NEWS BREAK

Sunday's News Break selects an article from Tuesday, May 24, 2016 of The Seattle Times e-Edition for an in-depth reading of the news. Read the selected article and answer the attached study questions. **Please remember to always preview the content of the article before sharing with your students.**

Article: Facebook makes changes after criticism by conservatives (Main, A10)

Pre-Reading and Vocabulary

- Where do you get your news from? Whose responsibility is it to decide which news stories you hear/read?

Vocabulary: Match the words to the numbered definitions in the chart below.

A. automated	1. the exchange of goods, services or something of value, between businesses or entities
B. backlash	2. superiority in weight or significance
C. bias	3. affecting or relating to a group or system (such as a body, economy, or market) as a whole, instead of its individual member
D. commerce	4. to propose an idea
E. consumer	5. the general course or prevailing tendency
F. motive	6. a strong and adverse reaction by a large number of people, especially to a social or political development
G. nominate	7. A publication or broadcast program that provides news and feature stories to the public
H. outlets	8. a process in a factory or office operated by machines or computers
I. preponderance	9. person who purchases goods and services for personal use.
J. suppress	10. a tendency to believe that some people, ideas, etc., are better than others that usually results in treating some people unfairly
K. systemic	11. a reason for doing something, especially one that is hidden or not obvious.

L. trending	12. to keep from public knowledge

Comprehension

1. What was the claim of the report that created backlash over Facebook's "trending topic" feature?

2. How long was the letter sent by Facebook's General Counsel that outlined the new change Facebook will make?

3. Sen. John Thune is chairman of the commerce committee, which oversees _____ and _____.

4. Name three news outlets that Facebook will no longer allow to automatically nominate news topics for its trending feature.

5. Instead of looking at news outlets, what source will Facebook now use to automatically update trending topics?

6. What is the problem with using lists of media sources to update the trending topics section?

7. **True or False**. A lone wolf might be able to game the system.

8. "Facebook was relying on a _____ of liberal and leftist 'news' organs," **(Fill in the blank).**

Additional Activities

- How do you think political values might influence the news? Should these value sets influence the news? Are there certain stories that are more influenced by politics than others? Why do you think this is? Research a currently trending topic (or a topic in today's news). Look up the story on both generally liberal vs. generally conservative news sites. Compare the differences of how the news is reported on each site (you might even want to make a table or chart to show your comparison).

- Do you think it is possible to have neutral news? Do you think that Facebook is responsible for providing neutral news to users? Why or why not? Write a letter to Mark Zuckerburg, the founder of Facebook, explaining your position. You may want to do some more research on the subject to further support what you say.

Answer Key to Vocabulary

- A. 8
- B. 6
- C. 10
- D. 1
- E. 9
- F. 11
- G. 4
- H. 7
- I. 2
- J. 12
- K. 3
- L. 5

Answer Key to Comprehension Questions

1. That it suppressed conservative views.
2. 12 pages.
3. The Internet; consumer protections
4. The Wall Street Journal, Huffington Post, and Drudge Report
5. It will automatically nominate topics based on a spike in user posts around a subject.
6. Any list – even a good one – inherently raises questions of which publications are included versus which are not.
7. True
8. Preponderance