**PRE-GAMEPLAY**

*Elicit Background Knowledge*

To prepare students for playing “Unbiased Reporting” of *After the Storm*, stimulate a discussion about objectivity in journalism by asking these questions:

1. Write on the board: *Biased: having an unfair tendency to believe that some people, ideas, or things are better than others.* Ask what the opposite of biased is. (*Unbiased: not having an unfair tendency to believe people, ideas, or things are superior to others.*)

2. Read aloud the following statements. After you’ve read each one, have students identify it as biased or unbiased—and say why.

   - Mayor Young is holding a daily press conference to update residents of Port Douglas about the progress of storm cleanup (*Unbiased: it just reports a fact*)
   - Zeke could be dangerous, and should be locked up. (*Based: it is based on an unfair tendency to believe all people who have fantasies or delusions are a danger to others*)
   - In all hurricane cleanups, businesses should be brought back to normal before people’s homes are. (*Biased: it is based on an unfair assumption that getting businesses running is more important than helping individuals*)

3. Why is it so important to be unbiased when writing news stories? (*Answers will vary, but students should understand that news stories must never reflect the personal biases of a reporter or writer, but should instead report only what happened, as supported by evidence, allowing readers to make their own judgments.*)
POST-GAMEPLAY
Explore Meaning

To encourage students to delve deeper into their experience of Unit 3, direct students to their Student Packets to answer the following questions after completing each session of “Unbiased Reporting.”

“MORNING” SESSION

1. On what evidence does LaDonna base her statement that Mayor Young has accepted a bribe? (A construction company is building a new section onto the Mayor’s house at no charge while also bidding on a giant construction job for Port Douglas.) **Note: You might want to write the definition of “bribe” on the board before asking the question above: bribe—something offered for the purpose of getting someone to do you a favor.**

2. Sometimes people’s choice of words can reveal their attitudes more than they intended. Write the figurative expression “juicy information” on the board and ask students for their thoughts on its meaning. (e.g., colorful, related to gossip or scandal, shocking) Why might you as editor-in-chief have been suspicious when LaDonna told you she had some “juicy information” from her contact at City Hall? (e.g., Her choice of words might reveal that she is eager to write a negative story about Mayor Young—that she is biased against the Mayor.)

3. Ernie edited a review of a new app called “You’re on Tour,” which you didn’t have time to read. What happened as a result of your not making time to read the review? (The review was published with errors that were embarrassing to **TDB.**) If you were too busy to review Ernie’s work, what could you have done to prevent today’s bad outcome? (e.g., Made sure an experienced reporter, such as LaDonna, carefully went over Ernie’s review before it went up on the blog; told Ernie not to post the review but to save it for you to read later)

4. Write on the board: **Downside: a result that you don’t want.** Then explain that LaDonna wants to get out the story about the Mayor quickly, before another news source publishes it. You want to slow down and make sure every factual detail is completely accurate. What could be a downside of always checking and rechecking facts? (You will never be first to a publish a new story.) What could be a downside to getting this story out quickly? (e.g., Even if **TDB** breaks the story, if it is inaccurately reported, it will make readers distrust **TDB.**)
“MIDDAY” SESSION

1. Why is Grace worried about the story about the Mayor that LaDonna is preparing? (e.g., She has heard people say that *The Daily Byte* loves to write bad things about the Mayor’s Office—Grace is worried *TDB* will get a reputation for being biased on the topic of city politics.)

2. Grace told you her doubts about LaDonna’s ability to report fairly about Mayor Young, then said, “We probably shouldn’t be talking this way.” Do you think that Grace handled this conversation well? Why or why not? (e.g., Yes, because she managed to get in her point before she stopped herself; No, because as Director of Technology, Grace does not have to be concerned with the article LaDonna is working on, or, No, she acted unprofessionally by expressing her doubts about another employee. If anything she should have talked directly to LaDonna.)

3. Were you satisfied with your response to Ernie when he told you he published a review that had many errors? Why or why not? (e.g., Yes, because I kept my cool and even suggested writing a humorous apology to readers, which helped give the mistake a great outcome—more readers for *TDB*; No, I think I should have been harder on Ernie and let him know just how damaging his errors could be to *TDB*, or No, I should have taken the blame because I didn’t proofread his review.)

“AFTERNOON” SESSION

1. Why did LaDonna push you so hard to read her article about Mayor Young? (She was afraid another news organization would get the story out first.) For what reason did you tell her you had not yet read her article? (e.g., I was waiting for her to provide a second source to confirm that the information in the article was accurate.)

2. According to the press release from the Mayor’s office, a rumor started about the Mayor taking a bribe simply because people came to the wrong conclusion based on certain events that took place. What were those events? (e.g., Principally Albert Shire taking the elevator to the Mayor’s floor and the blueprint for the new house extension left on the Mayor’s desk.) Why do you think LaDonna, despite being an excellent reporter, was eager to believe the story about the Mayor taking a bribe?” (Answers will vary, but students should understand that LaDonna’s personal bias against the Mayor contributed to her readiness to believe a negative story about Mayor Young.)
3. Why is it sometimes good to step back and let another news organization “scoop” you on a story—publish the story first? (e.g., It’s more important to publish a story that is completely accurate than to publish an inaccurate one before anyone else does.) Describe an experience in which you got disappointing results because, like LaDonna, you didn’t plan enough or think enough about possible outcomes. 

*Note: To get students going, you may wish to provide the first example.* (e.g., playing a sport or game without stopping to strategize; answering test questions without reading all the options; spreading gossip without really thinking if a story about someone could be proven to be true.)