

BERKELEY HEIGHTS PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
BERKELEY HEIGHTS, NEW JERSEY

**GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON HIGH SCHOOL  
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT**

**INTRODUCTION TO JOURNALISM**

**#067**

**Curriculum Guide**

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This curriculum may be modified through varying techniques,  
strategies, and materials, as per an individual student's  
Individualized Educational Plan (IEP).

Approved by the Berkeley Heights Board of Education  
at the regular meeting held on 9/21/06.

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## PHILOSOPHY/RATIONALE

Introduction to Journalism is a one-semester, 2.5 credit course offered as an English elective. The course is designed for students of all grades who want to learn basic newspaper skills to enhance their knowledge of writing, the craft of journalism, and the career opportunities associated with this field of study. Introduction to Journalism addresses many of the New Jersey Language Arts Core Curriculum Content Standards as well as the Technological Literacy, and Career Education and Consumer, Family and Life Skills Standards. News writing, in-depth reporting, editorials, features and sports writing, entertainment, pictures, headline preparation, design and layout, copy editing, and online journalism are some of the areas covered. Additional areas of focus include the history and social significance of print journalism and the media, ethics in journalism, freedom of the press, and student press law. The course seeks to deepen student understanding of the art of journalism and prepare students who are interested in any of the following areas: writing for the school newspaper, careers in journalism, photo-journalism, advertising, sales, and marketing. Students also improve their ability to work collaboratively through cooperative projects and pod based activities.

The course is designed around seven units; these units may be taught simultaneously, as many activities either complement or are contingent on the other. One example of this would be ethics and freedom of the press. Another would be writing a particular article and taking pictures to place with that article. The units need not be taught in the order they appear in this guide, though the structure of the units does offer a unified and coherent pattern. Introduction to Journalism is an interactive class, where students are frequently doing several tasks at a time, particularly during the second half of the semester. The class will most frequently be structured in pods, where groups of students rotate to work on several different projects throughout the semester, affording each student full exposure and access to all aspects of the class. This structure ensures student involvement, maximizes the number of learned skills, effectively utilizes classroom space, and contributes to effective classroom management.

## **COURSE PROFICIENCIES**

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. To recognize that there are ethical codes and laws in journalism that must be understood and followed (3.1/G1,9,10, H4,5; 3.3/A1-4, B2,3,5,7, D1; 3.4/A1, B1,4; 3.5/A2, B1, C1-3)
  - A. Identify journalistic ethics and the personal values that guide journalists and underlie ethics codes.
  - B. Recognize truth, honesty, integrity, fairness, and impartiality as important journalistic traits.
  - C. Acknowledge a journalist's duty to inform and to provide a forum for diverse viewpoints.
  - D. Examine a model ethics code for high school journalists.
  - E. Analyze the First Amendment as the basis for the laws and codes that guide journalists in the United States in their work, and student journalists in their efforts to inform and pursue the truth.
  - F. Review unprotected expression: libel and obscenity
  
2. To examine student press law and the differences between public versus private school media (3.1/H4,5,6; 3.2/D2,4)
  - A. Review student press law and high school court cases for examples of journalistic legal issues, particularly related to public and private forums and a free student press.
  - B. Distinguish the differences between public school and private school students in regard to their legal rights concerning freedom of expression.
  - C. Recognize that First Amendment rights for public school students can be legally mandated through means other than the federal courts.
  - D. Examine laws and educational codes at the state level that can give free expression rights to high school student journalists.
  - E. Discuss the practice of prior review and its impact on school newspapers.
  
3. To comprehend the fundamental definition of "news" and how that definition applies to school newspapers (3.1/G1,10,11, H4,6; 3.3/B1; 3.4A1-3, B1-3)
  - A. Deduct that news is difficult to define because it involves many variables.
  - B. Determine the differences between "hard news" and "soft news".
  - C. Evaluate the differences between fact and opinion.
  - D. Recognize that all news must be factual, yet not all facts are news.
  - E. Perceive that news has qualities that distinguish it from nearly all forms of writing.
  
4. To utilize different means of gathering information and then determine if the material is newsworthy (3.1/G1,10, H4,5; 3.2/B7; 3.3/B1,5; 3.4/A2, B2,3; 3.5/B1)
  - A. Identify the two types of information sources tapped by journalists: primary and secondary sources.

## **COURSE PROFICIENCIES** (continued)

- B. Examine the beat system and how it works.
  - C. Recognize that the most important and common way for a reporter to get information is through the interview.
  - D. Use the Internet to gather information.
  - E. Evaluate the veracity and quality of Internet information.
  - F. Review the various wire services, such as the Associated Press, Reuters, United Press International or a syndicate, such as Knight Ridder/Tribune Media Services.
5. To perform the skills of writing and editing newspaper articles and then creating headlines for those articles. (3.2/A3,4,5,6,7, B1-5,7-11, C1-8, D1,2,3,4,5,7)
- A. Create summary leads using the five W's and H: who, what, where, when, why, how.
  - B. Construct news stories using the inverted pyramid and the modified inverted pyramid forms to write both hard news articles and soft news articles.
  - C. Practice the proper techniques for attributing the source of facts and opinion in a news story
  - D. Recognize the importance of providing attribution for all sources and quotes in written articles.
  - E. Construct effective feature leads and write the various types of feature stories including profiles, human interest stories, informative feature stories, community feature stories, and interpretive features.
  - F. Construct effective sports leads and write various types of sports stories including the advance story, trend story, statistics story, sports feature story, and sports news story, and columns.
  - G. Recognize the editorial as the voice of the student newspaper and write various types of editorials including advocacy editorials, problem-solution editorials, commendation editorials, editorial comment, editorial cartoons, and columns.
  - H. Identify and write the four types of entertainment articles: advance stories, reviews, features, and columns.
  - I. Design interview questions through research and thorough exploration of a topic.
  - J. Examine the different types of headlines including teaser, teller, two and three liners, deck, hammer, tripod, jump, and banner or streamer.
  - K. Develop copy editing skills and utilize correct newspaper style as identified in the journalism stylebook.
6. To prepare copy for print and utilize different computer programs for final production. (3.2/A5, C7; 8.1/A1,5,6, B2,3,12)
- A. Design and layout a student newspaper on Publisher or PageMaker.
7. To develop the necessary skills to sell advertising and market a student newspaper. (9.1/A2, B2,5; 9.2/A1,3,4, B3, D6)
- A. Create mock ads and role play meetings with local businesses to sell advertising.
  - C. Design a marketing plan to generate interest in sales and readership.

## **STUDENT PROFICIENCIES**

The student will be able to:

1. Recognize that journalism is guided by laws and ethics such as the First Amendment. (3.1/G1,10; 3.2/B2, D4)
2. Become familiar with the consequences of plagiarism, fabrication of stories, and the altering of photos. (3.2/B2)
3. Read material critically and comprehensively. (3.1/G1,11)
4. Conduct interviews for the purpose of gaining information. (3.2/B7)
5. Edit and proofread written work. (3.2/A4, B11, C1-8)
6. Talk with others to explore and solve problems. (3.3/A3)
7. Listen critically by asking relevant questions and taking notes. (3.3/B1)
8. Evaluate the credibility of speakers and sources. (3.4/B2)
9. Write independently and collaboratively for a variety of purposes. (3.2/A3,4)
10. Collect information from a variety of sources. (3.2/B7)
11. Publish writing in the form of newspaper articles and letters to the editor. (3.2/B5,7,9)
12. Compile a collection of articles and photographs in the form of a journalist's portfolio. (3.2/B12)
13. Recognize the effect that the written word has on its intended audience. (3.2/B8, D1)
14. Distinguish fact from opinion in news material. (3.1/G10)
15. Recognize bias and propaganda in written articles and edit accordingly.
16. Recognize the media as an important form of communication through written work and visual presentations. (3.5/A1-3, B1-2, C1-3)
17. Take and select photographs to complement written newspaper articles.
18. Use computer programs such as Publisher and PageMaker to complete a finished newspaper. (3.2/A5)
19. Analyze how diction creates tone and mood, and how choice of words advances the theme or purpose of the work. (3.1/G11, 3.2/B8)
20. Select appropriate electronic media for research and evaluate the quality of the information received. (3.1/H1)
21. Design a marketing plan to generate revenue through advertising and to increase readership.
22. Create advertisements for local businesses.

## **METHODS OF EVALUATION**

1. Homework and class work.
2. Class participation and preparedness.
3. Tests and quizzes.
4. Pod activities and projects.
5. Outside reading project on a book about journalism or journalists.
6. Final project.

**SCOPE AND SEQUENCE**  
**COURSE OUTLINE/STUDENT OBJECTIVES**

**The student will be able to:**

<b>NJ Core Curriculum Standards/ Grade</b>	<b>Strands &amp; Indicators</b>	<b>Course Outline/Student Objectives</b>
3.1/9-12 3.3/9-12 3.4/9-12 3.5/9-12	G1,9,10 H,4,5 A1-4 B2,3,5,7 D1 A1 B1,4 A2 B1 C1-3	I. Examine The Ethical Codes And Laws That Act As The Guiding Principles In The Field Of Journalism A. Recognize Newspaper Ethics as Standards or Codes of Conduct That are Based on Personal Values or Law 1. Conclude that journalists are guided by ethics in gathering news and then reporting this news 2. Determine that ethical journalism revolves around honesty, respectful reporting, respect for diversity, respect for privacy, fairness and impartiality, careful gathering and reporting of facts, and a consideration of public interest 3. Recognize that a journalist’s mission is to inform the public, ensure a free flow of information, provide a forum for diverse viewpoints, serve as a watchdog of government and other groups, and to pursue the truth 4. Understand the ethics code specific to high school journalists as it applies to plagiarism, fabrication, altering photos, appropriate material and language, reporting of names and addresses, personal information, false identity, anonymous sources, negative stereotyping, gender biased labels, gifts or bribes, corrections, and conflicts of interest B. Analyze the First Amendment in Respect to Journalism in the United States 1. Recognize the First Amendment as the basis for the laws and codes that guide journalists in the United States in their work, and student journalists in their efforts to inform and pursue the truth
3.1/9-12 3.2/9-12	H4,5,6 D2,4	II. Analyze The History Of Student Press Law And Examine The Differences Between Public School And Private School Media

		A. Recognize the First Amendment to the US Constitution as Respecting Freedom of Speech and the Press, and How This Amendment Applies to Public Schools as an Extension of the Government
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		<p>II. Analyze The History Of Student Press Law And Examine The Differences Between Public School And Private School Media (continued)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understand that private schools must conform to only some government laws because they are funded mostly or wholly with nongovernmental money, and do not have to enforce freedom of expression</li> <li>2. Review sample court cases based on actual high school journalism decisions, including Tinker, Bethel, Hazelwood, and Dean</li> <li>3. Examine other legal considerations for journalists such as libel, obscenity, invasion of privacy, and copyright laws</li> </ol> <p>B. Analyze the Practice of Prior Review and a Public School’s Legal Rights and Restrictions in Exercising This Practice</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recognize that school administrators have the right to review a student publication for content approval before it is printed and distributed to the public</li> <li>2. Identify the reasons a school can restrict certain content from being printed, e.g., if the material is libelous, obscene, or disruptive</li> <li>3. Understand that school administrators cannot restrict schools from publishing controversial stories</li> <li>4. Review court cases involving high schools and censorship of material included in school newspapers</li> </ol>
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<p>3.1/9-12 3.3/9-12 3.4/9-12</p>	<p>G1,10,11 H4,6 B1 A1-3 B1-3</p>	<p>III. Determine What Constitutes Newsworthy Material And The Methods Which Are Used To Acquire This Material</p> <p>A. Differentiate Between “Hard News” and “Soft News”</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recognize that hard news has significance for relatively large numbers of readers, listeners, and viewers about timely events that have just happened or are about to happen in government, politics, foreign affairs, education, labor, religion, courts, financial markets, and the like</li> <li>2. Recognize that soft news is usually less important because it entertains, though it may also inform, and is often less timely than hard news</li> </ol> <p>B. Identify the Three Factors of News: Facts, Interests, and</p>
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		<p>Audience</p> <p>C. Identify the News Elements That Make Facts Interesting: Immediacy or Timeliness, Proximity or Nearness, Consequence or Impact, Prominence, Drama, Oddity or Unusualness, Conflict, Sex, Emotions and Instincts, Progress</p>
		<p>III. Determine What Constitutes Newsworthy Material And The Methods Which Are Used To Acquire This Material (cont.)</p> <p>D. Review News Material for Accuracy, Balance, Objectivity, Clarity, Current Relevance, and Public Interest</p> <p>E. Identify “Beats” Such as Athletic Coaches, Administrative Offices, and Activity Leaders and Stay Aware of Alternate News Sources Such as Teachers, Students, and Associations</p> <p>F. Examine the Journalist’s Responsibilities of Gathering Material Such as Understanding the Assignment, Improving Technique, Making Appointments in Advance of Deadlines, Communicating by Phone, Conducting Interviews, Taking Notes, and Recognizing Available Sources</p>
3.2/9-12	A3,4,5,6,7 B1-5,7-11 C1-8 D1,2,3,4,5,7	<p>IV. Write And Edit Articles And Create Headlines For Various Sections Of A Newspaper</p> <p>A. Write Articles, Including News, Features, Sports, Interviews, Opinions, and Special Features (Cartoons, Crosswords, Columns), Building Upon the Skills Acquired Earlier in the Semester</p> <p>B. Edit Work for Accuracy of Information, Grammatical Errors, Screening of Inappropriate Material, and Basic Copy Editing Errors, Using a Current Style Manual for Newspaper Writing</p> <p>C. Create Headlines to Match the Style of the Article</p>
8.1/9-12 9.2/9-12	B2 A3,4	<p>V. Review The Techniques Of Photojournalism</p> <p>A. Recognize What Makes a Picture Both Relevant and Appealing</p> <p>B. Consider Proper Ethics While Working with Photographs, Especially When Altering and Arranging</p> <p>C. Select and Arrange Appropriate Photos</p>
9.1/9-12 9.2/9-12	A2 A1,3,4 B3 D6	<p>VI. Examine The Methods And Purpose Of Preparing And Selling Advertising</p> <p>A. Recognize Both the Useful Functions as Well as the Problems of School Newspaper Advertising</p> <p>B. Utilize the Three Types of School Newspaper Ads: Display, Classified, and Shoppers’ Advertising</p> <p>C. Practice Methods of Designing and Selling Ads</p>
9.1/9-12	B2,5	VII. Plan Marketing Strategies For Sales And Distribution

9.2/9-12	B1,2,3	<p>A. Design a Marketing Plan/Campaign That Would Appeal to Businesses and Generate Ads as Well as Overall Interest in the Student Newspaper</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a clear and focused plan</li> <li>2. Contact businesses and community members</li> </ol>
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		<p>VII. Plan Marketing Strategies For Sales And Distribution (cont.)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Research and plan various types of fundraising events by contacting other schools, businesses, and utilizing the Internet for ideas</li> </ol>
3.2/9-12	C7	<p>VIII. Prepare And Organize Copy For Print</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Utilize Publisher and PageMaker for Format Final Copy</li> <li>B. Design Newspaper and Practice Layout Using the Techniques Taught to the Class by the Editors on the Staff of <i>The Highlander</i></li> </ol>
8.1/9-12	A5 A1,5,6 B2,3,12	

Note: The New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards can be accessed at [www.state.nj.us](http://www.state.nj.us)

## **RESOURCES/ACTIVITIES GUIDE**

### **Suggested Sample Activities**

#### Activity #1

What is ethical journalism?

Stage a mock libel trial in your classroom. Research a real libel case that was decided by a jury. Assign roles to class members. Keep the results of the real trial secret from those students who will serve on the mock jury. Compare the real and the mock jury results.

#### Activity #2

What makes a newsworthy photograph?

Using photographs from daily newspapers or magazines or from actual photographs students have taken on their own, choose five good pictures and five that are not so effective. Mount each on a sheet of paper and below each discuss its good and poor qualities. Explain how the poor pictures might have been better.

#### Activity #3

What constitutes effective advertising writing?

Select a product or service with which you are familiar and that you believe would be appropriate for an ad in *The Highlander*. List the buying motives you feel might be used in writing copy for the product or service. Then select the one motive you think would be most effective and tell why you think this is so. Discuss this assignment in class.

#### Activity #4

Internet WebQuest

In this WebQuest, students do some Internet research to learn about advertising strategies and to investigate how bias plays a role in advertising. They will answer some questions, based on their research, about techniques for creating advertisements, as well as to understand how stereotyping, as one form of bias, can be found in advertising. They will then evaluate a print advertisement by identifying the strategies used to create the message. They will also describe

elements of bias that may be included in the ad. After analyzing ads on the Internet, students will respond to the following prompts:

- 1 Identify and describe the subject of the advertisement and its purpose.
2. Identify and describe the advertising techniques used in the ad's design.

**RESOURCES/ACTIVITIES GUIDE (continued)**

3. Describe bias included in the ad, how it is demonstrated, and why the need for including bias.
4. Provide clear explanation for the believability of the advertisement.
5. Provide clear explanation for agreement or disagreement with the advertisement.

Activity #4

How to create appropriate headlines?

Using articles from daily newspapers, students will read the articles after the original headlines have been removed. Working in pairs or small groups, students will create new headlines based on the content of the article. At the completion of the activity students will compare the original headline with the one that they have written. Students will then discuss the similarities and differences of each headline and choose the one they consider to be the most effective.

Activity #5

Beat Reporting

Students will first act as reporters assigned to cover school related activities, such as sporting events, social functions, and school issues including board meetings and academics. Students will then act as photographers or illustrators matching their work to the previously written articles. In pairs or small groups, students will then peer edit and layout final copy.

## **SUGGESTED AUDIO VISUAL/COMPUTER AIDS**

### **Movies**

Absence of Malice 1981 DVD (Fictional film that explores ethical dilemmas in the world of journalism)

All the President's Men 1976 DVD (Fictional account based on Washington Post reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein and their investigation of the Watergate break in)

The Newsies 1992 DVD (Fictional account of the newspaper war between Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst and a subsequent strike organized by newsboys)

Shattered Glass 2003 DVD (Fictional account based on the true story of a journalist, Stephen Glass, who fabricated over half of his articles while working at The New Republic)

### **Documentaries**

Feeding the Beast: An Inside Look at the News Media 2003 DVD

Investigative Reports, Tabloid! Inside the New York Post 1999 VC

The Jayson Blair Story: Favoritism at The New York Times 2003 DVD

Media Ethics 2002 DVD

Newspapers 1999 VC (History Channel Modern Marvels Series)

When the Media Cheats DVD 2001

### **Informational/Career**

Journalism and Newspaper Editing 1998

Writing the News: A Basic Guide to a Career in Journalism, The Interview 1996 VC

Writing the News: A Basic Guide to a Career in Journalism, The Lead 1996 VC

Writing the News: A Basic Guide to a Career in Journalism, Writing About a Place 1996 VC

## **Websites**

American Journalism Review [Provides links to online news media, job banks, news articles, and other interesting news links.] ([www.ajr.org](http://www.ajr.org))

## **SUGGESTED AUDIO VISUAL/COMPUTER AIDS (continued)**

## **Websites (continued)**

American Society of Newspaper Editors ([www.asne.org](http://www.asne.org))

Associated Collegiate Press, National Scholastic Press Association ([www.studentpress.org](http://www.studentpress.org))

Columbia Scholastic Press Association ([www.columbia.edu/cu/cspa/](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/cspa/))

Dow Jones Newspaper Fund ([www.djnewspaperfund.dowjones.com/fund/](http://www.djnewspaperfund.dowjones.com/fund/))

The Freedom Forum [Offers the annual Al Neuharth Free Spirit Scholarship and Conference Awards to 102 students, one boy and one girl from each state and the District of Columbia who are interested in pursuing a career in journalism.] ([www.freedomforum.org](http://www.freedomforum.org))

Freedom Forum First Amendment Center ([www.fac.org](http://www.fac.org))

Garden State Scholastic Press Association ([www.gsspa.org](http://www.gsspa.org))

High School Journalism [An excellent resource site presented by the American Society of Newspaper Editors in conjunction with the ASNE High School Journalism Project funded by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. Resources for students, teachers, guidance counselors, and editors are accessible.] ([www.highschooljournalism.org](http://www.highschooljournalism.org))

Journalism Education Association ([www.jea.org](http://www.jea.org))

National Federation of Press Women ([www.nfpw.org](http://www.nfpw.org))

National Association of Black Journalists ([nabj@nahj.org](mailto:nabj@nahj.org))

National Association of Hispanic Journalists ([www.nabj.org](http://www.nabj.org))

National Institute for Computer-Assisted Reporting ([www.nicar.org](http://www.nicar.org))

National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association ([nlgja@aol.com](mailto:nlgja@aol.com))

National Association of Science Writers ([www.nasw.org](http://www.nasw.org))

National Newspaper Association ([www.nna.org](http://www.nna.org))

National Press Photographers Association ([www.nppa.org](http://www.nppa.org))

Newspaper Association of America ([www.naa.org](http://www.naa.org))

**SUGGESTED AUDIO VISUAL/COMPUTER AIDS** (continued)

**Websites** (continued)

News Papers in Education ([www.nieonline.com](http://www.nieonline.com))

The Newseum [This website is a fun and informational site for journalism teachers, advisers, and student journalists. Newseum is the only interactive museum of news that engages participants in decision-making and provides an insider's view of today's press and its issues.] ([www.newseum.org](http://www.newseum.org))

On the Media [A weekly news show that provides excellent commentary on media coverage both in the United States and throughout the world] ([www.npr.org](http://www.npr.org))

The Poynter Institute [Provides news articles, commentary, seminar information, a high school journalism guide, and "everything you need to be a better journalist."] ([www.poynter.org](http://www.poynter.org))

Quill and Scroll [International Honor Society for student journalists, provides useful links and publications] ([www.uiowa.edu/~quill-sc/](http://www.uiowa.edu/~quill-sc/))

Society of Professional Journalists ([www.spj.org](http://www.spj.org))

Student Press Law Center [Members include student journalists, advisers, and media professionals. Publication: *Student Press Law Center Report*; *Law of the Student Press* and others. This is an excellent site that offers free advice and opinions on any law media topics. Students are encouraged to visit this site with questions and concerns regarding freedom of speech, censorship, and any issues related to their school publication. Awards and internships are available] ([www.splc.org](http://www.splc.org))

Teach the First Amendment ([www.teachfirstamendment.org](http://www.teachfirstamendment.org))

Women's eNews ([www.womensenews.org](http://www.womensenews.org))

## **SUGGESTED MATERIALS**

### **Resources for Students:**

Rolnicki, Tom, et al., eds. Scholastic Journalism. 10<sup>th</sup> ed. Ames, Iowa: Iowa State UP, 2001.

Smith, Helen. The Official CSPA. 20<sup>th</sup> ed. New York, NY: Columbia Scholastic Press, 1996.

Vahl, Rod. Let's Go for Great Photos. 1991.

The Star Ledger (Free copies of The Star Ledger may be ordered for classroom use through the paper's Newspapers in Education Program by calling 973-392-5841.

### **Resources for Teacher:**

Greenman, Robert. The Adviser's Companion. New York, NY: Columbia Scholastic Press 1991.

Hall, Homer L. High School Journalism. New York, NY: Rosen Publishing, 2003.

Harwood, William N., and John C. Hudnall. Writing & Editing School News. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Logan, La: Perfection Learning, 2000.

Jamieson, Kathleen Hall, and Paul Waldman. The Press Effect. New York, NY: Oxford UP, 2003.

Knopes, Carol, ed. Death by Cheeseburger: High School Journalism in the 1990's and Beyond. Arlington, Va: Freedom Forum Press, 1994.

Osborn, Patricia. School Newspaper Adviser's Survival Guide. West Nyack, NY, 1998.

Rolnicki, Tom, et al., eds. Scholastic Journalism. 10<sup>th</sup> ed. Ames, Iowa: Iowa State UP, 2001.

Smith, Helen. The Official CSPA 20<sup>th</sup> ed. New York, NY: Columbia Scholastic Press, 1996.

## **APPENDIX**

## WRITING EFFECTIVE FEATURE LEADS

It is one thing to learn how to write a summary lead focusing on the key elements of the news story, (which we did last week) but it may be even more challenging to compose feature leads which pique the curiosity of the reader, making her or him want to continue reading the article.

The feature lead is also called the unconventional, unorthodox or novelty lead. There are many types of feature leads that lend variety to the writing of an article. Some of the approaches that can be taken are:

1. **Striking Statement Lead** – This lead starts the story off with a sharp attention-getting statement.
2. **Contrast Lead** – This lead begins the article by pointing out opposites in the story.
3. **Question Lead** – This lead poses a thought-provoking, but not phony, question. The question should not require simple yes or no answers, rather it should make the reader want to read the article to learn the answer.
4. **Quotation Lead** – A very effective technique, using a direct quotation can be used to start either a news or feature story.
5. **Historical or Literary Allusion Lead** – Sometimes a feature story, particularly one tied into a holiday, works well with an historical theme or literary one.

These are just a few of the different approaches that can be taken. It is important to stress that while the feature lead might be wordier, it is more creative than the summary lead.

(if we have copies of *The Star-Ledger* today, we will look for examples.)

### **One Example:**

#### **Historical Lead**

“For more than 200 years the heart of America’s military strength has rested with its citizen soldiers who volunteer time and skill to reserve forces such as New Jersey’s own 78<sup>th</sup> Infantry (Jersey Lightning) Division USAR, which is headquartered at Camp Kilmer and has its training brigades scattered statewide.”

**What follows is a list of 50 feature article ideas. Choose 5 of the following feature story ideas and write an interesting feature lead, employing several of the styles listed above. Your feature lead may be longer than the news leads that you wrote, though no longer than approximately 50 words. One of the leads you write will become the summary lead for a feature story. Writing the feature story will be our next activity.**

1. Rivalries – spirited or silly
2. Pressure of school athletics
3. Being a twin
4. Shoplifting – petty crimes
5. Class projects
6. Ever wonder why...
7. Employability
8. Beating the system
9. Gambling
10. School food
11. Is there life after dark (in your town)?
12. Teen drivers – the good and bad of it
13. Hanging out
14. Graffiti
15. Visit to an abortion clinic
16. Stereotyping
17. Teachers’ “other lives”
18. Junk food
19. Overcoming obstacles – student with disabilities
20. A popular new game or fad
21. Crime on campus
22. Where have all the heroes gone?
23. Interesting cars in the parking lot
24. A local hero
25. A special pet
26. Horror stories on the job
27. Traffic court
28. Making the weight as athletes
29. Out-of-way sites, such as air raid shelter, in high school
30. How town and school got their names
31. How mascot was chosen, yearbook named, etc.
32. Test anxiety
33. School nurse – anecdotes, stats, quotes
34. Story behind press releases
35. Community plays/student participation
36. Lost and found bin
37. Vegetarianism
38. Trials of a cigarette smoker
39. Personal experience
40. Students’ rights – do kids have more now
41. Volunteering
42. In locus parentus – the school as parent
43. Dress codes
44. Juvenile court system
45. Student knowledge
46. Dropping out – what happens next
47. Is a bigger or smaller school better
48. Do kids really believe they’re invincible
49. An out of the ordinary sport
50. A behind the scenes look at anything intriguing



## RUBRIC FOR LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Name \_\_\_\_\_

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>POINTS</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Problem Presented (25 points)		
Realistic Solution Presented and Explained (25 points)		
Elements of persuasion utilized in a succinct and to the point style (25 points)		
Grammatically Correct/Follows proper format/Does not exceed 200 words (25 points)		

Total Points -    /100

## RUBRIC FOR EDITORIAL

Name \_\_\_\_\_

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>POINTS</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Problem Explained (25 points)		
Explanation expanded and realistic solution presented and explained (25 points)		
Persuasive elements utilized, such as logical and emotional appeals, and acknowledgment and refutation of opposing view points (25 points)		
Language, grammar, and punctuation are appropriate and correct (25 points)		

Total Points – /100

## RUBRIC FOR FEATURE ARTICLE

Name \_\_\_\_\_

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>POINTS</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Lead includes one of the five elements of effective feature leads: striking statement, contrast, question, quotation, historical fact, literary allusion (25 points)		
Article is one of the following types: human interest, personality feature, news feature, sports feature, special feature (25 points)		
Writing is clear, concise, to the point, and specifically related to a particular type of feature article (25 points)		
Grammar and punctuation are correct (25 points)		

Points – /100

## RUBRIC FOR NEWS ARTICLE

Name \_\_\_\_\_

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>POINTS</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Summary Lead uses those 5 W's and H that apply (25 points)		
Article is written in the inverted pyramid style (25 points)		
Writing is clear, concise, to the point (25 points)		
Grammar and punctuation are correct (25 points)		

Points - /100

## MOVIE REVIEW RUBRIC

Name \_\_\_\_\_

<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>25 POINTS</b>	<b>15 POINTS</b>	<b>10 POINTS</b>	<b>5 POINTS</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Review title and introductory paragraph	Both are eye catching; the intro names the movie, provides a brief overview of the plot and names the actors and the characters they play.	One is eye-catching; the intro names the movie, provides a brief overview of the plot and is developed.	Title is not eye-catching, and the intro names the movie, but may not be eye-catching or fully formed with complex sentences. Also, it may or may not contain a brief overview of the plot and characters.	No title, and the introduction is lacking in two or more of the established criteria.	
Body paragraphs	At least two coherent paragraphs that contain negative or positive commentary on two aspects of the movie, such as plot, acting, direction, and cinematography.	At least two coherent paragraphs that contain the negative or positive commentary on at least one aspect of the movie, such as plot, acting, direction, or cinematography	Paragraph(s) contain(s) necessary information but is/are incoherent.	Paragraph is lacking in information and coherency.	
Concluding paragraphs	Conclusion ends on a strong note, with an overall rating and a recommendation for viewing to others.	Conclusion is satisfactory, but is lacking in one of the established criteria.	A conclusion is present but it is weak, lacking in two or more of the established criteria.	No conclusion is present.	
Grammar, punctuation, spelling, and presentation	Grammar, punctuation, and spelling are correct. Paper is typed.	There is one error in these areas, and paper is typed.	There are two or three errors in these areas, and paper is not typed.	There are four or more errors in these areas, paper is not typed.	

## MUSIC REVIEW RUBRIC

Name \_\_\_\_\_

<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>25 POINTS</b>	<b>15 POINTS</b>	<b>10 POINTS</b>	<b>5 POINTS</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Review title and introductory paragraph	Both are eye-catching; the intro names the CD, provides a brief overview of the music and background of the artist, and <u>fully</u> developed.	One is eye-catching; the intro names the CD, provides a brief overview of the songs and is developed.	Title is not eye-catching, and the intro names the CD, but may not be eye-catching or fully formed with complex sentences. It may or may not contain a brief overview of the songs.	No title, and the introduction is lacking in two or more of the established criteria.	
Body paragraphs	At least two coherent paragraphs that contain negative or positive commentary on two aspects of the CD such as lyrics, melody, style, and vocals.	At least two coherent paragraphs that contain the negative or positive commentary on at least one aspect of the CD such as lyrics, melody, style, or vocals.	Paragraph(s) contain(s) necessary information but is/are incoherent.	Paragraph is lacking in information and coherency.	
Concluding paragraphs	Conclusion ends on a strong note, with an overall rating and a recommendation for listening to others.	Conclusion is satisfactory, but is lacking in one of the established criteria.	A conclusion is present but it is weak, lacking in two or more of the established criteria.	No conclusion is present.	
Grammar, punctuation, spelling, and presentation	Grammar, punctuation, and spelling are correct. Paper is typed.	There is one error in these areas, and paper is typed.	There are two or three errors in these areas, and paper is not typed.	There are four or more errors in these areas, paper is not typed.	

## RUBRIC FOR PRINT ADVERTISEMENT

Name \_\_\_\_\_

<b>HEADLINE</b>	<b>BODY COPY</b>	<b>LOGO</b>	<b>SLOGAN</b>	<b>SIZE</b>	<b>ORIGINALITY</b>	<b>POINTS</b>
Contains an eye-catching headline.	Provides complete information about the product.	Clever, identifiable logo.	Thoughtful, catchy, memorable, and original slogan.	All elements of ad appropriately sized and arranged in an engaging manner.	New ad exhibits a clever slogan and shows obvious thought and creativity.	4
Contains a headline.	Contains some information about the product.	Logo is similar to another source.	Slogan exists but is not catchy or memorable.	Most elements appropriately sized and arranged in an engaging manner.	Clever development of a new ad that does not spin off an ad for a similar product.	3
Headline hard to find.	Unclear information about product.	Logo is taken from another source.	Slogan is trite or unoriginal.	Some elements are appropriately sized, though most are jumbled and all over the place.	Ad shows some creativity but evidence of innovative design is essentially ignored.	2
No headline.	No body copy.	No logo.	Slogan too close to another ad.	Dimensions of ad are ignored, with little or no effort to arrange in an engaging manner.	Ad shows little thought or effort and looks like a minimal amount of time was spent on its creation.	1

Score \_\_\_\_\_/24

**RUBRIC FOR ATHLETE INTERVIEW**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>NA</b>
1. Athlete’s name, year, sport.			
2. Quotes included from athlete.			
3. How many sports does athlete play?			
4. Personal analysis of ability, team, coach.			
5. There is a short, interesting lead.			
6. Life of athlete outside of school is included.			
7. Journalistic style, grammar, and spelling mistakes corrected.			
8. Paragraphs are short.			
9. No “is” few “was”.			
<b>Total Score</b> /9 %			

## WRITING CHECKLIST FOR EDITORIAL

Name \_\_\_\_\_

	Personal Evaluation				Teacher Evaluation		
	Y	N	NA		Y	N	NA
A. The problem is stated in the beginning of the editorial.							
B. The lead is to the point.							
C. The lead is brief.							
D. The editorial is written in a logical fashion.							
E. Does the lead merge smoothly with the first paragraph of the body?							
F. Three sets of statistics or documented facts are included.							
G. Proper attribution is stated.							
H. A solution is included.							
I. The tone of the editorial is not whining or sarcastic.							
J. There is an introduction and a conclusion.							
K. The editorial is approximately 300 words long.							
L. The editorial sticks to the topic and doesn't introduce extraneous details.							
M. The opposition has been considered and refuted.							
N. I have corrected all misspelled words or grammatical errors.							
O. Sentences are short and clear.							
P. The word "is" is eliminated.							
Q. Works cited page is included.							
<b>Final Score</b> _____							

**MOVIE REVIEW CHECKLIST**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

	Personal Evaluation				Teacher Evaluation		
	Y	N	NA		Y	N	NA
A. Is the lead short?							
B. Are the title, author (producer/director), and genre included within the first several paragraphs?							
C. The plot is briefly summarized without giving away the ending.							
D. Pros and cons are explained in significant detail.							
E. Background information about the stars and director are included.							
F. Where appropriate, there is discussion of acting, plot development, musical score, special effects, etc.							
G. There is evidence of a theme carried out.							
H. There is an introduction and a conclusion.							
I. Awards and/or nominations the movie actors won are mentioned.							
J. Paragraphs are short.							
K. Sentence structure is uncomplicated.							
L. The vocabulary is simple and specific.							
M. I have corrected all misspelled words and grammatical errors.							
N. Complete names of actors and their roles are included.							
O. There is no <b>is</b> .							
<b>Final Score</b> _____ /15							

## RESTAURANT REVIEW CHECKLIST

Name \_\_\_\_\_

	Personal Evaluation				Teacher Evaluation		
	Y	N	NA		Y	N	NA
A. Is the article written in order of decreasing importance?							
B. Does the lead explain the purpose of the article?							
C. Has the setting of the restaurant been fully described?							
D. Has the service been discussed?							
E. Have prices been mentioned?							
F. Is a receipt attached?							
G. Has what was ordered been described and critiqued?							
H. Has the name of the restaurant and its location been mentioned?							
I. Are the paragraphs short?							
J. Are unnecessary details eliminated?							
K. Have I corrected all misspelled words and/or grammatical errors?							
L. Is there a lead?							
M. Are sentences short and clear?							
N. Have I eliminated <b>is</b> and most uses of <b>was</b> ?							
<b>Final Score</b>							

**NEWS WRITING CHECKLIST FOR FACULTY INTERVIEW**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

	Personal Evaluation				Teacher Evaluation		
	Y	N	NA		Y	N	NA
A. Is the <b>lead</b> short and interesting?							
B. Are all essential 5 W's and H included in either paragraph 1 or 2 of a direct lead?							
C. Does the lead merge smoothly with the first paragraph of the body?							
D. Do all paragraphs follow one another in logical order using transitions or connecting links?							
E. Are the <b>paragraphs</b> short?							
F. Do I create a life for my subject outside of school?							
G. Is the writing objective?							
H. Have I interviewed one other adult? (first & last name)							
I. Have I interviewed two students? (first & last names, year)							
J. Have I obtained direct quotes and worked them into the body of the article?							
K. Have I kept myself out of the article and not used "I"?							
L. Is the vocabulary simple and specific?							
M. Have I corrected all misspelled words or grammatical errors?							
N. Are sentences short and clear?							
O. Has the verb <b>is</b> been eliminated?							
<b>Final Score</b> _____							