

Headline Writing

Regional Meet • 2024



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. **Put your number on your paper.**

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

Students who plan to take algebra during summer school could attend the school's new spring math camp instead. The camp will be two hours after school every Tuesday and Thursday beginning May 1 until the last week of school.

"No one wants to go to summer school," assistant principal Jai Pearson said. "But we have students who wish to get ahead and students who need another chance to complete the course. This math camp will give students that chance."

In addition of four hours of instruction time per week, students will have online modules and tests to complete in order to receive algebra credit.

"I missed a lot of this year when I got sick," freshman Angela Sinacore said. "I love that I'll be able to do the math camp and still be able to go to Girl Scout camp in June. I haven't missed a camp in years and don't want to start now."

Students interested in signing up for math camp should see their counselor.

"I'm happy to offer this camp," algebra teacher Mimi Pratt said. "I don't want to give up my summer either, and now I can make extra cash before my vacation."

Story 2 — Write: 2-line headline with each line counting 22-28

Profits from school-day picture packet sales, which normally go to the yearbook staff, will now go into a general activity account, according to Principal Alan Keighth. Last year, the yearbook staff used the \$14,000 from photography profits to purchase three new camera kits for the yearbook photographers.

"We have had a difficult time funding our accounts recently," Keighth said. "We will use the profit from our photography company to conduct school business, including staff shirts, staff luncheons and travel for our UIL academic team."

The yearbook adviser said last year, her students spent hundreds of work-hours planning picture days and sorting ID cards and packets to ensure each student received their IDs and photo packets they ordered.

"It takes so much time to do picture day and retake day," senior yearbook editor Sally VandenBush said. "We didn't mind doing it because we knew we would get enough profit to keep our program going. I'm not sure what we'll do now."

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

Student council's yearly Day of Service event is set for April 28. Participants will meet at 7 a.m. in the student parking lot and disperse to various locations around the city to do yardwork, basic home maintenance and other projects for elderly and disabled citizens.

"I look forward to this event, not because I'm trying to finish our community service hours for National Honor Society, but because I look forward to seeing someone's face after you've cleaned out their gutters or raked their whole yard for them," NHS president Nitish Patel said. "I don't even think I turned in the hours last year. That's how fun it was."

Student council has 64 households signed up to receive help during the event and 398 students signed up to participate.

"This is what service organizations are all about," student council president Lindsey Harris said. "We do this to help our fellow Leaguetowners — to make a difference."

Story 4 — Write: 1-line main headline counting 14-20 and 2-line secondary headline with each line counting 20-26

Junior Ellie Lantos sits on the floor of her closet to work, but she's not there to fold laundry. For the past year, Lantos has been writing poetry on the walls of her closet. On April 29, those words will be published in a book.

"I started writing in my closet last year, and in August I realized I probably had enough solid pieces that I wanted them to become available for the world," Lantos said. "The poems are mainly about my life and some of the struggles I've had but also about some of the things I really love — like sunflowers, pizza and writing."

Lantos raised half the money to publish her book of poetry, and her parents agreed to contribute the other half as a birthday present when she turned 17.

"She was almost finished with everything by the time she shared her work with me," Lantos' mother, Rose Lantos, said. "I'm so proud of her for using her writing as a skill to not only process her own emotions but also to share her voice with the world. I'm ready to buy my own copy as soon as it comes out."

The poetry collection, titled "Wall About Me," will be on Amazon for \$7.99.

"I'm excited for people I know and even people I've never met to see a small piece of me," Lantos said. "If we ever move out of this house, I'm not sure what I'm going to do. Maybe my closet will be worth something one day."

Story 5 — Write: 1-line main headline counting 10-16 and a 1-line secondary headline counting 26-32

Credit-deficient students can earn up to 30 missing credit hours by donating nonperishable food items in the counseling office. Each can will count for two hours and must be donated by April 30.

Administrators will send all food donations to the Leaguetown Food Pantry.

"We saw two different needs in our community — students who have no realistic way to make up the number of hours they've missed this year and families dealing with food insecurity," assistant principal John Castro said. "I hope we can make life a little better for these two groups of people with the new program."

Senior Remi Rodriguez said he does not support the food drive.

"If I can just bring in some cheap canned food and get back credit hours, what's my motivation to keep going to class?" he said. "This sounds like a bad idea to me."

But Castro said he doesn't expect the program to create a motivation issue.

"You can't get away with skipping a whole semester and wipe that out by donating a couple cans," he said. "And a can can't change your grade. We are talking about students who are still deficient by hundreds of hours. The food donation will take care of a few of them, but students will still need to come to class and do some credit recovery work to make up the hours they're missing."

Story 6 — Write: 1-line headline counting 24-30

The Career and Technology Education campus had three inches of standing water after flooding caused by last week's storms. CTE classes that normally meet in that building will now meet in the main campus gymnasium until clean-up and repairs have been complete.

The building, which opened last year, is home to CTE classes such as audio video production, robotics, cosmetology, HVAC and auto tech.

"We're lucky we aren't seeing more serious damage," CTE director Cliff Handy said. "I know how difficult it is to teach certain classes without the appropriate facilities and equipment, so we have a crew working almost around the clock to get repairs completed as soon as possible."

Most carpet in the building and a portion of the roof will need to be replaced, but most major equipment was stored and safely put away during the storm. Handy said students should return to the CTE campus by the end of next week.

"We still need to produce our TV show," LTV News Now anchor Jimmy McGill said. "We'll have to shoot anchors in the gym and assemble all our stories on someone's laptop, but we'll make it work."

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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!

Regional Meet • 2024 Headline Writing Contest Tips and Samples

Contest Director: Give one copy to each judge to use during critiquing/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 five 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. AP Style provides guidelines for headline writing. It is not required for contestants to follow AP Style, but a consistent style is recommended.

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
- try to write in present or future tense
- avoid unfamiliar abbreviations
- do not end the headline with a period

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★ STORY #2

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Student council	15
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★ STORY #6

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