



Lesson Title	How do I feel that my culture is misunderstood by others?	
	Age Range/ Year Group	KS4
Resources	Learning Outcomes	
1. Three newspaper articles (i.e. from three different newspapers) which focus upon the same story. This story should be about someone from a minority group. 2. Resource Sheet 1. Task 1 – What is the difference between facts and opinions within the media? Task 2 – Can we believe everything that we see or hear? 3. Resource Sheet 2. Task 3 – Is the same story written in the same way by every newspaper? 4. Resource Sheet 3. Task 4 – How can we take more care in terms of how we react to news stories? 5. Resource Sheet 4. Task 5 – What responsibility do we have in terms of the media?	By the end of this lesson students will be able to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the relevance of the difference between fact and opinion within the media. • Distinguish between fact and opinion within the media. 	

LESSON INTRODUCTION

This lesson encourages students to distinguish between fact and opinion within the media (and to appreciate the need to do so). Students also consider that cultural misunderstandings can be created by the media, and that people should handle the media’s interpretations of events in a responsible manner.

STARTER (10 mins)

- Ask a student to explain the difference between fact and opinion.
- Ask students to read task one. Next, ask them to decide which headlines seem factual and which seem opinion-based.

Answers:

FACT - 2, 4, 5, 8 & 9. OPINION – 1, 3, 6, 7 & 10.

- Ask the following questions:
 - How did you decide which headlines were which?
 - Which headlines told you something about a journalist’s opinions?
 - Which headlines were probably linked to biased stories?
 - Are facts always interpreted in the same way by different people?
 - Do you think that most of the headlines that you see in real life are based upon fact or upon opinion?
- Praise those who respond.
- Ask students to read task two. Encourage students to comment.
- An example of a constructive response might be:

“I thought that the quote made a lot of sense. It made me think about the fact that I often look at photographs in the newspaper without even bothering to read the stories. I suppose that the photographs are probably chosen because they represent journalists’ opinions rather than because they present balanced facts.”

MAIN ACTIVITY (15 mins).

- Ask students to get into groups of three or four and give each group the three newspaper articles.
- Ask students to read through task three and to complete the table. Explain to students that they should put ticks and crosses into the table (which they can expand upon in writing if they so wish).
- Ask spokespersons from a few groups to explain what their groups learnt from the activity.

Example of a good response:

“We realised that newspaper 1 always portrayed Hassan as lazy and selfish. The way that the story was written made you feel that he stole the bread because he didn’t have any respect for the law. Newspaper 2 made Hassan seem like a different person. He came across as a hardworking man for whom we should feel pity because he could not afford to feed his child. Newspaper 3 didn’t really tell you what to think about Hassan. It just seemed to tell you the facts. Filling in the table made us realise how many hidden messages there are in certain newspaper articles.”

SUMMARY (15 mins).

- Show students task four.
- Encourage students to work individually on the task (filling in their answers on the sheet).
- Invite students to share their answers with the class.

Prompt questions might include:

- Which minority groups seem to have lots of negative things said about them in the media?
- Why is it important to challenge media-created stereotypes?
- How might members of minority groups feel about the way in which they’re treated by the media?
- What effect might opinion-based journalism have on cultural misunderstandings?

A good answer might be:

“For question 3, I put that men always seem to be portrayed as violent in newspapers. This is damaging to their reputation and very unfair. The great majority of men sort out problems with their mouths rather than with their fists.”

- Ask students to think carefully about the personal pledge in task five.
- (Students might be encouraged to take the personal pledge home with them to act as an anti-extremism tool).

Useful vocabulary that might be written on the board to prompt thought includes:

BALANCE, BIAS, EXTREMISM, FACT, FREEDOM OF SPEECH, MINORITY GROUPS, MISUNDERSTANDING, MYTH, INFLUENCE, OPINION, RIGHT, RESPONSIBILITY, STEREOTYPE etc.





EXTENSION/FOLLOW UP IDEAS

Look at three news websites this week and compare the ways in which they present the same stories.

Decide which of the websites relies most heavily upon fact, and which relies most heavily upon opinion.

Be ready to show/explain your findings to the other students next lesson.

CHECK THE WEB

1. www.extremenews.org.uk for thought-provoking material about how extremism can be tackled (through the media and otherwise).
2. <http://www.sawtrycc.com/docs/020111/opinion%20bias%20in%20newspapers.pdf> for a somewhat jocular summary of British newspapers.

NATIONAL CURRICULUM LINKS

KS4: 1.1.b, 1.2.a, 2.1.a, 2.1.b, 2.1.c, 2.1.d, 2.2.a, 3a, 3f, 3g, 4a, 4b, 4c & 4i.

TASK ONE. What is the difference between facts and opinions within the media?

Lots of people think that everything that they read in the paper or see on the television is true. The reality is that there is a huge difference between fact and opinion.

Look at the following ten headlines. Which five seem to represent fact? Which five seem to represent opinion?

1. Lazy vicar makes stupid decision about the cemetery!
2. Local baker closes down due to recession!
3. Hardworking teacher kicked out of job due to selfish immigrant neighbour!
4. Government announces plans to encourage recycling at home!
5. New six-lane motorway to be built soon!
6. Crazy tax increase used to pay for greedy fatties!
7. Teenagers more arrogant than ever!
8. Scientists prove caffeine causes headaches!
9. Cats live longer in certain areas of country!
10. Government adviser has fantastic taste in clothes!

TASK TWO. Can we believe everything that we see or hear?

Even very intelligent people can sometimes find it hard to tell the difference between fact and opinion within the media.

Read the quote below. Think about whether you are sometimes fooled by what the media tells you.

{The following is taken from www.extremenews.org.uk}.

“News is a business. Extremism is news and it’s good for business! The media is often quoted as being the source of something factual and yet surprisingly the phrase ‘don’t believe everything you read in the paper’ is also well established. We have an ability to suspend our inquisitive nature and accept something in the media as true when normally we might question the content or the basis of what is being said, this is despite knowing we wouldn’t especially trust what we read or heard.”

‘Extreme News’ website.



TASK THREE. Is the same story written in the same way by every newspaper?

It is really interesting to see that the same story is usually written very differently by different journalists.

Look at your three newspaper articles and use them to fill in the table below.

SUMMARY OF STORY: _____

	Newspaper 1:	Newspaper 2:	Newspaper 3:
1. Is the person's cultural background necessary to the story?			
2. Is all of the information in the story relevant?			
3. Is the information balanced?			
4. Can the reader tell what the journalist's opinion is?			
5. Is the story representative of everyday life?			
6. Might the story promote racism?			
7. Is the language in the article sensationalist?			
8. Does any of the information seem exaggerated?			
9. Is the article aimed at a particular type of reader?			
10. How do I feel about the story now that I've read three different versions?			

TASK FOUR. How can we take more care in terms of how we react to news stories?

The fact that it is often hard to distinguish fact from opinion within the media means that cultural misunderstanding can very easily arise.

Finish the following sentences. The first two have been done for you.

A. The media sometimes gives the message that **Christians**...attack doctors who carry out abortions... In reality, the huge majority of Christians...do not attack anyone!

B. The media sometimes gives the message that **Muslims**...refuse to talk to non-Muslims...In reality, the huge majority of Muslims...associate with lots of type of people!

C. The media sometimes gives the message that men.....
.....In reality, the huge majority of **men**.....
.....!

D. The media sometimes gives the message that **French people**
.....In reality, the huge majority of French people
.....!

E. The media sometimes gives the message that **teenagers**
.....In reality, the huge majority of teenagers
.....!

F. The media sometimes gives the message that **atheists**
.....In reality, the huge majority of atheists
.....!

G. The media sometimes gives the message that **women**
.....In reality, the huge majority of women
.....!

H. The media sometimes gives the message that **German people**
.....In reality, the huge majority of German people
.....!

I. The media sometimes gives the message that **immigrants**
.....In reality, the huge majority of immigrants
.....!

J. The media sometimes gives the message that **black people**
..... In reality, the huge majority of black people
.....!





Fact and opinion within the media

TASK FIVE. What responsibility do we have in terms of the media?

Most young adults take an interest in the news. However, not all of them think carefully enough about how the news is chosen or presented.

Look at the ‘personal pledge’ below. From now on you might choose to look at your pledge whenever you interact with the media.

MY PERSONAL PLEDGE.

From now on, whenever I read a newspaper/internet article or access the news on television/the radio, I will....

E.g. Think about alternative interpretations of the facts.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____
