Local television news can be highly profitable to a television station. This is because local stations get to keep all the money made from the advertising that runs during local newscasts (as opposed to other times, when networks sell much of the advertising). As a result, local stations compete aggressively for viewers for their news broadcasts. These stations frequently rely on highly paid consultants to help them make their news programs more attractive to viewers. Many of these consultants use similar strategies. These strategies include coaching reporters about how to act and look when they are reporting the news.

Watch several local evening newscasts on different stations. For each newscast, write a description of the following, using another sheet of paper, if necessary:

1. the clothing of the news personnel

2. the gender and race of the news personnel

3. the colors and design of the news set

4. the location of each remote report

5. the screen graphics used

6. the use of **file footage** (This is videotape recorded several days to several years in advance, used when television news coverage is talking about the subject. For exam­ ple, a sports story during the summer about a basketball player may use file footage of that player taped during the previous season.)

7. the name (brand) of the newscast (for example, *Eyewitness News)*

8. use of teases

Now, review your notes for each of the items above.

9. Which of the above items is solely for entertainment purposes? Why?

10. Which of the items above helps viewers better understand the news? Why? Compare the local news programs of two different local stations.

11. How are they similar?

12. How are they different?