



General News Story (less than 4 minutes)

This contest focuses on producing a concise and well-organized news story that informs viewers about the most current or significant event in a straightforward manner, following the principles of broadcast journalism.

Key Elements of the General News Story:

1. Newsworthiness:

- The story should cover a **timely** and **relevant** event, adhering to the core journalistic principles of “who, what, when, where, why, and how.” The content should be news that matters to the school, local community, or larger audience. Examples could include school events, significant achievements, incidents, or any major developments.

2. Structure and Organization:

- **Inverted Pyramid Structure:** The most critical information should be presented at the start, and less essential details should follow. Viewers should understand the gist of the story within the first few seconds.
- **Clear Introduction:** The news story should begin with a strong lead (intro), summarizing the key point of the story concisely to hook the audience.
- **Body:** The story should then delve into more details, backed by interviews, facts, and sound bites to build depth.
- **Conclusion:** End with a clear and relevant conclusion that wraps up the story, often with a forward-looking element, such as “what’s next” or the impact of the event on the community.

3. Audio and Visual Synchronization:

- The video should feature appropriate **b-roll** (background footage) that visually supports the story being told. For example, if a student interviews a teacher about a school event, b-roll of the event in action should accompany the interview.
- **Natural Sound:** Use of natural sound (ambient audio from the location of the event) enhances the realism and immersion of the story. For example, if the story is about a sports event, capturing the sound of the game or cheering from the audience can add to the viewer’s experience.
- **Narration:** A clear, professional-sounding voiceover (narrator or anchor) should guide the story. The narration should be concise and neutral, ensuring that the video clips match the audio commentary.

4. Interview Sound Bites:

- **Relevant Interviews:** Short, impactful sound bites (10-15 seconds) from key individuals involved in the story should be included. For instance, if covering a school event, interviews with organizers, participants, or attendees can add depth.
- The interviewees should add **value** to the story, offering insights or personal perspectives that enhance the narrative, but they should not dominate the video. The quotes must be tied back to the main news narrative seamlessly.



5. **Visual and Technical Quality:**

- **Clear Footage:** The visuals should be sharp, with good lighting and stable camera work. Avoid shaky, low-quality footage. Camera angles should be professional, and the shots should match the storytelling flow.
- **Graphics and Supers (Lower Thirds):** Proper use of on-screen text to identify individuals (i.e., the person being interviewed, location, or key terms) is important. These “lower thirds” should be concise, professional, and informative, giving context without distracting from the story.
- **Transitions:** Video transitions should be smooth and enhance the flow of the story. Hard cuts or inappropriate effects that distract the viewer should be avoided.

6. **Time Management:**

- The story must fit within the 4-minute time limit. This requires a balanced pace, ensuring that the most essential details are conveyed without rushing or dragging out the content. Each segment (introduction, main content, conclusion) should have just the right amount of time devoted to it to create a coherent, engaging news story.

7. **Reporter Presence and Delivery:**

- If the student reporter appears on-camera, their presentation should be confident, clear, and professional. Their delivery should match the tone of the story and should not overshadow the event or the interviews.
- **Stand-ups** (where the reporter appears and speaks on camera) should feel natural, blending into the story while providing context or transitions between segments.

8. **Ethics and Accuracy:**

- All information presented should be factual and unbiased. Double-check facts, names, titles, and quotes for accuracy. The story must maintain **journalistic integrity**, without inserting personal opinions or unsupported claims.

Criteria for Judging:

- **Storytelling:** How well the story is organized and presented.
- **Clarity:** Whether the story is clear and easy to understand.
- **Visual and Audio Quality:** The technical quality of the visuals and sound.
- **Engagement:** How compelling and engaging the story is for viewers.
- **Adherence to Time Limit:** Keeping the story within the 4-minute limit without sacrificing content quality.

In summary, the **General News Story** contest challenges students to combine their storytelling, technical, and journalistic skills to create a polished, engaging broadcast segment. The goal is to inform the audience effectively while maintaining high standards of video production, sound design, and news judgment.