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The power of perspective

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Activity introduction

Quick summary

In this lesson, students consider perspective. They begin by reading a news article about youth gambling and consider who wrote it and whether it is objective or subjective. They then explore the story further by viewing an individual's recount of their experience. They consider differences in content and the impact of each text and consider the purpose and relevance of each form of publication within the media sphere.

Learning intention

To understand the impact of perspective.

NSW Syllabus outcomes

- **EN5-1A** responds to and composes increasingly sophisticated and sustained texts for understanding, interpretation, critical analysis, imaginative expression and pleasure
- **EN5-2A** effectively uses and critically assesses a wide range of processes, skills, strategies and knowledge for responding to and composing a wide range of texts in different media and technologies
- **EN5-6C** investigates the relationships between and among texts
- **EN5-7D** understands and evaluates the diverse ways texts can represent personal and public worlds

General capabilities

Critical and creative thinking

Literacy

Ethical understanding

Personal and social capability

Relevant parts of Year 9 and 10 achievement standards

NSW Stage 5 English Syllabus Statement

Students respond to texts from different cultures that offer a range of perspectives. In considering possible meanings, they develop sustained interpretations supported by evidence and think creatively beyond the text. They infer and interpret, and investigate the similarities and differences between and among texts. Through close and wide engagement with texts students extend their imaginations and engage with images of their real and imagined worlds. They respond imaginatively and critically to verbal and visual imagery and iconography, considering how these and other features reflect the cultural context of the text. By critically evaluating texts, students identify strengths and weaknesses and are able to articulate coherent responses. From their responses to individual texts they generalise about views of the world and strategies that are used to communicate and sustain such views.

Australian Curriculum Year 9 Level Description

Students engage with a variety of texts for enjoyment. They interpret, create, evaluate, discuss and perform a wide range of literary texts in which the primary purpose is aesthetic, as well as texts designed to inform and persuade. These include various types of media texts, including newspapers, film and digital texts, fiction, non-fiction, poetry, dramatic performances and multimodal texts, with themes and issues involving levels of abstraction, higher order reasoning and intertextual references. Students develop a critical understanding of the contemporary media and the differences between media texts.

Australian Curriculum Year 10 Level Description

Students engage with a variety of texts for enjoyment. They interpret, create, evaluate, discuss and perform a wide range of literary texts in which the primary purpose is aesthetic, as well as texts designed to inform and persuade. These include various types of media texts, including newspapers, film and digital texts, fiction, non-fiction, poetry, dramatic performances and multimodal texts, with themes and issues involving levels of abstraction, higher order reasoning and intertextual references. Students develop critical understanding of the contemporary media and the differences between media texts.

Topic

Perspective in the media

Unit of work

Stage 5 English

Time required

80 minutes

Level of teacher scaffolding

This lesson involves a number of class discussions to be guided and directed by the teacher. Independent tasks link directly to the class conversations and explorations and will therefore require little additional teacher scaffolding when students are working independently.

Resources required

- Video [Snack Attack](#)
- ‘Snack Attack –perspective’ worksheet
- Sydney Morning Herald article: [As long as you gamble, you feel like an Australian’: one in six teenagers gambling underage](#)
- ‘Youth gambling –news article’ worksheet
- Video [Bayu’s Story - “When you can’t help yourself, trust the other person to help you”](#)
- ‘Youth gambling – Bayu’s Story’ worksheet
- Video [How journalists cover different perspectives -BBC My World](#)
- Learning intention display (optional)

Keywords

Perspective, objective, subjective, impact, empathy, sympathy, connection, response, audience, purpose.

Teacher worksheet

Teacher preparation

This lesson focuses on exploring how particular contexts or events can be viewed differently from alternate perspectives. To implement this lesson it is important to understand the clear distinction between point of view and perspective. Where point of view relates to the way in which the writing is constructed (usually in first or third person), perspective relates to whose view is being shared or interpreted.

In terms of fiction, a story could be told from one particular character's perspective (e.g. Harry Potter's) but still written in the third person (e.g. "The problem was, strange things often happened around Harry and it was just no good telling the Dursleys he didn't make them happen"). In this lesson, perspective is considered within the context of the media. Students explore its relevance to communicating 'truths' to the general population.

Further resources:

[Define differences between perspective & point of view](#)

[Point of view vs perspective](#)

[PERSPECTIVE: What is perspective? Definition, usage, and literary examples](#)

This lesson considers perspective, by exploring texts based around youth gambling. Given that gambling can be a high-risk activity and is a priority concern for young people it is recommended that teachers and parents read the Facilitator pack before implementing the lesson. The pack provides teachers and parents

with essential information about gambling harm amongst young people and clarifies the nature of gambling-related behaviours as well as how to approach sensitive topics.

Learning intention

To understand that perspective influences interpretation of a particular context or event.

Success criteria

Students can:

- identify the perspective of a text.
- recognise how different perspectives influence readers and viewers in different ways.
- suggest what actions individuals can take to seek to understand the objective truth of a situation.
- identify the role and responsibility of the media in giving a well rounded view of issues.

Teaching sequence

15 minutes - Lesson introduction

20 minutes - Part A: The media:
impartial perspectives

20 minutes - Part B: The media:
personal stories

20 minutes - Part C: Impact of
perspective in the media

5 minutes - Reflection

Lesson introduction

1. Display the learning intention and success criteria for the lesson. This can be written onto the board, or the included learning intentions resource can be displayed. Invite students to read and discuss the learning intention and success criteria to ensure understanding before beginning the lesson.
2. Tune the students into the concept of perspective by sharing the video Snack Attack.

View the short film as a class. Once complete, provide students with the worksheet 'Snack Attack –perspective' and allow time for students to complete it.
3. Invite students to share what the perspective of each character may have been. Focus discussion on the reflection question, prompting the class to consider which version of events gives the truth of the situation.

Pose the questions:

1. *Do any of the perspectives give the full truth on their own?*
2. *Are all perspectives required to fully understand the context?*

Part A:

The media: Impartial perspectives

Step 1

Provide students with a copy of the article 'As long as you gamble, you feel like an Australian': one in six teenagers gambling underage.

Allow students time to read the article and discuss what stood out to them with classmates.

Step 2

Provide students with the worksheet - 'Youth gambling – News article' and invite them to respond to the prompts. Encourage students to respond independently, noting their individual observations are reactions to the text.

Step 3

Once students have had time to complete the worksheet, invite them to share their ideas as a class. Encourage a range of observations and perspectives, supporting students to validate their views by citing the text.

Throughout the discussion, maintain a central focus on the perspective that the text has been written from, being sure to note the following:

- The objective/academic use of language, and also the image, serve to 'other' the individuals who engage in gambling. They are represented clinically, within a data set or factual statement in the text. This is also true of the image, in which Bayu is presented alone, in the shadows.
- Despite the article initially seeming to work to present the facts of the matter in an objective manner, the fact that the article ends with the quote: *"We think that age verification is obviously really important and strict enforcement of acceptable proof of age, both for wagering sites but also for entry into gaming venues, is really important," Dr Jenkinson said.* Suggests underlying intent to present a particular perspective on what should be done next – to enforce laws more strictly.
- The article has been written by a journalist about an issue that does not personally involve them.
- The expression of facts and citation of evidence suggest that the journalist is attempting to convey an objective view of the context.

Part B:

A personal story

Step 1

Explain to students that they will now watch a video that gives a different perspective on this same issue. Show the video Bayu's Story – “When you can't help yourself, trust the other person to help you.” Upon completion of the video, invite students to discuss the key differences in the presentation of the story in comparison to the initial article.

Step 2

Provide students with the worksheet 'Youth gambling – Bayu's Story' and allow time for them to respond.

Step 3

Invite students to share their responses to the worksheet. Ensure that there is a central focus of comparison between the perspective in the first article and that of the video, noting:

- The video shows an individual's experience of the issue.
- The inclusion of personal experience and emotions provides a more subjective view of the issue and may not provide a full picture of the context.
- The relaxed and casual nature of the video humanises the experience and builds the viewers connection to the issue by evoking sympathy/empathy.
- Showing Bayu in public environments has the impact of presenting gamblers as 'existing within our worlds' rather than separated from our individual lives, creating a greater sense of connection.
- While the article read previously seemed to imply that strict enforcement of law is the solution to the problem, the video explores individual responsibility, as Bayu explains how his choices and the words and actions of those close to him were what enabled him to move forward. This is also reflected in the title of the video “When you can't help yourself, trust the other person to help you.”

Part C:

Perspectives in journalism

Step 1

Invite students to discuss the question:

Was one of these texts more suited to the purpose of sharing the context of youth gambling with the wider community? Why?

Step 2

After some discussion, pose the follow-up question:

Does one of these texts represent a more reliable form of journalism? Why?

Step 3

Show the video [How journalists cover different perspectives – BBC My World](#)

Upon completion of this video, ask the class the following questions:

- 1. Did this video change your perspective on whether the two texts we viewed in the lesson were valid forms of journalism?*
- 2. What obligation do journalists or media personnel have when sharing an individual view or experience of an issue?*
- 3. What power do we have as consumers to ensure we determine our own independent perspective on current issues?*

Discuss as a class.

Reflection

Provide time for students to independently respond to this question:

What perspectives do we need to consider in order to form a well rounded understanding of current societal issues? How can we ensure that we do this?

Differentiation


Extension - For students who demonstrate a strong understanding of perspective and its impact on the audience, invite them to respond to the following prompt.

The perspective presented in a text impacts the audience's opinion of a scenario. Discuss.

Provision for Learning Support - Students who find it challenging to complete the independent tasks can be supported in a teacher focus group, or be encouraged to work collaboratively with other members of the class.

Snack Attack – Perspective

Watch the short film [Snack Attack](#). After viewing, consider how the perspectives of each character, and of yourself as an observer differed from each other.

In each section, write a description of what that particular person is observing and thinking during this scene ...		
The person with the newspaper ...		The person with the headphones ...
A person watching on ...		

Reflection

Each individual's interpretation of the 'truth' of this situation was different. Was any perspective more right than the other?

Youth gambling – News article

After reading the article *'As long as you gamble, you feel like an Australian': one in six teenagers gambling underage* respond to the questions below.

What issue does this text focus on?

What is the purpose of this article? How is this evident in the text?

Describe the perspective shared in this article. Whose view is it written from? Is it an objective or subjective view of the topic? Does this perspective allow the article to achieve its purpose? Why/Why not?

What kind of language is used in the article? How does this link to the perspective of the writer?

There is one image included in this article. What are the features of this image and what is its impact. How does this image reflect the perspective the article is written from?

What is the impact of this article? What does it leave the reader or viewer believing is the solution to the issue presented?

Youth gambling – Bayu’s Story

After watching the video [Bayu’s Story](#) – “When you can’t help yourself, trust the other person to help you.”, respond to the questions below.

What issue does this text focus on?
What is the purpose of this video? How is this evident in the text?
Describe the perspective shared in this film. Whose view is it written from? Is it an objective or subjective view of the topic? Does this perspective allow the article to achieve its purpose? Why/Why not?
What kind of language is used in the video? How does this link to the perspective of the writer?
Consider the setting, camera positioning and angles in the video. What is the impact of these stylistic choices? How do they reflect the perspective shown in the video?
What is the impact of this video? What does it leave the viewer believing is the solution to the issue presented?

Learning intentions

I understand that perspective influences interpretation of a particular context.

Success criteria

I can:

- Identify the perspective of a text.
- Recognise that sharing different perspectives influences readers and viewers in different ways.
- Suggest what actions individuals can take to seek to understand the objective truth of a situation.
- Identify the role and responsibility of the media in giving a well rounded view of current issues.