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Newspapers Maintain the Brain

A Teacher's Guide for Using
The Newspaper to Enhance Basic Skills

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A Teacher's Guide for Using The Newspaper to Enhance Basic Skills



News develops every day. The beauty of the newspaper in the classroom is that it is also fresh each day. It comes to you with the latest news and information and, unlike other media, comes beautifully written with lots of detail. Stories unfold as reporters unearth more information to reconstruct what happened. There is truly no better record of the world's happenings than a newspaper.

For teachers the newspaper offers a special attraction. It has been called the living textbook and it lives up to that name. The newspaper can be used to enhance skills in reading, writing, listening, speaking, math, social studies and science. Critical thinking is the natural outgrowth of using a newspaper to learn. Unlike textbooks, which are several years outdated by the time they get into students' hands, the newspaper comes alive with information. The newspaper expands the curriculum with an unlimited amount of information to use as background for learning activities.

Each of the activities in this guide offers a process for learning. The lessons take students through steps to arrive at a level of understanding. Each requires thought and creativity. And, when teachers use newspapers, they learn along with their students. They, too, discover new worlds and uncover new information. As you work with the newspaper, your expertise as a teacher will give you the ability to help students learn, share and make connections with the material. You and your students will find new meaning in what you know and learn things together.

Each activity is labeled to indicate approximate grade level. **E = elementary**, **M = middle grades** and **S = secondary**. You will probably find it easy to adapt the lessons to the ability level of your students.

In addition, each lesson begins with one of the skills involved in the process of that activity.

Many of the activities are accompanied by reproducible activity sheets you can distribute to students. Those are indicated with the number of the activity sheet.

Here are some suggestions to help you make the best use of the newspaper:

- Whenever possible, allow students to read the newspaper for 10 minutes silently before beginning any lesson. The newspaper generates enthusiasm and interest among students, and you will want to capitalize on that interest. The goal of any lesson should always include generating excitement in learning about the world.
- Feel free to skip around this guide and use only those activities that fit the needs of your program.
- Encourage discussion among your students. Allow them the opportunity to voice their opinions.

- If possible, let students take the newspapers home; assign homework that involves talking about the material with parents.
- Students may be even more receptive to the assignments if you allow them to make choices about which activities they complete. You may want to offer opportunities for extra-credit work.
- Some activities may work best in small groups. Encourage students to work together for optimal results.
- Encourage students to do additional research in the library, in other sources and on the Internet.
- Read aloud to students. Children of any age can benefit from a good news article read aloud with emphasis. Share with your students what you find interesting.

Language Arts Activities

The activities in the language arts section of this booklet will help students improve their skills in reading and writing. These skills are among the ones they will practice: how to find the main idea, how to increase vocabulary, how to compare readings, how to form sentences, how to ask a good question and how to write a great summary. They will employ many critical thinking skills as they are required to interact with the authentic material found in the newspaper.

Sportsmanship

Skill: Student forms his/her own ideas about what has happened in a text and uses specific information from the text to support these ideas.

The Institute for International Sports encourages all athletes to be good sports and to play fairly. Have students make a list of the characteristics that a good sport should have. They can use today's newspaper to find an example of an athlete demonstrating good sportsmanship and explain why they think so. What athletes are not good sports? Why do they think so?

Fact or Opinion

Skill: Student determines fact from opinion.

What is the difference between a fact and an opinion? Read an editorial from today's newspaper aloud to your class or allow students to read independently. On the printed copy, have them circle the words or phrases that are facts with a colored marker and underline those that are opinions with a different color marker. Talk about which words show facts and which show opinions. Did they find more facts or opinions?

Predict the Future Activity Sheet #1

Skill: Student uses background knowledge to make complex predictions from a reading selection.

What do your students think about people who say they can tell fortunes?

Do they think anyone can predict the future? Have them read their horoscopes for today. What does it say about the kind of day they're going to have? Have them copy the prediction and write a paragraph telling whether or not they believe it and why. Then they can write their own prediction for today. Tomorrow, they can write another paragraph describing the kind of day they actually had. Which prediction was closer to reality?

today's newspaper that they think has an interesting topic. They can skim through the article again to find the main idea in each paragraph. On a piece of paper, have them number the ideas. The main idea for the first paragraph would be Number 1, the main idea for the second paragraph, Number 2, etc. They will need to leave space between ideas. Then they can look for the supporting facts in each paragraph and write them below each paragraph's main idea and label them a, b, c, etc.

Sports Glossary

Skill: Student uses a variety of strategies to analyze words.

Have students select an article from the Sports section. As they skim the story, they can make a list of vocabulary words that are used in the sport. Then they should write a definition for each word and draw a picture to illustrate what the word means. They can add any other words they can think of that also have to do with the sport, but that do not appear in the article. Now they have a sports glossary!

Monthly Magazine **Activity Sheet #3**

Skill: Student uses a variety of reading materials to develop personal preferences in reading materials and locates and organizes written information.

Tell students that they are in charge of planning a cover for an important monthly magazine. They can look through today's paper for the five articles that they think would be best for their magazine. They will design the cover, including titles that will make people want to read the articles and pictures that will catch their attention.

Taking Notes **Activity Sheet #2**

Skill: Student uses strategies to clarify meaning such as note taking, summarizing and outlining and can write a grade-level appropriate report.

Explain to students that a good way of taking notes is to make an outline of what they are reading by writing down the main points and a few important details. Have them read a news story in

Chat Rooms

Skill: Student locates, organizes and interprets written information for a variety of purposes.

Chat rooms are sites on the Internet where people can have conversations by typing messages that are sent immediately. Teens are now spending hours

talking to each other in chat rooms. Have students look through the news in today's newspaper for a story they might want to share with someone in a chat room. Have them write down exactly what they would say about the story.

Comics and You

Activity Sheet #4

Skill: Student identifies details and uses information to construct meaning and make inferences.

Have students look through the comic strips in today's newspaper for a character who is most like them. They can make a list of the things they have in common with this comic character as well as the differences.

Fun with Nouns

Skill: Student correctly identifies parts of speech-nouns.

Review the definition of a noun with your class. Then have them select a story from the front page of today's newspaper and find the nouns. They can underline the people they find in red, the places in blue and the things in green. Then make a list of nouns you can find looking around your classroom.

Picture Stories

Skill: Student organizes ideas and information for creative writing.

The goal is to use pictures from the paper to tell a story. This activity gives students a chance to explore how photographs can tell stories. Have students

look through the photos in today's paper. Students then choose three photos and cut them out without captions. They can paste each picture on a separate sheet of paper and staple the sheets together in the order they will appear in the story. Finally, they should write out each story in the form of captions below each picture.

Before and After

Skill: Student creates a story in which ideas and details are in a logical order.

Have students find a photograph in the newspaper that interests them. Instruct them to think about what is going on in the picture. Have them explain what they think happened just before the picture was taken and predict what they believe will happen afterwards. They should write down their explanation. Then, for creative writing fun, have them come up with the wildest events they can think of for what happened before and after.

On Sale

Skill: Student uses writing process effectively for persuasion.

Display ads are found throughout the newspaper. They are different from classified ads because they are larger and often have pictures and large letters. Have students find a display ad that catches their attention. Have them write a paragraph telling whether or not they think it's a good ad. How did it catch their eye? What would they change about it to make it even better? Have each student create a display ad to sell something in his/her desk.

Picture Punctuation

Skill: Student understands correct usage of punctuation marks.

The message of photos is sometimes like the message in a word sentence. Have students look through today's newspaper and find pictures whose subject could represent a question mark (?), an exclamation point (!), and a period (.). Have them cut out the pictures and write an original sentence for each picture telling why they made this choice.

Subject/Predicate

Activity Sheet #5

Skill: Student demonstrates mastery of correct subject/verb agreement.

Have students choose five sentences from today's newspaper that they think are well written and write each sentence on paper. Then have them circle the subject in each and put a box around the predicate that goes with each subject.

Secret Pal

Skill: Student drafts writing that conveys a sense of completeness.

Have students pretend they have a secret pal in the class and use the words from headlines in today's newspaper to create a friendly message for their pal. They can cut out the words and paste the message on a piece of paper, or they can just choose the words and write the message on the paper. Then they can give the message to the pal.

Searching the Paper

Activity #6

Skills: Student effectively skims and scans for information.

Have your students find each of the following in the newspaper:

- someone wearing glasses
- a map
- an animal
- a television listing
- the name of your city
- an athlete
- an action word
- a television star
- a cartoon
- a story about another country
- a letter from a reader
- a movie review or ad

Adopt a Pet

Skill: Student uses creative writing strategies appropriate to the purpose of the paper.

Pets are often in the newspaper. Sometimes they make news by doing something like saving their owner. Often they are found in ads. Have students turn to the classified ads and find the pets section. Have them read the descriptions and decide if one of these pets would be a good pet for them. They can then write a convincing argument that includes all the reasons they should have that pet.

Subheads

Skill: Student drafts writing that is focused.

Headlines are often followed by a subheadline that gives more information and details about a story. Challenge students to find a few examples of

subheadlines in the paper. They can each choose an interesting short article and write a subhead that introduces the main idea for each paragraph in the article.

Something Good and New

Skill: Student writes a concise summary.

The news is often about the troubles in the world. Is there any good news as well? Encourage students to find a story of good news. What makes the news good? Does the story have any impact on their lives? Have them write a brief summary of the good news and share it with your class.

Rubric Rating Activity Sheet #7

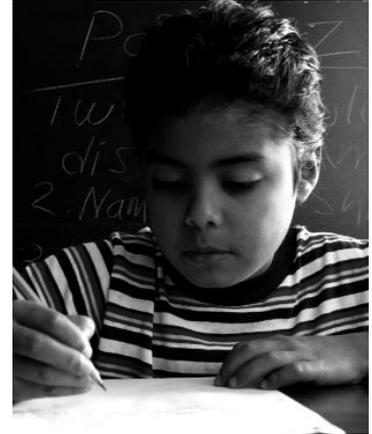
Skill: Student organizes information effectively and clearly.

Have each student select an interesting story from the newspaper and rate the article using a rubric. A rubric (ROO-brick) is a scale created to judge something using different categories. A rubric for a newspaper article could include the following categories: Is the article organized? Is it fair? Does it have supporting details? A satisfactory opening paragraph? A satisfactory closing paragraph? Have each student rate the story in each category on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the best. Then they can write a reason for their ratings. Have them compare stories and ratings.

Movie Promoting Activity Sheet #8

Skills: Student organizes information before writing and uses creative writing strategies.

Have students imagine that they are movie promoters and it is their job to get people to come see their movie. They can look through the Entertainment section in today's paper for one of their favorite movies. They will design an advertisement that will promote this film.



Comic Players

Skill: Student speaks with understanding and for various audiences or purposes including informal presentations.

The comic strips are really like little plays. Students can practice reading aloud with expression by reading the dialogue in the comics. Assign parts and have the strips read aloud in your classroom. Have fun and encourage students to really ham it up!

Think Positive

Skill: Student understands that word choice, figurative language or sentence structure may determine mood or meaning of text.

Challenge students to make a list of people in today's newspaper who they believe are positive thinkers. Then they can make a list of the negative thinkers. Have them compare the people on both lists. Who is more successful, happy, productive and satisfied? They can write down their conclusions.

Fun With Adjectives

Skill: Student demonstrates a command of language with freshness of expression and understanding of adjectives.

Explain to students that adjectives are words used to describe something. They are an important tool to make writing colorful and descriptive. Have students look through today's Sports section and make a list of 10 adjectives that provide great descriptions. They can use their adjectives to write a poem or rap song about sports. The lines don't have to rhyme, but they should be full of action! Allow students to take turns reading their poems aloud with feeling!

Sequencing

Skill: Student understands the development of plot and how conflicts are resolved in a story.

Assign students to read a news article or a feature story in today's paper. Then they should write out the events of the story in the order in which they happen. They can also discuss the characters, the setting, the action and how problems are resolved.

Mind Mapping Activity Sheet #9

Skill: Student determines the main idea and relevant details in a passage.

Assign students to choose an article from the newspaper that they think is interesting. They can write down the main idea in a few words in the center of a piece of paper. Then they will write down some details that support the main idea.

Winning Isn't Everything

Skill: Student writes informal letter expressing mood.

Students should read through the Sports section in today's newspaper and find an article about a game or event. Instruct them to imagine that they are a fan of the losing team and to write a letter explaining the impact of losing and some lessons one can learn from losing.

Television Debate

Skill: Student understands how volume, pacing and pronunciation can affect an oral presentation.

The debate over the good and bad of television continues. Some say it rots your brain and others believe it can be entertaining and/or educational. Talk about it in class. Challenge your students to debate the issue by using the television listings to find examples of shows which are or are not educational. Allow time for a verbal debate encouraging each student to speak.

Car Classifieds

Skill: Student recognizes different techniques used in media messages.

Have students locate the classified ad section and read through some of the ads selling used cars. Then have them write an ad to sell the last car they rode in. Remind them to include a description of what's good about the car—color, performance, comfort and features. How much do they want to tell about the things that are not so good about the car?

Math Activities

Whether students are getting dressed for school and checking the weather forecast in the paper or checking the starting time of their favorite TV show, or even digging for the score of last night's game, they're involved with math and with the newspaper. If they use the ads to find a good deal on CDs or read the Help Wanted to find a better paying after-school job, they are utilizing the real world applications of math skills. The newspaper shows students how math is used in real-life situations.

The activities in this section reinforce math skills including number sense, concepts, operations, estimation, computation, geometry, analysis and critical thinking. Students will learn how to use math quickly to make their lives easier.

Sports Scores

Activity Sheet #10

Skill: Student understands and explains the effects of operations on whole numbers.

Your students can practice math skills by skimming the Sports section for information. They will create a chart with four columns on a piece of paper. They will be finding sports scores to complete the chart. In the first column they will write the name of the sport. In the second column they will write the name of each team and the score each recorded. In the third column they will compute the difference between the two scores, and in the fourth column they will put the total points/runs scored by both teams. They should find the scores for at least five games.

It's Odd

Skill: Student demonstrates understanding of odd numbers.

Explain to students that odd numbers always have a 1, 3, 5, 7 or 9 in the ones column. Have them look through the newspaper to create a list of 10 odd numbers. They should use some numbers that have at least three digits. Can they write the numbers using words? Have them write an explanation showing that they know what makes a number odd. Where did they find most of the numbers?

Patterns

Skill: Student uses concepts about numbers to build number sequences.

Patterns are found throughout mathematics. Have students cut out numbers from the newspaper and paste them on a sheet of paper to create some math-pattern problems. They should leave blank spaces to be filled in to complete their pattern. For example, they could have a problem that reads 5, __, 15, __, 25. Or they could have 2, 4, 6, __. They can exchange their paper with a partner to see how well others understand the patterns. See who can create the most challenging pattern.

Stock Market Prices

Skill: Student understands the relative size of fractions and decimals.

Instead of counting in money amounts, the stock market measures prices in fractional parts. Have students look through



the stock listings in today's newspaper. They can list some of the different fractional parts that are quoted on the stock exchange. Then they can convert the fractions they find into decimals.

Cost of Living **Activity Sheet #11**

Skill: Student selects the appropriate operation to solve a problem.

Have students use the House for Sale ads to find 10 houses. They can list the houses in order of least to most expensive and compare the most and least expensive homes. What does the most expensive house have that the least expensive one does not have? If they put 20% down on the most expensive house, how much money will they need to borrow to buy that house? If they take out a 30-year loan, how many months will it take to pay for the house?

Shopping for Mortgages

Skill: Student uses concepts about numbers.

Most people who want to buy a house borrow money from a bank or a mortgage company in order to pay for their home. They shop around to find a low rate so the interest cost will be less. Have students look through the Business section of the newspaper for information about interest rates for borrowing money. Mortgage companies and banks often advertise their rates. They can make a list of the rates and put them in order from lowest to highest.

It's for Sale

Skill: Student understands number representations in real-world situations.

Products and services are for sale throughout the newspaper. Have students find some of these that they might be interested in buying. They should make a list of five possible purchases. How much does each one cost? If there were a half-off sale, what would the cost be? Have them figure out the prices if they were reduced by one-third and one-fourth.

Buying Advertising

Skill: Student uses estimation strategies to predict results.

Discuss with students the fact that because newspapers are widely read, advertising is an effective way to make people aware of a product or service. Have them suppose a full page of advertising costs \$5,000. They can find five ads of different sizes in the newspaper and estimate how much each one would cost based on the \$5,000-per-page price.

Round Off

Skill: Student understands place value concepts.

Before you begin this activity, you'll want to review with your class the process of rounding off numbers to the nearest hundred. Then, with your class, find the ads for cars in today's newspaper. Pick 10 cars that are pictured with their prices. Have students round off each price to the nearest hundred. In most cases is the nearest hundred lower or higher? Why do the students think this is so?

Inches and Centimeters

Skill: Student understands the metric system of measurement.

Students will need a ruler with inches and centimeters to do this activity. Start by talking with your class about the difference between these two ways to measure. Then have students outline an article on page one of today's newspaper. They can measure each side of the article and the top and bottom and write the measurement in inches and in centimeters. Then they can add the distance around the article to find the perimeter. When they find different articles with the same perimeter, they can compare the word count. Do different articles with the same perimeter have the same number of words?

Weather Watch Activity Sheet #12

Skill: Student collects, organizes and displays data.

Have students find the weather section in the newspaper. They should select the high and low temperature of five cities and compare the temperature of those cities with the temperature where they live. They should make a line graph to show the information. They can write down three questions that can be answered by looking at their graph. Allow them to exchange graphs and questions with a partner to try to interpret the graphs and answer the questions.

Metric Search

Skill: Student compares, contrasts and converts within systems of measurement.

Many sports use measurement for regulation of events (length of a race, height of jumps, etc.). Some sports use U.S. customary measurements (foot, yard, mile) and some use metrics (kilometers, kilograms, meters). Some sports use both. Have students peruse today's Sports section to find a sport that uses metric measurement and a sport that uses our customary measurement. They can write a word problem about each sport using the form of measurement they find. Students should exchange their word problems with a friend and try to solve them.

Shapes: Seek and Find

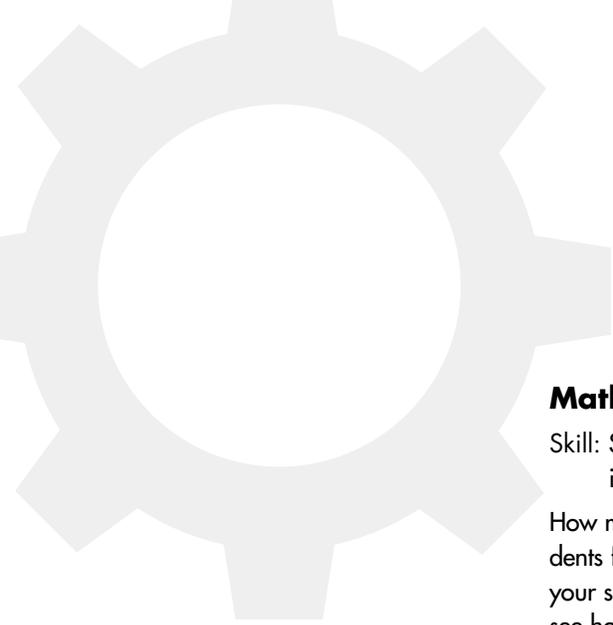
Skill: Student identifies geometric shapes.

Challenge students to find 10 triangles, 10 squares and 10 rectangles in the newspaper and trace them. They can discuss which shape was easiest to find.

Graphing Pro Sports

Skill: Student collects, organizes and displays data.

Have students turn to the Sports section and pick five of their favorite professional teams. They can make a line graph showing each team's wins in red and losses in blue.



Math Is All Around

Skill: Student identifies math concepts in real-world application.

How many math concepts can your students find in today's newspaper? Have your students skim today's newspaper to see how many of the following they can find: age, time, date, amount, distance, money or percentage.

Per Square Foot

Skill: Student uses the appropriate formula to find area.

Look through the classified ads for the "Homes for Sale" section. Find an ad that gives you the price and square footage of the home. Square footage is the amount of area inside a house. Figure out how much the house costs per square foot. At that rate, how much would a house cost that is twice the size? How about one that is half the size?

Column Inches

Skill: Student uses appropriate techniques to measure quantities in order to solve problems.

Explain to students that the price that advertisers pay for ads is based on the size of the ad. An ad that is three-columns wide and four-inches long is 12 column-inches ($3 \times 4 = 12$). Have them use a ruler to measure five ads in today's paper. They should measure the ads and use the multiplication formula to figure out the total column inches.

Fractional Parts Scavenger Hunt Activity Sheet #13

Skill: Student understands fractional parts and conversion to decimals.

Explain to students that fractions are a way to write a number that is less than all of something or less than a whole number. Fractions can be found everywhere in life. Have students find these in today's newspaper: a fraction that is more than two-tenths ($2/10$); two-thirds ($2/3$) of a comic strip; a store that is giving one-quarter ($1/4$) off; an advertisement that takes up more than one-half ($1/2$) of a page; a team that has won more than one-half of its games; a picture that is one-quarter ($1/4$) of a page; a stock that gained seven-eighths ($7/8$) of a point. Finally they can convert these fractions to decimals.

Bull Market

Skill: Student understands that numbers can be represented in a variety of equivalent forms including integers, fractions and decimals.

Information about the stock market can be found in the Business section. Have students find the NYSE listings (New York Stock Exchange) in the Business section and pick five stocks that they like. They need to find the column that shows the price under the column marked LAST and convert the figure to a dollar amount. How much would each stock cost if they bought 10 shares? Compute the cost of 10 shares of each of the five different stocks. It may be fun to have students check the newspaper listings again tomorrow to find out if their stocks are worth more or less than they are today.

Sports Space

Skill: Student selects appropriate operation to solve a problem.

Have students skim through the Sports section of the newspaper and list all the sports that are covered. Based on their observations, which sports are receiving the most coverage? Have them devise a method to figure out what percentage of the coverage each sport receives.

Graphing the Stock Market

Skill: Student describes a variety of relationships through models such as graphs.

Have students check out the Business section and find information on the stock market. The stocks that are the biggest winners or losers or the most active are listed in the New York Stock Exchange, American Stock Exchange and NASDAQ National Market. Each student can pick one of the categories and make a graph or other model to show the results.

Does Anybody Really Know What Time It Is?

Skill: Student uses algebraic equations to solve real-world problems.

Students can check the TV grid in the newspaper and find the starting times for six shows they have watched or would like to watch. They will need to write some equations showing how to compute the length of each show. They should compute how long each show lasts in both minutes and seconds.

Fashion Plates Activity Sheet #14

Skill: Student organizes data in an appropriate display.

Tell students to get ready for a serious shopping spree. They can glance over the newspaper ads for the latest fashions and decide what they will need for the season. They should make a chart comparing prices of articles of clothing they want to buy and the stores where they are sold. Which stores offer the best values? What is the total cost of all the items they selected?



Fun with Averages

Skill: Student understands and applies the concept of range.

Ask students to guess how many paragraphs there are in each story on page one of today's newspaper. Then have them count how many are actually in each story. With a calculator they can find the average number of paragraphs found in stories on the front page. Then they can find the average number of paragraphs in stories on page three. What is the difference between the averages on the two pages?

Vowel Tally Activity Sheet # 15

Skill: Student compares experimental results with mathematical expectations of probability.

Have students set up a chart with five columns on a piece of paper and label each column with a vowel—*a, e, i, o, u*. Which vowel do they think is used most often in headlines? Have them write their prediction above the chart. Then they

should make a mark in each column for each vowel they see in the headlines on page one of today's newspaper. Which vowel is used most often? They should show the total number of vowels counted and write a fraction to show how many times each vowel appears in that total.

Top Advertisers

Skill: Student uses the tools of data analysis for managing information.

Have students figure out, based on the size of ads, who the top advertisers in today's paper are. They should show exactly how they reached this conclusion and create a graph or chart of their findings.

Mean, Median, Mode **Activity Sheet #16**

Skill: Student applies the concept of mean, median and mode.

Have students use the weather information in the newspaper to list the high temperature for seven cities in the United States. They should add the numbers and divide by seven to find the average or mean. Then they should list the temperatures from highest to lowest and find the number that is in the middle (the fourth one) to find the median. Are any of the temperatures the same? Ask them to identify the number that came up most often. That temperature is the mode.

Social Studies Activities

Local, State, National, World

Skill: Student differentiates between local, national and international.

Students can do an interesting analysis of where news is happening as follows. Have them look at the front page of the newspaper and group the news that appears there. How many of the stories are about a local issue? How many are about your state, the nation or the world? Discuss where most of the news is coming from and why. Locate the places on a map.

Random Acts of Kindness Day

Skill: Student understands personal responsibility and responsible behavior.

Random Acts of Kindness Day is always the second Friday in February. Have students look at that day's newspaper, choose 10 people from the stories and rate these people on a 1-to-10 scale to measure their kindness. The kindest people should receive a 10 and the least kind a 1. Which were easiest to find? Why? Discuss where historical figures might rate on this scale.

City Mouse, Country Mouse

Skill: Student understands how physical environment affects way of life.

Discuss with students whether they live in the city or the country. Have them read the newspaper to find stories showing that where they live is a great place and discuss why this is so.

Business Boom

Skill: Student understands the basic characteristics of our economy.

Do your students think that competition is a good thing for business? Have them find three ads from companies that compete with each other. Have them conclude whether or not competition between businesses is good for the consumer based on the competitive ads.

Getting to School

Skill: Student understands the relationship between technology and transportation.

Talk with students about how everyone got to school today. Have them locate pictures of modes of transportation in the newspaper and determine the pros and cons of each mode.

Geography Hunt Activity Sheet #17

Skills: Student understands geographic terms.

Have students go on a geography scavenger hunt to find a foreign city, U.S. city, town, neighborhood, foreign country, body of water, country in Europe, and city west of where they live.

The Rights Stuff

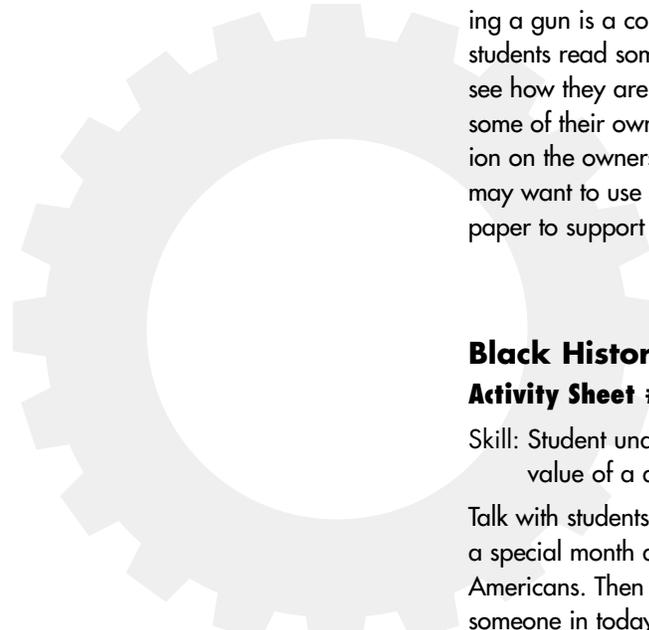
Skill: Student understands the historical impact of the Civil Rights Movement.

Talk with your students about the meaning of the word integration. Have them read the newspaper to hunt for each of the following people, places and things that relate to integration: an African American political leader, a minority figure in the comics, a photo with people of more than one race, a coach of a sports team who is a member of a minority group, a television show with an integrated cast, a story that has race as a theme. Discuss with students how this hunt may have been different 30 years ago or why it may still be difficult today.

Crimes and Misdemeanors

Skill: Student understands the essential principles of the Constitution.

Talk with your students about the crimes that are committed with guns. Law enforcement officials say that handguns are the favorite of criminals, but many American citizens want handguns for personal protection and argue that own-



ing a gun is a constitutional right. Have students read some letters to the editor to see how they are written and then write some of their own expressing their opinion on the ownership of handguns. They may want to use articles from the newspaper to support their point of view.

Black History Month **Activity Sheet #18**

Skill: Student understands the value of a diverse society.

Talk with students about why we have a special month designated for African Americans. Then have them choose someone in today's paper who might someday be part of a textbook created to teach about Black History Month. The students will write out the five W's of the article—who, what, when, where and why.

Role Model **Activity Sheet #19**

Skill: Student understands character attributes and how they might impact on society.

Discuss the concept of role models with your students. What kind of person do they admire and want to be like? Can they find a role model in today's paper? What characteristics do they have in common with the person they chose?

Workers of the World **Activity Sheet #20**

Skill: Student uses resources to find information about potential employment.

A newspaper can be a great career resource for students if they are alert to the job information it contains. Have them find a job in a new field, an ad for a job with a salary more than \$30,000, a government worker, someone who owns a business, a volunteer getting experience, someone who works well with people, a good worker, a person with a fun job.

Résumé Writing **Activity Sheet #21**

Skill: Student understands the basics of creating a personal résumé.

Have students study the Help Wanted ads to find a career for which they hope to be qualified after graduating from high school or college. They can list the qualifications needed for that job and imagine they have the others necessary. Have them write a brief résumé with their objectives, educational background, employment history and hobbies and interests.

Rules of the Game **Activity Sheet #22**

Skill: Student understands the function of rules in society.

Talk with your students about the need for rules and laws. Then explain that, just as a government has laws, so do sports. Have them find the Sports section in the

newspaper and pick a story. They can identify one rule from that sport and talk about the penalty for breaking that rule. Have them create a better penalty.

Teacher or Rock Star?

Skill: Student demonstrates understanding of career qualifications.

It may be fun to discuss with your students how a teacher is sometimes like a rock star. Just what are the characteristics of a teacher that also bode well for rock stars? Brainstorm a list of the necessary characteristics or attributes to be good at each of these careers. Have students create Venn Diagrams showing the characteristics that are common to success in each job and those that would not overlap. Then they can read the Help Wanted ads to examine how to write them, and next write an ad that could work for either of these careers—teacher or rock star—using the common characteristics.

Accentuate the Positive

Skill: Student is able to articulate a positive self-image.

Believe it or not, most teens have a positive self-image. They describe themselves as happy, responsible and self-reliant. Share this information with your students and then have them find a person in the news who fits each one of those categories. Then have them write a description of themselves. Are they positive or negative?

Older and Wiser

Skill: Student is able to understand that different parts of the population have special needs and issues.

Older people are special in many ways and have unique needs and assets. Discuss with your class some stereotypes about the elderly. Then have them search today's paper to see how older people are represented. Discuss the stories that they find and how the stereotypes are found in the stories or proven false in the stories. What are some of their concerns about aging?

Character Issue

Skill: Student understands the qualifications of leadership.

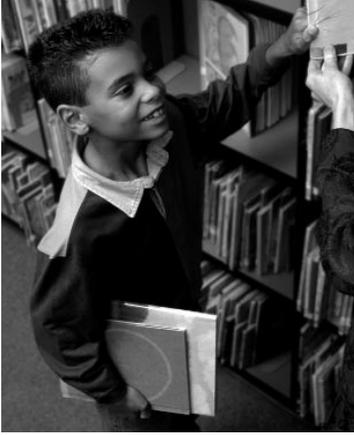
Americans are often thinking about the character of their elected politicians. Have students skim the Help Wanted ads in the newspaper and circle all the jobs that need a person of character as an important part of the job requirements.

Susan B. Anthony Coin

Skill: Student can identify a potentially historical figure and understand the impact of current events on history.

Share with your students that the first U.S. coin to honor a woman was minted on December 13, 1978, as a tribute to Susan B. Anthony, defender of women's rights. Have each student pick a story in the news to commemorate with a coin. They should design the coin to include the five W's of the story—who, what, when, where and why.





What's New?

What's Old? ⚙️ ⚙️

Skill: Student understands the impact of technological developments on society.

Ask students to find something in the newspaper they think they would not have found there 25 years ago. Have them describe what life must have been like without that item. Then have them find something they think will not be found in the paper 25 years from now. They can write descriptions of how the item will be replaced and how the replacement might change their lives.

Alien to Earth ⚙️ ⚙️

Activity Sheet #23

Skill: Student understands how to draw conclusions about society based on source material.

Assign students to imagine themselves as aliens who have just landed on Earth on a scouting trip. Their mission is to write a report to their home planet about life on Earth. They should write about what people on Earth eat, wear and do for fun or work. They can use only information that they find in the paper for the report. You may want to allow each student to give a brief oral presentation for the class.

Bill of Rights ⚙️ ⚙️

Skill: Student understands about the rights and freedoms of living in the U.S.

Talk with your students about some of the rights our democratic society affords us. Have them find a story in the newspaper that illustrates one of our rights.

Legislative, Executive and Judicial Branches ⚙️ ⚙️

Skill: Student understands the power and responsibilities of each branch of government.

Challenge students to find articles in the newspaper that show each of the branches of government at work. Have them write a paragraph explaining why they chose that example and what aspect of government it illustrates.

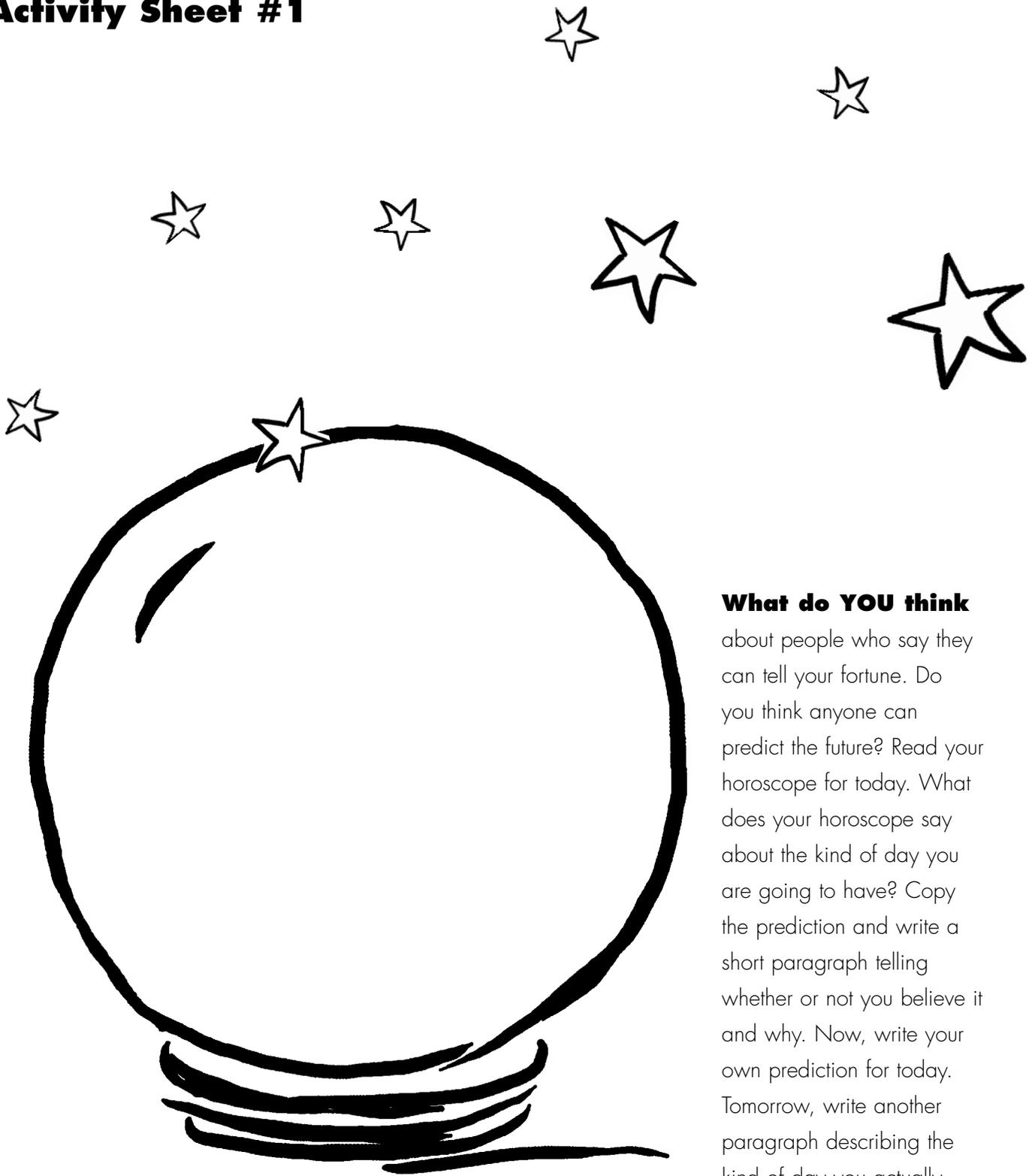
Extra Credit ⚙️ ⚙️

Skill: Student understands the advantages and disadvantages of buying on credit.

Have students make a careful study of the car-for-sale ads to uncover all information pertinent to buying a car on credit or leasing a car. Have them write comparisons of the difference in cost between these options and buying for cash.

Predict the Future

Activity Sheet #1

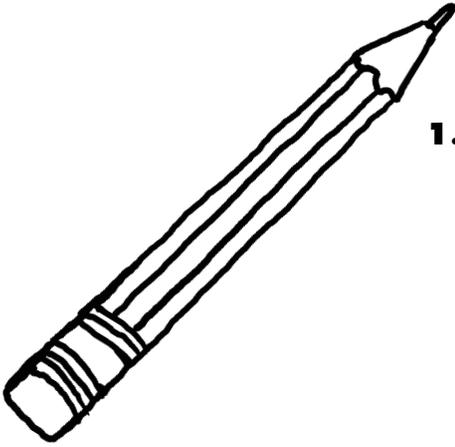


What do YOU think

about people who say they can tell your fortune. Do you think anyone can predict the future? Read your horoscope for today. What does your horoscope say about the kind of day you are going to have? Copy the prediction and write a short paragraph telling whether or not you believe it and why. Now, write your own prediction for today. Tomorrow, write another paragraph describing the kind of day you actually had. Which prediction was closer to reality—yours or your horoscope's?

Taking Notes

Activity Sheet #2



A good way of taking notes is to make an outline of what you are reading by writing down the main points and a few important details. Read a news story in today's newspaper that you think has an interesting topic. Skim through the article again to find the main idea in each paragraph. On a piece of paper, number the ideas. The main idea for the first paragraph would be Number 1, the main idea for the second paragraph, Number 2, etc. Leave space between ideas. Then look for the supporting facts in each paragraph, write them below each paragraph's main idea and label them a, b, c, etc., on your paper.

1. _____

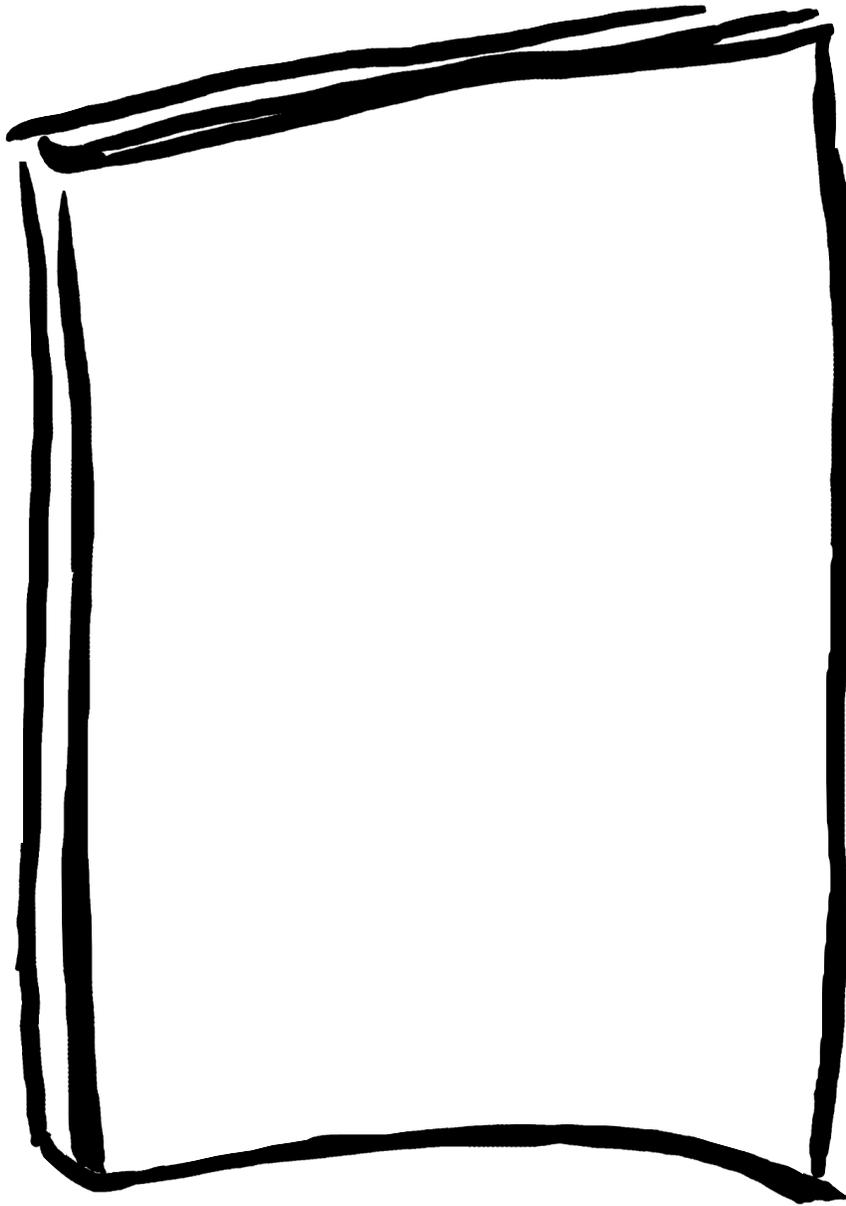
2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Monthly Magazine

Activity Sheet #3



You are in charge

of planning a cover for an important monthly magazine. Look through today's paper for the five articles that you think would be best for your magazine. Design the cover, including titles that will make people want to read the articles and pictures that will catch their attention.

Comics and You

Activity Sheet #4



Similarities	Differences

Look through the comic strips in today's newspaper for a character who is most like you. Clip out a picture of that character and paste it here. Make a list of the things you have in common with this comic character and a list of how you are different. What are the best things about the two of you? What would you like to change about yourself?

Subject/Predicate

Activity Sheet #5

1. _____

Subject

Predicate

2. _____

Subject

Predicate

3. _____

Subject

Predicate

4. _____

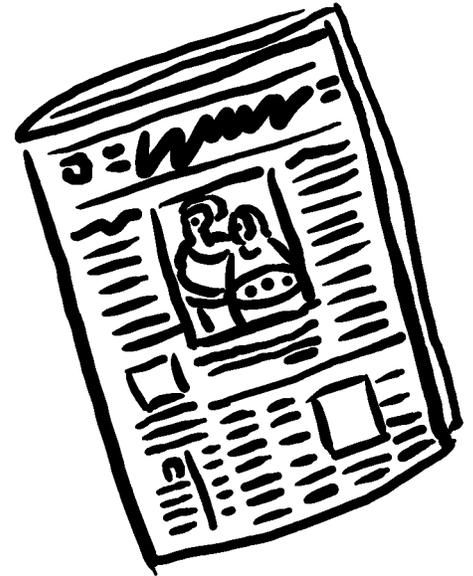
Subject

Predicate

5. _____

Subject

Predicate



Choose five

sentences from today's newspaper that you think are well written. Write each sentence on these lines. Then on the correct line, indicate the subject and predicate in each sentence. The subject of a sentence is who or what is doing the action. The predicate is the verb of the sentence, plus any supporting words that tell what action is being transformed by the subject.

Searching the Paper

Activity Sheet #6



1. _____



2. _____



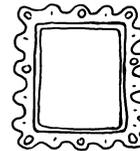
3. _____



4. _____



5. _____



6. _____



7. _____



8. _____



9. _____



10. _____



11. _____



12. _____

One great way to get to know your newspaper is to go on a scavenger hunt. See if you can find each of these items in today's paper. Next to each item write the page number on which you find it.

1. a picture of someone wearing glasses
2. a map
3. a picture of an animal
4. a television listing
5. the name of your city
6. a picture of an athlete
7. an action word
8. the name of a television star
9. a cartoon
10. a story about another country
11. a letter from a reader
12. a movie review or ad

Rubric Rating

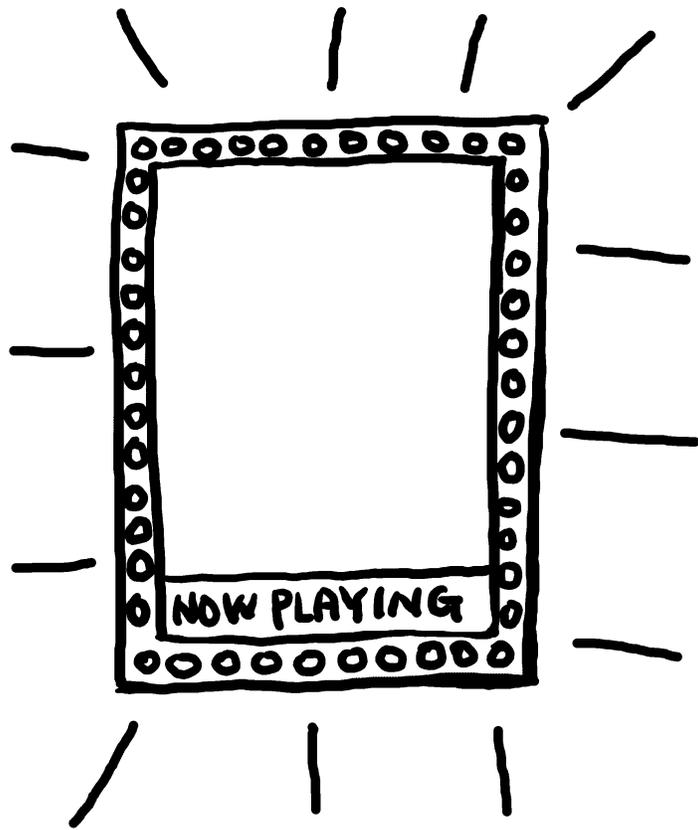
Activity Sheet #7

Category	1	2	3	4	5

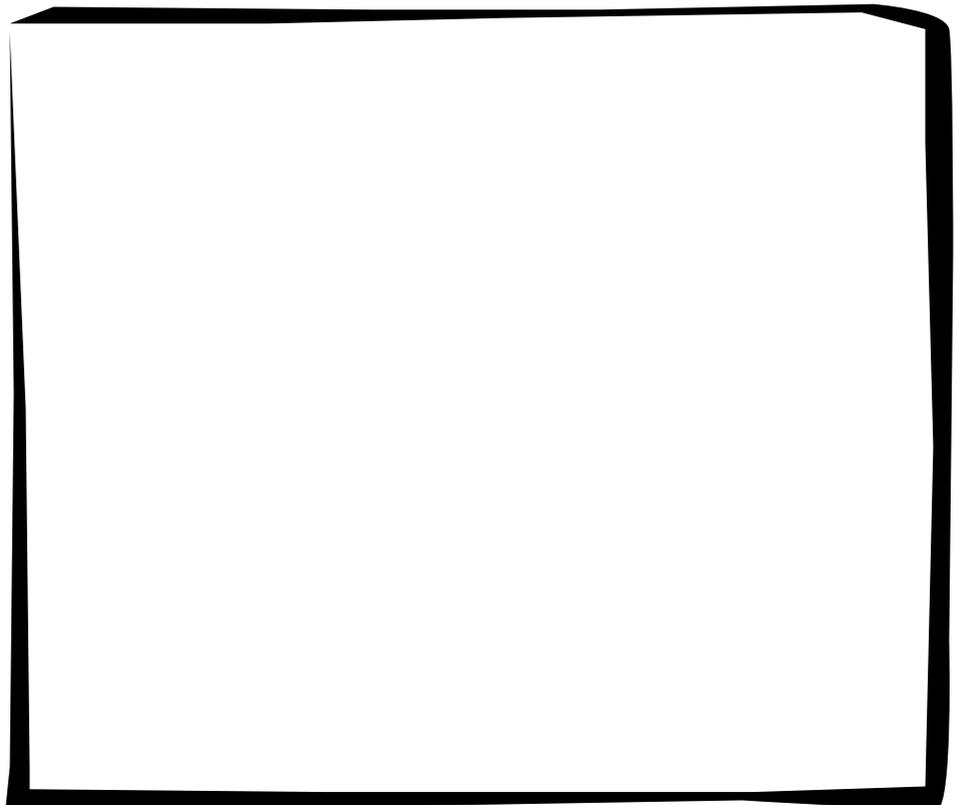
Pick a story from today's paper that you think is interesting. You are going to rate the article using a rubric. A rubric (ROO-brick) is a scale created to judge something using different categories. A rubric for a newspaper article could include the following categories: Is the article organized? Is it fair? Does it have supporting details, a satisfactory opening paragraph, a satisfactory closing paragraph? Rate your story in each category on a 1-to-5 scale with 5 being the best. Fill in the chart below to show your categories and your ratings. On the lines given, write a reason for your ratings. Compare your story with those chosen by others in your class. Which scored the highest?

Movie Promoting

Activity Sheet #8

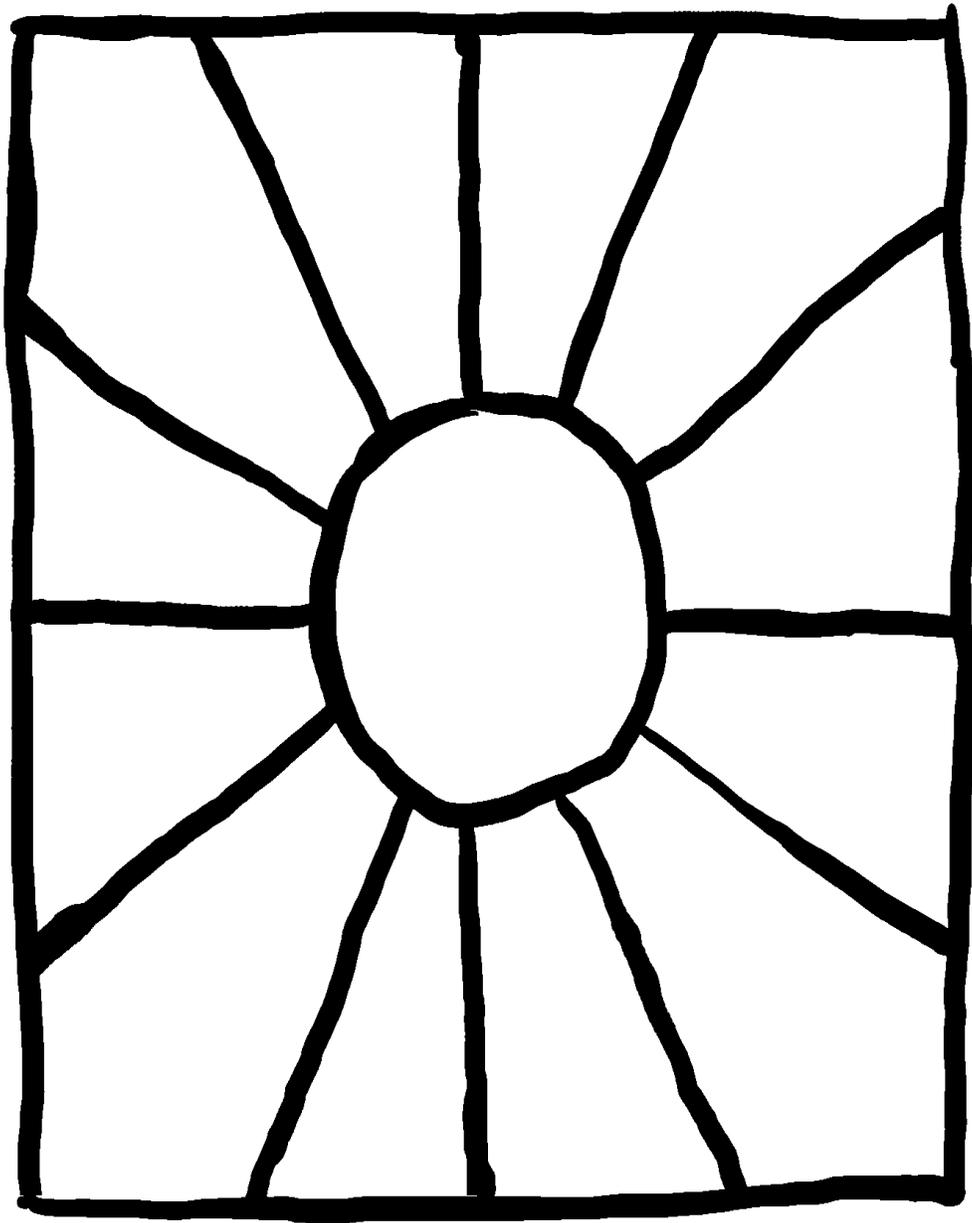


You are a movie promoter and your job is to get people to come see your movie. Look through the Entertainment section in today's paper for one of your favorite movies. Design an advertisement that will promote this film. Who are the stars and what are the critics saying? Include all the important information. Then draw a picture to place in the ad.



Mind Mapping

Activity Sheet #9



Choose an article from the newspaper that you think is interesting. You may pick from any section of the paper. Write down the main idea in a few words in the center of the circle. Then write down some details that support the main idea on each of the lines coming out from the circle.

Sports Scores

Activity Sheet #10



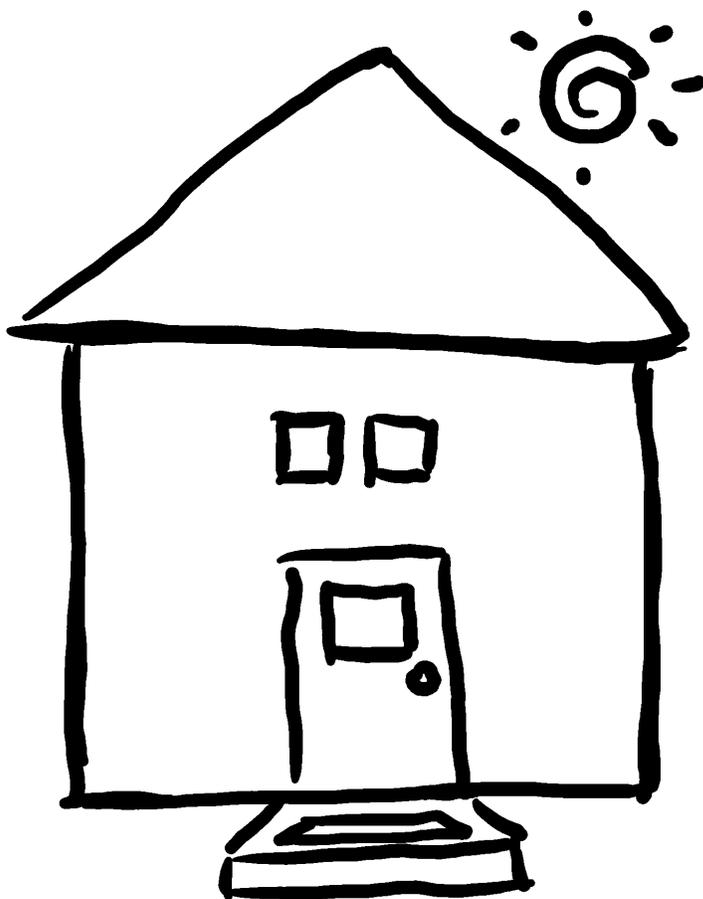
You can practice

math skills by looking at the Sports section for information. You will be finding sports scores to complete this chart. In the first column write the name of the sport. In the second column write the name of each team and the score each earned. In the third column compute the point differential between the two scores, and in the fourth column put the total points scored by both teams. Find the scores for at least five games.

Sport	Team & Score	Point Differential	Total Points

Cost of Living

Activity Sheet #11



Use the House for

Sale ads to find 10 houses that sound good. Clip these out and paste them on this page in order of least-to-most expensive. Compare the most and least expensive homes. What does the most expensive house have that the least expensive one does not have? If you put 20% down on the most expensive house, how much money will you need to borrow to pay for the rest? If your mortgage payment is \$800 per month, how many months will it take to pay for the house?

Weather Watch

Activity Sheet #12



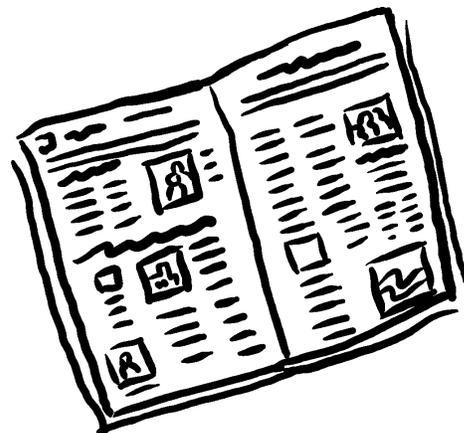
Find the Weather section in your newspaper. Select the high and low temperatures of five cities. Compare the temperatures of those cities with the temperature where you live. Make a line graph here which shows the information. Write down three questions that can be answered by looking at your graph. See if someone in your class can answer the questions.

Cities

Temperature

Fractional Parts Scavenger Hunt

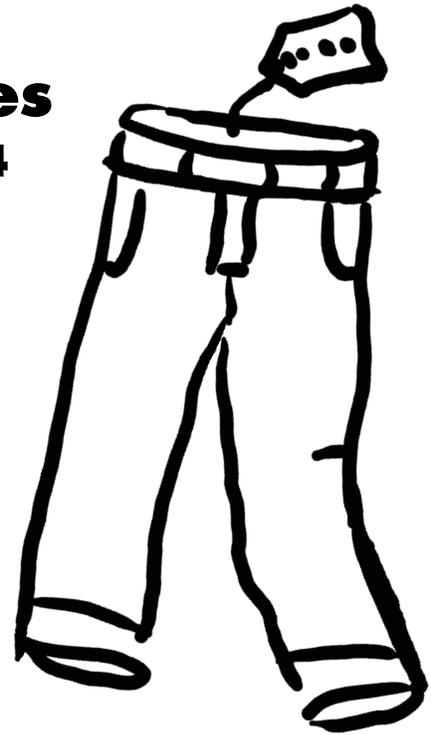
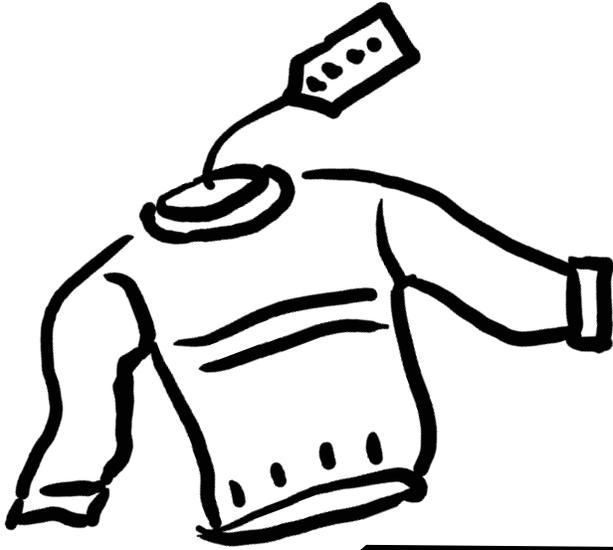
Activity Sheet #13



Fractions are a way to write a number that is less than all of something, or less than a whole number. Fractions can be found everywhere in life. See if you can find these in today's newspaper: a fraction that is more than two-tenths ($2/10$); two-thirds ($2/3$) of a comic strip; a store that is giving one-fourth ($1/4$) off; an advertisement that takes up more than one-half ($1/2$) of a page; a team that has won more than one-half ($1/2$) of its games; a picture that is one-fourth ($1/4$) of a page; a stock that gained seven-eighths ($7/8$) of a point. Clip out each item and write on the line the page number on which you found it.

Fashion Plates

Activity Sheet #14



Store	Item	Price

Are you ready to shop? You can scan the newspaper ads for the latest fashions and decide what you will need for the season. Fill in this chart comparing prices of articles of clothing you want to buy and the stores where they are sold. Which stores offer the best values? What is the total cost of all the items you selected?

Vowel Tally

Activity Sheet #15

	Total
A	
E	
I	
O	
U	

Which vowel do you think is used most often in headlines? Write your prediction above your chart. Then make a mark in each column for each vowel you see in the headlines on page one of today's newspaper. Which vowel is used most often? Show the total number of vowels counted, and write a fraction to show how many times each vowel appears in that total.

Mean, Median, Mode

Activity Sheet #16

City	Temperature
<p style="text-align: center;">Mode</p> <p>Total= ÷7=</p>	

List the high temperature for seven cities in the United States. Add the numbers and divide by seven. The answer is the average or mean. List the temperatures from highest to lowest. Find the number that is in the middle or fourth. This number is the median. Are any of the temperatures the same? Which number came up most often? This temperature is the mode.

Highest to Lowest Temperatures	
Highest	
Lowest	

Geography Hunt

Activity Sheet #17



A foreign city. _____

A U.S. city. _____

A town. _____

A neighborhood. _____

A foreign country. _____

A body of water. _____

A country in Europe. _____

A city west of you. _____

Go on a geography scavenger hunt to find each of these items and write your findings on the lines with the page where you found each: a foreign city, a U.S. city, a town, a neighborhood, a foreign country, a body of water, a country in Europe and a city west of you.

Black History Month

Activity Sheet #18



Who? _____

What? _____

February is Black History Month. Why do we have this special month? Choose someone in today's paper who might someday be part of a textbook created to teach about Black History Month. Read the article about that person and write a paragraph telling why that person's achievement belongs in a textbook. In the spaces provided, write out the five W's of the story.

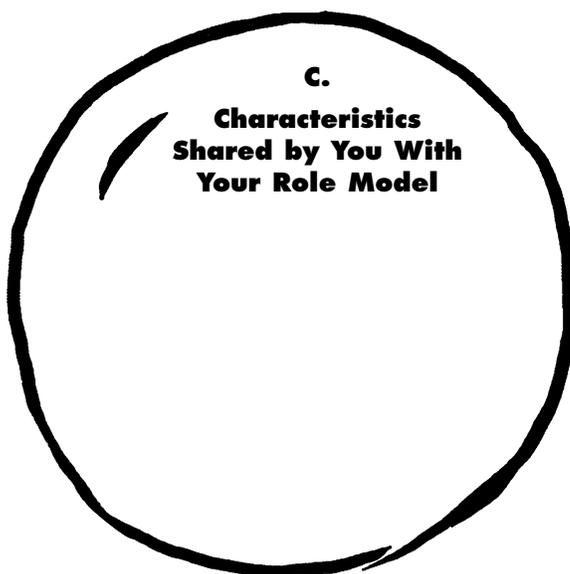
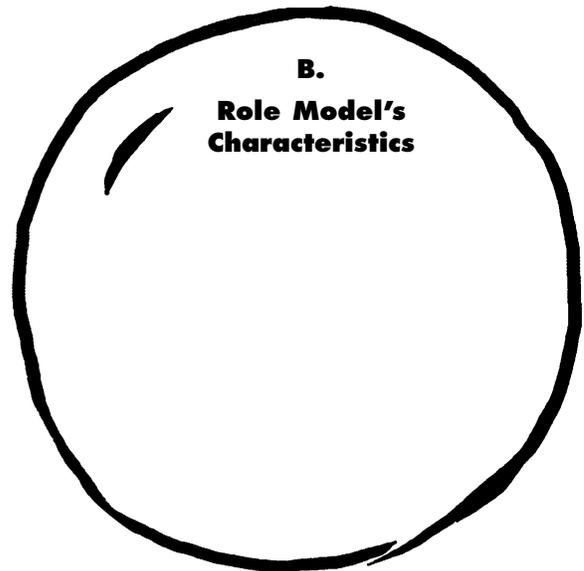
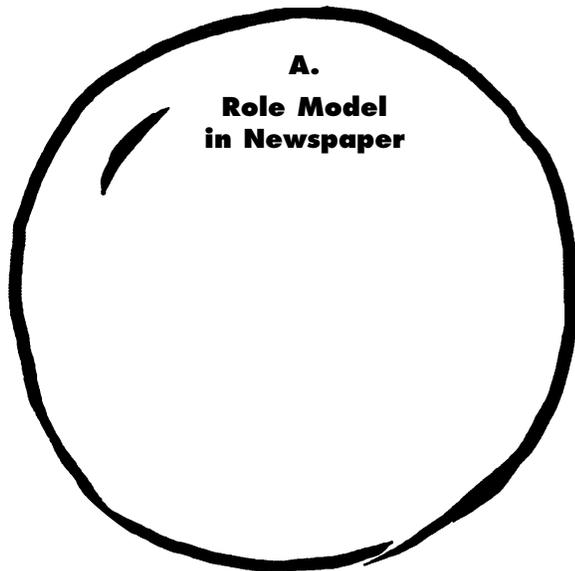
When? _____

Where? _____

Why? _____

Role Model

Activity Sheet # 19



Choose a person

from today's paper who could be a role model for you and put him or her in circle A. In circle B, put in a few of that person's characteristics. Finally, in circle C, put in the characteristics you have in common with the person you chose as your role model.

Workers of the World

Activity Sheet #20

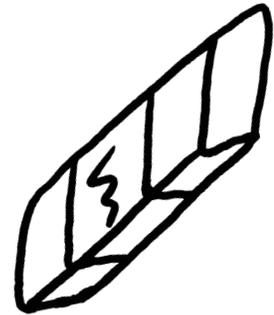


A newspaper can be a great career resource for you if you are alert to the job information it contains. Find each of these in today's paper: a job in a new field, an ad for a job with a salary more than \$30,000, a government worker, someone who owns a business, a volunteer getting experience, someone who works well with people, a good worker, a person with a fun job. Be sure to record the page number where you found each item.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Résumé Writing

Activity Sheet #21



Occupation:

Qualifications:

Career Objectives:

Education:

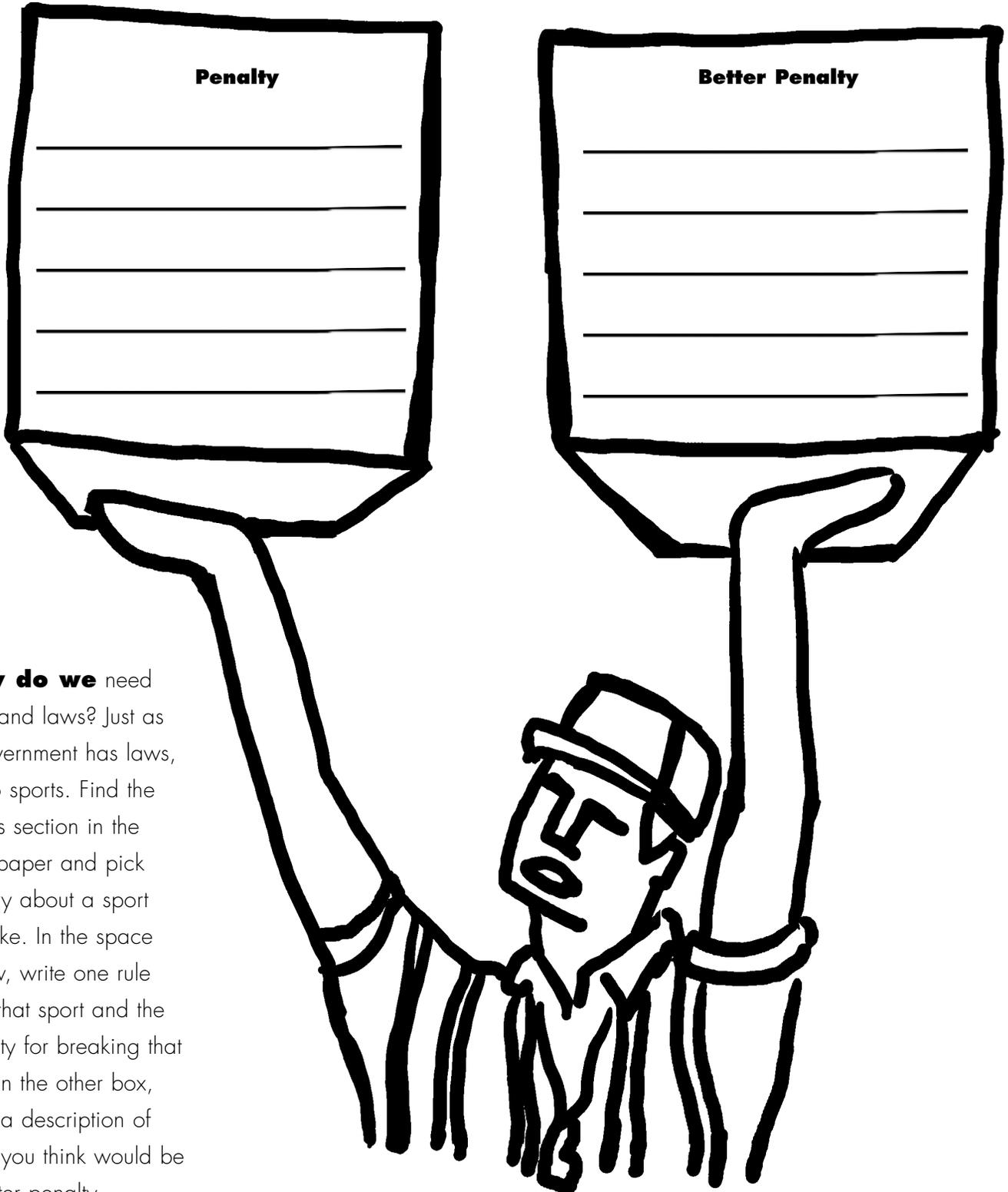
Employment History:

Activities:

A résumé is often the first thing an employer will look at in deciding whether to hire you. Study the Help Wanted ads to find a career for which you hope to be qualified after graduating from high school or college. List the qualifications needed for that job and check off those you already possess. Finally, imagine you have the other necessary requirements and write this fictional résumé for the job.

The Rules

Activity Sheet #22

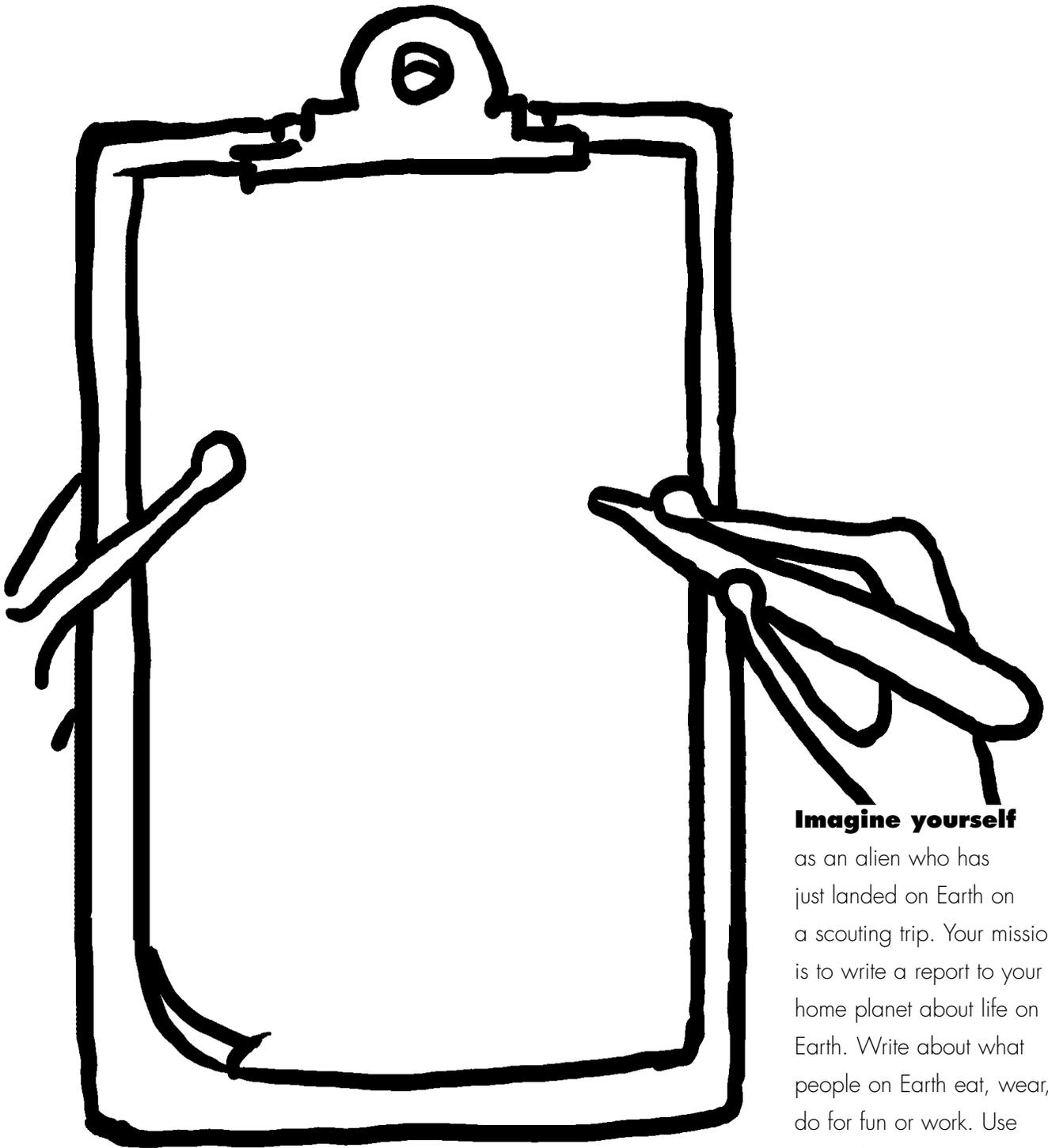


Penalty	Better Penalty

Why do we need rules and laws? Just as a government has laws, so do sports. Find the Sports section in the newspaper and pick a story about a sport you like. In the space below, write one rule from that sport and the penalty for breaking that rule. In the other box, write a description of what you think would be a better penalty.

Alien to Earth

Activity Sheet #23



Imagine yourself

as an alien who has just landed on Earth on a scouting trip. Your mission is to write a report to your home planet about life on Earth. Write about what people on Earth eat, wear, do for fun or work. Use only information that you find in the paper for your report. Give a brief oral presentation for the class.