

Steps to a “3-D Current Event”

1. **Find out about an event or a news item.** *Remember that with a 3-D event, the news itself is the assignment, not any particular article.* The event should be significant and objective – a law change (or a proposed law change), an event in international relations, etc. It also should have happened in the past week. You can find out about news in many ways:
 - Website or paper headline of an actual news site (voanews.com, wsj.com, nyt.com, etc.)
 - Trending topics on social media
 - Friend
 - TV News
 - Personal Experience (you’re told by your job that hours or pay will change due to a law, etc.)
2. **Check the date, including year, on each article!** Sometimes articles get shared long after their relevance is gone.
3. **Use the “click through method” to find original articles and firsthand sources.** This essentially means that you click all the links in the article. If the article says something like, “The Wall Street Journal is reporting....” Or “In an interview with the Arizona Republic, the ambassador said...,” then click that link and use the original article or interview instead of the article that linked it as your original source. If it references a firsthand source, such as text of a proposed law or testimony, or even a tweet or video, click through and list that under “Firsthand Sources.”
4. **If you don’t come up with any firsthand sources on step 2, try googling separately for sources.** You can also google the topic with the words “fact check” to see if you get any leads. Pay particular attention to URL’s in this step – make sure that the source makes sense. For instance, it would be a red flag if you’re looking for a transcript of a deposition and you find a result with a “blogspot” URL.
5. **As you look at each site, pay attention to the source.** If something is “paid content,” it is an advertisement – designed to make money. It probably shouldn’t be taken seriously as a news source. If the site or URL has an overtly partisan name the purpose may be to convince people to take a certain view. If the URL ends in “.com.co,” it is most likely a fake or satirical news site. There is no such thing as objectivity in journalism, because bias is the inevitable result of being human. So it is far more important to think about where each source is “coming from” than it is to try to find the mythical “Perfect Objective Source.”
6. **Watch the language of the content.** Real news articles wouldn’t typically have a headline with the word “shocking” in them, or reports someone purportedly “destroying” an argument or an elected official.
7. **Read all your sources.** If something is overwhelming (like a deposition), utilize the “find” feature on your browser to look for relevant parts.
8. **Now you’re ready to finish the assignment!** If you’ve checked and read multiple sources, you have a good enough background for the last two items on the sheet. Well done!