Name: Brandon Guy Sedgley

Subject/Grade Level: 9-12 Civics/Government Class

Title/Topic of Lesson: Social Media as News

Essential "Guiding Question" for Lesson

* Are social media sites legitimate sources to receive our news?

Next Generation Sunshine State Standards Addressed in the Lesson:

* Standard: SS.912.C.2: Evaluate the roles, rights, and responsibilities of United States citizens and determine methods of active participation in society, government, and the political systems
  + Benchmark: SS.912.C.2.12 Explain the changing roles of television, radio, press, and Internet in political communication

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

* Identify various forms of media via print, television, and the Internet
* Interpret and understand the importance of social media in modern America
* Identify the role of television, radio, the press, and the Internet in political communications.

**LESSON CONTENT**

Everyone knows that the popularity of social media has grown tremendously over the past few years. No one is certain where it will go in the future. Companies are investing millions of dollars to find out how they reach their clients by utilizing social media. With more and more people joining sites like Facebook and Twitter, more information is being shared. One piece of information commonly shared among social media users is the news. News outlets are noticing that this is a growing trend. Having access to such sites through mobile devices, users are able to follow news stories and even post their own as the happen in real time. There have been several instances where news stories were “broken” via Twitter or Facebook before being released by the AP. With the ability to post events in real time, more people are turning to social media sites as their primary source for news. How will this effect the current status of the media and are social media sites a legitimate source for people to rely on?

**STUDENT GROUPING:**

Students will be grouped in three ways for this lesson. They will come into class and sit as a whole group in order to participate in the opening activity. Then, they will be instructed to go into their small groups of 3-4 (which have been previously assigned by the teacher). Small groups such as these are proven to result in higher achievement levels by the students and are more beneficial to their learning then working individually.

**METHODS**

* Student Polling
  + This gives students the chance to voice their opinions and compare them to the rest of the class
* Small Groups
  + Small groups such as these are proven to result in higher achievement levels by the students and are more beneficial to their learning then working individually.
* Student Centered Learning
  + Research supports that student centered learning helps students preform at a higher level by teaching them communication skills, responsibility, and liability, among others. It also builds social and cognitive skills.
* Exit Ticket
  + This is a way for the teacher to assess what their students gained from a class discussion as well as see any questions that may not have been able to answer.

**ACTIVITIES**

Opening:

* Class will start normally. When students walk in the poll (linked below) will be visible on the screen.
  + Students will take the poll asking where they get most of their news.
    - <http://www.polleverywhere.com/multiple_choice_polls/LTIyMzU3NDM3OQ>
  + If students do not have access via a mobile device, they will be asked to use someone else’s or be allowed to use the teacher’s computer to enter their data.

Main Activity or Activities:

* In their small groups (3-4): This will likely take a whole day
  + Students will read the 3 articles linked below
    - This can be done either on paper by printing each article, or online if the teacher has easy access to a lab or set of computers. (online is preferred)
    - <http://mashable.com/2012/03/19/pew-state-of-media-technology/>
    - <http://stateofthemedia.org/2012/mobile-devices-and-news-consumption-some-good-signs-for-journalism/what-facebook-and-twitter-mean-for-news/>
    - <http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/how-social-media-helps-journalists-break-news/>
  + Pass out the handout with questions accompanying the readings
  + Each student will be asked to read one article aloud while the other two listen and help find the answers to the questions. Make sure they switch readers for each article.
    - The numbered questions relate to the readings, the un-numbered questions are higher order question that each student must answer individually. These questions will serve as a way for students to guide their thoughts and comments during the classroom discussion.
  + View Info Graphic
    - <http://mashable.com/2012/04/18/social-media-and-the-news/>
    - This must either be printed or viewed online. I would prefer it be printed on full length so students can view the whole thing at once. If this is not possible, try and adjust the view on the Smartboard to accommodate the whole graphic for students to use as a reference while looking at their copies.
* Discussion: This will likely be the second day of the activity
  + Have the students move their desk so that they form a large semi circle, but still with the members of their small groups.
  + The teacher will start the discussion by going over the infographic and main points of social media and its evolution as a news source.
  + The teacher must also remind the students of the proper etiquette and procedures involved when conducting a whole class discussion

Closing

* Exit Card:
  + Upon exiting the classroom, students must turn in a 3”x5” notecard with their names, something they learned that day, and a question they had that was not answered.

Important Questions to Ask: From the Handout:

* Where do you get your news?
* Do you see any trends in Pew’s findings that you’re exited about?
* Do you think social media will become more of a traffic driver for news organizations?
* Do you have a Twitter account?
* How does your usage of Twitter compare to the findings in this article?
* Do you foresee Twitter becoming more popular than Facebook? Why/Why not?
* “With social media, reporters aren’t often breaking news, but responding to it.” What are your opinions on this statement? Do you agree or disagree?
* How would you feel if a reporter contacted you about something personal you posted on Facebook?
* How have your news-consumption habits changed in the past few years due to social media and mobile communications?
* What would make the news easier to access through social media?
* What would make you start using Facebook and Twitter more for your news?
* Where do you see the future of journalism heading as social media evolves?

**MATERIALS**

* Readings:
  + Linked above
    - All three of these readings give a great explanation of the use of obtaining news through social media sites. The “State of the News Media” is a section of a scientific researched based report on the growth of social media and the use of mobile devices. The Mashable reading is a summary of that entire report’s findings. The “How Social Media Helps Journalists” article looks at the situation from the journalist’s perspective rather than the consumers.
* Student handout (pasted below Evaluation)
  + I created this to guide the students reading in a way that guarantees they gain at least some prior knowledge on the topic prior to a classroom discussion (even if the just read to find the answers, they will be forced to discuss the topic among the group).
* Infographic:
  + <http://mashable.com/2012/04/18/social-media-and-the-news/>
  + I chose this graphic, because when I found it online I immediately knew that I wanted to create and entire lesson based off of this one graphic. I think that I could have left all the readings out and just used this one graphic and I could have gotten the same amount of information across in this lesson. However, I wanted to supplement it with readings because pulling all the information out of this graphic would take certain skills that my students may not already know. Therefore, the reading supplement the image so well that they will notice more of the key points within the graphic after reading the assigned articles.
* 3x5 notecards
  + These will be needed for students to complete the exit ticket after the classroom discussion

**EVALUATION**

Students will be evaluated in many ways for this assignment. Throughout the lesson the teacher will be conducting visual scans and other formative assessments to ensure the class is on track. The teacher will also be walking around during the small group portion conducting formative assessments and answering any questions the students may have. The exit ticket will count as another type of formative assessment for the teacher to gauge the students’ understanding of the class discussion and material that was covered. Based on the level of the students’ responses the teacher will be able to tell who was paying more attention than others and who got more out of the lesson than others.

Following the lesson, students will be asked to submit a 3-400 word response to the topic of the discussion on the class blog. Responses must include 2 details discussed in the lesson they agreed with (use the higher order questions on the handout if they need help), 2 specific things they disagreed with, and 2 original questions that may not have been answered. They should also include whether or not they used social media sites for news prior to this discussion and if they intend to continue/start using them now that we have discussed this.

Student Handout (with answers):

Social Media as a News Source:

Answer the following questions when reading the online articles.

**Pew: Social Media Not Yet Driving News Traffic:**

<http://mashable.com/2012/03/19/pew-state-of-media-technology/>

1. What is the name of the report by Pew that claims social media is not a major source of traffic for news cites?
   1. Pew’s State of the Media 2012 report
2. Does Pew believe that social media use on the rise or decline?
   1. Rise
3. What percent of the world’s population is on Facebook?
   1. 54%
4. What site is Facebook’s largest competitor in terms of becoming a source for news?
   1. Twitter
5. Is news reported on social media sites always accurate?
   1. No
6. What percent of news organization’s “traffic” comes from social media sites?
   1. 9%

Answer the following questions individually. You will use these answers to help guide your comments during the class discussion.

1. Do you see any trends in Pew’s findings that you’re exited about?
2. Do you think social media will become more of a traffic driver for news organizations?

**The State of the News Media 2012: What Facebook and Twitter Mean for the News**

<http://stateofthemedia.org/2012/mobile-devices-and-news-consumption-some-good-signs-for-journalism/what-facebook-and-twitter-mean-for-news/>

1. Compared to the 423 minutes a month spent on Facebook, how many minutes a month does the average person spend on a news site?
   1. Under 12 minutes
2. “Facebook and Twitter are now \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to the news, but their role may not be as large as some have suggested.”
   1. Pathways
3. The users of which social media site, Facebook or Twitter, receive news links from a more “even mix” of family and friends and news organizations?
   1. Twitter
4. What percent of people get their news on Facebook often? Somewhat often?
   1. 7%, 19%
5. According to the article, are social media sites replacing the use of regular news sites as a way to receive news? Why/Why not?
   1. No, it is supplemental, it adds to the experience not take away from it
6. Which social media site users, Facebook or Twitter, tend to be more “mobile?”
   1. Twitter

Answer the following questions individually. You will use these answers to help guide your comments during the class discussion.

1. Do you have a Twitter account?
2. How does your usage of Twitter compare to the findings in this article?
3. Do you foresee Twitter becoming more popular than Facebook? Why/Why not?

**How Social Media Helps Journalists Break News**

<http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/how-social-media-helps-journalists-break-news/>

1. “In 2010 every news platform saw audience stall or decline…except \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”
   1. the web
2. With the power of the Internet who can now be reporters, videographers, or news editors?
   1. Anyone
3. “Journalists are using \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to discover new stories and uncover sources.”
   1. Social media
4. When reporters contact sources, do they hear back from them faster through Facebook or a phone call?
   1. Facebook
5. According to this article, what is one of the biggest changes to journalism now that stories are posted online?
   1. Readers can comment
6. What is one risk of allowing comments on a news post?
   1. Fear of people verbally attacking the author and people involved with the story
7. What is the biggest positive of using social media for news? The biggest negative?
   1. Move information quickly among a large group of people
   2. Easily pass miss information

Answer the following questions individually. You will use these answers to help guide your comments during the class discussion.

1. “With social media, reporters aren’t often breaking news, but responding to it.” What are your opinions on this statement? Do you agree or disagree?
2. How would you feel if a reporter contacted you about something personal you posted on Facebook?
3. How have your news-consumption habits changed in the past few years due to social media and mobile communications?
4. What would make the news easier to access through social media?
5. What would make you start using Facebook and Twitter more for your news?
6. Where do you see the future of journalism heading as social media evolves?

Infographic:

With your group, view and discuss your thoughts and opinions on this infographic. Pay particular attention to the questions below.

What do you find the most interesting?

How would you fit into the statistics on this graphic regarding your use of social media?

Look at the stories first posted through social media; do you remember these stories or seeing them