

# THE WEEK



The Week  
at a  
Glance



4	Islamist rebel leader claims victory in Syria	News	Deposed Syrian President Bashar al-Assad fled to Moscow after a lightning rebel advance ended his family's bloody half-century rule in just two weeks of fighting.	World Studies
5	GOP senators fall in line behind Trump picks	News	Momentum built behind some of President-elect Donald Trump's most controversial Cabinet nominees, as embattled defense pick Pete Hegseth showed new life and top Republicans backed Trump's plan to install loyalist Kash Patel at the FBI.	Politics Government
12	Biden's biggest failure	News	In his one term as president, Joe Biden was able to push through "a progressive laundry list" of big-government legislation, said Michael Warren. But on his own terms, Biden's presidency has been "an unmitigated disaster."	Government Politics
17	Supreme Court: A pivotal case for trans teens	Opinion	The Supreme Court heard arguments in a case involving gender-affirming treatments for minors, said Shirin Ali in Slate, "and it did not bode well for trans children."	Legal Studies Civics Government
34	Countdown: TikTok pins hopes on free speech claims	Business	TikTok's American users—as many as 170 million strong—have faced the threat of seeing the app closed for more than four years. This time, though, as one shocked TikTok put it to her 450,000 followers, "it's for real." A U.S. appeals court denied TikTok's request to overturn a law requiring its Chinese parent company, ByteDance, to sell the app or face a ban by Jan. 19.	Business Technology Media Studies Civics

**BRIEFLY: Quick Questions & Ideas To Engage Students**

Washington, D.C.: Opening moves PAGE 7	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. According to the article, what did President-elect Trump commit to doing on Day 1 of his presidency related to the Jan. 6 rioters? How do you feel about these rioters being pardoned? What other actions did he commit to implementing?</li> <li>2. What is the significance of his softened stance on Dreamers?</li> <li>3. What does his comment, "Retribution will be through success" mean?</li> <li>4. How do you think President-elect Trump's presidency will be described four years from now?</li> </ol>
The resurgent anti-vax movement PAGE 11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What, if anything, do you know about the anti-vax movement?</li> <li>2. According to the article, why are fewer kids getting shots?</li> <li>3. How did COVID-19 spur the anti-vaxing movement?</li> <li>4. How, if at all, has vaxxing become a partisan issue?</li> </ol>
'Eras,' the two-year Swifty stimulus plan PAGE 32	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What do you think this article is about, based on its headline?</li> <li>2. Based on information from this article, why would a city want to be included in a well-known artist's tour?</li> <li>3. How would you summarize Taylor Swift's national economic impact due to her Eras tour?</li> <li>4. What other elements of the US economy do you predict Swift impacted?</li> </ol>

**FEATURE OF THE WEEK: Cover**

Invite students to look at this week's cover and answer the questions.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe the illustration on this week's cover.</li> <li>2. What news story is being illustrated here? What do you think the illustrator's point of view is on this story, based on the choices in the illustration?</li> <li>3. Sketch a different illustration that shows the same or a different point of view about this news story.</li> </ol>
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**MAIN ACTIVITY OF THE WEEK #1:**  
Based on the article, "Biden's biggest failure" (p. 12)

<b>VOCABULARY</b>	term, progressive, laundry list, Trumpism, normalcy, decency, emboldened, botched, credibility, urgency, asylum
<b>DISCUSS</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do you think presidents care about their legacies? Why or why not?</li> <li>2. Which presidents from history have positive legacies? Negative legacies?</li> <li>3. What would you want your legacy to be?</li> </ol>
<b>DO</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Give each student a sticky note, and invite them to complete this sentence on their sticky notes: President Biden will most be remembered for _____. Hang notes on the wall, and invite students to identify common answers or patterns. Keep notes hanging.</li> <li>2. Distribute one more sticky note to each student. Invite students to read and annotate the article and write one more answer to the question on the new sticky note. Hang those notes.</li> <li>3. Divide students into four groups. Invite one group to read, annotate, and summarize the important points of President Biden's <a href="#">speech from the 2020 Democratic National Convention</a>. Invite a second group to read, annotate, and summarize the important points from <a href="#">President Biden's Inauguration Day speech</a>. Invite a third group to read, annotate, and summarize the important points from President Biden's <a href="#">first State of the Union speech</a>. And, finally invite a fourth group to read, annotate, and summarize the most important points from President Biden's <a href="#">last State of the Union address</a>.</li> <li>4. Direct students to form new groups, each with members from the four original groups. Invite each new group member to report on the speech their original group members summarized. Challenge the group to discuss similarities and differences in the speeches, commitments made, and important events throughout Biden's presidency. Further, challenge each group to select one commitment made by Biden during one of his speeches and analyze whether the commitment was fulfilled or not, the evidence for their answer, and the impact this commitment and its related result likely will have on Biden's legacy. Share answers among the group and challenge the class to reach a consensus on what President Biden's legacy will be.</li> <li>5. Finally, distribute one more round of sticky notes and repeat the introductory exercise.</li> </ol>
<b>EXTEND</b>	Invite students to imagine they have been asked by the Biden campaign to write President Biden's farewell speech. It must be no more than two pages long and summarize President Biden's most important accomplishments and at least one thing he wishes he had accomplished.

**MAIN ACTIVITY OF THE WEEK #2:**  
Based on the article, "Countdown: TikTok pins hopes on free speech claims of students' choice" (p. 34)

<b>VOCABULARY</b>	appeals court, ban, manipulate, infringement, adversaries, inundate, propaganda, espionage, editorial, algorithm, sympathizing, moderators, historical, hypothetical, opposition, apparatus, undercut
<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What values and principles are basic to our constitutional democracy?</li> <li>2. When, if at all, should free speech be censored or limited?</li> </ol>
<b>DO</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Put two signs in opposite corners of the room, one that says "free speech" and the other that says "national security," Ask students to stand by the sign that reflects what they believe to be the most important of the two. Invite those at each sign to explain their answers.</li> <li>2. Ask students if they know what a debate related to the social media app TikTok has to do with both of these concepts. Invite them to read and annotate the article to learn more. Challenge students to once again stand by the sign that is most important. Did anyone's answers change?</li> <li>3. Direct students to read the <a href="#">text of the First Amendment</a> and identify the five rights outlined: religion, speech, press, petition, and assembly. Ask students what each of the five rights means and how it relates to their lives. How do they use each right now? How would their lives be different if these rights were not protected? Which of the five is most important to them? Least?</li> <li>4. Discuss why they think the Founders included freedom of speech in the First Amendment. Explain that the Founders were concerned with preventing tyranny, and they believed that freedom of speech was necessary for a free, open, and civil society. Freedom of speech protects the right to express our beliefs and ideas through words, actions, or other communication methods. It even protects the right to express unpopular or controversial ideas. How, if at all, is the debate over TikTok related to free speech?</li> <li>5. Invite students to engage in a structured academic controversy related to the TikTok debate. Write this sentence from the article on the board, "... national security concerns outweigh the infringement of free speech (related to TikTok)." Divide students into groups of four, with each group divided into two dyads. Assign one dyad the role of supporting the statement, and assign the other dyad the opposing position. Invite groups to research and craft their positions so that they are prepared to defend them. Their positions must include at least three pieces of evidence.</li> <li>6. Invite Dyad 1 to share its position. Challenge Dyad 2 to restate Dyad 1's position to Dyad 1's satisfaction. Switch roles. Then, abandon positions, and challenge each group of four to reach a consensus on a position related to the debate. Encourage them to either share their positions with the rest of the class or to explain why they couldn't reach a consensus.</li> </ol>
<b>EXTEND</b>	Invite groups to create a one-minute TikTok that explains their positions.

\* Note: On your computer or mobile device, click or tap blue links to access linked content. Visit [www.theweek.com/teachers](http://www.theweek.com/teachers) to see all our lesson guides.