

# Defining and Writing Effective Editorials or Op-eds

Content Area: **ELA**  
Course(s): **Introduction to Journalism**  
Time Period: **Marking Period 1**  
Length: **2 Weeks**  
Status: **Published**

## Course Pacing Guide

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Introduction to Journalism introduces students to the history of journalism, ethical responsibilities of journalists, types of stories journalists write, challenges journalists encounter, and the role journalism has played in affecting social change.

Unit	MP	Weeks
History of Journalism	1	1
News Stories	1	2
Op-ed/Editorial	1	2
Features & Sports	1	2
Photos& Headlines	1	1
Print Publication Project	1-2	3
Broadcast Media	2	1
Podcasts & Blogs	2	1
21st Century Media Projects & Presentations	2	2
Film and Journalism	2	1

## Unit Overview

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Students will understand the fundamental structure of an effective editorial or op-ed article (both opinion-based stories).

Students will explain the importance of educating the reader about the topic in order to make a more effective argument.

Students will explain the importance of acknowledging counterarguments and refuting them.

Students will write their own op-ed and submit it for possible publication in *The Bulldawg Bulletin*.

## Enduring Understandings

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- Students will understand the importance of objectivity in news stories.
- Students will understand the value of incorporating primary sources, first-hand interviews, and research in a news story.
- Students will understand the value of responsible and persistent journalists in contributing to a well-informed society that hold those in power accountable.

## Essential Questions

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Why is journalism especially important in today's world?

How has journalism affected social change?

What are the ethical responsibilities of journalists and publications?

How can the field of journalism adapt to the challenges it faces in the 21st Century?

## New Jersey Student Learning Standards (No CCS)

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LA.W.9-10.1.B	Develop claim(s) and counterclaims avoiding common logical fallacies, propaganda devices, and using sound reasoning, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns.
LA.W.9-10.1.D	Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
LA.W.9-10.7	Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of

the subject under investigation.

LA.W.9-10.8

Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation (MLA or APA Style Manuals).

LA.W.9-10.10

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

## **Amistad Integration**

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SJ.DI.9-12.8

I respectfully express curiosity about the history and lived experiences of others and exchange ideas and beliefs in an open-minded way.

SJ.JU.9-12.12

I can recognize, describe and distinguish unfairness and injustice at different levels of society.

## **Holocaust/Genocide Education**

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SJ.AC.9-12.16

I express empathy when people are excluded or mistreated because of their identities and concern when I personally experience bias.

SJ.AC.9-12.17

I take responsibility for standing up to exclusion, prejudice and injustice.

SJ.AC.9-12.18

I have the courage to speak up to people when their words, actions or views are biased and hurtful, and I will communicate with respect even when we disagree.

## **Interdisciplinary Connections**

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SOC.6.1.12.A.14.f

Determine the extent to which nongovernmental organizations, special interest groups, third party political groups, and the media affect public policy.

SOC.6.1.12.A.16.a

Examine the impact of media and technology on political and social issues in a global society.

SOC.6.1.12.D.7.b

Determine the extent to which propaganda, the media, and special interest groups shaped American public opinion and American foreign policy during World War I.

SOC.6.1.12.D.12.e

Analyze the role that media played in bringing information to the American public and shaping public attitudes toward the Vietnam War.

TECH.8.1.12.C.CS1

Interact, collaborate, and publish with peers, experts, or others by employing a variety of digital environments and media.

TECH.8.1.12.C.CS2

Communicate information and ideas to multiple audiences using a variety of media and formats.

TECH.8.1.12.E.CS2

Locate, organize, analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and ethically use information from a variety of sources and media.

## **Technology Standards**

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TECH.8.1.12.A.2	Produce and edit a multi-page digital document for a commercial or professional audience and present it to peers and/or professionals in that related area for review.
TECH.8.1.12.A.CS2	Select and use applications effectively and productively.
TECH.8.1.12.B.CS1	Apply existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products, or processes.
TECH.8.1.12.B.CS2	Create original works as a means of personal or group expression.
TECH.8.1.12.C.CS2	Communicate information and ideas to multiple audiences using a variety of media and formats.
TECH.8.1.12.C.CS4	Contribute to project teams to produce original works or solve problems.

## 21st Century Themes/Careers

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CRP.K-12.CRP1.1	Career-ready individuals understand the obligations and responsibilities of being a member of a community, and they demonstrate this understanding every day through their interactions with others. They are conscientious of the impacts of their decisions on others and the environment around them. They think about the near-term and long-term consequences of their actions and seek to act in ways that contribute to the betterment of their teams, families, community and workplace. They are reliable and consistent in going beyond the minimum expectation and in participating in activities that serve the greater good.
CRP.K-12.CRP2.1	Career-ready individuals readily access and use the knowledge and skills acquired through experience and education to be more productive. They make connections between abstract concepts with real-world applications, and they make correct insights about when it is appropriate to apply the use of an academic skill in a workplace situation.
CRP.K-12.CRP4.1	Career-ready individuals communicate thoughts, ideas, and action plans with clarity, whether using written, verbal, and/or visual methods. They communicate in the workplace with clarity and purpose to make maximum use of their own and others' time. They are excellent writers; they master conventions, word choice, and organization, and use effective tone and presentation skills to articulate ideas. They are skilled at interacting with others; they are active listeners and speak clearly and with purpose. Career-ready individuals think about the audience for their communication and prepare accordingly to ensure the desired outcome.
CRP.K-12.CRP6.1	Career-ready individuals regularly think of ideas that solve problems in new and different ways, and they contribute those ideas in a useful and productive manner to improve their organization. They can consider unconventional ideas and suggestions as solutions to issues, tasks or problems, and they discern which ideas and suggestions will add greatest value. They seek new methods, practices, and ideas from a variety of sources and seek to apply those ideas to their own workplace. They take action on their ideas and understand how to bring innovation to an organization.
CRP.K-12.CRP7.1	Career-ready individuals are discerning in accepting and using new information to make decisions, change practices or inform strategies. They use reliable research process to search for new information. They evaluate the validity of sources when considering the use and adoption of external information or practices in their workplace situation.

## Financial Literacy Integration

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PFL.9.1.12.A.3	Analyze the relationship between various careers and personal earning goals.
PFL.9.1.12.A.4	Identify a career goal and develop a plan and timetable for achieving it, including educational/training requirements, costs, and possible debt.

## **Instructional Strategies & Learning Activities**

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- Peer interviews and stories
- News story analysis
- Op-ed critique
- News or features summary and critique
- Original news story
- Original opinion piece
- Original feature or news story
- Group publication
- Podcast review
- Original podcast
- Original blog
- Journalism film essay
- Guest speakers

## **Differentiated Instruction**

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- Inquiry/Problem-Based Learning
- Relationship-Building & Team-Building
- Self-Directed Learning
- LMS use
- Grouping
- Rubrics
- Flipped Classroom
- Mentoring

## **Formative Assessments**

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- Comparison of opinion pieces on a common topic
- Article analysis
- Discussion

## **Summative Assessment**

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Article for publication

## **Benchmark Assessments**

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- Article for publication

## **Alternate Assessments**

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For most assignments, students have quite a bit of freedom regarding their topics.

- Students select their own topic ideas.
- Deadlines are flexible if the challenges of the story demand more time (need to cover an event live; coordinating schedules with an interviewee, demanding research topic).

## **Resources & Technology**

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Chromebooks

## **BOE Approved Texts**

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*Journalism Today* ISBN # 0-07-861616-6

## **Closure**

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- Discussion
- Low-stakes quiz
- Projects

- Submitted Articles

## **ELL**

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- Extended Time
- Teacher Modeling
- Simplified Written and Verbal Instructions
- Frequent Breaks
- E-Dictionaries
- Google Translate

## **Special Education**

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- Shorten assignments to focus on mastery of key concepts.
- Specify and list exactly what the student will need to learn to pass.
- Evaluate the classroom structure against the student's needs (flexible structure, firm limits, etc.).
- Keep workspaces clear of unrelated materials.
- Keep the classroom quiet during intense learning times.
- Provide a computer for written work.
- Provide an unobstructed view of the chalkboard, teacher, movie screen, etc.
- Keep extra supplies of classroom materials (pencils, books) on hand.
- Maintain adequate space between desks.
- Give directions in small steps and in as few words as possible.
- Number and sequence the steps in a task.
- Have student repeat the directions for a task.
- Provide visual aids.
- Go over directions orally.
- Provide a vocabulary list with definitions.
- Allow tests to be taken in a room with few distractions (e.g., the library).
- Have test materials read to the student, and allow oral responses.
- Allow the student to complete an independent project as an alternative test.
- Give progress reports instead of grades.
- Grade spelling separately from content.
- Show a model of the end product of directions (e.g., a completed math problem or finished quiz).
- Stand near the student when giving directions or presenting a lesson.
- Mark the correct answers rather than the incorrect ones.

- Average grades out when assignments are reworked, or grade on corrected work.

## 504

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- preferential seating
- extended time on tests and assignments
- reduced homework or classwork
- verbal, visual, or technology aids
- behavior management support
- adjusted class schedules or grading
- verbal testing
- excused lateness, absence, or missed classwork
- pre-approved nurse's office visits and accompaniment to visits
- occupational or physical therapy

## At Risk

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- Have student restate information
- Provision of notes or outlines
- Concrete examples
- Assistance in maintaining uncluttered space
- Weekly home-school communication tools (notebook, daily log, phone calls or email messages)
- Peer or scribe note-taking
- No penalty for spelling errors or sloppy handwriting
- Follow a routine/schedule
- Teach time management skills
- Verbal and visual cues regarding directions and staying on task
- Adjusted assignment timelines
- Visual daily schedule
- Immediate feedback
- Work-in-progress check
- Pace long-term projects
- Cue/model expected behavior
- Use de-escalating strategies
- Use peer supports and mentoring



## **Gifted and Talented**

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- Offer the Most Difficult First
- Offer choice
- Speak to Student Interests
- Allow G/T students to work together
- Focus on effort and practice
- Encourage risk taking