

Unveiling Stories

A routine for revealing multiple layers of meaning.

1. What is the story?
2. What is the human story?
3. What is the world story?
4. What is the new story?
5. What is the untold story?

Purpose: What kind of thinking does this routine encourage?

This routine invites students to reveal multiple layers of meaning in an image, text, or journalistic report. Each layer addresses a key dimension of quality global journalism: the central, most visible story; the way the story helps us understand the lives of fellow humans; the ways in which the story speaks to systemic global issues; what is new and instructive about the story and issues explored; and the important absences or unreported aspects of the story. This routine also invites students to investigate the world and develop powerful habits of global journalism consumption – habits that are transferable to information consumption more broadly.

Application: When and where can I use it?

This routine can be used in global competence development in the arts, geography, literature, and history.

Launch: What are some tips for starting and using this routine?

You may consider selecting some – not all – of the routine’s questions depending on your goals. You may also consider modifying the order in which the questions are introduced. In using this routine with your students, you may see “the story” interpreted in one of the following ways: 1) “the story” told by the article, image, or material that they read, or 2) “the story” proposed to explain or contextualize the event depicted, i.e. “the human story that led to the contamination of the Mexican gulf begins with our dependence on fossil fuels.”

Share your experience with this thinking routine on social media using the hashtags #PZThinkingRoutines and #UnveilingStories.



This thinking routine was developed as part of the ID Global and PZ Connect projects at Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Explore more Thinking Routines at pz.harvard.edu/thinking-routines