

# TV Tricks - Transcript

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Episode 12 16/5/11

*INTRO: Now, let's talk about TV. Once again reality TV shows are dominating what we watch. Just as we say goodbye to The Biggest Loser, we say hello to Masterchef, Australia's Got Talent, The Amazing Race and others. James went to investigate how reality TV works and the tricks behind the scenes that make these shows so popular.*

JAMES BARTOLD, REPORTER: These are some of the most popular TV shows in Australia. There's fast-paced cooking shows, life-changing exercise programs. And show after show on becoming the next big star. There seems to be such a variety of things to watch, but actually isn't it all the same? Just one idea repeated over and over?

Let's take a look at the reality TV recipe. First take one group of contestants competing for a big prize. Then put them through a series of weekly challenges for the cameras. Mix in the perfect blend of judges, making sure that the personalities are both sweet and bitter. Finally sprinkle with a bit of drama and emotion with a weekly elimination and your reality TV dinner is served. But so far we've given you only the basic ingredients of the reality TV recipe. Next it's down to the shows editor who, like a chef, has to blend it all together to make it just right.

Welcome to my boring show. It's about two kids Tom and Allison boiling an egg. Doesn't sound like the best show in the world does it? But we haven't added any TV tricks yet. You guys start boiling your eggs now.

OK, still a bit boring here. Let's add some tense music. Now add a false sense of urgency. Let's make it against the clock. What this needs now is a bit more drama and emotion. Let's try cutting to some interviews.

INTERVIEWEE 1: I'm really worried. When the egg hit the pan there was a noise that sounded a bit like a crack.

REPORTER: And if the interview adds some conflict, even better.

INTERVIEWEE 2: As soon as the box was opened he was, like, straight in there, grabbing , like, the best egg and everything.

REPORTER: Let's support this new story-line with some slowed down pictures of the egg grab and we'll add a close up of Tom's face taken way earlier in the day because we think he looked a bit shifty. Perfect. As the time ticks away we build up the music and cut the shots quicker to give a dramatic end. Then it's judgment time.

REPORTER: Here it's all about the suspense. Even after the judge has tasted the dish it's good to keep viewers and contestants guessing.

Janet, I have to be honest and say I don't like it. I LOVE IT. Allison, you've won the golden egg cup.

So we've let you in on some of the secrets behind reality TV, and we've shown you just how much you can change a scenario with some simple tricks of the trade. So now you know, the truth behind reality TV is that it's actually not that real.

## ***TV Tricks - Homework Questions***

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1. In what ways are reality TV shows similar?
2. Describe some of the elements of a reality TV show.
3. What role does the editor play?
4. What techniques do reality TV shows use to make them more interesting?
5. Why do you think reality TV shows are so popular?
6. Reality TV is sometimes criticised for its lack of reality. What aspects may be artificial or made up?
7. Do you watch reality TV shows? If so, which ones and why?
8. What was surprising about this story?
9. Name three facts you learnt in the *TV tricks* story.