

# GOOD NEWS

## Style guide and author's code for edited news articles

Please send manuscripts to: [goodnews@thefreeschool.education](mailto:goodnews@thefreeschool.education)

<http://www.thefreeschool.education/good-news.html>

Please ensure that your manuscript conforms to our formatting style guide and our author's code as outlined on page 2 and 3 of this document.

### Formatting style guide

Please:

- State the author's first and last name. Institutional authors are welcome - example Home Class 1056 at Redwood East High School, Toronto.
- Use 12 point Arial or 12 point Times New Roman font
- Use double or 1.5 line spacing
- Use page breaks at appropriate places
- Use paragraph style writing
- Adhere to a word count limit of 500 to 1,500 words of discussion
- Use American English or British English
- You may insert photographs and images inside your article if they are not copyright or the author owns the copyright and agrees in writing to have these images published by Good News.
- Submit your article via email as a .RTF, .DOC or .DOCX digital document.

## **Author's code**

### **Lawfulness**

Respect local and global copyright laws.

Never violate any local laws such as defamation.

### **Originality**

Only discuss established facts and omit hearsay.

Only claim text that you have written yourself as original work.

Credit all persons who assist the author/s to prepare their articles.

Accurately quote verbal and written statements that are attributed to other parties.

### **Transparency**

Do not pursue a 'hidden agenda'.

Do not secretly promote goods, services or ideological dogma.

Advise the editor if you have received payment in cash, services or a gift to write any part of your news article.

Do not have a conflict-of-interest, or, advise the editor of all conflicts-of-interest in writing when submitting your manuscript.

Do not author work anonymously or use a false name or a pseudonym that is not commonly associated with the author's lawful name and identity.

## **Factual integrity**

Consider all relevant facts.

Write in an objective and fair manner.

Do not 'cherry-pick' facts selectively or secretly withhold relevant information.

Personally confirm all factual details with two independent, authoritative sources.

## **Ethics**

Respect the privacy of others at all times.

Do not write in a manner that is deliberately sensationalist.

Do not obtain information in an intrusive or coercive manner.

Show respect for all persons, groups, animals and the environment.

Only discuss details that relate to another person, group or institution where there is a genuine public interest.

Do not offer payment in cash, favors or other benefits to those who provide details that aid you to research or write your story unless you disclose these details to the editor.

## **Fictitious news article that conforms to our author' s code and style guide**

Author: The Free School Editorial Team

Title: The Good News Global Launch

On 27 January 2017 The Free School launched an innovative publication titled *Good News*. *Good News* is an open-access online newspaper that aims to disseminate

positive, public interest stories. In a global media release, The editor of *Good News*, Jay Jericho, stated that five principles underpin their Author's Code: "lawfulness, originality, transparency, factual integrity and ethics." Curiously, the home page of *Good News* refers to its writers as 'authors' and not as 'journalists'. This is a novel approach for a medium that aims to publish and circulate factual news articles.

In addition to the code, Jericho states that this press distinguishes itself by focussing on positive stories that have a grassroots connection to the authors. In essence, this news outlet publishes stories that come from the 'horse's mouth' - the people on the ground who know the facts, rather than the so-called 'gossip grapevine'. Furthermore, the mandate of this press centers on stories that have a strong public interest element at the local, regional, national or global level. Jericho stated that "nowadays there is so much grim news published. Although bad news and sad news is a reality, a fact of life, our newspaper endeavors to create a transparent public space, without boundaries. Our authors and editors focus our energies on communicating positive developments that offer something constructive to our society. We aim to offer our readers a safe, positive environment that is refreshing rather than depressing!".

The *Good News* publication aims to offer a voice in the public domain to any person or collective so long as they abide by this newspaper's code that centers on common-sense principles of fairness. Its editorial team welcome articles from any person or institution without fear or favour. As stated by Jericho, "all are welcome to try their hand at writing an article: students, teachers, parents, experienced writers and others. Every person on our planet lives an interesting life and everyone has something worthwhile to say!".

After reading its first edition, we conclude that an eclectic mix of topics, writers and writing styles seems to be welcome by the editorial team. Its first edition does not classify its articles by genres such as world affairs, entertainment and weather. This is one feature that clearly distinguishes *Good News* from traditional print media. The first article was authored by a nine year old Anglophone Canadian, 'Ruby' who lives in Northern Manitoba. Ruby discusses the personal benefits of having a pen-friend who lives in Russia and speaks English as a third language. On the other end of the spectrum, another article discusses the interesting history of a nursing home mega complex in Northern Hokkaido, Japan, that recently celebrated its 100th anniversary. 100 certainly seems to be the magic number at this intriguing seniors residence. Precisely 100 of its 725 residents are aged 100 or older. "There must be something special in the fish and sushi that keeps our residents young in the heart and young at heart" the home's Director of Nursing Tatsuro Oyama cheekily suggests.

*Good News* sounds like an interesting social and creative experiment. Time will tell how its readers respond to its 'Pleasantville' outlook on the dissemination of local and global news. Jericho concluded our interview by stating that "Our editors eat a lot of Japanese salmon", seemingly a reference to the story of the nursing home in Hokkaido. "We all want to be here to celebrate the Centenary anniversary of *Good News!*".

## **Notes**

Word count: 569

Thank you to our proofreaders, Liang Zhang and Ahmed Patel.

## **What to include in an article**

Some ideas include:

Who: Which person, people, place, object or institution does your article discuss?

What: Make clear the core message and facts that you wish to communicate.

When: What is the time frame of the event/story that you wish to discuss?

Where: State the location of the people, objects and events that you discuss.

Why: What are the reasons that make your story interesting and worthy of publication?

How: Make clear to your audience the reasons that explain events and facts.

Be clear of your original contribution.



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