

In the News: House Fires

Read the information about house fires on the fact sheet **Burning Up**.

Scenario: A house fire is started by a mobile phone charger, left on a teenager's bed, overheating. The fire spreads and damages the upstairs rooms of the house. One family member is burnt and two others suffer from smoke inhalation.

Imagine you are a journalist working for either a local newspaper or a local TV news channel. The house fire described above happened in your area. You are asked to investigate and write either an article or a script for a newscast.

Make the information clear and interesting – remember to include details about what happened, where and when, who was involved, why it happened, and possibly what is to happen next.

Newspaper article

- Look at a variety of news articles in local newspapers. Think about how the articles are structured (e.g. headline, paragraph length), the language used (formal? emotive?), what information is included and ways they grab the reader's attention.
- You could include quotes from interviews with the people involved (e.g. victims of injuries, witnesses, emergency service personnel).
- You could include photographs or diagrams and captions to bring the information to life.

Newscast script

- Watch a local news broadcast and look at news scripts online. Think about how the reports are structured, the language used (formal? emotive?), what information is included and ways they keep the viewer interested.
- You could include interviews with the people involved (e.g. victims of injuries, witnesses, emergency service personnel).
- You could put together a storyboard of shots you wish to include (e.g. reporter speaking to camera, footage of the burnt building).

Challenge

Discuss and compare these two media. How is the writing style and content similar and different? What are the advantages and limitations of each?