Event Events Guided Practice:  
Strategy for Identifying and Evaluating Information

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Introduction
This strategy was designed to help students derive meaning from current event articles. Students often struggle with finding the significance in articles and realizing a deeper understanding of the article itself. A traditional approach to current events had asked students to read an article of their choice. They were then asked to identify the "who, what, when, where, why, and how" of the piece. This had resulted in short, poorly phrased responses indicating little thought and/or effort. This strategy was devised to encourage students to focus on three or four specific higher-level tasks.

This strategy was used in eighth grade heterogeneously grouped social studies classes.

Step 1: Identifying the Strategy
The goal of the lesson is to increase reading comprehension as well as identify and evaluate the key ideas of the article. Previous student responses indicate that they often did not read for meaning, but rather, they scanned the article to identify short answers. They often did not go beyond basic knowledge-telling level answer completion. This strategy will assist students in developing a deeper understanding and creating higher level responses.

This strategy consists of appropriately selected thinksheets. One thinksheet (Addendum A) includes identifying what new information in the article that was not known before, to whom the information is important, why
this event is important, and a one sentence summary statement. The second
thinksheet (Addendum B) includes what is the news. to whom the information
is important, why it is important, and a summary statement. The rationale for
two thinksheets is based on the premise that varied learning styles are better
served by different thinksheets.

**Step 2: Modeling the Strategy**

Prior to reading the article for the assignment, the teacher will distribute
copies of the thinksheet and discuss the steps involved in completion of each
task on the organizer. The students will follow the explanations of the tasks on
the thinksheet. The article selected will relate to local, national, or international
events or issues. The teacher will provide student copies. After giving the class
five minutes to read the article silently, the teacher will lead the students
through the completion of each task using an overhead projector.

**Step 3: Scaffolding the Task**

After the group practice, the teacher gives the students a second current
event article and thinksheet. Students will work in pairs to complete the tasks.
Each group will compare their response to another’s. The teacher will solicit
student responses and provide immediate response.

**Step 4: Providing Additional Practice**

This strategy will be employed throughout the school year with students
working individually. Students will work toward proficiency resulting in
carryover to other reading analysis tasks. A logical extension of this strategy is
to allow students the opportunity to state their opinions concerning the article.
This allows the students to see that opinions are shaped from the acquisition of
factual information.

**Conclusion**

Completing the thinksheets requires the student to read the article in its
entirety, sort the key components of the article, and evaluate its significance.

**Suggestions for Adapting the Strategy in other Grades or Content Areas**

The incorporation of this strategy across the curriculum would
correspond well with the New York State Standards of information gathering in
Language Arts, Science, and also as demonstrated here, in Social Studies.

**Thinksheets**

Copies are attached.
What is new in this article?

To whom is this important, or whom will this effect?

Why is this important?

Summary Statement:
What is the main idea of this article? (one sentence only)
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<tr>
<th>What is the news?</th>
<th>To whom is it important?</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why is it important?</th>
<th>Summary Statement:</th>
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Title

Source

http://www.currentevents.edu