

# Comprehension: The Newspaper

One class meeting (2 hours)

## Lesson at a Glance

### SUMMARY

Newspaper articles can be difficult to comprehend. Some of the struggles faced by adult learners attempting to read a newspaper include: not understanding headlines, feeling intimidated by dense text, feeling pressured to read the entire article, and trying to find meaning in unfamiliar words. In this lesson, students are introduced to various strategies for reading a newspaper: reading the headlines to see what is of interest, scanning the first paragraph for the 5Ws (who, what, where, when and why), reading the first and last sentences of the paragraphs in an article, and connecting the article to real life. The students use these strategies with excerpts from newspaper articles and then write their own newspaper articles.

### GOAL

To become more proficient in getting information from newspaper articles

### LEARNER OUTCOMES

- Students will be able to list and explain the function of the following parts of a newspaper article: headline, caption, photo, and principle sections.
- Students will be able to list and perform the following five strategies for reading a newspaper article: read the headline, read the first and last sentences of each paragraph, look at the photos and captions, identify the 5 Ws, and relate the story to their own lives.

### MATERIALS

#### VIDEO:

**Question Man: The Newspaper: Episode 18:**  
Length 3:49, start time 1:33

**Street Beat: Newspaper Tips: Episode 16:**  
Length 1:22, start time 11:27

#### PRINT:

**Learn About: The Parts of a Newspaper Article:**  
Issue 4, pages 8 and 9

**How To: Understand a Newspaper Article: Issue 16,** pages 8 and 9

### ACTIVITIES

- View two TV411 video segments
- Complete two TV411 workbook sections
- Review 15 vocabulary words
- Freewrite about feelings towards and interactions with newspapers
- Discuss newspaper reading habits
- Discuss and list strategies for reading and understanding a newspaper article
- Discuss finding the who, what, where, when, and why (5Ws) of a newspaper article
- Write a short newspaper article
- Read classmates' newspaper articles and find the 5Ws
- Find articles in a local newspaper and highlight the 5Ws

“Doesn’t it take a college degree to read a newspaper like that?”

## Comprehension: The Newspaper

## Step by Step

## 1. INTRODUCING THE CONTENT

## Pre-Viewing Activities

## Focused Freewrite

Students freewrite for 5 minutes about their experience with newspapers.

## Possible prompts:

- I never read newspapers because ...
- I like to read newspapers because ...
- My favorite part of the newspaper is \_\_\_\_\_ because ...
- The reason I would read a newspaper is ...
- The thing that makes a newspaper article interesting for me is ...

## Discuss

- Do you read the newspaper? If so, how often?
- Does anyone have a preferred newspaper? If so, why do you like that one better than the others?
- Does anyone stay away from newspapers because you don't like the format?
- Is there anything else you like or don't like about newspapers?

## VOCABULARY REVIEW

(listed as they appear in the video)

headlines

sites

logged on

credit

online

coalition

consumer

eager

internet

research

firm

## 2. MODELING THE STRATEGY

## View Video

Question Man:  
The Newspaper:  
Episode 18: Length 3:49,  
start time 1:33



While at a diner, Question Man and another customer use various strategies to decipher a difficult newspaper article. The strategies include: reading the headline, reading the first and last sentence of each paragraph, and connecting the information in the article to their lives.

## Comprehension: The Newspaper

## Step by Step (cont.)

## 3. MINING THE STRATEGY

## Post-Viewing Activity

## Discuss

- What did Question Man mean when he asked if you had to have a college degree to read that thing?
- What were some of the strategies that the man in the diner told or showed Question Man? List responses on the board.

## Possible responses:

- Read the headlines first.
- Read the first and last sentence of each paragraph.
- If you want more information, read the rest of the paragraphs.
- Try to connect the information in the article to your life.
- How does/could this affect me?

## 4. EXTENDING AND PRACTICING THE STRATEGY

## Workbook Activities

Working in small groups, students read and complete page 3 of Issue 18, *Learn About: The Parts of a Newspaper Article*.

Using a short newspaper article on this page, students read about the sections in a newspaper article. They also learn how to use the photos and captions to help understand the article.



Comprehension: The Newspaper

Step by Step (cont.)

5. INTRODUCING THE CONTENT

Pre-Viewing Activities

Discuss

- When someone is telling you a story, what are the basic details that you often want to know?

Ideal responses:

- Who the story is about?
- What happened in the story?
- Where did it happen?
- When did it happen?
- Why did it happen or what made it happen?

You are trying to elicit the 5Ws from the students. If students don't mention all of them, add them at the end of the discussion. Talk about the function of each one in a story.

VOCABULARY REVIEW

(listed as they appear in the video)

- headlines
- first paragraph
- comradery
- dispute

6. MODELING THE STRATEGY

View Video

Street Beat:  
Newspaper Tips:  
Episode 16: Length 1:22,  
start time 11:27

NYPD Blues Denis Franz explains how to efficiently get information from a newspaper article by reading the headline and looking for the 5Ws when reading the first paragraph.



“You don’t always have to read the entire article.”

## Comprehension: The Newspaper

## Step by Step (cont.)

**7. MINING THE STRATEGY****Post-Viewing Activity****Discuss**

In pairs, students discuss the following:

What are some of the strategies Denis Franz suggests for reading a newspaper?

**Possible responses:**

- You don't have to read the whole paper
- Read the parts that interest you
- You don't have to read the whole article
- Just read the headline and the first paragraph to get the gist of what is in the article
- The first paragraph will usually tell you the 5Ws (who, what, where, when, and why).

**8. EXTENDING AND PRACTICING THE STRATEGY****Workbook Activity**

Working in small groups, students read and complete pages 8 and 9 of Issue 16 *How To: Understand a Newspaper Article*.

Students read an excerpt from a newspaper article about gun control and pull out the who, what, where, when, and why of the article. Students are guided in the deciphering of unknown words in the article by the use of context clues. They then try to match the words to their definitions. The words are: resistance, passage, legacy, infringes, priority, outbreaks, vital, and banning.

**Draft**

Students write the first paragraph of a newspaper article based on something that has happened in their lives or based on a story they have heard. Students use the structure of the 5Ws to make sure they have included all of the relevant information.

## Comprehension: The Newspaper

## Step by Step (cont.)

**Revise**

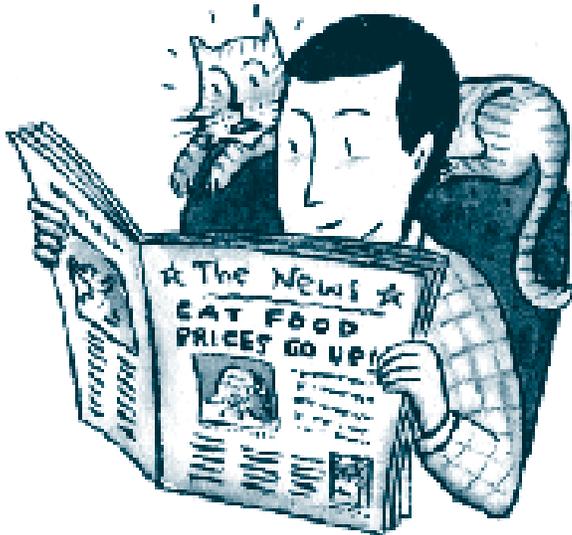
- Working in pairs, students exchange their articles.
- Read your partner's article.
- Underline the 5Ws in the article.
- Report back to your partner. Discuss your findings.

**PORTFOLIO**

Students save completed workbook pages, freewriting, and newspaper articles in their portfolio.

**HOMEWORK**

Students revise their first paragraph of a newspaper article based on peer feedback and/or students choose a newspaper article that interests them, underline the 5Ws in the article, and bring the article to the next class.

**RELATED VIDEO AND PRINT****More on Newspapers****VIDEO:**

**Question Man: Headlines:**  
Episode 4: Length 2:46, start time: 1:29



**Street Beat: The Op-Ed Page of the Newspaper:** Episode 5: Length 00:49, start time 11:44

**PRINT:**

**Learn About: Paging Through the Newspaper:** Issue 4, pages 8 and 9

**How To: Be a Critical Reader:** Issue 6, pages 4 and 5

**Super Models: Advertisements:** Issue 10, pages 2 and 3

**Brush Up: Summarizing:** Issue 13, page 10