

CURRICULUM ACTIVITIES

SECONDARY EDUCATION

LSU

ANATOMY OF A NEWSPAPER

Objectives:

To identify the targeted audience, general purpose, social/political agendas, and unique characteristics of historical Louisiana newspapers.

Materials Needed:

- Online access to *Chronicling America*
- Access to a word processing program or writing materials
- Several copies of at least 2 different current newspapers

Duration: 45-60 minutes per activity

Louisiana State Curriculum Standards:

8th Grade English Language Arts

GLE 13: Evaluate the effectiveness of an author's purpose

8th Grade History

GLE 64: Compare and contrast events and ideas from Louisiana's past and present, explaining political, social, or economic contexts

GLE 67: Analyze given source material to identify opinion, propaganda, or bias

9th-12th Grade US History

US 1.5: Analyze historical periods using timelines, political cartoons, maps, graphs, debates, and other historical sources

11th & 12th Grade English Language Arts

GLE 32: Give oral and written analyses of media information

GLE 34: Select and critique relevant information for a research project using the organizational features of a variety of resources

GLE 42: Access information and conduct research using various grade-appropriate data-gathering strategies/tools

Instructions: Introduce students to the *Chronicling America* website. Pre-select a few appropriate issues from various Louisiana historical newspapers and divide the URLs to these issues among the students.

Activity 1

1. Divide students into groups of 2 or 3 with one of the current newspapers and a URL to a historical newspaper issue. If the current newspaper contains more than one section, only give the students the front-page section for simplicity's sake. Students answer the questions on the "Newspaper Structure Handout."
 - a. Alternatively, the activity can be amended for only the front page of the newspapers
2. As a class, discuss the similarities and differences between today's newspapers and historical newspapers.

Activity 2

1. Divide students into groups of 2 or 3 with a copy of the "Vocabulary Terms," a URL to a historical newspaper issue, and one of the current newspapers.
 - a. Alternatively, the activity can be amended for only the front page of the newspapers.
2. Identify as many of the vocabulary terms as possible in both current and historical newspapers.
3. As a class, discuss the similarities and differences and observe the structural evolution of newspapers as media.

Sample Discussion Questions

1. In what ways are historical newspapers valuable as a source of fictional narratives? Non-fictional narratives?
2. In terms of newspaper access and readership/audience, how do these newspapers differ from the access and readership of today's newspapers?
 - a. How would literacy rates have affected the contents and language?
 - b. How would economic status and newspaper prices have affected access?
3. In what ways do the digitized historical newspapers differ from what current newspapers offer online?
4. What can be considered as the supplements of today's newspapers? The newspaper? The website?

ANATOMY OF A NEWSPAPER: NEWSPAPER STRUCTURE HANDOUT

Use the *Chronicling America* website and a copy of one or two current newspaper issues to answer one or two of the following question sets:



Examine a current newspaper issue and a historical newspaper issue:

- Compare the contents of the front page
- Compare the visual effects of two different newspaper issues



Examine a historical newspaper issue of the same date or week in two different titles

- Count the number of stories on the same topic in a newspaper issue
- How do the stories differ? Are the details, tone, or perspective different?
- Are there any identical stories? If so, where/who did they come from?
- What does the treatment and placement of a story indicate about the newspaper or editor's bias?
- Are the headlines different? If so, what connotations are associated with the different choice of words?



Examine a current newspaper issue and a historical newspaper issue

- Compare the ratio of news to advertising
- Compare the ratio of hard news to feature stories or leisure material
- Compare the ratio of staff written items to syndicated items



Examine two current issues and two historical newspaper issues

- Compare any editorials on the same subject
- Compare an editorial on the same subject as a news item. Does the news item's headline or content reflect the editor's opinion? Is it greatly different?



Examine a current newspaper issue and a historical newspaper issue and list articles of interest to different groups of people:

- your age group
- people younger than you
- people older than you
- business people
- farmers
- men
- women
- other groups not listed

ANATOMY OF A NEWSPAPER: VOCABULARY TERMS*

Ad – advertisement
Banner – headline spanning across the page
Binder Headline – one headline that presents several related stories
Break – where the story stops to be continued on another column or page
Byline – contains the author’s name and precedes the story
Canned Copy – a news story that has already been edited and is ready for print
Caption – the title or description of an image
Circulation – the number of copies that the newspaper distributes for each issue
Circus Makeup – headlines that are presented using a mixture of fonts sizes and types
Column – a vertical space for a stacked text, also known as a “leg”
Column Rule – the vertical line that separates a story, image, or other element
Cutoff Rule – the horizontal line that separates a story, image, or other element
Cutout – a silhouette of an image that has had its background removed to highlight the main subject
Dateline – usually located in the first line of a story and contains the story’s place or origin
Deck – a small headline following the main headline
Display Ads – large advertisements paid for by businesses that typically have illustrations
Ears – the space located on both sides of a newspaper’s nameplate or flag
Editor – a person who writes the editorials and prepares the newspapers stories for publication
Editorial – the editor or publisher’s opinion written as an article
Exclusive – a story that only one paper published
Extra – an irregular and separate edition that contains late and breaking news
Feature – a story concerned with a topic other than the news
Filler – space filling trivial information
Fold – the crease where the newspaper is folded in half
Folio – section located on the inside pages providing the newspaper’s name, date, issue, and/or page number
Header – a special name for a recurring section, page, or story
Headline – large type that appears above a story to introduce or summarize it
Infographic – any image, map, graph, chart, design, etc. that illustrates or analyzes an event, place, or news story
Jump – the continuation of a story on another page
Jump Headline – a headline reserved to introduce the continuation of a story
Lead – the first or second paragraph/sentence of a story that summarizes its content
Masthead – type that provides the newspaper’s title, owner, and other responsibility information
Nameplate – also known as a flag, this is the newspaper’s official title as it appears on the front page
Newshole – the space on a newspaper reserved for news rather than paid advertising
Obituary – brief biography and announcement of a person’s death
Printer’s Ornament – special characters in a typeset that act as spacers or decoration
Publicity – a new story that announces upcoming events
Publisher – the proprietor and sometimes the owner of a newspaper
Reporter – person who gathers news content and writes stories for a newspaper
Running Story – a news story that continues over several issues
Slant – when only one aspect of a news story is presented
Spot News – last minute unexpected news stories
Spread – the most important news within the issue
Subhead – small headlines used to divide a long news story
Syndicated Feature – material such as comic strips, columns, and stories purchased from a news organization
Wild Art – Stand-alone photos or images that do not have accompanying text

* Terms pulled from the following sources: Jane Lamb. *The Complete Newspaper Book*. (Portland, Me.: J. Weston Walch, 1985), 23-25 and Tim Harrower, *The Newspaper Designer’s Handbook*, 5th ed. McGraw-Hill, 2002, http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0072407611/student_view0/glossary.html (accessed 15 February 2011).

Scavenger Hunt

Objectives:

To learn how to search and browse for specific information within historical LA newspapers on *Chronicling America's* website. To understand the type and quality/trustworthiness of information historical newspapers provide.

Materials Needed:

- Online access to *Chronicling America*
- Access to a word processing program or writing materials

Prep Time:

5-10 minutes to set up *Chronicling America* website

Louisiana State Curriculum Standards:

8th Grade English Language Arts

GLE 1: Develop vocabulary using a variety of strategies

8th Grade History

GLE 62: Construct a timeline of key events in Louisiana history

GLE 63: Interpret data presented in a timeline correlating Louisiana, U.S. and world history

GLE 64: Compare and contrast events and ideas from Louisiana's past and present, explaining political, social, or economic contexts

9th-12th Grade US History

US 1.4: Discriminate between types of propaganda and draw conclusions concerning their intent

US 1.5: Analyze historical periods using timelines, political cartoons, maps, graphs, debates, and other historical sources

11th-12th Grade English Language Arts

GLE 42: Access information and conduct research using various grade-appropriate data-gathering strategies/tools

Instructions

Briefly introduce the *Chronicling America* website and how to browse, search, and filter results within the Louisiana newspapers. Have students individually, or in small groups, choose one of the sample subject categories and complete the browsing/searching tasks. For each answer, students should note the newspaper's title, date, and city/parish of publication, and optimally, copy and paste the hyperlink into a word document with their answers to share and compare findings. Once the students have completed the tasks, share the results and discuss as a class the significance of their findings.

The following sample subject categories of scavenger hunts are:

- Media & Advertising
- Literature & Entertainment
- Propaganda & Political Cartoons
- Science & Technology

Sample Discussion Questions

1. What types of information do historical newspapers provide?
2. In what ways can newspapers be useful when analyzing historical events?
3. How do the language and presentation of information differ from today's newspapers?
4. What sources of information are found in newspapers? Are the articles providing first, second, third-hand accounts? How do you know?
5. Describe the challenge of searching for political cartoons, photographs, and images.
6. How was communication encouraged during this time? Do you notice any differences between mailing addressed today and those printed in the papers?

Scavenger Hunt:

Media & Advertisements

Browsing:

- Find an advertisement for a local company
 - What is the company name?
 - Where are they located?
 - What is their specialty?
 - Is there an advertisement in the same issue for one of its competitors?
- Find an advertisement for something that does not exist today
 - What is it?
 - Why does it no longer exist?

Browsing & Searching:

- Browse a few newspapers for popular advertisements, choose a product or service name, and find four different advertisements for that product/service
 - How do the ads differ? What are the visual aspects, if any?
 - Do they try to sell the product/service to different groups of people?
 - Do they have a slogan or a logo? If so, what is it?
 - What are the earliest and the latest dates for the product/service advertisements you found?
 - Does it still exist?

Searching:

- Search for advertisements for at least two of the following products. Identify what they are, what they do, and who would use them. How do these advertisements differ from advertisements of similar products today? Take note of anything you find interesting.

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------|------------|----------------|
| • Calumet | • Cascarets | • Castoria | • Chesterfield |
| • Grove's Tasteless Chill Tonic | • Herbine | • Paxtine | • Peruna |
| • Prickly Ash Bitters | • Sarsaperilla | • Spohn's | • Wrigley's |

Louisiana State Curriculum Standards:

9th-12th Grade US History

US 1.4: Discriminate between types of propaganda and draw conclusions concerning their intent

US 1.5: Analyze historical periods using timelines, political cartoons, maps, graphs, debates, and other historical sources

11th & 12th Grade English Language Arts

GLE 1: Extend basic and technical vocabulary using a variety of strategies

GLE 3: Draw conclusions and make inferences about ideas and information in complex texts in oral and written responses

GLE 4: Evaluate ways in which the main idea, rationale or thesis, and information in complex texts, including consumer, workplace, public, and historical documents, represent a view or comment on life.

Scavenger Hunt:

Literature & Entertainment

Browsing:

- Look at several issues of one newspaper.
Find a fictional story presented as a serial.
 - What is the title?
 - Who is the target audience?
 - What is it about?
 - Does the segment provide a synopsis or introduction of the story's context?
 - Does it span three or more issues?
- Select one issue of a newspaper
 - How many poems and/or fiction stories are there?
 - Where in the newspaper are they located?
 - What are they about? Is there a theme?

Louisiana State Curriculum Standards:

8th Grade English Language Arts

GLE 13: Analyze an author's viewpoint by assessing appropriateness of evidence and persuasive techniques

10th Grade English Language Arts

GLE 42: Access information and conduct research using various grade-appropriate data-gathering strategies/tools

11th & 12th Grade English Language Arts

GLE 1: Extend basic and technical vocabulary using a variety of strategies

GLE 3: Draw conclusions and make inferences about ideas and information in complex texts in oral and written responses

GLE 4: Evaluate ways in which the main idea, rationale or thesis, and information in complex texts, including consumer, workplace, public, and historical documents, represent a view or comment on life.

GLE 37: Access information and conduct research using various grade-appropriate data-gathering strategies/tools

Browsing & Searching:

- Scan one or two issues of a newspaper and note ten words you do not recognize
 - Define each term in context
 - Find a dictionary definition of each term, and note if its use has changed
 - Use the terms as keyword searches and note their frequency in the newspapers
- Find some examples of humor, such as a joke, comical image, or funny story
 - Do you find the examples entertaining?
 - Is the humor relevant today, or is it only humorous within the context of that time?

Searching:

- Find a fictional story about a romance, a tragedy, or an adventure
 - Can you find other stories by the same author?
- Find an article, image, or advertisement that demonstrates popular extracurricular activities (e.g., sports, theater, games, circuses, fairs)
 - What forms of entertainment did you search?
 - Were such activities locally accessible to the newspapers' readers?
 - Can you find gender or age specific examples?
 - Did you find anything that is still popular today? Anything that is now unpopular?

Scavenger Hunt:

Propaganda & Political Cartoons

Browsing:

- Find an editorial about a political figure or event
 - Who or what is the editorial about
 - Is the editor's political affiliation obvious? If so, what is it?
 - Does the editorial's tone match that of the newspaper in general?
 - How does the editor support his/her opinion?

Browsing & Searching:

- Strategically restrict dates and browse a newspaper for three weeks before and after a state or national election
 - What office(s) is the election filling?
 - Are there portraits or photographs of the candidates?
 - Does the newspaper support a particular candidate or political party? How can you tell?
 - How does the newspaper present the election results?
- Find an article about the Progressive Party in Louisiana
 - From the article, can you define the Progressive Party's political platform?
 - Does the article support or denounce the Progressive Party?
 - What part or candidate does the article support, if not the Progressive Party?

Searching:

- Find a political cartoon or caricature
 - Who/what is it about?
 - What message does it portray?
 - Who is the creator/illustrator/published name, if any?
 - What search terms did you find successful?
- Find an article that announces the 1860 presidential election results
 - How many days after the election is the article printed?
 - What is the general reaction to the election results?
 - What, if anything, surprised you about the results?

Louisiana State Curriculum Standards:

8th Grade History

GLE 13: Analyze an author's viewpoint by assessing appropriateness of evidence and persuasive techniques

GLE 63: Interpret data presented in a timeline correlating Louisiana, U.S. and world history

9th-12th Grade US History

US 1.4: Discriminate between types of propaganda and draw conclusions concerning their intent

US 1.5: Analyze historical periods using timelines, political cartoons, maps, graphs, debates, and other historical sources

9th-12th Grade World History

WH 1.3 Use a variety of sources to analyze the validity of information in terms of facts, opinions, or propaganda

WH 1.4 Analyze historical events through the use of debates, timelines, cartoons, maps, graphs, and other historical sources

10th Grade English Language Arts

GLE 42: Access information and conduct research using various grade-appropriate data-gathering strategies/tools

11th-12th Grade English Language Arts

GLE 42: Access information and conduct research using various grade-appropriate data-gathering strategies/tools

Scavenger Hunt:

Science & Technology

Browsing:

- Find an article or recurring newspaper section that presents information on a topic related to science, technology, or innovation?
 - What does it discuss or present?
 - Is the article related to Louisiana, the United States, or somewhere else?

Browsing & Searching:

- Find a few articles or advertisements related to transportation vehicles
 - What different modes of transportation can you find?
 - What is the date on the earliest mention of the term “automobile”?
 - What do the papers describe when using the term “automobile”?
 - What interesting results do you get?
- Find a few articles and advertisements that demonstrate communication technology
 - What modes of communication did you find?
 - How do advertisements encourage consumers to contact them?
 - Are there any communication technologies still used today? Have they changed?
 - How has communication technology propelled modern culture? Modern politics? Society? Literacy rates? What evidence of change do the networks provide?
- Find an article or advertisement related to improved agriculture and/or livestock
 - To what type of farming does the item relate?
 - What does the innovation claim to improve? Does it save time, money, or energy?
 - What areas of Louisiana would benefit most from the innovation?

Searching:

- Find announcements for four inventions powered by electricity, kerosene, or petroleum
 - Do these inventions exist today?
 - If so, how are they different?
 - What is the date of the oldest announcement that you found? What invention does it present?

Louisiana State Curriculum Standards:

9th Grade Science

GLE 14: Cite examples of scientific advances and emerging technologies and how they affect society

9th-12th Grade US History

US 1.5: Analyze historical periods using timelines, political cartoons, maps, graphs, debates, and other historical sources

9th-12th Grade World History

WH 1.4 Analyze historical events through the use of debates, timelines, cartoons, maps, graphs, and other historical sources

11th-12th Grade English Language Arts

GLE 42: Access information and conduct research using various grade-appropriate data-gathering strategies/tools

National History Standards:

Era 6, Standard 1: How the rise of corporations, heavy industry, and mechanized farming transformed the American people

SUBJECT GUIDE

Objectives:

- To identify and evaluate historical newspaper items relevant to a specific event, period, or person(s).
- To evaluate the newspapers as a historical resource and critique journalistic methods.

Materials Needed:

- Online access to *Chronicling America*
- Access to a word processing program, html editor, or poster presentation materials

Prep Time: 5-10 minutes to set up *Chronicling America* website

Instructions:

1. Provide or let students select a historical subject – event, period, or person(s) – with coverage in the Louisiana newspapers (see Historical Context: Timeline of Significant Events Reported)
2. Using *Chronicling America*, experiment with search terms and date ranges to find newspaper items about or related to the historical subject
3. Make a citation for each interesting find and/or item that contains relevant significance to the historical subject chosen (a percentage of finds or a pre-determined number can narrow the amount of selections for citation)
4. Based on the search results and the contents of the newspaper items:
 - a. write a summary of the historical subject as covered by the newspapers, including newspaper titles, depth of coverage, differing perspectives and/or obvious slants
 - b. create a timeline of newspaper coverage, listing citations in chronological order
 - c. list notable persons, places, or events, and successful search terms or search tips

Optional presentation:

For those advanced in technology, create an html document that contains the above information as well as sample images from the results, and for each item's citation provide persistent links to the item on *Chronicling America*'s website.

Discussion:

- As a class, discuss successful and unsuccessful search strategies for a variety of topics.
- Identify how different titles covered news items by their depth, perspective, and target audience.
- Compare and contrast the reporting of events in Louisiana in terms of: 19th and 20th century, North and South, local and national items, and various social groups.
- Discuss how the activity contributed to your knowledge of both Louisiana's history and its journalistic tradition.

Louisiana State Curriculum Standards:

8th Grade English Language Arts

GLE 1: Develop vocabulary using a variety of strategies

8th Grade History

GLE 63: Interpret data presented in a timeline correlating Louisiana, U.S. and world history

GLE 64: Compare and contrast events and ideas from Louisiana's past and present, explaining political, social, or economic contexts

9th-12th Grade US History

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11th-12th Grade English Language Arts

GLE 42: Access information and conduct research using various grade-appropriate data-gathering strategies/tools

Louisiana State Curriculum Standards:

National History Standard, Historical Thinking:

Standard 1: Interpret data presented in time lines and create time lines by designating appropriate equidistant intervals of time and recording events according to the temporal order in which they occurred.

NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS EXHIBIT

Objectives:

- To identify and evaluate historical newspaper items relevant to a specific event, period, or person(s).
- To create and present a collection of newspaper items based on a theme

Materials Needed:

- Online access to *Chronicling America*
- Access to a word processing program or writing materials

Prep Time: 5-10 minutes to set up *Chronicling America* website

Instructions:

Based on coverage in the LA newspapers, students (as a group or individually) choose a theme by which to select and present items found in the historical LA newspapers.

Example themes include baseball, fashion, product

advertising, recipes for local crops, etc. The theme may be limited by date, newspaper title, geographic area, etc.

1. Using the *Chronicling America* website, browse and search the LA newspapers for items that provide visual and narrative coverage of the selected theme.
2. Cite each chosen newspaper item, it may be downloaded as an image file or captured on the screen, and briefly identify the item with a label.
3. After “clipping” 5-10 items related to the theme, students then gather information from a variety of historical resources and write a brief essay explaining the selected theme.
4. Create a visual presentation for the essay and newspaper clippings.
5. As a class, present the “Newspaper Clippings Exhibits” and discuss the significant of the findings.

Presentation: Encourage creativity in presenting the “Newspaper Clippings Exhibit”

Option 1: Print out and present the theme’s essay and selected items on a poster board, and provide each item with a caption containing a brief identification label and citations

Option 2: Present the theme’s essay and selected items using a word processing or slide show presentation program with the items inserted into the document as images. Identify each item with a label and citation.

Option 3: For those advanced in technology, create an html document that contains the essay and images from the results, and for each item’s citation provide persistent links to the item on the *Chronicling America* website.

Discussion

- Discuss how the newspapers cater to a variety of interests and social groups.
- Identify how the presented themes have evolved and their portrayal by the 21st century media.
- What do the clippings reveal about family, society, and industry during that time?
- What do the themes reveal about the American experience and contemporary culture?

Louisiana State Curriculum Standards:

8th Grade History

GLE 63: Interpret data presented in a timeline correlating Louisiana, U.S. and world history

GLE 64: Compare and contrast events and ideas from Louisiana’s past and present, explaining political, social, or economic contexts

9th-12th Grade US History

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US 1.5: Analyze historical periods using timelines, political cartoons, maps, graphs, debates, and other historical sources

9th-12th Grade World History

WH 1.3 Use a variety of sources to analyze the validity of information in terms of facts, opinions, or propaganda

WH 1.4 Analyze historical events through the use of debates, timelines, cartoons, maps, graphs, and other historical sources

National History Standard, Historical Thinking:

Standard 4: Obtain historical data from a variety of sources, including: library and museum collections, historic sites, historical photos, journals, diaries, eyewitness accounts, newspapers, and the like

RESOURCES

LSU

RESOURCES

LSU Libraries Special Collections. *Digitizing Louisiana Newspapers Project*. Retrieved from <http://www.lib.lsu.edu/special/cc/dlnp>.

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