

1c

The World in 22 Minutes: Constructing a TV News Lineup

An important part of understanding the constructedness of media is recognizing that choices are made and that those choices can influence people and society. The decision of what to include and what to leave out is made all the time as media creators struggle to balance competing needs. By enacting the role of news producers and organizing a simple 22 minute TV newscast, students experience the process of making the critical choices about what gets aired and what is never seen.

Objectives: Students will be able to...

1. Experience the role of news editor.
2. Define factors that go into news judgments.
3. Explore the constructed nature of news media with a consciousness of the way subjective choices influence the news that gets reported.

Correlation With McRel National Standards:

Language Arts Standards and Benchmarks

- Grades 6–8: (S9/B2), (S10/B6)
- Grades 9–12: (S9/B11), (S10/B3)

Civics Standards and Benchmarks

- Grades 6–8: (S19/B3) (S19/B6)
- Grades 9–12: (S19/B6)

Materials/Preparation:

1. Several sets of the front pages of two different newspapers from the same date. (See Teaching Tip on p. 20) You will need enough copies of both newspapers so that each group of 4-6 students can have one copy each.
2. Copies of Handout 1C: “The World in 22 Minutes.” (You may alter the titles of the sample news stories if you wish to make the exercise more real to your own locality.)
3. Chart paper and markers.

Teaching Strategies:

I. Comparing Newspapers

- Distribute to each group of 4-6 students, a set of two front pages that appeared on the same day in two different newspapers. Have groups discuss and answer the following questions:
 - ? Compare *front pages*. Which stories are on both front pages? Which are only on one front page? What feelings or impressions do you get from the different front pages?
 - ? Compare *headlines* for the same story in the two papers. How do the headlines differ in tone and implication? How do the headlines influence the way one could read the story?
 - ? Compare *photographs* connected with the same story in the two newspapers. In what ways are the photos similar or different? What do the photos suggest about the story?
 - ? What are some ways you see that headlines and photographs affect interpretations of news stories?

II. Constructing the TV lineup

- Distribute handout 1C to each group plus a large piece of chart paper and markers.
- Each team will arrange a 22 minute news broadcast by evaluating the sample news stories, discussing their competing importance, strategically choosing which stories to include and which to leave out, and arranging them in order. Explain the “Rules of the TV News Game” and the competing needs of each rule.
- Each teams should print their list of stories large and post it on the wall for the whole class to see. One student from each team should present their team’s lineup, explaining why they selected certain stories and left others out.

III. Reflecting on Differences and Similarities

- Compare and contrast program lists posted on the walls.
 - ? What similarities and differences exist?
 - ? How do you feel about what you had to drop?
 - ? What were some of the hard decisions?
 - ? What insights does this give you about the news broadcasts that you watch everyday?



Teaching Tip: Front Pages from Around the World

Finding a variety of newspaper front pages is easy on the website of the Newseum, an interactive museum in Washington, D.C. devoted to the news and a free press. You can download front pages from over 400 newspapers in 47 countries; the “map view” helps you locate your own local newspaper as well as cities near and far. However, as smaller cities often focus on their local area news, check major city newspapers to find different treatments of the same national or international stories. Pages print out 8 1/2 x 11. <http://www.newseum.org/todaysfrontpages>