

FOR THE RECORD

A MONTHLY MEDIA LITERACY RESOURCE FROM TORONTO STAR CLASSROOM CONNECTION

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HOW TO BE A JOURNALIST

YOU CAN GET STARTED RIGHT NOW WITH A BLOG, A NEWSLETTER OR A YEARBOOK

Journalists are naturally curious. They want to know about everything, before anyone else. And they're good communicators. They enjoy letting others know what's happening. If that sounds like you, journalism might be a good career. Why not try it and see? It's never too early to start reporting the news. Here are some ways you can get a head start on being a reporter.

Newsletter

A newsletter is like a mini newspaper. It can be as simple as two pieces of 8.5 x 11" paper stapled together. Put the name of your newsletter (like, MY NEWS) at the top of the first page. Under that, you can put your first article. It will need a headline, a byline (the name of the person who wrote the article—in other words, you) and of course, your article. Draw a square for an illustration. You can copy the newsletter template we've provided here. You can write the text in pencil or pen. Then, add your articles, images and headlines. If you take a photo of your pages using your phone, you can even send the newsletter around to classmates.

Or, you could print up hard copies.

Journalism Club

You could join your school's newspaper or even start one, with a teacher's help. Have weekly meetings where you plan the articles you want to write. Make a list of things to cover—events, assemblies, holiday happenings, sports. Each reporter decides what they want to cover. You could interview the principal or other staff members about their job. Post recipes or food reviews from the school cafeteria. Review a book or movie, telling kids why they would enjoy it. If a class is doing something interesting, interview students about it and write an article. Add photos (remember to ask permission before taking anyone's picture). You can also include things like a word search or a crossword puzzle.

Yearbook

A school newspaper is usually published weekly or monthly. A yearbook is made up of stories and photos from the whole school year. Often, it features pictures of every student and teacher in the school, but you don't have to go that big. You could just write up a series of articles throughout the year. Then, at the end of the school year, you'll have a collection of great memories to share with people. A yearbook can be done on paper or online like a blog.

Blog

A blog is a simple website where you can post articles and images. What's happening at your school, in your neighbourhood or in your family? Look around you. What's interesting or makes you curious to want to know more? You can interview people, gather facts, take photos and videos and write articles in an online blog. There are easy-to-use platforms, like Wordpress and Blogger, that let you create a blog for free, with an adult's help. There are free video classes on YouTube that can show them how. (Those platforms have free and paid versions.)

Give your blog a name (My Family News, for instance) and start posting articles. With a trusted adult, like a parent or guardian, you can decide who you allow to see it.

Broadcast

Try creating a video newscast. Have a trusted adult tape you—on a smart phone is fine—reading a news report you wrote. Watch a news show on TV to see how the professionals do it. You'll want to look directly into the camera and say the words clearly. You don't have to get it right the first time. Play it back and see how you can improve

it. After that, you can show it on your phone to your family and friends. With the help of your adult, you may want to post it online for your class to see.

Be safe

Never post anything online without the help of a trusted adult. Also, you should never post your full name or address online. For anything you do online, get the help of a parent, guardian or teacher.

GIVE IT A TRY!

Try creating your own newsletter using the template on the next page. You can fill it in online or print it. Get creative and have fun!



NEWSLETTER NAME

Headline for First Article Goes Here

By (your name)

Text of your article.

Another headline

By (your name)

Text of your article.

Another headline

By (your name)

Text of your article.