

## Lesson 2: Gathering News

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

### OBJECTIVES

To have an understanding of:

- Fact and opinion
- Open questions
- Ingredients of a news report
- Copyright

### LESSON 2: ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES

Activity	Resources	Low tech alternative
1 Video: Huw Edwards' tips	Internet access or DVD	Worksheet 2.1
2 Fact and opinion	Internet access	Newspapers
3 Open questions	None	None
4 Five Ws	Internet access, Worksheet 2.2	Newspapers, Worksheet 2.2
5 Gathering additional material and copyright	Internet access for one student, Worksheet 2.2	Worksheet 2.2
6 Questions, facts and opinions	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. Fact and opinion

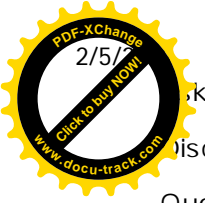
Explain: Journalists often start by collecting two types of information - facts and opinions. Ask students to define them:

- A fact is a statement that is true and can be backed up with evidence
- An opinion is a statement based on a belief or view

In pairs , students choose a piece of text-based news on the

or

websites, or a newspaper (low tech alternative). They underline THREE facts and TWO opinions.



Ask students: How can you tell which is a fact and which is an opinion?

Discuss their answers with reference to the following points:

Quotation marks: In text-based news, opinions are often inside quotation marks, in other words, they clearly belong to someone other than the journalist, who should remain impartial. Impartiality is one of the BBC News values.

Balance: A journalist should balance one opinion with an opposite view, particularly if there is a lot of debate around the issue.

### 3. Open questions

Ask one student to answer the following questions WITHOUT saying Yes or No.

- Do you like school?
- Do you meet your friends during break?
- Is homework set every day?
- Do you eat school dinners?
- What do you like about school?
- Where do you go during break-time?
- How much homework do you receive?
- What do you think of school dinners?

Ask the rest of the group: Which questions generated the best answers? Ask the student: Which questions were easier to answer without saying Yes or No?

Explain: Closed questions often prompt the short response: Yes or No. Open questions are used by journalists because they encourage people to give more information.

### 4. Five Ws

Explain: Open questions are also known as W questions because they begin with What, Who, Where, When, Why - and How.

#### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

- Students who finish this activity write ONE question, about their chosen news story, to ask members of the public.
- They conduct a VOX POP (voice of the people) collecting answers from several students in the group.
- Teachers tip: Students respond well to vox popping people outside the classroom.

Using their chosen piece of news, now with underlined facts and opinions, and the top section of Worksheet 2.2 (see below), students work backwards to compile a list of open, or W questions, the journalist would have asked. For each question, they suggest who they might have interviewed. Putting themselves in the position of the journalist, they suggest additional questions they would have put to additional guests. (Students complete the final activity later in the lesson.)

### 5. Gathering additional material, and copyright

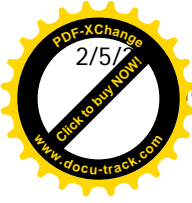
This activity requires use of the internet. If you don't have access, go onto the explanation stage.

Divide the group into three news media:

- Video
- Audio
- Text-based

Using the bottom half of the worksheet, pairs of students decide on the extra material they would need to have gathered for their particular media.

Then, ask the 'text-based' pairs to find a legally safe still (or photograph) to illustrate their



Chosen news story, by following these search tips:

- Use an advanced search on an image search engine
- Search within the site or domain: news.bbc.co.uk
- Look at the bottom right corner of the photos
- You can use ones marked AP, AP, AFP or GETTY IMAGES
- Right click and Save Picture As

Ask the 'Audio' pairs to:

- Think of a piece of music that would complement your news story
- Find out who produced it, or owns it
- Explain why you can't just download it and use it in your news report

Ask the 'Video' pairs to:

- Think of a video clip that would complement your news story
- Find out who produced it, or owns it
- Explain you can't just download it and use it in your news report

One pair from each group presents their chosen still, music or video clip to the rest of the group. They either explain how they searched ('text-based' pair looking for a still) or give reasons why you can't just download it and use it in a news report (the 'video' and 'audio' pairs).

Explain to students: You CANNOT use any photographs, graphics, music, video clips etc WITHOUT the owner's permission. Taking something of theirs, without consent, is like stealing - and breaking copyright law could result in a heavy fine.

The BBC have given permission for you to use the School Report logo, sting (music) and animated titles to be used as part of the project. They are on the DVD in the teachers pack.

Also, four photographic agencies - AP, PA, AFP and GETTY IMAGES - have given permission for their photographs which appear on the BBC News web pages ([www.bbc.co.uk/news](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news)), to be used as part of School Report.

#### PLENARY ACTIVITY

##### 6. Questions, facts and opinions

Present the group with this scenario: School has been cancelled for the rest of the week.

Bearing in mind what they have learnt about open questions, students ask you (the teacher) a series of questions to find out the facts.

Then they put questions to you to find out your opinion.

Summarise: Facts are often the answers to W questions - what, who, where, when and why? Opinions are often the answers to questions such as How do you feel? and What do you think?

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/7497310.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/school_report/7497310.stm)

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