

The News About the News Handout 1
"Newscast Component Vocabulary Sheet"

Advertising: Commercials for products and services created by companies who give money to the television station to promote their business.

Opening sequence: The standard video sequence that plays at the beginning of every news show. Usually this includes fast-paced images of newscasters and exciting music combined with an announcement that the newscast is beginning. All television programs have opening sequences that announce the beginning of a show—this is when you hear the theme song and often see images of the actors.

Station identification: This is when the station or network—for example, CNN, MTV, ABC—announces that you are watching their station or network. Station and network identifications usually have identifiable music and a logo.

Chitchat (or fluff): This is the unofficial term for the talking that goes on between newscasters. For example, Sue the newscaster says, "So, Sam, I hope you had a nice vacation. I heard that you were in Greece, on the islands—that just sounds wonderful. I'm sure you had great weather over there. But what kind of weather can we expect around here for the upcoming weekend?" Then Sam responds, "Well, yes, Sue, I did have a great vacation, and the weather in Greece was just terrific—and the food was great too. But now on to the weather report for this weekend. ..."

Hook: A hook is a commercial for other television programs. It can be in the form of an announcement for a show or number of shows that are going to be airing on the same station, often directly after the show you are currently watching.

Teaser: This is when the newscaster announces what is coming up in the current newscast or later newscasts. For example, Sue might say, "And Sam has some pretty interesting news about the weather for this weekend after this commercial break; so when we get back, you can find out whether to pack for that picnic or plan for a day at the museum."

Hard news: News stories that are considered to be hard news cover local and national events of the day and provide new information on stories that were covered in other newscasts. Hard news gives facts and accounts of events that are significant to a great number of people. Hard news covers politics, war, national disasters, economics, technological and scientific innovation, and education, among other topics.

Human interest: These stories are not hard news and are often endearing, cute or funny. For example, a human-interest story might be about a cat that was saved by firefighters or a baby that can play Beethoven on the piano blindfolded. News about celebrities also falls in the category of human interest.