

Name:

Date:

School:

Year:

# Literacy

## Writing Practice Group

Purple Course



### Writing Articles

## What do you know about the news?

### Part A: What is a news article?

News articles are a type of report that are published either daily or weekly. They give readers factual information to *inform* them about an event that has happened in the world in the order that it has happened (chronologically).

#### Features of a news article

News articles contain certain *structural* features that help the reader to understand that it is a news report. They can include:

Structural features focus on the layout or the way the article looks.

Feature	Purpose
Headline	Short and punchy to catch readers' attention, can use alliteration
By-line	The person who has written the article
Lead	The first important sentence/paragraph that summarises the report
Body	Provides more details in short paragraphs
Pictures and captions	Photographs related to the topic with a sentence underneath explaining the photograph.
Columns	The text in paper article is written in vertical blocks down and across the page

#### Did you know?

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, newspapers were written in columns because each individual letter had to be placed in a block and stamped on the paper. It must have taken a long time to write one paragraph!

## Eye-catching headlines

Articles contain interesting headlines so that they draw the reader in to want to read the article. They usually contain a few words that *summarise* the article. They can be funny and often use *alliteration* to make them sound even more interesting.

Examples include:

- Foxes Fought Back
- Columbus Cat Breaks Climbing Record
- Hilarious Hilary Highlights Again

Alliteration is when words that are next to each other begin with the same letter.

## Looking at Language

News articles also contain a number of *language* features. Language features focus on the *way* that an article is written and can include:

Feature	Purpose
Past tense	Written to show that the event has happened in the past
Third person	It is written about somebody or something else
Clear and concise	Short and straight to the point
Factual	Facts about the topic to give more information
Opinions	From individuals involved to understand point of view
Quotes	Statements from witnesses or experts. Written in speech marks

## Formal or Informal Language

Language can be either formal or informal.

Formal language uses words that sound very professional and does not use words or phrases that we hear in everyday conversation whereas informal language is more chatty and friendly.

For example:

Formal language: Reports show that eating chocolate is highly beneficial for mental wellbeing.

Informal language: Chocolate is good for your health.

News articles are usually written in *formal* language because they are used to inform the reader about something.

Exercise 1: Read the sentences in the table below. One is formal and one is informal.

Tick the box next to the sentence that has formal language.

Tick			Tick
	Cheers!	Thank you for your time.	
	I expect this to be resolved as soon as possible.	Sort it out quickly!	
	I look forward to meeting you.	See you soon.	
	I think...	It is my opinion...	
	Just to let you know...	I am writing to inform you...	
	Could you pass me the ball, please?	Hey! Pass the ball over!	

How did you choose which sentences were which?

Did you notice anything about the formal language used in Exercise 1?

The language also uses the *perfect form* of verbs to discuss time and cause. For example; instead of saying:

Jane *lived* in France for 10 years.

It would read:

Jane *has lived* in France for 10 years.

## A Note on Relative Clauses

A *relative clause* is a part of the part of a sentence that adds extra information to the main clause or part of the sentence. It usually follows a comma in a sentence and starts with relative pronouns such as *who*, *whose*, *which*, *where*, *when* and *that* but can also be *embedded* or sandwiched with commas in the middle of a sentence. For example,

She enjoys watching the show, which is on every Monday night.

The girl, who had a pony tail, lived on a farm near the woods.

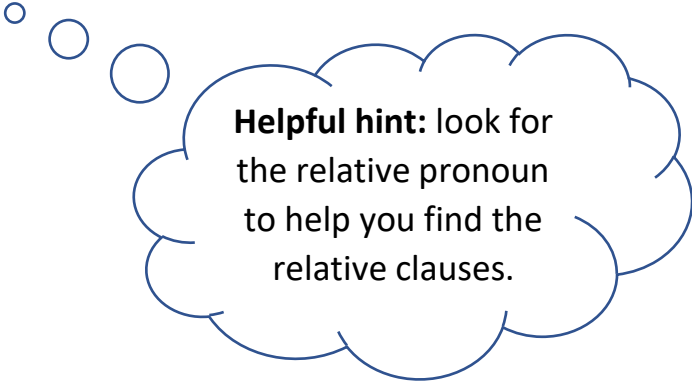


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stormy outside.

3. The boy, who works at the shoe shop, is Sally's nephew.
4. He lived in Scotland, which is part of the United Kingdom.
5. The cheetah, which is the fastest animal in the world, lives in Africa.
6. The wall was covered in graffiti, which will cost a fortune to clean.



**Helpful hint:** look for the relative pronoun to help you find the relative clauses.


## Fact or Opinion

News articles usually contain lots of facts and opinions about the topic being discussed. They help to support what is being said.

A **fact** is a piece of information that is true and can include dates, names of people, names of places or statistical information.

An **opinion** is somebody's personal thoughts, feelings or judgements about a topic based on what they know and have experienced.

Exercise 3: Read the text below. Try and decide whether you think the information is a fact or someone's opinion.

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Mrs Wain believes that the new skate park will encourage children to become more active.	
The Annual Chocolate Fair has been held every August for the last 10 years and provides funds for local children's groups across the town.	
"It will drive the wildlife away!" said Mr Waldow, a local resident who is concerned about the local wildlife following plans to change the beach area in the bay.	
Recently uncovered artefacts are confirmed to be the oldest known items of their kind following a discovery by builders redesigning a local pond area.	

What helped you decide if it was a fact or an opinion?

## Quotes – Direct or Indirect?

A news article also tends to contain quotes. A quote is a statement from a person that was involved in the event.

Quotes can be written in two different ways:

- Direct speech
- Indirect Speech

Direct speech is speech that is a word for word copy of what a person has said. You can identify direct speech from the use of *speech marks* or *inverted commas* that are around the spoken text. For example:



Exercise 4: Look at the quotes below. Can you identify which ones are direct speech and which ones are indirect speech? Circle your answer.

Discuss how you knew which ones were which with your tutor.

“I saw the whole thing from my car!” stated Will.

direct/indirect

Mr Pip explained how his discovery of pizza flavoured ice cream was a pure accident.

direct/indirect

Doris then described how the new app will reduce the need for homework in schools.

direct/indirect

“It will be longest jump ever made by a skateboard” said Ally.

direct/indirect

**Helpful hint:** look out for speech marks!



## Identifying Features of an Article

Exercise 5: Look at the example news article below. Add labels to annotate the features you can see. Discuss this with your tutor.

# HEADTEACHER ABDUCTED BY ALIENS



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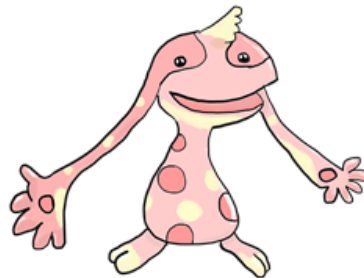
Head teacher, Mr. Sky, was said to be holding his weekly Monday assembly at 9:15am when an alien suddenly appeared on stage and promptly disappeared after grabbing Mr. Sky by the arm.

A number of pupils and staff were left in a state of shock following the incident, which happened in the school hall.

Year 6 pupil, Amber, who was on stage at the time of the incident to announce the House Point Champions, said "It was terrifying! The alien just appeared out of nowhere!"

Onlooker Miss Hayes, who is a Year 6 teacher at Seven Springs School, explained that it took at least 20 minutes to calm the 126 pupils who witnessed the abduction.

The alien was described as having pink skin with spots, long arms from its head and a tuft of yellow hair.



**Eyewitness drawing of alien that abducted Mr. Sky.**

Can you find two relative clauses in the article above?



## Part B: Organising a News Article

News articles are written by journalists. Journalists research and report on events from the local area and around the world that they think people would find interesting. The *purpose* is to inform the reader about the event.

Remember, the *purpose* of a text is the reason *why* it has been written.


The *audience* of a text is *who* it has been written for.

Once they discover an interesting news story, they have to think about the *audience* they are writing for. You would not write about the local summer fair in the same way for a 9-year-old as you would for an adult!



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children’s clubs to help parents deal with summertime boredom.		BIOLOGISTS studying animals and birds
On Tuesday, Year 3 made a trip to the British Museum as part of their Egyptians topic.		Local residents
A sighting of an Albus eagle has recently been reported by scientist, Dr Feather. The bird was previously thought to be extinct.		School children
Restaurant owner, Marcus Oliver, has won ‘Chef of the Year’ following a competition held in London this week.		Food bloggers

## The 5Ws

The 5Ws is the information that describes the **what, where, when, who** and **why**.

The first paragraph of a news article usually contains *all* of the 5Ws. The following paragraphs should then add more detail in clear manner.

Exercise 7: Read the following paragraph. See if you can identify the 5Ws.

Copy the information carefully into the table and then discuss your answers with your tutor.



5Ws	
What?	
Where?	
When?	
Who?	
Why?	

## Part C: Writing a News Article

Once a journalist understands what is included in an article they can begin to research their story.

Journalists will study the topic to discover facts and interview people to get opinions. They will then organise this information to write their article.

### Stop the Press!


Exercise 8: You have been asked to write an article for the school newsletter



What?	
Where?	
When?	
Who?	
Why?	

<sup>1</sup> <https://youtu.be/03FyBbDzy6k>

Exercise 9: Use the following table to help you organise your article based on the information you have discovered in the video in exercise 6.

Audience	
Headline ideas	
<div data-bbox="199 645 1396 958" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;">  <p><b>Seven Springs Education</b></p> <p>For workbook samples, contact us at: <a href="mailto:school@seven-springs.co.uk">school@seven-springs.co.uk</a></p> </div>	
Opinions and Quotes	

Exercise 10: Once you have found out the information you need, have a go at writing a news article about the event on the lines below.

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Top tips!

- Don't forget to include a catchy headline
- Include some interesting facts and opinions
- Add a quote from someone who was there
- Use *formal* language – don't be chatty!



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