

News

Topic

News and headlines

Aims

- To practise speaking skills
- To predict content from a headline
- To develop summarising skills
- To practise question formation

Age/level

Young learners aged 12+ or adults
CEFR level B1–B2

Time

60–90 minutes

Materials

1. worksheet (one per learner)
2. a selection of newspapers (or learners can use mobile devices if you have internet access)

Introduction

This lesson is about news and the media and gives learners opportunities to express their own opinions. Learners start by talking about the news and considering the advantages and disadvantages of the four main media sources – TV, the internet, newspapers and radio. Then learners look at some headlines and invent the story behind the headline. Learners will also summarise an article, discuss controversial quotes based on the topic of news and finally they step into the role of a news reporter to carry out an interview with a selected celebrity. The tasks can be adapted to suit your learners depending on their level, age group and context.

Procedure

1. Warmer (5 minutes)

Give learners the worksheet and ask them to discuss the questions in activity A. If you have a large class you could split the learners up into groups. In a smaller class you could sit in a circle with the learners and facilitate the discussion. The idea is to get them thinking about how they find out about what's happening in the world and if they consider it important to be informed of current affairs.

2. Brainstorming (10 minutes)	<p>Learners work in groups to think of advantages and disadvantages of the four media sources and write their ideas on the worksheet (activity B). Ask them for some examples first to get all the learners on the right track.</p> <p>Groups then decide which one they think is best and compare their answers with other groups. You could do this by re-grouping learners so that in each new group there is a learner from each of the previous groups.</p>
3. Predicting (10–15 minutes)	<p>Ask learners to work in pairs and choose (or assign them) one of the headlines in activity C to guess or invent the story for. Encourage the learners to use their imaginations and to make up a story. Learners can then share their ideas in groups or with the class.</p> <p>The headlines given are real and deliberately avoid politics, showbiz and any stories that will go out of date quickly. If you want to make this activity more topical, you can choose your own headlines.</p> <p>For higher levels you could choose some headlines from tabloids and some from the broadsheet papers and you could look at the differences in style and content.</p> <p>For lower levels you could do this activity using photos from newspapers instead of headlines.</p>
4. Summarising (15–20 minutes)	<p>Learners work individually and choose an article that they find interesting, either in the newspapers you have brought in or by browsing news sites on their devices.</p> <p>Explain that they are going to give a summary of the article to the rest of their group or the class, so they need to read it carefully. Once they decide what the important parts of the story are, they should make notes on the worksheet (activity D) of the points and keywords that will help them give their summary. Encourage learners to use dictionaries and not to always rely on you to supply all the vocabulary.</p> <p>As learners are listening to the other summaries, they need to think of one question they'd like to ask the learner giving the summary. At the end, select a few learners to ask their question.</p> <p>You might like to introduce this activity by modelling it first. Tell learners that you read a really sad/funny/odd article in the paper this morning. Give a brief summary of the article and encourage them to ask you about it.</p> <p>Learners could also write up their summary for homework.</p>
5. Discussion (10–15 minutes)	<p>Ask learners to read and talk about the quotes in activity E in small groups. They should say if they agree or disagree and why, and make sure they find out other people's opinions too.</p> <p>The activity could also be done as a mingle, with each learner taking one quote and going round the room to discuss it with the other learners. They could then report to the class what the overall class opinions were for their quote. If you have more learners than quotes, some learners could do the same quote, then compare what they discussed in pairs before reporting back.</p>

	You might like to brainstorm functional language for agreeing and disagreeing on the board and encourage learners to use the language in their discussions.
6. Role play (15–20 minutes)	<p>Ask your learners if they would like to be journalists. Why/why not? Who would they like to interview if they were a journalist for a day?</p> <p>Learners work in pairs. They choose someone to interview (a politician, musician, model, chef, writer, etc., or anyone who is in the news for some reason), then write six interview questions to ask them on their worksheet (activity F).</p> <p>Then in their pairs they decide who will role play the journalist and who will role play the interviewee. The interviewee should think about what their answers might be, and the journalist can either help them with ideas or think of some follow-up questions they could ask to their main questions.</p> <p>Depending on your learners, they might like to perform their interview in front of the class, imagining they are on a TV news programme, or do their interview together before writing it up for a newspaper or news website.</p>

Contributed by

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