

**Subject area/course:** English/Language Arts

**Grade level/band:** 10-11

**Task source:** Virtual Learning Academy Charter School (VLACS)

## Watchdog Reporter

### TEACHER'S GUIDE

#### A. Task overview:

In this computer-based task, students take on the role of an investigative reporter for a watchdog group. Students choose a topic, conduct research, and report on the topic and the information found. This can be in the form of a podcast, article, blog post, videocast or another presentation method.

#### B. Aligned standards:

##### 1. Primary Common Core State Standards

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.6](#): Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.4](#): Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.2](#): Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.8](#): Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.

##### 2. Secondary Common Core State Standards (optional)

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.8](#): Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

##### 3. Critical abilities

**Research:** Conduct sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem, narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate, and demonstrate understanding of the subject under investigation. Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, use advanced searches effectively, and assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the specific task, purpose, and audience.



Communication in Many Forms: Use oral and written communication skills to learn, evaluate, and express ideas for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, and rewriting while considering the audience.

Use of Technology: Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, making strategic use of digital media and visual displays to enhance understanding. Use technology, including the Internet, to research, produce, publish, and update individual or shared products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

#### **4. Other standards**

None listed.

### **C. Time/schedule requirements:**

This task will take approximately 1-2 weeks to complete.

### **D. Materials/resources:**

- Students will need access to the Internet to conduct research. Note: See variations below to adapt for a traditional classroom rather than an on-line assignment.
- The following sites may be helpful for students and/or teachers:
  - Tips on effective internet searches: <http://websearch.about.com/od/searchingtheweb/a/sevenhabits.htm>
  - Information on evaluating the quality and accuracy of internet resources: <http://www.library.georgetown.edu/tutorials/researchguides/evaluating-internet-content>
  - Compare and contrast guide: <http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/compcontrast>
  - Compare and contrast essays: <https://www.sbccc.edu/clrc/files/wl/downloads/WritingaCompareContrastEssay.pdf>
  - Compare and contrasting text: <https://learnzillion.com/lessons/1112-compare-and-contrasttextual-details>
  - How to analyze an article to write an essay: <http://classroom.synonym.com/analyze-article-write-essay-2759.html>
  - Speech Analysis – How to study and critique a speech: <http://sixminutes.dlugan.com/speech-evaluation-1-how-to-study-critique-speech/>
  - Analyze/Analysis: <http://www.roanestate.edu/owl/Analysis.html>
  - How to analyze a newspaper article: <http://www.understandmedia.com/topics/media-theory/112-how-to-analyze-a-newspaper-article>

- How to critique a journal article:  
<http://www.uis.edu/ctl/wpcontent/uploads/sites/76/2013/03/Howtocritiqueajournalarticle.pdf>
- How to write a critical analysis: <http://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Critical-Analysis>
- Evaluating sources – Print vs. Internet sources:  
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/553/04/>
- Reference Tools – Print and Non-Print Reference Tools:  
<http://www.susq.k12.pa.us/webpages/kfleegeer/learning.cfm?subpage=739847>

**E. Prior knowledge:**

- Ability to find, use, and assess valid internet sources
- Ability to document sources accurately
- Ability to produce outcomes using electronic means

**F. Connection to curriculum:**

None listed.

**G. Teacher instructions:**

Depending on the students' prior knowledge, the instructor may want to add a unit on using the Internet for research, including finding and assessing sources for validity.

Part 1 deliverables:

- Research Notes
- Progress Review Meeting with instructor
- Depending on students' prior knowledge, the instructor may want to add a unit on citation.

Part 2 deliverables:

- Research notes and works cited

Part 3 deliverables:

- Organizational Strategy
- Progress Review Meeting with instructor
- Peer review and critique may be added at this point. Students may be required to give a written critique of another student's material.

Part 4 deliverables:

- Final project
- Discussion Based Assessment

**H. Student support:**

None listed.

**I. Extensions or variations:**



The task as it stands is designed for an on-line course with work done entirely on and via computer. The task can be adapted to a conventional classroom by:

- Adding a module on finding, assessing, and using computer sources, if necessary.
- Using print sources as well as computer sources
- Forming students into groups of three or four to research and present a topic, rather than having each student do an individual topic
- Increasing use of in-class peer review, including a teacher-presented model of a final product
- Allowing a position paper as an outcome, presented as background material for a watchdog group

**J. Scoring:**

Student work can be scored using the NTN Knowledge and Thinking Rubric for ELA Research or Argumentation, Grade 12.

