

25 Ideas for Using Newspapers in the College Classroom

- 1. Class Opener: Current Events Questions**
Begin each class with a current events question. Read the answer from the paper.
- 2. Keeping Current: Article Presentations**
Students find a course-related article at least 250 words long, and present the article to the class.
- 3. Course-Relevant Clipping Project**
Students find and summarize one article per week relevant to the course content.
- 4. Clipping Project: Specific Topics**
Assign students to find and summarize articles on specific topics such as unemployment, the Federal Reserve or gross domestic product.
- 5. Analysis of Issues: One-Page Papers**
Distribute article(s) with specific questions addressed: What happened? What do you think about the issues involved? What concepts (e.g., economic) are involved?
- 6. Current Events Topic of the Week**
Devote the first or last five minutes of class to discussion of the topic. Grade on participation.
- 7. Group News Projects**
Divide students into groups and assign each group a different current topic to research and present.
- 8. Develop Research Skills**
Students select three articles on same topic, take notes, write thesis, write paragraphs supporting thesis, use citations.
- 9. Practice Research Skills**
Distribute articles for students to use to practice summarizing, paraphrasing, using quotations, avoiding plagiarism and citing sources.
- 10. Newspaper-Based Research Paper**
Use the front page of the newspaper for 10 consecutive days as the basis for research paper.
- 11. Compare Perspectives**
Develop key questions to help student compare points of view on a current topic from a New York Times editorial to those expressed in another source. On international issues, try comparing to a foreign paper.
- 12. Use the Crossword Puzzles**
Teach vocabulary with crossword puzzle competitions. Divide students into groups of three for 15-minute blocks.
- 13. International Relations Research Project**
Assign a research topic involving relations between the United States and another country in the news. (Use International News Summary and World Briefing).

14. Analyze Editorials

Assign students to read several editorials and write one of their own on a selected topic.

15. Analyze Letters to the Editor

Assign students to read several letters to the editor and write one of their own on a selected topic.

16. Analyze Movie Reviews

Assign students to read several movies reviews and write one of their own.

17. Analyze Book Reviews.

Assign students to read several book reviews and write one of their own.

18. Compare Print and Electronic Versions.

Assign students to write about strengths of each version of The New York Times.

19. Assign projects using The New York Times Index

This source contains abstract of the articles back to 1851, classified under major headings such as country names or "United States Economy".

20. Compare Issues Over Time

Assign students to read about a current issue and research the developments on the topic over time.

21. Investigate Career Choices

Assign students to use nytimes.com and/or Sunday's New York Times Job Market to identify several jobs that interest them.. Having them outline their strategies for qualifying for the positions.

22. Use the Obituaries

Assign students to read the obituaries in The New York Times and identify the traits (character, education, etc.) that contributed to the achievements of the deceased.

23. Illustrate the First Amendment

Find news stories or photos illustrating freedom of religion, speech, the press or the right to peaceably assemble.

24. Introductory Assignment: Find Yourself in the Paper

Assign student to scan the paper to find an article that in some way relates to their childhood and write a paragraph about it. Students can use their paragraphs to introduce themselves.

25. Analyze Photographs

Student can discuss how photographs are used, what they add to an understanding of the article, what makes them memorable.