

January 7, 2021: Newspaper Front Pages the Day After the Attack on the U.S. Capitol

Overview

On January 6, 2021 supporters of President Donald Trump stormed the United States Capitol building after repeated claims by Trump that the 2020 presidential election was stolen from him.

This activity provides an opportunity for students to examine how newspapers from different parts of the United States described the day's events in headlines the next morning.

Assessment

This activity is designed to be an exploration that allows for questioning, not necessarily one that features right or wrong answers. If you want more material on which to assess your students for a grade, you can assign them to write a response to this prompt: ***Which headline do you think best captures the events at the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021? Explain your choice in at least _____ [whatever number is appropriate for your grade level] sentences.***

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Examine and evaluate the words that newspapers used to describe the events that took place at the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021.
- Compare and contrast newspaper headlines from across the United States on January 7, 2021.
- Write a headline that shows how they think the day should have been reported.
- Write a headline that they hope will be on their local paper on January 7, 2022.

Activity

1. Show students the [slide of the eight front pages side by side](#).

Give students a few minutes to review the collection of images on their own. Ask them to note any questions they have, as well as at least two things they notice -- either about the front pages as a group, or about any individual front page.

2. If you think it will be helpful for your students (depending on their age, reading level, familiarity with U.S. geography, etc.), you may want to read through the headlines together. You might call on volunteers to read aloud the newspaper title and the headline. Help students identify where in the country the paper is from. (See alphabetical ordered list below).

3. Define or clarify any terms necessary to help your students understand what each headline says.
4. Work with your students to examine and analyze the front pages created by the various newspapers, focusing on the words and images the editors chose. These questions may help structure the conversation:
 - Which photo was used by the most newspapers? What does it show? Why do you think the editors chose this photo?
 - Do you notice any correspondence (or disconnect) between the headline and the main photo on any of the front pages?
 - Which photo do you think best captures the events of January 6? Why?
 - What are the main similarities across the collection of front pages? What are the main differences you observe?
 - What questions do you have about the content of any of the front pages, or about the collection as a whole?

Wrap-up activity

Have students write their own headline for their local paper for January 7, 2021.

Then, assign students to write what they hope the headline on their local paper might be on January 7, 2022, keeping in mind that it doesn't necessarily have to be about a political issue.

Sources and headlines transcribed here for quick checking

Albuquerque Journal (NM): 'Disbelief and dismay' grip Washington, nation

Arkansas Democrat Gazette (Little Rock): MOB STORMS U.S. CAPITOL

Fort Worth Star-Telegram (TX): ASSAULT ON DEMOCRACY

Idaho Statesman (Boise): ASSAULT ON DEMOCRACY

Knoxville News Sentinel (TN): US Capitol stormed

Los Angeles Times (CA): TRUMP-INCITED MOB STORMS U.S. CAPITOL

Star Tribune (Minneapolis, MN): INSURRECTION

The Wall Street Journal (NY): MOB STORMS CAPITOL

