

## Lesson 1: Finding news

This lesson plan is the first of a series of six that explain the news-making process followed by professional journalists.

### OBJECTIVES

To understand where to find news that is:

- Newsworthy
- Truthful and accurate
- Appropriate for your audience

### LESSON 1: ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES

Activity	Resources	Low tech alternative
1 Video: Huw Edwards' tips	Internet access or DVD	Worksheet 1.1
2 Headline analysis	Internet access	Newspapers
3 News sources, truth and accuracy	Internet access	Newspapers, at least two different titles
4 Guess the audience	Internet access	Printout from the BBC website
5 Preparing for News Day	None	None

### STARTER ACTIVITY

1. Video: Huw Edwards' tips

[Video with subtitles](#)

Students watch this Huw Edwards video, then recollect his top tips using this worksheet.

Low tech alternative to video

Using the above worksheet students match each top tip with Huw's advice.

Teachers tip: This worksheet could also be used as a plenary activity.

### MAIN ACTIVITIES

2. Headline analysis

Ask students for examples of current news headlines and compile a list. Students may wish to scan the front page of the

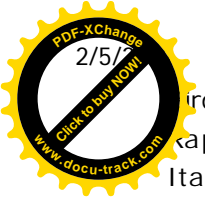
or websites or newspapers for inspiration.

Teachers tip: Free newspapers are a great resource for this activity, and throughout the six lessons.

For each story, ask students: Why is it in the news?

Compile their answers. Here are some examples:

What is in the news?	Why is it news? Because?
Whale spotted in London river	It's unusual



Swine flu arrives in the UK	People need to know about it
Rap artist fined for foul language	People want to know about it
Italy win the World Cup	It's of interest to lots of people
Junk food ban in schools	It's important

Summarise: News is something people WANT to know (interest) or NEED to know (public service).

### 3. News sources, truth and accuracy

Ask students to recall the news sources mentioned by Huw Edwards in the video. They are:

- Other journalists
- Press releases
- Experts
- Witnesses

Explain: This activity uses journalists as the main source.

#### RESEARCH TIPS

- Use a news search engine, rather than a general one
- Use "" e.g. "David Cameron" rather than David Cameron
- Use an advanced search tool
- Check the search term is spelt correctly
- Save your source, so you can return to it later

In pairs, students find one story which their audience will enjoy on a news website or in a newspaper (low-tech alternative)

They find the same story in another source (website or paper).

They examine the information carefully and note any differences, focusing on factual differences. Ask students:

- What differences did you notice?
- Why do you think there are differences?
- How can you find the most accurate information?

Discuss their answers with reference to the point below:

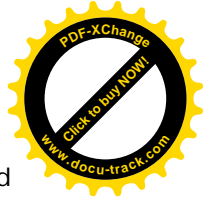
The greater the number of authors, the greater the likelihood the reported event is true, say historians. Journalists follow the same principle. BBC journalists check at least two sources while compiling a report. "Truth and accuracy" is one of the BBC's news values.

#### BBC NEWS VALUES

- Truth and accuracy
- Impartiality and diversity of opinion
- Editorial integrity and independence
- Serving the public interest
- Fairness
- Balancing the right to report with respect for privacy
- Balancing the right to report with protection of the vulnerable
- Safeguarding children
- Being accountable to the audience

### 4. Guess the audience

Explain: In media terms, the AUDIENCE refers to listeners of a radio programme, viewers of television programme or website users.



Display the front pages of the

and

, hiding the banner at the top of each page. The front pages can be printed out and distributed as a low tech alternative.

Students guess the age of the audience for each, commenting on the choice of news topics, formality of language, layout etc.

Ask students:

- Who will be your audience on School Report News Day?
- Given your audience, are there any stories you would avoid reporting?

Discuss their answers with reference to the points below:

Ongoing court cases: These are extremely tricky and court reporters undergo legal training. The BBC advises School Reporters to avoid such stories.

Celebrity gossip: Without hard facts, these stories can be nothing more than rumour and best avoided.

Taste and decency: School Reporters should avoid reporting anything inappropriate.

Students will review these points in lesson 6, when they take the

#### PLENARY ACTIVITY

#### 5. Preparing for School Report News Day

Ask students:

- Name one story or news topic that will interest your News Day audience.
- Name two reliable sources where you might find information about it.
- Which media (video, audio, text-based news) will best suit your audience?

Teachers tip: On School Report News Day, students' reports will be published on the school website so it's a good idea to start thinking - now - about how it might look.

Will it include video news, audio news, text-based news, or a combination? Have a look at the school websites linked from the

for inspiration.

For reference, teachers may like to look at previous years' resources including

.

This lesson has been approved by the BBC College of Journalism.

Story from BBC NEWS:

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/school\\_report/7496032.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/school_report/7496032.stm)

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