

Why Do Stories Make the News?



RIDAL 2010-11

News Criteria



- **Timeliness** – News that is happening now, news of interest to readers today.
- **Relevance/proximity** – The story happened nearby or is about a concern of local interest.
- **Magnitude** – The story is great in size or number; for example, a tornado that destroys a few houses might not make the news but a story about a tornado that devastates a community would be newsworthy.

News Criteria



- **Unexpectedness/oddity** – Something unusual or something that occurs without warning. A unique or unusual situation.
- **Impact/consequence** – News that will affect a large number of readers. These are issues that affect readers' lifestyles, personal lives, or daily environment.
- **Prominence** – News about a famous or well-known person or personality.

News Criteria



- **Conflict**/Reference to something negative – A major struggle in the news. Bad news often "sells" better than good news.
- **Continuity** – A follow-up or continuation to a story that has been in the news or is familiar.
- **Emotions** – Emotions (fear, jealousy, love, hate) increase interest in a story.
- **Human interest** – These stories give readers a chance to empathize with others.

News Criteria



- **Progress** – News of new hope, new achievement, new improvements.
- **Humor** – Most people like to be entertained as well as informed.
- **Animals** – Whether they evoke sympathy, anger, curiosity, or laughter, people love stories about furry critters and such.
- **Young children** – Any story that involves toddlers and babies are of interest to many readers.

News Criteria Assignment



- 1. You will find 10 stories in the news sections: Nation, World, State, Local. Use Miami Herald, NYT, CNN...
- 2. You will provide the headline (title) for each and a short, two sentence summary of the article.
- 3. List what criteria fit each story. Some stories may have more than one criteria. Try to find as many different criteria as you can.
- 4. Explain why the criteria fit the story.
- You may work in groups to use the computers, but make sure to have your own paper.
- Finish for homework if necessary. Place in class bin if finished.