

Headline Writing

STATE MEET • 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 main headline counting 10-16 and a 2-line secondary headline with each line counting 18-24

As sophomore softball player April May heads into the next playoff game, she has two goals — beat Westside High School and keep pitching strikes

May pitched a no-hitter against Southside in the first round of playoffs. The team won 1-0.

“April’s pitching saved the team last week,” Coach Terri Roach said. “We struggled with our bats and were able to produce only one run.”

May said she’s used to pressure on the mound.

“I concentrate on the batter and don’t think about anything else,” she said. “I didn’t realize no one got a hit until after the game.”

It was the sophomore’s first no-hitter.

“It’s pretty awesome,” she said. “Southside has some of the best hitters in the area.”

Roach said May will start against Westside on Saturday.

“If April keeps pitching strikes, and if we can produce a few more hits, we should bring home another win,” she said.

Story 2 — Write: 1-line main headline counting 12-18 and a 1-line secondary headline counting 26-32

When junior Trey Baker sent in his audition recording for the National Rite Theater Institute’s summer workshop, he thought it was a shot in the dark.

NRTI chooses only two high school students out of more 10,000 applicants to attend its six week summer program in Connecticut. The other 28 participants are college students.

Turns out, Trey was right on target.

Last week, he learned he has been accepted to the program.

“I don’t know what to say — and I always have something to say,” Trey said. “This is life-changing. The NRTI workshop is where Lin-Manuel Miranda created his first professional production, ‘In the Heights.’”

NRTI’s intensive summer program is taught by industry professionals and master teachers who provide comprehensive training to the actors.

“Since my mom took me to my first Broadway show when I was 3, I’ve wanted to be an actor,” Trey said. “This opportunity could be the path to my future.”

Story 3 — Write: 3-line headline with each line counting 12-18

To avoid last year’s end-of-school fiasco, Principal Anne Rutherford announced that no backpacks or big purses will be permitted at school during the last week of school.

“Last year, my administration and teachers spent hours helping the custodians clean the building,” Rutherford said. “We don’t plan on doing that again this year.”

On the last day, hundreds of students filled their backpacks with shaving cream, whipped cream and silly string, then sprayed it all over the school and other students.

“It was crazy,” junior Da’Von Trent said. “I slipped on the stuff and sprained my ankle. I don’t have any problem with the no backpack rule.”

Senior Davis Reed said Rutherford is killing the “senior vibe.”

“It’s our last day of school,” he said. “We should be allowed to have some fun.”

Story 4 — Write: 2-line headline with each line counting 20-26

Because of water damage to the school theater, the administration is moving Senior Walk Day to the Lakeside amphitheater. Walk Day will still be at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 18.

“We all have our fingers crossed that the weather will cooperate,” Principal Anne Rutherford said. “Since we will be outside, we are encouraging our seniors to be a little more casual with their dress.”

At Senior Walk Day, seniors walk the stage as their high school accomplishments are announced.

“We started doing this four years ago,” Rutherford said. “It’s a chance to celebrate high school accomplishments. It’s not a required event, but more than 80% of our seniors signed up for it. It’s one of my favorite events of the year.”

Senior Ryder Simpson said he’s glad about the location change.

“Now, I don’t have to wear a suit,” he said. “I’m still going to wear something nice, but I will be a lot more comfortable.”

A reception following Walk Day will be held at the park’s pavilion. Bob’s Barbecue will cater the event.

Story 5 — Write: 1-line headline counting 26-32

After securing a partnership with the Leaguetown Zoo, the zoology class will have a new hands-on component next year. Students will have class at the zoo once a week.

“This is an incredible opportunity for students,” science teacher Aryn Thanis said. “When we learn about primates and ecosystems, the students will experience the learning firsthand.”

To accommodate travel, zoology will be held during 8th period.

Thanis said she has already met with the zookeepers to plan for next year.

“On Amphibian Awareness Day, students will be in charge of activities at the zoo,” she said. “Several elementaries tour the zoo on that day, and our students will serve as the tour guides.”

The zoo also has a wildlife rehabilitation center.

“If our students choose, they can become certified in wildlife rehabilitation,” she said.

Junior Ava Wheeler said she can’t wait to get started.

“Animals are my life,” she said. “I want to be either a veterinarian or a zookeeper.”

Story 6 — Write: 1-line main headline counting 16-22 and a 1-line secondary headline counting 26-32

The prom theme — “A Night to Remember” — was spot on for senior Julianna Trujillo. In fact, her experience is one most of the prom attendees will never forget.

She attended prom in a blue elephant onesie after the zipper on her dress broke as she stepped out of her limo.

“As soon as I shut the door and the driver drove off, I heard a pop,” she said. “Luckily, my best friend was standing near me and grabbed the back of my dress. Otherwise, I would have way worse memories — like flashing everyone in line.”

Trujillo and her best friend rushed to the bathroom where they discovered they couldn’t fix the dress. They also didn’t have a car since the limo wouldn’t return until midnight.

That’s when English teacher Rachel Varuth came to the rescue with baby blue elephant footie pajamas.

“I don’t always have onesies in my car, but I was headed to Goodwill in the morning,” she said. “My mom bought it for me as a joke for my 21st birthday.”

Trujillo balked at the thought of wearing an elephant onesie with a swirly tail to prom, but it was either wear it or wait an hour for her parents to bring her a new dress.

“I didn’t want to waste my prom in the bathroom,” she said. “So I stopped crying, cleaned up my face and pulled on the onesie. I looked silly, but I had the most comfortable outfit at prom.”

And the icing on the cake?

“The onesie matched my boyfriend’s suit perfectly, so we still looked great in our photos,” she said.

DO NOT DISTRIBUTE TO STUDENTS BEFORE OR DURING THE CONTEST!**STATE • 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. Highlight or underline important words in the story. Then write a sentence based on those highlighted/underlined words.
3. After you write your first sentence, go back and change or delete 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, adverb, adjective and prepositional phrases especially — are on the same line. Play with words until 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. 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 printed or electronic. You may write in block letters.
5. Make sure you are within the prescribed count. Headlines that are under or over the count will be disqualified.
6. Use active verbs in either present, future or present perfect tense. Make sure your headline matches the tone of the story. If it is a fun story, write a fun headline. If it is a serious story, write a serious headline.
7. Never sacrifice accuracy for creativity or cuteness.
8. The main headline should 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 emphasize the significant aspects of the story. The main headline does not require a verb. The secondary headline does.
9. The following are additional basic headline guidelines:
 - avoid starting the headline with a verb
 - 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
 - avoid spelling out numbers (use numerals - 1, 20, etc.)

★ STORY #1

Pitch perfect	13
May delivers no-hitter	22
in 1-0 playoff win	18

★ STORY #2

On the Rite path	16
Junior to attend actors' program	32

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Principal bans	14
backpacks, bags	15
for end of school	17

★ STORY #4

Senior Walk Day moved	21
to outdoor amphitheater	22

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Zoology adds hands-on component	31
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★ STORY #6

Elephant in the room	20
Senior wears onesie to prom	27

2022 HEADLINE WRITING STATE CHAMPIONS

1A

Kelsie Gunter, Nazareth HS

'May' or May Not

Sophomore punches ticket

To playoffs with strikes

Time to Shine

Junior accepted in NRTI workshop

Principal bans

Use of backpacks

For last week

Administration to move

Walk day to amphitheater

Students to attend class at zoo

Prom night blues

Senior rocks elephant onesie

2A

Emily Carlson, Vega HS

Softball star

Sophomore plans to win

After first no-hitter

Stealing the show

Junior accepted to NRTI program

Principal bans

Bags for last

Week of school

Water damage washes date

For walk day to may 18

Zoology class to learn at zoo

Elephant in the room

Senior damages dress at prom

3A

Presley Applegate, Chapel Hill HS

Sophomore stud

Pitcher looks to retain

Success against Westside

Broadway Baker

Junior chosen for acting program

School to ban big

Bags during last

Week of classes

Senior walk day moved

To lakeside amphitheater

Zoology class partners with zoo

Triceratops tango

Senior attends prom in onesie

4A

Heather Meyers, Hardin-Jefferson HS

April May's Way

Sophomore strikes out

Southside in first round

Trey's on Target

Junior earns spot at workshop

Backpacks banned

During last week

To avoid disaster

Damages move senior walk

To lakeside amphitheater

Zoology to have class at zoo

"Onesie"-pop a prom

Girl wears PJs after dress break

5A

Seth Deaton, Hendrickson HS

Sit them down

No-hitter by sophomore

Aces round one for team

Acting on ambition

Theatre program accepts junior

To avoid fiasco

School bans bags

During final week

Water damages theater,

Relocates senior walk day

School partners with local zoo

Elephant in the room

Senior wears blue onsie to prom

6A

Morgan Lenamond, Waxahachie HS

Strike City

Pitcher looks to keep

Playoff no-hitter streak

Prestigious Plays

Theater institute accepts junior

Admin bans bags

After last year's

Messy final week

Senior walk day moves

To Lakeside Ampitheater

Zoology to get hands-on at zoo

Through elephant Eyes

Senior attends prom in onesie