



Different types of local, digital news outlets

Writer and trainer [Michelle McLellan](#) created a list of promising local news websites, including [sites she called “micro local.”](#) which focused on small geographic regions, such as neighborhoods, communities or towns.

Flashlight: Explore the sites on McLellan’s list and describe the sorts of stories that are published. Do you have any new digital news sites in your community? What category would you put them in? Describe the tone of the coverage. Is it detached, or does it show an interest and involvement with the community?

Spotlight: The Texas Tribune and Deerfield Forum couldn’t be located in areas more dissimilar. The Tribune is located in urban Austin; the Forum in a small New Hampshire town. Examine the websites of the [Texas Tribune](#) and the [Deerfield Forum](#). What sorts of stories do you see on these websites? What might appeal to people? What information might they get here that they couldn’t get elsewhere?

Searchlight: Does your town have a [Friends of the Library](#) organization? Invite students to set up a brainstorming session with Friends of the Library representatives to discuss the future of the library. Tell them about the Deerfield Forum experiment to gauge their reaction. What ideas do they have to engage a diverse range of citizens in local issues and community events?

Extra credit: Suggest a joint project between your school and a local library, similar to [On My Block](#). Suggest a joint project between your school and a local library. Work together to create a picture book for children so they can learn about important recent news stories. Give it a local emphasis but include national and international events and issues. Test it with local children whose parents agree. Librarians are experts at the dividing line between children’s books and adult books. How was the handling of sensitive topics different in the picture book?