

The Reporter is proud to offer:

# LESSON PLANS

## for Campus Star

These lesson plans are intended to help teachers embark on a series of lessons incorporating the newspaper into the classroom. Not only is the series intended to boost literacy and improve student skills, but it should better prepare students for the Campus Star competition.

**Campus Star entry kits are included in this packet.**

In these plans you will find easy-to-reproduce suggestions for the following subjects:

**ADVERTISING:** Here are some practice tips and information for teaching your students

about the world of advertising.

**NEWS WRITING:** Introduction to the who, what, when, where, why and how of the news business.

**FEATURE WRITING:** Let those budding young writers take a more creative approach to newspaper storytelling.

**OPINION WRITING:** Everyone has an opinion. Why not share it with the world? This lesson plan will teach them how.

**PUZZLES, MAZES AND GAMES:** Even newspapers have fun. This lesson gives students a chance to dabble with the more frivolous and entertaining side of the business.

**Photojournalism:** Pictures can tell a news story, or make a news story more interesting. This lesson gives students a chance to discover and discuss the different elements of photojournalism.



Newspapers In Education

Campus **STAR**

**REPORTER**

*Spirit of the Community Since 1883*

[www.thereporter.com](http://www.thereporter.com)

# Creating ads

## For Starters:

Ask students to name ways they find out about new products or special prices for products.

Have students discuss the differences between information they get from broadcast media and newspapers. (For example, where are they most likely to get price information and addresses of stores?)

## Learning Activities:

Have students hold an unopened newspaper in front of them and close their eyes. On your call to begin, have the students open to an inside page with ads, take a quick look at the page and touch the part of the page their eyes went to first. List on the board the elements that make something “eye-catching.”

In groups of two, students should select an ad for a product they each would like to buy. They should cut out the two ads and glue them onto paper and label how the ads do the following:

- Attract the reader’s attention. (Examples: size, typeface, or size, color, art, catchy slogans, photos.)
- Develop reader interest in the ad. (Examples: art, information, language.)
- Create a desire for the product. (Examples: lists appealing features, emphasizes positive qualities of the product.)
- Urge the reader to act, to make a purchase. (Examples: says quantity of items is limited, sale is for a limited time.)
- Have each team share one ad with the class.
- Have students generate ideas about what makes some ads attract more readers than others.

## On Assignment:

**Note to teachers: The following activities are for imaginary ads. Your class will be assigned a PAL sponsor, for which a specific ad size will be assigned.**

- Find an interesting ad. Change the ad by pasting new words over the key words, creating a new ad.
- Select your favorite book. Create an ad for the book.

# News Reporting

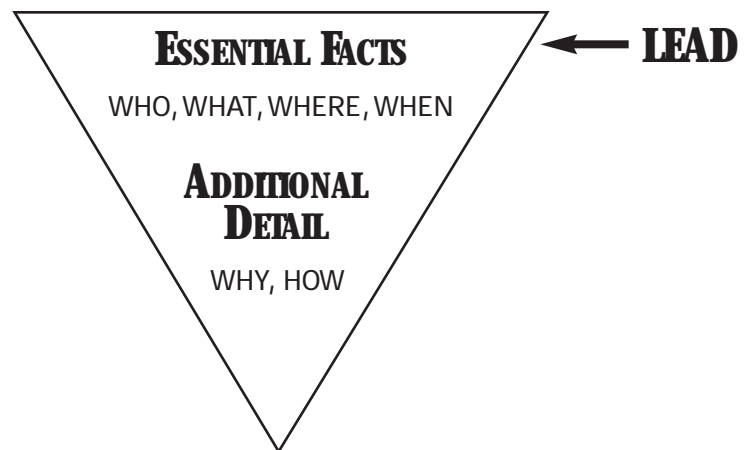
## For starters:

Encourage students to think about what information they want to know about a news event. Give them a hypothetical situation about something of interest to them.

- Pretend they hear a loud crash outside the classroom. Through the window they see a crumpled car, a delivery truck and two people arguing.
- Ask them what they want to know. List questions as they arise.
- Label the questions that ask for the five W's - who, what, when, where and why/how.
- Finally, ask students why they would want to know more about the accident.

## Learning Activities:

- Read a newspaper story to or with the class and demonstrate the inverted pyramid.
- Ask students to draw an inverted pyramid over other news stories. Discover the answers to who, what, where, when within the triangles.
- Have students continue reading the story to find out the how or why.



## On Assignment:

Discuss with the students the criteria for selecting a newsworthy story. Assign each category to a group of students; have them locate stories in the newspaper that fit the categories they have been assigned. Have students explain their findings.

- List what is new in your class, at your school. Check each news item for newsworthiness.
- Find newspaper stories that show things that are changing in our community. Interview sources on the positive and negative effects of these changes.
- How does weather effect the way we live: recreation, clothing, jobs, industry?
- 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.
- Interview students and teachers. Are students or classrooms at your school doing something to recycle or conserve? Find out about the environmental projects by interviewing teachers and students, and even experts in our community.

# News Reporting

## Your assignment:

Find a subject that is “newsworthy.” Complete the following information to get started. Rewrite your story on another sheet of paper.

## Subject of the story:

The story is important because of:

**Timeliness** - events that are happening now, or news that is of interest to readers 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** - interesting events that have happened to 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.

**Progress** - advances in science, medicine or technology.

**Importance** - important to readers' lives, family, education, health or well-being.

## Basic information about the story

Who the story is about: \_\_\_\_\_

What happened: \_\_\_\_\_

When this happened: \_\_\_\_\_

Where this happened: \_\_\_\_\_

Why this is important: \_\_\_\_\_

## Some relevant details about the story:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# Writing Feature Stories

## For Starters:

- Help students think about interesting topics that might make good feature stories.
- Ask students to suggest topics about current ideas or situations that interest them.
- Write suggestions on the board.
- Have students select the three topics they think would be most popular with many readers.

## Learning Activities:

- Divide students into groups. Direct each group to read the first paragraph of a feature story and a news story. Compare the two. Which is more factual and which is more descriptive?
- Next ask the groups to locate other feature stories in the newspaper; list the topics on the board.
- Let students read the opening paragraphs of several feature stories. Compare them with the lead paragraph of the news story they read earlier.
- Have students read through the feature articles to locate examples of descriptive words and phrases, colorful language, idioms and/or first and second person viewpoints.
- Help students generate ideas for their own feature stories. (Use the On Assignment ideas below.)

## On Assignment:

- Find a job in the newspaper's classified section that 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 about how unique and unusual the job is.
- Interview students at your school about the latest fashions and fads. Write a feature story on the favorite foods, clothing, beverages, entertainment, sports, language, school subjects, etc. of the students.
- What is a major problem faced by some or many students at your school? What are students doing to solve their problems? Write about resources for students in the community that help students with problems. Interview experts with tips for students in trouble.
- Do any of your friends have hobbies? Have they been involved with a very unusual program or are they planning to launch an unusual project?
- Does your family have an interesting history? Interview your parents and/or grandparents to find out about life before your time.

# Writing Opinions

## For Starters:

- Select a current 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.
- Have students explain their positions to the class.
- Ask students how they could communicate their positions to people outside the classroom, either in school or the community.
- Explain to students that they can communicate their ideas and they can read about the opinions of others in the newspaper.

## Learning Activities:

- Compare an editorial with a news story. List opinion words used in the editorial on the board.
- Ask students to express their opinions about a picture or headline in the newspaper. List on the board all of the issues that emerge from the discussion.
- Point out examples of different kinds of editorial writing throughout the newspaper. Point out an editorial, an op-ed, a letter to the editor, an editorial cartoon, an entertainment review, an advice column and an opinion column.
- Have students select an editorial to read. Tell them to look for the following editorial elements: Introduction - the editorial should briefly establish the topic. Body - the facts and details relevant to the topic. Conclusion - the writer’s opinion.

## On Assignment:

- Survey your classmates about their favorite comic strip. Collect the information and chart the results on graph paper. Write an editorial about the results of the survey and how you feel about it.
- Write a column recommending the best buys for students. Use ads from the newspaper as your sources of information. Make recommendations in several categories – for example: clothing, records, sports equipment, snacks.
- Select a controversial issue in your school or community. Take a “student on the street” poll of other students, asking their opinions on the topic. Write your findings in an opinion column called “Students Speak Out..”
- Use the entire sports section of one day’s newspaper to compare coverage of professional and youth sports. Count the number of stories devoted to each. Measure the number of inches of space given to each. Write an opinion about sports coverage in the local paper.
- Select a problem that many students your age face. Ask other students, teachers, parents and local experts for ideas on how to handle this problem. Write your findings in a column advising students what to do when faced with this problem.
- Draw a cartoon that expresses an opinion. Use a 4” x 4” frame.

# Games, Puzzles & Comics

## For Starters:

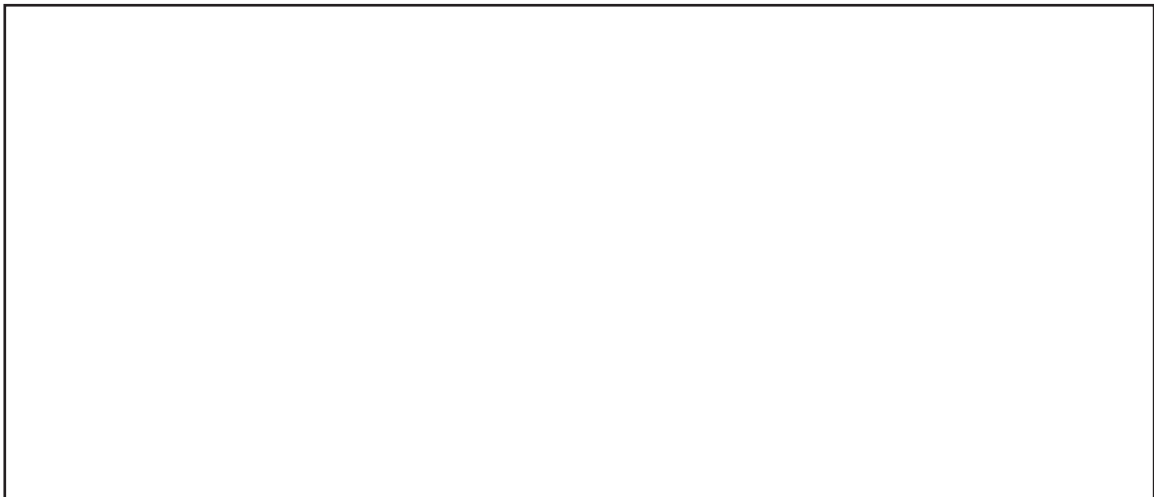
- Ask students to look through the newspaper or a magazine for an example of a comic, crossword puzzle, word search or maze. Tell them to select one they like.
- Ask students to explain what they like about their selection. List on the board the characteristics of a good comic, game or puzzle that come out in the discussion.

## Learning Activities:

- Have students count the words in individual frames of comic strips and find the average number of words per frame.
- Have students measure the frames of word searches, mazes and crossword puzzles. Find the average size of each

## On Assignment:

- Students who would like to create a word search, crossword puzzle or maze should work a first draft of their idea on graph paper. The frame should be 4" x 4". When the student has finished the activity on graph paper it should be neatly copied or traced onto plain white paper using a ruler and black ink.
- Students who would like to create a comic strip should use the comic strip template below. It can be divided into three sections.
- Comic strip starters: Illustrate a favorite joke or riddle. Draw a funny picture. Next, think about what story might go with the picture.
- Crossword puzzles and word searches: Pick a theme such as candy or sports. Then make a list of all the words you can think of that go with that theme. Use graph paper, putting one letter in each square, to lay out your puzzle.
- Mazes: Find a beginning and end for your maze. Make a trail connecting the two. Finally, add twisting, dead-end paths around the correct trail.



# Photojournalism

## For Starters:

- Ask students to cut out one or two photographs from the newspaper that caught their eye or appeals to them.
- Ask them what elements of the photo were striking. Talk about the scene, subject matter and storytelling qualities of the photo. What did the photographer have to do to make the image work?

## Learning Activities:

- Discuss the elements of what makes a good photograph. (See attached)
- Talk about different kinds of pictures: portrait, landscape, silhouette, sporting event or other activity, nature, etc.
- Discuss the elements of composition.
- Purchase a disposable camera (or two or three) for your class. Have each student shoot a few frames, perhaps during recess or a student activity. Have the pictures developed and use them for a classroom discussion on what makes an appealing photo.

## On Assignment:

- For a quick drill, pick three or four students to shoot portraits of one another during recess. Develop the images and discuss them with the class. What styles are most effective? Discuss the different styles of each student's approach to the subject matter.
- If students have access to a camera at home, encourage them to take pictures of their home life, their family, their neighborhood, anything that interests them. Have them bring these pictures to share with the class.

# A Short Checklist for Evaluating Photo Quality

By Charlotte K. Lowrie

## What makes a photo good?

### Fill the frame

Filling the frame helps establish the center of interest, and, simultaneously, it helps exclude competing background details. You can fill the frame by moving closer to the subject or by using a longer focal length (or zooming in).

### Organize elements in composition

The “Rule of Thirds” is often used to organize elements in a composition. This rule is derived from the Golden Section or the Golden Rectangle that divides a space, such as a photographic frame, into equal segments to create pleasing proportions. In simple terms, if you apply the Rule of Thirds in photography you simply imagine a tick-tac-toe pattern on the viewfinder. Then, when you place the subject of the photo at one of the intersection points, the result is a pleasing sense of order.

### Control the background

A nondistracting background is a compositional tool to help bring attention to the subject of the photo. You can control the background by moving your position or moving the subject to avoid background distractions and by using a wider aperture (smaller f-stop) to blur the background. It’s a good practice to review the entire scene and, when possible, eliminate or rearrange as many distracting background elements.

### Keep it simple

The fewer the elements in a photo, the stronger the statement the image makes. Simplicity also helps prevent the viewer’s eye from being distracted.

**To evaluate the composition of your images, try asking these questions:**

- Is there a sense of order and balance in the image that helps lead the eye through the composition?
- Are elements included that do not contribute to the subject of the image?
- Are elements excluded that, if included, would have enhanced the subject of the image?

**PAL/Newspaper in Education Presents:**

# **Classroom Speakers**

**Want your class to get the inside scoop on the next Campus Star competition?**

•The Reporter's Speakers Bureau provides this and much, much more. Other subjects and speakers available on request.

•To schedule a speaker, or a grand tour of the Reporter, contact Shauna Manina at 453-8177. Please call at least one week in advance, and be prepared to have a second selection if your preference can't be arranged.

## **Writing to win:**

Tips on how to write news stories for Campus Star competition. Editor Robin Miller will discuss story ideas, development and organization that makes a winner.

## **Designing that ad:**

Creative Services Artist Matt Meredith will share inside tips and information on how to design an award-winning ad that's sure to please your sponsor.

## **Fun with features:**

Features Editor Greg Trott talks about how to let your creative juices flow when writing the feature story.

## **Interviewing know-how:**

Learn how to effectively interview sources for your stories. Editor Robin Miller offers role-playing exercises and handouts with useful tips.

## **Who's got an opinion?:**

Opinion page editor Karen Nolan talks about opinion writing, commentary, letters to the editor, and critical reviews.

## **Sales and Slogans:**

Retail Advertising Director Gary Lunsford shares how to develop an advertising theme, campaign and sell the concept to a business.

## **Photojournalism:**

Reporter Photo Editor Rick Roach in the award winning Photo Department is available for classroom discussion of the techniques of photojournalism and what makes a picture interesting.

## **Help with PAL/NIE:**

Shauna Manina offers a design-ad workshops and give contest information to classrooms specifically for Campus Star.

## **Internet magic:**

Reporter Online Project Director James Price offers an explanation of The Reporter's Internet World Wide Web site and discusses practical applications.

## **Sports Mania:**

What is it like to interview Barry Bonds? Or Tim Lincecum? Or any number of celebrities whose paths have crossed into the Bay Area? Sports Editor Tim Roe can share lively stories about covering sports – from the club house to the race tracks.



**Newspapers In Education**

# **REPORTER**

*Spirit of the Community Since 1883*

[www.thereporter.com](http://www.thereporter.com)