

Headline Writing

Invitational Meet B • 2022



You are a copy editor for the Leaguetown **Press**, the student newspaper of Leaguetown High School.

Write the headline assigned for each of the given six stories. Use the following system: all upper and lower case letters, spaces, punctuation marks and symbols count as 1. Capitalize the first letter of the first word of each headline. You may use either upstyle (capitalizing the first letter of every word) or downstyle (capitalizing the first letter of the first word and the first letter of proper nouns only thereafter). Remember that main headlines belong on the top line and secondary headlines belong under the main headline. You have **30 minutes**.

Do not write your name or the name of your school on this sheet or your entry.

Story 1 — Write: 1-line headline counting 26-32

To raise funds for a memorial scholarship for former superintendent Stephen Wonder, the PTSA will host a dodgeball tournament in the gym Saturday, April 2. Tickets will be \$2 at the door.

To participate, students and faculty need to form teams of eight and register in the main office. Teams also must pay a \$30 participation fee.

“We hope to have more than 20 teams competing this weekend, and we hope to fill the gym,” PTSA president Diane Ross said. “Two faculty teams have signed up already.”

Senior Leo Richie said his team started practicing last weekend.

“It’s been a while since any of us played dodgeball,” Richie said. “I want to make sure we beat Coach [Mike] Jackson’s team of football coaches.”

Ross said the PTSA wants to raise at least \$1,000 for the scholarship. Wonder died over the summer after a two-year battle with lung cancer.

Story 2 — Write: 2-line headline with each line counting 15-22

For the first time in school history, seniors may be wearing a different color at graduation. Next week, seniors will vote on the color of this year’s graduation caps and gown — either navy or gold.

Traditionally, students have worn navy, but this year Balfour offered the school gold.

“The company never had gold before, and I thought that could be a great change if the seniors wanted it,” Principal Bobbi Dillan said. “The gold gowns are quite striking.”

Dillan said both graduation gowns and caps are on display in the main office.

“The gold gown is Gucci,” senior Raymond Charles said. “I’m voting for it.”

Senior Johnna Lennon said she also likes the gold.

“It’s much brighter than the dreary navy,” she said.

Seniors will vote during English classes. Those who do not have an English class can vote in the main office.

Story 3 — Write: 3-line headline with each line counting 10-16

Because drought conditions continue to plague the county, the school will pull the flowers from the front of the school and plant low-water plants in their place.

“Those flower beds haven’t looked good in four years,” Principal Bobbi Dillan said. “They need too much water.”

Dillan said the school will buy lantana and verbena to replace the flowers.

“Both of those plants needs little to no water to grow,” she said. “This switch will save the school quite a bit of money. Each year we replace many of the flowers and spend way too much on water to try to keep them alive.”

Paula McCarthy said her special education students would plant the new foliage.

“My students love working our vegetable garden,” she said. “This is another great project for them to take on.”

Story 4 — Write: 1-line main headline counting 10-18 and a 1-line secondary headline counting 26-32

Senior Starr Ringo loves faces. Old faces. Young faces. Any type of face.

“Every face is unique,” she said. “Every face is art.”

During the pandemic, Starr missed people, so she’s making up for that lost time by drawing as many faces as she can this year.

“I would love to sketch every student, but I am not sure if everyone is comfortable with that,” she said. “My goal is to draw at least 500 people by the end of the school year. Right now, I am at 314.”

To accomplish her goal, Starr is asking students to sign up for a portrait time during lunch or after school. The charcoal portrait sketches take about 20 to 30 minutes to do.

“Of the 314 sketches I’ve done so far, about 100 are friends or friends of friends,” she said. “The rest are students who signed up for a time slot.”

Art teacher Janie Mitchell said she would like to host an art show featuring Starr’s drawings in May.

“I was one of Starr’s first subjects at the beginning of the year,” she said. “The sketch is fabulous. I framed it, and it’s hanging in my classroom.”

Starr said her parents joke that the only reason she learned to walk was to get to the art supplies faster.

“I didn’t walk until I was almost two,” she said. “But according to my parents, I started drawing way before then.”

Story 5 — Write: 1-line main headline counting 15-22 and a 2-line secondary headline with each line counting 16-22

At its first official meeting, the Zombie Apocalypse Club had to move to a larger room. More than 50 students showed up for the meeting.

“We were blown away,” club president junior Otis Reading said. “We thought maybe 10 to 12 students would show. Who knew so many students would love talking about the living dead?”

Reading and his friend Jimmy Brown started the club as a way to talk about their favorite thing — zombies.

“At club meetings, we will discuss the latest zombie movies and the television show ‘The Walking Dead,’” Reading said.

Also, every week the club officers will present a “Scenario of the Week” in which a zombie attack scenario is taking place. The members will team up and decide the best way to survive the attack.

“This activity helps all of us stay caught up on the latest and greatest ways to fool a zombie, and it keeps us from getting rusty when it comes to defense tactics,” Brown said.

Chemistry teacher Juan Elton agreed to sponsor the club. He is a self-described “zombie nerd.”

“By next year, I am betting the club will be one of the largest in the school,” he said.

Story 6 — Write: 2-line headline with each line counting 20-26

To promote its new service, the cosmetology program will offer \$5 manicures during spring break to students and staff. After spring break, students and staff can schedule manicures after school on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 4:30 to 6 p.m. Cost will be \$10.

“Several of our students prefer to do nails over hair, and we’ve never offered manicures to the public,” cosmetology teacher Aretha Frank said.

Junior Janice Joplen, who is in cosmetology, said manicures and nail art are her favorite tracks in the program.

“When I graduate, I want to specialize in nail art,” she said. “I love getting creative and allowing people to show their passions and personality through their nails.”

Frank said cosmetology students cannot accept tips.

“Our students do a fabulous job, and often our clients want to tip our students,” she said. “But school district policy prevents that. We do encourage our clients to write reviews on Yelp instead. Right now, we have a 4.9 star rating.”

Invitational B Meet • 2022 Headline Writing Entry Sheet

All letters (upper and lower case), numbers, punctuation marks, symbols and spaces count as one (1). Place one letter or other unit in the appropriate spaces below. Remember to leave spaces between words. Note that the number of lines you are given on this sheet corresponds to the number of lines required for each headline. **Write your number on the upper right-hand corner of this sheet.**

■ Headline Number 1

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32

■ Headline Number 2

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32

■ Headline Number 3

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32

■ **Headline Number 4**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32

main headline

secondary headline

■ **Headline Number 5**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32

main headline

secondary headline

■ **Headline Number 6**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32

DO NOT DISTRIBUTE TO STUDENTS BEFORE OR DURING THE CONTEST!

INVITATIONAL B • 2022 HEADLINE WRITING CONTEST TIPS AND SAMPLES

Contest Director: Give one copy to each judge to use during critique/judging. Also, staple one copy of the contest and one copy of the contest tips to each student's returned entry. The purpose of the tips is to provide immediate feedback to students. However, it is not meant to replace written comments from the judges.

1. Headline writing is different than the other contests. It is suggested you pace yourself. You have about 5 minutes for each headline. Don't watch the clock, but be aware of the time you are taking to complete a headline. It is better to have four or five good headlines rather than six mediocre ones.
2. When writing the headline, first highlight or underline all the important words in the story. Then write a sentence based on those highlighted words.
3. After you have your first sentence, go back and begin editing out words. If you have a multi-line headline, separate the lines at a recommended area. This means you should not split phrases or ideas. Make sure all types of phrases — noun, verb, adverbial, adjective and prepositional phrases especially — are on the same line. Continue eliminating words until you get to a point where the headline fits. It may be necessary to re-write the headline one or more times or to take a different approach before you get the key idea. Remember to eliminate all unnecessary words such as article adjectives (a, an, the). In many cases a comma (,) can substitute for the word "and."
4. You may use a thesaurus or dictionary, either bound or electronic. You may write in block letters. You should not be penalized for inconsistency in upstyle or downstyle.
5. Make sure you are within the prescribed count. Under no circumstances should you go over the maximum count. Judges are instructed to disqualify any headline under or over the prescribed count.
6. Write headlines using active verbs in either present, future or present perfect tense. Follow the style of the headline — if it is a fun story, write a fun headline; if it is a serious story, write a serious headline.
7. Do not sacrifice accuracy for creativity or cuteness.
8. Normally, the main headline is used to grab the reader's attention. It is not necessary, although it is possible, to have a verb in the main headline when you have a secondary headline. The secondary headline should do one of two things: emphasize the significant aspects of the story or emphasize the unusual.
9. Please note that AP does not have a style dealing with headlines. Most newspapers create their own style; so using numbers or spelling them out is acceptable either way as long as the writer is consistent.

The following are additional basic headline rules for you to follow:

- avoid starting the headline with a verb
- always use single quotes
- avoid using the same word twice in a headline
- use active verbs, not passive verbs
- try to write in present or future tense
- avoid unfamiliar abbreviations
- do not end the headline with a period

★ STORY #1

Dodgeball event set for April 2	31
---------------------------------	----

★ STORY #2

Seniors to vote	15
on graduation color	19

★ STORY #3

Low-water plants	16
to replace	10
flower beds	11

★ STORY #4

Face value	10
Senior offers charcoal portraits	32

★ STORY #5

Living dead love	16
Zombie club draws	17
crowd at first meeting	22

★ STORY #6

Cosmetology to offer	20
\$5 manicures during break	25