



## TIPS FOR TEACHERS

When working with images from the Case Histories PDF, you should also have a range of recent newspapers to hand (for example, *The Financial Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Independent*, *The Guardian*, *The Daily Mail*, *The Daily Mirror*, *The Sun*, and a number of local newspapers). It is important that students can experience the physical nature of the newspaper, as well as familiarising themselves with the different formats and up-to-date news stories.

Students may choose to extend some activities by creating convincing mock-ups of their ideas on the computer. They can distribute these to other classes, include their articles in a school newspaper or leave them in reception for visitors to read.

# BIAS AND CENSORSHIP

These activities look at how the same story will often be presented in completely different ways by different newspapers. Careful investigations throw up important questions, such as:

- Is the newspaper presenting the whole story?
- Whose 'voice' are we hearing?
- How is the news presented to its readers?
- Is there any justification for bias or censorship?

Some of the activities focus on bias in relation to images. It is said that the camera never lies, but an analysis of newspapers will show this statement to be a simplification. Students could ask how editors and photographers influence the way we view an image.

## **Pair work: writing**

Introduce the idea of censorship to the class by playing the following game. Working in pairs, give students a photocopy of an article from a newspaper. Read the article out loud to the class and ask students to explain what it is about, using as much detail as possible.

Ask students to re-read the article and to delete sentences or paragraphs from it. While the article will remain coherent, the meaning may be radically altered. Alternatively, the article may retain its integrity despite the fact that some of the information is missing. Ask two or three students to read out their examples and see if the rest of the class can spot what's missing.

Now ask students to insert a short sentence somewhere in the article. The sentence should be false but should embellish the thrust of the story. Again, ask students to read out some of their examples and compare the ways in which the sense of the story shifts.

## **Class discussion**

- Does the article still tell the same story?
- Do you think the original version of the story was censored to begin with?
- How might censorship be dangerous?
- Might censorship be a good thing in certain circumstances? (You could discuss censorship during wartime, Holocaust denial, or the political bias of certain newspapers).

## **Individual work: writing, analysis, drawing**

Cut out a minimum of 10 diverse images from a range of newspapers. Photocopy them so that each student has an image. Ask students to imagine the story the lies behind the image and write a sentence about it. If the images show people, ask students to consider whether they are presented favourably or unfavourably. Now ask students to think of, or draw, a different picture for the same story, which presents it from an alternative point of view.

# TYPOGRAPHY AND DESIGN

These activities look at the power of design and how it is used to shape a newspaper's identity. Typeface, scale and colour are all used to create an impact, whether the effect is vibrant or subtle. Questions to explore:

- In our highly visual culture, how do newspapers vie for our attention?
- Do newspapers work on the same principles as other visual media?

## **Class discussion**

Create and print out five posters, each showing the name of your school in a radically different font. Use colour and scale to exaggerate the differences. Hold them up in turn, and ask students to imagine they were visiting for the first time. What impressions does each poster give about the school? Hold a class vote to establish which seems to most closely reflect the identity of the school.

## **Group work: writing and design**

Looking at the Front Page CD, examine a range of newspapers from different periods of history. Consider the differences in typography and design. Firstly, focus on the Newspaper Title and discuss the kind of identity it gives to the newspaper.

Divide into groups, giving each group an authentic headline in its original font. Ask each group to brainstorm and write down their ideas of what the headline might be about. Now give them the same headline in a different font. How many of the ideas still fit? Does the headline take on a new meaning, or have different connotations?

## **Group work: design**

Dividing into small groups, give each group a different front page. Examine the layout. Compare the balance between headlines, articles and photos. Using grey and black paper plot these out very simply as squares and rectangles on a sheet of paper and label them 'headline', 'text', 'image'. Which of these elements is the most important part of the page? Ask students to imagine that the space taken up by the photo is text and vice versa. How would this change the impact of the page?

# WORD AND IMAGE

These activities explore the ways that headlines influence the reading of an image and vice versa. Students will be introduced to the idea that an image can add another interpretive dimension to a story, rather than simply illustrating it.

Questions to explore:

- Is the image as powerful as the word?
- How do words and images influence each other?

## **Class discussion and analysis**

Using the Front Page CD, look at a range of images used on front pages from different periods of history. Discuss the idea that different types of images are used in different decades. Take 3 diverse examples and discuss whether the image is more or less important on the page. Look at the drama and impact of a single image. Ask the group to consider what the photographer or picture editor might have decided to include or exclude from the depicted scene.

Show the group other images from a range of newspapers – including your local paper. Ask the class to consider why photography is important in a newspaper, whether it is as important as the writing on a page, and what constitutes a 'good' or effective picture.

Annual awards are given for photojournalism. Hold your own class competition using the images you have shown them (you can ask students in advance to contribute pictures they find interesting). Firstly, ask students to come up with their own categories for your Photojournalism Awards (most dramatic, most thought provoking, funniest etc.). Take a vote for each category and then a final vote for 'Best Picture'. Ask students to justify their choices.

## **Individual work: drawing and writing**

Select a headline from the Front Page CD. Choose one that has not yet been discussed by the group, and could be interpreted in a number of ways e.g.: "IT'S ALL OVER". Ask students to imagine what the background story might be and to draw an image to fit the headline.

Collect the drawings and re-distribute them. Ask students to analyse the drawing they have been given and generate a new headline for it.

# TABLOID VERSUS BROADSHEET

These activities explore the differences between the tabloid and broadsheet formats. Questions to explore:

- Are newspapers all about news, or do they also provide their readers with entertainment and 'infotainment'?
- Do tabloids and broadsheets approach the same story differently?
- Do differences in the world of newspapers reflect broader social and cultural issues?

## Class discussion

Look at contemporary examples of 'tabloid' and 'broadsheet' newspapers on the CD. Make two lists on the board and ask students to list all the superficial differences they can spot between the two. Use the list to ask students if they think the news is different in each format and if so how?

You can extend the discussion using spider diagrams. Make one spider for each format and explore the positive and negative aspects of each. Which aspects of these papers more appealing than others? Which aspects are more difficult or off-putting?

Ask your students how they would combine elements from both formats to make a new format newspaper that appeals to everybody.

## Group work: analysis and collage

Make a pack of photocopies for each group using tabloid and broadsheet newspapers from the same day. Copy a range of stories to give the students choice. Give each group a theme, (front page, sport, entertainment etc.). Working in small groups, ask the students to work together to create a hybrid page using design elements, photographs, articles and headlines from both formats.

- Decide in advance how big the page should be
- Use a sheet of sugar paper for the page and fold back or tear off any areas not being used
- Choose one story as the main feature
- Select one or two other stories to create a contrast on the page
- Isolate useful images and headlines for each story
- Experiment with mixing up headlines, articles and photos from the different formats
- Do not stick anything down until the whole group is happy with the choices

Ask each group to select an 'editor' who will present the page to the rest of the class. Ask the class to comment on what they think is successful or unsuccessful about each page. How would they change it? Would they buy a newspaper in this style and how much should it cost?

# NEWSPAPERS IN SOCIETY

These activities are designed around fundamental questions relating to the purpose of newspapers. Questions to explore:

- Is the role of newspapers to uncover the truth or reflect collective values and ideals?
- Do newspapers set the tone for our political and cultural thinking?
- How are minority interests represented in print?
- Do newspapers talk to YOU?
- Do newspapers provide a distinct alternative to the TV news?

## *Class discussion*

Read out a story from a recent paper. Ask your students what the journalist considered important when he or she wrote the story (interest, accuracy, clarity etc.).

Show examples from the Front Page CD about an issue of national concern e.g.: The War in Iraq  
Ask students:

- Does everybody feel the same about this issue?
- Where do newspapers get their information?
- Where can we get other information about this subject? (internet, campaign groups, books, history, TV, radio, government)

Ask the class to help you draw a diagram or time-line that shows where news comes from and the route it takes before ending up on the front page.

## **Individual work**

Give the class a set of hard facts about global warming (wildlife behaviour, seasonal change, 'natural events', statistics, projections etc.).

Discuss how these facts could be used to write an article that informs the public about global warming. Ask students:

- What should the public know?
- What are they concerned about?
- What are they least interested in?

Divide the class in two. Using this information, ask students in one half of the class to write an informative list or article about the issues involved. Ask the other half to write a list or article that creates concern and fear.

Ask the class whether readers are interested in hard facts (statistics, scientific research etc.) or the story? How do these different modes of presentation impact on the reader in different ways?

## **Class discussion and pair work**

Using the hard facts and the individual writing already generated, ask students to think about how this story could be presented on TV. What might be added or taken away? What kind of impact does TV have compared to newspapers? Introduce the idea of sound, movement and time as crucial factors.

# CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

Who or what changes the newspaper establishment? These activities aim to look at the history and possible future of newspapers.

Questions to explore:

- As new technologies develop will newspapers survive in their current form?
- How might we receive the news in the future?
- Does technology dictate the nature of news reportage as well as the way it is delivered to us?
- Will newspapers retain their status in the delivery of news?

## Class discussion

Use the Front Page CD to look at newspapers across the decades. Discuss what has changed and what remains the same.

Ask students how many of them have read or tried to read a newspaper. Hand round some newspapers and give students 5 minutes to look through them on their own terms. Ask the class for feedback: what did they like about the newspaper and what didn't they like? Write these points on the board.

Now ask the class to brainstorm: list all the different kinds of technology they, their siblings, friends or parents use for receiving and sending information. Can any of these be used to send or receive news and if so how?

## Individual work: design

Give each student 2 sheets of A4 paper. On the first sheet ask students to make 6 – 8 small, very quick 'thumbnail' sketches of technology that could be used to transmit written and photographic news. They can draw existing technology (mobile phones, games etc.) or they could invent their own.

Now ask them to imagine travelling 50 years into the future... On the second sheet of paper ask students to combine 2 or 3 of their drawings to create a new piece of technology to deliver the newspaper of the future. Stress that it is not delivering TV or internet news (though it could be linked to these). Ask them to work with the following criteria:

- The technology must be able to deliver the news quickly at a size people can see
- It must be portable
- It could incorporate features for people with language difficulties and visual and hearing impairments
- It could include interactive features

Select a few examples to present to the class and ask whether they think any of these ideas might happen? Did anybody have completely new ideas? Discuss the question: In 50 years time will you be able read a newspaper in the same way as you can now?