
HEADLINES

FOR THE TEACHER

Discipline

People and the Sea

Themes

Systems and Interactions

Key Concept

The more people know about how the marine ecosystem works, and how they interact with the environment, the more likely they are to protect, rather than endanger marine species.

Synopsis

Student News Teams prepare marine news stories based on background information and clues and present them to the class in a simulated TV news show.

Science Process Skills

communicating, organizing, inferring, applying

Vocabulary

incidental kill, ghost nets, gill net, entanglement, non-target species, mortality, ocean dumping, insulation

MATERIALS

- Clue cards for Headline Stories, cut apart

For each group of students:

- Fact sheets on Oil, Gillnetting and Plastics
- Points of View Sheet
- News Team Notes Sheet

INTRODUCTION

The main source of information on science and the environment for most people comes from television news. It is very important that reporters and newscasters present as accurate a description of the research or problem as possible. Most investigative reporters also try to include different points of view

from various sources if the story is about a conflict, question of values or if people disagree about solutions to the problem. The quality of the delivery of the on-the-scene reporter and anchor person also determines what people will learn from science and environmental reports. If the delivery is boring or the description of the problem unclear, people will tune out. The reporter's use of language may also affect our perceptions of the story by their tone of voice, style of delivery and use of "red flag" words which tend to slant our views or let us know that the issue is controversial.

INTO THE ACTIVITIES

Show videotapes of news shows or news magazines such as "60 Minutes" or in-depth news programs such as the PBS "McNeil Lehrer Hour Report" so students have an idea of the types or roles needed to put on a newshow and the various tones and styles used by diverse reporters and anchors.

Do a Tea Party using the following or similar questions:

- What is the last issue you remember hearing on a news report?
- What made you listen to the report?
- Did you have enough information to make an informed decision about the issue?
- What is important to cover in a news story?
- How important is style in communicating critical environmental disasters?

Divide students into groups of four. Have each group choose a headline story card, a News Team Notes sheet, Points of View sheet, and Fact Sheets relevant to their story.

Explain that each group will develop a news story for television presentation on the Noon News Hour for stations KWAV, KBAY, KOCN, or KWET. Within each team of four, each "reporter" should take one of the four questions on the News Team Notes sheet. Then members of the news team will fill in the pieces of the story to help each reporter, drawing on information on the Clue Card to answer #1, the Fact sheets to answer #2, and the Points of View sheet for #3.

Encourage students to be creative in filling in details of the story and work together to agree on the final report. Students should fill in the News Team Notes sheet completely; the "anchors" can use it for the class presentation.

When the teams have their stories complete, they can present them to the class as News Anchors. Other members of the News Teams may take on the role of news reporters at the scene of the story interviewing eye-witnesses or the role of expert witnesses interviewed on the news show. Add microphone props and

station emblems for dramatic flavor. Encourage students to present their stories in news media styles with careful reading and camera presence.

**BEYOND
THE ACTIVITIES**

Print a newspaper with your class news stories and distribute it to other classes.

Collect newspaper clippings about the marine environment and review them for bias in how they were written. Write down questions left unanswered by the article. Letters to the Editor may be in order or calls to other experts.

Developed by Stephanie Kaza
Point Reyes Bird Observatory Education