

4th
edition

**the Radical
Write**

BOBBY HAWTHORNE

the Radical Write

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STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS
FOR THE 4TH EDITION
OF THE

**Radical
Write**
**Teacher's
Handbook**

by Bobby Hawthorne

This quick test will help your teacher or adviser determine where you are as a writer in general and as a journalistic writer in particular.

REPLACE TWO WORDS WITH ONE

- smiled arrogantly
- ate voraciously
- walked briskly
- talked excitedly

EDIT AND RE-WRITE

1. Its not as if the Wilson's don't have money, they do. Their just to cheap to spend it.

2. Walking back home from school, a pit bull dog escaped from it's yard and almost attacked Joe and I.

3. James Eberhart who advises the yearbook tendered his resignation after school officials made an investigation of yearbook expenditures and determined that Eberhart had spent right about three hundred dollars cash on Selena Gomez posters for the journalism room.

DESCRIBE AN EVENT OR SCENE

Select a scene from your life, such as argument with a sibling or parent, or a conversation with a person very special to you, or a moment of spectacular joy, fear, disappointment or frustration. Describe that scene, using at least two of the following literary devices: dialogue, internal dialogue, alliteration, allusion, hyperbole and repetition.

Ch. 1 | WB 1-2

Essential Questions

Be prepared to discuss the following questions:

1. What is the main purpose of a student publication?
2. Who is your audience? Who are your major stakeholders?
3. What is the difference between a newspaper or magazine article and a story?.
4. What are the six news values?
5. Aside from the six news questions above, what are three or four other questions journalists should ask?
6. How does journalism differ from other forms of writing?

End of Chapter Quiz

1. The author calls for publications to publish more “journey stories.” What is a “journey story?”
2. What is a “dead on arrival” story? How do you avoid it?
3. What is the difference between facts and story?
4. In addition to the standard who, what, when, where, why and how questions, what are three other questions to ask?
5. When the author says, “Reject outdated models,” to what is he referring?
6. What should be a reporter’s first move after being assigned a story?
7. List three ways a reporter can build a network of sources?
8. Explain the implications of how news changes instantaneously. How can reporters remain ahead of the story?
9. What are some of the questions a reporter should ask before running a story or photograph?
10. The author claims, “Names are not news.” Explain what that means.
11. According to the author, censorship and prior restraint are not impenetrable barriers to substantive coverage? Explain his position on this topic.

Essential Questions

Be prepared to discuss the following questions:

1. What are three essential elements for news?
2. Where is news found?
3. How is news gathered?
4. What is a local source?
5. How does time affect news?
6. What is the writing/reporting nexus?

End of Chapter Quiz

1. List five definitions of “news.”
2. List five forms of communication that are not necessarily “news.”
3. As far as student publications are concerned, how does news become “fake news?”
4. Explain the following statement: “A computer is a toaster. It’s not a loaf of bread.”
5. List five moments when emotions will be elevated, thus improving the chances for a more interesting story.
6. Which statement is TRUE?
 - a. The opening sentence should never drop readers right into a story.
 - b. Avoid the use of literary devices in news writing. Keep it simple and bland.
 - c. It’s OK to use long direct quotes and/or long transitions when necessary.
7. Which statement is TRUE?
 - a. Short item news should be third person.
 - b. In a news story, it’s best to open with a question or a summary.
 - c. It’s OK to build stories around “composite” persons — that is, make-believe people who represent a larger reality.
8. If you want to be a better writer, you should do this.
 - a. Read more.
 - b. Use bigger, more complicated words.
 - c. Always adhere to formulas, like the Five Paragraph Essay.
9. What is an anecdote, and how can you use one in your story?

Story format exercise

Comparing the classic data-driven news lead approach versus an alternative people-driven approach.

News story facts

- Who:** Your school's trustees
- What:** Revised the way it will admit incoming freshmen into Einstein Prep. The new policy takes effect next spring.
- When:** Trustees approved the policy on Sept. 12
- Where:** The vote was taken at the Administrative Building
- Why:** In hopes of diversifying its student population
- How:** The pool of applicants will be expanded.

Direct Quote

“Applicants will be reviewed on a “sliding scale” basis, meaning that the admissions committee will balance an applicants’ grade point averages with their scores on Einstein Prep’s admission test. That will allow students who do not test well to compensate with better grades and overall GPA. Students with lower GPAs can also compensate with strong test scores.” — Paul Romer, Director of Communications

- Your publication will be published on Sept. 21.
- Explain how you might approach this story from a more people-oriented angle.

News lead writing exercise

From the information provided, write a summary lead emphasizing “who” and a summary lead emphasizing “what.”

Be as concise and precise as possible.

Make is concise and precise

- WHAT:** Discussed the off-campus lunch policy, then took a vote and decided to discontinue the policy of allowing students to leave the campus for lunch. Students take lunch from noon to 1 p.m. The decision will go into effect the first day of class next fall.
- WHO:** School trustees
- WHEN:** The vote was taken at the board’s regular meeting at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday.
- WHERE:** In the Administrative Building
- HOW:** The board voted unanimously with a show of hands.
- WHY:** Because of reports of students leaving campus at lunch to use alcohol, drugs and/or tobacco.

Ch. 2 | WB 2-4

**Clarity,
precision
exercise**

In particular, be suspicious of words ending in “ion.”

I have a strange suspicion there is a more concise way to write these.

That is, I suspect a tighter way to write these exists.

- A decision was made by school trustees to fire head football coach Randy Jones. The decision was made last Monday.
- The Booster Club met on the next day, Tuesday, to hold a discussion in regards to the matter.
- Several parents were in opposition to the plan.
- Others were in a state of elation at coach Jones’ firing, although a few said termination is what Jones deserved, given his 0-10 record last season.
- Athletic director Brad Hammers said he was full of mystification at the way the events were handled.
- Hammers said he continues to have great admiration for Jones but added it is time to move forward.
- Booster Club president Tom Braddock said he is enjoying great exhilaration that the matter has come to a state of resolution.
- Of course, coach Jones said he is full of agitation at the firing and made a suggestion that the board will one day regret the cancellation of his contract.

Essential Questions

Be prepared to discuss the following questions:

1. How has technology changed journalism for the better?
2. How do you decide which form the story will take?
3. What is the inverted pyramid?
4. What is alternative copy, and how should it be used?
5. What is the difference between straight news and news feature?

End of Chapter Quiz I

1. Be prepared to discuss how the internet in general and social media in particular have changed and continue to change scholastic journalism. p. 31-32
2. List three ways to build an effective beat system. p. 39
3. In assessing your own reporting and writing, what are the questions you should ask yourself? p. 33
4. Explain why curiosity is an essential personality trait for journalists? p. 32
5. Explain what it means to “write to your medium.” p. 40
6. Which statement is NOT TRUE? d (p. 32)
 - a. Generally, these cliché leads crop up when the reporter has done little or no reporting.
 - b. A dictionary definition lead rarely if ever works.
 - c. As a general rule in attribution, place nouns in front of verbs.
 - d. In broadcast, it’s OK to chit-chat with listeners.
7. News is often hidden in the most obvious of places. List five of them.
8. According to the author, which attribution arrangement is preferred.
 - a. “Mrs. Jones was a special part of the school for many years, and we will miss her dearly,” Principal Dan Fletcher said.
 - b. “Mrs. Jones was a special part of the school for many years, and we will miss her dearly,” said Dan Fletcher, Principal.
 - c. “Mrs. Jones was a special part of the school for many years, and we will miss her dearly,” said Principal Dan Fletcher.
 - d. “Mrs. Jones,” said Dan Fletcher, principal, “was a special part of the school for many years, and we will miss her dearly”.

Basic grammar exercise

It's time to review a few basic rules.

You should know most of these already. If you haven't learned them, then it's time you do.

End of Chapter Quiz II

9. Which statement is not true?
 - a. Good journalistic writing and good fiction employ many of the same literary devices.
 - b. Every story has a factual reality and an emotional reality.
 - c. As a general rule, avoid “where” leads.
 - d. Short item news should be first or second person.

10. Which sentence contains a major error?
 - a. James came to the conclusion that Sherry was seeing other boys.
 - b. Sherry is the cheerleader that broke James' heart.
 - c. Wearing a tutu, the burly wrestler patted the 6-year-old dancer on the head.
 - d. all of the above

11. Of the following sentences, which is incorrect?
 - a. Mrs. Phillips asked Ben and I to help move the books.
 - b. Ben and I helped Mrs. Phillips move the books.
 - c. Mrs. Phillips asked Ben and me to help move the books.
 - d. All are correct.

12. You are your publication's copy editor. A beginning reporter turns in the following story with this lead: “Sleep is essential to a healthy person, yet many high school students have problems with sleeping.” How you would coach this beginner to improve his or her lead.

13. Of the following sentences, which is (are) correct?
 - a. The Spanish Club will sponsor their Cinco de Mayo Day celebration with a trip to the Aguilar Latino Cultural Arts Center.
 - b. The television that is in the teacher's lounge is broken.
 - c. The juniors won their third straight PowderPuff football game.
 - d. The television which is in the teacher's lounge is broken.

Story- building exercise

What should be
focus of each
of the two fact-
based stories?

Be prepared to
discuss your
answer.

1. Locks of Love

The Student Council is participating in “Locks of Love,” a non-profit organization that provides hairpieces to financially disadvantaged children under age 18 suffering from long-term medical hair loss.

“Most of the children helped by Locks of Love have lost their hair because of a medical condition called alopecia areata, which has no known cause or cure,” president Sarah Ellis said. “The hairpieces made from donated hair help restore self-esteem and confidence, enabling them to face the world and their peers.”

Ellis said her experience as a cancer survivor inspired her to participate in Locks of Love.

In other action, the council approved the budget for homecoming and drafted a resolution asking the school board to study problems with the student parking lot.

2. Teens Make a Difference Day

On Nov. 1, teens from around the world will join together to make a difference in their school and community. The purpose of the annual “Teens Make a Difference Day” is to help create a new generation of teen leaders.

“This is a wonderful experience, and I’m looking forward to taking part in it,” said junior Corey Cettie. “Our main goal will be to show people in our community that young people care.”

Last year, more than 150 groups of teens from across the city worked together on some 43 projects, according to Dan Fezell, student council sponsor.

“This year, we hope to have more than 1,000 teens involved,” he said. “By participating, teens can see their contributions immediately. It has a profound effect on the community.”

Senior Kendra Tyson said she will again participate because she has seen the value of the program first-hand.

“Three years ago, a group of volunteers helped re-build a portion of my grandmothers house that was destroyed in a storm,” Tyson said. “So I’m just giving back some to my community.”

Ch. 4 | WB 4-1

Essential Questions

Be prepared to discuss the following questions:

1. What does it mean to search for a story?
 2. How does the notion of “truth” figure in to journalistic reporting and writing?
 3. What is the difference between subject and story?
 4. What is a story theme?
 5. What are three types of conflict?
 6. What is a nutgraf (nutgraph)? What is its purpose?
1. What are the traits of “good writing?”
 2. What is the difference between covering a subject and covering a story?
 3. What is the “Axios brevity formula?”
 4. What does the author mean by the “emotional center of a story”?
 5. What role does empathy play in how a reporter covers a story?
 6. How do you decide what a story is really about?
 7. Explain the importance of the opening sentence of a story.
 8. Be prepared to discuss how conflict often drives narrative.

Editing, proofing exercise

Wordiness,
redundancy
murder good
writing. Get
rid of all
unnecessary
words.

lift it up
in a dying condition
null and void
drop down abruptly
a free gift
he continued on
a near facsimile
his final conclusion
on Easter Sunday
had two twins
a complete monopoly
the actual truth
raise the aerial
he personally believes
she definitely decided
caught a tuna fish
sent none at all
consensus of opinion
June sales to level
a pretty young debutante
a true fact
two complimentary passes
30 invited guests
was short in length
our hopeful optimism
came on Christmas day
zoom up fast
held a temporary recess
first of all
decided last of all
a rich widow woman
will start soon
it first began
a hound dog
a noon luncheon
in court litigation
in close proximity
finishing off soon
its final completion
an old adage
strangled to death
a personal friend
the proved facts
was finally settled
her past experiences
a clever innovation
its future prospects
a canary bird
will repeat again
whether or not
will start off soon
complimentary free prize

Essential Questions

Be prepared to discuss the following questions:

1. What does the term “angle” mean, in terms of a feature story?
2. What’s the difference between a cliché and a creative angle?
3. What’s the difference between “theme” and “angle”?

End of Chapter Quiz

1. Rather than asking readers to “picture this” or “imagine that,” how might a writer approach a feature story about a person who has overcome a great obstacle?
2. What’s the best way to make sure the story comes to a clear and logical conclusion?
3. What is the purpose of a transition paragraph or sentence?
4. Explain how a reporter might “repair” a direct quote.
5. List at least five cliché leads.
6. Thumb through five or six exchange publications. Find at least five “statement-of-the-obvious” leads.
7. Provide an example of an “apt allusion.”
8. Find in your high school or local newspaper a lead you consider to be weak. Explain why you think it’s weak and re-write it to make it more interesting.

Editing, coaching exercise

You don't need to be a copy editor to catch most of the mistakes made in the story here. If you were coaching the staff member who turned this in, what problems would you point out?

List four mistakes made by the writer of the following piece:

Have you ever been to Europe? Well, the a cappella choir went to Europe this summer. And they said they had a great time.

“London was beautiful,” senior Anne Thomas said. “It contains many great museums and libraries. We had a wonderful time.”

The family also visited Paris, Amsterdam and Vienna as well, all of which are fabulous cities, steeped in history. One can hardly consider oneself a cultivated person until he or she has stood in front of the Mona Lisa or visited the Van Gogh museum in Amsterdam.

“I've never been to Europe, but I hope to go one day,” an unnamed choir member said.

Among the members of the choir who went to Europe are Chris Grewe, Sydney McNeil, Mark Salinas, Hector Yzaguirre, Maggie Fuchs and Anne Thomas.

“My favorite city was Paris,” Salinas said. “The Eiffel Tower is there, and it's awesome.”

So, next time you see a member of the a cappella choir, stop them and ask them about their trip. Don't be surprised if they answer in song.

Story- building exercise

Read the story provided. Explain how you might make it more interesting, more timely and more important to your readers. Begin by identifying a more unique angle.

Seaweed High School’s percussion ensemble will play a concert at 7 p.m. Tuesday, May 24, at the SHS theater.

Last spring, the talented group played a similar concert to a full house, and SHS band director Steve Jacobs expects the show to once again sell out.

“People say they’ve been blown away by what they hear,” Jacobs said. “They didn’t know percussion could do this.”

The 15-member ensemble recently placed fourth at the State Solo and Ensemble Competition. Last year, they placed eighth.

Jacobs said those who come to the concert, which is also a fundraiser for the band program, are in for a treat. The entire stage will be filled with various percussion instruments, from bongos and bass drums to xylophones and marimbas.

Even everyday objects will become instruments, as the group incorporates items such as a garden weasel into their music.

“Anything becomes a percussion instrument when you get into percussion ensemble,” Jacobs said.

Small groups, individuals and the entire cast of percussionists will play a wide range of music, he said, from avant-garde 20th Century pieces to modern pop tunes.

“There are so many sounds and colors and different styles of things,” he said.

The concert will also be bittersweet, said Jacobs, as it will be the percussion ensemble’s last performance ever. The program is one of several extracurricular classes in the district being cut next year due to the school district’s \$850,000 budget shortfall.

Jacobs said that although the program has only existed for three years, many are sad to see it go.

“Not only is this a special group of kids,” he said, “but the fact that we’re able to have this separate class where we really get to focus on percussion and get to do a lot of other literature we would not be able to do in a regular band class. It’s hard to see this going away.”

Write a feature story about the person you know more about than anyone alive: you!

This is called a “diagnostic.” The purpose is to let the teacher know how much you know about writing feature stories.

Write a feature about yourself. It can be a straight feature or a personality profile.

- It should be no longer than 600 words. The length doesn’t matter so long as you answer all relevant news questions.
- Interview yourself and don’t complain later that you were misquoted.
- You are free to include quotes from other people, but it’s not required.
- Use any and all literary devices you wish.
- Remember what you’ve learned so far about angle and theme.

Searching for a unique angle

Based on the information provided, a write a feature story about Lou Paschal, who teaches automotive technology at your school.

Paschal is 59 years old. He has taught for 21 years, including the past nine here. He is a former automobile mechanic.

Every day, he drives 111 miles to work, 111 miles home. On a good day, the drive takes him just under two hours.

On a bad traffic day, the drive can take as long as three hours.

He drives a white 2010 Chevy pickup.

“I try to be at school by 7:45 each day, which means I get up around 5 and hit the road by 5:45. My wife has my coffee in the thermos, ready to go. And she packs me a biscuit and a slice of ham or maybe a cinnamon roll.

“The morning drive isn’t so bad. I’ve always been an early riser. I love watching the sun come up in the east, although there are days when I’m driving right into it, and that’s no fun. Usually, I listen to a book on tape or to music. I don’t listen to the radio any more. I can’t stand all that screaming and silliness. Also, I like to take some time to plan my lessons.

“I enjoy the afternoon drive as well. After being with kids all day, it’s nice to relax and enjoy the silence. The drive gives me time to relax and clear my head. Even if something went wrong that day, I’m usually pretty relaxed by the time I get home.

“I don’t let the traffic bother me. I used to yell a lot. I’d get upset if people were driving too fast or too slow—or rather, if I thought they were driving too fast or too slow. These days, I just take whatever the road gives me. Lately, I’ve been chewing up audio books. Just finished Charles Darwin’s *The Bleak House*. I know what you’re thinking. ‘Bubba reads literature?’ Well, I do.

“I guess the obvious question is, ‘Why don’t you live closer to your work?’ Well, my wife and I own a little ranch, and we love the place. Other teachers tell me I’m crazy, but there’s too much hustle and bustle in the city. If I had a bad day at home, I have time to leave it behind before I get to work. And if I have a bad day at work, I can leave it behind before I get home. Plus our kids grew up on the ranch, and my and grandchildren look forward to coming out there to fish and hunt and chase the chickens.

“I suppose I could look for a job closer to home, but the fact is, I love teaching here. I have a lot of friends here. I’ve built the program to fit my needs, and the administration has been extremely supportive, so I figure I owe them.

“If I get tired, I’ll pull over and grab a cup of coffee or maybe even take a little power nap. And if I’m late for a class because of traffic or the weather, well the kids have my cell phone number. They’ll call me, and I’ll tell them what we’re working on that day, and they’ll get started. I don’t worry about them a bit.

“I enjoyed working on cars but I love teaching auto mechanics even more. It’s a class where kids want to be there. We get to do a lot of cool stuff. And the young people who go through my program are prepared to enter the work force when they graduate. They can find a job that pays a decent salary, enough to get them started in life.”

Essential Questions

Be prepared to discuss the following questions:

1. Explain “show, don’t tell.”
2. What are “sensory details”?
3. Find examples of at least five more cliché leads.
4. How can a writer “re-create” a scene he or she did not see in person?
5. What is the best way to integrate description into a story without slowing down the narrative or confusing the reader?

End of Chapter Quiz

1. Explain why writers use description.
2. What is the similarity between fiction and descriptive non-fiction, like journalism?
3. List at least five items on any given reporter’s checklist.
4. Explain how you might go about describing a person’s face.
5. List at least five questions you might ask to determine someone’s personality traits.
6. What is a “defining moment”?
7. List five ways a student can improve his or her writing.
8. Select one of the following sentences and, using your imagination, write a lead that shows rather than tells.
 - A. The Student Council had a busy year.
 - B. She was a popular and excellent teacher.
 - C. The National Honor Society participated in many charitable events this year.
 - D. New computers made a big difference in the school this year.
 - E. Reality shows are popular with students.
 - F. A spirit of volunteerism swept through the school.
 - G. The baseball team had a habit of losing games in the last inning.
8. Rewrite each sentence to make it more precise, concise and descriptive.
 - A. Jerry looked at the umpire with anger.
 - B. Mrs. Riggins enjoys classical music and TV game shows.
 - C. Hearing that the tornado was coming nearer and nearer, Jeff assumed a squatting position in the basement of his house.
 - D. Ashley’s face expressed great pain upon seeing her boyfriend, Lawton, severely injured his arm during the football game.
 - E. A baby kitten searched for food outside the cafeteria.

Literary device exercise I

Similes are excellent ways to compare something abstract or obtuse to something familiar and specific.

In other words, they are as handy as a button on a shirt pocket.

1. The floor was as sticky as a
2. The new microwave oven was as worthless as
3. News that the store had closed was as welcome as a
4. Her mother ironed her blouse as crisp as a
5. Their quarterback was as tough as a
6. After the loss in the student council race, Barry Morton's self-confidence shrank like
7. The sophomore running back squirted around like a

Literary device exercise II

Hyperbole is a way to make a point by over-stating something. As I've said about a million times, it's an exaggerated statement or claim that's not meant to be taken literally.

Here's a wonderful piece of hyperbole by columnist Dave Barry:
"As a child, I was more afraid of tetanus shots than, for example, Dracula."

So, now, complete the following sentence with four different answers.

■ The local cops were so inept, they couldn't find...

A.

B.

C.

D.

Objectivity, subjectivity exercise

Details reveal not only the facts but also the truth.

Based on information covered in this text so far, select the right response to each of the following questions. Be prepared to explain your choices.

■ FOR EXAMPLE

Opinion — *Junior Jenny Lunde loves spending time with her family.*

Fact — *Junior Jenny Lunde spent last weekend with her family.*

Details “show” the fact — *Junior Jenny Lunde watched the final Harry Potter movie with her 9-year-old sister Friday afternoon and played cards with her parents and grandmother later that night.*

■ EXERCISE

1. **Opinion** — *Alex Gonzales is the most reliable Student Council officer.*

Fact — *Gonzales attends all Student Council functions.*

Fact with revealing detail —

2. **Opinion** — *Senior Bobby Phillips is the basketball team’s best player.*

Fact — *Phillips is the team’s leading scorer and rebounder.*

Fact with revealing detail —

3. **Opinion** — *English teacher Clarence McClellan is neurotic.*

Fact — *McClellan worries about the strangest things.*

Fact with revealing detail —

Precision writing exercise

Any time you have a choice among or between words, choose the one with the narrowest meaning.

Prove a more precise word or example for each of the following words.

pants/slacks

eat quickly

motorcycle

dance (noun)

female

tree

Rock 'n roll group

cartoon

restaurant

frown

Laugh

tropical Fruit

drink

tropical Fish

complain

coffee bar

look

child

dog

high school student

knock

money

move

vacation

university

drug

professional athlete

hot

old

young

breathed

flower

Computer

dessert

Essential Questions

Be prepared to discuss the following questions:

1. How do you find and cultivate reliable sources?
2. How do you prepare for an interview?
3. What is proper interviewing etiquette?
4. What kinds of questions should you ask?
5. How can you use emails and texts in the interviewing process?
6. Explain what “off the record” means. When can it be used, and when should it never be used?

End of Chapter Quiz

1. Be prepared to discuss the following statement: “Journalism is not about writing. It’s about reporting.”
2. According to the author, what is a major problem with scholastic journalism today?
3. According to the author, what is “the key to successful reporting and writing?”
4. How can a reporter “cultivate” sources?
5. List at least five examples of proper reporting etiquette.
6. What are four “memory” questions?
7. List three tips for conducting an interview.
8. What does “pay close attention to the interviewee’s environment” mean?
9. List three steps necessary to successfully conclude an interview.
10. Be prepared to discuss why email or text interviews rarely produce interesting or powerful direct quotes.
11. Explain the difference between “off-the-record” and “deep background.”
12. Be prepared to explain the importance of the follow-up interview.

Breaking up the long direct quote.

**Break this long
direct quote
into a series of
direct quotes
and transitions
sentences or
paragraphs.**

“For years, I assumed that I’d end up at UT-Austin or Rice or some place like that, but then I heard about Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland, and the more I looked into it, the more attractive it became. Trinity is like the Harvard of Ireland. So, my parents and I arranged to meet some of the university recruiters in Chicago, and that sealed the deal for us.

“It’s a lot different than I thought it would be. I live in a dorm that’s a half-hour commute from campus, and my flat mates have to stop and cook because there is no such thing as a dormitory meal plan. The year is broken into three terms, and I had to declare a major on my admissions application because students apply to a specific department instead of the college itself. I like it a lot, especially now that Ireland is part of the European Union. I’ve met people from all across Europe.”

— **Jenny Brown**

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."

Quote, transition exercise II

The attribution (Lampi said) is placed after the first sentence of the quote block.

Also, it's "Lampi said" rather than "said Lampi." Nouns typically precede verbs. In the last paragraph, the verb "added" is used because the student actually "added" it.

Situation: This story involves a middle school's outreach program to help teenage smokers outgrow a dangerous adult habit.

Quotes:

JUANITA GOMEZ, PRINCIPAL

"We know that the younger children are when they start smoking, the more likely they are to become smokers, and heavier smokers as adults. The health consequences of smoking are well documented, so preventing tobacco use among young people can significantly reduce the long-term health consequences.

"Rather than catching smokers and punishing them, we decided to try to see what we could do to get them to stop. So we began the "Hi! I. Q. Club," which means "Hi. I Quit Smoking." I liked the positive connotation of IQ. It means, "Yeah. You're smart. You quit smoking."

"The bottom line is to teach students that they have control over their habits. We try to uncover the reasons why they smoke and then channel those motivations in less harmful directions. A lot of time, students say they smoke to relieve stress. So we pay a lot of attention to helping them reduce stress."

MEGAN OSGOOD, SOPHOMORE

"I started smoking to look older, more mature, like my sister, who's a senior. But I found that cigarettes also calmed me down and I didn't eat so much. I joined the "Hi! I. Q. Club" because I once coughed up some blood, and I think that is a bad sign."

Quote, transition exercise III

Using a transition sentence to link the two direct quotes.

The transition is created from the first sentence of Muñoz' direct quote.

■ Quote 1

“Teenagers are at a significant risk for developing depression and other health-related conditions, and schools need to take a more proactive approach. Too many schools take a piecemeal approach to mental health, offering services only after problems reach critical stages.”

— Libby Lundegard, director of public policy for the National Association of School Psychologists.

■ Quote 2

“Schools are stretched too thin as it is. Schools are expected to do too much these days already. In addition to teaching kids to read, write and do math, and with diminished resources we’re provided by the states to do them, it’s unrealistic to expect schools to serve as mental health care providers as well.”

— Randy Munoz, assistant principal

Essential Questions

Be prepared to discuss the following questions:

1. In terms of story structure, what does it mean to achieve “unity”? Why is it important to weave a story together?
2. Why is it important to master the quote/transition/quote structure? How does it contribute to story unity?
3. What is attribution? What is the proper way to attribute information — whether it’s direct quotes, facts or descriptive details — to the source?

End of Chapter Quiz

1. Be prepared to discuss the differences among “no-quote” stories, “empty quote” stories and “stacks of quotes” stories. p. 108-109
2. How do you use key words and phrases to unify a story? p. 109
3. True or false? You may not change the content or tone of the quote, but you may edit for clarity and precision. p. 112
4. When is it acceptable to use “state” as your attribution verb? p. 115
5. True or false? A good way to begin a story is with any of the following words: Some, many, most, several. p. 115
6. What does it mean to “bury the attribution”?
7. Provide two instances in which it’s good to paraphrase all or parts of a direct quote? p. 116
8. Which statement is TRUE?
 - A. Repeat facts from the transition to the direct quote.
 - B. Direct quotes should never be longer than three sentences.
 - C. Spell-check will catch virtually all errors, so proofing is unnecessary.
 - D. As a general rule, delete “that” unless it’s essential.
9. From a feature story you find in a newspaper or magazine, highlight the transition sentences. Explain how the author has used different types of transition sentences to weave the story together.

Feature writing exercise

Organize information and weave it so that it eliminates redundancy.

Dan Burke teaches government at Seaweed High School. Mr. Burke recently announced that he will take a leave of absence next year in order to work with a humanitarian group, Feed the Children, in Afghanistan. He says he plans to leave in early June. Based on this information and the quotes to the right, write a feature story.

DAN BURKE QUOTES

“I’m one of the few social studies teachers here who doesn’t coach athletics. They asked me if I’d like to coach basketball, but I didn’t want to split time between teaching and coaching, so I declined.

“I worked as a freelance photographer in 1994-95, covering the Afghan civil war. I was there in 1996 when the Taliban took control of the country. To make matters worse, the country was in the middle of one of its worst droughts ever. It was nothing to see people with rationing coupons standing in line for hours to get bread. Those with no other resources resorted to begging, stealing, rummaging through garbage, whatever it took to survive. The country was in complete ruins then.

“I have one memory that really stands out. One day in 1996, a couple of friends and I went to watch a soccer match in Kabul, hoping for a little diversion. During a break in the action, two men accused of crimes had their hands chopped off. Afterward, the hands were hung outside for days to make sure other people saw them. It was a horrible thing to witness.

“I remember one little girl in particular. Her name was Haziza. A beautiful little girl, maybe 11 or 12 years old. She grew up in a village near Kabul. Her father was a candy vendor. One day, the Taliban came to her village to conscript boys into the army. Her father protested that his sons were still children. They killed him on the spot and left with the two boys, ages 13 and 15. A month later, Haziza and her mother escaped to Pakistan.

“When I met Haziza in a refugee camp, she couldn’t read or write, but she was extremely bright and curious. In a room full of schoolchildren, I noticed her right away, and we became friends. I taught her to take photos and gave her a point-and-shoot camera. The shots she came back with were remarkable. They really captured the human spirit fighting to survive amid such desolation and horror.

“After I returned to the U.S., I tried to stay in touch, but it was impossible. I’m not sure if her family returned to Afghanistan, and if so, what happened to them. I realize I’m going back to a different place, a better place I hope, but not necessarily a good place. I hope to play a small role in bringing peace to people who have known little more than war and hardship. But most of all, I hope to find Haziza.”

Essential Questions

Be prepared to discuss the following questions:

1. Define “objectivity.” Be prepared to discuss how easy or difficult it is to achieve.
2. In terms of journalistic ethics, what might constitute a conflict of interest?
3. What is the difference between accuracy and truth?
4. What is the difference between opinion and interpretation?

End of Chapter Quiz

1. According to the author, achieving absolute objectivity is impossible. Explain why he believes that.
2. How does a reporter distinguish between facts, fiction, fantasy and hoaxes without losing credibility or objectivity?
3. Which statement is NOT TRUE?
 - A. Reporters may cherry-pick facts and use them out of context to advance a specific agenda.
 - B. The process of selecting sources and then deciding which quotes from them to use is mostly objective. Reporters have little latitude in this decision-making process.
 - C. To protect their objectivity and credibility, reporters must maintain strict separation between news, features and opinion.
 - D. All of the above.
4. Be prepared to discuss the following statement: “Objectivity demands more than a verbatim regurgitation of words spoken.”
5. What is the difference between a conflict and a complication?
6. Explain the difference between an traditional news approach and an interpretive feature approach.
7. Which statement is NOT TRUE?
 - A. Mindless chit-chat is unacceptable under any circumstance.
 - B. Professional reporters are often allowed to draw their own conclusions based on their knowledgeable observations.
 - C. Analysis is just another form of editorial comment.
 - D. In a misguided attempt to be objective, some reporters have passed along information that is technically accurate but not entirely true.

See beyond the basic facts.

Thumb through an old yearbook or past issues of the student newspaper. Find a basic fact-driven story. Now, write about the same topic but as a more visual, interpretive approach. Explain what the facts mean. Interview. Observe. Extrapolate. Do not editorialize.

For example, this is a basic fact-driven story:

As part of its fund-raising effort to go to the Orange Bowl Parade of Bands next January, the band raised more than \$700 selling Christmas trees last month.

“We have wanted to go to this festival for several years but could not afford it,” band director Jerry Downs said. “If we stay on target, we will have sufficient funds to afford this trip.”

Band president Brad Nichols said hauling the trees was hard work but added, “It will be worth it because everyone is looking forward to going to Miami. It’ll be great to be on the beach and away from this cold weather.”

On the other hand, this interpretive approach reveals a more interesting, colorful truth.

Huddled around a small heater, four band members waited for the next customer and argued.

“I’m not going out there again. I waited on the last guy,” junior Roger Wharmund said. “It’s your turn.”

“No way. I’m freezing,” senior Angel Walker answered. “Let Ann go. She hasn’t been out in an hour.”

“I can’t go. Look at this blister,” sophomore Ann Hughes said. “My hands will never recover.”

“You should have worn gloves,” senior Brad Nichols answered. “What did you expect? That unloading Christmas trees would be fun?”

These students and others spent Friday hauling Christmas trees from a refrigerated truck to an outside lot, where the fog and snow gave the event a festive holiday atmosphere that lasted only until the students started shivering.

Why all this? For two years, band members have raised money to pay for next January’s trip to the Orange Bowl Festival of Bands in Miami, Florida. Still, the thoughts of sunny beaches did little to warm the band members as they braved the bone-chilling weather.

“It was fun at first, but after a while we all got tired and cold,” Hughes said. “We tried to break up the boredom with a little snowball fight, but even that didn’t work.”

Essential Questions

Be prepared to discuss the following questions:

1. Explain what it means to thoroughly “localize” an issue or story.
2. What questions might you need to ask to localize a story?
3. What are the risks and benefits of using the internet to help in localizing a story?

End of Chapter Quiz

1. Be prepared to explain how you might localize a national story such as the startling increase in teen vaping.
2. List five other national events or issues that you could localize to your school.
3. Take one of the five topics and explain how you would localize it to your school.
4. **Headline:** Joining a national trend among urban school districts, the Los Angeles board of education approved a plan to scale down all the sprawling district’s secondary schools into smaller units of 350 to 500 students apiece.

How would you localize this story? List at least three persons you would need to interview.

4. **Headline:** According to Education Week, more and more schools are turning down federal Title I money or are finding other ways to avoid having to comply with the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).

How would you localize this story? List at least two persons you would want to interview.

5. What are three questions reporters must answer before tackling any given story?”
6. **Study report:** Although studies show that teenagers are at significant risk for developing depression and other mental-health conditions, few U.S. high schools have clearly defined procedures for identifying students with such problems and referring them for treatment.

List four websites that provide accurate and reliable information that could be used to localize this story. Be prepared to justify your selections.

**All politics
is local.
News
should be
treated the
same way.**

How would you
localize these
stories for your
publication or
broadcast?

Localize these stories.

1. An annual survey of hundreds of thousands of American college freshman found that a growing percentage of them rated themselves as “above average” in several categories, compared with college freshmen who were surveyed in the 1960s.
2. According to the National School Board Association, bullying lawsuits are on the rise nationwide. There are no studies the association knows of, but “anecdotal evidence shows an obvious increase,” TSBA general counsel Francisco Negron said.
3. According to a story in the Wall Street Journal, people born between 1965 and 1980 might call themselves “The Divorce Generation” because so many of their parents divorced.
4. Theodore Dalrymple is a contributing editor of the Manhattan Institute’s City Journal. He writes, “Fifty years from now, no one in Indiana — or at least, no one born and raised in Indiana — will be able to write cursive. On the other hand, everyone will be able to type, and by then, technology might have made the ability to sign your name redundant.”
5. The U.S. economy added painfully few jobs for the second month in a row, undermining hopes that the sluggish recovery was getting back on track.
6. The type of high-profile police crackdown and public education campaign that led to record seat-belt use in the U.S. has proved highly effective against distracted driving in two pilot programs, the federal agency that tracks road deaths reports.
7. According to USA Today, a growing number of special-needs students nationwide have gone back to school with tablet computers. The tablets are growing in popularity for special-needs students because they can be customized to each child’s needs, are lightweight and mobile, and give the kids the sense they’re plugged into a larger, high-tech community.

Essential Questions

Be prepared to discuss the following questions:

1. What does “flow” mean in terms of narrative?
2. What are three things that can interrupt narrative flow?
3. What is the difference between accuracy and truth?
4. What are five questions you should ask before beginning to write?
5. What are five questions you should ask before turning in your first draft?

End of Chapter Quiz

1. Use “said” unless you have a good reason not to. When might be a good reason not to use “said”?
2. List four ways a story can be “sidetracked.”
3. From the following information, write a lead that uses a partial (also known as a “minor”) sentence.
 - John Bartolo is a senior at Seaweed High School.
 - He will graduate in May ranked No. 3 in his class of 435 students.
 - Rather than attending an elite college or university, John has decided to enlist in the U.S. Army.
 - He hopes to be a sniper.
 - John said he expects to serve in Afghanistan next year.
 - John has been accepted to Harvard, Cal Tech and the University of Chicago. He was accepted by every college to which he applied.
 - John is a fourth-generation U.S. soldier.

Senior John Bartolo could have attended any university he wanted. Harvard. Cal Tech. The University of Chicago. They all wanted him. But instead of strolling the campus of some leafy college somewhere next year, John expects to be humping over mountains in Afghanistan. The son and grandson and great-grandson of U.S. soldiers, Bartolo has enlisted in the U.S. Army and intends to be a sniper.

4. Answer the following questions about the David Bissinger story on page 150:
 - What is the theme of the story?
 - What is the angle?
 - Who is the main character?
 - What is the tone of the story?
 - How is first person used in this story?
 - The story uses several literary devices. List four of them.
 - Explain how the final paragraph brings the story full-circle.

Feature writing exercise

From the facts and quotes provided on the prompt, write a feature story. Make sure information flows smoothly from direct quotes to indirect quotes and to transitions.

Susan Kelso is a school psychologist. She is 34 years old, a graduate of the University of Kansas. She is married to Dr. Robert Kelso, a professor of chemical engineering at Southview College. Kelso has developed a program to assist overweight students. She has worked with nutritionist Molly Greer. The program consists of counseling, diet and exercise.

■ Susan Kelso

“An overweight child has a real dilemma, especially in this fitness-conscious age. No doubt, there’s a stigma in this society to being overweight and kids pick up on it. The television is especially guilty of portraying overweight people as stupid, lazy or evil. It’s important to realize that no kid wants to be fat. The New England Journal of Medicine recently produced concrete evidence that genetic factors play a deciding role in the weight of adults. We are led to believe that people are overweight by choice or by a lack of self-will. This is rarely the case.

“Overweight kids are often ridiculed, taunted or ostracized. They hear all the cruel nicknames and unless they are very strong, this can be devastating to the child’s self-esteem. We are trying to teach children that they control how they feel about themselves and the rest of the world.”

■ Molly Greer

“There are no miracle cures. You can’t sleep away those pounds, regardless of what you hear on the television. The new cure for obesity is no miracle at all — it’s simply good nutrition and exercise. We want the kids to change their lifestyles but they must be committed to losing weight. We try to see what psychological reasons lie behind the weight problem and to make sure there is adequate family support to sustain the child through what will likely be a lifelong weight problem. Then, the child begins a 10-week program of diet, counseling and exercise.”

■ Jeffrey Beaumont, junior

“I’ve been fat all of my life. Not just overweight but really fat. This program has really helped me. Before, when someone teased me about my weight, I’d console myself by eating. I’d look for satisfaction in food, generally sweets. It was a vicious circle.

“I’ve tried all sorts of diets but they never worked. This time, I’m really serious. I’m watching my diet and since I started the program five weeks ago, I’ve lost 30 pounds. I have a long way to go. But I have a picture in my mind how I want to look, and I’m not giving up until what I see in the mirror matches the picture in my mind.”

Essential Questions

Be prepared to discuss the following questions:

1. Describe at least five literary devices.
2. Define “sensory imagery.”
3. What is the difference between dialogue and internal dialogue?
4. What are five questions you should ask before beginning to write?
5. Explain what the author mean by the following statement: “Use literary devices with sophisticated restraint.”

End of Chapter Quiz

1. Explain how a reporter might take a story from a fact-based article to an imagery-driven narrative.
2. What is the difference between simile and metaphor?
3. **Situation:** Senior Danielle Contreras has accepted a full basketball scholarship to attend the University of Anchorage. Anchorage is almost 3,500 miles from her home in Brownsville, Texas. She accepted the scholarship in part because she plans to major in botany and study climate change. Danielle is a 5-foot, 11-inch guard/wing.

Now, select a favorite film, television series or song and write a feature lead about Danielle that includes an allusion to that film, TV series or song.

4. Thumb through news or feature stories in newspapers, magazines or news websites for examples of the following:
 - simile
 - hyperbole
 - metaphor
 - allusion
 - comparison
 - partial sentence
 - repetition
 - dialogue
 - alliteration
 - personification
 - dialogue
 - polysyndeton
 - asyndeton

Feature writing exercise

Take risks with your writing.

From the facts provided on the prompt, write a story that uses all of the information as well as at least three literary devices.

Do not write a news story. Do not write an inverted pyramid news lead.

Using the same facts, write creatively

Who:	Senior Ben Grant
What:	Finished second in the district 100-meter dash championship
When:	Last Saturday
Where:	District track meet
How:	He was suffering from a mild pulled hamstring
So what:	Until Saturday, Ben had not lost a district 100-meter race in four years of high school. He's finished second at state the past two years. As a freshman, he finished fourth at region.
Ben Quote:	"I had hoped to finish my career undefeated, but he's been on my heels all year. I knew that sooner or later, he'd beat me. But he shouldn't plan on making a habit of it."
Sam Quote:	"I'm not going to kid myself, Ben can smoke me when he's healthy. If his hamstring improves by regional, I'll be back looking up at him on that winner's stand."
Also:	The sophomore was Sam Grant, Ben's brother. Ben's father, Pete Grant, won the district 100-yard dash in 1982. His older brothers, Josh and Dan, won the district 100-meter dash championships in 2015 and 2017 respectively. On the awards stand, Sam and Ben wore their blue and red warm-ups.
Scene:	On the awards stand, Sam grabbed his brother and pulled him up on the top rung. "I wouldn't be standing here if it weren't for you," Sam said. Ben grabbed his brother's arm and raised it into the air. "No. You deserved it. You're the champ. Until the next time we run," Ben answered.

Essential Questions

Be prepared to discuss the following questions:

1. What are the elements of voice?
2. Explain what the author means when he suggests, “Write like you talk.”
3. Be prepared to explain when and how first and second person can be used effectively.
4. Discuss “style” and how a writer develops it.
5. Explain the role that description plays in the development of style.

End of Chapter Quiz

1. Be prepared to discuss why it’s important for a writer to trust his or her own voice.
2. Provide two examples that reflect the following statement: “Rules are meant to be broken by those who have mastered the rules.”
3. What is “tone,” and why is it important that a writer identify a story’s tone at the beginning?
4. Find in the feature story about Col. Chuck Savedge on page 178 one example of each of the following literary devices:
 - descriptive verb
 - hyperbole
 - dialogue
 - repetition
 - alliteration
 - internal dialogue
5. Thumb through old yearbooks or newspapers. Find an incident that you think would be worthy of a historical feature. Explain how you might go about writing this story.

Ch. 13 | WB 13-2

**Show.
Don't tell.
Using your
imagination,
describe a
scene that
illustrates a
larger truth.**

Create (either in writing or as a class discussion) an anecdote that illustrates each of the situations listed here.

Again, use your imagination. The point of this exercise is for you to demonstrate your creative writing skills.

Show. Don't tell.

- A small, timid student is bullied at school.
- The sophomore point guard is nervous before the first varsity game.
- Members of the one-act play cast were disappointed in their ranking.
- Girls can be mean to one another.
- The teacher takes extra time and effort to help students.
- The school adopts a “get-tough” policy toward tardy students.
- Football practice on a summer day is tough.
- A freshman girl is sexually harassed at a dance.
- A teacher confronts a student over a cheating incident.
- A boy was sleepy.
- The junior was excited about his prom date.
- The man appeared intoxicated.
- The room was cold.
- Students face emotional and psychological problems.