

SUGGESTED LESSON PLAN

D. VI

CAN YOU BELIEVE THE MEDIA?

1 50-minute session for simply reading. 2 50-minute sessions if including class discussions.

Resource for Citizenship, Journalism, Politics, History, Philosophy and Ethics.

This section examines how the media reports from conflict zones, taking as examples events between 2003-2014. . It lists ways in which the media is often misled, and asks what the role of reporters should be. It looks at how we, as citizens, can ensure that we have access to as much information from both sides as possible. The slides contain many questions and discussion points, and more are included below.

Aims

To raise students' awareness of the problems of reporting from a conflict zone;
To help them consider the role of the media, and to reach their own conclusions as to how we, the citizens, can ensure that we are given an honest, balanced report of events.

Contents

Slide 1	Title
2-4	Outline of issues
4	Topic for discussion: honesty of the press
5-9	Staged events, with 1 example from August 2014
10-11	Ideology. Its influence on reporting
12	Ignorance of local culture. Topic for discussion: helpfulness of knowing about local culture
13,14	Intimidation of reporters Discussion: response of reporters to intimidation.
15,16	Conflicting reports of casualty numbers
17-20	Human shields. Varying reports on its use
21-24	Freedom of the press. Differing views
25-29	Discuss topics on ethics or reporting and relevant issues
30-34	How can we ensure we get the facts. Discussion topic
35	Notes, additional information.

Discussion topics

1. Ask the students to discuss in pairs the issue of whether a journalist's ideology or political preferences should be part of his or her reporting, and whether the writing of historians can be considered to be reliable if it is influenced by ideology or political opinions. (slides 10-11)
2. Ask the students to list in two columns the benefits and disadvantages of reporters learning about a place before they arrive there. Share the conclusions with the class.(slide 12)

3. Ask the students to list the moral and wider implications of reporters giving in to intimidation (slides 13-14).
4. Discuss the importance of going to more than one source to find out the truth about an event.

Assignment

Essay: Select two events, and consider how they were reported. Outline measures which could be undertaken to ensure more honest reporting.

Outcome

Students will be more aware of how events in a conflict zone are reported. They will have had the opportunity to look at the role of the journalist, the degree to which the media lives up to expectations, and to reach their own conclusions.