

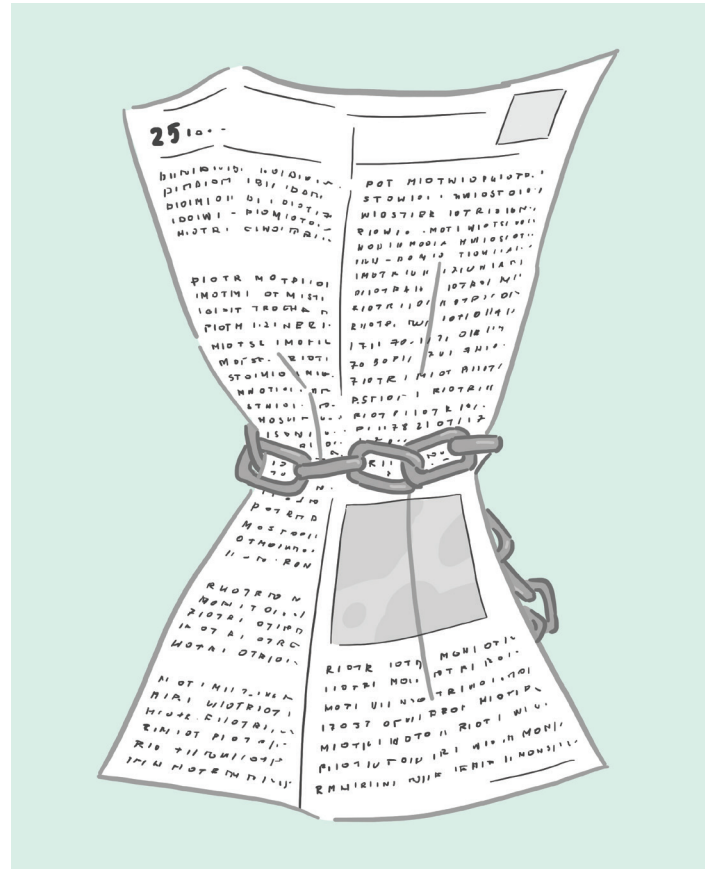
Freedom of the Press

In this lesson, you will read about the rights and restrictions of the media. You'll talk about free expression and debate whether or not free expression includes the right to offend.

Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. What is your favorite newspaper, news website, or news show, and why?
2. What restrictions do journalists have in your country?
3. How does "freedom of the press" differ from "freedom of speech"?



B. Vocabulary Preview

Match the words on the left with the correct meanings on the right.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| _____ 1. interference | a) making fun of society, politics, or religion |
| _____ 2. democratic | b) private, not to be disclosed |
| _____ 3. libel | c) to make fun of something |
| _____ 4. confidential | d) to overstep boundaries or ignore rules and regulations |
| _____ 5. obscene | e) hurtful, upsetting |
| _____ 6. publication ban | f) a severely negative reaction |
| _____ 7. cross the line | g) disgusting or immoral, especially of a sexual nature |
| _____ 8. satirical | h) an equal rights system in which the people choose their government |
| _____ 9. mock | i) to express strong disapproval |
| _____ 10. backlash | j) the prevention of an action, one thing that gets in the way of another |
| _____ 11. condemn | k) a court order not to release information about a case |
| _____ 12. offensive | l) a person who says one thing but takes the opposite action |
| _____ 13. hypocrite | m) a false statement that could hurt a person's reputation |

Reading

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

Defending the Right to Offend

1. *Freedom of the press* refers to the right to express and communicate ideas in the media. The Universal Declaration of Rights states that everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression through any media without **interference**. Freedom of the press is closely related to an individual's right to *freedom of speech*.
2. Journalists, like individuals, have a few restrictions, even in **democratic** nations. They can't misrepresent a person or group in a damaging way. This is called **libel**. They also can't copy the work of someone else. In many countries, it is also illegal to publish something that is **confidential** or **obscene**. Journalists are sometimes restricted from publishing details that could interfere with a criminal case. This is called a **publication ban**. In many nations, it is illegal to publish government secrets related to national defense. When journalists **cross these lines**, they often get into trouble.
3. Not everyone agrees that publishers have the right to express themselves freely. In fact, journalists are often targeted by those who disagree with this right. One of the deadliest media killings in history took place in an office space in Paris in 2015. Several staff members of Charlie Hebdo magazine were killed by terrorists. The editor and his staff were targeted for publishing **satirical** articles and cartoons that **mocked** religion.
4. Whenever journalists are targeted, there is always a heavy **backlash**. After all, individuals value the right to inform and be informed. Millions of people, including at least 50 world leaders, marched in support of free expression following the Charlie Hebdo attacks. Reporters Without Borders called many of these world leaders **hypocrites**. If they supported freedom of the press in France, why did they jail journalists at home?
5. Though most people agree that killing in the name of a religion is wrong, many, including the Pope, **condemned** the magazine for publishing such **offensive** cartoons. Does freedom of the press include the right to offend? If not, whose job is it to decide when a picture or article crosses the line?

"Where the press is free, and every man able to read, all is safe." —Thomas Jefferson

Comprehension

Discuss these questions in pairs, and write the answers in your notebook.

1. Define *freedom of the press* in your own words.
2. What are journalists usually restricted from publishing?
3. What happened at Charlie Hebdo magazine in 2015?
4. Why does this reading mention the Pope?
5. Why were some world leaders who joined the Paris rally called hypocrites?

Pronunciation Practice

WORDS WITH SILENT "N"

In the following English words, the final *n* is not pronounced. Listen to your teacher say these words. Then repeat the words out loud and try making sentences with them.

Examples:

- condemn
- autumn
- column
- hymn
- solemn

Vocabulary Review

A. Complete the Sentences

Complete the sentences using a word from the vocabulary list on page 1. You may need to change the word form.

1. When the government _____ with what the media publishes, this is called *censorship*.
2. Please don't _____ my religion. I don't make fun of your beliefs.
3. My dad is a _____. He tells us not to drink soda because it's bad for our health. Then he lights a cigarette.
4. The editor refused to publish the _____ cartoon. He respects every political candidate.
5. Please don't share my phone number. My personal information is _____.
6. The teacher didn't expect a _____ from parents. She thought her note about homework would be well received.

Vocabulary Review cont.

B. Synonyms

Circle the synonyms in each group of words.

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| 1. a) offensive
b) hurtful
c) confidential | 3. a) make fun of
b) trick
c) mock | 5. a) ban
b) prohibit
c) backlash | 7. a) block
b) interfere
c) libel |
| 2. a) private
b) confidential
c) democratic | 4. a) libel
b) obscenity
c) misrepresentation | 6. a) hypocritical
b) cross the line
c) go too far | 8. a) disgusting
b) obscene
c) satirical |

Discuss

A. Discuss as a Class

In 1791, when the US Constitution included the phrase *freedom of the press*, it referred to the printing press. The First Amendment guaranteed the right to print and publish information without government censorship. In your opinion, what types of media does *the press* include today?

B. Discuss in Groups

1. Should journalists be jailed for reporting damaging information about a government?
2. Should editors worry about terrorism when they are deciding what to publish?
3. Should individuals censor themselves when publishing opinions online?

Debate

Use the useful expressions on page 5 to help you make your points.

Topic 1:

The press must be free. Freedom of the press includes the right to express personal opinions even if they offend an individual, group, or religion.

Topic 2:

The media today is too free. The government should do more to regulate what gets published.

Writing

After you have a debate, write a paragraph summarizing your own personal opinion about one of the topics on this page. Use expressions and transitions from page 5 as well as vocabulary from page 1.

Useful Expressions and Transitions for Debating

Agreeing and Disagreeing

- That doesn't take away from the fact that...
- That's beside the point.
- With all due respect...
- I agree with you there.
- I agree with ---- (name).
- I see your point, but...
- That may be true, but...
- We're going to have to agree to disagree.
- I get/see where you're coming from, but...
- I'm afraid I disagree entirely.
- I'm afraid I'd have to disagree.
- I agree to some extent, but...
- I disagree with you there.
- Pardon me for disagreeing, but...

Interrupting / Asking to Contribute

- I hate to interrupt, but...
- If I may come in here...
- I'd like to add something.
- Would you like to contribute something?
- I'd like to raise a point.
- If I could speak for a moment...
- I'd like to cut in here.
- You haven't answered my question.

Persuading

- Can you see where I'm coming from?
- I challenge you to give this a try/chance.
- I want you to see it my way.
- Put yourself in my shoes.
- Am I getting through to you?

Expressing an Opinion

- In my honest opinion...
- It is my belief that...
- From my experience...
- From where I look at it...
- From my point of view...

Clarifying / Rephrasing

- Let's be clear here...
- I think you misunderstood what I said.
- What I said was... (repeat a point that was misunderstood or confused)
- What I meant to say was... (rephrase something in a way that is clearer)
- In other words...
- What I was trying to say before I was interrupted is that...

Summarizing / Concluding

- So let me get this straight. You think...
- To conclude...
- I'd just like to summarize by saying...
- Finally, I'd like to reiterate that...
- It's time to take stock of what we've heard today.
- Both sides have some valid points.
- The stronger argument/team today is...