

# Headline Writing

Invitational Meet A • 2018



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 **45 minutes**.

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

## Story 1 — Write: 2-line headline with each line counting 14-21

During the holidays, depression, stress and anxiety tend to increase, according to counselor Gabby Molina. To help students deal with these issues, Molina is starting a Get Up group where students can work together to overcome these issues.

“Depression and anxiety is isolating,” Molina said. “Students feel alone — like they are the only one feeling this way. This group will show them they are not alone, and it will focus on ways for us to help one another.”

The Get Up group will have its first meeting next Monday during lunch. Molina said she will provide pizza for the students.

“This group will focus on discussion and support,” she said. “If a student needs one-on-one counseling, we still offer that throughout the day.”

## Story 2 — Write: 2-line headline with each line counting 18-24

Student bands can sign up for the battle of bands competition, hosted by Student Council, this Monday through Thursday in the library.

The contest is free, but all members of the bands must be current Leaguetown students.

“We are limiting the contest to 15 bands and, from what I hear, we have a lot of students interested,” Jocelynn Druthers, Student Council president, said. “I would recommend that students sign up Monday and Tuesday. Once we have 15 bands, we will end registration.”

Admission to attend the competition will be \$10 per person. All proceeds will be used to fund the school-wide field day in May.

Druthers said she is working on securing three judges for the contest.

“One local disc jockey has agreed to judge, but I am keeping his or her name a secret until the day of the contest,” she said.

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

Because of damage from the cafeteria fire last month, the ACT exam scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 3, will be moved to Southside High School.

“We had hoped to have the cafeteria back in shape for the test, but building delays prevented that from happening,” Principal Liam Fanning said.

More than 200 students, not all Leaguetown students, were scheduled to take the test here. Because of the change of venue, the time for the test has been pushed back from 8 a.m. to 9 a.m.

“We are going to give students a little extra time to get to Southside,” Fanning said. “The ACT people emailed students who registered to inform them about the change, but we are afraid some students still won’t get the message.”

Since Southside is only 25 minutes from the high school, the delay will give students time to get there if they show up here first, Fanning said.

“Our counselors met with all of our students, but I don’t know if all of the other schools notified their students,” he said. “And honestly, I am not sure how often high school students check their emails.”

**Story 4 — Write: 1-line main headline counting 14-20 and a 2-line secondary headline with each line counting 22-28**

When junior Gus Sanderford's dad brought home a beat-up VW Beetle, Gus was less than thrilled. His dad said it was an early birthday present, but there was one catch — the car didn't work.

"My dad was grinning ear to ear when the tow truck dropped off the wreck of a car," Gus said. "I couldn't even force a smile on my face."

Fast forward six months, and Gus can't stop smiling when he looks at the Beetle.

"It's a true work of art," he said. "I love everything about it."

Gus and his father spent five months rebuilding the car's engine and repairing the body of the car. Two weeks ago, the pair painted the car burnt orange with a white longhorn on the hood in honor of the junior's beloved University of Texas Longhorns. They even found burnt orange seat covers for the front seat.

"I was never a big car freak, but my dad loves working on old cars," Gus said. "I never understood his passion until I started working on Bevo — that's what I call my car. I was hooked the first week. I loved bringing Bevo back to life."

And, his work has been noticed around town.

"One Longhorn fan offered me \$15,000 for Bevo," he said. "Nope. No way. I'm never selling this beauty."

**Story 5 — Write: 1-line main headline counting 12-18 and a 1-line secondary headline counting 26-32**

English teacher Sydney Tomich found more than vegetables in her garden last weekend. Wrapped around one of her final carrots of the season was her wedding ring.

"I lost my ring last spring," Tomich said. "I looked for weeks and had no luck. Finally, my husband bought me a new ring."

Apparently, her ring fell off while she was gardening and then attached itself to a budding carrot this winter.

"I couldn't believe my eyes when I pulled up the carrot," she said. "At first, I thought it was just a metal tab from a soda, but then I started cleaning the carrot off, and I realized it was my ring."

Tomich started screaming, and her husband ran from the house to the backyard garden.

"He thought I had found another snake, so he grabbed a hoe and ran to me," she said. "I was crying, and he was totally confused until I showed him the carrot."

The wedding ring was Tomich's grandmother's ring.

"Even though I was happy when my husband bought me the new ring, it couldn't replace the one that was lost," she said. "My grandmother gave me the ring a year before she died. I loved having a part of her on my hand every day."

**Story 6 — Write: 1-line headline counting 26-32**

The Science Club is sponsoring a nature hike and lunch on Saturday, Feb. 3. Interested students should meet at Canyon Peak Park at 10 a.m. with water and a light lunch.

"Canyon Peak has some incredible wildlife, plants and views," Maddie Fiona, club sponsor, said. "Last time I was there, we saw a fox, a bull snake and tons of wild flowers."

Fiona said students should not forget water bottles.

"Even though we don't think it will be hot, you can still get dehydrated," she said. "We will hike about five miles in about three hours. That's quite a long hike."

Junior Sandy Helms, who is president of the Science Club, said the hike was her idea.

"We are trying to grow our club," she said. "Everyone thinks we are just a bunch of science geeks who all make 100s in our science classes. That's so far from the truth."

Helms said she joined the club her freshman year because of her love for wildflowers.

"We are an extremely diverse club with diverse interests," she said. "Science is more than physics and chemistry."

## Invitational A Meet • 2018 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

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■ Headline Number 2

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■ Headline Number 3

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■ **Headline Number 4**

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*main headline*

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*secondary headline*

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■ **Headline Number 5**

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*main headline*

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*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

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# DO NOT DISTRIBUTE TO STUDENTS BEFORE OR DURING THE CONTEST!

## INVITATIONAL A • 2018 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 7 1/2 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 and 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

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