

Headline Basics

Headlines should

- Grade the news
- Sell the story
- Tell the facts
- Dress up the page

Basic Principles

- Headline should tell the whole story accurately
- Avoid editorializing
School buses are not safe editorializing
Buses unsafe, experts say good
- Keep the subject clearly specified
- Create strong, interesting verbs
- Headlines should create the mood of the story
- No headline should start with a verb
- No passive verbs
- No “to be” verbs
School board is going to workshop (wrong)
- No past tense verbs
School board attended workshop (wrong)
- The headline should be fresh and vivid
- Do not repeat any words
Students attend student conference (wrong)
- Avoid slang
Band replaces ghetto band uniforms (wrong)
- Avoid simplified spellings
Nite for Night
- Use single quotation marks rather than double quotation marks
‘We’re going to win’ Butler says
- Divide thoughts with a semi colon
Happiness comes with money; jobs hard to find
- Avoid abbreviations, except for months with days
Parade scheduled Dec. 12
- Do not use articles
Journalism receives a grant (wrong)
New turf installed on the field (wrong)
- Use a comma in the place of the word “and”
Jones and Mallett receive pay raises (wrong)
- Conjunctions, prepositions and modifiers should not be placed at the end of a line or the last word of a headline
- Avoid punctuation marks
- Avoid school name or abbreviation
- Avoid clichés
- Avoid the word “are”
- Avoid alliteration

- Never ever use an exclamation point
- Do not split
 - Names
 - Verb phrases
 - Prepositional phrases
 - Adjective phrases
 - Adjective from noun

Main headlines and Sub Headlines

- Main headlines are bolder and more eye attracting
- Sub headlines usually come after the main head and give more to the story or a different angle to the story
- Each must stand-alone and not depend on the other
- Sub headlines are usually longer in word count
- Sometimes the main head will use a play on words to grab the readers attention while the sub head will complete the story idea

Students angry

Administrators pass school uniform rule

Good or Bad?

_____ **Texas schools are killing children through pesticides**

_____ **TV show sparks hairy issue**
Sideburns a growing fad

_____ **Bronco band to perform at
state meet in Austin**

_____ **Journalism teacher named ‘Teacher of the Year’**

_____ **Journalism students
prepare for meet at
Mansfield Summit**

_____ **Happiness hotel and James hotel
demolished for student parking lots**

_____ **State gives Mark
Williams honor**

_____ **Making a statement**
Band members attend top honors in Austin