



## **Lesson Plan: CREATING A NEWSLETTER / NEWSPAPER**

**Class: 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Class**

**Subject: English**

**Strand: Oral Language / Writing**

**Strand Unit: Developing cognitive abilities through language. Emotional and Imaginative development through language**

### **Aim / Learning Objective:**

Creating a class newsletter, students will build their vocabulary and writing skills through drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. Students will become familiar with the process of producing formal written documents, such as magazines and newspapers. Through interacting with others in the class, students will also learn how to work within a team.

### **Skills:**

Students will have developed questioning and predicting skills as well as the following:

- Developing receptiveness to language, reading, listening and understanding
- Writing, spelling, grammar, drafting, revising and editing
- Developing imagination, confidence in using oral language and creative skills
- Use of dictionaries and thesauruses to extend and develop vocabulary and spelling

### **Materials:**

- Explorers Species Information Booklet available on [www.explorer.ie](http://www.explorer.ie)
- Explorers Aquarium Log Book
- Pens, Pencils, Paper, Colouring Pencils
- Photographs of the Explorers Aquarium and species
- Samples of Newspapers and / or Newsletters
- Web link to templates for formatting a newspapers:
  - The interactive Printing Press is designed to assist students in creating newspapers, brochures, and flyers: [www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/Printing\\_Press/](http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/Printing_Press/)
  - Word.doc templates suitable for newspapers can be downloaded from: [www.extranewspapers.com/newspaper-template-pack-word-school/](http://www.extranewspapers.com/newspaper-template-pack-word-school/)

### **Activity:**

- Ask the students to look at newspapers and other newsletters for ideas of layout. Highlight how the newspaper is structured: e.g. “lead” story, use of full banner headlines, language of headlines, placement of photographs and captions, audience of the newspaper, are the stories interesting, are the stories opinion pieces or factual etc.
- Ask the students to create a list of topics around the Explorers Aquarium that they wish to write about in their newsletter. This could include:
  - Meeting experts about the marine
  - Delivery of aquariums to the class
  - Species they have learned about (maybe interviewing one of the species)
  - Information from their Log Book
  - Feeding Schedule
  - Tank Cleaning
  - Lessons and Activities they have completed relating to the Seashore etc.



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- Reporting Tips for Students: Encourage the students to gather information for their articles and to follow the reporting checklist including:
  - Accuracy: Ensure the facts are right (including how to spell names). Always use the five Ws and H (Who, What, When, Where, Why, How?).
  - Audience: Who will read the paper? Is your story of interest to them?
  - Interviews: will the students be interviewing anyone for an article? Prepare questions ahead of time. Take notes during the interview and don't be afraid to check information. Will the person being interviewed provide a quote to make your story more interesting?
  - Research: always check facts that you have collected – use reference materials if needed.
  - Images: don't leave the images to the last minute – always think how the image can grab the reader's attention- that can be used with the article.
  - Writing: what is the WOW factor of the story? - Start with a good lead. Remember that you want to grab the reader's attention and then want to read more. Use the worksheet below to assist with writing stories.
- Either produce a class newsletter / newspaper or organise the students into groups to create a series of newsletters / newspapers.
  - Get the students to come up with a name for their newsletter. Students should be encouraged to take photographs of the species to include in their newsletter. Assign students roles within each team: writers (e.g. assign different stories to each of the students), headline writers, editors, researchers, graphic artists, photographers (all team members can get involved with this part). Students may use their computer skills for this project. You will find various newsletter / newspaper templates on line (see links above).
  - Students should be creative with the design of their newsletter and perhaps include: "Fishy" jokes, Horoscope for the Seashore Species, Seashore Sports section, World News of the Seashore etc.
  - The Newsletters can be presented to the other students, school and with family members.



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Template for writing draft articles:

Headline: \_\_\_\_\_

Write a paragraph using the Five Ws + H in these boxes – this is the most important information:

Who, What, When, Where, Why and How?

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Write the less important information in this box – such as a quote from the species or person giving their opinion.

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Enter the least important detail in the final box

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After writing the first draft of the article, re-write (removing boxes) for submission to the editor.



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SAMPLE NEWSLETTER

# Explorers Aquarium Newsletter

ALL ABOUT THE BIG WORLD WE LIVE IN

EXCLUSIVE NEWS  
TODAY

## HEADLINE

ARTICLE 1 TITLE HERE

Article 1



Picture Caption

Article 2

Article 3