



The Spokesman-Review can be a valuable way to engage students in current events, critical thinking, and media literacy. This 14-day lesson plan provides a structured way to explore news analysis, media literacy, and critical thinking using ***The Spokesman-Review*** e-Edition as a resource. Be sure to adapt the activities, topics, and depth of analysis to suit your students' grade level and learning objectives.

Day 1: Introduction to Newspapers

Learning Target/Objective:

Students will understand the purpose of newspapers and identify their key components.

Success Criteria:

Students can list and describe the key sections of a newspaper.

Materials Needed:

- Access to ***The Spokesman-Review*** e-Edition
- Projector/Smartboard (for class viewing)

Anticipatory Set:

Begin by asking students, “*What sources do you use to get your news?*”

Instruction:

Explain the key components of a newspaper: headlines, articles, editorials, classifieds, etc. Use ***The Spokesman-Review*** e-Edition to show real examples. Highlight different sections, such as the front page, sports, business, and local news. Expanded lesson [here](#).

Guided Practice Questions:

- What sections can you find in today’s ***The Spokesman-Review*** e-Edition?
- Why do you think each section is important for the readers?

Closure/Assessment:

Exit ticket: Have students write down three things they learned about the structure of a newspaper.

Independent Practice:

Explore *The Spokesman-Review* e-Edition at home and list the sections you find most interesting.

 **Day 2: The Role of Newspapers in Communities****Learning Target/Objective:**

Students will understand how newspapers serve communities by providing information, education, and a forum for public discourse.

Success Criteria:

Students can explain three key roles newspapers play in communities.

Materials Needed:

- *The Spokesman-Review* e-Edition

Anticipatory Set:

Ask, “How do you think your community would be different without a local newspaper?”

Instruction:

Discuss the role of newspapers in reporting news, educating the public, and serving as a platform for community dialogue. Use examples from *The Spokesman-Review* e-Edition, such as local news stories, editorials, or community announcements.

Talking Point 1: Informing the Public

- Newspapers serve as a primary source of information for the community. They provide up-to-date news on local, national, and international events. By reporting on topics like politics, education, health, and public safety, newspapers keep the community informed about what’s happening around them.
- **Example:** When a new law is passed, the newspaper reports on it, explaining how it will impact the community.

Talking Point 2: Holding Authorities Accountable

- Newspapers play a crucial role in holding government officials and public figures accountable. Through investigative journalism, they uncover and report on corruption, misuse of power, and other issues that affect the public. This watchdog function helps ensure transparency and promotes integrity in public offices.
- **Example:** If a local official is involved in a scandal, the newspaper investigates and reports the facts, which can lead to public outcry and legal action.

Talking Point 3: Fostering Community Engagement

- Newspapers provide a platform for community voices. They publish letters to the editor, opinion pieces, and guest columns that reflect diverse perspectives within the community.

This encourages public discourse and allows citizens to share their views on important issues.

- **Example:** A newspaper may feature opinions on a proposed community development project, allowing residents to express their support or concerns.

Guided Practice Questions:

- What is one example of how ***The Spokesman-Review*** has informed the community?
- How might a newspaper influence community decisions?

Closure/Assessment:

Exit ticket: Write one way that a newspaper contributes to your community.

Independent Practice:

Research a community issue covered in ***The Spokesman-Review*** and summarize it.

 **Day 3: Understanding Editorials**

Learning Target/Objective:

Students will understand the purpose and structure of editorials in newspapers.

Success Criteria:

Students can identify the main argument in an editorial and explain its significance.

Materials Needed:

- ***The Spokesman-Review*** e-Edition
- Printed copies of a selected editorial

Anticipatory Set:

Pose the question, “*What’s the difference between a news article and an opinion piece?*”

Instruction:

Introduce the concept of editorials as opinion pieces written by the editorial board or guest writers. Read a selected editorial from ***The Spokesman-Review*** and analyze its structure (argument, evidence, conclusion). Discuss how editorials reflect the author’s stance on issues and encourage public discourse.

Talking Point 1: What Are Editorials?

- Editorials are opinion pieces published in newspapers that express the views of the editorial board or guest writers. Unlike news articles, which aim to report facts objectively, editorials present arguments, opinions, and perspectives on various issues.
- **Example:** An editorial might advocate for policy changes, criticize government actions, or highlight social issues.

Talking Point 2: Understanding the Structure of an Editorial

- Editorials typically follow a clear structure to effectively convey their message:
 - **Argument:** The editorial begins with a statement of the main opinion or argument, clearly stating the author's stance on the issue.
 - **Evidence:** The body of the editorial provides supporting evidence, such as facts, statistics, and examples, to back up the argument. This evidence is crucial in persuading readers to agree with the author's viewpoint.
 - **Conclusion:** The editorial concludes by summarizing the argument and often includes a call to action, urging readers to think about the issue or take specific steps.

Talking Point 3: Analyzing an Editorial from *The Spokesman-Review*

- After reading a selected editorial from *The Spokesman-Review*, identify the key components:
 - **What is the main argument?** Discuss the central opinion or stance the editorial takes.
 - **What evidence is used?** Examine how the author supports their argument. What facts, examples, or expert opinions are included?
 - **How does the conclusion reinforce the argument?** Consider how the editorial wraps up the discussion and whether it successfully persuades the reader.

Talking Point 4: Editorials and Public Discourse

- Editorials reflect the author's stance on issues, often sparking conversation and debate within the community. By presenting strong opinions, editorials encourage readers to think critically about current events and form their own opinions.
- **Example:** An editorial on environmental policy may prompt readers to discuss climate change and what actions should be taken locally or nationally.

Guided Practice Questions:

- What is the main argument of this editorial?
- Do you agree or disagree with the opinion? Why?

Closure/Assessment:

Exit ticket: Write a one-sentence summary of the editorial's main argument.

Independent Practice:

Find another editorial in *The Spokesman-Review* and summarize its main points.

Day 4: Reporting vs. Opinion Writing

Learning Target/Objective:

Students will differentiate between news reporting and opinion writing.

Success Criteria:

Students can distinguish factual reporting from opinion writing in a newspaper.

Materials Needed:

- **The Spokesman-Review** e-Edition
- Two articles: one news report, one editorial

Anticipatory Set:

Ask, “How do you think reporters stay objective when covering the news?”

Instruction:

Discuss the differences between reporting (fact-based) and opinion writing (perspective-based). Compare a news report and an editorial from **The Spokesman-Review**. Highlight how news reports focus on presenting facts, while editorials offer personal or collective opinions. Expanded lesson [here](#).

When discussing the differences between reporting (fact-based) and opinion writing (perspective-based), it's important to understand the distinct purposes and structures of these two types of writing.

Reporting is all about presenting facts in a straightforward and unbiased manner. The goal of a news report is to inform the reader about events, issues, or developments by providing accurate and verified information. A good example of this can be seen in a news report from **The Spokesman-Review**, where the focus is on delivering the who, what, where, when, why, and how of a story. The language is neutral, and the reporter avoids inserting their personal views, instead prioritizing objectivity.

On the other hand, **opinion writing**—which includes editorials, op-eds, and columns—focuses on interpreting facts through a particular lens, often reflecting the views of the writer or a specific group. When you look at an editorial from **The Spokesman-Review**, you'll notice a shift from mere presentation of facts to analysis and commentary. Editorials typically address the implications of events, advocate for certain viewpoints, or argue for specific actions. The language in opinion pieces is more persuasive and subjective, aiming to convince readers rather than just inform them.

By comparing a news report and an editorial from the same publication, such as **The Spokesman-Review**, you can clearly see how news reports prioritize factual accuracy and objectivity, while editorials offer insight, analysis, and opinions on those facts, often sparking further discussion or debate.

Guided Practice Questions:

- How is the tone different between the news report and the editorial?
- Why is it important to keep news reporting and opinion writing separate?

Closure/Assessment:

Exit ticket: List two key differences between news reports and editorials.

Independent Practice:

Find an example of each in *The Spokesman-Review* and explain how you identified them.

 **Day 5: Analyzing Headlines**

Learning Target/Objective:

Students will analyze how headlines are crafted to attract attention and convey key information.

Success Criteria:

Students can explain the purpose of a headline and identify key features.

Materials Needed:

- *The Spokesman-Review* e-Edition
- Examples of headlines from the day's edition

Anticipatory Set:

Display several headlines and ask, “*What makes you want to click on a headline?*”

Instruction:

Discuss the role of headlines in capturing the reader's attention and summarizing the story. Break down several headlines from *The Spokesman-Review* and analyze their structure and effectiveness. Explain how headlines use keywords, emotion, and sometimes puns or wordplay to attract readers.

Talking Point 1: Importance of Headlines

- Headlines serve as the first point of contact between the reader and the article. They must quickly capture attention and provide a snapshot of the story's content.
- A well-crafted headline can draw readers in, encouraging them to read further, while a poorly constructed one can cause readers to skip the story altogether.

Talking Point 2: Functions of a Headline

- **Attention-Grabbing:** Headlines need to stand out in a sea of content. They often use strong, compelling language or intriguing phrases to hook the reader's interest.
- **Summary of Content:** In addition to grabbing attention, headlines must succinctly convey the main point or theme of the article, giving readers a sense of what the story is about.

Talking Point 3: Breaking Down Headlines from *The Spokesman-Review*

- Analyze a few recent headlines from *The Spokesman-Review* to see how they accomplish these goals. For example:
 - “*City Council Approves New Affordable Housing Project*”: This headline is straightforward, clearly summarizing the key action (approval of a housing project) while using keywords like "affordable housing" to highlight the topic's relevance.
 - “*Storm Slams Region, Leaves Thousands Without Power*”: Here, the use of the word "slams" injects emotion and urgency, making the headline more impactful. The phrase "leaves thousands without power" adds a sense of consequence.
 - “*Mayor’s Budget Cuts Draw Ire from Community Groups*”: This headline uses a strong verb, "draw ire," to convey conflict and emotion, which can attract readers who are interested in local controversies.

Talking Point 4: Structure and Effectiveness

- **Keywords:** Effective headlines often include keywords that are relevant to the reader's interests, such as "affordable housing," "power outage," or "budget cuts." These words help readers quickly identify the story's focus.
- **Emotion:** Emotive language, such as "slams," "draws ire," or "struggles," adds a sense of urgency or drama, which can make headlines more compelling.
- **Puns and Wordplay:** Sometimes, headlines use puns or clever wordplay to grab attention or add humor. While risky, when done well, this technique can make a headline memorable and shareable.

Talking Point 5: Balancing Clarity and Creativity

- Discuss the challenge of crafting headlines that are both clear and creative. While it's important to be concise and informative, adding a touch of creativity can make a headline more engaging.

Talking Point 6: Conclusion

- The best headlines from *The Spokesman-Review* effectively balance the need to inform with the need to attract attention, using a combination of keywords, emotional appeal, and sometimes clever language to draw readers in.

Guided Practice Questions:


- What keywords make this headline effective?
- How does the headline influence your expectation of the article?

Closure/Assessment:

Exit ticket: Write your own headline for a current news story in *The Spokesman-Review*.

Independent Practice:

Review headlines in *The Spokesman-Review* and choose the most compelling one. Explain your choice.

 **Day 6: The History of *The Spokesman-Review***

Learning Target/Objective:

Students will explore the history of *The Spokesman-Review* and its impact on the community.

Success Criteria:

Students can summarize key historical events related to the newspaper.

Materials Needed:

- Internet Access
- Projector/Smartboard

Anticipatory Set:

Ask, “Why do you think it’s important for a newspaper to have a long history in a community?”

Instruction:

Research the history of *The Spokesman-Review*. Discuss significant events the newspaper has covered over the years and their evolution in response to changes in technology and society.

Guided Practice Questions:


- How has *The Spokesman-Review* changed over time?
- Why is it important for a newspaper to adapt to changes in technology?

Closure/Assessment:

Exit ticket: Write down one historical fact about *The Spokesman-Review* that surprised you.

Independent Practice:

Research another historical newspaper and compare its history with that of *The Spokesman-Review*.

 **Day 7: Interviewing and Gathering Sources**

Learning Target/Objective:

Students will learn the basics of interviewing and evaluating sources for credibility.

Success Criteria:

Students can conduct a basic interview and evaluate the credibility of their sources.

Materials Needed:

- [Sample interview questions](#)

- **The Spokesman-Review** e-Edition

Anticipatory Set:

Ask, “What makes a source credible? How can you tell if someone is trustworthy?”

Instruction:

Teach the basics of interviewing, including preparing questions, active listening, and following up on responses. Discuss the importance of evaluating the credibility of sources. Use **The Spokesman-Review** articles to identify how reporters quote sources and verify information.

What makes a source credible?

Talking Point 1: Expertise and Knowledge

- *Relevant Background:* A credible source should have expertise or significant knowledge in the subject area they are discussing. Consider their education, experience, and professional background.
- *Track Record of Accuracy:* Evaluate whether the source has a history of providing accurate and reliable information. Past credibility often indicates future trustworthiness.

Talking Point 2: Objectivity and Bias

- *Lack of Bias:* A trustworthy source should provide information objectively, without letting personal biases overly influence their statements. Be cautious of sources with strong affiliations or agendas that could color their perspective.
- *Balanced Viewpoint:* Look for sources that acknowledge multiple sides of an issue and provide evidence for their claims. This balance often indicates credibility.

Talking Point 3: Consistency with Other Sources

- *Cross-Verification:* Check if the information provided by the source aligns with what other reputable sources are saying. Consistency across multiple credible sources strengthens the reliability of the information.
- *Fact-Checking:* Utilize independent fact-checking tools or organizations to verify the information. A source that stands up to fact-checking is more likely to be trustworthy.

Talking Point 4: Transparency and Citation

- *Source Identification:* A credible source should clearly identify where their information comes from, citing reliable data, studies, or firsthand experience.
- *Willingness to Provide Evidence:* Trustworthy sources are open about their sources and willing to provide evidence or documentation when questioned.

Talking Point 5: Reputation and Recognition

- *Peer Respect:* Consider whether the source is respected within their field. If experts or institutions in the same area of study recognize them as credible, that's a strong indicator of trustworthiness.
- *Affiliations with Reputable Organizations:* Sources connected to well-known and respected institutions or publications are often more credible due to the vetting and standards of those organizations.

Talking Point 6: Motivations and Intentions

- *Understanding Intent:* Assess the source's motivations—are they providing information to inform, sell, persuade, or entertain? Understanding their intent can help you gauge the credibility of the information.
- *Potential Conflicts of Interest:* Be wary of sources with potential conflicts of interest, such as financial gain, personal vendettas, or political motivations that could influence their objectivity.

Talking Point 7: Consistency Over Time

- *Reliable Over Time:* A source that consistently provides accurate and reliable information over time is more likely to be trustworthy. Look at their history to see if they have maintained credibility.

Talking Point 8: Openness to Scrutiny

- *Willingness to Engage in Dialogue:* Credible sources are typically open to being questioned and are willing to engage in discussions or debates about their information.
- *Admits Errors:* A trustworthy source acknowledges mistakes and corrects them transparently, which can enhance their credibility.

Talking Point 9: Use of Evidence and Reasoning

- *Evidence-Based Claims:* Trustworthy sources base their statements on verifiable evidence rather than opinion or speculation.
- *Logical Reasoning:* Evaluate whether the source's arguments are logically sound and supported by evidence, rather than relying on emotional appeals or anecdotal evidence.

Guided Practice Questions:

- What makes a source reliable or unreliable?
- How can you tell if an interview subject is knowledgeable about a topic?

Closure/Assessment:

Exit ticket: List two questions you would ask in an interview about a current event.

Independent Practice:

Conduct a short interview with a family member or friend about a current event and evaluate their responses for credibility.

Day 8: Understanding Bias in Media

Learning Target/Objective:

Students will identify bias in news articles and understand how it affects reporting.

Success Criteria:

Students can identify biased language and explain its impact on news coverage.

Materials Needed:

- *The Spokesman-Review* e-Edition
- Examples of biased and unbiased reporting

Anticipatory Set:

Ask, “Can a news article be completely unbiased? Why or why not?”

Instruction:

Discuss the concept of bias in media and how it can influence the way news is reported. Analyze examples of articles you think are biased as well as unbiased reporting from *The Spokesman-Review*, focusing on word choice, tone, and the selection of facts. Expanded lesson [here](#).

Guided Practice Questions:

- What are some signs that an article might be biased?
- How can bias affect a reader’s perception of the news?

Closure/Assessment:

Exit ticket: Identify a biased statement in a news article and explain why it’s biased.

Independent Practice:

Find a news article in *The Spokesman-Review* and analyze it for any potential bias.

Day 9: Writing a News Report

Learning Target/Objective:

Students will learn how to write a basic news report.

Success Criteria:

Students can draft a factual news report based on a given event.

Materials Needed:

- *The Spokesman-Review* e-Edition
- [News report templates](#)

Anticipatory Set:

Ask, “What makes a news report different from other types of writing?”

Instruction:

Teach students the structure of a news report: headline, lead, body, and conclusion. Use **The Spokesman-Review** articles as examples. Guide students through the process of writing their own news report on a recent event.

Talking Point 1: Headline

- *Purpose of the Headline:* Explain that the headline is the first thing readers see and should capture their attention immediately. It provides a concise summary of the news story.
- *Key Characteristics:* Teach students that a good headline is brief, clear, and specific. It should convey the main point of the story without giving away too much.
- *Types of Headlines:* Discuss different types of headlines, such as direct (e.g., "School Board Approves New Budget") and intriguing (e.g., "Why Your Commute Might Get Shorter Next Year").
- *Tips for Writing Headlines:* Encourage students to use strong action verbs and avoid unnecessary words. Remind them to keep the headline under 10 words if possible.

Talking Point 2: Lead Paragraph

- *Importance of the Lead:* Emphasize that the lead paragraph is crucial because it provides the most important information right at the beginning. It sets the tone and direction of the report.
- *The 5 Ws and H:* Teach students that the lead should address the essential questions—Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How?—in a clear and concise manner.
- *Types of Leads:* Introduce different types of leads, such as the summary lead (e.g., "A local elementary school was awarded a national prize yesterday..") and the anecdotal lead (e.g., "As Sarah walked into the gym, she didn't expect to leave with a trophy..").
- *Writing an Effective Lead:* Guide students to write a lead that grabs attention, provides the main point of the story, and entices readers to continue reading.

Talking Point 3: Body Paragraphs

- *Expanding on the Lead:* Explain that the body of the news report provides additional details and context to expand on the information presented in the lead.
- *Logical Structure:* Teach students to organize the body of the report using the inverted pyramid style, where the most important details are presented first, followed by less critical information.
- *Including Quotes and Evidence:* Instruct students to incorporate quotes from relevant sources, facts, statistics, and background information to support the story. Remind them to attribute quotes accurately.

- *Maintaining Clarity and Objectivity:* Encourage students to write clearly and objectively, avoiding any personal bias or opinions. Each paragraph should focus on a single idea or piece of information.

Talking Point 4: Conclusion

- *Purpose of the Conclusion:* Explain that while not all news reports require a formal conclusion, it can be useful for summarizing key points, providing a final thought, or indicating what might happen next.
- *Types of Conclusions:* Discuss different ways to conclude a report, such as a summary of the main points, a quote that wraps up the story, or a statement about the future implications (e.g., "The decision will take effect next month, impacting thousands of commuters.").
- *Avoiding Redundancy:* Remind students not to simply repeat information from the lead or body. Instead, the conclusion should offer a final perspective or close the story effectively.
- *Keeping it Brief:* Teach students to keep the conclusion concise, ensuring it adds value to the report without unnecessary repetition.

Guided Practice Questions:

- What information is most important to include in the lead?
- How can you ensure your report is objective and factual?

Closure/Assessment:

Exit ticket: Write a lead paragraph for your news report.

Independent Practice:

Complete the news report draft and be ready to share it with the class.

Day 10: Peer Review Session

Learning Target/Objective:

Students will develop editing skills by reviewing and providing feedback on peers' news reports.

Success Criteria:

Students can give constructive feedback and improve their own writing based on peer input.

Materials Needed:

- Draft news reports from Day 9
- [Peer review checklists](#)

Anticipatory Set:

Ask, "Why is it important to get feedback on your writing?"

Instruction:

Introduce peer review techniques, focusing on constructive criticism. Have students exchange news report drafts and use the checklist to review each other's work, providing feedback on clarity, accuracy, and structure.

Talking Point 1: Introduction

- *Define Peer Review:* Begin by explaining what peer review is and why it is an essential part of the writing process. Highlight that peer review is not just about finding mistakes but also about helping peers improve their work.
- *Purpose of Constructive Criticism:* Discuss the importance of giving feedback that is constructive—feedback that is meant to help the writer improve. Emphasize that the goal is to be supportive and provide useful suggestions.

Talking Point 2: Key Components of Constructive Criticism

- *Be Specific:* Explain that feedback should be specific rather than vague. Instead of saying, "This part is confusing," a more constructive comment would be, "This sentence could be clearer if you explained why the character reacted that way."
- *Be Positive and Balanced:* Encourage students to start with something positive before offering suggestions for improvement. For example, "I really liked how you described the setting, but I think adding more dialogue could help the reader understand the characters better."
- *Focus on the Writing, Not the Writer:* Remind students to critique the writing, not the person who wrote it. For example, "The argument in this paragraph could be stronger," rather than, "You didn't do a good job here."
- *Offer Solutions, Not Just Problems:* Encourage students to offer suggestions for improvement. Instead of just pointing out a weakness, suggest how it could be fixed. For example, "This paragraph would be clearer if you combined these two sentences."

Guided Practice Questions:

- What feedback did you find most helpful?
- How can you improve your news report based on the feedback you received?

Closure/Assessment:

Exit ticket: Write one thing you will revise in your report based on peer feedback.

Independent Practice:

Revise your news report and prepare it for submission.

Day 11: Introduction to Digital Journalism

Learning Target/Objective:

Students will explore the basics of digital journalism and how newspapers like *The Spokesman-Review* have adapted to the digital age.

Success Criteria:

Students can explain how digital journalism differs from traditional print journalism.

Materials Needed:

- *The Spokesman-Review* e-Edition
- Examples of digital vs. print articles

Anticipatory Set:

Ask, “How do you usually access news—online or in print? What are the advantages of each?”

Instruction:

Discuss the evolution of newspapers into the digital age, focusing on how *The Spokesman-Review* utilizes its e-Edition to reach readers. Highlight the differences between digital and print journalism, including multimedia integration, hyperlinks, and interactive content.

Talking Point 1: Multimedia Integration

- **Digital Journalism:**
 - *Incorporates Various Media:* Digital journalism allows for the integration of videos, audio clips, slideshows, and infographics within articles, enhancing storytelling by providing a richer, more dynamic experience.
 - *Engagement and Accessibility:* These multimedia elements make stories more engaging and accessible to a broader audience, especially those who prefer visual or auditory content over text.
- **Print Journalism:**
 - *Static Content:* Print journalism relies solely on text and static images. While it can be highly informative and descriptive, it lacks the interactive and multimedia elements that digital platforms offer.
 - *Depth of Reading:* Print encourages in-depth reading without distractions, appealing to readers who prefer a more focused and immersive experience.

Talking Point 2: Hyperlinks

- **Digital Journalism:**
 - *Instant Access to Information:* Hyperlinks allow readers to instantly access additional information, related articles, and sources directly

from the text. This enhances transparency and allows for deeper exploration of the topic.

- *Interconnected Content:* Articles can link to previous reports, external studies, or multimedia content, creating an interconnected web of information that enriches the reader's understanding.

- **Print Journalism:**

- *No Direct Linking:* Print journalism cannot incorporate hyperlinks, so readers must rely on citations, footnotes, or separate references, which can be less convenient for quickly accessing related information.
- *Encourages Focused Reading:* The absence of hyperlinks means readers are less likely to be distracted by jumping to other content, potentially leading to a more concentrated reading experience.

Talking Point 3: Interactive Content

- **Digital Journalism:**

- *User Interaction:* Digital platforms can include interactive elements such as polls, comment sections, maps, and quizzes, allowing readers to engage directly with the content and participate in discussions.
- *Real-Time Updates:* Interactive content in digital journalism can be updated in real-time, providing the latest information and enabling readers to interact with evolving stories.

- **Print Journalism:**

- *Fixed Content:* Once printed, the content is static and cannot be updated or interacted with, making it less adaptable to breaking news or reader engagement.
- *Reader Interpretation:* Print relies on the reader's interpretation and engagement with the text itself, without the added layer of interaction or immediate feedback.

Guided Practice Questions:

- What are the benefits of digital journalism for readers?
- How does digital journalism change the way news is presented?

Closure/Assessment:

Exit ticket: Write down one feature of digital journalism that you find most interesting.

Independent Practice:

Explore *The Spokesman-Review* e-Edition and identify a digital feature (video, interactive graphic, etc.) that enhances a news story.

Day 12: Exploring Multimedia in Journalism

Learning Target/Objective:

Students will learn how multimedia elements like videos, photos, and infographics enhance news stories.

Success Criteria:

Students can identify and explain the impact of multimedia in journalism.

Materials Needed:

- **The Spokesman-Review** e-Edition
- Examples of multimedia in news stories

Anticipatory Set:

Ask, “How do videos and photos help tell a news story?”

Instruction:

Discuss the role of multimedia in modern journalism, focusing on how it complements written content. Use examples from **The Spokesman-Review** to show how videos, photos, and infographics can provide additional context and engage readers.

Talking Point 1: Enhanced Storytelling

- **Multimedia as a Complementary Tool:** In modern journalism, multimedia elements like videos, audio clips, and interactive graphics provide additional layers to storytelling. They allow journalists to present information in ways that text alone cannot capture, making stories more engaging and comprehensive.
- **Example:** *The Spokesman-Review* often incorporates interactive maps in its local coverage, allowing readers to explore the geographical context of a story directly, rather than relying solely on descriptive text.

Talking Point 2: Improved Engagement and Accessibility

- **Catering to Diverse Audiences:** Multimedia elements cater to different learning styles and preferences, making content more accessible. For example, some readers might prefer watching a video summary or listening to a podcast rather than reading a lengthy article.
- **Example:** The publication's use of podcasts, like “The Press Box” podcast, engages sports fans who might prefer to hear discussions and interviews rather than read game recaps or opinion pieces.

Talking Point 3: Real-Time Reporting and Updates

- **Multimedia in Breaking News:** Multimedia allows for real-time updates during breaking news events. Videos and live streams can provide immediate, on-the-ground

perspectives, while written content offers detailed analysis and background information.

- **Example:** During the 2020 wildfires in Washington State, *The Spokesman-Review* used drone footage to show the extent of the damage, offering a visceral visual element that complemented the detailed written coverage of the event.

Talking Point 4: Interactivity and Audience Participation

- **Fostering Community Engagement:** Interactive multimedia, such as polls, quizzes, or comment-enabled infographics, allows audiences to engage directly with the content, fostering a sense of participation and community involvement.
- **Example:** *The Spokesman-Review* has used interactive features in its coverage of local elections, where readers could explore candidate positions on issues via interactive charts and then share their opinions in comment sections or social media.

Talking Point 5: Visual Evidence and Verification

- **Enhancing Credibility:** Multimedia serves as visual or auditory evidence that supports the written narrative, enhancing the credibility and trustworthiness of the journalism.
- **Example:** In investigative reports, *The Spokesman-Review* might use video interviews or photographic evidence to substantiate claims made in the articles, ensuring that readers have a clear, evidence-based understanding of the story.

Talking Point 6: Expanding the Reach of Journalism

- **Appealing to Broader Audiences:** Multimedia can help stories reach a broader audience, especially on social media platforms where visual content is more likely to be shared.
- **Example:** The newspaper's short, captioned video segments summarizing key stories often go viral on social media, reaching audiences who may not typically engage with traditional print journalism.

Talking Point 7: Supporting Data Journalism

- **Visualizing Complex Data:** In data journalism, multimedia, particularly infographics and data visualizations, can help make complex datasets more digestible and understandable for the average reader.
- **Example:** *The Spokesman-Review* has employed data visualizations to break down complicated topics like local economic trends or public health statistics, turning dense data into accessible visuals that complement the written analysis.

Talking Point 8: Educational Value

- **Providing Contextual Learning:** Multimedia can provide educational content that enhances readers' understanding of the news by offering backgrounders, historical context, or expert interviews that explain why a story matters.

- **Example:** In its coverage of regional history, *The Spokesman-Review* often includes archival footage or expert video interviews that enrich the written articles, providing readers with a deeper understanding of the topic.

Guided Practice Questions:

- How does this video/photo/infographic enhance the story?
- Why is multimedia important in today's news reporting?

Closure/Assessment:

Exit ticket: Describe how you would use multimedia to enhance a news story.

Independent Practice:

Find a multimedia feature in *The Spokesman-Review* and analyze how it adds to the understanding of the article.

 **Day 13: Ethics in Journalism**

Learning Target/Objective:

Students will explore the ethical principles in journalism, including accuracy, fairness, and accountability.

Success Criteria:

Students can identify ethical issues in journalism and suggest solutions.

Materials Needed:

- [Case studies](#)
- [Ethics guidelines](#)

Anticipatory Set:

Ask, “What does it mean to be ethical in journalism? Why does it matter?”

Instruction:

Introduce the concept of journalistic ethics, covering key principles like truthfulness, minimizing harm, and accountability using the ethics guidelines material. Discuss case studies from *The Spokesman-Review* where ethical decisions were critical.

Guided Practice Questions:

- What ethical dilemmas did the journalist face in this case?
- How could the situation have been handled differently?

Closure/Assessment:

Exit ticket: Write down one ethical principle you think is most important in journalism.

Independent Practice:

Choose a news article from *The Spokesman-Review* and evaluate it based on ethical principles discussed in class.

 **Day 14: Reflective Assessment****Learning Target/Objective:**

Students will reflect on their learning and assess how newspapers influence community decisions.

Success Criteria:

Students can articulate the impact of newspapers on their community.

Materials Needed:

- [Reflective writing prompts](#)
- *The Spokesman-Review* e-Edition

Anticipatory Set:

Ask, “After everything we’ve learned, how do you think newspapers impact your community?”

Instruction:

Facilitate a class discussion where students share their thoughts on how newspapers influence public opinion and community decisions. Encourage students to reflect on the role of journalism in society and their own perceptions of news media.

Guided Practice Questions:

- How has your view of newspapers changed over the past two weeks?
- In what ways do you think newspapers will continue to evolve?

Closure/Assessment:

Exit ticket: Write a short reflection on what you’ve learned about newspapers and their role in your community.

Independent Practice:

Complete a reflective essay on the role of newspapers in society, using examples from *The Spokesman-Review* to support your points. *We’d love to read the students reflective essays!*
Please share to nie@spokesman.com.