

**the Gov**

“Impact of the Deepwater Horizon Spill”  
Social Studies & Language Arts  
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



**the Gov**



Segment 2:  
“Impact of the Deepwater Horizon Spill”  
Social Studies and Language Arts Curriculum

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the Gov



Fall, 2010

Dear Educator,

*the.News* online video reports for *the.Sci* and *the.Gov* provide middle and high school students with a valuable exercise in science, social studies and language arts with this **9:08** segment on “The Aftermath of the Gulf Coast Oil Spill” at [www.pbs.org/newshour/thenews/thegov](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/thenews/thegov) and also at [www.pbs.org/newshour/thenews/thesci](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/thenews/thesci). Correspondent, Antonio Neves investigates the economic, biological, and social implications of this major crisis that occurred on Earth Day – April 20, 2010. Lessons for social studies, language arts and also science 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](http://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. Also, we have added a journalism blog about his report, by Antonio, which can be found within the SS/LA lesson plan as well as on the district website. 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 Nebraska.
- #2. .civil penalty or fine
- #3. oysters and people

Sincerely,

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# The Aftermath of the Gulf Coast Oil Spill

This lesson was designed to support *the.News* video "Impact of the Deepwater Horizon Spill"  
The video can be found online at [www.pbs.org/newshour/thenews/thegov](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/thenews/thegov)

## Omaha Public Schools Standards

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

### Grades 12

### Government

**Standard 3. Identify and describe the distributions of power at the local, state, and federal levels including the role of being an active citizen.**

2. Analyze and apply the distribution of powers that exist under a federal system of government:

State government (with an emphasis on Nebraska)

- Branches of government, Unicameral vs. bicameral, and Powers and responsibilities; Local government.

**Conceptual Lens:** Conflict/Cooperation

**Enduring Understanding:** Geographical and biological conflicts caused by human beings challenge governments to provide solutions

## Grade Level: 7-12

## Social Studies; Civics; Economics; Language Arts

### Key

### Concepts:

Students will **analyze** the impact that the Deepwater Horizon explosion and the resulting oil spill have

on U.S. citizens, the BP oil company, the U.S. government, and the Gulf Coast environment. Students will **summarize** their findings and **describe** whether the government has effectively fulfilled its responsibilities to the U.S. citizens. They will then **evaluate** the government's effectiveness in responding to the oil spill. As a result, they will write an Op-Ed piece in which they express their opinions about the government's effectiveness.



### Key Objectives:

Students will:

- **Analyze** the impact that the Deepwater Horizon explosion and the resulting oil spill have on U.S. citizens, the BP oil company, the U.S. government, and the Gulf Coast environment.
- **Summarize** their findings.
- **Describe** whether the government has fulfilled its responsibilities to the U.S. citizens.
- **Evaluate** the government's effectiveness in responding to the oil spill.



**Key Vocabulary:**

- *Acoustic trigger*: a football-sized remote control that uses sound waves to communicate with the valve on the seabed floor and close it  
<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704423504575212031417936798.html>
- *Blog*: a journal written on-line and accessible to users of the internet  
<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/blog>
- *Blowout*: an uncontrollable escape of oil, gas, or water from a well  
<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704423504575212031417936798.html>
- *Blowout preventer*: a main switch on oil rigs that is used for cutting off the flow of oil by closing a valve located on the ocean floor  
<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704423504575212031417936798.html>
- *Containment dome*: a steel box that would “contain” the oil and siphon it off elsewhere while attempting to prevent ice from forming  
<http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/05/25/us/20100525-topkill-diagram.html?ref=us>
- *“Dead man” switch*: a backup switch on oil rigs that is supposed to close the valve if it senses a catastrophic failure aboard the rig  
<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704423504575212031417936798.html>
- *Junk shot*: attempting to stem the flow of oil by pushing “junk” (i.e. golf balls and heavy plastic) into the pipelines to clog the lines and not allow oil to pass through (\*\*  
<http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/05/25/us/20100525-topkill-diagram.html?ref=us>

**Omaha Public Schools Standards**

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

**Grades 7-12**

**Writing**

**Standard 5. Students will write for a variety of purposes and audiences in multiple genres.**

1. Write in a variety of genres, considering purpose (e.g., inform, entertain, persuade, instruct)

**Standard 9. Students will research, summarize, and communicate information in a variety of media and formats (textual, visual, and digital)**

5. While reading, listening, and viewing, evaluate the message for bias, Commercialism and hidden agendas (e.g., produce placement, television ad, radio ad, movie, body image, sexism)

6. Gather and share information and opinions as a result of communication with others (e.g., video/audio chat, interview, pod cast, multimedia presentations)



- *National Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA)*: a legal process to determine the type and amount of restoration needed to compensate the public for harm to natural resources and their human uses as a result of the spill (NOAA.gov)
- *NOAA*: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA.gov)
- *Op-Ed*: a newspaper page devoted to signed articles by commentators, essayists, humorists, etc., of varying viewpoints (dictionary.com)
- *Riser*: the 5,000-foot pipe that connects the well at the ocean floor to the drilling platform on the surface of the ocean *Static kill*: a similar process to the top kill; pump mud through a valve on the blowout preventer and into the existing well's metal casing pipe  
<http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/05/25/us/20100525-topkill-diagram.html?ref=us>
- *Top kill*: attempting to stem the flow of oil by pushing heavy drilling mud into the pipelines  
<http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/05/25/us/20100525-topkill-diagram.html?ref=us>

**Time Frame: 3-5 class periods  
plus research time (as needed)**

**Materials:**

- *the.News* video:  
<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/thenews/>
- Handout #1: Government Response to the Oil Spill
- Computers with internet access
- [www.restorethegulf.gov](http://www.restorethegulf.gov)
- Printer friendly version of U.S. Constitution:  
[http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/print\\_friendly.html?page=constitution\\_transcript\\_content.html&title=The%20Constitution%20of%20the%20United%20States%3A%20A%20Transcription](http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/print_friendly.html?page=constitution_transcript_content.html&title=The%20Constitution%20of%20the%20United%20States%3A%20A%20Transcription)
- Paper, pencils, and pens
- Copies of the following Op-Ed pieces by Thomas Friedman  
[http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/19/opinion/19friedman.html?ref=gulf\\_of\\_mexico\\_2010](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/19/opinion/19friedman.html?ref=gulf_of_mexico_2010)  
and Maureen Dowd  
[http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/30/opinion/30dowd.html?ref=gulf\\_of\\_mexico\\_2010](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/30/opinion/30dowd.html?ref=gulf_of_mexico_2010)
- Argumentative writing help: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/724/01/>

**Lesson Topics:**

- Responsibility of government
- Op-Ed
- Environmental responsibility
- Multiple perspectives
- Civics
- Oil Spill Gulf of Mexico
- Earth Day 2010



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**Level III (Grades 6-8)**

**Writing**

**Standard 2. Uses the stylistic and rhetorical aspects of writing**

2. Uses paragraph form in writing (e.g., arranges sentences in sequential order, uses supporting and follow-up sentences, establishes coherence within and among paragraphs)

3. Uses a variety of sentence structures to expand and embed ideas (e.g., simple, compound, and complex sentences; parallel structure, such as similar grammatical forms or juxtaposed items)

**Background:**

In an ironic twist, an explosion on the drilling rig Deepwater Horizon coincided with the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Earth Day in the United States. The explosion happened just two days prior to the celebration for Earth Day, though the environmental repercussions of the explosion and the resulting oil leak are still being felt today.

On April 20, 2010, an explosion occurred forty miles off the coast of Venice, LA in the Gulf of Mexico, critically injuring three rig workers and presumably killing eleven others. The fire burned for over twenty-four hours before fire fighters were

eventually able to control the fire. The Deepwater Horizon, owned by Swiss company Transocean and contracted by oil company British Petroleum (BP), eventually sank five thousand feet to the ocean floor. The explosion was supposedly caused by a blowout, in which pockets of unstable hydrocarbons shot up the pipes of the rig, causing the blast. Though the Deepwater Horizon was equipped with a **blowout preventer** and a “**dead man**” **switch**, both malfunctioned. Because the Deepwater Horizon was not outfitted with a third preventative valve – the inexpensive **acoustic trigger** – and the acoustic trigger is not mandated by the U.S. government, this has caused controversy over whether the massive oil spill that resulted from this explosion could have been prevented in the first place.



Though it was initially believed that there was no oil leaking from the well below the rig, on April 24, 2010 the Coast Guard found two leaks in the **riser** that was separated from the rig in the explosion and was reported to be leaking 1,000 gallons of oil per day. By April 26, emergency responders for the Coast Guard, **NOAA**, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service had used seven



skimming boats and ten offshore response vessels to collect 1,152 barrels (48,384 gallons) of oily water from the spill site. Meanwhile, BP had to determine where the leaks were and how to stop them.

In its desire to stop the oil leak and stem the public outcry against the company, BP made several attempts to stop the massive amounts of oil that were flowing into the Gulf of Mexico. On May 7, 2010, BP tried to fit a **containment dome** over the well and siphon the oil to a container ship, but the mission was aborted once a dangerous mix of ice and oil formed. BP then tried to do **junk shot** and **top kill** procedures simultaneously, but the flow of oil was too strong and both tactics failed to plug the leak. On May 31, 2010, a cap was placed on the damaged blowout preventer but gases and oil continued to billow out from the vents in the cap. A tighter cap was placed over the blowout preventer and by July 12, 2010, BP was able to collect and process a lot of the oil that was escaping. On August 3, 2010, BP engineers successfully pumped mud through the lines in a **static kill** procedure that was very similar to the top kill procedure that had failed on July 12. On September 21, 2010, the well was officially declared dead after cement was poured into the lines to prevent any oil and gas from coming up past the well. Overall, the damaged well released over 172 million barrels of oil into the Gulf of Mexico.

Though they both attempted to deal with the oil leak and its aftermath, BP and the U.S. government received negative criticism about how they handled this environmental disaster. BP chief executive Tony Hayward came under fire for having a slow response time in stopping the leak and for downgrading the severity of the spill. He stated that the gulf “is a very big ocean” and “the environmental impact of this disaster is likely to have been very, very modest” (See resources: Mouwad & Krauss). Under Hayward’s leadership, BP refused to use widely respected scientific

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**Level III (Grades 6-8)**

**Writing**

**Standard 4. Gathers and uses information for research purposes.**

2. Uses a variety of resource materials to gather information for research topics (e.g., magazines, newspapers, dictionaries, schedules, journals, surveys, globes, atlases, almanacs, websites, databases, podcasts)

**Level IV (Grades 9-12)**

**Writing**

**Standard 2. Uses the stylistic and rhetorical aspects of writing.**

1. Uses precise and descriptive language that clarifies and enhances ideas and supports different purposes (e.g., to stimulate the imagination of the reader, to translate concepts into simpler or more easily understood terms, to achieve a specific tone, to explain concepts in literature)

2. Uses paragraph form in writing (e.g., arranges paragraphs into a logical progression, uses clincher or closing sentences)

5. Uses a variety of techniques to provide supporting detail (e.g., analogies; anecdotes; restatements; paraphrases; examples; comparisons; visual aids, such as tables, graphs, and pictures)

6. Organizes ideas to achieve cohesion in writing

7. Conveys individual voice, tone, and point of view in writing.



measures to test how much oil was released. BP only agreed to set up a live feed camera showing the damaged well when Congress pressured them to do so. In addition, BP started their \$20 billion compensation fund for victims of the disaster only after both Congress and the Obama administration urged them to do so. At the insistence of the government and the public, Robert Dudley replaced Hayward as chief executive of BP in July.

Meanwhile, President Obama was criticized for taking too much time to respond to the disaster; when he did respond, his critics declared that he was too removed at a time when U.S. citizens wished to see him become more pro-active with the big oil companies and to encourage Congress to create energy alternatives to oil. The President initiated a blue-ribbon commission of non-governmental employees to investigate the oil spill and its aftermath. In addition, the U.S. government created an information-specific website ([restorethegulf.gov](http://restorethegulf.gov)) that detailed the ways in which the government was helping to fix the problems in the Gulf of Mexico. NOAA initiated its **National Resource Damage Assessment** (NRDA) response process, which follows three steps: preliminary assessment, injury assessment and restoration planning, and restoration implementation. President Obama placed a moratorium on issuing permits to start deep-water drilling in the coast that was only lifted after Congress passed a bill on September 30, 2010 that improved safety standards on drilling. Within the regulations bill, safety measures were implemented that aim at preventing a blowout, increasing oversight of safety mechanisms, and guaranteed safety procedures for workers in a similar emergency happens again. The U.S. Coast Guard and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement are currently holding hearings to discover more information about who was responsible for the safety and mechanical lapses. Over 300 lawsuits have been filed against BP, but there will be more when a verdict is passed on whether BP was negligent with their safety standards. Currently, there are 104 miles of coastline (primarily in Louisiana) that are affected by moderate to heavy oil impacts, and 498 miles of coastline (in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida) that are affected by light to trace oil impacts. The ecological damage has killed animals, caused people to lose their jobs, and seriously affected the fishing industry on the Gulf Coast.



*“There has been a psychological impact as well. We who live in hurricane country are the hardiest people in America. We know how to recover from catastrophe, through hard work, being resourceful, working together as community, and not waiting for government assistance. This oil spill is different and worse than a hurricane, due to the uncertainty of what the future effects will be.”*

John Supan, Ph.D.  
Associate Research Professor  
Director-Sea Grant Bivalve Hatchery  
Louisiana State University



### the.Blog: Gulf Coast Travels

The Gulf Coast region of the United States is known for its delicious and fresh seafood. Shrimp, crawfish, crab and all types of fish can be found its waters. And of course, you can't forget oysters. But as I reported my story on the lasting effects of April's devastating Deepwater Horizon oil spill in Louisiana, I found that getting my hands on some oysters would prove challenging.

One of my first interviews was with Al Sunseri, the General Manager of P & J Oyster Co. Since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, this New Orleans family owned business has supplied oysters to restaurants in Louisiana and all across the country. When I arrived at their French Quarter-based facility I found Al and his brother Sal, but barely any oysters. Sunseri explained that since the four-point-nine million barrels of oil spilled into the Gulf, oysters are in short supply. P & J's processing plant which once bustled with 21 employees and plenty of oysters was now void of business. Each day Al and his brother Sal man the phones with the hopes of a shipment of oysters and work to keep customers.



Many New Orleans restaurants have resorted to removing oysters from their menus or obtaining them from different regions of the United States like the Pacific Northwest. For a small business like Lil' Dizzy's Café this can prove challenging. Lil' Dizzy's Café is in the Treme area of New Orleans and specializes in Creole soul food like red beans and rice, stuffed peppers, jambalaya and crawfish bisque. Owner Wayne Baquet says business has been off by 20 percent and he had to remove oysters from his menu. Since the oil spill, seafood and produce prices have skyrocketed which makes it challenging for a small business like Lil Dizzy's Café to survive.

One of the biggest challenges the Gulf Coast region faces after the oil spill is perception. The big question - is Gulf Coast seafood safe to eat? To ensure safety, Gulf Coast seafood is regularly tested for contamination. On my last day of reporting I took a boat deep into the Louisiana Bayou to an area called Bayou DuLarge. Here there were a few commercial boats out in search of crab, shrimp and oysters. Back on land at Motivati's oyster processing plant I got to taste what had eluded me so far, a fresh oyster.

- written by Antonio Neves, *the.News*, correspondent



**Note to Teachers:** Teachers and students wishing to find this blog on their LMS (school website) should check there or use the content from this lesson plan.



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**Level IV (Grades 9-12)**

**Writing**

**Standard 4. Gathers and uses information for research purposes.**

2. Uses a variety of print and electronic sources to gather information for research topics (e.g., news sources such as magazines, radio, television, and newspapers; government publications and microfiche; library databases; field studies; speeches; technical documents; periodicals; Internet sources, such as web sites, podcasts, blogs, and electronic bulletin boards)

5. Synthesizes information from multiple research studies to draw conclusions that go beyond those found in any of the individual studies

**LESSON PLAN**

1. The students should copy down the following questions:
  - a. What are the problems that the government, the U.S. citizens, and the oil companies have to fix?
  - b. What has the government done to fix this problem?
  - c. What has BP done to fix this problem?

Once they have copied these questions, have them read the background information included in this lesson plan and watch *the.News* video about the Gulf Coast oil spill. The students should take notes on the

video and the background sheet by answering these questions in depth. After they have finished answering the questions, hold a class discussion in which students can use their answers to **evaluate** whether the government and the other parties involved were initially successful in treating this environmental disaster.

2. Give each student a copy of handout #1 (“Government Response to the Oil Spill”). Have the students research the information that is listed on the handout. They should use the following resource for their research:

- a. [www.restorethegulf.gov](http://www.restorethegulf.gov)





3. After the students have finished filling out handout #1, have each student look at a copy of the U.S. Constitution (an online version can be found at: [http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/print\\_friendly.html?page=constitution\\_transcript\\_content.html&title=The%20Constitution%20of%20the%20United%20States%3A%20A%20Transcription](http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/print_friendly.html?page=constitution_transcript_content.html&title=The%20Constitution%20of%20the%20United%20States%3A%20A%20Transcription)) In small groups, they should **analyze** the responsibilities the government has towards its citizens. The following sections of the Constitution should be used:
  - a. Article 1, Sections 8-10 (powers and limitations of Congress)
  - b. Article 2, Section 3 (powers and limitations of the President)

4. Give each student copies of the *New York Times* Op-Ed pieces by Thomas Friedman and Maureen Dowd. Have students identify the format of argumentation that the two authors use. Then have the students **summarize** what the authors' arguments and support are.
5. The students should now write their own argumentative Op-Ed pieces in which they answer the following question:

*Has the government been effective in fulfilling its responsibilities to the U.S. citizens during the Gulf Coast oil spill? Why or why not? In a well-developed Op-Ed argumentative essay, support your argument with details.*

*Be sure to analyze the information that you have researched and include data and specific quotes from the Constitution to support your response.*

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**Level III (Grades 6-8)**

**Civics**

**Standard 1. Understands ideas about civic life, politics, and government**

4. Understands major ideas about why government is necessary (e.g., people's lives, liberty, and property would be insecure without government; individuals by themselves cannot do many of the things they can do collectively such as create a highway system, provide armed forces for the security of the nation, or make and enforce laws)

5. Understands competing ideas about the purposes government should serve (e.g., whether government should protect individual rights, promote the common good, provide economic security, mold the character of citizens, promote a particular religion)

**Level IV (Grades 9-12)**

**Civics**

**Standard 1. Understands ideas about civic life, politics, and government**

8. Understands how the purposes served by a government affect relationships between the individual and government and between government and society as a whole (e.g., the purpose of promoting a religious vision of what society should be like may require a government to restrict individual thought and actions, and place strict controls on the whole of the society)



**Notes to Teacher:** Every page within this site contains data that the students can use to answer their responses. If you have a lower-level or younger class, you may want to make the search more focused by narrowing the number of pages that the students can view. There are facts listed on concentrated sheets located on the following site:

<http://www.restorethegulf.gov/response/education-resources/fact-sheets>

Argumentative writing is often a requirement in high school English curriculums. If your students have not covered argumentative writing, the OWL resource is especially helpful for reviewing what they should know about argumentation: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/724/01/> .



**Extension Assignment:**

Students should create an Op-Ed piece that they can then use to hold a class debate about whether the government was effective in their response or not. For students who need more of a challenge, the teacher can assign a position to them that is opposite of what they used for their Op-Ed pieces, or they can assign a position that represents another involved party in the oil spill (i.e. BP, the other oil companies affected by the temporary ban on deep-water drilling, etc.).

**Assessment:**

The Op-Ed essay should be evaluated according to the following rubric:



**Argumentative Essay Rubric: Gulf Coast Oil Spill Op-Ed**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**IDEAS & DEVELOPMENT**

- 6** The paper is clear, focused, and insightful. Relevant examples and details, including persuasive appeals, effectively support the main idea.
- 5** The paper generally maintains focus on the topic. Details appropriately support the main idea.
- 4** The paper has a recognizable topic, although development and support for the main idea may be uneven or inconsistent.
- 3** The paper lacks a clear topic. Support for the main idea is inadequate.
- 1** The paper lacks ideas, details, and purpose.

**WORD CHOICE (Diction)**

- 6** Words effectively convey the intended meaning in a specific and engaging way.
- 5** Words convey the intended meaning in a clear and appropriate way.
- 4** Words generally convey the intended meaning, but may lack energy and specificity.
- 3** Word choice is limited and may not convey the intended meaning.
- 1** Word choice does not convey the intended meaning.

**VOICE**

- 6** The writer’s voice is individual and engaging, demonstrating awareness of and respect for the audience and the purpose.
- 5** The writer’s voice is appropriate to the purpose and engages the audience.
- 4** The writer’s voice is generally clear but may not be fully engaged with the audience or purpose.
- 3** The writer’s voice is indifferent and unengaged with the audience and purpose.
- 1** The writer’s voice is not evident.

**ORGANIZATION**

- 6** The organization enhances the main idea. The order, structure, and presentation of information effectively move the reader through the text.
- 5** The organizational structure supports the main idea and moves the reader through the text.
- 4** The paper has an organizational structure that helps move the reader through the text, although the structure may be uneven or inconsistent.
- 3** The paper lacks clear organizational structure. Ideas, details, or events are loosely strung together.
- 1** The paper has no discernible organization.

**SENTENCE FLUENCY (Syntax)**

- 6** The writing has an effective rhythm. Sentences are well developed, with structural variety, including parallel structure, that supports the purpose.
- 5** The writing has appropriate sentence variety and structural clarity.
- 4** The writing is generally clear, but sentences may be mechanical or lack variety.
- 3** The writing demonstrates limited understanding of sentence structure.
- 1** The writing lacks appropriate sentence structure.

**CONVENTIONS**

- 6** The writer uses conventions effectively to support meaning.
- 5** The writer uses conventions with few or no errors that distract or interfere with meaning.
- 4** The writer generally uses conventions appropriately, although at times errors are distracting and may interfere with meaning.
- 3** The writer consistently makes errors in conventions that distract the reader and interfere with meaning.
- 1** The writer lacks control of conventions.

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_/40 points

Comments:



### the.Blog Extension Activities:

1. Identify to students what characteristics are included in a blog post:

- written in journal form
- uses informal language
- is written chronologically
- reflects the personality of the author

Have each student identify the characteristics of Antonio Neves' blog, plus the purpose that he is trying to convey.

2. Once the students have identified the characteristics of this blog, have students choose a person mentioned in the blog (Al and Sal Sunseri; Wayne Baquet) and write three entries for a blog that is written from their perspective. In the blog, the students should make sure that the speaker's voice is evident and that it clearly mentions the personal reaction that the speaker is feeling about the Gulf Coast oil spill.

### Resources:

- *New York Times* article: "Search Continues After Oil Rig Blast," Campbell Robertson, [http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/22/us/22rig.html?\\_r=1&scp=1&sq=oil+rig+explosion&st=nyt](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/22/us/22rig.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=oil+rig+explosion&st=nyt)
- *New York Times* article: "Oil Leaking Underwater From Well in Rig Blast," Campbell Robertson, [http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/25/us/25rig.html?ref=gulf\\_of\\_mexico\\_2010](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/25/us/25rig.html?ref=gulf_of_mexico_2010)
- *New York Times* article: "Methods That Have Been Tried to Stop the Leaking Oil," <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/05/25/us/20100525-topkill-diagram.html?ref=us>
- *New York Times* article: "Another Torrent BP Works to Stem: Its C.E.O.," Jad Mouwad and Clifford Krauss, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/04/us/04image.html?scp=29&sq=&st=nyt>
- *New York Times* article, "Now, to Clean Up BP," Julia Werdigier and Jad Mouwad, [http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9501E7D81538F934A15754C0A9669D8B63&ref=gulf\\_of\\_mexico\\_2010](http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9501E7D81538F934A15754C0A9669D8B63&ref=gulf_of_mexico_2010)
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### Handout #1: Government Response to the Spill

1. What branches of the government are working together to fix the repercussions of the oil spill? Within those branches, what are the specific organizations involved?
2. How has the marine wildlife been affected by the oil spill and the cleanup process? (Use **specific data** here!)
3. How has the marine flora been affected by the oil spill and the cleanup process? (Use **specific data** here!)
4. What kinds of techniques have been used to recover the oil from the Gulf and to clean up the beaches surrounding the spill area?
5. In what ways has the government worked to protect the health and safety of the citizens who were affected by the oil spill?