WRITING: TELL ME A STORY

Walsworth yearbooks

Yearbook SUITE

Copyright 2014 by Walsworth Yearbooks
Reprint 2015, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021
All rights reserved. This book, or parts thereof, may not be reproduced in any form without written permission from the publisher.

Published in the United States of America by Walsworth Inc., Marceline, Missouri

Corporate Office: 306 North Kansas Ave., Marceline, MO 64658
800.265.6795

Yearbook Sales and Marketing Office: 7300 West 110th Street, Suite 600, Overland Park, KS 66210
800.369.2965

For more information about this curriculum guide or any other Walsworth products and services, visit walsworthyearbooks.com
or call 800.972.4968.

Acknowledgments
Susan Massy, Yearbook Adviser, Shawnee Mission Northwest High School, Shawnee, Kansas, and unit author
Kristin Mateski, CJE, Vice President of Marketing and Communications
Jamie Chambers, Graphic Designer
Evan Blackwell, CJE, Marketing Automation Specialist
Jenica Hallman, Copywriter
Mike Taylor, CJE, Journalism Specialist
Sabrina Schmitz, CJE, Walsworth Yearbooks sales representative
Alex Blackwell
Elizabeth Braden, CJE
T. Edward "Blaze" Hayes
Sarah Roberts
Amy Spears

Consultants
Whitney Huntington, CJE
Brad Lewis

Front cover photo by Megan Pernas

By Susan Massy
Yearbook Adviser, Shawnee Mission Northwest High School

WRITING: TELL ME A STORY

STUDENT WORKBOOK

WRITING: TELL ME A STORY

So why do we even bother to write yearbook copy? I mean, seriously… nobody likes to read and yearbook staff members claim they don't like to write, so why go to the trouble?

Let's start with why we produce yearbooks – and why people buy them.

> **A yearbook captures memories.** It is the sentimental version of a bank vault where we store the important events, the touching memories, those defining moments that give meaning and life to a year.
>
> **The yearbook is a time machine** that allows readers to remember what it was to be in high school, to be a teen.

Yearbooks without stories have a hard time capturing defining moments or reminding readers who they were and how life has changed. To do this, you need to write stories that are captivating and personal. Once you learn the process for researching, writing and rewriting, you can write those engrossing stories for your yearbook.

Photo by Jacob Moscovitch

Lesson 1
Getting Started

Objectives – In this lesson, you will learn:

How to find a good story

How to brainstorm for a story

We all love a good story. Whether the story begins with "once upon a time…," "did you hear…?" or "OMG!" we've been listening to and telling stories all of our lives. Telling stories isn't difficult if you stop to think about why you have always loved a good story.

So how do you find a good story?

Focus on people, not events.

Think about your favorite childhood stories. The plotline wasn't the story of Hogwarts, but of Harry Potter and his friends. Story assignments are generally given in terms of what club, event or sport will be covered. Writing about the talent show or Key Club or English classes is a recipe for a dull story. Focus the story on a person or on a few people.

Narrow your coverage to a compelling moment that tells the story of the year.

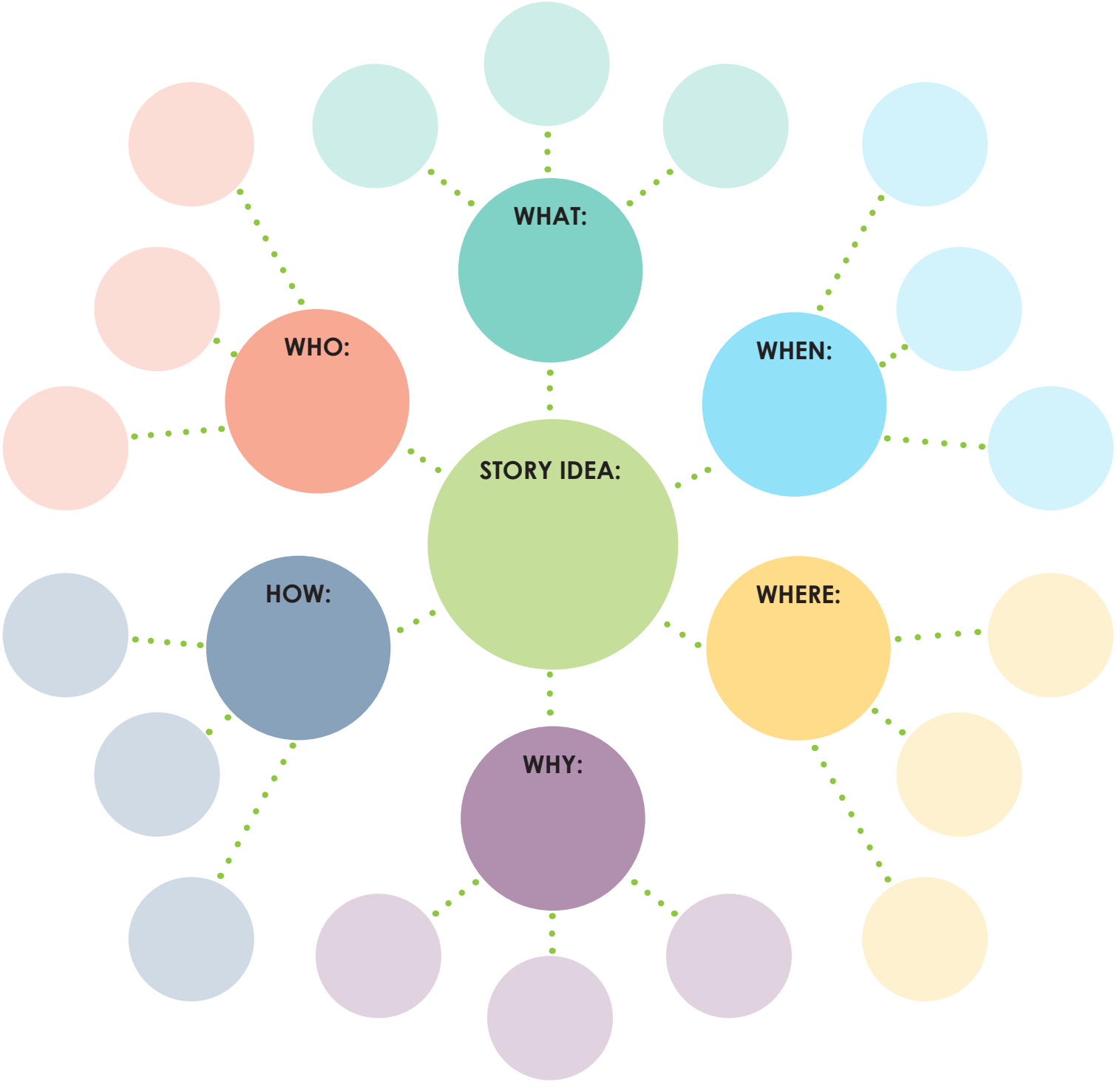
Rather than writing a summary list of the acts that performed in the talent show and offering a few words about each, pick a moment that tells the story of what made this year's talent show different. Use photos, captions and sidebar coverage to tell the rest of the story.

ACTIVITY

Your Name: .....

BRAINSTORMING WEB

To help you determine what you know and what you want to know about a topic, complete a brainstorming web. Begin with a general story topic at the center and who, what, when, where, why and how in the six secondary boxes. Fill in the details of what you know and then the last circles can be filled with questions and information you need to find.



VOCABULARY

Accuracy Freedom from mistake or error
Angle The approach to a story taken by a writer; a more specific angle results in a better story
AP Style A widely accepted style and usage guide in journalism; short for Associated Press Stylebook
Attribution Identifying the speaker of a quote by full name and other information such as year in school
Bias Emphasis on a particular view that results in representing some information in an unfair or inaccurate manner
Cliché A phrase that has been used so often that it is no longer effective
Lead Beginning or introduction to an article; should grab the reader's attention and give the story direction, setting the tone
Objectivity Presentation of information based on facts rather than on feelings or opinions
Paraphrase Presenting the information received from a source without using their exact words
Quote The exact words of a source, presented within quotation marks
Redundancy A word or phrase that is repeated and is therefore unnecessary; also using more words than needed to present information
Source A person who provides information for a story
Transition Words or phrases that help a story move smoothly from one point to the next

NOTES!

Walsworth yearbooks

Lesson 1 SCORE

RATE YOUR PROGRESS

4.0 ☐ I can do all tasks in 3.0 and I can teach others!

3.0 ☐ I can demonstrate an understanding of the qualities that make a good story. I can…

a. research and brainstorm ideas to expand upon story topics

b. find story ideas that focus on people, not events

c. find narrow and specific story ideas that capture the year

2.0 ☐ I understand how to get started on writing a story, but I still struggle to understand what qualities make a quality story.

1.0 ☐ I don't understand how to get started on writing a story.

Lesson 2
Research

Objectives – In this lesson, you will learn:

How to begin researching for a story

That research for a yearbook story will involve interviewing, observation and searching for local written sources including the school and local newspaper and previous yearbooks

To become familiar with terms regarding yearbook writing

Now that you have an idea of the information you already know, as well as questions you need answered, you are ready to begin research.

Writing a journalistic story involves more than sitting at a computer and putting your ideas together. The most important part of preparing to write a good story is personally attending all events that relate to your topic. Observe and take notes for later use.

If the assignment is the talent show, you will need to determine when tryouts will occur, when and how the results will be announced, the date of the show and then plan to be at each. At each stage of the tryout and performance of the talent show, you will be both interviewing and observing (see the unit, *The Art of the Interview*, for more information on this topic).

All of this may seem obvious, but it is easy to overlook story ideas and angles unless you have a process to follow. You must be curious and interested in getting a compelling story. Although you will never directly show up in the story as the writer, you must be there observing and learning about the topic at hand. You must be able to tell the reader not only what happened, but what it felt like to be there. Saul Pett, who won a Pulitzer Prize for feature writing, once said, "A story without the writer in it is as meaningless as a rimless zero." That's good advice and good writing.

Photo by Rae Thiemann

Walsworth yearbooks

ACTIVITY

INFORMATION GATHERING

Start by reading the example stories on the next few pages. Then gather information about the person or topic you will be writing about by getting out and observing. You won't know what details you are looking for until you determine the angle of the story, so pay attention. Look for all kinds of details.

Regardless of what type of story you are covering, take a significant amount of time to observe: several games, four to five different homecoming invitations, several class periods or several hours (perhaps on a couple of occasions). Plan to take notes on what you see, the mood and the smells (if applicable).

In addition, look for stories in the school or local newspaper that will provide additional information you might be able to use.

Photo by Caitlin Murphy

"GO FOR THE GOAL"

Varsity boys' soccer lost their first regional match by one in overtime

by Tatum Schuerman
Lair – Shawnee Mission Northwest High School

With one minute on the clock, the crowd screamed: "Get him!"

A step-over sent the ball past the Cougar midfield.

A through ball reached the winger who crossed it up and over to the top of the box, right to the forward.

One touch, one shot and the ball passed the goalie.

The crowd went silent.

The score was 1-0.

The Cougars had lost.

These details take the reader to the scene, as though they are experiencing it in real-time, through short, choppy sentences, creating tension.

ACTIVITY (CONT.)

"Soccer is just one of those sports where you can dominate the entire game, but still lose," junior Henry Fears said.

Quote has been used to follow up on scene-setting detail presented in the previous paragraph.

The varsity team recorded seven wins and nine losses. Even with a talented team, they seemed to be on the losing side too often. One loss by one goal and three losses in overtime were frustrating for the coaches, but even more for the players. During practices, the team ran shooting drills, the skill that troubled the team during their games. Although they practiced shooting repeatedly, it rarely paid off in competition.

Great background details to enhance the reader's understanding.

"We have been a goal or two, or a mental lapse here or there or a small mistake, or a lucky bounce, or a poor decision by the referee from having an excellent season," senior Josh Sherfy said.

Going into their first regional game, team members were confident in their technical skills, as well as in the key players and the nine seniors who wanted to win. The energy radiated off the players, yet in the back of their minds was the season and how unlucky they were. The team never felt like they had that special player to lead them all the way.

This is a great example of not just listing the statistics of a season or game. No scoreboard will give this level of personal insight – the reader can only find it in the story!

"I think this team had a legitimate shot at a regional championship," Sherfy said. The varsity players had plenty of opportunities that could have put them in a better place. During their first and only regional game, they lost 0-1 to J.C. Harmon. According to Sherfy, a bad call by the referee gave the Hawks a free kick which was sent to a forward who blasted it to the back of the net with 10 minutes left on the clock. Five minutes later, Sherfy got a kick in the face and the referee missed it. Team members claim these calls are some of the reasons they lost that game.

Here is opinion that only a person on the team can offer. The writer does a good job attributing the opinion with words like, "According to" and "claim" so as to not state as fact.

"High school soccer is anything but pretty," Sherfy said.

After that last game, a few of the seniors cried, Sherfy talked to the referees, the parents sat in shock. Boys' varsity coach Todd Boren was on one knee with his hand covering his face. As they all sat down for the team talk, they turned away from the cameras and covered their faces with their sweatshirts. They could hear the chant of the J.C. Harmon Hawks echo through the stadium. Boren had nothing to say. Even the parents were silent.

This provides visual details that could only be obtained if the writer was physically present at that moment. As a result, the reader feels present as well, absorbing the emotional impact of the moment.

"We believed our guys could get over the hump," Boren said. "But, for whatever reason, we couldn't seem to do it."

"I WAS ADDICTED TO FEELING NUMB"

ACTIVITY (CONT.)

by Addie Von Drehle
Hauberk – Shawnee Mission East High School

Senior Fought to Recover from an Opioid Addiction

Running his hands through his mop of dirty blonde hair, senior Wyatt Staveley* looked down. His eyes burned a hole in the soles of his shoes. It was always easier not to make eye contact.

This scene-setting lead uses strong attention to detail gained from observation without spelling out the story. The reader must keep reading to find out more. It sets up the rest of the story.

Good use of detail gained from observation.

"There's a lot of things people can say I was addicted to," Staveley said. "The way I see it, I was addicted to feeling numb."

What a powerful, personal quote. No one else could make that statement, and it has the most impact coming directly from the mouth of the subject instead of summarizing.

He looked up to the ceiling.

"I had messed up to the point where I couldn't look at myself in the mirror anymore." Opioid addiction had haunted Staveley since his sophomore year. By the end of second semester, his Honda Civic doubled as his house, and his friends' couches were a luxury. He had no source of income and nowhere to go. This void filled with drugs.

Paragraph gives a look into the subject's past without making it the focus.

"I would say the biggest part of the recovery wasn't the recovery. It was finding out who I really was and what makes me happy."

Note that quotes are sprinkled liberally throughout the story. The writer allows the subjects to tell his own story.

"It became a point where if I didn't have it, I couldn't live. I couldn't be myself. I tricked my brain into thinking that being drugged down was being myself."

His hand clenched into a fist, and his eyebrows furrowed as he remembered who was to blame for digging the hole of addiction.

More good use of observational detail.

"I was never a victim of peer pressure in the normal sense. I, unofficially, was always peer pressured by a shadow of myself. I always had the self control to say no, but I didn't want to."
It wasn't until June 6, 2016, that his life would turn around.

Good transitional sentence setting us up for what comes next.

"I got arrested by private sheriffs my mom had hired. I had nothing on me. I was in my boxers. They woke me up and dragged me out. They had me shackled."

His laser blue eyes shot up. He thought he was being arrested for vandalism, but when he reached Hallsville, Texas, 13 hours later, he knew it was more than a night in juvy.

"They carried me into the main building, and they sat me down at a conference table. At this point I'm speechless. I'm very angry,

and I'm coming down off a lot of drugs so that fueled it all. That was my first official day at Heartlight. I go on to spend 15 months of my life there."

Staveley thought lying his way through therapy at Heartlight Ministries, a therapeutic boarding school, would get him home faster. He held out for three months by insisting he didn't have a problem to fix. But that couldn't last.

"One day I just broke down. I knew I had a problem. I told them I was fine, but out of nowhere I realized I couldn't take it anymore."

Staveley knew keeping to himself wasn't an option. He began listening in meetings and talking to his therapist.

Good explanation of where he is and his current motivations. The quotes before and after make more sense because of this insight.

"It eats you up inside, you know, to say you're fine when you're not."

At Heartlight, every day posed a new emotional hurdle. It took weekly psych tests, counseling at least twice a week and drug-therapy meetings to make Staveley feel like he was starting to recover. But being separated from drugs wasn't enough.

The helps us understand what was going on during those months to spur change.

"They said I wasn't facing the real reason for my drug abuse. It doesn't work until they root out the deep problems." Staveley brushed the hair from his face as he continued.

"The reason for my addiction was that I had a very f****d up situation growing up. That's no excuse for doing drugs, but it's an explanation. The reason I was there so long was because it was so hard for me to accept it."

Once Staveley realized the unstable relationship he had with his parents was the root of his drug problem, he found it easier to overcome.

"Getting sent there wasn't my choice, but I guess it was to learn. Heartlight gives you the tools to find the things you need but I could've just acted and not actually done the work. I did it because I always wanted to see myself as not a screw up.

"Your true self is expressed by what you do for people, your compassion, your love for people. That's what Heartlight really taught me. When I left, they were like 'you're ready for the new world,' but it wasn't a new world. It was the same world. I'm trying to be myself in a place I don't think I can."

The reader can feel the vulnerability in this quote and see that this is more than just drug treatment

Staveley knew recovery wouldn't come easily.

"People that say they recover in months, no. Recovery takes years. I'm still recovering. I still have to go to a therapist, a drug counselor.

Recovery has a lot of different stages and I'm going through the stage where I came back thinking I was recovered but recovery is never over. You can never reach perfection. I try my hardest."

Staveley still fought his old habits and stressors. Skipping school, avoiding his feelings and relapses caused setbacks, but remembering how important his well-being was to those close to him helped him get back on track.

The paragraph does a good job of not sugar coating the story as a perfect package, but shows the grit and honesty of the subject.

"Knowing that I'm loved and loving back is a big factor for me right now. It's really keeping me going.

"I have a lot of different ways to cope with my stress now, like drawing, meditation, just being active even helps. As much as I used to bag on physical activity, it actually helps a lot."

He leaned back and sighed.

"I would say the biggest part of the recovery wasn't the recovery. It was finding out who I really was and what makes me happy."

Staveley sat up.

"There were also a lot of reasons why I was given that second chance. I'm back here now. Whether it's the will of something all powerful or something else, because stuff happens. I just always hope the next day is a lot better."

He brushed the hair from his eyes one last time.

"I'm trying my hardest to keep myself together."

Closing quote gives an honest evaluation of where he is right now, instead of trying to find "the end" of the subject's story.

*Walsworth has changed the name of the individual from the originally published version to protect the identity of the student.

Lesson 2 SCORE

RATE YOUR PROGRESS

4.0 ☐ I can do all tasks in 3.0 and I can teach others!

3.0 ☐ I can demonstrate an understanding of the importance of researching and gathering information from various sources before writing. I can...

a. use my journalistic curiosity to discover story-telling details

b. attend events that will provide important information and interviews for my story

c. observe my surroundings so that I can convey feeling, emotion and sensory detail in my writing

2.0 ☐ I understand the importance of gathering information before writing, but I don't understand what kind of information I need to acquire.

1.0 ☐ I don't understand the importance of gathering information before writing.

Lesson 3
The Writing Process

Objectives – In this lesson, you will learn:

What to look for in a good story angle

How to write a lead

Once you have received a story assignment, it's time to get moving. The writing process provides you with a framework of steps to complete on the journey to a fabulous story. Before beginning to write, make sure you know the deadline for your first draft. Set mini-deadlines for yourself by working backwards from your deadline to allow plenty of time to complete this process.

Find an angle.

After organizing the notes, facts, observations, quotations and details you have gathered, determine a central theme that will provide both focus and direction for your story. Remember that the story should focus on human interest and emotion. It should not be merely a list of facts or events. Choose an angle that allows you to capture the story of the year by combining anecdotes and quotes to recreate specific moments. You can change the angle later in the writing process if the initial angle proves unworkable.

Create an informal outline.

In The *Art of the Interview* unit, you were taught to mark up your notes to highlight the best quotes and most relevant details. Now, you will build on that process. Go back through all of your interview and observation notes. Make sure you have copies of stories written by the school newspaper related to your topic (remember you can't use the quotes from the newspaper unless you attribute them).

Find quotes and details you have marked in your notes for use and number them in the order you intend to use them. If you do this carefully, you can essentially write your story by providing additional information and transitions between these elements to construct the story.

Write the lead.

Try beginning the story with a **scene-setting lead**, which verbally paints a picture of a person or place. Immediately take the reader into the story. Even if the reader is not familiar with the scene you are depicting or the person you are describing, this type of detail tends to draw him or her to the story.

- In newswriting, a lead consists of one paragraph of fewer than 25 words. In feature writing, which is more closely related to the type of stories that appear in yearbooks, the lead often is presented in two to three short paragraphs.

- Paragraphs are kept short in all forms of journalism because of the way stories are presented: in relatively narrow columns. Columns, even those wide by journalistic standards, can cause a paragraph of only two sentences to appear complex and unappealing.

EXAMPLE:

Headache forming, sophomore Sam Jacob's mind started racing. Worry and anxiety overwhelmed him. He looked tired, worn out, and exhausted because of the amount of hours he would spend on an essay in his AP European History class that pertained to the renaissance and scientific revolution.
– Indian, Shawnee Mission North High School, Jess Kilgore

Or try a **storytelling lead**, one that uses the story of a particular person to demonstrate the experience of many people as another compelling way to begin a story. In the interview, questions like "tell me about …." Or "So what happened when…" tend to elicit this type of information.

EXAMPLE:

For the first half of my life, my parents' bathroom became my personal salon. The whiff of burnt hair and products filled the cramped space. My mom sighed as she saw the bird's nest that she had to maintain.

"Mom, that hurts!" I said.

"Do you want your hair to look nice?" she asked, snapping back at me.

I sulked and counted in my head the minutes, which felt like hours. For the next few years, this was how I managed my hair. At about 8 years old, I graduated from the bathroom to an actual salon. Here, I wasn't able to whine.
– Lair, Shawnee Mission Northwest High School, Wairimu Mbogori

The scene-setting lead and the storytelling lead differ only slightly. They draw the reader directly into the story by providing compelling details. The storytelling lead is generally longer (3-4 paragraphs) and includes a quote. The scene-setting lead tends to focus on visual and auditory details and is generally 2-3 paragraphs in length.

ACTIVITY

Your Name:

PRACTICE THE LEAD

Practice writing the types of leads discussed in this lesson.

Walsworth yearbooks

NOTES!

Lesson 3 SCORE

RATE YOUR PROGRESS

4.0 ☐ I can do all tasks in 3.0 and I can teach others!

3.0 ☐ I can demonstrate how to identify and introduce the story angle to the reader and engage them through the use of well-structured leads. I can…

a. determine the central idea of the story and can introduce its message through a descriptive lead

b. use narrative techniques to keep the story's lead concise but engaging

c. use descriptive words, telling details, and sensory language to create an emotional connection with the reader and engage them in the lead of the story

2.0 ☐ I understand how to establish a strong angle before writing, but I still struggle to write a lead that introduces the angle and engages the reader through the use of telling details and narrative techniques.

1.0 ☐ I don't understand how to get started on writing a story.

Lesson 4
After the Lead

Objectives – In this lesson, you will learn:

To recognize and write a nut graf, and how to continue the story after the nut graf

The difference between active and passive voice, and the characteristics of a strong story end

The lead is followed by the nut graf (short for paragraph), which provides both transition and direction to the story.

NUT GRAF

Paired with a scene-setting or anecdotal lead, the nut graf tells the reader what the story is about and offers background information as needed for clarity. It can be one paragraph or several. The nut graf may or may not include a quotation. Be sure the nut graf does not tell so much that the reader has no reason to continue reading.

According to journalism researchers at The Poynter Institute, the nut graf has several purposes:

- It justifies the story by telling readers why they should care.
- It provides a transition from the lead and explains the lead and its connection to the rest of the story.
- It often includes supporting material that helps readers see why the story is important.

Let's go back to one of the lead examples from the previous lesson and look at more of the story.

EXAMPLE:

Descending into the icy water with GoPros in hand and snorkels secured, sophomores Holly Arquette and Caroline Casola prepared to capture their last summer adventure.

Arquette and Casola visited Devil's Den located in Williston, Fla., about 90-minutes from Orlando. Arquette saw this attraction on a @ThatBucketList Twitter post on her feed.
-Legend, William R. Boone High School, Molly Cooper,

The is the nut graf. It explains where they were and why they were there so the story can widen.

Walsworth yearbooks

ACTIVITY

Your Name: .....

FIND THE NUT GRAF

Read each of the following examples. Underline the nut graf.

1. *Huddled near the flagpole at 7:09 a.m., he grasped a stranger's hand and bowed his head to pray.*

   For sophomore Peyton Kane, Christianity affected every aspect of his life in a positive and beneficial way.

   Kane became interested in Christianity because of his parents, but as he got older, his friends got him involved in a youth group, Remix, held on Wednesdays at his church, Fellowship Orlando.

2. *"We beg to differ. We beg to differ!"*

   Dean of students Greg Wojczynski led the cheer in response to a referee's call during the game against main rival Aquinas Jan. 3.

   At the end of quarters and during timeouts, the entire student section of bleachers rocked back and forth in the motion of rowing a boat and Wojczynski was at the heart of all that spirit.

3. *The building reeked with the unmistakable smell of chlorine. Swimmers yelled in the echoing area and still were only barely audible to their teammates.*

   The Cougars stood in their "crash zone," where each team had their bags and other gear stashed, directly across from the warm-up pool.

   "The atmosphere was hectic and crowded," senior Aaron Bullard said. "It was a little nerve-wracking, but that's what made it so exciting."

   This was the most important meet of the year: state.

   Competing in the meet would not be an easy task, but all year the team had made it a goal to overcome the obstacles that challenged them.

Photo by Amy Wrenn

BODY OF THE STORY

The rest of the story will unfold naturally as you weave details and background information between quotations using the quote-transition-quote-transition format. Generally, yearbook stories will be organized chronologically, but stories that lack a clear timeline will follow a logical system of organization determined by the writer. Use active, not passive, voice throughout. Avoid any sentence that begins with "There are…," "There was…," or "There were…," etc.

ACTIVITY

Your Name: .....

PASSIVE VOICE

Rewrite these sentences to "activate" the verb.

1. The candy was sold in the gym by the PTA.

.....

2. A mess was left by the seminar class in room 11.

.....

3. Several notes were left on the board Tuesday.

.....

4. An anonymous letter was received by the newspaper staff.

.....

5. The team was excited about the state tournament.

.....

6. The event was canceled by bad weather.

.....

7. The proposed school funding initiative will be bitterly opposed by groups that favor decreased property taxes.

.....

8. The store was robbed by an employee.

.....

9. The fire was caused by an oven that overheated.

.....

10. The book had been given to Stephanie as a gift.

.....

THE END

Work just as hard on your ending as you did on the lead. Every story must come to a complete and satisfying end. The story shouldn't just stop, it should give the reader the impression that the end has been reached.

- Return to the scene introduced in the lead to bring the story to a close.
- Describe the reaction of people in the story to the end of the event — the dance, the game, the play. Or show what people did at the end.
- Find a quote that provides a natural conclusion to the story.

The best endings leave the reader with something that resonates, something to remember.

"THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY"

Seniors flop like fish out of water at family night Sept. 8

by Jennifer Mathew and Austyn Wilson
Wings – Arrowhead Christian Academy

It was the moment of a lifetime.

Strong, attention-grabbing, opening statement.

Granted, that life belonged to a fish worth 25 cents from Walmart, won for a dollar at the senior fundraiser booth.

This is the nut graf. It builds on the lead, providing clarification with an unexpected twist, and introduces the topic of the story – events at the senior fundraising both at Family Night.

The game was simple: toss a pingpong ball, land it into a bowl floating in a kiddie pool, win a fish.

It was going well.

Until an overeager child dropped his newly won guppy.

These short, descriptive, scene-setting statements build up to a bigger moment the reader begins to anticipate.

Guests screamed as they watched the fish flop around. Seniors Payden Miranda, Alexis Guerth, Madison Anderson, Alyssa Quast and Jacob Van Dam lunged for the fish. Guerth scooped it up, tossed it back into the kiddie pool, bagged it and handed it back to the child.

"The kid was satisfied," Van Dam said. "He even ended up going on to win another fish. A senior crisis averted."

Good time to introduce a quote after the longer intro. The quote's lightheartedness in downplaying events with a bit of sarcasm helps balance the dramatic buildup of the story.

Aside from this hiccup, Family Night seemed to be off with few interruptions – until parent Troy TerBest discovered the 800 hot dogs he purchased a week before had gone unrefrigerated. TerBest stored the dogs in the cuisine room refrigerator, unaware of the recent renovations and disconnected power.

This paragraph opens with a great transition that moves into other highlights of Family Night to redirect the reader to the larger picture of Family Night as a whole, not just the fish.

"We found it out at 4 o'clock that day," TerBest said. "But, being in good ol' America, the stores are always chock-full of hot dogs."

TerBest sent his wife Pamela to Sam's Club to purchase a fresh batch.

As guests chomped away at their unspoiled dinners, seniors Austyn Wilson and Alyssa Quast prepared their 26 players for the annual senior-faculty basketball game. As both teams started to warm up, the crowd focused on the ringer the teachers had snagged: former assistant basketball coach Kevin McNeil.

Another smooth transition moves seamlessly from the hot dog dinner into the senior-faculty basketball game.

"He plays basketball over at San Bernardino Valley College," senior Trevor Cassell said. "I asked him before the game not to dunk on me. I knew it was going to go down."

McNeil took to the court, posterizing anybody he could find.

"Everyone was scared," Wilson said. "We were winning, but the stands would go crazy when [McNeil] would dunk. He showed us what's up."

Even though the story is written in past tense, it feels like the reader is present, watching it happen almost in slow-motion.

The seniors kept a 48-44 lead through the first quarter. Coaches Wilson and Quast replaced their weary starting lineup with new faces. Blake Seaton and Jimmy Jizmejian, fresh off the football field after a scrimmage against Ontario Christian, made several baskets in the seniors' favor.

But the lead would not last.

As the clock dwindled, the staff rallied and gained a 52-49 lead. David Curiel took the ball and ran out the last moments of the clock. The seniors were forced to watch as the game slipped away from them and the buzzer finalized their defeat.

Closing statement wraps up the story beautifully while tying back to the opening.

The moment of a lifetime had passed.

the one that got away

SENIORS FLOP LIKE FISH OUT OF WATER AT FAMILY NIGHT SEPT. 8

It was the moment of a lifetime.

Granted, that life belonged to a fish worth 25 cents from Walmart, won for a dollar at the senior fundraiser booth.

The game was simple: toss a ping-pong ball, land it into a bowl floating in a kiddie pool, win a fish.

It was going well.

Until an overeager child dropped his newly won guppy.

Guests screamed as they watched the fish flop around. Seniors Peyden Miranda, Alexis Guerth, Madison Anderson, Alyssa Quast and Jacob Van Dam lunged for the fish. Guerth scooped it up, tossed it back into the kiddie pool, bagged it and handed it back to the child.

"The kid was satisfied," Van Dam said. "He even ended up going on to win another fish. A senior crisis averted."

Aside from this hiccup, Family Night seemed to be off with few interruptions – until parent Troy TerBest discovered the 800 hot dogs he purchased a week before had gone unrefrigerated. TerBest stored the dogs in the cuisine room refrigerator, unaware of the recent renovations and disconnected power.

"We found it out at 4 o'clock that day," TerBest said. "But, being in good ol' America, the stores are always chock-full of hot dogs."

TerBest sent his wife Pamela to Sam's Club to purchase a fresh batch.

As guests chomped away at their unspoiled dinners, seniors Austyn Wilson and Alyssa Quast prepared their 26 players for the annual senior-faculty basketball game. As both teams started to warm up, the crowd focused on the ringer the teachers had snagged: former assistant basketball coach Kevin McNeil.

"He plays basketball over at San Bernardino Valley College," senior Trevor Cassell said. "I asked him before the game not to dunk on me. I knew it was going to go down."

McNeil took to the court, posterizing anybody he could find.

"Everyone was scared," Wilson said. "We were winning, but the stands would go crazy when [McNeil] would dunk. He showed us what's up."

The seniors kept a 48-44 lead through the first quarter. Coaches Wilson and Quast replaced their weary starting lineup with new faces. Blake Seaton and Jimmy Jizmejian, fresh off the football field after a scrimmage against Ontario Christian, made several baskets in the seniors' favor.

But the lead would not last.

As the clock dwindled, the staff rallied and gained a 52-49 lead. David Curiel took the ball and ran out the last moments of the clock. The seniors were forced to watch as the game slipped away from them and the buzzer finalized their defeat.

The moment of a lifetime had passed.

JENNIFER MATHEW, AUSTIN WILSON

Jumping to block his shot, senior Trevor Cassel lunges in front of David Curiel. Both Cassel and Curiel went head-to-head in the senior-faculty basketball game. Cassel's as the sneaky-sly ball-handler, Mark Magill makes a basket. "Mr. Best came up to me the day before and told me how excited Marky and Cade [Rager] were to play so I figured, 'why not?'" coach Austyn Wilson said. (Photo: Sam Cesario)

A rogue guppy is rescued by Peyden Miranda, Alexis Guerth, Madison Anderson and Alyssa Quast after an accidental dip. Seniors mastered the tradition of a kiddie pool game, with proceeds going towards their senior trip. (Photo: Kyle Sharp)

With sticky fingers, Cassidi Calzaretta hands a snow cone to an awaiting customer. Calzaretta and Ethan Baker manned the booth with more than 300 snow cones, which they sold for a dollar each. "It was fun," Calzaretta said. (Photo: Sam Cesario) To decorate her smocks, junior Taryn Clark holds up a mirror to present a freshly painted face. The junior booth sold snow cones and makeovers, each for the price of one ticket. "The most difficult thing I've had to paint is a rainbow dragon," Clark said. "I didn't even choose to paint faces." (Photo: Brett Dickinson)

At the sophomore booth, Matthew Vrana helps a customer fix a golden ticket from a candy bar. "The kid threw the fishing string over the booth, then the rope went around my neck," Vrana said. "That wasn't very pleasant." (Photo: Sunny Zhu) **Advertising their prizes,** sophomores Kandi Stover and Isabella Adair flaunt their fishing incentives. A popular booth, the sophomores gave out their entire arsenal of ice cream and candy, forcing Adair and Stover to wave their sign. (Photo: Selah Kelley)

EVENTS • FAMILY NIGHT

10

11

Walsworth yearbooks

NOTES!

Lesson 4 SCORE

RATE YOUR PROGRESS

4.0 ☐ I can do all tasks in 3.0 and I can teach others!

3.0 ☐ I can demonstrate how to develop the angle of the story by effectively using well-chosen, relevant facts and details. I can…

a. properly follow the quote-transition-quote format and can vary my transition sentences to connect quotes and create cohesion in the story

b. use precise language and phrases to maintain an active voice throughout the story

c. craft a satisfying conclusion by returning to the events recorded in the lead or by using a storytelling quote that brings closure to the piece

2.0 ☐ I understand how the placement of an effective nut graf helps develop the story, but I still struggle to logically organize the details and quotes of the story into the proper format.

1.0 ☐ I don't understand how to proceed with writing a story after the lead.

Lesson 5
Improve Your Writing

Objective – In this lesson, you will learn:

To become familiar with advanced storytelling techniques

Once you've mastered the techniques of storytelling from the previous lessons, you are ready to employ advanced storytelling techniques to enhance the appeal of your story. These techniques are found both in the words of excellent writers and in the images that you have grown accustomed to viewing in a good movie or TV show. Good storytelling is good storytelling across all media. As a result, you can adapt techniques from poetry, song lyrics and cinema, as well as from other various forms of writing to improve yearbook stories.

WRITE TIGHT WITHOUT COMPROMISING CONTENT

Famous song lyrics, such as "Eleanor Rigby," and "Sittin' by the Dock of the Bay" are wonderful examples of writing tight to convey a message. To accomplish this, you should work to remove redundancy.

Photo by Kaci Godfrey

ACTIVITY

Your Name: .....

REMOVING REDUNDANCY

Each of the following phrases is either redundant or wordy. Rewrite each.

1. Cooperate together

.....

2. Cheaper in cost

.....

3. Filled to capacity

.....

4. Past history

.....

5. Personal opinion

.....

6. They beat him about the face and body.

.....

7. The superintendent's report was based on the true facts.

.....

8. The freshman football team played their games at 3 p.m. in the afternoon.

.....

9. Advance planning can make all the difference in the success of a school dance.

.....

10. Last of all, I would like to completely finish this exercise before I go to bed.

.....

THINK CINEMATICALLY

Use the techniques of a cinematographer. Think about your favorite movie and the way the camera presents a variety of angles to tell the story. These same techniques can be used in good writing.

- Present the overview picture… show where the story is taking place.
- Move in closer… show people and how they interact.
- Go for the close-up… provide small details that others may not have noticed but that add depth to the story.
- Create slow motion by showing action or layering detail in short, choppy sentences.
- Create the sense of fast forward by presenting action in longer sentences that utilize verb or gerund phrases.

See how it was done in this example.

"BABY ON BOARD"

Waking up to the sound of a crying baby was all too familiar for students in Child Development

by Mollie Elfrink
Lair – Shawnee Mission Northwest High School

Waa! Waa!

At 3:32 a.m. on a Saturday morning, sophomore Emma Bowman peeled her covers off of her face and rolled over. She stared across the room at the crying robotic baby, trying to gather the strength to get up. Exhausted, she finally threw her legs off the side of the bed and picked up the "baby."

The lead sets the scene, bringing the reader into not only the physical place where the story will begin to unfold, but into the mental attitude of the subject.

WAAA!

"I woke up and I was completely out of it, and it wanted to be fed," Bowman said. "It took half an hour, so I wasn't even tired after and I couldn't go back to bed."

This quote really gets us in the subject's head in that moment.

Child Development students each took home a Real Care Baby for two to three days. The Real Care Baby, an infant simulator used to create a realistic parenting experience, allowed teachers to grade their students on their child care skills. Sensors in the baby and its belongings reported how often it was fed, whether it was shaken, how often it was picked up and other critical information.

Nut graf expounds upon the opening and gives necessary background info.

"I think it's definitely realistic; it's more work than anyone could imagine," Bowman said. "I'm glad I know more of what it's like being a mom. I was sleep deprived."

Bowman sat in her bed, eyes wide open, as the glow from her television screen lit the room. She got up and made her way to the kitchen. As she was pouring herself a glass of water, she heard a faint cry coming from her room.

"I would do everything, feed it, change it and it would not stop crying," Bowman said. "It was, like, screaming. It was so annoying."

These scene-setting, visual details help us understand the quote. Can you feel the frustration in her words? Note how she refers to the baby consistently as "it." The writer zooms in on details that might have been overlooked, but these close-up details add depth.

The next morning, Bowman left for work thinking that the baby would turn off. Once she arrived at Taylormade Catering, Brooke Klassen, Bowman's mom, left a voice mail on her phone alerting her that the baby hadn't turned off. She could hear it screaming as her mom spoke.

This paragraph helps illustrate the never-ending nature of parenthood. We feel her stress building right when she thought she was going to get a break.

"She told me that the baby was not off, and I needed to call my teacher," Bowman said. "She was very mad and felt like she didn't know what to do." Klassen sat on her couch with her friends when all of the sudden, the giggles were interrupted by crying.

Confused, Klassen followed the noise to Bowman's bedroom.

"I was very panicked, I didn't want to be responsible for affecting her grade negatively and I did feel under-educated on all of the things in the bag and how they worked," Klassen said. "I didn't know if I was going to do it correctly."

Klassen, a mother of two, knows all too well what taking care of a baby requires. She found that the Real Care Baby reminded her of raising her own children.

Having quotes from her mother gives a much more balanced approach to the story. It's not just Bowman saying how difficult it can be – her mom collaborates her story and gives a new perspective.

"In some ways, it was similar to a normal baby," Klassen said. "The timing was probably right on as far as how often it needed things. It was also very different. With a real baby, you can calm it down while you're getting whatever it needs. You can hold it, coddle it and it will calm down. But with that baby, it continually gets louder and louder. It makes it a little more stressful."

Bowman pushed her front door open and threw her bags from work on the floor. Reluctantly, she walked into her bedroom, picked up the baby and started to feed it. After burping it, she laid it back down. Quietly, Bowman slid back into her bed hoping to get some rest in preparation for the sleepless night ahead.

The ending is cyclical in effect. One sleepless night leads to another, just the way the story began.

BE SPECIFIC

Say what you mean. Choose verbs and adjectives that paint a specific image in the mind of the reader.

- Strutted, not walked
- Maroon or scarlet, not red

Provide pertinent details, but use only those details that add insight or meaning. Readers want to know the name of the dog, the type of car and the type of clothing. "Her crystal-studded Miss Me jeans" paints an entirely different picture from "her skin-tight Mossimo leggings."

- He walked across the stage to shake hands with the principal.
- He limped across the stage…
- He galloped across the stage…

All three show a person walking across the stage, but the latter two quickly paint a picture.

TAKE THE READER SOMEWHERE UNEXPECTED

In the process of your research or interviewing, it is important to learn about details that the average person has no way to know and include them in the story.

- The cross country coach who runs every night at practice: first with his best runners and then catches up with the slowest and runs the route a second time.
- The drama teacher who never leaves the building before 11 p.m., even when a play is not in production because she's getting ready for the tryouts for the next play.
- The good-luck charms or pre-game rituals of your school's state champion heavyweight wrestler.
- What it's like to have to kiss on stage.

Taking time to learn about details like these take your story from ho-hum coverage that reads just like every other story on this topic to something special, something memorable and something that people who aren't even involved in these particular stories would be interested in reading.

CHOOSE A POINT OF VIEW

Just because journalistic stories tend to be written in third person doesn't mean this is the only point of view that can be used. There are so many alternate methods of telling a story.

Consider telling the football story from the point of view of a student who rides the bench. Spend time behind the scenes at the fall play. Can you tell the story from the point of view of the lead actor and his thoughts as he gets ready to go on stage, as he prepares for an exceedingly quick costume change or as he deals with a personal struggle that allows him to play his part even more realistically? Or perhaps you can follow a freshman through the tryout process and learn what it's like to try out for the first time.

Regardless of the point of view, you will need to then choose the best way to tell the story.

- Third person is the most common journalistic point of view but certainly not the only one.
- Third person employs the use of he, she, it and they.
- First person tends to make copy personal and should be used sparingly. It makes use of the pronouns "I" and "we." It is most appropriate for stories that are best told as a personal narrative by a single person.
- Second person creates copy that is very inclusive. It is marked by the use of the pronoun "you" and is generally reserved for how-to stories or opening copy.

FIND THE AUTHENTIC VOICE

Every person you will interview has his or her own voice. It's a different way of talking, of putting words together. Be sure you retain the authentic voice of people you interview rather than changing their words to the way you would have said it. This is another part of making a story come alive and ring true.

But it's important to remember that every writer has his or her own voice as well. You would never mistake Edgar Allen Poe for Emily Dickinson or E.E. Cummings or Ernest Hemingway or the person who sits next to you during yearbook. The best stories capture these kinds of authentic voices.

SHOW, DON'T TELL

This is not an easy skill to learn. It's easier to describe the football player as tough, a teacher as fascinating or the homecoming queen's gown as beautiful, but don't do it. Observe carefully and accurately. Provide just enough detail to paint the picture and let the reader react rather than telling him your interpretation.

- Use fewer adjectives and strong, interesting verbs.
- Be careful that the adjectives you choose do not unwittingly signal the writer's bias.

Remember: Readers don't come to the yearbook in search of a lifeless quote or looking just for the scoreboard. They come to be reminded... to remember, to hear a story they already know the ending to.

Photo by Jolie Barnhart

Read the following example story to see how it utilizes the concepts discussed in this lesson.

"ON THE OUTSIDE"

Teens reflect on inner struggles, stress

by Danielle Robinson
Buffalo – Haltom High School

Stressed. Her red, puffy eyes stared back at her like a cruel reminder of the pain she just released through her tears. Overwhelmed. She compared her happiness to those around her seeking the joy they portrayed. Face it. She positioned herself in front of the mirror, screamed, straining her vocal chords and waited for the camera to capture the pain. Sophomore Alexandra Ramirez* relayed her daily struggles through the power of photography.

"I just thought if I were to put how I felt into a photograph for everyone to see on the outside, then maybe those who are going through what I am won't feel as alone," Ramirez said. "Everything is a domino effect. There are a lot of times I see how everyone is happy and smiling and laughing with their groups of friends. Sometimes even the people who I call friends push me out, and it makes me feel alone."

Ramirez also found comfort through the symbolism of the semicolon to overcome the day-to-day oppression she felt. Suggesting there is a choice to continue life despite depression, addiction, self-harm and thoughts of suicide, students like Ramirez embraced the power of the punctuation and brought their struggles to the surface in order to cope.

"The semicolon shows me how other people push past their struggles. It's inspiring when you see someone with the tattoo or if you hear them talking about how they almost ended their lives, but now they have kids and have a future," Ramirez said.

Similarly, senior Danielle Macintosh* embraced the semicolon by tattooing it on her ankle.

"The tattoo actually matches one with my mother," Macintosh said. "Both my mother and I have suffered from depression within our lifetimes, whether it be dealing with bad relationships, family matters or dealing with mental abuse from others. We turned the semicolon to look like a cat because I love cats, but I still wanted it to look like what it is supposed to be since it is my way of saying I chose to live."

Like Ramirez and Macintosh, sophomore Almina Mendoza* faced hardships and found a way to visually express her feelings.

"It's really hard to talk about the pain, so I can express it through photography," Mendoza said. "I'm going through a hard time with family and friends, and I wanted to show that it's okay not to be okay. In my photo, I chose to use a mask because you put on a different face when you talk to others, and my running mascara is to show the pain I feel behind the mask."

Sophomore Meredith Nataro* showed courage by bringing issues to the service. Nataro admitted her support system of friends and family gave her that courage.

"Even though I look perfectly fine, I have a mental health condition that requires me to take medication," Nataro said. "I started hating the pills because they reminded me that there was something wrong with me. I guess the reason behind it was I was in fear of people judging me. I keep close to my friends, and they have helped me cope. I want people to know that it might seem like you're struggling right now, but I promise, it will get better. When you feel like you're all alone and want to keep it all to yourself, it might be the time to open up to the people around you and tell them what you are going through so you can help cope with the situation instead of feeling hopeless and all alone."

*Walsworth has changed the names of the individuals from the originally published version to protect the identities of the students.

NOTES!

ACTIVITY

Your Name: .....

Story Topic: .....

STORY CHECKLIST

When you have completed your first draft of a story, write a 1-2 sentence summary of it below. This summary should make it clear what the angle of your story is.

.....

.....

.....

.....

Headline:

.....

Secondary Headline:

.....

Sidebar Plan:

.....

1. Does the story match the summary provided above? ..... Yes ____ No ____
2. Does the story focus on a specific person or persons? ..... Yes ____ No ____
3. Have you chosen an angle that allows the story to be told in the most effective manner? ..... Yes ____ No ____
4. Does the story provide specific details using quotes that will help the reader recall the moments described or discussed? ..... Yes ____ No ____
5. Are at least three highly appropriate sources quoted in the story? ..... Yes ____ No ____
6. Does one source have leadership responsibilities for the event or organization in the story? ..... Yes ____ No ____
7. Was one source involved in the event or organization? ..... Yes ____ No ____
8. Can one source provide a reaction quote? ..... Yes ____ No ____
9. Do all quotes provide insight rather than facts that don't need to be quoted? ..... Yes ____ No ____
10. Is the story lively, interesting and familiar? ..... Yes ____ No ____
11. Does the lead draw the reader into the story? ..... Yes ____ No ____

12. Would a reader feel compelled to keep reading? If, as you read the story, you lost interest in the story at any point, mark it. . . . . Yes ____ No ____

13. Is the story effectively organized? . . . . . Yes ____ No ____

14. Does it flow easily and logically from the beginning to the end? . . . . . Yes ____ No ____

15. Have you checked to ensure the story follows AP style? . . . . . Yes ____ No ____

16. Read the story again looking for mechanical errors as well as errors in fact. . . . . Yes ____ No ____

17. Has the information for your sidebar been submitted? . . . . . Yes ____ No ____

Once you have completed this form, you are ready to meet with the copy editor. Please set up a time to meet within the next two days. At the end of the meeting with the copy editor, you will have 48 hours to make changes/corrections on your story (unless you and the copy editor negotiate a different deadline).

NOTES!

BODY COPY EVALUATION

Writer's name:

Date due:

Section of yearbook:

Page number(s):

Subject of story:

5 = outstanding
4 = very good
3 = acceptable
2 = not acceptable
1 = not completed

	Self Evaluation Date: _____	Section/Copy Editor Review Date: _____	Due Date for Edits: _____	EIC Review Date: _____	Due Date for Edits: _____	Adviser Review Date: _____
Lead draws in reader	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1
Copy follows journalism style	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1
Story written in past tense	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1
Story written in third person unless it is a first-person account	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1
Active verbs are used	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1
Paragraphs are short	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1
Story contains background info	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1
At least two sources are quoted	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1
Interview notes accompany story	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1
Quotes are verified	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1
Quotes are in separate paragraphs	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1
Angle is interesting	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1
School name, words like "students" or "seniors" are not repeated or overused	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1
Abbreviations are known to all readers	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1

	Self Evaluation Date: _____	Section/Copy Editor Review Date: _____	Due Date for Edits: _____	EIC Review Date: _____	Due Date for Edits: _____	Adviser Review Date: _____
Editorializing is avoided	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1
Conclusion has a sense of finality	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1
Spelling, grammar and punctuation are correct	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1
Story does not leave unanswered questions	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1		☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 5 4 3 2 1

Evaluated by Writer: **Total score:**

Evaluated by Section/Copy Editor: **Total score:**

Evaluated by EIC: **Total score:**

Evaluated by Adviser: **Total score:**

Lesson 5 SCORE

RATE YOUR PROGRESS

4.0 ☐ I can do all tasks in 3.0 and I can teach others!

3.0 ☐ I can demonstrate how to develop and strengthen writing by applying advanced storytelling techniques throughout copy. I can…

a. revise, edit and rewrite the story to remove redundancy

b. use precise language, including strong verbs and adjectives, to create specific, concise copy

c. use various points of view in copywriting when appropriate for the content of the story

d. use telling details, sensory language and cinematic techniques to create vivid pictures of the experience, event, setting and/or characters

I can establish an authentic voice that highlights the unexpected details of the story in a creative way while maintaining an objective tone throughout.

2.0 ☐ I understand the importance of revising the story and removing redundancy from copy, but I still struggle to apply more advanced story-telling techniques.

1.0 ☐ I understand how to write a basic story that follows the proper format, but I don't understand the techniques required to refine the story into a publishable piece.

Lesson 6
The Rest of the Story

Objectives – In this lesson, you will learn:

The criteria for information that could be included in a mod

The various types of mods that might be included in a yearbook

As readers increasingly demand information presented in a visual manner, yearbooks must adapt. Mods allow yearbook staffs to combine design, graphics and words to present information in a visually interesting way.

A mod, sometimes referred to as a sidebar, is a small feature story that complements the main story on a spread. Use mods to record details and free up space for feature coverage, provide team and player stats, or to feature mini profiles about interesting people involved in clubs and activities as well as a host other information that will add to the coverage of the year. It should either cover important information that will complete the coverage or provide interesting "insider" information that goes beyond the expected coverage.

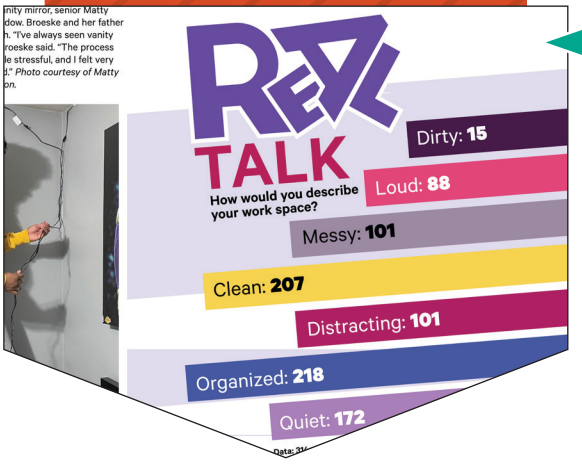
Consider these criteria as you consider the types of information that would be appropriate for a mod.

- A mod should present interesting and informative facts and short stories that the reader wants to know.
- Information in a mod should be presented in a visually compelling and easily digested manner.
- Take Goldilocks' advice: the length of an infographic must be "just right." Not so long that it's overwhelming, not so short that it isn't worth the reader's attention.
- Be sure to provide appropriate attribution that either explains how the information was gathered or cites the source of the information.
- The design of all types of infographics should coordinate with and further the graphic theme using the same fonts. However, to tie the mod to the spread it appears on, its color palette should echo or coordinate with the palette of the spread.
- Various types of infographics should have titles that spin off of the theme phrase, similar to section titles.
- If you can do an internet search and find the information included in your mod, it isn't mod material.

MOD EXAMPLES

CURRENT EVENTS

STATISTICS & CHARTS



"THIS IS REAL"

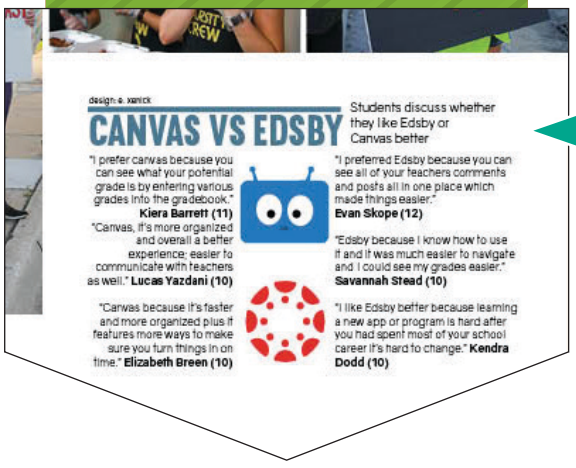
El Camino Real Charter High School

Woodland Hills, California

El Corazón

FAST FACTS

VS.


design: e. xenick

CANVAS VS EDSBY

Students discuss whether they like Edsby or Canvas better

"I prefer canvas because you can see what your potential grade is by entering various grades into the gradebook." **Kiera Barrett (11)**

"Canvas, it's more organized and overall a better experience; easier to communicate with teachers as well." **Lucas Yazdani (10)**

"Canvas because it's faster and more organized plus it features more ways to make sure you turn things in on time." **Elizabeth Breen (10)**

"I preferred Edsby because you can see all of your teachers comments and posts all in one place which made things easier." **Evan Skope (12)**

"Edsby because I know how to use it and it was much easier to navigate and I could see my grades easier." **Savannah Stead (10)**

"I like Edsby better because learning a new app or program is hard after you had spent most of your school career it's hard to change." **Kendra Dodd (10)**

"WHO WOULD'VE THOUGHT"

H.B. Plant High School

Tampa, Florida

Panther

PRO/CON

THE SHOW GOES ON

Chorus students discuss the pros and cons of having Madrigals outside

PROS

BEN AVRIETT (9): "We got to have a live audience."

SARA HENDRY (10): "We could have the same engaging experience as last year like being able to still preform with costumes and an audience."

JESSICA THAXTON (11): "It was a pretty day and we got to be in a new environment to perform."

CONS

"It was harder to hear the performers, and you had to rely on the weather to perform."

"That we didn't have a dinner, we don't have as much of an interactive performance, and we had limited shows."

"There was a possibility that we would have to re-schedule because of the weather."

cons - design: e. xenick - photos: l. gough

POSITIONED DOWNSTAGE, **Blasé Roque (12)** says his lines and uses his le hand to reiterate the message. Madrigals this year took on the musical "Once Upon A Mattress", which was an adaption of the "Princess & The Pea". "Madrigals was different this year because we had to perform outside and due to COVID we couldn't serve food as we usually do. (Even) with the changes, I'm still glad tha we could perform opposed to it being canceled," Roque said.

CHUGGING FROM A PR

Isabella Rodrigue

role of Winn

The s

QUOTE COLLECTION

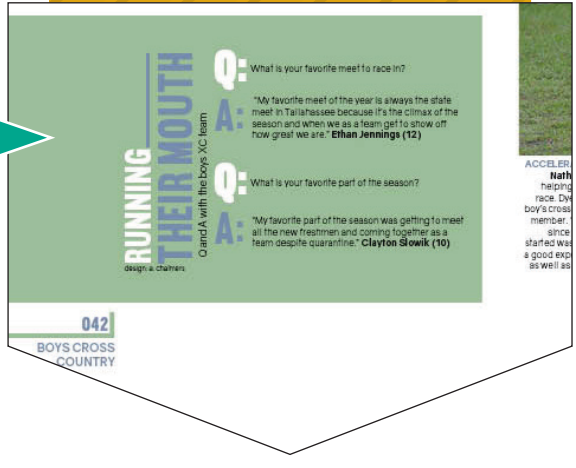
DISCO

"I think the pants make my outfit groovy. Spirit week brings the school together because it's something silly that everyone can laugh about." **Jessie Babb (10)**

"My favorite part of spirit week is letting loose and being goofy because we are all working hard and stressed out with school and dressing up is something cute and easy to release tension or stress." **Solange Sai (12)**

"I think my gold and black disco shirt makes my outfit look groovy because it stands out and has a cool pattern. Spirit week brings everyone together with its themes because it shows off the creativity of people who go all in with their outfits." **Matthew Maney (12)**

Q&A


RUNNING THEIR MOUTH

Q and A with the boys XC team

design: a. chalmers

Q: What is your favorite meet to race in?

A: "My favorite meet of the year is always the state meet in Tallahassee because it's the climax of the season and when we as a team get to show off how great we are." **Ethan Jennings (12)**

Q: What is your favorite part of the season?

A: "My favorite part of the season was getting to meet all the new freshmen and coming together as a team despite quarantine." **Clayton Slowik (10)**

ACCELER

Nath

helping

race. Dy

boy's cross

member.

since

started was

a good exp

as well as

042

BOYS CROSS COUNTRY

ACTIVITY

THINK OF A MOD

List the types of mod coverage you think would add interesting coverage to the story you are working on for this unit.

Story topic:

Mod coverage:

Lesson 6 SCORE

RATE YOUR PROGRESS

4.0 ☐ I can do all tasks in 3.0 and I can teach others!

3.0 ☐ I can demonstrate an ability to further a story by identifying information and content appropriate for a mod. I can…

a. use precise language and vocabulary to create specific, concise copy

b. use theme-related graphic elements, fonts and designs to create a mod that reinforces the visual message of the book

c. gather relevant information from a variety of sources to provide the reader with "insider" information that will either complete or expand upon the expected coverage of the year

I can produce clear and coherent writing that is appropriate for a mod and includes attribution and source information.

2.0 ☐ I understand what a mod is and its purpose in yearbooks, but I don't understand how to create content that is appropriate for a mod.

1.0 ☐ I don't understand what a mod is or its purpose in yearbooks.

Lesson 7
Theme Copy

Objectives – In this lesson, you will learn:

Why theme copy is difficult to write

The steps needed to write theme copy

Sometimes it feels like theme copy is one part excellent word choice, one part brilliant writing, one part inspired theme, three parts magic and two parts total luck.

That's because theme copy is the toughest copy in the yearbook to write. Why?

- It's the first public airing of your theme. Get it right and everyone loves and identifies with it. Mess it up and nobody likes your theme or even understands it.
- Theme copy forces you to take an abstract idea that you came up with over the summer and apply concrete examples from the year that is now unfolding to make it relevant, to bring it to life. Taking the abstract and making it concrete can be a serious challenge.
- Finally, it needs to sound like anyone in your school could have written it. It needs to have a universal teenage voice that expresses the experiences and thoughts of the people who attend your school.

START WITH A GREAT THEME

To write great theme copy, you need to have a great theme. Something that is relevant and appealing to your student body. Something current. For more information on generating a great theme, see the *Finding Your Theme* unit.

GATHER EVIDENCE

At its most basic, theme copy is nothing more than a proof statement, an argument proving that the theme you selected has a direct relationship, a connection to the year it describes. What events have occurred since you selected the theme that validates the theme statement? What conversations, what moments in class, in the hall, or during a game seem to go with the theme? These all are the evidence that proves the theme you selected continues to be appropriate for the year you are covering.

VOICE

The voice you are searching for isn't the voice of a single person, but rather a chorus that sounds like your student body. Consider finding your last five yearbooks. Read the opening copy from each. Then have a forensics student read them aloud expressively. If you have

always had unsatisfying theme copy, look for books from other schools with outstanding theme copy. Read it in the same way. Although there will be some differences from school to school, the predominant tone and voice in any school's theme copy is that of a young person, of someone your age. Although you know what that sounds like, it's sometimes difficult to understand how that translates to theme copy until you hear it in someone else's book.

CREATING THEME COPY

At this point, there's no best way to write theme copy. There's only the way that works best this year, for your staff. This is the part where a clear understanding of your theme, preparation, luck and magic really do come together.

- **Option 1:** One person takes all this information and creates the theme copy. This can be highly effective, but also creates ownership and makes it difficult to edit. With anything less than a crystal clear understanding of the theme, the writer will struggle to explain the theme.
- **Option 2:** With a strong writer's hands on the keyboard, a group of 2-4 students takes the information and writes the theme copy together. This generally takes longer and requires a group of students who trust each other. It does, however, tend to create copy that is more universal and the group generally accepts edits more easily.
- **Option 3:** Rather than one person or a small group of people writing the theme copy, several people each write a chunk of the theme copy. Generally, a chunk is limited to particular area of the theme or particular topic. Once each person has written their chunk, one writer will knit the chunks together into a cohesive whole. If each person understands the theme well, this can be a highly effective and efficient method of writing theme copy. The major difficulty will be in making sure individual voices are not apparent.

REDUCE BY HALF

Once you have theme copy that explains the theme and provides concrete evidence of the ways the theme applies to your school this year, you probably need to work to cut it by nearly half of its length. Look for ways to say the same thing in fewer words. Search for unnecessary details and delete them. When describing an event that occurred, we often include more information than is needed. Most of your cuts will come from this process, but expect to realize that entire paragraphs or ideas will need to be removed to improve your theme copy.

AND YOU'RE DONE...

Good theme copy resonates with those who read it, even if they don't go to your school. High school students should see themselves or people like themselves in your theme copy. High school graduates of any age recognize themselves at that age in your copy. Good theme copy connects to people. It creates a physical and emotional reaction. It has heart. This is one of the magical parts of a yearbook. Don't stop editing, cutting, rewriting, rethinking, reshaping it until it's perfect. And when you think it's perfect, put it away for two weeks, then read it, edit it, reshape it again.

Here is an example of outstanding, intriguing theme copy:

66 H 99

Haltom High School
Buffalo

H STANDS FOR HOME.

H represents the Link Crew Members making sure freshmen feel a part of Buff Nation. It's shown by the varsity football team winning their first district game in ten years. H is the student section hooked on the feeling of victory and attending every game, even if it takes two hours to get there. It's heard in the movements of the Pride of Haltom during their performances at games, Bands of America and UIL. H is seen when students pull out their phones, hoping to get a shot of Ms. Campbell dancing the "Wobble" during homecoming week. It means getting up early to get help from Mr. Edge in the tutorial lab or staying late to finish the final touches of a VASE project. H is shown by Omega students who make Starbuffs coffee and tea for teachers and staff every morning. It's represented by the Back the Blue footballs the varsity football captains gave to the police chief and fire marshal. H is the Humanitarian Club collecting socks and Ms. Autrey delivering coats to the homeless. It's seen in the excitement of the girls varsity basketball team making it to playoffs and robotics advancing to the World Championships. H is revealed by STUCO raising money for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society to honor Jacob and benefit Christian. It's in our spirit and who we are.

H HAS HEART.

As a reader, you've seen the H on the cover. Now, the lead to the opening copy pulls you in because this is your school, your home.

Every high school student who reads this recognizes himself somewhere in this copy, because generally, this is what life is like for American high school students.

Note the use of specific cultural references that tie this book and this theme to 2017.

Details unique to this school – VASE project, Starbuffs coffee, Back the Blue footballs – will be recognized by the student body of Haltom. That's important and it's this ability to hold up a mirror to your student body and allow them to see themselves that makes theme copy come alive.

Tie back to the very beginning of the copy. You can tell that the story is almost over.

Here's the theme again. You've read the whole thing. Even if you can't put the theme specifically into words, you have a sense of it, an idea of what to expect in this book… that Haltom High School is a caring school community that enables their students to succeed.

Walsworth yearbooks

ACTIVITY

Your Name:

WRITING THEME COPY

Trying to determine which theme possibility is the best? Start writing your theme copy using the steps outlined in this lesson. If you are doing this prior to the beginning of the school year, use the details and specifics from the previous year to make your theme specific to your school.

Before you begin, take time to agree on whether your opening copy will be written in first, second or third person. Each has its advantages (see the Point of View section earlier in this unit). If the staff can't agree, each person should write it in the way that seems more comfortable to them. This may help you decide which voice is most appropriate for your particular theme.

Lesson 7 SCORE

RATE YOUR PROGRESS

4.0 ☐ I can do all tasks in 3.0 and I can teach others!

3.0 ☐ I can demonstrate how to craft engaging theme copy that creates an emotional connection with readers and effectively communicates the story of the year. I can…

a. develop theme copy through the use of telling details and significant and relevant facts that build on one another to create a coherent whole

b. establish a point of view and voice that connects with readers and engages them in the copy

c. research and gather relevant information from a variety of sources that will develop and prove the theme's relationship to the year it describes

d. work with peers to apply different approaches to writing theme copy (individually, small groups or large groups) in order to construct a focused message

I can produce concise, clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization and style reflect the message of the theme.

2.0 ☐ I have a relevant theme and I understand the voice theme copy should have, but I don't know how to begin creating strong, relatable theme copy that effectively tells the story of the year.

1.0 ☐ I can write a traditional story, but I don't understand how to translate those skills to writing theme copy.

Lesson 8
Title Page

Objective – In this lesson, you will learn:

The function of a title page and the information that should be included on it

The title page is one of several pages where the theme is carried out through design, but written aspects of this page are also important. As the very first page of the book, it deserves special attention.

Photography that complements the theme and focuses on people should be the focus of the page and must be accompanied by a strong, storytelling caption (see the Captions/Headlines unit for lessons on caption writing). The next most important component of the title page is a presentation of the theme statement. Finally, some information just has to appear on the title page. Certainly, the photo and theme presentation should attract more attention, but the following information should be provided in a visually pleasing but undemanding manner:

- Name of the book
- Volume number
- School name
- Street address
- City, state and ZIP code
- School telephone
- School website or a website that supplements the book
- Student enrollment

Inclusion of the name of the principal has become popular in recent years and some staffs even include theme-related statistics. You might even choose to start theme copy on the title page.

Panther
H.B. Plant High School, Tampa, Florida

The staff worked to keep visual theme in tact while still including the necessary elements. Placing the required information along the side allows the photos to dominate the page. Note that detailed captions with an explanation of the photos also appear next to each image.

ACTIVITY

Your Name:

WRITE THE TITLE PAGE COPY

Reviewing the list in this lesson, write the copy that should appear on the title page of the yearbook for your school.

Lesson 8 SCORE

RATE YOUR PROGRESS

4.0 ☐ I can do all tasks in 3.0 and I can teach others!

3.0 ☐ I can demonstrate an understanding of the content that is appropriate for a title page. I can…

a. produce concise, clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style reflect the message of the theme and are appropriate for the task

b. gather the relevant information for the title page and can present this information in a visually pleasing manner

c. construct a strong, storytelling caption that complements the theme

2.0 ☐ I understand what a title page is and its purpose, but I am still unsure of the content that should be included.

1.0 ☐ I don't know what a title page is or its purpose in a yearbook.

Lesson 9
Table of Contents

Objective – In this lesson, you will learn:

The possible placements of the table of contents and the information that should be included in the table of contents

The table of contents needs not be simply a reader service, presented in a dull but functional manner. Today's tables of contents are used to develop the theme both visually and through the words chosen to represent the various sections of the book (see the *Finding Your Theme* unit for more information on spin-off phrases).

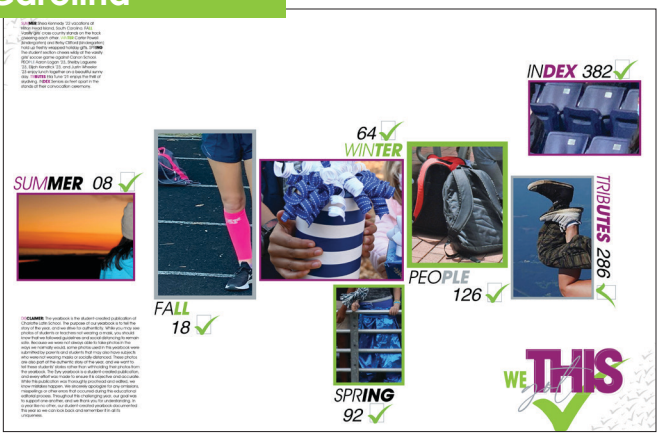
The table of contents can appear in any of a number of places. The most popular placement is on the endsheets. Some staffs have placed a general table of contents on the endsheet and introduced a more specific one on each division page. Books that can't print on endsheets could include the table of contents on the title page or perhaps could design it as a module on one of the opening spreads.

A table of contents should indicate the page on which each section begins. If the staff chooses to use spin-off phrases for each section, the table of contents also needs to provide the traditional name of the section. For example, if the theme is "The Power of One" and the spin-off theme is "The Power of Competition" for sports, both should be included in the table of contents.

Chronological books face a slightly different challenge in that their books are generally divided by seasons or months, but often include content from each of the traditional sections in each division. As a result, noting where the section for October begins does not help the reader understand where to look for coverage of the Key Club. For these staffs, placing a more specific table of contents on each division page becomes much more of a necessity and also makes the accuracy of the index even more important.

Eyry
Charlotte Latin School, Charlotte, North Carolina

The endsheet of Charlotte Latin School's book presents the sections of the book, shows what the reader can expect to find in each section and the beginning page number of each section.



ACTIVITY

Your Name: .....

SPIN SOME SPIN-OFF PHRASES

Take your theme and write spin-off phrases for the following sections. If your book will have fewer sections, see if any of the spin-offs you wrote would work. Otherwise, write new ones for each section of your yearbook.

ACADEMICS

.....

.....

PEOPLE

.....

.....

STUDENT LIFE

.....

.....

SPORTS

CLUBS/ORGANIZATIONS

ADS/COMMUNITY

OTHER

Walsworth yearbooks

NOTES!

Lesson 9 SCORE

RATE YOUR PROGRESS

4.0 ☐ I can do all tasks in 3.0 and I can teach others!

3.0 ☐ I can demonstrate an understanding of the information that is appropriate for the table of contents as well as how to connect this information to the theme. I can…

a. produce concise, clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style reflect the message of the theme and are appropriate for the task

b. use precise language and vocabulary to create spin-off phrases for each section that reflect the theme

c. use the placement and design of the table of contents to help direct the reader and reinforce the theme message

2.0 ☐ I understand what the table of contents is and its purpose, but I am still unsure of the content that should be included or how to connect this content to the theme.

1.0 ☐ I don't know what the table of contents is or its purpose in a yearbook.

Lesson 10
Colophon

Objectives – In this lesson, you will learn:

What a colophon is and the information that is expected to appear

The additional information that can be included in a colophon

The colophon is both a required part of the book as well as an opportunity to add a new dimension to theme presentation and interpretation. At its heart, the word colophon comes from Greek and is a list or description of how a book was produced.

With this in mind, a yearbook colophon should include the name of the company that printed the book, the number of copies that were ordered, the fonts used, the type of paper used and the cover specifications. If you are unsure of any of this information, contact your yearbook representative for help. The colophon generally appears near the back of the book, before or after the index, but before the closing pages.

Many staffs choose to include additional information such as the number and types of computers and cameras used in the production of the book, awards won by the previous book and a description of how the theme was determined. Finally, the colophon may also include a complete staff list with or without photos and an editor's note. An editor's note is primarily made up of "thanks" to the people who supported the staff and sometimes to individual members of the staff itself.

But the colophon doesn't have to be a dull presentation of information that only yearbook staff members care about.

Le Flambeau
Notre Dame de Sion High School, Kansas City, Missouri

In keeping with the graphic design used throughout the book, the *Le Flambeau* staff kept the colophon from being boring by including the same graphic elements there as well. Additional fun photos of the staff, identifying photos with the names of the editors, a letter from the editor and relevant printing details of the book made the page pop.

Walsworth yearbooks

ACTIVITY

BUILDING A COLOPHON

Using the information from this lesson, begin writing a colophon for this year's yearbook. Decide what you think it should include, even if you don't know that information yet, such as font choices.

Lesson 10 SCORE

RATE YOUR PROGRESS

4.0 ☐ I can do all tasks in 3.0 and I can teach others!

3.0 ☐ I can demonstrate an understanding of the information that is appropriate for the colophon as well as how to connect this information to the theme. I can…

a. produce concise, clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization and style reflect the message of the theme and are appropriate for the task

b. use precise language and telling details to add theme-related packages and copy that enhances and personalizes the colophon

c. use the placement and design of the colophon to help inform the reader of the book's production details and reinforce the theme message

d. gather the relevant information for the colophon including the book's specifications, equipment used, staff members, awards and/or theme inspiration

2.0 ☐ I understand what the colophon is and its purpose, but I am still unsure of the content that should be included or how to connect this content to the theme.

1.0 ☐ I don't know what the colophon is or its purpose in a yearbook.

NOTES!

Walsworth yearbooks

MEET THE AUTHOR

Susan Massy is the yearbook adviser at Shawnee Mission Northwest High School in Shawnee, Kansas, where her *Lair* yearbook staffs have been demonstrating excellence in writing and design for the past two decades. The *Lair* has won more Pacemakers than any other yearbook in National Scholastic Press Association (NSPA) history. Under Massy's guidance the *Lair* has also received numerous Gold Crowns from the Columbia Scholastic Press Association.

In 1999, Massy was chosen the National Yearbook Adviser of the Year by the Journalism Education Association (JEA). Massy was also inducted into the Kansas Scholastic Press Association (KSPA) Hall of Fame in 2013.

Walsworth yearbooks
customer service 800.972.4968
computer support 800.369.1530
walsworthyearbooks.com