



Lesson Plan

Media Bias Research Report

Lesson Overview

This lesson is aimed at improving media bias awareness and news literacy skills through a research report that incorporates critical reading and analytical writing. Students will research instances of bias in the media and prepare a report on the effects of bias.

Level: 9th - 12th grade

Estimated Time: 3-4 class periods

Skills:

- News media literacy
- Media bias awareness
- Critical reading
- Analytical/Argumentative writing

Objectives:

- **Discover** common uses of media bias
- **Analyze** media bias in news content
- **Evaluate** how bias affects the meaning of a news article

Questions:

- How and why do journalists use media bias?
- How does bias affect the meaning or interpretation of a news article?

Recommended Tools:

- [AllSides Guide to Types of Media Bias](#)
- [AllSides Topics & Issues](#)
- [AllSides Balanced Newsfeed](#)
- [AllSides Media Bias Ratings™](#)

In Class:

Before beginning this lesson, students should be familiar with media bias as laid out in Lesson Plan 1.1 and 1.2.

Everyone is biased — and that's okay. There's no such thing as unbiased news. Hidden media bias misleads, manipulates and divides us, so everyone should learn how to spot media bias. Many news outlets often report the same news in vastly different ways. If we don't consume a balanced news diet, we risk only hearing one perspective.



Activity:

- Refer students to the [AllSides Guide to Types of Media Bias](#), or open with a brief recap about bias and polarization.
- Open the [AllSides Balanced Newsfeed](#) web page and, as a class, investigate an article for bias. It may be helpful for the instructor to choose an article before class.
- Once students have found bias indicators, discuss how bias changes the meaning of the article. Use the following questions as a guide:
 - What types of bias are present?
 - Does the journalist feel positively or negatively about the issue? How can you tell?
 - How do you think readers may feel about the issue after reading this article?
- **Before beginning the assignment**, it is important to remind students that a "Center" media bias rating from AllSides doesn't necessarily mean a source is neutral, unbiased, perfectly reasonable or credible. A Center media bias rating simply means a source or writer does not predictably publish content tilted toward either end of the political spectrum — conservative or liberal. A media outlet with a Center rating may omit important perspectives, or run individual articles that display bias, while not displaying a lot of predictable bias in its content overall. Center doesn't mean better!

Assignment/Summative Assessment:

- Students will prepare a 1-2 page report on an article of their choosing. The report will consist of two sections.
 - Section 1:
 - Publication name
 - [AllSides Media Bias Rating](#)
 - Article title
 - Journalist/author name
 - Topic
 - Types of bias present
 - Section 2:
 - What is the overall effect of the types of bias on this article?
 - How does bias affect the meaning of the story?
 - Does this article present the issue negatively, positively, or neutrally? Why?
 - How do you think readers may feel about the issue after reading this article?
 - If you find that bias has affected the meaning of the article, how would you learn more about the subject from a different perspective?
- Reports should include a proper heading, a works cited page, and proper formatting of article titles, publication names, citations, etc. For extra formatting support, [visit this link](#).