

# Words and Writing

Mod 7, Part 10

## Headline Writing Rules

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

You should spend time brainstorming headlines, just like you do for the actual copy. As review and for example:

**Is there a clever play on words you can use?**

**OLE MISake** – Story about the Gators loss to Ole Miss in an error-filled game

**EYE have amoeba** – Story about a student who got amoeba in her eye from swimming in a lake and had to have it treated.

**Alliteration? Students spent Saturday saving school** – Story about club members who spent a Saturday cleaning up campus after a storm.

**Quote? 'Pray for rain'** – Story about players who practice in 100-degree in August heat and wanted afternoon relief from the rain – taken from player quote.

In this exercise, we will look at some of the rules of writing headlines. Many headlines have a subject, verb, and a direct object. They show a clever play on words and they even may include a quote. Other points to remember are below.

- Avoid writing articles: a, an, the in your headlines.
- And – replace it with a comma (example: Staff, students choose longer school day)
- Avoid names in headlines unless they are well known
- Avoid label leads (example: Girls soccer earns title – it is the girls soccer page, obviously you are not writing about the football team on this spread.)
- Write in present tense, since headlines are what the story IS about
- Do not ask questions. You are telling the reader what the story is about, not questioning him/her.
- Avoid periods – they stop a reader. A headline is meant to pull people into the story quickly
- Omit forms of the verb be – write in active voice

**Instructions:**

Wait, what did that just say? Yep, these really happened. These are real headlines found in a variety of newspapers, yearbooks, or ads. Identify the error the writer made and rewrite the headline using the rules and guidelines listed in this exercise. You are encouraged to write a headline using the kicker, wicket, hammer, and tripod styles from Mod 7, Part 9.

**1. POLICE BEGAN CAMPAIGN TO RUN DOWN JAYWALKERS**

- a. What is wrong?

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- b. Rewrite headline.

i. 

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**2. ENGLISH TEACHERS INCORPORATE CHANGED IN LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM**

- a. What is wrong?

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- b. Rewrite headline.

i. 

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**3. TWO SISTERS REUNITED AFTER 18 YEARS IN CHECKOUT LINE**

- a. What is wrong?

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- b. Rewrite headline.

i. 

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**4. BOYS BASKETBALL BEATS OPPONENTS**

a. What is wrong?

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b. Rewrite headline.

i. 

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**5. THE SGA COLLECTED 2500 POUNDS OF CANNED GOOD**

a. What is wrong?

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b. Rewrite headline.

i. 

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**6. WIN STATE TITLE AND ANOTHER STATE CHAMPIONSHIP**

a. What is wrong?

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b. Rewrite headline.

i. 

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**7. JOHN THOMPSON LEADS TEAM TO VICTORY**

a. What is wrong?

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b. Rewrite headline.

i. 

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**8. CAN YOU USE ALL THE NEW TECHNOLOGY?**

a. What is wrong?

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b. Rewrite headline.

i. 

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