

the Gov

“Newspapers in the Digital Age”
Social Studies Lesson Plan

the Gov
is a feature of

the News

A daily news broadcast for High School and Middle School students
now under development by MacNeil/Lehrer Productions



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Segment 1:
“Newspapers in the Digital Age”
Social Studies Curriculum

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Fall, 2010

Dear Educator,

the.News online video reports for *the.Gov* provide middle and high school students with a valuable exercise in social studies and language arts with this **6:50** minute video report on the “Newspapers in the Digital Age” at www.pbs.org/newshour/thenews/thegov Correspondent, Antonio Neves explores the changes in the newspaper business, how stories are covered and delivered and the changes in economic models to secure their existence. Lessons for social studies and language arts are available to support this video in the “For Educators” section of the website. All videos and curricula have been informed by *the.News* instructional design that can be found on the website www.pbs.org/newshour/thenews. The curriculum includes content-based standards, discussion questions, student activities, vocabulary and primary reference sources. A complete transcript of each video report includes time codes to assist in isolating specific segments of the video and to augment the instruction of media literacy and multimedia production. All of this material is presented as options to fit teachers’ instructional needs.

References to Larry Bell’s “The 12 Powerful Words” are highlighted in **bold** in the lesson plans and in the “thought starter” questions on the home page and educator’s page, and in the transcript (to denote where they are used in the video segment).

We have also added general topics to correlate to the lessons and video as well as concept based standards with conceptual lens and enduring understanding.

We welcome our partners at the Omaha Public Schools who have joined *the.News* in the second year of a special pilot project. We have also developed a new authoring tool for students called *YOU.edit* which gives students an online tool to remix the content of *the.News* reports, so they can create their own multimedia presentations. This editing tool can be found by clicking on the *YOU.edit* button on the home page of the website. Currently used with our OPS teacher consultants it is password protected so that it can serve as a viable educational asset that allows classroom teachers to assign multimedia projects within the security and content safety of *the.News* website.

Answers to student “**thought starter**” questions listed below the video.

- #1. Readership is down and advertising revenue, based on this number, is also down.
- #2. Newspapers are redesigning their print and online content in tandem to be more efficient and attractive to readers. This synergy improves journalism, adds to local coverage, and brings more relevant news to more people.
- #3. Micro-news focuses on news at the local and even neighborhood level.

Sincerely,

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Newspapers in the Digital Age

This lesson was designed to support *the.News* video “Newspapers in the Digital Age.”
The video can be found online at www.pbs.org/newshour/thenews/thegov

Omaha Public Schools

<http://www.ops.org/District/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=Hbqyrrg2ydM%3d&tabid=912&mid=2006>

Social Studies

Standard 04: Students will describe the structure and function of government, the expanding role and responsibilities of the citizen in a representative democracy, and compare and contrast these elements to those in other countries.

World Cultures Grade 7

- Describe rights and responsibilities of citizenship

U.S. History Grade 8

- Summarize the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and citizenship activities.
- Explain the function of the Constitution.

Grade Level: 7-12

Concept Areas: Social Studies, History, Civics, Communication, Technology

Key Concept(s)

This lesson examines the current crisis in journalism. Specific attention is given to the historical developments in dissemination of the news. Students will **trace** the history of news dissemination. In small groups, students will **evaluate** the most significant developments in news dissemination. Students will then construct an illustrated timeline that **explains** the historical significance of each development. Finally, students will **predict** trends in journalism over the next 5 years.



Key Objectives:

Students will be able to

- **trace** the history of news dissemination.
- **evaluate** significant developments in news dissemination.
- construct an illustrated timeline.
- **explain** the significance of developments in news dissemination.
- **predict** future trends in news dissemination.



Key Vocabulary:

- **Broadcast**—giving information through radio or television
- **Consensus**—an agreement made by everyone making a decision
- **Dissemination**—to spread to many people and places
- **Journalism**—the collection and editing of news for presentation through the media
- **Mass Media**—a way to communicate to many people such as through radio, television, newspapers, and internet
- **News**—a report of events that recently occurred

Source: (<http://www.merriam-webster.com>)



Omaha Public Schools

<http://www.ops.org/District/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=Hbqyrrg2ydM%3d&tabid=912&mid=2006>

Social Studies

Standard 02: Students will identify and explain the importance of major events, key concepts, and significant contributions of groups and individuals related to selected themes throughout history.

World Cultures Grade 7

- Interpret industrialization and its impact on a society.
- Analyze current events.

Conceptual Lens: Transformations

Enduring Understanding: Expanding the role of technology can help change the course of economic models that are in crisis

Standard 03: Students will interpret (writing, discussion, and debate) primary and secondary sources as well as current issues involving the public interest.

U.S. History Grade 9

- Categorize and evaluate historical changes in the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, and the 1990s to the present



Omaha Public Schools

<http://www.ops.org/District/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=Hbqyrrg2ydM%3d&tabid=912&mid=2006>

Social Studies

Economics

Standard 01: Students will demonstrate an understanding of fundamental economic terms and concepts and the role of citizens as producers and consumers

Introduction to Economics Grade 10

- Predict the impact of changes in production.

Sociology

Standard 03: Students will apply sociological concepts to the study of societal and cultural groups and institutions

Sociology Grades 10-12

- Recognize and examine the major institutions of society.

Materials:

- “Newspapers in the Digital Age”
www.pbs.org/newshour/thenews/thegov
- “Changes in Journalism” Background Essay
- Highlighters
- Consensus Circle graphic organizer
- Timeline Template
- Color pencils
- Rulers

Lesson Topics:

- Journalism
- News dissemination
- Print media
- Electronic media
- Mobile media
- First Amendment
- Timeline

Time Frame:

- Two 45 minute class periods

Background

What is news? How do you get your news? While the type of events that become news have not changed much over time, the way we get our news dramatically has. This dramatic change is causing a change in journalism.

The word “journalism” has to do with collecting and disseminating the news. Today’s changes in journalism reflect the way news is disseminated or the way the news is spread to people. What happened throughout history that led up to this change?



Imagine a time before the internet, television, and radio. (Its hard to do but its an important part of the story.) How did people get their news? Before most people could read, people got their news from each other. The Romans built roads for messengers to travel along taking news from one part of the Empire to another. Some traditional West African cultures used the “talking drum” to send news from one village to another. The Inca

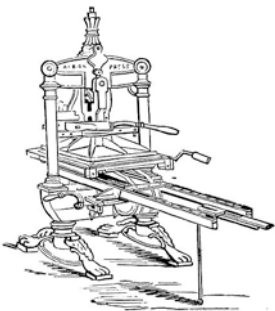


talking drum

used *quipus* and a messenger system to deliver news throughout their Empire. And everyday, people met at public places like markets or at celebrations such as weddings to share news. No matter the source of the news—family, friends, the government, or religious leader--technological innovation has made a large impact on journalism and how the news is disseminated.

Prior to 1450 CE, most writing had to be done by hand. It could take a year or more just to write one book. Creating multiple copies of a book could take a lifetime.

Johannes



printing press

Gutenberg’s invention changed all of this for the Western world. He invented moveable type that he used in a printing press. Now it was possible to print thousands of copies of a book in less time than it had taken a scribe to produce one. The invention of the printing press marks the first time in history that large numbers of people could have access to written materials.

While printing made the news in written form available to more people, there was still no fast way to disseminate news. The news could travel no faster than the person, animal, or sailing ship carrying it. In the early 1700’s the development of the steam engine added speed to transportation, making it possible to send news across oceans by steam-powered ships. Equally important, steam-driven printing presses caused greater numbers of books, pamphlets, and journals to be printed more quickly and affordably than ever before. Newspapers and magazines consequently grew in number and circulation, especially as people came to depend on them for news, information, and entertainment.



Massachusetts Sun, July 1774

McRel
<http://www.mcrel.org/>
United States History Era 10

Standard 31: Understands economic, social, and cultural developments in the contemporary United States
Level III (Grades 6-8)

- Understands various influences on American culture (e.g., the desegregation of education and its role in the creation of private white academies; the influence of the media on contemporary American culture; how ethnic art, food, music, and clothing are incorporated into mainstream culture and society)
 - Knows how the media influences contemporary American culture



The first regular newspaper in the Thirteen Colonies appeared in 1704. The government had to approve publication. By the time of the American Revolution in 1775, there were daily newspapers in most cities and weeklies in smaller towns. Debate on issues that criticized the government was normally shared in these newspapers. After the Constitution of 1787 was in place and political parties were in the process of formation, American newspapers began to express the views of one political party or another.

In 1791, the first ten amendments to the United States Constitution were ratified. Dissemination of the news and the rights of journalists were now protected by the first Amendment.

Amendment I

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.

Note: The text is a transcription of the first ten amendments to the Constitution in their original form. These amendments were ratified December 15, 1791, and form what is known as the "Bill of Rights."

<http://www.archives.gov/>

This was interpreted to mean that dissemination of the news could not be censored by the government.¹

With the establishment of the United

States and legal guarantees of freedom of the press, newspapers became a more popular form of news dissemination. By 1850, there were about 400 daily newspapers distributed in the United States. In 1880 there were about 850 dailies and in 1900, more than 1,950.²



telegraph

While the steam engine increased the speed of news dissemination, Samuel Morse's invention increased it even more. In 1832 Samuel F.B. Morse invented the telegraph. To send messages using the machine, Morse invented what is now known as Morse Code, a system of dots and dashes that represented the alphabet.³ Soon wires crisscrossed the United States and telegraph cables were laid beneath the Atlantic Ocean. News could now be disseminated quickly and across long distances. News could even be published in newspapers on the day it happened.

Getting news to people even faster was accomplished with the use of the telephone. Invented in 1876 by Alexander Graham Bell the telephone provided way for the voice to be transported over electrical currents carried by wires. By 1880 about 30,000 telephones were in operation in the United States. Some people consider the invention of the telephone as the first electronic revolution in news dissemination. Now a journalist could call in his or her story for even more immediate publication.



telephone

¹ Constitution Day is celebrated on September 17. Go to <http://www.loc.gov/law/help/constitution-day.php> for more information.

² "newspaper." *Compton's by Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica Online School Edition.* Encyclopædia Britannica, 2010. Web. 12 Sept. 2010 <<http://school.eb.com/comptons/article-205407>>.

³ see a copy of Morse Code and hear a translation, go to <http://www.glassgiant.com/geek/morse/>



For the past 90 years or so, people have been able to *hear* the news over the radio. When Lee De Forest patented a vacuum tube in 1906, music or voice could be encoded--radio, as it is known today, became possible. By 1920 radio receivers began to appear in homes across America and the news could be disseminated to more people, with more speed, and in a new way.

In the time before television was popular, people *saw* the news every week in their neighborhood movie theaters. Newsreels were shown before every movie. Universal Newsreel, produced from 1929 to 1967, was released twice a week. Each issue contained six or seven short stories, usually one to two minutes in length, covering world events, politics, sports, fashion, and whatever else might entertain the movie audience.⁴ Newsreels became a primary source of disseminating the news visually.



film reel and film projector



television

Around the same time, news was also broadcast via television. Television was first introduced to the public at the 1939 World's Fair. On July 1, 1941, the Federal Communications Commission (the government agency that regulates television) allowed 18 television stations to begin broadcasting. Two of them are ready to go that day in New York City-- NBC and CBS. When television became popular in the late 1940s, the news could be heard *and* seen through one device in people's homes. Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) began airing programs in 1969. "PBS NewsHour" (formally called "The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer")

marked the start of a daily news show on PBS in 1975.

While people still read the news in newspapers, and heard the news on their radios, over the next few decades, more and more people were receiving their news through television. Satellite-cable or cable TV began in 1975. Within the next decade, the number of cable TV stations increased. People could now watch specific types of news on specific channels. CNN (Cable News Network) was the first cable channel to broadcast national and international news 24-hours a day in 1980. ESPN (Entertainment and Sports Programming Network) began disseminating sports news in 1979; MTV (Music Television) began disseminating music news in 1981; and The Weather Channel began disseminating the news in weather in 1982. By the middle of the 1980's, people had many ways to get their news and get it quickly.

Computers were introduced at the same time cable television was growing in popularity. Apple and IBM began selling personal computers in the early 1980's. At first, computers were mostly used for gaming and data processing. But then...a British computer scientist named Timothy Berners-Lee introduced the World Wide Web to help physicists communicate more effectively around the world. Within a few years the Internet was open to the entire world. In 1993, when Internet service providers were first allowed to sell Internet connections to individuals, usage of the Web grew very fast.

Zoom forward to today. In addition to newspapers, radio, and television, news is disseminated through a wide variety of websites, blogs, e-mail, and social networking sites on the internet. People can access the internet

⁴ to see a newsreel, go to http://www.archive.org/details/universal_newsreels



from computers *and* their cell phones. Long gone are the days when news traveled by a messenger walking information from place to place. Long gone are the days of the telegraph and Morse Code. In 2010, news is disseminated instantaneously.

How will the news be disseminated in the future? In the *Time Magazine* article “MANNERS & MORALS: Kiddies in the Old Corral” from November 27, 1950, journalist Fred Allen predicted that television “threatened to change Americans into creatures with eyeballs as big as cantaloupes and no brain at all.”⁵ On September 13, 2010, *The Washington Post media critic*, Howard Kurtz predicted, “With news and gossip leaping off every laptop screen, smartphone and Facebook page, the common wisdom these days is that traditional news outlets are doomed... Just as the advent of television didn't kill radio, peaceful co-existence may be possible.”⁶

Howard Kurtz also noted, “A new Pew Research Center study says that on a given day, Americans spend 57 minutes a day getting the news from television, newspapers or radio, just as they did in 2000. But they spend an additional 13 minutes each day consuming news on the Web--a figure that doesn't even include stories viewed on cell phones.”⁷ News dissemination is big business. Because of mergers and corporate failures there are now fewer daily newspapers in publication--in 1960 New York City supported eight major dailies, by 1980 there were only four.⁸ Whatever the future of news dissemination may hold, there has been, is, and may continue to be, a change in journalism.

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<http://www.mcrel.org/>

Civics

Standard 08: Understands the central ideas of American constitutional government and how this form of government has shaped the character of American society

Level III (Grades 6-8)

- Understands how specific provisions of the United States Constitution (including the Bill of Rights) limit provisions of government in order to protect the rights of individuals (e.g., habeas corpus; trial by jury; ex post facto; freedom of religion, speech, press, and assembly; equal protection of the law; due process of law; right to counsel)

Knowledge/skill statement 5

- Understands that specific provisions of the United States Constitution, such as freedom of speech, limits the power of the government to protect the rights of individuals

Knowledge/skill statement 6

- Understands that specific provisions of the United States Constitution, such as freedom of the press, limits the power of the government to protect the rights of individuals

⁵ "MANNERS & MORALS: Kiddies in the Old Corral - TIME." *TIME.com*. Time Inc. Web. 14 Sept. 2010.

<<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,813849,00.html>>

⁶ Kurtz, Howard. "Multitasking through the News." *Blog Directory (washingtonpost.com)*. The Washington Post, 13 Sept. 2010. Web. 14 Sept. 2010 <http://voices.washingtonpost.com/howard_kurtz/2010/09/multitasking_through_the_news.html>

⁷ Kurtz, Howard.

⁸ "newspaper." *Compton's by Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica Online School Edition*. Encyclopædia Britannica, 2010. Web. 12 Sept. 2010 <<http://school.eb.com/comptons/article-205407>>.



Lesson Plan

To better facilitate this lesson, distribute the background essay above before you start this unit. That way, students will have read the content and be prepared for the activities below.

Day 1

Opening Activity (5-10 minutes)

- Ask students to answer the following questions:
 - What type of information is “news”? (for example--sports, world events, weather, crime)
 - How you find out the latest news?
- Chart and discuss student answers.

Guided Practice

- Instruct students to read the background essay.
- Direct students to **trace** the developments in news dissemination by highlighting passages in the essay.

Group Activity

- In groups of 4, students evaluate the most significant developments in the history of news dissemination and complete a consensus circle that lists the 5 most significant events.
 - In his/her section of the outer ring of the consensus circle, each member of the group lists the most important developments in news dissemination in order from most to least important.
 - Each member of the group shares his/her list out loud with group.
 - The group comes to consensus and lists the 5 most significant developments in the history of news dissemination in the center circle.

Closing Activity

- Ask reporters from each group to share the list significant developments the group came to consensus on with the entire class.
- Ask each reporter to justify the group’s choice of most significant development.

Day 2

Opening Activity (5 minutes)

- Ask students to think about their top 5 significant developments in news dissemination and list the name of a thing or symbol they could draw to represent each of the developments.

Individual Practice

- Direct students to use the 5 events from their consensus circle to create an illustrated timeline.
- Each events on the timeline must be labeled and include an illustration and caption that **explains** the historical significance of the development in news dissemination.

Connection to Practice

- Watch the video.
- Ask students to individually to **predict** the development in news dissemination over the next 5 years



- Direct students to add their prediction to the timeline.
 - Direct students to illustrate and label their prediction.
 - In the illustration's caption, students must **explain** the thinking behind their prediction.

Closing Activity

- Ask students to share their predictions and explanations with the class.

Extension Activity

- Instruct students to conduct research on the history of news dissemination in the United States between 1700-2010 CE. Students should **evaluate** the information and rank the top 5 developments in news dissemination and create an electronic photo essay using PhotoStory or PowerPoint that **summarizes** major developments, **explains** the significance of each, and **predicts** developments over the next 5 years.



Partnership for 21st Century Skills

<http://www.p21.org/>

Civic Literacy

- Participating effectively in civic life through knowing how to stay informed and understanding governmental processes

Financial, Economic, Business and Entrepreneurial Literacy

- Understanding the role of the economy in society

Creativity and Innovation

Work Creatively With Others

- Be open and responsive to new and diverse perspectives; incorporate group input and feedback into the work

Communication and Collaboration

Collaborate With Others

- Exercise flexibility and willingness to be helpful in making necessary compromises to accomplish a common goal



Assesment

Consensus Circle

- listed items are relevant to the topic and accurate
- Individual participation in the group

Timeline

- Number of developments on timeline
- Accuracy of development chosen
- Appropriate placement of development on the timeline
- Appropriateness of illustration
- Accuracy of caption
- Relevance of prediction



Resources

- "About--Corporate Facts, PBS: Innovation and Transformation to Benefit the American Public." Aaronson, Stephanie, and Jan McNamara. *PBS.org*. 4 Aug. 2010. Web. 19 Sept. 2010. <http://www.pbs.org/aboutpbs/aboutpbs_corp.html>
- "Bill of Rights." *National Archives and Records Administration*. Web. 12 Sept. 2010. <<http://www.archives.gov>>.
- "communication." *Compton's by Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica Online School Edition*. Encyclopædia Britannica, 2010. Web. 12 Sept. 2010 <<http://school.eb.com/comptons/article-198984>>.
- "Constitution Day and Citizenship Day " Law Library of Congress." *Library of Congress*. 30 July 2010. Web. 19 Sept. 2010. <<http://www.loc.gov/law/help/constitution-day.php>>
- "History of Television - Archive Collection - TIME." *TIME.com*. Time Inc. Web. 14 Sept. 2010. <http://www.time.com/time/archive/collections/0,21428,c_television_history,00.shtml>
- "International Morse Code." *Morse Code and Phonetic Alphabets*. Web. 14 Sept. 2010. <<http://morsecode.scphillips.com/morse.html> >.
- Kurtz, Howard. "Multitasking through the News." *Blog Directory (washingtonpost.com)*. The Washington Post, 13 Sept. 2010. Web. 14 Sept. 2010 <http://voices.washingtonpost.com/howard-kurtz/2010/09/multitasking_through_the_news.html>
- "MANNERS & MORALS: Kiddies in the Old Corral - TIME." *TIME.com*. Time Inc. Web. 14 Sept. 2010. <<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,813849,00.html>>
- "Morse Code Translator." *GlassGiant*. Web. 14 Sept. 2010. <<http://www.glassgiant.com/geek/morse/>>
- "New Media, Old Media: HOW BLOGS AND SOCIAL MEDIA AGENDAS RELATE AND DIFFER FROM THE TRADITIONAL PRESS." *Project for Excellence in Journalism (PEJ) | Understanding*



News in the Information Age. 23 May 2010. Web. 19 Sept. 2010.
<http://www.journalism.org/analysis_report/new_media_old_media>

- "newspaper." *Compton's by Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica Online School Edition*. Encyclopædia Britannica, 2010. Web. 12 Sept. 2010 <<http://school.eb.com/comptons/article-205407>>.
- "Newsreels Movies U.S. and World History." *The Entertainment Magazine*. News in Brief. Web. 14 Sept. 2010 <<http://emol.org/movies/newsreels/index.html>>
- Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism, <http://www.journalism.org/>
- "Stories of The Century." *Newseum*. Newseum. Web. 14 Sept. 2010.
<<http://www.newseum.org/century/#>>
- *The Washington Post*, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/>
- "Universal Newsreels : Free Movies : Download & Streaming : Internet Archive." *Internet Archive: Digital Library of Free Books, Movies, Music & Wayback Machine*. Internet Archive. Web. 14 Sept. 2010. <http://www.archive.org/details/universal_newsreels>
- *USA Today*, <http://www.usatoday.com/>

Images

- film projector <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fumeo9250.jpg>
- front page of 1774 newspaper
http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/12/Massachusetts_Spy_3a10607u.png
- printing press
http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/39/Lord_Stanhopes_Printing_Press.jpg
- quipu <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/cc/Quipu.png>
- steam engine http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Newcomen_steam_engine.jpg
- talking drum <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/26/TalkingDrum.jpg>
- telegraph http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Morse_Telegraph_1837.jpg
- telephone http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Telefon_VHM_ubt.jpeg
- television http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:TV_Antik_copy.jpg



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- USA Today, iPad app <http://crenk.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/usa-today-ipad-app.jpg>
- TBD Logo
http://2.bp.blogspot.com/_nDg5BBFO4Uw/TIe9ExINE9I/AAAAAAAAANA/ltudzPPim8/s1600/tbd_1ogo080210.jpg
- NY Times Logo
http://1.bp.blogspot.com/_MCKytfy9INQ/SZpAU1gBtMI/AAAAAAAAAEQ/L6lVe3UAX00/s200/nytimes_logo.gif

Activity Designer:

Beth Shevitz is a seventh grade world studies teacher in Montgomery County, Maryland. She spends much of her free time reading the news in print.

Handouts

- Background Essay
- Consensus Circle Graphic Organizer
- Timeline Template

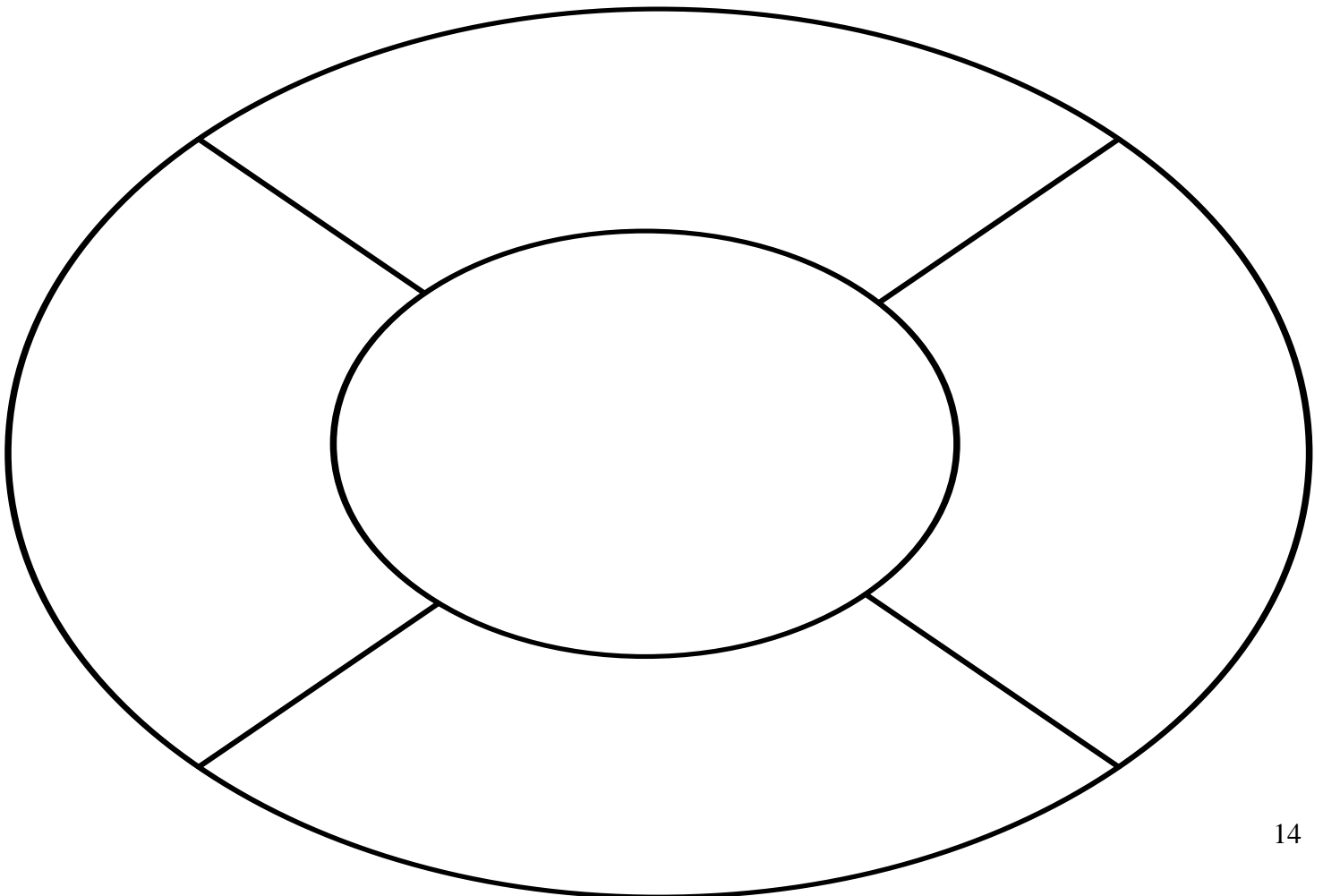


Consensus Circle

What are the most significant developments in the history of news dissemination?

Directions:

- *Individually*, list the most significant developments in the history of news dissemination from the most significant to the least significant *in the outer ring of the circle*.
- *As a group*, come to consensus on the 5 most significant developments in the history of news dissemination. List these from most significant to the least significant *in the center circle*.





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Timeline Template

The Most Significant Developments in News Dissemination Timeline

Directions:

- Use the 5 developments from the center of your consensus circle to construct this timeline.
- Label each development. Draw a picture or symbol with each development.
- Include your prediction of how the news will be disseminated 5 years from now.

