



IN THE NEWS: FACT OR FICTION?

(50-60 minutes)

OBJECTIVE

Students write a newspaper article that incorporates a headline, lead paragraph, body, and conclusion.

MATERIALS

Copies of a local or national newspaper

GET READY

- ✓ Cut out examples of newspaper article headlines from a newspaper.

INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ Make sure your students are fluent in the components of a newspaper article: the headline is what catches the reader's attention, the lead paragraph tells the important information about the news story, the body gives the supporting information and detail for the lead, and the conclusion sums up the content of the article.
- ✓ Go into detail about what makes a news article compelling: a persuasive headline, strong details, quotes, etc.
- ✓ Share with your students the headlines you cut out. Ask them what makes these headlines effective or ineffective, and then have your class look through the newspaper to identify other interesting headlines.
- ✓ Remind your students that they are only to look for headlines and are not to read any articles.
- ✓ Instruct your students to choose a headline of interest to them and then to put all the newspapers away.

- ✓ From the headline they selected, your students need to create newspaper articles, that include all the components of a newspaper article that were already discussed. Your students only have the headlines to go by, so encourage them to be creative.
- ✓ Tell your students to aim for credibility and professionalism in their articles, because the rest of the class will be guessing if their work is the real article or not.
- ✓ One at a time, have your students read aloud both their article and the real one. Have the class guess (by a show of hands) which the original is and which one is made up.
- ✓ Make sure to have each student mention who wrote the original article after the guessing is over.
- ✓ Follow up this exercise with a discussion of what makes a good news article and what some students did to make their articles convincing.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ★ *What makes an article compelling to read?*
- ★ *What makes an article sound professional?*
- ★ *What helps make an article credible?*
- ★ *What are the most important aspects of a newspaper article?*
- ★ *What in hindsight would you have done differently with your article?*