



# JOURNALISM CLUB TOOLKIT

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## ***WELCOME TO THE MEDIA LITERACY TOOLKIT FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS***

This toolkit is aimed at students who are interested in media and would like to take part in a journalism club. You will find lesson plans aimed at giving students the skills and knowledge to make them better informed and more actively involved in civic life, as well as helping them produce high-quality media products.

Developing journalism clubs and school media will not only help students interested in journalism to improve their media literacy skills, but will also offer them first-hand experience in a real newsroom, learning how it functions and what it means to be a journalist.

Participation in these extracurricular activities will help students learn basic skills such as assessing information, critically reading online articles, working with sources, and using basic tools to verify information. Moreover, it will teach them how to write and edit copy, discover facts through research and interviews, work with audio and video, and publish content online.

The topics of this toolkit are divided into modules that aim to deepen students' understanding of the media world, its components, and main challenges, as well as more hands-on journalistic work. Some modules are more theoretical — they introduce key concepts in the media world that are important for both journalists and media consumers; other modules deal with practical tasks related to producing high-quality media content.

### **The modules include:**

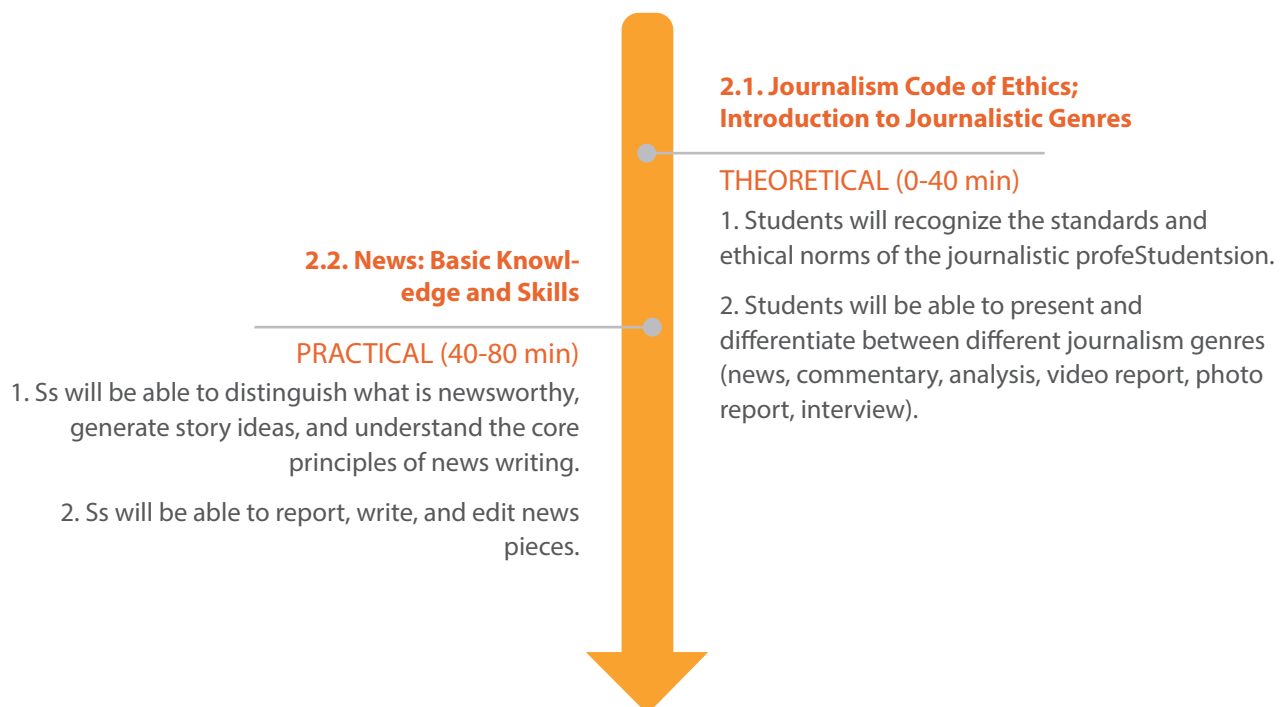
- Freedom of speech and codes of ethics
- Hate speech and regulatory institutions
- Quality journalism and the spread of disinformation and propaganda
- The job of a journalist and how newsrooms operate
- Interviews, photo reports, video reports, radiopodcasts, opinion pieces and analytical articles

# LESSON TIMELINE

## OCTOBER

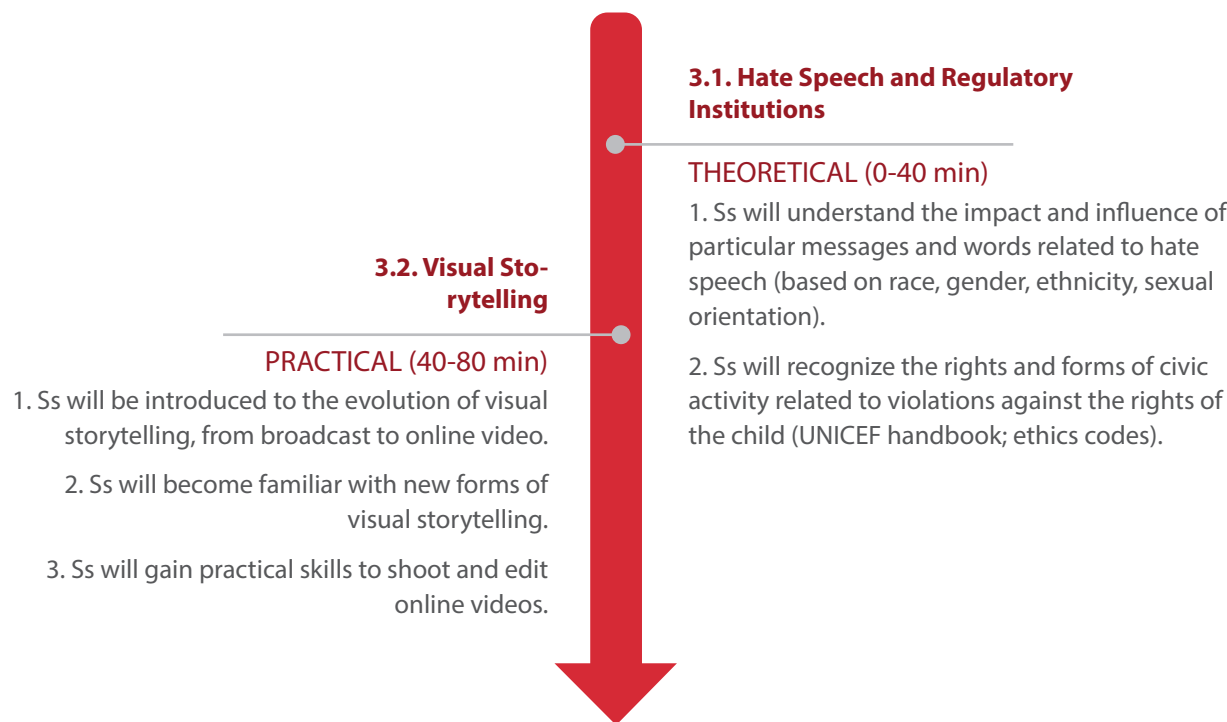


## NOVEMBER



\*These objectives will also be covered throughout the year, as students will be involved in reporting and producing journalistic stories.

DECEMBER



JANUARY



## FEBRUARY

**5.1. Quality Journalism  
vs. Disinformation, Part II: Fact-checking**
**THEORETICAL (0-40 min)**

1. Ss will be able to recognize and distinguish between quality journalism and propaganda, manipulation, disinformation, and fake news.

**5.2. Analysis and Commentary**
**PRACTICAL (40-80 min)**

1. Ss will learn the differences between news stories and opinion pieces, as well as where they intersect and complement each other.
2. Ss will be able to produce analytical and opinion segments.
3. Ss will understand the value of opinion pieces but also their limitations.



## MARCH

**6.1. Quality Journalism  
vs. Disinformation, Part III: Tools for Verifying  
Information Online**
**THEORETICAL (0-40 min)**

1. Ss will be able to explain why fact-checking is one of the most important elements of reporting.
2. Ss will learn basic tips to facilitate fact-checking.
3. Ss will gain insight on some fact-checking tools and learn how to use them.
4. Ss will become aware of fact-checking's limitations in stopping the spread of misinformation and disinformation.

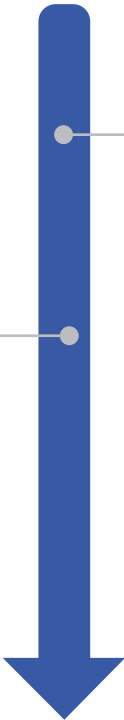
**6.2. Interviews**
**PRACTICAL (40-80 min)**

1. Ss will develop basic knowledge on the principles of conducting interviews.
2. Ss will gain basic interviewing skills: choosing relevant interviews, finding the right story angle, preparing for an interview, writing interview questions, and interviewing techniques.
3. Ss will learn about the different types of interviews and will understand when it is appropriate to use them: narrated interview, citing, analysis with comments.





APRIL



7.1. My Media Consumption

THEORETICAL (0-40 min)

- 1. Ss will gain awareness about their rights in the media context.
- 2. Ss will understand how to consume media content responsibly.
- 3. Ss will develop critical thinking skills about the media.

7.2. Radio Podcast

PRACTICAL (40-80 min)

- 1. Ss will be able to distinguish between a radio podcast and a radio show.
- 2. Ss will be able to make a radio podcast.

MAY



8. Wrap-up Session: Year in Review

THEORETICAL (0-40 min)

- 1. Ss will be able to prepare a special edition news item.
- 2. Ss will reflect on what they have learned so far.



## HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

The toolkit contains 16 modules. In every module, you can find a lesson plan consisting of objectives, expected results, key points, and an activity plan. In addition, for every module you can find the key concepts and definitions that students need to learn through the activities. You can read the key concepts information to learn more about specific topics, and this can be distributed to students as handouts (or however you wish) for future reference.

For every module, there is a variety of resources and materials shared in the lesson plans. The information contained in these resources is subject to the authors' and publishers' copyright, so make sure to credit them.

While classes in the average Bulgarian high school are usually 40 minutes long, we have added activities for about 60-80 minutes in every module. You don't have to do all the activities — you almost certainly won't have the time — but you can pick and choose the ones you think best fit your classes' needs. Our advice is that you use at least one activity for every objective — you can see which activities cover which objectives in the module plan. These 16 modules have been planned with the idea that students in the journalism club will create their own content and work on a school media project. You can use the activities in whatever sequence through the different stages of the process, rather than strictly following their order.

We hope that the toolkit will be a useful tool to teach students media literacy and basic journalism skills during your English Teaching Assistantship Program.

**From the authors**

Developing journalism clubs and school media outlets will not only help students who are interested in journalism to improve their media literacy skills, but will also offer them first-hand experience in a real newsroom, learning how it functions and what it means to be a journalist.

Participation in these extracurricular activities will help students learn basic skills such as assessing information, critically reading online articles, working with sources, and using basic tools to verify information. Moreover, it will teach them how to write and edit copy, discover facts through research and interviews, work with audio and video, and publish content online.

As the editor-in-chief of the school media outlet and adviser of your journalism club, your role is crucial to the publication's success. It's key to find the right balance between overseeing the editorial process and giving students enough freedom to create a school media project which reflects their own interests and voice. After all, the purpose of starting a school publication is to give a voice to the students. Your job is to provide guidance and advice on writing articles, as well as to teach them different reporting techniques.

### 1. BEFORE LAUNCHING THE JOURNALISM CLUB:

Do your homework: Consult with your mentor teacher and other colleagues. Try to find out if there is a school media outlet that already exists and, if so, who runs it.

#### ■ *If there is an existing school media/journalism club:*

- Arrange a meeting with the teacher running it and learn more about their work.
- Tell them that you would like to help develop the English-language version of the school media publication.
- Briefly introduce the Media Literacy in the Classroom Project and the Scoolmedia.com platform and encourage the school media club to publish their content on the site. Tell them about the top-notch journalist we plan to bring to their school as part of the program and show them the teaching materials we have put together for the journalism club.
- Ask how you could be of help and brainstorm some ideas for collaboration.

#### ■ *If there is no journalism club:*

- With the help of your Bulgarian mentor teacher, arrange a meeting with the principal or director and inform them about your plans to start a journalism club. Briefly introduce the Media Literacy in the Classroom Project and Scoolmedia.com and outline the benefits for the school.
- Spread the word about the club through other teachers and social media and during your classes.
- Make sure to plan out the logistics beforehand: Find a room where the editorial staff will meet; make sure it's available at the time of the meetings and that it has everything you need to ensure the smooth functioning of the newsroom (whiteboard, Internet connection, projector, etc.).

### 2. HOW TO RECRUIT STUDENTS

- Talk to other teachers to identify students interested in media and journalism.
- Advertise the program in class.
- Organize an essay competition open to all students during your regular English classes to identify potential good writers.
- Frame it as a request: Help us build a journalism club!
- Target students and teachers with high performance — at the beginning, it is better to aim at quality over quantity.

### 3. WHAT'S IN IT FOR THE STUDENTS?

**Hands-on media training:** They get to become journalists. In the era of post-truth and disinformation, it's more crucial than ever to produce quality journalism and to teach the next generation of reporters to cover the news following the highest journalistic standards.

**Valuable, transferrable skills:** Research, writing, editing, and photography could be valuable skills even if students don't decide on a career in the media sector. Writing, editing, and storytelling skills might come in handy when applying for a job or preparing for a job interview.

**Language skills:** Being part of the school media project is an excellent chance for them to hone their writing skills in English.

**Networking:** They'll become part of a group of student/reporters across the country who share similar interests and passions.

**New experiences:** Apart from the club activities, they'll have the chance to take part in a summer bootcamp (a training program where the best student reporters will further hone their journalistic skills) and spend a few fun days with peers from around the country.

**Journalists in the classroom:** They'll meet top-notch journalists and media professionals as the journalism club will host regular meetings with experienced reporters, photographers, videographers, and other media professionals.

### 4. HOW TO SUSTAIN STUDENT ENTHUSIASM

Throughout the school year, identify the most motivated and active students and try to engage them in the management of the journalism club/school media project.

Target students and teachers with high performance — at the beginning, it is better to aim at quality over quantity.

It might be a good idea to approach 10th and 11th-grade students, as they are the most likely to take part in the club and who will be ready to take on new roles (unlike 8th and 9th graders, who might be too young, and 12th graders, who are about to graduate and will be busy preparing their college applications). These students will have the time to participate in extra-curricular activities and are more likely to be part of the club until they finish school.

Try to involve some of your Bulgarian colleagues who are interested in keeping the journalism club and the student publication running after your program year ends.

Reward their work:

- Encourage them to do as much as reporting as possible and to get published on [Scoolmedia.com](https://www.scoolmedia.com) by reminding them about the student competitions the site offers: Story of the Month, Reporter of the Month, Summer Bootcamp, etc.

Award certificates to the most active student ambassadors.

- If possible, introduce a badge system or certain perks, such as treating them to a coffee hour or letting students choose a journalism-themed film to watch in class.

### **5. ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS:**

You might want to consider the following questions/ideas regarding your role in the journalism club/school media before launching the first meeting:

#### ***What's the purpose of the publication?***

During the launch meeting, talk to the students about the purpose of their school media project and listen to their thoughts on the matter. It's a good idea to guide the discussion and come up with a mission statement for the student publication.

#### ***What's the difference between social media and journalism?***

Explain the difference between posting on social media and actual reporting. Introduce the role of the media in society. For more information, see Module 1: Freedom of Speech and Democracy.

#### ***Encourage dialogue within the student newsroom.***

Often times, students' opinions will vary on different issues. Initiate a healthy debate environment where students can explore the various sides of an issue and try to understand another point of view. It's always helpful to step into somebody else's shoes.

#### ***Promote good journalism.***

The goal of launching a school publication is to give students first-hand experience in a real newsroom and a taste of good journalism. We strive to produce fact-based, objective, and fair articles following the basic journalistic standards of quality reporting. It might be useful for the editorial team to create their own set of guidelines or even adopt their own Code of Ethics.

Question their facts and/or assumptions. Try to make them aware of their biases and help them keep their biases in check.

**Note from the authors:** Don't hesitate to get in touch with the Association of European Journalists if you encounter any problems or need any assistance when communicating with the school's management.



# **FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND DEMOCRACY**

In this module, students will expand on the concept of freedom of speech and its importance to democratic societies. They will examine how the two are connected and discuss the media's role. Students will also look at the differences between public and private media and compare their notions of the journalistic profession with the realities of the job.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Ss will recognize the role of media in society.
2. Ss will be able to distinguish between the role and functions of private and public media.
3. Ss will gain a realistic understanding of a journalist's job: what a journalist does and doesn't do.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- Ss can explain the importance of freedom of speech and the media.
- Ss can distinguish between private and public media and their respective functions and roles in society.
- Ss can explain what a journalist does.

## OUTLINE OF THE KEY CONCEPTS

*(See the corresponding Key Concepts Section)*

### 1. Aspects of "freedom of speech"

- Definition of "freedom of speech"
- The right to freedom of opinion and expression
- The right to information
- Different types of speech

### 2. The link between freedom of speech and the level of democracy in a society

- Why is journalism needed in a democratic society?
- What would happen if the media disappeared?

### 3. Key differences between private and public media and their importance for society

- What kind of media are there?
- What is a public medium?
- What are private media?

### 4. Journalist job description

- What is a journalist and what does he/she do?
- What don't journalists do?
- What is "quality journalism"?

## MODULE LENGTH

60 minutes (*teacher chooses activities for about 40 min*)

## LESSON PLAN: ACTIVITIES AND TIMEFRAME

ACTIVITIES	LESSON OBJECTIVE	TIME
1. Discussion: "Freedom of speech" and Democracy	1	11 min
2. Freedom of Speech (Video Clip)	1	10 min
3. Discussion: The Role of Media	2	17 min
4. Public vs. Private TV Channels (BNT vs. bTV)	2	15 min
5. What is the Job of a Journalist?	3	10 min
6. Game: What Don't Journalists Do?	3	15 min

## RESOURCES FOR FURTHER READING

- Singapore: Laws Chill Free Speech (Human Rights Watch) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=14&v=P123NJp9gpo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=14&v=P123NJp9gpo)
- Media Freedom in Uzbekistan: Still a Long Way to Go (Human Rights Watch) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oav3hiJOW-M>
- Journalists on press freedom as threats to media rise (DW) <https://www.dw.com/en/journalists-on-press-freedom-as-threats-to-media-rise/av-43635925>
- Freedom of Expression easily explained (Explainity Channel) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FEqFp0q60-U>
- What is Freedom of the Press? - Definition, History & Examples (Study.com) <https://study.com/academy/lesson/what-is-freedom-of-the-press-definition-history-examples.htm>
- What is quality journalism? The most important question for news organisations today, but do we know what it means? (London School of Economics) <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/polis/2018/06/05/what-is-quality-journalism-the-most-important-question-for-news-organisations-today-but-do-we-know-what-it-means/>
- What is Quality Journalism: and how can it be saved (Reuters Institute) <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/our-research/what-quality-journalism-and-how-can-it-be-saved>
- Journalism Encyclopedia (Open School of Journalism) <https://www.openschoolofjournalism.com/resources/encyclopedia/quality-journalism>

## HOMEWORK ACTIVITIES

Students conduct research on a country with a high media freedom index and compare it to a country with a low media freedom index. They should consider the following criteria: wealth, wellbeing of people, corruption, etc.

Alternatively, students look at Bulgaria's ranking on the media freedom index and think of the reasons that may have led to this ranking.

Resources: Nelly Ognyanova <https://nellyo.wordpress.com/>



## ACTIVITY 1

TITLE	DISCUSSION: "FREEDOM OF SPEECH" AND DEMOCRACY
TIME	11 minutes
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Write "FREEDOM OF SPEECH" on the whiteboard or flipchart paper.</li> <li>2. Distribute sticky notes to Ss and ask everyone to write down his/her associations with the phrase. Give them 2 minutes to think and write down their associations.</li> <li>4. Have Ss stick their notes onto the whiteboard/chart (2 min).</li> <li>5. Review and summarize the most frequently shared associations (5 min).</li> <li>6. Provide the definition from the key concepts of freedom of speech (2 min).</li> </ol>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Flipchart (whiteboard), markers, sticky notes See Key Concepts

## ACTIVITY 2

TITLE	FREEDOM OF SPEECH (VIDEO CLIP)
TIME	10 minutes
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Play one of the following short videos on the topic (5 min).   <b>Journalists on press freedom as threats to media rise</b> (DW) <a href="https://www.dw.com/en/journalists-on-press-freedom-as-threats-to-media-rise/av-43635925">https://www.dw.com/en/journalists-on-press-freedom-as-threats-to-media-rise/av-43635925</a>             May 3rd is World Press Freedom Day. According to the NGO Reporters Without Borders, hostility toward the media is increasing worldwide. DW talks with a handful of journalists for whom 'freedom of the press' is not just about journalists, but about all of us.             *Alternatively, one of the following two videos can be shown:   <b>Freedom of Expression easily explained</b> (Explainity Channel): <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FEqFp0q60-U">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FEqFp0q60-U</a>   <b>What is Freedom of the Press? - Definition, History &amp; Examples</b> (Study.com): <a href="https://study.com/academy/lesson/what-is-freedom-of-the-press-definition-history-examples.html">https://study.com/academy/lesson/what-is-freedom-of-the-press-definition-history-examples.html</a> </li> <li>2. Remind Ss about their own ideas about freedom of speech from the previous activity and link them to some of the definitions from the film (3 min).</li> </ol>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Internet connection, laptop, projector, whiteboard

## ACTIVITY 3

TITLE	DISCUSSION: THE ROLE OF MEDIA
TIME	17 minutes
STEPS	<p>1. Introduce the following topic (2 min):</p> <p><b>What would happen if the media disappeared?</b></p> <p>Nowadays, it seems that everyone can say whatever they want, as long as no one is harmed. The media is an indispensable tool allowing people and individuals to get informed on various topics and also providing them with a platform to express their own views and opinions. It could very well be one-sided.</p> <p>Imagine a situation in which the media acts like your family or closest friends — allowing you to only hear information and opinions that are similar to yours. While this might cater to your preferences and your beliefs, it would present a rather lopsided view of the world, wouldn't it?</p> <p>All this begs the question: Are we better off living in a bubble of like-minded people, or is it better to allow ourselves to get out of our comfort zone and experience the variety of opinions and views that modern society consists of?</p> <p>The role of the media is to show all sides — including the unpopular ones. After all, it is the media's responsibility to account for all views and perceptions, regardless of their popularity.</p> <p>2. Divide Ss into three groups and assign them roles: (1 min split + 6 min task = 7 min)</p> <p><b>Group One</b> represents politicians who want to help people with disabilities. What would happen if their opinion or the bill they were proposing wasn't heard?</p> <p>Example: If there was no media, it would be much harder to learn about people's suffering; we would not be able to help and we would be out of touch with other people, so we would not know what is going on.</p> <p><b>Group Two</b> represents pizza restaurants. What would happen if there were no private media to advertise their products?</p> <p>Example: If there were no media, people would remain isolated, and information would be a minority privilege.</p> <p><b>Group Three</b> represents football fans. What would happen if there were no TV channels to show football matches?</p> <p>Example: If there were no media, people would remain isolated, and information would be a minority privilege.</p> <p>Give Ss in groups 6 min to discuss and note down their ideas.</p> <p>3. Now ask Ss to nominate leaders to summarize the ideas they reached in the groups in front of the whole class and discuss the consequences of having no media to report on the issues and events from their given perspective (6 min).</p> <p>4. Point out the importance of media based on the conclusions of the teams (2 min).</p>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<p>Flipchart (whiteboard), markers, paper</p> <p>Write down the roles on pieces on paper</p> <p>See Key Concepts</p>

## ACTIVITY 4

TITLE	PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE TV CHANNELS (BNT VS BTV)
TIME	15 minutes
STEPS	<p>1. Divide Ss into two teams which represent two editorial offices. One is the office of the public BNT station and the other is the private bTV station. Each team brainstorms a list of what differences there are between public and private media (3 min).</p> <p>2. Guide a discussion using the module guidelines on types of media and definitions of public and private media.</p> <p>Questions:</p> <p><i>What are the responsibilities of the different types of media?</i></p> <p><i>What are the advantages of being a journalist for public media and what are the advantages of working in private media?</i></p> <p><i>What are the limitations of each type of media?</i></p> <p><i>How are the different types of media financed?</i></p> <p><i>Why is it important to know who owns a certain media outlet?</i></p> <p>Ask the questions and have Ss answer them in a group discussion, still in the teams of the public and private media. You can use the points and definitions to structure students' answers. In summary, Ss note down the characteristics of the two types of media (8 min).</p> <p>3. Ask Ss to discuss what type of media they would prefer to work for or which they trust more and why (5 min).</p>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<p>Flipchart (whiteboard) and markers</p> <p>See Key Concepts</p>

## ACTIVITY 5

TITLE	WHAT IS THE JOB OF A JOURNALIST?
TIME	10 minutes
STEPS	<p>1. Write up the following question on the whiteboard or flipchart: <b>What is a journalist and what does he/she do?</b></p> <p>2. Distribute sticky notes to Ss (1 min).</p> <p>3. Give Ss thinking time (2 min) and ask them to write down a few ideas on the sticky notes (4 min total).</p> <p>4. Invite Ss to stick their notes on the whiteboard (1 min).</p> <p>5. Read aloud the most frequently shared associations (2 min).</p> <p>6. Provide the definition from "Key Concepts" (2 min).</p>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<p>Flipchart (whiteboard), markers, sticky notes</p> <p>See Key Concepts</p> <p>What is quality journalism? The most important question for news organisations today, but do we know what it means? (London School of Economics): <a href="http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/polis/2018/06/05/what-is-quality-journalism-the-most-important-question-for-news-organisations-today-but-do-we-know-what-it-means/">http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/polis/2018/06/05/what-is-quality-journalism-the-most-important-question-for-news-organisations-today-but-do-we-know-what-it-means/</a></p> <p>What is Quality Journalism: and how can it be saved (Reuters Institute): <a href="https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/our-research/what-quality-journalism-and-how-can-it-be-saved">https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/our-research/what-quality-journalism-and-how-can-it-be-saved</a></p>

## ACTIVITY 6

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>GAME: WHAT DON'T JOURNALISTS DO?</b>
<b>TIME</b>	15 minutes
<b>STEPS</b>	<p>1. Divide Ss into two teams which represent two editorial offices. One is the office of the public BNT station and the other is the private bTV station. Then ask them the question:</p> <p><b><i>What should journalists do if they see a person who has a tattooed swastika, for example?</i></b></p> <p>(Give them 3 min to discuss what they would do and 2 min to share).</p> <p>Then provide the answer: (1 min)</p> <p>Journalists should discuss the issue. They should not act as if the tattoo isn't there and as if it doesn't offend certain groups of people. But they should never show the tattoo on a TV show or in a YouTube video.</p> <p>2. Have Ss in their teams discuss whether, from a journalist's point of view, there are certain cases when self-limitation is necessary and when these can turn into self-censorship (9 min).</p>
<b>OPTIONAL EXTENSION (homework assignment)</b>	<p><b><i>Satire</i></b></p> <p>Caricaturists are often subject to censorship, threats, and revenge. For homework, Ss can read more about what happened in the offices of the French satirical weekly newspaper Charlie Hebdo in Paris, and come to the next meeting ready to discuss why it happened.</p>
<b>MATERIALS AND RESOURCES</b>	Internet connection, laptop, whiteboard

## KEY CONCEPTS

### 1. Aspects of “freedom of speech”

#### ■ Definition of “freedom of speech”

**Freedom of speech means the protection of several rights:** the right to freedom of opinion and expression, the right to information, and the freedom of press and other media.

Everyone has the right **to express their opinions freely through various means.**

Bulgarian Professor Neli Ognyanova says that according to the Bulgarian Constitutional Court, “expression” includes not only speech, but also a variety of means of expressing thoughts, opinions, information and beliefs, and even emotions and intuitions (Ognyanova, 2007).

We can express ourselves through **symbolic words or through artistic, scientific and technical creativity.** Scientific research, technical innovations and ideas are also protected.

■ **Freedom of opinion and expression**, however, is related to the **responsibility** to respect the rights and obligations of others. Therefore, when we express our opinion and disseminate it in the media, it is vital to be aware of whether we might be hurting or offending someone or injuring their dignity.

#### ■ Freedom of press and mass media

The media help us understand the feelings of other people, who should be able to express their opinions and reach us. In Bulgaria, the press and other media are free. The State has no right to impose censorship.

#### ■ The right to information

The lack of freedom of speech might lead to the violation of other rights – such as **the right to information**. “Everyone has the right to seek, receive and disseminate information,” the Bulgarian Constitution states. But, again, this right should not contradict other rights. Freedom of opinion and expression are not boundless; we have no right to distribute pornographic content, content that incites violence, and so on.

#### ■ Different types of speech

##### ■ Symbolic speech

A form of speech that expresses an idea or emotion without the use of words, such as burning one’s draft card, bra, or flag, or picketing

#### **Did you know that ...**

The tattoo is also a means of expression, and even if there are no words, it is considered speech through which we have the freedom to express ourselves!

#### **But!**

As with words, we should not use characters and images to offend other people, and we should not show any other signs that can insult them.

What should journalists do if they see a person who has tattooed a swastika, for example?

Journalists should discuss this issue; they should not disregard it, as it may potentially offend someone’s feelings. However, the offensive image (tattoo) should not be shown on a TV show or in a YouTube video.

***Did you know that ...***

We have the right to express our ideas and emotions in creative writing by employing the richness of our language by using satire, parody, irony and grotesque.

Powerful people (politicians, church clerics, celebrities) are often ridiculed for their actions/words or because they have abused their office or position. This is one way to attract people's attention to certain issues.

***But!***

***No idea justifies insulting or libeling anyone.***

***What are insults and slander?***

***An insult is*** when someone says or does something degrading the honor or dignity of another person.

***Slander is*** when someone discloses a disgraceful circumstance about another person or falsely accuses them of a crime.

### ■ ***Anonymous speech***

So far, we have been discussing authored ***speech***. But ***anonymous speech*** is also protected in certain cases, as long as it does not become libelous or cause insult. This is because sometimes we are afraid of expressing our opinions freely, yet we may need to alert others about a threat or an irregularity.

***Important:***

Journalists can use information from anonymous sources in the media, but they should always tell the audience that they are reporting unverified information. This is a warning not to trust the information completely, but not to discard it, either.

In this way, journalists let people make up their own minds about what to do: either trust the anonymous information or wait to find out whether it is true. However, immediately after reporting such information, journalists should look for other sources of information to confirm or disprove it. The problem is that journalists can sometimes cause panic and, even if no real threat exists, people's actions could considerably worsen the situation.

Consider the following case:

If a journalist knows that a bank is going bankrupt, should he/she report it? Do you think that panic will cause people to withdraw money from the bank and therefore actually cause its bankruptcy? What if the bank really is going bankrupt and by reporting on it, people's life savings might be saved?

News reporting should also make people aware of their rights and should inform them about what to do in case of an adverse event.

## 2. The link between freedom of speech and the level of democracy in a society

Nowadays it seems that everyone can say whatever they want, as long as no one is harmed.

The media is an indispensable tool allowing people and individuals to get informed on various topics and also providing them with a platform to express their own views and opinions. It could very well be one-sided.

Imagine a situation in which the media acts like your family or closest friends — allowing you to only hear information and opinions that are similar to yours. While this might cater to your preferences and your beliefs, it would present a rather lopsided view of the world, wouldn't it?

All this begs the question: Are we better off living in a bubble of like-minded people, or is it better to allow ourselves to get out of our comfort zone and experience the variety of opinions and views that modern society consists of?

The role of the media is to show all sides — including the unpopular ones. After all, it is the media's responsibility to account for all views and perceptions, regardless of their popularity.

### Why is journalism needed in a democratic society?

"Conveying information is an important part of **the democratic decision-making system**, as it brings **transparency** into society and for its part makes sure that the made decisions go along with the people's sense of justice.

To make sure that there is a chance for civil advocacy, **it is important that the citizens are informed of decisions while they are being made.**

In other words, **the journalists' mission** is to oversee the work of government officials on behalf of the citizens. The press, or the media in general, is occasionally called **the watchdog of society or the fourth estate**. Based on Montesquieu's tripartite system, the other estates in modern democracies are often referred to as branches of a legislature, an executive, and a judiciary.

The watchdog refers to the fact that journalists are supposed to guard the policymakers' actions. In recent years, social media has been proposed to be the fifth estate, where the work of journalists is scrutinized."

Source: MediaGuide (<https://mediaguide.fi/mediaguide/?p=20>)

### What would happen if the media disappeared?

The right to expression and the right to information are key values in every democratic society.

When the media is censored or non-existent, dictatorships flourish. And dictators impose regimes that, in the words of Hannah Arendt, destroy social ties between people and can lead to the death of society. People live in isolation and cannot help each other.

## 3. The link between freedom of speech and the level of democracy in a society

### ■ What kind of media are there?

- **According to status:** public, private, state, community
- **According to programming:** "everything for everyone" or niche/profiled programs
- **According to distribution:** national, regional, media chains



### ■ *What is a public medium?*

■ The purpose of the public media is to have a safe place from which different social groups, especially minorities in a society, get information and are encouraged to express different opinions. This can happen in the news or on shows about current affairs, shows but also through culinary shows or children's programs.

■ Public media also produce entertainment shows. Their main function is to acquaint the public with the achievements of Bulgarian and world artists, but they also serve to share art on television or the radio. For many people, recordings or live broadcasts from different artistic and cultural events are the only way to experience music, visual arts, or excerpts from new books.

■ Public media outlets include scientific programs and talk shows in their schedules, as well. These are a social platform for expressing different opinions.

■ Public media is required to have children's shows.

In Bulgaria, **BNT (Bulgarian National Television)** and **BNR (Bulgarian National Radio)** are examples of **public media**.

Since 1990, however, a major problem has remained unsolved: **how to finance public electronic media**. Up to now, these media have been funded **by the state budget**, though this is a double-edged sword as journalists may sometimes feel pressured by the government to cover or not cover certain stories.

Decision-making on what the programming of public TV and radio should be does not depend on regular listeners, but rather on what certain groups of people think it should be. The BBC (British Broadcasting Service) have solved this problem by charging a monthly fee for public television and radio services. Thus, the government has no say in what the media broadcasts. The BBC also has strict **editorial guidelines** and it enjoys vast degree of independence from external pressures.

### ■ *What are private media?*

■ Private media are owned by private companies. The media business, however, is a peculiar one — owners need to know that in addition to seeking profits, they are also responsible for the information they communicate. In the cases where public media are censored or pressured by external influencers, private ones may fill this role and report on sensitive information or criticize the government.

■ Private media can target specific groups as an audience, as well as express the views of different social groups (e.g. young people, the elderly, disadvantaged people, people with different sexual orientations) and give voice to different ethnic, religious or social minorities and groups.

■ Newspapers and online publications offer private companies great opportunities for strong analytical journalism on the one hand, or tabloid content on the other...

■ Competition incentivizes the media to invent novel and interesting content with which to engage audiences. It's problematic when the media market is monopolized by a certain organization or media group.

### ***Why is it important to know who owns the media?***

Because it is good to know what values they will protect or what values they do not possess. It is crucial to know whose voice we are hearing and thus decide if we should trust it or not.

### ***What is a community media outlet?***

Media created by a community or representatives of a particular community. Examples of community media include school or student media.

#### 4. Journalist job description

##### ■ **What is a journalist and what does he/she do?**

The question is not easy to answer after the advent of so many internet platforms where anyone can say anything. Anyone can become a writer. But is every writer a journalist?

Journalists are intermediaries who provide information so that we can all make informed choices, understand and appreciate what happens, remember the past and learn more about the processes around us.

- Journalists ask questions to clarify the actions of different institutions and representatives of society so that we can decide what to do.

- Journalists help different groups in society hear and see each other. But they also respect the people's right not to be seen or depicted in the media.

- When they are in doubt, journalists investigate and discover facts that are hidden from society but are crucial to its development.

- Journalists even try to listen to extreme views that they do not agree with, looking for the causes of these extreme opinions.

- Journalists know who to rely on for expert opinion in a particular area.

- Journalists are obliged to present events **impartially**.

#### **Nota Bene:**

##### **Impartiality**

Does not mean neutrality on all topics covered. However, certain topics do require taking a stand, especially if they are offensive to people's feelings. Therefore, journalists should not allow the spread of hateful messages and should point out when speakers use such rhetoric.

When journalists select events to cover, they take a very important factor into account: the public interest.

##### **Public interest differs from what is of interest to the audience.**

A lot of people are interested in what football stars do. And yet even though very few people may be interested, journalists should ask questions about corruption in football federations or violations of players' rights. This might be boring but it is "in the public interest."

Journalists perform various professional roles: presenters, reporters, editors, commentators, photo journalists. The existence of an editorial office where discussions can be held prior to and after broadcasting or publishing material is vital, as journalists have to defend core values in a democratic society. The role of the editors is to verify all facts, prevent hate speech and insist on as many points of view on a given issue as possible.

##### ■ **What don't journalists do?**

Journalists are not judges: they do not say what is right or wrong, but seek out the causes of certain phenomena. They do not point fingers or stigmatize.

At the same time, it is **the job of journalists not to disseminate hate speech or content that damages human dignity**.

The main benefit of being a journalist is that sometimes they are the first to come upon a piece of information. This fact also carries great responsibility because they can then speculate on that information, use it for their own purposes, exchange it or sell it.

Journalists can misuse the audience's trust and report misleading information. This is when they stop being journalists.

### ■ **What is "quality journalism"?**

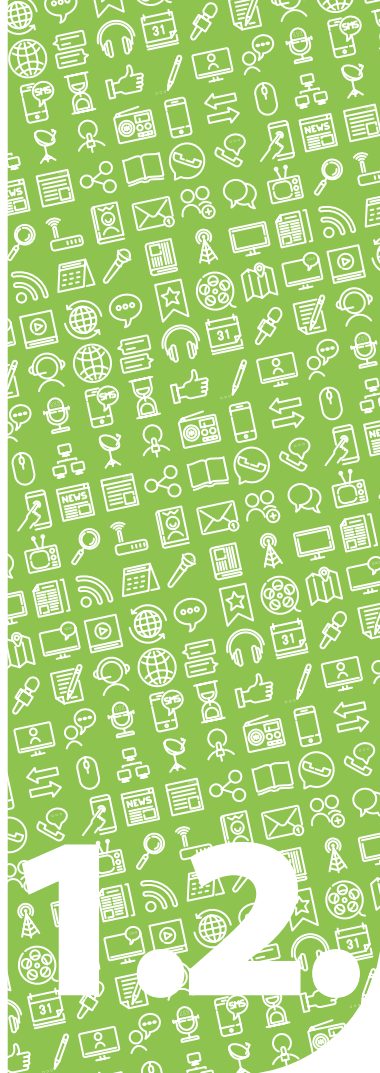
Quality journalism refers to the kind of journalism in which there is a clear distinction between facts and commentary. Up until now, newspapers have always been the bastion of quality analyses, commentary and reporting.

**Journalism Encyclopedia** (<https://www.openschoolofjournalism.com/resources/encyclopedia/quality-journalism>)

*"Quality journalism is a self-explanatory thing: it is genuinely good journalism. A journalist that incorporates all of their principles and criteria into their work, expressing who they are as well as telling their story thoroughly, would be considered a great journalist in most cases. Quality journalism is inventive yet traditional. It is sensible, risky, and relevant to the world. Presentation tells a lot about the story and the publication it is printed in, so it is all but natural for a news organization to want to invest in only the best journalism around."*

**What is quality journalism? The most important question for news organisations today, but do we know what it means?** (<http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/polis/2018/06/05/what-is-quality-journalism-the-most-important-question-for-news-organisations-today-but-do-we-know-what-it-means/>)

**What is Quality Journalism: and how can it be saved** (<https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/our-research/what-quality-journalism-and-how-can-it-be-saved>)



# LAUNCHING A MEETING

This practical module is designed to provide students with a realistic idea of newsroom operations. Students will establish or continue their journalism club, decide on the purposes of their media outlet, and learn more about the editorial roles in a newsroom. Students will be assigned both journalistic and editorial roles. The most fundamental part of the module will be setting up a working process to organize the journalistic work of students in a real newsroom environment with a certain type of media in mind, as well as creating specific roles for that media type and planning meetings.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Ss will get an accurate and realistic idea of how a real newsroom operates.
2. Ss will feel like part of a real newsroom environment, where each one of them is assigned an editorial role.
3. Ss will be involved in setting up a working process to organize the journalistic efforts of the team.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- Ss have a basic understanding of how a real newsroom operates.
- Ss gain knowledge about the different editorial roles.
- Ss can organize their journalistic efforts in a clear and simple way.

## OUTLINE OF THE KEY CONCEPTS

*(See the corresponding Key Concepts Section)*

### 1. Creating a newsroom

- Platform
- Product
- Audience
- Architecture
- Planning

### 2. Newsroom architecture: What are the different editorial roles in a newsroom?

- Editor in Chief
- Editor
- Reporter
- Photo Reporter
- Photo Editor
- Designer

### 3. Planning: Objectives and checklist of the editorial meetings

### 4. Editorial meeting checklist: What happens during a editorial meeting?

## MODULE LENGTH

60 minutes (*teacher chooses activities for about 40 min*)

## LESSON PLAN: ACTIVITIES AND TIMEFRAME

ACTIVITIES	LESSON OBJECTIVE	TIME
1. Brainstorming: Student-run Media Ideas	1, 2, 3	15-20 min
2. Choosing Editorial Roles	1, 2, 3	12 min
3. First Editorial Meeting	1, 2, 3	10-15 min

## HOMEWORK ACTIVITIES

Setting up different online and offline tools to help Ss better organize their work and track progress:

- A board which Ss can use as a visual aid to share their thoughts and inspiration, pin story ideas, or use as a timetable for ongoing work and projects (alternatively, they can create an online visual board on Pinterest or Glogster).
- A shared Google calendar where Ss can either fill in local current events they are interested in covering, schedule meetings for interviews, or research on a certain topic.
- A shared Google sheet with topics and their respective authors and editors which should be filled in during or after each planning meeting.

## ACTIVITY 1

TITLE	BRAINSTORMING: STUDENT-RUN MEDIA IDEAS
TIME	15-20 minutes
STEPS	<p><b>Scenario A:</b> establishing a new journalism club</p> <p>1. Divide the whiteboard in several sections to generate ideas and decide on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ What type of media Ss want to create (an online newspaper, radio show, etc.)</li> <li>■ What topics they want to cover (and where they will draw inspiration: from news sites, social media, friends and family, etc);</li> <li>■ Which platform will they use (WordPress or other blog, Facebook page, in print, via radio, etc.);</li> <li>■ Who their target audience is (profile of readers/listeners/viewers);</li> <li>■ What type of content they will focus on and how it will be sub-divided (general news, commentary, analysis, photo stories, or a mix of everything)</li> <li>■ How often content will be produced (daily, weekly, monthly)</li> </ul> <p>*Be sure to write the section names on the board before the beginning of class.</p> <p>2. Distribute sticky notes to Ss and ask them to express their ideas using key words only. After collecting their responses, T sticks the notes on the whiteboard under/after each heading.</p>

<b>STEPS</b>	<p>3. Pick out the most commonly repeated answers and organize them into like groups. Ask Ss to review the ideas in order to reach final decisions about their media project. Vote for the final form of the student-run media (15-20 min in total).</p> <p><b>Scenario B:</b> working with an existing journalism club (see the relevant section in the. How to start a journalism club “unit”)</p> <p>1. If there is an already functioning journalism club, engage Ss in a brainstorming session on the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The main goals and strengths of the student-run media outlet;</li> <li>■ Areas for improvement;</li> </ul> <p>2. Distribute sticky notes to Ss and ask them to express their ideas using key words only. After collecting their responses, T sticks the notes on the whiteboard after each heading.</p>
<b>MATERIALS AND RESOURCES</b>	Flipchart (whiteboard, markers, sticky notes)

## ACTIVITY 2

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>CHOOSING EDITORIAL ROLES</b>
<b>TIME</b>	12 minutes
<b>STEPS</b>	<p>1. Give Ss a <b>fact sheet with the editorial roles from The Guardian</b> (<a href="https://uploads.guim.co.uk/2017/09/13/Guardian_Education_Centre_Editorial_roles_fact_sheet.pdf">https://uploads.guim.co.uk/2017/09/13/Guardian_Education_Centre_Editorial_roles_fact_sheet.pdf</a>) to read and then engage them in a short discussion about the importance of each role (4 min).</p> <p>2. Ask Ss to pick which roles are essential for their own newsroom (2 min).</p> <p>3. Present Ss with two options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Creating a talent pool where editorial roles are assigned according to everyone’s talents and preferences (for example, the tech savvy student could become a video editor or a photographer);</li> <li>■ Agreeing to a weekly/monthly role rotation that allows each student to experience every position: reporter, editor, photo reporter, etc.</li> </ul> <p>Ss decide on one of the two structures by voting (3 min).</p> <p>4. When a consensus has been reached, assign each S his/her respective role and proceed to the first planning meeting (3 min).</p>
<b>MATERIALS AND RESOURCES</b>	<a href="https://uploads.guim.co.uk/2017/09/13/Guardian_Education_Centre_Editorial_roles_fact_sheet.pdf">https://uploads.guim.co.uk/2017/09/13/Guardian_Education_Centre_Editorial_roles_fact_sheet.pdf</a> (The Guardian) Handout



### ACTIVITY 3

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>FIRST EDITORIAL MEETING (TO FOLLOW ACTIVITY 1)</b>
<b>TIME</b>	15 minutes
<b>STEPS</b>	<p>1. Distribute pieces of paper with questions written on them and ask Ss to spend some time thinking and preparing to present their ideas for stories in their notebooks. They should organize presentation notes in the following manner: (4 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Explain what the story is about;</li> <li>■ Explain why it is important/relevant and why people would be interested to read it;</li> <li>■ Name a few sources to be used when researching the story;</li> <li>■ Suggest interesting and engaging storytelling methods (by using photographs, infographics, video, animation, etc.)</li> </ul> <p>2. Invite each member of the club to share his/her proposal for a story, while the others comment on it and make suggestions for further research and ways to produce it (10 min).</p> <p>3. Explain that this process represents the core of a news planning meeting (1 min).</p>
<b>MATERIALS AND RESOURCES</b>	Notebooks, pieces of paper with written questions

## KEY CONCEPTS

### 1. Creating a newsroom

Several important decisions should be made during the kick-off meeting in order to establish or upgrade an existing journalism club. These decisions are going to help focus and structure the team's efforts and create a working process aimed at producing content for your students' media outlet.

The following are the basics of how a newsroom operates. They concern the planning, production and distribution of content.

**Platform:** What type of media are you going to produce and how are you going to distribute it?

There are numerous options for storytelling and news consumption that students can choose from, depending on their interests, resources or time. If writing is their preferred form of expression, they can create an online newspaper on a web-based platform such as Wordpress. If they're more interested in multimedia journalism, they can create a video blog on YouTube or Vimeo or a radio show/podcast.

Once you've reached a decision, you can delve into the specifics of your chosen platform with some further reading:

**BBC Tips on How to write for the web** (BBC): <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schoolreport/19743392>

**BBC Tips on recording for radio** (BBC): [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/school\\_report/resources\\_for\\_teachers/8524006.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/school_report/resources_for_teachers/8524006.stm)

**BBC Tips on how to make a video news report** (BBC): [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/school\\_report/resources\\_for\\_teachers/8472052.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/school_report/resources_for_teachers/8472052.stm)

**Product:** What type of content do you want to create and what topics do you want to cover as a media platform? How are you going to organize this content into sections or categories?

This is a good time to introduce students to the different genres in journalism. Students can discuss whether they would prefer to produce only news and reportage or if they would rather opt for a mix of news, commentary and analysis.

You can either follow the classic newspaper structure for organizing content into Local news, Foreign news, Opinion, Culture (Entertainment/Lifestyle) and Sports; or you can use your own ideas and create a unique sequence of news that reflects school life and your students' interests.

**Audience:** Who are you writing for? What are the key demographics of your readers/listeners/viewers?

It is important for students to try and imagine who they want to reach/engage with their content. They need to know specifics about their various audience members (fellow students, teachers, parents, local authorities, etc.), the different ways they consume news, what type of information they are interested in, etc.

Remind them that they are working in a competitive environment with a tremendous amount of information sources and that they should collaborate with each other and think of different strategies to make their voices heard and cut through the background noise

**Architecture:** Who is who in the newsroom, what are the different editorial roles and how do they interact with each other? (*See more below*)

**Planning:** How often are you going to produce your content (on a daily, weekly or monthly cycle) and how are you going to organize the process of planning your content? (*See more below*)

## 2. Newsroom architecture: What are the different editorial roles in a newsroom?

Good journalism is the result of a team effort and you can showcase this by introducing students to the different roles a journalist can have in a newsroom. In this way, they will be able to understand how many people are involved in the production of a news story and how important each one of them is for the final product. The aim is to encourage students to work together and create content for their students' media.

You can start by reading and discussing the job descriptions and responsibilities of journalists in big and complex newsrooms such as The Guardian or the BBC.

**Editorial roles in The Guardian** (The Guardian): [https://uploads.guim.co.uk/2017/09/13/Guardian\\_Education\\_Centre\\_Editorial\\_roles\\_fact\\_sheet.pdf](https://uploads.guim.co.uk/2017/09/13/Guardian_Education_Centre_Editorial_roles_fact_sheet.pdf)

**Who does what in TV, radio and online news** (BBC): <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schoolreport/16576962>

Then, based on the interests and talents of the students, you can decide on a simple newsroom structure of your own. You can experiment by switching their roles at certain time intervals so that each student gets the chance to experience each editorial role. Alternatively, one student can take on few different roles.

The following roles are essential for the functioning of a student media outlet.

**Editor in Chief** - the teacher himself/herself

Definition One (**The Guardian**): The leader of the news organization, in charge of the overall strategy of the media platform and the values it stands for.

Further reading: 'Farewell, readers': Alan Rusbridger on leaving the Guardian after two decades at the helm (The Guardian): Former editor of The Guardian Alan Rusbridger reflects on his 20 years in charge of the newspaper and how journalism has changed over the past two decades: <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2015/may/29/farewell-readers-alan-rusbridger-on-leaving-the-guardian>

### EDITOR

Definition One (The Guardian): Responsible for overall content of the paper and making sure everything runs according to plan; has the final say on what appears.

Definition Two (BBC): Editors have overall charge of the content and have the final say on important decisions about what stories to cover and how to cover them. They are usually experienced and confident journalists with an overarching view of all the output, and will often decide which journalists get to write particular stories.

Basic responsibilities:

- Decides what stories should be covered;
- Decides how much time to allocate for each news item and decides the order in which they should run;
- Edits stories for style, grammar and sense; often writes the headlines;
- Is in charge of a particular section of the content

Further reading: [BBC on what makes a good editor](#)

### REPORTER

Definition One (The Guardian): Obtains information and writes stories; may cover all types of stories or may be a specialist who is concerned with a specific area of the news, such as sports or crime.

Definition Two (BBC): Gathers news by finding out all the relevant information and checking the facts. This can involve interviewing those involved or affected by the story, or attending news conferences, where organizations such as the police address a number of reporters at the same time to inform them about the story. Senior reporters or those who specialize in a particular area are sometimes called correspondents.

Basic responsibilities:

- Decides what stories should be covered;
- Decides how much time to allocate for each news item and decides the order in which they should run;
- Edits stories for style, grammar and sense; often writes the headlines;
- Is in charge of a particular section of the content

### PHOTO REPORTER

Definition (BBC): Photographers will gather all the best shots on location and need an appreciation of the sort of images that work well on the web. Creativity and an eye for strong imagery are important attributes.

### PHOTO EDITOR

Definition (The Guardian): Commissions freelance and staff photographers and selects the best pictures for stories.

### DESIGNER

Definition (The Guardian): Designs layouts that are attractive and accessible to the reader while maintaining the look and identity of the online newspaper.

### PLANNING: OBJECTIVES AND CHECKLIST OF THE EDITORIAL MEETINGS

The main objective of the editorial meeting is to organize the day-to-day process of gathering, packaging and publishing news. It is a brainstorming tool for generating story ideas, but it is also a place where everyone is given working assignments and a respective deadline.

**NB:** Deadlines are essential for the proper functioning of any newsroom. The stories in journalism tend to be open ended. It is likely that new information may come up, thus altering the course of the story. However, a journalist can't drag out the reporting part of his/her assignment forever. Sometimes it is worth waiting for an important piece of information or a source before publishing a certain story, but that is up to the editor to decide and reporters are expected to stick to the agreed-upon deadlines. Any piece of new information on a particular topic is a possible lead for a follow-up story.

The amount of editorial meetings you have depends on the frequency of your content production (daily, weekly, monthly, etc.) For example, you can have one meeting for discussing stories and work assignment ideas and another one a few days later to check on the progress made on each story. Alternatively, you can decide to hold a feedback meeting (what we did well and where things could have been improved) once the content is published. Keep it simple because too many meetings can eat up the time for actual news gathering.

The teacher can lead the editorial meeting himself/herself as editor in chief or can appoint one of the editors to lead it.

There are different approaches to generating stories during the editorial meeting; you can either go by sections (Local News, Culture, Sports, etc.) or by people. The important thing is that everyone on the team has the chance to suggest a story idea and collect feedback from the team.

If students are having a hard time coming up with ideas for stories, the teacher can pick their brains to find out what they are passionate about and what kind of stories they would like to tell. Anything can be a source of inspiration for a story — news from big media outlets, books or online articles, conversations with friends or relatives, town events, etc. Practically speaking, you can encourage students to keep a shared Google calendar where they can keep track of any town or school events. This list can be used during editorial meetings to plan news stories ahead of time. [Here are some more ideas](http://training.npr.org/audio/3-simple-ways-to-find-story-ideas/) (<http://training.npr.org/audio/3-simple-ways-to-find-story-ideas/>) on how to come up with ideas for stories from NPR.

Students should be encouraged to propose their ideas in the following manner:

1. Explain what the story is about;
2. Explain the reasons why it is important/relevant and why people would be interested in reading it;

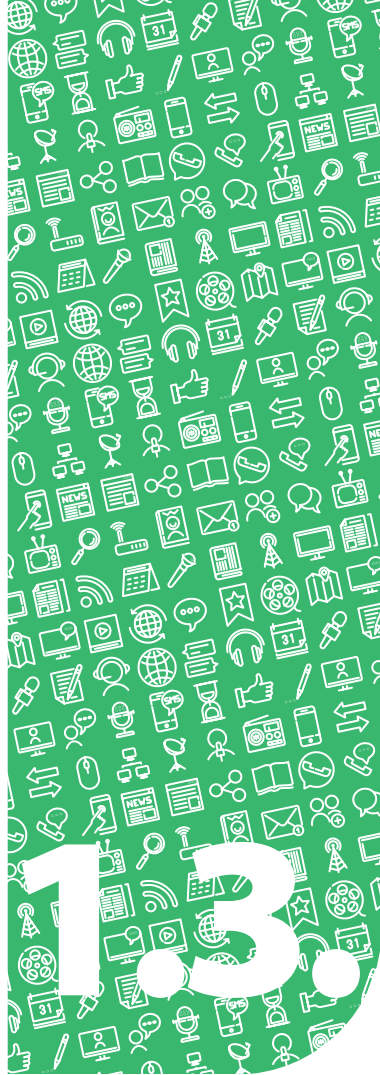
3. Name a few sources they will use to research the story
4. Propose how to tell the story in an engaging way — by using photographs, infographics, video, animation, etc.

Other students can give their feedback by discussing the relevance and importance of the story, or they can elaborate by giving further ideas about who to interview for the story or how to tell it in an engaging way.

The decision about which stories should be covered can be mutual or it can be made by the leader. The one question that must be considered when it comes to the selection process is: Is it important/interesting to our readers and is it worth spending time and resources on it?

#### **EDITORIAL MEETING CHECKLIST: WHAT HAPPENS DURING A EDITORIAL MEETING?**

- Students generate ideas for stories; everyone should suggest at least one;
- The team discusses the proposals and decides which stories to pursue;
- The editor in chief assigns students their respective stories and sets a deadline for writing, editing and publication;
- The editor in chief forms an editor-reporter team for each story;
- The editor in chief makes sure that all story ideas and their authors and editors are included in the shared Google sheet so that he/she can easily keep track of the progress being made.



# THE EDITING PROCESS

This module will combine students' knowledge about the editing process with further, practical steps in the role of either journalist or editor. Through roleplays, students will participate in planning meetings, work on transforming ideas into stories worth publishing, plan and research their stories, and experience working with an editor. This module's key concepts will explain the process of transforming their ideas into published stories and provide specific guidelines for journalists and editors within their roles.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Ss should understand the steps journalists take in order to publish a news story.
2. Ss have a basic understanding of an editor's job.
3. Ss gain editorial skills.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- Ss understand the basic steps that take an idea for a news story and turn it into a publication.
- Ss can explain an editor's job in the newsroom.
- Ss have the basic skills to edit a news story.

## OUTLINE OF THE KEY CONCEPTS

*(See the corresponding Key Concepts Section)*

1. What does an editor do?
2. Step-by-step guide how an idea turns into a published story
  - Step one: Generate ideas for news stories
  - Step two: Plan your story
  - Step Three: Research and reporting
  - Step Four: Writing
  - Step Five: Editing
  - Step Six: Feedback

## MODULE LENGTH

60 minutes

## LESSON PLAN: ACTIVITIES AND TIMEFRAME

ACTIVITIES	LESSON OBJECTIVE	TIME
1. Planning a Story	1, 2, 3	20 min
2. Deconstructing a Feature Story	1, 2, 3	30 min

## RESOURCES FOR FURTHER READING

· What does an editor do? (BBC) ([http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/theeditors/2006/06/what\\_does\\_an\\_editor\\_do.html](http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/theeditors/2006/06/what_does_an_editor_do.html))



## ACTIVITY 1

TITLE	PLANNING A STORY
TIME	20 minutes
STEPS	<p>1. Ask Ss to write out a short plan (2-3 sentences) for their respective ideas in their reporter's notebooks (20 min) after they have read the following guiding questions and points (projected or written on the board):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ What story do you want to tell or prove?</li> <li>■ What is the background/context of your story?</li> <li>■ Make a list of people you would like to interview for your story and explain how their relevance to the story.</li> <li>■ Make a list of all the other resources you are going to use during your research — documents, archives, pictures, data, web searches, audio files</li> </ul>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Notebooks, whiteboard/blackboard (projector and laptop optional)

## ACTIVITY 2

TITLE	DECONSTRUCTING A FEATURE STORY
TIME	30 minutes
STEPS	<p>1. Divide the class into several groups and ask them to deconstruct a feature story, with each group performing a different editorial task. Firstly, Ss will read the text and then perform their assigned tasks. The idea is not only to practice different editorial skills, but to break down the journalistic efforts behind a complex story into little steps (24 min). Example tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ One group is assigned to create a character map — identify all the different characters in the story, highlight the most useful quotes, mark the ones that present different points of view and point out the ones that don't.</li> <li>■ Another one is assigned to do fact-checking — highlight all the facts in the story (such as names, dates, numbers, locations) and search different news websites to check if the information is accurate.</li> <li>■ A third group should read and compare the front online pages of several news websites (The Guardian, The New York Times, The Independent) and explain why they have chosen these particular stories and what strategies they have used to grab the reader's attention — headlines, pictures, etc.</li> </ul> <p>2. After Ss have completed the assignment, each group presents their findings (2 min per group).</p> <p>Exemplary texts for the assignment:</p> <p><a href="http://fellowship.birn.eu.com/en/fellowship-programme/fellowship-programme-2014-article-blood-ties">http://fellowship.birn.eu.com/en/fellowship-programme/fellowship-programme-2014-article-blood-ties</a></p> <p><a href="http://fellowship.birn.eu.com/en/fellowship-programme/fellowship-programme-2%C3%A5aa4-article-romania-s-resilient-generation-the-kids-left-behind-who-get-ahead">http://fellowship.birn.eu.com/en/fellowship-programme/fellowship-programme-2%C3%A5aa4-article-romania-s-resilient-generation-the-kids-left-behind-who-get-ahead</a></p> <p><a href="http://fellowship.birn.eu.com/en/fellowship-programme/fellowship-programme-2014-article-entrepreneurs-strive-to-make-balkans-buzz-with-tech-startups">http://fellowship.birn.eu.com/en/fellowship-programme/fellowship-programme-2014-article-entrepreneurs-strive-to-make-balkans-buzz-with-tech-startups</a></p>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Internet connection

## KEY CONCEPTS

### 1. What does an editor do?

See 1.2 Launching a Meeting: Key Concepts for the definition of an editor and the basic responsibilities.

What makes a good editor, in the words of reporters:

**“They channel your voice, rather than drafting theirs onto your piece.”** Tim Egan, Op-ed columnist, The New York Times <https://www.nytimes.com/times-insider/2014/06/18/what-makes-a-great-editor-part-ii>

**“The best editor is the person who can take a modest story and make it big, broad and powerful.”** Gretchen Morgenson, business columnist reporter, The New York Times (<https://www.nytimes.com/times-insider/2014/06/16/what-makes-a-great-editor-part-i/>)

What makes a good editor [according to the BBC](#).

### 2. Step-by-step guide how an idea turns into a published story

■ **Step one: Generate ideas for news stories** (for tips on how to come up with interesting ideas for stories and how ideas are discussed and approved during planning meetings, see 1.2 Launching a Meeting: Key Concepts.

#### ■ Step two: Plan your story

When a student has a story idea and wants to start working on it, you can encourage him/her to answer the following questions and prompts first. It can help them find their focus and the right angle to a topic:

1. What story do you want to tell or prove?
2. What is the background/context of your story?
3. Make a list of people you would like to interview for your story and explain how are they relevant to your story.
4. Make a list of all the other resources you are going to use during your research — documents, archives, pictures, data, web searches, audio files, etc.
5. Think about what you would like to prove. Start by asking yourself: “Why is X happening?” Build a hypothesis and try to prove or disprove it through research.

#### ■ Step Three: Research and reporting

Research and reporting have a lot to do with proper time and resource management. There are two levels of research in journalism. At the initial stage, the focus is on accumulating facts and information on a given topic. At this stage, the journalist collects background information and [identifies the sources](#) in a story. The second phase consists of more in-depth research which involves interviewing the story’s key stakeholders and going through official documents, reports, court decisions, etc. The information-gathering process should begin with researching the most easily accessible sources and people first, then should gradually move on to more difficult and hard-to-find ones. It is of critical importance that the reporter prepares well for the interviews because the proper choice of questions is crucial for getting the right answers from the source.

#### ■ Step Four: Writing

Prior to starting the writing process, the reporter should first go through all of the information gathered, highlight the most important parts, and think of a clear text structure and proper wording for the lead, the different paragraphs, and summary.

Before the actual writing process begins, the reporter should discuss the story's structure with the editor. In this way, if both parties agree on it, a considerable amount of editing time will be saved, as the editor won't have to re-write the whole story from scratch.

Another time-saving technique is keeping good notes. This skill is important for journalists to have in order for them not feel overwhelmed by the sheer volume of information they have acquired on a certain topic (See more tips on writing in specific genres in the modules for News, Analysis and commentary, and Interview).

### ■ **Step Five: Editing**

The editor's job doesn't start with the written text. It is important for the editor and the reporter to work together as a team from the moment a story is conceived.

The role of the editor is also to support the reporter throughout the process of gathering information and researching a story. His/her guidance is crucial for finding the right angle of a story, identifying the important stakeholders and ways to approach them, and offering writing advice in order to make the story sound more convincing and engaging. The editor should know the characters in the story almost as well as the reporter does.

Once the story is written, the editor has to reread and carefully reflect on the story. Ideally, the reporter and the editor will have the time to sit and read through the story together.

Here are the important milestones on the editor's checklist:

**Clarity and relevance** — when reading through a story, an editor has keep in mind the following questions, among others: 1) Why is this story important/interesting? 2) Does it provide readers with new information? 3) Does it present a new angle to a certain issue? 4) Why should readers care about it? 5) What are the potential repercussions or impact of this story? 6) Is there enough background that puts the story in its context? 7) Is the context clear?

**Story structure** — the story should be simple, clear and able to grab readers' attention. When going through the story's structure, the editor should ask if the story has an engaging lead, if it has a summary paragraph,\* if the text includes enough arguments and quotes to present opposing viewpoints, and if it has a clear point and conclusion.

\*What is the story about? Put more simply, what are the answers to the 5 Ws?

**Fact-checking** — together with the reporter, the editor should verify and cross-check all the facts mentioned in the story. The editor can print the story on paper and highlight all the names, locations, definitions, and other facts that need to be checked for accuracy. The editor makes sure that the reporter has proof/verification of every claimed fact.

**Fairness to sources** — The editor should also look for balance in a story. Are all the different sides in a story equally represented? Has a person who has been criticized been given the right to reply? Are sources cited properly? Are there any anonymous sources quoted and, if so, what is the reason for their anonymity?

**Style and grammar** — the editor corrects typos, looks for a unique and engaging style of writing and shortens the text for clarity. The rule of thumb is that if you can say something in fewer words, you should do it. Too much information usually waters down the substance.

**Lead and headline** — as they are the first thing the reader sees, the editor must pay special attention to these; they determine whether the story will get read or not. [Here are some ideas](#) about different story leads and how to write good, catchy ones.

More on the fundamentals of editing [here](#).

### ■ *Step Six: Feedback*

It's important and helpful for both reporter and editor to take some time to reflect on the following questions once the story has been published:

- Why was that story important?
- Which were its strongest points?
- What did the reporter research/write that didn't end up in the text and why?
- How did working on the story affect the reporter and his/her work?
- How could it have been done better?

# JOURNALISM CODE OF ETHICS; INTRODUCTION TO JOURNALISTIC GENRES

This theoretical module will help students recognize and discuss ethical norms and standards in the journalistic profession. Students will have the opportunity to put themselves in the shoes of people whose stories provide ample opportunities for breaking ethical rules, as well as journalists who have to make decisions based on codes of conduct. While doing that, students will discuss and learn about various journalistic genres’ characteristics.

### OBJECTIVES

1. Ss will recognize the standards and ethical norms of the journalistic profession.
2. Ss will be able to present and differentiate between different journalism genres (news, commentary, analysis, video report, photo report, interview).

### EXPECTED RESULTS

- Ss can recognize standards and ethical norms in the journalistic profession.
- Ss can describe different journalism genres.
- Ss can explain why civic journalism is important.

### OUTLINE OF THE KEY CONCEPTS

*(See the corresponding Key Concepts Section)*

1. What is Ethics in Journalism?
  - Definition
  - Ethical Rules
2. Journalistic Genres (news, commentary, analysis, video report, photo report, interview)
  - Why is it important to distinguish between journalism genres?
  - News story
  - How to read the news
  - Analysis
  - Feature
  - Interview

### MODULE LENGTH

60 minutes *(teacher chooses activities for about 40 min)*

### LESSON PLAN: ACTIVITIES AND TIMEFRAME

ACTIVITIES	LESSON OBJECTIVE	TIME
1. Standards and Ethical Norms	1	12 min
2. Rules and Consequences	1	10 min
3. Create a Media Glossary	2	18 min
4. Game: Walk in Someone Else’s Shoes	1	20 min

## RESOURCES FOR FURTHER READING

- Code of Ethics of Bulgarian Media [http://ethicnet.uta.fi/bulgaria/ethical\\_code\\_of\\_the\\_bulgarian\\_media](http://ethicnet.uta.fi/bulgaria/ethical_code_of_the_bulgarian_media)
- Patrick Lee Plaisance. Journalism <http://communication.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228613.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228613-e-89>
- The UNICEF Manual <http://www.aej-bulgaria.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Children-and-the-Media-A-Guidebook-on-Ethical-reporting.pdf>

### Codes of Ethics: Europe

- Ethics net. Codes by country [http://ethicnet.uta.fi/codes\\_by\\_country](http://ethicnet.uta.fi/codes_by_country)
- BBC Editorial Guidelines (BBC) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/editorialguidelines/>
- BBC Code of Conduct (BBC) [www.bbc.co.uk/aboutthebbc/insidethebbc/howwework/policiesandguidelines/codeofconduct.html](http://www.bbc.co.uk/aboutthebbc/insidethebbc/howwework/policiesandguidelines/codeofconduct.html)
- Radio and Television Act: <http://www.abbro-bg.org/docs/8bc73e5e6aef581de7616ee20fc9fab8.pdf>

## HOMEWORK ACTIVITIES

Two options:

A. Create a partial news report.

Go through some of your favorite books to find different ways of describing characters. Compare the styles of character portrayal in *Slaughterhouse Five*, *The Hunger Games*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Anna Karenina*, etc.

B. Choose a place in the city to describe, e.g. the corner shop, the school cafeteria, the spot where students smoke, a concert hall, etc.

## ACTIVITY 1

TITLE	STANDARDS AND ETHICAL NORMS
TIME	12 minutes
STEPS	<p>1. Ask Ss what has impressed them most in the news and publications they have seen or read recently, for instance, photos of victims of accidents or violence, interviews with politicians, gossip or rumors about the personal lives of celebrities (2 min).</p> <p>2. Have Ss talk in pairs about what they have seen or read. (3 min)</p> <p>3. Summarize Ss' observations and present some of the main rules of the Code of Ethics of Bulgarian Media. See guidelines for more information (5 min).</p> <p>4. Write a few rules from the ethical code on the board and have Ss write down in their notebooks what the consequences of breaking these rules might be (2 min).</p> <p>5. Optional: show some videos on the topic.</p> <p>Example: BBC <i>JOURNALISM Values</i> (<i>find information and links in the key concepts</i>)</p>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<p><i>Code of Ethics of Bulgarian Media</i> <a href="http://ethicnet.uta.fi/bulgaria/ethical_code_of_the_bulgarian_media">http://ethicnet.uta.fi/bulgaria/ethical_code_of_the_bulgarian_media</a></p> <p>BBC <i>Journalism Values</i></p>

## ACTIVITY 2

TITLE	RULES AND CONSEQUENCES
TIME	10 minutes
STEPS	<p>1. Write different rules from the Code of Ethics of Bulgarian Media on the whiteboard or flipchart (2 min).  2. Have Ss write down the consequences of a journalist breaking these rules (4 min).  3. Ask individual Ss to share with the class what consequences might result from breaking the rules (4 min).</p> <p><b>Rule A:</b> Only <b>interview victims of violence, injured people, or children</b> when we have evidence that they have something to add to the process of uncovering the truth or if there is a delay in the investigation process.  <b>Consequence:</b></p> <p><b>Rule B: We cannot dig into anyone's personal life.</b> There are people we call "public figures" who are aware of the fact that the media will follow their every move. But the personal lives of politicians, public figures, and celebrities are only important if there is some information related to the public interest. In such cases, we are obliged to ask questions.  <b>Consequence:</b></p> <p><b>Rule C: We must not report facts related to people's mental and physical health</b> if this is not relevant to the event we are talking about.  <b>Consequence:</b></p>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Flipchart/whiteboard, markers OR <a href="#">Ethical Rules Handout</a> and space for writing down consequences

## ACTIVITY 3

TITLE	CREATE A MEDIA GLOSSARY
TIME	18 minutes
STEPS	<p>1. Prompt Ss to write their own definitions of news, reporting, and analysis (1 min).  2. Divide Ss into three teams: news, report, analysis (2 min).  3. Ask each team to make a list of what the main characteristics of their assigned genre is on a piece of flipchart paper (5 min).  4. Have each team present the main characteristics of their genre. Add information to the presentation if necessary (9 min).  *See Key Concepts for more information.  5. Stick the flipcharts to the wall (2 min).</p>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Blackboard/whiteboard, flipchart paper, markers



## ACTIVITY 4

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>GAME: WALK IN SOMEONE ELSE'S SHOES</b>
<b>TIME</b>	20 minutes
<b>STEPS</b>	<p><b>Trigger Warning:</b> This activity includes potentially sensitive content and mentions sexual assault, so don't use it if you think it is not age-appropriate for the members of the journalism club.</p> <p>(The aim of the game is to integrate observing the rules from the ethical code while doing a report and an interview.)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explain the task (3 min): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ss will work in pairs. Student A, Peter, is visually impaired and Student B, Anne, is a journalist who has to shoot a video report and interview Peter. What parts of Peter's story should Anne choose to include?</li> <li>■ Student C, John, is a doctor who has been accused of accepting a bribe. The doctor has published a photo of himself in his "friends only" Facebook profile. Student D, Martha, is a journalist who has to write an article about the accused doctor. Should Martha use John's profile photos?</li> <li>■ Student E, Joanna, was a victim of rape but the police have been unable to trace the perpetrator for months. Student F, Margo, is a journalist who has convinced Joanna to talk in front of the camera. What questions should Margo ask? What would the purpose of the interview be?</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. In pairs, have Ss discuss what they would do and why (10 min).</li> <li>3. Conclude the activity by summarizing what choices journalists are compelled to make between learning certain facts and deciding whether to disclose them (3 min).</li> <li>4. Instead of being assigned to work in pairs, some of the students could be the audience and judge which pair managed the task in the best way (add 2 min).</li> </ol>
<b>MATERIALS AND RESOURCES</b>	Scenarios printed on slips of paper

## KEY CONCEPTS

### 1. What is Ethics in Journalism?

#### ■ Definition:

When The Code contains issues of moral principles and standards as applied to the conduct, roles, and content of the mass media.

#### **Thomson Gale. Journalism Ethics**:

"Journalism is the profession of writing, editing, and publishing high-frequency periodicals that aim to report and comment on events of public interest, commonly called news, with its frontline practitioners, those who gather the data — reporters, photographers, videographers — and those who approve the data and prepare the collection of text and visuals for presentation — editors and producers. The unique role-related responsibility of journalists, which includes all of these practitioners, in democracy is to communicate to citizens information needed for self-governance. Self-governance includes the most mundane of decisions, such as what weather to prepare for when driving to work, and the most complex of choices, such as voting on referendums or candidates for public office.

As a profession, journalism is dependent on certain ethical standards to maintain the credibility needed to perform its role-related responsibilities. The professional acts of discovering, reporting, and disseminating the news is dependent on various technologies. Thus, insofar as both changes in science and technology alter the practice of journalism and journalists report on scientific and technological news, journalism ethics is of relevance to science, technology, and ethics, and vice versa."

#### **Patrick Lee Plaisance. Journalism Ethics**:

"News workers — writers, editors, videographers, bloggers, photographers, designers —regularly confront questions of potential harms and conflicting values in the course of their work, and the field of journalism ethics concerns itself with standards of behavior and the quality of justifications used to defend controversial journalistic decisions. While journalism ethics, as with the philosophy of ethics in general, is less concerned with pronouncements of the "rightness" or "wrongness" of certain acts, it relies on longstanding notions of the public-service mission of journalism. However, informing the public and serving a "watchdog" function regularly require journalists to negotiate questions of privacy, autonomy, community engagement, and the potentially damaging consequences of providing information that individuals and governments would rather withhold."

Short video:

#### **BBC Values: James Harding**

The BBC's ethics and values are non-negotiable. Director of news James Harding explains how they apply to BBC news and current affairs.

### ■ Ethical Rules:

#### Independence

The BBC's obligation to its audiences means journalists have to be able to show the independence of their decision-making and do all they can to eliminate doubt in it.

#### Accountability

Being accountable to BBC audiences means being able to show good reasons for your decisions. You should listen to your audience and acknowledge your mistakes.

#### Truth and Accuracy

Accuracy means not only getting the objective, verifiable 'facts' right but also accurately reporting opinions expressed by those you are reporting on.

#### The Public Interest

Do we report on the public interest or on what the public's interested in? The difference is crucial. And, of course, there are many different audiences with variable interests.

#### Impartiality

#### **Violence**

When reporters are at the scene of an event, they want to give us as much detail as possible in order to make us feel more involved. Journalists are responsible for judging whether to ask someone questions when they are suffering (Reference: Code of Ethics for Bulgarian Media).

**The overarching rule of interviewing victims of violence, injured people or children is to do so only:** when we have evidence that they have something to add to the process of uncovering the truth or if there is a delay in the investigation process.

#### **Personal lives of public and private figures**

We cannot dig into just anyone's personal life. There are people we call "public figures" who are aware of the fact that the media might follow their every move. But the personal lives of politicians, public figures, and celebrities is only important if this information is related to the public interest. In such cases, we are obliged to ask questions.

#### **Personal information**

We must not report facts related to people's mental and physical health if this is not relevant to the event we are talking about.

## 2. Journalistic Genres (news, commentary, analysis, video report, photo report, interview)

### **Why is it important to distinguish between journalism genres?**

According to Dominique Maingueneau, a genre is a **contract between the author, the medium and the audience**. With these short genre definitions, the author can say **what he or she promises the audience**.

**Each genre is related to preliminary work.**

- **How is information collected when writing a news item, feature, an analysis or an interview?**

The rule is that journalists should fact-check their stories across multiple information sources. Unfortunately, numerous media outlets copy information from each other without checking the information first.

The news item **should indicate** the information source.

Journalists need to edit the information so that it contains only what is important to readers or listeners.

### ■ *News Story*

A news story is a message containing new information. It contains facts that journalists arrange and edit. There may be different opinions in the news, but there should be no journalistic commentary.

#### ■ How to read the news

Certain phrases can reveal that there is a problem with credibility. If you see: "Information from two of our independent sources," "Sources close to the editorial offices," "Sources close to the investigation," "two sources from the prosecution," etc., this means the information has not been verified.

**NB:** Such information should not be ignored, but other sources should be sought out in order to verify it.

The information may come from:

- An official source
- Unverified information — reported by an anonymous source
- A source requesting anonymity (journalists know who the source is, but may not disclose it)
- Another media outlet (or Internet platform)
- Weather forecast news

This is one of the most important pieces of information that helps us make decisions, if needed. The language used must be understandable to viewers, not just experts. The first sentence must contain the most important information, as during a storm the TV signal may be interrupted, the Internet may disappear, and there may be no media access.

### ■ *Analysis*

This is a journalism genre that provides explanations for societal and global phenomena. Analyses present different perspectives and focus on the question why. Analysts try to outline how a process will develop or what will happen in the future.

An analysis can begin by stating the problem, immediately followed by the main thesis to be defended. Then the arguments are given. It is very important for the text to be coherent.

We need to be careful not to insult or slander anyone.

### ■ *Feature*

Journalists report on what they see or have researched. A feature story uses detailed description and vivid writing. It is important to observe, take notes, and record words, data, comments, and details.

Each reporter can choose what aspects to emphasize — whether to start with descriptions or portraits of the participants in the event, whether or not to show the location, and whether to start with the end of the story and take us back to the beginning or tell the story in a more conventional way. Of course, they should always follow the chronology of events.

We hear different opinions in reports.

It is vital to follow certain rules for identifying people, and the UNICEF Manual is an important reference for such recommendations.

<http://www.aej-bulgaria.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Children-and-the-Media-A-Guidebook-on-Ethical-reporting.pdf>

**The rule** is not to use descriptions of things which are irrelevant to the event.

### ■ Interview

The interview may be a stand-alone genre or part of a report, but could also be a feature or a longer form such as a documentary.

The most important thing for the journalist to know from the very beginning is the purpose of the interview and how to achieve it.

#### **When is interrupting the interviewee necessary?**

What is important is to get the information the audience wants to know, not to ask questions that are easy on the interviewee. Therefore, if the interviewee avoids certain questions or does not provide accurate information, it is better to repeat the question.

**One common misconception about interviews is that there are “awkward” questions.** Journalists can explain to interviewees why it is important to communicate certain information.

Journalists have pre-written questions but listening to the interviewee can lead the conversation in a direction that gives more information or turns a conversation into an emotional exchange.

**In video reports,** interlocutors should look at each other. It is not good idea to look at a script. You should make sure that you sit at your interviewee's eye level — for example, if he or she is a child, you should sit or kneel and have the conversation on an equal footing.

Many people worry about the camera and follow it with their eyes. Explain to them that they should look at you because they are talking to you. The operator is recording them, but it is a mistake to look at the camera.

**About radio interviews:** When the interview is broadcast on the radio, the interlocutors should refer to each other on a family name basis. Interviewers should remind the listeners who they are speaking to at regular intervals, as listeners do not always start listening to the conversation from the beginning.

#### **Preliminary questions**

Do journalists have to comply with PR department requests to send their questions in advance? Certainly, not! But if you want data, it is better to send some of the questions in advance and to word other questions as common themes. Journalists have the right to ask questions. When it comes to talking with people who have no media experience, they might tell you a lot of interesting things in advance, but then they may not want to repeat them in front of the camera. That's why asking your questions in advance may not always be a good idea.

#### **IN CASE OF:**

##### **Informing the audience about something that has not been confirmed yet**

Phrases used to warn the audience include: “According to unconfirmed information,” “According to unofficial information,” and “According to an anonymous source”.

**NB:** If we delay the disclosure of some information in order to check it, we may fail to warn others about something important. So, the solution is to report the information and let our audience decide for themselves whether or not to take action. However, we must warn them that there is no verified source.

Sometimes journalists rely on **sources of information who wish to remain anonymous**. When we receive information from such a source, there is a risk that the editorial office will be given information to serve certain interests. However, it could also be a person who is afraid of saying something in public. Journalists are obliged to protect the identities of such sources.

***How news items are written***

***We search for*** additional information about the participants in the event, to remind us about how it started, or what has happened so far.

It is important to arrange the information in a coherent manner in order to clarify cause and effect. Precise verb tenses are also important. We must say if an event is ongoing or is already over.

Links to similar news provide ***additional context***.

***Presentation of data — accuracy and unambiguousness***

The data may be presented as a chart or with different visual effects.

It is a good idea to present figures in a meaningful way because listeners have no time to make calculations while listening to the news on TV. ***We should be careful with adjectives and adverbs — they should not be ambiguous.***

***Civic Journalism***

Civic journalism gives voice to opinions that otherwise do not reach the media. But it also gives rise to the question: ***Who verifies the truthfulness of the information?***

It is important not to withhold information or restrict opinions. But information coming from other sources needs to be confirmed.

Public media have an obligation to inform the public what the state administration in the executive, legislative and judiciary branches is doing. Journalists seek different opinions — for instance, those of opposition parties and non-governmental organizations or groups.

Let us examine an expression often used by the Bulgarian media: The bill is having its First Reading in the N.A. Between the First and the Second Reading in the National Assembly, proposals may be submitted and different representatives of the public interest may submit requests for changes which the MPs had not previously thought of. It is a good idea to have representatives of different social groups in Parliament, but this is not always the case. More often, it is the media's job to trigger a ***discussion so that the best possible decisions can be voted on.***



2.2.

## **NEWS: BASIC KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

This practical module deals with the most essential part of journalism — the news. Students will learn to distinguish newsworthy stories from those that aren't. They'll learn basic news-writing principles and practice applying them. They'll examine the structure of a news story and will be introduced to different styles of reporting, their combinations, and the way they interact with one another. Students will have to start thinking about research, a target audience, types of news, presentation styles, and means of discovering interesting story angles.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Ss will be able to distinguish between what is newsworthy, generate story ideas and learn the core principles of news writing.
2. Ss will be able to report, write and edit news pieces.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- Ss learn basic news-writing principles and how to apply them when writing news pieces.
- Ss develop the skills necessary to find newsworthy stories, then approach them and tell them from different angles.
- Ss can identify different parts of a news story and understand how to write them in an engaging manner.
- Ss are familiar with different styles of reporting and how they can interact with each other.

## OUTLINE OF THE KEY CONCEPTS

*(See the corresponding Key Concepts Section)*

1. What is the news?
  - Story ideas and research
  - Who do you write for?
  - Types of News
  - Discovering interesting angles
2. Basic principles and structure
  - The 5 Ws of Reuters
  - Structure of an article and the "Inverted pyramid"
  - Sources, Opinions and Quotes
  - Length and clarity
3. Editing
  - Double-checking information and proof-reading
  - Rewriting and cutting stories

## MODULE LENGTH

60 minutes *(teacher chooses activities for about 40 min)*

## LESSON PLAN: ACTIVITIES AND TIMEFRAME

ACTIVITIES	LESSON OBJECTIVE	TIME
1. Brainstorming: What Can be News in Our School and Town?	1	10 min
2. Discussion: What is News?	1	15 min
3. Writing News Leads	2	10 min
4. The "Inverted Pyramid:" Deconstructing a News Piece	1	15 min
5. Write an Article (Based on Current Events)	2	15 min



## RESOURCES FOR FURTHER READING

- BBC Academy on how to write a good news story (BBC Academy) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pdkbsl3YjHM>)
- Reuters Manual on Reporting and Writing Basics (Reuters) ([http://handbook.reuters.com/index.php?title=Reporting\\_and\\_Writing\\_Basics](http://handbook.reuters.com/index.php?title=Reporting_and_Writing_Basics))
- News writing tips for beginners (Media Helping Media) (<http://www.mediahelpingmedia.org/training-resources/journalism-basics/464-assembling-a-news-story>)
- Journalism Skills for Engaged Citizens (Coursera) (<https://www.coursera.org/learn/journalism-skills>)

## HOMEWORK ACTIVITIES

Writing a story lead based on pre-written information

Writing a headline and sub-headline based on pre-written information

Writing an entire news piece based on a school event

## ACTIVITY 1

TITLE	BRAINSTORMING: WHAT CAN BE NEWS IN OUR SCHOOL AND TOWN?
TIME	10 minutes
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask Ss to work in pairs and think of an interesting topic for a news piece (2 min).</li> <li>2. Discuss what would be an interesting angle to tell the story from (2 min).</li> <li>3. Identify the three basic points of the story and write them down (3 min).</li> <li>4. Select a number of Ss to briefly tell their potential stories to the class (3 min).</li> </ol>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Notebooks and pens

## ACTIVITY 2

TITLE	DISCUSSION: WHAT IS NEWS?
TIME	15 minutes
STEPS	<p>1. Display A4 sheets of paper around the room on which you have previously written the questions below.</p> <p>2. Ask Ss to circulate, read the questions, and put sticky notes with their answers underneath (5 min). It's okay if not all students can answer all the questions.</p> <p>3. Discuss the answers and add information from the guidelines on these questions (10 min).</p> <p>"What is news?" questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ What do you think makes a piece of news a good one?</li> <li>■ What's the difference between a "yellow" publication and a "real" source of news?</li> <li>■ What piece of news from the last week did you find most interesting? Why did you remember it?</li> <li>■ What kind of story would you write if your primary audience was your class? What if it was your school? What if it was your town? Or the country as a whole?</li> <li>■ Why is proof-reading important? Do you do it for other writing assignments you have to complete (homework, exams)?</li> </ul>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	A4 sheets of paper with questions, sticky notes

## ACTIVITY 3

TITLE	WRITING NEWS LEADS
TIME	10 minutes
STEPS	<p>1. Distribute a handout with information about three different events. Some (but not all) available information on the events that occurred should be given (1 min).</p> <p>2. Have Ss write the leading sentences of the story, trying to stick to the principle of the 5 Ws (6 min).</p> <p>3. Call on 3 Ss to read their leads, with the class determining whether they have done them correctly (3 min).</p>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<a href="#">Writing News Leads Handout</a>

## ACTIVITY 4

TITLE	THE “INVERTED PYRAMID:” DECONSTRUCTING A NEWS PIECE
TIME	15 minutes
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Print out the following news story and distribute it to Ss: Bulgaria tightens law against hooliganism (France Presse) See the Materials and Resources section.</li> <li>2. Ask Ss to read the story (5 min).</li> <li>3. Using the “inverted pyramid” model, ask Ss to mark the lead, the body and the tail of the story (5 min).</li> <li>4. Prompt a discussion: Tell Ss to cut the tail part of the text. Does the story maintain its news value? What if they remove the body of the text? Do you still know what it is about? Do you still know the answers to the 5 Ws? (5 min)</li> </ol>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Handouts: <a href="#">Inverted Pyramid Handout</a> <a href="#">Bulgaria tightens law against hooliganism</a>

## ACTIVITY 5

TITLE	WRITE AN ARTICLE (BASED ON CURRENT EVENTS)
TIME	15 min + homework
STEPS	<p>Prompt: <i>Select a newsworthy event from the TV/newspaper or school and make a brief report out of it. Use all the basic principles learned in class (the 5 Ws and inverted pyramid structure) or go outside of the box.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assign Ss the prompt and give them a word limit of 100-200 words.</li> <li>2. Collect their articles, then print and stick them on the wall before the next class.</li> <li>3. Ask Ss to circulate and read the articles, choosing the one that they found most interesting.</li> <li>4. Debrief with Ss about what they found interesting.</li> </ol>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Access to TV/print news/online media, printouts of Ss’ completed assignments, tape

## KEY CONCEPTS

### I. WHAT IS ETHICS IN JOURNALISM?

*“When a dog bites a man, that is not news, because it happens so often. But if a man bites a dog, that is news” – Alfred Harmsworth, British newspaper magnate.*

There are so many different things happening around us and in the world, but what makes some more newsworthy than others? It all depends on the context in which it happens and who you write for. Appointing a new English language teacher might not be news for the local newspaper or the national TV station, but it might very well turn into an interesting feature for your school radio station or magazine. At the same time, a parliamentary decision to reduce social spending might not be the first thing local newspapers would write about, yet, at the same time, it might affect people from the community — which would make it newsworthy.

What often makes for interesting news is the fact that an event is recent, somehow disturbs the existing patterns of life, and holds an interesting and significant meaning for a specific community. There are certain caveats to these rules: if something happened yesterday and has been reported by others, it is not news. But if you find out some specific new details or angles that give the story a fresh outlook, it might become newsworthy. If everybody reports today that your town mayor has resigned, citing “personal reasons”, but tomorrow you get to interview him and see what these “personal reasons” are, this still makes it news. This applies to unusual events, too — maybe there is an old person still working way past his retirement age — and while this is not something newsworthy in the traditional sense (it didn’t happen today or last week), it is still pretty newsworthy if nobody else has noticed it yet. This applies to scientific breakthroughs, new businesses being launched, and noticing and explaining any new tendency in general.

One last thing: look at the so-called “yellow press” — these newspapers are usually very thick, with hundreds of petty personal dramas or rumors regarding celebrities. Are these news? Most of them are not: they usually do not abide by the high standards of journalism, they don’t give voice to the people involved, and usually rely on unnamed sources or rumors, as opposed to opinions and unconfirmed information.

Questions for a class discussion:

- What do you think makes a piece of news a good one?
- What is the difference between a “yellow” publication and a “real” news source?

### 1. STORY IDEAS AND RESEARCH

Potential news topics are all around you — everything that has happened and is unusual, that showcases an interesting trend, or will have significant consequences is something that needs reporting and further research. Upcoming student body elections in school? The only way for people to learn what candidates are promising and whether they’re actually able to deliver is through media. An exchange student from a far-away country is a perfect story. What about the anniversary of an important event for the community? If you find the right people (first-hand witnesses of the event or people related to an important character), go ahead and interview them. The more you research and report on a specific topic, the more interesting stories and details that come out of it will usually be.

Sometimes, there are national or international trends that have local effects. Look for these — policies on the national or international level that reflect a problem or highlight an issue close to home. There is a new EU Commission decision about greenhouse gas emissions: maybe this will affect the local thermal heating plant. Why not report on these effects, asking relevant people who work there or who are managers of the company? There is a government campaign against drugs: how does it work in your town?

Look for news in the local paper or on TV and ask yourself: What can I add? What is missing from this report? Read national newspapers and watch the news at 20:00 — what is a relevant topic in your town? Talk to people around you, your classmates, your teachers and your family — what is of interest to them that you can delve into? Look at decisions on a school, local, national, or international level — how do they affect life? You probably have some hobbies, let's say, football, but football is not only about the game on the field; it's about transfers of players, clubs going bankrupt, youth teams making a breakthrough into first division... These are all potential stories.

## 2. WHO DO YOU REPORT FOR?

This really depends on the type of media you write for. If you are Reuters, you have three different audiences — other media that cite you, professionals that use your subscription services for quick, accurate information, and the broader public.

*"As we only write one version of the story, we need to ensure that the significance and background are properly explained for an international readership, while not making the story so basic that a sophisticated reader won't value the news it contains. All readers want simple, clearly written stories that say what's happening and why it matters,"* the Reporting and Writing Basics manual of the information agency states.

Although the principles of accuracy, fairness, and (as long as these first two are provided for) speed are essential for all media dealing with the daily news, there are differences when it comes to newspapers, TV, radio and online publications. If you are a print newspaper, you don't need to hurry with reporting but you do need to propose new angles to stay relevant. If you are on TV, on the other hand, you need to be present at events ASAP, while the originality of your reporting can be more of a secondary concern. If you are writing for your community or on a school issue or broadcasting for the local TV or radio station, engaging with community problems should be your top priority.

## 3. TYPES OF NEWS:

It is important to note that there are different types of news: political, economic, social, educational, business, sports, and cultural, among many others. All of them can be further subdivided into various groups; cultural news can be divided into music, the arts, etc., for example. In any case, the basic principles and process behind reporting the news are the same — the reporter needs to know they are writing for, what is interesting and new, and, last but not least, if the information they provide is accurate and clear and abides by the ethical standards of journalism. Understanding the process behind reporting is crucial, as it makes you a good reader of the news — it helps you reverse-engineer the way a news piece was produced because it helps you ask the right questions while you read:

- Is it fresh? Does it give me new and relevant information?
- Does the information look consistent and clear?
- Do we know exactly what happened, and who claims that it happened in this way?
- Do we know why it happened and why it matters?
- Were relevant stakeholders asked for comment?
- Did the journalist abide by the ethical code of conduct?

These are the basic principles editors or producers base their judgments on when they decide which information is news and which is not.

We should keep in mind that, while the innate characteristics of a piece of information (prominent people, peculiar doings, and so forth) determines if it is newsworthy, there are other forces at work, including how important a new piece of information is to society in general and what kind of impact it might have.

**Presentation** is best described in terms of **tone** and **weight**.

The tone can be humorous, serious, conversational, or scholarly. It also indicates whether editors think the story alerts, diverts, or connects.

The weight is the time and space devoted to a story and indicates how important and/or interesting editors think it is.

#### 4. DISCOVERING INTERESTING ANGLES

A story may have a variety of angles. Let's go back to the example of the EU greenhouse gas emissions regulation and your local thermal plant — you could tell the story from the personal perspective of a worker who might lose his job due to the regulation. Alternatively, you might look into the environmental and health impacts of the plant in your area — maybe it causes higher levels of smog and ecological damage. Maybe you can look into the future and see how companies start investing in renewable energy sources in preparation for the plant's closure. These are just three different angles that will give your reader or viewer different sense of the events. A really good report should mention the most relevant issues related to the topic, but various more detailed reports might focus on a specific issue. Keeping a balance between "depth" and "breadth" of coverage is key.

*Questions for a class discussion:*

- What piece of news from last week did you find the most interesting? Why do you remember it?
- What kind of story would you write if your primary audience was your class? What if it was your school? What if it was your town? Or the country as a whole?

## II. BASIC PRINCIPLES AND STRUCTURE

In order to make good news stories, you need to: engage your reader; give them the most important piece of information first; follow a certain logic of providing the most relevant and interesting information first; keep their attention; provide all the relevant opinions and sides of a story; tell them how you found out about it; and indicate why the information or data you provide is relevant. Additionally, you have to write in short and succinct words, try to be fair to all sides of the debate and not take sides — leave readers to make their own conclusion. Last, but not least, you need to learn to edit, cut text for clarity, and write strong leading paragraphs and titles so that you get people's attention in the first place.

### 1. THE 5 WS OF REUTERS

There is not much to add, so here they are:

Every story must answer, in its very first paragraphs, the following questions: Who, what, when, where and why?

WHO is at the center of the story — who is the main person (or individuals) involved in it, who is being affected, who is benefiting, and who will lose out?

*Example: Mayor of Ruse announces his resignation*

WHAT is what the story is actually about — what is the core action that needs further explanation? This is the substance and core of a story: it explains how all the relevant WHOs are related to it.

*Example: Resignation of mayor leads to administrative blockage*

WHEN is about the timing of an event. It is always extremely important to note the date and/or time an event occurred, how long has it been developing, how it may have been affected by events in the past and how it could, in turn, affect the future.

*Example: Tuesday resignation of mayor leads to snap elections*

WHERE is crucial in pinpointing the locale in which your news is important — the closer it is, the more intriguing to readers and viewers it will be.

*Example: Ruse mayor's resignation leads to turmoil in city*

WHY is your explanation of the topic's relevance. Why should we care about a subject? This is the question you need to respond to in order to explain the meaningfulness of an event.

*Example: Mayoral resignation triggers governing crisis*

Bonus: the HOW of a story is the more detailed explanation of how the story could affect people's lives.

*Questions for a class discussion:*

■ For what reasons would you put the WHEN of the story first? What about the WHERE and the WHY?

## 2. STRUCTURE OF AN ARTICLE AND THE "INVERTED PYRAMID"

When arranged in a particular order, the 5 Ws principle becomes your lead. Depending on which W is most important to a specific topic or news piece, it takes precedence and the rest follow. But it is up to you to decide, depending on the context: is it the time, the place, the "what happened," or "how it happened" that matters?

Once you go past this step, your story should follow the following structure, known as the "inverted pyramid" of news information. The most important information is in the beginning and the further in your article you go, the more detail you add.

■ All of your important details should be in your lead — the opening sentences of your article. Keep it short and sweet.

■ Then comes the body, where you develop your thoughts, you add the opinions and arguments of the various sides, and you provide deeper background or details.

■ In the end you add the tail, or the extra info that is not top priority, but improves the quality of the story for the reader — the closing touch.

■ While you write all this, think of the headline, the sub-headline, and the in-text subheadings. These are the most important pieces of information your readers will read if they skim through your piece; they need to provide the most crucial and succinct information out of the entire article (headline and sub-headline) and the different elements of it (the subheadings).

*Figure Source: Wikimedia Creative Commons*

*Questions for a class discussion:*

- Why do you usually put the most important information first?
- Could there be reasons for you not to follow the inverted pyramid logic? What would be the occasion in which it could be turned upside down?

**3. SOURCES, OPINIONS, AND QUOTES**

You should be as honest with your reader as possible — where did you learn the information from, how do you know what happened, and when did you get it Every piece of information should be sourced; rather than express your views on something, compile the thoughts and comments of various actors.

Use quotations wisely — they should not repeat something that has been said already but compliment it, add value to the text, and follow its logic. They help you move the story forward, but don't overuse them. Too many quotes make a story hard to read. If you can, paraphrase, but only do so when the meaning of what your interviewee is saying remains clear.

The primary source for every journalist ought to be their own personal experience and involvement in a topic. Once a theme is selected, reporters need to go "into the field" to gather information. "The field" can take on various forms — sometimes, it is really a place (a ceremony, Parliament, a happening on-site where a reporter can talk to different people and get a first-hand look at things, etc.) and sometimes it might mean organizing private meetings, discussing information during informal occasions, or doing research at a library or on the Internet. All of these things form the backbone of the story.

**4. LENGTH AND CLARITY**

Once you start writing, be direct. Use simple words. Try writing with short, one-syllable words and short sentences (15-16 words per sentence). But bear in mind that combining a few long sentences with shorter ones will change the pacing of your narrative.

Clarity and precision — be clear and precise about what you want to say. Don't overdo adjectives and use the right ones to describe a certain phenomenon. Avoid clichés or imprecise metaphors you do not understand or that will be hard for readers to understand. People have just one chance to understand your meaning.

Write and re-write, each time trying to simplify the language and the sentences that you use. Simplify your language, not your thoughts.

**5. BEYOND THE TEMPLATES: EXPERIMENTATION**

Bear in mind that the classical 5 Ws and inverted pyramid storytelling method is nothing more than a template. Templates have their downsides, too — they don't always organize a story in a logical manner, they can get repetitive, and they mostly work for shorter stories. Sometimes, you might need to develop a story in its chronological order for clarity or suspense. Experiment with everything — sentence length, the structure of what information you provide first, focus — this will give your readers various different feelings from the same story.

Think what you want to convey. Sometimes, we need to give a straightforward narrative of what has happened in a strictly chronological way. Other times, we need to evoke an atmosphere or narrative and, perhaps, to focus on analysis, giving context, explaining what happened, why, and what it means. Think about what medium you are writing for. If you write script for TV or radio, visuals, or audio reels can be used to complement the words.



Here's some final advice from the BBC Academy: people who write well usually read a lot — and not only news but also books, poetry, and other forms. Notice how famous authors use language to convey their ideas. If you cannot make people finish reading what you write what is the point of writing so well?

### III. EDITING

Editing a news piece is as important as the writing itself. It gives you a chance to correct mistakes, proof-read, and get a second opinion on whether something has been written in the most informative and practical manner possible. Editing also offers the opportunity to restructure a piece, make it clearer, and get rid of information that is not crucial for the sake of length and clarity, thus helping the story become easier to read and more interesting. Always allow enough time for editing and never skip it — it might make the difference between a good story and a bad one.

#### 1. DOUBLE-CHECKING AND PROOF-READING

Once an article has been written, think about several questions. Is the information you're providing really new and relevant? Are facts and statements made by the author or the interviewees correct, and have they been cross-checked with other sources? Has the article been researched thoroughly enough, providing all the relevant context and information required for a (non-expert) reader to understand it? Have the sources that were put to use been double-checked for trustworthiness and accuracy? Has all the information been verified using at least two different original sources unrelated to one another (which have not quoted each other and which do not use the same source material, as far as this is verifiable)?

A good editor checks everything — whether the text and its thesis are coherent inside and out, if the different parts of the article contradict each other, if the author makes it clear enough how they gathered the information, if all the numbers are correct and are put into the right context...

Reuters recommends that an editor needs to check for balance and legal dangers and see if the story is balanced and fair. Does the story cast a slur on the good name of an individual, company, or organization? If so, it could be libelous!

*Questions for a class discussion:*

- Why is proof-reading important? Do you do it for other tasks (homework, exams)?

#### 2. REWRITING AND CUTTING STORIES

Last, but not least, always leave enough time to re-write a story. By the second or third reading, you might find a gap in your logic or flow or decide that you have to add some more information that gives additional context.

But also, never forget the golden rule that "a story can be cut short to the point at which it is not published." One should always be ready to cut elements of their story, especially when they have time or space constraints. Even complicated stories (should) have a couple of crucial points and a lot of background that can be cut down for the purposes of clarity or readability.

A vertical red bar on the left side of the page, featuring a dense pattern of white line-art icons. The icons represent various concepts related to technology, communication, and media, such as a smartphone, a laptop, a globe, a speech bubble, a magnifying glass, a network of nodes, a film strip, a camera, a microphone, a document, a star, a heart, a thumbs up, a thumbs down, a person, a group of people, a handshake, a lightbulb, a gear, a clock, a calendar, a mail envelope, a key, a padlock, a shield, a flag, a trophy, a medal, a ribbon, a star, a heart, a thumbs up, a thumbs down, a person, a group of people, a handshake, a lightbulb, a gear, a clock, a calendar, a mail envelope, a key, a padlock, a shield, a flag, a trophy, a medal, a ribbon.

3.1.

## **HATE SPEECH AND REGULATORY INSTITUTIONS**

This module will direct students' attention towards the definition of hate speech and the ways in which the media sometimes sends messages and uses words that are defined as hate speech. Students will practice writing without using hate speech and participate in activities that put them in the shoes of people who have been affected by hate speech. In this module, students will also have the opportunity to discuss rights and forms of civic activity related to violations of children's rights.

## OBJECTIVES

Ss will understand the impact and influence of particular messages and words related to hate speech (based on race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation).

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- Ss recognize hate speech messages in media.
- Ss can write about conflict without using hate speech.

## OUTLINE OF THE KEY CONCEPTS

*(See the corresponding Key Concepts Section)*

Part I: Hate Speech

- Story Definition of hate speech
- What are the consequences of hate speech?
- Freedom of speech and hate speech
- What is the definition of illegal hate speech?

Part II: Ethics Codes

- What are journalists responsible for?
- Fighting hate speech online

Part III: Regulatory institutions

- Self-regulation
- Self-regulation based on a code of ethics
- Example Codes of Ethics

## MODULE LENGTH

60 minutes (*teacher chooses activities for about 40 min*)

## LESSON PLAN: ACTIVITIES AND TIMEFRAME

ACTIVITIES	LESSON OBJECTIVE	TIME
1. What is Hate Speech?	1	20 min
2. Discussion: Writing About Conflict Without Hate Speech	1	20 min
3. What are Journalists Responsible For?	1	12 min
4. Media Approaches to Hate Speech	1	12 min
5. Game: Hurting Others vs. Being Hurt	1	25 min
6. Do the Hate Speech Test	1	15 min

## RESOURCES FOR FURTHER READING

- Definition of hate speech, Spassov, Orlin, 2015 ([http://antihate.europe.bg/sites/antihate.europe.bg/files/uploads/untitled\\_folder/definicii.pdf](http://antihate.europe.bg/sites/antihate.europe.bg/files/uploads/untitled_folder/definicii.pdf))
- Legal Dictionary: Hate speech (Legal Speech) (<https://legaldictionary.net/hate-speech/>)
- Countering illegal hate speech online (European Commission) ([http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release MEMO-18-262\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-18-262_en.htm))
- Moving Stories: International Review of How Media Cover Migration (Ethical Journalism Network) (<https://ethicaljournalismnetwork.org/resources/publications/moving-stories/recommendations>)
- BULGARIA: A study in media sensationalism (Rossen Bosev and Maria Cheresheva, Ethical Journalism Network) (<https://ethicaljournalismnetwork.org/resources/publications/moving-stories/bulgaria>)
- Patrizia Faustin: Migration, hate speech and media ethics (Patrizia Faustin, UNICEF) (<https://blogs.unicef.org/evidence-for-action/migration-hate-speech-and-media-ethics/>)
- European platform of regulatory authorities ([http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release MEMO-18-262\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-18-262_en.htm))
- HUMAN RIGHTS COMMENT. Ethical journalism: self-regulation protects the independence of media (COE) ([https://www.coe.int/en/web/commissioner/blog/-/asset\\_publisher/xZ32OPEoxOkq/content/ethical-journalism-self-regulation-protects-the-independence-of-med-1/pop\\_up?\\_101\\_INSTANCE\\_xZ32OPEoxOkq\\_languageId=en\\_GB](https://www.coe.int/en/web/commissioner/blog/-/asset_publisher/xZ32OPEoxOkq/content/ethical-journalism-self-regulation-protects-the-independence-of-med-1/pop_up?_101_INSTANCE_xZ32OPEoxOkq_languageId=en_GB))
- British Press Complaints Commission Code of Practice (Accountablejournalism.org) (<https://accountablejournalism.org/ethics-codes/UK-Press-Complaints>)
- Code of Ethics of Bulgarian Media, in Bulgarian (<https://www.capital.bg/st.php?page=ek>)

## HOMEWORK ACTIVITIES

Ask Ss to find one more example of hate speech in the media and make suggestions on how to change that example so that it complies with the Ethical Code.

### ACTIVITY 1

TITLE	WHAT IS 'HATE SPEECH'?
TIME	20 minutes
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Write the words "Gypsy", "Muslim", "Jew", "Woman", and "Gay" on the board. Divide the class into five groups and assign one word to each group (2 min).</li> <li>2. Have each group write down their associations with these words, giving 2 minutes of thinking time (5 min total).</li> <li>3. Select an order for the groups to read out loud the words they have written and explain why they chose them to the class. After each group shares, ask if any of the words might be considered offensive. If so, why do we use them? (10 min)</li> <li>4. Conduct a summary discussion of when these words turn into an insult for a particular group in society (3 min).</li> <li>5. Provide a definition of <i>hate speech</i> (2 min).</li> </ol>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Notebooks and pens, whiteboard and markers

## ACTIVITY 2

TITLE	DISCUSSION: WRITING ABOUT CONFLICT WITHOUT USING HATE SPEECH
TIME	20 minutes
STEPS	<p>1. Before setting the task, write the following on the board: We should not hide the existence of a problem; we should talk and write about it. The question is how?</p> <p>2. Ask Ss to read various reports and analyses to examine how German media present the images of refugees (12 min).</p> <p>Guiding questions for Ss while reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Who and what questions should they ask?</li> <li>■ How should the problem be solved?</li> <li>■ Who is talking to whom? What does the municipality say? What does the police say?</li> <li>■ What adjectives would students use to describe the people?</li> <li>■ Who would they interview to find out what the authorities' responsibility is to observe compliance with social rules.</li> </ul> <p>Sources from the German press:</p> <p><u><a href="#">Report: Cologne New Year's Eve attacks 'could have been prevented'</a></u>  Short description: A report obtained by German media has slammed authorities for mistakes leading to the mass sexual assaults at the city's train station. Police's public relations in the aftermath were self-serving, the report also said.</p> <p><u><a href="#">News: Investigation committee opens first meeting on Cologne NYE assaults</a></u>  Short description: A parliamentary committee looking into the sexual assaults in Cologne on New Year's Eve has met for the first time. Discussions started as police launched an investigation into alleged sexual assaults by 70 refugees.</p> <p><u><a href="#">Opinion: One year after the Cologne assaults - Stop apologizing for political Islam</a></u>  Short description: That authorities will deploy 1,500 police officers in Cologne on New Year's Eve is proof that the German way of life has been compromised. Political Islam continues to pose a big threat, says DW's Shamil Shams.</p> <p>3. Engage Ss in a discussion about their answers to the above questions, related to the articles they read (8 min).</p>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<p>Handouts of the articles, markers, flipchart or whiteboard</p> <p><b>Report: Cologne New Year's Eve attacks 'could have been prevented'</b> (DW): <a href="https://www.dw.com/en/report-cologne-new-years-eve-attacks-could-have-been-prevented/a-37979296">https://www.dw.com/en/report-cologne-new-years-eve-attacks-could-have-been-prevented/a-37979296</a></p> <p><b>News: Investigation committee opens first meeting on Cologne NYE assaults</b> (DW): <a href="https://www.dw.com/en/investigation-committee-opens-first-meeting-on-cologne-nye-assaults/a-19055748">https://www.dw.com/en/investigation-committee-opens-first-meeting-on-cologne-nye-assaults/a-19055748</a></p> <p><b>Opinion: One year after the Cologne assaults - Stop apologizing for political Islam</b> (DW): <a href="https://www.dw.com/en/opinion-one-year-after-the-cologne-assaults-stop-apologizing-for-political-is-lam/a-36954743">https://www.dw.com/en/opinion-one-year-after-the-cologne-assaults-stop-apologizing-for-political-is-lam/a-36954743</a></p>

### ACTIVITY 3

TITLE	WHAT ARE JOURNALISTS RESPONSIBLE FOR?
TIME	12 minutes
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask Ss to think of examples of offensive language and hate speech in recent media reports (2 min).</li> <li>2. Split Ss into small groups and have them share examples and discuss how they are offensive/discriminatory and to whom (4 min).</li> <li>3. Display the “pyramid of hate” graphic (with a projector or handouts). Instruct Ss to put their examples on the steps of the pyramid and, in groups, discuss what other stories might fall under the categories of the pyramid (6 min). First, do one example together so that students get the idea of how to place their examples.</li> </ol>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<p>“Pyramid of hate” graphic (electronic or printed), laptop and projector (optional)</p> <p><b>Patrizia Faustin. Migration, hate speech and media ethics</b> (<a href="https://blogs.unicef.org/evidence-for-action/migration-hate-speech-and-media-ethics/">https://blogs.unicef.org/evidence-for-action/migration-hate-speech-and-media-ethics/</a>)</p> <p><b>BULGARIA. A study in media sensationalism. By Rossen Bosev and Maria Cheresheva</b> (<a href="https://ethicaljournalismnetwork.org/resources/publications/moving-stories/bulgaria">https://ethicaljournalismnetwork.org/resources/publications/moving-stories/bulgaria</a>)</p>

### ACTIVITY 4

TITLE	MEDIA APPROACHES TO HATE SPEECH
TIME	12 minutes
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Before class (as homework), ask Ss to compare several texts on the so-called “refugee hunters”. More about the case in English here: <a href="https://www.economist.com/europe/2016/04/19/bulgaria-tries-to-restrain-its-vigilante-migrant-hunters">https://www.economist.com/europe/2016/04/19/bulgaria-tries-to-restrain-its-vigilante-migrant-hunters</a></li> <li>Text 1: <a href="https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-35919068">https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-35919068</a> (The BBC)</li> <li>Text 2: <a href="http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3680867/ISIS-offers-50-000-reward-head-Bulgaria-s-migrant-hunter-Vigilante-terrorises-refugees-Turkish-border-sport-finds-targeted-jihadis.html">http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3680867/ISIS-offers-50-000-reward-head-Bulgaria-s-migrant-hunter-Vigilante-terrorises-refugees-Turkish-border-sport-finds-targeted-jihadis.html</a> (The Daily Mail)</li> <li>2. In class, discuss the different representations of this “phenomenon” (5 min).</li> <li>3. Ask Ss to identify the differences between media outlets that present the “refugee hunters” as heroes, offering them a platform to communicate hate against refugees and migrants and those media outlets which emphasize the unlawfulness of the vigilantes’ actions (5 min).</li> <li>4. Have Ss vote for their preference between the two different media approaches (2 min).</li> </ol>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<p>Previously assigned homework (clips and links given to Ss)</p> <p>Internet connection, laptop and projector (optional)</p>

## ACTIVITY 5

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>GAME: HURTING OTHERS VS. BEING HURT</b>
<b>TIME</b>	25 minutes
<b>STEPS</b>	<p>1. Divide Ss into three groups, A, B and C (3 min), and distribute the following information in a handout:</p> <p><b>Group A</b> Choose people in your group to act out these roles. A woman, a refugee from Syria, has been insulted on the basis of her gender. A person is derogatively called “the Muslim” instead of his real name in the media because of his religious choice. In each article about a terrorist act, he is referred to as a “terrorist”.</p> <p><b>Group B</b> Choose people in your group to act out these roles. One female politician from a political party wins the elections, despite public insults towards women and their abilities to lead and take political decisions. A mayor who equates “Muslims” with “terrorists” turns the issue of religious choice into a problem.</p> <p><b>Group C</b> Think of interview questions to ask people from the other two groups and encourage them to share their feelings on the public opinion about them and of the way they are represented in the news.</p> <p>*If you have more students, you can divide the class into large groups and, inside them, put students in smaller groups A, B, and C.</p> <p>2. Ss in group C ask the questions (7 minutes).</p> <p>3. Ss in Group A and Group B explain how they felt in the roles they assumed (10 min).</p> <p>4. Conduct a class discussion about how journalists can help people understand and listen to each other (3 min).</p>
<b>MATERIALS AND RESOURCES</b>	Handouts with the group tasks

## ACTIVITY 6

TITLE	DO THE HATE SPEECH TEST
TIME	15 minutes
STEPS	<p>Background: The <a href="#">Ethical Journalism Network (EJN)</a> has published a five-point test for journalists to help them identify hate speech and to better understand the possible impact of its dissemination.</p> <p>The test challenges journalists to think about the status of the speaker and the reach, objectives, content, and form of the speech as well as the social, economic, and political climate before deciding whether a quotation can be characterized as hate speech.</p> <p>The motto of the EJN campaign is “Turning the Page of Hate in Media,” and the test is one part of it, titled, “Don’t Sensationalise. Avoid the Rush to Publish. Take a Moment of Reflection.”</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Distribute the Hate Speech Test for Journalists (1 min).</li> <li>2. Present Ss with the following case: There is a football match between two local teams. When the commentator presents the players of both teams, the audience starts chanting “Monkey” when the name of a black football player is announced. You’re a sports journalist covering the match. How would you cover the case? (1 min)</li> <li>3. Instruct Ss to base their decision on the Hate Speech Test and give them time to respond (7 min).</li> <li>4. Elicit responses from a few volunteers, who will tell the class how they would cover the incident (5 min).</li> </ol>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<p>Handouts of the “<a href="#">Hate Speech Test</a>” file</p> <p>For more information about the “<a href="#">Hate Speech Test Additional Reading</a>”</p> <p><a href="#">Alternatively, you can use this example as a case study</a></p>



## KEY CONCEPTS

### PART I: HATE SPEECH

#### A. DEFINITION OF HATE SPEECH

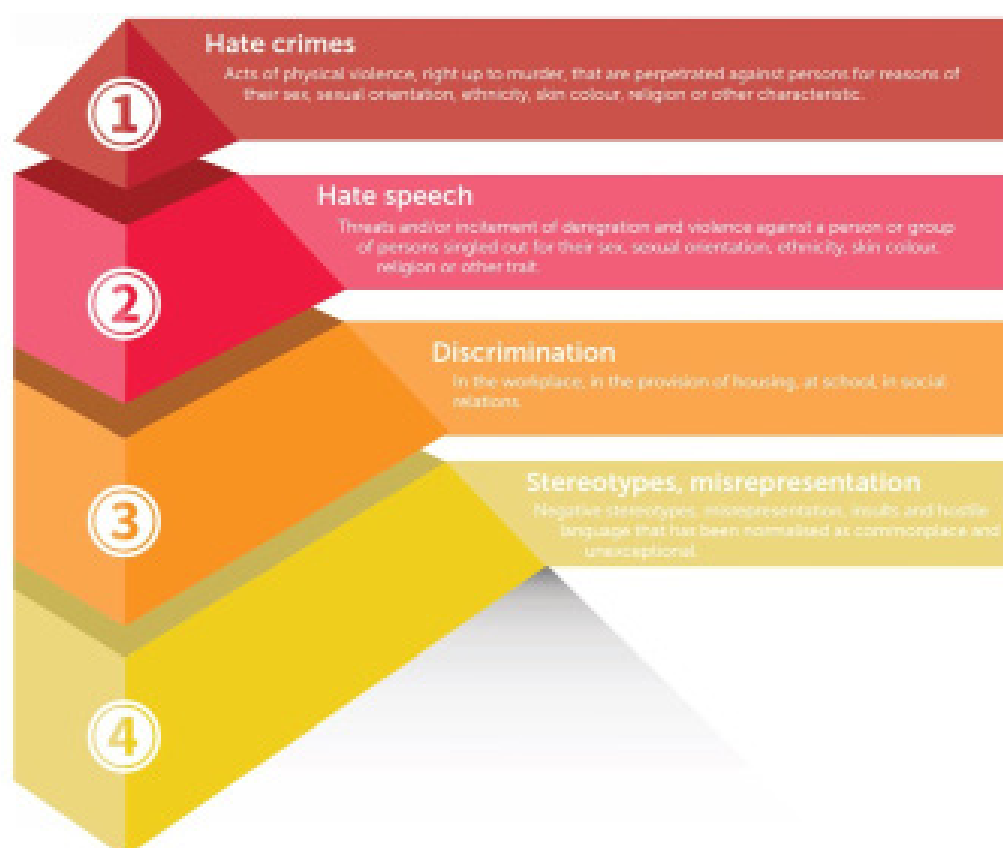
“Hate speech shall be understood as covering all forms of expression which spread, incite, promote or justify racial hatred, xenophobia, antisemitism or other forms of hatred based on intolerance, including: intolerance expressed by aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism, discrimination and hostility against minorities, migrants and people of immigrant origin.” Source: Spassov, 2015 ([http://antihate.europe.bg/sites/antihate.europe.bg/files/uploads/untitled\\_folder/definicii.pdf](http://antihate.europe.bg/sites/antihate.europe.bg/files/uploads/untitled_folder/definicii.pdf))

Hate speech is more than speech. It can also be expressed by behavior, gestures, symbols, images, music, etc. that create the same effect.

There is an ongoing discussion about how to identify discrimination. There are cases when journalists have been accused of inciting and spreading hate speech while trying to inform about conflicts between different groups in society. It is important for journalism to provide opportunities for discussion and dialogue, not only to inform or create mass hysteria.

Hate-speech is widespread in the media. Often it can't be prevented when it comes out of the mouths of prominent public figures, but journalists should always remember that just because someone says something outrageous doesn't make it newsworthy.”

Faustin's research is represented in the pyramid of hate, revealed in the final report prepared by the Committee on Hate, Intolerance, Xenophobia and Racism set up by the Italian Chamber of Deputies, after 14 months of work, 31 hearings from witnesses and collating 187 documents (studies, research papers, monographs, data records, position papers).



**B. WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF HATE SPEECH?**

Expression of hate towards individuals or members of groups, identified by attributes such as:

- Race
- Ethnicity
- Nationality
- Citizenship
- Place of origin
- Religion
- Sexual orientation
- Gender identity or performance
- Disability
- Age
- Appearance

Can pose the following consequences:

- Creating hostility
- Humiliating a person or group based on group characteristics
- Threats of violence
- Defacing of places of worship
- Harassment
- Stigmatization or marginalization of a person or group due to any of the above-mentioned characteristics.

**C. FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND HATE SPEECH**

It is important to protect our rights to freedom of opinion and expression (as discussed in Module 1: Freedom of Speech), but at the same time journalists and interviewees must be prevented from using hate speech.

**1. Hate Speech Laws in the U.S.**

The United States differs from Europe on its approach to hate speech, although both value the freedom of expression as a core value of democracy. The U.S. Constitution's First Amendment provides stronger free speech protections than those of most European democracies.

Modern times have seen Americans staunchly protective of their First Amendment right to free speech, believing that the government should only intervene in extreme cases, and just as many people wondering where free speech stops and hate speech begins. On the other hand, "fighting words" are, according to many, a good reason for the government to get involved and place a limit on how far someone can go with their speech.

In the debate over hate speech vs. free speech, many Americans express a concern that the number-one priority should be the well-being of the community and that a person's right to freedom of speech can and should be limited, if it poses a threat to that community's well-being.

**2. Hate Speech Laws in Other Countries**

With the advent of social media, the issue of offensive and threatening speech has become a global problem. Just as the U.S. is struggling to determine where free speech goes too far, hate speech laws in other countries are evolving. Examples of hate speech laws in other countries include:

- **Japan** – Japan's laws protect its citizens from threats and slander. However, derogatory comments directed at general groups of individuals remain unrestricted in Japan. Despite global calls for hate speech to be criminalized, Japan claims that hate speech has never reached such a point as to warrant legal action.

■ **United Kingdom** – Hate speech is widely criminalized in the U.K. Communications that are abusive, threatening, or insulting, or which target someone based on his race, religion, sexual orientation, or other attribute, are forbidden. Penalties for hate speech in the U.K. include fines and imprisonment.

■ **Sweden** – Hate speech, defined as public statements made to threaten or disrespect groups based on their race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or skin color, is prohibited in Sweden. Constitutional restrictions determine which acts are and are not criminal, as do limits imposed by the European Convention on Human Rights.

■ **Ireland** – While Ireland’s constitution guarantees the right to free speech, there is an understanding that freedom of expression will not be abused to “undermine public order or morality or the authority of the State.” Further, the Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act of 1989 defines threatening or abusive speech or behavior as that which is likely to inspire hatred against a group of individuals based on their race, color, religion, or some other attribute.

■ **India** – While freedom of speech and expression are protected under India’s constitution, “reasonable restrictions” can be imposed in order to maintain the “sovereignty and integrity of India,” as well as the country’s safety and its relations with other countries. Freedom of speech and expression may also come under fire in India with regard to offenses such as contempt of court and defamation.

■ **Canada** – Advocating for genocide in Canada against any “identifiable group” (any group that can be identified by their race, religion, sexual orientation, or other attribute) is a criminal offense that carries a maximum sentence of five years in prison, with no minimum sentence. It is also a criminal offense to provoke hatred against an identifiable group.

(Source: Legal Dictionary <https://legaldictionary.net/hate-speech/>)

#### **D. WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF ILLEGAL HATE SPEECH?**

Illegal hate speech is defined in **E.U. law** (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=URISERV:I33178>), within the Framework Decision on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law, as the public incitement to violence or hatred directed towards groups or individuals on the basis of certain characteristics, including race, color, religion, descent, and national or ethnic origin.

## **PART II: ETHICS CODES**

### **A. WHAT ARE JOURNALISTS RESPONSIBLE FOR?**

■ It is journalists’ responsibility not to use offensive or discriminatory language, as this has the power to destroy lives.

■ The media should not become a disseminator of hate speech when choosing interlocutors on a given topic (for example, when television channels invite nationalist politicians who express hatred towards minority groups without presenting an opposing view in the discussion).

#### **1. Recommendations**

Moving Stories: International Review of How Media Cover Migration (<https://ethicaljournalismnetwork.org/resources/publications/moving-stories/recommendations>):

“Media companies and journalists’ unions and associations should prepare concise guides to best practices for reporting on refugees and migrants. In addition, all media should examine their internal structures to make sure they are telling the story in the most effective way.

**NEWS ORGANIZATIONS CAN:**

- Appoint specialist reporters with good knowledge of the subject to the migration and refugee beat.
- Provide detailed information on the background of migrants and refugees and the consequences of migration. It is especially important to note that some major studies reveal how migration can strengthen national economies in the longer term, even where there are short-term challenges.
- Avoid political bias and challenge deceptive handling of the facts and incitement to hatred particularly by political, religious or other community leaders and public figures.
- Respect sources of information and grant anonymity to those who require it most, particularly those who are vulnerable and most at risk.
- Establish transparent and accessible internal systems for dealing with complaints from the audience over coverage of migrant and refugee issues.
- Review employment policies to ensure newsroom diversity with reporters and editors from minority communities.
- Provide training for journalists and editors covering everything from international conventions and law to refugee rights and what terms to use while covering refugee stories.
- Monitor coverage regularly. Organise internal discussions on how to develop and improve the scope of migration coverage.
- Manage online comments and engage with the audience to ensure that migration stories are not used as a platform for abuse or intolerance.

Media associations and journalists' unions can also support national structures for independent regulation or self-regulation of journalism, such as press councils. Where there are industry-wide codes of conduct and guidelines dealing with non-discrimination, these should cover reporting migration."

**B. FIGHTING HATE SPEECH ONLINE**

Countering illegal hate speech online ([http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release MEMO-18-262\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-18-262_en.htm)):

"Each of the IT companies (Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Microsoft, and now Instagram) that has signed this Code of Conduct is committed to countering the spread of illegal hate speech online.

When they receive a request to remove content from their online platform, the IT companies assess the request against their rules and community guidelines and, where applicable, national laws on combating racism and xenophobia transposing E.U. law on combatting racism and xenophobia. The aim of the Code is to make sure that requests to remove content are dealt with speedily. The companies have committed to reviewing the majority of these requests in less than 24 hours and to removing the content if necessary.

**2. The Bulgarian case**

**BULGARIA: A study in media sensationalism.** By Rossen Bosev and Maria Cheresheva (<https://ethicaljournalismnetwork.org/resources/publications/moving-stories/bulgaria>):

"The main medium for spreading hate-speech, according to the respondents, is television, referred to by 75 per cent. The second most important is the internet, where the forums have turned into a nest of openly xenophobic comments. Despite the recent decision of the European Court of Human Rights in the case of Delfi vs Estonia, which stipulated that the operators of internet sites are responsible for content in their user forums, the field remains largely unregulated and few newsrooms bother to moderate online comments and discussions.

Two of Bulgaria's far-right parties represented in the national parliaments have private TV channels, SKAT and Alpha, which predominantly base their content on racist and xenophobic rhetoric, naming asylum seekers 'Talibans', 'jihadists', 'terrorists', and so on.

Recently, the Council for Electronic Media issued 11 adjudications on violations of the Law on Radio and Television against Alpha TV, including hate-speech, but all of them went without any legal consequences.”

Bosev and Cheresheva conclude: “Unfortunately, not only the politically related channels give a platform to hate-speech. Extremist politicians, journalists, and popular figures are often invited to television and radio studios to comment, while the voices of the refugees themselves are rarely heard.

Typical of the hateful political speech which is given media exposure is that of Magdalena Tasheva, a far-right MP who accused refugees of being cannibals on bTV: ‘Society doesn’t care if the refugees are eating human flesh or just chewing it, there are international conventions that they have breached,’ she said, ‘We cannot love murderers. No one loves mass murderers.’

(...) But that is only part of the media challenge. Journalists and editors sometimes appear to forget that behind the plentiful numbers and statistics surrounding the migrant and refugee story are thousands of human-interest stories charting experiences that are profoundly important to creating a fuller understanding of the crisis within Bulgarian society.”

### **3. The case of migrants and refugees**

Patrizia Faustin. *Migration, hate speech and media ethics* (<https://blogs.unicef.org/evidence-for-action/migration-hate-speech-and-media-ethics/>):

“Media can play a critical role in influencing public perception of migrants and/or in facilitating their integration. They can be a firewall against racism and xenophobia, or a catalyser of instinctive and emotional hostile reactions towards migrant people.”

Patrizia Faustin further writes: “Refugee groups, activists and NGOs, many of which provide vital information for media, can be briefed on how best to communicate with journalists and media can explain to the audience their policies and editorial approach which may encourage readers, viewers and listeners to contribute useful additional information.”

## **PART III: REGULATORY INSTITUTIONS**

European platform of regulatory authorities:

### **A PLURALITY OF ENTITIES**

In Europe, several types of authorities are in charge of supervising the implementation of broadcasting legislation. Broadcasting regulation usually encompasses the power to license broadcasters, to monitor whether broadcasters are fulfilling their legal obligations, and to impose sanctions if they fail to carry out those obligations. Organizing and coordinating the broadcasting landscape can also be added to these traditional functions.

Broadcasting regulation may be exercised by governmental administrative authorities or by courts (e.g. for issues regarding the protection of fundamental rights). Moreover, in some countries such as Germany, public service broadcasting may be subject to a form of self-regulation. However, the most common organization type in Europe is that of the independent regulatory authority, which is characterized by the fact that it is not part of the actual structure of governmental administration and that it has at its disposal an apparatus which does not serve any other body. Generally, the rise of independent regulatory authorities coincided with the decline of public service monopolies in the 80s.

### **FUNCTIONS AND POWERS OF REGULATORY AUTHORITIES**

As mentioned above, the common thread for European countries is that all of them have now conferred the regulation of broadcasting onto independent regulatory authorities. However, great differences can be found in the scope of their remit, powers, and structure.

#### **IN TERMS OF REMIT**

The vast majority of European countries have, at a minimum, two separate regulatory bodies respectively in charge of the regulation of broadcasting and telecommunications. However, some countries, such as Italy with the *Autorità per le garanzie nelle comunicazioni* and the UK with Ofcom, now have a single regulatory body whose remit encompasses both broadcasting and telecommunications. This is also the case in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Finland, Hungary, and Slovenia.

While most of the regulatory bodies in Europe regulate both the public and private sectors (e.g. the French *Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel* or the Dutch *Commissariaat voor de Media*), others such as the German *Medienanstalten* are only competent for the regulation of private broadcasting.

#### **IN TERMS OF POWERS**

Three basic categories of powers can be identified: the administration of the broadcasting sector (e.g. award of broadcasting licenses), supervisory functions (e.g. program monitoring), and rule-making functions (e.g. codes of practice). Here again, the diversity of the powers of regulatory authorities can be remarked upon. As an example, most authorities have the power to award licenses but some may only make recommendations addressed to the government. The power of drawing up binding rules, which is common in Anglo-Saxon systems, is not shared by all regulatory authorities in Europe.

#### **IN TERMS OF STRUCTURE**

Great diversity can also be observed in terms of the structure of regulatory bodies. In federal countries such as Germany or Belgium, broadcasting is in the remit of federal states, thus creating a plurality of regional regulatory bodies.

#### **IN TERMS OF STAFFING**

As a matter of course, the number of staff employed in the respective regulatory authorities varies considerably according to the size of the country and of the national media landscape (from less than 10 for the smallest bodies to almost 900 for the biggest).

#### **A. SELF-REGULATION**

[HUMAN RIGHTS COMMENT. Ethical journalism: self-regulation protects the independence of media:](#)

***“The media play an enormously important role in the protection of human rights. They expose human rights violations and offer an arena for different voices to be heard in public discourse. However, the power of the media can also be misused to the extent that the very functioning of democracy is threatened.*”**

Some media outlets, including in European countries, have been turned into propaganda megaphones for those in power, while other media have been inciting xenophobic hatred against minorities and vulnerable groups.

We have also seen that unrestrained commercial ambitions can encourage a culture of illegal and unethical activity in the newsroom — as the [phone hacking scandal](#) in the United Kingdom demonstrated with shocking clarity.

Such reckless and intrusive journalism can damage public confidence very quickly — and be used as an excuse by governments to impose media regulation or even censorship. This would, of course, further undermine the existence of critical, investigative journalism.

### **B. SELF-REGULATION BASED ON A CODE OF ETHICS**

To prevent such tendencies, the media community needs to develop a system of effective self-regulation — based on an agreed code of ethics and a mechanism to receive and respond to complaints, for instance through an ombudsman or a media council.

The idea of self-regulation springs out of the desire by quality-conscious journalists and media to correct their mistakes and to make themselves accountable to the public. One purpose is to develop ethical principles which would protect individuals or groups from unacceptable abuse in the media.”

### **C. EXAMPLE CODES OF ETHICS**

To prevent such tendencies, the media community needs to develop a system of effective self-regulation — based on an agreed code of ethics and a mechanism to receive and respond to complaints, for instance through an ombudsman or a media council.

#### **British Press Complaints Commissions Code of Practice**

(<https://accountablejournalism.org/ethics-codes/UK-Press-Complaints>):

### **6. CHILDREN**

- Young people should be free to complete their time at school without unnecessary intrusion.
- A child under 16 must not be interviewed or photographed on issues involving their own or another child's welfare unless a custodial parent or similarly responsible adult consents.
- Pupils must not be approached or photographed at school without the permission of the school authorities.
- Minors must not be paid for material involving children's welfare, nor parents or guardians for material about their children or wards, unless it is clearly in the child's interest.
- Editors must not use the fame, notoriety or position of a parent or guardian as sole justification for publishing details of a child's private life.

### **7. CHILDREN IN SEX CASES**

1. The press must not, even if legally free to do so, identify children under 16 who are victims or witnesses in cases involving sex offences.
2. In any press report of a case involving a sexual offence against a child:
  - The child must not be identified.
  - The adult may be identified.
  - The word 'incest' must not be used where a child victim might be identified.
  - Care must be taken that nothing in the report implies the relationship between the accused and the child.



## 8. HOSPITALS

- Journalists must identify them-selves and obtain permission from a responsible executive before entering non-public areas of hospitals or similar institutions to pursue enquiries.
- The restrictions on intruding into privacy are particularly relevant to enquiries about individuals in hospitals or similar institutions.

## 9. REPORTING OF CRIME

- Relatives or friends of persons convicted or accused of crime should not generally be identified without their consent, unless they are genuinely relevant to the story.
- Particular regard should be paid to the potentially vulnerable position of children who witness, or are victims of, crime. This should not restrict the right to report legal proceedings.

## 10. CLANDESTINE DEVICES AND SUBTERFUGE

- The press must not seek to obtain or publish material acquired by using hidden cameras or clandestine listening devices; or by intercepting private or mobile telephone calls, messages or emails; or by the unauthorized removal of documents, or photographs; or by accessing digitally-held private information without consent.
- Engaging in misrepresentation or subterfuge, including by agents or intermediaries, can generally be justified only in the public interest, and then only when the material cannot be obtained by other means.

## 11. VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

The press must not identify victims of sexual assault or publish material likely to contribute to such identification unless there is adequate justification and they are legally free to do so.

## 12. DISCRIMINATION

- The press must avoid prejudicial or pejorative reference to an individual's race, colour, religion, gender, sexual orientation or to any physical or mental illness or disability.
- Details of an individual's race, colour, religion, sexual orientation, physical or mental illness or disability must be avoided unless genuinely relevant to the story."

### CODE OF ETHICS OF BULGARIAN MEDIA (EXCERPTS)

#### DISCRIMINATION

- We respect everyone's right to live in safety and security, and we shall avoid publishing material that incites or encourages hatred, violence or any form of discrimination
- We shall not refer to a person's race, colour, religion, ethnic background, sexual orientation, mental or physical condition, unless it is of importance to the meaning of the story.

#### 1. Crime and brutality

#### EDITORIAL INDEPENDENCE

- We shall not be susceptible to political or commercial pressure or influence.
- We shall maintain a clear distinction between editorial decision-making and commercial policy of the media.
- We shall maintain a clear distinction between editorial content and marketing, advertisements or sponsored materials.



■ We shall not accept any personal, political or financial inducements that may impact upon our ability to provide the public with accurate information.

#### **THE PUBLIC INTEREST**

1. Infringement of the terms of this Code may only be justified where it can be clearly and fully demonstrated that publication serves the best interests of the general public.

2. For the purposes of this Code, information 'of public interest' should not be confused with information which is 'interesting to the public'.

3. A publication is in the public interest only if:

- It protects health, safety and security;
- It helps the prevention and disclosure of serious crimes and abuse of power;
- It prevents the public from the danger of being seriously misled.

Source: Code of Ethics of Bulgarian Media ([http://ethicnet.uta.fi/bulgaria/ethical\\_code\\_of\\_the\\_bulgarian\\_media](http://ethicnet.uta.fi/bulgaria/ethical_code_of_the_bulgarian_media))



3.2.

# **VISUAL STORYTELLING**

This practical module will lead students through the history and evolution of visual storytelling. It deals with the concept of multimedia journalism and will expose students to new genres and various formats of visual storytelling. Students will learn how to shoot and edit a video-story using online tools.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Ss will be introduced to the evolution of visual storytelling, from broadcast to online video.
2. Ss will become familiar with new forms of visual storytelling.
3. Ss will gain practical skills to shoot and edit online videos.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- Ss are familiar with the essence of visual storytelling and can explain its advantages and evolution.
- Ss know the definition of multimedia journalism and can explain the set of skills a multimedia journalist should possess.
- Ss are able to shoot, edit and upload their own simple online videos.

## OUTLINE OF THE KEY CONCEPTS

*(See the corresponding Key Concepts Section)*

1. The evolution of visual storytelling, from broadcast video to online video
2. New genres and formats of visual storytelling
  - Video streaming
  - News video for social media
  - Explainer video
3. Skills of the multimedia journalist: how to shoot and edit

## MODULE LENGTH

60 minutes (*teacher chooses activities for 40 minutes*)

## LESSON PLAN: ACTIVITIES AND TIMEFRAME

ACTIVITIES	LESSON OBJECTIVE	TIME
1. Introduction to Interactive Storytelling	1, 2	20 min
2. Comparing Forms of Visual Storytelling	2	25-30 min
3. What Video Journalists Do	3	10 min

## RESOURCES FOR FURTHER READING

- My video toolkit  
(Nilo Fabrizio, ijnet.org) (<https://ijnet.org/en/resource/my-video-toolkit-nilo-tabrizy>)
- Fundamentals of recording video news (ijnews.org) (<https://ijnet.org/en/resource/fundamentals-recording-video-news>)
- Hand-held shooting tips  
(ijnet.org) (<https://ijnet.org/en/blog/pro-smartphone-journalism-part-2-hand-held-shooting-tips>)
- What is a digital journalist (World Press Photo Connected Learning) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iFADOW-wZsU>)

## HOMEWORK ACTIVITIES

Come up with an idea and basic script for an online video. Shoot it with your smartphone camera or use pictures and text. Use one of the template-based video makers to create your own video and then upload it to the shared folder.

Ss can work individually or in small groups on this assignment.

## ACTIVITY 1

TITLE	INTRODUCTION TO INTERACTIVE STORYTELLING
TIME	20 minutes
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask Ss, "How can you present a story with a combination of images, sound, video, and text?" Discuss the advantages of this type of presentation (3 min).</li> <li>2. Show the New York Times' story about avalanches in Australia (4 min).</li> <li>3. Give Ss some time to think about the story and then start a discussion, using the following questions as a guide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ How would you define the genre of this story?</li> <li>■ How many different types of storytelling are employed in this story?</li> <li>■ What are the advantages of this type of storytelling in comparison to a story with just text and pictures?</li> <li>■ How has the digital age changed storytelling in journalism? (6 min)</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Introduce the definition of multimedia journalism (This type of journalism combines different types of storytelling – text, video, audio, and photos – to tell a story in a more compelling way) (2 min).</li> <li>5. Explain the context and evolution of visual storytelling: video does not simply refer to TV/broadcast journalism anymore; the largest media organizations have made their move to online video, which is now the fastest growing multimedia format; the intersection of photojournalism, video journalism, documentary, and graphic arts creates many forms and genres across multiple platforms; the main drivers behind this change (i.e. the revolution of mobile technology); the changing habits of media consumption, etc. (5 min).</li> </ol>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Internet connection, laptop, projector <b>Avalanches in Australia</b> (New York Times) ( <a href="http://www.nytimes.com/projects/2012/snow-fall/index.html#/?part=tunnel-creek">http://www.nytimes.com/projects/2012/snow-fall/index.html#/?part=tunnel-creek</a> )

## ACTIVITY 2

TITLE	COMPARING FORMS OF VISUAL STORYTELLING
TIME	25-30 minutes
STEPS	<p>1. Select a few examples of different types of visual stories and divide the class into several groups, depending on the number of examples (1 min).</p> <p>2. Give each group a video to watch and ask Ss to list the characteristics and advantages of the particular video format (10 min).</p> <p>3. Have groups present their videos to the rest of the class and discuss the different tools journalists employ to tell stories in a non-traditional way (10-15 min).</p> <p>Examples:</p> <p>Explainer Video for Facebook: (<a href="https://www.facebook.com/TheEconomist/videos/10156641576479060/">https://www.facebook.com/TheEconomist/videos/10156641576479060/</a>)</p> <p>Video documentary (series): (<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zSjYra7cYqY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zSjYra7cYqY</a>)</p> <p>Video op-ed: (<a href="https://www.nytimes.com/video/opinion/100000005940613/i-escaped-north-korea-heres-my-message-for-president-trump.html?playlistId=1194811622299">https://www.nytimes.com/video/opinion/100000005940613/i-escaped-north-korea-heres-my-message-for-president-trump.html?playlistId=1194811622299</a>)</p> <p>Visual longterm project: (<a href="https://apimagesblog.com/new-arctic/">https://apimagesblog.com/new-arctic/</a>)</p> <p>Video animation: (<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/news/video/2014/apr/30/bitcoin-made-simple-video-animation">https://www.theguardian.com/news/video/2014/apr/30/bitcoin-made-simple-video-animation</a>)</p> <p>360-degrees video/ Virtual Reality Documentary (<a href="https://www.facebook.com/bbcnews/videos/vl.1589800511345813/10155593029277217/?type=1">https://www.facebook.com/bbcnews/videos/vl.1589800511345813/10155593029277217/?type=1</a>)</p>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Internet connection, mobile devices or computers for each group

## ACTIVITY 3

TITLE	WHAT VIDEO JOURNALISTS DO
TIME	10 minutes
STEPS	<p>1. Play the video about video journalists' work (2 min).</p> <p>2. Distribute sticky notes and ask Ss to write down the different skills multimedia journalists should possess (5 min).</p> <p>3. Add Ss' suggestions to the flipchart or whiteboard and summarize, adding additional skills if necessary (3 min).</p>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Internet connection, laptop, projector, sticky notes, flipchart/whiteboard, markers <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m_V-jnoljQM">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m_V-jnoljQM</a>

## KEY CONCEPTS

### 1. THE EVOLUTION OF VISUAL STORYTELLING

In the 90s, video journalism used to mean TV/broadcast content: video content that we used to access through broadcast, cable, or satellite signal. Then came the internet, [which disrupted the media business](#) ) and created an entirely new ecosystem in which media outlets are still trying to survive and adapt.

The emergence of social media and internet giants such as Facebook and Google, the arrival of the smartphone, and [the changing habits of media consumption](#) have completely changed the news creation playing field. In the past decade or two, news websites [have employed different modes of reporting](#) to utilize digital technologies.

As writer and producer David Campbell [explains](#), “the shift to online news sources, the growth of mobile platforms, the rise of multimedia and the expansion of video output are both cause and effect of the fact that the screen has become the dominant access point for much news and information.”

Nowadays, video journalism has evolved to mean online video production in all its different forms and shapes. How is online video different from a broadcast video? If viewers previously needed access to a broadcast, cable, or satellite signal in order to watch something, [now all they need is a device and an Internet connection](#).

Online news video is currently [the fastest growing multimedia format](#). Online videos are exploding, with YouTube (which only launched in 2005) hosting more than 40% of all online videos. “I see video as a mega trend, same order as mobile,” [said Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg](#) in 2017. Accordingly, media organisations are trying to increase their online presence and are producing more and more online video.

These efforts create both new tools and new challenges for journalists, who also have to adapt and acquire new skills in order not to fall out of step with this transformation of the media environment. In effect, there are new emerging fields in journalism such as [mobile journalism](#), [data-driven journalism](#), and multimedia journalism. (See below)

More on the evolution of visual storytelling and visual communication can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

In addition, there is an ongoing debate over whether or not all these new digital techniques and instruments of producing and distributing video content constitute a new genre in journalism.

Some professionals use the term ‘multimedia journalism’ to address the changes that video content creation has gone through.

There is no universal definition, but the term ‘multimedia journalism’ refers to the combination of images, sound, text, videos, and graphics in telling news stories. This means of presentation adds greater context to storytelling and can be easily distributed through new digital channels (the web, apps, mobile) that are no longer limited by space in print publications or time on TV.

According to the [BBC Academy](#), multimedia journalism can be understood as one multi-skilled reporter telling a story for TV, radio, and online or it can mean running a newsroom where journalists working in different media collaborate.

Writer and producer [David Campbell](#), who was commissioned by the World Press Photo Foundation to do a research project on the emergence and development of multimedia in photojournalism, prefers the term ‘visual storytelling’. He [defines it](#) as “the zone in which the routes of photojournalism, videojournalism, documentary, cinema and interactive storytelling have the potential to intersect.” According to Campbell, however, this does not create a new visual genre, “but it constitutes a space in which photojournalists can bring their aesthetic abilities and commitment to reporting, and learn from those operating outside of photography.”

## 2. NEW GENRES AND FORMATS OF VISUAL STORYTELLING

The new digital tools and gadgets at journalists' disposal create various new forms and genres of storytelling, and big media outlets have already begun to experiment with them. This often requires rethinking how information is presented and distributed so it can fit digital screens. As videos continue their migration from TV screens to all other screens, there's a whole lot of terminology being used to address new types of online video.

There are two current trends in video making and production through which media is trying to increase its audience. The first one is the demand for short, simple, and shareable videos, created for social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, or Snapchat. The other one is the outburst of longer form and serialised storytelling, which is employed by streaming platforms [such as Netflix](#).

However, there are also many others gaining momentum or which have already become an important part of the digital media toolkit, such as [explainer videos](#) or livestreaming. [Here](#) you can find examples of other forms of video journalism, such as the vodcast, the video diary, and the edited narrative.

[According to the Reuters Digital news report for 2018](#), an increase in horizontal storytelling or swiping through your stories is expected, as more and more journalists are shooting with their smartphones.

A [report](#) about the future of online news video by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism says that in terms of formatting and content, more and more publishers are moving away from traditional talking head videos and TV-style packages to create videos which are captioned, short, and have an intense beginning to capture the audience's attention.

There are new forms of online video emerging all the time, but let's take a closer look at some of the more commonly used ones at present:

■ **Video streaming:** [multimedia](#), delivered by a provider, that is constantly received by and presented to an end user. Most social networks have started supporting the format and [offer publishers the opportunity](#) to connect with their audience while reporting certain news or sports events live.

Here [are examples](#) from the BBC.

■ **News video for social media:** as the majority of video content is now consumed through social media, especially Facebook, publishers are creating video news content specifically designed for social media. According to a recent [study](#) by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, the most successful social videos tend to be short (under one minute), are designed to work with no sound (with subtitles), focus on soft news (lifestyle or entertainment), and have a strong emotional element.

Here are few examples by [The Guardian](#) and [The New York Times](#).

■ **Explainer video:** short video (1-2 minutes) that provides an explanation of a concept, certain topic, or a particular news event or situation. It works great both on and off-site (e.g. Facebook) and it usually combines video footage with text, audio, or animation.

Here is an [example](#) by The Guardian using video animation

■ **Video documentary:** one of the most demanding new genres, as it takes a lot of resources, efforts and preparation. It involves developing an idea, writing a script, shooting actual video footage, and doing fieldwork that involves researching, meeting, and interviewing people. It usually requires better technological equipment, recording voiceovers, and a lot of editing prior to publishing. Most of video documentaries tend to add graphics and animations mixed in with the filmed video footage.

Here is an [example](#) (VOX) of serialized video documentary by Vox.

**RESOURCES FOR FURTHER READING:**

Here are 10 video formats for mobile journalists (<https://www.journalism.co.uk/news/10-video-formats-to-tell-stories-from-your-mobile-phone/s2/a683786/>)

Ideas for social video from Vice Media (<https://www.rjionline.org/stories/fl198-ideas-for-social-video-from-vice-media>)

What is horizontal storytelling and why is it gaining momentum? (<https://onlinejournalismblog.com/2017/03/20/tap-to-advance-the-rise-and-rise-of-the-horizontal-story/>)

How to make infographics: A beginner's guide to data visualization (<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2014/aug/28/interactive-infographics-development-data>)

The future of online news video (<http://www.digitalnewsreport.org/publications/2016/future-online-news-video/>)

Virtual Reality Journalism (<https://towcenter.org/research/virtual-reality-journalism/>)

The Art and Science of Data-driven Journalism (<https://towcenter.org/research/the-art-and-science-of-data-driven-journalism/>)

**3. SKILLS OF THE MULTIMEDIA JOURNALIST — HOW TO SHOOT AND EDIT**

The most important skill of any multimedia journalist today is to be adaptable. He/she can't rely on a single tool, technology, or type of knowledge. (See here [what a multimedia journalist is, according to World Press Photo](#))

"Today's multimedia journalists need to possess strong writing skills, know how to use multimedia tools and software, and be able to assess the multimedia potential of stories and determine which story forms are most appropriate," [writes](#) journalism professor Jennifer George-Palilonis and author of the book *The Multimedia Journalist*.

Here are more practical tips and ideas on how to shoot and edit online video:

[How to teach your newsroom basic video skills](#)

[The fundamentals of recording video for news](#)



# QUALITY JOURNALISM VS. DISINFORMATION, PART I

This module delves into expectations in terms of professionalism and quality in the journalistic profession. Students will consider the ethical standards for journalistic quality and the importance of trust in the media, thereby developing skills and methods for building trust between the media and the audience. They will practice distinguishing quality journalism from instruments for propaganda and manipulation. Students will also focus on the difference between professional journalists and citizen journalists.

### OBJECTIVES

1. Ss will be able to recognize and distinguish professional journalism from other media content creation (by bloggers, vloggers, commentators, citizen journalists, research fellows, trolls, propagandists, disinformation agents).
2. Ss will learn to identify red flags for poor quality journalism and manipulation.

### EXPECTED RESULTS

- Ss can recognize and distinguish quality journalism from instruments of propaganda and manipulation, based on compliance with existing codes of conduct by media and other professional organizations.
- Ss can differentiate between professional journalism and other writers who fall into the category of citizen journalists.
- Ss can utilize different methods to build trust between the media and the audience.

### OUTLINE OF THE KEY CONCEPTS

*(See the corresponding Key Concepts Section)*

- Professional journalism
- Citizen journalism
- Manipulation
- First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution
- Code of conduct
- Framing

### LESSON LENGTH

80-90 minutes (choose activities for 40 min)

### LESSON PLAN: ACTIVITIES AND TIMEFRAME

ACTIVITY	LESSON OBJECTIVE	TIME
1. What it Means to be a Journalist	1	15 min
2. Discussion: Professional journalism	1	20 min
3. Trust in Journalism	2	20 min
4. Citizen Journalism	1	20 min
5. Trust in Media and Institutions	2	20 min

## RESOURCES FOR FURTHER READING/WATCHING


- The 5 core values of journalism (Ethical Journalism Network)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uNidQHk5SZs>
- A day in life of a journalist/educational reporter (Student Edge)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5uN9sF-z0z0>
- Frederic Filloux, The oxymoronic citizen journalism (*The Guardian*)  
<https://www.theguardian.com/media/pda/2010/may/17/citizen-journalism>
- Amanda Harper, Citizen journalism vs. Professional Journalism <https://journalismthefuture.wordpress.com/citizen-journalism-vs-professional-journalism/>

## HOMEWORK ACTIVITIES

Assignment:

Find, read, and compare codes of conduct of Bulgarian media organizations and those analyzed in class. Find discrepancies between the codes. Write a short essay (250 words) on what contributes to low enforcement of codes in Bulgarian journalism compared to other E.U. countries and the U.S.

## ACTIVITY 1

TITLE	WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A JOURNALIST (VERSION A AND VERSION B)
TIME	15 minutes (for each version)
STEPS	<p><b>Version A:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask Ss the following questions, calling on different Ss to answer different questions (5 min): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Who is a journalist? Can you name a few journalists?</li> <li>■ What qualifies as journalism in the digital age? Can you name a journalist who works only in a non-traditional digital media?</li> <li>■ Is anyone who publishes content online a journalist?</li> <li>■ Do you know a blogger or vlogger who publishes news?</li> <li>■ Are commentators/columnists journalists?</li> <li>■ What about citizens who publish news sporadically, or who comment on a range of topics and have a large following, or vloggers, or human rights activists?</li> <li>■ Does it matter if someone is a journalist or not?</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Distribute handouts with cases/texts and ask Ss to decide if they represent journalism/work done by journalists or not. If not, what is the most likely profession of the writer? (10 min)</li> </ol> <p><b>Version B:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Show Ss the following collage. Pictured from left to right: Julian Assange (founder of Wikileaks), Oprah Winfrey (television host), Oriana Fallaci (Italian journalist), Nigella Lawson (television personality and food writer), Sean Penn (actor who interviewed drug lord El Chapo for Rolling Stone). For more info, see the Resources section below (2 min).</li> <li>2. Ask: Are they journalists? Why? (4 min)</li> <li>3. Discuss the role of a journalist (9 min).</li> </ol> 
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<p><b>Version A:</b></p> <p>Videos related to the questions:</p> <p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=orl0uEj2Z7M">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=orl0uEj2Z7M</a> (2 min)</p> <p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=88Midc38AUU">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=88Midc38AUU</a> (1.5 min)</p> <p><b>Version B:</b></p> <p><a href="#">Who Is a Journalist Handout</a></p> <p>For further reading/background information</p> <p>On Julian Assange (BBC): <a href="https://www.bbc.com/news/world-11047811">https://www.bbc.com/news/world-11047811</a></p> <p>On Oprah Winfrey (Harper's Bazaar): <a href="https://www.harpersbazaar.com/culture/features/a15895631/oprah-daily-routine/">https://www.harpersbazaar.com/culture/features/a15895631/oprah-daily-routine/</a></p> <p>On Oriana Fallaci (The Guardian): (<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/news/2006/sep/16/guardianobituaries.italy">https://www.theguardian.com/news/2006/sep/16/guardianobituaries.italy</a>) (The Guardian)</p> <p>On Nigella Lawson (Splendid Table website): <a href="https://www.splendidtable.org/story/nigella-lawson-on-recipes-writing-and-the-importance-of-home-cooking">https://www.splendidtable.org/story/nigella-lawson-on-recipes-writing-and-the-importance-of-home-cooking</a></p> <p>On Sean Penn: (Rolling Stone) <a href="https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-news/el-chapo-speaks-40784/">https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-news/el-chapo-speaks-40784/</a></p>

## ACTIVITY 2

TITLE	DISCUSSION: PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM
TIME	20 minutes
STEPS	<p>1. Divide the class into three groups and give each group one of the following pieces to read/watch (5 min). Tell them to pay attention to the challenges, characteristics, and skills of professional journalists.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ (text) Fran Yeoman, "The Value of Professional Journalism"</li> <li>■ (text) Michael Schudson, "Professional Journalism Will Survive the Post-Truth Era Because We Actually Aren't in a Post-Truth Era"</li> <li>■ (video) Michael Schudson Speaks on the Challenges of Professional Journalism</li> </ul> <p>2. Ask students to reflect on what they have read/seen/heard, and have them write down their ideas in a few sentences (3-4 min). Relate their ideas to the different types of journalism (news journalism, investigative journalism, op-eds, etc.).</p> <p>3. Engage Ss in a discussion by following these steps (10-12 min):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ask the three groups to present their findings, starting with the group that watched the video, followed by the group with the Schudson article and the last one who read Ms. Yeoman. After the presentation of the first group, ask the second if something was missing. Most likely, there will be differences of opinion, especially since the text is an example of good reporting. The short video (5 min) is a summary of a lecture (1 hour) provided at the end of the article.</li> <li>■ Professionalism could be viewed as a skill and a desire to check all the facts with multiple sources. It relates facts to different situations and shows nuances ordinary people may not see. Professionalism describes the context as it is and does not subject itself to bias; therefore, it has the power to change perceptions and attitudes. Facts and context play a critical role in presenting information. Over the years, the balance between the two has been varied. Ask Ss: In your view, what is the balance in Bulgaria? Is it focused more on the facts or on the context?</li> </ul> <p><i>Optional:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Journalism is a trust business. The audience/readers/viewers should trust the media as well as the journalists, whistleblowers, informers, and interviewees. Focus on what Yeoman considers trust to be in the article and discuss whether or not Ss agree that professional journalism is about maintaining trust in all stakeholders involved in the journalistic processes.</li> </ul>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<p>Internet connection, laptop, projector (optional)</p> <p>Handouts and/or student access to mobile phones with Internet</p> <p>Fran Yeoman (article): <a href="https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/the-value-of-professional-journalism-8982792.html">https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/the-value-of-professional-journalism-8982792.html</a> (Yeoman, The Independent)</p> <p>Schudson (article): <a href="https://cmds.ceu.edu/article/2018-01-29/schudson-professional-journalism-will-survive-post-truth-era-because-we-actually">https://cmds.ceu.edu/article/2018-01-29/schudson-professional-journalism-will-survive-post-truth-era-because-we-actually</a></p> <p>Schudson (short video): <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZdEiB0VqidQ&amp;t=1s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZdEiB0VqidQ&amp;t=1s</a></p> <p>Schudson (full video): <a href="https://youtu.be/Lkn-vEUXiwM">https://youtu.be/Lkn-vEUXiwM</a></p>

### ACTIVITY 3

TITLE	TRUST IN JOURNALISM
TIME	20 minutes
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Show the video “The quest for trust: Introducing the standards for professional journalism” (3 min).</li> <li>2. Divide Ss into two groups and distribute one of the following handouts to each: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The Globe and Mail’s Editorial Code of Conduct, as an example of good practice in using codes of conduct to ensure trust in their ecosystem (7 min);</li> <li>■ The Code of Ethics of the Society for Professional Journalism (7 min).</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. A Pair up Ss with a partner who read the article they didn’t (if odd numbered, make a group of three) and have them summarize to each other the codes they read (3-5 min).</li> <li>4. Read the definition of manipulation to Ss and ask them to identify how breaches in the code of conduct allow for manipulation. Encourage Ss to provide examples from their own media consumption and from well-publicized media cases (5 min).</li> </ol>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<p>Internet connection, laptop, projector</p> <p>“The quest for trust” video: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IT7UGUkrre4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IT7UGUkrre4</a></p> <p>Handouts:</p> <p>Editorial Code of Conduct, <i>The Globe and Mail</i> (summary): <a href="https://www.theglobeandmail.com/about/editorial-code/">https://www.theglobeandmail.com/about/editorial-code/</a></p> <p>Code of Ethics, Society of Professional Journalists: <a href="https://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp">https://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp</a></p>

### ACTIVITY 4

TITLE	CITIZEN JOURNALISM
TIME	20 minutes
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Distribute a short article from The Guardian and ask Ss to read it individually (4-5 min).</li> <li>2. Have each student write down his or her ideas about what the differences between professional and citizen journalists are. Tell them to write as many differences as possible in 3-4 minutes.</li> <li>3. Find out which student wrote down the most differences and ask him/her to present them briefly to the class. Write them on the whiteboard (2 min). If others thought of more differences, add them to the board.</li> <li>3. Organize a brainstorming session on how the issue of trust relates to those differences by adding keywords. The keywords correspond to the mechanisms of the trust-building process between the media and the audience (9 – 11 min):</li> </ol> <p>Use of reputable journalists and/or media outlets;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Direct experience (meeting in person, engaging in a discussion) and collecting credible communication;</li> <li>■ Enforcing accountability in journalists and editors (written procedures to follow in case someone fails to comply with the code of conduct or with professional standards);</li> <li>■ Increasing both the skills and knowledge of journalists.</li> </ul>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<p>Whiteboard and markers, handouts:</p> <p><i>The rise of citizen journalism</i> (The Guardian) (<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/media/2012/jun/11/rise-of-citizen-journalism">https://www.theguardian.com/media/2012/jun/11/rise-of-citizen-journalism</a>)</p>

**ACTIVITY 5**

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>TRUST IN MEDIA AND INSTITUTIONS</b>
<b>TIME</b>	20 minutes
<b>STEPS</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Distribute handouts on trust in the media in CEE and have Ss read the text (7 min).</li> <li>2. Engage Ss in a discussion based on the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ What factors link distrust in media and distrust in governments?</li> <li>■ Look at Figure 5: Usage of print media, television and social networks. Is there a connection between the use of media and media freedom? (8 min)</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<b>MATERIALS AND RESOURCES</b>	Handouts: <a href="#">Trust in media in CEE</a> (part of a book chapter to be published by Routledge).

## KEY CONCEPTS

### 1. PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM

Journalism conducted by formally qualified people who engage in news collection/reporting and interviewing, fact checking, photo spotting, storytelling, or editing. Professional journalism follows strict codes of conduct and is monitored both by an internal governance system (within the news organization) and by other organizations of professionals. Professional journalism is a business of trust.

### 2. CITIZEN JOURNALISM (SOURCE: AMANDA HARPER, CITIZEN JOURNALISM VS. PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM)

Citizen journalism is the process by which members of the public play an independent role in collecting, reporting, and distributing current and breaking news events — a process that has recently become very popular. Online news media such as social networks (Twitter, Facebook, Blogger) have given everyday citizens the ability to transmit information globally — a power which was once reserved solely to large media corporations. In addition, the increasing presence, speed, and accessibility of advanced cellular phones and other media sharing devices has allowed citizen journalists to report on breaking news not only to a larger, global, audience but also more quickly than traditional news reporters. Many believe this form of news coverage is fundamental to journalism today: citizens' relatable, unrestricted, and freely able to capture images and footage of worldwide news as it breaks.

Citizen journalists differ from professionals in many ways, but as a rule they use significantly fewer polls and surveys and are far less integrated with third parties. Citizen journalists could be bloggers, vloggers, YouTubers and others. There are citizen journalists who, in time, may become professionals.

### 3. MANIPULATION

Media manipulation is the application of a series of related techniques in which journalists or editors with partisan interests influence the behavior or perception of the audience on a particular issue. Manipulation creates an image or argument that favors their world-views or interests, which otherwise (i.e. via plain news reporting) might not be achieved. Such tactics may include the use of logical fallacies, psychological manipulation, outright deception, rhetoric, and propaganda techniques; they often involve omitting information or points of view that contradict their interests or views and diverting attention away from problematic areas. Successful manipulators very well know the cognitive biases of the audience at large, which facilitates this manipulation.

### 4. FIRST AMENDMENT OF THE U.S. CONSTITUTION

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

### 5. CODE OF CONDUCT

"Principles, values, standards, or rules of behavior that guide the decisions, procedures and systems of an organization in a way that (a) contributes to the welfare of its key stakeholders, and (b) respects the rights of all constituents affected by its operations" (International Federation of Accountants).

### 6. FRAMING

Framing comprises of a set of concepts and theoretical perspectives on how individuals, groups, and societies organize, perceive, and communicate about reality. Framing involves the construction of a social phenomenon — via mass media sources, political or social movements, political leaders, or other actors and organizations. Participation in a language community necessarily influences an individual's perception of the meanings attributed to words or phrases. Politically, the language communities of advertising, religion, and mass media are highly contested, whereas framing in less-sharply defended language communities might evolve imperceptibly and organically over time, with fewer overt modes of disputation. Framing is the most widely used mechanism for manipulation.





4.2.

# **PHOTO JOURNALISM**

This practical module explores the role of photography in journalism and will help students to understand the principles and values a photojournalist must follow. On a more practical note, it will introduce them to the key elements of an image and the basic skills needed to create a newsworthy picture on available devices. Students will practice shooting newsworthy pictures as well as editing and captioning them.

### OBJECTIVES

1. Ss will build a realistic and accurate idea of what photojournalism is and how it contributes to news stories.
2. Ss will get to know the basic values and principles in photojournalism.
3. Ss will have the necessary knowledge and tools to create newsworthy images.

### EXPECTED RESULTS

- Ss can explain the role of photography in journalism.
- Ss understand the principles and values a photojournalist must adhere to.
- Ss understand the key elements of an image and have the basic skills to create a newsworthy picture using a smartphone or a camera.

### OUTLINE OF THE KEY CONCEPTS

*(See the corresponding Key Concepts Section)*

1. The importance of pictures in news stories
2. The ethics of photojournalism
3. Key concepts of a newsworthy image
  - Content
  - Composition
  - Light
  - How to write captions: Standards
4. What is mobile journalism? Basics of smartphone photography

### MODULE LENGTH

65 minutes (teacher chooses activities for 45 minutes)

### LESSON PLAN: ACTIVITIES AND TIMEFRAME

ACTIVITY	LESSON OBJECTIVE	TIME
1. The Importance of Pictures in News Stories	1	20 min
2. The Ethics of Photojournalism	2	12 min
3. Three Key Elements of an Image	3	15 min
4. Photo Captioning	4	17 min

## RESOURCES FOR FURTHER READING/WATCHING

- Why violent news images matter (TIME) <http://time.com/3705884/why-violent-news-images-matter/>
- World Press Photo Manipulation – The Ethics of Digital Photojournalism (*The New York Times*) <https://lens.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/02/17/world-press-photo-manipulation-ethics-of-digital-photojournalism/?mtrref=undefined>
- A Handy Guide to Making Awesome Photos (NPR) <http://training.npr.org/visual/a-handly-guide-to-making-awesome-photos/>
- A Guide to Making Better Images with Your iPhone (NPR) <http://training.npr.org/visual/a-guide-to-making-better-images-with-your-iphone/>
- Tips for writing photo captions (Poynter) <https://www.poynter.org/news/6-tips-writing-photo-captions>

## HOMEWORK ACTIVITIES

Prompt:

Create an idea for a photo story and shoot it with your smartphone camera. Upload the pictures in the journalism club shared folder and write a headline and photo caption for each picture to create a meaningful story.

\*Ss can work individually or in small groups on this assignment.

## ACTIVITY 2

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY	THE ETHICS OF PHOTOJOURNALISM
TIME	12 minutes
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Give Ss an excerpt from the Reuters Handbook of Journalism (<a href="http://handbook.reuters.com/index.php?title=A%20Brief%20Guide%20to%20Standards%20C%20Photoshop%20and%20Captions">http://handbook.reuters.com/index.php?title=A Brief Guide to Standards%2C Photoshop and Captions</a>) on the rules for photographs to skim (2 min).</li> <li>2. Show Ss the photograph of Aylan Kurdi, a child refugee, lying dead on a beach in Turkey and explain the context of the picture and why it sparked debate among media professionals (3 min).</li> <li>3. Provide some questions on the topic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Which rule of journalism was broken in that case?</li> <li>■ If you were the person making decisions in a newsroom, would you have published it and why (give arguments)?</li> <li>■ When is it acceptable to use images of death to convey an important message?</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p>Ss discuss the questions in pairs (4 min).</p> <p>4. Ask a few Ss to share answers with the rest of the class (3 min).</p>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<p>Internet connection, laptop, projector, whiteboard, handout from Reuters (<a href="http://handbook.reuters.com/index.php?title=A%20Brief%20Guide%20to%20Standards%20C%20Photoshop%20and%20Captions">http://handbook.reuters.com/index.php?title=A Brief Guide to Standards%2C Photoshop and Captions</a>)</p> <p>Further reading:</p> <p>Will the image of a lifeless boy on a beach change the refugee debate (<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/media/greenslade/2015/sep/03/will-the-image-of-a-lifeless-boy-on-a-beach-change-the-refugee-debate">https://www.theguardian.com/media/greenslade/2015/sep/03/will-the-image-of-a-lifeless-boy-on-a-beach-change-the-refugee-debate</a>) (The Guardian)</p>

## ACTIVITY 3

TITLE	THREE KEY ELEMENTS OF AN IMAGE
TIME	15 minutes
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduce the three key elements of an image: composition, content, and light. Explain the importance of each (5 min).</li> <li>2. Play a short video with composition tips (3 min).</li> <li>3. Show some examples of award-winning pictures and ask Ss the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ What story does the picture tell? What message does it convey?</li> <li>■ How does the photographer direct the eye to what's important in the picture? What composition technique did he or she use?</li> <li>■ What is the mood of the picture? How does the light contribute to it?</li> <li>■ Can you spot a metaphor in the picture?</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p>Ss discuss the questions together with T (7 min).</p>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<p>Internet connection, laptop, projector, whiteboard</p> <p>Short video (COOPH) (<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=29&amp;v=7ZVyNjKSr0M">https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=29&amp;v=7ZVyNjKSr0M</a>)</p> <p>Award-winning images (Pulitzer) (<a href="http://www.pulitzer.org/winners/photography-staff-reuters">http://www.pulitzer.org/winners/photography-staff-reuters</a>)</p> <p>Note: it would be great to use the picture by Stoyan Nenov, the Bulgarian photographer on the Reuters team.</p>

## ACTIVITY 4

TITLE	PHOTO CAPTIONING
TIME	17 minutes
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduce the basic rules of writing photo captions with information from the Reuters Handbook of Journalism on accuracy of captions (5 min).</li> <li>2. Show Ss several photographs and ask them to write their own captions to the images on the notes in their notebooks (5 min).</li> <li>3. The class then compares their photo captions with the original ones and discusses the similarities or differences (7 min).</li> </ol>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<p>Internet connection, laptop, projector, whiteboard/flipchart, markers, sticky notes</p> <p>Reuters handbook on captions (<a href="http://handbook.reuters.com/index.php?title=A_Brief_Guide_to_Standards%2C_Photoshop_and_Captions">http://handbook.reuters.com/index.php?title=A_Brief_Guide_to_Standards%2C_Photoshop_and_Captions</a>)</p> <p>Photographs for Ss to caption:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="http://time.com/4701247/aleppo-syria-car-collector/">http://time.com/4701247/aleppo-syria-car-collector/</a></li> <li>2. <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/news/gallery/2018/jun/12/a-broken-tusk-and-an-alpine-pass-tues-days-best-photos#img-1">https://www.theguardian.com/news/gallery/2018/jun/12/a-broken-tusk-and-an-alpine-pass-tues-days-best-photos#img-1</a></li> <li>3. <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/news/gallery/2018/jun/13/saint-anthony-and-frida-kahlo-wednes-days-top-photos#img-2">https://www.theguardian.com/news/gallery/2018/jun/13/saint-anthony-and-frida-kahlo-wednes-days-top-photos#img-2</a></li> </ol>

## KEY CONCEPTS

If photography is a visual language, photojournalism is the process of communicating news through photographs.

Definition of contemporary photojournalism by critically-acclaimed photographer Ed Kashi: “Photojournalism is a unique and powerful form of visual storytelling, originally created for print magazines and newspapers, but has now morphed into multimedia and even documentary filmmaking. Through the Internet, apps and the mobile device explosion, photojournalism can now reach audiences never before imagined with immediate impact, while continuing to write our visual history and form our collective memories.”

There are different categories within news photography. For example, Pulitzer’s feature photography provides in-depth coverage of news or recent news stories; documentary photography reveals life as it is: “the infinite number of situations, actions and results over a period of time” (NiemanReports, Fall 2001).

### 1. THE IMPORTANCE OF PICTURES IN NEWS STORIES

A picture is worth a thousand words, the saying goes. In the news, pictures convey emotions and messages that words simply cannot; they touch the hearts and minds of viewers and help them grasp the context of a story. Nowadays, everyone has the tools necessary to take pictures but it takes special skills, knowledge, and experience to be able to tell accurate and meaningful stories through pictures.

Here’s what makes a photograph powerful, according to a few media professionals:

“A great photograph is one that is well composed, captures a moment that informs the viewer and evokes an emotion.” (Kevin Coombs, production editor at Reuters Pictures: <https://agency.reuters.com/en/insights/articles/articles-archive/here-is-why-photography-is-essential-to-your-content.html>)

“It’s not the role of a photograph or a photographer to be an agent of change; it’s to document what is happening. It’s then the role of society to react to that photograph and decide on a course of action. The power that the photographer has is to be present and channel all their knowledge, experience and emotion into framing the context of the image.” (Pancho Bernasconi, Getty Images VP Editorial content: <http://stories.gettyimages.com/in-search-of-great-politics/>)

“What allows me to overcome the emotional obstacles inherent in my work is the belief that when people are confronted with images that evoke compassion, they will continue to respond, no matter how exhausted, angry or frustrated they may be.” (James Nachtwey, newspaper and war photographer, contributor for *Time Magazine*: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/dec/05/world-words-photos-matter-photojournalism-reportage>)

### 2. THE ETHICS OF PHOTOJOURNALISM

Just like any other branch of journalism, photojournalism adheres to certain rules and standards. The most important one is accuracy. News images must reflect reality and inform the reader of what is happening.

According to the Reuters Handbook of Journalism, the rules photojournalists should follow are: no additions or deletions, no misleading the viewer through manipulation of the tonal and color balance of the photo (to disguise certain elements or change the context), and no staging or re-enactment of news events. Photographers may not direct the subjects of their images or add, remove, or move objects when they are shooting for a news assignment.

When photographing conflicts or people in distress, photojournalists must consider the basic ethical rules of the journalistic profession.

The Code of Ethics of Bulgarian Media states:

- We shall avoid publishing photographs and recordings of individuals taken outside public places without their consent.
- We shall not publish information or photographs about the private life of a child unless there is an overriding public interest.

That being said, however, when it comes to graphic violence or documenting death and tragedy, the choice of which pictures get published or not is a matter of the subjective decisions made by the picture editor or editorial team. As such, there is no consensus on the topic but an ongoing debate, which you can read more about here:

[TIME: Why violent news images matter](#)

*The New York Times*: [The ethics of digital photojournalism](#)

[Award-winning National Geographic photographer Michael Nichols on the ethics of photography](#)

### 3. KEY CONCEPTS OF A NEWSWORTHY IMAGE

There are three key elements that make a picture newsworthy, [according to NPR](#).

■ **Content** — what you want to communicate to your audience, reader, viewer. It should inform and move the viewer.

■ **Composition** — the organization of the scene in the frame; how the photographer directs the eye to what is important. This can be achieved through [different photographic techniques](#).

■ **Light** — it helps give your image a tonal feel and helps the viewer focus on what you need them to see.

■ **How to write photo captions: Standards**

Pictures in news always need a good caption to inform the reader and provide him/her with the context behind the story.

According to Reuters, the most important rule of writing a caption is accuracy.

“Just as our news photographs must reflect reality, so too should our captions. They must adhere to the basic Reuters rules of accuracy and freedom from bias and must answer the basic questions of good journalism:

- Who is in the picture?
- Where was it taken?
- When was it taken?
- What does it show?
- Why is a subject doing a particular thing?”

Captions must not contain assumptions on the part of the photographer about what might have happened, even when a situation seems likely. “Explain only what you have witnessed,” says the [Reuters Handbook of Journalism](#).

You can find more tips on how to write good photo captions [here](#).

### 4. WHAT IS MOBILE JOURNALISM? BASICS OF SMARTPHONE PHOTOGRAPHY

The digital revolution has impacted photo and video journalism in numerous ways. The shifts from film to digital and from print to web have had profound effects on the quality, speed, and tools that visual journalists use to tell their stories.

In the last decade, smartphones have become not only the dominant way through which people consume news but also have increased in worldwide newsroom use, as they provide an easy, affordable, and fast way to report on live events or stories from the field. A growing community of journalists [is experimenting](#) with different applications, testing limits, and paying attention to how their audiences are engaging with this new form of journalism.

As it is a relatively new form of visual storytelling, there is no universal definition of mobile journalism. [The Mobile Journalism Manual](#), created by journalists with the support of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, [defines mobile journalism](#) “as a form of digital storytelling where the primary device used for creating and editing images, audio and video is a smartphone.”

For practical tips on how to shoot and edit news stories with a smartphone, see here:

Lifewire: [Tips for mobile photography](#)

[Introduction to smartphone photography](#)

[How to get started in mobile journalism](#)

NPR: [How to make better images with your iPhone](#)





51.

# **QUALITY JOURNALISM VS. DISINFORMATION, PART II: FACT-CHECKING**

The second module related to quality journalism and manipulation is focused on developing students' skills to identify whether something is true. They'll gain knowledge and experience from reputable sources and services that provide advice on recognizing credible news outlets in Bulgaria which are designed to help them avoid becoming the victims of major fake news stories. Students will learn how to fact-check and research information, simultaneously becoming aware of some cognitive biases which facilitate the diffusion of fake news.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Ss will be able to recognize and distinguish between quality journalism and propaganda, manipulation, disinformation, and fake news.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- Ss have the skills to identify fake news, manipulation, disinformation, or propaganda.
- Ss are aware of reputable resources and services (including browser add-ons) advise about finding credible news outlets in Bulgaria and avoiding major European fake news/propaganda media outlets.
- Ss can fact-check and research information in Google and various other databases.
- Ss understand and can identify the cognitive biases which facilitate fake news diffusion.

## OUTLINE OF THE KEY CONCEPTS

*(See the corresponding Key Concepts Section)*

1. Yellow/Tabloid journalism
2. Fake news
  - Types of Fakes News according to James Titcomb and James Carson
  - Facebook's tips for spotting fake news
  - Claire Wardle of First Draft News identifies seven types of fake news
  - Mathew Shaer: Fighting the Nazis with Fake News
3. Disinformation
  - Key principles to counter disinformation, as outlined by the report
4. Manipulation
5. Cognitive bias
6. Propaganda

## LESSON LENGTH

55-70 minutes

## LESSON PLAN: ACTIVITIES AND TIMEFRAME

ACTIVITY	LESSON OBJECTIVE	TIME
1. Introduction: Brief Video and Discussion	1	15 min
2. Characteristics and Types of Fake News	1	10 min
3. Case Study: "Europe Drowns but They Decided to Ban Baptizing of Kids"	1	20-25 min
4. EU Recommendations on Disinformation	1	5-7 min
5. Summary of Key Points; Assign Homework	1	5-12 min

## RESOURCES FOR FURTHER READING/WATCHING

- A Multi-dimensional Approach to Disinformation: Report. Independent High-level Group on Fake News and Online Disinformation, European Commission, 2018. ([http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc\\_id=50271](http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/document.cfm?doc_id=50271))
- “First Draft” is a project of the Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy at Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government. It uses research-based methods to fight mis- and disinformation online. Additionally, it provides practical and ethical guidance on how to find, verify, and publish content sourced from the social web. (<https://firstdraftnews.org/>)
- Fake News and Disinformation Online. Eurobarometer 464, 2018. Final report, results, and fact sheets per country available at: (<http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/survey/getsurveydetail/instruments/flash/surveyky/2183>)
- Factsheet about Bulgaria (based on Eurobarometer 464, 2108) (<http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/ResultDoc/download/DocumentKy/82821>)
- Online verification tools Video 1 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yBU2sDIUbp8>)
- Online verification tools Video 2 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hB6qjlxKItA>)
- Online verification tools Video 3 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tRZ-N3OvvUs>)
- Online verification tools Video 4 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wJG7kFmS0FE>)
- Fact-checking tools with Craig and Jane (three videos) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7eKG9RuqUE4&list=PLsSbsdukQ8ValEVot2y0EFusKSqK9hdgt>)
- Duke Reporters’ Lab, a hub for worldwide fact-checkers and fact-checking articles (<https://reporterslab.org/about-the-lab/>)
- “EU vs. Dis,” the major EU anti-disinformation service, which collects fake news targeting the EU (<https://euvsdisinfo.eu/>)
- The Open Data Service of the Bulgarian Government, where a lot of registers are made available to the public (<https://opendata.government.bg/>)

[Boyan Yurukov](#), an IT specialist and a well-known blogger in Bulgaria, is an extensive user of public registers in an effort to bust myths about various issues, such as fertility rates and the demographic collapse.

Other databases that can be used are Apis, Ciela, and Lakorda (free access from the premises of Sofia University), which provide detailed financial information about companies that can be cross-checked with the Commercial Registry.

There are other, more specific, databases where you can search for information to fact-check different statements made by politicians, businessmen and even people in academia — such as Eurostat’s ComExt database for external trade, among others. Another method is to try to find out who the website is registered under, and so on.

## HOMEWORK ACTIVITIES

[Watch the video, “Facing Facts”](#) (12 minutes).

Review both your own and your friends’ posts from the past year and identify fake news and manipulative posts/pictures as they appear. Using these examples, prepare a short analysis of cognitive biases that can help identify fake posts and shares.

\*This assignment is linked with the personal consumption Module (7.1) and serves as background preparation and reflection.

## ACTIVITY 1

TITLE	INTRODUCTION: BRIEF VIDEO AND DISCUSSION
TIME	15 minutes
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Show the “How can you spot fake news?” video (8 min).</li> <li>2. Engage Ss in a discussion by asking the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Have you come across fake news in traditional media? How about in social media?</li> <li>■ Do you know how to distinguish between media content that is genuine or fake, and that leads to disinformation, manipulation, or propaganda?</li> <li>■ Have you shared anything on social networks which turned out to be fake news? What did you do when you found out?</li> <li>■ Have you ever told any of your social media friends that a post they’ve shared is fake news? Did they take notice of what you told them? (5 min).</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. After the discussion, present the key concept of fake news and distribute an information sheet by Facebook with tips for spotting fake news (2 min).</li> </ol>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<p>Internet connection, laptop, projector, handouts</p> <p>“How can you spot fake news?” video from BBC Click: (<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qet-0mfK5b0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qet-0mfK5b0</a>) (~8 min)</p> <p>Handout from “Facebook Tips” information sheet: (<a href="https://web.facebook.com/help/188118808357379?rdc=1&amp;_rdt&amp;locale=en_US">https://web.facebook.com/help/188118808357379?rdc=1&amp;_rdt&amp;locale=en_US</a>)</p>

## ACTIVITY 2

TITLE	CHARACTERISTICS AND TYPES OF FAKE NEWS
TIME	15 minutes
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Distribute a handout on the seven types of fake news, according to Claire Wardle (prepare before class).</li> <li>2. Ask Ss to match the types of fake news presented to their original examples from the previous activity. If a specific type has not been mentioned, ask if Ss can come up with an idea or remember a case that fits each of the remaining types.</li> </ol>
MATERIALS/ RESOURCES	<a href="#">Types of Fake News Handout</a>

## ACTIVITY 3

TITLE	CASE STUDY: "EUROPE DROWNS BUT THEY DECIDED TO BAN BAPTIZING OF KIDS"
TIME	20-25 minutes
STEPS	<p>1. Distribute printed copies of "Europe drowns but they decided to ban baptizing of kids." Have Ss read and discuss it in small groups of 4 or 5 students and identify the aspects of the article that leads them to believe that the information provided is inaccurate (7-8 minutes).</p> <p>2. Ask one group to present its findings (2 min) and the others to add anything additional (2 min).</p> <p>3. Prompt Ss to imagine they are in an editor's shoes. After they receive the article from one or multiple journalists (as was the case here: <a href="https://www.lentata.com/page_8359.html">https://www.lentata.com/page_8359.html</a>), what would they do to prevent the fake news being published? (3 minutes)</p> <p>4. Search for the article's first appearance using Google advanced search and decide if this was simply an example of poor journalism or coordinated disinformation/propaganda (6-7 minutes).</p> <p>* If Ss are unaware of Google's advanced search options, you may either present them or seek out cross-subject coordination with the school's IT teacher. Alternatively, a Google image search can clearly indicate if the picture is original and in what context it was first used. Further to that, Google Trends can be used to analyze the spread of a particular fake news article. Last, but not least, Google's automatic website translation can also help identify the media source when the origin is unknown.</p> <p>5. Following the case study discussion, introduce the key concepts of disinformation and propaganda as a generalization (3-6 minutes).</p>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<p><a href="#">Europe drowns but they decided to ban baptizing of kids</a> handout</p> <p><b>PREPARE</b></p> <p>1. Make enough copies of the piece "Europe drowns but they decided to ban baptizing of kids" for all Ss.</p> <p>2. Additional fact-checked resources can be found here: <a href="http://factcheck.ge/en/article/from-march-2016-the-baptism-of-children-will-be-prohibited-in-member-states-of-the-european-union/">http://factcheck.ge/en/article/from-march-2016-the-baptism-of-children-will-be-prohibited-in-member-states-of-the-european-union/</a></p> <p>You should be prepared to provide examples of the same article covered in other countries (like Poland) where, although proven to be fake, it was still circulated and continued misinforming the public.</p> <p><a href="https://www.fakt.pl/wydarzenia/swiat/unia-europejska-zakaze-chrztu-bo-godzi-w-prawa-dziecka/ffntswv">https://www.fakt.pl/wydarzenia/swiat/unia-europejska-zakaze-chrztu-bo-godzi-w-prawa-dziecka/ffntswv</a></p> <p><b>BACKGROUND</b></p> <p>The article is a classic example of fake news. The news firstly appeared on glasove.com after being Google-translated from an Italian parody news site, but quickly diffused in traditional and new media. The hoax has been circulating in Europe since at least 2014, citing a non-existing journalist from The Times. The article is still in circulation, despite being proven fake, because news outlets simply don't bother deleting it.</p>

## ACTIVITY 4

TITLE	EU RECOMMENDATIONS ON DISINFORMATION
TIME	5-7 minutes
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduce Ss to the “EU vs. Disinfo” service (<a href="https://euvsdisinfo.eu">euvsdisinfo.eu</a>). The database has more than 4,000 cases (<a href="https://euvsdisinfo.eu/disinformation-cases/">https://euvsdisinfo.eu/disinformation-cases/</a>).</li> <li>2. Share the recommendations of the EU High-level Group (in Key concepts) (3 min).</li> <li>3. Present Krasimir Gadjkov’s Mediascan service (<a href="https://mediascan.gadjkov.com">https://mediascan.gadjkov.com</a>), which classifies Bulgarian online media according to the type of news they publish and their ownership (if this is publicly known).</li> <li>4. Demonstrate how to download and install Chrome and Mozilla extensions which warn readers about the credibility of news websites (<a href="https://mediascan.gadjkov.com/extension">https://mediascan.gadjkov.com/extension</a>).</li> </ol>
MATERIALS/RESOURCES	Internet connection, laptop, projector, web addresses listed above, handout with recommendations from key concepts

## ACTIVITY 5

TITLE	SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS; ASSIGN HOMEWORK
TIME	5-12 minutes
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask Ss to come up with their own reasons for the spread of fake news and disinformation in Bulgaria. Distribute the handout with additional information from 2018 (3 min).</li> <li>2. Continue the discussion by dividing the class into 2 groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group 1 (True or false): If the yellow/tabloid press is so highly sought after, it means there is a demand for it. How can this demand be satisfied? Who should take the necessary steps and prevent the spread of fake news?</li> <li>Group 2 (Vicious cycle): Poor quality journalism is the result of a vicious cycle, coming from the lack of resources and skills to produce good material and the inability or unwillingness to pay for quality journalistic pieces. On the other hand, it could also be a conspiracy: media owners feeding the public fake news as a means of control, manipulation, and disinformation. Is it possible to tell what the real reason behind the fake news phenomenon is? And if people can easily detect which news is fake and which is not, why is it that such disinformation still exists?</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Have the two groups present their findings. (3 min)</li> <li>4. Present the homework assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Watch the video “Facing Facts” (<a href="https://newsroom.fb.com/news/2018/05/inside-feed-facing-facts/#watchnow">https://newsroom.fb.com/news/2018/05/inside-feed-facing-facts/#watchnow</a>) (12 minutes).</li> <li>■ Review both your own and your friends’ posts from the past year and identify fake news and manipulative posts/pictures as they appear.</li> <li>■ Using these examples, prepare a short analysis of cognitive biases that can help identify fake posts and shares.</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p>*This assignment is linked with the personal consumption Module (7.1) and serves as background preparation and reflection.</p>
MATERIALS/RESOURCES	<p>Handouts (Eurobarometer report, 2 pages):</p> <p>(<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/ResultDoc/download/DocumentKy/82821">http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/ResultDoc/download/DocumentKy/82821</a>)</p> <p>Link to video for homework and prompt</p>

## KEY CONCEPTS

### 1. YELLOW/TABLOID JOURNALISM

Yellow journalism or the yellow press are American terms for low-quality journalism and media outlets providing little or no legitimate news. They usually provide sensational, eye-catching headlines, gossip presented as facts, faked interviews, and exaggerations of news events. Their stories are under-researched (or not at all) and they publish anonymous articles, relying on unnamed sources. Yellow newspapers often make use of large print on their cover pages with lots of pictures and often report about pseudo-scientific news and astrology.

The term was coined by Erwin Wardman from the New York Press in response to the circulation battle between two other New York City newspapers in the late 19th century, which used yellow ink and sensational journalism. Currently, the term has a pejorative meaning and refers to unethical and unprofessional journalism.

In the U.K. context, tabloid journalism is used instead of yellow journalism, the tabloid format of the press having the same characteristics as the yellow press. However, not all media outlets publishing in tabloid formats engage in tabloid journalism and, of course, other format presses use low-quality journalism, as well.

Additional reading:

[Bed Adler: Tabloids in the age of social media](#) (Columbia Journalism Review)

### 2. FAKE NEWS

Fake news is a neologism that means fabricated or false news, deliberately created and diffused via different tools with the aim of damaging the reputation of an agency, entity, or person or raising doubt in values and beliefs. Fake news has been part of the arsenal of all war makers and many governments. One of earliest documented uses of fake news was by Emperor Octavian in his disinformation campaign to win over Mark Antony in the first century, B.C. Fake news was used extensively during World War II and the Cold War after that. Recently, the term has gained popularity due to Russian interference in the US elections in 2016, and also from Trump and his supporters' referring to established U.S. media who criticize him, like CNN and The New York Times, as fake news outlets.

#### Types of Fakes News according to James Titcomb and James Carson:

"One of the problems of actually doing anything about fake news is that it comes in multiple variants, from different actors and with different motives. These include, but are not limited to:

■ **Commercially-driven sensational content:** Stories that are not ideologically driven, but very often have absolutely no grounding in fact. Their key goal is to drive web traffic and, as a result, generate advertising income. Pop-up websites run by [Macedonian teenagers](#) (BBC) fall into this category.

■ **State-sponsored misinformation:** The goal here isn't revenue, but influence. Outlets in Russia or elsewhere might produce content to swing public opinion, sow division, or give the illusion of support for a particular candidate or idea, either domestically or abroad. Fabricated stories can often be mixed with true or sensationalised ones.

■ **Highly-partisan news sites:** These can conflate fact and opinion, are nakedly supportive of one political viewpoint or party, and often position themselves as alternatives to the mainstream media.

■ **Social media itself:** Swarms of Twitter bots posting doctored or misleading photos, adverts on Facebook paid for by Russian intelligence outfits, videos on YouTube claiming terrorist incidents are hoaxes. These are not links outside of social media but are part of the social networks themselves.



■ **Satire or parody:** Light-hearted publications such as The Onion and Daily Mash have existed since well before fake news was seen as a problem."

Source: Fake news: What exactly is it — and how can you spot it? <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/0/fake-news-exactly-has-really-had-influence/>

### ■ Facebook's tips for spotting fake news:

**1. Be skeptical of headlines.** The headlines of fake news stories are often catchy, and contain lots of capital letters and exclamation marks. If claims in the headline sound unbelievable, they may well be.

**2. Look closely at the URL.** Many fake news stories mimic authentic news sources by making small changes to the URL. You can go to the site to compare the URL to established sources.

**3. Check the source.** Ensure the story comes from a source with a reputation for accuracy. If the story comes from a site you have not heard of, check their "About" section to learn more.

**4. Watch for unusual formatting.** Many fake news stories often contain spelling and grammar errors, as well as an awkward-looking layout.

**5. Check the photos.** Fake news stories often contain manipulated images or videos. Sometimes the photo may be authentic, but taken out of context. You can do an Internet search of the image to find out where it came from.

**6. Check the dates.** Fake news stories may contain timelines that make no sense or event dates which are wrong or have been altered.

**7. Check the evidence.** Check the author's sources to confirm they are accurate. Lack of evidence or a reliance on unnamed experts may indicate disinformation.

**8. Look at other reports.** If no other news source is reporting the same story, it could indicate that it is false.

**9. Is the story a joke?** Sometimes fake news stories can be hard to distinguish from humorous articles. Check whether the source is known for parody and whether the story's details and tone suggest it may be just for fun.

**10. Some stories are intentionally false.** Think critically about the stories that you read and only share articles which you know to be credible."

### ■ [Claire Wardle of First Draft News identifies seven types of fake news](#) (Wardle, First Draft News)

1. Satire or parody ("no intention to cause harm but has potential to fool")
2. False connection ("when headlines, visuals or captions don't support the content")
3. Misleading content ("misleading use of information to frame an issue or an individual")
4. False context ("when genuine content is shared with false contextual information")
5. Imposter content ("when genuine sources are impersonated with false, made-up sources")
6. Manipulated content ("when genuine information or imagery is manipulated to deceive", as with a 'doctored' photo)
7. Fabricated content ("new content is 100% false, designed to deceive and do harm")

A 'doctored' photo is a manipulated photo, as in the case of a picture of John Kerry (US presidential candidate in 2004) and Jane Fonda that was claimed to show both speaking together at an anti-Vietnam War protest in 1971. Later, with advancements in technology, not only photos but videos can also be manipulated.



■ **Mathew Shaer: Fighting the Nazis with Fake News** (Shaer, Smithsonian Magazine)

“British journalist Sefton Delmer engaged in ‘black propaganda’ against the Nazis between 1941 and 1943 by organizing a fake news factory in the form of a radio broadcast featuring Der Chef, a patriot and Hitler loyalist. ‘He disclosed worrying news that injured German soldiers were receiving infusions of syphilis-tainted blood from captured Poles and Slavs, and gossiped about an Italian diplomat in Berlin who was bedding the wives of German officers. German civilians picking up the shortwave radio transmissions thought they were eavesdropping on the affairs of a secret military organ led by Der Chef.’... ‘To be sure, British intelligence agents played a role (providing real news), but it was behind the scenes, unlike traditional government propaganda. By most accounts, the broadcasts were insidiously effective: Hitler’s high command repeatedly attempted to block the signal.’... ‘In November 1943, Delmer ended Der Chef’s reign of error by penning a script that had Nazi troops storming the studio and ‘shooting’ him mid-broadcast, but many other ruses lived on. Beginning in May 1944, he produced a German-language newspaper called Nachrichten für die Truppe (News for the Troops), which was air-dropped to soldiers on the Western front. After the war, Delmer rejoined Britain’s Daily Express, revealing his earlier role as a source of fake news in a 1962 memoir. ‘Delmer was proud of his work,’ says Gary Blount, producer of Come Before Winter. ‘His broadcasts had not only been heard extensively, but had contributed to the war effort.’”

**3. DISINFORMATION:**

A European Commission report defines it as “false, inaccurate, or misleading information designed, presented, and promoted to intentionally cause public harm or for profit”. It argues that the problem is not in the “fake news”, but rather in disinformation, its business models, low media and information literacy, and increasing distrust in institutions. Disinformation could be tackled by attacking the monetization strategies behind fake news websites and by extending the networks of fact-checking organizations, verification specialists, and real-time machine learning.

■ **Key principles to counter disinformation, as outlined by the report:**

1. Platforms should adapt their advertising policies, including adhering to the “follow-the-money” principle, whilst preventing incentives that lead to disinformation — i.e. discouraging the dissemination and amplification of disinformation for profit. These policies must be based on clear, transparent, and non-discriminatory criteria;
2. Platforms should ensure transparency and public accountability with regard to the processing of users’ data for advertisement placements, with due respect to privacy, freedom of expression, and media pluralism;
3. Platforms should ensure that sponsored content, including political advertising, is appropriately distinguished from other content;
4. Platforms should take the necessary measures to enable privacy-compliant access to data for fact-checking and research activities;
5. Platforms should make advanced settings and controls available to empower users to customize their online experience;
6. Platforms should, in cooperation with public and private European news outlets and where appropriate, take effective measures to improve the visibility of reliable, trustworthy news and facilitate users’ access to it;
7. Where appropriate, trending news items should, if technically feasible, be accompanied by related news suggestions;
8. Platforms should, where appropriate, provide user- friendly tools to enable users to link up with trusted fact-checking sources and allow users to exercise their right to reply;

9. Platforms that apply flagging and trust systems that rely on users should design safeguards against their abuse...;

10. Platforms should cooperate, i.e. by providing relevant data on the functioning of their services..."

(Source: A multi-dimensional approach to disinformation. Report of the Independent High-Level Group on Fake News and Online Disinformation, 2018. European Commission.)

The term disinformation is of Russian origin. It was coined in 1923 by Stalin, as Pacepa and Rychlak claim in their book *Disinformation: Former Spy Chief Reveals Secret Strategies for Undermining Freedom, Attacking Religion, and Promoting Terrorism* (2013). The term was then used to refer to a special unit of the State Political Directorate (later the KGB) aimed at active intelligence operations abroad through the manipulation of foreign national intelligence systems by spreading credible but misleading information.

The difference between misinformation and disinformation is that the former is unintended, due to errors and noise in communication channels, while the latter is strategic, or at least a tactical endeavor.

#### 4. MANIPULATION

Media manipulation is the application of a series of related techniques in which journalists or editors with partisan interests influence the behavior or perception of the audience on a particular issue. Manipulation creates an image or argument that favors their world-views or interests, which otherwise (i.e. via plain news reporting) might not be achieved. Such tactics may include the use of logical fallacies, psychological manipulation, outright deception, rhetoric, and propaganda techniques; they often involve omitting information or points of view that contradict their interests or views and diverting attention away from problematic areas. Successful manipulators very well know the cognitive biases of the audience at large, which facilitates this manipulation.

#### 5. COGNITIVE BIAS

Cognitive bias is a psychological term denoting a systemic deviation from rationality in judgment. Cognitive biases are not necessarily a bad thing, as they can facilitate faster and more effective decisions; yet, in the context of fake news and disinformation, there are three major biases which negatively affect the ability to orientate between facts and fake news, especially in the context of conspiracy theories, and explain what is happening:

- Illusory pattern perception (seeing inexistent causal links),
- Proportionality biases (big events should have big causes), and
- Confirmation biases (tend to accept explanations that you already believe).

Media manipulation is linked to framing bias. Framing is a pattern of behavior, a collection of stereotypes. Framing could be enough to achieve manipulation without altering facts, simply by knowing how the audience processes information from different media sources. There are other cognitive biases, as well.

#### 6. PROPAGANDA

Propaganda is a persuasive spread of information used to influence opinions, beliefs, and intentions, shape actual decisions, and form specific world-views. Initially a neutral term close to our current understanding of advertising, currently propaganda is associated with the manipulative and non-objective use of information.

In a media context, propaganda often relates to Herman and Chomsky's propaganda model, which argues for the existence of systemic biases in mass media and explains them through the lens of structural economic causes. The model considers the media a business that sells readers and audiences (and not news) to other businesses. News appearing in the media is merely instrumental. Although Herman and Chomsky's theory is rather cynical, it explains the current flourishing of fake news websites very well.

(Source: Herman and Chomsky, 1988, *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*)



# 5.2.

## ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

This practical module introduces the differences between news stories and opinion pieces, as well as how they complement one another. Students will learn to distinguish between different types of opinion and commentary writing, critically evaluate them, understand their purpose, and produce such pieces in a balanced and ethical manner that conforms to quality journalism standards.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Ss will learn the differences between news stories and opinion pieces, as well as where they intersect and complement each other.
2. Ss will be able to produce analytical and opinion segments.
3. Ss will understand the value of opinion pieces, but also their limitations.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- Ss can distinguish between the various types of opinion and commentary writing.
- Ss can critique such types of writing and understand their purpose.
- Ss can produce analytical and opinion pieces in a balanced and ethical manner.

## OUTLINE OF THE KEY CONCEPTS

*(See the corresponding Key Concepts Section)*

1. Overview
2. Types of Commentary
  - Editorials
  - Letters to the editor
  - Op-eds
3. Analysis
4. Writing tips
  - Writing an analysis
  - Writing commentary pieces
  - Editing tips

## MODULE LENGTH

60 min (*T chooses activities for about 40 min*)

## LESSON PLAN: ACTIVITIES AND TIMEFRAME

ACTIVITY	LESSON OBJECTIVE	TIME
1. Opinion Pieces, Analyses and News	1, 3	20 min
2. Turning Opinion into Analysis	2, 3	15 min
3. Team-writing Commentaries	2, 3	25 min
4. Letter to the Editor	2	5 min

## RESOURCES FOR FURTHER READING

- Op-ed basics (The Op-ed project) (<https://www.theopedproject.org/oped-basics/>)
- Tips for aspiring op-ed writers (New York Times) (<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/25/opinion/tips-for-aspiring-op-ed-writers.html>)
- Duke University op-ed resources (Duke University) ([http://web.archive.org/web/20160201094734/http://newsoffice.duke.edu/duke\\_resources/oped](http://web.archive.org/web/20160201094734/http://newsoffice.duke.edu/duke_resources/oped))
- Writer's Digest: 10 rules for writing opinion pieces (Writer's Digest) (<http://www.writersdigest.com/writing-articles/by-writing-goal/improve-my-writing/10-rules-for-writing-opinion-pieces>)
- How to write a letter to the editor (Oregon Live) (<https://www.oregonlive.com/opinion/index.ssf/page/how-do-i-write-a-letter-to-the.html>)

## HOMEWORK ACTIVITIES

Writing a sample analytical article on a set of pre-determined topics.

### ACTIVITY 1

TITLE	OPINION PIECES, ANALYSES AND NEWS
TIME	~20 minutes
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduce Ss to each genre by providing examples in handouts.</li> <li>2. Give Ss time to read them (5 min).</li> <li>3. Discuss the similarities and differences of the pieces and make an outline of each one's structure and content (8 min).</li> <li>4. Now try the same approach with a website (8 min).</li> </ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Do all of the newspaper websites have clear distinction between the different genres?</li> <li>■ Show blogs and portfolio websites as special cases.</li> </ul>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<p>Handouts with examples of opinion, analysis, and news (choose excerpts from the links below), Internet connection, laptop, projector, whiteboard</p> <p>The 60 most-read opinion pieces of 2015 (The Guardian) (<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/commentis-free/2015/dec/30/the-60-most-read-opinion-pieces-of-2015">https://www.theguardian.com/commentis-free/2015/dec/30/the-60-most-read-opinion-pieces-of-2015</a>)</p> <p>Top 10 unforgettable editorials (Smithsonian Magazine) (<a href="https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/top-10-unforgettable-editorials-725211/">https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/top-10-unforgettable-editorials-725211/</a>)</p> <p>(Pulitzer) <a href="http://www.pulitzer.org/prize-winners-by-category/214">http://www.pulitzer.org/prize-winners-by-category/214</a></p>

## ACTIVITY 2

TITLE	TURNING OPINION INTO ANALYSIS
TIME	15 minutes
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Split the class into 3 groups.</li> <li>2. Hand each group several copies of an opinion piece (see resources) and have them discuss the following question:  <div>■ How could this opinion piece be turned into an analysis? What more does it need? (7 min)</div> </li> <li>3. Ask groups to share advice for changing an opinion piece with the others and make a list of additions/ omissions that would turn it into an analysis. T records the advice on the board and Ss can copy/take a picture of the recommendations (8 min).</li> </ol>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Whiteboard, markers, printed copies of the <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/commentis-free/2015/dec/30/the-60-most-read-opinion-pieces-of-2015">opinion piece: (https://www.theguardian.com/commentis-free/2015/dec/30/the-60-most-read-opinion-pieces-of-2015)</a>

## ACTIVITY 3

TITLE	TEAM-WRITING COMMENTARIES
TIME	25 minutes
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask Ss to form editorial teams of 4 people each.</li> <li>2. Give them a specific topic from the daily news (make a list of topics in advance).</li> <li>3. Using the editorial structure, ask teams to write a 300-word piece for their newspaper that establishes their joint position on the topic (15 min).</li> <li>4. Have team volunteers read their editorials in front of the class and as the other groups if they were convinced by the point of the group.</li> </ol>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Topics from the news
HOMEWORK	*This can transform into a homework assignment instead: Set up the task in teams and ask Ss to write the piece collaboratively in a common outlet such as Google Drive so that others can read and comment throughout the week.

**ACTIVITY 4**

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>LETTER TO THE EDITOR (THIS IS A HOMEWORK ACTIVITY)</b>
<b>TIME</b>	5 minutes (for giving instructions)
<b>STEPS</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask Ss to follow a newspaper or TV channel for a week.</li> <li>2. After a week, have them write an imaginary letter to the editor on a specific topic covered by the newspaper or TV channel, either sharing a critical opinion or praising the way a topic was covered.</li> <li>3. Send the best ones to the respective media outlets.</li> </ol>
<b>MATERIALS AND RESOURCES</b>	<p>Access to newspapers/other media;</p> <p>Contact information for the editors of the newspapers/media in question</p>

## KEY CONCEPTS

### 1. OVERVIEW:

Producing news is just one of the roles media professionals play. News outlets often need to go beyond that with more in-depth coverage of certain issues, or let the experts in a specific field have the word. Journalists who share the same general position on a specific social or political topic will often agree to back this position through an editorial piece that expresses the opinion of the entire team. These opinion pieces, however, ought to be duly marked as such and should not be mistaken for news pieces or other genres. They should either come with the name of the person who wrote them or should be signed by the editorial team.

Apart from that, journalists' role is not only to inform about events and the positions of others — they have to give their own input, find additional sources of information and expertise, and add value to well known facts. This is what makes an analysis. Last, but not least, experts or readers who have something unique or useful to say are often given the opportunity to do so — on the pages of newspapers, in radio talk shows, or, more recently, in online comment sections. Needless to say, when a journalist or an editorial team produces their view on a topic, they need to remain loyal to the previously described basic principles of reporting. Yet, they are also free to express where they stand on a certain issue and why is this the case, using facts, figures, and general observations.

Giving space for dissenting opinions is also an ethical must-do, as it provides the opportunity for debate and a plurality of discussion. However, in the modern online media landscape, the chance to stay anonymous and use various social media accounts or tools (i.e. A.I. bots) creates a more polarized and antagonized discussion; journalists should be wary of the effects of this.

### 2. TYPES OF COMMENTARY

There are three basic kinds of items appearing in opinion pages: **editorials**, written by newspaper staff; **letters to the editor**, written by readers; and **op-eds**, generally written by people with special expertise or credibility in a certain field.

■ **Editorials** are generally written by the editor after an editorial discussion. These articles form the opinion of the entire newspaper as an institution on a certain topic. They may or may not reflect the ideological bias of the newspaper (business-oriented, conservative, left-wing) or might just point at a special issue that was brought to light by an analysis or investigation of the newspaper. Such pieces are usually short and succinct — it is in this format that editors or journalists can express their point of view straight away, without giving all the usual data and/or background information they would in an average analysis or news piece.

This, however, does not mean they can write whatever they want. Sticking to the facts and referring to other work the media outlet has produced is still a must; otherwise, one risks losing not only their personal credibility as a professional, but that of the media outlet as a whole.

■ **Letters to the editor** are, unfortunately, a dying genre — they were popular in the heyday of mass print media. They usually comment on the news, share readers' views on a specific topic, and showcase alternative viewpoints.

■ **Op-eds** (\*Op-ed comes from the term "Opposite the editorial page of a newspaper") represent a column that conveys the strong, informed, and focused opinion of the writer on an issue of relevance to a targeted audience, according to Jeffrey Seglin, Director of the Harvard Kennedy School Communications Program. Typically, they are a bit longer than letters to the editors or editorials, but are still kept short (700-800 words), have a clearly defined point, are honest and clear about their point of view, and have a strong and distinctive style. The topic revealed in the first paragraph is the person, place, issue, incident, or thing that is the primary focus of the column. The article itself, despite being concise, still relies on primary materials, data, research, interviews, or in-depth coverage of a subject. Usually, in order to be an op-ed writer, you either have to be an expert in the given field or be able to bring something new to the table: new information, research, or a personal story that represents a wider phenomenon.



All these different types of journalistic writings share some common characteristics. They can be written in a much freer style, they can be written as a conversation with the reader, and they may use various types of voices – from humorous and introspective to more expert and data-oriented, describing certain phenomena from the height of one's specific knowledge and experience.

Another common characteristic of all opinion pieces is that they should be timely — even the best expert opinion or the strongest editorial position are useless if they are written long after the occurrence of the event.

In short, opinion pieces should be well written, timely, and provocative. They should target the audience of the outlet you have chosen well. People don't usually write to a national newspaper about a local issue, or vice versa: if you want to comment on the effects of oil prices on the economy, you wouldn't do so for your small town's website. Still, exceptions are always possible. A piece has to be informed and backed up by facts — not just emotions or opinions. An op-ed's purpose is to drive the public debate forward.

### 3. ANALYSIS

Analysis is a journalistic genre that provides explanations of processes in society and the world around us. It goes beyond the facts — it gives the journalist the chance to put them in context and allows the audience to make sense of them. Analyses present different perspectives, add nuance to a topic, and focus on the question "why?" Analysts try to outline how a process will develop or what will happen in the future. An analytical journalist basically provides his or her own reading of a specific topic that is ideally better informed than that of an average person — because the reporter has done better research, reached out to experts, and delved into a particular subject more than their average reader would be able to.

An analysis is still based on a news story, but it goes beyond it. It differentiates from other longer form journalistic genres, like backgrounders or features, in that it does not necessarily expose facts, investigate events, or tell a story as much as it explains a current phenomenon.

In order to do so, it relies on the in-depth knowledge of experts or people with knowledge of the subject. If one is analyzing the political situation in a certain country, it might be useful to turn to relevant professors, politicians, and political analysts from that country or similar experts from respected foreign institutions who focus on it. If the topic is scientific, similar authoritative individuals from the specific field (or their published peer-reviewed papers) need to be consulted or sought for comment. It must be clear, though, that the opinions and comments are left to the experts — journalists should keep their own opinion separate for potential commentary pieces on the topic.

Every good analysis needs to be backed by data, scientific research and objective facts and figures. Coherence of the thesis is also a must. We need to be careful not to insult or slander anyone.

### 3. ANALYSIS

#### ■ *Writing an analysis*

- Explain to your editors why a certain news story deserves more in-depth analysis.
- Find other relevant stories, materials, data, research, etc. that provide further background and help you understand a trend that needs to be analyzed.
- Find relevant experts, peer-reviewed journals, data sources, etc. that help you build up your understanding of the problem.
- Build up your hypothesis.
- Reach out for comments, organize interviews, and arrange informal meetings with the relevant stakeholders.
- If your story has to do with public affairs and you make a claim about a specific stakeholder, ask them for comment and give them enough time to respond.

- After completing your interviews and gathering all the required data, revise your hypothesis and build your analytical thesis.

- Write the piece, starting with your thesis and continuing with examples, interview quotes, and data that back it up.

- Don't write it in your own words — every statement needs to be made either based on data or on somebody else's informed viewpoint.

### ■ *Writing commentary pieces*

- Op-eds and commentaries are short.

- The thesis must unfold quickly.

- The focus should be on one idea only and this must begin developing in the first paragraph.

- The next paragraph needs to present clear, factual, well-researched, data-supported examples in support of your argument.

- Opinion pieces are not simply made up of opinions, but informed views based on context.

- Be timely — no opinion piece is good if it misses the right time to make the desired impact.

- Don't be afraid to be controversial, yet be careful not to be offensive or irresponsible in your claims.

- Do not preach, but provide a call for action, a solution, or anything that goes beyond the realms of simple criticism.

- Be catchy — both in your writing and in your title and subtitle. People should get hooked on your piece instantly, and it should be memorable.

- This is not the time to present a balanced view of both sides of the argument — only present arguments in defense of your view and refute the other side, if need be.

- Emphasize active verbs; go easy on adjectives and adverbs.

- Don't use acronyms or technical words unless you can't avoid them. If you use them, explain them straight away.

- This is not the time to present a balanced view of both sides of the argument — only present arguments in defense of your view and refute the other side, if need be.

- Emphasize active verbs; go easy on adjectives and adverbs.

- Don't use acronyms or technical words unless you can't avoid them. If you use them, explain them straight away.

- Use specific references and easy-to-understand data rather than abstraction.

- Use anecdotes if they support your thesis, but only if you can relate them to your general point.

- Discuss the piece with your editor or with your team, if it is a joint effort.

- If you can defend your point before your editors, it is more likely you will convince your audience.

### ■ *Editing tips:*

- Give clear guidelines of what you expect a commentary/analysis to consist of when you assign it.

- Debate with your author — produce a compelling antithesis of their main thesis and make them adjust theirs or reconsider it.

- Make sure you have a working thesis agreed upon with the authors before they actually start writing.

- Ask for a brief outline with the main points/arguments of the author of the commentary/analysis in advance.

- Give them clear deadlines to submit the first draft of the commentary/analysis and, after reading it, give feedback and ask for edits.

Check if the final comment abides by the ethical and writing standards of your media outlet.



6.1.

# **QUALITY JOURNALISM VS. DISINFORMATION, PART III: TOOLS FOR VERIFYING INFORMATION ONLINE**

Students will deepen their understanding of and skills related to fact-checking — one of the most essential elements of reporting. They will practice these skills via popular fact-checking instruments.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Ss will be able to explain why fact-checking is one of the most important elements of reporting.
2. Ss will learn basic tips to facilitate fact-checking.
3. Ss will gain insight on some fact-checking tools and learn how to use them.
4. Ss will become aware of fact-checking's limitations in stopping the spread of misinformation and disinformation.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- Ss understand the basic concept of fact-checking and its importance.
- Ss will become familiar with basic fact-checking techniques and learn how to apply them in various reporting situations.
- Ss will learn how to use some of the most popular fact-checking instruments available for free on the web.

## OUTLINE OF THE KEY CONCEPTS

*(See the corresponding Key Concepts Section)*

1. What is fact-checking and why it is important?
2. Fact-checking tips
  - Copyright
  - Verification with multiple sources
  - Check if the source is credible
  - Date published
  - Author's expertise and background on the subject
  - Does it match your prior knowledge?
  - Does it seem realistic?
3. The limits of fact-checking

## MODULE LENGTH

60 min *(choose activities for about 40 min).*

## LESSON PLAN: ACTIVITIES AND TIMEFRAME

ACTIVITY	LESSON OBJECTIVE	TIME
1. Case Study: The Viral Story of the Croatian President	1, 2	20 min
2. Follow the Fake news	2, 3	15 min
3. Being Critical on Social Media	3, 4	10 min
4. Facts vs. Opinions	2, 3	10-15 min
5. Using Google Reverse Image Search to Fact-check Images	2, 3	10-15 min
6. Homework: A Fake News Diary	1, 2, 3, 4	5 min

## RESOURCES FOR FURTHER READING

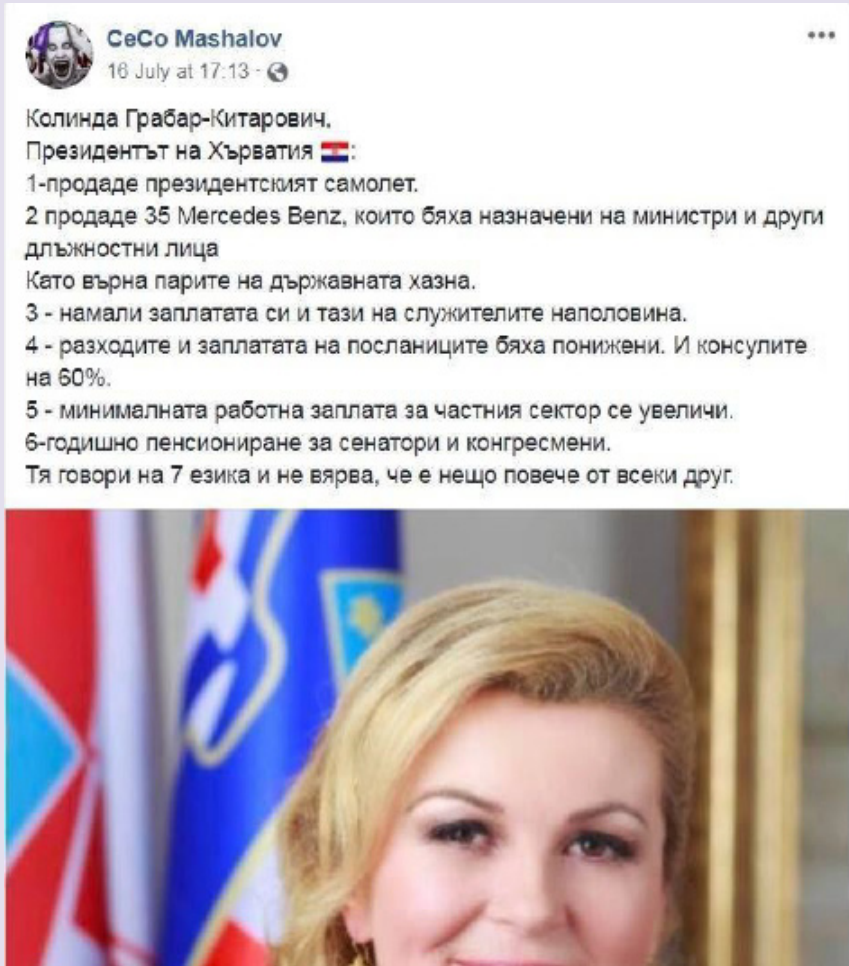
- The Macedonian Teens Who Mastered Fake News (Wired) (<https://www.wired.com/2017/02/veles-macedonia-fake-news/>): It tells the story of some small-town Macedonian teens who contributed to the spread of fake news intentionally and for profit, possibly contributing to the electoral results in the 2016 U.S. elections.
- The Bittersweet Sweepstakes to Build an A.I. that Destroys Fake News (Wired) (<https://www.wired.com/2016/12/bittersweet-sweepstakes-build-ai-destroys-fake-news/>): This article explains how Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning — two of the most advanced high-tech tools of the digital age, which are able to turn cars into self-driving machines and make our smartphones ever smarter — cannot keep up with the fight against disinformation.
- Solving the Disinformation Puzzle (Project Syndicate) (<https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/disinformation-fake-news-social-media-regulation-by-kelly-born-2018-07>): The article argues that when it comes to tackling the “fake news” problem, there is no silver bullet. The modern information ecosystem is like a Rubik’s Cube: a different move is required to “solve” each individual square, and success requires getting all the sides in place.
- Distinguishing Disinformation from Propaganda, Misinformation, and “Fake News” (National Endowment for Democracy) (<https://www.ned.org/issue-brief-distinguishing-disinformation-from-propaganda-misinformation-and-fake-news/>): This brief explains the concept of disinformation, what sets it apart from other manipulative or persuasive content, and why the current informational environment amplifies its spread.
- The Grim Conclusions of the Largest-Ever Study of Fake News (The Atlantic) (<https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2018/03/largest-study-ever-fake-news-mit-twitter/555104/>): An MIT media lab study analyzes every major contested news story in English across the span of Twitter’s existence — some 126,000 stories, tweeted by 3 million users, over more than 10 years — and finds that the truth simply cannot compete with hoax and rumor. By every common metric, falsehood consistently dominates over the truth on Twitter, the study finds. Fake news and false rumors reach more people, penetrate deeper into the social network, and spread much faster than accurate stories.
- Beyond the Truth-O-Meter (Columbia Journalism Review) ([https://www.cjr.org/first\\_person/beyond-the-truth-o-meter.php](https://www.cjr.org/first_person/beyond-the-truth-o-meter.php)): The creator of the “Truth-O-Meter”, a popular tool that rates politicians’ statements from true to false, thinks that there should be a more sophisticated and targeted approach to fighting people’s biases that takes their individual perspectives into account.

Lessons from Google

## HOMEWORK ACTIVITIES

See Activity 4

## ACTIVITY 1

TITLE	CASE STUDY: THE VIRAL STORY OF THE CROATIAN PRESIDENT
TIME	10 minutes
STEPS	<div data-bbox="459 434 1311 1397">  <p><b>CeCo Mashalov</b> 16 July at 17:13 · 🌐</p> <p>Колинда Грабар-Китарович, Президентът на Хърватия 🇭🇷:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1-продаде президентският самолет.</li> <li>2 продаде 35 Mercedes Benz, които бяха назначени на министри и други длъжностни лица</li> <li>Като върна парите на държавната хазна.</li> <li>3 - намали заплатата си и тази на служителите наполовина.</li> <li>4 - разходите и заплатата на посланиците бяха понижени. И консулите на 60%.</li> <li>5 - минималната работна заплата за частния сектор се увеличи.</li> <li>6-годишно пенсиониране за сенатори и конгресмени.</li> </ol> <p>Тя говори на 7 езика и не вярва, че е нещо повече от всеки друг.</p> </div> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Show this image from a Facebook post that helped the spread of fake news about the Croatian president at the end of the 2018 FIFA World Cup. This <a href="#">post</a> was shared over 16,000 times, while another post <a href="#">debunking it was only shared</a> was passed on about 1,000 times. Ask Ss to check the edit history.</li> <li>2. Ask Ss if they consider the story to be fake or true and why. Does it seem realistic? Does it abide by the 7 rules we set out in the beginning of the class?</li> <li>3. Ask them to check on their own to see if each point the author makes is true or not. Which statements made about the Croatian president are true, false, or semi-true?</li> <li>4. Ask what purpose they think the story's creator had (Answer: It was a Croatian journalist who wrote a satirical piece).</li> <li>5. Ask them why they think the image became so viral in Bulgaria (Possible answers: Frustration with Bulgarian politics, comparison with another Balkan country, desire to find role models, etc.).</li> <li>6. Ask Ss to find the original version and the edited version of the story. The author did not delete the story after people approached him with proof that it was untrue "because it was in all Spanish and Italian electronic media" and because he never claimed it to be real.</li> </ol>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Internet connection, laptop, projector, access to computers or smartphones with Internet for Ss

## ACTIVITY 2

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>FOLLOW THE FAKE NEWS</b>
<b>TIME</b>	15 minutes
<b>STEPS</b>	<p>1. Provide handouts on a case study of fake news spreading over the Internet. Ask Ss to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Follow their path.</li> <li>■ Discuss how the story might have gone viral, the reasons for its being widely reposted, and what its impact may have been.</li> </ul>
<b>MATERIALS AND RESOURCES</b>	Handouts (See the <a href="#">“6.1. Act2-Follow the fake news”</a> file)

## ACTIVITY 3

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>BEING CRITICAL ON SOCIAL MEDIA</b>
<b>TIME</b>	10 minutes
<b>STEPS</b>	<p>1. Provide handouts with the following information and read as a class:</p> <p>Nowadays, social media channels like Twitter and Facebook are among the main sources of instant news. They usually beat traditional news outlets, as they rely on “first hand reporting” from people at events. However, being the first one to report something does not make you necessarily right. In the best-case scenario, the picture that pops up on social media would usually be timely, but give little context. In the worst-case scenario, it would be a malevolent disinformation attempt. And there will always be a wide gray zone in between.</p> <p>In order to find out more about information you see on social media, you can ask yourself the following key questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Location of the source:</b> Are the people posting this in the same place where the event is taking place?</li> <li>■ <b>Network:</b> Who is in their network and who follows them?</li> <li>■ <b>Content:</b> Can the information be confirmed by other sources?</li> <li>■ <b>Contextual updates:</b> Do they usually post or tweet on this topic? If so, what did past or updated posts say?</li> <li>■ <b>Account history:</b> What is the age of the account in question? Be wary of recently created accounts.</li> <li>■ <b>Reliability:</b> Is the source of information reliable?</li> </ul> <p>2. Ask Ss to apply this to the social media profiles they follow. (*could be used as a homework assignment)</p>
<b>MATERIALS AND RESOURCES</b>	<p>Handouts, Ss’ smartphones with Internet to check out the social media profiles they follow (optional)</p> <p>Alternatively, give your students the <a href="#">CRAAP test</a> for online information evaluation and ask them to put it to the test during all exercises.</p>

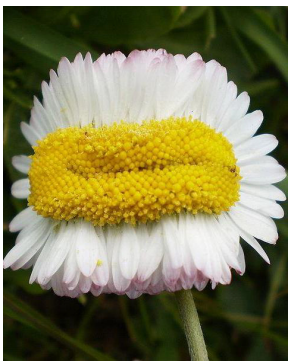


## ACTIVITY 4

TITLE	FACTS VS. OPINIONS
TIME	10-15 minutes
STEPS	<p>1. Distribute as handouts the two excerpts from <a href="#">News Front</a> and the <a href="#">Greek online site Ekathimerini.com</a>.</p> <p>2. Have Ss read both articles and pose the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Which one do you trust more? Which claims were most convincing?</li> <li>- What do you think is missing from both articles in order to give a full and unbiased picture?</li> <li>- Do the titles reflect the information in the article itself? Why/why not? (5 min)</li> </ul> <p>3. Ask Ss to skim both articles now, underlining the statements made that represent facts and circling opinions (3 min).</p> <p>4. Have Ss exchange papers with someone sitting next to them and determine if they have underlined/ circled the same parts (3 min).</p> <p>5. Discuss the problems with the News Front article. Find out which of the two they think more people trusted and why. Ask them which stereotypes the article perpetuated and why the News Front might have looked convincing enough to the public (5 min).</p> <p><b>Background:</b></p> <p>Photo: Kosovan and Albanian migrants are “storming” the EU borders from Serbia.</p> <p>The <a href="#">photo is from February 2016</a>. It was taken at the border of FYROM and Greece and shows refugees, mainly from Syria, and migrants. Outlets such as <a href="#">The New York Times</a> and <a href="#">Kathimerini</a> used it back then. The photo has served disinforming purposes on various occasions. On January 8th, 2018 it depicted “200 migrants storming the Morocco-Spain border”, according to <a href="#">stormfront.org</a>.</p> <p>In July 2017, websites like <a href="#">vch.org</a> and <a href="#">ladylibertynews.com</a> used the picture to illustrate how George Soros was “in alliance with the EU to flood Europe with refugees”. In May 2017, <a href="#">arabinworld.com</a> showed it as refugees fleeing from Germany due to the suffering and humiliation they encountered there.</p> <p>News Front is a growing Russian news agency that is <a href="#">run from Crimea</a>, created to “fight in the information war,” and frequently spreads <a href="#">disinformation</a>. According to <a href="#">Die Zeit</a>, the agency is partly funded by the FSB, Russia’s security service.</p> <p>Read more: <a href="https://euvsdisinfo.eu/one-image-4-x-disinformation-about-migrants/">https://euvsdisinfo.eu/one-image-4-x-disinformation-about-migrants/</a></p> <p>(Source: EU Vs Disinformation  <a href="https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/photo-kosovan-and-albanian-migrants-are-storming-the-eu-borders-from-serbia-2/">https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/photo-kosovan-and-albanian-migrants-are-storming-the-eu-borders-from-serbia-2/</a>)</p>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Handouts (Excerpts are provided in the Shared Resources folder: <a href="#">News Front</a> and the <a href="#">Greek online site Ekathimerini.com</a> ).



## ACTIVITY 5

TITLE	USING GOOGLE REVERSE IMAGE SEARCH TO FACT-CHECK IMAGES
TIME	10-15 minutes
STEPS	<p>If you have ever wondered about the source or history behind an image, Google image search can help to provide answers. Whether you're doing research or you are just curious, reverse image search offers a digital paper trail of where an image has appeared on the Internet. All you need to do is drag and drop the image into the images.google.com search bar, paste a URL into the search bar, or right-click on an image when using the Chrome browser.</p> <p><b>Example: The mutant flowers of Fukushima</b></p> <p>1. Show your students the following image of a mutated daisy. Ask them to find the story behind it by using the Reverse Google Images Search or fact-check websites with information about it (links below) (7 min).</p> <p>They can either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Drag and drop the image into the Google Images search bar.</li> <li>■ Describe what they see in words in the Google search bar.</li> <li>■ Inset the URL of the image (in case it is not downloaded).</li> </ul> <p>If they can't find it on their own, give them links to the fact-checked story via Snopes and National Geographic (3 min).</p> <p>2. Students discuss their findings (5 min).</p>  <p>NB: The same strategy can be applied to questionable video content.</p>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<p>Internet connection, laptop, projector, whiteboard, computers or smartphones with Internet for Ss' use</p> <p>There are other tools that can be used alternatively. One is <a href="#">TinEye</a> image search and recognition software.</p> <p>For a more detailed analysis on where an image has appeared on the Internet, you can introduce them to <a href="#">RevEye</a>, a Chrome app that allows you to search within multiple databases for an image to see if it has appeared online before.</p> <p>Another useful tool is the <a href="#">Storyful Multisearch</a> App, another Chrome extension, which helps you quickly query keywords across Twitter, YouTube, Tumblr and Instagram. In this way, you can find more information about the mediums the story/picture became popular in.</p> <p>You can also use <a href="#">MentionMapp</a> Analytics, which investigates the digital ecosystem using visualization tools as well as machine and human intelligence. Their maps and reports reveal how information and misinformation flows through networks on Twitter, showing trends and key social profiles connected with them. In the free version of the software, you can make 15 searches of people, hashtags, and profiles per month.</p> <p><a href="#">Also, see the Video Verification Guide and Photo Verification Guide.</a></p>

## ACTIVITY 6

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>HOMEWORK: A FAKE NEWS DIARY</b>
<b>TIME</b>	Homework
<b>STEPS</b>	<p>Task: Follow a website from the list of “harmful” websites listed by blogger Krasimir Gadjokov in his <a href="#">Media Eye</a> project for a week.</p> <p>The goal of the project, as described by the author, is “to keep the average reader aware of the Bulgarian political and policy news online-media, which are anonymous or break the basic media ethical standards of a democratic society.”</p> <p>For the homework exercise, students should spend 15 minutes after school going through the content published on the website, asking the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Which are the top stories? Which are the most-read stories?</li> <li>2. How are they presented differently compared to how mainstream news agencies cover them (national television and radio)?</li> <li>3. What is the tone of the writing? Irritable, sarcastic, overblown, biased, plain, detached from emotions, informational? Are there major grammar/spelling errors?</li> <li>4. How many stories are published per day?</li> <li>5. How are the websites different in terms of presentation from the ones published by the information agencies?</li> <li>6. Are there ALL CAPS writing and many banners (usually promoting inappropriate content)?</li> <li>7. Find all basic information about the websites — is there an editorial list of authors? Is it clear who owns the website? When was it published? Is it realistic for the number of authors to create the number of articles that are published? Which other outlets does the website quote?</li> </ol> <p>Ask Ss to summarize their findings in a 3-page report.</p> <p>Follow-up in class: discuss recent fake news scandals and how they were reported in the websites Ss followed.</p> <p><i>Note: The categorization of the websites in Krasimir Gadjokov's project is based on the project creator's discretion, but provides concrete examples of the publications which are the reason for the particular categorization.</i></p>
<b>MATERIALS AND RESOURCES</b>	Notebooks, access to the Internet

## KEY CONCEPTS

### 1. WHAT IS FACT-CHECKING AND WHY IT IS IMPORTANT?

False information, rumors spreading around social media like wildfire, light-hearted (or sometimes malevolent) jokes turning into viral memes with simplified messages that captivate people's minds, facts turning into fiction and fiction molding people's thoughts more than facts — and all of this amplified by the vast availability of technology, centralization of information in social media, and the polarization of opinions when it comes to political or social topics. This is the environment we live in today, and one of the most important things we can do — as reporters, but more generally as ordinary people — is to learn how to think critically about the information that comes our way and how to double-check the claims we make ourselves, as well as the ones others make.

Fact-checking is the process of attempting to verify or disprove assertions made in a piece of media output, be it an article, a video, or a social media post. This practice is essential not only within the media, but also in business, school activities, etc. It is, essentially, practical critical thinking.

The reason why fact-checking is so important is that it is one of the essential ways to debunk, if not stop the spread of, disinformation. It provides a fresh second thought, helping fight against fear, uncertainty, and doubt about the world around us. It also helps keep reputations intact when it comes to double-checking the information we ourselves distribute.

According to marketing specialist Nicola Watts, who [wrote a summary piece \(https://www.ogilvy.com/feed/5-types-of-fake-news-and-why-they-matter/\)](https://www.ogilvy.com/feed/5-types-of-fake-news-and-why-they-matter/) for the Ogilvy agency, so-called “fake news” can be divided into five general categories. Some of them are actually fake (**disinformation**), while others occur due to human error or biases (**misinformation**). It is important to distinguish between:

■ **Satire or Parody** — Sites such as NeNovinite and The Onion or Daily Mash publish fake news stories as humorous attempts to satirize the media, but also have the potential to fool readers when shared out of context.

■ **Misleading news that's sort of true but used in the wrong context** — These are selectively chosen real facts that are reported to gain headlines, but tend to be a misinterpretation of scientific research.

■ **Sloppy reporting that fits an agenda** — News that contains some grains of truth that are not fully verified, used to support a certain position or view.

■ **Misleading news, not based on facts, that supports an ongoing narrative** — This means news where there is no established baseline for truth and where ideologies or opinions often clash and unconscious biases come into play. Conspiracy theories tend to fall here!

■ **Intentionally deceptive** — News in this category has been fabricated deliberately to either make money through ad clicks, to cause confusion or discontent, or as sensationalist propaganda. These stories tend to be distributed through imposter news sites designed to look like ‘real’ news brands or through fake news sites. They often employ videos and graphic images that have been manipulated in some way.

### 2. FACT-CHECKING TIPS AND TOOLS

There are seven different elements of a news piece to examine. If the information checks out for each of these points, it has a high likelihood of being accurate. Still, passing the test is not a guarantee that the information is a fact.

■ **Copyright:** Check the bottom of a webpage to see if the information has been submitted for ownership. If this information comes from a non-transparent source, it is highly likely that somebody is hiding something about their intentions.

■ **Verification with multiple sources:** Double check the information on a few different webpages that are not connected with each other. Bear in mind that sometimes fake news websites reference each other in a circular way.

■ **Check if the source is credible:** There is this idea being spread that fake news and disinformation is mostly spread by mainstream media. Yet, mainstream media at least stands behind the claims it makes with its name and journalists' names, which both have a track record of their actions online and, even when biased, can be checked for generally adhering to the facts or not. If a source has just been created (a new or rarely used blog, a website which aggregates most of its content from somewhere else, etc.) and is not marked by someone who stands behind it, be vigilant! This does not mean to completely distrust new media.

■ **Date published:** Always check how recently the page has been updated to see how current the information is and whether anything has changed. In cases of serious doubt, check the history of the webpage using [tools like this one](#).

■ **Author's expertise and background on the subject:** See who is behind what you read and establish your opinion on the leading figures in journalism on the topics that interest you. This does not mean that experienced people and ones who hold good credentials are always right — but at least they can give you an idea of the general state of the debate on a certain topic.

■ **Does it match your prior knowledge?** Ask yourself if the information matches up to what you have learned before.

■ **Does it seem realistic?** Rely on your own common sense. Does something that you see on the Internet really look probable and likely to have happened?

Besides these questions, however, you should always consider the wider context when reading or watching a news piece. The longer you follow different types of media, the more you will create a trusting (or mistrusting) relationship with them and the more you will learn about their biases and the network they work in. Every time a scandalous piece of news comes from an unknown website, or one with track record of SHOCKING stories, be sure that something is fishy.

### 3. THE LIMITS OF FACT-CHECKING

To understand why fake news spreads, it is important to accept that disinformation spreads much faster than the truth and it has much more significant impact on people's minds. This was shown by research at MIT (available in the Further Reading list).

Consider the reaction of the person who spread a fake Facebook post about the Croatian president in Activity 1. Although it was quickly made clear that the information he shared was false, he never took it down and only barely acknowledged it as such, saying that he liked how the president acted at the final football game of the 2018 FIFA World Cup.

Very often, personal biases and partisanship drive people to read and share posts and articles that resonate with their perceived values or interests, regardless of whether they actually ring true. You will see many people — older, intelligent, well-informed people — fall for such pieces because of their biases and therein bringing some friends on social networks down the rabbit hole with them.

This is why it is important for students to learn these preventive measures, and how to balance between their biases and critical thinking.

The fact is, however, that this is more easily said than done. According to Sam Wineburg and Sarah McGrew from the Stanford University Graduate School of Education (See their research paper [Evaluation Information: The Cornerstone of Civic Online Reasoning](#)), students generally fail at placing information in its context, despite their tech-savvy nature and ability to go through various types of information sources and get the basic details about each source.

This is why they recommend that teachers introduce their pupils to a two-tier approach — firstly, they should teach them to go over a piece of news as it is, outside of its context, and then review all available information and position the news in its broader context. This involves:

1. Looking at the piece of information as it is and using your intuition: scanning the website, looking at its design, logos, advertisements, domain, hyperlinks, and end notes; evaluating the information for internal consistency and unbacked claims;
2. Engaging in a slow and methodological review of the sources — looking for more information on the topic from different sites, checking who the people/institutions quoted are and what their agendas might be, checking the background of the website itself.

Then there are the politicians who claim that mainstream media outlets are sources of “fake news” — they usually do this when information that is somehow inconvenient for them is published. Of course, partisanship within media outlets and the polarization of opinions that it creates have always existed and politicians from different sides have attacked their opponents for misinterpreting information. Nowadays, though, this has been taken to the extreme and one needs to tread very carefully because it endangers the very essence of public debate, as the Stanford History Education Group underlined in their paper [Evaluation Information: The Cornerstone of Civic Online Reasoning](#).

Just because information is biased, opinionated, or comes from a source that has a stake in a certain agenda does not necessarily mean it is “fake news”. A left-wing or a right-wing think tank might have a certain agenda that it follows when publishing reports; however, the information contained in them might very well be well founded. It is all about context and being honest with readers.



6.2.

## INTERVIEWS

In this practical module, students will learn basic interviewing skills and techniques. They will also learn about the different types of interviews (both in terms of genre and designated outlet) and practice taking, editing, and presenting interviews.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Ss will develop basic knowledge the principles of conducting interviews.
2. Ss will gain basic interviewing skills: choosing relevant interviews, finding the right story angle, preparing for an interview, writing interview questions, and interviewing techniques.
3. Ss will learn about the different types of interviews and will understand when it is appropriate to use them: narrated interview, citing, analysis with comments.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- Ss can select topics and relevant interviewees, prepare the right questions for them, and conduct an engaging interview.
- Ss are familiar with different types of interviews, both in terms of genre (arts, politics, science, etc.) and in terms of the media they are designated for (TV, radio, print, etc.).
- Ss can edit and present an interview.

## OUTLINE OF THE KEY CONCEPTS

*(See the corresponding Key Concepts Section)*

Plan:

1. Definition:

- What is an interview?
- What are the different types of interviews?

2. Preparation

- Selecting a relevant interviewee
- Approaching an interviewee
- Preparing questions and the interview setting
- Preparing yourself

3. On the spot

- Asking questions and listening
- Interview techniques
- Tips and common courtesy

4. Getting the interview ready for an audience

Editing and choosing a presentation technique — narrated interview, direct quotations, unmoderated conversation

5. Interview Dos and Don'ts

## MODULE LENGTH

60 min (choose activities for about 40 min).

## LESSON PLAN: ACTIVITIES AND TIMEFRAME

ACTIVITY	LESSON OBJECTIVE	TIME
1. Identifying the Topic	2	15 min
2. Mind Map: Interview Questions	2	10 min
3. Mock Interview	2	10 min
4. Preparing For the Interview	1	10 min
5. Editing the Interview	2, 3	15 min OR homework
6. Doing a Vox Pop	2, 3	Homework

## RESOURCES FOR FURTHER READING

- The Original Watergate Interviews (You Tube) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9OCon3yKmwQ>
- Donald Trump in his own words (FT) <https://www.ft.com/content/9ae777ea-17ac-11e7-a53d-df09f373be87>
- BBC Question Time's finest, most memorable and shocking moments (BBC Question Time) <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/media/tv-radio/bbc-question-times-finest-most-memorable-and-shocking-moments-9462557.html> (The Independent)
- Christo. Long-form interviewing (Interview Magazine) <https://www.interviewmagazine.com/art/christo>
- The love and Terror of Nick Cave. A year-long interview with Nick Cave, a star musician who had just lost his son (GQ Magazine) <https://www.gq.com/story/the-love-and-terror-of-nick-cave>

## HOMEWORK ACTIVITIES

Edit your interview and present the final product.



## ACTIVITY 1

TITLE	IDENTIFYING THE TOPIC
TIME	15 minutes
STEPS	<p>Give the following task to Ss:</p> <p>You are going to prepare for an imaginary interview with any person of your choosing.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Choose a topic for your imaginary interview.</li> <li>2. Research this topic briefly and find the relevant materials to prepare for it.</li> <li>3. Find the right person (e.g. politicians, experts, celebrity, etc.) you can ask for an interview.</li> <li>4. Think of a way to approach them and say why this is the best option.</li> </ol> <p>*Alternatively, the same steps can be followed for a real interview concerning an issue in your community. Instead of looking on the Internet, discuss it with a classmate.</p>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Access to the Internet or a discussion group.

## ACTIVITY 2

TITLE	MIND MAP: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
TIME	10 minutes
STEPS	<p>Give the following instructions to Ss:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Choose your topic and decide what roles are needed to do the interview (e.g. politicians, experts, etc.).</li> <li>2. Brainstorm: make a mind map of what you want to learn from the person you are “interviewing”.</li> <li>3. Write a short summary you will pitch to the interviewee and think about how you will grab their attention?</li> <li>4. Prepare themes for your interview — general enough so that there is space to maneuver, but specific enough so that your interviewee can prepare adequately.</li> <li>5. Prepare the actual questions you will ask in the interview itself.</li> </ol>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<p>Notebooks</p> <p><a href="https://storycorpsorg-staging.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/Interview-Tips.pdf">https://storycorpsorg-staging.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/Interview-Tips.pdf</a></p> <p><a href="https://training.npr.org/audio/15-principles-of-show-bookings/">training.npr.org/audio/15-principles-of-show-bookings/</a></p>

### ACTIVITY 3

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>MOCK INTERVIEW</b>
<b>TIME</b>	10 minutes
<b>STEPS</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Give the following instructions to Ss:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Form pairs and select your roles (interviewer, interviewee).</li> <li>2. Conduct practice interviews, asking each other the questions you wrote in Activity 2.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Select a few pairs to present their interviews to the class.</li> </ol>
<b>MATERIALS AND RESOURCES</b>	Notebooks, questions from Activity 2 Dos and Don'ts from the BBC: ( <a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk/academy/en/articles/art20171005102830849">http://www.bbc.co.uk/academy/en/articles/art20171005102830849</a> )

### ACTIVITY 4

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW</b>
<b>TIME</b>	10 minutes
<b>STEPS</b>	Give the following instructions to Ss: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Get your pitch ready to send to your potential interviewees.</li> <li>2. Find their contact information.</li> <li>3. Call/write them an email.</li> <li>4. Arrange the interview.</li> </ol>
<b>MATERIALS AND RESOURCES</b>	Notebook, contact information, mobile device (or another recording device), Internet connection

## ACTIVITY 5

TITLE	EDITING THE INTERVIEW
TIME	15 minutes or as homework
STEPS	<p>Give the following instruction to Ss:</p> <p><i>You have done your interview (real or fake). Edit it and get it ready for presentation.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Select either a narrated interview or a Q&amp;A.</li> <li>2. Edit it down to a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Maximum of 1.5 A4 pages for a print/online interview</li> <li>■ Maximum of 2 minutes for a video interview</li> <li>■ Maximum of 3 minutes for an audio interview</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Computers, notebooks, recording devices, free software for editing for video/audio interviews

## ACTIVITY 6

TITLE	DOING A VOX POP
TIME	Homework
STEPS	<p>Ask regular people how they feel about a current topic</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Choose the topic — something people from your school/community might have opinions about.</li> <li>2. Prepare and ask simple questions: how they feel, why it is important, why they took a certain side on a topic.</li> <li>3. Using your mobile phone, record a video or an audio file of them talking.</li> </ol>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Mobile devices

## KEY CONCEPTS

### 1. DEFINITION

#### ■ *What is an interview?*

The interview is much like any everyday conversation that people generally engage in. But the difference is that the person leading the interview steers the direction of the conversation, skips boring and repetitive bits, and aims to get the important information that people are interested in.

Interviews can be with an expert, giving more insight on little known topic; they can be with politicians, bureaucrats, or other people held accountable for their actions and statements; they can be with somebody who has an interesting story to tell (an artist, a traveler, a person who has gone through something unique), or they can just be with somebody on the street (Vox Pop, from the Latin Vox Populli = the voice of the people) representing the mood of the day.

Giving space for dissenting opinions is also an ethical must-do, as it provides the opportunity for debate and a plurality of discussion. However, in the modern online media landscape, the chance to stay anonymous and use various social media accounts or tools (i.e. A.I. bots) creates a more polarized and antagonized discussion; journalists should be wary of the effects of this.

#### ■ *What are the different types of interviews?*

Depending on who you interview and what you want to get out of them in terms of information or opinion, there are various types of interviewing genres.

The interview itself can be a stand-alone or part of a report, feature, or longer form, such as a documentary. There are expert interviews, political interviews, moderated or unmoderated panel discussions, Vox Pops, long forms, etc.

Interviews are also different in terms of the way they are presented. Regardless of whether they are produced for radio, print/online or TV, interviews can either follow the classical Questions and Answers (Q&A) format, be narrated (i.e. written from a first-person or a third-person perspective, with direct quotes interlinked with narrated elements: "James Fox grew tired of his work in the factory. 'The fumes were slowly killing me,' he told me while we were standing outside of the plant in Sheffield.").

### 2. PREPARATION

#### ■ *Selecting a relevant interviewee*

This is of crucial importance. Ask yourself — what is the topic that my audience and I are interested in, what is the information we need right now? Then go a step further and start looking for the person who can best provide this information.

Think about the purpose of the interview: does it need to give us a fresh perspective on a topic? Maybe you need to go down the street and ask a random person or find somebody who is not the most well-known expert, but can provide an alternative opinion on your topic.

Does it need to give us an authoritative answer about some difficult or niche subject? Maybe this is when you have to turn to an expert in the field you are researching.

Is it supposed to bring somebody to confess something or to show their inability to account for a decision they have made? This is what you may have to do when you interview politicians, for example.

### ■ *Approaching an interviewee*

There are several ways one approaches an interviewee: in person, over email, via the public relations officer of their institution, over the phone, or by using some other device. Be ready to use your entire network to find the right person.

Write a conversation frame or a short paragraph in which you explain exactly what the purpose of the interview is and what you are interested in.

Send them topics of conversation, but never send them particular questions — people, especially politicians, should not be given the full comfort of knowing exactly what they are going to be asked. If you would like precise data, ask in advance.

### ■ *Preparing questions and the interview setting*

Your task is to lead the guest in an engaging conversation. People should learn something new from this talk, get entertained or inspired, or should be left with a maximum of three memorable points from it.

To do this, you need to prepare very well! Start by reading on a topic. Rarely are journalists complete know-it-alls — even the more experienced ones — especially when it comes to more obscure topics. You will need be able to find, go through, and extract the most valuable points out of a few reputable sources. Then find what these articles or reports did not answer well enough, or points that you want to elaborate on, and turn these into the most appropriate questions. If you fail to familiarize yourself with the topic well enough, you will not have achieved in making an interesting interview. And sometimes this might lead to awkward situations in which you and the guest are not on the same page at all!

It is critical that you keep most of the questions short and simple. A formula you can follow is the following: Introductory sentence that sets the context, followed by the question itself ("X says that the healthcare reform would lead to 10,000 more elderly people losing their access to hospital care. What is your opinion on that?"). Never leave questions open-ended; people tend to drift away in their thoughts.

### ■ *Preparing yourself*

Calm down! At some point, you will be interviewing or posing questions to people who are much more experienced and older than you, people with authority and in a position of power, or those with much greater expertise than you. But that shouldn't scare you. The point of an interview is not how much you know or you don't know, but to relate some knowledge through your questions from your interviewee to the audience.

In order to feel comfortable, chose your space and timing well — this can help you feel in control of the situation. Need the person to open up? Go somewhere where they will feel comfortable. Want to overhear the voices on the street or the emotions at the stadium? Get out there and talk in the natural environment.

## 3. ON THE SPOT

### ■ *Asking questions and listening*

Remember one thing: If the interview is good, nothing goes according to plan. Rarely will you be able to ask all of your questions in the order in which you wrote them initially. In fact, that may not be such a bad thing, as conversations follow a natural pattern in which they drift towards subjects that are vitally important or need further explanation.

You can follow this pattern if you listen to your interviewee actively and know the important things they have to say or the questions that need to be answered. Elaborate on your questions. If you have to, repeat them so that you receive the clearest possible answer.

This does not mean you should let the conversation drift away in the direction your interviewee wants to (if is a politician who wants to avoid answering) or unintendedly steers it to (if they are, say, an artist who is not asked very concrete questions). Stay on point, stay focused, stay clear — and require the same from your interviewees.

Don't be afraid to repeat a question several times if you have a difficult interviewee who dodges the topic. Try different wording. Don't worry if you don't get an answer — your audience will most probably get the hint and the interviewee's silence will not be in their favor. If the conversation stalls, keep moving forward. To do this effectively, you need to have enough questions prepared in advance.

Don't be afraid to cut people short if they take too long with an answer. You have limited time and your audience has limited focus they would like to invest.

### ■ **Interview techniques:**

- Consider warm-up questions, unless you have very limited time or you want to strike a politician down from the first blow. Most people feel more comfortable explaining first who they are, what they do, or whatever simple things they can say about themselves or the topic that will make them feel comfortable.

- Open-ended questions are a must. They allow people to get into more detail and to steer the story in a certain direction.

- Follow-up questions show that you are actively listening, make the conversation less predictable, and give you the chance to open up an entire new direction of the discussion.

- Make sure you are understood at all times. Sometimes, when an expert delves into a particular story and the interviewer knows what they are talking about, the conversation drifts into a niche discussion that is interesting only to both people and ten other experts in the field. Try not to fall into this trap — if there are abbreviations that need explanation, do this just after they are mentioned (Belene NPP, which stands for Nuclear Power Plant). If names that are not widely known are mentioned, offer context and say who these people are.

- Avoid asking more than one question — people may forget the first one or deliberately ignore it. Ask them one by one.

- Consider the difference between fact-based questions and feeling-based ones. On the one hand you have: "How much does this project cost? What is its purpose?" On the other, you have: "How did that make you feel?" Both might be useful in different contexts.

### ■ **Tips and common courtesy**

- Be polite, but keep your hands on the steering wheel. You are leading the conversation, not the guest.

- Break the ice before the talk — not everybody feels comfortable in the interview chair.

- Remind them of the topic of your conversation. People tend to forget.

- Ask them for a proper introduction. Sometimes people have complaints about the way they are introduced — perhaps they haven't updated their online CV in a while — and you don't want them getting angry at you for that.

- Bear in mind your timing — people tend to drift away, and you are the one who is supposed to follow the clock. For a print edition interview, this might not be such a problem, as you may have more time, but for radio or TV, it can ruin everything.

- Bear in mind the medium — if you are on the radio, you need to remind people who they are listening to. Someone might have just tuned in, so they might not know who is on the air.

- Look and sound interested in what the other person is saying. This happens when you push yourself to listen actively and makes the other side feel engaged.

- Never forget that you are not doing this interview for yourself or your guest, but for the people who are listening, reading, or watching you.

#### 4. GETTING THE INTERVIEW READY FOR THE AUDIENCE

##### ■ *Editing and choosing a presentation technique*

Editing an interview for clarity is different for every format — video, audio, or print. It also depends whether you are broadcasting live (video, audio) or if you will have time to work on the interview and clean it up.

Printed interviews are the easiest — you can alter the structure of sentences — although you should always bear in mind the fact that this might unintentionally change the meaning of what the interviewee was saying.

With audio and video interviews, it depends on whether you are broadcasting live or not. If you are not, you can either present the interview as it happened (question-answer format) or you can a storyteller's role and narrate it — cutting out the parts that you deem irrelevant, shortening it for clarity, re-recording some of the questions, or setting up the context through a narrated piece. But just because you can do it, it does not necessarily mean you should — sometimes this might alter the story too much or it might seem as if you are trying to put someone's words out of context. There is a fine line between storytelling and manipulation, and one need to be cautious about it. Obviously, the storytelling method can be quite suitable when interviewing a scientist or an expert, however it might not be a wise idea when you interview a politician.

#### 5. INTERVIEW DOS AND DON'TS

##### **DOS:**

- Research your interviewee and the topic prior to the interview.
- Plan your questions in advance and note them down. Avoid questions that result in a yes/no answer or be ready for a follow-up.
- Ask the interviewee if you can record them before you start. Get your recorder ready and always have spare batteries or an alternative way to record the conversation (a smartphone usually does the job). If you can't record them, make sure you clarify what things the interviewee says you can quote and what you cannot.
- Have the interviewee spell out their name and titles.
- Make sure both you and the interviewee are comfortable. Limit distractions.
- Listen carefully during the interview. If you didn't hear or understand something that your interviewee said, ask them for clarification. Make sure your interviewee responds to your questions in complete sentences.

##### **DON'TS:**

- Don't make the interviewee uncomfortable. Avoid asking very personal questions that are unrelated to the interview topic.
- If you have a microphone, don't let the interviewer hold it but keep it close enough to their mouth, especially in a noisy environment.
- Don't interrupt your interviewee in the middle of a sentence. Let them finish what they have to say, unless there is a clear reason you would like to interfere (e.g. you expect a clear answer to the most important questions you would like to ask, but the interviewee's answers run too long).
- Don't ask yes/no questions.



# MY MEDIA CONSUMPTION



This module deals with media consumers' rights and responsibilities. Students will be challenged to think critically about the content they choose to consume and share, to protect their personal data, to recognize post-truth notions, and to take a stand against spreading fake news. They will also reflect on the notion that their filter bubble might prevent them from accessing various points of view and story angles.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Ss will gain awareness about their rights in the media context.
2. Ss will understand how to consume media content responsibly.
3. Ss will develop critical thinking skills about the media.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- Ss know how to protect their personal data.
- Ss recognize the post-truth reality and post-truth politics.
- Ss participate in fighting the spread of fake news.
- Ss can analyze the media consumption of their relatives and friends.

## OUTLINE OF THE KEY CONCEPTS

*(See the corresponding Key Concepts Section)*

1. Right to privacy
2. Personal data
3. The consequences of oversharing personal data on social media
4. Media consumption
5. Post-truth
6. Post-truth politics
7. The consequences of a post-truth world
8. Viral content on social media
9. Filter bubble

## LESSON LENGTH

40-75 minutes

## LESSON PLAN: ACTIVITIES AND TIMEFRAME

ACTIVITY	LESSON OBJECTIVE	TIME
1. How Much Does Social Media Know About You?	1	10 min
2. Right to Privacy vs. Freedom of Expression	1, 2	10 min
3. Fake Fake News?	3	15 min
4. Fact-checking Superpowers	3	15 min
5. Pop that Filter Bubble!	2	15 min
6. Consequences of a Post-truth World	2, 3	10 min

## RESOURCES FOR FURTHER READING

- Children's Rights in the Digital Age (UNICEF). The material informs children and young people about their rights in the contemporary media context. The book is focused on better understanding how the ubiquity of digital media impacts on children's rights

<https://www.unicef-irc.org/research/childrens-rights-in-the-digital-age/>

- Children's Online Privacy Protection Rules ("COPPA"). COPPA imposes certain requirements on operators of websites or online services directed to children under 13 years of age, as well as on operators of other websites or online services that have actual knowledge that they are collecting personal information online from a child under 13 years of age

<https://www.ftc.gov/enforcement/rules/rulemaking-regulatory-reform-proceedings/childrens-online-privacy-protection-rule>

- Facebook and Twitter Prediction (University of Cambridge). This tool predicts your psycho-demographic profile, linking your digital footprint to your behavior. It reveals how you might be perceived by others online and provides detailed insights on your personality, intelligence, life satisfaction, and more

<https://applymagicsauce.com/>

- From traditional to online fact-checking (European Journalism Observatory). The material examines the practices of fact-checking throughout the history of journalism

<https://en.ejo.ch/ethics-quality/traditional-online-fact-checking>

- "Don't call it post-truth. There's a simpler word: lies." (The Guardian). The article questions the term post-truth as being dangerous

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/dec/16/not-post-truth-simpler-words-lies-aleppo-trump-mainstream>

## HOMEWORK ACTIVITIES

Choose one of the homework scenarios below:

A. Make an inquiry among your parents, relatives, and friends. Ask them which media they use, how they protect their personal data on social media, about the latest fake news they've heard, how they spot fake news, how they verify information, etc. Share the results with your classmates and make a media literacy plan.

B. Try to determine the path of a single piece of information: a video, a photo, an article, etc. Did it come to you via social media, TV, an information site, or a book? Was it forwarded by a friend in a chat? What does it make you feel? Did you share it? In this way, you will trace how information moves and learn to be careful about sources.

C. Find fake news spread by politicians. Identify the emotions and prejudices that trigger the news. Discuss them with your family.

## ACTIVITY 1

TITLE	HOW MUCH DOES SOCIAL MEDIA KNOW ABOUT YOU?
TIME	10 minutes
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduce the topic: your right to privacy and personal data (2 min).</li> <li>2. Distribute/show “How much does social media know about you?”: <a href="https://www.pandasecurity.com/mediacenter/social-media/how-much-does-social-media-know-about-you/">https://www.pandasecurity.com/mediacenter/social-media/how-much-does-social-media-know-about-you/</a> (1 min).</li> <li>3. Ask Ss to discuss in pairs the relationship between their social media practices and their personal data and right to privacy (5 min).</li> </ol> <p>Ask the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Do you think before giving personal information on social media?</li> <li>■ Do your parents post your images on social media? How could this be dangerous for you?</li> <li>■ Do you feel threatened or angry when your relatives and friends tag you in pictures without asking for your consent?</li> <li>■ If social media disappeared, how would your life change?</li> </ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Have Ss try to identify how much their media consumption does or doesn't interfere with their rights to privacy (2 min).</li> </ol>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	“How much does social media know about you?”; projector, laptop

## ACTIVITY 2

TITLE	RIGHT TO PRIVACY VS. FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION
TIME	10 minutes
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Show Ss “Human Rights Video: The right to privacy” (1 min).</li> <li>2. Discuss the right to freedom of expression and the right to privacy, using the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Could what happened in the video also happen online (on social media)?</li> <li>■ How could my right to have fun harm others' right to privacy?</li> <li>■ How do you feel when someone violates your freedom of expression?</li> <li>■ How do you feel when someone violates your privacy?</li> <li>■ How can you protect your privacy on social media? (9 min)</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<p>Internet connection, laptop, projector, whiteboard</p> <p>Video clip <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CDNyhR1MGVlk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CDNyhR1MGVlk</a></p>

## ACTIVITY 3

TITLE	FAKE FAKE NEWS?
TIME	15 minutes
STEPS	<p>1. Introduce Ss to the key definitions (5 min).</p> <p>2. Show the video “CNN is fake news, I don’t take questions from CNN” (1 min).</p> <p>3. Engage Ss in a discussion about a post-truth world.</p> <p>Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Try to distinguish between the rational and emotional elements in President Trump’s statement. What does the term fake news mean?</li> <li>■ What would happen if there were no clear boundary between truth and lies?</li> <li>■ What would happen if we announced all the inconvenient news as fake?</li> <li>■ Why is the post-truth situation dangerous for democracy? (9 min)</li> </ul> <p>Key definitions:</p> <p><b>Media consumption</b> (or media diet) is the sum of media content that you use and publish (news, videos, social media, TV, radio).</p> <p><b>Post-truth:</b> Relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal beliefs. (Source: <a href="https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/post-truth">https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/post-truth</a>)</p> <p><b>Fake news:</b> false stories that appear to be news, spread on the Internet or using other media, usually created to influence political views or as a joke. (Source: <a href="https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/fake-news">https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/fake-news</a>)</p> <p><b>Post-truth:</b> Relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal beliefs. (Source: <a href="https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/post-truth">https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/post-truth</a>)</p> <p>The rise of fake news, filter bubbles and the polarization of society has also given rise to the idea that we are living in a post-truth world — a situation where alternative facts replace actual facts, emotions have more weight than evidence (e.g. denial of scientific facts about evolution, climate change, vaccines, etc.).</p>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<p>Internet connection, laptop, projector, whiteboard</p> <p>Video clip “CNN is fake news, I don’t take questions from CNN,” <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w-JxxQM7GxJA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w-JxxQM7GxJA</a></p>

## ACTIVITY 4

TITLE	FACT-CHECKING SUPERPOWERS
TIME	15 minutes or as homework
STEPS	<p>1. Demonstrate tools for fact-checking (via the “Top 10 Sites” article) to help Ss check their facts (3 min).</p> <p>2. Divide Ss into 5 groups. have them discuss and answer the question: What is my super power against fake news?</p> <p>■ Examples: I share only verified information on social media, I never read just the headline, I constantly update my tools for fact-checking, I make sure my relatives do not share fake news, etc. (7 min).</p> <p>3. Ask groups to prepare guides for responsible media consumption (5 min).</p>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<p>Internet connection, laptop, projector, whiteboard, notebooks</p> <p>Top 10 sites to help students check their facts</p> <p><a href="https://www.iste.org/explore/articleDetail?articleid=916">https://www.iste.org/explore/articleDetail?articleid=916</a></p>

## ACTIVITY 5

TITLE	POP THAT FILTER BUBBLE!
TIME	15 minutes
STEPS	<p>1. Introduce the concept of a filter bubble with a video clip (1-2 min).</p> <p>2. Show the “10 ways to pop your filter bubble” video (3 min).</p> <p>3. Do a learning coach role-play. In pairs, one S describes their own filter bubble using the “My filter bubble” chart while the other S tries to coach them to pop their filter bubble, using tips from the video. Then partners switch (10 min).</p>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<p>Internet connection, laptop, projector, whiteboard, notebooks, “<a href="#">My filter bubble</a>” handout)</p> <p>Choose one video clip for Step 1:</p> <p>“How social media filter bubbles work” (1 min)</p> <p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=doWZHFVPQ8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=doWZHFVPQ8</a></p> <p>or “How filter bubbles impact social attitudes” (2 min)</p> <p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3PR9e5AXgMQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3PR9e5AXgMQ</a></p> <p>Step 2: “10 ways to pop your filter bubble” (3 min)</p> <p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yELr8akCxoQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yELr8akCxoQ</a></p>

## ACTIVITY 6

TITLE	CONSEQUENCES OF A POST-TRUTH WORLD
TIME	10 minutes
STEPS	<p>1. Introduce the key concepts: the consequences of disinformation and the post-truth reality, including the anti-vaccine movement (3 min).</p> <p>2. Divide Ss into 3 groups. The first group should discuss what consequences this information may have if it's spread (e.g. many unvaccinated children in kindergartens, mistrust in healthcare, mothers' protests, etc.). The second group should discuss the types of channels this fake news can spread on (e.g. mothers' forums, blogs, social media, TV shows, etc.). The third group should discuss what society is losing and what politicians are gaining in the current environment of fake news and post-truth (3 min).</p> <p>3. Show Ss the "Is this story share-worthy?" poster and discuss why we have to fight against disinformation and always share information responsibly (4 min).</p> <p>Key concepts and background:</p> <p>When politicians and media spread fake news, many people share it without thinking. The term 'post-truth' becomes a mantra that justifies the lie. Thomas Rid, a professor of security studies at King's College London, wrote on Twitter that disinformation campaigns have "often deliberately blended accurate and forged details" to sow distrust and confusion. If news outlets and public figures publicize lies, they lose their credibility as trustworthy sources of information. "There's no reliable truth to rest upon," Professor Pearce said. "Every piece of information you get is possibly true, possibly false."</p> <p>Example: Starting in 2012, Donald Trump has repeatedly expressed his personal belief that autism is linked to childhood vaccinations, saying it in interviews, on Twitter, and even during a Republican debate.</p> <p>On the show "Fox &amp; Friends" in April 2012, Mr. Trump was asked about the rising number of children with autism diagnoses and said, "I have a theory and it's a theory that some people believe in, and that's the vaccinations." Later in the segment, one host noted that most doctors disagree and that studies do not show a link between vaccines and autism, which Mr. Trump acknowledged by adding, "It's also very controversial to even say, but I couldn't care less." He said he had seen changes in children firsthand to support his belief.</p> <p>Plenty of studies, including a recent one that involved almost 100,000 children, have shown there is no scientific evidence linking vaccinations to autism, and that there is no benefit to delaying vaccinations. Instead, children who are not vaccinated on the regular schedule can be at risk for infectious diseases for a longer period. One doctor told Scientific American that "misinformation on the Internet often frightens parents away from following" the vaccination schedule recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In 2015, a measles outbreak in California which started at Disneyland was partly attributed to the disease being spread by children who were not vaccinated. (Source: <a href="https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/business/media/trump-fake-news.html">https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/business/media/trump-fake-news.html</a>)</p>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<a href="#">"Is this story share-worthy?"</a> poster, notebooks

## KEY CONCEPTS

### 1. RIGHT TO PRIVACY

The rights to freedom of the press, as well as free speech and expression and the right to privacy, are two sides of the same coin. One person's right to know and be informed may violate another's right to be left alone. Every person has an inherent human right to his or her private life, which must be respected by everyone in society. You have the right to control information regarding your name, image, correspondence, family life, relationships with other persons, your intimate life, and so on. Your personal data is private information and is thus closely linked with your private life. Human rights protect your privacy.

**2. PERSONAL DATA** is information that relates to you as an individual and allows for your identification. There are special categories of personal data: an individual's racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, sexual orientation, trade-union membership, and health or sex life. Biometric data and genetic data also are special categories of personal data. Data can exist in many different forms. It may be written on paper or in electronic form, contained in written or spoken communication between persons; it may also be expressed in an image, video, or sound, or even enclosed in cellular samples and fingerprints.

When you interact with society, there is a chance of your being photographed or filmed. If that happens and your **image** is recorded by someone else, it may be reproduced and used later for various purposes. Sometimes you are obliged to let yourself be photographed, for instance, for a passport photo or for your employer's personnel files. In other situations, you, yourself, actively share your image, for example, by posting a selfie on Facebook. Your control over the use of your image is part of the human right to private life. The right to your own image covers your right to object to and refuse the recording, reproduction, and retention of your image, as well as its publication by another individual or institution.

At the same time, your right to control the use of your image may collide with the rights of others. In most cases, this will be someone's right to freedom of expression — for example, when a journalist wants to publish an article of great public interest and your image is an important part of it.

If you believe that your image has been taken or otherwise used unlawfully and that your human right to private life has been violated, you have the right to complain.

(Source: <http://www.cilvektiesibugids.lv/en/themes/>)

### 3. THE CONSEQUENCES OF OVERSHARING PERSONAL DATA ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Media consumption facilitates children's communicative, entertainment, and informational needs, but oversharing personal data can be dangerous. Social media invites users to share private data and details of their daily lives. As a result, businesses use our personal data to compile user profiles for advertising, employers check Facebook profiles of job candidates, and home robbers can find out when homeowners are not at home.

Parents should also be aware of oversharing information about their children over social media. They have to remember that some things should be kept private.

Tips for privacy protection on social media:

1. Use strong passwords, and don't use the same password for multiple accounts.
2. Don't use social media on public devices and, if you must, make sure to log out afterward.
3. Disable access to geolocation data for your social media apps.

4. Be wary of clicking links from friends on social media; you never know if they've been hacked.
5. Use a two-factor authentication or do regular password-reset checks for all your accounts.
6. Even on your private social profiles, keep personal information to a minimum.
7. Consider who might read your posts.
8. Avoid filling out lots of personal information in your profiles — hometown, birthday, family members, etc.
9. Don't post about your trips.

**4. MEDIA CONSUMPTION** (or media diet) is the sum of media content that you use and publish (news, videos, social media, TV, radio). A balanced media diet combines online and offline activities.

Tips for a healthy media diet:

1. Try to limit social media use.
2. Avoid checking your email and social media accounts obsessively.
3. Look for real people offline.
4. Media detox — try take a break from media content at the beginning and/or end of every day.

In today's digital era, healthy media consumption includes having skills like fake news spotting and online fact checking, responsible sharing of information, and critical thinking.

**5. POST-TRUTH:** Relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal beliefs.

(Source: <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/post-truth>)

The rise of fake news, filter bubbles and the polarization of society has also given rise to the idea that we are living in a post-truth world — a situation where alternative facts replace actual facts, emotions have more weight than evidence (e.g. denial of scientific facts about evolution, climate change, vaccines, etc.).

**6. POST-TRUTH POLITICS:** The emergence of fake news is used as a political tool. According John Keane, post-truth is a term for communication that includes old-fashioned lying and emotional rejection of inconvenient facts. Once, the purpose of political lying was to create a false view of the world. Nowadays, post-truth politics communicate with feelings, not with facts. Their aim is to reinforce prejudices. (Source: <https://theconversation.com/post-truth-politics-and-why-the-antidote-isnt-simply-fact-checking-and-truth-87364>).

The phrase “post-truth politics” was first coined by David Roberts in 2010. He defined it as “a political culture in which politics have become almost entirely disconnected from policy.”

(Source: <https://grist.org/article/2010-03-30-post-truth-politics/>)

Today, the phrase “post-truth politics” relates to a condition in which political lies and appealing to feelings instead of facts are no longer punished.

(Source: <https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/bitstream/handle/1887/57102/Thesis%20Catherine%20Koekoek.pdf?sequence=1>)



Post-truth politicians use the term “fake news” to **discredit quality journalism**.

Example: “When president Donald Trump uses the term ‘fake news,’ it does not only mean news whose accuracy he questions; it also means any news that is negative for him. One of the maddening features of Trump’s communications technique is that, even as he masquerades as a factchecker, he simultaneously tells towering, easily debunked lies.” (Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/jul/13/trump-fake-news-fox-cnn-theresa-may>)

Video: During a joint press conference with British Prime Minister Theresa May, CNN’s Jim Acosta tried to ask Donald Trump a question. Trump refused to answer, saying, “CNN is fake news. I don’t take questions from CNN... Let’s go to a real network.” At that point, he called on John Roberts of... Fox News.

(Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wJxxQM7GxJA>)

Donald Trump’s insistence that any challenges to the actions and utterances of the president are “fake news” resembles a tactic used by authoritarian regimes seeking ways to silence independent reporting.

## 7. THE CONSEQUENCES OF A POST-TRUTH WORLD

Thomas Rid, a professor of security studies at King’s College London, wrote on Twitter that disinformation campaigns have “often deliberately blended accurate and forged details” to sow distrust and confusion. If news media and public figures publicize lies, they lose their credibility as trustworthy sources of information. “There’s no reliable truth to rest upon,” Professor Pearce said. “Every piece of information you get is ‘possibly true, possibly false.’”

Discussion: If too many people do not care about the truth and only see and confirm their own prejudices, what would be the consequences for society (e.g. trust in institutions, freedom of expression, democracy, elections, the journalistic profession, etc.)?

Why can the term post-truth be dangerous?

The terms post-truth and post-truth politics are too soft. Post-truth politicians are not engaging in post-truth politics. They are lying. Post-truth politics replace the truth with the “feeling of truth”. Thus, the boundary between truth and lie is blurred. Political lying and fake news are challenges to basic democratic norms. (Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/dec/16/not-post-truth-simpler-words-lies-aleppo-trump-mainstream>)

*Examples of Trump’s fake news:*

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/business/media/trump-fake-news.html>

Fake news: false stories that appear to be news, spread on the Internet or using other media, usually created to influence political views or as a joke. (Source: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/fake-news>)

*Fake news: examples*

- Hillary Clinton is running a child sex ring out of a pizza shop.
- Democrats want to impose Islamic law in Florida.
- Thousands of people at a Donald Trump rally in Manhattan chanted, “We hate Muslims, we hate blacks, we want our great country back.”

## 8. VIRAL CONTENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Viral content on the Internet refers to piece of information (a video, a photo, an animation, an article, a quote, a person, an idea, a pet, an event, etc.) which spreads just like a virus. The infection usually comes from the emotions it evokes which impel the user to share it. Nowadays, advanced technology and social media have made it simple to share content with our friends and followers (e.g. music videos like Gangnam Style or Despacito).

**9. FILTER BUBBLE** is a term coined by Eli Pariser. This concept refers to a situation where an Internet user encounters only information and opinions that conform to and reinforce his/her own beliefs, caused by algorithms that personalize an individual's online experience. (Source: [https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/filter\\_bubble](https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/filter_bubble))

Filter bubbles exist because many people tend to ignore facts and stick to their own social media enclaves. Pariser investigates how the race to collect our personal data from Internet giants such Google, Facebook, and Apple and the personalization of information are closing users inside their own "filter bubbles". We receive mainly news that confirms our beliefs and stereotypes. As a result, the Internet is enclosing us in an isolated echo chamber.



# **RADIO PODCAST**

In this practical module, students will learn to differentiate radio podcasts from radio shows. They will examine the purpose of a podcast, study the elements of a podcast with examples, think about composition and the editing process, and create a podcast of their own. Students will also become acquainted with podcast copyrights and the process of archiving podcasts.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Ss will be able to distinguish between a radio podcast and a radio show.
2. Ss will be able to make a radio podcast.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- Ss understand what a podcast is.
- Ss can create a podcast of their own (such as an educational or school related podcast, or a podcast on school musicians or sports).

## OUTLINE OF THE KEY CONCEPTS

*(See the corresponding Key Concepts Section)*

Part I: Definition of “podcast”

Part II: The elements of a radio podcast

- Sound picture
- Intonation, noise, music
- Composition, editing process
- Archive
- Copyright in radio and podcasting

Part III: What do you need to make a podcast?

- Let’s make a podcast! Main steps

## MODULE LENGTH

40 min (selected activities)

## LESSON PLAN: ACTIVITIES AND TIMEFRAME

ACTIVITY	LESSON OBJECTIVE	TIME
1. Introduction to Podcasts	1	7 min
2. Elements of a Podcast	1, 2	15 min
3. Discussion on Podcast Ideas	2	5 min
4. Record Your Podcast	2	15 min
5. Be the Editor: Decide on Podcast Topics	2	8 min

## RESOURCES FOR FURTHER READING

· Everything You Need To Know To Start Your Own Podcast, According To The Pros (Forbes) <https://www.forbes.com/sites/unicefusa/2018/08/10/when-a-refugee-camp-becomes-an-innovation-incubator/#553750122f94>

· Looking to launch a podcast? Advice from an audio producer (ONA)

<https://journalists.org/2017/06/28/looking-to-launch-a-podcast-advice-from-an-audio-producer/>

· Tutorial: Podcasting (Berkeley University) <https://multimedia.journalism.berkeley.edu/tutorials/podcasting/>

Podcasts in English:

· 411 Teen <http://news.wfsu.org/programs/411-teen-889-wfsu-fm>

· Ted Talks <https://www.ted.com/about/programs-initiatives/ted-talks/ted-talks-audio>

· The World According to Sound <http://www.theworldaccordingtosound.org/>

· Radiolab <https://www.wnycstudios.org/shows/radiolab>

· The Moth <https://themoth.org/podcast>

Podcasts in Bulgarian:

· Govori Internet (Internet Calling) <http://govori-internet.com/>

· The Urban Detective <http://www.detectivepodcast.com/> (Both in Bulgarian and English)

## HOMEWORK ACTIVITIES

### 1. Recordings

T helps Ss learn how to talk to potential guests (e.g. other teachers) and invite them to the studio or another location; in addition, they are taught how to elicit the interview questions and how to make a phone call.

If a S has made a recording, the show's presenter announces what the audience is going to hear. The listeners do not know who the speaker is, where the reporter is from, or what has happened. The interviewees should be presented with their name and occupation or in the way they choose to present themselves.

It is not necessary to start the interview with the clichéd "We are now in the school yard". In radio, it is good to use so-called "sound pictures" — the author tells a story through different sounds.

### 2. Archiving and describing the podcast so that it grabs attention — a short text saying what the podcast is about.

Self-study (find short video lessons on YouTube):

■ How to make a recording

■ How to make an audio montage

## ACTIVITY 1

TITLE	INTRODUCTION TO PODCASTS
TIME	7 minutes
STEPS	<p>1. Write up the definition of a podcast on the board:</p> <p><b>Podcast:</b> An audio or video program that is stored in a digital form that can be downloaded from the Internet and played on a computer or on an audio player.</p> <p>(1) A podcast is a series of shows that have the same name.</p> <p>(2) By subscribing, listeners receive a message whenever a new podcast is released.</p> <p>(3) Radio shows usually cover current events, whereas podcasts can be listened to whenever the listener chooses.</p> <p>Definition of podcast according to International podcast day: What is a podcast?</p> <p>2. Provide further information.</p> <p><b>Did you know that ...</b></p> <p>Recent research has shown that well-educated people from higher income households tend to listen to podcasts more. As a result, advertisement in such media has proven to be extremely profitable and beneficial. By purchasing the advertised products, people also support the author of the podcast.</p> <p>Politicians also like to “escape the traditional media” and are looking for authorial platforms like podcasting. George W. Bush was the first U.S. president to agree to participate in a podcast. He even became a podcaster himself — his addresses to the public were recorded as podcasts one could listen to by subscribing to the White House page. Barack Obama followed his lead and went to the garage of one of the most popular US podcasters, stand-up comedian Marc Maron. This conversation about global politics was not held in the White House, but in the garage of an ordinary person.</p>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<p>Whiteboard and markers</p> <p>What is a podcast? (<a href="https://internationalpodcastday.com/what-is-podcast/">https://internationalpodcastday.com/what-is-podcast/</a>)</p> <p>What's the difference between Downloads, Podcasts and Streaming? (<a href="https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/help/definitions">https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/help/definitions</a>)</p>

## ACTIVITY 2

TITLE	ELEMENTS OF A PODCAST
TIME	15 minutes
STEPS	<p>1. Introduce the different elements of podcast:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sound picture</li> <li>■ Intonation, noise, music</li> <li>■ Composition, editing process</li> <li>■ Archive</li> <li>■ Copyright in radio and podcasting</li> <li>■ Share some examples of podcasts and ask Ss to identify the above elements.</li> </ul>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<p>Markers, whiteboard</p> <p>Internet connection, laptop with speakers</p> <p><a href="#">Radiolab</a> or <a href="#">Freakonomics Radio archive</a></p>

### ACTIVITY 3

TITLE	DISCUSSION: PODCAST IDEAS
TIME	5 minutes
STEPS	<p>1. Remind Ss what they can do. They have made an interview and a news report that they can use as elements of the podcast.</p> <p>2. Have Ss make a final decision: What is the theme of the podcasts?</p> <p><b>What do you need to make a podcast?</b></p> <p>To make a podcast, you need a computer connected to the Internet and a microphone, as well as the ability to do audio montage with one of the available software programs. This is not only easy but also very interesting.</p> <p>On the radio, talking to people is the most interesting part. The more different voices you hear in a 30-minute show, the better.</p> <p><b>Let's make a podcast! Main steps:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Select a topic.</li> <li>2. Study up on the subject, search the web, ask different people.</li> <li>3. Choose the speakers.</li> <li>4. Write a short script, marking the elements that will included in the show and how long they will take.</li> <li>5. Prepare for the montage: arrange the elements and the way they will be announced.</li> <li>6. Record the podcast.</li> <li>7. Do the montage.</li> </ol>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	None

### ACTIVITY 4

TITLE	RECORD YOURSELF
TIME	15 minutes
STEPS	<p>1. Prepare short excerpts to be read aloud in about 30 seconds (e.g. on the topic of CCTV extracts from 1984 by George Orwell). Have Ss make the recordings.</p> <p>2. Ask Ss to listen to their own recordings before leading a discussion, highlighting what they can achieve by using various intonation patterns, the role of pauses and silence, logical accents, etc.</p> <p><b>NB: It is important for students to hear their voices and learn to listen to themselves.</b></p>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	<p>Internet connection, laptop, projector, whiteboard, notebooks</p> <p>Top 10 sites to help students check their facts</p>

## ACTIVITY 5

TITLE	BE THE EDITOR: DECIDE ON PODCAST TOPICS
TIME	8 minutes
STEPS	<p>1. Assign Ss roles as “editors” and have them discuss the following possible topics for a series of podcasts. What are the common elements? What is the aim of the series? The podcasts could also be on different topics.</p> <p>Example A:</p> <p>You can suggest making an <b>educational podcast</b> explaining various phenomena, facts, a story, etc.</p> <p>Example B:</p> <p>What do adults do when their dreams won't come true? Interview parents whose jobs aren't what they wished for, who haven't travelled around the world, or haven't learned to sing like Adele or Sting. How have they dealt with the disappointment? Have they stopped dreaming, do they still sing in the shower, etc.? How do we deal with dreaming?</p> <p>Example C:</p> <p>Alternatively consider <b>the topic of CCTV in schools</b>. How did our great grandparents survive at school without CCTV? Record different opinions on why we agree to be recorded at school. Are there people who don't want to be recorded? What is the opinion of people who believe their security is guaranteed by being recorded?</p> <p>2. Ss discuss:</p> <p>What are the common elements? What is the aim of the series?</p>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Handouts with the examples



## KEY CONCEPTS

### PART I: DEFINITION OF “PODCAST”

An audio or video program that is stored in a digital form that can be downloaded from the Internet and played on a computer or on an audio player.

- (1) A podcast is a series of shows that have the same name.
- (2) By subscribing, listeners receive a message whenever a new podcast is released.
- (3) Radio shows usually cover current events, whereas podcasts can be listened to whenever the listener chooses.

“A good starting point is to think of a podcast as “**Internet Radio** On-Demand.” It’s similar in that you can usually listen to it on your computer — but it’s more than that. [However, and not to confuse the issue, podcasting isn’t confined to just audio but can be video, as well].

With the amount of content that podcasting provides, regular broadcast radio, or “Terrestrial Radio” — as they call it — simply can never compete. The AM and FM radio band only has so many channels. Consequently, radio stations “broadcast” their content — meaning that they attempt to appeal to as broad of an audience as possible. Because, after all, this is what advertisers are looking for. But podcasting, by contrast, is not necessarily hamstrung to advertising revenue like its broadcasting cousin. With its specific and specialized content, it is able to “narrowcast” to only those who choose to listen. So, while a particular podcast’s audience may be considerably smaller than the audience of a broadcast, one could argue that the podcast’s audience is much more targeted and interested in the content being delivered. So, in a way, satellite radio, with its ability to provide more channels than broadcast radio, takes a step towards podcasting — but still does not come close.

Podcasts are “On Demand” and can be listened to on your schedule — not when a radio station decides to air it.

Each podcast typically has a website where the show’s episodes can be listened to or downloaded for future listening. With downloaded media, you can either listen to it on your computer or take it with you by transferring it to a portable digital media player or using a podcast app on your phone. So, in this way, it’s kind of like a small paperback book.

Listeners can easily “subscribe” to podcasts (most are free) by clicking on its RSS icon or a subscription button. The listener is then walked through how to add that podcast’s syndication “feed” to a podcatching application of their choosing. So, when a podcaster releases a new episode, subscribers are automatically notified without having to constantly check back with the podcast’s website to see if a new show has been produced. With that podcatching software, all episodes of their favorite podcasts can be automatically downloaded — all without having to lift a finger. So, in this way, podcasts are like magazine subscriptions. The differential aspect in “casting” is major. Podcasts can reach a global audience, as where traditional radio is limited by broadcasting signal strength.”

(Source: What is a podcast? <https://internationalpodcastday.com/what-is-podcast/>)

Every media has its advantages. Radio allows us to imagine what we are listening to, but also use our voice to influence others and be heard. Television (video podcast) shows everything and makes comprehension easy, but at the same time it leaves nothing to the imagination. The written word also relies on the imagination; it is also permanent, so we can go back and reread.

***Did you know that ...***

Recent research has shown that well-educated people from higher income households tend to listen to podcasts more often. As a result, advertisement in such media has proven to be extremely profitable and beneficial. By purchasing the advertised products, people also support the author of the podcast.

Politicians also like to “escape the traditional media” and are looking for authorial platforms like podcasting. George W. Bush was the first U.S. president to agree to participate in a podcast. He even became a podcaster himself — his addresses to the public were recorded as podcasts one could listen to by subscribing to the White House page. Barack Obama followed his lead and went to the garage of one of the most popular US podcasters, stand-up comedian Marc Maron. This conversation about global politics was not held in the White House, but in the garage of an ordinary person.

**PART II: THE ELEMENTS OF A RADIO PODCAST****1. SOUND PICTURE****■ Intonation, noise, music**

On the radio, there are other important elements besides speech that can influence listeners.

Intonation is a key element in podcasting. You should speak clearly. It is important not only what you say but how you say it. You should pause to enable listeners to understand what has been said. Silence has a special meaning in radio. For example, it can be used to create suspense, it can mean an assessment of what has been said, or it can show speakers’ confusion. The logical accents made by silence are also important. They help you direct the listener’s attention. To emphasize what is important, we can use sound effects showing surprise, astonishment, indignation, etc.

If the conversation is being recorded outside the room, use the sounds that can be heard to create atmosphere.

***Example:***

If the conversation is recorded in the room of a classmate who plays the guitar, the conversation with your guest may begin by asking the interviewee how many guitars he/she sees (listeners cannot see what you see, so you have to take them there). Noises are part of the action, so it is better to use them on the radio, not mute and cut them off during montage. They give us the opportunity to imagine what is happening while we are listening. You do not have to literally describe what is going on — it can be done by transmitting the sound directly. For example, in front of a doctor’s surgical room, someone could be coughing, someone else is looking for a doctor, another person is talking to the child beside them, etc.

**2. COMPOSITION, EDITING PROCESS**

Finally, you need to edit the opinions or parts of the podcast.

Only the most important part of someone’s opinion should be selected and the unnecessary parts should be cut off during montage. For example, it is much better to leave only one sentence containing the essence rather than keeping everything that has been said. However, you should not cut sighs, pauses, or other sounds — they are natural parts of the conversation and show the speakers’ emotions. Sometimes they say much more than words.

You can listen to all the opinions, choose one sentence from each one and decide how to arrange them — whether the speakers “oppose” each other as if they were talking in front of you, whether they are complementary, or if they interact in another way. The conclusion should contain the most important information — a summary statement or phrase that indicates that there is no single answer.

### 3. ARCHIVE

The listener can listen to a podcast months later. So, you have to figure out how to present your shows to the listener. Surely numbering or dating will not work. You have to figure out engaging themes, announce interesting guests to interview, and use the most appealing element which you think would appeal to listeners. You need headings to grab the listener's attention

### 4. COPYRIGHT IN RADIO AND PODCASTING

Copyright also applies to a podcast on the Internet.

If the podcaster does not want to pay for them, they can make use of websites that provide music and sounds for free. But as so many of your classmates can play an instrument, write poetry, or create art, you should consider asking to record them! Most certainly they would not care about the copyright, and you will make them famous!

## PART III: WHAT DO YOU NEED TO MAKE A PODCAST?

To make a podcast, you need a computer connected to the Internet and a microphone, as well as the ability to do audio montage with one of the available software programs. This is not only easy but also very interesting. On the radio, talking to people is the most interesting part. The more different voices you hear in a 30-minute show, the better.

### 1. LET'S MAKE A PODCAST! MAIN STEPS:

- Select a topic.
- Study up on the subject, search the web, ask different people.
- Choose the speakers.
- Write a short script, marking the elements that will included in the show and how long they will take.
- Record the podcast.
- Prepare for the montage: arrange the elements and the way they will be announced.
- Do the montage.



8.0.

## **WRAP-UP SESSION: YEAR IN REVIEW**

The final reflection module gives space for both the teacher and students to look back on the past year in the journalism club, celebrate their successes, and plan ahead for the next school year. Students will also prepare the final edition of the school media outlet for the academic year and assign individual and group tasks, so that the club can continue its activities in the following school year.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Ss will be able to prepare a special edition news item.
2. Ss will reflect on what they have learned so far.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- Ss prepare a special edition news item.
- Ss reflect on the process they went through.

## LESSON LENGTH

80 minutes (all activities add up to 110 min)

## LESSON PLAN: ACTIVITIES AND TIMEFRAME

ACTIVITY	LESSON OBJECTIVE	TIME
1. Top Takeaways	1	12 min
2. You Are the Best at...	1, 2	13 min
3. Most Likely to...	2	15 min
4. Student Feedback	2	15 min
5. Next Year's Club	2	15 min
6. Special Edition! (Brainstorming Session)	2	30-40 min

## HOMEWORK ACTIVITIES

Preparing of the special edition

## ACTIVITY 1

TITLE	TOP TAKEAWAYS
TIME	12 minutes
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Divide students into groups of 3-4 people.</li> <li>2. Give Ss 7 min to discuss the following question: What things I did you learn from the club (about journalism or about yourself) that were the most interesting?</li> <li>3. Groups share their findings with each other for 1 min each (5 min total).</li> </ol>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	None

## ACTIVITY 2

TITLE	YOU ARE THE BEST AT...
TIME	13 minutes
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have everyone tape an A4 sheet of paper to their backs (including T, 2 min).</li> <li>2. Ss and T go around writing on each other's backs the reasons why they appreciated working with them (e.g. always on time; full of ideas; very responsible; always there to help; takes the best photos, etc., 6 min).</li> <li>3. Everyone takes the sheets off their backs and reads them to the group (5 min). Group applause for everyone.</li> </ol>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	A4 paper, tape or paper clips for securing the sheets of paper on the backs of the students, markers

## ACTIVITY 3

TITLE	MOST LIKELY TO...
TIME	15 minutes
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have each S pick someone else's name from a box (2 min).</li> <li>2. Ask Ss to create a superlative for that person — e.g. best at videoreporting, best at editing, best at time management. There is a list of nominations available, but Ss can also think of their own. (See resources: Nominations). Ss then create certificates with that superlative/nomination (10 min).</li> <li>3. Ss award the certificates to each other one by one (3 min).</li> </ol>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Card for certificates, list of nominations, names of participants on pieces of paper, art materials for the certificates — felt tips, colored pencils, etc.

## ACTIVITY 4

TITLE	STUDENT FEEDBACK
TIME	15 minutes
STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Prior to class, stick up sheets of A3 paper with the titles of the modules around the room.</li> <li>2. Have Ss go around around and write for each module: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The key things I learned here that helped me better understand journalism and develop my skills</li> <li>■ What I want to know/learn more about about this topic (10 min)</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Summarize Ss comments in front of the group (5 min).</li> </ol>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	A3 paper, markers, felt tip pens (optional: sticky notes)

## ACTIVITY 5

TITLE	NEXT YEAR'S CLUB
TIME	15 minutes
STEPS	<p>Set up 3 stations with flipchart paper (one of the following questions each written on them) hung up around the room:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ How can we recruit new people for the club?</li> <li>■ How can we teach them the lessons we learned this year?</li> <li>■ How can we keep developing our skills?</li> </ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Split Ss into 3 groups (1 min).</li> <li>2. Each group discusses and writes ideas about the question at their station for 5 minutes, then the groups switch places. The second and third group have 3 minutes each to read through and add ideas (11 min).</li> <li>3. The whole club gathers and chooses 1-2 people who will be responsible for each of the questions for the next academic year (4 min).</li> </ol>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Flipchart paper, markers, felt tip pens (optional: sticky notes)

## ACTIVITY 6

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>SPECIAL EDITION! (BRAINSTORMING SESSION)</b>
<b>TIME</b>	30 - 40 min (depends on the choice of activities beforehand)
<b>STEPS</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lead the last editing process for the club (Refer to Editing Process Module).</li> <li>2. Ask Ss to choose a topic for the special edition, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ My year in journalism</li> <li>■ Why everyone should participate in the club next year</li> <li>■ The end of the school year — new beginnings and lessons learned</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. T assigns tasks and Ss create the materials and put the special edition together (given as a homework assignment).</li> </ol>
<b>MATERIALS AND RESOURCES</b>	Depends on the media



