

UNIT 6 SPORT AND THE MEDIA

*"The news and truth are not the same thing."
Walter Lippmann, American journalist.*

SPORT AND THE MEDIA

What are the mass media?

They're huge corporations, massive corporations, linked up with even bigger corporations. They sell audiences to other businesses, namely advertisers. So when you turn on the television set, CBS doesn't make any money from you; they make money from the advertisers. You're the product that they're selling, and the same is true of the daily newspapers. They're huge corporations, selling audiences, potential consumers, to other businesses, all linked up closely to the government, especially the big media. What picture of the world do you expect them to present?

– Noam Chomsky, American writer, linguist, and dissident (1928 -), in Sparrow Talks with Noam Chomsky.

(From <http://www.newspackdictionary.com/ot-quotes.html#QMedia>, viewed on April 15, 2003; and <http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com>)

Task 1 SPEAKING: Effects of technology

Technology is really important to the coverage of sport in the media. Not only does it allow all of these forms of media to be possible, but it also allows features like photo finishes, instant replays, split times etc.

Which of the below would you say are the good and which are the bad effects of media coverage on sport:

- *Money* - Media companies pay for the rights to show a sporting event. Also, sports shown on TV generate more sponsorship
- *Attention* - Sport stars often complain of too much attention being paid to their private lives
- *Education* - People learn the rules of the sport from watching it on TV
- *Role models* - Seeing good sports people on tv and in newspapers makes them a role model for people to look up to
- *Lack of Attendance* - For matches that are shown on tv, ticket sales often drop
- *Demands* - The media can put pressure on the organisers of sporting competitions to make the viewing experience better for TV audiences. For example, in a previous Olympics, the marathon was run at a time which suited TV companies, even though it was at the hottest time of day.
- *Inspiration* - Media brings sport to people who may not normally get to experience it otherwise. This can encourage people to get involved
- *Coaching aid* - Watching professionals on the tv can help you see how a technique should be performed which could help your performance
- *Bias* - Only the really popular sports get much attention on the tv and in newspapers etc. This doesn't help encourage people into the less popular sports

Task 2 READING:

15 April 2011

A new Super League is being launched for some of the top English ladies' teams including Arsenal, Chelsea and Liverpool. England's Football Association is hoping the league will attract more supporters to the sport.

(1) Women's football - or soccer as it's known in many countries - has been played in England for more than a hundred years. But, unlike men's football, it's always been an amateur game. The new Super League will be the first semi-professional competition for women, with eight teams from across the country competing for the title.

(2) The players will get paid for their efforts, although their salaries will be nothing like those given to top male football stars. The Football Association says it hopes to avoid uneven competition, where a country's richest clubs get access to all the best players.

(3) Each club in the women's Super League will have a maximum annual budget of around \$400,000. Some clubs, like Arsenal and Everton, will be helped by their respective male clubs, but others are trying to match their incomes by coaching school pupils or raising money through social events.

(4) Organisers are hoping the league will eventually attract the world's best female players and stop England's top stars heading to Germany and the United States, where there are already major professional competitions.

Maddy Savage, BBC News

Read the above article from the BBC news and summarise the main points.

Choose the most suitable heading:

- A) *Female and male footballers clash*
- B) *Football Association backs female football*
- C) *Female players get football league in England*

Find synonyms to these expressions:

half, partly (par. 1) _____

unequal (par. 2) _____

belonging or relating separately to each of the things mentioned (par. 3) _____

moving in a particular direction (par. 4) _____

Task 3 NEWSPAPER LANGUAGE – HEADLINE ENGLISH

The language of headlines is therefore unusual in a number of ways. The main function of the headline is to inform the reader briefly of what the news that follows is about. Sometimes headlines contain elements of appraisal, i.e., they show the reporter's or the paper's attitude to the facts reported. English headlines are short and catching.

Grammar words like <i>articles</i> or <i>auxiliary verbs</i> are often left out	/Royal Family quits/
A <i>simple</i> form of a <i>verb</i> is used	/Queen Opens Hospital Today/
The <i>infinitive</i> is used to express the <i>future</i>	/President to visit Iran/

Newspaper articles and headlines use a lot of distinctive vocabulary:

NEWSPAPER WORD	MEANING	NEWSPAPER WORD	MEANING
aid	help	key	essential
axe	cut, remove	link	connection
back	support	bar	exclude, forbid
bid	attempt	oust	push out
blast	explosion	blaze	fire
plea	request	boost	encourage
clash	dispute	ploy	clever activity
curb	limit	probe	investigation
drive	campaign, effort	quit	leave, resign
go-ahead	approval	hit	affect badly
riddle	mystery	strife	conflict
threat	danger	vow	promise
wed	marry	gems	jewels

NOTE: Newspaper headlines often use abbreviations, e.g. PM = Prime Minister, MP = Member of Parliament etc.

Task 4 Match the headlines with their topics:

Headlines

1. PM BACKS PEACE PLAN
2. MP SPY DRAMA
3. SPACE PROBE FAILS
4. QUEEN'S GEMS RIDDLE
5. STAR WEDS
6. KEY WITNESS DEATH THREAT

Topics

- a. marriage of famous actress
- b. royal jewels are stolen
- c. person who saw crime in danger
- d. proposal to end war
- e. satellite is not launched
- f. politician sells secrets to enemy

Task 5 Explain the meaning of the following headlines:

- MOVE TO CREATE MORE JOBS
- GO-AHEAD FOR WATER CURBS
- PRINCE VOWS TO BACK FAMILY
- NEW TENNIS CLASH

Task 6 Grammar – Passive Voice

Transform the sentences into the passive voice.

2. They interviewed her for the job. – She
3. James is printing the report. – The report
4. They have finished the job. – The job
5. The employees brought up the issue. – The issue
6. The professor told him not to talk in class. – He
7. She would reject the offer. – The offer
8. This surprises me. – I
9. I had to delete the file. – The file

Task 7 Listening

Guess vocabulary from the context:

1. Children and adolescents are especially **susceptible** to this violence.
2. Using media can become very **addictive**.
3. Most of us **wander** through cyberspace...
4. The content is a kind of **wrapping** for the advertising.
5. The media is **invading our privacy**.
6. You can be **tracked** if you make a few visits to any website.

Match the vocabulary items with their definitions:

- a) Move with no clear direction or purpose
- b) Likely to be affected by
- c) Followed
- d) Cover
- e) Getting into our private lives
- f) Hard to stop or give up

Listen to a lecture called Dangers of the Mass Media and take notes. What are the main harmful effects of the mass media according to the speaker?