The chaos of information overload 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.
American Forums: The Marketplace of Ideas

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GOALS:
• To analyze and create editorial and opinion pieces
• To identify and analyze fallacious reasoning in a text
• To analyze how writers use logic, evidence, and rhetoric to advance opinions
• To define and apply the appeals and devices of rhetoric
• To analyze and apply satirical techniques
• To examine and apply syntactic structures in the written and spoken word

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY
reasoning
evidence
bias
editorial
fallacies
parody
caricature

Literary Terms
target audience
secondary audience
cession
refutation
slanters
satire
Horatian satire
Juvenalian satire
persona
objective tone
subjective tone

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*Texts not included in these materials.
Learning Targets

- Examine the key ideas and vocabulary for the unit.
- Identify and analyze the skills and knowledge necessary for success in completing the Embedded Assessment.

Making Connections

If you have ever listened to talk radio, watched cable “news” shows, or browsed the Web for blogs, you may see many different versions of the same information. 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. So when you come into contact with the news, you should ask what information you are receiving and not receiving, where that information came from, and whether the purveyor of the news might have had an agenda. In this unit, you will learn more about how to identify bias and how language is sometimes used as a substitute for logic. Good writers use evidence and reasoning to support their claims; the failure to do so can result in fallacies.

Essential Questions

Based on your current knowledge, respond to the essential questions.

1. How do news outlets impact public opinion or public perception?

2. How does a writer use tone to advance an opinion?

Unpacking Embedded Assessment 1

Read the assignment for Embedded Assessment 1: Creating an Op-Ed News Outlet. Working in groups, your assignment is to plan, develop, write, revise, and present an informational article on a timely and debatable issue of significance to your school community, local community, or national audience. After your group completes its article, you will individually develop a variety of editorial products that reflect your point of view (agreement, alternative, or opposing) on the topic. Be creative with your editorial products and include at least two or three different pieces, such as cartoons, editorials, letters, posters, photos, and so on.

With your class, read closely and mark the text for the knowledge and skills you must have to successfully complete this project.
Rights and Responsibility

Learning Targets
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text.
- Summarize the opinion of a writer using textual details as support.

Rights and the American Dream
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. This unit, with its focus on the media, begins with an in-depth examination of the Amendment guaranteeing us our freedom of speech.

In Unit 1, you read the First Amendment to the United States Constitution as part of your study of the Bill of Rights. Refresh your memory of the First Amendment by rereading the text.

Primary Document

First Amendment to the United States Constitution

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Before Reading
1. Each of the following terms is taken verbatim from the First Amendment. Read through the list first, and then underline each word or term as it appears in the text of the First Amendment. Next, define each term. Feel free to use a dictionary or other resource as allowed or provided by your teacher.
   - respecting:
   - establishment:
   - prohibiting:
   - free exercise:
   - thereof:
   - abridge:
   - the press:
   - peaceably:
   - assemble:
   - petition:
   - redress:
   - grievances:
2. Now transform the text by rewriting the First Amendment in the space below, replacing the vocabulary words with their definitions. In some cases, your definition may fit exactly; in others, you may need to rework the phrasing.

3. The First Amendment includes four basic rights or freedoms. What are they? Which of these will be the focus of this unit?

During Reading

4. As you read, annotate the text for connections to the ideals reflected in the First Amendment. Use your metacognitive markers to indicate anything that provokes a question (?), anything about which you wish to comment or make a connection (*), and anything you find surprising (!). Be prepared to discuss your responses.

Informational Text

The Role of the Media in a Democracy

by George A. Krimsky

Chunk 1

In a free-market democracy, the people ultimately make the decision as to how their press should act, says George Krimsky, the former head of news for the Associated Press' World Services and author of Hold the Press (The Inside Story on Newspapers).

1 Volumes have been written about the role of the mass media in a democracy. The danger in all this examination is to submerge the subject under a sludge of platitudes. The issue of whether a free press is the best communications solution in a democracy is much too important at the close of this century and needs to be examined dispassionately.

2 Before addressing the subject, it helps to define the terminology. In the broadest sense, the media embraces the television and film entertainment industries, a vast array of regularly published printed material, and even public relations and advertising. The "press" is supposed to be a serious member of that family, focusing on real life instead of fantasy and serving the widest possible audience. A good generic term for the press in the electronic age is "news media." The emphasis in this definition is on content, not technology or delivery system, because the press—at least in developed countries—can be found these days on the Internet, the fax lines, or the airwaves.

3 A self-governing society, by definition, needs to make its own decisions. It cannot do that without hard information, leavened with an open exchange of views. Abraham
Lincoln articulated this concept most succinctly when he said: “Let the people know the facts, and the country will be safe.”

4 Some might regard Lincoln’s as a somewhat naive viewpoint, given the complexities and technologies of the 20th century; but the need for public news has been a cornerstone of America’s system almost from the start.

5 Thomas Jefferson felt so strongly about the principle of free expression he said something that non-democrats must regard as an absurdity: “If it were 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.” The implication of those words is that self-governance is more essential than governance itself. Not so absurd, perhaps, if you had just fought a war against an oppressive government.

Chunk 2

6 In the wake of America’s successful revolution, it was decided there should indeed be government, but only if it were accountable to the people. The people, in turn, could only hold the government accountable if they knew what it was doing and could intercede as necessary, using their ballot, for example. This role of public “watchdog” was thus assumed by a citizen press, and as a consequence, the government in the United States has been kept out of the news business. The only government-owned or -controlled media in the United States are those that broadcast overseas, such as the Voice of America. By law, this service is not allowed to broadcast within the country. There is partial government subsidy to public television and radio in the United States, but safeguards protect it against political interference.

7 Because the Constitution is the highest law in the land, any attempts by courts, legislators and law enforcement officers to weaken protected liberties, such as free expression, are generally preventable.

8 Fairly simple in theory, but how has all this worked out?

9 Generally speaking, pretty well, although the concept of a free press is challenged and defended every day in one community or another across the land. The American press has always been influential, often powerful and sometimes feared, but it has seldom been loved. As a matter of fact, journalists today rank in the lower echelons of public popularity. They are seen as too powerful on the one hand, and not trustworthy on the other.

10 In its early days, the American press was little more than a pamphleteering industry, owned by or affiliated with competing political interests and engaged in a constant war of propaganda. Trust was not an issue. What caused the press to become an instrument for democratic decision-making was the variety of voices. Somehow, the common truth managed to emerge from under that chaotic pile of information and misinformation. A quest for objectivity was the result.

Chunk 3

11 Many critics have questioned whether there is such a thing as “objectivity.” Indeed, no human being can be truly objective; we can only seek objectivity and impartiality in the pursuit of truth. Journalists can try to keep their personal views out of the news, and they employ a number of techniques to do so, such as obtaining and quoting multiple sources and opposing views.

12 The question is whether the truth always serves the public. At times, the truth can do harm. If the truthful report of a small communal conflict in, say, Africa, leads to more civil unrest, is the public really being served? The journalistic purists—often those sitting
in comfortable chairs far from conflict—say it is not their job to “play God” in such matters, and that one should not “shoot the messenger for the message.”

13 If, however, one takes the rigid view that the truth always needs to be controlled—or Lenin’s dictum that truth is partisan—the door is wide open for enormous abuse, as history has demonstrated time and again. It is this realization (and fear) that prompted Jefferson to utter that absurdity about the supreme importance of an uncensored press.

14 What Jefferson and the constitutional framers could not have foreseen, however, was how modern market forces would expand and exploit the simple concept of free expression. While media with meager resources in most developing countries are still struggling to keep governments from suppressing news that Westerners take for granted, the mass media in America, Britain, Germany and elsewhere are preoccupied with their role as profitable businesses and the task of securing a spot on tomorrow’s electronic superhighway. In such an environment, truth in the service of the public seems almost a quaint anachronism.

15 Is the capitalist drive an inherent obstacle to good journalism? In one sense, the marketplace can be the ally, rather than the enemy of a strong, free media. For the public to believe what it reads, listens to and sees in the mass media, the “product” must be credible. Otherwise, the public will not buy the product, and the company will lose money. So, profitability and public service can go hand in hand. What a media company does with its money is the key. If it uses a significant portion of its profits to improve its newsgathering and marketing capabilities and eliminate dependence upon others for its survival (e.g. state subsidies, newsprint purchases, or access to printing facilities), the product improves, and the public is served. If it uses its profits primarily to make its owners rich, it might as well be selling toothpaste.

16 The assumption in this argument is that the public overwhelmingly wants to believe its news media, and that it will use this credible information to actively and reasonably conduct its public affairs. Unfortunately, that assumption is not as valid as it was in simpler times. In affluent societies today, media consumers are seeking more and more entertainment, and the news media’s veracity (even its plausibility) is less important than its capacity to attract an audience.

17 But, you say, look at the new technology that can penetrate any censorship system in the world. Look at the choices people have today. Look at how accessible information is today. Yes, the choices may be larger, but a case can be made they are not deeper—that big money is replacing quality products and services with those of only the most massive appeal. The banquet table may be larger, but if it only contains “junk food,” is there really more choice? Declining literacy, for example, is a real problem in the so-called developed world. That’s one reason why newspapers are so worried about their future.

**Chunk 4**

18 Where is the relevance of all this to the emerging democracies around the world? Certainly the American experience, for all its messiness, provides a useful precedent, if not always a model.

19 For example, when one talks about an independent media, it is necessary to include financial independence as a prerequisite, in addition to political independence. The American revenue-earning model of heavy reliance on advertising is highly suspect in many former communist countries, but one has to weigh the alternatives. Are government and party subsidies less imprisoning? If journalists are so fearful of contamination by advertiser pressure, they can build internal walls between news and business functions, similar to those American newspapers erected earlier in this century.
20 If they are fearful of political contamination of the information-gathering process, they can build another wall separating the newsroom from the editorial department—another important concept in modern American journalism.

21 The problem in many new democracies is that journalists who once had to toe the single-party line equate independence with opposition. Because they speak out against the government, they say they are independent. But haven’t they just traded one affiliation for another? There is little room for unvarnished truth in a partisan press.

22 Is objectivity a luxury in societies that have only recently begun to enjoy the freedom to voice their opinions? Listen to a Lithuanian newspaper editor shortly after his country gained its independence: “I want my readers to know what their heads are for.” His readers were used to being told not only what to think about, but what to think. Democracy requires the public to make choices and decisions. This editor wanted to prepare citizens for that responsibility with articles that inform but do not pass judgment. His circulation increased.

23 Though nearly 60 percent of the world’s nations today are declared democracies—a monumental change from a mere decade ago—most of them have nevertheless instituted press laws that prohibit reporting on a whole array of subjects ranging from the internal activity and operations of government to the private lives of leaders. Some of these are well-intentioned efforts to “preserve public stability.” But all of them, ALL of them, undermine self-governance.

24 The watchdog role of the free press can often appear as mean-spirited. How do the government and public protect themselves from its excesses? In the United States, it is done in a variety of ways. One, for example, is the use of “ombudsmen.” In this case, news organizations employ an in-house critic to hear public complaints and either publish or broadcast their judgments. Another is the creation of citizens’ councils which sit to hear public complaints about the press and then issue verdicts, which, although not carrying the force of law, are aired widely.

25 Last, and most effective, is libel law. In the United States, a citizen can win a substantial monetary award from a news organization if libel is proven in a court of law. It is much harder for a public official or celebrity than an ordinary citizen to win a libel case against the press, because the courts have ruled that notoriety comes with being in the limelight. In most cases, the complaining notable must prove “malice aforethought.”

26 There is nothing in the American constitution that says the press must be responsible and accountable. Those requirements were reserved for government. In a free-market democracy, the people—that is the voters and the buying public—ultimately decide as to how their press should act. If at least a semblance of truth-in-the-public-service does not remain a motivating force for the mass media of the future, neither free journalism nor true democracy has much hope, in my opinion.

27 The nature and use of new technology is not the essential problem. If true journalists are worried about their future in an age when everyone with a computer can call themselves journalists, then the profession has to demonstrate that it is special, that it offers something of real value and can prove it to the public. There is still a need today—perhaps more than ever—for identifying sense amidst the nonsense, for sifting the important from the trivial, and, yes, for telling the truth. Those goals still constitute the best mandate for a free press in a democracy.

28 George Washington’s admonition, uttered at the Constitutional Convention, still stands: “Let us raise a standard to which the wise and honest can repair.”
WORD CONNECTIONS

Patterns of Word Changes

The word *convention* (which can mean “something agreed upon,” “agreement,” or “assembly”) comes from the verb *convene* (“come together”). The suffix *-tion* is often used to transform a verb into a noun.

After Reading

5. You will next participate in a Socratic Seminar. To prepare for the Socratic Seminar, review the texts in this activity and respond to the pre-seminar questions. Use details from each text to support your thinking.

Pre-seminar questions:
- How important is a free press to a democratic society? What is the balance between the freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment and the responsibility of the individual in our society?
- Why is it important that the government is not involved with the media?
- Write one of your own open-ended questions based on the text.

Check Your Understanding

**Writing Prompt:** Think about the role of media in society today, including its limitations and its contribution to a democracy. Using details from the text, write a text that explains the importance of a free press in a democracy. Be sure to:
- Provide a coherent explanation of the role of free press in a democracy.
- Provide a concluding statement that follows from and supports the explanation presented.
- Use specific diction to maintain an objective tone throughout your writing.

Language and Writer’s Craft: Evolving Language

Language changes over time. We no longer write or speak as Shakespeare did. Nor do we even write or speak as James Madison, author of the First Amendment, did. As language changes, the rules about standard and nonstandard usage change, too.

Who gets to say what usage is correct, or standard? As new words and usages appear and fill new communication needs, they may gain popular currency. People who create dictionaries, usage guides, and other reference works decide which new usages to include and which to exclude. Between popular usage and the sanction of cultural gatekeepers such as dictionary editors, a working consensus arises about what the new words and usages mean and how to use them effectively.

This means that “correct,” or standard, usage is largely a matter of cultural consensus, or *convention*. And what is standard changes over time. Not everyone agrees about what is standard. Good usage dictionaries, such as Bryan Garner’s *Dictionary of Modern American Usage*, can help you resolve issues about contested or complex usages.

Look up the words *nauseated* and *nauseous* in a dictionary of usage. Are you surprised to learn that many people consider it an error to use *nauseous* to mean “having nausea”? Given how common this usage is, should we still consider it an error? Why or why not?
Introducing the Media

Learning Targets

- Examine a news source and identify its focus.
- Explain how a medium is tailored for a specific audience.

Before Reading

1. To prepare to discuss the media, complete the following survey.

News Media Survey

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

   ______ Newspaper       ______ Websites/Internet
   ______ Local TV News   ______ Radio News
   ______ Cable News Station ______ News Magazines
   ______ Word of Mouth

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

   ______ Newspaper       ______ Websites/Internet
   ______ Local TV News   ______ Radio News
   ______ Cable News Station ______ News Magazines
   ______ Word of Mouth

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

   ______ Newspaper       ______ Websites/Internet
   ______ Local TV News   ______ Radio News
   ______ Cable News Station ______ News Magazines
   ______ Word of Mouth

4. Rank each of the following reasons that you might give for not reading the newspaper. (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.
**News Source Viewing Log**

2. You have been assigned one news source to monitor. Be prepared to share your findings tomorrow during class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time (non-print) or Location (print)</th>
<th>Story Focus or Headline</th>
<th>Target Audience</th>
<th>Perspective on Issue Covered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

3. 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?

**Writing Prompt:** After discussing differences, write a text explaining how your source’s coverage of “news” is tailored to what you think is its **target audience**. Identify a specific audience for your source. Be sure to:

- Provide a clear, focused response to the prompt.
- Use relevant details from your viewing log to support your analysis of how the style and content contributes to the engagement of the target audience.
- Use specific diction to maintain an objective tone throughout your writing.
Independent Reading: Newspapers

Learning Targets
• Analyze a variety of opinions about newspapers.
• Examine your own personal experiences with print media.

Before Reading
1. How often do you read the newspaper? In a group, create a chart that illustrates the sections of newspapers and the topics you look for in your local or national newspaper.

During Reading
2. 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
   • “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

WORD CONNECTIONS
Roots and Affixes
The words avid (adj.) and avidity (n.) are from similar Latin roots. Avid is from the Latin word avidus, meaning “longing eagerly” or “greedy.” Avidity is from aviditatem, meaning “extreme eagerness” or “greed.”

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

• “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

After Reading
3. Through the course of this unit, you will be asked to read at least one local, national, or online newspaper daily. Create a log to keep track of what and when you read, as well as to write down the titles of significant articles that you encountered in each section. Each day, cut out or photocopy one article that you enjoyed reading.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time Spent</th>
<th>Interesting Articles in Front Section</th>
<th>Interesting Articles on Op-Ed Page</th>
<th>Interesting Articles in One Other Section</th>
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The Newspaper Debate

Learning Targets

• Analyze how concessions and refutations can be used to refute an opposing argument.
• Apply strategies of refutation to a set of persuasive elements.

Before Reading

1. You have taken a look at your local newspaper and thought about how often you read the paper. With a partner, discuss the idea of a newspaper made just for you. What might be some of the advantages of a fully personalized newspaper? What might be some of the disadvantages?

During Reading

2. 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-hand column of the graphic organizer on page 185. Be prepared to discuss your findings.

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 the University of Chicago, Harvard University, and Columbia University.

Editorial

How the Rise of the Daily Me Threatens Democracy

by Cass Sunstein

1. 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.

2. 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.

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

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

KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS
Sunstein defines his key term in the first paragraph. Why is that definition necessary for his argument?
3 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 international 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 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.

4 In almost every group, people ended up with more extreme positions. The Boulder groups favoured an international 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.

5 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.

6 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.

7 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.

8 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.

9 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.

10 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.
3. 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 fill in the right-hand column after the next activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunstein</th>
<th>Potter</th>
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ACTIVITY 3.5 continued

The Newspaper Debate

During Reading

4. Read Potter’s article, marking the text to identify the **concessions** and **refutations** he uses to counter Sunstein’s article and to 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 the graphic organizer on page 185.

Editorial

The Newspaper Is Dying—Hooray for Democracy

by Andrew Potter

1 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.

2 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.

3 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.

4 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.

5 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.

After Reading
5. Complete the graphic organizer on page 185 by recording your findings from this article.

6. Identify the writer’s use of inductive and deductive reasoning to support his positions. Cite textual evidence.
Refuting an Argument

To refute an existing argument, authors rely on a variety of strategies of refutation. These strategies 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 his or her 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? (A writer’s assumptions are often unstated.)

7. In the following graphic organizer, practice refuting elements adapted from George A. Krimsky’s article “The Role of the Media in a Democracy” from Activity 3.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Your Refutation or “Attack”</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Claim:</strong></td>
<td>In the age of technology, the media is still an essential part of a self-governing society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reasoning:</strong></td>
<td>People's fascination with Brittany Spears shows that celebrity news is more important than traditional news.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evidence:</strong></td>
<td>People that use MySpace are producers of news.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assumption:</strong></td>
<td>Everyone has access to a source of news.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Check Your Understanding

**Writing Prompt:** Examine the notes you took on Sunstein and Potter to identify which strategies of refutation Potter uses in his response to Sunstein. Then evaluate the effectiveness of those “attacks.” Be sure to:

- Use quotes and paraphrasing to show evidence of claims, reasoning, or assumptions that Potter is refuting.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of Potter’s refutations.
Learning Targets

• Access prior knowledge about objectivity and subjectivity.
• Analyze a news story for evidence of bias.

Examining Bias

1. With a partner, create a graphic that compares and contrasts news articles and editorials. If you have access to a newspaper or online news source, review examples of news articles and editorials for specific evidence to inform your findings.

2. 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—because 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.

You will be assigned one of the following six types of bias. In your small group, paraphrase the explanation for your assigned type of bias. Next, generate several guiding questions you can use to discern whether your assigned type of bias is present in a given text.

Types of Bias

A. BIAS THROUGH SELECTION AND OMISSION

• An editor can express a bias by choosing to use or not to use a specific news item. For example, the 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 the people jeering can be dismissed 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.

B. 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 20.

• Similarly, where information appears within an article may also reveal evidence of bias. Because 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 or her personal bias) on the issue.

C. BIAS BY HEADLINE

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

D. 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.

E. 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” is not as powerful 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 or she is critical of the crowd’s purposes or beliefs. News magazines use specific numbers to enhance believability.

F. 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). The name “puff piece” comes from the word puffery, which means overly flattering words about a topic. 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.

INDEPENDENT READING LINK

Review your outside reading and find examples of at least two types of bias. For each example, provide an explanation of how it exemplifies the bias.
• 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 question 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.

3. Use the following graphic organizer to keep track of examples of the guiding questions each group developed for identifying bias. Then apply those questions to a sample newspaper article or online news source.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bias Type</th>
<th>Guiding Questions</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<td>Bias Through Selection and Omission</td>
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<td>Bias Through Placement</td>
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<td>Bias by Headline</td>
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<td>Bias by Photos, Captions, and Camera Angles</td>
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<td>Bias Through Statistics and Crowd Counts</td>
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<td>Bias by Source Control</td>
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Before Reading
4. Have you encountered bias when using a social networking site? If so, give an example.

During Reading
5. 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 mark the text by labeling any evidence of bias you encounter. Be sure to use the guiding questions your class has generated.

Article

Facebook Photos Sting
Minnesota High School Students

The Associated Press

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. “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.

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. “They don’t have (the) support of the students to hand out arbitrary punishments and punishments that don’t fit the crime,” he said.

7. 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.

8. 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 McGeveran, 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,” McGeveran 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.

McGeveran 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.

“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.”

After Reading

6. Evaluate this article as a source of credible information. Did you find bias in this article, or is it objective? Explain.

Check Your Understanding

Expository Writing Prompt: With a partner, plan, develop, write, revise, and present an informational article on a timely and debatable issue of significance to your school community, local community, or national audience. Be sure to:

- Integrate information into the text to maintain the flow of ideas.
- Include both a paraphrase and a direct quote in your text.
- Maintain an objective tone.
The Bias of Rhetoric

**Learning Targets**
- Analyze how language can be used to manipulate readers or viewers.
- Distinguish between biased and objective rhetoric.

**Slanting Reader Perception**
1. While the previous activity focused on how writers can construct the “truth” of their subject via their choices regarding content and structure, this activity focuses on how language itself can be used to influence the reader’s perception of the subject. View the advertisement selected by your instructor. Then in a quickwrite, identify what elements from the advertisement contribute to its power.

2. 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 “slancers.” 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*, 8th ed, 2007).

**Types of Slancers**

**A. 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** or **question-begging** epithet. 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.

**B. Rhetorical analogy:** The use of a figurative comparison (sometimes a simile or a metaphor) to convey a positive or negative feeling toward the subject. For example, in the 2008 presidential race, Sarah Palin suggested (via a joke) that she was like a pit bull with lipstick.

**C. Rhetorical definition:** The use of emotionally 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.

**D. 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.”

**E. 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.
F. **Downplayers:** The use of qualifier words or phrases to make someone or something look less important or significant. Words like “mere” and “only” work this way, 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 are linked to concessions with connectors such as *nevertheless, however, still,* or *but.*

G. **Hyperbole:** The use of extravagant overstatement that 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 how they are worded; the key element 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!”

H. **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 author is doing a poor job of citing it; meanwhile, the author has not actually identified any source—or made any claim—that can be easily disproven or challenged.

I. **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.

**Check Your Understanding**

Given one of the previous slanters, complete the following tasks in your small group and be prepared to share your findings with the class:

- Create your own paraphrased definition of the term.
- List the examples provided in the explanation and brainstorm additional examples.
- Create a brief skit for the rest of the class to illustrate the term.
- Take notes on the other groups’ presentations of their slanters.
Fair and Balanced

Learning Targets
• Identify examples of slanters in an editorial.
• Revise selected passages to eliminate loaded language.

Before Reading
1. From the list of slanters in the previous activity, which do you encounter most often? Which do you think are most effective? Do a quickwrite responding to these questions. Be prepared to discuss your response.

During Reading
2. As you read the following text, highlight or mark text for “slanters” that help the writer convince the audience of his point of view.

Editorial
Abolish high school football!
by Raymond A. Schroth

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

2 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.

3 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.

4 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.

5 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.

6 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.
Buzz Bissinger’s 1990 bestselling “Friday Night Lights,” a popular book, film, and TV series, was, in the long run, an indictment of the small Texas town with nothing going for it but its high school football team. If the town had a library, churches, a theater, a park—if the school had any classes—we never saw them. They were irrelevant.

The boys went to high school to play, feeding delusions that they would be noticed by a scout who would get them college scholarships and contracts on pro teams.

But, you say, if high schools drop football, that will deprive colleges and the pros of their feeder system. Right. It will also deprive colleges of many who have come for only one reason—to play—while their paid tutors ease them through the motions of an education.

But, you say, some football players are very bright. Absolutely right. I have taught three in recent years who were the best in the class, straight As, a delight to have in the room. But they are exceptions to the rule, and few and far between.

Without football, how can ambitious athletes thrive? They can play soccer, basketball, baseball, tennis, lacrosse, and squash. They can run, swim, row, sail, wrestle, and bike. They can also read, write for the paper, act, sing, dance, walk, and pray. And when they graduate their brains will be enriched, not bruised.

The Times article quotes Kelby Jasmon, a high school student in Springfield, Ill., walking around today with two concussions, who says there is “no chance” he would tell the coach if he gets hit hard and symptoms return. “It’s not dangerous to play with a concussion,” he says. “You’ve got to sacrifice for the team. The only way I come out is on a stretcher.”

If the school officials and his parents read that and leave him on the field, something is very, very wrong.

After Reading
3. In pairs, use the SMELL strategy to analyze this editorial. You have already done some work in the Language section of the strategy.

Sender–Receiver Relationship
Who is the writer explicitly addressing his argument to here? 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 his desired effect?

Logical Strategies
What logical arguments or 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?
Check Your Understanding
Copy five of the more slanted passages from Schroth’s essay to the spaces below and revise them to be less rhetorically manipulative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Passage</th>
<th>Revised Passage</th>
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Learning Targets

- Use specific strategies to analyze an editorial.
- Examine the impact of audience and context on a writer’s decisions.

How to Read an Editorial

As you read through the following guidelines for reading editorials, paraphrase each of the points by writing a word or two in the margins that will help you to remember the point.

- 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 author’s perspective at this point?
- Look at the author’s name and affiliation, if given. What do you know about the author’s background and/or potential bias at this point?
- Read the first two to three paragraphs very carefully. What issue is the author discussing and what is his or her stance on this issue?
- Once you have determined the author’s stance on the issue, stop reading for a moment or two. What is the other side to the issue? Who might think differently? What are one or two reasons that you know that might support the other side of the author’s stance?
- Continue reading the editorial. What are two of the strongest pieces of evidence that the author uses to support his or her side of the issue? Why are they effective?
- Did the author persuade you? Did the author address or refute the main objections of the opposition? Give an example. What did he or she not address? Why might the author have chosen not to address this element? Do you think the author was fair to the other side? Why or why not?
- 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 author?
- If the author were standing right next to you now, what would you say to him or her?

Before Reading

1. How is an editorial different from a news story?

During Reading

2. Read the unsigned editorial “Facing Consequences at Eden Prairie High” beginning on the following pages, and use the eight prompts in “How to Read an Editorial” to guide your initial analysis. For further analysis, you may want to consider using the SOAPSTone reading strategy.
3. Use the questions on the previous page to guide your responses to the editorial on the next page. The numbers in the left-hand column correspond to the eight bullet points outlined under “How to Read an Editorial.”

Title: ___________________________ Author: ___________________________
Issue: ___________________________

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Facing consequences at Eden Prairie High

from the Minneapolis/St. Paul Star Tribune

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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 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.

5. With that backdrop, protests over invasion of privacy are ridiculous. School administrators weren’t surfing social networking sites without cause. They received a complaint and had a responsibility to investigate and act according to school policies. Students who think the Web has been used against them unfairly should fast-forward a few years and consider how they’ll feel when a potential employer uses Facebook or MySpace in a background check, with a job offer on the line.

6. Some are viewing the athletes among the students who were caught red-cupped in Eden Prairie through a surprisingly sympathetic lens. That’s wrongheaded. The Minnesota High School League requires student-athletes and their parents to pledge that the students will abstain from alcohol and illegal drugs. Break the pledge, lose the privilege.

7. We were encouraged by the reaction of Eden Prairie High School parent Larry Burke, whose daughter was not involved in the drinking incident. “The posting is very foolish,” Burke told the Star Tribune. “But from a perspective of a parent, I’m glad it happened. There are a lot of discussions going on in a lot of households about alcohol and consequences.”

8. Let’s hope other parents bring as much common sense to those conversations as Burke.
After Reading
4. Using the notes you have generated thus far, be prepared to participate in a class discussion addressing the following questions (as well as any others inspired by the text):
   • What does the author seem to assume the audience is feeling about the issue?
   • How does the author tailor language and argument to his or her audience?
   • Does the author use slanders? If so, what is their effect?

Check Your Understanding
Writing Prompt: Now independently analyze a second editorial of your choice. Then write a text analyzing how the writer tailors the language and argument to a target audience. Be sure to:
   • Include a clear summary of the argument.
   • Cite specific examples from the text.
   • Comment on the effect the author’s language has on the intended audience.

INDEPENDENT READING LINK
Read an editorial from your independent reading selections, and complete another analysis using the questions on how to read an editorial.

My Notes

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How to Write an Editorial

Learning Targets
• Compare and contrast the persuasive elements of two editorials.
• Craft an editorial of your own, carefully considering audience and context.

How to Write an Editorial
You have now had the opportunity to read and analyze a couple of editorials. What advice would you offer a friend who is about to write an editorial of his or her own? Be prepared to share your advice with the class.

Before You Write
• Brainstorm for topics: Choose topics in which you have a genuine interest and some prior knowledge. Be sure they are issues that are debatable. Do not, for example, argue for school violence because it would be difficult to find anyone in favor of such a thing. Many editorials are written as responses to news articles or other editorials, so be alert 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. You will need this soon.
• Consider your audience: Use 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. Create 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. State the source of your information and 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 dismissing your ideas easier than misspelled or misused words or phrases. Triple-check your editorial for mistakes.

**Check Your Understanding**

**Writing Prompt:** Now that you have read “How to Write an Editorial,” with a partner, co-compose your own brief editorial on the subject of the Eden Prairie suspensions or another contemporary issue of your choice. Use the steps outlined in “How to Write an Editorial” to guide your writing. Be sure to:

• Develop a position on the issue you have chosen.

• Provide a concise summary of what you’re going to tell the reader and include your thesis statement.

• Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone.

**Before Reading**

1. What are the requirements for graduation in your school? Should academic graduation requirements be increased for high school students in your district?
## How to Write an Editorial

### During Reading

2. The issue for the next two editorials that you will read is whether to raise high school graduation requirements. As you read the editorial on the next page, use the following graphic organizer to keep track of your observations. Complete the chart after you have read and analyzed the two editorials.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Reasons For</th>
<th>Reasons Against</th>
<th>Strongest Statement of Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jack O’Connell</td>
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<td>Nick Thomas</td>
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<td>You</td>
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<tr>
<td>A Person You Know</td>
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Editorial

Pro and Con: Raising Graduation Requirements for High School Students

Time to raise the bar in high schools

by Jack O’Connell

1 The most important challenge we face in public education today is to improve high schools so that all California students graduate prepared to succeed in either college or the workplace. Today, far too many of our 1.7 million high school students are prepared for neither the demands of skilled employment nor the rigors of higher education. Employers consistently complain of graduates who lack critical problem-solving and communications skills. More than half of students entering California State University need remediation in reading or math. It is clearly time for us to re-examine high school in California, to raise the level of rigor we expect of all of our students and begin preparing every high school student to reach higher expectations.

2 How we meet the challenge of improving high school student achievement will determine the futures of our children and their ability to compete and succeed in the decades to come. Moreover, how we respond to this challenge will significantly affect the economic and social future of our state.

3 Research shows that students who take challenging, college-preparatory courses do better in school, even if they started out with poor test scores and low expectations. Students who take rigorous courses are also less likely to drop out, and they perform better in vocational and technical courses.

4 Our high schools today struggle with an achievement gap that leaves African-American, Latino and socioeconomically disadvantaged students lagging behind their peers. A failure to provide and expect all students to take demanding academic coursework has also created a high school “reality gap.” While more than 80 percent of high school students say they intend to go to college, only about 40 percent actually take the rigorous coursework required for acceptance at a four-year university. The numbers are even lower for African-American graduates (24 percent) and Latinos (22 percent).

5 Many students are not aware that the “minimum requirement” courses they are taking aren’t providing the rigorous foundation that will prepare them to fulfill their dreams after high school. In some cases, students are steered away from tough courses or find them overenrolled. The result is thousands of students who must spend significant, unnecessary time and money after high school if they are ever to fulfill their dreams.

6 To reverse this trend, we must make rigorous courses available to all of our students. We must redefine high schools as institutions that provide all students with a strong academic foundation, whether they are bound for college or the workplace after graduation.

7 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.
How to Write an Editorial

8 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.

9 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.

10 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.

Editorial

New Michigan Graduation Requirements Shortchange Many Students

by Nick Thomas

1 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?

2 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.

3 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.

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

5 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.
6 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

7 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.

8 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.

9 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.

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

After Reading

3. Complete the graphic organizer on page 206 to compare the key ideas these two writers present in support of their argument. In your opinion, which of the two writers made the strongest case? Explain.

Check Your Understanding

Writing Prompt: Now that you have practiced writing a brief editorial of your own and have had the opportunity to read the previous two editorials with opposing views, compose your own editorial that reflects an alternate perspective to your first editorial. Be sure to:

• Develop an alternate position on the issue you have chosen.
• Effectively use slanters to support your argument.
• Credibly address your opposition by conceding and refuting the position.
**LEARNING STRATEGIES:**
Graphic Organizer, Rereading, Think-Pair-Share, Discussion Groups

**Where’s Your Proof?**

**Learning Targets**
- Identify different types of evidence and revise writing to incorporate appropriate evidence.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of different types of evidence.

**Before Reading**
1. **Quickwrite:** Who do you know who is particularly good at persuading others? What do they do that makes them so successful?

**During Reading**
2. To support the claims they make, authors 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Evidence: What is it used for? What are its limitations? “They X, but they Y.”</th>
<th>Example from an Editorial in this Unit</th>
<th>Evaluation: What kind of appeal does it make: logos, ethos, or pathos? Does the evidence logically support the author’s claim in this case? Why or why not?</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Illustrative Examples</strong> (Personal Experience/Anecdotal/Media Example). They add reality to the claim, but may not be generalizable.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothetical Cases</strong>. They challenge the reader to consider possible circumstances or outcomes, but there’s no reason they will definitely happen.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Analogies/Comparison</strong>. They make the unfamiliar or abstract more accessible, but they need to be more similar than different in order to be persuasive.</td>
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Expert Testimony. 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!

Statistics/Surveys. They support generalized claims and make strong logical appeals, but they must be reliable and unbiased.

Causal Relationships. They suggest possible positive or negative outcomes, but there needs to be a clear link between the cause and the effect.

After Reading
3. Once you have recorded your observations in the graphic organizer, be prepared to discuss those observations. You will want to make sure to address both the types and effectiveness of each technique you find the author has used. Make sure you reference specific examples from the text. With a partner, discuss why using a wide variety of evidence might be more persuasive or effective than using only one kind of evidence.

Check Your Understanding
Select one of the editorials you have written in this unit and revise it by adding at least one of the types of evidence from this activity. Share your revision with a partner and ask your partner to identify the type of evidence you used in your writing.
Learning Targets

- Create an editorial letter according to specific criteria.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of multiple editorial letters based on criteria.

Before Reading

1. **Quickwrite:** Skim over an assortment of letters to the editor. What do they have in common? What advice would you offer a friend who is about to write a letter to the editor? Be prepared to share your advice with the class.

2. Next, read through the informational text “How to Write a Letter to the Editor.” You will be using the following tips as you craft your own letter to the editor.

**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, try to tie the issue you want to write 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.
**During Reading**

3. Your teacher will provide an editorial and several letters written in response to the editorial. Fill in the chart below for each of the letters to the editor. The last box is for your opinion on the editorial.

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<tr>
<th>Letter Number</th>
<th>Agree or Disagree with Original Editorial?</th>
<th>Reasons</th>
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4. **Quickwrite:** Which of the letters to the editor made the strongest argument? What made that argument compelling?
5. As you read the following editorial about cell phones, mark the text to identify words or phrases that reveal the writer’s tone and its effect on the reader.

**Why I **_**Hate**_  **Cell Phones**

*by* Sara Reihani

1. 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.

2. 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?

3. 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 lubrious 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.

4. 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 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.

After Reading
6. What tone did the writer reveal through her diction?

Check Your Understanding
Writing Prompt: Craft a letter of your own to the editor in response to the previous editorial. Use the steps outlined in “How to Write a Letter to the Editor” to guide your writing. Be sure to:
• Identify a specific point of view.
• Make use of a variety of rhetorical techniques.
• Follow the letter specifications of your local newspaper.
Learning Targets

- Identify fallacious logic, appeals, and rhetoric in sample texts.
- Use logical fallacies and refute the fallacies of others in a debate.

Identifying Fallacies

1. You will be given a set of card manipulatives, some of which will contain the names of specific types of fallacies, while others will contain the definitions. In your small group, you will need to match the fallacies with their definitions.

2. Next, read through the following informational text and check your answers.

Types of Fallacies

Fallacies are commonplace in advertising, political discourse, and everyday conversations—and they will continue to be as long as they work to persuade. 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, 8th ed., 2007) 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

- **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.

- **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

- **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 bandwagoning).

- “**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.
• **Ad misericordiam, or appeal to pity:** If you have 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.

• **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

• **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.

• **Ad hominem/genetic fallacy:** Literally meaning “to the man,” ad hominem refers to attacks against a person him- or herself 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 or 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, it is a genetic fallacy. For example, to say an idea comes from the “media elite” makes it sound like it should be rejected—but who are the media elite?

• **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.”

• **Slippery slope:** Half appeal to fear and half a causal fallacy, a person uses a slippery slope when they suggest one action will lead to an inevitable and undesirable outcome. To say legalizing voluntary euthanasia paves the way for forced euthanasia is a slippery slope argument.

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

3. Now that you have been introduced to the concept of fallacious appeals, take up the challenge to use as many as possible in a **Fallacy Face Off**.
Fallacy Face Off

1. As a class, select a current, high-profile, controversial issue. Feel free to pull this topic from some of your recent newspaper readings. You will use this topic in a mock debate.

2. Next, split into teams. Within each team, each team member will select or be assigned a fallacious appeal to use regarding the selected topic.

3. When the teams are ready, they will use these fallacious appeals in a mock debate. Each team will take turns presenting their appeals to the class as if presenting at a public rally, televised debate, or other venue of the class’s choosing.

4. As other groups present their arguments, you will be responsible for identifying and challenging the nature of the fallacy being used by the speaker.

Check Your Understanding

After exploring these fallacies in class, discuss the following questions in your 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?

Revision Writing Prompt: Review the letter to the editor that you wrote in the last activity and revise it using at least one of the types of fallacy from this activity. Share your revision with a partner and ask him or her to identify the type of fallacy you used in your writing. Be sure to:

- Revise your letter to clearly state your position, if needed.
- Incorporate at least one fallacy into your letter.
- Prepare your letter in final draft, checking that it is grammatically and technically accurate. As needed, consult references to ensure that you are spelling and using words correctly.
How to Read and Write an Editorial Cartoon

Learning Targets
• Analyze the format, style, and conventions of editorial cartoons.
• Apply knowledge from this analysis to create an editorial cartoon.

Before Reading
1. Your teacher will provide examples of cartoons. Examine the cartoon assigned to you and determine whether the cartoon constitutes an editorial cartoon or a comic strip.

2. With a partner who has a different cartoon, construct a Venn diagram indicating the similarities and differences between these types of cartoons. Be sure to consider subject matter, style, how the cartoons in question demonstrate humor, etc.

During Reading
3. Read the following text, using your metacognitive markers to indicate anything that provokes a question (?), anything about which you wish to comment or make a connection (*), and anything you find surprising (!). Be prepared to discuss your responses.

Informational Text
An Inside Look at Editorial Cartoons
by Bill Brennen

1 A few weeks ago, Joy Utech, the journalism teacher at Grand Island Senior High, asked if I could visit with some of her students about editorial cartoons.

2 The invitation was exciting because editorial cartoons are one of my favorite subjects. Very few items are as unique to a newspaper as editorial cartoons.

3 A very brief history lesson: Editorial cartoons first appeared in the United States on single-page broadsheets¹ during the colonial times. The first popular cartoon is a snake severed into 13 parts with the names of each colony by each piece. The caption is simple, “Divided we die.”

4 Such a theme helped the colonies, with their diverse locations and interests, unite under a common cause.

5 Flash forward to the years in New York City after the Civil War, when Tammany Hall² became such a powerful political machine that it nearly sucked the life out of its residents. In addition, William Tweed stole millions from the taxpayers.

¹ broadsheets (n.): early newspapers, also called broadsides, first used for issuing royal proclamations. They later evolved into the newspaper format with which we are familiar today.
² Tammany Hall: Tammany Hall was the name given to the Democratic political machine that dominated New York City politics.
Eventually, the *New York Times* and eventually law enforcement officials began investigations of the Tweed Ring, but it was the powerful cartoons of Nast that brought the politicians to their knees. At one point, Nast, who worked for *Harper’s Weekly*, turned down a bribe of $500,000 to discontinue his cartoons.

Instead, Nast made Tweed the most recognizable face in America. When Tweed tried to flee conviction, he was arrested in Spain, because authorities recognized his face from Nast’s cartoons.

By the way, Nast deserves partial credit for another icon, one that has stood the test of time. Along with an artist named Clement Moore, Nast drew the first Santa Claus.

Photography became a part of American newspapers and magazines as early as the Civil War, but the process was difficult and illustrations remained a part of American newspapers until early into the 20th Century.

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 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 *[sic]*. Then you can determine whether the message is getting through.

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3 **Thomas Nast**: Nast used his cartoons to crusade against New York City’s political boss William Tweed, and he devised the Tammany tiger for this crusade.
“Reading” Editorial Cartoons

4. Because 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?

5. 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?

6. Editorial cartoons are designed to evoke emotion—humor, anger, or outrage, for example. How do the cartoonists do this?

7. Based on these other questions, what does the message of your assigned cartoon seem to be, and what can you infer about its intended purpose?

Literary Terms

Satire is a manner of writing that mixes a critical attitude with wit and humor in an effort to improve humankind and human institutions. Editorial cartoons are often rather satirical. You will learn more about satire in the second half of this unit.
Creating Your Own Editorial Cartoons

8. Now that you have had some experience reading and analyzing political cartoons, try to create some of your own.
   - Brainstorm topic ideas by thinking about current events in your school, your hometown, or the world. List a few ideas below.

   - Choose one of your ideas 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 News Project

Assignment
Working in groups, your assignment is to plan, develop, write, revise, and present an informational article on a timely and debatable issue of significance to your school community, local community, or national audience. After your group completes its article, you will individually develop a variety of editorial products that reflect your point of view (agreement, alternative, or opposing) on the topic. Be creative with your editorial products and include at least two or three different pieces, such as cartoons, editorials, letters, posters, photos, and so on.

Planning and Prewriting: Take time to plan all the texts that you will include.
- How can you build a list of potential issues that are both interesting to your group as well as debatable and timely?
- What format will your opinion pieces take (e.g., editorials by newspaper staff, letters to the editor, editorial cartoon)?
- How will you split the various tasks and roles among your group members so that everyone is doing a fair amount of work?

Drafting: Decide how you will incorporate support and organize texts.
- How will you gather evidence to support your positions?
- How can you use models of argumentative writing from this unit to help you add rhetorical elements that will appeal to your audience?
- What sort of organizational patterns do the kinds of pieces you are writing tend to follow? How can you emulate these so that your pieces read like a real informational or editorial publication?

Evaluating and Revising: Create opportunities to review and revise.
- What sort of strategies can you use to provide feedback to each other on the quality of your pieces (e.g., SMELL, SOAPSTone)?
- What kinds of feedback from peers and the Scoring Guide can help guide your revision?
- How will you assure that your product as a whole represents multiple perspectives on your topic?

Checking and Editing for Publication: Be sure your work is the best it can be.
- How can you use examples of either print or online newspapers to create a realistic layout for your articles?
- How will you check your own or each others’ work for grammatical and technical accuracy? What references will you consult?

Reflection
After completing this Embedded Assessment, think about how you went about accomplishing the assignment, and respond to the following:
- How do newspapers impact public opinion or public perception?
- Which of the rhetorical techniques that your group used do you think were the most effective in appealing to your audience? Why?

Technology TIP:
Consider using online document sharing to develop your group article. For your individual work, you may also want to use word processing or creative programs to create editorial products. Visuals and video could also be part of your final product.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scoring Criteria</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
<th>Incomplete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideas</strong></td>
<td>The project explicitly represents multiple and varied editorial perspectives</td>
<td>The project represents various perspectives that are implied throughout the work as a whole</td>
<td>The project represents a limited range of perspectives</td>
<td>The project lacks a range of perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• is extremely persuasive throughout every piece, demonstrating a thorough understanding of persuasive techniques</td>
<td>• demonstrates a clear intention to persuade in a few of the pieces; some of the pieces may be descriptive or expository rather than persuasive</td>
<td>• demonstrates that some research has been conducted to support the positions with lapses in completeness to adequately support the thesis.</td>
<td>• offers pieces that may be descriptive or expository rather than persuasive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• provides evidence of thorough and original research throughout; each piece demonstrates appropriate and ample evidence to support the thesis.</td>
<td>• demonstrates that research has been conducted to support the positions; the majority of pieces demonstrate sufficient evidence supporting the thesis.</td>
<td>• demonstrates that some research has been conducted to support the positions with lapses in completeness to adequately support the thesis.</td>
<td>• does not demonstrate adequate research; the majority of the pieces demonstrate insufficient evidence to adequately support the thesis and/or opinions remain unsupported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure</strong></td>
<td>The project is organized exceptionally, so that ideas move smoothly and comfortably</td>
<td>The project is organized in a way that is clear and easy to follow</td>
<td>The project is unevenly organized with lapses in coherence</td>
<td>The project is difficult to follow, and may jump too rapidly between ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• accurately follows the organizational pattern of the article type, whether informational or editorial.</td>
<td>• largely follows the organizational pattern of the article type, whether informational or editorial.</td>
<td>• attempts to follow the organizational pattern of the article type, whether informational or editorial, with some lapses.</td>
<td>• struggles to follow the organizational pattern of the article type, whether informational or editorial.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of Language</strong></td>
<td>The project demonstrates purposeful use of rhetoric designed to appeal to the target audience(s)</td>
<td>The project demonstrates functional use of rhetoric but may not directly appeal to the target audience</td>
<td>The project attempts to use rhetoric with limited appeal to the target audience</td>
<td>The project inconsistently demonstrates rhetoric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• contains few or no errors in grammar or conventions.</td>
<td>• may include minor errors in grammar and conventions that do not interfere with understanding.</td>
<td>• includes some errors in grammar and conventions that interfere with the meaning.</td>
<td>• includes many errors in grammar and conventions that seriously interfere with the meaning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Learning Targets
- Reflect on concepts, essential questions, and vocabulary.
- Identify and analyze the knowledge and skills needed to complete Embedded Assessment 2 successfully.
- Generate examples of satirical writing.

Making Connections
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 exactly 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 have 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. Immersing yourself in the art of satire, you will explore how writers use a range of genres and techniques to present their messages in indirect ways. In this way, satirists can make powerful contributions to the marketplace of ideas.

Essential Questions
Based on your study of the first part of the unit, review and revise your answers to the Essential Questions.
1. How do news outlets impact public opinion or public perception?
2. How does a writer use tone to advance an opinion?

Developing Vocabulary
Review the Academic Vocabulary of the unit and the Literary Terms to check your knowledge and ability to use these terms fluently in writing and in speaking. Also check that you can pronounce each word correctly. For any words you may not know exactly how to pronounce, check a reference such as a dictionary for pronunciation guides.

Unpacking Embedded Assessment 2
Closely read the assignment for Embedded Assessment 2: Writing a Satirical Piece.

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 develop a satirical piece critiquing some aspect of our society.

In your own words, summarize what you will need to know to complete this assessment successfully. With your class, create a graphic organizer to represent the skills and knowledge you will need to complete the tasks identified in the Embedded Assessment.

1. As you read the following text, use your metacognitive markers to indicate anything that provokes a question (?), anything about which you wish to comment or make a connection (*), and anything you find surprising (!). Be prepared to discuss your response.
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 and Juvenalian satire, named after the Roman writers Horace and Juvenal who made the genre famous. As you read satire, look for these characteristic techniques of satiric writing:

Irony: A mode of expression that uses words (verbal irony) or events (situational irony) to convey a reality different from and usually opposite to appearance or expectation. The surprise recognition by the audience often produces a comic effect. 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. Example: “The grave’s a fine and private place, / But none, I think, do there embrace.” Andrew Marvell, “To His Coy Mistress.”

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 intention 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: An imitation of a work or of an author with the idea of ridiculing the author, ideas, or work. The parodist exploits the peculiarities of an author’s expression—his or her 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)

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1 derogatory (adj.): showing a critical or disrespectful attitude; humiliating
2 derision (n.): ridicule or mockery; an object of ridicule, a laughingstock
3 denounces (v.): condemns; publicly declares to be wrong or evil
Identifying the Elements of Satire

Learning Targets
- Identify the elements of satire by marking a text.
- Analyze how a satirist uses humor to develop a position.

Before Reading
1. Satire is a specific form of literature in which an author often adopts a persona to convey a perspective different from her or his own in order to make a point. Try to identify the characteristics of the persona of the essay you are about to read.

During Reading
2. As you read, mark the text for any areas you find humorous. For example, look for parody, caricature, and other forms of humor. Caricature is more often applied to graphic representations, but it can be applied to literary works.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
David Bouchier is a British writer who has lived in the United States since 1986. He has written fiction, nonfiction, commentaries, and humor columns for newspapers, literary journals, and magazines. He is also an award-winning essayist for National Public Radio.

Satire
Let’s Hear It for the Cheerleaders

by David Bouchier

1 Strange things happen on college campuses in summer. I was nearly trampled to death the other day by a horde of very young women wearing very short red skirts and chanting something that sounded like “A fence! A fence!”

2 A fence might be a very good idea, perhaps with some razor wire and a warning sign saying “Danger: Cheerleaders Ahead.” Long Island is host to more than a dozen cheerleader camps. For the educationally gifted, Hofstra and Adelphi Universities even offer cheerleading scholarships (“Give me an A! Give me an A!”).

3 But I think there is some intellectual work to be done here. Cheerleading needs a history, a philosophy and, above all, a more sophisticated theory of communications.

4 The cheerleading phenomenon is almost unknown in the rest of the world. British soccer fans do their own cheerleading, with a medley of traditional songs, bricks and bottles. In less civilized parts of the world, fans express their enthusiasm by running onto the field and beating up the opposing team. Only in America do we have professional partisans to do the jumping and yelling for us.

KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS
Dramatic irony refers to situations—usually in plays, short stories, novels, etc.—in which the audience/reader understands or grasps information that the characters in the story do not. What information do you “get” that the narrator seems not to understand?
5 Strange as it may seem to foreigners, the cheerleading industry has many ardent supporters. It is said to build self-confidence, positive attitudes and a mysterious quality called spirit, which seems to involve smiling a lot. 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.

6 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.

7 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.

8 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.

9 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.

10 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Champs take it away</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Now Play by Play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move that ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Win win win.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11 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 eye-popping 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.

After Reading

3. Create a graphic organizer like the chart below, and quote passages you found funny. Explain why you thought each was funny and identify the satirical techniques being used. Interpret what each had to say about the subject referenced in the quote. An example has been provided to get you started.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Humorous Passage</th>
<th>Identify humorous techniques and humor of quote</th>
<th>What is the implied message?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“...perhaps with some razor wire and a warning sign saying ‘Danger: Cheerleaders Ahead.’”</td>
<td>The writer uses hyperbole, irony, and vivid imagery to create a ridiculous picture of cheerleaders as a threat that needs to be contained.</td>
<td>The image seems to suggest that cheerleaders are dangerous.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Check Your Understanding

**Writing Prompt:** Now apply the techniques you learned from the “Introduction to Satire.” Using details from the text, explain how Dave Bouchier’s article fits the definition of satire. Be sure to:

- Reference the definition of satire as discussed in class.
- Support your answer with specific examples from the text.
- Provide commentary that explains the effect of the technique you have identified.
Language and Writer’s Craft: Definitions and Word Patterns

When you are reading a text and find a word you do not know, there are several ways to determine the word’s meaning.

First of all, look for context clues and use the reading strategy of diffusing. What meanings and connotations do surrounding words and sentences provide?

**Example:** What does the word ardent mean in the text below?

The cheerleading industry has many ardent supporters. It is said to build self-confidence, positive attitudes, and a mysterious quality called spirit, which seems to involve smiling a lot.

Here, ardent is clearly modifying supporters. The second sentence tells you that people believe many good things about cheerleading, so you can probably tell that ardent means “enthusiastic” or “passionate.”

Also, you can use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech. If you know that ardor means “passion; enthusiasm” and you recognize -ent as a suffix that transforms a noun to an adjective, you can figure out the meaning of ardent without looking it up.

Sometimes, however, you need to consult a dictionary to be sure you understand a word’s denotation, or definition, and its connotations, or associations. You can also look up a word’s etymology, or history, to learn more about it. For instance, if you look up the etymology of ardent, you will learn that it literally means “burning.”

Check Your Understanding

Read the text below. Use context clues to determine the meaning of decimated.

The opposing squad, the Furies, were merciless goddesses of vengeance who would swing into violent action if their team was losing. . . . So many teams were decimated by the Furies or led astray by the Moenads that cheerleading fell into disrepute for 2,000 years.

First, jot notes based on context clues and your knowledge of word parts and changes. Then look up the word in a good dictionary or dictionary of usage. What was the word’s original, literal meaning? Is it still used that way?
Learning Targets

- Analyze cartoons for satirical content and techniques.
- Compare and contrast cartoons to determine purposes for satire.

Satire as a Rhetorical Tool

You will next look at how a writer uses satire as a rhetorical tool. Go back to Bouchier’s essay in Activity 3.16 and use the following questions to discuss the tone of the piece.

1. Choose one tone word that characterizes the entire piece. What do you think of the writer’s attitude toward the subject? In 2–3 sentences, justify your choice.

2. Identify and explain one element of irony in the text.

3. Where is the tone of the piece most obvious? Give examples and justify your response.
4. Based on your observations, place the text on the continuum below. Be prepared to justify your answer.

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

5. Your teacher will share some examples of cartoons with you. You may want to review the satirical techniques you already know as you examine the examples. How does the visual content contribute to the cartoon’s overall tone? As you examine the cartoon, consider the following questions:
• What elements of satire are present in the cartoon?
• What is the implied message of the artist?
• Is the cartoon effective in presenting the implied message?
• Where does the cartoon fit in the Horatian to Juvenalian continuum above? Justify your placement.

Check Your Understanding
Writers use satire for a range of purposes. Go back through the sample cartoons and consider the purpose of each. Put the purpose of each cartoon into one sentence. How does each cartoon seek to affect the reader’s perception of the subject? Be prepared to share your responses with the class.
Learning Targets

• Analyze an author’s use of genre and detail for satirical purposes.
• Explore the impact of ridicule on the perception of a writer’s subject.

Before Reading

1. Think about the characteristics of Horatian and Juvenalian satire and be ready to identify the following text as one or the other.

During Reading

2. As you read, pay close attention to the use of parody. Mark the text for lines or phrases that show the author is parodying the form of a news article in creating this satiric piece.

LEARNING STRATEGIES:
Marking the Text, Graphic Organizer, Quickwrite

GRAMMAR & USAGE
Dash

Notice how 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 dashes signal a sudden shift or interruption and create more drama than commas would. Humor is often created through the sudden clash of expectations and reality, and dashes can emphasize that clash.

Satire

Girl Moved To Tears by Of Mice and Men Cliff Notes

from The Onion

1 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 Cliff Notes early last week.

2 “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.’”

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

4 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.”

5 “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.”

6 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 Cliff 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.

My Notes

KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS
Why include “under 110 pages” and the description of the book as a “pocket-sized novel”?
7 “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.”

8 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.

9 “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.”

10 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.

11 “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.”

12 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.”

13 “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.”

After Reading
3. Is the tone of the piece objective or subjective?

Writing Prompt: As a small group, write an analysis of the author’s use of the techniques of satire in the piece (refer to page 226). Be sure to:

- State the purpose of the satire. What is the author criticizing?
- Identify the other techniques of satire the writer uses.
- Identify the use of parody by citing specific genre conventions of a news article.

My Notes

KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS
What does the author think about Weaver’s choice to read the Cliffs Notes rather than the actual novel? How do you know?

Literary Terms
Objective tone refers to a tone that is more clinical, and which is not influenced by emotion. Subjective tone refers to a tone that is obviously influenced by the author’s feelings or emotions.
Learning Targets
• Examine how parody is used to critique a subject.
• Craft an original parody of a mass-media program.

Before Reading
A parody is a specific technique that imitates an author or a work for the purpose of humor. The parodist exploits the peculiarities of an author’s expression or the characteristics of a typical format.

1. Based on your discussion of this definition, brainstorm a list of parodies you’re familiar with. Think of popular music, television, movies, print sources, etc.

2. As you watch the news excerpt provided by your teacher, make a list of things in the show that might be ripe for parody. Think about the people you see, the show’s style, the graphics used, the stories reported, etc., that are typical of this show and of news broadcasts in general.

During Reading
3. As you read Dave Barry’s parody, mark the text to identify specific aspects of news shows that Barry is parodying. Be prepared to discuss your findings. In the My Notes space, make a list of the different things that Barry is parodying.

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 and is the only humor writer to win this prestigious award.

Parody

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.

KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS
Barry says that “news means anything that you can take a picture of, especially if a local TV News Personality can stand in front of it.” Although this is an exaggeration, how is there a kernel of truth in the hyperbole?
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:


WESTBROOK: Good evening. Tonight from the On-the-Spot Action Eyewitness News Studios we have actual color film of a burning building, actual color film of two cars after they ran into each other, actual color film of the front of a building in which one person shot another person, actual color film of another burning building, and special reports on roller-skating and child abuse. But for the big story tonight, we go to City Hall, where On-the-Spot Reporter Reese Kernel is standing live.

KERNEL: I am standing here live in front of City Hall being televised by the On-the-Spot Action Eyewitness News minicam with Mayor Bryce Hallbread.

MAYOR: That’s “Hallwood.”

KERNEL: What?

MAYOR: My name is “Hallwood.” You said “Hallbread.”

KERNEL: Look, Hallbread, do you want to be on the news or don’t you?

MAYOR: Yes, of course, it’s just that my name is—

KERNEL: Listen, this is the top-rated news show in the three-county area, and if you think I have time to memorize every stupid detail, you’d better think again.

MAYOR: I’m sorry. “Hallbread” is just fine, really.

KERNEL: Thank you, Mayor Hallbread. And now back to Wilson Westbrook in the On-the-Spot Action Eyewitness News Studios.

WESTBROOK: Thank you, Reese; keep us posted if anything further develops on that important story. And now, as I promised earlier, we have actual color film of various objects that either burned or crashed, which we will project on the screen behind me while I talk about them. Here is a building on fire. Here is another building on fire. Here is a car crash. This film was shot years ago, but you can safely assume that objects just like these crashed or burned in the three-county area today. And now we go to my Co-Anchorperson, Stella Snape, for a Special Report on her exhaustive three-week investigation into the problem of child abuse in the three-county area. Well, Stella, what did you find?

SNAPE: Wilson, I found that child abuse is very sad. What happens is that people abuse children. It’s just awful. Here you see some actual color film of me standing in front of a house. Most of your child abuse occurs in houses. Note that I am wearing subdued colors.
WESTBROOK (reading from a script): Are any efforts under way here in the three-county area to combat child abuse?

SNAPE: Yes.

WESTBROOK: Thank you, Stella, for that informative report. On the lighter side, On-the-Spot Action Eyewitness Reporter Terri Tompkins has prepared a three-part series on roller-skating in the three-county area.

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-county 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.
After Reading

4. Rank Barry’s satirical intent on the scale below. Be prepared to justify your rankings.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Just Plain Silly</td>
<td>Biting Sarcasm/Criticism</td>
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<td>(Horatian)</td>
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Writing Prompt: Write a parody of some aspect of TV programming. Choose a partner and a subject (a genre like soap operas, sports broadcasts, reality shows, children’s television programs; or a specific show like Oprah or CSI or 60 Minutes, etc.). Next, write your parody, using the format of a script. 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 middle of a 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 toward 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 of speech can you identify that would be easy to parody? How stupid or cliché 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 can you accomplish this?
Need Some Advice?

Learning Targets

- Analyze satirical techniques used for comic effect.
- Examine how syntax is used for effect.

Before Reading

1. In preparation for reading “Advice to Youth” by Mark Twain, answer the following questions. Be prepared to discuss your responses.
   - What advice do adults typically give teenagers?
   - Why do adults feel it is necessary to pass on this information?
   - Is this advice typically helpful? Do you typically heed that advice? If not, why not?

Language and Writer’s Craft: Loose or Cumulative Sentence Patterns

In “Advice to Youth,” Mark Twain uses loose or cumulative sentences for comedic effect. *Cumulative* (or *loose*) sentences make complete sense if brought to a close before the actual ending; that is, the main clause begins the sentence and connects with a phrase or subordinate clause, suggesting that the first clause is dominant. Consider these examples from other text selections. The main clause is in italics.

“We reached New York that morning after a turbulent flight and some exciting experiences, tired but exhilarated, full of stories to tell our friends and neighbors.”

“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

During Reading

2. As you read, mark the text whenever it takes a surprising departure from where it seems to be going, as well as the portions of the text you find to be particularly humorous. Be sure to pay close attention to how Twain structures sentences for comedic effect.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mark Twain was born Samuel Clemens in 1835 in Missouri. His most famous novel, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, made a revolution in American literature. During his life, he was also famous for his humorous lectures, essays, and sayings.
**Satire**

**Advice to Youth**  
(1882)

by Mark Twain

1. 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, urgently—

2. 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.

3. Be respectful to your superiors, if you have any, also to strangers, and sometimes to others. If a person offends 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 kindliness, the time has gone by for such things. Leave dynamite to the low and unrefined.

4. 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.

5. 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 of 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 is in 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.

6 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 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 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 makes one shudder.

7 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.

8 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.
After Reading

3. *Didactic* (Greek, *didaktikos*: apt at teaching) is a term often used to describe a speaker's or writer's tone when that speaker or writer is attempting to educate or inform an audience. Provide an example of textual evidence for why Twain's piece could be described as *didactic*.

4. In the graphic 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 of this loose sentence pattern in column 3. In some cases, Twain may add multiple modifying clauses, so beware!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Clause 1</th>
<th>Main Clause 2 or Modifying Phrase/Clause</th>
<th>Effect on Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Check Your Understanding

**Writing Prompt:** After completing the organizer, it is your turn to try this technique. Write your own lecture of advice to a particular audience. Use a RAFT to select a role for you to play and an audience to whom to impart your great wisdom (your topic). Be sure to:

- Select a topic that is specific to your audience.
- Use an appropriate format in which to deliver your message to your audience (e.g., an editorial, a letter, etc.).
- Use loose sentence patterns to create a humorous effect.
Learning Targets

- Analyze and compare and contrast two satirical texts for purpose and techniques.
- Evaluate the author’s choice of tone to appeal to an audience.

Before Reading

1. Go back to Twain’s essay in the previous activity and determine where his tone might fall on the Horatian to Juvenalian continuum. Be sure to identify textual support to justify your answer.

During Reading

2. As you read, mark the text for evidence of satire. As you mark the satire, be sure to annotate the text by identifying the satirical technique employed (as detailed in Activity 3.15).

Satire

The **War Prayer**

*by Mark Twain*

1. 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 sputtering; 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.

2. 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

---

1. **martial** (*adj.)*: military
2. **saber** (*n.*): a heavy Calvary sword with a curved blade
Twain in Twain

Then came the "long" prayer. None could remember the like of it for passionate pleading and moving and beautiful language. The burden of its supplication was, that an ever-merciful and benignant Father of us all would watch over our noble young soldiers, and aid, comfort, and encourage them in their patriotic work; bless them, shield them in the day of battle and the hour of peril, bear them in His mighty hand, make them strong and confident, invincible in the bloody onset; help them to crush the foe, grant to them and to their flag and country imperishable honor and glory—

An aged stranger entered and moved with slow and noiseless step up the main aisle, his eyes fixed upon the minister, his long body clothed in a robe that reached to his feet, his head bare, his white hair descending in a frothy cataract to his shoulders, his seamy face unnaturally pale, pale even to ghastliness. With all eyes following him and wondering, he made his silent way; without pausing, he ascended to the preacher's side and stood there waiting. With shut lids the preacher, unconscious of his presence, continued with his moving prayer, and at last finished it with the words, uttered in fervent appeal, "Bless our arms, grant us the victory, O Lord our God, Father and Protector of our land and flag!"

The stranger touched his arm, motioned him to step aside—which the startled minister did—and took his place. During some moments he surveyed the spellbound audience with solemn eyes, in which burned an uncanny light; then in a deep voice he said:

"I come from the Throne—bearing a message from Almighty God!" The words smote the house with a shock; if the stranger perceived it he gave no attention. "He has heard the prayer of His servant your shepherd, and will grant it if such shall be your desire after I, His messenger, shall have explained to you its import—that is to say, its full import. For it is like unto many of the prayers of men, in that it asks for more than he who utters it is aware of—except he pause and think.

"God's servant and yours has prayed his prayer. Has he paused and taken thought? Is it one prayer? No, it is two—one uttered, the other not. Both have reached the ear of Him Who heareth all supplications, the spoken and the unspoken. Ponder this—keep it in mind. If you would beseech a blessing upon yourself, beware! lest without intent you invoke a curse upon a neighbor at the same time. If you pray for the blessing of rain upon your crop which needs it, by that act you are possibly praying for a curse upon some neighbor's crop which may not need rain and can be injured by it.

"You have heard your servant's prayer—the uttered part of it. I am commissioned of God to put into words the other part of it—that part which the pastor—and also you in your hearts—fervently prayed silently. And ignorantly and unthinkingly? God grant that it was so! You heard these 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.

**After Reading**

3. Once you have finished reading the piece, conduct a comparative SOAPSTone, looking at the different ways in which Twain treats these drastically different topics. To help you organize your thoughts, you might fold your paper lengthwise, use the first column to complete a SOAPSTone on “Advice to Youth” and the second column for “The War Prayer.” Be prepared to discuss your responses.

**Check Your Understanding**

As a follow-up to the comparative SOAPSTone activity, discuss the following questions:

- How is the type of satire being used appropriate for the subject and purpose?
- How do the terms Horatian and Juvenalian satire apply to the two satires by Twain?

Transfer your answers to a poster and include a visual element that symbolizes the differences between the texts. Be prepared to present your poster to the class.
The Satirical Critique

Learning Targets

• Examine how tone is connected to a writer’s purpose.
• Evaluate the effectiveness of a satirical text.

Before Reading
1. Writers often use satire to critique public policy. Brainstorm a list of controversial public policies. The reading you have done from the newspaper should help you come up with topics.

During Reading
2. As you read Mohr’s and Saukko’s essays, mark the text for words, phrases, and images that contribute to the satiric tone and purpose of each essay.

TEXT 1

Gambling in Schools

by Howard Mohr

1 [When Minnesota jumped into legalized gambling, it was off the deep end without a lifeguard. First it was Canterbury Downs, a clean, well-lighted 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?]

2 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.

3 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.

4 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.

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

6 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.
ACTIVITY 3.22 continued

7 Each school system may publish and sell its own Tip Sheet or it can hire a professional tipster, such as “Gimp” Gordon or “Fast-Forward” Freddy, to be a counselor and role model.

8 Betting on high school sports will be forbidden, but the morning line for collegiate and professional sports will be broadcast on Channel One and posted in the principal’s office near the sports betting window. As a safeguard, students will not be allowed to bet on sporting contests unless they have successfully passed Math II, “Point Spreads and Injuries.”

9 Poker games will be operated as an extracurricular activity from the final bell until four a.m. The School will be the “house” and provide the dealers. There will be a 10 percent rakeoff for each pot up to a maximum of $10 per hand. Only Five-Card Draw, Stud, and Hold-Em will be permitted. Midnight Baseball, Spit in the Ocean, or Mission Impossible will not be permitted because they are silly games of chance and would send the wrong message to students.

10 Gambling will obviously bring new life and big money to the schools, but there are other advantages:

1: Students will be prepared for jobs in the gambling industry after graduating.

2: Part-time jobs will be created in the schools for change walkers, dealers, security officers, and so on.

3: A wider variety of people will be attracted to the teaching profession.

4: Discipline will be better because the hope of getting something for nothing is one of the oldest drives for excellence.

11 A bigger gambling issue faces the Legislature soon: Should gaming be permitted in hospitals and medical centers? And if so, how much and what kind? Would patients be able to bet the ponies from their beds? Could nurses deal blackjack in the sunroom? Could you go double or nothing with your physician?

TEXT 2

Satire

How to Poison the Earth

by Linnea Saukko

1 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 dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (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 tests 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.
After Reading

3. Which satire is more effective in making its point? Why?

4. Meet with others who chose the same essay. Be prepared to debate with a member of the group who chose the other essay, using effective reasoning and evidence from the text to prove your claim. Be able to point to satirical techniques and purpose.

Writing a Satire

The first task of writing a satire is to choose a topic you are informed and passionate about. Think of some of the topics written about in this unit: advice, football, war, poisoning the earth, and gambling.

Imagine that your school has a persistent problem with students being late to class. Evaluate how the steps below can get you started on a satirical piece of writing.

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. (The 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. (This action does not solve the problem of students not being in class to learn.)
1st offense: Students will carry around a 40-lb clock for the remainder of the day.
2nd 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-lb 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!

Check Your Understanding
Writing Prompt: Select one of the topics from the class brainstorm of issues and draft a satirical paragraph. Be sure to:

- Clearly identify the topic.
- State the problem in hyperbolic terms.
- Propose an ironic solution.
- Use wit and have fun with words.
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 develop a satirical piece critiquing some aspect of our society.

Planning and Prewriting: Take time to create a plan for choosing a topic and audience.
• What has guided your choice of topics? Do you have the information to sustain a satiric treatment?
• Will your piece be more Horatian or Juvenalian? What techniques of satire apply well to that form (hyperbole, parody, irony, ridicule, etc.)?
• If you use parody, what typical conventions of the format do you plan to use as part of the satire?
• To whom will you address your satire and why? What is your satirical purpose—what effect do you hope to have on this audience?

Drafting: Decide how you will incorporate elements of satire.
• How will you demonstrate the flaws or foibles of your satire’s subject?
• As you draft your essay, how will you stick to the conventions that you identified for your satire in your prewriting?
• What sort of tone is appropriate for the audience and purpose you identified?

Evaluating and Revising: Create opportunities to review and revise.
• How can you revise to add additional satirical language elements (loose and cumulative sentences, irony, hyperbole, and litotes)?
• What sort of strategies could you and a peer use to provide each other with feedback (e.g., evaluate with the Scoring Guide, use the SOAPSTone strategy)?

Checking and Editing for Publication: Be sure your work is the best it can be.
• How will you check for grammatical and technical accuracy?
• What sort of outside resources can help you to check your draft (e.g., a format guide, a dictionary, etc.)?

Reflection
After completing this Embedded Assessment, think about how you went about accomplishing this assignment, and respond to the following:
• Satire requires a sort of balancing act, mixing humor that draws in your audience with criticism that points out a particular flaw. How did you approach the challenge of balancing these two different elements?
### SCORING GUIDE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scoring Criteria</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
<th>Incomplete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideas</strong></td>
<td>The satire • offers insight into a topic that is relevant, current, and debatable • argues a convincingly persuasive position • skillfully demonstrates techniques of satire that are ideal for the topic.</td>
<td>The satire • presents a topic that is generally relevant, current, and debatable • argues a clear position • demonstrates techniques of satire that are suitable for the topic.</td>
<td>The satire • presents a topic that is not fully relevant, current, or debatable • argues a position • demonstrates techniques of satire that are somewhat suitable for the topic.</td>
<td>The satire • presents a topic that is irrelevant • includes an vague or unclear position • fails to demonstrate techniques of satire that are somewhat suitable for the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure</strong></td>
<td>The satire • presents ideas in an arrangement that is most conducive to the writer's position • is aptly organized using typical conventions of the format.</td>
<td>The satire • logically arranges ideas to support the writer's position • is organized appropriately using typical conventions of the format.</td>
<td>The satire • arranges ideas to somewhat support the writer's position • is mostly organized using typical conventions of the format.</td>
<td>The satire • arranges ideas in a way that detracts from the writer's position or may be irrelevant • is organized in a way that does not match the typical conventions of the format.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of Language</strong></td>
<td>The satire • uses language elements (e.g., skillfully incorporating loose and cumulative sentences, irony, hyperbole, and litotes, etc.) extremely effectively • insightfully matches tone and satirical effect to the intended audience and purpose • contains almost no errors in standard writing conventions.</td>
<td>The satire • uses language elements (e.g., incorporating loose and cumulative sentences and satirical techniques) appropriately • applies appropriate tone and satirical effect for the intended audience and purpose • may contain minor errors in writing conventions that do not interfere with understanding.</td>
<td>The satire • uses language elements less effectively • struggles to match tone and satirical effect to the intended audience and purpose • includes some errors in conventions that interfere with the meaning.</td>
<td>The satire • does not use language elements • does not match tone and satirical effect to the intended audience and purpose • includes errors in writing conventions that seriously interfere with its meaning.</td>
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