

# COMPLETE CAPTIONS

*adding to the story*

Every single picture in the yearbook needs a caption. Though a picture may be worth a thousand words, captions help those pictures tell the complete story. Besides, because they are shorter, captions get read more than any other copy in the book. View captions as mini-features and pack them with information that cannot be ascertained by looking at the picture. Captions should answer as many of the following questions as possible:

**WHO:** use full names and include grade and titles

**WHAT:** specifically what is the subject doing

**WHEN:** date and time of event as specific as their importance

**WHERE:** location, again as specific as its importance

**WHY:** interview the subject for outcomes and additional information

## DO ▶

As he finishes polishing, junior Chris Dmochowski keeps his '94 Chevy truck in tip-top condition, spending four hours a week cleaning it. "It gets judged on the condition it's in, how well you take care of it and how much customization it has in it," Chris said. The truck is equipped with leather interior, a stereo and a DVD player with a small screen.

- ...**research!** Be accurate, specific and thorough.
- ...use interesting leads and some kind of lead-in device like an overline or large initial letter.
- ...use names up to six or seven. Use complete first and last names.
- ...tell the whole story. Captions should be a **MINIMUM** of two sentences but more often three or more.
- ...use action verbs and active voice to add color and life.
- ...start in the present tense but change to past tense after the first sentence.
- ...vary the opening and order of information. Be careful not to overuse verbals (-ing verbs).
- ...begin group idents with name of group, then Front Row...Second Row...Back Row.
- ...in sports captions, include the opposing players' names and the result of the contest.

## DON'T ▶

Kwassi Cataria watches carefully as he throws the football with amazing grace.

This smiling team is one big happy family.

What are you looking for, Alice?

Yvonne Smith smiles for the camera.

- ...begin with names or label.
- ...state the obvious.
- ...use "seems to" or "attempts to." Research and find out information.
- ...use slang or double meanings. Don't make jokes.
- ...pad the caption. Do your research and provide worthwhile information.
- ...comment to the photo (Gotta flat, Bob?). Captions shouldn't poke fun or degrade people.
- ...make up quotes, ever, **ever, EVER!**
- ...editorialize. Be careful of editorial adjectives (excellent season, outstanding performance).

# GET OFF TO A GOOD START

Varying leads can keep captions fresh and lively. Check out the variety of possibilities shown below:

## QUOTATION LEAD

"I may get zits and a stomachache before I go, but the trip to New Orleans will be worth it," junior John Marsh, first-chair trumpet player, said. The band funded its trip to Mardi Gras by selling 4,200 boxes of M & Ms. A repeat customer, sophomore Julie Jones, buys her seventh box in Mr. Plough's class. Band members raised the \$4,200 needed to charter a bus for the trip with the candy sales and the band boosters paid for their lodging for three nights.

## ADJECTIVE LEAD

Sweet M & Ms accompany junior John Marsh as he sells another box of candy to sophomore Julie Jones, a sophomore in his physics class. "I can't help it," Julie said. "I have to get my chocolate fix." Four thousand two hundred boxes of candy financed the band's February trip to Mardi Gras. Band members raised the \$4,200 needed to charter a bus for the trip with the candy sales and the band boosters paid for their lodging for three nights.

## PREPOSITION LEAD

With M & Ms in hand and New Orleans in mind, junior trumpet player John Marsh sells a sweet treat to Julie Jones, a sophomore in his physics class. Four thousand two hundred boxes of candy financed the band's February trip to Mardi Gras. Band members raised the \$4,200 needed to charter a bus for the trip with the candy sales and the band boosters paid for their lodging for three nights. "We're going to be marching in one of the parades, but we'll also have time to see the city," John said.

## INFINITIVE LEAD

To charter buses to New Orleans, band members sold M & Ms. Trumpet player John Marsh, a junior, sells sophomore Julie Jones one of the 4,200 boxes of candy that helped send the 175-member band to the February Mardi Gras parades. Band members raised the \$4,200 needed for the busses and the band boosters paid for their lodging for three nights. "We had to raise enough for two busses, one just for our instruments," John said.

## PARTICIPLE LEAD

Selling another box of M & Ms, junior John Marsh, first-chair trumpet player, reaches his goal of high salesman in the band's candy campaign. Sophomore Julie Jones buys her seventh box of 4,200 boxes sold by the band members to earn money for their February trip to Mardi Gras. Band members raised the \$4,200 needed to charter a bus for the trip with the candy sales and the band boosters paid for their lodging for three nights. "I got pretty sick of selling candy, but it was worth it because we get to be in New Orleans for three whole days," John said.

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# CAN YOU DO BETTER?

See what you can do to improve on these captions. **Just this once**, you can make up information.

Long practices in the field by the cowpath kept band members busy most of the fall season. For Cherresa Johnson, Kokomo freshman, that meant long hours lugging around a heavy baritone.

Near the end of the 500-freestyle race, Fred Wellman gasps for breath. Fred, the only freshman to swim for the Pioneers, finished in last place against Principia. Kirkwood lost the meet, 70-102.

With a little soap and water and a lot of elbow grease, Rosemary Schempp adds the finishing touch to a fender during the September 27 senior car wash. The class took in \$160 in profits to add to their class gift.

Sacrificing the chance to sleep late, senior Joe Young tackles the school's front lawn on July 27. Students like Joe in need of summer employment worked at the school for five weeks of the summer to pay a portion of the upcoming year's tuition.

The sound of scuffling feet down the math hall and the crumple of paper bags meant only one thing to yearbook staffers who spent time after school: dinner was on its way. Juniors Mary Kay Rensch and Allison Comp grab their goodies from the delivery boy of the day, David Lambert.