Student Learning Objectives. Instruction in this lesson should result in students achieving the following objectives:

1. Demonstrate appropriate writing skills in preparing a print-media news release.
2. Describe proper photography methods and techniques.
3. Explain the essential components of a quality print-media advertisement.
4. Design a print-media advertisement utilizing the appropriate layout.

Resources. The following resources may be useful in teaching this lesson:

- E-unit(s) corresponding to this lesson plan. CAERT, Inc. [http://www.mycaert.com](http://www.mycaert.com).
Equipment, Tools, Supplies, and Facilities

✓ Overhead or PowerPoint projector
✓ Visual(s) from accompanying master(s)
✓ Copies of sample test, lab sheet(s), and/or other items designed for duplication
✓ Materials listed on duplicated items
✓ Computers with printers and Internet access
✓ Classroom resource and reference materials

Key Terms. The following terms are presented in this lesson (shown in bold italics):

- advance story
- attribution
- body copy
- caption
- contrast
- cover story
- cropping
- editorializing
- follow-up story
- headline
- inverted pyramid
- jargon
- objective
- print-media advertisement
- print-media news release
- screening
- tag line
- white space
Interest Approach. Use an interest approach that will prepare the students for the lesson. Teachers often develop approaches for their unique class and student situations. A possible approach is included here.

Assemble the students into small groups. Pass out sample news releases and advertisements from the local newspaper. Give each group at least two news releases and two advertisements to view. Have the groups examine the samples and answer the following questions:

1. Is each news release newsworthy, important, and timely?
2. Does each news release answer the Five Ws (who, what, when, where, and why) and, if applicable, One H (how)?
3. Does each news release contain a picture and caption?
4. What are the similarities between the advertisement samples?
5. What are the differences between the advertisement samples?
6. Which advertisement do you believe is the more effective, and why?
7. Which advertisement do you believe is the less effective, and why?

Lead a discussion on the importance of print-media news releases and advertisements. Briefly discuss what makes an effective news release, the importance of photography in written communication, and the components of quality advertisements.

CONTENT SUMMARY AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1: Demonstrate appropriate writing skills in preparing a print-media news release.

Anticipated Problem: What are the types of news stories and what techniques can be used to write an effective print-media news release?

I. A print-media news release is an article written for distribution to newspapers, magazines, and other print media. For information to be newsworthy, it must be important, local, and/or timely.
   A. Three types of news stories are advance, cover, and follow-up.
      1. An advance story is an article written and submitted before an event. The purpose of an advance story is to encourage attendance or to promote community awareness.
2. A **cover story** is an article written immediately following an event. It is intended to report on what happened at the event.

3. A **follow-up story** is written well after an event has concluded. It focuses on the consequences of the event.

B. The writer of a news release must capture the attention of the reader and practice good writing skills.
   
   1. This is accomplished by using the inverted pyramid. The **inverted pyramid** is a style of writing that opens with the most important information, followed by the next most important information, and so on. With the inverted pyramid, the least important information appears at the end of a news release.
   
   2. A good practice is to try to provide the reader with the Five Ws (who, what, when, where, and why) and, if applicable, One H (how) in the first few sentences.

   3. A writer should strive to be objective. To be **objective** is to report the news without bias or prejudice. A writer must work hard to be objective when reporting on controversial topics.

   4. Reporters must provide attribution in their stories. **Attribution** is the act of telling the reader where the information in a story came from. If details are not attributed to someone, people may wonder if the reporter is editorializing. **Editorializing** is a reporter’s presenting his or her own opinions as facts.

   5. A writer should always consider spelling, grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure when writing a news release.

C. Helping people get their messages out is not the priority of reporters and editors. Instead, they are looking for stories that will be interesting to their readers. They want information that will help them provide good stories.

**Teaching Strategy:** Discuss the learning objective and introduce key terms. Use VM–A to illustrate how news releases are created using the inverted pyramid. Use VM–B to help illustrate the use of the Five Ws and One H in writing. Have students complete LS–A to further their understanding of the inverted pyramid. Use LS–B to practice using the Five Ws and One H.

**Objective 2:** Describe proper photography methods and techniques.

**Anticipated Problem:** What are the proper methods and techniques used in photography?

II. “A picture is worth a thousand words” is a common expression. Photographs help a reader to understand a news story, often better than words.

   A. Pictures are good at telling a story and show the whole range of human emotions.
      
      1. Pictures show emotions, such as happiness, skepticism, pain, grief, surprise, and anger.
      
      2. Pictures add credibility to a news story, because “seeing is believing.”
3. Pictures show visual characteristics that words cannot always adequately describe—for example, scale, color, texture, and design.

B. Editors use specific criteria to determine if a photograph is newsworthy.
   1. Editors evaluate the timeliness, importance, and proximity when deciding on the need for a photograph.
   2. Pictures must be of good technical quality, which includes sharp focus and adequate contrast. **Contrast** is the visual difference between the darker areas of a photograph and its lighter areas.
   3. If contrast is lacking, a photo will not show much detail when it is screened for publication. **Screening** is the process that converts a photograph to an image with thousands of tiny colored dots. Once a black-and-white photo is screened, its darker areas will appear with dense concentrations of black dots; image details that are lighter shades of gray will be made up of fewer dots. If a published photo appears too light or looks washed out, the original probably didn’t have much contrast and therefore was not an ideal photo for a news release.
   4. Pictures of just a few people rather than a large group tend to be more engaging. Newspaper editors run more closeup pictures than pictures taken from a distance. Action shots are especially common and desired by readers.
   5. An action shot is not always possible for a photographer. When this is the case, the storytelling qualities of a picture may be improved if the image is cropped for publication. **Cropping** is cutting off the parts of an image that are distracting or not essential and enlarging the remaining portion to show detail.
   6. Photojournalists should carefully identify the people, places, and things they photograph.
   7. A caption should accompany every image. A **caption** is a short explanation or description of an illustration or a photograph. It should be two sentences in length. The first sentence should describe who and what the image shows. It is usually written in the past tense. The second sentence should give a few more details or tell the reader why the image is newsworthy.

C. Several basic steps can lead to a quality photograph. The photographer should:
   1. Know the camera. The manufacturer’s manual will explain what the camera is capable of.
   2. Be aware of composition. The shot should be framed with the viewfinder to capture the principal image and exclude features that are not important.
   3. Pay attention to light. The most important aspect of photography is light. Indoor photography usually permits light to be controlled. Outside photography, however, demands consideration of the sun, clouds, and time of day.
   4. Consider colors. Too many bright colors should be avoided in favor of a balance of various tones.
   5. Follow basic principles related to backgrounds. The background should be free of clutter, allowing the subject to be easily seen.
   6. Take multiple shots to catch the moment. The photo with the best lighting, color, and focus can be selected from the various takes.
   7. Be familiar with photo editing software. Photos can be enhanced electronically.
Objective 3: Explain the essential components of a quality print-media advertisement.

Anticipated Problem: What components make up a quality print-media advertisement?

III. Advertisements are found in many places and in many forms. A print-media advertisement is an advertisement in a magazine, in a newspaper, in a mailing, or on a billboard intended to reach consumers, business customers, and prospects. Several components are essential in producing a quality print-media advertisement.

A. A print-media advertisement must have a hook, such as an intriguing headline, to grab the reader’s attention. Colorful graphics and text with bold, italics, or a unique font can also accomplish this.

B. Finding the right balance between too little and too much information is important. The least number of words possible to convey the meaning is usually best. Readers often have limited attention spans, so too many words may result in losing their attention. However, important information must not be omitted. Readers should feel as if they have read something meaningful but not overwhelming.

C. Language that is too technical or that contains jargon should be avoided. Jargon is the specialized language of a trade. The message should be easy for the reader to understand.

D. An advertisement should explain how the product will benefit the reader. Less time should be spent on the company selling the product, and more time spent on the product being advertised and sold. Connecting with the customer’s wants and needs is very important.

E. A bold theme should be used repeatedly throughout the writing. When the reader is done, a central theme should stick in the reader’s mind. An example of a bold theme is what makes the product different from competing products. This could include a product feature, the cost, or a limited-time promotion.

F. A clear and simple action step for making a purchase should be included. If the reader wants to act, the advertisement must explain clearly what to do to buy the product.

Teaching Strategy: Discuss the components that make up a quality print-media advertisement. Show students several examples of advertisements from magazines, newspapers, or mailings. Have students critique the advertisements and discuss the positives and negatives of each.
Objective 4: Design a print-media advertisement utilizing the appropriate layout.

Anticipated Problem: What are the steps in designing a print-media advertisement?

IV. Knowing the basic format for a print-media advertisement is extremely important.
   A. The purpose of a good print-media advertisement is to establish the appeal and give the reader a reason to buy the product or request more information.
   B. The creator of a print-media advertisement should:
      1. Create a headline. A _headline_ is a phrase that grabs the reader’s attention, is based on the product’s key selling points, and is brief and memorable.
         a. The headline should be direct, with an offer or guarantee. The headline does not need to be complicated. If there is a special offer that will attract the customer, it should be mentioned in the headline.
         b. The headline should make a statement. It should be creative, catchy, and just a couple of words or short sentences.
         c. The headline should sound newsworthy. If the ad is introducing a new product to the market or an improvement of an existing product, that news should be included in the headline. Popular words found in this kind of headline include “introducing,” “finally,” and “announcing.”
         d. Using a question and answer as a headline is often effective. Example—Question: “Need curb appeal?” Answer: “Green Thumb Landscape Company.”
      2. Write informative body copy for the print-media advertisement. The _body copy_ is the part of an advertisement that expands benefits offered in the headline. Besides elaborating on benefits, the body copy should explain how the product or service is unique in relation to others. The following should be considered when writing the body copy.
         a. The offer should be mentioned in the first paragraph.
         b. As much information should be used as will fit in the ad space.
         c. The judicious use of white space is important in good ad design. _White space_ is empty space that creates focus on the important elements of an advertisement.
         d. Testimonials should be included when possible.
         e. An attempt should be made to create a sense of urgency for the reader to respond quickly.
         f. Simple words and simple writing style should be used.
         g. The advertisement should make it easy for the reader to obtain the product or service.
      3. Include a tag line. A _tag line_ is a phrase that summarizes the product or the philosophy of the company. The tag line should encourage the reader to want to learn more about the product or company.
      4. Add company details. Details are necessary so the reader can contact the company to gain more product or service information. Details include name,
Create a design and layout that grab the reader’s attention. The size of the font should be large enough to intrigue the reader. Borders and pictures can also be helpful. Borders can complement the look of the advertisement. Pictures that work well are those that show the product, the product in use, or people using the product. The company logo should be included for ready recognition.

**Teaching Strategy:** After discussing appropriate advertisement layout, assign LS–C to help students master the development of a print-media advertisement.

**Review/Summary.** Use the student learning objectives to summarize the lesson. Have students explain the content associated with each objective. Student responses can be used in determining which objectives need to be reviewed or taught from a different angle. If a textbook is being used, questions at the ends of chapters may also be included in the Review/Summary.

**Application.** Use the included visual masters and lab sheets to apply the information presented in the lesson.

**Evaluation.** Evaluation should focus on student achievement of the objectives for the lesson. Various techniques can be used, such as student performance on the application activities. A sample written test is provided.

**Answers to Sample Test:**

**Part One: Matching**

1. c  
2. a  
3. f  
4. i  
5. e  
6. b  
7. j  
8. d  
9. h  
10. g

**Part Two: Multiple Choice**

1. c  
2. a  
3. b
Part Three: Short Answer

1. Know your camera, be aware of composition, pay attention to light, consider colors, follow basic principles related to backgrounds, take multiple shots, and be familiar with photo editing software.
2. Be direct with an offer or guarantee, make a statement, sound newsworthy.
3. **Who, what, when, where, why, and how.**
Part One: Matching

Instructions: Match the term with the correct definition.

a. body copy  f. objective
b. caption  g. white space
c. contrast  h. print-media advertisement
d. headline  i. inverted pyramid
e. print-media news release  j. attribution

1. The visual difference between the darker areas of the photograph and its lighter areas
2. The part of an advertisement that expands benefits offered in the headline
3. To report the news without bias or prejudice
4. A style of writing that opens with the most important information, followed by the next most important information, and so on.
5. An article written for distribution to newspapers, magazines, and other print media.
6. A short explanation or description of an illustration or a photograph
7. The act of telling the reader where the information in a story came from
8. A phrase that grabs the reader’s attention, is based on the product’s key selling points, and is brief and memorable
9. An advertisement in a magazine, in a newspaper, in a mailing, or on a billboard intended to reach consumers, business customers, and prospects
10. Empty space that creates focus on the important elements of an advertisement
Part Two: Multiple Choice

Instructions: Circle the letter of the correct answer.

1. _____ is an article written and submitted before an event.
   a. A body story
   b. A cover story
   c. An advance story
   d. A follow-up story

2. _____ is a phrase that summarizes the product or the philosophy of the company. It should encourage the reader to want to learn more about the product or company.
   a. A tag line
   b. An objective
   c. A caption
   d. A headline

3. _____ is the specialized language of a trade.
   a. A print-media advertisement
   b. Jargon
   c. Editorializing
   d. Screening

4. _____ is cutting off the parts of an image that are distracting or not essential and enlarging the remaining portion to show detail.
   a. Cropping
   b. Screening
   c. Editorializing
   d. Detailing

5. Which is not true about a caption?
   a. A caption should accompany every image.
   b. A caption should be at least four sentences in length.
   c. A caption should describe who or what an image shows.
   d. A caption should give details to the reader.

6. A reporter is editorializing when he or she _____.
   a. paraphrases the facts
   b. summarizes the story
   c. presents his or her own opinions as facts
   d. gives details of a story
Part Three: Short Answer

Instructions: Answer the following.

1. What are the basic steps to follow when taking a quality photograph?

2. List three characteristics of a good headline.

3. What are the Five Ws and, if applicable, One H to keep in mind when writing a news release?
THE FIVE WS AND ONE H

♦ Who was there?
♦ What happened?
♦ When did it happen?
♦ Where did it happen?
♦ Why did it happen?
♦ How did it happen?
Using the Inverted Pyramid

Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to practice using the inverted pyramid.

Objective

Demonstrate the ability to write using the inverted pyramid.

Materials

♦ lab sheet
♦ writing utensil
♦ at least three news stories
♦ paper
♦ photo

Procedure

1. Read at least three news stories from a daily newspaper.
2. Determine if the stories are written in the inverted-pyramid style.
3. Try cutting out the last few paragraphs of the stories, and determine if the reader’s understanding would be affected.
4. Practice writing a news story about an event at school using the inverted pyramid.
5. Include a picture taken to enhance the story.
The Five Ws and One H

Purpose
The purpose of this activity is to practice using the Five Ws and One H.

Objective
Demonstrate the ability to pick out the Five Ws and, if applicable, One H in news releases.

Materials
- lab sheet
- writing utensil
- three news stories (printed or recorded)

Procedure
1. Clip three news stories from a newspaper, or record three broadcast news stories about current events.
2. Read, listen to, or watch the stories carefully.
3. Fill out the chart below using the Five Ws and One H.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Story #1</th>
<th>Story #2</th>
<th>Story #3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What happened?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Story #1</td>
<td>Story #2</td>
<td>Story #3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where did it take place?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When did it occur?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who was involved?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why did it happen?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did it happen?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Design a Quality Print-Media Advertisement

Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to design a print-media advertisement using the appropriate components and layout.

Objective

Design a quality print-media advertisement that includes the essential components and uses an appropriate layout.

Materials

- lab sheet
- color writing utensils
- paper

Procedure

Create a full-page color advertisement for a magazine, newspaper, mailing, or billboard. Use an agriculture-related product or service to advertise. Include the components of a quality print-media advertisement, and use the appropriate layout discussed in class. Be sure to include a headline that stands out, body copy that expands the benefits of the product or service, a tag line to encourage the reader to want to learn more about the product or service, and details of the company so the reader can make contact to purchase the product or service.

The position of each element contained in an advertisement layout varies; however, the illustrations below show typical layouts that may be used.

Sample Layouts

Open spaces represent where the heading and tag line go. Text lines represent the body copy information. Text boxes represent where a picture will go.