NEWSEUM ED

My Local News

What do you know about your community? Who lives there? What are their interests? Let's do a little research to find out.

1. Use the U.S. Census

Every 10 years, the U.S. government conducts a census – a survey of the population. The census data is freely available at http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/. Look up your city and complete the profile.

City/State: _____

Data year:_____

Population: _____

Females: _____% Males: _____%

Median age, 18 years and over: _____

Education, high school graduate or higher: _____%

Median household income: $_____

Another piece of information that you find interesting: _____

2. Interview a resident

Individuals who have lived in a community watch the people, buildings and activities change over the years – or remain the same and become a tradition. Interview someone who has lived in your community for at least 20 years. Write five questions to ask this person.

Name of person: _____

Year he or she moved to your community: _____

1._____

2._____

3._____

4._____

5._____

Record the resident's answers on a separate sheet of paper.

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3. Read the local newspaper

A newspaper reflects the community by providing information that residents want, need and should know. Read a local newspaper's front page and answer the questions below.

Name of newspaper: _____

How many stories are about an event or action that took place outside of the U.S.? _____

Focus of those stories: _____

_____

Describe the way(s) in which the stories relate to your community: _____

_____

How many stories are about a national event or action? _____

Focus of those stories: _____

_____

The way(s) in which the stories relate to your community: _____

_____

How many stories are about a state event or action? _____

Focus of the stories: _____

_____

The way(s) in which the stories relate to your community: _____

_____

How many stories are about a local event or action? _____

Focus of the stories: _____

_____

The way(s) in which the stories relate to your community: _____

_____

_____

Name:
Date:

Choose the News Gallery Guide

Visit the Today's Front Pages Gallery (Level 6)
The Newseum receives more than 800 front pages daily from newspapers across the country and around the world. Here we display 80 of these front pages. Some days the stories on the front pages are all very similar; some days they are very different.

Find a newspaper from a state where you have relatives or friends and a newspaper from your home state and compare them:

Newspaper 1	**Newspaper 2**
Home state: _____	Other state: _____
Newspaper: _____	Newspaper: _____
_____	_____
Lead story: _____	Lead story: _____
_____	_____
_____	_____
How many stories are on the front page? ___	How many stories are on the front page? ___
How many of those stories are local? _____	How many of those stories are local? _____
National? _____	National? _____
International? _____	International? _____
How many photos or graphics are on the front page? _____	How many photos or graphics are on the front page? _____

Editors often select a variety of stories for the front page. Here are some factors they use in the decision-making process:

Impact (How many are affected?)
Proximity (Where it happened?)
Timeliness (When it happened?)
Fame (Who was involved?)
Human Interest (Appeals to our emotions)
Novelty (Is unusual, a first)

What kinds of stories are the lead stories? Are they a combination of these types?

Home newspaper stories: _____

_____

_____

Other newspaper: _____

_____

_____

Pick one story from each of the two front pages that you would not have included if you were the editor and explain why.

Home newspaper story you would cut: _____

Why? _____

_____

_____

Other newspaper story you would cut: _____

Why? _____

_____

_____

Name:
Date:

Use the stories and images on each front page to deduce three things the communities care about.

Home newspaper: _____

_____

_____

Other newspaper: _____

_____

_____

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The Medium Shapes the Message

Why does the news look different depending on where it's published? How does the type of news media shape the story being covered? Use this worksheet and four news media examples to find answers to these questions.

Source that appears to cover the most stories:

_____

Source that appears to cover the fewest stories:

_____

Source that appears to cover the broadest range of topics:

_____

Source that appears to have the narrowest range of topics:

_____

Story that appears in more than one source:

_____

Story that appears in only one source:

_____

Source that uses the most pictures:

_____

Source that appears to have the most multimedia offerings:

_____

Source with the most local stories:

_____

Source with the most national stories:

_____

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Source with the most international stories:

_____

Source with the best layout (most interesting and clear), in your opinion:

_____

Source with the worst layout, in your opinion:

_____

Source with the most interesting headlines, in your opinion:

_____

Source with the least interesting headlines, in your opinion:

_____

Source that seems the most up-to-date:

_____

Source that seems the most out-of-date:

_____

Story that you were surprised to learn about:

_____

If you had to pick only one of these news sources to follow for the next month, which one would you pick? Why? What do you like about it?

_____

_____

_____

_____