

## NEWSPAPER VOCABULARY

**active voice:** In active voice the subject (the subject of the verb) performs the action. Active voice puts the person or thing (the subject) doing the action first in the sentence, then the verb.

**Active:** Jane baked the cookies. (Jane, as the person doing the action, is first in the sentence.)

**Passive:** The cookies were baked by Jane.

**anecdote:** A short story about an incident or situation that shows rather than tells. It may be as simple as an explanation or example or as involved as the retelling of an incident complete with a sense of plot and dialogue.

**attribution:** The act of providing a reference to a source; citing the source.

**banner:** A headline in large type running across the entire width of the page.

**box:** A small article or headline enclosed by lines to give it visual emphasis.

**broadsheet:** full-size newspaper, averaging six columns to a page

**byline:** Line located under headline which tells the name of the writer.

**caption:** Lines under a photograph which explain what the picture is about (also called "cutline").

**column:** the vertical divisions of a page or opinion or comment expressed by a regular writer

**columnist:** Writer who gathers facts and writes opinions.

**comic strip:** Three- or four-panel drawings that tell a story, usually humorous.

**confrontation interviewing:** Firing questions in an accusatory manner that will likely make the interviewee (the person being interviewed) uncomfortable and less likely to respond.

**copy:** Typewritten or printed material.

**copy editing:** A reading of the copy, or article, to eliminate all errors after the reporter has finished the story.

**credit line:** Acknowledging the source of a picture.

**cutline:** Information below a picture which describes it.

**dateline:** The first words in lead of a story which give name of city from which the story was sent.

**direct quotation:** The exact words that a news source uses in giving information. Quotations marks are always used to set off a direct quotation.

**ears:** Space at the top of the front page on each side of the newspaper's nameplate. Usually boxed in with weather news, index to pages or an announcement of special features.

**editor:** Person who decides what news goes into the paper, reviews and corrects reporters' work and writes the headlines.

**editorial cartoon:** Drawing on editorial page employing exaggeration, satire, and symbolism.

**elements of the news:** Qualities, such as timeliness, proximity, conflict, progress, consequence, prominence, human interest, variety, and humor, that create interest in a news event.

**feature story:** A story that goes further than straight news coverage, and usually focuses on the human interest elements of a situation or event. The feature story may be written to inform or entertain, and it can be on a multitude of topics from the trivial (students favorite singing groups) to the serious (teenage depression).

**feature the feature:** Place the most important information at the beginning of the lead paragraph. In other words, place the most important of the 5Ws & H at the beginning of the opening paragraph.

**filler:** A copy with little news value; used to fill space.

**follow-up question:** An on-the-spot question that is based on an answer to a previous question. It often asks for elaboration or explanation.

**font:** style and size of type

**hard news:** up-to-the-minute news and events that are reported immediately

**headline:** extra large font across top of front page, placed above or below the masthead

**index:** Table of contents of each paper, usually placed on page one.

**indirect quotation:** Information that is close to the way the news source said it, but not exactly. Quotation marks are not used.

**journalism:** Process of collecting, writing, editing, and publishing news.

**journalistic interview:** A focused conversation between two or more persons to gather information on behalf of an unseen audience.

**justified:** Lines of type that are even on the right as well as the left side.

**kicker:** A short, catchy word or phrase over a major headline.

**lead:** First paragraph of a story, usually telling the 5 Ws (who, what, when, where and why) and H (how).

**layout:** the position of stories, advertisements, photos and graphics on a page (also Dummy)

**libel:** Written defamation

**logo or flag:** Type on front page which gives name of newspaper.

**masthead:** information about the newspaper, such as the name of the publishing company, names of the officers of the company, location of editorial offices, editorship and distribution facts, all usually found at the top of the editorial page

**morgue:** the newspaper's collection of clippings, photos, reference materials and microfilm

**nameplate** (flag or logo): A stylized signature of a newspaper which appears at the top of page one.

**news hole:** Space in a newspaper allocated to news.

**newsprint:** A grade of paper made of wood pulp used for printing newspapers.

**news story:** An objective article written about an event or situation.

**obit:** An obituary; a story of a person's death.

**op-ed page:** Opposite editorial page: to give readers'/columnists' opinions different from those of the newspaper

**paparazzi:** international press corps who compete for stories, usually of a sensational nature

**paraphrase:** Information that rephrases, but accurately summarizes, what the news source said. Quotation marks are not used.

**passive voice:** In passive voice the subject receives the action with the use of a passive verb. A passive verb is a form of to be and a past participle: is believed, was believed, had been believed, will be believed.

**Passive:** The chess game was played by senior John Jones.

**Active:** Senior John Jones played the chess game.

**press conference:** Place where reporters from different newspapers are briefed.

**press release:** A hand-out giving information about a public event

**probe:** To investigate thoroughly during an interview; to ask follow-up questions that encourage the respondent to explain or elaborate on something already said.

**publisher:** Administrative head of a newspaper.

**reefer:** Reference line, also called "refer" line.

**reporter:** a person hired to rush to the scene and phone back information as soon as possible or to key the report into a word processing terminal at the newspaper office

**review:** An account of an artistic event such as a concert or a play which offers critical evaluation; opinion of the writer.

**sidebar:** A shorter, related article that focuses on one aspect of a main article. A sidebar is a secondary story accompanying a major story.

**slander:** Oral defamation

**soft news:** background information or human interest stories

**source:** Supplier of information.

**spot news:** News obtained first-hand. Fresh news.

**stringer:** A writer who works for a newspaper but does not report to the office every day.

**syndicate:** Company which sells and distributes cartoons, columns, comics, puzzles, etc. to newspapers.

**tabloid:** a smaller format 1/2 broadsheet folded, often preferred by publishers of local papers or commuter papers and the sensationalist press (*National Enquirer*)

**typo:** Short for typographical error.

**wire service:** a news agency or organization that gathers news and transmits it to individual subscribing newspaper (AP, CP, Reuters)

**yellow journalism:** Refers to sensational stories and "scare" headlines.