

Current Events Project Grade Eight Humanities 2007-08

Introduction

Current events are much more than the fast facts on the front of newspapers. Current events are the unfolding of our timeless stories in the present. Everything we hear, read about, listen to or see has a history and a future, and it is these on-going stories, together and separately, that work to inform and shape our citizenry, public opinion and communities. In order to achieve the learning outcomes of Humanities, students should be able to not only follow these stories, but should also be critical of the ways in which they are told, identify biases, and recognize the advantages and disadvantages of different types of media, as well as their strengths and weaknesses.

Task Overview

For each school term, you will choose one of the following projects to complete, for a total of three projects over the course of the year. **Each project must contain news from the days within the term. In other words, you may not complete two projects in one term.** Some of the options allow for group work, while others are designed for individuals; some projects may require more time, while others may require more creativity. While making your decision about which options you will choose, please consider the following:

- Everyone will be required to do at least one project individually and one project in a group. You may choose the same individual project as others and share ideas, but each of you will be required to hand in their own work.
- What interests you the most? Ex. Have you designed a web-page before? Do you like working with video recorders? Is scrap-booking a hobby?

1. TTN: The Teen Television Network

In a small group of 2 or 3, you will create your own primetime news network. You will present a sample of your primetime show to the class. The show must be at least five minutes long and it can be performed live or pre-recorded and played on T.V. Your show must include **ten elements of a typical news hour** and **at least five** must relate on the themes of Citizenship and Identity. Pay attention to the question, “**How does this story represent a particular worldview?**” and include as you see fit.

2. The Teen Herald

In a small group of 2-3 people, you will produce your own newspaper. You will choose **two issues** at all of the local, national and international levels (**six issues total**). At least half of these news items should be relevant to the themes Citizenship and Identity. You will also include **three political cartoons** related to your stories (your own drawings or those you can find in sources). Finally, each group member will be responsible for writing **an original editorial**. The editorials should address the question, “**How does this story represent a particular worldview?**” in respect to one of the stories you have chosen.

3. What’s in the news?

This is an individual project. You will choose one theme (Citizenship or Identity) and find at least **15 different news items** in at least **four different types of media** (newspapers, websites, magazines, TV, radio, documentaries, etc.) Your objective is to analyze each news item, find out what is happening, why it is important, and **how the story represents a particular worldview**. You will use your analysis to create

your own summary on the issue. In other words, what can you say about the theme you are addressing based on your news items? What can you say about the worldview given, and the different perspectives and interests at stake? You will use PowerPoint to present your findings to the class.

4. **My E-News**

This project can be completed individually or in pairs. You will produce your own web page that showcases at least **two issues** at each of the local, national and international levels (**six issues total**). Half of these items should be relevant to the themes: Citizenship and Identity. Each person will also include an original editorial specific to one of the issues that addresses the question, “**How does this story represent a particular worldview?**” For at least three of the stories, you should provide **two web links** to more information on the topic for your readers.

5. **Our Community**

This is an individual project. You will produce a one-page (double-sided) community newsletter. The type of community the letter is intended should be evident by the content, format and voice of your newsletter and is your choice. For example, are you targeting your neighbourhood? Your circle of friends? Your province? Your school? All girls your age? You should have **at least six items** in your newsletter, and at least half should relate to the themes: Citizenship and Identity. Your design should be a combination of news articles you have collected and your responses to the articles in respect to your audience. In other words, why is the news item important to them?

6. **Unfolding the News**

This is an individual project. You will choose one current event issue that relates to **one** of the themes (Citizenship or Identity). This should be a major Canadian issue that is ‘unfolding’ in the news right now. You will follow the developments of the issue over the course of the term and report your findings in a scrapbook format. Your scrapbook will include:

- Cover page
- Table of Contents
- At least 3 newspaper articles from different sources. For each article you will include a written summary that addresses:
 - What happened?
 - Why is it important?
 - **How does this story represent a particular worldview?**
- At least 3 opinion pieces on the issue
- At least 3 photographs related to the issue
- One editorial cartoon (your own drawing or one from a source)
- Your opinion of the possible result or how you would resolve the issue

Due Dates:

Project #1 - Term One

Project #2 – Term Two

Project #3 – Term Three

*** Students must complete one project with a focus on Citizenship, and one on Identity. The third one is a choice piece (either theme). You can also encourage students to have a balance between group projects and individual ones if you prefer.**

Name: _____ Date Submitted: _____

Current Events: Worksheet

This worksheet is designed to support you while you follow, collect and analyze news stories for your current events project.

Topic of Article:

Source: newspaper/internet/magazine/TV broadcast/other _____

Name of Source: _____

Date: _____

Other Important Source/Author Information:

What advantages or disadvantages has the type of source created in the telling of this story?

Ex. Who might be listening to this particular radio show? Who might not be? How does the radio limit or enhance the telling of the story?

What 'larger' issue or issues does this story/article connect to?

How does this article/story relate to 'citizenship' and 'identity'?

How might this article/story impact the public: their opinions, values, beliefs, desires, concerns, and lifestyle choices?

What biases are evident in the telling of this story? What particular worldview is informing the story?

Other Information:

Current Events Project #2: Assessment

** Please note that this rubric is based on the Current Events Project Handout. In order to be successful, please ensure you include and follow ALL of the requirements outlined in your handout.

	4	3	2	1	Total
Required Elements (x5)	The project contains ALL of the required elements that are outlined in the Current Events Project handout.	The project contains MOST of the required elements, but is missing one or two minor elements.	The project contains MOST of the required elements, but is missing one or two major elements.	The project contains only some of the required elements.	/20
Understanding Based on 4 questions from the evaluator (x3)	Student is able to make references to project in order to answer all questions accurately .	Student is able to make references to project in order to answer 3 questions accurately.	Student is able to make references to project in order to answer 2 questions accurately.	Student is able to make references to project in order to answer 1 question accurately.	/12
Presentation Does the 'newspaper' look like a 'newspaper'?	Project is neat, easy to read and represents the required 'source' accurately and creatively .	Project is neat, easy to read and represents the required 'source' accurately OR is very creative.	Project is somewhat neat, easy to read and slightly represents the required 'source' accurately OR creative.	Project is lacking in neatness, representation and creativity.	/4
Whose Voice Matters?	The project clearly considers and responds to the question, "Whose Voice Matters?"	The project considers and responds to the question, "Whose Voice Matters?"	Many follow-up questions are needed to identify how the project considers the question.	The question, "Whose Voice Matters?" is only somewhat considered.	/4

/40

Name of Evaluator: _____

Name of Student: _____

Comments: