



Creating a school newspaper

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Here is how we created our long-running school newspaper in 13 easy steps.

Setting Up

1. Using a Desktop Publisher program a newspaper template was set up that was 8 pages long. (Working in multiples of 4 pages means no loose sheets in the newspaper.)
2. On the front page a title for the newspaper was created and written in a large font and beneath the title a template subtitle was created that said "Issue [blank]. [blank] Term, 200[blank]" allowing a few changes to be made quickly each issue.
3. Also on the front page two special areas were added - a contents list telling the readers what they would be able to read on each page, and also a 'From the Editor' column for announcements.
4. Throughout the remaining pages blank text boxes were added for the reports.

Writing Reports

5. Once the template was created then the reports could be written and added.
6. Working with a small group of children (in our case we had two Yr4, two Yr5 and two Yr6 pupils) at the start of each term they met with a teacher to discuss items to go into the paper. At this stage we also decided the report that might go on to the front page.
7. Once the reports had been decided, the children were asked to begin to interview people who they would need to speak to, take photographs and write their reports. For each report, two children write their own version, and then the best part of both are taken out and put into a combined report.
8. Sometimes the report is edited to fit into the space available in the paper and sentences are removed as necessary. *Newspaper reports themselves vary in size and space, and so each issue the pre-made templates for the reports are often resized and dragged around until everything can fit into place.*

Editing

9. Once the reports had been added to the newspaper, then the photographs that were taken, as well as clipart (make sure this is copyright free), were added where appropriate. This helped to fill the space in short reports, and also provided a visual stimulus to the paper.
10. Last-minute changes were always made as events, visitors and trips occur throughout the term and so it was not until two weeks before the end of term that the newspaper draft master copy was printed off.
11. The draft master copy was proofread by several people to ensure that there were no spelling errors in the reports. Any mistakes were corrected on the computer, and then a new master version printed off.

Printing

12. The master copy was then run through the copy machine in a special order (first page / last page, 2nd page / 7th page, 3rd page / 6th page, centre pages) so that it all printed out in the correct order.
13. Finally it was sold throughout the school, at the local newsagents and also at a school event attended by lots of parents (Christmas production / Easter Assembly / Sports Day). That way as many copies as possible are sold, and money raised for the school.

View 'Tons of Fun', the newspaper for Southwold Primary School, on their school website <<http://atschool.eduweb.co.uk/southwold>>



Report writing for a newspaper article

If you want to write a newspaper article then there are a few ways to make your writing stand out as a good report:

- Think of your audience and write for them.
- Use the 3rd person. Write, “When Mr. Smith was asked, he said” rather than “I asked my teacher”.
- Use pronouns where possible instead of repeating people’s names.
- Choose powerful verbs that catch the reader’s attention “Susan raced into the lead” is much better than “Susan ran fast”.
- Keep the report to the point. Don’t get sidetracked including something that is not necessary.
- Do not over-describe in a report - leave descriptive writing for stories and poetry. Readers want the facts in a report, and nothing more.
- Try to avoid using “said” too often. “Answered”, “replied” and “commented” are much better and avoid repetition.
- Use paragraphs to divide your report into sections.
- Make subheadings between paragraphs that are appropriate to the text that follows.
- Do not think about your headline until you have completed your report - you will find you are able to think of eye-catching headlines much more easily if you already have written the report and know exactly what has been said.

Why not write a newspaper article for the Castle Times?

It's Kids' Castle's own newspaper at

<http://www.kidsonthenet.com/castle/times.cfm>