

# Sports Reporter Training: Unpacking the Press Box

## Materials Needed

- 3-5 different sports articles from a newspaper or website (one news report, one feature, one editorial if possible)
- Scissors
- Glue or tape
- A blank sheet of paper or notebook
- Pen or pencil
- Highlighters (optional, in three different colors)
- Prepared "Jumbled Sports Article" puzzle (see activity description)

## Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Identify the structure and purpose of three types of sports articles: news, feature, and editorial.
- Examine the structure of a sports news article by arranging its jumbled parts into the correct order.
- Explain the importance of a well-structured sports article for clarity and purpose.

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## Lesson Proper

### Part 1: The Warm-Up - Welcome to the Press Box! (5 minutes)

**Teacher's Guide:** Start with a fun, engaging conversation to connect with Aira Marie's interests.

**Activity:** Ask Aira Marie: "If you were a sports reporter for a day, what sport would you cover? Who is one athlete you would love to interview?" Discuss her answer briefly. This gets her thinking about sports from a reporter's perspective.

Say: "That's awesome! A great reporter doesn't just know the sport; they know *how* to write about it. Today, you're in training to become an expert sports journalist. Your first mission is to understand the three main types of articles you'll find in the sports section."

### Part 2: The Reporter's Briefing - Know Your Article Types (15 minutes)

**Teacher's Guide:** Introduce the three types of sports articles. Use the sample articles you collected as real-world examples. If you have highlighters, you can read through them together and highlight the key components of each structure.

#### 1. The Sports News Report

- **Purpose:** To inform the reader about the results of a game or event, quickly and efficiently. It's all about the facts.
- **Key Question it Answers:** What happened?
- **Structure: The Inverted Pyramid**
  - **Lead (Top):** The most important information comes first! This includes the final score, the key players, and what made the game significant (the Who, What, Where, When,

Why). A busy reader could read only this part and know the outcome.

- **Body (Middle):** More details, key plays, and quotes from players or coaches.
- **Tail (Bottom):** Least important information, like background stats or details about the next game.

## 2. The Sports Feature

- **Purpose:** To entertain and tell a deeper story. It focuses on the human side of sports, not just the final score.
- **Key Question it Answers:** Who is this person/team and what is their story?
- **Structure: Narrative or Creative**
  - Often starts with a hook or an interesting anecdote (a short story) to grab the reader's attention.
  - It doesn't follow the inverted pyramid. The most important point might be saved for the end.
  - Uses descriptive language, storytelling, and emotional details. (Example: An article about a star player's journey from childhood to the big leagues).

## 3. The Sports Editorial

- **Purpose:** To persuade the reader to agree with a specific opinion or point of view.
- **Key Question it Answers:** What should we think or do about this?
- **Structure: Persuasive Argument**
  - **Introduction:** States a clear opinion or claim (e.g., "This player deserves to be named MVP," or "The team needs a new coach.").
  - **Body:** Provides reasons, evidence, and examples to support that opinion.
  - **Conclusion:** Summarizes the argument and often includes a call to action or a final powerful statement.

**Check for Understanding:** Show Aira Marie the headlines of the sample articles and ask her to guess which type each one is before you read them.

## Part 3: The Main Event - The Jigsaw Challenge (15 minutes)

**Teacher's Guide:** This is a hands-on activity to solidify the concept of structure, specifically the inverted pyramid of a news report. Prepare this ahead of time by finding a short sports news article (5-6 paragraphs), typing it out, and cutting it into separate paragraph strips.

### Activity Instructions for Aira Marie:

"Great job on your briefing, reporter! Now for a real test. A rival newspaper has scrambled one of our reports! Your mission is to reassemble this jumbled sports news article into the correct order. Remember the inverted pyramid structure!"

1. Lay out all the paper strips with the jumbled paragraphs.
2. Read through each paragraph.
3. Your first task is to find the **LEAD**. Look for the paragraph that answers the 5 Ws (Who, What, Where, When, Why) and gives the final score. This is your first piece!
4. Next, find the body paragraphs. These will have more details, quotes, and descriptions of key plays.
5. Finally, find the **TAIL**. This paragraph will have the least essential information, perhaps about the team's season record or their next opponent.
6. Arrange the strips in order on a blank sheet of paper. Once you're confident, glue or tape them down.

**Support/Hint:** "If you get stuck, ask yourself: 'If I could only read one of these paragraphs, which

one would give me the most important news?' That's always your lead!"

#### **Part 4: Post-Game Analysis - Reflection (5-10 minutes)**

**Teacher's Guide:** This final step connects the activity to the 'why' behind the lesson, addressing the third objective.

**Activity:** After Aira Marie successfully completes the jigsaw challenge, have a brief discussion or ask her to write down her answer to the following question in her notebook:

**Reflective Question:** "Why is it so important for a sports *news* article to have a clear structure like the inverted pyramid? How does it help the reader, especially someone who might be in a hurry?"

**Desired Answer Clues:** Look for her to mention ideas like: it helps readers get the most important information quickly, it respects the reader's time, it makes the news easy to understand even if you don't finish the whole article.

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#### **Extension Activity (Optional): Reporter for a Day**

If time permits and Aira Marie is feeling creative, challenge her to write her own short sports article. She can choose the type:

- **Write a News Lead:** Write just the opening paragraph for a news report about a recent game she watched or a made-up game. Make sure it includes the 5 Ws!
- **Pitch a Feature:** Come up with an idea for a sports feature story. Who would it be about? What makes their story interesting?
- **State an Editorial Opinion:** State an opinion about her favorite team or sport and give one strong reason to support it.