

# ACTIVITY 24



in the news

## TEACHER BACKGROUND

Students analyze, interpret and evaluate news media every time they watch television, read the newspaper, listen to the radio, or use the internet. In doing so, students use their knowledge of form and structure, compare and contrast, choose from a repertoire of genre, plot, theme and setting, and call on their understanding of politics, history, and society. Nonetheless, students tend to believe what is on the written page, repeated out loud on television or radio, and most recently, to believe what is accessed via the Worldwide Web. There are specific things students can look for when asked to use the news media as a resource or as a source of information to answer specific questions. Following is a list of questions related to media messages.

- Where is the information? Is it in the body of the story, the headline, a caption, or an advertisement?
- Where is the information found? Are all media covering the same topic? Is it being shown only on television and ignored by the print media? Is the information on a Website?
- Who is providing the information? Is the source credible? Is it from the news agencies, an individual, a

stakeholder in a particular issue, or a columnist?

- How can the information be verified? Do all media (television, radio, print, and electronic) agree?

## ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

In this activity, students will be comparing and contrasting media and the ways that various media present information about tobacco. Specifically, students will be determining how news events are presented, what influences those news events, and how historic, political, social, and economic contexts influence the news.

1. Define a tobacco-related issue. For example, environmental tobacco smoke (secondhand smoke), legislation regarding tobacco use, sale of tobacco products to minors, tobacco advertising, use of tobacco settlement funds, etc.
2. Have students write down what they already know about that issue and where they got their information. After completing the activity, have students react to their comments.

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3. Have students find news media coverage from as many different
4. Students fill in the Comparison Chart (see Student Page).
5. Have students discuss their findings and compare charts among individuals or groups.
6. Using the same issue, students complete the Media Influences Diagram (see Student Page).

### Tying It All Together

Choose one or more of the issues defined by students or groups of students. This will be the basis for a Socratic Seminar. A Socratic Seminar begins with a question. In this case, the issue students choose to work with will determine the question. The discussion results as students attempt to find answer to the original question. In this case, groups of students represent each of the four circles on the Media Influences Diagram and use that context to frame their discussion and answers.

A question that you could use is: How has the media dealt with the issue of smoking in public places? Discuss this and attempt to answer the question from each of the four perspectives in the Media Influences Diagram.

### Resources

Science, Tobacco & You Website, Asking and Sharing, In The News  
<http://scienceu/news/index.html>

### Homework and Assessment

Research how other areas of the state, country, and world have responded to this issue. Report back to the class on similarities and differences among

media as possible on the issue they have chosen.  
newspapers and web-based reports from other locations.

Research the following question, “How do other countries deal with the problem of smoking in public places?”

### Standards

#### Florida Sunshine State Standards

Science: SC.H.1.2.3, SC.H.1.2.4, SC.H.3.2.4

Social Studies: SS.A.1.2.1, SS.A.1.2.2, SS.A.2.2.3, SS.B.1.2.5, SS.B.2.2.3

Language Arts: LA.A.1.2.1, LA.A.1.2.2, LA.A.1.2.4, LA.A.2.2.1, LA.A.2.2.5, LA.A.2.2.6, LA.A.2.2.8, LA.B.1.2.1, LA.B.1.2.2, LA.B.1.2.3, LA.B.2.2.1, LA.B.2.2.4, LA.C.1.2.1, LA.C.1.2.3, LA.C.1.2.4, LA.C.1.2.5, LA.C.2.2.1, LA.C.2.2.2, LA.C.3.2.2, LA.D.2.2.3, LA.D.2.2.4, LA.D.2.2.5

Health: HE.A.1.2, HE.A.2.2, HE.B.1.2, HE.B.2.2, HE.C.2.2

#### National Science Education Standards

K-4: Content Standards C, E, F, G  
5-8: Content Standards C, E, F, G

### Extensions

Research, using print and electronic media, legislation regarding tobacco use in other countries. Include references to how media has influenced policy.

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Write a paper with the following paragraphs:

1. Identify the issue you researched in this activity.
2. What new information did you acquire by reading the newspaper, listening to the radio, watching television, or surfing the internet?
3. How has your opinion changed as a result?

### **Literature Links**

*The Landry News* by Andrew Clements, Aladdin Paperbacks, ISBN 0-689-82868-3. This story about a fifth-grade class addresses the power of the media. A new girl in town starts a newspaper that may result in the teacher losing his job.

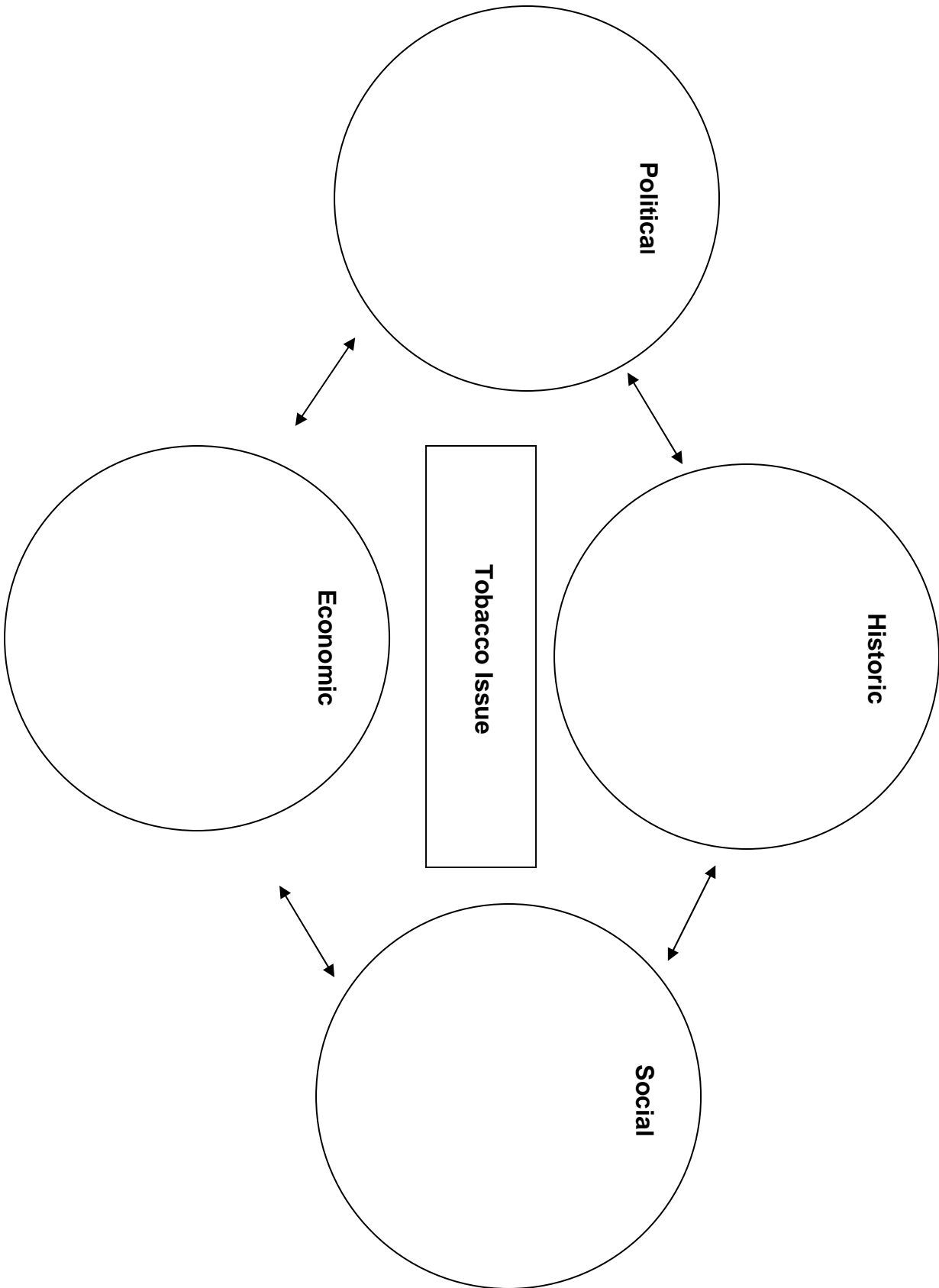
*The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs!* As told to Jon Scieszka, Scholastic Books, ISBN 0-590-45495-1. This retelling of the classic three little pigs story shows how different things can be when viewed from a different perspective. Was the Wolf framed?

## MEDIA COMPARISON CHART

Fill in the chart comparing newspapers or news magazines with television and/or radio and electronic sources such as the internet or other computer sources.

	Newspaper/News Magazine	Television/Radio	Electronic Sources
What is the topic of the news story?			
How much space was given to the story? (For example, how much time, how many columns, how many pages?)			
What sources or quotes, if any, are cited?			
Give as many details as you can. (Who, what, when, where, and how?)			
Why do you think this story was included at this time?			
What do you think about the story? Did the story make any difference to your actions, your life, or your thinking?			

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**MEDIA INFLUENCES DIAGRAM**