



ANSONIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Journalism I and II (Grades 9, 10, 11, 12)

Courtesy · **P**ride · **P**erseverance · **C**ooperation

Chargers Promoting Positive Change

The mission of AHS is to prepare all students to reach their potential by teaching them the knowledge, skills and behaviors necessary for academic, civic, and social success. Students will be college and career ready in the ever-changing technological world of the 21st century by meeting high expectations, engaging in authentic problem solving, and utilizing critical thinking.

Academic Expectations

- Apply critical thinking skills to solve problems
- Access, evaluate, apply, and communicate information and ideas through writing, speaking, and effective use of technology
- Read effectively for a variety of purposes
- Work independently, reflectively, and/or collaboratively to accomplish goals

Civic Expectation

- Demonstrate service to the school and community

Social Expectation

- Demonstrate respect for self, others, and property within our school community

Ansonia's Vision of a Graduate

Content Area: English	Course: TBD
Vision of Graduate: • Communication & Collaborator • Critical Thinking • Life Long Learner • Responsible Citizen	Standards for English Language Arts 1. Reading: Text complexity and the growth of comprehension 2. Writing: Text types, responding to reading, and research 3. Speaking and Listening: Flexible communication and collaboration 4. Language: Conventions, effective use, and vocabulary
Unit Titles	
Unit 1: Introduction to Journalism	
Unit 2: Interviewing	
Unit 3: Writing Production	
Unit 4: Law & Ethics	
Unit 5: Multimedia Production	

Course Overview:
As a half-year elective, students will not only study the elements of journalistic writing, but also the elements of journalism. Students will differentiate these components and demonstrate their ability to apply them within a true journalistic presentation. <i>Fulfills Humanities Elective.</i>

Unit 1: Introduction to Journalism

Priority Standards:	Supporting Standards:
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.7 Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person's life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.7 Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
Big Ideas	Essential Questions
- Journalists determine what news is using the six elements of news, along with other publication-specific factors that influence news judgment. - Journalistic writing has a different organization structure, complexity and style than communication arts writing. However, it still uses the same writing process and employs both gathering information and citing sources. - Journalistic writing is different because it has a different purpose and audience than communication arts writing.	- How do journalists determine what is news? - How is journalistic writing different from (and the same as) communication arts writing? - Why is journalistic writing different from communication arts writing?
AHS Expectations	
Apply critical thinking skills to solve problems.	

- Access, evaluate, apply and communicate information and ideas through writing, speaking and effective use of technology.
- Read effectively for a variety of purposes.
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Skills (I will be able to...)

- Identify and evaluate an author's core purpose, stance, and point of view within various news articles and media publications.
- Deconstruct rhetoric and analyze how journalists use specific language, tone, and framing to influence an audience or advance a viewpoint.
- Compare and contrast how the same news event or story is covered across different media platforms (e.g., comparing a print newspaper article to a video broadcast or podcast).
- Evaluate and cross-check multiple sources of media information to identify bias, emphasize key details, and ensure factual accuracy.
- Draft clear and objective informative text that conveys complex news events accurately without injecting personal opinion.
- Structure news stories using specialized journalistic formats (such as the Inverted Pyramid layout) that differ significantly from traditional academic essays.
- Adapt writing style, vocabulary, and pacing to match different journalistic tasks, specific target audiences, and publication formats.
- Integrate narrative techniques (like descriptive detail and clear event sequencing) when drafting long-form feature stories or profiles.

Unit 2: Interviewing

Priority Standards:	Supporting Standards:
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.7 Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person's life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.7 Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation
Big Ideas	Essential Questions
- Journalists prepare for an interview by setting goals, choosing sources, doing research and writing open-ended questions. This preparation gives them credibility and results in better responses. - Journalists listen, ask follow-up questions, take detailed notes and observe throughout the interview. They spend 25% or less of the conversation talking. - Journalists use a variety of news gathering techniques including observation, research, polling and crowdsourcing. However, the primary source should always be real people. - Journalists can get credible, accurate information from reputable, professional organizations, websites, academic databases, etc.	- How do journalists prepare for an interview? Why is it important to do so? - How do journalists conduct their interviews to get the best possible information from their sources? How do journalists gather information in ways other than interviews? - Why is it important for journalists to use credible sources? How do you determine credibility? - After gathering information from multiple sources, how do journalists choose what to put in their stories?

and use several tests to determine this credibility. Journalists evaluate information using the 5Ws and H and the three types of quotes to choose the best information to include in their stories.	
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Skills (I will be able to...)	
- Formulate open-ended, focused questions that avoid simple "yes" or "no" answers and encourage deep, informative responses from sources. - Conduct preliminary research on an interview subject or topic using reputable websites, professional organizations, and databases to build foundational knowledge and journalist credibility. - Establish explicit goals and select target sources (prioritizing real people as primary sources) most relevant to the scope of an investigative question or story. - Apply credibility tests to evaluate and filter background information before integrating it into a research profile or interview prep sheet. - Execute active listening techniques during live conversations, ensuring the journalist speaks 25% or less of the time to give the source maximum space to share. - Generate spontaneous follow-up questions in real-time based on a source's answers rather than strictly adhering to a pre-written script. - Document detailed notes and record sensory observations (e.g., body language, facial expressions, setting environment) during an active interview to capture subtext and narrative details. - Deploy alternative news-gathering strategies—including polling, observational fieldwork, and crowdsourcing—to complement traditional primary source interviews.	

Unit 3: Writing Production

Priority Standards:	Supporting Standards:
● CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. ● CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.6 Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature. ● CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.8 Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning. ● CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.	● CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences. ● CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others. ● CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. ● CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
Big Ideas	Essential Questions
● Journalistic writing differs by genre in organization, use of different types of leads, focus on different types of quotes, use of statistics and narrative perspective. However, the genres all use basic journalistic structure, style and source citation. ● Journalistic writing genres are different based on their specific purpose and audience.	● How are the different genres of journalistic writing different? How are they the same? ● Why are the different genres of journalistic writing different? Why are they the same?
AHS Expectations	
● Apply critical thinking skills to solve problems. ● Access, evaluate, apply and communicate information and ideas through writing, speaking and effective use of technology. ● Read effectively for a variety of purposes. ● Work independently, reflectively, and/or collaboratively to accomplish goals.	
Skills (I will be able to...)	

- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- Synthesize unstructured information Students analyze raw observation data, messy field notes, and scattered interview quotes, systematically filtering out conversational "fluff" to reconstruct a clear, logically sequenced narrative.
- Differentiate text density and structures Students contrast minimal text formats (like active headlines) with deeply contextual prose (like feature leads and nut grafs) to understand how structural layout changes based on target audience and purpose.
- Evaluate media writing against criteria Students audit their own drafts and the work of their peers by using explicit industry guidelines, such as headline conventions or sports writing checklists, to self-correct and edit objectively.
- Deconstruct historical publication models Students mine historical media archives and past publications to analyze real-world text layouts, identifying the specific rhetoric and stylistic choices that make a written piece engaging or weak.
- Construct concise summary statements Students evaluate long-form news stories under strict time constraints to extract the most vital angle, condensing entire multi-paragraph reports into punchy, active single-line statements.

Unit 4: Law and Ethics

Priority Standards:	Supporting Standards:
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.7 Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person's life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language of a court opinion differs from that of a newspaper). CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.8 Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning.	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.2 Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
Big Ideas	Essential Questions
- Journalists need to understand law and ethics so they know their rights and responsibilities in order to make decisions. - Student journalists hold limited press rights in comparison to professionals as a result of landmark court decisions. - Journalists apply their knowledge of law and ethics to a decision-making process in order to determine what stories run and how to run them.	- Why is it important for journalists to understand law and ethics? - How are student press rights different from professional press rights? - How do journalists make decisions about what stories to run?
AHS Expectations	
- Apply critical thinking skills to solve problems. - Access, evaluate, apply and communicate information and ideas through writing, speaking and effective use of technology.	

- Read effectively for a variety of purposes.
- Work independently, reflectively, and/or collaboratively to accomplish goals.

Skills (I will be able to...)

- Analyze complex real-world scenarios to balance the public's right to know against privacy concerns, libel laws, and journalistic ethics, arriving at a group consensus on whether to run a story.
- Dissect the precise language of the First Amendment and examine historical court cases to determine how student press freedoms and speech rights are legally upheld or limited.
- Extract vital information, ruling arguments, and societal impacts from a legal case under tight time constraints, condensing complex judicial findings
- Formulate and analyze audience data
- Engage in structured rhetorical discourse.

Unit 5: Multimedia Production

Priority Standards:	Supporting Standards:
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2.B Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2.A Formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension 3.Collaborative technologies to work with others, including peers, experts or community members, to examine issues and problems from multiple viewpoints. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.7 Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.8 Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.1.B Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.
Big Ideas	Essential Questions
- Journalists use video, photo, audio and graphics to tell a broad array of stories that may appeal to different audiences and may have a different purpose than writing. - Journalism is ever changing and in order to be marketable in college and career, journalists now must have skills in all media. This also allows the journalist to tell the story in the best possible way. - Journalists use a variety of media together to tell a more well-rounded, whole story than might be possible with just writing.	- How do journalists tell stories and communicate messages using media other than writing? - Why is it important to be a multimedia journalist and not focus only on print? - How do journalists use different media together to tell a story?
AHS Expectations	
- Apply critical thinking skills to solve problems. - Access, evaluate, apply and communicate information and ideas through writing, speaking and effective use of technology. - Read effectively for a variety of purposes.	

- Work independently, reflectively, and/or collaboratively to accomplish goals.

Skills (I will be able to...)

- Deconstruct visual framing and composition
- Analyze photographs and video footage to identify and evaluate the intentional placement of subjects using industry-standard visual guidelines, such as the rule of thirds and the seven rules of composition.
- Translate abstract design principles into physical models
- Synthesize textual data into visual infographics
- Extract complex data points, statistics, and narrative threads from professional news articles and translate them into clean, self-explanatory infographic components that expand upon a written text.
- Execute precise videography techniques, manipulating physical distance, stability, and camera angles (such as applying the ten-finger rule) to capture clean, professional-grade footage in the field.
- Embed themselves within a public space to discover unscripted human-interest angles, gathering active b-roll and situational interviews to construct a compelling, real-world visual feature story.

