
Action News

by Lawrence Stevens

Grade 5 & Up



**Simulations
About
Writing &
Editing**

Stevens & Shea Publishers, Inc.

Activity Two

Comparing local news programs

Directions

Do the same type of comparison with the local news as you did with the national networks. Now you might have more stations involved. Some independent stations have local news and sometimes the public broadcasting station has news. All of the stations should be compared.

1. List the stories that are carried. Using a watch, time the stories. Time only the actual reporting of the story and not the chit-chat that might come before or after the story.
2. Categorize the stories and put down their times.

- Local Politics & Economy
- Environment
- Pollution
- Sports/Weather
- Entertainment
- Social/Human Interest
- Advertising

3. What percentage of the time was spent on ads? What percentage of the time was actually spent on news?
4. How many were involved in the news cast? What was their style: did they joke around a lot (happy talk), or were they serious and straightforward? How many times did the newscasters comment about the stories before or after they were presented?
5. How many of the stories were on-the-scene?
6. How many of the stories were interviews with people?
7. In the stories that involved some conflict, did they give only one point of view, or did they give more than one?
8. Did they have any feature stories—if so, what were they about? A feature story is different from a news story in that it is not immediate news. A story about a local artist would be a feature story because it could be done at any time; in contrast would be a bank robbery, which is only of immediate interest.

Activity Three

Comparing TV news with the newspaper

Directions

On a given evening compare your local newspaper and one of the network TV news shows.

1. List the stories featured on the TV news.
2. List the stories featured in the local paper. Use only the stories in the section covering national and international news.
3. Take just one story, a story featured on the front page and featured on the network news. For each story write down the basic facts. Is there any difference in the reporting? Which

Newspaper	Television News