

The History of *Mass Media*

Directions: Learn the history of the media in a hands-on way! Read the history of mass media below, then cut out the events on the next page and paste them into the timeline to create your own history of mass media. *Hint:* Match the squares to the spaces on the timeline to put the events in order.



The very first forms of mass communications were quite literally word of mouth! People would pay others to tell them the news. In ancient Rome, the first published news began in Ancient Rome -- the Acta Diurna, a stone or metal piece etched with news of the day, was posted in a public place. In China in the 700s, the government wrote up their own newspaper with information on laws and politics, and it was read to the people by a government official.

The invention of the printing press changed everything. People began to write not only the news, but their opinions on it as well. For a long time, something called a broadside was one of the most common ways for people to get their point across and to spread the news – a broadside was a sheet of paper with information on it, or sometimes a cartoon or song, that was posted in a public place like a town square or the side of a building on a busy street.

The first newspaper is said to have been written in Germany in the early 1600s. Newspapers became the most popular way for Americans and Europeans to hear the news. At first, instead of being read by individuals, they were read aloud in taverns and coffeehouses. In the late 1800s, magazines provided an additional source of news. They contained longer articles on bigger topics, much like they do today.

Newspapers and magazines were the main source of news in the US until the mid 20th century, when radio and TV came along. Newspapers were still popular, but these new technologies provided new ways of receiving the news.

Now we have the Internet, which allows us access to news and opinions from all over the world at a moment's notice.



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Pamphlets or small posters called broadsides were printed, and distributed or posted in public places.

Newspapers began to gain popularity in Europe and the United States.

The Internet lets people watch videos, share photos and read blogs from all over the world, giving people access to countless different opinions and events that they would have had trouble hearing about before.

Radios, and then television sets, were all the rage. TV news brought us a new batch of famous reporters.

A sheet of metal or stone carved with the day's events would be posted in public places for everyone to see.

People enjoyed reading magazines in addition to newspapers because magazine articles were unique, in-depth or appealed to a specific type of person.



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