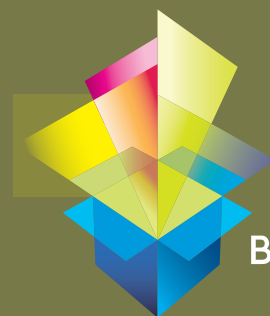




DEVELOPING A NEWS BROADCAST STUDY GUIDE

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Now in production

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Background Information

News broadcasts help inform students' understanding of local, national and global events that influence their own lives. When students first begin watching the news, the camera lens seems like a window on the world, capturing events as they unfold. Through life experience, maturation and media education, they begin to understand that newscasts are representations of reality, not reality itself. Television news is a view of reality, shaped by the point of view of the media owner as well as the reporter. Even the location of the camera influences how a story is told. There is no neutral position, no bias-free report. The competition for high ratings and commercial sponsorship also influences which stories make it to the broadcast. The video that accompanies this lesson plan, *Behind the Scenes of a TV Newsroom*, gives students an opportunity to begin to understand the editing decisions that shape each newscast. The students also see how reading, writing and spoken-language skills are vitally important in the creation of visual media.

Curriculum Applicability

The lessons developed to accompany this video help students address many learning expectations stated in the revised 2006 Ontario Language Curriculum, grades 1 to 8.

Language Arts

Media literacy skills for understanding the economics and production skills required for TV news production:

“Demonstrate an understanding of a variety of media texts” (Ontario Language Arts Curriculum, Media Literacy Strand)

“Identify media forms and explain how the conventions and techniques associated with them are used to create meaning” (Ontario Language Arts Curriculum, Media Literacy Strand)

“Create a variety of media texts for different purposes and audiences, using appropriate forms, conventions and techniques” (Ontario Language Arts Curriculum, Media Literacy Strand)

*“Reflect on and identify their strengths as media interpreters and creators, areas for improvement, and the strategies they found most helpful in understanding and creating media texts.”
(Ontario Language Arts Curriculum, Media Literacy Strand)*

“Listen in order to understand and respond appropriately in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes” (Ontario Language Arts Curriculum, Oral Language Strand)

“Recognize a variety of text forms, text features and stylistic elements and demonstrate how they help communicate meaning” (Ontario Language Arts Curriculum, Reading Strand)

“Generate, gather and organize ideas and information to write for an intended purpose and audience. This can be achieved by developing editing, proofreading and publishing skills and strategies and knowledge of language conventions to correct errors, refine expression and present their work effectively.” (Ontario Language Arts Curriculum, Writing Strand)

Suggested Classroom Activities

1. Viewing the *Behind the Scenes of a TV Newsroom* video

OBJECTIVES

Students will be introduced to the process of creating a TV news story

MATERIALS

TV, VCR player, chart paper, markers, worksheet

LESSON PLAN

BEFORE VIEWING

Activate prior knowledge by brainstorming using a KWL chart on the board. Generate ideas for the first two columns.

Know	Want to Know	Learned
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Show *Behind the Scenes of a TV Newsroom* video, which can be found at reellearning.ca under "Curriculum."

DURING VIEWING

Divide the class into three groups to take notes during the viewing. Ask each group to appoint a **re-corder** to write up the chart after viewing the video, and a **presenter** to present the group's information to the class.

Group 1: list various roles of members on the news team

Group 2: list all the equipment used by the reporter

Group 3: list the sequence of jobs required to prepare the news report for presentation

AFTER VIEWING

Each group will assemble the information on chart paper and present their findings to the class. Encourage discussion and clarification of student observations.

The class will complete the Learned column of the KWL chart. Were there any surprises about the reporter's job?

View video for a third time to see if any details were missed.

Hand out worksheet. Discuss questions before beginning.

2. TV REPORTER Activity

List all the equipment that reporter Michael Melling uses to gather information and create the final version of his news story.

1. Conduct an Internet search to learn the full story of Steven Truscott, his conviction and his recent appeal. Using this knowledge, explain why Michael Melling interviewed older people in the restaurant and young people at the high school for this story.
2. The city has announced it is closing the community centre in your community. Plan how you would report this story, keeping in mind that the story must appeal to a large audience; you must be able to film good visual images and develop a human interest storyline. Try to present a balanced report by interviewing people who support each side of the issue. You can list the sequence you would follow to create your report, using Michael Melling's work as a model. List the equipment you will need to do the job.
3. Reflect on and identify the skills the reporter uses in his job. What skills would you need to develop in order to be a TV reporter? Is this job of interest to you? Why? Why not?

3. NEWSROOM SIMULATION

This activity helps teachers address another directive from the Ontario Language Curriculum, regarding the use of technology in language education.

“Whenever appropriate, students should be encouraged to use information and communication technologies to support and communicate their learning. For example, students working individually or in groups can use computer technology and/or Internet websites to gain access to museums and archives in Canada and around the world. Students can also use digital cameras and projectors to design and present results of their research to their classmates.” P. 30, Ontario Language Curriculum

OBJECTIVES

Students will create a newscast to cover school news or community news.

The planning and production components of this activity cover all the overall expectations in the media literacy strand.

MATERIALS

Digital video camera, computers, visual/sound editing software such as iMovie. If digital equipment is not available, plan a radio newscast, which will develop similar reporting skills, using readily available equipment such as simple tape recorders.

CREATING THE NEWSROOM TEAM

Review the *Behind the Scenes of a TV Newsroom* video. Divide the class into several newsroom groups. Ask students to volunteer for the jobs for which they feel suited. Have each student consider their own talents and interests before choosing a position. Partnering is a helpful strategy for students who need a little extra support with a new task.

The News Director creates the programme by choosing what stories will be developed. The News Director considers:

Who does this story affect? Is this a story that is important to my audience? (i.e., how much market share will we be engaging with this story?)

TV is a visual medium. Is it feasible to get good visual footage?

What is the storyline? The news item must be more than a list of events. The reporter must create a human interest side to the story.

The Assignment Editor gathers information about predictable upcoming news events (e.g., trials, public meetings, elections) and unpredictable events (e.g., accidents, fires, tornadoes), and assigns stories to specific reporters. Some reporters like to specialize in specific kinds of reporting (e.g., crime, politics, science, fashion, food).

Reporters research the story assigned to them, develop the visuals and written interviews to tell the story, and edit and present the report. For this assignment reporters can work in pairs.

The Technical Producer gathers the required equipment, makes a schedule and signs equipment out and in, assists reporters and others with technical problems, creates visual graphics and finds music for the newscast intro. Technical Producers can also work in pairs.

The News Anchor reads the news and introduces reporters.

The Camera operator tapes the newscast.

Production Schedule for Evening News:

MORNING MEETING

Each newsroom group meets to discuss and select the stories that will make up the evening news. The Assignment Editor and Reporters must come prepared to pitch news ideas to the News Director. The News Director will choose three stories to shoot for the evening news.

Technical Training

Provide any necessary training on equipment and software required for the completion of this assignment. Consider inviting the information technology teacher to team-teach this unit with you. Students can bring valuable technical knowledge and experience to this kind of assignment. Ask for their help.

Reporters will research their topic, shoot the visuals and edit the story into a two-minute news item, using software like iMovie. When all news items are complete, the newscast can be taped.

The Technical Producer prepares opening graphics, visuals and music.

The News Director chooses the order of presentation.

The News Anchor prepares a script to introduce each news item according to the News Director's order. Cued by the News Director, the Camera Operator films the standard opening, the News Anchor and Reporters who present their own items.

Make copies of the newscast for each student to keep.

IT'S A WRAP

What did you learn from this experience? What would you do differently next time?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

If you have a group of students who enjoyed this project, consider maintaining the newscast on a weekly or monthly basis. It's a great way to do school announcements and updates.

Encourage other classes to watch the newscast and respond to some news items in letters or emails to the news team. These activities could be done as an integrated study unit over two weeks, or spread out over a longer period of time.

Watch a variety of news broadcasts about the same event. How are the reports the same? How are they different? Whose views are represented and whose views are missing? Is there an effort to present a balanced view (i.e., both sides of the issue)?

Visit broadcasting websites for news. Compare TV newscasts to news webcasts and podcasts, found on TV websites. Which do you prefer? Why?

Arrange a visit to a local TV station to see the newsroom and meet the reporters. Ask to sit in on a morning meeting.

Additional Resources

Newshounds
Media Journalism Workshops
Debbie Gordon
www.Mediacs.ca

Responding to Media Violence: Starting Points for Classroom Practice
Andersen, Carreiro, Sinclair
Pembroke Press 1997

Currently under construction in downtown Toronto, Bell Lightbox is soon to be the world's leading destination for film lovers. This major new cultural institution on the Canadian and international landscape will be structured around five state-of-the-art cinemas celebrating film from around the world. Bell Lightbox programming will give context to films through innovative cross-media exhibitions, lectures, and film-related learning opportunities for all ages. Designed by the innovative architecture firm KPMB, Bell Lightbox's fluid design encourages exploration, movement and play within its soaring atriums.

TIFFG is a charitable, not-for-profit cultural organization whose mission is to transform the way people see the world. Its vision is to lead the world in creative and cultural discovery through the moving image.