

Broadcasting: Creating a Successful Newscast

Jeremy Davis, Danny Mattox, Rachelle Johnson
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Time Frame 230 minutes

Essential Question(s)

- What makes a news broadcast effective?
- How can we create a compelling student newscast?

Summary

In this resource, students explore the elements of a quality news broadcast and work in teams to create and film their own school news segments. They learn about production roles, plan their stories, and choose editing software to produce their final newscasts. Finally, students evaluate their own and peers' videos by providing constructive feedback to improve their work.

Learning Goals

Attachments

- Activity Slides—Broadcasting.pptx
- Broadcast Breakdown—Broadcasting - Spanish.docx
- Broadcast Breakdown—Broadcasting - Spanish.pdf
- Broadcast Breakdown—Broadcasting.docx
- Broadcast Breakdown—Broadcasting.pdf
- Common Terms and Abbreviations—Broadcasting - Spanish.docx
- Common Terms and Abbreviations—Broadcasting - Spanish.pdf
- Common Terms and Abbreviations—Broadcasting.docx
- Common Terms and Abbreviations—Broadcasting.pdf
- Newscast Roles Preference Sheet—Broadcasting - Spanish.docx
- Newscast Roles Preference Sheet—Broadcasting - Spanish.pdf
- Newscast Roles Preference Sheet—Broadcasting.docx
- Newscast Roles Preference Sheet—Broadcasting.pdf
- Newscast Story Planning Sheet—Broadcasting - Spanish.docx
- Newscast Story Planning Sheet—Broadcasting - Spanish.pdf
- Newscast Story Planning Sheet—Broadcasting.docx
- Newscast Story Planning Sheet—Broadcasting.pdf
- Sample Student Broadcast Script—Broadcasting - Spanish.docx
- Sample Student Broadcast Script—Broadcasting - Spanish.pdf
- Sample Student Broadcast Script—Broadcasting.docx
- Sample Student Broadcast Script—Broadcasting.pdf
- Two Stars and a Wish—Broadcasting - Spanish.docx
- Two Stars and a Wish—Broadcasting - Spanish.pdf
- Two Stars and a Wish—Broadcasting.docx
- Two Stars and a Wish—Broadcasting.pdf
- Video Editing Guide—Broadcasting - Spanish.docx
- Video Editing Guide—Broadcasting - Spanish.pdf
- Video Editing Guide—Broadcasting.docx
- Video Editing Guide—Broadcasting.pdf

Materials

- Activity Slides (attached)
- Broadcast Breakdown (attached; one per student)
- Newscast Story Planning Sheet (attached; one per group)
- Sample Student Broadcast Script (attached; one per group)
- Shot Size Graphic (attached; one per group)
- Common Terms and Abbreviations (attached; one per group)
- Video Editing Guide (attached; one per group)
- Two Stars and a Wish (attached; one per student)

30 minutes

Engage

Display **slide 2** of the attached **Activity Slides** to introduce Broadcasting to students. Move to **slides 3–4** to go over the essential question and the learning objective. Transition to **slide 5**. Put students into pairs and pass out **Broadcast Breakdown** handout. Navigate students to Student Network Television Broadcast Excellence Winners and allow students to select a video to watch. As students watch their chosen video they will answer the questions on their handout. When students complete the questions, ask students to share what they found.

Move to **slide 6** and prompt students to think about what news is. Discuss what makes something "newsworthy" and brainstorm some things that are happening in your school that could be turned into news stories.

60 minutes

Explore

Transition to **slide 7** and introduce students to their Pop-up Challenge. Put students into groups of four and provide students with equipment to film their video. Instruct students that they need to make a 1–2 minute segment about something happening in the school. Give them 50 minutes to complete the assignment. Move to **slide 8** and introduce students to the Collective Brain Dump strategy. Ask students to answer the questions about their experience filming their pop-up challenge.

30 minutes

Explain 1

Teacher's Note: Newsroom Environment and Preparation

This portion of the lesson is designed to emulate a professional newsroom editorial meeting. Students will determine the stories they'll cover in the next broadcast, assign production roles, and establish a production timeline and deadlines.

Move to **slide 9** and facilitate a short reflection on the student-produced newscasts and their pop-up challenge. Ask students to identify:

- What worked well—in both their production and the SNTs?
- Types of stories that stood out
- What made those stories effective or engaging?
- What they would like to incorporate into their own production?

Inform students that they will identify what they think students at their school would be interested in or what would make a good newscast based on what is happening around the school community during the time frame the newscast is produced (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, etc.). Transition to **slide 10** and facilitate a story pitch session using the Stand Up, Sit Down strategy. Give students a few minutes to brainstorm ideas and write down 2–3 story ideas. Have all students stand up. Each student will read their ideas one at a time. As an idea is read, write the idea down on the board for everyone to see. If a student's peer shares a story that is listed on their paper, they will mark it off. Once a student has shared or marked off all of their story ideas on their paper, they will sit down. When all of your students are sitting, you know you have a complete list of the class's news story ideas.

Sample Newscast Stories:

Some examples of story ideas might include:

- Upcoming school events (e.g., dances, fundraisers, assemblies)
- The lunch menu
- Sports team previews or highlights
- Student or teacher spotlights
- Behind-the-scenes looks at clubs or activities
- Public service announcements or relevant national/local news

Lead a discussion about which ones will be included in the newscast. Help the class narrow the list to a manageable set of stories (3–5 is typical for a weekly student newscast). You may have to guide students to what are the most newsworthy stories if there are too many ideas for one newscast.

Teacher's Note: Assigning Roles

This part of the lesson may not need to be done each time. All students should do each role at least once. After they have done them all, many students will gravitate towards one role they like the best or are most comfortable in.

Move to **slide 11**. Tell the students that it takes many people doing different jobs to make a newscast successful. Show them the graphic(s) of what the job duties look like in action.

- **Producer**: Oversees the entire production, coordinates team communication, and ensures deadlines are met.
- **Field Producer**: Manages the technical aspects of recording; works with camera crew and talent during shoots.
- **Director**: Manages the live recording of the newscast, may also be in charge of the rundown (order of the stories in the newscast) or switching between cameras during recording.
- **Talent-Anchor**: On-camera presenters behind the news desk reading stories on-air
- **Talent-Reporter:** On-camera reporter who gathers news at the location of newsworthy events
- **Writers**: Develop scripts based on selected stories.
- **Camera Operators**: Record video according to production plan.
- **Editors**: Assemble, cut, and polish video content.
- **Audio (may be combined with editing)**: Monitor and adjust sound levels and mic quality in studio and the field.
- **Graphics**: Create lower thirds, titles, and visual elements.

Display **slide 12** and ask them what roles they are most interested in. Pass out the handout and ask them to write down their top three choices. Tell them that they will be doing all the jobs at some point, but you will do your best to give them one of their top three choices first.

30 minutes

Extend 1

Pass out the **Newscast Story Planning Sheet** to gather information about each of the stories to be included in the newscast. Divide students into groups to tackle each story or work on them together as a class. Use **slides 13–14** to guide students through developing their newscast story with their group. Pass out the **Sample Student Broadcast Script** for inspiration on how to write a script for student-produced broadcasts. Additionally, provide the **Shot Size Graphic** and the **Common Terms and Abbreviations** to assist students develop their script fully.

Teacher's Note: Script Writing

Scripts for each news segment may not be able to be written prior to filming. Sports results and competitions may require filming b-roll first and then a script can be written for a voiceover or anchor. While segments about the lunch menu or scheduled events can be written before filming. Assist students in developing the best plan for their story.

Transition to **slide 15** and guide to establish a schedule for when things need to be done and the format of stories (e.g. voice-over, vosot, package, read by anchors, etc.). Write tasks and deadlines on the board with the students as you go over them. If necessary, write student names next to each task.

Since the producer will be taking the lead on this since they are in charge of the newscast this week they are responsible for making sure deadlines are met.

Move to **slide 16** and allow students to start planning and preparing to film the videos for their newscast.

15 minutes

Explain 2

Move to **slide 17** and distribute the **Video Editing Guide**. Let students know it includes tips that apply to many types of editing software. Review with students how to start a project, import clips, use the timeline, cut and arrange footage, and export the final product for the editing program you have available to you. The Video Editing Guide provides basic instructions for three of the most popular and well-known editing programs.

45 minutes

Extend 2

Move to **slide 18** and allow students time to begin editing their newscast segments. Remind students to use the Video Editing Guide as a reference as they work through their edits—importing clips, trimming footage, arranging the timeline, and exporting their final product. Once students have completed their segments instruct them to export the file so it can be merged with the other segments into one broadcast.

Only one or two students from each group may be directly involved in editing at a time. Assign the remaining group members to create promotional materials for their newscast such as posters, flyers, trailers, or social media posts.

20 minutes

Evaluate

Move to **slide 19** and introduce the instructional strategy Two Stars and a Wish. Let students know they will watch the whole broadcast together as a group.

After viewing the broadcast, students will write down two stars (things they thought were well done) and one wish (suggestion for improvement). Remind students to be thoughtful, kind, and specific with their feedback.

Once students are done with their Two Stars and a Wish students will reflect on the process of making a broadcast by answering questions on the back of the handout.

Research Rationale

Research rationale for this educator resource is provided in the literature review, Evidence in Action: When "Journalism Kids" Do Better: A Reassessment of Secondary and Postsecondary Achievement and Activities

Resources

- K20 Center. (n.d.). Collective brain dump. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/111
- K20 Center. (n.d.). *When "journalism kids" do better: A reassessment of secondary and postsecondary achievement and activities*. Literature Review. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/literature-review/4897
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Stand up, sit down. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/1771
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Two stars and a wish. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/83
- STN. (2025). *Broadcast excellence*. https://www.studenttelevision.com/broadcast-excellence-winners-2025