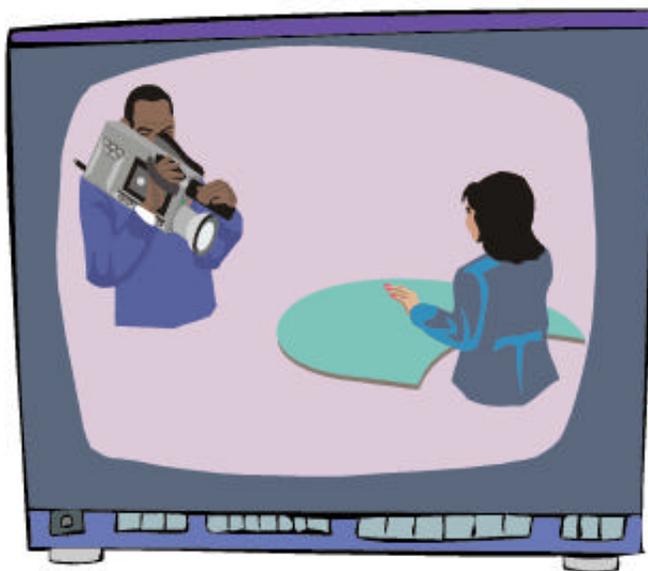


# **WHAT'S GOING ON?**

**A FULLY-DEVELOPED, INTERDISCIPLINARY PROJECT  
USING THE POWER OF TECHNOLOGY  
TO INCREASE LEARNING**

**GRADES 4 – 8**



**CREATED AND DEVELOPED FOR  
KIDBIZ 3000**

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# WHAT'S GOING ON!

## *An interdisciplinary project for grades 4 – 8*



### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Is it enough that your students know *what* is going on in the world? Just as students need to make connections to the books and stories they read, they also need to make connections to the news and feature articles. In order to make sense of the *who? what? why? and where?* students need to be able to put the information they read in context, access prior knowledge, and be given opportunities to respond to what they read. **What's Going On!** is an engaging, real-world simulation which provides these opportunities.

The premise of **What's Going On!** is that students are asked to produce their own informative television program. As students become involved in all aspects of producing a news program, they develop their reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Not only must students read news stories and feature articles, they must learn to interpret what they read to their audience. The project will use a cooperative learning approach and integrate all the content areas.

The project is introduced with a letter from the president of a television station. Your class is asked to help create, develop, and produce a news and information program specifically for kids. The project is divided into three parts or phases: Internship, In the Studio, and On the Air. Each phase addresses performance standards in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, and the Arts:

**Internship:** Students will explore various news sources, such as television, radio, newspapers, and Internet news sources as they *Learn the Business*. They will examine the different formats for presenting information, such as news articles, features, and opinion/editorials. During this phase of the project, students will develop the structure and design of their proposed television program. They will “pitch” their ideas to the network and “apply” for jobs working on this new program.

**In the Studio:** *Developing your news show* is the second phase of the project. Once the show’s concept is accepted and approved, your newly hired students will be assigned to a cooperative group. Each group will become a separate news department (such as local news, world news, sports, health, etc.). They will develop one or more segments for their department. As students are developing their news segments, they will get and respond to a variety of assignments from their “executive producer” (the teacher). These assignments will provide students with opportunities to develop problem-solving strategies as well as meet content-specific objectives.

**On the Air:** *Producing your show* is the culminating phase of the project. Students will present their television show to an audience using segments from each cooperative group.

**Required for this project:** To complete this project, students will use information and resources from the KidBiz 3000 website. They will also rely on the KidBiz 3000 email system. Students must have regular use of computers with Internet access and passwords for the KidBiz3000 website. They should also have access to the following software applications: a word processor, a spreadsheet program, and a presentation or multimedia program.

# **PERFORMANCE STANDARDS DRIVING THIS PROJECT**

## **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS:**

Students will...

- Read and understand informational texts.
- Enrich reading through the use of websites.
- Produce informational writing using facts gathered from several sources, expressing a particular point of view, and written for a specific audience.
- Produce persuasive writing that uses reasons, anecdotes, and examples to create a convincing argument.
- Produce functional writing, including résumés and business letters.
- Participate in small group meetings to share data, facts, and ideas, and work together to come up with group decisions and ideas.
- Present and deliver an oral report.
- Make informed judgments about television.

## **MATHEMATICS:**

Students will...

- Develop an understanding of statistical ideas to analyze data and show that data in tables, charts, and graphs.
- Estimate and use mathematical concepts in real-world situations.
- Make, read, and interpret graphs.
- Apply a variety of reasoning strategies to solve problems.
- Explain and express solutions clearly and logically, using appropriate mathematical terms, language, and notations.
- Talk about uses of mathematics and its importance to their present and future lives

## **SOCIAL STUDIES:**

Students will...

- Collect information using different types of sources and make connections among various sources of information and ideas. Interpret and analyze this information in multiple ways.
- Use knowledge from other subjects and personal experiences to form and express opinions.
- Identify current political or social problems and situations and conduct research to find possible solutions.
- Understand that others may have different points of view.
- Prepare and deliver a presentation on a researched topic that expresses an opinion and backs it up with reasons.

## **SCIENCE:**

Students will...

- Observe and explain environmental change and its impact on living organisms.
- Examine, describe, and measure the effects of natural events on the Earth, such as changes in weather or erosion.
- Work individually and in groups to collect, describe, record, and share information and ideas.
- Understand and describe examples of the importance of scientists, science, and technology and the impact they have on our lives.
- Develop and describe appropriate choices leading to good personal health.
- Understand the planning, problem-solving and decision-making process in which the designed world is created.
- Propose and critique alternate explanations and distinguish between fact and opinion.
- Use a variety of media to collect and record information.
- Understand ways to manage and preserve natural resources.

## **ART:**

Students will...

- Develop ideas and images through the creation of art works based on themes, symbols, and events.
- Develop skills with electronic media as a means of expressing visual ideas.

## BEFORE YOU BEGIN

A project of this scope and magnitude takes planning. Here are some things to consider before you begin this project:

**DO I HAVE TO DO ALL OF THIS?** The project plan, with all of its phases, transitions, and extensions, may be too much for any one class to do entirely. Read through the whole plan and select which pieces are most appropriate for your class. Make sure you have all the materials you need before beginning any part of the project. Also, feel free to change and adapt any aspect of the project to suit the interests and needs of your students.

If this is your first time doing a project like this, consider starting with only one phase. If you haven't used cooperative grouping before, you will want to ease into it slowly. You can learn more about cooperative learning<sup>1</sup> on the Internet.

**HOW CAN I DO AN INTERDISCIPLINARY PROJECT IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOL?** Experts agree that an interdisciplinary approach to learning can give students a richer understanding and increase their interest in a topic, as well as provide a context for learning. One of the better ways to do this is to have several teachers of different content areas collaborate in presenting this project. There are two ways to structure collaborative teaching:

- One teacher coordinates the project and uses other teachers as resources. (The math teacher helps with data collecting, the social studies teacher helps with geography and map making, etc.)
- Divide the project ahead of time, according to content. For example, one teacher manages the internship, while another takes charge of developing the news show.

In either case, one teacher should play the role of Executive Producer (or EP). This will be the person students report to throughout the project. No matter how you structure the project, collaboration takes careful planning and communication. You can use the KidBiz 3000 email system to keep in daily communication with colleagues if you can't arrange time to meet face-to-face.

There are a variety of reasons why collaborative teaching may not be possible in your school. You can still do this project, however. Start with determining the goals and objectives that you want to address. Then determine which aspects of the project will help you meet those learning goals. If you only have one period a day with students, time may be an important factor. Determine which parts of the project students can do outside of class time.



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<sup>1</sup> Visit <http://www.cde.ca.gov/iasa/cooplrng2.html> or see the Appendix for more information.

**WHAT IF MORE THAN ONE CLASS WANTS TO BE INVOLVED?** This is one project where you can definitely say “*The more, the merrier!*” Just as there are many competing news programs on television, multiple classes can produce their own shows. Encourage students to develop a strong creative tone for their program to separate it from the other classes. Take the time to preview different news programs and talk about what is good or not so good about each one.

When it comes time to do the culminating activity, limit each class to a specific time period. Each class can show their “pilot” episode to an audience of parents, administrators, and other classes playing the role of “potential advertisers.” Keep this day from becoming too competitive by reminding students that companies can advertise for more than one show. (McDonald’s, for example, advertises on almost every station and just about every show.)

**HOW LONG WILL THIS PROJECT TAKE?** The estimated time frame for this project is 5 - 6 weeks. Each section includes a suggested time frame, which you may have to adjust to meet the needs of your class and related circumstances. However, there are many variables that you should consider (such as the number of computers you have and how much time your class will devote to the project) before determining the actual time it will take your class to complete the project.

Once you begin this project, however, it is important to set up a time frame *and stick with it*. Planning when to present your show to an audience and giving students a real deadline will help keep them stay focused throughout this project.

**DO I HAVE TO DO ANYTHING SPECIAL ON THE COMPUTER?** There are many resources for planning with technology<sup>2</sup> on the Internet. The following questions will help decide how to organize this project:

- *How many computers do you have with Internet access?* Most of this project involves working with KidBiz3000. This means students must have access to the KidBiz 3000 website on a regular basis. If you have only a few computers with Internet access, consider rotating students. For example, you can have one student from each cooperative group assigned to the computer each day. That student can read any new articles, collect new email, and report back to the group.
- *Are the computers in your classroom or in a lab?* If the computers are in the classroom, students can use them on an “as needed” basis. This makes computer use a natural part of the process. If your computers are in a lab that you visit at certain times, make the most of this time. Students should know what they need to do *before* going to the lab. If you have computers both in a lab and in the classroom, students can use floppy disks or email to transfer files between the two sites.



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<sup>2</sup> See the Appendix for more resources, or visit:

<http://adulthood.about.com/education/adulthood/library/weekly/aa061001a.htm?rnk=r4&terms=Technology+In+The+Classroom>.

- *How much time (in your school day and how many weeks) do you have for this project? The more you integrate this project into your daily curriculum, the more time you can devote to the project. You can adapt the project to meet specific curriculum needs. Have the class help develop a calendar to keep the project on a specified time frame, and be consistent in keeping to that calendar. Finally, don't over plan. If this is your first time doing project-based learning, consider doing only part of this project. You will be much more successful if you start small. You can always add more aspects of the project later on.*
- *How comfortable are the students using computers? It can be very helpful if students have experience using computers and using the KidBiz 3000 website before starting this project. Be sure to read the section on *Integrating KidBiz 3000 with this Project*. You can use some of the lesson plans in the **School-to-Work** or **Budgeting** sections to give students additional experience in the context of an actual lesson.*

Here is a checklist you can use before introducing this project to your students:

- Any software students will need should be pre-installed into each computer.
- Bookmark any Internet links students will be using.
- You will be using the KidBiz3000 site daily with this project. You should consider making this website your browser's home page.
- Prepare for what to do if the technology doesn't work. (If the printer breaks, or your connection to the Internet goes down, you should have ready activities as substitutes.)

**WHAT PLANNING DO I HAVE TO DO WITH MY STUDENTS?** If you want the project to go smoothly, you will want to spend time planning the project with your students. Whenever possible, let students make choices about the project. This will give them a stronger sense of ownership and motivation. Be sure to review the rubrics and any other assessments you will be using ahead of time, so students know what is expected of them.

**IS ALL THIS WORK WORTH IT?** Absolutely, yes! Project based learning has many advantages. It appeals to a variety of learning styles, motivates students and builds necessary skills in real-world context. Most of all, it makes learning (and teaching) fun.



## **INTEGRATING KIDBIZ 3000 WITH THIS PROJECT**

This project relies heavily on students having access to KidBiz 3000. This section will help you plan how and when to use the resources on that website.

If your class is just starting to use KidBiz 3000, you should spend some time exploring and navigating the site before beginning the project. The two features that are most often used in this project are *News* and *Email*. Students should have some experience using these features. Ask students to read an article that interests them and send an email summary of what they read to the teacher or to other students. Students can complete the activities related to many of the articles and compare results with their classmates. Since new news articles are posted daily, students should check the KidBiz 3000 site on a regular basis.

**NAVIGATING THE KIDBIZ 3000 SITE FOR THIS PROJECT** There are many important resources on the KidBiz 3000 site. Throughout the project you will be directed towards these resources. Some of them are tutorials or “cheat sheets” for working with technology. Others are lessons or activities that teach skills students need to complete an activity. How you use these resources depends on your students’ needs and skill levels. To find these activities, look for this icon and the words “KidBiz 3000 can help”:



An explanation of what type of help is being offered will follow.

**You must be logged on to KidBiz 3000 before you can link to these resources.**

*Note: KidBiz 3000 is constantly updating and improving their site. This means more resources and services for you and your students. It may also mean a change in one or more of the web links listed in this plan. Be sure to confirm any web links you will use with students are still active. If you have any questions or problems, you can email KidBiz 3000<sup>3</sup> or call 1-877-803-6505.*

**EMAIL FROM THE EXECUTIVE PRODUCER** Surprise! You, the teacher, have been promoted. You are now the executive producer of a new broadcast news program for kids. You will be using email as your major form of communication with your students, now your employees. Throughout this project plan you will see information formatted as follows:



*This is a sample of an email message. When you see something that looks like this, you will send the information to your students in the form of an email. These emails are only suggestions. You can adapt them as necessary in order to meet the needs of your students.*

Whenever you see the email symbol in a pink box, it is an indication that you, as executive producer, should send an email to your students. Although you are given a suggested text for these emails, at times you may need to adapt the email to fit your particular class situation. You may also choose to send different emails to different students or groups to customize the project to meet individual needs. You can send emails as often as you like. Encourage your students to email each other as well.

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<sup>3</sup> You can use the KidBiz 3000 email system to email KidBiz for help, to answer questions, or to submit samples of students work.

# PROJECT OUTLINE

## ***Introduction: Getting Started***

Approximate Time Frame: 2 – 3 periods

### **EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

Students will demonstrate an understanding of the importance and features of news media as demonstrated in a graphic organizer.

Students will develop an understanding of what makes a news program successful by developing a rubric

### **LESSON PROCEDURES**

How you introduce **What's Going On!** sets the stage for the entire project. You want to engage your students in the simulation as well as provide them with a solid foundation of skills they will need as the project develops. You also want students to take ownership of the project by including them in the decision-making process. Choose one or both of the following activities to introduce this project to your students.

#### **Activity #1: Exploring Prior Knowledge**

Explore what your students already know about this topic. Students can respond to each of the following questions as a class or within their cooperative groups:

1. What is news?
2. What are different features and types of news?
3. Why is it important to be aware of the news?
4. From what sources do we get news, and how do these sources differ?

Ask students to come up with their own, related questions. Each cooperative group can create graphic organizers to represent their responses.



**KidBiz 3000 can help:** Did you know you could use *PowerPoint* to make simple graphic organizers? Go to **Insert** in the menu bar. Drag down to **Picture** and choose **Organization Chart** from the choices.

For more help on using *PowerPoint*, go to:

<http://216.240.129.170/technology/technology.php?type=3>

#### **Activity #2: News on Television**

Take advantage of a news medium with which students are already familiar: television news. Tape a television news program similar to the one they are going to create in this project, such as *Nick News with Linda Ellerbee*<sup>4</sup>. As students watch the program, ask them to take notes about the stories, as well as how those stories were delivered. After watching the show, ask students to write their responses:

- What did you like about the program?
- What didn't you like about the program?
- If you were the producer of this program, what would you do differently? What would you keep the same?

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<sup>4</sup> See the Nickelodeon website for program information and schedule:

[http://www.nick.com/all\\_nick/tv\\_shows/shows.jhtml?propertyId=239](http://www.nick.com/all_nick/tv_shows/shows.jhtml?propertyId=239)

Each cooperative group can use the responses to these questions to develop a rubric<sup>5</sup> to rate the show and/or its segments. Students will determine the criteria on which this type of show should be evaluated. They may need to see several episodes, or more than one program, in order to develop useful criteria.

**What is a rubric?** The word *rubric* generally means a set of criteria against which work is judged. A good rubric insures that the assessment of these types of tasks is both reliable and fair. A rubric can be something as simple as a checklist as long as it specifies the criteria for evaluating a performance task. It generally has objectives and performance indicators.

The **objectives** are the outcomes you are measuring. The objectives for a news program could be:

*Content* – Does the program include information that is accurate and useful?

*Organization* – Is the program organized in a way that makes sense to the viewer?

*Presentation* – Is the program visually interesting to watch?

The **performance indicators** refer to the scale against which each objective is evaluated. You can use a numerical scale (0 - 1 - 2 - 3) or a descriptive scale (*Not Yet - Getting There - Meeting the Standard - Above Standard*). You can have as few as 2 indicators (*yes - no*) or as many as required.

You may need to guide your students through the process of developing a rubric. Start simply with rubrics of familiar tasks or create "fun" rubrics for practice. Making a rubric for assessing the perfect pizza, for example, can help students internalize the concept of objectives (*Toppings - Taste - Temperature*) and performance indicators (*I'm not eating that! - Not bad for school lunch - Pretty good - Can I have another slice!*). The more involved students become in the assessment process, the better they understand what they are being asked to do. To see sample rubrics, or more information about creating rubrics, see the Appendix.



**KidBiz 3000 can help:** Give your rubric a professional look by making a table using *Microsoft Word*. For more help, visit:

[http://216.240.129.170/technology/technology.php?type=1&article\\_id=66](http://216.240.129.170/technology/technology.php?type=1&article_id=66)

<sup>5</sup> When working with lower grades, consider using a checklist, which is a simple version of a checklist.

## ***Internship: Learning the Business***

Approximate Time Frame: 2 – 3 weeks

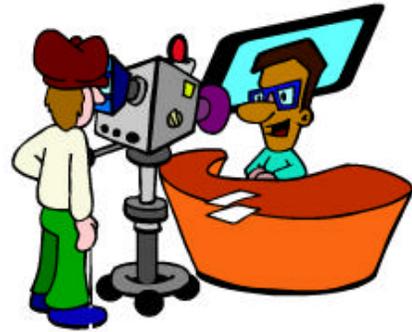
### **EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

Students will improve note-taking skills as demonstrated in their “news notebook.”

Students will organize, develop, and deliver a presentation intended to persuade an audience.

Students will understand how to collect and use statistical data by conducting their own survey and presenting the results in a chart or graph.

Students will create a résumé and cover letter using appropriate business format.



### **LESSON PROCEDURES**

Before they begin work on their own program students need to learn more about the business of news. Distribute the *Internship Letter* to the class. This letter will help set the tone for the project as well as provide students with the first assignment from the studio. Students are asked to start a “news notebook.” This is a good place for them to keep their notes and information about this project. Students can keep their notes electronically, using a program like *Microsoft Word*, or they can keep a traditional journal (such as a composition book or stenographer’s notebook) to keep their notes organized.

The *Internship Letter* asks students to submit their first report to the Executive Producer (or EP). The assignment asks them to choose a news story on which to report. They are to include how the story impacts kids their own age. This means their choice of a news article is very important. At this stage of the project, students may need guidance in choosing which news story to select.

Most television and newspaper news sources have their own field reporters; they also rely heavily on news sources such as *The Associated Press*<sup>6</sup> and *United Press International*<sup>7</sup>. Your class will model this process, using the KidBiz 3000 website as a resource for news information. Set up a schedule for when and how students will check the news (either daily or several times during the week. If you only have one or two computers, students may need to take turns getting the news and reporting back to their group. If you have access to more computers, or a computer lab, each student can get first-hand access to the news reports more frequently.

**Helpful Hint:** You may choose to supplement the information on the KidBiz 3000 website with information from television news programs, newspapers, and other Internet news sources, if this is appropriate for your students and your classroom. Remember, however, that these other sources of information are not designed for your students. They may include material that is not appropriate in content and/or comprehension level. If you choose to use this supplemental material, you must take a very active role when students access and utilize these sources.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.ap.org/>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.upi.com/>



**KidBiz 3000 can help:** Have students submit their reports to KidBiz 3000 for publication on their website. You can send materials to KidBiz 3000 through the email system.

### **Activity #1: Developing News Departments**

Although people tend to think of political, national, and international stories when they think of news, there are many other types of stories that get reported, such as sports, technology, health and medicine, or financial news. Different people find different types of news interesting or relevant. Students will take the information from the KidBiz 3000 site to use as a foundation for their own news program. They should examine the different news departments available. They can create a section for each department in their notebook and organize their notes accordingly. Send the following email assignment:



*There are many different types of news stories that get reported. On the KidBiz 3000 site these features fall into categories or departments, such as “In the Nation” or “Eye on People”. After examining each of these departments you will create a report that will:*

- 1. Determine what are the different news departments on the KidBiz 3000 site. You should include a description of what types of stories can be found in each department and examples of actual stories reported.*
- 2. Create a list of departments you would like to see on a television news show. You should include a description of what types of stories would be covered in each department and why that department would be interesting or relevant to other kids your age.*

*This report is due to me by \_\_\_\_\_.*

Many students do not know how to take useful notes. You may find that you need to model good note taking skills for students. Check students “news notebooks” regularly to make sure they are keeping track of the important information.

### **Activity #2: A New Idea For A News Show**

By now your students have a good understanding of the news business; it is time for them to develop their own television news program geared specifically for other kids their age. They will need to develop an idea and “pitch” the idea to studio executives. Your students will use the information in the preceding activity to develop their own news program. They will name their program, determine what segments the program should have, and persuade the studio to accept their ideas.

To introduce this activity, distribute the *Programming Letter* to your students. Students will have to give their show a title, decide on specific segments for the show, and explain why these segments will be included. Each cooperative group should be responsible for developing ideas for one or more segments of the show. However, for decisions that affect the whole show, the class needs to come to a consensus.

Most classes will find it easy to develop programming to *report* the news; it is important, however, to challenge your students to *interpret* what they report as well. Point out that there are many programs that report the news, and they should try to find a way to set their show apart from these other programs. Students may want to include editorials or opinions in their segments, interview other students about what is going on, review new movies (or books, music, games, etc.), or even make an active response to the stories they are covering (such as starting a letter writing campaign, raising money for a relief fund, etc.).



**KidBiz 3000 can help:** Students can create a *PowerPoint* slideshow to use with their presentation:  
[http://216.240.129.170/technology/technology.php?type=3&article\\_id=72](http://216.240.129.170/technology/technology.php?type=3&article_id=72)

*Math Extension:* Students can support their ideas using statistical evidence. Have students create surveys and poll other classes. They can represent the results of their surveys in their presentation, using charts and graphs.



**KidBiz 3000 can help:** Students can use *Microsoft Excel* to create charts and graphs. These can be exported to *PowerPoint*:  
[http://216.240.129.170/technology/technology.php?type=5&article\\_id=22](http://216.240.129.170/technology/technology.php?type=5&article_id=22)

### Activity #3: Careers in News Broadcasting?

Ask your students about jobs in news and almost everyone will be able to answer “reporter” or even “anchor person”. However there are many other jobs related to producing a news show. Send the following email assignment:



*Congratulations on a great presentation. I am confident the studio plans to go ahead with your show idea. If that is the case, I definitely would like your whole team to work on the show.*

*There are many different careers related to news broadcasting. Each career requires different skills. Create a list of possible careers related to your news show. Describe the skills that are necessary for a person to be successful in each career you include. Finally, decide which career would best suit you? Submit a résumé and a cover letter applying for that position.*



**KidBiz 3000 can help:** Get students prepared to think about different types of jobs and the skills related to those jobs. Look at the **School-to-Work** section of the KidBiz 3000 website: <http://www.mykidbiz.com/stw/prep.htm>  
Complete the following assignments prior to doing this activity: *Finding the right job* (Chapter 4), *Writing a cover letter* (Chapter 7), *Understanding job qualifications* (Chapter 8), and *Creating a résumé* (Chapters 9, 10, 11, and 12).

Distribute the *Careers in News Broadcasting* handout<sup>8</sup> to students to help them get started on this assignment. You can use these careers as guidelines for defining and dividing work in the cooperative groups.



There are many ways to divide the work within each group. Some possible job titles include:

- Director - to take leadership of the group; ensure that everyone is doing his or her job
- Agent - to encourage participation among the members
- On Air Talent - students who will perform as anchors, hosts, field reporters, etc.
- Writers - to write the segments
- Camera Operators - to film the segments
- Researcher and/or Fact checker - to make sure all the information is accurate.
- Secretary - to keep minutes of the groups meetings
- Production Assistant – to keep track of all the materials for the group

Students may apply for any career they want. However, when you assign roles within the group you may choose something other than the job for which they applied. You may also assign a student more than one job, and there can be more than one student assigned to some jobs (like writer, researcher, or on-air talent). You should send each student an email acceptance letter that specifies the job (or jobs) they will be assigned. Use and/or adapt the following as appropriate:



Thank you for applying for the position of ( insert job title ). We were very impressed by your résumé and are delighted to offer you a position here at WKTV. Because we are very understaffed, all our employees work more than one job. We would like you to accept the following positions: ( insert additional job titles ). You will begin immediately.



Thank you for applying for the position of ( insert job title ). We were very impressed by your résumé. Although we can't offer you the position for which you applied, we would like to have you join our staff as: ( insert additional job titles ). You will begin immediately.

## CONCLUSION

Distribute the *Production Letter* after each of the activities has been completed. This will help transition students to the next phase of the project. There is also a transitional activity to help students develop the skills they need in the next phase.

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<sup>8</sup> This, and other handouts, can be found in the Appendix.

## **TRANSITION TO “IN THE STUDIO”**

### **EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

Students will create a storyboard to help organize information and ideas in a meaningful way.

#### **Learning to Storyboard:**

In the next phase of the project, students will begin working on a storyboard for their show. However, your students may not know how to develop a storyboard or even what one is. This activity will help students learn the basics of storyboarding.

It is easier to create a storyboard for a finished product. Ask your students to create a storyboard based on a short piece of video, such as a television commercial. Each group can have its own commercial, or choose one commercial for the whole class<sup>9</sup>.

A storyboard can take many different formats. The format you develop for this practice activity will be used for the actual storyboard students will create in the next phase of the project. The *Production Letter* does not designate how much detail the storyboard must include so that you can make this determination.

Use the following checklist to help make decisions about what format you want the storyboard to take:

- Do you want the storyboard to be done on the computer or by hand? Is either format acceptable?
- Are you going to create a template for students to use? (Many teachers create a template on the computer and students use Post-It notes to write information. This makes it very easy to make changes as the project progresses.)
- Visuals: Should students sketch what the “shot” will look like, or should they describe the shot in a few short sentences?
- Narration: Do you want students to write out a detailed script or simply summarize what will be said?
- What other information do you want included? Will you include music, special effects, still and video pictures, animation, etc? Will there be captions, maps, charts, interviews, “sound bites” etc?

### **INTERNET RESOURCES**

- Storyboard elements: <http://www.indezine.com/ideas/storybrd.html#elements>
- Creativity Lab: [http://www.creativitylab.com/jump\\_start/storyboardfrm.htm](http://www.creativitylab.com/jump_start/storyboardfrm.htm)
- How to make a storyboard: <http://www.st-philiphoward.w-sussex.sch.uk/reintranet/How%20to%20files%20for%20web/How%20to%20make%20a%20storyboard.htm>
- All about storyboarding: <http://w3.tvi.cc.nm.us/~jvelez/MMS170/storyboard/storyboarding.htm#whatisastoryboard>

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<sup>9</sup> If you think it is appropriate, consider assigning this activity for homework. This can save class time and allow each student to choose his or her own commercial.

## ***In The Studio: Developing Your News Show***

### **EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

Students will research news stories and use their research to plan, write, and produce a segment of a news show<sup>10</sup>.

Students will work cooperatively to make decisions and share responsibility.

Students will establish an advertising budget based on available data and represent their budget in a mathematically accurate report.

Students will demonstrate an understanding of “open-ended” questions.

Students will write a persuasive letter using standard business format.

Students will summarize their writing into main ideas and present their summaries on a class web page.

### **LESSON PROCEDURES**

Your students have been hired, and the show’s concept has been reviewed and accepted. It is now time for your class to begin working on designing and producing the show. The *Production Letter* asks students to begin working on their storyboard. Using the information from their presentation to the studio executives, they can begin doing so. Your students should understand that the storyboard is like a “blueprint” of what will happen in the show. As they work on developing the show, there may be changes in their plan. Some changes may be caused by “late breaking news” or may be the result of new information coming to light. Other changes may be creative as students come up with new ideas on how they want to present their information. They will have to update their storyboard accordingly.

This is a good time to determine *how* you will present your News Show. The format you choose should be based on a consideration of how much time you have, the skills and needs of your students, and how much access to technology your class has. Many teachers include students in making this determination. Your students will have many creative ideas. If these ideas are feasible, you should consider incorporating them.



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<sup>10</sup> You should determine a time frame for each segment. Generally, grades 4-5 should be less than five minutes per segment. Grades 6-8 should be between five and seven minutes per segment.

The list below contains several suggestions. There are positives and negatives for each concept. You may choose one concept, a combination of several concepts, or come up with your own idea.

Concept	Materials Required	Pros	Cons
Video Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Video camera</li> <li>▪ Editing system or computer with video editing capability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Has a very professional look</li> <li>▪ You can re-shoot scenes and/or edit until they are perfect</li> <li>▪ Can use real settings and/or “blue-screens” instead of building sets.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Requires a lot of time/skill for editing.</li> <li>▪ Expensive equipment</li> </ul>
Live Production <i>(Like a play)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A stage</li> <li>▪ Sets</li> <li>▪ Costumes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inexpensive</li> <li>▪ Students generally have experience and are comfortable with this type of production</li> <li>▪</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Requires a lot of time to practice and rehearse.</li> <li>▪ When performing live you only get one shot to “get it right.”</li> </ul>
Multimedia Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Computer</li> <li>▪ Presentation software</li> <li>▪ Projector and screen or television monitor.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Requires the same technology and skills used in the internship (no <i>additional</i> costs).</li> <li>▪ Students can use real sounds, videos, and pictures from the Internet.</li> <li>▪ Students can record their narration directly into the computer and don’t need to memorize anything.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Requires a lot time on the computers (in addition to researching news stories).</li> <li>▪ Students don’t get the opportunity to act or perform.</li> <li>▪ Less “realistic” than authentic productions.</li> </ul>

**Activity #1: Budgeting your television show**

Distribute the *Budget Letter* to your students. This letter asks student to create an advertising budget for their program. They will present their budget in a report. You can encourage students to justify their report by explaining why they made certain decisions. Students should be able to explain how they came up with various budget figures. To increase the difficulty on this assignment, require that the budget must spend within \$100 or less of the budgeted amount.

To expand this activity, students can choose specific programs and magazines for their advertisements and specific places for their billboards. They can sketch designs for their print ads or storyboard their television commercial.



**KidBiz 3000 can help:** Students can use *Microsoft Excel* to create their budget: [http://216.240.129.170/technology/technology.php?type=5&article\\_id=23](http://216.240.129.170/technology/technology.php?type=5&article_id=23)

### **Activity #2: Guest Appearances**

Send the following email assignment:



*Many news programs interview celebrities, experts, politicians, and athletes. These interviews, while not necessarily news, are a good way to attract a larger audience. WKTV would like your group to choose one person to invite and interview for your segment. This person must somehow relate to your topic. As a group, decide whom you will be inviting. Write a letter to this individual asking him or her to consent to the interview. Also, write up a list of sample “open-ended” questions you would like to ask this celebrity.*

In order for students to complete this assignment, they must know how to write a business letter and understand the difference between “open-ended” and “closed” questioning. Encourage students to be creative with their interview choices. Remind them that the goal of these celebrity guests is to increase viewers so the person should be someone in whom other kids are interested.



**KidBiz 3000 can help:** For help learning how to write a professional business letter, check out: [http://www.mykidbiz.com/stw/kid/beg/bs\\_act.htm](http://www.mykidbiz.com/stw/kid/beg/bs_act.htm)

### **Activity #3: Just Like TV Guide**

Many shows have their own website for viewers. Students can create a web page for their show. This web page can include a general overview of the show, information about the cast<sup>11</sup>, and descriptions of each segment for the show. The descriptions should be a “teaser” to encourage viewers to watch the show.



*As part of our effort to advertise this program, WKTV would like to post a web page. The web page should highlight each segment and entice the audience to watch. Each group needs to design a section of this web page that represents its own segment. Your design should include the title of your department, the title for this episode’s segment, a summary or description of the segment. It can also include a picture, graphic, map, or chart that is related to your topic. Remember to keep your summary brief. If you give away all the information on the website, no one will have a reason to watch the show!*

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<sup>11</sup> Most schools and districts have strict policies about publishing students names, pictures, and/or work on the Internet. Before posting any information make sure you understand and are complying with your district’s policies.

If you continue this project for multiple shows, you can keep the look and feel of your first web page and simply replace the content information for upcoming shows. If you only plan to present one episode of your program, take pictures or short movies of the actual program and load these onto your website at a later date.

**Helpful Hint:** If you don't have a website design application, you can create a web page from a simple document in **Microsoft Word**. To do this, create your document. Go to *File* on the menu bar and drag down to *Save as Web Page*.

## INTEGRATING NEWS INTO YOUR CURRICULUM

### Content Specific Menu:

On the following pages you will find a menu of sample content ideas and related activities. While students are developing their news segments, you can use these activities to challenge them to think deeper about the news and its impact on society. You may also use these activities to relate current news events to your curriculum. *Do not try to do all of these activities!* You may also develop your own activity ideas.



**Helpful Hint:** Most of the activities below were designed to work with a general type of news story that commonly reoccurs in the news. (For example, you can usually find a news story about a medical breakthrough or one about civil rights.) However, there is no guarantee that that type story will be available on a particular day. To guarantee your students can fulfill the assignment,

- Make sure that an appropriate story is available
- Give students enough time so that a story becomes available

or

- Allow students to respond using past articles they have recorded in their notebooks.

*Note: Some activities require students to use outside resources.*

You may want to incorporate some of the ideas and/or activities into the news program. After completing the activity, students may use the information in one of their news segments, create a segment specifically for that information, or present the information in the form of a television commercial or public awareness ad.

Related Content	Suggested Questions and Ideas	Suggested Activities
Social Studies – focus on overarching issues such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free speech and social responsibility</li> <li>• Civil rights</li> <li>• Propaganda and biased reporting</li> <li>• The legal system in the US</li> </ul>	What is the connection between local government and the needs and interests of their community?	Write a letter to a local politician asking for a new law or a change in a law based on a recent event.
	Compare and contrast two or more government systems.	Make a Venn diagram of similarities and differences between two democratic governments.
	Examine the intersection between an individual's right to privacy versus the public's right to know.	Hold a debate that examines both sides of a story related to this issue.
	Should athletes and entertainers be role models?	Make a presentation to an athletic team about the importance of being a <i>good</i> role model for kids. Use examples of athletes that disappoint their fans by participating in dangerous and/or illegal behavior.
	Examine attitudes and practices regarding energy use and the current political debate on energy policy.	Make a poster promoting energy conservation.
	Compare and contrast the civil rights movement in the past with how these issues are played out today.	Make a television commercial informing the public about their civil rights.
	Examine changes in legislation of conservation of wildlife and resources.	Make a television commercial to raise money for wildlife conservation.
	Compare news reporting from different countries around the world.	Make a graphic organizer that demonstrates how a single story is reported differently in different countries.
How has a growing awareness of terrorism impacted day-to-day activities?	Make a brochure informing kids about this issue.	



Related Content	Suggested Questions and Ideas	Suggested Activities
Science – focus on overarching issues such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energy and conservation</li> <li>• Current health issues and concerns</li> <li>• New technologies</li> </ul>	How does an increased scientific understanding of the natural world help to develop more sophisticated technologies?	Make a presentation to your state government to persuade them to spend more money on scientific research.
	Identify some of Earth’s most serious environmental problems and what causes them. What current legislation and regulations are designed to address these problems?	Make a brochure to raise public awareness regarding three serious environmental problems and advocating possible solutions.
	How does new technology help us decrease the negative impact of serious weather situations (like hurricanes, tornadoes, etc.)	Write a newspaper article that features one or more of these new technologies and how it has helped save lives.
	Investigate current and recent disease epidemics (such as AIDS, anthrax, cancer, etc.).	Make a television commercial to raise public awareness about a specific disease.
	Explore health risks specifically related to sports and athletes.	Write an article for a sports magazine about athletes and injuries.
	Explore new and/or experimental treatments of serious health issues.	Hold a debate on the pros and cons of testing new drugs on humans (or on animals).
	What effect does advances in technology have on education?	Write a letter to your principal to persuade him or her to spend more money on technology for your school.
Math – focus on overarching issues such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currency and money</li> <li>• How statistical data is used</li> </ul>	What is the national debt (or social security, or taxes, etc.), and what impact does this have on our economic situation?	Make a public service announcement informing people about this issue.
	Investigate the currencies used by different countries and the current market exchange rates.	As a reporter you need to travel to 10 different countries. The station will give you \$100 (US) per day for expenses. You will be gone 25 days. Create a budget of how much of each currency you will need.
	Explore how math is used to report and analyze sport scores and statistics.	Create a brochure explaining how to interpret sport scores in the newspaper. (Focus on one major league sport).
	Analyze and graph the results of a nationwide poll.	Conduct a related poll in your own community and compare the results in a chart.
	Explore mathematical applications of the stock market.	Keep track of the stock prices of five companies over a four-week period and graph the results. Use that graph to predict stock fluctuation for the next four weeks.

## ***On The Air: Producing Your Show***

### **EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

- Students will organize an event to demonstrate learning.
- Students will produce and present their finished news program.

### **LESSON PROCEDURES**

This is what your students have been working towards so diligently: Producing their own news show. Whether your news program is a video production, a live production, a multimedia production, or a combination of these formats, you should make this a time to celebrate student achievement. This is one of the more important aspects of the project and will give your students a genuine opportunity to share their accomplishments.

It is important to invite people outside your classroom, such as parents, administrators, and other classes to view the final product. Try to involve students in planning this day as much as possible. Students should feel this is their day!

As a class, create a calendar or schedule outlining the tasks that need to be done and when they need to be done. Each student should have some responsibility towards making this event happen. These responsibilities could include:

- Create an invitation for the premiere of the pilot.
- Create a “press release” for the show’s pilot episode.
- Create the look of a “real” premiere in the auditorium. Have students pretend to be “paparazzi” and take lots of pictures. Use red bulletin board paper to make a “red carpet.”
- Plan and prepare refreshments for the audience.
- Create a form or survey asking the audience to review the pilot episode. (See ***Engaging the Audience*** below for more information)
- Write memos or letters informing other teachers, administrators, and custodial staff of any schedule or room changes caused by the event.

**Helpful Hint:** This can be the culmination of your project, or it could be just the beginning. The news is constantly changing, and your students can continue to report the news throughout the year. You can use the work done so far as a template. Students can continue to track the news. They can use the same format for their storyboard, replacing the content as appropriate. Each time they produce a new show the process will become easier and easier. You may want to rotate roles within the groups or reassign departments so that everyone gets a chance to do everything.

**Engaging the audience:** You can invite your audience into the simulation by asking them to role-play. Students can create surveys asking for audience response. They can use the rubrics created in the introduction as a basis for their survey. Some possible roles for audience participation are:

- The audience could take the role of television critics and rate the program.
- The audience could play the role of potential advertisers and decide how much of their advertising budget they would be to commit to this program.
- The audience members could play the role of television network executives and decide how many more episodes of the program they want to produce.

# APPENDIX

## ***Additional Internet Resources:***

### **ON COOPERATIVE LEARNING:**

- An Overview of Cooperative Learning: <http://www.clcrc.com/pages/overviewpaper.html>
- Authentic Learning: <http://tiger.coe.missouri.edu/~vlib/Joan's.stuff/Joan's.Page.html>
- What is Cooperative Learning: <http://www.clcrc.com/pages/cl.html>
- The Jigsaw Classroom: <http://www.jigsaw.org/>

### **ON THE TEACHING IN THE CONSTRUCTIVIST CLASSROOM:**

- Assessment in the Constructivist Classroom: <http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/methods/assment/as7const.htm>
- Constructivist Uses of Technology: <http://www.esc20.net/techserv/workshops/plan/consttech.html>
- Constructivist Classrooms: <http://inst.cl.uh.edu/inst5931/Constructivist.html>
- The Constructivist Classroom: <http://204.98.1.2/isu/itech/research/theclassroom.html>

### **ON INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY INTO THE CURRICULUM:**

- Computers in the Classroom: <http://www.lausd.k12.ca.us/lausd/resources/integration/>
- Connecting Student Learning with Technology: <http://www.sedl.org/pubs/tec26/classtech.html>

### **ON CREATING AND USING RUBRICS:**

- Create Rubrics for Project Based Learning with RubiStar: <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/>
- Rubric Generator: [http://www.teach-nology.com/web\\_tools/rubrics/](http://www.teach-nology.com/web_tools/rubrics/)
- Rubrics from the "Staff Room": <http://www.odyssey.on.ca/%7Eelaine.coxon/rubrics.htm>
- Kathy Schrock: Assessment and Rubric Information: <http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/assess.html>



**SAMPLE RUBRIC FOR MULTIMEDIA PRESENTATION: (FILL IN \_\_\_S AS APPROPRIATE.)**

	1 Not Yet	2 Getting There	3 Meeting the Standard	4 Above Standard
Topic and Content	Includes little essential information to support argument. Includes no sense of audience and purpose. Includes fewer than ___ pages.	Includes some essential information to support argument. Includes little sense of audience and purpose. Includes fewer than ___ pages.	Includes essential information to support argument. Includes some sense of audience and purpose. Includes at least ___ pages.	Covers the topic completely and in depth. Includes an understanding of audience and purpose.. Includes at least ___ pages.
Mechanics	Includes more than ___ errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc.	Includes between ___ and ___ errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc.	Includes fewer than ___ errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc.	Grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization are correct. No errors in text.
Cooperative Group Work	Cannot work with others in most situations. Cannot share decisions or responsibilities.	Works with others but has difficulty sharing decisions and responsibilities.	Works well with others. Takes part in most decisions and contributes a fair share to group.	Works well with others. Assumes a clear role and related responsibilities. Motivates others to do their best.
Oral Presentation	Has great difficulty communicating ideas. Uses poor voice projections. Shows little preparation or incomplete work.	Has some difficulty communicating ideas due to one or more of the following: voice projection, lack of preparation, or incomplete work.	Communicates ideas with proper voice projection. Adequate preparation and delivery apparent.	Communicates ideas with enthusiasm, proper voice, projection, appropriate language, and clear delivery. Is able to get audience enthusiastic or interested in topic.
Scale	<b>4-6</b>	<b>7-10</b>	<b>11-14</b>	<b>15-16</b>

## ***Careers In News Broadcasting:***

When creating your cooperative groups, you may want to take advantage of “real-world” television news careers. Here are some general descriptions for some of the many careers related to producing a television news program. You should provide this list to students to help them with their research:



**THE EXECUTIVE PRODUCER (EP)** is in charge of everything and everyone in the newsroom. The EP reports directly to the station owner and/or manager.

**THE NEWS DIRECTOR** is in charge of the day to day operations of the news-room. The news director hires and supervises the staff and reports directly to the EP.

**THE ASSIGNMENT EDITOR** is responsible for generating story ideas and monitoring field reporters and photographers to make sure the stories are covered in a comprehensive manner.

**THE NEWS ANALYST** is also called a *commentator*. The news analyst presents news stories and interprets them, discussing how they may affect the nation or the show’s viewers.

**THE NEWS ANCHOR** presents news stories and introduces in-depth videotaped news or live transmissions from “on-the-scene” reporters.

**THE REPORTER** investigates, reports, and/or edits news stories. The report uses a variety of sources to find out news stories. *Note: Anchors often also do reporting, and reporters may do occasional anchoring. There is not a clear-cut line between these two jobs.*

**THE SPORTS EDITOR** is a newscaster who specializes in reporting and analyzing news related to sports. Sportscasters select, write, and deliver the sports news, which may include interviews with sports personalities and coverage of games played.

**THE WEATHERCASTERS** are also called weather reporters or meteorologists. Weathercasters report and forecast weather conditions. They may also do in-depth reporting of situations caused by severe weather conditions, such as hurricanes or floods.

**THE NEWS WRITER** takes information from the field reporter and writes it into copy for the anchor to read on-air. *Note: Many anchors prefer to write their own news.*

**THE PHOTOGRAPHER AND/OR VIDEOGRAPHER** travels with the reporter to take still and/or video pictures of the stories for use on the news program.

**THE MEDIA COORDINATOR** is responsible for the advertising and marketing of a television program, including publicity, commercials, website, etc.

**THE TAPE EDITOR** takes the footage shot in the field and edits it for use in the news program to fulfill content and/or time requirements.

**THE RESEARCH ASSISTANT** uses a variety of sources and tools to check facts for accuracy.

**THE PRODUCTION ASSISTANT** is the assistant to the News Director. He/she runs errands, keeps time schedules, sends out memos and letters, and generally fulfills any task that needs to be done.

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

Your application to apprentice at our television station has been approved. Welcome to WKTV, Channel 1.

Part of being an apprentice at a television station is to learn all aspects of the business. Over the next few weeks you will be involved in activities that will help you learn all about the news.

You will report directly to your executive producer, or EP as we call it. Your EP will send you assignments using our email system, so it is important to check your email regularly. It is also *extremely* important to stay informed. You should check our news source (<http://kidbiz3000.com>) frequently. You should have a notebook to help keep track of important news throughout your internship.

Your first assignment is to find a news story that interests you, and report on it. I want your report to include the facts in your own words. Remember to answer the following questions: *Who? What? Why? Where?* and *When?* I also want you to put this news story in perspective by explaining what impact it might have on kids your age.

You should submit your report to your EP by \_\_\_\_\_. It is important that everything you submit be edited for spelling, grammar and punctuation.

I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



Heloise Hinklehoffer  
President  
WKTV, Channel 1



"Your All News Source"

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

I have been reviewing your work and am very much impressed. My associates and I have been considering developing a news program specifically produced by and for kids. I think you are just the group of kids to do it.

It can cost quite a lot of money to produce a new show, so I need to be sure that my money will be well spent. We need to make sure a lot of kids will want to watch the show. Since you know what kids like, please come up with a plan for this show and present your plan to my board of directors.

Your plan should include the following:

- A title for your show
- A description of each of the segments of the show.
- An overview of the types of stories that will be included in each of these segments.
- An explanation of why these segments and types of stories will be interesting to kids. (Why will kids want to watch this show?)

If you need any assistance with this presentation, you should email your EP. Our next meeting will be on \_\_\_\_\_, so I need you to be ready to present by that date.

I look forward to hearing all of your ideas.

Sincerely,



Heloise Hinklehoffer  
President  
WKTV, Channel 1



"Your All News Source"

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

Congratulations on developing a wonderful idea for a show. We can't wait to begin production on this television program. I have reviewed your resumé and cover letter and have decided to hire you. Welcome to WKTV.

Your executive producer will give you all the details you need about your new job. There are so many things that need to be done before the first show. Your executive producer will send you emails to guide you through this process. You will have to respond to each memo as quickly as possible.

The first thing I need you to do is to plan out your segment of the show. You must start to decide the story (or stories) on which your segment will focus, and how those stories will be portrayed. You will need to create a storyboard to show your plan. A storyboard breaks down your segment into individual scenes that are listed in sequential order. Think of it as a timeline for your show. The more detail you add to your storyboard, the better your segment will flow.

Your storyboard should include:

- What you will see in each scene of your segment. (Visuals)
- What each person will say in each scene. (Narration)
- How long each scene will last. Remember, we have to keep our program on a time schedule, so you must limit your segment to \_\_\_\_\_ minutes.

Our airdate is \_\_\_\_\_, which doesn't give us a lot of time. I know that you will work very hard to make this the best show. I look forward to seeing your work.

Sincerely,



Heloise Hinklehoffer  
President  
WKTV, Channel 1



"Your All News Source"

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

I know you are working very hard on developing your news program, but a very important issue has come up that requires your immediate attention. The station feels that it is very important to promote your show so that we get a big audience. We would like to have television commercials, billboards, and magazine ads. However, we just don't seem to have enough money to do everything.

Since it is your show, we would like you to have some input on how this advertising budget is set. Your advertising budget is \$ 230,000.00. This may seem like a lot of money, but it will go very quickly. Use the chart below to figure out how to get the most for our money.

<b>Television</b>	<b>Cost per 30 seconds</b>	
Prime-Time Network Program	\$ 130,000	
Prime-Time cable Program	\$ 60,500	
Afternoon Network Program	\$ 13,255	
Afternoon Cable Program	\$ 3,075	
<b>Billboard</b>	<b>Cost per sheet (6' x 12')</b>	
Major Highway	\$ 515	
Local Road	\$ 321	
Mass Transit (subway or rail road station)	\$ 449	
<b>Magazine Ad</b>	<b>Full Color</b>	<b>Black and White</b>
1/2 page ad	\$ 135	\$ 645
Full page ad	\$ 400	\$ 1,599
Full page pull out section	Not available	\$4,215

Using this information, create a budget report and submit it to my office no later than \_\_\_\_\_. Your report must include your reasons as to why the budget should be spent this way.

Thank you for taking care of this very important matter.

Sincerely,



Heloise Hinklehoffer  
President  
WKTV, Channel 1



**"Your All News Source"**

**WKTV** CHANNEL 1

"YOUR ALL NEWS SOURCE"



"Your All News Source"