

ARTICLES

Articles are written to give information (e. g. news reports) or express opinions (e. g. argumentative articles). They can be either formal or informal depending on the audience they are addressed to and the topic they deal with. A good article consists of:

- a) an eye-catching **headline** which suggests the topic of the article that follows;
- b) an interesting **introduction**;
- c) a **main body** consisting of two or more paragraphs in which the topic is presented in detail;
- d) a **conclusion** which gives an appropriate ending to the article.

Such pieces of writing can be found in newspapers, magazines or newsletters.

Points to consider

- Decide on the style of the article before you start writing.
- Always think of a short, clear, appropriate headline which attracts the reader's interests.
- Each paragraph should deal with one aspect of the topic. You can use linking ideas or time expressions to join your ideas or introduce paragraphs.
- Avoid using simplistic adjectives (good, nice, bad, etc). Always try to use more sophisticated vocabulary instead. (*splending, gorgeous, awful, etc*)
- Address the reader in the second person (*you*) if the topic of the article and the style you have adopted permits this.
- Descriptive, narrative and argumentative techniques can be applied when writing articles.

1. Match the headlines with the topics below. There are two headlines for each topic. Which are the most successful? Why?

- a) Exams not necessary
- b) Tahiti: Holidaymaker's paradise
- c) The ferry ran onto rocks
- d) Exams to be banned?
- e) Go to Tahiti for your holidays
- f) Storm forces ferry onto rocks

1. You are a reporter for a newspaper. Write an article about a ferry boat which ran aground in rough seas.

2. Your school magazine has asked its readers to give their opinions on whether exams are useful as a means of testing students' knowledge. Write your article.

3. You are a reporter for a weekly magazine. Write an article describing a popular holiday resort.

How to Write Headlines for News Articles

A headline is a short clear summary of the information presented in a newspaper article. To write headlines correctly, certain rules must be followed.

- a) Use the **present simple** tense to describe events which have occurred very recently. *Earthquake hits L.A.*, for example, means the earthquake has just happened, probably in the last twenty-four hours;
- b) omit the verb „be” when using the passive voice to describe a past event. Write: *President*

- defeated* or *Lost boy found* not: *President was defeated* or *Lost boy was found*;
- c) write to be + past participle when using the passive voice to describe a future event, as in: ***Hospital to be opened by Queen*** (= *A hospital is going to be opened by the Queen.*) When using the active voice to describe a future event, write the full infinitive (to be) only, as in ***Queen to open hospital*** (= *The Queen is going to open a hospital*);
- d) omit articles (a, an, the) as in ***Child trapped in rubble*** (= *A child was trapped in rubble*);
- e) put nouns one after the other as in **London factory explosion injures 27** (which means that an explosion in a factory located in London resulted in twenty-seven people being injured);
- f) avoid using prepositions (words like **under, over, across, through**). Write: ***Unidentified virus spreads*** rather than *An unidentified virus has spread across the country*); and
- g) use abbreviations like US, UN, NATO. Write ***UFO sighted*** not: *An unidentified flying object was seen*.

2. Try to rewrite the following sentences into headlines, applying the theory above.

1. The prisoners' protest at the Tryall jail has ended.
.....
2. Banks are planning to introduce security camerac at cashpoint machines.
.....
3. A tanker overturned, spilling its cargo of heating oil on the M11 motorway.
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4. Nutritionists have condemned new slimming drugs as very harmful.
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5. The London School of Economics has won an award for being the best buisness school.
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6. The Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries has made a deal to fix oil prices.
.....
7. The Zolois factory was blamed for failing to protect workers against unsafe chemical levels.
.....
8. Contaminated baby food of various brands has caused a scare in the city of Redding.
.....
9. The director of the car company will be charged with fraud.
.....

3. Look at the following headlines and expand them into proper sentences.

1. Queen's Lost Jewels Found
2. Collision Kills Five
3. Manchester Wins Cup
4. Explosion Destroys Factory
5. Prince to Wed
6. Dustmen's Strike Over
7. Election Called By PM
8. 7.5 Quake Kills 5000

9. Scandal Threatens Government
10. Hospital to Be Closed
11. War Declared
12. Storm Destroys Corn Crop
13. Terrorist Drama Ends Peacefully
14. Clinton, Pope to Meet
15. UN Warning: Starvation In Africa

4. Read the following sentences, underline the key words, then write possible headlines.

1. Breston is becoming a busy holiday resort due to the Mayor's successful promotional campaign.
2. A mother of four won £1 million in the national lottery last week.
3. A massive earthquake has destroyed most of Clifford Bay. Forty people were killed and fifty are still missing.
4. An attempt was made on the French Ambassador's life while he was visiting Australia. The assassin, who failed in his mission, was arrested.
5. Sting is going to give a concert in London. All proceeds from the concert will go to Amnesty International.
6. Medical researchers have discovered a new treatment which will help people suffering from asthma.
7. Many teachers object to the introduction of computers in school education, as they fear that computers will eventually replace them.
8. Police seized drugs worth £1,000,000 at London's Heathrow airport last Monday.

5. Read the following article and give the paragraph outline. Is it formal or informal? Where would you be likely to find this article?

Massive earthquake hits Georgia

A devastating earthquake measuring 8.2 on the Richter scale struck the provincial town of Brozhomi in Georgia, Southern Russia, last night.

Residents were awakened shortly after 2.00 am by violent tremors lasting more than a minute. Eighty people were killed in the earthquake, which destroyed hundreds of homes and caused severe damage to those left standing.

Authorities fear that dozens of people may still be trapped under the debris ruined buildings. Rescue efforts have been hampered by a lack of equipment, and rescue workers are battling under appalling weather conditions in ... zero temperatures.

Speaking over the wail of sirens, Vasya Puchka described her personal tragedy. „*There is nothing left for me. I have lost my home, my husband and three young children. I saw them die.*”

Unable to cope with the widespread devastation, Georgia has appealed to the international community for medical supplies and help with temporary (...). The rest of the world has been quick to respond. Fleets of trucks (...) food, medical supplies and tents are already on their way in an (...) to relieve the horrific situation.

6. Match the beginnings and endings below, then decide on an appropriate headline for each pair. Which of the sets are informal and which are formal? What does each set talk about? Where could each article be found?

BEGINNINGS

1. If you're looking for an exciting holiday, let me recommend the Florida Keys. It's the ideal place for both fun and relaxation.
2. In the recent past, Olympic medal winners have been accused of taking drugs to enhance their performance. They have even been stripped of their titles after drug tests have come out positive. Why are athletes taking drugs?
3. A whale was safely returned to the sea yesterday after spending two days stranded in shallow waters on the coast of Brenton, North Devon. Dozens of villagers joined in the rescue effort and, with the use of special equipment, moved the whale into deeper waters.

ENDINGS

1. At a press conference today, Deborah Adams, Chief Marine Biologist at Millford Aquarium, thanked all those who had helped, saying it „couldn't have been done without them.” The whale is being monitored and appears to be in good condition.
2. The Florida Keys is a place I'll always remember. Why don't you try it for yourselves this year?
3. All in all, it appears to be a combination of pressure to be the best, the will to win and fear of failure, which can become a deadly cocktail. Some athletes cannot cope and find themselves pushed to their limits. It is then that they turn to the easy, illegal option.

7. Read the following article and replace the words in bold with adjectives from the list below. What headline would you suggest for the article? What techniques have been used?

confident – depressing – dramatic – enormous – enthusiastic – gleaming – inadequate – inspiring – magnificent – wonderful

The Queen Mother officially opened the 1) **nice** new £200m Children's Wing of St Bernadette's Hospital in London yesterday, to the 2) **happy** cheers of medical staff and representatives of the charity which raised the money for the project.

Gone is the 3) **sad** old Children's Wing, built in 1820, with its 4) **bad** facilities and ugly brick walls; in its place is a(n) 5) **clean** new structure with 500 beds, 4 operating theatres and state-of-the-art equipment.

This 6) **big** change is thanks to the efforts of the Children's Hospital Fund, a charity organisation which raised the £200m needed to build the new wing when spending cuts made it necessary to close the hold block. A hospital spokesman thanked the charity on behalf of sick children everywhere and said he was 7) **sure** that St Bernadette's could now offer medical treatment „to rival that of any hospital in the world.”

In her speech, the Queen Mother said, „The 8) **great** efforts of the Children's Hospital Fund are a(n) 9) **good** example to us all and will make a(n) 10) **big** difference to the lives of thousands of children, now and for generations to come.”

Read the article below. Then read the topic sentences and put them in the right box. Where do you think this article is taken from?

JOIN IN RECYCLING SCHEMES

Have you ever really stopped to think about how much rubbish you and your family throw away? Every day we produce incredible amounts of waste. If we don't do something about it, we are in danger of turning this whole planet into a gigantic rubbish dump. Throwing away rubbish also means we are throwing away our planet's precious resources.

1.....Aluminium cans are the perfect example. It costs less to recycle an aluminium can than to make a new one, and one person recycling one can a day would save 50 litres of petrol every year.

2.....Take advantage of recycling facilities in your city. You can divide your rubbish into different bags on glass, metal, plastics and paper, so these can be handled separately.

3.....After all, it's true what they say: „If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem.”

- a) Recycling is easy, but we all have to play a part instead of leaving it to someone else.
- b) So what can be done? Recycling is the answer.
- c) There's no excuse for just throwing away your rubbish.

9. Read the following opening paragraphs and decide which are formal and which are informal, then write an appropriate headline. Finally, give the paragraph plan and complete the articles.

1. Want to escape from the monotony of daily life? Go to Monaco, with its luxurious hotels, 16th century palace and magnificent cathedral. Have cash to spare? Go to one of the Famous casinos and try your luck. But don't overdo it.
2. At a time when pollution is at its worst, governments are working on plans to find ways to reduce the problem. One suggestion being considered is to introduce free public transport in major European cities. This would certainly be one way of tackling the pollution which is slowly choking city dwellers.
3. Twenty-three football supporters were seriously injured at yesterday's Cup Final as a security fence collapsed on spectators in the west stand. Overcrowding and lack of police control were blamed for the tragedy.
4. Colorful floats, spectacular costumes, streets brightly decorated with balloons and streamers – here you are in Rio, enjoying the famous carnival. This is the most amazing carnival in the world and surely one of the most unforgettable experiences you'll ever have.

10. Mark the statements True or False justifying your answers.

1. Articles should always be written in formal style.
2. Articles should not include narrative techniques.
3. Addressing the reader is a way of keeping his/her interests.
4. Articles should always have a headline.
5. More sophisticated adjectives should be avoided.

11. Read the following topics, identify the style they require and suggest an appropriate headline and a paragraph plan. Then write any two of them using 200-250 words.

1. Your school magazine has asked students to give their opinion on whether computers should be used in the classroom.
2. A young people's magazine has asked its readers to write an article promoting the most famous holiday resort in their country.
3. The newspapers you are working for has asked you to write an article on a recent disaster which hit the capital of your country.
4. A health and diet magazine has asked its readers to write an article giving their opinion on junk food.

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