

Lesson One - Finding Topics and Basic Newswriting

1. **Institute Session(s)** - 1 and 9 Jeanne Acton, 5 Dave Garland, 6 Kathleen McElroy
2. **Theme** - Developing and Writing News Stories
3. **Overview** - Students have a difficult time thinking of writing topics for the school paper. Many have no real idea of what a school newspaper usually contains, the normal sections, and what should be included. The story ideas given in this handout are an excellent resource for students with writer's block. These story ideas are separated into sections that correspond to the sections of our newspaper. The writing ideas and copywriting tips from Garland and McElroy support more complete and polished work from the students.
4. **Goals – California Common Core Standards**
5. Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects 6–12
Production and Distribution of Writing
6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.
Research to build and present knowledge
7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

Outcomes for journalism students:

1. Greater ease in selection/determination of topics written about for the school newspaper.
2. Ability to discover adjustments/corrections needed in pre-production material.

6. Procedure –

- Hand out copies of 75 Story Ideas (Lemmons) to all students.
- Have students read through and select one of these ideas to write about.
- Handout copies of News Writing from Invitational A Meet-2011 with copies of rubric for written compositions to all students.
- Students will complete an article of about 500 word length and bring to next *Falcon Times* session

7. Assessment – completed compositions, student readings and discussion of writing and ideas represented.

8. Recommended readings and sources –

- University Interscholastic League Study Packets on Feature Writing, Editorial Writing and Headline Writing.
- 10 Ways to Improve Quotes and Anecdotes/assorted readings, Dave Garlock/University of Texas.
- Janet Elbom selected publications written and compiled, ASNE Summer Workshop UT, Austin
- Copyediting materials, Kathleen McElroy