

E-module on News and Allied Information-An Introduction



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Structure of the lesson

- **Objective**
- **Introduction**
- **Meaning and Definitions of News**
- **Importance of news**
- **Difference between News and Information**
- **Types of news**
- **Elements of news**
- **Summary**
- **Glossary**
- **Suggested readings**



News-An Introduction

Objective:

- To explain the importance of news.
- Various sources of News.
- To make the reader able to differentiate between news and non-news.



News-An Introduction

Introduction

The contents of a newspaper can be broadly divided into four parts-

- (1) News
- (2) Articles and Features
- (3) Opinion Pieces such as editorials, comments, letters to the editor, reviews, columns.
- (4) Advertisements



- News constitutes about 70 percent of the space in the newspaper.

News-An Introduction



Meaning:

- News is the report of a current event, something that was not known, information of recent events and happenings.
- News is that satisfies readers' curiosity to answer the following basic questions: Who? What? When? Where? Why? And How?
- News implies new thing or latest information.

News-An Introduction

Meaning:

- News pertains to some recent event which is a matter of interest to readers or listeners.
- It is said that the letters in the word “NEWS” is derived from the four directions: N orth, E ast, W est and S outh
- As the word implies, news contain much that is new, informing people about something that has just happened

News-An Introduction

Meaning:

- News is, anything out of the extraordinary, it is the current happenings.
- It is anything that makes the reader surprised and curious.
- News is any event, which affects most of the people, interest most of the audiences and involves most of the people.

News-An Introduction

Definitions:

- **According to D.S. Mehta** “News is the record of the most interesting, important and accurate information obtainable about the things man thinks and says, sees, describes, plans and does.”
- **According to Willard G. Bleyer**, in his textbook, *Newspaper Writing and Editing*, “Anything timely that interests a number of persons and best news is that which has the greatest interest for the greatest number.”

News-An Introduction

Definitions:

- According to **Turner Calledge**, “ News is anything you did not know yesterday.”
- According to **Charles Dana, Editor New York Sun**, “Anything that will make people talk is news.”
- Political scientist **Leon V. Sigal** says “One big trouble with news is that nobody knows what it is. The other trouble is that nobody knows what it means. ”

Importance of News

- News is important for a number of reasons within a society.
- News can make people feel connected too.
- News is important as a social gathering space.

Importance of Local News

- News from a local area is often important to advise people in a locality about activities that may have an impact on a community.



Importance of National News

- Having a national news focus can allow people to gain a sense of national perspective.



- This is particularly significant for countries that have a diverse range of population centres such as cities or towns.

Importance of International News

- Certain kinds of news from countries that rely on each other for energy or other resources can often have a profound influence in overall global economics.

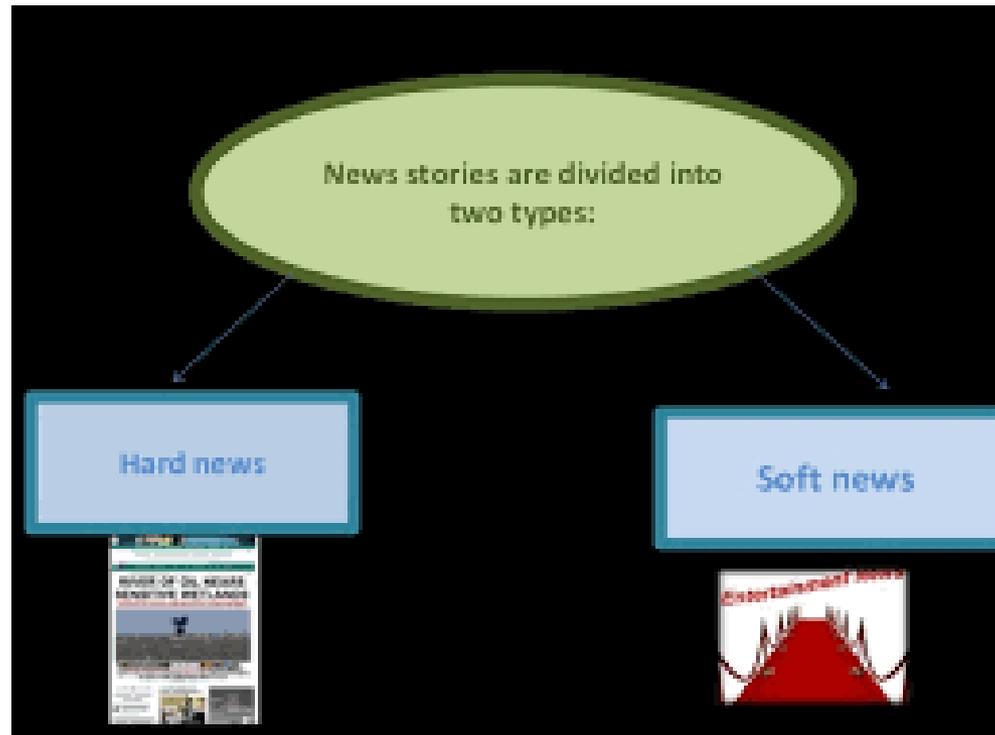


Difference between News and Information

- This is the age of information and we are bombarded with tons of information every day. News, on the other hand, is specific information that is a communication in the form of print or electronic media.
- News is an account about what has recently happened as in a news program on the TV or radio telling you what has happened in the world. Information describes facts and details about a certain subject.
- You might have seen weather reports in the newspapers. It gives the day's temperature or rainfall. It does not make news. It becomes news when there is a sudden change in weather.

Types of News

- Hard news
- Soft News



Types of News

Hard News: These stories generally consists of basic facts: who, what, when, where and how.

- It is the news of important public events.
- The front page of newspapers and lead stories of radio and television news bulletins usually comprise hard news.
- These news items are events, which must be reported to the public in a timely manner.

Types of News

Soft News:

- These news are not time-sensitive.
- Soft news includes profiles of people, programs or organizations.
- Soft news focuses on situations, people or events that have human interest.
- Typically, soft news has a human interest, entertainment focus or a statistical and survey approach.
- Soft News have a longer shelf life.

Elements of News



Elements of News

- **Timeliness:** News has to be new. With news, the fresher the better. Timeliness is a great factor in deciding news. For a newspaper, events that had happened on the previous day is news. But for a weekly, events of the previous one week can make news. For a 24-hour television news channel, every second is a deadline.
- **Proximity:** The geographic nearness or distance of an event can make a story more or less attractive to the reader. People like to read about what is near to them. Proximity means news happens close by readers and viewers want to learn about their neighborhood, town or country.

Elements of News

- **Controversy/Conflict:** Conflict means a kind of clash, quarrel, disagreement, discard or battle between persons, groups, societies or countries. It may be political, religious, ethnic or personal. Conflict has an element of drama that gets attention and hence serves as a criterion for news selection.
- **Eminence and Prominence:** “Name makes news” goes the cliché, still, what happening that involve well known people or institution are likely to be interesting even if not important. The inauguration of a beauty saloon by a renowned actress is news. A prominent actor’s visit to a market is news. Any political leader’s visit to a Kachchi Basti is news.

Elements of News

- **Impact:** When the tsunami waves struck several parts of the world, thousands of people were affected. It became major news for the whole world. News of nuclear war will create impact on its readers throughout the world.
- **Progress:** Progress means any improvement in any field. Technological advance and new discoveries will always be the subject for discussion and a readable news story.

Elements of News

- **Disaster:** Disaster is destruction, ruin, adversity, calamity, devastation and catastrophe. Where there is any disaster on a considerable scale, there is availability of news. . It is media's responsibility to inform people about the magnitude of the disaster, number and names, if possible, of the casualties and injured ones, aid activities, rehabilitation efforts, etc.
- **Human interest:** We turn to those news items, we find interesting. E.g., Women are normally considered to go after fashion news. Typically, these items concern ordinary people.

Elements of News

- **Novelty:** Unusual things make news. Extraordinary and unexpected events generate public interest. A man pulls a car by his hair, a woman gives birth to triplets, a singer enters the Guinness Book by singing non-stop for 48 hours, and the painting of a famous artist is auctioned for a very expensive price.
- **Relevance:** Stories which have direct influence on our lives or have direct relation with us are more important for us.

Elements of News

- **History:** Researchers are all the time working on history and historical events. The quest to history is an effort quench the thirst of man faculty of curiosity.
- **Objectivity and Fairness:** Carrying only one version and ignoring others in the coverage of a controversial matter amounts to taking sides. Objectivity demands that both sides and all points of view in a controversy are fairly presented.

Summary

- News is different from information.
- News is always current.
- Yesterday's news is no news. It will be counted as history.
- News is the most perishable commodity in this world.
- Every person should have nose for news.

Glossary

- **1. Breaking News:** Unexpected, unplanned occurrences, for example, a plane crash. A story that must be covered and without any advance preparation.
- **2. Backgrounder:** A news story that explains the background or origins of an issue or situation.
- **3. Editor:** The top ranking individual in the news department of a newspaper, also known as “editor-in-chief.”
- **4. Hard news:** Coverage of the actions of government or business, or the reporting of an event, such as crime, an accident or a speech. The time element often is important.
- **5. Human Interest Story:** A piece valued more for its emotional impact or oddity than for its importance.
- **6. Newspaper:** A publication that regularly prints and distributes news of general interest to a broad audience, or of more specialized interest to some category of people.
- **7. Spot News:** A timely report of an event that is unfolding at the moment

Suggested Readings

- Melvin Mencher. *Basic News Writing*, Universal Book Stall, New Delhi.
- Dr. Vir Bala Aggarwal, *Essentials of Practical Journalism*, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi.
- Dr. Vir Bala Aggarwal and V.S. Gupta, *Handbook of Journalism and Mass Communication*, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi.