Unit 2: Media Ethics and Law & Gender, Race and Class in the Media

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Marking Period 1**
Length: **3-5 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Brief Summary of Unit

In this unit, students will explore the ethical and legal frameworks that guide journalism and media production, focusing on the challenges of maintaining integrity, accuracy, and fairness in reporting. The unit will also examine how issues of gender, race, and class are portrayed in the media, encouraging students to critically analyze the representation of different social groups. Through case studies, discussions, and projects, students will gain an understanding of the ethical dilemmas journalists face, the impact of media on public perceptions, and the importance of diverse and equitable representation. By the end of the unit, students will be equipped to identify bias, challenge stereotypes, and understand the role of the media in shaping societal views on gender, race, and class.

Interdisciplinary Connections and Career Readiness: This unit is designed to be part of a developmental progression across grade levels and make interdisciplinary connections across content areas including physical and social sciences, technology, career readiness, cultural awareness, and global citizenship. During this course, students are provided with opportunities to develop skills that pertain to a variety of careers. When completing this course, students can make informed choices and pursue electives that further their study and contribute toward the formation of career interest.

Revision: July 2024

Standards

This unit challenges students to locate, evaluate, and use information effectively. Information literacy includes, but is not limited to, digital, visual, media, textual, and technological literacy. Lessons may include the research process and how information is created and produced; critical thinking and using information resources; research methods, including the difference between primary and secondary sources; the difference between facts, points of view, and opinions, accessing peer-reviewed print and digital library resources; the economic, legal, social, and ethical issues surrounding the use of information.

LA.RI.11-12.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).
LA.W.11-12.6	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, share, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

LA.W.11-12.7	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.SL.11-12.1.D	Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.
LA.SL.11-12.2	Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, qualitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.
LA.SL.11-12.3	Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.
LA.11-12.CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.RL.7	Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
LA.11-12.CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.RL.9	Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
CRP.K-12.CRP4	Communicate clearly and effectively and with reason.
CRP.K-12.CRP7	Employ valid and reliable research strategies.
CRP.K-12.CRP8	Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
CRP.K-12.CRP11	Use technology to enhance productivity.
TECH.8.1.2.B.1	Illustrate and communicate original ideas and stories using multiple digital tools and resources.
TECH.8.1.12	Educational Technology: All students will use digital tools to access, manage, evaluate, and synthesize information in order to solve problems individually and collaborate and to create and communicate knowledge.

Essential Questions

- - How can journalists and media creators ensure that their work promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion in their reporting and storytelling?
- ● How do laws governing freedom of the press, copyright, and privacy shape journalistic practice?
- ● How do media representations of gender, race, and class influence societal perceptions and stereotypes?
- ● What are the consequences of unethical journalism, and how can media professionals be held accountable?
- ● What ethical principles guide responsible journalism, and how can journalists navigate conflicts between truth-telling and other ethical considerations?

Essential Understandings

- ● A range of factors influence people's beliefs, including experiences, environment, among others.
- ● Each medium uses a different set of techniques to achieve its purpose.
- ● Media and advertising use a variety of techniques to persuade viewers.
- ● People can be persuaded by appeals to emotion, logic, and credibility.

Students Will Know

- ● Students will know the key ethical principles that guide journalism, including truthfulness, fairness, and accountability, as well as the legal frameworks that impact media practices, such as freedom of the press, copyright law, and privacy rights
- ● Students will know the role of the media in influencing social attitudes and the importance of promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in journalism and media content.
- ● Students will understand how media representations of gender, race, and class can shape public perceptions and either reinforce or challenge societal stereotypes and biases.

Students Will Be Skilled At

- ● Students will be skilled at applying ethical principles to real-world scenarios, making informed decisions about how to handle ethical dilemmas in journalism and media production.
- ● Students will be skilled at understanding and evaluating the legal considerations that affect media practices, such as issues of copyright, defamation, and privacy.
- ● Students will be skilled at articulating and defending their positions on ethical issues in media, engaging in thoughtful debate and discussion with their peers.
- ● Students will be skilled at critically analyzing media content to identify biases, stereotypes, and the representation of gender, race, and class
- ● Students will be skilled at producing media content that promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion, ensuring fair and accurate representation of all social groups.

Evidence/Performance Tasks

Developmental progression across years in both reading and writing is evidenced by multiple benchmark assessment screeners, administered two times per year. Follow up diagnostic assessments are used to target skill remediation. Student proficiency allows for additional or alternative assessment based on demonstration or absence of skill.

Students demonstrate differentiated proficiency through both formative and summative assessments in the classroom. Based on individual student readiness and performance, assessments can be implemented as formative and/or summative.

The performance tasks listed below are examples of the types of assessments teachers may use in the classroom and the data collected by the district to track student progress.

Formative:

- Teacher Observations
- Accountable Talk, Socratic Seminars/Fish Bowls
- Analysis of multimodal text sets

- Analysis of critical commentary, literary criticism
- Writers Notebook (quick writes/drafts/prewrites), emphasizing author's craft
- Close reading analysis of text using evidence as substantiation
- Conferences: Individual and small group, accompanying conference notes
- Reflective exercises and assessments
- Oral Reading and Interpretation
- Peer and self-evaluations of learning
- Entrance and Exit Tickets
- Open-Ended Responses in Journal
- Textual Analysis Reading Responses
- Dialectical Journal
- Rhetorical Precis
- SOAPSTone Analysis

Summative, including Alternative Assessments:

- On-demand Writing Assessments, timed and untimed
- Researched Presentations
- Performance Assessments
- Project-based Learning
- Problem-based Learning
- Personalized Learning
- Visual Literacy Prompts
- Digital Portfolios
- Online Discussion Forums
- Weekly articles for school newspaper

Benchmark:

- Benchmark reading and writing assessments, scored using rubrics, district-created and standards-aligned; based on NJSLA, reported twice per year
- Engage in text set analysis using visual literacy and close reading analysis strategies to compose a claim and use evidence as support
- Grade-level Standards-based Rubrics
- Common Lit Reading Benchmark Assessments, three times per year (grades 9-11)
- Advanced Placement tests (grades 11-12)
- NJGPA (grade 11)
- PSAT (grades 10-11)
- SAT (grades 11-12)
- Final Exam
- IXL

- ● Write peer-evaluation and self-reflection following project presentations
- ● A reflective essay that discusses the ethical and legal challenges encountered, the solutions implemented, and how the content promotes diversity and inclusion.
- ● Apply ethical principles and legal considerations in media production.
- ● Create content that promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- ● Design and produce a media campaign that addresses a social issue related to gender, race, or class

Learning Plan

Instructional time will be dedicated to whole class text instruction, collaborative learning, and independent and personalized learning. The intent is for student-readers to have clear modelling through whole-class instruction. These strategies are practiced in a group setting of peers and through independent practice monitored through teacher conferencing with students. An emphasis will be based on the transfer of skills instruction, teaching the reader, not merely the content of the text. The text complexity and rigor of reading will be appropriate for grade 9-12; materials selection for whole-class and literature circles will be from the book list approved by the Board of Education. Classrooms will house rich and diverse independent reading libraries of both contemporary and canonical works.

The reading of text during this class targets not only comprehension, but also analysis. Students may read both long-and short-form, exceprted and full-length, print and electronic, fiction and nonfiction texts. Study will include the analysis of visual texts including film clips, art, infographic, maps, charts, graphs, cartoons, graphic novel. Technique and terminology specific to a genre of reading is examined. Research tasks are embedded throughout the year and a minimum of one task is completed during each unit. Vocabulary instruction will be chosen from the reading material.

Students write in all modes of rhetoric including narration/description, argument/persuasion, and exposition. Various forms of writing including digital writing are emphasized as well. Grammar instruction is embedded in writing instruction through mini-lessons, holding students accountable for skills taught and practiced; modelling is done through mentor texts, both published and student-crafted. Teachers focus on process in addition to product with an emphasis on synthesizing texts with nuanced understanding; teacher-created multi-modal text sets will be used as materials. High-and low-stakes, timed and untimed pieces are all important.

Students will be taught how to speak and listen in addition to being assessed on these skills.

1. Students will delve into the foundational principles of journalism law, with a particular focus on libel and privacy. They will examine what constitutes libel, learning how to recognize and avoid making false and damaging statements about individuals or organizations that could lead to costly legal battles. They will cover the elements required to prove libel, such as the publication of a false statement, identification of the subject, harm to the subject's reputation, and the presence of fault or negligence. Additionally, students will explore privacy laws and the ethical responsibilities journalists have when reporting on both public and private individuals. They will discuss scenarios involving intrusion, publication of private facts, false light, and appropriation, learning to balance the public's right to information with the need to respect personal privacy. By understanding these legal concepts, students will be better prepared to navigate the complex landscape of modern journalism, ensuring their reporting is both accurate and ethical. This knowledge will be crucial in fostering a responsible and legally aware approach to journalism, essential for maintaining the integrity and trustworthiness of the media.

2. Students will understand how media shapes culture and society, becoming more critical media consumers. Through analyzing various forms of media—such as news articles, television broadcasts, social media, and

advertisements—students will learn to identify the underlying messages and biases that influence public perception and behavior. They will study how media framing, agenda-setting, and representation can shape societal norms, values, and issues, often reflecting and reinforcing power dynamics and stereotypes. By engaging in discussions and projects, students will develop skills to critically evaluate sources, discern between credible and unreliable information, and understand the techniques used in media to persuade and inform audiences. They will also examine case studies of media influence on historical and contemporary events, observing how media coverage can sway public opinion and policy decisions. This comprehensive understanding will equip students with the tools to navigate the media landscape thoughtfully, making informed decisions about the information they consume and share. Ultimately, this curriculum aims to foster media literacy, empowering students to participate in society as informed and critical citizens.

- ● Analyze a set of teacher-sourced advertisements to determine advertiser's intended audience, goal, and main rhetorical strategy.
- ● Develop a personalized rubric that includes a set of techniques the student will use in creating their own advertisement
- ● Evaluate and analyze peer projects and provide meaningful feedback
- ● Find and create a packet of student-sourced advertisements for each of the major rhetorical strategies
- ● Identify common techniques used for persuasion, with a focus on Aristotle's rhetorical triangle and appeals: pathos (emotion), ethos (ethics), and logos (logic).
- ● Use MAPS strategy to analyze advertisements: Mode, Media, Audience, Purpose, Situation (See teacher resources, Troy Hick's Digital Writing)
- ● Use the SOAPStone (Speaker, Occasion, Audience, Purpose, Subject, Tone) AP method of analyzing advertisements.
- ● Use the Toulmin approach to analyzing argument by examining the first triad: claim (of value, fact, or policy), substantive evidence (qualitative and quantitative), and warrant (underlying assumption based on fallacies).
- ● Write self-reflections to reflect thoughtfully on process, successes, and struggles in planning, production, and achievement of goals
- ● A reflective essay that discusses the ethical and legal challenges encountered, the solutions implemented, and how the content promotes diversity and inclusion.

Materials

The materials used in this course integrate a variety of leveled instructional, enrichment, and intervention materials that support student learners at all levels in the school and home environments. Associated web content and media sources are infused into the unit as applicable and available.

Teachers must refer to the district-approved Core Book List while selecting whole-class or small-group leveled resources.

Suggested Strategies for Accommodation and Modification

Content specific accommodations and modifications as well as Career Ready Practices are listed here for all students, including: Special Education, English Language Learners, At Risk of School Failure, Gifted and Talented, Students with 504.

Possible accommodations include:

- Accessing speech-to-text function on computer.
- Using visual presentations of all materials to include organizers, charts.
- Allowing students to set individual goals for writing/reading.
- Offering graphic organizaers, note-taking models, strategies for summarizing, and questioning techniques.
- Offering oral assessments.
- Supplying study guide questions and access to class notes.
- Working in partnerships.
- Giving responses in a form (verbal or written) that is easier for the student.
- Using additional time to compete a task or project.
- Scaffolding by chunking material and texts.
- Individualizingreading choices based on ability and level .
- Providing frequent breaks.
- Using an alarm to help with time management.
- Assessing individually or in small groups.
- Marking text with a highlighter or other manipulative such as a post-it.
- Receiving help coordinating assignments.
- Modifying the length and quantity of assignments to fit individual.
- Differentiating roles in discussion groups.
- Using digital technology, eBooks, audio version of printed text.
- Createing alternate assignments or homework.
- Providing distinct steps in a process; elminate unnecessary steps, as needed.
- Using art, music, and film to convey alternate interpretation of literature and assessment.
- Managing executive function by scaffolding process and amending deadlines.
- Clarifying key terms and definitions at the beginning of the unit to create a shared vocabulary for analysis and evaluation.

Particular to this unit:

- Clarifying key terms and definitions at the beginning of the unit to create a shared vocabulary for analysis and evaluation
- Using multi-modal forms of representation of ideas, including text, video and images.
- Optimizing individual choice in terms of the choice of product and audience in the development of persuasive advertisements.
- Guiding students in goal-setting and executive function by setting timelines for completion of various stages, including design, writing, commenting, and reflecting.
- Promoting autonomy, engagement, and ownership by creating personalized rubrics.
- Fostering collaborative learning through the use peer evaluation and feedback.
- Providing low-stakes opportunities to learn new technology tools before applying knowledge in an assessment context.

- Providing opportunities for self-regulation by including reflective self-evaluation.

Adhere to all modifications and accommodations as prescribed in IEP and 504 plan