The top U.S. health official warned this week that the nation’s “Pearl Harbor moment” of the coronavirus pandemic was at hand, as a surging death toll shot past 10,000 Monday and took its greatest single-day leap Tuesday, when more than 1,900 deaths were recorded—50 percent more than any previous day.

The Seoul government was able to slow the spread of coronavirus and limit deaths. What did it do right?

The nine-year-old videoconferencing platform has become arguably the most indispensable technology in the world now that the coronavirus pandemic has locked us all inside.

What claim does the author make about wearing masks?

What evidence is used to support the claim?

According to the article, why were we originally told not to wear masks if we were healthy?

Whom do you most trust for information and advice during this pandemic, and why?

According to the article, what percentage of people may have Covid-19 without showing any symptoms? On what evidence or research is this statistic based?

How could this statistic complicate efforts to contain the pandemic?

What do you think we could do to mitigate the risk of infected people spreading the virus?

According to the article, what are the “quieter heartbreaks” the coronavirus is leaving behind?

Do you agree with the claim that “older teenagers may be hurting most,” and why or why not?

How, if at all, can we make up for these missed milestones?

Write a letter to yourself or someone else who is missing an important milestone to help capture the significance of what they are missing and to provide inspiration.

Describe the illustration on this week’s cover. Who are the six people featured?

How would you describe the significance of how each one is portrayed in the illustration?

What news story(ies) from the issue is being illustrated here? What do you think the illustrator’s point of view is on this story, based on the choices in the illustration?

How does the illustrator use symbolism and exaggeration to showcase his or her point of view and explain the news story?
Based on articles from throughout the issue about coronavirus (pp. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 30, 32, 34, 36, 37)

VOCABULARY AND COMPREHENSION

- pandemic, surging, social distancing, marshaling, ludicrous, contagion, explicit, alarmist, frontline, blatant, charlatans
- What is the difference between an epidemic and a pandemic, and how would you describe Coronavirus?

DISCUSSION

1. How do you decide which people and sources to trust when searching for news about the coronavirus?
2. In what ways has this pandemic revealed the best and the worst of our society?
3. What changes brought on by the pandemic are most likely to be permanent?

ACTIVITY

1. Challenge students to identify what they know and what they are curious about related to the following topics and the coronavirus: (1) The current situation in the U.S.; (2) President Trump’s response to the coronavirus; (3) The current situation around the globe; (4) The impact on businesses and the economy; (5) The impact on health care workers and other essential workers; (6) The impact on the arts: (7) The impact on schools; and (8) The race to find a vaccine.
2. Invite students to select one or more of the articles in this week’s issue about the coronavirus. The articles correspond with the phrases on the signs. Challenge students to read and annotate their articles and conduct additional research to learn more about their topics and to answer the questions they have written. Suggested research sites include the dashboard created by Johns Hopkins University, the Centers for Disease Control, and the World Health Organization.
3. What changes brought on by the pandemic are most likely to be permanent?
4. If group learning is possible, invite students to summarize their articles to the rest of the class and to report out the information they validated, the information they debunked, and the questions they answered.
5. Then, challenge students to synthesize all information to create three lists: the first list will include the 5 most important facts for this week about the coronavirus; the second list will include the 5 biggest misconceptions this week about the coronavirus; and the third will include 5 strategies for ensuring that information you receive about the coronavirus is factual.
6. Finally, direct students to visit social media sites and fact check headlines and posts about coronavirus, using what they have learned.

EXTENSION

Invite students to select and summarize an article about how another nation is managing and responding to the pandemic. How, if at all, has the response been similar to or different from the U.S. response?

MAIN ACTIVITY OF THE WEEK #2

Based on the feature, “Pick of the week’s cartoons” (p. 20)

VOCABULARY

- symbolism, exaggeration, labeling, analogy, irony, persuasive

DISCUSSION

1. How can political cartoons serve as primary sources for helping us learn about the past?
2. What do you think makes an effective political cartoon?

ACTIVITY

1. Direct students to the “Pick of the week’s cartoons” feature on p. 20. In small groups, challenge them to answer the following questions about all five cartoons: What do you see in the cartoon? What news story is being illustrated in the cartoon? What point of view is the cartoonist trying to convey?
2. Lead a discussion about political cartoons. Challenge students to identify what makes political cartoons different from other cartoons, why they are used, and what, if anything, makes an effective political cartoon. Explain that political cartoons are cartoons that make a point about a political issue or event. Their main purpose is not to amuse you but to persuade you. A good political cartoon makes you think about current events, but it also tries to sway your opinion toward the cartoonist’s point of view. The best political cartoonist can change your mind on an issue without you even realizing how he or she did it.
3. Looking back at this week’s cartoons, challenge student groups to identify techniques the cartoonists used to express their points of view and try to persuade others. Introduce the following techniques to students, and challenge them to identify which ones were used in this week’s cartoons: symbolism, exaggeration, labeling, analogy, and irony. Which cartoon do students think is most persuasive, and why?
4. Finally, invite students to select an article in this week’s issue and create a political cartoon that both illustrates their point of view and tries to persuade others to feel the same. Challenge them to use at least two of the techniques they learned about.

EXTENSION

Invite students to apply information from your school to another of the magazine’s weekly features.

MAIN ACTIVITY OF THE WEEK #3

Based on the feature, “Review of reviews” (pp. 21-24)

VOCABULARY

- scholar, eternal, animus, eschatology, protagonist, rogue, bard, sedulously, parodies, profoundly, fiendish, alt-culture, highbrow, quenelle

DISCUSSION

1. Do you rely on reviews when choosing books, movies, or television shows?
2. How can reviewers impact the economy?
3. Why, if at all, would reviews during the pandemic be particularly important?

ACTIVITY

1. Divide students into the following four groups: movies, television shows, songs, and books. Challenge them to select a movie, show, song, or book that they would like to convince the rest of their group to watch, listen to, or read. Tell them they have 30-seconds to convince the rest of their group to read, listen to, or watch the song, movie, show, or book they have selected. Once all students have gone, invite students to poll others in their group to see which ones were most effective at persuading them, and discuss why.
2. Debrief the exercise as a class and draw conclusions about what types of words, phrases or strategies were most effective. Was it colorful language; a strong opening; recommendations from famous people; comparisons to other similar works of art: the writer, star or singer; or something else?
3. Ask students how they currently decide which books, shows, movies, or songs they will watch, listen to, or read. Poll students to see how many of them use reviews in magazines, newspapers, or online websites. Ask students what role they think that reviewers play in the entertainment industry; how critical a successful review is to a show, book, or movie, or conversely how damaging a negative review can be.
4. Invite students to read the reviews on pages 21-24. What can they observe about these reviews? How long are they? What type of language is used? What techniques do the reviewers use to explain or defend their opinions of the works of art? Explain that reviews can be good or bad but, since this week’s feature focuses on the year’s “best,” they are all positive. Direct students to circle the shows, books, movies, or albums they would watch, listen to, or read based on the review. Invite student volunteers to explain why.
5. Finally, challenge students to write their own “Best of … “ list for books, movies, television shows, or albums during this time. Their reviews should incorporate the techniques they found most effective and try to persuade others their age that their list is truly representative of the “best”

EXTENSION

 Invite students to imagine they have been asked to create a movie poster, book cover, album cover, or television ad for one of the works of art on their list. It must use images to show everything that they have written about.
* Note: On your computer or mobile device, click or tap blue links to access linked content. Visit www.theweek.com/teachers to see all our lesson guides.