

Dr. Downing Journalism Handbook 2022

*A hands-on resource
for journalism students
at
Kutztown University of Pennsylvania*

By
Dr. Michael Downing
Professor of English and Professional Writing
Kutztown University of Pennsylvania

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Fifth Edition

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PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

This book is intended to provide guidance, explanations, and hands-on exercises for anyone interested in studying journalism. It contains information on format, Associated Press style, the 5Ws and the H, the Inverted Pyramid, and various specifics related to common journalistic writing assignments. It also includes self-quizzes and answer keys.

It is intentionally designed as a pen-in-hand workbook, because despite our increasingly “paperless” age, I want to enable students to write in their books: to take the quizzes with a pencil, to complete exercises in ink, to underline important aspects, and to make notes in the margins. To connect the brain with the hand. To get messy.

Journalism has permeated my life since I was a youngster. I was editor of my grade school, high school, and university newspapers and pursued a double major in college, completing bachelor's degrees in English and Communication. I finished a master's degree in English shortly thereafter, with a focus on writing.

From there, I began teaching writing courses at local colleges in Western Pennsylvania while completing a Ph.D. in English. Upon graduation, I worked as a professional journalist/ technical editor for approximately seven years, writing for such publications as *Mass Storage News*, *Business Solutions*, *Integrated Communications Design*, *Lightwave*, and *Portable Design*.

When the right opportunity became available, I moved back into teaching. Today, I teach Journalism and Technical Writing. I am also an August Wilson scholar.

Before You Begin Writing

Format

Format¹ is very important in the world of journalism because it provides consistency for written material submitted for publication throughout the organization. Imagine if you were an editor who had several reporters working for you and they were all submitting documents in different formats: Some in *Word*, some in *Pages*, some in *Notes*...some double-spaced, some not. Some with indented paragraphs, some not. It wouldn't take you long to develop a uniform format policy for the entire organization.

Therefore, most newspapers, magazines, and other publishing houses have pre-determined format requirements. What does this mean for you? It means you should be prepared to "format" your documents to suit the needs of your editors. If s/he wants little bunnies in the top right corner, then put them there.

That said, the phrase, "Simple is best" typically governs policies of format. For example, margins should be an inch to an inch and a half, double spacing for any material going to copy editors (which is pretty much everything), paragraphs should be separated from one another with an extra space, no tabbed indentation should be used (see Appendix A). Be sure to include the "thirty mark (-30-) at the end of all stories.

Other format concerns...

Include the following at the top left of the page (but not in the header):

Headline:

Subhead:

Section:

Date:

Words:

By

For now, go ahead and include the labels, "Headline," "Subhead," etc. Once you become used to the pattern, you can drop the labels. However, do not make the mistake of removing the labels and then forgetting certain aspects. Your editor will not be happy if you forget the word count, for example—or the date—and s/he has to come looking for you.

Please note the formula: Headline+subhead=lead. If you can't write a headline for your story, you don't know what you're trying to say. It's okay to bounce back and forth between the story and the head/ sub/ lead. More on this later, but in my experience, students struggle mightily with writing headlines, subheads and leads.

Dateline

¹ It is important to note that *format* is different from Associated Press *style*; we will cover AP style later.

Datelines look like this: KUTZTOWN, Pa. March 28 – They should only be included when a reporter is actually working from that location. We don't typically use datelines at *The Keystone*, because most of our stories are written by students in and around campus. If you are working from Harrisburg, however, then by all means use the dateline.

Center the "thirty" mark (-30-)

Remember to center the -30- mark at the end of all stories.

Why -30-? Check out this article: [Why Not "-29-"?](http://www.ajr.org/article.asp?id=4408)

(<http://www.ajr.org/article.asp?id=4408>)

My favorite explanation is that it comes from the Roman numerals X X X, with "X" being the oldest form of human marking, next to the straight line. # # # is also acceptable as a story-end designator; however, the purposes of my classes, students typically use -30-.

Hit the Space Bar Once

Use **one** space after periods in journalistic writing. If you are in the habit of using two spaces after periods, use Find and Replace to remove extra spaces.

In-House Style

In addition to the *AP Stylebook*, every publishing house I have worked for maintained some kind of In-House Style Guide. These guides are typically composed by copy editors and proofers, in conjunction with the publishers, editors, and owners. They are designed to tackle concerns that have emerged, specifically, within that publishing house. One example: "Use of the word 'just' is not acceptable in any context." Another: "'Usage' is not acceptable; instead: 'use.'"

Be prepared to have an In-House Style Guide handed to you when you begin working for just about any news outlet.

Keystone Newspaper In-House Style

The Keystone Newspaper follows AP style with exceptions.

For example:

All references to Kutztown University are KU.

All references to Kutztown Borough are Kutztown.

This section will grow with time.

Track Changes and Peer Review

If you are not familiar with the Track Changes function in *Word*, I suggest you find it immediately. It is located under the Review Tab in *Word* 2007. To activate Track Changes, click the button. This will enable you to add comments to your own work or to the work of others. It also allows a professor or editor to comment on your work. It's used all the time.

Note: Sometimes the feedback can seem harsh. Do not take it personally. Typically, the first two reviews are painful. You'll modify your style and focus your attention accordingly.

The best strategy for any kind of peer review is to find another person who is similar to you in terms of writing skill and dedication. Personally, I have about six readers that I could go to pretty quickly, depending on the nature of the writing (journalistic, academic, technical, etc.).

Naming Files

In this section, my goal is to amplify the importance of naming files correctly, providing as much information as possible. This will enable your co-workers to know the contents of the file without having to open the file.

Typically, this will be covered by the In-House Style Guide, which will tell you 1) how to name and 2) where to save your files (typically on a shared folder on a server). Some feature of the file name is going to be valued more than others, so that's what will come first. It might be your last name; it might not. It all depends on the practices of the organization.

I want my students to use the following format for naming files:

Last name, first name, assignment title, course title, time the class meets

Which would look like this, in practice: Downing, Michael, Hard News Story, Journalism, 3pm

The Associated Press

The Associated Press is a news gathering organization that got its start in 1846 (<http://www.ap.org/>). Located in New York City, the company employs 3,700 people. Its most famous publication, the *AP Stylebook*, is the bible of journalists worldwide.

Here are some excerpts from the *AP Stylebook*.

Consult the official *Stylebook* for complete entries.

Numbers

Use figures for all numbers above nine; spell out all numbers under 10. (Note exceptions.)

Use 21 million instead of 21,000,000.

Money: \$39 million, \$22.5 billion. Don't carry beyond two decimals.

Fractions standing alone are spelled out.

One-fourth of the students

Insert commas with four or more figures, except in dates.

\$5,900 1,576 skateboards 1990 2001.

Abbreviations

Ala. Fla. Md. Neb. N.D. Tenn.

Ariz. Ga. Mass. Nev. Okla. Vt.

Ark. Ill. Mich. N.H. Ore. Va.

Calif. Ind. Minn. N.J. Pa. Wash.

Colo. Kan. Miss. N.M. R.I. W.Va.

Conn. Ky. Mo. N.Y. S.C. Wis.

Del. La. Mont. N.C. S.D. Wyo.

DO NOT abbreviate Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Utah, Texas.

Abbreviate names of months more than five letters when followed by a date, but spell out when referring to the month generally.

DO NOT abbreviate March, April, May, June, July.

Feb. 5 March 30 April 7 Sept. 10

Punctuation

Always put the period and comma inside quotation marks.

“I saw the play,” he said.

He said, “I saw the play.”

“Did you see the play?” he asked.

Should I see “King Lear”?

Use periods in lower-case abbreviations.

c.o.d. f.o.b. a.m. p.m. m.p.h. r.p.m.

Exception: 35mm

PART TWO: WRITING AND BASIC COVERAGE

Five Ws and H

The five Ws and the H consist of answering who, what, when, where, why, and how. These are essential to any news story and should be covered at the top. This means that the headline, subhead, and lead should answer all of the 5Ws and H.

Please note that even though these factual aspects should be covered, you should also seek to write a lead that is 1) interesting and 2) tells a story. In other words, don't write deadly dull leads in the name of following the inverted pyramid. Good writers find a way to include the 5Ws and H while hooking the reader and telling a good story.

Inverted Pyramid

The Inverted Pyramid is critical to news writing. It assumes that the most important information comes at the beginning of a story and that the information decreases in importance as the story progresses. This stems from the old days when a story literally had to be “cut” (with scissors) from the bottom in order to allow that story to fit in the news hole.

Today, readers depend on the Inverted Pyramid to deliver their news in a certain way. The agreement is simple: Readers should be able to understand the key points to any story by reading the headline, the subhead, and the lead. If they are interested in obtaining more details, they can read further. Otherwise, they can stop reading and move on to another story.

Storytelling

The ability to tell a good story is critical to journalists. The difficult part is finding a way to include all of the factual aspects while constructing a good story. The typically strategy is to slow down and allow the story to tell itself. In my view, the two most important parts of this strategy are 1) developing a clear perspective and 2) the starting point.

Developing a clear perspective enables the reader to connect with your story. Even if you tell the story from a criminal’s perspective, readers can connect and watch a woeful pattern emerge. The starting point is critical because if you try to provide too much background information at the beginning, you will lose your readers. In contrast, if you don’t provide enough information at the beginning and instead try to build dramatic tension by building toward a climax, then most readers will tune out. Of course there may be exceptions to this when writing certain features stories. However, in the day-to-day world of news reporting, the idea is to find a starting point that hooks readers and provides enough information to keep them reading without loading too much information into the lead or withholding too much until the end.

This may sound difficult, because it is. This is the puzzle that journalists face every day. Writing a perfect news article can take years to master. It’s a matter of practice and attention to detail.

Headlines, Subheads, and Leads

Memorize this formula: Headline + subhead = lead.

Headlines and subheads come at the beginning of news stories. Please note that they are not titles, like you may have learned to write in high school.

Title: Guns in America

Headline: President Vetoes Gun Legislation

Headline and subhead combinations are not easy to write and often have to be re-written several times. Be sure to allow enough time to develop a good headline and sub.

Remember that subheads should amplify and extend headlines. Let's look at some examples.

Headlines MUST have verbs:

- ⦿ Scientists Fault U.S. Response in Assessing Gulf Oil Spill
- ⦿ Florida Worries About Oil Effect on Tourism
- ⦿ Voter Insurrection Turns Mainstream, Creating New Rules

Subheads follow headlines and must, themselves, contain verbs:

Headline: Emmaus police officer suspended

Subhead: Chief says Nathan Bordner was in alcohol-related incident in North Catasauqua

Headline: Hang up the cell phone

Subhead: Bethlehem is 6th city in state to ban motorists from using devices that aren't hands-free

Note how the subhead functions. It does not repeat any of the information from the headline *verbatim*. Instead, it **amplifies, extends, and clarifies** the information provided in the headline.

Example #1

Headline: Emmaus police officer suspended

Subhead: Chief says Nathan Bordner was in alcohol-related incident in North Catasauqua

The subhead identifies the name of the “police officer” mentioned in the headline. The subhead also provides attribution—in other words, it tells you who is providing this information. The subhead also provides a crucial detail: the fact that the incident was “alcohol-related.” This is the right way to do it.

Here is an example of an incorrect headline/subhead:

Example #2

Headline: Emmaus police officer suspended

Subhead: Emmaus police chief says Nathan Bordner will be suspended for incident

In example #2, the subhead does little to extend the information provided in the headline (other than identifying the name of the officer). In fact, the subhead actually repeats three of the four words. This is the wrong way to do it.

In all that you do as a journalist, think about limitations: limitations on space, limitations on time, limitations on peoples' attention spans. This will force you into recognizing the importance of making the most of every word, every phrase, and every headline. All of it should be right and tight. All of it should be clear and concise—not cluttered and confusing.

The “lead” is the first paragraph of a news story. They typically connect the content to the audience and provide as much of the 5Ws and H as possible. Remember that headline + subhead = lead. Let’s see if it works with the following example.

Headline: Emmaus police officer suspended

Subhead: Chief says Nathan Bordner was in alcohol-related incident in North Catasauqua

An Emmaus police officer has been suspended because of an "alcohol-related incident" in North Catasauqua last weekend, Emmaus police Chief David Faust confirmed.

Just as headline + subhead = lead, you can check your headline and subhead by reviewing your lead. In other words, if you have trouble writing headlines and subheads, take a look at your lead and reverse-engineer it. That should help you check your head and sub.

Libel

Libel is a written statement that is false that holds a person up to ridicule, hatred, or scorn, or damages a person’s reputation, through fault.

Truth is the best defense against libel. However, truth alone is not enough. If fault can be proven, a reporter can still be held liable.

In the case of libel, “fault” has been typically defined by the courts as either: reckless disregard for the truth or malice aforethought.

Reckless disregard for the truth can involve not getting the other side of the story or willingly (and conveniently) ignoring critical information in order to create a scenario that damages a person’s standing.

Malice aforethought involves situations where it can be proven that the reporter wrote the story with the express intention of damaging the reputation of the party in question. This is difficult to prove and typically requires corroborating evidence and additional witnesses.

The second defense against libel is the public persons defense. Under the Constitutional right to Freedom of Speech, the courts have upheld the right of the press to Fair Comment and Criticism. The precedent has been that, if you are a public person, you are more subject to the public opinions of people. That’s why Americans can say just about anything they like about the President of the United States (whomever that might be). The same is true for celebrities, because the courts would say that these people “actively sought the spotlight” and must face the consequences of those actions.

In contrast, private persons are more protected. If you do not seek the spotlight and suddenly find yourself subject to false ridicule in the press, you will have more options

under libel law. Of course, you must then demonstrate that the things they are saying about you are false.

Obituaries

An obituary is a published death notice that includes a brief biography of the deceased as well as family connections. Obits are typically written by young journalists, who are sharpening their writing skills.

Here are two models. One is an actual obituary that ran in a local paper. The other is from an assignment I give in my journalism classes where students were to write their own obituaries. I wrote with them.

Elizabeth A. Welch, 94, died Saturday, Feb. 2, 2008 at Sarah Reed Retirement Center in Erie, Pa. She was born on May 18, 1913 in Ripley, N.Y., the daughter of the late Joseph and Olive (Alcorn) Welch. Elizabeth attended Ripley Central School in Ripley and graduated from Jamestown Business College in Jamestown, N.Y. She worked for 35 years at Welch Foods, Inc. in Westfield, N.Y. She was a member of First United Methodist Church, Westfield. Elizabeth was active with the local quilting club, The Lady Needlers. She also enjoyed playing bridge and tending her vegetable garden. She is survived by a nephew, Robert S. Warner, of Erie, and a dear friend, May Elizabeth "Mitzie" Simmons of Erie. Besides her parents, she was predeceased by her niece and nephew, Robert L. and Peggy Warner. Funeral services will be held on Saturday, Feb. 9 at 10 a.m. at the Fantauzzi Funeral Home, 52 South Portage Street, Westfield, with the Rev. Matt Golibersuch of First United Methodist Church officiating. Relatives and friends are invited to call at the funeral home from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. on Saturday, prior to the funeral service. Interment will be in the Quincy Rural Cemetery, Ripley.

Dr. Mike Downing, of Stony Run, Pa., died Tuesday at the age of 104. He was born Dec. 8, 1965 at Hamot Hospital in Erie, Pa., son of the late Bart A. and Mary S. Downing. After graduating from East High School in Erie, Mike attended Clarion University, earning bachelor's degrees in English and Communications, as well as a master's degree in English. From there, he went to Indiana University of Pennsylvania where he earned a doctorate in English. After living and working for a time in Pittsburgh and Nashua, N.H., he returned to Erie and worked for Mercyhurst College. He eventually moved on to the position of Professor of English at Kutztown University of Pennsylvania, where he worked for 25 years. He was a musician, playing with such bands as Ischabaha and Evolution Circus. He enjoyed hiking, camping, swimming, and any outdoor activity. He was a volunteer at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary and Camp Notre Dame in Erie. He was also a longtime fan of the Pittsburgh Steelers and the Boston Celtics. Survivors include his wife and daughter and numerous cousins. He was preceded in death by his brother, Bart J. Downing, as well as his parents. Calling hours will be held at Kempton Funeral Home from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Monday and Tuesday. Burial will be conducted at Gate of Heaven Cemetery. In lieu of

flowers, contributions can be made to Camp Notre Dame, PO Box 74, Fairview, PA 15147.

The following elements must be included in any obituary:

- 1) Name
- 2) Identification
- 3) Time and place of death
- 4) Age
- 5) Funeral service
- 6) Burial or entombment

The following should be considered and included when appropriate

- 1) Cause of death
- 2) Extent of illness
- 3) Survivors
- 4) Biographical material
- 5) Those present at time of death
- 6) Last words
- 7) Unusual circumstances of death

Typically, journalists complete an obituary form before writing the obit. The obit form goes into a folder with other notes and can be consulted in case there was a mistake.

TYPICAL OBITUARY FORM

Name

 (Title) (First) (Middle) (Last)

Date of Death _____ Place of Death _____

Age _____ Residence at the time of death _____

Period of Residency _____

If a former Berks County resident, where and when _____

Cause of death _____

Date of Birth _____ Place of Birth _____

Father's Name _____ ☐ Deceased

Mother's Name _____ ☐ Deceased

Spouse's Name _____ ☐ Deceased

Residence of Spouse _____ Years Married _____

Children (and children's spouses, if desired). Use additional sheet if needed.

First and Last Name City, State of Residence Deceased Sex (M/F)

_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

Number of Grandchildren _____ Great-grandchildren _____

Siblings. Use additional sheet if necessary.

First and Last Name City, State of Residence Deceased Sex (M/F)

_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

Military service, if any _____

Education/Work

Memberships/Organizations/Awards/Other _____

Funeral/Memorial Service information (include address)

Burial information

Memorial contributions may be made to (include address)

Funeral home (include phone number)

Family Contact (include phone number)

Once you've filled out the form, you're ready to begin writing. Writing a rough draft in pen or pencil will help you to compose more effectively once you're at the computer, ready to type.

[illegible]

Press Releases

Common Newsroom Task: Press Release Re-Write

Introduction

A press release is a written document prepared by a business or organization for direct distribution to the media. The purpose of a press release is to give journalists background information on a particular topic. For example, the business might be opening a new office, moving to another location, merging with another company, or laying off ½ its workforce. [You can view hundreds of press releases at www.PRNewswire.com.]

The danger for journalists lies with the fact that press releases are not objective; they don't pretend to be. They will typically depict the companies they represent as being "the best, the brightest, and the boldest." Therefore, a press release should NEVER appear in your newspaper *verbatim*. They should be re-written to reflect the essentially facts: 5 Ws and the H and other relevant details.

It is important to note the journalists must be very aggressive at removing and/or ignoring biased language. Like most editors, I will be very tough on you if you write, "Company X is the best company in the United States." What does "best" mean? Are they the most profitable? If so, in what market(s)? Do they sell more widgets than the other companies? How many more? How long has this been true?

See what I mean?

In other words, you should not make any statements about a company that are not **quantifiable**. I will be relentless in helping you to identifying such "fluff" and making appropriate revisions.

In practice, many newspapers often have no problem with a simple re-write; however, some publications demand that value be added to the release in a variety of ways:

- 1) by conducting background research that offers effective comparisons and/or illustrates trends,
- 2) by making one or more phone calls to gather additional facts and/or opinion,
- 3) by conducting a full-scale interview with several key players.

Since this particular assignment is an academic exercise, I won't require you to make phone calls or conduct interviews. However, you should add value by conducting background research:

- 1) Visit the press release page on the company's website to see if there are any other relevant or interesting releases.
- 2) Visit Hoovers.com to see how much background information you can find.
- 3) Google the company and/or some of the people mentioned in the release
- 4) Ask your editor what s/he knows about this. In this class, I am your editor.

Model

Sheetz, Inc. Continues West Virginia Blitz, Opening Third Store in Three Months
Huntington, WV Welcomes Awesome New Convenience Location

ALTOONA, Pa., Aug. 20 /PRNewswire/ -- Sheetz, one of America's fastest growing family-owned and operated convenience store chains, is carrying out a plan to rapidly develop a new market of its convenience stores in Southern West Virginia with the opening of another excellent location today at 432 Eighteenth Street West in Huntington. This is the third opening in that area since June 2009 for Sheetz, the first two being brand-new stores in nearby Barboursville and Milton.

"We can't be more pleased with how well received our stores have been this summer," said Stan Sheetz, president and CEO, Sheetz, Inc. "Customers are excited and enjoying what we offer and we've been fortunate to have hired some great West Virginians who work hard and really make a difference for us."

Doors officially open to customers this morning and employees will host a grand opening celebration with a ribbon cutting ceremony later this afternoon at 3:00p.m. Customers and all media are welcome to attend.

The 5,000 square-foot facility will offer fresh food items like the MTGo! and Shweetz Bakery lines of sandwiches, wraps, donuts and muffins, along with the signature MTO(R) line of Angus beef burgers, premium grilled chicken sandwiches, freshly made salads, French fries, onion rings and more.

Sheetz Bros. Coffeez, a full-service espresso and smoothie bar staffed by a trained barista is going to be available at the new store. Customers can order hand-made specialty coffee drinks including lattes, cappuccinos and mochas - hot, frozen or iced.

Sheetz also offers premium brewed self-serve coffees made from 100 percent Arabica beans in a variety of flavors such as Breakfast Blend, Serious Dark Roast, 100 percent Colombian and Hazelnut.

"Sheetz has a legacy of innovation, customer focus and employee development," Mr. Sheetz said. "The company's mission today is on meeting the needs of customers on the go by providing fast and friendly service, quality products in clean and convenient locations."

Sheetz is also proud of its tradition of giving back to the communities in which it operates. Especially important to the organization is finding ways to be involved with today's young people. As part of today's celebration, the company will make a donation to Boys and Girls Club of Huntington.

Established in 1952 in Altoona, Pennsylvania, Sheetz, Inc. is one of America's fastest growing family-owned and operated convenience store chains, with more than \$4.9

billion in revenue for 2008 and more than 12,000 employees. The company operates more than 350 convenience locations throughout Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Maryland, Virginia, Ohio and North Carolina. Sheetz provides an award-winning menu of MTO(R) subs, sandwiches and salads, which are ordered through unique touch-screen order point terminals. Sheetz currently ranks 82nd on the Forbes list of largest private companies, and has ranked for seven consecutive years on the list of Best Places to Work in Pennsylvania. All Sheetz convenience stores are open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. For more information, visit www.sheetz.com.

-30-

Hard News

News stories come in two basic forms: hard and soft. Hard news is what you find, for the most part, on the Associated Press website and on most news services/newspapers (NY Times, Reuters, Washington Post, Yahoo!, L.A. Times, Google, CNN). Hard news makes use of the 5Ws and the H and focuses on hard facts (times, dates, people involved). Hard news stories involve accidents, fires, crime, etc. Headlines for hard news look like this:

- ◎ Scientists Fault U.S. Response in Assessing Gulf Oil Spill
- ◎ Florida Worries About Oil Effect on Tourism
- ◎ Voter Insurrection Turns Mainstream, Creating New Rules

In contrast, soft news deals with biography, background/profile, trends, etc. While facts are certainly important, the focus is on people, not necessarily events and circumstances.

Therefore, a hard news story would be “Mack Truck Closing.” Such a story would focus on when the operation is closing, how many people would be laid off, what the economic impact is going to be, what efforts are taking place to prevent such a closure.

In contrast, a soft news story might take a closer look at someone who might have worked at Mack Truck for 35 years. What memories does he have? What’s he going to do now?

Here is a hard news model from my days as a technical journalist. You might not be familiar with some of the jargon, but that’s okay. You should be able to recognize some of the important features of a hard news story, such as a strong lead, attribution, quotations, and actionable information at the end. I also wanted you to have an idea of the kind of writing I did—and the kind of writing that exists out there.

Model

Headline: High-speed backplane initiative launched

Subhead: Work on the HSBI specification to be completed by the end of 2002

Section: News

Date: Sept. 12, 2002

Words: 551

By Mike Downing, Senior Technical Editor

San Jose, Ca. (September 2000) - Think of it as a high-profile project intended to provide a mid-life bandwidth boost to backplane development. That's the wisdom driving the launch of the High Speed Backplane Initiative (HSBI). The group's purpose is to develop serial link technology capable of sending data at rates of 4.976 to 6.375 Gbits/s across a backplane up to a distance of 30 in. (including two connectors).

According to John D'Ambrosia, Manager of Semiconductor Relations for Tyco Electronics and secretary for the HSBI, the project started with companies involved with XAUI (10-Gbit Attachment Unit Interface) development.

D'Ambrosia said, "As XAUI work was winding down, several companies recognized the need for additional bandwidth on the backplane, especially with the emergence with fiber optics and the push for greater port densities. Nine of these companies came together to form the HSBI."

The companies include Agilent, Intel, Marvel, Mindspeed, Gennup, Cadence/Tality, Texas Instrument, Tyco, and Velio. "There are also more than 20 additional companies currently that are acting as contributors," said D'Ambrosia, adding, "System vendors will also be invited to participate in the initiative once we have more to show them."

Shawn Rogers from Texas Instruments is senior editor for the High Speed Backplane Initiative. He says, "We don't want to create the impression that this is a bunch of XAUI players who don't have anything else to do. We found that the market for our XAUI transceivers was predominantly in the backplane. Our customers were telling us that they need a mid-life bandwidth boost in order to develop their next-generation products and stay competitive. We thought we were going to have an easy time to this, rolling out various flavors of XAUI transceivers. But more work needs to be done."

SONET and/or Ethernet

The HSBI will focus on three main application spaces: SONET, Ethernet, and a collection of people who occupy both camps who are largely data agnostic (and which might include such applications as Fibre Channel).

Rogers says the HSBI will create an interoperable solution for higher speed backplanes by addressing issues associated with electrical signaling and protocol.

Specifications will be developed that define basic I/O levels and performance levels achieved when interfacing to the backplane environment. To address multi-protocol

support, the HSBI will develop specifications for 8B10B, SONET/SDH, and 64B66B encoding schemes, so that they may be carried over an HSBI link.

6- to 10-Gbit/s speeds

If the HSBI can ensure high-speed SERDES interoperability, systems vendors can meet increasing backplane bandwidth demands with multi-sourced parts that meet 6- to 10-Gbit/s speeds.

Work on the HSBI specification is scheduled for completion by the end of 2002. In addition to the actual specification, an interoperability test specification will also be released, which will enable interoperability testing of different vendors' HSBI links.

According to Allan Liu of Agilent technologies a lot of attention recently has been focused on speeding up the port side, which is rapidly making the backplane a bottleneck in system design. "The work of the HSBI is essential to satisfy the growing demand for bandwidth," he says. "Tackling the design challenges of signaling at these higher speeds as well as guaranteeing an abundance of components are two top-priorities for HSBI and will be critical in enabling the next-generation boxes."

For more information about the High Speed Backplane Initiative, visit the organization's Web site at www.hsbi.org.

Sports

Just like news stories, sports stories come in two basic forms: Hard sports and soft sports. Hard sports stories present the results of athletic competitions and focus on providing the score, the context, as well as any outstanding performances. Headlines and leads typically take the shape of a running narrative, which tells your readers how this particular contest fits into the recent history of the team: “Phillies Win Fifth in a Row” or “Ravens Lose Fifth Straight in Pittsburgh”. This is the “context” part.

In contrast, soft sport stories delve into background situations and consider the feelings and perspectives of various athletes. For example, there have been several stories about Michael Vick’s signing with the Philadelphia Eagles: Why did the Eagles decide to sign Vick? What kinds of legal hurdles must Vick overcome? These kinds of stories typically consider fan reaction, coach reaction, and player reaction.

Strong leads: Like any news article, you want to start your sports article with a strong lead, one that encapsulates the available information on “who, what, where, when, why and how.” Look at sports articles in almost any paper to see how they introduce the game they are covering with their lead paragraph. They get the reader’s attention with a strong but concise summary of the story to follow.

Also, note that a lead always places emphasis on the most important/interesting/relevant aspect of the story. For instance, a Philadelphia Phillies loss, by itself, is not significant. However, if it is their sixth loss in a row, then you have a big story. Context is everything in sports reporting.

Write clearly and concisely. If you read the daily sports section of your city paper, you will notice that most sports articles are written concisely. They also *stick to basic vocabulary*.

For example:

Avoid: The young man with the football endeavored to make progress into that part of the field known as the “end zone.”

Do this: Peterson took a direct snap and ran around left end, past the Cowboys defense, for his second touchdown of the game. Tight. Not wordy.

Words like “endeavored” are not part of the sports writing lexicon. Drop the literary thing and get to the facts of the story.

Know the context. Like any news article, a sports article will require you to have a basic working knowledge of the universe on which you’re reporting. This may mean not only knowing all about the current players, coaches, and standings but knowing some history, as well. This may be common knowledge to you, but if not, you may need to do some research.

The best way to tackle this—especially if you are not a seasoned sports reporter (or if you are covering a KU sporting event and have never done so before)—then be sure to ask the *coach* or the AD (Athletic Director) for some perspective: What does this win/loss mean for the team? For the program?

It's okay for you not to have all the answers. Just keep asking questions until you have your story.

Give the major play by play. Obviously, there are hundreds of plays in any match or game, and no article will include them all. Your job as a reporter is to report the basic chronology—beginning, middle, and end, of the sports event—with details about the major moments, turning points, big plays, big mistakes, momentum-builders.

In other words, you're providing something of a verbal highlight reel. Pay careful attention to who does what—and at what point—during the event. Then figure out which moments to include and which to leave out. You have the advantage of hindsight when putting these events together: "That hit turned out to be the fatal blow..."

When covering KU events, pick a sport that you are familiar with. If you do not have a deep knowledge of a sport and you want to cover it anyway, take a friend with you and let him/her describe what's happening.

Use quotes when possible. Talk to players and coaches. Quotes help to fill out your article.

Check your facts. Sporting events usually generate a lot of statistics. They can also be very fast-paced, involve many different players, and follow rules you might need to double-check if you're going to reference them. A clean, concise sports article will have its facts straight.

In these days of instant news, chances are good that your readers will already know the basic results (scores) of any sporting event that you cover (but not necessarily; you will include the scores, but reporting scores is not the emphasis of the story). With this in mind, then, the 5 W's and the H as well as the Inverted Pyramid are de-emphasized to some degree. In other words, most sports writers will not write this kind of simplistic lead: "The West Virginia Mountaineers defeated South Florida last night by a score of 20-6." Instead, you might see something like this: "Geno Smith threw two touchdown passes as No. 25 West Virginia (5-1, 1-0 Big East) held South Florida (3-3, 0-2) to a season-low for yards in the Mountaineers' 20-6 victory over the Bulls in Morgantown, W.Va."

Stated simply, readers want CONTEXT. That means background information: Why did Pirate Manager Jim Leyland pull pitcher Doug Drabek in the fourth inning with the game tied and a man on first? Why did Larry Bird leave the game holding the back of his leg last night? Was Mario Lemieux's injured back affected by the pounding he took last

night from New Jersey's goons? This is also known as "inside" information and readers crave it.

Sports leads are of four different types: Anecdote, Direct Quote, Personal Performance, Profile, or outstanding Element.

An anecdote lead makes use of a story-type introduction: A year ago on this date, Mario Lemieux said, "I may never play again." Thank goodness he was wrong....

A direct quote begins with a simple, direct quote: "They beat the heck out of us" is all Coach Brown had to say as the Cougars lost their tenth straight....

A personal performance lead focuses upon an individual: "Barry Bonds' quest for a second consecutive MVP trophy took another dramatic step forward last night..."

A profile lead for sports writing is similar to a features lead with a sporting slant: Jim Leyland's fiery temper on the field provides a sharp contrast to his temper off the field...

An outstanding element lead focuses upon one particular element that may have decided the outcome of a game: If there is one skill that lifts the Boston Celtics above most of their competition, it is their passing.

Accuracy is of prime importance. Write clearly.

Be aware of the history surrounding the event. Whether it is the history of the Olympics, or the rivalry between two college basketball teams, be sure to familiarize yourself with the historical framework of the event.

Be sure to consider possible leads as the game evolves.

Be sure to communicate effectively with your editor. When you have returned from the game, share your lead with him/her (if possible). They, in turn, can tell you how much space they are holding for you. They can also let you know about any other details which might affect your story.

Be descriptive. Communicate the atmosphere of the event: the players' attitudes, the crowd's attitudes, any unusual conditions, etc.

Remember: Your job is not yet over simply because you have turned your story over to your editor. Give them time to check your story: you may need to re-write. It is also a good idea to re-check your story (If your particular system permits) after it has been typeset and copy edited to be certain there are no errors. After all, it is YOUR NAME that will appear in the byline.

Model

Headline: KU Men's Baseball Defeats Shippensburg

Subhead: Big fifth inning takes the team to victory

Section: Sports

Date: March 28, 2010

Words: 275

By Mike Downing

The KU men's baseball team continued its winning streak to five games, scoring eleven runs in the fifth inning on Saturday to defeat the Red Raiders of Shippensburg University by a final score of 12-4.

The game featured strong hitting performances by KU's Paul Grmac and Pete Servas.

Initially, Shippensburg jumped out to an early 3-0 lead with a walk and three singles in the third inning. Couster, Persot, and Reel scored for the Red Raiders.

KU began fifth inning with back-to-back walks to left fielder Ryan Jones and shortstop Jeff Conway. Cleanup hitter Paul Grmac was up next and he hit a colossal home run to deep center field to tie the score, 3-3.

Then the flood gates opened. Yanoulis and Wedman singled for KU and Carlton doubled, driving in both runners, making the score 5-3. Servas then homered, making the score 7-3.

The Shippensburg pitcher, senior Freddy Glass, was taken out of the game and replaced by junior Mark Latrobe. But it didn't help.

Latrobe hit KU's second baseman Carlos Ramirez with a pitch. Then Ramirez stole second and was driven in by Wallace, who doubled to left field.

With the score 8-3, KU right fielder Phillipe Montoya singled. Byron Cox and Gary Snyder both walked for KU, loading the bases for center fielder Max Kant. On a 3-2 pitch, Kant smashed a towering home run to deep left field, making the score 12-3.

Shippensburg scored one run in the bottom of the seventh on a single by Tom Vernon, followed by a double by Larry Smyth.

After Shippensburg scored, KU senior reliever Paulo Ruiz entered the game and held Shippensburg scoreless.

-30-

[Editor's note: The above game never happened and the names are all fictitious.]

Opinion/Editorial

Steps for writing an editorial:

1. Summarize the issue in 80-120 words.
2. Make your position clear with a single “nut” sentence or paragraph.
3. Address contrary positions (“Some might say, increasing the minimum wage will create fewer jobs; however, history has proven this false because when more money is in the hands of more people, there tends to be *more* jobs.”)
4. Drive home your position with several concrete examples.

Model

Headline: Understanding the impact of IPv6

Subhead: Need for additional addresses prompting the inevitable upgrade

Section: Opinion

Date: September 2002

By Mike Downing, Senior Editor

Words: 613

NASHUA, N.H. Sept. 2002 - If you don't mind, I'd like to distract our collective attention away from our diminishing retirement portfolios to talk about an important technology that's literally rising like the sun from the east. The technology is IPv6.

As you all know, IPv4 is the current standard for Internet protocol (IP). And while it has led the way to fantastic Internet growth, there are limitations to the protocol. One of the most visible problems involves security. IPv4 is simply not as secure as we would like it to be, so we've had to invent all kinds of silicon and software add-ons in order to provide some degree of security to the global network. IPv6 is different. It was designed from the outset with security in mind, so it will offer the security functionality that is sorely missing from IPv4.

The other significant problem with IPv4 is the limited number of addresses available (currently estimated at approximately four billion). This problem is magnified when you consider the fact that heavily populated countries like China are jumping en masse into the Internet pool. There are simply not enough IP addresses available worldwide under IPv4, and the United States owns-relatively speaking-the lion's share. In fact, someone recently told me (anecdotally) that Stanford University has more IP addresses than the entire country of China. That's impressive.

Thankfully, instead of forcing The Cardinal to relinquish IP addresses, we can turn to IPv6. IPv6 will include the ability to provide a virtually unlimited number of user addresses for networks and systems connected to the Internet.

There is also an auto-configuration mechanism built into IPv6 that will enable customers to connect any device to the Internet without having to configure complicated network parameters. The new protocol will also enable Internet traffic that requires support for varying Qualities of Service. This will facilitate a mix of voice, video, and data communications. Good stuff.

In addition, IPv6 is designed for use in 3G wireless applications. With the proliferation of globally routable IP-aware devices, such as cell phones, video-game consoles and PDAs (combined with the increasing demand for wireless Web access) migration to IPv6 is becoming a necessity as we transition to 3G wireless.

In addition to providing additional IP addresses by increasing the address space from 32 to 128 bits, IPv6 also adds improvements in areas such as routing and network auto-

configuration. IPv6 is expected to gradually replace IPv4, with the two coexisting for a number of years during a transition period.

Today, the light of IPv6 is shining in Japan and the Asia Pacific region where IP addresses are in short supply. It will also take hold in Europe before it reaches the United States and Canada. Eventually, networking systems worldwide will have to deal with the new protocol. This means that IPv6 is going to lead not only to deployment of IPv6-compatible boxes for new implementations overseas, it's also eventually going to lead to the replacement of IPv4 boxes here in the U.S. that can't migrate to IPv6. There likely will also be bridge devices that link IPv4 with IPv6.

So, in addition to the current projects you're thinking about, you can start thinking about IPv6. Hopefully, the transition to the new protocol will bring new light and purpose to our battered industry.

IPv6 provides:

- * A virtually unlimited number of IP addresses
- * Unique addresses for all devices connected to networks
- * Extended IP addresses, from the current 32 bits to 128 bits
- * Enhanced authentication and security
- * Higher trust and penetration
- * Base for 3G mobile data standards
- * Countless end nodes expected with always-on connectivity
- * Multimedia subsystem specified to run over IPv6
- * Auto-configuration of IP-addresses for better "plug-and-play"
- * Makes adoption attractive
- * Quality of Service provisions

PART THREE: COVERING OTHER EVENTS

Speeches

1. Research the speaker. Visit the Web and find some biographical information. Visit the library and look through the vertical file for clippings. See if he/she is a published author. Check past issues of your newspaper for related information. Schedule an interview with the speaker beforehand if possible.
2. Verify exactly WHEN and WHERE the speech is to be delivered.
3. If this is a regular beat, write a pre-story so that your readers know the specific details surrounding the speech.
4. Prepare questions carefully. Check with your editor to see if he/she has any particular questions for the speaker (or any particular angles).
5. Get to the speech early. Review your questions. Be sure to have two working pens (or pencils).
6. Get a good seat near the front.
7. Tape recorders are useful. First, however, you must understand the rules of each particular speech. Call your contact and ask if tape recorders/cameras will be permitted. If so, be sure your recorder has fresh batteries. Always perform a sound check 10-15 minutes before the speech begins. In all cases, it is better to be a good listener than to depend on a tape recorder.
8. As you listen, be sure to take accurate notes. Remember to write down several direct quotes. Place question marks next to quotes you have questions about.
9. Remember: The speech itself is only half of the process. Most speakers will field questions from the floor. As these questions begin, be sure to listen carefully to both the questions and answers. Continue to take appropriate notes. Ask your own questions at this time. Many times the big story erupts AFTER the speech, during the Q&A, so pay attention.
10. You will generally find that the lead for your speech story will manifest itself near the end of the speech. This is when the speaker will emphasize his point (s). Don't daydream near the end.
11. As mentioned, the lead may surface during the question/answer session. If the speaker has been involved in some controversy, chances are good that there will be questions pertaining to that controversy. If the Q&A has greater impact upon your readers than did the speech itself, your lead will be fashioned accordingly.
12. As you write, be sure you do not re-tell the speech in chronological order. Instead, focus upon what most affects your readers; then develop a lead and arrange the details around your lead.
13. Be sure to communicate effectively with your editor. When you have returned from the speech, share your lead with him/her. They, in turn, can tell you how much space they are holding for you. They can also let you know about any other details which might affect your story. Use the Five W's and H and the Inverted Pyramid.
14. Generally, a speech story lead contains the WHO, WHY, and WHAT: President Bush, seeking to bail out the failing savings and loan industry, plans to increase the personal income tax by 20 percent.

15. Save the WHERE (Capitol Hill), WHEN (8:00 p.m. EST), and HOW (during a joint session of Congress) for approximately the third or fourth paragraph.
16. According to the Inverted Pyramid style, remember to place “cuttable” information near the end of the story so that the story can literally be “cut from the end” without damaging the basic message.
17. Don’t write empty leads: “Pittsburgh Mayor Sophie Masloff spoke to city council yesterday.” So what? Instead, focus upon an element of her message which directly affects your readers: job cuts, tax increases, service cuts, police reduction, etc.
18. Be descriptive. Indicate the speaker’s tone, the audience’s attitude, any unusual conditions, etc.
19. Remember: Your job is not yet over simply because you have turned your story over to your editor. Give them time to check your story; you may need to re-write. It is also a good idea to re-check your story (if your particular system permits) after it has been copy edited to be certain there are no errors. After all, it is YOUR NAME that will appear in the by-line.

Spot News Stories

1. Journalists must be flexible when covering spot news. Each particular story needs to be judged as it occurs and on its own merits. Before you begin to cover and write any news story, be sure to read the “Code of Ethics” contained in this informational packet.
2. As you move through your daily life, be alert as to what is going on around you. If you encounter an event which might be newsworthy, either cover it yourself or immediately contact your editor so that he/she can make the appropriate writing /photo assignments.
3. If you cover it yourself, be sure to speak with as many people as possible at the scene. This will enable you to develop a good idea of exactly what has occurred. Speak with any officials who might be on the scene; be sure to quote them accurately.
4. Note: You may deny ANYONE access to your notes, but it is a good idea to check your quotes by reading those specific words back to the particular person who spoke them. After you have double-checked, place your initials next to the quote. You are now certain that this quote is “safe”.
5. Don’t be disappointed if police/firefighters/paramedics are not able to provide you with much information during a spot news situation. They will be involved in the rescue. Talk with them if you can, but don’t get in their way. Instead, locate any eyewitnesses and get their stories. The police report of the incident will be available at the local police department within a few days, call and ask them how you might obtain a copy.
6. Keep your eyes wide and your ears open. Look for details to include in your story. After all, good news writing involves the careful description of images. Look at the faces; look into their eyes. Watch for other possible physical descriptions.
7. The seasoned reporter realizes that accidents and fires occur every day. Remember, stories that seem very exciting to you (because you’ve never been part of them before), are just normal daily incidents in the world of newspapers. Keep the story in perspective.

Investigative Stories

1. Begin with careful research. Read carefully about persons/places/things. Get your hands on contracts, deeds, and other legal documents. Visit the Web and visit the courthouse. Read

about the history of the person or place. *You will always gather more information than you will use in your story—that's normal.* Your role is to be completely prepared, so that when your story is printed, you have all the available facts in hand.

2. Keep your paper notes in a file folder and on a hard disk that has backup protection.
3. Work closely with your editor. He/she will offer useful feedback.
4. Be open minded. Let the facts of the story guide you. If you enter into the assignment with a preconceived personal agenda, your story will either fail (factually), or you will lose credibility because the tone of your story will indicate that you are more concerned with "grinding an axe" than you are with "getting to the bottom of the story."
5. Remember to identify and date all of your notes. This will help you with your organization.
6. Expect your story to be scrutinized. Develop a thick skin.
7. Keep a narrow focus. All of your information should pertain directly to your major point (s). Don't stray onto points and suppositions which you can't back up.
8. Remember your tape recorder for any interview. Be sure your recorder has fresh batteries. Always perform a sound check 10-15 minutes before the speech begins.
9. It is imperative that you get both sides of the story. If you receive a press release containing certain information from, let's say, the local steelworkers union concerning the strike, be sure to contact the employer for a response. DO NOT WRITE ONE-SIDED STORIES!

Meetings

1. Research the group. Locate clippings from previous articles. Ask your editor or other reporters (who may have covered the group in the past) for names, tips, and guidance.
2. Before you attend the meeting, call a representative of the group and ask him/her for a list of group members. Be sure you know which members serve as officers. Use this opportunity to ask about the group's agenda for the next meeting.
3. Verify exactly WHEN and WHERE the meeting is to occur.
4. If this is a regular beat, write a pre-story so that you readers will know the specific details surrounding the meeting.
5. Prepare potential questions carefully. Check with your editor to see if he/she has any particular questions for the group members.
6. Get to the meeting early. Review your questions; be sure to have two working pens (or pencils).
7. Get a good seat (where you can see and hear).
8. Concentrate on your notes. Meetings are often confusing. Keep your wits about you.
9. Draw a diagram which reflects how the group members are positioned. This may help you later. Be sure to label your diagram carefully.
10. Carefully record specific statements made by group members.
11. If non-members address the group, be sure to get their names and record their statements.
12. If you can't hear the person's name, don't ask a fellow reporter. While 99 out of 100 reporters are honest and willing to share information, there are some that would get a big kick out of giving you some misinformation and then seeing it in print the next day. Get the job done yourself. Make a note next to the speaker's quote: "man/red tie" and then you must track him down after the meeting. At that time, get his name (have him spell it; show it to him to make sure). Also get his hometown, his title, and his relation to the group.
13. Mark any questions you may have and be quick about getting them answered. When meetings adjourn, members usually depart quickly. Be direct and carry yourself professionally. Stop them and ask them your questions in courteous but straightforward fashion.
14. You may need clarification on certain points later that evening. Be sure you have a person (the secretary of press rep) to contact at a particular phone at a particular hour.

15. Consider your lead as the meeting evolves. Remember your readers.
16. Be sure to communicate effectively with your editor. When you have returned from the meeting, share your lead with him/her. They, in turn can tell you how much space they are holding for you. They can also let you know about any other details which might affect your story.
17. Do not re-hash the meeting in chronological order. Instead, focus upon what most affects your readers; then develop a lead and arrange the details around your lead.
18. Generally, a meeting lead contains the WHO, WHY, WHAT, and WHEN. "Seeking to pull the city from the jaws of recession, city council voted to increase the city income tax from 3 to 4 percent yesterday.
19. Save the WHERE (council chambers), and HOW (details of implementation) for about the third or fourth paragraph.
20. According to the inverted pyramid style, remember to place "cuttable " information near the end of the story so that the story can literally be "cut from the bottom" without damaging the basic message.
21. Don't write empty leads: "City council met yesterday." Instead, focus upon an element of her message which directly affects your readers.
22. If the group also discussed many little concerns, use: *In other business...*
23. Be descriptive. Indicate the group's attitude, the audience's attitude, any unusual conditions, etc.
24. Remember: Your job is not yet over simply because you have turned your story over to your editor. Give them time to check your story; you may need to re-write. It is also a good idea to re-check your story (if your particular system permits) after it has been typeset and copy edited to be certain there are no errors. After all, it is YOUR NAME that will appear in the by-line.

Feature Writing

1. The focus should be on people. What they do; where they're from; how they cook, sew, farm, sleep, work, diet, drive, write, and succeed. Keep this in mind as you work.
2. There are two basic types of feature writing: news format and personality profile.
3. News format: Forget the strict rules of news writing. Instead, be creative and stylish. Be very descriptive. Use humor. Write in conversational tones. Highlight the people in the story through quotes and description. Do not inject any of your opinions into the story.
4. Personality profiles: The focus here is to develop a clear and balanced profile of one personality. Talk to people who know him/her (spouse, father, mother, coach, boss, etc.) gathering anecdotes and information from a wide array of sources. This is not a personal interview. A few quotes from the person him/herself are acceptable, but the portrait should include the brush strokes of many, not of one.
5. There is no set formula for feature writing, but there are a few pointers:
 - a. Begin with a quote or anecdote. This brings the reader into the story.
 - b. As the story develops, continue to make use of quotes and personal stories, using paraphrase to maintain the flow.
 - c. Feature writing, as literary writing, is circular. This means that the end should eventually relate to the beginning. Find an interesting thread that can be consistently referred to and developed throughout your piece. Your ending, then, will tie the end of the thread back to the beginning. If you're doing a story about a famous person, you might begin with a quote where someone says "We never thought she would amount to much..." As you continue to recount her accomplishments, you can occasionally refer to that statement. As you reach your conclusion, you can quote a current opinion, " She is one of the most influential writers in the world today; she's come a long way"

- d. More than one source is a must.
- e. Research is also a must. Look for clippings and other bits of past history.

Critiques and Reviews

1. There is a major difference between critiques and reviews. Be sure you know what your editor desires before you write a single word.
2. Critiques are usually written by experts or critics. They are EVALUATIVE, SUBJECTIVE, and OPINIONATED. Critics will not re-tell or outline the plot for the reader. Instead, a critique will judge the effectiveness of the acting, direction, lighting, costuming, staging, acoustics, music, etc. If, in the critics view, the acting was bad, then he/she will say so in direct terms. Critics will also offer an analysis as to the overall worth of the performance.
3. A review should be done by writers who are familiar with dramatic/film conventions. A review offers to readers an outline of plot, action, music, staging, etc. The tone should strive toward the objective. The reviewer may, at various points, offer his/her reactions to the any specific element, but the overall worth of the performance is not an issue.

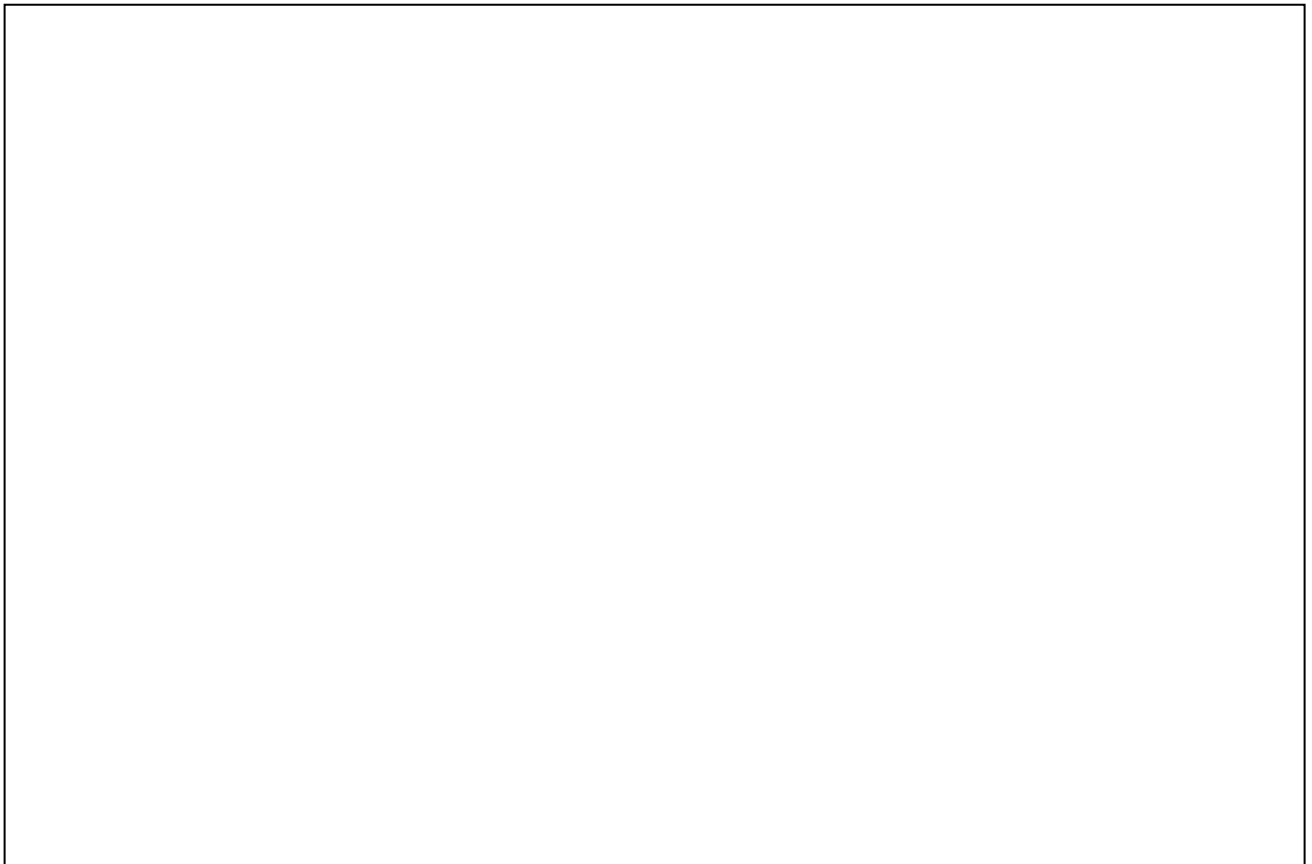
PART FOUR: EXERCISES AND SELF TESTS

Headline, Subhead, and Lead Writing Exercises: News Articles

Write a headline, subhead, and lead, based on the following information. Be sure to follow AP style.

1. A 10-year-old boy practiced casting with his fishing rod. At approximately 9:15 a.m., he cast his line in his backyard. The line wound around an electric wire. The boy tried to pull the line free, which brought the line in contact with another wire. This caused a short circuit. Electrical service to 2,500 homes was interrupted for two hours. The boy, Joseph Mitchell of Sparks Street, was not injured, police said.

2. A DC10 jetliner took off from the airport in Chicago at 9 a.m. today. At the same time, a smaller DC9 was being tested on takeoffs and landings. A DC9 can carry 70 passengers, but only four persons were aboard the plane: three crewmen and an observer from the FAA. The air behind the DC10 was turbulent. As the DC 9 approached the runway, it became trapped in the turbulence. It tumbled out of control, slipped onto its back and crashed in flames. Everyone on the plane was killed.



3. Municipal council met at 7 p.m. last night. The mayor called the meeting to order and read the minutes of the last meeting. All twelve council members were present. They approved the minutes of the last meeting. They discussed raising the salaries of firefighters and police by 7 percent, but tabled the motion until the next meeting. By a vote of 7 to 5, council approved a controversial plan to begin a municipal income tax next Jan. 1. the tax will take 1 percent of every paycheck issued within the borough limits. Council members who favor the bill pointed out that the tax will affect people who work in town and use the borough's facilities, but who do not live in town.



4. Fritz Jones pleaded guilty in county court at 10:47 a.m. today. His attorney is Samuel Foster.

The judge was Albert Jenkins. Jones pleaded guilty to one charge of armed robbery at the First National Bank. He stole approximately \$31,000 last Sept. 3. Jenkins proceeded to sentence Jones to a 30-year term. Jenkins said he needed the money to pay off gambling debts. He used a toy gun during the robbery and nobody was injured.



5. School officials in Modesto, Calif., want to bring business in when their classes go out of business. They are faced with declining enrollment and revenue. Trustees for Modesto City Schools have decided to try leasing unused classrooms. "This would give the school district the ability to generate funds to help maintain the building and to keep the neighborhood schools open," said Louis Medeiros, the district's newly-hired marketing agent.



6. A Manhattan judge, Leon T. Smith, has all but accused an Manhattan auction house of ripping off a major jeweler to make a killing in the gold market. The auctioneer, Plaza Art Galleries, is owned by James Conner, a convicted stock manipulator. Conner's attorney, Theodore Roethke, says his client is innocent. Conner could not be reached for comment. Leon Smith refused comment.



7. The Kutztown University basketball team will play a series of games with small-college teams from the southern U.S. "This is a great opportunity for our kids to gain exposure to different styles of play. It'll be good for them. We're looking forward to it," said KU's Coach Patrick Harding. The games will take place during the final two weeks of August. The games will be open to the public. KU center Djembe Jones said he was looking forward to the games. "It will help us prepare for league games," he said.



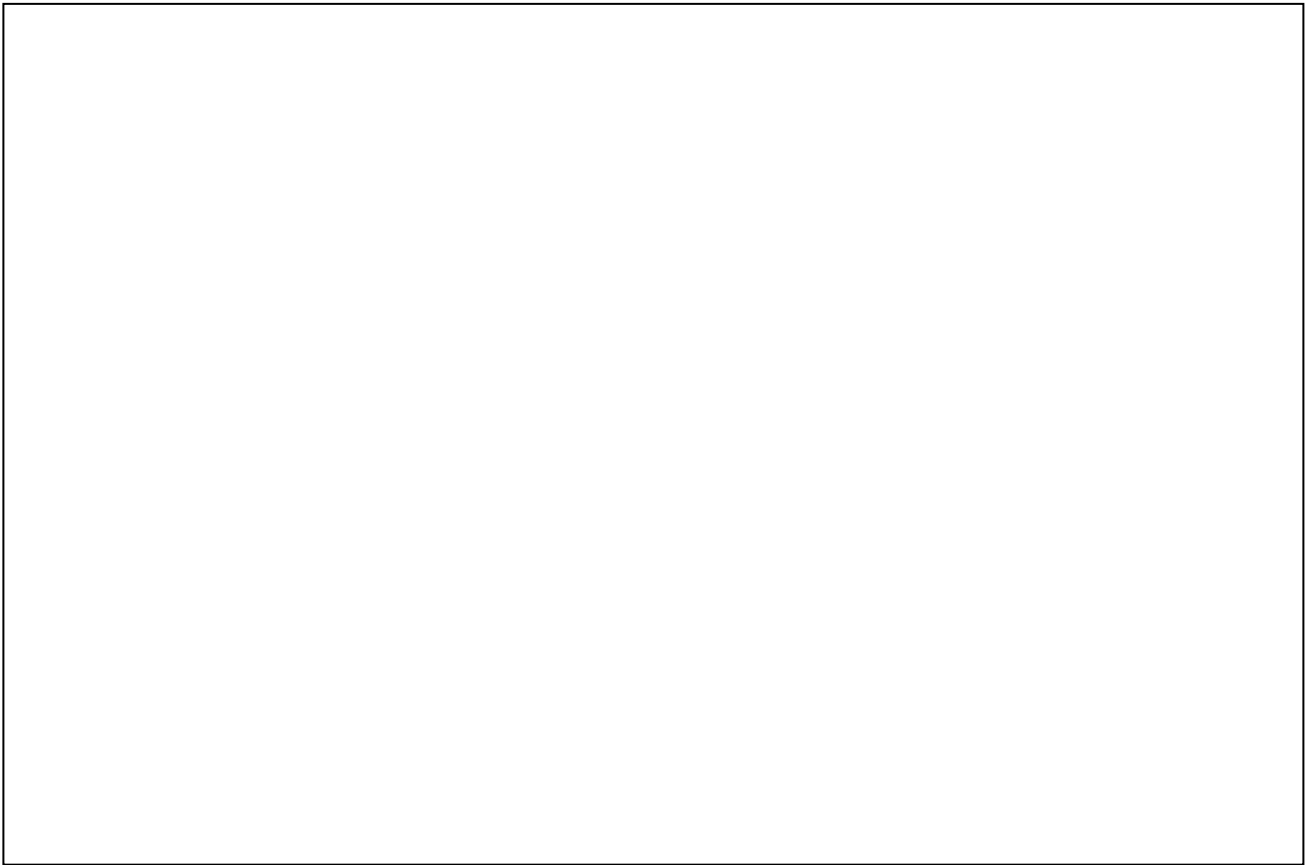
8. The Allentown Area Recreation Board announced that it has received \$50,000 from the state of PA for renovation of their water and sewage lines. It was announced last night. The money has been put into a special fund, where it will collect interest until it is needed to complete the project. They expect work to begin in April of 1992. The project should be completed in 1995. Lisa Spadaro is the project supervisor. She said, "This funding will help to bring our water and sewer lines up to date."



Lead Writing Exercises: Features

Rewrite these notes into features leads. Be sure to follow AP style.

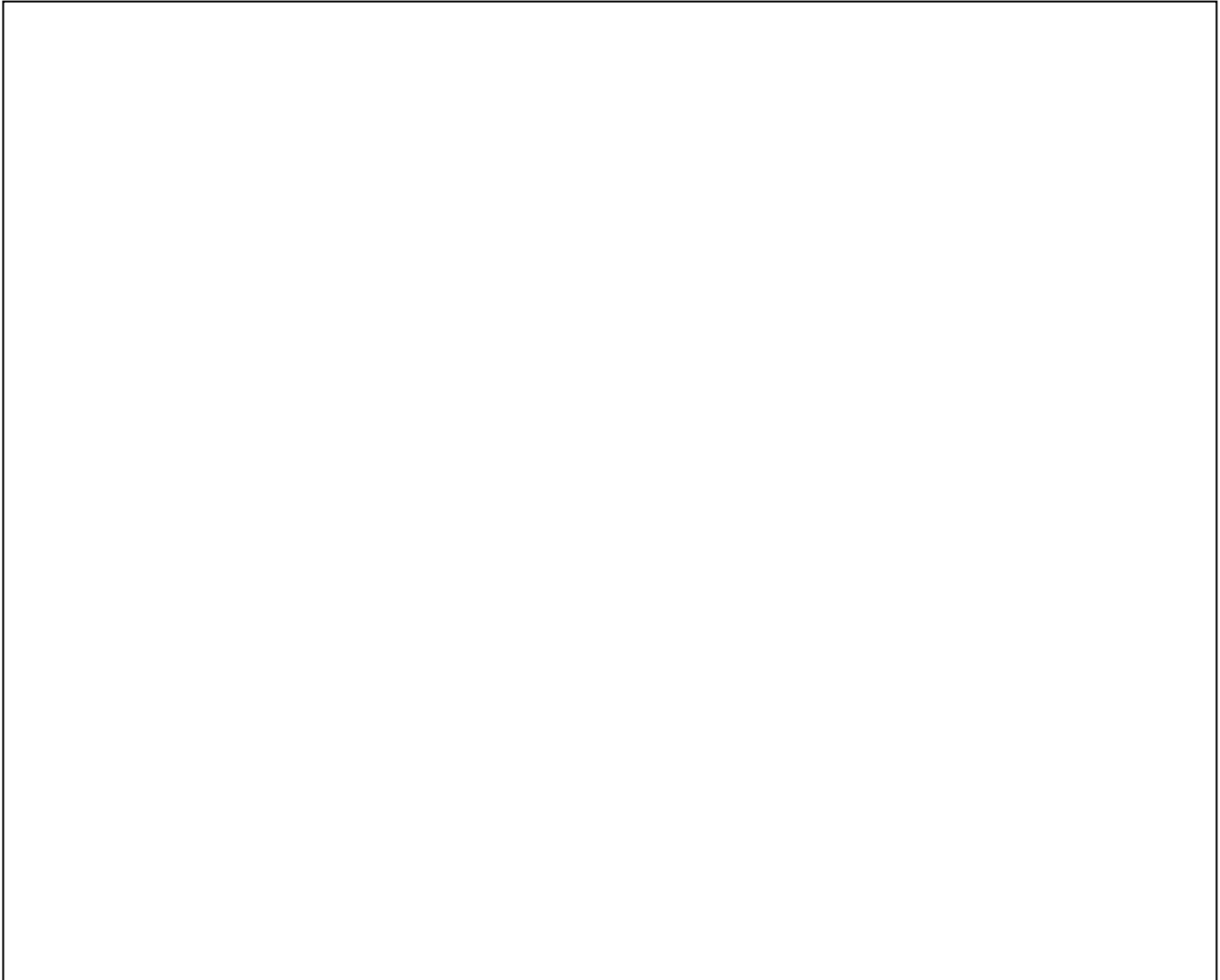
1. Butler Borough council voted in favor of allowing people to park for free every Thursday night in Nashiminy Borough. The move is meant to improve weeknight sales downtown. People have not been going downtown to shop recently. They have instead been going to the malls where parking is free.



2. "I can't believe it happened," a RACC student said upon winning the Pennsylvania State Lottery. Edna Protocol, 20 from Saxonburg, won \$11,000 when she played the number 9-9-9 in the daily lottery yesterday. Edna is originally from England. She plans to spend part of the money on her schooling. She also plans to help out her mom and dad with their mortgage.



3. HACC professor William T. Smartz has won the Fair Arts Writing Contest for the second year in a row. Smartz, an English teacher and artist, took the first-place prize for his entry, "Eating a Can of Tuna fish." He is from Lititz. The poem is from Smartz' recently published collection of poems entitled, *Comprehending a Random Mind*.



The Use of Quotes

Quotes are essential to most news and features stories. They give color to the articles and provide hints as to the sources' personality.

1. Put only a person's exact words in quotation marks.
2. If a person used a contraction, write it that way in the quote.
3. As a rule, you should always put the quote first, followed by who said it.
4. Handle quotes so the reader will know who is being quoted as soon as possible. Put the attribution at the first break in the quote.
5. Indirect quotes generally require more attribution than direct quotes. Remember: any time you use an idea--- any bit of information--- it has to be attributed. Otherwise our readers will think you are offering your own opinions, not the opinions of the parties involved.
6. Don't use orphan quotes--- single words enclosed in quotation marks --- unless the word has a special meaning as defined by the author.
7. Use partial quotes only when necessary.
8. "Said" is the ideal word for attribution. Use it.
"According to" can be used when referring to documents.
9. Never use the first person except in direct quotes (I).
10. Commas and periods always go inside quotation marks.
11. Consult the *AP Stylebook* for further information concerning quotes.

Punctuation Notes

1. Commas- Commas have four basic uses:
 - a. To separate items in a series
 - b. To follow introductory or adverb phrases.
 - c. With a coordinating conjunction to link main clauses.
 - d. To set off parenthetical elements.

(In journalism, it is not necessary to use a comma before the final “and” when listing items in a series. It is, however, required in formal writing. A comma worksheet, with answers is available later in this book.)
2. Punctuation inside and outside quotation marks – The period and comma always go within quotation marks. The dash, semicolon, question mark and exclamation point go within the marks only when they apply to the quoted matter. Examples: Have you read Lewis Carroll’s “Jabberwocky”? “When will we be going?” he said.
3. Quotes within quotes – Use single quotation marks to offset the material that is being quoted second hand: “The boss told me, ‘Knock it off and get to work’.”
4. Colon – A formal introducer; between titles and subtitles; in scriptural and time references. Capitalize the first word after a colon only if it is a proper noun or the first word of a complete sentence (:).
5. Dash - Use a dash to show an abrupt change in thought (--).
6. Ellipsis – Indicates an omission in quoted text; use sparingly (...).
7. Exclamation point – Avoid. (!)
8. Hyphens – Hyphenate compound adjectives before a noun (-).
9. Semicolon – Used to link main clauses of equal grammatical weight (;).

Words Commonly Confused

affect / effect

Effect is typically a noun: "The outside light had a nice effect on the room."

Affect is typically a verb: "Did the gin and tonic affect your judgment?"

allusion / illusion

Allusion means indirect reference.

Illusion means misconception.

alternately / alternatively

Alternately means one after the other.

Alternatively means one or the other.

beside / besides

Beside means next to.

Besides means also.

bimonthly / semimonthly

Bimonthly means every two months.

Semimonthly means twice a month.

capital / capitol

The seat of government is the *capital*; the building in which the legislative assembly meets is the *capitol*. The term *capital* also refers to money.

cite / site

Cite is a verb that means to quote a source.

Site is a noun meaning location.

complement / compliment

Complement is a noun or verb that means something that completes a whole.

Compliment is a noun or verb that means an expression of praise.

comprise / compose

The whole comprises the parts, and the parts compose the whole.

concurrent / consecutive

Concurrent is an adjective that means simultaneous.

Consecutive means successive.

connote / denote

Connote is a verb that means to imply.

Denote is a verb that means to refer to specifically.

convince / persuade

One convinces a person that something is true but persuades a person to do something.

council / councilor / counsel / counselor

A *councilor* is a member of a *council*.

A counselor gives counsel.

discreet / discrete

Discreet is an adjective that means prudent.

Discrete is an adjective that means separate.

disinterested / uninterested

Disinterested is an adjective that means unbiased.

Uninterested is an adjective that means not interested.

elicit / illicit

Elicit is a verb that means to draw out.

Illicit is an adjective meaning unlawful.

emigrant / immigrant

Emigrant is a noun that means one who leaves one's native country to settle in another. *Immigrant* is a noun that means one who enters and settles in a new country.

farther / further

Farther relates to distance.

Further relates to extent or degree.

few / less

Few is an adjective that means small in number. It relates to things that can be counted individually.

Less is an adjective that means small in amount or degree. It relates to things that cannot be counted individually.

figuratively / literally

Figuratively is an adverb that means metaphorically.

Literally is an adverb that means communicated in real terms.

flammable / inflammable

These two words are actually synonyms, both meaning easily set on fire.

Use nonflammable to mean *not* flammable.

flaunt / flout

To *flaunt* means to show off.

To *flout* means to show scorn or contempt for.

foreword / forward

Foreword is a noun that means an introductory note or preface.

Forward is an adjective or adverb that means toward the front.

founder / flounder

Founder means to sink below the surface of the water.

Flounder means to move about clumsily.

hanged / hung

Hanged means to execute by suspending by the neck.
Hung means to suspend from above.

i.e. / e.g.

i.e. means in other words.

e.g. means for example.

it's / its

It's is a contraction for it is.

Its is the possessive form of it.

lightening / lightning

Lightening means to illuminate.

Lightning refers to electrical charges.

passed / past

Passed is the past tense and past participle of *pass*.

Past refers to time gone by.

penultimate

Penultimate means "next to last."

precede / proceed

Precede means to come before.

Proceed means to move forward.

principal / principle

Principal means a person who plays an important role.

Principle is a noun that means a rule or standard.

stationary / stationery

Stationary means fixed.

Stationery means writing materials.

their / there / they're

Their is the possessive form of they.

There refers to place

They're is the contraction of *they are*.

who's / whose

Who's is the contraction of *who is*.

Whose is the possessive form of *who*.

your / you're

Your is the possessive form of you.

You're is the contraction you are.

Vocabulary Words High School Seniors Should Know

1. aberration: deviation
2. abysmal: extremely low
3. bellicose: belligerent, warlike
4. benevolent: loving
5. capitulate: surrender
6. capricious: fickle, whimsical
7. castigate: to punish or criticize
8. deface: to mar or disfigure
9. ebullient: enthusiastic
10. enact: to make into law
11. enigma: a riddle
12. enmity: hatred
13. enumerate: to number
14. eradicate: destroy completely
15. exorbitant: excessive
16. fallible: imperfect
17. flamboyant: colorful or elaborate
18. forbearance: patience
19. forswear: renounce
20. garner: to store
21. germane: relevant or related
22. ghastly: hideous
23. gregarious: sociable, outgoing
24. grotto: small cavern or cave
25. halcyon: calm
26. havoc: chaos, devastation
27. hiatus: break or vacancy
28. hirsute: hairy
29. hydra: sea serpent
30. illusory: false appearance, fake
31. impede: prevent
32. impromptu: of the moment
33. indolent: idle
34. inevitable: unavoidable
35. ingratiate: To win good graces
36. insinuate: suggest or imply
37. insomnia: sleeplessness
38. intrepid: fearless, brave
39. inveigh: to attack or denounce
40. interim: between
41. intrepid: fearless
42. invincible: not to be conquered
43. ire: wrath
44. irrigate: to water a field
45. itinerary: schedule
46. jocular: joking
47. juxtapose: place close together
48. kiln: oven for baking or drying
49. knavery: deceitfulness
50. labyrinth: maze
51. laudable: worthy of praise
52. legible: readable
53. leviathan: large animal
54. lexicon: dictionary
55. listless: inattentive
56. lucrative: highly profitable
57. lunar: related to the moon
58. magnate: person of rank
59. malady: disease or disorder
60. malediction: a curse
61. mandatory: required
62. masquerade: disguised
63. maverick: rebel, nonconformist
64. mediocre: ordinary
65. mendacity: dishonesty
66. mendicant: beggar
67. mesmerize: Hypnotize
68. mettle: Courage
69. migrant: Wanderer
70. minion: Servant
71. mitigate: appease, lessen
72. misogyny: Hatred of women
73. molt: Cast off
74. monotony: Lack of variety
75. moribund: Near death
76. muddle: To confuse
77. mundane: commonplace, everyday
78. myriad: Numerous
79. natal: Relating to birth
80. negate: Deny
81. nefarious: Wicked
82. nocturnal: Of the night
83. nominal: Trivial
84. neophyte: a beginner
85. obituary: Death notice
86. obnoxious: Intolerable
87. occident: Western culture
88. olfactory: Related to smell

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 89. onerous: Burdensome | 109. remonstrate: to protest |
| 90. opulent: Fancy | 110. repugnant: Offensive |
| 91. osculate: To kiss | 111. retaliate: Strike back |
| 92. palpable: Able to feel | 112. ruminate: To chew again |
| 93. pastoral: Related to nature | 113. satiate: To satisfy |
| 94. perfidy: Treachery | 114. seduce: Persuade or entice |
| 95. pernicious: deadly, destructive | 115. semblance: Appearance |
| 96. pinnacle: Top notch | 116. sepulcher: Tomb |
| 97. precipitous: foolhardy | 117. sequester: Remove |
| 98. polyglot: Speaks many languages | 118. squalid: foul, filthy |
| 99. quarantine: Isolation | 119. sycophant: flatterer; suck-up |
| 100. parity: equality | 120. tact: Good manners |
| 101. paucity: scarcity | 121. tantamount: of equal value |
| 102. penchant: strong liking | 122. transient: temporary, fleeting |
| 103. pragmatic: practical | 123. ubiquitous: everywhere |
| 104. precarious: uncertain, risky | 124. umbrage: offense, resentment |
| 105. quandary: Problem | 125. vacillate: to waver |
| 106. quarantine: isolate | 126. witling: a person with little understanding |
| 107. recapitulate: To say again | 127. yearn: desire |
| 108. refute: To argue | 128. zenith: high point |

Spelling Quiz

Circle the correct word. Check your answers on the next page.

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------|
| 1. argument | arguement |
| 2. definatly | definitely |
| 3. separate | seperate |
| 4. developement | development |
| 5. occasion | occassion |
| 6. privilege | privelege |
| 7. independent | independant |
| 8. accommodate | accomodate |
| 9. liason | liaison |
| 10. harrass | harass |
| 11. embarass | embarrass |
| 12. prerogative | perogative |
| 13. inoculate | inoculate |
| 14. battallion | batallion |
| 15. judgement | judgment |
| 16. commitment | committment |
| 17. alotted | allotted |
| 18. drunkenness | drunkeness |
| 19. souvenir | souvinir |
| 20. receive | recieve |
| 21. aquire | acquire |
| 22. analize | analyze |

23. assassination	assassination
24. bureacracy	bureaucracy
25. deceive	decieve
26. exaggerate	exagerate
27. hypocrisy	hypocrasy
28. posess	possess
29. occurrence	occurrence
30. mischievous	mischeivous
31. remembrance	rememberance
32. sophomore	sophmore
33. vaccum	vacuum
34. written	writen
35. tobaco	tobacco
36. eighth	eigth
37. ecstatic	exstatic
38. grammer	grammar
39. approximitely	approximately
40. amatuer	amateur

Answers to Spelling Quiz

1. argument
2. definitely
3. separate
4. development
5. occasion
6. privilege
7. independent
8. accommodate
9. liaison
10. harass
11. embarrass
12. prerogative
13. inoculate
14. battalion
15. judgment
16. commitment
17. allotted
18. drunkenness
19. souvenir
20. receive
21. acquire
22. analyze
23. assassination
24. bureaucracy
25. deceive
26. exaggerate
27. hypocrisy
28. possess
29. occurrence
30. mischievous
31. remembrance
32. sophomore
33. vacuum
34. written
35. tobacco
36. eighth
37. ecstatic
38. grammar
39. approximately
40. amateur

General Spelling Words

1. antidisestablishmentarianism
2. accommodate
3. acquittal
4. ancestry
5. benefactor
6. bureaucracy
7. castigate
8. conceive
9. debatable
10. definitely
11. divine
12. exaggerate
13. February
14. encyclopedia
15. enormous
16. enthusiastic
17. epitome
18. erudite
19. eulogy
20. exodus
21. fabulous
22. felony
23. fictitious
24. finite
25. forehead
26. gamut
27. grammar
28. genealogy
29. grapple
30. hernia
31. hypocrite
32. hygiene
33. illiterate
34. imaginary
35. impetus
36. inlet
37. introvert
38. inverse
39. irrelevant
40. irritate
41. jewelry
42. jubilation
43. judicious
44. kimono
45. knead
46. landlord
47. laxative
48. leisure
49. levity
50. libel
51. litigate
52. longevity
53. machinery
54. manufacturer
55. matrimony
56. medal
57. menagerie
58. metaphor
59. meticulous
60. microphone
61. misanthrope
62. mismanage
63. moderation
64. momentous
65. morality
66. multiplicity
67. mutation
68. nausea
69. necessary
70. necessity
71. negligent
72. neurology
73. nomination
74. nuance
75. nuptial
76. obsolescence
77. obstruction
78. occasion
79. odious
80. officiate
81. opaque
82. palatial
83. paralyze
84. percussion
85. possession
86. quiet
87. ramification
88. reactionary
89. receive
90. separate
91. sibling
92. succeed
93. technique
94. temperature
95. terminate
96. theocracy

97. theology
98. tolerable
99. transcend
100. tranquelize
101. ultimatum
102. unacceptable
103. unbearable
104. unconscious
105. unison
106. vaccinate
107. vacuum
108. variant
109. vengeance

110. veracity
111. verbose
112. vernal
113. Wednesday
114. weather
115. whimsical
116. wrangle
117. xylophone
118. yield
119. zealot
120. zephyr
121. zodiac

Editing Exercises

The following examples contain errors of grammar, usage, spelling, punctuation and redundancy. Change them according to standard grammatical rules.

1. the group voice it's concern about three issues; Salery, benefits, and working conditions.
2. The five peoples on the Butler County Municipal Council Beautification Committee

include Alice Jones, George Smith, Joseph Jenkins, they all live in Butler.
3. The hotel can acommodate a lot more people, in may judgement. I didn't agree. The clerk, he told me I was wrong.
4. The man in the large blakc hat was working in his yard, he fell into the ditch.
5. President Bush has procalaimed march 15th as " National Party Day."

Reduce or eliminate unnecessary words. Re-write the phrase if necessary. Tighten!

1. Erect a new building
2. In this day and age
3. Was of the opinion that
4. Completely destroyed
5. Pursuing a study of history
6. The child, who had not been killed, crawled from the wreckage.
7. Can be easily broken.

Use the *AP Stylebook* to correct the following sentences.

1. A thirteen year old boy was name PA.'s most valuable little league player as the the little leage world series ended on Sat., September 15th.
2. Governor Ed Rendell, attempting to cut expenses in the state government, elimanted monring and afternoon breaks for all state workers. The ruling was to take effect at 8AM this morning.
3. The cross country trip across the U.S. began in Asbury Park, New Jersey, and went through N.Y., Oh., Neb., and on out to San Fran., Calif.

Commas

Comma Rules:

1. Separate items in a series
2. Precede coordinating conjunctions when linking two sentences
3. Direct address and direct quote
4. Set off parenthetical information and appositives
5. Set apart introductory information

Insert commas into the following sentences. Place the number of the rule on the line below.

1. Actually they are cats but they think they are people.

Rules _____

2. Kahlua Mariner and Midori are my best friends.

Rules _____

3. For instance Kahlua has his own bedroom and Dori thinks no one should be in "her" upstairs unless she's there as well.

Rules _____

4. "Whenever I go upstairs" Nancy said "Dori races ahead of me and meows at the top of her little kitty lungs."

Rules _____

5. If I am home Kahlua has to be in the same room and he always needs to be petted when I need to study.

Rules _____

6. I went to the store and bought bread milk eggs cat food and paper towels.

Rules _____

7. William White who had helped Henry build his fortune died yesterday.

Rules _____

8. He trimmed the shrubbery very carefully for he hoped to keep the hedge alive for the entire summer.

Rules _____

9. After Harry left his wife began to collect her wits.

Rules _____

10. Night falls quickly in the mountains yet the cabin is comfortable and warm.

Rules _____

11. Judy picked vegetables and Bob mowed the lawn.

Rules _____

12. The nets were full of fish but we were too exhausted to haul them in.

Rules _____

13. Before you compare those two poets you should be sure you're familiar with their work.

Rules _____

14. While you sit there talking and wasting time I'm trying to finish this project.

Rules _____

15. In spite of his training it was difficult to keep the sarcasm out of his voice.

Rules _____

16. Warned by the shot the wild horses stampeded across the valley.

Rules _____

17. Satisfied by what he saw he took off his hat and wiped his brow.

Rules _____

18. Nevertheless he continued to work toward his goal.

Rules_____

19. To earn a small amount of money Miss Susan opened a studio for china painting.

Rules_____

20. James Lee who owns this bank and five others is one of the wealthiest men in the state.

Rules_____

21. After completing that business psychology course salesmen are always enthusiastic.

Rules_____

22. In preparing such department notices officials must use appropriate forms.

Rules_____

23. The coach called out "Higgins get over here."

Rules_____

24. Coach Jones who chewed on cigars but never smoked them threw one away and reached for another.

Rules_____

25. My father hoping that I would remain at home offered me a share in his business.

Rules_____

Answers to Comma Worksheet

1. Actually, they are cats, but they think they are people.

Rules: 5, 2

2. Kahlua, Mariner, and Midori are my best friends.

Rules: 1

3. For instance, Kahlua has his own bedroom, and Dori thinks no one should be in “her” upstairs unless she’s there as well.

Rules: 5, 2

4. “Whenever I go upstairs,” Nancy said, “Dori races ahead of me and meows at the top of her little kitty lungs.”

Rules: 3

5. If I am home, Kahlua has to be in the same room, and he always needs to be petted when I need to study.

Rules: 5, 2

6. I went to the store and bought bread, milk, eggs, cat food, and paper towels.

Rules: 1

7. William White, who had helped Henry build his fortune, died yesterday.

Rules: 4

8. He trimmed the shrubbery very carefully, for he hoped to keep the hedge alive for the entire summer.

Rules: 2

9. After Harry left, his wife began to collect her wits.

Rules: 5

10. Night falls quickly in the mountains, yet the cabin is comfortable and warm.

Rules: 2

11. Judy picked delicious vegetables, and Bob mowed the deep green lawn.

Rules: 2

12. The nets were full of fish, but we were too exhausted to haul them in.

Rules: 2

13. Before you compare those two poets, you should be sure you're familiar with their work.

Rules: 5

14. While you sit there talking and wasting time, I'm trying to finish this project.

Rules: 5

15. In spite of his training, it was difficult to keep the sarcasm out of his voice.

Rules: 5

16. Warned by the shot, the wild horses stampeded across the valley.

Rules: 5

17. Satisfied by what he saw, he took off his hat and wiped his brow.

Rules: 5

18. Nevertheless, he continued to work toward his goal.

Rules: 5

19. To earn a small amount of money, Miss Susan opened a studio for china painting.

Rules: 5

20. James Lee, who owns this bank and five others, is one of the wealthiest men in the state.

Rules: 4

21. After completing that business psychology course, salesmen are always enthusiastic.

Rules: 5

22. In preparing such department notices, officials must use appropriate forms.

Rules: 5

23. The coach called out, "Higgins, get over here."

Rules: 3, 3

24. Coach Jones, who chewed on cigars but never smoked them, threw one away and reached for another.

Rules: 4

25. My father, hoping that I would remain at home, offered me a share in his business.

Rules: 4

PART FIVE: ETHICS AND RESOURCES

Journalistic Code of Ethics

As student reporters, you will often hear your editors and adviser talking about “ethics” and “conflicts of interest.” Most of us have a general idea of what these terms mean, but let’s take a closer look. First, what are “ethics”?

Webster’s New World offers the following definition of “ethics”: “the study of standards of conduct and moral judgment; the system of morals of a particular person, religion, group, etc.”

This definition is helpful, but not complete. Now we must consider the term “moral”. Let us again consult Webster’s: “dealing with, or capable of distinguishing between right and wrong... principles or standards with respect to right and wrong conduct.” OK, that’s a bit better.

In a journalistic setting, ethical conflicts will definitely arise from time to time. In the relatively small environment of a community college campus, the potential for ethical conflicts can be great. Students who work for the newspaper may also be on the basketball team. A student reporter may also have a brother who is the president of student senate. Both of these instances are clear and common examples of “conflicts of interest”.

Other conflicts, however, are not so obvious. Therefore, it is important to understand how to recognize and handle potential conflicts of interest when they may occur.

Remember these three concepts: When considering the question of ethics, ask yourself if you have any PERSONAL, POLITICAL, or CAPITAL INTERESTS in a particular story. If you do, or even if you think you might, it is best to talk with your editor. Open communication is the best way to handle potential conflicts. If a possible conflict does arise, and nobody knew anything about it but you, then you will certainly be seen in a bad light. Keep editors posted as to any extraordinary interests you may have in the assigned story.

Remember, all you have as a reporter is your credibility; be sure to keep it untarnished. The best way to maintain your credibility is to avoid even the suggestion of unethical behavior.

Practical Applications:

- 1) It’s fine to cover the men’s basketball team, unless you’re the coach’s son (or your boyfriend is the captain, or you’re actually a team member). Remember, you should try to avoid those areas where you have direct personal, political, or capital interests.
- 2) Don’t do stories connected with your part-time job. If you work for some business downtown, don’t do a profile on the owner. If you work as a tutor, don’t do stories on the tutoring program.

- 3) Don't write political articles for your college newspaper if you are the chair of the Young Republicans or Young Democrats.
- 4) Don't cover student senate if you are a member (or if your best friend is a member or president).

In all of these instances, the stories in question should be covered by other reporters who have NO PERSONAL, POLITICAL, OR CAPITAL INTERESTS in them. This is the best rule of thumb. Otherwise, you will be immediately dismissed by your readers, and as a journalist, all you have is your credibility.

Other Considerations:

- 1) Don't use the newspaper office or equipment for personal reasons, unless approved by management.
- 2) Any reporter who actively participates in a political campaign will be asked to remove him/herself from covering relevant stories the duration of that campaign. There are too many conflicts which can occur when a reporter is also involved in a campaign.
- 3) This should be clear: "Reporters should never take bribes." But bribes can be difficult for some to define. What about gifts? A crooked cop, when asked how he became dishonest, said, "It starts with a cigar..." Remember to apply the following:
 - A) It's OK to use a free ticket or press pass to review a concert or ball game. You shouldn't have to pay to do your work. It's not OK to call the coach and ask him for an extra ticket for your friend or date.
 - B) It's OK to keep a book which was sent to you unsolicited for review; that's the choice of the publisher. It is not OK to call the bookstore and ask for a free book in exchange for mentioning their name in the review.
 - C) It is certainly not OK to attempt to solicit free meals at area restaurants in exchange for a favorable review.
 - D) Don't let sources buy you meals, beer, etc., beyond what is considered common courtesy. If the Trustee you interview at the Kutztown Tavern offers to pay for your three-course dinner, you should refuse. If that same Trustee offers to pick up the tab for your coffee or drink of choice, you can smile and relax. One drink—or a sandwich—is no big deal. Remember the word "reasonable" in these matters.
- 4) Don't attack people or organizations unless you have overwhelming evidence that they are guilty of gross crimes. And if you do, indeed, have that evidence, complete the proper investigation in close connection with the authorities and write the story as such. Allow the facts and sources to tell the story; don't editorialize in your news column. ALSO, when making charges, BE VERY SPECIFIC AND DON'T STRAY INTO THE AREA OF INNUENDO AND SUGGESTION. Charges as, "The Trustees aren't doing their jobs" don't say or prove anything. If, on the other hand, the Trustees have put off voting on a

crucial matter for more than three months, and you HAVE SOUGHT ANSWERS THROUGH THE APPROPRIATE CHANNELS WITHOUT SUCCESS, you may then—ethically (and with the guidance of your editor)—launch an investigation. Even so, stick to the question of why the vote has been delayed.

- 5) If someone involved with the story has made you angry and you have, as a result, lost your objective positioning, you should discuss this openly with your editor. If need be, the story can be completed by another reporter and you can share the byline.
- 6) If you do have an “ax to grind”, that’s fine. Simply write a letter to the editor, or see the editor about writing your own opinion article. That’s what the OP/ED page is for.
- 7) In conclusion, when you consider ethics, you should remember to ask yourself: “Do I have any PERSONAL, POLITICAL, OR CAPITAL INTEREST in a particular story?” OR “Have I lost my objectivity to the point where this has become a personal crusade?” If you are uncomfortable with either of these questions, it is best to talk with your editor. Remember your credibility. And when accepting gifts or perks, remember the word “reasonable”. Keeping a close eye on these barometers will help you to carefully deal with this difficult but important subject.

