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UNIT 3: IN THE REAL WORLD

Unit Overview

People often ask, “Why is there so much bad news in the newspaper?” This unit provides an explanation. Students learn about the basic functions of journalism in American society.

They use a newspaper to find different types of stories based on different news judgments. They discover that the people who create TV news and newspapers make choices about what to include and what to leave out using specific reasoning and criteria. They practice the skills of editing a paragraph for accuracy, spelling, and punctuation.

Students rewrite real newspaper stories to be read aloud using a microphone or public address system, learning how to use their voices to communicate effectively on the radio.

The “essential questions” of this unit are:

- **What is journalism?**
- **How does a TV news or newspaper editor decide what types of stories to include?**
- **Why is accuracy so important for TV news and newspapers?**
- **What are the similarities and differences between TV news, radio news, and print news?**



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UNIT 3: IN THE REAL WORLD

Learn about the purpose of journalism and discover how journalists decide what gets on TV news or in a newspaper. Rewrite news for a radio or TV broadcast and perform it.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

3.1 In the Real Word

Strengthen reading comprehension and vocabulary by learning about journalism.

3.2 Fix It Up!

Edit news paragraphs for grammar and mechanics.

3.3 What's Got News Value?

Use a newspaper to find stories based on five different news judgments.

3.4 In the Newsroom: From 10 to 3

Select from ten different possible news stories the three to go in a TV news bulletin.

PRODUCTION ACTIVITY

You Be the Journalist!

Select print news stories and write a brief report for TV news. Read them on video as if you were a TV reporter.

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UNIT 3: IN THE REAL WORLD

CONNECTIONS TO MARYLAND STATE CONTENT STANDARDS

The *Assignment: Media Literacy* curriculum has been designed to align with Maryland State Content Standards. Many of the activities and lessons are modeled upon the structure and format used in the MSPAP tests for language arts and social studies.

For each unit, the Grade 3 standards are listed first for each subject area, followed by the Grade 5 standards. The numbers at the end of each line refer to specific instructional goals identified in the Maryland Content Standards.

Use the chart below to identify the specific instructional objectives developed in each unit of the program.

ELEMENTARY LANGUAGE ARTS

Grade 3 Content Standards

1.3.1	Concepts of Print and Structural Features of Text (#5)
1.3.5	Comprehension and Interpretation of Informational Text (all)
1.3.6	Evaluation of Informational Text (all)
1.3.7	Reading Fluency (all)
2.3.2	Comprehension, Interpretation, and Analysis of Text (all)
3.3.1	Organization and Focus (all)
3.3.3.	Revision and Evaluation of Writing (all)
3.3.6	Informational Writing (all)
4.3.1	Acquisition and Application on New Vocabulary (#2,3,4)
4.3.2	Comprehension and Application of Standard English Language Conventions (all)
5.3.1	Active Listening Strategies (all)
5.3.2	Comprehension and Analysis (all)
6.3.1	Organization and Delivery Strategies (all)
6.3.2	Oral Presentations (all)
6.3.3	Evaluation of Oral Presentations (all)

ELEMENTARY SOCIAL STUDIES

Grade 3 Content Standards

1.3.9	Identify and summarize different viewpoints on a single issue.
1.3.10	Distinguish fact from fiction by comparing documentary sources on historical figures with fictionalized characters and events.

ELEMENTARY LANGUAGE ARTS**Grade 5 Content Standards**

1.5.1	Concepts of Print and Structural Features of Text (#5)
1.5.5	Comprehension and Interpretation of Informational Text (all)
1.5.6	Evaluation of Informational Text (all)
1.5.7	Reading Fluency (all)
2.5.1	Characteristics of Literary Genre (#2)
2.5.2	Comprehension, Interpretation, and Analysis of Text (all)
3.5.1	Organization and Focus (all)
3.5.3	Revision and Evaluation of Writing (all)
3.5.6	Informational Writing (all)
4.5.1	Acquisition and Application on New Vocabulary (#2,3,4)
4.5.2	Comprehension and Application of Standard English Language Conventions (all)
5.5.1	Active Listening Strategies (all)
5.5.2	Comprehension and Analysis (all)
6.5.1	Organization and Delivery Strategies (all)
6.5.2	Oral Presentations (all)
6.5.3	Evaluation of Oral Presentations (all)

ELEMENTARY SOCIAL STUDIES**Grade 5 Content Standards**

1.5.7	Describe the difference between primary and secondary source documents and the relationships between them, distinguishing among facts, supported inferences, and opinions.
1.5.11	Develop effective questions to acquire information about people, events, civilizations, and other social studies concepts.
7.5.1	Identify various sources of information that are available to citizens to make political decisions.
8.5.2	Explain the importance of civic participation as a citizen of Maryland and the United States.

ELEMENTARY THEATRE**Content Standards**

Outcome III	Creative Expression and Production: Expectation A, Indicators 1, 3; Expectation B, Indicators 1, 2, 4.
Outcome IV	Aesthetic Criticism: Expectation A, Indicators 1, 2, 3.



TEACHER NOTES

UNIT 3 | ACTIVITY 3.1 | IN THE REAL WORLD

This activity introduces students to the work of TV and print journalists and provides a critical reading opportunity, inviting students to make inferences and use a dictionary to look up the meanings of words.

Getting Started

Use the video segment to introduce this activity. Before viewing, ask students whether they watch TV news. Invite students to share stories of times when they were younger when they may have watched something scary or disturbing on TV news.

After viewing, ask students why grownups like to watch the news or read a newspaper. Write down students' answers on chart paper.

Explain, "Sometimes people wonder why they put some information on TV news, but leave out other information. This reading will explain how journalists decide what gets in the news."

Pass out one copy of Activity Sheet 3.1 to each pair of students. You may want to let students select partners or you may want to assign students of different reading abilities to be partners for this activity.

After they are paired up, ask children to take turns reading paragraphs aloud to each other. Students take turns being "reader" and "listener."

Ask students to write short answers to the two questions on the activity sheet by reviewing the reading, working together, and discussing the answers before writing.

Invite students to complete the extra credit activity by looking up the six vocabulary words in a dictionary. Review students' answers and practice these words by asking students to make up sentences for each word.

Answers:

1. **To broadcast “live,” what kind of machine or technology is needed?** A satellite is used to relay pictures instantly.

2. **Why does TV present only fifteen stories when a newspaper may have 100 news stories?** Inference required: TV news is limited to only a short period of time each day. Newspapers cover more stories because they use paper to communicate, which provides more space for longer stories than TV news.

Vocabulary Words

witness

verb: to see, to perceive

compete

verb: to try to win or gain something wanted by others

distribute

verb: to give some of to each; to divide and give out in shares

bulletin

noun: a short statement of news; a statement to inform the public, especially by an authority

relay

verb: to take and carry and send farther

instantly

adverb: at once; immediately

Extension

Ask students to look up the word “journalism” in the encyclopedia and find three additional facts not presented in this reading.

UNIT 3 | ACTIVITY 3.1

IN THE REAL WORLD



Journalists inform people about events that happen each day. They report on what happens in neighborhoods, in cities, in the nation, and around the world. We depend on journalists to get information about events we cannot witness directly ourselves.

Every day, journalists gather, write, and videotape material for thousands of news stories. But only a few of these stories will appear in a newspaper, newsmagazine, or radio or television report. Newspapers cover more stories than any of the other news media. In a large newspaper, there may be more than 100 stories each day.

But newspapers cannot compete with radio and TV to be first to report the news. Radio and TV stations can interrupt a program at any time to broadcast a news bulletin. A newspaper must be printed and distributed before it can bring a story to the public.

Television news is the main source of information for about 60% of all adult Americans. It brings the sights and sounds of the day's major events, as decided by the news staff, into our living rooms. Some news is taped in advance, while some news stories are broadcast "live" using a satellite to relay pictures instantly. Because of time limitations, only about fifteen news stories appear on the national network news each day. The visuals (pictures) of TV news help viewers understand a story. Even so, some stories are more complicated and not easily explained with just visuals.

1. To broadcast "live," what kind of machine or technology is needed?

2. Why does TV news present only fifteen news stories when a newspaper may have 100 news stories?

CHALLENGE: Look up the underlined words and write the dictionary definitions on the back of this page.



TEACHER NOTES

UNIT 3 | ACTIVITY 3.2 | FIX IT UP!

This activity provides a chance to practice editing with examples from actual news articles.

Getting Started

This activity is ideal for providing practice in identifying spelling and punctuation problems. You may want to have students work individually on this activity or in pairs.

You can invite students to “be the editor” and fix the errors in these news stories. You may want to inform students that in any news story we read in a newspaper or see on TV news, at least three people have reviewed it before publication. Checking to see that the information is accurate is an important job in journalism.

Answers:

State Police **inn** Maine have turned **toø** a national television show for help in finding a man suspected **off** murdering a woman in her apartment. Gloria C. Fredon, 59, was found **stabbed too** death on March 21. **Detectives** sent out a **packet** of **information** about the **murder** to the producers of FOX-TV's *America's **Most Wanted*** on Thursday. State Police have **found** fugitives **with** help from *America's Most Wanted* in the past.

A **74-year-old** man has died of smoke inhalation in a fire that **swept through** his home. Richard Bolton was found unconscious **inn** a second-floor bedroom **after** the fire **broke** out at 1 p.m. **Wednesday**. **Firefighters were** unable **toø** revive him and he was pronounced dead at **Memorial Hospital**. Authorities said the fire appeared to be accidental. John Davis, the owner **off** the apartment house, said the home's smoke detectors were up-**to-date**.

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

UNIT 3 | ACTIVITY 3.2

FIX IT UP!



Pretend that you are the editor of a newspaper. Edit the news paragraph below to correct the errors.

State Police inn Maine have turned too a national television show for help in finding a man suspected off murdering a woman in her apartment. Gloria C. Fredon, 59, was found stabled too death on March 21. Detctives sent out a packit of informtion about the murdor to the producers of FOX-TVs *Americas Must Wanted* on Thursday. State Police have fund fugitives wit help from *America's Most Wanted* in the past.

Did you find all 14 errors?

FIX IT UP!

Pretend that you are the editor of a newspaper. Edit the news paragraph below to correct the errors.

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Did you find all 15 errors?



TEACHER NOTES

UNIT 3 | ACTIVITY 3.3 | WHAT'S GOT NEWS VALUE?

This activity helps children understand what kinds of information are included in a TV newscast or newspaper by introducing students to five different criteria used by editors to select what's newsworthy.

Using Newspapers in Elementary Classes

This activity is ideal for using as part of a “getting acquainted with newspapers” activity. For many students, using a newspaper will be an exciting change of pace, since many students may not get exposure to newspaper reading at home.

Contact your local newspaper and ask to speak to the NIE (Newspapers in Education) representative. He or she can often deliver to the school inexpensive (or free) copies of newspapers for you to use to complete this activity.

If you cannot get multiple copies of a single current newspaper, you can also complete this activity with old newspapers from different days. You need enough newspapers so that each child has a section.

Getting Started

Explain to children that **news editors** are the people who decide what information to put in the newspaper or on TV news. News editors don't just put anything they like in the newspaper—they select news that falls into clear categories, like the five categories presented on the activity sheet. These categories are based on the work of Herbert Gans, author of *Deciding What's News*.

Break students into five teams and assign each team one of the News Values listed on the activity sheet. You may want to read these short descriptions aloud to students. Ask children to circle the News Value they have been assigned to help them remember it.

Make sure each child on the team has a newspaper or at least a section of the newspaper to use for this activity.

Read the directions aloud to students and make sure they understand the task: to find an example of a news story that fits into the category they have been assigned.

Working in Teams Under a Deadline

Give students a limited time period to complete this activity—at least fifteen minutes. News editors work under deadline pressure. Write the word **deadline** on chart paper or the blackboard and explain that deadlines are limits on the amount of time needed to complete a task, and that in journalism, deadlines are very important.

Monitor students' work as they flip through the newspaper to make sure they stay on task. Encourage children to use the headline and photos to decide if the news story might fit the category they have been assigned.

Remind students about the deadline periodically and give them a ten-minute warning, a five-minute warning, and a one-minute warning to find a news story and read the first two paragraphs.

Sharing the Findings

Ask children to share the news stories they found for each of the five categories, starting with News Value #1, Close to Home.

Depending on the reading levels of your students, you may want students to read aloud the headlines and first two paragraphs and ask students to explain the story's main idea in their own words.

If a child has not selected an appropriate news story for the category, point out which other category that news story might fit in. Generally, all news stories will fit into at least one of these five categories.

You might point out to children that many news stories will fit in more than one category. Stories that fit into more than one category are often placed on page 1, given large headlines, or make use of a photo to attract the reader's attention.

UNIT 3 | ACTIVITY 3.3

WHAT'S GOT NEWS VALUE?

***Instructions:** Look through a newspaper and find an example of a news story that has one of the News Values listed below. After you have found the story, read the headlines and first two paragraphs and be prepared to share your choices with the class.*

NEWS VALUE #1

CLOSE TO HOME

Did the news event happen in our neighborhood? Are the people familiar to the readers or viewers? If the news relates to our local community, it is more likely to be selected by a news editor.



NEWS VALUE #2

JUST IN TIME

Did the news event happen just recently? Will readers or viewers learn about this event first in your newspaper or TV show? If the news happened just a few minutes or hours ago, it is more likely to be selected by a news editor.

NEWS VALUE #3

DECISIONS, DECISIONS

Does the news story help readers or viewers spend their money more wisely or choose healthy foods to eat? Does the news story help them decide the best candidate to vote for in the upcoming election? If the news story helps people make informed decisions, it is more likely to be selected by a news editor.

NEWS VALUE #4

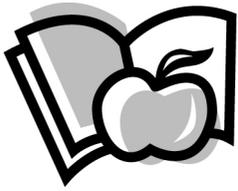
CRIME, TRAGEDY, AND BAD NEWS

Does the news story tell about a horrible crime that has been committed? Does it report on the most recent efforts by police to solve the crime? If the news story tells about a crime or some other bad news, it is more likely to be selected by a news editor.

NEWS VALUE #5

JUST FOR FUN

Does this story tell about the results of last night's game? Report on the life of an interesting person in our community? Does it relate an unusual or surprising event? If the news story provides information that people find pleasing or interesting, it is more likely to be selected by a news editor.



TEACHER NOTES

UNIT 3 | ACTIVITY 3.4 | IN THE NEWSROOM: FROM 9 TO 3

This activity provides an opportunity for collaborative learning and critical thinking by involving students in selecting three news stories to publish from nine possible news stories.

Background

This activity is designed as a follow-up activity to further explore the concept of news values, which was first explored in Activity 3.3. If you haven't done so already, introduce the five News Values shown using the Activity 3.3 handout. Make sure students understand the concepts. Review the role of the news editor, the person who selects the most newsworthy events to publish in the newspaper or report on TV news.

Getting Started

Children should work with a partner or in a small group (of no more than three) for this activity.

Explain to children that news editors make important decisions about what we see on TV news and what we read in newspapers. Children can practice these skills in the classroom with this activity.

As news editors, students will need to select three of the nine news stories shown on the activity sheet. Each group of students should be assigned to use one of the five news values used in Activity 3.3. You should assign each group one of these news values. They are:

#1 Close to Home

News that happened in our neighborhood

#2 Just in Time

News that happened recently

#3 Decisions, Decisions

News that helps people make informed decisions

#4 Crime, Tragedy, and Bad News

News of natural disasters, crime, or solving crime

#5 Just for Fun

News that people find pleasing, unusual, or interesting

Making the Decisions

Read over the instructions with students and make sure children understand the goal. Students are to read the news stories and select three that fit their news value and seem most important.

Give students a deadline. Ask them to share the choices they made.

In this activity, it's important for students to discuss the discovery of finding that different teams made different choices of the three news stories.

You may want to point out that this activity explains why we see different news on different TV stations. Different TV news shows select news stories to report based on news values. That's why the local TV news is different from the national TV news, which is different from other news programs like *20/20* or *60 Minutes*. The local newspaper and the big city newspaper are different because the news editors are using different criteria in selecting what is news.

The important concept to leave in children's minds is that people are making decisions about what we see on the news.

Ask students to review the news stories and ask which three they would be most interested in reading about. You might point out that no one reads all the stories in a newspaper—so when you choose which stories to read, you're being a news editor yourself!

UNIT 3 | ACTIVITY 3.4

IN THE NEWSROOM: FROM 9 TO 3

Instructions: You have been hired to be the news editor for the “HEADLINE NEWS,” a one-minute local TV news show that presents a review of the day’s news. Read the news stories below and decide which three stories you will present to your readers. Be sure to use one or more of the NEWS VALUES to make your decision.



1. Tom Bowden, much-beloved coach at Woodlawn High School, retires after 50 years of leading local teams to victory.
2. Leonia Smith, a candidate for the mayoral election, appeared here at Central High School yesterday to talk about her plan to improve school buildings throughout the city.
3. Brian Harrington’s sliding catch in the end zone lifted the Redskins to a 20–17 victory yesterday. It was his first appearance since his car accident in February.
4. This morning, when police arrived at the scene, Muskara Johnson, age 21, was found shot to death in his car at the intersection of 2nd and Central Avenue.
5. Yesterday, the National Football League suspended Pittsburgh player Gino Odeon for throwing a punch at Baltimore player Jerry Leadringer.
6. The Shelter for Homeless Pets reports that a family has come in to adopt an unusual combination of animals—three dogs, five kittens, two canaries, and five guinea pigs. “We just thought the children should have pets,” said Mrs. Thibodeau, mother of 12 children ages 4 to 21.
7. Yesterday, more than 1,000 people attended the funeral of Jason Green, a Baltimore County sheriff’s deputy who was killed in the line of duty last week.
8. Joanne Feingold doesn’t have diabetes, but she’s one of 300 people involved in a medical research experiment on a new drug that may reduce the risk of people who are at high risk for the disease.
9. The Internet auction site eBay is auctioning off an unusual item: a 9,000-year-old mastodon skeleton with an asking price of \$5.5 million.



TEACHER NOTES



UNIT 3

YOU BE THE JOURNALIST!

Select a print news story from your local newspaper and write a twenty-second news bulletin report. Read these on video, on audiotape, or over the public address system as if you were a TV or radio reporter.

Background

This activity provides students with the opportunity to practice writing and speaking skills in a real-world simulation activity.

Selecting a News Story

Play the videotape which shows a class of 4th graders completing this activity. Students should select a news story that will be interesting to the target audience—the students in the school. They should look for news stories in their local newspaper, or they may find news stories in a newsmagazine.

Review the Checklist

Read aloud the checklist provided so that students understand the sequence of events needed to complete this assignment.

Planning to Write

Tell students that professional announcers usually speak at a rate of 120 words per minute. You may want students to set up the math equation to figure out how many words can be spoken in twenty seconds.

120 words per minute
60 seconds in a minute
20-second presentation

$$\begin{aligned} &120 \text{ words} / 60 \text{ seconds} \\ &= 2 \text{ words per second} \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} &20 \text{ second presentation} \times \\ &2 \text{ words per second} = \\ &40 \text{ words total} \end{aligned}$$

Evaluation

Provide the evaluation rubric so that students can see how this assignment will be evaluated. You might want students to evaluate each other's work using this evaluation sheet or you might want to use this as an evaluation tool yourself.

Publishing Student Work on www.AssignmentMediaLit.com

See the Resources section on page 151 to learn how you or your students can send completed tapes or scripts to be published on the *Assignment: Media Literacy* website.

ASSIGNMENT



UNIT 3

YOU BE THE JOURNALIST!

- (**ASSIGNMENT:** *Select a print news story from your local newspaper and write a two-sentence news-bulletin report. Read these on video or over the public address system as if you were a TV or radio reporter.*

Your News Show: The Morning Messenger

This is a news bulletin produced for students in your school to help them learn about current events happening in the community, the nation, and the world.

Your Purpose:

Your goal is to inform students about important events happening in the news, but you also want to entertain them a little to get them interested in listening or watching your program.

Your Target Audience:

Students and teachers in your school will watch or listen to your broadcast. You'll need to appeal to both groups with the same message.

CHECKLIST TO COMPLETE THIS ACTIVITY:

Select an article and re-write it for a radio broadcast.

- First, read at least three articles from a local newspaper.
- Second, select one that is newsworthy for your audience.

- Then, read the article again—underline the most interesting information.
- Write two sentences about the report using WWWWWH format.

- Next, read the sentences aloud.
- Re-write the sentences to make them short and easy to read aloud.
- Practice making your voice dynamic and lively as you read aloud.
- Perform “live” in front of a microphone or TV camera.
- Finally, review your taped performance and discuss the strengths and weaknesses.

EVALUATION



production
ACTIVITY



UNIT 3

YOU BE THE JOURNALIST!

Student Name: _____

The news story is well chosen.

4	You've picked a story that is informative and something students will enjoy.
3	The story is informative but not too interesting to students.
2	The story might not interest many students.
1	You didn't think carefully about the purpose or target audience.

Sentences include main ideas.

4	You have included the "who, what, where, and when" parts of the news story.
3	You have included most of the "who, what, where, and when" parts of the news story.
2	You have left out many of the "who, what, where, and when" parts of the story.
1	You have not written the story in a way that listeners can understand the main ideas.

You have written your script using short sentences that sound like spoken language.

4	You have used short sentences and your writing sounds like someone who is talking.
3	You have used short sentences but your writing doesn't sound enough like talking.
2	Your sentences are too long but your writing sounds like someone who is talking.
1	Your sentences are too long and your writing doesn't sound like spoken language.

You read your script using a loud, fast-paced and energetic voice.

4	Your performance is loud enough, fast-paced, with good energy in your voice.
3	Your performance is not loud enough, but has good pace and energy.
2	Your performance is loud enough but is not fast-paced enough and lacks energy.
1	Your performance is not loud enough and needs a faster pace and more energy.

Comments:

Grade: