



Winged Victory

FOUNDATION

Advancing liberty through storytelling and the arts

Student Activities for the novel *Just the Truth* Teacher's Copy

Pre-reading Activities:

- Teacher reads the first few pages of the novel to the classroom to build excitement for the unit.
- (For Central Indiana) Invite the author to read a few pages to your classroom to inspire students to continue reading. Contact us below to schedule an author visit.
- Attend the play adaptation of *Just the Truth* if it is playing in your area.

During-reading Activities:

- **Discussion or Essay Questions within the syllabus** can be used for classroom discussions, to check comprehension, or as essay prompts to incorporate the writing process.
- **Storyline Organizer for *Just the Truth*** helps students meet literacy outcomes for developing chronological thinking skills and determining key elements of a story such as the setting, main characters, theme, plot action, climax, and resolution.
- **Bill of Rights Note Pad** reinforces the First-Amendment themes of the novel such as free speech and freedom of the press, and expands on them to include the other Amendments while fulfilling social studies, civics, and U.S. government standards.
- **Quick Search** activity supports the literacy skill to do research by using a theme from the novel, in this case freedom of the press, and to explain its importance, why it needs to be protected, and how it can be threatened. This task covers standards for teaching the influence of media and technology on society.

After-reading Activities:

- Tour a television or radio station to get a behind-the-scenes look at what a newscaster like Laura Taninger experiences.
- Perform a dramatic reading as listed in the accompanying syllabus at the End-of-Unit Wrap Up.
- Students can enter the Winged Victory Foundation's essay contest to win cash prizes.
- If the play adaptation of *Just the Truth* is being performed in your area, inquire about discounted or free tickets for students and attend a performance (2 hours).
- Students and adults may volunteer to participate in or attend one of our community celebrations.
- See our website and Facebook page for our current activities and play performances.

For additional information and support, or to schedule an author visit, contact:

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STORYLINE ORGANIZER

Name _____

for the novel *Just the Truth*

Class _____

Make a small poster containing each storyline element below, and fill it in as you read the novel.

The setting

The characters

Define “protagonist.” Who is the protagonist in *Just the Truth*? Briefly describe each of the main characters. You may add other minor characters, as well. (E.g., Clark Taninger: CEO of Taninger Enterprises, Laura’s father and her boss.)

The central plot line of the novel

From the opening chapters, explain what Laura Taninger is trying to do and what forces are working against her.

Events of the story that advance the plot

Describe at least 3 events from the story that advance the plot, such as the attacks on Laura or her family aimed at getting her to give up her investigation and the growing evidence of election-rigging. These events are building to a climax.

Event 1

Event 2

Event 3

Do you have other events to add?

The climax/turning point

Describe the event and the setting in which the dangers to the characters reach a peak and something alarming is about to happen, and the mysteries and puzzles are going to be solved. What dangerous scheme is revealed? (Hint: chapters 26-31)

Resolution

Following the climax, there is usually a brief final chapter or epilog in a novel that further resolves remaining issues and may also indicate the future path of the characters. Name some of the issues and future directions of the characters that are indicated in the final chapter of *Just the Truth*. Are the villains brought to justice? Is the truth revealed? Is the country saved from disaster? Is a new direction hinted at for the country? Is the ending satisfying?

Theme/moral to the story

A well-written story has thematic depth—it has something important to say. What is the theme of *Just the Truth*? (Hint: The description on the book’s back cover gives various indications of the theme.)

BILL OF RIGHTS NOTE PAD Name _____

used with the novel *Just the Truth* Class _____

The Declaration of Independence explains in one profound statement that individuals have “unalienable rights,” among which are “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” The Declaration further pronounces that “to secure these rights, governments are instituted.” This means that no one can take away our unalienable rights and that the express and sole purpose of government is to protect them. The Founders also considered property rights as inseparable from the three rights named in the Declaration.

In 1791, 10 Amendments were added to the U.S. Constitution. They are referred to as the Bill of Rights. Today, there are 27 Amendments in all, but only the first 10 are called the Bill of Rights. The novel *Just the Truth* focuses on the First Amendment and shows how it must be protected from abuses from government.

Below is a list of the 10 Amendments that comprise the Bill of Rights. Each one defines actions that the government is *prohibited* from taking. Explain in your own words how each Amendment, by restricting the government’s power and preventing its overreach, protects your unalienable rights and ensures that you can live in freedom. (The first Amendment has been filled out for you; you may add to it.)

Helpful link: www.billofrightsintstitute.org/primary-sources

The Bill of Rights, Amendments 1-10	What can the government NOT do to you? What rights and freedoms do these Amendments protect?
<p>First: Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.</p>	<p>I can freely choose my beliefs. I can freely exercise a religion if I choose.</p> <p>The government can never establish a state-sponsored religion or force me to pay for it with my taxes or to join it.</p> <p>I can say and publish my views, including my criticisms of the government, without being charged with a crime, punished, or prevented from doing so by the government.</p> <p>If I have a grievance, I can engage in peaceful protests and make my complaints known through petitions, contacting public officials, etc., without repercussions from the government.</p>

<p>Second: A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.</p>	
<p>Third: No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.</p>	
<p>Fourth: The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.</p>	
<p>Fifth: No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb, nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use without just compensation.</p>	

<p>Sixth: In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed; which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defence.</p>	
<p>Seventh: In Suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury shall be otherwise re-examined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.</p>	
<p>Eighth: Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.</p>	
<p>Ninth: The enumeration in the Constitution of certain rights shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.</p>	
<p>Tenth: The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.</p>	

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QUICK SEARCH

activity for the novel *Just the Truth*

Name _____

Class _____

1. Perform a quick search at www.Merriam-Webster.com or another online dictionary to define and explain freedom of the press. What does it mean? Put your findings into bullet points.
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2. Using what you learned above, explain why freedom of the press is so important for journalists like Laura Taninger, her audience in the novel *Just the Truth*, and for everyone.
3. According to Thomas Jefferson: "Our liberty depends on the freedom of the press, and that cannot be limited without being lost." While it is misleading to think of liberty as being "limited," as some sources say, there is an area into which liberty does not extend. It does not extend into the sphere of action that violates another person's rights. So, there are some actions that freedom of the press does not protect. What are they?
4. Does your freedom of speech require another private individual who is not acting as a surrogate of the government to supply you with a meeting hall and microphone?
5. What laws does America have to help people find the truth and (in the words of Laura Taninger) "to ensure transparency and to prevent agencies from concealing questionable activities"?

ANSWERS TO QUICK SEARCH

activity for the novel *Just the Truth*

1. Perform a quick search at www.Merriam-Webster.com or another online dictionary to define and explain freedom of the press. What does it mean? Put your findings into bullet points.
 - the right of newspapers, magazines, etc., to report news without being controlled by the government
 - the right to report news or circulate opinions without censorship from government
 - guaranteed in the First Amendment
 - "...one of the greatest bulwarks of liberty"
2. Using what you learned above, explain why freedom of the press is so important for journalists like Laura Taninger and her audience in the novel *Just the Truth*, and for everyone.
 - Freedom of the press is important for journalists like Laura Taninger because it plays a significant role in how she informs and warns citizens about what our elected representatives are doing.
 - Without freedom of the press, citizens would have a hard time receiving news and opinions, and that could lead to electing candidates who abuse their power and fail to protect our liberties.
3. According to Thomas Jefferson: "Our liberty depends on the freedom of the press, and that cannot be limited without being lost." While it is misleading to think of liberty as being "limited," as some sources say, there is an area into which liberty does not extend. It does not extend into the sphere of action that violates another person's rights. So, there are some actions that freedom of the press does not protect. What are they?
 - Can you shout "Fire" in a crowded theatre when you know there is no fire and your shouts cause a panic? No, because you are violating the rights of the theater owner by causing harm to his or her business resulting from your intentionally false and reckless speech.
 - Freedom of the press also does not protect false speech defaming someone, or threats to harm others.
4. Does your freedom of speech require another private individual who is not acting as a surrogate of the government to supply you with a meeting hall and microphone?

No, freedom of speech indicates what *you* may say and does not put unchosen obligations on other private citizens acting outside of the government to help you say it. Your fellow citizens have the freedom to agree or disagree with you and to support or not support you. No person should be forced to provide goods and services to others with whom he or she disagrees.

5. What laws does America have to help people find the truth and (in the words of Laura Taninger) “to ensure transparency and to prevent agencies from concealing questionable activities”?

Public disclosure laws allow journalists to make requests for information from government agencies, and the government must comply in providing it. In the novel, a journalist seeking information from a government agency files a Public Disclosure Request. In real life, this is called a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request.

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