

Newspapers in Education -- Middle School Reading

Compiled by Tom Janz

In the last two years, Tom Janz has traveled hundreds of miles across the Kenai Peninsula, showing teachers how to use the newspaper as an educational tool in their classrooms. Janz works for the *Peninsula Clarion*, a small paper for the Kenai Peninsula. His title is Marketing and Circulation Manager, but he wears many hats. One of them is the administrator of the *Clarion's* Newspapers in Education (N.I.E.) program. (For more information about N.I.E., see [The newspaper: A living textbook.](#))

He has written three workbooks that contain hundreds of lessons to get students involved with the newspaper. "Middle schools take the most amount of papers," Janz says. "The kids are beginning to take more interest in the world around them, in things like fashion and sports." That's why the workbook he created for middle schools contains lessons like finding examples of figurative language in the sports section.

If you would like to have Tom Janz visit your school with ideas about Newspapers in Education, call (907) 283-7551.

Reading Exercises

1. Select one news article and read the lead paragraph. Write the who, what, where, when, why and how.
2. Select a news photograph. Then, without reading the caption or accompanying article, describe in as much detail as possible what is happening in the photograph.
3. Go through the newspaper and list the names of all the states that are mentioned. Variations on this activity could include: list all of the countries, state capitals, cities in your state, heads of state, types of transportation.
4. Read a paragraph in the newspaper and then list: three nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, prepositions, and conjunctions.
5. Select an advertisement from the newspaper. How do specific words or phrases influence the reader's thinking about the product? Use these words or phrases to create an ad selling something you own.
6. Read an article or advertisement about a well-known product. Write a letter to an alien in another galaxy, explaining the use of the product. If you like, include illustrations in your letter.
7. Read an editorial. Divide a sheet of paper into two columns. Label one column fact, the other opinion. List the statements in the editorial under the appropriate column.
8. Select a person in the news or a comic strip character that interests you. Read anything you can about that personality. After studying the selected person for awhile, list all the character traits that describe your selection. From the list write a character sketch of your personality.
9. Skim through the newspaper to find advertisements you especially like. What do you like most about the ad: the words, illustration, or item being advertised?
10. Choose four headlines in today's newspaper to rewrite using synonyms. Are

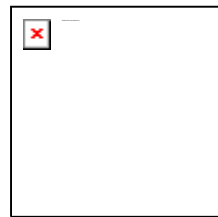
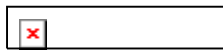
the new versions as effective as the originals?

11. A fact is something true and accurate which has real, demonstrative existence. An opinion is a personal belief with or without positive knowledge or proof. A fantasy is a product of the imagination with no basis in fact or reality. Find which sections in the newspaper seem to deal primarily with fact, with opinion, and with fantasy.
12. Create an ad to sell something that you really don't want or like, (an old bicycle, a case of the flu, homework, etc.) Do not let your true feelings show. Use one or two propaganda techniques and indicate in the margins of the paper which ones you used.

Vocabulary of Newspaper Terms You May Find in These Exercises:

- **Advertisement** - a message printed in the newspaper in space paid for by the advertiser.
- **Banner** - a headline in large type running across the entire width of the page.
- **Box** - a small article or headline enclosed by lines to give it visual emphasis.
- **Byline** - the name of the writer of the article, usually appearing above the news or feature story.
- **Caption** - title or explanatory note above a picture.
- **Credit Line** - acknowledging the source of a picture.
- **Cutline** - information below a picture which describes it.
- **Dateline** - line that tells where the story originated.
- **Ears** - space at the top of the front page on each side of the newspaper's nameplate. Usually boxed in with weather news, index to pages or an announcement of special features.
- **Edition** - in a single day, a newspaper may publish several editions, each one going to a different part of its circulation area.
- **Editorial** - an article stating an opinion of a newspaper editorial board, usually written in essay form.
- **Editorial Cartoon** - cartoon which expresses opinions; appears on the editorial page.
- **Feature** - a story in which the interest lies in some factor other than news value.
- **Filler** - copy with little news value; used to fill space.
- **Flag** - a stylized signature of a newspaper which appears at the top of page one.
- **Headline** - display type placed over a story summarizing the story for the reader.
- **Index** - table of contents of each paper, usually placed on page one.
- **Issue** - All the editions of a newspaper published for a single day.
- **Journalism** - process of collection, writing, editing, and publishing news.
- **Jump** - the continuation of an article from one page to another.
- **Kicker** - a short, catchy word or phrase over a major headline.
- **Lead** - the first few sentences of opening paragraphs of a news story containing the answers to who, what, where, when, why and how.
- **Mass media** - any of various methods of transmitting news to a large number of people (e.g. radio, television, newspaper).
- **Masthead** - the matter printed in every issue of a newspaper stating the title, ownership, management, rates, etc.
- **Newsprint** - a grade of paper made of wood pulp used for printing newspapers.
- **News Services** - news gathering agencies such as Associated Press (AP). They gather and distribute news to subscribing newspapers.
- **Obit** - an obituary; a story of a deceased person's life.
- **Review** - an account of an artistic event such as a play or concert which offers a critical evaluation by the writer.
- **Sidebar** - a short story related to a major story and run nearby.

- **Typo** - short for typographical error.



Reading Workbook

Multiple Skill Levels

- [Teaching Reading Through Poetry](#)
- [Teaching Reading Through the Use of Students' Writings](#)
- [How to Read a Short Story](#)
- [The Newspaper: A Living Textbook](#)
- [Useful Websites for Teachers, Parents, and Students](#)

Elementary School

- [Different "Versions" and Comic Fun](#)
- [Looking at Books Through First Graders' Eyes](#)
- [Biography Exercise](#)
- [Readers Theater for Bilingual/ESL Students](#)
- [Using Jazz Chants for Bilingual/ESL Students](#)
- [Lesson Plan for "Tlingit Moon and Tide"](#)

Middle School

- [Corralling Reluctant Readers at the Ranch](#)
- [Literature Circles](#)
- [Text Interpretation Exercise](#)

High School

- ['Angel Card' Discussion Technique](#)
- [Newspapers in Education -- High School Reading](#)
- [Four Reading Strategies for High School Students](#)
- [Four Vocabulary Strategies for High School Students](#)

Writing Workbook Index
