

High Five B4: Criteria for Newsworthiness

Prominence—a person, organization or institution in the story is important or well-known.

Proximity—nearby; newspapers print stories about people and events in the community or region where their readers live.

Timeliness—something happening or important right now; most news stories reflect events in the immediate past or involving an issue that affects readers now.

Oddity/uniqueness—out of the ordinary, unusual; some stories are about people or events that are unexpected or special in some way—perhaps an athlete who displays remarkable ability or an unusual celebration.

Consequence—effects of a decision or event; newspapers publish stories about issues that affect readers directly or indirectly.

Human interest—something that touches lives, imagination or emotions of readers; stories may be about an inspiring teacher or a courageous pet, for instance. Assign students into small groups and provide each a different criterion for news. Have each group find an example in the newspaper that meets that criterion. Bring the class together and have volunteers read headlines of their stories and explain how each is a good example of their criterion.