



Current Issues & Events

NOTES



Written, compiled & edited by Bradley Wilson, PhD



UIL CURRENT ISSUES & EVENTS NOTES

Academic Year: 2018-2019

Written by Bradley Wilson, Ph.D.

Edited by Hexco Academic

Hexco, Inc. is a small company that listens! If you have any questions or if there is an area that you would like fully explored, let us hear from you. We hope you enjoy this product and stay in contact with us throughout your academic journey.

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Honeybees. | **Arabian Gulf** U.S. Navy photo by Bradley J. Gee | **U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo** State Department photo | **Families belong together rally** Photo by Fabrice Florin

CURRENT ISSUES & EVENTS CONTEST NOTES

WRITTEN & COMPILED
BY BRADLEY WILSON, PH.D.

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ONE OF THE MOST INTERESTING AND CHALLENGING COMPETITIONS

Welcome to another year of UIL Current Issues & Events. The purpose of this manual is to help prepare both students and instructors for one of the League's most interesting and challenging competitions.

But first, let me echo what previous authors have said, year after year: I can no better predict what will happen between now and April of 2019 than you can.

Sure, I can say with some certainty that the weather will be unpredictable and people will die because of it. I can say with some certainty that someone will do something heinous in the name of God. I can say with some certainty there will be unrest in the Middle East. And I can say with some certainty that Donald Trump will say something on Twitter that will lead the news.

I just don't know who, when, where or why. It's your job to keep up with all of that.

So then, what's the point of this manual? Well, this workbook provides an outline or overview of what students need to know. It's a primer, a guide to show participants where and how to begin. Students who can master the information in this workbook will understand the context into which events and issues exist, and they'll have gone a long way toward being a productive member of their CI&E team.

THE 30,000-FOOT VIEW

This manual does not replace reading a first-rate metropolitan newspaper or news website. I do not recommend any site that espouses a particular political ideology. It's your job to find an objective, comprehensive source of news.

Regardless of your choices for news, you can't understand the why and how and so what of what's happening in the world if you don't know the who and what and where of happenings in the world. Students who possess this knowledge are not only more likely to win at this contest, they are more likely to participate

in civic life, move up career ladders, succeed in college and generally have the esteem that comes with being regarded as an educated person. This is not an insignificant matter. Don't underestimate its importance.

UIL RULES

Also, this workbook complements information provided by the UIL, in particular the *UIL Constitution and Contest Rules* and the *UIL Current Issues & Events Manual*. Both provide specific information about rules, policies, teams, wild cards and all the other technical details students don't necessarily need to know but coaches do. That information is available for free on the UIL website, and I won't duplicate much of it in this manual.

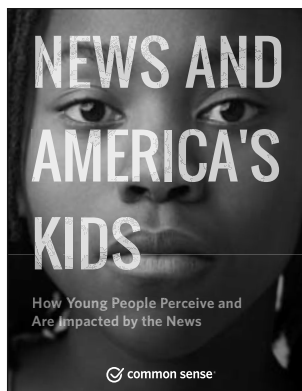
I highly recommend that you order a set of last year's tests. It'll give you an insight on how the CI&E director sees the world and formulates questions.

THE BIG PICTURE

In regards to the information in the notes, when I include an entry, it's because I want you to know that this person or country or thing is important enough to monitor. It's also good to understand the context in which this person, country or thing exists or operates. More than anything else, these notes help you see and understand the big picture — which is particularly invaluable when it comes to answering essay questions.



LOOKING FOR THE RULES? All of the official rules and particulars of the contest are available online at the UIL website:
<http://www.uilTEXAS.org/academics/current-issues-and-events>



NEWS AND AMERICA'S KIDS: HOW YOUNG PEOPLE PERCEIVE AND ARE IMPACTED BY THE NEWS

- **Kids value the news.** Most access it and care about it, and overall they feel smarter when they are informed. Forty-eight percent say that following the news is important to them; 70 percent say consuming news makes them feel smart and knowledgeable; and half believe following the news helps them feel prepared to make a difference.
- **Kids feel neglected and misrepresented.** They do not think the media covers what is important to them, and they feel misrepresented when they are covered.
- **Kids see racial and gender bias in the news.** Half of kids say when they see nonwhite kids in the news, it is negative and/or related to crime and violence. Children also recognize gender bias. Only 34 percent agree that the news treats women and men fairly and equally.
- **What kids are seeing scares them and makes them feel depressed.** Sixty-three percent of kids find the content disturbing. As a result, they are afraid, angry and/or depressed.
- **Kids are fooled by fake news.** This awareness may be why many are extremely skeptical and distrustful of the news media. Only 44 percent agree that they can tell fake news stories from real ones.
- **Kids trust their families and teachers for news more than any source, but they prefer to get it from social media.** Sixty-six percent say they trust the news they hear from family "a lot," with teachers being the second-most-trusted source (48 percent).

Robb, M.B. (2017). News and America's Kids: How Young People Perceive and Are Impacted by the News. San Francisco, CA: Common Sense.

LEARN TO DIFFERENTIATE REAL NEWS FROM 'FAKE NEWS'

While Merriam-Webster declared, "fake news" is unlikely to be entered into that dictionary anytime soon, Collins Dictionary not only added the term but also chose "fake news" as its word of the year.

Defined as "false, often sensational, information disseminated under the guise of news reporting," "fake news" will be added to the next print edition of Collins Dictionary.

While "fake news" is nothing new — indeed, Yellow Journalism was at the core of the newspaper industry in the 19th century — it has become harder to differentiate real news from "fake news" in an era when anyone can be a journalist using online and social media.

To help combat the proliferation of "fake news," Google's Fact Check appears in the company's Search and News functions and identifies stories that include information fact-checked by news publishers and fact-checking organizations, allowing users to identify verified stories. This summer, Facebook announced it is taking some more steps to stop the plague of fake news on its platform. The social networking giant said in June of 2018 that its fact-checking project that it debuted in spring now covers 14 countries and is using machine-learning technology to eliminate fake news stories that have been duplicated and spread to its users.



Consider the source

Click away from the story to investigate the site, its mission and its contact info. Do a who-is lookup to see who the site belongs to.



Check the author

Do a quick search on the authors. Are they credible? Are they real?



Check the date

Reposting old stories does not mean they are relevant to current events.



Check your biases

Consider whether your own beliefs could affect your judgment.



Read beyond

Headlines and social media posts can be outrageous to get clicks. What's the whole story?



Supporting sources?

Click on those links. See whether the information actually supports the story.



Is it a joke?

If it is too outlandish, it might be satire. Research the site and the authors to be sure.



Ask the experts

Ask a librarian or a specialist in the field. Also consult fact-checking sites.

MODIFIED FROM INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS

<https://www.ifla.org/publications/node/11174>

Original story "How to Spot Fake News" by Eugene Kiely and Lori Robertson on Nov. 18, 2016, posted on factcheck.org which was based on a Nov. 19, 2014, article "That Chain E-mail Your Friend Sent to You Is (Likely) Bogus. Seriously."

Also by Lori Robertson on factcheck.org.

its version of the budget, which would permit CPS to hire 728 conservatorship workers.

VOTER ID

In June of 2018, after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Texas lawmakers did not intentionally discriminate when they signed off on congressional and state House maps in 2013, the Texas attorney general's office asked U.S. District Judge Nelva Gonzales Ramos of Corpus Christi to reconsider her findings that the state's voter ID law was enacted to purposefully discriminate against voters of color. An appellate court has already upheld the law, but — in light of the Supreme Court's ruling — the state is now trying to convince the judge to reverse her findings of discrimination in the voter ID case to eliminate the possibility of a return to federal oversight of its election laws.

A little background.

The 2011 law requires Texans to show one of seven approved forms of identification to vote. Its proponents say it is meant to protect against voter fraud, but a federal appeals court ruled in 2015 that it discriminated against Latinos and other minorities. Sen. Joan Huffman, R-Houston, said Senate Bill 5 used the U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeals ruling as a road map for changing the voter ID law.

Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick identified photo voter ID as one of his top 10 legislative priorities for the 2017 session.

In April, a federal court judge ruled that a Texas voter ID law was passed with the intent to discriminate against minorities, violating the Voting Rights Act.

The state's voter ID law has been under legal challenge since it passed in 2011 and went into effect in 2013. The Texas law requires voters to present government-issued photo IDs such as a state driver's license, a Texas election identification certificate, a U.S. passport or a military identification card.

The Texas secretary of state's website says voters must show one of seven forms of approved voter ID. If they don't have one of those, they may vote by signing a declaration at the polls explaining why not and provide supporting documentation, like a birth certificate or utility bill.

In 2017, SB5 was written to give more leeway to people who show up to the polls without one of seven state-approved photo IDs. They would be allowed to use other documents that carry their name and address as proof of identity, such as a utility bill, if they sign a "declaration of impediment" stating why they don't have an approved ID.

SB5 passed 95-54.

PEOPLE TO WATCH



PHOTO BY GAGE SKIDMORE

TED CRUZ

Senator, Texas

A graduate of Princeton, Cruz is the junior U.S. senator from Texas elected in 2013. He was a candidate for the Republican nomination for president in 2016.



PHOTO BY GAGE SKIDMORE

JOHN CORNYN

Senator, Texas

Cornyn graduated from Trinity University in 1973 with a degree in journalism. He earned his law degree from St. Mary's University School of Law in 1977 and an LL.M. from the University of Virginia School of Law in 1995. He has been serving in the U.S. Senate since 2002 and is the Senate Majority Whip. He was mentioned as a candidate for FBI director but withdrew his name from consideration.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

To what did the presidential candidate and freshman Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) attribute his win in the Iowa caucuses?

- a poor showing by third place Marco Rubio
- that he funded his campaign entirely on his own with no outside money
- his boots-on-the-ground campaigning**
- a record vote from the liberal Republicans

The Texas Senate gave initial approval to legislation that would eliminate straight-ticket voting in all elections. What reason was cited for eliminating it?

- Hardly anyone uses it anymore.
- It would force voters to make more informed decisions in individual elections.**
- Texas could lead the charge to get rid of this antiquated form of voting. Two other states, Oklahoma and Iowa, have already banned it.
- HB25 would strengthen the voice of minority voters and the elderly.



SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Whole Foods, with headquarters in Austin, and New York City's Department of Consumer Affairs have announced that the grocery chain will settle with the city for \$500,000. This settlement is for ____.

- overcharging customers for produce
- using undocumented workers
- insider trading violations of its stock, WFM up more than 8.5 percent on the year
- selling Asparagus Water

Two of Donald Trump's original top cabinet picks were born in Texas. Which two?

- Ted Cruz and Jeff Sessions
- Sid Miller and Andy Puzder
- Cathy McMorris Rodgers and Jeb Hensarling
- Rick Perry and Rex Tillerson**

Texas Rep. Dan Huberty's bill pumping \$1.5 billion into public schools died after the Senate appended what to it? "We only voted six times against it in the House," Huberty said.

- creating an income tax to fund education
- outlawing public funding of charter schools
- private school choice**
- getting rid of the STAAR test

SANCTUARY CITIES

President Donald Trump issued an executive order on his fifth day in office to support immigration enforcement and punish local governments that don't comply with federal authorities. A federal judge froze the order in April.

Federal officials rely on local law enforcement to help enforce federal immigration laws, but the law doesn't require local authorities to detain undocumented immigrants just because their federal counterparts make a request.

In Texas, where an estimated 1.6 million undocumented immigrants live according to a 2014 study by the Pew Research Center, Gov. Abbott called for legislation to ban sanctuary cities, remove any officeholder who refuses to comply with federal deportation requests and even impose criminal and financial penalties on that person. Under SB4, law enforcement in cities, counties and on college campuses would have to hold an arrested person in custody while U.S. Customs and Immigration Enforcement looks into his or her immigration status. If the entities fail to do so, they could be denied state grant money.

It was signed by the governor on May 7 and took effect Sept. 1, 2017.

As Amber Phillips points out in a Jan. 25, 2017 article in *The Washington Post*, "The battle in Texas could help Trump and his supporters nail down a blueprint to use nationwide."

BULLYING

Effective Sept. 1, 2017, Senate Bill 179, commonly known as "David's Law," expanded the definition of "bullying" under the Texas Education Code and clarified that the definition of bullying includes cyberbullying. The bill now gives the school the discretion to punish students for off-campus bullying that is delivered to school property or to the site of a school-sponsored or school-related activity; occurs on a publicly- or privately-owned school bus or vehicle being used to transport students; or is cyberbullying that interferes with a student's educational opportunities or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a classroom, school or school-sponsored or school-related activity.

SB179, "David's Law," was named for Maurine Molak's 16-year-old son. Molak said her son was humiliated online in front of hundreds of classmates by students who threatened him. School officials said they couldn't do anything because the harassment didn't happen at school. The bullying only got worse, she said in a *Texas Tribune* article by Jackie Wang.

"It was as if we were in the middle of a tornado, and I couldn't move fast enough," she said.

David took his own life in January 2016.

POWDERED ALCOHOL

Already, 25 states had enacted a permanent ban on the sale of powdered alcohol. As of last summer, 32 states have permanently or temporarily banned the product, and only three, including Texas, allow regulated sales.

House Bill 133, which failed, would have made powdered alcohol an "alcoholic beverage." HB 47, which also failed, would

PEOPLE TO WATCH



PHOTO BY GAGE SKIDMORE

KEN PAXTON

Texas Attorney General

Paxton has been the Texas attorney general since January of 2015. He won election to the state's top law enforcement job in November 2014 as a champion of the Tea Party movement and conservative principles.

In July 2015, following a complaint by investors Joel Hochberg and Byron Cook, a Republican member of the Texas House of Representatives, a Texas grand jury indicted Paxton on felony charges of securities fraud and failing to register properly with the Texas state securities board.

According to a financial disclosure statement released in February of 2018, Paxton has received more than \$630,000 for his legal defense from people he has described as family friends or others not covered by state bribery laws. @KenPaxtonTX

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzō Abe denounced the launch of a North Korean missile that flew for only 15 minutes and 342 miles in the air late in August. It represented a "most serious and grave threat," he said. What was unique about this launch?

- a. It flew over Japan, landing in the Pacific Ocean.
- b. It flew 342 miles and fell into the water off the Korean Peninsula.
- c. It was the first North Korean missile to use solid fuel.
- d. It forced the cancellation of the 10-day Ulchi Freedom Guardian military exercises between the U.S. and South Korea.

Forming a country with sister island Antigua, which small Caribbean island is now deserted after Hurricane Irma destroyed 95 percent of homes there?

- a. Montserrat
- b. Basseterre
- c. Barbuda
- d. Guadeloupe



Partial lunar eclipse over Acropolis of Athens, Temple of Athena Nike, Aug. 7, 2017. Photo by Dimitris Ko.

state the consequences of the fracking revolution, because the U.S. oil production surge broke OPEC's stranglehold on global oil prices."

While oil production went up and oil prices went down, the jobs in fields related to clean energy increased. Early in 2018, a report by the Environmental Defense Fund showed wind and solar energy jobs now outnumber coal and gas jobs in 30 states.

As Ken Silverstein reported in a *Forbes* magazine article, "The marketplace is demanding cleaner energy, all precipitated by better and cheaper technologies ushered in by progressive public policies."

Inevitably, advances in solar and wind energy will make them cheaper and more popular particularly in West Texas areas.

Germany produced more solar power than ever in the first four months of a year in 2018. And, historically, on May 1 of 2018, Germany's renewable power production briefly exceeded the entire country's electricity demand.

Wind generators accounted for 8 percent of the operating electric generating capacity in the United States in 2016, more than any other renewable technology, including hydroelectricity.

SITUATION IN SYRIA

The estimates of the dead in Syria since 2011 range from a conservative 203,000 to more than 400,000 as the United Nations estimated last spring. As of this March, more than 5 million Syrians have fled the country and 6.3 million people have been displaced internally. Many others have been forced from their homes as forces loyal to President Bashar al-Assad and those opposed to his rule battle each other as well as jihadist militants from the Islamic State.

There are four main factions of fighting groups throughout the country: Kurdish forces, the Islamic State, other opposition (such as Jaish al Fateh, an alliance between the Nusra Front and Ahrar-al-Sham) and the Assad regime.

PEOPLE TO WATCH

JULIAN ASSANGE

Australian Assange, the founder of Wikileaks, has been held at Embassy of the Republic of Ecuador in London, having breached bail granted by the UK authorities on an application under a European arrest warrant to extradite him. Swedish prosecutors dropped their investigation into the rape accusation. He is free to leave the embassy but would likely still be arrested. @JulianAssange

POPE FRANCIS

Jorge Mario Bergoglio

From Argentina, Pope Francis is the 266th and current Pope of the Roman Catholic Church. He chose "Francis" as his papal name in honor of Saint Francis of Assisi. Francis is the first Jesuit pope, the first from the Americas, the first from the Southern Hemisphere and the first pope from outside Europe since the 8th century.

DAVID CAMERON

President, Alzheimer's Research Cameron served as prime minister of the United Kingdom from 2010 to 2016. Following the success of the Leave vote in which citizens of the UK voted to leave the EU, he resigned and was succeeded by Theresa May. Cameron joined Alzheimer's Research UK as president in January of 2017.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

The Obama administration halted a decades-long provision that allowed Cubans to be given immediate legal status. But to earn that status, what did the Cubans have to do?

- reach a U.S. land port, rather than being caught at sea
- apply for a "green card" and then citizenship
- live in the U.S. without committing any crimes
- arrive via one of the new commercial flights from Cuba to the U.S.

In a dramatic personal demonstration of his core foreign policy of engaging America's enemies, former U.S. President Barack Obama, became only the second sitting U.S. president to visit what country?

- Russia
- Iran
- Cuba
- North Korea

Marriott won over Starwood (including brands such as Sheraton and Westin) with a sweetened bid worth more than \$14.4 billion just days after Anbang appeared to make a more lucrative offer. Anbang, which purchased the Waldorf Astoria of New York two years ago for almost \$2 billion, is an insurance company with headquarters in what country?

- Cuba
- United States
- Japan
- China



PHOTOS © BY BRADLEY WILSON USED WITH PERMISSION

The capitol building in Havana, Cuba.

Residents in Chinatown of Havana, Cuba play Mi Jong.



Though the details of the trade were not made transparent to the public, a public briefing announced the deal would be applied only to existing refugees and that they would be resettled in America in the coming year.

After a call with Trump during the first weeks of the Trump administration, Turnbull said he was 'confident' and confirmed that the deal would still go ahead. However, one week later, Trump expressed concern on the refugee swap, labeling the trade a "dumb deal" and vowing to "study" it.

On a subsequent visit by the Vice President Mike Pence, Trump confirmed that the U.S. would honor the deal, but the refugees would be subject to "extreme vetting."

OVERPOPULATION

When you have a few minutes to educate yourself about what some scientists call the most severe problem facing the world today, check out the Worldometer (<http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/>) or the U.S. Census Bureau U.S. and World Population Clock (<https://www.census.gov/popclock/>). If you like numbers, check out the U.S. Debt Clock (<http://www.usdebtclock.org/>).

INTERNET

There are about 7.5 billion people in the world. According to statistics provided by the Miniwatts Marketing Group and the International Telecommunication Union, just about half have access to the internet, a growth of 936 percent since 2000. And half of those users are in Asia. In North America, 88.1 percent of people have internet access.

PEOPLE TO WATCH

HASSAN ROUHANI

President, Iran

Rouhani is the seventh president of Iran, a position he has held since 2013. He is also a lawyer, academic, former diplomat and Islamic cleric. Rouhani won re-election in the 2017 election with 57.1 percent of the vote. He became the second Iranian president, after Mohammad Khatami, to win a presidential victory as an incumbent with an increased electoral mandate.

MARK RUTTE

Prime Minister, Netherlands

Rutte has been the prime minister of the Netherlands since 2010 and the leader of the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy since 2006. In the 2017 election, Rutte's party lost some seats but retained its position as largest party. The Third Rutte cabinet was installed by King Willem-Alexander on Oct. 26, 2017.

MOHAMMED BIN SALMAN

Crown Prince, Saudi Arabia

Bin Salman is the crown prince of Saudi Arabia and the youngest minister of defense in the world. Bin Salman is also chief of the House of Saud royal court and chairman of the Council for Economic and Development Affairs. He has been described as the power behind the throne of his father, King Salman.

NARUHITO

Kōtaishi Naruhito Shinnō

Naruhito is the crown prince of Japan and the elder son of Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, which makes him the heir apparent to the Chrysanthemum Throne, first in line to become the 126th emperor according to Japan's traditional order of succession. Naruhito is expected to succeed his father as emperor upon his father's abdication on April 30, 2019.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Although it was nothing new in this city, schools were closed, the government banned instruction and residents were urged to stay inside and wear masks. Indeed, the pollution was so bad, United Airlines halted flights to there.

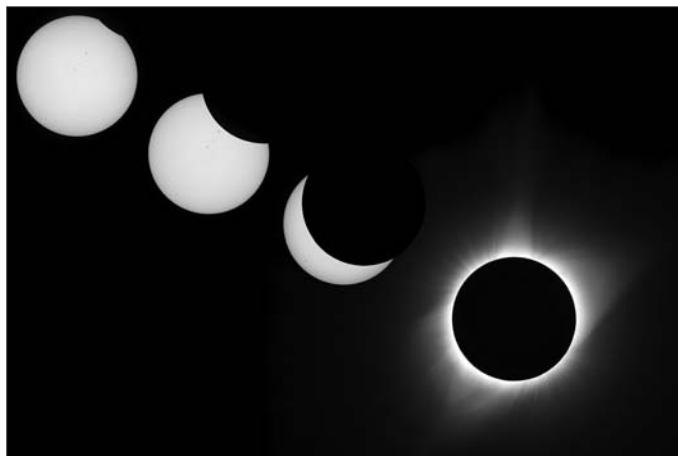
- a. **New Delhi, India**
- b. Beijing, China
- c. Zabol, Iran
- d. Kabul, Afghanistan

Three American researchers won the Nobel Prize in medicine in the fall of 2017 for discovering what?

- a. mechanisms of autophagy, a fundamental process for degrading and recycling cellular components
- b. **the molecular circuitry of body clocks, circadian rhythms**
- c. a theory against infections caused by roundworm parasites
- d. a therapy against Malaria

Elon Musk said he aims to land two cargo ships and eventually send colonists to this planet.

- a. the moon
- b. Saturn's moon Titan
- c. Proxima Centauri
- d. **Mars**



KILOHN LIMAHN / USED WITH CREATIVE COMMONS LICENSE

Montage of the total eclipse of Aug. 21, 2017, seen from Shoshoni, Wyoming. The next one won't happen until April 8, 2024.

DEVELOPMENTS IMPACT ALL PARTS OF OUR LIVES

If Amazon billionaire Jeff Bezos has his way, humans will be settling on the moon in the 2020s. And Elon Musk, founder of SpaceX and Tesla, has received the green light to build a hyperloop from Washington, D.C. to New York City that will cut transportation time to about an hour, with possible Baltimore and Philadelphia stops as well. Major developments in science can change our way of life and warrant more attention than being printed in academic journals.

OIL AND GAS

"U.S. oil and natural gas is on the verge of transforming the world's energy markets for a second time, further undercutting Saudi Arabia and Russia," Justin Worland wrote in *Time* magazine, March 6, 2018.

Fracking is literally revolutionizing the world economy.

It's also changing the face of Texas. The sand for fracking comes from a small town about 45 miles west of Odessa — about 13,000 tons/day and home to the sagebrush lizard. In Oklahoma, which has the most induced earthquakes in the U.S., only 1-2 percent of the earthquakes can be linked to hydraulic fracturing operations. The remaining earthquakes are induced by wastewater disposal, according to the U.S. Geological Services.

Oil is now flowing through the Dakota pipeline—and, crucially, beneath Lake Oahe in North Dakota, which is sacred to local Lakota and Dakota people and their only source of water. The pipeline runs more than 1,800 miles, linking oil fields in North Dakota to refineries, ports, and further pipelines in southern Illinois. Eventually it will transport more than 520,000 barrels of oil per day.

In one of his early executive orders, just days after the seventh anniversary of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, one of the

PEOPLE TO WATCH



JEROME M. ADAMS

Surgeon General

Adams is an anesthesiologist and a vice admiral in the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps. He is the 20th surgeon general of the United States. Adams was confirmed by the United States Senate on Aug. 3, 2017. He assumed office on Sept. 5, 2017.

MICHIO KAKU

Theoretical Physicist

Kaku is an American futurist, theoretical physicist and popularizer of science. Kaku is a professor of theoretical physics at the City College of New York. He has written three *New York Times* Best Selling books: "Physics of the Impossible, Physics of the Future and The Future of the Mind."

ELON MUSK

CEO, SpaceX

Musk is founder, CEO and CTO of SpaceX; co-founder, CEO and product architect of Tesla Inc.; co-chairman of OpenAI; and founder and CEO of Neuralink. Musk has said the goals of SolarCity, Tesla and SpaceX revolve around his vision to change the world and humanity including building a colony on Mars and reducing human impact on climate change.

SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- LiAngelo Ball, along with two other UCLA basketball players, were arrested while their team was visiting the Chinese city of Hangzhou. They were eventually released and suspended from the team. What were they suspected of?
- spying on behalf of the Democratic Party
 - stealing a propaganda sign from a hotel
 - stealing sunglasses from a Louis Vuitton store**
 - the hazing death of a freshman involving "copious amounts of alcohol"

Alejandro Villanueva stood at attention during "The Star-Spangled Banner" while the rest of his team, the Pittsburgh Steelers, stayed in the locker room. Later, what action did Villanueva take?

- He apologized. "I made my teammates look bad," he said.**
- He attacked U.S. President Donald Trump. "This individual is bringing down our country," he said.
- The West Point graduate said he was doing his duty and would always stand during the national anthem.
- He condemned the coaches. "I disagree with their decision. We need to do what the rules say we should do."

Two Houston-area football players from Victory and Praise Worship Center were kicked off the team on the field on a Friday night in September 2017. Why?

- for failing to pray before the game with the team
- for protesting during the national anthem**
- for wearing "Black Lives Matter" armbands
- for putting out statements on social media against church doctrine

Again, it's about more than the score of the game. A MLS team in Austin will be the first major league team to come to the city some say is already overcrowded.

Second, science and sports and business often merge.

When young athletes sustain concussions, they are typically told to rest until all symptoms disappear. Restricting all forms of activity after a concussion is known as "cocooning." But in May of 2017, new guidelines suggested that most young athletes should be encouraged to start being physically active within a day or two after the injury.

Painting college football as a billion-dollar enterprise that continues to grow in popularity and riches, five former football players, including one from TCU, are accusing the NCAA and the Big 12 conference of not protecting and informing thousands of football players about the debilitating health risks stemming from concussions and head injuries. The NCAA settled one related lawsuit for \$75 million.

Seven years after former UCLA basketball star Ed O'Bannon filed a federal lawsuit against the NCAA over whether Division I men's basketball and football players should be compensated for the commercial use of their names, images and likenesses, the U.S. Supreme Court denied petitions by both O'Bannon and the NCAA to review the case.

Sports, science, business, law. When they merge, they are increasingly likely to be real news.

Sports and politics also merge sometimes.

Last season, NFL players across America knelt during the country's national anthem in a display of protest and defiance to highlight racial injustice and police brutality in America.

Quarterback Colin Kaepernick who knelt before a pre-season game for the San Francisco 49ers in 2016 started the Take-a-Knee movement.

U.S. President Donald Trump repeatedly criticized the demonstrations.

However, in May of 2018, the NFL announced that all players and league personnel on the sidelines must stand for the national anthem or face a fine on their teams. Commissioner Roger Goodell said, however, that players have the option to remain in the locker room if they don't want to stand for "The Star-Spangled Banner."

"The policy adopted today was approved in concert with the NFL's ongoing commitment to local communities and our country — one that is extraordinary in its scope, resources and alignment with our players," Goodell said in a statement. "We are dedicated to continuing our collaboration with players to advance the goals of justice and fairness in all corners of our society."

He added, "It was unfortunate that on-field protests created a false perception among many that thousands of NFL players were unpatriotic. This is not and was never the case."

Oh, by the way, economics can play a role too. ESPN reported in the fall of 2017 that Goodell had asked for a salary of \$49.5 million a year, the use of a private jet for life and lifetime health insurance for his family. Goodell was paid \$31.7 million in 2015, the most recent figure publicly available.

PEOPLE TO WATCH

KEVIN W. SUMLIN

Sumlin served as the Texas A&M athletic director from 2012-2017 and was the second-highest paid official in Texas, earning about \$5 million/year, five times what the university president makes. In 2018, he became the head coach at the University of Arizona.

BEYONCÉ GISELLE KNOWLES-CARTER

Born in Houston, Beyonce is a consistent artist and is one of the highest-grossing female artists of all time. She's won 20 Grammy Awards, 8 Billboards and 6 American Music Awards.

CRISTIANO RONALDO

Ronaldo plays forward for Spanish club Real Madrid and the Portugal national team. Often considered one of the best soccer players in the world and one of the greatest of all time, Ronaldo was named FIFA's best player for the fourth time. He secured a contract with Real Madrid for more than \$50 million for each of the next four seasons.

OPRAH WINFREY

Winfrey is an American media proprietor, talk show host, actress, producer and philanthropist. She is best known for her talk show "The Oprah Winfrey Show," the highest-rated television program of its kind in history. Dubbed the "Queen of All Media" and with a net worth of \$2.8 billion, she was the richest African American of the 20th century and North America's first multi-billionaire black person. In July of 2018, she denied claims she would run for president, saying it would "kill" her. @Oprah