

LEARNING PLAN

Issue #1, November, 2019



Celebrating news literacy

Introduction: **Grade 7's** take-on the role of journalists.

Alicia's inspiration board for the grade 7 newspaper and news broadcast launch.

This learning plan is for the launch celebration of a class-created school newspaper and broadcast....

The event will act as the finale to a 6 to 8 weeklong news literacy unit. The purpose of this learning experience is multifaceted. The launch celebration should bring together, present and celebrate all the elements of the unit. In culmination with the unit, this final celebration should help students see themselves as both critical investigators and creators of news content as opposed to passive information consumers.

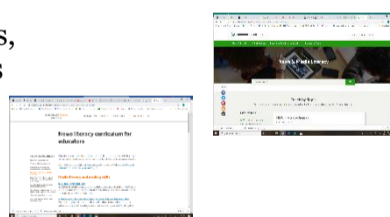
By inviting community members to celebrate with the class, students will hopefully see that their voices and work are valued outside the classroom. Students will take the lead in the creation of the news 'brands' and content, and work collaboratively, sharing, editing and reflecting on each other's work until they are happy with a final product. Through this collaborative work, I hope that students will begin to see how learning and ideas can be extended and built upon.

Prior knowledge and unit outline...

Over the course of the unit students will look at different news platforms focusing on news broadcasts and newspapers. In order to get students more engaged in current affairs students will be asked to watch, read or listen to news regularly. They will be asked to bring in

particularly interesting news stories to share with the class during morning meeting. We will share one or two stories a day and take time to discuss them together. We will explore local newspapers to discover typical content, formatting, important roles (e.g. editor, journalist, reporter etc.)

and key aspects (headlines, by lines, cover story, dates etc.). We will review and practice the news article inverted triangle format along with the characteristics of effective headlines. We will come up with a list of sources that journalists can use when following a story. When writing articles for class, we will first brainstorm important events happening within the students' home or school community to write about. This way students will be able to do some of their own investigating on their topics and refer to any important sources in their writing.



Linked website resources for teaching news literacy

We will also investigate news broadcasts, identifying similarities and differences with news articles. This will also give students an opportunity to examine and practice the oral language strategies used in news broadcasts. Students will be given the opportunity to present news stories as

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Big Ideas



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- Exploring & sharing multiple perspectives extends our thinking.
- Questioning what we hear, read and view contributes to our ability to be educated and engaged citizens.
- Language and text can be a source of creativity and joy

Read more on P3

 **CORE COMPETENCY:** Students use *critical thinking* as they investigate and analyze both sources and other news for reliability and relevance. Students use *creative thinking* to come up with story ideas, design their news platform and present new ideas to peers.

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broadcasts for the class or in small groups.

Students will be given ample time to both create and refine their news stories in either text, spoken or recorded form. In this time, the

Finally, we will explore fake news examples in both video and text form. We will look critically at stories and consider resource reliability from both a journalist and public audience perspective.

Students will get to write, design and create a school newspaper and short school news broadcast video.

students will be encouraged to collaborate with their peers, taking feedback and suggestions to help them achieve their best quality work.

I am assuming that students have will come to this unit with a general understanding of interviews, paragraphing and research, although these concepts will

be elaborated on through the lens of news literacy.

For the final project in this unit, students will get to write, design and create a school newspaper and short school news broadcast video.

Students will be given the choice of whether they want to work on the newscast or the newspaper. Editors and producers will be nominated by students. Students will be allowed to select work created during the unit or create new texts to be inputted into the final paper or broadcast.

Although students will be facilitated and reminded that their audience is the school community, they will have responsibility in choosing which stories make it into the newspaper and news broadcast.



YouTube: 3/11/2016 AFIA Elementary Broadcast News



<http://www.wpbyexample.com/>: example news website

Curricular integration: making connections

Because the students will be writing or speaking about issues relevant to the school community, it is possible that aspects of multiple other subjects could be addressed in this project.



Photo by Annie Spratt on Unsplash

The most obvious connection would be to Applied Design Skills and Technology. This connects for several reasons. First, students will make use of digital literacy skills to both research their articles and design their final products. The students involved in the news broadcast will make use of video and image editing as well. Depending on time restraints, students may also upload their newspaper and broadcast onto the school website or potentially created their own so that they can reach a wider audience.

Part of the unit will be dedicated to identifying source types and evaluating the reliability of sources. Students will need to use sources as evidence in their articles.

These skills are all related to aspects of Social Studies. It is also possible that students may choose to write about local government actions that affect the school community, this also aligns with the curricular content of Social Studies that looks at the varying levels of the Canadian government.

Depending on the choice of topics for the articles and news cast stories, students may also apply their knowledge of other subjects such as Science, Math (finance), Art Education or Physical Health and Education. (see appendix for specifics)



YouTube: How creating a school newspaper gave students a voice in their school

A GENERAL OUTLINE OF THE LAUNCH

As the final learning event, we will hold a news launch after school in the gym.

Class members will make and give students, parents, teachers, administration and friends formal invitations to attend the event. These invitations could be either electronic or paper depending on the students' inclination. The newspaper created by the

students will be printed and made available to guests on stands at the entrance to the gym. Enough will be printed so that each grade 7 student will be able to keep their own copy as well.

We will decorate the gym according to the students'

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Continued from P2

preferences, potentially with balloons and ribbons. On the walls there will be enlarged pictures of students in the process of creating both the broadcast and the newspaper with short captions created by students. On divider boards, each student will have their own display area which will include a framed picture of them posing like a journalist, two samples of work from the unit that the student chose and a self-written profile. The profile will include information such as who they are, what role they played in the newspaper or news broadcast, what they enjoy doing and what their ambitions are for the future.

We will need one or two long tables with tablecloths to put trays of finger food appetizers and napkins on. We will also have fizzy apple juice in Champaign glasses for

the grade 7 students and paper cups for the guests. These will be set out at the beginning of the event. At one end of the gym we will have a screen and projector, podium and microphone and a ribbon strung



YouTube: Inspiring students to celebrate and Share Their learning

The students will give a brief outline of the process ...and share some of their favorite experiences.

between two posts in front of the screen. We will also need around 50 chairs to be placed in front of the podium.

When it looks as though most people have arrived, three or four students, who had previously volunteered

and prepared, will go to the podium, welcome everyone and ask them to take a seat. The students will give a brief outline of the process that they underwent to create the newspaper and broadcast and share some of their favorite experiences. If it happens that no students are confident enough to speak in front of the group, I will welcome the guests and read a few quotes from the children about their experiences. Finally, the

class will cut the ribbon and we will play the news broadcast through the projector. After the news broadcast, guests will be invited to move around the room, read the newspaper, visit the displays and interact with the journalists.

Language Arts Competencies & Content

Curricular Competencies:

- Access information and ideas for diverse purposes and from a variety of sources and evaluate their relevance, accuracy, and reliability
- Exchange ideas and viewpoints to build shared understanding and extend thinking
- Use writing and design processes to plan, develop, and create engaging and meaningful literary and informational texts for a variety of purposes and audiences
- Assess and refine texts to improve their clarity, effectiveness, and impact according to purpose, audience and message



Photo by Perry Grone on Unsplash

Content:

- Forms, functions and genres of text
- Features of oral language
- Metacognitive strategies



CORE COMPETENCY: Students work on **collaboration**, putting their work together into one newspaper or broadcast. They **communicate** their thoughts and suggestions for peers, practice interview strategies when finding sources and create informative texts.

Finding adaptations for all learners

One common and possibly major challenge in this project is the amount of writing involved.

However, students who struggle with writing could participate in several ways that still show their learning. For the final project of creating a newspaper or broadcast for the launch, they could work in the group that creates the news broadcast.

Their roles may be to provide ideas, be a reporter, interview sources, gather information or edit the video to best present the information in a reliable and entertaining format.

These students may also participate in the newspaper by pairing up with other students. In this way they could dictate their ideas to a partner or share ideas and research which the partner could then combine to make a collaborative final story. Students who struggle with writing could also create comic strips for the newspaper, take pictures or create art to best represent certain stories.

For practice and class work these students could record their news stories in an audio format. Work chosen for the launch displays could either be transcribed or set up for guests to listen to. For their profiles, these students could dictate their ideas to the teacher or write directly on a Chromebook, depending on what works for the student.

Students who do not want to talk to the group of guests during the presentation at the news launch can be involved in helping decorate the gym, handing out newspapers to guests, creating and delivering invitations. They will also be given a chance to talk to guests in smaller groups after the presentation.



Photo by ShareGrid on Unsplash

Extensions and challenges for interested learners

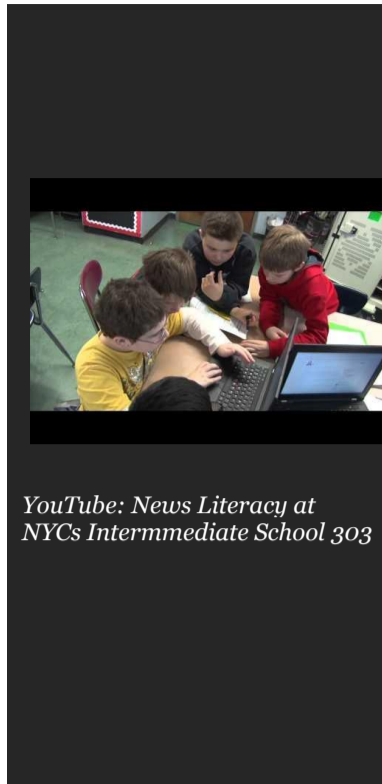
Exceptionally strong students should be encouraged to take editorial roles in which they will both write articles but also play leadership roles in editing, refining and selecting articles for the newspaper.

If interested, these students could try writing more challenging pieces such as editorials or features which are generally a bit longer and more in depth than typical news stories.

As mentioned earlier, students who are confident and very engaged in the unit may volunteer speak at the launch either to introduce the project or speak about their personal experiences and learning outcomes.

Students who are interested will now be familiar with the process for creating a newspaper and may continue the newspaper as a regular monthly periodical. Students who are more technologically inclined may also choose to create a web version of the newspaper to link to the school website.

Although it may be difficult or impractical to continue a regular school broadcast, students who are interested in sharing news verbally could organize school news through the loudspeaker. This might include interviews or breaking news stories once a week or as organized with school administration. These students may also be interested in creating news broadcasts to be delivered during school assemblies or recorded news to be uploaded onto the school website.



YouTube: News Literacy at NYC's Intermediate School 303

 CORE COMPETENCY: Students demonstrate **personal and social** skills by setting goals for individual tasks, becoming confident news content creators and investigators, considering local community interests and by generating a news source.

Project assessment

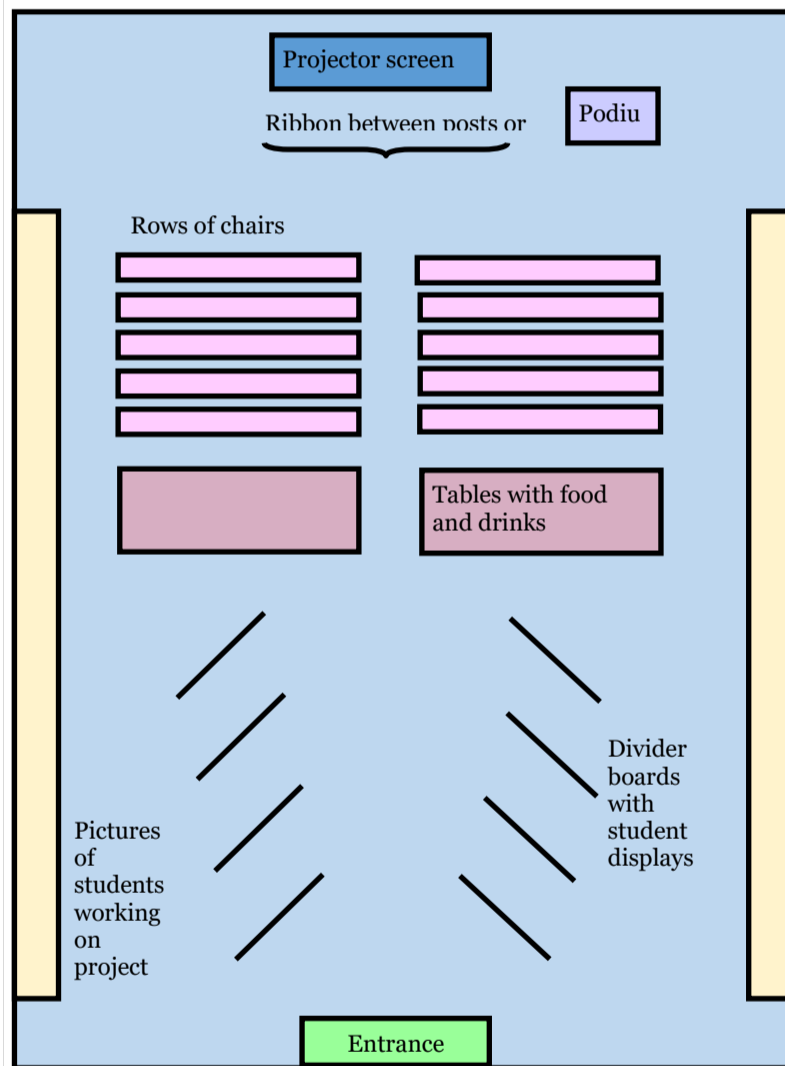
The assessment for this final project will be based on a short informal conference with each student at the news launch event, the work that the student chose for their display and their contribution to the overall news project. Students will be assessed on a single point rubric (*see appendix*) which all students will have access to at the start of the project.

During the conferences, students will be asked about their work sample choices, why they were chosen, what they are most proud of and what they found most challenging. They will be asked about the sources they used and why they were chosen. Students will be asked about their experience working collaboratively for the newspaper and whether they were able to learn something from their peers.

Students will also be asked to reflect on what core competencies they felt they used throughout the project and include a self-assessment on their online core competency profiles. These profiles are Google websites created through the students' Google Suite for Education accounts. They include pictures and reflections from throughout the year for all three competencies. I will make pictures from the process and the final event available for students to use on their profiles.

From these assessments and prior formative assessments, I will be able to report progress in relation to the learning continuum for the curricular competencies and content covered in the unit. By discussing the project with students, I might get better insight into any major roadblocks and skills or strategies that might need to be better scaffolded in the future for individual students.

Possible layout for the launch celebration in the school gym:



Final thoughts and concluding words...

By teaching students news literacy and encouraging them to take on the roles of journalists, I hope that they would learn more than just the logistics of different news platforms.



Photo by Siora Photography on Unsplash

This unit would hopefully get students to start watching, listening or reading news and, as a result, become more engaged in both local and global affairs. By asking students to write for and present to their local community, they would have to consider what the community wants to know about, what affects them, how it affects them and why. Through these investigations, I would hope that students could begin to form personal connections and opinions on these events for themselves.

The news launch is meant to show the students that they can be contributing members of their community and that their voices matter. This along with the new personal

connections that they will hopefully be forming may act as a bridge toward taking a more active role in their communities, whether that be in or out of school.

Finally, by showing students the process of investigation, by considering fake news and by allowing students to act as the information holders at the launch, I hope that students would feel more empowered to be critical about what they read and see in the news.

Although only a 6-week unit, I would hope that students at least finish this unit feeling like news is not just for adults.

Appendix

Curricular Integration in Detail:

Subject	Curricular Competencies/content	Connection to project
<i>Applied Design Skills Technology</i>	Digital Literacy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> search techniques, how search results are selected and ranked, and criteria for evaluating search results Entrepreneurship and Marketing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> role of entrepreneurship in designing and making products and services Media Arts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> media technologies and techniques to capture, edit, and manipulate images, sounds, and text for specific purposes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> research designing news logos, names and presentation video making and editing web version of news
<i>Social Studies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the credibility of multiple sources and the adequacy of evidence used to justify conclusions (evidence) (content)social, political, legal, governmental, and economic systems and structures, including at least one indigenous to the Americas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research, source type and exploring reliability Using sources in articles as evidence Possibly stories related to local government
<i>Science</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate ideas, findings, and solutions to problems, using scientific language, representations, and digital technologies as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potentially using science related concepts and language if stories relate to science
<i>Physical Health & Education</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> movement concepts and strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> potentially discussing sports rules, strategies, strengths and weaknesses if writing or presenting about sports
<i>Art Education</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapt learned skills, understandings, and processes for use in new contexts and for different purposes and audiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students may apply art concepts when designing layout, logos or art to match stories

Single Point Rubric for Project Assessment:

Goals to Work Toward	Proficient	Areas to Celebrate
	Process and Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I proofread my written work I took suggestions and comments from my peers to improve my work I improved my work over multiple drafts or attempts 	
	Investigating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I used different sources to find out about news stories (<i>for example, firsthand interviews, websites, other news articles, reports etc.</i>) I referred to important sources in my work I thought about the reliability of my sources 	
	Design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I contributed to the final newspaper or broadcast My work is related to the theme of the newspaper or broadcast My work shows that I have thought about the audience and purpose of my work 	
	Content Application <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I presented news in the inverted triangle format My headlines are concise, informative and intriguing I used impersonal language When verbally presenting news, I spoke clearly, at an even pace and looked at the audience/camera 	

