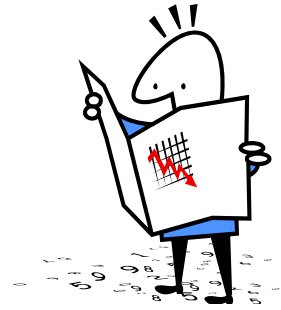


Newspaper Writing Packet

Overall Points to Remember When Writing Articles

- Be Concise
- Be objective
- Report facts
- Quote the source of your information
- Identify people in your stories and include a title (science teacher, sophomore, principal, parent, etc)
- Most newspaper articles use paragraphs that are 2-3 sentences maximum



Visual Organizer

Almost all newspaper stories start off by answering most of these questions. Try to answer these questions in your story.

Who: _____

What: _____

When: _____

Where: _____

Why: _____

How: _____

Lead Sentence (a sentence that includes some of the information above and that grabs the reader)

Tips from the Pros

You've just been assigned to write a story for your newspaper. Here are some tips to help you write a good one.

Who – What – When – Where – Why – How. Almost all newspaper stories start off by answering most of these questions. Try to answer these questions in your story. For example: "Sherry Smith won first place in the Cutest Pet contest yesterday at Columbia Mall." Check your local newspaper for more examples.

Accuracy. Your writing might be wonderful, but if you don't get the facts right, people won't believe what you write the next time. Make sure everything you say is true. And spell people's names correctly — they get upset when you don't.

What makes a good story? Anything that could interest or affect your classmates, teachers, school or family will make a good story. Be curious. Ask yourself, "What would I like to know more about?" — then write a story about it.

Interviews. You may want to interview someone to get the facts. Here's what to do:

- **Make an appointment.** Call or meet with the person, tell them what kind of a story you want to write, then set a time and place for the interview.
- **Prepare questions.** Write down the questions you want to ask. For example, "How long have you been working here?" "What do you like most about your job?" and "Is there anything you would like to tell our readers?"
- **Take tools.** Take a small notebook and two pens or pencils to the interview.
- **Write it down.** Take notes as the person answers your questions — you want to be sure to quote the person **accurately** in your story. It's OK to ask the person to repeat what they said or ask them what they mean if you don't understand them the first time. The main thing is to get it right.

Research. Use encyclopedias, dictionaries, almanacs and other reference materials to get the facts you need. More and more reporters are doing their research on the Internet. Research includes interviewing people — such as a professor or doctor or coach — who know the facts

Writing the story. Start with a good **lead** — a sentence that grabs your reader and makes her want to read more . Write your story plainly so that everyone can understand it. If possible, use quotes in your story to make it more interesting — for example, "The flames were so hot I thought my helmet would melt," the firefighter said. And remember to answer the questions **Who – What – When – Where – Why – How.**

Writing to Inform

Development

- *All necessary information needed to understand the story is present
- *Ideas and actions are fully developed and explained

Organization

- *Ideas are organized logically (Beginning, Middle, and End)
- *Topic sentence (the story lead) introduces the topic
- *Sufficient, appropriate details fully support the topic
- *Concluding sentence ties the story together

Attention To Audience

- *Enough information is presented so reader can understand the topic
- *Story answers questions the reader might have

Language

- *Vocabulary is appropriate for the topic
- *Precise, appropriate, and descriptive language adds meaning to the story
- *Variety of sentence structures and use of linking words or phrases, as appropriate, make the story easy to read and understand

Newspaper Vocabulary You Should Know

Active voice: the subject of the verb performs the action.

Attribution: the act of providing a reference to a source; citing a source.

Banner: A headline in large type running across the entire width of the page

Beat: daily route covered by reporter to keep in touch with sources.

Box: a small article or headline enclosed by lines to give it visual emphasis

Byline: Line located under headline which tells the name of the writer

Caption: lines under a photograph which explain what the picture is about (aka "cutline")

Column: 1) the vertical divisions of a page

2) opinion or comment expressed by a regular writer

Copy: typed material

Copy editing: a reading of the copy to eliminate all errors after the reporter has finished the story

Credit line: acknowledging the source of a picture

Dateline: the first words in the lead which give the name of the city from which it was sent.

Direct Quotation: the exact words that a news source uses in giving information. Quote marks always set off direct quotations.

Deadline: the assigned time for stories to be submitted in order to make the issue going to press

Ears: Space at the top of the front page on each side of the newspaper's nameplate. Usually boxed in with weather news, indexes, or an announcement of special features.

Editor: person who decides which news goes into the paper, reviews, and corrects reporters' work and writes the headlines.

Feature Story: a story that goes further than straight news coverage, and usually focuses on the human interest elements of a situation or event.

Filler: a copy with little news value; used to fill space.

Headline: an extra large font across top of front page, placed above or below the masthead

Index: Table of contents of each paper, usually placed on page one

Indirect quotation: information that is close to the way the news source said it, but not exactly. Quotation marks are not used.

Journalism: process of collecting, writing, editing, and publishing news

Journalistic style: set of rules covering newspaper writing style, including rules pertaining to capitalization, spelling, abbreviations, titles, grammar, and punctuation

Jump: to continue a story from one page to another

Justified: lines of type that are even on the right as well as on the left side

Kicker: a short, catchy word or phrase over a major headline

Layout: the position of stories, ads, photos and graphics on a page (aka "Dummy")

Logo: type on front page which gives the name of the newspaper (aka "flag" or "nameplate")

Masthead: info about the newspaper such as the publishing company, names of the officers of the company, location of editorial offices, editorship and distribution facts, all usually found at the top of the editorial page

News story: an objective article written about an event or situation

Op-ed page: Opposite editorial page which gives readers'/columnists' opinions different from those of the newspaper

Review: an account of an artistic event such as a concert or play which offers critical evaluation; opinion of the writer

Sidebar: a shorter, related article that focuses on one aspect of a main article. A secondary story accompanying a major story.

Soft news: background information or human interest stories

Source: supplier of information