

New news, old news, whose news

Learning outcomes

- ◇ To research news stories about Palestine
- ◇ To identify gaps in reporting in British press
- ◇ To identify bias in news reporting

Lesson in brief

Students will look at events in a given week in the West Bank and Gaza and whether these events made it into the British press. Students will reflect on why or why not, and on the nature of news.

National curriculum

2.1a, 2.1c

Materials Newspapers/internet access, weekly report from PCHR

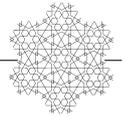
Lesson Plan

Starter

- ◆ Brainstorm as a class what students think make news and what newspapers should offer their readers (for example, a way to find out about the world, an interesting read etc)

Main activity

- ◆ Split the class into groups and assign each group one newspaper. Ensure there is a mix of tabloids and broadsheets.
- ◆ Ask each group to look up the latest weekly report from the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR)
http://www.pchrgaza.org/files/W_report/English/2007/weekly2007.html
- ◆ Alternatively you could choose a week in which there was a Palestinian suicide bomber in Israel. These are invariably covered by the British press. This would give the lesson a different slant and raise different questions.
- ◆ Ask each group to read through the PCHR report and highlight which items they think would be most likely to appear in the news.
- ◆ Each group will search through their assigned newspaper in the relevant week to see if any of the events described in the PCHR report were written about in British newspapers.
- ◆ To do this they should use the archive search facilities on the newspaper websites and google news which is often more efficient than the newspapers' own websites.



Plenary

- ◆ Are newspapers supposed to tell what is new or what is going on in the world?
- ◆ If something has been going on for a long time does it stop becoming news? If yes, after how long?
- ◆ If something happens every day does it stop becoming news?
- ◆ Every week Palestinians are killed. Israelis are not killed every week. If Israeli deaths become news because they happen less often, does this have an effect on our understanding of what is going on in Israel-Palestine?

Homework

- ◆ Write down answers to the questions discussed in class

Background info for teachers on the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR)

In January 2001, PCHR began weekly reports on Israeli Human Rights Violations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Published every Thursday since then, the Weekly Reports are compiled by PCHR's fieldworkers and represent a comprehensive record of human rights violations that week in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) is a Non Government Organisation (NGO) based in Gaza City. The Centre is a non-profit company, dedicated to protecting human rights, promoting the rule of law and upholding democratic principles in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

The Centre was established in 1995 by a group of Palestinian lawyers and human rights activists in order to:

- ◇ protect human rights and promote the rule of law in accordance with international law
- ◇ create and develop democratic institutions and promote democratic culture within Palestinian society
- ◇ support all efforts aimed at enabling the Palestinian people to exercise its rights in regard to self-determination and independence in accordance with international law and UN resolutions

The work of the Centre is conducted through documentation and investigation of human rights violations, provision of legal aid and counselling for both individuals and groups, and preparation of research articles relevant to such issues as the human rights situation and the rule of law. The Centre also provides comments on Palestinian Draft Laws and urges the adoption of legislation that incorporates international human rights standards and basic democratic principles. To achieve its goals, the Centre has recruited a committed staff of well-known human rights lawyers and activists.