



REPORTER for a WEEK

CALENDAR FOR 13 DAY-UNIT

Friday

- Review elements of reporting, focusing on direct observation and interviewing.
- Brainstorm possible coverage areas and events.
- Your reporting week begins as soon as class ends today.

Monday

- First news story due in class (all stories may be hand-written or typed, but must be at least 250 words).
- First story comes from reporting Friday class to Monday class.

Tuesday

- Second news story due in class. Coverage period from Monday class until class today.

Wednesday

- Third news story due in class. Coverage period from Tuesday class until class today.

Thursday

- Fourth news story due in class. Coverage period from Wednesday class until class today.

Friday

- Fifth and final news story due in class. Coverage period from Thursday class until class today.
- Review portfolio of news stories in groups – choose one to “perfect” (may involve further reporting).

Monday

- Review ledes and news story structure.

Tuesday

- Review punctuation of direct quotations and AP style.

Wednesday

- Final, typed news story due in class, with proper AP and local style applied, etc.

The nuts and bolts of this challenge

This will likely be the most time-consuming 13 days of the term. You will need to cover five different “news stories,” and you will have prescribed beginning and end times for your reporting to occur.

For our purposes, “news” can include pretty much anything that happens during the reporting period that might be of interest to our readers. This can be something that happens during class, between classes, before or after school, off-campus or on-campus. It can include sporting events, scheduled events, meetings, practices, rehearsals, classroom activities... But news can also include traditionally unnoticed things that happen every day, but that are worth writing about.

The reason this assignment takes time is that you may have to spend some hours outside school to get your reporting done (though it is possible to report only on things that happen during the school day – you just need to be clever and organized).

Half your grade for this unit will be based on the ONE story you ultimately choose to “perfect,” and perhaps add to with additional interviewing and research. The other half of the grade is earned simply by meeting each of the five daily deadlines and meeting the word counts and a basic standard of news values.

You are not required to include visuals, video, or alternatives to traditional text to do well in this unit, but extra credit is available to those who find ways to work some of those “extras” into one or more of their reports.

Keys to success

Carry your reporters notebook with you wherever you go.

Never be satisfied to rely on your own eyewitness reporting.

Never be satisfied with one source, or even two.

Be on the lookout for themes in your reporting. Look for qualities of whatever you are covering that are likely to interest a high school reader.

Move around. Don't get stuck in one location. Remember to report, not just be a spectator.

Gather enough information that you can recreate “scenes.” You are the reader's representative, and you need to gather enough information and insight so that you can make events come alive for people who did not have a chance to be there.

Be bold, but also be polite.