



Welcome to the News

News is happening all the time. There are events taking place, issues being discussed and trends developing all around us. How do we get this information? How can we present it to the public?



A journalist is someone who:

- ◆ collects,
- ◆ verifies,
- ◆ produces and
- ◆ distributes information, thereby making it news!

A journalist who reports on environmental issues is called an environmental journalist.

A GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALIST:

communicates information that it is easily understood

understands current environmental issues

knows historical environmental events

understands scientific terms



knows the work of environmental organisations

keeps up to date with environmental policies



Environmental journalists report stories within an ecological package. Sometimes the issues are not clear or may be controversial. It is important that journalists do not humanise, over-simplify issues or only present one side of a story. They need to find a balance when reporting on issues. Reporting on our natural environment and the effect of development is one of the main jobs of an environmental journalist.

There are **six important questions** that all journalists need to address when reporting:

WHO

HOW

WHAT

WHY

WHERE

WHEN

As a journalist it's best to be prepared, **ALL** the time!
News waits for no man... or woman!



Media Presentations and Platforms



WHAT TYPE OF NEWS DOES AN ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALIST PRODUCE?

1. Hard news

A story of an incident that has happened **now**, good or bad, which is of importance to society. For example: A rhino has been poached, the government passes a new environmental law.

2. Feature story/documentary

This is an in-depth look at a story subject.

For example: Documentaries are shown on television such as the film **The Vanishing Kings** about desert-adapted lions.

3. Editorial/opinion

This is a newspaper article or talk show that expresses a journalist's opinion. For example: National newspapers have editorial and opinion pages where people express their views and opinions on issues.



Now that you have news, you need to distribute it. Communication channels where news is distributed are called media. There are different types of media platforms, including:

Print media



Newspapers, magazines, photographs and blogs

Audio media



Radio, podcasts, music, songs

Audio-visual media



Television, video clips, films, music videos



REPORT THAT INFO

When you are presenting information to the public (either written, visual or just spoken) remember to:

- ♣ Attract people's attention
- ♣ Be fun
- ♣ Speak loud and clear
- ♣ Address your audience
- ♣ Make your point - with a storyline that is understandable.

In today's world of fast changing technology, all these different media platforms can be found in one place-online! The internet has also allowed for social media platforms to go viral.



But be careful of the internet, not everything is true, not every one online has good intentions. Some sites are not safe!

Have your pencil ready to take notes...



Observation is Key



Check out the picture on the right!
What is it?

See the answer on pg 11.



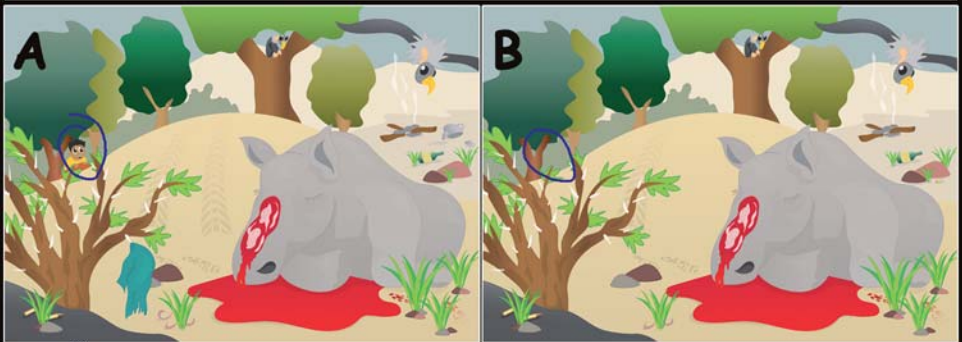
Observation is a key skill in journalism. People perceive what they see and hear differently. A journalist's job is to ensure that this does not cloud their judgement on how they see or understand things. This is key to spreading the right news.



ZOOM IN... test your observation skills

Rhinos are an endangered animal, but unfortunately rhino poaching is on the increase. You are a journalist at the scene of a recently poached rhino. Test your observation skills to see if you know what happened.

Directions: Find as many differences in the two pictures below as you can and circle them. One has been done for you.



ZOOM OUT... what did you find?

Photo A tells a story different from photo B.

Photo A tells a story of a rhino that was brutally poached for its horn. The poacher came in with a car and left the scene of the crime in the opposite direction. Photo B tells a story of a rhino that was brutally poached for its horn as well. The single track suggests that the poacher left the scene on a motorcycle.

Good journalists ensure that they find and document as much evidence as possible at a scene, so that they can report accurate information.

What story can you tell from observing these two photos?



...in your notebook!



Ask ALL the Sources



Remember to ask all the questions!

HOW

WHO

WHEN

WHY

WHAT

WHERE

A good journalist keeps an open mind, asks the right questions and checks all facts by asking all potential sources. It's a journalist's job to ensure that the information being presented to the public is not biased or one-sided.



ZOOM IN... find the right sources

The Zambezi Region has a high density of human and elephant populations. These elephants are not only in parks. You are a journalist talking to people living in the area after an elephant recently trampled a crop field.

Directions: Read the opinions of different people about the incident. Draw a line to match the right answer to the person who said it.



Elephants should be protected. If your property is damaged by wild animals, government should compensate. Besides we need them for tourism.



There are many elephants, but also very many hungry people. It is the elephants' fault and they should be eliminated.



Properties should be properly fenced off and wild animals will not force their way in. Farmers should work through conservancies to get assistance.



ZOOM OUT... who do you believe?

Before a journalist publishes this story about human-wildlife conflict in Zambezi, he/she needs to check all of his/her facts, by going to all different sources. When this story is reported, it should include information from all of the relevant stakeholders. The journalist needs to verify all the gathered information and then needs to find a balance when reporting.

Who else could be a good source of information?

Recordings help you to check your memory...



Make it Eye-catching News

A headline is the gateway to your content. It convinces people to walk through the "gate" or pass it by. As a journalist you want to create a story that is eye-catching to get people's attention right away. But remember your journalistic ethics! Make sure your headline is not misleading the audience.

A great headline and good photo make the start to a great story.



ZOOM IN... write a great headline

BREAKING NEWS

Directions: Below are different headlines. Two of each headline are referring to the same news story. Circle which news story you prefer to know more about by just looking at the headlines.

The elephant herd – out of hunger – entered the green, lush garden...

The beast broke into the field

It's easy being green-
Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Government forces residents
to recycle

It's only good until the last drop,
then what?

Stop wasting water because
water is life

Electricity prices go up again, so does
the pollution that comes with it

Less pollution is the best solution



ZOOM OUT... what would you write?

Which storylines did you choose? In most cases we choose the headlines that are 'eye-catching', even if they may be exaggerated to seem more interesting. An environmental journalist should produce interesting articles without sensationalising the information. Look at the headlines again and suggest some of your own that are eye-catching but not misleading:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



Get visual evidence ... don't forget your camera!



Match the Target Audience



Every age group has different perspectives and interests. Environmental news, however, is important for everyone. A journalist can present the same news story using different media types and with a different angle to the story. Recent graduates may be reading the newspapers looking for a job, while their parents will read the news to keep themselves updated with current events.



ZOOM IN... same event, different audience

Every year energy prices go up and the demand for electricity is increasing. At a recent public meeting, local residents were informed why prices were going up and how to reduce household bills.

Directions: Read the two articles. Which one did you choose to read first?

Electricity prices go up: save energy

The energy council at a recent meeting urged residents to save electricity. This was announced as residents complained about high electricity prices. The council explained how it is important to save energy. After a lengthy discussion the residents were satisfied to learn that the use of alternative energy sources, such as solar energy, will be supported through loan schemes. In addition residents can apply to get free energy-efficient light bulbs in exchange for incandescent bulbs.

Youth vocal at energy meeting

Yesterday's energy meeting was attended by many youths that live with their grandparents due to high unemployment. As an increase in energy prices was announced, the youth started protesting. Before chaos broke out, a youth group leader from the south proposed that young people stop complaining and take action by becoming entrepreneurs in renewable energy products. A new loan scheme for such renewable industry was announced. This business venture would help them earn an income and enable them to become independent.



ZOOM OUT... what media type would you use

Both articles are about the same energy meeting; however, they focused on different aspects of the event. If you were the energy council, what type of media would you use to reach the target audience?

Directions: Circle the media type you prefer to get your news.



And most importantly keep your journalistic ethics!



Take Action: Start a Media Club



Do you have a school newspaper, website or a social media page for your school? These are platforms where learners and teachers can share information. Contributions could consist of written articles, or just photos, videos or podcasts. Make sure to report on environmental news too!

Getting started:

- 1) Get several interested people together.
- 2) Get an adult to be the club's supervisor and mentor.
- 3) Decide on the purpose of the media club.
 - ⇒ What is the club's aim?
 - ⇒ Who is the target audience?
 - ⇒ What topics will be covered?
- 4) What type of media platform(s) will the club use?
- 5) Who will be responsible for what?
- 6) Does the club have the support of the school?

School newspaper, radio show, podcasts, films and videos...

These are all great ways to:

- keep learners and parents informed about school activities and events;
- empower learners;
- share environmental information with the school and local community;
- develop media skills such as writing, reading and presenting information in an understandable way.

It is possible with no or little money to produce media. Here are some fun ways to get started:

- Work with school management and broadcast short messages using the school's loud speaker system. For example, a 2-minute "radio show" about why littering is bad.
- Write a "newspaper" using A4 paper and hang it on a bulletin board for all to read.
- Use a smartphone with video and make a short clip. If your school has multimedia equipment it can be edited and broadcast. Nowadays there is a lot of free software available to edit your footage into a good video.

Have you heard?

Here are some websites where Namibian kids are already active in journalism.

www.ecokidsnam.com
www.mojogreen.org
www.schools.com.na
www.namibian.com.na



I really enjoyed making these videos, can we do it again?

*Brigitte, gr. 5,
WJD Cloete JSS*



Taking Action: Freedom of Expression



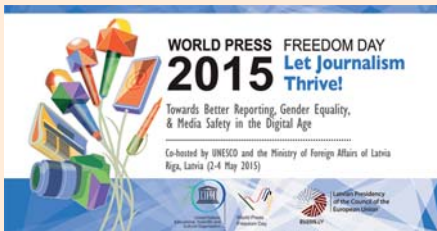
Have you ever been scared to say what you think? Or to tell the truth because you fear someone will be angry or hurt you? Don't be!



GO NAMIBIA!

The World Press Freedom index ranked Namibia as #17 worldwide. It is the only African country in the top 20 countries. Namibia's Constitution under Article 21 Fundamental Freedoms (1) protects these rights: **All persons shall have the right to: (a) freedom of speech and expression, which shall include freedom of the press and other media.**

Freedom of expression is a fundamental right that should be enjoyed by everyone. It is especially important for journalists as they should be allowed to inform the public of what is happening without fear. Some governments do not allow the freedom of expression.



The freedom of expression, media and journalists are celebrated on the **World Press Freedom Day** on May 3 and on **World Radio Day** on February 13. These days are important to highlight, celebrate and advocate for press freedom.

Organisations Protecting Freedom of Expression

Local, national and international organisations are working together to promote freedom of expression and to protect journalists worldwide.



Reporters without Borders is an international

non-governmental organisation that operates on five continents. Reporters without Borders help and protect the rights of journalists. They ensure that: 'freedom of expression and of information will remain to be the world's most important freedom. If journalists were not free to report the facts, denounce abuses and alert the public, how would we resist the problem of children-soldiers, defend women's rights, or preserve our environment?'

Reporters without Borders

The **Media Institute of Southern Africa's**



vision for the region is that:

- ♣ the media enjoys freedom of expression.
- ♣ members of society, individually or collectively are free to express themselves through any media of their choice without hindrance of any kind.
- ♣ access to information must be unhindered and information be readily available.

Personalities in Conservation

Name: Dirk Heinrich

Profession: Environmental journalist and photographer

Organisation: Allgemeine Zeitung and Freelance

Years on the job: 35

What is the work of an environmental journalist?

It is a reporter who is specialized in issues regarding nature, natural resources and the environment as a whole.

Although you do report on all news stories, your reporting focuses often on wildlife and specifically human-wildlife conflict. Why?

In the past, people were more connected with nature and understood wildlife and the way it behaves. Today people are disconnected from animals and plants... actually, the ecosystem as a whole. We need to understand nature and the environment first before we can understand how to use natural, renewable resources correctly.

Are there any key factors an environmental journalist should take into account when reporting on an issue?

Yes, it is important to captivate and know your audience, but without sensationalizing an issue. People's perception of the environment is shaped by how we talk and write about it. All journalists should do their research on the subject, gather the info and check sources. Stick to the facts not emotions.

Can you give me an example?

Let's say there is a problem with elephants that are destroying infrastructure. We should not approach the story by demanding that the elephants must be shot or by calling them 'poor elephants' which have to be protected. Get down to the actual problem why the elephants destroyed the infrastructure. Find out why there is a conflict with these animals and what could be the solution for the benefit of humans and elephant.



What do you enjoy the most about your work?

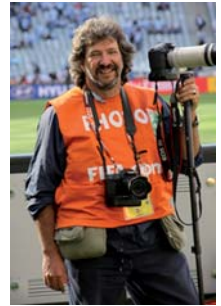
Working with nature, learning something new every day and then sharing these experiences with other people.

Dirk's message to Namibia's youth:

Realise the importance of nature and the environment and protect it. Learn from nature and use it wisely

for the benefit of fauna and flora and yourself. We only have one environment and we must be part of it, not destroy it.

In 2004 Dirk was awarded the "Environmental Journalism Award" by NNF/Go Green, for recognition of over 20 years of environmental journalism.



HOLDEN'S HANG-OUT



Holden Mole is the name. NaDEET's my hangout spot. I love Namibia. My number one job is to get the basics - my food, water and shelter. "Education is the key"- I know everyone says it, but it is true. So if you don't know, ask me.

Holden Mole, NaDEET, PO Box 8702, Swakopmund
email to: admin@nadeet.org or post them on NaDEET's Facebook page

Dear Holden,
How does "electricity" hurt the environment?

Anni, Windhoek

Dear Anni,
Most of the electricity that Namibia uses is imported and is produced from fossil fuels, especially coal. Coal is actually highly compressed plant and animal material that has been formed and stored underneath the ground for millions of years. Coal therefore is a highly compacted block of energy. But it also contains all of the stored carbon dioxide (CO₂) that originated from these decayed plants and animals. Once coal is burnt to produce electricity they release CO₂ and other harmful gases. Therefore the primary source of electricity production in Namibia is very harmful to the environment. And the more electricity we use, the more coal needs to be burnt, the more damage we do to our environment. But luckily we can change this by using renewable sources such as solar and wind and by being energy efficient!

Holden

Dear Holden,
Why does the dancing white lady spider live underground?

Delvitho, Mariental

Dear Delvitho,
The dancing white lady spider, unlike other spiders, does not build a web. Instead it builds a long, silk-lined tunnel in firm dune sand with a trap door. It belongs to a group of spiders commonly called "trap door spiders". It is nocturnal, meaning it only comes out at night to hunt or to mate. Just like many desert organisms, the dancing white lady spider is specially-adapted to dealing with difficult conditions.



For example, it stays in the tunnel during the day to protect itself from predators but also the extreme temperatures.

Holden

Answer from page 4:

It could be a rabbit or a duck.

Update from Last Issue

THE KEY TO A SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL IS TO:



ASK, SHARE, CREATE & DO

1st place winner: Eco Media Awards "Publishers House" category 2010
Official youth magazine of the Roan News

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Illustrations: Ida Blaauw, Innovative Design Arts **Photos:** Dirk Heinrich Photo Library

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NaDEET Centre: A Sustainable Living Experience



NaDEET Centre offers week-long programmes for school, youth, educator & adult groups in the Namib Desert.

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