

## Media Literacy Mini-Lesson #3

# JOURNALISM

Journalists gather information about what's going on in the world and share it with their audiences.



## Journalism can take many forms:

Journalism can include newspaper articles, magazines, photos, videos, or podcasts. Journalism can be about politics, sports, pop culture, and so much more. But what different forms of journalism have in common is a reliance on *sources* for info.

## Who can be a journalist?

Anybody! But that doesn't mean that everyone who writes about current events is a reliable journalist. To be a reliable journalist, you have to adhere to some important values, like honesty, fairness, and verifying the facts you publish.



Journalists get their information from sources, such as eyewitnesses, documents — or even the experiences of the journalists themselves.

**The following source** was written by Nellie Bly, an investigative journalist who discovered rampant abuse when she went undercover as a patient at a mental health asylum in New York.

On the 22nd of September I was asked by THE WORLD if I could have myself committed to one of the Asylums for the Insane in New York with a view to writing a plain and unvarnished narrative of the patients therein and the methods of management, etc. ...

I was to chronicle faithfully the experiences I underwent, and when once within the walls of the asylum to find out and describe its inside workings, which are always, so effectually hidden by white-capped nurses, as well as by bolts and bars, from the knowledge of the public. "We do not ask you to go there for the purpose of making sensational revelations. Write up things as you find them, good or bad; give praise or blame as you think best, and the truth all the time." ... said the editor.

Source: "Behind Asylum Bars" by Nellie Bly. The New York World. Oct. 17, 1887. Permission has been granted for educational purposes only, courtesy of NYU Digital Library Services.

**Describe what is happening in the excerpt. What did you notice or wonder about?**

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**What sources of information does Bly rely on in this short excerpt?**

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