News Literacy: Evaluating Authority in a World of Perspectives

Susan Smith, Library Director, The Harker School, San Jose
Why teach with the news?

• Teach voice (writing style)
• Real-world connections
• Teach critical thinking & close reading
• Teach content knowledge
• Appeal to multiple learning styles
• Tools for citizen journalists
• Increase civic engagement
• and...?
NEWS!
How Students Get the News

**Digital News Surpasses Newspapers, Radio**

*Where did you get news yesterday?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>2008</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>08-12 Change</th>
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<td>27</td>
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<td>-14</td>
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<td>65+</td>
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<td>Liberal Dem</td>
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<td>45</td>
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*PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2012 News Consumption Survey. Q52. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.*
Disengagement . . .
“New Media”

• On-demand access, 24/7 (54% online*)
• “Stickiness” of news read on devices
  – More likely to spend time on news sites
• Democratization of creation, publishing, distribution, consumption
• Manipulated, dense, compressible, interactive
• Two-tiered trend
  – Long form/short form trends, e.g. Politico

What’s Different?

• Values: Neutrality & Independence replaced by transparency
• Networks
  • Virality replaces institutional authority
  • What’s trending over what’s important
• Algorithms have baked-in political choices
• Increasingly polarized => Need for evaluation
  • Who is the person you are interviewing?
  • Why should I believe him/her?
  • What biases might they have that you are not telling me about?
Reliable Journalism Acts As:

- Authenticator: document evidence
- Sense-maker – provide context
- Investigator – watchdog
- Witness-bearer – be at the right place & time
- Forum Organizer – create discourse
- Empowerer – give us tools for knowing
- Smart Aggregator – link to other sources
- Role model – for citizen journalists
Measuring news media literacy

How knowledge and motivations combine to create news-literate teens

Stephanie Craft, Ph.D., University of Missouri
Adam Maksl, Ph.D., Indiana University Southeast
Seth Ashley, Ph.D., Boise State University
Key findings of Maksl, Ashley, and Craft (2013)

News literate teens:
– Show a greater knowledge of current events
– Believe they are in control of the message
– Are motivated to consume news; it’s part of their core identity
– But do not necessarily consume more news than less news literate teens
Prescriptive Results

- Mindful thought-processing
- In control of news media’s influence
- Knowledgeable about the news media system

 Highly news literate

What do we mean by Civic Engagement?

“What Civic Engagement is working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes.”

Does online news affect engagement?

• “Does learning about news make students more civically engaged (as we hope) or does it make them more cynical and apathetic (as some fear)?”

• Civic engagement → News Consumption? News Consumption → Engagement?

• Role of political discussion in the classroom?
Tips for Choosing a Topic:

- **Topics vs. Issues:** Health Care Costs; National Health Policy
- **Controversial vs. Constitutional:** Legislatures work on policy; Courts debate rights
- **Public vs. Private:** Institute a draft; Join the military;
- **Current vs. Perennial:** TARP policy; Government economic intervention
Selective Exposure for Better or Worse: Its Mediating Role for Online News' Impact on Political Participation
Knobloch-Westerwick & Johnson (2013)

• More habitual online news use decreases attitude-consistent selective exposure.
• More attitude-consistent exposure increases political participation
• More attitude-consistent selective exposure mediates the effect of habitual online news use on political participation.

An online news habit decreases the likelihood of participation (for adults).
“This suggests that students are not engaging with texts in meaningful ways. While it does not prove that they are not reading the entire source, it would explain why we see so little summary.”
Key Ideas and Details

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.3 Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

Craft and Structure

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.5 Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.6 Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.8 Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.9 Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.
Close Reading

• Comprehension
A notecard is an organizer for ideas

Copy and paste here

- Capture the author’s words and images
- Get quotes and attribution right
- Mark up the quote

In your own words

- Explain it to yourself
- In words you understand
- Look back at the quote – got it all?

Original thinking here

- What do you wonder?
- How does this fit with what you know?
- What can you follow up on?
Get quotes and attribution right
Close reading boosts comprehension.
What should I teach here?
A first reading through sources
Skills Involved in Summary Writing

• Understanding the text including the structure and purpose;
• Combining and generalizing which leads to identifying key ideas and details;
• Explaining it in your own words
Definition

Journalism is a set of transparent, independent procedures aimed at gathering, verifying and reporting truthful information of consequence to citizens in a democracy (33).

Need new close reading strategies
Viral standard for accuracy

““We are dealing with a volume of information that it is impossible to have the strict standards of accuracy that other institutions have...[but] we assume a certain level of sophistication and skepticism of our readers. ”

- John Cook, editor-in-chief, Gawker

Close Reading

- Comprehension
- Tone
The entire issue, at least as far as Somali pirates are concerned, could be made largely superfluous if only Somalia had a responsible government capable of policing its own territory. Given that country's long history of chaos, the only sure way to achieve this goal would be through the imposition of an international regency similar to the UN administration in Kosovo. But since U.S. and UN forces were chased ignominiously out of Mogadishu in the early 1990s, there is scant chance they will be willing to return to Somalia and risk another fight. The odds that Somali piracy will disappear without a robust response from maritime nations are equally remote. Even if bringing law and order to Somalia is beyond the will of the international community, it still should be possible to curb the pirate menace through military and legal initiatives that stop short of actual occupation. All that is required is to apply the lessons of history. If previous generations could defeat the Barbary corsairs, the Caribbean buccaneers, and the Red Sea men, surely this generation can defeat the ragtag sea robbers of Somalia.

Argument:
Piracy is the result of a long time, ineffective Somali government
Other countries are reluctant to risk another occupation after Mogadishu

However other historical examples show that a coordinated "military and legal initiatives" could end this insignificant problem.

Tone is sarcastic - he's blaming the international community for not stepping in to solve this problem of a failed state.
Graph these comma-separated phrases: Diaoyu, Senkaku
between 1970 and 2000 from the corpus English with smoothing of 3

Search in Google Books:

Run your own experiment! Raw data is available for download here.

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Japan passes new defense policy package

Updated: 2013-12-17 16:33
(Xinhua)

TOKYO - The Japanese cabinet approved a defense policy package Tuesday to further expand its military might amid increasing regional concerns about its right-leaning politics and surging nationalism.

The defense package includes the national security strategy, the defense program guidelines and a five-year defense buildup plan that envisions 24.7 trillion yen ($240 billion) of military spending in 2014-2019, a 5-percent increase over the five years ending March 2014.

Japan's neighbors including China and South Korea will seek new security arrangements for peace in the region.

The 10-year defense program guidelines and the five-year defense buildup plan, together with the overarching national security strategy, are part of hawkish Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's broader drive to raise the country's defense profile.

Since Abe took office, his government has taken an irresponsible approach to Japan's war history by refusing to apologize to its Asian neighbors and trying to revise the country's pacifist constitution.

Japanese politicians' visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, where 14 World War II class-A convicted war criminals are enshrined, have angered Japan's neighbors such as China and South Korea.

In September 2012, Japan unilaterally altered the status quo in the East China Sea by announcing a purchase deal of the Diaoyu Islands of China. The move has since led to increased regional tensions and revived concerns about Japan's militaristic past.

Japanese companies doing business in China are stepping up vigilance in anticipation of possible anti-Japanese protests, as there were in 2012, over Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's visit to Yasukuni Shrine on Thursday. In autumn 2012, anti-Japanese protests were triggered by the nationalization of three Senkaku Islands in Okinawa Prefecture. However, some people say such protests will not spread because it would have an adverse impact on the Chinese economy if investment from Japan to China were to decrease due to protests.

"The timing [of Abe's visit to Yasukuni] was just when things had finally calmed down. I hope things won't go back to square one," said an executive of a Japanese-affiliated parts manufacturer working in China.

Rioters in China destroyed Japanese-affiliated business facilities, including a plant and an automobile retailer, in September 2012 in protests over the Japanese government's purchase of three of the Senkaku Islands from a private Japanese owner.

Some protesters looted a convenience store and a supermarket and attacked Japanese restaurants.

More than one year has passed since then, and Japanese companies in China had finally begun to enjoy calm again as anti-Japanese sentiment had begun to cool off.

Although sales of Japanese automakers dropped by half for a while after the anti-Japanese movement, sales recovery is becoming notable. For example, Honda Motor Co.'s monthly auto production jumped to a record high in November. In Beijing, Japanese restaurants are now attracting customers like they used to.

"[Abe's decision] came after careful planning and consideration for the country. Therefore, [Abe] will be able to take responsibility [for anything that happens as a result of his actions]," Yasuchika Hasegawa, chairman of the Japan Association of Corporation Executives, or Keizai Doyukai, told reporters at a hotel in Tokyo.

Hiromasa Yonekura, chairman of the Japan Business Federation (Keidanren) who visited China with about 180 business executives in November, did not make any comment, apparently concerned about what effects his comments might have.

Though there have been no reports of significant damage to Japanese companies doing business in China as of Thursday night, the Japanese Embassy in Beijing sent an e-mail to Japanese living in China cautioning them of possible anti-Japanese sentiment in the near future.

According to an expert in business in China, Hikojiro Takahara, CEO of Consul Bution Co., "A plant of a certain midsize company was destroyed, and the company went bankrupt following the anti-Japanese riots, because the plant was not covered by special contract insurance." Therefore, Takahara stresses the need for businesses to prepare for any possible damage to property.

On the other hand, some Japanese companies doing business overseas are increasingly shifting their investments to Southeast Asia. So far in 2013...
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Although sales of Japanese automakers are becoming notable. For example, Honda Motors had sales of 28,000 vehicles in Beijing, Japanese restaurants are now attending a "Chinese" business society.

"[Abe's decision] came after careful planning. The leader must accept responsibility [for anything that happens]." said a member of the Japan Association of Corporation Executives, or Keizai Doyukai.

Hiromasa Yonekura, chairman of the Japanese Automobile Manufacturers Association, is attending the Japan-China Business Conference in Beijing this week. He added that he wants to rephrase his policy on "大豆主义" (soybeanism) that was criticized by some people. "We've been teaching China how to make soybeans," Yonekura said.

Though there have been no reports of significant incidents in November, did not make an appearance in the daily press this week.

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On the other hand, some Japanese companies doing business overseas are increasingly shifting their investments to Southeast Asia in China and South Korea.
Close Reading

• Comprehension
• Tone
• Evidence from sources
Types of evidence

- Experimental research
- Informal research
- Authorities
- Statistics
- Textual
- Visual
Despite the prohibition on conscripting children under the age of fifteen, no consensus exists in international law as to the criminal responsibility of children who commit grave violations of international humanitarian and human rights law. (30) The court in the U.S. Office of Military Commissions against Omar Khadr recognized this distinction, holding that "neither customary international law nor international treaties binding upon the United States prohibit the trial of a person for alleged violations of the law of nations committed when he was fifteen years of age." (31)

Scholars disagree as to what the MACR should be. (32) Some argue that an emerging trend sets the MACR somewhere in the mid-teens (thirteen to fifteen years old), while others claim that international instruments such as the Rome Statute and the Convention on the Rights of the Child set the MACR somewhere between fifteen and eighteen years old. (33) A conservative reading of what scholars claim regarding an international MACR suggests that there is a consensus against prosecuting children aged twelve or less.
Close Reading

- Comprehension
- Tone
- Evidence from sources
- Weighing and weaving
“Patchwriting”
Weighing and weaving a conversation

Picking a fight

Piggybacking

Settling a dispute
How strongly endorsed (verbs)?

suggest, imply, indicate, support, point out...

establish, show, prove, confirm, validate...

say, state, report, inform, refer to, comment on, mention, conclude
Qualifiers vs. Intensifiers

to some degree, to a certain extent, to a limited extent, in a restricted way, somewhat, potentially, fairly, rather, quite.

clearly, strongly, significantly, substantial, widely, unambiguously, generally, complete, essentially, primary, conclusive, unanimously
There are two main networks of pirates operating off the coast of the Horn of Africa, and despite reports suggesting otherwise, they are loosely organized and poorly trained. The first network is located in Puntland, based mainly in the Eyl district, while the other is located in central Somalia.

To some extent, these two networks cooperate and coordinate with one another, and the organizations are guided largely by the principles of private enterprise. The security sector in Puntland is relatively weak, and there is simply no capacity for law enforcement in central Somalia. Both private financiers and other prominent business organizations advance the startup money for the pirate groups. Aside from cash, these funders also provide assistance in the form of boats, fuel, arms, and communication equipment.

The second phase of the piracy operation begins with the seizure of a targeted vessel. Once a vessel is seized, it is the financier's job to find a sponsor who is willing to bankroll the cost of the operation, which will eventually be paid back through a share of the ransom. The vessel is then taken to a coastal port, an attribute for which the village of Eyl has made its namesake. Once in port, a ground team awaits the arrival and takes care of the supplies and pays for local protection of those on board the vessel. This indicates that there is some form of corrupt political acquiescence in play, and the U.N. Monitoring Group reported that senior government officials are among those involved.

After negotiations, a ransom is paid in cash to those who successfully influence the foreign entity that owns the vessel. Distribution is flexibly scaled but is reported to resemble the following: maritime militia, ten percent of the ransom to the financiers, and ten percent to the government officials involved.

Weaker evaluative verbs:

Stronger evaluative verbs:

Limiters:

Intensifiers:

Weighing indicators:

Stated as absolute fact:
Social Studies in the Common Core

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.6** Describe how a narrator’s or speaker’s point of view influences how events are described.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.7** Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text (e.g., graphic novel, multimedia presentation of fiction, folktale, myth, poem).
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.7** Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.
Close Reading

• Comprehension
• Tone
• Evidence from sources
• Weighing and weaving
• Visual evidence
What I see

- Pirates: gym pants, no shoes, African cloth
- US soldiers: uniforms, bullet-proof vest, shoes
- Pirate thin / Soldiers stocky

What it means

"rag tag" description fits - poorly outfitted, not well-fed
An infographic can be a visual argument

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.1** Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7** Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.8** Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
Edward Tufte: Visualize data

• Graphical excellence
  – Greatest number of ideas
  – In the shortest time
  – With the least ink
  – In the smallest space

• Shows data variation, not decoration

• Tells the truth

Pirate Wars

53% of the world's pirate attacks in 2011 were by Somali pirates.

An additional 12% occurred off the coast of West Africa.

Weapons of Choice

245 incidences
69 incidences

Pirate Attacks by Region, 2011

- Africa: 295 attacks
- Asia: 119 attacks
- Americas: 25 attacks

439 total attacks

Target of Choice

Cargo Ships

Typical cargo ship length: 1200 feet
Typical pirate boat length: 20 feet

Source: International Maritime Bureau Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships 2011 Report
Graphics: Kyle Kim/GlobalPost
Persuasion vs. Argument

**Persuasion (editorial)**
- Rests on the credibility, character, or authority of the writer
- May appeal to the audience’s self-interest and sense of identity
- Includes emotional appeal

**Argument (investigative article)**
- Rests on perceived merit and logic of the claims and proofs
- Requires evidence
- May include personal experience as evidence
News Literacy

This guide describes resources for integrating News Literacy into a 6-12 history/social studies curriculum.

Last Update: Feb 22, 2014  |  URL: http://library.harker.org/NewsLit  |  Status: Published

Understanding the News

Library.Harker.org/NewsLit
What is NoodleTools?

A platform for student / group research
- Integrated components
- Contextualized help
- Data for self-assessment

A platform for teaching the research process
- View individuals and groups progress
- Comment directly on student work
- Assessment framework
- Cross-curricular collaboration
“Need help”
News Literacy: Evaluating Authority...

Questions...?

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