

HELPFUL TIPS FOR WRITING NEWS STORIES

1 Be objective:

- Be sure the story is newsworthy and would be of interest to the reader. Ask the question: "So what?"
- The news story should be interesting, objective, thorough, accurate, timely, unbiased, and relevant.

2 News should be written in the third person (he, she, it, they):

- Never write a news story in the first person (I, we, me, us) or second person (you, your, yours).
- Remember, you are the reporter reporting the news.
- Avoid editorializing. Keep yourself and your opinion out of the story.
- Include the author's name and title.

3 Use the Five "W"s and the "H":

- Provide details that answer the following questions: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?
- Give "just the facts."

4 Quotes:

- Include at least one quote. Quotes are a good way to hold the readers' interest and move the story forward.

5 The inverted pyramid style:

- News writers follow the inverted pyramid style. The most important news is placed first.

6 Use the active voice:

- Construct sentences where the subject "acts."

Active voice: The education director **asked** the youth director to present the workshop.

Passive voice: The youth director **was asked** by the education director to present the workshop.

7

When identifying individuals, include:

- First and last names, correctly spelled (**never** Mr., Mrs., Ms., Dr., Sis., Bro., etc. in front of a person's name)
- Titles (communication director, pastor, elder, deacon, etc.)
- Academic degree where appropriate: Ph.D., Ed.D., D.Min., M.D., etc.

8

Don't get flowery:

- Keep paragraphs short (one to three sentences), and sentences shorter.
- Avoid using lots of heavily descriptive language.
- Try to remove any words that aren't completely necessary. Be concise.
- Avoid "Adventist jargon," slang, or "insider words."

9

Headlines:

- Give the article a suggested title.
- The title should include a verb.
- The title must be accurate and honest, not misleading. Keep it short and catchy.

10

Submitting photos:

- Digital cameras should be placed on the largest setting for size and quality.
- Pay close attention to the subject in the frame to be sure the background is not too busy and the lighting is good. Action shots are best.
- Each photo should have a caption written in complete sentences.
- Identify the individuals in the photo, unless it is a very large group.
- Include the name of the photographer(s) so that they can be acknowledged for their work.