

Political Campaigns in the Information Neighborhoods Case Study: The 2008 Presidential Election

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News Literacy Summer Institute 2011**

Lesson 2: Deconstructing Interactive Infographics

Grade level: High School

Technology Used: LCD Projector, laptop, PowerPoint, internet

Length of Lesson: 80 minutes

Aim: How have journalists used interactive infographics to convey information about the 2008 Presidential Election? How do news consumers clear away the clutter to learn the facts?

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- read and interpret information in interactive infographics.
- deconstruct interactive infographics.
- evaluate the credibility of an interactive infographic.
- evaluate the quality of an interactive infographic.
- identify news drivers in interactive infographics.

News literacy skills/terms to be incorporated:

- news drivers
- credibility
- deconstruction
- accuracy
- source
- attribution
- credit line
- context

Introducing and motivating the lesson:

This lesson is designed to be presented in a news literacy or journalism class. The material can be adapted for the social studies or technology classroom. This lesson requires students to use their knowledge of news drivers, credibility, accuracy, and attribution to analyze interactive info graphics created by the news

media during and immediately following the 2008 Presidential Election. Students will be expected to think critically, use technology, work in pairs, and share their conclusions with peers.

Lesson Development/Sequence:

1. **Do Now:** News Matters

2. **PowerPoint presentation:**
 - a. Slides 2-3 address the importance and impact of interactive infographics.
 - b. Slides 5-8 review the concepts of news drivers and components of infographic credibility. Share this information with students. Towards the end of this document, you will find two related quizzes.
 - c. Present examples of interactive infographics from the 2008 Presidential Campaign (which are located on slides 10-21). To modify this lesson for a shorter class period or to better suit your classroom, feel free to remove some of these examples.

3. **Partner work:** Students should form pairs. They have 15-25 minutes to visit the various websites addressed in the PowerPoint presentation. A list of the links referenced in the PowerPoint is included at the end of this document.
 - On a separate sheet of paper, each pair should write down at least 5 facts about the 2008 Presidential Election or its candidates that they learned from the infographics. Students should be able to justify what made their favorite/least favorite infographic good or bad. Students are encouraged to think critically, identifying the shortcomings and limitations of the interactive infographics or suggesting information that was not included and should have been. They are also encouraged to point out information that may have been ineffective or misleading, and would have been better left out or presented differently. Students may also want to consider the question, “Does the infographic provide necessary and accurate context?”

4. **Summarizing the lesson/sharing activity:** Each pair should share their responses to the previous activity. Ask 2 class “secretaries” to take notes on the board. One secretary should record the qualities that make an interactive infographic good. The other secretary should record the qualities that make an interactive infographic weak. Students are expected

to take notes. Assist students in making connections and drawing conclusions to news literacy concepts.

5. **Homework:** Find an example of an effective interactive infographic (on a subject of your choice). Use the components of infographic credibility that you learned about in class to make sure you have chosen a quality infographic. Then, write a 250 word response (in paragraph form) that answers the following questions (20 points per question):
- What is the URL for the website you have chosen?
 - Who is the audience for the interactive infographic and how do you know this?
 - What information and/or message does the interactive infographic communicate?
 - Why do you believe this infographic is credible? (HINT: Use CAGED CATS to justify your response.)
 - What makes the infographic effective?

Lesson extensions and connections:

- Read an article and write a proposal for an interactive infographic that relates to the article you read.
- Research a subject or collect your own data. Then, write a proposal for an interactive infographic to illustrate your findings. Students should “pitch” these proposals to the class and vote on a favorite interactive infographic concept. This activity would simulate the type of debate/discussion that would occur in a real newsroom. Consider offering the winner a prize such as extra credit or possible publication of that interactive infographic in a future edition of the school’s (or a local) online news publication.
- In a technology classroom, use computer software to create your own interactive infographic.
- Research a historical subject or read historical articles/documents. Then, create a concept for an interactive infographic that an online news publication might have published had it existed during that time period.
- Select one of the following topics:
 - Hurricane Katrina
 - 2011 Earthquake in Japan
 - 2010 Earthquake in Haiti
 - 2005 BP Oil Spill
 - The Arab Spring
 - Prince William and Kate’s Wedding or Tour of Canada
 - U.S. Census

You may select a topic that is not on this list as long as it is approved by your teacher.

Find several credible infographics and reliable sources pertaining to one of the above topics. Then write a research paper related to the subject. Incorporate information from the infographic in your research paper. Be sure to correctly cite all sources.

HINT: If you type the name of your research subject "+ interactive" you should find many interactive infographics. Be sure to evaluate the credibility of your source!

New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards for Language Arts (adapted in 2008):

A. Concepts About Print/Text

3.1.12.A.1 Interpret and use common textual features (e.g., paragraphs, topic sentence, index, glossary, table of contents) and graphic features, (e.g., charts, maps, diagrams) to comprehend information.

C. Decoding and Word Recognition

3.1.12.C.1 Decode new words using structural and context analysis.

D. Fluency

3.1.12.D.1 Read developmentally appropriate materials (at an independent level) with accuracy and speed.

3.1.12.D.3 Read a variety of genres and types of text with fluency and comprehension.

F. Vocabulary and Concept Development

3.1.12.F.3 Apply reading vocabulary in different content areas.

G. Comprehension Skills and Response to Text

3.1.12.G.15 Identify, describe, evaluate, and synthesize the central ideas in informational texts.

3.1.12.G.16 Distinguish between essential and nonessential information.

3.1.12.G.17 Analyze the use of credible references.

3.1.12.G.18 Differentiate between fact and opinion by using complete and accurate information, coherent arguments, and points of view.

3.1.12.G.19 Demonstrate familiarity with everyday texts such as job and college applications, W-2 forms, contracts, etc.

H. Inquiry and Research

3.1.12.H.4 Read and critically analyze a variety of works, including books and other print materials (e.g., periodicals, journals, manuals), about one issue or

topic, or books by a single author or in one genre, and produce evidence of reading.

3.1.12.H.5 Apply information gained from several sources or books on a single topic or by a single author to foster an argument, draw conclusions, or advance a position.

3.1.12.H.7 Produce written and oral work that demonstrates synthesis of multiple informational and technical sources.

3.1.12.H.8 Produce written and oral work that demonstrates drawing conclusions based on evidence from informational and technical text.

C. Mechanics, Spelling, and Handwriting

3.2.12.C.1 Use Standard English conventions in all writing (sentence structure, grammar and usage, punctuation, capitalization, spelling).

3.2.12.C.2 Demonstrate a well-developed knowledge of English syntax to express ideas in a lively and effective personal style.

3.2.12.C.3 Use subordination, coordination, apposition, and other devices effectively to indicate relationships between ideas.

A. Discussion

3.3.12.A.1 Support a position integrating multiple perspectives.

3.3.12.A.3 Assume leadership roles in student-directed discussions, projects, and forums.

B. Questioning (Inquiry) and Contributing

3.3.12.B.5 Question critically the position or viewpoint of an author.

3.3.12.B.6 Respond to audience questions by providing clarification, illustration, definition, and elaboration.

3.3.12.B.9 Give and follow spoken instructions to perform specific tasks to answer questions or to solve problems.

C. Word Choice

3.3.12.C.1 Select and use precise words to maintain an appropriate tone and clarify ideas in oral and written communications.

D. Oral Presentation

3.3.12.D.1 Speak for a variety of purposes (e.g., persuasion, information, entertainment, literary interpretation, dramatization, and personal expression).

3.3.12.D.3 Demonstrate effective delivery strategies (e.g., eye contact, body language, volume, intonation, and articulation) when speaking.

A. Active Listening

3.4.12.A.1 Discuss, analyze and extend ideas heard orally.

3.4.12.A.3 Demonstrate active listening by taking notes, asking relevant questions, making meaningful comments, and providing constructive feedback to ideas in a persuasive speech, oral interpretation of a literary selection, or scientific or educational presentation.

B. Listening Comprehension

3.4.12.B.5 Follow oral directions to perform specific tasks to answer questions or solve problems.

A. Constructing Meaning from Media

3.5.12.A.1 Understand that messages are representations of social reality and vary by historic time periods and parts of the world.

3.5.12.A.2 Identify and evaluate how a media product expresses the values of the culture that produced it.

3.5.12.A.4 Examine the commonalities and conflicts between the visual and print messages (e.g., humor, irony, or metaphor) and recognize how words, sounds, and images are used to convey the intended messages.

B. Visual and Verbal Messages

3.5.12.B.2 Analyze visual techniques used in a media message for a particular audience and evaluate their effectiveness.

3.5.12.B.3 Analyze the effects of media presentations and the techniques to create them.

3.5.12.B.4 Compare and contrast how the techniques of three or more media sources affect the message.

C. Living with Media

3.5.12.C.2 Identify and discuss the political, economic, and social influences on news media.

3.5.12.C.3 Identify and critique the forms, techniques (e.g., propaganda) and technologies used in various media messages and performances.

3.5.12.C.4 Create media presentations and written reports using multi-media resources using effective images, text, graphics, music and/or sound effects that present a distinctive point of view on a topic.

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Reference Sheet

Example #1: Interactive Map, NPR

<http://www.npr.org/news/specials/election2008/2008-election-map.html#/president?view=race08>

Example #2: Another Interactive Map, The Seattle Times

<http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/flatpages/nationworld/elexelectoralcollegemap.html#loop>

Example #3: Voting Patterns in the Democratic Primaries, NY Times

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/04/us/politics/04margins_graphic.html

Example #4: Campaign Trail, Politico

<http://www.politico.com/campaigncalendar/index.html>

Example #5: Past Results, USA TODAY:

<http://www.usatoday.com/news/politics/election2008/electoral-vote-tracker.htm>

Example #6: Candidate Match, USA TODAY:

<http://www.usatoday.com/news/politics/election2008/cm-g-original.htm>

Example #7: Candidate Match II, USA TODAY:

<http://www.usatoday.com/news/politics/election2008/candidate-match-game.htm>

Example #8: Campaign Spending, NY Times:

http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2008/07/03/business/20080706_METRICS_GRAPHIC.html

Example #9: Campaign Finance, NY Times:

<http://elections.nytimes.com/2008/president/campaign-finance/map.html>

Example #10: Campaign Finance Tracker, USA TODAY:

<http://www.usatoday.com/news/politics/election2008/campaign-finance-tracker.htm>

Example #11: A Look at Clarks County, Las Vegas Sun

<http://www.lasvegassun.com/politics/voterguide/clarkcountyzip>

Example #12: Who am I?, Scholastic News

http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/indepth/election2008/games/candidates_stand

Name: _____

Date: _____

Quiz: News Drivers

Each question is worth 10 points.

1-8. List eight of the ten news drivers (STEPPIIDOC).

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

9. Define *timeliness*.

10. Define *proximity*.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Quiz: Components of Infographic Credibility

Each question is worth 10 points.

1-8. List eight of the nine components of infographic credibility (CAGED CATS).

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

9. Define *credit line*.

10. Define *credibility*.
