



News Writing

IHSA Sample Prompt

Be sure to put your contestant code in the upper right-hand corner of each page of your entry. Do not put your name on the entry. If you do, your entry will be disqualified.

Block A

Students will receive interview information selected by the IHSA and then write a story based on the material. Stories will be judged on leads, clarity and accuracy of details, and proper style and mechanics in addition to writing and organization.

Students will review the information below to generate a news story. Use only the information below. Do not make up any additional information for your story.

Word count: 300

DIRECTIONS

You are a staff writer of Abraham High School's The Standard (Middleland, Illinois). Your editor has assigned you to write the front page news story. From the given information gained during the interview, write a feature story for the next issue.

School: Abraham High School (AHS), 2715 McGraw Drive, Middleland, Illinois
(518) 554-2334 (518) 554-2339 (fax) www.abrahamhs.edu

Mascot: The Loggers

School Colors: Orange and Blue

Location: Middleland, Illinois

School Size: 789 (9th-12th grades)

School Newspaper Name: The Standard

You are writing for your high school newspaper. Decide on story possibilities. Decide on how to develop your story angle. Organize your information and decide on your approach to the story. Write a story that would interest newspaper readers.

INFORMATION

The Abraham High School principal went skiing over last week with the AHS Student Council. They went to Keystone in Colorado. They did fundraising all year to raise the money: car washes, bake sales and candle sales. They raised \$3,000. A total of 26 students went on the trip and four adult chaperones, including Sarah McCalley, StuCo adviser, and Head Football Coach David Walters. McCalley is a vocational studies teacher.

The principal Walter Simmons had never been skiing before, but he signed up for lessons with 12 of the other students who had never skied before. On the second day of the trip, the principal and the rest of the beginners were allowed to ski on their own on the "bunny slope." On the last day of the trip on the last time down the slope, the principal fell. He was rescued by the ski patrol. Once at the lodge, the medical personnel determined he had broken his leg and took him to Keystone Hospital to have it set. Simmons rode the bus back with the rest of the students, even though he was in pain.

Back at the school the next week, Simmons found himself in pain. The School Board recommended he have bed rest until it healed completely, through the rest of the school year. In his absence, the vice principal, Patricia Waterstone will assume the duties as principal, including running the Student Body elections, supervising the hiring of new teachers for the next school year and preparing for the summer school schedule. It is the first time Waterstone has had official duties.

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CONTINUED

QUOTES

Principal Walter Simmons: I have every confidence that Ms. Waterstone can handle the responsibilities of the office. A lot happens at the end of the year, and I am sure her time will go by fast. I feel comfortable leaving it in her capable hands.

The students on the trip were great. They really took care of me on the long bus ride home and made me as comfortable as possible on a bus trip like that.

Vice Principal Patricia Waterstone: I have been trained for this job and I know the students of AHS will help me and the rest of the staff in Mr. Simmons' absence. I have served AHS for the past 15 years as a teacher and an administrator so I am used to the end-of-the-year routines.

Prom and graduation are two of my favorite activities and I will work hard to ensure they run smoothly. I know Mr. Simmons will miss being there, but I will keep him apprised of every step along the way.

Student Council President Wanda Brandman: You never think that something like this will happen. You hear about people getting injured on the slopes, but this was unbelievable. Plus, it was on the last day, so we figured everyone would be OK.

We had a great time. It was a good time for the student council reps to relax after a good year and do something fun together. I think this was one of the most successful years in history for StuCo, so I am glad we got to do this, even if Simmy did get hurt.

Principal's wife, Jackie Simmons: I think in the back of your mind you are always nervous when a person his age tries something new. I am just glad he will be OK. He will miss all the great thigs that happen at the end of the year, and I know that's hard for him. He loves all the events at the end of the year.

I know he'll watch a lot of TV, listen to ballgames on the radio and read to pass the time. I also want to thank everyone for the cards and food and get well wishes. They all really helped to cheer him up.

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Students will review the information below to generate a news story. Use only the information below. Do not make up any additional information for your story.

Be sure to put your contestant number in the upper right-hand corner of each page of your entry. Do not put your name on the entry. If you do, your entry will be disqualified.

DIRECTIONS

You are a staff writer of Illinois High School's The Standard (America, Illinois). Your editor has assigned you to write the front page story news feature. From the given information gained during the interview, write a feature story for the next issue.

School: Illinois High School (IHS), 123 Maxwell Way Avenue, America, Illinois (518) 554-2334 (518) 554-2339 (fax) www.illinoishs.edu

Mascot: Add A. Tude

School Colors: Orange and Blue

Location: America, Illinois

School Size: 789 (9th-12th grades)

School Newspaper Name: The Standard

You are writing for your high school newspaper. Decide on story possibilities. Decide on how to develop your story angle. Organize your information and decide on your approach to the story. Write a story that would interest newspaper readers.

INFORMATION

- 45 minutes during the overall school year is set aside for 'a moment of reflection'
- Some students will stand and say the Pledge of Allegiance.
- The 'moment' came into being after the Illinois legislature passed the "Enrolled Act".
- "Enrolled Act" allows for 30 seconds each day, usually in the morning for silent reflection.
- 69% of students surveyed say that they stand and say the Pledge voluntarily each day.

QUOTES

- "This silence is a time for what you want it to reflect. It could be for someone who has passed or anything you want it to be about," (Mr. Joe Schmo, Assistant Principal).
- "It's not a moment of prayer; it's a moment of silence." (Mr. Joe Schmo, Assistant Principal).
- "We should not observe a moment of silence because it is a waste of time." (Junior Ashley Miller grade 11)
- "I think we should have the Pledge because it is America and we should support it, and do what we have to do." (Sophomore Tom Jones)
- "I pray about the soldiers and the people in the world that are in need." (Aaron Johnson grade 12).



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DESCRIPTION OF SCHOOL

School: Abraham High School (AHS), 2715 McGraw Drive, Middleland, Ill.
(518) 554-2334 (518) 554-2339 (fax) www.abrahamhs.edu

Mascot: The Loggers

School Colors: Brown and White

Location: Middleland, Ill.

School Size: 789 (9th-12th grades)

School Newspaper: The Standard

Yearbook Name: The Annual

Radio Station Call Letters: WMIL

DIRECTIONS

Recording devices are prohibited in this category.

Your editor has assigned you to cover this press conference and write a Page One story. From the given information and the presentation at the press conference, write a news story for the next issue. The word limit will be 400 words. Stories will be judged on leads, news judgment, clarity and accuracy of details, use of quotations, proper style and mechanics, in addition to style and organization. You are permitted to use the AP Stylebook and dictionaries.

Decide on story possibilities. Decide on how to develop your story angle. Organize your information and decide on your approach to the story. Write a story that would interest newspaper readers.