



Lesson Plans

Created by **Fiona Kirwan**, English teacher



NewsBrands
Ireland

An Initiative from NewsBrands Ireland

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Overview of Press Pass Lesson Plans



Approach A

Move through the entire workbook and at the end assign the students whatever number of assignments you wish them to complete e.g. there are five options – you might decide they should submit two.

OR

Approach B

After one section has been covered, brainstorm article ideas and allow time for them to research, write and submit those. This process can then be repeated after each section. **Approach B** is more suited to a longer time frame.

From a teacher's point of view the Press Pass programme with its accompanying workbook can be used in any way that suits your class group and the time you can give to it.

If it is used as a teaching module, that module can be as short as six weeks or as long as three months. You could have 40 minute classes 3 or 4 times a week or you might have 2 one hour classes. Most "lesson" blocks are estimated as 40-60 minute blocks. From that you can anticipate the number of weeks you will need.

Therefore these lesson plans, which are designed to accompany the workbook, should be used in whatever way suits your time constraints and your class group's interest and ability.



Lesson 1	Introduction to the workbook and the competition
Lesson 2	Why journalism matters and media ethics
Lessons 3 & 4	Explaining the news and analysing a news story
Lessons 5 & 6	Examining different writing styles
Lesson 7	How to conduct an interview
Lesson 8	Digital Journalism and Social Media
Lesson 9	Brainstorming session to generate news story writing
Lesson 10	Identifying and analysing feature articles
Lesson 11	Brainstorming session to generate feature article writing
Lesson 12	Identifying and analysing comment/opinion articles
Lesson 13	Brainstorming session to generate comment article writing
Lessons 14	Identifying and analysing sports articles
Lessons 15	Brainstorming session to generate sports writing
Lessons 16	Exploring photojournalism
Lesson 17 & 18	Navigating the News



Short on time ? Use the 'Quick Plan'

Or if you are really short on time (work experience.... Christmas show...trips away... matches...speakers etc. after eating into your class time????!!!!) you could consider using the **Quick Plan**

Quick Plan

- **Leave out the optional activities which increase class time (groupwork and brainstorming exercises).**
- **Focus on covering the main points on each category outlined in the workbook where you identify and analyse each type of article.**
- **You can then set writing work to be done individually in their own time.**



Introduction to workbook and competition

Pages:

2

3

35

39



40-60 minutes

Material to be used

- Quickly **outline** to the class the **concept of Press Pass** using pages 2 & 3 of the workbook .
- Use **pages 35- 39** to explain how the competition works.
- Ask students to think about a category they might like to enter or perhaps the class would like to create their own school newspaper or enter the Opinion or Sports writing categories
- If there is time to spare let them flick through the guidebook familiarising themselves with the sections and layout.



Why Journalism Matters and Media Ethics

Pages:

4 5



40-60 minutes



Optional:
Survey
(see PDF for printing/
photocopying)

Material to be used

Play the NewsBrands Ireland Journalism Matters video, available on <https://newsbrandsireland.ie/journalismmatters/#videos>

Pages 4 & 5 set in context what journalism matters to society and why it is important in today's world. Read and discuss.

Optional Activity to help prompt and guide discussion:

Read and discuss the National Union of Journalist's [Code of Conduct](#) and the [Press Council of Ireland's Code of Practise](#)

This survey can be used before or after reading pages 4&5 of the guidebook. The survey can provide prompts for use for use by individuals/ pairs/ groups to deliver feedback on their engagement (or lack of) with the news.

After they have conducted the survey, either in groups or as individuals, they can feedback their responses as follows:

1. Place 4 columns on the board headed with A, B, C, D.
2. Collate their preferences using simple ticks to indicate what the majority of their choices were.
3. Use the points below to open discussion on the results.

Mostly A answers indicates a complete lack of engagement with the news. You could discuss why this is.

Mostly B answers indicates a small amount of interest in the news. You could discuss when and why they engage with certain news stories.

Mostly C answers indicates frequent engagement with the news. Tease out what interests such people and how and why they engage.

Mostly D answers indicates a high degree of interest in the news.

4. You could focus in on the specific answers that people had for questions 6, 7 and 8. There will probably be discrepancies in those answers. These could be explored further.

5

Lessons 3 & 4



The News

Pages:

6 7



10-20 minutes

(depending on length of discussion)

News Tutorial

Pages:

8 9



40+ mins

(more time can be allocated to this task or it can be kept to a minimum)



Handout for analysing News Stories Handout. PDF to print/ photocopy

Material to be used

On page 6, read through the brief points on news and the job of the journalist.

Examine and discuss the Do's and Don'ts of writing a news story.

Pages 8 and 9 explain the structure of a news story, the **5Ws**, using very straightforward examples.

After these have been read, either silently and independently, or with the group as a whole **each student should take a newspaper or pick a news website from our Press Pass resources page on-line (<https://presspass.ie/2022-resources/>)** and do the following...

Optional: Analysing the News Tutorial:

1. Write down the name of their paper and date published.
2. **Identify a news story** in their paper or news website.
3. Write down the **headline**/ sub head and byline.
4. **Summarise** the story down **into the 5Ws** using bullet points.

Options for discussion/ analysis:

- In pairs they could analyse which of their headlines was the most factual or sensationalised.
- They could compare the way in which the 5Ws were used i.e. in which order did they come?
- They could establish what extra information was given or who was quoted.
- Finally they could decide which of the two stories they thought was more interesting or better written saying why they made that choice.
- Each pair could feed back to the class.



Writing Styles

Pages:

10 11



40-60 minutes



Click to download!
**Handout for
differentiating
News Writing
Styles.
PDF to print/
photocopy**

Material to be used

Read pages 10 and 11.

After these have been read, either silently and independently, or with the group as a whole have a discussion on the different emphasis in each piece.

Optional: Differentiating News Writing Styles

The following tasks can be done individually, in pairs or in small groups.

1. **News:** Ask them to bullet point the factual details in this version of the story.
2. **Analysis:** Get them to choose three words or phrases that indicate how the journalist is adding their analysis to the story.
3. **Feature:** List three feelings which the feature version of the story evoked in them.
4. **Colour:** Identify words or phrases that created drama or tension in this version.
5. **Comment:** What comments have they to make on what is said here about how news is written?

Take **feedback** from these to focus group discussion.



How to conduct an interview

Pages:

12 13



40 minutes

(or an extra class can be added)

Material to be used

Read through the steps outlined in the workbook on pages 12 and 13.:

Optional Activity:

1. Ask the class to compile a list of well-known people from a broad range of backgrounds; sport, fashion, music, politics, film etc.
2. Assign a “persona” to each student in the room (preferably one they are interested in and that they know something about – there can be more than one of each persona...!)
3. If possible allow them to quickly research their well-known person.
4. Divide the class into pairs – one person is A the interviewer and the other is B and they are acting as the “persona” in question. These roles will then be reversed.
5. Both must separately prepare to interview the other following the steps laid out in the workbook.
6. When they are ready A interviews B for 5-10 minutes, then they reverse and B interviews A.

This is intended to be a light-hearted, fun exercise but it should demonstrate the need to prepare well in advance of conducting a real interview..



Digital Media & The News

Pages:

14 15



40 minutes

Material to be used

Read the material on pages 14 and 15.

Optional Activities:

Tweet Your own News Story (useful in the absence of access to the internet/ computers)

- Students are all given one of the newspapers.
- They identify a news story and turn it into a Twitter feed as breaking news.
- Remind them about the 5Ws.

Alternatively if you have easy access to the internet/ computer:

- The trending news stories of the day on Twitter could be accessed online.
- The popular Irish journalists on Twitter name on page 17 could be searched for and more information gained about them and their stories.



Brainstorming Session to generate news story ideas

Pages:

8 9 35



40 minutes +

(session length dependent on group
and/or time allocated)



Click to download!
**Handout for
Brainstorming
News Stories.
PDF to print/
photocopy**

Material to be used

Look at the “How to enter” section for the **News Category** on page 6.

Use the prompts below to encourage discussion of ideas for articles suitable for the Press Pass competition.

- Students could **think** about the prompts individually writing down any of their own ideas
- They could then be **paired** or put into slightly larger groups of three or four.
- Their ideas could then be **shared** with the class as a whole in a plenary style session.

Optional prompts to generate news story ideas:

- What are the main local/ national/ international stories in the news at present?
- Do any of them have any interest or significance for your area or for you?
- Have any events of interest happened locally recently?
- Are there any upcoming events of local/ national importance?
- Who do you think you could speak to or interview in relation to any of the events you have thought of?

Optional:

You could now set a deadline for submission of a news article which conforms to the competition rules.

Depending on your time constraints this can done within class time or as an independent assignment to be completed in their own time.



Features Tutorial

Pages:

16 17 18 19



40-80 minutes +



Click to download!
Handout for
analysing Feature
Articles.
PDF to print/
photocopy

Material to be used

Read through pages 16-19.

Emphasise how while a feature article is always focused on a specific **topic** it also generally has **theme** or a message.

Get the class to look at the examples on pages 16 and 17. Ask them to identify in general terms what **topic** the article seems to be examining and maybe to guess what they think the main message might be. The headlines and photos are already indicating these to them.

After these pages have been read **each student should take a newspaper or access a news website on line** and do the following:

Optional: Features Tutorial

1. Write down the name of their paper and date published.
2. **Identify a news story** in their paper.
3. Write down the **headline**/ sub head and byline.
4. Break the article down using the following prompts:
 - What **topic** is the article focusing on?
 - How does it try to catch the **reader's attention** at the start?
 - Is there colourful, descriptive **language** or is it more informative and factual?
 - How does the feature article **end**? (Is there a quote, a punchline, does it draw a conclusion or refer back to the opening?)
 - Was there some kind of **hook or angle** to the feature article that caught your attention?
 - Were many **quotes** used? If so from what sources?

After each student has read and analysed a feature article by themselves they could then compare their analysis in pairs and feed back to the group.



Brainstorming Session to generate feature articles

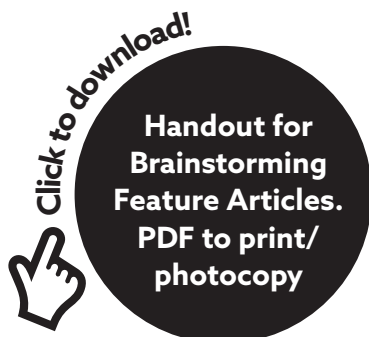
Pages:

35



40 mins +

(session length dependent on group and/or time allocated)



Material to be used

Look at the “How to enter” section for the **Features Category** on page 35.

Use the prompts below to encourage discussion of ideas for feature articles suitable for the Press Pass competition.

- Students could **think** about the prompts individually writing down any of their own ideas
- They could then be **paired** or put into slightly larger groups of three or four.
- Their ideas could then be **shared** with the class as a whole in a plenary style session.

Optional prompts to generate feature article ideas:

- What topics or issues are you interested in?
- Do any specific people, groups or organisations come into your mind in relation to this topic or issue?
- What aspect of this topic would you like to focus on?
- What do you think you could use as a hook or an angle?
- Have any ideas on what your main points might be and how you could order them?
- Who do you think you could speak to or interview in relation to any of the ideas you have?

Optional:

You could now set a deadline for submission of a feature article which conforms to the competition rules.

Depending on your time constraints this can be done within class time or as an independent assignment to be completed in their own time.



Comment

Pages:

20 21 22 23



40-80 mins+

Click to download!



Handout for
analysing an
Opinion Piece.
PDF to print/
photocopy

Click to download!



Handout for
comparing
broadsheet and
tabloid opinion.
PDF to print/
photocopy

Material to be used

Read pages 20 to 23 in the workbook.

There are **three optional activities** suggested below. Award winning Opinion articles can be accessed via the Resources page on the Press Pass website.

1. All students **individually analyse an opinion piece** from one of the newspapers **using prompts provided**.
2. Some students could analyse **broadsheet** opinion pieces while others look at **popular opinion pieces**. They could then be put into pairs or groups to the different ways they handle comment using the **compare and contrast handout** as guidance.
3. Students could read the Letters to the editor pages and write their own response to one of the letters. Alternatively their letter to the editor could be in response to an opinion piece they've read.

Depending on time constraints and class ability and interest, any or all of these activities can be done.



Brainstorming session to generate comment pieces



40-60 mins +

Material to be used

Revisit the “How to enter” section for the **Comment Category** on page 35.

Use the prompts below to encourage discussion of ideas for comment pieces suitable for the Press Pass competition.

- Students could **think** about the prompts individually writing down any of their own ideas
- They could then be **paired** or put into slightly larger groups of three or four.
- Their ideas could then be **shared** with the class as a whole in a plenary style session.

Optional Prompts for discussion:

- Students could any issues on which they have strong opinions: (they need to think about things they rant about frequently!)
- From this list they could choose one issue.
- Outline briefly their opinion on this issue.
- Note aspects of this issue that they feel they would need to research or explore further. (Remind them they will need **facts** to back up their opinions!)
- Separate to their opinions on this issue, who else do they feel is affected by it?
- How do they think they could persuade people to pay more attention to this issue?
- Decide on main points might be and how they might sequence the

Optional:

You could now set a deadline for submission of an **opinion piece** which conforms to the competition rules.

Depending on your time constraints this can done within class time or as an independent assignment to be completed in their own time.



Sport

Pages:

24 25 26 27



40 -80 mins



Click to download!
Handout for
analysing Sports
Writing.
PDF to print/
photocopy

Material to be used

Read through pages 24 to 27 of the workbook.

After these have been read, either silently and independently, or with the group as a whole each student should take a newspaper and do the following

Optional Sports Writing Tutorial:

1. Write down the name of their paper and date published.
2. **Source a piece of sports writing** in their paper or one of the news websites on the Press Pass website's resource page.
3. **Identify** whether it is a match report, interview or sports feature article.
4. Write down the **headline**/ sub head and byline (if they are present).

Options for discussion/ analysis:

- If looking at a **match report**, select words and phrases the writer used to 'set the scene'.
- Assess how clearly or accurately the writer captured the action.
- Note any factual details included.
- If analysing an **interview** piece select words and phrases the writer used to 'set the scene' for the interview.
- Choose questions asked by the interviewer which were particularly good in your opinion.
- Decide were there any questions which could have been left out or write some that you'd have liked answered.



Brainstorming session for sports articles



Handout for
Brainstorming
Sports Articles.
PDF to print/
photocopy



40 - 60 mins +

Optional:

You could now set a deadline for submission of a feature article which conforms to the competition rules.

Depending on your time constraints this can be done within class time or as an independent assignment to be completed in their own time.

Material to be used

Revisit the “How to enter” section for the **Sport Category** on page 35.

Use the prompts below to encourage discussion of ideas for sports articles suitable for the Press Pass competition.

- Students could **think** about the prompts individually writing down any of their own ideas
- They could then be **paired** or put into slightly larger groups of three or four.
- Their ideas could then be **shared** with the class as a whole in a plenary style session.

Prompts for discussion:

Interviews:

- Students could list sports personalities they admire.
- Choose one person and outline the aspects of their sportsperson’s personality or career they would like to focus on.
- List some of questions they feel might draw out some of those aspects.
- Think about hooks or angles they could use to draw readers in at the beginning of the interview.

Match reports:

- Draw up a list local sporting events in which they are interested
- Choose one and note details they can remember of a significant match or sporting event. (Perhaps choosing a recent game or event which was of significance.)
- They could focus on:
 - Where and when did it take place?
 - Who was involved in the competition? (why was it an important event?)
 - Words or phrases which could be used to describe the weather or the atmosphere beforehand?
 - Note important moments or turning points in the game or event. (scores, fouls, sending offs etc.)



Photojournalism

Pages:

28 29 30 31



40-80 mins



Click to download!
Analysing the
composition of a
photograph.
PDF to print/
photocopy

Material to be used

Read pages 24 to 27 in the workbook.

Photojournalism Tutorial:

Give the students time to look at the photographs on pages 28 to 31.

Using the following **prompts** (see **handout**) they can analyse a photograph of their choice:

1. Identify the main subject in the photograph.
2. Is the entire focus of the photograph on that subject?
3. Are certain things in sharp focus while others are less so?
4. What's in the background or the foreground of the photograph?
5. Are there areas of light or shade?
6. Do the colours on the photo contrast or complement each other in your opinion?
7. Could you describe the mood or atmosphere of the photo?
8. If the subject of the photo is human are their facial expressions, postures, gestures or their activity of significance and if so why?
9. Jot down your emotional response to this photo i.e. were you amused, shocked, bored, appalled, entertained etc.?
10. What do you think might have been the photographer's intention when taking this photo?
11. After the students have completed their analysis individually, they could be paired or put in groups to share this or they could feed back to the class group straight away.

Optional: Depending on class interest, you could now set an assignment for them to apply some of what they have learned by taking a photograph (see page Y in the workbook for tips). These can be brought back to the group for discussion or entry to the competition.



Navigating the News

Pages:

32

33

34

Material to be used

Read pages 32 to 34 of the workbook.

Discuss the concept of News Literacy and 'Fake News' with the class:

Discussion points:

- Play this [video by the News Literacy Project](#) for your class and discuss
- Have you had occasions where you have seen or read information that may have been questionable? What questions did you ask after you read/saw/watched it?
- Going through the 'Be Media Smart' guidelines, identify what questions to ask and what checks to make to decide whether a news report is fake or real