

# What is News???

## News...

- Information of sufficient interest or importance to the public to warrant reporting in the media
- What people want to hear

## How does one decide what makes an item news???

## What makes it interesting or important to the public???

## Who makes the decision???

## Just putting it on a news program sometimes is all it takes

- Media executives tend to lean towards the unusual. (a plane crash)
- That's what people want to see.

## The 10 basic tests of newsworthiness...

### Change (or suspense)

A story without an ending...one for which the conclusion is unresolved...can hold public interest for a long time. People will tune in for an update, to hear the latest progress, especially if they expect a conclusion will come.

### Disaster (or tragedy)

These events are all very big news, and television's ability to bring on-the-spot film into people's living rooms makes this type of news one of the strongest for TV news. People care about stories like these.

### Bizarre

If elements of the story are unique, unexpected, or novel, it may be news. ("When a dog bites a man, that's not news, because it happens so often. But if a man bites a dog, that's news.")

### Timeliness

News is not news unless it's new. The "breaking story, "the story that's coming in right now, is definitely news. If people are saying, "Did you hear about..." then it's news.

### Conflict (or controversy)

People taking sides, people at war, or people outraged at injustices (real or unreal)...these are conflicts that make news.

### Human Interest

A story filled with human emotion, warmth, and the ability to make eyes tear up always commands attention.

### Impact

How many people are affected by the story???. Thousands???. If so, it's news. Are the consequences of the story large? Do they have world significance?

**Local Interest**

Will people care about a story happening locally?

**Progress**

Everyone likes to think that some improvement, either small or large, is taking place.  
The more measurable the progress is, the more satisfying the story is.

**Celebrity**

- People love to know what movie stars are doing (especially if their doings are a little scandalous)