| Title | *Where Did You Hear That?* Becoming Critical Consumers of News Media |
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| Class | ELA, GLE 4–8 (Pre-ASE) |
| Time | 24 hours (four weeks at six hours per week) <br> *Note: lessons are for ~3 hrs/week, with the remaining time used for writing and editing* |
| Purpose | This unit aims to support students in becoming more discerning, critical consumers of news media in an age where information is produced in abundance, making it difficult to sort the accurate from the false, biased, and satirical. This unit will help equip adult learners with the analytical skills, knowledge, and awareness of bias (including their own) needed in order to more critically evaluate the plethora of information they encounter. |
| Goals and Outcomes | Students will read a variety of types of articles (authentic news, satire, and biased news), analyzing the techniques and persuasive strategies employed, in order to become more critical consumers of news media. They will demonstrate their learning by working in small groups to create a newsletter that incorporates the various styles of news articles studied. Please note that some familiarity with online research may be helpful for students. |
| Essential Questions to Guide the Unit | o What qualifies a piece of media as reliable news? <br><br> o What consequences follow from authors who mislead or deceive us? <br><br> o What biases and agendas may be at play in the media we consume? <br><br> o How do authors try to persuade us, and how can we be more discerning so as not to be misled? |
| Key Resources | The three lesson plans, with accompanying handouts and websites, are posted at https://www.sabes.org/content/ela-curriculum-unit-media-critical-consumers. Or, go to https://www.sabes.org, choose the ELA PD Center, choose Curriculum, and choose Curriculum Exemplars, Models, and Sources. <br><br> *A few key websites:* <br> 1. How False News Spreads (TED Ed video) [https://youtu.be/cSKGa_7XJkg] <br><br> 2. On the Media's News Consumer's Handbook, Fake News Edition [https://www.wnycstudios.org/story/breaking-news-consumer-handbook-fake-news-edition] <br><br> 3. The Sift [https://newslit.org/educators/sift/]: a weekly compilation of fake or misleading news stories and ideas of how to use them in class, hosted by the News Literacy Project <br><br> 4. Editorials/opinion pieces from Newsela.com and The Times in Plain English |

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| STANDARDS—Priority CCR-ELA Anchor Standards, level-specific | |
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| **Reading** | **R 4D**: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.<br><br>**R 5D**: Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.<br><br>**R 6D**: Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints;<br>Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose<br>(e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts). |
| **Writing** | **W 4C**: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.<br><br>**W 5C**: With guidance and support from peers and others, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.<br><br>**W 6C**: With some guidance and support, use technology, including the Internet to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others. |
| **Speaking & Listening** | **S&L 3C**: Summarize the points a speaker makes and explain how each claim is supported by reasons and evidence. |
| **Language** | **L 3D:** Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening:<br>    a. Vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.<br>    b. Maintain consistency in style and tone.<br>    c. Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy. |

| UNIT OBJECTIVES—for both content/topic and ELA skills |
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| **By the end of this unit, students will be able to:** |

➢ Distinguish between various types of media including authentic news, satire, and biased news

➢ Identify three primary authors' purposes (persuade, inform, entertain) in political news articles

➢ Identify common persuasive strategies used in news media, such as

  o appeal to emotion, use of facts/figures (logos),

  o use of experts,

  o appeal to popularity, and

  o anecdotal evidence and evaluate their efficacy and reliability

➢ Recognize common media biases (bias by omission, by language, by photo, by statistics, and by emphasis) and how they impact our view of the information we consume

➢ Recognize Confirmation Bias: that their own biases alter the way they evaluate information

➢ Understand and accurately use Tier 2 vocabulary when discussing news and information

➢ Recognize how author's purpose affects decisions related to text structure, content, and style

➢ Produce various types of writing found in media (news, satire, biased news) that also illustrate use of persuasive strategies

| LEARNING PLAN (suggested sequence of lessons and activities) | |
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| Three lesson plans are provided in this curriculum. We recommended using the time between provided lessons to review and edit the pieces of writing associated with each lesson. | |
| **Week 1 /** <br> Lesson 1 | **Introduction to News**—Authentic vs. unreliable, how false news spreads, strategies to spot false news, and satire. Produce an authentic and a satirical news article for newsletter. |
| **Week 2 /** <br> Lesson 2 | **Author's Purpose and Persuasive Strategies**—Author's purpose in media articles (persuade, inform, & entertain), common persuasive strategies in news and editorials. Create an editorial for newsletter. |
| **Week 3 /** <br> Lesson 3 | **Biases**—Common News Biases and Our Own: How confirmation bias and common news biases (bias by omission, by language, by emphasis, by photo, and by statistics) influence the way we consume information.  Create a short article for the newsletter using common biases. |
| **Week 4 /** <br> Lesson 4 | **Culmination**—Review. Find examples of previously studied article types and techniques in authentic news. Revise, format, and present newsletters. |

| KEY VOCABULARY (content and academic)  Additional vocabulary may be selected by teachers. | | |
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| Teachers can embed vocabulary instruction throughout using EBRI/STAR strategies.  ★ https://www.sabes.org/ebri ★ https://www.sabes.org/star ★ | | |
| *Lesson 1:* | *Lesson 2:* | *Lesson 3:* |
| Conspiracy | Editorial | Bias |
| Credible (Credibility) | Fact | Conservative |
| Reliable (Reliability) | Objective | Liberal |
| Satire | Opinion | Prejudice |
| Valid (Validity) | Subjective | Propaganda |

| ASSESSMENT | |
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| **Culminating Assessment**<br><br>*authentic performance task(s) that demonstrate student learning and integration of the knowledge and skills taught through the objectives* | Students will work in small groups to create a topical newsletter that illustrates the various types of articles and persuasive strategies found in news media that they have studied. At the end of each week, students will work on creating an article that corresponds to the objective of that week's lesson (e.g., the first week, they will create a satirical news article). The articles will be based on a topic that is relevant to students and salient in the news.<br><br>Each student group will dedicate their newsletter to a different topic (e.g., one group may choose immigration while another does gun laws). The topics will be developed in collaboration with the teacher and students.<br><br>The final lessons will be dedicated to revising the pieces they have worked on throughout the unit and putting those pieces together into a newsletter. Teachers can choose whether students produce the newsletter articles using a digital tool like Google Docs or handwritten ones that will be compiled into a booklet.<br><br>At the end of the unit, students will present their newsletters to the class. The other students will then test their knowledge by trying to identify the various types of news articles, persuasive strategies, and biases contained in the articles. |
| **How learning will be evaluated** | Checklists for each article type will be used by both students and teachers to assess whether the articles they produced meet their respective criteria. |
| **Other Evidence of Learning** | Student learning will be evaluated through their written work during class and through oral discussions. |