

# Regional News Summary Assignment

**Overview:** This assignment breaks down the task of summarizing a news story (required in **Part B** of the Student Worksheet) by asking students to first select, then analyze, a current regional news story. Criteria and a performance scale for assessing the summary follows this lesson plan.

**Resources Required:** (per student or group of students):

- a copy of a major regional newspaper OR access to online newspapers

*note: links to regional and national news sources are available on the LesPlan Teacher's site LINKS page at [www.lesplan.com](http://www.lesplan.com), and on the Student site at [www.whatintheworld.ca](http://www.whatintheworld.ca)*

- 1 file folder or large envelope
- 1 copy of the News Story Analysis chart
- 1 piece chart paper, marker
- looseleaf paper, pen or pencil, highlighter

**Assignment:**

## 1. PREPARATION

a) Divide students into groups of three or four to discuss the following question:

**What is news?** (alternatively, What are current events?)

Students can record their responses in web form on a piece of chart paper.

b) Students can present their webs to the class for discussion.

Ask students:

- What is news?
- For what reasons is it important (or not important) to understand what's happening in the news?
- Are all news stories equally important? What makes a news story significant?

## 2. SELECTING A NEWS STORY

Students are responsible for following current events in their region, by reading a regional newspaper or visiting regional news sites online, for two weeks, or period of time determined by the teacher. Each day during this time, students are expected to clip or print out articles covering significant regional news stories, record the date and source, and file them in their folder or envelope.

*note: Teachers may omit step two, instead providing students with a copy of a news story of their choice.*

## 3. ANALYZING A NEWS STORY

After the articles have been collected, students must select one story to analyze. First, students can organize the relevant articles in chronological order. Then, they can read through all articles, underlining or highlighting key details and terms as they read. Finally, students can complete the *News Story Analysis Chart* using the information they have gathered.

## 4. WRITING A SUMMARY OF A NEWS STORY

Using the information recorded on the News Story Analysis chart, students can write a summary of their news story. When writing their summary, students should:

- follow the rules of summary writing
- use their proofreading skills
- use language effectively

See *Criteria for a News Story Summary*

## 5. ASSESSMENT

Distribute a copy of *Criteria for a News Story Summary* to each student to complete and hand in with their final copy.

Assess each student's summary using the *News Story Summary Performance Scale* by scanning the descriptions and highlighting the descriptors that apply.

# News Story Analysis Chart

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

News story topic: \_\_\_\_\_

News story sources (attach clippings in chronological order): \_\_\_\_\_

**WHAT** happened?

**WHEN** did it happen?

**WHERE** did it happen?

**WHO** was involved?

**OTHER** relevant information:

(WHY? HOW?)

**WHY** is this story significant?

**MY PERSONAL RESPONSE** to this story:



# Criteria For News Story Summary

## Student Checklist

In writing my summary, did I ...

\_\_\_\_\_√\_\_\_\_\_

Use my proofreading skills?

- correct spelling \_\_\_\_\_
- correct punctuation \_\_\_\_\_
- proper sentence structure \_\_\_\_\_

Follow the rules of summary writing?

- all key details and facts included \_\_\_\_\_
- all information is relevant \_\_\_\_\_
- written using my own words \_\_\_\_\_

Use language effectively?

- ideas clearly organized \_\_\_\_\_
- appropriate vocabulary \_\_\_\_\_
- concise \_\_\_\_\_

**GIVENS** *Your summary will not be accepted for assessment unless it:*

- is double-spaced \_\_\_\_\_
- is written in ink or typed \_\_\_\_\_
- is neat \_\_\_\_\_
- includes your name and date \_\_\_\_\_

# News Story Summary

## Performance Scale

### 5 EXCELLENT

- may be small mechanical errors, if any; still flows well (almost need to look closely to find errors)
- includes all key details and facts relating to the news story, and all information is relevant; is written using student's own words
- is well-organized and easy to read; written in a concise, clear manner

### 3 SATISFACTORY

- some punctuation, spelling and/or run-on sentence errors, and these slightly interfere with the flow; however, the meaning is generally obvious
- includes most of the key details and facts relating to the news story, although some unnecessary information may be present; the majority is written using the student's own words
- clear attempt to organize the information, but needs more work; may be some vagueness, 'wordiness'

### 1 MINIMALLY ACCEPTABLE

- contains mechanical errors including run-on sentences, spelling, and punctuation; may not have been proofread, and errors interfere with reading – reader may be left confused
- made an attempt to include some details and facts relating to the news story, and/or includes many unnecessary details; many sentences or phrases copied directly from the news source
- shows lack of organization of ideas; meaning is often unclear