Lesson Plans

pbs.org/newshour/extra/lessons-plans/decoding-media-bias-lesson-plan

PBS NEWSHOUR

Decoding Media Bias

A. Watch the video.
Think about these questions, answer on Showbie:

1. Where do you go to read the news? [If you say social media, where specifically?
2. Whom do you follow? If you say TV, which programs?]
3. Why do you go there?
4. What other options do you have?

B.Media Website Examination: You will go to three cable news outlets and examine the top three home page and politics page news stories, focusing on headlines. Answer the following questions on Showbie.

CNN Headlines
1.
2.
3.

Politics Section
1.
2.
3.

Fox News Headlines
1.
2.
3.

Politics Section
1.
2.
3.

MSNBC Headlines
1.
2.
3.

1. What do you notice about the differences?
2. Why do the different news organizations have different stories?

C. Choose a topic addressed on all three networks and read a story from each network to examine for point of view. Look for a top-of-the-page topic that addresses politics or public policy. Answer the following on Showbie: 1. What facts were included in all three stories? 2. Was there one news source that contained facts the other two did not? 3. Why might that be? 4. What did you notice about the language/word choice? 5. Was there leading or subjective language to favor one point of view over another?

D. Go to All Sides. Here they show news topics written in three distinct viewpoints: left, center, right.
1. How can this be used as a tool to recognize bias?
2. Did you find this interesting? Would you consider reading stories here again?

The site also serves as a resource that people can go to read something that may challenge their assumptions, and with which they may disagree, as suggested in the *We The Voters* film "MediOcracy."