

# Student-generated class news

*Janet Isserlis*

## Rationale

The process of generating and reading class news enables students to share information about matters of importance to them, and hence builds community. It also produces a piece of reading matter where the context is one which all the students understand and share. As students gain familiarity with the process of generating the news, they have the option of taking on 'leadership' writing roles by acting as scribe for other students. This process encourages students to consult each other in ascertaining correct spelling, seeking clarification, etc. Additionally, the use of students' names (and experiences) increases their awareness of each other as well as validating their experiences and increasing reading and writing abilities overall.

## Materials

Large newsprint, markers.

## Procedure: Generating the News

The teacher, initially, asks students what 'news' items they have to contribute. This process follows the Language Experience Approach, in that the teacher transcribes the events described by students using the students' own words. Reading, rereading and interactive activities can follow (e.g., circle the 'b' words, underline \_\_\_\_\_, etc.)

After all the news has been assembled, the teacher types the news into a format, (see sample). The more regular the format, the greater the chances that students will engage in predictive reading patterns; that is, they learn to scan for the weather report, find the calendar in the upper right hand corner, etc. The use of regular

Week of June 12-15, 1989  
Calendar

## Room 6 News

### Traphya's News

Yesterday (Tuesday), Traphya had an accident at work. The stapler machine hit her finger and her boss at work brought her to the hospital emergency room for x-rays and a shot. After that, she went back to work.

### Norm's News

Norm is happy everybody students in Room 6 have a nice vacation this summer. Thank you very much. Norm wrote his news on the blackboard.

### Dave's News

Yesterday, Dave brought material to Traphya. He brought material to Mrs. Sandy on Monday. She paid him \$10 for 5 yards of material. Thank you very much.

### Omaka's News: Walking to School

On Monday, and yesterday, Omaka walked to school because his son needed Omaka's car. The car was not at home. He was sweating. It was hot, walking to school.

### Sung's News

Everyday Sung stays home to take care of his niece and clean the house and cook for his family, before he comes to school. Maybe next month he will look for a job, maybe in Warwick in the factory if he gets a drivers' license.

### Sandy's News: Trouble in China

Last week, there were a lot of problems in China. Sandy's friend called her. She can't go to China now for vacation. Sandy doesn't want to go to China now. Maybe she will go later and her friend might go later, too. It's dangerous to travel in China now.

June 1989

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

Please circle the days we study this week. Please circle the days we'll study this month.

### Bai's News

On Monday, Bai got a letter from a lawyer. In the letter, he talked about her son's accident. A few weeks ago, he hit someone's car. A pregnant lady was in the car. At that time, they said, "No problem." But now, the lawyer said the pregnant lady got sick. What can Bai do? Yesterday, Bai's husband went to see the man at the insurance company. The company has a lawyer, too, but Bai still worries because she doesn't want to hear about these problems.

### Weather Report

It was hot on Monday.  
Yesterday it was raining all day, and it was cold.  
How's the weather today?

How many times did you read the word 'news' in this week's news?

Please circle 'news'.

## Teacher Tips

and predictable features also feeds into the reading of newspapers, which have predictable formats.

As students gain facility with generating the news, they assume more responsibility for generating and transcribing independently in the class. At more advanced levels, and as and resources permit, they can also become engaged in production process — typing, laying out, etc. Graphics, such as small calendar and/or photos, may be added as appropriate.

### Note:

On 'slow' news days, teachers may wish to add a weather report word count (How many times did you read 'to'? Please circle 'to' in the cloze exercise (today is \_\_\_/yesterday was \_\_\_/tomorrow will be \_\_\_), or an information gap (How did you come to school today? \_\_\_), or an information gap (How did you come to school today \_\_\_) in order to increase students' interaction with the paper and other.

### Procedure: Using the News

The news can be read and processed in a variety of ways. Students may read silently, or aloud to each other in small groups, or read all together. Collaboratively or individually, students can engage in interactive activities. The teacher may wish to ask who wants to read (as a general invitation) and/or ask a particular student to read (s/he wishes to read his/her story). Further exercises and activities can be developed from the news; it can be adapted for classroom use in ways similar to those employed in adapting material from other texts.

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