

American Printing History

Grade Levels: 8-11



Subject Areas: Texas History, American History, World History, Social Studies, and Government

Learning Objectives

- The history of journalism and newspaper publishing in early America
- The history of newspaper journalism in modern United States
- Changes in the newspaper front page and visual story-telling

Students will learn to:

- Use primary and secondary sources, including original artifacts, to discuss the importance of word choice
- Identify the history and development of American journalism through people and events
- Demonstrate an understanding of the different forms of media and the different types of journalistic writing

Lesson Details

1. Pre-arrival lesson options: vocabulary activity and crossword
2. Main lesson:
 - Benjamin Franklin/Columbian press profile
 - Declaration of Independence with a modern Twist
 - Visual Story-Telling Activity
 - Creating signatures for currency
 - American coins and currency
3. Post-visit lesson options: discussion/reflection questions and post-visit activity.

Vocabulary words associated with lesson:

Benjamin Franklin, broadside, colony, constitution, continental, currency, editor, engraving, facsimile, freedom of speech, gazette, headline, independence, libel, liberty, literacy, newspaper, primary source, printer, printing press, reporter, revolution, secondary source, signature, Stamp Act, tax, typesetter, typewriter, Zenger

Applicable TEKS

Social Studies (6th-8th): 6.1.A-B; 6.2.A-B; 6.6.A-C; 6.7.B; 6.11.A-B; 6.12.A-B; 6.16.A-C; 6.17.A; 6.18.A-C; 6.19.A-C; 6.21.A-E; 6.22; 7.1.A; 7.2.A-F; 7.4.A; 7.7.E; 7.18.A-D; 7.19.A; 7.20.A-F; 7.22.A-C; 8.1.A-B; 8.2.A-B; 8.4.A-B; 8.5.C; 8.6.A-B; 8.8.A-D; 8.15.A-C; 8.19.A-C; 8.20.A; 8.21.A-B; 8.23.A-E; 8.24.B; 8.27.A-C; 8.28.A-B; 8.29.A-H; 8.20.A-C; 8.31

World History (10th): 10.1.A-E; 10.4.A-J; 10.5.A-B; 10.6.A-B; 10.8.A-D; 10.10.C; 10.15.C; 10.16.B-C; 10.17.A-E; 10.20.A-B; 10.23.A; 10.24.A-D; 10.25.A-B; 10.26.C; 10.27.A-B,E; 10.28.A-F; 10.29.A-C; 10.30.A-C; 10.31

American History (11th): 11.1.A-C; 11.9.A; 11.15.A; 11.16.E; 11.17.A; 11.18.B-C; 11.21.A-B; 11.22.A-C; 11.24.A-C; 11.25.A,C; 11.26.A; 11.27.A-B; 11.28.A-E; 11.29.A-B; 11.30.A-B; 11.31

Vocabulary

Name: _____

For each section write the vocabulary word in the top, and circle the part of speech it is. Then, define it, draw a small symbol or the word, and a sentence using the word.

Word	
Definition	Draw it
Noun Verb Adj. Adv.	
Sentence	

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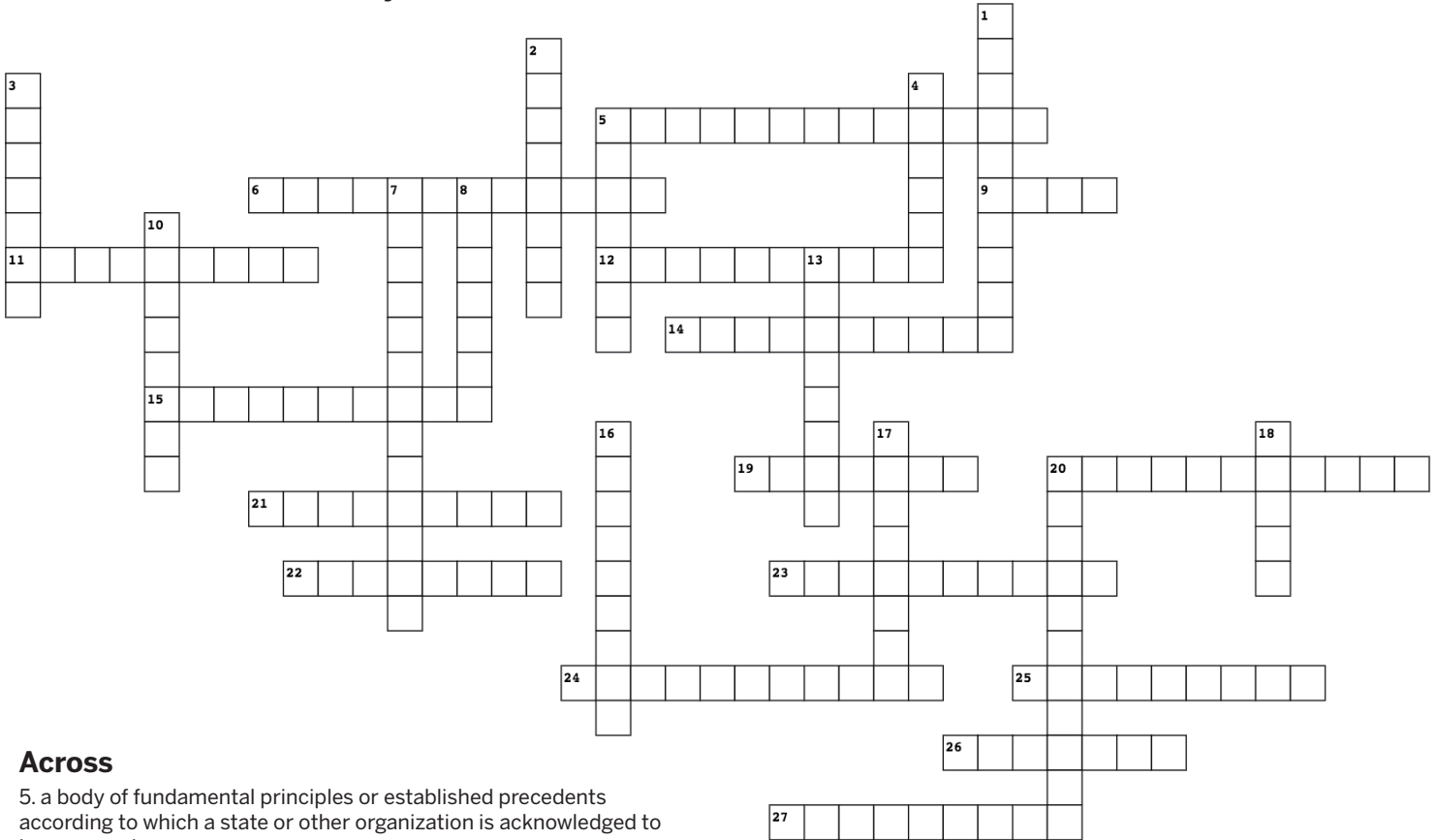
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Sentence	

Word Search

Name: _____

Use the correct vocabulary word to the definition.



Across

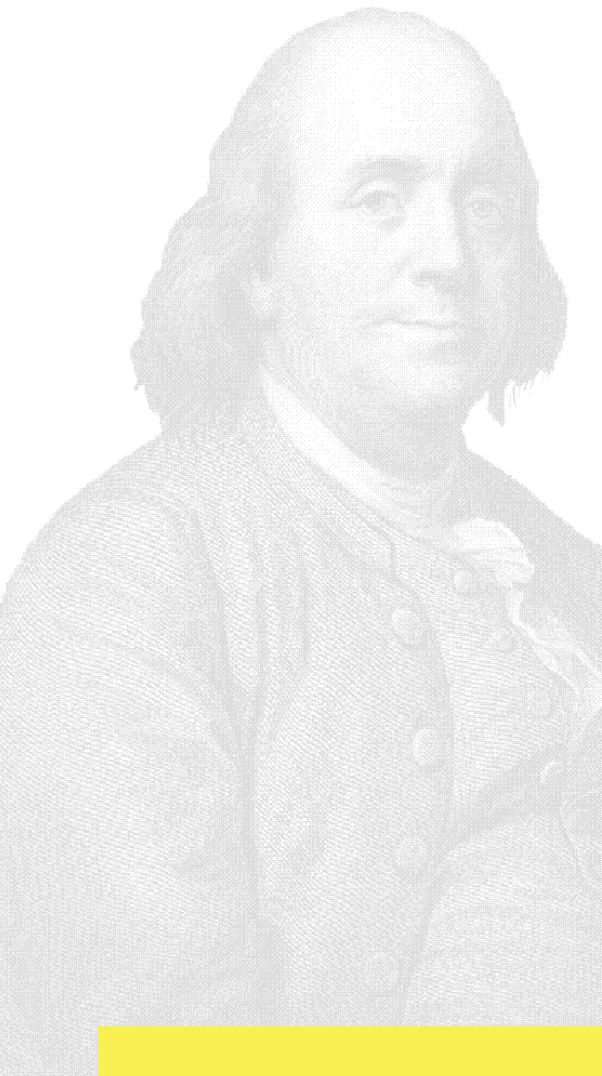
5. a body of fundamental principles or established precedents according to which a state or other organization is acknowledged to be governed
6. forming or belonging to a continent
9. a compulsory contribution to state revenue, levied by the government on workers' income and business profits, or added to the cost of some goods, services, and transactions
11. a person employed by a newspaper, magazine, or television company to gather information
12. a paper that is printed and distributed usually daily or weekly and that contains news, articles of opinion, features, and advertising
14. an exact copy, especially of written or printed material
15. the process or art of cutting or carving a design on a hard surface, especially so as to make a print
19. a German printer and journalist in New York City, who printed The New York Weekly Journal.
20. a person who typesets text
21. source, works that analyze, assess, or interpret a historical event era or phenomenon
22. the state of being free within society from oppressive restrictions imposed by authority on one's way of life, behavior, or political views
23. a large sheet of paper printed on one side only. Historically used for announcing events or proclamations, as posters, or advertisements.
24. a fundamental and relatively sudden change in political power and political organization which occurs when the population revolts against the government, typically due to perceived oppression or political incompetence
25. the ability to read and write
26. of speech, the right to express any opinions without censorship or restraint
27. a system of money in general use in a particular country

Down

1. a person's name written in a distinctive way as a form of identification
2. a journal or newspaper
3. source, a first-hand or contemporary account of an event or topic
4. a published false statement that is damaging to a person's reputation; a written defamation
5. a country or area under the full or partial political control of another country, typically a distant one, and occupied by settlers from that country
7. free from outside control; not depending on another's authority.
8. a person who is in charge of and determines the final content of a text, particularly a newspaper or magazine
10. a person whose job or business is commercial printing
13. press, a mechanical device for applying pressure to an inked surface resting upon a print medium, thereby transferring the ink
16. a heading at the top of an article or page in a newspaper or magazine
17. Franklin, a founding father, and an American polymath active as a writer, scientist, inventor, statesman, diplomat, printer, publisher and political philosopher.
18. Act, an act of the British Parliament in 1765 that exacted revenue from the American colonies by imposing a stamp duty on newspapers and legal and commercial documents
20. a machine with keys for producing alphabetical characters, numerals, and typographical symbols one at a time on paper inserted around a roller

Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790) Name: _____

Key figure of American Printing History



While serving as minister for the American colonies in France from 1776 to 1785, **Benjamin Franklin** was already well known as a printer, scientist, thinker and political leader. Born into a Boston family of modest means, Franklin had little formal education. He went on to start a successful printing business in Philadelphia and grew wealthy. Franklin was deeply active in public affairs in his adopted city, where he helped launch a lending library, hospital and college and garnered acclaim for his experiments with electricity, among other projects. During the American Revolution, he served in the Second Continental Congress and helped draft the Declaration of Independence in 1776. He also negotiated the 1783 Treaty of Paris that ended the Revolutionary War (1775-83). In 1787, in his final significant act of public service, he was a delegate to the convention that produced the U.S. Constitution.

In 1729, Franklin became the owner and publisher of a colonial newspaper, the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, which proved popular—and to which he contributed much of the content, often using pseudonyms. Franklin achieved fame and further financial success with “*Poor Richard’s Almanack*,” which he published every year from 1733 to 1758. The almanac became known for its witty sayings, which often had to do with the importance of diligence and frugality, such as “Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise.”

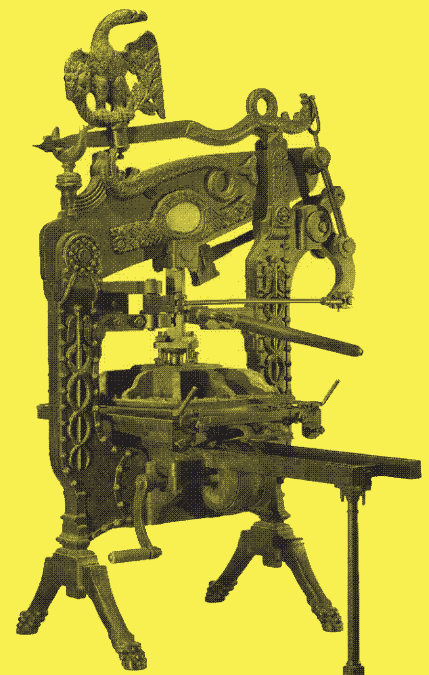
Did you know? Benjamin Franklin is the only founding father to have signed all four of the key documents establishing the U.S.: the Declaration of Independence (1776), the Treaty of Alliance with France (1778), the Treaty of Paris establishing peace with Great Britain (1783) and the U.S. Constitution (1787).

Source: <https://www.history.com/topics/american-revolution/benjamin-franklin>

The Columbian Press

The Columbian Press, invented by George Clymer of Philadelphia (1754-1834), originated from the technological innovations of the Industrial Revolution alongside steam engines, the telegraph, and railroads.. Alongside steam engines and railroads, a new generation of presses increased efficiency, speed, and the quality of the printing press.

The name of the press refers to Columbia, allegorical figure of the United States. It’s most notable feature is an American eagle in full relief, another symbol of America, perched on top and grasping an olive branch of peace and cornucopia. Compound levers and a counterweight behind the eagle at the top of the frame assist in printing



Modern Declaration

Name: _____

Printing the original Declaration of Independence was the only way to spread the word around America. Today, news spreads a lot faster due to modern technology and social media. In this exercise, you'll create a tweet announcing your intentions with similarities to the original document. Then, once you compose your tweet, create handles for prominent Revolutionary leaders and what their support would look and sound like today. Feel free to get creative and use appropriate word choice through the Twitter profile.

The image shows a simulated Twitter interface. On the left is a navigation sidebar with icons for Home, Explore, Notifications, Messages, Bookmarks, Lists, Profile, and More, along with a 'Tweet' button. The main content area is titled 'Home' and features a 'What's happening?' prompt with a 'Tweet' button. Below this are two tweets: one by 'Thomas Jefferson @WriterBoy76' and another by 'Colonial Printer @' with a drawing prompt. A 'Messages' pop-up is overlaid on the left, showing messages from 'Abigail Adams', 'Patrick Henry', and 'Paul Revere'. The right sidebar contains sections for 'Creating Hashtags', 'Who to follow' (listing King George III, George Washington, and Benjamin Franklin), and 'Topics to follow' (listing The Boston Tea Party, The Stamp Act, and Columbian Press).

In your own words, how does social media affect communication and literacy compared to traditional print?

Visual Story-telling

Name: _____

Focusing on illustrations from Harper's Weekly (pg. 1)

Imagery is one of the strongest concepts in story-telling. When people don't have a full language understanding or complete literacy, they still understand the concept and communication of visual story-telling, no matter if it's art, photography, charts, graphs or advertisements.

All images, historical or modern, can be deeply understood and appreciated under most circumstances. Analyzing the story and understanding the meaning behind the visual is how the reader perceives the message.

In the next exercise, you will be creating your own visual story, but first, read below to understand the overall purpose, context, and details to creating an image.

PURPOSE

Every image is created to DO something, so think with a specific action verb. Think along these to start with:

- Share a new idea (*introduce, propose, suggest, outline, etc...*)
- Share a positive message (*inspire, honor, praise, celebrate, etc...*)
- Share a negative message (*challenge, criticize, disagree, etc...*)
- Connect with an idea (*compare, echo, reflect, wonder, etc...*)

DETAILS

Details are the most important part of telling a story to support the purpose and message. Look for/create the items below:

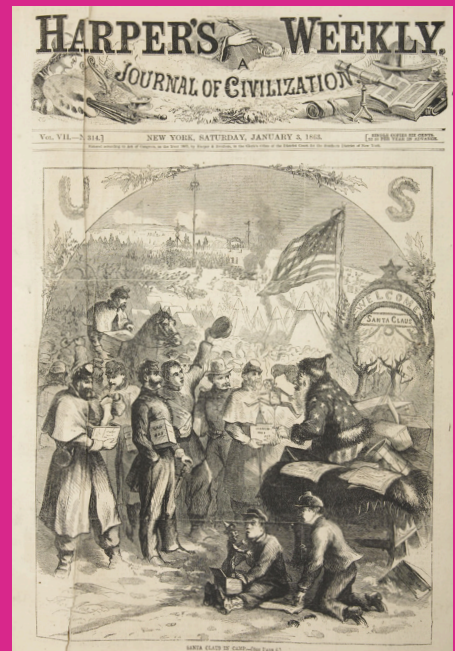
- Background
- Color
- Objects
- People/subject
- Sensory
- Perspective/Point of view
- Scale
- Narrative

CONTEXT

Specific social, political, and/or economical events make images have certain circumstances of the creation of art. Think about:

- **Before/after:** what major event just happened or what could happen?
- **During:** is it related to a trend or is there no end in sight?
- **Shift:** is there change that could happen or occur?

HISTORICAL EXAMPLES



After your museum visit, think about the Harper's Weekly cartoons that were on display. Each one had a specific purpose, details and context. Below, write in your own words the significance of visual cartoons and elements added to print during the late 1800s.

Visual Story-telling

Name: _____

Focusing on illustrations from Harper's Weekly (pg. 2)



With your teacher's permission, go to a trusted news site, or use a local newspaper. Research an important event that can be translated into a cartoon or an artistic image. Keep in mind the purpose, details, and the context as stated on the previous page along with answering the who, what, when, where, why, and how. You can use other historical events for inspiration, too.

Thomas Nast (1840 – 1902) was a German-born American caricaturist and editorial cartoonist often considered to be the "Father of the American Cartoon." Among his notable works were the creation of the modern version of Santa Claus (based on the traditional German figures of Saint Nicholas and Weihnachtsmann) and the political symbol of the elephant for the Republican Party (GOP). Nast was associated with the magazine Harper's Weekly from 1859 to 1860 and from 1862 until 1886.

In a few words, give your image a caption or a small blurb to deepen the understanding of the image.

Why is it important to have visual story-telling added to mass-circulating in newspapers?

Creating a John Hancock

Name: _____

Even though printing was starting to slowly become more mass produced, all of America's founding documents were handwritten and signed, especially currency so it couldn't be counterfeited or forged. Even today, most identities are narrowed down to handwriting, which is why a signature is so important! Your signature is unique to you and needs to be something that can not be easily forged by someone. While some people have a signature in cursive, many in today's generation print their signature letter by letter because it's not taught in schools as much as it used to. Below, you are going to work on your own signature in cursive.

Tips for writing in cursive:

- Trace the letters below (this is optional).
- Connect each of your letters together.
- Don't lift your pen/pencil until the end of the word. Cross the 't's and dot the 'i/j's at the end.
- Make it your own. It doesn't have to match the letters below or anything else, or you can add some flair to it, too. It is your identity!

Uppercase

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z


Lowercase

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

Practice Space

Do you know what it means when someone asks for your John Hancock? If someone is asking, they want your signature!

John Hancock was president of Congress when the Declaration of Independence was adopted and signed. He is primarily remembered by Americans for his large, flamboyant signature on the Declaration, so much so that "John Hancock" became, in the United States, an informal synonym for signature. If you look at the copies of the Declaration, you'll see his signature big and bold above everyone else's.



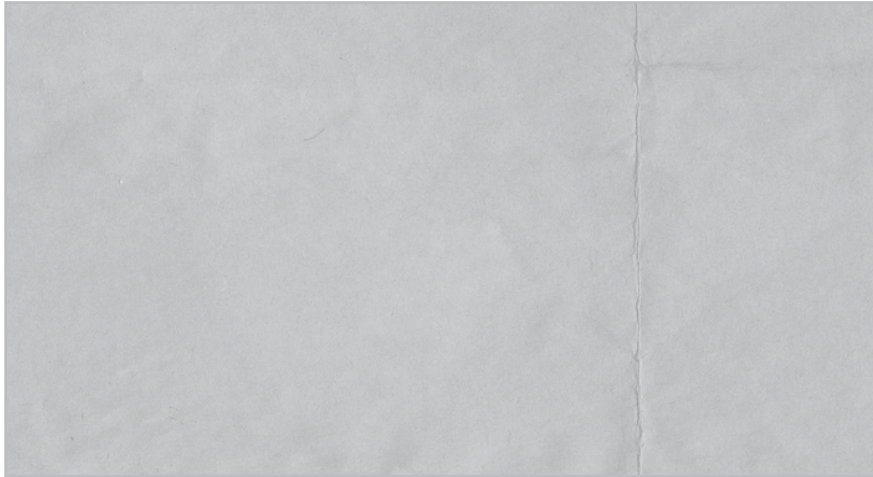
Making Money

Name: _____

An interpretation of American currency

Congratulations! You are now in charge of creating modern money! You are at the first step of creating money: designing it. Below, follow the directions to create new fresh take for today's currency. Keep in mind all the features found in modern currency to prevent forgery.

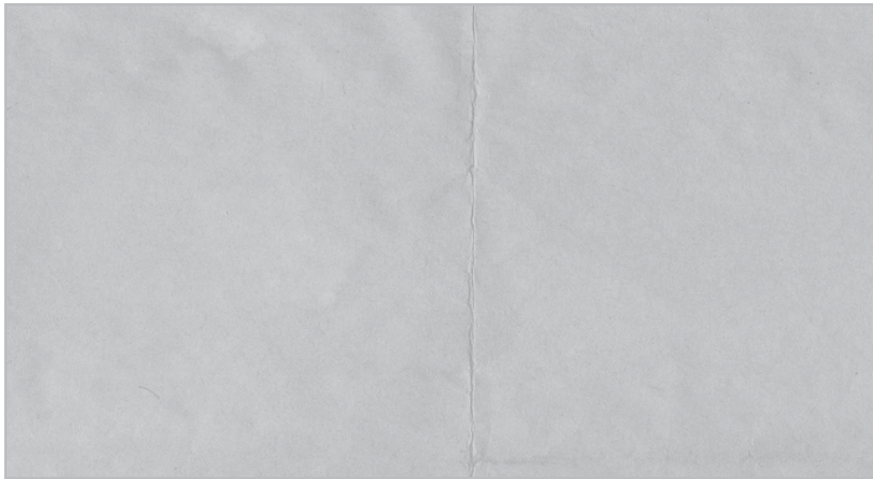
Name of currency:



Flat currency/notes

1. Create three different images for money. It could be any modern interpretation of money or a remake of how money could have been designed during the revolution.
2. Add wording or phrases to your design.
3. Name the three different values (for example, we have the \$1, \$5, \$10, etc.). You could even design the first \$3 bill!
4. Lastly, add your John Hancock so no one can copy your money!

Name of currency:



Coins

1. First, decide what images should be on the two faces of your coins.
2. Next, think about word choice. Every coin has the year it was created and phrases or mottos engraved on it.
3. Lastly, make sure you add how much your coin is worth.
4. Have fun and get creative with your design.

Name of currency:



Post-Visit Discussion

Name: _____

Use the questions below to prompt discussion and reflection after the museum trip.

1. What was your favorite exhibit? Is there anything you wished you could have seen more of?

2. What's one thing you learned from the activities?

3. What's one thing that surprised you?

4. Do you think printing is important or not? Would the world be the same today without it?

5. How do you think newspaper and printers spread ideas?

6. Why do you think more Americans were literate in comparison to the English or other countries at the time?

7. Why were journalists and printers so important in Colonial America?

8. Do you think the American Revolution could have occurred without journalists and printers?

9. Why were colonists resistant to taxes such as the Stamp Act?

10. Even colonists were divided between those who wanted to rebel and those who were loyal to the British crown during the American Revolution. Why do you think that was? How was printing used to support each side?

11. Which invention or development in journalism and printing do you believe is the most important and why?