

THE NEWSPAPER

# Using the Newspaper to Meet Language Arts Standards

Written by Jennifer Wirthwein  
School District of Washington, Missouri



*Missouri*  
NEWSPAPERS in EDUCATION

# NEWS

## Table of Contents

	Page #
Introduction	1
Reading Standards	2
Writing Standards	10
Speaking, Listening, and Collaboration Standards	18
Language Based Standards	23

# NEWSPAPERS AS TOOLS FOR LEARNING

Newspapers are a valuable classroom tool. For years, teachers have been utilizing newspapers across the curriculum to meet learning standards. With the educational focus shifting to using nonfiction sources in the classroom, the newspaper is more valuable than ever.

Recent language arts standards require students to read and respond to literature across all content areas, especially nonfiction text. Newspapers are a timely, relevant and affordable source of nonfiction text that allows teachers to meet their classroom goals and students to master the skills. The activities found in this guide enforce reading and writing standards across the curriculum, addressing science and social studies topics.

Many newspaper companies provide classroom copies at little or no cost to schools. Your community newspaper also may have other resources available for educators and students. Contact the publisher or editor at your community newspaper to request classroom copies for use with this guide.

©Copyright 2014 Missouri Press Association and Foundation, 802 Locust, Columbia, MO 65201.  
This guide may be reproduced for educational purposes with credit given to the Missouri Press Association and Foundation.

## Making Inferences and Drawing Conclusions

Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

**Learning Standard:** *I can read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.*

**Activity One:** Students will read part of a teacher selected editorial and make an inference about the author's opinion. Students will write their inference at the top of a t-chart (labeled fact and opinion), listing facts and opinions from the editorial to support their inference.

**Activity Two:** **Heralding Headlines:** Headlines are not only designed to attract attention, they are designed to summarize key elements of the news article. Skim the newspaper and find an interesting headline. After reading the headline only, write three predictions about the article. Read the article, revise your predictions, and list five important details you learned. Next, write a new headline for the article. Finally, trade stories with a partner and decide which headline is better.



**Activity Three:** Read an article in the newspaper and identify the problem (ex: fire, accident, etc.). Write an explanation of the problem, making inferences about what may have caused the problem. Use supporting details to support your inferences.



## Supporting Details

**Learning Standard:** *I can read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.*

**Activity One:** Choose one story from each section of the newspaper. Identify the theme of each story. As a class, compare the various themes found in each section of the paper, as well as specific details that develop the theme.

**Activity Two:** Choose three news stories with various moods. Identify the mood of each story and list the details from the story that contribute to the mood.

**Activity Three:** Locate a news story or an editorial that has the same topic as an editorial cartoon. Compare and contrast how the theme is portrayed in the writing and the illustration. What supporting details does the author use to develop the theme? How does the illustrator portray the theme in the editorial cartoon? What is the mood of the writing versus the mood of the cartoon?

## Character Traits and Interactions

**Learning Standard:** *I can analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.*

**Activity One:** Students will choose a person featured in a news story to evaluate for character traits. Students will describe the featured person in a character chart. They will draw an outline of the person, write the person's name in the head, write an inference about the personality in the body, and details that support the inference in the arms and legs.



**Activity Two:** Use a story in the newspaper to create a timeline. Your timeline should be in sequential order with at least five to 10 entries. Choose or create illustrations that support the key events of your timeline.

## Cause and Effect

**Learning Standard:** *I can identify cause and effect.*

**Activity One:** Review cause and effect situations. Explain that cause is why something happens and effect is what actually happens. Analyze cause and effect relationships in a news article. Cut several 1-inch paper strips. Write the cause on one strip and paste the ends together. Write the effect on another strip, interlock, and attach.



## Interpreting Unknown Words and Phrases

**Learning Standard:** *I can interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.*

**Activity One:** Choose important unknown words from a news story. Read each word to the class and invite the students to say the first word that pops into their head. Write the words on the board and discuss the meaning of each word. Circle the synonym. Discuss how synonyms cannot always be used interchangeably. Sometimes, a synonym can alter the intended meaning. Next, students will choose a newspaper article to rewrite, using a thesaurus to replace 10 words. The new words must be interesting, and should not change the meaning of the article.



**Activity Two:** Sportswriters have to think of many different ways to write “win” and “lose.” Brainstorm a list of synonyms for win and lose. Look through the newspaper to find other examples to add to your list. Next, look at sports headlines. A clever headline writer can match a headline verb to the name of a sports team. For example, “Sonics Outshine Suns in Playoffs.” Find several sports headlines and come up with new verbs.

**Activity Three:** As a class, talk about your area’s dialect. Have students look for examples of local dialect in the newspaper. Tell them to pay special attention to local news stories and advertisements. As a class, discuss examples that were found.

## Parts of a Text

**Learning Standard:** *I can analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.*

**Activity One:** Help students identify the parts of the newspaper such as headline, cutline, byline, lead paragraph, etc. Locate the text elements in the newspaper.

**Activity Two:** Compare the newspaper's index to a table of contents. Use the newspaper index to find a story of interest.

**Activity Three:** Study the format of the classified ads. Notice how items are divided into sections: for sale, real estate, furniture, cars, pets, etc.

## Author's Purpose/Point of View

**Learning Standard:** *I can assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.*

**Activity One:** Feature stories are based on facts, but often include details that add emotional appeal. Ask students to read a pre-selected feature story in the newspaper and make a list of emotions they feel while reading the story.

**Activity Two:** Writers write for three main purposes: to persuade, inform, or entertain. You can find examples of all three types of writing in the newspaper. Find an example of each type of writing. State the author's purpose (persuade, perform, or entertain). Describe the clues you used to determine author's purpose.

**Activity Three:** Locate the Letters to the Editor in your newspaper. Choose a letter that interests you. What is the issue presented? What is the writer's perspective? People are often influenced by groups, clubs, or organizations to which they belong. Think of



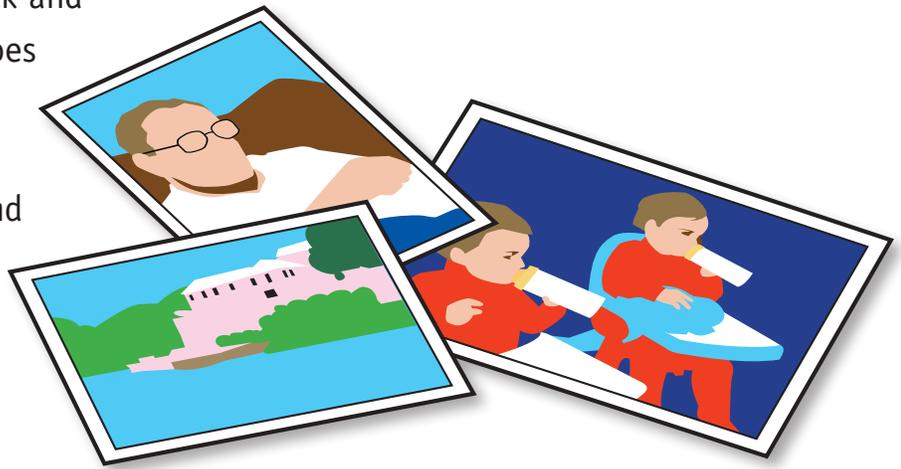
a group or organization that would strongly agree or disagree with the letter written. Imagine you are a member of that group and write a response.

## Author's Presentation

**Learning Standard:** *I can integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.*

**Activity One:** Newspapers must have an enticing layout and meet space constraints. Choose a page of the newspaper to evaluate. Measure the square area of text, advertisements, and photographs. Place the measurements from least to greatest. Which area was given the most space? Why do you think this layout was chosen?

**Activity Two:** Instruct students to cut out three examples of color photographs from the newspaper and three examples of black and white photos. As a class, discuss the use of color versus the use of black and white. What does color lend to a picture that is not in black and white, and vice versa?

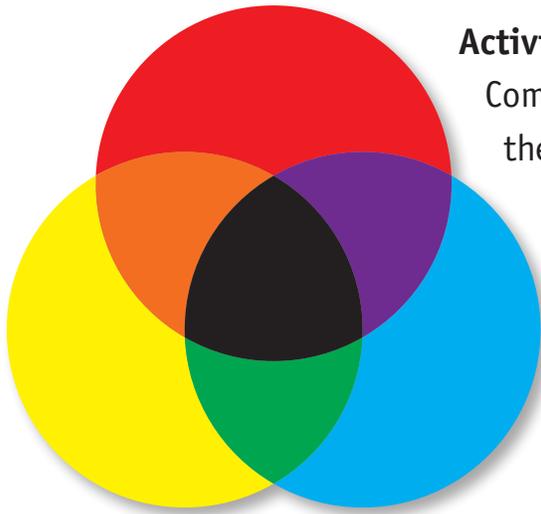


**Activity Three:** Editorial cartoons are a powerful medium for expressing ideas. Find an editorial cartoon in your newspaper. Who is the intended audience? What is the message? What is the theme or tone of the cartoon? What symbolism is being used? Has the author chosen an effective way to present the idea? What would you do differently?

## Supporting an Idea or Claim

**Learning Standard:** *I can evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.*

**Activity One:** Look through various items that are for sale in the Classifieds. Choose an item that you would like to have. Write a paragraph persuading your parents to buy the item for you. Make sure you support your claim with three or more supporting details and a concluding sentence.



**Activity Two:** Find an advice column in the newspaper. Compare the problem-solving strategies of the author with the strategies you could choose to use. Create a Venn diagram to display your answer.

**Activity Three:** Five main factors determine if an event is newsworthy: timeliness, closeness, significance, prominence, and human interest. Evaluate the articles on your newspaper's front page and determine which of the five categories they fulfill.

## Compare and Contrast

**Learning Standard:** *I can analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.*

**Activity One:** Locate and read several newspaper headlines. Discuss how the headlines sum up the article while catching the reader's interest. Compare headlines to story titles. Next, ask students to write a headline for a familiar fairy tale. Share the headlines with classmates, and have them guess the fairy tale.

**Activity Two:** Compare and contrast the coverage of the same story or event in your local newspaper to a big city newspaper. Think about: headline, location of the article, space used, pictures, details, quotes. Create a Venn diagram to record your results.

**Activity Three:** As a class, choose an editorial or Letter to the Editor to read, identifying fact, opinion, and author's viewpoint. Students will also use research to verify any facts and statistics used in the story. Students will then write a response, either supporting or questioning the information in the original editorial or letter. Students will compare their letters to the letters of their classmates, comparing the different approach each person took in their response to the same issue.



## Reading Fluency

**Learning Standard:** *I can read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.*

**Activity One:** Identify and explain the message conveyed in a news story by sharing your thoughts. Read the story aloud. Pause occasionally to take turns sharing what you are thinking with others. Your thoughts can be in the form of a question, comment, or feeling about what is being read. Make a conclusion about the intended message.



**Activity Two:** Students will independently read a news story and summarize using the who, what, when, where, why, and how method. Next, students will find a partner to role play. One student will be the main character in the news story, the other will be a reporter. The reporter must interview the character and take notes. When finished, the reporter will read the news story and verify the character's information.

**Activity Three:** Students review the Help Wanted section in the Classified ads and employee characteristics. They draw conclusions about why those characteristics are most important to employers. They choose the job they're most suited for and write a short essay explaining why.

## Supporting a Claim

**Learning Standard:** *I can write arguments to support claims in an analysis of topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant, sufficient evidence.*

**Activity One:** Ask students to create a newspaper ad promoting one of the 13 colonies. Each ad should persuade others to come live in the selected colony and must include information about the quality of life, work opportunities, and geographical features there. You can adapt this activity to the study of the westward expansion or learning about the 50 states.



**Activity Two:** There are various social, economic, and environmental issues that can be overcome by the use of science and technology. Use the newspaper to locate an example of a problem that can be overcome by the use of science and/or technology. Explain the solution and how society affected the need and development of science.

**Activity Three:** Government officials have the restrictions and limitations on the use of their power. Find a news article that demonstrates a limitation on a government official's power. Why was the limitation enforced? Was it effective?

## Informational/Explanatory Writing

**Learning Standard:** *I can write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.*

**Activity One:** Use the newspaper to locate pictures of groups and organizations that help meet people's needs. Cut and paste the

pictures on a piece of paper. Write an explanation that explains how each group or organization meets the needs of people.



**Activity Two:** Instruct students to write newspaper headlines that might have appeared during a period of history you are studying in class. Extend the activity by having them write newspaper-style stories about specific historical events.

**Activity Three:** The Bill of Rights offers us many rights and freedoms. Review and list the freedoms contained in Amendments 1, 4, 5, 6, and 8. Collect newspaper articles that are related to the rights and freedoms guaranteed in those amendments. Discuss why having these freedoms is important to you.

## Narrative Writing

**Learning Standard:** *I can write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.*

**Activity One:** Who wants to be a millionaire? Students will pretend that they have just inherited \$1 million. Instruct them to use the newspaper to look for items they could buy with their newfound wealth. They can keep track of their purchases by writing down the items and how much they cost. When their \$1 million is spent, have them write a report on what it was like to be a millionaire for a day.



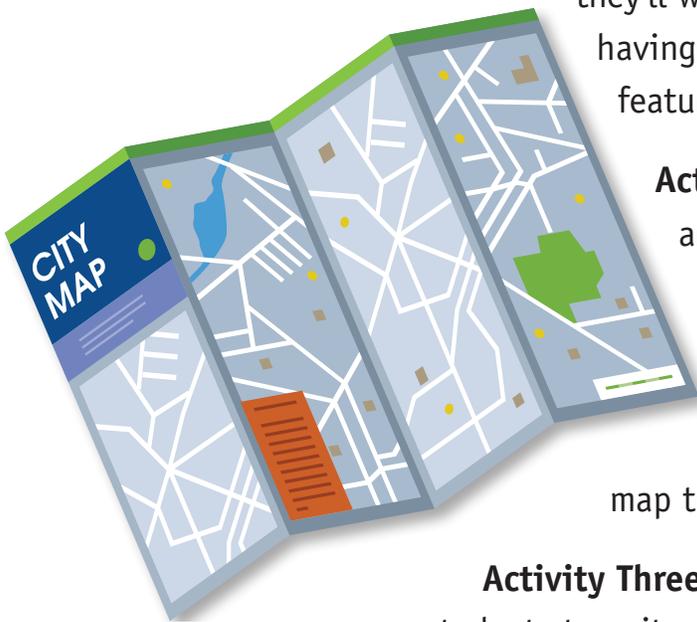
**Activity Two:** New technology continuously changes the way we do things. Locate a picture of an invention that has affected or changed your life in some way. Write about how the invention has changed your life.

**Activity Three:** As a class, watch a newly released video. Afterward, have each student write a newspaper-style review of the movie. Discuss the differences and similarities in their opinions of the movie. Extend the activity by creating a list of things they liked and disliked about the movie and discussing the criteria used in the evaluation process.

## Writing for a Specific Audience/Purpose

**Learning Standard:** *I can produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.*

**Activity One:** When students are assigned book reports, allow them to write a newspaper-style review instead. Students should study examples of book and movie reviews in the newspaper. If they liked the book, they should try to persuade others to read it. If not they'll want to explain why. Extend the activity by having students write their reports as a news story, feature story, editorial, or other type of writing.



**Activity Two:** Maps are very helpful tools and are often found in newspapers. Skim your newspaper and find an article that you think would be improved with the addition of a map. Design a map that you think should accompany the article and present your map to your classmates.

**Activity Three:** When working on letter writing, ask students to write a personal letter, a business letter, a letter to the editor, a postcard, and an email message about one topic featured in the newspaper. Students can also write thank-you notes, sympathy messages, invitations, and other personal correspondence based on topics in the newspaper.

## The Writing Process

**Learning Standard:** *I can develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.*

**Activity One:** Ask students to clip a photograph from the newspaper without clipping the caption that goes with it. Then, ask them to exchange photos with a partner and write down what they think is happening in the picture they're given. Afterward, they can compare their thoughts with the actual captions and draw conclusions about the "stories" that photographs tell.

**Activity Two:** Have students discuss a school or community problem. Then have them break off into small groups to conduct research about the problem and ways to solve it. Encourage them to use the newspaper, the internet, and a variety of other resources. After they analyze and evaluate the information, ask each student to write an editorial that reflects his opinion about the issue.

**Activity Three:** Students will critique a variety of newspaper ads for message and impact. Next, they will revise one of the ads to appeal to people in a certain age group (teens, senior citizens, etc.)



## Publish Your Writing

**Learning Standard:** *I can use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.*

**Activity One:** Instruct students to prepare a list of newspaper reporter’s questions they could ask to find out more about a specific place—a city, a region, or a country—featured in the newspaper. Have students trade questions with a partner and use the Internet and other resources to find answers to the questions they’re given. They will conclude the activity by writing a short, descriptive report based on their research.

**Activity Two:** Editorials are an effective way for people to express their opinions and share their message with the community. Browse your paper to find editorial letters, columns, and cartoons. Choose an issue in your school or community that is important to you and create an editorial to submit to your local newspaper. Remember, in order to convince others, you should include facts and research, as well as your personal opinion.



**Activity Three:** An area’s weather is greatly influenced by its geographical features. Students will research local geographical features and how they affect the weather. Then, each day for a week, students will compare their findings to the weather report in the newspaper. Students will discuss their conclusions.

## Research Based Writing

**Learning Standard:** *I can conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.*

**Activity One:** Over a period of weeks, have students “follow” a local sports team through the newspaper. Ask them to mark on a map the places the team travels for games and figure the distance

traveled for each trip. Extend the activity by having them use their data to create a thematic map or graph detailing the teams' travels.

**Activity Two:**

When you think of scientists, do you think of men and women? Do you envision people of various races? Technological advances have been made by a diverse group of people. Use the newspaper to evaluate how an informative article is written. Next, write an article about a scientist you have studied that has made contributions with his or her scientific advances.



**Activity Three:**

Ask students to find a major story in the day's newspaper. Have them analyze its historical significance by identifying events from the past that are directly related. Encourage further research, and ask them to document their findings by creating a timeline of important events.

## Credible Sources

**Learning Standard:** *I can gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.*

**Activity One:**

Some of the top news stories in recent years have involved science-related topics, such as the weather, natural disasters, health and medicine, and space exploration. Ask students to find a science-related story about one of these topics. Have them identify the five Ws—who, what, when, where, and why. Then have them explain the “how” in writing. Additional resources may be used for research.



**Activity Two:** Reporters are responsible for background research and interviews to develop a well-written article. Imagine you have the chance to interview any person in history (living or deceased). What questions would you ask? Complete a mock interview and the necessary research and write a news article about your historical person. Be sure to include quotes in your article!

**Activity Three:** In order to be taken seriously, journalists need credible sources for their information. Choose a newspaper article to evaluate. Are the sources used tertiary, secondary, or primary? Do you feel the sources are credible? Why? ?

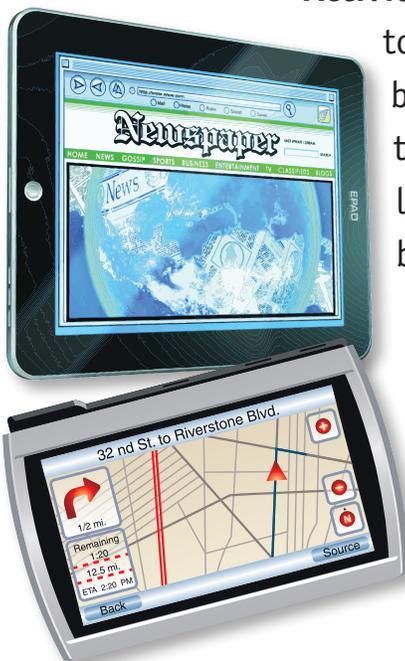
## Using Evidence to Support Writing

**Learning Standard:** *I can draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.*

**Activity One:** Artifacts help us learn about our history. Locate a picture of something in the newspaper that could someday be used as an artifact. Paste the picture on a piece of paper and write about what the future scientists could learn from the artifact.

**Activity Two:** With students working in small groups, ask them to find a newspaper story about cooperation or conflict between two countries. Have them draw conclusions about the regional differences or similarities (religion, resources, language, political beliefs) that might lead to cooperation or conflict.

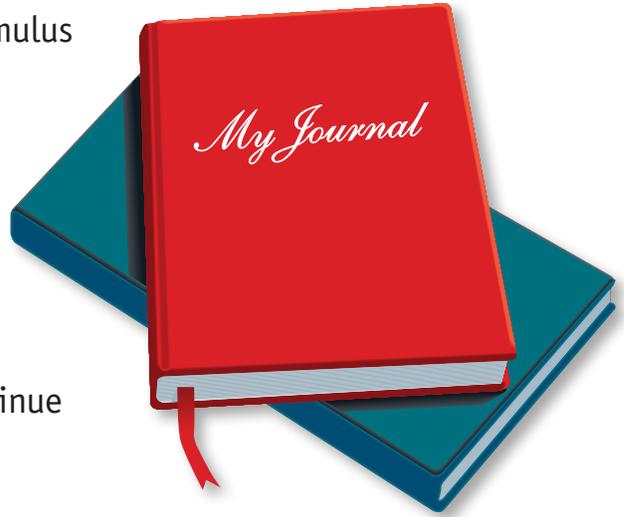
**Activity Three:** Instruct students to create newspaper employment ads for jobs that existed during specific periods in America's past. Ask them to identify the skills needed, educational requirements, salary range, and benefits that reflect the appropriate time period.



## Writing Fluency

**Learning Standard:** *I can write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.*

**Activity One:** Cut out several pictures from the newspaper without reading the captions. Place the pictures in a bag and without looking, pick your mystery picture from the bag. That's your stimulus for writing. Construct a graphic organizer to identify the 5Ws (who, what, when, where, and why) of your story by looking at your picture. Then, continue the writing process.



**Activity Two:** Have students create diaries or journals while studying events in history. They can pretend to have lived during a specific time or, based on other sources, interpret how someone else might have felt. Discuss the value of written records such as "The Diary of Anne Frank," and how they help us understand the context of historical events. Students will be creating diaries or journals as they follow presentday issues in the newspaper.

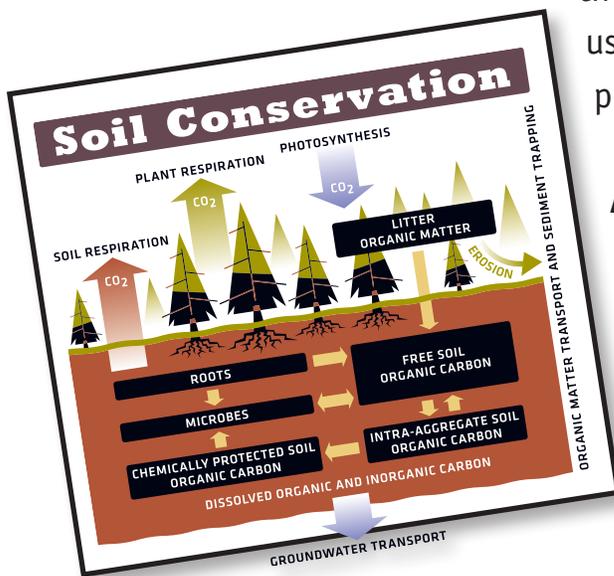
**Activity Three:** Creative minds are often thinking of ways to improve our lifestyle. Think of all the technological advances in the past year, 5 years, and 10 years. Use the newspaper to locate a new technology item. Maybe you will see this in an advertisement or a news article. Write your prediction for how this item will improve your future.

## USING THE NEWSPAPER FOR SPEAKING, LISTENING, AND COLLABORATION

### Working Together

**Learning Standard:** *I can prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.*

**Activity One:** Students will work in cooperative groups to make a commercial using an ad from the newspaper. Each group will choose an ad to rehearse. They will videotape themselves promoting a product, using inflection, facial expressions, props, etc.



**Activity Two:** Students will work in groups to find newspaper stories about shortages and surpluses of natural resources. Following discussion, students will write down their thoughts about how such shortages and surpluses occur and how they affect the economy.

**Activity Three:** Ask students to find a newspaper story about a government using its power to maintain order and stability. During discussion, have students evaluate the results of the government's action and whether those results were intended. Inquire about how the government might have acted differently.

### Presenting Ideas

**Learning Standard:** *I can integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.*

**Activity One:** Students will listen to a news story read by the teacher. They will then discuss the characters, setting, and important events of the news story. Finally, they will retell the story by working in cooperative groups to retell the story by acting out important events.

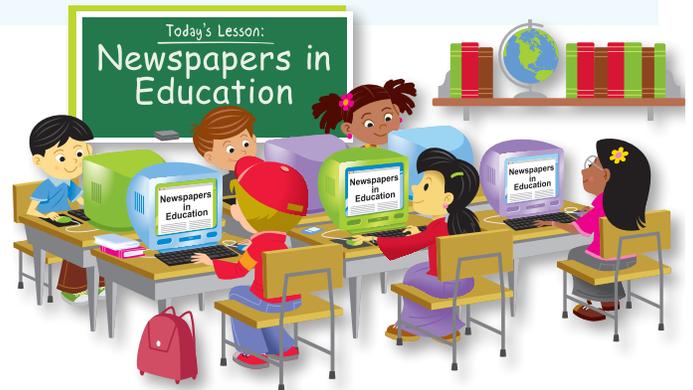
**Activity Two:** Students will read an editorial aloud and will poll their classmates and create a bar graph of those who agree and disagree with the author.

**Activity Three:** Have students collect stories and pictures illustrating different methods used by American citizens to express their opposition to government policy. Discuss whether each method is an exercise of a citizen's right to dissent. To extend the activity, have students research the right to dissent and explain in writing why that right was important to early Americans.

## Evaluating Reasoning

**Learning Standard:** *I can evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.*

**Activity One:** As a class, discuss the difference between fact and opinion. Explain that editorials have both fact and opinions. Choose an editorial to read aloud. After a couple of paragraphs, make an inference about the author's opinion. Locate facts from the editorial to support this.



**Activity Two:** Who am I? Riddles: Students will fold a piece of paper in half. On the outside flap, they write a riddle about a character of a newspaper story. They paste the article on the inside, and share their riddles with their classmates.

**Activity Three:** Instruct students to find a newspaper story about an individual who is trying to change society. Ask each to determine how the individual is going about his or her efforts and whether those efforts are effective. Conclude by having them prepare a list of reporter’s questions they would like to ask the person if given the opportunity.

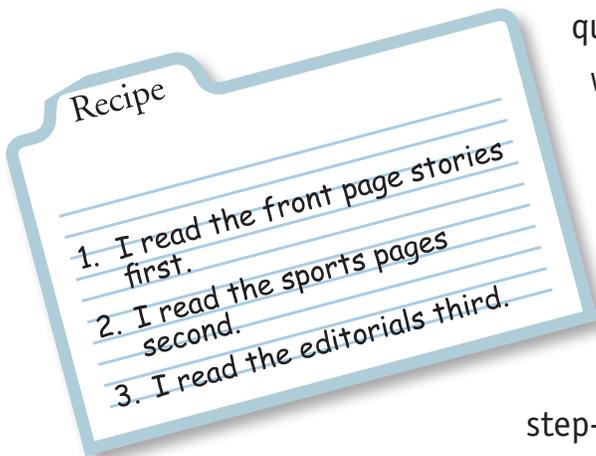
## Audience and Purpose

**Learning Standard:** *I can present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.*

**Activity One:** As students read a news story, use the “Think Aloud” strategy, letting them tell what they are thinking or ask questions. I wonder if I... I can’t believe... What would have happened if... Allow them to share or stop to ask for “Think Alouds.”

**Activity Two:** Recipe for Reading the Newspaper: Think about what you do when you read a newspaper. What do you do first? Second? Write a recipe for reading the newspaper by giving step-by-step directions. Make sure to include time order words. Trade your recipe with a friend.

**Activity Three:** As a class, discuss major issues in our society today—crime, destroying natural resources, healthcare, foreign policy, drug abuse, etc. Then divide the class into small groups and assign each group one of these issues to research. Encourage them to use the newspaper, magazines, and internet to determine the government’s role in these issues. Have them create a scrapbook with newspaper clippings and other printed information. You can extend the activity by having the students express opinions about their assigned issue through mock trial, letters to the editor, editorials, columns, or editorial cartoons.



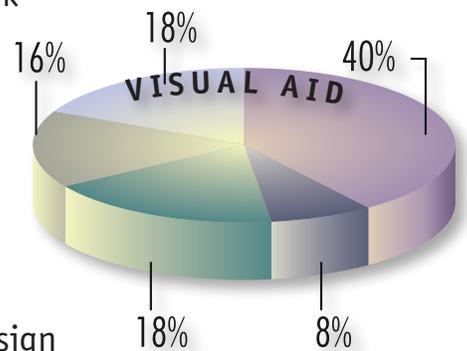
## Using Visual Displays and Graphics

**Learning Standard:** *I can make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.*

**Activity One:** Have students look through the newspaper for pictures, stories, and advertisements that demonstrate how people change the environment.

**Activity Two:** Graphics are very helpful tools and are often found in newspapers. Skim your newspaper and find an article that you think would be improved with the addition of graph or other visual aid. Design graphic that you think should accompany the article and present your graphic to your classmates.

**Activity Three:** Have students look at the newspaper's weather report for symbols used to illustrate weather. Then ask them to design their own symbols for the following weather conditions: sunny, cloudy, partly cloudy, showers, thundershowers, and snow.



## Communicating Effectively

**Learning Standard:** *I can adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.*

**Activity One:** Students will search the newspaper for someone who has something in common with them. They will preview articles by looking at headlines and pictures. They will then predict things they have in common with the person in the article. After reading the article, students will create a Venn diagram to compare and contrast the person and themselves. They will present their Venn diagrams to the class.



**Activity Two:** Students will role play a radio broadcaster and recap the news from today's newspaper headlines. Students must stay within a one minute time frame and speak in a rate and tone which is easily understood by their classmates.

**Activity Three:** Have students find a newspaper story about or an ad for a new business in the area. Ask them to identify the goods and/or services it will provide and the effects it will have on the local economy. Then have students find a newspaper reference to an area business that is closing. Who will the closing have an impact on and what effects will it have on the local economy? Allow classroom discussion to follow.



## English Grammar

**Learning Standard:** *I can demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing and speaking.*

**Activity One:** Explain to students the value of being able to describe the world around them effectively, whether in conversation or in writing. They can practice this skill by recording their daily observations in a reporter’s notebook or journal. Then have them “observe” a story in the newspaper. Tell them to underline the details in the story that resulted from the reporter’s ability to see, hear, smell, feel, and taste. Discuss.



Shaun and Merilee, the cute twins down on Main Street, are going to the wonderful Missouri State Fair in Sedalia this week. They are taking a special train from Kirkwood.

**Activity Two:** Find newspaper examples of paragraphs written in the past, present, and future tense. Underline the verbs in the story.

**Activity Three:** Give students a section of the newspaper that has several advertisements. First, have them identify the adjectives in the ads. Then have them come up with a list of other adjectives that could have been used.

Ask volunteers to share examples. Extend the activity by instructing students to mark out the adjectives in one ad. Discuss how the ad “reads” without the adjectives and have them draw conclusions.

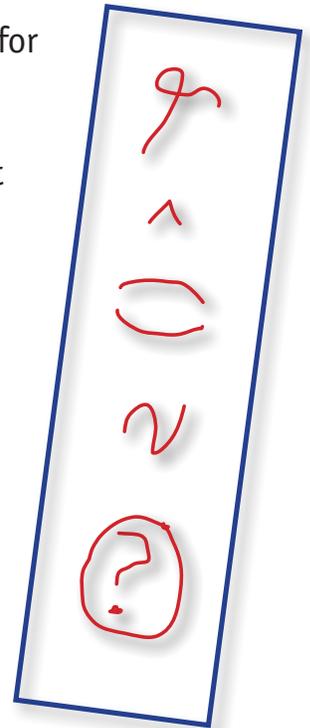
## Capitalization and Punctuation

**Learning Standard:** *I can demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.*

**Activity One:** Good spellers recognize patterns. Using the newspaper, cut out 10 words that have double vowels. Paste these onto your paper. Do the same for 10 words that have blends.

**Activity Two:** Write a newspaper paragraph on the board without proper punctuation, capitalization, or spelling. Ask students to identify the errors and correct them. Then ask them to rewrite the paragraph in the proper form. For a variation of this activity, have students use editor's proofreading marks to correct the errors.

### Proofreading Marks



## Writing Style

**Learning Standard:** *I can apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.*

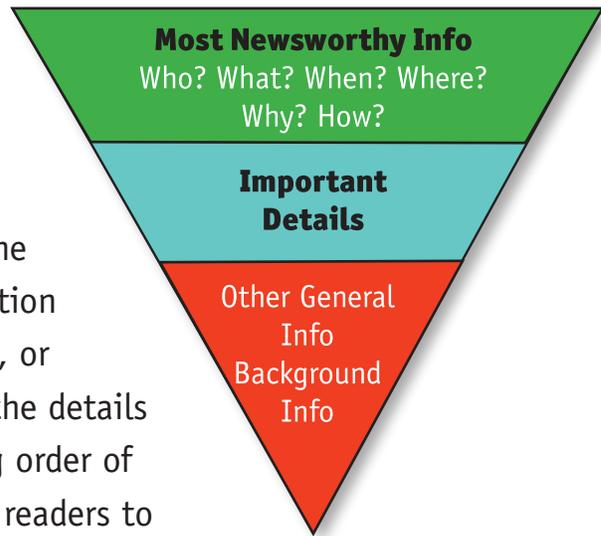
**Activity One:** When quoting their interviewees, reporters must think of interesting ways of saying "said." Use quotes in your newspaper to see how reporters quote their subjects. Make a list of at least 10 different ways that were used. Share your results with your classmates.

Kindness is the language  
which the deaf can hear  
and the blind can see.

**Mark Twain**

**Activity Two:** Choose three news stories with various moods. Identify the mood of each story and list the words or phrases from the story that contribute to the mood.

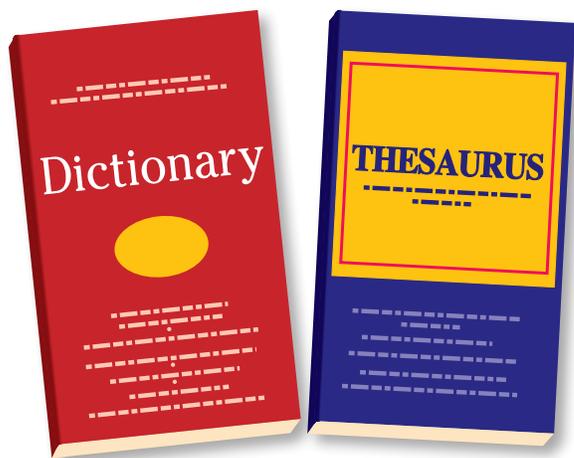
**Activity Three:** Explain to students that news stories often are written in a style of writing called the inverted pyramid. The most important information is contained in the lead, or first paragraph(s), and the details are added in descending order of importance. This allows readers to browse through the newspaper at a quicker pace. Ask students to find a story in the newspaper that is written in inverted pyramid style. Discuss each example.



## Word Choice

**Learning Standard:** *I can determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.*

**Activity One:** Discuss strategies for decoding unknown words. Remind students that they can problem-solve larger words by locating the root or base word. Choose unknown words from the newspaper to decode. Locate the base words, identify the prefixes or suffixes, and share the meaning of the words.



**Activity Two:** Students will use the newspaper to locate unfamiliar words. They will first use context clues to determine their meaning, and then will look the words up in a dictionary to verify the correct meaning. Students may also use a thesaurus to find possible synonyms and antonyms.

**Activity Three:** Instruct students to find the section of the newspaper containing the movie and television listings. Then ask them to find five movie titles and five TV show titles and write them on a sheet of paper. Students will use the thesaurus to find synonyms for each title. For example, Who Wants to Be a Millionaire might become Who Yarns to be of Easy Wealth? To extend the activity, have students to repeat the same exercise with headlines, business names, and advertising slogans.

## Figurative Language

**Learning Standard:** *I can demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.*

**Activity One:** Use similes/metaphors found in the newspaper to make a matching game. Students write a simile or metaphor on a notecard and then explain the meaning on another card. Do several examples. Mix them up, match the cards with their meanings.



**Activity Two:** Alliteration is the repetition of first consonant sounds in words close to each other. For example, "The Sweet Smell of Success" uses "s" as the alliterated consonant. Use the newspaper to find examples of alliteration. What is the purpose of alliteration? Give each student

a consonant and ask them to create an alliterated headline for an article.

**Activity Three:** After reviewing the definition of hyperbole, students will use the sports section to find and clip an example of hyperbole to share with the class. Next, students will look for additional examples of hyperbole in other sections of the newspaper.



## Building Vocabulary

**Learning Standard:** *I can acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.*

**Activity One:** Identify abbreviations used in Classified ads. List three to five abbreviations you found and then state what the abbreviation stands for in the ad.

**Activity Two:** Some of the most colorful words and expressions in the English language have their origin in the world of sports. For example, below the belt, bull's eye, and full-court press. Have students research the origins of these and other expressions found in the newspaper. Conclude the activity by having them use the words and expressions in sentences not related to sports.

**Activity Three:** Make a chart showing examples of the vocabulary variations that appear in different sections of the newspaper. For instance, the jargon used by the food editor and the sports editor is probably quite different. How?

**Below  
the  
Belt**

**BULL'S  
EYE**

**Full-Court  
Press**