



# **CREATING A CLASSROOM NEWSPAPER**

**Co-sponsored by the Newspaper Association of America Foundation  
and the International Reading Association**

# To the Teacher

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## Join us for NIE Week

Celebrate Newspaper In Education Week with an adventure that will help your students become aware of the world around them, make decisions, plan with their classmates and become producers as well as consumers of the written word.

NIE Week will transform students into news readers...news gatherers...and news writers. *Creating a Classroom Newspaper* enables you to combine reading and writing activities every day during NIE Week. The week's lessons culminate with student production of a classroom newspaper. From kindergarten to high school, students will become newspaper publishers.

Newspaper In Education Week is sponsored at the national level by the Newspaper Association of America Foundation and the International Reading Association. The week is celebrated by classroom teachers in the United States and around the world. NIE programs are offered by more than 950 newspapers in the United States and Canada.

The goal of Newspaper In Education is to introduce educators to the use of the newspaper as a powerful and cost-effective instructional tool. Newspapers are being used by thousands of teachers to improve students' reading skills, to extend knowledge in the content areas and to enhance thinking skills. The newspaper provides opportunities for students to see writing and reading connections. It bridges the gap between school-sponsored writing and writing in the real world.

## Rationale for Creating a Classroom Newspaper

The activities in *Creating a Classroom Newspaper* are based on current research findings in reading and writing. Students who understand the structure of the text they are using read with more understanding. Newspaper text structure is predictable. It is concise and well-written. It can become a model for student writing. Students who write will read. Newspaper In Education activities help students practice skills they learn in language arts programs. Newspaper activities provide many opportunities for students to collaborate with their classmates. Students working together to achieve a common goal develop social skills as they learn to accept and appreciate differences in others.

Here are some pointers to help make your NIE Week program more meaningful:

- Allow time for free reading of the newspaper every day.
- Instruct students in the use of writing folders to store and organize their newspaper writing activities.
- Collect examples of styles of newspaper writing.
- Refer to the writing styles and genre of the newspaper frequently in your teaching.
- Read interesting news stories to your students every day.
- Talk with your students about the news. Follow one story for several days with them.
- Use the newspaper as a stimulus for stories your students write.
- Invite newspaper personnel to visit the school and talk to your students.

- Acquaint students with the use of journals so that writing becomes a part of the classroom routine.
- Provide a safe, predictable environment where students can write every day.
- Newspapers can be used as an integral part of the instructional program throughout the year, not only during NIE Week.

### **Organization of the Lessons**

This guide is designed for five days of instruction. It allows your class to practice, prepare and create its own newspaper. Each day's work has been organized with a teacher's lesson plan, student worksheets labeled *Reporter's Notebook* and ideas for additional activities called *On Assignment*. These components are described below.

- **Teacher's lesson plan**  
Each lesson introduces the teacher to the newspaper element to be studied. Student objectives are stated next, followed by a list of pre-organizing strategies. Next, learning activities outline steps to help students learn about newspaper writing or design. The final section directs students to take information they have studied and apply it to their own classroom newspaper.
- ***Reporter's Notebook* – Student worksheets**  
Student worksheets accompany each lesson plan. The instructions are written at three levels of complexity, so you can use the worksheet that is most appropriate for your students. The differentiated worksheets allow you to use the activities with special education students as well as those in gifted and talented programs, and with elementary, intermediate and advanced students. The level of each worksheet is indicated by the number of pencils shown in the lower-right corner of the worksheet.
- ***On Assignment* – Content-related activities**  
Activities presented here provide additional experiences for your students as news gatherers. Each activity can be used to help students create portions of the newspaper. The levels are only a guide for your students. You may have students of varying proficiency levels in your class. We urge you to adapt these ideas to meet your students' needs.
- **Checklist for Production**  
Suggestions for putting your classroom newspaper together are presented in checklist form. Alternative ideas for production also are listed.
- **Newspaper Glossary**  
A list of newspaper terms is included. Copy this page for your students' newspaper writing folders. Use these terms as appropriate with the daily newspaper lesson. List them on charts to describe the newspaper. Learning the language of the newspaper is essential and can be fun.

# Lesson #1      Planning the Newspaper

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## Teacher Background:

Your daily newspaper provides information on many topics in a variety of ways. News stories tell you what's happening on local, state, national and international scenes. Feature stories expand your knowledge of social issues and events. Opinion columns and editorials provide arguments and debate on controversial topics. Advertising, which is space paid for by stores and businesses, provides important information about goods and services available in your area. Newspapers have several objectives: to inform, interpret and entertain.

**Purpose:**      Students will:

1. Identify the purposes of a newspaper;
2. Define vocabulary related to newspapers;
3. Discover different kinds of information found in the newspaper;
4. Name the sections in a newspaper; and
5. Determine the format for the classroom newspaper.

## Before you start:

**Note:** Before every newspaper lesson, students should have newspapers to read. They should be allowed time to browse through their newspapers and to read what they like. Have students become familiar with the newspaper by going on a newspaper scavenger hunt.

1. Prepare a list of items students will have to locate in the newspaper, such as a headline, a sale price, a comic strip with children as characters, a sports score, something to eat, etc.
2. Let students spend 10-15 minutes with their newspapers. Divide them into groups; give each group a scavenger list and tell the groups to locate and circle the scavenger hunt items in their newspapers. The first group to locate all of the items correctly can win a prize.

## Learning activities:

### Level 1

1. Give students marking pens and direct them to write on the first page of their newspapers, labeling the parts of the page listed below. Explain the terms as you identify them (see glossary at the end of this guide).

<i>Flag</i>	<i>Dateline</i>	<i>Cutline or caption</i>
<i>News story</i>	<i>Byline</i>	<i>Index</i>
<i>Headline</i>	<i>Photo</i>	
2. Divide the students into groups. Have each group discuss the purposes of newspapers. List ideas on the board.
3. Explore the sections of the newspaper with your students. Help them categorize the types of sections.

### Levels II & III

1. Introduce the vocabulary of the newspaper by having students circle and label the following terms on the front page (see glossary at the end of this guide).

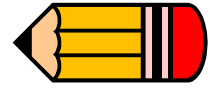
<i>Flag</i>	<i>Ear (if applicable)</i>	<i>Headline</i>
<i>News story</i>	<i>Dateline</i>	<i>Byline</i>
<i>Jump</i>	<i>Cutline</i>	<i>Wire service</i>
2. Have students name as many different kinds of information as they can that can be found in the newspaper.
3. Have students list on the board sections with special titles, such as: *Sports, Daily Record, Business/Finance, Daily Log, Police Log, Editorial Page.*

### **Putting it all together:**

1. Introduce the idea of creating a class newspaper for NIE Week. Generate enthusiasm for the project.
2. Plan the sections you will have in your newspaper and who will be the editor for each section.
3. Discuss a name for your newspaper. You might hold elections to determine the newspaper name.
4. Establish the details of newspaper production: format, story responsibility, deadlines, etc., by completing the *Reporter's Notebook* page for your level.
5. **Note:** Primary teachers may want to make a wall chart detailing the class newspaper plans. The *Reporter's Notebook* page for Level II could be used as a model for a wall chart.

# Reporter's Notebook – Planning the Newspaper

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## To the newspaper writer:

You will design your class newspaper.

## Your assignment:

Decide what your newspaper will be like.  
Fill in the blanks below.

Our newspaper will have \_\_\_\_\_ pages.

These people will write stories:

\_\_\_\_\_

These people will draw pictures:

\_\_\_\_\_

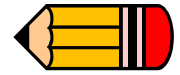
Our newspaper will be ready by:

\_\_\_\_\_

The name of our newspaper will be:



# Reporter's Notebook – Planning the Newspaper



## To the newspaper writer:

You will design a classroom newspaper.

## Your assignment:

Your job is to decide what your newspaper will look like, what news you will include and who will do the various jobs to create your newspaper. In teams of no more than four people, answer the following questions. Write your answers in the spaces below.

### PLANNING OUR NEWSPAPER

What will we call our newspaper? \_\_\_\_\_

Who will get our newspaper? \_\_\_\_\_

(Your class alone? The entire school? Parents? Teachers? School staff?)

Who will decide where to put the stories on the pages? \_\_\_\_\_

Who will check our stories for spelling, grammar and punctuation? \_\_\_\_\_

### HOW WILL OUR NEWSPAPER LOOK?

How big will the pages be?  8 ½ x 11     8 ½ x 14     Other \_\_\_\_\_

How many pages will we have? \_\_\_\_\_

How many columns will we put on a page?  2     3     Other \_\_\_\_\_

How will we get our stories ready for the newspaper?

- Write them by hand     Type them on a typewriter  
 Use a computer and printer

How many pages will contain “news”? \_\_\_\_\_

How many pages will contain ads? \_\_\_\_\_

### SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS

Who will write news stories?

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Who will write feature stories, puzzles or editorials?

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Who will make up ads?

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Who will do the artwork for stories and ads?

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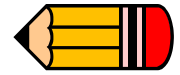
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### DEADLINE TIME!

Our stories and ads must be finished by:



# Reporter's Notebook – Planning the Newspaper



## To the newspaper writer:

You will design and organize your own newspaper.

## Your assignment:

Your job is to establish the specifications of your newspaper before you begin gathering the news. Complete the following information about the organization of your newspaper.

## Name of your newspaper:

What is the nature of your market? Who will be reading this newspaper?  
(Your class alone? The entire school? Parents? Teachers? School staff?)

**Editor(s)-in-Chief** (Responsibilities include designing the newspaper layout and deciding what stories to run, where to place ads, etc.)

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**Copy Editors** (Responsibilities include proofreading stories for spelling, grammar and punctuation; writing headlines.)

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## PRODUCTION/DESIGN DECISIONS:

**Page size** (for example: 8 ½ x 11", 8 ½ x 14", 11x17") \_\_\_\_\_

**Number of pages:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Number of columns:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Type of production:**     Typewritten     Computer     Photocopied     Printed

**Who will prepare materials for production?** (keyboarding) \_\_\_\_\_

**Who will be responsible for reproduction?** (photocopying, printing) \_\_\_\_\_

**Editorial/advertising ratio:** \_\_\_\_\_ % editorial    \_\_\_\_\_ % advertising

## EDITORIAL DECISIONS:

### Type of news sections:

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### Writers assigned:

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## ADVERTISING DECISIONS:

### Type of advertising

Products/stores  
Classified

### Ad designers assigned:

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## ART/DESIGN DECISIONS

### Task

Design newspaper flag  
Locate or design art for stories

### Art designers assigned:

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## **DEADLINES!!!!**

Date advertisements must be completed \_\_\_\_\_

Date news and feature stories must be completed \_\_\_\_\_

Date news and feature stories will be prepared for printing \_\_\_\_\_

Date newspaper will be sent to printer \_\_\_\_\_




Date newspaper will be distributed \_\_\_\_\_






# ON ASSIGNMENT...PLANNING THE NEWSPAPER

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## Level I

-  Use the index to locate information and to practice number order. Make up a scavenger hunt using the index – ask other students to locate specific section page numbers. Find sections of the newspaper and write down the page numbers in each section in proper order. Discuss with other students how to find information in a newspaper and how many pages are in each section. Make an index for your classroom newspaper. (Math, study skills)
-  Look at the weather information in your newspaper. Locate where you live on a weather map and find the temperature for the day in your area. Make a weather map for your newspaper. (Science, math, study skills, language arts)
-  Cut out the heading or section name – sports, style, etc. – for each section of your local newspaper. Name other words that describe what is included in each section. Make headings for the sections you want in *your* newspaper. (Newspaper, language arts)

## Level II

-  Collect several headlines from the newspaper. Then add words to the headlines to change them into narrative sentences. Next, work with one or two other students to practice writing headlines. Each of you should write three sentences about something that happened in school. Then, exchange papers and let another student rewrite your sentences in headline form.
-  Skim the newspaper for specific information. Create a five-item scavenger hunt for your classmates using the index of your newspaper. Plan an index for your classroom newspaper. (Study skills, math)
-  Survey the newspaper for datelines and list all of the places named. Include city and country. If the country name is not available in the story, look up the information. Create a chart listing all of the datelines and where they are located. Mark them on a map. Write datelines for stories in your classroom newspaper. (Social studies, study skills)

## Level III

-  Measure the number of column inches of space devoted to international news in your newspaper (one column inch = one newspaper column wide by one inch). Next, measure the number of column inches given to national and local news. Determine the percentage of news of each type based on the total column inches. Then decide the percentage of space your classroom newspaper should allocate for international, national and local news. (Math)
-  Take a survey of your classmates to see what kinds of special interest columns or features they would like to see in the newspaper – music reviews, television information, movie reviews, food stories, etc. Ask each student to suggest three feature ideas. Tally the number of votes for each feature. Select the top five for your newspaper. Design a section heading or logo for each section. (Math, social studies, art)
-  Estimate the amount of time and material it will take to produce your classroom newspaper. Calculate the pieces of paper you will use (pages per issue times number of issues). Calculate the number of student-hours required (determine the number of hours each student will use; add all of the student-hours together). The results of these calculations could be used as a news story in the classroom newspaper. (Math)

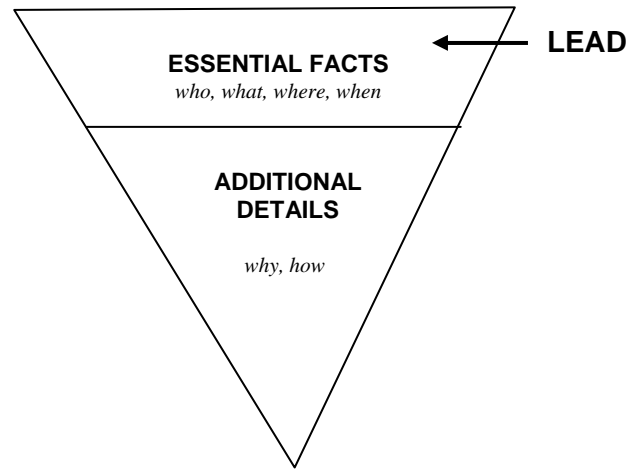
## Lesson #2 Writing News Stories

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### Teacher background:

This lesson develops two concepts related to news writing:

- (1) Stores are written in the **inverted pyramid style** – four of the essential “5 W” elements usually are contained in the **lead paragraph(s)** of the story. Supporting information follows.
- (2) Certain characteristics of an event determine its newsworthiness. These are listed in the lesson below.



### Purpose: Students will:

1. Identify the essential elements of a news story: *who, what, when, where, why* and *how*;
2. Understand the inverted pyramid structure of a news story;
3. Learn the criteria for newsworthiness (what makes a story news?);
4. Choose news topics for their own newspaper;
5. Write a news story for the classroom newspaper.

### Before you start:

Encourage students to think about what information they would want to know about a news event. Give them a hypothetical situation about something that would have special interest for them.

1. Pretend they hear a loud crash outside the classroom. Through the window they see a yellow school bus, a crumpled passenger car and two people arguing.
2. Ask them what they want to know – list questions on the board as students state them.
3. Mark those questions that ask the “5 Ws” in newspapers: **who, what, where, when, why/how**.
4. Finally, ask students why they would want information about the accident. (Possible responses would include: Because it’s near the school; it might involve someone they know; someone could be hurt).

### Learning activities:

#### Level 1

1. Develop the meanings of four of the “w” words – *who, what, when* and *where*, using examples in oral language and in text.
2. Read the first sentence of a news story to students. Give students cards with the “w” words on them. Ask them to hold up the right card when they hear their word used in the story.
3. Ask students to use the newspaper to find words and pictures that describe each “w” word. Place them under the correct heading on a chart.

#### Levels II & III

1. Develop an awareness of the text structure of a news story. Demonstrate the inverted pyramid on a news story.
2. Ask students to draw an inverted pyramid over several news stories. Discover the answers to *who, what, where* and *when* within the triangles.
3. Have students suggest the *why* or *how* of the story.

## Lesson #2 Writing News Stories, continued

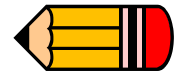
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4. Introduce students to the criteria for selecting a newsworthy story. Write each category name on the board as you explain it to the class.
  - Timeliness** – events that are happening right now, or news that is of interest to readers right now
  - Proximity** – events or situations that occur near the reader
  - Uniqueness** – very unusual events or situations
  - Impact** – news that will affect a large number of readers
  - Prominence** – well-known people or groups of people
  - Suspense** – events, such as disasters, where the outcome is not known
  - Conflict** – people or groups opposing a situation or other groups of people
  - Emotions** – love, hate, fear, jealousy, horror, pity
  - Progress** – advances in science, medicine or technology
  - Importance** – important to the reader’s life, family, education, health or well-being
5. Assign each category to a group of students; have them locate news stories in the newspaper that fit the categories they have been assigned. Have students explain their findings.

### Putting it all together

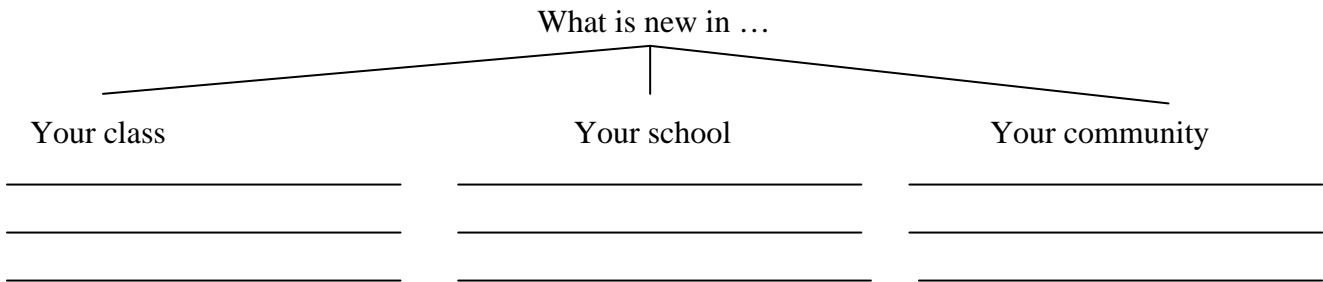
1. Have students generate ideas for their own newspaper.
2. Let students create their own news stories on the appropriate *Reporter’s Notebook* page.
3. Organize the news stories into categories such as class news, school news and community news.
4. Direct students to write headlines for their news stories.

# Reporter's Notebook – Writing News Stories



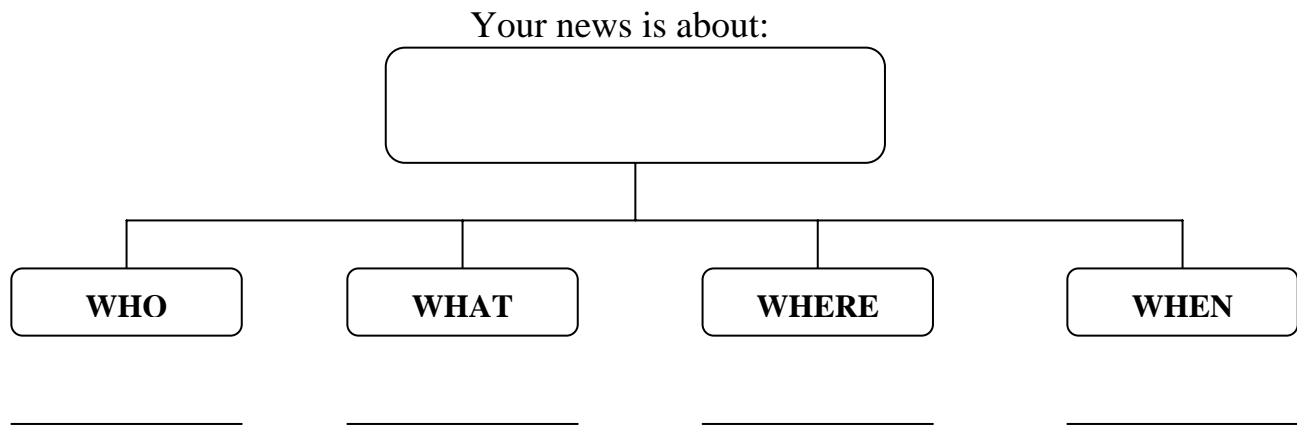
To the newspaper writer:

Here is one way to help you find the news.



Your Assignment:

Take one news happening and get ready to write.



Use the WHO, WHAT, WHERE and WHEN in one sentence. This will be your lead sentence.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Finish your story.

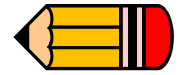
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# Reporter's Notebook – Writing News Stories



## To the newspaper writer:

You will write a news story for your newspaper.

## Your assignment:

Your job is to find a subject that is “newsworthy.” You can write about things that are happening in your classroom or somewhere else in the school. Plan your story by filling in the spaces below.

**My story is about:** \_\_\_\_\_

## This story is important because:

- It is about something that is happening now.
- It is happening here in our classroom or school.
- It is about something unusual.
- It is about an important person.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## Answer these questions about your story:

**Who** is the story about? \_\_\_\_\_

**What** happened? \_\_\_\_\_

**When** did this happen? \_\_\_\_\_

**Where** did this happen? \_\_\_\_\_

**Why** is it important? \_\_\_\_\_

## Write some details about your story:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Write your lead or opening sentence:

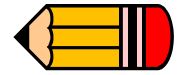
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Finish your story:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Reporter's Notebook – Writing News Stories



## To the newspaper writer:

You will write a news story for your newspaper.

## Your assignment:

Your job is to find a subject that is “newsworthy.” Use the categories you discussed in class to help you decide on a good topic. Complete the following information:

**Subject of the story** \_\_\_\_\_

## This story is important because of:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Timeliness</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Suspense</b>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Proximity</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Conflict</b>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Uniqueness</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Emotions</b>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Impact</b>     | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Progress</b>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Prominence</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Importance</b> |

## Basic information about the story

**Who** is the story about? \_\_\_\_\_

**What** happened? \_\_\_\_\_

**When** did this happen? \_\_\_\_\_

**Where** did this happen? \_\_\_\_\_

**Why** is it important? \_\_\_\_\_

## Some relevant details about your story:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Lead paragraph of the story:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Supporting paragraphs of the story:




\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_






# ON ASSIGNMENT...WRITING NEWS STORIES

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## Level I

-  Clip several pictures from the sports section of the newspaper. Separate the photos from the captions. Write new captions under the pictures. You might also draw a picture about a sports happening in school and write a caption to go with the picture. (Language arts, social studies, art)
-  Cut out three pictures from the newspaper. With a friend, make up a story using all three of the pictures. Together, write a news article about the story. (Language arts)
-  Discuss with other students how holidays are celebrated in your school. Write a news article about a holiday celebration in your school. (Social studies, language arts)

## Level II

-  Find newspaper stories that show things that are changing in your community. Under your local news section, write a story about how your community is changing. Write about the positive and negative effects of these changes. (Social studies, thinking skills)
-  Collect all of the place names you can find in your newspaper. Organize them under the following headings: Cities/Towns, States, Countries, Bodies of Water. Which places appear in the news most often? Write a news story about what is happening in those places. (Social studies, study skills)
-  Use the weather map to study the weather in your area. Predict what the weather will be like tomorrow. Using the extended forecast, create a five-day weather chart. Were your predictions correct? Read the newspaper to discover how weather affects the way we live: recreation, industry, clothing, jobs. Write a news story about a weather-related happening in your town and how weather influences life there. (Science, social studies, language arts)

## Level III

-  The United States has connections with many other countries in the world. We rely on one another for various goods and services. Find five articles in the newspaper that show how the United States interacts with other countries. Put the information together in your own news story about U.S./international relations. (Social studies, economics)
-  Select three houses listed in the classified ad section of the newspaper. Calculate the cost of the house per square foot, based on the overall cost of the house and the size provided in the ad. Use the information to write a news story about the high cost of housing. (Math)
-  Read a news article about a scientific advance – in technology, medicine, space exploration, etc. Write a news story about how that advance might affect students in your school. (Science, thinking skills)

# Lesson #3 Writing Feature Stories

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## Teacher background:

Feature stories are different from news stories in several ways. They generally are not late-breaking news, but cover subjects that are timely. They often present another way of looking at a current event. Feature stories do not follow the inverted pyramid style of writing. They may be written in different styles, and at times, use a first- or second-person approach. Feature stories are people-oriented. They cover topics such as social trends, health and wellness, fashion, food, “slice of life” views on situations, travel stories, consciousness-raising stories, personality profiles and “behind the headline” stories. They are more descriptive than news stories.

## Purpose:

Students will:

1. Identify the characteristics of feature writing;
2. Discover the differences between feature writing and news writing;
3. Select feature topics for the class newspaper;
4. Write a feature story.

## Before you start:

Help students think about interesting topics that might make good feature stories.

1. Ask students to suggest topics about current ideas or situations that interest them.
2. Write suggestions on the board.
3. Have students select the three topics they think would be most popular with many readers.

## Learning activities:

### Level I

1. Explain the differences between feature stories and news stories.
2. Read examples of each to the students. Discuss similarities and differences.
3. Ask students to tell a story in feature story format.
4. Guide students in selecting an appropriate topic for their feature stories. List some of the ideas on the board.

### Levels II & III

1. Compare news writing and feature writing. Establish the following comparison:

	CONTENT	BEGINNING	MIDDLE	ENDING
NEWS STORY	5Ws NEWSWORTHY	4 Ws	W & H	W & H
FEATURE STORY	Narrative or expository	Catchy, exciting	Sequences information	Reaches conclusion

2. Divide students into groups. Have the groups locate feature stories in the newspaper. Remind them that news stories and opinion columns are not feature stories.
3. Ask students to share findings; list topics of the features on the board.
4. Let students read the opening paragraphs of several feature stories. Compare these with the lead paragraphs of news stories.
5. Have students locate and share examples of such feature-writing techniques as descriptive words and phrases, colorful language, idioms, and first- and second-person viewpoints.

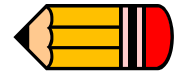
## Lesson #3 Writing Feature Stories, continued

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### **Putting it all together:**

1. Help students generate ideas for their own newspaper.
2. Let students create their own feature stories on the appropriate *Reporter's Notebook* page.
3. Encourage students to make illustrations or locate pictures to go with their stories.
4. Have students write catchy headlines for their stories.
5. Collect stories and save for future publication.

# Reporter's Notebook – Writing Feature Stories



**To the newspaper writer:**

This is your **FEATURE WRITING** page.

**Your assignment:**

Write your feature story on this page. Use pictures or drawings to go with your story.

← **Headline**

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← **Lead Sentence**

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← **Your Name**

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← **Picture**

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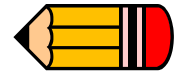
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# Reporter's Notebook – Writing Feature Stories



**To the newspaper writer:**

You will write a feature story for your class newspaper.

**Your assignment:**

Think of something that interests you. Write a story about it.

**My story is about:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I think people will like this story because:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Here are some interesting details about my subject:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Here are some words that describe my subject:**

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**Write an interesting opening for your story:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Develop your story:**

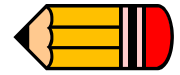
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Finish your story:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Reporter's Notebook – Writing Feature Stories



**To the newspaper writer:**

You will write a feature article for your class newspaper.

**Your assignment:**

Develop a human-interest story that will appeal to many readers (for example, a teenager visits an African country). Complete the following information to outline your story.

**Subject of the feature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Explain why this will appeal to readers:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Write down some interesting details about your subject:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**List some words that describe your subject:**

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**Write an attention-grabbing opening for your story:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Develop your story:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Finish your story:**




\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_






# ON ASSIGNMENT...WRITING FEATURE STORIES

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## Level I

-  Develop a story about a picture in the newspaper. Discuss what happened before the picture was taken and what will happen next. Write an exciting first line for the story you created. (Social studies, language arts, thinking skills)
-  Look at the ads in the newspaper. Find examples of ways we prepare for each season. Discuss with other students things people do to prepare for future events, such as getting ready to go back to school, celebrating special occasions, and going on vacation. Write a story about something you look forward to, beginning it in an exciting way. (Social studies, science, language arts)
-  Collect pictures from the newspaper that show examples of the five senses. Paste the pictures on five different charts depicting the senses. Write a story about this class activity. Describe each chart and what it depicts. (Science, language arts, thinking skills)

## Level II

-  Select a pet from the classified ad lost-and-found section. Write a story about the pet as a “Pet of the Week” feature. The story should describe the animal, its special characteristics and why the pet should be adopted. (Science, language arts)
-  Find a job in the newspaper you might like to have. List information about the job, the qualifications a person needs in order to be hired, and the responsibilities required. Interview people who have the same or similar jobs. Learn all you can about the job. Write a feature story to share this information with other people. Find a picture in the newspaper to accompany your story. (Career education, language arts)
-  Pretend your class is going to another planet. Have every student select one item from the newspaper to take along. Write a feature story describing the various items and explaining why people selected them. (Social studies)

## Level III

-  Write a feature article about the expenses of living in your own apartment. Use classified and display ads to find the costs of renting an apartment, purchasing furniture and buying food for a month. (Math)
-  Select three world leaders who have appeared recently in the newspaper. Pretend that they are on a world speaking tour, and that they have stopped in your area. Write an interview you might have with them. (Social studies, language arts).
-  Read the comics in your newspaper. If you were from another planet and the comics page was your only source of information, what ideas might you have about life here? Write a feature story about how we might appear to outsiders. (Social studies, thinking skills)

## Lesson #4 Writing Opinions

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### Teacher background:

There are several places in a newspaper where a writer's opinions are appropriate. The most obvious place is the editorial, where editors display their viewpoints on a topic. There are also opinion columns and editorial cartoons located on the editorial or op-ed page, a page opposite the editorial page where guest writers express their opinions. Personal opinion columns also appear in other parts of newspapers. For example, the sports page may contain personal columns in addition to news stories about sporting events. The business page may contain a personal column by a business analyst. Readers also may find articles labeled "analysis;" these contain interpretations of events in addition to facts. It is important for students to recognize differences between editorials and columns, which reflect opinions, and news stories, which report facts. In addition, letters to the editor sections offer readers an opportunity to voice their opinions.

Editorial pages and opinion columns are daily examples of our right to free speech, guaranteed by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

### Purpose: Students will:

1. Learn the characteristics of opinion writing;
2. Identify vocabulary used in opinion writing;
3. List editorial topics for the class newspaper;
4. Write an editorial or draw an editorial cartoon; and
5. Identify examples of opinion writing other than editorials.

### Before you start:

1. Select a current national or local issue – one that has many sides – and take a class poll on students' stands on that issue. Record the number of votes for each side on the board.
2. Have several students explain their positions to the class.
3. Ask students how they could communicate their positions to people outside the classroom, either in the school or in the community.
4. Explain to students that they can communicate their ideas and they can read about the opinions of others on the editorial pages of the newspaper.

### Learning activities:

#### Level I

1. Compare an editorial with a news story.
2. Talk about vocabulary used in an editorial. Brainstorm with students to generate words that mean "opinion."
3. Discuss editorial cartoons and letters to the editor. Show an example of each to students.
4. Ask students to express their opinions about a picture or headline in the newspaper. List on the board issues that emerge from the students' discussion.
5. Direct students to write one sentence expressing an opinion about one of those issues.

6. Have students draw an editorial cartoon using an idea they found in the newspaper.

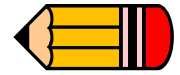
### **Levels II & III**

1. Have students turn to the editorial page of the newspaper. Point out the following: editorial, editorial cartoon, letter to the editor, opinion column and op-ed piece.
2. Have students select an editorial to read. Tell them to look for and point out following editorial elements:  
**Introduction** (the editorial should briefly establish the topic)  
**Body** (the facts and details relevant to the topic should be presented next)  
**Conclusion** (the editor's opinion follows)
3. Have students locate and discuss other examples of opinion writing, such as personal columns and reviews of movies or restaurants.

### **Putting it all together:**

1. Have students generate topics for editorials in their own newspaper.
2. Let students write an editorial, using the appropriate *Reporter's Notebook* page.
3. Have students exchange editorials. Each student then writes an op-ed piece disagreeing with the editorial just received. Students may also write a letter to the editor agreeing with the editorial.
4. Collect student editorials, op-ed pieces and letters to the editor and save for future publication.
5. Discuss with students the role of editorials and letters to the editor in a democracy. Use the following quote as a starting point:  
*"It is the purpose of the First Amendment to preserve an uninhibited marketplace of ideas in which truth will ultimately prevail."*  
– Justice Byron White, U.S. Supreme Court, 1969.

# Reporter's Notebook – Writing Opinions

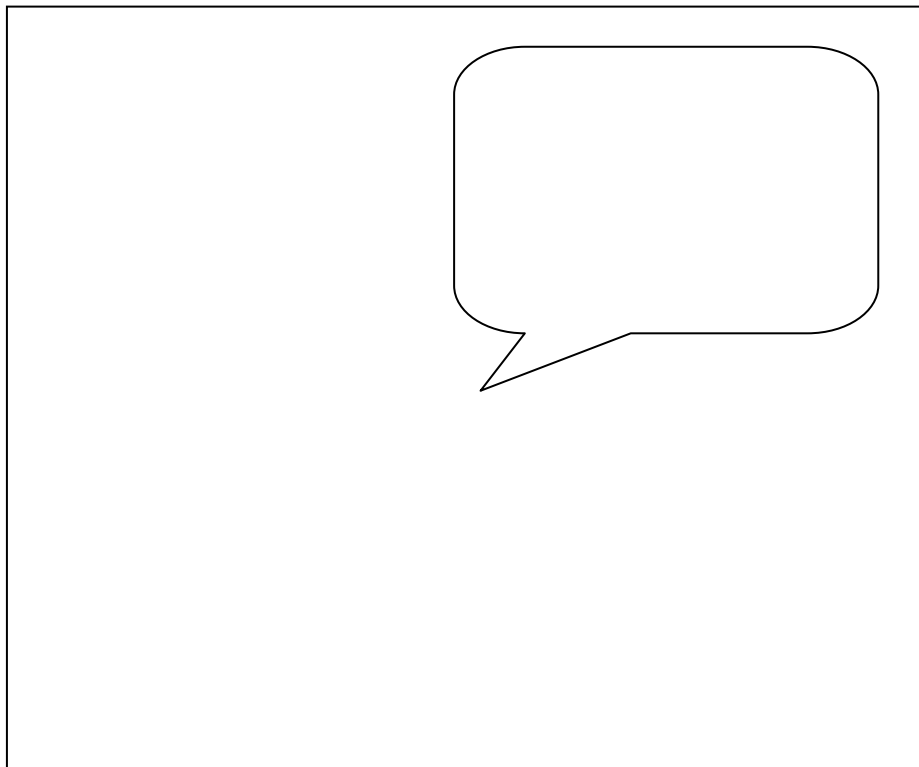


**To the newspaper writer:**

This is your editorial page

**Your assignment:**

Draw a cartoon that tells how you feel about something in your class or your school.



← Say it

← Draw it

← Sign your name

Write your own editorial here. Make a headline to go with it.

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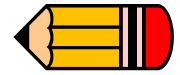
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# Reporter's Notebook – Writing Opinions



**To the newspaper writer:**

You will write an editorial telling your ideas about something.

**Your assignment:**

Think of an issue that is important to you. Write down facts about the issue. Then write how you feel about the subject. Get your editorial ready by filling in the spaces below. Draw an editorial cartoon about the same topic.

Use a sentence to say what you are going to write about.

## Introduction

Three horizontal lines for writing the introduction.

Write your *facts* about the subject here. Use sentences.

## Body

Seven horizontal lines for writing the body of the editorial.

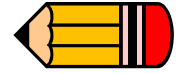
Write how you feel about the subject here. Use sentences.

## Conclusions

Seven horizontal lines for writing the conclusion of the editorial.



# Reporter's Notebook – Writing Opinions



**To the newspaper writer:**

You will write an editorial or opinion column.

**Your assignment:**

Select an issue that you want to take a stand on. Collect facts about the subject. Then write an editorial stating your position. Write your editorial in the boxes provided below. Design an editorial cartoon about the issue.

Introduce your topic here.

Introduction

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Write your *facts* about the subject here.

Body

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Write your *opinion* based on the facts here.

Conclusions

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_




On a separate piece of paper, design an editorial cartoon on this topic.






# ON ASSIGNMENT...WRITING OPINIONS

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## Level I

-  Find a picture in your newspaper. Does it tell a story? Write an editorial describing your opinion of the pictures and why you think it should or should not be in your newspaper. (Thinking skills, creative writing)
-  Collect editorial cartoons. Discuss them with your classmates. Editorial cartoons may be any size, but they must express the artist's opinion. Draw an editorial cartoon for your classroom newspaper about something you wish you could change in your school. (Social studies, language arts)
-  Find the editorial page by using the index in the newspaper. Locate, read and circle those words that indicate an opinion and those that tell a fact. List the words on a chart in the correct category. Write an editorial expressing your feelings about the rule that dogs may not attend school. Use the words you have just learned. Put the editorial in your classroom newspaper. (Science, language arts)

## Level II

-  Read the headlines of the editorials on the editorial page. Select one editorial to read, then complete the following sentence: "*This editor believes....*" Write a letter to the editor telling if you agree or disagree with the editor. Be sure to say why you feel the way you do. (Social studies, thinking skills)
-  Pretend you are the editor of your classroom newspaper. What is of interest to your friends? Is it the school starting time, school lunches or snack time? Write an editorial. Be sure to state the facts and then give your opinion. Write a headline for your editorial that makes your classmates want to read it. (Social studies, language arts)
-  Survey your classmates about their favorite comic strip. Collect the information and chart the results on graph paper. Write an editorial or draw an editorial cartoon about the results of the survey and how you feel about it. (Math, language arts)

## Level III

-  Write a consumer's column recommending the best buys for students your age. Use ads from the newspaper as your sources of information. Make recommendations in several categories (clothing, music, handheld devices, sports equipment, cars, etc.). Remember to cite prices in your column and compare the costs of your recommendations to the costs of similar products you don't recommend. (Math)
-  Select an editorial on a controversial issue in your newspaper. Take a "man in the street" poll of other students, asking their positions on the topic. Write your findings in an opinion column called *Our Students Speak....* (Social studies).
-  Use the entire sports section of one day's newspaper to compare coverage of professional and amateur sports. Count the numbers of stories devoted to each. Measure the number of inches of space given to each. Write an opinion column about the sports coverage in the local newspaper. Include your suggestions for changes. (Math, writing)

## Lesson #5      Creating Ads

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### Teacher background:

There are three different kinds of advertising in local newspapers. General advertising emphasizes a product or brand. Occasionally, several stores carrying that brand share the cost of the ad and have their names listed on the ad (for example, ads for a new car debut or a new soft drink). Retail advertising emphasizes merchandise, products or services available at particular stores or businesses; frequently prices are included in these ads (for example, ads for Target or Sears stores). Classified advertising serves businesses and private sellers. Most classified ads are small, short lines of type. They include lost and found, employment, automotive and real estate ads.

Creators of advertising design art and copy around **AIDA** guidelines – attract the reader’s **attention**; develop **interest** in the product; create a **desire** for the product; and urge **action** from the consumer.

**Purpose:**      Students will:

1. Identify the characteristics of good ads; and
2. Create an ad for the classroom newspaper.

### Before you start:

Have students think about how they learn where to make purchases and how much items cost.

1. Ask students to name ways they find out about new products or special prices for products.
2. Have students discuss differences between the information they get from broadcast media and from newspapers.

### Learning activities:

#### Level I

1. Ask students to look through their newspaper to find ads.
2. Select one ad to discuss with students. Ask students what they see in the ad. List their responses on the board – for example, a picture of the product, the product name, a slogan and information about the product.
3. Create an imaginary product and design an ad for it with your students.
4. Have students establish criteria for a good ad.

#### Levels II & III

1. Distribute a copy of your local newspaper to each student.
2. Tell students to locate two ads for products they would like to buy.
3. Tell pairs of students to compare ads and select two to work with as a team.
4. Two students working together should paste each ad on a piece of paper and then label or show how each ad does the following:
  - **Attract the reader’s attention?** (amount of space, type, type size, color, art, catchy slogan)
  - **Develop reader interest?** (art, information, language)

## Lesson #5      Creating Ads, continued

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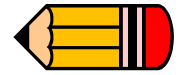
- **Create a desire** for the product? (lists appealing features, emphasizes positive qualities of the product)
  - **Urge the reader to act** – to make the purchase? (indicates quantity of items is limited, states that the sale price is available for a limited time)
5. Have each team share one ad with the rest of the class.
  6. Have students generate ideas about what makes some ads attract readers more than others.

### **Putting it all together:**

1. Have students suggest the kinds of ads they will include in their newspaper – what kinds of products will appeal to their readers?
2. Have students design an ad for a product of their choice using the appropriate *Reporter's Notebook* page.
3. Collect ads and save for future publication.

# Reporter's Notebook – Creating Ads

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**To the newspaper writer:**

Today you will make an advertisement for your newspaper.

**Your assignment:**

Make a travel ad about your town.

Describe interesting places.

Invite readers to visit.

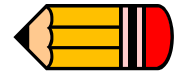
Visit

Where

Why



# Reporter's Notebook – Creating Ads



## To the newspaper writer:

You will design an ad for something students would like.

## Your assignment:

Think of something that other students would like to have. It could be something to use or something to eat. Create an ad telling about it. Make your ad special. It should catch the attention of readers right away. Get your ad ready for the newspaper by filling in the spaces below.

**My ad will be for:** \_\_\_\_\_

**My ad will be** \_\_\_\_\_ inches wide and \_\_\_\_\_ inches high.

## These people will be interested in what I'm advertising:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

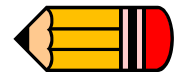
Draw your ad in the box below. If you are going to make a larger ad for your newspaper, use a separate sheet of paper.

Check your ad. Be sure it:

- Attracts** the reader's attention;
- Increases the reader's **interest** in the product;
- Creates a **desire** in the reader to own the product; and
- Urges the reader to **action** – to buy the product.



# Reporter's Notebook – Creating Ads



## To the newspaper writer:

You will design an ad for a product that will be appropriate for your readers.

## Your assignment:

Identify a product that would appeal to some or all of your readers. Design an ad for that product in the area below. Use the AIDA guidelines:

- Attract the reader's attention;
- Develop the reader's **interest** in the product;
- Create a **desire** for the product; and
- Urge **action** from the reader.

Organize your ad by completing the following sections.

The dimensions of the ad will be \_\_\_\_\_ inches wide and \_\_\_\_\_ inches high.

The product to be advertised is \_\_\_\_\_.

This product will appeal to \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

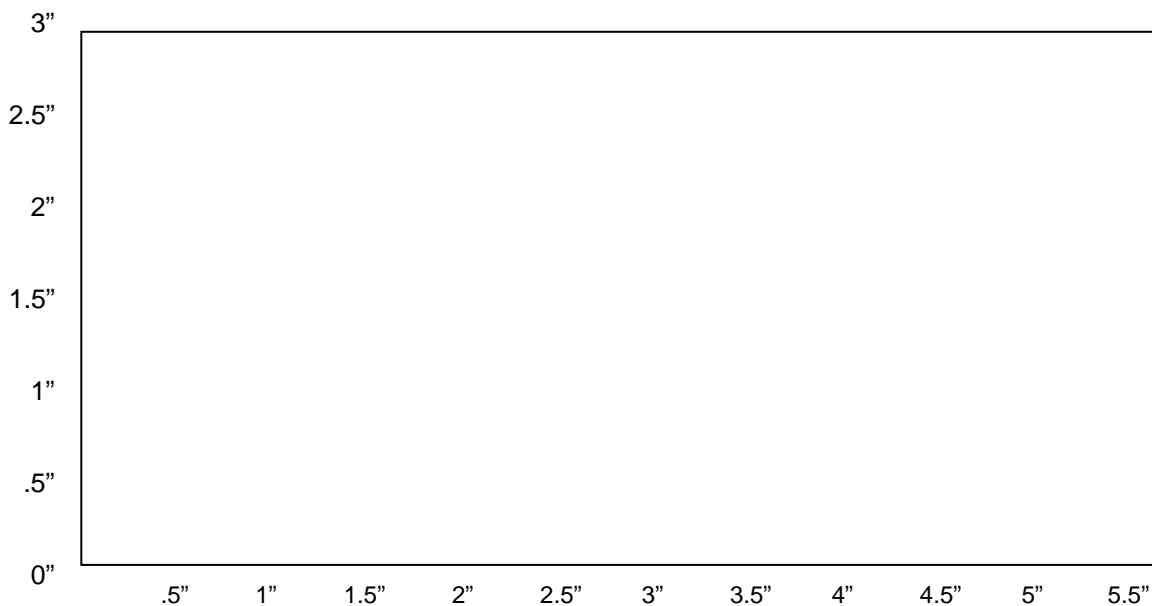
To attract the reader's attention, I will \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

To create reader interest in the product, I will \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

To develop the reader's desire to own the product, I will \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

To urge the reader to purchase the product, I will \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.




Mark off the dimensions of your ad and design your ad below. If you are going to make a larger ad for your newspaper, use a separate sheet of paper.






# ON ASSIGNMENT...CREATING ADS

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## Level I

-  Look in the classified ads and make a list of the services available in your community. Classify the services. With a classmate, discuss a service you think you could provide. Write an ad describing your service; draw a picture to illustrate it. (Social studies, language arts)
-  Find an interesting advertisement. Change the advertisement by pasting new words over the key words. Create a new ad. Choose your new words from other ads in the newspaper. (Language arts)
-  Create a “favorite meal” ad. Cut out pictures of foods from the food pyramid and paste them on an ad. Use foods that you would like to eat. Write a slogan advertising your favorite meal. (Health, thinking skills)

## Level II

-  Design a new invention that will help someone do a routine job more efficiently. Draw your invention and write an ad for it. Remember to tell how it can be used, where it can be purchased and how much it costs. (Science, language arts)
-  Make a new creature from parts of animals you find in the newspaper, either in ads or in photos. Use the head of one animal, the body of another, and so on. Write a classified ad to sell this new “pet.” (Language arts)
-  Look at the ads in your newspaper. Make a collection of words that mean the same thing. Paste them together. Draw an ad using the new words. Use familiar ads as your guide. (Language arts)

## Level III

-  Select your favorite subject in school. Write an ad to “sell” the subject. Describe the “product.” Write about its positive qualities and make readers want to take the class. (Creative writing, art)
-  Select an ad that is written to appeal to adults. Rewrite the ad so that it appeals to students your age. (Social studies, writing)
-  Select your favorite comic character in the newspaper. Design an ad to encourage people to read that comic strip every day. (Creative writing)



# Checklist for Production

Use the checklist below as a guide to help you put your newspaper together for publication.

- Prepare your copy for the newspaper.**  
Put your stories in column form. You can write your stories by hand and reduce them on a photocopying machine. You can type your stories in columns. You can use a computer and print your stories on a printer.
- Prepare your artwork for the newspaper.**  
Trace over any pencil drawings for stories or ads with a black felt-tip pen. Most photocopiers cannot copy pencil well.
- Lay out and paste up your front page.**  
Put your newspaper's flag at the top of your front page. Then paste your pictures and stories on the page. Be sure to include an index on the front page.
- Lay out and paste up the inside pages of your newspaper.**  
Put the ads on your other pages first. The ads always start at the bottom of the page. Your news stories, feature stories and opinion pieces go at the top of the pages. Be sure to number each of the inside pages of your newspaper.
- Print your newspaper.**  
Copy your pasted-up pages on a photocopier. After you have copied all of the pages, put the pages together in the correct order. Use a stapler to fasten all the pages together.
- Distribute your newspaper.**  
Deliver your newspaper to your readers. Be sure to include other teachers, your school superintendent, your principal, office workers and maintenance workers. Take a copy of your newspaper home to show your family.

# Glossary

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- Ad – printed notice of something for sale (short for advertisement)
- AP – abbreviation for The Associated Press, a wire service
- Art – any photograph, map, graph or illustration
- Assignment – the event or situation a reporter is supposed to report on
- Balloon – a drawing, usually in a comic strip, which makes words appear to be coming directly from the speaker's mouth
- Banner – a headline that runs across the entire page
- Beat – the area of news regularly covered by a reporter (e.g., the city hall beat or the education beat)
- Body – the main part of a story
- Bold face – heavy or dark type
- Box – border around a story or photo
- Break – initial news coverage of an event
- Bullet – a large, black dot used at the left edge of a column to mark each item in a series
- Byline – the reporter's name, which appears at the head of a news or picture story
- Caps – abbreviation for capital letters
- City desk – the area of the newsroom that focuses on coverage of local news events
- Clips – articles that have been cut out of the newspaper, short for clippings
- Cold type – type that is produced photographically
- Column inch – one inch of type or space (measured vertically) by one column wide
- Columnist – a person who writes a regular column giving a personal opinion
- Compose – to set type
- Copy – all material used for publication
- Copy desk – area of the newsroom where editing is done
- Copy editor – the person who edits news stories and writes headlines
- Correspondent – an out-of-town reporter
- Cover – to get all the facts about a news event for a story
- Credit line – the name of the photographer or artist below a piece of art
- Crop – to cut away unwanted parts of a picture
- Cut – to shorten a story
- Outline – explanatory information under a photo or piece of art; also called a caption
- Dateline – words at the beginning of a story that give the story's place of origin
- Deadline – time at which all copy for an edition must be in
- Dingbat – any typographical device used for ornamentation
- Dummy – a diagram of a newspaper page used to show printers where stories, pictures and ads are to be placed
- Ear – copy in either upper corner of the front page, on either side of the flag (sometimes used for weather, jokes or to call attention to a special feature inside)
- Edit – to correct and prepare copy for publication
- Editor – a person who decides what stories will be covered, assigns reporters to stories, improves the stories that reporters write, and decides where stories will appear in the paper
- Editorial – an article expressing the opinion of the newspaper's editor or management
- Extra – a special edition of the newspaper, printed between regular editions, containing news too important to hold for the next regular edition
- Feature – a news story that may not have late-breaking news value, but is timely and of interest to readers
- Filler – a story with little news value, used to fill space
- Flag – the newspaper's name as it appears at the top of the first page; also known as the logotype or nameplate
- Fourth Estate – a traditional name for the press, referring to it as the "fourth branch" of government; the term indicates the role and the importance of the free press in a democratic society
- Gutter – margin between facing pages where the fold lies
- Hard news – urgent news, usually of a serious nature, found in the front pages of a newspaper
- Headline – words in large type at the top of the story telling what the story is about; also called head
- Hot type – type made from molten lead
- Inverted pyramid – news story format in which the important facts are listed first and additional details follow
- Jump – to continue a story from one page to another
- Justify – to space out a line of type so that each line fits flush to the margin
- Kill – to take out or delete copy
- Lay out or make up – to position editorial, pictorial and advertising elements on a page to prepare it for the camera
- Lead – (pronounced "leed") the first paragraph or two of a news story, telling who, what, where, when, why/how
- Linotype – machine used to produce hot type, one line at a time; no longer used in modern newspaper production
- Market – people the newspaper wants to attract with its news and advertising
- Masthead – detailed information printed in the newspaper stating names of the publication's publisher, editors and other top executives, usually printed in a box on the editorial page
- Morgue – a newspaper's library of stories, pictures, biographies and other references
- Obit – short for obituary, a death notice
- Op-ed – a page opposite the editorial page, where opinions by guest writers are presented
- Play – emphasis given a story on a page
- Proof – page on which newly set copy is reproduced so it can be checked for errors before being printed
- Release – advance information about a story given to the newspaper by the source of the news
- Reporter – a person who finds out facts about a story and then writes the story for the newspaper
- Scoop – a story obtained before other newspapers receive the information
- Stringer – a part-time reporter, a correspondent
- Syndicate – organization that distributes columns or feature material, such as comics or advice columns, to many different newspapers
- UPI – abbreviation for United Press International, a wire service