

Quote, transition exercise I

If you think a direct quote is too long, then break it into a series of quotes and transitions. The direct quotes will explain, elaborate or offer an opinion. The transitions will provide news fact or data.

Situation: This story involves a principal's decision to censor a story in the high school newspaper about guns in school. The students appealed the decision to the school board, which ruled that the coverage can and should be reported.

Quotes:

JOAN LANE, EDITOR

"Administrators caught a student on campus carrying a .22-caliber pistol. Everyone knew about it. But when we wanted to report on this and other instances of students bringing guns to school, they tried to censor us. I think they were more worried about public relations than they were about guns.

"It was really absurd. As much as anything, we were trying to dispel a lot of rumors. For example, there was one rumor that the student brought an assault rifle to school.

"We took the matter to the school board, and they basically agreed with us that the story should be reported. We were pleased, but I'm sure the principal is now going to be on our case the rest of the year. I don't think they like us because we want to print the truth.

"Mr. Garvey asked us to wait until the next issue to write about this. It would have been old news by then. We're a monthly paper, and we'd have completely lost the timely angle if we had waited another month to run the story."

JOSEPH B. GARVEY, PRINCIPAL

"We were concerned that the paper might publish something that would further inflame the issue. I was not trying to censor the publication, but I wanted time for the whole episode to calm down.

"There will be no retribution against the paper or its editors. I'm disappointed that they'd think I'm that petty. I'm proud of the paper. I just want them to do the best job possible, journalistically."