



Journalistic Writing

Course Description: Students learn to gather and write news, commentary, and feature stories for the school newspaper. Projects introduce students to multimedia publishing technologies.

Attendance: Students are required to be in school every day. Students are responsible for communicating with their teachers to make up missed learning.

Essential Skills: As an elective, journalism supports the ELA standards for grades 9-12 but especially emphasizes the following standards. All these standards for grades 11-12 can be found at <https://doe.sd.gov/>

11-12.W.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

11-12.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, style and tone are appropriate to grade-specific task, purpose, and audience.

11-12.W.5 Use a writing process to develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grades 11–12.)

11-12.W.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

Course Expectations: Although not everything is graded, everything is important. In order to demonstrate growth and learning, students will need to:

1. Participate in class activities (take notes, work in a group, complete in class tasks, ask questions) without distractions (cell phones, games, etc.)
2. Use morning time and teacher to seek help outside of class when needed.
3. Complete all assessments within teacher timelines.

Grading

Learning (Practice) includes instructional activities in and outside of class and are not used in grade determination.

Skyward Assessment (Grades) may include quizzes, labs, learning checks, tests, speeches, performances, projects, and various kinds of writing activities.

Final Grade	
A	100% - 90%
B	80% - 89%
C	70% - 79%
D	60% - 69%
F	0% - 59%

Calculations:

Semester Grade	
Semester Grade	95%
Semester Exam	5%
Final Grade	
Semester 1	50%

Central High School Courses:

- Will determine grades based on student learning and growth.
- Will not include practice and behavior in grade determination.
- Will give all students regardless of absence an opportunity to demonstrate learning.
- Will not include extra credit.

Instructional Resources:

- *On Writing Well* (Zinsser)
- *Elements of Style* (Strunk/White)
- *The Advisor's Companion* (Greenman)
- [The Pine Needle](#)
- NPR hourly audio newscast
- *This American Life*, "[Harper High School](#)"

The journalism class will rely greatly upon current events journalism, using recently published news articles as model texts, as well as articles from newspaper and [Pulitzer Prize archives](#).

Depending upon availability in a highly fluctuating field, students may be asked to subscribe to a regular news-aggregating newsletter or other daily news publication. Examples include [South Dakota Searchlight](#), "[Need2Know](#)" or [Axios AM](#).

Other essays commonly used or referred to may include any of the following:

Death of a Pig (White); Why I Write (Didion); Toy Children (Daum); Don't Eat Before Reading This (Bourdain); Me Talk Pretty One Day (Sedaris); The Ballad of Luther and Johnny (Vowell); Bad Taste, and on Such a Large Scale (Schmich); America's Bad Jeans (Will); Curvy or No, Barbie Is Still a Mean Girl (Daum); All Can Be Lost (Carr); A Yellow Card (Phillips); For \$1 per Big Mac (Kingsbury); What is to be done about schooling? (Belz); A Wounded Boy's Silence (Noonan); Us and Them (Sedaris); Walking While Black (Cadagon); Letter from a Birmingham Jail (King); The Boy Who Got Stuck in a Tree (Key); A Sudden Illness (Hillenbrand); Junk Food Heaven (Bryson); The Nature of the Fun (Wallace); This is Water (Wallace); Megaphone Man (Saunders); Alexander, Caroline – Epic of Survival:

Shackleton; Alexie, Sherman – What Sacagawea Means to Me; Berry, Wendell – The Pleasures of Eating; Bourdain, Anthony – Don't Eat Before Reading This; Boyle, Rebecca – Light Pollution Is Destroying the Environment; Bryson, Bill – The Toilet, the Stairs, and the Lawn; Cassidy, Cody – How to Outrun a Dinosaur; Catron, Mandy Len – To Fall in Love with Anyone, Do This; Christman, Phil – How to be Married; Cofer, Judith Ortiz – The Myth of the Latin Woman; Collins, Paul – 22,000 Seedlings; Crosley, Sloane – 35.09, the Exact Age at Which Beauty Begins to Fade; Daum, Meghan – My Misspent Youth; de Botton, Alain – Why You Will Marry the Wrong Person; Didion, Joan – Goodbye to All That; Dillard, Annie – Total Eclipse; Doyle, Brian – selections from *Hoop*; Ehrenreich, Barbara – Serving in Florida; Epstein, David – Roger vs. Tiger; Faust, Drew Gilpin – Gen Z Never Learned to Read Cursive; Frazier, Ian – Coyote v. ACME; Gioia, Ted – Is Old Music Killing New Music?; Gioia, Theodore (Ted) – Bach at the Burger King; Gladwell, Malcom – The Sports Taboo; Golding, William – Thinking as a Hobby; Gourevitch, Philip – After the Genocide; Halberstam, David – Jordan's Moment; Hartnick, Christopher – Medicine Face to Face;

Heti, Sheila – On the Importance of Finding Trusted Readers; Holley, Claire – The Wisdom of Goodnight Moon; Hugo, Richard – Writing Off the Subject; Jamison, Leslie – In the Shadow of a Fairy Tale; Key, Harrison Scott – The Wishbone; Kidder, Tracy – Facts and the Nonfiction Writer; King, Stephen – Reading to Write; Lebovitz, David – My Paris Kitchen (Introduction); Lim, Lousia – The People's Republic of Amnesia (introduction); Mairs, Nancy – On Being a Cripple; Marshall, Colin – You Must Change Your Writing Style; Mauldin, Laura – Care Tactics; McClay, B.D. – It's Very Unlikely Anyone Will Read This in 200 Years; McPhee, John – The Search for Marvin Gardens; Mooney, Michael J. – The Most Amazing Bowling Story Ever; Onion, The – Amicus Brief for the case of Novak v. City of Parma, Ohio; Orwell, George – Shooting an Elephant; Phillips, Brian – A Fighter Abroad; Phillips, Brian – The Man-eaters; Rakoff, David – The Invisible Made Visible; Rennie, Jeff – Trapped! The Mike Turner Story; Robinson, Marilynne – When I Was a Child; Strebeigh, Fred – The Wheels of Freedom, Bicycles in China; Touré – Forty Million Ways to Be Black; Vowell, Sarah – The Ballad of Luther and Johnny; Wallace, David Foster – How Tracy Austin Broke My Heart; Whitehead, Colson – The Loser Edit; Wilson, N.D. – Why I Write Scary Stories for Children; Zinsser, William – College Pressures

Course Calendar/Pacing:

This calendar is subject to change as the teacher tweaks and improves the course.

Students will learn the following types of story-writing in roughly the following order:

- Basic news stories (inverted pyramid, leads, quotes, etc.), conducting interviews, research
- Commentary
- Profiles/feature story writing
- Editorial comics
- Podcasting/multimedia forms

Students will also publish and advertise Pine Needle stories and features as opportunity arises, learning to use various media for these purposes.

