

Extra! Extra!

Read all about it! Even though we live in the Internet age, most people still keep track of events by reading the newspaper or listening to the radio. By learning to use the proper format, you can improve your chances of getting your news items published or aired. In this activity you will learn how to get your information released about an upcoming activity or event.

Making CONTACT

Write a press release to let others know about a recent or upcoming event. When you are finished use the checklist below to make sure you have included the necessary information. Make your revisions and get the news out! Include as many elements as possible in your press release.

Check It Off: Writing a Press Release

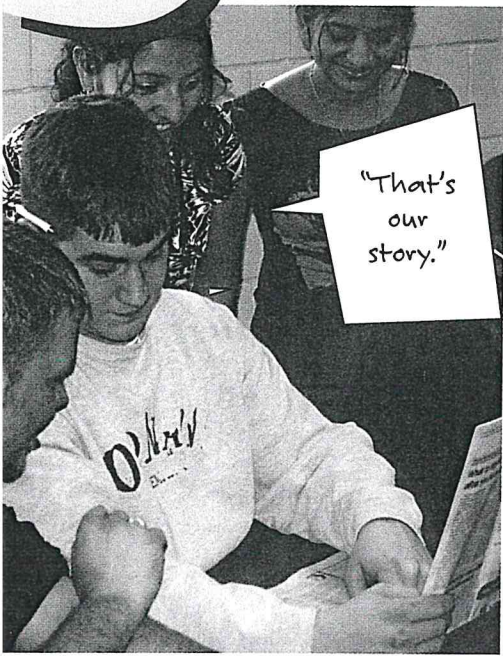
	Yes	No	Revisions Needed
Is the topic timely?			
Important?			
Of local interest?			
Does the story tell:			
Who?			
What?			
When?			
Where?			
Why? and/or How?			
Does the story begin with a strong informative lead?			
Is it written in newspaper style?			
Are the most important facts included here?			
Is it written in an objective way?			
Does it include the writer's contact information? (Name, address, phone number, e-mail address)			

Communication Skill:
Writing a press release or PSA

Life Skill: Communicating with others; presents complex ideas

Educational Standard:
NL-ENG.K-12.6 Apply knowledge of language structure to create texts

Success Indicator:
Prepares a press release or public service announcement.



REMEMBER:
Store your Press Release in your Communications portfolio.

Chat Room

Publicize It! share

- How did you choose what to write about?
- What do you think made this event newsworthy?

Headline It! process

- Which of the five elements did you emphasize in your press release?
 - Why did you choose to emphasize those?
-
-
-

Link It! generalize

- About what topic have you written a press release or PSA in the last year?
 - Why are press releases an effective form of communication?
-
-
-

Network It! apply

- In what other situations could you use a Press Release or PSA?
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-
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News Stories, Press Releases and PSA's

Do you know the difference between a news story, press release and PSA? Each one of them has a specific purpose and format to get information to the public.

Five elements of a News Story (plus how)

- **Who** – who is the story about?
- **What** – what happened?
- **Where** – where did it take place?
- **When** – the date and time it happened?
- **Why** – or how did it occur?

Press Release

A **press release** is a written account of the five basic elements of a news story along with additional details and could include photos. It would be printed in a newspaper or magazine.

Share the most important information first and then work your way down to include the details that aren't as interesting or urgent. This style of writing is called an **inverted pyramid**.

On the top left hand side of your page you should start with FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE followed by a few spaces and the date of writing the release. Always include the name, phone, email and fax of the contact person. Skip a few lines and title your release and then write the article covering all the main parts outlined in the checklist provided in the activity.

Public Service Announcement

A Public Service Announcement (**PSA**) is a short version that includes just the vital information of the five elements. It is usually transmitted electronically, via radio or television in a short spot of ten to sixty seconds. When writing a **PSA**, the words PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT should be written at the top middle of your paper followed by a few spaces and then the date that you'd like your announcement to air. Next include name, phone, e-mail and fax of the contact person. Skip a few lines and title your announcement, in bold letters, by the name of the event, followed by a short, complete explanation of what you want aired. PSA should be sent about three weeks in advance.

LINGO • Press Release • PSA

• Inverted pyramid

NOTE IT

All newspaper articles use the **who, what, when where, and how**—occasionally the **how** is not applicable.

Upgrades

1. Write a PSA for your local radio station or cable access channel for National 4-H Week. Review your PSA with your helper and then have it posted.
2. Write a press release for an upcoming 4-H or other event going on in your county. Ask your helper to assist you in submitting it to a local paper.