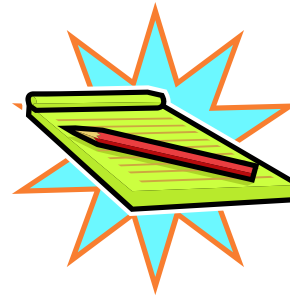


# Oil Spill Reporting

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<b>Organization:</b>	<b>LSU AgCenter – Youth Wetlands Program</b>
<b>Subject area</b>	<b>Language Arts</b>
<b>Grade</b>	<b>6-12</b>
<b>Lesson Length</b>	<b>2 class periods</b>



**Focus/Overview of the lesson:** Students will learn about different types of newspaper articles and will research a topic and create their own newspaper article about the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

**Student Learning Objective(s):**

**The students will...**

- ... be able to identify types of newspaper and magazine articles
- ...write a newspaper or magazine article.
- ...conduct research about the events and impacts of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill.

**Louisiana SCIENCE Grade Level Expectations**

GRADE LEVEL	TARGET GLEs
Grades 6-8 SI GLEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use a variety of sources to answer questions (SI-M-A1)</li> <li>3. Identify patterns in data to explain natural events (SI-M-A4)</li> <li>7. Recognize that there may be more than one way to interpret a given set of data, which can result in alternative scientific explanations and predictions (SI-M-A6)</li> <li>2. Use evidence and observations to explain and communicate the results of investigations (SI-M-A7)</li> <li>4. Recognize the importance of communication among scientists about investigations in progress and the work of others (SI-M-B5)</li> <li>9. Identify areas in which technology has changed human lives (e.g., transportation, communication, geographic information systems, DNA fingerprinting) (SI-M-B7)</li> </ul>
Grades 9-12 SI GLEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Describe how investigations can be observation, description, literature survey, classification, or experimentation (SI-H-A2)</li> <li>8. Give an example of how new scientific data can cause an existing scientific explanation to be supported, revised, or rejected (SI-H-A5)</li> <li>14. Cite examples of scientific advances and emerging technologies and how they affect society (e.g., MRI, DNA in forensics) (SI-H-B3)</li> </ul>

**Materials needed (list quantities per student or group)**

- Pencils – 1 per student
- Paper
- Copy of a recent newspapers (optional) or access to Internet newspaper sites.
- “Planning a Newspaper Article” worksheet (**Blackline Master #1**)

### Advance Preparation

1. Make a copy of the "Planning a Newspaper Article" activity sheet (**Blackline Master #1**) for every student in your class.
2. Make two copies of the "Final Article" activity sheet (**Blackline Master #2**). One will be distributed on the first day so the students can write a rough draft, and the second one will be distributed on the second day to make a final draft.

### Background Information

On April, 20, 2010, there was an explosion on the Deepwater Horizon oil rig in which oil began gushing into the Gulf of Mexico. This lesson will provide students with an opportunity to research a part of the oil spill or its impact that interests them, and then write their own news article about the events..

#### *Types of Newspaper Articles*

There are several types of news articles that are commonly found in newspapers and magazines. The students will decide what type of article they would like to write (or the teacher will assign a specific type of article for the class). Examples of types of news articles include:

#### **Types of Newspaper Articles**

From [http://www.dispatchnie.com/live/content/types\\_of\\_articles/typesofarticles.html](http://www.dispatchnie.com/live/content/types_of_articles/typesofarticles.html)

A **local news article** focuses on what's going on in the surrounding community. This can include a story on a city council meeting or an interview with an individual who has had direct experience with the article that is being written.

A **national news article** focuses on what's happening in the United States. An example of a national news article would be an article on the U.S. Senate passing a new bill.

An **international news article** focuses on news that's happening outside the United States. A story on an influenza outbreak in Chile would be considered an international news story.

A **feature article** is an article that is about "softer" news. A feature may be a profile of a person who does a lot of volunteer work in the community or a movie preview. Feature articles are not considered news stories.

An **editorial article** contains the writer's opinion. Editorials are usually run all together on a specific page of the paper and focus on current events. Editorials are not considered news stories.

A **column** is an article written by the same person on a regular basis. A columnist (the writer of the column) writes about subjects of interest to him/her, current events or community happenings. Columns are not considered news stories.

### **Procedure**

#### ***Engage (Introduction)***

1. Ask students what they know about the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.
2. Ask them to think about the events since it has happened and ask them what questions they would like to have answered about the spill.
3. Ask if any of the students have had a friend and family member directly impacted by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Have them share their thoughts and talk about what questions they have concerning the issue.
4. Pass around a current newspaper for students to review. Have them list the different types of newspaper articles they can find in the paper.

(Add and optional engagement: Show a brief newscast or interview recorded during this environmental disaster as engagement to begin student discussion.)

**Explore/Explain (Activity)**

1. Explain to the students that they will be creating a classroom newspaper. This newspaper will be a special edition that will focus only on the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.
2. Students should choose an issue related to the oil spill that they have questions about and/or find interesting.
3. Hand out the “Planning a Newspaper Article” activity sheet (**Blackline Master #1**) to the students and help them fill it out and plan their article.
4. Give the students time to do research on their topic. This may take one or two class periods, a trip to the library, and/or overnight work (if they plan to interview anyone involved with the oil spill).
5. Tell students to use what they wrote on the “Planning a Newspaper Article” to write a newspaper article for the class newspaper. Advise the students that they must use evidence and facts, not just opinions, in their article.
6. When the students have completed a first draft, allow students to rewrite their article and include illustrations and graphics.

**Expand (Apply or Practice)**

1. If there are any creative students in the class, encourage them to develop comic strips, posters or songs about the oil spill.
2. Combine all the articles into one booklet and make copies for all students.

**Evaluate**

1. Once completed, have the students read their article to the class.
2. Have the class vote for the headline and front page articles.
3. Revisit and review the questions that the students had when this project began and determine if any of their articles answered their questions.
4. Use a teacher developed rubric to evaluate the quality of students’ articles.

**Lesson Source:** This lesson is modified from “Article Wetland “ a Youth Wetlands Program lesson in the Louisiana Youth Wetlands Week Curriculum (2007): [www.lsuagcenter.com/yww](http://www.lsuagcenter.com/yww)

This lesson was developed by LSU Agriculture Center’s Youth Wetlands Program in response to the BP Horizon blowout oil spill, in partnership with Louisiana teachers, Louisiana Sea Grant College Program, Audubon Aquarium of the Americas, Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries, LSU Department of Education Theory, Policy and Practice, UNO Pontchartrain Institute for Environmental Studies, SELU Department of Teaching and Learning, Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program, Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium, Louisiana Department of Natural Resources and Louisiana Department of Human Health.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Planning a Newspaper Article

Follow this step-by-step guide to plan your article about the Deepwater Horizon oil spill:

1. What type of article will you be writing (circle one)?

**Local News Article**

**National News Article**

**International News Article**

**Feature Article**

**Editorial Article**

**Column**

2. What will your article be about? What is the main message/thesis?

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3. What is your opening sentence? (Grab the reader's attention by using an opening sentence that is a question or something unexpected!)

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4. How will your wetland article answer these questions?

- Who? \_\_\_\_\_
- What? \_\_\_\_\_
- Where? \_\_\_\_\_
- When? \_\_\_\_\_
- Why? \_\_\_\_\_

5. What will your supporting paragraphs be about? Give the details. Write in the third person (he, she, it or they). Be objective. Use active verbs so the reader feels things are really happening!

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6. Last paragraph: Round off your article. Try ending with a quote or a catchy phrase!

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7. What is the title/headline of your article?

(A headline is like a short poem. It communicates a lot of information in a small space).

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8. Byline: Underneath the article title, state who wrote the article; "By ...."

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## Coastal Zone Gazette

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

*Use the space below to write the full article.*