

FREE MINI MISSION

The Coverage

A free single-session taste of the 3-day mission.

GRADE 7 · ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (MEDIA LITERACY) · ~45 MIN · 1 CLASS PERIOD

Your seventh graders are media analysts. Two articles cover the exact same school event — and both are *true*. But each one emphasizes different evidence and quietly leaves things out. Students compare the coverage, spot what each reporter played up and left off, and decide what the whole story really is.

TEACHER QUICK-START

Objective: Students analyze how two authors writing about the same topic shape their accounts by emphasizing different evidence — and recognize that one-sided coverage, even when factually true, isn't the whole truth.

Standards tie-in: CCSS RI.7.9 (analyze how two authors on the same topic emphasize different evidence/interpretations), RI.7.6 (author's purpose and point of view), RI.7.1 (cite text evidence).

What you need: Just this packet. Print the student pages (one per team of 3–4). No prep.

- 1. Set the scene (5 min).** “You’re media analysts. Two articles cover the same event. Figure out what each one emphasizes — and what it leaves out.”
- 2. Read the facts + both articles (12 min).** Teams read the neutral fact box, then Article A and Article B.
- 3. Compare & decide (18 min).** For each article, teams note what it plays up and what it omits, then judge what the full story is.
- 4. The reveal (6 min).** Walk the answer key. The point: both are true, but each tells only half.
- 5. Reflection (4 min).** Each student answers the reflection question.

THE FACTS (what actually happened)

The school spent \$80,000 to replace the old playground with a new turf sports field. The field can host soccer games and PE classes. The old playground was used most by the after-school program's younger students. In a survey, 60% of students liked the change and 40% did not.

Article A — “Eagles Score a Brand-New Field!”

“Our school just got a fantastic new turf field! Now PE classes and the soccer team finally have a real place to play. A survey shows 60% of students are happy about the upgrade. It’s a huge win for school spirit.”

Article B — “Younger Students Lose Their Playground”

“The school tore out the beloved playground that the after-school kids loved — and spent \$80,000 to do it. In a survey, 40% of students said they did not want the change. Many younger students now have nowhere to play.”

The ruler is a reliable account using the evidence that matters and doesn't leave out facts that change the picture. Both articles are factually true — but notice what each one emphasizes and what each one leaves out.

STUDENT PAGE 2 — YOUR CALL (ANALYSIS SHEET)

Team name: _____

Step 1. For each article, note what it emphasizes and what it leaves out.

Article	Plays UP	Leaves OUT
A — “New Field!”		
B — “Lost Playground”		

Step 2. Which article gives the whole story — or do you need both? _____

Step 3. Explain how two true articles can leave such different impressions:

ANSWER KEY (for the reveal)

Article A plays up the new field, PE/soccer benefits, and the 60% who liked it. It leaves out the **\$80,000 cost** and the **younger students who lost their playground**.

Article B plays up the lost playground, the \$80,000, and the 40% who disliked it. It leaves out the **field's benefits** and the **60% who liked it**.

The whole story needs both. Neither article is lying — each just selected which true facts to emphasize and which to omit. A fair account would include the benefit (a real field for PE/soccer, liked by most) AND the cost (the \$80,000 and the younger kids' lost playground).

The big idea: Two reporters can use all-true facts and still leave totally different impressions, just by choosing what to emphasize and what to leave out. Smart readers ask: *what's being played up — and what's missing?*

REFLECTION (graded on thinking, not the “right” answer)

“How did two true articles create such different impressions of the same event? What did you have to do to get the whole story?”

Scoring the thinking	3 — Strong	2 — Developing	1 — Beginning
Finds the emphasis	Names what each article plays up	Some	None
Spots the omissions	Names what each article leaves out	Some	Misses them
Explains clearly	Shows how true facts still mislead	Partly	Unclear

Ready to analyze the whole media landscape?

This was one comparison. In the full 3-day mission, your analysts dig into loaded word choice and author's purpose, judge whether each source's evidence is relevant and sufficient (and catch a misleading statistic), then write the balanced report a fair journalist would publish.

Graded on the reasoning you can back up with the sources, not on a “right” answer.

The full Coverage mission is at patiencelearning.com — explore the full simulation catalog there.