

## Classroom Newsletter

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Grade: 3-6

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Justification: Newsletters and newspapers provide opportunities for diverse authentic writing activities. Students can write persuasive articles, informational articles, opinion pieces such as editorials, advertisements and more. Students have the freedom to choose topics and explore ideas that interest them.

### Common Core

3.W.1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.

- a. Introduce the topic or text they are writing about, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure that lists reasons.
- b. Provide reasons that support the opinion.
- c. Use linking words and phrases (e.g., because, therefore, since, for example) to connect opinion and reasons.
- d. Provide a concluding statement or section.

3.W.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

- a. Introduce a topic and group related information together; include illustrations when useful to aiding comprehension.
- b. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details.
- c. Use linking words and phrases (e.g., also, another, and, more, but) to connect ideas within categories of information.
- d. Provide a concluding statement or section.

3.W.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

- a. Establish a situation and introduce a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.
- b. Use dialogue and descriptions of actions, thoughts, and feelings to develop experiences and events or show the response of characters to situations.
- c. Use temporal words and phrases to signal event order.
- d. Provide a sense of closure.

3.W.5 With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 3.)

3.W.6 With guidance and support from adults, use technology to produce and publish writing (using keyboarding skills) as well as to interact and collaborate with others

Hook: Explain to the class that they will spend some time each month to develop and create a class newsletter/paper (choose ahead of time which you want them to complete). The newsletter will highlight events in class as well as informational articles on topics of their choice. Once published, the paper will be distributed to the class, parents, other teachers and office staff.

Possible Units:

- Design Team
- Editorial Section
- Feature Story
- School News
- Class News
- Advertisements (school events)
- Person Highlight
- Comics
- Sports Report

Procedure:

Share units you want students to include in their newsletter or provide them with a list of options. Have students pick two units in which to participate. They may be helping to develop a feature store and creating a comic. You can stipulate the number of times a student can join any specific unit in order to ensure they are practicing with a variety of writing styles. For organizational purposes put half of the units in list A and the other half in list B. Have students pick one from each list. This helps when units meet to plan and organize. Have A units meet on day and B units meet another day.

Initial Unit Meeting:

Provide a worksheet that includes the following information:

- List Unit members
- Consider topics/subjects for your section – List all ideas shared in the group
- As a group choose the topic/subject for your section
- Create a list of tasks to be done (this may be outlined by teacher ahead of time for different units)
- Assign roles – Who is going to do what?
- Create deadlines to ensure articles are written and edited prior to the class deadline.

Work Sessions: Provide students with three to four 20-40 minute work sessions. Meet with individuals during these work sessions to assess progress and needs.

Unit Meeting #2

Students meet in their units to assess progress. Ideally all research and fact gathering will be complete by this time and rough drafts outlined. Have each group turn in a paper that indicates who is working on

what assignment, did they meet their progress deadline set during initial meeting. What struggles have been encountered and ideas for how the group can assist any students who are not done with initial progress.

Work Session: This set of work sessions should provide students with time to complete first drafts, complete peer reviews and complete edits of their articles. Students may work independently or with small groups in order to complete the steps of the writing process.

### Unit Meeting #3

Students will meet one last time to make final adjustments, submit and agree on articles written for the final paper and assess teams' success. Have each unit turn in a paper that lists each member, what they contributed to their section of the paper, and list final articles ready for submission. They will turn in their submission for the paper at the end of the meeting.

Design Team: Final submissions will be collected and turned over to the design team. This team will put together the final product. Once completed, and a final edit completed by the teacher, papers will be printed and distributed.