Unit 2: Rights and Responsibilities (Ethics)

Content Area: **Language Arts Literacy**
Course(s): **School Newspaper**
Time Period: **October**
Length: **7 weeks**
Status: **Published**

Transfer

Unit Goals:

- Write according to established laws and conventions for journalists
- Exhibit civic engagement through study of ethical and First Amendment issues
- Build strong content knowledge through research and presentations
- Enhance note-taking and critical reasoning skills

Enduring Understandings

By the end of this unit students will understand that…

- Journalists must research and report all sides of an issue and refrain from inserting personal opinion.
- Journalists adhere to a professional code of ethics to "seek truth and report it."
- Society relies on journalists for fair and balanced information.
- Journalists must report facts and avoid opinion or judgment.
- Media promotes civic literacy.

Essential Questions

By the end of the unit students will be able to answer…

- Why must journalists avoid bias?
- How do journalists maintain objectivity?
- What is the role of journalism in our society?
- What is slander and libel and how does media law apply to this?
- When is it acceptable for the media to act as a tool to assist the common good?
- How does a news organization engender trust in the public?

Content

Vocabulary

Vocabulary

5w+1H

Angle

Attribution

Banner

Beat

Bias

Byline

Caption

Column

Copy

Copy editor

Cutline

Deck

Editor

Editorial

Ethics

Feature

Flag

Grabber

Hard news

Headline

Hole

Human interest story

Investigative journalism

Inverted pyramid

Jumphead

Justified

Layout editor

Lead

Libel

Op ed page

Off the record

Plagiarism

Proofreading

Pull out quote

Side bar

Slander

Soft news

Source

Style

Summary lead

tabloid

Learning Objectives

- Understand the meaning of bias and objectivity
- Read and discuss the Society of Professional Journalists' Code of Ethics
- Identify and evaluate bias in the media
- Analyze and discuss slander and libel in a variety of articles
- Evaluate pieces of literature to determine effective word choice
- Apply journalistic ethics to hypothetical and real world situations

- Role-play complex situation in which to apply the codes of ethics and libel
- Debate pros and cons of running a potentially controversial story
- Generate a policy for the newspaper staff to use regarding anonymous sources
- Create and maintain a portfolio of their work
- Create WebQuests which explore the effects historical events had on journalism

- Research muckrakers from history to complete multimedia presentations using research
- View films and write reviews comparing the historical content of the film to real-life historical events
- Research and describe major Supreme Court freedom of speech cases like Tinker and Hazelwood
- Research and complete a multimedia presentation on a major Supreme Court First Amendment case
- Debate case studies involving ethical decisions
- Research libel and slander laws
- Role play situations where ethical decisions need to be made
- Interview school and community media professionals and others about defamation and censorship issues
- Create blog/forum or other posts so that their research can reach a greater audience

Use websites of professional organizations, such as the Student Press Law Center and the Society of Professional Journalists, for research purposes

Resources

Potential Works of Study

USA Today

Washington Post

Wall Street Journal

NYT.com

Local and national newspapers

The United States Constitution

Government databases

University libraries

The Associated Press Archives

Supreme Court Archives/Decisions

The American Press Institute: High Five Integrated Language Arts and Journalism Curriculum

NPR Database

Possible Films:

Shattered Glass; All the President's Men; Good Night; and *Good Luck*

Content/Themes/Skills:

Muckrakers, McCarthyism, Red Scare, and Edward R. Murrow, Watergate and Woodward & Bernstein, Stephen Glass and Jayson Blair, First Amendment, Tinker v. Des Moines Independent School District, Hazelwood School District v. Cathy Kuhlmeier, libel, slander, ethics, ethical choices in photography.

Standards

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.1	Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.6	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.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.8	Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.8	Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.2	Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.