

## **Audience Analysis Activity**

Adapted by Sue Doe from 2002-03 lesson plans

**Goals:** *To learn what readers already know about your issue so that you can shape your news and issue analysis to better meet their needs and interests.*

To complete this activity, you will first create a series of interview or survey questions. These questions should probe interviewees' or survey takers' understanding of the issue as well as any stake they may have in the issue (understood by them or not), so that you can both inform them and win their interest in your analysis.

Then, you will use these questions to interview five college students *or* to survey approximately 20 college students in order to find out what the probable readers of your news and issue analysis already know about your issue as well as what they have to lose or gain from the debate perspectives and possible outcomes. You will use the results from your interview or survey to help you plan your research and writing about the issue.

Finally, write up a summary of your findings to refer to throughout your research and writing about this issue, focusing on the following:

- Describe students' knowledge of your issue. (What did they know? What did they not know)
- Summarize their attitudes toward your issue.
- Describe the complexity with which students viewed your issue. Did they recognize the range of positions and approaches people take? Did they simplify the issue as a pro/con debate?
- Based on what your audience thinks about your issue, what will you need to do to show them that your issue is complex and that it goes beyond a simple pro/con debate?