

OSAGE NEWS: CASE STUDY IN JOURNALISTIC ETHICS Review Qs

1. Examine the [Society of Professional Journalists' Code of Ethics](https://www.spj.org/pdf/spj-code-of-ethics.pdf) - See PDF at <https://www.spj.org/pdf/spj-code-of-ethics.pdf>
2. List the four main principles of ethical journalism (large subtitles).

Seek truth & report it

Act independently

Minimize harm

Be accountable and transparent



The ethical “high” road is the right road - but usually the *harder* road: Most ethical choices make the job *more difficult - more time-consuming - more complex*. The standards of conduct make sure journalists resist the temptation to take the easy way out, to over-simplify, spend less time, etc.

CHOOSE one of the ETHICAL STANDARDS OF CONDUCT - ONE OF THE BULLET POINTS on the Society for Professional Journalists' Code of Ethics - that would make the job *harder*.

3. State the ethical standard: (varies) example: Provide access to source material when it is relevant and appropriate
4. Tell how it would make the journalist work harder: (varies) example: You would have to keep track of where each fact came from and be able to provide this info if needed
5. Give an example of how this might be violated by an unethical journalist. (varies) example: they might falsify sources and / or not be willing to provide sources when needed
6. Tell how you think this violation would be damaging. i.e. How would it violate the publication's overall responsibility to “ensure the free exchange of information that is accurate, fair and thorough”? (varies) example: it would lead to inaccurate information

7. The **Osage Nation Code of Ethics** says the Osage News will serve all people equally, regardless of **location**. This ensures that an Osage person located in California gets the same value from the *Osage News* as a person in Oklahoma.

Editorial Policies: Read the editorial policies. Choose one and consider the possible reason behind it.

8. Policy (varies) example: No editorials from the paper's reporters, editor.
9. Tell WHY do you think this is a policy? i.e. What does it protect against?

(varies) example: To ensure the paper does not seem biased. To uphold credibility of the paper.

10. Why do you think the *Osage News* has an **editorial board**? Why not just let the reporters and editor decide how to enforce editorial policies? (varies) it takes pressure off the staff by spreading out the responsibility, also it adds more ideas and judgement to decisions
11. What two important documents (from 2006 and 2008) keep an ON reporter **free from pressures** to give a certain opinion from an Osage Nation government official? (1) **Constitution of 2006 guaranteeing freedom of press**(2) **2008 Independent Press Act**
12. What could happen if the reporter did not have these protections? **Someone in the government might try to tell the reporters what to write, interfering with their freedom of press**