CCSS PRIMARY ALIGNMENT:

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.6: Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose.

C3 FRAMEWORK ALIGNMENT:

- D1.5.9-12: Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of view represented in the sources, the types of sources available, and the potential uses of the sources.

SUMMARY:

By examining news reports and other content available online, students learn to categorize information based on its primary purpose and to align that purpose with one of seven Info Zones. The ability to differentiate between types of information — such as news, entertainment, opinion and advertising — is an important skill for students to develop as they evaluate the credibility of everything they read, watch or hear.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE:

I can determine the primary purpose of a piece of information and use this to categorize it into one of seven distinct types.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- What are some of the main reasons that people create and share information?
- Does the purpose of a piece of information affect its credibility? Why or why not?

WORD WALL TERMS:

- News
- Advertising
- Entertainment
- Publicity
- Opinion
- Propaganda
- Raw information

PREPARATION:

What you’ll need:

- Six pieces of chart paper
- One marker for each student
- Six notecards or small pieces of paper
- LCD projector connected to computer with internet
- Copies of the Own It, Zone It! graphic organizer
- A timer or timer mobile app (optional)

1. Prepare a Gallery Walk of six examples as described below. (Note: You will need to decide whether to do a digital gallery walk, a paper-based gallery walk, or a hybrid.) Ideally, this can be ready for students when they arrive in your classroom. Each of the six examples you use need to have a different specific primary purpose. You can find gallery walk collections created by NLP here.

2. The gallery walk involves posting six examples of information around the classroom — each in the center of a piece of chart paper, which is numbered. (Video-based and digital examples should have a piece of chart paper nearby.)

3. For the Connection Challenge portion, prepare six notecards with the following six Info Zones written on them: News, Opinion, Entertainment, Advertising, Publicity and Propaganda. (Note that there is a seventh Info Zone, Raw Information, that will remain a mystery until the end of the lesson.)

4. For the Own It, Zone It portion of the lesson, make sure you can access the collections of examples here.
LESSON:

This lesson has three parts, outlined below:

Part One: Gallery Walk

1. As students enter the room, or at the beginning of the period, use your favorite method (verbal count-off, slips of paper, other symbols) to assign students to one of six groups. Give each student a marker.
2. Tell students that they will start the period by participating in a gallery walk. They will see six examples of information posted at stations around the room and must quickly write down what they think the primary, or main, purpose is of each. We recommend directing students to keep it simple by using just two words for this, the first of which is “to” (for example, “to sell”).
   - Note: If you need to first introduce the concept of distinguishing a primary purpose from secondary purposes, you might use an example of something in the room — chairs and bottled water have clear primary purposes and several secondary purposes, for example, as do common items you could bring in, such as a shoebox or baking soda.
3. Students should find the gallery item with their group number on it and begin there. They have just five minutes to complete the walk by quickly reviewing each example, determining what they think its primary purpose is, and writing that purpose clearly on the chart paper using their marker. We recommend using a timer and making this a timed challenge.
4. When time is up, one student from each group will summarize for the class the responses written on the chart paper. As those students do so, try to consolidate and redirect the responses to correspond with NLP’s six primary purposes — to inform, to persuade, to entertain, to sell, to promote and to distort — and quickly reconcile or postpone disagreements or debates about individual examples. As you do this, use a thick marker to write the NLP primary purpose clearly, in large letters, on each piece of chart paper.

Part Two: Connection Challenge

1. Point out that for these information categories to be useful, we need more than just a primary purpose; we need a name so we can refer to them by category. We’ll call these categories Info Zones.
2. Now give each group representative an Info Zone (category) notecard that does not match their purpose (chart paper) and tell the representatives to return to their groups. Tell students that they will have just two minutes to consult with their group members and figure out on which of the other gallery papers their notecard belongs. If another group has already placed a notecard where they think theirs should go, the first group should also place their card there, and it will be discussed afterward. Go!
3. When the two minutes are up, students can take their seats. Briefly discuss each example, highlighting the connection (or lack of connection, if incorrectly placed) between the purpose written on the chart paper and the Info Zone on the notecard. If you encounter an example with two notecards, engage in a quick discussion about which one belongs and which must go elsewhere. Identifying the blank example and chart paper (where one of the two notecards in question belongs) can help expedite this discussion and make the distinctions clear to students.
4. Once all purposes have been matched with an Info Zone, quickly recap the six zones. Then reveal that there is one more zone — but, unlike the others, it does not have just one primary purpose. For now, it will be the mystery zone.

Part Three: Own It, Zone It

1. Make sure each student has a copy of the two-sided Own It, Zone It graphic organizer.
2. Locate the NLP Info Zone collection found here and project the title slide for the class. Tell the students that they will now be evaluating a collection of new examples. Every zone (including the mystery zone) is present in this collection; some zones will appear more than once. Students will have 20 to 30 seconds to zone each example before you move on to the next one.
   - Consider making the mystery zone a contest by offering a prize to any student who figures it out.
3. The examples in the mystery zone (Raw Information) should generate some confusion or uncertainty among students when they appear. When some students conclude that an example is the mystery zone, ask them if they can guess as to what the examples of this zone share in common. If they can answer this correctly, you can elicit the zone name (Raw Information). If they do not, wait for the next example and see if anyone has a guess. Limiting students to one student per example will help prevent these from slowing down the lesson.
4. At the end of the collection (or with five minutes left in the class period, whichever comes first), click back through the examples and elicit answers from the students, redirecting incorrect answers and acknowledging correct answers. You might want to have students grade their own graphic organizers as they go, then find out who has the most right before dismissal before the end of class.
5. If the name of the mystery zone (Raw Information) has not already been revealed during the lesson, quickly recap the examples of raw information in the collection and guide students to the right answer by highlighting what each has in common and what sets them apart from the other zones.
EXTENDED LEARNING:

- Extend the final activity in this lesson by using another copy of the Own It, Zone It! graphic organizer with one of the alternate Info Zone collections located [here](#).
- Use an online generator to create a set of Info Zones bingo cards to use with one of the alternate collections. The winner is the first student who can check off — and explain — five consecutive Info Zones on his or her boards!

TAKING INFORMED ACTION:

Have students create a plan to educate others about NLP’s seven basic zones of information (Info Zones) by completing some or all of the following steps:

- Select two Info Zones that you think might be hard for people to specifically identify — for example, opinion and propaganda, or publicity and advertising, or news and opinion.
- Choose an audience (peers, family members, etc.) that you think would benefit from learning the difference between these two zones.
- Come up with a plan to teach your audience how to distinguish between the two zones you selected. Remember: A key part of determining an Info Zone is recognizing its primary purpose while understanding that it can have additional purposes or effects. (For example, an opinion piece can be informative, an advertisement can be entertaining, etc.).
- Make sure that your plan includes a way to deliver examples of media (for example, something from the following list — or use your imagination!):
  - A screencast/video
  - A meme
  - A PowToon or other animation
  - A pamphlet
  - A game
  - An infographic
  - A poster for classroom use
  - A Prezi or other presentation
- Use what you created to teach your audience how to differentiate between the two types of information you selected. You might consider measuring your project’s effectiveness by assessing your audience’s abilities to distinguish between the two before you begin, then doing so again when you’re done.
- To finish your project, reflect on this question: “What positive civic outcomes might result from people learning to distinguish between information from the two Info Zones you selected?”
ACTIVE LEARNING COMPONENT: MAKE YOUR OWN

SUMMARY:
In this activity, students create their own Info Zone collections about a topic or theme of their choice. We recommend that students work in small teams and use the same platform (for example, Google Slides on Google Docs or as a Prezi) to store and share their collections.

WHAT YOU’LL NEED
• Devices that allow students to research and collect information they find online. This could be a desktop computer, laptop computer, tablet or smartphone.
• A pre-selected tool for students to use to collect, store and share or present their collections.
• A timer or timer mobile app (optional).

HOW IT WORKS:
Remind students of the Info Zone collection(s) they worked through in the previous lesson, and tell them that they are now going to create their own collection, using these four rules:

1. All examples must be appropriate for school.

2. All Info Zones must be represented at least once.

3. All examples should include enough details or context clues to make it possible for their peers to correctly categorize them. (In other words, examples can be tricky, but not tricks.)

4. The maximum collection size is 15 (or another number that you select).

Make sure students have access to the internet and understand where to collect their examples, then give them a set amount of time to build their collections. We recommend that you leave enough time at the end of the period for at least three groups to share their compilations. If you like, you can create an award for the best collection.

ADAPT AND EXTEND:
• Pair up teams and have each complete the other’s zone collection using the Own It, Zone It graphic organizer. Afterward, teams should give feedback to one another and briefly discuss any examples that generate disagreement. At the conclusion, team pairs can share these contested examples and discuss them with the whole class.

• Have teams of students hack the NLP Info Zones — which are basic categorizations — and reconfigure them to be more specific and nuanced. Students’ new Info Zone systems might allow people to distinguish between subgenres of advertisements such as political, corporate and public service. When their new Info Zone systems are complete, students can teach their peers how they work, or create some kind of project that visualizes and explains their new system.

PROJECT OPTION! TAKE IT FURTHER:
Challenge teams of students to design and build an Info Zones game. Share the best projects with us at info@thenews literacyproject.org!
As you go through the Info Zones collection, decide which zone each example falls into, then explain why you think so. Finally, decide whether you think this particular piece of information has a positive or negative impact on the public and be ready to discuss.

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<th>INFO ZONE</th>
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