Teaching With Your Newspaper

Exploring News and Views

Identify newspaper elements: Ask students to look up and define the following terms: headline, byline, dateline, wire service, lead, jump line, caption or cutline, subhead. Ask students to try to find and identify these elements in your newspaper. Do these elements also appear in PARADE? In monthly magazines?

Predict: Distribute newspapers to your students. Then have them use the front-page headlines and photos to predict what will appear in those stories. How well do the photos and headlines convey what the content will be? Are there any surprises?

Compare and contrast: If the newspaper and the TV news covered the same story, how would the coverage be different? List similarities and differences in perspective, depth, detail and angle. Are there other differences? What might account for them?

Identify issues: Ask students to choose a problem that they've heard about in the news. What do they already know about the issue? What's the best way to learn more about it?

- Have students gather additional information about the issue from the newspaper. Then ask them to propose a solution to the problem.
- Discuss and analyze the solutions. Will they work? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each one? What solutions have experts proposed?
- Ask students to write a letter to the editor of the local newspaper explaining their positions on the issue.

Analyze events: What positive events are reported in the local newspaper? Ask students to identify headlines and articles reporting positive and negative events in at least two issues of the daily paper. Then, have them write a summary of what they learned from this activity. Does the newspaper concentrate more on positive or negative news?

Skill-Building Activities
From Geography to Media Literacy

Geography: Explore the world with your students. The newspaper—and PARADE—feature stories from all parts of the United States and the world.

- Ask different students to list all the cities, states and countries mentioned on assigned pages of the newspaper. Then have them plot them on maps.
- Ask students to refer to the newspaper's weather map and list the temperatures for their assigned locations. Then students can determine the difference between the highest and lowest temperatures.
- If there is interest, have students research the places mentioned in the news. What is the political situation? What supports the local economy? What sort of clothes do the people wear? How are women and minorities treated? What is the system of government? Then ask students to make oral reports to the class.

Math: The newspaper is full of math, from the financial pages to the sports page. For specific ideas, see "Teaching the Sports Page" in the section called "Teaching with Special Newspaper Features."

Vocabulary: Have students look through the newspaper for unfamiliar words. Ask them to use context to predict their meanings. After they write down their predictions, ask them to use the dictionary to see if their predictions were correct.

Expository Writing: Have students complete journal writing and summarizing activities using the newspaper or PARADE, if available.

- Ask students to write journal entries responding to newspaper articles that affected them strongly—either positively or negatively. Why did the articles make them feel as they did?
- Have students read newspaper articles and write brief summaries of their content. How do the students' summaries compare with the summaries in the news-summary section of the paper?

Media Literacy: Ask students to identify the ads in the newspaper—or PARADE—that most appeal to them. Then ask them to analyze their appeal.

- Does the ad make it appear that the product will make them cooler, better-looking, or more a part of the crowd? Is the product endorsed by a celebrity? Ask each student to critically consider one ad and list the way that the advertiser tries to make the product seem appealing. Are the claims for the product realistic?
- Is it important for an ad to be colorful or designed in an upbeat way? Do cool graphics mean that something is a cool product? Does the appearance of an ad make them want the product more? Ask students to choose the ad that interested them most graphically. Then have them analyze what about the ad grabbed their attention.
- Discuss ad placement. Why do certain ads fall on particular pages? Why are particular ads always in the same section of the paper?
- Ask students to imagine that they are advertisers with a product to sell. Then have them write and design an ad that they think will appeal to other teenagers.

Creative Writing/Imagining the News: Ask your students to predict what they think the world will be like 100 years from now. Students should pretend that they are reading the newspaper—or PARADE—in the year 2101. Ask them to list six stories that might appear that year. For each story, have them write a headline and a lead paragraph. Be sure that the lead includes the important elements (who, where, when, what, why and how).

Creative Writing/Explaining the News: Have students imagine that they've just landed on Earth from another planet. They must report back to their superiors on life in America and in your town. Their only sources of information are your newspaper—and/or PARADE.

- What impressions do they get of American teen life? What roles do teens have? How do they look, talk, behave and dress? Ask them to list at least 10 impressions they get from the newspaper. Are these views valid?
- Next, ask students to consider local issues, politics, job opportunities, education, and community activities. Ask them to write a summary of what they've learned about your town for their space alien leaders.

Teaching with Special Newspaper Features
From Advice Columns to the Sports Page

Teaching with Advice Columns: Use the newspaper's advice column to illustrate psychology and family-relationship topics.

- Ask students to think critically about the questions asked. How would they answer each one? Why?
- Have students respond to the advice column. Do they agree with the columnist's advice? Why or why not? Ask them to write to the columnist, expressing their views on the advice given. What would happen if someone actually followed the advice?

Teaching Fashion and Lifestyle Topics: Use articles in these sections to help students express creativity and to tackle budget issues.

- Ask students to scan the newspaper for evidence of the latest fashion and trends. Do the styles reflect their own tastes? How are they different? How far ahead or behind the curve do they find the newspaper's style features? How would they do them differently?
- Ask students to keep track of how they spend their money. Then have them chart their expenditures, using categories such as clothing, food, personal care and entertainment. Is this how they'd most like to spend their money? Have them create an alternative budget based on a specific amount. It should include these categories as well as savings. Have students scan the paper for products they'd like to buy. Can they afford them on the new budget? Do their spending habits change after budgeting?

Teaching the Arts and Entertainment Section: This section can generate writing and critical thinking activities.

- Ask students to compare and contrast the way that the newspaper reviews books, movies and television shows. How are the reviews similar? How are they different?
- Ask students who have seen a particular movie whether or not they agree with the paper's review. Why or why not? What could account for any differences in opinion? Then have students review a book or movie in the style of your local critic.

- Ask students to look at the movie advertisements in the paper. If they have seen any of the movies, ask them to consider whether or not the advertisements give a good idea of what the movie is like.

Teaching the Sports Page: The sports page can generate math activities and present role models.

- If an athlete's salary is reported, ask students to calculate the player's weekly or monthly earnings.
- Have students look up the sports news about their own school in the local newspaper. Divide the class into groups. Ask each group to keep track of a particular school sport for the season, keep records on how each team is doing and analyze the statistics. Compare the school's standings with those of a professional team.
- Ask students why they think a particular athlete was featured in the newspaper. Analyze the reasons why an editor would feature an article about this person. What has he or she accomplished? What obstacles has he or she overcome? Is this person a role model in any way?

Building Character and Self-Esteem
Role Models and Community Service

Discussing Role Models: Choose a person featured in your newspaper—and/or PARADE—and discuss him or her with your students.

- Ask students to identify the specific traits that made this person admirable. Would they like to develop these traits themselves?
- Have students weigh the pros and cons (or advantages and disadvantages) of being more like this person.
- Ask students to write about what they'd like to change about themselves. What characteristics make them proud of themselves?
- Look through the newspaper as a class. Have students identify people whom they believe are positive role models.

Helping Students Take Action: Encourage your students to get involved in their community. Here's how to get started:

- Have your students read the newspaper to find out about a local group or cause, such as a children's hospital, homeless shelter, soup kitchen, nursing home, after-school program or community center that could use the help of your class. Have them identify which activities would be most helpful and take action.
- Help students coordinate a schedule of volunteer activities. Then present it to the local group for its approval.
- Plan fund-raisers, involving the whole school if possible, to benefit the group or cause. These could include car washes, bake sales, book and clothing drives, support from local stores and the community.
- Help students create a publicity campaign to generate school and community awareness. Have them make posters and flyers, write press releases, contact local newspapers and write stories for the school paper.
- Plan a school presentation to present money or goods to the cause or group. This generates enthusiasm about helping others among students.
- Have your students surf *www.servenet.org* for a database of volunteering opportunities in your community and throughout the nation. Ask them to research the organizations and activities that match their interests and service goals.

Focusing on the Environment: Encourage your students to explore activities such as recycling and community beautification.

- Ask your students to find newspaper stories focusing on recycling. Research and discuss: What is recycled in your community? What else could or should be recycled? What products can be made from recycled aluminum, paper, tin, or glass? Why is recycling important? Challenge your class to develop other recycling/environmental programs.
- Ask your students to find newspaper stories focusing on community-beautification needs. Then encourage them to design programs from start to finish, including fund-raising and publicity.
- Have your students research newspapers and other sources for information on pollution. Afterward, ask students to write essays about how they would tackle pollution if they were President.

Teaching with PARADE:
Gateway to Your Newspaper

Using PARADE is a good way to draw your students into the newspaper—and connect them to the world. If you or your students have access to PARADE in your Sunday paper, try these tips. If not, most tips are adaptable to your newspaper as well!

Teaching the Cover

Give students a few moments to look over PARADE's cover. Then:

- Have students use the cover to predict what will be inside. What is the cover image? What is the function of the cover lines? Would the magazine seem as interesting without them? What cover lines are most appealing? Are there articles in PARADE not featured on the cover?
- Ask students to conceptualize their own covers for the issue. What images and words would they use? Why? What would they put on the covers of their own personal magazines?
- Ask students to compare and contrast PARADE's cover with the front page of a newspaper. How are they similar? Different?

Teaching Writing Skills and Personal Growth with "Fresh Voices"

Each week, PARADE's"Fresh Voices" column presents the voices of teenagers on issues of importance to them. You can use the column as a fun exercise in expository writing in which your students have the opportunity to be published in PARADE.

- Most columns begin with a question. For example, "If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?" Ask students to discuss the question and generate their own answers. Then have them evaluate the answers of the teens in the column. Do they agree or disagree? Finally, have them read the new question at the bottom of the column and write a paragraph in response. Encourage students to share their own stories and to write from personal experience—as if a friend had said, "*Tell me what happened!*" The more details, the better! E-mail their comments to *freshvoices@parade.com* or write to Fresh Voices Box 5103 Grand Central Station, New York, N.Y. 10163-5103.

Teaching Critical Thinking Skills with "Ask Marilyn"

PARADE columnist **Marilyn vos Savant** is in the Guinness Book of World Records Hall of Fame for the world's highest IQ. An author of several books, including the recently released *Growing Up: A Classic American Childhood*, she has been answering readers' questions—on all subjects—since 1986. Her answers—and brain teasers—are great fodder for critical thinking activities.

- Read students the questions in Marilyn vos Savant's column and ask them how they would answer them. If the questions require research, where would they go to find the answers? After they have tried to answer the questions, read them her answers. Do they agree with them? Is there a way to check their accuracy?
- Ask students if there are questions that they would like to ask Marilyn. If so, e-mail them to *marilyn@parade.com* or write to Marilyn c/o PARADE 711 Third Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017. Give extra credit to any student whose question is published.

Teaching Current Events with "Intelligence Report"

Each week award-winning journalist **Lyric Wallwork Winik** presents a variety of news items about some of the biggest and most provocative issues of our time.

- Ask students what types of items Winik uses in "Intelligence Report." In what sense is it an "intelligence report"? Why do they think PARADE editors chose to call it that? Can they think of any alternative titles?
- Ask students to pick out short items that interested them in "Intelligence Report." How could they learn more about these topics? What questions would they like to have answered? Divide them into groups to do further research.
- How do short items like these differ from longer articles in other parts of PARADE?
- Winik often recommends Web sites, announces contests or tells about free information that readers can send for. Have students follow up on an item in one of these ways. What did they learn from the experience?

Teaching Economics and Personal Finance

PARADE Personal Finance Editor **Andrew Tobias** is well-known for his best-selling books, *The Only Investment Guide You'll Ever Need*, *The Invisible Bankers*, and *Fire and Ice*, as well as for his Managing Your Money software. His personal finance columns tackle issues from teaching children about money to the importance of making wills.

- Most of Tobias' advice is aimed at adults. Ask students what advice applies to them right now. Also ask them how the advice will apply to them in the future. Why is it important to learn the financial facts of life now? How can it help them avoid trouble? How can it actively improve their future lives?
- Ask students what financial questions they would like to ask Tobias. Have them write to him at PARADE or e-mail him at *www.andrewtobias.com*. In what other ways could they find the answers to these questions? What types of financial information can they find in the newspaper? How helpful is it? Ask students to compare Tobias' advice on a particular issue with that of another expert. In what ways are their views the same? In what ways are they different? Which advice seems the most sensible? Why?

Teaching "Science on PARADE®" and "Health on PARADE®"

PARADE Science Editor **David Levy** was co-discoverer of the Shoemaker-Levy 9 Comet that struck Jupiter. He is one of the country's foremost astronomers and the author of 19 books on science. PARADE Health Editor **Dr. Isadore Rosenfeld** is an attending physician at New York Hospital and Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. A distinguished professor at New York Hospital, he is the author of nine books, including the best-selling *Live Now, Age Later*.

For the science and health sections:

- Ask students what they know about the week's topic. What would they like to know? How would they go about researching the answers? What would be their sources?

• Then ask students to read the article. Did they find the answers to their questions? If not, what questions do they think that the authors started with? What new information have they learned from the article? Ask them to write brief summaries of the most important information or advice.

Teaching Technology

Each month—and in PARADE's annual personal technology issue—PARADE columnist **Robert Moritz** explains the Internet and its technologies to readers.

• Moritz often recommends Web sites. Ask your students to check out some of his recommendations. Do they agree with what he says? Why or why not?

• Ask them to write their own mini-reviews of these sites. Then have them recommend sites that they like, using his style.

• Ask students what technology topics they'd like to see discussed. Then have them send a letter to Moritz with their questions or comments at *gadget@parade.com*.

Teaching Interview Skills with "In Step With"

PARADE Columnist **James Brady,** author of the best-seller *The Marines of Autumn*, is renowned for his celebrity interviews. Of course, our tips for teaching his profiles will work with other PARADE profiles as well—and with those in your local newspaper.

• Ask students to read a celebrity profile. Then have them list the questions that the reporter must have asked to get the information for the article. Then ask them to choose a celebrity whom they would like to interview. What would they like to know about this person? Ask them to develop a list of questions for the interview.

• Have students write a profile about their favorite celebrity. In the article, ask them to explain whether they think this person is—or isn't—a positive influence on the audience they entertain and why.

Evaluating the Entire Issue

Ask students to evaluate one entire issue of PARADE. What messages did they find on the cover? What drew their interest? Which columns or stories did they enjoy the most? Why? Why were certain stories placed next to each other? Did the design, typography, and story coverage meet their needs? The needs of the overall audience? How? Did they find worthwhile role models? How is PARADE different from a newspaper? Ask students to write a brief critique on what they liked and didn't like about the current issue of PARADE—or today's newspaper.

For more specific tips on teaching with your newspaper or PARADE, be sure to check out each week's edition of PARADE Classroom,® provided by the editors of PARADE and your local newspaper's Newspaper In Education program. You can download the guide and the weekly current events quiz at ***www.paradeclassroom.com*** *on the Web.*