

Features to watch out for in a newspaper report

- Attention-grabbing headline.
- Factual – giving information, answering the questions: Who? What? Where? When? How?
- Keeping the story exciting and the pace fast so the reader does not get bored.
- Clear sentences, not too long and complicated.
- Direct quotes from witnesses or reported speech where a direct quote has not been obtained.
- Short paragraphs to break up the text.
- Clear conclusions.
- **Style – can be chatty or formal**

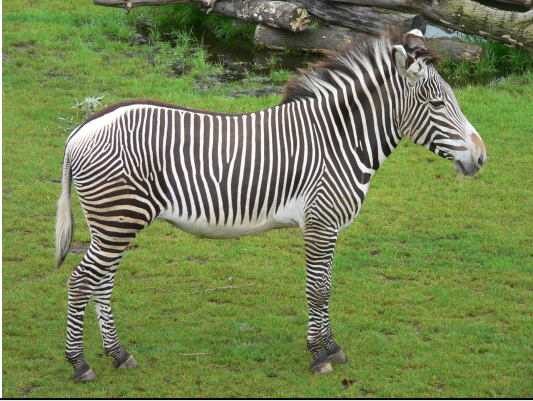
Chatty

- Direct speech.
- Active voice to say exactly who did what.
- Shorter sentences.
- Informal language (e.g. contractions such as 'don't' or 'wouldn't').

Formal

- Reported speech.
- Passive voice to avoid saying who or what was the cause.
- Longer sentences.
- Formal language with no shortened forms.

Zoo Zebra in Co-op Car Park Caper



Molly the zebra safely back at the zoo last night

A runaway zebra caused chaos yesterday as it tried to avoid capture in the seaside town of Lindley in Dorset. The zebra had escaped at dawn from the nearby children's zoo in Briarley Wood.

The beautiful stripy mare was first spotted in the car park of the Co-op supermarket in Westray Street where it came to the attention of two local women; the pair had set out early to do their regular Friday morning shop. "At one point the zebra was coming towards us," said retired nurse Sally Stern. "When it reared up on its hind legs, my friend and I were scared its hooves would hit us in the face."

Once supermarket staff realised the animal was on their site, they quickly contacted the local RSPCA, who traced the animal to Briarley Wood Children's Zoo. The RSPCA rescue squad were at the Co-op within ten minutes of taking the call – only to find that their stripy quarry had disappeared.

The next sighting of the zebra was outside Claire's Gift Shop. Eye-witnesses say the animal looked as if she wanted to go inside. However, the loud noise of a nearby drill frightened her away – this time towards the park.

It was in Lindley's Memorial Park that the zebra was finally captured by the RSPCA rescue squad. Children and parents in the park were alarmed at the sight of the now panic-stricken animal, but police officers quickly sealed off the area so that RSPCA staff were able to sedate the zebra and return her to the zoo.

Local RSPCA Director Alf Crawley said that questions will be asked about the careless security arrangements at Briarley Wood Zoo. He expressed surprise that, until the RSPCA informed them, staff at the zoo were unaware the zebra had escaped. A spokesperson for the zoo was unavailable for comment.

It's curtain up for new stage school!

Hayley Turnpike keeps her promise with her gift to Tinksbury



Tinksbury is to have a new stage school, thanks to the generosity of talented actress Hayley Turnpike, it was announced yesterday. The stage school will be built in the Greenside area of the town, close to the industrial park.

Hayley lived the first twenty years of her life in the town, before moving to Los Angeles to pursue an acting career in Hollywood. She is best known for her starring role in the Carrie Spotter series of films. This won her an Oscar last year and has made her the UK's richest woman under 30.

The decision to build the £10 million stage school was made public yesterday during Hayley's visit to her family who still live in Lower Tinksbury. With characteristic modesty, Hayley declined to be interviewed herself, but a spokesperson for the actress confirmed that the exciting project will go ahead. Her publicity manager, Hal Brent, said that Hayley does not want a big fuss made about her involvement in this venture, adding that she had loved living in the area and wanted to give something back for future generations of young people.

An ecstatic Mayor Joe Lavinski was photographed on the steps of the town hall giving details to the press about the stage school. "We are delighted to confirm that a new stage school is to be built in Tinksbury next year. There will be full-time places for fifty 16-21 year-olds with many other acting, singing and dancing classes available. In accordance with the wishes of our generous benefactor, preference will be given to talented youngsters from our local area." It is understood – or hoped – that after the school is built, Ms Turnpike will continue to fund the school annually.

Rumours about this project have abounded for many months now; some people thought an announcement would be made last Christmas. Others felt it would never happen. Nevertheless, on this occasion rumours have proved to be correct and there can be no doubt that the future looks bright for stage-struck youngsters who hope to follow in the famous footsteps of their heroine Hayley Turnpike.



Mystery flower beds while you sleep

Residents of the town of Aldeymarsh in Lincolnshire do not know whether to be concerned or grateful for a series of visits the town has been receiving during the night over the last month. So far no fewer than eleven lucky householders have woken to find that their gardening has been done for them while they were sleeping.

Tasks carried out included: hedge cutting, weeding, edge trimming and even lawn mowing; most of the homes involved have also had new flowers and shrubs planted. Mother-of-two 28-year-old Anna Gagney of Romney Close said that last Tuesday, when she when she went to bed, her front garden was full of weeds. The following morning all the weeds had been removed and she was delighted to find that about twenty substantial flowering bushes had been planted -neatly and expertly - in her previously overgrown flower beds.

Most of the residents who have received the free garden makeovers are delighted with the results. Senior citizen Moses Oakey commented, "I'm amazed at this kindness. You don't usually get something for nothing these days." His neighbour, firefighter Peggy Maloney added, "I can't believe they managed to mow my grass in the dark and I didn't even hear the mower!" But accountant James Fearney does not agree. He said he found it alarming that strangers could visit his garden while he was asleep. "These people have trespassed on my property. What's more, if I want flowers in my garden I'll choose and plant them myself."

How the mystery gardeners managed to carry out so many tasks so silently in the dark has baffled local police ever since they were first made aware of the problem by James Fearney. A spokesman for Superintendant Beth Holt confirmed that police are looking into eleven cases of overnight trespass and so far, have no leads to go on. It is unknown whether the trespassers, when found, will also be charged with theft of weeds.

Anyone with any information is requested to call Aldeymarsh Police in confidence on 020023 987987.



1. Why would people read this article?
2. Headlines often play with language using devices such as puns, alliteration, rhyme, references to well-known sayings, book titles etc. What does this one do?
3. What picture(s) is / are included? Is there a caption? What does the picture add to the story?
4. Does the first paragraph answer the questions: Who? What? When? Where? (This is often called the orientation of the article as it helps to 'orientate' the reader, i.e. 'put them in the picture'.)
5. In 2 or 3 words, what is each paragraph about?
6. Does the final paragraph bring the story up to the present or look to the future? (This is often called the reorientation because it helps leave the reader with a good idea of 'what might happen now'.)
7. What do the following words mean: *pursue, characteristic modesty, confirmed, venture, ecstatic, benefactor, abounded, stage-struck, declined to be interviewed*? How can you work them out if you don't know?
8. Find some facts from the article. Often news articles contain opinion. Can you find any words in this which show the writer's opinion?
9. Who has been interviewed? (Interviews are usually with someone involved or affected / eyewitness / expert on relevant topic / spokesperson for relevant group.)
10. Are the interviews in direct or reported speech? How can you tell? (Look for use of 1st or 3rd person, present or past tense, speech marks or no speech marks, but above all whether it is the actual words spoken.) Do you prefer the direct or reported speech? Why?
11. Can you find anywhere the writer has used a semi-colon? Can you find another place where the writer might have used a semi-colon to join two closely connected sentences?
12. Is the style chatty or formal? (Find some examples of, reported or direct speech, the use of informal 'chatty' language or the use of formal, quite 'dry' language to help you decide what style the article is written in.)
13. Did you find the article a) informative and b) entertaining?

- 1) How does the headline draw you in?
- 2) What picture is included? Is there a caption? What does the picture add to the story?

- 3) Does the first paragraph answer the questions: **Who? What? When? Where?**
- 4) In 2 or 3 words, what is each paragraph about?
- 5) Does the final paragraph bring the story up to the present or look to the future?
- 6) What do the following words mean: ***quarry, panic-stricken, sedate, expressed surprise***? How can you work them out if you don't know?
- 7) Can you find some facts from the article? Can you find words which show the writer's opinion?
- 8) Who has been interviewed?
- 9) Are the interviews in direct or reported speech? How can you tell?
- 10) Can you find anywhere the writer has used a semi-colon?
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How can you work them out if you don't know?
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