

LESSON 1

Becoming a journalist

Learning objective

To recognise the purpose of news and how it is produced

Learning outcomes

- Define news
- Identify the purpose of different news stories and why they might be reported
- Recall the NewsWise values
- Recall the roles in a newsroom and what they involve

Curriculum links

- **English (reading):** asking questions to further understanding
- **English (oracy):** asking questions to further understanding; take part in discussions

See 'NewsWise and your curriculum' for a more detailed breakdown of how this lesson links to your national curriculum objectives.



This lesson focuses on the NewsWise value: **interesting**.

Journalist training school context

Journalists have a very important job. They make sure that people hear about what is happening in the world and do it in an interesting way. Lots of different types of journalists work together to make the news.

Core knowledge/skills

- A journalist's role is to share information with the public. This may be revealing important facts that others are trying to hide, or sharing something more local that is interesting, useful, relevant or entertaining for a specific audience.
- Newsrooms have a set of values that they strive to uphold. A journalist's work is considered against these standards.
- Different roles exist in the newsroom. These roles are equally important and work together to produce the news that we see, hear or read.

Starter/baseline assessment [10 mins]

1. Welcome pupils to Journalist Training School! Show the journalist training school context slide and explain that in this lesson they will learn what it means to be a journalist. Build excitement by revealing what they will achieve over the course of the unit: pupils will become journalists, learn about spotting fake news and report a real story through their own news broadcast.
2. Arrange the **Carousel questions** around the classroom, for example, by mounting these onto large sheets of paper or a surface that drywipe markers can be used on. Give pupils 5 minutes to go around the questions, adding their initial responses to each station as they do so.
3. Lead a class discussion to explore the ideas shared for each question.

Learning activities

Activity 1 [25 mins]

1. Explain that the primary role of a journalist is to inform people about what is happening in the world. However, there are different reasons why a journalist might feel they need to share a story. There are also different reasons why people want to hear them.

2. Pupils look at the four stories from **Introduction to news stories**. They look at the headline, image and 5Ws of each story and discuss with their partner:

- *Why might somebody want to read this story?*
- *Why might a journalist want to share this story?*

(Support pupils by encouraging them to focus on the reason they would want to read the story first. Considering why a journalist would share it is more complex and can be treated as an extension.)

3. As pupils explore the stories, ask questions to deepen their thinking: *Which story would you want to read the most? Why would that story appeal to you? What makes this an important/interesting/entertaining story?*

4. Provide pupils with the **Exploring stories** worksheet to complete. Pupils choose one of the stories and complete the sheet.

5. Lead a class discussion to allow pupils the opportunity to share their ideas with the rest of the class.

Activity 2 [10 mins]

1. Explain that when journalists decide which stories they would like to share, they have a set of values which they have to meet. As pupils work through this unit of work, they will use the NewsWise values. Use the slide to show the values: Truthful, Fair, Balanced, Interesting.

2. With the whole class, explore the definition of each value and consider ways that news reporting may or may not meet them. Our definitions of the values are:

- **Truthful:** Be honest. Check the facts are accurate. Don't guess. Don't assume. Don't make things up!
- **Fair:** Treat everyone equally and with respect. Only report what you need to tell your story. Don't bully or make fun of people. Treat people in the way you would like to be treated.

- **Balanced:** Make sure all sides of the story are represented. Include all relevant viewpoints (even if you disagree with them!).

- **Interesting:** Consider why stories are important and why your audience would want to hear them. Ask lots of questions to find out new facts and details.

3. After exploring the values with the class, find a way together to represent and remember them. (Some classes may want to decide on an action for each value. Alternatively, the class could agree on a symbol for each value and use them as part of a class display.)

Plenary [10 mins]

1. Use the lesson slides to explain the roles of a reporter, a subeditor and a picture editor.

2. Share a list of qualities and ask which would be important to have for each role in the newsroom. (Pupils can discuss each role with their partner then share with a wider group or the whole class after. Alternatively, different pairs could be assigned just one of the roles to discuss before sharing with others.)

Questions for assessment

- *Which stories would you most like to read? Why? Which stories would you least like to read? Why?*
- *What makes some stories important for journalists to share? Why might some stories seem less important?*
- *What are the NewsWise values? What does [truthful/fair/balanced/interesting] mean? Why do you think each of these values is important for news reports?*
- *What does a [reporter/picture editor/subeditor] do?*
- *What skills or qualities should a [reporter/picture editor/subeditor] have? Why might they need these skills/qualities?*

Resources checklist

- **Lesson slides: Becoming a journalist**
- **Carousel questions**
- **Introduction to news stories cards**
- **Exploring stories worksheets**
- **Large paper, markers and sticky notes (optional)**