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Oxford Middle School 2024-2025 Yearbook/Newspaper Application

Directions:

1. Complete the first two pages of this application. Be as accurate as possible.
2. Submit a summative writing piece you completed in 7th grade for your ELA class.
3. Submit a one page news story on a topic that interests you. The News Story Task is described below. Use the final two pages of this application to assist you with your writing.

The **application, summative writing piece and news story** should be submitted to Mrs. Papsdorf in the counseling office by **Friday, March 22, 2024.**

News Story Task:

Choose a subject/event in which you are personally involved and write a news story. This event could be, but not limited to the following: a sporting event, a club or organization at school or in the community, a recent movie release, a vacation, etc.. Review any past newspaper issues or yearbooks for further story ideas. The writing of this article should showcase your ability to write like a journalist. ***Your news story must include: the headline, the actual story with quotes from sources you interviewed and at least one picture YOU TOOK with a caption to accompany the picture.*** You may still include other photos, but there needs to be at least one that has been taken by you. Also, ***be thoughtful about the layout of your news story. Use appropriate text features and placement of text and images to make your news story as strong as possible.*** This should be a blending of your writing and artistic abilities with photography and design in order to give us a complete picture of your talents, as well as insight into your interests. Take your time and present your best work!

Student Name: _____

Student Email Address: _____

Course you are applying for (circle one): Newspaper / Yearbook

**If you don't get into your first choice above, would you be interested in the other course? Yes No*

Complete the Chart below:

English Course	Final Grade	Teacher
6th grade ELA		
7th grade ELA		

Describe yourself:

What Computer Skills will you bring to the staff:

What Personal Skills will you bring to the staff: __

List all of the extracurricular activities you plan to participate in next year (OMS sponsored *and* outside groups): sports, clubs, honor groups, equestrian, swimming, Student Council, etc.:

What was your best memory in the past year? We know the past years have been difficult in so many ways, but what is something that is good that has happened?

Who is a teacher or staff member at OMS that can speak about you as a student?

DISCLAIMER: Please read the following statement and sign.

By signing below, I understand that I will only be admitted to the class based upon the evaluation of my application, writing sample and current ELA teacher's feedback that will be given directly to the advisor of the course upon submission of my application and writing sample. In no way does the submission of these documents guarantee my admittance to the class.

Student Signature: _____

Follow the tips below for writing a great story!

*Also, remember the work you did on your informational articles for ELA this year! Use some of the same formatting techniques for combining your writing, images and captions.

1. THE HEADLINE:

- a. Make sure you give enough information about your article so the reader has an idea about what they are about to read, but be sure to make it interesting and leave the reader wanting more information...so that they actually read your article! :) For example, "Team Tackles National Competition" or "Big Ask for First-Year Coach".

2. THE WRITING:

The Inverted Pyramid Style of Writing:

This refers to the style of journalism which places the most important facts at the beginning and works "down" from there. Ideally, the first paragraph should contain enough information to give the reader a good overview of the entire story. The rest of the article explains and expands on the beginning.

A good approach is to assume that the story might be cut off at any point due to space limitations. Does the story work if the editor only decides to include the first two paragraphs? If not, re-arrange it so that it does.

THE LEAD:

The crux of all news - you need to know five things: Five "W"s and the "H" (**Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?**)

Any good news story provides answers to each of these questions up front, and then provides further detail as the reader continues reading the article. The sentence or sentences used to present the information of the 5 W's and H are known as the lead. For example, if you wish to cover a story about a local sports team entering a competition, you will need to answer these questions:

- **Who** is the team? Who is the coach? Who are the prominent players? Who are the supporters?
- **What** sport do they play? What is the competition?
- **Where** is the competition? Where is the team normally based?
- **When** is the competition? How long have they been preparing?
- **Why** are they entering this particular competition?
- **How** are they going to enter the competition? Do they need to fundraise? How much training and preparation is required? How do they win?

THE BODY:

Keep it Objective: You are to be completely impartial. If there is more than one side to the story, cover them all. Don't use "I" and "me" unless you are quoting someone. Speaking of quoting... be sure to interview from a variety of sources/angles.

3. THE PICTURE(S):

Be thoughtful when taking your picture. This is **NOT** the time to just point and click. Think of how you are framing the picture. What is included in the frame? What are you cutting out of it? Is there a better angle to add more interest? Higher? Lower? Google search samples of the following photography skills to get some ideas of how to take your picture from good to GREAT!

- **Limited Focal Point** (check your background for distractions - move your subject into open space free of clutter behind them)
- **Rule of Thirds** (move your subject or horizon off center)
- **Filled** (fill the entire frame with your object so that it would seem to spill off the picture)
- **Angles** (perspective - high, low, sideways)
- **Contrast** (color/tones/shapes)
- **Repeating** (fill your frame with repetition – uniform objects/shapes lined up in a row)

4. THE CAPTION:

Follow the formula to add interest to your caption.

FORMULA:

Sentence #1: **FACTS** - who, what, when, where, why, how

*Use a different grammatical starter for this sentence - adjective, preposition, infinitive or participle

DO NOT USE: "This is a picture of..."

Sentence #2: **FIGURES** - add interesting numbers

complementing the content of the image

*reference a source if the figure is one you looked up online

Sentence #3: **FEELING** - a quote adding emotion

SAMPLE:



TAKE THAT. At the Blue Valley East Invitational on Sept. 5, senior Chandler Durk screams after spiking the ball and earning the final point of the game. The girls won their first match of the season against Blue Valley East, the reigning state champ. "It was just one of those moments when time kind of slowed down. It all just happened in slow motion and then 'Wham' the ball was on the floor. Game over; we beat East," Durk said.