

Hot off the Press! Journalism for Beginners

*Celebrate the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution and literacy at the same time.
The Bill of Rights assures freedom of the press – kids are protected, too!*

Reflect. Teacher: “Did you know that here in America we are assured Freedom of the Press? That means we can share our ideas through newspapers, magazines, websites, and television and radio shows. Why do you think that’s important? (Encourage discussion.) Let’s share our ideas, right now by making a class newspaper of our own articles!”

Model. “Here’s a copy of the *Daily News*. Look, there’s an article about someone getting hurt on the bike trail. Let’s look for features that make this a quality article.”

The following are features you and your students might identify. List them on a Key Features Chart for reference:

- Topic is a unique, interesting, and/or important event
- Headline
- Catchy beginning
- Important information at the beginning
- Concise
- Inclusion of key facts: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?
- Authoritative quotes

Guide. “Let’s write an article together. Can you think of an important event?”

As you write, check back with the Key Features Chart and the sample article you read during modeling. Encourage students to build on each other’s ideas and language. Scribe their story on an overhead projector. Encourage revision until students are satisfied they have created an informative, snazzy piece. As you come up with a headline, realize you are teaching summarizing, a critical comprehension skill! Read the final product and evaluate what makes it a successful article.

On their own. “Now it’s your turn to write an article. Think about the one we read in the *Daily News* and the one we just wrote together. Refer to our Key Features Chart. Start with a special event in your life or here at school. Reporters, give it a try!”

Reflection. Have students read their work. Talk about ways each article is successful and ways to make each even better. Refer to the Key Features Chart.

Presentation. See *Hot Off the Press* below for fun ways to publish student work.

Hot off the Press!



Celebrate freedom of the press kid-style by making your own newspaper. Invite your friends to be reporters and join in the fun. Then invite folks to read the latest news!

★★ You'll need ★★

- Paper
- Pencil
- Crayons
- Camera, optional
- Child safety scissors
- Glue
- Old newspaper

- 1 Write stories about what's happening in your neighborhood or school. You can write about yourself, your family, or your friends. Draw pictures or take photos. Write on paper (or use a computer). Be sure to add your own headlines, give weather reports, and tell about sports and special events. Do it your way!
- 2 Glue your stories onto the pages of a real newspaper.



We Say U.S.A.!



More Freedom Fun!

Kid of the Year!

Glue your picture on the cover of an old news magazine. Glue stories about yourself inside.



TV Reviewer

Write or draw pictures about cool and not-so-cool television shows. Tell why you think so. Glue them into an old TV program guide.

Sports Reporter

Write and draw pictures about sports that you and your friends enjoy watching or playing. Glue them inside an old sports magazine.



A Kids' Bill of Rights

Meet with a group of friends to create your own Kids' Bill of Rights. Are there 10 ideas you can all agree on? Are they fair to everyone?

Here are some ideas other kids have had. Do you agree with them?

Kids have the right to:

- ★ be loved and respected
- ★ choose what they like or don't like
- ★ be safe and protected
- ★ go to bed when they please
- ★ ask questions
- ★ wear the clothes they choose
- ★ agree and disagree with others
- ★ be alone or with others
- ★ pick their own friends
- ★ eat only the foods they like



Little Hands® Celebrate America!

Jill Hauser, 2005

Source: *Celebrate America!*

Learning about the USA through Crafts and Activities

By: Jill Hauser

Williamson Publishing