



**Zero to nine spell out,
but numerals for
10 and up. Got it!**

Associated Press Stylebook and Word Usage Lesson Plans & Materials

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Stephen Green created these lessons as a capstone project for completion of the journalism educator master's degree program at Kent State University. It may be reproduced only for individual classroom teachers in class, but not for any commercial purposes including derivative works.

How to Use the AP Stylebook

AP STYLEBOOK UNIT

Rationale

The Associated Press Stylebook is often jokingly referred to as the journalist's bible. However, the AP Stylebook is not set up in a traditional format like a dictionary or thesaurus might work and must be taught.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn how to search for terms in the AP Stylebook to copy edit work made for media publications.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will edit publication-like copy using the AP Stylebook.

Goals for Understanding

Students will learn how to search for

- Spelling
- Capitalization
- Abbreviation
- Numbers
- Word usage
- Punctuation
- Copy editing marks
- Media law

Students will learn how to search using

- Table of contents & index
- SCAN-UP method
- Special sections
- Key to Stylebook entries

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in two, 45-minute class periods, but may be completed in one depending on teacher class length.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- Class set of AP Stylebooks, physical or web-based. This lesson was designed using the 2020-2022 Associated Press Stylebook.
- "Using the AP Stylebook Instructional Sheets" cut for each group
- "Using the AP Stylebook Worksheet" for each group
- "Using the AP Stylebook Practice" for each student

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the Slideshow and have students individually complete the activity silently with a 5-minute time limit using the AP Stylebook. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and walk around to ensure everyone is talking.

Show Slide 4 with the answer to the warm up and have students compare their individual answers.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have group members each pull out one of the four "Using the AP Stylebook Instructional Cards". They should read silently for 1 minute and individually complete the activity at the end of each card. Then, go in a rally-robin format with each student explaining (not reading) their card's instructions to the other students, as well as the example they found. Each student should have 1-2 minutes to do this. The other students can take notes or just remember the information in the card.

After students read the four tip cards, pass out the "Using the AP Stylebook Practice" sheet. Talk with students about how to help one another if they see a student struggling. Students will use the round-robin method to complete this as a group. Each student will fill out one of the terms they find and pass to the next person. They should do this until it is complete. It should take approximately 10 minutes.

At the end, pass out the key to groups and have each student explain and demonstrate how they found each term. All groups should go through every term on the list, led by the student who found it.

DIRECT INSTRUCTION: Show and discuss Slide 5, which recaps everything students should have learned.

CLOSING ACTIVITY: Show Slide 6 and have students complete the activity on a blank sheet of paper, sticky note, or method the teacher prefers to see how well students understand the concept. Slide 7 has the corrections to be used at teacher prerogative.

Day 2

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slide 8 and have students individually complete the activity silently with a 5-minute time limit using the AP Stylebook. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the same directions as the warm up on Day 1. Slide 9 has the answers.

Discuss the results and length of time it took compared to the first time they did the same activity. It should be faster.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY: Have students complete the "Using the AP Stylebook Worksheet" document as a group in the following way: Person A will read the sentence and identify one possible error and the type of correction it could be. Person B will suggest what term or category the group should look up. Person C will look that up and read the entry out loud. Person D will then determine what was wrong and tell the group what to write down. Persons A, B & C will all agree or disagree if Person D was correct and discuss until the item is correct. The roles will all switch and continue in the same pattern. (Item 2 should be B identifies, C suggests term to look up, D looks up the entry, and A makes the correction.) This continues with the other items until the worksheet is complete. This should continue for about 20-30 minutes or until all groups are complete with the assignment.

Show Slide 10 to the class, which contains the key, or hand out the worksheet key. If they have any errors or blanks, they should discuss what made it difficult to look up or understand.

DIRECT INSTRUCTION: Lead a class discussion on the issues and challenges they found and help redirect any misunderstandings.

CLOSING ACTIVITY: Put Slide 11 on the board and have each student complete in the method most preferable to the teacher. This can be graded. Slide 12 is the key.

References

Froke, P., & Bajak, F. (2020). *The Associated Press Stylebook*. Basic Books.

Strunk, W., & White, E. (2000). *The Elements of Style*. Allyn & Bacon.

Using the Table of Contents & Index

USING THE AP STYLEBOOK

Table of Contents

The table of contents is the section at the front of the AP Stylebook that shows you the pages where each section begins.

Index

The index shows where all individual entries are throughout each of the books sections or chapters.

Using the Index

Start by looking alphabetically in the index to see if you can find that specific entry or find the category where it may be. For example, if someone writes, "It is 5-o'clock somewhere" in a quote, you may notice "5-o'clock" is not in the index but "o'clock" is — listed as "See times, 297". "Times" is in the index also. Now you know the writer should have written "5 o'clock" instead.

If the index is not helpful, perhaps the table of contents may help find a chapter that may go deeper into your subject. Otherwise look in the main section.

Find It!

On what pages could I find the entries for **SYNAGOGUE**? Use the index.

SCAN-UP: Figuring Out What to Search

USING THE AP STYLEBOOK

SCAN-UP Method

The Associated Press Stylebook is set up to help writers with six main problems: spelling, capitalization, abbreviation, numbers, proper usage, and punctuation. Remember to SCAN-UP each sentence for each error type by reading six times — once for each error type.

Spelling

At first, look up each word's correct spelling. Sometimes words have letters transposed (reversed), extra/missing letters, or just not spelled right at all. The AP Stylebook has some spelling entries. If not, consult a dictionary.

Capitalization

The biggest set of entries is maybe usage followed closely by capitalization. There are many words we capitalize and shouldn't, and those wrongly lowercased. **Always** check the capitalization of nouns.

Abbreviations

The AP Stylebook has several rules about when to spell out months completely and when shortening them is OK. It also shows when to use acronyms (letters in place of a long name) or the full name. Though: When in doubt, spell it out.

Numbers

AP Style has an easy rule of thumb for numbers: 0-9, spell it out. Of course, there are, it seems, a billion exceptions. If you see a number, think, "What is the number representing?" Consult the numerals section (or other places in the book) and see if it is an exception.

Usage

Much of the book is a set of entries to prevent you from using the wrong word, or the proper word to use when there are many to choose. Check to see if you used a word correctly or the right one at all.

Punctuation

When wrong, punctuation is either missing, extra, or The AP Stylebook helps here, too. In most cases, you can just look up the punctuation's name and find the rules there or consult the punctuation section. When scanning a sentence, think: "Where should punctuation go that it isn't? Is the punctuation there used correctly?"

Find It!

SCAN-UP the sentence below six times — each time thinking about a different type of error. First, look for spelling errors. Then, capitalization; then abbreviations, and so on until you look all six times. See how many you can find!

The six-year-old man wrapped his arm in scotch tape which had to be cut off with scizzors on tuesday january tenth

Tips for Searching Stylebook Entries

USING THE AP STYLEBOOK

Search Specific to General

There is a LOT in the AP Stylebook. Always start looking up the exact thing you need. If it isn't, think: What category could it fall into? The book has categories of entries like times, postal codes and states.

Key to Stylebook Entries & What's New

One of the first pages is called "Key to Stylebook Entries" where editors explain how the book is laid out. Read it. It is adjacent to the "What's New" section with changes from the previous edition.

Use It Every Time

Look up every single thing in a word the first few times. After a while, you will start to instinctively know where to go look.

Find It!

Is it Super Bowl LVI, 56, or 2022?

Special Chapters & Copy Editing Marks

USING THE AP STYLEBOOK

Special Chapters

Because of how big the book got over the years, its editors created sections to help journalists. It includes punctuation, business, data journalism, polls and surveys, health and science, social media, digital security, religion, sports, media law, news values, and broadcast.

Copy Editing Marks

On page 519 (different in every book), you'll find a set of commonly used editing marks. Print out work and hand edit. It actually helps find errors you otherwise wouldn't find. Make sure the person you're editing for also knows the symbols.

Find It!

What is the legal term **DEFAMATION**?

Draw It!

edit this setnence using Copy Editing symbols found in your A.P. Style Book

Group Practice

USING THE AP STYLEBOOK

Use the Associated Press Stylebook to identify and correct the FOUR errors in each sentence below. Use copy editing symbols (shown on p. 519) to make the corrections. Then, write the sentence correctly at the right. Each has four errors. Compound errors (like lowercasing Math Professor) count as one.

NAME _____ PERIOD ____

Group Practice 1

There has been an internal religious conflict
ongoing between Shiia and Sunni muslims
since soon after the prophet Mohamed died.

Correctly Written Answer

Group Practice 2

Lieutenant governor Wilson Phillips tooked
a vacation, saying the election was nerve
racking because his opponent had almost
one million votes.

Correctly Written Answer

Group Practice 3

The oak tree fell down on Princple Initia
Brake's house Thurs., February 10 shortly
before 12 am during a tornado.

Correctly Written Answer

Group Practice Key

USING THE AP STYLEBOOK

Use the Associated Press Stylebook to identify and correct the four errors in each sentence below. Use copy editing symbols (shown on p. 519) to make the corrections. Then, write the sentence correctly at the right. Each has four errors. Compound errors (like lowercasing Math Professor) count as one.

Group Practice 1

There has been an internal religious conflict ongoing between Shiia and Sunni muslims since soon after the prophet Mohamed died.

Correctly Written Answer

There has been an internal religious conflict ongoing between **Shia** and Sunni **Muslims** soon after the **Prophet Muhammad** died.

Group Practice 2

Lieutenant governor Wilson Phillips tooked a vacation, saying the election was nerve racking because his opponent had almost one million votes.

Correctly Written Answer

Lt. Gov. Wilson Phillips **took** a vacation, saying the election was **nerve-racking** because his opponent had almost **1** million votes.

Group Practice 3

The oak tree fell down on Princple Initia Brake's house Thurs., February 10 shortly before 12 am during a tornado.

Correctly Written Answer

The oak tree fell on **Principal** Initia Brake's house **Thursday, Feb.** 10 shortly before **midnight** during a tornado.

Practice Worksheet

USING THE AP STYLEBOOK

Use the Associated Press Stylebook to identify and correct the FOUR errors in each sentence below. Use copy editing symbols (shown on p. 519) to make the corrections. Then, write the sentence correctly at the right. Each has four errors. Compound errors (like lowercasing Math Professor) count as one.

NAME _____ PERIOD ____

Problem 1

Despite studying as a foreign-exchange
student in the middle east, Junior Harry Feat
still did not know muslims believe in Allah.

Correctly Written Answer

Problem 2

Government Teacher Juanita Rivera earned
her Bachelor's degree in History from
Cityville University — the 1st in her family to
graduate with a college degree.

Correctly Written Answer

Problem 3

The Varsity Football team's day to day grind
is apparent on the quarter back's face when
he crossed the five-yard line.

Correctly Written Answer

Rationale

Journalists stick to a specific way to attribute names and format direct quotes. The reason is to help prevent confusion and avoid editorializing.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn how to properly attribute information, reference names, and format and punctuate direct quotations.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will copy edit a story using proper copy editing marks to correct attribution and quote formatting.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- All facts & opinions that do not fall into common knowledge must have attribution of some sort
- Attribution includes full name and job title or description that makes them relevant to being quoted in the story
- Always use "said" unless it is a document, which can't talk
- Title-name-said format, unless the title or description is so long it would cause confusion
- Proper punctuation for direct quotes
- Reference people by title and full name on first reference, then just by last name on subsequent references unless two people in a story share the same last name

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in two, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four, but may be done in one depending on class length.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Attribution and Quote Cards" cut for each group
- "Example Quote Worksheet" for each student
- "Copy Editing for Attribution & Quote Format" and "Key" for each student
- Class set of AP Stylebooks, physical or web-based. This lesson was designed using the 2020-2022 Associated Press Stylebook.

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the Slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the correct version the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Each group should have a different stack of cards than the other groups. Every member in the group will have the same card. (i.e. Group 1 will all have Card 1 for every student. Group 2 has Card 2, and so on.) Each group should also have the "Example Quote Worksheet".

Have every member of the group read their card silently for 1-2 minutes. Then, have them go in a round-robin format explaining the rule they learned from the card. Then, have the group members independently make the correction to the quote using copy editing marks. After all members silently made their corrections, they should compare their edits to each other and coach those who did not understand the concept.

Once they all have the same edit, the group will choose one member to leave the group to teach another group what they learned and coach the new group to make the correction without telling the right answer. The group member who left should then return to their group and hear what the members learned from their visiting tutor and make the correction.

This pattern should continue with new group members leaving to serve as tutors until each group member has been a tutor at least once or until there are no new cards for that group to learn. Every group should have visited and learned from every other group by the end of class.

EXAMPLE: Sarah, Joseph, Tracy and Elaine are in Group 1. They all read Card 1 independently, discuss, make corrections independently, compare their edits, and coach. Then, Sarah goes to be the tutor for Group 2, telling them what her group learned while Sarah was away. Tamela, from Group 5, visits Joseph, Tracy and Elaine to tell them about Card 5. Sarah returns to the group. All four make the edits based off what Tamela told them after they fill Sarah in on the new information. Now, Joseph will visit Group 3 to start the process again. This continues until all groups have heard all five notes.

Show Slide 6, which has the correct answer and have groups compare the right answer to their corrections. If it is incorrect, have students discuss where and why they were incorrect and resolve where communication broke down.

DIRECT INSTRUCTION: Slide 7 includes everything the students should have learned as a recap.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have all students complete the exercise on Slide 8. The answer is on Slide 9 for however the teacher prefers to review.

Day 2

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slide 10 of the Slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit in the same way as Day 1. Slide 11 has the correct answers.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY: Each group member should get one copy of the "Copy Editing for Attribution & Quote Formatting" worksheet. Students should take turns, one at a time, making one edit to the story for attributions and/or quote formatting using copy editing marks, then pass it on to the next group member.

Once they have finished, have them stand up to show they are complete. Then, have groups edit the story using the SCAN-UP method and the AP Stylebook. They should continue until the group is satisfied the story is completely edited. This should take approximately 30-40 minutes. The "Copy Editing for Attribution & Quote Formatting Key" has the corrected story.

NOTE: Teach students how to coach and correct their peers if they see something was done incorrectly. Teachers should also coach students how to encourage and give hints, not answers, to their peers if they become stuck or lack anything to edit.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Show students Slide 12 and have them submit in the manner appropriate for the teacher to be graded. Slide 13 has the corrected sample story.

References

Froke, P., & Bajak, F. (2020). *The Associated Press Stylebook*. Basic Books.

Strunk, W., & White, E. (2000). *The Elements of Style*. Allyn & Bacon.

Punctuating a Direct Quote

ATTRIBUTION & QUOTE FORMAT

Attribute After the First Sentence

Your attribution — who said the quote — should come at the end of the first sentence and **only** the first sentence. Do not attribute after every sentence in the same quote block.

Quotation Marks

Quotation marks always go around exactly what the person said. If words are in quotation marks, they are a signal the person said exactly those words.

All punctuation goes **INSIDE** quotation marks. All periods, commas, etc. all appear inside the quotation marks.

Spaces

Watch out for extra spaces! Punctuation should always hug the word to its left except the first quotation mark of a sentence, which hugs the word to its right.

Model

“This is the first sentence of my quote,” teacher Smart E. Pants said. “The second quote goes here. The third goes here if there is one.”

Comma

At the end of the *first* sentence, use a comma and quotation marks rather than a period. (.....*enjoyed it,*”). Your attribution adds to the end. (...*it,*” **he said.**)

Period

Put a period at the end of every sentence. That means after the attribution and at the end of any other sentences in the quote.

Attributing Names

ATTRIBUTION & QUOTE FORMAT

Use First and Last Names Always

On the first reference to a person, always use their first and last name. Many share the same last name. By using both names, you give people a concrete idea of who said what and being more accurate. This applies to teachers as well. That means you need to find their first name as well and ask them how they spell it.

Give Them a Title

A title might be a job, official position, or just describing who they are and why they matter to the story. Some people may have more than one title; so include the relevant one, or both if they both matter. For example Principal Richard Penny may be called principal at your school, but is “concert attendee” elsewhere to prevent readers thinking, “Why do I care about their opinion?”

Title Then Name

When attributing, it's always title then name: *junior Abby Lee*; *choir member Alex Sanchez*; *history teacher Janey Jackie*; *Principal Kenny Smitts*.

EXCEPTION: When the description is way too long, then: *Gerry Scot, director of research and innovation at the University Center for Strategic Studies*.

It is hard to read when reversed.

Model

“This is the first sentence of my quote,” **teacher Smart E. Pants** said. “The second quote goes here. The third goes here if there is one.”

Always Said

ATTRIBUTION & QUOTE FORMAT

Title-Name-Said

Always use “said” when referencing something someone said in a quote.

Write “said” **AFTER** the title and name: *freshman Molly Winters said*.

EXCEPTION: If the person's title is super long: *said Gerry Scot, director of research at the Center for Strategic Studies*.

Avoid Editorializing

Attribute any facts & opinions not falling into very common knowledge. In addition, avoid describe how someone said something (“Winters laughed” instead of “said”). You **can** add a comma after the attribution then add clarification or detail of how they said something: *freshman Molly Winters said, laughing at her situation with a tear in her eye*

According to

Documents can't talk. Prefer “according to” in this case when citing non-human things.

Model

“This is the first sentence of my quote,” teacher Smart E. Pants **said**.

Second References

ATTRIBUTION & QUOTE FORMAT

Last Name Only

Once you have said the person's title and first name on first reference, you don't have to again for the rest of the article. Readers are smart enough to figure out who you mean...unless...

Unless More than One of the Same Name

The exception is if more than one source in the same story share the same last name. If so, use the full name for both people on all reference to avoid confusion.

Model

Math teacher **Smart E. Pants** said something like this.

“This is the first sentence of my quote,” **Pants said**.

Courtesy Titles

ATTRIBUTION & QUOTE FORMAT

Avoid

Courtesy titles are verbally said as a sign of respect: Mr., Ms., Mrs., Dr., Miss. However, they can be messy. Is she married? You have to ask irrelevant questions just to put a few letters no one cares about in front of their name.

GENDER-NEUTRAL LANGUAGE:

The AP Stylebook recommends using gender-neutral language anyway. Sources identifying as non-binary, transgender or somewhere else on the gender spectrum are put in the awkward position of choosing a courtesy title they don't recognize and awkward for the reporter forced to pry into people's personal lives.

Model

Math teacher Smart E. Pants said something like this.

“This is the first sentence of my quote,” **Pants said**.

Example Quote Worksheet

ATTRIBUTION & QUOTE FORMAT

Learn It, Then Fix It!

Use copy editing marks (p. 519 in the Stylebook) to make corrections as you learn new corrections. After learning all rules about attribution and quote formatting, write it correctly in the space provided below.

Says Mrs. Martha May, the Spanish teacher, she will be attending the upcoming Food & Family Festival.

The festival is one of the few times of year my family gets to spend quality time outside. Usually, it is too hot with small children to do anything for a lengthy amount of time outdoors. smiled Mrs. Martha May, Spanish teacher.

Group Version

Write your final version of the sentence and quote paragraphs below.

Copy Editing for Attribution & Quote Format

Use your knowledge of attribution, quote formatting, and the Associated Press Stylebook to identify and correct the errors in the story below. Use copy editing symbols (shown on p. 519) to make the corrections. There are FOUR corrections per paragraph to look up.

Student Council to host city beautification project

Members of the Cityville **Highschool student council** decided to spruce up the city with a new clean-up project in the downtown square starting **Tues.**, Feb. **15th**.

"Downtown used to be the hub of the city for so many years," **Senior** and Student Council **president** Marci Gray said. "Now, **its** just a dump and **grave yard** for struggling small businesses. Worse than that, its just dirty."

the plan involves the collective effort of all the clubs, organizations and sports on campus. Student Council **Member** Joshua Browne hopes all of the groups can form a **masive** walk across the downtown square to pick up trash, pull weeds, and **re-paint** the signage and other fixtures to freshen up the area's visual appeal.

"To get people to support small businesses, they have to want to walk and enjoy **Downtown** again." Browne said. "I don't **fell** welcome in the heart of the **City**. It is a massive eyesore."

Browne got the **idae** after Cityville **city council** members recognized the problem at last month's meeting. Members ended up creating a new **taskforce** to come up with a **re-vitalization** plan. Mayor Lee Durr said the Student Council project fit right in to the vision he has for the area.

"A city is only as good as **it's** people," Durr said. "These **High-School** students are showing the community what **reel** service can look like. In all honestly, the students are going to save us a significant amount of thyme getting downtown back to **were** it was."

The downtown square was **1st** constructed in the **1920's** as a way to centralize the town's economy. Cityville was a logging community at the time and the shops and services were scattered around by all the **company's** until downtown brought them all **to gether**, according to the city's historical record.

"When people turn 100, there is an **awl** around them and they are protected at all costs," Gray **stated**. "Downtown is just over **100-years-old** and we've just abandoned it to **dye**. It's about time we stepped in to do what others clearly have failed to do."

Copy Editing for Attribution & Quote Format Key

Use your knowledge of attribution, quote formatting, and the Associated Press Stylebook to identify and correct the errors in the story below. Use copy editing symbols (shown on p. 519) to make the corrections.

Student Council to host city beautification project

Members of the Cityville **High School Student Council** decided to spruce up the city with a new clean-up project in the downtown square starting **Tuesday**, Feb. **15**.

“Downtown used to be the hub of the city for so many years,” **Senior** and Student Council **President** Marci Gray said. “Now, **it’s** just a dump and **graveyard** for struggling small businesses. Worse than that, its just dirty.”

The plan involves the collective effort of all the clubs, organizations and sports on campus. Student Council **member** Joshua Browne hopes all of the groups can form a **massive** walk across the downtown square to pick up trash, pull weeds, and **repaint** the signage and other fixtures to freshen up the area’s visual appeal.

“To get people to support small businesses, they have to want to walk and enjoy **downtown** again,” Browne said. “I don’t **feel** welcome in the heart of the **city**. It is a massive eyesore.”

Browne got the **idea** after Cityville **City Council** members recognized the problem at last month’s meeting. Members ended up creating a new **task force** to come up with a **revitalization** plan. Mayor Lee Durr said the Student Council project fit right in to the vision he has for the area.

“A city is only as good as **its** people,” Durr said. “These **high-school** students are showing the community what **real** service can look like. In all honestly, the students are going to save us a significant amount of thyme getting downtown back to **where** it was.”

The downtown square was **first** constructed in the **1920s** as a way to centralize the town’s economy. Cityville was a logging community at the time and the shops and services were scattered around by all the **companies** until downtown brought them all **together**, according to the city’s historical record.

“When people turn 100, there is an **awe** around them and they are protected at all costs,” Gray **said**. “Downtown is just over **100 years old** and we’ve just abandoned it to **die**. It’s about time we stepped in to do what others clearly have failed to do.”

Rationale

Timeliness is one of the key news values any journalist knows. It makes sense that knowing how to properly format times is a must-have skill for any journalist. There are many usage, abbreviation and punctuation rules when it comes to writing times and when to reference them. The better you know the rules, the faster you get with copy editing and writing.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn the proper ways to reference time in writing.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will copy edit work using my knowledge of time reference styles in the AP Stylebook.

Goals for Understanding

Students will demonstrate when and how to include

- Days of the week & dates
- Months
- Time of day
- Years, decades & centuries

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in one, 45-minute class period with students split into groups of four.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Time Instructional Cards" cut for each group
- "Time Practice Cards", printed front and back & cut for class
- "Copy Editing for Time" and key for each student
- Class set of AP Stylebooks, physical or web-based. This lesson was designed using the 2020-2022 Associated Press Stylebook.

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the correct version the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have group members each pull out one of the four "Time Instructional Cards". They should read silently for 1-2 minutes and individually complete the activity at the end of each card. Then, they should talk in a round-robin format—each student explaining (not reading) their card's instructions to the other students, as well as the example they found. Each student should have 1-2 minutes to do this. The other students can take notes or just remember the information in the card.

After students read the four tip cards, pass out the "Time Practice Cards"—one to each student. They will engage in a mix-pair-share activity: Students will mix around the room (make them actually mix) and pair up with someone. The pair should ask each other the question on their card and answer. If they got it wrong, the other student should coach them to the right answer, not tell them the right answer right away. Talk with students about how to help one another if they see a student struggling. Then, have them mix-pair-share again with someone they have not already paired with. They should do this for about 5-10 minutes or until the class has roughly cycled through everyone. Students then return to their seats. This assignment can also be done with the stand-up, hand-up, pair-up method.

Hand out the "Copy Editing for Time" worksheet. Students should take turns, one at a time, making one edit to the story JUST for time elements using copy editing marks, then pass it on to the next group member until it is completely edited.

Once they have finished, have groups edit the story using the SCAN-UP method and the AP Stylebook. They should continue until the group is satisfied the story is completely edited. This should take approximately 15-20 minutes. The "Copy Editing for Time Key" contains the corrected story with errors highlighted.

Slides 5 & 6 have a recap of all concepts.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have them do the activity on Slide 7.

References

Froke, P., & Bajak, F. (2020). *The Associated Press Stylebook*. Basic Books.

Strunk, W., & White, E. (2000). *The Elements of Style*. Allyn & Bacon.

Time of Day

TIMES

Numerals, Not Words

Time is always written as a numeral, never as a word. It's 5 *p.m.* not *five p.m.*

a.m. & *p.m.*

When you include *a.m.* or *p.m.* to signify time of day, use periods after each letter. Lowercase and never use all caps.

Avoid Unless Needed

There is no need to cite the specific time something did or will happen unless that is vital for readers to understand the context of the story. Morning, night, afternoon, etc. work well to get the idea across if it is simply to describe the time.

Don't Be Too Specific

Again, unless necessary, round the times to whole or half hours. Use *just after 10 a.m.* rather than *10:12 a.m.*

Range of Times

Same half of day: 5-7 *p.m.*

Different half of day: 5 *a.m.* to 7 *p.m.*

Noon & Midnight

Never use 12 *a.m.* and 12 *p.m.* Use either noon (12 *p.m.*) or midnight (12 *a.m.*): *The race will start at noon.*

Avoid midnight if it can be confusing about the day of the week something took place.

o'clock

Avoid unless part of a quote. When you use, it is (numeral) *o'clock* and mention the time of day: 4 *o'clock in the afternoon*; Monday morning at 3 *o'clock*

Cut Redundancy

You don't need to say: *It was Tuesday afternoon at 5:30 p.m.* Instead say: *...Tuesday at 5:30 p.m.* Or: *...Tuesday afternoon at 5:30.*

Fix It!

The car crashed Monday morning at exactly twelve am and was cleared by three am. Traffic was jammed until sixoclock in the morning.

Days of the Week & Dates

TIMES

Spell It Out

There is never a reason to abbreviate a day of the week. Ever.

Capitalized

Days of the week are proper nouns and should be capitalized.

Dates

Numerals only; don't use -st, -nd, -rd, or -th: Feb. 10, Oct. 9, Dec. 14, May 17

Use Alone Only When Within 7 Days in Print Publications

If your newspaper goes to print on a Monday and the event happened Friday, you can say, *"Theater performed the play on Friday."*

But if it was three months ago, you need to include the full date in this format & punctuation: *Friday, Oct. 5* (Day, Month Date)

Use Full Date in Online Publications

Readers may find an article online weeks, months or years later. Include the full date online to avoid confusion down the road: *Friday, Oct. 5*

Fix It!

Published online & print: Monday, Feb. 3

Prom will take place friday february seventh.

Months & Abbreviations

TIMES

Capitalize

Months are proper nouns and should be capitalized every time.

Spell Out Months Less than 6 Characters

March through July will never, never, never be abbreviated. Never.

Abbreviate the Others With Specific Dates

The only time you abbreviate a month is when it is with a specific date and more than five characters: *Tuesday, Dec. 4*

ABBREVIATIONS: Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.

NOTE: Spell out all months when just with the year and not a date. Examples: *November 2023, January 1998*

Fix It!

The organization had its first meeting in Feb. 2021 and will host a fundraiser on Wednesday, Mar. 4. The goal is to raise enough money to attend the district convention next year on Thursday, September 20.

Years, Decades & Centuries

TIMES

Use When Not Using Current Year

Readers will assume the dates you use are for the current year. Only use the year when you are referencing a previous or future year from the one you are in.

Decades

Proper format: 1960s or '60s

Centuries

Lowercase & spell out numbers less than 10 unless part of a proper noun: 21st century, the first century, 20th Century Fox

Fix It!

The best example of classic Americana was the architecture of the 1920's. Architects still cite influence from other 19 Century designers all the way through the pop art phase of the 50's. This year, the group will give an award for innovative design Wednesday, Jan. 4, 2022.

Copy Editing for Time Worksheet

AP STYLEBOOK UNIT

Use your knowledge of time elements, attribution, quote formatting, and the Associated Press Stylebook to identify and correct the errors in the story below. Use copy editing symbols (shown on p. 519) to make the corrections. Each paragraph has FOUR errors.

First homecoming parade set for next month

Students, faculty and staff will have the chance to show off their school spirit in a historic new way in october. During Tuesday morning's announcements at 8 am., Principal Dr. Jeff Sticks states Cityville High School is preparing for its first-ever homecoming parade

"This was a surprise for everyone, and intentionally so," said Sticks. "this school has been through so much in the last five years." "We just wanted to find a time where we could go crazy as a community and have a time not to worry"

the news lit social media on fire with excitement. by 8:17 pm. on tuesday, #CityvilleHoCo was trending on Twitter, Instagram and TikTok locally.

"I think I was one of the first people to post to my account about the parade." said person with more than 2,300 followers on Instagram and freshman Lindsay Bergman. "I had about 700 likes before I even got home at four-o-clock. Numbers aren't everything, but the vibe just hit different this time; people care about us now".

Constance Bergman, a student who is a junior, said she was always jealous of other schools having a tradition like the parade but never expected it to actually happens. the last time the high school had a similar event was in the 1950's, but ended during the late 60's due to lack of interest.

Bergman says: " Cityville has never really had school spirit. Individually, people recognize the work the school does for the community, but having a parade might mean the Town comes together for positive."

The cheerleaders will be in charge of organizing the parade, which is scheduled to take place from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 23 in the downtown square right before the homecoming game. Organizations that want to participate have until 12 pm on monday, Oct. 11 to submit their float application.

"We want this to not be a onetime thing. City ville really is a great place to live, work and learn. I hope this is the start of something that last's forever and unifies our town for the better." said Sticks.

Copy Editing for Time Worksheet Key

AP STYLEBOOK UNIT

Use your knowledge of time elements, attribution, quote formatting, and the Associated Press Stylebook to identify and correct the errors in the story below. Use copy editing symbols (shown on p. 519) to make the corrections.

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"This was a surprise for everyone, and intentionally so," **Sticks said**. "**This** school has been through so much in the last five years. **We** just wanted to find a time where we could go crazy as a community and have a time not to worry."

The news spread lit social media on fire with excitement. **By 8 p.m.** on **Tuesday**, #CityvilleHoCo was trending on Twitter, Instagram and TikTok locally.

"I think I was one of the first people to post to my account about the parade," said freshman Lindsay Bergman, **who has more than 2,300 followers on Instagram**. "I had about 700 likes before I even got home at **4 o'clock**. Numbers aren't everything, but the vibe just hit different this time; people care about us now."

Junior Constance Bergman said she was always jealous of other schools having a tradition like the parade but never expected it to actually **happen**. The last time the high school had a similar event was in the **1950s**, but ended during the late **'60s** due to lack of interest.

"Cityville has never really had school spirit," **Constance Bergman said**. "**Individually**, people recognize the work the school does for the community, but having a parade might mean the **town** comes together for positive."

The **cheerleaders** will be in charge of organizing the parade, which is scheduled to take place from **5-6:30 p.m.** on Friday, Oct. 23 in the downtown square right before the homecoming game. Organizations that want to participate have until **noon** on **Monday**, Oct. 11 to submit their float application.

"We want this to not be a **one-time** thing," **Sticks said**. "**Cityville** really is a great place to live, work and learn. I hope this is the start of something that **lasts** forever and unifies our town for the better."

Card 1

Answer

Change 3 PM to 3 p.m.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 2

Answer

Change seven to 7.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 3

Answer

Change the hyphen to "to"..

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 4

Answer

Change 12 p.m. to noon.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 5

Answer

Change 8-o'clock to 8 o'clock.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 6

Answer

Eliminate p.m. or night.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 7

Answer

Remove the -nd from 22nd.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 8

Answer

Spell out Tuesday.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 9

Answer

Say "around 11 p.m." (don't use specific time).

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 10

Answer

Abbreviate November.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 11

Answer

Spell out April.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 12

Answer

Capitalize July and May.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 13

Answer

Lowercase "Century".

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 14

Answer

Change 1980's to 1980s and 60's to '60s..

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 15

Answer

Remove 2022.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 3

Question

The basketball game tournament is scheduled to last from 7 a.m. - 8 p.m. next Thursday.

Card 2

Question

Carl Havlock and his friends will leave for the trip at seven in the morning.

Card 1

Question

The band will practice in November starting at 3 PM every Wednesday.

Card 6

Question

He said the delivery would arrive by 8 p.m. Monday night at the latest.

Card 5

Question

The time struck 8-o'clock when the first light of Friday morning fell through the window.

Card 4

Question

Stephanie Brown showed up to practice about 12 p.m. Tuesday and did not see anyone.

Card 9

Question

Police said the burglar broke in Monday at 11:27 p.m. while the family was asleep.

Card 8

Question

Jessica Smith said for all FFA members to show up Tues., March 10 for a meeting.

Card 7

Question

The football team is scheduled to kickoff the homecoming game at 7 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 22nd.

Card 12

Question

It was not until July that Mark Rony realized he left his backpack at school since May.

Card 11

Question

The fact that the mural was put up before Wednesday, Apr. 12 was amazing to everyone.

Card 10

Question

When the church opened its doors Sunday, November 14, all the members cried tears of joy.

Card 15

Question

Earlier this year, the culinary arts served breakfast to military veterans Wednesday, March 12, 2022.

Card 14

Question

The last time the city hosted its music festival was in the late 1980's with the theme: the Rocking 60's.

Card 13

Question

The Civil War was the bloodiest war of the 19th Century and any other war the United States fought in.

Rationale

Spelling is tricky. English is tricky. Knowing the common spelling mistakes and how to correct them is important in reducing typos, and editing and writing quickly.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn the common types of spelling errors and ways to spot and correct them.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will edit copy for publication using spelling and other style rules I have learned.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Using the wrong vowel & consonant
- Transposing double vowels & letters
- Extra & missing letters
- Similar word confusion
- Using a dictionary & Stylebook

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in two, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four, but can be done in one period depending on class length.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Spelling Instructional Cards" cut for each group
- "Example Spelling Worksheet" for every student
- "Copy Editing for Spelling" and key for each student
- Class set of dictionaries, physical or electronic.
- Class set of AP Stylebooks, physical or web-based. This lesson was designed using the 2020-2022 Associated Press Stylebook.

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the correct version the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Each group should have a different stack of "Spelling Instructional Cards" than the other groups. Every member in the group will have the same card. (i.e. Group 1 will all have Card 1 for every student. Group 2 has Card 2, and so on.) Each group should also have the "Example Spelling Worksheet".

Have every member of the group read their card silently for 1-2 minutes. Then, have them go in a round-robin format explaining the rule they learned from the card. Then, have the group members independently make the correction to the "Example Spelling Worksheet". After all members silently made their corrections, they should compare their edits to each other and coach those who did not understand the concept.

Once they all have the same edit, the group will choose one member to leave the group to teach another group what they learned and coach the new group to make the correction without telling the right answer. The group member who left should then return to their group and hear what the members learned from their visiting tutor and make the correction.

This pattern should continue with new group members leaving to serve as tutors until each group member has been a tutor at least once or until there are no new cards for that group to learn. Every group should have visited and learned from every other group by the end of class.

EXAMPLE: Sarah, Joseph, Tracy and Elaine are in Group 1. They all read Card 1 independently, discuss, make corrections independently, compare their edits, and coach. Then, Sarah goes to be the tutor for Group 2, telling them what her group learned while Sarah was away. Tamela, from Group 4, visits Joseph, Tracy and Elaine to tell them about Card 4. Sarah returns to the group. All four make the edits based off what Tamela told them after they fill Sarah in on the new information. Now, Joseph will visit Group 3 to start the process again. This continues until all groups have heard all four notes.

Show Slide 5, which has the correct answer and have groups compare the right answer to their corrections. If it is incorrect, have students discuss where and why they were incorrect and resolve where communication broke down.

Slide 6 recaps everything the students should have learned in the lesson.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have all students create three examples of each type of spelling error.

Day 2

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Have students compare and correct the spelling errors they made on Day 1 as a group.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY: Each group member should get one copy of the "Copy Editing for Spelling" worksheet. Students should take turns, one at a time, making one edit to the story for attributions and/or quote formatting using copy editing marks, then pass it on to the next group member.

Once they have finished, have them stand up to show they are complete. Then, have groups edit the story using the SCAN-UP method and the AP Stylebook. They should continue until the group is satisfied the story is completely edited. This should take approximately 30-40 minutes. The "Copy Editing for Spelling Key" has the corrected story.

NOTE: Teach students how to coach and correct their peers if they see something was done incorrectly. Teachers should also coach students how to encourage and give hints, not answers, to their peers if they become stuck or lack anything to edit.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Show students Slide 7 and have them submit in the manner appropriate for the teacher to be graded. Slide 8 has the corrected sample story.

References

Froke, P., & Bajak, F. (2020). *The Associated Press Stylebook*. Basic Books.

Strunk, W., & White, E. (2000). *The Elements of Style*. Allyn & Bacon.

Using the Wrong Letter: Sownds ryght tu mi

SPELLING

Writing Like We Talk

People that struggle with spelling tend to type words the way they sound. There are words that sound the same (called homophones) and even letters that sound the same depending on the word — c and s, i and e, e and a, and so on.

When looking for spelling errors look for words that might have that issue.

At First

Use a dictionary or AP Stylebook for every word you are not sure of the spelling. You should never guess at a spelling.

Vowels

Examples of words using the wrong vowel:

- definately instead of definitely
- dependant instead of dependent
- privelege instead of privilege
- ridiculous instead of ridiculous
- seperate instead of separate

Consonants

Examples of words with the wrong consonant (non-vowel):

- concensus instead of consensus
- supercede instead of supersede

Fix It!

The trayn left the stashon on
the way to cee the diffirent
countrycide. The passingers all felt
the car shaik around bifore they
screemed for their mommys.

Transposing Letters: Deosn't qiute raed corretcly

SPELLING

Transposing

This means to flip the order of letters.

Double Vowels

If there are two different vowels side by side, look it up to see if it is correct or transposed.

Examples of this:

- guage instead of gauge
- neice instead of niece
- wierd instead of weird
- recieve instead of receive

Other Words

Typing quickly easily leads to transposing letters, especially on really small, large and complicated words and names, as well as at the end or middle of words:

- teh instead of the
- wlle instead of well
- neighbrohood instead of neighborhood
- wheelbarwo instead of wheelbarrow
- Stephen instead of Stephen
- numbres instead of numbers

Fix It!

The trian left the statoin on the wya
to see the diffirenet countryisde. The
passengres all felt the car and their
brians shkae aruond before they
screamed for their mommeis.

Extra & Missing Letters: A litle typoo neever hrt

SPELLING

Repeating Consonants

Sometimes people accidentally add extra consonants (non-vowel letters), or add them because they believe they should be in the word.

- innoculate (extra n)
- harrass (extra r)
- occassion (extra s)

Extra Vowels & Ends

This error usually comes with the way the word is pronounced.

- mischievious instead of mischievous
- judgement instead of judgment
- publically instead of publicly
- too instead of to
- choose stead of chose

Silent & Missing Letters

Then there are words that have missing letters by accident or because they are silent and the writer doesn't know.

- cooly/wooly instead of coolly/woolly
- now/new instead of know/knew
- rythm instead of rhythm

Fix It!

The mane was embarrassed of failuure.

Confusion with Similar Words: Eye sea et write their!

SPELLING

Homophones

These are words that sound the same as other words. Computerized spell checks will not catch these mistakes! You have to know the differences. When the words sound alike, we easily make mistakes.

For example, baloney is foolish talk. Bologna is a region of Spain and bologna is the deli meat. They all sound the same.

Commonly Confused

- too: In addition
- to: Indicate action or direction
- there: Location
- their: Possession
- they're: They are
- accept: to agree or receive
- except: not including
- your: you possess it
- you're: you are

Fix It!

The women aloud the seamstress
to altar her dress. Butt the cut she
maid was bazaar, causing the
woman to loose her mind at the
cite of the grizzly seen.

Use your knowledge of spelling, time elements, attribution, quote formatting, and the Associated Press Stylebook to identify and correct the errors in the story below. Use copy editing symbols (shown on p. 519) to make the corrections. Each paragraph has FOUR errors.

Librarian bans food, drink from library during lunches

Due to the recent number of spills, stains and other damgaes to school property, food and drinks will no longer be aloud in the library during lunches starting Mon. Librarian Paige Turner said students were not treating the area with respect, causing custodians to have to work until 12 a.m. or later.

“You have to draw a line somewhere,” Turner said. “The damage to the books was getting out of hand. Sum got spaghetti sauce in books and others spilled soda on the carpet; we had to get it all pooled up because of the mold.”

In sum, Turner said teh cost of damages alredy exceeded \$4,000, which will have to come from the school’s general fund. However, that muuch money may mean fewer field trips and other school-funded proejects.

Hopefully this is a wake-up call for the student body,” said Principal Terry O’Carry. “If we can’t treat the building with respect, we half to put the hammer down. The repairs have to come from somewhere”

Studnets like sophomore Mary Martin used the library at lunch and our sad that they can’t go any longer. She said their should have been a ban on indivdual students instead.

“I get why they shut it down, but it went to far,” Martin says. “They easily could have kicked out just those kids that where causing issues. The rest of us were just trying to find a nice place to eat with freinds.”

Senior Ryan Naur said he was won of the students who damgaed property, but said administrators are making a bigger deal out of the damage than they shood.

“I actualy did the responsible thing by showing the librarian where I dropped a little milk on my book,” Naur said. “It wasn’t like they had to throw the hole book away though. We whipped it up and it was all good to go.”

Turner hopes by sprign break, the library wil be back open during lunches from 11:30 AM-1:30 PM.

“There’s nuthing wrong with being comfortable and hanging out in the libarry,” Turner said. “That’s what I want the library to bee. I just want there to be a library for students to hang out in nad not let it be treated like a giant trash can.”

Copy Editing for Spelling Key

AP STYLEBOOK UNIT

Use your knowledge of spelling, time elements, attribution, quote formatting, and the Associated Press Stylebook to identify and correct the errors in the story below. Use copy editing symbols (shown on p. 519) to make the corrections. Each paragraph has FOUR errors.

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Due to the recent number of spills, stains and other **damages** to school property, food and drinks will no longer be **allowed** in the library during lunches starting **Monday**. Librarian Paige Turner said students were not treating the area with respect, causing custodians to have to work until **midnight** or later.

“You have to draw a line somewhere,” Turner said. “The damage to the books was getting out of hand. **Some** got **spaghetti** sauce in books and others spilled soda on the carpet; we had to get it all **pulled** up because of the mold.”

In sum, Turner said **the** cost of damages **already** exceeded \$4,000, which will have to come from the school’s general fund. However, that **much** money may mean fewer field trips and other school-funded **projects**.

“Hopefully this is a wake-up call for the student body,” Principal Terry O’Carry **said**. “If we can’t treat the building with respect, we **have** to put the hammer down. The repairs have to come from somewhere.”

Students like sophomore Mary Martin used the library at lunch and **are** sad that they can’t go any longer. She said **there** should have been a ban on **individual** students instead.

“I get why they shut it down, but it went **too** far,” Martin **said**. “They easily could have kicked out just those kids that **were** causing issues. The rest of us were just trying to find a nice place to eat with **friends**.”

Senior Ryan Naur said he was **one** of the students who **damaged** property, but said administrators are making a **bigger** deal out of the damage than they **should**.

“I **actually** did the responsible thing by showing the librarian where I **dropped** a little milk on my book,” Naur said. “It wasn’t like they had to throw the **whole** book away though. We **wiped** it up and it was all good to go.”

Turner hopes by **spring** break, the library **will** be back open during lunches from 11:30 **a.m. to** 1:30 **p.m.**

“There’s **nothing** wrong with being comfortable and hanging out in the **library**,” Turner said. “That’s what I want the library to **be**. I just want there to be a library for students to hang out in **and** not let it be treated like a giant trash can.”

Example Spelling Worksheet

SPELLING

Learn It, Then Fix It!

Use copy editing marks (p. 519 in the Stylebook) to make corrections as you learn new corrections. After learning all four of the common spelling errors, write it correctly in the space provided below.

The vetrinary medisine clas will oppen a knew daycare for doges starting Wednseday. Awl faculty adn staff members wheel be able too drop of man's best friend in the mourning before scool.

"We our exited too be a part off the school cutlure," the class's teahcer Jennifer Miter siad. "They took thyme too guage the interest level facuulty had and we definately saw a knead."

Group Version

Write your final version of the sentence and quote paragraphs below.

Rationale

Capitalization is a victim of text messaging. Over time, we sort of forgot what should and shouldn't be capitalized. It is more than just "capitalize what the important words are" because society forgot what is and is not important grammatically.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn the proper times to capitalize words.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will copy edit work using my knowledge of capitalization in the AP Stylebook.

Goals for Understanding

Students will demonstrate when and how to capitalize including

- Beginnings of sentences
- Proper nouns
- Derivatives
- Formal titles before a name

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in one, 45-minute class period with students split into groups of four.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Capitalization Instructional Cards" printed and cut for each group
- "Capitalization Quiz Cards", printed front and back & cut out
- "Copy Editing for Capitalization" and key for each student
- Class set of AP Stylebooks, physical or web-based. This lesson was designed using the 2020-2022 Associated Press Stylebook.

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the correct version the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have group members each pull out one of the four cards explaining how and when to reference time. They should read silently for 1-2 minutes and individually complete the activity at the end of each card. Then, they should talk in a round-robin format — each student explaining (not reading) their card's instructions to the other students, as well as the example they found. Each student should have 1-2 minutes to do this. The other students can take notes or just remember the information in the card.

After students read the four tip cards, pass out the "Capitalization Quiz Cards" — one to each student. They will engage in a mix-pair-share activity: Students will mix around the room (make them actually mix) and pair up with someone. The pair should ask each other the question on their card and answer. If they got it wrong, the other student should coach them to the right answer, not tell them the right answer right away. Talk with students about how to help one another if they see a student struggling. Then, have them mix-pair-share again with someone they have not already paired with. They should do this for about 5-10 minutes or until the class has roughly cycled through everyone. Students then return to their seats.

Hand out the "Copy Editing for Capitalization" worksheet. Students should take turns, one at a time, making one edit to the story for attributions and/or quote formatting using copy editing marks, then pass it on to the next group member until it is completely edited.

Slide 5 has a recap of the lesson concepts.

Once they have finished, have them edit the story using the SCAN-UP method and the AP Stylebook. They should continue until the group is satisfied the story is completely edited. This should take approximately 15-20 minutes. The "Copy Editing for Capitalization Key" contains the corrected story with errors highlighted.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have them do the activity on Slide 6.

References

Froke, P., & Bajak, F. (2020). *The Associated Press Stylebook*. Basic Books.

Strunk, W., & White, E. (2000). *The Elements of Style*. Allyn & Bacon.

Copy Editing for Capitalization

AP STYLEBOOK UNIT

Use your knowledge of capitalization, spelling, time elements, attribution, quote formatting, and the Associated Press Stylebook to identify and correct the errors in the story below. Use copy editing symbols (shown on p. 519) to make the corrections. There are FOUR errors per paragraph including at least one capitalization error.

Hurricane floods school; shuts classes down

Cityville high school students will be out of school until Wednesday, Sept. 25 after hurricane Frank caused a torrent of rain to flood the school Thursday. About three dozen employees and students were trapped in the building for several hours with only emergency power until being evacuated at 1:29 pm.

"we shouldn't have been here," Sophomore James Smith says. "The district made a bad call canceling school so late in the morning. Everyone out here new going to school was a bad idea, why didn't they?"

The call was maid by superintendent Kurt Knoll about 20 minutes before school started. He said the data the district got showed the storm was knot as bad as it was because the storm ended up turning West at the last minute.

"If we knew it was as bad as it actually was, there's know way we would have let children go to School," Knoll said. "Our priority as a district is safety first, even before education. We're sorry for what happend, but we made the call as soon as we realized the danger of the situation"

The District will be hiring a contrcting firm to repair teh 1100, 1200 and 1500 hallways that flooded during the storm. Estimates to have the building repaired show it fully operational again by march of next year or earlier.

Associate Principal of operations Nancy Kahn said, "The plan is to get classes back in their rooms as soon as we can. Right now, Cosmetology doesn't even have access to electricity and she has to teach still. We know this whole situation is a pain in the but."

There are other probelms that have come from the hurricane's sudden appearance. Some students like Senior Barbara klein said they have found mold growing from there desks and ceilings in random spots around the school.

"I don't blame the campus for something that mother nature did," she stated. "However, it definately is gross. The air will be dangerous and it could lead to the school shutting down if they don't get it to gether."

As of pres time, there were no indications that the District planss to shut down the campus, but is planning on performing a deep cleen over the upcoming holiday.

Copy Editing for Capitalization Key

AP STYLEBOOK UNIT

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"We shouldn't have been here," **sophomore** James Smith **said**. "The district made a bad call canceling school so late in the morning. Everyone out here **knew** going to school was a bad idea, why didn't they?"

The call was **made** by **Superintendent** Dr. Kurt Knoll about 20 minutes before school started. He said the data the district got showed the storm was **not** as bad as it was because the storm ended up turning **west** at the last minute.

"If we knew it was as bad as it actually was, there's **no** way we would have let children go to **school**," Knoll said. "Our priority as a district is safety first, even before education. We're sorry for what **happened**, but we made the call as soon as we realized the danger of the situation."

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"I don't blame the campus for something that **Mother Nature** did," she **said**. "However, it **definitely** is gross. The air will be dangerous and it could lead to the school shutting down if they don't get it **together**."

As of **press** time, there were no indications that the **district plans** to shut down the campus, but is planning on performing a deep **clean** over the upcoming holiday.

Beginnings of Sentences

CAPITALIZATION

Start It Off Right

As a result of text messaging, capitalization has become something that we need to consciously think about.

The first letter of EVERY sentence gets capitalized. Every. Single. Time. If you see a period at the end of a sentence, the next letter after that gets capitalized.

This also goes for quotes. Just because there is a quotation mark doesn't mean the first letter doesn't get capitalized.

Capital letters are partly a signal to readers that a new idea has begun.

Model

There are many people that deserve the award, but none more than junior Abigale Razer. She saved the lives of two dozen firefighters.

"I'm just as surprised as y'all that I saved them," she said. "I was honestly just in the right place at the right time."

Fix It!

police chief Derek Webber said there was one fatality, But the rest were lucky to be alive.

"this crash site is a mess," He said. "it's a wonder anyone walked away from this alive."

Proper Nouns & Names

CAPITALIZATION

Proper Nouns

Always capitalize. Proper nouns are poorly described as "the important words." They are the official name of something: people, animals, businesses, organizations, etc.

Look in the AP Stylebook for every noun (at first) to see if it is a proper noun. Brand names can be especially tricky!

Informal Nouns

If it just describes the noun, lowercase it.

Model

The two baseball players enjoyed their time at the **World Series** including playing **Ping-Pong** with two **Astros** players.

"I even got them to sign my bat," sophomore **Ricky Rickerson** said. "They really know how to treat their audience in **Houston**."

Fix It!

The Senior left early for his job at sonic where he worked late. Eventually, he went home to do his Government homework on the Environmental Protection agency.

Derivatives

CAPITALIZATION

What Are They?

Some words we use are related to a proper noun. They derive (come from) the other word, making them a derivative

EXAMPLES: English class, Hispanic man, Latina woman, Franciscan friar

Except

Some became so commonly used that the derivative got dropped. Check the Stylebook or dictionary for these.

EXAMPLES: french fry, manila envelope, vulcanize, bohemian lifestyle

Model

The debate team members generally feel they excel in classes like **English**, government and economics, but struggle in courses like physics, math, and foreign languages like **German**, **Chinese** and **Spanish**.

NOTE: debate team, government, economics, physics, math, foreign languages all get lowercased because they are not proper nouns nor derivatives.

Fix It!

While Amy Juarez's favorite class is Psychology, she has a special place in her heart for spanish.

"I'm a proud Latina," She said. "Knowing your roots are important and mine stretch back to spain."

Only Formal Titles Only Before a Name

CAPITALIZATION

Formal vs. Informal

Formal title is "one that denotes a scope of authority, professional activity or academic activity" (p. 298): *Sen. Catherine Cortez*, *Dr. Benjamin Spock*, *retired Principal Colin Morukawa*

Informal titles simply just describe the person's occupation or classification: *junior Sally Smith*, *teacher Janice Lovely*, *janitor Billy Higgins*, *astronaut Lizbeth Pas*

Model

The group started with **Principal** Peggy Houser, who later resigned before math **teacher** Barry Stiles took over.

"Both were great, but we just love Stiles," **senior** Reka Ovat said.

Fix It!

When Veterinarian Jeff Yarborough told Freshman Ethan Stock that his dog was healed, Coach Dan Jamm saw a smile return to Stock's face.

Card 1

Answer

Capitalize "the"

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 2

Answer

Capitalize "next"

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 3

Answer

Capitalize "the"

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 4

Answer

Capitalize "brown"

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 5

Answer

Capitalize "ford" but not truck

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 6

Answer

Capitalize "apple's"

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 7

Answer

Lowercase: football, homecoming and game

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 8

Answer

Lowercase "members"

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 9

Answer

Lowercase "police officers"

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 10

Answer

Lowercase "church"

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 11

Answer

Capitalize "latin american"

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 12

Answer

Capitalize "mark rony"

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 13

Answer

Capitalize "US" but not "history teacher"

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 14

Answer

Capitalize "mayor"

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 15

Answer

Lowercase culinary arts

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 3

Question

the basketball game tournament is scheduled to last from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. next Thursday.

Card 2

Question

next week, Carl Havlock and his friends will leave for the trip at 7 in the morning.

Card 1

Question

the band will practice in November starting at 3 p.m. every Wednesday.

Card 6

Question

He said the delivery of apple's iPads would arrive by 8 p.m. at the latest.

Card 5

Question

The time struck 8 o'clock when the first light of Friday morning struck his ford truck in the driveway.

Card 4

Question

Stephanie brown showed up to practice about noon on Tuesday and did not see anyone.

Card 9

Question

Cityville Police Officers said the burglar broke in Monday about 11 p.m. while the family was asleep.

Card 8

Question

Jessica Smith said for all FFA Members to show up on Tuesday, March 10 for a meeting.

Card 7

Question

The Football team is scheduled to kickoff the Homecoming Game at 7 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 22.

Card 12

Question

It was not until July that mark rony realized he left his backpack at school since May.

Card 11

Question

The fact that the mural honoring latin american leaders was put up before April was amazing to him.

Card 10

Question

When the Church opened its doors on Sunday, Nov. 14, all the members cried tears of joy.

Card 15

Question

Earlier this year, the Culinary Arts class served breakfast to military veterans on Wednesday, March 12.

Card 14

Question

The last time the city hosted its music festival was in the late 1980s, according to mayor Lee Durr.

Card 13

Question

The Civil War was the bloodiest war of the 19th century, us history teacher Lerna Lott said.

Rationale

Some words are long...very long. Other times, long-ish words get used often in a story. The AP Stylebook allows some of these words be abbreviated to help save space while still being clear.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn how and when to use abbreviations.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will copy edit publication copy for proper abbreviations.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate abbreviations for

- Acronyms
- Political, military & courtesy titles
- Addresses & No.
- Avoiding alphabet soup

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in one, 45-minute class period with students split into groups of four.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Abbreviation Pair Check Practice" & Key worksheets for each student
- "Copy Editing for Abbreviations" worksheet printed for all students (and key if you prefer)
- Class set of AP Stylebooks, physical or web-based. This lesson was designed using the 2020-2022 Associated Press Stylebook.

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the correct version the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: All group members should grab one of the "Abbreviation Instructional Cards" and read independently for 1-2 minutes. They should then go in a round-robin explaining their card and walking the group members through the examples they had to fix until everyone agrees and understands. This should take 1-3 minutes depending on how correct the student was to begin with.

Hand all students the "Abbreviation Pair Check Practice" sheet, which contains 10 questions. The group should be randomly split into two partnerships. Partner A will complete a question on the sheet followed by Partner B doing the same. Both then check each other's work. After these two questions, they should trade papers with the other set of partners and check their work, which are the same questions. The group and pairs should continue doing this until all 10 questions are answered and the group feels confident they are correct. The "Abbreviation Pair Check Practice Key" has the right answers.

EXAMPLE: Sarah, Joseph, Tracy and Elaine are in Group 1. Sarah and Elaine are paired together. Sarah completes problem No. 1 and shows Elaine who checks it. Then the roles switch for No. 2. After No. 2, they trade with Joseph and Tracy and all four critique the answers, coaching if they are wrong. The pairs move on to Nos. 3 and 4 to repeat the process until the paper is complete.

Use Slide 5 to recap the information students should have learned.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have all students complete the "Copy Editing for Abbreviation Worksheet" individually. This may also be used as a warm-up or activity for the following day.

References

Froke, P., & Bajak, F. (2020). *The Associated Press Stylebook*. Basic Books.

Strunk, W., & White, E. (2000). *The Elements of Style*. Allyn & Bacon.

Acronyms

ABBREVIATIONS

Acronyms

These are letters that stand in place of a longer name like U.S. for United States. Most organizations must be spelled out completely the first time, then an acronym. Some acronyms are acceptable or required on first reference.

Check AP Stylebook every time for the punctuation and acceptability of acronym use: FBI, but Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB after).

Model

Scientists at **NASA** have to submit their needs to the **Congressional Budget Office** annually. Then, the **CBO** creates a budget.

Fix It!

The man first got acquired immune deficiency syndrome before it turned into the human immunodeficiency virus, according to the CDC.

Political, Military & Courtesy Titles

ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviated Titles

POLITICAL TITLES: These are abbreviated and capitalized BEFORE a name only.

- **GOVERNOR:** Gov.
- **LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR:** Lt. Gov.
- **REPRESENTATIVE:** Rep.
- **SENATOR:** Sen.

Gov. Rachel Uso and Lt. Gov. Martha Mae shook hands with opponents Rep. Kim Garry and Sen. Marco Revuelta.

MILITARY/POLICE TITLES: They are always capitalized and abbreviated before a name only. See "Military Titles" in the AP Stylebook for the complete listing.

COURTESY TITLES: Avoid using Mr., Mrs., or Ms. If your publication uses them, capitalize and place a period after.

Doctor is Dr. before a name for medical doctors. Some schools do for academic titles like those with a Ph.D. or Ed.D.

Dr Pepper has no period in its brand.

Fix It!

When Army colonel Gerry Atric announced his run for office, U.S. representative Kerry Tin announced her bid as well.

Addresses & Other Abbreviations

ABBREVIATIONS

Addresses

When using a full address — not when referencing the street name alone — ONLY these get abbreviated:

- **AVENUE:** Ave.
- **BOULEVARD:** Blvd.
- **STREET:** St.

EXAMPLES

- 1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
- 12 Brown Road
- Main Street
- Broken Dreams Boulevard
- 854 Main St.
- 90 Broken Dreams Blvd.

Ranks

Use No. # when describing a rank.

EXAMPLE: The team was ranked No. 1 in the nation heading into playoffs.

Model

The **No. 1** party was going to be on **Park Street** but moved to **17 Windy Road**. The other party is at **20 Prime Blvd**.

Fix It!

Police responded to Maple St. early Saturday morning while firefighters arrived at 16 Maple Street by mistake. The fire raged down New York ave. until reaching its final stop at 3248 Hoppity Street in downtown Cityville.

Avoid Alphabet Soup

ABBREVIATIONS

Isn't It Delicious?

Alphabet soup is, in this case, not the tomato broth with pasta letters; it is paragraphs littered with acronyms and abbreviations most readers won't understand or would be confused by. Some acronyms are OK, just not many.

EXAMPLE: After President David Smitty said the CDC, WHO and NIH all submitted budget recaps to the CBO, OAG, DEA and FBI officials scanned the documents for PAC activity. DNC and RNC officials signed off on NDAs to prevent leaks.

Model (Fixed)

After President David Smitty said the **major health organizations** submitted budget recaps to **Congress**, **federal legal agencies** looked through the documents for **political donations**. **Republican and Democratic Party** leaders agreed **not to discuss** anything to prevent leaks.

NOTE: All the letters were rewritten to be more reader friendly and direct.

Fix It!

In a joint press conference with the DEA, FBI and CIA officials announced they arrested Big Company CEO Jane Johnson for withholding COVID-19 vaccines to NATO and EU allies, which is a violation of the UN treaty.

Abbreviation Pair Check Practice

AP STYLEBOOK UNIT

Learn It, Then Fix It!

Use copy editing marks (p. 519 in the Stylebook) to make corrections to each sentence. Each has one abbreviation error.

Problem 1

NRA is headquartered in Fairfax, Virginia, not far from the National Security Agency's own headquarters.

Problem 2

The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization director spoke to the U.N. General Assembly on Thursday before his trip.

Problem 3

When the Cityville Police Department promoted Capt. Richard Kingsley, his wife — Sergeant Kelley Kingsley — was on hand to pin the award herself.

Problem 4

Superintendent Larry Falso proudly named his deputy administrator as Doctor Patty Oswald.

Problem 5

The worst thing Mr Kenny Lisbony ever did was care too much, according to Ms. Lacey Miller.

Problem 6

The new high school campus will be located two blocks down from Knowledge Street at 123 ABC Dr.

Problem 7

Those wanting to attend the swearing-in ceremony will have to park on Power Blvd. then walk to 13 Congress Ave. to watch the events unfold.

Problem 8

Junior Alberto Gonzalez is now the number one tennis player in the state after winning the state title.

Problem 9

U.S. ambassadors to the U.N. will speak with UNICEF directors about providing IOUs to the IRS to pay for food voucher programs to NATO member countries struggling with famine.

Problem 10

Lonnie Risinger — a CHS dropout — got his GED diploma through CNA testing company before getting his BA in acting from NYU, MS in accounting from BYU and an MFA from GWU.

Abbreviation Pair Check Practice Key

AP STYLEBOOK UNIT

Learn It, Then Fix It!

Use copy editing marks (p. 519 in the Stylebook) to make corrections to each sentence. Each has one abbreviation error.

Problem 1

National Rifle Association is headquartered in Fairfax, Virginia, not far from the National Security Agency's own headquarters.

Problem 2

The **UNESCO** director spoke to the U.N. General Assembly on Thursday before his trip.

Problem 3

When the Cityville Police Department promoted Capt. Richard Kingsley, his wife — **Sgt.** Kelley Kingsley — was on hand to pin the award herself.

Problem 4

Superintendent Larry Falso proudly named his deputy administrator as **Dr.** Patty Oswald.

Problem 5

The worst thing Mr. Kenny Lisbony ever did was care too much, according to Ms. Lacey Miller.

Problem 6

The new high school campus will be located two blocks down from Knowledge Street at 123 ABC **Drive**.

Problem 7

Those wanting to attend the swearing-in ceremony will have to park on Power **Boulevard**, then walk to 13 Congress Ave. to watch the events unfold.

Problem 8

Junior Alberto Gonzalez is now the **No. 1** tennis player in the state after winning the state title.

Problem 9

REWRITTEN FOR THREE FEWER ACRONYMS: **United States** ambassadors to the **United Nations** will speak with UNICEF directors about providing **loans** to the IRS to pay for food voucher programs to NATO member countries struggling with famine. (Any version of reducing alphabet soup is acceptable.)

Problem 10

REWRITTEN FOR FOUR FEWER ACRONYMS: Lonnie Risinger — a **high-school** dropout — got his GED diploma through **a** testing company before getting his BA in acting from **New York University**, MS in accounting from **Brigham Young University** and an MFA from **George Washington University**. (Any version of reducing alphabet soup is acceptable.)

Use your knowledge of abbreviations, capitalization, spelling, time elements, attribution, quote formatting, and the Associated Press Stylebook to identify and correct the errors in the story below. Use copy editing symbols (shown on p. 519) to make the corrections. There are FOUR errors per paragraph including at least one abbreviation error.

Journalism class revolts against teacher over AP Stylebook lessons

The beginning journalism students at Cityville Highschool have had enough of grammer and Associated Press Stylebook lessons. During class Thurs. at 9:16 am, 19 students all began throwing their AP Stylebooks at teacher Penelope Panic after a lesson on abbreviations — the sixth lesson in a row on writing.

"I signed up for this class because I thought all we would be learning about is photography", freshman Ima Brat said. "Because she dared to teach us how to right, I threw a book at her. I didn't expect anyone else to do it until they were all flying and an asst. principle came in."

Panic, in her 16th year as the advisor, won Journalism Teacher of the Year from the JEA last year. She stated learning how to write and do it well consistently will make the students' lives easier in teh long run.

Panic said: "It doesn't matter if you talk to a photographer, vidoegrapher, designer, reporter or even advertising executive, the message is all the same: Writing is the number one skill. Trust me, I understand that learning to write isn't always the most fun or flashy. That does not, however, give them the excuse to toss around books at 9 oclock."

Students reportedly tied Panic up and hung her trademark cardigan from a broom stick and waived it around like a victory flag. all students were involved except for Junior Jorge Juarez, who was at the Dr.

"I got back to school and heard loud noises," He said "I sneaked through the back door to the class and it was sheer choas. I tried my best to help, but they smacked me with the cardigan as well and shoved me out the door, which is when Lieutenant (Dan) Hickey ran in."

Principal Doctor Jeff Sticks is asking four anyone with informaiton about the attack to notify there grade principal.

"If chs students think it is funy to throw a book at a teacher, we can throw the book right back at them," Sticks says, speaking metaphorically. "Between you and me, It was kind of funny. Don't write that down. No, really, don't."

students and others who may have information can call or text 555-555-5555, mail letters anonymously to 7355 Dodo Avenue or contact Cityville police department in person at its Coffee Blvd. bureau.

Copy Editing for Abbreviations Key

AP STYLEBOOK UNIT

Use your knowledge of abbreviations, capitalization, spelling, time elements, attribution, quote formatting, and the Associated Press Stylebook to identify and correct the errors in the story below. Use copy editing symbols (shown on p. 519) to make the corrections. There are FOUR errors per paragraph including at least one abbreviation error.

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“It doesn’t matter if you talk to a photographer, **videographer**, designer, reporter or even advertising executive, the message is all the same: Writing is the **No. 1** skill,” **Panic said**. “Trust me, I understand that learning to write isn’t always the most fun or flashy. That does not, however, give them the excuse to toss around books at **9 o’clock**.”

Students reportedly tied Panic up and hung her trademark cardigan from a **broomstick** and waived it around like a victory flag. **All** students were involved except for **junior** Jorge Juarez, who was at the **doctor**.

“I got back to school and heard loud noises,” **he** said. “I sneaked through the back door to the class and it was sheer **chaos**. I tried my best to help, but they smacked me with the cardigan as well and shoved me out the door, which is when **Lt.** (Dan) Hickey ran in.”

Principal **Dr.** Jeff Sticks is asking **for** anyone with **information** about the attack to notify **their** grade principal.

“If **CHS** students think it is **funny** to throw a book at a teacher, we can throw the book right back at them,” Sticks **said**, speaking metaphorically. “Between you and me, **it** was kind of funny. Don’t write that down. No, really, don’t.”

Students and others who may have information can call or text 555-555-5555, mail letters anonymously to 7355 Dodo **Ave.** or contact Cityville **Police Department** in person at its Coffee **Boulevard** bureau.

Rationale

The AP Stylebook has a happy little rule about how and when to spell out numbers and when to use numerals. Then there are about a thousand exceptions. We need to know the most important ones to edit and write quickly without relying on the book.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn when to spell out numbers and when to use numerals.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will edit copy based off my knowledge of rules regarding numbers & other AP Style rules.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Spell out 0-9 in most cases
- Use numerals 10+ in most cases
- Use numerals always for: addresses, ages, dollars and cents, measurements, millions and billions, temperature, and percentages
- Spell out always: At the beginning of sentences, fractions less than one, casual mentions

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in one, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Numbers Instructional Sheets", cut for each group
- "Numbers Quiz Cards" printed front and back, then cut
- "Copy Editing for Numbers" for every student & Key at teacher preference
- Class set of AP Stylebooks, physical or web-based. This lesson was designed using the 2020-2022 Associated Press Stylebook.

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the correct version the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have group members each pull out one of the four cards explaining how and when to reference time. They should read silently for 1-2 minutes and individually complete the activity at the end of each card. Then, they should talk in a round-robin format — each student explaining (not reading) their card's instructions to the other students, as well as the example they found. Each student should have 1-2 minutes to do this. The other students can take notes or just remember the information in the card.

After students read the four tip cards, pass out the "Numbers Quiz Cards" — one to each student. They will engage in a mix-pair-share activity: Students will mix around the room (make them actually mix) and pair up with someone. The pair should ask each other the question on their card and answer. If they got it wrong, the other student should coach them to the right answer, not tell them the right answer right away. Talk with students about how to help one another if they see a student struggling. Then, have them mix-pair-share again with someone they have not already paired with. They should do this for about 5-10 minutes or until the class has roughly cycled through everyone. Students then return to their seats. This assignment can also be done with the stand-up, hand-up, pair-up method.

Hand out the "Copy Editing for Numbers" worksheet. Students should take turns, one at a time, making one edit to the story for just for numbers using copy editing marks, then pass it on to the next group member until it is completely edited.

Once they have finished, have them edit the story using the SCAN-UP method and the AP Stylebook. They should continue until the group is satisfied the story is completely edited. This should take approximately 15-20 minutes.

Show Slide 5 to recap the instruction.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have them do the activity on Slide 6.

References

- Froke, P., & Bajak, F. (2020). *The Associated Press Stylebook*. Basic Books.
- Strunk, W., & White, E. (2000). *The Elements of Style*. Allyn & Bacon.

Rule of Thumb: Spell These Out

NUMBERS

0-9

In general, when you use a number from 0-9, you should spell it out. This includes 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and so on. Typically, this is just when you are describing a quantity of some item.

- *The girl had four cats.*
- *The dog ate a third turtles.*
- *Peggy hit Jon Boy nine times.*

Model

Everyone was excited to see the

first performance of the play.

The **three** lead actresses all

said the **second** act is the best.

Fix It!

Mary had 3 little lambs whose fleece was white as snow. They followed her everywhere she went — including 2 stores downtown — and people looked like she had grown a 3rd head.

Rule of Thumb: Use Numerals for These

NUMBERS

10 and above

In general, when you use a number from 10 or larger, you should use the numeral. This includes 10th, 33rd, 145th and so on. Typically, this is just when you are describing a quantity of some item.

- *The girl had 34 cats.*
- *The dog ate 19 turtles.*
- *Peggy hit Jon Boy 198 times.*

Model

Everyone was excited to see the

13th performance of the play.

The **11** lead actresses all said the

10th was the best yet.

Fix It!

When thirty-two chickens crossed the road to get to the other side, it caused a fourteen car pile up that lasted for ninety-seven hours.

Exceptions to Spelling Out 0-9

NUMBERS

Always Numerals For

- **ADDRESSES:** 4 Maple St.
- **AGES:** She was 4 years old.
- **MONEY:** \$5 and 3 cents
(\$ goes before the amount.)
- **MEASUREMENTS:** 6-yard line, 5 feet tall, 7 pounds, 4 inches away
- **MILLIONS & BILLIONS:** 9 million, 1 billion, 3 trillion
- **TEMPERATURE:** 16 degrees Fahrenheit, minus 6 degrees Celsius
- **PERCENTAGES:** 4%
(Use % instead of "percent")
- **FRACTIONS LARGER THAN ONE:** 1 ¾, 2 ½, 13 ¼
- **YEARS AT THE BEGINNING OF A SENTENCE:** 2023 is on track to be the best year ever.

Model

The **8**-year-old lives at **6** Bronson St. where he ran a drink stand, charging **5** cents for a cup and **\$1** for bottles, which made him a **8%** profit. Each cup was held at **4** degrees Celsius and weighed **8** ounces. He sold **1** million cups by his **9th** birthday. **2018** ended up being **1 ½** times better than 2017.

Fix It!

The quarterback — in his 1st year in the role — passed the ball only eight yards before it was intercepted, which decreased his pass rate by one percent. The opposing player ran before being taken down at the seven-yard line before two million fans on live TV. Fans watched the game for three dollars on pay-per-view. Two-thousand and twenty one marked the first year people could watch the game at home.

Exceptions to Using Numerals for 10 and Up

NUMBERS

Always Spell Out

- **AT THE BEGINNING OF SENTENCES:** *Fourteen police officers turned out for the trial.*
- **AMOUNTS LESS THAN ONE USING HYPHENS:** *The bill failed to get the two-thirds of votes to pass.*
- **CASUAL MENTIONS:** *It feels like this is taking a thousand years. You're just in it for the dollar.*

Model

Thirteen models walked up the stage to after making it **three-fourths** through Miss America.

"If you bet me **a billion dollars** I'd be here, I would have laughed," Miss Texas Carolyn Hat said. "There are **a million** girls out here that want **one-half** of what I get to experience. I'm so grateful."

Fix It!

29 sandwiches was all it took for Betty Belcher to call it quits in the contest. She didn't make it through ½ of the all-you-can-eat challenge before quitting.

"You couldn't get me to do that again for 1 million dollars," she said. "It would take 1,000 people to finish that."

Copy Editing for Numbers

AP STYLEBOOK UNIT

Use your knowledge of numbers, abbreviations, capitalization, spelling, time elements, attribution, quote formatting, and the Associated Press Stylebook to identify and correct the errors in the story below. Use copy editing symbols (shown on p. 519) to make the corrections. There are FOUR errors per paragraph including at least one numbers error.

Students jailed over assault on teacher

19 teenagers are feeling the sting a week after pelting their journalism teacher with books. Dist. attorney Roberto Garcia said the revolt the students lead “must be dealt with to teach the community a lesson.”

“I have 2 children myself,” said Garcia. “They know not ever to behave like that. We have to do everything we can to protect are teachers, especially since good teachers are harder and hardre to find.”

Journalism teacher Penelope Panic admitted herself to the hospital with four-inch cuts across her face and bruises over eight percent of her body, according to the police report. 2022 was the 1st year Panic said she ever had students take tissue with her lessons.

“Most students Love these because I try too be funny when I use examples,” Panic said. “Judgeing by their actions, this group just does not understand dry humor. I had a similar situation twelve years ago. They didn’t revolt though.”

Two-thousand and twenty-one’s Journalism Education Association’s teacher of the year Panic tried to convince the school not to press charges, but the school’s resource officer, Lieutenant Dan Hickey, did it anyway. He filed the report at 8 am the next day.

“these are my teachers and my students as much as anyone else’s,” Hickey barked. “I don’t care who you are, no 1 acts immature and doesn’t end up behind bars on my watch”.

The students are charged with negilgent immaturity and — if convicted — will be sentenced to 15 and one-half years in the state jail system. It is their 1st criminal charge. The crime is considered to heinous for the juvenile-corrections system.

The students’ parents went to social media hoping to find two million donors of 10 dollars each to crowdfund their children’s bonds. They had just forty-six donors after 3 weeks.

“I’m begging anyone and everyone that will listen: Help us,” Freshman Ima Brat said through tears and snot bubbles “These adults have lost their minds; it’s insane. If you have a \$1 to spare, send it to my lawyer’s office at 7 No Chance Avenue in downtown Cityville. Even if it’s \$5 or 5 cents, I’ll take anything.”

Junior Jorge juarez, the only student not to join the fraye, will make up $\frac{3}{4}$ of the prosecution’s case as its sole witness aside form Panic.

“I hop those idiots learn their lesson,” he said. “There going to have to suffer through jail food. I hear they only give you three pounds of food every 2 days.”

Principal Doctor Jeff Sticks did not wish to comment on the “story written by the person who I told 2 times not to write down I thought it was funny kids threw books at their teacher. Oh, for the 3rd time, don’t write that.”

Copy Editing for Numbers Key

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“I have **two** children myself,” **Garcia said**. “They know not ever to behave like that. We have to do everything we can to protect **our** teachers, especially since good teachers are harder and harder **er** to find.”

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“Most students **love** these because I try **to** be funny when I use examples,” Panic said. “**Judging** by their actions, this group just does not understand dry humor. I had a similar situation **12** years ago. They didn’t revolt though.”

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“I’m begging anyone and everyone that will listen: Help us,” **freshman** Ima Brat said through tears and snot bubbles. “These adults have lost their minds; it’s insane. If you have **a dollar** to spare, send it to my lawyer’s office at 7 No Chance **Ave.** in downtown Cityville. Even if it’s \$5 or 5 cents, I’ll take anything.”

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Principal **Dr.** Jeff Sticks did not wish to comment on the “story **written** by the person who I told **two** times not to write down I thought it was funny kids threw books at their teacher. Oh, for the **third** time, don’t write that.”

Card 1

Answer

Nineteen: Spell out at the beginning

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 2

Answer

third: 0-9 spell out

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 3

Answer

seven: 0-9 spell out

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 4

Answer

17: 10+ use numbers

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 5

Answer

a dollar: spell out casual mentions

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 6

Answer

2022: years are always numbers...always

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 7

Answer

4: ages are numerals

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 8

Answer

1: always numerals for addresses

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 9

Answer

one-half: spell out fractions less than one

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 10

Answer

5: use numerals for measurements

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 11

Answer

\$5: use numerals for money

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 12

Answer

2: use numerals for measurements

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 13

Answer

9%: use numerals for percents

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 14

Answer

4: use numerals for degrees

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 15

Answer

3: use numerals for millions & billions

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 3

Question

Mike Mayors ate 7 carrots.

Mike Mayors ate seven carrots.

Card 2

Question

The train stopped its third time.

The train stopped its 3rd time.

Card 1

Question

Nineteen cats lived there.

19 cats lived there.

Card 6

Question

2022 is the best year ever.

Two-thousand, twenty-two is the best year ever.

Card 5

Question

Anyone have a dollar?

Anyone have a \$1?

Card 4

Question

The teacher fell 17 times.

The teacher fell seventeen times.

Card 9

Question

The bill failed to get one-half of the votes it needed to pass.

The bill failed to get $\frac{1}{2}$ votes it needed to pass.

Card 8

Question

Amy found the car at One Happy Ave.

Amy found the car at 1 Happy Ave.

Card 7

Question

The dog is 4 years old.

The dog is four years old.

Card 12

Question

Lassie, a 2-pound cat, slept.

Lassie, a two-pound cat, slept.

Card 11

Question

She paid \$5 for hot coffee.

She paid five dollars for hot coffee.

Card 10

Question

Jerry stopped 5 yards short.

Jerry stopped five yards short.

Card 15

Question

The band has three million fans.

The band has 3 million fans.

Card 14

Question

The temperature fell to 4 degrees.

The temperature fell to four degrees.

Card 13

Question

Her team gained nine percent back.

Her team gained 9% back.

Rationale

Journalism is all about objectivity, concision, accuracy, comprehending language, and engagement. Improper word use can confuse and confound all of these worthwhile goals.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn many important rules for word usage including tense, active voice, subject-verb agreement, perspective, and boring words.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will edit publication copy for word usage & AP Style.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Tense: Past, present, future
- Active vs. passive voice
- Subject-verb agreement & pronouns
- Boring words
- First- v. third-person voice

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in two, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four, but may be completed in one depending on class length.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Word Usage Instructional Sheets" cut for each group
- "Example Word Usage Worksheet" for each group
- "Copy Editing for Word Usage" for all students & key at teacher discretion
- Class set of AP Stylebooks, physical or web-based. This lesson was designed using the 2020-2022 Associated Press Stylebook.

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the correct version the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Each group should have a different stack of the "Word Usage Instructional Sheets" than the others. Every member in the group will have the same card. (i.e. Group 1 will all have Card 1 for every student. Group 2 has Card 2, and so on.) Each group should also have the "Example Word Usage Worksheet".

Have every member of the group read their card silently for 1-2 minutes. Then, have them go in a round-robin format explaining the rule they learned from the card. Then, have the group members independently make the correction to the quote using copy editing marks. After all members silently made their corrections, they should compare their edits to each other and coach those who did not understand the concept.

Once they all have the same edit, the group will choose one member to leave the group to teach another group what they learned and coach the new group to make the correction without telling the right answer. The group member who left should then return to their group and hear what the members learned from their visiting tutor and make the correction.

This pattern should continue with new group members leaving to serve as tutors until each group member has been a tutor at least once or until there are no new cards for that group to learn. Every group should have visited and learned from every other group by the end of class.

EXAMPLE: Sarah, Joseph, Tracy and Elaine are in Group 1. They all read Card 1 independently, discuss, make corrections independently, compare their edits, and coach. Then, Sarah goes to be the tutor for Group 2, telling them what her group learned while Sarah was away. Tamela, from Group 5, visits Joseph, Tracy and Elaine to tell them about Card 5. Sarah returns to the group. All four make the edits based off what Tamela told them after they fill Sarah in on the new information. Now, Joseph will visit Group 3 to start the process again. This continues until all groups have heard all five notes.

Show Slide 5, which has the correct answer and have groups compare the right answer to their corrections. If it is incorrect, have students discuss where and why they were incorrect and resolve where communication broke down.

Show Slide 6, which shows what they should have learned to pay attention to.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have all students complete the exercise on Slide 7. The answer is on Slide 8 for however the teacher prefers to review.

Day 2

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slide 9 of the Slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit in the same way as Day 1. Slide 10 has the correct answers.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY: Each group member should get one copy of the "Copy Editing for Word Usage" worksheet. Students should take turns, one at a time, making one edit to the story using copy editing marks, then pass it on to the next group member.

Once they have finished, have them stand up to show they are complete. Then, have groups edit the story using the SCAN-UP method and the AP Stylebook. They should continue until the group is satisfied the story is completely edited. This should take approximately 30-40 minutes. The "Copy Editing for Word Usage Key" has the corrected story.

NOTE: Teach students how to coach and correct their peers if they see something was done incorrectly. Teachers should also coach students how to encourage and give hints, not answers, to their peers if they become stuck or lack anything to edit.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Show students Slide 11 and have them submit in the manner appropriate for the teacher to be graded. Slide 12 has the corrected sample story.

References

Froke, P., & Bajak, F. (2020). *The Associated Press Stylebook*. Basic Books.

Strunk, W., & White, E. (2000). *The Elements of Style*. Allyn & Bacon.

Tense: Past, Present & Future

WORD USAGE

Get in the Action

Look at the verbs and the subjects they describe. Make sure they match the when. Don't say *running* if they *ran* or *will run*.

Present Tense

Something **is happening** now. Usually saved for narrative leads, caption action sentences, or ongoing actions.

Model

Fifteen racers **started** the 10-day Alaskan Dogsled Race yesterday. The competitors **are sledding** across 100 miles of tundra. They **will** finish in eight days, according to officials.

Past Tense

Something **happened**. Events that already occurred are written like this.

Future Tense

Something **will happen**. This is usually seen in preview stories of events.

Active vs. Passive Voice

WORD USAGE

Subject-Verb-Object

You have to know these grammar terms

- **SUBJECT**: noun doing the action
- **VERB**: the action
- **OBJECT**: noun the action is being done to

The man (subject) bit (verb) the dog (object). The cat (subject) laughed (verb) at the sight (object). His wife (object) was appalled by (verb) the act (subject).

Active Voice

When the subject goes before the verb and object. Prefer this unless the object is more important than the subject.

Passive is object before verb/subject.

WAY TO SPOT PASSIVE VOICE: If you see "was/is (verb)ed by", it is passive voice: *She was shocked by the fence.*

Instead, prefer: *The fence shocked her.*

NOTE: Passive voice is different from past tense. "*He was riding a bike.*" This is active voice but in past tense. "*The bike was being ridden by him.*" is past tense AND passive voice.

Model

ACTIVE: Congress passed the bill.

PASSIVE (avoid): The bill was passed by Congress.

Subject-Verb Agreement & Pronouns

WORD USAGE

It's a Numbers Game

All subject-verb agreement means is that the subject of the sentence and its verb describe the same number: singular or plural. Usually an issue in present tense.

- man sits/men sit
- cow moos/cows moo
- dog barks/dogs bark

It vs. They

- it/its: singular, for non-people and groups, teams and organizations
- they/their: plural for all
- who/whom: refers to people and animals with names
- that/which: refers to non-people

WRONG: The team took **their** break.

RIGHT: The team took **its** break, or the team **members** took **their** break.

Model

The **gymnasts** complained **they** were not getting enough rest. The **International Olympic Committee** changed **its** policy based on **their** suggestion. The **IOC** **looks** at the policy every year.

First-, Second- & Third-Person Voice

WORD USAGE

First-Person Voice

Save it for quotes: *I, we, our, me, mine, us*

Second-Person Voice

Save it for quotes: *you, your, yours, y'all*

Third-Person Voice

Preferred for all journalism writing: *they, it, its, which, that, them, he, she, the, their*

Model

The basketball team scored **its** first point of the year in **the** gym Friday.

"**We** have been looking forward to this all year," senior Billy Bobby said. "**You** have no idea."

Fix It!

Our marching band started auditions in our gym. If you are interested in auditioning, you should come see our band director Jeremy Close before we go on spring break next week.

Boring Words to Kill

WORD USAGE

Words to Kill

Unless in quotes, avoid using

- very: delete, adds no value
- that: rarely needed
- a lot: be more specific or delete
- things: be more specific or delete
- some: be more specific or delete

Model (Wrong)

The **very** angry woman said

that there were **a lot** of

things on **some** dishes.

Model (Fixed)

The angry woman said there were

seven roaches on **her**

dinner plate and glass.

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Student rebels convicted, sentenced in assault on teacher

The 19 students who throws a pile of books at their journalism teacher felt a book of another sort thrown at them Wednesday, Dec. 3. The class was sentenced by Judge Bollen Chayne to fifteen years in state jail for their role in the Nov. 2022 assault on Cityville High School teacher Penelope Panic.

“This is a tough lesson to learn,” Chayne said very bluntly. “Don’t engage in hooliganism and you won’t phil the stingy of my gavel. Enjoy your time in gel, delinquents.”

Freshman Ima Brat will act as the group’s chief spokesperson since the start of the criminal trail. The group was silent with a grin on their face as the judge reads out the verdict and sentence.

“They have no idea what they just did” Brat said to us reporters a crazed hunger in her eyes. “I got exactly what I wanted. The only way to take down the prison-industrial complecks has to be from the in-side.”

Journalism teacher Penelope Panic — fresh from an extended stay in the hospital following the attack — speaks on behalf of the students, hope she could sway the jury and judge to show a lot of common sense. She failed.

“Am I realy the only one who thinks this whole thing is crazy?,” she said on the witless stand. “These are just kids. Yes, they did some stupid stuf; but they are still children.”

District Attorney Roberto Garcia felt justice was served, spoken to me and other reporters as the nineteen former students filled onto the white bus bound for Cityville state jail.

“A few more kids finally of the street,” he states. “There is nothing worse than a community with to many kids running around acting a fool. Have you ever walked into a chuck e. cheese? Yikes.”

A primitive scream of joy was let loose by police officer Lt. Dan Hickey upon exciting the courthouse. Like Garcia, Hinkey was joyous about throwing the now-felons in “the big house.

“This is my house,” Hickey said that before he crushed a soda can on its fourhead. “Don’t mess with me in my hose.”

Principle Dr. Jeff Sticks feels that Panic should be jailed also for acting as the root cause of the thing.

“I wish we could throw that women and those like her in jail,” Sticks will say. “If you force kids to do things they don’t want to, what else do you expect? Only give kids things that like to do and wheel all be good. Dang it; that was meant to be off the record, okay? I didn’t know you were recording already. Turn that off.”

Copy Editing for Word Use Key

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Example Word Usage Worksheet

WORD USAGE

Learn It, Then Fix It!

Use copy editing marks (p. 519 in the Stylebook) to make corrections as you learn new corrections. After learning all rules about attribution and quote formatting, write it correctly in the space provided below. There are two of each of the types of word usage errors in the passage below.

A plane ticket was just bought by our very own history teacher
Matty Smith. He said that he plan to go to Holland with some other
teachers on a federal-grant-sponsored trip over its summer break.
The area was popularized by the movie “Weekend in Holland”.
“I’ve always wanted to visit that area,” Smith says to me. “The
pictures are so beautiful and so is the culture. Everyone should
have the chance to experience other cultures in their youth.”

Group Version

Write your final version of the sentence and quote paragraphs below.

Rationale

Periods ~ Commas. Semicolons-hyphens,,,exclamation points? Another murder victim of text messaging. Students need to understand when and where punctuation goes instead of sprinkling it broadly over their work or leaving it out completely.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn when and where to put the most important punctuation including apostrophes, periods, commas, quotation marks, semicolon, colon, hyphens, en dashes, em dashes, ellipses, and parentheses.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will copy edit publication copy using my knowledge of punctuation and other AP style.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate proper usage of

- Apostrophes: to show possession & contractions or omissions
- Periods: at the end of all sentences and abbreviations
- Commas: to separate items in a list, before “which” but not “that”, before and after appositive phrases, and to offset clauses. Also, to avoid using too many
- Quotation marks: around direct and partial quotes with punctuation on the inside, and around composition titles except for names of publications and religious works
- Semicolon: separating two complete sentences when they sound as one
- Colon: to introduce a list or idea
- Hyphens (-): to separate fractions, and compound modifiers (when before the noun they describe)
- En Dashes (–): between scores and votes of any kind
- Em Dashes (—): can be used in place of commas, parentheses and colons
- Ellipses: to show omission inside of a quote
- Parentheses: to clarify intent inside of a quote

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in one, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- “Punctuation Instructional Cards” cut for each group
- “Punctuation Pair Check Practice” for each student
- “Copy Editing for Punctuation” for each student
- Class set of AP Stylebooks, physical or web-based. This lesson was designed using the 2020-2022 Associated Press Stylebook.

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the correct version the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: All group members should grab one of the “Punctuation Instructional Cards” and read independently for 1-2 minutes. They should then go in a round-robin explaining their card and walking the group members through the examples they had to fix until everyone agrees and understands. This should take 1-3 minutes.

Hand all students the “Punctuation Pair Check Practice” sheet, which contains 10 questions. The group should be randomly split into two partnerships. Partner A will complete a question on the sheet followed by Partner B doing the same. Both then check each other’s work. After these two questions, they should trade papers with the other set of partners and check their work, which are the same questions. The group and pairs should continue doing this until all 10 questions are answered and the group feels confident they are correct.

EXAMPLE: Sarah, Joseph, Tracy and Elaine are in Group 1. Sarah and Elaine are paired together. Sarah completes problem No. 1 and shows Elaine who checks it. Then the roles switch for No. 2. After No. 2, they trade with Joseph and Tracy and all four critique the answers, coaching if they are wrong. The pairs move on to Nos. 3 and 4 to repeat the process until the paper is complete.

Recap the instructional sheets and information on Slide 5.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have all students complete the “Copy Editing for Punctuation Worksheet” individually. This may also be used as a warm-up or activity for the following day.

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Apostrophes & Quotation Marks: What Did They Say?

PUNCTUATION

Apostrophes ‘ ’

These show possession (except its), contractions (can't) and omissions (He yelled 'til he was told not to).

SINGULAR NOUN: add 's

PLURAL & PROPER NOUNS: add '

EXCEPTIONS: A's, B's, 7's, 1's

Quotation Marks “ ”

Use around direct and partial quotes to show someone said exactly that. Other punctuation goes on the inside.

Use apostrophes for quotes within quotes.

Use around composition titles, but **not** names of publications, religious or reference works. (Example on the right.)

Model

Time Magazine's article "How to Get Away With Murder" was on the members' must-read list. Tim Stevens' version of The Holy Bible was No. 3 behind William Shakespeare's "Macbeth". All earned straight 1's in the ratings.

Periods & Commas: Hold! Pause! Stop!

PUNCTUATION

Periods .

Always at the end of a sentence and abbreviations, and in between some acronyms. Never exclamation points!

Commas ,

Avoid too many in a sentence and splicing two sentences together. If both halves of the sentence have a subject and verb, there should be a period.

Used to separate items in a list except between the last two items unless it is otherwise confusing.

Use before "which" but not "that".

Use to separate numbers four digits or longer into sets of three: 1,000 -- 10,000 -- 900,000 --- 45,876

Used for appositive (renames the noun) and introductory phrases, and nonrestrictive clauses (descriptions not essential to the sentence).

LISTS: They ate everything in the pantry, kitchen **and** cabinets.

WHICH, NOT THAT: He hit the car, **which** was the only one out in the driveway.

APPOSITIVE: Jimena Carrillo, **the head basketball coach**, said she loves it.

INTRODUCTORY: **Essentially**, they want it. **Because of its high quality**, the item is greatly desired.

NONRESTRICTIVE: The boy, **who is the tallest**, won Most Popular Boy.

COMMA SPLICE (AVOID): The boy chased the girl, they fell down the hill.

COMMA SPLICE (FIXED): The boy chased the girl. They fell down the hill.

Semicolon & Colon: Let Me Introduce You

PUNCTUATION

Semicolon ;

Joins two complete sentences instead of a period if the sentences flow well together. Do not use a comma instead of this.

EXAMPLE: *The boy really wanted the dog; the girl saw that and gave it to him.*

Colon :

Use to introduce an idea or list.

The first letter after it is capitalized if the phrase after the colon is a complete sentence. Lowercase if not.

EXAMPLE: *The man had one thought: The bank had to be robbed. He needed a few items: rope, duct tape and a bag.*

Model

The circus has a worthwhile goal: **It** wants to make people laugh. Actors train for hours to make it work; this includes all their well-kept animal assistants: **horses**, camels and elephants.

Hyphen & the Dashes: We Need Space

PUNCTUATION

Hyphen -

Use to separate fractions, some prefixes and suffixes, and compound modifiers before the noun they describe.

- The blue-green car was two-thirds through the trip, all **off road**.
- The road-trip tradition to **reenact** '80s music videos went well.

En Dash –

Use between scores & votes.

- The baseball team defeated its longtime rivals in a 14–13 showdown.
- The bill failed to pass the House after a 300–135 vote.

Em Dash —

Can be used in place of commas, parentheses & colons.

- The woman had a lifelong goal — to be president. The idea — running for office — isn't far-fetched. She just needed a few people to help — her parents, friends and family.

Ellipses & Parentheses: I Need to Clarify

PUNCTUATION

Ellipses ...

Shows omission in a quote. Careful to not take a quote out of context.

Example: "That man saw me through the window," she said. "... I was really scared."

Parentheses ()

Use to clarify intent in a quote. Make sure you know what they are referring to.

Example: "(The defendant) saw me through the window," she said. "He looked away. I was really scared."

Model

"The last time **(NASA)** launched a shuttle was magical," astronaut Elsa Portillo said. "We all cheered and cried. ... I miss those days."

Use your knowledge of punctuation, word usage, numbers, abbreviations, capitalization, spelling, time elements, attribution, quote formatting, and the Associated Press Stylebook to identify and correct the errors in the story below. Use copy editing symbols (shown on p. 519) to make the corrections. There are FOUR errors per paragraph including at least one punctuation error.

19 students break out of state jail, enact revenge plot

The score between the city and a gang of hooligans is now 1—1. After 2 years in Cityville State Jail, the 19 former students sentenced for assaulting its teacher with paperback books have escaped, according to a Cityville PD press release.

“They are know longer children; they are — sort of — full-grown adults,” the Release states. “The group is probably led by its leader; Ima Brat. (omission) The public should consider them armed and extremely dangerous.”

The escape plan that allegedly took place Sunday, Apr. 7 as guards slept at their posts, In a twist of irony, Jail Warden Eaton Doe—Nutts said the gang carved 13 keys to fit their cells out of old books.

“We heard the scratching,” said Doe-Nutts. “We assumed they were just so dum they thought the books were scratch and sniff. In hindsight we probably should have figured it out when they said, “We’re busting out of here on Sunday, warden.” We just didn’t know what they meant.”

In order to project the teachers of Cityville High School, Lieutenant Dan Hickey sets up a wooden barricade at the front of the school the following day. He was up until after midnight Monday morning hammering away at the structure made of logs, a few trees, doors from journalism teacher Penelope Panic’s classroom, an old sled, and a cardboard box.

“Ain’t nobody getting though this fortress,” Hickey said while wearing a six-pound helmet made from hospital bedpans. “I’m not even letting the student’s through. The best way to let this School run is without students being here!”

Principal Dr. Jeff sticks blames Doe-Nutt’s failure on the craftyness of his former students and thought the city should just let them go.

“I had a change of heart after talking with the lady who taught them, you know the one,” Sticks stated. “They are just kids. They are definately not hiding in my basement either. Not at all. Noone should even go check to see because they are not there at all.”

Before the Gang escaped, Brat left a note written on the wall in what appeared to be made up of toliet water blended with ink, the note claimed “victory in war against the prison industrial complex.”

“We choose books as our weapon to start and end this war because of one notion, Books are knowledge and knowledge is power,” the note said. “We’re going to hide in the Sticks now, and we meant to capitalize that.

Copy Editing for Punctuation Key

AP STYLEBOOK UNIT

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“We **chose** books as our weapon to start and end this war because of one notion: Books are knowledge and knowledge is power,” the note **states**. “We’re going to hide in the Sticks now, and we meant to capitalize that.”

Punctuation Pair Check Practice

AP STYLEBOOK UNIT

Learn It, Then Fix It!

Use copy editing marks (p. 519 in the Stylebook) to make corrections to each sentence. Each has two punctuation errors.

Problem 1

The last time he earned all As, freshman Jack Less' mom bought him a 'really big cake' and a copy of "The Help".

Problem 2

Homecoming Queen Carrie Bucket gave the float straight 1s, saying "thats so pretty."

Problem 3

The Cityville Townsfolk won their first state championship! People jumped, hooted, and hollered in happiness.

Problem 4

When Polly Pocket became principal she never expected a gift, senior Jack O. Lantern gave her one anyway.

Problem 5

There is one sight worse than a murderer with a knife outside a shower; A dog eating chocolate

Problem 6

The school finally caved in, it bought equipment the class needed. hammers, lava lamps and a cage.

Problem 7

Once they finished the high flying kite, all they needed was approval; the vote failed 9—1.

Problem 8

Sophomore Grant Brian - the top of his class - said he wants a red—orange jacket for prom.

Problem 9

"There was something (in the car, I swear it," Lt. Dan Hickey said. "It was massive. (left out a quote) Weird."

Problem 10

After getting 100% on both the ACT and SAT, all Brennan Landry needed to do was relax.

"It was the hardest one for sure," he said. ".. I would do it all over again if I had to."

Punctuation Pair Check Practice Key

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Interviewing

Table of Contents

- LESSON ONE:** Types of Sources, pg. 2
- LESSON TWO:** Types of Questions, pg. 7
- LESSON THREE:** Writing & Ordering Questions, pg. 12
- LESSON FOUR:** Preparing for the Interview, pg. 17
- LESSON FIVE:** Conducting the Interview, pg. 20

Rationale

Student reporters need to know the types of sources they can and should collect information from. Journalists spend more of their time on the reporting side with sources than they do writing. Otherwise, we'd just call them writers. Knowing the types of sources will make a story stronger by having multiple sources to give credibility to the report.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn the types of sources journalists use.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will develop a source plan for a story idea.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Documents can be used as sources
- Using direct observations
- Use witnesses, audience members, experts and authority
- And trust, but verify, information from people who may have an axe to grind or something to gain

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in two, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four, but may be completed in one depending on class period length.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Sources Instructional Sheets" cut for each group
- "Source Group Worksheet" for each student
- "Sources Plan for Story" for each student
- "Axe to Grind Worksheet" cut into one strip for each student

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the correct version the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each group member pull one of the four "Sources Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts they learned on their card.

Then, hand students the "Source Group Worksheet" and explain the instructions. Students will each be the group's expert in one type of source and make a suggestion on the story idea for a source they could use to report on the topic.

Give students 1 minute to read Story Idea 1, write a suggestion for a potential source and pass their paper to the right. They should right the same name or type of person (if they don't know a name) on every paper in the group. By the end, each paper should have the same information in Story 1. They should conduct a round robin for each member to explain why they chose the source they did. If the group disagrees, they can coach the member to correct the mistake or to make their answer more specific.

Then, they repeat the whole process for Story 2, 3 and 4 — read, write & pass papers, discuss, coach if needed.

FAST GROUPS: If a group gets through the worksheet quickly. Have them go a second time, adding another in each category until all groups have finished.

EXAMPLE: Sarah, Joseph, Tracy and Elaine are in Group 1. Sarah will write all the observations, Joseph all the witnesses, Tracy all the experts, and Elaine all the documents. Each reads the topic, writes as specific a name or type of person they can interview, then pass around until all four papers have a complete Story Idea 1. They then discuss each choice before repeating Story Idea 2, 3 and 4.

DIRECT INSTRUCTION: Slide 5 covers the concepts students should've learned.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have all students complete the "An Axe to Grind" exit ticket.

Day 2

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Have each group go in a round robin to discuss their answers to the exit ticket from Day 1.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY: (Instructions on Slide 6) Have each student grab something to write with, paper/notebooks, and go to a classroom. They should ask the teacher for permission, stay for 15 minutes and document what they observe.

NOTE: Teach students how to politely ask a teacher to observe their classroom. They may be unaware.

When they come back, give them the "Source Plan for Story" and have them complete the worksheet.

After completing the worksheet individually, have students pass their paper around with other students writing additions, critiques, what they would cut, and other notes to help improve the newsworthiness and quality of the idea.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Students should make any corrections to their story idea pitch and turn it in.

References

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Documents: Read All About It

SOURCES

Paper Trail

Documents are any type of source written down somewhere. That can be a book, news article, government file, police record, meeting minutes, websites, academic articles, and much more. Unlike people, documents — once you have them — can't be taken back like words can. Though, they can be faked or inaccurate.

As Sources

Verified documents give us information & facts to beef up the credibility of the story, but also can serve as the source of story ideas. Public information can reveal plans to expand the school, what businesses are coming to town, and academic research related to hotly debated current events you may end up reporting on.

Think About It!

Story idea: Are more girls dress coded than boys?

What type of documents could you use to answer the story idea?

Observations: Use Your Eyeballs

SOURCES

Be There

Your senses are like a giant butterfly net catching information, ready for painting a picture for readers. Use these to spot stories, but also to add details in your reporting. You have to be there to do so.

What do you see? What did you hear? What did it smell and feel like? What did the food, water or air taste like?

No Citation Needed

With any piece of information, reporters should cite a source. However, observations need none if the reporter witnessed it directly. They are the source.

If a reporter saw two people jump out of a burning building, they can write that.

If you do this, just be sure you are right.

Think About It!

Story idea: Are more girls dress coded than boys?

What type of observations could you make to answer the story idea?

Witnesses & Audience: Power to the People

SOURCES

Humanity is the Heart

People are the core function of journalism. We report not just for people, but for our audience. The audience can be a tool in a journalist's toolkit. During natural disaster, media outlets can deputize readers as honorary journalists by asking for photos, description of damage, and sharing heartwarming and heartbreaking stories.

They Saw It First

Some audience members are also eye witnesses to a news event or were involved themselves. While they won't always give you the most clear-cut data, they usually give you the small details, sequence of events, emotion, opinion, and other vital parts to a news event that experts and authority don't always.

Think About It!

Story idea: Are more girls dress coded than boys?

What type of witnesses or members of the audience could you use to answer the story idea?

Experts & Authority: If You Know, You Know

SOURCES

Study for Your Life!

Professors, research institutions and other academics spend their lives to be experts on topics. Some perform research and studies. These are formal experts.

There are also informal experts — people who are super fans of TV shows, collectors, some hobbyists, and others whose experience drives expertise.

Who's In Charge?

Those in authority — people who have control or assigned to oversee areas — often have access to insider data, reasonings why certain policies and practices exist, and plans for the future.

Authorities, though, sometimes try to keep information from you or attempt to squash a story they don't like. Don't let them.

Think About It!

Story idea: Are more girls dress coded than boys?

What type of experts or authority figures could you use to answer the story idea?

Trust, But Verify

SOURCES

An Axe to Grind

Sources who have a bias against a story have an axe to grind — some reason they don't or do want the information published. If so, they may attempt to mislead, divert attention or straight up lie. You still have to interview people, even if you don't know their biases. All people are biased — even reporters; just be aware information they give needs fact checked. Trust, but verify.

Something to Gain

Other sources you should especially fact check are those who may benefit from information being published — the opposite of those with an axe to grind. Sometimes this is obvious, but not always.

Politicians, for example, cherry pick information to make their policies look best. They just don't tell you the bad stuff.

Think About It!

Story idea: Are more girls dress coded than boys?

What types of people would have an axe to grind or something to gain with a story answering this story idea?

Source Group Worksheet

NAME: _____

Instructions

Decide in the group who will come up with the idea for each type of source. You will specialize in one kind of source to recommend for the group's story ideas you were assigned below. You will fill out the source recommendation for Story 1, then pass to the next person and fill out the same spot on the sheet you are handed. This happens until all group members jointly complete Story 1.

Next, stop and discuss why each of you chose the sources you did and make any corrections the group feels needs changed. Continue this same process with the three other stories. By the time you are complete, you should have completed four story source plans and had four discussions with your group.

Story Idea 1 **Are students tardy to class less since the new bell schedule started?**

Observations

What observations could you make that help answer the premise?

Documents

What documents, websites or data could help answer the premise?

Witnesses/Audience

What witnesses or readers you interview could help answer the premise?

Experts/Authority

What experts or authorities could help answer the premise?

Story Idea 2 **How protected is the school district from cybersecurity threats?**

Observations

What observations could you make that help answer the premise?

Documents

What documents, websites or data could help answer the premise?

Witnesses/Audience

What witnesses or readers you interview could help answer the premise?

Experts/Authority

What experts or authorities could help answer the premise?

Story Idea 3 **How many students are choosing workforce over higher education?**

Observations

What observations could you make that help answer the premise?

Documents

What documents, websites or data could help answer the premise?

Witnesses/Audience

What witnesses or readers you interview could help answer the premise?

Experts/Authority

What experts or authorities could help answer the premise?

Story Idea 4 **What effect does depression have on academic success in school?**

Observations

What observations could you make that help answer the premise?

Documents

What documents, websites or data could help answer the premise?

Witnesses/Audience

What witnesses or readers you interview could help answer the premise?

Experts/Authority

What experts or authorities could help answer the premise?

Source Plan for Story

NAME: _____

Instructions

After making your observations in the classroom, use the worksheet below to develop a story idea and source plan for that idea.

Observations

What is **ONE** interesting observation you made about each below?

Location

What about the place you were at was interesting?

Teacher

What was interesting about the teacher?

Student Behavior

What was interesting about the way one or more students behaved?

Fashion

What was something interesting you noticed about what they wore?

Language

What was interesting about the way they spoke?

Interactions

What was interesting about the lesson, discussions or student interactions?

Story Idea

What story could you write inspired by your observations?

Inspired by the Location

IN THE FORM OF A QUESTION, what story would be interesting when thinking about where you observed?

Inspired by the People

IN THE FORM OF A QUESTION, what story would be interesting when thinking about the adults and/or students you observed?

CHOOSE ONE OF THE STORY IDEAS YOU MADE ABOVE.

Source Plan

What sources would help? Write a name/type of person in each box.

Observations

What observations could you make that help answer the premise?

Documents

What documents, websites or data could help answer the premise?

Witnesses/Audience

What witnesses or readers you interview could help answer the premise?

Experts/Authority

What experts or authorities could help answer the premise?

Collecting

How would you go about getting the interviews, data and observations?

Observations

What more could you observe to add to your story?

Documents

How will you obtain those documents? (Go with your first instinct if unsure.)

Witnesses/Audience

How will you locate or find these witnesses/audience members?

Experts/Authority

How will you find those experts? (Go with your first instinct if unsure.)

An Axe to Grind

NAME: _____

Consider This Scenario

You are assigned to report on the city's upcoming election for mayor. While asking around, the current mayor's opponent says they have information exposing the mayor as corrupt. Specifically, they show you documents from the mayor's official email account giving multimillion dollar construction projects to his brother. The emails appear to be real but are scanned copies of original emails. The opponent says he will help you out if he's elected.

Why would they give this information to you? What do they have to gain?

Write your response below.

Should you still investigate?

If so, why & how do you verify this is true? If not, why?

Write your response below.

An Axe to Grind

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Write your response below.

Rationale

Like any profession, there is a strategy to doing a job well. Journalists have to anticipate how sources may respond to questions, what their answers could be, and prioritize the information they need most. All of which first requires a basic understanding of the common types of questions and their purposes.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn about open- and closed-ended questions, leading questions, when to prefer closed-ended questions, and challenging questions.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will write questions for a story using the different types.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Closed-ended questions are ones with limited- or single-word answers,
- Open-ended questions require the source to provide longer answers,
- While we prefer open-ended questions, closed-ended questions get us some details and basic information we also need,
- Avoid leading questions that assume something not already established or known before or during the interview,
- And, some questions may force the interview to end that are challenging, such as questioning a person in authority's integrity to get a response to a claim or interviewing someone's loved one soon after they died.

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in two, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four, but may be completed in one depending on class length.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Types of Questions Instructional Cards" cut for each group
- "Types of Questions Practice Cards" cut for class
- "Types of Questions Practice Worksheet" for each student

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the suggested answer the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each group member pull one of the four "Types of Questions Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts they learned on their card.

Then, pass out the "Types of Questions Practice Cards" — one to each student. They will engage in a mix-pair-share activity: Students will mix around the room (make them actually mix) and pair up with someone. The pair should ask each other the question on their card and answer. If they got it wrong, the other student should coach them to the right answer, not tell them right away. Talk with students about how to help one another if they see a student struggling. Then, have them mix-pair-share again with someone they have not already paired with. They should do this for about 5-10 minutes or until the class has roughly cycled through everyone. Students then return to their seats. This assignment can also be done with the stand-up, hand-up, pair-up method depending on teacher preference.

Finally, have students read and complete the activity on the "Types of Questions Practice Worksheet" individually. They should completely fill out all 24 questions.

DIRECT INSTRUCTION: Show students Slide 5 to recap the information they should have learned.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have all students pick two questions they are unsure of if they got right and trade with a group member.

Day 2

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Hand students each of their "Practice Worksheets" back. Have groups review and discuss what a leading question is. Then, pass their paper to the right in their group. Have each group scan through each question the other person wrote, seeing if there are any leading questions. If so, have them make a suggestion about how to fix the problem.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY: Have students line up in order of who lives farthest to closest to campus. (This is for fun, but also helps them get to know one another more and randomize the group.) Divide the line into pairs. They will be interviewing each other.

Once students are paired, have them quickly name something they do for fun outside of school. Give them 2 minutes to discuss their hobby and have them return to their desks. They have 10 minutes to write at least 10 questions that they will interview the other person with to find out more information about why their partner likes the activity they described. Eight of them must be open-ended and two can be either open or closed ended depending on how little they know about the activity.

After 10 minutes, divide the remainder of the class in half and have the older of the pair interview the younger first. Then switch and let the other interview.

NOTE: This is a good time to introduce the idea of follow-up questions and the preferred method of recording interviews.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have students write one difficult experience they had with the interview they didn't expect and submit using the teacher's preferred method.

References

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Open-Ended: Longer Answers

TYPES OF QUESTIONS

Tell Me More

Open-ended questions force sources to provide longer answers — usually about opinion, analysis, experiences or emotion. They would not be answering the question if they answered in a word or two.

Why did you take the job? What do you remember about the experience? How did you end up in charge?

Why? Why? Why?

Sometimes people have a dry response, even to an open-ended question. Embrace your inner 4-year-old: Follow-up with a version of “why?” If you make people justify their first answer, you usually get a solid quote.

“It was good.” “Why was it good?” “I got to see all of my friends finally in one place.”

Ask It!

You’ve been assigned to write a story about the tennis captain resigning from the team.

What is an open-ended question you may ask them reflecting on their experience on the team?

Closed-Ended: One-Word Answers

TYPES OF QUESTIONS

Yep. Nope. Good. Bad.

Many cub reporters ask questions assuming the source will elaborate. Many do not. When you want to get good, juicy quotes, avoid closed-ended questions, which allow the source to get away with limited- or one-word responses.

“Did you enjoy the game?” is unsurprisingly met with “Yeah.” This is on the reporter, not the source.

Tricky, but Still Closed

There are questions that sometimes seem posed as open-ended that are still closed. “How did the team do?” may seem to be open. However, “good” is a correct response to answer the question fully.

To avoid this, ask questions with more detail to get the actual reaction you’re looking for. “What strategies did you hope the team would execute tonight?”

Ask It!

You’ve been assigned to write a story about the tennis captain resigning from the team.

What would a closed-ended question be that a reporter might ask, but wants a longer answer?

Avoid Leading Questions

TYPES OF QUESTIONS

Don’t Assume

Leading questions are ones that assume a fact never established in the first place. Lawyers famously use the example, “When was the first time you beat your wife?” without first establishing the person actually beat their wife first.

“Why don’t you like the dress code?” assumes the person has an issue with it when they may not.

Be Neutral

Think about your question: Am I assuming something about them I already don’t know? If so, rewrite the question to let them tell you the information, even if you are correct from the start.

“Why don’t you like the dress code?” becomes “What are your thoughts on the dress code?”

Ask It!

You’ve been assigned to write a story about the tennis captain resigning from the team.

What could be a leading question with a false assumption if you are asking the captain about their resignation from the team?

Fact-Finding Needs

TYPES OF QUESTIONS

Inquiring Minds Want to Know

Many beginning reporters mistake “prefer open-ended questions” (to get longer answers) with “NEVER ask closed-ended questions.” When you need simple answers, it’s OK to ask simple questions.

“When is the dance?” “Tuesday at 8 p.m.” This is important for people wanting to go.

Name of the Dog

Closed-ended questions actually increase the quality of storytelling when used intentionally. Journalists love to say “Get the name of the dog.” By asking tiny details, they help paint a mental picture.

“He walked his dog down the road.” becomes “He walked his 3-year-old poodle, Linda, two blocks down to the corner store on his work break.”

Ask It!

You’ve been assigned to write a story about the tennis captain resigning from the team.

What is a closed-ended question you should ask the captain regarding the story?

Challenging Questions

TYPES OF QUESTIONS

Too Much to Feel

Some situations — particularly sad or bittersweet ones — make otherwise normal questions hard to answer for sources. They could break down and cry to the point they may not be able to continue. This isn’t the journalist’s fault (usually).

Interviewing the mother of a student killed, a challenging question may be one that evokes a powerful memory of the dead.

“What will you miss most about them?” It is a question that will get lots of payoff, but forces the mother to face the permanence of death head on. Be patient and human.

Face the Facts

Other challenging questions may end the interview because the source doesn’t like the question, like confronting a politician about illegal use of taxpayer dollars.

Ask It!

You’ve been assigned to write a story about the tennis captain resigning from the team.

What is a challenging, but fair, question you may ask the captain about their resignation?

Card 1

Answer

Closed-ended question.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 4

Answer

Closed-ended question.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 7

Answer

Closed-ended question.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 10

Answer

Open-ended question.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 13

Answer

Open-ended question.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 2

Answer

Closed-ended question.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 5

Answer

Closed-ended question.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 8

Answer

Closed-ended question.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 11

Answer

Open-ended question.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 14

Answer

Open-ended question.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 3

Answer

Closed-ended question.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 6

Answer

Closed-ended question.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 9

Answer

Open-ended question.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 12

Answer

Open-ended question.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 15

Answer

Open-ended question.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 3

Open or Closed?

Do you know how popular you are among all of faculty, staff and students at both schools?

Card 2

Open or Closed?

Are you aware of the accusations against you that you are mean to students and other faculty?

Card 1

Open or Closed?

What was the final result of the last home game?

Card 6

Open or Closed?

When was the last time you remember having this much fun?

Card 5

Open or Closed?

According to a poll of 400 students, most say school administrators are out of touch; do you agree?

Card 4

Open or Closed?

What is your favorite country you've traveled to during your time in the study-abroad program?

Card 9

Open or Closed?

Why do you think so many students are performing poorly on the freshman standardized test?

Card 8

Open or Closed?

How many times has a student thanked you for doing your job?

Card 7

Open or Closed?

I heard there will be a surprise dance next week as a thank you to seniors. Is that true?

Card 12

Open or Closed?

What would you say is the most difficult part of being a lifeguard at the public pool and why?

Card 11

Open or Closed?

What is your opinion on the dress code for faculty members?

Card 10

Open or Closed?

Why are you choosing to continue teaching instead of retiring?

Card 15

Open or Closed?

How do you feel about people celebrating your success in the world of fine arts?

Card 14

Open or Closed?

Why do team bonding activities work?

Card 13

Open or Closed?

If you feel comfortable, tell me about the last thing you vividly remember before going into the coma.

Question Types Practice

NAME: _____

Instructions

You have been assigned the four stories below. Each will tell you the person who you will interview and some facts about them. Write 3 closed-ended and 3 open-ended questions for each person.

Story 1 **Are students tardy to class less since the new bell schedule started?**

JACOB JINGLE: Another staff member says Jacob is always tardy to class — before and after the new schedule made longer passing periods. They also said he actively tries to be tardy and has more than 100 tardies in the first semester. They said he tries to because he hates rules and is vocal on social media.

Closed-Ended Questions

What questions could help you collect data, facts, or confirm information?

Open-Ended Questions

What questions will help you get in-depth analysis and experiences?

Story 2 **How protected is the school district from cybersecurity threats?**

HEIMER SCHMIDT: The district's director of IT. He oversees all of the cybersecurity issues across all of the schools. He wrote the district's first cybersecurity guidelines, which were put on the school's website. According to his biography online, Schmidt has his master's degree in computer science.

Closed-Ended Questions

What questions could help you collect data, facts, or confirm information?

Open-Ended Questions

What questions will help you get in-depth analysis and experiences?

Story 3 **How many students are choosing workforce over higher education?**

IZZIE SMART: The campus college and career counselor for the last 20 years. She hosts the annual college fair in the cafeteria during lunches and coordinates with representatives from higher education, local employers and military recruiters every day. She works most closely with honors graduates.

Closed-Ended Questions

What questions could help you collect data, facts, or confirm information?

Open-Ended Questions

What questions will help you get in-depth analysis and experiences?

Story 4 **What effect does depression have on academic success in school?**

IDA KNOW: The yearbook editor said Ida checked herself into a mental health facility over the summer and has since been released. Ida is an all-A student and agreed to talk with you about her mental health issues — particularly depression and anxiety.

Closed-Ended Questions

What questions could help you collect data, facts, or confirm information?

Open-Ended Questions

What questions will help you get in-depth analysis and experiences?

Rationale

A continuation of "Types of Questions" would be about what questions to ask and in what order. The order can make sources feel more comfortable, guarantee usable information and elicit more colorful quotes. When done poorly, order can quickly end an interview, make quotes less quality or leave you without vital information.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn the proper order to ask questions, anticipating the source's ability to answer, researching before an interview and understanding a story's needs.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will write questions for an interview based off a fictional situation in the right order and to get basic facts, but done in a fair manner.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Ask questions in order of least to most challenging to guarantee you get the information you need and to build confidence in the source
- Know what sources can and can't answer as a matter of fairness and confidence building
- Know what questions a story requires, and research ahead of time to prevent looking ill prepared in front of the source
- And ask detailed questions if the source needs to answer about a specific moment; otherwise keep it simple for them to elaborate.

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in two, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four, but may be completed in one depending on length.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Writing Questions Instructional Cards" cut for each group
- "Sample Interview 1 & 2" — printed individually or front and back
- "Source Questions List" printed for each student

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the correct version the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each group member pull one of the four "Writing Questions Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts they learned on their card.

Then, hand each student copies of both "Sample Interview 1 & 2" worksheets. The group should split into two pairs. Each will role play one of the people on the interview and read it out loud, making notes along the way or after the roleplay activity. Once they finish reading the script, the pair should write a top two list of the best practices the reporter showed and a top two worst practices list the reporter showed. Then, the entire group comes back together to compare their lists and make a top three list of each as a group.

They will split up again, now partnering with a different group member and repeat the process for "Sample Interview 2".

EXAMPLE: Sarah, Joseph, Tracy and Elaine are in Group 1. Sarah and Joseph read each role of interview 1, discuss and make a list. All four compare notes and make a top three list for each. Then Joseph and Elaine/Sarah and Tracy are partners and repeat the process.

DIRECT INSTRUCTION: First, lead a class discussion with each group listing off one of their top good and bad practices they saw. Then, show students Slide 5 to recap the information they should have learned and likely picked up on.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have students individually write a list of a total of five behaviors to avoid and to do.

Day 2

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Have students read their "Source Plan for Story" worksheet they filled out previously. They should choose one of the sources to interview and write down (anywhere on the sheet) about what they as a reporter would need from the interview and what the source would likely not be able to answer. Then, go in a round-robin discussing their story ideas and the source they chose.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY: Give students the "Source Questions List" and 30 minutes to write 5 closed-ended questions that seek information and 10 story-specific, open-ended questions meant to get analysis, opinion or description of experience.

NOTE: Some students may have chosen complex topics. Assure them it is OK if they have not had time to research the topic yet. They should just be curious.

After they write their questions, have groups pass their papers around the group with each member making a note where one or more questions could be improved. Once all members have looked at one another's papers, they should read over the comments, ask clarifying questions and make revisions as necessary.

Inform students they will need to complete the interview and will be submitting it as a Q&A. (It is recommended advisers give the Q&As to their editors for consideration of publication. Students who do not know what a Q&A is may need to have the basic idea of writing the question, then the person's answer, explained to them.)

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Students should write and submit their current plan to contact and set up an interview with their source. They should not do so until after the next two lessons.

References

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- Strunk, W., & White, E. (2000). *The Elements of Style*. Allyn & Bacon.

Order From Least to Most Challenging

WRITING QUESTIONS

Calm the Nerves

Everyone in an interview is nervous at some level. Beginning reporters are afraid of their subject. The subject is afraid of the questions. If you start the interview with the least challenging questions, sources feel more confident in their ability to answer and reporters feel more confident in your ability to ask them. The more confident sources are, the more they talk and give reporters great information.

A Rocky Start

By leading with challenging questions, you could be posing the worst-case scenario for the source. If the question is too challenging emotionally or because it is confrontational, they may stop the interview and leave you with nothing.

If the questions are too intellectually difficult, sources may get more nervous and give worse quotes as you go on.

Order It!

Put these in order.

Why did you decide to get married in high school?

What do you think about people who say you're too young and immature to get married now?

When did you first meet?

What Can They Answer?

WRITING QUESTIONS

Be Fair

Not every person knows every answer. If you ask a question to someone who genuinely doesn't know the answer, it could hurt their confidence and your interview as a result.

A teacher would not necessarily know why the school board voted on a certain policy.

Think Ahead

When thinking of questions, ask yourself "Why am I interviewing this person? What do I need most from them?" Your main reason probably says a lot about their ability to answer.

Asking students for their opinion on dress code is fine. Asking them why admin enforces it makes them guess.

Which is Fair?

Interview questions for a student entering the county fair.

What is your favorite moment of the fair so far?

Why is the fair done during this time of year?

What Do I Need?

WRITING QUESTIONS

Don't Forget Basics

An amusing-yet-frustrating scenario is seeing reporters who return with a stellar interview but fumble when they are asked, "What was their last name?"

When preparing for an interview, the biggest set of questions to write are the facts you have to have so you won't forget when you are deep into the interview.

Start with Most Basic

The first question you should ask is, "Is it OK to record this interview?" Sometimes this is a legal requirement.

After you start recording, you ask, "Can you spell and pronounce your first and last name, and grade (title for adults), for the record?" This builds confidence and gets you information you must have.

Write It!

What are four basic pieces of information you need to know about a story previewing ticket sales starting for prom?

Assume the publication has done no stories on prom thus far.

Research First

WRITING QUESTIONS

Don't Look Dumb

No matter the story, reporters should do even the most basic of research beforehand. Some stories require little research. Others require months of it. With basic stories, don't ask questions that Google could have answered or are common knowledge. Don't ask the football coach how football works. Look it up.

Just Be Smart

Sources appreciate someone who has clearly taken an interest in them. The more a reporter appears (and has) invested into really knowing a topic inside and out, the more information sources will give you because they feel more confident in you and because they don't feel like they have to dumb it down for you to understand.

Which Is Bad?

Interview questions for a student who won a debate tournament.

How did you do at the tournament?

Why do you think you won?

How is your debate style unique?

Sample Interview 1 — After the Soccer Game

INTERVIEWING UNIT

INSTRUCTIONS: Make notes about what went right and wrong in this interview after role playing both parts with another group member. Then, compare notes and come up with the top two good and top two bad things the reporter did.

NAME: _____

Before the Interview

The reporter has been at the boys soccer game all night. It went into overtime and resulted in a tie game with the team's main rival. After the game is over and the field is clearing, the reporter goes over to the head coach with pen and paper, and his recorder. This is what happened when the reporter approached the coach.

Reporter

Reporter taps coach on shoulder.

"Hi, coach. My name is Kieran Smyth with The Bugle. Do you have time for a few questions about tonight's game?"

"Thanks! Just a few questions. First, what how does a tie game happen in soccer?"

"And that's what happened tonight?"

"OK, thanks. How did the game go overall?"

"Oh that's great. I'm glad to hear the team is doing well. What makes the team so good?"

"I know what you mean. I am a big fan of the team. Who all is on the team?"

"No, that's OK. I have a roster I got from the table. Why did you choose to be a soccer coach?"

"Neat. My grandpa wanted me to play once. I just couldn't run that much and it ended up with me getting a broken knee from the first match. A kid from the other team stepped on my knee and absolutely crushed it."

"How has the season gone so far? What is your record?"

"While I think it is important they know that, I am not allowed to make promises about what to put in a story at this point. I apologize."

"I know what you mean. Just a few more questions. Who were the standout players tonight?"

"Right? I totally get that. What are the players doing now after the game?"

"How have they done in previous years?"

"The whole season."

"Great. One more question. What are you looking forward to?"

"Don't worry. I'm writing it, so you have nothing to worry about. See you at school tomorrow, coach!"

Reporter shakes the coaches hand and leaves.

Coach

"Absolutely. Whatcha got?"

"Well, it's not like other sports where there has to be a winner. It's very possible that any game can end in a tie unless it is during playoff season."

"Yes."

"Not too bad for us. We played hard, worked like a team and came out successfully."

"We just are a bunch of hardworking guys."

"There are about 26 guys on varsity right now. Some shift back and forth on JV as we need them, but there are just too many to list off the top of my head without forgetting someone. Can I just email you later?"

"Uh. I guess it had to do with growing up and playing. My dad made me play and my mom would drive me to the pitch every day. It just became a family thing, you know? It's something I hope more kids around here do."

"OK..."

"We're 2-4-1 right now. I think it is a huge success. You look at a record like that and you can't be anything but proud. You should definitely include that in the story. I want to make sure the guys know I'm proud."

"No need to apologize. I get that. I'm just so proud, you know? Couldn't hurt to ask."

"Everyone on the team are winners in my book. You can't put how good someone is in numbers. There isn't a way to judge players from one to the next like that."

"I have no idea. They do their own thing at this point."

"What after games or the whole season?"

"Oh. Got ya. They have done well. Got to love them."

"I'm looking forward to the Whataburger I'm about to inhale. Sorry, I have to go. Hope the article turns out good for us!"

Sample Interview 2 — School Bans Driving

INTERVIEWING UNIT

INSTRUCTIONS: Make notes about what went right and wrong in this interview after role playing both parts with another group member. Then, compare notes and come up with the top two good and top two bad things the reporter did.

NAME: _____

Before the Interview

The story broke over the weekend on social media that Principal Peter Rude banned all students from driving themselves on campus, including students of age and with driver's licenses. This reporter's editor assigned them to figure out why. They set up a meeting and walk into his office.

Reporter

"Mr. Rude?"

"I wish I could say the same.
Thank you for allowing me to interview you anyway."

"Would you mind if I record this interview
to make sure I get everything you say correct?"

"I can't do that. We don't let sources see the material
prior to publication. I'm sure you understand."

"OK. First, can you just state your name, title and age for the record?"

"Thanks. Here's my first question: Why do you hate student drivers?
Some students have to be able to drive to school for work after, or
their parents go to work before they're ever up for school. Aren't you
discriminating against the poor and underaged with this policy?"

"And, why, exactly, is that? You're dodging the question as usual."

"Fair enough. But you still never answered the question
about what reason you canceled the policy..."

"Is that what happened to her?"

"You can break the rules.
It just sounds like you're dodging another question."

"Thank you, next. Since this policy clearly discriminates against the
poor, why should you be in charge of a school that oversees a student
population with more than 70% in bad poverty?"

"I think what's rude is your pompous self sitting there in your throne,
acting like a tyrant while the rest of everyone has to do
your dirty work. I just asked simple questions."

"Because you hate poor people. It's not opinion, it's fact."

"You would relate even more if they could drive to school like you do."

"Yes. Thank you for your time."

"OK, bye."

Principal

"Yes, come on in. Good to see you."

"You're welcome. I'm always a fan of the student press."

"Would you mind not recording? I want to email you all my answers to make sure I
get them right."

"Got it. Then, go ahead. I might just take time to think of my answers."

"Principal Peter Rude, 48"

"Wow. Um. I think it's clear we don't see eye to eye on this issue now. Let's just say it
was the right decision to make the call for this campus at this time."

"I'm not dodging anything. You accused me of something which I do not agree with. I
was answering your question."

"If you must know, last week when Jaimie Gillibrand died in that wreck trying to leave
school, she also took out a person walking on the sidewalk. Sometimes people of
your age aren't the most responsible drivers, especially if they have been consuming
illegal drugs or alcohol."

"I am not legally allowed to comment on that."

"I --"

"I think you're stepping a little out of line. I've been nothing but a fan of the student
newspaper since I've got here. This line of questioning is frankly rude."

"No you didn't. You are saying I should be removed because of what?"

"I came from a home with a disabled mother and my father worked as an electrician.
We didn't have money and I can relate to these kids on that level."

"Look. I'm not going to put students at risk because of accidents. The more we keep
vehicles away, the less likely people are to be hit or have them stolen from school
grounds. It's that easy. Not an easy decision, but a simple concept.
Does that make sense?"

"Don't mention it. I will be talking to your editor and adviser
about your behavior. Just wanted to give you that heads up
and some advice: You don't have to be rude just to be rude. Goodbye."

Source Questions List

INTERVIEWING UNIT

INSTRUCTIONS: Think about what you need to know from this person about your topic, why you chose them to get information from, and what they are going to be able and unable to answer. Then, write thoughtful, relevant questions below.

NAME: _____

Source Name: _____

IN THE SPACE BELOW, WRITE WHY YOU CHOSE THIS SOURCE TO INTERVIEW AND WHAT INSIGHT THEY HAVE INTO YOUR TOPIC.

Closed-Ended Questions

What questions could help you collect data, facts, or confirm information?

1 _____

What information will this help you know?

2 _____

What information will this help you know?

3 _____

What information will this help you know?

4 _____

What information will this help you know?

5 _____

What information will this help you know?

Open-Ended Questions

What questions will help you get in-depth analysis and experiences?

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

6 _____

7 _____

8 _____

9 _____

10 _____

Rationale

Interviews don't fall out of the sky. The reporter must prepare ahead of time to get the best results and guarantee they have access to their interview afterward.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn ways to prepare for an interview.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will create a plan for an upcoming interview.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Interviews cannot be done at the last minute and should give the reporter enough time as needed for the story
- The location of the interview determines how comfortable the source is, which can be useful either way depending on the circumstance
- Dress to blend in your surroundings and bring backups of your equipment
- And conduct preinterviews to get a deeper understanding of topics before conducting a more formal interview later on

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in one, 45-minute class period with students split into groups of four.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Preparing for the Interview Instructional Sheets" for each group
- "Preparing for the Interview Plan" for each student
- Access to the internet for students to research about their topics

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the correct version the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each group member pull one of the four "Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts they learned on their card.

Give each student a half-sheet of "Preparing for the Interview Plan" and have them fill out the top four boxes of the worksheet, which requires them to think through contacting, scheduling, dress and equipment — the technical part of the interview, but a vital one.

After they complete the top half, give students 10 minutes to use the internet to research their topic and/or their person depending on the topic. Then, have each student go around in their groups discussing their topic, source and upcoming interview, asking at least one question to the group seeking feedback to be better prepared for their interview.

DIRECT INSTRUCTION: Slide 5 has a recap of the information students should have learned.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have students fill out the bottom half of the worksheet based off feedback from group members and submit for teacher feedback. They should not contact their source until after the final lesson over conducting the interview. However, they may start scheduling and preparing for the interview.

HOMEWORK/EXTRA CLASS

ASSIGNMENT: Students need to complete a preinterview with their source or someone else before their formal Q&A interview with their chosen source.

References

- Etwell, J., Balmeo, M., Austin, E., & Hamm R. (2021). *Journalism: Publishing Across Media*. The Goodheart-Willcox Company.
- Froke, P., & Bajak, F. (2020). *The Associated Press Stylebook*. Basic Books.
- Harrower, T. (2013). *Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism*. McGraw-Hill.
- Hawthorne, B. (2019). *The Radical Write*. Jostens.
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- Strunk, W., & White, E. (2000). *The Elements of Style*. Allyn & Bacon.

When is the Interview?

PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

Availability

As a scholastic journalist, you have the limitation of only being available during one class, or before/after school. Other students are similarly limited.

Make sure your sources are available and you plan ahead of time before randomly showing up. People don't like surprises.

Don't Limit Yourself

If you are assigned to get quotes about the latest trend on social media, a quick interview works. But if you are interviewing an immigrant student about their refugee status coming from a war-torn country, it is best to give yourself more time to ask questions than standing in the hallway outside a classroom for 5 minutes.

What Should Have Happened?

Reporter comes back angry because a teacher didn't let them pull a student from class. They found and interviewed a junior for 4 minutes an impromptu feature.

Where is the Interview?

PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

To Your Advantage

Sports have what they call home-field advantage. This is true for journalism as well. Sources feel more comfortable in environments familiar to them.

When you want a source to feel at home in the interview, do it where they are. When you need them to be more focused, remove them from their environment.

Digital Interviews

Email, texts, phone calls and social media interviews are for lazy reporters, situations where it is actually impossible to see someone face to face, or clarifying facts after a formal interview.

Digital interviews lead to sterile, uninteresting quotes, or being completely ignored if the source is annoyed or scared.

Your Place or Theirs?

A reporter is wanting to interview the principal about people claiming he lacks school spirit.

If you had the option, should you interview them in their office or in an empty conference room? Why?

What Should I Bring & Wear?

PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

Dress to Match

If you are covering the county fair outside in the heat, do not wear a suit and tie. Not only will you die of heat stroke, but you will stick out like a sore thumb.

Similarly, if you are interviewing the superintendent, don't show up looking like you rolled out of bed 7 minutes before.

Bring Backup

When you go to an interview, it is always good to bring a recorder AND a written way to take notes in case one doesn't work. There is nothing more embarrassing, unprofessional and panic-inducing than thinking you recorded an interview on your phone and you notice after that you never hit the button. Get it the first time.

Think About It!

If you were going to write a story about the kickball tournament on the baseball field, what all would you bring to do your job and for personal needs? What would you wear? Why would you bring and wear those items?

Preinterviews

PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

Go Fish

Especially in complex stories, it may be worth conducting a preinterview — a recorded, on-the-record interview used to collect information used to generate questions for another interview later on. These are helpful when you need to understand a situation more fully to ask better questions down the line.

Tell Me More

Sometimes a preinterview can also divert your story to a more important angle or topic you never expected.

When doing a preinterview on a new standardized test, a source may tell you the angle you are pursuing is actually old news but that you should look more closely at how much they cost.

What Don't You Know?

If you were assigned the story idea below, what would you want to understand more about during a preinterview?

Why did the new head coach switch from a primarily run-focused game from the pass-focus strategy under the old coach?

Preparing for Interview Plan

INTERVIEWING UNIT

INSTRUCTIONS: Research your topic and/or person, discuss with your group (asking for at least one piece of advice on the interview), and fill out the form.

NAME: _____

Topic: _____

What's Their Schedule Like?

When are you available to meet? Could you schedule a before or afterschool meeting? Lunch? Class time? What will limit their schedule?

Where Is Best to Meet?

Would it be better to interview them where they are to make them more comfortable or in a neutral location?

What to Bring?

How will you record the interview electronically? How will you take notes during the interview on paper?

What to Wear?

What will you wear? How formal do your clothes need to be to match the person or environment of your interview? Are school clothes OK?

What Do You Not Know?

What about the topic, person or situation do you not know enough about that would help you to write or clarify questions?

What Do I Need To Know?

What questions or bits of information want to ask the source in a preinterview to make you more informed before the interview?

Preparing for Interview Plan

INTERVIEWING UNIT

INSTRUCTIONS: Research your topic and/or person, discuss with your group (asking for at least one piece of advice on the interview), and fill out the form.

NAME: _____

Topic: _____

What's Their Schedule Like?

When are you available to meet? Could you schedule a before or afterschool meeting? Lunch? Class time? What will limit their schedule?

Where Is Best to Meet?

Would it be better to interview them where they are to make them more comfortable or in a neutral location?

What to Bring?

How will you record the interview electronically? How will you take notes during the interview on paper?

What to Wear?

What will you wear? How formal do your clothes need to be to match the person or environment of your interview? Are school clothes OK?

What Do You Not Know?

What about the topic, person or situation do you not know enough about that would help you to write or clarify questions?

What Do I Need To Know?

What questions or bits of information want to ask the source in a preinterview to make you more informed before the interview?

Rationale

Interviews are (usually) friendly battles of the mind. Reporters need information and have to get the source to provide information or perspective. Sources don't know what journalists are looking for or may be unwilling to provide it. These are some battle strategies to help reporters win the fight for information.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn tips on how to conduct an interview like follow-up questions, being confident through body language and professionalism, and proper ways to end an interview.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will prepare, schedule and conduct an interview for a publication Q&A story.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Before the interview, don't talk about the topic with the subject so they save the best quotes for on-the-record talk, and don't email questions ahead of time
- Act confident through body language
- Be professional as a representative of a media publication
- Don't stick to a list of questions, but ask follow-ups as well to go deeper or find better stories
- And end the interview by thanking them for their time and collect follow-up contact information.

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in one, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four, but may be stretched longer if the teacher wants to repeat activities, have additional projects to accompany the lesson, or have a publication assignment tied to the learning.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Conducting the Interview Instructional Sheets" cut for each group

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the correct version the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each group member pull one of the four "Conducting the Interview Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the concepts they learned.

Have students stand up, hand up, mix around the room, and pair up. Instead of any informal greeting like a high five, make students shake hands. Instruct them not to hand over "dead fish" hands nor to crush the bones in their partners hands. They should practice a confident handshake.

Students will mix and pair around the room again, this time introducing themselves in the following way: "Hello, my name is (first and last name) with (your publication name). Nice to meet you" in addition to the handshake. Have each student coach the other to improve or congratulate them. Have them repeat with five other students, even if they already know them.

After introductions, have them mix-pair-ask. They will repeat the introduction, but this time add, "Would you mind if I ask you a question for the (yearbook/newspaper/etc.)?" and ask the question on Slide 5. When their partner answers, they should ask one follow-up question. If they are stuck, their partner should help coach them but not give them a follow-up to ask. Then, the other partner ask the same question, also with one follow-up.

Slides 6-10 have more questions to repeat this as many times as the teacher prefers. Have them repeat this process once more, now requiring two follow-up questions and thanking their partner for their time at the end of the interview.

DIRECT INSTRUCTION: Show Slide 11 to recap what they should have learned.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have all students do a 5-minute interview with one person with only the question on Slide 12 to start. The rest must be follow-up questions. When class nears the end, have students write what was most difficult about asking follow-up questions and one trick they found to help them.

References

- Etwell, J., Balmeo, M., Austin, E., & Hamm R. (2021). *Journalism: Publishing Across Media*. The Goodheart-Willcox Company.
- Froke, P., & Bajak, F. (2020). *The Associated Press Stylebook*. Basic Books.
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- Strunk, W., & White, E. (2000). *The Elements of Style*. Allyn & Bacon.

Before the Interview

CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW

Don't Send Questions

Reporters do not send a list of questions ahead of an interview. Either the source will try to memorize their answers, which never works, or they have time to figure out a way to answer around your question instead of answering directly.

It is perfectly ethical to send topics to discuss and facts they need to review.

Talk About Anything But the Story

When you arrive at the interview, they may try to talk about the story. Especially in broadcast, avoid doing so. The first time they give an interview is the strongest. If they already answered you once, their on-the-record statement is more boring.

What Do You Do?

You want to interview the superintendent about a change in bus transportation, particularly the shortage of actual buses. He asks for your questions ahead of time.

What should you say?

Body Language

CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW

Confidence is Key

People naturally gravitate toward confident people and feel more comfortable around them. With reporters, confidence tells a source that you are in control of the interview and they are safe to sit back and let the reporter do their job.

Stand up straight. Speak from your gut. Fake confidence if you have to.

No Dead Fish, No Death Grips

When you meet a new source for the first time, shake their hand. If you initiate the handshake, it is the first step in controlling the interview and instilling confidence.

No one feels comforted by a reporter with a limp or bone-crushing handshake.

Think About It!

What do you think you have to work on to practice being more confident in an interview?

Do you consider yourself to be a confident person? Why?

Professionalism

CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW

Don't Be Sloppy

When reporters are overly shy, giggle because they are nervous, use informal language or cuss, or otherwise act like they don't know what they are doing, there is no getting the source to feel comfortable with them.

It is a casual conversation, but still a job that needs to be taken seriously.

Be an Expert

Over time, reporters covering a beat begin to become experts in the field. They get to know people in power and become a fixture of the group or topic they cover.

Two things: First, do this. It will lead to so many story opportunities and better interviews. Second, don't let your familiarity lead to biased choices.

Is Any of This OK?

A reporter walks into an interview with the principal with a bag of Burger King and eats during the interview. The reporter calls the principal "bro" repeatedly and laughs when the principal says she "really cares about kids."

Follow-Up Questions & Your List

CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW

Follow the Story

A list of questions is important to help you have a roadmap and details you have to get. However, maps have detours. Some of those detours are pretty. Follow them.

People may surprise you in an answer and open up an opportunity to explore a potential gold mine of storytelling. Don't just stick to your script.

Get Deeper

Sometimes the detours circle back to the original road. Sources may open up about a personal story you did not know about before. You can always ask a few questions until the new topic is dry, then use your notes to get back on track.

Audiences love details in stories. Following up to get deeper is a way to get them.

What'd I Miss?

What should the reporter followed up on after this response to a question?

"I got into choir because my mom does it for a living and does concerts with a professional choir. I do like our choir though. It's a start and lots of fun."

Ending the Interview

CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW

Thank You

The Constitution may protect what journalists publish, but it doesn't force anyone to talk to us. Only courts have that power. Be sure to not unnecessarily burn any bridges and thank your source for their time, even if they are being a massive jerk. For most people, being interviewed and put in a publication is a big deal.

Following Up

After the interview is finished up, ask them for contact information (phone number and email) in case you need to ask more questions or clarify quotes.

Speaking of, actually follow up with questions or clarify something they said if it doesn't make sense. They'll thank you.

What'd I Miss?

What in this question might a reporter have a follow-up question on later?

"I like to go to that store down the road to get my food. I walk about 4 miles there and back every other day to get it."



**You act like this is
breaking news
or something...**

News Writing

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Stephen Green created these lessons as a capstone project for completion of the journalism educator master's degree program at Kent State University. It may be reproduced only for individual classroom teachers in class, but not for any commercial purposes including derivative works.

Choosing Good Stories to Write

NEWS WRITING UNIT

Rationale

Anyone can have an idea for a story. Not everyone can write, justify and critique one for journalism purposes. Knowing the values that make up good news and how to pitch a story idea will go a long way in improving the quality of your work and the publication as a whole.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn how to choose stories for publication that will interest and matter to readers, and know the difference between a story topic and a story idea.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will create a complete story idea that could be used for our school publication.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- All stories should have strong news values. TIPCUP: timeliness, impact, proximity, conflict, uniqueness, and prominence.
- Story ideas can come from beats, assignments, planned & unplanned events and observations. Enterprise stories are those a reporter finds on their own.
- Topics are broad categories that many stories could be about. Story ideas are specific angles to stories.
- Write story ideas as a broad question the reporter will answer in a way that matters to local readers.

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in two, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four, but may be completed in one depending on class length.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/pre-activity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Nora Ephron Story" for teacher
- "News Value Instructional Cards" cut for group
- "News Value Scenarios" cut for group
- "Choosing Good Stories Instructional Cards" cut for group
- "Story Idea Critique Practice Cards" cut for group
- "Story Idea Development Worksheet" for each student

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity silently with a 5-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and walk around to ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has a suggested answer.

ACTIVITY: Start by reading the "Nora Ephron Story" and having students practice writing ONE sentence they would use for the same situation. The teacher can, alternatively, change up Ephron's story to match their school if it would make more sense to their students. Have students share their sentences with the other members of their group. The group should then develop a consensus on what the best version of all four and why.

Have each group trade with the other groups, reading and comparing the previous group's sentence to theirs. Do this until all groups have read all other group's sentences and come to a classwide consensus of what the one sentence they would use to start this story.

Then, show Slide 5 and have the class compare by each group discussing the differences between the group's and class's sentences, and Ephron's. What did they miss?

Have each group member pull one of the four "News Value Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts learned from their card.

After learning the concepts, have students each take one of the "News Value Scenarios" and read the miniature story on each card. They should write down one of the six news values the story uses and why. Then, pass their story to the right and do it again. The next person should add either another news value and why, or add another sentence justifying what the news value the previous person added. Continue until all students have seen every card twice. Then, have groups discuss why some news values were left off each story.

DIRECT INSTRUCTION: Show and discuss Slide 6, which recaps everything students should have learned.

CLOSING ACTIVITY: Show Slide 7 and have students complete in a method most appropriate to the teacher. (Students will develop a story idea for their publication and explain which news values it has.)

Day 2

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 8 & 9 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity silently with a 5-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch and walk around to ensure everyone is talking.

ACTIVITY: Have students explain the story idea they wrote individually on Day 1 to their group members. The other group members must add some comment on each story idea verbally — this could be a critique and improvement, or a praise and addition to justifying the story.

Have each group member pull one of the four "Choosing Good Stories Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the different concepts they learned on their card.

After learning the concepts, have students each split up the "Story Idea Critique Practice Cards". Each student should read their card aloud, the next member will point out what is wrong with the story idea, the next suggests how to improve it, the final group member will agree or critique the previous member's story idea, and the original member who read the card will write down the ultimate revised version of the card. This continues — roles rotating — until all have read, critiqued and revised every card.

DIRECT INSTRUCTION: Show and discuss Slide 11, which recaps everything students should have learned.

CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have all students individually complete the "Story Idea Development Worksheet", or let students brainstorm as a group after completing, work in pairs by critiquing after the sheet is completed. (Students will come up with a story idea for their publication, explain which news values it has and describe how it has been localized.)

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- Etwell, J., Balmeo, M., Austin, E., & Hamm R. (2021). *Journalism: Publishing Across Media*. The Goodheart-Willcox Company.
- Froke, P., & Bajak, F. (2020). *The Associated Press Stylebook*. Basic Books.
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- Strunk, W., & White, E. (2000). *The Elements of Style*. Allyn & Bacon.
- Stovall, J. (2009). *Writing for the Mass Media*. Pearson.

1 Start by Read This

Famous journalist and writer Nora Ephron had a life-altering experience when she was in high school. She recounted:

The best teacher I ever had was named Charles Simms, and he taught journalism at Beverly Hills High School in 1956 and 1957. The first day of journalism class, Mr. Simms did what just about every journalism teacher does in the beginning — he began to teach us how to write a lead. The way this is normally done is that the teacher dictates a set of facts and the class attempts to write the first paragraph of a news story about them. Who, what, where, when, how and why. So, he read us a set of facts. It went something like this:

'Kenneth L. Peters, principal of Beverly Hills High School, announced today that the faculty of the high school will travel to Sacramento on Thursday for a colloquium on new teaching methods. Speaking there will be anthropologist Margaret Mead, educator Robert Maynard Hutchins, and several others.'

2 Students Do This

Silently write how you would start this story off. You have two minutes to complete this. (Put a timer visually for students to see.)

NOTE TO TEACHER: Students may feel self-conscious because they don't know the rules yet. Assure them this is OK and expected.

3 Read This

You just did what Ephron and her classmates did. This is what Ephron said happened next:

We all began typing, and after a few minutes we turned in our leads. All of them said approximately what Mr. Simms had dictated, but in the opposite order ("Margaret Mead and Robert Maynard Hutchins will address the faculty," etc.). We turn in our leads. We're very proud.

4 Students Do This

Read your lede to the story to your other group members. Then, all of you in the group compare sentences and write a new one that represents your whole group. You have five minutes.

ONCE THIS HAS BEEN COMPLETED: Now, we will read every group's out loud and come to a class consensus on one lede you all feel should start this story.

5 Read This

Here's what happened next Ephron said:

Mr. Simms riffled through the ledes we wrote and tossed them in the garbage. He said, "The lead to the story is 'There will be no school Thursday.'

6 Students Do This

Take a moment to compare the ledes against his.

WHEN THIS IS DONE SAY:

In your groups, each person should spend 20 seconds discussing what was different between the lede your group came up with, what the class decided on, and Mr. Simms' lede from Ephron's story.

WHEN THIS IS DONE ASK:

What did you learn? (Let students discuss, assuring one person from each group read.)

7 Read This

Ephron had this to say about the point:

"It was an electrifying moment. So that's it, I realized. It's about the point. The classic newspaper lead of who-what-where-when-how-and-why is utterly meaningless if you haven't figured out what the significance of the facts is. What is the point? What does it mean? He planted those questions in my head. And for the year he taught me journalism, every day was like the first; every assignment, every story, every set of facts he provided us had a point buried in it somewhere if you looked hard enough."

Timeliness & Proximity

NEWS VALUES

News Matters Now

Timeliness is when a story matters now; it can be a new event or an update on an old one. Either way, it needs to matter to people at the present time.

In modern times, most people have already heard old news on social media or online before it could be printed. The news must be fresh for people to care.

Remember: NEW is literally in news.

Finding a Local Angle

Proximity is when a story matters to the people in your area. A plane crash in Colorado is sad and powerful there but not elsewhere.

Unless there is some reason people care locally, your readers can get the same information from national news outlets.

LOCALIZATION: This is when you take a story that lacks proximity and give it an angle that does matter to people locally.

Models

OLD: The debate team won the district tournament two months ago.

TIMELY: The debate team will be attending the state meet next week.

TIMELY: One of those team members was just named the national Debater of the Year.

NOT LOCAL: A debate team won a tournament in England.

LOCAL: The (school's) debate team won a tournament in England.

LOCAL: (School) debate coach Tom Waites led the U.S. debate team to win a tournament in England.

Impact & Conflict

NEWS VALUES

News Hits Hard

Impact is how much a story affects people. Breaking news usually focuses on deaths, injuries and finances — in that order.

However, impact can talk about mental health, a rise in school spirit, or anything that describes how people are being affected.

Impact can also be positive. Fundraisers, school spirit and awards are all positive news events that impact people in a good way.

Butting Heads

Conflict is any time where two parties disagree. Competitions, politics, mental health (internally), economics, superlatives, crime and hirings/firings all involve conflict. Journalism is referred to as the fourth branch of government because it fosters debate, which feeds democracy.

Conflict can also be entertainment (sports, awards, contests) and problem-solving (crime, mental health, employment practices).

Models

NO IMPACT: A couple adopted a puppy from the animal shelter.

IMPACT: If more people don't adopt from the shelter, the shelter will run out of money.

IMPACT: A couple paid for all adoptions from the animal shelter for the year.

NO CONFLICT: A couple adopted a puppy from the animal shelter.

CONFLICT: A couple stole a puppy from the animal shelter.

CONFLICT: Two new rules prevented a couple from adopting a puppy.

Uniqueness & Prominence

NEWS VALUES

So Different

Uniqueness is when a story doesn't happen often. This could be the man-bites-dog story, a feature on a church that turned 100 years old, or a track star setting a state record.

The more unique the event, the more people typically want to read.

NOTE: Do not make the story more unique than reality by adding or leaving out facts.

So Important

Prominence is any time important people, places or things are involved.

It doesn't make the news when you go to prom. When celebrities go to prom with their fans, it does.

It could be when a favorite school tradition gets canceled, an athlete setting a record or a popular teacher retires.

Models

NOT UNIQUE: Student Council will meet.

UNIQUE: Student Council will meet on the roof.

UNIQUE: Student Council will meet for the first time in school history.

NOT PROMINENT: Student Council will meet.

PROMINENT: Student Council will meet with the governor.

PROMINENT: Student Council will decide if the homecoming dance will happen this year.

How Many News Values? & TIPCUP

NEWS VALUES

Remember This

To help remember the six news values, use the acronym TIPCUP: timeliness, impact, proximity, conflict, uniqueness, and prominence.

When you are looking at struggling story ideas and want to improve them, go through the six news values to figure out WHY it isn't good.

How Many Do I Need?

There isn't a great answer because you have to look at each story as a whole. A story can have anywhere from zero to six news values. The more news values it has, the more important it can be. One news value can also be so big that the event becomes a story.

For example, a car crash can be timely, have impact, involve a mayor, lead to conflict, and have a unique story. However, if there isn't a local tie, the story may die. On the flip side, if that same car crash happened here, but didn't involve anyone prominent, it may not make the school newspaper.

Models

LACKS NEWS VALUE: A family got ice cream last month in a neighboring state.

LACKS NEWS VALUE: A family got ice cream last month in a neighboring state and decided to open a new ice cream shop.

HAS SOME NEWS VALUE: A family got ice cream last month in a neighboring state and decided to open a new ice cream shop in town.

HAS A LOT OF NEWS VALUE: A family got ice cream last month in a neighboring state and decided to open a new ice cream shop on campus during lunches.

Scenario 1

NEWS VALUES

Retiring Pharmacist

Imagine this story was written for your school newspaper:

When local pharmacist Charles Cheese decided to call it quits, he wanted to go out quietly. His customers of 56 years had other plans.

HOSA President Janey Jackie and members of the health-occupations club are co-hosting a retirement ceremony with the city next week.

"Every student here has been directly or indirectly impacted by this man," Jackie said. "As the only pharmacy in town, he has single-handedly cured us of the most serious diseases to the sniffles. There's no way we'd let him walk into the sunset without getting to say goodbye."

His assistant, Foz E. Bare, will take over his business when Cheese officially retires next month.

Analyze It!

Write one news value it has and why, then pass to the next person:

Scenario 2

NEWS VALUES

Rivalry Match

Imagine this story was written for your school newspaper:

The tennis team will face its chief rival at a home game in three months. Head coach Homer Carte said they are looking forward to the match.

"We play them every year and it's always tough," Carte said. "Their coach and I have talked. We both enjoy the friendly rivalry."

The last four times the school's clashed, they traded wins and losses. The tennis team is now 2-2 in the series.

Analyze It!

Write one news value it has and why, then pass to the next person:

Scenario 3

NEWS VALUES

NHS Applications

Imagine this story was written for your school newspaper:

Principal Lacey Ghist announced applications to join the National Honor Society last month. The applications are due in three days.

"Recognizing the best of our students is one of the best parts of my job," Ghist said. "I'm hoping all qualified students join NHS."

Applications require three letters of recommendation and an unweighted 3.5 GPA.

"I put my application in last week," junior Dalia Weeks said. "I want to be a part of something like NHS because it will look good on my resume."

Analyze It!

Write one news value it has and why, then pass to the next person:

Scenario 4

NEWS VALUES

Model Visitor

Imagine this story was written for your school newspaper:

The person Model U.N. President Ysela Gutierrez did not expect at the group's first-ever meeting: local U.S. Rep. Nancy McCarthy. The visit came after getting a letter from her congratulating the group for starting.

"When she walks in, there's a gravity about her; people are just drawn in," Gutierrez said. "I want to go into politics, which is why I started the club. Her showing up just shows how much she cares."

McCarthy said she was not going to the meeting at first, but noticed her schedule took her by the school at the exact time the meeting was to begin.

"Getting young people involved in representative government is the only way to keep the American experiment alive," she said. "I'm so glad I could come; you can feel the passion this group has."

Analyze It!

Write one news value it has and why, then pass to the next person:

Where Do Ideas Come From?

STORY IDEAS

Observation & People

When you walk around school: Look at flyers on the wall, listen to conversations at lunch, talk with students about issues important to them, read event calendars, pay attention to changes and anything else that uses your five senses to tell when news is out there.

Beats

Beats are when a reporter focuses on creating stories about certain topics consistently. They become an expert in the topic. They may include the school board, sports, pop culture, religion, food, fashion, federal government, and anything else your audience finds important. Your publication should make a list of important beats and assign people to follow them throughout the year with regular updates.

Assignments

Editors also sometimes assign stories that need to be covered. Sometimes you like these; sometimes not. Either way, you have to do it. The easiest way to avoid being assigned (because you lack stories to write) is to create enterprise stories, which is when you come up with the idea.

Unplanned Events

Life is messy. Unplanned events pop up all the time that overtake whatever plan currently exists. Natural disasters, crime, protests, events you didn't hear about, and other things that have heavy news value but weren't planned in advance become stories. They assert themselves as news and the staff must respond accordingly.

Topics Aren't Ideas

STORY IDEAS

What is a Topic?

"The economy" is not a story idea. There are a thousand stories that fall within topics. When a reporter tells you they want to do a story on (insert noun here), ask "What about it?" What they answer with is closer to a story idea than the original idea they said.

Turn It Into an Idea

Inevitably, a news topic becomes popular on staff. The football team won the state championship; the school flooded from a hurricane; or, the principal suddenly resigned. As a staff, start listing off all the stories that could possibly be done. Start going beyond the initial, surface-level story to explore other possibilities.

Football the state championship stories: Was this expected? How did they do it? How many fans traveled to the game? Do other sports have a shot at the title? How are they going to try to repeat next year? How are they planning to celebrate? How will the school celebrate as a group? Did anyone set any records? Did this help get any students scholarships to college? Each one could be a full story — or even multiple — within the topic.

Write Stories As Questions

STORY IDEAS

Statements Are Biased

Do not just state story idea as a topic. Rather than "dress code", a more intuitive reporter might pitch the idea: "More girls get in trouble for dress code than girls." However, if the reporter uses this as a starting point, they have gone in search of a story with the ultimate answer already in mind. They now have confirmation bias — searching for an answer they assume is true rather than finding out if the assumption is even true.

Questions Get Answered

Writing story ideas as questions helps prevent some bias in the reporting process by starting the newsgathering from a place of inquiry.

For example, rather than "the dress code" or "More girls get in trouble for the dress code than girls", a seasoned reporter will write it as a question with no preconceived ideas: "Is the dress code biased?"

Story ideas should be written as questions to be answered, rather than answers meant to be confirmed. The reporter may very well determine that their gut reaction was true, but they may also be surprised.

Either way, this is a less biased way to approach a story — all stemming from the way the story idea was written.

Expand the Idea

STORY IDEAS

Brainstorm

The first story idea is not always best. Once a story idea is written as a question, you may want to talk with other people to see if other people agree the idea is worthwhile. If no one cares, why pursue the story?

In a school environment, the people on your staff happens also to be people in your readership. Are they interested? Ask people not on staff if they think it might be worth writing about if you are still unsure.

What Else?

The next question you should ask yourself and others is: What else? People naturally have different interests. The more important you think the story will be, the more people you want to talk with before to see if you missed a bigger angle.

This goes for people on and off staff. Don't be afraid to talk out ideas with readers because the story is meant for them.

Story Development Interviews

There is nothing wrong with conducting an interview — that may or may not be used in a story — just to see what issues experts or witnesses feel may have slipped through the crack.

You may think a story on changes to the school lunch program is important, but find the cause of the changes is the bigger fish to catch.

Story Idea 1

STORY IDEA CRITIQUES

Story Idea

COVID-19 and its effects on the school.

What's Wrong?

Below, write what the group agreed needed to be improved about the story.

Fix It!

Write a better version of the idea below:

Story Idea 2

STORY IDEA CRITIQUES

Story Idea

Rap music is more mainstream now than it used to be.

What's Wrong?

Below, write what the group agreed needed to be improved about the story.

Fix It!

Write a better version of the idea below:

Story Idea 3

STORY IDEA CRITIQUES

Story Idea

Politics

What's Wrong?

Below, write what the group agreed needed to be improved about the story.

Fix It!

Write a better version of the idea below:

Story Idea 4

STORY IDEA CRITIQUES

Story Idea

Why are so many students at school doing drugs more than they used to be?

What's Wrong?

Below, write what the group agreed needed to be improved about the story.

Fix It!

Write a better version of the idea below:

Story Idea Development Worksheet

NEWS WRITING UNIT

Story Topic

Below, write down a topic you would be interested in actually doing a story on for our publication.

Story Idea 1

Write one story you could do — written as a question — within the topic you wrote at the top.

Story Idea 2

Write one story you could do — written as a question — within the topic you wrote at the top.

Story Idea 3

Write one story you could do — written as a question — within the topic you wrote at the top.

Pick One & Revise

Look at each story idea you wrote above. Pick the one you think has the most news value and reader interest at our school. Then, rewrite the question to make it even better.

IF YOU'RE STUCK: The rewrite could include making the question: more or less broad, removing assumptions, finding a more specific angle, or anything else you think would make the story idea relevant and newsworthy, or improves the ethical nature of the idea by making it have less bias.

Why is this idea better? In the space below, write down how and why you revised your idea in the way you did.

Localize It

Complete this column only once you have finished the instructions on the left.

In the space below, write the local angle of the story. This could include a person at the school impacted or involved in the story, that the event is happening locally, or any other reason you feel people locally will care to read your story.

News Values

In the space below, write down each news value you feel your story has and why. List (one word each) which news values you feel are missing.

What's the Biggest Draw?

In the space below, write down which news value is the one that will make people care about the most and justify why you feel that's the one readers of our publication will care about the story.

Rationale

Breaking news stories are created in what's known as the inverted pyramid. This structure also serves as a fantastic tool to build and understand news structures. It is the most dry version of news writing, but all other styles build off of this structure in some way.

CLASS GOAL: We will understand the inverted pyramid style of news writing.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will critique and edit a story based off my knowledge of AP Style and the inverted pyramid.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Identifying and writing in the inverted pyramid structure
- How to identify the news peg
- Knowing what can be pushed lower in the story
- Avoiding burying the lede

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in two, 45-minute class periods but may be done in one class depending on length.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Inverted Pyramid Instructional Sheets" cut for each group
- "Example Breaking News Story - Inverted Pyramid" for each student
- "Example Reporter Notes - Inverted Pyramid" for each student
- "Copy Editing for Inverted Pyramid Style" for each student

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity silently with a 5-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and walk around to ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 shows a suggested answer.

ACTIVITY: Have each student in the group take one of the "Inverted Pyramid Instructional Sheets", read it silently for 1-2 minutes, and spend 30 seconds each going in a round-robin fashion to explain what they read to their classmates.

Have students all now read the "Example Breaking News Story" silently, making notes on their version as they go. Then, in another round-robin format, each student in the group should explain what they thought the news values of the story were and what problems they saw based on the instructional sheets.

Now, have all students mix around the room and sit with other members not from their own group. They should go around their new group and explain, one at a time in 15 seconds each, something their original group noticed that has not already been said. They will go in one more round-robin discussion about what they would do to improve the story. All students should then return to their original groups.

On the side of their sheets, students should independently write the order that the story should go in without rewriting the entire story. They should include the quotes as well — designated by writing the last name of the person who was quoted. This skeleton of the story can be as simple as one word or a phrase per section. Have each group compare before the group come up with a unified story skeleton.

Hand all students the "Example Reporters Notes". They will create another story skeleton based off the notes on the sheet. They will also compare their stories to their group members and justify the differences, coming up with a unified skeleton idea. One group member will then go to the other groups to show and explain their story skeleton until each group "stray" has gone to each other group before returning. Once they return to the original group, the other group members should explain the differences they saw and make any changes they feel they should make. Show and explain Slide 5 to show the students an example skeleton.

NOTE: This skeleton is based off one person's opinion and students may have a good reason for their structure. As long as students can justify it and it makes journalistic sense, they have succeeded.

DIRECT INSTRUCTION: Show and discuss Slide 6, which recaps everything students should have learned.

CLOSING ACTIVITY: Show Slide 7 and have students complete "Copy Editing for Inverted Pyramid Style". NOTE: The teacher may have to explain how to copy edit structure, which works somewhat differently than line editing for style.

Explain they can rewrite, draw arrows and make notes — whatever would help a reporter know how to correct the story.

Day 2

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Have students discuss in groups the notes they made on the "Copy Editing for Inverted Pyramid Style" worksheet and make any corrections they would like.

ACTIVITY: Students could write a 150- to 250-word story based on their skeleton on the "Example Reporter's Notes". Give them 30-minutes to do so. The story should be thin considering the information they have to work with and lack of knowledge about structure. This is to see if the order of information is right, not necessarily structure.

After they have written their stories, have students rotate their papers once around the group. Give students 5 minutes to edit. Rotate again and give another five minutes. Do this until all students have had a chance to line edit for style and order of importance including of their own work. These can be turned in for a grade.

OPTIONAL: Teachers may choose to have students write a new prompt after the edits, rewrite the original story, or report on a real event. In any case, the focus at this stage should be on making sure all students can nail the order of importance.

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5Ws & H: The Basics

THE INVERTED PYRAMID

Who, What, When, Where, Why & How

The inverted pyramid is based around the who, what, when, where, why and how of the news event. These are known as the 5Ws & H and are the bedrock of all journalism stories. They are just displayed differently depending on the structure.

The origin of the inverted pyramid comes from — according to lore — the Civil War when reporters on the battlefields tried to get information back to their editors via telegram wires. They would start with the most important information in case lines were cut. Regardless if this is the true origin, the story helps contextualize the idea: People want to know who is doing what, when and where? Why? How?

In modern times, the wires being cut is our attention span. People don't have the patience for long stories when it comes to stories the inverted pyramid is meant for — breaking news.

People may only have time to read the first half, the first graf, the first sentence, or even just the headline. In every structure, you must all 5Ws and H in some way.

Start Stories with Most Important

THE INVERTED PYRAMID

What Goes First?

The ultimate concept of the inverted pyramid is to start the first sentence of the story with the most important thing readers need to know. Usually, this is the thing that is most recent in the past or the future. What just happened? If readers already know what happened, what will happen? Strong stories start with a paragraph that weaves the two together.

Imagine you have just one sentence to tell people the basic facts of what will/did happen. What would you say? That's the start to an inverted pyramid story. This is what's called the **news peg**. You must know your audience. You write stories differently for a general audience, than for students, faculty, or the community.

If you bury the news peg deeper in the story, it's called **burying the lede**. This happens when you write a story chronologically — in time order.

EXAMPLE OF BURYING THE LEDE

The boys basketball team is 10–4 on the year after losing three weeks in a row.

"We will end up doing better," head coach Tim Cooke said. "It just takes practice."

Yesterday, the team lost its fourth game in a row, setting them up in a game across town. On the way home from the game, the team was hit by a semi-truck, causing four students to be hospitalized.

What's After the Most Important?

THE INVERTED PYRAMID

Answer the Reader's Next Question

After the first paragraph, the second bit of information should be the next logical question readers want answered.

Once you've written your first paragraph, you need to think, "What would be the first thing a reader would have questions about?" That becomes the question your next paragraph has to answer.

Model

FIRST PARAGRAPH: "Prom is canceled after a 4–3 vote at the school board meeting last night."

NEW QUESTIONS: If this was the first paragraph of a story, what would you want to know as a reader? Most likely, it is, "Why?" That should be the next paragraph either as a quote or information.

SECOND PARAGRAPH: "The vote is the result of a protest against the prom theme: Arabian Nights."

NEW QUESTIONS: Your next question is one of two things: "Why would they not like the theme?/What's the problem?" or "Who would be protesting?" The best story would combine both in the answer.

THIRD PARAGRAPH: "There are a number of Arab American students that go to the school," President Lonnie Price said. "The prom committee refused to change the theme despite the overtly racist stereotypes in the execution and families asking for minor changes."

NEW QUESTIONS: By this point, we not only hit the news peg (prom just got canceled), we also explained why. After this, you should then explore questions like: What were the stereotypes? What were the changes? Who was supporting the theme and why? It's just answering the logical question followed by answering the next logical question.

About the Length

THE INVERTED PYRAMID

How Long Does the Story Have to Be?

This isn't an essay for English class. Writing news is about providing information in a timely fashion. Frustratingly for many first-time journalists, there is not a firm length for news stories. Inverted pyramid stories typically fall in the 300–500 range, but aren't always so. You should write until all of the relevant questions have been answered within the deadline.

Breaking news may require stories that are only three sentences long if the issue is so big it can't wait to be posted online. It's updated later as more information becomes available.

If the story can wait — like results from a golf tournament — it will be longer, but should be published while still timely.

When you go to read a finished story — especially as you're learning how to look for structural issues related to the inverted pyramid — make notes about what major questions you have and mark them off as you read through. If the sentence says, "The City Council will consider purchasing enough mittens for every student in the school," I'm writing "Why?" next to it. Cross that off if the answer is in the next paragraph. If it isn't in the next paragraph but is further down the story, cross it off, circle the area where the "why" is answered and draw a line to the area below the sentence where

it should be and write, "Needs to be higher in story." If the answer to that question is totally absent, the story needs to be longer to answer that question.

Stories can also be too long. If you are write 2,600 words about the results of the last bowling tournament, you better have an incredibly compelling, intensely well written story. If not, Strunk & White's "Elements of Style" makes a fantastic suggestion: Reread your story after it is written and "ruthlessly delete the excess." It could be cutting a single word to entire blocks of a story. Take a machete to stories that are too long. "Is it vital to the story? Is it already said somewhere else? What new does it add?"

Example Breaking News Story

NEWS WRITING UNIT

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the story below. Make notes on why you think this story was written in the order that it was and the inverted pyramid style of writing notes. Be prepared to talk about the news values it has.

Students, faculty trapped in flooded school

About 100 faculty, staff and students were already in the building when the districtwide alert went out canceling classes at 6:50, about 20 minutes before first period was to begin.

"I arrived at about 6:30 a.m. and I thought the sky had actually fallen out," government teacher Joseph Kolache said. "We were stuck there, helplessly watching the water rise and leak into the building. It was terrifying."

Students were held in the upstairs library, playing board games and eating snacks and leftover breakfast that cafeteria workers had already made.

"The teachers really made most of this feel like nothing," sophomore Aaron Broomington said. "I mostly played Monopoly with my brother. It just sucks that we had to be there at all; I don't really understand why I was there."

Teachers were downstairs, picking up computers, books and any other valuables off the ground as the waters began to pour in.

"My car is about the size of a fully grown peanut," math teacher Eric Grimes said. "The other teachers and I had to just watch as the parking lot became a lake and engulfed several vehicles. We tried to pull them inside, but the doors just weren't wide enough."

The school community is asking "why" after students, faculty and staff were trapped in the building for most of Wednesday after Tropical Storm Ivette made a westward turn bringing heavy winds and rain.

"We had been monitoring the weather since about 3 a.m.," Communications Director Ima Goen said in a statement. "The storm was supposed to be a little windy but pass us to the east. We apologize for the inconvenience, disruption, and worry that may have resulted from making a late decision to cancel schools, but we knew it was the right thing to do for the safety of student and staff based on what was taking place in terms of the unprecedented heavy rainfall and quickly deteriorating road conditions."

Many parents want answers from Superintendent Dr. Kurt Noll who makes the ultimate decision on district closures.

"My son has never driven in high water before and damaged the entire front of his car trying to leave the neighborhood," parent Ysela Camileta said. "He was worried he would miss school because the district couldn't get its act together and just cancel school. If the district really cared about safety, it would have called school the night before because a freaking tropical storm was down the road."

Noll said the district plans on changing how it calculates when and which schools to close. Currently, it relies primarily on teachers calling out and watching other school closures.

"We clearly have to take more things into account," he said. "The other schools in the district didn't even get rain. That doesn't make it right that the high school flooded though. We have to do better."

Notes on Story

Make notes about what the reporter got right and wrong in the story.

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the information below that is a collection of facts from a reporter's notebook for the story including quotes. In the space below the notes, write out a list that chunks the story into parts. What is the top of the story? Cross out unimportant or arbitrary quotes & facts.

School Board Meeting Notes

6 PM: School board members call to order and recite the pledge of allegiance. Members approve the last meeting's minutes (attendance record and notes on what happened).

615 PM: Board President David Spearman congratulates longtime secretary Donna Noble on retirement and thanks her for 50 years of service. "We know how hard you work. I hope retirement is as good to you as you've been good to us here in CISD." Noble blushed and thanked board members. "I appreciate it. I'm so embarrassed." The audience laughed. Her family was there in attendance.

632 PM: Members of the public speak.

Parent Lonnie Risso: "I would like to see more physical activity in schools. Kids these days are lazy and don't want to go outside. Please do more about this."

Cub Scout and fourth grader Adam Ant: "Thank you for helping make my school better. My troop made you this to show our thanks for making students learn." The flag is a series of colorful stick figures in front of a hand-drawn school building with the words "Thank You CISD School Board!" in blue marker arched across the top.

Ice cream shop owner Mary Wilson: "Students are too rowdy right after school. They leave school and walk around the corner to the buses and cause all kind of havoc on the way. I have to spend about 10 minutes every day cleaning up the mess they throw on the sidewalk." Wilson's ice cream shop is on the corner right by the school. Students have to walk around the block to the bus holding area the high school shares with the junior high because there is not enough room for all the buses to line up in front of the school.

702 PM: Board unanimously passes Item 1 to make November officially Nurse Appreciation Month and send all school nurses a thank-you card. Board Secretary Tom Tillimaloo: "Nurses work so hard. They keep kids in school and kids can't learn if they aren't in school."

712 PM: Board moves onto Item 2 to purchase the empty lot next to the school to create a bus ramp and additional parking space for faculty. Assistant Superintendent of Operations Eazy Ryder proposed hiring Ripped Construction Crew as the contractor for \$1.5 million and spend \$30,000 on purchasing the lot. The lot is currently owned by a family. However, the family approached the school about buying the land.

Ryder: "You already heard one reason this will help us out. Students are having to walk too far to get on their bus. They can get in trouble along the way. Aside from that, there is the safety issue. The farther students have to walk, the more of a chance they can be injured by traffic, risk being approached by strangers with bad intentions and brave the weather. The proposal is costly, I know, but it is worth it. Faculty are also basically out of places to park. That is not fair to them."

Spearman questions Ryder if other options were taken into consideration. "You're asking the school to pay almost \$2 million on concrete. I don't see a reason why they can't just walk down there. Kids will be kids and cause trouble. I remember doing that while I was in school."

Ryder reminds Spearman of the freshman hit and hospitalized after falling into the road and being run over by a car. "That's on us. She would not have been there if the buses were connected to the school parking lot." Spearman nods in agreement after listening to Ryder.

Risso shows his support. "I think there are plenty of reasons this is a good idea aside from the obvious. That area could be used for more than just parking. We could hold fairs, band practice and other fun stuff. I see it as a win-win."

745 PM: The board approves the project unanimously. Construction will start on Monday, Jan. 4. The board adjourns the meeting.

Notes on Story

Make notes on, next to and below the story about what you think the most important story from the meeting is, what is unimportant, and who should be quoted and help show the sides of the story.

Rationale

If subject-verb-object is the building block of any sentence, the lede is the building block of anything someone writes. No matter what structure, something resembling a hard-news lede will exist.

CLASS GOAL: We will demonstrate what the function of a lede is and the proper ways to write one.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will write ledes to hard news stories.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Hard-news ledes should be about 30 words or less
- Ledes should include the 5Ws & H most relevant to readers
- Start with the most important 5Ws & H
- Be specific but without being too detailed

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in one, 45-minute class period with students split into groups of four.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Lede Writing Instructional Sheets" cut for each group
- "Group Lede Writing Scenarios" for each student
- "Individual Lede Writing Scenarios" for each student
- "Copy Editing Ledes" for each student

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity silently with a 5-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members. Slide 4 includes a suggested answer.

ACTIVITY: Have each student in the group take one of the "Lede Writing Instructional Sheets", read it silently for 1-2 minutes, and spend 30 seconds each going in a round-robin fashion to explain what they read to their classmates.

Give each group a copy of the "Group Lede Writing Scenarios". Each student should write a lede for one of the four scenarios. Give students 5 minutes to read, analyze, and write their lede.

Then, have students pass their ledes to the left in the group, each person making one edit of any type. If the person sees no error, they can make a note about what they thought the writer did well. However, the teacher should warn students to be extra picky when editing and not to forget to check for AP Style: spelling, capitalization, abbreviations, numerals, word usage and punctuation. They should continue to rotate until all the ledes have passed through each group member twice.

Have the original student write a revised lede using the notes their peers provided. Then, have groups switch papers with another group to revise one another's ledes in the same way as the first — students make an edit on the new lede and rotate until all group members have seen each lede twice before passing the ledes back to the original group.

This can move to the next step or continue with new groups switching until the teacher is satisfied the edits are effective.

Let the entire process above last no more than 20 minutes. Slide 5 recaps concepts.

INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT: Give students the "Individual Lede Writing Scenarios" and have them write a lede for each scenario. They should use the feedback they got on the first two ledes to help guide them to well-written ledes on the four in front of them.

EXIT TICKET: Give each student a slip from the "Copy Editing Ledes" that the students should line edit themselves and make suggestions on better ledes. They will turn both individual assessments in.

References

- Etwell, J., Balmeo, M., Austin, E., & Hamm R. (2021). *Journalism: Publishing Across Media*. The Goodheart-Willcox Company.
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Always: Who, What, Where & When

LEDE WRITING

What's in a Lede?

Any lede or paragraph that recaps the big story needs a few pieces of information: Who is doing what, where and when. Regardless of how much space you have, this is key.

When any one of these is missing, the sentence is missing key information VITAL to understanding what's doing on.

Bad Model

MISSING WHO: Someone will be the new principal of the high school Thursday.

MISSING WHAT: Dr. Sanjay Das will important to the high school Thursday.

MISSING WHEN: Dr. Sanjay Das will be the new high school principal.

MISSING WHERE: Dr. Sanjay Das will be the new principal Thursday.

Good Model

Dr. Sanjay Das will be the new principal of the high school starting Thursday.

Sometimes: Why & How

LEDE WRITING

Good to Know

When the who, what, when and where are short enough, it is great to include the "why" of the news event and "how" if it isn't obvious. Sometimes the how and what are the same. ("Football is playing in a game..." is what & how.)

May Be Needed

When the action being taken does not seem obviously newsworthy, the why or how may be a requirement.

Students must wear an ID on school grounds starting Monday (first 4 W's) because of a new policy (how) after an adult posing as a student walked into the building last week (why).

Are the Why & How Vital to Know?

WHO: Principal

WHAT: Banning cellphones

WHEN: Tomorrow

WHERE: At school

HOW: Making a rule

WHY: Because she felt it is necessary for good education

Thoughts?

The reason why probably matters less than what's happening and can be explained later. The how is sort of obvious and would just make the story longer and likely already be in a quote somewhere.

Are the Why & How Vital to Know?

WHO: Track team

WHAT: Holding a parent meeting

WHEN: Tomorrow

WHERE: At school

HOW: Called the meeting last night

WHY: The coaches may dissolve the team due to poor sportsmanship

Thoughts?

The how and why are much more interesting than the fact a meeting is taking place. In this case, they **MUST** be in the lede of the story or you are burying the lede too deep in the story.

Which Goes First?

LEDE WRITING

Lead with the Most Reader Interest

What will people care about? Lead your lede with that and they will want to keep reading on in the story. Imagine this boring start with the interesting end.

FFA adviser Carrie Ann Powers will host a meeting Thursday for all members of the club in the meat-processing lab via virtual reality to watch her dissect an adult swine using VR and AR technology.

BETTER: *To show students an adult-swine dissection through the world of virtual and augmented reality, FFA adviser Carrie Ann Powers will host a meeting for all members Thursday in the meat-processing lab.*

Thoughts?

I have to be 24 words into the first lede before I get to the reason we decided to do the story to begin with. Flip the order of the sentence to start with the why and how, then explain the other W's.

Fix It!

The school board will meet at the administration building at 7 p.m. to take a vote on canceling all sports for the remainder of the season after a series of viral hazing rituals spread across TikTok last month.

Details & Attribution

LEDE WRITING

Goldilocks Rule

Write just enough detail to give the readers the basics without overwhelming them with detail. Otherwise, they may stop reading from being overwhelmed with information. Save some detail for later on.

EXAMPLE: *After three golf team members were busted last week for drinking at a tournament, stealing a golf cart and crashing into a tree, the Mothers Against*

Drunk Driving proposed a lifetime ban from high school sports for students that engage in drug and alcohol abuse at school-sponsored events, which will be discussed at a community meeting being held at the school Monday.

INSTEAD: *After student golfers drank alcohol at a tournament last week, the community will discuss a permanent ban on students caught using illegal at a community meeting Monday.*

Attribute

The information in the lede should be attributed to a source, especially if that information would raise eyebrows. Put the attribution at the end of the sentence.

NO ATTRIBUTION: *The boys bathrooms have been wrecked beyond repair.*

ATTRIBUTED: *The boys bathrooms have been wrecked beyond repair, according to lead custodian Mel Blanch.*

Group Lede Writing Scenarios

NEWS WRITING UNIT

INSTRUCTIONS: Discuss with your group members and decide who will write which lede. Write a lede based off the information below.

NAME _____

Scenario 1

Burglars broke into the high school. Police are still searching for the suspects. The suspects stole 10 laptops, 14 Chromebooks, candy from a teacher's desk, 27 dry-erase markers, and all the hot dogs in the kitchen. The suspects were wearing black masks and hoodies. They knocked over a "Do Not Slip" sign and spray painted an Exit sign black. One was seen on camera laughing at the others. The burglary happened on Thursday, 9/30 of this year about 11 o'clock at night.

Scenario 2

The high school will have a pep rally fundraiser. Only students with tickets are allowed to attend. Tickets are on sale in the cafeteria for \$1. There are a maximum of 900 students who can attend due to limited space in the gym. Previously, no pep rally had ever cost money to attend. The money will go toward senior prom and is being hosted by senior class officers. The pep rally will be Tuesday, 10/7 in Gym B. The theme of the pep rally is "Blackout" and all students are encouraged to bring glow-in-the-dark material and clothing.

Scenario 3

Cityville Police Department held a press conference on Friday, 12/3 at 4 in the afternoon. A hippo walked into the school and broke the kneecaps of 24 students. There were no deaths reported. The feral hippo was raised in town right down the road from the school. The hippo is still on the loose. Police issued a citywide alert. The victims tried to pet the hippo before it tackled them. Damage from the hippo attack totals \$130,000.

Scenario 4

The drill team won the state championship. The state championship was in Cityville last month. There are 45 members and two instructors on the team. The team is judged on performance, technique and creativity. Two dancers had to sit out because they were ineligible. Drill team members now qualified for the national competition. It will be in Orlando next week. The team will fly to the competition and stay in a low-cost hotel.

Lede for Scenario _____

Lede for Scenario _____

Individual Lede Writing Scenarios

NEWS WRITING UNIT

INSTRUCTIONS: Write a one-sentence lede for each story below.

NAME _____

Scenario 1

GudStuf Co. maintains the vending machines, cafeteria and concession stand options. Due to a lack of federal regulations, the teachers lounge has unhealthy, sugary drinks and snacks. Student Council met yesterday. Officers are asking the principal to move the student vending machines to places further from the cafeteria so they may be stocked with items similar to the teachers lounge. Items would cost between 25 cents and \$1.50. Cafeteria lunch costs \$1.25. The money made would go toward the student activity fund. The Future Dieticians Association opposes the idea.

Lede

Scenario 2

Junior Terry Perks built his first computer two months ago. The first action he took was to build a video game, which he released a month later. The game is based on disinformation circulating around social media with the goal of causing the most damage. He got inspiration from similar games about plagues and warfare. A major game developer bought the rights to the game on Tuesday. The contract was for \$1.4 million. Terry plans on donating \$400,000 to the school to set up a scholarship fund and to pay for the computer science program to get a new lab.

Lede

Scenario 3

Students in the honors government class went to Washington, D.C. There are 31 students in the class. The teacher's name is Jacob Schmidt. The class visited the Capital to watch President Joe Biden formally nominate Appellate Court Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson to the U.S. Supreme Court. The ceremony took place Friday, 2/25. Schmidt got the idea from another teacher in the district who brought their students to the last inauguration. Each student paid \$500 to go.

Lede

Scenario 4

The school library has more than 20,000 books, magazines and reference material. Members of the public have been debating about the appropriateness of some books for high-school students. Topics in question include LGBTQ+ and race relations. A parent group submitted a petition to the school board Wednesday. The petition would ban any book that mentions either subject. The school board will vote on the petition Monday. Board members have not taken a side.

Lede

Copy Editing Ledes

LEDE WRITING

Edit This!

Copy edit the sentence below using your knowledge of lede writing, spelling, capitalization, abbreviations, numerals, word usage and punctuation.

Spartans win golf district

It's a great day to be a Cityville Spartan! On March 19th at the cityville country club, the Cityville Highschool golf taem competed at the district tournament. The team one the championship by 7 strokes over their rivals Townston Titans and advanced to region.

Copy Editing Ledes

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Edit This!

Copy edit the sentence below using your knowledge of lede writing, spelling, capitalization, abbreviations, numerals, word usage and punctuation.

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Rationale

There are story formats and complex topics that require more information than a one-line, hard-news lede. To give the reader a sense of context and “why am I reading this now?”, you should provide a nut graf when the situation calls for it.

CLASS GOAL: We will understand when and how to write a nut graf to expand upon a lede.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will write a lede and a nut graf using my understanding of the basic concepts.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Nut grafts should be used when a lede does not adequately inform readers of vital information about why they are reading a story at that time, or when the lede would be confusing without more information to supplement.
- Nut grafts contain information similar to, but not repetitive of, that which is in the lede.
- Nut grafts can also be historical background that might clue in new readers as to why a story is newsworthy to the community.
- Nut grafts are found in most journalistic stories and are structured similarly to a lede for non-hard-news story structures.

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed for one, 45-minute class period with students split into groups of four.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/pre-activity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- “Nut Graf Instructional Sheets” cut for each group
- “Nut Graf Practice Cards” cut
- “Example Reporter Notes” for each student. This was also used during the Inverted Pyramid lesson plan.

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has a suggested answer the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each student in the group take one of the “Nut Graf Writing Instructional Sheets”, read it silently for 1-2 minutes, and spend 30 seconds each going in a round-robin fashion to explain what they read to their classmates.

Then, give each student one of the cards from the “Nut Graf Practice Cards”. These are examples of ledes. Students should mix around the room while music plays until the music stops before pairing with a person near them. They will quiz and coach each other until both have it correct. They will continue to do this until all students have circulated or the teacher is satisfied with the results.

Conduct a round-robin format discussion with students going one at a time to explain what they saw, what they did right, and what they did wrong.

Use Slide 5 to explain to students what they should have learned through the lesson thus far.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have all students look at the “Example Reporter Notes” that they already attempted to write a story for. They will write a new lede and nut graf — regardless of how well their first attempt went — using the same information as before. They can use their notes from before or complete a new sheet depending on teacher preference.

If time allows, have students go around once in a round robin with each student reading and making a comment about what could be done better with the author’s lede and nut graf.

References

- Etwell, J., Balmeo, M., Austin, E., & Hamm R. (2021). *Journalism: Publishing Across Media*. The Goodheart-Willcox Company.
- Froke, P., & Bajak, F. (2020). *The Associated Press Stylebook*. Basic Books.
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- Strunk, W., & White, E. (2000). *The Elements of Style*. Allyn & Bacon.
- Stovall, J. (2009). *Writing for the Mass Media*. Pearson.

Use for Complex Stories

NUT GRAF

More Info, Please

A nut graf is a 5Ws and H paragraph that expands upon a lede that didn't include all the required details. Not all stories need them. A preview of the choir concert is straightforward whereas a discussion over a hotly debated policy change may require another paragraph at the top.

Needs More Info

The library's most popular book may soon be unavailable.

NOTE: The lede is good because it sums up the information with the most reader interest in a concise, easy-to-understand way without being bogged down by detail.

Here It Is

(In a new paragraph after the "Needs More Info" lede.)

After controversy over critical race theory, a local parents group is petitioning the library to remove "All American Boys" from shelves at the board meeting Friday

Answering the Important Questions

NUT GRAF

Wait, What?

If readers are left wondering what exactly they just read after the lede, you hooked them. However, you need to provide them with information they need in a nut graf.

HUH?: Cats closed school this week.

OH OK: A herd of feral cats infested the roof over the weekend, prompting district officials to close classrooms while the cats can be relocated to the animal shelter.

Which Needs a Nut Graf?

The varsity football team is 8–4 heading into a do-or-die match against the Spartanville Hippies next week in Columbus.

The varsity football team will not play football next year.

Thoughts

FIRST LEDE: There's nothing really else we need to know out of this paragraph. Football is going to do football things. Great. We can jump straight into a quote to get to the interesting parts of the story.

SECOND LEDE: HUH? Why? Says who? What happened? Why not? So many questions. A nut graf is 100% needed if this is your lede.

Use in Updates

NUT GRAF

Get It Up, Get It Right

When news is unfolding in real time — the real reason for an inverted pyramid story — throwing news online quickly is a must. Sometimes a story is maybe only three paragraphs at first and gets longer as more information comes up.

Nut graf works well in these scenarios.

ORIGINAL STORY: *Police arrested two parents at school today after bringing weapons and pointing them at students, according to Principal Terry Toma.*

"The two individuals violated state law today by threatening student safety," he said. "We have taken all necessary precautions and police have secured the facilities."

There isn't much information to be had in this story initially. Rumors will spread like wildfire on the internet the longer accurate information is withheld from the public.

Is it nice to have quotes, background, names, criminal backgrounds, police quotes and more? Yes. However, some situations don't allow it until later.

More Information

Eventually, that information comes out and your previous lede will (usually) become all or part your nut graf and the updated information will become a new top (lede) for the story.

Two parents accused of drunkenly waving weapons at students and faculty in the parking lot face state felony charges.

Police arrested Jim and Pam Halpert at the front entrance of the school yesterday after bringing two pistols, pointing them at students and laughing from their car, according to CPD Lt. Don Juan.

Use for Historical Background

NUT GRAF

Let Everyone In On The History

Occasionally news breaks that does not immediately click with younger readers or those not familiar with the area's traditions or history. These require a nut graf to help those readers understand the context. Otherwise, it's a weird inside joke.

EXAMPLE: *Sam Houston State University administrators will hold a funeral service for Tripod on campus Wednesday.*

Who is Tripod? Why would a university hold a funeral service? Why would the funeral service be on the campus grounds? None of this makes sense!

More Information

Depending on the publication (like a statewide publication), it may be more important to focus on who Tripod was than what happened (for the school paper).

FIXED EXAMPLE: *Sam Houston State University administrators will hold a funeral service for Tripod on campus Wednesday.*

The stray, mustard-colored dog has been the beloved, unofficial mascot of the Bearkat community for 14 years — known for his genial nature and school spirit at pep rallies, homecoming parades and football games. He got the name Tripod for his lame left-front paw that veterinarians were unable to heal.

That Makes Sense

Without knowing who Tripod was, it was impossible for an outsider to understand the gravity of the situation for the school community. With the nut graf, they get it.

What Does Your School Care About?

Think about the traditions, history and other unwritten rules your school has.

What would students be upset if the school banned, got rid of, or canceled?

How would you explain that to an outsider?

Card 1

Answer

Needs a nut graf.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 2

Answer

Needs a nut graf.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 3

Answer

Needs a nut graf.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 4

Answer

Needs a nut graf.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 5

Answer

Needs a nut graf.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 6

Answer

Needs a nut graf.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 7

Answer

Needs a nut graf.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 8

Answer

Needs a nut graf.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 9

Answer

No nut graf needed.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 10

Answer

No nut graf needed.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 11

Answer

No nut graf needed.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 12

Answer

No nut graf needed.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 13

Answer

No nut graf needed.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 14

Answer

No nut graf needed.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 15

Answer

No nut graf needed.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 3

Does It Need a Nutgraf?

Walking down the street covered in grime, dirt and wet from rain, junior Adam Savage noticed his ticket out.

Card 2

Does It Need a Nutgraf?

The basketball team may soon get a new gym.

Card 1

Does It Need a Nutgraf?

The dance started — and ended — with a bang.

Card 6

Does It Need a Nutgraf?

City residents might be without water depending on the outcome of a city council decision.

Card 5

Does It Need a Nutgraf?

The curtain rose but the audience was absent. Theater teacher Maddy Bowchu was not surprised.

Card 4

Does It Need a Nutgraf?

Campus administration has one goal: get more students ready for college, the military and careers.

Card 9

Does It Need a Nutgraf?

No students will need to take a final exam after administrators canceled them due to COVID-19 related concerns last week.

Card 8

Does It Need a Nutgraf?

After tripping down the stairs last week, freshman Phil Harmonic got the luckiest break of his life.

Card 7

Does It Need a Nutgraf?

Students should be worried about their privacy on school servers.

Card 12

Does It Need a Nutgraf?

Yearbook delivery may be delayed after a computer error caused all the files to be deleted yesterday.

Card 11

Does It Need a Nutgraf?

Anyone interested for running for a class officer position has until Friday to turn in applications.

Card 10

Does It Need a Nutgraf?

Seniors are ecstatic Student Council will put on the first homecoming dance in three years next week.

Card 15

Does It Need a Nutgraf?

School is closed until Friday after a busted gas pipe led to a leak that flooded rooms with carbon monoxide.

Card 14

Does It Need a Nutgraf?

One student is injured after wrecking their bike into the baseball field after their brakes failed Monday.

Card 13

Does It Need a Nutgraf?

The fishing club won its third-straight, state championship Monday.

Rationale

The lede and nut graf are easy enough. What really separates a story from the others is the quality of quotes and transitions. Transitions are the thread by which we weave the quotes and extra information in to provide context to the reader and make the story flow.

CLASS GOAL: We will understand what a transitional phrase is and the options for how to write them.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will write four different types of transitional phrases based off a set of reporter notes.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Transitions should link to quotes or informational paragraphs that follow without repeating the quote.
- Transitions can be facts and information, paraphrased quotes, and/or filled with small details that help paint a picture for a reader.
- Transitions should not be paraphrased quotes that would have been better as a direct quote.

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in one, 45-minute class period with students split into groups of four.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/pre-activity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Writing Transitions Instructional Cards" for each group
- "Writing Transitions Practice Worksheet" for each student

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the suggested answer the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each student in the group take one of the "Writing Transitions Instructional Sheets", read it silently for 1-2 minutes, and spend 30 seconds each going in a round-robin fashion to explain what they read to their classmates.

Each group should take a copy of the "Writing Transitions Worksheet". The group will take turns starting with a randomly selected person. The first person will read the selection of text out loud from the lede to the transition. The second person in the group will discuss the link between the transition and quote, then explain why they feel it is strong or weak. The third person should describe if the transition is based on fact, history, a summary of emotion, or a paraphrased quote that should really have been in direct quotes. The fourth person will discuss if it repeats the direct quote or not.

Students will then mix around the room and find a new group. They will reread the transition and quote from the Group Worksheet and write a new transition based on what they learned from their original groups. They should have done their best to change groups. They should discuss the transition as a group until they have a unanimously agreed upon example. They should elect a group leader to explain which type of transition it is and why they chose that. There may be multiple right answers. Assure students there is no perfect way to achieve this. There are ways for a transition to be better than another and for them to be wrong, but not perfect. When they return to their original groups, they will discuss what they ran into issues with in their other group before writing the second transition in the second slot.

Slide 5 has a recap of the concepts.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Students should complete the bottom half of the "Writing Transitions Practice" worksheet as a formative assessment of individual understanding of transition writing before turning it in.

References

- Etwell, J., Balmeo, M., Austin, E., & Hamm R. (2021). *Journalism: Publishing Across Media*. The Goodheart-Willcox Company.
- Froke, P., & Bajak, F. (2020). *The Associated Press Stylebook*. Basic Books.
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- Stovall, J. (2009). *Writing for the Mass Media*. Pearson.

Go with the Flow

WRITING TRANSITIONS

Make Transitions & Quotes After Relate

Transitions (paragraphs between quotes) should relate to the quotes that follow.

Stories should flow, which means the story easily moves from one paragraph to the next. Stories shouldn't feel like a disjointed list of information.

Bad Model

The Cityville Fair & Rodeo will take place this week and feature food, fun and family activities.

"The prices of food are too high," Mary Jo said. "I wouldn't go to the fair because of that."

Good Model

While the fair features rides, games and snacks, the expense is off-putting to some.

"The prices of food are too high," Mary Jo said. "I wouldn't go to the fair because of that."

No Juice; Just Facts

WRITING TRANSITIONS

Factual Transitions

Transitions (paragraphs between quotes) are the place for putting hard facts in stories, not quotes. The quotes after factual transitions should be a person's thoughts related to that fact, which could include analysis, anecdotes or an opinion.

Fact-based quotes are BORINGGGGG.

Multiple Transitions

In particularly data-heavy stories, you can use multiple transitional paragraphs to explain it in **reader-friendly language**. Experts tend to use lots of jargon (industry-specific words) that readers do not understand. Do not limit your writing to a formula of one paragraph then one quote ad nauseum. Do what makes sense.

Model

The new policy bans all shorts that are shorter than 2 inches past fingertip length.

"That's unfair," Bobby Boi said. "I have freakishly long arms."

Details, Details, Details

WRITING TRANSITIONS

Give Me the Details

Solid transitions (paragraphs between quotes) provide the details that help understand or imagine.

Readers need necessary details to paint a picture in their mind, understand how two actions relate, and how past events play into current events. Details matter.

Weak Model

The girl was very happy when her parents bought her some things including a lot of stuffed animals.

"She is so cute and fluffy," Kim Schmidt said. "I love her so much."

Better Model

The girl, 7, was ecstatic when her parents, Bob and Karen, bought her 47 stuffed animals including a white lion she named Linda.

"She is so cute and fluffy," Kim Schmidt said. "I love her so much."

Looking Back to History

WRITING TRANSITIONS

Historic Transitions

There are stories that very much matter, but new readers would not understand context because they are either too young, new to an area or unfamiliar with the topic.

Use transitions (paragraphs between quotes) to fill in gaps for readers who may not fully understand why the story matters.

Weak Model

Some people do not like the proposed change to the driving requirements.

"All of us old folk are heavily impacted," John Greo said. "I cannot support it."

Better Model

Some remembered a similar, 1950s policy that prevented most 60-plus year olds from driving.

"All of us old folk will be heavily impacted," John Greo said. "I cannot support it."

Summarize It For Me

WRITING TRANSITIONS

Paraphrased Quotes

When most people talk about their analysis or opinion, they begin with a sentence summarizing their thoughts and/or facts that can be used as transitions (paragraphs between quotes).

Paraphrasing is where the writer rewords what the person said in a similar way without losing the context or repeating what is already in the quote.

Example Quote Block

Firefighter Patty Milt: "The new fire truck is amazing. (summary of opinion) It has space for six crew and tank of 10,000 gallons. (fact) I can't wait to see how many more houses get saved because of this. That's the point. (good quote)"

The summary & fact can be my transition, leaving the better part to directly quote.

Model

Firefighter Patty Milt said she is amazed by the new fire truck including the space for six more firefighters and a 10,000-gallon water tank.

"I can't wait to see how many more houses get saved because of this," she said. "That's the point."

Writing Transitions Worksheet

NEWS WRITING UNIT

Instructions

Below is an example of a lede, nut graf, first quote, and transition to a second quote. Your group will analyze the second transition to think about the different ways a nut graf could go wrong to see where the error is located.

Endangered bats infest cafeteria, forcing weeklong lunch shutdown

Lunch will take place in classrooms after a colony of rare bats has taken up its home in the ceiling above the cafeteria.

About 125 little brown bats — an endangered species native to the northern area of the United States — will have to be moved to a safe location and the area be sanitized before students can safely return to the cafeteria.

“The bats must love our school as much as we do,” Superintendent Daniel Brown said. “Unfortunately, their status as an endangered species means we cannot quickly remove them in the same way we might remove less rare types. It is pretty cool to see the process of how they remove them to protect the species though.”

There are a lot of very small details the district had to do for the bats to move to the place, according to animal control officer Lisa Pikes.

“There are lots of very tiny details and red tape the district has to cut for the bats to move,” Pikes said. “When you are dealing with a protected population, you have to be careful not to disturb the colony. The sheer number of these animals makes this an amazing find, even if it is an inconvenience.”

FFA set for first city fair since pandemic struck

FFA members will compete this weekend in the Cityville Fair & Rodeo for the first time since 2020.

“COVID-19 really took its toll on agriculture,” sponsor Jessica Smith said. “Students had to cull animals that would otherwise have been sold at the fair for scholarship money. These kids had to start over almost immediately in order to be ready for this move.”

(Write four different transitions for this paragraph below using the additional information provided about the event.)

“All our hard work is about to pay off when I never thought it would,” senior Patricia Clarke said. “So many of my friends were devastated by the sudden canceling that happened because of COVID-19. I get to go to college now because of this girl.”

Story Information to Help Construct Ledes

Cityville Fair & Rodeo consistently provided scholarship opportunities to students by allowing donors and business owners to purchase animals from the show. In 2020, the fair ceased operations right before the livestock show. This was the first year the fair had enough entries to start the youth show back up. Sponsor Jessica Smith said more than 40 Cityville High School students are showing animals. The categories students entered include animals like cows, ducks, sheep, chickens, goats and rabbits. Senior Patricia Clarke: “My heifer, Bacon, and I have been hoping this moment would come. All our hard work is about to pay off when I never thought it would. So many of my friends were devastated by the sudden canceling that happened because of COVID-19. I get to go to college now because of this girl.” Bacon is a 4-year-old Hereford with the distinct red body, and white face, underline and legs.

Historic Transition

Detailed Transition

Fact-Based Transition

Paraphrased Transition

Rationale

People are not always the best interview subjects. Most people are nervous and most reporters feel the same. As a result, people resort to boring quotes to get in and get out. That's a fast way to get a boring publication. Choose good quotes only and people will want to read.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn types of quotes to avoid and those to seek out.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will use my knowledge of quote and information selection to analyze a transcript to choose good information to include in a story, then write the story and edit another person's work.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Good quotes are emotional, opinionated or provide eyewitness testimony — all of which in a way that would lose its flavor if a reporter paraphrased the quote.
- Boring quotes focus on facts or are a summary of how they feel.
- Avoid choosing information or quotes that were already said or included somewhere else to avoid just using filler words and information.

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in two, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four, but may be completed in one depending on class length.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Choosing Good Quotes Instructional Cards" cut for each group
- "Choosing Good Quotes Practice Cards", printed front and back, cut for class
- "Sample Reporter Notes — Vending Machines" for each student to use

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the suggested answer the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each student in the group take one of the "Choosing Good Quotes Instructional Sheets", read it silently for 1-2 minutes, and spend 30 seconds each going in a round-robin fashion to explain what they read to their classmates.

Then, give each student one of the cards from the "Choosing Good Quotes Practice Cards". These are examples of quotes a student might use in a publication. Students should mix around the room while music plays until the music stops before pairing with a person near them. They will quiz and coach each other until both have it correct. They will continue to do this until all students have circulated or the teacher is satisfied with the results.

Conduct a round-robin format discussion with students going one at a time to explain what they saw, what they did right, and what they did wrong.

Use Slide 5 to recap what students should have learned.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have students read through the "Sample Reporter Notes" silently and independently. They should label each sentence of the quotes as either: "stating fact", "summary of opinion", "boring", or "could be used".

Day 2

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Have students discuss with their group which quote statements in the transcript they believed were good quotes and why.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY: Have students write a 200-word-minimum story in 30 minutes using the facts and interviews provided to them. They should have at least one, fact-based transition using details and information pulled from a quote, and at least one paraphrased transition using summarized opinion from the quotes.

NOTE: This should go much faster than the first time they wrote a story. Assure students that 200 words is not an insurmountable task in 30 minutes.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have students trade with another student and copy edit each other's work after printing out the stories, or trade hand-written papers. Editors should primarily focus on quote choice, but not forget all the AP Style and grammar from before. (Note: Students should get used to typing on a keyboard. Some choose to write by hand because they are scared of not knowing how to operate actual computers.) Once the work has been copy edited, the teacher can either have the edited work turned in, or have students make corrections.

References

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So Emotional

CHOOSING QUOTES & INFORMATION

Find Emotion

Avoid quotes that summarize a person's emotion and look for moments where someone's words are emotional.

Humans relate to other human emotion: anger, disappointment, joy, excitement, sadness, mourning, loss, optimism. This makes readers understand.

Weak Model

"I was excited," Larry Plopper said. "We had fun and a good time."

BORING. What was specifically exciting? Was it what you were expecting? What is fun? What made it fun? What was the good time? What made it good?

No one feels the same excitement he did.

Better Model

"The roller coasters made my heart pound as I walked closer to them," Larry Plopper said. "I thought my chest was going to burst when we reached the top of the coaster. The adrenaline rush was so intense I felt like I was walking on air."

In My Their Opinion

CHOOSING QUOTES & INFORMATION

Explaining Opinion

Quotes that focus on opinion should not just be a summary of opinion. Save that for a transition or leave it out. The quote should make the reader obviously know how the person interviewed felt about the topic.

Think: Why do they feel that way? If the quote doesn't give insight, it's weak.

Weak Model

"I do not like the idea of vaping," Jose Alfonze said. "I just think it's bad for you."

WHO CARES? Many people don't like vaping. What makes this opinion so special? Why does he think it's bad?

Better Model

"Vaping is one reason I can never use the bathrooms between class periods," Jose Alfonze said. "Too many kids are piled up in the stalls smoking that I have to wait to pee until class starts. Then, I can't always go because of the teacher."

Eyewitness Testimony

CHOOSING QUOTES & INFORMATION

A Story Only They Can Tell

Quote interviewees who have such a way with words that the quote would lose its unique vibe if the reporter wrote it. It's like cleaning a chocolate-covered peanut so much before eating that most of the chocolate falls off. It's still a peanut, but with less flavor because you sanitized it.

Story Told By Quote

"We were eating dinner when we heard a bang so loud, I thought one of our guns went off. It shattered a window and knocked pictures off the walls. It wasn't until about an hour later that we realized it was from the plant blowing up."

Story Told By Reporter

The man first heard the explosion while eating dinner. He did not find out the factory blew up until an hour later.

BORING: The quote loses the series of events and way he describes the sound and what he witnessed. When people talk like that, let them tell the story.

Cut the Boring & Irrelevant

CHOOSING QUOTES & INFORMATION

No. Boring. Quotes.

Quotes are not filler words. They exist to tell stories.

Do not ever include a quote "just because" or because it is the only one you have.

Quotes add that little extra spice that humans sprinkle on the facts and figures of the human experience.

Weak Model

"The game was good," coach Barry Peye said. "We worked hard and played as a team."

Good for you, coach. The other team did, too. Why did they lose/win? What did the result mean for the team? Was there any strategy that didn't work? So DULL.

Better Model

"Our offensive line really stepped up its game tonight," coach Barry Peye said. "Tonight's win can be attributed to those guys plowing through defense. We'll make playoffs if they keep this performance up."

Don't Be Redundant

CHOOSING QUOTES & INFORMATION

You Already Said That

When picking quotes and information, choose new perspectives, information and emotions the reader has not already seen.

If an idea gets repeated, delete or replace with a new side of the story that hasn't been seen. This is especially true of quotes that repeat what was said in transitions: One has to change.

Weak Model

Junior Carrie On loves the new dress with six pockets.

"I really love that new, six-pocket dress," she said. "The company finally understands what we say about functionality of dresses."

Better Model

CHANGE THE TRANSITION: Junior Carrie On is one of many people planning on buying the dress.

"I really love that new, six-pocket dress," she said. "The company finally understands what we say about functionality of dresses."

OR, DELETE THE REPEAT: Junior Carrie On loves the new dress with six pockets.

"The company finally understands what we say about functionality of dresses," she said.

Card 1

Answer

Good quote. It would lose meaning if the reporter paraphrased it.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 4

Answer

Good quote. It would lose meaning if the reporter paraphrased it.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 7

Answer

Good quote. It would lose meaning if the reporter paraphrased it.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 10

Answer

Good quote. It would lose meaning if the reporter paraphrased it.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 13

Answer

Good quote. It would lose meaning if the reporter paraphrased it.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 2

Answer

Boring quote. It is a summary of emotion.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 5

Answer

Boring quote. It is a summary of emotion.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 8

Answer

Boring quote. It is a summary of opinion.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 11

Answer

Boring quote. It is a summary of opinion.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 14

Answer

Boring quote. It is a summary of emotion.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 3

Answer

Boring quote. It is just a statement of fact.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 6

Answer

Boring quote. It is just a statement of fact.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 9

Answer

Boring quote. It is just a statement of fact.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 12

Answer

Boring quote. It is just a statement of fact.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 15

Answer

Boring quote. It is just a statement of fact.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 3

Good or Bad Quote?

I walked down the road to the store
and fell in a puddle along the way. My
pants got muddy.

Card 2

Good or Bad Quote?

It made me really happy.

Card 1

Good or Bad Quote?

The bolt of lightning shot through me
and lit me up. My hair was fried from
tip to tail.

Card 6

Good or Bad Quote?

My mom and dad are 15 years apart
in age. They met after she left college
and they started working together.

Card 5

Good or Bad Quote?

We all played well as a team and
worked hard today.

Card 4

Good or Bad Quote?

Without teachers like her, students
like me would still be wandering the
halls looking for a safe space.

Card 9

Good or Bad Quote?

She gave out homework all last week.
We had to write these essays over
the start of World War I.

Card 8

Good or Bad Quote?

The policy is a good idea. I like it.

Card 7

Good or Bad Quote?

The horrendous bill would be a
travesty of historic proportions. We
will be paying for it for generations.

Card 12

Good or Bad Quote?

My mom bought me this little brown
hat I wore in the play. It was on sale
at the store next door.

Card 11

Good or Bad Quote?

I don't like seeing that type of
language on TV.

Card 10

Good or Bad Quote?

I cannot imagine what those poor
souls are going through in the darkest
of dark situations. My heart weeps.

Card 15

Good or Bad Quote?

I told her I wanted the toy. She
bought it for me the same day.

Card 14

Good or Bad Quote?

Seeing that makes me emotional and
want to cry.

Card 13

Good or Bad Quote?

My life is better off for having known
the joy of cooking. Hopefully I can
spread that happiness myself.

Sample Reporter Notes — Vending Machines

NEWS WRITING UNIT

INSTRUCTIONS: Go through each quote under each source's name. Mark each sentence as either F for "stating fact", S for "summary of opinion", B for "boring", and put brackets [] around the quotes that you would use as direct quotes in a story.

Story Information

Cityville High School has a school population of roughly 1,650 students in grades 9-12. The school is serviced by the GudStuf Co. for cafeteria, vending machine and concession stand options. Due to federal regulations, the student vending machines located near the cafeteria can only be stocked with healthy, and what many consider overpriced, snacks and drinks. The teachers lounge has no federal regulations and is stocked with popular snacks and drinks that have a lot of sugar and no healthy options.

The CHS Student Government came forward with a petition to move some vending machines to other locations in the school to allow for less-healthy, more-popular options for students. The proceeds from vending machines goes toward the general student activity fund. The student legislators argue that adding popular options can net more money for campus events and boost school pride. Other student groups have opposed the measure. Vending machines must abide by federal health guidelines. The cafeteria workers refill the machines twice a week after school is over. The Student Council says students should go to its website to read more about the petition and leave comments. The website is www.CityvilleStuGo.hs.

The student government will make its pitch to the school board Friday, March 4 at 7 p.m. You are writing for an edition of The Cityville High School Bugle to be distributed Tuesday, March 1.

Kyle Bannor, student government president

"Kids love unhealthy food. Considering the options we have in the vending machines, many students prefer to just bring a backpack full of snacks from home for less money. We're losing money unnecessarily simply because of vending machine placement and vendor contracts."

"Letting us move the machines to allow for more popular options keeps student money inside the building at competitive prices. This could allow us to use that money for more school-sponsored events. There's a sense of irony that Oreos can help students out at schools. I get that. But, it is true. We've heard from many students who'd rather just be able to have lots of options to eat because they already hate what we have."

"There has been a 40 percent drop in vending machine sales in the last nine years since the machines were moved to the cafeteria. That is \$8,600 a year in lost revenue that could have gone back to us."

Peter Gunn, president of CHS Future Dieticians Association

"This is another example where the dollar wants to trump student health. There's a reason the federal government restricts where and when unhealthy food can be had in a school environment. America is the fattest nation in the world. Heart disease is the leading cause of death. We live in one of the least healthy states in the nation. This proposal is well-intentioned but a very poor use of efforts. There are other ways of making money."

Cheryl Rappon, principal

"I am not taking a position on this issue for a specific reason. Our students have taken an issue to heart and there is a vibrant, well-mannered debate going on in our school. Both positions abide by the law and would both have good and bad consequences. I want this school environment to be created, fostered and led by students. What they eat and how they garner and spend student funds is just as important part of school culture as anything we adults can do. In my view, this is their situation to resolve among themselves."

China Limon, parent of a student

"When I was in school, we could eat whatever we want. I want my daughter to have the same choices I did. This country is based on the free market system. If we want to eat foods that clog our heart, so be it. I should have the choice."

Josh White, senior

"We've had terrible options in the vending machines since I was a freshman. I don't bring money to spend in the vending machines because there's nothing good to eat. I'd rather spend \$20 at Walmart for a weeks worth of snacks than spend a dollar on a bag of cardboard chips."

Carolyn Proxy, sophomore

"I don't mind what we have in the vending machines. We still have lunch and we're at school for about eight hours anyway. If they complain about it, just wait to go home and get something to eat. Or, you could sneak into the teachers lounge like I do. They have the better stuff anyway. Both of them are always unlocked."

Rationale

"How am I supposed to end the story?" is a question beginning journalism students ask with the reliability of a Swiss watch. Stories can't just end at any point in the story; otherwise, it won't feel

CLASS GOAL: We will learn techniques for finding a stopping point for stories.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will write different types of endings for the same story, as well as write and edit a story using all of the news writing tools.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Stories should feel complete when they are done. Readers shouldn't be looking for the rest of the article.
- Stories can end on quotes that have a forward look and sometimes those that circle back to the past.
- Stories can end by providing contact information or other types of reader help to provide more information.
- Stories should not end by cheerleading or summarizing.

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in two, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four, but may be completed in one depending on class length.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/pre-activity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Ending a Story Instructional Sheets" for each group
- "Example Story Ending" for each student & "Sample Reporter Notes — Vending Machines" from the quote selection lesson
- "Sample Reporter Notes — COVID Petition" for each student
- Class set of AP Stylebooks, physical or web-based. This lesson was designed using the 2020-2022 Associated Press Stylebook.

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the suggested answer the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each student in the group take one of the "Ending a Story Instructional Sheets", read it silently for 1-2 minutes, and spend 30 seconds each going in a round-robin fashion to explain what they read to their classmates.

Then, hand each student a copy of the "Example Story Ending". They should read the story, then discuss the missing paragraph at the end. Each of the group members should write a different type of ending to the story (that they determine beforehand) using the "Sample Reporter Notes — Vending Machine". Once they finish, they should pass their papers around the table, writing the same ending.

After each student writes an ending, have them edit another person's work, coaching and critiquing them on what to improve. They should rotate the papers around with each student having time to critique and edit every other student's work.

Slide 5 has a recap of all the concepts.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Hand each student a copy of the "Sample Reporter Notes — COVID Petition". Explain they will be writing a full story using everything they have learned. Give the groups time to read the prompt and explain to each other in a round-robin format what they think the lede should be. All students should then write their ledes.

Day 2

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Have students swap ledes from the day before with another student and critique.

PRACTICE/CLOSING ACTIVITY/EXIT TICKET: Students should write the rest of the news article using the information they learned from the whole unit.

OPTIONS: Students should be able to edit one another's work and have a chance to revise their work before turning in what should be a clean piece of copy. The teacher may impose a shorter time and word limit on the article, extend the assignment to multiple days for editing and revising, or other methods that would allow students to be able to coach, edit and revise. The goal would be for the students, not the teacher, to do all of the coaching and correcting before the teacher ever touches a news article.

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Quotes About the Future

ENDING A STORY

Look Forward

A quote from someone involved that talks about future plans, hope, optimism, goals or any other thought about the future could be one way to end a story.

NOTE: The quote should be on feelings about the big picture of the future, not just their plans for grocery shopping.

Weak Model

"I am glad the doctors were able to save my life," she said. "They said I could go home as early as tomorrow or the next day."

Because the second sentence is a fact, the story would end on a flat note.

Better Model

"I am glad the doctors were able to save my life," she said. "They have inspired me to go into the medical field myself. If I can save one person's life like my situation, it will be worth it."

Quotes About the Past

ENDING A STORY

Look Back

Quotes about the past can end a story if they are powerful and discuss something that has not already been told or is doing so in a new way. Otherwise, readers will feel the redundancy.

Generally, try to use these to circle the story back to the tone of the beginning.

Weak Model

"The last time we had an earthquake like that was 1947," Gerry Atric said. "I learned a lot. It was the worst thing that happened to the city."

Better Model

"The last time we had an earthquake like that, I remember the tragedy the city felt," Gerry Atric said. "Although, the lessons I learned at that time still stick with me to this very day. Bittersweet, yes, but invaluable."

For More Information

ENDING A STORY

What Else?

When writing stories about events, business, entertainment and other topics that have more relevant information for people interested than could ever fit in a story, you can drop a paragraph at the end letting people know where they can go find more information for themselves.

Why Not More?

Some stories may be missing a key piece of information for good reason or tell readers what the publication is doing to find that extra piece of information that is missing. A paragraph explaining that is helpful, especially in breaking news.

Models

For more information, call 555-555-5555 or visit its website at www.CityvilleThreads.com.

The school board declined to comment for this story.

Don't Summarize nor Cheer

ENDING A STORY

Don't Repeat Yourself Don't Repeat Yourself

There is never a reason to restate what has already been stated. Unlike public speaking where summary ends are common, readers can go back to read what you wrote. Do not provide "In conclusion..." or "All-in-all..." endings.

Don't Cheer Them On

Stories will never end with "Go Panthers!" or any sort of hype statement meant to cheer on a team, person or school.

The cheerleaders have their job. Let them do it. Your job is to tell people what is going on in an unbiased manner. Yes, you are a part of the school and community, but objectivity is key.

Bad Models

The team will play Livingston next week. We wish them good luck!

As already stated, the Cityville City Council will meet next week to discuss the budget.

It's Over Already?

ENDING A STORY

Should Feel Complete

When you complete a story, read it top to bottom. As you finish reading, see if you are expecting for it to continue. If the story randomly ends, you can feel it.

Your reader should never ask the question: Where's the rest? Is that it?

If so, use another type of ending.

Weak Ending

The academic decathalon team will have their next match in Cityville on Saturday.

"I'm ready to go compete," Gabby Falcky said. "Last time, I missed a question on biochemistry."

Better Ending

The academic decathalon team will have their next match in Cityville on Saturday.

"I'm ready to go compete," Gabby Falcky said. "We want to prove to everyone we have what it takes."

Sample Reporter Notes — COVID Petition

NEWS WRITING UNIT

INSTRUCTIONS: Write a 300- to 500-word news story using the inverted pyramid style of writing with a hard news lede. **NOTE:** Information written in the reporter notes below may not be written in AP Style.

Story Information

Cityville High School has a school population of roughly 1,500 students in grades 9-12. In the two weeks after winter break, nearly half of all faculty, staff and administrators were home sick with the Omicron variant of COVID-19. During the third week, 68% of students were absent compared to an average of 4% the year prior to Covid-19, according to attendance records. Throughout February, absentee rates dropped to the lowest point in school history with only 10 students, faculty and staff absent on average due to any illness. About 40% of students have received the first COVID-19 vaccine, according to a survey of 550 students conducted by the Bugle staff members at lunch.

As a result, a group of students is circulating a petition to remove all vaccine requirements going forward. Those students formed an unofficial club last week called Students for Reason that meets off campus at one of their houses. The group cites low absentee rates as a sign that vaccine mandates prolong exposure to viruses and that students have no say in control over what goes in their body. HOSA members have contested the new group's claims, saying the high school got lucky with how the virus spread to cause absentee rates to drop and that the science behind their petition is flawed. The petition has yet to be formally presented to the school board. Being an officially recognized group would allow Students for Reason to meet on campus with an adult adviser, have a school bank account, fundraise, advertise and recruit on campus, and use school materials for club functions.

Students for Reason's officers filed a request with campus administrators to become a fully recognized student organization. HOSA — a student group of future health care providers — issued a statement advocating the group's petition be denied. Principal Juana Guzman will make the decision about the new group's status Thursday, March 10.

You are writing for the next edition of The Bugle, which will be distributed Wednesday, March 9.

Kevon Bakin, Students for Reason president

"Kids love unhealthy food. Considering the options we have in the vending machines, many students prefer to just bring a backpack full of snacks from home for less money. We're losing money unnecessarily simply because of vending machine placement and vendor contracts."

"Letting us move the machines to allow for more popular options keeps student money inside the building at competitive prices. This could allow us to use that money for more school-sponsored events. There's a sense of irony that Oreos can help students out at schools. I get that. But, it is true. We've heard from many students who'd rather just be able to have lots of options to eat because they already hate what we have."

"There has been a 40 percent drop in vending machine sales in the last nine years since the machines were moved to the cafeteria. That is \$8,600 a year in lost revenue that could have gone back to us."

Juana Guzman, principal

"This is a tricky situation for anyone to be in. Either way, I end up being the bad guy. My job is to facilitate learning and educational activities across the campus. I have now been forced to make a decision that will hurt students in some way."

"Students have a Constitutional right to free speech and to form a club as much as any other student. I may not agree with what Students for Reason believes, but they do have the right to say it and let the debate happen. However, school's also have a legally protected duty to look out for the health of our student body. The risk is that Students for Reason's speech could feed misinformation and cause more death and disease. I'm allowed to rule in either way on this and that makes it tough. There is no clear answer to this problem I'm left to solve."

Lara Rader, HOSA president

"That petition is so misguided. I get what they're going for and how they got there logically. What they are leaving out is that of the 68% of students who were out sick, 88% were unvaccinated. Only 12% of vaccinated students got sick and they were much less sick than everyone else. Now, apply that to other serious diseases like measles. You're going to have a very, very sick campus. It's unsafe and no one would be able to learn. Our town also doesn't live in a bubble and antibodies do not last forever. Even if you assume a big wave of illness happens and we all aren't sick for a while, that wave will come back and it will be worse."

That is exactly why Principal Guzman should not allow this group to be a campus. I'm all for the right to free speech, but even free speech has its limits like every other amendment in the Constitution. This group would be using school resources to promote an ignorant, anti-science agenda in the name of personal freedom. The school has a duty to protect its students and should do so by denying this group."

Joey Pouch, junior

"I'm unvaccinated and got sick right after we came back. Mrs. Windy had Covid and spread it to the whole class. That's how I got it. To be honest, it wasn't as bad as I thought it would be - not much worse than the flu I had before."

I signed the petition because it just makes sense. Instead of fighting this thing all the time, let's just get it all at over with at once. People believe science is full of answers, but scientists disagree all of the time. If we're all getting sick already, there is no harm in testing out this idea. Once they become a group, I will definitely be joining. The school makes a lot of decisions that just don't follow common sense. It's about time students took change into their hands."

Paisley Rose, freshman

"My parents brought me to get my vaccine because I asked them to. I have all three shots I can now. While I did get sick after winter break, it only lasted a day and wasn't anything more than a runny nose and a slight fever. I would hate to see what would happen if the whole school didn't have any vaccines. I would probably stop going to school altogether and do homeschooling."

I used to believe in the same thing Students for Reason does. While it does make sense if you look at one time in one place, but they aren't taking how viruses work into account. As soon as viruses mutate or weaken, your antibodies end up being worthless. Ironically, I learned that in science last year. If this group had its way, the school would end up in a constant battle with really sick students. Recognizing that group would make the school just as guilty for people who get sick."

Paisley Rose, freshman

"Vaccine mandates are one of those moral issues that is hard to answer. Medicine and control over any virus is really about taking personal responsibility. Vaccines and masks are not 100% effective without people behaving responsibly as well, even with mandates. I encourage everyone to listen to the disease experts and talk with your doctor. Making medical decisions is never easy, but they will help you best."

Example Story Ending — Vending Machines

NEWS WRITING UNIT

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the story below. Work with your group to write four different possible endings to this story. **NOTE:** Ending on a quote also requires another transition as to not stack quotes.

Sweet petition seeks to fatten up snack, drink machines for students

By R. E. Porter
The Bugle Staff

Campus vending machines could feature less healthy options for students if Student Government's pitch to the school board Friday goes its way.

Student legislators circulated a petition to move some vending machines away from the federally regulated cafeteria to provide more popular snacks and drinks similar to those in the faculty lounge. The move would also provide more money to the general student activity fund.

"Letting us move the machines to allow for more popular options keeps student money inside the building at competitive prices," the group's President Kyle Bannor said, noting students bring backpacks filled with snacks to avoid school offerings. "... There's a sense of irony that Oreos can help students out at school. I get that, but it is true."

Bannor said vending machine sales dropped 40% in nine years since they were moved to the cafeteria, which falls under federal law preventing certain unhealthy snacks from being sold. Future Dieticians Association President Peter Gunn said that is exactly the reason he is against the proposal.

"This is another example of where the dollar wants to trump student health," Gunn said. "There's a reason the federal government restricts where and when unhealthy food can be had in a school environment."

Some school community members are making the choice about personal responsibility like parent China Limon.

"When I was in school, we could eat whatever we want," she said. "I want my daughter to have the same choices I did. This country is based on the free-market system; if we want to eat foods that clog our heart, so be it."

Others, like sophomore Carolyn Proxy, do not mind what is available to students because there are more food options like the lunch and because school only lasts eight hours.

"If (students in favor of the petition) complain about it, just wait to go home and get something to eat," Proxy said. "Or, you could sneak into the teachers lounge like I do. They have the better stuff anyway."

(Insert ending here.)

Ending 1

Ending 2

Ending 3

Ending 4



**That's my
OPINION**

Opinion Writing

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Stephen Green created these lessons as a capstone project for completion of the journalism educator master's degree program at Kent State University. It may be reproduced only for individual classroom teachers in class, but not for any commercial purposes including derivative works.

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Rationale

Writing an opinion is more than putting personal thoughts on paper and calling it a day. Journalists have a duty to uphold and a powerful platform not to misuse. Knowing what kinds of topics to choose and ethical responsibilities not only achieves those goals, but also makes the opinion articles stronger.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn ways to think about choosing a topic for an opinion article and ethical responsibilities that come with opinion writing.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will choose a topic based on these criteria and consider the ethical questions for my topic.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Reporters should choose topics they have a fresh angle on — the more local the better — particularly about practices and policies they feel should change
- They should choose topics they feel passionate about and are knowledgeable of
- They have a duty to research the topic, and be accurate and clear
- They must be fair in their criticism and understand what expectations their target should be meeting
- And they should not cherry pick arguments to support their case, but face the realities of their stance head on.

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in two, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four, but may be completed in one depending on class length.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Opinion Topic Worksheet" for each student
- "Choosing a Topic Instructional Sheets" for each group
- "Ethics in Opinion Instructional Sheets" for each group
- "Ethics in Opinion Exit Ticket" for each student

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the example version the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each group member pull one of the four "Choosing a Topic Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts they learned.

Show students Slide 5, which has a topic they will use to think about opinion articles. First, have students think about their opinion on the topic for 1 minute in silence. Tell them to think about their strongest reasons why they agree/disagree with the statement. Then, have students go in a round-robin format with each student answering question 1, starting with the tallest person in the group. Then, the next tallest will start question 2 and so forth until all four questions are answered.

Lead a class discussion on those questions to see how the groups answered. They should be on the right track, even if not perfect in their reasoning.

Now, explain students will be writing an opinion article of their choice. Hand each student the "Opinion Topic Worksheet." They should complete these individually.

Slide 6 has a recap of concepts they should have learned.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have each group go in a round robin starting with the person who yawned last (just for fun) and discuss the hardest part about filling out the worksheet, then come to a group consensus and post it somewhere that all groups can see the other responses. Then, turn in their worksheet.

Day 2

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Have students discuss the topic they picked with their group in a round-robin format, explaining why they think (some) students at their school would care about the topic. Then, show them the topic on Slide 7.

Have students perform a mix-pair-share activity: Students will think about their answer, mix around the room, and randomly pair (at teacher preference how this happens) with a student. They will discuss the two questions on Slide 7. Then return to their seat.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each group member pull one of the four "Ethics in Opinion Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the other group members.

Have each group assign the four ethical questions to a different group member. Then, have students write down (in the method preferred by the teacher) an example of how someone may violate that ethical rule in an opinion column. You will do this as a numbered heads together activity where after the group is finished, they should compare answers and make sure each one has written their answer correctly and revise as needed. Then, the teacher will randomly call a group and one of the four ethical questions. That student will have to explain their scenario and why it violates ethical rules.

NOTE: Some students may want to revise their opinion topic after the discussion.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have students read and complete the "Ethics in Opinion Exit Ticket."

References

- Etwell, J., Balmeo, M., Austin, E., & Hamm R. (2021). *Journalism: Publishing Across Media*. The Goodheart-Willcox Company.
- Fink, C. C. (2004). *Writing Opinion for Impact*. Blackwell Publishing.
- Hawthorne, B. (2019). *The Radical Write*. Jostens.
- Kanigel, R. (2012). *The Student Newspaper Survival Guide*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Stovall, J. (2009). *Writing for the Mass Media*. Pearson.
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- Harrower, T. (2013). *Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism*. McGraw-Hill.

What Can You Add?

CHOOSING A TOPIC

Personal Connection

When choosing an opinion topic, think about your own life experiences. Topics close to you, situations your friends and family experience, and what you have gone through all give you a unique voice in the matter. People who have been hit by a drunk driver know the issue firsthand compared to someone who has not.

Know Thyself

Sometimes what you add is done for the wrong reasons. Don't choose a topic simply because it benefits you, because the target of your opinion "deserves it," or because you want to stir up drama.

Understand your motivations for writing. It should always be for some greater good.

Think About It!

What topics do you have a personal connection to? What opinions could you add to the discussion over that?

What's Been Said?

CHOOSING A TOPIC

Don't Be a Parrot

It is tempting to write about national or international news coverage. You hear it from family and friends; you probably have valid opinions. However, you are throwing just one more opinion on a mountain of others who probably already said the same ideas with better resources. Instead, choose a fresh angle or a new idea.

Local is Best

An easy way to pick a topic of fresh discussion is to stick local. Issues going on at your school or community have more impact because more people care and let you be one of the leading voices in the discussion. This also is a way to discuss national topics by finding that local angle.

Think About It!

If the U.S. Department of Education started a new rule requiring all states to have a standardized test for every subject including electives, what would be your local approach to an opinion?

What's Needs Changed?

CHOOSING A TOPIC

Make It Happen

The goal of an opinion piece should never be "because we need one" or "because I need the grade." Sure, that might be a plus, but the bigger picture is about being useful. Editorial pages serve as a voice for your readers to those in power. An article you write "just because" has as much power as those you care about.

If I Could...

When you are considering a topic, think about what you would change if you could snap your fingers and make it happen. What would you change that would make the lives of other people better off? That is the purpose of most opinion articles: reviews help you make product choices; others help through exposure or advocacy.

Think About It!

At your school, what is one thing you would change that would genuinely make the lives of students, faculty or staff better? Avoid trivial topics and focus on the actual problems, even if they may seem small to you.

What Do You Care & Know About?

CHOOSING A TOPIC

Write With Passion

What are you angry about? What brings you joy? What gets you excited when you talk? What are the topics that make your heart rate jump just because you get to intellectually wrestle another person?

Those are what you should consider when picking what to write. People can feel boredom or sterile, just-because writing.

Write With Knowledge

In Thomas Hobbes' "Leviathan", he writes "knowledge is power." If you want to write powerful opinion articles, you cannot wander into a hot topic unprepared. It is better to start with topics you are already familiar with. Otherwise, the research process will take even longer and you may make unintentionally horrid arguments.

Think About It!

What are topics you are passionate about?

Be an Expert

ETHICS IN OPINION

Do Some Research

Just because you are writing an opinion article does not give you any less reason to be a reporter. In fact, the opposite is true. Not only are you supposed to be providing your opinion, you are supposed to be providing them based in reality.

Writing an article full of old, inaccurate or misleading data leads to losing respect.

Different Expertises

Being an expert doesn't mean you have to hold a doctoral degree or work 30 years in a field, it just means you know what you're talking about through any means.

You could be an expert on punk rock, Asian food, African American culture, school board policy, or animal shelters because you know it well.

Think About It!

What do you consider yourself an expert in or have in-depth knowledge about? Why would you consider yourself to have expertise in that area?

Be Accurate

ETHICS IN OPINION

Swing Hard

Writing an opinion piece is all about being firm and confident in your opinion. Being wishy washy about your stance can be frustrating as a reader, who just wants to know how you feel.

This means you must be accurate and clear about what you are arguing. If it is confusing, readers will bail.

Cut Deep

If you're going to swing hard (have a strong opinion), you need to go deeper than the surface level arguments. This means diving into the underlying issues. These can sometimes be unclear.

Doing your research more than scanning a Wikipedia entry or the first page of Google will go a long way in helping this.

Don't Miss

Importantly, if your goal is to swing hard and cut deep, you can't have bad facts.

Imagine a student screaming in the cafeteria about another student having a dog on campus and how he was punished for bringing an animal before. Then the kid who brought the dog saying, "She's my service dog for my seizure condition." While was passionate, he was wrong.

Be Fair

ETHICS IN OPINION

Fair Expectations

When writing a criticism, keep in mind what should be expected from your target. Don't accuse the principal of being abusive of power for doing something the superintendent forced them to do. Don't criticize the theater's production by comparing to a Broadway version. Don't pick on a first-year sport for not winning.

Fair Requests

In any opinion piece, the author should make some sort of call to action or request from someone to do something.

Keep these reasonable. It wouldn't be reasonable for the cafeteria to convert to only food trucks. It is a reasonable request to ask schools to invite a food truck for students occasionally. Be realistic.

Is This Fair?

The principal should do more to help school spirit. Her focus should primarily be on making students happy and feeling engaged. More students would feel that way if they let us leave class when we want if we need a break.

Don't Cherry Pick

ETHICS IN OPINION

Face Reality Head On

Every topic out there has pros and cons. If, as a columnist, you can't pretend your idea has no problems. The more contentious the topic, the more people will see you clearly avoiding problems with your position. Instead, it is much more convincing when readers see you address or even embrace problems without fear.

Don't Mess with Fact

If 100 studies exist on your issue and 99 say they support A, don't pick the one study that supports B. Doing this does a disservice to the reader and your responsibility as a journalist.

If your research or interviews can't find many good reasons to support your view, don't pretend otherwise.

What's the Problem?

Evidence shows newspapers are not in any danger of collapsing. A study from the 1977 edition of Journalism Quarterly shows the majority of Americans still get their news from daily newspapers.

Opinion Topic Worksheet

NAME: _____

Instructions

Use the worksheet below to help guide you to an opinion topic that you will eventually write about for the publication. Take it seriously because this topic will follow into future lessons. You will write a full opinion article about the issue you choose.

Topic Options

WRITE ALL FOUR, THEN PICK ONE TO USE ON THE REST OF THE WORKSHEET.

Sports

What topic in the sport you most closely follow is currently being debated?

Current Events

What in the news today is being debated you care most about?

Entertainment/Pop Culture

What in the pop culture industry is debated right now and you care about?

School

What is currently being debated about your school by students or staff?

Localize & Personalize It

It Is Local Because...

The more local the better. How does your story relate to your school?

People Here Care Because...

Why should or do your readers care about this particular topic?

I Can Add New Discussion By...

What perspective can you bring not recently PUBLISHED by others?

I Am Knowledgeable Because...

What makes you somewhat of an expert on this topic?

Think About the Goal

What I May Want Changed Is...

What about your topic might you ask for something to change?

What I Want Authorities To Know Is...

What would you tell the people in power in control of your topic?

What I Want Readers to Know Is...

What do readers not know that you will inform them about?

The Talking Points I'm Avoiding Are...

What is the argument already debated to death on this topic?

Think About the Other Side

My Biggest Feelings About This Are...

What is your personal biggest reason for your position on this topic?

People Who Disagree With Me Say...

What is the big objection to your position by the people you disagree with?

The Expectations People Have Are...

What expectations are you holding the subject of your article to?

My Expectations Are Fair Because...

Why should your target be able to meet those expectations and aren't?

Ethics in Opinion Exit Ticket

NAME: _____

Theater heads 'Into the Dumpster'

Social media was hyped with reviews of theater's performance of "Into the Woods" — the first musical in school history. Unfortunately it was also my first theater show to watch. It should be thrown "Into the Trash".

The lead actor, freshman Jacob Jingle, had never taken a theater or choir class before and, man, did it show. Jingle was making himself out to look like an absolute fool. He could sing and dance, sure. He tripped over the first lines in the whole performance, which automatically put me off.

The scenery was a disaster. Instead of buying new props, they just repainted and repurposed old sets. They have a \$2,000 for Pete's sake. I could do a lot with that much. Where did that money go?

Mine went down the toilet. If you care about high-quality theater, don't go.

Analyze It!

Write and explain at least two ethical issues with this critical review.

Ethics in Opinion Exit Ticket

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Analyze It!

Write and explain at least two ethical issues with this critical review.

Rationale

Opinion writing is, at its core, about persuasion. There's no point in writing a piece only meant to be read by people who already agree with you. This means your arguments have to be strong enough to convince someone to switch their beliefs or for them to understand your position in more depth than before. To do so, you need to know what parts arguments need.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn the proper parts of a strong argument.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will create a strong argument using a topic I previously chose.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- All arguments need a claim, warrant and impact
- Claims are the main idea the argument is trying to get across
- Warrants are the logical or evidence-based reasons the claim is true
- Impacts are why the reader should care if the claim is true
- And without just one, the argument becomes incredibly weak

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in one, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Writing Strong Arguments Instructional Sheets" for each group
- Lots of index cards, sticky notes, or other small slips of paper that students will use for the activity
- "Writing Strong Arguments Exit Ticket" for each student

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the example version the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each group member pull one of the four "Writing Strong Arguments Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts they learned.

Show students Slide 5 and explain they will be doing a practice version of the next activity to make sure everyone understands the structure of a strong argument. Have each student write down (in method preferred by teacher) a claim (reason) they agree with the statement on Slide 5. In this case, tell them they must agree with the statement for now. Then, have them pass their claim to another group member. Each should read and provide a warrant (evidence or logic the claim is true). Pass again. The groups should now add an impact (if the claim is true, why does it matter?).

Now, pass out the sticky notes/index cards/small slips of paper. Each group may need several. Explain that each group will be attempting to come up with as many unique arguments for or against the statement on Slide 6 (don't show them yet). Then tell that the group will have 5 minutes to come up with as many claims as possible based on the topic. Once a group member has written a claim, they should toss it into the middle of the table. Students are allowed to help each other if they are confused on wording or facts.

Put 5 minutes on a timer and begin. Really encourage and drive the competition aspect of it. Stop them when time is up. Have the groups count the number of UNIQUE claims. Write it on the board.

Now, tell the teams they have 10 minutes to write a warrant underneath the claim. Remind them it can be logical or evidence (from memory is OK for this). They cannot write the warrant on a claim they wrote.

Finally, give students 5 minutes to write as many impacts in the same fashion. Once they are complete, they should count the number of arguments with all three parts.

Write that number on the board. In a twist, have students trade with another group. The groups will now check the logic and completeness of the other group's work. Have a brief talk about fairness. If the argument is complete, it should count.

The group may disqualify the argument if:

- It makes absolutely no sense or is complete gibberish.
- The claim is a fact, not an argument.
- The warrant does not prove the claim is true logically or factually.
- The impact does not answer the question "So what? Why does it matter if the claim is true?"
- Any part is factually incorrect, redundant (of another argument), or repetitive (within the argument).

Slide 7 has a recap of concepts.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have all students complete the "Writing Strong Arguments Exit Ticket".

References

- Etwell, J., Balmeo, M., Austin, E., & Hamm R. (2021). *Journalism: Publishing Across Media*. The Goodheart-Willcox Company.
- Fink, C. C. (2004). *Writing Opinion for Impact*. Blackwell Publishing.
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- Stovall, J. (2009). *Writing for the Mass Media*. Pearson.
- Strunk, W., & White, E. (2000). *The Elements of Style*. Allyn & Bacon.

Structure of an Argument

WRITING STRONG ARGUMENTS

Three Parts

Every argument should have three parts: a claim that is the summary of that argument, a warrant that proves the claim true, and an impact statement that shows why the claim matters if the warrant proves it true.

If there's no claim, readers get confused what you are talking about. No warrant means no proof what you say is true. No impact means I don't understand why what you are arguing is important.

Bad Models

The man is guilty of murder. The evidence indisputable and beyond a reasonable doubt.

There are witnesses to the crime, his fingerprints are on the weapon and was caught running away covered in blood. The evidence indisputable and beyond a reasonable doubt.

The man is guilty of murder. There are witnesses to the crime, his fingerprints are on the weapon and was caught running away covered in blood.

Best Model

Claim: Obviously the man is guilty of murder. **Warrant:** There are witnesses to the crime, his fingerprints are on the weapon and was caught running away covered in blood. **Impact:** The evidence is indisputable and beyond a reasonable doubt.

People might be able to piece this together in the other models, but this has all the parts to explain it out for readers.

Claim: Summary of Argument

WRITING STRONG ARGUMENTS

First of All

When you are in an argument with someone, the first statement you make is usually a claim. You are setting up the bigger argument about to come next.

Claims are the main point of the argument and what you are trying to get people to understand when they read your work.

They Need Help

Claims can't exist alone. You can't just run around yelling arguments at people without proving your point or explaining why it matters.

Claims are, however, important. They help introduce the idea you are about to convey to them, so the next parts make sense.

Models

Batman is the best superhero.

President Pearl Gower is the best candidate on this issue.

The policy prevents students from adequate freedom of expression.

Warrant: What's the Proof?

WRITING STRONG ARGUMENTS

Where's the Beef?

Warrants are what most students call evidence. While the warrant can be hard evidence, data, studies or other written proof, they can also be logical or common sense connecting the dots.

Without warrants, there is no reason for a reader to believe you. You have to have it.

Connect A to B

Warrants are the second step in a three-part argument. They can range from a single sentence to multiple paragraphs depending on what you need to prove.

They do need to support the claim. Sometimes reporters get bogged down in the data and don't realize they aren't proving their bigger idea true.

Models

He doesn't have superpowers.

She has a track record to prove she does what she means.

It bans students from wearing shirts with political messages.

Impact: Why Does It Matter?

WRITING STRONG ARGUMENTS

Spell It Out For Them

The impact is the reason the argument should matter to your reader. Without it, who cares? You may assume readers may follow the logic from the first two parts of the argument, but they may not.

If you write out exactly why they are supposed to care, it may help connect the dots for readers who don't fully see it.

Models

Superheros are extraordinary people who go above and beyond to help. Most of them rely on supernatural powers and abilities while Batman does not to achieve the same effect.

Candidates should be judged not just by what they say, but also by what they do. If she not only says it, but does it, there is no other candidate to support.

Schools are meant to encourage hard conversations, not prevent them. This policy, therefore, undermines that fundamental goal.

Writing Strong Arguments Exit Ticket

NAME: _____

Write It!

In the space below, write (and label each part) a complete argument on any side of the topic to the left. Your position & argument is up to you, but it must have a claim, warrant and impact.

Topic

Should the United States focus more on human rights or the economy?

Writing Strong Arguments Exit Ticket

NAME: _____

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In the space below, write (and label each part) a complete argument on any side of the topic to the left. Your position & argument is up to you, but it must have a claim, warrant and impact.

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In the space below, write (and label each part) a complete argument on any side of the topic to the left. Your position & argument is up to you, but it must have a claim, warrant and impact.

Topic

Should the United States focus more on human rights or the economy?

Rationale

There are many ways to structure an opinion piece and none of those is a 100% “correct” way to get thoughts published. However, this structure is a good starting point. Once reporters have the basic idea, they can branch off this structure, add to, rearrange, etc. But they have to walk before they can run.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn a basic structure of opinion writing.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will create a draft structure using the topic I researched and prepared previously.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Start with a background sentence or paragraph explaining enough of the situation to give readers context
- Have a clear and direct stance after the background
- And start the body of the article after the stance to educate and persuade the reader using complete arguments

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in one, 45-minute class period with students split into groups of four. Students can be given additional days to research before this lesson begins however.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- “Background, Stance & Body Instructional Cards” for each group
- “Background, Stance & Body Puzzle” cut & mixed up for each group (suggested key in documents)
- “Background, Stance & Body Worksheet” for each student.

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the suggested version the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each group member pull one of the four “Background, Stance & Body Instructional Cards” and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts.

Have groups take the “Background, Stance & Body Puzzle” pieces from wherever the teacher prefers. Tell students that their group’s goal is to put together five paragraphs of an opinion article and that it will be missing the remaining two parts they have not learned yet.

They should figure out that there are several backgrounds, stances and arguments. Some of the arguments are only partially complete. Stances are wishy-washy. Backgrounds miss vital information or have too many details. Give them none of that information beforehand. Once the group believes it is finished, members should raise their hands. Tell them if they are right or wrong, then give them a one-word hint as broadly as possible like “structure” or “argument”. They should be forced to coach one another and refer to their notes. When a group gets it right, celebrate, but then have the group members split up to the other groups to COACH them, but not give the right answer away. They are also not allowed to touch any pieces, point, or otherwise give away the answer. Every group in the room must be finished to move on. The goal is for the class to teach each other how to think about the order, quality of argument, etc. without being told the answer.

Slide 5 has a recap of concepts.

Then, have students work on the “Background, Stance & Body Worksheet” independently to plan out their opinion piece. They should have the remaining time in class to do so.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Turn in their worksheet.

NOTE & CRITIQUE OPTIONS: Students may not finish the worksheet. Teachers may assign a whole additional day to complete the worksheet if the research time is required. It would also be wise to set aside time for groups to critique one another’s work. To do so, students could do a write round robin format where they pass their paper to the right, critique the background and pass the paper until all background comments are critiqued. Then, continue the same pattern for the stance and three arguments. Students could then question their group members on comments and then revise.

References

- Etwell, J., Balmeo, M., Austin, E., & Hamm R. (2021). *Journalism: Publishing Across Media*. The Goodheart-Willcox Company.
- Fink, C. C. (2004). *Writing Opinion for Impact*. Blackwell Publishing.
- Harrower, T. (2013). *Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism*. McGraw-Hill.
- Hawthorne, B. (2019). *The Radical Write*. Jostens.
- Kanigel, R. (2012). *The Student Newspaper Survival Guide*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Stovall, J. (2009). *Writing for the Mass Media*. Pearson.
- Strunk, W., & White, E. (2000). *The Elements of Style*. Allyn & Bacon.

Background: What's the Situation?

BACKGROUND, STANCE & BODY

Back to the Lede

The background is a short paragraph somewhere toward the top — usually at the beginning — of the article that clues readers in on why the opinion article is important now. Beginning columnists should put this first.

It is essentially written as the lede to a hard news story.

Example

For an opinion piece on cellphone bans

No students can have a cellphone on campus starting next week after Principal Polly Pocket created the new policy to address a decline in grades across the school.

Draft It!

Think about the topic you are writing about. Craft a background sentence that explains why you are writing about this now.

Background: Just Enough to Know

BACKGROUND, STANCE & BODY

Keep It Simple

The background sentence or paragraph does not need to be a complete rehashing of the news event. That's what the news story about it is for.

For an opinion article, you need to give enough information to provide context to your arguments without being redundant.

Example

For an opinion piece on cellphone bans

No students can have a cellphone on campus starting next week after Principal Polly Pocket created the new policy to fix declining grades.

Readers know just enough to get the idea.

Draft It!

Think about the topic you are writing about. What do readers already know? What do you need to explain in your background? Is yours a complex topic needing in-depth explanation or a simple one?

Stance: Be Clear & Direct

BACKGROUND, STANCE & BODY

How Do You Feel?

The stance is a sentence or paragraph bluntly laying out your opinion on the topic. This is not a time to be wishy washy (a half-hearted attempt to hold a position, usually to "not sound mean").

People can clearly see how you feel and know what to expect when they continue on reading the piece.

Example

For an opinion piece on cellphone bans

The principal should retract the campus cellphone ban.

Everyone gets it. There is no ambiguity about how you feel. Avoid "some people say this, some people say that" stances.

Draft It!

Think about the topic you are writing about. Craft a clear and direct stance.

Body of Opinion Piece

BACKGROUND, STANCE & BODY

Educate Them

The main body comes after the background and stance. This is where your various, complete arguments live and make up the bulk of the article. Order your arguments from the least to most convincing so readers become more persuaded as they read instead of less.

After the body is refutation and a call to action, which you will see in future lessons more in depth.

First Part of Structure

For an opinion piece on cellphone bans

Background explaining the cellphone ban.

Stance: Retract the policy

Argument 1: No way to enforce

Argument 2: Used in class

Argument 3: Contacting parents

Draft It!

Think about the topic you are writing about.

Create a draft structure of your editorial through the end of the body paragraph using the one to the left as a model.

Background, Stance & Body Worksheet

NAME: _____

Instructions

Use the worksheet below to help guide you to what you need for each section of the opinion article you are writing.

Background

What Happened/Is Happening?

What event took place that makes this worth talking about now?

Who is Involved?

Who are all the people involved in the topic?

Why Did/Will It Occur?

What is the reason people say this is happening or did happen?

Where, When & How

Is there a location? When did it happen? Does the how matter?

Stance

How Do You Feel?

What is your position on the topic, stated as simple as possible?

What's Your Big Reason Why?

Describe a common theme to your arguments after writing them.

Simplified Argument 1

Claim

What is one reason you believe in your stance?

Simplified Argument 2

Claim

What is one reason you believe in your stance?

Simplified Argument 3

Claim

What is one reason you believe in your stance?

Warrant

How do you know that's true?

Warrant

How do you know that's true?

Warrant

How do you know that's true?

Impact

If true, why does the claim support your stance?

Impact

If true, why does the claim support your stance?

Impact

If true, why does the claim support your stance?

Background, Stance & Body Puzzle

OPINION WRITING UNIT

Key — Entire Left Side

A group of parents will present the school board with a petition Monday that would bring back the Miss Cityville High pageant after the 51-year-old event was canceled last week. Superintendent Paula Harrison and Mayor Riki O'Hara made the announcement at a press conference, saying that the pageant was objectifying female students.

The board should reject the idea of bringing it back to show girls that they are more than just flesh.

The public nature of a pageant allows adults to watch young girls compete, opening the door for inappropriate behavior. When the pageant takes place, any member of the community could walk in, video or photograph the girls on the stage and use the material for sexually inappropriate ways. This means not only would the school be the reason for providing the opportunity for those people, but also forever ruining the lives of the girls whose pictures were distributed online or used for gross behavior.

Pageants also have a long history of putting undue pressure on girls, which can cause major trauma physically and mentally. Participants often engage in bulimia or anorexia just to have a shot at winning, which also causes mental health issues including body dysmorphia. This type of trauma is not temporary; physical and mental health issues last longer than one pageant and even an entire lifetime.

At its core, pageants are about one thing: judging girls on their appearance, which is gross on its face. The competition only includes formal gown and bathing suit portions – the talent portion having been eliminated years ago. Without any portion that relies on a girl's personality or intellect, it teaches girls that the only aspect of themselves they should care about is their appearance.

Those in favor of keeping the pageant feel strongly the event is part of a long held and deeply valued tradition that even provides a scholarship to its winner. However, the school could always invest more time in having students create new traditions and other ways to provide scholarship opportunities.

The school board should hear the parent group's petition out, but ultimately leave the pageant rightfully canceled.

A group of parents will present the school board with a petition Monday. Superintendent Paula Harrison and Mayor Riki O'Hara made the announcement at a press conference, saying that the pageant was objectifying female students.

The board should reject the idea of bringing it back.

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Pageants also have a long history of putting undue pressure on girls, which can cause major trauma physically and mentally. This type of trauma is not temporary; physical and mental health issues last far longer than just one pageant and even an entire lifetime.

At its core, pageants are about one thing: judging girls on their appearance, which is gross on its face. Without any portion that relies on a girl's personality or intellect, it teaches girls that the only aspect of themselves they should care about is their appearance.

Those in favor of keeping the pageant feel strongly the event is part of a long held and deeply valued tradition that even provides a scholarship to its winner. However, they're wrong because the pageant is sexist.

The school board should hear the parent group's petition out and we'll see what happens.

When the pageant takes place, any member of the community could walk in, video or photograph the girls on the stage and use the material for sexually inappropriate ways. This means not only would the school be the reason for providing the opportunity for those people, but also forever ruining the lives of the girls whose pictures were distributed online or used for gross behavior.

Participants often engage in bulimia or anorexia just to have a shot at winning, which also causes mental health issues including body dysmorphia. This type of trauma is not temporary; physical and mental health issues last far longer than just one pageant and even an entire lifetime.

At its core, pageants are about one thing: judging girls on their appearance, which is gross on its face. The competition only includes formal gown and bathing suit – the talent portion having been eliminated years ago.

Rationale

If opinion articles are about persuading people who don't already agree with the writer, there must be clash. The opinion article author must, in some way, clash with those that disagree. This is where the debate lives and the driver of conversation.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn how and why to refute people who have the opposite stance.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will write a paragraph refuting people who disagree with my topic stance.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Refutation helps break down reasons for people to disagree with you, making them easier to persuade
- Understand the other side's reasonings for believing their position
- Refute the big ideas, especially those relevant to the writer's position
- And give the other side a legitimate explanation so the opposition feels like the writer fully understands their reasons, which makes them more likely to read and become persuaded

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in one, 45-minute class period with students split into groups of four. Students can be given additional time to research before this lesson begins however.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Refuting the Opposition Instructional Sheets" cut for each group
- "Refuting the Opposition Worksheet" for each student.

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the suggested answer the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each group member pull one of the four "Refuting the Opposition Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts.

NO, YOU'RE WRONG: Have students mix around the room and pair up randomly. They will now enter a debate competition called "No, You're Wrong!" One by one, each pair will walk to the front of the room. The youngest partner will read the prompt on Slide 5 and give one reason they agree or disagree with the statement. Regardless of the other student's actual position, they have 5 seconds to begin explaining why they believe the original student is wrong. Then, the first student will explain why the other student's rebuttal was incorrect. This will continue until one of them cannot come up with an answer and begin talking in 5 seconds, gives up, or repeats an argument they already said. That person is then eliminated and stands behind/with their opponent and now becomes their cheerleader for the next match. Slides 6-14 have various debate topics.

This process continues with each pair coming up, debating until one gives up until all original pairs have gone. Then, winners face off. When one winner loses, they and their cheerleader will join the new winner. (The size of each person's cheer squad should double with each win.) This continues until you have a class winner and the class all celebrates them.

Slide 15 has a recap of concepts.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have students complete the "Refuting the Opposition Worksheet" and turn it in.

References

- Etwell, J., Balmeo, M., Austin, E., & Hamm R. (2021). *Journalism: Publishing Across Media*. The Goodheart-Willcox Company.
- Fink, C. C. (2004). *Writing Opinion for Impact*. Blackwell Publishing.
- Harrower, T. (2013). *Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism*. McGraw-Hill.
- Hawthorne, B. (2019). *The Radical Write*. Jostens.
- Kanigel, R. (2012). *The Student Newspaper Survival Guide*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Stovall, J. (2009). *Writing for the Mass Media*. Pearson.
- Strunk, W., & White, E. (2000). *The Elements of Style*. Allyn & Bacon.

Try to Change Minds

REFUTING THE OPPOSITION

Root Out the Cause

In order to convince someone to change their mind, you must first know why they feel that way. What is the reason they support one side over the other?

By understanding the opposite side in a genuine way, you are better prepared to know how to convince them. Otherwise, what makes sense to you may not to them.

There's a Reason

The point of writing opinion pieces is to make change in some way — changes in what people buy, who they vote for, what policies and practices exist, how people are treated, etc. None of that can happen by writing opinion if your opposition's beliefs don't originate with what you are arguing about.

Draft It!

Think about the topic you are writing about. What do people who disagree with you say? Why do they feel that way? How do you convince them otherwise?

What Are the Main Talking Points?

REFUTING THE OPPOSITION

The Big Idea

There is a bad habit among beginning editorial writers to refute the opposition by picking the opposition's weakest argument and attacking that.

However, that isn't convincing. To do that, you must really tackle head on the biggest ideas and do it well.

Don't be afraid of a challenge.

Example

When advocating for more funding of Alzheimer's research, a rookie reporter might write "opponents of increased funding say the world would be better off if we reduced the surplus population." That's not why more funding doesn't exist. Instead, focus on real reasons like avoiding government debt and that there is already plenty of research happening.

Draft It!

Think about the topic you are writing about. What do people who disagree with you argue? What's the biggest reason they are against your stance?

Writing the Refutation

REFUTING THE OPPOSITION

Order

Where the refutation falls in the article depends on the body. At first, put it right after the body paragraphs and before your call to action. This lets you try to prove your reasoning first, then show how the other side is wrong.

The call to action is last, which you will see in the next lesson.

Reason, Then Refute

When writing the paragraph, start by fairly explaining the other side's perspective, then explaining why it is wrong to you.

Principal Polly Pocket said the cellphone ban will increase grades because there are less distractions. However, studies show students develop anxiety and become fixated on not having their phone. This policy does the opposite of what she is trying to do.

Draft It!

Write a sentence explaining the other side and one reason you disagree with them.

Give Them a Fair Explanation

REFUTING THE OPPOSITION

They Should Be Heard

In order to convince someone to change their mind, they have to know you understand their position. Many people feel unconvinced in arguments because they don't feel the other person understands what they are trying to say.

Fairly explaining their position and reasons goes a long way in changing minds.

If Not...

If you unfairly explain why people feel a certain way, miss the actual point, or use a small, silly reason someone might support their side, the opposition might feel like you are trying to belittle them or cherry pick arguments to make yourself look better.

They will not be convinced.

Draft It!

Write a sentence fairly explaining the other side's position.

Refuting the Opposition Worksheet

NAME: _____

Instructions

Use the worksheet below to help guide you to what you need for each section of the opinion article you are writing.

Knowing the Opposition

What are the three biggest arguments of the opposition against your stance?

Circle the one you feel is the most fair representation of the opposition side.

Refutation 1

What is one way you can refute the argument you circled?

Refutation 2

What is another way you can refute the argument you circled?

Refutation 3

What is another way you can refute the argument you circled?

Explain & Refute

Combine a fair explanation of their position & your refutation into a paragraph.

Rationale

People are much more likely to enact change if opinion writers ask them to. Some readers will be convinced, but don't know what to do with their newfound position. That's what the call to action solves at the end of the article.

CLASS GOAL: We will understand types of calls to action and why they matter.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will write the three different types of calls to action while being specific and intentional.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Solution-based calls to action where the writer tries to fix the problem
- Asking readers to take some action
- Asking authority figures to take some action on the issue
- And that calls to action must be specific and intentional to address the problem at hand.

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in two, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four, but may be completed in one depending on class length.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Call to Action Instructional Cards" cut for each group
- "Call to Action Problem Solving Worksheet" for each group
- "Call to Action Exit Ticket" cut for each student

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the suggested answer the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each group member pull one of the four "Call to Action Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining their concept to the group members.

Then, hand each group a copy of the "Call to Action Problem Solving Worksheet". Have the groups create a scenario that might have an opinion piece written about. The worksheet has space on the top half for the group to create a hypothetical situation and what the justification is.

Once the groups have created their scenarios, they should trade with another group. Now, the group will shift from creating a scenario to developing a call to action that provides a solution to the situation at hand. Each member of the group should come up with their own call to action sentence regarding the situation. Then, the group will confer in two pairs and discuss each other's call to action. They will either choose one, or create a compromise of the two. Then, the group will compare the final two solutions and write one in the spot for the call to action. Then they will pass to the next group.

The process will repeat with the group reading the scenario another group created and coming up with a solution. However, they cannot repeat a call to action another group already made. This way, the groups are forced to create new types of calls to action. Do this until all the call to action spots are filled up and return the papers to their original groups.

Slide 5 has a recap of concepts.

Groups should discuss the calls to action and what were the best ones. Have each group explain their favorite and why.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have all students complete the "Call to Action Exit Ticket" and turn into the teacher. If time allows, students can partner up and critique each other's calls to action before turning them in.

Future & Project Recommendation

After this, give students time in class to put all the pieces of their opinion piece together, clean up, revise and edit.

Then, it would be good to have them write another from scratch using the structure but without doing it piecemeal.

References

- Etwell, J., Balmeo, M., Austin, E., & Hamm R. (2021). *Journalism: Publishing Across Media*. The Goodheart-Willcox Company.
- Fink, C. C. (2004). *Writing Opinion for Impact*. Blackwell Publishing.
- Harrower, T. (2013). *Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism*. McGraw-Hill.
- Hawthorne, B. (2019). *The Radical Write*. Jostens.
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- Stovall, J. (2009). *Writing for the Mass Media*. Pearson.
- Strunk, W., & White, E. (2000). *The Elements of Style*. Allyn & Bacon.

Present a Solution

CALLING TO ACTION

Be a Problem Solver

Calls to action can be attempts to present a way to solve the existing problem through an existing solution, or one the writer makes themselves.

Either of these can work. It shows readers you are not just complaining to complain, but actually working toward a better future.

Calls to action go at the end, telling someone to do something about the issue.

Model

Instead of banning cellphones, teachers should do a better job of classroom management and providing engaging lessons to prevent students from getting bored and turning to their phone.

Write It!

Think about your topic. What is your ideal solution? How would you want to solve it? What solutions are already out there?

Write a sentence with a solution-based call to action.

Talk to Readers

CALLING TO ACTION

Readers, Assemble!

There are many cases where your readers have the power to fix problems: They can change behaviors, vote, boycott, protest, write letters, buy or not buy, strike, praise, criticize, and anything else where mass amounts of people get attention. Make sure it is something they can actually achieve within the law.

Calls to action go at the end, telling someone to do something about the issue.

Model

Students and parents should contact the school board through email, phone calls or show up to the next meeting so it can override the principal's ban on cellphones.

Write It!

Think about your topic. What could your readers do to solve the problem?

Write a reader-action-based call to action.

Talk to the Authority

CALLING TO ACTION

Speak to the Manager

Opinion pieces often give voice to the voiceless. But what does that really mean? It means the publication is serving as the middle man between reader and those in power. People with power and authority to make the change can be the target of calls to action. Tell them directly to solve the problem.

Calls to action go at the end, telling someone to do something about the issue.

Model

Principal Polly Pocket should hold a focus group of students to discuss possible solutions to her concerns without banning cellphones and causing more problems for the school.

Write It!

Think about your topic. What people in charge could solve your topic's problem?

Write an authority-based call to action.

Be Specific & Intentional

CALLING TO ACTION

I Should Do What?

Calls to action should be specific about what you want the person to do and intentional about it addressing your concerns.

Vague or broad calls to action are confusing for readers. Lazy calls to action don't actually do anything to help.

Calls to action go at the end, telling someone to do something about the issue.

Good Model

Students, faculty and staff should contact Superintendent Lee Durr and ask he stop the cellphone ban before it takes effect.

Bad Model

Students, faculty and staff should do something about the policy before it's too late.

Write It!

Think about your topic. What action would actually solve the problem? What would you need to tell people to solve that problem?

Write a specific and intentional call to action.

Opinion Topic Scenario

Instructions for Group Creating the Scenario

Use the top section to create a scenario that another group will have to write calls to action to. They can be as realistic or fictional as you like. Include the following: What is the big change being debated? Who is pushing for the change? Is there a vote, meeting or other event coming up related to this issue? Write the scenario as you would a background paragraph at the top of the opinion article. The other groups will try to create solutions to solve the problem.

Example: "Student Council is speaking to the school board next week asking members to ban homework. They say students don't have enough time and that they don't like homework anyway."

Instructions for Receiving Groups

Write a call to action that solves the problem above and provide a warrant and impact below that, or find an alternate solution to the one proposed in the scenario (if one exists). In the example above, you might ask the school board to deny/approve the group's request, create a compromise like only allowing one homework assignment per week, or something completely different like there should never be any assignments at all — at school or at home.

Call to Action 1

Call to Action 2

Call to Action 3

Call to Action 4

Call to Action Exit Ticket

NAME: _____

Write It!

In the space below, write a call to action. Try to think outside of the box and a way to enhance, reform or come to consensus on the issue. It is often more persuasive when your arguments and/or call to action are fresh.

Think!

In your opinion article, what is the main problem you are trying to solve through your position? What should be done about it? Who/what type of people are the best one to do so?

Call to Action Exit Ticket

NAME: _____

Write It!

In the space below, write a call to action. Try to think outside of the box and a way to enhance, reform or come to consensus on the issue. It is often more persuasive when your arguments and/or call to action are fresh.

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In your opinion article, what is the main problem you are trying to solve through your position? What should be done about it? Who/what type of people are the best one to do so?

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NAME: _____

Write It!

In the space below, write a call to action. Try to think outside of the box and a way to enhance, reform or come to consensus on the issue. It is often more persuasive when your arguments and/or call to action are fresh.

Think!

In your opinion article, what is the main problem you are trying to solve through your position? What should be done about it? Who/what type of people are the best one to do so?



Photojournalism

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Stephen Green created these lessons as a capstone project for completion of the journalism educator master's degree program at Kent State University. It may be reproduced only for individual classroom teachers in class, but not for any commercial purposes including derivative works.

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Rationale

There are a few rules that will improve a photojournalist's work from snapshots to photography. Understanding these basic rules will produce usable, storytelling work.

CLASS GOAL: We will understand the basic principles of photojournalism and photo composition.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will take photos using all of these basic principles at the same time.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- The rule of thirds means to place photos on the invisible lines that divide the photo into thirds
- Headroom means to leave space above the top of the subject
- Lead room means to leave room in the direction the subject is facing and for them not to face off of the photo
- Include faces and emotion wherever possible to help readers feel a photo
- And try to get lower or up higher whenever possible to give readers a new angle on an otherwise normal view they get at eye level.

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in two, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four, but may be completed in less depending on school class length.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Basic Composition Instructional Cards" cut for each group
- "Basic Composition Practice Picture" printed on 8.5- by 11-inch paper for each student (can be a class set)
- "Basic Composition Practice Tools" cut out for each group
- Markers, pens, pencils or other writing utensils students may use to draw on the "Practice Picture", or have the image laminated and use dry-erase markers
- Cameras for students to practice with DSLR or mirrorless cameras; this can also be done with cellphones
- (Optional) computers to upload photos & editing software to manipulate at teacher preference

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the suggested answer the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each group member pull one of the four "Basic Composition Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts they learned.

Give each student a copy of the "Basic Composition Practice Picture" and have the set of picture frames ("Basic Composition Practice Tools") cut for the group. Each group member should take a different sized frame and move the frame around the image, attempting to get rule of thirds, headroom and lead room in one shot. They should then show their group members their shot and, in a round robin format, explain why they chose this shot and frame. If the group members see an issue, they should coach the student to correct the issue. Then, have students rotate until each group member was successful in placing all four types of frames on the image.

Then, have one member of each group move to another group. The remaining members of the group who did not move will attempt to find as many different photos as possible in 10 minutes with any number of frames. They can contain different subjects, change orientation, whatever they think works, as long as it meets the three basic composition rules. The visiting group member will be the referee, counting all the different crops the group members found and determining if they met all three rules. After 10 minutes, celebrate the group members who scored the most points.

Slide 5 has a recap of concepts.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have students leave the room with a camera (or cellphone if the situation calls for it). They should go find a classroom, ask the teacher if it is OK to take pictures. They need three different photos of three different people that follows: rule of thirds, headroom, lead room, is medium/tight, candid (not posed) and not at eye level. They should come back and show the teacher as a formative assessment.

Day 2

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Have students compare and critique their photos from the day before.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY: Either assign each student a random classroom, or a group/class that needs photos for publication purposes. They should spend the rest of class (until 5 minutes before the period ends) covering the class for the publication. This is also a great time to preview the caption lesson by telling them to get names (first & last), grades and write down what was going on that day in class. They should have a minimum of 10 different, well-composed shots usable in any publication. They can shoot more, but must turn in 10.

NOTE: Many students fear getting too close. Teachers should be firm in requiring them to re-shoot if they were too far away. Teachers should also be firm in holding students accountable for getting names spelled correctly and completely.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have students, on their way out, write down the area they are having the most difficulty with in terms of composition and with what they feel most confident.

References

- DK. (2015). *Digital Photography: Complete Course*.
- Etwell, J., Balmeo, M., Austin, E., & Hamm R. (2021). *Journalism: Publishing Across Media*. The Goodheart-Willcox Company.
- Harrower, T. (2013). *Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism*. McGraw-Hill.
- Harrower, T., & Elman, J. M. (2013). *The Newspaper Designer's Handbook*. McGraw-Hill.
- Kanigel, R. (2012). *The Student Newspaper Survival Guide*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Kobre, K. (2017). *Photojournalism: The Professionals' Approach*. Routledge.

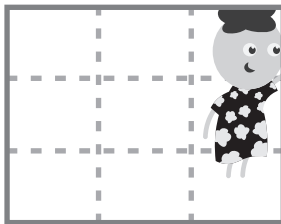
Rule of Thirds, Headroom & Lead Room

PHOTO COMPOSITION BASICS

Bare Basics

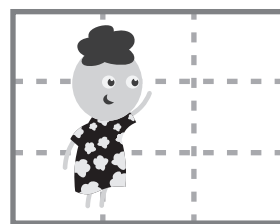
The rule of thirds means to imagine two lines that divide a photo horizontally and two vertically into thirds and place your subject on one of those lines in the opposite direction they are facing (lead room). If they face right, put them on the left line. You don't want the subject to face off the photo. Don't cut the top of their head — leave some headroom. In short, don't center your subject.

Bad Model



Dood lé Head is facing off the frame, and will have their hair and arm cut off.

Good Model



Dood is now on the correct dividing line, has headroom and lead room.

Get Close, Not in the Stands

PHOTO COMPOSITION BASICS

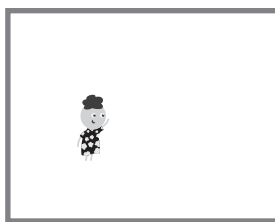
They Don't Bite

When you are going on your first assignment, you may be scared to get close. At a sporting event, you may be tempted to hide away in the stands.

Don't!

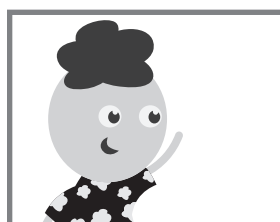
All you are doing is hurting your own photography quality by not being close. Yes, you can crop, but it will pixelate and be bad quality that way. Just get close. People will soon forget you're even there.

Bad Model



You can barely even make out Dood lé Head. Walk closer. They don't bite.

Good Model



We can see Dood's face well now and all the emotion and detail that people like.

Look for Candid Faces

PHOTO COMPOSITION BASICS

Universal Language

English, Spanish, German, Chinese, Farsi — not everyone can speak them. Saying "I'm happy" in one language likely won't translate to a non-native speaker. Emotions do though.

Anguish, joy or thrill is obvious — on their face and in their body language. Make faces and facial expressions a priority to help the audience feel the photo without having to say, "John Smith is upset."

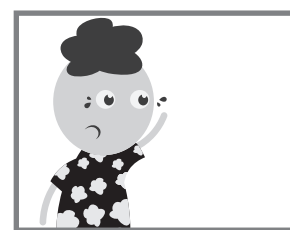
Don't get poses. Get REAL, candid action.

Bad Model



We know Dood lé Head is waving, but what are they feeling? I can't feel their emotion in this photo.

Good Model



Oh no! Dood is crying. You wouldn't know from the first photo. Faces = emotion.

Don't Stand Up

PHOTO COMPOSITION BASICS

Go Low, Go High

People experience life at eye level. Looking at photos taken at eye level may not be bad, but it isn't exciting.

To bring your photography portfolio from OK to great, do your best to never stand up when taking a photo. Kneel down, lay down, get on a ladder, stand on a (sturdy) chair, or get on your belly.

Bird's eye view is a shot above eye level. Worm's eye view is below. Try both out!

OK Model

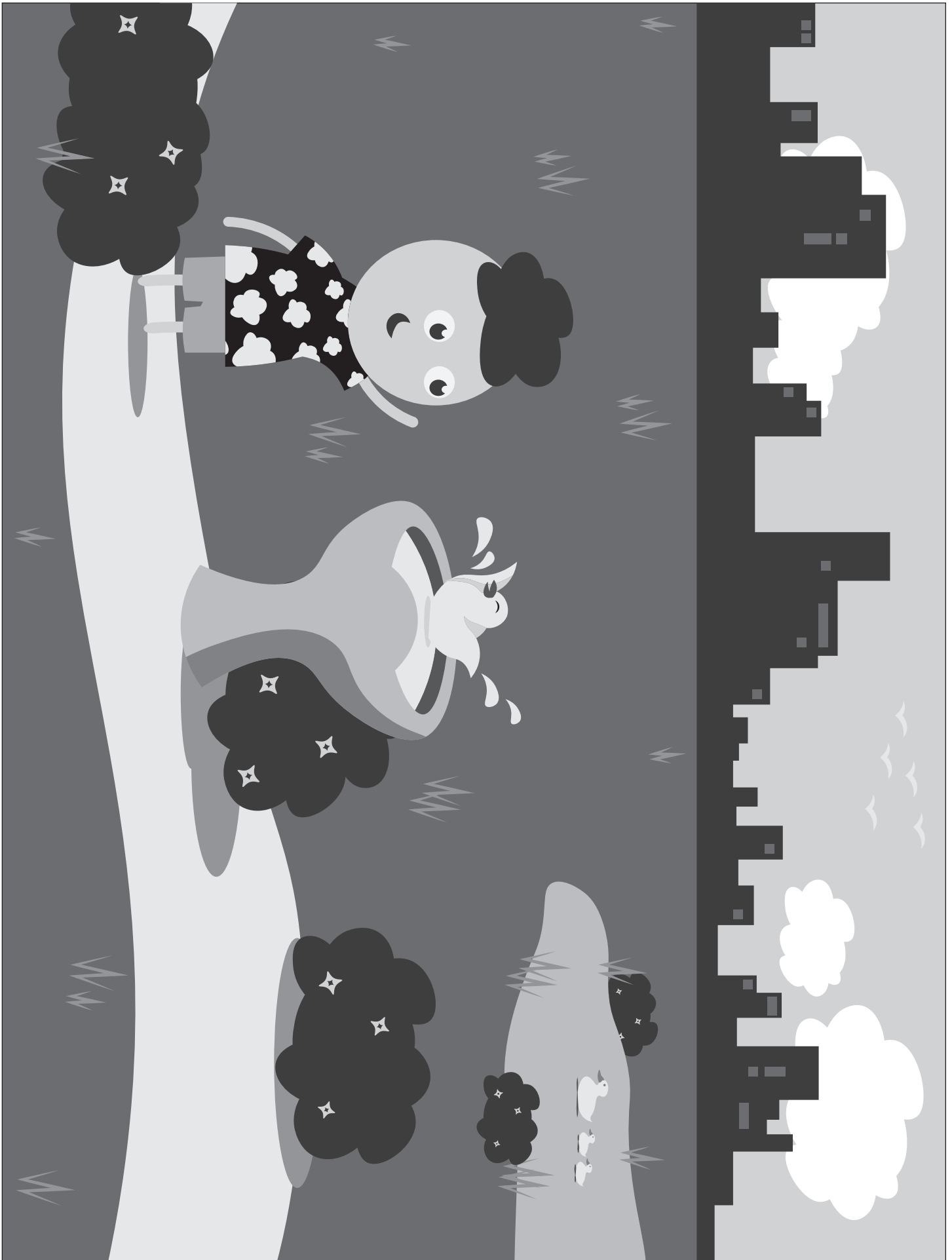


There's nothing exactly wrong with this photo, but it is boring and at eye level.

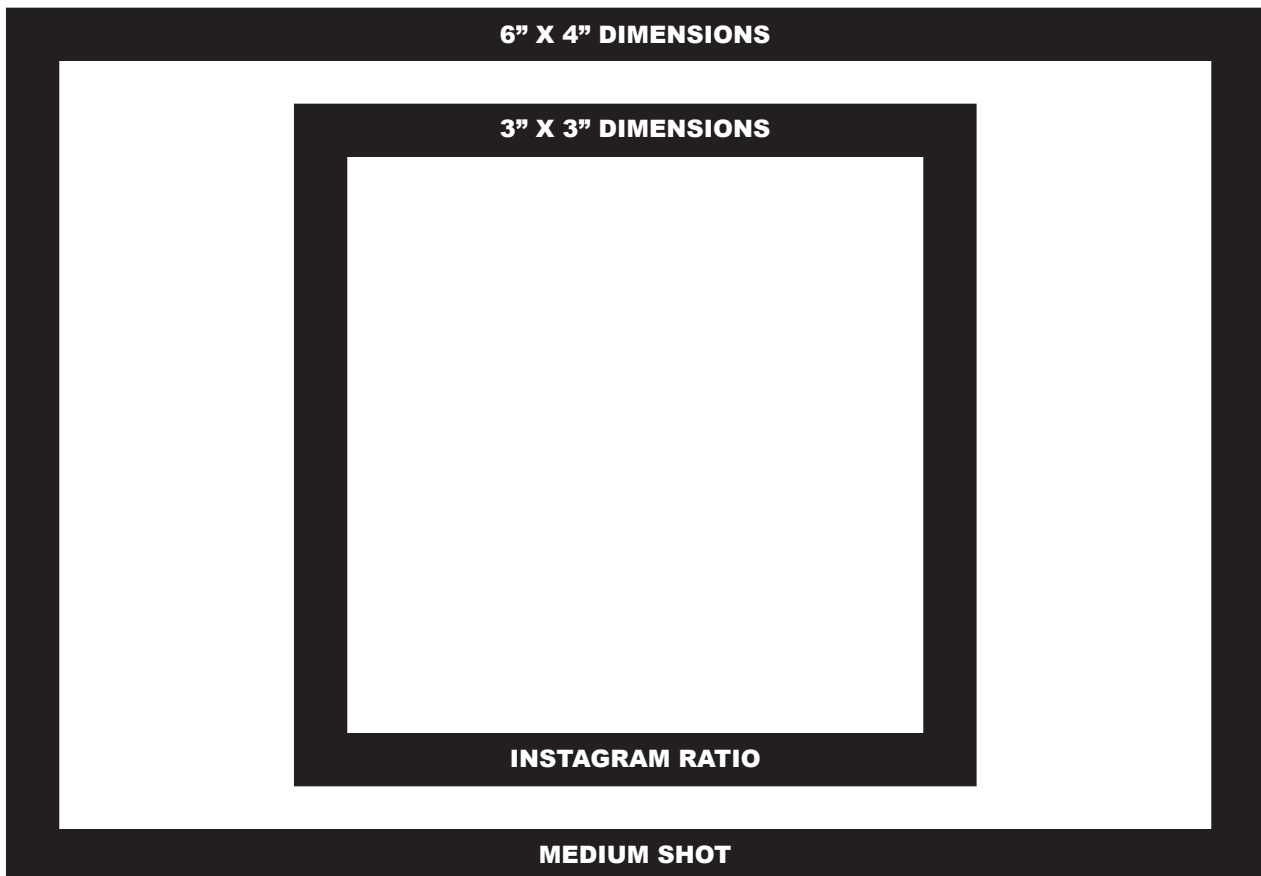
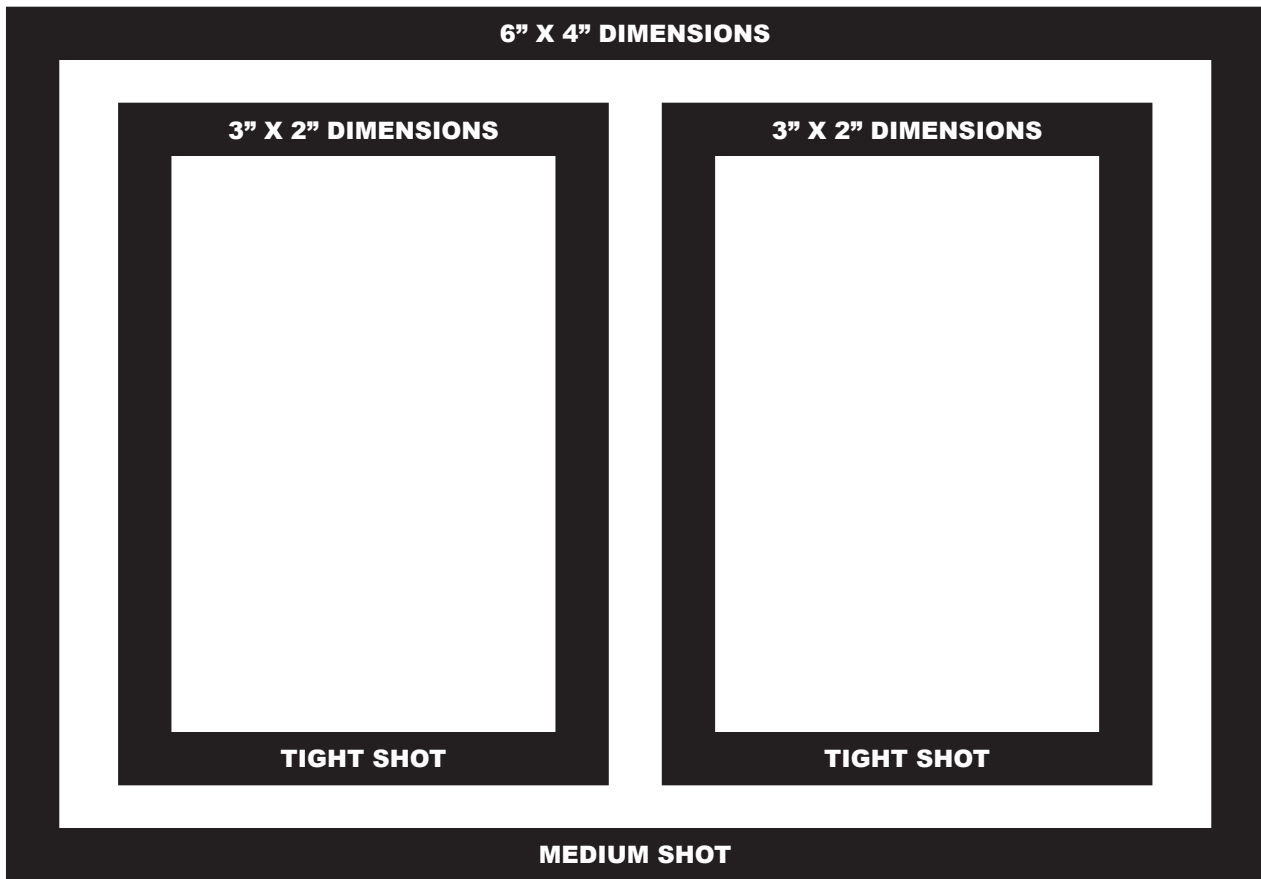
Better Model



By getting closer to the ground, the photo develops more depth and leading lines.



Cut out the black rectangles. Cut out white middles as well. You should have 5 black rectangles in total.



Rationale

The rule of thirds (and its friends) are excellent rules of thumb. However, there are ways to break the rules and still draw the reader's eye to where we want it to go.

CLASS GOAL: We will understand other techniques that photojournalists can use that may break the basic rules.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will take photos using each of these techniques.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Pattern and symmetry provide structure and order, which is pleasing to the eye
- Contrast directs the eye to the subject that sticks out
- Filling the frame is a tight shot of a subject that takes up the majority of the frame
- And framing surrounds the subject on three sides in the foreground or background, creating focus by making a picture within a picture.

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in two, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four, but may be completed in one depending on class length.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "More Techniques Instructional Cards" cut for each group
- "More Techniques Practice Cards" cut for the class
- "More Techniques Window Drawing" for each student
- Cameras for students to practice with DSLR or mirrorless cameras; this can also be done with cellphones but is significantly harder to do so with some of the newer techniques
- (Optional) computers to upload photos & editing software to manipulate at teacher preference

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the suggested answer the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each group member pull one of the four "More Composition Techniques Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts they learned.

Then, give each student one of the cards from the "More Techniques Practice Cards". These are examples of all photo composition techniques. Students should mix around the room while music plays until the music stops before pairing with a person near them. They will quiz and coach each other until both have it correct. They will continue to do this until all students have circulated or the teacher is satisfied with the results.

After this, give each student the "More Techniques Window Drawing". The paper has four squares where each student will draw an image representing one of their favorite memories, but drawn in the style of the photo composition technique. Give them 10-15 minutes to think about their four memories and draw them. Encourage students to help one another out when a technique is challenging for one of the group members to imagine how the drawing looks. After 15 minutes, ask students to show and check each scene to make sure every student understands the concepts of the technique. Then, have them share one of the memories with the other students in their group.

Slide 5 has a recap of concepts.

NOTE: This may be difficult for some students to imagine. First, tell them to treat the black square like the frame of an image. Second, tell them to imagine the area where the memory occurred and act as if they were a photographer shooting the moment. They should draw what they can imagine that look like in the box. Also, stick figures and line art is perfectly acceptable for this.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have all students answer the question on Slide 6 in a method preferred by the teacher.

Day 2

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Run another round of the "More Composition Techniques Practice Cards" to refresh student memories about the techniques.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY: Each student should use a camera to return to the class they shot in the "Basic Composition Techniques" lesson (or another if the teacher prefers this). There, they should get another 10 photos. This time, at least one of them should be from each of the four new techniques they learned. The other six photos should also be from the four techniques, but the techniques are up to them. They should return with enough time to turn the photos in. They won't have time to edit yet, but will be learning that later on. They will edit these photos then.

NOTE: This seems like a quick timing for one class period. This is by design. Students need to understand the need for fast turnaround. If students have to share cameras, reduce the number of photos required for each pair/trio.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Students should turn in their photos for teacher critique.

References

- DK. (2015). *Digital Photography: Complete Course*.
- Etwell, J., Balmeo, M., Austin, E., & Hamm R. (2021). *Journalism: Publishing Across Media*. The Goodheart-Willcox Company.
- Harrower, T. (2013). *Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism*. McGraw-Hill.
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- Kanigel, R. (2012). *The Student Newspaper Survival Guide*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Kobre, K. (2017). *Photojournalism: The Professionals' Approach*. Routledge.

Pattern & Symmetry

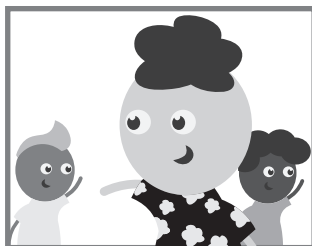
MORE COMPOSITION TECHNIQUES

Candy to the Eye

Patterns are just shapes that repeat in an expected way. Symmetry is when there is perfect repetition. The human brain loves patterns because it is hardwired to spot change — thank your ancestors for looking out for danger in the wild.

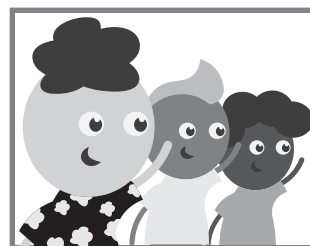
Look for opportunities to try to use pattern and symmetry in your work. Move around and attempt to find ways to get shapes to repeat, mirror, rotate (like a pinwheel) or step symmetry (like footprints in the sand).

Bad Model



There is nothing resembling a pattern or symmetry in this shot.

Good Model



They are repeating in a line. They are all doing the same thing. Easy pattern.

Contrast & Odd Man Out

MORE COMPOSITION TECHNIQUES

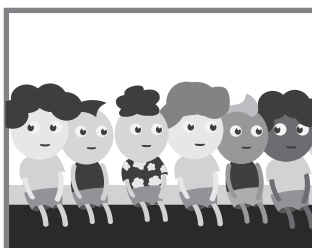
Just Look at Them

Contrast is in many ways the opposite of symmetry and pattern. The goal is to have something stick out.

The reader's eye will be drawn to the subject that sticks out — which should be engaging — while also getting the visual effect from the pattern they are breaking.

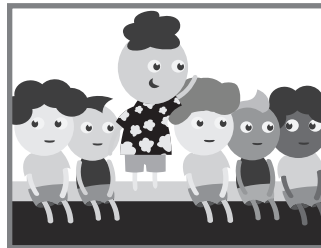
Contrast can also be placing two obviously different subjects next to each another to create a message about that difference.

Bad Model



There is no main subject. My eye isn't drawn to any one place.

Good Model



My eye goes straight to them standing up because they are breaking the pattern.

Filling the Frame

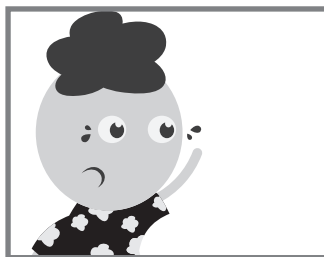
MORE COMPOSITION TECHNIQUES

Get REALLY Close

There are many times where needing to include the entirety of a subject or scene is unnecessary. Filling the frame means to literally take up the majority of the frame — the edges of the picture — with the subject.

You cannot halfway do it like the example to the right where the photographer attempted. The hair is touching the frame and there is space we don't need. Instead, crop tighter or — better yet — get closer.

Bad Model



The hair is touching the frame and lots of dead space I don't need.

Good Model



We can see their face well now and all the emotion and detail without distractions.

Framing

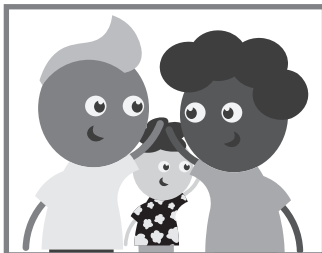
MORE COMPOSITION TECHNIQUES

You're Surrounded

When a subject is framed, they are surrounded on at least three sides by something in the foreground (the area between you and the subject) or the background (the area behind the subject).

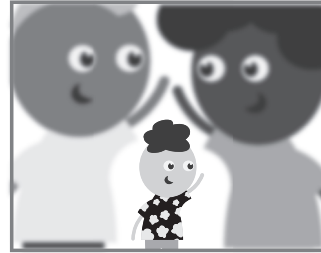
If you use foreground subjects as the framing device, make sure you crop and/or blur out enough of them to prevent the photo from becoming distracting, cluttered and confusing for the viewer.

Bad Model



The foreground overlaps the subject and are distracting because they're in focus.

Good Model



By cutting off parts of the foreground and using a low f-stop, we draw focus to them.

CONTRAST/ODD MAN OUT

FRAMING

PATTERN/SYMMETRY

FILLING THE FRAME

Card 1

Answer

Lead room

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 2

Answer

Headroom

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 3

Answer

Rule of thirds

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 4

Answer

Contrast or odd man out

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 5

Answer

Pattern, symmetry or leading lines

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 6

Answer

Don't stand up or worm's eye view

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 7

Answer

Framing

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 8

Answer

Framing

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 9

Answer

Filling the frame

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 10

Answer

Contrast or odd man out

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 11

Answer

Pattern, symmetry or leading lines

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 12

Answer

Filling the frame

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 13

Answer

Lead room

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 14

Answer

Headroom

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 15

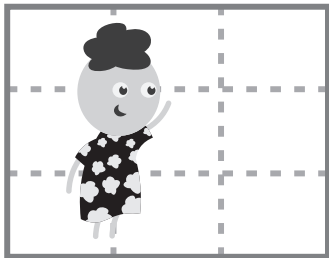
Answer

Rule of thirds

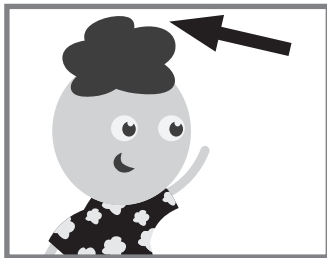
Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

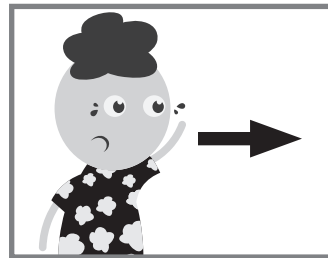
Card 3



Card 2



Card 1



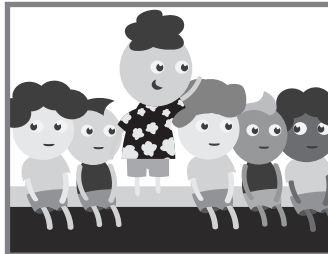
Card 6



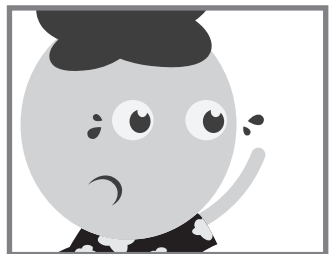
Card 5



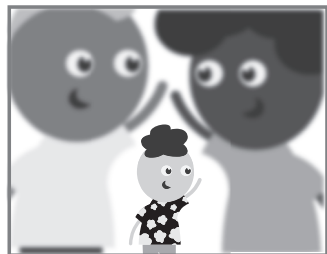
Card 4



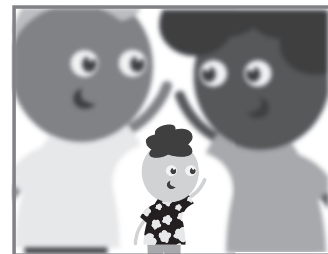
Card 9



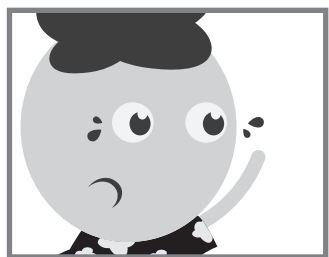
Card 8



Card 7



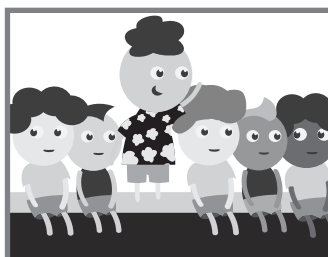
Card 12



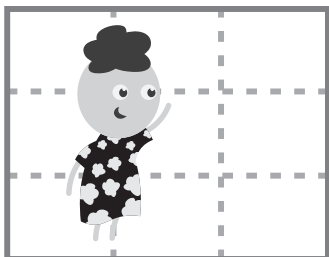
Card 11



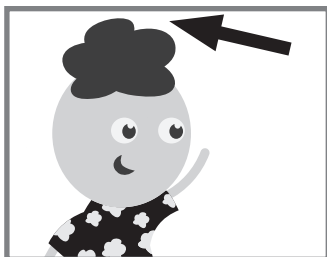
Card 10



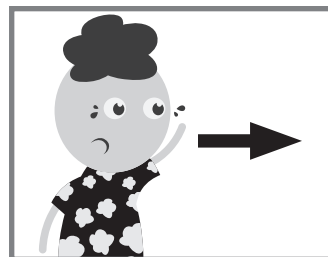
Card 15



Card 14



Card 13



Rationale

Automatic on a DSLR or mirrorless camera does help super amateurs. However, photojournalists encounter challenging lighting and color situations where they need to understand how the different settings work and correct issues they have. The exposure triangle is a basic for all photojournalists to understand.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn the basics of the exposure triangle including the ISO, shutter speed and aperture.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will think through scenarios and make suggestions based on the functions of each setting.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- The exposure triangle is a balance of ISO, shutter speed & aperture with the goal of being well exposed
- Underexposed is too dark and overexposed is too bright
- Aperture controls how much light comes in and depth of field
- Shutter speed controls how long light is let in for and motion blur
- And ISO controls how reactive the camera is and the level of noise

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in two, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four, but may be completed in one depending on class length.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Exposure Triangle Instructional Cards" for each group
- "Exposure Triangle Practice Cards" cut for class
- "Exposure Triangle Scenarios" for each group
- Cameras for students to practice with DSLR or mirrorless cameras; cellphones will not work with the practice assignment

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the correct version the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each group member pull one of the four "Exposure Triangle Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts they learned.

Then, give each student one of the cards from the "Exposure Triangle Practice Cards". Students should mix around the room while music plays until the music stops before pairing with a person near them. They will quiz and coach each other until both have it correct. They will continue to do this until all students have circulated or the teacher is satisfied with the results.

Finally, give each group the "Exposure Triangle Scenarios" to work through as a group. The first person will read the scenario. Person 2 will identify the problem setting. Person 3 will make a recommendation of what to change. Person 4 will determine if it is correct. The group should then discuss. The process repeats with all the roles shifting to the right. Person 2 reads, Person 3 identifies, etc. Do this until all groups finish all scenarios. Once finished, each group should send a representative to a nearby group who will discuss their answers before returning to their group to lead their team in any revisions needed.

Slide 5 has a recap of concepts.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have all students complete the scenario individually on Slide 6.

NOTE: How long this takes depends on the group of students. Some years, the group may understand the settings much more quickly than the next.

FAST CLASSES: If there is extra time, have the students grab a camera and start identifying and playing with each setting using Manual mode, which will allow them to see the effects of changing just one.

Day 2

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Have students compare answers o Slide 6.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY: Have students line up by youngest to oldest. Starting with the youngest, number off students into threes. Give each pair a camera and a sheet of blank/extra paper. Ask one of the members to wad up the paper into a ball. Ask the trios to find a spot with lots of room — the hallway, cafeteria, outside, etc. Teachers should be able to monitor student progress. Have two of the three in each trio play catch. The third has a goal to get a well exposed shot with no motion blur that follows basic composition rules and gets the ball in the shot. Let them struggle and ask each other first if the settings aren't working for them. After the first student successfully completes this task, they should randomize the settings and pass it to the next person, who will complete the same exercise. Continue until all three in each group achieve the goal in Manual mode.

Then, the trio will — still working in Manual — attempt to get a shallow depth of field head-and-shoulders shot of one another with the minimum amount of noise and no motion blur.

NOTE: They may find lighting to be an issue. If possible, allow them to go outside to get more light. They may also need to be coached into getting closer, which is required to achieve a shallow depth of field in addition to the low f-stop.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have each group return and upload their photos as a formative assessment.

References

- DK. (2015). *Digital Photography: Complete Course*.
- Etwell, J., Balmeo, M., Austin, E., & Hamm R. (2021). *Journalism: Publishing Across Media*. The Goodheart-Willcox Company.
- Harrower, T. (2013). *Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism*. McGraw-Hill.
- Harrower, T., & Elman, J. M. (2013). *The Newspaper Designer's Handbook*. McGraw-Hill.
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- Kobre, K. (2017). *Photojournalism: The Professionals' Approach*. Routledge.

Exposure Triangle: Strike a Balance

EXPOSURE TRIANGLE

Goldilocks & the Three Camera Settings

The exposure triangle refers to the balance between a camera's aperture, shutter speed and ISO. The goal would be to have good exposure (brightness). Underexposed means the photo is too dark, while overexposed is too bright. When one changes, one or both of the others should also or risk being under/over.



Aperture: How much?

EXPOSURE TRIANGLE

What is It?

Aperture is the hole in the lens that lets in light. The aperture is measured in f-stops.

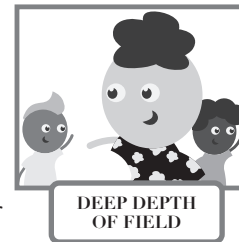
2 2.8 4 5.6 8 11 16 22 32

These determine how much light gets into the camera and its depth of field — how much of the image is in focus.

Exposure & Visual Effects

As the f-stop number, the less light enters the camera because the hole got smaller. Each full stop higher (see left) is half as much light as the one before.

The aperture also controls the depth of field. As the f-stops increase, the more of the image will be in focus — called a deep depth of field. Lower f-stops are shallow — less will be focused.



Shutter Speed: How long?

EXPOSURE TRIANGLE

What is It?

Shutter speed is how fast the camera's shutter opens to let light hit the sensor and then close. It is measured in fractions of a second.

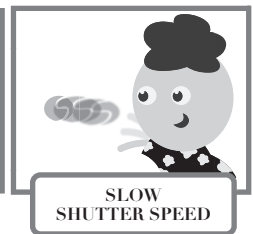
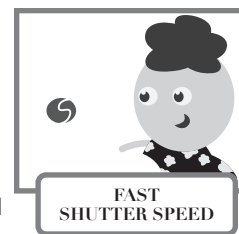
1/60 1/125 1/250 1/500 1/1000

These determine how long light is let in as well as how much motion blur exists in the photo.

Exposure & Visual Effects

As the fraction gets smaller ($1/20 \rightarrow 1/40$), less light enters the camera because light hits the sensor for less time. Each time the time is twice as fast, half as much light goes in.

The shutter speed also controls motion blur — streaks of light that show were something moved while the shutter was open. $1/125$ will stop most motion. Below that, you risk motion blur.



ISO: How reactive?

EXPOSURE TRIANGLE

What is It?

ISO is the setting determining how quickly the camera's sensor reads the light coming in and converting it to a digital image. Measured using an industry-created standard.

100 200 400 800 1600 3200

These determine how reactive (or sensitive) the sensor is to light, as well as how much noise/grain the image will have.

Exposure & Visual Effects

As the number doubles, the sensor becomes twice as reactive, which means the image will become brighter if you do nothing else.

The ISO also controls noise or grain — areas where the camera guessed at what should be there. The higher the number, the more the camera has to guess what should be there, making it more noisy/less detailed.



Card 1

Answer

Aperture: also called the f-stop

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 2

Answer

Shutter speed: fractions of a second

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 3

Answer

ISO: Measured in 100s

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 4

Answer

Determines how reactive the sensor is to light.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 5

Answer

Determines how much light enters the lens.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 6

Answer

Determines how long light enters the camera and strikes the sensor.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 7

Answer

Noise: Lower ISO leads to less noise.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 8

Answer

Depth of field: Low f-stops lead to shallow depth of fields; high leads to deep.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 9

Answer

Motion blur: The faster the shutter speed, the less motion blur you get.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 10

Answer

ISO: Lower ISO leads to less noise.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 11

Answer

Shutter speed: The faster the shutter speed, the less motion blur you get.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 12

Answer

Aperture: Low f-stops lead to shallow depth of fields; high leads to deep.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 13

Answer

The balance for an image's brightness between the shutter speed, aperture & ISO.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 14

Answer

The photo is too dark. There are no pure white pixels in the image.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 15

Answer

The photo is too bright. There are blown highlights throughout the photo.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 3

Question

400 is an example measurement of which setting?

Card 2

Question

1/250 is an example measurement of which setting?

Card 1

Question

f/2.8 is an example measurement of which setting?

Card 6

Question

How does the shutter speed affect exposure of an image?

Card 5

Question

How does the aperture affect exposure of an image?

Card 4

Question

How does the ISO affect exposure of an image?

Card 9

Question

What visual effect (not exposure) does the shutter speed control?

Card 8

Question

What visual effect (not exposure) does the aperture control?

Card 7

Question

What visual effect (not exposure) does the ISO control?

Card 12

Question

If you wanted to make sure you had a background out of focus, which setting would you change?

Card 11

Question

If you wanted to make sure you stopped all motion, which setting would you change?

Card 10

Question

If you wanted to make sure you had a high-detail, low-noise image, which setting would you change?

Card 15

Question

What does it mean if a photo is overexposed?

Card 14

Question

What does it mean if a photo is underexposed?

Card 13

Question

What is the exposure triangle?

Scenario — The Wrestling Match

EXPOSURE TRIANGLE

The Situation

While taking pictures of the wrestling district tournament, your photographer texts you their images are blurry and noisy, but in focus.

You ask for their settings and they tell you: f/32 (max on their camera), 1/30, and ISO 12800.

Fix It!

What are you going to text them back?

Scenario — The Senior Portrait

EXPOSURE TRIANGLE

The Situation

A friend asks you to take their senior photos. You take them to their favorite hallway at the school because they like the mural in the background.

You shoot the picture, which is in focus, but has lots of noise. There is no motion blur.

Fix It!

What are you going to change?

Scenario — The Group Photo

EXPOSURE TRIANGLE

The Situation

It is group photo day for the yearbook. The FFA shows up with 80 members and are lined up into rows in the bleachers.

You notice the first row is in focus, but the back row is not.

Fix It!

What are you going to change?

Scenario — The Volleyball Game

EXPOSURE TRIANGLE

The Situation

At the volleyball playoff game, you were asked to take over for the main photographer who bailed last minute.

You are shooting the game in focus but notice lots of motion blur and the images are way too bright.

Fix It!

What are you going to change?

KEY Scenario — The Wrestling Match

EXPOSURE TRIANGLE

The Situation

While taking pictures of the wrestling district tournament, your photographer texts you their images are blurry and noisy, but in focus.

You ask for their settings and they tell you: f/32 (max on their camera), 1/30, and ISO 12800.

Fix It!

What are you going to text them back?

ANSWER: THE APERTURE NEEDS TO BE REDUCED BECAUSE IT IS LETTING IN VERY LITTLE LIGHT. THIS WILL ALLOW THE SHUTTER SPEED TO INCREASE AND ISO TO REDUCE.

KEY Scenario — The Senior Portrait

EXPOSURE TRIANGLE

The Situation

A friend asks you to take their senior photos. You take them to their favorite hallway at the school because they like the mural in the background.

You shoot the picture, which is in focus, but has lots of noise. There is no motion blur.

Fix It!

What are you going to change?

ANSWER: THE ISO IS TOO HIGH. IT SHOULD BE REDUCED.

KEY Scenario — The Group Photo

EXPOSURE TRIANGLE

The Situation

It is group photo day for the yearbook. The FFA shows up with 80 members and are lined up into rows in the bleachers.

You notice the first row is in focus, but the back row is not.

Fix It!

What are you going to change?

ANSWER: THE F-STOP (APERTURE) IS TOO LOW AND CAUSING TOO SHALLOW OF A DEPTH OF FIELD. THE F-STOP SHOULD BE INCREASED TO PROVIDE A WIDER FOCUS AREA.

KEY Scenario — The Volleyball Game

EXPOSURE TRIANGLE

The Situation

At the volleyball playoff game, you were asked to take over for the main photographer who bailed last minute.

You are shooting the game in focus but notice lots of motion blur and the images are way too bright.

Fix It!

What are you going to change?

ANSWER: THE SHUTTER SPEED IS TOO SLOW. INCREASING THE SHUTTER SPEED WILL SOLVE BOTH THE BLUR AND EXPOSURE.

Rationale

Even the best photographers will tell you photos need editing. Photojournalists limit their edits to exposure & color correction, and cropping. We don't edit parts of images in nor out to make it look better.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn the steps to edit a photo for publication.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will edit a photo to be used for publication.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Photos should be cropped starting by highlighting the face and adding in parts the photographer wants to keep rather than cropping outside to in
- Avoid distracting mergers — areas where foreground or background objects intersect with the frame or main subject, or where the subject touches the frame; especially avoid cropping at joints
- Color correct using the Color Balance function in Photoshop
- Exposure correct using the Levels function in Photoshop (Teachers can also use Curves if they prefer)
- And edit color & exposure to the main subject's skin

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in two, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four, but may be completed in one depending on class length.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Editing Photos Instructional Cards" cut for each group
- Access to Adobe Photoshop or Photopea on computers
- "Photo Editing Learning Rubric" for each student
- "Photo Composition & Technical Critique Rubric" for each student (optional) if you want students to critique more than just the editing
- Students should have photos already taken in previous assignments.

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the correct version the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each group member pull one of the four "Photo Editing Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts they learned.

Use Slides 5-14 to have students quickly discuss what is wrong with the edit on the photo using just what they can see. The teacher will pull up a Slide and all students will individually answer on white boards, paper or any other method the teacher prefers. Then, the students will select a group leader. The group leader will call out "Show Me" and everyone will reveal their answers. If there is disagreement, they will discuss the options and come to consensus. If not, they should celebrate and cheer as a group. (They are more engaged if there is a non-academic teambuilding activity that is fun preceding this.) This repeats through all images.

Now have students open Adobe Photoshop or another photo editing software with similar capabilities of Photoshop's Levels and Color Balance functions. First, they will edit one photo and get used to the process before editing many photos. Tell students to save a copy of the original so they have a compare/contrast to the final product. Have students crop (inside to outside), exposure correct (using Levels) and color correct (using Color Balance). With either preassigned or randomized pairs, have students critique the each other's work using the "Photo Editing Learning Rubric" to rate the photo. They will not be assigning a grade, but rather going through multiple parts to give students from a "Well Below Standard" to "Above Standard" in each category.

Slide 15 has a recap of concepts.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have students turn in a completed photo and the original image for the teacher to check.

Day 2

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Students should look at Slide 16 and discuss with their group in a round robin format all the issues in the photo using concepts used on Day 1. Then, randomly call a student in each group to see what the groups all mentioned. Continue until all errors have been spotted.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY: Have students crop, edit and color correct all the photos taken in the Basic Composition and Breaking the Rules (More Techniques) lessons. This should take most of class.

NOTE: This is the time to really squash lazy habits and force students to see the small details. If the teacher gets students to fully understand the concept this early, it will become a good habit.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have each pair reconvene and critique another photo using the same editing checklist as Day 1. Then, have them compare to the photo they edited on Day 1.

References

- DK. (2015). *Digital Photography: Complete Course*.
- Etwell, J., Balmeo, M., Austin, E., & Hamm R. (2021). *Journalism: Publishing Across Media*. The Goodheart-Willcox Company.
- Harrower, T. (2013). *Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism*. McGraw-Hill.
- Harrower, T., & Elman, J. M. (2013). *The Newspaper Designer's Handbook*. McGraw-Hill.
- Kanigel, R. (2012). *The Student Newspaper Survival Guide*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Kobre, K. (2017). *Photojournalism: The Professionals' Approach*. Routledge.

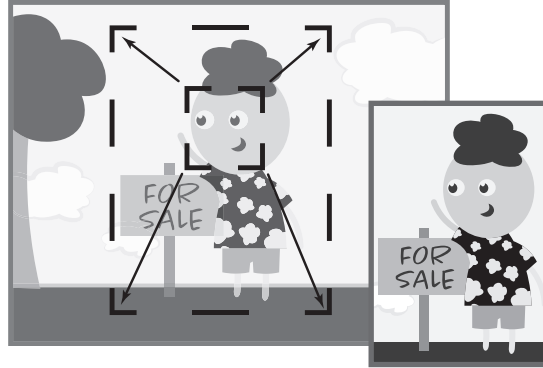
Crop Inside to Outside

EDITING PHOTOS

Start at the Face

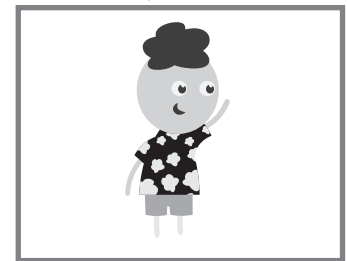
First step. When cropping, aim for a tight crop around the action. Start by drawing a crop box around the face. If the face isn't strong enough on its own (it usually isn't) start adding in more of the photo.

When you crop outside-in, you usually leave unneeded space. An inside-out method will help you be more aware of what is in your photo by adding to the photo to make it better, rather than cropping outside-in to make the photo less bad by cutting things out.



Draw It!

Draw a box around the subject's face and another where you would finish the crop.



Watch Out for Mergers

EDITING PHOTOS

Overlapping Problems

Mergers are annoying issues when cropping. They are times when foreground or background objects intersect with the frame or main subject, or where the subject touches the frame.

You especially want avoid cropping at joints to avoid awkward mergers.

NOTE: Mergers are sometimes unavoidable. Do your best to make those situations have the least number of distracting mergers with the main subject.

Circle It!

On the right, circle every merger you see. Start with the frame — follow the edge and circle everything that touches it.

Then look at the subject and circle objects touching them or where they touch the frame.

Which are OK to you? Which are distracting and should be cropped?



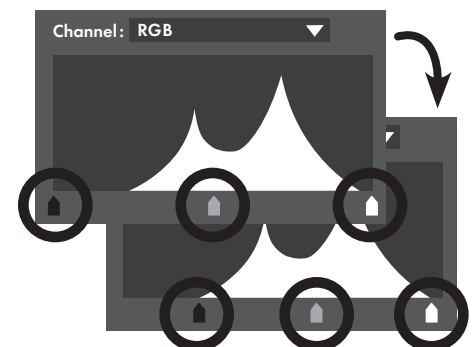
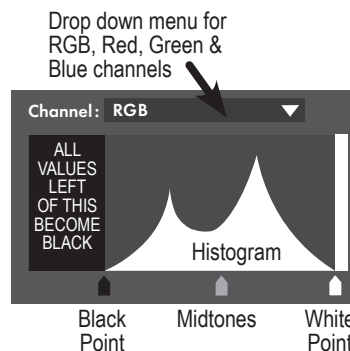
Exposure Correction

EDITING PHOTOS

Level Playing Field

Second step after cropping. In Photoshop or other editing software, there is a Levels function that lets the photographer edit the histogram of a photo for each of the three channels — red, green and blue — in RGB images.

AFTER cropping, start by moving the black and white end points for each channel individually to eliminate any empty space only. Then, switch to the RGB composite level, hold Alt and drag each again to correct exposure, careful not to have too much pure white, which blows the highlights. If you want it darker or brighter after this step, move the gray midtones Slider toward the middle of the histogram.



Color Correction

EDITING PHOTOS

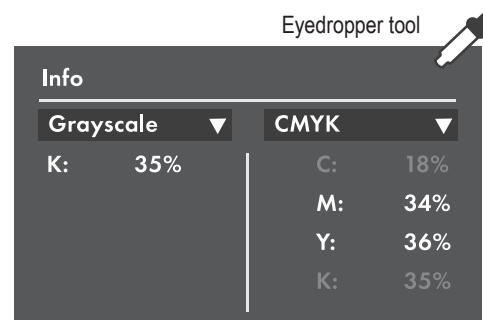
Why So Blue?

Final step after cropping & exposure correction. Different lights reach different temperatures, which changes the color of the lighting. Your camera has a white balance function, but the colors almost always need some sort of correction.

Open the Info panel in Photoshop, select the Eyedropper tool and change the left to Grayscale (K) and right to CMYK. On MOST people — no matter how pale or dark their skin — the M and Y values should be about the same. Test with the Eyedropper tool (set to anything but Point Sample) on a well exposed piece of skin. Use the Color Balance adjustment to resolve that. The K value should be about 35% for most people with light skin. People with darker skin tones should NOT be edited to the same K value. However, the K value shouldn't rise above 70% or the subject may not be visible on paper like newsprint. Fix that in Levels by sliding the Midtones Slider.

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Info panel setup



Learning Rubric — Photo Editing

EDITING PHOTOS

	<i>Above Standard</i>	<i>Standard</i>	<i>Nearly at Standard</i>	<i>Well Below Standard</i>
<i>Crop</i>	<p>The crop enhances composition rules like rule of thirds, headroom and lead room, and simultaneously follows other techniques like pattern or framing.</p> <p>There are no mergers touching the main subject or subjects.</p> <p>There are no mergers touching the frame's edge.</p> <p>The space remaining creates perfect internal margins of the subject, not requiring any additional space nor additional cropping.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Photo adheres to composition rules like rule of thirds, headroom and lead room, or clearly follows other techniques like pattern or framing.</p> <p>There may be mergers of the subject, but none distracting to the eye.</p> <p>There may be mergers of the frame, but none distracting to the eye.</p> <p>There may be a little extra space or subjects close to the frame's edge, but only a slight amount.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Photo violates one basic composition rule like rule of thirds, headroom and lead room, or almost follows, but not quite, other techniques like pattern, symmetry or framing.</p> <p>There are a few distracting mergers of the subject and frame.</p> <p>There is some extra space on one side of the frame with some cropping needed to cut dead space, or subjects close to or touching the frame's edge.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Photo violates more than one basic composition rule like rule of thirds, headroom and lead room, and does not clearly follow other techniques. This includes completely uncropped images.</p> <p>There are many distracting mergers of the subject and frame.</p> <p>There is a lot of extra space on more than one side of the frame with lots of cropping needed to cut dead space, or main subjects touching the frame.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
<i>Exposure Correction</i>	<p>Photo is perfectly exposed.</p> <p>The contrast between areas of dark black and areas of bright white enhance the visual quality of the photo throughout the entire image.</p> <p>Noise from color is almost impossible to notice, absent completely, or enhances the story of the image.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Photo is barely underexposed or overexposed with only a few blown highlights (pockets of pure white or glowing "halos". Any blown highlights are mostly harmless and not distracting to the eye.</p> <p>There is some contrast between areas of dark black and areas of bright white, but the contrast may not be throughout the entire image.</p> <p>Exposure was not edited so heavily to cause noise or grain to be distracting.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Photo is underexposed, or overexposed with several blown highlights (pockets of pure white) or glowing "halos" in sections of the image. Some blown highlights are harmful and distracting to the eye.</p> <p>There is some contrast between areas of dark black and areas of bright white. There is some dark black and/or bright white areas of the photo, but not many.</p> <p>Exposure was edited in a way that it made noise a distraction.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Photo is completely underexposed, or drastically overexposed with blown highlights (pockets of pure white) or glowing "halos" across the image. Almost all blown highlights are harmful and distracting to the eye.</p> <p>There is no contrast (flat) between areas of dark black and areas of bright white. There are no dark black nor bright white areas of the photo.</p> <p>Exposure was edited so heavily to enhance noise as a major distraction.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
<i>Color Correction</i>	<p>Image is perfectly color corrected to the main subject's well-exposed skin. The M & Y values in the Info Panel are within 3%. Attention was paid to skin that falls outside typical color ranges or in situations complicating skin tones.</p> <p>The K value in the Info Panel does not exceed 70% on people with dark skin tones or 30% on the lightest skin tones.</p> <p>Noise from color is almost impossible to notice, absent completely, or enhances the story of the image.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Image may be slightly yellow or blue, but otherwise is close to correct. The M & Y values in the Info Panel are within 10% of each other on well-exposed skin except for situations and skin that fall outside of the typical color range.</p> <p>The K value in the Info Panel does not exceed 70% on people with dark skin tones or 30% on the lightest skin tones.</p> <p>Color was not edited so heavily to cause noise or grain to be distracting.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Image may be slightly yellow or blue, but otherwise is close to correct. The M & Y values in the Info Panel are within 10% of each other on well-exposed skin except for situations and skin that fall outside of the typical color range.</p> <p>The K value in the Info Panel does not exceed 80% on people with dark skin tones or 50% on the lightest skin tones.</p> <p>Color was edited in a way that it made noise a distraction.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Image is completely yellow or blue. The M & Y values in the Info Panel are not within 25% of each other on well-exposed skin, or does not make exception for situations and skin that fall outside of the typical color range.</p> <p>The K value in the Info Panel does not exceed 90% on people with dark skin tones or 60% on the lightest skin tones.</p> <p>Color was so heavily to enhance noise or grain to be distracting.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>

Learning Rubric — Photo Composition & Technical Rubric

EDITING PHOTOS

	<i>Above Standard</i>	<i>Standard</i>	<i>Nearly at Standard</i>	<i>Well Below Standard</i>
<i>Focus</i>	Subject is crisp & in focus, or used in a normally improper way that enhances the storytelling in the photo.	Subject is crisp and in focus. Details in the visible parts of the subjects have well-defined lines that stand out from the background.	Subject is mostly crisp and in focus. Details in the subjects have mostly clear lines that let it stand out from the background.	Subject is fuzzy and not in focus. Details in the subjects do not have clear lines and the subject blends into the background.
<i>Depth of Field</i>	Depth of field is just deep enough for subject and action, or used to enhance a photo in a meaningful way.	Depth of field is just deep enough to include all details of the subject and action, and keep out distractions.	Depth of field is sufficient to include most details in the subjects and action with minor distractions in focus.	Depth of field is too shallow to capture details in focus, or too deep and includes distracting elements.
<i>Motion Blur</i>	Motion blur is nonexistent, or used in a way to enhance the meaning.	Motion blur is nonexistent, or present but not distracting.	Motion blur is barely present but mostly not distracting.	Motion blur is present and is distracting and even destructive.
<i>Noise</i>	Noise is nonexistent, or used in a way to enhance the meaning.	Noise is nonexistent, not distracting nor destructive.	Noise is somewhat distracting or destructive of the subject.	Noise is highly present and destroys details in the picture.
<i>Exposure & Color</i>	Subject is well-exposed, or not but in a way that enhances the photo's meaning. The colors present are intentional and enhance the meaning.	Subject is well-exposed. The colors are vibrant or correct to the subject's skin tone. There are no blown highlights.	Subject is well-exposed, or slightly over/under. The colors are dim, muddy or too bright. There are only one or two, small blown highlights.	Subject is not well exposed, and possibly so bright/dark that details are difficult to determine. Colors are incorrect to the subject's main skin tone. There are many blown highlights.
<i>Composition</i>	Subject placement is unconventional to direct the eye in an intentional way. Traditional photo composition rules are tossed out, but the photo is stronger for it rather than weakened. The size of the subject enhances the meaning.	Subject placement directs the viewer's eye to the subject or action. Sports photos include the ball (if applicable). The subject's face is visible and facing into the photo. No body parts are cut off at a joint. Subjects are of good size.	Subject placement directs viewer's eye with one or more distractions. Sports photos include the ball. Subject facts are completely or partially hidden. Body parts are nearly cut off at joints. Subjects are slightly too far away or too close to the photographer.	Subject does not draw attention. Sports photos do not include the ball. No faces are visible, cut off and/or facing out of the photo. Body parts are cut off at joints. Subjects are too far away or too close to distinguish features.
<i>Creativity</i>	Photographer uses creative techniques in a way to enhance one or more elements of the photo. This includes placement, lighting, color, angle, storytelling, access to subject or location. Effort is visible and commands attention of the viewer.	Photographer may or may not have used creative composition that enhance mood, tone, emotion or storytelling aspects of the photo. If used, it is used effectively. If not, effort to create quality is visible in product.	Photographer may or may not have used creative composition that enhance mood, tone, emotion or storytelling aspects of the photo. If used, it is used to minimal effect. If not, effort to create quality hardly exists.	Photographer took no creative liberty or go out of their way to enhance mood, tone, emotion or storytelling aspects of the photo. If used, they are done poorly and is a distraction. The photographer made no attempt at quality photos.
<i>Storytelling</i>	Subjects are unique and evoke compelling emotion. Action and reaction is impactful to tell the entire story almost without needing a caption.	Subjects are vibrant and full of emotion. Photos involving movement or action show the entire action, or focuses on the reaction to an action.	Subjects have life, but are not engaging nor show any compelling emotion. Photos with action show most of the action. The basic mood, tone and emotions are boring or come across after some thought (confusing).	Subjects are dull and lifeless. There is little to no action or reaction. It does nothing to describe the mood, tone nor emotions, or does so incorrectly, inappropriately or out of context.

Rationale

Captions are not labels nor throwaway text. They are the most-read text in a yearbook and each should function as a mini story. As such, there are five basic parts: A lead-in to set the tone and direct a reader's eye; an action sentence, a background sentence, and commentary from someone in the photo, as well as a photo credit.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn the parts of a caption for a publication.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will write a mini-story caption for publication photos.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Lead-ins are mini headlines that function both as previews of the caption and as visual cues to draw the reader's eye
- Action sentences are literally the 5Ws and H of the photo, written in present tense, active voice, and name the subjects of a photo up to those with six or more subjects
- Background sentences tell me something I don't know related to the action sentence, written in past tense and active voice
- Commentary is a direct quote from someone in the photo
- And photobys are the credit for the photographer; don't forget it!

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in one or two, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four, but may be completed in one depending on class length. This also depends if students already have caption information or have to collect it. This lesson may extend in time for students to complete all captions from the two photo-gathering assignments.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Caption Writing Instructional Cards" cut for each group
- "Caption Writing Critique" for each student
- "Caption Writing Worksheet" for each student.

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the suggested version the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each group member pull one of the four "Photo Editing Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts they learned.

Give each student the "Caption Writing Critique". Each student in the group will make one note on each caption about something wrong with its structure, wording, pieces missing, or missing information. Then, pass the paper to their right. They should make one more note per caption that is different than what the previous student wrote. This should continue until all papers have been seen by every group member twice.

Slide 5 has a recap of concepts.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have all students complete the "Caption Writing Worksheet" using photos of their choice. Teachers will need to be explicit with how to identify which photo the caption describes so the teacher can adequately assess the quality of their caption writing.

DAY TWO: This activity would extend into Day 2 only in the case that students need to spend the rest of Day 1 getting quotes, names, information, etc. they need to complete the "Caption Writing Worksheet."

References

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- Etwell, J., Balmeo, M., Austin, E., & Hamm R. (2021). *Journalism: Publishing Across Media*. The Goodheart-Willcox Company.
- Kanigel, R. (2012). *The Student Newspaper Survival Guide*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Harrower, T. (2013). *Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism*. McGraw-Hill.
- DK. (2015). *Digital Photography: Complete Course*.
- Harrower, T., & Elman, J. M. (2013). *The Newspaper Designer's Handbook*. McGraw-Hill.

Lead-Ins

CAPTION WRITING

Mini-Headlines

Lead-ins are first and mini headlines that function both as previews of the caption and as visual cues to draw the reader's eye. They are one word or a phrase, but rarely a full sentence. Usually they are puns, word play or references to pop culture.

Model

GOAL FOR IT. Junior Jorge Jaimes makes a last-ditch attempt at goal from 50-yards back in the game against Townston on Friday. The shot fell short, causing Cityville to lose 2-1. "I knew we were running out of time, so I went for it," Jaimes said. "Honestly, I cried when it didn't go in. That was the last shot we had at playoffs."

Photo by Phil M. Camera

Try It!

Write a lead in for this caption

After drinking six glasses, senior Katherine Laddie smiles with a milk mustache at the FFA Fun for Funds carnival Tuesday. The event features silly games like milk drinking, hay bale punching and cow tipping. "Don't drink that much milk," she said. "Just don't."

Photo by Phil M. Camera

Action

CAPTION WRITING

What Happened?

Action sentences are second and

- literally the 5Ws and H of the photo
- written in present tense
- active voice
- name the subjects of a photo up to those with six or more subjects

Who is doing what, when, where, why and how? (How is usually also the what.)

Model

GOAL FOR IT. Junior Jorge Jaimes makes a last-ditch attempt at goal from 50-yards back in the game against Townston on Friday. The shot fell short, causing Cityville to lose 2-1. "I knew we were running out of time, so I went for it," Jaimes said. "Honestly, I cried when it didn't go in. That was the last shot we had at playoffs." *Photo by Phil M. Camera*

Try It!

What's missing from the action sentence below?

After drinking six glasses, senior Katherine Laddie smiles with a milk mustache.

Background

CAPTION WRITING

What Else?

Background sentences are third and tell

- something I don't know just by looking that is related to the action
- written in past tense
- written in active voice

Who is doing what, when, where, why and how? (How is usually also the what.)

Model

GOAL FOR IT. Junior Jorge Jaimes makes a last-ditch attempt at goal from 50-yards back in the game against Townston on Friday. **The shot fell short, causing Cityville to lose 2-1.** "I knew we were running out of time, so I went for it," Jaimes said. "Honestly, I cried when it didn't go in. That was the last shot we had at playoffs." *Photo by Phil M. Camera*

Try It!

What's wrong with the background sentence?

After drinking six glasses, senior Katherine Laddie smiles with a milk mustache at the FFA Fun for Funds carnival Tuesday. She had a milk mustache after finishing the contest.

Commentary

CAPTION WRITING

Say What?

Commentary is last and just a direct quote from someone in the photo ABOUT that moment specifically. If it is a photo of a sport, ask about that play or that game. It shouldn't be about their love of sports.

These are formatted the exact same as quotes used in a story.

Model

GOAL FOR IT. Junior Jorge Jaimes makes a last-ditch attempt at goal from 50-yards back in the game against Townston on Friday. The shot fell short, causing Cityville to lose 2-1. **"I knew we were running out of time, so I went for it," Jaimes said. "Honestly, I cried when it didn't go in. That was the last shot we had at playoffs."** *Photo by Phil M. Camera*

Try It!

What would be the difference in the caption to the left if the quote wasn't there? What value does the quote add?

Credit & Photobys

CAPTION WRITING

Who Did It?

To be absolutely clear: Student journalists own the photos they take — even if it is with school cameras. This is a lot of work, time and skill put into making one photo. Be sure to include a photoby/photo credit for every single photo.

Take the credit you earned!

Model

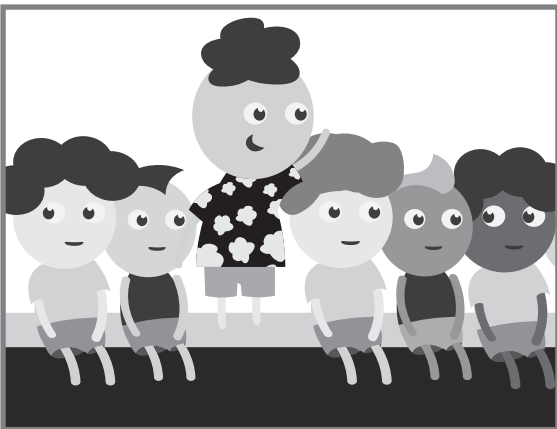
GOAL FOR IT. Junior Jorge Jaimes makes a last-ditch attempt at goal from 50-yards back in the game against Townston on Friday. The shot fell short, causing Cityville to lose 2-1. "I knew we were running out of time, so I went for it," Jaimes said. "Honestly, I cried when it didn't go in. That was the last shot we had at playoffs." *Photo by Phil M. Camera*

Try It!

How would you handle a designer forgetting to include photo credits? What about a photographer giving your photos away for free? Think about how you would professionally handle that.

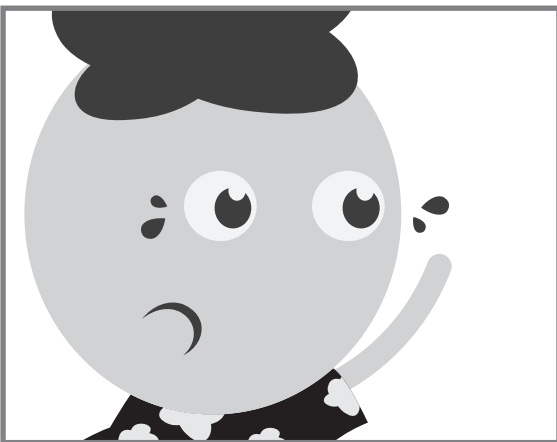
Caption Critique

NAME: _____



PICK ME. Dood lé Head raises their hand. They were the only student to volunteer to play aside from those already on the field, and led the freshmen to a last-minute win. "I love this game," lé Head said.

Notes What's wrong with these captions?



CRYBABY. As their mother drops them off, tears stream while a freshman waives goodbye. "It was overwhelming thinking about being the new person at a school," lé Head said. "I was afraid of being the new kid and having no friends. That changed over time though."

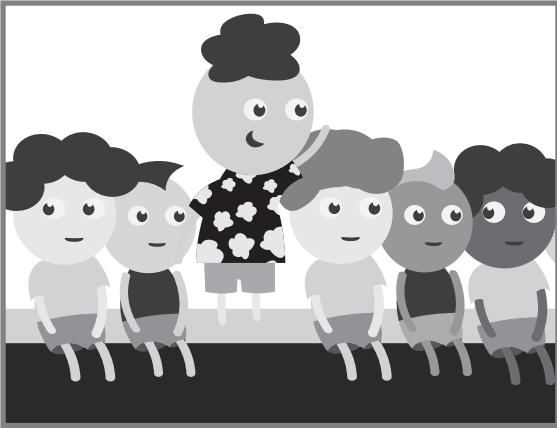


On Thursday, July 22, Dood lé Head tries to pet a dove enjoying the birdbath while on a morning walk in Cityville Municipal Park. They said their flower-print shirt is their favorite out of the whole closet. "The park is weird," lé Head said. "It has a strange smell — like hope or sewage."



quiz bowl team While competing on the JV quiz bowl team, freshman Dood lé Head rushes to answer the last question Oct. 1. Quiz bowl is a team event and competed in several competitions where they competed in a quiz format and trivia knowledge against other school quiz bowl teams. They answer trivia questions to see who is smartest and stuff. "I like quiz bowl," freshman Ima Tryen said. "It's a competition."

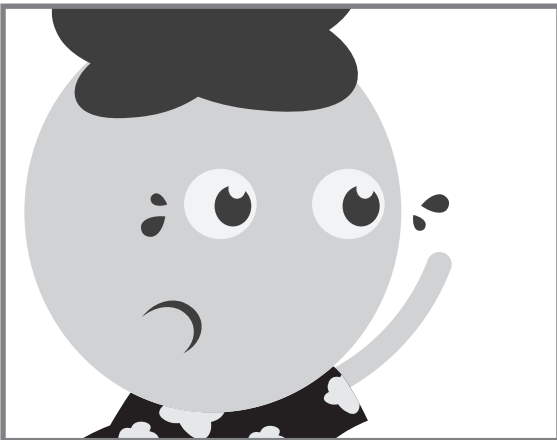
Caption Critique *KEY/COMPARE*



PICK ME. Dood lé Head raises their hand. They were the only student to volunteer to play aside from those already on the field, and led the freshmen to a last-minute win.



PUT ME IN. In order to join the ongoing kickball game between the freshman and senior classes, freshman Dood lé Head raises their hand Monday, March 3. They were the only student to volunteer to play aside from those already on the field, and led the freshmen to a last-minute win. "I wanted to prove I'm just as good as these other people," lé Head said. "I was surprised I was the only volunteer. They must have been scared of me."



CRYBABY. As their mother drops them off, tears stream while a freshman waves goodbye. "It was overwhelming thinking about being the new person at a school," lé Head said. "I was afraid of being the new kid and having no friends. That changed over time though."



WATERY WAVE. As their mother drops them off, tears stream while freshman Dood lé Head bids goodbye on their first day of high school Wednesday, Aug. 13. They transferred from Townston to Cityville over the summer. "It was overwhelming thinking about being the new person at a school," lé Head said. "I was afraid of being the new kid and having no friends. That changed over time though."



On Thursday, July 22, Dood lé Head tries to pet a dove enjoying the birdbath while on a morning walk in Cityville Municipal Park. They said their flower-print shirt is their favorite out of the whole closet. "The park is weird," lé Head said. "It has a strange smell — like hope or sewage."



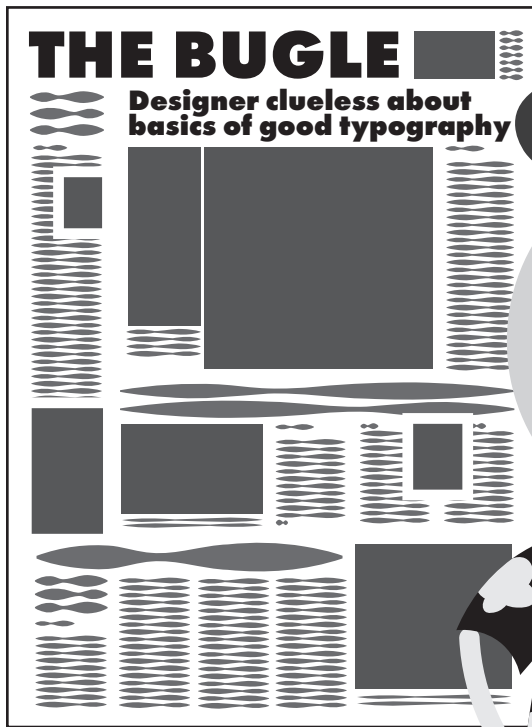
SPLISH SPLASH. While on a morning walk in Cityville Municipal Park, freshman Dood lé Head tries to pet a dove enjoying the birdbath Thursday, July 22. The bird — a white turtle dove — flew off when lé Head was only inches away from its feathers. "The bird let me get way closer than most would," lé Head said. "I think it was so involved in its bath, it just forgot about me. I should have had my camera."



quiz bowl team While competing on the JV quiz bowl team, freshman Dood lé Head rushes to answer the last question Oct. 1. Quiz bowl is a team event and competed in several competitions where they competed in a quiz format and trivia knowledge against other school quiz bowl teams. They answer trivia questions to see who is smartest and stuff. "I like quiz bowl," freshman Ima Tryen said. "It's a competition."



LET'S GET QUIZZICAL. While competing on the JV quiz bowl team, freshman Dood lé Head, junior Max Vol Hume and freshman Ima Trien rush to answer the last question at the Townston High School Invitational on Monday, Oct. 1. The moderator called on lé Head who got the question about Hammurabi's Code correct. "Without that question, we would have lost," lé Head said. "Luckily, it put us just over the edge and helped get us to district undefeated."



**Needs more
Comic Sans**

Principles of Design

Table of Contents

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- LESSON TWO: Font & Mood, pg. 9
- LESSON THREE: Color Combinations & Modes, pg. 15
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- LESSON FIVE: Basic Newspaper Layout, pg. 24

Stephen Green created these lessons as a capstone project for completion of the journalism educator master's degree program at Kent State University. It may be reproduced only for individual classroom teachers in class, but not for any commercial purposes including derivative works.

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Rationale

Most people can identify which design is better between two choices, but not necessarily be able to explain why. There are a thousand lists of what layout practices make design look good. Four of them are universal: contrast, repetition, alignment and proximity (CRAP). Designers cannot correct or critique their own work nor the work of others if they do not have the right vocabulary.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn the four principles of design.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will identify the four principles in previously made designs and create examples myself.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Contrast is a significant difference between two visual elements
- Repetition is consistency of how layout elements are used
- Alignment is to have the edges or centers of two or more visual elements lined up
- And proximity describes how related two visual elements are through their physical distance apart

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in two, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four, but may be completed in one depending on class length. The optional assignments reinforce these concepts and is recommended if time allows.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Principles of Design Instructional Cards" cut for each group
- "Principles of Design Worksheet" for each student
- "Principles of Design Group Style Guide" for each group
- Drawing & coloring supplies
- Samples of magazines, yearbooks, newspapers or other print publications students can use to analyze
- "Principles of Design Analysis Worksheet" for each student

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the suggested answer the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each group member pull one of the four "Principles of Design Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts they learned.

Hand each group the "Principles of Design Group Style Guide" sheet. Explain that each member of the group will be drawing and coloring a set of trees. The group's goal is for each set to look like they belong together. They should discuss and draw a guide for each member to reference when making their own trees so they all have the same visual styling. They should also come up with alternatives that have similar styling, but may have different shapes. They should also pick color options for each of the three elements that work well together. Give groups 10 minutes to complete the "Style Guide".

EXAMPLE: The group may draw a smooth oval tree top for most trees, but have a rectangle and triangles as alternates. They may draw thin tree trunks with one branch with alternates having multiple branches and/or be thicker with one branch. The fruit may be apples on one but pears, bananas or oranges as alternates — each with similar visual styles as the original apple.

Once the group is finished with the "Style Guide" worksheet, give students 20 minutes to complete the worksheet. During the process, have them discuss with a partner when they get stuck on a specific principle. The partners should not give each other answers, but coach them using terms from the principles of design.

Slide 5 has a recap of concepts.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have each student submit in a way preferable to the teacher their answer to Slide 6.

Day 2

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Have groups locate ONE previously published publication and look through it, pointing out what they naturally like and don't like.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY: Give each student copy of the "Principles of Design Publication Analysis" worksheet. Each student should take responsibility and be the expert on one topic. Have the tallest student be the expert on the two top-left boxes in each section (Contrast & Font), next tallest the top-right boxes (Repetition & Graphic Shapes), the third the bottom-left (Alignment & Color), and the shortest the bottom-right (Proximity & Spacing).

Once the roles have been assigned, have each student go through the publication, spending 20-25 minutes looking for good examples of their assigned principle of design & style guide assessment. Then, have students spend the rest of class going one at a time showing the rest of the group examples they found and how it meets the principle and why they think it is in the publication's style guide, which the others will write down on their own paper.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Students should turn in the assignment & write down on the paper any concepts they most and least understand.

Optional Assignments

DESIGN RECREATION: Give students a random page out of a publication or let each pick their own. They have to measure and layout an exact duplicate, or as close to exact as the program allows.

PICK A STYLE: Give students a pre-laid-out publication that has no style guide apparent, and a style guide. (Using the school publication's style guides is a good idea if they are consistent year after year.) Then, have them correct the page over several days to mesh with the style guide.

MAKE THEIR OWN: Give students a pre-laid-out publication that is as basic as possible. Have them create their own style guide as teams and individually change the font, colors and (add or modify) shapes consistent with the principles of design to match their group's style in their own way.

References

- Harrower, T., & Elman, J. M. (2013). *The Newspaper Designer's Handbook*. McGraw-Hill.
- Williams, R. (2014). *The Non-Designer's Design Book: Design and Typographic Principles for the Visual Novice* (4th ed.). Peachpit Press.

Contrast: What's the Difference?

PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

Make It Pop

Contrast is when two visual elements are different. If two items are not exactly the same, then make them different. Really different. Don't be a wimp! If two elements are only sort of different, it isn't contrast.

Add contrast to emphasize areas readers need to look, specifically titles, headlines and subheadlines.

It Can Be Many Types

Contrast can include

- **SIZE:** big & small
- **SHAPE:** sharp & soft
- **COLOR:** bright & dark
- **SPACING:** wide & narrow
- **CONCEPT:** good & bad
- **MEANING:** harmful & helpful



Repetition: It's All the Same

PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

Over & Over & Over

Repetition is to use some aspect of the design multiple times throughout the entire piece. It adds visual unity to tie the piece together. It can be anything the reader will visually recognize.

Lack of repetition creates variety, used mostly in placement.

Repetition can be thought of as consistency. How an element looks on one page should be treated the same way when used in another place.

TIP: If an element is repeated, make it visually interesting — bullet points, fonts, shapes, photo treatment all should be thought out carefully.

These three create a pattern by repeating the same action and standing in a row. They also share similar facial features & design styles.



Alignment: All Your Ducks in a Row

PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

Fall In Line

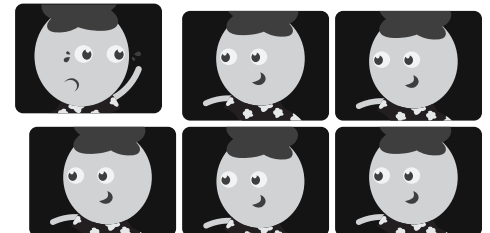
Nothing should ever be placed on the design arbitrarily. Every element should have a visual connection with something else on the design.

Objects can be aligned with edges or centers of other visual elements.

Alignment establishes a page's margins — an empty border around the design.

Create optical alignments when laying out on a computer. Don't rely on text boxes or graphic frames and assume the two elements will actually line up.

TIP: Don't center everything — save it for formal documents. Align left or right to create strong lines. However, avoid using more than one text alignment per design.



Proximity: We Belong Together

PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

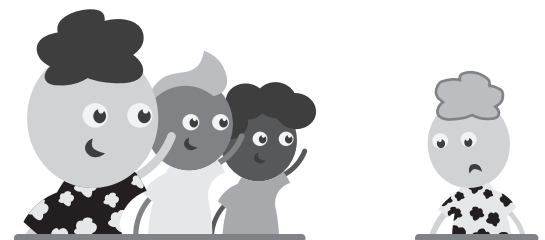
Birds of a Feather

Physical closeness implies a relationship. When items are related — belong together — make them closer, put them into groups and otherwise make it visually clear the two elements are supposed to work together.

Blank Space, Baby

Just like elements that belong together, separate unrelated elements with white space to show the reader this.

Look at this column and the one to the left. We separated them to make it clear they cover different concepts.



Style Guide & System

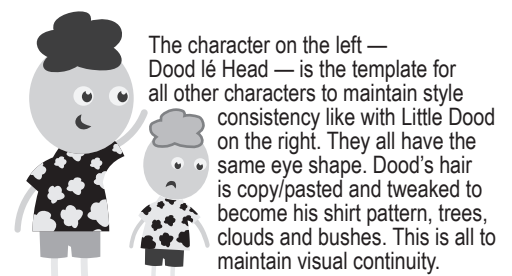
PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

Make It Look Like One Person, One Idea

Any publication staff would be foolish not to have a way to track what fonts get used when, what color formulas are required, spacing norms and other ways to guarantee that multiple designers will produce the same visual concept. This is called a style guide or style sheet.

In This Document

I can quickly lay this document out using Parent Pages, Paragraph Styles, Character Styles, Object Styles, a color library, a folder of Snippets, and an object library that makes it simple to click and create. All my headlines are Didot and the body copy Arial Narrow. All other text is a variation on those two.



NAME: _____

2 TREES WITH 3 TYPES OF CONTRAST

3 TREES WITH REPETITION

3 TREES WITH ALL 4 PRINCIPLES

2 TREES, ALIGNED TO TOP OR BOTTOM

2 TREES WITHOUT
ALIGNMENT & REPETITION

3 TREES WITHOUT ALL 4 PRINCIPLES

2 TREES WITH PROXIMITY

2 TREES WITHOUT PROXIMITY & CONTRAST

4 TREES WITH ALL 4 PRINCIPLES

GROUP TREE STYLE GUIDE

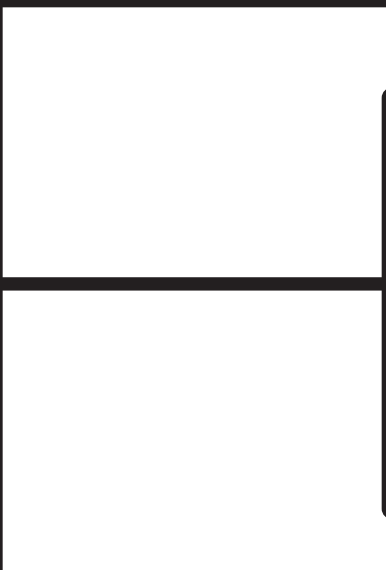
TREE TOPS SHOULD LOOK LIKE



ACCEPTABLE OPTION FOR TREE TOP



ACCEPTABLE TREE TOP COLORS



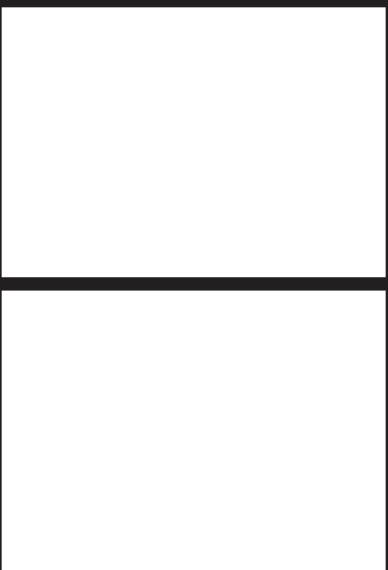
TREE TRUNKS SHOULD LOOK LIKE



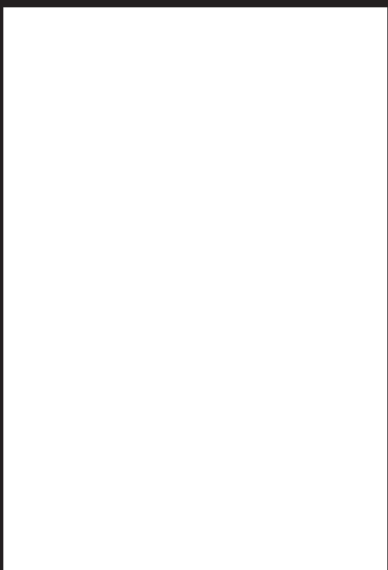
ACCEPTABLE OPTION FOR TREE TRUNK



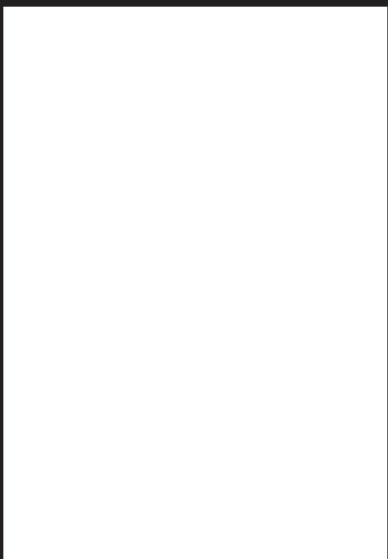
ACCEPTABLE TREE TRUNK COLORS



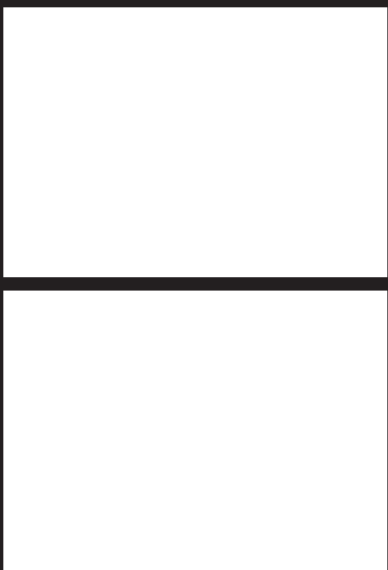
TREE FRUIT SHOULD LOOK LIKE



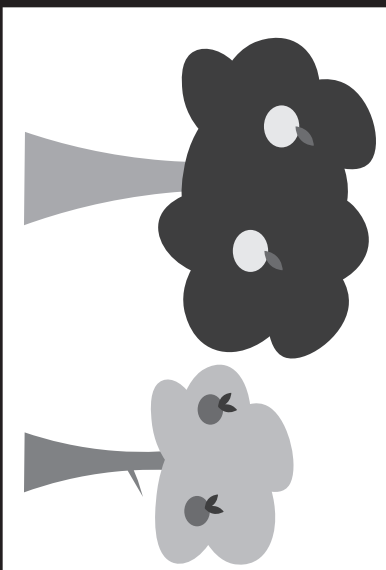
ACCEPTABLE OPTION FOR TREE FRUIT



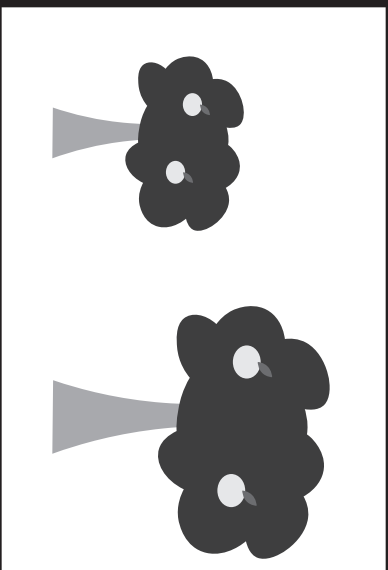
ACCEPTABLE TREE FRUIT COLORS



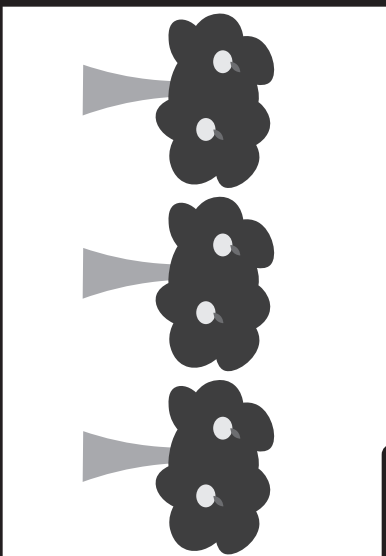
PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN WORKSHEET EXAMPLES



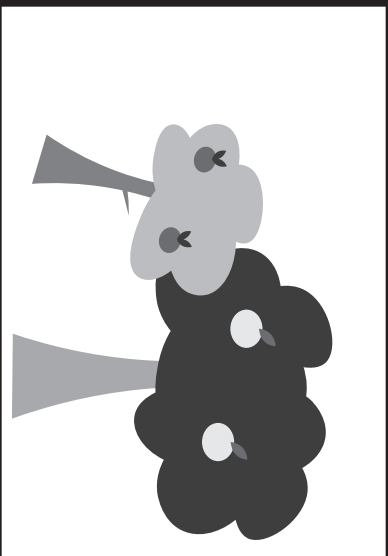
2 TREES WITH 3 TYPES OF CONTRAST



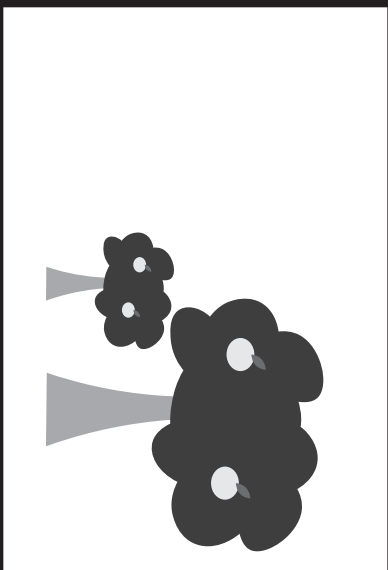
2 TREES, ALIGNED TO TOP OR BOTTOM



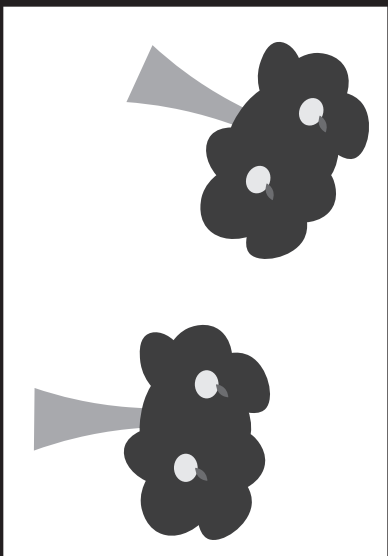
3 TREES WITH REPETITION



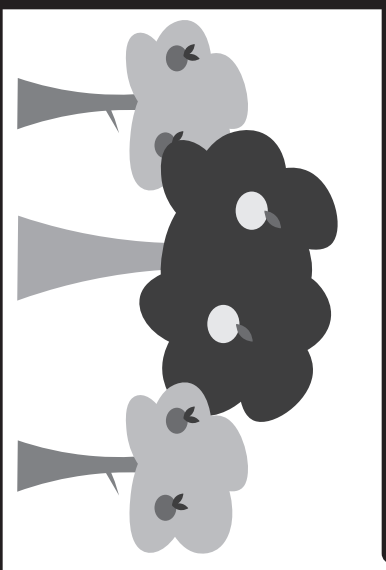
3 TREES WITHOUT ALIGNMENT & REPETITION



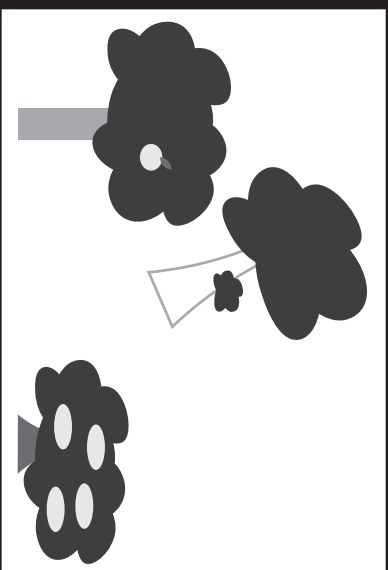
2 TREES WITH PROXIMITY



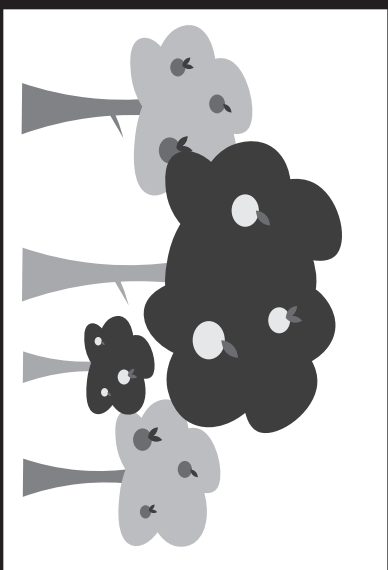
2 TREES WITHOUT PROXIMITY & CONTRAST



3 TREES WITH ALL 4 PRINCIPLES



3 TREES WITHOUT SHARING ALL 4 PRINCIPLES

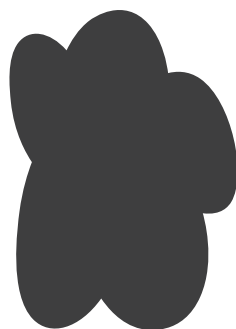


4 TREES WITH ALL 4 PRINCIPLES

GROUP TREE STYLE GUIDE EXAMPLE



TREE TOPS SHOULD LOOK LIKE



ACCEPTABLE OPTION FOR TREE TOP



ACCEPTABLE TREE TOP COLORS



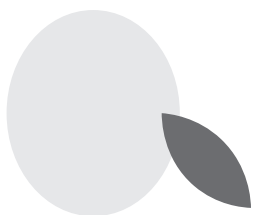
TREE TRUNKS SHOULD LOOK LIKE



ACCEPTABLE OPTION FOR TREE TRUNK



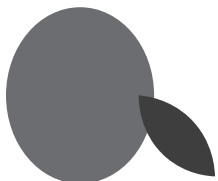
ACCEPTABLE TREE TRUNK COLORS



TREE FRUIT SHOULD LOOK LIKE



ACCEPTABLE OPTION FOR TREE FRUIT



ACCEPTABLE TREE FRUIT COLORS



Principles of Design Publication Analysis

INTERVIEWING UNIT

INSTRUCTIONS: While looking at the publication you received, work through each section, describing examples of where you see each principle of design (or don't) and what you can guess about the publication's style guide.

NAME: _____

Publication Name & Edition: _____

Principles of Design

Contrast

Write three pages & describe elements where contrast is used WELL.

Write two pages & describe elements where contrast is used POORLY; where you think it should be used more.

Repetition

Write three pages & describe elements where repetition is used WELL.

Write two pages & describe elements where repetition is used POORLY; where you think it should be used more.

Alignment

Write three pages & describe elements where alignment is used WELL.

Write two pages & describe elements where alignment is used POORLY; where you think it should be used more.

Repetition

Write three pages & describe elements where proximity is used WELL.

Write two pages & describe elements where proximity is used POORLY; where you think it should be used more.

Style Guide

Font Choice

What did you see font was repeated? How did it repeat?

Where was the publication's style guide maybe ignored?

Graphic Shapes

What shapes & style of graphics or other non-photo visual elements did you see repeated? Did they vary?

Where was the publication's style guide maybe ignored by including seemingly random graphic shapes not seen elsewhere?

Color Theme

How is color used stylistically to make the publication feel cohesive?

Where was the publication's style guide for color maybe ignored?

Spacing

How did the publication consistently use space to show items belong together? Which items were closest together?

Where did it use white space to separate unrelated content?

Rationale

Font choice is more than just picking a type because it “looks good”. Fonts convey mood. They drive theme. They function to convey information. There should be just as much thought put into them as images you choose for a yearbook spread or more.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn the functions of type, how to combine fonts and purposes of each type.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will create an example of a readable, contrasting font combination that fits a mood.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- There are four major font categories: serif, sans serif, novelty and script
- Font shape drives mood
- Text must be readable
- And combine two fonts by changing two significant elements of the second font, plus the second font's size by a significant amount

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in one, 45-minute class period with students split into groups of four.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- “Font & Mood Instructional Sheets” cut for each group
- “Font & Mood Group Font Cards” cut for each group
- “Font & Mood Practice Cards” cut for class activity
- Access to different fonts through any design software such as Adobe Illustrator, Adobe InDesign, Canva, or yearbook design software of choice
- “Font & Mood Example Sheet” cut for each student

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the suggested version the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each group member pull one of the four “Font & Mood Instructional Cards” and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts they learned.

Then, give each student one of the cards from the “Font & Mood Practice Cards”. These are examples of font types. Students should mix around the room while music plays until the music stops before pairing with a person near them. They will quiz and coach each other until both have it correct. They will continue to do this until all students have circulated or the teacher is satisfied with the results.

Then, have students reconvene in their groups and give them one of the “Font & Mood Group Font Cards”, which contains the name of an emotion, action or mood. The group members have to type the word on their card in a font they believe best exemplifies the emotion, action or mood. Give them 5 minutes to do this. Once finished, students should go in a round-robin explaining why the font fits the word. The group will then choose the best and tell the teacher. Give them 5 minutes to do this. If time allows, show all word designs the groups made and have the class vote on their favorite (they can't vote for themselves).

Slide 5 has a recap of concepts.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Give students a copy of the “Font & Mood Example Sheet” to reference at teacher preference. Now, have students use their first and last name, and two different fonts, to describe their personality or emotions. This should follow the rules of combining fonts. If time allows, have students discuss their choices with one another in a round-robin format.

OPTIONAL EXTENSION: Have students use other publications to see how font was used, if fonts were combined well and what mood the publication may have intended to portray.

References

- Harrower, T., & Elman, J. M. (2013). *The Newspaper Designer's Handbook*. McGraw-Hill.
- Williams, R. (2014). *The Non-Designer's Design Book: Design and Typographic Principles for the Visual Novice* (4th ed.). Peachpit Press.

Font Types

FONT & MOOD

Categories

- **SERIF**: Has feet & flags
- **SANS SERIF**: Does not
- **NOVELTY**: Oddly shaped
- **SCRIPT**: Like handwriting

Best Uses

- **SERIF**: Print body copy
- **SANS SERIF**: Digital text
- **NOVELTY**: Large theme font
- **SCRIPT**: Large theme font, but never all caps

SANS
SERIF *Serif*
NOVELTY
Script

Shape

FONT & MOOD

What Do You Feel?

Font selection is important, especially for magazine and yearbook design where fonts play a role in conveying the mood or theme of the publication. Fonts remind us of other visual things we've seen before.

The font family — shape of the font — will dictate much in how people feel looking at your products and publication.

I will always love you.
Clarity Bold

I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU.
ALLSTAR

I will always love you.
Courier New

I will always love you.
Chiller

I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU.
CHANTAL LIGHT

I will always love you.
Creampuff

Readability

FONT & MOOD

Must Be Functional

Above all else, fonts must be readable. It is important, yes, to pick fonts that look good, convey your theme, and make the reader feel a certain kind of way.

However, text that cannot be read or is hard to look at is a quick way to lose a reader.

Readability Factors

- **SIZE**: Fonts that are too small cannot be read. The size it becomes unreadable depends on the font family.
- **FONT TYPE**: Script and novelty fonts are never to be used in body copy. Never. Also, never use script in all caps.
- **COLOR**: Fonts on colors must have contrast. Light gray on white = bad.

CAN YOU READ THIS?
Bush Script

CAN YOU READ THIS?
CHANTAL LIGHT

Can you read this?
Creampuff

Combinations

FONT & MOOD

Change 2 & Size

An easy way to pair two different fonts together is to **SIGNIFICANTLY** change two things about the second font **AND** the size. The changes could be font type, font family, font style, font decoration (bold, underline, etc.), color, orientation, really anything as long as it is done significantly.

If you are going to make them different, make them **VERY** different.

Bad Example

design
GOOD

All we did was make it all caps.

Good Example

Push yourself to do crazy stuff. Once you think you're done, make one more difference to really push the idea.

DESIGN
good

Choose a font to show

EXERCISE

Choose a font to show

SLEEPING

Choose a font to show

EXCITEMENT

Choose a font to show

NOSTALGIA

Choose a font to show

SURPRISE

Choose a font to show

WAITING

Choose a font to show

SMART

Choose a font to show

BRAVE

Card 1

Answer

sans serif — There are no feet nor flags.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 2

Answer

sans serif — There are no feet nor flags.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 3

Answer

sans serif — There are no feet nor flags.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 4

Answer

serif — There are feet and flags.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 5

Answer

serif — There are feet and flags.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 6

Answer

serif — There are feet and flags.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 7

Answer

decorative — designed for a specific mood.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 8

Answer

decorative — designed for a specific mood.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 9

Answer

decorative — designed for a specific mood.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 10

Answer

script — looks like handwriting

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 11

Answer

script — looks like handwriting

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 12

Answer

script — looks like handwriting

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 13

Answer

decorative — designed for a specific mood.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 14

Answer

decorative — designed for a specific mood.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 15

Answer

decorative — designed for a specific mood.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 3

*Serif, sans serif,
decorative, or script?*

font choice matters

Card 2

*Serif, sans serif,
decorative, or script?*

font choice matters

Card 1

*Serif, sans serif,
decorative, or script?*

font choice matters

Card 6

*Serif, sans serif,
decorative, or script?*

font choice matters

Card 5

*Serif, sans serif,
decorative, or script?*

font choice matters

Card 4

*Serif, sans serif,
decorative, or script?*

font choice matters

Card 9

*Serif, sans serif,
decorative, or script?*

font choice
matters

Card 8

*Serif, sans serif,
decorative, or script?*

font choice matters

Card 7

*Serif, sans serif,
decorative, or script?*

font choice matters

Card 12

*Serif, sans serif,
decorative, or script?*

font choice matters

Card 11

*Serif, sans serif,
decorative, or script?*

font choice matters

Card 10

*Serif, sans serif,
decorative, or script?*

font choice matters

Card 15

*Serif, sans serif,
decorative, or script?*

font choice
matters

Card 14

*Serif, sans serif,
decorative, or script?*

font choice
matters

Card 13

*Serif, sans serif,
decorative, or script?*

font choice
matters

Font Combination Example Sheet

RETRO
MUSIC

the
PIANO
player

TIME IS
MONEY

poison
Ivy

SATURDAY MORNING
CARTOONS

Font Combination Example Sheet

RETRO
MUSIC

the
PIANO
player

TIME IS
MONEY

poison
Ivy

SATURDAY MORNING
CARTOONS

Font Combination Example Sheet

RETRO
MUSIC

the
PIANO
player

TIME IS
MONEY

poison
Ivy

SATURDAY MORNING
CARTOONS

Rationale

Colors are a way to convey feelings and messages individually and as schemes of colors. When choosing colors for a publication's theme or style, color choice is one of the most important decisions.

CLASS GOAL: We will understand the differences between color modes and ways to combine colors to convey certain moods and messages.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will choose a hue and color scheme to fit the mood of a set of words.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- CMYK is the color mode for printing; RGB is for digital screens
- Prefer Black to Registration for all text in four-color printing
- Monochromatic and analogous color schemes provide unity
- And complementary and triadic color schemes provide variety and contrast

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in one, 45-minute class period with students split into groups of four.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Color Combinations & Modes Instructional Sheets" cut for each group
- "Color Combinations & Modes Practice Cards" cut for class activity
- Access to design software such as Adobe Illustrator, Adobe InDesign, Canva, or yearbook design software of choice

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the suggested answer the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each group member pull one of the four "Color Combinations & Modes Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts they learned.

Then, give each student one of the cards from the "Color Combinations & Modes Practice Cards". These are examples of font types. Students should mix around the room while music plays until the music stops before pairing with a person near them. They will quiz and coach each other until both have it correct. They will continue to do this until all students have circulated or the teacher is satisfied with the results.

Slide 5 has a recap of concepts.

Show students the color.adobe.com website. Show them how to find the color formulas and, if needed, how to change a swatch/color to match the color formula.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have students pull up the design they made in the "Fonts & Mood" lesson using their name. They should make four versions of the font design using the four color schemes they learned in a way they think would help convey the emotion or personality trait they want people to understand. They should have one using complementary colors (at least two colors), analogous (at least two colors), triadic (at least three colors), and monochromatic (at least three colors). If time allows, have students show the other group members and see if the group members can guess — based off the font and color choices — what emotion or personality trait the designer wanted to convey. The designer should explain their choices and be coached if need be.

References

- Harrower, T., & Elman, J. M. (2013). *The Newspaper Designer's Handbook*. McGraw-Hill.
- Williams, R. (2014). *The Non-Designer's Design Book: Design and Typographic Principles for the Visual Novice* (4th ed.). Peachpit Press.

CMYK v. RGB

COLOR MODES & COMBINATIONS

Color Modes

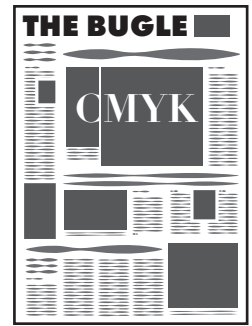
There are several color modes best used in different circumstances

- **CMYK**: cyan, yellow, magenta and key (black) for print
- **RGB**: red, green and blue for digital screens
- **HEX**: web-safe color codes
- **HSB**: hue, saturation & brightness (less of a color mode than a way to edit color)

What Would You Choose?

Your editor asks you to give them the school color values for a cafeteria TV graphic and edit a photo for the newspaper.

What color mode goes with which product?



Registration v. Black

COLOR MODES & COMBINATIONS

Registration

This swatch in InDesign and other programs is primarily meant to be used only on registration marks during the four-color process printing. In this process, your publication is sent through four printers: cyan, magenta, yellow and key (black). The registration marks tell the printer if the plates are lined up or not. If the plates aren't lined up, they can cause fuzzy images or, worse, fuzzy text like the left version in the diagram on the right.

Black

The opposite of registration: Items marked with the Black swatch will only go through the key (black) plate, which prevents fuzzy images like the T on the left. However, this also means it will not be a super dark black.

NOTE: In color printing, not all blacks are the same. There are warm, cool, hot, cold, green, and other versions of black. Rich blacks are usually 50% mixes.



Unity: Tints & Shades, Analogous

COLOR MODES & COMBINATIONS

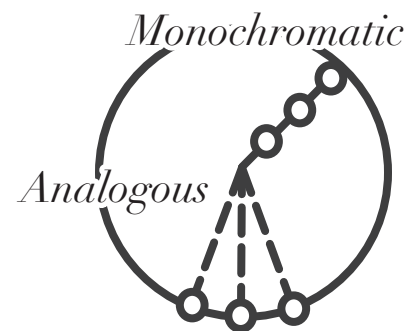
Swatches Unite!

When you want to create unity in a design, color can help. Sets of color that are close to one another make a design visually feel like they belong together.

The more unity a set of colors — called swatch groups or themes — has, the more calm and formal a design will feel.

Unifying Combinations

- **TINTS**: Different levels of white added to a hue (color).
- **SHADES**: Different levels of black added to a hue (color).
- **MONOCHROMATIC**: Tints & shades of the same hue paired together.
- **ANALOGOUS**: Hues near one another on the color wheel.



Contrast: Triadic & Complementary

COLOR MODES & COMBINATIONS

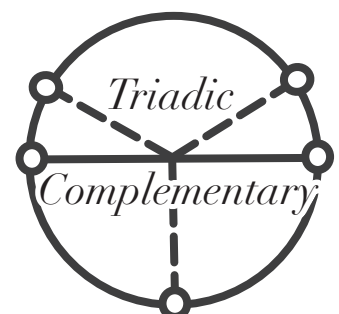
Apples & Oranges

When you want to create variety or contrast in a design, color can help. Sets of color that are farther apart on the color wheel from one another make a design visually feel more hectic or chaotic — which is sometimes what you want.

Contrasting color schemes also help with text readability and making two different colored shapes more distinct from a distance.

Contrasting Combinations

- **TRIADIC**: Three colors equally distant from one another on the color wheel. These are your primary colors — cyan, yellow and magenta; and red, green and blue. Purple, orange and lime green are also triadic
- **COMPLEMENTARY**: Polar opposite on the color wheel: blue and yellow, red and green, orange and purple. Black on white is the easiest color combination to read.



Card 1

Answer

HEX (hexadecimal) — only web-safe options

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 2

Answer

RGB — lights combining from a screen

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 3

Answer

CMYK — four-color printing process

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 4

Answer

False — there are warm & cool versions.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 5

Answer

It only prints on the black (key) plate & prevents fuzzy, hard-to-read text..

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 6

Answer

If the four-color plates are misaligned, text will appear fuzzy and hard to read.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 7

Answer

Color scheme where hues are next to one another on the color wheel.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 8

Answer

Monochromatic — same hue, different tints & shades used together.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 9

Answer

Monochromatic — same hue, different tints & shades used together.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 10

Answer

Colors directly across from one another on the color wheel.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 11

Answer

Three hues perfectly spaced apart from one another on the color wheel like a triangle.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 12

Answer

More unity; they are close to one another on the color wheel.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 13

Answer

Hue (color), saturation (amount) & brightness (amount of black added to hue).

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 14

Answer

More variety; they are as far apart on the color wheel from one another as possible.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 15

Answer

Complementary — colors directly across from one another on the color wheel.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 3

Question

Which color mode is intended for printed products?

Card 2

Question

Which color mode is intended for digital screens?

Card 1

Question

Which color mode is intended for web-safe colors?

Card 6

Question

Why should Registration never be used in print products?

Card 5

Question

Why should Black be preferred to Registration in color printing?

Card 4

Question

True or False: All black colors are the same. Explain your answer.

Card 9

Question

Tints and shades produce what color combinations?

Card 8

Question

Which color scheme provides the most unity to a design?

Card 7

Question

What is an analogous color scheme?

Card 12

Question

Do analogous color schemes provide more unity or more variety to a design? Why?

Card 11

Question

What is a triadic color scheme?

Card 10

Question

What is a complementary color scheme?

Card 15

Question

Which color scheme provides the most variety/contrast to a design?

Card 14

Question

Do triadic color schemes provide more unity or more variety to a design? Why?

Card 13

Question

What does the HSB color editing mode stand for?

Rationale

Yearbooks are not scrapbooks. The visual elements have several jobs to do: convey theme, tell a story and — always — look good. Visual elements cannot be haphazardly tossed onto a page and hope it all turns out good. There are a few basic rules that will help the design process.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn basic elements of yearbook design.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will draw a basic design using the rules for yearbook layout.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Modular layout divides a page into modules for added, small coverage
- Every page gets an eyeline — an unbroken empty space that stretches in a line from one page to the next to unify the two into a cohesive unit
- Dominant photos are the biggest on the page and grow off of the eyeline
- Other photos branch off of the dominant photo
- Avoid trapped text and white space, which is surrounding on three sides by images or, for white space, text
- Have a consistent spacing rule for publication with three degrees
- Use rails to vertically separate and align sidebar modules
- And keep faces and text out of the gutter — the book's fold

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in one or two, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four, but may be completed in one depending on class length and student speed.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Basic Yearbook Layout Instructional Cards" cut for groups
- "Basic Yearbook Layout Template" for each student
- Rulers & coloring/drawing supplies
- Optional: Access to any design software such as Adobe Illustrator, Adobe InDesign, Canva, or yearbook design software of choice

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch members and ensure everyone talks.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each group member pull one of the four "Basic Yearbook Design Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts they learned.

Slide 4 has a recap of concepts.

Give each group one copy of the "Basic Yearbook Layout Template". Show Slide 5, which has requirements about what the yearbook dummy sheet should contain. Starting with the student who laughed most recently (a fun way to randomize the order), the group should place one element at a time. When Person A is going to place an element only Person B can coach them. Only C can coach B. Only D can coach C. Only A can coach D. They should continue placing one element at a time and keeping in mind the rules they learned just before the activity. They are not finished until the teacher approves their layout as technically correct.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY:

Give each student a copy of the "Basic Yearbook Layout Template" and any drawing supplies the teacher or student prefers. Each student should lay out their paper based on the instructions on Slide 5. Depending on the speed of the groups and/or individual students, the individual portion of the activity may need to extend into a second day.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY: Teachers may ask students to convert their designs from the print layout to a digital copy using the design software of their choice including giving the students actual photos and text to use instead of dummy boxes.

References

- Harrower, T., & Elman, J. M. (2013). *The Newspaper Designer's Handbook*. McGraw-Hill.
- Williams, R. (2014). *The Non-Designer's Design Book: Design and Typographic Principles for the Visual Novice* (4th ed.). Peachpit Press.

Modular Layout & Eyeline

BASIC YEARBOOK LAYOUT

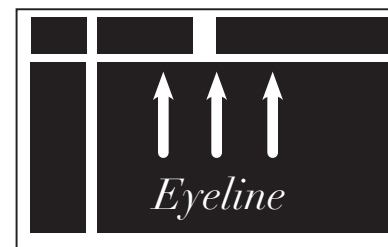
Eyeline

Every spread (a set of two pages that works together) should have an eyeline — an unbroken, empty line that stretches across both pages.

This visually unites both pages into one rather than them acting as two separate designs unrelated to each other.

Divide It Up

Modular designs are ways to layout a yearbook that put coverage into sections (modules) to add more content. After placing the eyeline, place your main package (the largest one) and then your modules as large color blocks to get an idea of where each will go. Think of these as pages within a page — each has their own margins.



Dominant Photos & Images

BASIC YEARBOOK LAYOUT

Dominant Photo

If the eyeline is the foundation of the design, the dominant photo is the cornerstone. The dominant photo should grow from the eyeline. This is the biggest photo on the page, usually around three times larger than others, and is the best storytelling photo for the topic.

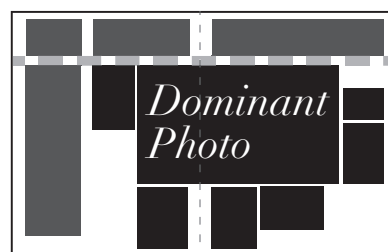
The dominant photo should cross the gutter — the place where the book will fold.

Other Images

The other photos should sprout off of the dominant photo like branches from a tree.

The dominant photo and surrounding photos should be the things placed right after the eyeline. Let the images you have drive the design.

Don't lay out blank frames and cram photos in. Captions must touch the photos they describe.



Don't Trap the Text & White Space

BASIC YEARBOOK LAYOUT

How is It Trapped?

White space and text can both be trapped. This happens when white space or text is surrounded on three or more sides by images or, in the case of white space, text.

Images cannot be trapped, but they can be abandoned to float aimlessly around the page. Text can't trap text, but can trap white space.

How to Avoid Trapping?

Start by placing your images first, then your text next to it, as close as possible.

Double check all your text first and fix any trapped text by switching the placement with photos. Now look at all the white space, is there any surrounded on three or more sides? If not, you have no trapped space!



3-2-1 Spacing Rule

BASIC YEARBOOK LAYOUT

Consistency is Key

The old rule of spacing in yearbook design used to be everything was 1 pica (one-sixth of an inch) away from everything else. Modern designs use three degrees of separation.

FIRST DEGREE: The smallest separation is for similar types of visual elements that are related. Primarily, this is for images in the same package.

SECOND DEGREE: The second smallest is for different types of visual elements that are also related. Think a caption and its image, or a story and its headline.

THIRD DEGREE: The third degree is for unrelated packages. They are spaced the most out.

Determine what your spacing amounts are and stick to them.



Rails & the Gutter

BASIC YEARBOOK LAYOUT

Rails

These are similar to the eyeline except they are vertical and only go down one page. They are the third degree of separation in the 3-2-1 rule.

These separate modules from each other and modules from the main package.

This creates a strong visual line that gives your page organization.

The Gutter

The gutter is the space where the book folds in half. There is only two types of visual elements that should cross the gutter: blocks of color used as background design, and the dominant photo used to help tie the page together similar to the eyeline's purpose.

NEVER PUT THESE IN THE GUTTER: faces & text — they become distorted and you lose letters. "Public" quickly becomes "pubic".



NAME: _____

HEAD

[illegible]This image shows a full page of blank graph paper. The grid consists of small, uniform squares formed by thin, light gray lines. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.

MARGIN

FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS ASSIGNMENT, THE SPACING RULE IS 1 SQUARE BETWEEN ALL ELEMENTS ON THE PAGE



TEXT

HEAD



Rationale

Newspapers, like yearbooks, have a certain function to their design. However, unlike a yearbook, newspapers are meant to be temporary. As such, their designs focus more on function than theme, but do not have to be dull.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn the basic principles of newspaper design.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will draw a basic design using the rules for layout.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Lay out color-block rectangles first, then fill in the content one section at a time — filling each block edge to edge
- The dollar-bill rule means that no matter where I set a dollar bill on a newspaper, it should be touching at least one visual element
- Plan for the most visually interesting content to be on color pages, if they have them, and edit photos to be in black and white otherwise
- Eliminate orphans and widows at the top and bottom of columns
- More important story packages should go at the top
- And more important stories get bigger visual elements

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in one or two, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four, but may be completed in one depending on class length and student speed.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- “Basic Newspaper Layout Instructional Cards” cut for groups
- “Basic Newspaper Layout Template” for each student
- Rulers & coloring/drawing supplies
- Optional: Access to any design software such as Adobe Illustrator, Adobe InDesign, Canva, or yearbook design software of choice

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch members and ensure everyone is talking.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each group member pull one of the four “Basic Newspaper Design Instructional Cards” and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts they learned.

Slide 4 has the suggested answer the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

Give each group one copy of the “Basic Newspaper Layout Template”. Show Slide 5, which has requirements about what the yearbook dummy sheet should contain. Starting with the student who laughed most recently (a fun way to randomize the order), the group should place one element at a time. When Person A is going to place an element only Person B can coach them. Only C can coach B. Only D can coach C. Only A can coach D. They should continue placing one element at a time and keeping in mind the rules they learned just before the activity. They are not finished until the teacher approves their layout as technically correct.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY:

Give each student a copy of the “Basic Newspaper Layout Template” and any drawing supplies the teacher or student prefers. Each student should lay out their paper based on the instructions on Slide 5. Depending on the speed of the groups and/or individual students, the individual portion of the activity may need to extend into a second day.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY: Teachers may ask students to convert their designs from the print layout to a digital copy using the design software of their choice including giving the students actual photos and text to use instead of dummy boxes.

References

Harrower, T., & Elman, J. M. (2013). *The Newspaper Designer's Handbook*. McGraw-Hill.

Williams, R. (2014). *The Non-Designer's Design Book: Design and Typographic Principles for the Visual Novice* (4th ed.). Peachpit Press.

Order of Operations

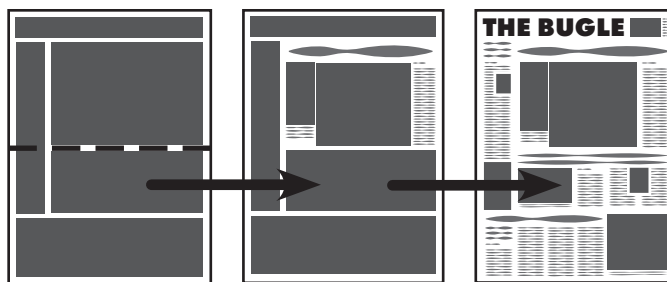
BASIC NEWSPAPER DESIGN

What Goes First?

Newspapers are laid out into rectangles — not L-, U- nor T-shapes — that get filled up edge to edge. As such, a common sense approach is to start by laying out color blocks that show what goes where — keeping the fold in mind.

After placing the blocks, place visual elements on the page working one section at a time, filling up the internal margins — the edge of the block — with images, text, headlines, etc.

Do this — one section at a time — until the page is laid out.



Dollar-Bill Rule

BASIC NEWSPAPER DESIGN

Too Much Gray

In the olden days, newspapers were nothing but headlines and text. That is boring and even intimidating for some readers. If you can place a dollar bill in an area without touching a visual element other than text, you need to add something to break it up. Otherwise, you end up with a boring design.

Break It Down

One goal is to reduce the size of your story on the page. People like stories chunked into several pieces, which also helps retain information in the long run.

Use mugshots, infoboxes, calendars, lists, smaller stories, charts, tables, and other graphic sidebars to provide the information in a more visually friendly way.



Think About Color & the Fold

BASIC NEWSPAPER DESIGN

Color Me Surprised

Unlike yearbooks and magazines, newspapers are typically not full color. Many newspapers use the front and back for color — which also means the back of those pages would also be in color — and the guts would be black and white. Think about where to place colorful packages as a result.

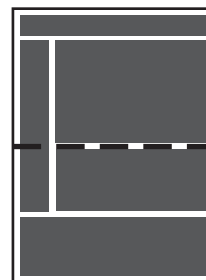
Edit for Newsprint

When placing photos for newspaper that will be black and white, it is wise to edit the photo to match before laying it out. Most have a black and white function that allows you to add much-needed contrast in black and white photography. Also, consider dot gain, which makes photos about 15% darker on the average newsprint paper.

Above the Fold

Newspapers in a broadsheet style are folded two ways — the normal gutter fold like any book or magazine, and a horizontal fold that only shows the top half of page one.

If your newspaper relies on sales or isn't directly handed out. Make sure your stories above fold are interesting.



Columns, Orphans & Widows

BASIC NEWSPAPER DESIGN

Columns

Newspapers, much more than yearbooks, use columns heavily. Columns are vertical blocks of text — usually justified alignment — that split the story into easier-to-read chunks.

Most newspapers employ a five- or six-column design that drives their structure and make quick design possible. Don't ignore guidelines!

Orphans & Widows

When single words or the opening line to a new paragraph are left alone at the bottom of a column, they are orphans (alone at the bottom of a family tree). Alternatively, the last line of a paragraph that appears on a different page or at the top of the next column is a widow (alone at the top of the family tree). Avoid creating more orphans and widows in the world if you please. ←



Visual Hierarchy & Dominance

BASIC NEWSPAPER DESIGN

Top-Down Approach

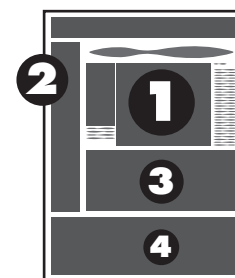
Newspapers follow visual hierarchy to the T. This is where your most important stories should be earlier in the newspaper and toward the top of the page.

This is why having a front-page, above the fold story is a big deal for many journalists because it means theirs was the most important story that day.

Don't throw your less important stories high up.

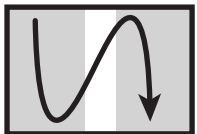
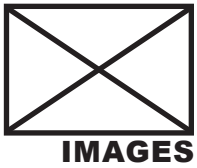
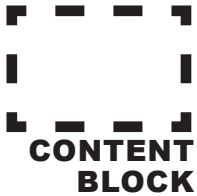
It's the Big One

Aside from hierarchy, dominance also plays a role. People tend to lock onto the biggest visual element on the page and go smaller. This means that your biggest photos, graphics and packages should go toward your most important stories. Some important stories don't lend themselves to strong visuals, which is when think about hierarchy. As stories become less important, their visuals and size should get smaller.



SPACING RULES

FOR THE
PURPOSES OF THIS
ASSIGNMENT, THE
SPACING RULE IS 1
SQUARE BETWEEN
ALL ELEMENTS ON
THE PAGE.



STORY & TEXT
DIRECTION
ACROSS
MULTIPLE
COLUMNS

HEAD
HEADLINES

EDGE OF
PAGE

COLUMN
GUTTER

MARGIN

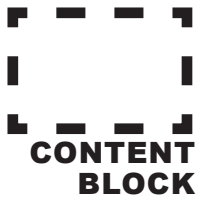
THE BUGLE

*Voice for the Cityville
High School students*

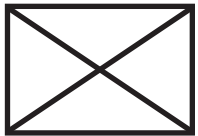
Basic Newspaper Layout Example With Grid

SPACING RULES

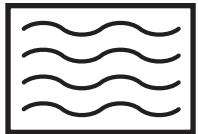
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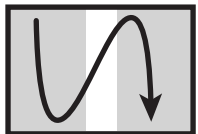
CONTENT BLOCK



IMAGES



CAPTIONS



STORY & TEXT DIRECTION ACROSS MULTIPLE COLUMNS

HEAD
HEADLINES

EDGE OF PAGE

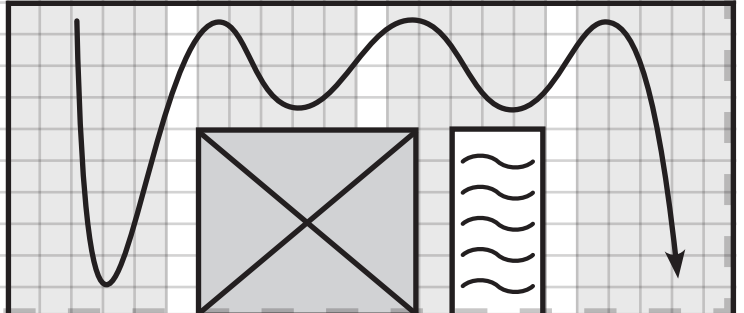
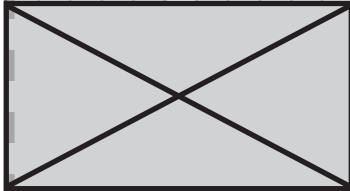
COLUMN GUTTER

MARGIN

THE BUGLE

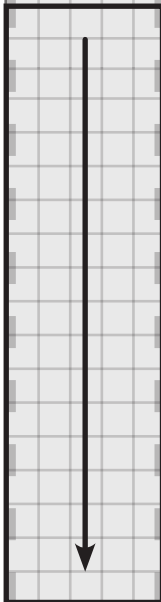
Voice for the Cityville High School students

HEADLINE HEADLINE

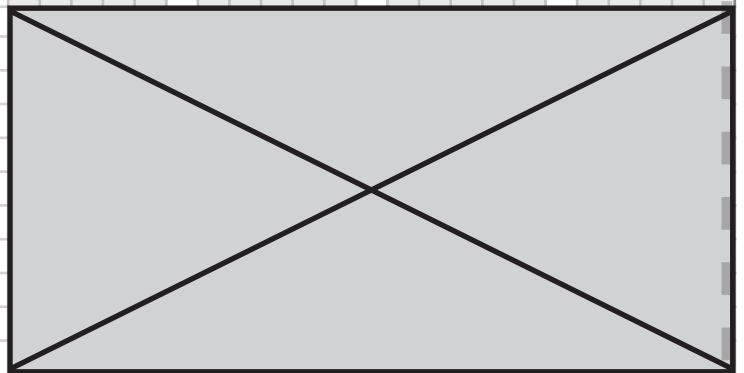


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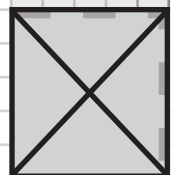
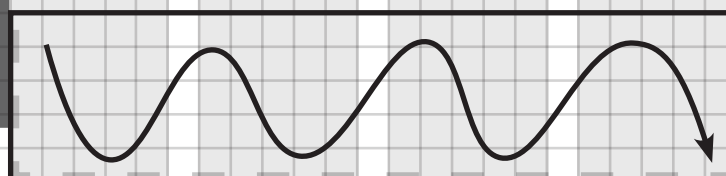
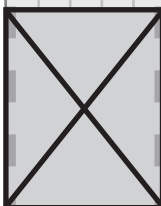
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SPACING RULES

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SPACING RULE IS 1
SQUARE BETWEEN
ALL ELEMENTS ON
THE PAGE.

PACKAGE DIVIDER



IMAGES



CAPTIONS



STORY TEXT

HEAD HEADLINES

EDGE OF
PAGE

MARGIN

COLUMN
GUTTER

THE BUGLE

*Voice for the Cityville
High School students*

HEADLINE HEADLINE



HEADLINE HEADLINE HEADLINE

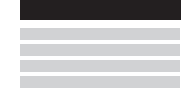
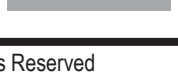
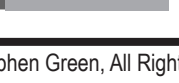


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Media Law & Ethics

Table of Contents

- LESSON ONE: ABCs of Journalism Ethics, pg. 2
- LESSON TWO: First Amendments & Its Limits, pg. 7
- LESSON THREE: Defamation & Right to Privacy, pg. 10
- LESSON FOUR: School Speech Limits, pg. 13

Stephen Green created these lessons as a capstone project for completion of the journalism educator master's degree program at Kent State University. It may be reproduced only for individual classroom teachers in class, but not for any commercial purposes including derivative works.

Rationale

If law is what journalists must follow, ethics are what they should follow. There are many codes of ethics and small rules how journalists need to behave in certain situations. However, starting by understanding some key, overarching ideas will hit most of the small situations as well and prevent shady behavior.

CLASS GOAL: We will understand core beliefs and behaviors of journalists.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will apply the ethical duties of journalists to scenarios.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Journalists have a duty to be accurate & transparent
- Journalists should be balanced, unbiased and exhibit fairness
- Journalists should write with concision and understandability
- Journalism serves democracy — being a watchdog of public officials and providing information voters need to make informed decisions
- And journalists help its readers by providing vital information and helping to make sense of the vast amount of information going on around them

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in one, 45-minute class period with students split into groups of four.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- “ABCs of Ethics Instructional Cards” cut for each group
- “ABCs of Ethics Practice Cards” cut for the class
- “ABCs of Ethics Scenario Cards” cut for each group

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the suggested answer the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each group member pull one of the four “ABCs of Ethics Instructional Cards” and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts they learned on their card.

Then, pass out the “ABCs of Ethics Practice Cards” — one to each student. They will engage in a mix-pair-share activity: Students will mix around the room (make them actually mix) and pair up with someone. The pair should ask each other the question on their card and answer. If they got it wrong, the other student should coach them to the right answer, not tell them the right answer right away. Talk with students about how to help one another if they see a student struggling. Then, have them mix-pair-share again with someone they have not already paired with. They should do this for about 5-10 minutes or until the class has roughly cycled through.

Once students return to their seats, give students in each group one of the four scenarios so that every group member has a different scenario. Start with the person who last drank water. The person holding the card will read the scenario and ask the first question. The group will round-robin answering the question. Then, the card-holder will ask the next question, which is answered in the same way. This repeats until the card is complete. Once complete, the group should come to consensus on what they would do in the situation. This process repeats with the other group members and other cards until all have been completed. Discuss the cards as a class and correct any misconceptions or erroneous lines of thinking groups have.

Slide 5 has a recap of concepts.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have all students complete the question on Slide 6.

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Accuracy: Get It Right

ABCS OF ETHICS

Is It True?

Journalists journal. They observe, analyze, interpret, interview and otherwise collect data that is then organized into a story.

People have no choice but to trust what you say is correct. As a result, you have a duty to make sure every single fact you write, no matter how small, is correct.

Accuracy Includes

- Spelling names correctly & getting the tiny details right; don't guess or assume something is true
- Get direct quotes correct; record
- Confirm when unsure about facts
- Never make up facts or quotes
- Fact check everything twice
- Make it easy to report & correct errors

Think About It!

If John is writing a story about Maria, referring to her as an "unauthorized immigrant" but that is only true of Maria's mother, why would that be a big deal ethically? It is not true so Maria could not be deported. So, what could happen? Why does it matter?

Balance: All Sides & Unbiased

ABCS OF ETHICS

Is It Unbiased?

Journalists are teachers for adults. They are supposed to provide information in an understandable way without injecting personal biases into the mix.

Journalists must always be aware of their own biases (everyone is) and do their best to limit that bias showing up in their coverage, even unintentionally like not covering some groups.

Balance Includes

- Giving a fair chance to legitimate other sides of a story, if there is one
- Being transparent about your reporting
- Avoiding conflicts of interest — a personal connection to a story
- Being unbiased even when you disagree
- Covering different types of people and groups including lighter, happier stories.

Think About It!

The yearbook editor refuses to include a spread dedicated to the cheerleading team, which is successful and is one of the largest sports on campus. They say "the stereotypes are true here, I'm not going to reward them for being a bunch of catty girls who like drama." This isn't written in a story, so is it OK?

Concise: Be Understandable

ABCS OF ETHICS

Too Smart & Bad Writing

Your job is to help people learn about the world around them. This means you have a duty to write well in a way that makes sense to the average reader. You have a duty to be brief as to not waste time.

Writing is a tool for reporters as a scalpel is for doctors. Both must wield their tools with passion, care, and know how to use them.

Concise Includes

- Say what you mean; don't try to sound smart just for the sake of flexing your vocabulary to be impressive
- Avoid jargon — industry specific language
- Know what the audience needs to know and prioritize including it in the story
- Use Associated Press Style or other guides to share common language styles

Think About It!

SENTENCE: The surrounding subtropical climate region experienced byproducts of condensing atmospheric water vapor falling to the floor of the troposphere via gravitational pull in the form of droplets in excess of 0.2 millimeters on the present date of the Gregorian calendar.

TRANSLATION: It rained today.

Journalism Serves the Reader

ABCS OF ETHICS

Public Service Job

Always remember that you are doing a job meant to help the public. Every story you choose (or ignore), all photos, all resources you create, all ads you sell, all videos you publish are meant to help a reader's life be a little better than it was before. Should you do a story? Ask yourself, "How does it help readers?"

Serving Readers Means

- Providing timely information relevant to their area
- Responding to reader questions, story ideas & content concerns
- Being financially independent to continue publishing
- Understanding the community, its needs and the players involved

Think About It!

Think about the last story, photo or other content you generated for your publication (if you haven't, think about the last media article you read). What good does it serve? How does it help people? There are lots of ways they can.

Journalism & Democracy

ABCS OF ETHICS

The Fourth Branch

Journalists are the only job specifically protected by the United States Constitution. This is because it helps keep the democratic style of debate alive.

Consider: If the news would disappear today, how would you know what Congress is planning on doing? Who would let you know who is running and what they stand for?

Roles Include

- **WATCHDOGS:** Journalists alert the public when they see wrongdoings.
- **GATEKEEPERS:** Journalists pay attention to everything going on and publish what is most important and helpful to readers.
- **TRANSLATOR:** Provide context to otherwise random events and breakdown complex issues.
- **MODERATOR:** Be a public forum for debate on important issues as a voice for the voiceless.

Think About It!

A longtime U.S. representative for your school is loved by everyone. They donate millions to charity, pass sensible laws and even pushed legislation forward that helped your friend get health insurance. However, you find out they steal \$100,000 in tax dollars every year. Why would journalists report on such a nice person?

Card 1

Answer

Biased. "Refuses" has negative connotation and "better books" is up to the reader. Many people like books others find boring.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 4

Answer

Biased. "Too much" is a judgment call about the cost unless a source is cited as saying it.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 7

Answer

Biased. "Childish" is a subjective term. Remove that and the sentence is good.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 10

Answer

Factual. Descriptions may sometimes be subjective, but "stacked" and "pile" are still able to be proven true or not.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 13

Answer

Factual. It can be proven if "sources suggest"ed the statements to the reporter.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 2

Answer

Biased. The food may be getting an upgrade, but "mostly dry and flavorless" is subjective.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 5

Answer

Biased. "Go support the team" is an opinionated call to action not allowed in news.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 8

Answer

Biased. Suspect is factual, but "his victim" is biased and potentially libelous.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 11

Answer

Factual. The team may have lost, which is bad, but it is a fact that can be proven.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 14

Answer

Factual. "Murder suspect", "a victim" and "his house" are provable statements. The dead body is, factually, "a victim of someone even if not the person they arrested."

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 3

Answer

Biased. "Too many" is the reporter making a judgment unless they add a citation.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 6

Answer

Biased. "Smart" is an opinionated term. Plus, the reporter can't make a global claim without a source to back that up.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 9

Answer

Factual. It can be proven whether or not "he said" the statement.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 12

Answer

Factual. It might be a negative fact about the person, but it is still a fact it happened.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 15

Answer

Factual. "Faulty" is true in this case because the computers don't work. It would be different if they worked and were just slow.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 3

Factual or Biased?

Too many students have been getting tardy referrals.

Card 2

Factual or Biased?

The food in the cafeteria — mostly dry and flavorless — is getting an upgrade.

Card 1

Factual or Biased?

The English department refuses to pick better books.

Card 6

Factual or Biased?

He is one of the smartest people on the planet, much less the campus.

Card 5

Factual or Biased?

Go support the team in its game against the Townston Rebels this Friday.

Card 4

Factual or Biased?

The school district spend too much money on textbooks and workbooks for a class that does not exist.

Card 9

Factual or Biased?

He said the school board needs to be completely wiped clean and start from scratch.

Card 8

Factual or Biased?

Police arrested the murderer suspect this morning, only hours after finding his victim lying dead in his house.

Card 7

Factual or Biased?

The childish prom theme was selected by a majority vote of the senior class.

Card 12

Factual or Biased?

The starting quarterback got sacked by the other team early in the first half.

Card 11

Factual or Biased?

The team lost the game after a last-minute score by the other team.

Card 10

Factual or Biased?

The peanut butter and jelly sandwiches were piled up on the table by the drinks.

Card 15

Factual or Biased?

The faulty computers have not worked since a toddler spilled a sticky drink into the motherboards last year.

Card 14

Factual or Biased?

Police arrested the murderer suspect this morning, only hours after finding a victim lying dead in his house.

Card 13

Factual or Biased?

Sources suggest the company is about to file for bankruptcy, perhaps as early as tomorrow morning.

ABCs of Ethics Scenarios

Silent Reading

Consider This Scenario

You want to write a story about how students use the time allotted for a period of required, silent reading every day, as well as what they do while the principal reads the announcements. The student reporters are planning to stick their heads into classrooms during announcements and reading time and write about what they see going on.

Do you have to give teachers a warning before you come in? Should you as a courtesy? Why or why not?

Who all could be harmed by the story — rightly or wrongly?

Do you ask permission from the students or teachers first about writing down what they are doing? Why or why not?

Do you see any problems with this method of reporting the story? Could anything be taken out of context? How or why wouldn't it?

What ethical duties are violated by running this story, if any? What harm happens or could happen, if any, and under what circumstances?

Staging a Photo

Consider This Scenario

You are covering bullying issues on your campus after a student in a nearby state made national news for bullying a freshman. The professional press is covering it as an issue of homophobia. You wish to create a photo illustration (staged photo) of bullying on your campus. Several students have volunteered to play the parts of the students being bullied and bullies if you digitally blur their faces in the picture. You intend to label the images as a photo illustration.

What problems might exist by staging the photo for the publication? For the public?

How could the image be taken poorly by the LGBTQIA community or victims of bullying in general?

What purpose does the illustration serve? Why would the editor want to do that in the first place?

What harm or benefit could come from the photo illustration? Is the illustration worth doing?

What ethical issues exist considering you do not know if any of the volunteers are former or current bullying victims? How could they be harmed and why would they do it?

What ethical duties does running it violate, if any?

The Quoted & Misquoted

Consider This Scenario

One of your teachers who was quoted in a sports feature story tells you she was never interviewed for the piece. Another student claims he was misquoted in the same story. You approach the reporter who interviewed both sources asking to see the interview notes or hear the recording. The reporter says they threw away the notes and deleted the recording like they always do but "swears on everything" they didn't make up the interview or misquote him.

What should you do with regard to the reporter? How should they be punished if the teacher & student are being truthful?

What should the publication do about the story, if anything? What is your recommendation?

How can you be sure either way that the reporter or sources are being honest?

What if the misquote was accidentally forgetting a word, would it still be unethical for the reporter?

What ethical duties does this violate, if any, if the reporter did fabricate and misquote the interviews? What harm happens?

How can the publication prevent this situation from happening in the future?

Helping a Friend

Consider This Scenario

A veteran reporter pitches a story about her best friend who was allegedly raped under the influence of a date-rape drug by the friend's boyfriend. She wants to write the story. She said her friend is OK and wants to name the boyfriend. The alleged rape happened right after her friend tried to break up with him at a party. No formal criminal charges have been filed and she has no plans to file any. Her friend said she wants to "help prevent future victims."

What potential good and bad that can result from the story for the friend? For the public?

How can you be skeptical about the seriousness, criminal nature of her claims while not undermining a potential victim?

Should the reporter be able to write the story about her friend? Why or why not?

How does the potentially criminal element weigh into your ethical choice?

What ethical duties could this violate, if any? What harm happens?

If she had proof the claims were true, would you publish even without criminal charges? Why or why not?

Rationale

The First Amendment is one of the cornerstones of the American political system. What exactly does it protect? People use it all the time without actually understanding what all it means for people in the country.

CLASS GOAL: We will learn about the First Amendment, its history and its protections and limitations.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will analyze a situation and determine if a situation would be in violation of the First Amendment.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- The First Amendment has five protections: religion, peaceful assembly, petition, press, and speech
- It was included as a response to British royalty preventing criticism
- First Amendment protection extends only to government action, not protection from private citizens and businesses who dislike your speech
- And speech can be limited in its time, place and manner in limited ways; all Constitutional protections have limits.

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in one, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "First Amendment & Limits Instructional Cards" cut for each group
- "Supreme Court Cases Cards" cut for each group

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the suggested answer the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each group member pull one of the four "First Amendment & Limits Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts they learned.

Hand each group a stack of the "Supreme Court Case Cards". Starting with the person with Texas v. Johnson, students should take turns reading the scenario and getting a response to each question about an actual Supreme Court case. Then, the group should come up with a consensus about what would be allowed to happen in a similar situation if the Supreme Court didn't vote that way. For example, if the Supreme Court didn't support flag burning as a form of speech in Texas v. Johnson, the government would be able to punish people for criticizing the government by disrespecting the flag. After Texas v. Johnson, this is the order they should discuss the cards: Snyder v. Phelps, Chaplinsky v. New Hampshire, Brandenburg v. Ohio, and finally Miller v. California. Stop and have the class discuss the pros and cons of each Court case and correct any misunderstandings before moving on. Continue until all cards and questions have been discussed.

Slide 5 has a recap of concepts.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have all students answer the situation on Slide 6 in a way preferable to the teacher and turn in to make sure students understand the main idea behind First Amendment protections from the government.

References

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RAPPS: What's in It?

FIRST AMENDMENT & LIMITS

First Gives Us Five

There are five protections enshrined in the First Amendment

- **RELIGION:** Right to practice any religion
- **ASSEMBLY:** Right to protest & strike
- **PETITION:** Ask the government to change
- **PRESS:** Media publishes what they want
- **SPEECH:** People say what they want

Example Protections

Even if you don't agree, people are legally protected from government stopping them from

- Burn an American flag or Bible
- Publish racist & homophobic books
- Protest military funerals
- Advocate legalizing crack cocaine
- Ask the school board to fire the principal of your school

Is It Protected?

This headline in the opinion section of your school publication:

Campus officials should be ashamed about low-quality teachers

Protects Me From Whom?

FIRST AMENDMENT & LIMITS

The Private Eye

The First Amendment specifically notes "the government shall make no law." This means government officials are the only people you have protection from (excluding crimes people commit against you).

Private companies and people can still punish you in other ways: telling you they hate you, firing you, or stop shopping at the small business you own.

Examples

All of these are perfectly legal (in most cases) because of the First Amendment wording

- John gets fired because promoted alternative medicine at the hospital where he works as a pharmacist
- Penelope's brother blocked her on Facebook because of racist statements
- Companies screening your social media

Think About It!

Kathy posts on Instagram that "anyone who believes in Christianity deserves to die." She loses 80% of her followers and posts, "Do I not have a right to free speech anymore?" What about her statement is misguided?

Time, Place & Manner

FIRST AMENDMENT & LIMITS

Everything Has Limits

A common misconception is that the Constitution is black and white. In reality, the law has many exceptions. You can't spread rumors that your friend is a drug user if that isn't true. You can be sued.

The Supreme Court is protective of speech rights, but has made exceptions.

When, Where & How

In the 1941 case *Cox v. New Hampshire*, the Supreme Court said the government can, at times, restrict the time, place and manner of speech. *Ward v. Rock Against Racism* (1989) created a three-part test

- **MUST BE CONTENT NEUTRAL** — not related to ideas. Officials can't punish you because it doesn't like your ideas.

- The restriction **MUST BE AS NARROWLY TAILORED AS POSSIBLE**. If someone at a protest is trying to convince people to start a fight, police can ask them to stop inciting violence, not to stop protesting.
- There **MUST BE ALTERNATIVE WAYS FOR COMMUNICATING** the message. A city cannot declare the entire city a "no free speech" zone. Freedom of speech must be reasonably accommodated in the vast majority of public places.

Why the First Amendment?

FIRST AMENDMENT & LIMITS

It's Common Sense

It may be obvious to people born in the United States in the 1900s and 2000s that people have free speech rights. It wasn't always that way and still isn't in many countries.

The first newspaper in the Americas was *Publick Occurrences* in Boston, which ran for one edition before being censored for criticizing the British government and operating without permission. Taxation without representation included the ability to criticize the government freely to make change.

Zenger Trial

Censorship was common in pre-Revolution America. Printers were regularly shut down and the British government controlled the presses. John Peter Zenger accused the British of corruption and was arrested for libel (printed lies). His lawyer earned a free-speech win when the jury determined libel must be false.

Not pleased, the British passed the Stamp Act on paper goods before angry editors force them to repeal. This was one of many reasons for revolt.

The Constitution

The American Revolution was a success and the founding fathers crafted a government (and failed on the first try) but eventually passed the Constitution in 1789. They forgot to add all those protections they rebelled for to begin with. Oops.

To fix this, Congress passed the Bill of Rights, 10 amendments to guarantee individual freedoms from government control. Top of their list were five rights enshrined in the First Amendment, which they considered most important.

Texas v. Johnson: Flag Burning

SUPREME COURT CASES

Situation & Court Ruling

Gregory Lee Johnson burned an American flag to protest President Ronald Reagan's policies in 1984 in front of the Dallas City Hall. He was arrested under a state law in Texas that outlawed such acts. Johnson was convicted to a year of jail time and a \$2,000 fine. The Supreme Court overturned the case in a 5-4 decision, which held that Johnson's act of protest fell into the category of free speech and "the Government may not prohibit the expression of an idea simply because society finds the idea itself offensive or disagreeable." Justices who disagreed said the act was meant to provoke others and there were alternative ways to get the same message across.

Think About It!

- Which of the five protections is being discussed in this case?
- When could burning an American flag incite a riot?
- Is there a difference between burning an American flag, and burning a pro-America shirt?
- What would be a reason the government should ban burning the American flag? Why is that not enough to justify violating a person's right to free speech?
- What could happen if the Supreme Court voted the other way? What would the government have the right to do as a result?

Snyder v. Phelps: "Thank God for Dead Soldiers"

SUPREME COURT CASES

Situation & Court Ruling

Westboro Baptist Church regularly help protests at many events, including soldiers' funerals and held signs that said "Thank God for dead soldiers" and "God hates fags," among many others. The family of Marine Lance Cpl. Matthew Snyder sued, accusing the church of defamation, invasion of privacy, and intentional infliction of emotional distress. In 2010, the Supreme Court voted 8-1 in favor of the church, saying the First Amendment shields those who protest and otherwise do not violate the law like if they were to have trespassed or incited a riot. Justice Samuel Alito was the only one to dissent, saying the First Amendment is not a free pass for "vicious verbal assault."

Think About It!

- Which of the five protections is being discussed in this case?
- When could the church's protest cross the line and violate the law?
- If you were the church, how would you have argued on your behalf?
- Why is this considered an act of political protest (legal) instead of assault (legal)? Explain.
- What could happen if the Supreme Court voted the other way? What would the government have the right to do as a result?

Chaplinsky v. New Hampshire: Fighting Words

SUPREME COURT CASES

Situation & Court Ruling

Walter Chaplinsky was on the sidewalk in downtown Rochester, New Hampshire, passing out materials on behalf of the Jehovah's Witnesses that included attacks on other religions in 1942. Chaplinsky called a local law enforcement officer a "God-damned racketeer" and a "damned fascist." He was arrested under a state law that prohibited intentionally offense or annoying speech to anyone lawfully in a public space. The Supreme Court found, in a unanimous decision, that Chaplinsky broke the law because the First Amendment does not protect "fighting words" like Chaplinsky's because it could have caused an "immediate breach of the peace."

Think About It!

- Which of the five protections is being discussed in this case?
- What could Chaplinsky have said that would not have incited a fight?
- Do "fighting words" change from person to person? If so, why is that problematic for free speech? If not, how?
- How is the government upholding one of its duties by allowing fighting words to be censored?
- What could happen if the Supreme Court voted the other way? What would the government have the right to do as a result?

Brandenburg v. Ohio: Imminent Lawless Action

SUPREME COURT CASES

Situation & Court Ruling

Clarence Brandenburg, a local KKK leader, made a speech at the group's rally and was arrested under an Ohio law that made it illegal to advocate crime and terrorism as a form of political speech. In a 1969, unanimous decision, the Supreme Court found the Ohio law was unconstitutional and created a test for speech acts like his. First, the speech could be prohibited if it's "directed at inciting or producing imminent lawless action." Second, it must also be "likely to incite or produce such action." Because the leader was not calling specifically for illegal actions, instead just speaking about the ideas of the KKK, the speech would not have incited immediate lawless action.

Think About It!

- Which of the five protections is being discussed in this case?
- At what point does racist, homophobic, xenophobic or any other discriminatory speech turn into advocating "imminent lawless action?"
- If discriminatory speech was to be outlawed, who gets to determine what "discrimination" is? Why would that be bad for free speech?
- How does this case exemplify the quote, "I may not agree with what you say, but I will defend to death your right to say it"?
- What could happen if the Supreme Court voted the other way? What would the government have the right to do as a result?

Miller v. California: That's Obscene!

SUPREME COURT CASES

Situation & Court Ruling

Marvin Miller started a mass-mailing campaign to advertise adult materials. He was arrested and convicted of violating California law that prohibited distributing obscene materials. In 1973, the Supreme Court ruled in a 5-4 decision that obscene materials were not upheld by the First Amendment, and modified an earlier test it created to determine obscene materials. First, an "average person" would have to find it obscene. Second, it must describe or depict sexual conduct. Third, it must not have any "serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value." The justices who disagreed argued, in short, that the test was too vague and could result in unfair arrests.

Think About It!

- Which of the five protections is being discussed in this case?
- In your town, what do you think people would consider obscene? What is the difference between calling something obscene and finding something upsetting or gross?
- At what point does sexual conduct have "literary, artistic, political or scientific value" as the Supreme Court requires?
- What could be a problem for free speech if there were no test created by the Supreme Court? Is the test good enough?
- What could happen if the Supreme Court voted the other way? What would the government have the right to do as a result?

Rationale

Don't get sued. The United States has a fairly robust set of laws that make it difficult to sue someone because you didn't like what they wrote. There are a few types of speech, though, that the subject can sue the outlet for. Knowing these areas and practicing sound ethics will prevent journalists from being sued.

CLASS GOAL: We will understand the difference between libel and slander, the burden of proof for libel, and four rights to privacy journalists need to know.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will analyze scenarios and determine if the journalist would lose or successfully defend themselves in a lawsuit.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Libel is written; slander is spoken; both are lies
- The standard of proof for libel is on the person suing to show: the information was a lie, published, they were identified, the journalist was at fault and their reputation was damaged leading to actual harm
- Minors can agree to be interviewed without parent permission if they give informed consent
- Right to privacy is not in the Constitution, but set by courts and other laws at federal and state levels
- And there are four common privacy violations students should be aware of: publication of embarrassing private facts, false light, intrusion into seclusion, and misappropriation.

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in two, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four, but may be completed in one depending on class length.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "Defamation & Right to Privacy Instructional Cards" for each group
- "Defamation & Right to Privacy Practice Cards" cut for class
- "Defamation & Right to Privacy Scenarios" cut for groups

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the suggested answer the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each group member pull one of the four "Defamation & Right to Privacy Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts they learned.

Then, pass out the "Defamation & Right to Privacy Practice Cards" — one to each student. These recap the information from the instructional cards. They will engage in a mix-pair-share activity: Students will mix around the room (make them actually mix) and pair up with someone. The pair should ask each other the question on their card and answer. If they got it wrong, the other student should coach them to the right answer, not tell them the right answer right away. Talk with students about how to help one another if they see a student struggling. Then, have them mix-pair-share again with someone they have not already paired with. They should do this for about 5-10 minutes or until the class has roughly cycled through everyone.

Open the floor for clarification questions as media law can be a bit confusing. Students will need some help understanding the specifics and how it all works together.

Pass out the "Defamation & Right to Privacy Scenarios" to each group. Students should each pull one of the five scenarios, read it individually and decide if the law was violated. Then, students should explain their situation to the group and, in a round-robin format, allow the other group members to say what they think after knowing what the law requires. There should be one scenario left over. One member will read the scenario out loud and the group will discuss and come to consensus on what the result should be.

Slide 5 has a recap of concepts.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have all students complete the activity on Slide 6 in the way preferred by the teacher.

Day 2

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Have students discuss their answers to Slide 6 with the other members and come to a consensus.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY: Groups should divide up four of the five laws amongst the group members, giving a different law to members than they had on Day 1. Each member will separately create a scenario similar to Day 1 scenarios, writing it on a piece of paper or method preferred by the teacher. They should then present the scenario to the group, which will fact check the scenario to make sure it addresses the issue. Groups will then trade with another group and solve the scenarios, finding in favor of the plaintiff or journalist based off the law. This should continue until students solved all other scenarios.

NOTE: Remind students not to make the scenarios overly obvious about the answer, but not too hard.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Students should write and submit a scenario where a reporter violates all five laws they learned about.

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Libel v. Slander

DEFAMATION & RIGHT TO PRIVACY

What's the Difference?

Libel is a written lie; slander is a spoken one. Both are considered defamation — a civil crime, but one you can be jailed over.

Truth & consent are the best defenses. You cannot defame someone with the truth, if they let you print the lie, or if it is a true opinion. You also can't defame someone if the lie came from a government document.

Model

John published a story saying Principal Polly Pocket stole \$4 million from the school over five years. His source had no proof but heard it was true. Pocket was fired and sued the newspaper for libel, and won because it was not true.

Is It Libel?

Penelope writes a column saying the head coach "does a terrible job" with the team. The coach sues for libel, claiming it was a lie. The coach lost the libel suit. Why?

They Must Prove Defamation

DEFAMATION & RIGHT TO PRIVACY

Burden of Proof

In the United States, the person suing for libel — a written lie — to prove the information published was, in fact untrue.

This helps deter people from suing someone just because they didn't like what was published. The First Amendment protects the freedom of the press and speech. Frivolous lawsuits would harm this.

There are five parts the plaintiff must prove

- **FALSITY:** It was untrue
- **IDENTIFIED:** Readers could figure out who the person is
- **PUBLICATION:** The lie was published
- **FAULT:** The journalist published the lie with actual malice (for public officials) or recklessly (for everyone else)
- **HARM:** The person had to have been financially hurt by the lie

Would They Win?

Paul sues The Bugle for publishing that he said City Council should "go jump off a bridge" when he actually said "cliff." It was published by his name and the reporter chalked it up to a typo. Paul said no one said anything to him about it though.

Informed Consent & Minors

DEFAMATION & RIGHT TO PRIVACY

Minor Misconception

Courts have long given minors — people under 18 — the right to verbally agree to decisions like being interviewed, without their parent's consent, as long as it was *informed* consent.

The interviewee under 18 can agree to an interview if they know they will be published and, for controversial topics, what the outcomes could be. Reporters: make sure they know.

Better Safe Than Sorry

There are occasions when consent is necessary and better when written

- Stories about private details of a person's life like mental health, sexuality, substance abuse, poor grades and previously confidential family problems
- Photographing a story from a clearly private setting like a hospital room

- Reporting a story involving a potentially defamatory topic (one that could damage someone's reputation) like a subject admitting to cheating or using drugs

Ethics

Remember that not everyone understands the consequences of being interviewed. Help your sources understand what their words could mean and don't take advantage of people that clearly don't understand the rules of the game.

Embarrassing Facts & False Light

DEFAMATION & RIGHT TO PRIVACY

Types of Privacy Rights

There is no Constitutional right to be left alone, but courts and laws have created four common areas people have protection. Two of these are

- **PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF PRIVATE AND EMBARRASSING FACTS:** There are three parts: 1) The information is sufficiently private — not known by people outside their small circle of family and

friends; 2) intimate — habits, details or history the person doesn't normally reveal; and 3) highly offensive — it must be more than just annoying, bothersome or mildly embarrassing to the average person. The person must also not have disclosed it on the record. FERPA (school privacy) and HIPPA (medical privacy) don't apply if the source told the reporter the information.

- **FALSE LIGHT:** Portraying someone as something they are not in an unflattering way. This is similar to libel in that they both involve something not being true. However, with false light, it must merely be "highly offensive" to a reasonable person rather than actually damaging that person's reputation. Examples: Publishing photos with incorrect or misleading captions, misattributing political views, and cropping or quoting out of context.

Intrusion & Misappropriation

DEFAMATION & RIGHT TO PRIVACY

Types of Privacy Rights

There is no Constitutional right to be left alone, but courts and laws have created four common areas people have protection.

These two in particular have to do with journalists behaving badly to get information. In sum, work hard to get the information, but journalists don't have a special pass to break the law to get a story.

- **INTRUSION TO SECLUSION:** A reporter violating a person's reasonable expectation of privacy. People can't make out at a football game and expect privacy (in a legal, not ethical, sense). Common types of intrusion to seclusion violations include trespassing (being on restricted property without permission), secret surveillance in private settings, misrepresentation (pretending to be something you are not for consent). Public spaces are *never* private.

- **MISAPPROPRIATION:** The most rare for student journalists. Also known as "commercialization". This is the unauthorized use of a person's name, photograph, likeness, voice or endorsement to promote the sale of a product or service. As "Law of the Student Press" puts it, "It recognizes that every person has the right to benefit from his own publicity or celebrity." Courts generally allow media to reuse photos as part of self-promotion.

Defaming a Principal

DEFAMATION & RIGHT TO PRIVACY SCENARIOS

Here's the Situation

Principal Jeff Sticks is known around the school for keeping candy in his office and allows students to come by, grab a piece and say hello. He also loves to tell inspirational stories on the announcements every Monday. Last week, he ended the announcements by saying, "Make sure you stop by my office, grab some candy and have a chat. I love hearing from all you kids." A reporter for the news website wrote a column titled "Principal offers candy to students in creepy announcement" where they accuse Sticks specifically of "being a little too friendly around students and tries to lure them into his office with candy." Sticks was fired after the article went viral on social media.

Court Case Arguments

PRINCIPAL'S POSITION: Sticks sued, claiming the reporter libeled him by "painting Sticks out to be a pedophile" by saying he lures children into his office. His lawyers said facts were out of context when the public reads the article. He agrees he invited kids to his office and eat candy, but that the reporter played into stereotypes to make him look even worse, which his lawsuit claims is "exactly the same as lying."

REPORTER'S POSITION: The lawyers defending the reporter say the reporter was simply stating their opinion and calling Sticks' behavior "creepy", which is subjective, and that "lure" means to attract or invite.

Interviewing Minors

DEFAMATION & RIGHT TO PRIVACY SCENARIOS

Here's the Situation

After President Chester Drawers lost the last election, a number of students supporting Drawers held an informal protest in the parking lot before school. Reporter Edd Iltor approached the group with a recorder in his shirt pocket, and pen and notepad in his hand. This was the entire conversation with junior Lindon-Bridges Follendon, 16.

"What are you guys doing?" "Showing these pigs who really won."

"You don't think Drawers lost?" "Hard no; the election was a sham."

Iltor walked away, jotted the quotes down and published the story.

Court Case Arguments

FOLLENDON'S POSITION: Follendon sued, claiming he had no idea Iltor was with the school newspaper and would never have agreed to an interview if he knew. His parents claim even if he did, the school should have parental permission before publishing any interviews with minors beforehand. They say Iltor never introduced himself, wrote anything down nor showed his recorder to obtain implied or informed consent.

REPORTER'S POSITION: The lawyers claim Iltor is well-known by many students as a reporter and had paper in his hand. Iltor said in his testimony, "Why else would I be talking to him? I don't know him."

Embarrassing Facts

DEFAMATION & RIGHT TO PRIVACY SCENARIOS

Here's the Situation

Senior Mary Lamb was walking to class when Yearbook Editor Kenny Duet approached her. He said, "Hey Mary, I was wondering if we could do a story on the time you were institutionalized in a mental hospital for the mental health spread? It would be a powerful piece." She responded, "How did you know I was in the mental hospital?" "Nevermind," Duet said. "I figured it out." Lamb was institutionalized for four months due to severe anxiety attacks that caused her to have heart problems. Duet included this line in the yearbook spread story on students with mental health issues: "Mary Lamb (12) fought and won against anxiety for months in a psych ward before returning to school."

Court Case Arguments

LAMB'S POSITION: Lamb sued, claiming that the yearbook publicly disclosed private facts. Her lawyers say Lamb never told anyone at school about her stay in the mental hospital and that Lamb had to be reinstituted after the story was published without her permission.

EDITOR'S POSITION: Duet admits his actions were unethical, but says they were not illegal. He said he thought he saw a Cityville Psychological Services note shredded on the street outside her house after the wind knocked over their trash. He said he didn't know for sure until Lamb confirmed it in their conversation, knowing he was a reporter.

Shining a False Light

DEFAMATION & RIGHT TO PRIVACY SCENARIOS

Here's the Situation

While editing captions for the culinary arts class spread in the yearbook, section editor Whoopie C. Daisies saw the name Mes Gnomer written in a caption with no classification. She knew a kid named Mes was a freshman and made the correction. After the book came out, she realized there are two student named Mes in the school — a freshman and a senior. Mes Gnomer is the senior and Mes N. Duppendent was the freshman. There were two other similar typos and errors in the book, improperly labeling students with the wrong grade. Another nine students were identified by the wrong name in a caption or story.

Court Case Arguments

GNOMER'S POSITION: Gnomer sued, claiming the reporter violated his right to protection from false light. His lawyers said when the book was distributed, Gnomer saw the typo and started crying and had a panic attack. He is afraid students will make fun of him and think he was held back for being "too stupid" to graduate, thus highly offensive.

DAISIES' POSITION: The lawyers defending Daisies and the yearbook staff says there were many other typos in the yearbook but did not hear from anyone in those situations. They say it is unprofessional, but not highly embarrassing to have your classification mislabeled.

Intruders: Keep Out!

DEFAMATION & RIGHT TO PRIVACY SCENARIOS

Here's the Situation

Photographer Philip Shed was about to finish using a bathroom stall and wash his hands when he heard to students walk into the room. Shed stayed in the stall when he heard, "You smoke?" "Yeah. I got you." The two boys stood on a trash can to smoke and blow into the vents. School officials already threatened to close bathrooms if students continued to do illegal activities in them. Shed, who was also reporting on the issue for the newspaper, took a photo with his cellphone of the two boys standing on the trashcan and smoking. He published the full photo on the website with a story on the school's threat.

Court Case Arguments

SMOKERS' POSITION: The lawyer representing both boys said they had a reasonable expectation of privacy the photographer violated. He said journalists have no right to gather news in a bathroom and that there are limits on who can go into what bathroom for a reason.

SHED'S POSITION: Shed's lawyers say the bathroom's common area is a public place because there is no door leading into the main area. They said if the boys were in a private stall, it may be different. They argue hiding and publishing without giving a chance to respond was unethical, but not illegal.

Rationale

Students have much more in terms of free speech than they realize. However, two court cases affect scholastic journalists more than the others. They should know not only which standard their state falls under, but the limits and rights they retain under each Supreme Court case.

CLASS GOAL: We will understand limits on student free speech & press rights, and limits on schools.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL: I will analyze legal situations to determine who is in the right.

Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Tinker v. Des Moines and the standard it set
- Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier and its set of standards
- Limits on student speech broadly
- Viewpoint-based censorship restrictions on schools
- Prior review & prior restraint
- And the role of the adviser and the Student Press Law Center

Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in two, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four, but may be completed in one depending on class length.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

Materials Needed

- "School Speech Instructional Cards" cut for each group
- "School Speech Practice Cards" cut for class
- "School Speech Group Cards" cut for each group

Day 1

WARM UP ACTIVITY: Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY: Have each group member pull one of the four "School Speech Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts they learned.

Then, pass out the "School Speech Practice Cards" — one to each student. They will engage in a mix-pair-share activity: Students will mix around the room (make them actually mix) and pair up with someone. The pair should ask each other the question on their card and answer. If they got it wrong, the other student should coach them to the right answer, not tell them the right answer right away. Talk with students about how to help one another if they see a student struggling. Then, have them mix-pair-share again with someone they have not already paired with. They should do this for about 5-10 minutes or until the class has roughly cycled through.

Once students return to their seats, give students in each group one of the four "School Speech Group cards" so that every group member has a different scenario. Start with the person who last drank water. The person holding the card will read the scenario and ask the first question. The group will round-robin answering the question. Then, the card-holder will ask the next question, which is answered in the same way. This repeats until the card is complete. Once complete, the group should come to consensus on what they would do in the situation. This process repeats with the other group members and other cards until all have been completed. Discuss the cards as a class and correct any misconceptions or erroneous lines of thinking groups have.

Slide 4 has a recap of concepts.

EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have all students write three of their own scenarios — one where a publication was censored under Tinker, one under Hazelwood, and one under any other law (specific to schools or anyone). Then, write a sentence under each explaining how the publication could have avoided censorship in that case.

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The Tinker Standard

SCHOOL SPEECH

Tinker v. Des Moines

John and Mary Beth Tinker, and friend Christopher Eckhardt planned to wear black armbands to protest the Vietnam War. The school created a dress code policy against it when it found out. The three wore them anyway and were punished, claiming their rights to freedom of speech was violated. There had been no definitive case like this before.

Court Ruling

The Court ruled in the students' favor. The justices wrote that students do not give up their rights to "expression at the schoolhouse gate."

This case created limits on what public schools could restrict with speech. Specifically, it mentions schools cannot censor content simply because officials don't like the content or because it is critical of them or the school.

What Does It Mean?

Schools the Tinker standard may be censored for speech that

- materially disrupts classwork or involves substantial disorder
- or, invades the rights of others

Schools fall under the Tinker standard if they behave as an open public forum by policy or practice, or states with New Voices laws.

The Hazelwood Standard

SCHOOL SPEECH

Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier

The staff of the Spectrum newspaper at Hazelwood East High School in Missouri produced a two-page spread of stories of teen problems including one on pregnancy and one on divorce. The paper censored by the principal, who objected to discussion of sexually active teens and abortion. Three students sued and the Supreme Court denied they had been improperly censored.

Court Ruling

The Court believed some publications and theater performances can be construed as being the school's beliefs and not just speech.

In addition, the Court did not believe the paper was an open public forum — a place for any and all speech — because the school used it as curriculum and the principal reviewed every edition prior to it being released.

What Does It Mean?

Schools under the Hazelwood standard may be censored for material that

- ungrammatical, poorly written, inadequately researched, biased or prejudiced, vulgar or profane, or unsuitable for immature audiences
- advocating conduct that does not uphold the "shared values of a civilized social order"
- and that associates schools with anything other than neutrality on controversial political topics

No Viewpoint-Based Censorship

SCHOOL SPEECH

That Looks Bad

There is a three-part test for "time, place and manner" restrictions on all free speech

- Censorship must be "CONTENT NEUTRAL", or not censoring particular opinions
- "NARROWLY TAILORED" for significant government interest
- LEAVES ALTERNATIVES for communicating messages & ideas

What Does That Mean?

Schools cannot censor a publication just because it makes them or the school look bad, they disagree with a political view or other reasons specific to the content. They can only censor for reasons cited in the Tinker standard and, in some states, the Hazelwood standard.

This includes both prior restraint and review, which can be viewed as "chilling" free speech.

Narrowly Tailored

Schools cannot simply throw out an entire publication because of one error, one story or even an entire page.

Courts limit censorship of publications and any speech to the smallest possible extent and only for compelling government interests. The interest for schools is the age and maturity level of students, and because students must attend.

Universal Student Speech Limits

SCHOOL SPEECH

You Can't Say That

While the Supreme Court gave students First Amendment protections at school, students cannot say whatever they want whenever.

These "time, place and manner" restrictions (*Cox v. New Hampshire*) are divided into two parts: those that apply to everyone in the U.S. and additional limits for students on school campuses, particularly because of age.

No One Can

Some speech is illegal everywhere

- **OBSCENITY:** Graphic depictions of sex and illegal sexual activity like child pornography
- **FIGHTING WORDS & INCITING IMMEDIATE LAWLESS ACTION** and breach of the peace
- **LIES** that hurt a person's reputation (**DEFAMATION**), benefit you at a person's expense (**FRAUD**) or under oath (**PERJURY**).

- Blackmail & true threats
- Asking someone to commit a crime
- Violations of copyright and trademark law

Students Can't

Some limits are just for students while at school

- **VULGAR & INAPPROPRIATE LANGUAGE:** Obscene and vulgar (*Bethel v. Fraser*)
- **ADVOCATING ILLEGAL DRUG USE**, but OK to advocate political action (*Morse v. Frederick*)

Student Press Law Center & Advisers

SCHOOL SPEECH

Rock & a Hard Place

Advisers are in a tricky spot: They want to protect their students to be free to create good, honest journalism; they also are an employee.

In short, the less the adviser (or any school official) does with their student media program, the less likely a court would find it to be "school-sponsored" and thus open for censorship. Schools are also held less legally liable in that case as well.

What Does That Mean?

Students must take the lead on approving all content in the publication. Advisers are within their rights to make suggestions to improve quality, make ethical recommendations, suggest (but not dictate) story ideas, name editors, and pull stories when there is a legal reason to avoid a lawsuit like libel.

The more students control, the less they can be censored and the less schools are liable.

Students Take the Lead

In order to protect their adviser and be more free from censorship, students need to do most of the arguing and meeting if an issue of censorship occurs. This means you need to be prepared to discuss your rights with authority figures if you must.

Solve by being your own advocate. The Student Press Law Center (splc.org) has adults and resources to help without needing your adviser.

Card 1

Answer

Tinker v. Des Moines.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 2

Answer

Tinker v. Des Moines.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 3

Answer

Tinker v. Des Moines.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 4

Answer

Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 5

Answer

Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 6

Answer

Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 7

Answer

Viewpoint-based censorship.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 8

Answer

Viewpoint-based censorship.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 9

Answer

Viewpoint-based censorship.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 10

Answer

Advocating for illegal drug use.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 11

Answer

Advocating for political action.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 12

Answer

Vulgar & inappropriate language.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 13

Answer

Bethel v. Fraser.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 14

Answer

SPLC. Advisers are in tricky spots legally.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 15

Answer

SPLC.

Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

Card 3

Question

Which case involved students protesting the Vietnam War by wearing black armbands?

Card 2

Question

If a student locks themselves in an office and uses the intercom to read the script to "Finding Nemo" all day, which case are they violating?

Card 1

Question

Which case set the standard that a student's free speech does not end "at the schoolhouse gate"?

Card 6

Question

Which case allows censorship of student news that associates schools to "anything other than neutrality on controversial political topics"?

Card 5

Question

Which court case allows the most censorship of student publications (but only in states without a New Voices law)?

Card 4

Question

If a principal says an article cannot publish because it is "ungrammatical", which court case are they citing?

Card 9

Question

A three-part test says officials can limit speech for time, place and manner. The censorship must be as small, leave an alternate option, and...what?

Card 8

Question

Which concept means a government official is restricting media because it does not like the ideas being presented in it?

Card 7

Question

Why can't a school censor an article "because it makes the school look bad" no matter what legal standard they fall under?

Card 12

Question

Bethel v. Fraser involved a student giving a sexually charged speech without using any cuss words, what type of speech got limited for students?

Card 11

Question

Morse v. Frederick would allow a student to wear a shirt saying, "Pass Marijuana Reform Now" but not clothing with just marijuana leaves on it. Why?

Card 10

Question

Morse v. Frederick is known as the "Bong Hits 4 Jesus" case. What type of speech did it actually ban for students?

Card 15

Question

Which organization has a set of attorneys dedicated to helping student journalists with the law?

Card 14

Question

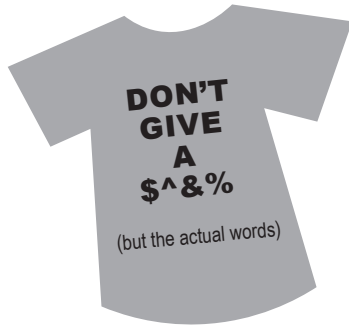
Who should you go to if your school censors the newspaper from running an article?

Card 13

Question

Which case prevents students from cussing, using sexual innuendo and similar adult language in schools?

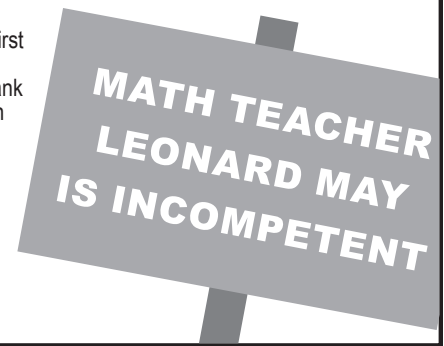
Can a school censor?



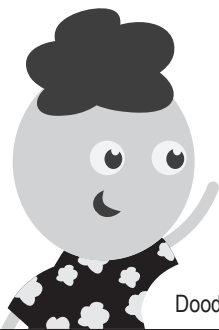
Freshman Jimmy Johns got a funny T-shirt as a birthday present from his uncle, Papa. The T-shirt had an expletive in large font across the middle of the shirt. One morning, Jimmy woke up late and hastily threw a shirt on. An assistant principal saw the shirt and wrote Jimmy up. Jimmy said he didn't want to wear the shirt, but that punishing him violates his right to free speech in the First Amendment.

Can a school censor?

After failing math teacher Leonard May's class in the first semester, junior Larry Livid went to the store, bought blank signs and stakes, and began a protest of the school until May was fired for "gross incompetence." The signs were put up in the public right of way in front of the school, but not on the school's actual property.



Can a school censor?



Sign my petition to make heroin legal and free for students!

Dood lé Head thought yelling this at lunch was funny.

Can a school censor?

THE BUGLE

School continues pollution from fleet of diesel buses

The principal meets with you and says, "The article is factual, but I'm not allowing you to run it. The article makes the school look bad, which is bias."

Can a school censor?

BUGLEonline

BURN IT DOWN Light school on fire to protest homework

Last year, a group of students held a violent protest on campus, lighting the library on fire after it prohibited students from eating there during lunches. They spread a message on social media to get students to light the library on fire. The website posts an editorial on the homepage calling for another protest.

Can a school censor?

THE BUGLE

good! principle left out of meting w/ parents lol :)

The principal meets with you and says, "The article is factual, but I'm not allowing you to run it. This has too many spelling errors and is way too biased."

Can a school censor?

BUGLEonline

WHAT-A-BURGLAR Thief breaks into cafeteria, steals all hamburgers

Superintendent Lee Durr calls you on the phone after posting an article about a recent break-in: "You need to take that down. First of all, we haven't had a chance to send a message to parents. Second, it makes us look like fools. Third, it is not newsworthy at all. It was just a few hamburgers."

Can a school censor?

In hopes to find a worthy challenger, senior Ralph Magutsup broke the first rule of fight club: He spoke about it. In fact, he put up a sign in front of the school asking for students to join him in the second-floor boys bathroom for a fight at lunch. He got in trouble because this was how students started fights last year. He says they violated his rights to free speech.

