**Lesson 5: Finding Bias**

**Learning objectives:**

**21st Century Skills**

***Reason Effectively***

* **Use various types of reasoning (e.g., inductive, deductive, etc.) as appropriate to the situation**

***Make Judgments and Decisions***

* **Effectively analyze and evaluate evidence, arguments, claims and beliefs**
* **Analyze and evaluate major alternative points of view**
* **Synthesize and make connections between information and arguments**
* **Interpret information and draw conclusions based on the best analysis**
* **Reflect critically on learning experiences and processes**

**Time Required**: 60 min

**SWBAT:**

1.   Identify bias in two articles dealing with electric cars

2.   Identify the author, type of document and source

4.   Identify the intent and intended audience

5. List any important facts gained from the document

6. Identify the author’s knowledge of the information being presented

**Materials:**

Finding bias worksheet

Article: Why Electric Cars Are Our Future

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_W._Destler>

Article: Cost to Operate a Chevy Volt

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eric_Bolling>

Article: 8 Reasons Why The Electric Car Will Not Be A Success Anytime Soon

Read more: <http://www.businessinsider.com/the-electric-car-why-it-is-not-ready-for-mass-consumption-2011-12?op=1#ixzz3aEkzu4Xg>

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**Procedure:**

1. Put finding bias worksheet on the overhead

2. Talk about bias and the ways bias is used to manipulate opinion

3. Put the article, ***“Cost to Operate a Chevy Volt”*** on the projector, read together.

4. Talk about how the author uses a biased opinion coupled with outright lies to keep the reader from buying a Chevy Volt--show your PUD bill to show that electricity doesn’t cost $1.16 per KWH! Questions to ask author: Where do you live? Can you read a utility bill? Can you do math? Are you lying? Show website showing that Eric Bolling was once a stock trader focusing on oil and natural gas companies. (Conflict of interest)

5. Put the introduction to the article ***“Why Electric Cars Are Our Future”*** on the projector, read together. Show website that confirms William Destler’s job as president of a university, once professor of electrical engineering, and degree holder from Cornell University. It also mentions that he collects rare banjos (random fact) and has a Toyota Prius and Chevy Volt for cars. (First hand knowledge)

***If time allows...***

6. Repeat with the intro article, ***“Reasons Why the Electric Car Will Not Be a Success Any Time Soon.”***

7. Break the students into 12 teams. Give each team a paragraph from one of the two articles and have them fill out their finding bias worksheet on their article

8. Have the teams present their findings to the class when done.

**Assessment**: Students can be scored on their scrutiny and ability to look for bias in the last article. Students could also be asked to provide another article and analyze it for bias as homework.

**Accommodations**: A summary of the main points of each article could be provided rather than the whole articles. Short biographic paragraphs could be provided for each author.

**Extensions**: Students could analyze bias provided by their teacher in written or verbal statements. Critical consumption of information is a key skill in an informed citizen.