

Believeland: Responses to the Pandemic

A unit by Keisha Davenport

In this unit, students review a mix of journalism and media exploring the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in order to explore big ideas, essential questions, and their personal connections to the pandemic. In their final projects, students research the impact of COVID-19 in their own communities and present their findings through a community mapping process. Through research and mapping will help students explore the responses and resources that are available to them in their neighborhoods or community, as well as the gap in these responses and resources.

This unit is comprised of 4 lessons that can be held over the course of approximately seven 80-minute class sessions.

Unit Objectives

- SL.11-12.2 Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.
- SL.11-12.3 Evaluate a speaker's perspective, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.
- SL.11-12.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.
- SL.11-12.5 Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.
- RI.11-12.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
- RI.11-12.2 Analyze informational text development. a. Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another.
- RI.11-12.2b. Craft an informative abstract that delineates how the central ideas of a text interact and build on one another.
- RI.11-12.6 Determine an author's perspective or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text.
- RI.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a

problem.

- W.11-12.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline - specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Unit Outline

Lesson 1 Connecting to COVID-19
<p><u>Facilitation Timeline</u></p> <p>45-80 minutes over 1-2 days</p>
<p><u>Essential Question</u></p> <p>What news stories have value? What news sources are accessible? What news stories are under-reported, and how do we find them?</p>
<p><u>Objectives</u></p> <p>Students will be able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access and integrate prior knowledge about news on COVID Response to answer anticipation set/survey questions. • Evaluate how 'news value' motivates the media. • Categorize how propaganda is a necessary element of the media. • Assess what may or may not be fake news.
<p><u>Standards</u></p> <p>SL.11-12.2 Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.</p> <p>SL.11-12.3 Evaluate a speaker's perspective, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.</p>
<p><u>Academic Vocabulary and Language</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community mapping

- Data

Warm Up

1. Students complete the [Anticipation Questions for Pandemic Response Unit](#) prior to or at the beginning of class.
2. Students discuss the following questions:
 - What is your definition of the news?
 - How does your definition compare to the dictionary definition of news?
 - Where do you get your news? Internet apps, TV, Radio, etc.?
 - What are examples of stories you would see on the news?
 - Or, examples of stories that you would seek out on the news?
 - Or, examples of stories that you would like to see on the news?
 - What is something that you think is important, but that you don't see much about in the news?
 - Why do you think news outlets choose to feature some stories more than others?
3. Students review [The Top 25 News Traffic from PEW Research](#) and compare where they get their news to the most visited news sites in the U.S

Introducing and Exploring Underreported Stories

Students will watch two videos exploring underreported stories from The Pulitzer Center and respond to questions on the [Underreported Stories Guided Notes](#) worksheet.

- Students are introduced to underreported stories in [Underreported Stories video](#)
- Students explore [How to Find Underreported Stories](#) to evaluate how journalists identify under-reported stories

Comprehension questions

Students respond to the following questions about the resources:

- How do you think news outlets decide which stories to focus on?
- Why are some news stories receiving less attention?
- How do journalists find under-reported stories in the first place?
- Where do they look?
- Who do they talk to?
- What kinds of questions do they ask themselves to decide if they want to pursue a story?

Final Project Introduction

Share with students that they will ultimately conduct and present research on how COVID-19 is impacting different neighborhoods in their communities. They will explore elements of the pandemic like rates of infections, resources provided to the community, etc. They will also make comparisons between the impacts of the pandemic on their communities, and the impacts on communities from different parts of the world. Ultimately, students' goal is to share underreported stories from their communities using a structure from [The Community Mapping Choice Board](#)

Exit Ticket

1. Students respond to the following questions in writing, or through discussion:
 - Name 3 things you learned about underreported stories today?
 - List 2 things you want to learn more about underreported stories.
 - What is 1 question about underreported stories that you have after today's lesson?

Lesson 2 | Local Reporting on COVID-19

Facilitation Timeline

45min – 80 min / 1-2 days

Essential Question

How is COVID-19 being reported on in Cuyahoga County? What resources are available to me to research the pandemic response in my county?

Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Complete guided notes on how to research (and include a persuasive appeal) on their community using community mapping resources (e.g., Cuyahoga County GIS, Google Maps, etc.).
- Complete guided notes on the expectations for the final project.
- Practice annotation and note taking skills for close read of information text.

Standards

RI.11-12.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

Resources

[KWL Chart](#)

[Portraits of a Pandemic](#)- Philadelphia (portraits and profiles)

[How Do We Survive?](#) - San Francisco focus, uses graphic novels, profiles, photography and writing.

[COVID-19 writers project](#) - uses vlogs and photographs in NYC

[Underreported Stories Graphic Organizer](#)

Academic Vocabulary and Language

- Textual evidence

Warm Up

1. Students use a K-W-L Chart (Google Form or [print form like this one](#)) to activate prior knowledge about pandemic reporting and response in their county. Afterward, students reflect on the following questions:
 - How did you hear about the pandemic in the county?
 - What real news or rumors have you heard related to the pandemic?
 - What images have you seen in your neighborhood related to the pandemic?
 - Or, what resources were available to you because of the pandemic?
2. Students reflect on how accurately the news has reflected their experiences of the pandemic by answering the following question: **What do they think is missing from reporting on the impacts of COVID-19 in their communities?**

Synchronous/asynchronous exploration of under-reported news stories from other communities in the U.S. about the impacts of COVID-19

1. Students explore one or more of the following underreported news stories using [this graphic organizer](#).
 - [The COVID-19 Writers Project](#) (uses photos, vlogs, and simple text to capture the experiences of communities in Brooklyn, NY)
 - [Portraits of a Pandemic](#)- uses photo and interviews to capture the experiences of communities in Philadelphia, PA
 - [How Do We Survive?](#) - San Francisco focus, uses graphic novels, profiles, photography and writing.

After reading each article, students use their notes to respond to the following:

- **What are the under-reported impacts of COVID-19 on the people profiled in these articles?**
- **How do their stories compare to your experience during the pandemic?**

Note to teachers: If possible, review the graphic organizer by sharing an article from one of the projects above with the class. Then, students should explore at least one more article on their own.

Reviewing the Community Mapping Projects

[Students review the rubric for their community mapping projects.](#)

Lesson 3 | Evaluating Journalism Structure, Content and Style

Facilitation Timeline

80 min/2 days

Essential Question

What examples of reporting on COVID-19 resonate as truth? What makes news on the pandemic trustworthy? How do journalists reinforce the credibility (ethos) of their reporting?

Objectives

Students will be able to

- Analyze text development in informational text to determine central idea/theme/thesis, including main and supporting points as textual evidence.
- Write a 250-word abstract summary of their article to present to the whole group.

Standards

RI.11-12.2 Analyze informational text development. a. Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another.

RI.11-12.2b. Craft an informative abstract that delineates how the central ideas of a text interact and build on one another.

RI.11-12.6 Determine an author's perspective or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text.

W.11-12.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline - specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Resources

[Nonfiction Text Structures](#)

[Abstract OST Rubric](#)

[St. Louis, Mo. 63106: A Health Risk Even Without Coronavirus](#)

[Residents Line Up to be Tested at New Mission District COVID-19 Mobile Testing Site](#)

[Kimberly: A Young Woman's Story of Isolation in SF's Mission District](#)

[Food Bank Lines Filled With Stories of Life and Death](#)

[Isolating With COVID-19 Traumatizes Even the Asymptomatic](#)

[Milwaukee Evictions Spurred by COVID-19, Longstanding Racism and Poverty](#)

[COVID's Invisible Victims](#)

Academic Vocabulary and Language

- News Values
- Author's Purpose

Warm Up

1. Teacher reviews [Nonfiction Text Structures](#) with students
2. Students review how the articles explored in the previous lesson connect to these structures.

Exploring news stories about COVID-19

1. Students choose one of the following articles to review on their own:
 - [St. Louis, Mo. 63106: A Health Risk Even Without Coronavirus](#)
 - [Residents Line Up to be Tested at New Mission District COVID-19 Mobile Testing Site](#)
 - [Kimberly: A Young Woman's Story of Isolation in SF's Mission District](#)
 - [Food Bank Lines Filled With Stories of Life and Death](#)
 - [Isolating With COVID-19 Traumatizes Even the Asymptomatic](#)
 - [Milwaukee Evictions Spurred by COVID-19, Longstanding Racism and Poverty](#)
 - [COVID's Invisible Victims](#)
2. After reading one of the articles above, students answer the following questions:
 - What is the central idea of the article?
 - What are the main points and supporting points of the article?
 - What text structures are used within this article
 - What textual evidence is used by the author to support their claim?

3. Students write a 250-word abstract summary of their article to present to the whole group.
 - a. Teachers should review the [Abstract OST Rubric](#) that will be used to evaluate the summaries.
4. Students present their abstracts to their classmates.

Exit Ticket

Students discuss the following:

- Which article did you choose?
- Why did you choose this article?
- What is your article about?
- How does your article relate to your own experience?

Lesson 4 | The Project: Research, Strategy, and Project Presentation

Facilitation Timeline

80 min/2 days

Essential Question

What topics and themes do I want to research in my community mapping project and how do I want to present my findings?

Objectives

Students will be able to

- Identify a project theme and structure from the Choice Board to create their final reporting project on community mapping in Cuyahoga County.
- Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.
- Identify a project theme and structure from the Choice Board to create their final reporting project on community mapping in Cuyahoga County.
- Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

Standards

RI.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.

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SL.11-12.5 Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

Resources

[Community Mapping Choice Board](#)

[Project Resources Worksheet](#)

[Rubrics for Community Mapping Project](#)

Academic Vocabulary and Language

- Research
- Claim
- Persuasion
- Logos, Ethos, and Pathos
- Works Cited

Warm Up

Students discuss or journal around the following questions:

- How have your experiences with COVID-19 compared to the experiences of another person you read about in this unit?
- What are some themes/subjects you want to explore for your community mapping projects

Exploring Reporting Projects

Students review the range of reporting projects in the [Project Resources Worksheet](#).

After reviewing each resource, students should respond to the following questions:

- How is the journalist covering this city?

- Who is this affecting and how?
- Does this issue impact people in my city? How?
- What stories/themes/issues is the journalist presenting?
- How does the journalist present the story/theme/issue? (photography? video? writing? art? website? etc)
- How might I use these strategies?
- What do you want to research, and how do you want to do it?

Exploring Reporting Styles

After reviewing a range of the the reporting projects and additional resources on the Project Resources Worksheet above, students discuss the following questions:

- What strategies do journalists use to report in these projects? Is it visual? Is it qualitative or quantitative? Is it written?
- What would you do differently with access to unlimited resources?
- Which communication style am I most drawn to, and why?
- What projects from the examples resonate as truth or authentic?
- What strategies are the most apparent in the reporting of these projects and stories?

Planning Community Mapping Project

Teacher reviews the [Community Mapping Choice Board](#). Students choose the following elements for their project:

- What topics will you explore? (e.g. compare your experience of COVID-19 with the experiences of Americans in rural communities (or another community))
- What kind of project will you make?

Teacher reviews the [Rubric for Community Mapping Project](#) with students.

Develop Community Mapping Project

Students use unstructured time to plan, research, and construct their community mapping project using resources curated by the teacher, the [Project Resources Worksheet](#), and other found resources.

Students Present Projects

Students present their finished projects to the class. Students are evaluated using the [Rubrics for Community Mapping Project](#).

Student examples: [Click here](#) for final projects from Glenville High School students in Cleveland, OH who participated in the unit in fall 2020.