

Lesson Plan: Differing News Reports (long) 3

Sharing our news articles and recapping the lesson (Part 3 of 3)

Subjects: Social Studies, History, Language Arts

Grade-level: Middle [6-8], High [9-12]

Time required: 45 minutes

Materials required: [Optional] Healthy snack and drinks

Related links: [Guampedia](#), [Pacific Daily News](#), [Guam Daily Post](#), [KUAM](#), [Pacific News Center](#)
[Stripes Guam](#)

Description

In this lesson, students will share their completed news reports about Guam history from opposing viewpoints. Students will then recap their work from the previous lessons, and discuss the importance of being critical media consumers.

Objectives/Skills

- Review content that has been covered previously in the course (or that is currently being studied).
- Experience, first hand, the possibility for skewing factual information through a self-written historical news report.
- Understand the importance of critically engaging with news.

Questions or Assessment

- Were students able to add additional researched information to their news reports?
- Were students able to identify the manner by which factual information can be presented in a biased manner?
- Do students recognize the possibility for bias and interpretation in news reports, including contemporary events?
- Do students appear aware of the need to more critically analyze the information around them?

Procedure

Teacher prep

Healthy snacks and drinks. [Optional]

Recap (3 minutes)

1. Review the activities of the previous two lessons in order to convey to students that the lesson series has worked toward an increasingly nuanced understanding of critical media consumption, culminating with today's sharing activity. In other words, explain to students that the first day introduced the concept of critical news consumption, the second day the class participated in creating their own versions of news reports, and that today they are sharing their different reports and discussing the implications of acknowledging different sides to historical and contemporary news report.
2. Ask students if they had any difficulty completing their homework assignment.
 - Were they able to find resources or additional information to include in their news reports?
 - Where did they get this information?
 - Were they able to use different sources, such as newspapers, Guampedia, textbooks, family members, and teachers? (Depending on the content matter you've chosen for the class exercise, not all of these resources will be applicable)

Sharing (20 minutes)

1. Seat students into small groups; each group should have equal numbers of reporters from each of the two sides of the topic.
2. Share healthy snacks and drinks with the class. [Optional]
3. Have students share their reports with the group, alternating between viewpoints.
 - Remind students not to make negative comments about any of the reports.
 - Walk around the class and make certain students stay on task. It may help to provide a specific time limit; for example, have each student share for 3 minutes, and then move onto the next report. If students finish before the 3 minutes, they are to briefly discuss the challenges to may or may not have encountered in formulating their report
 - [For advanced students] Encourage students to take notes on things that stuck out to them. Patterns, general concepts, interesting/surprising interpretations or juxtapositions, etc.

Discussion on Findings (12 minutes)

1. Ask students to consider the two different viewpoints taken in writing the news reports, and have them share common points shared between the two sides. List these points on the board.
2. Now ask students to identify differing points between the two sides. List these points on the board.
3. If students are familiar with the concept, identify among the previous points examples of objective and subjective statements. Convey to students, through either discussion or explication, that statements can be technically objective, but juxtaposed or presented in a slanted manner. [If students are unfamiliar with the concept, you may use this opportunity to teach it to them, or you may skip over it; the lesson does not require it]
4. Lead a discussion on how these same factual events can be portrayed in such different lights. Emphasize that the content of these reports are all technically factual, but the manner of presentation can color the interpretation.
5. Have students share their thoughts about hearing a news report written from a different viewpoint than they personally used.

Discussion on Application (8 minutes)

Have students explain how today's lesson can be applied when reading old news articles.

- Guide students to briefly discuss the importance of understanding an author's point of view, and that even news articles can be biased.
- Ask students how the understanding of authorship can be applied when reading current events. Prompt students for specific examples.
- Students will likely repeat their responses from the previous question. It is important to encourage students to draw connections between the lesson and contemporary events affecting their lives.
- Examples of new topics include: military buildup, elections, political news, or even game recaps of favorite sports teams.

Recap (2 minutes)

Recap what we've done and learned in the lesson:

For advanced students: "Over the last three class periods, we've learned about the importance of understanding an author's point of view. We all have viewpoints or biases, though it's sometimes hard to identify them; the same applies to news articles. While news reporters attempt their best at remaining neutral, it is impossible for anyone to remain completely dispassionate (or, in other words, unbiased). For this reason, it is important to always consider the viewpoint of the author when reading a news article. Even if it's difficult to know what the author is thinking or feeling, we can look for clues, including the subjective comments (comments that are opinions) or the type of information that is being published (or not published). This exercise was just an introduction into the range of ways an historical event may be portrayed. Hopefully this will aid you in becoming more aware and critical media consumers."

For younger students: "Over the last three class periods, we learned how the same event can be portrayed in different ways. Half of you were reporters for [name side], while the other half were reporters for [name side]. You both had the same information, but your news articles were very different in tone. By doing this exercise, we've learned how different news articles can be, and we've learned that it's important to always be aware of the tone of a news article."

Ask students for their favorite parts of the activity.