

## **Making and Breaking the News: Interpreting the News Using Various Media**

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### **INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE:**

The ESL classroom is an exciting place to be at our school. Each discussion and encounter brings incredible variety and depth of perspectives coming from all around the globe. The students are eager to share their understanding of the world, while at the same time realizing that theirs is not the ultimate and complete picture. They are all immigrants (both willing and not-so-willing) who are trying to decipher the world around them and fit in. An incident that happened in this classroom last year prompted the idea for this unit on interpreting the news. It occurred the day following the elimination of the known terrorist Osama Bin Laden. Two of the girls from Guinea waltzed into the classroom unable to suppress their excitement and happiness that the number one terrorist who had caused so much trouble around the world was no longer a threat. Two young men from Pakistan upon entering the room were quick to interrupt the celebration by offering that it was all just a media hoax, that it had been reported seven times now already that he had been captured, and that every time he came back with a vengeance. The kids from Mexico agreed that if this news was on American television, then it **MUST** be true. The discussion triggered a lot of opinions, but ended with a series of obvious questions: How do we know that the media is telling us the truth? Can we trust television? Who has the right answers? As a teacher I was proud of my students—they were thinking critically, they were seeking the answers, and they were not intending to be manipulated. All they needed were the resources and background to avoid misinformation and make knowledgeable decisions. According to one of the latest polls,<sup>1</sup> nearly 70% of Americans are getting their news through television. However, relying exclusively on TV media for accurate information is a recipe for allowing our worldview to be manipulated. Students need a broader spectrum of sources, tools, and strategies in order to navigate through a world inundated by media, opinions, and ideas. Coming from different cultures, the students not only bring their unique perspectives on the issues, but perhaps also question their own ways of thinking and interpreting information.

Therefore, the focus of this unit will be on making students better able to interpret and analyze the events that are happening around them as presented through various media, such as television, the Internet, and newspapers. According to the standards mentioned above, students must be able to analyze various accounts of a subject told in different media, determining which details are emphasized in each account. In this unit, the students will explore such questions as *whether the news interpretation changes depending on the medium, how various types of media structure their presentation of the news, and what approaches we (the news recipients) need to take in order to discern the*

*validity and reliability of the news.* Such analysis will require an understanding of the following:

- the definition of news
- different means of spreading the news
- the structure of television news
- the structure of a newspaper
- the sources of the Internet news
- how to compare and contrast
- how to read and listen critically

## **Demographics**

Appoquinimink High School (AHS) is one of the two high schools in Appoquinimink School District, serving approximately 1,400 students in grades 9-12. Among those students are English Language Learners (ELLs) who are recent immigrants and migrants from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds, including students from Africa (Ghana, Guinea, Cameroon), Mexico, China, Japan, Pakistan, and Ecuador. These students are not only acquiring a new language but adjusting to a new culture, manner of thinking, and way of life while being expected to meet the graduation requirements in all subject areas. They are all part of the English as a Second Language (ESL) course, where they learn the English language and get help with other courses. I have the privilege of teaching that course.

This unit is designed for these high school ELLs in a mixed-grade ESL II class. Students in this class are either taking the course for the second year or have demonstrated a higher level of language proficiency on the placement test (fourth to seventh grade reading level in the English language). In this classroom, the unit will take five weeks of daily block classes to complete.

## **THE MEDIA**

The three sources of information chosen for this unit are television, newspapers, and the Internet. All of these media have been discussed throughout our seminars in terms of the different literacies they foster. Each of the discussions centered around the question *what does it mean to be \_\_\_\_\_ (insert television, Internet, newspaper, music, art, etc.) literate?* Such an idea of literacy was not only novel to me, but also challenged me as a teacher and a learner to search for my own interpretation of literacy and proficiency in a subject. Such task required research and reflection and led to a final realization that it is the society that determines which literacy is more or less esteemed or regarded. Just like my students, I was slowly realizing that if society is making those decisions daily, then the truth in the news that we are searching for is also a subject of opinion. I began my quest for the validity of the news in various media by learning more about each source. *Amusing Ourselves to Death* and *How to Watch Television News* (both by Steve Powers) offered insights on how television is providing us with a vastly distorted picture of the world. Instead of providing the public with the accurate information we are all seeking,

television newscasts focus on entertainment and advertising. Steve Powers cautions against relying solely television in order to get the picture of what is happening. If television was not enough, the next step for me was to turn to newspapers. The structure of a newspaper and the type of news that is presented differ significantly from those of television news broadcasts. Unless something significant and momentous happens, television news directors are forced to put severe time limitations on every story. In other words, watching news on TV is similar to reading nothing but headlines in the newspapers. Newspapers provide more in-depth coverage and detail than TV news; it is possible to reread stories after further research in order to determine their validity instead of adhering to a set schedule and interpretation provided by the self-anointed experts on TV.

Walter Cronkite, who for nearly twenty years was television's foremost news anchorman, was also an ardent advocate of the need for a free people to remain free by keeping fully informed. He strongly believed that rule number one of American journalism was: "News columns are reserved only for news."<sup>2</sup> What is news? It is information only! Does it mean news columns' information is more accurate than that on television? Perhaps not entirely, but putting the two sources together will definitely paint a clearer picture. Yet an individual functioning in today's society, where information is instant and fluid, has to be literate about how the Internet is presenting and interpreting the news. Due to bountiful and sometimes unreliable sources, the news we instantly receive via the Internet has to be analyzed more deeply. Current netlore and urban legends, showing up on the lists of search results, appear just like all the other legitimate news permeating the Internet. Just like my students, I want to be sure that the information in front of me is accurate. My research showed that the purposes of these hoaxes vary greatly from robbing unwary victims to having harmless fun. One of the most recent is the "Balloon Boy Hoax" that kept the country in suspense as all of the media fervently reported the details of the little boy stuck in a helium-filled balloon. After evaluating all of my sources, I decided to provide an in-depth look at each one of the modes of media—television, newspaper, and the Internet—in terms of its structure, purpose, and bias.

## TELEVISION

It is probably safe to say that each American household has at least one television set. Surveys that examine the television viewing patterns

<sup>3</sup> indicate that in an average household the television set is turned on about eight hours a day. Throughout that time we, as recipients of information, are also watched and examined, since the television not only delivers programs to us, but also, and more important to the business of television, delivers us to the sponsor. American television producers take great care in planning, timing, and delivering their programs to us in order to attract the largest possible audiences. Today, the news is one of the most profitable programs for television networks, a sharp change from just a few decades ago when news broadcasts were considered a monetary loss. They range from all-news cable channels to special television news programs, to all-sports (or business) news channels, to

entertainment news shows and so on. For sponsors, news programs are not just simply profitable, but are also highly desirable because people who are watching the news tend to be paying more attention to what is on the screen. If we are statistically watched as we are watching the news, then could the decisions about *what to put on the news and how to structure it* depend on us, the viewers, and on how to keep us glued to the set and continue consuming the information selected for us for business purposes?

Before examining the issue further, it is important to examine our own understanding of the word “news.” The question is not a simple one, but without having a clear answer about what exactly it is that we are watching, we run the risk of someone else dictating to us not only the content of what we need to know, but also its forms and all the possible conclusions that will come with the issue. Most people would respond to the question “*What is news?*” with something like “what happened today,” or “important and interesting events.” If we think about these answers, they are quite broad. On any given day, at any given moment, a multitude of events are happening around the globe. How do we know what determines the importance of one event and the insignificance of another? Importance is a subjective measure selected by a rather small group of individuals as worthy to be noticed and featured. Such selection lends itself to featuring the events in a way that will profit the news station and the sponsor. Therefore, as Neil Postman suggests,<sup>4</sup> to answer the question “*What is news?*” we must have some understanding about the political beliefs and economic situation of those who provide us with the news. Having such understanding will help us create a clearer picture of why certain events are considered important by television networks and how their judgments compare to ours.

Once the events have been subjectively gathered and molded into a news show, the task of the producers is now centered on us, the viewers. There is no doubt that the audience is the most important component of a news broadcast. The paramount question for broadcasters is how to get the viewers to continue watching the show—not an easy task with so many different networks competing for our time and, ultimately, our appeal to the sponsors. Here, several factors are crucial. The lead-in gets us hooked before the news broadcast even comes on with promises of “team coverage” and a “fair and balanced” presentation<sup>5</sup> of the most recent calamity or a disaster. Equally important is the line-up of the programs leading to the broadcast with programs with high ratings leading the way. *Dr. Phil*, for instance, aired right before the local news show will likely bring larger audiences thereby making the newscast more profitable for the producer. Good-looking and likable anchors who are preferably also good actors are most likely to appeal to the audience than highly professional journalists.<sup>6</sup> Make-up creates just the right look while camera magic portrays just the right angle—and we are completely sold on the professionalism and validity of what is happening on the screen. The theme music, of course, sets the tone of what is about to come. In fact, the producers place a high regard on the music at the beginning of the show, recruiting such big names in music as James Horner (Academy Award Winning Composer)<sup>7</sup> and Joel Beckerman (an award-winning musician and president of Man Made Music, a music company dedicated to harnessing

the emotional power of sound and music to tell great stories and build brands)<sup>8</sup> to create the mood of the lead story and the broadcast. As the music fades, the news crew that actually *performs* the presentation embodies a so-called “pseudofamily” with a male and female anchor relatively in the same age category (the husband and wife) joined by somewhat younger “family members” to appeal to the younger viewers—the sportscaster and the weatherperson—occasionally visited by a “cousin” who is the expert in the latest show business developments and new products. The happy family is featured together at the beginning and the end of the show, politely taking turns throughout to share with us what we need to know about the day in question. However, the appealing presentation is not all it takes to keep us glued to the tube. The producer will carefully line up the events, starting with a “get,” a headliner that will attract the audience, such as an interview with today’s hero or a celebrity, or the latest scandal that involves politicians. If we get hooked on that headliner, we stay though the commercial break to watch the following segment. Then the strategy is repeated with the sole purpose of keeping us focused on the content and not for a moment thinking about changing the channel.

In the television news industry, as in just about any other field, there are terms and titles that are part of the professional jargon. The mules, for instance, are those general-assignment reporters who gather and create the actual news stories. The reason for the name is those long hours, nomadic way of life, and large workload. The next step on the ladder is the big foot, a reporter covering the major stories that have the potential of becoming the feature of most shows. Some of such assignments can be dangerous, such as news from war or conflict zones. Both jobs are much more exhausting than they seem. The segment that we see a reporter complete on the screen in just a few seconds sometimes takes hours or days to create—the pictures have to match the description, appear just at the right time, and come from many different places (from a steep terrain to a courtroom issuing a long-awaited verdict or decision). Contemporary audiences’ expectations that news will be reported instantaneously make the behind-the-scenes work that much more pressured and demanding. To make such presentations more fluid and give them a sense of happening “live,” such episodes are presented in a donut form. A donut is a television interview in which the studio presenter hands over to a journalist on location who interviews guests before handing back to the presenter in the studio.<sup>9</sup> Many times, the reporter on the scene will bring the audience up to date with the latest developments and then refer to a pre-recorded segment. The promptness and instantaneity of the news, however, would not be possible without a bird, a communications satellite giving national and local audiences a bird’s-eye view of the world.

The work and technology behind the scenes of any newscast is unmatched in its broadness and versatility—all with the purpose of bringing us the latest and most sensational information first. However, the ultimate responsibility of each news broadcast lies with the news director, who makes the hiring decisions and deals with the policy-making as well as the question of which news gets featured and which doesn’t and what the tone of such presentation should be. In this difficult task, he is not alone. The assistant

news director and the managing editor are responsible for making spot decisions about what events to cover. The producer, in turn, decides which stories will go into the broadcast in which order and how much time each should take. Assignment editors, desk assistants, production assistants, and news editors all pitch in to create the most effective and appealing news product.<sup>10</sup>

The commercial, the pillar of non-public television, is the reason why the networks, including the news, are available to us without breaks, holidays, and days off. There are two dimensions to the commercial on American television: business and social. On the business side is the CPM (“cost per thousand”) which calculates how much an advertiser should spend for each thousand people watching the news broadcast on a particular night. The current CPM is about \$7 per thirty-second spot, or about half a cent for each viewer. News broadcasts, with their high ratings and large audiences, are extremely attractive to advertisers, as an estimated 25 million people turn to the ABC, CBS, and NBC news daily.<sup>11</sup> Numbers, however, are not the only factor that the advertisers consider. Demographic profiles of the audience will dictate the time, place, and content of the commercial in the news. News broadcasts with younger viewers will feature products that appeal to the audience, while older viewers will most likely see a whole different set of products advertised. Although it is important for my students to understand the value of the economic and social domains of the commercial, the fact that each one of them is designed to manipulate our social lives is far more significant to understand. Whether the commercial appears comical, glamorous, mysterious, or straightforward, its purpose includes the message that whatever problem we are facing, it can easily and deftly be solved by turning to the product in question; in fact, we appear helpless and act ridiculous if we fail to use it. We can all recall the tired-looking lady in black and white dragging that heavy vacuum up the stairs and when she’s just about to reach the top, the vacuum’s canister comes off and dumps dirt all the way back down the stairs, leaving her hopelessly depressed and so inadequate with the derisory piece of junk she’s chosen as an appliance—but wait, now there’s the Dyson Ball! And once she uses it, her world becomes colorful and virtually dirt-free! Get the picture? Intermixed with the news, especially “breaking news” about natural disasters, crimes, and social tragedies, the commercial is designed to take our mind off world events and focus us on our own inadequacies and needs, thereby causing us to desire the products being advertised. As consumers, we should develop the “literacy” of discerning the validity and value of the information thrown at us and make informed decisions about commercials.

As my students become more familiar with the structure and components of a news broadcast, I am hoping they will become more analytical and reflective recipients of information and keep in mind that television news is NOT what happened today or what is important. It is, rather, what certain individuals with the title of “reporter,” “producer,” and “director” tell us is worth reporting. Decisions about what is important and how to interpret it are ours to make with appropriate knowledge and practice without allowing the news directors and journalists to manipulate our choices. Further, when watching the

news, we should be aware that we are watching a show put together by a very successful and profitable business seeking to remain just that—a successful and profitable business—with our help. Learning something about economic and political interests of those running the show will help us be critical about the picture being constructed for us. An informed and reflective viewer will never underestimate the power of commercials, which perhaps tell us even more about what is important today than the actual news. In other words, the best way for my students to prepare themselves to know exactly what is happening is to develop an understanding of all the aspects of television news mentioned above.

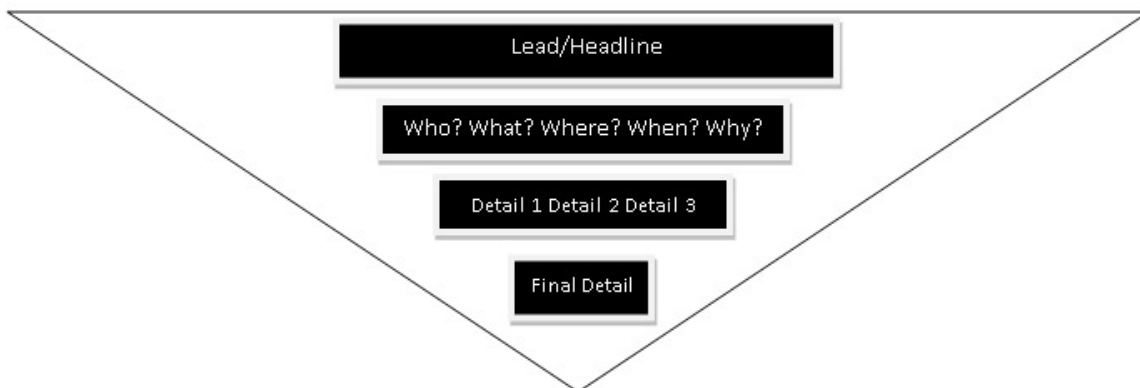
### THE NEWSPAPER

As stated above, about 70% of us get our news through daily television broadcasts. Given the time constraints and high cost of each newscast, however, the news that is put on television has to be reduced to mere headlines, unless of course something extraordinary happens (extraordinary mostly in the eyes of the presenters). In order to get a broader picture, a more complete account, we have to refer to other sources. Before the relatively recent rise of television and the Internet, newspapers were the primary source of information about happenings around the world. The history of the newspaper began nearly five centuries ago in Germany, where merchants distributed handwritten newsletters containing information regarding weather, economy, and people.<sup>12</sup> America's first newspaper, *Publick Occurrences, Both Foreign and Domestick*, was printed in 1690 by Richard Pierce. Today, we enjoy the choice of roughly 1450 daily newspapers<sup>13</sup> presenting the latest news. To help my students use the newspaper as a resource that will supplement television news with the purpose of constructing a clearer understanding of current events, I feel it important to equip them with some knowledge about the structure of a newspaper as well as the strategies of reading its multiple sections and pages.

Whether it is a smaller local paper or a much larger national or regional paper, most of them will have a variety of subject sections, typically classified under a letter—for example, “A” for the news of highest importance as perceived by the publisher, “B” for local or regional news, and so on. The sections of a newspaper, although containing variations from newspaper to newspaper, will most likely include the follow. The Front Page invites the reader inside the newspaper. Some newspapers have a “Briefs” section that highlight the news and refer the reader to the letter and page reference for further reading. The Index, also located on the front page of a newspaper, informs the reader where to find specific sections or subjects if interest. The Editorial is the journalist's side of the newspaper, which will include both fact and opinion pieces. Hard News articles provide the reader with the facts and concise information only, and these contain *both* sides of the story, refraining from using a lot of adjectives and adverbs as these may color and/or slant the story. Features written to entertain and educate touch upon lifestyle subjects, such as home, gardening, cooking, travel, and other interest of the readers. The Sports Section will include articles ranging from professional games to local school sports, and will include stories about individual athletes and the latest developments in

the world of sports. Opinion/Perspective pieces feature subjective writing on popular topics submitted by the readers, written by editors and columnists. This section may also contain political cartoons. Advertising is the publisher’s side of the newspaper. As in the television news industry, advertising is the fuel of the newspaper industry, allowing sponsors to purchase the space to promote their products. The Classifieds provide the reader with the information on something they need—a job, a service, a home—posted by anyone interested. Display Ads are used for product and service promotions and are usually located alongside editorial material. Ad Inserts are separate print sheets slipped inside the newspaper that target consumers of everyday products. According to a “Customer Focus 2008: Retail” study from Vertis Communications,<sup>14</sup> ad inserts have overcome television advertising as the medium most able to elicit consumer attention. Advertorials are promotions featuring a product, service, or political candidate disguised to a greater or lesser extent as news stories. Subject-Specific Advertising appears in a specially-devoted section, such as real-estate.<sup>15</sup>

Once the students are familiar with the sections of a newspaper and comfortable navigating through them, they can focus on the individual article. Newspaper articles use the *inverted pyramid* style to attract and keep our attention. The inverted pyramid principle structures the writing beginning with the most important information, then continuing with the next important point, and the next, slowly diminishing in the order of importance. Invented in the nineteenth century by wartime reporters, this style was dictated by the contemporary medium used in information transmission, the telegraph. The most crucial information had to be transferred first in the event the transmission got interrupted. Even though telegraph is no longer used for creating articles, the idea of interrupted messages is quite prevalent in the busy world of multiple sources of news that are constantly competing with each other. The journalists allow us, the readers, to get to the meat of the problem first before we get bored and switch to reading something else.<sup>16</sup>



A well-reported story will answer the 5W and H questions, that is, the “what,” “who,” “when,” “where,” “why,” and “how.” The “why” of the story is often found on the sidebars in the form of supporting stories that offer a form of analysis (opinion) and



background (facts) to help the reader understand and evaluate information. Both analysis and background are usually bylined by an expert on the subject who explains the causes of the news and its possible consequences to us, the readers. Here again, we should take caution to not allow self-anointed experts to manipulate our opinion through their skillful interpretation of facts and tell us not just what will probably happen, but what should happen. Here the students should understand that before reading these interpretive stories, we must form our own opinion first and then be open to other ideas, resisting the temptation of letting the experts tell us what to think. A more complete and detailed picture of the story will come from multiple sources and various media. Getting the information from television, following it in print, identifying opinions and facts will give the students the skills to form their own sensible opinions as to the “whys” and “wherefores” of the event, even down to how it will affect them and what should be done about it.<sup>17</sup>

Reading larger chunks of informational texts could be overwhelming for my students due to the language barrier and, in some cases, limited literacy experience. As they read newspapers and search for information, they will be able to practice and apply Proficient Reading Strategies:<sup>18</sup> 1. Locating the title and visual aids; 2. Accessing background knowledge and making predictions; 3. Clarifying unknown words and ideas using context clues; 4. Summarizing the text in smaller portions in order to synthesize; and 5. Evaluating the reading. These strategies will improve comprehension and therefore increase students’ motivation to read and interpret newspapers.

## THE INTERNET

The 2010 Annual Report on American Journalism—The State of the News Media, conducted by The Project of Excellence in Journalism<sup>19</sup>—showed that in 2010 every news media agency experienced either a decline or a stall in audience numbers except for one: the Web. Now that information is available 24/7 at the request of the seeker, we can find the exact information we are looking for online without having to read through pages of newspapers or watching cable news programs with the news bits preselected for us by alleged experts. The study also noted that nearly half (47%) of Americans get their news on a hand-held device, making the news accessible just about anywhere in the country (and most of the world). This number is rapidly growing, and with the advances of technology, immediate news will soon become a front-runner among all the sources of news. An earlier study by the same project also identified an interesting trend: the stories selected by online users as worthy of their attention tended to gravitate toward topics that were not necessarily featured by other news sources.<sup>20</sup> My personal observations of my students’ choices in selecting the sources of their news suggests that they rely almost solely on the web.

In this new world of media inundation and plethora of the internet news sources, it is clear that being able to evaluate the validity and reliability of information is a skill necessary for our students to master. Web media are readily available to anyone not just

for consumption, but also for creation and manipulation. In January 2011, for instance, Pierson Publishing Company came out with a press release referencing their new study entitled *School Facing Learning Crisis Spawned by Internet*.<sup>21</sup> The press release advocated the need to teach the students Internet literacy skills, exemplifying a study funded by the Department of education and conducted by Dr. Donald Leu. Leu, a former teacher, focused the study on the fallacious report on the fate of the endangered “tree octopus,” a species living in the treetops of the Pacific Northeast. The students were asked to gather information on this creature and propose steps to save and preserve such a valuable species. The students were directed to a specially designed website<sup>22</sup> with photographs, scientific information, frequently asked questions, and a special page for the readers’ suggestions about how to save the critter. Needless to say, the creature did not exist and the whole thing was a hoax. The students, however, fell for it and continued to believe in the tree octopus even after they were told it was a scam. These students, the study concluded, were not prepared to critically evaluate the information presented to them. Such examples of Internet hoaxes are numerous; another recent one is the scam of the mini lap pet giraffe supposedly grown in Russia since 1908.<sup>23</sup> In order to equip my students with the strategies to evaluate information, I investigated the evaluating process from a standpoint of cognitive psychology and thinking theory.

In 1956 Benjamin Bloom and his colleagues introduced a hierarchy of thinking skills widely known today as Bloom’s Taxonomy.<sup>24</sup> Evaluation, placed at the higher end of the spectrum of skills, involves making a judgment using a set of criteria concerning the accuracy and effectiveness of the discourse and is therefore closely associated with critical thinking. According to Mary Ann Fitzgerald (Assistant Professor, Department of Instructional Technology, University of Georgia), the process of evaluation embodies several distinct components: metacognition, goals, a personal disposition toward evaluation, a signal to begin the process, deliberation, and decision.<sup>25</sup> Understanding this process will help me build strategies that my students can use in order to evaluate the validity and credibility of information online.

Metacognition, or the process of thinking about one’s own thinking, allows the students to regulate their own thinking and learning. In other words, thinkers constantly choose strategies that will help them monitor both comprehension of the material and an analysis of whether or not this information may be false or the source incompetent. Goals, or purposes, for reading and using the information will contribute to the extent of the evaluation process. Our goals for reading are numerous: entertainment, gathering information, curiosity, fact collection, comparison of ideas or products, and so on. The reader’s goal for processing the information will largely determine the level of engagement and the type of cognitive strategies used. A person browsing the web for entertainment will employ fewer critical thinking and cognitive strategies than a person searching for real estate offers, for instance. Fitzgerald states that motivation increases evaluation accuracy through the deliberate avoidance of flawed thinking patterns; conversely, lack of motivation may decrease evaluation accuracy.<sup>26</sup> A necessary

condition for evaluation is disposition. Glaser, as quoted by Fitzgerald, defines disposition as the “attitude of being disposed to consider in a thoughtful, perceptive manner the problems and subjects that come within the range of one’s experiences,” the strength of which will vary among individuals. In order to increase the ability to think critically when evaluating the information, students will have to draw on concrete goals, background knowledge, and personal experiences. All these skills can be taught and practiced in the classroom. The signal to begin the process of evaluating the discourse is described as specific thoughts in recognizing that there is something erroneous in what is being presented. Readers begin to pay close attention, draw on the knowledge they have, check the facts for veracity, and recall information. Depending on the schema that readers possess, they will have some expectations about what should and should not happen next, incorporating the new information as they go along. Ambiguity and bewilderment may be signals for evaluation as well. Once the process has been triggered by these signals, readers begin deliberating in order to resolve the conflict through searching, investigating, inquiring, reasoning, and making judgments. In questioning the author’s reasoning and viewpoint, readers are now applying strategies in order to analyze the validity of the material presented as compared to the information and knowledge they already have. At this point in the process, readers may also be considering two conflicting viewpoints simultaneously and discarding the one that does not add up.<sup>27</sup> Readers are now ready to make a decision, or a judgment, regarding the value or accuracy of the information. Deliberation seems to be the key here. Skipping it as a part of critical thinking process will lead to decisions based on false facts and misinformation. I believe that is why so many students fell for the “endangered tree octopus” story. My goal will be to demonstrate to the students that had they set their goals as being accountable for the information they are agreeing with, had they been open to processing the information critically, had they paid attention to the signals they were confused about, and had they considered how likely it was that the theory of a tree-crawling octopus was founded on science, they would have decided that the information they were dealing with was a skillful hoax by which they got fooled.

## **OBJECTIVES**

Students will learn how to interpret the news presented in various media. Students will use their reading and speaking skills to participate in a collaborative discussion about what can be considered “news.” This process will be scaffolded through questioning, using visual aids like photographs and excerpts from television news broadcasts, and organizing ideas into categories. Further, students will analyze the structure of news presentation in the following media: television, newspapers, and the Internet. Students will participate in a jigsaw activity to learn the roles of each television newscast member, evaluate which events make the news and how they are represented, and create their own broadcast featuring the events in the school and community. They will become familiar with the structure of a newspaper and analyze a news story presentation, enabling them to create their own newspaper featuring current events in their community. In gathering

news from the Internet, students will be able to analyze and evaluate the validity of sources in order to make informed decisions about the authenticity of the news. Finally, students will compare, contrast, and analyze a current event presented in all three media and evaluate its sources and presentation.

Our district's curriculum units are created following the research-based Learning Focused Strategies developed by Drs. Max and Julia Thompson.<sup>28</sup> This method of teaching is based on the acquisition of material as opposed to learning it. In order to make that possible, learning units are created based on what the students will need to know, understand and do—as stated in the Common Core State Standards. The standards that this unit is based upon can be found in Appendix A. Interpreting the news is the key learning for this unit that will answer the following essential question: How does analyzing the news presented in various media help me create a clearer picture of current events? This big idea is further classified into concepts with corresponding lesson essential questions (LEQs): 1. News (LEQ1: What is news? What determines which events make the news?); 2. Television News (LEQ2: How does analyzing the components of a news broadcast help me make informed decisions about current events?); 3. Newspapers (LEQ3: What is the structure of a newspaper? How does understanding the structure of a newspaper help me interpret the news?); 4. News on the Internet (LEQ4: How does analyzing the validity of sources help me identify the most accurate information?). The students will be required to give detailed answers to LEQs after each lesson of the unit. The unit will culminate with an analysis of a current event employing all three sources of media.

## **STRATEGIES**

As ELLs, my students face many challenges when it comes to reading and understanding material in any content area. Most of the students' reading ability is well below grade level expectations. Therefore, incorporating literacy skills into each lesson is a vital step in ensuring that learning and understanding of the material takes place. The students will incorporate a variety of strategies throughout the unit that will help them monitor their learning.

### *Proficient Reading Strategies*

Since the students will be required to read and analyze authentic unmodified texts, the following reading strategies will simplify the process and will encourage the students to think critically as they read. I have adapted these strategies to be applicable to my high school classroom from the set of strategies developed by Dr. Barbara Prillaman for her middle-school ELL classroom, where I had the privilege of completing my student teaching:<sup>29</sup>

1. Identify and read the title
2. Look at the visual aids (illustrations, photos, maps, graphs, etc.)
3. Make a prediction

4. Scan the text to identify and clarify unknown words
5. Read the text
6. Identify main ideas in portions of the text as you read (e.g. paragraphs, sections, etc.)
7. Clarify ideas and concepts
8. Create a graphic organizer to show the relationship between ideas
9. Summarize the reading
10. Evaluate your work

Although the students will apply these strategies throughout the entire unit, I will explicitly model and guide the students in practicing them during our introductory reading, *Are You Watching Television or Is Television Watching You?*, as well as during Lesson Two, when we will be reading various newspaper articles.

#### *Think-Alouds*

Think-alouds are often used in my classroom as a way of meaningful interactions with written or spoken discourse. Through this strategy, the thinking process is vocalized in order to help the students increase their comprehension of the material by describing things they are doing and should be doing as they read, write, or listen to the English language. This strategy helps my students organize their own thinking and learn from the thinking process of the peers and the teacher.

#### *Jig-Saw Learning*

This strategy accomplishes two goals. First, it breaks up the large amount of material the students are to master into meaningful chunks. Second, it gives the students multiple opportunities to practice the English language through reading, speaking, writing, and listening. The class will be divided into groups of four or five students. Each group will receive an assignment to learn the roles of a television cast. The students will split the assignment by selecting one of the roles (e.g. the meteorologist) and becoming an expert on the subject. The students will then convene and share their expert knowledge with the group. The students will learn from each other as well as demonstrating mastery of the material they have researched.

#### *Graphic Organizers*

A graphic organizer is a visual representation of key information. It visually shows the key points or ideas of the lesson; it turns abstract concepts into concrete visual representations; it guides student thinking about the concept of the lesson; and therefore, it produces learning effects that are substantial and long-lasting.<sup>30</sup> Graphic organizers are an integral part of each lesson that I teach when I work with ELLs. Using graphic organizers, the students are able to make sense of difficult concepts and understand the relationships between them without having to worry about long and difficult verbal descriptions.

### *Vocabulary Practice*

As mentioned above, language acquisition is a process that accompanies all of the learning that the students are doing in and outside the school setting. Although language acquisition is a multi-faceted and complex process, its most obvious evidence is the increased vocabulary knowledge of each learner. Learning new words for everyday communication and mastering academic vocabulary are two similar yet distinct processes. Jim Cummings differentiates this process into Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP).<sup>31</sup> While it takes one to two years to become proficient in BICS, it takes up to eight years to master CALP. Since eight years represents over half of school years in this country, my students will need all the support and scaffolding they can get to help them through this process. Therefore, each lesson in the unit will be accompanied by explicit vocabulary instruction that will employ a variety of classroom activities in order to ensure word acquisition.

### *Presentations*

People without a full command of the language who are conscious of their accent and past educational experiences can find it overwhelming to speak in front of other people. At some point in their learning, all of my students experience the fear of public speaking. However, that does not mean that presentations and public speaking should not be a part of their learning. Equipped with the right strategies, the students can be confident about their presentations and speaking talents. In this unit, we will employ such strategies as voice projection, body language, eye contact, and the use of visual aids.

## **CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES**

### **LESSON ONE: THE NEWS**

What is news? What determines which events make the news?

This introductory lesson will allow students to learn more about the process of creating television news. They will use their prior knowledge as well as their discussion skills in order to define “news.” Students will understand why and how certain events are selected and labeled as news over others. Students will be able to identify various ways to deliver the news.

*Anticipatory Set:* The students will brainstorm what the word “news” means arranging their ideas into a Word Splash (all the words that come to mind arranged randomly around the concept word).

*Socratic Model:* Direct the students’ discussion about what contributes to the decision on whether or not an event is worthy of being called “news” through a questioning session. Allow the students to express their thought and ideas. Then, in pairs, the students will come up with definitions of news. As a background knowledge evaluation, the teacher will further elicit information regarding the media and sources of news.

*Formative Assessment:* Answers to questions, teacher notes, pair definitions.

## LESSON TWO: TELEVISION NEWS

How does analyzing the components of a news broadcast help us make informed decisions about current events?

The students will be able to analyze how the structure of a television broadcast is created to keep the viewers' attention. They will be able to describe and identify the roles of a news crew both in the studio and out in the field. They will be able to name and provide background about several major television networks.

*Activity 1:* Read and discuss. Working in groups, the students will read and discuss "Are You Watching Television or Is the Television Watching You?," the introductory chapter of Neil Postman and Steve Powers' *How to Watch TV News*. Through the reading, the students will understand that creating the news has become a profitable business that draws large audiences who are tuned in to pay close attention to what is being presented. They will see that television is, in fact, a well-created system that targets our interests, preferences, and habits by kindling our continued interest in the program and skillfully interjecting the sponsor's messages that prompt us to buy a product or try out a service. In order to maximize comprehension, the students will employ Proficient Reading Strategies (PRS).

*Formative Assessment 1:* Use of PRS and Ticket Out as summarizing.

*Vocabulary Instruction:* As the teacher introduces each vocabulary unit, it is posted on the Word Wall, noted in the learning map, and reviewed daily until the end of the lesson. Vocabulary: *lead-in, theme, "get," line-up, pseudo family, anchor, sportscaster, meteorologist, expert, reporter, mule, big foot, bird, donut, director, producer, editor.*

*Activity 2:* Jigsaw. The students will work in groups of four. Each member of the group will select one aspect of the news broadcast and will become an expert in the subject and later share the information with the other group members with the purpose of making everyone familiar with all the aspects of the broadcast. Each student will collect the information on the following topics: 1. *The structure of the broadcast (lead-in, theme music, "get," and line-up);* 2. *The news crew (the "pseudo family," the anchors, the sportscaster, the meteorologist, and the expert);* 3. *The reporters (the mules, the big foot, the bird, and the donut presentation);* 4. *Behind the scenes (news director, assistant news director, producer, assignment editor, desk assistant, production assistants, and news editors).* Once the roles have been selected, the students will regroup into homogeneous groups that will focus on the same aspect (e.g., all of the group members who had prompt number one: the structure of the broadcast). The new group members will work together utilizing the resources provided by the teacher and/or their own sources. Once the information is gathered and analyzed, the students will return to their original groups and

will teach the other group members about their topic. The students will note and classify the new information into a graphic organizer (Appendix B).

*Formative Assessment 2:* The students will summarize new learning by describing the components of a news broadcast.

*Summative Assessment:* The students will create a news broadcast utilizing their knowledge.

### LESSON THREE: THE NEWSPAPERS

What is the structure of a newspaper? How does understanding the structure of a newspaper help me interpret the news?

This lesson will teach students to identify the various sections of the newspaper and understand how they are organized into the final product. The students will describe the structure of a newspaper article by analyzing an “inverted pyramid” strategy. The students will compare and contrast the television’s and the newspaper’s presentation of the same event.

*Activity 1:* Students will read a newspaper article about the history of newspapers.<sup>32</sup> Students will employ Proficient Reading Strategies(PRS) and summarize their findings through a class discussion.

*Formative Assessment 1:* Evidence of PRS and answers to discussion questions.

*Activity 2:* Scavenger Hunt. Distribute newspapers to all the students. Have them preview the newspaper by scanning through all of the pages. Then have students find and circle the following information: the name of the editor of the newspaper, today’s weather forecast, the name of a winning sports team, a political headline, a comic strip, a local event, a job posting, a price of a house, a movie title, an opinion or advice column, an advertisement, and an economics headline. Have the students share what they have found.

*Vocabulary Instruction:* As the teacher introduces each vocabulary unit, students locate it in the newspaper; the units are then posted on the Word Wall, noted in the learning map, and are reviewed daily until the end of the lesson. Vocabulary: *the front page, briefs, index, news article, headline, dateline, editorial, features, sports section, opinion/perspective pieces, advertising, classified, display ads, ad inserts, advertorial, display ads, comic strip, editor.*

*Guided Practice:* Students will find and classify examples of the vocabulary units into the theme categories in their graphic organizer: *The Front Page, Editorials, Sports, Advertising, Comics and Cartoons* (Appendix C).



*Formative Assessment 2:* Completed graphic organizer.

*Activity 3:* Inductive Reasoning. Students will examine several news articles in order to infer generalizations regarding the structure of a news article. Students will notice that there is a pattern to the presentation of the news in the form on a newspaper article. Distribute blank Inverted Pyramid graphic organizers (Appendix D). Explain that each article will have the following components: *the 5Ws, details, final detail, headline, and lead*. Working in groups, students will read several articles and organize these components into proper locations within the inverted pyramid. Lead students in the discussion of the reasons for such organization. Compare and contrast the structure of a news article presentation to a television news segment.

*Formative Assessment 3:* Group discussion conversations, teacher notes, Inverted Pyramid graphic organizer.

*Summative Assessment:* Using online resources (e.g. [www.buildanewspaper.com](http://www.buildanewspaper.com)), students will create a class newspaper featuring school and local events.

Lesson Four: The Internet

How does analyzing the validity of sources help identify the most accurate information? This lesson will teach the students to analyze the mode of presentation of information on the web in order to reach sounder conclusions regarding its validity.

*Activity 1:* Computer Lab Investigation. Students have completed this type of activity numerous times in just about all of their classes. They will be directed to a website and given a graphic organizer to note down the information into corresponding categories. However, this time the website will represent an Internet hoax: a story about the endangered tree octopus that needs our determined action in order to survive.<sup>33</sup> After students gather the information, the teacher will conduct a discussion, and through deductive reasoning<sup>34</sup> will elicit the conclusion that the tree octopus could not possibly exist, much less need our help. Students will understand that trusting the first website as their source of news and information could lead to misrepresentation and distortion of facts.

*Formative Assessment 1:* The Tree Octopus Questionnaire (Appendix E) and answers to teacher's questions.

*Activity 2:* Computer Lab Investigation. Students will conduct a computer investigation, a tutorial on how to evaluate the validity of webpages.<sup>35</sup> The tutorial will present the users with techniques and list a series of questions that lead readers to critically think about each webpage in front of them, thereby helping them make a decision regarding its reliability. The task for the students will be to create a checklist for a successful webpage evaluation. The teacher will model the process by analyzing and identifying the items for the checklist based on the first two sections of the tutorial: *1. What can the URL Tell You?*

and 2. *Scanning the Perimeter of the Page*. The remaining sections of the tutorial will be completed by the students through guided and independent practice: 3. *Indicators of Quality Information*; 4. *Links and Other Sources*; 5. *Does It All Add Up?* 6. *Why Was the Page Put on the Web?*

*Formative Assessment 2*: Working in pairs and using the checklist, created by the students, they will evaluate the validity of the following web pages:

- "Glowing Bacteria Could Power 'Bio-light'"<sup>36</sup>
- "Pregnant Man."<sup>37</sup>
- "Nevada Hunter Captures 'UFO' on Camera."<sup>38</sup>
- "Blind French Eaterie Seeks to Conquer New York."<sup>39</sup>,
- "Sokoblovsky Farms: Russia's Finest Purveyors of Petite Lap Giraffes."<sup>40</sup>
- "Video games make kids future CEOs?"<sup>41</sup>

They will summarize their finding regarding the reliability of information for each website.

*Activity 3*: Compare and Contrast Discussion. Students will recall our discussion in Lesson One regarding the sources of news and compare and contrast the three types of media they studied in the unit as a summarizing activity. Through questioning and discussing, students will realize that in order to get the most complete picture of an event, they have to consult multiple sources in various media.

*Unit Summative Assessment*: Analyzing a current event. Each student will select a current event (choice: local or global) and will analyze it using all three types of media engaging multiple sources in each. In Part I, through the analysis process the students will answer the 5W and H questions creating a more complete account of the event. The students will cite all the sources used. In Part II, the students will create a narrative explaining how each of the sources used contributed to creating a more complete picture as well as how this analysis process helped form the reader's personal opinion regarding the event.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A

#### COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

RI.9-10.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language of a court opinion differs from that of a newspaper).

RI.9-10.7. Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person's life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are

emphasized in each account.

SL.9-10.2. Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.

SL.9-10.5. Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **The News Broadcast Components**

<b>News Broadcast Component</b>	<b>What I Have Learned</b>
The Structure of the Broadcast	
The News Crew	
The Reporters	
Behind the Scenes	

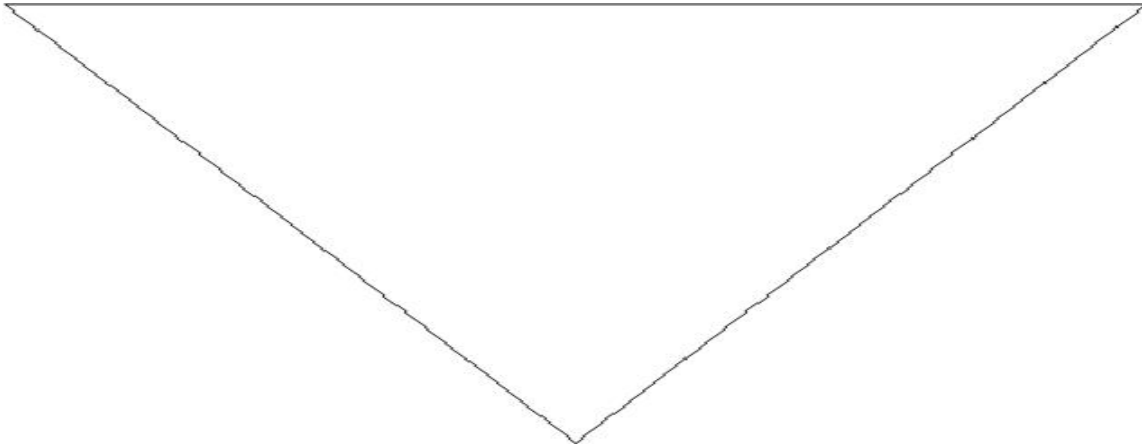
## **APPENDIX C**

### **The Structure of a Newspaper**

<b>Section</b>	<b>Examples</b>
The Front Page	
Editorials	
Sports	
Advertising	
Comics and Cartoons	

## APPENDIX D

### The Inverted Pyramid



## APPENDIX E

### The Tree Octopus Web Quest

Go to “Help Save the Endangered Pacific Northwest Tree Octopus,”<sup>42</sup> and gather the information about the endangered tree octopus. Record your answers to the following questions:

1. Where can the Pacific Northwest tree octopus (*Octopus paxarbolis*) be found?
2. Describe the Pacific Northwest tree octopus.
3. How did the tree octopus adapt to the new environment?
4. Using the provided map as a resource, describe the reproductive cycle of the Pacific Northwest tree octopus.
5. Why is the tree octopus endangered?
6. Describe two ways you can help the endangered tree octopus survive.
7. Study the FAQ section and list four most interesting facts you have learned.
8. Click on the Media Section of the website. List some of the resources that you could use to learn more about the tree octopus (e.g., *Confessor* (2010), a book about genetically-engineered tree octopuses).
9. Review the Cephalonews and Cephaloblog sections. List three interesting facts.

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## TEACHER RESOURCES

“A Daily Miracle: A Student Guide to Journalism and the Newspaper Business (2007),” *The Daytona Beach News Journal*, Newspapers in Education, accessed October 29, 2011. <http://www.nieworld.com/cc/NewspaperADailyMiracle.pdf>  
This article by Press Research Center is about the new trend in retrieving the news.

Beverly, Sharon, Pamela Cornelison & Sheila E. Quall. "Goal: Read A Newspaper," Merced County Library, accessed October 29, 2011.

[http://libraryliteracy.org/staff/rg/Life\\_Long\\_Read\\_a\\_newspaper.pdf](http://libraryliteracy.org/staff/rg/Life_Long_Read_a_newspaper.pdf)

Teacher's resource on reading newspapers that includes vocabulary instruction, reading and writing skills, and an assessment rubric.

Bloom, Benjamin and David R. Krathwohl. "Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals, by a Committee of College and University Examiners," Handbook 1: Cognitive domain (New York: Longmans, 1956). A resource explaining the taxonomy of student learning based on the level of cognitive learning order.

Fitzgerald, Mary Ann. "Evaluating Information: An Information Literacy Challenge," American Association of School Librarians. Accessed October 29, 2011.

<http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/aasl/aaslpubsandjournals/slmrb/slmrcontents/volume21999/vol2fitzgerald.cfm>

A comprehensive guide to how the readers should evaluate information as presented on the Web.

Inverted Pyramid, The" Daily Writing Tips, accessed October 29, 2011.

<http://www.dailywritingtips.com/the-inverted-pyramid/>

This article explores a principle employed by 19<sup>th</sup> Century wartime reporters where the most crucial information to their reported stories was delivered first.

Kohut, Andrew, Michael Remez, et al. "Internet Overtakes Newspapers as News Outlet," PEW Research Center News Release, 2008. Accessed October 15, 2011.

<http://www.people-press.org/files/legacy-pdf/479.pdf>

The Press Research Center Article about the new trend in retrieving the news.

Man Made Music: A Joel Becker Company, accessed October 22, 2011.

<http://www.manmademusic.com>

Music (including news broadcast tracks) produced with the philosophy is that great music has one core, unshakable goal: making strong emotional connections with the audience.

Philly.com - Video, "Video games make kids future CEOs?" Last modified Wed, Jun 23, 2010. Accessed December 12, 2011.

[http://www.philly.com/philly/entertainment/video\\_games/062310\\_video\\_game\\_ceos.html](http://www.philly.com/philly/entertainment/video_games/062310_video_game_ceos.html).

Postman, Neil and Steven Powers. *How to Watch TV News* (New York: Penguin, 1992).

A detailed account of how television news is gathered, created, and delivered to

the viewers.

Prillaman, Barbara. "Conversations to Help Make Meaning: ELLs and Literature Circles," Proficient Reading Strategies, Executive Position Paper, University of Delaware (2008): 52-54. Accessed October 29, 2011, <http://www.docstoc.com/docs/46995844/Conversations-to-help-make-meaning--ELLs-and-literature-circles>

An excellent resource on the use of Proficient Reading Strategies and Literature Circles in the ELL classroom.

Ranker: Music By James Horner: Films Composed by James Horner, accessed October 22, 2011. <http://www.ranker.com/list/james-horner-movie-soundtracks-and-film-scores/reference>

This website explores examples of music by James Horner that are being used as an integral part of a television news broadcast.

Rothenberg, Carol and Douglas Fisher. "Teaching English Language Learners: A Differentiated Approach," (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Pearson, 2007)

This book models a strategy for teaching English language learners.

"School Facing Learning Crisis Spawned by Internet," Pierson Publishing Company's PRWeb, posted January 28, 2011. Accessed October 29, 2011.

<http://www.prweb.com/releases/2011/01/prweb5010934.htm>

This article delves into research findings advocating for the need online literacy skills for the new generation students learning online.

"State of the News Media 2011, The: An Annual Report on American Journalism," The Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism, Published March 14, 2011. Accessed October 29, 2011. <http://stateofthemedias.org/>

A report presenting data and statistics in the American journalism, including essays, glossaries, data interpretation, and special reports.

"Terms of Use: Description of FOX News Services and Acceptance of Terms of Use," Fox News Corporation. Accessed October 15, 2011.

<http://www.foxnews.com/about/terms-of-use/>

A description of Fox News Services terms of use, including their mantra "Fair and Balanced."

Thompson, Max and Julia Thompson. "Connecting Extending Thinking; The Learning Focused Strategies Part 3," (North Carolina: Learning Concepts, Inc., 2004).

A training manual designed to assist teachers in using exemplary practices to increase learning and achievement.

U.C. Berkley, "Evaluating Web Pages: Techniques to Apply & Questions to Ask." Last updated September 20, 2011. Accessed October 29, 2011.

<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/Evaluate.html>

A description of combines two techniques into a process that evaluates one's search results from a search engine or other source.

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Cronkite, Walter Cronkite. "How to Read a Newspaper," Accessed October 15, 2011.

[http://www.santafenewmexican.com/www/nie/Instructional\\_Resources/NIE-Misc/HowToReadaNewspaper.doc](http://www.santafenewmexican.com/www/nie/Instructional_Resources/NIE-Misc/HowToReadaNewspaper.doc)

Useful steps on how to read newspapers by renowned television anchor Walter Cronkite.

Discovery Fit & Health, "Pregnant Man." Accessed December 12, 2011.

<http://health.discovery.com/tv/pregnant-man/pregnant-man.html>

Website for supposed TV show featuring an exclusive documentary of Thomas Beatie – history's first pregnant man.

"Help Save the Endangered Pacific Northwest Tree Octopus," Updated October 20, 2011.

Accessed October 29, 2011. <http://zapatopi.net/treeoctopus/>

An Internet hoax website that provides detailed information about a creature that does not exist.

Huet, Natalie of Reuters. Yahoo News, "Blind French Eaterie Seeks to Conquer New York." Last modified December 2, 2011. Accessed December 12, 2011.

<http://news.yahoo.com/blind-french-eaterie-seeks-conquer-york-172522544.html>.

Internet story that relates how a thriving and profitable company where 50 percent of staff are very heavily handicapped uses visually impaired waiters to guide patrons past heavy black curtains into a pitch-dark dining room where they are served a surprise two or three-course menu.

Knight, Matthew. CNN Tech, "Glowing Bacteria Could Power 'Bio-light'." Last modified updated 10:06 AM EST, Sat December 3, 2011. Accessed December 12, 2011.

<http://www.cnn.com/2011/12/03/tech/innovation/bio-light-eco-system/index.html>

This website explains a "sci-fi type" living light bulb where bioluminescent bacteria produce a green glow when fed methane gas.

MC Marketing Charts, "Ad Inserts Capture Consumers' Attention," February 12, 2008.

Accessed October 22, 2011. <http://www.marketingcharts.com/print/ad-inserts-capture-consumers-attention-3420/>

Statistical information related to advertizing and consumers' interests.

News Manual, The: Journalism and Media Glossary. Accessed October 22, 2011.

<http://www.thenewsmanual.net/Resources/glossary.html>

An exhaustive list of terms used in journalism and media with definitions and examples.

News, The: The Process Behind the Presentation, "Newspaper: The History," Oracle ThinkQuest Education Foundation. Accessed October 29, 2011.

<http://library.thinkquest.org/18764/print/history.html>

An article about the history of newspapers with links to well-known newspaper sites, a glossary of terms, and a virtual tour of the process behind the presentation.

Philly.com - Video, "Video games make kids future CEOs?" Last modified Wed, Jun 23, 2010. Accessed December 12, 2011.

[http://www.philly.com/philly/entertainment/video\\_games/062310\\_video\\_game\\_ceos.html](http://www.philly.com/philly/entertainment/video_games/062310_video_game_ceos.html).

Web video explanation of how the "Gamer Generation" says that playing video games as a kid helped them become a great CEO.

"Sokoblovsky Farms: Russia's Finest Purveyors of Petite Lap Giraffes." Accessed October 29, 2011. <http://www.petitelapgiraffe.com/>

Another Internet hoax website that provides detailed information about a creature that does not exist.

Wolchover, Natalie. Fox News Air & Space - Scitech, "Nevada Hunter Captures 'UFO' on Camera." Last modified December 05, 2011. Accessed December 12, 2011.

<http://www.foxnews.com/scitech/2011/12/05/nevada-hunter-captures-ufo-on-camera/>

Internet story of a Nevada hunter who had an "alien spacecraft" virtually land on top of him.

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#### NOTES:

<sup>1</sup> Andrew Kohut, Michael Remez, et al., "Internet Overtakes Newspapers as News Outlet."

<sup>2</sup> Walter Cronkite, "How to Read a Newspaper."

<sup>3</sup> Neil Postman and Steven Powers, How to Watch TV News, 3.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>5</sup> "Terms of Use: Description of FOX News Services and Acceptance of Terms of Use."

<sup>6</sup> Postman and Powers, How to Watch TV News, 31.

<sup>7</sup> Ranker: Music By James Horner: Films Composed by James Horner .



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- <sup>8</sup> Man Made Music: A Joel Becker Company.
- <sup>9</sup> The News Manual: Journalism and Media Glossary.
- <sup>10</sup> Postman and Powers, *How to Watch TV News*, 67.
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, 115
- <sup>12</sup> *The News: The Process Behind the Presentation*.
- <sup>13</sup> "A Daily Miracle: A Student Guide to Journalism and the Newspaper Business (2007)."
- <sup>14</sup> MC Marketing Charts, "Ad Inserts Capture Consumers' Attention."
- <sup>15</sup> Sharon Beverly, Pamela Cornelison & Sheila E. Quall, "Goal: Read A Newspaper."
- <sup>16</sup> "The Inverted Pyramid," *Daily Writing Tips*.
- <sup>17</sup> Cronkite, "How to Read a Newspaper."
- <sup>18</sup> Barbara Prillaman, "Conversations to Help Make Meaning: ELLs and Literature Circles," 52-54.
- <sup>19</sup> "The State of the News Media 2011: An Annual Report on American Journalism."
- <sup>20</sup> Postman and Powers, "How to watch TV News," 14.
- <sup>21</sup> "School Facing Learning Crisis Spawned by Internet."
- <sup>22</sup> "Help Save the Endangered Pacific Northwest Tree Octopus."
- <sup>23</sup> "Sokoblovsky Farms: Russia's Finest Purveyors of Petite Lap Giraffes."
- <sup>24</sup> Benjamin Bloom and David R. Krathwohl, "Taxonomy of Educational Objectives."
- <sup>25</sup> Mary Ann Fitzgerald, "Evaluating Information: An Information Literacy Challenge."
- <sup>26</sup> *Ibid*.
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid*.
- <sup>28</sup> Max Thompson and Julia Thompson, "Connecting Extending Thinking."
- <sup>29</sup> Barbara Prillaman, "Conversations to Help Make Meaning: ELLs and Literature Circles."
- <sup>30</sup> Max Thompson and Julia Thompson, "Connecting Extending Thinking," 56.
- <sup>31</sup> Carol Rothenberg and Douglas Fisher, "Teaching English Language Learners: A Differentiated Approach, 35.
- <sup>32</sup> *The News: The Process Behind the Presentation*, "Newspaper: The History.
- <sup>33</sup> "Help Save the Endangered Pacific Northwest Tree Octopus."
- <sup>34</sup> Max Thompson and Julia Thompson, "Connecting Extending Thinking; The Learning Focused Strategies Part 3," 227.
- <sup>35</sup> U.C. Berkley: Evaluating Web Pages.
- <sup>36</sup> Knight, "Glowing Bacteria Could Power 'Bio-light'."
- <sup>37</sup> *Discovery Fit & Health*, "Pregnant Man."
- <sup>38</sup> Wolchover, "Nevada Hunter Captures 'UFO' on Camera."
- <sup>39</sup> Huet, "Blind French Eaterie Seeks to Conquer New York."
- <sup>40</sup> "Sokoblovsky Farms: Russia's Finest Purveyors of Petite Lap Giraffes."
- <sup>41</sup> Philly.com - Video, "Video games make kids future CEOs?"
- <sup>42</sup> "Help Save the Endangered Pacific Northwest Tree Octopus."

**Key Learning:** Reflective learners refer to and analyze multiple sources of information in order to gain a deeper understanding of an issue.



**Unit Essential Question:** How does analyzing the news presented in various media help me create a clearer picture of current events?



<u>Concept:</u>	<u>Concept:</u>	<u>Concept:</u>	<u>Concept:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ News</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Television News</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ News through the Newspapers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Internet News</li> </ul>



<u>Lesson Essential Questions:</u>	<u>Lesson Essential Questions:</u>	<u>Lesson Essential Questions:</u>	<u>Lesson Essential Questions:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What is news?</li> <li>▪ What determines which events make the news?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How does analyzing the components of a news broadcast help me make informed decisions about current events?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What is the structure of a newspaper?</li> <li>▪ How does understanding the structure of a newspaper help me interpret the news?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How does analyzing the validity of sources help me identify the most accurate information?</li> </ul>



<u>Vocabulary:</u>	<u>Vocabulary:</u>	<u>Vocabulary:</u>	<u>Vocabulary:</u>
news select determine television newspaper the Internet sensational breaking news	lead-in, theme, “get”, line-up, pseudo family, anchor, sportscaster, meteorologist, expert, reporter, mule, big foot, bird, donut, director, producer, editor	the front page, briefs, index, news article, headline, dateline, editorial, features, sports section, editor, opinion/perspective pieces, advertizing, classified, display ads, ad inserts, advertorial, display ads, comic strip,	validity accurate scan URL indicators quality information link