

# American Forums: The Marketplace of Ideas

## Essential Questions

- 1 How do newspapers impact public opinion or public perception?
- 2 How does a writer use tone to advance an opinion?

TV news, news magazines, newspapers, radio, and the Internet give us sometimes vital, sometimes trivial, facts and opinions, creating a swirling array of often conflicting information. The resulting chaos of information and perspectives can create an overwhelming presence in our lives, yet this information is also crucial to our ability to make informed decisions about everything from personal beliefs to public policy. Indeed, the ways in which these ideas and voices interact with each other create a marketplace of ideas—a forum through which we can shape, test, and revise our own perspectives on our society and the issues that dominate the day. One place in particular where opinions can be shared, heard, and responded to is the newspaper op-ed page. In this context, and in many others, satire is often used by social critics to challenge or comment upon prevailing attitudes. In this unit you will learn to discern a news story from an opinion piece and a satirical text, and you will be better prepared to know where to go when you want to find out what America is thinking—and to create texts that may influence that thinking.

# Unit 2

## American Forums: The Marketplace of Ideas

### Goals

- ▶ To identify the main components and role of a newspaper's op-ed page
- ▶ To analyze how writers use logic, evidence, and rhetoric to advance their opinions
- ▶ To write persuasive pieces and refute the positions of others
- ▶ To recognize the symbols and references that editorial cartoonists use
- ▶ To analyze and apply satirical techniques

### ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

Bias  
Fallacy  
Editorial  
Parody

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# Learning Focus:

## Browsing in the Marketplace

While the American Dream is central to our shared sense of identity, another of our defining beliefs is in the importance of free speech. As Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes famously observed in 1919, “the best test of truth is the power of the thought to get itself accepted in the competition of the market.” Viewed in this way, the expression of contrasting and even conflicting ideas and opinions provides information that is crucial to our ability to make informed decisions about everything from personal beliefs to public policy. Indeed, the ways in which these ideas and voices interact with each other help us to shape, test, and revise our own perspectives on the issues that dominate our lives.

Of course, if you have ever listened to talk radio, watched cable “news” shows, or browsed the Web for blogs, you know what happens when the marketplace becomes a monopoly. Some news is presented with a biased point of view, and when it comes to the expression of **editorial** opinions, sources often rely heavily on language and evidence that attempt to persuade by manipulating. As a result, you should question the information you receive, where it comes from, and the perspective through which the information is filtered. In this unit, you will learn more about how to identify **bias** and how language can be used as a surrogate for logic. You’ll analyze how writers use evidence and reasoning in support of their claims—and how failing to do so can result in **fallacies**.

Finally, you’ll collaborate with your peers to produce your own contribution to the marketplace of ideas by creating a newspaper op-ed page for Embedded Assessment 1. Can you be a persuasive yet ethical advocate for your positions?

**Independent Reading:** In this unit, you will read both print and nonprint texts that explore the relationship between news media and a free exchange of ideas in a democracy. For independent reading, choose a topic of interest and explore its coverage in the media across a variety of genres (for example, articles, news stories, editorials, political cartoons, satirical commentary, and so on).



# Introducing the Media

SUGGESTED LEARNING STRATEGIES: Think-Pair-Share, Questioning the Text, SOAPStone

## News Media Survey

1. Rank the following media channels in the order you would turn to them for information on a major news story. (Choose 1 to indicate the outlet you would turn to most often. Write N/A to indicate you would not use that outlet.)

_____ Newspaper	_____ TV Network News
_____ Websites/Internet	_____ News Magazines
_____ Cable News Station	_____ Radio News

2. Rank the following media channels for accuracy and trustworthiness in how they present information. (Rank the most trustworthy outlet 1.)

_____ Newspaper	_____ TV Network News
_____ Websites/Internet	_____ News Magazines
_____ Cable News Station	_____ Radio News

3. Think back on the past month. About how much time (in hours) did you spend receiving news (not entertainment) from the following media channels?

_____ Newspaper	_____ TV Network News
_____ Websites/Internet	_____ News Magazines
_____ Cable News Station	_____ Radio News

4. Rank each of the following reasons that you might give for not reading newspapers. (Write 1 next to the reason most appropriate for you. Write N/A if you disagree with the statement.)

\_\_\_\_\_ They are boring.

\_\_\_\_\_ They take too long to read.

\_\_\_\_\_ They don't have information that applies to me and my life.

\_\_\_\_\_ They usually focus on scandals, politics, and gossip.

\_\_\_\_\_ They are often filled with mistakes and lies.

\_\_\_\_\_ Other:

5. Do you feel that it is important to be knowledgeable about news? Explain.



# Introducing the Media

## My Notes

A lot of the time it remains a good one. When terrorists hit, we'd rather know sooner than later. If stocks in our portfolio are losing their value in a crash, we'd prefer to get that information now.

When Buddhist monks hit the streets of towns in Myanmar we look to AFP, Reuters and AP to get the news out.

But the Internet has changed a lot of this. First off, everyone is connected. By connected I mean they can look up anything they like so long as they're near an Internet-connected computer. Which for a lot of people now means a 3G phone.

Even if you don't have one, the chances are you'll be in spitting range of a computer that is connected to the Internet. Or you could get your information by SMS — from news sites, from colleagues, from family members. It's not that we're not far from a gadget. We're not far from information. This has a critical impact on the idea of news.

Because we're informed, news doesn't hit us in the same way it used to when we weren't.

True, if someone hits a tall building with an airliner, that's news to all of us. The U.S. invades or leaves Iraq; that's news.

But the rest of the time, news is a slippery beast that means different things to different people.

That's because there's another kind of news we're all interested in.

It's hyperlocal news. It's what is around us. In our neighborhood. Since moving house, I'm much less interested in gubernatorial<sup>2</sup> elections and much more in anything that anybody says about en bloc sales and house prices. That is hyperlocal news, and it's where most people spend their day. No nuclear weapons being fired? No terrorist attacks? No meltdown in the financial markets? OK, so tell me more about en bloc sales. Actually, this is just part of hyperlocal news.

If you've used Facebook, you'll know there's another kind of addictive local news: your friends' status updates. A status update, for those of you who haven't tried Facebook, is basically a short message that accompanies your profile indicating what you're up to at that point.

I think of it as a wire feed by real people. Of course it's not news as we'd think of it, but news as in an answer to the questions "What's up?" "What's new?" "What's happening?" "What's new with you?"

<sup>2</sup> gubernatorial: pertaining to a state governor

In that sense it's news. I call it hyper-hyperlocal news. Even though those people are spread all over the world, they're all part of my friends network, and that means for me they're local.

So news isn't always what we think of as news. News has always meant something slightly different to the nonmedia person; our obsession with prioritizing stories in a summary, the most important item first (How many dead? What color was their skin? Any Americans involved?) has been exposed as something only we tend to obsess over.

Don't believe me? Look at the BBC website. While the editors were putting up stories about Musharraf, North Korea and Japan, the users were swapping stories about Britney Spears splitting with her manager, the dangers of spotty face, and the admittedly important news that the Sex Pistols might be getting back together.

Of course, I'm not saying journalists are from Mars and readers are from Venus. It just looks that way.

What we're really seeing is that now that people have access to information, they are showing us what they're interested in. Unsurprisingly, they're interested in different stuff. What we call audience fragmentation — niche<sup>3</sup> audiences for specialized interests — is actually what things have always been about.

If we're a geek we go for our news to Slashdot. We want gossip? We go to Gawker. We want to change the world? We go to WorldChangingOnline.org. The Internet makes the Long Tail of all those niche audiences and interests possible, and possibly profitable.

What we're seeing with the Internet is not a revolution against the values of old media; a revolution against the notion that it's only us who can dictate what is news.

What we're seeing is that people get their news from whoever can help them answer the question they're asking. We want the headlines, we go to CNN. But the rest of the time, "news" is for us just part of a much bigger search for information, to stay informed.



<sup>3</sup> **niche**: a specialized market segment

## My Notes

# Introducing the Media

In what different ways does Wagstaff define “news”? Cite several lines in which he characterizes the different meanings the term has in today’s media-saturated world.

Write your own answers to the following questions in the space below. Then discuss your responses with your classmates.

How do you respond to Wagstaff’s article? How have his purpose and tone influenced your response?

Does Wagstaff’s description of media consumers apply to you? In what ways?

Are you a producer and not just a consumer of news? How so?

Is audience fragmentation a good thing? Why or why not?

Do we need to know more than hyperlocal news to be informed? Why or why not?

**Writing Prompt:** Write a letter to Wagstaff in which you explain how your own experience confirms or challenges his claims about the changing meaning of “news” in our lives.

SUGGESTED LEARNING STRATEGIES: Graphic Organizer, Summarizing, Discussion Groups

## Informational Text

# A Day in the Life of the Media: Intro

by The Project for Excellence in Journalism

...To study a day in the life in the media, we picked a universe to be representative of a broad swath of what Americans can choose from. It included three national newspapers, the three primary cable news channels, the three major commercial broadcast networks, PBS, seven news Web sites, seven prominent blogs, and a wide cross-section of TV, radio, newspapers, and ethnic and alternative media in three American cities, Houston, Milwaukee, and Bend, Ore. The result was a study that included 2,125 stories in 57 outlets and 48 hours of programming on radio and television, all offered in a single day, May 11, 2005—plus 112 different blog postings.

To what extent did any of what we saw reflect more than this one day? The results, it turns out — about topics covered, sourcing, and more, in each medium — closely mirror what we have found in these media and others for the last two years, when we took randomly constructed months of news for each, analyzed them by topic and broke down the reporting.

### THE MEDIA CULTURE: A LOOSE TYPOLOGY

If different media offer distinctly different news agendas, what did we find about each in our study of May 11?

*Online* : “The Internet,” we found, describes a technology, not a style of media or a set of values or even a journalistic approach. The seven news Web sites we monitored varied widely — from Google’s emphasis on speed and bulk to Yahoo’s focus on navigability to a local TV news station’s site, largely a portal for advertising copy. Many of the most popular sites also remain largely a stepchild of print and wire-service content, especially the so-called Internet-only sites that produce no copy of their own. As a result, while the Internet has added more outlets from which to choose, it has not, our study suggests, added new topics to the agenda.

Ultimately, it still seems unclear what online news will come to represent.

## My Notes

### GRAMMAR & USAGE

Writers sometimes pose **rhetorical questions**, which are questions used for effect and not because an answer is expected. In this report, the rhetorical question acknowledges and anticipates one of the reader’s first questions — how can we trust that information gathered on just one day will be accurate? Using a question instead of a statement is a way to connect to the reader by acknowledging that the question is reasonable.

# Consumer's Report

## My Notes

Will it be constant updating, focusing on being fast and first? Or more depth, as sites are freed from the confines of space and time? Will online journalism come to mean multi-media convergence, including downloading sound and pictures to PDAs and phones? Or a worrisome intermingling of advertising and editorial? Or will online journalism move toward more citizen voices, more communication with the audience, and more opinion? In the seven sites studied we found all of the above, but none of it all in one place. Two of the most innovative sites we encountered, interestingly, were from old media, a TV network (CBS) and a mid-sized metropolitan newspaper (the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel).

*Blogs:* If the media culture needs navigators, by day's end the seven popular blogs we studied would offer that — to an extent. As the hours went by, the bloggers sifted through the content of the mainstream media and noted what they deemed important, curious, absent, interesting or objectionable. But contrary to the charge that the blogosphere is purely parasitic, we also found new topics here, and new angles on old ones. Indeed, the blogs were generally less concerned than many traditional journalists with the latest breaking news, and more focused on long-term issues. Yet there was little here that a journalist would call reporting or even sourcing. Only 1% of the posts this day involved a blogger doing an interview, and only another 5% involved some other kind of original research, such as examining documents. There is no summary of the news to be had here. The blogs ultimately are idiosyncratic. It is not citizen journalism in any traditional sense, but something closer to a stylized citizen media forum, often with an insider's tone and its own nomenclature.

*Cable News:* Up close, the striking thing about much of cable news, the first 24-hour medium, is a fixation with whatever is happening at the moment. The result is a good deal of repetition and a good deal that is ephemeral. The reporting, perhaps because of the time to fill rather than despite it, was shallowest by our indicators of any national media studied.

To a degree that we do not find on network TV, the three main cable news channels have also grown distinct from each other. Fox has built its appeal around trying to help its viewers put the news in some order — a conservative order — even if the production values are sometimes ragged. CNN is far more earnest, and tied to the immediate, and seems less sure what the difference is between its different programs. MSNBC, for its part, seems a different channel virtually from program to program — sometimes an extension of NBC News, sometimes something quite alien from its broadcast cousin. If there is a common thread between Don Imus in the morning, Chris Matthews in the evening and Keith Olbermann at night, it might be an effort at being ironic and glib.

*Network:* The contrast between the network nightly and morning news is so



striking that the term network TV news almost seems a misnomer. It makes more sense to talk nightly news versus morning. The three evening newscasts were virtually identical to each other and very different from their network siblings in the morning.

A close look also suggests just how disadvantaged the traditional 30-minute evening newscasts are today. They are still trying to cover traditional hard news, but they are constrained by airing only once a day, by a newshole that is really 18 minutes, and by limited staff, which seems even more apparent when you look closely. People who want a quick, one-shot fill on the major national and international events of the day can still find that here, but within a set viewing times and brevity of a 30 minute program.

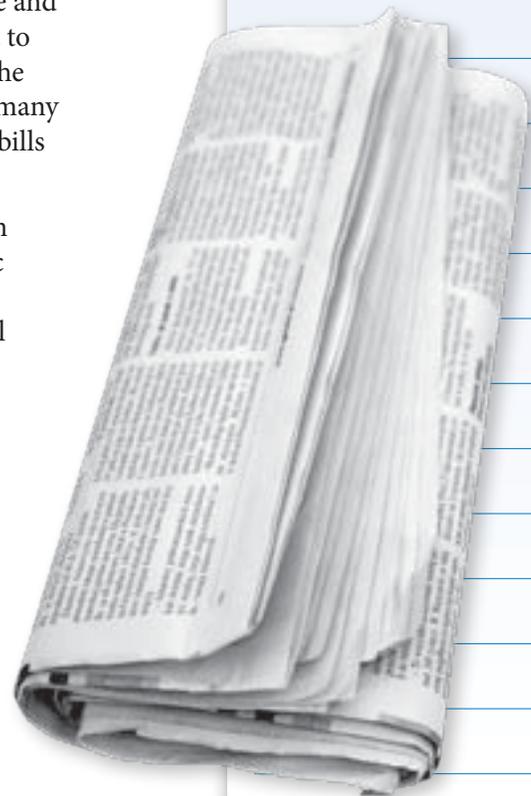
In the mornings, the luxury of an hour time slot makes a difference, but the news agenda is lighter and focused on emotion. Morning News and Features would probably be a more fitting title. Much, too, depends on the ability of two or three anchors to be experts in everything, prepared for everything, and charming all at the same time.

*Newspapers:* If ink on paper has an advantage, the day would suggest it is in the number of boots on the ground. This is the medium that is covering the most topics, has the deepest sourcing, explores the most angles in stories, and for now is supplying most of the content for the Internet. A reader also discovers probably the closest thing to a medium still trying to provide all the news a consumer might want, though perhaps in language and sourcing tilted toward elites. Looming, as readers inevitably shift to acquiring their news online, is the question of what happens to the more complete reporting that additional time affords. And how many boots will be left on the ground if the print editions that pay the bills continue to shrink.

*Local TV:* Local TV, at least in the three cities studied, focused on what news managers apparently thought people could use, traffic and weather, and what they were worried about, accidents and crime. Take out traffic, weather and sports, indeed, and half of all the newshole — and an even greater percentage of lead stories — was devoted to crime and accidents. But the bulk of what made up local news in print — issues like government, taxes, infrastructure and civic institutions — was relegated here to brief “tell” stories in the middle of the newscast. In style and format, the stations were strikingly similar, even across cities. The stories here were just the facts. There was little opinion, our statistical breakdown shows. But on average local TV news stories had the shallowest sourcing and explored the fewest angles of events covered of any medium studied except local radio.

*Radio:* Contrary to the notion that radio news is all

## My Notes



# Consumer's Report

## My Notes

syndicated national material, we found local radio news today to be very local — but also limited in scope. What listeners get is headlines read from wires, adapted from the newspaper, or provided by national networks. The stories are brief — almost always less than a minute and often less than 30 seconds. What depth of coverage we found came largely from talk show hosts offering opinions on issues or taking call-ins from listeners. But we found little in the way of reporters in the field, or what most journalists would consider reporting. Over all, just 14% of stories would involve field reports, and many were from syndicated network feeds. And the eight stations in three cities monitored this day are strikingly alike, in format and style. . . .

### CONCLUSION

In the end, one does draw some conclusions about the different media — what they offer and what they do not. None excel at everything. And there are few, if any, news consumers who rely on only one of these outlets anymore.

The Day in the Life of the News offers two warnings, as well. Consuming the news continuously does not mean being better informed. There is too much repetition, and too much confusion. The most efficient diet means finding the right mix depending on the time of the day, the nature of the news that day, and more. The wrong mix may prove to be a waste of time, the one thing consumers can never get back.



### VIEWING LOG

News Source: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time (nonprint) or Location (print)	Story Focus or Headline	Target Audience	Perspective on the Issue Covered

As you compare your source’s coverage of “news” with that of other students, what key differences do you notice? What might explain those differences?

#### LITERARY TERMS

A **target audience** is the intended group for which a work is designed to appeal or reach. A **secondary audience** is the group who may also receive the message or may influence the target audience.

**Writing Prompt:** After discussing differences, write a paragraph on a separate sheet of paper explaining how your source’s coverage of “news” is tailored to what you think is its target audience.

# Debating the Newspaper: Part I

SUGGESTED LEARNING STRATEGIES: Skimming/Scanning, Marking the Text, Discussion Groups, Paraphrasing, Quickwrite, Graphic Organizer

Look over the following quotations about newspapers. In the space after each quote, summarize what the author is saying and then state whether you agree and why.

“Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter.” — Thomas Jefferson, 1787

“Congress shall make no law ... abridging the freedom of speech or of the press...” — Article One, Bill of Rights of the United States Constitution, 1789



**WORD CONNECTIONS**

**Accurate** uses the Latin root *-cur-* from the verb *curare*, meaning “to take care of,” plus the common Latin prefix *ad* meaning “to.” *Curator*, *pedicure*, and *procure* also come from the same root.

“Newspapers ... give us the bald, sordid, disgusting facts of life. They chronicle, with degrading avidity, the sins of the second-rate, and with the conscientiousness of the illiterate give us accurate and prosaic details of the doings of people of absolutely no interest whatsoever.” — Oscar Wilde (1854–1900), playwright

“Here is the living disproof of the old adage that nothing is as dead as yesterday’s newspaper... This is what really happened, reported by a free press to a free people. It is the raw material of history; it is the story of our own times.” — Henry Steel Commager, preface to a history of *The New York Times*, 1951

“The newspapers, especially those in the East, are amazingly superficial and ... a large number of news gatherers are either cynics at heart or are following the orders and the policies of the owners of their papers.”  
— Franklin D. Roosevelt, May 7, 1934

“For my part I entertain a high idea of the utility of periodical publications; insomuch as I could heartily desire, copies of ... magazines, as well as common Gazettes, might be spread through every city, town, and village in the United States. I consider such vehicles of knowledge more happily calculated than any other to preserve the liberty, stimulate the industry, and ameliorate the morals of a free and enlightened people.” — George Washington, 1788

“I read the newspapers avidly. It is my one form of continuous fiction.”  
— Aneurin Bevan (1897–1960), British Labour politician

“What appears in newspapers is often new but seldom true.”  
— Patrick Kavanagh (1905–1967), Irish poet



### WORD CONNECTIONS

**Superficial** combines two Latin words: *super* meaning “above” and *facies* meaning “face.” *Supervise*, *supernatural*, *superb* and *face* are some of the many English words that originate in these Latin words.

# Debating the Newspaper: Part I



## WORD CONNECTIONS

**Subservient** comes from the Latin word *servire* meaning “to serve.”  
*Preserve, conserve, serve, deserve, servant* come from the same Latin word.

“As people get their opinions so largely from the newspapers they read, the corruption of the schools would not matter so much if the Press were free. But the Press is not free. As it costs at least a quarter of a million of money to establish a daily newspaper in London, the newspapers are owned by rich men. And they depend on the advertisements of other rich men. Editors and journalists who express opinions in print that are opposed to the interests of the rich are dismissed and replaced by subservient ones.”

— George B. Shaw, Irish playwright, 1949

“Most of us probably feel we couldn’t be free without newspapers, and that is the real reason we want the newspapers to be free.” — Edward R. Murrow, journalist, 1958

“The decline of competing local daily newspaper voices diminishes not only the availability of local and regional news to consumers but also the availability of competing opinions and ideas, not just at local levels but at all levels. Social thinkers, historians, and political analysts have identified such diversity of thought—a marketplace of ideas—as essential to a functioning democracy.” — Steven M. Hallock, journalism professor, 2007

**Quickwrite:** Write a paragraph or two about your own experiences with or observations about newspapers. Analyze the value or purpose of newspapers, among other things.

# How the Rise of the Daily Me Threatens Democracy

by Cass Sunstein

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cass Sunstein is a noted American legal scholar who has written dozens of books, essays, and newspaper and magazine articles on public policy, economics, law, and psychology. He has taught at the law schools of University of Chicago, Harvard University, and Columbia.

### LITERARY TERMS

**Reasoning** is the thinking or logic used to make a claim in an argument. **Evidence** is the specific facts, examples, and other details used to support the reasoning.

### My Notes

Sunstein’s article first appeared on an English Web site, so you will see many words with the British spellings. Read Sunstein’s article, marking the text to identify support (reasoning and evidence) he uses to justify his claim that the diminished role of the newspaper is a problem for American democracy. Record your findings in the left column of the graphic organizer on page 118.

More than a decade ago the technology specialist, Nicholas Negroponte, prophesied the emergence of the Daily Me – a fully personalised newspaper. It would allow you to include topics that interest you and screen out those that bore or annoy you. If you wanted to focus on Iraq and tennis, or exclude Iran and golf, you could do that.

Many people now use the internet to create something like a Daily Me. This behaviour is reinforced by the rise of social networking forums, collaborative filtering and viral marketing. For politics, the phenomenon is especially important in campaigns. Candidates in the US presidential race can construct information cocoons in which readers are deluged with material that is, in their eyes, politically correct. Supporters of Hillary Clinton construct a Daily Me that includes her campaign’s perspective but offers nothing from Barack Obama, let alone Mitt Romney.

What is wrong with the emerging situation? We can find a clue in a small experiment in democracy conducted in Colorado in 2005. About 60 US citizens were put into 10 groups. They deliberated on controversial issues, such as whether the US should sign an inter-national treaty to combat global warming and whether states should allow same-sex couples to enter into civil unions. The groups consisted of predominantly either leftwing or rightwing members, with the former drawn from left-of-centre Boulder and the latter

# Debating the Newspaper: Part I

## My Notes

from Colorado Springs, which tends to be right of centre. The groups, not mixed, were screened to ensure members conformed to stereotypes. (If people in Boulder liked Vice-President Dick Cheney, they were cordially excused.) People were asked to state their opinions anonymously before and after the group discussion.

In almost every group, people ended up with more extreme positions. The Boulder groups favoured an inter-national treaty to control global warming before discussion; they favoured it far more strongly afterwards. In Colorado Springs, people were neutral on that treaty before discussion; discussion led them to oppose it strongly. Same-sex unions became much more popular in Boulder and less so in Colorado Springs.

Aside from increasing extremism, discussion had another effect: it squelched diversity. Before members talked, many groups displayed internal disagreement. These were greatly reduced: discussion widened the rift between Boulder and Colorado Springs.

Countless versions of this experiment are carried out online every day. The result is group polarisation, which occurs when like-minded people speak together and end up in a more extreme position in line with their original inclinations.

There are three reasons for this. First is the exchange of information. In Colorado Springs, the members offered many justifications for not signing a climate treaty and a lot fewer for doing so. Since people listened to one another, they became more sceptical. The second reason is that when people find their views corroborated, they become more confident and so are more willing to be extreme. The third reason involves social comparison. People who favour a position think of themselves in a certain way and if they are with people who agree with them, they shift a bit to hold on to their preferred self-conception.

Group polarisation clearly occurs on the internet. For example, 80 per cent of readers of the leftwing blog Daily Kos are Democrats and fewer than 1 per cent are Republicans. Many popular bloggers link frequently to those who agree with them and to contrary views, if at all, only to ridicule them. To a significant extent, people are learning about supposed facts from narrow niches and like-minded others.

This matters for the electoral process. A high degree of self-sorting leads to more confidence, extremism and increased contempt for those with contrary views. We can already see this in the presidential campaign. It will only intensify when the two parties square off. To the extent that Democratic and Republican candidates seem to live in different political universes, group polarisation is playing a large role.

Polarisation, of course, long preceded the internet. Yet given people's new power to create echo chambers, the result will be serious obstacles not merely to civility but also to mutual understanding and constructive problem solving. The Daily Me leads inexorably also to the Daily Them. That is a real problem for democracy.

### LITERARY TERMS

**Inductive reasoning** is a process of looking at individual facts to draw a general conclusion. In contrast, **deductive reasoning** moves from general information to a specific conclusion. Notice that Sunstein provides evidence (individual facts) in his essay that lead to his concluding thesis (inductive reasoning).

# Debating the Newspaper: Part I

In the left-hand column, identify support (reasoning and evidence) Sunstein uses to justify his claim that the diminished role of the newspaper is a problem for American democracy. You will complete the right-hand column after the next activity.

Sunstein	Potter

**Quickwrite:** Explain how Sunstein’s *reasoning* and *evidence* convincingly support his claim that the diminished role of the newspaper is a problem for American democracy.

# Debating the Newspaper: Part II

SUGGESTED LEARNING STRATEGIES: Marking the Text, Graphic Organizer

## Editorial

Read Potter's article, marking the text to identify the **concessions** and **refutations** he uses to counter Sunstein's article and justify his claim that the diminished role of the newspaper is not a problem for American democracy. Record your findings in the right-hand column of your graphic organizer on page 118. Also, identify the writer's use of inductive and deductive reasoning to support his positions.

# The Newspaper Is Dying

## Hooray for Democracy

by Andrew Potter

The Newspaper Audience Databank (NADbank) released its readership numbers for 2007 a couple of weeks ago, and for those of us in the industry it was grim reading: almost everywhere you look, circulation, ad revenues and page counts are down, which is why you can now fire a cannon through any given newsroom at midday and not have to worry about committing reportercide.

But unless you work in the business, is there any reason to be especially concerned? Each year may put another loop in the newspaper's death spiral, but the overall consumption of news is on the rise, almost entirely thanks to the myriad online sources. The Internet is eating the newspaper's lunch, but there's plenty of food on the buffet table.

In certain quarters, though, there is growing concern that the demise of the newspaper is a threat to democracy itself. The argument goes something like this: the economic logic of mass circulation meant a newspaper had to try to appeal to as many potential readers as possible. To do so, it brought together in one package a diverse set of voices, presenting each reader with ideas and perspectives that he or she might not otherwise have seen or sought out. This fostered the democratic values of curiosity, enlightenment and toleration, and the worry is that if the newspaper declines, so might democracy.

### LITERARY TERMS

A **concession** is an admission in an argument that the opposing side has points. A **refutation** is the reasoning used to disprove an opposing point.

### My Notes

# Debating the Newspaper: Part II

## My Notes

The sharpest version of this argument comes from Cass Sunstein, a law professor at the University of Chicago. In a recent column in the *Financial Times*, Sunstein fusses about the rise of what he calls the Daily Me, the highly personalized and customized information feeds that will allow you to “include topics that interest you and screen out those that bore or anger you.” As Sunstein sees it, the Daily Me is the potential Achilles heel of democracy because of a phenomenon called group polarization: when like-minded people find themselves speaking only with one another, they get into a cycle of ideological reinforcement where they end up endorsing positions far more extreme than the ones they started with.

Group polarization is everywhere. It helps explain why, for example, humanities departments are so left-wing, why fraternities are so sexist, why journalists drink so much. But, for the most part, it isn't a problem (for democracy anyway), since we routinely come into contact with so many people from so many different groups that the tendency toward polarization in one is at least somewhat tempered by our encounters with others.

Yet Sunstein is worried that group polarization on the Internet will prove far more pernicious. Why? Because of the image of the blogosphere as a series of echo chambers, where every viewpoint is repeated and amplified to a hysterical pitch. As our politics moves online, he thinks we'll end up with a public sphere that is partisan and extreme, and as an example, he points out that 80 per cent of readers of the left-wing blog Daily Kos are Democrats, while fewer than one per cent are Republicans. The result, he claims, “will be serious obstacles not merely to civility but also to mutual understanding.”

As upside-down arguments go, this one is ingenious. For decades, progressive critics have complained about the anti-democratic influence of the mass media, and that newspapers present a selective and highly biased picture of the world, promoting pseudo-arguments that give the illusion of debate while preserving the status quo. (Remember that the villain in *Manufacturing Consent*, the film about Noam Chomsky, was – wait for it – the *New York Times*.) And now that the Internet is poised to cast these lumbering dinosaurs of black ink and dead trees into the pit of extinction, we're supposed to say hang on, what about democracy?

There's a basic error here, paired with an equally basic misunderstanding of how the marketplace of ideas works. There is no reason at all to be concerned that 80 per cent of Daily Kos readers are Democrats, any more than to worry that 80 per cent of the visitors to McDonald's like hamburgers. Given what each of these outlets is selling, it would be bizarre if it were otherwise. What would be worrisome was if four-fifths of Democrats read only the Daily Kos, but there is absolutely no evidence that is the case.

Earlier this month, the Project for Excellence in Journalism, a think tank sponsored by the Pew foundation, released its fifth annual report (at journalism.org) on the state of the news media. For the most part, its analysis of the newspaper business confirmed the trends of declining circulation, revenues and staff. But with respect to public attitudes, the PEJ found that most readers see their newspaper as increasingly biased, and 68 per cent say they prefer to get their news from sources that don't have a point of view. The PEJ also found a substantial disconnect between the issues and events that dominate the news hole (e.g. the Iraq surge, the massacre at Virginia Tech) and what the public wants to see covered – issues such as education, transportation, religion and health. What this suggests, is, aside from some failings of newspapers, that readers go online in search of less bias, not the self-absorption of the Daily Me.

Nothing about how people consume media online suggests they are looking for confirmation of pre-existing biases. In fact, we have every reason to believe that as people migrate online, it will be to seek out sources of information that they perceive to be unbiased, and which give them news they can't get anywhere else. The newspaper may be dying, but our democracy will be healthier for it.



## My Notes

# Debating the Newspaper: Part II

After recording your findings in the graphic organizer located in Activity 2.4, respond to the following:

When refuting an existing argument, writers rely on a variety of strategies. These strategies of refutation often “attack” different elements of an opponent’s position. Some of the most common “attacks” include:

- Attack on a claim: A big picture attack focusing on the writer’s overall position.
- Attack on reasoning: Does the evidence the writer uses logically support the conclusions?
- Attack on evidence: Is the evidence timely, accurate, and unbiased? Is there counter-evidence?
- Attack on assumption: What does the writer assume to be true and is that assumption accurate? (Writer’s assumptions are often unstated.)

In the following graphic organizer, practice refuting elements adapted from Jeremy Wagstaff’s article “Oh my! The future of news.”

Element	Your Refutation
Claim: The Internet is transforming the meaning of news.	
Reasoning: People’s fascination with movie stars shows that celebrity news is more important than traditional news.	
Evidence: People that use MySpace are producers of news.	
Assumption: Everyone has access to a source of news.	

**Writing Prompt:** Identify which strategies of refutation Potter uses in his response to Sunstein, and evaluate the effectiveness of those “attacks.” In your response, provide examples of inductive and deductive reasoning each writer uses to support or refute claims.

Throughout the course of this unit, you will be asked to read at least one newspaper daily. Use this log to keep track of what and when you read, as well as to write down the titles of significant articles that you encounter in each section. Each day cut out or photocopy one article that you enjoyed reading.

Title of Newspaper \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time Spent</b>	<b>Interesting Articles in Front Section</b>	<b>Interesting Articles on Op-Ed Page</b>	<b>Interesting Articles in One Other Section</b>

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# News or Views: A Closer Look

SUGGESTED LEARNING STRATEGIES: Paraphrasing, Quickwrite, Marking the Text, Think-Pair-Share

## ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

**Bias** is an inclination or mental leaning for or against something, which prevents impartial judgment.

We tend to think that news articles are **objective**, which means they are based on factual information. However, all news reports are to some extent **subjective** – or based on feelings or opinions – since they represent the reporter’s analysis of the information surrounding the story’s topic. Close analysis of the details of the text’s content, structure, and publication context can often reveal subtle indications of bias in terms of how the writer frames the issue. Considering the following aspects of a text gives a basis for understanding that many news stories may be far from objective in their coverage of the stories they construct.

### 1. BIAS THROUGH SELECTION AND OMISSION

- An editor can express a bias by choosing to use or not to use a specific news item. An editor might believe that advertisers want younger readers—they spend more money. Therefore, news of specific interest to old people will be ignored.
- Within a given story, details can be ignored or included to give readers or viewers a different opinion about the events reported. If, during a speech, a few people boo, the reaction can be described as “remarks greeted by jeers” or they can be ignored as “a handful of dissidents . . .” or perhaps not even be mentioned.
- Bias through the omission of stories or details is very difficult to detect. Only by comparing news reports from a wide variety of outlets can this form of bias be observed.
- Bias in local news coverage can be found by comparing reports of the same event as treated in different papers.

### 2. BIAS THROUGH PLACEMENT

- Readers of papers judge first-page stories to be more significant than those buried in the back. Television and radio newscasts run the most important stories first and leave the less significant to later. Where a story is placed, therefore, influences what a reader or viewer thinks about its importance and suggests the editor’s evaluation of its importance.

For example, a local editor might campaign against the owning of hand guns by giving prominent space to every shooting with a hand gun and gun-related accident in his paper.

- Some murders and robberies receive front-page attention while others receive only a mention on page twenty.
- Similarly, where information appears *within* an article may also reveal evidence of bias. Since most readers only read the first few paragraphs of any given article, burying information at the end may work to suppress a particular point of view or piece of information, while placing it at the beginning emphasizes it. The opposite might be true, though; the end could reveal the writer’s closing thought (and thus his/her personal bias) on the issue.

### 3. BIAS BY HEADLINE

- Many people read only the headline of a news item. Most people scan nearly all the headlines in a newspaper. Headlines are the most read part of a paper. They can summarize as well as present carefully hidden bias and prejudices. They can convey excitement where little exists; they can express approval or condemnation; they can steer public opinion.

### 4. BIAS BY PHOTOS, CAPTIONS, AND CAMERA ANGLES

- Some pictures flatter a person; others make the person look unpleasant. A paper can choose photos to influence opinion about, for example, a candidate for election. Television can show film or videotape that praises or condemns. The choice of which visual images to display is extremely important. Newspapers run captions that are also potential sources of bias and opinion.

### 5. BIAS THROUGH STATISTICS AND CROWD COUNTS

- To make a disaster seem more spectacular (and therefore worthy of reading), numbers can be inflated. “One hundred injured in train wreck” can be the same as “Passengers injured in train wreck.”
- Crowd counts are notoriously inaccurate and often reflect the opinion of the person doing the counting. A reporter, event sponsor, or police officer might estimate a crowd at several thousand if he or she agrees with the purpose of the assembly—or a much smaller number if he/she is critical of the crowd’s purposes or beliefs. News magazines use specific numbers to enhance believability.



#### **WORD CONNECTIONS**

The perception of bias depends on evidence supporting or not supporting claims made. *Prima facie* is a Latin term meaning “on the face of it,” or at first glance. An example of its use is, “*Prima facie* evidence does not support the conclusions drawn.”

## 6. BIAS BY SOURCE CONTROL

- To detect bias, always consider where a news item “comes from.” Is the information supplied by a reporter, by an eyewitness, by police or fire officials, by executives, by elected or appointed government officials? Each might have a particular bias that is presented in the story.
- Puff pieces are supplied to newspapers (and TV stations) by companies or public relations directors—and even sometimes by the government (directly or through press conferences). For example, the “Avocado Growers Association” might send a press release in the form of a news story telling of a doctor who claims that avocados are healthy and should be eaten by all. A food company might supply recipes for a newspaper’s food section that recommends use of its products in the recipes. A country’s tourist bureau will supply a glowing story, complete with pictures of a pleasant vacation. Recently, even government agencies have sometimes issued such releases.
- A pseudo-event is some event (demonstration, sit-in, ribbon cutting, speech, ceremony, ground breaking, etc.) that takes place primarily to gain news coverage.
- Similarly, the choice of who is quoted in an article can point to bias. Be sure to consider who is quoted, what the quote seems to reveal or imply (negatively or positively) about the position, who is merely paraphrased, and what perspectives are unrepresented or remain silent in the article.

<b>Bias Type</b>	<b>Guiding Questions</b>
<b>Bias Through Selection and Omission</b>	
<b>Bias Through Placement</b>	
<b>Bias by Headline</b>	
<b>Bias by Photos, Captions, and Camera Angles</b>	
<b>Bias Through Statistics and Crowd Counts</b>	
<b>Bias by Source Control</b>	

## My Notes

While editorials openly present opinions, newspaper articles may appear objective until carefully examined for evidence that reveals a more subjective agenda. Read the following news stories and carefully evaluate them for subtle evidence of bias using the guiding questions your class has generated.

**Article**

# Facebook Photos Sting Minnesota High School Students

## The Associated Press

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minn. — For 16-year-old Nick Laurent, walking out of Eden Prairie High School yesterday to protest the school's punishment of students seen partying on Facebook pages was about asking administrators to be fair.

More than a dozen students joined Laurent after learning of the walkout from fliers the junior handed out the day before. The students said school administrators overreacted to the perception that students in the photos were drinking.

"It's the loudest thing we could do," said Laurent, who organized the walkout but said he wasn't one of the students in the photos.

Laurent tried to make his point by passing out red plastic cups that were similar to those seen in some of the photos. He noted that it was impossible to see what was inside the cups, so administrators couldn't prove that students were drinking.

Laurent agreed that athletes and other students who sign a code of conduct to be involved in activities should face consequences if they break the rule against drinking alcohol. But he said the punishments were too harsh.

"They don't have (the) support of the students to hand out arbitrary punishments and punishments that don't fit the crime," he said.

Once the photos on the social-networking Web site came to the attention of administrators, 42 students were interviewed and 13 face some discipline over the pictures, school officials said.

School officials haven't said how the students were disciplined, but Minnesota State High School League penalties start with a two-game suspension for the first violation. Laurent and other students said they knew of classmates who were banned from their sports teams for five weeks.

Principal Conn McCartan did not return a call seeking comment on the walkout, but students said they expected they'd be punished.

In earlier statements, the school's principal said school officials did not seek out the pictures. But he didn't say who gave the school the photos.

"We do not go out looking at student social networking sites. We do however take action when we are given legitimate information about school or Minnesota State High School League violations," McCartan said in an e-mail to families of his students.

McCartan said interviews with students suggested, however, that the pictures might have been posted on such sites, and warned of the dangers.

"These sites are not private places," he wrote. "Their content forms a permanent and public record of conversations and pictures."

In an e-mail to parents and guardians, Superintendent Melissa Krull said, "We are not legally at liberty to discuss further details of this investigation."

Fourteen-year-old Ali Saley said cutting class for the cause was worth it. She held signs such as, "They walk or we do," in solidarity with the students who were punished. A few cars honked in support of the students as they gathered on a footbridge over the road in front of the school.

The Eden Prairie High School students who got into trouble ran afoul of a new reality: digital cameras and social networking sites make the entire world a public space.

It's becoming increasingly common for schools and potential employers to check social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace, and to penalize kids or other people for what they find, said William McGeeveran, a professor at the University of Minnesota Law School and an expert on data privacy.

"Facebook is largely a public space. Users don't always perceive it that way, but that's what it is," McGeeveran said.

Even when young people are cautious about what they put on the pages, he said, friends or acquaintances can post pictures of them in questionable situations without their knowing about it.

McGeeveran cited research by the Pew Internet & American Life Project that suggested most teens were aware of the risks of posting personal information on the Internet. A report issued last month found that most teens restrict access to their posted photos and videos at least some of the time, and that few consistently share them without any restrictions.

## My Notes

# News or Views: A Closer Look

## My Notes

“But some students are still foolish about what they put on their pages,” he said.

Eden Prairie High School has about 3,300 students, and Facebook lists about 2,800 members in its network for the school, including more than 500 from the current senior class. A spot check on Jan. 9 showed that some had posted dozens and even hundreds of pictures of themselves and their friends. However, most members used a privacy setting to limit access to their profiles to friends and other authorized people.

Schools in Minnesota have limited ability to regulate the conduct of students after hours. When students participate in sports or certain fine-arts activities, however, they must agree in writing to abide by the long-standing rules of the Minnesota State High School League, which prohibit the use of alcohol, tobacco and controlled substances, even over the summer.

League spokesman Howard Voigt noted that parents must sign the forms, too, certifying that they understand the rules and penalties. Still, he said, complaints are common.

“We run into that all the time here — parents call and accuse us of being too hard on their kid,” he said.

Voigt said there had been several cases of students’ running afoul of league rules because of potential violations posted on social-networking sites.

It’s not safe for kids to assume what they do in small groups won’t be broadcast to the entire world, McGeveran said.

“I don’t think most of us would have liked to have lived our teen years in an era of ubiquitous camera phones and social networking,” he said. “It really changes the perception of what places are private and which ones aren’t.”

# Federal Way schools restrict Gore film

by Robert McClure and Lisa Stiffler

This week in Federal Way schools, it got a lot more inconvenient to show one of the top-grossing documentaries in U.S. history, the global-warming alert “An Inconvenient Truth.”

After a parent who supports the teaching of creationism and opposes sex education complained about the film, the Federal Way School Board on Tuesday placed what it labeled a moratorium on showing the film. The movie consists largely of a computer presentation by former Vice President Al Gore recounting scientists’ findings.

“Condoms don’t belong in school, and neither does Al Gore. He’s not a schoolteacher,” said Frosty Hardison, a parent of seven who also said that he believes the Earth is 14,000 years old. “The information that’s being presented is a very cockeyed view of what the truth is. ... The Bible says that in the end times everything will burn up, but that perspective isn’t in the DVD.”

Hardison’s e-mail to the School Board prompted board member David Larson to propose the moratorium Tuesday night.

“Somebody could say you’re killing free speech, and my retort to them would be we’re encouraging free speech,” said Larson, a lawyer. “The beauty of our society is we allow debate.”

School Board members adopted a three-point policy that says teachers who want to show the movie must ensure that a “credible, legitimate opposing view will be presented,” that they must get the OK of the principal and the superintendent, and that any teachers who have shown the film must now present an “opposing view.”

The requirement to represent another side follows district policy to represent both sides of a controversial issue, board President Ed Barney said.

“What is purported in this movie is, ‘This is what is happening. Period. That is fact,’” Barney said.

Students should hear the perspective of global-warming skeptics and then make up their minds, he said. After they do, “if they think driving around in cars is going to kill us all, that’s fine, that’s their choice.”

Asked whether an alternative explanation for evolution should be presented by teachers, Barney said it would be appropriate to tell students that other beliefs exist. “It’s only a theory,” he said.

While the question of climate change has provoked intense argument in political circles in recent years, among scientists its basic tenets have become the subject of an increasingly stronger consensus.

## My Notes

### GRAMMAR & USAGE

News stories often carry many direct quotes. Notice, however, that this story contains a blend of complete quotations of one or more sentences, quotes of short phrases, and indirect quotes, which are paraphrases. The variety keeps the story from being boring or confusing. The same is true for research papers. Use longer quotes when the words are especially significant. Otherwise, rely on paraphrases and short quoted phrases.

# News or Views: A Closer Look

## My Notes

“In the light of new evidence and taking into account the remaining uncertainties, most of the observed warming over the last 50 years is likely to have been due to the increase in greenhouse gas concentrations,” states a 2001 report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which advises policymakers.

“Furthermore, it is very likely that the 20th-century warming has contributed significantly to the observed sea level rise, through thermal expansion of seawater and widespread loss of land ice.”

The basics of that position are backed by the American Meteorological Society, the American Geophysical Union, the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the National Academy of Sciences.

Laurie David, a co-producer of the movie, said that this is the first incident of its kind relating to the film.

“I am shocked that a school district would come to this decision,” David said in a prepared statement. “There is no opposing view to science, which is fact, and the facts are clear that global warming is here, now.”

The Federal Way incident started when Hardison learned that his daughter would see the movie in class. He objected.

Hardison and his wife, Gayla, said they would prefer that the movie not be shown at all in schools.

“From what I’ve seen (of the movie) and what my husband has expressed to me, if (the movie) is going to take the approach of ‘bad America, bad America,’ I don’t think it should be shown at all,” Gayle Hardison said. “If you’re going to come in and just say America is creating the rotten ruin of the world, I don’t think the video should be shown.”

Scientists say that Americans, with about 5 percent of the world’s population, emit about 25 percent of the globe-warming gases.

Larson, the School Board member, said a pre-existing policy should have alerted teachers and principals that the movie must be counterbalanced.

The policy, titled “Controversial Issues, Teaching of,” says in part, “It is the teacher’s responsibility to present controversial issues that are free from prejudice and encourage students to form, hold and express their own opinions without personal prejudice or discrimination.”

“The principal reason for that is to make sure that the public schools are not used for indoctrination,” Larson said.

Students contacted Wednesday said they favor allowing the movie to be shown.



# Fair and Balanced: Part I

SUGGESTED LEARNING STRATEGIES: Paraphrasing, Discussion Groups, Notetaking

Sometimes a writer compensates for a lack of evidence and logical argumentation by using slanted language and emotional appeals to present a prejudiced depiction of a subject. This happens so often that there are actually many names for these various “**slanters**” (rhetorical devices used to present the subject in a **biased** way). As you read through the techniques described below, try to think of examples from the media that fit the descriptions (adapted from Brooke Noel Moore and Richard Parker’s *Critical Thinking*, 8<sup>th</sup> ed, 2007).

- 1. Labeling (euphemisms and dysphemisms):** The use of a highly connotative word or phrase to name or describe a subject or action, a technique also called using loaded language. When the connotations are positive (or less negative), the writer is using euphemism. For example, car dealers try to sell “pre-owned vehicles” rather than “used cars.” In the opposite case, negative connotations may be assigned to a term. Consider, for example, the differences between these terms: freedom fighter, guerrilla, rebel, and terrorist. Freedom fighter is a euphemism while terrorist is a dysphemism.
- 2. Rhetorical analogy:** The use of a figurative comparison (sometimes a simile or a metaphor) to convey a positive or negative feeling towards the subject. For example, in the 2008 presidential race, Sarah Palin suggested (via a joke) that she was like a pit bull with lipstick. In another famous moment of the campaign, a McCain ad compared Barack Obama to Paris Hilton, thus suggesting he was an unqualified celebrity. “The environment needs George W. Bush like farmers need a drought” is another example.
- 3. Rhetorical definition:** The use of emotively charged language to express or elicit an attitude about something. A classic example is defining capital punishment as “government sanctioned murder.” A rhetorical definition stacks the deck either for or against the position it implies.
- 4. Rhetorical explanation:** Expressing an opinion as if it were fact, and doing so in biased language. For example, you might say someone “didn’t have the guts to fight back” when taunted by another person. This paints the person as motivated by cowardice. Or you might say the person “took the high road, instead of taking a swing.”
- 5. Innuendo:** The use of language to imply that a particular inference is justified, as if saying “go ahead and read between the lines!” In this way, the speaker doesn’t have to actually make a claim that can’t be supported; instead, the audience is led to make the leap on their own. For example, a presidential candidate might say, “Think carefully about whom you choose; you want a president who will be ready to do the job on day one.” The implication is that the opposing candidate is not ready.

- 6. Downplayers:** The use of qualifier words or phrases to make someone or something look less important or significant. In *An Inconvenient Truth*, for example, Al Gore refers several times to the “so-called skeptics,” in contrast to how he often refers to the experts he cites in his speech as “my friend.” Words like “mere” and “only” work this way, as well, as does the use of quotation marks, to suggest a term is ironic or misleading. For example: “She got her ‘degree’ from a correspondence school.” Often these references are linked to concessions with connectors such as *nevertheless*, *however*, *still*, or *but*.
- 7. Hyperbole:** The use of extravagant overstatement, which can work to move the audience to accept the basic claim even if they reject the extremes of the word choice. Many of the other “slanters” can be hyperbolic in the way they are worded, but the key part is that the statement or claim is extreme. For example, in response to a dress code, a student might say “This school administration is fascist!”
- 8. Truth Surrogates:** Hinting that proof exists to support a claim without actually citing that proof. For example, ads often say “studies show,” and tabloids often say things like “according to an insider” or “there’s every reason to believe that . . .” If the evidence does exist, the writer is doing a poor job of citing it; meanwhile, the writer has not actually identified any source—or made any claim—that can be easily disproven or challenged.
- 9. Ridicule/Sarcasm:** The use of language that suggests the subject is worthy of scorn. The language seeks to evoke a laugh or sarcastically mock the subject.



### WORD CONNECTIONS

To analyze analogies, you must look at alternative meanings of words. For example, look at this analogy.

murder : crows ::  
team : players

You may first think of *murder* as a crime, but that does not describe the relationship between team and players. If you think of a team being composed of players, then you make the connection that a flock of crows may be called a *murder*. Create your own analogy using words that have multiple meanings.

SUGGESTED LEARNING STRATEGIES: Marking the Text, SMELL, Discussion Groups, Quickwrite

## My Notes

**Editorial**

# *Abolish* high school football!

by Raymond A. Schroth

Are you sure playing high school football is good for your son?

I had doubts long before I read the report in the New York Times (Sept 15) that of the 1.2 million teenagers who play high school football, an estimated 50 percent have suffered at least one concussion, 35 percent two or more. Since 1997, throughout 20 states, 50 boys have died.

A concussion is a blow to the head that smashes the brain against the skull. Because their brain tissues are less developed, adolescents are most vulnerable. The victim feels “weird,” has splotchy vision, falls to the ground, vomits, goes into a coma, dies. If he survives he suffers depression, he can’t concentrate, drops out, and/or develops symptoms later in life.

Worst of all, the young men overwhelmingly told the reporter that if they thought their heads had been damaged they would never tell the coach, because he might take them out of the game.

I’ve felt high school football did more harm than good since I taught high school in the 1960s, since I began getting an inkling of the damage done young bodies in both high school and college, where linemen are encouraged to “bulk up” to a grotesque 300 pounds in order to do more damage to the enemy — to say nothing of the damage done to their own late adolescent bodies by getting so fat.

Football, especially in high school, distorts the goals of the so-called educational institution that sponsors it, turns ordinary boys into bedazzled heroes, tells them they’re the kings of the corridors, coddled by teachers afraid to flunk them, as their parents try to live out their glamorous dreams over the broken bodies of their children bashing their helmeted heads into one another as thousands cheer.



# Fair and Balanced: Part II

SMELL is an effective strategy for analyzing a writer's use of language in support of a position. As you read Schroth's essay, look for evidence of biased language; then fill in the SMELL chart below.

**Sender-Receiver Relationship** – To whom is the writer explicitly addressing his argument? How does he seem to feel about that target audience? What values does the sender assume the reader shares or argue that they should share?

**Message** – What is a literal summary of the content? What is the article's ultimate thesis regarding the subject?

**Emotional Strategies** – What emotional appeals does the writer include? What seems to be their desired effect?

**Logical Strategies** – What logical arguments/appeals does the writer include? What is their effect?

**Language** – What specific language/slanters are used in the article to support the message or characterize the opposition?

In the boxes below, copy five of the more slanted passages from Schroth’s essay and revise them to be less rhetorically manipulative.

Original Passage	Revised Passage

# How to Read an Editorial

SUGGESTED LEARNING STRATEGIES: Graphic Organizer, SOAPStone, Substituting

## ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

An **editorial** is an article in a newspaper or magazine expressing the opinion of its editor or publisher.

## How to Read an Editorial

The purpose of a news story is to inform you about a particular and noteworthy event.

The purpose of an **editorial** may also be to inform, but its main objective is to persuade.

When you read an editorial, consider the following:

1. Examine the headline, sub-headline and related cartoon (if it exists). What will this editorial be about? What guesses or assumptions can you make about the writer's perspective at this point?
2. Look at the writer's name and affiliation, if given. What do you know about the writer's background and/or potential bias at this point?
3. Read the first two to three paragraphs very carefully. What issue is the writer discussing and what is his or her stance on this issue?
4. Once you have determined the writer's stance on the issue, stop reading for a moment or two. What is the other side of the issue? Who might think differently? What are one or two reasons that you know that might support a side opposite the writer's stance?
5. Continue reading the editorial. What are two of the strongest pieces of evidence that the writer uses to support his or her side of the issue? Why are they effective?
6. Did the writer persuade you? Did the writer address/refute the main objections of the opposition? Give an example. What did he or she not address? Why might the writer have chosen not to address this element? Do you feel that the writer was fair to the other side? Why or why not?
7. Go back through the editorial and circle words and phrases that are "slanted." How do these words affect your feelings about the issue? About the writer?
8. If the writer were standing right next to you now, what would you say to him or her?

Use the questions on the previous page to guide your responses to the editorial on pages 142–143.

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Writer \_\_\_\_\_ Issue \_\_\_\_\_

Question	Response
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	

## My Notes

**E d i t o r i a l****FACING CONSEQUENCES  
AT EDEN PRAIRIE HIGH***from the Minneapolis/St. Paul Star Tribune*

This just in: Some high school students drink alcohol and, in the Internet age, some underage drinkers are foolish enough to post party photos on popular websites. In the case of Eden Prairie High School vs. the partying Facebook students, we give administrators credit for their judgment and flunk the students on common sense.

Similarly, any parents considering taking legal action because they think the school went too far in disciplining students need a reality check. Teen drinking remains a serious problem in this state and Eden Prairie administrators deserve praise – not legal threats or complaints from parents – for taking decisive action that they knew would be controversial. Face it, parents, the Facebook kids screwed up, and here’s a chance to talk about personal responsibility in the context of an underage drinking escapade that, thankfully, did not involve death or injury.

And here’s the reality for students: We know high school students drink, and some experiment with drugs. Most of your baby boomer parents certainly did one or both, and some lost driver’s licenses, had serious auto accidents and were suspended from the football team. That’s how it goes with risks and consequences.

Your parents can probably tell you a few stories about binge drinking, too, either from their high school or college days or both. If not, go to the search field at [startribune.com](http://startribune.com) and type in these names: Jenna Foellmi, Rissa Amen-Reif, Amanda Jax and Brian W. Threet. In the past four months, these four young people all died in drinking-related incidents in Minnesota. Brian’s funeral was Thursday afternoon in Farmington.

With that backdrop, protests over invasion of privacy are ridiculous. School administrators weren’t surfing social networking sites without



# How to Write an Editorial

SUGGESTED LEARNING STRATEGIES: RAFT, Graphic Organizer, Drafting, Sharing and Responding, SOAPStone

## How to Write an Editorial

### Before You Write

- **Brainstorm for topics:** Choose topics in which you have a genuine interest and some prior knowledge. Be sure that they are issues that are debatable. Do not, for example, argue against school violence since no one in his or her right mind would ever be for such a thing. Many editorials are written as responses to news articles or other editorials, so keep your eyes open for interesting ideas while reading the paper each day.
- **Research your topic:** Ask opinions, conduct interviews, and locate facts. While editorials are opinion pieces, those opinions must still be supported with evidence.
- **Get both sides:** In addition to having support for your position, be certain that you have information about the other side of the issue.
- **Consider your audience:** Use a SOAPStone as a prewriting strategy to consider details of your audience. What does your audience currently believe about this issue? Why? How will they respond to you? Why? What can you do to persuade them to change their minds? How will using slanted language affect your credibility and persuasiveness with them?
- **Write a thesis:** Before writing your draft, you must have a clearly stated position on this issue with a strongly worded reason for your position.
- **Write out your topic sentences and/or main ideas:** This preparation will help you organize your thoughts as you draft your editorial.

### Writing a Draft

- **Get to the point:** Your first paragraph should immediately bring the reader's attention to the seriousness of the issue. Use a "hook" that will sell the piece to the reader: a current event or imminent danger, for example. You should then provide a concise summary of what you're going to tell the reader and include your thesis statement.
- **Provide context:** Give your readers important background information about the issue. This background should not be common knowledge (e.g., "drugs are dangerous"), but should frame the issue and define any key terms that your reader will need in order to understand your argument.
- **Make your point:** Give your strongest two or three reasons why the reader should agree with you. Use relevant and appropriate evidence to support your reasons. Be sure to state the source of your information. Be sure that your argument is clear and organized.

- **Address your opposition:** Reasonable people may think differently than you do on the subject. State at least one or two of the most credible reasons why someone might object to your point of view. Then refute their positions by explaining why their assumptions, claims, logic and/or evidence are wrong.
- **Wrap it up:** Briefly summarize the main points of your argument and think of a powerful way to end your piece. Often this means giving your reader one last thought to consider.

### Revising Your Draft

- **Check your evidence:** As you look back through your draft, consider whether you have included enough evidence to convince someone who thinks differently than you. Also, is that evidence relevant to your position?
- **Check your rhetoric:** Where is your language slanted? What words or phrases could you modify to “tone” down your voice and appeal to more people?
- **Check your grammar:** Nothing will make it easier for someone to dismiss your ideas than if you misspell or misuse words or phrases. Triple-check your editorial.

# How to Write an Editorial

## Issue: Raising Graduation Requirements

Should academic graduation requirements be raised for high school students in your district? Complete the following chart after you have read and analyzed the two editorials that address this question.

Writer	Reasons For	Reasons Against	Strongest Statement of Position
Jack O'Connell			
Nick Thomas			
You			
A Person You Know			



# How to Write an Editorial

## My Notes

I am proposing a High Performing High Schools Initiative that will raise expectations for our high schools and high school students. It will provide better training and support for high school principals. And it will establish a state “seal of approval” process for high school instructional materials, giving districts guidance in choosing materials that are standards-aligned, and therefore more rigorous than many used in high schools today.

It is simply wrong to decide for students as young as age 15 whether or not they are “college material” and capable of challenging courses in high school. Guiding students to an easier academic pathway, even if they show little early motivation or curiosity about possibilities beyond high school, virtually guarantees they won’t be prepared with important foundational skills. It limits their opportunities for years to come. Years ago, this was called “tracking.” Students facing childhood challenges such as poverty or the need to learn English — the description of fully well over a quarter of California’s students today — would be tracked to less-challenging courses and denied opportunities after high school as a result.

By advocating for tougher curriculum in high schools, I am not in any way suggesting vocational education programs should be eliminated. In fact, legislation I introduced to improve high school achievement would reward schools that collaborate with businesses or labor unions to expand such successful programs as career partnership academies. These academies have been successful where they have provided rigorous academic instruction geared toward a career pathway.

The truth is that we can no longer afford to hold high expectations only for our college-bound students. Today, all of our students need the skills and knowledge contained in the curriculum that was once reserved only for the college-bound. Strong communications skills, knowledge of foreign language and culture, higher-level math and problem-solving skills are needed in technical trades as well as white-collar professions. The job of K-12 education in California must be to ensure that all of our students graduate with the ability to fulfill their potential — whether that takes them to higher education or directly to their career.

# New Michigan Graduation Requirements Shortchange Many Students

by Nick Thomas

Imagine waking up in the morning to find the electricity is out, or a pipe has burst or your car won't start. As you look through the Yellow Pages for a technician, do you really care if that person has a working knowledge of matrices, oxidation numbers, and Kepler's laws of planetary motion?

Apparently the state of Michigan does. Its new high school graduation requirements will assure that every graduate, regardless of their career choice, will have taken advanced math and science classes.

Among the new requirements are one credit each of algebra I, geometry and algebra II and an additional math class in the senior year. Also required is one credit of biology, one credit of physics or chemistry and one additional year of science.

This new curriculum may be helpful for a student who plans to go on to college, but it seems excessive for vocational students.

Plumbers, mechanics, construction workers, hairdressers and many other positions do not need an advanced math and science background. Math needed for vocational jobs could be learned through an "applied math" class, or on-site learning.

I'm concerned that when students are forced to take classes that are unnecessary for their chosen careers, they'll feel discouraged and put little effort into their classes. And if they can't take the classes they want, I'm afraid that more of them will drop out.

## Advanced classes becoming basic classes

One of my biggest concerns with all students taking advanced classes is that the pace of the courses will slow down. Some students will undoubtedly not try to learn the material, and some will be incapable of learning as fast as others, leaving the teacher compelled to dumb down the class. In effect, advanced classes will become basic classes. This will have no additional benefit for vocational students and will hamper college prep students.

There's yet another way college-bound students might suffer from the new requirements. A very gifted English student who lacks ability in math could have their grade point average lowered significantly when required to take advanced math classes. And of course, when applying to college, high school grades are important.

## My Notes

# How to Write an Editorial

## My Notes

A well-rounded education is ideal but can be achieved in many ways, not just through academics. Our economy depends on a variety of jobs. We need carpenters as well as engineers. We need hairdressers as well as doctors, and we need heavy equipment operators as well as lawyers.

All jobs are important, and students deserve to pursue their choice of a career without being forced to take unnecessary classes.

# Where's Your Proof?

SUGGESTED LEARNING STRATEGIES: Graphic Organizer, Rereading, Think-Pair-Share, Discussion Groups

To support the claims they make, writers use a variety of types of evidence. With a partner or small group, revisit one of the editorials you have read in this unit and fill in the chart below.

<b>Type of Evidence: What is it used for? What are its limitations?</b> <b>“They X, but they Y.”</b>	<b>Example from an Editorial in this Unit</b>	<b>Evaluation: What kind of appeal does it make: logos, ethos, or pathos? Does the evidence logically support the writer’s claim in this case? Why or why not?</b>
<p><u>Illustrative Examples</u> (Personal Experience/Anecdotal/Media Example). They give a reality to the claim, but may not be generalizable.</p>		
<p><u>Hypothetical Cases</u>. They challenge the reader to consider possible circumstances or outcomes, but there’s no reason they will definitely happen.</p>		
<p><u>Analogies/Comparison</u>. They make the unfamiliar or abstract more accessible, but they need to be more similar than different in order to be persuasive.</p>		
<p><u>Expert Testimony</u>. They provide expert support for causal claims, predictions of outcomes, or possible solutions, but they’re still just opinions—and the source needs to be checked carefully!</p>		
<p><u>Statistics/Surveys</u>. They support generalized claims and make strong logical appeals, but they must be reliable and unbiased.</p>		
<p><u>Causal Relationships</u>. They suggest possible positive or negative outcomes, but there needs to be a clear link between the cause and the effect.</p>		

# Reading and Writing a Letter to the Editor

SUGGESTED LEARNING STRATEGIES: Graphic Organizer, Marking the Text, Sharing and Responding, Self-Editing, Peer Editing

## How to Write a Letter to the Editor

Letters that are intended for publication should be drafted carefully. Here are some tips to keep in mind:

- Make one point (or at most two) in your letter. Be sure to identify the topic of your letter. State the point clearly, ideally in the first sentence.
- Make your letter timely. If you are not addressing a specific article, editorial, or letter that recently appeared in the paper you are writing to, tie the issue you are writing about to a recent event.
- Familiarize yourself with the coverage and editorial position of the paper to which you are writing. Refute or support specific statements, address relevant facts that are ignored, offer a completely different perspective on the issue, but avoid blanket attacks on the media in general or the newspaper in particular.
- Consider your audience (the newspaper's editors and readers).
- What does your audience currently believe about the issue? Why?
- How will they respond to you? Why?
- What can you do to persuade them to change their minds?
- How will using slanted language affect your credibility and persuasiveness?
- Check the letter specifications of the newspaper to which you are writing. Length and format requirements vary from paper to paper. Generally, roughly two short paragraphs are ideal. You also must include your name, signature, address, and phone number.
- Look at the letters that appear in your paper. Is a certain type of letter usually printed?
- Support your facts. If the topic you address is controversial, consider sending documentation along with your letter. But don't overload the editors with too much information.
- Keep your letter brief. Type and spell-check it. Have a peer edit it.
- When possible, find others in the community to write letters to show concern about the issue. If your letter doesn't get published, perhaps someone else's on the same topic will.
- If your letter has not appeared within a week or two, follow up with a call to the newspaper's editorial department.

Fill in the chart below for each of the letters to the editor in response to the editorial your teacher provided. The last box is for your opinions.

Letter Number	Agree or Disagree with Original Editorial?	Reasons
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
You		

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**Writing Prompt:** Next, craft a letter of your own in response to the editorial. Be sure to follow all of the guidelines for writing a letter to the editor.

# Reading and Writing a Letter to the Editor

## My Notes

## Editorial

# Why I Hate Cell Phones

by Sara Reihani

In this wild, unpredictable world that modern society has thrust upon us, only one gadget anchors us amid the whirl of Wiis, Wikis and Wi-fi: the cellular phone. From its origins as the pineapple-sized “car phone” exclusive to power-suited 80’s business executives to its current incarnation as camera/computer/life coach, the cell phone has gone from convenient utility to graven idol of instant gratification. Scores of modern social phenomena are directly attributable to cell phones including textual flirtation, Bluetooth use disguised as schizophrenia and the ringtone as a profound expression of personal identity.

While constantly reachable has undeniable advantages, cell phones deceive us into thinking that this accessibility is an inalienable right rather than a flawed privilege. By giving people my cell phone number, I give them permission to contact me whenever they want, no matter where I am or what I am doing. I am thus shackled to their whim, subjecting me to their contact when it may not be desired. I could, of course, simply turn off my phone, but this is no longer an acceptable excuse. After all, what is the use of owning a cell phone if you are going to leave it off all the time?

Those who live lives more unpredictable than mine may have good reason to consider their cell phones crucial lifelines, but for most of us, they are more of a luxury than a necessity. Cell phones are currently dirt cheap to manufacture, but their true cost is insidious and pervasive. Besides the perils of hidden fees and the lubricious<sup>1</sup> allure of text-messaging, one must consider the emotional enslavement that comes with allowing the outside world to contact you almost anywhere. Owning a cell phone guarantees that you can and will be interrupted in movie theaters, libraries or scenes of pastoral tranquility, usually for trivial reasons. In a world full of landlines, pay phones, email, instant messages and Facebook messages, few of us need the accessibility to go that extra mile.

<sup>1</sup> lubricious: shifty or tricky

The most alluring thing about cell phones for the younger generation (i.e. us) is their efficacy as instruments of spontaneity. They ensure that no matter where you are or what you are doing, you can be notified of other entertainment opportunities; namely, where the new party is at. In this way, we are freed from the responsibility of making plans in advance. We can also cancel plans at the last minute without condemning ourselves to evenings of loneliness — instead, we can just use the opportunity to insinuate ourselves upon everyone else in our electronic phone books. This protean<sup>2</sup> convenience breeds selfishness by liberating us from any solid idea of obligation. The primal human fear of isolation also comes into play here; cell phones feed on this anxiety like blood-hungry mosquitoes, promising a solution for the many who live in vague terror of spending time alone with their thoughts.

In a way, cell phones actually decrease effective communication. They allow us to make calls from almost anywhere, meaning that we do not have to interrupt our other activities to sit down and call someone in particular. We can do anything while talking on the phone: distractedly check Facebook, drive irresponsibly. If I can call someone at any time to obtain or verify information, it lessens my incentive to actually listen to them the first time they tell me something, which is inadvertently disrespectful and powerfully habit-forming. The worst side effect of modern conveniences like cell phones is how easy it is to be dependent on them in the most casual situations.

They give you brain cancer, too.

<sup>2</sup> **protean**: diverse, varied



## My Notes

## ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

**Fallacies** are false or misleading arguments.

**Fallacies** are ubiquitous in advertising, political discourse, and everyday conversations—and they will continue to be as long as they work as ways to persuade. However, by learning to recognize them when you see them, you can strip away their power. There are many different ways to categorize fallacies, and many different names for the various types. The following eleven fallacies (adapted from Brooke Noel Moore and Richard Parker’s *Critical Thinking*, 8<sup>th</sup> ed, 2007), a rogue’s gallery of most frequent offenders, are divided into the different types of offense they represent. Learn these and you’ll be ready to see through many of the rhetorical scams that come your way each day.

**LOGICAL FALLACIES: ERRORS IN REASONING**

1. **Hasty Generalization:** The leap to a generalized conclusion based on only a few instances. For example, on a trip to Paris you meet several rude Parisians, leading you to conclude that French people are rude.
2. **Post Hoc:** Literally meaning “after this,” it’s a causal fallacy in which a person assumes one thing caused another simply because it happened prior to the other. For instance, the high school soccer team loses an important game the day after they start wearing new uniforms. The coach blames the loss on the new uniforms.

**EMOTIVE FALLACIES: REPLACING LOGIC WITH EMOTIONAL MANIPULATION**

3. **Ad Populum:** Literally meaning “argument” from popularity; refers to a variety of appeals that play on the association of a person or subject with values that are held by members of a target group (think of images of the flag in ads playing on patriotism), or the suggestion that “everybody knows” that something is true (as with bandwagon).
4. **“Argument” from Outrage:** Aristotle said that if you understand what makes a man angry, you can use that anger to persuade him to accept a position without critically evaluating it. This fallacy is the backbone of talk radio and of political rhetoric on both extremes of the political spectrum. It often employs loaded language and labels. It also includes scapegoating—blaming a certain group of people, or even a single person.

5. **Ad Misericordiam, or Appeal to Pity:** If you've ever asked a teacher to give you a better grade or a second chance because things have been tough recently or because you worked SO hard, you're guilty of this one! It refers to an attempt to use compassion or pity to replace a logical argument.
6. **Ad Baculum, or Scare Tactics:** An appeal to fear in place of logic. If a candidate for office says "electing my opponent will open the door for new terrorist attacks," it represents an attempt to scare people into rejecting the person, despite providing no evidence to justify the claim.

## **RHETORICAL FALLACIES: SIDESTEPPING LOGIC WITH LANGUAGE**

7. **Straw Man:** Erecting a distorted or exaggerated representation of a position that is easily refuted. For example, Schroth says, "But, you say, if high schools drop football it will deprive colleges and the pros of their feeder system," an argument that is, of course, a ridiculous attempt to justify high school football—and one that is thus easy to refute.
8. **Ad Hominem/Genetic Fallacy:** Literally meaning "to the man," *ad hominem* refers to attacks against a person rather than the ideas the person presents. This is a dominant feature in political campaigns, where sound-bite 30-second advertisements attack a candidate's character, often with mere innuendo, instead of his/her policy positions. When this extends to criticizing or rejecting a general type of something simply because it belongs to or was generated by that type, you have the genetic fallacy. For example to say an idea comes from the "media elite" makes it sound as if it should be rejected—but who are the media elite?
9. **Red Herring/Smokescreen:** Answering the question by changing the subject. For example, when pulled over for speeding, a person might respond to the officer's question, "Why were you speeding?" by saying, "The school no longer offers driver's education classes."
10. **Slippery Slope:** Half an appeal to fear and half a causal fallacy; people use a slippery slope when they suggest one action will lead to an inevitable and undesirable outcome. To say that passing gun-show background checks will lead to the repeal of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment represents a slippery slope argument.

# Fallacies 101

11. **Either/Or (or false dilemma):** This is a conclusion that oversimplifies the argument by suggesting there are only two possible sides or choices. This fallacy is commonly used in debates of policy, where issues are always complex but which politicians reduce to simplistic either/or choices for rhetorical purposes.

**Quickwrite:** In the space below or on your own paper, write a letter to the editor in which you use one of these fallacies to support your position. You might modify the letter you wrote in the previous activity or use the topic from today's discussion.

After exploring these fallacies in class and using one in a brief letter to the editor, discuss the following questions in a small group.

- Why are fallacies so common in our political discourse? Which ones are most common and why?
- Why are fallacies so powerful—and so dangerous?
- Why might you choose to use a fallacy—or rhetorical slanters—in a letter or speech?
- What would be the pros and cons of doing so?
- How does the use of fallacies affect the ethos of a writer or speaker?
- What is the relationship between considering your audience and deciding whether to use fallacious appeals or slanters?



# How to Read and Write an Editorial Cartoon

## My Notes

But the sketches known as editorial cartoons are as popular today as they ever have been. People love the humor, simplicity and caricatures of politicians of the day. Caricatures, I told the students at Senior High, are exaggerations of one's physical features.

In recent years, there have been the JFK haircut, the LBJ ears, the Nixon eyebrows, the Carter teeth and the Clinton jaw. Of course, each cartoonist has his or her own style, but it is amazing how they reach out to the same features to identify a politician.

A good editorial cartoon must have five basic features.

- It must be simple...
- People must understand it. The cartoon must make sense to those who read the particular paper. A school newspaper might run a cartoon about cafeteria food that includes an inside joke and isn't readily understood by the general public. The cartoon would only make sense in the school newspaper.
- The cartoon must be timely...
- It must evoke emotion. A good cartoon should make people laugh or make them mad.
- Always, the cartoon must give a point of view. The cartoon may be looking at the truth, but it usually is coming from a specific viewpoint. When we look down at an object, the viewpoint is very different from when we look up at the object. Editorial cartoons are the same way.

The Independent doesn't always agree with the viewpoint of each cartoon in the paper. Most certainly the readers don't always agree with them. But we all should agree that political cartoons are thought provoking. Just like a photograph, a well-illustrated editorial cartoon can be worth a thousand words.

There probably are about 100 newspapers, give or take a few, that employ full-time cartoonists. Unfortunately, it is a luxury that only metropolitan-sized newspapers can afford. Smaller newspapers subscribe to syndicated features for the right to reprint some of the better cartoons that have been published.

The next time you look at an editorial cartoon in the newspaper, try to look at it a new way. Instead, of thinking about just whether you agree or disagree with the message, see if the cartoons have the five basic components to it. Then you can determine whether the message is getting through.

## “Reading” Editorial Cartoons

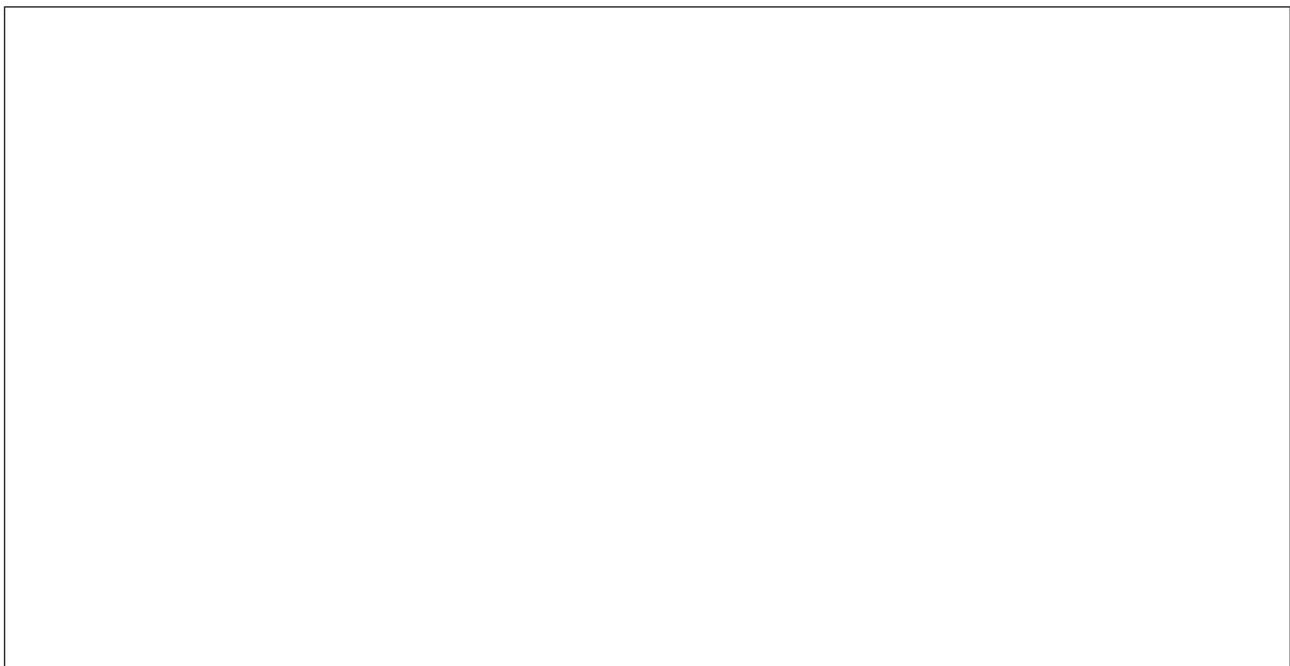
1. Since there is so little space for an editorial cartoonist to make his or her point, the cartoonist often uses symbols and allusions as shorthand for the meaning of the cartoon. Examine each of the cartoons your teacher supplies and identify the symbols and allusions. Why might the cartoonist have chosen these symbols or allusions?
2. Most editorial cartoons present a specific political perspective. Do the cartoons you are examining have a specific point of view? How does the cartoonist demonstrate these perspectives?
3. Editorial cartoons are designed to evoke emotion: humor, anger, or outrage, for example. What are the feelings created and how do the cartoonists do this?
4. Based on the questions above, what does the message of the cartoon seem to be, and what can you infer about its intended purpose?

# How to Read and Write an Editorial Cartoon

## Creating Your Own Editorial Cartoons

Now that you have had some experience reading and analyzing political cartoons, create one of your own. Here are some suggestions to get you started.

- Brainstorm topic ideas by thinking about current events in your school, your hometown, or the world. List a few ideas below:
  
- Choose one of the ideas above and describe a point that you might want to make about that event. Perhaps you agree and want to show your support or perhaps you would like to ridicule those who might feel differently.
  
- What symbols, sayings, pop culture allusions, or other easily recognizable references might be appropriate for this topic?
  
- Sketch a very rough draft of what your cartoon might look like.



# Creating an Op-Ed Page

SUGGESTED LEARNING STRATEGIES: Discussion Group, Brainstorming, Drafting, Mapping, Sketching

## Assignment

Working in groups, your assignment is to plan, develop, write, revise, and present your own op-ed page as if you were writing for an actual newspaper.

Your op-ed page must have at least two unsigned editorials that reflect the same perspective; at least three editorial cartoons that can represent a variety of viewpoints; at least two guest columnist editorials, two of which must be opposing viewpoints; and several letters to the editor written in response to previous news stories, editorials, or current events. Your final layout and design should reflect that of an actual newspaper.

## Steps

### Planning

1. Assemble your editorial board by selecting the group with which you want to work. Your teacher will decide on the number of members.
2. Begin brainstorming a list of issues in which your group has an interest. Be sure that issues are both debatable and timely. You should look back through your portfolio of work from this unit to remind yourself of issues that have already been raised, whether school or community-related, political, or social in nature.
3. Determine the role of each person in your group and begin identifying what pieces each member will contribute: editorial, cartoons, letters, and so on.

### Creating

4. Begin gathering evidence and support for several of your issues. Conduct interviews, do research, and take surveys that will yield information related to your topics. Write drafts on several different issues. Create drafts of editorial cartoons. You might include pieces you have previously created during this unit.
5. Meet again as an editorial board and make a final determination of which pieces will be included on the final op-ed page. These choices should be made by subject matter, space allotment, and perspective.
6. Write another draft of each piece and have it reviewed and revised by a member of your editorial board using SMELL and other strategies to refine writing.
7. Examine the sample op-ed layout provided on page 166 and consider what modifications would create better visual balance in your own document. You might also consult op-ed pages in a local or national newspaper for additional ideas. Lay out your op-ed page using appropriate software or paste-up techniques. Display it or publish it. As you design your layout, consider what pieces are emphasized or de-emphasized by where they are placed on the page.

## Creating an Op-Ed Page

### Presenting

8. Present your op-ed page as a display or as a consumable page of print in a manner prescribed by your teacher.
9. As a group, review the work of another group and comment on how effectively they have constructed their arguments and their page. Comment on the technical correctness, timeliness, relevance, and the persuasiveness of the group's language and reasoning. Each member of your group should evaluate at least one section of the op-ed page using the provided SMELL organizer. These organizers will become part of your grade and their grade.
10. Write a reflection answering the general question, "How do newspapers impact public opinion or public perception?" Discuss specific persuasive techniques you have used in the pieces you have personally contributed for your group's op-ed page. Why did you choose them, and were they effective? Refer to the feedback you received from your peers in step 9 to evaluate how effective your group was in constructing your pieces and the op-ed page as a whole.

As you evaluate your peers' op-ed page, use the SMELL strategy to review their pieces for fallacies, slanters, and unsupported claims. Suggest revisions that may improve each piece's appeal to a broader audience.

**Sender-Receiver Relationship** – To whom is the writer explicitly addressing his/her argument? How does he/she seem to feel about that target audience? What values does the sender assume the reader shares or argue that they should share?

**Message** – What is a literal summary of the content? What is the article's ultimate thesis regarding the subject?

**Emotional Strategies** – What emotional appeals does the writer include? What seems to be their desired effect? Do they cross the line into becoming fallacies? If so, suggest revisions.

**Logical Strategies** – What logical arguments/appeals does the writer include? Are these supported with persuasive evidence? Identify any fallacies or unsupported claims in the essay and suggest revisions.

**Language** – What specific language/slanters are used in the text to support the message or characterize the opposition? How does the language convey the writer's ethos and the text's effectiveness and credibility?

**Masthead**  
Lists publisher and editorial board

**Editorial  
Cartoon**

**Guest Columnist**

**Guest Columnist**

**Unsigned Editorial 1**

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**Letters to the Editor**

**Editorial Cartoon**

**Unsigned Editorial 2**

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**Editorial (Continued)**

**Letters to the Editor  
(continued)**

**SCORING GUIDE**

<b>Scoring Criteria</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Emerging</b>
<b>Ideas</b>	The op-ed page explicitly represents multiple and varied editorial perspectives. Each piece is extremely persuasive and demonstrates a thorough understanding of persuasive techniques.	The op-ed page represents various perspectives that are implied throughout the work as a whole. The majority of the pieces demonstrate a clear intention to persuade and an adequate understanding of persuasive techniques.	The op-ed page represents a limited range of perspectives. A few of the pieces demonstrate an intention to persuade. Some of the pieces may be descriptive or expository rather than persuasive.
<b>Evidence of Research</b>	There is evidence of thorough and original research throughout. Each piece demonstrates appropriate and ample evidence to support the thesis.	Research has obviously been conducted to support the positions. The majority of pieces demonstrate sufficient evidence supporting the thesis.	Adequate research is not demonstrated. The majority of the pieces demonstrate insufficient evidence to adequately support the thesis. Opinions remain unsupported.
<b>Organization</b>	The layout and design of the op-ed page reflect thoughtful planning. Overall organization is enriching to the ideas and purpose and is visually appealing.	The layout and design are appropriate for the project’s purpose. Overall organization adequately communicates ideas and purpose.	Layout and design do not enhance the project and reflect little advance thought or planning. The overall organization detracts from ideas and purpose.
<b>Use of Language</b>	The pieces demonstrate purposeful use of rhetoric designed to appeal to the target audience(s). No errors in grammar or conventions are present.	The pieces demonstrate functional use of rhetoric but may not directly appeal to the target audience. Errors in grammar and conventions, if present, are minor and do not interfere with understanding.	The pieces inconsistently demonstrate functional use of rhetoric. Errors in grammar and conventions seriously interfere with the meaning.
<b>Reflection</b>	The text demonstrates thoughtful engagement with peer feedback and offers insightful evaluation of the effectiveness of the various pieces.	The text demonstrates engagement with peer feedback and offers evaluation of the effectiveness of the various pieces.	The text does not demonstrate engagement with peer feedback and/or offers limited evaluation of the the effectiveness of the various pieces.
<b>Additional Criteria</b>			

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Comments:

# Learning Focus:

## The Art of Indirect Persuasion

While the op-ed page is an important forum for the exchange of ideas in our society, not everyone who contributes to the conversation means what they say. **Satire** may be the tool of choice for some writers (and cartoonists) who prefer to use irony and a range of tones to make statements about the issues of the day. If you've ever enjoyed watching late-night comedy shows, you know how effective—and how much fun—this approach can be when it comes to changing perception of the subjects being lampooned.

In the second half of this unit, you'll immerse yourself in the art of satire, exploring how writers use a range of genres and techniques, including **parody**, to present their messages in indirect ways. You'll explore how **diction** and **syntax** can be used to create humor as well as a wide range of satirical **tones**. Finally, you'll explore how satirists manipulate and parody the **conventions** and content of other formats and genres to advance their purposes as writers. In this way, satirists can make powerful contributions to the marketplace of ideas.



# Introduction to Satire

## My Notes

### GRAMMAR USAGE

Satire gets much of its humor from the writer's diction. Bouchier takes the lighthearted topic of cheerleaders and uses a serious and earnest diction. The mismatch between the topic and the diction contribute to the humor. For example, ancient cheerleaders used "frenzied rites" and "extravagant gestures." Injuries happen because of "excessive acrobatics," and the squads have "brilliant visuals."

Cheerleading also teaches the value of teamwork, something that women have often despised in the past as a male excuse for mindless violence and idiotic loyalties. "Be 100 percent behind your team 100 percent of the time" is a slogan that would be heartily endorsed by Slobodan Milosevic, the Orange Order and the Irish Republican Army.

Young cheerleaders also acquire valuable practical skills: impossible balancing tricks, back flips and the brass lungs they will need for child raising or being heard at the departmental meeting. Above all, they learn to compete, in hundreds of local and national events. Cheerleaders are clearly the corporate leaders and the political stars of the future.

Cheerleader culture is much broader and shallower than I had imagined. There are glossy magazines and webzines featuring the essential equipment: deodorants, contact lenses, Cheer Gear, makeup, party dresses and miracle diets. Novices can learn how to create a successful cheer routine with hot music, unique moves, fab formations, and multiple levels. They can also learn to make their own pom poms (called just "Poms"). There are international stars out there you've never heard of, and even a few anonymous muscular cheerleading males, whose job it is to support the base of the feminine pyramid.

Despite cheerleaders' obsession with pyramids, my research suggests that cheerleading began in ancient Greece, rather than in Egypt. The first cheerleaders were called Maenads, female attendants of the god Bacchus. Their task was to encourage the crowds to have a good time, with frenzied rites and extravagant gestures. The opposing squad, the Furies, were merciless goddesses of vengeance who would swing into violent action if their team was losing. The ancient Greeks must get the credit for being the first to give young women these important career opportunities.

So many teams were decimated by the Furies or led astray by the Maenads that cheerleading fell into disrepute for 2,000 years, until it was revived in a kinder, gentler form in the United States. But it's still a dangerous activity. In an average year, high school footballers lose 5.6 playing days to injuries, according to the January 1998 Harper's Index, a compilation of statistics. Cheerleaders lose 28.8 days. These accidents are blamed on excessive acrobatics and the passion for building taller and taller pyramids.

But all enthusiasm is dangerous, especially when it takes a physical form. If cheerleading is part of education, let's use it to educate by focusing on the message. Surely we can do better than waving our poms, doing somersaults and chanting:

*Champs take it away*

*Now Play by Play*

*Move that ball*

*Win win win.*

Let's face it, this is not exactly a stellar example of the sophisticated use of the English language. To reduce the risk of injury and make the sport more educational and less distracting for the fans, I propose to substitute verbal skills for physical high jinks. Routines should become more static, and chants should become more grammatical, more literary and more conducive to the kinder, gentler society we all hope for in the next century.

Why don't you fellows

Pick up that ball

And move it carefully

To the other end of the field?

If we really want to teach good social values, let's chant this famous verse from Grantland Rice:

For when the one great Scorer comes

To write against your name

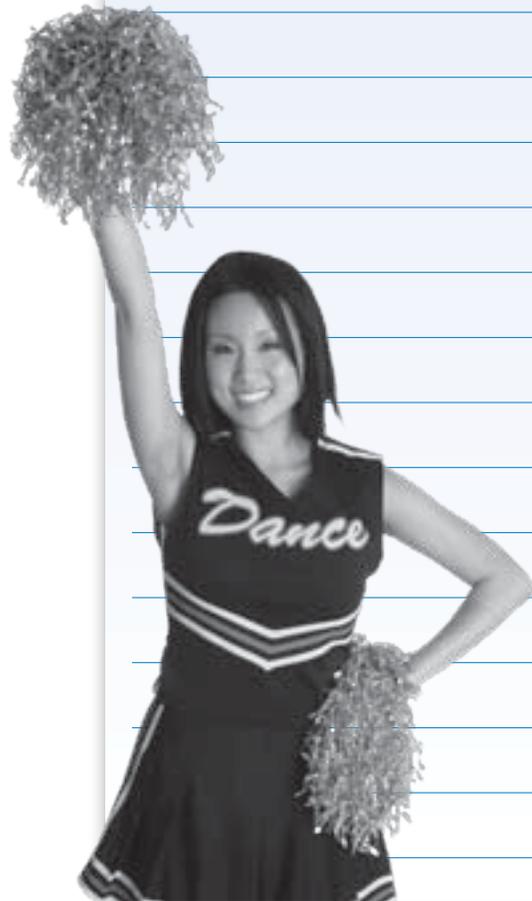
He writes not that you won or lost

But how you played the game.

Now there's a catchy message for the millennium!

And why not bring that youthful spirit and those brilliant visuals out of the stadium and into the workplace? Cheerleaders should be in every office, with a chant for every corporate game. In a lawyer's office, for example, a spirited cry of "Rule of Law! Rule of Law! Sue! Sue! Sue!" accompanied by some eyepopping dance steps, would give courage and purpose to desk-bound drones. On Wall Street, a simple chant of "Go Greenspan! Low Interest! Never mind the Asians!" would create a positive environment for investment. And cheerleaders would share their boundless enthusiasm with the rest of us who, in the game of life, so often find ourselves on the losing team.

## My Notes



# Introduction to Satire

## LITERARY TERMS

**Satire** is a manner of writing that mixes a critical attitude with wit and humor in an effort to improve mankind and human institutions.

As you read Bouchier’s essay, highlight anything you find humorous. Once you have finished, fill out the chart below, quoting passages you found funny, explaining why you thought each was funny, and interpreting what each quote is saying. An example has been provided to get you started.

Humorous Passage	Why it is funny?	What is the implied message?
<p>“...perhaps with some razor wire and a warning sign saying ‘Danger: Cheerleaders Ahead.’”</p>	<p>The writer uses hyperbole and vivid imagery to create a ridiculous picture of cheerleaders as a threat that needs to be contained.</p>	<p>The image seems to suggest that cheerleaders are dangerous.</p>

Humorous Passage	Why it is funny?	What is the implied message?

Now read “Introduction to Satire” on the next page, focusing on terms that seem to fit the examples of humor you have identified in the passages from “Let’s Hear It for the Cheerleaders.” In the space provided, write a paragraph responding to the following prompt.

**Writing Prompt:** How does David Bouchier’s article fit the definition of satire? Support your answer with specific examples from the text.

# Introduction to Satire

## Introduction to Satire

**Satire** is a literary genre that uses irony, wit, and sometimes sarcasm to expose humanity's vices and foibles, giving impetus to change or reform through ridicule. Types of direct satire include Horatian satire, which pokes fun at human foibles with a witty even indulgent tone, and Juvenalian satire, which denounces, sometimes with invective, human vice and error in dignified and solemn tones.

As you read satire, look for these characteristics of satiric writing:

**Irony**—A mode of expression, through words (verbal irony) or events (irony of situation), conveying a reality different from and usually opposite to appearance or expectation. The surprise recognition by the audience often produces a comic effect, making irony often funny. When a text intended to be ironic is not seen as such, the effect can be disastrous. To be an effective piece of sustained irony, there must be some sort of audience tip-off, through style, tone, use of clear exaggeration, or other device.

**Hyperbole**—Deliberate exaggeration to achieve an effect; overstatement.

**Litotes**—A form of understatement that involves making an affirmative point by denying its opposite.

**Caricature**—An exaggeration or other distortion of an individual's prominent features or characteristics to the point of making that individual appear ridiculous. The term is applied more often to graphic representations than to literary ones.

**Wit**—Most commonly understood as clever expression, whether aggressive or harmless; that is, with or without derogatory intent toward someone or something in particular. We also tend to think of wit as being characterized by a mocking or paradoxical quality, evoking laughter through apt phrasing.

**Sarcasm**—Intentional derision, generally directed at another person and intended to hurt. The term comes from a Greek word meaning “to tear flesh like dogs” and signifies a cutting remark. Sarcasm usually involves obvious, verbal irony, achieving its effect by jeeringly stating the opposite of what is meant so as to heighten the insult.

**Ridicule**—Words intended to belittle a person or idea and arouse contemptuous laughter. The goal is to condemn or criticize by making the thing, idea, or person seem laughable and ridiculous.

**Parody**—The parodist exploits the peculiarities of an author’s expression—the propensity to use too many parentheses, certain favorite words, or other elements of the author’s style.

**Invective**—Speech or writing that abuses, denounces, or attacks. It can be directed against a person, cause, idea, or system. It employs a heavy use of negative emotive language. Example: “I cannot but conclude the bulk of your natives to be the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth.” (Swift, *Gulliver’s Travels*)

**ACADEMIC VOCABULARY**

**Parody** is an imitation of an author or his/her work with the idea of ridiculing the author, his/her ideas, or the work itself.



4. Your teacher will share some examples of cartoons with you. “Read” the cartoon using the types of evidence you learned in Activity 2.11. How does the visual content contribute to its overall tone?

5. Based on your observations, place your text on the continuum below. Be prepared to justify your answer.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10  
Horatian Juvenalian

## My Notes

### GRAMMAR & USAGE

This writer's syntax includes a number of **verbal phrases**. Notice in particular these gerund and participial phrases:

A **gerund** is a verbal that ends in *-ing* and functions as a noun.

*Poisoning the earth* can be difficult... (gerund phrase as subject)

...many different ways of *putting the waste from*... (gerund phrase as object of preposition *of*)

A **participle** (the present or past participle form of a verb) is a verbal that functions as an adjective.

*Keeping this in mind*, we should generate.... (participial phrase modifying *we*)

The toxins ... seep into the earth, *guaranteeing that contamination will last*.... (participial phrase modifying *toxins*)

## Satire

# HOW TO POISON THE EARTH

by Linnea Saukko

Poisoning the earth can be difficult because the earth is always trying to cleanse and renew itself. Keeping this in mind, we should generate as much waste as possible from substances such as uranium-238, which has a half-life (the time it takes for half of the substance to decay) of one million years, or plutonium, which has a half-life of only 0.5 million years but is so toxic that if distributed evenly, ten pounds of it could kill every person on the earth. Because the United States generates about eighteen tons of plutonium per year, it is about the best substance for long-term poisoning of the earth. It would help if we would build more nuclear power plants because each one generates only 500 pounds of plutonium each year. Of course, we must include persistent toxic chemicals such as polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) and dichlorodiphenyl trichloroethane (DDT) to make sure we have enough toxins to poison the earth from the core to the outer atmosphere. First, we must develop many different ways of putting the waste from these nuclear and chemical substances in, on, and around the earth.

Putting these substances in the earth is a most important step in the poisoning process. With deep-well injection we can ensure that the earth is poisoned all the way to the core. Deep-well injection involves drilling a hole that is a few thousand feet deep and injecting toxic substances at extremely high pressures so they will penetrate deep into the earth. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), there are about 360 such deep injection wells in the United States. We cannot forget the groundwater aquifers that are closer to the surface. These must also be contaminated. This is easily done by shallow-well injection, which operates on the same principle as deep-well injection, only closer to the surface. The groundwater that has been injected with toxins will spread contamination beneath the earth. The EPA estimates that there are approximately 500,000 shallow injection wells in the United States.

Burying the toxins in the earth is the next best method. The toxins from landfills, dumps, and lagoons slowly seep into the earth, guaranteeing that contamination will last a long time. Because the EPA estimates there are only about 50,000 of these dumps in the United States, they should be located in areas where they will leak to the surrounding ground and surface water.

Applying pesticides and other poisons on the earth is another part of the poisoning process. This is good for coating the earth's surface so that the poisons will be absorbed by plants, will seep into the ground, and will run off into surface water.

Surface water is very important to contaminate because it will transport the poisons to places that cannot be contaminated directly. Lakes are good for long-term storage of pollutants while they release some of their contamination to rivers. The only trouble with rivers is that they act as a natural cleansing system for the earth. No matter how much poison is dumped into them, they will try to transport it away to reach the ocean eventually.

The ocean is very hard to contaminate because it has such a large volume and a natural buffering capacity that tends to neutralize some of the contamination. So in addition to the pollution from rivers, we must use the ocean as a dumping place for as many toxins as possible. The ocean currents will help transport the pollution to places that cannot otherwise be reached.

Now make sure that the air around the earth is very polluted. Combustion and evaporation are major mechanisms for doing this. We must continuously pollute because the wind will disperse the toxins while rain washes them from the air. But this is good because a few lakes are stripped of all living animals each year from acid rain. Because the lower atmosphere can cleanse itself fairly easily, we must explode nuclear test bombs that shoot radioactive particles high into the upper atmosphere where they will circle the earth for years. Gravity must pull some of the particles to earth, so we must continue exploding these bombs.

So it is that easy. Just be sure to generate as many poisonous substances as possible and be sure they are distributed in, on, and around the entire earth at a greater rate than it can cleanse itself. By following these easy steps we can guarantee the poisoning of the earth.

## My Notes



### WORD CONNECTIONS

**Gravity** comes from the Latin word *gravis* meaning "heavy." Other words that use the root *-grav-* are *grave*, *aggravation*, and *grief*.



# The Satirical Critique

## My Notes

### Satire

# GAMBLING IN SCHOOLS

by Howard Mohr

[When Minnesota jumped into legalized gambling, it was off the deep end without a lifeguard. First it was Canterbury Downs, a clean, well-lit horse track that seemed more like a Lutheran church with betting windows. Then came Powerball, Daily Three, Gopher Five (named after the official state rodent), and Scratch-Offs. At the same time Native American casinos were springing up in the land of sky blue waters, raking it in with blackjack and slot machines and high-stakes bingo. What could possibly be next?]

Parents and teachers who have been worried sick about finding enough money just to maintain public schools at a minimal level, worry no more. The Minnesota Legislature last week approved the Education Gambling Bill. The bill allows Video Gaming Devices (VGDS) in K-12 classrooms. Only two machines per classroom will be permitted, unless the class size exceeds thirty, in which case one additional VGD machine will be permitted for each additional ten students. Class size, however, will not be a problem once the gambling revenue begins pouring in.

Students in math classes will be instructed in probability, statistics, and hot streaks. The VGDS in kindergarten classrooms will operate with nickels only. All students will be expected to do their assignments and homework before gambling, unless they're on a roll.

Powerball and Gopher Five tickets will be sold only in the lunchroom during the noon hour. But the attractive neon Minnesota lottery signs will be permitted at the main entrance of the school and near the scoreboard at games.

Pulltabs and Scratch-Offs are specifically outlawed in the bill because they make a big mess, according to the powerful Janitor's Lobby.

Off-track horse betting will be handled in the Principal's office, with a \$2 and \$5 window initially, but with the option of a \$100 window after the first year. Race results will be available in convenient locations. The first half hour of the school day will be a "handicapping homeroom," but students will be encouraged to arrive early if they are psyched up and have the feeling that this is the day.



# Satire and Society

SUGGESTED LEARNING STRATEGIES: Marking the Text, SOAPStone, Oral Reading, Quickwrite, Brainstorming, Rereading, Drafting

1. As you read the following statistics, consider their implications. What explains them? What do they say about cultural attitudes in the United States?
  - The United States contains 5% of the world’s total population, but 25% of the world’s prison population. — “All Things Considered,” National Public Radio, 8 May 2008
  - The United States has 2.3 million criminals behind bars, more than any other nation. China, which is four times more populous than the United States, is a distant second, with 1.6 million people in prison. — International Center for Prison Studies at King’s College, London
  - The United States has 751 people in prison or jail for every 100,000 in population. (If you count only adults, one in 100 Americans is locked up.) The only other major industrialized nation that even comes close is Russia, with 627 prisoners for every 100,000 people. The other industrialized nations have much lower rates. England’s rate is 151; Germany’s is 88; and Japan’s is 63. — *The New York Times*, 23 April 2008
2. **Quickwrite:** Explain what you think accounts for these statistics. Be prepared to share your responses with your classmates.
3. As you read the following essay out loud as a class, mark the text for lines in which Ehrenreich seems to be making satirical comments regarding our attitudes towards crime and punishment in the United States. You will be responsible for teaching one of the paragraphs to your classmates!
4. Working in a small group, discuss the rhetorical aspects of Ehrenreich’s text, using the SOAPStone strategy. Write your comments or annotations in the My Notes space.

You will be assigned one paragraph of the essay to teach to the rest of the class. Reread and analyze your assigned paragraph, and fill out the chart below noting how Ehrenreich uses language and tone to advance her underlying argument. Paragraph 1 has been done for you as an example.

<p><b>One sentence summary</b></p>	<p><b>Words (diction) contributing to tone</b></p>	<p><b>Connotation of word choices</b></p>	<p><b>This paragraph’s contribution to the argument and the tone</b></p>
<p>Literally, the author points to the boom in our “Punishment Industry” and wonders what would happen if our nation runs out of criminals.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. massive, splendid</li> <li>2. shiny new prisons</li> <li>3. supply and demand</li> </ol>	<p>These words connote that the industry is important, impressive, and larger than life. Usually the word <i>splendid</i> is reserved for beautiful or worthy endeavors and so it is odd that it is used to describe the penal system. Usually this system is associated with a failure of our society, but here it is regarded as a successful, powerful business.</p>	<p>This paragraph introduces the satire of the text and the focal question. Already the author is challenging assumptions made about the purpose and focus of our penal system. She “mixes” up word meanings just as she reassigns the purpose of this system. The tone is sarcastic and irreverent.</p>

## My Notes

## Satire

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Barbara Ehrenreich was born in Montana and earned a Ph.D. in cell biology. While working for a nonprofit agency, she discovered a passion for writing. A social activist, feminist, and award-winning author, she has written books, articles, and essays about controversial topics such as health care, war, families, and women's issues.

# MAINTAINING THE CRIME SUPPLY

by Barbara Ehrenreich

- 1 It's impossible to address the problem of crime without beginning to worry about the law of supply and demand. Not that many people go around breaking that particular law, but you can be sure we'd get them if they did. Thanks to tough new legislation, we will soon have the most massive and splendid Punishment Industry on earth today: shiny new prisons for every state, harsh new sentences for every infringement, lethal injections more readily available than measles vaccine! Already the United States has a larger proportion of its population locked up than any other nation, South Africa included, so the only worry is—what if we run out of crime?
- 2 If punishment actually worked, a crime shortage would develop in no time at all. Would-be criminals would study the available sentences, do a careful cost-benefit analysis, and conclude that armed robbery, or, say, aggravated assault just wasn't their cup of tea. Yes, if deterrence worked, as our leaders seem to think it does, we would soon have a vast oversupply of electric chairs and unattractive, heavily walled, rural real estate.



## My Notes

- 7 Conservatives naturally question the liberal theory. They point to the occasional person who grows up poor and virtuous, or, alternatively, affluent and twisted. Deprivation and temptation are not enough, they say—a good supply of crime requires technology too. Hence the Republicans’ understandable reluctance to get behind gun control. Why make it even marginally more difficult for a teenager to get his hands on a gun just as we are about to beef up the Punishment Industry with an ultra-tough new legislation? As even the National Rifle Association is too modest to point out, there is no way we would lead the world in the business of crime and punishment if it were not for our wide-open supply of guns.
- 8 The other tried-and-true approach is to simply broaden the definition of crime. This is the function of drug prohibition. A few decades ago, a person who smoked marijuana was a degenerate rake or a dashing bohemian, depending on your point of view. Now he or she is a criminal, qualifying for years in the slammer. Some states have gone further, making possession of rolling papers an equally dastardly crime. Similarly the “crime” of graffiti writing could be broadened to include possession of Magic Marker, or crossing state lines with to intent to buy one. The possibilities are endless once you realize that there is no crime, no matter how seemingly minor, that cannot be federalized, subjected to mandatory minimum sentencing, or transformed into a capital offense.
- 9 But a growing number of experts, including many criminal judges, assure us that there is nothing to worry about. No matter how fiercely Draconian<sup>1</sup> it becomes, the Punishment Industry will never diminish the supply of crime. On the contrary, there is evidence that a few years in the pen serves to season a criminal and make him more productive at his work. So as long as we do nothing to disturb the marvelous synergy<sup>2</sup> of poverty and temptation, guns on the street and gun-fun on the tube, the supply of crime will never fall below the widespread demand for punishment.
- 10 Or we could decide, all of us law-abiding citizens, to cut off crime at the source, where poverty intersects with weaponry, and to satisfy the public appetite for cruelty with something other than the Punishment Industry. Bearbaiting has been proposed; also cockfighting and the public torment of stray dogs.

<sup>1</sup> **Draconian**: severe

<sup>2</sup> **synergy**: mutual advantage

6. Your task is to write a work of satire. Use the following steps to complete the task. As an example, imagine that your school has a large problem with students being late to class (tardiness).

**Step 1: Identify the topic.**

Students being late to class (tardiness)

**Step 2: State the problem in hyperbolic terms.**

The staggering lack of students at the beginning of class leaves teachers paralyzed.

(Diction overstates the severity of the problem—“paralyzed” and “staggering.”)

**Step 3: Propose an ironic solution.**

If students are late, they must stand outside the door for 20 minutes.

(Doesn’t solve the problem of students not being in class to learn)

1<sup>st</sup> offense: Students will carry around a 40-pound clock for the remainder of the day.

2<sup>nd</sup> offense: Students will receive jail time.

(The punishment does not fit the “crime.”)

**Step 4: Use wit (wordplay, clever language, or rhetorical analogy).**

Punishment will be doled out in a *timely* manner. (Word play)

This problem is a *ticking time bomb!* (Rhetorical analogy)

**Step 5: Downplay the severity of the punishment using litotes.**

Missing class and being ridiculed is a *small price to pay* to promote punctuality.

**Sample paragraph using the above process:**

*It has come to my attention that students have been late to class at an alarming level. The staggering lack of students at the beginning of class leaves teachers paralyzed. To address this problem, we are adopting a new tardy policy. Following the first offense, students will carry around a 40-pound clock for the remainder of the day. Following the second offense, students will receive a night in jail, during which time they will be able to think about what they have done wrong. We promise to dole out this punishment in a timely manner as we have identified this issue as a ticking time bomb!*

**Writing Prompt:** Working with a partner, select one of the topics from the class brainstorm of issues and follow the five steps to draft a satirical paragraph.



4. **Writing Prompt:** Based on your analysis of Barry's piece, write a paragraph in the space below analyzing Barry's central thesis/point and how he uses evidence to support it.



# Writing a Parody

## My Notes

## Parody

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dave Barry is a writer and journalist who wrote a weekly humor column for more than 25 years. He won a Pulitzer Prize for commentary in 1988, the only humor writer to win this prestigious award.

# IN DEPTH, but Shallowly

by Dave Barry

If you want to take your mind off the troubles of the real world, you should watch local TV news shows. I know of no better way to escape reality, except perhaps heavy drinking.

Local TV news programs have given a whole new definition to the word *news*. To most people, *news* means *information* about events that affect a lot of people. On local TV news shows, *news* means *anything that you can take a picture of, especially if a local TV News Personality can stand in front of it*. This is why they are so fond of accidents, burning buildings, and crowds: these are good for standing in front of. On the other hand, local TV news shows tend to avoid stories about things that local TV News Personalities cannot stand in front of, such as budgets and taxes and the economy. If you want to get a local TV news show to do a story on the budget, your best bet is to involve it in a car crash.

I travel around the country a lot, and as far as I can tell, virtually all local TV news shows follow the same format. First you hear some exciting music, the kind you hear in space movies, while the screen shows local TV News Personalities standing in front of various News Events. Then you hear the announcer:

ANNOUNCER: From the On-the-Spot Action Eyewitness News Studios, this is the On-The-Spot Action Eyewitness News, featuring Anchorman Wilson Westbrook, Co-Anchor-person Stella Snape, Minority-Group Member James Edwards, Genial Sports Personality Jim Johnson, Humorous Weatherperson Dr. Reed Stevens, and Norm Perkins on drums. And now, here's Wilson Westbrook.



# Writing a Parody

## My Notes

TOMPKINS: Roller-skating has become a major craze in California and the three-county area, as you can see by this actual color film of me on roller skates outside the On-the-Spot Action Eyewitness News Studio. This certainly is a fun craze. Tomorrow, in Part Two of this series, we'll see actual film color film of me falling down. On Wednesday we'll see me getting up.

WESTBROOK: We'll look forward to those reports. Our next story is from Minority-Group Reporter James Edwards, who, as he has for the last 324 consecutive broadcasts, spent the day in the minority-group sector of the three-county area finding out what minorities think.

EDWARDS: Wilson, I'm standing in front of a crowd of minority-group members, and as you can see, their mood is troubled. (*The crowd smiles and waves at the camera.*)

WESTBROOK: Good report, James. Well, we certainly had a sunny day here in the three-count area, didn't we, Humorous Weatherperson Dr. Reed Stevens?

STEVENS: Ha ha. We sure did, though I'm certainly troubled by that very troubling report Stella did on child abuse. But we should see continued warm weather through Wednesday. Here are a bunch of charts showing the relative humidity and stuff like that. Ha ha.

WESTBROOK: Ha ha. Well, things weren't nearly as bright on the sports scene, were they Genial Sports Personality Jim Johnson?

JOHNSON: No, Wilson, they certainly weren't. The Three-County Community College Cutlasses lost their fourth consecutive game today. Here you see actual color footage of me watching the game from the sidelines. The disgust is evident on my face. I intended to have actual color film of me interviewing the coach after the game, but the team bus crashed and everyone was killed.

WESTBROOK: Thank you, Jim. And now, here is Basil Holp, the General Manager of KUSP-TV, to present an Editorial Viewpoint:

HOLP: The management of KUSP-TV firmly believes that something ought to be done about earthquakes. From time to time we read in the papers that an earthquake has hit some wretched little country and knocked houses down and killed people. This should not be allowed to continue. Maybe we should have a tax or something. What the heck, we can afford it. The management of KUSP-TV is rolling in money.

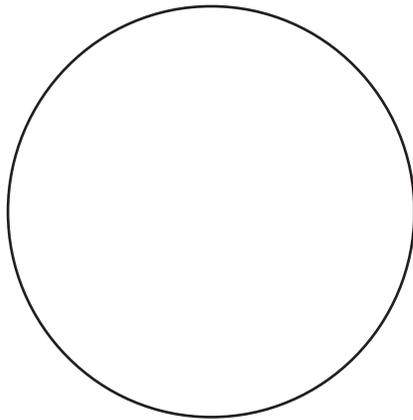
ANNOUNCER: The preceding was the opinion of the management of KUSP-TV. People with opposing points of view are probably in the vast majority.

WESTBROOK: Well, that wraps up tonight's version of the On-the-Spot Action Eyewitness News. Tune in tonight to see essentially the same stories.



**Writing Prompt:** Write a TV parody. Choose a partner and choose a subject (a genre such as soap operas, sports broadcasts, children’s television programs; or a specific show like *Oprah* or *CSI* or *60 Minutes*, etc.). Next, using the format of a script, write your parody. Use the following questions as a basis for planning your parody:

**Details:** What images should you include? What images should you avoid? Put your subject in the circle, and then brainstorm a list of conventions and features that might be good parody material. Think about what things in the show are just a *little* annoying. . .



**Tone/Purpose:** How critical should you be? Is it time for brutal sarcasm or playful wit? Is the show an offense to good taste or just a silly waste of time? Are you out to destroy or merely to tease?

**Audience:** How familiar is your audience with the show? What is their attitude towards the show? How will these answers affect what you should and should not do in your script? How will the use of irony, overt sarcasm, or ridicule affect your audience’s response to your parody? You will present your script to your classmates in a reader’s theater, so keep that audience in mind.

**Organization:** Focusing on the formulas of your subject, how should you start, develop, and end your script?

**Diction:** What patterns can you identify that would be easy to parody? How stupid or clichéd do you want to make your characters/ personalities appear?

**Syntax:** What about the pacing of the script? Where should it read the most quickly? Where should the reader hang on every word? How is this accomplished?

# Need Some Advice?

SUGGESTED LEARNING STRATEGIES: Marking the Text, Graphic Organizer, RAFT

In “Advice to Youth,” Mark Twain uses loose or cumulative sentences for comedic effect. A **loose sentence** is a string of main clauses connected with conjunctions, commas, or semicolons, creating a sense of equality. A loose sentence may have a main clause with a phrase or subordinate clause, suggesting the first clause is dominant. Consider this example from a previous selection.

**Loose Sentence:** “The Newspaper Audience Databank (NADbank) released its readership numbers for 2007 a couple of weeks ago, and for those of us in the industry it was grim reading: almost everywhere you look, circulation, ad revenues and page counts are down, which is why you can now fire a cannon through any given newsroom at midday and not have to worry about committing reportericide.” —Andrew Potter

In the graphic organizer below, identify at least five pieces of advice Twain renders to his audience. Write the main clause in column 1, the main or modifying phrase or clause in column 2, and explain the effect in column 3. In some cases, Twain may add multiple modifying clauses, so beware.

Main Clause 1	Main Clause 2 or Modifying Phrase/Clause	Effect on Meaning

<b>Main Clause 1</b>	<b>Main Clause 2 or Modifying Phrase/Clause</b>	<b>Effect on Meaning</b>

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**Writing Prompt:** After completing the organizer, it's your turn to give this technique a try. Use a RAFT to select a Role for you to play and an Audience to whom to impart your great wisdom (your Topic). Finally, use a format of your choice in which to deliver your message to your audience (perhaps an editorial letter . . .). Be sure to use some loose sentence patterns in order to create a humorous effect.

# Need Some Advice?

## My Notes

## Satire

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mark Twain (1835–1910) was born Samuel Clemens in Florida, Missouri. His most famous novel, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, was revolutionary in American literature. During his life, he was also famous for his humorous lectures, essays, and sayings.

# ADVICE TO YOUTH

by Mark Twain

Being told I would be expected to talk here, I inquired what sort of talk I ought to make. They said it should be something suitable to youth—something didactic, instructive, or something in the nature of good advice. Very well. I have a few things in my mind which I have often longed to say for the instruction of the young; for it is in one's tender early years that such things will best take root and be most enduring and most valuable. First, then. I will say to you my young friends—and I say it beseechingly, urgingly—

Always obey your parents, when they are present. This is the best policy in the long run, because if you don't, they will make you. Most parents think they know better than you do, and you can generally make more by humoring that superstition than you can by acting on your own better judgment.

Be respectful to your superiors, if you have any, also to strangers, and sometimes to others. If a person offend you, and you are in doubt as to whether it was intentional or not, do not resort to extreme measures; simply watch your chance and hit him with a brick. That will be sufficient. If you shall find that he had not intended any offense, come out frankly and confess yourself in the wrong when you struck him; acknowledge it like a man and say you didn't mean to. Yes, always avoid violence; in this age of charity and kindness, the time has gone by for such things. Leave dynamite to the low and unrefined.

Go to bed early, get up early—this is wise. Some authorities say get up with the sun; some say get up with one thing, others with another. But a lark is really the best thing to get up with. It gives you a splendid reputation with everybody to know that you get up with the lark; and if you get the right kind of lark, and work at him right, you can easily train him to get up at half past nine, every time—it’s no trick at all.

Now as to the matter of lying. You want to be very careful about lying; otherwise you are nearly sure to get caught. Once caught, you can never again be in the eyes to the good and the pure, what you were before. Many a young person has injured himself permanently through a single clumsy and ill finished lie, the result of carelessness born of incomplete training. Some authorities hold that the young ought not to lie at all. That of course, is putting it rather stronger than necessary; still while I cannot go quite so far as that, I do maintain, and I believe I am right, that the young ought to be temperate in the use of this great art until practice and experience shall give them that confidence, elegance, and precision which alone can make the accomplishment graceful and profitable. Patience, diligence, painstaking attention to detail—these are requirements; these in time, will make the student perfect; upon these, and upon these only, may he rely as the sure foundation for future eminence. Think what tedious years of study, thought, practice, experience, went to the equipment of that peerless old master who was able to impose upon the whole world the lofty and sounding maxim that “Truth is mighty and will prevail”—the most majestic compound fracture of fact which any of woman born has yet achieved. For the history of our race, and each individual’s experience, are sewn thick with evidences that a truth is not hard to kill, and that a lie well told is immortal. There in is Boston a monument of the man who discovered anesthesia; many people are aware, in these latter days, that that man didn’t discover it at all, but stole the discovery from another man. Is this truth mighty, and will it prevail? Ah no, my hearers, the monument is made of hardy material, but the lie it tells will outlast it a million years. An awkward, feeble, leaky lie is a thing which you ought to make it your unceasing study to avoid; such a lie as that has no more real permanence than an average truth. Why, you might as well tell the truth at once and be done with it. A feeble, stupid, preposterous lie will not live two years—except it be a slander upon somebody. It is indestructible, then, of course, but that is no merit of yours. A final word: begin your practice of this gracious and beautiful art early—begin now. If I had begun earlier, I could have learned how.

Never handle firearms carelessly. The sorrow and suffering that have been caused through the innocent but heedless handling of firearms by the young! Only four days ago, right in the next farm house to the one where I am spending the summer, a grandmother, old and gray and sweet, one of the loveliest spirits in the land, was sitting at her work, when her young grandson crept in and got down an old, battered, rusty gun which had not been



**WORD CONNECTIONS**

Wide reading in a variety of subject areas will help you analyze the meanings in analogies. For example, knowing about important people and their discoveries or contributions in science, math, history, and literature will help you make connections to relationships expressed in analogies. Complete this analogy.

Twain : humor ::  
Aristotle : \_\_\_\_\_

- a. idealism
- b. drama
- c. logic
- d. empiricism

**My Notes**

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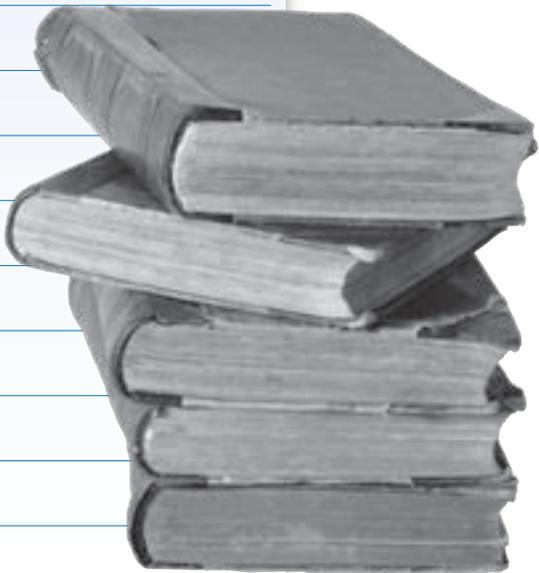
# Need Some Advice?

## My Notes

touched for many years and was supposed not to be loaded, and pointed it at her, laughing and threatening to shoot. In her fright she ran screaming and pleading toward the door on the other side of the room; but as she passed him he placed the gun almost against her very breast and pulled the trigger! He had supposed it was not loaded. And he was right—it wasn't. So there wasn't any harm done. It is the only case of that kind I ever heard of. Therefore, just the same, don't you meddle with old unloaded firearms; they are the most deadly and unerring things that have ever been created by man. You don't have to take any pains at all with them; you don't have to have a rest, you don't have to have any sights on the gun, you don't have to take aim, even. No, you just pick out a relative and bang away, and you are sure to get him. A youth who can't hit a cathedral at thirty yards with a Gatling gun in three quarters of an hour, can take up an old empty musket and bag his grandmother every time, at a hundred. Think what Waterloo would have been if one of the armies had been boys armed with old muskets supposed not to be loaded, and the other army had been composed of their female relations. The very thought of it make one shudder.

There are many sorts of books; but good ones are the sort for the young to read. Remember that. They are a great, an inestimable and unspeakable means of improvement. Therefore be careful in your selection, my young friends; be very careful; confine yourselves exclusively to Robertson's Sermons, Baxter's Saint's Rest, The Innocents Abroad, and works of that kind.

But I have said enough. I hope you will treasure up the instructions which I have given you, and make them a guide to your feet and a light to your understanding. Build your character thoughtfully and painstakingly upon these precepts, and by and by, when you have got it built, you will be surprised and gratified to see how nicely and sharply it resembles everybody else's.



# Twain in Twain

SUGGESTED LEARNING STRATEGIES: Marking the Text, SOAPStone

"Advice to Youth"		"The War Prayer"
	<b>S</b>	
	<b>O</b>	
	<b>A</b>	
	<b>P</b>	
	<b>S</b>	
	<b>Tone</b>	

## My Notes

## Satire

THE  
**WAR**  
 PRAYER

by Mark Twain

It was a time of great and exalting excitement. The country was up in arms, the war was on, in every breast burned the holy fire of patriotism; the drums were beating, the bands playing, the toy pistols popping, the bunched firecrackers hissing and spluttering; on every hand and far down the receding and fading spread of roofs and balconies a fluttering wilderness of flags flashed in the sun; daily the young volunteers marched down the wide avenue gay and fine in their new uniforms, the proud fathers and mothers and sisters and sweethearts cheering them with voices choked with happy emotion as they swung by; nightly the packed mass meetings listened, panting, to patriot oratory which stirred the deepest deeps of their hearts, and which they interrupted at briefest intervals with cyclones of applause, the tears running down their cheeks the while; in the churches the pastors preached devotion to flag and country, and invoked the God of Battles beseeching His aid in our good cause in outpourings of fervid eloquence which moved every listener. It was indeed a glad and gracious time, and the half dozen rash spirits that ventured to disapprove of the war and cast a doubt upon its righteousness straightway got such a stern and angry warning that for their personal safety's sake they quickly shrank out of sight and offended no more in that way.

Sunday morning came — next day the battalions would leave for the front; the church was filled; the volunteers were there, their young faces alight with martial dreams — visions of the stern advance, the gathering momentum, the rushing charge, the flashing sabers, the flight of the foe, the tumult, the enveloping smoke, the fierce pursuit, the surrender! Then home from the war, bronzed heroes, welcomed, adored, submerged in golden seas of glory! With the volunteers sat their dear ones, proud, happy, and envied by the neighbors and friends who had no sons and brothers to send forth to the field of honor, there to win for the flag, or, failing, die the noblest of noble deaths. The service proceeded; a war chapter from the Old Testament was read; the first prayer was said; it was followed by an organ burst that shook the building, and with one impulse the house rose, with glowing eyes and beating hearts, and poured out that tremendous invocation



# Twain in Twain

## My Notes

words: ‘Grant us the victory, O Lord our God!’ That is sufficient. the *whole* of the uttered prayer is compact into those pregnant words. Elaborations were not necessary. When you have prayed for victory you have prayed for many unmentioned results which follow victory—*must* follow it, cannot help but follow it. Upon the listening spirit of God fell also the unspoken part of the prayer. He commandeth me to put it into words. Listen!

“O Lord our Father, our young patriots, idols of our hearts, go forth to battle — be Thou near them! With them — in spirit — we also go forth from the sweet peace of our beloved firesides to smite the foe. O Lord our God, help us to tear their soldiers to bloody shreds with our shells; help us to cover their smiling fields with the pale forms of their patriot dead; help us to drown the thunder of the guns with the shrieks of their wounded, writhing in pain; help us to lay waste their humble homes with a hurricane of fire; help us to wring the hearts of their unoffending widows with unavailing grief; help us to turn them out roofless with little children to wander unfriended the wastes of their desolated land in rags and hunger and thirst, sports of the sun flames of summer and the icy winds of winter, broken in spirit, worn with travail, imploring Thee for the refuge of the grave and denied it — for our sakes who adore Thee, Lord, blast their hopes, blight their lives, protract their bitter pilgrimage, make heavy their steps, water their way with their tears, stain the white snow with the blood of their wounded feet! We ask it, in the spirit of love, of Him Who is the Source of Love, and Who is the ever-faithful refuge and friend of all that are sore beset and seek His aid with humble and contrite hearts. Amen.

*After a pause.* “Ye have prayed it; if ye still desire it, speak! The messenger of the Most High waits!”

It was believed afterward that the man was a lunatic, because there was no sense in what he said.



# Peeling the Skin

SUGGESTED LEARNING STRATEGIES: Marking the Text, Graphic Organizer

## Satire

# Girl Moved To Tears

by *Of Mice and Men* Cliffs Notes

from *The Onion*

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA—In what she described as “the most emotional moment” of her academic life, University of Virginia sophomore communications major Grace Weaver sobbed openly upon concluding Steinbeck’s seminal work of American fiction *Of Mice And Men’s* Cliffs Notes early last week.

“This book has changed me in a way that only great literature summaries can,” said Weaver, who was so shaken by the experience that she requested an extension on her English 229 essay. “The humanity displayed in the Character Flowchart really stirred something in me. And Lennie’s childlike innocence was beautifully captured through the simple, ranch-hand slang words like ‘mentally handicapped’ and ‘retarded.’”

Added Weaver: “I never wanted the synopsis to end.”

Weaver, who formed an “instant connection” with Lennie’s character-description paragraph, said she began to suspect the novel might end tragically after reading the fourth sentence which suggested the gentle giant’s strength and fascination with soft things would “lead to his untimely demise.”

“I was amazed at how attached to him I had become just from the critical commentary,” said Weaver, still clutching the yellow-and-black-striped study guide. “When I got to the last sentence—‘George shoots Lennie in the head,’—it seemed so abrupt. But I found out later that the ‘ephemeral nature of life’ is a major theme of the novel.”

Weaver was assigned *Of Mice And Men*—a novel scholars have called “a masterpiece of austere prose” and “the most skillful example of American naturalism under 110 pages”—as part of her early twentieth-century fiction course, and purchased the Cliffs Notes from a cardboard rack at her local Barnes & Noble. John Whittier-Ferguson, her professor for the class, told reporters this was not the first time one of his students has expressed interest in the novel’s plot summary.

“It’s one of those universal American stories,” said Ferguson after being informed of Weaver’s choice to read the Cliffs Notes instead of the pocket-sized novel. “I look forward to skimming her essay on the importance of following your dreams and randomly assigning it a grade.”

## My Notes

### GRAMMAR & USAGE

Notice that the writer uses dashes effectively to heighten the irony and humor. The student explains that she gets to the last sentence of the novel, and the writer sets the line *George shoots Lennie in the head* between dashes. The presentation of this key point as an interruption or an incidental piece of information creates a dramatic and ironic effect.

# Peeling the Skin

## My Notes

Though she completed the two-page brief synopsis in one sitting, Weaver said she felt strangely drawn into the plot overview and continued on, exploring the more fleshed-out chapter summaries.

“There’s something to be said for putting in that extra time with a good story,” Weaver said. “You just get more out of it. I’m also going to try to find that book about rabbits that George was always reading to Lennie, so that I can really understand that important allusion.”

Within an hour of completing the Cliffs Notes, Weaver was already telling friends and classmates that Steinbeck was her favorite author, as well as reciting select quotations from the “Important Quotations” section for their benefit.

“When I read those quotes, found out which characters they were attributed to, and inferred their context from the chapter outlines to piece together their significance, I was just blown away,” said a teary-eyed Weaver. “And the way Steinbeck wove the theme of hands all the way through the section entitled ‘Hands’—he definitely deserved to win that Nobel Prize.”

Weaver’s roommate, Giulia Crenshaw, has already borrowed the dog-eared, highlighted summary of the classic Depression-era saga, and is expecting to enjoy reading what Weaver described as “a really sad story about two brothers who love to farm.”

“I loved this book so much, I’m going to read all of Steinbeck’s Cliffs Notes,” said Weaver. “But first I’m going to go to the library to check out the original version *Of Mice And Men* starring John Malkovich and Gary Sinise.”



Fill in the chart below by citing your favorite quotes in the left column—the ones that most powerfully mock Weaver and Cliffs Notes. In the right-hand column, explain the effect of the quote on your perception of the subject: why is it such a slam?

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

## Writing a Satirical Piece

SUGGESTED LEARNING STRATEGIES: **Drafting, Self-Editing/Peer Editing**

### Assignment

You have been studying how opinions are expressed and perceived in a democratic society through a variety of rhetorical formats including satire. Your assignment is to write a satirical piece critiquing some aspect of our society.

### Planning

1. Choose a topic that is relevant, current, and debatable. Remember that the flaws and foibles of all aspects of society—from government to celebrity to religion, from teenagers to presidents to soccer moms—are grist for the satirist’s mill.
2. Review the various samples of satire, and choose one to use as a model. Then make a list of conventions typical for that style of satire.
3. Review the techniques of satire: hyperbole, parody, irony, ridicule, etc. Will your piece be more Horatian or Juvenalian? Why?
4. Understand your audience. To whom will you address your satire and why? What tone will be appropriate for this audience and your purpose?

### Drafting

5. Draft your piece, keeping in mind the conventions you identified in step 2.

### Sharing, Responding, and Revising

6. Review your draft, and revise it to clarify ideas, refine structure, and enhance coherence before sharing it with peers for their review.
7. Identify loose sentences in your draft, and consult a member of your writing group for feedback on the effectiveness of your use of syntax for rhetorical effect.
8. Ask a reader to complete a SOAPSTone analysis of your piece to gauge your effectiveness at constructing your satire. Revise in response to the feedback you receive.

### Editing

9. Review your draft, and use all available resources to correct errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Edit accordingly to prepare a technically sound document.
10. Consider the broad satirical ideas in your text, and brainstorm appropriate titles. Choose one, and create a final draft.

 **TECHNOLOGY TIP** Create your final draft using a word processing program. Use the spell-check and grammar-check features to help you produce a final draft. Remember to review the options for spelling or grammar changes the program presents before accepting them. Most programs do not recognize proper names, and the grammar check may recommend contractions (e.g., it’s instead of its) or verb choices that you do not want.

**SCORING GUIDE**

<b>Scoring Criteria</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Emerging</b>
<b>Ideas</b>	<p>The piece presents a topic that is relevant, current, and debatable.</p> <p>It skillfully demonstrates techniques of satire ideal for the topic; the writer’s position is convincingly persuasive.</p>	<p>The piece presents a topic that is generally relevant, current, and debatable.</p> <p>It demonstrates techniques of satire suitable for the topic; the writer’s position is clear.</p>	<p>The piece presents a topic that is not fully relevant, current, or debatable.</p> <p>It demonstrates techniques of satire somewhat suitable for the topic; the writer’s position is unclear.</p>
<b>Organization</b>	<p>Ideas are presented in an arrangement most conducive to the writer’s position. The piece is aptly organized, utilizing typical conventions of the format.</p>	<p>Ideas are logically arranged to support the writer’s position. The piece is organized appropriately using typical conventions of the format.</p>	<p>A weak arrangement of ideas detracts from the writer’s position. The organization of the piece does not match the typical conventions of the format.</p>
<b>Use of Language</b>	<p>Language used (e.g., skillfully incorporating loose sentences; irony, hyperbole, and litotes; etc.) is extremely effective in achieving the desired tone and satirical effect for the intended audience and purpose. There are no errors in standard writing conventions.</p>	<p>Language used (e.g., appropriately incorporating loose sentences; satirical techniques) is effective in achieving the desired tone and satirical effect for the intended audience and purpose. Errors in writing conventions, if present, are minor and do not interfere with understanding.</p>	<p>Language used is ineffective in achieving the desired tone and satirical effect for the intended audience and purpose. Errors in writing conventions seriously interfere with the meaning.</p>
<b>Additional Criteria</b>			

Comments:

## Reflection

An important aspect of growing as a learner is to reflect on where you have been, what you have accomplished, what helped you to learn, and how you will apply your new knowledge in the future. Use the following questions to guide your thinking and to identify evidence of your learning. Use separate notebook paper.

### Thinking about Concepts

1. Using specific examples from this unit, respond to the Essential Questions:
  - How do newspapers impact public opinion or public perception?
  - How does a writer use tone to advance an opinion?
2. Consider the new academic vocabulary from this unit (**Bias, Fallacy, Editorial, Parody**), as well as academic vocabulary from previous units. and select 3–4 terms of which your understanding has grown. For each term, answer the following questions:
  - What was your understanding of the word before you completed this unit?
  - How has your understanding of the word evolved throughout this unit?
  - How will you apply your understanding in the future?

### Thinking about Connections

3. Review the activities and products (artifacts) you created. Choose those that most reflect your growth or increase in understanding.
4. For each artifact that you choose, record, respond to, and reflect on your thinking and understanding, using the following questions as a guide:
  - a. What skill/knowledge does this artifact reflect, and how did you learn this skill/knowledge?
  - b. How did your understanding of the power of language expand through your engagement with this artifact?
  - c. How will you apply this skill or knowledge in the future?
5. Create this reflection as Portfolio pages—one for each artifact you choose. Use the model in the box for your headings and commentary on questions.

### Thinking About Thinking

#### Portfolio Entry

Concept:

Description of Artifact:

Commentary on Questions: