

DAY 4

Who decides if news is newsworthy?

Not every bit of news ends up in the newspaper. Selecting the 'best' news is an important part of the day. Reporters might arrive at their desks at *The West* at 9am in the morning - maybe this is similar to the time you start your school day!



On arrival the reporters will look at all the possible news stories that they could follow up that day. Then some reporters will head to an editorial meeting at around 11am with the Editor. At the morning meeting the reporters and the Editor will talk about all the possible news stories that might be included in the newspaper that day. They will decide which stories are worth investigating further. Reporters will return to their desks and start to follow up their news stories.

Investigate



Cut out 10 articles from the first fifteen pages of today's newspaper. Write out the headlines below. Decide why these news articles have been included in today's paper. Tick the boxes. Paste the articles on the glue strip provided.

Headline	Reason this news story has been included ✓				
	Impact	proximity	important people	timeliness	conflict or bad news

Glue or staple articles here

Discover

The Editor at *The West Australian* is the person who has the final say about what stories should be followed up each day at the 11am meeting. However, they don't get to choose just on the basis of their personal likes and dislikes. There are a number of things they consider when deciding the news value of a story. Read more about what they consider.

What the Editor considers	Questions that might be asked	Why attracts Interest
Impact	"Does this matter?"	News that directly influences the lives of the readers in WA, (such as an increase in their electricity charges) is likely to be included in <i>The West Australian</i> .
	"Is this news close to home?"	The closer the story is to the reader the more interested the reader generally is in the story. A mining disaster in Kalgoorlie for example would receive more coverage in <i>The West Australian</i> than a mining disaster in Asia, even if the disaster in Asia is more destructive.
Important people	"Do people care about this person?"	A large percentage of news in <i>The West Australian</i> is about leaders and other important/famous people and personalities. Stories show that our readers like human interest stories.
Timeliness	"Is this breaking news?"	Events that have just happened or are very recent attract more interest than 'old news'.
Conflict or bad news	"Will this news shock or draw a strong emotional response from the reader?"	Bad news is often considered to be more newsworthy than feel good stories. Wars, disasters and disagreements always attract lots of attention.

Discover

Have you ever completed a brainstorm? A brainstorm shows lots of possibilities. From a brainstorm you choose to follow these possibilities down to a few options. A brainstorm is a bit like the 11am editorial meeting here at *The West*. All story ideas are brought to the table. Only some story ideas are followed up.

Connect



I am the Editor here at *The West*. I run the 11am and 3pm editorial meetings each day. I work with the reporters to decide which stories are newsworthy enough to end up in the paper.

- 1 Imagine you are the editor. You have to remove five stories from the first ten pages of today's paper, which ones will you choose? Compare your choices with a friend and explain your reasons.
- 2 Cut out what you think is the most important news story in today's paper. Tell a friend why this story is newsworthy to you.
- 3 Cut out a story that you think would matter to the people of WA from today's paper. Tell a friend why.

DAY 5

Interviews and angles

To follow up stories and investigate them further reporters might interview people to gather information. They will then quote people in their articles who they've interviewed. Eyewitnesses and experts in certain fields such as doctors, politicians and teachers, as well as celebrities, are common people who reporters interview.

There are two main styles of questions: open and closed. Closed questions should be avoided in an interview as they inspire short single word answers such as 'yes' or 'no'. An example of a closed question is, "Did you see the plane crash?"

Open questions are much more useful as they are likely to draw more information from the interviewee. An example of an open question is, "How did you feel when you saw the plane crash?"

Interviews enrich stories and give a report credibility because they act as first-hand accounts.



Glue or staple articles here

Discover

Before writing, reporters need to find angles for their stories. An angle is a bit like a 'focus'. Reporters should stick to their angle and not wander from it when they write. In the opinion section of the newspaper, the angle is more obvious and is revealed in the headlines. For example, Mark M... shark...

Investigate

Find two articles from today's newspaper. Select two articles which contain quotations from people who have been interviewed. Think about the questions that the reporter might have asked to draw information from the interviewee. Fill in the table. Paste the articles on the glue strip provided.

Headline	Quotation	Possible questions asked



Discover

It is important to quote people accurately and in context. If you make a mistake in a published article, the mistake is multiplied. Misquoting people or quoting people out of context can mislead the audience.

Some quotes included in articles are direct and shown in speech marks. Direct speech repeats the words actually spoken, eg

"I saw the men jump into the black car and speed down the road".

Indirect speech does not appear in speech marks as it reports 'about' the words spoken, eg

Mr. Smith said that he saw the men climb into a black car and watched it take off at top speed down the road.

Innovate

Cut out five articles from today's newspaper. Look at the headlines. Think about how you could modify the headline to change the angle. Paste the articles on the glue strip.

Headline	Modified Headline
Hawks nearly crumble in final minutes	Final minutes of game show length

Direct

- 1 Skim and scan the newspaper. Select a story that interests you. Think about who the reporter has interviewed to gather their information.
- 2 Flick through the newspaper. Does every article contain quotations from interviewees? Highlight the ones that do. Discuss with a friend why you think this is.
- 3 Scan the paper. Select an article. Cross out the quotations. How does this affect the news being told? Discuss in pairs.

