



CAPTION WRITING CHEAT SHEET

a picture is worth a thousand words.

use the **caption cheat sheet** to ensure your pictures tell the whole story

types of captions

Identification Captions simply identify the first name, last name and grade of the individuals in the picture

Basic Captions generally always answer the "Who?" and "What?" questions of each picture. They will identify individuals and / groups as well as give us a basic description of the activity happening.

Storytelling Captions provide the reader with in-depth insight into the picture and events surrounding it. Containing a captivating lead, they identify the individuals and / or groups, provide us with complementary information and often include quotes. They answer as many of the "Who?", "What?", "When?", "Where?", "Why?" and "How?" question as possible.

picture name _____	type of caption	<input type="checkbox"/> Identification
individuals / groups _____		<input type="checkbox"/> Basic
		<input type="checkbox"/> Storytelling

description of event _____

quote (s) _____

caption lead draft _____

caption draft _____

checklist

- Identify your caption type.** What kind of caption will you be writing. What information will it contain? What do you need?
- Lead or lead-in interests the reader** and reflects an important element of the photo. Usually 3-4 words long. Think mini-headline for your photo that creates a connection; This eliminates the need for numbering photos and captions
- First sentence answers the "Who?" and "What?"** that cannot be determined in the picture. Provide the reader with more than the obvious. Are they tears of joy or frustration?
- Identify all faces or identify the group.** All faces should be identified appropriately however follow this simple rule of thumb. *3 or fewer faces*; identify each individual by first-last name and grade. *4 or more faces*; identify them as a group (ex: varsity baseball players or faculty members)
- Complementary information is key.** Presented in past tense, this information takes the reader beyond the moment of the photo making it that much more interesting.
- Use Quotes.** Quotes convey emotion and opinions. They make your captions that much more powerful.

things / words to avoid

- clichés
- "this year"
- 1st person pronouns (I - me - us - we)
- be verb (am - is - are - was - were - be - being - been)
- many - some - most - few
- opinions
- ___"attempts to" ___

- Write using Active Voice.** Writing compelling captions requires the use of active voice. Active voice is when the subject of a sentence is doing the action, while passive voice is when the subject of a sentence is being acted upon.

CAPTION WRITING CHEAT SAMPLES

type of caption Identification Basic Storytelling



POMS HIGH, HOPE HIGHER - Sophomores Jane Baxter and Isabelle Dominguez perform during a pep rally on Friday, October 18 in the courtyard. "I could not imagine my high school experience without cheer," junior Tracy Frink said. "It's not just a sport. It comes with family and priceless memories."

Captivating lead!

Identifying individuals and location

Quotes to convey emotion

type of caption Identification Basic Storytelling



Students play in the snow at the Teton Science School. They explored the winter landscapes to learn about the wildlife, climate, geology, human history, and ecology in Grand Teton and Yellowstone.

Who and What identified

Caption type identified

No faces, identification of the group

Complementary information

type of caption Identification Basic Storytelling



THE LONGEST YARD - Junior Patrick Johnson is sprinting to victory at Comalander Stadium against Madison on Saturday, September 21. "It gives me a feeling that I never felt before," Johnson said. "It just makes me come together with different people and different coaches. Just being in the game really helps me have fun, and I put all my effort into every single person on the team."

Inspiring lead

Key individual identified

Active voice

Quotes combines with complementary information

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