

# Current Events Assignment

Major Grade (15 Points) and Standards SS 1.12a, 2.12b, 2.12c, 6.12g

In order to fully understand Comparative Government and Politics, students should understand what is happening around the world. Student understanding should be well-beyond simply recognizing certain trends or news; students should actively think and question things that are happening in their communities, home country and/or foreign countries. In order for us to truly love our neighbors, we need to actively understand things that are occurring around the world. The more we recognize, understand, analyze, and question, the more we can positively impact the world. Also, the more you know about world events, the easier it is for you to connect with individuals from other countries! (I'm speaking from experience : ) )

This assignment will look slightly different from AP and Non-AP students. In general, we will have weekly discussions on current events in the non-AP course and quarterly discussions in the AP course. Non-AP students are not binded to the 6 AP countries; AP students are restricted to the 6 AP countries. Both groups of students will need to summarize and analyze what's going on around the world. AP Students should check page 3-4 for instructions and rubric. Non-AP students should check page 5-6 for instructions and rubric.

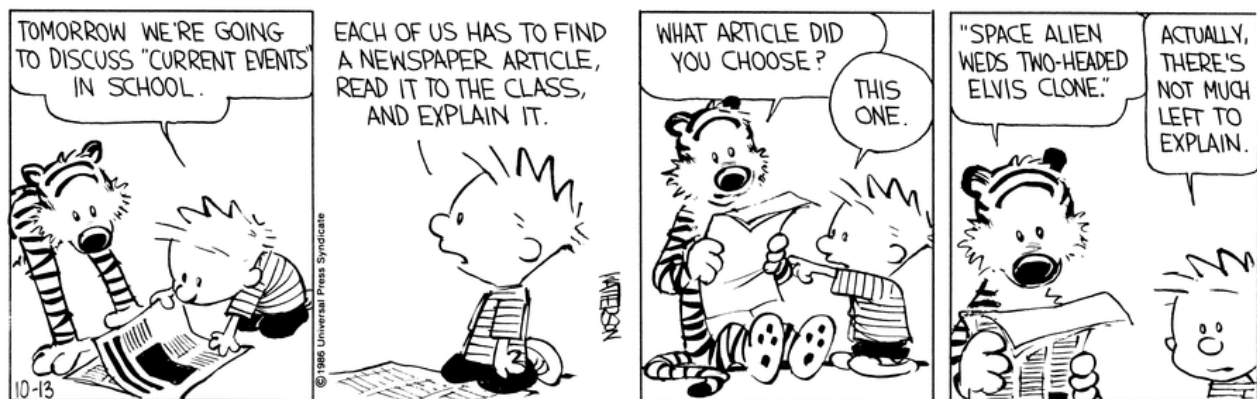
There will also be a discussion grade aspect to this assignment. Students can check these requirements on a different Google Document.

## Outline of this Assignment

Page 2: Things to Expect

Page 3-4: AP Expectations

Page 5-6: Non-AP Expectations



Cartoon by Bill Watterson

## Things to Expect

Choice of current events/news should relate to one of more of the following topics:

- Economic performance and development
- Changes in government structure, laws, or elections
- Social Welfare (education, health, poverty)
- Civil Liberties (human rights and freedoms)
- Environment
- Population and Migration
- Factors influencing public policymaking and implementation
- Events occurring in the country's international and regional environment

Decision of current events/news can be focused on one country or multiple countries.

## Writing Rules

Students must cite their sources in MLA format (include a bibliography page). There is no need for in-text citations for this assignment. Submit original work. Plagiarism results as a zero. Submission format must also follow MLA formatting.

## News Source Recommendations (\*My favorite sources)

The Economist*	NHK	Foreign Policy
BBC*	Nikkei Shimbun*	MSNBC
NPR*	The Wall Street Journal*	Associated Press (AP)
Al Jazeera*	The New York Times*	Reuters*
The Guardian	ABC	Bloomberg
Moscow Times	NBC	Politico
Washington Post	CNN	Financial Times (London)*
Mainichi Shimbun*	USA Today	
Yomiuri Shimbun	Foreign Affairs	

Some of the news outlets are free to read, e.g. *Al Jazeera*, *Guardian* and *Reuters*. Some will only allow 10 free articles a month (e.g. *Bloomberg* and *The New York Times*). Please keep in mind that there are satirical news outlets, e.g. *The New Yorker* and *The Rising Wasabi*. Political satire is fun to read if you understand the context.

Have fun reading!

**AP Expectations:** Students will choose events/articles from one of the 6 AP countries. Each student will submit this assignment **twice** (Q1 and Q2).

Steps:

1. Select one event from one of the 6 AP countries. There should be at least three different sources for this event. The event must be current (within the quarter).
2. Summarize the event in one paragraph. Look up new terms, location of the event, and important individuals. Assume that the reader does not understand the context of the event and related individuals.
3. Analyze the event in one paragraph. Why is this event important? How might this impact other events? What are the implications? How does this event relate to government or economics and AP Comparative Gov Themes? The AP Themes should be **bolded** in the typed response.
4. Include **3 Open-Ended Questions** related to the article that can be used in our quarterly discussions.
5. Must be at least one page minimum typed. Of course, MLA formatted.

Tip: Because AP students are only analyzing one event, you should treat this as a mini-essay: not too short, not too long.

<p><b>AP Current Events Rubric:</b> Students should select an event that they believe is important for their peers to understand when talking about AP Comparative Government and Politics. Students should utilize more than 3 sources. Any submissions less than 3 sources will automatically lose 1 point. There should be two paragraphs per event: (1) summary and (2) analysis.</p>				
Grade	4	3	2	1
Summary	Event is clearly explained and thoroughly summarized.	Event is mostly clear and thoroughly summarized.	Event is somewhat clear and summarized.	Summary is unclear and incomplete.
Analysis	Analysis is clear, thorough, and coherently connects to more than 2 AP Themes.	Analysis is mostly clear, thorough, and connects to more than 2 AP Themes.	Analysis is somewhat clear. Connects to at least 1 AP Theme.	Analysis is unclear. Connection to AP Theme raises questions.
Question: Open-Ended		Includes 3 Open-Ended Questions that are relevant and thought-provoking.	Includes 2 Open-Ended Questions that are relevant and thought-provoking.	Questions are not Open-Ended at all.
Citation and Grammar (Format Expectations)	Perfect MLA Citation & Format and excellent grammar (minimal errors are fine).	2 or more MLA Citation & Format mistakes. Few grammatical errors.	More than 3 MLA Citation & Format mistakes. Grammar needs work. Errors distract readers.	More than 4 MLA Citation & Format mistakes. Grammar is poor and unacceptable.

**Non-AP Expectations:** Students, in pairs of two, will choose events/articles from any country of their choice. Each pair will submit this assignment **twice per Quarter** (Q1 and Q2). [Total of 4 times]

Students will submit their summaries on Google Classroom **AND** print out enough copies for their classmates and teacher (look at Current Events Discussion Rubric).

Students should diversify their countries as much as possible, i.e. no more than two countries per region (Europe, Americas, Africa, Middle East, Asia, Oceania) in one submission.

Steps:

6. Select four events from four different countries. There should be at least two different sources per country. The event must be current (within the week). Students can check with me if they are unsure whether the event is “not new,” e.g. ongoing issues such as the Civil War in Yemen, Taliban takeover, etc.
7. Summarize the event in one paragraph. Look up new terms, location of the event, and important individuals. Assume that the reader does not understand the context of the event and related individuals. However, because students will be able to verbally share the event, there is no need to write an entire essay - keep it concise!
8. Analyze the event in one paragraph. Why is this event important? How might this impact other events? What are the implications? How does this event relate to government or economics and AP Comparative Gov Themes? The AP Themes should be **bolded** in the typed response. Do this for two out of the four events.
9. Include **2 Open-Ended Questions** related to the article that can be used in our weekly discussions. (Note: 2 Open-Ended Questions in total, not 2 per event).
10. Must be at least two pages minimum typed. Of course, MLA formatted.

“Within a week” is defined as events occurring from Friday to Thursday.

Again, students can check with me if they are unsure whether the event is “not new.”

<p><b>Non-AP Current Events Rubric:</b> Students should select four events that they believe is important for their peers to understand when talking about Comparative Government and Politics. Students should utilize more than 8 sources. Any submissions less than 8 sources will automatically lose 1 point. Any submission that includes more than 2 countries from the same region will automatically lose 2 points. There should be two paragraphs per event: (1) summary and (2) analysis.</p>				
Grade	4	3	2	1
<p>Summary Four in Total</p>	<p>Events are explained and thoroughly summarized.</p>	<p>Events are mostly clear and summarized.</p>	<p>Events are somewhat clear and summarized.</p>	<p>Unclear and incomplete summaries.</p>
<p>Analysis Two in Total</p>	<p>Analysis is clear, thorough, and coherently connects to more than 2 AP Themes.</p>	<p>Analysis is mostly clear, thorough, and connects to more than 2 AP Themes.</p>	<p>Analysis is somewhat clear. Connects to at least 1 AP Theme.</p>	<p>Analysis is unclear. Connection to AP Theme raises questions.</p>
<p>Question: Open-Ended Two in Total</p>		<p>Includes 2 questions that are relevant and thought-provoking.</p>	<p>At least one question is open-ended and is relevant and thought-provoking (the other fails to meet criteria).</p>	<p>Questions are not open-ended nor relevant / thought-provoking.</p>
<p>Citation and Grammar  (Format Expectations)</p>	<p>Perfect MLA Citation &amp; Format and excellent grammar (minimal errors are fine).</p>	<p>2 or more MLA Citation &amp; Format mistakes. Few grammatical errors.</p>	<p>More than 3 MLA Citation &amp; Format mistakes. Grammar needs work. Errors distract readers.</p>	<p>More than 4 MLA Citation &amp; Format mistakes. Grammar is poor and unacceptable.</p>