

***Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier* / What Would You Do?**

Directions:

Pretend you work on a high school newspaper and it is your job to decide whether to publish articles. Assume you live in a state that has not passed “anti-Hazelwood” legislation extending greater First Amendment protection to school newspapers than that afforded by *Hazelwood*.

Below are brief descriptions of six articles you might receive.

Keeping in mind the Supreme Court’s decision in *Hazelwood*, work in a small group to discuss the following questions for each of the articles:

1. Will you publish the article? Why or why not?
2. Do you think your school’s administration would want to censor this article? Why or why not?

Be prepared to discuss your answers with the rest of the class.

1. Following a drug arrest at your school, a student writes a first-person account of how their friend got arrested. In the article, they admit to some activities that are in violation of school rules and state law. They criticize both the police and the security guards at your school. They do not want the article published anonymously.
 - a. Will you publish the article? Why or why not?
 - b. Do you think your school’s administration would want to censor this article? Why or why not?
2. Reporters from your paper write an article based on a commercial website on which students post their ratings of their teachers. The article includes sample comments on teachers in your school, both positive and negative. The negative comments include: “If you get this teacher, run for the parking lot!”; “Can’t teach their way out of a paper bag.”; and “This teacher had an affair with another teacher (not named).” The teachers are named.

- a. Will you publish the article? Why or why not?
 - b. Do you think your school's administration would want to censor this article? Why or why not?
3. A reporter for your paper writes a long article about the problem of drug use in your school. The reporter interviews several students about their use of marijuana but does not use names or other personal details that could help identify the students. The article makes it clear that marijuana use is widespread in your school.
- a. Will you publish the article? Why or why not?
 - b. Do you think your school's administration would want to censor this article? Why or why not?
4. Reporters for your paper discover that the star quarterback for your football team does not live within the boundaries of the school. They write an article exposing this fact and, of course, naming the quarterback. The consequences of publishing this article will include forfeiting all the wins from your school's football season, which is just ending with a good shot at winning the state championship.
- a. Will you publish the article? Why or why not?
 - b. Do you think your school's administration would want to censor this article? Why or why not?
5. A teacher approaches a reporter for your paper with an article about cheating being tolerated in your school, but the teacher will not agree to have their name used in the article. The teacher caught a student cheating on a final exam and gave the student a zero. This failing grade on the final exam resulted in the student, a senior, being ineligible to participate in the school musical, in which they were scheduled to play the lead part. The student's parents pressured the principal to overturn the grade and the principal did so. Publishing the article would, of course, reveal the identity of the student involved but not the teacher.

- a. Will you publish the article? Why or why not?
 - b. Do you think your school's administration would want to censor this article? Why or why not?
6. There are high-stakes standardized tests given in your school every May. In order to graduate, students must pass these tests. Students have told your reporters that other students obtained a copy of the test in advance from a teacher. The students involved agree to tell what happened if none of the names of any of the parties involved would appear in the article.
- a. Will you publish the article? Why or why not?
 - b. Do you think your school's administration would want to censor this article? Why or why not?