

Middle School Journalism: Course Syllabus

Middle School Journalism

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Who? What? When? Where? Journalism provides us with the answers to these questions for the events that affect our lives. In this course, students will learn how to gather information, organize ideas, format stories for different forms of news media, and edit their stories for publication. The course will also examine the historical development of journalism and the role of journalism in society.

Unit 1: What is Journalism?

Learning Objectives:

- * Define journalism
- * Discuss the purpose of journalism
- * Define key terms such as reporter, editor, journalist and audience.
- * Discuss the different type of journalism
- * Identify different types of news
- * Explain key roles in the world of journalism

ASSIGNMENTS:

What is Journalism?: Unit Text Questions	<i>Homework</i>	10 points
Middle School Journalism Unit #1 Project #1	<i>Homework</i>	15 points

Middle School Journalism Unit #1 Project #2	<i>Homework</i>	15 points
Unit 1 Discussion Assignment 1	<i>Discussion</i>	5 points
Unit 1 Discussion Assignment 2	<i>Discussion</i>	5 points
Unit 1 Quiz – What is Journalism?	<i>Quiz</i>	15 points

Unit 2: Analyzing Media

Learning Objectives:

- * Explain what makes a story newsworthy.
- * Discuss elements of a good news story.
- * Define and give examples of audience.
- * Define and recognize bias.
- * Discuss why reporters include opinions.
- * Explain the role tone plays in a news story.
- * Explain how to analyze a news story.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Analyzing Media: Unit Text Questions	<i>Homework</i>	10 points
Middle School Journalism Unit #2 Project #1	<i>Homework</i>	15 points

Middle School Journalism Unit #2 Project #2	<i>Homework</i>	15 points
Unit 2 Discussion Assignment 1	<i>Discussion</i>	5 points
Unit 2 Discussion Assignment 2	<i>Discussion</i>	5 points
Unit 2 Quiz – Analyzing Media	<i>Quiz</i>	15 points

Unit 3: Gathering Information

Learning Objectives:

- * Identify the difference between primary and secondary sources.
- * Discuss the importance of gathering credible information.
- * Explain the signs of sources that are not credible.
- * Identify ways to gather information.
- * Discuss ways to gather different types of information.
- * Explain how journalists use the information they gather.
- * Describe investigative journalism.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Gathering Information: Unit Text Questions	<i>Homework</i>	10 points
Middle School Journalism Unit #3 Project #1	<i>Homework</i>	15 points

Middle School Journalism Unit #3 Project #2	<i>Homework</i>	15 points
Unit 3 Discussion Assignment 1	<i>Discussion</i>	5 points
Unit 3 Discussion Assignment 2	<i>Discussion</i>	5 points
Unit 3 Quiz – Gathering Information	<i>Quiz</i>	15 points

Unit 4: Organizing Information

Learning Objectives:

- * Identify different purposes journalists have for writing.
- * Describe the two main types of news stories: hard news and soft news.
- * Explain the different types of soft news.
- * Describe how journalists determine what information is important.
- * Discuss the components and role of a lead.
- * Describe the two main organizational techniques for hard news.
- * Explain which organizational technique is best for a particular article.
- * Explain the pros and cons of each type of news story.
- * Explain the pros and cons of each organizational technique.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Organizing Information: Unit Text Questions	<i>Homework</i>	10 points

Middle School Journalism Unit #4 Project #1	<i>Homework</i>	15 points
Middle School Journalism Unit #4 Project #2	<i>Homework</i>	15 points
Unit 1 Discussion Assignment 1	<i>Discussion</i>	5 points
Unit 1 Discussion Assignment 2	<i>Discussion</i>	5 points
Unit 4 Quiz – Organizing Information	<i>Quiz</i>	15 points

Unit 5: Writing an Article

Learning Objectives:

- * Describe methods for organizing an article.
- * Identify the main parts of an article.
- * Explain how an article is written.
- * Use third person point of view to write an article.
- * Use active voice to write an article.
- * Explain the purpose of deadlines.
- * Describe how to revise an article.
- * Discuss the difference between a story and an article.
- * Identify quality headlines.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Writing an Article: Unit Text

Questions	<i>Homework</i>	10 points
Middle School Journalism Unit #5 Project #1	<i>Homework</i>	15 points
Middle School Journalism Unit #5 Project #2	<i>Homework</i>	15 points
Unit 5 Discussion Assignment 1	<i>Discussion</i>	5 points
Unit 5 Discussion Assignment 2	<i>Discussion</i>	5 points
Unit 5 Quiz – Writing an Article	<i>Quiz</i>	15 points

Middle School Journalism Midterm Exam

Learning Objectives:

- * Review information acquired and mastered from this course up to this point.
- * Take a course exam based on material from the first five units in this course (Note: You will be able to open this exam only one time.)

ASSIGNMENT:

Middle School Journalism Midterm Exam	<i>Exam</i>	50 points
Midterm Discussion Assignment	<i>Discussion</i>	5 points

Unit 6: Preparing a Newscast

Learning Objectives:

- * Explain the difference between writing for print and writing for on-air news.
- * Recognize the different types of newscasts and their purpose.
- * Explain the main story forms.
- * Identify the major components of a newscast.
- * Describe how to write a broadcast news story.
- * Describe and demonstrate how a newscast is organized.
- * Explain the importance of graphics and video in a newscast.
- * Demonstrate writing a story using the different story forms.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Preparing a Newscast: Unit Text Questions	<i>Homework</i>	10 points
Middle School Journalism Unit #6 Project #1	<i>Homework</i>	15 points
Middle School Journalism Unit #6 Project #2	<i>Homework</i>	15 points
Unit 6 Discussion Assignment 1	<i>Discussion</i>	5 points
Unit 6 Discussion Assignment 2	<i>Discussion</i>	5 points
Unit 6 Quiz – Preparing a Newscast	<i>Quiz</i>	15 points

Unit 7: Editing an Article or Newscast

Learning Objectives:

- * Describe the different types of editors involved in the editing process.
- * Explain the importance of editing.
- * Understand the difference between macro editing and micro editing.
- * Discuss issues with plagiarism and fabrication and ways to prevent them.
- * Describe the editing process for a newspaper article.
- * Describe the editing process for a newscast.
- * Recognize the common errors found in articles and newscasts.
- * Edit an article to correct major issues.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Editing an Article or Newscast: Unit Text Questions	<i>Homework</i>	10 points
Middle School Journalism Unit #7 Project #1	<i>Homework</i>	15 points
Middle School Journalism Unit #7 Project #2	<i>Homework</i>	15 points
Unit 7 Discussion Assignment 1	<i>Discussion</i>	5 points
Unit 7 Discussion Assignment 2	<i>Discussion</i>	5 points
Unit 7 Quiz – Editing an Article or Newscast	<i>Quiz</i>	15 points

Unit 8: Media, the Law and Ethics

Learning Objectives:

- * Explain the difference between the law and ethics.
- * Describe the First Amendment rights for journalists.
- * Understand the lack of freedom journalists have in other countries.
- * Determine when a journalist should not ethically publish a story.
- * Explain how the law and ethics play a role in determining the stories a journalist covers.
- * Discover specific examples of when journalists did not follow the law or acted unethically.
- * Learn the consequences of breaking the law or not acting ethically in journalism.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Media, the Law and Ethics: Unit Text Questions	<i>Homework</i>	10 points
Middle School Journalism Unit #8 Project #1	<i>Homework</i>	15 points
Middle School Journalism Unit #8 Project #2	<i>Homework</i>	15 points
Unit 8 Discussion Assignment 1	<i>Discussion</i>	5 points
Unit 8 Discussion Assignment 2	<i>Discussion</i>	5 points
Unit 8 Quiz – Media, the Law and Ethics	<i>Quiz</i>	15 points

Unit 9: Media and Society

Learning Objectives:

- * Describe the role media plays in society.
- * Explain how the media determines what stories are important.
- * Discuss how the media gets people to experience different emotions.
- * Describe how media can enhance or manipulate information.
- * Cite specific examples of how the media has affected society.
- * Explain how the media reaches different audiences.
- * Discuss the way the internet has changed journalism.
- * Explain different ways the internet is used to spread news.
- * Describe how the media reflects diverse voices of people from various backgrounds.
- * Discuss examples of alternate viewpoints in the media.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Media and Society: Unit Text Questions	<i>Homework</i>	10 points
Middle School Journalism Unit #9 Project #1	<i>Homework</i>	15 points
Middle School Journalism Unit #9 Project #2	<i>Homework</i>	15 points
Unit 9 Discussion Assignment 1	<i>Discussion</i>	5 points

Unit 9 Discussion Assignment 2	<i>Discussion</i>	5 points
Unit 9 Quiz – Media and Society	<i>Quiz</i>	15 points

Unit 10: A History of Journalism

Learning Objectives:

- * Explain how the news was spread before newspapers, television and radio.
- * Discuss the history of the creation of the newspaper.
- * Discuss the history of broadcast journalism.
- * Describe how journalism has played a role in American history.
- * Describe how the internet has changed the news.
- * Explain the history of African-Americans in journalism.
- * Explain the history of women in journalism.
- * Analyze the effect journalism has had on society.
- * Analyze the effect society has had on journalism.

ASSIGNMENTS:

A History of Journalism: Unit Text Questions	<i>Homework</i>	10 points
Middle School Journalism Unit #10 Project #1	<i>Homework</i>	15 points
Middle School Journalism Unit #10 Project #2	<i>Homework</i>	15 points
Unit 10 Discussion Assignment 1	<i>Discussion</i>	5 points

Unit 10 Discussion Assignment 2	<i>Discussion</i>	5 points
Unit 10 Quiz – A History of Journalism	<i>Quiz</i>	15 points

Middle School Journalism Final Exam

Learning Objectives:

- * Review information acquired and mastered from this course up to this point.
- * Take a course exam based on material from units six to ten in this course – the last four units. (Note: You will be able to open this exam only one time.)

ASSIGNMENT:

Middle School Journalism Final Exam	<i>Exam</i>	50 points
Class Reflection Discussion Assignment	<i>Discussion</i>	10 points