

The World in 22 Minutes

Exercising Your News Judgment

As the producers of the local TV newscast, *The World in 22 Minutes*, your team must exercise “news judgment” and select the best lineup of stories that will keep your viewers watching!

Rules of the TV News Game

Making decisions about what stories to include – and in what order – takes lots of strategic thinking. Plus you must keep in mind the following rules:

1. **Newsworthiness** – What is the importance of the story? Does the story contain critical information that your viewers should know about? What will hold your audience’s interest? Will it move them?
2. **Strive for Balance** – Include the positive as well as the negative; breaking news as well as “human interest” features; stories of success as well as stories of conflict.
3. **Timeliness** – Do you need to run the story today or will the story keep for another day?
4. **Picture Quality** – TV news needs good quality pictures and graphics to keep viewers watching. Choose wisely.
5. **Time Restrictions** – Can the story fit into the 22 minutes allotted for your broadcast?

Tips to keep in mind

- Make sure to select stories that add up to no more than 22 minutes. (commercials and promos take the other 8 minutes.)
- Your first story (the “Lead”) should be the one that is most compelling in both content and pictures. You don’t want your audience to click over to the competition!
- Please note that these sample news stories are unusually long for the purpose of this exercise. Most news stories rarely last more than two minutes and are often as short as 15 seconds.

Sample News Stories

Story Summary	Picture Quality	Length
1. Community group protests toxic waste disposal site.	so-so	1.5 mins.
2. Vice President comes to visit regional high school.	good	2 mins.
3. Striking workers arrested after violent outbreak.	good	2.5 mins.
4. Opening of community center for kids at risk.	so-so	2 mins.
5. Former mayor dies suddenly of heart attack.	good	3 mins.
6. Football team makes state regionals.	so-so	2.5 mins.
7. Local insurance company charged for defrauding elderly.	good	2 mins
8. Pop star comes home for charity event at local hospital.	good	2 mins.
9. Welfare recipients say lines are getting worse.	so-so	1 mins.
10. Weather report with pending storm graphics.	good	2 mins.
11. Profile: local citizen with a garage full of TVs.	good	2 mins.
12. Monsoon devastates rural parts of Indonesia.	good	1.5 mins.
13. Economists predict gas prices will continue to rise.	so-so	1 min.
14. Pomegranates: the new miracle food.	good	2 mins.
15. New ab machine boasts more muscle for less workout.	good	2 mins.
16. Popular SUV recalled for faulty seatbelts.	poor	1.5 mins.