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**EXTRA!  
EXTRA!  
READ ALL  
ABOUT IT!**

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Jillian Cronin  
Grades 6-8  
August 6, 2015

## II. Introduction

Many students in the United States are often caught unaware of the daily events in not only their local neighborhoods or states, but also their nation and globe. In an increasingly technological and high-speed society, there is no excuse for not being up to date on the goings on in the world. The skills presented below are essential for students to learn in order to become well informed, current, contributing members of our society. Understanding how terms like, bias and censorship, affect our daily lives as Americans allows students to become more aware. Honest, well-researched, and unbiased reporting of the news is the only way that people can trust that the information is correct. Students need to understand why this is the case, and that not all news outlets or reports meet those criteria. In addition to understanding the background behind journalism, students in this unit will also create their own news reports. A student that cannot only read and keep up with current events, but also can create their own is truly immersing him or herself in the discipline.

Gifted learners, specifically, would greatly benefit from a unit such as this. It includes various types of differentiation; process, content, and product, all geared toward gifted learners. Throughout the unit, many of the activities, including the final performance task, are created with gifted learners in mind. Students are able to have choice regarding the presentation of their final product. This differentiation appeals to gifted learners because they will be more invested in their task and take more accountability in it. As far as complexity and challenge, that can be easily differentiated through types of selected topics or articles. This unit can be easily adapted to a higher-level secondary class and can approach and discuss more controversial topics, as the students are older. There is a Socratic Seminar within this unit as well as many mini-discussions. Gifted learners work well in groups and can formulate many deep, thorough discussions. Giving gifted learners many opportunities to participate in discussions, especially ones based around real world

connections is essential. In addition to differentiating the content through challenge and complexity, you could also differentiate the process through acceleration of the content. Once you have seen what the students are capable of and how quickly they take in information, the lesson may not take as long as suggested. It is important to get to know your students and see what they are capable of and how you might differentiate based on their giftedness. This unit provides a lot of opportunity for gifted students to thrive and learn and challenge themselves. It is up to you to differentiate as you, their teacher, see fit.

This unit is intended for middle school gifted learners, particularly upper middle. It can be easily adapted for higher or lower grade levels if needed. Students of any gender and cultural background would be able to engage within this unit. Because there is a lot of student choice, as well as opportunity for teachers to differentiate based on interest, students with any interests may enjoy this unit. The only challenge may be in students who come from various socioeconomic backgrounds. Certain students who are gifted but from a less affluent family may not be as aware of the social and political issues of the day as their more affluent counterparts. The teacher needs to be aware of these possibilities when assigning topics to students. Some students, despite their being gifted, may need some more background information on the field of journalism. Younger students, especially, may have had little to no experience with current events and news broadcasting. This can easily be remedied with some direct instruction and videos of various news broadcasters and news articles from multiple sources. Gifted students do not fit into a "box." Each student has his or her own needs with regards to education. As a teacher of the gifted, it is essential that you learn your students interests, abilities, and needs, in order to properly equip them with the skills they need to succeed.

### III. Goals and Outcomes

- i.) **Content Goal** – Students will know how a journalist reports on the news, as well as often-overlooked aspects of journalism, such as bias and censorship.
  - a. Elaborate on the various steps leading up to a news report and the people involved
  - b. List and explain various types of bias
  - c. Decipher bias within news articles
  - d. Analyze Supreme Court censorship cases and how it affects journalism

First off, students need a background and basic understanding of the concept. This overarching goal describes what students will be expected to learn within the unit.

- ii.) **Process Goal** – Students will be able to work collaboratively, research and report on current events.
  - a. Analyze various types of primary source documents
  - b. Engage in a variety of classroom discussions
  - c. Work with groups to practice the interview process
  - d. Write news reports using domain-specific vocabulary

This goal focuses on the way students will become active participants in the discipline. In order to truly understand journalism and the work that goes into it, students will themselves become “journalists.”

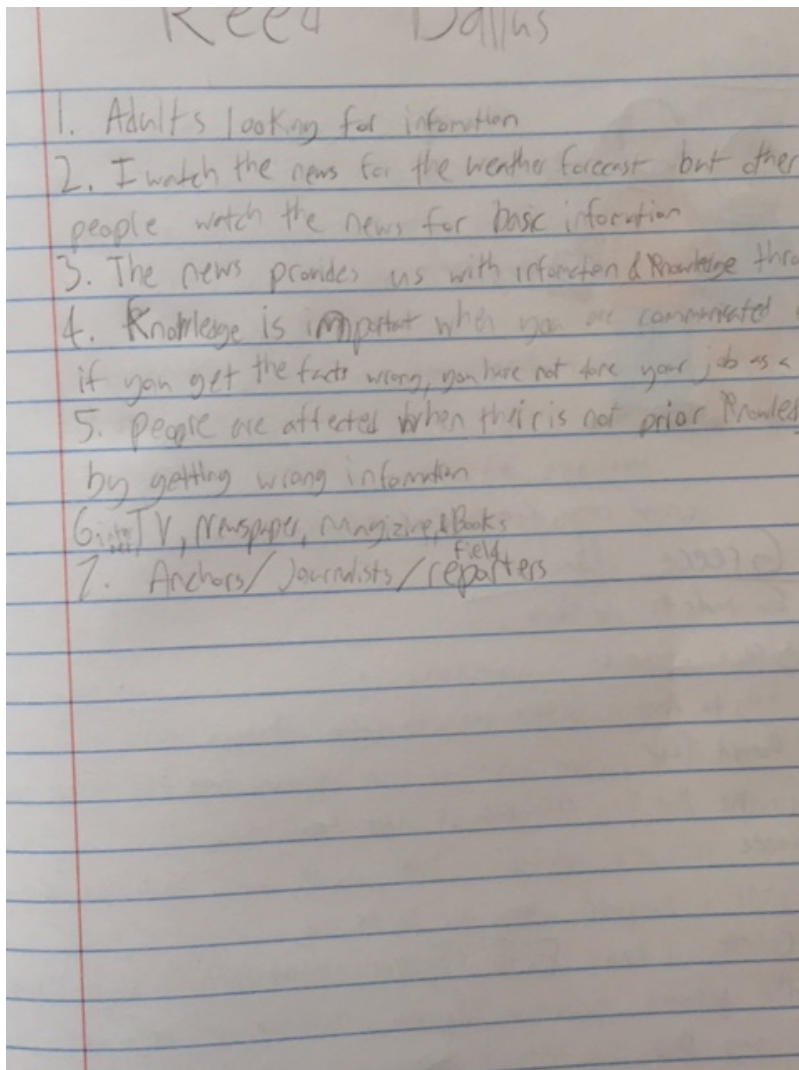
- iii.) **Concept Goal** – Students will understand that communication requires knowledge.

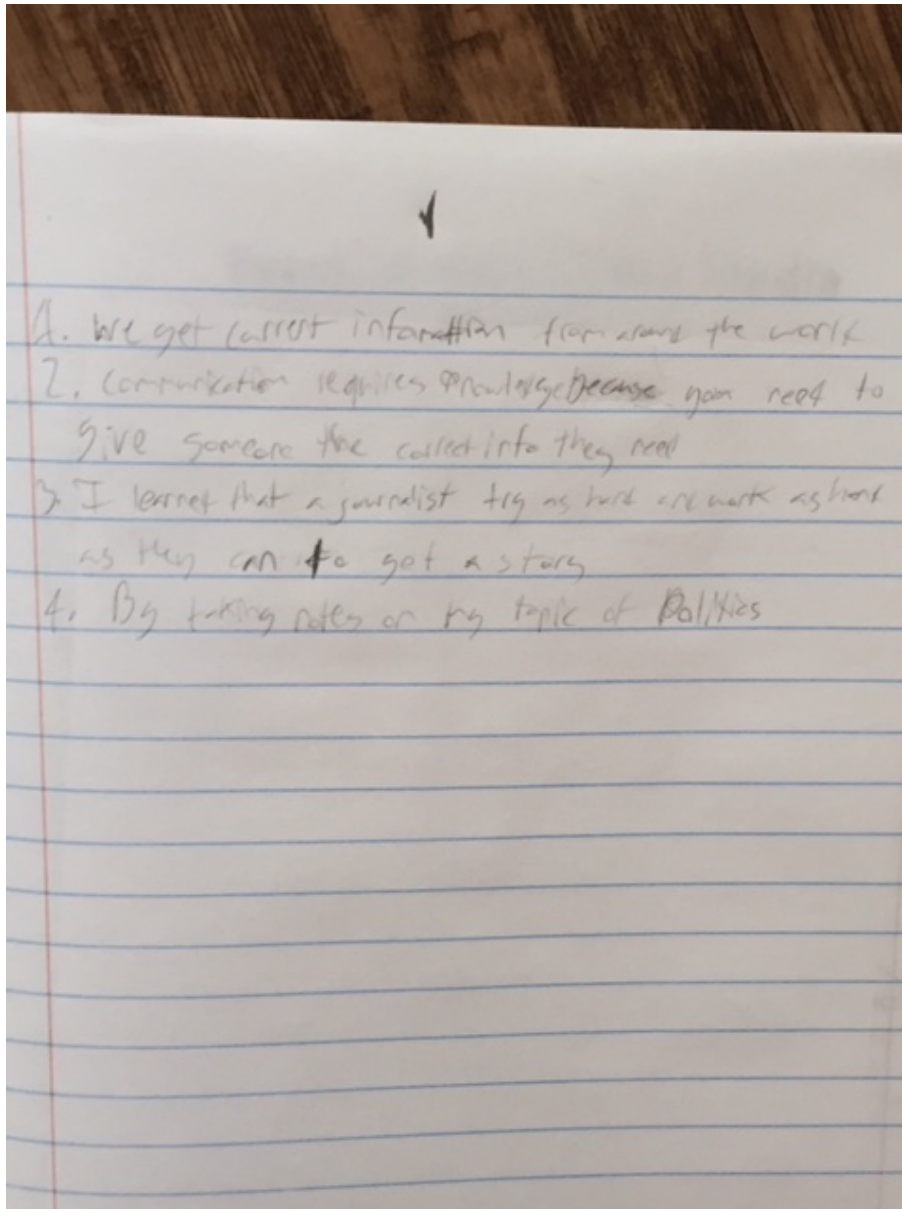
This goal is the essential understanding of the unit. By the end of the unit, I want to students to store this as their take away. I want them to be able to make this connection. Communication (i.e. reporting the news) requires knowledge (unbiased, highly researched information) before it can be relayed to the public. The students must be able to explain why this is important, before they can become true journalists.

## IV. Assessment Plan

This unit contains much formative assessment. Although summative assessments are essential for garnering information about student understanding, formative assessments can provide so much clarity throughout the course of the unit.

*Formative Assessments:* We will begin the days with a pre-lesson discussion period. This will give me the opportunity to assess student prior knowledge and check for understanding from previous days' lessons. The discussion period will be open and students can feel free to respond to questions in any way they see fit. I will encourage discussion amongst students and the teacher and amongst students and students. Prior to the discussion, the students will be given a few minutes to jot down their thoughts and organize them before we begin our pre-lesson discussion.





1. We get correct information from around the world
2. Communication requires knowledge because you need to give someone the correct info they need
3. I learned that a journalist try as hard as they can to get a story as they can
4. By taking notes on my topic of Politics

In addition to informal discussions at the start of lessons, the students will also wrap up every single lesson with informal discussions as well.

As their teacher, I gain a lot of valuable insight into their learning from the day with these wrap up discussions.

These discussions will not have time to process and write down their thoughts.

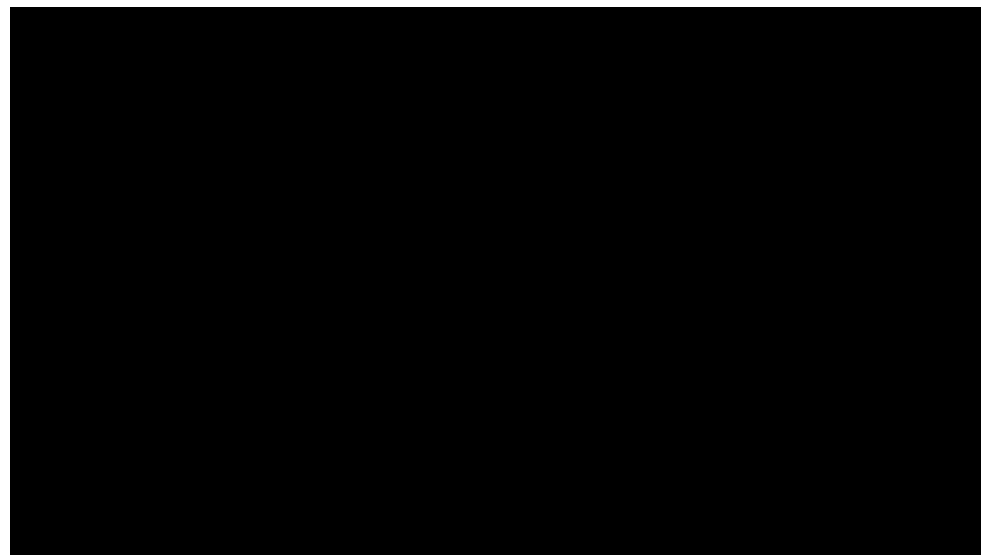
Instead, I will pose the questions and the students will simply share out their

thoughts and comments. These discussions will contain questions that reference material learned that day. These questions will also assess the students' abilities to make connections between the content material and the goals, specifically the concept goal: *communication requires knowledge*. Every day will end with this informal summary referencing that essential understanding. It is imperative that students are making the connection and meeting the aforementioned goals.

Not only will students be formatively assessed via informal discussions but, also, one of the lessons in the unit is a formal Socratic Seminar. This lesson/activity gives me an indication of how students are grasping the concepts taught to them. It also allows the students to see real world applications of their learning. As I mentioned before, gifted learners respond well when lessons and content can connect to the real world. Gifted students are able to place more value on information that affects and interacts with the world around them. This Socratic Seminar discusses issues of censorship and how it affects First Amendment rights, such as freedom of the press and freedom of speech.

Finally, by way of formative assessment, on Day 2 of the unit, when students are discussing bias and its application within our society, they will complete an independent formative activity. This activity involves students identifying uses of bias within national and world news headlines. I will be able to quickly see if students are grasping the concept of bias, as well as give the students opportunity to see how this concept is used in our daily lives.

*Summative Assessment:* The unit concludes with an authentic performance summative assessment. This assessment will demonstrate each students' understanding of the



concepts and their achievement of the stated goals. The students will be researching a current event, as detailed in the lesson plans,

and acting as actual, authentic participants in the discipline of Journalism. This

performance task will be drawn out over the course of the unit through the students' experience with the Bruner model. The Bruner model works well for gifted learners because students are immersed in the real world application of a discipline, in this case it is journalism. Gifted students understand how an active participant, a journalist or news reporter, works within the discipline. The students see the rules and expectations of a participant in the discipline of journalism. As the students go through the various steps of researching, interviewing, editing and so on, they become actual journalists themselves. At the end of the unit, the students will have completed either a newspaper article or a script and a newscast to demonstrate their *knowledge-based communication*.

## V. Lesson Plans

<b>TEACHER NAME</b>		<b>Lesson #</b>	
Jillian Cronin		1 (Day 1 of STEPS camp)	
<b>MODEL</b>	<b>CONTENT AREA</b>	<b>GRADE LEVEL</b>	
Bruner	Social Studies	8	
<b>CONCEPTUAL LENS</b>		<b>LESSON TOPIC</b>	
Communication		Writing news articles & acting as a journalist	
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES (from State/Local Curriculum)</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• W7.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.</li> <li>• W7.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.</li> </ul>			
<b>THE ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDING</b> <i>(What is the overarching idea students will understand as a result of this lesson?)</i>		<b>THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION</b> <i>(What question will be asked to lead students to “uncover” the Essential Understanding)</i>	



Communication requires knowledge	How does communication require knowledge?	
<b>CONTENT KNOWLEDGE</b> (What factual information will students learn in this lesson?)	<b>PROCESS SKILLS</b> (What will students be able to do as a result of this lesson?)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are various types of ways to communicate current events and happenings (i.e. blogs, newspapers, TV news channels, Twitter, etc.)</li> <li>• Journalists have to go through many channels before they can properly finish an article.</li> <li>• There are different roles within a news outlet (i.e. editor-in-chief, writer, investigative reporter) that all have different roles and goals to accomplish.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SWBAT:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work collaboratively to conduct research about current events</li> <li>• Explain the role of a journalist in reporting the news</li> <li>• Understand and analyze the role of an expert in the field of journalism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Take part in particular roles in the process</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Reflect on the Bruner model and the process as a whole</li> </ul>	
<b>GUIDING QUESTIONS</b> <i>What questions will be asked to support instruction?</i> <i>Include both "lesson plan level" questions as well as questions designed to guide students to the essential understanding</i>		
<b>Pre-Lesson Questions:</b>	<b>During Lesson Questions:</b>	<b>Post Lesson Questions:</b>
<p>Who watches the news?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Why do you watch the news? Why do people in general watch the news?</li> <li>2. How does the news provide us with information and knowledge?</li> <li>3. Why is knowledge important when things, such as the news, are being communicated?</li> <li>4. How are people affected when the news is communicated without any prior knowledge or factual understanding?</li> <li>5. What different types of media exist in the world of journalism?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What do reporters do?</li> <li>2. <i>After watching the clips</i>, what should we add to the list now?</li> <li>3. What sort of information will you need to gather as an expert in your field of journalism?</li> <li>4. What sorts of questions might you need to ask your interviewees?</li> <li>5. What sorts of things do you need to keep in mind, with regards to the questions we answered at the beginning of class?</li> <li>6. How does an editor in chief affect the outcome of reporting the news?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What do we gain from watching the news or reading current event articles?</li> <li>2. How does communication require knowledge? Why is this important?</li> <li>3. What are some new things that you learned about what a journalist does?</li> <li>4. How did this process help you feel like an active participant in the discipline of journalism?</li> </ol>

<p>6. Who are the experts that are associated with delivering the news?</p>	<p>7. How has their opinion about journalism changed since becoming active journalists?</p> <p>8. How can journalists affect all other aspects on our country?</p> <p>9. What rules and procedures do journalists follow?</p> <p>10. What role does knowledge play in the way news is communicated?</p> <p>11. Why is it important to have factual basis (knowledge) before you communicate something, such as the news?</p>	
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**DIFFERENTIATION**  
*(Describe how the planned learning experience has been modified to meet the needs of gifted learners. Note: Modifications may be in one or more of the areas below. Only provide details for the area(s) that have been differentiated for this lesson.*

Content	Process	Product	Learning Environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The students will become active participants in the discipline. The Bruner model is effective for gifted learners for this purpose.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>	

**PLANNED LEARNING EXPERIENCES**  
*(What will the teacher input? What will the students be asked to do? For clarity, please provide detailed instructions)*

**Engage and Connect** - *This phase focuses on piquing students' interest and helping them access prior knowledge. This is the introduction to the lesson that motivates or hooks the students.*

We will begin class by answering the pre-lesson questions. Once we have reached the last question, "Who are the experts associated in the news?" I will give the students five minutes to draw what a reporter/journalist looks like. The drawings should be based on depictions of qualities that the students believe "journalists" have. Once they have finished their drawings,

the students will answer the first during lesson question, “What do reporters do?” The students will share their drawings with the class and include their list of associated qualities. I will record the list of the qualities on the board, as the students show their drawings. Afterwards, the students will watch two clips centered on journalists. I will then ask the second ‘during lesson’ question, “Is there anything new we should add to this list?”

*Explore - In this phase, the students have experiences with the concepts and ideas of the lesson. Students are encouraged to work together without direct instruction from the teacher. The teacher acts as a facilitator. Students observe, question, and investigate the concepts to develop fundamental awareness of the nature of the materials and ideas.*

Students will choose their partners, based on interest in specific topics. I will list the choices of fields (i.e. entertaining, politics, sports, health, etc.) on the wall and students will go to their first choice and pair with the person also choosing that same field. Each pairing will be given a more specific topic based in the field that the pairings have agreed upon that is facing our nation today. Each pairing will represent a different news outlet reporting on a particular topic. The two students in each pair will act as “journalists” in their fields.

I will explain to students “in order to communicate news, knowledge and research are necessary. We cannot provide information to the public that is not legitimate (this also leads into the next day’s discussion, which is “bias” in the media.) Many famous reporters/journalists were only successful because they built a career on fact checking and dedicating their lives to bringing people the correct and true news.” Here, I will begin to introduce, experts in the field of journalism (i.e. Nellie Bly, Walter Cronkite, Woodward and Bernstein, all the way up to Diane Sawyer). We will discuss how different media, such as radio, newspaper, television, and Twitter affected the way these journalists researched and communicated the news. Here, I will ask question #10 in the during lesson questions. I will be able to assess students’ understanding of the connection between communication and knowledge formatively, based on their answers.

The students will then conduct research, digitally, about their particular topic and begin reporting that event (their final product will be part of the performance task. These are just first steps in that process.) I will be circulating the room (acting as editor-in-chief) to ensure that students are fact checking and effectively including knowledge in their communication of the current event topic and field.

*Explain - Students communicate what they have learned so far and figure out what it means. This phase also provides an opportunity for teachers to directly introduce a concept, process, or skill to guide students toward a deeper understanding.*

In the last 15 minutes of class, students will be asked to stop and come together as a whole group. I will then ask them to discuss things that they did not expect from the process. I will ask them to discuss with their partners one thing they would change about the process now that they have experienced being active journalists? As a class, we will discuss: What are some important rules that journalists need to follow to be effective? Did a certain style of reporting (i.e. newscast, newspaper article, etc.) stand out as most effective in reporting your news?

Elaborate —*Allow students to use their new knowledge and continue to explore its implications. At this stage students expand on the concepts they have learned, make connections to other related concepts, and apply their understandings to the world around them in new ways*

After the researching, I will ask the students to reflect on the process and describe on a piece of paper some new things that they learned about being a journalist. How has their opinion about journalism changed since becoming active journalists? How can journalists affect all other aspects of our country? (During lesson questions 7 & 8) Why are facts and knowledge necessary when communicating the news?

Evaluate: *This phase assesses both learning and teaching and can use a wide variety of informal and formal assessment strategies.*

Before leaving, students will continue to reflect on the process and orally answer the remaining 'post lesson questions.' I will be able to formatively assess their understanding during this portion. As their exit ticket, I will ask the students to leave one question they still had remaining and to answer the question, "How does communication require knowledge" as well as 'post lesson' question 4 on a piece of paper.

TEACHER NAME		Lesson #	
Jillian Cronin		2 (2 <sup>nd</sup> day of summer class)	
MODEL	CONTENT AREA	GRADE LEVEL	
VTS	Social Studies	Rising 6-8 graders	
CONCEPTUAL LENS		LESSON TOPIC	
Communication		Bias and its use in the media/interviewing	
LEARNING OBJECTIVES (from State/Local Curriculum)			
8.H.2.2: Summarize how leadership and citizen actions (e.g. the founding fathers, the Regulators, the Greensboro Four, and participants of the Wilmington Race Riots, 1898) influenced the outcome of key conflicts in North Carolina and the United States.			
<a href="#">CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.6</a> Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).			
THE ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDING (What is the overarching idea students will understand as a result of this lesson?)		THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION (What question will be asked to lead students to "uncover" the Essential Understanding)	
Communication requires knowledge		Why does communication require knowledge?	
CONTENT KNOWLEDGE (What factual information will students learn		PROCESS SKILLS (What will students be able to do as a result of	

in this lesson?)	this lesson?)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will be able to define bias.</li> <li>• Students will be able to list the different types of bias (bias through omission, visual bias, bias through wording, etc.)</li> <li>• Students will know that people may write with unintended biases, which makes it difficult for the reader to decipher them.</li> <li>• Students will know how to create interview questions.</li> <li>• Students will know how bias is depicted in the media (pictures, interviews, stories.)</li> </ul>	<b>SWBAT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze various types of primary source documents</li> <li>• Synthesize information</li> <li>• Discuss in a small and whole group setting</li> <li>• Formulate questions</li> <li>• Decipher types of bias in news articles</li> </ul>	
<b>GUIDING QUESTIONS</b> <i>What questions will be asked to support instruction?</i> <i>Include both “lesson plan level” questions as well as questions designed to guide students to the essential understanding</i>		
<b>Pre-Lesson Questions:</b>	<b>During Lesson Questions:</b>	<b>Post Lesson Questions:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is going on in the picture?</li> <li>• What do you see that makes you say that?</li> <li>• What do you think is happening?</li> <li>• What do you think the artist wanted to tell us about the event, the people involved, the setting, etc.?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can visuals be used to promote a message?</li> <li>• How has viewing the picture changed your definition of bias?</li> <li>• How does bias occur in the media?</li> <li>• Why do we have to be aware of bias when reporting the news?</li> <li>• What responsibilities do journalists have to their readers?</li> <li>• What happens if journalists are not unbiased in their reporting of events? How are people affected?</li> <li>• How can we as journalists do our best to eliminate bias in our reporting of the news?</li> <li>• How does careful selection of interviewees eliminate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are words the only medium that you gain information from? Why or why not?</li> <li>• Besides writing, what other text features do journalists use to communicate information?</li> <li>• How does communication require knowledge?</li> <li>• In what ways does bias affect our knowledge and affect our communication?</li> <li>• Why should we be aware of bias before we communicate?</li> </ul>

	bias?	
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**DIFFERENTIATION**  
*(Describe how the planned learning experience has been modified to meet the needs of gifted learners. Note: Modifications may be in one or more of the areas below. Only provide details for the area(s) that have been differentiated for this lesson.*

Content	Process	Product	Learning Environment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will be participating in a simulation (continuing from their Day 1 lesson of Bruner). This simulation will continue their process of being active participants in the discipline.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The product will be an authentic performance task. These particular assessments are geared toward gifted learners because it gives real world meaning to school assignments.</li> </ul>	

**PLANNED LEARNING EXPERIENCES**  
*(What will the teacher input? What will the students be asked to do? For clarity, please provide detailed instructions)*

**Engage and Connect** - *This phase focuses on piquing students' interest and helping them access prior knowledge. This is the introduction to the lesson that motivates or hooks the students.*

When the students enter the classroom, the word "Bias" will be written on the board. I will ask the students to brainstorm definitions or associated words that I will record on the board. After the students have come to a conclusion, they will view the Paul Revere painting "Boston Massacre," (found on the last page) a prime example of propaganda/bias. I will spend 20-25 minutes allowing the students to share out things they are observing, limiting my questions and responses to the pre-lesson questions listed above. Finally, I will ask the last question on the pre lesson questions list. Students will be expected to build on the discussion of other students. After the students have finished discussing the picture, I will explain the historical relevance of the painting and how it can be construed as pure bias.

**Explore** - *In this phase, the students have experiences with the concepts and ideas of the lesson. Students are encouraged to work together without direct instruction from the teacher. The*

*teacher acts as a facilitator. Students observe, question, and investigate the concepts to develop fundamental awareness of the nature of the materials and ideas.*

The lesson will then be redirected to “bias” in modern day once more. I will ask the second During Lesson question and accept any answers. We will have a short discussion on why bias is dangerous in the media. I will ask students During Lesson questions 4-6. Also, I will say, “People rely on the news and journalists to provide knowledge, information and to communicate in a truthful, nonpartisan way. What happens if journalists are not unbiased in their reporting of events? How are people affected?” I will have some examples of biased news reports. Here we should see students making the connection between unbiased knowledge and how its required to communicated the news. Students will take brief notes on bias and complete short graphic organizers on the various types of bias used in our society. After the note taking, students will complete a short activity wherein they circle around the room reading 8 headlines about world events. Each headline describes the same event using various forms of bias. The students will identify the bias being used and we will debrief the activity.

We will move into the second half of the lesson which is to continue our Bruner simulation from the previous day. The students will take on a new role of journalists, the interviewer. Each student will receive a manila envelope. Inside the envelope is a different news story that they will be expected to report on. This news story goes along with the story they are being asked to report on in their performance task. After having done research on their story (the first step a journalist does), they will now be tasked with the second step, which is interviewing various people. In the previous lesson, the students made the connection that communication needs knowledge. One cannot accurately report the news without fact-checking and gathering lots of knowledge on the topic. Here, I will brief the students after the have received their news story, about the importance of avoiding bias through your interview. I will ask During Lesson question #8 and have a brief discussion. Students will need to make the connection between how our “required knowledge” (as presented in the essential understanding) is enhanced through different interviewees. For example, students should look to interview people on both sides of strife to portray an accurate and whole picture of the news story.

*Explain - Students communicate what they have learned so far and figure out what it means. This phase also provides an opportunity for teachers to directly introduce a concept, process, or skill to guide students toward a deeper understanding.*

Before beginning their creating of the interview and questions, we will discuss types of bias that exist in the media. I will ask the students During Lesson #3, and list their answers on the board. Any remaining types of biases that the students do not produce, I will share with them (i.e. less obvious ones, such as bias through omission, bias by wording, statistical bias, etc.)

*Elaborate —Allow students to use their new knowledge and continue to explore its implications. At this stage students expand on the concepts they have learned, make connections to other related concepts, and apply their understandings to the world around them in new ways*

Students will use their understanding of how unbiased reporting plays into the required knowledge for accurate communication. Students will need to decide 2+ people they would want to interview as it pertains to their assigned news story. Once they have chosen, they will then start formulating questions they would need to ask their interviewee to get an unbiased, adequate picture of the story. This simulation/continuation of Bruner will provide the students with an understanding of how journalists act in the discipline.

(NOTE: There may also be an element of “fact-checking” included in this lesson. Once students have completed interviews, they will trade questions and stories with a “colleague” at the news station [as stated in their performance task.] The colleagues will then look for elements of bias in their questions and beginnings of news reports. I have yet to decide if there will be time in this lesson for this or if I will continue the simulation the next day.)

*Evaluate: This phase assesses both learning and teaching and can use a wide variety of informal and formal assessment strategies.*

As the lesson comes to a close, the students will write a 1-2 paragraph reflection that addresses the post lesson questions. It is important that the students grasp that when people relay the news (communicate) they need to have the full, truthful story (knowledge.) Pictures, articles, news broadcasts all contain elements of bias.



The BLOODY MASSACRE perpetrated in King-Street BOSTON on March 5<sup>th</sup> 1770 by a party of the 29<sup>th</sup> REG<sup>t</sup>



# Bias in the Media

**Bias:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Is bias always intentional? Why or why not?**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Liberal:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Conservative:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Types of Bias in the Media

**Bias through**

**Bias through Selection of  
Sources**

**Bias through Statistics**

**Bias through Word  
Choice**

<b>TEACHER NAME</b>		<b>Lesson #</b>	
Jillian Cronin		3 (3 <sup>rd</sup> day of summer class)	
<b>MODEL</b>	<b>CONTENT AREA</b>	<b>GRADE LEVEL</b>	
Socratic Seminar	Social Studies	Rising 6-8 graders	
<b>CONCEPTUAL LENS</b>		<b>LESSON TOPIC</b>	
Communication		First Amendment/Censorship	
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</b> (from State/Local Curriculum)			
<p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.1</u> Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1</u> Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.</p>			
<b>THE ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDING</b> (What is the overarching idea students will understand as a result of this lesson?)		<b>THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION</b> (What question will be asked to lead students to "uncover" the Essential Understanding)	
Communication requires knowledge		Why does communication require knowledge?	
<b>CONTENT KNOWLEDGE</b> (What factual information will students learn in this lesson?)		<b>PROCESS SKILLS</b> (What will students be able to do as a result of this lesson?)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The first amendment includes freedom of speech and freedom of the press.</li> <li>There have been multiple Supreme Court cases addressing these first amendment issues. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Including Tinker and Hazelwood</li> </ul> </li> <li>Nellie Bly was a journalist who exposed conditions in Insane Asylums and advocated for better conditions.</li> </ul>		<b>SWBAT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage in a Socratic Seminar discussion</li> <li>Cite specific textual evidence when referencing texts</li> <li>Work collaboratively</li> <li>Build on others' ideas</li> </ul>	
<b>GUIDING QUESTIONS</b> What questions will be asked to support instruction? Include both "lesson plan level" questions as well as questions designed to guide students to the essential understanding			
<b>Pre-Lesson Questions:</b>	<b>During Lesson Questions:</b>	<b>Post Lesson Questions:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What rights does the First Amendment guarantee us?</li> <li>How does the cartoon depict free speech?</li> <li>Is completely "free speech" a good thing?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>[Many of the during lesson questions will generated by the students, as this is a Socratic Seminar. However, I have included some possible questions in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How is your communication in the seminar powered by your knowledge?</li> <li>How would your communication be different if you didn't have knowledge?</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Should everyone get these rights? Even if their message is offensive?</li> </ul> <p>After the second picture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is this picture depicting?</li> <li>How is media censored?</li> <li>Is censorship a recent issue?</li> <li>How does censorship affect communication?</li> </ul>	<p><b>the rare case that students may not be able to come up with their own.]</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did Nellie Bly use unethical tactics to gain information on reporting the conditions in the insane asylums?</li> <li>Does the unethical acquisition of knowledge affect how we communicate? Or how we perceive information?</li> <li>Does it matter that she acquired knowledge in a potentially unethical way? Why or why not?</li> <li>How do the Supreme Court cases put our first amendment rights in jeopardy?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All of the questions included in the Reflection</li> </ul>
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**DIFFERENTIATION**

*(Describe how the planned learning experience has been modified to meet the needs of gifted learners. Note: Modifications may be in one or more of the areas below. Only provide details for the area(s) that have been differentiated for this lesson.*

Content	Process	Product	Learning Environment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Socratic Seminar process is geared toward gifted learners. Gifted learners work well in groups and succeed in open discussion. This dialogue is perfect for gifted learners.</li> </ul>		

**PLANNED LEARNING EXPERIENCES**

*(What will the teacher input? What will the students be asked to do? For clarity, please provide detailed instructions)*

**Engage and Connect** - *This phase focuses on piquing students' interest and helping them access prior knowledge. This is the introduction to the lesson that motivates or hooks the students.*

The students will enter the classroom as the political cartoon (below) is displayed on the screen and the wording of the First Amendment is written on the board. After the students have been given time to consider the cartoon, I will ask the first four Pre-Lesson Questions and we will discuss. This will serve as a mini-intro to the full Socratic Seminar we will conduct on this day.

After 15-20 minutes discussing those questions, I will show the students the second picture (below.) We will then discuss the Pre-Lesson Questions 5-9 with regards to the image.

I will then tell the students that we will have a whole class discussion (Socratic Seminar) about cases and people surrounding these very issues. I will take time to explain the Socratic Seminar process and allow the students to come to terms with the fact that I will not be leading the discussion; they will need to lead their own discussion!

**Explore** - *In this phase, the students have experiences with the concepts and ideas of the lesson. Students are encouraged to work together without direct instruction from the teacher. The teacher acts as a facilitator. Students observe, question, and investigate the concepts to develop fundamental awareness of the nature of the materials and ideas.*

Students will begin their readings and prep for their Socratic Seminar. This process needs to take a significant amount of time so that the students can be properly prepared. Depending on the number of students in the class, every pair will receive a different text (either one about the Tinker case, Hazelwood case, or Nellie Bly.) The texts all relate to censorship and first amendment rights (specifically free speech and free press) controversies.

Once the pairs have read through and completed their texts, I will give them time to formulate questions that they will pose to their peers. I will have the list of During Lesson questions prepped in case the students hit a dead end with their discussion.

**Explain** - *Students communicate what they have learned so far and figure out what it means. This phase also provides an opportunity for teachers to directly introduce a concept, process, or skill to guide students toward a deeper understanding.*

I will explicitly model a Socratic Seminar so that the students can be aware of what this process looks like. I will show the video:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6pGVR6ZF\\_2M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6pGVR6ZF_2M). This video gives a thorough depiction of an age appropriate Socratic Seminar.

**Elaborate** —*Allow students to use their new knowledge and continue to explore its implications. At this stage students expand on the concepts they have learned, make connections to other related concepts, and apply their understandings to the world around them in new ways*

Students will conduct their Socratic Seminar discussing issues of censorship in the press as well as First Amendment right issues. As is typical for my Socratic Seminars, I will not redirect students if they stray from the topic. In my experience, the students always find their way back. I will do everything possible to not have to pose

questions. The students should have spent enough time preparing to be ready to conduct their own discussion.

**[If there are enough students for an inside/outside circle setup, I will have the students on the outside circle record notes on the dialogue of the inside circle and then flip and vice versa.]**

**Evaluate:** *This phase assesses both learning and teaching and can use a wide variety of informal and formal assessment strategies.*

At the end of the seminar, I will debrief it a little bit. I will ask students if any of their opinions on censorship and First Amendment rights changed following the reading of the texts and the open dialogue. Following all of this, the students will complete the Socratic Seminar Reflection [below] and will turn in at the end of class.



The worst thing  
about censorship  
is [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

### Socratic Seminar Reflection

1. What is one thing you liked that you said?
2. What is one point someone else said that you agree with?
3. What was the most interesting idea to come from a participant?
4. What was the best thing that you observed?
5. What was the most troubling thing that you observed?
6. How would you alter the process of the seminar?
7. As a Socratic Seminar participant moving forward, what area of the process will you work on for next time?
8. What new questions arose as a result of the discussion and debrief?

<b>TEACHER NAME</b>		<b>Lesson #</b>	
Jillian Cronin		4 (4 <sup>th</sup> day of summer class)	
<b>MODEL</b>	<b>CONTENT AREA</b>	<b>GRADE LEVEL</b>	
Working on Performance Task (Not a model)	Social Studies	Rising 6-8 graders	
<b>CONCEPTUAL LENS</b>		<b>LESSON TOPIC</b>	
Communication		Producing a News Report	
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</b> (from State/Local Curriculum)			



CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.2

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.2.D

Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

<b>THE ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDING</b> <i>(What is the overarching idea students will understand as a result of this lesson?)</i>	<b>THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION</b> <i>(What question will be asked to lead students to “uncover” the Essential Understanding)</i>
Communication requires knowledge	Why does communication require knowledge?
<b>CONTENT KNOWLEDGE</b> <i>(What factual information will students learn in this lesson?)</i>	<b>PROCESS SKILLS</b> <i>(What will students be able to do as a result of this lesson?)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Headlines are attention grabbers. Without a great headline, many people will not be invested in the article.</li> <li>It is important when reporting the news via the television, to look your best and present the facts in a clear, yet interesting way.</li> </ul>	<b>SWBAT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate researched topic</li> <li>Present findings in a variety of methods</li> <li>Work collaboratively</li> <li>Use technology</li> </ul>

**GUIDING QUESTIONS**

*What questions will be asked to support instruction?*

*Include both “lesson plan level” questions as well as questions designed to guide students to the essential understanding*

<b>Pre-Lesson Questions:</b>	<b>During Lesson Questions:</b>	<b>Post Lesson Questions:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What do the headlines make you think of?</li> <li>What kind of emotions do you associate with these headlines?</li> <li>Why are headlines important?</li> <li>What did the reporter do wrong in this clip, besides the obvious?</li> <li>Why is it essential to fact check prior to reporting news or interviewing?</li> <li>How does a lack of knowledge affect our communication?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How are you ensuring that you are incorporating your knowledge into your communication of the news?</li> <li>How is your news report avoiding bias?</li> <li>Is your news report clear and understandable to your audience?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Questions on Feedback Sheet</li> </ul>

**DIFFERENTIATION**

*(Describe how the planned learning experience has been modified to meet the needs of gifted learners. Note: Modifications may be in one or more of the areas below. Only provide details for the area(s) that have been differentiated for this lesson.*

Content	Process	Product	Learning Environment
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will be</li> </ul>	

		able to choose how they want to report their current events, via a newspaper article, blog, or video newscast. Differentiating choice in the product works well for gifted students. They are able to use their judgment to best present the information.	
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**PLANNED LEARNING EXPERIENCES**

*(What will the teacher input? What will the students be asked to do? For clarity, please provide detailed instructions)*

**Engage and Connect** - *This phase focuses on piquing students' interest and helping them access prior knowledge. This is the introduction to the lesson that motivates or hooks the students.*

On the final day, there will be crazy newspaper headlines displayed on the screen. The students will read the headlines and we will briefly discuss their reactions using the Pre-Lesson Questions 1-3.

After the discussion, I will play them the following clip:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=96nWItQPfiI> (00:00-00:50)

I will then ask the students Pre-Lesson Questions 4-6.

**Explore** - *In this phase, the students have experiences with the concepts and ideas of the lesson. Students are encouraged to work together without direct instruction from the teacher. The teacher acts as a facilitator. Students observe, question, and investigate the concepts to develop fundamental awareness of the nature of the materials and ideas.*

Students will be given the remainder of the class to work on their authentic performance task. Because this class is shorter and the task needs to be completed by the end of the day, students will need to focus all their attention on communicating their current events and using proper knowledge from research and "interviews."

**Explain** - *Students communicate what they have learned so far and figure out what it means. This phase also provides an opportunity for teachers to directly introduce a concept, process, or skill to guide students toward a deeper understanding.*

I will continuously float around the room asking the During Lesson Questions of all of the students. If students need to record their newscast, a partner will use the iPad to ensure that the video is recorded. I will also have the students use the website Fodey to create newspaper articles on their iPads. Students will also be given the option if they would like to make a newscast in addition to their newspaper articles. The newscast would reflect the same researched information from their current event articles.

**Elaborate** —*Allow students to use their new knowledge and continue to explore its implications. At this stage students expand on the concepts they have learned, make connections to other related concepts, and apply their understandings to the world around them in new ways*

We will have all of the students go around the class and preview their classmates' news reports once everyone has completed. This stage will serve as the "editing" phase and each student will act as an editor, in addition to my role as Editor-In-Chief.

**Evaluate:** *This phase assesses both learning and teaching and can use a wide variety of informal and formal assessment strategies.*

At the end of class, students will complete a feedback sheet. This will give me an idea about what the students grasped in my class and how I may improve the structure.  
(Below)

#### Feedback Sheet

1. What are two new things you learned in this class?
2. What is one questions you still need answered?
3. What was your favorite element of this class?
4. What are some areas that Ms. Cronin could improve upon?
5. Why does communication require knowledge?
6. What is one piece of advice you would give next year's students?

## VI: Unit Resources

Facts and Case Summary– Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier. (n.d.) Retrieved August 6, 2015

Here, teachers can find a litany of resources of information surrounding the Hazelwood case. This case is an excellent jumping off point for a Socratic Seminar discussion.

Notable First Amendment Court Cases. (n.d.). Retrieved August 6, 2015.

The American Library Association has compiled a list of brief overviews of notable Supreme Court cases all surrounding the First Amendment and censorship. Use this source for ideas to provide more depth into a Socratic Seminar about censorship.

Readers Remember Misleading Headlines. (2015, May 27). Retrieved August 6, 2015, from <http://www.studentnewsdaily.com/example-of-media-bias/readers-remember-misleading-headlines/>

Here, teachers can find examples of biased headlines to be used in the “identifying bias” activity. Student News Daily is also a great resource for teachers and students to keep abreast of daily events and news articles.

Sneed, M., & Knevil, K. (1988). "Hazelwood V. Kuhlmeier": Closing "Tinker's" Schoolhouse Gate. *Inquiry & Analysis*, 1-6. Retrieved August 6, 2015, from ERIC.

This publication would make a good supplement to the Socratic Seminar. IN addition to discussing the Hazelwood case, this article also introduces many Supreme Court cases that preceded it. They set the tone for First Amendment rights in schools.

In addition to the above resources, students will need access to various types of online news outlets (or print versions of applicable and accessible.) These sources will provide students with many different viewpoints and much information for their reports. Some of the examples of sites can be:

cnn.com

msnbc.com

nytimes.com (New York Times)

wsj.com (Wall Street Journal)