

ANG-5106-2 Current Events

Project two

News reporting: Objective or Subjective?



When we think about journalism and journalists, we may imagine that they are genuinely trying to find out the facts about issues and events and that they are completely objective or neutral. However, even though this is an accurate description of the work of many people in the news industry, many news sources have a particular bias, usually leaning toward one political vision of society or another. In Canada, this would usually be either Liberal or Conservative while in the United States, the division is generally Democratic versus Republican.

Furthermore, other powerful organizations such as religious groups may also put pressure on news sources to keep certain information from being revealed. In order to be an informed citizen, it is very important to observe how the news may be influenced by factors other than a desire by reporters to discover and reveal the pure facts.



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A) Watch a film about reporters and current events and take notes, using the rubric below. Discuss your observations and conclusions about the film with your partner or teacher.

- One suggestion is **All the Presidents Men** about the Watergate scandal, that led to the resignation of the President of the United States in 1974.
- Another film is **Spotlight** which deals with newspaper reports of a scandal in the Roman Catholic church in Boston.

| | |
|---|--|
| Name of film | |
| Summary of the film | |
| Setting (Time and place) | |
| Opening situation | |
| Main conflict | |
| Principle events | |
| Conclusion | |
| Message of the film | |
| What did you learn about journalism and journalists? | |

B) To complete this task, you can work alone or with a partner.



If you are working alone :

- Choose a recent news event. You may choose from various types of events: politics, environment, international, science, crime, etc...
- Find two articles about the same event, from two different sources. You should choose two news sources with different ideologies, such as the Toronto Star and the Toronto Sun in Canada or The New York Times and the New York Post in the United States.
*(*Since it is difficult to find two such articles, you may ask your teacher for the two articles that appear in the teacher's guide to ANG5106.)*
- Using a graphic organizer, form an outline and summary of each report and then compare the two reports.
- Using the notes in your rubric, discuss the differences (and similarities) in the two reports with your teacher.



If you are working with a partner :

- Together, choose a recent news story. You may choose various types of events: politics, environment, international, education, etc... Each partner is then responsible for finding a separate article about the same event. You and your partner should choose two news sources with different ideologies, such as the Toronto Star and the Toronto Sun in Canada or The New York Times and the New York Post in the United States.
- Using a graphic organizer, each of you should form an outline and summary of your article.
- Using the notes in your rubric, discuss the differences (and similarities) in the two reports with your partner. Then discuss the subject again with your teacher.

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| News source (newspaper, television station, etc...) | | |
| News Event | | |
| Title of report (and byline) | | |
| Introductory sentence (also called the lead/lede) | | |
| Summary of intro (5 w's- who, what, where, when, why and how) | | |
| Body of report (details of story- minimum 4 facts + 1 quote, if possible) | | |
| Conclusion | | |
| What differences did you observe in how each news source reported this event? | | |
| What conclusions can you make about the ideology or opinions of the readers of each news source? | | |

POSSIBLE NEWS SOURCES:

| LIBERAL (DEMOCRATIC) | |
|--|---|
| CBC news: http://www.cbc.ca/news  | Toronto Star: https://www.thestar.com/  |
| NPR: (American news site) https://www.npr.org/sections/news/  | BBC: (British news site) http://www.bbc.com/news  |
| New York Times : https://www.nytimes.com/  | |
| Alternative news sites: https://eluxemagazine.com/magazine/honest-news-sites/  | Reuters: (neutral international news site) https://www.reuters.com/  |
| CONSERVATIVE (REPUBLICAN) | |
| Toronto Sun http://torontosun.com/ | National Post : (Canadian newspaper) http://nationalpost.com/  |
| The Washington Times : (US newspaper) https://www.washingtontimes.com/  | The New York Post: (US newspaper) https://nypost.com/news/  |