

Ten Reasons... Continued

- 5. Newspaper readership is declining, especially among college students.** Unfortunately, college students spend little time in discretionary reading and more time working and engaging in various forms of recreation. Helping students to find value in reading to be informed is important for the future of our democracy.
- 6. Reading newspapers combats student political disengagement.** Newspapers are an important source of intellectual stimulation that document for college students the importance of political engagement
- 7. Using newspapers in the classroom promotes critical thinking.** Critical thinking abilities can only be developed if students are exposed to stimulating information about which probing questions can and must be asked, and if they are provided examples of critical reasoning as manifested in the printed word. This skill is also developed by exposure to a blend and balance of widely differing opinions found in news resources.
- 8. Newspapers help students develop vocabulary.** A sufficiently sophisticated vocabulary is required to read newspapers with comprehension and appreciation.
- 9. Newspapers are compatible with the philosophy of liberal arts education.** Comprehension and application of the information found in newspapers requires critical thinking, analytical skills, and synthesis skills. Use of news resources for serious engagement of the liberal arts helps college students make connections between different fields, subjects, topics, issues, and events, and hence helps them ask the right questions.
- 10. Reading newspapers contributes to citizenship development.** Adult literacy, critical thinking, global thinking, and information analysis are skills that can be facilitated by engagement with newspapers and can lay the foundation for life-long citizenship knowledge, values, interests, behaviors, and skills.

Resources and strategies compiled by the Center for Teaching and Learning and Albertsons Library



¹Adapted from National Resource Center for the First Year Experience and Students in Transition, Knowlton, S. R., & Barefoot, B. O. (1999). *Using national newspapers in the college classroom. Number 28, The first year experience & students in transition: Resources to improve teaching and learning.* Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina.

USING NEWSPAPERS IN THE CLASSROOM

Engaging Students in Critical Thinking, Civic Participation and Academic Success

Teaching with news resources “will foster among students the habit of using a quality news source... of staying informed about events changing their world... of thinking about and putting knowledge to good use.. and of becoming more analytical about news coverage and other information they seek out in our Information Age”

Janet Robinson (in Knowlton & Barefoot, 1999).



Why Teach with Newspapers? Ten Reasons to Use Newspapers in the College Classroom¹

- 1. Newspapers are a tool for educational and personal empowerment.** Using news resources can help students develop the skills to be self-reliant seekers, gatherers, and interpreters of information.
- 2. College students need both local and global information.** Newspapers can help students be aware of issues that shape their lives on a local, national, and international level.
- 3. Newspapers help students anticipate trends and understand rapidly changing events.** Citizens need to anticipate change before it reaches them in order to plan appropriately and to be knowledgeable participants at all levels in the political process.
- 4. College students need comprehensive information.** Information is critical for functioning in an information-based society and economy. Newspapers offer a single format for finding information across a broad range of categories, including politics, international affairs, business, health, science, arts, entertainment, travel, and sports.

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FREE & Easy Access to Newspapers!

- All students, faculty and staff have free daily online access to the [Idaho Statesman](#)
- [Albertsons Library](#) provides free online access to a variety of news resources

Inside:

- Strategies for using newspapers in your teaching
- Detailed information about accessing news resources

Strategies for Using Newspapers as a Teaching and Learning Tool

Use newspapers as an entrée to scholarship in your discipline

- Have students compare a newspaper article to a journal article on a related topic. Students might work in groups to address questions that a) ensure they've read and understood the articles, b) link the content of the articles to course content, c) help them to examine the validity of the claims in the two different publication types, and d) identify the different goals of the different kinds of writing about science, history, public policy, K-12 education, health sciences, etc..
- Have students read a newspaper article, summarize it, and explain how it relates to course material. Then, have students find citations to two scholarly articles that relate to the material. For example, have students locate an original research study that has been summarized in a newspaper article.
- Assign students to find reviews of artistic performances or exhibits. Analyze the reviews for the focus of the critique. How does this relate to critiques conducted in class? How does it inform rehearsal preparation or studio work?

Help students become critical readers of media

- Have students analyze news articles to determine: who owns this media source? Who is the journalist? What is the news of the day? What are the issues involved? Who are the "sources" for the story? Is there "spin"? Who are the advertisers? What is the media doing to get your attention? What values and beliefs do you bring as a reader?
- Have students compare coverage of a news event in several different newspapers in order to critically review how the topic is being reported. On what page is the story? How big is the headline? How long is the article and how many times is the topic covered?

Use newspapers to develop a sense of historical context

- Have students read about current events and prompt them to make connections between ongoing events and larger political patterns and historical trends. Ask students to compare current events to historical ones, through the lens of these trends or themes.
- Have students explore historical newspapers to find advertisements, political cartoons, classifieds, or letters to the editor in order to enrich their understanding of a time period, place, or event.

Cultivate the use of a newspaper as a regular source of course content

- Have students "clip" two articles per week on topics related to the current course content. Students submit articles with a description of why they were chosen and how they related to the current topic of the course. Students must learn what to read and what can be not read. The news provides an up-to-date complement to course content (e.g., about politics, public policy, economics, etc.)
- Have students establish background knowledge on a topic by reading and summarizing newspaper articles. Use this activity to help students choose a topic for a larger project, such as a term paper.
- Assign students to read particular stories and hold them accountable. One might assign 3-5 stories per day (by email or Bb). Test questions can be simple (Why? What? Who?) or can prompt students to integrate material with course content through an essay exam (e.g., Summarize one item from the newspaper that you have selected. Apply the news item to the insights and theories studied in the course and identify new insights and problems that demand additional study.)
- Assign students (on a rotating basis) to assign articles that everyone should read for class discussion.
- Over a semester, have students create an archive of articles organized into categories of their choice. A final assignment is to provide an aggregate commentary on the articles and to describe the rationale for the articles chosen, the organization of the archive, and what the archive reveals about the year/semester it represents.
- Distribute articles for students to use to practice summarizing, paraphrasing using quotations, without plagiarism and city sources. Have peers evaluate the quality of work.

Accessing Newspapers: Online Access Makes Using News Resources Easy!

Newspapers available online through Albertsons Library

Idaho Statesman online articles and editorials [1999-present]

Ethnic News Watch database of newspapers and magazines of the ethnic minority press



National Newspapers

- *Chicago Tribune* - 1985-present
- *Christian Science Monitor* - 1990-present
- *Los Angeles Times* - 1985-present
- *New York Times* - 1980-present
- *The Wall Street Journal* - 1984-present
- *Washington Post* - 1987-present

New York Times Historical

articles as they appeared in print [1857-2006]

There's more!

To access a complete list of newspaper resources, visit: guides.boisestate.edu/newspapers.

Additional Strategies for Supporting and Assessing Student Learning

- Have students post answers to questions you pose in an online discussion board prior to class. This lets the instructor know what students understand and where they may be less clear. Assess participation.
- Devote the first or last five minutes of class to a discussion of the reading(s). Assess on participation or engagement.
- Consider using a standard set of questions that might apply to all articles. Students take three or four minutes to answer one of those questions at the beginning of class each day. Assess the accuracy of student answers.
- Develop a rubric that helps students determine the quality of their work on a newspaper assignment that is practiced multiple times in a semester.

Idaho Statesman e-Edition—for free!

- Each weekday in your Gmail you receive an e-mail from *The Idaho Statesman*
- Click on "Access the e-Edition now"
- Look for the Login box—enter a username and password of your own choosing. (Does not need to be the same as the Boise State system.)
- **OR** simply bookmark the page <http://bsudigital.idahostatesman.com/> to go directly to the login page
- The Statesman e-Edition provides access to the past week's newspapers

The e-Edition is a highly interactive, electronic version of the printed newspaper. It is designed to be intuitive—letting readers peruse by turning from page to virtual page.

- Read starting from the front page, clicking "continue" to follow a story— or double-click on the story to get a full-text pop-up.
- Change the size with the buttons across the top.
- Other buttons let you print, e-mail or save a copy of the story.
- Questions? Go to the contents tab to get navigation help. Or click the index tab to see a list of all stories in that day's new, sports and feature sections.

Are you and your students busy? The front page has a quick survey of the most important local, state and national stories. Pages A2-3 are "Catching up" pages, offering a quick summary of the most interesting items from the day. These pages provide a great place for you and your students to seek course-relevant news and to become informed about events in our community and beyond.



How do YOU use newspapers in your teaching?

Send us a quick email at CTL@boisestate.edu and let us know how and why you use newspapers in your courses.

We're compiling a list of strategies used by Boise State faculty. We'll add your idea to our website so others can benefit!