

Grades 6-8 Student Activities for Using the Newspaper

Features

- In groups of three, poll 15 other students or teachers and graph the results of the poll:

Do you read the comics?

What is your favorite comic?

- Clip a comic strip and remove the words. Create your own dialogue for that comic-strip character(s).
- Write a story about a comic-strip character.
- List the names of people mentioned or pictured on a feature page(s) you would like to meet. Tell why you would like to talk to them.

Sports

- Rewrite a sports article using as many opinionated phrases as possible. Trade with a classmate. Underline the biased statements of your partner.
- Find one example of “good citizenship” and one example of “bad citizenship” on the sports pages and discuss the reasons for choosing these examples.
- Create ratios. Example: If the White Sox won 19 of their first 27 games, how many games will they win in a 162 game season – provided they continue to win and lose at the same ratio?
- Underline the compound words in a sports story.

Editorial/Opinion

- Choose an editorial to study. Mark each fact in the editorial

with an orange marker and each opinion with green.

- An editorial generally consists of four parts – the question or problem, proof, conclusion and suggestions for reader action. Identify these parts in several editorials.
- Read and summarize three or four columns selected by your teacher. Discuss why you liked or disliked particular ones and whether or not you agree with the columnists.



- Identify a controversial subject in the community or state. Collect columns, letters to the editor and/or editorial cartoons on the subject. Determine the opposing views expressed. Identify classmates who are on opposing sides of the issue. Vote on it in class and chart the results.
- Use one of the unsigned editorials or column to create an editorial cartoon.
- After reading the columnists’

opinions, make a list of issues of local interest.

News

- Read the headlines and select a news story. List two to three questions you expect will be answered. Write the answers to the questions, if given.
- Skim the front section of the newspaper. Write a current events quiz for your classmates. Take turns asking questions and have others find the answers.
- From the business section, pick 10 stocks you would like to buy and find the total value if you purchased 100 shares of each. Pick the stock you think will gain the most value in a week’s time. Compute the percentage of gain or loss for each of the 10 stocks to see if you picked the correct one.
- News stories should be objective and unbiased. Choose two to three articles. List quotes that show different viewpoints of the story. Did the reporter use enough sources or is information lacking from the story? Is it one-sided? Why or why not?

Advertising

- Find advertisements in the newspaper you find interesting. Cut out one you do not find interesting. Describe the ads to the class and talk about why you chose them.
- Create an advertisement to sell your (teacher, school, favorite celebrity, pet) and use words (15 or less) to make someone want to purchase your item.