

2009

**About Face International
One Article per Day**

Karyn E. Vostok

[WHAT PERIODICALS TO USE FOR CURRENT- EVENT STUDY]

What news publications are best for middle school and high school students for current-event work.



About Face International | One Article per Day

What Periodicals to Use for Current-Event Study

“A good teacher can inspire hope, ignite the imagination, and instill a love of learning.” Brad Henry

There is no one best periodical to use in connection with the study of current-events. *One Article per Day* does however use the below criteria when judging the fitness of a periodical for middle school and high school students.

1. The use of precise and exact English.
2. Clearness and definiteness in presentation.
3. Unquestioned scholarship.
4. Painstaking care in giving to its readers only trustworthy and authoritative information.
5. Lack of partnership.
6. An aggressive policy for public good.
7. The periodical's power and purpose to arouse public conscience.

Most people will concede that these are worth and well-stated standards, but when it comes to applying them to periodicals in general one encounters some seemingly insuperable obstacles. For instance, it would be difficult to find a respectable magazine that does not claim to embody each of the essential characteristics in the superlative degree. In spite of this, however, to date there is no periodical in the field, printed wholly for the use in current-topic work that is entirely satisfactory. The newspapers and magazines claiming this distinction have simply added a section which offers suggestions for using the material that they have always been printing. The thought here is that the major articles in these magazines are not prepared as textbooks are, with the idea that they are to be used exclusively by high school students of a certain maturity. If magazines ever attain that the success that they should in presenting material adapted to high school students, they will have to displace their general audience with a limited one. Until they do this the teacher will have to do what has been done in the past in respect to the magazine to use in current event work, namely, use the one most available, as there is little or no difference in the quality and quantity of material or the level on which it is written when one considers the magazines that are making any special efforts to appeal to those interested in current-event study. However, before one can decide upon the magazine to use, there is another question which must be settled, namely, whether the periodical is to be a weekly or monthly. Let us examine the claims of each of these.

In favor of the weekly periodical it can be said that if current-event work is regularly done in the classroom once a week, current-work adapts admirably to such a plan. The articles are likely to be up to a minute and rather brief. The most significant happenings in so far as they can be determined at so short a range are also found in most weekly periodicals. The chief objections to the permanent use of weeklies are that they generally depend upon newspapers for their news, hence are subject to the same pitfalls, only to a less degree, as newspapers; the articles appearing in them are not usually of permanent value; topics treated are usually incomplete and not fully developed; the general make-up of periodicals as a whole is not especially appealing to high school pupils; and they contain few or no illustrations, many quotations, and a general lack of continuity in treatment, since most of the material is in the form of a survey.

In favor of the monthly periodical the following statements may be made: It contains a large variety of articles by different authors; the style of articles usually appeals to the high-school students because it is more like what they are accustomed to; it is usually profusely illustrated and therefore likely to attract and hold young readers; the articles are often of permanent value, because they are written by individuals possessing first-hand knowledge; the nature of the material offers many opportunities for the teacher to make historic and economic parallels; and, because



About Face International | One Article per Day

What Periodicals to Use for Current-Event Study

topics have a full month to develop, the treatment can approximate completeness and maturity. As for the objections to monthly magazines, it may be said that when one period a week is devoted to the work, the student is likely to lose interest in the succeeding three weeks. There is a tendency to want to be more nearly up to the minute in everyday occurrences. To wait a whole month for important and exciting news is too much to expect. It is also true that many of the articles in a monthly magazine are written far in advance of their publication. Such articles, of course, are those having more or less permanent value, and they are more useful as supplementary reading matter in connection with courses in geography, history, or English.

One Article per Day is unique as we create current-event materials specifically for middle school and high school students. Our weekly current-event readings combine daily, weekly, and monthly articles to expose students to as many news sources as possible and so they can learn about various publications, ideas, and opinions.

Before leaving high school each student should have the opportunity of a special study of magazines and newspapers. This work could be done in the second semester after becoming acquainted with various publications through their current-event work in the first semester. The chief things to emphasize in the study of magazines are the numerous types with some concrete examples of each, the nature and content of each type, and the chief characteristics of dailies, weeklies, and monthlies. The purpose of this work is thoroughly to acquaint the class with the various types of magazines so that the knowledge thus acquired will guide future magazine reading. It will also serve as a protection to some in the class who will have an opportunity to find out by a comparative study the best periodicals in any one field.

One Article per Day, www.onearticleperday.com, is brought to you by **About Face International**, www.aboutfaceintl.org, a 501©3 status organization dedicated to changing the world through social entrepreneurship and productive discussion. *One Article per Day* is designed to foster a more robust civil society, a more cohesive and interactive communities, greater literacy, and a more informed and engaged citizenry. One of the ways in which we do this is by offering middle school, high school, and college educators current-event curriculum that will teach students to be active participants in society in addition to supplementing their classroom education. To learn more, call 617.972.2474 or email classroom@onearticleperday.com.