



What's in Our News?

Adapted from Being the Change (@SaraKAhmed)

PURPOSE: The following lesson allows kids to express the things on their mind and explore questions they have about their news. The lesson structure is perfect for those days when “the world hands you your curriculum” (@katricequitter) or as a regular, daily/weekly SEL check-in. Examining students’ news helps them to process what’s happening in the world around them and to practice important social comprehension skills as they listen and dialogue with others

PREP: Create a space for students to record their news. They can write in a notebook, on an anchor chart (with or without teacher support), or through a digital platform like Google Slides. Label one side of the page, “What’s in My News?” and the other side, “My Thinking.”

1. MODEL THE PROCESS: Start by saying, “There are lots of things happening in the world right now and there are also things in 'my news' that are on my mind.” Then model your thinking as you write down a few items that are in “your news.” These might be as big as current events and news headlines, or as personal as a family birthday coming up or a trip to the vet with your pet. Now, share your thinking in the next column, including any personal thoughts, questions, ideas, and/or worries.

What's in my news?	My thoughts, feelings, questions (?!*...)	My identity <i>What pieces of my identity are carrying these feelings?</i>	Action <i>What can I do/did within my control & power?</i>
Outcome of the election (Ms. Ahmed)	It's stressful, nervous, excited for the Democratic process How will our nation react to the outcome? Will it be safe outside this week?	Teacher, Aunt of the next generation Woman of Color, Parents are Immigrants +Muslim	Running (for peace and quiet) Treated myself to a donut Wrote postcards Called voters Tweeted information to call the local offices and helped people Texted with family & friends Watching, observing, staying informed Create group chats (support)
Election (Student)	Added!! Last election I was 6 so I had no clue what was going on. I was doing somersaults on the couch.	I am a 5th grader now and I get it and am watching TV	Keep watching Have it on in the background Talk to my family Text the group Zoom chat
Birthday (Student)	It's tomorrow! Exciting! Halloween, Election, Birthday Celebrating on Saturday	I am going to be 11 years old	Making a birthday gift list Bring donuts to hockey practice

Sara K. Ahmed, Being the Change

[Link to Blank Google Slides Template and Example](#)



2. STUDENTS WRITE: Now give students an opportunity to write down what's on their mind by asking, "What's in your news?"

This can be done individually, as students record on their own papers, or as a group, calling on a few students to share aloud.

3. SHARE YOUR NEWS: Whether the routine is done individually or as a group, be sure to hold space for students to share their news, a connection to the news of others, feelings, wonderings, questions, etc. This can be done using a Turn and Talk structure and/or whole group discussion. Remember, you don't have to have answers to students' questions or find solutions to their challenges. The lesson is really about checking in with kids and honoring what they observe, hear, see, and feel. It helps everyone see the unique lived experiences of others and helps to facilitate understanding across differences.

EXTENDING THE LESSON:

- Keep the newsfeed lesson alive by revisiting it weekly or on occasion.
- Connect student news to their personal identity (gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual identity/orientation, language, interests, personality, etc.). This helps kids see how their understanding of the world can grow and change as they view it from different perspectives.
- Extend the chart to include a column titled, "My Ideas for Action." Here students can channel their emotions and develop an action plan to become more informed on the topic, for example by finding out more information, talking to others, writing about it, etc.

