Honors World Geography
Summer Assignment
Mr. Corcoran - Teacher - Gilroy Early College Academy
email: JCorcoran@gavilan.edu or Mr.JCorcoran@gmail.com.

Current Event Report

Introduction:
One of the things you will soon come to realize in Honors World Geography is the emphasis I place on contemporary affairs. Current Events and awareness of world events are essential for being successful in a honors level social science course. It is my expectation that you spend about 1-2 hours a week minimum just reading or watching news. As such your summer assignment will revolve around these expectations. I would like all of your work to be in a bound report cover (like a small three ring).

Directions for Current Events:
Over summer you will need to spend each week keeping on top of current events. You will need to pick a Minimum of 5 news stories to do a current event write up on (see the current event write up form). You will be collecting these current events to create a current event report around a general theme (see below). There are several restrictions you must follow;

1. No more than 2 Current Events can be from the same continent.
2. You need a minimum of 3 different news sources (i.e. BBC News, Fox News, CNN, NBC news, or SF Chronicle).
3. Current Events must be at least five days apart.
4. Current Events can not follow the same story with constant updates.

Themes:
Here is a list of themes you can choose for your report, only choose one.

1. Global Health
a. Examples for current events could include health care, access to health care, diseases, nutrition, or exercise.

2. Terrorism
   a. Examples for current events could include terror strikes, security issues, or use of new technology in security

3. Global Conflict
   a. Examples for current events could include warfare, border disputes, hostile negotiations, or trade blocks.

4. Economic Issues
   a. Examples for current events could include stock performance, companies going out of business, currency devaluation, or stories on economic growth

5. Political Issues
   a. Examples for current events could include elections, protests, uprisings, or transfers of power

6. Culture/Entertainment
   a. Examples for current events could include sporting events, music, theatre, or religious events.

**Final Observations:**

For your final part to your project I want you to complete a write up of the following questions. They each need to be a substantial paragraph, so at least 4-5 sentences, but most importantly completely answer the question. Also, use your sources (news stories) to support your answer.

1. Based off your current events, how does your theme relate to Honors World Geography?
2. What global patterns/similarities exist between a theme and the region of the world it occurs in?
3. What differences are apparent between a theme and the region of the world it occurs in?

4. Were there any patterns in the apparent biases in the news stories, why do you think this was or was not the case?

5. Why are current events important/relevant to a global studies course?

---

**Current Events Assignments**

In a class that deals with government and politics it is vital to stay abreast of current events around the world and locally.

**Task**

Watch, read, listen, Google, (or any other recognized verb) a relevant news story that pertains to Geography.

**Potential sources**

- CNN, MSNBC, Fox News, or any 24 hour news network or TV news cast.
- Any newspaper like *New York Times, SF Chronicle, or Gilroy Dispatch*.
- Radio news, NPR, or any designated news cast.
- *The Daily Show* will also work provided you can distinguish humor from fact.

**Writing**

Write a page response to the article.

1 – *Summary of article content* (Give me about 4-5 lines about the story. I should have a general idea about the who, what, where and so on.)

2 – *How does this relate to class* (I need to see that you can apply class material to outside sources. I want about 3-4 sentences on how a story relates to your theme for your summer project.)

3 – *What is the Bias* (We all have bias, and the media doubly so. From your reading or whatever was there a position that was treated more favorably. Did a person get off too easy in your opinion?)

**Citation**

I won’t make you do a full MLA style citation for the article but I need several details. So either give me a copy of the article or tell me where you found the article, the date, and the medium.

Example: *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*, 1/23/06, Television show
The Sri Lankan Government has claimed they will cease the use of heavy weapons and air strikes against Tamil Tiger rebels. The current focus of the military will be to provide civilian aid amid growing casualties. On Sunday the Sri Lankan authorities dismissed a Tamil ceasefire offer as a "joke" adding that the rebels were near defeat. However, the Tigers' political head claims that government artillery and jet bomber attacks were continuing to target civilians. The recent admission of the use of heavy arms and air strikes on civilian populated areas was a major change in the Sri Lankan government, who until recently denied the existence of said programs. The Tamil Tigers have fought for an independent homeland since 1983, a conflict that has claimed at least 70,000 lives.

Since my theme is global conflict, the recent developments in Sri Lanka are a prime example of a global conflict. In Sri Lanka there is an ethnically based militia that is seeking to gain independent territory away from the government. The issue at hand is what identifies a nation of people who feel like they do not belong to the overriding national identity. In many nations we have seen ethnic minority groups often come under oppression from the ruling force like the Kurds in Turkey and Iraq or the Tibetans in China. Global conflict is not always between nations but at times can be internal conflict with issues that can extend beyond its borders.
The article does a good job of covering the facts and the history of the issue. The BBC does a great job of highlighting the perspective of the Sri Lankan military/government, the Tamil rebels, Tamil’s in India, and the observations of the UN and foreign aid workers. While the article does detail some efforts by the government, little mention is made of Tamil tactics. From this sole article we can not tell if the Tamils have utilized tactics that are similar to terrorists groups we would usually decry as illegitimate. Also, since the BBC is a British based news agency there could be a bias towards South Asian news stories because of their history with the area as a colonizing force.

How the Assignment will be Scored

Current Events:
Each current event is worth 10 points; 2 points for it being typed, 2 points for the citation, 2 points for summary, 2 points for relevance to theme, 2 points for the bias. A total of 50 points are available for the current event component of the summer assignment.

What is bias?-

“Bias is a term used to describe a tendency or preference towards a particular perspective, ideology or result, especially when the tendency interferes with the ability to be impartial, unprejudiced, or objective.” (Dictionary.com)

Remember everything has a bias, it may be hard to locate but it is there.

Final Observations:

Each question is worth 10 points. You need to completely answer the questions in a decent paragraph. Make sure to make fact based observation not just opinions. If you make a clear point, use examples from you current events, and satisfy the length you should do fine.

Mr. C’s Tips

1. Look at news for news; don’t just hunt for what you want.
2. Routinely check multiple sources and mediums.
3. Research potential bias, example the New York Times usually has a more liberal editorial board than the Wall Street Journal which tends to be conservative.
4. In your write ups never use “I think”, “I believe”, or an ‘I’ statements even if a question seems opinionated your answer should be fact based.
5. Don’t wait until the end, start early be happy.

Rubric

Please attach at the end of your report

<p>| Current Event #1 | _____/10 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Event #2</th>
<th>____/10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Event #3</td>
<td>____/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Event #4</td>
<td>____/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Event #5</td>
<td>____/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question #1</td>
<td>____/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question #2</td>
<td>____/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question #3</td>
<td>____/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question #4</td>
<td>____/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question #5</td>
<td>____/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neatness</td>
<td>____/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a bound folder</td>
<td>____/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>____/120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>