

Headline Writing

Invitational A Meet • 2024



You are a copy editor for the **Leaguetown Press**, the student newspaper of Leaguetown High School.

Write the headline assigned for each of the given **six** stories. Use the following system: all upper and lower case letters, spaces, punctuation marks and symbols count as 1. Capitalize the first letter of the first word of each headline. You may use either upstyle (capitalizing the first letter of every word) or downstyle (capitalizing the first letter of the first word and the first letter of proper nouns only thereafter). Remember that main headlines belong on the top line and secondary headlines belong under the main headline. You have **30 minutes**. Do not write your name or the name of your school on this sheet or your entry. **Put your number on your paper.**

Story 1 — Write: 1-line headline counting 26-32

The mock trial team will attend its first tournament of the spring season Jan. 13 after a semester of daily after-school practice.

“We come in every day after school,” sophomore Julian Reyes said. “Sometimes we stay here for hours drilling, reading and watching videos of past trial competitions. But mostly we laugh and have a great time.”

If team members advance past the first qualifying tournament in March, they could punch their ticket to the state mock trial finals in Austin.

“We put in a bunch of work so far this year,” team captain Lindsey Gantz said. “Last year, we lost our first round at prelims, and that put us in a tough position to win state. This year, we’re ready to win the whole thing.”

Story 2 — Write: 2-line headline with each line counting 16-22

Senior Josslyn Shakur has been selected as one of 14 young people to be honored with the National Environmental Protection Society’s Teen Environmental Hero Award.

Shakur earned the distinction, which comes with a \$2,500 scholarship, with her district-wide garden project.

“We didn’t do the project to win an award,” Shakur said. “When my Peer Leadership classes visited elementary schools in the district, we could see that the younger kids were enthusiastic about learning how to grow their own food.”

Shakur made a plan to plant vegetable gardens on each of the district’s seven elementary campuses to teach students about gardening. Students plant their own seeds or plants and harvest their own vegetables to provide snacks for elementary students or donate to local shelters.

“We are proud of the work Josslyn has done to promote not only environmental education but also healthy eating among our younger students,” Vega Elementary Principal Ross Green said. “It was such a small idea, but it’s made a huge difference for our students.”

Story 3 — Write: 2-line headline with each line counting 22-28

With the Encore Microchip company finishing construction outside the city limits, the company announced a new internship for high school engineering students in 11th and 12th grades.

“We hope to offer an opportunity for students in engineering classes to partner with some of our teams to learn about the company and how we operate,” Encore representative Jake Chapper said. “Hopefully we’ll see some successful graduates down the line who want to return to the Leaguetown area after getting their degrees and choose a career at Encore.”

In addition to the internship, Encore will offer a summer engineering camp for high school students.

“It’s cool to have an opportunity like this so close to town,” junior Champ Prescott said. “I hope to study computer science and programming in college, and I think getting to know this business through this internship would give me a great head start.”

Story 4 — Write: 1-line main headline counting 8-14 and 2-line secondary headline with each line counting 18-24

With a loaf of bread and a dream, sophomore Liz Chan will take her homemade bread, butter and jam recipe on the road Saturday for the League County Winter Fair Bake-Off and Fundraiser.

Chan frequently sells her product on Facebook to friends and family and credits her talents to her grandmother.

“My grandmother started teaching me how to bake when I was 8,” Chan said. “I would sit with her in her kitchen, and we’d go over pie crusts and cookies and cakes.”

But Chan said it was her grandmother’s bread recipe that continues to be the most popular when it comes to online sales.

“Nothing beats Mimi’s warm homemade bread and jam,” she said. “I try to always deliver it warm out of the oven. It can’t be beat. I hope the fair judges feel the same way.”

Story 5 — Write: 1-line main headline counting 10-16 and a 1-line secondary headline counting 22-28

Teachers will have their first morning exercise bootcamp Friday at 6:30 a.m. in the school parking lot. The group was started after two teachers couldn’t find a fitness group that would work around their school schedules.

“I used to teach fitness bootcamps throughout the summer,” computer science teacher Justinia Austin said. “But then school would start and I’d be too busy to go to a class, let alone teach one.”

Then Austin had an idea and met with fellow teacher and fitness guru Danielle Garcia to form the group.

“We just made our own fitness group that fits around our teaching schedule,” Garcia said. “It’s free. All teachers are welcome. It’s just a good way to get together, have some fun and stay in shape.”

Instructors will offer a variety of exercises, including aerobics and strength training.

“We’ll have a little something for everyone,” Austin said. “I’d love for us to set a goal as a group to do the Leaguetown 5K in March. We’ll just have to see how committed everyone is. I think we can do it.”

Story 6 — Write: 3-line headline with each line counting 12-18

Bill Smith’s Burger Stand, a favorite for student dining ahead of football games, served its last cheeseburger Friday as the restaurant will be demolished next Wednesday to make way for additional stadium parking. Owner Bill Smith accepted the district’s offer to purchase the property last year.

“We’ve been serving burgers before games since 1957,” Smith said. “Every Friday during football season, we make around 600 burgers. I can’t believe that adventure is over.”

Since opening, Bill Smith’s served more than a ton of hamburger meat, more than 5,000 slices of cheese and 250,000 french fries on Friday nights every football season.

“Going to Bill’s before a game is just as much of a tradition as homecoming or prom,” senior class president Chase Valdivia said. “The whole school stops in, grabs a burger and meets in front of the stadium to eat. It’s the ultimate tailgate experience.”

At 82 years old, Smith said he’ll take this opportunity to retire and spend more time around his family.

“After all these years, I’m not sure what I’ll do with myself on Friday nights,” he said. “Maybe now I’ll actually get to go to a football game.”

Invitational A Meet • 2024 Headline Writing Entry Sheet

All letters (upper and lower case), numbers, punctuation marks, symbols and spaces count as one (1). Place one letter or other unit in the appropriate spaces below. Remember to leave spaces between words. Note that the number of lines you are given on this sheet corresponds to the number of lines required for each headline. Write your number on the upper right-hand corner of this sheet.

■ Headline Number 1

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32

■ Headline Number 2

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32

■ Headline Number 3

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32

■ **Headline Number 4**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32

main headline

secondary headline

■ **Headline Number 5**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32

main headline

secondary headline

■ **Headline Number 6**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32

DO NOT DISTRIBUTE TO STUDENTS BEFORE OR DURING THE CONTEST!

Invitational A Meet • 2024 Headline Writing Contest Tips and Samples

Contest Director: Give one copy to each judge to use during critiquing/judging. Also, staple one copy of the contest and one copy of the contest tips to each student's returned entry. The purpose of the tips is to provide immediate feedback to students. However, it is not meant to replace written comments from the judges.

1. Headline writing is different than the other contests. It is suggested you pace yourself. You have about five minutes for each headline. Don't watch the clock, but be aware of the time you are taking to complete a headline. It is better to have four or five good headlines rather than six mediocre ones.
2. When writing the headline, first highlight or underline all the important words in the story. Then write a sentence based on those highlighted words.
3. After you have your first sentence, go back and begin editing out words. If you have a multi-line headline, separate the lines at a recommended area. This means you should not split phrases or ideas. Make sure all types of phrases — noun, verb, adverbial, adjective and prepositional phrases especially — are on the same line. Continue eliminating words until you get to a point where the headline fits. It may be necessary to re-write the headline one or more times or to take a different approach before you get the key idea. Remember to eliminate all unnecessary words such as article adjectives (a, an, the). In many cases a comma (,) can substitute for the word "and."
4. You may use a thesaurus or dictionary, either bound or electronic. You may write in block letters. You should not be penalized for inconsistency in upstyle or downstyle.
5. Make sure you are within the prescribed count. Under no circumstances should you go over the maximum count. Judges are instructed to disqualify any headline under or over the prescribed count.
6. Write headlines using active verbs in either present, future or present perfect tense. Follow the style of the headline — if it is a fun story, write a fun headline; if it is a serious story, write a serious headline.
7. Do not sacrifice accuracy for creativity or cuteness.
8. Normally, the main headline is used to grab the reader's attention. It is not necessary, although it is possible, to have a verb in the main headline when you have a secondary headline. The secondary headline should do one of two things: emphasize the significant aspects of the story or emphasize the unusual.
9. AP Style provides guidelines for headline writing. It is not required for contestants to follow AP Style, but a consistent style is recommended.

The following are additional basic headline rules for you to follow:

- avoid starting the headline with a verb
- always use single quotes
- avoid using the same word twice in a headline
- try to write in present or future tense
- avoid unfamiliar abbreviations
- do not end the headline with a period

★ STORY #1

Mock trial team ready for court	31
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★ STORY #2

Gardener wins honor	19
for environmentalism	20

★ STORY #3

Company offers internships	26
for engineering students	24

★ STORY #4

Dough Nut	9
Baker heads to fair	19
with homemade goodies	21

★ STORY #5

Fit Friday Fun	14
Teachers form exercise group	28

★ STORY #6

Retiring chef	13
flips final burger	18
before demolition	17