



Course Outcome Summary

Course Information: (SSCE) Current Events

Description: Current Events is the study of present day happenings at the international, national, state and local levels that are affecting the lives of students.

Instruction Level: 12th grade

Course Standards:

This current events course is driven by the Wisconsin State Standards and ACT college Readiness standards.

- Analyze primary and secondary sources related to a historical question to evaluate their relevance, make comparisons, integrate new information with prior knowledge, and come to a reasoned conclusion
- Evaluate the ways in which public opinion can be used to influence and shape public policy
- Locate, organize, analyze, and use information from various sources to understand an issue of public concern, take a position, and communicate the position
- Identify a clear central claim in highly complex passages
- Analyze how the choice of a specific word or phrase shapes meaning or tone in passages when the effect is subtle or complex
- Locate, organize, analyze, and use information from various sources to understand an issue of public concern, take a position, and communicate the position
- Evaluate the quality and accuracy of historical details/evidence in supporting an historical argument
- Enrich and strengthen ideas and analysis by considering factors that complicate the writer's own perspective

Unit

1. How to Analyze the News
2. Reading and Interpreting Charts, Graphs and Political Cartoons
3. Identifying and Analyzing Bias in the News
4. Analyzing Satirical News
5. Identifying and Analyzing Fake News
6. Writing Feature Articles

Unit Outlines

1. How to Analyze the News

Standards:

- Analyzing critical elements of an issue and differing perspectives on it
- Analyze primary and secondary sources related to a historical question to evaluate their relevance, make comparisons, integrate new information with prior knowledge, and come to a reasoned conclusion
- Evaluate the ways in which public opinion can be used to influence and shape public policy
- Understand point of view in highly complex passages

Essential Questions:

Students will be able to answer the following question(s):

- What benefits does an open and free press provide to a society?
- Why does the study of current events matter?
- How do I go evaluate news sources?
- How do I ask myself the right questions when consuming news?
- How do I identify what the author is arguing?

Essential Knowledge:

This unit will cover the basic foundations of current events and news media. It will start out with an explanation of what news is and why it is relevant to study news today. We then begin to think about what makes a news source valid and useful. An analysis of how to read the news and how to ask critical thinking questions will end the unit.

2. Reading and Interpreting Graphs, Charts and Cartoons

Standards:

- Gather various types of historical evidence, including visual and quantitative data, to analyze issues of freedom and equality, liberty and order, region and nation, individual and community, law and conscience, diversity and civic duty; form a reasoned conclusion in the light of other possible conclusions; and develop a coherent argument in the light of other possible arguments
- Locate, organize, analyze, and use information from various sources to understand an issue of public concern, take a position, and communicate the position

Essential Questions:

Students will be able to answer the following question(s):

- How do I use charts, graphs and cartoons as evidence when forming an argument about a news topic?
- Why do journalists employ graphs, charts and cartoons when writing articles?

Essential Knowledge:

This unit will introduce the students to political cartoons, how they are used and why they are a powerful tool for shaping the views of society. They will also explore how journalists use graphs, charts and other data sources to form and bolster an argument when reporting the news.

3. Identifying and Analyzing Bias in the News

Standards:

- Analyze how one or more sentences in passages offer reasons for or support a claim when the relationship is subtle or complex
- Identify or infer a central claim in complex passages
- Identify a clear central claim in highly complex passages

Essential Question:

Students will be able to answer the following question(s):

- What is bias and how do we identify it in the news by analyzing the opinion of the author?
- Why does news contain bias and why is it important to identify?

Essential Knowledge:

This unit will analyze bias in the news, with an emphasis on identifying bias in the news through analysis of the opinion of the author

4. Analyzing Satirical News

Standards

- Analyze how the choice of a specific word or phrase shapes meaning or tone in passages when the effect is subtle or complex
- Interpret words and phrases as they are used in complex passages, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings
- Interpret words and phrases in a passage that makes extensive use of figurative, general academic, domain-specific, or otherwise difficult language

Essential Question:

Students will be able to answer the following question(s):

- What is satire and how do journalists use it to convey meaning or an argument?
- How do I write a satirical article?

Essential Knowledge:

This unit will look at the basis for the use of satire in the news and why it is an integral part of the free press system in the United States.

5. Identifying and Analyzing Fake News

Standards:

- Locate, organize, analyze, and use information from various sources to understand an issue of public concern, take a position, and communicate the position
- Evaluate the quality and accuracy of historical details/evidence in supporting an historical argument

Essential Question:

Students will be able to answer the following question(s):

- What is fake news and how do I identify it among real news?
- What are ways in which fake news has affected society and the decisions we make?
- How can society solve the issue of fake news?

Essential Knowledge:

This unit will consist of defining, identifying, analyzing and critiquing fake news articles, near fake news articles and fake news sources. An emphasis will be placed on looking at how fake news has affected current events and public opinion/behavior.

6. Writing a Feature Article

Standards:

- Generate a nuanced, precise thesis that establishes a perspective on a contemporary issue
- Make skillful use of reasoning and examples to broaden the context for analysis, support the thesis, and arrive at deeper insight into the issue
- Enrich and strengthen ideas and analysis by considering factors that complicate the writer's own perspective

Essential Question:

Students will be able to answer the following question(s):

- What is a feature article and how do I write one?
- How do I engage in research and critical thinking to form a thesis and back it up in an essay?
- How do I incorporate varying and counter perspectives into my writing to bolster my thesis?

Essential Knowledge:

This unit is the culminating experience in the class where students are tasked with writing a feature article, editorial type paper that argues a thesis based upon a topic that is or was in the news at some point during class.