

Event reporting masterclass with BBC presenter Sophie Raworth: transcript

I'm Sophie Raworth, a presenter and newsreader at the BBC and I have been extremely fortunate over the years because I have been involved in an awful lot of the big national events that the BBC broadcasts.

The most recent of course was the Royal Wedding which was a massive privilege. It was one of the biggest broadcasts the BBC has ever staged.

[Clip of Sophie presenting Royal Wedding coverage]

When I'm involved in something like that I immerse myself and completely swamp myself in all the information, the facts, the figures so that on the day you feel completely relaxed. You have too much to do if anything!

[Clip of sporting action]

Obviously with 2012 there is going to be so much going on all around Britain and it's a really good opportunity for you to get involved as well. I'm sure there will be things going on in your schools, things that you could cover.

Find something that you want to go to, that you want to show to a wider public – and get your way in there. It might be a football game for example, and maybe you want to get behind the scenes. See if they'll let you do it because it opens all kinds of doors and you find yourself in places that you never thought you'd be in.

When you're trying to report on an event, there are some really important things to remember. The first is you must know what you're talking about, you must know it inside-out, there is no point in going to an event and not knowing the facts and figures. Nobody else is going to give it to you – it's all happening as you do it, it's all happening live. You have got to know your stuff. If you don't, you're going to fall flat on your face – that is rule number one.

You've got to make sure that you have a really good vantage point because you're showing to everybody, you're there to broadcast it so there's no point in being stuck in a little corner if there's a much better view and if you'd actually gone there and had a look a few days before you'd have thought 'no, if I stand here, that's not going to work'.

Be careful – don't go and stand in the middle of a crowd. Often at these big events there are huge crowds around. There's no point in standing in the middle of a crowd because everyone gets terribly excited when there's a TV camera around and it can be quite dangerous sometimes if they are pushing and shoving.

It's about picking out the details; it's about bringing the scene to life. Imagine your mother, for example, sitting at home – she knows nothing about what you're seeing and so you have to be as descriptive as you possibly can and really engage her and keep her attention. It's all about using language and being descriptive and being passionate and excited and that's how you'll get your audience to listen.

So those are the main rules, but my biggest one is to make sure you know what you're talking about!