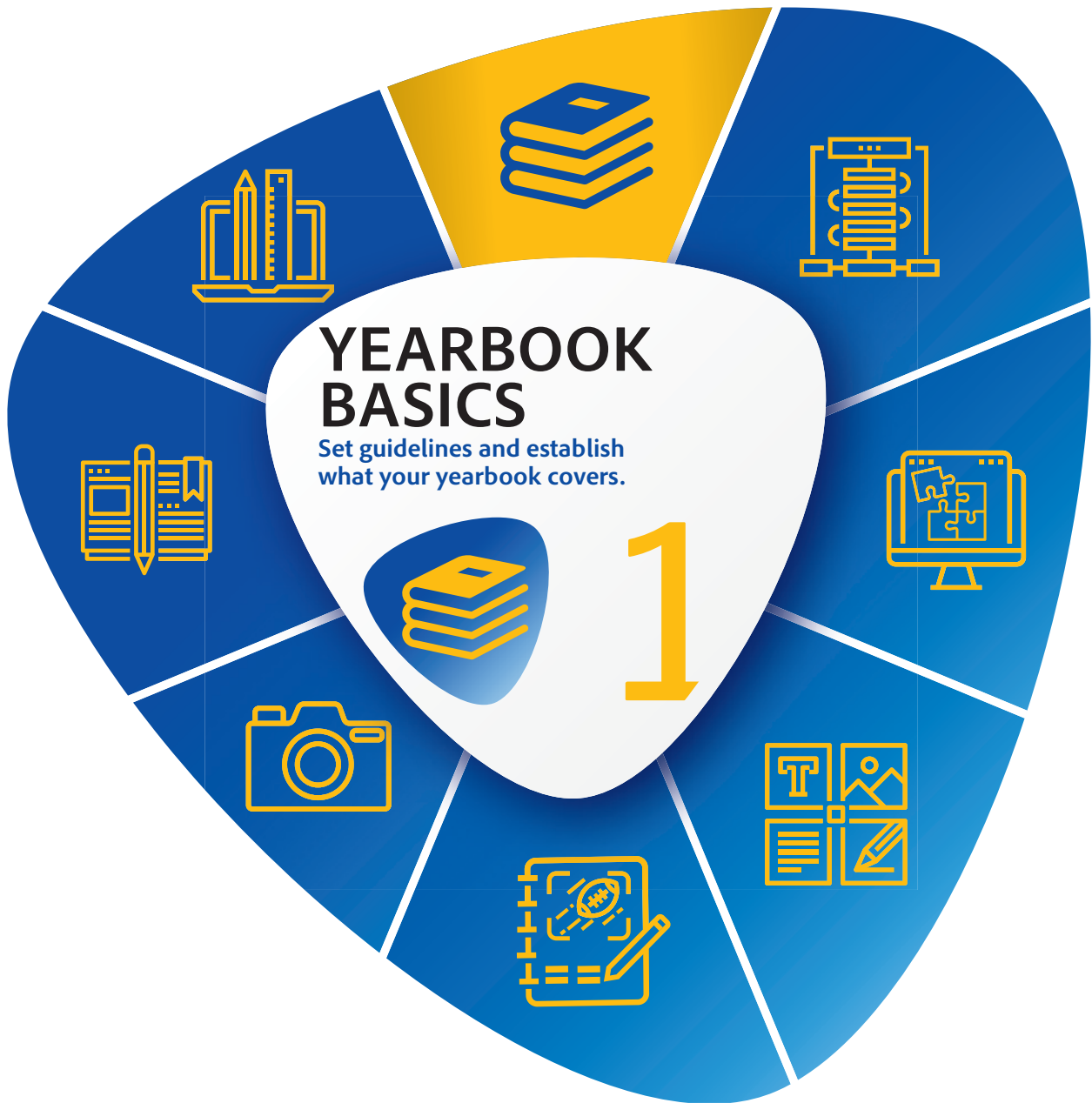




# Curriculum Guide



# Booklet 1: YEARBOOK BASICS



## WHAT IS A YEARBOOK?

A yearbook is a permanent and complete encapsulation of activities, events, news and memories for all students, staff, and the immediate community of a school. This all-inclusive publication holds a different standing in the minds of different people. To many, a yearbook is ...

### A PHOTO BOOK

Most people would probably say a yearbook is a picture book, one that should contain a plethora of photographs of themselves and their friends, the activities, events, and the wonder of everyday life as well as special occasions.

### A MEMORY BOOK

"Do you remember the homecoming game downpour? I got under the bleachers but not before I was soaked through. What did you do?" The images, captions and stories will bring back the atmosphere of the year.

### A HISTORY BOOK

People should be able to look back in 20 or 30 years and remember the blizzard that shut down schools across the nation.

### A RECORD AND REFERENCE BOOK

"Who did the football team beat to win the championship? How many years since the last time we were in the playoffs?" As a record book and a reference book, it is essential for the book to be honest. It is all too easy for staff to want to only report the positive. "Who were the players? What was the score?"

### A PUBLIC RELATIONS TOOL

A yearbook promotes your school to the public. For families moving into a city and deciding on which school to send their kids to, they can look through a yearbook and see all that your school has to offer.

Although many may regard a yearbook as one of the above, it is in practicality, all of them. The yearbook and publication team have the tall task of accurately recording the year that was for many stakeholders and preserving them in a creative, lively, and timeless format. This publication must combine high standards of ethical journalism, cutting-edge design and finding unique ways to ensure that the final product touches each member of the student community, in some way or another.

# ETHICS

When new advisors and staff get ready to start a yearbook, few turn their thoughts to right and wrong, legal, and illegal, what to print and what not to print. It's more about 'Do we have pictures of this?' or 'Does anyone know anyone who did something cool for summer vacation?' Along with these questions there is an excellent opportunity to discuss appropriateness, ethics, and responsibility. Students should think about all the pros and cons and whether anyone is hurt unnecessarily, while covering the school year.

## PUBLISHING THE TRUTH

A yearbook is oriented towards feature coverage and not published daily or monthly as many student newspapers are, yet it is still important for it to be a faithful, trustworthy accounting of the history of the school year. In fact, since a yearbook cannot print retractions or corrections in the same manner as a newspaper can, it is even more important for it to be factually accurate.

## MASKING THE TRUTH

At times, it is tempting to leave out some aspects of the year because the staff is afraid of 'making someone look bad.' For instance, when the girls' basketball team loses every game, the sports editor may want to leave out the score box for that spread even though the scores are included on other sports spreads. Instead of trying to cover up the truth, a more compelling and even compassionate way to cover the team would be in writing a story or interviewing the athletes for a quote collection in which they talk about how they kept motivating each other through such a tough season. Regardless, keep the scoreboard. A more slippery and common problem for yearbook staffers in truth-telling is in resisting the temptation to alter a photograph's content. While it is acceptable to use programs like Photoshop to replace traditional dark-room techniques like colour correction, it is not ethical to alter the factual content of an image. It is not altering the content of the image to correct the gym lighting of the volleyball photos so that they do not have a yellow cast, but it is misleading and unethical to move the placement of a ball, an athlete, a boundary, or a background object in a photo that purports to be of an actual game or practice. Be sure to consult with your school administrators if you have any doubts about including something. Meet with them at the beginning to get a clear understanding of what they want out of the book. Once printed it is here for life.

## PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT

Helping students and staff heal from the death of a fellow student or co-worker is difficult. Every person reacts in a different way and it is important to be respectful of everyone at such time, not favoring one group over another.

Some schools handle these kinds of situations by honoring the individual with a ¼ or ½-page 'In Memory of ...' photo. It includes only the name, year of birth and death as well as photos of the individual supplied by the family. It could be placed in front of the advertising/index section or at the conclusion of the portrait section; being mindful that it is not adjacent to other coverage that would be insensitive. If multiple individuals pass away during the year, it is important to allocate the same amount of space for both as well as maintaining a standard within those pages (same font, same font size, same number of pictures, etc.)

Some schools choose not to ever print their own memorial pages, but rather allow friends and/or family to purchase a student page in the advertising section to memorialize their friend.

The most important approach is to be sensitively realistic that this could happen at some point and to be prepared with a plan when it does.

## ADVERTISING POLICY

Do not allow advertisers to dictate coverage decisions. For instance, it is not appropriate that a local used car dealership purchase an advertisement in return for inclusion in a story in the student life section on students and how they acquire their first cars. Even if the suggestion is not overt, it is not ethical. That is not to say you cannot do the story but rather it would not feature the advertiser. It is also not ethical to feature an image of a homecoming parade that focuses closely on signage promoting a local car dealer on a convertible transporting a queen candidate. Conversely, if someone who is an advertiser does something of major importance for the school – funds an endowment, builds a new theatre – it would be appropriate and indeed newsworthy to cover in the yearbook. Including a statement in the yearbook's code of ethics and advertising policies could directly address such circumstances by stating that the staff does not solicit or accept coverage ideas from advertisers, nor does it feature advertisers in coverage other than in the advertising section.

To ensure that publishing guidelines are followed as much as possible, every yearbook staff should discuss, agree upon, write and publish a policy that covers its right of free expression and manner in which all staff members will conduct themselves in an ethical fashion. It may include the following topics:

- References to national, state, municipal and school district policies governing the book
- Advertising policies
- Obituary policies
- Book sales policies
- Senior portrait policies
- Photography policies
- Journalistic integrity policies

## COPYRIGHT

Every high school student should be familiar with the concept of plagiarism. School handbooks and class assignments are clear on the definitions and the repercussions, but when it comes to the yearbook, they often neglect to remember that what may appear to be plagiarism can become an issue of the law: copyright law.

Yearbook classes strive to produce a book that is accepted and popular. It must reflect what is relevant to the students today. As class advisors, the first place we tell the class to seek inspiration for their theme or concept is within popular culture.

Before choosing a theme or concept based on a popular idea, however, it is vital that copyright law is fully understood by the class. Copyright law was established to protect the right of the author and creators of any original artwork, literary work, dramatic work, advertising design and photographs. It also protects the rights to reproduce cartoon characters, music lyrics and scores.

For a yearbook class, it is quite simple to avoid problems. The class should acknowledge that any work that has been created by someone else and put in a fixed form cannot be used without permission of the creator. Only the creator or the owner of the rights or licenses can grant permission.

Appearing in the public domain, such as the Internet, does not mean that the work is now available for use. It only means that the person or company using the work has sought and received permission. The class must follow the same path and secure permission before including the work in their yearbook.

## Q & A's for Copyright Law

### If I redraw the cartoon character, can I include it?

No, redrawing the artwork is still considered reproducing it and therefore falls under copyright protection.

### How do I receive permission to use the work?

You need to find the owner of the work and ask for permission. If it is a cartoon character, you can contact the publisher and they will guide you through the appropriate channels. They will often ask for examples of how you intend to use the work and will sometimes restrict the use. Do not be afraid to do this because most often the companies will say yes. They may ask for examples of how the work is to be used and can restrict the number of times it can be used.

### How do I let the Yearbook Company know I have permission?

It is vital that you ask for written permission so you may include a copy of this with your submission to your yearbook company. Yearbook companies prepare contracts that state that they are not liable for the violation of copyright laws. This makes your school liable, so act before trouble arrives.

# THE RULE OF THREE

As a rule of thumb, you should always look to include three pictures of each student in your school.

Students are 99% more likely to purchase a yearbook if they know they are in it. In addition to their portrait (or mugshot), your yearbook team/publications staff should seek to include each student at least two additional different times. This could include but is not limited to sports pictures, events, group shots or even candid images.

## TIPS TO GET EVERYONE PICTURED IN YOUR BOOK

- Request a list from the office of the entire student body as well as faculty and staff.
- Post the list in your classroom or upload the list to a shareable document online (GoogleDocs, ConnectMe, etc.)
- Create a system to indicate the page where someone has appeared in a:
  - Cap
  - Story
  - Quote
  - Team shot
  - Picture

The finalized list will create the basis of an Index that can be included at the conclusion of the book. The list can also be used to help boost sales by notifying those who have not purchased a book how many times they appear in the book!

## ASSIGNMENT #1

Ask students to develop a plan to broaden the perception of the yearbook (Photo Book, Memory Book, History Book, Record & Reference Book, Public Relations Tool). Encourage them to come up with new ways to incorporate different elements from each perception and explain, in detail, how someone would view the book in all ways.

## ASSIGNMENT #2

Ask students to divide into groups to research and develop publishing guidelines for this year's book, outlining their editorial responsibilities and policies on content. Encourage students to contact the school district or administration for their publishing guidelines and compare and note differences/similarities.

## ASSIGNMENT #3

Individually, get each staff member to answer the following questions for the scenarios below:

**Is it legally acceptable to print these pictures and coverage?**

**Is it ethically acceptable to print these pictures and coverage?**

**If it is not legal or ethical, then what should the yearbook staff do to cover the event instead?**

For each of the three scenarios below, write a paragraph discussing all the legal and ethical considerations that a staff member should consider in deciding whether it is acceptable to print the photos. Conclude each paragraph by giving your recommendation for covering the story.

**Scenario 1** – It is an annual tradition for students to paint their class logo in the quad. This year at least 40 seniors were involved, and they painted paw prints 'walking' in from the front of the quad to the senior square which is a hit with the student body. The yearbook photographer did not show up even though coverage of this event is supposed to be part of today's submission deadline. However, several of the students who were there did take photos of the whole process and they posted them on Facebook. Some staff members are 'friends' of theirs so they can access the images.

**Scenario 2** – In March, a junior student is killed in a drunk driving accident in which he was driving. There were two other passengers in the car who are also juniors; one suffered a broken leg and arm, and the other received a concussion, cuts, and bruises. The police have evidence that all three were intoxicated. At a November yearbook deadline, one of the students was included in coverage of the school's 'Every 15 Minutes' program sponsored by MADD and local law and health agencies. In a quote collection that included her photo, the student said, "I would never get into a car with someone who had been drinking." Although the book has not yet been finished, the student life pages that included that coverage have already been submitted.

**Scenario 3** – A local tanning company requests that photos of actual students be included in the advertisement they purchase. Their idea is that they are promoting 'safe' versus 'unsafe' tanning techniques. They provide

images of students using the tanning beds and getting spray tans at their facility. However, it is the yearbook staff's job to come up with 'unsafe' tanning pictures. Since the on-campus Day on the Green celebration features water slides, water-gun fights, and students basking in the warm spring weather in bathing suits, there are a lot of opportunities to gather photos of students catching some sun. The best 'unsafe' tanning images are of some senior girls in bikinis who arrange lounge chairs and blankets along one side of the boys' 'beach' volleyball game to cheer on their friends.

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