



# Climate Change in the News

## learning objectives

## subjects

English–Language Arts  
 Environmental Education  
 Social Studies

### WISCONSIN MODEL ACADEMIC STANDARDS

ENGLISH–LANGUAGE ARTS  
 A.8.4, A.12.3, A.12.4,  
 E.8.2, E.12.2

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION  
 C.8.4

SOCIAL STUDIES  
 E.8.3, E.8.8, E.12.6

## materials

- Newspapers from around the state, country, or globe
- News Analysis Worksheets provided in this activity

Students will:

- Read, review and critique the way newspapers report on climate change.
- Describe how different locations and regions view the issues and effects of global climate change.



## Background

Depending on where you live, the local media can have a profound effect on what and how information gets reported to you. Small town weekly papers tend to focus on issues closer to home while papers with larger circulations focus on local as well as state, national, and international issues.

Climate change can be a large and complex issue to cover. Climate change affects all of us and is an important issue that may be reported on differently according to the circulation size of the newspaper and the target audience.

## activity

CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE NEWS

### News Analysis

Students will look through magazines and newspapers from different areas for articles, advertisements, and opinions on climate change for discussion.

### Procedure

1) Collect an assortment of newspapers from different regions of Wisconsin, the United States, and the world. Many larger newspapers can now be found on the Web. Divide students into groups. Assign each group a different news publication. Have each group search for articles, opinions, and advertisements directly or indirectly related to climate change. Students should read the items found and write down specifics and key points to be shared later (use attached *News Analysis Worksheet*).

2) Students should also get a sense of the relative amount of coverage of climate change in each publication by counting the number of articles mentioning climate change and comparing it to the total number of articles.

3) Once everyone has finished their review, ask each group to share their findings and discuss whether there were differences among the publications. Follow the discussion questions below.

### Discussion Questions

1) What, if any, were the differences between the urban and rural papers?

2) What, if any, were the differences between papers from various regions of the US? Discuss how they were different.

3) What differences were noticed between publications from the US and foreign newspapers?

4) What types of advertisements were found in each newspaper? How many focused on eco-friendly products?

5) Does the paper have an editorial slant (e.g. conservative vs. liberal, business-focused, etc.)? How do you know? If there is a slant, how might it affect the coverage? Does the paper have an editorial position related to climate change and, if so, what is it? How do you know?

6) How many editorials were in the paper on climate change issues? Were they positive or negative? In what ways?

### Going Beyond

1) Have students look up news articles from 10, 15 or 20 years ago. How many articles on climate change were found in the older newspapers? What information was the same? What information was different?

2) Discuss how to research articles online. What are some good methods to use for online news article searches? How do you know that what you are reading is from a credible source? How much easier or harder is it to find good information online?

3) For breaking news on climate change go to the website of the Newseum (see *e-Appendix* for link) and click on Today's Front Pages to view the front page covers of newspapers from all over the world. Compare.

4) Use this activity as a model and apply it to other news and communication media: magazines/periodicals, radio news, network TV coverage, cable TV coverage, podcasts, radio, TV talk shows, e-zines, blogs, etc. Have each group watch a different news channel for a week or compare across media (e.g. radio vs. TV vs. newspaper vs. news magazine) and then discuss the difference the medium makes in conveying messages.

5) Try incorporating newspapers or other media that target a specific segment of the population and then compare. How does the news differ between ethnic groups (e.g. a Hmong radio station in Milwaukee vs. a Hispanic newspaper) or different "user" groups (e.g. *Outdoor News* vs. business newspapers like the *Wall Street Journal*)?





# activity News Analysis

CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE NEWS

NAMES \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

TEACHER/CLASS \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

PUBLICATION NAME \_\_\_\_\_

CIRCULATION  URBAN  RURAL  REGIONAL  NATIONAL  GLOBAL  OTHER (DESCRIBE)

TOTAL NUMBER OF ARTICLES \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OR ARTICLES RELATED TO CLIMATE CHANGE \_\_\_\_\_

ARTICLE TITLE	DATE
	PAGE NO.
SYNOPSIS	

ARTICLE TITLE	DATE
	PAGE NO.
SYNOPSIS	

ARTICLE TITLE	DATE
	PAGE NO.
SYNOPSIS	

worksheets



NAMES \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

TEACHER/CLASS \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

PUBLICATION NAME \_\_\_\_\_

CIRCULATION  URBAN  RURAL  REGIONAL  NATIONAL  GLOBAL  OTHER (DESCRIBE)

TOTAL NUMBER OF ADVERTISEMENTS \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF ADVERTISEMENTS RELATED TO CLIMATE CHANGE \_\_\_\_\_

ADVERTISEMENT/SUBJECT	DATE
	PAGE NO.

ADVERTISEMENT/SUBJECT	DATE
	PAGE NO.

ADVERTISEMENT/SUBJECT	DATE
	PAGE NO.

ADVERTISEMENT/SUBJECT	DATE
	PAGE NO.

ADVERTISEMENT/SUBJECT	DATE
	PAGE NO.