

**Lesson Title:** Got News? Let's Create Our Own Front Page!

**Creator:** Michelle Bombard

**Brief Description:** After pointing out to students how they receive information regarding newsworthy events in their town and in the world, students will become familiar with the front page of their local newspaper; its components, and what it takes to put the front page together. To personalize the lesson even more, students will become familiar with how their school newspaper is organized and created, and the team that works together to do so. Students will watch a video the newspaper club has put together to see what's it's like to follow a "beat." Students will complete activities to understand the basic terminology of the newspaper. After viewing a variety of front pages via print and online papers, ultimately students will master the skills to create their own front pages.

**Information Literacy Skills:**

**Definition**

- Identifying the requirements of the assignment
- Determining the amount and type of information needed to complete the assignment.
- Considering potential topics to write about.

**Selection**

- Narrowing the topic to be explored

**Planning**

- Identifying potential search strategies
- Creating a framework for organizing information found

**Exploration**

- Accessing information resources
- Exploring a variety of information resources

**Collection**

- Extracting information from selected resources
- Evaluation of information

**Organization**

- Filtering out irrelevant information
- Summarizing gathered information
- Organizing information for presentation

**Presentation**

- Presenting results

**Evaluation**

- Evaluating the end product

**Information Literacy Standards:**

- Access of information effectively and efficiently
- Evaluation of information critically and competently
- Use of Information accurately and creatively
- Strives for excellence in information seeking and knowledge generation

- Recognizes the importance of information to a democratic society
- Practices ethical behavior
- Participates effectively in groups to pursue and generate information

**Relates Subject Area:** English Language Arts

**Related NYS Content Standards:**

- Language for Information and Understanding
- Language for Critical Analysis and Evaluation
- Language for Social Interaction

**Collaborators:**

English Language Arts Teacher

Librarian

High School Newspaper Moderator and Newspaper Club Members

## PURPOSE

**Instructional Goals:** Students will become familiar with the paper format of the front page of their local newspaper as well as the online format of the front page.

**Learning Objectives:** This lesson will introduce students to the components of the front page of a newspaper – paper and online formats. By the end, seventh grade students will be able to:

- Using a list of definitions provided, recognize and label all standard components of the front page of a newspaper (headline, dateline, byline, etc)
- Name, search and find a minimum of two local newspapers online as requested by the teacher-librarian.
- Understand and develop “eye-catching” headlines.
- Write brief news stories using their understanding of the basic inverted pyramid style newspaper writing.
- Within the allocated time, create and compose a team front page of stories written on their own.

### **Motivational Goals:**

- Students will understand the relevance of incorporating media into their everyday lives. Example: Students will be able to access their online newspaper to check the scores of their school’s soccer game from last night.
- To generate interest in researching news articles, students will watch a video called “Following the Beat.” The video is a brief documentary that follows two high school newspaper reporters, from their school, as they track down ideas and details of a story they are writing.
- By the end of the lesson, students will show increased confidence in writing brief news stories as high school newspaper writers, their teachers, and their team coaches them.
- Maintain and generate interest in forms of media and promote value in current events.

## AUDIENCE

**Grade Level:** Seventh Grade Students

**Number of Students:** 20 – 25 (class enrollment)

**Relevant Characteristics:**

- Have used the internet for basic searching assignments in the past
- Range of learning styles
- Range of reading levels
- Have seen a copy of a newspaper before
- Have worked in a team setting before
- High curiosity

**Motivational Profile**

Attention	Low	Medium	High
Relevance	Low	Medium	High
Confidence	Low	Medium	High
Satisfaction Potential	Low	Medium	High

Attention to the lesson is set at medium/high based upon the idea that in order to do well and retain the information needed, students attention is important highly beneficial to the success of the project. Coming in to the project, students will have little understanding as to why reading a newspaper may affect their lives. At this point in their life, they have had minimal exposure to print media and therefore most likely see little relevance to their life. The lesson will increase their knowledge and relevance to world of print media. By tying in personal information (i.e. scores from their soccer game); the relevance of the project will increase. In conjunction with low relevance, their confidence will also be low due the fact again of minimal exposure to print media and no participation in a media writing activity. Satisfaction potential is high due to the fact that some of their grade is based upon group work and students will see that they need to do well in an attempt to satisfy their group members. Also, the rewards are high if indeed they do well on the project.

**CONTENT AND TECHNIQUE**

### **Introduction: Session One**

1. Students will come to the library for their designated library time. Upon entering the library, students will see 8x10 posters hanging from the ceiling with famous headlines boldly printed on them (“Astronauts Touch the Moon!” “The September to Never Forget” etc.) Together, we will discuss what headlines are and why it’s so important for a newspaper to create a catchy headline.
2. Students will be placed into pairs and one person from each pair will come to the front of the room and pick a story scenario from a box. They must take the scenario back to their teammate and create a catchy headline for the story. After 10 minutes have passed, I will introduce each scenario to the class and ask the team who had that scenario to stand up and reveal their catchy headline.
3. I will then poll the class and ask whose parents receive a local paper every morning. After the poll, I will discuss an alternative form of reading the paper every morning – online! Together, we will write and brainstorm (on the smart board) a list of three to four local newspapers in our area.
4. I will then bring up a basic search page and show students how to search for their local papers online. Through discussion and interaction using the smart board, students will see how they can go to their paper’s front page, the sports section, or check their horoscope.
5. Students will have a few minutes left to go to a computer station in the library and practice searching for a local online paper.

#### *Methods, Media, and Materials*

Pre-made headline posters, typed story scenarios, Internet access, smart board or LCD projector with screen

### **Body: Session Two**

1. Students will come to the library for their designated library time. Once they have come in and sat down, I will introduce them to the group of high school students that stand before them. The high school newspaper club members will introduce themselves and state what their positions are on the paper.
2. I will then explain to students that they are going to watch a mini-documentary (define documentary for those who do not know) that follows two of the newspaper members around for a day. The documentary will show how the students start during a general staff meeting to generate story ideas, how the editor assigns who will write, how the writer sets up interviews, and how the interviews are carried out to gather information.
3. After the video has been shown, the high school students will explain to the seventh graders what they have just watched and ask for any relevant questions.
4. Students will then receive a list of terms that define elements of the front page (headline, byline, dateline, etc). The front page of the local newspaper will be displayed on the smart board and students, after called upon, will come up and write what term defines what element. Students will be asked to continue to review these definitions prior to the next library class. The classroom ELA teacher will also have a copy of the definitions.

#### *Methods, Media, and Materials*

Mini-documentary provided by the high school newspaper club, worksheet defining the elements of the front page, smart board or LCD projector with screen, Internet access

### **Session Three**

1. When students come into the library during their designated library time, they will be given copies of old newspapers and a list of terminology of front-page elements. Using only what they remember from their definitions, students must cut out sections of the front page to match the definitions. Before they begin, students will see that there are three high school newspaper staff members standing again in our library. I will tell the students that the first five students with their worksheet completed and correct will go with the staff members on a little trip.
2. Students will be directed to begin the competition. The five winning students will go with the high school students during their lunch to sit in on a newspaper club meeting where pizza is provided. They will see first-hand how a meeting works and how the newspaper begins its developing process. What they don't know is that the five to finish first will each be placed on separate teams to make up their entire "front-page team." That way each team will have someone on it that has seen the ins and outs of the high school newspaper.
3. After students have finished the competition, we will designate the winners, announce their "pizza winning" prize, and go over the worksheet together on the smart board.
4. Students will then be asked to go to a computer station and get onto the front page of one of the local online formats of a newspaper. Students will be asked to browse stories on the front page and eventually choose one and print it out in the library. I will be walking around ensuring students are on task and answering any necessary questions. Students must have a story chosen and printed out and turned into me, with their name on it, before the end of class.

#### *Methods, Media, and Materials*

Copies of old newspapers, Newspaper Components Review Sheet (see below), scissors, sticks of glue, smart board or LCD projector with screen, Internet access, printer access.

### **Session Four:**

1. The five students who won the prize of attending the newspaper club meeting will be asked to come forward. I will ask them a series of questions about what they saw and heard during the meeting so the rest of the class can have an idea of what the meetings are like.
2. Students will then receive their stories back that they had printed out last library class as well as a highlighter.
3. Using the smart board, I will introduce students to the 5w's and inverted pyramid style writing. Together, we will read through one story on the smart board and highlight the who, what, where, when, and why of the story.
4. Students must then use the highlighters they have been given to read through their own stories and highlight the 5w's.

5. The Seventh grade ELA teacher will join me and together, we will introduce what the pyramid looks like in newspaper writing. Students will then attempt to fill in their inverted pyramids using the stories they have been working with. This activity will be continued and practiced again (more than once) during their English class time prior to coming back for their library time again.

*Methods, Media, and Materials*

Printed stories, highlighters for each member of the class, smart board or LCD projector and screen, worksheet of inverted pyramid style writing (see below)

**Session Five:**

1. The ELA teacher and I will put students into pre-selected teams. (Each team will consist of one of the competition winners.)
2. On the smart board, we will brainstorm a list of jobs that people have who work on a newspaper (Editor, journalist, photographer, etc).
3. Students will be given the assignment and timeline of each team creating their own front page.
4. Students will be given a copy of the rules as well as follow along with them on the smart board:

Rule that students will see:

- Your team will be given information to write three news stories. You must use that information and only that information for accuracy in writing your stories.
  - You must designate a role for each member of your team and on the back of your front page each team member's name must be listed with their role written beside it.
  - You must work as a TEAM in creating this front page. You will be gluing and pasting your stories (after they have been typed) onto the provided poster-board. Neatness will count!
  - You must follow the rubric provided for "Creating Your Own Front Page and News Story." If you have any questions in regards to the rubric, make sure to see Mrs. Bombard or your English teacher.
5. Students will then be given the story ideas and facts they must use to write their three front-page stories and headlines.
  6. Students will be given designated folders in the library to keep all of their team's materials and work.
  7. During English class this week, the ELA teacher will go over the story rubric generated by both of us with the students. She will explain that their projects will be given an English grade, but will be graded collaboratively by her and myself.

*Methods, Media, and Materials*

Smart board or LCS projector and screen, list of Newspaper professions, list of rules, typed out story ideas and facts, team folders, Create Your Own Front Page and News Story Rubric (see below)

**Session Six:**

1. Students will return to the library for their designated library time and they must begin assigning roles and working on their front pages. Those who have been assigned the “journalist role” will go to a separate part of the library to begin typing their articles. The ELA teacher will be in the library at this time to assist in the writing process.
2. The students who are the artists and layout people must begin putting together a draft of the layout and drawing the sketched that will go with the pictures.

### **Sessions Seven and Eight:**

1. Students will continue to use library time to put together their front pages.
2. If additional team time is needed, teams must schedule a time to come to the library together to finish up the project before next library time.
3. Students will be informed that all front pages are due the day before the next library time. Their front pages will be on display when they enter the library next time and they must take the time to look over every team’s page.
4. Members of the high school newspaper club will also be down to view the display and provide any positive comments to the students.

*Methods, Media, and Materials (for sessions six, seven, and eight)*

Poster board, scissors, glue, colored pencils, sign-up schedule, computer access, and printer access.

### **Conclusion: Session Nine**

1. Students will enter the library and see their front pages on display.
2. Students will walk around for a bit, viewing all team’s pages.
3. High School Newspaper members will also be there to critique the project.
4. After a while of viewing, students will sit while the high school members point out things that were done well, written well, drawn well, etc. Positive comments only!
5. Congratulate students on their success with the project and their writing and drawing.
6. Ask students to take out a piece of paper and each writes a personal evaluation of what they liked best/least about the project (not about a person working on their team!)
7. Congratulate students once again and let them know that because they have done such a wonderful job, the administration has agreed to allow the middle school to begin creating their own newsletter or “front-page” that will be published monthly. Tell students that if they are interested in really becoming published members of the newspaper, to see you after class to sign up. After everyone has signed up, I will let students know where and when our “Front-Page Club” will meet.

### **Assessment Methods:**

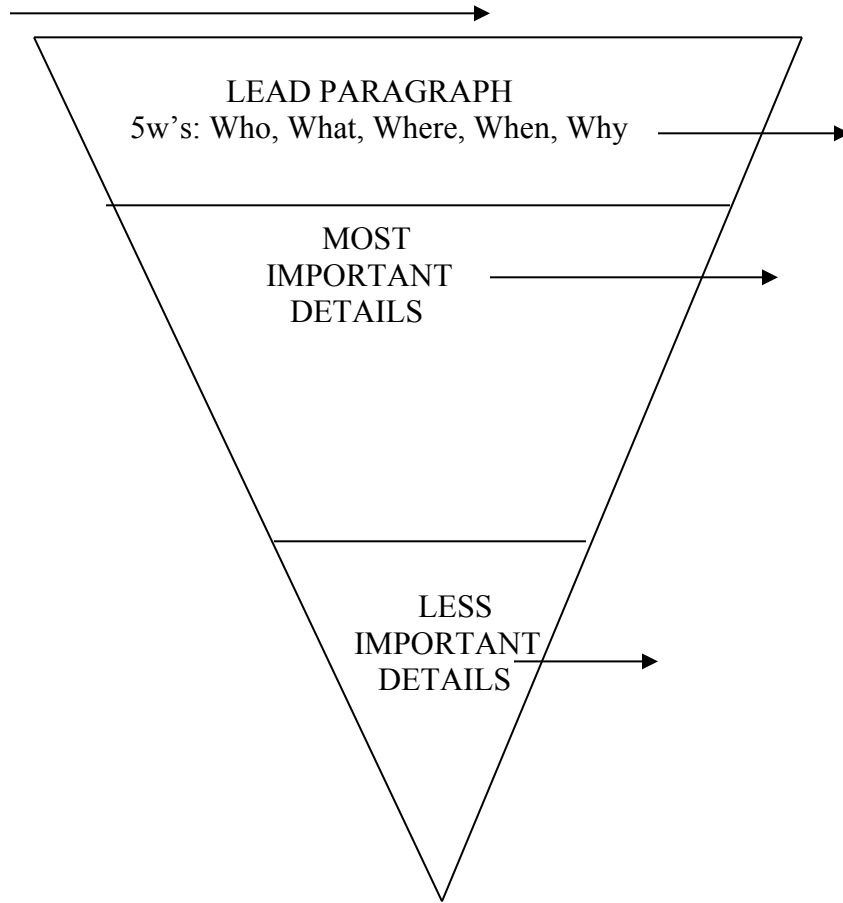


1. Observation
2. Grading of “Create Your Own Front Page and News Story” Rubric
3. “Newspaper Components” Review Sheet
4. Self-evaluation of effort and achievement

See below for support materials

## **The Inverted Pyramid**

Headline



## Rubric for: Create Your Own Front Page and News Story

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	Criteria				Points
	1	2	3	4	
<b>Number of Sentences</b>	Your story had less than eight sentences.	Your story included 8 - 11 sentences.	Your story included 11 - 15 sentences.	Your story included more than 15 - 18 sentences.	___
<b>Grammar, Spelling, and Punctuation</b>	Your story had more than ten mistakes.	Your story has six to ten mistakes.	Your story has one to six mistakes.	Your story has no mistakes.	___
<b>Labeling all Components of Stories and Pictures/Name of Newspaper Included</b>	You did not label any of the missing components. You did not give your newspaper a name.	You did give your newspaper a name but you did not correctly label all of the missing components.	Your newspaper had a name and you correctly labeled most of the components.	Your newspaper's name was very creative. All components were correctly labeled.	___
<b>Pyramid Style and the 5w's</b>	Your article did not follow pyramid style and you did not include the 5w's.	Your article was unorganized in pyramid style and not all of the 5w's were included.	Your article followed pyramid style but you did not include all 5w's.	Your article followed pyramid style and all 5w's were included.	___
<b>Creativity</b>	Your story did not include any descriptive words. Too many baby words were used. The layout of your front page was not eye-catching.	Your story is vague. You used the same words repeatedly and offered little imagery. The layout of your front page was pretty generic.	You used some descriptive words and provided imagery. The layout of your front page was creative.	Your story is interesting to read. Your descriptive words are excellent. The layout of your front page was very creative!	___
				<b>Total----&gt;</b>	___

Comments from Mrs. Bombard:

## Newspaper Components Review Sheet

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Please cut components from your newspaper and paste them in the appropriate spaces.

1. Byline | **By GREG DIUTE**  
*Evening Times Reporter*

2. Headline

### **'Taste of Tioga' cookbook needs recipes, donations**

3. Dateline **OWEGO,**

4. Logo

**THE  
EVENING  
TIMES**

5. Banner

## **Athens grad tending to wounded at Ramstein Air Force Base**

6. Credit Line

Photo by L.D. Glover

7. Caption

BOCES PALS teacher aide Mary Fran Killoran gets a hug from Katie Krukowski, 15, at a support rally Thursday for staff members whose relatives are serving in the military. Killoran's son, 1st. Lt. Eric Killoran, is with the Army's 3rd Infantry Division in Iraq.