

Responsible Reporting
By
Angela Mazza
Allerdice High School

Overview

Taylor Allerdice High School has a population of 1550 students. Set in the Squirrel Hill section of the city of Pittsburgh, Allerdice has long been noted for its outstanding students. Many of those noted students are in the communications field—Howard Feinstein of Newsweek and Sharon Epperson of CNBC are the names of a few. Students come from nine communities which cross-demographic paths socially, economically and politically. Students need this unit to learn how to research and gather information using credible sources and to use facts and information to write solid stories that provide readers with accurate information. Students should learn not to make comments on issues about which they do not know. Of course, adults should not comment without having information.

By living in a democracy citizens have to know the issues. One way to know is to read news that is objective and factual every day. Students should be taught the moral highground in regard to gathering information, research, documentation of sources and publishing stories in student newspapers. Students should respond well to this because they are assigned to research and write papers throughout their educational as well as their professional lives. Learning how and what are verifiable sources is a good way to begin, because this is a method that should be followed consistently.

Media Responsibility

Accuracy

News Gathering

News Sources

Verification

The object of this unit is to teach students how to gather information, cite sources and verify information for readers. Journalists report facts that citizens should know in order to be informed about their government and the policies and legislation that affect them. Issues that concern the environment, health, technology, education, transportation have consequence for all Americans. However, many people believe that news lacks credibility and is primarily entertainment. And, for convenience's sake, a few in the media have helped us to believe that.

Living in a democracy is an ongoing process of conversation, debate and news. But, many media moguls are more interested in becoming the news themselves. They take on legislators and

interview celebrities. Real reporting and information needs to be communicated to an audience to inform and to educate them about issues that affect them. People need to take time to read mainstream newspapers and periodicals to reflect about issues which concern them and their fellow citizens. Yet, this seems too idealistic to expect. Pete Hamill discusses this trend in his book, News is a Verb. He cites the main plaza, zocalo, of Mexican towns as a place where there is a sense of belonging. People gather and learn how the town works and who possesses the power. Hamill believes newspapers must be written for the communities they serve and should give a local perspective to the stories.

Rationale

At a time when information runs rampant via hundreds of cable television and radio stations, daily, weekly and specialized newspapers, and the Internet, the reader, listener, viewer may not comprehend the messages because there are so many of them. It is important to teach students that accurate information and the truth can save their lives, affect their community and enlighten them in regard to issues that have consequence for them personally or professionally. As the information explosion continues many students as well as adults are unprepared for the deluge of information that floods the media. Learning how to access information from credible sources and websites is not something that just happens, it should be taught. Students who are taught how to use information are going to comprehend issues and communicate them to their families and communities. A better-educated student is an asset to the community. So far, I do not see a commitment on the part of businesses to address the antiquated curricula and technology in urban public schools, yet there is much criticism of the teachers and students who work diligently without the tools to be as competitive as wealthier school districts.

This unit is important in that the Internet has made vast changes as to how we receive information and not enough is known as to how to use this technology. There is no standard for the web. Anyone can put up a website and pretend to have credentials. Students must learn to use the websites and research engines provided by universities and government institutions. The less educated the parents of students, the less they discriminate over the websites they cite as indicated in the research papers and news articles I have read the last few years. As a teacher, it is my responsibility to teach the truth. I am not paid to increase profits. I teach to increase student understanding and knowledge, which will hopefully lead to each student's autonomy, understanding and appreciation of the issues and the works that they do. Like others, I will benefit from their knowledge and understanding because I am a teacher, but also a taxpayer, a patient, a consumer and a human being. I would like to think that their being accurate is going to save me time, lessen risk and diffuse conflict because of their knowledge and application of the skills they learn in journalism and English classes benefits us.

Newspapers are said to be the first rough draft of history. Technology rapidly changed how information was reported to readers. From communicating non-verbally to the beautifully transcribed calligraphy the monks used to copy the Bible, technology has had an impact. Technology became the medium by which more people received information faster via offset printing, television, xerography, the computer, and the communications satellite. Electronic mail

and the ability to transmit message via computer, telephone lines and satellites is available. Today, the Internet is having the greatest impact. Getting hooked up and having an access to information is almost instantaneous. However, students need to know which websites provide the most accurate updates of research and information.

Cynicism prevails. Much of the public does not expect the media to provide them with accurate information. There is a declining public belief that the media contribute positively to democracy. Between 1985 and 1999 there has been a declining trust in government. Being provocative and delving into a public person's private life is more entertaining. Important issues related to government at every level; the economy, science and technology are not covered. The news media as a watchdog of government is passe. The media has become part of a game where government leaders are taken on by media hosts in stories about their personal lives.

Public issues are not debated enough; public speeches are not reported enough in the realm of our daily democracy.

What citizens, consumers or patients do not know hurts them. Knowledge is important. In knowing, one can make decisions about issues that affect them. Many journalists not only report the news, they are also commenting on it. Their purpose is to inform and not to persuade. Rather, than permitting the audience to read the facts, they interpret the facts. Fair and accurate interpretation based on evidence and logic is welcome. Rather, than report, they entertain and hold court in the realm of public opinion. Some hosts like John McLaughlin have become celebrities, just like the elected leaders whom they cover and comment about. They should provide more intelligent discourse. The whole land seems to be in a state of running itself with influence peddlers at the side of leaders whom they prop up at the helm.

Mainstream news media compete with tabloids for consumers to buy their papers. So, money, not issues, has become the bottom line. More publishers are businessmen, so earning a profit is important. Originally, CBS had a separate budget for news. In the early days of television, the entertainment budget and shows like Jack Benny paid for news. Today, news competes with entertainment. To compete, news organizations report news that is more sensational and what will get an audience to tune in. In addition, multiple cable channels are eating away at network profits. So, mainstream media becomes more sensational. This has not been helped by the few occasions where tabloids like the National Enquirer have scooped the mainstream press. This competition often leads to unethical practices in mainstream reporting. In the past sources had to be identified. Today, sources are often unknown. This was indicated when the media reported a new grand jury investigation of President Clinton on Thursday, August 17, 1999. Mainstream media such as the Associated Press, New York Times, LA Times, Washington Post, ABCNews.com did not cite sources that should have been identified. They call sources, " " they," "those familiar with the investigation said," " sources said," and "sources told ABCNEWS Thursday. News media cited other news sources as the source.

Marvin Kalb and Tom Patterson cited at a Harvard Seminar in June 2000 major trends affecting the way news is gathered and delivered both for the industry as a whole and in political campaign coverage. The two root causes of scandal coverage according to Kalb are changes in media technology and economics. Patterson cites the diminishing length of sound bites to the

unfavorable coverage of political campaigns and the source of tone in election stories with more news analysis and less objective reporting.

What is wrong with this? Teachers are called upon to teach facts and information. In all content area subjects we teach children information and help them to read and to identify the difference between fact and opinion, truth and rumor, credibility and distrust. With the Internet, many of our students have access to information that is reliable or unsound. In teaching information gathering and documentation for research papers, factual reports or journalism, we teach every student how to document information, to verify facts, and to cite attribution in their reports, using the best sources and the most up to date information.

Having to gather information from a knowledgeable source such as an administrator or a faculty member is difficult if the issue is controversial. It always takes time to cultivate sources. But, the public has a right to know the facts. Some student reporters find it easier to talk to a source who does not want to be identified rather than interview the person in charge. Teaching students to interview a primary source—no matter how long it takes is often better reporting than permitting them to cite a source at the school. A reporter's credibility is this trust. Yet, it is often easier not to go after the tough interview—just report a rumor and label it with "an unnamed source."

For a print interview a reporter needs to talk to three times as many people as is needed for the story. It is most important to gather background information if a statement is not going to be attributed. A reporter talks to people to get information. Oral histories are an example. Newspapers are there to gather and to verify information. They are the best sources. The best sources sometimes are good because they know they will not be attributed.

In some situations, someone in authority is giving good information, but that person wants his or her name to be withheld. Another source is for background. In that case, statements are attributed to "a high official in the administration." That person could be the president, vice-president. They are floating a trial balloon so to speak. Deep background will miss one or both of these above elements. The reporter just paraphrases. There is no quotation and the reporter cannot say "a high administrative official" because he does not want to point to one person directly. Not for attribution is not suggesting at all where information is coming from as in the case of Deep Throat and Watergate. Before a reporter goes into an interview, the terms should be clear. Students need to be taught this for their first interviews.

In attributing information, it is important to know what to attribute and what not to attribute. Reporters should not attribute information that is of a factual nature. If it is verifiable, it is the reporter's job to verify the information. It is also important to use the word "said." To use the word "claim" poses doubt in the reader's mind. To use the word "stated" is another code that information is official but not spoken

Plagiarism is the misappropriation of another writer's work, either writing or reporting, and passing it off as one's own work. Various reporters have been caught fabricating sources or plagiarizing. Patricia Smith and Mike Barnicle are former columnists of the Boston Globe who fabricated people in their stories. Phil Musick of the Pittsburgh Press plagiarized two columns before he was fired by Editor Angus McEachran.

In teaching attribution, students should know that failure to attribute another's work is plagiarism. The Washington Post's former executive editor, Ben Bradlee, called it "one of journalism's unforgivable sins." He should know. His reporter, Janet Cooke, created a story of an eight-year-old heroin addict back in 1981. She won the Pulitzer Prize, but was found out when readers wanted to help the boy whom she had invented. No sources are needed to corroborate evidence of facts.

The media is earning a bad reputation and losing its credibility. When reporters neither document information nor verify sources, they teach people that identifying a source is not important to the verification of a story. The truth can be stretched and the facts can be juggled. This lessens the public's belief in the media, and the media loses its credibility in a medium where believability and trust are tantamount. There are many instances of this with today's media. The Clinton-Lewinsky scandal brought utmost attention to this need for news, whether verified or not. Shoddy journalism is on the upswing because mainstream media are competing with the tabloid press for business. News has become a cutthroat business and the audience listens and reads what is sensational—not what is newsworthy or of consequence to their everyday lives. Talk shows, tabloids and news broadcasts create drama. Entertainment drivel becomes the normal news diet. More important issues such as education, taxes and the budget are problems considered too boring or complex to present in a brief TV or newspaper story. First impressions, hasty generalizations and faulty thinking are conclusions that the fast sound bite announces to the listener on the go.

Tabloid Reporting

Information concerning Princess Sophie Rhys-Jones, the wife of Britain's Prince Edward, fell into media brouhaha. She revealed to an Arab sheik seeking to hire her public relations firm, remarks about whom she likes in the royal family including the 100-year-old Queen Mum. The sheik, however, was a British tabloid reporter. At first, Rupert Murdoch's tabloid decided not to publish what she said. However, someone at another tabloid got hold of it and printed Sophie's news to the Arab sheik to reporters. The scandal set off a firecracker in the British monarchy. Sophie Rhys-Jones resigned as head of the public relations firm to tend to her royal family duties.

The National Enquirer reported that Jesse Jackson's paramour bore him an illegitimate child. With that, the whole story came out. Jackson's wife appeared on national television to say that she was "not divorcing" Jesse. He went on to say that he would support his child financially and emotionally.

Book media

On June 18, 2001, Joseph Ellis, a Pulitzer Prize winning author of *Founding Brothers*, was revealed to have lied about his past. Bob Hoover, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* book editor, said that "media influence had distorted both the lives and careers of writers in our celebrity culture" in his July 1, 2001 column in the *Post-Gazette*. He added, "Nothing attracts media attention more

than somebody who looks like a fool, and Ellis certainly fits that description." Because Ellis told his classes he was a combat veteran of the war and also told two Boston Globe reporters that he had been a civil rights activist in the South and a high school football hero, his career as a teacher and author is over. Once an author loses credibility and a teacher tells lies then they are distrusted. This is just another reason to tell the truth. In all of these cases, journalists get caught. When the two Globe reporters decided to check out Ellis' story, they found out the truth. Though Ellis has taught at a New England school for about 30 years, his lies were found out momentarily and his career, based on his word, is dead.

Objectives

Students will read old stories from newspapers. Then they will explore the differences in content and presentation. It is important that students read information about how news was reported in the past and how it is reported today and how it should be reported in the future. We will analyze what the journalistic pundits have to say about the media today. We will read good journalism from the past that cited authentic sources and we will read some shoddier examples of poor journalism. In the end, students will explain why one must possess honesty and integrity in reporting. They should explain why good reporting educates readers and poor reporting misleads them and they should compare mainstream reporting with that of the tabloid press.

Students will base their understanding of facts and truth from reading parts of John Hersey's Hiroshima and Tobias Wolff's In Pharaoh's Army as well as other selections or accounts. Students will note how each reported documented facts and information. They will explain how they knew each reporter was telling the truth, how they were witnesses to history. Richard Harding Davis, (1864-1916) a war correspondent, was one such witness. His report is called "The Death of Rodrigues" and is published in an historical anthology called The Art of Fact. His writing bears witness to the death by firing squad of a twenty year-old farmer's son sentenced to death for bearing arms against Spanish authority. Witnessing events explains why readers should believe reporters over secondary sources. A war correspondent has a particularly harrowing account of the conflict. These descriptions arrest our senses. Stephen Crane, Ernest Hemingway, and Ernie Pyle are examples of war reporters who describe the action. We will contrast these well-sourced reports with examples of today's media coverage. How do you know the reporter is telling the truth? What verification does the reporter use? Do you find the reporter and the paper to be credible? What can reporters and editors covering major stories do to amend errors in judgment?

Citizens should know that the media has standards. They communicate their standards as guardians of the public interest when they act as ombudsmen for the American public. Often acting as the fourth branch of government, the press provides the public with news and reports the actions of public officials exposing any unjust activities. They do this by having an ombudsman column in the paper. Larry Walsh of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette writes that column weekly for the readers. He researches information about citizens' complaints. Spotlight teams also investigate corruption. They can be a newspaper or a radio or television news staff that investigates a situation. Editorial campaigns are another way to guard the public. News

departments must serve the public not special interests. They, also, should serve as a voice for those less fortunate in our society.

Our world is built on codes. Codes define the standards or the rules by which we work and play. The following organizations cite their standards: The Associated Press Managing Editor's (APME) Criteria for a Good Newspaper; Preamble to the Television Code of the National Association of Broadcasters; the Radio Broadcaster's Creed; and the Production Code of the Motion Picture Association of America, Inc. and there are more.

Vocabulary

Message

Truth

Facts

Rumor

Propaganda

Plagiarism

Human beings learn to communicate from infancy. Our ability to know and to understand is developed through communication. Communication is nonverbal. It involves the senses--seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, and smelling. Infants babble sounds but feel the warmth of their mother's embrace just as a lover coos in the arms of their lover. Acknowledging messages of comfort and security we learn at birth, we think. We hope that these messages are positive ones—ones that reinforce our sense of security and love. However, that is not always so. Sometimes we use messages to get attention, to distract, to deceive.

Creating direct messages and breaking down to our understanding of them is not only a science but also an art. Propaganda is often a means to tell a story even if it is not the truth. Starting a rumor and eventually having it turn out to be true without a basis in fact goes on. Look at literature that has been told as part of an ensuing conflict. The Tragedy of Richard III is an example. Shakespeare's telling of the history of King Richard III was brought on by this chronicle play of this Plantagenet English arch-villain. Subsequent research has pointed out that during Queen Elizabeth's reign, Richard III had been the victim of Tudor propaganda. Virtually, all of Shakespeare's sources were based on histories composed by Tudor allies. The Folger edition of Richard III points out that the Tudors were excellent masters of public relations in an age when public relations was not named though propaganda was.

Strategies

Having students research information from primary sources is an arduous process. Gathering information not only from print but also from electronic sources is a challenge. It is important to read impartial/unbiased information rather than promotional propaganda whether that idea is a candidate, product or legislative issue. Many websites masquerade as authentic when they are not what they seem. So, this assignment should teach students how to research and report information accurately. Part of the English portfolio consists of various reading, writing and speaking assignments. These assignments demonstrate a student's ability to communicate. For the Pittsburgh public schools, each student must prepare a writing exhibit. One example is entry four, a report of information. This report provides knowledge to the reader. Students are asked to demonstrate their ability to report information accurately. The student writer is expected engage the reader by establishing a context, developing a controlling idea, including appropriate facts and details, excluding extraneous information and using a range of appropriate strategies. To show their accomplishment in reading in entry reading entry exhibit two, students are to demonstrate their understanding of nonfiction writing by citing the thesis and supporting evidence.

In writing the English language for the reader, we learn to communicate ideas coherently and clearly. Students need to cite two kinds of evidence in their research: facts and authoritative statements. Facts are defined as truth and they are verifiable. Facts must be accurate and plentiful enough to be convincing. Authoritative statements should use expert opinions or testimonials. The student journalist, also, uses direct observation and personal knowledge.

Propaganda is defined as an organized group, government institution or business that attempts to win over the public in favor of their program, but this is negative when propaganda is directed toward selfish ends. Students should define and recognize propaganda especially in political campaign advertising and product or service advertising. The following are types of propaganda: name-calling, slogan, unproved assertion and bandwagon.

In gathering material to support one's proposition, one should provide two kinds of evidence: facts and authoritative statements or testimonials. Facts are true and verified. Facts must be accurate and plentiful enough to be convincing. Authoritative statements are expert opinions; they are not verifiable like facts.

Students can apply their knowledge through reading information for research papers. By gathering facts from unbiased media, they form conclusions and opinions based on the evidence they have compiled. Whether writing a news story, column, editorial or research paper, students need to put the theory to practice. Evidence of this is the final paper, which is the product of their information gathering.

Classroom Activities

Observation

1. Make up a rubric for students bearing witness. Make up a skit of a scene. Test students' observation skills. Have a student actor come into the room and scream something. Later, question what students observed and discuss their responses.

Rumor game

2. The teacher will whisper a sentence or line to the first student. That student then tells the next student until the last student hears what was whispered to them. The last student tells what line was whispered to him or her. Have students compare the first line with the last line and see how different the information is. Then, have students determine how a statement can damage a person's reputation.

What is gossip? Why should gossip not be published? Find examples of stories you would double-check before printing. Use your school newspaper.

Sourcing/Attribution

3. Pick up good news stories from mainstream newspapers such as the Post-Gazette, NY Times or Washington Post. Have students read the news story for sources. Count the number of unnamed sources versus the number of sources. Have them test the story for its believability factor. What happens to story when unnamed sources are used? Why is a person's experience and position important to verify information or a story? Identify and underline all instances of attribution in an article and explain why it was necessary to establish each quotation or act as coming from specific source.

What happened when a source speaks "on condition of anonymity"? When and why might a source not give his or her name? Cite what the condition might be.

Why do most newspaper have a strict policy against the unnecessary use of anonymous sources?

4. Find attribution in all parts of the story, begin, middle or end of direct quotes in a paragraph. Explain why the reporter selected one of those three spots to place the attribution. Try out these two alternatives to some construction to see if you agree with the reporter's choice of placement.

Ask why a quote is not attributed. This includes basic unimpeachable facts.

Placement of attribution teaches clarity of communication and graceful writing. Cite the place of attribution—beginning, middle or end of a sentence.

Review the rules for patterns of attribution. Using a grammar book, or news book, or text, teach the rules for direct and indirect quotations. For example, paragraphs never contain quotations from more than one person. Indent for every new speaker. This is so as not to confuse the reader as to whom is speaking.

5. Pick up a tabloid story. Look for sourcing. Is the information credible?

6. Compare the straight story and the tabloid story. What is the difference? Circle all sources of information. Include all firsthand observations. Include all written sources with attribution.

7. Research controversial stories where the tabloid press picks up information before the mainstream press. An example, is the case of the Rev. Jesse Jackson? Here has a child born to his mistress. Find this story and any other examples. This story was reported in the National Enquirer.

8. Research old stories from the 20th century. Use the following topics: Lindbergh baby kidnapping, W.W.I, W.W.II, Vietnam War, Civil Rights, Clinton-Lewinsky scandal. Report to the class on mainstream reporting about these issues. How and what was reported. See your teacher for some of the above handouts. Go to NY Times Front-page book. Read the front pages of the major stories of the century. Compare those stories to what is in a history textbook.

9. Find out the policy for sourcing on mainstream newspaper and a tabloid. Report to the class. The New York Times has a policy against the use of anonymous sources.

Library/Internet

10. Go to the library to gather information. Distinguish between valuable websites and bogus ones. Perform a scavenger hunt on the Internet. Find websites that are credible sources for journalists and those that are false.

Other

11. Write an essay/ a report of information. Describe how the press has changed in America during the last one hundred years. How could the media be improved and why.

12. Write a persuasive research paper on a debatable topic. Research information both pro and con. Determine your own proposition based on the facts you have gathered. Write a paper documenting print and electronic sources.

13. From the persuasive research paper, deliver a three minute speech to the class on your topic. Attempt to convince the audience about your viewpoint based on facts about a controversial issue such as the death penalty. Cite facts in your speech. This fulfills the speaking exhibit entry three for a formal speech that influences the opinion of others.

Annotated Bibliography

Books

The Art of Fact. A Historical Anthology of Literary Journalism. Kerrane, Kevin and Ben Yagoda, editors. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997

Boorstin, Daniel J. The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America. New York: Vintage, 1961

Cappon, Rene J. The Associated Press Guide to News Writing. 3rd edition. Foster City, California: IDG Books Worldwide, Inc., 2000

Dillard, Annie. The Writing Life. New York: Harper, 1989

Emery, Edwin. The Press and America. Englewood-Cliff, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1972

Franklin, Jon. Writing for Story. Craft Secrets of Dramatic Nonfiction by a Two-Time Pulitzer Prize Winner. New York: Penguin, 1986

Grossman, Lawrence K. The Electronic Republic: Reshaping Democracy in the Information Age. New York, Viking, 1995

Hall, Jim. Online Journalism; A Critical Primer. Sterling, Virginia: Pluto Press, 2001

Hamill, Pete. News is a Verb. New York: Ballantine, 1998

Hersey, John. Hiroshima. New York: Vintage, 1995

Hohenberg, John. The Professional Journalist. New York: Holt, 1978.

Kovach, Bill and Tom Rosenstiel. Warp Speed: America in the Age of Mixed Media. New York: Century Foundation press, 1999

Lacey, Nick. Image and Representation: Key Concepts in Media Studies. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998

Wolff, Tobias. In Pharaoh's Army. New York: Vintage, 1994.

Writers [on Writing]. Collected essays from The New York Times. New York: Henry Holt, 2001

Zinsser, William. Speaking of Journalism. New York: Harper, 1994

Periodicals

Blendon, Robert J. Slideshow: Educating Americans about Public Issues in an Era of Distrust at Harvard University Media Seminar June 2000.

Bok, Sissela. "The Decline and Fall of Journalistic Standards." Boston Globe 13 April 1998:A17

Kalb, Marvin. "The Rise of the 'New News': A Case Study of Two Root Causes of the Modern Scandal Coverage." Discussion Paper D-34, Massachusetts: The Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy, October 1998

Source Allegations in the News about the Clinton-Lewinsky Relationship" in packet distributed by Tom Patterson to the Media and American Democracy participation June 28, 1000

Textbooks used in Class

English Earl Et Al. Scholastic Journalism. Ninth edition. Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1996

VI. Understanding Ethics. Chapter 23 "Ethics for Students Journalists," pp. 334-338.

Examining Professional Mass Media. Chapter 25 "Professional News Gathering and Processing," pp. 348-351

III. Preparing Copy for Print. Chapter 20 'Computers and Journalism,' pp. 290-302.

Electronic Sources

The Columbia Journalism Review website: <http://www.cjr.org>

Freedom Forum Ethics Curriculum Review website: <http://www.jea.org/news/review.html>

The New York Times Learning Network website: <http://www.newyorktimes.com>

Public Perceptions of the Media website: <http://www.cmpa.com/nota/erceptions/secf.html>

Pennsylvania Newspaper Association

<http://www.pnpa.com/>

Pennsylvania Newspaper Association Resource Link

<http://www.pnpa.com/resources/index.htm>

Reporter/Photographer Resources

<http://www.pnpa.com/resources/reporter.htm>

PA-Today, The Best of Pennsylvania's Newspapers Online

<http://www.pa-today.com/>

Poynter Institute

<http://www.poynter.org/>

Salon.com

<http://www.salon.com>

Slate.com -- check out "Today's Papers"

<http://slate.msn.com/>

Editor & Publisher Home Page

<http://www.editorandpublisher.com/>

Investigative Reporters and Editors

<http://www.ire.org/>

Society for News Design

<http://www.snd.org>

Project for Excellence in Journalism

<http://www.journalism.org/>

U.S. Newspapers

<http://usnewspapers.about.com/newsissues/usnewspapers/?once=true&>

Newspaper Design: Design with Reason

<http://www.ronreason.com/>

Google.com (search engine)

<http://www.google.com>

Slipup.com: America's Newspaper Corrections Connection

<http://slipup.com/>

Appendix A

Find the following information on this internet scavenger hunt.

On separate paper, answer each question and document your sources. One source may not be authoritative, so you may need to find several sources.

1. What was the low temperature in Pittsburgh last year?
2. Who developed HTML (hypertext markup language)? When?
3. What is Zapata Oil? Is it still in business? If not, when did it?
Begin and when did it go out of business?
4. Distinguish among the several nations known by variations on the names "Guinea" and "Guiana." Along with each name, include a brief description of the location.
5. What is the birth name of the professional wrestler known as The Rock? The actors Whoopi Goldberg and Tom Cruise?
6. In two sentences or less, explain the etiology of mad cow disease.
7. Name the boy and girl who hold the national high school records in the mile run. Include the date and location of their record runs.
8. Identify by name and date the movie and TV debuts of Courteney Cox.
9. Which jobs did Pittsburgh mayor Tom Murphy hold before becoming mayor?
10. Who is the highest paid American university president? How much?
11. Identify the most recent U.S. Senate bill and most recent U.S. House of Representatives bill concerned with campaign, finance reform. Include the name, number and chief sponsor of each bill.
12. Who is Robert Downey Sr.?
13. What was the peak value of amazon.com stock? What was the date?
14. What does "tenure track" mean? What professorial ranks does it include?
15. In the recording business, what is the standard for "multi-platinum" status?

Appendix B

Communications Standards for the Pittsburgh Public Schools

1. All students use effective research and information management skills, including locating primary and secondary sources of information with traditional and emerging library technologies.
2. All students read and use a variety of methods to make sense of various kinds of complex texts.
3. All students respond orally and in writing to information and ideas gained by reading narrative and informational texts and use the information and ideas to make decisions and solve problems.
4. All students write for a variety of purposes, including to narrate, inform and persuade, in all subject areas.
5. All students analyze and make critical judgments about all forms of communication, separating fact from opinion, recognizing propaganda, stereotypes and statements of bias, recognizing inconsistencies and judging the validity of evidence.
6. All students exchange information orally, including understanding and giving spoken instructions, asking and answering questions appropriately, and promoting effective group communications.
7. All students listen to and understand complex oral messages and identify their purpose, structure and use.
8. All students compose and make oral presentations for each academic area of study that are designed to persuade, inform or describe.
9. All students communicate appropriately in business, work and other applied situations.