

Not the nine o'clock news!

Answers

LINKS TO:

Stage 2, Module 11

Learning Object 2: Here is the news

Exercise 1

Sample answer:

1.1 Fill in the table with the things that may affect news programming on the ABC.

National broadcaster (in Australia this is the ABC)	
Who is the target audience?	<p>Australia's ABC television is a national free-to-air broadcaster. Its target audience is all Australians. According to the ABC's website, its focus is on providing 'distinctly Australian content across a wide variety of genres'. It also states that its aim is 'to engage large numbers of Australians in content that enriches their lives'.</p> <p>The Australian Bureau of Statistics data for 2008 reveals that Australians live in a mixture of urban and rural places, although most Australians live in cities (about 89 per cent). Most Australians are aged between 15 and 64 years and there are roughly equal numbers of men and women. About 90 per cent of Australians are of European ancestry.</p> <p>There is no national religion in Australia, which is considered a largely secular society, although the majority of Australians identified themselves in the most recent national census as Christians.</p> <p>The ABS conducted an adult literacy and life skills survey in 2006. According to the ABS 'just over half (54 per cent) of Australians aged 15 to 74 years were assessed as having the prose literacy skills needed to meet the complex demands of everyday life and work', which include the prose literacy skills needed to read a newspaper.</p>
How is the news program funded?	<p>The ABC is an advertising-free, taxpayer-funded, public service broadcaster. No advertising is programmed during the news. There are advertisements before and after the news, which advertise ABC products and services, and some public service announcements.</p>
What else might influence your news program?	<p>Because of the way the ABC is funded, it is free of the kinds of pressures that can impact on commercial television. News reporting on the ABC is less likely to be influenced by commercial interests, such as advertisers, station owners or investors. Nevertheless, the ABC is often subject to intense public scrutiny and is expected to be balanced and impartial, particularly in terms of its political reporting.</p>

1.2 Based on your answer to Exercise 1.1, decide which of the types of news in this list you are going to include in your news program, and how much emphasis, or time, you will allocate to that news type. Give reasons for your decisions.

The major focus of the news program will be general news stories, so I have decided to devote 40 minutes of the hour to news from both local, state, national and international sources. This is because the ABC states that its policy is to 'engage large numbers of Australians'. I think that providing a range of news about different places is a good way to engage a range of Australians. It also demonstrates balanced programming. Showing local and state news will be a good way to ensure coverage of both urban and rural news stories, since although most Australians live in urban areas, I think there is a strong interest in rural Australia.

I have decided to include 5 minutes of human interest news, to lighten the tone of the program. This is also a way to reflect the ABC's goal of enriching people's lives.

I have decided to include 5 minutes of sports news. I have decided to do this because although I think sport is very popular in Australia, there are a range of sports-specific programs on the ABC that cover that type of news in more detail, so my own news program need only cover the biggest stories in brief.

I think it is important to include the weather. This is an important standard element of news programming in Australia, which most Australians are interested in knowing about.

Because the ABC is government funded, I do not need to allow for advertising in my program.

1.3 Are there any other types of news you feel you should include in your program? If so, give reasons, based on your answer to Exercise 1.1, for why you should include this type of news.

I think that I will also include Indigenous news in my program. The ABC states that its focus is on 'distinctly Australian content'. I think that having a short segment on stories related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is a good way to ensure the program is distinctively Australian. Although 90 per cent of Australians have a European heritage*, I think there is a strong interest in Australia on Indigenous affairs.

Source: Australian Society, Population Composition: A National and Regional View of Australia's Social Demography by Jeromey Temple and Peter McDonald, The Australian National University.

1.4 Give your news program an appropriate or catchy title. Divide up the clock, graphically illustrating the amount of time your one-hour news program will spend on each type of news.

Title: News at six



(continued on following page)

Exercise 2

Sample answers:

2.1 Complete the table, including information about the target audience, funding and other considerations for your Indonesian news program.

National broadcaster (in Indonesia this is the TVRI)	
Who is the target audience?	<p>All Indonesian people.</p> <p>Indonesians live in a mixture of rural (46 per cent) and urban (54 per cent) settings¹.</p> <p>Although primary school enrolment has been as high as 96 per cent in recent years, 8 out of every 100 students will drop out before completing their primary education².</p> <p>There is an even gender balance in the population with 50.34 per cent males and 49.66 females³.</p> <p>In Indonesia, it is compulsory to follow one of the five authorised religions with religious affiliation shown on all official documents and the <i>Kartu Tanda Penduduk</i> or National Identity Card. The major recognised religions and their followers are Islam (85.1 per cent), Protestantism (9.2 per cent), Catholicism (3.5 per cent), Hinduism (1.8 per cent) and Buddhism (0.4 per cent)⁴.</p> <p>1 The World Bank 2 Indonesian Minister for Education in <i>Pos Kota</i> (24 April 2011) 3 2010 Indonesian Population Census 4 2010 Indonesian Population Census</p>
How is the news program funded?	<p>As a public broadcaster, TVRI is funded by the Indonesian Government, with the main sources of funding being monthly television licensing fees paid by consumers for each television they have in the household, and through a 12.5 per cent tax on the advertising profits of all commercial television stations⁵. TVRI itself is not permitted to raise revenue from on-air advertising.</p> <p>5 Ministerial Decree issue by Information Minister, Harmoko, in 1990.</p>
What else might influence your editorial decisions?	<p>Because of the way TVRI is funded, and because of its role as an agent for social cohesiveness across Indonesia, the news on TVRI must be reported in a manner that does not disturb public order, threaten state unity or harm the country's political and economic interests.</p>

2.2 Based on your answer to Exercise 2.1, decide which of the types of news you are going to include in your news program, and how much emphasis, or time, you will allocate to that news type. Give reasons for your decisions.

Because TVRI is the national broadcaster, its news service is broadcast to each of the 31 provinces of Indonesia. As such, the national component of this broadcast will be hosted by one male and one female news reader, and contain:

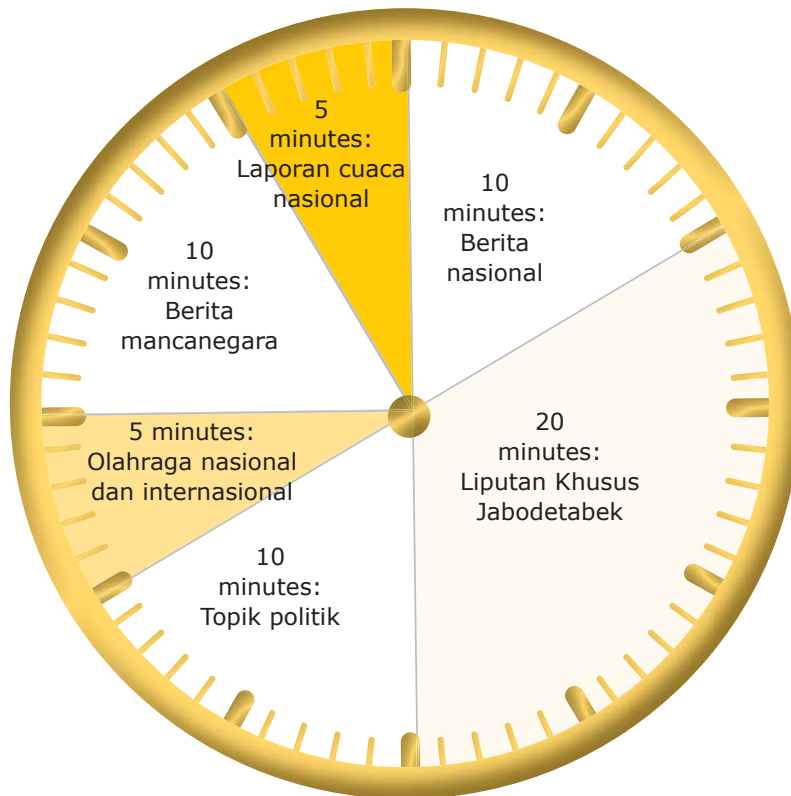
- national news: 10 minutes
- national political affairs: 10 minutes
- foreign news: 10 minutes
- national and international sport: 5 minutes
- national and international weather: 5 minutes

Following the national news service, the broadcast will cross over to one of the regional newsrooms of TVRI hosted by a local news-reading team. They will present a 10–20 minute bulletin of regional news. For the area of Jakarta-Bogor-Depok-Tangerang-Bekasi (or Jabodetabek), which alone has a population of 28 million people*, there would be plenty of material for a 20-minute local news bulletin, whereas with some of the smaller regions or provinces a 10-minute local bulletin would be sufficient.

* Source: Article in *Suara Pembaruan* online on 6 September 2011 titled 'Jabodetabek Masih Jadi Magnet'.

2.3 Give your Indonesian news program a title. Complete the clock showing what you will include in your program.

Title: Jendela Indonesia



Exercise 3

Sample answer:

What differences and similarities are there between your two news programs in Exercises 1 and 2? What are the major reasons for these differences?

In my news programming I have included a 20-minute section for *liputan khusus*, 'special coverage', of *Jabodetabek*. (*Jabodetabek* is the Greater Jakarta region, made up of Jakarta and four surrounding satellite cities — **J**akarta-**B**ogor-**D**epok-**T**anggerang-**B**ekasi). This megalopolis has a population of more than 28 million people so there would be plenty of news and events to occupy 20 minutes of the daily evening-news program.

Being a public broadcaster like the ABC, TVRI is not permitted to broadcast commercials, so the entire one-hour program is made up of national and international news, politics and sport, the national weather report, and the 20-minute special coverage of *Jabodetabek*.

Exercise 4

Sample answer:

Compare the Australian story with the Indonesian one. What are the similarities and differences between how the two news broadcasts are presented? Explain some of the reasons for the differences.

In the Australian news item the Minister for Education has made the announcement. In the Indonesian news item, the announcement has been made by the Education Ministry, rather than the individual minister, although the minister acted as a spokesperson for the Department.

The Australian news item has been sensationalised as 'breaking news', which makes it sound like a surprise or an unexpected initiative. The Indonesian announcement appears to be considered and measured, and has been publicly introduced at a formal press conference called by the Education Ministry.

The Australian news item includes video footage of the Minister for Education making the announcement, even though in the footage he is largely reiterating what has already been stated in the news item.