iCivics

What Is Media?



Elizabeth Anderson Lopez

TCM Teacher Created Materials

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What Is Media?

You learn many things at school, but that is not the only way to learn. You can learn from watching TV or reading articles online. You might read magazines or newspapers. They make it easy to stay up-to-date with news. Those sources are known as *media*. They report on sports, entertainment, world events, and lots of other topics.



People read and watch the news.

Review Only

The media plays an important role in our freedoms as citizens. We expect to read truthful stories. In return, we must learn to judge what we read. We have to be able to tell facts from opinions. It can be a tough job! There is a famous saying that goes: "You can't believe everything you read." It is up to the reader to decide.



Review Only

Jump into Fiction

Yoli's Lesson

Yoli and her dad were in the kitchen when she heard the theme music for *Hughes on News*. She wanted to be a reporter, and the song made her smile.

"Good evening, I'm George Hughes," the man on the screen began. "Mayor Timmons should be fired! He isn't doing enough to help the shelter find homes for dogs and cats. He doesn't like animals."



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Yoli stopped what she was doing, confused. "Dad," Yoli began. "Mr. Hughes clearly doesn't like the mayor. I thought reporters were supposed to stick to the facts."

Yoli's dad smiled. "You're right," he tells her. "But there are different kinds of reporters. George Hughes's show is all about his opinions. You write articles for the school website, right? As a columnist, you tell students what you think about different topics. Hughes is kind of like that."



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Yoli thought about what her dad said. But she was still confused. Yoli's dad turned on his tablet and went to a few websites about the animal shelter. "The city website says it gave less money to the animal shelter this year than last year," Yoli's dad reads aloud. "That means Hughes is right," Yoli replies.



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"Not exactly," her dad says. "The fact that they got less money is a fact. The mayor not wanting to help animals is an opinion. Hughes said it's the mayor's fault. But there may be other reasons. Can you think of some?"

"Um…maybe the mayor isn't the only one who decides how money should be spent?"

"That's true," Yoli's dad agrees. "Hughes is sharing news, but he's also sharing his opinion. Being able to tell fact from opinion is important."



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Back to Nonfiction

What Is Media?

The media is a great tool to learn about all sorts of things. There are newspapers, magazines, online sources, and more. But not everything you read or hear is true. Learn how to be a truth detective and tell facts from opinions!

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