**Task: Let's Write a Newspaper Story!**

During this project you are going to become a real newspaper writer. You are going to be a reporter investigating what students in your classroom did over the Spring Break.

Also think about what you need to do to write a successful newspaper story — things like writing a good lead sentence, spelling correctly, and putting an interesting quote in your story. Your story and the stories of other students will go together to make a class newspaper.

Write down questions to ask at your interview.

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Answer: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Visual Organizer

Almost all newspaper stories start off by answering most of these questions. Try to answer these questions in your story.

Who:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

What:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

When:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Where:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Why:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

How:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Lead Sentence** (a sentence that includes some of the information above and that grabs the reader)

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\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Writing to Inform

**Development**

\*All necessary information needed to understand the story is present

\*Ideas and actions are fully developed and explained

**Organization**

\*Ideas are organized logically (Beginning, Middle, and End)

\*Topic sentence (the story lead) introduces the topic

\*Sufficient, appropriate details fully support the topic

\*Concluding sentence ties the story together

**Attention To Audience**

\*Enough information is presented so reader can understand the topic

\*Story answers questions the reader might have

**Language**

\*Vocabulary is appropriate for the topic

\*Precise, appropriate, and descriptive language adds meaning to the story

\*Variety of sentence structures and use of linking words or phrases, as

appropriate, make the story easy to read and understand

**Linking Words and Phrases:**

## To introduce and organize ideas

# First, …To begin with, … Next, … Another …In addition

**To introduce details**

# For example, …For instance, … In fact, … such as … including

**To compare and contrast**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Similarly | Compared to | Have in common |
| Even though | Rather than | On the other hand |
| On the contrary | Although | As opposed to |
| However | In contrast | Otherwise |

**Tips from the Pros**

You’ve just been assigned to write a story for your newspaper. Here are some tips to help you write a good one.

**Who – What – When – Where – Why – How.**  Almost all newspaper stories start off by answering most of these questions. Try to answer these questions in your story. For example: “Sherry Smith won first place in the Cutest Pet contest yesterday at Columbia Mall.” Check your local newspaper for more examples.

**Accuracy.** Your writing might be wonderful, but if you don’t get the facts right, people won’t believe what you write the next time. Make sure everything you say is true. And spell people’s names correctly — they get upset when you don’t.

**What makes a good story?** Anything that could interest or affect your classmates, teachers, school or family will make a good story. For example, science topics like the strange worlds of the planets and how the weather works … school activities such as fund-raisers, what goes on in music classes, and the importance of safety patrols … after-school activities … a review of a book you enjoyed … or how middle school will be different from fourth grade all could make good newspaper stories. Be curious. Ask yourself, “What would I like to know more about?” — then write a story about it.

**Interviews.** You may want to interview someone to get the facts. Here’s what to do:

• Make an appointment. Call or meet with the person, tell them what kind of a story you want to write, then set a time and place for the interview.

• Prepare questions. Write down the questions you want to ask. For example, “How long have you been working here?” “What do you like most about your job?” and “Is there anything you would like to tell our readers?”

• Take tools. Take a small notebook and two pens or pencils to the interview.

• Write it down. Take notes as the person answers your questions — you want to be sure to quote the person accurately in your story. It’s OK to ask the person to repeat what they said or ask them what they mean if you don’t understand them the first time. The main thing is to get it right.

**Research.** Use encyclopedias, dictionaries, almanacs and other reference materials to get the facts you need. More and more reporters are doing their research on the Internet. Research includes interviewing people — such as a professor or doctor or coach — who know the facts. And your research may be just your own observation of an event: For example, reporting on the visit of a policeman and his dog to your class.

**Writing the story.** Start with a good lead — a sentence that grabs your reader and makes her want to read more: For example, “The fourth grade class painted one wall of their classroom with a picture so strange that their teacher immediately sent for the principal.” Write your story plainly so that everyone can understand it. If possible, use quotes in your story to make it more interesting – for example, “The flames were so hot I thought my helmet would melt,” the firefighter said. And remember to answer the questions **Who – What – When – Where – Why – How.**