Headline News! Summary

**Conviction Overturned!**
(New Information Emerges)

**Failure to Act!!**
(Investigative Report on the Railroad System)

**Sounds of a Bubble Bursting**
(Forclosures in the Wake of the Real Estate Bust)

**The Wait Is Over!!**
(Release of a New Anti-Cancer Drug by the FDA)

**Hopes Dashed for Truce!**
(Two Sides Fail to Come to Agreement Despite International Urging)

The Headline News! Summary asks students to sum up the essence of a lesson by creating newspaper headlines and delivering a brief news summary as an innovative way to involve them in meaning making. Allowed to use only a few words in the headline, students must think of a concise way to summarize what they have learned. Small-group discussions provide them with the opportunity to reflect upon what they have heard, read, or seen immediately following the learning experience. Allowing students to have small-group discussions helps learners make connections they may not make on their own.

**Step-by-Step**

1. Familiarize students with headlines and their purpose. In *Differentiation in Action* (Dodge, 2005), I describe a process to help students get comfortable with creating headlines. The process familiarizes the whole class with headlines they see in the newspaper.

2. Place students in small groups to create their own headlines for articles that you provide (with the headlines cut off).

3. Model for the entire class how to apply this summarizing technique to developing “headlines” for a passage from a novel or social studies or science textbook.

4. Ask pairs to create headlines for subsequent passages in the textbook.

5. Have partners share their ideas with the whole class, alternating between the reading-writing activity for a passage and the sharing.

6. You will need to model for students how to write a summary. You can use the following questions to guide your whole-class practice with summarizing: *What is the main idea? What do we know so far? What is the significance of the event, discovery, problem, conflict, etc.? Whom does it affect? What seems likely for the future?*

7. You can provide additional practice for homework. Over time, students’ ability to summarize the essence of a reading or class discussion will become more refined.

8. Once students are comfortable with writing headlines, you can give small groups a few minutes during class to prepare an oral summary of the event, chapter, passage, or concept in a one- or two-minute Headline News! Summary. You might want to provide sentence starters such as the following to guide the development of their summary:

   “What we know so far is… “At this point, we understand that…”

   “The conflict appears to be…” “The action taken by… has led to…”

   “The problems facing us now are…” “What remains to be seen is…”

(Adapted from Jeffrey Wilhelm’s *Action Strategies for Deepening Comprehension*, Scholastic, 2002)
Applications

You can have students in small groups develop the Headline News! Summary first. Then they can work to develop the headline. For some students (those who are right-brained, preferring steps that go from whole to part), this process might be easier.

Create a Headline News! bulletin board in your classroom so that your students can post their headlines summarizing what they’ve learned. This bulletin board should remain in place for the entire year, if possible, to help students see all of the learning that has taken place. In addition, the bulletin board will help students activate prior knowledge when they try to make connections to new material they are studying.

Tips for Tiering!

In addition to the ideas on page 9, consider the following.

To support struggling learners: Provide an outline for a written script for Headline News! Summary.

Offer a selection of topics from which to choose. Then, have students write the Headline News! Summary from an outline or sentence starters.

To challenge advanced learners: Place an advanced group of readers/writers together and ask them to:

■ use puns, metaphors, or similes as part of their headlines
■ predict a future event in their headline, based on what they know so far, then write the Headline News! Summary as if the prediction has taken place
■ create two headlines showing opposing viewpoints on the same subject

TechConnect

Using the Web site listed below, your students can work alone or with one or two others to create a one-page newspaper article with as many as to three headlines and articles. They can customize the name, fonts, colors, and layout for their digital Headline News! Summary.

Go to: http://interactives.mped.org/view_interactive.aspx?id=110&title