SUMMARY
In the early 1950s, the threat of Communism created an air of paranoia in the United States, and Wisconsin Sen. Joseph McCarthy exploited those fears. However, CBS reporter Edward R. Murrow and his producer Fred W. Friendly decided to take a stand and challenge McCarthy and expose him for the fear monger he was. Their actions took a great personal toll on both men, but they stood by their convictions and helped bring down one of the most controversial senators in American history.

DIRECTED BY George Clooney
WRITTEN BY George Clooney & Grant Heslov

CAST (in credits order)
Jeff Daniels..................Sig Mickelson
David Strathairn............Edward R. Murrow
Alex Borstein...............Natalie
Rose Abdoo................Millie Lerner
Peter Martin..................Pianist
Christoph Luty............Bassist
Jeff Hamilton...............Drummer
Matt Catingub..............Saxophonist
Tate Donovan...............Jesse Zousmer
Reed Diamond...............John Aaron
Matt Ross...................Eddie Scott
Patricia Clarkson...........Shirley Wershba
Robert Downey Jr...........Joe Wershba
George Clooney............Fred Friendly
Thomas McCarthy...........Palmer Williams

PRODUCED BY Sydney Pollack, Ronald L. Schwary

ORIGINAL MUSIC BY Dave Grusin

THINGS TO WATCH OUT FOR
• Rosemary Clooney’s band plays throughout the movie, and the arrangements of the songs in the movie are hers. Rosemary Clooney is George Clooney’s aunt.

• It was originally thought by many viewers that the “CBS News” sign on the wall is set in Helvetica, a typeface that was first created in 1957, three years after the Joseph McCarthy broadcast. Subsequent investigation by typographers established that the typeface is actually correct because the font is Akzidenz Grotesk.

• In several of the scenes with telephone conversations the phones being used were models not introduced until years later. At least twice the handsets use the detachable cord with the RJ-11 plug, which was introduced by Bell in the 1970s.

• Mention is made of the hotline telephone between Moscow and Washington, but this connection was installed in 1963, five years after Murrow’s speech and 10 years after the bulk of the film.

• George Clooney had said they opted to use archive footage of Joseph McCarthy instead of using an actor to portray the senator. Clooney had said when the movie had undergone test screenings, audience members felt that the McCarthy character was overacting a bit, not realizing that it was the actual McCarthy through archive footage.

• The film was shot on color film on a grayscale set, then color-corrected in post. It is the first completely black-and-white film to be nominated for Best Picture since “The Elephant Man” was nominated in 1980.

good night, and good luck.

'Technology of Another Era'

OVERVIEW
It is important for the makers of “Good Night, and Good Luck” to use authentic equipment to properly represent the era. Such items include the microphones, teleprompters (simply cards), telephones, manual typewriters, television sets, etc. How different was the studio in those days?

SUGGESTED TIME ALLOTMENT
One week to research and collect materials and plan a class presentation.

OBJECTIVES
Students will:
1. Research what equipment was used in television studios during the mid-1950s.
2. Also find out about the challenges Murrow’s “Person to Person” program created in an era before satellite transmission.
3. Interview local television station personnel who have been involved in electronic media production for a number of years. What changes have they seen? Also consider interviewing local college/university professors in broadcast journalism or radio/television/film to discuss the changes in electronic media in the last 50 years.
4. Prepare a report, including visuals, to show how the field has changed.

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS
Visit www.jea.org to find links to Web sites with information, including:
- An interesting collection of historical images belongs to Tom Genova, a retired Ford Motor Company senior engineer. He has photos of many old television sets and equipment, plus scans of ads for them. Another interesting plus: For each year, he includes a “What Things Cost” listing. (i.e. 1952: Car $1,850; gasoline $0.27/gallon; minimum wage $0.75/hour; postage stamp $0.03)
- The Early Television Foundation and Museum in Hilliard, Ohio, has a Web site with everything from photos of early television ads and sets to television network maps from 1950 and 1957.
- This covers “Person to Person” and the early talk show format from the Museum of Broadcast Communications (MBC)

A complete version of this lesson plan contributed by Candace Perkins Bowen is available online at:
HTTP://WWW.HSBJ.ORG
Overview
Obituaries are an important part of what newspapers offer readers. They summarize an entire life and highlight accomplishments. Although they are routine — writing obits is the first job many journalists have when they go to work for a newspaper — they also offer an opportunity to go beyond the ordinary and find an interesting angle. The famous often have obituaries written and on file at such newspapers as The New York Times for years before their actual death. Two of those portrayed in “Good Night, and Good Luck” have accessible obituaries that reveal a lot … or a little … about them.

Suggested time allotment
After watching the 90-minute movie, one class period to read the material that follows and discuss the characters whose obituaries are included here. Two to three additional days if students will be writing obituaries.

Objectives
Students will:
1. Watch the movie and read the article below about obituaries.
2. Then read and discuss the obituaries for Don Hollenbeck and Jack O’Brien. Did they give you a glimpse of the men you saw or heard about in the movie? For Hollenbeck, how do the “facts” about his life seem different in the newspaper than when his character talks to Murrow? Why do you think that might be?
3. Read sample obituaries of movie stars, political figures and the like who have died in recent years.
   a. Discuss the information included and how the reporter probably got it.
   b. Discuss the way the article is organized (Chronological? Summary news lead and inverted pyramid? Other?)
   c. Note if negative or embarrassing information is included and discuss what they think this is so.
4. Choose a celebrity living now and research his or her life.
5. Write an obituary that could run in a national publication or be aired on national television for this person.

Resources and materials
A useful book:

Visit www.jea.org to find links to Web sites with information, including:
• The Lincoln Star (Lincoln, Nebr.) June 23, 1954. “News Commentator Hollenbeck Ends Life” (AP).