



Cultural Awareness and Appreciation

CA-02

WebQuest



CQ⁺

De-escalating Polarisation
in Europe



THEME ALLOCATED:	Cultural Awareness and appreciation (CA 02)
TITLE OF THE WEBQUEST:	Awareness Campaign detecting bias in Media
INTRODUCTION	
<p>The purpose of this WebQuest is to help you to see the different ways stories are presented in the media.</p> <p>You are a journalist that presently works in the marketing department of an international company in Madrid, but your life-long dream is to become a news editor. Convinced that it is time you pursue your dream, you decide to enroll in a news writing course to improve your skills. The first lesson you are going to learn is about identifying biases in the news, and how to write news reports that are truthful, transparent and unbiased.</p>	
TASKS	
<p>You will have to choose a current event and after reading different news sources on the topic, present an analysis of the biases they found in the articles, and finally write their own conclusions about what really happened in the form of a news report.</p>	
PROCESS	
<p>Step 1) Read the following article or if you prefer you can pick any other headline news story or event to research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2023-01-25/spain-1-dead-in-attack-with-bladed-weapon-at-church	



Step 2) Find 4 more articles online about the same topic. If you have chosen the suggested topic, you may use some the following links or find different ones online:

- <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-64421278>
- <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-11676945/Terrorist-stabs-church-official-death-wounds-southern-Spain.html>
- <https://www.politico.eu/article/church-terrorist-attack-algeciras-spain-clergyman-killed/>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/jan/27/spain-algeciras-churches-attack-rightwing-leaders-islam-comments>
- <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/machete-attack-church-spain-sexton-killed-priest-injured-diego-valencia-antonio-rodriguez/>

Step 3) Next, for each news source, address the following:

- Main points of their story
- Potential bias evident in story
- Similarities/Differences between this source and the other sources

Step 4) If you are unsure about the credibility of the news source you choose, try evaluating it first.

Here you will find useful advice on how to do it:

- <https://www.poynter.org/educators-students/2016/9-questions-to-help-you-evaluate-the-credibility-of-news-sources/>
- https://libguides.rutgers.edu/fake_news

Step 5) Now write your own report of the event in a fair and balanced way, even if



you have a strong opinion about it.

Step 6) Next, you will have to create a presentation explaining the following:

- What specific pieces of information are or not included, and why
- What biases you saw in other sources, and how they impacted your decisions in writing your own article.
- How this activity will influence the ways you gather information in the future

EVALUATION

Please indicate your stance on the following statements:

- 1) I have learnt to distinguish between the different types of biases present in the news (yes, no, not sure).
- 2) I have learnt to effectively analyse sources (yes, no, not sure)
- 3) I can now discuss the concept of bias and prejudice more broadly (yes, no, not sure)
- 4) I have learnt to outline the DOs and DON'Ts when writing unbiased news reports (yes, no, enough)
- 5) I understand the consequences of biased reporting (yes, no, not sure)
- 6) I now know how to evaluate the content on a news article (yes, no, not sure)
- 7) I am more aware of the way biases affect our decisions (yes, no, not sure)
- 8) I am more aware of the source's motive for providing the information (yes, no, not sure)
- 9) I understand that sometimes the bias is due to missing information (what is missing is more relevant than what is present in the article) (yes, no, not sure)



10) Would you recommend this exercise to improve everyone's knowledge on how to choose reliable news sources? (yes, no, not sure)

CONCLUSION

No one is free of all bias since no one is perfectly objective. So, every article is bound to have some form of bias.

In an ideal world, journalists should only use factual and concise language in news reporting. They should not use words which convey their own opinion or influence their reader to feel a certain way. Use of 'influencing' language is another way in which news reports can be biased.

Since the media are the primary source of information for most people, associated bias may influence viewer political opinions or party preferences, and even impact voting behaviour. Furthermore, biased information can have undesirable societal consequences such as group polarization, intolerance of dissent, and political segregation. It can also have an impact on group decision-making. The implications of selective exposure theory amplify the severity of slanted news coverage: people prefer to consume information that confirms their worldview while avoiding information that contradicts it (confirmation bias). Selecting just confirmatory material reaffirms one's own opinion, and there is no need to re-evaluate previous stances.

To overcome this influence, there are some practices that can help us:

We can start by sourcing news from less-biased Media. Although it may seem difficult to find news from an article that does not lean in one direction, you can avoid having your opinions influenced by reading news from sources that are known for eliminating bias in their reporting.

Also, we can choose to read the same topic from a variety of sources. After finishing



this WebQuest, you now understand how different the reader's reaction will be to the different versions of the article you have just evaluated.

By introducing these practices in our everyday lives, we can reduce the influence of media bias in our opinions and views.



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