



zeum In-Depth Teacher Guide Newscast

Students work together to transform classroom studies into a unique news broadcast on our production stage. Blending scriptwriting and performance with classroom relevance, students learn to collaborate and communicate ideas through a digital medium. Groups use costumes, digital backgrounds, and theme music to creatively and effectively tell their stories. Because a two-hour field trip goes by very quickly, your time at Zeum is best spent as television journalists would spend their studio time: rehearsing and fine-tuning their performances. This guide is a concise introduction that prepares your class for a productive field trip. For this reason, **it is imperative that you email your scripts to your assigned Educator before your visit!**

Checklist

- Introduce Newscast to the class
- Brainstorm news segments
- Split students into 4 groups
- Write segment scripts
- Email typed scripts to your assigned Educator

Let's Communicate!
Make the most of your visit by speaking with a Zeum Educator to customize your experience. Have special curricular or technological needs? Want to come back more than once? Let's talk.
perry@zeum.org 415.820.3334

Learning Goals

All Zeum field trips are designed to accomplish the following goals:

- Develop 21st Century Literacies: Creativity, Communication, and Collaboration.
- Support students' ability to integrate relevant content knowledge into a clear, concise, and engaging media project.
- Develop students' awareness and mastery of a concept-to-creation process of storytelling.
- Build students' repertoire of art, technology, and media skills.
- Practice reflecting on and speaking about their media through informal critiques.

Newscast also has additional goals, specific to the media, technology and outcomes developed during the field trip:

- Build public speaking, scriptwriting, and journalism skills.
- Combine live acting with audio and visual effects to tell a compelling digital story.
- Practice collaboration across groups through scene development.
- Learn about multiple facets of a video-production process.

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Step 1: Newscast Introduction

In your visit to Zeum, you will collaborate with other students to create three to four news segments, with each segment running for about one minute. Along the way, you'll learn the basics of the production process from start to finish. You will have the chance to choose your topic, generate storyboards, create the scripts, invent characters, choose from Zeum's selection of backgrounds for your locations, select costumes and props, do a sound check, rehearse, and produce and film your performance. You'll assign the roles of anchor people, interviewers and interviewees among your group members.

Production is the process that takes a story from an initial idea and follows it through to a completed, filmed newscast. When you watch a newscast on television, you only see the finished product, perhaps the anchorperson and the field reporters on the screen. But that production results from a tremendous amount of work by lots of people whose collaborative efforts are part of the final piece that airs. In a real news studio, journalists write the scripts that the newscasters read from Teleprompters. Set designers create and maintain the news studio. Other people work on hair, makeup and wardrobe for those on camera. While the news is being filmed, there are directors, camera people, and various other members of the technical crew on the set making sure everything runs smoothly. At Zeum, you will get a taste of the fast-paced lives of news producers.

Step 2: Brainstorm Story Ideas for News Segments

Broadcast news shapes the way we see our world and the events that happen in it. News programs on different channels are as diverse as the personalities of the anchor people. Your newscast has the potential to be truly relevant, funny, meaningful, and interesting. Consider these possibilities:

- A nightly news program with varied segments on current events
- A program that delivers the news specific to your school and its students
- A program that covers historical events you are studying
- A humorous take on the news
- An imaginary newscast from a fictional world
- The same story from different points of view
- A combination of current events, school news, and historical events

Each group will produce one segment as part of an entire newscast. Here are some examples of specific types of segments. Which one will your group do? *Local/School News; Domestic News; International News; Human Interest; Arts/Entertainment; Science/Technology; Health/Medicine; Business/Economy; Sports; Weather.* Feel free to use these as ideas, or create your own unique news segments.

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Tip: Jumpstart your brainstorming by watching the news. Bring a recording of the previous night's news broadcast (whether it's a mainstream broadcast network, Comedy Central's *The Daily Show*, newscasts on YouTube, et. al.) and watch for (1) the types of news segments, (2) the theme music, and (3) the language used by the anchors and reporters. You might want to model your segment on a traditional newscast, or perhaps you'd like to *redefine* what the news should sound and look like.

Tip: Connections to your classroom curriculum – here are some examples from past field trips:
History/Social Studies: current events; politics, global influences on the environment (population growth, urbanization); ancient civilizations; prominent and/or significant individuals; gender roles across the world; analyzing government structures...
Language Arts: dialogues between two characters; re-creating a chapter from a novel or scenes from plays; excerpts from journals; student-written creative stories; autobiographical works...
Science: movement of celestial bodies in the solar system and beyond; weather phenomena; cell division; relationships between organisms in food chains and food webs...
Mathematics: how-to videos on algebra topics; statistics and data analysis...

Step 3. Break into Groups

Break students up into no more than 4 groups! Groups can be self-selected based on shared interests or be formed before generating ideas. Two groups could approach the same general topic from two distinct angles. Whatever topics you choose, it is crucial that it be interesting and relevant to the people in that segment. Remind your students to be creative and work together! Hopefully, you can tie the segment to something you're learning in the classroom – past segments have included a health/medicine story on the development of the Polio vaccine and an arts and entertainment story on the Harlem Renaissance.

Step 4. Write the News Segment Script

See worksheet below *Your News Script* (pages 5 and 6)

Individual segments can be no more than 2000 characters.

Use the Word Count tool in Microsoft Word to tally the number of characters

Your news segments can take many forms. One effective structure is to set the context of your topic with an introduction, explore the topic in an interview, and conclude with a series of concise or insightful comments. Practice by writing a script based on a newspaper or magazine article, a section from a book or events happening at your school. In the script, everyone in your group should have a chance to speak. To accommodate more students in a group, a script may contain dialogue between two news anchor people or have two people being interviewed at once. Most, but not all scripts will consist of an **introduction**, an **interview**, and a **conclusion**. It's your newscast – tell your story the way you think it

ought to be told! Also, think about how to make **transitions** from your segment to the one before and after. This program is made possible in part by the generous contribution of supporters including the California Consumer Protection Foundation, The California Wellness Foundation, The Campbell Foundation, Dean & Margaret Leshner Foundation, Mary A. Crocker Trust, Stocker Foundation, Union Bank, and Vodafone Americas Foundation.

after it. Often, newscasters use words like, “And now over to...” or “Let’s check in with...” or “Back to the studio.” Ideally, the newscast should flow smoothly from segment to segment.

Email your completed scripts to your assigned Educator so that they can be uploaded to the Production Stage teleprompter for your visit.

Step 5. Collect Props and Costumes

Will you be interviewing an astronaut, construction workers, or rock ‘n’ roll stars? Another part of the pre-production is to pick out **costumes** and **props** to develop your characters.

Tip: Zeum has many costumes to choose from, but if you need a specific prop or costume, it’s best to bring it with you.

Tip: If any students are near-sighted, another important prop to bring with you to Zeum are your **eyeglasses** and/or **contact lenses**; this will enable you to read the teleprompter with minimal difficulty.

Step 6. Design Your Blocking

How your newscasters and characters stand and move in front of the camera adds interest to the newscast. This is called **blocking**. How will the anchors be positioned? Where does the weatherman stand when pointing at the map?

Tip: Sometimes it helps to have characters who aren’t speaking act out their roles behind the reporters. For example, people could be in the background farming, protesting or dancing, depending on the subject of the news segment.

If some students do not wish to be on camera, there are other roles they can take on. For instance, one student can be the director, making sure all of the shots are successfully composed and performances effectively executed. Speak with the Educator leading your field trip for additional information on other important roles.

Helpful Links

www.timeforkids.com/tfk - Time magazine for kids

<http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/talk/news.html> - Talking to kids about the news

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