



Speaking Truth to Power

Maria Ressa, Rappler!
The Philippines

☀ Call to Action

Be awake, aware, and use social media responsibly. To join or support Maria's Rappler Plus:
www.rappler.com/plus.

☀ Values

- Compassionate
- Imaginative
- Courageous
- Dedicated
- Environmentalist

☀ Lessons Learned

It is important to understand your roots. Maria achieved success in her career by connecting with her identity and returning to her roots.

It is crucial to always engage in dialogue. Listen to each other. Try to understand someone else's point of view.

Use your voice, no matter what the critics say. Speak the truth, and don't be afraid to challenge stereotypes.

Journalism plays a crucial role in a healthy democracy.

Maria Ressa, who is originally from the Philippines, wants to bring some of the tactics of climate change and human rights activists to journalism.

For Maria, journalism shouldn't just inform; it must also make change. Maria founded Rappler, a site that creates change through both rap (talking) and ripple (making waves). This journalism start-up made a big difference in the lives of everyday people when a typhoon hit the Philippines in 2013. The little truck that brought Rappler journalists through the storm to cover the news also served as a lifeline for the local residents who were directly affected by it.

☀ Language Arts

Choose an important recent news story in your area.

Learn as much as you can about the issue. As you go through the information you've gathered, be aware of the point of view from which the news is being covered. How is this issue being covered? Are all possible points of view represented in the story or stories you've read? Write an article of your own about the issue in which you cover the most underrepresented points of view.

Write a series of at least six tweets aimed at educating people about a particular issue that interests you but isn't getting much coverage in the news, or that very few people know about. Your tweets must cover both sides of the issue: the side you agree with, and the side you disagree with. Then, write a reflection paper explaining what you learned by researching and understanding a point of view contrary to your own.

Maria says that it is essential to "Speak truth to power," and she certainly has done that in her career. What does this mean for journalists? Create a series of posters or Instagram posts (at least six) in which you show examples of people who have spoken

truth to power about climate change issues. On a separate sheet of paper, explain why you chose the people you chose, and how you can draw inspiration from their activism.

Sign up to receive Rappler notifications. Gather at least three articles that report on climate change issues in Asia. Write a one-page summary for each article.

STEM Activities

Imagine being the founder of Rappler and dealing with government backlash while trying to post news about sustainability issues. How would you deal with this kind of challenge?

Create a chart that compares the sustainability goals and government policies of the United States and the Philippines. What is the most difficult issue that the Philippines is facing that the U.S. is not?

Research news articles focused on sustainability in the U.S. and in the Philippines. Explain the difference in the points of view expressed, as well as the actual issues described in these articles, and the pros and cons of current media outlets in terms of covering sustainability issues.

Sustainability Innovations

In addition to small news outlets like Rappler, large media outlets like [The Guardian](#)¹ do a great job of featuring more environmental articles than other news outlets.

The global shift toward sustainability is more prominent today than it has ever been before. [Earthsight](#)² is one of the strongest UK-based news outlets that almost solely focuses on the environment.

Maria realized that social media has the ability to get people around the world working together to achieve sustainability and environmental change. Greta Thunberg and [Fridays for Future](#)³ have used similar methods to engage individuals globally to reach people around the world.

Sustainability Career Pathways

Investigative Journalist. As Maria's story demonstrates, a good investigative news story can play a powerful role in making governments and corporations accountable for their actions, and can help push them to improve their environmental and social records. This is not an easy job, and it may even hold risks, but it can be a very rewarding career, especially if you love researching, interviewing, writing, and making a difference. [Here's an introduction to the field](#)⁴.

Sustainability Data Analyst. To become a good investigative journalist, you have to be good at analyzing data--whether it is information about financial matters, toxic releases, or other types of data. Data analysis is its own career specialty; data analysts help identify and understand trends in [sales, logistics, audience engagement, or costs](#)⁵. (For example, in transportation, data analysts could help reduce a company's fuel usage by figuring out how to make delivery routes more efficient.) If you love analyzing data and looking for patterns, this may be a career path for you. [Learn more here](#)⁶.

Media Entrepreneur. Maria's creation of Rappler shows the power of thinking big and doing things differently. The media is constantly being reinvented, especially as consumers move from print media to audio and digital channels--and even AR (augmented reality) or VR (virtual reality) news. There's lots of opportunity to become a media entrepreneur, from being a freelancer, to starting

your own blog or podcast, to helping create a media start-up company. This article provides an [introduction to media entrepreneurship](#)²; and this one is about [how to become a media entrepreneur](#)⁸.

1 <https://www.theguardian.com/us/environment>

2 <https://www.earthsight.org.uk/>

3 <https://fridaysforfuture.org/>

4 <https://online.maryville.edu/online-bachelors-degrees/english/careers/how-to-become-an-investigative-journalist/>

5 <https://www.careerexplorer.com/careers/data-analyst/>

6 <https://www.rasmussen.edu/degrees/technology/blog/what-does-a-data-analyst-do/>

7 <http://mediashift.org/2016/06/teaching-media-entrepreneurship-mean/>

8 <http://teemingmedia.com/2009/01/how-to-bc-a-media-entrepreneur/>

