

Ideas with

**IMPACT**

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

**Newspaper  
Club**

## **Newspaper Club**

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# Goals

## Key Activities and Learning Outcomes:

- **Article Writing:**  
Students will research and write articles covering school-related events, student life, academic topics, general topics of interest and community news. This will help improve their writing, critical thinking, and storytelling abilities.
- **Editorial Roles:**  
Participants will be assigned roles such as editor-in-chief, staff writer, photographer, illustrator and layout designer. These roles teach leadership, teamwork, responsibility and accountability.
- **Editing and Peer Review:**  
Editors and club advisor (teacher) will guide the revision process by reviewing articles, offering constructive feedback, and ensuring that all content meets publication standards.
- **Digital Media & Design Skills:**  
Students will use digital tools such as Canva to design the layout of the newspaper. This introduces them to visual communication and basic graphic design principles.
- **Creative Expression:**  
As a team, students will brainstorm and design a club T-shirt to represent their group, promoting unity and school spirit.
- **Time Management and Responsibility:**  
Students will be expected to meet deadlines for drafts, edits, and final submissions—developing strong time management and personal accountability.
- **Collaboration and Communication:**  
Through regular meetings, interviews, and peer collaboration, students will strengthen their interpersonal and communication skills in a professional school classroom setting.

## Florida Standards

ELA.5.C.1.3 Argumentative Writing

ELA.5.C.1.4 Expository Writing

ELA.5.C.1.5 Improving Writing

ELA.5.C.3.1 Conventions

ELA.5.C.1.1 Handwriting

## **Project Overview**

### **Empowering Student Voice Through a Classroom Newspaper**

This innovative project blends traditional writing skills with modern technology, offering students a dynamic platform to express themselves, report on relevant topics, and develop essential academic skills. By creating a student-led newspaper, learners engage in meaningful writing while mastering digital tools such as Canva to design and publish their work. The project supports both cognitive growth—through research, writing, and editing—and effective development by fostering creativity, ownership, and confidence.

One of the project's most valuable features is its adaptability. Teachers attending this workshop will gain practical strategies to implement a classroom-based version of a newspaper, allowing them to scale the project to fit their unique teaching environment.

This makes it an ideal introduction to project-based learning that is manageable, student-centered, and deeply engaging. Educators will walk away with tools to motivate students to write about topics that matter to them while learning collaboration, time management, and multimedia design.

## Use of Technology

Creating a physical elementary school newspaper is a powerful way to combine technology with traditional literacy skills. Students can begin the process by researching current events or school-related topics using kid-friendly platforms like TIME for Kids, NewsELA, and Discovery Education.



These resources provide age-appropriate articles that help students build background knowledge and inspire their own writing. Once students have selected their topics, they can draft their articles using Microsoft Word, which allows for easy editing, peer feedback, and formatting. Teachers can model how to use editing tools like track changes and comments to enhance collaboration and revise for clarity and accuracy.

After final drafts are completed, students can bring their newspaper to life using Canva, a user-friendly design platform.



Canva offers customizable templates for newsletters, making it easy for students to format their articles, add headlines, insert photos, and create appealing layouts. Teachers can schedule planning, drafting, and publishing sessions using Outlook Calendar to help students learn time management and meet deadlines.



Once finalized, the newspaper can be printed and distributed in physical form, giving students the excitement of seeing their work in print.

## **Project Schedule**

The schedule below reflects club meetings 2x a week for the first 9 weeks. The total duration of work for the school year is approximately 36 weeks. This schedule is to be used every nine weeks. At the end of the school year the club will have produced 4 editions.

If students require additional instruction in the writing process or using technology

Tools (Canva), lessons can be added in the early stages or work with peers that can help support.

Day 1: Introduce the school newspaper. Teach expectations and rules of the club environment, function, purpose of the newspaper and distribute potential Editorial Job Descriptions and Job Application handout.

Day 2: Job applications are discussed and collected. Small-group exploration of past school newspapers and samples.

Day 3: Discuss topics and school events. Create written and/or digital calendar for the next nine weeks.

Day 4: Assign reporter and photographer interviews or coverage of such school events, comics, illustrations and deadlines.

Day 5: Editorial team announced. Instruction - writing and submitting a pitch, distribute handouts and reporter's notebooks. Collaborative brainstorming. Begin writing first-draft of articles.

Day 6: Editorial team meeting – introduce procedures for reviewing/commenting on pitches/articles. Give instruction on handling different types of articles.

Day 7: Continue drafting/submitting pitches. Editorial team conferencing with writers who need help with revisions.

Day 8: Deadline for first draft. Content development

instruction – review Newspaper Canva Stylesheet handout. Teach intro to CANVA for new students.

Day 9: Editorial team conferencing with writers who need help with revisions.

Day 10: Deadline for second draft. Editorial team conferencing with writers who need help with revisions. Content development.

Day 11: Section team meetings – discuss writing pieces that have been approved for each section. Content development. Graphics team begins planning artwork based on pitches.

Day 12: Content development.

Day 11: Using Media Responsibly activity. Content development and fact checking article info.

Day 13: First draft due. Peer editing, section team meetings. Graphics team develops art content.

Day 14: Revision and conferencing. Graphics team develops art content.

Day 15: Revised draft due. Sub-editing within sections. Graphics team develops art content.

Days 16-17: Revision and conferencing. Final drafts submitted to editorial team for review and copy editing. Production staff develops Canva layout. Revision of drafts continues as needed.

Day 18: Final proofing, revision, upload and print.

## **Newspaper Club Job Descriptions**

Our school Newspaper Club will produce a newspaper featuring student writing, artwork and photography. All students will participate in this collaborative project in a variety of roles that will allow you to apply the language arts skills you have learned. You will be encouraged to seek specific role(s) that you find personally appealing while also contributing to the overall success of the school's newspaper.

The following editorial and staff roles are available:

### **Editor-in-Chief**

- Assume responsibility for the newspaper's writing, photography and illustrations.
- Develop story ideas
- Write editorials, edit copy, edit cover stories, do layouts, write headlines, and do production work.
- With the advisor, review assignments and delegate jobs with the club advisor, review assignments and delegate jobs
- Help support staff writers

### **Associate Editor**

- Work closely with editor-in-chief
- Organize and update daily staff communications
- Keep in daily touch with fellow editors and the advisor
- Monitor progress on assignments
- Contribute ideas and assist editor-in-chief in all necessary areas
- Help keep track of the calendar

### **Art Director**

- Coordinate stories and artwork
- Think of graphic ideas and make suggestions
- Supervise design of the entire publication, including page design
- Plan cover with editor

### **Section Editors (Nonfiction, News, Events, Book Nooks, Sports, Comics etc..)**

- Write content
- Oversee staff writers
- Collaborate with the design team for illustrations, photos, etc. for articles

### **Sub-editors**

- General production layout
- Proofreading and copy-editing
- Work with Canva templates
- Production editor

### **Staff Writer**

Develop ideas for creative writing, features, reviews, interviews, commentary

### **Illustrators**

- Develop artwork as needed

### **Photographer**

- Take photos as needed for articles or separate events.

## Newspaper Club Job Application

All of these jobs require you to contribute and help with reading and writing.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Homeroom Teacher and Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

What job would you like to have in the Newspaper Club? If you select a section editor or staff writer position, please specify.

First choice: \_\_\_\_\_

Second choice: \_\_\_\_\_

Third choice: \_\_\_\_\_

Please explain why you feel that you should be chosen for your first choice of roles in the newspaper:

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I understand that this is a team effort, and that my participation and commitment are important to the success of the project. I am prepared to fulfill my role to the best of my ability. I will hand in articles on time and not miss more than 3 club meetings.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Crafting the Ideal Article**

Depending on the membership of the club, non-editorial staff are required to write at least one article per edition. Please follow the guidelines below for writing and submitting your articles. Pitches will be reviewed by the editorial staff and either approved or returned to the student for revision.

A working title or topic - a catchy title is great, but it isn't essential. You'll have time to think about a title as you write, so don't spend a lot of time on this but do share what your idea for your article is about.

A summary of your idea (What is the topic? What ideas/questions will you explore through your writing?)

Address the 5 W's and how.

All newspaper articles should answer the 5 W's and how (Who, What, When, Where and Why)

Remember that, for your article to be included in the school newspaper, your piece must reflect the topic of and answer all if the 5 W's. Your article should at least be one well-developed paragraph in length. Please pay attention to spelling, grammar, and conventions.

If your article is returned for revision, please read the editors' comments carefully and resolve all the concerns in your revision before resubmitting. You can make an appointment to conference with the editorial team if you need clarification before beginning your revision.

## Newspaper Writing Tips

Using a stylesheet or style book includes guidelines for grammar, punctuation, spelling, vocabulary, usage, abbreviations, and any other matter related to conventions (FL standards could be used and referred to.) It is important to use the same style within the newspaper so that there is uniformity within each piece. Below are some of the basic style guidelines that each writer should follow. When in doubt, ask one of the editors or club advisor.

### General Style Guidelines:

1. Avoid slang. Words like bruh, gonna, wanna, gotta, kinda have no place in formal writing. Always use academic vocabulary in your writing.
2. Contractions are informal and should be used minimally. Common contractions (can't, won't, doesn't, isn't) can be used to avoid an unnatural or stilted tone in writing. However, excessive informal contractions like those of the word have (could've, should've) must not be used in your writing.
3. Pay attention to words used that don't make sense or are considered extra words, that have no meaning. Don't start sentences with "Well," "So," "Because" or "But" as these are not appropriate in formal writing. Keep an eye out for words that do not add to the article. Do not start a sentence with a lower-case letter.
4. Make sure you are giving credit to statements that are presented as fact. Any written statement that is not gathered directly from a quoted source must give credit to the source (website, broadcaster, publication) from which it came from.

Quotes must be presented accurately and attributed correctly.

(Teachers should review the use of quotes with students)

5. Specifics are very important. Refer to as exact time as possible. Avoid terms like today, every day, always or nowadays.

Make sure the names included in the article are accurately written and mentioned. Check for spelling mistakes and titles. Do not think

that the reader is familiar with the person, so provide any background

information that is critical to the reader's understanding of the person or the event they are involved in.

### **Basic Writing Tips:**

Be cautious in your writing, do NOT repeat words or phrases.

All sentences must begin with a capital letter. If the first word of a sentence is a number, you must spell it out. Use a single space after a period and before the next sentence. Make sure titles and names are used and spelling properly.

Paragraphs should be indented using the Tab key, not by inserting single spaces with the space bar. Do not skip lines between paragraphs.

Do not use all caps or italics for emphasis. Use exclamation points only when needed.

## **Resource List**

- Canva. Outlook News ELA, Time for Kids and Discovery Ed
- Reporter's notebooks, pens, pencils, sharpies
- Camera, Phone Camera
- ID Tags- Press Passes
- Club T-Shirts
- Laptops