

Power Analysis of Current Events

Grade Level: 5-12
Time: 30-50 minutes

Objectives:

- Become familiar with the concept of power.
- Analyze a news story in terms of power.
- Identify relations of power among actors in a news story.

Curricular Connections: Civics, Visual and Language Arts

Materials/ Resources: Highlighters, [Power Analysis Questionnaire](http://www.publicachievement.org/TeacherGuide/Activities/PowerAnalysisQuestionnaire.pdf) (<http://www.publicachievement.org/TeacherGuide/Activities/PowerAnalysisQuestionnaire.pdf>) news stories featuring young people taking action or involved in politics (a good source is the New York Times: www.nytimes.com/learning). Make sure that each story involves two or more actors.

Procedure:

- 1) Students will review what power means (ability to influence or make change).
- 2) Students will read story looking for power relations (this can be done individually or in pairs). Tell them that the word “power” may not be in the story, but you are looking for instances where people are trying to influence or make change.
- 3) Have students complete the accompanying handout .
- 4) Students will gather in a group, and discuss their analysis of power in the stories.
 - a. Where did students find power in the story? Discuss different responses.
 - b. Who had power? How did they exercise it?
 - c. What could they do differently to be more successful?
- 5) As a class create a “power map” of each story on the board (see <http://www.publicachievement.org/TeacherGuide/MainText/MindMapping.pdf>)

Reflection:

- Students discuss the different insights gained from analyzing information according to power relations.

Assessment:

1. Completed hand out demonstrates reading comprehension and analytic ability to correctly identify power relations.
2. Hand out / power map demonstrates students beginning understandings of power.
3. Discussions gauge depth of students’ understandings of power.

Source: Roudy Hildreth