

More English & Journalism Teaching Ideas

- ◆ **On the Wire:** Stories are often attributed to news services. See how many different services you can find mentioned in the newspaper. Discuss how news services work.
- ◆ **Good News, Bad News:** Some people feel there is not enough good news in the newspaper. Put it to the test. Categorize each article in the newspaper as good news or bad. Which has more? Explain why you think newspapers often print "bad news." Is any news good for some people, bad for others?
- ◆ **Who Said It?** Scan the front page of the paper and see how many phrases of attribution you find in the stories, including such phrases as: he said...reportedly...allegedly...an informed source...it is reported... according to... (underline the phrase as you locate it).
- ◆ **Categories:** On the board, write the categories "political news," "social news," "economic news" and "science news." Find articles from today's newspaper that fit each category.
- ◆ **Five-minute Newscast:** Use today's news to write a five-minute newscast including major news, weather and sports.
- ◆ **Win, Lose, or...** Turn to the sports section of the newspaper. Clip from the paper all the synonyms you find for "win" or "lose." Paste these onto a sheet of paper.
- ◆ **Jargon:** Make a chart showing examples of the vocabulary variations that appear in different sections of the newspaper. For instance, the jargon used by the food editor and the sports editor is probably quite different. How?
- ◆ **Past, Present, Future:** Find newspaper examples of paragraphs written in present, past and future tense. Be aware of paragraphs containing clumsy shifts in tense. Clip your examples from the newspaper and paste them onto your paper.
- ◆ **Just the Opposite:** What is an antonym? Look through the newspaper and find five different sets of antonyms. Clip these words from the newspaper and paste onto your paper.
- ◆ **My name in headlines:** Cut out letters of the alphabet from the newspaper headlines to spell both your first and last name. Mount them on paper.
- ◆ **Double Vowels:** Using the newspaper, cut out 10 words that have double vowels. Paste these onto your paper. Do the same for 10 words that have blends.
- ◆ **5 Ws & an H:** Use the 5 Ws and H (who, what, where, when, why and how) to analyze a newspaper article. How many of the questions are answered in the lead paragraph (usually the first or second paragraph)?
- ◆ **Nouns, Nouns, Nouns:** A noun is a name, person, place or thing. Find 10 nouns on the front page of the newspaper. Write sentences for each.
- ◆ **Ain't That Funny:** Find the comics section in the index of the newspaper. Turn to the comics and cut out two cartoons. Paste the cartoons on paper and erase the words. Write your own words in the balloons. Have a friend read your cartoon.
- ◆ **From A to Z:** Look through the newspaper and cut out all of the letters of the alphabet. Paste them in alphabetical order.
- ◆ **Describe It!** Make a list of at least 15 descriptive words you find in advertisements. After compiling your list, write one or two paragraphs describing something. Use as many of your descriptive words as you can.
- ◆ **Headline Writing:** Headlines are written to fit the space allotted. Distribute news stories without headlines. Write one- to two-line headlines for these stories, making them no more than 30 characters long. (Spaces count as characters.)
- ◆ **Present Tense:** Locate a newspaper article written in present tense and clip it out of the paper. Underline all verbs and then rewrite the article in past tense.
- ◆ **Cryin...** Choose two pictures in the newspaper showing emotion. Cut these out and paste onto your paper. Now, describe the pictures using sound, smell, taste and feeling words.

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- ◆ **Answer Me!** Pick two stories on the front page of the newspaper. Answer the following questions about them: 1) When did the story take place? 2) Where did the story take place? 3) What happened? 4) Who was involved? 5) Why is it newsworthy?
- ◆ **Lost & Found:** Find the lost and found column in the newspaper. Choose one item that has been lost or found and write a short story about the item. Include how it was lost, who found it, where they found it, etc.
- ◆ **More than one:** Find and clip 10 plural words in the newspaper. Write the root word next to each of the plural words you have pasted onto your paper.
- ◆ **Punctuation!** Choose a newspaper article and paste onto your paper. Now, circle all the different punctuation marks used in the story. Make a list of each of the punctuation marks used.
- ◆ **The Long & Short of it:** Look through the newspaper and find one example of a long vowel and a short vowel sound for each of the five vowels. Clip these words from the newspaper and paste them onto your paper.
- ◆ **Interview:** Select someone in today's news to interview. Decide five questions to ask and predict how the person might answer. Role-play the interview. (Do the same with a comic strip character.)
- ◆ **R.I.P.:** Write an obituary for: a fairy tale character, a favorite book character, yourself or an item in the Lost and Found (see classified ads).
- ◆ **Imaginary News:** Clip photos from the newspaper. Write an imaginary news story about one of the photos, using the 5 Ws and H (who, what, where, when, why and how). Or use an unusual photograph as the starting-off point for creative writing. Use the people or event pictured in the story.
- ◆ **Editorials:** Find examples of editorials written to: 1) inform; 2) interpret; 3) entertain; and 4) influence.
- ◆ **New Headlines:** After scanning the newspaper, choose five news articles and write new headlines. After writing new headlines, write new leads that begin with different types of grammatical constructions, such as prepositional phrases, noun clauses, etc.
- ◆ **No News:** Pretend you are living in a society in which there are no newspapers. Make a list of all the functions provided by the newspaper.
- ◆ **Adjectives:** Clip 10 adjectives from the advertising section of the newspaper. Paste them onto paper and write one synonym and one antonym beside each one.
- ◆ **For Sale:** Write classified ads for items you want to sell. Be creative in abbreviations you use, but keep in mind that other readers should be able to understand the ads!
- ◆ **Classified Sentences:** Rewrite classified ads in full sentences, interpreting abbreviations and using unabbreviated words.
- ◆ **One-Minute News:** Rewrite newspaper stories to be one-minute TV or radio news items. Broadcast your story to a group or class. Compare with TV and radio news.
- ◆ **Rewrite it!** Rewrite classified ads to make complete sentences and punctuate correctly.
- ◆ **Upper & Lower Case:** Match upper and lower case letters found in the newspaper.
- ◆ **Pick a Letter:** Circle a specific letter each time it appears in a headline.
- ◆ **A to Z:** Find pictures of things that begin with a specific letter of the alphabet and then write the letter on a sheet of paper and paste down the pictures.
- ◆ **Studying the letters:** Cut a word out of the newspaper and glue it to the top of a plain sheet of paper. Find another word that starts with the same letter that the previous word ends with. Ex.: AND, DOLL, LOST. You can paste these in a row and make columns.
- ◆ **Photo Story:** Choose a picture from the newspaper and write a story about it. Post on the bulletin board or make a class book.
- ◆ **Alliteration:** Cut a picture of an animal or some familiar object from the newspaper. Write alliteration, such as, "Freddie Frog flips and flops finding flies."