NEWCASTLE HERALD

School Newspaper Competition

How to create the best entry

NEWCASTLE PERMANENT

Here for good.

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Inside the newsroom

The following jobs are associated with the production of a newspaper and can be used to help students understand their roles and responsibilities in compiling their School Newspaper. The co-ordinating teacher may wish to act as editor-in-chief and encourage students to adopt appropriate roles.

Editor: Oversees and co-ordinates the production of the entire newspaper and has the final say on job allocation for reporters, newspaper layout and content. The editor ensures there is a balance between different types of stories in the newspaper.

Chief of staff: The chief-of-staff oversees the assembly of the paper, organises the journalists to cover particular stories and is responsible for seeing that reports are finished.

Editorial writer(s): The editorial writer writes statements of opinion about major news stories or topical issues.

Sub-editors: Sub-editors check every story for grammatical and spelling errors. They may need to edit (or cut) a story back to a shorter length. Sub-editors check factual content and indicate to journalists where corrections are to be made. When stories are correct, the sub-editors write a headline.

Layout sub-editors: Layout sub-editors oversee the layout of the newspaper. They place stories and photographs on each page.

Artistic journalists: The artists are responsible for any illustrations, cartoons, logos, tables or complex layouts that are required.

Photographic journalists: The photographers shoot the images that accompany stories written by the reporters, often liaising closely with the chief-of-staff to ensure they capture the correct “angle” in their photograph.

Journalist: Journalists, or reporters, write the stories that make the news. Reporters need to pay scrupulous attention to accuracy and balance.

What is news?

1.
    a. a report of recent events
    b. previously unknown information [“I've got news for you”]

2.
    c. material reported in a newspaper or news periodical or on a newscast
    d. matter that is newsworthy

Source: Merriam-Webster Dictionary, http://www.m-w.com/cgi-bin/dictionary

For most writers, news is what happens today. It may be issues; it could be unusual people or unusual events. High-profile people are often deemed newsworthy even when they do ordinary things. It would be accurate to say that its audience often determines news – if it is of public interest, it is news.

A journalist is:

1.
    a. a person engaged in journalism; especially: a writer or editor for a news medium
    b. a writer who aims at a mass audience

Source: Merriam-Webster Dictionary, http://www.m-w.com/cgi-bin/dictionary

A journalist gathers the facts and communicates them to the public but he/she is more than a note-taker who simply quotes people verbatim. He/she has the responsibility of putting things into perspective and putting the reader into the picture; not just repeating the words that were uttered.

Ethics and Values

According to Australia's Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance, "journalists describe society to itself". Those engaged in journalism commit themselves to:

1 **Honesty**
2 **Fairness**
3 **Independence**
4 **Respect for the rights of others**

According to the Australian Journalists' Association Code of Ethics, journalists must:

1. Report and interpret honestly, striving for accuracy, fairness and disclosure of all essential facts. Do not suppress relevant available facts, or give distorting emphasis. Do your utmost to give a fair opportunity for reply.
2. Do not place unnecessary emphasis on personal characteristics, including race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age, sexual orientation, family relationships, religious belief, or physical or intellectual disability.
3. Aim to attribute information to its source. Where a source seeks anonymity, do not agree without first considering the source's motives and any alternative attributable source. Where confidences are accepted, respect them in all circumstances.
4. Do not allow personal interest, or any belief, commitment, payment, gift or benefit, to undermine your accuracy, fairness or independence.
5. Disclose conflicts of interest that affect, or could be seen to affect, the accuracy, fairness or independence of your journalism. Do not improperly use a journalistic position for personal gain.
6. Do not allow advertising or other commercial considerations to undermine accuracy, fairness or independence.
7. Do your utmost to ensure disclosure of any direct or indirect payment made for interviews, pictures, information or stories.
8. Use fair, responsible and honest means to obtain material. Identify yourself and your employer before obtaining any interview for publication or broadcast. Never exploit a person's vulnerability or ignorance of media practice.
9. Present pictures and sound which are true and accurate. Any manipulation likely to mislead should be disclosed.
10. Do not plagiarise.
11. Respect private grief and personal privacy. Journalists have the right to resist compulsion to intrude.
12. Do your utmost to achieve fair correction of errors.

News Reporting

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Coming up with story ideas

The first, and often the hardest, thing to come up with are the topics for your stories. They need to be interesting for the *Herald* audience and relevant to your community.
The biggest mistake that schools make is to just write about events that are happening within their school. This may be suitable for the school newsletter, but it isn't of much interest to the greater *Herald* readership.
The best place to start is to look at what is happening in your community – there is always something going on.
Here are some ideas to help you come up with potential stories:

- Is there a new development proposed/being built/something getting demolished?
- Is there an ongoing problem in your suburb/town – roads, service providers (health, police, teachers), lacking facilities or infrastructure?
- Is there a regular event that happens in your area – general meetings, fairs, expos, sports meets, a historical event?
- Have any studies been done and the results released, maybe be banks, medical research, environmental and religious groups – perhaps it has implications on your area
- Events on community noticeboards – protests, fun groups, health clubs, general lectures
- Is someone in the community achieving something worthwhile – in the fields of sport, culture, art, music, education, their work?
- Have there been any crimes, donations, accidents, unexpected deaths or announcements?
- Is your school involved in a regional, state or national initiative? (for example: the RDA Hunter's ME Program, the Premier's Reading Challenge or the national Jump Rope For Heart event)
- Talk to the local newsagent or shopkeeper, or people around town, they often will lead you to a story.

Great story ideas from last year:

- The building of a new bridge to alleviate traffic congestions
- The lack of rural GPs
- Anniversaries of churches, schools and other buildings
- The effects of wild dogs on farming
- Local fairs, markets and fetes
- A budding entrepreneur
- Students representing their school on a national level
- Repair work to Les Darcy's grave, upgrades to the local police station
- A town that ran out of petrol and another that lost all ATM services
- A new memorial that opened – also surf club, skate park and expressway
- A game developed for those with vision impairment
- The impact of a new bottle shop on a town with health problems, the after-effects of a bush-bashing accident

The Basics

First up, everyone needs to look at their story topic and consider:

Is it news?

News is new information. It's stuff that isn't already known. You need to make sure that new information is the focus, or angle, of your story. If you're writing about something that people already know about, try and find a fresh way of looking at it - look at the impact your news is having on your local community, or write about a person who is directly involved with/affected by your topic.

Writing your intro

Once you've decided what your most important piece of new information is, you have your angle. With that in mind, ask yourself the following questions:
Who?
What?
Where?
When?
Why?
How?
Write the answers on a piece of paper.

Again, ask yourself: what is the most interesting/important fact among those six pieces of information? Then construct a sentence, beginning with the most important/interesting point, and including all six pieces of information.

That's your introduction!

From that point, structure your story in order of importance. Where a recount follows the clock, a news story follows the order of importance.

Some important points

Your ABC of journalism is:
A - ACCURACY The number one rule of reporting. You must be entirely sure whatever you write is accurate. People are going to read it and believe it and 100 years from now what you've written will still be there. You are recording history.
B - BALANCE Part of being accurate is telling all sides to a story. If you're only telling one side you're presenting opinion and not news.
C - CREDIBILITY People need to know where you got your facts from so they can decide whether or not they want to trust them. They need to know your facts are believable, or credible. Your main form of research will probably be

interviews. Make sure you interview EXPs - people who are experts or experienced on the subject. They are credible sources of information.

Don't

● use I, WE or OUR. How can a story where the writer uses the words 'I, we or our' be balanced? These words should alert you to the fact that the information you're about to present is the opinion of one person, or one group of people. Instead, be objective. Be the fly on the wall, writing about what is going on. Write about things as if you're an observer, not living through them. **Only use I, WE or OUR if they are part of direct quotes from your EXPs**.

● start your stories with a question. Stick to the basic introduction formula above and you can't go wrong.

● use a conclusion. A conclusion is a final paragraph where you summarise all the important parts of your argument and make a final statement, adding your own opinion. Conclusions belong in essays, not news stories. It is not your job to argue a point of view, or sum up with your opinion. A news story just runs out when you run out of important information.

Do

● use lots of quotes. People love reading what other people say, and nobody can say things better than our EXPs. So quote your sources often.

● look for an interesting, fresh angle. Again, people love reading about other people - their ideas, their lives, their communities. This is called giving a story a human face.

● look outside your school for story ideas. Tens of thousands of people will read your paper, from Gosford to Ballina to Dubbo. Think about story ideas that would be interesting to everyone - other primary students to politicians. They are all going to read your work.

● be mindful of your publication date. Something you are writing about may have happened between submission and publication. You'll need to either write as though it has happened or send through updates to the competition co-ordinator.

● remember, it's **news**. Tell the reader something they don't already know.

Interviews

To properly write a news story, you'll need to talk to someone who is either an expert on your topic to support what you are saying or someone who knows the details of what you are reporting about.

For example, if you are reporting on an accident, a journalist might speak to a witness to the accident, a policeman who was on duty at the crash, a medic either on site or at the hospital that the injured person got taken to, or a family member to update on their injuries. If you are writing a story about problems with a local road, chatting to someone from the Roads and Maritime Services would be a good place to start.

Think about who would be the best person to speak to, to add authority to what you are going to say. It makes your story more informed and trustworthy.

Interview Techniques

Before setting off to conduct an interview, journalists need to research their topic. Knowing the history of an issue or person makes it possible to ask informed, relevant questions.

After researching the topic, write down any relevant facts that might be useful points of reference in their story, such as major events surrounding the issue, important dates and names and possible contacts.

The journalist can also compile a list of possible interview questions, bearing in mind that yes/no questions are not as effective as asking a question about a specific event or issue.

Importantly, the writer should always concentrate on the answer, not the next question. The list of questions should only be a guideline and should not blindfold the reporter to other angles to the story or unexpected information.

You should also be aware that most news stories contain conflicting information gathered from different sources. It should be stressed that the reporter's job is simply to gather the facts surrounding an issue in a balanced, accurate and interesting way.

It is likely that a reporter will need to speak to at least one other source to gather a balanced view of the issue.

Classroom Exercise

Split students into pairs. Try to pair pupils who normally do not spend a great deal of time together.

Ensure each student has a pen and something to write on.
Give each pair somewhere private to sit.

Students will now take turns interviewing and being interviewed. Each interview must be completed in a set period of time, for example, five minutes.

The teacher will set the topic for both interview sessions. Possible topics include student's individual accounts of universal events, such as a sports carnival, or periods in their lives, such as their first memories.

After both students have completed their interviews they must compile their information into a short news story. Teachers need only allocate 10 minutes for this as the information writers will be drawing upon is very limited.

Teachers should either call on students to read out their work for discussion or collect it to check on the structure.

Choosing an angle

Once you have returned from your interview(s), it is time to begin collating the information and choosing an angle, or the underlying theme in a story.

Often a reporter has to choose from several possible angles. These may be as simple as whether to pursue the human-interest angle or the hard-news angle, but are often much more complex.

The best way to illustrate different angles is to choose a major news story and see how it has been written up in a variety of publications. Unless a newspaper or news service has an exclusive (they are positive they have new information that has not previously been publicised), writers spend their time searching for a unique angle.

Often a writer can hang the story on the experiences of someone who is personally involved in the issue or event. This is called giving the story a human face. People relate better to other people and a story has more meaning to them if they can see the way its issues affect a fellow human being.

The experience of writing this type of news report is extremely valuable for

students. It helps explain why news stories, and often historical documents, can include contradictory information.

The importance of accuracy

Accuracy and balance are paramount to responsible journalism. If a newspaper, knowingly or unknowingly, publishes fiction as fact, how can the public trust that what it reads every day is truthful? It is no good for a report to be interesting and well structured if it is incorrect.

You also have a responsibility to accurately record any quotes from the person you interview. Don't put words in their mouths. It's a great iea to tape interviews so you can play it back later to hear what they said. But don't rely solely on a recorder – technology sometimes fails. It's best to take a few notes as well. If you miss something important, ask them again to clarify.

NEWS STORY / INVERTED PYRAMID

There are several key differences between a recount and a news story. In a recount, information is presented in chronological order. In a news story, information is presented in the order of interest, or importance.

This structure, known as the inverted pyramid, aims to capture readers' attention by addressing the most interesting facts and encouraging them to read on.

The first paragraph, or introduction, should be a sentence of fewer than 35 words. This sentence tells readers the most important information and gives specific facts with regards to who, what, where, when, why and how.

Beyond the introduction, information is presented in a descending order of importance, with writers striving to keep paragraphs to one sentence, and addressing one idea per paragraph.

The second paragraph should develop an idea introduced in the lead paragraph, not drop the story into a chronological narrative.

Remember: all information must be attributed to a credible source. Readers need to know where the journalist got his or her information.

Direct quotes, which utilise quotation marks, are a good way to give stories a human face and add credibility.

News stories do not have a conclusion, summary, call to action or other form of closure.

Structuring a news story

News reports are structured like an upside-down pyramid, with the most important and interesting facts in the first paragraph (also known as the intro or lead). News writers want to grab the readers' attention and encourage them to read on.

Ideally, an intro should be under 25 words.

To emulate a journalist's style, follow the KISS formula (Keep It Simple, Stupid). This does not mean journalists are dumb or have to write in primitive language to reach their audience, but they should make it as easy as possible for the reader to digest information.

Information should be presented in order of importance, and each paragraph should 'stand alone'. Every sentence should have some information that adds to the story. There should be no repetition.

A fun exercise for primary-aged children is to have students recount one of their favourite nursery rhymes or childhood tales in a news structure, identifying the who, what, where, when, why and how.

The following page contains a four-step classroom exercise that helps students dissect and understand the structure of a news story. It also encourages pupils to think about what they are reading and test their retention.

Classroom Exercise

A good news story is structured like an upside-down pyramid, with the most-important and interesting facts in the first paragraph, or “intro”.

To complete this exercise, select a news article from The Herald. Read the first paragraph then fill in the first column of this exercise sheet. Next, fill in column two. Finally, read the rest of the story and fill in the third column.

Do you have anything to add to the fourth column? You may pick up something our reporter missed or it could lead to another story

What Have I Learnt Already?	What Do I Want To Know?	What Else Have I Learnt?	What Do I Still Want To Know?

Where we go wrong

The most common mistake made by primary students participating in the School Newspaper Competition is the fact they write first-person recounts of events, which are NOT news stories.

High school students, indoctrinated into the essay regime, often set out to write a news story but instead write something that more closely resembles an unattributed opinion piece.

Essays vs news stories

Essays are generally written to argue for a particular point of view and their basic structure remains the same - an introduction, which gives an overview of what you plan on discussing, and a thesis statement, which states your position on the issue; the body, where you elaborate on ideas arguing your position related to the topic; and the conclusion, where you restate your thesis and reach a judgement/discuss findings and leave the reader with a thought-provoking statement.

A news story is not an essay!

- **Fact or opinion?** As you have already learnt, a news story is, first and foremost, an accurate, balanced, unbiased account of an event or issue. It is does NOT argue a particular point of view. An essay DOES.

- **Structure** News stories also differ from essays in their structure. While essays follow the introduction, body and conclusion format, often with the punchiest, most thought-provoking sentences in the last paragraph, a news story is structured like an upside-down pyramid, with the most important and interesting facts in the first paragraph.

- **Attribution** In an essay, the writer is pursuing a certain line of argument. The entire piece of work is, in effect, an opinion piece. When writing a news article, any piece of information must be clearly annotated as fact or opinion, and attributed to the correct source.

Class Exercise - Spot the difference

To illustrate this, two articles appear below. One is written as an opinion piece masquerading as a news story, and one appears as it was published in the *Herald*.

To Have or To Have Not
By A Student

Australia is becoming a less-equal society with the gap between those who have and those who do not continuing to widen. Many Australians are aware of this, as are welfare groups, yet the Government continues to widen the gap by using budget surpluses to offer some voters tax cuts during election time.

Two surveys recently conducted show that many Australians believe the wealth of their country is becoming less equally distributed. Eighty eight percent of those Australians surveyed by Roy Morgan Research in 2003 agreed with the statement: “I think the gap between rich and poor is growing”.

There are ways to address this problem, however. The Australian Council of Social Service recommends that the taxation system be overhauled to help families who need it most, and improve the value of rent assistance for the unemployed.

Australians Fear End of Equality
The *Herald*, Monday, January 26

Australians were right to think that the gap between rich and poor was widening, welfare groups said yesterday.

A global poll conducted for this week’s World Economic Forum in Switzerland found that almost 90 per cent of Australians surveyed thought that Australia was becoming a less equal society.

Of the 19,014 Australians surveyed during 2003 by Roy Morgan Research, 88 per cent agreed with the statement: “I think the gap between rich and poor is growing.”

The Australian Council of Social Service called for a debate to turn around the growing divide.

“The poll shows that the vast majority of Australians believe we are a less equal society – they are right,” council president Andrew McCallum said.

“The rich-poor divide should not be made worse by the major political parties using the budget surplus in a federal election to offer some voters a tax cut.”

Improving the tax system to help families who needed it most and improving the value of rent assistance for jobless people would be fair, he said.

Class Exercise

Discuss the difference between fact and opinion. Have students examine one of their own essays, isolating examples of each.

Discuss how facts can be used to strengthen or discredit a certain argument and the dangers inherent in presenting opinion as fact in a newspaper article.

Have students re-write one of their own essays as a news report, following the 'upside-down triangle' model for structure. Have them keep their entire piece to fewer than five paragraphs. This will encourage them to stick purely to the facts.

Encourage them to look to their essay conclusion for their possible news report 'lead'.

Attribution

Many newspaper stories are based on interviews with news sources who are quoted directly or paraphrased in the story. It is important to carefully attach the sources' names to their ideas. This is called attribution.

Quotes are an excellent way for journalists to build the tone of an article. While the writers themselves could be considered biased by using descriptive language and straying from the facts, news sources can more concisely describe the tone or attitude surrounding an article.

Direct quotations and paraphrased quotations are extremely important in news writing. Knowing how to punctuate quotations and correctly attribute information is essential.

A classroom exercise that encourages students to examine correct punctuation in quotations, identify the difference between direct and indirect quotes and understand the effectiveness of quotations follows overleaf.

Classroom Exercise

Quotations are usually the part of a story that stays with a reader the longest. “Strong” or newsworthy quotes are often humorous, unexpected or particularly well said.

A journalist must never change direct quotes. They are a verbatim repeat of a source’s words. Indirect quotes may also be used but the journalist must not change the speaker’s original meaning in any way.

Transcribe two quotes from a news story into this column, noting punctuation and capitalisation.	Tick that the quotes are correctly punctuated. If you find a mistake, re-write it correctly.	Pick the best quote in the story. Write it in this column and explain why it’s the best.	Find one sentence that contains a paraphrased idea from the speaker. Is the idea clearly attributed?

Captions

Most graphics (photographs, maps, graphs, etc) that appear in a newspaper require a caption. A caption explains a graphic's purpose. It also synopsises its relevance and attributes the work to either the illustrator or photographer, or the source who has provided the information being graphically represented.

Bylines and Taglines

A byline appears at the top of a story and identifies the journalist who wrote the article. Not all articles carry bylines. A tagline runs at the bottom of an article and carries only the journalist's name or the abbreviation of the news service that provided the article (eg AAP = Australian Associated Press).

Headlines

Headlines, essentially, are titles above stories. They can vary in size (point size), darkness (light face or bold face), the number of lines (decks) and the number of columns they stretch across. A good headline should attract the readers' attention and encourage them to read on. This is why headlines that use a play on words or a pun are popular, as are active headlines and headlines involving alliteration. However, the emphasis on accuracy must not be lost. Sensational headlines are often untrue and should be avoided at all costs.

Classroom Exercise

This exercise is designed to teach students what an active headline is. In sentences written in active voice, the subject performs the action expressed in the verb. This exercise is therefore similar to a game of charades.

How to start: All you need for this activity is some spare time, some newspapers and a stopwatch. Divide the class into two or four groups. Have students read/scan newspapers, paying close attention to headlines, especially active ones. Have students cut out these headlines and place them in a container at the front of the classroom.

The rules: Individually, a student selects a headline to act out for the rest of the class, using body language and other non-verbal communication only. The student's goal is to get their classmates to say the headline as quickly as possible. Once a headline has been guessed correctly within a given time, another student selects a headline from the container and the process is repeated. Hand signals, such as small word, large word, cut the word down, sounds like, etc are permissible, as is showing numbers with figures.

Photographs

Worth a thousand words

One picture is worth a thousand words…if, indeed, it is the right picture. Big, bold, strong photographs always make an impact. Similarly, people love to see photos of other happy, smiling people. Some general photographic guidelines include:

● Stand up close and eliminate all the irrelevant background.
● If you must take a photo of someone displaying an award or medal, have him or her hold it near their face – not their navel.
● Avoid group shots. When a group photo is sized and published, the faces become unrecognisable and have minimal meaning for the average reader.
● Look for a different angle. Don't take posed photographs of cheque presentations or static equipment. A photo of two or three people engaged in activity related to the cheque, equipment, building etc is more newsworthy.
● Keep the photo compact.

Getting the picture

When considering the photograph that will accompany your story, you need to decide what visual metaphor will communicate the news. Elements that make the story newsworthy should be considered as you mentally construct your photograph. Think through all the details, including:

● **Background:** Your location should help tell your story. Be mindful of camera angles, the direction of the sun and lighting. Also, be sure the backdrop, or setting, complements the photograph.

● **People:** Are all the right people represented? Some candidates for photographs could include EXPs – people who are expert sources of information, or people who have personally experienced or been affected by your news topic.

● **Props:** Are there any visual elements or gimmicks that could add interest to your photograph?

Elements to consider

There are four key elements to consider when composing a photograph for publication in a newspaper. These are:
● Content (details, emotion, drama, symmetry, shadows)
● Composition
● Framing
● Exposure

Content: While it is true that some photographs can stand alone, others benefit from a few words of explanation. A photograph should showcase details relevant

to a story. For example, a photograph of winners could capture jubilation, or the rewards of their victory. A photograph illustrating a tragedy should reflect the emotion of the situation. Most good photographs include people. We are interested in people.

Dramatic photographs can also be captured, especially of nature at her best and worst. These pictures can include large surf, dramatic clouds and wind-blown trees.

Keep an eye out for symmetry and patterns when composing your picture. These can be used to great effect. For example, light coming through venetian blinds gives a good effect. Picket fences, shadows from railings, etc can also be dramatic. Shadows can add interest to a photograph if well placed.

Diagonal lines in a photograph can appear dynamic; horizontal can draw attention to the subject while an S curve can appear graceful.

Composition: Composition is important for visual impact. All photographs have a certain amount of space to work with and photographs need to be composed to maximise the space available. Photographers need to choose the correct lens and the best camera position in relation to the subject

Framing: Framing is using things in the picture to bring the viewer's attention to the focus of the subject. This could involve using background items like trees; fences; people framed in archways; windows etc. These make for a more interesting result and add to the setting.

Things to watch out for

● Don’t shoot into the sun. Wherever possible, keep the sun behind you.
● Avoid mergers. This is where objects in a photograph blend with one another. For example, photographing someone standing directly in front of a flagpole. It could look like the flagpole is growing out of his/her head.
● Try not to cut people in half or trim their heads or feet. If you are shooting a portion of someone’s body, make sure it is balanced and obviously intentional.

Rule of thirds: Every rectangular shape can be divided into a grid of nine by drawing four lines – two horizontal, two vertical – like a tic tac toe grid. You can add dramatic interest to your photograph by placing your subject at any one of the four spots where the lines intersect.

Depth of field: When a lens is focused on a subject, objects in the foreground and background are not at the same distance away and can appear blurred. The term depth of field refers to the distance between the nearest and farthest objects in focus in a photograph. Increasing the depth of field can improve the overall sharpness of an image, sometimes giving it a three-dimensional feel.

Advertising

Types of advertising
Targeting the audience
Buying motives
Attention grabbers
Persuasion
Power words
Putting a price on it
Call to action

Types of Advertising

There are two basic types of print media advertisements – classified and display. Members of the public generally write classified advertisements. They are charged per line of space. You need to concentrate on display advertisements, which are drawn up by professionals and have a far greater impact on the public.

Targeting the Audience

The first step in designing or writing an advertisement is targeting the market group the product is aimed at. These target market groups are determined by factors such as age and gender. These target audiences are also typified by their habits, values and lifestyle choices. Targeting the audience not only offers direction in designing an advertisement but also helps advertisers decide when and where to use it.

Class Exercise

Discuss with the class what their favourite clothing brands, snack foods and entertainment choices are. Ask them to identify the jingle or advertising slogans that accompany them and where they are most likely to encounter them (eg, in magazines, on the radio, on television etc).

Set students the task of collecting 10 different print media display advertisements that target children or teenagers and have them identify the main techniques used in the advertisements to get the message across, eg: image, health, fashion and peer acceptance.

Buying motives

For display advertisements to be successful, they will probably have appealed to at least one of the seven basic buying motives. These are:

- **Gain**
- **Security**
- **Interest**
- **Ease**
- **Imitation**
- **Pride**
- **Fear**

Have students review the collected display advertisements geared towards their target audience and ask them to determine which of the buying motives each advertiser is appealing to.

How do they do it?

You've now seen how an advertiser targets his or her market and hits a nerve by hanging the advertisement on one or more buying motive. But, before they did this, they had to simply get the attention of a potential buyer long enough for him or her to read the advertisement.

Attention grabbers

The advertisement must catch the reader's attention. Usually this is done through a headline. Ideally, the headline will tell the reader what the product will do, give reasons for having the product and mention the product favourably. Often headlines will:

- **Appeal to curiosity**
- **Promise benefits**
- **Address the reader directly**

An advertising headline is generally acknowledged as being worth about 90 per cent of the power of a newspaper headline. Keep it snappy, concise and active.

The art of persuasion

Advertising is a form of persuasive writing. In the "body", or text, of the advertisement, the writer should tell readers what the product could do for them. This text should support the headline. It should convince the reader that the product/company has something special to offer and is better than the competition. This all has to be done as quickly as possible, before the reader loses interest, and should be structured with a beginning, middle and end. The beginning is usually the headline, the body must be persuasive and concise, and the ending, or "kicker", has to spur the potential customer to action (purchase).

Advertisements appeal to both emotion and reason. The most effective messages have flair, humour and a catchy slogan or jingle.

Advertisements usually fall into two main categories – product advertising and image advertising. Product advertising aims to get consumers to buy a product immediately, while image advertising tries to build long-term loyalty. In both

instances, however, readers want to know: “what’s in it for me?” So make sure the advertisement tells how the product will deliver the benefits. Finally, keep it simple. The text should be interesting and written in clear, simple words so it is easy to understand. It should project enthusiasm and honesty.

Power of the pen

In addition to capitalising on our hearts and minds, advertisers often cash in on the power of certain words. A Harvard University study identified the 12 most persuasive words used in advertisements. They were:

- **You**
- **Health**
- **New**
- **Discover**
- **Proven**
- **Safe**
- **Easy**
- **Guarantee**
- **Free**
- **Money**
- **Love**
- **Results**

Class Exercise

Have students read the display advertising headlines in the herald and find as many “power words” as they can.

Have students create a dictionary of advertising words that are applicable to their target audience. Do any of the words they selected appear in the collected advertisements? Which ones?

Call to action

The final part of the advertisement’s text should be a “kicker”, or something geared to create a response to the advertisement’s message. These may be phrases such as “hurry – while stocks last!” “final three days” or “ring now!”

Class Exercise

Have students examine the body copy of a number of display advertisements and identify the beginning, middle and end. Discuss how the three sections are linked, and identify the "kicker" in each advertisement. Have them time how long it takes to read each advertisement aloud, from headline to kicker.

Putting it all together

For any advertisement to be effective, it has to be read. The layout and design techniques employed in an advertisement will affect whether or not it is seen and read, as will the advertisement's placement and timing of publication.

For example, it is not much use to promote gas heating when it is hot; advertise skateboards in the financial section of the newspaper or bury interesting facts beneath a boring headline. In laying out an advertisement, remember the eye follows "reading gravity", which moves from the upper left-hand corner to the bottom right-hand corner.

Therefore, the best place to put your "grabber", or headline, is the top left-hand corner.

Writing an Editorial

Expositionary text type
Writing an editorial
Editorial cartooning
Getting started

Expositionary text type

Expositions are used to argue a case for or against a particular position or point of view. They begin with the statement of a point of view, followed by justification of arguments in a logical order, and finish with a summing up of the argument.

This editorial focus, based on the **exposition text type**, utilises topics relevant to news issues explored in their newspaper.

A news story addresses the facts related to an issue and offers a balanced and credible representation. An editorial is an opportunity to 'read between the lines' – explore a news issue and express an opinion about what it will really mean to the community.

What is an editorial?

An editorial is the newspaper's leading article and the place where the paper expresses its opinion.

While an editorial is an opinion piece, often related to issues that have attracted attention and debate in the news arena, readers have the right to expect that any opinion expressed is an educated opinion.

The *Herald* publishes an editorial, or leader, every day on its first opinion page. Throughout the School Newspaper Competition, primary and secondary participants will be required to submit an editorial.

Writing an editorial

Some tips on writing an editorial:

An editorial is structured like an exposition. It's a one-sided argument. It needs to be accurate, but not balanced. Your editorial is the voice of your paper, speaking on behalf of your readers, advocating for a course of action or change. Make sure your topic is representative of your readers. You want to speak for them, not ostracise them.

A great test for an editorial is to read it out loud to an audience. If it is well structured, effectively argued and passionately worded, it's probably a good one.

● Decide what you want to persuade your readers about; how it will appeal to your readers and why it is relevant to them.
● Soften criticism - do not divide your readership.

● Speak as the voice of the whole community.
● Tie the editorial to a news item or current issue of public concern.
● Show a local flavour; local loyalties and interests related to readers.
● Avoid a preachy tone and rhetorical flourishes.
● Clarify your point of view before beginning.
● Simplify expressions; talk plainly.
● As a guide, focus on three points only, short paragraphs and short sentences.
● Do not use "I - you - me" pronouns; use a plural voice = the community. The editorial is the voice of the newspaper, not an individual.

Editorial cartooning

Think newspaper cartoons, think comics. Right? Well, no. While cartoons are included in most publications to give readers a daily laugh, other forms of artwork, caricatures and cartoons convey news messages through images.

One simple formula that captures this is:

Cartoon + Opinion on newsworthy issue = Editorial cartoon

While cartoons may have a humorous element they are most often serious commentary in visual form. Editorial or political cartoons express an opinion and often utilise satire – that special brand of humour that can make you chuckle and wince at the same time!

Symbols, stereotypes and caricature are also utilised in the cartoonist's quest to convey meaning and opinion.

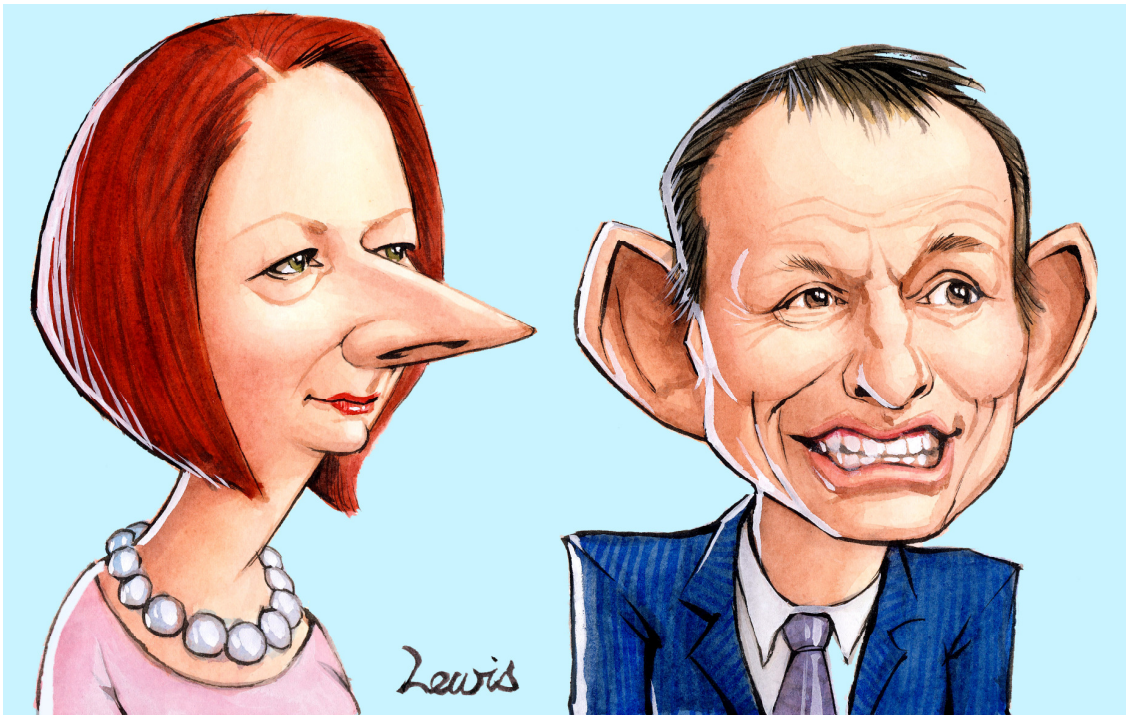
Here are some definitions:

satire: is the use of irony, sarcasm and ridicule in exposing, denouncing, or deriding vice, folly and the like.

stereotype: a set form; convention; standardised idea or concept; or to characterise according to a conventional idea or concept. For example – an Australian farmer wears an Akubra and chews a straw of wheat.

caricature: a picture ludicrously exaggerating the peculiarities or defects of persons or things. For example, compare the photograph of Julia Gillard and Tony Abbott on the next page with their caricature by *Herald* cartoonist Peter Lewis. He has focused on Julia's nose and Tony's ears in an absurd manner.

symbol: a letter, figure, or other character or mark, or a combination of letters or the like, used to represent something. For example – a dove symbolises peace.


Lewis

Getting started

For the purposes of the School Newspaper Competition, cartoonists will be required to create an editorial or political cartoon to accompany the editorial article on Page 2. For maximum impact, cartoonists must:

- Have an excellent understanding of the news issue discussed in the editorial
- Identify the opinion being expressed in the editorial article. Write it down.
- Translate this comment into a graphic form. Are there metaphors, allusions or symbols that come to mind?
- Experiment with shading and shadowing to give the cartoon depth and contrast.
- Sketch the cartoon in pencil in the supplied template. When you are happy with the cartoon's completed form, ink over the sketch with a fine black marker and erase your pencil sketch marks.
- Keep the drawing uncluttered and use as few words (for example balloons, labels or titles) as possible.
- Make sure the cartoon is accurate. A cartoon may be defamatory if the cartoonist portrays false facts about people or events.

Winning Examples

News Story

Arguments over alcohol

By **BONNIE GRICE, THALIA SIMON** and **CAYLEY GRIBB**

ALCOHOL is the leading health concern for the Gloucester and Manning Valley region.

So the plan to place an alcohol superstore, Dan Murphy's, in the middle of Taree is being questioned as a sensible thing to do.

Mayor Paul Hogan and six of Taree's Council councillors don't believe it is.

They have rejected a plan for the development of the liquor outlet to go ahead.

They have cited their main issue as being the adverse social impact to the community of Taree.

The vote went against a staff recommendation for conditional approval, and shocked many in the community.

Greater Taree City Council are in dispute over the decision, with only two councillors – Trent Jennison and Alan Tickle – voting for the idea of the development of the Dan Murphy's store.

Cr Jennison explained: "It is not a local council's decision to say where people can buy their alcohol and then be responsible for people's behaviour when drinking."

Cr Jennison continued to say that there is a liquor licence already in place for the area, and it is simply a case of "closing down a small business to open a larger business that has a higher level of security system that aims to stop the risk of under-age drinking".

DIVISION: Councillor Trent Jennison standing at the location of the proposed Dan Murphy's store in Taree. *Picture: Andrew Jennison*

However, Mayor Paul Hogan is not only concerned about the social impact but also the location.

"The proposed location is the gateway to our beautiful town, and I do not want an enormous alcohol superstore to be the first thing people see when they visit," he said.

Greens MP John Kaye said: "Taree has a 73 per cent higher rate of alcohol-related violence compared to the state-wide average. This alone provides a strong argument for reducing the number of outlets."

The rejected development application for the Dan Murphy's liquor outlet in Taree will have a fresh airing, with a rescission motion now lodged with Greater Taree City Council.

They are seeking the deferment of a final decision, to allow the Woolworths-owned operation time to provide confirmation on several vital issues affecting the amenity of the surrounding location, and for council staff to clarify where there might be adverse social impact.

Primary
This is a relevant topic for the community of Taree regarding the proposed opening of a Dan Murphy's store and a well-written story that would comfortably appear within the pages of the Herald.

Wild dogs on rampage

By **LEAH WRIGHT**

THE effects of the drought and fires have not been the only severe issues lately, residents are also dealing with the devastation that wild dogs are causing throughout the Upper Hunter.

Wild dogs are currently having disturbing impacts on local livestock production, causing significant economic downturn and abundant stress to livestock producers.

The problem is becoming severe as they are not confined to one area and have been known to travel long distances, some up to 60 kilometres from their original homes.

Farmers around the area are continuously losing substantial numbers of sheep from their herds due to the wild dogs.

Local farmer Rodney Walters is familiar with the issue and believes the loss of sheep is increasing.

"It's distressing to find so many of your animals dead. I can't even begin to imagine the effect of wild dogs on native animals out in the bush," he said.

It is feared that if it is not controlled immediately, producers will begin to see the loss of livestock other than sheep.

Fielding off dogs as big as 40 kilograms with the capacity to bring down calves and foals is now a real concern.

DANGER: It seems baits are one of the best methods for controlling wild dogs. *Picture: Leah Wright*

Board member of the Local Land Services, Ron Campbell, believes no one in NSW is left unaffected.

"I think the wild dog issue is more prevalent than people realise, it is an increasing problem and needs to be addressed continuously," said Mr Campbell.

With local farmers wanting to see an increase in control measures to stop the wild dogs, Biodiversity NSW has developed a Wild Dog Management Strategy, with the primary objective aiming to minimise the negative impacts of wild dogs on primary production, the environment and the wider community.

The Hunter Board currently has baits that comply with government regulations available to farmers through Local Land Services who are being affected by the issue.

The issue has become so large that the Local Land Service is subsidising the baits so farmers are able to obtain them for free.

Area baiting programs are being applied to try and control the problem, but it needs to be used extensively with a large number of farmers participating.

Secondary

The writer tapped into the heart of the community, by talking about the devastation of wild dogs on farmers livelihoods using fact, quotes and a sound structure.

Editorial

Tourle Street now one bridge too far

EDITORIAL

By **TULLY COLLISON** and **COCO TINDALL**

THE building of the Tourle Street Bridge from Kooragang Island to Mayfield was one of the biggest mistakes that has been planned by a government for a long time.

Only a couple of years old now, the bridge is a complete bottleneck for traffic getting into and out of Newcastle. Not only is it a problem for people coming to work in Newcastle from the Port Stephens and Medowie areas, it is a big problem for people going to and from Newcastle Airport.

While the old bridge that was used for many years needed to be pulled down as it wasn't in very good condition, it was obvious before it was decommissioned that the new bridge needed to be at least four lanes and not the two lanes that has replaced the old bridge, therefore not increasing its size.

The federal government has said money is in the budget for the doubling of the bridge and a 2.5-kilometre stretch of road. However, this will still mean bottlenecks will occur, as the stretch of road from the Industrial Highway right through to the airport needs to be upgraded.

There are stretches of road through Fern Bay and then further up the road approaching Williamtown that are only two lanes – and they are not divided roads at that.

The road that leaves the Tourle Street bridge is only two lanes and when it is widened it will either mean the removal of native mangroves in the river or the filling in of the only beautification that has been successful on Kooragang Island – the small swamp that is used by black swans and migratory birds adjacent to the bridge.

It is also plain to see for anyone who travels on this road that planners have not looked very closely at any of the development that has taken place.

On the Mayfield side of the bridge, there are large pipes that will have to be moved for the road to be widened. And more than likely on the Kooragang side, large power lines that have been placed there will also have to be moved.

We are very lucky that planners in the past had the vision to build the Stockton bridge. It opened in 1971 and replaced the Stockton punt in Newcastle harbour. It is a shame that the planners and governments of today, or even a few years ago, didn't have the foresight of those back in 1971 in looking to the future instead of trying to replace something that was already out of date.

Primary
This editorial about a topic affecting many residents – the Tourle St Bridge – drew feedback from Herald readers who wrote letters to the editor about the piece, congratulating the students on their insight.

One size doesn't fit all in education

EDITORIAL

By **LARA HARRIMAN**

IN Australia, education is seen as a civil right for children and young people up to the age of 18. As the competitive nature of employment rises, so does the reliance on education as a mediator between social advantage and disadvantage.

Comparing NAPLAN results between disadvantaged and advantaged families across Australia has demonstrated a worrying difference in literacy and numeracy results. What does this mean for an area such as the Central Coast that has consistently held higher levels of unemployment both in adults and youth than the NSW and national averages?

It demonstrates that the one-size-fits-all approach to Australian education does not always accommodate for challenging circumstances and individual needs.

Some claim that it's up to the individual to take charge of their education and that the fault lies not in the institution at all. To a certain degree, this is true.

However, to generalise every student as viewing education in this manner or having the circumstances to achieve their best ignores the 15 per cent of children living in poverty. It further ignores the housing crisis on the Central Coast leading to a 12-year waiting list for public housing.

The truth is that the education system is not modelled on an equal playing field. Study after study has proven that poverty is a vicious cycle, where the circumstances of the family heavily dictate the opportunities of the student.

Children who come from challenging family situations, which may include severe illness of a parent, relationship breakdowns, domestic violence, sexual abuse, substance addictions and mental illness, are at a major disadvantage.

Furthermore, if education is not valued in the student's family, it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy of underachievement and invariably unemployment.

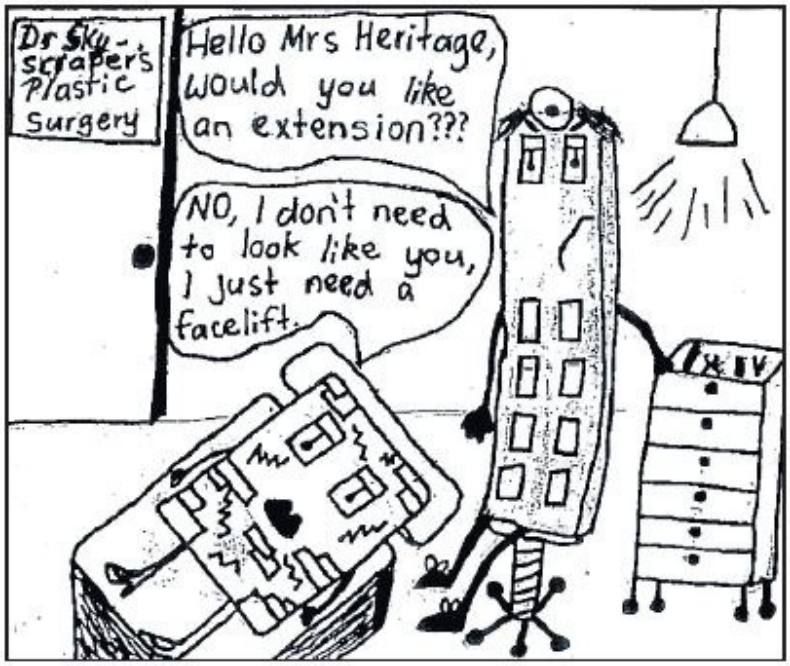
How can we change this? Tania Major, a Young Australian of the Year and advocate for indigenous youth, said: "I believe it is more than just bums on seats and counting numbers. Are these kids actually learning?"

We cannot expect students to do well when they have no connection to the education system. To boost employment and social equality, we need to make schools relatable to students from a variety of circumstances. We need to provide a better framework of support and change our negative perceptions of education. Otherwise what's the point of an education system?

Secondary

The writer took a national subject – an analysis of the role of NAPLAN – and brought it back to a local perspective to make it more emotive and relevant to our readers.

Cartoon



Primary

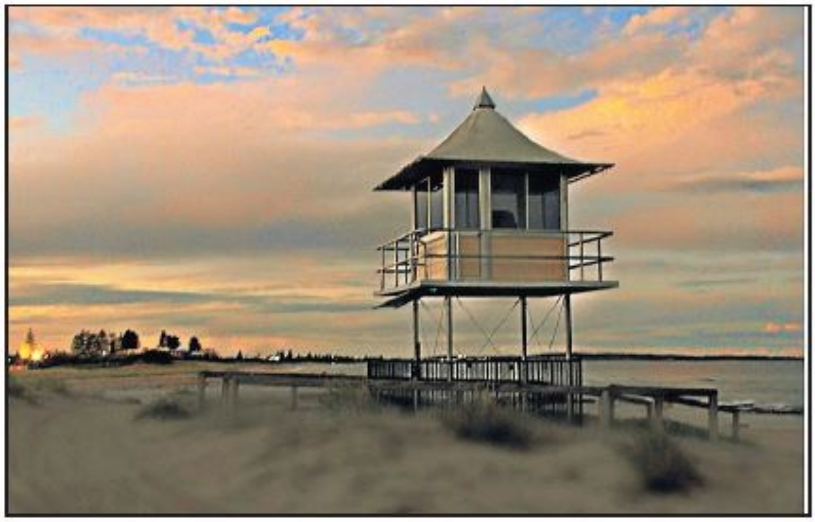
Humour was used to highlight a topical debate to readers – heritage versus new buildings in the Newcastle CBD. Set in Dr Skyscraper's Plastic Surgery, Mrs Heritage decides she just wants a facelift, not an expansion.

Secondary

A fresh, easy-to-understand and well-drawn depiction of the impact of individual littering and how it all adds up, despite starting out as just one piece, earned the top place.

Photography

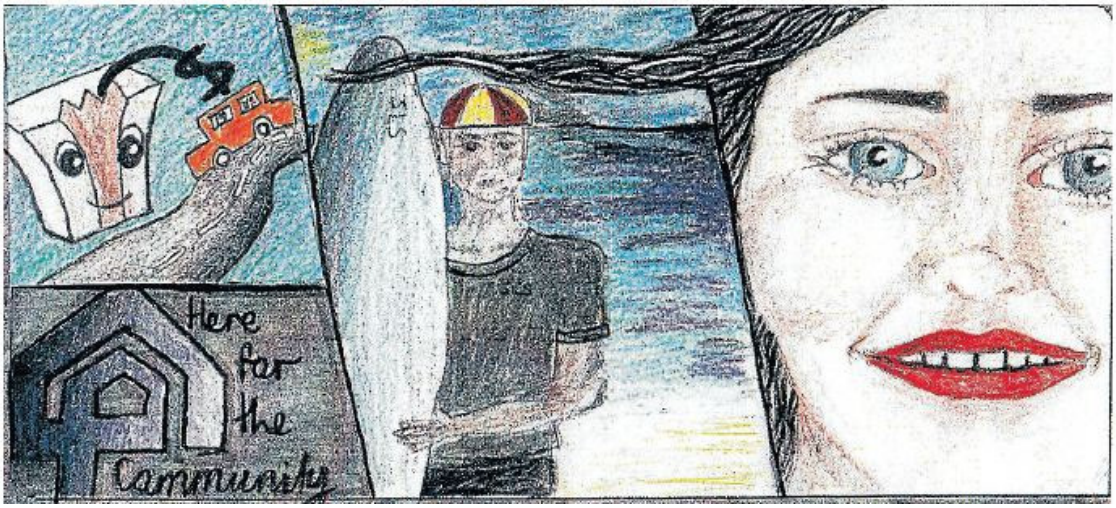
Primary
These photos for the Thornton Thunder were well-framed, visually engaging and supportive of their stories. They were uncluttered but still had a human element in each.



Secondary
These photos were well-framed and featured interesting use of light to capture the essence of the subject matter in the stories. They showed a sound understanding of news photography.

Advertisements

Primary
This magical, beautiful drawing of a young reader on a flying book took us on the journey with her across the world of her imagination, demonstrating the theme of literacy and its benefits.



Secondary
This ad displayed her beautiful drawing skills in a triptych of what the Newcastle Permanent provides for the community – financial security and supporting local services and charities.