

# Copy Deadline Review and Scoring

# Required Content for Copy Deadline

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- **Surveys** out of at least 100 people
- At least **3 different perspectives** for each story
- Copy that fills **required word count**
- Story that “doesn’t suck”
  - Yes, this is on the rubric
  - This gets you a free date with the copy editors and Clone (not a date you want to go on)

# Content - stuff to edit out of your writing

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- **Passive Voice**

- Having the thing carry out the action
- “The shoes were worn by the basketball players.”
- Should be, “The basketball players wore the shoes.”

- **The “No duh” information**

- “Joel Linden chose to play football for a division one school in California. The coaches there thought he was really good.”

- **The reporter should not be present in the story**

- “When asked about \_\_\_, Joe Smith said\_\_\_” - DON'T
- Just paraphrase and create a transition into the quote.

# Editorializing - this is bad

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- This is when you write something as if it's a fact that you don't attribute to someone...
  - **Generalizations**
  - Many, some, most, always/never (don't do this)
    - Example: "They always gave practice their all."
  - **Opinion statements:**
    - "The Varsity swim team is really good."
    - "It was the most fun event they will ever go to."

# Verb Tenses

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- **STORIES** SHOULD BE IN THE **PAST TENSE**
- **Subheads** should be in **PRESENT tense**
  - Read through your entire story just looking for verbs and changing them to past tense.
  - Try not to start with “For grade + name,…”
  - Subheads should summarize event and connect story to headline
- **Attributes**
  - After **FIRST** complete thought.
  - **ALWAYS** use “(name) **said.**”

# Style Stuff NOT TO DO

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- Asking **rhetorical questions**, or starting with “Imagine”
  - These are all hypotheticals. You are supposed to report on facts, not speculation
- **3 sentences in a row** that begin with a subject
- Using **personal pronouns** (you, your) – DON’T
- **Redundancy**
  - “This made her sad and depressed.”

# Style continued

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- **Cliches** - avoid them like the plague
  - Example: “That was her passion.”
  - Watch for things like “made an impact on,” “were a family,” and “formed bonds.”
- **Wrapping up your story with a prediction** - Don’t do this
  - Example: “Next year, the team will be stacked.”
- **Wrapping up your story with a nice bow** - Don’t do this
  - Example: “The future is sure to be bright for this team.”

# The Nitty Gritty



# Obvious Things not to do...

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- Using **“this year,” “currently,”** – DON'T
- **DO NOT** use **“Traverse City”** or **TCW** or **West**
- **DO NOT state the obvious.** Don't tell what the reader already knows. Tell the story behind the story.
  - Ex; DON'T say...The players were happy that they won with a score of 20 to 2, better than their last score.”

# People's Names and Acronym Names

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- Use **full name on school record** (no nicknames)
- Use full name the first time in the story, then just last name for the rest of the story/caption.
- NAME MISSPELLINGS \*\*\*\*\*
- **Spell out acronym names first time**, then use acronym
  - Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA) >> DECA

# Stuff TO DO

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- **Spell out numbers 10 and over**
- **(exception: ages and times)**
  - Always spell out numbers under ten
  - Ages: 18-year-old
  - Times: 1 p.m.
- **Specify a.m. & p.m. (yes, use both periods)**
- **Fix conversational spelling** from your interview:
  - Example: “Sorta,” = “sort of,” “Kinda” = “kind of,” “Gonna” = “Going to,” “Wanna” = “Want to,” etc.
  - Yes, fix these in quotes

# Capitalization

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- **Lowercase grade levels**
  - junior Elizabeth Cheswick
  -
- **Capitalize the level of team + team name**
  - Varsity Pom Team
  - JV (no periods)
- **DO NOT leave “I” as lowercase**

# Punctuation

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- Quotation Marks - use around every quote.
  - Remember, **“quote, comma, (quotation mark), name said.”**
  - Or **“I love punctuation,” Melissa Clone said.**
- **Exclamation points** - don't use them. Just use a period.
  
- When **naming teams by gender, use an apostrophe at the end:**
  - Example: Boys' Tennis; Girls' Golf

# Paragraphing

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- **DO NOT indent paragraphs**, just double space between them
- Always start a **new paragraph with each quote**
  - You should have a lot of short paragraphs in your stories
- **DO NOT stack quotes without a transition** sentence in between.
  - Use other information from your interview to transition into the next point

# Leads

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- Leads that don't hook the reader
  - Don't use a quote lead!
- Types of leads (again)
  - The punch lead
    - Blunt statements that jolts the reader
  - The picture/background lead
    - Descriptive/imagery
  - The contrast lead
    - Two opposite extremes
  - 5Ws & H

# Quotes

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- **Use [] to clarify quotes**

- “It is my favorite sport,” Zaliagiris said.
- Should be, “[Football] is my favorite sport,” Zaliagiris said.

- Statements backed up with no quotes

- Delete from quotes: “umm,” “well,” and “like”

- Quotes without context

- Example: “That was amazing.”

- Quotes with no human interest or emotion (irrelevance)

Quotes that state what any reporter could write in their own words



# Captions

# Attributes

# Attribution - to whom can we attribute the quote or information

Correct: Written as a Quote

“The volleyball fans are hype,” Libby Cheswick 11 said.

Correct: Written as the reporter Paraphrasing

According to Libby Cheswick 11, the student section is more enthusiastic than in years past.

## QUOTE - COMMA, NAME - SAID

“The volleyball fans are hype,” Libby Cheswick 11 said.

- The person is more important than the word “said”
- Always use said
- Always write in the past tense (except for your lead, which should start in the present tense)

**Break up longer quotes** by placing the attribution after the first complete thought.

“There’s a serious problem,” Lucas Hartwell 9 said, “because people just don’t care about architecture and the beauty in it. Buildings are living, breathing beings, worthy of admiration and respect.”

Use a combination of **paraphrasing** and **quotes** to build the story:

“There’s a serious problem,” Lucas Hartwell 9 said, “because people just don’t care about architecture and the beauty in it. Buildings are living, breathing beings, worthy of admiration and respect.”

**Hartwell** believed that all students should give Detroit a fresh look. His work with his family, who owned several buildings that they were rehabbing, gave him **insight about Detroit’s potential**. (This, by the way, is a transition paragraph, but it’s filled with information that builds the story)

“Detroit has always featured great buildings,” he said. “But the skyline at night - now it just has this magic that I haven’t seen in years past. It’s worth seeing.”