

WRITING A NEWSPAPER STORY by Claire Fayers

This guide comes from the Wyse Weekly Mirror, a fake newspaper I create to go with my book *Mirror Magic*. You can download a copy of the Mirror from my website.

I had a lot of fun writing all the articles for the newspaper so I thought I'd share a few tips for writing your own articles. You might want to write about your holidays, your family, or even create some spooky stories for a Halloween newspaper.

Step 1 – Plan your Story

Think -

Who is your story about?

What happened?

Where did it happen?

When did it happen?

Why did it happen? (This one can be quite hard to answer, but it will make your story more interesting.)

Answering all these questions will give you an outline for your story.

For example, here's something that happened on my last holiday.

Who – two small dinosaurs, Sir Boris and Sir Doris.

What – They were accused of stealing a kite and imprisoned without trial. This caused a public outcry. The two dinosaurs made a daring escape in a flying pirate ship kite.

Where – The International Kite Festival in Dieppe, France.

When – September

Why – Because the dinosaurs' human owner was being very mean.

Step 2 – Write Your First Draft

The first draft is a very rough outline of the story. Don't worry about spelling every word right, or even if you're not sure what to write. You'll go back and tidy it up later. The important thing is to write something.

Start by expanding each of your answers in your plan and add in some extra details. A lot of newspaper stories like to say how old people are, for example, and what their jobs are.

Here's my example draft:

Two dinosaurs, Sir Boris, age 7, and Sir Doris, age 3, were wrongly imprisoned in Dieppe, France, after they were accused of stealing a kite from the International Kite Festival in September.

Their human owner, the author Claire Fayers, said she was going to keep the dinosaurs in prison until they'd learned their lesson.

But Claire's friends all said she was being mean and she should free the dinosaurs. They sent many messages of support on Facebook, and some people even sent gifts of chocolate to the dinosaurs.

The situation was resolved when the dinosaurs escaped dramatically one morning, sneaking out of prison and flying away in kite shaped like a pirate ship.

Step 3 - Edit your Story

All writers have to edit their work, sometimes many times over, until they get it right. Is your story the best you can make it?

Tips:

Keep your story short. Can you cut out any words? See how short you can make it (you can always add some words back in).

Think about the words you're using. Can you change any of them for more interesting words?

Finally, add in some pictures if you have them, or draw a picture to go with your story.

(This guide was written by Claire Fayers. You are welcome to use it, but please mention me when you do! www.clairefayers.com)