

CURRENT ISSUES AND EVENTS



BRADLEY WILSON, PH.D. | CONTEST DIRECTOR
2016

"I DON'T THINK [STUDENTS TODAY] ARE LESS INFORMED THAN PRECEDING GENERATIONS. THEY ARE JUST LESS INFORMED IN GENERAL."

DAVID HAZINSKI, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

GRADY COLLEGE OF JOURNALISM AND MASS

COMMUNICATION, 2013

"A VIBRANT DEMOCRACY DEPENDS ON A WELL-INFORMED CITIZENRY. AS THE WORLD GETS SMALLER, AS THE WORLD GETS MORE INTERCONNECTED, THE THINGS THAT ARE GOING ON IN OTHER COUNTRIES WILL AFFECT THEM TOO."

CYNTHIA TUCKER, VISITING PROFESSOR GRADY COLLEGE OF JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION, 2013

Pew Survey: 41% Can't ID Biden as Vice President

By Mike Tighe | Wednesday, 29 Sep 2010 01:41 PM

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With some Democrats still whining about Vice President Joe Biden's admonition to them the other day to quit complaining about President Obama, now he's got something to whine about, too: A stunning 41 percent of Americans surveyed couldn't name the vice president, according to the results of the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life. Say it ain't so, Joe might plead.



That stat stands out among the other answers of 3,412 Americans surveyed between May 19 and June 6, especially because some of Biden's gaffes have given him enough notoriety that he can't be viewed as just another VP, working in storied anonymity. Indeed, his gaffes have fueled a veritable cottage industry of YouTube videos, T-shirts, and other souvenir paraphernalia memorializing some of his more outrageous comments.

Special: [Could this alarming video cost the Democrats the White House in 2016?](#)

Only **45 percent** of Americans were able to correctly identify what the initials in GOP stood for.

55 percent of Americans believe that Christianity was written into the Constitution and that the founding fathers wanted One Nation Under Jesus

When asked on what year 9/11 took place, **30 percent** of Americans were unable to answer the question correctly.

When looking at a map of the world, young Americans had a difficult time correctly identifying Iraq (**14 percent**) and Afghanistan (**17 percent**).

YOUNGER AMERICANS
(AGES 18 TO 34) ARE NOT
AS KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT THE NEWS
AS ARE OLDER AMERICANS.



Thomas DeGolier @DeGolierThomas · 8h

@uilciande is a large part of why I want to pursue a political science degree

RETWEET

1

FAVORITE

1



10:38 PM - 26 May 2015 · Details



ABOUT THE CONTEST



- 40 objective questions
- Essay (10 points)
- 60 minutes
- Top score individual (objective plus essay)
- Top score team (objective only; top three individuals constitute team score)

WHO MAY ENTER?



- School may enter four students at district.
- Three individuals advance from district to regional to state.
- Four members of winning team advance.

WHAT AREAS WILL THE CONTEST COVER?

- War and conflict
- Politics
- Health
- Science/technology
- Economics (economy, deficit, unemployment)
- Media
- Crime
- Education
- Environment
- Awards /Honors (not entertainment)

ELEMENTS OF NEWS

- **Timeliness** — when?
- **Conflict** — political, ideological, cultural
- **Consequence** — what? why is it important?
- **Prominence** — who?
- **Proximity** — where? how?
- **Oddity** — unusual events that make the news
- **Human Interest** — newsmakers in a more human role

WHO QUESTION



Who is Jorge Mario Bergoglio?

- A. Cardinal and Archbishop in New York City
- B. Obama fund-raiser charged with fraud and violating campaign-finance laws
- C. First Hispanic on the U.S. Supreme Court
- D. Pope Francis of Assisi

WHO QUESTION



Which Rowan County (Kentucky) Clerk was jailed after s/he refused to grant marriage licenses?

- A. Melissa Thompson
- B. Ted Cruz
- C. Josh Earnest
- D. Kim Davis**



Clerk Rejects Proposal to Let Deputies Issue Marriage Licenses



Kentucky Clerk Who Said 'No' to Gay Couples Won't Be Alone in Court

Health Care Rules Proposed to Shield Transgender Patients From Bias

PAID POST: CARTIER Could You Climb This Norwegian Cave?

Cartier



3 Corrections Deputies in California Charged With Murder in Death of Mentally Ill Inmate

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U.S.

3585 COMMENTS

Clerk in Kentucky Chooses Jail Over Deal on Same-Sex Marriage

By ALAN BLINDER and TAMAR LEWIN SEPT. 3, 2015



Kim Davis, the clerk of Rowan County in Kentucky, after refusing to grant a marriage certificate to Robbie Blankenship and Jesse Cruz on Wednesday. Ty Wright/Getty Images

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ASHLAND, Ky. — A county clerk who, through her defiance of a federal court order to issue marriage licenses to gay couples, became a national symbol of religious opposition to [same-sex marriage](#) was jailed Thursday after a federal judge here declared her in contempt of court.

MULTIPLIES. AMPLIFIES. MESMERIZES. INTRODUCING AUDACIOUS MASCARA

SHOP NOW

NARS

WHERE QUESTION



Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, defending Hungary's handling of the crisis, said the situation was a "German problem" and argued that Europe had a duty to tell migrants from what country not to come?

- A. Syria**
- B. Belarus
- C. Poland
- D. Iraq

WHAT QUESTION

According to scientists, what is the most likely cause of the baffling plague that destroyed thousands of U.S. honeybee colonies as part of what is known as Colony Collapse Disorder?

- A. climate change
- B. a virus, possibly imported from china or Australia
- C. pesticides**
- D. parasites

WHICH QUESTION

According to a Government Accountability Office report released this spring, the Pentagon plans to destroy more than \$1 billion worth of which of the following?

- A. documents related to spying on American civilians
- B. nuclear weapons housed in Midwest silos
- C. ammunition, including bullets and missiles
- D. overseas troop housing

WHICH QUESTION



A statue of which president was taken down at the University of Texas after some cited it as a symbol of racism?

- A. Abraham Lincoln
- B. Thomas Jefferson
- C. James K. Polk
- D. Jefferson Davis**

NO CELEBRITY QUESTIONS

What was Justin Bieber's excuse for being arrested for cocaine possession and DWI?

- A. No one is perfect.
- B. I was overtired and working myself to death.
- C. The drugs weren't mine.
- D. all of the above

NO CELEBRITY QUESTIONS



Who cares?

BUSINESS QUESTIONS

Making it the most-watched finale, with almost 10 million viewers, what PBS television series ended in March after six seasons?

- A. *Downton Abbey*
- B. Sesame Street
- C. Doctor Who
- D. The Magic School Bus

BUSINESS QUESTIONS

Even before it opened in China, Disney's new movie "Star Wars: The Force Awakens" was breaking records.

- Fastest film to gross \$1 billion – 12 days.
- Biggest worldwide opening weekend and single weekend gross – \$529 million.
- Biggest worldwide December opening weekend – \$529 million.

However, the movie, which opened Dec. 18, 2015, was not without controversy. Discuss some of the issues surrounding the production and release of the box office sensation.

NO IMPOSSIBLE STUFF

Argentina's ruling left-leaning coalition has chosen its candidate for the October presidential elections. Who is it?

- A. First lady Christina Fernandez de Kirchner
- B. Gen. Javier Lozano Alarcon
- C. Economy Minister Domingo Cavallo
- D. Buenos Aires Governor Carlos Ruckauf

NO NUMBER QUESTIONS

Iran announced that it had reached its goal of running _____ centrifuges for uranium enrichment, a much higher number than recently estimated by the United Nations' atomic agency.

- A. 50
- B. 400
- C. 3,000**
- D. 12,000

HOWEVER, I MIGHT ASK...

This nation announced that it had reached its goal of running 3,000 centrifuges for uranium enrichment, a much higher number than recently estimated by the United Nations' atomic agency.

A. North Korea

B. Iran

C. South Africa

D. Israel

NOTHING TOO EASY

Which American president was responsible for the construction of the Affordable Healthcare Act, popularly known as Obamacare?

- A. Ronald Reagan
- B. Gerald Ford
- C. Bill Clinton
- D. Barack Obama**

NO SPORTS QUESTIONS

Who won the bronze medal in women's trap shooting at the 2016 Rio Summer Olympics?

- A. Corey Cogdell-Unrein
- B. Mitch Unrein
- C. Katie Ledecky
- D. Simone Biles

HOWEVER, I MIGHT ASK...



Corey Cogdell-Unrein won a bronze medal in women's trap shooting, her second Olympic bronze. The *Chicago Tribune* generated controversy with what headline?

- A. Wife of Bears lineman Mitch Unrein wins bronze
- B. Trap shooter remarkably wins bronze
- C. Stay-at-home mom wins Olympics medal
- D. American wins bronze in another unheard of game

AND NOW A WORD ABOUT THE ELECTIONS



Photos by Gage Skidmore, used with permission

IMPORTANT TOPICS

- United States presidency
- National and state elections
- Texas politics
- International conflict
- Iranian nuclear ambitions
- U.S. Supreme Court decisions
- The economy and significant economic events
- Global climate change
- Major scientific and technological developments

ANY RATIOS?

- No. I play it by ear depending on news flow.
- In an **election year**, you can expect a lot of national news. And, you might expect to see questions regarding Texas implications to a national story or event.
- When the **Texas Legislature** is meeting, there might be more Texas questions.

THE ESSAY

The essay matters.
Contestants who fail to submit
an essay shall be disqualified

THE ESSAY

World War I, also known as the First World War or the Great War, was a global war mostly centered in Europe that began formally in 1914 and ended in 1918. World War II was a global war that lasted from 1939 to 1945. It was the most widespread war in history, and directly involved more than 100 million people from more than 30 countries. Both global conflicts began as a series of regional conflicts that grew to encompass economic, industrial and scientific capabilities worldwide.

Given the number of conflicts in which the United States is involved in now, some people believe we are leading up to World War III. Discuss the conflicts in which the United States is involved now and their relevance to American citizens.

THE ESSAY

An article on making small talk in the Huffington Post discussed how and why people resort to talking about the weather. Lindsay Holmes wrote that research has some possible insight: "We're directly affected by our environment. Studies have shown that our moods and overall well-being are influenced by the weather. So when the rising temperature or the bitter cold is the first thing on your mind, it might be hard to discuss anything else." Certainly, the weather has been front and center in the news during the last six months. So, discuss the weather and the implications of some of the recent newsworthy weather events.

FROM THE CONSTITUTION

REPRESENTATION.

(1) **Individual Competition.** Each member high school may enter as many as four individuals in the district meet.

(2) **Team Competition.** A school shall have a minimum of three contestants compete in order to participate in the team competition. All four members of the winning team will advance to the next higher level of competition.

ABOUT INDIVIDUAL SCORING



- Objective + essay score.
- Only top eight objective scorers advance to essay round.

ABOUT INDIVIDUAL SCORING OBJECTIVE QUESTIONS

- Britney — 32
- Lindsay — 30
- Tara — 28
- Juan — 27
- Jayden — 26
- Sophia — 26
- Nicole — 25
- Hilary — 24
- Noah — 23
- Jacob — 22
- Mary-Kate — 21

All other contestants
answered fewer than 21
correctly.

Top eight advance to the essay round.

ABOUT INDIVIDUAL SCORING

ADD THE ESSAY QUESTIONS

NAME	OBJECTIVE	ESSAY	TOTAL
BRITNEY	32	5	37
LINDSEY	30	7	37
TARA	28	10	38
JUAN	27	10	37
JAYDEN	26	8	34
SOPHIA	26	5	31
NICOLE	25	3	28
HILARY	24	9	33

ABOUT INDIVIDUAL SCORING

FINAL PLACES

NAME	OBJECTIVE	ESSAY	TOTAL	PLACE
BRITNEY	32	5	37	4th
LINDSEY	30	7	37	3rd
TARA	28	10	38	1st
JUAN	27	10	37	2nd
JAYDEN	26	8	34	5th
SOPHIA	26	5	31	
NICOLE	25	3	28	
HILARY	24	9	33	6th

ABOUT INDIVIDUAL SCORING

FINAL PLACES

NAME	OBJECTIVE	ESSAY	TOTAL	PLACE
BRITNEY	32	5	37	4th
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SOPHIA	26	5	31	
NICOLE	25	3	28	
HILARY	24	9	33	6th

ABOUT TEAM SCORING

- Top three-member team determined **by objective scores only**.
- For example, TEAM A:
 - Kevin — 29
 - Brad — 26
 - Jake — 25
 - Matt — 21 (lowest score doesn't count)
 - Team score: 80

WHAT ABOUT THE WILD CARD?

- Best **second place** team among the eight districts in a region goes to region.
- Best **second place** team among the four regions in the state qualifies to the State Meet.

8 DISTRICTS PER REGION 4 REGIONS IN THE STATE

- District 1 — 78
- District 2 — 72
- District 3 — 69
- District 4 — 83
- District 5 — 66
- District 6 — 81
- District 7 — 70
- District 8 — 68
- Region 1 — 81
- Region 2 — 77
- Region 3 — 72
- Region 4 — 83

WHAT IF THERE'S A TIE? FOURTH TEAM MEMBER'S SCORE WILL BREAK TIE.

- District 1 — 78
- District 2 — 72
- District 3 — 69
- District 4 — 83
- District 5 — 66
- District 6 — 83
- District 7 — 70
- District 8 — 68

District 4 (83)

Jennifer - 30

Courtney - 27

David - 26

Matthew - 25

District 6 (83)

Tony - 32

Carmela - 28

Meadow - 23

A.J. - 19

BUT WHAT IF...

- Can a member of a team who did not place first, second or third at district but who advanced with the team then places first, second or third as an individual at region advance as an individual?
- Yes.

THE NUMBERS: DISTRICT



THE NUMBERS: REGION & STATE

Region participation in 2016 — 1,080
(2015 — 1,088)

State participation in 2016 — 165
(odds of making it to State — 1:6.5)

THE NUMBERS: STATE 2016

Objective score average | 27.6 (2015: 32.3)

High | 40 (n=1)

38 (n=1)

37 (n=1)

Low | 14

Essay score average | 4.7 (2015: 5.6)

High | 9 (n=3)

Low | 1

NATIONAL NEWSPAPERS AND THEIR ASSOCIATED WEBSITES AND SOCIAL MEDIA



- USA Today
- Wall Street Journal
- Christian Science Monitor
- The New York Times
- The Washington Post

TEXAS METROPOLITAN NEWSPAPERS AND THEIR ASSOCIATED WEBSITES AND SOCIAL MEDIA



- Dallas Morning News
- Houston Chronicle
- San Antonio Express News
- Fort Worth Star Telegram
- Austin American-Statesman

NEWS MAGAZINES



- Time
- Newsweek
- Texas Monthly
- US News & World Report
- The Economist

RADIO, TELEVISION, INTERNET



- Texas Tribune
- National Public Radio
- PBS
- The Daily Show
- ABC, CBS, NBC
- CNN.com, MSNBC.com, foxnews.com
- huffingtonpost.com

CUT-OFF DATES 2016-2017

The contest will focus on a basic knowledge of current state, national and world events and issues. "Current events" are defined as those that have occurred during the current school year so any material after Aug. 22, 2016 is fair game for any exam.

As a general rule, exams are submitted about **TWO WEEKS** before the first contest date.

CONTEST DATES 2016-2017

- Start of school — Aug. 22
- Invitational A — Jan. 7 - Feb. 4
- Invitational B — Feb. 10 - March 11
- District — March 20 - 25
- Region — April 7 - 8
- State — April 20 - 22

Q & A

I carry a fifth place person and she practices with us. She was listed as an alternate at district. I would like for her to take the CI&E test at Austin. Her scores are better and she has earned the testing spot. My question is how to go about this at the State meet? | **Larry Franks, Hartley ISD**

Alternates for teams do not advance in the online system. The students you had participate at Region are the four students who have qualified to State. You are allowed one substitution on your team only if one of those qualifying students are unable to participate at State. If you have two students unable to attend, then you may still sub only one student and compete as a team of three. That process includes turning in the substitution form with with an administrator's signature certifying that the substituting student is eligible to compete.

Q & A

There was one complaint by some of the students about a question specifically about an event at Highland Park High School. This gave an unfair advantage to the students who participated from Highland Park High School. With a tight margin on whose essays were graded, the point earned by the HPHS students could have been a game changer? | **Linda Smith, Rockwall High School**

This was a big deal not only for those students at Highland Park but in the Dallas area and all over Texas. It has implications for schools over. And it made the regional and national news repeatedly including in the *Texas Tribune* and the *New Yorker*.

Q & A

You use too much stuff from your Twitter feed you sacrifice depth in favor of breadth. It's just not the same as reading an article or listening to NPR. It almost comes off as CE Lite or a quiz from *USA Today*. | **Chris Smith**

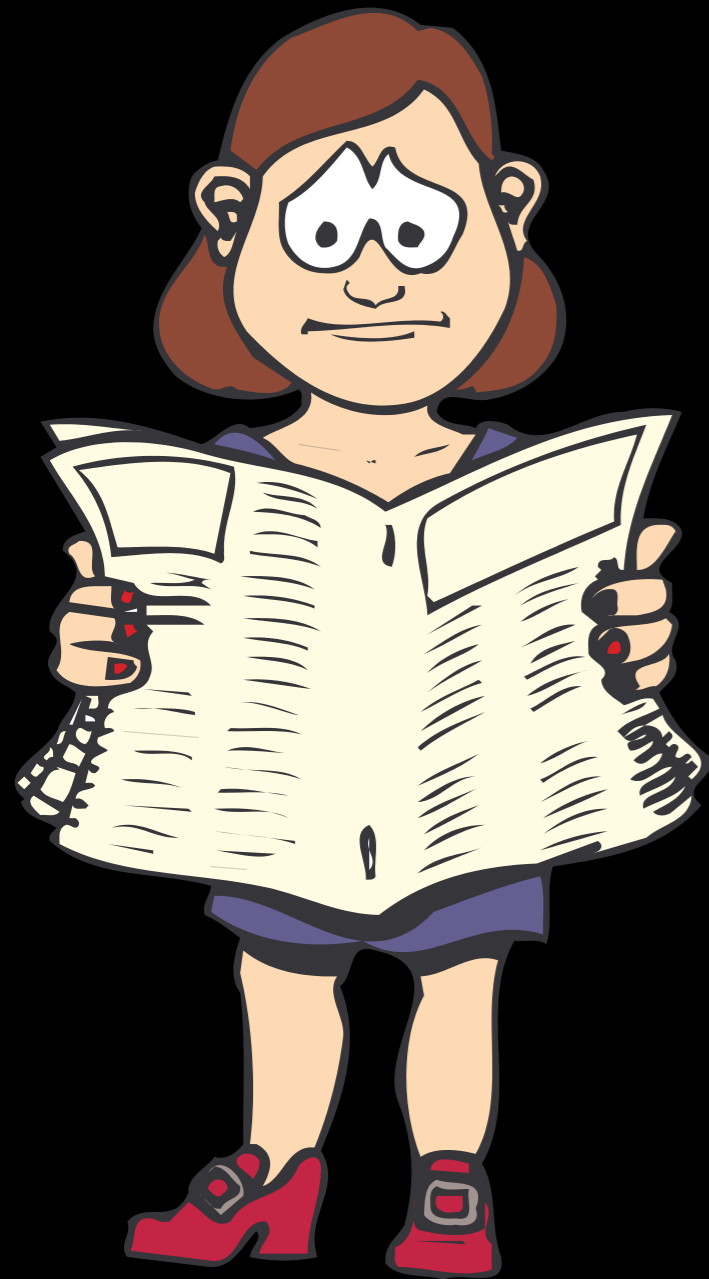
This is a breadth vs. depth question for sure. It is possible to achieve depth over time.

Q & A

Using websites is tricky because, as you know, stories get pushed down as the news cycle continues. Let's say you look at a site when you get to your office 8 a.m., maybe. But let's say my conference period isn't until 2 p.m. that afternoon. What I'm looking at is literally not the same as what you looked at, and I have no way of knowing what was on the screen that morning. | **Chris Smith**

True. Remember, the goal of the contest is to engage in current events over time. A single story on a single website will almost never make the test. It wouldn't pass the 'consequence' test.

GET STARTED NOW



- Organize your team
- Read *CI&E Contest Handbook*
- Engage in social media
- Collect and store data
- Practice regularly
- Attend an invitational meet
- Practice writing and evaluating essays
- Have fun



Roy Rodriguez @MrRod4Edu · 11h

.@uiltexas 2015 5A Current Issues Champions (3rd year in a row.) A&M Consolidated HS with @uilciande #uilstate2015



Nancy Jeanes and 7 others favorited a Tweet you were mentioned in

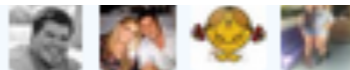
9h

14h: What an amazing time at #uilstate2015 so thankful for my team & coach! A huge S/O to @bradleywilson09 and @uilciande pic.twitter.com/Oz49JM8Apl



5

3



9:48 PM - 27 May 2015 · Details



Hide photo



Jack-Jack
@MaloneJackson



Follow

@bradleywilson09 CI&E test had me like



RETWEETS
3

FAVORITES
7



10:10 AM - 26 May 2015

HAVE FUN!



Chad Smith
@MrAwesome109



Follow

Not only are we champions but we also just set a record for score! @uilciande State champs! Obed -3rd Sam-4th



RETWEETS
14

LIKES
30



1:27 PM - 25 May 2016



14

30



Reply to @MrAwesome109

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Texas UIL Current
Issues and Events



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BRADLEY WILSON, PH.D.
bradleywilson08@gmail.com
@bradleywilson09