

Julie Summa  
April 10, 2006

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Scholastic Publications  
Final packet 4/25/2006

## Scholastic Publications: 28 Days

**Group to be taught:** Grade 12 Advanced Communications class at Lafayette High School, St. Joseph, Missouri.

- One class of approximately 30 students in a dense middle to lower class area of town, 2/3<sup>rd</sup> is Caucasian, 1/3<sup>rd</sup> black.
- Most adults in the school's community have no education beyond high school, 2 percent achieved bachelors degree or above; mean household income is low (\$33,578); free and/or reduced lunch count for the district is 58.3%, above the state mean of 41.8%
- Aggregate test scores (ACT Comp and grade seven and eleven MAP Communication Arts) from 2000 – 2004 are at or slightly higher than the state's mean

**Overall purpose of the lessons:** The lesson plans that follow cover approximately 28 days in-class with a final project that can span the semester.

Over the following eight lessons, students will learn the basics of journalism, news writing and analysis -- key elements for putting together a school newspaper.

The assignment will help students meet several of Missouri's Communication Arts GLEs for high school: i.e. follow a writing process when composing a writing assignment, participating in formal and informal presentations and discussions of issues and ideas, reading and evaluating nonfiction works and material (such as biographies, newspapers, technical manuals), writing formally (such as reports, narratives, essays) and informally (such as outlines, notes).

Students should be prepared to journal their reflections on the lessons either via online blog that the teacher can view, or in a regular notebook. All notes and assignments should be kept by the student in a portfolio.

The lesson culminates with a final project where the students will be able to put everything they've learned together in a news story they've researched and written for publication.

**Learning Outcomes:** As a result of completing these lessons, students will be able to:

- Determine the parts of newspapers, news stories and feature stories.
- Learn newspaper vocabulary and correct lingo.
- Develop interview and news writing skills.
- Analyze what is newsworthy, what is good page design.
- Write a competent editorial.
- Write a "for publication" news story.

Julie Summa  
April 10, 2006

**List of materials needed:**

- Area newspapers, student newspapers, examples of the good and the bad, the legitimate press and the tabloids.
- Student writing journals (personalized composition notebook which students have available to write in at every class session. Entries are titled and dated.)
- Two colors of post-it notes.
- AP Stylebook

Handouts located among the lesson or at the back of this packet:

- Handouts 1-5 for Journalism 101
- Pre/Post Unit Test
- Editorial handout
- All About Leads handout

Some material for this packet adapted from or borrowed outright from lessons found at the ASNE High School Journalism web page Lesson Plans sections.

## Lesson One – Journalism 101 (3 day time span)

**Objectives:** This unit begins with students assessing their own sources of news trying to define: What is News?

Then they will learn how to understand and evaluate the elements of news.

In the second part of the unit students will become familiar with and start to use newspaper vocabulary to identify the parts of the page and features.

Finally, students will look at placement issues on the front page. In assessing the front page, students will use their newspaper vocabulary and apply what they've learned in defining "news."

Since this is an introductory unit, vocabulary is emphasized and will be reinforced throughout the study of journalism, news values, and design.

### Day One: Definitions and Sources of News

Each day people throughout the world depend on newspapers, television, radio news, and personal interactions to keep up with global, national, regional, and local events. Consider your own news sources. How do you learn about what is happening? Complete *Handout 1: My Personal News Sources*.

Partners share of results followed by class discussion about various sources of news used by students. Additional questions to consider:

- Which of the sources is most accurate/reliable?
- Which is most entertaining?
- Why are people interested in getting news?

*What is news?* Create a definition. Brainstorm and chart ideas on board.

Read and discuss *Handout 2: What is News?* Reinforce/expand student suggested definitions. Continue discussion with *News Elements: Concepts that Make News News* (adapted from *For Journalism Teachers Only*)

**Homework:** complete *Handout 3: What is News? Assignment* adapted from *Making News: An Introduction to Journalism* by John R. Harrold and Lois A. Stanciak.

### Day Two: Newspaper Vocabulary

Students will read *Handout 4: Newspaper Vocabulary*. Teacher will have overheads of newspaper pages and will ask which words are confusing? Further clarification and examples will be given.

**Question to consider:** As beginning journalists, why is it important to know and use proper terminology?

#### Group Activity:

Using Vocabulary and main section of the daily paper, each group will use post-it notes to identify and label terms in the news.

Groups will exchange papers to review vocabulary identification labels. The "editing" group should check work, note any problems/corrections, and label any additional terms. Groups will conference to discuss problems and additions.

All work will be displayed for a Gallery Walk by the larger class.

**Homework:** Students will complete an individual identification of terms with a new paper. Multiple copies of papers will be assigned in order to form groups for Front Page Analysis.

Julie Summa  
April 10, 2006

**Day Three: Assessing the Front Page**

Find the students who had your same homework paper and review identification of newspaper terms in your group. Teacher will announce today's lesson focuses on the content and elements of the front page.

**Question to consider:** Why is the front page of a newspaper so important?

**Group Activity:**

Groups will use *Handout 5: Assessing the Front Page* to analyze the front page of the newspaper.

Each group will present their front page and responses to it to the larger class.

Class discussion about similarities and differences between publications. Students justify what they like and what they don't like. Discuss placement issues. Connect ideas to starting a school paper and the design of the front page.

**Homework:** Using the same paper, for homework, students will choose one article to check to see if it follows the inverted pyramid. Students will list the who, what, where, when, why, and how and tell in what order these facts occur. It is important to note that students now have a newspaper that has been labeled with newspaper terms, analyzed for front page information and placement, and tested for use of the inverted pyramid.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### Handout 1: My Personal News Sources

**Directions:** How do you learn what is happening? Review the categories in the left column and think about the source(s) of your information. Estimate what percentage of your information comes from each source?

	% from Radio	% from TV	% from Newspaper(s)	% from Conversation	% from Other Sources (Explain)
World News					
National News					
Local/Community News					
School News					
News about Family & Friends					
Other: Please Describe					

Adapted from *News/Journalism Across the Media* [www.media-awareness.ca](http://www.media-awareness.ca)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## Handout 2: What is News?

### NEWS IS:

Anything printable.

An account of an event, or a fact or an opinion that interests people.

A presentation of current events in newspapers, magazines, periodicals, radio, or television.

Anything that enough people want to read is news, provided it meets the standards of "good taste" and isn't libelous.

Anything that is timely that interests a number of readers, and the best news is that which has the greatest interest for the greatest number of people.

Accurate and timely intelligence of happenings, discoveries, opinions, and matter of any sort that affect or interest the readers.

The first rough draft of history.

The study of people.

### WHAT MAKES NEWS NEWS?

1. **Proximity:** This has to do with location. If the event is happening close by, it will have a greater impact on your readers.
2. **Timeliness:** If something is happening NOW, it has more impact than something that happened yesterday or last week. Often, the most recent development in a story can be used as a feature.
3. **Prominence:** This has to do with how well known the people in your story are. If the person or persons are well known to your readers, the story will impact them more than a story involving people they do not know.
4. **Conflict:** Readers have an interest in disagreements, arguments, fights, and rivalries.
5. **Novelty:** If something is unusual, people want to know what and why it happened.
6. **Human Interest:** If a situation makes you angry, sad, happy, or overjoyed, it contains the element of human interest.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### Handout 3: What is News? Assignment

**Directions:** As you read each event, carefully consider your news elements. If you believe the event is a good example of news, in the **NEWS** Box, explain why it is newsworthy. If you think the event is not a good example of news, in the **NOT NEWS** box tell how the event might become newsworthy with the addition of a new fact or detail.

	NEWS	NOT NEWS
The temperature reaches 90 degrees in May.		
A senior misses her first day of school since the first grade.		
Three new homes are being built in the community.		
A star athlete becomes ineligible to play because of poor grades.		
A record number of citizens applied for United States citizenship this past year.		
A student is absent from school for three days.		
The basketball team loses its 6 <sup>th</sup> consecutive game.		

*Adapted from Making News: An Introduction to Journalism by John R. Harrold and Lois A. Stanciak*

## Handout 4: Newspaper Vocabulary

- **5W'S & H** The essentials of any story: who, what, when, where, why, and how
- **ADVERTISING** Space in a publication sold to other businesses; display ads usually contain headlines, illustrations, copy, a call for action and information to identify the business
- **ALIGNMENT** Refers to the justification of text at its margins; left, right, centered, justified
- **BEAT** A specific area assigned to a reporter for regular coverage
- **BOLD** Type which appears darker than surrounding type of the same family; used for emphasis
- **BY-LINE** Indicates who wrote the story; often includes the writer's title
- **CAPTION** The portion of the layout which explains what is happening in a photograph. Also called cutlines. Often includes a photo credit.
- **COLUMN** A vertical division of layout which aids in giving structure to a page
- **DOMINANT** The largest photograph on a layout
- **EDITOR** Has overall responsibility for the publication
- **EDITORIAL** A type of story which serves to express an opinion and encourage the reader to take some action
- **ETHICS** A standard of conduct based on moral beliefs
- **FACT** A statement that can be proven. Not an opinion
- **FEATURE** A story written with some interpretation that goes beyond just reporting the facts
- **FLAG** The name of the paper that usually appears at the top of page one
- **GRAPHICS** The use of lines, screens, boxes, large initial letters etc. to enhance a design by breaking up areas
- **GRID SYSTEM** A system of layout in which the page is divided into small units which are filled in
- **HAMMER** A form of headline consisting of a few very large words over a smaller subheadline
- **HEADLINE** Large type designed to summarize a story and grab the reader's attention
- **HUMAN INTEREST** An element of news that includes people or events with which the audience can identify; stories that are just interesting
- **INTERVIEW** A question and answer session between a reporter and source to get information for a story
- **INVERTED PYRAMID** A style of writing most commonly applied to news stories in which the most important facts appear early in the story and less important facts later in the story
- **KICKER** A short (one or two word) statement at the beginning of a caption that serves to grab the reader's attention
- **LEAD** The beginning of the story which serves to summarize the story and/or grab the reader's attention

Julie Summa  
April 10, 2006

- **LIBEL** Written defamation; damaging false statements against another person or institution that are in writing or are spoken from a written script
- **NEWS** Information delivered about an event shortly after it has occurred
- **OP-ED** Opinion/Editorial; refers to the pages in a publication that express the opinion of the writer
- **OPINION** A statement which cannot be proven.
- **QUOTATION** A statement made by another person included in a published story. A direct quotation is exactly what the person said and appears inside quotation marks. An indirect quote is a paraphrase of what a person said and does not appear in quotes.
- **REPORTER** Person who researches and generally writes stories assigned by editors
- **REVIEW** A form of editorial written to comment on a play, movie, piece of music or some other creative work
- **SANS SERIF** Type with no extension at the letters which is easier to read at large sizes
- **SERIF** An extension at the end of certain letters which make the type easier to read at text sizes
- **SLANDER** Spoken defamation; damaging false statements against another person or institution that are spoken
- **SPREAD** Two facing pages that are designed as one unit
- **STAFF BOX** A box containing the names of the staff members
- **STORY** A block of text on a single topic beginning with some form of a lead followed by the body that contains quotations and transitions
- **TEXT WRAP** Adjusting the appearance of text to follow the shape of a graphic
- **TRANSITION** The portion of the story which helps the reader move from one point to the next: helps a story flow, adds information, and explains other items in the story
- **UNDERLINE** A smaller headline set under the main headline that is approximately the same length as the main headline
- **WHITE SPACE** The portion of a page with nothing on it used to draw a viewer into the other elements on the page

(Adapted from *TAJE Journalism Curriculum Guide & Newspaper Curriculum Guide* )

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### Handout 5: Assessing the Front Page

**Directions:** Use the front page of your newspaper to answer the following questions. Be ready to present your findings to the class.

1. Which items had the largest headlines? Why?
2. Which items had the smallest headlines? Why?
3. Which stories had photos? Why?
4. Consider the placement of the articles. Does the position of a story (above the fold, below the fold etc.) affect the reader's response to it? Why?
5. What other information does the front page include in addition to major news reports? How does this extra information affect the readers' attention?
6. How many stories are on the front page? How many are local? How many are national? How many are international?
7. What do you find appealing about this front page? What would you like to change? Why?

## **Lesson Two: Critique Newspapers (1-2 days)**

This lesson can be used to focus student attention on a variety of different aspects of newspapers allowing them to utilize knowledge from **Lesson One** in a very active way.

The related handouts on rating and analyzing student newspapers are primarily focused on headlines, layout, and design of newspapers and interest and readability of articles but they can be modified to focus on whatever aspect of student newspapers you desire your students to learn about. The lesson will also help students develop their critique, group work and presentation skills.

### **Objectives**

Students will:

- learn to identify positive and negative features of a variety of student newspapers.
- read and evaluate two articles of different styles from their chosen newspaper.
- work to evaluate their group's newspapers.
- present their findings to the class.

### **Basic Lesson**

5-10 minutes setup, explain assignment, Select newspapers, form groups.

20-25 minutes: Individual analysis of newspaper.

15-30 minutes: Group analysis of newspaper.

5-8 minutes: Presentation time for each group.

Depending on the number of students in your class create groups of 4 to 5 students.

Once in their groups handout the Individual and Group Newspaper Analysis sheets and explain expectations.

Give students about 20 minutes on the Individual part. Aim for 15-30 minutes for the group part.

When all groups are finished they present their findings. Each group comes to the front of the class and each member tells and shows the class a bit about the newspaper. Finally, they present their best and worst newspapers and tells the class their reasoning for this selection.

Teacher will prompt the group with questions and assess participation points.

### **Materials**

- Handouts: Individual analysis sheet and Group analysis sheet.
- At least 10-30 different high school newspapers from a variety of schools depending on the number of students in the class. (The local state scholastic press association assists in these exchanges.)

## Worksheet for Analyzing Student Newspapers

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Paper Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Publication Date: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Total pages: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Identify the best layout elements of your paper. Describe.
2. Is there anything about your paper that is poorly done? Be specific.
3. Write the most interesting and least interesting headlines from your paper below.

Most: \_\_\_\_\_

Least: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Read one front-page article. What is the headline? Is the article interesting? Well written? Does it address an issue of interest to the average high school student?

What could be improved about it?

5. Read a sports or editorial piece. What is the headline? Is the article interesting? Well written? Does it address an issue of interest to the average high school student?

What could be improved about it?

Julie Summa  
April 10, 2006

6. List two story ideas that you think your high school newspaper staff should write about that would be of interest to you and other students.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Overall rating of this newspaper: \_\_\_\_ 1-10 (10 best)

## Group Rating of Student Newspapers

Headlines, Layout and Photos

Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. List names, publication dates, and schools for all five of your papers

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Rating</b>
1.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____

2. Which paper has the most visually pleasing front page? Explain what you like about it.
3. Which paper has the least visually pleasing front page? Why?
4. Look through all the pages of each paper. Judging only by the layout, headlines, and photos, which paper is the most interesting to your group?

Julie Summa  
April 10, 2006

5. List three items that all members in your group find effective and interesting about this paper. (Layout, headlines, photos)
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
6. Which paper was least interesting based on layout, headlines, and photos? Why?
  
7. List the three best headlines from these five publications
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  
8. As a group, rate your five papers based on layout, headlines and photos. Use a 1 to 10 scale with 10 the best possible. (Put scores under item number 1, at top)

### **Lesson Three: Defining Roles and Setting Goals (2-3 days)**

Students will become mission-oriented in their work on the newspaper staff and operate as a team. This lesson will bring them together in developing a mission for their school paper.

#### **Objectives:**

Students will analyze the roles newspapers play in society and establish their own goals for their newspaper.

**Day One:** Ask the class to think quietly for a minute on the question: “Why do people read newspapers?” Have students turn to a partner and share their answers. Ask a handful of individuals to share aloud to the class what they thought or heard that they agreed with. List answers on the board.

Distribute “**Roles of High School Newspapers**” handout to entire class and review the list with students. As the class moves through the list, connect their earlier responses to the roles defined on the handout.

Distribute one or two issues per group of last year’s school newspaper issues (or exchange issues from other high schools). Ask each group to browse the issues and determine what the top 3 priorities (in terms of roles) each issue emphasizes as published. Share these responses group by group, taking note on the board of the variety of answers. After all have shared, draw conclusions as to what roles predominated.

Direct students to review the list of roles to answer the following questions in their small groups. (Each group should write down their responses to hand in.)

Which three roles do you perceive to be least important our newspaper? Why?

Which three roles do you perceive to be top priorities for our newspaper? Why?

**Day Two:** Develop an overhead showing each group’s top three and bottom three responses.

Present the overhead to the entire class. Draw out significant overlap and glaring differences of opinion among the groups. Initiate a discussion as to why groups made the choices they did.

Ask each individual to vote by secret ballot for his or her top three priorities for our newspaper.

Have the editors compile the results and report the top three choices. Using these results, ask each student to create a publication mission statement that begins: “The mission of the (school paper) will be to ... (e.g., demonstrate leadership, advocate school pride, etc.)”

Have the editors review each submission and choose their favorite (parts from several) to become the staff mission statement. Post it in large letters in the newspaper production room.

#### **Materials needed:**

- “**Roles of High School Newspapers**” handout
- last year’s school newspaper issues (or exchange issues from other high schools)

Julie Summa  
April 10, 2006

**Assessment:** Each student will receive credit for submitting a group list of responses and for individually submitting a mission statement.

## Roles of High School Newspapers

Every newspaper, and especially a high school newspaper, has various roles to play along with stated or implied goals. All high school newspapers fill these roles to some degree, some more than others. Focusing efforts in specific areas will improve the newspaper's effectiveness and better serve its readers (and advertisers).

1. **News Reporting**
  - a. emphasizes coverage of what is happening in the school
  - b. based upon duty to readers' "right to know"
  - c. gatekeeper function that controls reader's access to news
2. **Matter of Record**
  - a. records the events and activities over the entire year
  - b. newspaper as future historical document
3. **School Spirit**
  - a. promotes the positive aspects of school events and activities
  - b. advocacy journalism – supporting a particular cause or perspective
4. **Entertainment**
  - a. showing the lighter, humorous side of student and school life
  - b. often perceived as what most people want, but not necessarily
5. **Reader Culture**
  - a. giving the readers what they want no matter what
  - b. can come into conflict with other roles
  - c. assumes a homogenous readership
6. **Professionalism and Educational Purposes**
  - a. newspaper imitates the best in the commercial press
  - b. adopting professional standards of journalism
  - c. lab for learning news production skills
7. **Leadership**
  - a. taking a stance to guide readers toward solutions to problems or conflicts
  - b. function of editorial and commentary
  - c. media as agenda-setter and political watchdog
8. **Public Forum**
  - a. place for readers to "sound off" on issues and concerns
  - b. outlet for student debate and dissent
  - c. media as a marketplace where people exchange ideas
9. **Community Image**
  - a. public relations function
  - b. newspaper as official publication
  - c. responding to the audience outside the school
10. **Interpretation and Analysis**
  - a. examining the impact of news on students' lives
  - b. push beyond the superficial and educate readers
  - c. time-intensive and difficult to pull off successfully

## **Lesson Four: Interviewing (1 day)**

**Objectives:** Students will discover the information normally given on the syllabus through interviewing trial by fire. Students should understand the importance of good interviewing and note taking skills.

**Lesson:** Teacher introduces him/herself and welcomes students to the class. Teacher explains that he/she will run the class, while the students will run the newspaper.

Teacher explains that the students need to know the very important information that is usually given to them in a syllabus, but the teacher will not be giving the students a syllabus.

The teacher explains that interviewing skills are among the most important in journalism; therefore, students will begin their journalism experience by interviewing the teacher to get the information normally given in a syllabus. Teacher recommends that students take notes.

**Note:** The teacher needs to have a clear idea of everything the students need to know.

If possible, it would be helpful to start questioning with students who have been in the class previously. (Even if this is the first time for the assignment, those students might feel more comfortable asking questions and will be more familiar with procedures from previous years.)

**Potential Problems and Solutions:**

The students miss important questions and, therefore, information.

Solution: The teacher can give hints to draw students to those questions.

The students will not ask any questions.

Solution: The teacher can write random, but important topics on the board (i.e. grades, assignments, positions, etc.) to encourage students to ask questions along those lines.

The class runs out of time before getting all the necessary information.

Solution: The teacher should have a written syllabus prepared to give students the next day.

### **Assessment**

The following day, the teacher hands out the written syllabus.

Students compare the written syllabus to the information they gathered in their notes the day before.

The teacher can lead a discussion on what information the students missed, how they missed that information and why they missed that information.

That discussion can lead into a discussion or lecture on the importance of journalism fundamentals.

## **Lesson Five: News Writing and Copy Editing (5-7 days)**

This nuts-and-bolts unit will provide basic skills for the new staff members and serve as a review for returning staffers.

### **Objectives**

Via handouts and the study of examples, students will be introduced to different story structures.

Students will prepare for and conduct an interview with a classmate in order to write an appropriately organized personality profile.

Students will practice crafting sentences in journalistic syntax.

Students will know how to attribute direct and indirect quotes to a source.

Students will be able to answer:

- What types of questions should be answered in a story?
- How are various types of stories organized?
- How is journalistic writing distinguished from writing an essay or a report?
- How are quotes used in a news or feature story?
- What leads to balanced, thorough reporting?
- How can the traditional 5Ws and H be expanded to provide more sophisticated coverage of an event or a person?
- When are various types of story organization (inverted pyramid, spot news, feature, profile, op/ed) appropriate to present the information available?
- What makes good journalistic reporting and writing?

### **Day One: (may take more than one class day):**

Introduce various story structures with defining handouts and story examples that will be discussed in small groups facilitated by experienced staffers. In a wrap-up discussion, the staff will explore various types of stories that we likely would be covering during the year and what structures might work best for them.

**Homework:** Students must find examples of an inverted pyramid news story and at least one other organizational pattern in the newspapers available to them at school and home. For each story, the student must write a brief discussion of its organizational structure.

### **Day Two:** Review need for observational skills.

Orchestrate a disruption by visitor unknown to the students, ask them to write a description of the person to test their powers of observation. Share descriptions, then debrief the exercise as a way of illustrating the importance of noticing details and using them in writing.

**Homework:** Prepare for the interview with staff colleague by doing background research about the individual and preparing questions for the interview.

### **Day Three:** Conduct classmate interviews during class.

With any remaining time, organize notes, fill out a Pre-write Story Planning sheet, and Select a focus for the profile.

Julie Summa  
April 10, 2006

Review attribution styles for direct and indirect quotations, as well as subject-verb-object syntax.

**Homework:** Students should interview at least one other person relevant to the profile subject with particular attention to the predetermined story focus (coach, teacher, parent, friend, etc.) in order to gain further information and balance. Draft the assigned profiles using interview notes and Pre-write Story Planning sheet. Be sure to include direct quotes, as well as indirect quotes. Determine if there are any holes that need to be filled.

**Day Four:** In a mini lesson, copy editing symbols will be introduced and a handout provided for student reference.

Following the mini lesson, students will plug any holes in their profile drafts. After finalizing the draft, students should get a peer edit for their draft, then make whatever revisions seem appropriate. After revising and proofing the draft, turn in to editors for review. **(May go onto Day Five.)**

**Day Five or Six (after editors have reviewed drafts):**

Sample profiles will be shared with the class to illustrate good technique and coverage.

#### **Assessment**

Homework assignments will receive credit for completion based on quality and thoughtfulness.

Participation points will be assigned for contributions made in class discussion  
Personality profile will be scored using the following rubric:

	Needs work	Satisfactory	Well Done
Thorough coverage of subject	1 2 3	4 5 6 7	8 9 10
Use of direct, indir. quotes	1 2	3	4 5
Journalistic writing style	1 2	3	4 5
TOTAL _____/20			

## Lesson Six: Writing Editorials (5-6 days)

**Objectives:** Students will complete a newspaper editorial as an exercise in persuasive writing.

Students often have opinions but cannot communicate them effectively. In order to write well, students need to learn to formulate strong arguments and defeat opposing arguments without losing focus.

**Day One:** Teacher and students read an example of an editorial from each paper. Class brainstorms topics of interest to the students. Students and teacher complete a 10 minute focus write in their journals to brainstorm on topics they might wish to develop.

**Day Two:** In groups of four students keep a list of the following:

- What topics are covered in each of the editorials?
- What purpose does each article seem to serve?

Teacher puts a list of "Purposes Editorials Serve" on the overhead and the class brainstorms the list.

Students form new pairs and identify/list on butcher paper three possible topics for a school paper for each "purpose" discussed in class. The writing on butcher paper should be large enough to be seen from 20 feet away. Post lists on wall.

Discuss characteristics of effective editorials.

**Day Three:** Students review the list of "Characteristics of good editorials." They decide if they need to add to or revise the list. (The main goal here is to refresh student memories of the list)

Students form groups of three to four and each group is assigned a group letter. Within each group, students should be assigned a number 1-4. Groups are assigned a "purpose" from the class list that was created while reading editorials.

Groups pick one topic listed under that purpose from the butcher paper lists on the wall.

**Day Four:** Students work for 20 minutes to research (internet or school library), outline, and plan a five-minute speech that logically achieves the purpose assigned.

Before speeches begin, review audience behavior and develop a short list of characteristics we will be looking for.

Discuss feedback techniques -- sandwiching improvement suggestions between compliments.

Draw letters from a hat to determine which group goes first. One member of the group delivers the speech as their group's letter and individual number is drawn.

Speech givers and their group receive feedback from peers and instructor about how well their speeches meet the requirements of an effective editorial, as discussed in class.

Students write the first draft of an editorial for the same topic as their speeches, incorporating any appropriate feedback they received

Julie Summa  
April 10, 2006

**Day Five-Six:** 10 minutes - Students trade editorials and give feedback.

20 minutes are given for additional online research and developing draft number two.

The final 30 minutes is spent smoothing over the final draft of the editorial. Students will turn in the final copy and their previous draft showing significant revision.

# Editorial Structure

## Purpose of an editorial:

- Primary: to persuade! If you can't take a stand, you do not have a good editorial
- Secondary: to inform and/or to entertain

## Topic Selection Criteria

- What's important?
- What's current?
- What's possible?
- Research- Important Step!
  - do not share ignorance!
  - use primary and secondary sources

## Structure

### Hook (Lead) has to invite readers in

30 words or less; 50 words or less OK if using anecdote, but split to 2 -3 paragraphs

## Four possible openings:

- anecdote- short story that makes a point
- question- usually rhetorical which tries to involve reader
- starting statistic/ fact
- description- to put the reader in a certain place/time

## Position Statement/Thesis Statement/ Main Idea

- one sentence statement on your position
- 2nd paragraph of story
- Concession
  - considers what the other side's strongest argument is and acknowledges it
  - example: "Certainly open campus can be dangerous for some students. However..."
  - makes this point quickly, then moves on to your position & details
- Supporting Details (one paragraph per detail, 1-2 sentences each)
  - each a short paragraph
  - put in order of your weakest to strongest arguments/ reasons/ details
  - finish with strongest
  - using facts, rather than opinion, for these details is much more effective
- Conclusion
- suggest a course of action
- remind reader of your opening hook in some way

**NOTE: Good editorials usually run 250-500 words in length. Brevity is powerful!**

## **Lesson Seven: Make the Most of Your Story with Research. (2 days)**

**Objectives:** Learn how research can enhance and illustrate a story and answer the question, “Why?”

- Why is research essential?
- Where can information be found?
- How do you ask the right questions?

### **Day One: Introduction to Research**

Divide class into small groups to read and examine various news stories. Each group answers questions about assigned article.

Groups share findings with class as part of discussion about the value of research in journalistic writing. (Resource #1)

### **Day Two: Research practice**

Each student (or small group of students) is given a “scenario” to explore.

Provide questions to prompt research for each scenario (#3)

Students brainstorm ideas for research and research-based secondary coverage, i.e. bio boxes, timelines, graphs and charts.

### **Assessment**

Scenario questions are answered by each student (even if a member of a group) illustrating the process of finding possible research ideas and sources. (25 pts)

Students conduct research individually and turn in information with attribution of sources and at least two ideas for secondary coverage. (100 pts)

### **Materials**

Copies of several different articles showing good examples of research

Basic questions to answered about each article (Handout #1)

Various research “scenarios” (Handout #2)

Questions to be answered about scenarios research (Handout #3)

A list of suggested research sources based on your school’s resources

## Research Sources

### Search Engines

Alta Vista - [www.altavista.digital.com](http://www.altavista.digital.com)

Yahoo - [www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com)

Windweaver's Search Guide - [www.windweaver.com/searchguide.htm](http://www.windweaver.com/searchguide.htm)

Search Engine Watch - [searchenginewatch.com](http://searchenginewatch.com)

### News on the Web

Hot News Research - [www.poynter.org/research/](http://www.poynter.org/research/) (the page listed on the handout was no longer in service, but this is the Poynter research page)

News Works - [www.newsworks.com](http://www.newsworks.com) -(no longer in service)

Newspaper Archives on the Web - [sunsite.unc.edu/slanews/internet/archives.html](http://sunsite.unc.edu/slanews/internet/archives.html)

AJR Newslink - [www.newslink.org/news.html](http://www.newslink.org/news.html)

Editor and Publisher Online - [www.mediainfo.com/ephome/npaper/nphtm/online.htm](http://www.mediainfo.com/ephome/npaper/nphtm/online.htm)

News Index - [www.newsindex.com](http://www.newsindex.com)

News Hub - [www.newshub.com](http://www.newshub.com)

### Business Information

Edgar Database - [www.sec.gov/edgarhp.htm](http://www.sec.gov/edgarhp.htm)

Stern Business School at NYU - [edgar.stern.nyu.edu](http://edgar.stern.nyu.edu) (directs to <http://www.edgar-online.com/>)

WSJ Briefing Books - [interactive.wsj.com/edition/resources/documents/bbsearch.htm](http://interactive.wsj.com/edition/resources/documents/bbsearch.htm)

PR Newswire - [www.prnewswire.com](http://www.prnewswire.com)

Hoover's Company Capsules - [hoovweb.hoovers.com/cd\\_home.html](http://hoovweb.hoovers.com/cd_home.html)

Wall Street Research Net - [www.wsrn.com/](http://www.wsrn.com/)

### Government and Demographic Information

Thomas - [thomas.loc.gov](http://thomas.loc.gov)

Harden Political InfoSystem - [www.com/hpi/us50/index.html](http://www.com/hpi/us50/index.html)

Texas Legislative Information Online - [www.capitol.state.tx.us](http://www.capitol.state.tx.us)

Census Lookup - [cedr.lbl.gov/cdrom/doc/lookup\\_doc.html](http://cedr.lbl.gov/cdrom/doc/lookup_doc.html) (Not available, try <http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet>)

Bureau of the Census - [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

Texas State Data Center - [txsdc.tamu.edu/](http://txsdc.tamu.edu/)

### Experts and People Finders

Liszt, the mailing list directory - [liszt.com](http://liszt.com) (Now Topica)

Profnet - [www.profnet.com](http://www.profnet.com)

WhoWhere - [www.whowhere.com](http://www.whowhere.com)

Deja News - [www.dejanews.com](http://www.dejanews.com)

Tile Net/Lists - [www.tile.net/tile/listserv/index.html](http://www.tile.net/tile/listserv/index.html)

Directory of Scholarly and Professional E-Conferences - [www.kovacs.com/directory.html](http://www.kovacs.com/directory.html)

List of Lists - [catalog.com/vivian/interest-group-search.html](http://catalog.com/vivian/interest-group-search.html)

L-Soft International - [www.lsoft.com/catalist.html](http://www.lsoft.com/catalist.html)

Mail List WWW Gateway - [www.netspace.org/cgi-bin/lwgate](http://www.netspace.org/cgi-bin/lwgate)

Switchboard - [www.switchboard.com](http://www.switchboard.com)

InfoSpace - [www.infospaceinc.com](http://www.infospaceinc.com)

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April 10, 2006

### **Homework**

Findlaw - Internet Legal Resources - [www.findlaw.com](http://www.findlaw.com)  
MedWeb: Databases - [www.medweb.emory.edu/MedWeb/](http://www.medweb.emory.edu/MedWeb/)  
MedWeb Plus - [www.medwebplus.com/](http://www.medwebplus.com/)  
Medicine Net - [www.medicinenet.com](http://www.medicinenet.com)  
The Argus Clearinghouse - [www.clearinghouse.net](http://www.clearinghouse.net)  
FAQ Finder - [ps.superb.net/FAQ](http://ps.superb.net/FAQ)  
The Internet Movie Database - [us.imdb.com](http://us.imdb.com)  
Cool Calculators - [www-sci.lib.uci.edu/HSG/RefCalculators.html](http://www-sci.lib.uci.edu/HSG/RefCalculators.html)  
First Amendment  
Freedom Forum First Amendment Center - [www.freedomforum.org/first/](http://www.freedomforum.org/first/)  
First Amendment Center - [town.hall.org/places/spj](http://town.hall.org/places/spj) (No longer available, see  
[spj.org/foia/](http://spj.org/foia/))  
National Freedom of Information Coalition - [www.reporters.net](http://www.reporters.net)  
Reporters' Committee For Freedom of the Press - [www.rcfp.org/](http://www.rcfp.org/)  
Nonprofit Organizations  
Guidestar - [www.guidestar.org](http://www.guidestar.org)  
National Center for Charitable Statistics - [nccs.urban.org](http://nccs.urban.org)  
National Charities Information Bureau - [www.give.org](http://www.give.org)  
Better Business Bureau's Philanthropic Advisory Services - [www.bbb.org/about/pas.asp](http://www.bbb.org/about/pas.asp)  
The Foundation Center - [www.fdncenter.org](http://www.fdncenter.org)  
IRS Tax Exempt Status - [www.irs.treas.gov/tax\\_stats/exempt.html](http://www.irs.treas.gov/tax_stats/exempt.html)  
Council of Foundations - [www.cof.org](http://www.cof.org)  
Chronicle of Philanthropy - [philanthropy.com](http://philanthropy.com)  
Independent Sector - [www.indepsec.org](http://www.indepsec.org)  
National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy - [www.ncrp.org](http://www.ncrp.org)  
National Center for Nonprofit Boards - [www.ncnb.org](http://www.ncnb.org)  
California Charity Information - [caag.state.ca.us/charities](http://caag.state.ca.us/charities)  
Maryland Charity Information - [www.sos.state.md.us/sos/charity/html/cod.html#donor](http://www.sos.state.md.us/sos/charity/html/cod.html#donor)  
(other states may list similar information on their state government Web sites)  
Investigative Reporters and Editors Resource Center - [www.ire.org/resourcecenter](http://www.ire.org/resourcecenter)

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April 10, 2006

## Analyzing Research from the Newspaper

What is the basic information:

Who:

What:

When:

Where:

How:

What is the "WHY?" of the story?

List 4 other "WHY?" questions that could have been asked about this story:

Where could you go to find the answers to these questions?

What are some ideas for secondary coverage? Boxes, timelines, graphs, charts

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April 10, 2006

## Research Scenario Notes

Based on your scenario, answer the following questions. List your ideas as completely as possible.

What are the basic facts: 5 W's

What are five basic questions that need to be answered about this story?

What are five MORE questions that can be asked about this story?

What are five MORE questions that can be asked about this story?

Choose three of the most compelling questions and list five places you might find information about each.

What are three secondary coverage ideas related to your three favorites and where would you find the data and information? (you do NOT have to create the graphics, only the idea)

After completing the above questions, DO YOUR RESEARCH, COMPILER IT WITH ATTRIBUTION AND SUBMIT BY \_\_\_\_\_.

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April 10, 2006

## Research Scenarios

### RESEARCH SCENARIOS

The state passes a law that all high school students must be involved in community service in order to graduate.

The president visits our school.

A graduate of our school wins \$30 million in the lottery.

A tornado touches down in our town during the weekend. There is no school to return to on Monday.

Saddam Hussein is found innocent.

Because of homeland security, teenagers can no longer own cell phones.

A serious automobile accident occurs on school grounds.

The drinking age is lowered to 16.

## **Lesson Eight: Searching for Stories (project over time)**

This activity will pull all the skills in the previous seven lessons together in a final project.

**Objectives:** Recognize that stories are everywhere. It's the recognition of a good story that is the challenge. Define what is and isn't a good news story, develop means and routines for finding stories

### **Activities:**

**Define:** news, timeliness, prominence, proximity, conflict, impact, human interest, beat, localize, futures file, deadline, budget, news hole, wire service, tip, service piece.

The students will start a clipping file from the newspaper of stories that may be of interest or have a school angle in the future.

The students will familiarize themselves with search engines such as Google, Altavista, Dogpile, etc. Student will learn to pare down broad subjects by doing a boolean search for specific information.

The students will do an Internet search of hometown name, looking for anything that might appear as unusual or interesting.

After reading the chapter and doing the Internet search, the students must come up with ten story ideas to pitch to the class. The class will determine if it is a story worth pursuing or not.

Some things to consider when looking for stories:

- Go to public library and search the hometown newspaper, going back as far as the archives can possibly go.
- As the student does so, he/she needs to keep a log of interesting stories that catches his or her attention.
- See if there are any follow-ups in the newspaper on those stories. Is there a story that appears to have just left the reader hanging?
- Contact the local sheriff's office and ask about cold cases.
- Talk to adults who have lived in the area for a long time. Ask them about the most interesting news event that happened in the town since they've lived there.
- Ask if there is a news item that just faded away without ever seeming to get closure. If so, there's a story.
- Go to the courthouse and look up recent filings. There may be something there of interest.
- Talk to teacher and administrators about possible news stories or upcoming events that need to be covered.

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April 10, 2006

**Assessment:**

Once the research is done and the class has determined what would be the best angle for the stories, the student needs to write the story following all journalistic guidelines. This will be turned in with the final at the end of the year.

# 5Ws and an H – Pre and Post Unit Test

**Directions:** Answer the following questions, independently, to the best of your ability.

1. Generally, a news story is written in what structure?
  - a) pyramid
  - b) chronological order
  - c) inverted pyramid
  - d) narrative form
  
2. The lead of the story is:
  - a) The first paragraph or the first few paragraphs
  - b) The theme of the story
  - c) The conclusion
  - d) The tone of the story
  
3. A basic news lead which gives the reader the most important information in a capsulized statement is called a/an:
  - a) graphic lead
  - b) narrative lead
  - c) novelty lead
  - d) summary lead
  
4. The following lead features which of the Ws or H?  
President Bush put the finishing touches Monday on a major speech on fighting drugs by attacking both supply and demand.
  - a) what
  - b) why
  - c) who
  - d) where
  
5. The following lead features which of the Ws and H?  
Thousands of people on Kodiak Island and the Alaska Peninsula fled to high ground Monday after a strong earthquake prompted a tsunami warning, but only a small sea wave materialized.
  - a) what
  - b) indefinite who
  - c) who
  - d) where
  
6. The following lead features which of the Ws or H?  
A scuba diver attacked by a blue shark he was videotaping said Monday, "I didn't feel him bite. I just looked over and his mouth was around my arm."
  - a) indefinite who
  - b) who
  - c) what
  - d) when
  
7. The following lead features which of the Ws or H?  
Settling national goals in public education for the first time is the goal of President Bush and the nation's governors. The national and state executives want to restructure how schools are run in every state.

- a) what
- b) who
- c) why
- d) when

8. The following lead features which of the following Ws or H?

In the shadow of the Statue of Liberty, President George Bush and Soviet Secretary-General Mikhail Gorbachev pledged to reduce nuclear and chemical warfare stockpiles.

- a) when
- b) who
- c) how
- d) where

9. The following lead features which of the Ws or H?

In haste to get to the bedside of his dying mother this morning, Walter Davis, a truck driver with Southern Gas Company, was critically injured when his sedan crashed into a parked car at Fourth Street and Flowers Ave.

- a) who
- b) why
- c) when
- d) where

10. The following lead features which of the Ws or H?

When defense industry executives gather to talk about business these days, their cocktail of choice may be Maalox. As Congress debates how to cut the Pentagon budget, one outcome is virtually certain: programs will be abandoned and assembly lines shut down.

- a) where
- b) who
- c) when
- d) what

11. The following lead features which of the Ws or H?

Ferdinand Marcos, a man for whom political power was life, died Thursday but the end really began on the tumultuous night of Feb. 25, 1986. With sporadic gunfire rattling in Manila's streets, the Philippine president and his family were hustled out of Malacanang Palace and onto U.S. military helicopters bound for humiliating exile in Honolulu.

- a) why
- b) who
- c) what
- d) when

12. The following lead features which of the Ws or H?

After a marathon journey of 12 years and more than 4 billion miles, the remarkable Voyager II space probe is finally approaching its final port of call. Having made historic fly-bys of Jupiter in 1979, Saturn in 1981, and Uranus in 1986, it is poised for an Aug. 24 rendezvous with Neptune, the most distant of the giant planets.

- a) where
- b) who
- c) when
- d) what

13. The following lead features which of the Ws or H?

By flunking every course and missing 62 days of class, Bubba Snively gravely endangered his eligibility for high school basketball.

- a) where

- b) who
- c) how
- d) why

14. The following lead features which of the Ws or H?

A team of physicians performed a Caesarean section and emergency surgery simultaneously on a woman who had been stabbed in the heart Wednesday, saving the baby girl before the mother died.

- a) indefinite who
- b) what
- c) when
- d) how

15. The following lead features which of the Ws or H?

Mounting fears that Asia's crisis is spreading to the USA's back yard in Latin America rocked Wall Street Thursday.

- a) where
- b) how
- c) why
- d) what

16. The following lead features which of the Ws or H?

A former Harris County jail inmate suspected of stalking actress Justine Bateman of the television series "Family Ties," held police at bay with a loaded gun for 2 1/2 hours Wednesday before being captured, police said.

- a) where
- b) who
- c) why
- d) what

17. The following lead features which of the Ws or H?

The assault on baseball's homerun record has been a smash in Las Vegas, although Mark McGwire has taken away some of the suspense--and action.

- a) how
- b) what
- c) who
- d) why

18. The following lead features which of the Ws or H?

In a sign of political trouble lying ahead, Sen. Joseph Lieberman, a moderate Democrat and longtime ally of President Clinton, harshly rebuked the president Thursday for his "immoral" relationship with Monica Lewinsky and for lying about it for seven months.

- a) how
- b) who
- c) why
- d) when

19. The following lead features which of the Ws or H?

A Corpus Christi real estate agent has been sentenced to almost 500 years in state prison after he retracted his "not guilty" plea and admitted sexually molesting five pre-teen girls and using them to produce child pornography.

- a) why
- b) what
- c) where
- d) who

Julie Summa  
April 10, 2006

20. The following lead features which of the Ws or H?

A film crew, technicians and dozens of spectators gathered at the site of President Kennedy's assassination Thursday morning for a laser-beam experiment retracing the trajectory of the fatal bullet for a TV documentary. Associated Television International is producing the film to be shown on the TNT cable channel in November. The makers plan to compare the results of the experiment with the data submitted to the Warren Commission.

- a) what
- b) why
- c) how
- d) who

## All About Leads

### **What is a lead?**

A lead is a simple, clear statement that makes up the first paragraph or two of your story. It advertises what is coming in the story.

### **What is the first step in writing a lead?**

The first step is determining a story's relevance.

### **How do I determine a story's relevance?**

Ask "So what?" or "Who cares?"

### **What are the six basic questions that every story must answer?**

Who

What

When

Where

Why

How

### **How long should a lead be?**

Leads should be short, usually fewer than 25 words. It can vary depending on style of story.

### **What's an inverted pyramid?**

The organization of a news story in which information is arranged in descending order of importance.

### **What are the different types of leads?**

There are many, but what follows are five types of leads:

Immediate identification: This lead focuses on the "who" when it comes to the six basic questions. Use this approach when someone important is making news. For example:

**President George W. Bush ate a cheeseburger and fries with students Friday during a visit to (school).**

Delayed identification: In this lead, the "who" is not immediately identified by name. Instead, the "who" is identified by an occupation, city or job title. Use this approach when the person involved has little name recognition among readers.

**A cafeteria worker at Andrew Jackson High won \$2.5 million Friday in the state lottery.**

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April 10, 2006

**Summary:** The lead in this case is a synopsis of two or more actions. Reporters who deal with several important elements may choose to sum up what happened rather than highlight a specific action. This is one type of lead where a general statement is preferable to a specific action.

**Multiple elements:** This lead reports on two or more newsworthy elements. In some stories, choosing one theme is too restrictive. A multiple-element lead allows the reporter to work more information into the first paragraph. (Use sparingly.)

**Leads with flair:** Use this type of lead when you want to emphasize novelty. It deviates slightly from the inverted pyramid approach.

### **What should I avoid in a lead?**

There are no hard and fast rules, but remember:

- Too many numbers can bog down a lead. You can tell readers how the numbers will affect them in your lead then provide details later in the story. For example, if prom tickets were \$50 per person last year and the price increased to \$75 per person this year, your lead could say:  
**Seniors shouldn't spend that extra \$25 dollars on appetizers and dessert for dinner before prom-they'll need it to pay for tickets. The student council voted Friday to raise the price of prom tickets.**
- A quote lead may not be the best choice. Quote leads often lack context. The reader doesn't know who is speaking or why it matters.
- Question Leads! Don't start off with a question, that's too easy and the reader knows it.
- Try not to start with dates, times or places ... unless those are the most important news. Start with people and what they are doing or have done.

#### **Bad Lead**

On Friday, July 15, 2001, three students won a statewide choral competition.

#### **Good Lead**

Three Our High juniors took home \$500 and top honors Friday in a statewide choral contest.

Adapted from material written at the High School Journalism Institute at Hampton University in Hampton, Va., 2001.