

Using NewsHour Extra Feature Stories

STORY

Economy, Online Trends Threaten Newspaper Industry, 05/08/2009

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/arts/jan-june09/newspapers_05-08.html

Estimated Time: One 45-minute class period with possible extension

Student Worksheet (reading comprehension and discussion questions without answers)

PROCEDURE

1. WARM UP

Use initiating questions to introduce the topic and find out how much your students know.

2. MAIN ACTIVITY

Have students read NewsHour Extra's feature story and answer the reading comprehension and discussion questions on the student handout.

3. DISCUSSION

Use discussion questions to encourage students to think about how the issues outlined in the story affect their lives and express and debate different opinions.]

INITIATING QUESTIONS

1. How do you usually get your news?

2. Who is most likely to read a print newspaper?

3. What would you like to change about how you get your news?

READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS – **Student Worksheet**

1. How were newspapers in Thomas Jefferson's time different than they are now?

ANSWER

Early versions of the newspaper were more political opinion papers than what we think of as newspapers now.

2. Name at least two newspapers that recently shut down.

ANSWER

In March 2009, the 146-year-old Seattle Post-Intelligencer put out its last print edition and Denver's Rocky Mountain News shut down its presses after close to 150 years of putting out a daily paper.

3. Why is the Boston Globe important? Why is it in trouble?

ANSWER

The Boston Globe is the largest newspaper in New England. Although unions representing the paper's employees reached a tentative deal with its parent company, the New York Times Co., to cut wages and other benefits, the newspaper is still losing money.

4. When the president of Sports Illustrated told his employees that “print is dead,” what did he mean?

ANSWER

Even before the recession started in 2007, the newspaper industry was losing readers and losing money.

5. Why are newspapers trying to support online journalism?

ANSWER

People have to pay for print newspapers, but online ads are the only method that most newspapers have to support online views.

Thus far, online advertising is not enough to support the reporters, editors and expenses of professional journalism.

6. What are some new models for the newspaper according to Ibarreto Ibarguen, CEO of John S. and James L. Knight Foundation?

ANSWER

Ibarguen told the NewsHour “...we do know is that it's going to be digital; it's probably going to be mobile; and it is certainly going to be interactive.”

7. What deal did Amazon and the Washington Post and the New York Times offer consumers?

ANSWER

Amazon.com recently released a device called the Kindle DX. The Kindle can display books and newspapers on its large screen. And Amazon has made a deal with the Washington Post and the New York Times to give people a discount on the device if they sign up for a Kindle subscription to one of their newspapers.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (more research might be needed)

1. If people get their information first from the TV, next the internet, and then print journalism, what (if anything) do you think is lost?

2. Why do you think people demand free content online? Is it a good idea?

3. After reading this do you think you are more or less likely to go into journalism? Why?

4. Would you purchase the Kindle to read the newspaper? Why or why not?

5. Look 10 years into the future, how do you think we will get our news?

Extension Activity

Have students write a 300-500 word essay on this topic providing clear examples. Send your completed editorial to NewsHour Extra (extra@newshour.org). Exceptional essays might be published on our Web site.