

WHAT'S NEW?

Communication Objectives:	Ss will be able to: - use expressions for implying and colloquialisms. - use vocabulary, phrases and idioms related to the media.		
Educational Objectives:	Ss will address issues of censorship, freedom of the press and media ownership.		
Connected Topics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sensationalism - Public versus private media - Television content - Life of a journalist - Political parties and the media - Journalists and the intelligence community 		
Grammar:	Prepositions	Colloquialisms	
Key Vocabulary:	ban biased caste system clone constrained disinformation distort drive dumbing down dystopia	exile fake foreign correspondent free press headlines impact install integrity legitimate lowest common denominator	mass media media freedom point the finger ranking real time sensational slippery slope argument slogan spin

The BIG question: DO YOU TRUST THE MEDIA?

VIEWPOINT

Facts: Reporters without Borders published these findings in 2005. The index is based on surveying journalists, researchers and legal experts about many areas affecting press freedom (censorship, pressure, media monopolies, arrest and murder of journalists).

Source:

http://www.rsf.org/rubrique.php3?id_rubrique=554

EQ: *Can you draw any conclusions about why some countries have more or less press freedom? Was there anything surprising about these figures? How do you think Reporters without Borders analyses press freedom?*

Quote: Rose Macauley (1881–1958) was a British novelist and essayist known for satirising middle-class life.

EQ: *Is Macauley being serious, ironic or something else? Why? Do you believe everything you read / see / hear about in the media? Why / Why not?*

1 WORD POWER

A gets students to practise their knowledge of prepositions.

1 WORD POWER A			Answers
1 for	2 in, from	3 with	
4 of	5 about	6 at	

B gets students to analyse differences between broadsheet (more serious news providers) and tabloid (more sensational news providers) journalism and practise using colloquialisms in **Language Bank 13**.

1 WORD POWER B**Answers**

- 1 Arrested **for** *pinching cop car*
 2 Pensioner bought shares **in** *dodgy deal from best mate*
 3 *What's up* **with** the Prime Minister?
 4 Cost of living too *pricey? Fed up with* (Tired **of**)
 being *broke?*
 5 Politicians *touchy* **about** electoral *scam*
 6 Do *blokes* do their fair share **at** home?

B 2 (Sample answers)

Based on this third headline, **you could get the impression that** there was some problem with the Prime Minister. (Headline 3)

I would suggest that the fourth headline deals with the cost of living. (Headline 4)

I believe that refers to men not helping with housework. (Headline 6)

ARTICLES**Italy Trail in Press Freedom**

This article discusses the debate about the controversial former Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi and press freedom in Italy. Many in the media suggested that Italy's wealthiest man had a serious conflict of interest because of his media ownership and should have divested some of his holdings. Between his ownership of Mediaset and his party's control of state-run RAI (the Italian public broadcaster) he controlled 90 per cent of Italian TV.

While Berlusconi rejected claims that this had led to press censorship, several cases involving RAI gave cause for concern. When Berlusconi publicly stated dislike of the criticisms aired against him by the respected journalists Enzo Biagi, Michele Santoro and comedian Daniele Luttazzi, RAI ended its relationship with all three. In November 2003, Sabina Guzzanti's satirical programme was taken off the air after she criticised one of Berlusconi's companies. By and large, the Italian public seems largely ambivalent about Berlusconi's media ownership. In fact, many see his ability to run a large corporate empire as evidence of his leadership skills.

EQ: *Would it worry you if your country's leader owned 90 per cent of the media in your country?*

Pay-Per-Click Journalism

This article discusses an interesting phenomenon, which seems set to upset the traditional roles in print journalism of editor and journalist. While many detractors worry that this will inevitably lead to dumbing down or the lowest common denominator in journalism, it could lead to greater choice. No longer will an editor choose what should be printed, but the public will choose themselves.

The Korean internet newspaper, Ohmynews (<http://english.ohmynews.com/>), has taken this one step further with letting the public write their own stories. Ohmynews has some 32,000 citizen-reporters averaging several million hits per day. The popularity of the site has shaken the Korean press.

EQ: *Do you think the public is only interested in sensational news? What kind of news stories interest you? What news stories have interested you the most recently?*

2 READING

A is a skimming activity that will help students with the Use of English section of the CAE exam.

2 READING A**Answers**

Mediaset, main private TV company in Italy; controls a large share of publishing and newspaper market, including Mondadori, Italy's largest book and magazine publishing group, and *Il Giornale*, a leading national newspaper.

B requires students to analyse and imply similarities and differences between unrelated people. You should encourage the students to cite actual examples from the text and to use implying phrases in **Language Bank 13**.

C 1 This question relates to a type of question in the Trinity exam which requires students to speculate and conclude on the unstated feelings of people.

2 This question requires students to discuss the role editors play in choosing the news that is printed. You can help students by introducing words such as *censorship*, *bias* and *tabloid journalism*.

EQ: *What does it take to become a journalist or editor? Do you think an editor's education and experience gives them the right / ability to choose the stories that matter to the public? Do editors make the right choices?*

3 SPEAK YOUR MIND

This section covers the topics of news sources and current events, television content, life of a journalist, political control over the media and media as a pillar of democracy.

A EQ: *What are the advantages or disadvantages of getting your information from only one source? Name some current events. How might these stories be reported on differently by different networks? How is news reporting different and similar between television, radio, newspapers, news magazines and the internet?*

B EQ: *The average American watches over four hours of TV per day. How does this compare to your country? Is television an important part of your free time activities? Why / Why not? Should television viewing be restricted in any way? Can television be educational? Do you think television influences you in any way?*

C EQ: *What would it be like to interview famous people? To report from war zones? To break an important story? Do you think there is a difference between TV and newspaper journalists' jobs?*

D EQ: *How might news stories sound different if different political parties reported them? Give examples. Should you know everything? Can a country be democratic without a free press?*

4 LISTEN

DVD

This video clip is part of the controversial documentary, *Outfoxed: Rupert Murdoch's War on Journalism* by director Robert Greenwald. *Outfoxed* analyses the rise of the Fox News Channel, the 24-hour US cable news channel owned by Australian-born media tycoon, Rupert Murdoch.

Fox News was created to counter what conservatives viewed as an inherent liberal bias in the media and is one of the first news networks to openly support the political agenda of a single party, the right-wing US Republican party. Although it uses the slogan 'Fair and Balanced', Fox News often mixes journalism and conservative opinions that may blur the lines between conservative opinion and facts.

While cable news remains a small market (Fox has just over 1 million viewers) critics argue that the network has created a shift in US media towards the right. Greenwald and others also worry about

the extent of Murdoch's total media empire.

Murdoch's company News Corporation owns 9 satellite TV networks, 100 cable channels, 40 TV stations, 40 book companies, 175 newspapers and 1 movie studio. News Corp. is estimated to reach an audience of 4.7 billion.

B The text inside the box is a special review of the *Outfoxed* video clip. It was written in the first person by the author and publisher of *Quick Smart English*. This unusual step of reviewing a video clip in this way in an EFL textbook was to ensure this book's compliance with the fair use of copyrighted material. Students should be strongly encouraged to compare this style of journalism with that of journalists in their own country.

C You decide: Was this programme reporting news in a biased or fair way? After watching this, what do you think of Fox News' slogan, 'Fair and balanced'?

5 TEAMWORK

This activity is designed to get students to develop ideas for fictional story lines. This activity is designed to aid students in their creative effort and is based on an actual creative thinking activity. By pairing seemingly unconnected ideas or words, the resulting connection can lead to some original ideas. It should be viewed as both a fun activity and a serious attempt to think about the importance of truth in journalism. Students should be given the freedom to create whichever type of headlines or story ideas they want.

Sources:

Weekly World News. Bat Boy Lives! The WWN Guide to Politics, Culture, Celebrities, Alien Abductions, and the Mutant Freaks that Shape our World.
www.weeklyworldnews.com

6 CONTROVERSY

In 1976, the US Senate Select Committee on Intelligence discovered that more than fifty American journalists had worked as CIA agents during the Cold War. The Committee condemned the practice, but during the next twenty years, the CIA simply limited the practice. In 1996, the US Council on Foreign Relations suggested that the law limiting the use of journalists as spies should be re-examined. In response,

former CIA director John Deutch told Congress that there was no need to change the law because under the guidelines the CIA director still had the right to approve the use of journalists as spies when needed.

This use of journalists appears to be the norm among major powers rather than the exception. Colonel Stanislav Lunev, a defector from Russia's military intelligence, stated in 2000 that at least half of all Russian journalists working in Washington and the US were spies. According to Major General Yuri Kobaldze of Russia's SVR, "There is no essential difference between the work of a spy and a journalist; both collect information in the same way – just the end consumers are different. Journalists make the best spies; they have more freedom of access than diplomats. The Americans' moral stand on not using journalists is artificial, and not a little duplicitous."

Sources:

The Thin Ink Line: Spies, Journalists, Espionage and the Media, David Grant

Through the Eyes of the Enemy: Russia's Highest Ranking Military Defector, Stanislav Lunev
www.cpj.org/attacks96/sreports/cia.html
www.aarclibrary.org/publib/church/reports/contents.htm

EQ: *Should governments use reporters or cameramen as spies? If so, under what circumstances? If not, why not? How could working for an intelligence agency affect how stories are reported? Do you think this puts journalists' lives and integrity at risk? Is intelligence gathering more important than reporting news stories?*

7 PORTFOLIO WRITING

See the Introduction to the Teacher's Guide.

A Sources:

Berlusconi's Shadow: Crime, Justice and the Pursuit of Power, David Lane

Silvio Berlusconi: Television, Power and Patrimony, Paul Ginsborg
www.economist.com/countries/Italy/
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/3034600.stm>
www.forza-italia.it/notizie/int_2815.htm

B Sources:

Writing Feature Stories, Matthew Ricketson
Writer's Digest Handbook of Magazine Article Writing,

Michelle Ruberg

www.journalism.org/resources/tools/print.asp
www.cjr.org/tools

8 MEDIA STUDIES in English [CLIL]

The idea of a utopian society can be traced back as far as Plato's *The Republic* (360 BC), however, the idea of a dystopian society is much more recent. The first recorded use of the term was by John Stuart Mill in 1868 to the UK Parliament. The idea seems to have gained ground in popular thought and literature, perhaps with the rise in importance of new technologies and the development of the modern state. New technologies were pushing the Industrial Revolution and changing the traditional roles in society. In this new age, Europe experienced a lot of social unrest from the 1840s to 1870s, as the divide between rich and poor began to grow. It is no coincidence that Mills' comments came only a year after the printing of Marx's first volume of *Das Kapital*.

In dystopian visions of the world, several themes emerge that have a direct relationship to this historical period, mostly dealing with control or a lack of it: the influence of machines and technologies as social control; an autocratic, centralised authority that cares little for the individual, but cares a lot for maintaining order; the rise of crime, as social stability and control decreases. Like utopias, dystopias are set in the not so distant future as a warning to change and a general fear of the unknown.

The novels presented in the unit are examples of how controlling the media is part of the formation of a dystopian state and where it could lead.

EQ: *Which do you think is more likely in the future: utopia or dystopia? Why? Do you think these particular dystopias are possible? Is it fair to draw similarities between these novels and today's media and society? Can you see examples today of each of the criticisms mentioned in these novels? What can we do to prevent these dystopias from occurring?*

Sources:

Brave New World, Aldous Huxley
www.huxley.net
Fahrenheit 451, Ray Bradbury
www.raybradbury.com

9 FURTHER DISCUSSION

This section covers the influence of the media, technology and the media, entertainment as news, and the case of *NY Times* journalist Jayeson Blair.

A Try to get students to think about how they form their views on different issues, how the media creates consensus in a society, and how people can affect the media in the age of PR and social activism.

EQ: *Which media figures do you respect? Why? How much do they influence your opinions? Is it possible to form opinions independent of or contrary to the media? How important is consensus in your society?*

B Try to get students to think about how news travelled before each new technological invention (internet, satellites, TV, telephone, radio, telegraph, ship, printing press).

EQ: *How important is speed in receiving news? Give some current news examples. What effect would it have if the story was reported a day, a week, a month or a year later? Do you think technology has given us a better or worse understanding of world events? Why?*

C Try to get students to think about how often news covers issues relating to celebrities or the entertainment industry.

EQ: *Name five celebrities. What is happening in their lives at the moment? Do you know as much about your neighbours' lives? Does reporting about celebrities trivialise the importance of other stories?*

D Try to get students to think about the reality of a high-pressure job like being a journalist, meeting deadlines, and reporting on important people.

EQ: *If you might lose your job, would you ever lie to keep it?*

10 ***Your answer:*** DO YOU TRUST THE MEDIA?

This question tries to get students to address the most fundamental question regarding the media in today's society. The media is often seen as an important pillar in democracy. If the media is not providing us with accurate, unbiased information, what does this say about the democracy in our countries? How can we be informed citizens and

participate fully in our society without knowing about the reality of the world around us. Does the media actually have much control over individuals?

WORKBOOK

1 WORD POWER

This activity will get students practising the use of colloquialisms and the implying phrases from **Language Bank 13**.

1 WORD POWER

Answers

- 1 All these documentaries on television are really *daft*. **Based on this, you could get the impression that** people don't want to watch anything more challenging.
- 2 I read in the paper that train fares are going up by 10 per cent. They're going to be really *pricey*. **Some people say that** we are only paying half the real cost.
- 3 I heard there was more hooliganism at the *footie* match last tonight. **I would suggest that** the football league could do more to stop violence.
- 4 Did you see that *telly* programme about that bank manager who *pinched* a million pounds? **I suspect that he knows more** than he is letting on.
- 5 Are you still *keen on* going to see that film tonight? **I would suggest that** the film next week would be better.
- 6 It's such a media stereotype! Not everyone from there is *posh*. **Don't you think it points to** lazy journalism to use stereotypes like that.

2 WRITING

A Sources:

www.thenation.com
www.motherjones.com
www.nationalreview.com
www.conservativenews.org

B Sources:

The Web of Deceit: Britain's Real Role in the World, Mark Curtis
Tell Me Lies: Propaganda and Media Distortion in the Attack on Iraq, David Miller
www.cpj.org
www.freedomhouse.org

3 SPEAKING STRATEGIES: Use some quotes

This activity is the one of the techniques to help students give better presentations. This provides students with a great way to make their presentations more interesting, more concise and better planned.

3 SPEAKING STRATEGIES	Answers
1 d 2 b 3 a 4 c 5 b	

4 IDIOMS

See the Introduction to the Teacher's Guide.

4 IDIOMS	Answers
1 b 2 c 3 d 4 e 5 a	
1 to have a thick skin = not be sensitive to criticism 2 to break the story = give the information / tell the story in public 3 to have a sharp tongue = to be very critical, rude 4 on the box = on the television 5 through the rumour mill = from the gossip that goes round	

Ask students to use the idioms when answering these questions orally. This can be done as pair work or as a class.

- *Do you think you could handle answering questions at a televised press conference?*
 - I think you would *need a thick skin* to handle some of the questions.
 - I would be nervous. Some news commentators *have very sharp tongues*.
 - I don't see why a press conference *on the box* would be any harder.
- *What would you do if the media printed a false story about you?*
 - I think it happens often when the media is competing to *break a story*.
 - I wouldn't worry. If they printed something from *the rumour mill*, I could just sue for libel.
 - I don't know if my skin is *thick enough* not to be very upset.
- *Can you trust reporters to keep a secret?*
 - I think the papers would print everything. *The rumour mill* is just too powerful.
 - Reporters can't resist *breaking a story*. They just couldn't keep it a secret.