



A ready-to-use lesson

Reacting to the MSD Aerie yearbook, connecting with your own

from JEA member adviser
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It's the second of third week of April. The book is off at the plant. The lab has been cleaned up, old pizza boxes tossed, and the printouts covering the wall are recycled.

Now what?

Maybe things can slow down enough for some staff reflection on the past year and on the next book.

This lesson may benefit from a printed worksheet to guide students, but each step might be shared on a white board or projector.

Step 1: Worksheet/Think-pair-share – What purposes does a yearbook serve?

Step 2: Worksheet/Think-pair-share – What kinds of coverage exists in [your book] this year and why is it there? How did/do we decide what to include in the book?

Step 3: Add to your response in #2 to include other ideas from our class discussion.

Step 4: Read this New York Times article on how the Aerie staff of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School changed the coverage in their book because of the event that occurred on Feb. 14, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/04/us/parkland-shooting-yearbook.html>

Step 5: After reading the article all the way through once, go back and review it to answer the following questions:

- a) Factual (1 sentence): How is Aerie's book organized? Is it chronological or topical?
- b) Factual (2 sentences): What coverage was the staff planning to do on the day of the shooting? Did they still include it? Why did they decide that?
- c) Evaluative (Short answer - 4-5 sentences): Do you agree with the staff's decision about whether to include the pre-planned Feb. 14 coverage? Would you have made the same decision? Why or why not?
- d) Factual (List): What coverage did they decide to add to the book because of the shooting?
- e) Evaluative (Short answer - 4-5 sentences): Do you agree with the staff's decisions about the added coverage? Why or why not? Include examples of what they did in your

answer. Include at least one example of something that you would want to cover that wasn't mentioned in the article.

- f) Reflective (Paragraph - 10-12 sentences): If you were an editor on the staff of Aerie, how would you have handled the situation? As an editor on the yearbook staff, what would you have done on the day of the shooting, in the weeks immediately after the shooting and/or when you got back to school? What would you have wanted the yearbook staff to talk about? To photograph? To write? Who should they interview? Is there anyone they should not interview? How would you decide who works on which spread?

Step 6: Discussion: Pair-Share answers for a-f.

Step 7: Group Discussion: What should the priority of the yearbook staff be in a traumatic situation such as this?

Step 8: Self-reflection (free write): Answer g on the worksheet – What have you learned from reading, writing and talking about yearbook coverage and how the Aerie staff covered the event on Feb. 14?

Have access to computers? Check out the special issue produced by the MSD Eagle Eye newsmagazine staff on ISSUU: https://issuu.com/melissafalkowski4/docs/memorial_donate?e=17890846/59940756

Is it OK for a publication to include a clear point of view in its writing and coverage?

Where is the line?

Some people say that yearbooks are examples of "advocacy journalism" (as opposed to objective journalism. What do you think?