Consumption of Resources; Consumption of News

Analyzing Media Sources

Study Guide Theme: Consumption

Featured Photos:

Trash Wave    Sao Paulo, Brazil    Sorting Garbage

Overview: Students will learn how to dissect popular sources by considering point of view, tone, and main idea through content relevant to consumption. Students will learn the components of a news website that can help them understand news websites as a medium. Students will also learn to understand how writers support a position by choosing experts and texts relevant to their topic. Students will simultaneously note how consuming information is similar to the consumption of resources.

Grade level(s): Postsecondary

Subject(s): Writing

Corresponding National Standards:
North Carolina Community College System Combined Course Library:

- Demonstrate writing as a recursive process.
- Demonstrate writing and inquiry in context using different rhetorical strategies to reflect, analyze, explain, and persuade in a variety of genres and formats.
- Students will reflect upon and explain their writing strategies.
- Demonstrate the critical use and examination of printed, digital, and visual materials.
- Locate, evaluate, and incorporate relevant sources with proper documentation.
- Compose texts incorporating rhetorically effective and conventional use of language.
- Collaborate actively in a writing community.

Corresponding Global Competency Skills:

The Asia Society Competencies:

1. Investigate the World
2. Recognize Perspectives

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**Essential Questions:**
1. How do news websites operate as conveyors of information relevant to the consumers?
2. What techniques do news agencies use to convey information?
3. How does consumption and consumer experiences differ across the globe?

**Specific Strategies and Activities by Grade Level:**
This lesson is the first in a series of lessons to teach students about cause and effect. This lesson will lead students toward collecting information to answer the following research question in a cohesive essay: **Analyze the effect of consumption on the environment using articles from an American news agency and a foreign news agency.**

This lesson will have four major steps: entrance ticket, table discussion, gallery walk, article dissection

- **Entrance ticket: photo analysis:**
  - Students will discuss the consumer habits that prompt environmental disasters. Students will use specifics from ONE Overbook image to develop a list of specific human behaviors using this template: 
    *This image shows how the human activity of ______________ can result in ______________.*

- **Table discussion:**
  - Using specifics from the images provided, discuss in groups the social, legal, or political action or inaction that made these disasters a reality, and further research one of these issues in the media with a partner at your table. How does the media report on environmental issues? How does the media hold the appropriate parties responsible for disasters? Poll the class for answers after 10 minutes and write them on the board.

- **Gallery Walk:**
  - Students will brainstorm about the forces that create consumptive chaos through image analysis at their table groups for ONE image. The class will compile a large list and go around the room and edit each other’s list through questions, suggestions, or corrections.

- **Article Dissection:**
  - Students will then learn how to analyze news stories by using research from the Pew Research Center to determine the type of language that can influence tone and inform point of view and main idea. Students will use a sample article about the environment from one of the news agencies on the Pew website. The class will develop a list of inflammatory language and neutral language. The class will then develop a list of resources we expect good journalists to use in order to provide a balanced view of a topic. Students will identify those resources in their chosen article. Students will dissect sample articles about consumption for point of view, tone, main idea.
  - Students will use a teacher chosen article on a relevant topic to provide a stimulus text for this topic’s portrayal in foreign news. (Extension: Have students divide into groups and do a Google search for environmental news about a country trying to reduce consumption.)
  - Homework: Students will journal about their own consumer habits with relation to goods, taking the “Slavery Footprint” quiz. How often do you use plastic? In what ways can we live without creating more stuff? How does this information help you make decisions as a consumer?

**Materials:**
Images from Overdevelopment, Overpopulation, Overshoot
Pew Research Center Media Bias
Slavery Footprint interactive website

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Extension:
Have students track their consumption of goods for ONE day. Then, have students brainstorm ways to reduce their consumption as a journal activity.

References:


