News-Style Worksheet

Fill in the blanks with the appropriate terms from the list below:

• **nut graph** (3 appearances in the text)

• **main idea** (6 appearances in the text)

• **headline** (2 appearances in the text)

• **topic sentence** (3 appearances in the text)

• **news story** (2 appearances in the text)

• **lead** (4 appearances in the text)

• **supporting details** (1 appearance in the text)

When a journalist writes a **\_\_\_news story\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**, he or she will generally use a very standard way of organizing facts and ideas in the text. Here are six pieces of related terminology:

**I The \_\_\_Headline\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**: This is found at the top of the article in large-size font. Its purpose is to give the reader a clear idea of what the story is about. The **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_headline \_\_\_\_\_** is usually written in the present tense. Articles (*a, an,* and *the*), the verb *to be*, and other common function words are generally omitted in order to save space.

**II The \_\_\_\_\_\_lead\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**: Generally, the first two or three sentences of an article will contain the essential facts and the **\_\_\_\_\_Main idea\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** of the story. These sentences are called the **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_lead\_\_\_**. In fact, this word is often used to refer to the entire opening paragraph of the story. A good **\_lead\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** will try to answer the questions *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *why*, and *how* as fast as possible. Its purpose is to get the reader’s attention and supply important information as quickly as possible.

**III The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_nut graph\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**: In English, if you present your ideas “in a nutshell,” it means you communicate them as concisely as possible. **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Nut graph\_\_\_\_\_\_** is a shortened form of this well-known idiom and the word *paragraph*. In a news piece, the **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_nut graph \_\_\_\_\_\_\_** is generally the second paragraph. The purpose of this paragraph is to expand on the **\_\_\_\_\_lead \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** and give additional important details, all “*in a nutshell*!”

**IV The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Main Idea\_:** Imagine if you could summarize a news story with a single thought – the writer’s basic or central point. This is what writers refer to as the **\_\_\_Main idea\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**. In fact, each paragraph of the story can have a **\_\_\_\_main idea \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** of its own.

**V \_\_\_\_Topic sentence\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**: If you look at any paragraph in a **\_\_news story\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**, there is a very strong possibility that it will contain one of these – a statement of the paragraph’s **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_main idea\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**. A **\_\_\_\_\_topic sentence\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** will usually (but not always) be the first sentence in the paragraph. A good reading strategy is to identify the **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_topic sentence\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** in each paragraph. By doing that, you will also identify the paragraph’s **\_\_main idea\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**.

**VI \_\_\_\_\_Supporting details \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**: This refers to any additional information in the news article such as examples, statistics, and statements.