

**ASSESSMENTS**

# USING THE ASSESSMENTS

## MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

*Intended for use after each of the three slide readings*

We have included 20 multiple-choice test questions about the history of each of the three wars. They are located after each of the three slide scripts in the binder along with answer sheets. The questions are linked to the student short history handouts (including the maps and timelines) and the in-class information from the slide scripts. The glossaries, which are intended for student use, define core vocabulary used on these tests. During the test each student will need the one-page handout of the slide images (copy-ready master included in plastic sleeve).

## SUMMARY ASSESSMENTS

*Intended for use after completing all three of the slide readings*

**SHORT ANSWER:** The following summary assessments include three different types of short answer activities. Each activity includes a one- or two-page student handout, a one-page image handout (copy-ready masters included in plastic sleeve), and an answer key/scoring guide.

**Which War and Why** uses *Newsweek* covers from all three wars to assess each student's ability to identify evidence in a news document that points to a particular historical time period.

**Bias in Coverage** uses *Newsweek* covers from the 2003 War in Iraq to assess each student's ability to identify bias in media coverage and the techniques used to influence readers, and to apply that analysis to a more recent war.

**Targeting North Korea** uses a 2003 *Newsweek* cover to assess each student's understanding of how and why news images communicate certain messages.

**DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTION ESSAY:** This assessment asks students to use the *Newsweek* images and text they have analyzed to write a formal essay that compares coverage during the three wars, discusses government influence on media, and evaluates press freedom during wartime. A scoring guide is included.

**SUMMARY QUESTIONS:** These questions (with suggested responses) may be used for discussion or adapted for writing activities. They include a reflection on the bias of these materials. The handout of slide images (one page per war, copy-ready masters included in plastic sleeve) will assist students in answering these questions.



**NAME:****Date:**

*This activity will show your ability to identify evidence in a news document that points to a particular historical time period. For this activity use covers #44-49.*

**For each of the six covers, circle the correct war and give at least two pieces of evidence from the cover to back up your choice. There are two covers from each war.**

**COVER #44:****VIETNAM WAR****GULF WAR****WAR IN AFGHANISTAN****EVIDENCE:**


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**EVIDENCE:**


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**COVER #45:****VIETNAM WAR****GULF WAR****WAR IN AFGHANISTAN****EVIDENCE:**


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**EVIDENCE:**


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**COVER #46:****VIETNAM WAR****GULF WAR****WAR IN AFGHANISTAN****EVIDENCE:**


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**EVIDENCE:**


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**COVER #47:**                      **VIETNAM WAR**                                      **GULF WAR**                                      **WAR IN AFGHANISTAN**

**EVIDENCE:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**EVIDENCE:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**COVER #48:**                      **VIETNAM WAR**                                      **GULF WAR**                                      **WAR IN AFGHANISTAN**

**EVIDENCE:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**EVIDENCE:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**COVER #49:**                      **VIETNAM WAR**                                      **GULF WAR**                                      **WAR IN AFGHANISTAN**

**EVIDENCE:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**EVIDENCE:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



**SCORING GUIDE - WHICH WAR AND WHY?**

**Score 1 point for each correct answer and 1 point for each piece of valid evidence, with a maximum of 3 points per cover for 18 points total.**

- “I remember it from class” (#46, 48, 49) is not evidence from the cover.
- “The lines around the edge of the cover” or “the price” is evidence from the cover.
- Points may be awarded for valid evidence for the wrong war (see #48).
- There may be other valid evidence in addition to the answers below.

**COVER #44: WAR IN AFGHANISTAN**

- Osama bin Laden was a cover story after 9/11
- turbaned Muslims often illustrated Islamic fundamentalists in post-9/11 coverage
- the term “evil” was rarely used for leaders, even Saddam Hussein, before 9/11
- the focus on reforming the Arab world came after 9/11
- Zakaria wrote for *Newsweek* during the War in Afghanistan

**COVER #45: VIETNAM WAR**

- “The Troubled Army” refers to Vietnam, not the other wars
- many soldiers were overtly anti-war (such as wearing peace signs) during Vietnam, much less so in the other wars
- the peace sign was popularized during the Vietnam War
- the soldier’s open shirt and informal dress implies Vietnam, not more recent wars

**COVER #46: WAR IN AFGHANISTAN**

- turbaned Muslims often illustrated Islamic fundamentalists in post-9/11 coverage
- “Islamic Rage” was not an issue during the Gulf War or the Vietnam War
- the focus on “they,” meaning Muslims, hating Americans is a post-9/11 issue
- the “Ground Zero” text (at top) is a reference to the 9/11 World Trade Center site
- this “Special Report” suggests a big event related to “Islamic Rage” (9/11)
- this photo is from an anti-U.S. rally in Pakistan after September 11, 2001.

**COVER #47: GULF WAR**

- “CNN’s Man in Baghdad” is about the Gulf War (Peter Arnet who reported throughout the war from the Iraqi capital)
- the soldier’s camouflage, gun, and the sand in the photo are not from the Vietnam War
- “Showdown in the Sand” and “Heat of Battle” imply *Operation Desert Storm* (Gulf War)
- “Showdown” refers to the countdown to the ground war in the Gulf

**COVER #48: GULF WAR**

- only the Gulf War had a “Countdown to a Ground Strike”
- the Stealth bomber came after Vietnam (could be Gulf or Afghanistan)
- the high-tech “New Science of War” reflects Gulf War coverage (also Afghanistan)

**COVER #49: VIETNAM WAR**

- jungle setting is not the Persian Gulf or Afghanistan
- injured U.S. troops are more typical of Vietnam coverage than other wars
- “How Goes the War?” is critical, anti-war text, most like Vietnam War coverage
- “*Newsweek*” font is older than other covers







**SCORING GUIDE - BIAS IN COVERAGE**

**SCORING:**

- 1 point:** Correctly identifies bias for cover #50 or #51 but provides no appropriate evidence or explanation from the cover to back up choice. Incorrectly identifies bias but provides some limited evidence and explanation.
- 2 points:** Correctly identifies bias and provides some evidence and explanation from the cover including one or two factors with explanations of how they communicate the bias.
- 3 points:** Correctly identifies bias and provides clear evidence and explanation from the cover including three factors with explanations of how they communicate the bias.

**BENCHMARK 3-POINT ANSWER FOR COVER #51**

*Although this cover shows a soldier, who I assume is American, looking young and handsome, the words and photo make this against the war in Iraq. Most importantly are the big words, "Hell Bent on War." This puts a negative spin on it. They are followed by smaller words, "Will attacking Saddam Hussein really make us safer?" This kind of question reminds me of the Vietnam War coverage and makes Americans doubt the war and the president. Mentioning, "fear on the front lines" is also a negative thing about war. Finally, the photo of the soldier is also kind of anti-war. He looks scared, his eyes are sort of bulged out and he is dirty.*

**BENCHMARK 3-POINT ANSWER FOR COVER #50**

*Cover #50 is pro-war. The soldier on the cover is smiling (a positive thing) with the American flag behind her (patriotism). She is young, cute, and easy for most Americans to relate to. The headline tells the reader that she was saved (also a good thing). The photo of the soldier in the corner with the text "Inside Baghdad" shows the cool action of war on Iraq. All together the cover shows a patriotic and heroic story of a perky young female soldier being saved. This presents a good view of war.*

**Note:** The story of Jessica Lynch is well known and controversial. Students may be able to add their own knowledge to the paragraph. This can help their explanation but they must explore at least 3 factors from the cover to receive a top score.

**MEDIA COVERAGE AND THE STORY OF JESSICA LYNCH:**

Jessica Lynch was captured by Iraqi forces on March 23, 2003 when her maintenance convoy took a wrong turn during the U.S. march towards Baghdad. She was injured in the assault and placed in an Iraqi hospital. On April 2nd, U.S. Special Forces staged a nighttime raid to rescue her that was documented by a military camera crew. Details about Jessica's captivity and rescue later became controversial. It turns out she had not received gunshot and stab wounds, as had been previously reported, and that she was treated very well by the Iraqis, not "slapped around" as

was written in some accounts. Government reports and the edited videotape of her rescue obscured the fact that her Iraqi guards had already fled the hospital before her rescue team stormed in and all the explosions and gun shots that can be heard on the video were from U.S. forces alone. Some see the Jessica Lynch story as a well-orchestrated PR campaign by the government and media while others welcome the celebration of this American hero's courage and struggle. Her story provides a good opportunity for the class to discuss these perspectives.







**SCORING GUIDE - TARGETING NORTH KOREA****PART ONE:**

Score one point for each appropriate answer that includes a message and techniques (max. 3 points).

Example answers:

- *message: He is evil. technique (the text: "Dr. Evil")*
- *He is not straightforward or trustworthy. (can't see his eyes behind dark glasses)*
- *He is not a regular or respectful politician. (informal or casual dress)*
- *He is a great threat to the U.S. (the text: "Is Kim Jong Il a bigger threat than Saddam?")*
- *He is a suave and hip guy. (his outfit, glasses, and cool Cadillac in the corner)*
- *He is a bungling but powerful bad guy. (reference to "Dr. Evil" character in Austin Powers)*

**PART TWO:**

Score one point for answers that do not address WHY *Newsweek* may have constructed this cover the way that it did. Score one point for answers that attribute *Newsweek's* negative depiction of Kim Jong Il solely to "make him look bad" without addressing *Newsweek's* marketing or advertising intent.

Score two points for answers that appropriately address the question and include discussion of *Newsweek's* goal of selling more magazines through sensational covers and/or targeting of youth.

**Benchmark 2-point answer**

*This cover will help Newsweek to sell more magazines, especially to kids. The text and the photo make the Korean leader seem both scary and interesting. He is supposed to remind us of the "Dr. Evil" character in the Austin Powers flicks so that we are more likely to buy the magazine.*

**Benchmark 2-point answer**

*On this cover Newsweek is tapping into public concern about the possibility of war with North Korea. If they make Kim Jong Il look really bad they may attract more readers. The text makes "North Korea's Dr. Evil" (big black font) seem like a bigger threat than Saddam Hussein (small white font). Maybe Newsweek is suggesting that we should go to war against him instead of Saddam or that we shouldn't go to war in Iraq if Kim Jong Il is worse than Saddam. Either way they are picking up on public fears about dangerous ("Dr. Evil"), and weird (the photo), foreign leaders in order to sell magazines.*

**COMPUTING THE FINAL SCORE FOR SHORT ANSWER ASSESSMENTS**

**Which War and Why**

Each of the six covers will have a score of 0–3 points. Total the scores.

- This assessment has a maximum of **18 points**.

**Bias in Coverage**

This assessment will have a score of 0–3 points total.

- Multiply the score given by 3 for a maximum of **9 points**.

**Targeting North Korea**

This assessment has two parts:

Part One will have a score of 0–3 points.

Part Two will have a score of 0–2 points.

Total the scores for the two parts (maximum of 5 points).

- Multiply that amount by 2 for a total maximum of **10 points**.

**FINAL SCORING:**

- Add the totals from all the above for a maximum of **37 points**.
- Divide that total by .37 for a final score out of 100.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTION ESSAY**

1. Read over the Document-Based Question Essay (DBQ Essay) handout and adapt the questions if appropriate.
2. Make copies of the three pages of *Newsweek* images (Vietnam War, Gulf War, and War in Afghanistan), one three-page packet per student. Image quality is important for these copies. Return half-tone masters to plastic sleeve. Copy the DBQ Essay handout, one per student.
3. Introduce the assessment, hand out image packets and DBQ Essay, and give students an appropriate amount of time for the essay.
4. After students have finished the test you may want to discuss the answers. See the page titled *Summary Discussion Questions* later in this section for suggestions.
5. A scoring guide for the DBQ Essay is included later in this section.



## MEDIA CONSTRUCTION OF WAR: DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTION ESSAY

**NAME:**

**Date:**

### **DIRECTIONS:**

- Write a well-organized essay that includes an introduction and conclusion and that addresses all aspects of the task listed below.
- Use evidence from the *Newsweek* images in your handout to support your response.
- Include additional related information.

### **Historical Context:**

The news media influence attitudes and opinions about current events, in part through the words and images they present to the public. Media coverage of the Vietnam War in the 1960s and 1970s differed from coverage of the Gulf War in 1991 and the War in Afghanistan in 2001.

### **Task:**

Using information from the handouts and your knowledge of history, write an essay in which you:

- Compare and contrast *Newsweek* coverage of the Vietnam War, the Gulf War of 1991, and the War in Afghanistan in 2001.
- Discuss the ways in which the U.S. government has influenced media coverage during wartime since the 1960s.
- Evaluate the extent to which we have a free press in this country during times of war.



**SCORING GUIDE FOR DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTION ESSAY****SCORE OF 5:**

- Thoroughly addresses all three aspects of the task including:
  - comparison of media coverage of all three wars,
  - discussion of U.S. government influence on media coverage of war since Vietnam,
  - judgment about the existence of a free press during war.
- Shows a strong understanding of each of the wars and core issues related to government influence of media coverage during wartime.
- Uses appropriate and detailed evidence from the *Newsweek* images and brings in additional accurate information not found in the images.
- Goes beyond merely stating information and demonstrates the ability to effectively analyze, evaluate, and compare.
- Connects information and weaves it into a cohesive essay that supports the conclusions about a free press.
- Is a clear and well-developed essay with an introduction and conclusion, and shows consistent and logical organization and control of basic writing skills.

**SCORE OF 3:**

- Addresses some aspects of the task. This may include an adequate treatment of two of the three tasks or a very brief or flawed treatment of all three tasks.
- Shows a flawed or limited understanding of each of the wars and core issues related to government influence of media coverage during wartime.
- Includes some inaccuracies and unsubstantiated generalizations.
- Cites appropriate evidence from the images only one or two times and adds little outside information.
- Goes beyond merely stating information but demonstrates a limited ability to analyze, evaluate, or compare.
- Has an unclear theme or an inadequate connection of information to the theme. Does not adequately relate ideas to a conclusion about a free press.
- Writing is at times unclear, illogical, or unorganized. The introduction and conclusion are merely restatements of the task.

**SCORE OF 1:**

- Does not address the tasks. This may include a limited response to only one of the three tasks or an inadequate response to all three tasks.
- Demonstrates a very limited understanding of the history of the wars, and little or no understanding of government influence of media coverage during wartime.
- Includes nearly all inaccurate or unsubstantiated information.
- Uses no appropriate and detailed evidence from the *Newsweek* images and brings in no additional accurate information.
- Merely states information but does not appropriately analyze, evaluate, or compare.
- Does not connect information to an appropriate theme or address the issue of a free press during wartime.
- Is illegible, unclear, illogical, or unorganized. Has an inappropriate or inadequate introduction and conclusion.



**SUMMARY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

*These questions are intended for use after completing the interactive slide presentations. They may be used for discussion or adapted for writing activities. The handout of the slide images (one page per war) will assist students in answering these questions.*

**How did *Newsweek* coverage of the War in Afghanistan, the Gulf War, and the Vietnam War differ?**

Most of the *Newsweek* coverage we saw from the Vietnam War was anti-war. Many of the covers asked critical questions about the war (*Can We Win?, How Goes the War?, Which Way Out?*). Many of the images showed the horrors of war for both the Americans and the Vietnamese (#8, 9, 10, 15, 16). The enemy was portrayed in a neutral or even positive light (#5), and anti-war protests were covered (#6, 13). In general the war was portrayed as negative.

The *Newsweek* coverage that we saw from the Gulf War was much more pro-war. The cover text did not ask questions as it had during the Vietnam War but instead made statements (*the Path to War, America at War, Victory!*). There was an emphasis on America’s high-tech capabilities and the “New Science of War” (#24, 20, 22) and there were fewer images of the casualties of war than during Vietnam. Saddam Hussein, unlike Ho Chi Minh, was presented as an evil madman who deserved the war (#19, 25). The U.S. victory was presented as a terrific celebration (#27, 28, 29).

The *Newsweek* coverage we looked at from the War in Afghanistan was even more pro-war. It emphasized patriotic images (red, white, and blue, strong presidential leadership and flags). Much of the text was overtly pro-war (*We Will Not Falter, “Get Out of My Way,” “Where We Get Our Strength”*). The enemy was labeled as “evil” (#39, 42) and described as hating America (#33). *Newsweek* coverage again celebrated U.S. high-tech weaponry as it did during the Gulf War. There were a few images of injured Afghans (#37, 39) but none that showed injured Americans. *Newsweek* coverage showed the

U.S. victory bringing freedom and liberation to the Afghan people (#39, 40), while the Arab world was portrayed in shambles and in need of “saving” (#43).

**What are possible reasons for *Newsweek* anti-war coverage during the Vietnam War but increasingly pro-war sentiments during the subsequent wars?**

*Newsweek* coverage reflects its primary goal of selling magazines by appealing to public interest and opinion. The Vietnam War became unpopular after many years of graphic media coverage, thousands of American deaths, questionable justification for the war, and a growing sense that the U.S. could not defeat the enemy. After 1968 popular opinion turned against the war and *Newsweek* coverage became more overtly anti-war.

During the Gulf War the government took action to influence media coverage including limiting journalists’ access to battle scenes, providing images and information to the media, training military spokespeople in PR techniques, and censoring reports. The Gulf War was short, relatively few Americans died, and the U.S. won. *Newsweek* coverage reflected the positive, pro-war views of many Americans.

Coverage of the War in Afghanistan was a clear reflection of American public opinion after the September 11th attacks. The U.S. public was shocked, angry, and ready for retaliation. The patriotic mood in the nation made it difficult for mainstream news organizations to raise difficult questions about the War in Afghanistan. As the nation rallied behind the president and went to war, *Newsweek* played it safe and reinforced public opinion (and the government line) by constructing patriotic and pro-war images and text.

**OPEN-ENDED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- What is the proper role for media in wartime? Should media support the government in a time of crisis? Is it appropriate or even patriotic for media to raise hard and uncomfortable questions during a war?
- If mainstream media are big businesses, often controlled by huge corporations with ties to the government, can they be expected to challenge public opinion or government policy?
- If media do not present conflicting opinions and perspectives on war, how will the public learn the truth and decide what is right?

**REFLECTING ON THE BIAS OF THESE MATERIALS**

It is important for high school and college students to begin to question the sources and perspectives of the educational materials used in the classroom, including textbooks, films, and other media materials. Students should ask questions about the producers of educational materials, the currency and accuracy of the information, and the bias or point of view of the materials. This is especially important when studying history. The slides and short histories in this kit should be deconstructed by students using these same critical questions. Students should be encouraged to ask questions about who produced these materials, for what purpose, with what bias, and to give evidence from the slides and histories that back up their analysis.

**What is the bias in this series of slides and in the history you have been reading? What is your evidence? Who produced these materials and for what purpose?**

These materials (the slides, teacher’s guide, short histories, and assessments) were created by a not-for-profit group in upstate New York called Project Look Sharp, which is funded by Ithaca College and private foundations. Project Look Sharp’s web site states that its primary goal is to help teachers integrate “media literacy” into the classroom.

The questions that the author poses about *Newsweek* coverage indicate that he wants to teach students to question the media and the government. The materials focus on media distortions (image manipulation, stereotypes, sensational covers) and government distortions (focus on the *Pentagon Papers*, control of Gulf War coverage). The facts presented in the short histories of the three wars are much more critical of the government than typical high school history texts. The *Short History of the Vietnam War* quotes the *Pentagon Papers*, “only the Viet Cong had any real support...” and “South Vietnam was essentially a creation of the United States,” both controversial positions. The Gulf War slides focus on a government “campaign to manage media coverage,” suggesting that the news coverage was biased in favor of the government.

The choice of what slides to include biased the readers towards a certain analysis. Are the 14 slides we saw from the Vietnam War really reflective of a decade of *Newsweek* coverage of that war or did the author choose those covers to present an anti-war view? Was *Newsweek* Gulf War coverage really as pro-war as the 12 slides seemed to indicate? It is also not clear if *Newsweek* coverage is typical of other magazines,

newspapers, or television coverage of the wars. However, this set of questions, which asks students to analyze the bias of the materials themselves, does indicate a sincere interest in teaching critical thinking.

**Are these slides propaganda?**

Mass media messages are constructed to persuade, to educate, to entertain, or to inform (or some of all four). All media messages come from a point of view. In that way all media messages are biased. These slides are intended to teach students to ask critical questions about the bias of news coverage. They are designed to counteract the effects of propaganda. On the other hand, these materials can be called propaganda because they “try to persuade using a one-sided message” – the message that students should always question the media.

***The teacher can use the dilemma about propaganda to lead into a philosophical discussion about truth.***

**How does one learn the truth about war when all media sources have a bias?**

The following principles can provide a starting point for discussion and reflection on our roles as students and citizens during a time of crisis.

**The search for truth must be:**

- **informed by credible sources**
- **open to many perspectives**
- **grounded in core values**
- **self-reflective and critical**