



# NEWSPAPER CRITICAL READING

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**У**ЧЕБНО-**М**ЕТОДИЧЕСКОЕ  
**П**ОСОБИЕ

# NEWSPAPER CRITICAL READING

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## ЧТЕНИЕ И АНАЛИЗ ГАЗЕТНЫХ ТЕКСТОВ

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## PREFACE

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Reading is an important part of foreign language learning process aimed at achieving autonomous learning by developing strategic competence. It is widely accepted that reading is a process of hypothesis formation and verification; it is a communicative act between a writer and a reader (possibly a large number of readers). According to this notion reading presupposes some kind of criticism. Research proves that critical reading can be taught and that students do not become critical readers without instruction. Reading experts also confirm that the reading process becomes a critical act if the students are challenged by provocative reading materials and learning activities.

These premises are taken into account in teaching students, who acquire English for academic/professional purposes in practical language classes, where they usually read newspaper and web news articles followed by vocabulary developing tasks, comprehension questions and discussion, as well as in classes on stylistics. The ultimate goal is to familiarize students with mass media language, register and stylistic devices as well as with certain typical features of different article types. It is also useful to ask students to write a summary or personal reaction to what they have read and involve them in discussion on the key problems.

To become critical thinkers and readers students should:

- evaluate what they have read and make a decision;
- be challenged with increasingly demanding and thought-provoking tasks, which are practical and help to enhance thinking powers and develop critical skills;
- follow some guidelines that may be applied to all kinds of texts with the traditional five Ws (who/whom, what, when, where, and why/how) as the basic critical awareness procedure;
- relate new information with their background knowledge to go deeper into the essence of reading material;
- retrieve information to select those chunks that are essential for the understanding of the material and may be useful for their further interpretation.

The textbook provides some theoretical basics of news style (Part I) and guides for newspaper article analysis accompanied by modern news stories (Part II) assigned for students' autonomous work demanding thinking powers and critical skills.

# **PART I**

## **THE BASICS OF NEWSPAPER CRITICAL READING**

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### **Unit 1. NEWS MEDIA**

News is any new information or information on current events which is presented by print, broadcast, Internet, or word of mouth to a third party or mass audience. News is the reporting of current information on television and radio, and in newspapers and magazines.

News articles (on paper and on computer screen) inform us about different issues affecting our lives. They deal with local (entertainment, fashion, sports, and business news) and world news on a specific topic (i.e. political or trade news magazines, club newsletters, or technology news websites). They also give background analysis, opinions, and human interest stories on events happening in the world.

### **What Is News?**

Answering the question we can remember the cliché: *When dog bites man, it's not news. When man bites dog, that's news.*

The main goals of news writing can be summarized by the ABCs of journalism: accuracy, brevity, and clarity. Newsworthiness is defined as a subject having sufficient relevance to the public or a special audience to warrant press attention or coverage.

So news usually has at least one of these elements:

- **Impact.** Impact is determined by the number of people affected, the number of boats that sink, the number of cars wrecked, etc. The more people affected, the more boats sunk, the bigger the impact of the story.

- **Proximity.** The closer your audience is to the event, the greater its news value. If a train hits a bus in Bangladesh, it may receive three column inches behind the sports section. If a train hits a bus on Niles Canyon Road, the Argus will play it on page one.

- **Timeliness.** "New" is a big part of news. If it happened just before deadline, it's bigger news than if it happened last week. Even "big" stories last only a week or so. News, like fish, is better fresh.

- **Prominence.** The public cares more about celebrities than they do about people they don't know. If President Clinton goes jogging, reporters take

pictures. If the Monitor adviser goes jogging, dogs bark, but no one else notices. (This is fine with the adviser.)

- Novelty. If an event is unusual, bizarre, the first, the last, or once-in-a-lifetime, it has more news value than if it is something that happens all the time.

- Conflict. War, politics and crime are the most common news events of all. If everyone got along, there wouldn't be much news.

- Relevance. How does the story affect the reader? If there's no effect at all, maybe there's no news.

- Usefulness. How can I use this information?

Home, business and leisure news sections have sprouted in newspapers in an attempt to give readers news they can really use.

- Human interest. A story may be weak on the other news values, but be interesting anyway. It can be as simple as an interview with a fascinating person who does unusual things. If people are talking about it, it's news, even if it doesn't meet the criteria of our other news values.

## **The News Media**

The news media refers to the section of the mass media that focuses on presenting current news to the public. These include print media (newspapers, magazines); broadcast media (radio stations, television stations, television networks), and increasingly Internet-based media (World Wide Web pages, weblogs).

A medium (plural media) is a carrier of something. Common things carried by media include information, art, or physical objects. A medium may provide transmission or storage of information or both. By metonymy, the industries which produce news and entertainment content for the mass media are often called "the media" (in much the same way the newspaper industry is called "the press"). In the late 20th century it became commonplace for this usage to be construed as singular ("The media is...") rather than as the traditional plural. Usually the term includes all working journalists and is often used by those who would make generalizations about the product of "most" journalists, for example that journalists who work for large media corporations, or who are based in New York City or Washington, D.C., harbor a liberal (or conservative) bias. Let us consider the types of modern news media.

### **Online Journalism**

The effect of modern technology has been felt strongly in the newspaper world. Computers have changed the way departments in the newspaper are organized. The Internet has become an important resource in the news

industry. Reporters use the Internet to research stories and communicate with sources. Many newspapers provide an online edition in addition to the printed product.

Online journalism is reporting and produced or distributed via the Internet. The Internet challenges traditional news organizations in several ways. They may be losing classified ads to Web sites, which are often targeted by interest instead of geography. The advertising on news Web sites is sometimes insufficient to support the investment.

Even before the Internet, technology and perhaps other factors were dividing people's attention, leading to more but narrower media outlets.

By covering news, politics, weather, sports, entertainment, and vital events, the daily media shape the dominant cultural, social and political picture of society. Beyond the media networks, independent news sources have evolved to report on events which escape attention or underlie the major stories. In recent years, the blogosphere (blog – a journal that's kept on the internet, most likely for public viewing) can also be called a web journal and derived from the term weblog or blogger. It originated from the popular application called blogger that allows people to easily and freely update their blogs without having to hard-code the sites) has taken reporting a step further, mining down to the experiences and perceptions of individual citizens.

Let's have a look at some of the features of Web news style:

- ✓ Web newspapers are structured with two or even three levels of headlines (a general page heading plus subheads – and sub-sub-heads when appropriate).
- ✓ Meaningful rather than "cute" headings (i.e., reading a heading should tell the user what the page or section is about).
- ✓ Highlighting and emphasis to make important words catch the user's eye. Colored text can also be used for emphasis, and hypertext anchors stand out by virtue of being blue and underlined.

Critical literacy in terms of the World Wide Web draws on cognitive processing mechanisms like those used for printed texts and a set of distinctive features likewise closely related to those used for conventional print texts, but extending beyond them. But the both web and printed newspapers have much in common – they are characterized by a typical news style encompassing not only vocabulary and sentence structure, but also the way in which news stories/articles present the information in terms of relative importance, tone, and intended audience.

## **Broadcasting**

Broadcasting is the distribution of audio and video signals (programs) to a number of recipients ("listeners" or "viewers") that belong to a large group.

This group may be the public in general, or a relatively large audience within the public. Thus, an Internet channel may distribute text or music world-wide, while a public address system in (for example) a workplace may broadcast very limited ad hoc sound bites to a small population within its range.

The sequencing of content in a broadcast is called a schedule.

Television and radio programs are distributed through radio broadcasting or cable, often both simultaneously. By coding signals and having decoding equipment in homes, the latter also enables subscription-based channels and pay-per-view services.

A broadcasting organization may broadcast several programs at the same time, through several channels (frequencies), for example BBC One and Two. On the other hand, two or more organizations may share a channel and each use it during a fixed part of the day. Digital radio and digital television may also transmit multiplexed programming, with several channels compressed into one ensemble.

When broadcasting is done via the Internet the term webcasting is often used. Broadcasting forms a very large segment of the mass media. Broadcasting to a very narrow range of audience is called narrowcasting.

### **Newsmagazines**

A newsmagazine, sometimes called news magazine, is a usually weekly magazine featuring articles on current events. News magazines generally go a little more in-depth into stories than newspapers, trying to give the reader an understanding of the context surrounding important events, rather than just the facts.

### **Newspapers**

A newspaper is a lightweight and disposable publication (more specifically, a periodical), usually printed on low-cost paper called newsprint. It may be general or special interest, and may be published daily, weekly, biweekly, monthly, bimonthly, or quarterly.

General-interest newspapers are usually journals of current news on a variety of topics. Those can include political events, crime, business, sports, and opinions (editorials, columns, or political cartoons). Many also include weather news and forecasts. Newspapers increasingly use photographs to illustrate stories; they also often include comic strips and other entertainment, such as crosswords.

Newspaper writers use special techniques or news style to win the reader's confidence and attention. According to I.R.Galperin: "It is a system of interrelated lexical, phraseological and grammatical means which is perceived



by the community speaking the language as a separate unity that basically serves the purpose of informing and instructing the reader. Primary function is to impart information, to influence public opinion on political and other matters (brief news items and communiqués, press reports, purely informational, advertisement and announcements, editorials)”.

So the mass media are focusing on presenting current news to the public include print media (newspapers, magazines); broadcast media (radio stations, television stations, television networks), and increasingly Internet-based media (World Wide Web pages, weblogs).

## **Unit 2. CRITICAL READING OF NEWSPAPER ARTICLES**

All the training in reading and all the practice in various reading skills lead ultimately to this goal – that of preparing students for critical reading-for helping them to read with analysis and judgment.

Critical reading requires a contribution by both the author and the reader and an interplay which usually results in a new understanding.

To become critical readers, students should have all the various skills of reading. They should analyse quickly through skimming, the directions, the main idea, the purpose of the writer, make some decisions as to whether the author has fulfilled his apparent intended direction and purpose for the writing. They should aware that any text may be evaluated from at least three angles: from the viewpoint of the addresser – the author of the text; the message – the text itself as a self-contained entity, and the addressee – the reader. Before the evaluation of such aspects as the author's purpose, accuracy or implications, the readers should be able to identify the facts. They should check how reliable the information is; how recent it is; how accurate it is; and how competent the writer is.

Evaluating the author's purpose the questions should be asked: Is it to inform? Is it to persuade? Is it to entertain? Is it to interpret a point of view? Is it to incite into action? A casual glance at daily newspapers will give examples for all of these. One article may be informational, such as news report, and it may be that the person who writes it wishes to leave the reader with a particular feeling about his topic. May be that he simply wants to entertain him.

Once the reader finds out the hidden purposes or view points, then he must examine the implications present in the material. What inference is suggested by his tone, choice of words or style? Obviously if his purpose is to inform

then he generally uses a matter of fact tone. The writer may not use colourful adjectives or adverbs, but simply states the facts precisely as they happened. On the contrary, if he wants to persuade you, then he may use the tone or mood which will be in keeping with the way he wishes the reader to react. For example, if he is attempting to persuade you to vote for him and persuade you not to vote for the other party, then his attitude or tone or his mood could be cynical, it could be satirical, it could be sarcastic, and it could be critical and so forth. Critical reading demands the knowledge of the news article types and their language peculiarities.

## **The Types of News Articles**

So newspaper critical reading is impossible without understanding of the language peculiarities of news stories, without analyzing the types of news article:

**1. General News** (+/- 600 words): any story that emphasizes facts of a recent event. News articles focus only on the facts; they don't contain anyone's opinion.

A news article can include accounts of eyewitnesses to the happening event. It can contain photographs, accounts, statistics, graphs, recollections, interviews, polls, debates on the topic, etc. Headlines can be used to focus the reader's attention on a particular (or main) part of the article. Quoting references to people can also be made through written accounts of interviews and debates confirming the factuality of the writer's information and the reliability of his source.

There are two types of general news stories – ***Hard News and Soft News***.

***Hard News*** is a brief and simple chronicle of current events/incidents and is the most common news style on the front page of your typical newspaper.

Newspapers normally write hard news stories, such as those pertaining to murders, fires, wars, etc. in inverted pyramid style so the most important information is at the beginning. Busy readers can read as little or as much as they desire.

It states only facts without giving comments, presents up-to-the minute, concise information about current events and delivers the facts and only the facts – the *who, what, when, where, why, and how* of an event. It is free of personal opinions and biases.

Hard News language is basic, unemotional, and to the point.

The writer is invisible, never adding his or her personal feelings or reactions to the article.

In fact, many articles are unsigned, with only a dateline at the beginning of the first paragraph to indicate the city where the event took place. They are characterized by an impersonal, direct, and almost telegraphic style.

**Soft News** is a term for all the news that isn't time-sensitive. Soft News includes profiles of people, programs or organizations.

Specific language features tend:

- to be impersonal to make it appear objective (to distance the reporter from the story) hence:

- written in the third person;
- use of direct speech or indirect speech which is attributed to someone other than the reporter;
- some use of passive verbs but usually only when someone who is being quoted wants to distance themselves from an issue and to show their objectivity about an issue;

- nouns and noun phrases are used rather than personal pronouns;

- to be punchy – it must grab the reader's attention so often uses:

- relatively short sentences and words – adjectives and nouns are often strung together to make the writing shorter and snappier, so you get expressions like there:

1. *The result of behind-the-scenes policy.*

2. *Top changes at Treasury.*

3. *A world-wide burst of anger*

4. *Cash cut-back threat.*

If you try to re-write these phrases, you will discover just how economically they are written:

1. *The result of the policy which was not obvious and open.*

2. *New changes in the upper level of the Treasure Dept.*

3. *A burst of anger from all over the world.*

4. *A threat to reduce expenditure.*

- some use of clichés which the whole audience understands;
- acronyms and abbreviations, immediately recognizable by the reader. (If they are not, they are spelled. For example, Lawrence City Commission (not“LCC”));

- to be written in the present tense;

- to have:

- technical, scientific, political and economic terms;
- active verbs (*rushed, scurried, flew, crashed, blew, dashed, buried, languished, mired etc.*) that provide interest to the writing; they replace blah, boring, vague verbs (*Jeb ran into the burning igloo. Jeb rushed into the burning igloo.*);

- linking verbs are used, e.g. *is, are, has, have, belong to*, to give coherence;
- concrete rather than abstract vocabulary;
- descriptive language that is factual rather than imaginative e.g. colour, shape, size, body parts, habits, behaviours, functions, uses.

## 2. Features or Human Interest Stories

*News stories* aren't the only type of material that appears in newspapers and magazines. Longer articles, such as magazine cover articles and the pieces that lead the inside sections of a newspaper are known as features. **Feature articles** are rather long (+/- 1500 words) with reflective tone; often humorous or entertaining. They always carry the writer's byline. A feature article is an article that is about "softer" news.

Feature articles are not considered news stories. They differ from straight news in several ways.

Foremost is the absence of a straight-news lead, most of the time. Instead of offering the essence of a story up front, feature writers may attempt to lure readers in. A news story provides information about an event, idea or situation. The feature does a bit more – it may also interpret news, add depth and colour to a story, instruct or entertain. They rather entertain than focus on news value. They intend to inform, teach, or amuse the reader on a topic. The topic centers on human interests accompanied by personal comment. They may include conventions found in fiction such as dialogue, plot and character. A feature's first paragraphs often relate an intriguing moment or event, as in an "anecdotal lead". From the particulars of a person or episode, its view quickly broadens to generalities about the story's subject.

The section that signals what a feature is about is called the *nut graf* (the paragraph in a story that tells readers what the story is about and why they should care) or *billboard*. Billboards appear as the third or fourth paragraph from the top, and may be up to two paragraphs long. Unlike a lead, a billboard rarely gives everything away. This reflects the fact that feature writers aim to hold their readers' attention to the end, which requires engendering curiosity and offering a "payoff." Feature paragraphs tend to be longer than those of news stories, with smoother transitions between them.

A *feature article* is an umbrella term that includes many literary structures: personality sketches, essays, how-to's, interviews and many others. The writer is often visible though expressed feelings, biases, reactions, and opinions and may even, on occasion, appear as *I narrator*. *The language of feature articles* is less restricted and more imaginative, it contains:

- Action verbs: Action verbs provide interest to the writing. For example, instead of *The old woman was in his way try.* – *The old woman barred his path.* Instead of *She laughed.* – *She cackled.*

- Written in the first person (*I, we*) or the third person (*he, she, they*).

- Usually past tense.

- Connectives, linking words to do with time.

- Specific nouns: Strong nouns have more specific meanings, e.g. *oak* as opposed to *tree*.

- Active nouns: Make nouns actually do something, e.g. *It was raining.* – *Rain splashed down.* *There was a large cabinet in the lounge.* *Could.* – *A large cabinet seemed to fill the lounge.*

- Careful use of adjectives and adverbs: writing needs judicious use of adjectives and adverbs to bring it alive, qualify the action and provide description and information for the reader.

- Use of the senses: Where appropriate, the senses can be used to describe and develop the experiences, setting and character:

What does it smell like?

What can be heard?

What can be seen – details?

What does it taste like?

What does it feel like?

- Imagery:

*Simile*: A direct comparison, using like or as or as though, e.g. *The sea looked as rumpled as a blue quilted dressing gown.* *The wind wrapped me up like a cloak.*

*Metaphor*: An indirect or hidden comparison, e.g. *She has a heart of stone.* *He is a stubborn mule.* *The man barked out the instructions.*

*Onomatopoeia*: A suggestion of sound through words, e.g. *crackle, splat, ooze, squish, boom*, e.g. *The tyres whir on the road.* *The mud oozed and squished through my toes.*

*Personification*: Giving nonliving things (inanimate) living characteristics, e.g. *The steel beam clenched its muscles.* *Clouds limped across the sky.* *The pebbles on the path were grey with grief.*

*Rhetorical questions*: Often the author asks the audience questions, knowing of course there will be no direct answer. This is a way of involving the reader in the story at the outset, e.g. *Have you ever built a tree hut?*

- Variety in sentence beginnings. There are a several ways to do this e.g. by using:

Participles: "*Jumping with joy I ran home to tell mum my good news.*"

Adverbs: "*Silently the cat crept toward the bird.*"

Adjectives: "*Brilliant sunlight shone through the window.*"

Nouns: "*Thunder claps filled the air.*"

Adverbial Phrases: "*Along the street walked the girl as if she had not a care in the world.*"

- Conversations/Dialogue: these may be used as an opener. This may be done through a series of short or one-word sentences or as one long complex sentence.

- Personal Voice: It may be described as writing which is honest and convincing. The author is able to 'put the reader there'. The writer invests something of him/her self in the writing. The writing makes an impact on the reader. It reaches out and touches the reader.

Most features are complex and therefore involve more than one theme. But one is most prominent. To decide which theme is most prominent one should ask the questions: What is this story really about? What is the main point in the story? What is the central concept described in the story? To answer these questions, use the following guidelines:

- Look at the actions or developments in the story, rather than the context in which they occur.

- Focus on why this story is in the paper at all – usually something has to happen (a news peg) that can give you a clue on how to classify the story.

- If you cannot decide between two themes (or more) you can resort to paragraph counting (i.e. choose the theme that has more paragraphs in the story).

- Use headlines or section heads as clues only: a story in the Business section is more than likely to include information relating to business, but it should not necessarily be coded as “business” for theme.

### 3. Commentary/Criticism

**Commentary or criticism article** is any one that offers a first-person opinion or a stated opinion of the newspaper, e.g. editorials and op-eds. **Editorials** express an opinion rather than attempting to simply report news. Editorials are collectively authored by a group of individuals called the editorial board without bylines. If written by the board, they represent the newspaper's official positions on issues. Editorials are almost always printed on their own page of the newspaper, and are always labeled as editorials. They

are often about current events or public controversies. Like all journalists, editorial writers need to present facts and reasons for opinions. Often, humor can be an effective tool to persuade a reader.

One of the most popular kinds of editorials is the editorial cartoon, a drawing that pokes fun at someone or something currently in the news. A good political cartoon can say in one drawing what an editorial might take 1,000 words to say – and it can make us laugh in the process.

Many newspapers have columnists who are experts in certain areas or writers whose opinions are respected. Most newspapers try to balance their editorial pages with columnists who have different points of view.

***The language of editorials*** gives opinions. This is done in a number of ways – through adjectives and adverbs, through sarcasm and satire, and through very direct criticism or praise. That is one reason editorials can be fun to read.

***Op-eds (opinion editorials)*** are articles that run opposite the editorial page. Opinions are not limited to the editorial pages. They can appear in other parts of the paper, such as sports, movie reviews and even the comics. They are a response to current editorials and topical subjects with a catchy title that may not emphasize the central message. Political op-eds are the most common, but they don't have to be limited to politics. They must, however, reflect items that are current and newsworthy. For newspapers, the Op-Ed is the page opposite the editorial page. It may contain letters to the editor or other opinion pieces. They state the subject under controversy clearly and try to persuade a middle-of-the-road readership by mainstreaming idea, citing various sources. Most people know that editorials reflect the viewpoint of the newspaper.

But an editorial is more than opinions. The editorial writer must include information – statistics, details, examples – to support their opinion. To make the editorial even more effective, the writer must present arguments and then challenge the arguments of other with different opinions. The writer makes an appeal to the reader to accept the position expressed by the newspaper.

So the language is rather argumentative and characterized by the following features:

- The argument is written in the timeless present tense. This might change to the past if historical background to the issue was being given. If predictions are being made the tense might change to the future.
- The writer uses repetition of words, phrases and concepts deliberately, for effect.

- Verbs are used when expressing opinions, e.g. *I think they are the best! We believe students should not be stopped from eating junk food.*
- Strong effective adjectives are used.
- Thought provoking questions are used. These may be asked as rhetorical questions. (Rhetorical questions: a question asked only for effect, not for information, e.g. *Would you give your pre-schooler matches to play with?*)
- Written in the timeless present tense.
- Use of pronouns (*I, we, and us*) is used to manipulate the reader to agree with the position argued. E.g. *We all know that smoking causes cancer so we do not smoke.*
- Use of emotive language or words that will appeal to the reader's feelings, eg. *concern, unreasonable, should.*
- Use of passive voice or verbs in which the subject is acted upon and not doing the action. This helps structure the text, e.g. *We would like to suggest that an enquiry be held into the running of the steel mills. Water is being polluted.*
- Conjunctions that can exemplify and show results – they are usually used in concluding statements to finalise arguments.

#### **4. Advertisements and Announcements**

The function of advertisements and announcements is to inform the reader, influence his mind, making him acquire the advertised product. There are two types of them: classified and non-classified. In classified the information is arranged according to the subject matter: births, marriages, deaths, business offers, personal etc.

Newspaper ads are a genre unto themselves. They use graphics and design elements to attract a reader's attention. They use white space and type fonts as part of their message. Their strength, however, lies in their use of precise language. Because most newspaper ads use few words, those words must be exact. Ad creators design ads following a formula with the acronym "AIDA." The letters in the acronym stand for:

- Attracting attention – usually with graphics, white space and type font.
- Creating Interest – with language and art.
- Creating Desire to have the product – with effective descriptive language.
- Creating a need to Act – with persuasive language.

The language of advertisements as a particular style of discourse is a complex blend of national, social, economic and linguistic traditions which work together with the addressees' expectations.



Advertising language is characterized by the following features:

- Hyperbole – exaggeration, often by use of adjectives and adverbs.
- Frequent use of adjectives and adverbs.
- A limited range of evaluative adjectives: *new, clean, white, real, fresh, right, natural, big, great, slim, soft, wholesome, improved...*
- Neologisms may have novelty impact, e.g. *Beanz Meanz Heinz, Cookability, Schweppervescence, Tangoed, Wonderfuel...*
- Long noun phrases, frequent use of pre and post modifiers for descriptions.
- Short sentences for impact on the reader. This impact is especially clear at the beginning of a text, often using bold or large type for the "Headline" or "slogan" to capture the attention of the reader.
- Ambiguity is common. This may make a phrase memorable and re-readable. Ambiguity may be syntactic (the grammatical structure) or semantic (puns for example).
- Weasel words are often used. These are words which suggest a meaning without actually being specific. One type is the open comparative: "*Brown's Boots Are Better*" (posing the question "*better than what?*"); another type is the bogus superlative: "*Brown's Boots are Best*" (posing the question "*rated alongside what?*");  
*enriched – worth – fresh*  
*tested – guaranteed – scientific*  
*traditional – home-made – organic*
- Use of Imperatives: "*Buy Brown's Boots Now!*"
- Euphemisms: "*Clean Round the Bend*" for a toilet cleaner avoids comment on "*unpleasant*" things. The classic example is "*B.O.*" for "*body odour*" (in itself a euphemism for "*smelly person*").
- Avoidance of negatives (advertising normally emphasises the positive side of a product).
- Simple and Colloquial language: "*It ain't half good*" to appeal to ordinary people, though it is in fact often complex and deliberately ambiguous.
- Familiar language: use of second person pronouns to address an audience and suggest a friendly attitude.
- Present tense is used most commonly, though nostalgia is summoned by the simple past
- Simple vocabulary is most common, *my mate Marmite*, with the exception of technical vocabulary to emphasize the scientific aspects of a product (computers medicines and cars but also hair and cleaning

products) which often comes as a complex noun phrase, *the new four wheel servo-assisted disc brakes*.

- Repetition of the brand name and the slogan, both of which are usually memorable by virtue of alliteration: *finger of fudge, the best four by four by far*; rhyme, *mean machine, the cleanest clean it's ever been*; rhythm, *drink a pint a milk a day*.

- Syntactic parallelism: *stay dry, stay happy*.

- Association: *fresh as a mountain stream*.

- Humour. This can be verbal or visual, but aims to show the product positively. Verbal Puns wonderful and graphic juxtapositions are common.

- Glamorisation is probably the most common technique of all. "Old" houses become *charming, characterful, old world or unique*. "Small" houses become *compact, bijoux, snug or manageable*. Houses on a busy road become *convenient for transport*. A café with a pavement table becomes *a trattoria, a restaurant*; too cramped it becomes *a bistro*. Not enough room to serve it becomes *a fast food servery*. If the menu is *English food* it is likely to be *traditional, home-baked or homemade*; if the menu is *French* the cake will be *gateau*, the potted meat *pâté*, bits of toast in your soup will be *croutons*. The *decor* will be probably *chic*, possibly *Provençal*.

- Finally potency. It is identified as the words that give news value, novelty and immediacy:

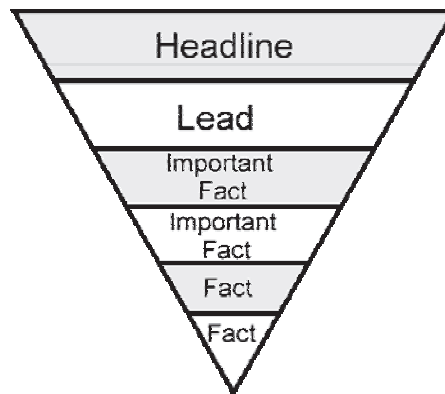
*suddenly – announcing – introducing*  
*improvement – amazing – sensational*  
*remarkable – revolutionary – startling*  
*miracle – magic – offer*  
*quick – easy – wanted*

### **Unit 3. NEWS ARTICLE STRUCTURE**

There are three traditional news structures: the inverted pyramid, the narrative or story telling and the hourglass.

The most popular structure for news stories is *the inverted pyramid*. In the inverted pyramid, the information is arranged in descending order of importance. The most important material is placed at the beginning of the story, and less important material follows. Succeeding paragraphs explain and support the lead. The inverted pyramid is popular because it still serves readers well. It tells them quickly what they want to know. It also serves to

identify and rank the most important elements of the story. The structure of a general news article can be pictured as a triangle or an inverted pyramid.



The inverted pyramid is a metaphor used to illustrate how information should be arranged or presented within a text. The triangle's broad base at the top of the figure represents the most substantial, interesting, and important information the writer means to convey. This type of writing came about in newspapers in the days of the telegraph, the whole story took long to transmit, and starting with the main information ("The battle was lost, 940 killed") was more important for getting on press immediately than the details ("Our soldiers crossed the bridge at dawn with fresh supplies..."). This format will allow the less important information to be more easily cut out of the article to fit a fixed size (number of words, printed size, etc.). This structure enables readers to quit reading at any point and still come away with the essence of a story. It allows people to enter a topic to the depth that their curiosity takes them, and without the imposition of details or nuances that they would consider irrelevant. A similar style could be used for web pages, mainly for the last reason – knowing that not all readers will read the entire story.

But the inverted pyramid has big disadvantages. Although it delivers the most important news first, it does not encourage good writing. Many times stories do not have an ending crafted by the writer; they simply end. There is no suspense. Reporters tend to lose interest, time and energy. Writing in the second half of the story is casual at best, and poor at worst.

One alternative to the inverted pyramid is *narration or story telling*. Narration uses scenes, anecdotes and dialogue to build to a climax. People are prominent in the story, and they are responsible for the action. The story has a beginning, middle and end. Quotations sound like real speech. The words and actions of the characters reveal motives.

A third story structure, *the hourglass*, combines some of the best elements of both the inverted pyramid and the narrative. It consists of three parts: a top,

which tells the news quickly; the turn, a nimble transition; and the narrative, a chronological retelling of events. The hourglass works well with police stories, courtroom dramas and other incidents that lend themselves to chronological narration. The hourglass has several advantages: readers get the news high in the story; the writer gets to use storytelling techniques; and it encourages a real ending.

Text function of news articles focuses on pragmatic aspects such as purpose or communicative effect and takes into account the situational conditions of communication interaction. News article functions include:

- referential function (referring to objects and phenomena of the world e.g. informative (referring to a particular use of the language), instructive, meta-linguistic functions are a sub-referential function;
- appellative function (appeals to the receiver's experience, knowledge), sub-functions: persuasive, illustrative, advertising, imperative (so that the reader does what is asked);
- expressive function (express the sender's attitude or feelings, sub-functions: emotive, evaluative (e.g. in a political commentary) functions;
- phatic function: establishing maintaining or finishing contact, sub-functions: salutation, small talk functions.

All these functions leave marks on the article structure.

So there are some differences in structures of general news articles and other type of media articles (features, commentaries/criticism stories). In the "objective", "hard news" report the author's "voice" is constructed as impersonal full of facts and data but not as of a human individual.

In general the structure of a typical news article contains five parts:

1. Headline or Title that will entice the reader to read the story further.
2. Byline: This tells who wrote the story.
3. Lead. First Paragraph is one of the most important elements of news writing is the opening paragraph of the story.
4. Body including explanation (put in second, third, fourth paragraphs) that gives details, contains quotes that are objective (written in 3rd person) enough and can answer any important questions a reader might have after reading the headline and the lead paragraph.
5. Conclusion, last paragraph wrapping the content up. However, it shouldn't contain such phrases as "in conclusion" or "to finish".

## **Headline**

A headline is text at the top of a newspaper article, indicating the nature of the article below it. Headlines are usually written in bold and in a much larger size than the article text.

Headline conventions include normally using present tense, omitting forms of the verb "to be" in certain contexts, and removing short articles like "a" and "the". Most newspapers feature a very large headline on their front page, dramatically describing the biggest news of the day. A headline may also be followed by a smaller secondary headline which gives a bit more information or a subhead (also called a deck or nutgraf in some areas). Words chosen for headlines are often short, giving rise to headlines.

The main function of headline is to inform the reader briefly of what the news is to follow about. The headline should report the topic and perhaps the main fact, accurately. It should also present the information in an interesting way so that the reader is encouraged to read the article itself. It should hook the reader with a funny, clever, or surprising statement. It should be begun with a question or provocative statement.

The kinds of news that appeal to readers of one newspaper may differ widely from those of a competitor. But all headlines include one or more of the following elements that attract a reader's interest: newness or unusualness, personal relevance or consequences, and emotions.

Sometimes one headline is not enough to summarize the important information, so a second headline, in smaller letters, called *subhead line*, is added below the first.

There are ***two types of headlines***:

1. Sentence headlines are very short sentences, interrogative sentences, nominative sentences, elliptical sentences, sentences with articles omitted, headlines including direct speech:

*Police rescue 12 divers as launch sinks off Bali*

*Pen manufacturers still see good future for luxury pens*

2. Phrase headlines:

*Getting in touch with the spirit*

*Heroism and cowardice at the "Top of the World"*

*Reward for tracing suspect*

Effective headlines usually involve logical sentence structure, active voice and strong present-tense verbs. Let us cover their major language peculiarities in detail:

▪ *First*, headlines in English language newspapers are usually short and they thus tend to leave out all the *inessential words*, such as articles and auxiliary verbs ("be" verb omitted), and to be as generally economical as they can. Because of that, headlines use *short words* wherever possible, in preference to long ones. As with any good writing, good headlines are driven by *short verbs*; certain verbs are very common in headlines, such as: *deal, cost, ban, hit, get, and clash*.

They usually use a compound-noun phrase instead of a longer clause: for example, “*Japan Leadership Struggle*” for “*The Leadership Struggle in Japan*”, “*Bridge Cost*” for “*The Cost of the Bridge*” and “*Bank Girl Killer Clues*” for “*Clues to the Killer of the Girl who Worked in a Bank*”.

Many abbreviations that are not acceptable in stories are acceptable in headlines (as with “K.C.” Everyone would know that “K.C.” is *Kansas City*.).

Sometimes, of course, the very briefness of headlines makes them ambiguous. What about “*Prime Minister Moves to Cut Down Expenditure*” – When the Prime Minister did not change his place of residence but made a move politically.

Here’s what some of the headlines mean:

1. “*Car Import Curb ‘Would Hit Britain’* ” – Controls on the import of cars would make Britain suffer.

2. *Action Man Sinatra Dies* – Sinatra, who was a man of action, has died.

3. *Agricultural Policy to be Discussed* – The policy of Agriculture will be discussed.

4. *25 Charged After Clash* – Twenty five people were accused by the police of criminal behaviour after a fight.

▪ Second, newspaper headlines generally use the simple tenses of verbs, and the present simple tense is very frequent for immediate past information: “*Japan Leadership Struggle Hots up*”, “*Bridge Cost Soars*”, “*Miners Ban Overtime*”, “*Police Get Bank Girl Killer Clues*” and “*Action Man Sinatra Dies*”. The present tense gives the subject a sense of freshness and immediacy, making it more interesting to read. Past tense (often in passive voice) is used for past perfect, and the infinitive form is often used to express the future: “*Agricultural Policy to be Discussed*”, “*Two Presidents to Meet in September*”. And the passive form is employed where the action is more important than the agent: “*25 Charged after Clash*”. Present tense headlines are sometimes written in the passive voice (*Westchester Mayor is stabbed by angry voter*). It is important not to confuse the present tense passive voice in an elliptical headline – when an auxiliary verb is omitted (passive: *Mayor stabbed at midnight* = *Mayor is stabbed at night*. active: *Mayor stabbed someone at night*).

▪ Third, specific punctuation marks in headlines:

- Headlines are usually printed in large letters at the top of the story.

The comma:

- takes place of *and*;
- is used with its normal function of separating words in a list (*Massive, Mobile UN Force...*);
- separating phrases (*19hrs. after deadline, the war began*).

### The colon:

- is used after a word or phrase to explain it (*Washington prediction: slow growth, no recession*);
- following a name, tells what a person said without quoting their exact words (*Junkie: I'll take test*).

### Single quotation marks:

- tell what a person said, using their exact words. The whole headline (or subhead line) can be a quotation or just a few words. The speaker can be named in the headline or not (*'The liberation of Kuwait has begun' – President Bush* or *Iraqi air force 'decimated'*);
- are used instead of the name of a person who is not well-known or instead of a thing that has a difficult or technical name (*Just 2 years [jail term] for 'beauty queen' thief 'Suicide machine' takes first life*).

Serious journalism requires that the source of quotation be named at the beginning of the article.

Inverted commas are inserted to show that a fact or an event is quoted or reported: *"Car Import Curb 'Would Hit Britain'."*

## **Lead**

The lede/lead is usually the first sentence, or in some cases the first two sentences, and is ideally 20–25 words in length. The top-loading principle applies especially to leads, but the unreadability of long sentences constrains its size. This makes writing a lead an optimization problem, in which the goal is to articulate the most encompassing and interesting statement that a writer can make in one sentence, given the material with which he or she has to work. The lead (sometimes spelled lede) is of the most important elements of news writing is the opening paragraph or two of the story. It should incorporate as many of the 5 "W's" of journalism and "H" (Who is involved? What happened? When did it happen? Where did it take place? Why is this newsworthy? Why is it important or interesting? How did it happen? How will it affect a reader?).

Its function is to summarize the story and/or to draw the reader in (depending on whether it is a "hard" or "soft" news story. *In a hard news story*, the lead should be a full summary of what is to follow. It should hook the reader with a funny, clever, or surprising statement. It should begin with a question or provocative statement. *In a soft news story*, the lead should present the subject of the story by allusion.

The lead also establishes the subject, sets the tone, and guides the reader into the article. Its function is to summarize the story and/or to draw the reader in.

A good news story, unlike the novel or play, is based on one main idea. That is why it is so important to decide on a focus and stick to it. The author may choose to open with any number of ways including the following: anecdote, shocking or startling statement, a generalization, pure information, description, a quote, a question, a comparison.

There are two main types of the lead:

**1) *The direct lead or cliché lead reveals*** immediately what the story is about. It is the summary or statement of the most important events contained in the story. It is the climax, the result of the investigation, the theme. If you told a joke as you wrote a direct lead, you would place the punch line first.

The direct lead – also called the summary lead – is usually one sentence, but sometimes two. It answers immediately, in 25 words or less, the main questions of who, what, when and where. It is the workhorse of daily journalism, used at the top of most stories.

The best direct leads start with a compelling noun and a strong verb, not with a prepositional phrase. It usually sets a scene or evokes a mood with an incident, anecdote or example. The writer may foreshadow events to come or create a sense of foreboding or anticipated surprise. Essential information is temporarily withheld.

**2) *The delayed lead can*** be short, perhaps two sentences, or it can be longer, up to four paragraphs. The delayed lead still must fulfill the two roles of the lead: It must capture the essence of the story and do it in a way that encourages the reader to continue. Like the direct lead, it leads the reader straight to the heart of the story. When the lead is delayed and does not immediately explain the main point of the story, it is important to include the theme statement somewhere high in the story, usually within the first four paragraphs.

Good leads are like good titles: they shine a flashlight down into the story. In a feature story, the author may choose to open in any number of ways, including the following:

- an anecdote,
- a shocking or startling statement,
- a generalization,
- pure information,
- a description,
- a quote,
- a question,
- a comparison.



## Body

The body of the story involves combining of the people opinions, some factual data, and a narrative which helps the story flow.

The narrations of a news story are based on facts, events and true experiences. Cause and effect illustrates how something happened or what the consequences are. Most events presented in narrations are arranged in chronological order (as they occurred). A 3d-person narration of a news story tends to be impersonal and to make it appear objective (to distance the reporter from the story). A 1st-person narration (an I-story) as well as narrations interlaced with descriptive passages, dialogues or quotes of personages, and an account of events interwoven with a humorous (ironical, satirical) portrayal of society, or the personage may be typical for features and editorials.

Each paragraph of the body has a certain logical structure containing:

- 1) topic sentence introducing the main idea, one relevant fact;
- 2) supporting details – relevant to the main idea facts, specific details that explain, prove, support;
- 3) summary/conclusion, linking to next paragraph and restating the topic sentence.

Paragraphs of the body are linked with the help of transitions that present words or phrases making the movement of ideas from one to another clear and easy. Obvious transitional phrases are: thus, therefore, on the other hand, next, then, and so on.

For the general news story, details and elaboration are evident in the body of the news story and flow smoothly from the lead. Quotes are used to add interest and support to the story.

Feature articles follow a format appropriate for its type. Structures for these types of articles may include, but are not limited to:

- chronological – the article may be a narrative of some sort;
- cause and effect – the reasons and results of an event or process is examined;
- classification – items in an article are grouped to help understanding;
- compare and contrast – two or more items are examined side-by-side to see their similarities and differences;
- list – a simple item-by-item run-down of pieces of information;
- question and answer – such as an interview with a celebrity or expert.

The idea may be hidden between the lines of narration, in order to grasp the author's idea we should consider the usage of some stylistic devices. Their role in the narration:

- to create a certain atmosphere;
- to convey the feelings and emotion;
- to give an explanation;
- to express and underline the main idea.

## **Conclusion/Ending**

The conclusion is the outcome of the story. There is a difference between a news story ending and a feature article conclusion. Endings for hard news article occur when all of the information has been presented according to the inverted pyramid form. By contrast, the feature article needs more definite closure. The conclusions for these articles may include: a final quote, a descriptive scene, a play on the title or lead, a summary statement usually containing a resolution of the complication. The complication may be resolved for better or worse/happily or unhappily. Sometimes there are a number of complications that have to be resolved. These add and sustain interest and suspense for the reader.

## **PART II**

# **CRITICAL READING OF NEWS ARTICLES**

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Reading, as an important part of foreign language learning process, aimed at achieving autonomous learning by developing strategic competence, stimulates thinking about the text, promotes reflection on the reading process, gives practice with an effective strategy for vocabulary building, and serves as a basis for assessment of communicative speech.

According to Harris and Hodges (1981) critical reading is the process of making judgments in reading: "evaluating relevancy and adequacy of what is read". Several strategies are used for developing critical awareness while reading. They can be classified as the pre-reading stage (that generates a critical awareness of how and why texts are written), while-reading stage (when questioning and interpretive abilities are triggered – annotating and analyzing stage), and post-reading stages, with a focus on both language and content (summarizing, evaluating, synthesizing, commenting, and reflecting).

For this purpose some specific learning thought-provoking tasks are used to direct attention to the points that elicit responses to help arouse critical attitude to reading material.

### **Developing critical awareness is impossible without grasping**

#### **The Main Idea**

A paragraph is a group of sentences related to a particular topic, or central theme. Every paragraph has a key concept or main idea. The main idea is the most important piece of information the author wants you to know about the concept of that paragraph.

When authors write they have an idea in mind that they are trying to get across. This is especially true as authors compose paragraphs. An author organizes each paragraph's main idea and supporting details in support of the topic or central theme, and each paragraph supports the paragraph preceding it.

A writer will state his/her main idea explicitly somewhere in the paragraph. That main idea may be stated at the beginning of the paragraph, in

the middle, or at the end. The sentence in which the main idea is stated is the topic sentence of that paragraph.

The topic sentence announces the general theme (or portion of the theme) to be dealt with in the paragraph. Although the topic sentence may appear anywhere in the paragraph, it is usually first – and for a very good reason. This sentence provides the focus for the writer while writing and for the reader while reading. When you find the topic sentence, be sure to underline it so that it will stand out not only now, but also later when you review.

### **Identifying the Topic**

The first thing you must be able to do to get at the main idea of a paragraph is to identify the topic – the subject of the paragraph. Think of the paragraph as a wheel with the topic being the hub – the central core around which the whole wheel (or paragraph) spins. Your strategy for topic identification is simply to ask yourself the question, "What is this about?" Keep asking yourself that question as you read a paragraph, until the answer to your question becomes clear. Sometimes you can spot the topic by looking for a word or two that repeat. Usually you can state the topic in a few words.

Let us try this topic-finding strategy. Reread the first paragraph on this page – the first paragraph under the heading grasping the main idea. Ask yourself the question, "What is this paragraph about?"

To answer, say to yourself in your mind, "The author keeps talking about paragraphs and the way they are designed. This must be the topic – paragraph organization". Reread the second paragraph of the same section. Ask yourself "What is this paragraph about?" Remember, getting the main idea of a paragraph is crucial to reading.

The bulk of an expository paragraph is made up of supporting sentences (major and minor details), which help to explain or prove the main idea. These sentences present facts, reasons, examples, definitions, comparison, contrasts, and other pertinent details. They are most important because they sell the main idea.

The last sentence of a paragraph is likely to be a concluding sentence. It is used to sum up a discussion, to emphasize a point, or to restate all or part of the topic sentence so as to bring the paragraph to a close. The last sentence may also be a transitional sentence leading to the next paragraph.

Of course, the paragraphs you'll be reading will be part of some longer piece of writing – a textbook chapter, a section of a chapter, or a newspaper or magazine article. Besides expository paragraphs, in which new information is presented and discussed, these longer writings contain three types of paragraphs: introductory, transitional, and summarizing.

Introductory paragraphs tell you, in advance, such things as (1) the main ideas of the chapter or section; (2) the extent or limits of the coverage; (3) how the topic is developed; and (4) the writer's attitude toward the topic. Transitional paragraphs are usually short; their sole function is to tie together what you have read so far and what is to come – to set the stage for succeeding ideas of the chapter or section.

Summarizing paragraphs are used to restate briefly the main ideas of the chapter or section. The writer may also draw some conclusion from these ideas, or speculate on some conclusion based on the evidence he/she has presented.

## **Unit 4. GUIDES FOR NEWSPAPER ARTICLE ANALYSIS**

**Analyzing:** having ascertained the main thrust of the writer's arguments from outlining. So a very important critical reading skill is to be able to distinguish fact from opinion. This is an essential first step in acquiring critical reading ability. It is also important to make students aware of how language is used to express facts and opinions. The analysis of text language can be very useful for ascertaining the writer's ideology.

***Study the following guides taking into account that not all these points will be relevant to the given articles, but some of them may give a focus to your overall analysis.***

### **Identify**

1) The type of the newspaper article: general news, feature, commentary/criticism (editorial, op-ed, etc.). To find the right answer define the author's overall purpose (to inquire, to convince, to persuade, to negotiate or other purpose).

2) The functions of the headline, the lead, the body, conclusion and their language peculiarities.

### **Give a summary of the article following these steps**

A summary is a shorter version of a longer piece of writing. The summary captures all the most important parts of the original, but expresses them in a shorter space. Summarizing is usually set to test your understanding of the original, and your ability to re-state its main purpose.

Summarise the text following these steps:

1) Read the article several times considering the gist, the content of the story and formulate the main idea conveyed by the author (the main line of the thought, the author's message) and summarise it briefly:

Who? (characters: age, physical appearance, clothes... / occupation...)

When? (time, day, month, year, century...)

Where? (country, city, village, place, house...)

What? (the plot: characters and conflict (internal and external))

Why? How? (State the problem raised by the author.

The problem is broken down into smaller more manageable parts. Formulate the main idea conveyed by the author (the main line of the thought, the author's message). Cause and effect illustrates how something happened or what the consequences are.

2) Choose the key-sentence (the topic sentence) in each part that reveals its essence and write down key words and expressions that remind you of these essential points.

3) Expand your key words into sentences, paragraphs and then summarise. Remember that it must be in your own words. By writing in this way, you help to re-create the meaning of the original in a way which makes sense for you.

### **Give a detailed analysis of the narration**

- Define the type of the narration:

- 1) a 3d-person narration tends to be impersonal and to make it appear objective (to distance the reporter from the story);

- 2) a 1st-person narration (an I-story) interlaced with descriptive passages and dialogues of the personages and with an account of events interwoven with a humorous (ironical, satirical) portrayal of society, or the personage, etc.

- Define the prevailing mood (tone, slant,) of the article.

It may be lyrical, dramatic, tragic, optimistic/pessimistic, melodramatic, sentimental, emotional/unemotional, pathetic, dry and matter-of-fact, gloomy, bitter, sarcastic, cheerful, etc.

- Define: What is the message? How is it conveyed to the reader? (explicitly/implicitly?)

- Comment upon the language means (EM and SD) employed by the author and their role in the narration:

1. *The variety of expressive means (EM) of language:*

- 1) Action verbs: Action verbs provide interest to the writing.
- 2) Written in the first person (*I, we*) or the third person (*he, she, and they*).
- 3) Usually past tense.
- 4) Connectives, linking words to do with time.
- 5) Specific nouns: Strong nouns have more specific meanings.
- 6) Active nouns: Make nouns actually do something.
- 7) Careful use of adjectives and adverbs: writing needs judicious use of adjectives and adverbs to bring it alive, qualify the action and provide description and information for the reader.
- 8) Use of the senses: the senses can be used to describe and develop the experiences, setting, events and characters to let the reader experience the situation under discussion:
  - a. What does it smell like?
  - b. What can be heard?
  - c. What can be seen – details?
  - d. What does it taste like?
  - e. What does it feel like?
- 9) Use of conversations/dialogue: these may be used as an opener. This may be done through a series of short or one-word sentences or as one long complex sentence.
- 10) The vocabulary used is neutral/common literary/colourful containing:
  - f. special political and economic terms;
  - g. non-term political vocabulary;
  - h. newspaper clichés;
  - i. abbreviations;
  - j. neologisms.

2. *The stylistic devices:*

a) epithet: a stylistic device based on the interplay of emotive and logical meaning in an attributive word, phrase or even sentence, used to characterise and object and pointing out to the reader, and frequently imposing on him, some of the properties or features of the object with the aim of giving an individual perception and evaluation of these features or properties foregrounding the emotive meaning of the word to suppress its denotation meaning – expresses characteristics of an object, both existing and imaginary ("*formidable waves*", "*heart-burning smile*"; "*destructive charms*", "*glorious sight*", "*encouraging smile*");

b) simile: a direct comparison, using *like* or *as* or *as though* (*The sea looked as rumpled as a blue quilted dressing gown. The wind wrapped me up like a cloak.*);

c) metaphor: an indirect or hidden comparison, transference of names based on the associated likeness between two objects, on the similarity of one feature common to two different entities, on possessing one common characteristic, on linguistic semantic nearness, on a common component in their semantic structures ("*pancake*" for the "*sun*" (*round, hot, yellow*); "*silver dust*" and "*sequins*" for "*stars*";

d) personification: a metaphor that involves likeness between inanimate and animate objects giving nonliving things (inanimate) living characteristics ("*the face of London*", "*the pain of ocean*";

e) repetition: a powerful means of emphasis; – adds rhythm and balance to the utterance;

f) rhetorical question: an utterance in the form of a question which pronounces judgment and also expresses various kind of modal shades of meanings, as doubt, challenge, scorn, irony and so on. This is a way of involving the reader in the story at the outset.

g) comparison (an ordinary comparison of two objects belonging to the same classes) and contrast (opposition or dissimilitude of things or qualities; unlikeness show similarities and differences) between two like topics.

### **Suggested Clichés for Text Analysis**

#### *The object of the article*

1. The object (purpose) of this paper is to preset (to discuss, to describe, to show, to develop, and to give)...
2. The paper (article) puts forward the idea (attempts to determine)...

#### *The major problems*

1. The paper (article) discusses some problems relating to (deals with some aspects of, considers the problem of, presents the basic theory, and provides information on, reviews the basic principles of)...
2. The paper (article) is concerned with (is devoted to)...

#### *The beginning of the article*

1. The paper (article) begins with a short discussion on (deals firstly with the problem of)...
2. The first paragraph deals with...
3. First (at first, at the beginning) the author points out that (notes that, describes)...
4. The story features / highlights / focuses on the... The subject matter of the story is...



### *Discussion of the content*

Then follows a discussion on...

Then the author goes on to the problem of...

The next (following) paragraph deals with (presents, discusses, describes)...

After discussing... the author turns to...

Next (further, then) the author tries to (indicates that, explains that)...

It must be emphasized that (should be noted that, is evident that, is clear that, is interesting to note that)...

### *The ending of the article*

The final paragraph states (describes, ends with)...

The conclusion is that the problem is...

The author concludes that (summarizes the)...

To sum up (to summarize, to conclude) the author emphasizes (points out, admits that...)...

Finally (In the end) the author admits (emphasizes) that...

### *Your opinion on the article*

In my opinion (To my mind, I think)...

The paper (article) is interesting, of importance (of little importance), valuable (invaluable), up-to-date (out-of-date), useful (useless)... (not interesting)...

I can say that I found this article very interesting and very important not only for me, but for everybody.

This situation tells us that .../ My opinion is that ...

## **Unit 5. NEWSPAPER ARTICLES FOR CRITICAL READING**

### ***1. Read and consider the general news articles using the guidelines given before.***

**UK Biometric Visas**

**Andy Tighe, BBC News**

**14 January, 2008**

From today, visitors to the United Kingdom requiring a visa must have their fingerprints taken. The British Government says it's necessary to deter people from using false identities when they apply to enter the UK.

Under the new system, travellers to Britain from 133 countries – covering three quarters of the world's population – must now have their fingerprints checked against a database compiled by officials. The British Government says it's necessary to deter people from using false identities when they apply to enter the UK, including would-be asylum-seekers who've previously been turned down or deported, people with criminal records and wanted terrorists.

Nearly five hundred cases of identity swapping have been detected so far and the scheme is now fully operational three months earlier than expected. The Government also says it's exceeded its target for deporting foreign national prisoners at the end of their sentence, with more than four thousand removed last year.

By the end of this year the Government says it will begin issuing compulsory identity cards for all non-European Union foreign nationals in Britain, though it says the much more controversial plans to force British citizens to hold ID cards are some years away and require a change in the law.

### **Compulsory Cooking Classes**

**Jon Devitt, BBC News**

**23 January, 2008**

English teenagers are to receive compulsory cooking lessons in schools. The idea is to encourage healthy eating to combat the country's spiralling obesity rate. It's feared that basic cooking and food preparation skills are being lost as parents turn to pre-prepared convenience foods.

Cooking was once regarded as an integral part of education in England - even if it was mainly aimed at girls. In recent decades cooking has progressively become a peripheral activity in schools. In many cases the schools themselves have given up cooking meals in kitchens on the premises. But the rising level of obesity, has led to a rethink about the food that children are given and the skills they should be taught. Ed Balls is the minister in charge of schools.

"What I want is for young people to be taught how to do basic, simple recipes like a tomato sauce, a bolognaise, a simple curry, a stir-fry – which they can use then at home and in their later life, experiment with, discover the joy of food, having got the basics under control."

The new lessons are due to start in September but some schools without kitchens will be given longer to adapt. There is also likely to be a shortage of

teachers with the right skills, since the trend has been to teach food technology rather than practical cooking. Also the compulsory lessons for hands on cooking will only be one hour a week for one term. But the well known cookery writer, Pru Leith, believes it will be worth it.

"If we'd done this thirty years ago we might not have the crisis we've got now about obesity and lack of knowledge about food and so on. Every child should know how to cook, not just so that they'll be healthy, but because it's a life skill which is a real pleasure and we deny children that pleasure."

The renewed interest in cooking is primarily a response to the level of obesity in Britain which is amongst the highest in Europe, and according to government figures half of all Britons will be obese in 25 years if current trends are not halted.

### **Heavy Snow Hits China**

**Quentin Sommerville, BBC News, Shanghai**

**28 January, 2008**

China's government has issued a severe weather warning after the heaviest snowfalls in decades. The country is experiencing transport delays and power cuts as millions of people prepare to make long journeys home for the Chinese New Year.

China hasn't experienced weather this bad in decades. And as the country prepares for Chinese New Year, the disruption couldn't come at a worse time. Over 100,000 people are stranded in Guangzhou railway station in the south. It may climb to as many as 600,000 as more people arrive to make their journeys home for the Spring Festival. Travellers have been evacuated to nearby sports stadiums and exhibition centres.

Across China around nineteen airports have shut because of the weather. Around half the provinces in the country have had to start rationing power, according to the state media. The government has suspended coal exports in favour of home consumption. At least a dozen people died over the weekend because of heavy rains and the snowfall.

The Spring Festival is China's most important holiday when people journey home to be with their families. For millions of the country's migrant workers it's their only holiday. Some two billion journeys were made during the festival last year, making it the largest migration of people on the planet. And even without the severe weather, conditions on overcrowded trains and buses are terrible. The holiday stretches China's transport system to its very limits.

**Mirror.co.uk**

**NEWS**

**Brown speaks to India PM on terror**

**14/12/2008**

Prime Minister Gordon Brown flew into India to discuss terrorism and try to calm relations with Pakistan following the deadly Mumbai attacks.

Mr Brown will discuss the fallout from last month's atrocity, which killed at least 170 people including one Briton, with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

India has announced a major beefing up of its security after admitting "lapses" in the siege by gunmen which it blames on Pakistan-based militants.

It has put huge pressure on its neighbour, which strongly denies any involvement, to do more to combat terrorism amid fears of a stand-off between the nuclear-armed nations.

Pakistan has moved to place a militant leader accused of links to the attacks under house arrest and President Asif Ali Zardari has pledged to take "strong action" against terrorists.

But he has also called on India to share more information about the attacks.

Mr Brown, speaking during a visit to Afghanistan, said that he hopes to raise the issue with Mr Zardari soon as well.

He named Pakistan's border region with the country, where he was meeting troops fighting the Taliban, as one end of a "line of terror" that could stretch to Britain if more was not done to tackle the threat of al Qaida.

**Mirror.co.uk**

**NEWS**

**Benn warns over airport expansion**

**14/12/2008**

The Government "cannot contemplate" allowing expansion of Heathrow airport if it fails to meet European Union pollution targets, Environment Secretary Hilary Benn warned.

In one of his strongest public expressions of apparent concern about the impact of a third runway at London's biggest airport, Mr Benn said he was "determined" to honour commitments to meet environmental pledges.

His comments came after Transport Secretary Geoff Hoon postponed the long-awaited decision on a third runway until January, sparking speculation about a Cabinet split on the issue.

Supporters of the project are believed to include Mr Hoon, Prime Minister Gordon Brown and Business Secretary Lord Mandelson, who are thought to see increasing capacity at Heathrow as a key to boosting economic growth and prosperity.

But it is reported that other ministers, including Mr Benn, Foreign Secretary David Miliband and Climate Change Secretary Ed Miliband, have doubts.

Critics say that expansion of Heathrow would increase noise pollution for households on flight paths as well as pushing up emissions of nitrogen dioxide and particulates.

Britain has obtained opt-outs from EU air pollution directives, but they run out over the years to 2015 by which time the UK has promised to get emissions down below the limits.

Mr Benn told the Sunday Times: "We have to achieve the environmental objectives. We have to honour that commitment and I am determined that we will... We have a problem with nitrogen dioxide around Heathrow, principally because of the traffic. Some of it is the aircraft."

The Environment Secretary played down arguments that "green" technological improvements to air transport would allow the UK to meet EU targets over time while still expanding airport capacity.

"Obviously there is technological change affecting airports, but come what may we will come to a point in 2011 with particulates and 2015 with nitrogen dioxide when we will have to be meeting the terms of the directives."

**Mirror.co.uk**

**NEWS**

**Food firms 'mislead using adverts'**

**14/12/2008**

Food companies are misleading parents through legal loopholes and spurious health claims to market unhealthy food to children, a charity has said.

The British Heart Foundation (BHF) claims to "expose" the "top five" marketing tactics it said companies used to advertise children's food high in fat, sugar and salt.

The report, prepared by food campaigning group The Food Commission on behalf of the BHF, said companies made claims about the quality of products to hide the true nutritional content and used selective nutritional and health information.

Companies also used "emotional insight" to empathise with mothers about some of the difficulties in raising a family, and imagery to entice and mislead parents, the report said.

Kellogg's claimed its Coco Pops Cereal and Milk Bars were the "best choice for a lunchbox treat" and used images of grapes and a wholemeal bread sandwich on packaging despite containing 41g of sugar per 100g, the study said.

An ad for KFC showed children volunteering to clean up after eating one of the takeaway chain's meals, while an ad for Burger King Aberdeen Angus Mini-Burgers showed a motherly figure declaring "the lunch battle is over".

The BHF commissioned the report as part of its Food 4 Thought childhood obesity campaign.

The report also said companies were showing "misleading" adverts during shows popular with young people like the X Factor, despite regulations banning the advertising of junk food during children's programmes.

The BHF is calling for a ban on all junk food television advertising before 9pm. It also wants "consistent" junk food marketing regulations across all media and for a mandatory front of pack food labelling system to help parents understand the nutritional values of children's products.

Manufacturers denied the report's findings. A Kellogg's spokesman said: "To suggest we exploit marketing loop holes as a matter of course is rubbish. Our on-pack claims are rigorous and all our marketing reflects the latest advertising codes.

**Mirror.co.uk**

**NEWS**

**Unemployment 'to top two million'**

**17/12/2008**

Unemployment looks certain to top two million in the New Year after a black day on the jobs front, with a series of grim figures and fresh redundancies condemning thousands to the dole.

The Government conceded that unemployment will get worse in the coming months, pledging to spend millions of pounds retraining redundant workers to help them find other jobs.

Unemployment increased by 137,000 in the quarter to October to 1.86 million, the highest figure for more than a decade, the number of jobseeker's allowance claimants went above a million for the first time in eight years, and there was a big fall in job vacancies, down by 49,000 in the last three months to 562,000, the joint lowest on record.

Gloom over jobs deepened when it was announced that all 807 Woolworths stores will shut by January 5, affecting 22,000 permanent staff and 5,000 temporary workers. Union officials said they were "devastated" by the news, believed to herald the biggest loss of jobs by a single company in such a short period of time in living memory.

Train and bus operator National Express announced plans to cut up to 750 jobs in a bid to save £15 million a year.

Long term unemployment, covering those out of work for over a year, increased by 7,000 to 438,000 in the latest quarter, while unemployment among 18–24 year olds rose by 55,000 to 597,000, the highest figure since 1995.

Manufacturing jobs continued to be lost, down by 73,000 in the three months to October compared to a year ago to 2.83 million, the lowest figure since comparable records began in 1978.

Wednesday's data from the Office for National Statistics also showed a fall in the number of people in work, down by 115,000 in the quarter to October to 29.38 million. The claimant count has now increased for 10 months in a row, the worst sequence since a run of 16 monthly rises from March 2005.

Employment Minister Tony McNulty admitted that unemployment will get worse next year but he pledged a "robust" response, including extra support such as personal jobs advisers.

Prime Minister Gordon Brown, on a visit to Iraq, said the rise was "disappointing", adding that the Government was addressing how to get more people into jobs. "We are not standing by, doing nothing. Unemployment is high this month and was high last month but we are trying to do everything we can to help people get the skills and the help to get back into work," he said.

**Mirror.co.uk**

**NEWS**

**South pole race team in Antarctica**

**19/12/2008**

TV presenter Ben Fogle and Olympic rowing champion James Cracknell have arrived in Antarctica ahead of a gruelling South Pole race.

Cracknell, 36, Fogle, 35, and 28-year-old Dr Ed Coats – who beat 650 applicants for his place on the trip, will spend the next fortnight acclimatising to the harsh weather and terrain.

Team QinetiQ, as they are collectively known, will endure minus 50C (minus 58F) temperatures during the 420-mile contest, the first race to the South Pole since Roald Amundsen and Robert Scott's attempt nearly 100 years ago.

A spokeswoman for the team confirmed that the men arrived on Earth's southernmost continent this morning and would be issuing an update on their progress over the weekend.

The trio will be relieved to arrive with all its members intact – Animal Park presenter Fogle nearly pulled out weeks before the scheduled departure date when he was struck down with a tropical skin-eating parasite.

He started treatment in November for Leishmaniasis Vianna, contracted while filming Extreme Dreams in Peru, and missed weeks of training until he was given the all-clear on December 9.

The team spent the previous three days in Cape Town, South Africa, before flying in to the Novo Base, in Antarctica, on Friday morning.



The race, which kicks off on January 1, will see 10 teams from across the world race across the world's most inhospitable continent to the Geographic South Pole.

The teams of three will ski, pulling 200lb (90.7 kg) sleds, following the same route as Amundsen and Scott before them.

Dr Coats, from Bristol, who specialises in obstetrics, landed a place on the team in October following a high-profile public search and intensive selection process, which began in June.

**Mirror.co.uk**

**NEWS**

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**Telegraph.co.uk**

**Almost two-thirds of Britons support Telegraph's Justice for Pensioners campaign**

**More than half of Britons support**

**The Daily Telegraph's savings campaign, a new YouGov survey has disclosed.**

**By Myra Butterworth, Personal Finance Correspondent**

**Last Updated: 6:34PM GMT 19 Dec. 2008**

A total of 58 per cent backed the Justice for Pensioners campaign, which is calling for a suspension of tax paid by pensioners on savings and dividends.

It comes as millions of pensioners have seen the return on their savings and share investments – which they have prudently built up for their retirement – plummet following consecutive significant cuts in interest rates.

While the Bank of England has reduced rates from 5 to 2 per cent from the beginning of October, the average rate on a one-year savings bond has been cut from 6.2 per cent to 3.8 per cent per cent during the same period, according to the personal finance researchers Moneyfacts.

Around 30 per cent of those aged 55 or over rely on the interest from savings and dividends from shares.

Charities have welcomed the campaign. Bryan Clover, director at grant-giving charity Elizabeth Finn Care, said: "People are going to struggle to rely

on the income from their savings and investments, which is no longer there in the economic downturn.

"We back the campaign whole heartedly and think it will be a tremendous success in helping to boost pensioner's income."

The survey also asked whether people approved of the current rules on annuities. Those with a private pension fund are required by law to use the money to buy an annuity – a regular pension income – by the age of 75, rather than leave it as a lump sum, with the option of buying an annuity later, or leaving it in their will.

A total of 65 per cent said the rule is wrong, saying people should be allowed much more flexibility with what they do with their pension savings. Only 11 per cent said the rule is right, while 24 per cent said they do not know.

## ***2. Read, and consider the features taking into account:***

### **1) The Author's Purpose**

- *Has a contemporary issue or a particular philosophy influenced the authors purpose?*
- *Is the author defending a particular point of view?*
- *For whom is the material intended? (e.g. other academics, students, the general public).*
- *How does the author's argument or perspective relate to other material in the field?*

### **2) Content**

- *What is the main theme (thesis or argument) in the material?*
- *What main points are used to justify or support this theme?*
- *What explanation or evidence is used to support the main points?*
- *Does the evidence seem well researched and accurate?*
- *Which aspects of the topic has the author chosen to concentrate on or omit?*
- *Is there any evidence of deliberate bias, such as interpretation of material, choice of sources or factual information?*
- *How do the contents relate to what you know about the topic?*

### **3) Style**

- *In what style has the material been written? For example, is it formal or informal, simple or complex, didactic or persuasive, narrative or analytical?*

*(Comment on syntactical, lexical, morphological and phonetic peculiarities, the purpose of their employment by the author. Comment on syntactical stylistic devices and expressive means marking the author's style.)*

**Mirror.co.uk**

**NEWS**

**Scandal of Baby S: 18-month-old taken off at-risk register and killed by his mother**

**By Kate Mansey and Matt Blake 13/12/2008**

Tragic toddler Sean Denton – left by Social Services to die at the hands of his drug-abusing mother who had already served a jail sentence for manslaughter.

Amanda Adams smothered her rosy-cheeked son when he was just 18 months old, before hanging herself.

Shockingly, Sean – whose father was also a killer – had been taken off the at-risk register when he was just two months old, despite his parents' deeply-troubled past.

Sean's background could hardly have been worse. His mum Amanda started drinking at the age of 12, went off the rails as a teenager and suffered mental health problems.

She had a history of self-harm and violence and served two years in a young offenders' institution for a knife attack.

Sean's father Mark Denton was also an alcoholic drug abuser.

Amanda, 30, and Mark, 35, together killed a squatter in a violent row in 1999 – and were each sentenced for manslaughter.

Amanda was jailed for life, Mark received a lesser sentence – but both released after just five years.

Not surprisingly, Sean was placed on the at-risk register before he was even born. But incredibly he was taken off it at the age of two months because social workers took a "positive" view of his parents.

A total of 10 government agencies were involved with helping or monitoring the family – from social services to two police forces. But all failed to save him.

The events that led to Sean's death started to unfold when Mark hanged himself last October.

His death failed to raise any alarms among authorities – and two weeks later, distraught Amanda smothered Sean and then hanged herself.

Sean's desperately short life started in Barnet, North London, on April 10, 2006 – just a month after Baby P was born in the neighbouring London borough of Haringey.

He died on October 26, 2007 – two months after the now-notorious death of Baby P, who was murdered three miles away after social workers and medics failed to spot he was being abused.

Until now, the tragic circumstances of Sean's death have been kept quiet.

His parents met in rehab in 1999. Amanda, whose father killed himself when she was just eight years old, was known to authorities as a troublesome teenager whose mother couldn't control her.

When she and Mark came out of rehab they were homeless and lived in a squat. They soon spiralled back into a life of drink and drugs.

It wasn't long before they killed a fellow squatter and were jailed. They were released in 2004 and the following year they got back together.

Amanda then fell pregnant with Sean. The authorities were so concerned that Sean was placed on the child protection register even before his birth.

But, astonishingly, the decision was made to take him off the register when he was just a few weeks old because he was healthy and there were no signs of abuse.

Amanda and Mark parted when Sean was one, and Mark moved to a flat in Hemel Hempstead, Herts. He hanged himself there on October 12, 2007.

But no one told Barnet Council about Mark's death, so they did not know to keep an eye on the family.

Exactly two weeks later, Amanda wrote suicide notes saying she wanted the family to be reunited in heaven before killing her son and then herself.

A month after the deaths, Barnet Council launched a review into how Sean could have been better protected.

The year-long Serious Case Review, seen by the Sunday Mirror, reveals a catalogue of fatal blunders that led to the child's welfare being ignored. Mother and baby were being monitored by the Metropolitan Police, London Probation, Barnet NHS Primary Care Trust, Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust, Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health, London Borough of Barnet and Barnet Homes and Barnet Children's Services.

But after Sean was taken off the at-risk register, they all withdrew their monitoring. One by one they failed to help Amanda and Sean.

The papers reveal the many mistakes made by the organisations which failed to spot the baby was in danger.

They also reveal a complete communication breakdown between the 10 different authorities, including two police forces, which meant

Barnet child protection workers were not told of the father's suicide. Barnet's Serious Case Review recommended that more "risk assessments" taking into account the "personal history" of the parents should have been carried out.

A further independent review slammed officials for painting a "positive picture" of the parents and being "overly optimistic".

It said carers did not check records properly and "the history of extreme violence was not explored".

A whistleblower who attended the Serious Case Review was appalled by what he heard.

He told the Sunday Mirror: "Sirens should have been ringing as loud and clear over this case as possible.

"The review suggested there should have been greater risk assessments and that they should have looked more closely at the history of the parents. If two killer parents with a history of drug and alcohol problems aren't a risk, I don't know what is.

"Baby S's death was completely preventable – no ifs or buts.

"The social services, the police and mental-health professionals all have blood on their hands.

“There were so many agencies involved that they could have looked after a whole kindergarten full of kids – never mind just one.

“But they failed to communicate with each other.

“There’s a culture of looking on the bright side, so professionals can sign off on a case and move on to the next.

“When the father committed suicide, alarm bells should have rung and the agencies should have been talking to each other and gone back to see the mother.”

Amanda’s mother Rita, 66, was left devastated by the deaths of her daughter and grandson and said: “She was a beautiful girl – our whole family has been through so many deaths and so much grief.

“When she had the baby we couldn’t believe how well she was getting on. She was a great mum.”

After social services ended their involvement with Sean and his mother, the only interaction Amanda had with the authorities was to go to a local community centre twice a month where her attendance was registered.

The separate, damning independent Overview Review report, by child protection expert Sally Trench said: “Previous records were not consulted, extreme violence not explored.

The director of children’s services in Barnet at the time of Sean’s death – Gillian Palmer – has since moved on to work for Greenwich Council in South London.

Yesterday when approached at her home she refused to speak to the Sunday Mirror about the case.

Both Sean and Baby P died just a few miles from where eight-year-old Victoria Climbié was killed.

Victoria’s death in 2000 sparked a nationwide review of child-protection services by Lord Laming.

But today the Sunday Mirror reveals another shocking catalogue of errors by social services that has led to another child’s death.

Steve Shawcross, spokesman for Barnet Council, said: "Tragically, unexpectedly and unknown to Barnet Council, the father of Baby S committed suicide in Hertfordshire, and the Serious Case Review confirms that this had a profound effect on the mother of Baby S.

"Had the authority known of this event, support and guidance would have been provided."

The whistleblower also said of the Serious Case Review: "No one said they were sorry.

**12/18/2008**

**United Way gives \$175,000 to aid those hit by recession 2008**

**Reading Eagle Company**

**By Erin Negley**

As the recession's impact grows, the United Way of Berks County is tapping a \$175,000 special fund to provide grants to help shelters and foster affordable housing.

Eight awards will be used to help struggling Berks residents with essential needs such as staying warm and keeping roofs over their heads.

The Salvation Army's heating-assistance program and the emergency shelter at Reading's Opportunity House are among the beneficiaries. Opportunity House will use \$15,000 to hire additional staff and buy supplies for the shelter at 430 N. Second St.

Opportunity House Executive Director Modesto Fiume said the shelter has recently seen an increase in clients. The facility regularly has room for 75 people, but 30 to 50 extra cots are added during the winter.

The special fund was developed recently because United Way leadership noticed the growing need for assistance in the community, said Patricia C. Giles, senior vice president of community impact.

"We're really trying to keep pace with what's happening," Giles said.

The United Way board of directors approved the grants Tuesday.

The funding is separate from the millions of dollars the United Way provides to its partner agencies each year.



The grants also will fund preventative efforts such as tenant education classes provided by Neighborhood Housing Services and a tenant advocacy program by MidPenn Legal Services.

The free tenant classes, funded with a \$37,500 grant, will start in May, said Ronald E. Miller, executive director at Neighborhood Housing Services.

"There's a real need for low-income renters to receive an education, not only for landlord-tenant responsibilities but also landlord responsibilities," Miller said.

### **BBC NEWS**

**Monday, 14 January 2008, 16:24 GMT**

#### **Royal Diana plot was 'impossible'**

Princess Diana's former butler has told the inquest into her death it is "impossible" that she was murdered on the orders of the Royal Family.

When asked if Prince Charles could have planned her death, Paul Burrell said: "I could not possibly see the father of her children murdering her."

Diana's employee of more than 10 years also told the High Court she had considered marrying Hasnat Khan.

Mr Burrell said Diana loved the heart surgeon more than "any other man".

He also said that as butler to the princess, he connected Diana's network of friends and had been "at the hub of the wheel".

"Prince Charles was not capable of murdering the Princess – they were cordial towards the end of her life"

#### ***Paul Burrell***

Diana, her companion Dodi Al Fayed and their driver Henri Paul died in Paris in a car crash in August 1997.

Mr Burrell's comments about the likelihood of a royal murder plot followed a line of questioning about a note from the princess to him in which she said that her husband Prince Charles was "planning an accident in my car".

Asked by Ian Burnett QC, counsel to the inquest, if he knew of anything to support the idea that Diana and Mr Al Fayed were murdered, Mr Burrell said: "No, I can't begin to believe that.

"Knowing the members of the Royal Family as I do, and knowing them so well, I think that's impossible."

Dismissing the suggestion of the Prince of Wales being involved in a murder plot, Mr Burrell said: "The princess always had a great fondness for Prince Charles even after her divorce."

"She asked me if it was possible to arrange a private marriage between her and Hasnat Khan".

***Paul Burrell***

"Prince Charles was not capable of murdering the princess – they were cordial towards the end of her life."

Mr Burrell also described a 90-minute meeting with the Queen after Diana's death during which she told him to "be careful" as there were "powers at work in this country".

It is unclear what the Queen meant and Mr Burrell never asked her to explain the remark, perceiving it to be a "general 'be careful warning' over many issues".

He suggested three possibilities – media bosses, the establishment and the security services.

Earlier, the inquest heard that the "extremely serious relationship" between the princess and Mr Khan had lasted for two years and Mr Khan had been a regular visitor to Kensington Palace until the couple parted in July 1997.

When asked by Ian Burnett QC, representing the inquest, whether she had "contemplated" marriage with Mr Khan, the former butler replied: "Yes, she did."

"She asked me if it was possible to arrange a private marriage between her and Hasnat Khan."

It is not known whether Mr Khan was aware of these discussions.

Mr Burrell also said he had not been given the impression that her boyfriend, Dodi Al Fayed, was "the one".

He described Diana's relationship with Mr Al Fayed as "a very new friendship which developed into something more".

He told the court he did not believe the couple's romance had begun during a holiday on Mr Al Fayed's yacht with her sons, Princes William and Harry at the end of July 1997.

### **Ring dilemma**

Instead, he thought it was only after their return that the pair became romantically linked.

Mr Burrell also said a ring bought by Mr Fayed for the princess was "not an engagement ring, it was a friendship band".

He said that to make sure no-one, including Mr Al Fayed, would be misled into thinking it was anything else, Diana wore it on the fourth finger of her right hand instead of on her left.

Mr Burrell said she had told him: 'I need marriage like a rash'.

He said the couple were definitely not engaged, and rubbished rumours that they had planned to wed, suggesting that Diana was "on the rebound from that relationship".

### **'Healthy banter'**

Mr Burrell later told the court he had seen letters between the princess and her father-in-law, the Duke of Edinburgh.

The correspondence, written as Diana and the Prince of Wales were divorcing in 1992, was "sharp" but not nasty and reflected "healthy banter" between the two of them, he said.

He dismissed claims by psychic healer Simone Simmons who said she had seen two letters from Prince Philip around 1994 or 1995 in which he made disparaging remarks.

"Prince Philip is not known for diplomacy but he certainly wouldn't have written nasty notes to the princess. He was fond of the princess," Mr Burrell said.

In 2002 Mr Burrell, who worked for the Royal Family for more than 20 years, was cleared of stealing Diana's possessions after an Old Bailey trial collapsed.

**President Bush Says Time is Right  
for Peace Between Israelis and Palestinians  
By Judith Latham  
Washington  
11 January 2008**

President Bush says he believes there will be a signed peace treaty between Israel and the Palestinians by the time he leaves office a year from now. He made these bold remarks in Jerusalem, his first stop on an 8-day trip to the Middle East. He has called for Israel to end its “occupation” of Palestinian territories and for the Palestinians to stop terror attacks against Israel. He says a two-state agreement would ultimately eliminate security checkpoints, guarantee Israel “secure” and “defensible borders”, and provide for a Palestinian state that is “viable” and “contiguous.”

In an earlier interview with Al-Hurra television, the U.S. government’s Arabic-language satellite television network, the President told viewers it was his intention to advance the agenda set forth at the Middle East peace conference held 6 weeks ago in Annapolis. But Omar Karmi of the Jordan Times, who reports from Ramallah, says expectations among Palestinians are “not particularly high.” Speaking with host Judith Latham of VOA News Now’s International Press Club, Mr. Karmi says people are extremely skeptical that this round of talks will bring real benefits to Palestinians or that Washington is “serious enough” in its intention to push the two sides into “something meaningful.”

Israeli journalist Ori Nir of Peace Now says that most Israelis, like most Palestinians, have low expectations regarding what President Bush will be able to accomplish on his trip. Nonetheless, he says that Israelis support Mr. Bush’s “vision, his mission.” But Omar Karmi notes that, although the “chemistry” between Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas is reportedly very good, the two leaders have not been able to capitalize on it, partly because each of their positions is weak with respect to their own constituencies.

In recent days, some Middle East analysts have suggested that President Bush’s meetings with leaders in the Gulf States, which are expected to focus on Iran’s regional influence, may actually be more important to the U.S. administration than the Palestinian-Israeli peace process. Similarly, the Gulf states are probably more concerned about the growing influence of Iran than the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. President Bush is insistent that Iran’s

nuclear program is a threat to the region and he is therefore seeking support for “different types of sanctions and international efforts.”

Despite the political weaknesses of the American, Israeli, and Palestinian leaders, Ori Nir says the three share the “notion that real progress is in their national security interest” as well as in the interest of the legacy that each hopes to leave. For that reason, Mr. Nir says, he agrees with long-term U.S.-Middle East negotiator Dennis Ross that, although a breakthrough is unlikely, it may be possible to take “some baby steps” on the road to regional peace. In addition to Israel and the West Bank, President Bush will be making stops in Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt.

## **BBC NEWS**

### **Bush Labels Iran World's Leading Sponsor of Terrorism**

**By Paula Wolfson**

**United Arab Emirates**

**13 January 2008**

President Bush says Iran is the world's largest sponsor of terrorism, and a source of instability in the Middle East. VOA White House Correspondent Paula Wolfson reports in the only speech of his Mideast trip, the president urged the people of the region to reject extremism and embrace freedom.

Standing on a stage in Abu Dhabi, less than 300 kilometers across the Persian Gulf from Iran, President Bush called for unity against Tehran.

"Iran's actions threaten the security of nations everywhere. So the United States is strengthening our long-standing security commitments with our friends in the Gulf, and rallying friends around the world to confront this danger before it is too late," said Mr. Bush.

He said Iran is the world's largest state sponsor of terrorism, listing Tehran's support for extremists in Iraq, Lebanon, and the Palestinian territories.

"It sends hundreds of millions of dollars to extremists around the world, while its own people face repression and hardship at home," added President Bush.

Mr. Bush told Iran's neighbors that the kind of extremism embraced by the government in Iran stands in opposition to their hopes for a better future.

He said Iran provides a vivid contrast to other countries in the region that are moving toward greater freedom and openness to the world. He said no one

should doubt America's commitment to help those leaders who embrace change, pointing to the assistance the United States gave nations in Asia and Europe devastated during World War Two.

"The United States has no desire for territory. We seek our shared security in your liberty. We believe that stability can only come through a free and just Middle East where the extremists are marginalized by millions of moms and dads who want the same opportunities for their children that we have for ours," continued Mr. Bush.

The speech came roughly mid-way through a Middle East trip that has taken President Bush to Israel and the West Bank, where he sought to encourage peace talks between Israelis and Palestinians.

He said he came away encouraged, adding that even though talks on the parameters of a Palestinian state are just beginning, hopes are high.

"We will encourage reconciliation between the Israeli and Palestinian people, foster reconciliation between Israelis and Arabs and build a foundation for lasting peace that will contribute to every state in the Gulf," he said.

The president is visiting several Gulf states on this trip, and came to the United Arab Emirates from Bahrain – the headquarters of the U.S. Fifth Fleet. While there, he visited a naval facility that provides support for U.S. forces in Iraq.

He sat down for breakfast with one group of sailors, and got a briefing from the Fifth Fleet commander on the recent incident in the Strait of Hormuz in which Iranian military craft menaced American naval vessels. White House spokeswoman Dana Perino says the commander told the president the Navy takes the incident deadly seriously.

**Los Angeles Times**

**Dog days ahead for the Obamas**

**Meghan Daum**

**November 15, 2008**

In case you hadn't heard, Barack Obama's daughters are getting a dog. They were promised one after the election regardless of the outcome and, as the president-elect noted at his first news conference, the subject is generating "more interest on our website than just about anything." He said this in the same somber tone with which he also discussed Cabinet appointments and Iranian nuclear proliferation, referring to "criteria that need to be reconciled" (the need for a hypoallergenic dog and a preference for a shelter dog) and calling it "a pressing issue in the Obama household."

And many, many others. Type "Obama, new puppy" into Google and nearly half a million search results appear, including more than 3,000 news stories and blog posts with such headings as "Cuteness Overload" and, from Treehugger.com, "Will the Obama's [sic] New Puppy Be Green?"

As for all that talk about how an Obama victory would repair America's image throughout the world, the puppy back-channel is already open. Last week, the Friends of Peruvian Hairless Dog Assn. offered the Obamas a 4-month-old pedigreed Peruvian H.D. named Machu Picchu. The good news: It doesn't cause allergies; the potentially less-good news: It's completely bald.

Back here at home, dozens of experts and animal groups are weighing in on the matter. The American Kennel Club, whose survey last summer determined that a poodle would be the best dog for the Obamas (poodles have hair, not fur), is now offering links to poodle rescue groups. The Humane Society of the United States has an online thank-you card to the Obamas, with more than 4,000 signatures praising the family's desire to adopt from a shelter (it's also encouraging the Bidens to follow suit).

Meanwhile, Cesar Milan, known as the "Dog Whisperer," offered tips for the Obamas in that well-known animal training guide, *People* magazine. His most sapient observation: "The dog won't know he's Barack Obama and won't win the presidency."

Don't be so sure. Considering the amount of CNN my dog has been exposed to lately, I'm willing to bet he knows who won.

The real question though, is how long the fixation on the presidential pup will continue – reports say the Obamas won't actually be getting their pet until the spring – and why it appears to have taken on about the same level of importance as, say, the global economic crisis.

One obvious theory, of course, is we're star-struck. With all due respect to the Fabulousness Industrial Complex of Brangelina and family, the Obamas are heading for a higher Q score. Even formerly committed detractors like New York Times columnist Bill Kristol are clinging to the Obama bandwagon (or at least reluctantly walking behind it) and getting a little bit high from the exhaust fumes. Kristol did, after all, call Obama "formidable" and pronounce his news conference "not bad."

Why such sudden capitulation? Kristol thinks talking about dogs is a sign of good political instincts, as if people need constant reminding that they've elected a real American with real American dilemmas, like whether to get a mutt or a purebred and how to get their kids to walk it like they said they

would (with Rahm Emanuel in charge at the White House, I doubt this dog will go unattended).

But are symbolic notions of real Americanness why so many people, regardless of their political leanings, really, really, really want the Obamas to get a dog? I don't think so. Nor do I think the canine question is grabbing headlines simply because dogs are easier and more fun to think about than, say, auto industry bailouts. Instead, I suspect that we want the Obamas to get a dog for the same reasons a lot of us want dogs. Our favorability ratings tend to be consistently positive in their eyes.

Dogs not only never think we're fat, they generally don't notice when we make a mistake. Even if they did, they'd never judge us for it, or rate us negatively in a poll, or hand Congress back to the GOP at the midterms.

The same cannot be said of the American people. For all the giddiness and unalloyed optimism of the interlude between Nov. 4 and Jan. 20, for all the ways in which the freshness of Obama's victory masks the stink of the world's problems, most of us know that right now is the easy part. No matter what, Obama will never again be loved quite the way folks are loving him right now. He will never again be in the position of not yet having screwed up. He will never again be the beneficiary of such unconditional, drool-inducing love – at least not from humans. Someone get this man a dog immediately. And maybe one for his daughters too.

**Los Angeles Times**

**LAUSD – a crisis too good to waste**

**Budget cuts are coming, but they bring needed change to the L.A. school system.**

**Patt Morrison**

**December 11, 2008**

That's not the piney whiff of Christmas you smell – it's the saltier scent of revolt.

Angry Chicago workers are occupying the factory that shut down and fired them on three days' notice. Angry stockholders picketed on Wall Street, one carrying a scrawled cardboard sign admonishing brokers to "Jump, You [bleeps]." Angry taxpayers fume about CEOs who pocket bonus millions as their stock value shrivels, or who fly private jets to D.C. to beg for tax money.

The national mood is for throwing the bums out. "Change" now feels like it has an "or else" tacked on.



This week, the head guy's head rolled at the Los Angeles Unified School District. The man who navigated the U.S. Navy to become a vice admiral got deep-sixed from a job that turned out to be even harder: superintendent of the LAUSD.

David L. Brewer departs with a half-million-dollar contract buyout. The cartoonist and poet Tony Peyser told me he thinks Brewer should get paid in "tiny amounts at odd increments" by the same loused-up payroll system that's cost the district tens of millions of dollars and still can't get all the teachers' paychecks exactly right.

The LAUSD is one of the few institutions that touches almost every life in the city – even if it's just because we all pay taxes to support it. And for years, the LAUSD has been the can't-do institution. The billion-dollar Belmont Learning Center construction disaster. The payroll mess. Kids flunking. Kids dropping out.

"The notion of the district being in crisis has been with us for at least 15 years," says Charles Kerchner of Claremont Graduate University. He studies the LAUSD, bless him, and has coauthored the book "Learning From L.A: Institutional Change in American Public Education."

Brewer is getting out while the getting is good, before the biggest state budget cut tsunami hits. The word's come down from Sacramento: At least \$200 million has to go from the district's \$8.6-billion budget this year, and another \$400 million next year.

This, as Ted Mitchell, president of the State Board of Education, told me, is "a crisis too good to waste." Lean times force change in a way that flush times can't. Brewer's exit only adds to the momentum. Ideally, we would leave classroom spending unscathed but force a reinvention of the wheel at Beaudry – shorthand for the LAUSD headquarters (on Beaudry Avenue) and shorthand for bureaucracy.

Sandra Tsing Loh, who talks and writes entertainingly of her fury not at the particular school her kids go to (which she finds heroic and effective) but at the LAUSD, told me parents have had enough of being summoned to protest budget cuts "on behalf of our children." Because "we are given no say in what the billions are spent on," Loh fulminates, "we are in effect shilling for all these padded professionals" at Beaudry.

When she gets even more riled up, you can almost hear her spitting out the word that describes perhaps her biggest bad guys: "consultants." The Daily News has toted up \$173 million in deals the district made with outside

contractors, in some cases to do work that sounded like it duplicated what in-house staff does, from computer work to public and media relations.

In the LAUSD's defense, Kerchner says it comparatively puts a lot of money into instruction – 59 %, more than any big district except Chicago, at 61 %. And the LAUSD, Kerchner believes, is more willing to experiment than other districts, with magnet schools and charters and Green Dot.

Now if only it could be that creative at its downtown headquarters. As Kerchner says, the LAUSD, like many such institutions, runs on groupthink.

"Big organizations," Kerchner told me, "have a way of getting things done, which is their way and very hard to permeate."

Best case? Extreme budget cuts could offer up the opportunity to flatten out hierarchies and streamline ossified processes. "There are so many steps... between the top of the system and the kids and teachers at the bottom," Kerchner said.

For example, instead of just buying a textbook and letting teachers build classes around that, the LAUSD spends thousands of hours and millions of dollars on a massive instructional "system" that gives teachers orders, not goals, and can make as much sense as me buying a big fancy car for one trip to the grocery store.

Arnold Schwarzenegger said he wanted to blow up the boxes of government. He sure didn't have in mind being forced to do it at the point of a budget gun. But now that the moment's here, the LAUSD could make the best of it and help to restore the public's confidence in its drift to the Rodney Dangerfield of districts.

### **Los Angeles Times**

#### **Israel's crisis of leadership**

**Neither Labor, Likud, Kadima nor Meretz  
offers clear political certainties.**

**By Benny Morris**

**December 14, 2008**

Israel is in the throes of a grave crisis of leadership. General elections are scheduled for Feb. 10, and there is no widely respected or overwhelmingly popular leader in sight. Even with the existential threat of a nuclear Iran looming over the country, the candidates and party lists are unattractive, the political landscape bleak.

Ehud Olmert, the caretaker prime minister who has been running the country since 2006, is on his way to a corruption trial. Defense Minister Ehud

Barak and Benjamin Netanyahu, the heads, respectively, of the Labor Party and the Likud Party, are both discredited ex-prime ministers. Barak's back story is that he offered the Palestinians too many concessions in 2000 and garnered only a resounding "no" (along with an unprecedented wave of terrorism). Netanyahu, who was prime minister from 1996 to 1999, did nothing at all to further the peace process.

The third major candidate in February's elections is Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni, who heads the centrist Kadima party (founded in 2005) and who is a relative novice with no real experience in the crucial realm of security. And she lacks charisma.

How have we gotten to this point? For one thing, the Labor Party, which led the Zionist movement to statehood and headed Israel's governments from 1948 (when David Ben-Gurion became prime minister) to 1977, is on the ropes. Last week, polls predicted that Labor would emerge with only 12 seats in the 120-member Knesset in the coming elections, down from 19 in 2006. In 1951, Labor won 45 seats and, in 1969, 56. During the last few years the party has suffered major defections, including the 85-year-old president of Israel, Shimon Peres, who is now in Kadima, as well as Yossi Beilin, the astute dove who has abandoned politics altogether, and Avraham Burg, a longtime Knesset member turned businessman.

Likud, to be sure, emerged from the primary season with something of a face-lift, with the addition of Moshe Ya'alon, an ex-Israel Defense Forces chief of staff, and the return to its ranks of hard-liner Benny Begin, a former minister and son of party founder Menachem Begin, and Dan Meridor, a liberal former justice minister. But the voters' selection of religious extremist Moshe Feiglin and some of his supporters for the party list of Knesset candidates means that Netanyahu, if he becomes the next prime minister (as seems likely, according to the polls), will be severely hobbled in any effort to negotiate with the Palestinians or with the Arab states. No clear policy can emerge from this mishmash.

Kadima, made up in equal measure of defectors from the right and left, offers no political certainties either, though it no doubt will figure large in any future coalition government.

The left-wing Meretz party is back in the news after the recent mobilization of some of the country's leading intellectuals, including novelists Amos Oz, A.B. Yehoshua and David Grossman, on its behalf. But the polls show that the expanded party will not win more than 6 % to 7 % of the electorate.

All of this is a far cry from Zionism's first 100 years, when there was ideological certainty and single-mindedness, and when dedicated men were at the helm. During Israel's first existential crisis, in 1948, when the emergent Jewish state (population 650,000) was attacked by the Arabs, Ben-Gurion presided with a sure hand and firmly steered Israel to victory and international recognition. (Compare that with Olmert's thickheaded, hesitant leadership during the 2006 Lebanon war). Ideological yet pragmatic, Ben-Gurion labored around the clock (his children barely saw or knew him) and accrued no personal wealth (he died in a hut in the desert kibbutz of Sde Boker).

His immediate successors, whatever their shortcomings, were similarly fueled by Zionist ardor and public-mindedness. Moshe Sharett (Labor), Levi Eshkol (Labor), Golda Meir (Labor) and Menachem Begin (Likud) did not become wealthy in their jobs, and they all died, in their various ways, broken, crushed by the weight of terrible office and unforgiving circumstances. Ariel Sharon, the Likudnik turned Kadima founder who was prime minister from 2001 to 2005, and who has been in a stroke-induced coma since 2006, also was a hardheaded true believer.

The current set are a wholly different breed. Olmert, Netanyahu and Barak have all spent years amassing personal wealth, hugely helped by their years and connections in office. (Livni, in this respect, is an exception. Colleagues testify to her clean hands and austere personality.)

In a sense these self-serving, affluent leaders are an apt reflection of the development and character of Israeli society over the last few decades: a shift from the idea of the collective to the cult of individualism, from socialism to capitalism, from lean youth to middle-aged paunch.

In Israel's case, the leadership crisis also has much to do with its over-democratic electoral system of proportional representation, in which a multiplicity of small parties in the Knesset and the inevitability of weak coalition governments guarantee a relative inability to govern (or to govern for long). The mismanagement of the 2006 Lebanon war – the politicians and generals afraid to incur too many Israeli casualties out of fear of the wrath of the electorate, or to inflict too many on the Lebanese for fear of international and internal condemnation – was emblematic.

The last decades' steady erosion of the Zionist ethos has an unusual if in some ways apt representative in Avraham Burg. With him, the erosion has not merely followed the route from public service to private enterprise but also to well-publicized anti-Zionist posturing. This from a man who was chairman of the Jewish Agency and the World Zionist Organization (1995–1999) and speaker of the Knesset (1999–2003) – a veritable embodiment of Zionism.

But in his new book, "The Holocaust is Over; We Must Rise From Its Ashes," which describes his intellectual evolution, Burg argues that Israel is a sick society, "a ghetto of belligerent colonialism," "paranoid" and "schizophrenic," mostly as a result of the Holocaust. The Shoah, he writes, wields an "absolute monopoly" over "every aspect of" Israeli life. It explains, according to Burg, why Israel has been unable to make peace with the Arab world, and the Palestinians in particular, and why Israel is the "neighborhood bully."

Last I heard, Burg was trying to make a comeback by joining the expanded Meretz party, though party stalwarts and the recently mobilized intellectuals are trying to keep him at arm's length. But given its size, Meretz is irrelevant today.

Much more worrisome is the broader leadership crisis, which means that Israel after Feb. 10 will be confronting Iran, with its nuclear ambitions, and Iran's neighborhood proxies, Hamas and Hezbollah, with no firm hand on the tiller and with no widely respected figure at the helm. Perhaps the best that can be hoped for is an Israel governed during the next four years by a Netanyahu-Livni-Barak triumvirate. Without doubt, this only adds one more troubling variable for President-elect Barack Obama as he gloomily scans the Middle East for some ray of hope.

Benny Morris is the author of many books about the Israeli-Arab conflict, including, most recently, "1948: A History of the First Arab-Israeli War."

**Telegraph.co.uk**

**Second Life founder finds virtual world a "very interesting alternative to reality"**

**Providing a second life on the internet has been a route to riches for one US computer wizard, writes Andrew Cave.**

**Last Updated: 7:36PM GMT 19 Dec 2008**

Philip Rosedale doesn't look like his avatar but that, apparently is the point. The founder and chairman of Linden Labs, the US group which runs the Second Life virtual internet universe, is a blond, 40-year-old Californian with boyish good looks, while his internet alias is "a cool cowboy with a handlebar moustache"

"He doesn't look anything like me," laughs Mr Rosedale. "The great thing about Second Life is that you can be anybody you want."

He certainly doesn't resemble a classic computer geek, though that is what he claims to be. In fact, Mr Rosedale says he has been planning Second Life

since he was 15 – well before the technology that enables its virtual or parallel universe to exist in 3D came into existence.

"I was very creative and very good at making things," he says, "so I started programming. When networks started emerging, I was struck by the idea that the most fantastic thing you could possibly do was to get a whole bunch of computers together and then in some manner simulate the laws of physics.

"You could potentially, through the looking glass of a computer screen, create a world that has similar physical properties to ours.

"You could build the dream gadgets, cars, houses and stuff that you could only imagine but that are difficult to actually create in the real world."

So that's what he did and the rest is real and virtual world history. He started software company, FreeVue, when he was a 17-year-old, using it to finance his way through a physics degree at the University of California in San Diego, and later selling it to video-streaming group Real Networks, which he joined in Seattle as chief technology officer.

After three years, he stumbled on a computer chip capable of high-quality three-dimensional computer graphics, realised that his dream was now possible and quit Real Networks, moving back to San Francisco and founding Linden Labs, which he named after a street in Hayes Valley, San Francisco.

Mr Rosedale funded the business personally in the first 18 months, paying about \$1m to his six staff before recruiting angel investors and then private equity firms led by Benchmark Capital.

"It didn't take off for a long time," he recalls. "At the start it was just me and another guy sitting in a room, writing code and trying to simulate space. It arguably took until 2005 to really be viable in any visible way. It was very hard to get going. It was too big and too crazy an idea for people."

"No-one thought it could work but Benchmark recognised the parallel between what we were doing and eBay.

"They saw that it was a marketplace, a platform on which people could do business. It was like eBay without any of the restrictions of physical goods: a kind of eBay without having to actually ship anything."

Now \$1m a day of real money changes hands between people inside Second Life and Mr Rosedale, who was in the UK for the Leaders in London conference earlier this month, believes the potential is enormous.

"If you look at internet traffic today," he says, "the largest proportion of it is websites; the second largest is email.

"My prediction is that in 10 years time, the largest fraction of internet traffic will be people walking around in virtual worlds like Second Life. The web will continue to grow but the ability to do the website thing in 3D with other people there is going to be the more compelling solution."

Second Life is certainly wild and wacky. Mr Rosedale calls it "a kind of time machine that lets people do whatever they want to do after they have consumed everything in the real world".

It has produced real-money millionaires; real-life churches, universities, museums and libraries have embraced it and Sweden, the Maldives, Estonia, Colombia and Serbia have official embassies on it.

"There are so many things that are wonderful or just plain strange," he enthuses. "The big thing that's different is that your identity and the environment around you is easier to modify and therefore you can be engaged in much more of that kind of creative activity and modification than in the real world.

"There was a guy who lost 70lbs after going on Second Life. He said that every day he was tweaking something on Second Life to make it a little bit better and he got up one morning and was struck by the point that it couldn't be all that hard to make real life changes to himself so he started working out. It's really interesting."

Then, of course, there was the story last month about the real-life British couple who are divorcing after the wife discovered her husband's online alter-ego, a goatee-bearded, medallion-wearing man called Dave Barmy, fraternising with a virtual woman.

Mr Rosedale waves it away. "Second Life has made a lot more marriages than divorces," he says. There's actually a business doing wedding planning in Second Life and it is making significant amounts of real money.

"A lot of people partner in Second Life and then get together in the real world. I get a lot of emails from people that are heartwarming, telling me how Second Life changed their life."

Is this the first real-life Second Life divorce though? "Oh no, I'm sure it is not," he exclaims. "The thing about that story is that it got people saying, 'Is stuff actually real enough in there for it to have that kind of impact on people? The answer for a substantial number of people is 'yes'."

There's evidence, however, that the initial hype has faded. While Second Life has more than 13m registered subscribers, only about 5pc of them are considered active.

Second Life controversies have included a few cases of people exchanging child pornography on the site, while Linden Labs banned gambling inside Second Life last year and a spate of banking scandals led it to shut down virtual banks on the site this year.

There have also predictably been US lawsuits involving everything from Second Life land deals to copyright infringement. Linden, which employs 350 people in seven offices, including one in Brighton and is still owned by private equity groups headed by Benchmark, has a team watching over 30,000 servers to detect misuse.

Mr Rosedale is relentlessly upbeat, saying the number of active users is growing, as are Linden's revenues, derived from collecting hosting fees and commissions on currency exchange. Linden also moved into profits earlier this year, though he won't give details.

He is excited about corporate adoption of virtual worlds. US computer companies Sun Microsystems, Cisco Systems, IBM and Intel are holding strategy meetings, training sessions and staff forums in Second Life, while in the UK, accountants KPMG held a job fair there.

Some analysts are forecasting that within a decade, it may be commonplace for staff to be asked to create work avatars to communicate and network with other employees in a digital world.

"Second Life is fundamentally a new medium and there's a history of people adapting new media," Mr Rosedale says. "It happened with the internet, email, instant messaging and with TV and radio. Things happen in stages.

"If you look at the internet, selling things over it didn't happen for some time but what happened with Second Life is that a lot of companies jumped in and tried to do late-stage commercial e-commerce stuff really early on.

"They found that was inappropriate at the early stage of the market but a lot of companies are coming back now and using it for collaborative, internal capabilities. There are companies interviewing and recruiting in Second Life and using it in education. In Canada, they're training real-life border control agents on Second Life.

"There are enormous cost and environmental benefits to operating in Second Life. Companies are going to figure out how to use it to sell things to their end users."

And what about the recession? Are times about to get much tougher in the virtual world? Mr Rosedale looks triumphant. "Actually, the opposite," he



says. "When the real world becomes more difficult, there's a tendency to look at alternatives. It's not just escapist. From every perspective, Second Life is a very interesting alternative to reality.

**Los Angeles Times**

**Tight on cash? Redeem those old savings bonds**

**Roughly \$16 billion in mature certificates remain uncashed. Are you holding on to what could be instant funds?**

**Kathy M. Kristof, Personal Finance**

**December 14, 2008**

Looking for cash to tide you over during these lean times? The Treasury Department is urging Americans to quiz their parents and grandparents this holiday season about whether they squirreled away U.S. savings bonds that have stopped earning interest.

The reason: About \$16 billion of these bonds haven't been redeemed.

The government suspects that the owners have either died or forgotten about the investments that they bought in the 1940s, '50s, '60s and '70s.

Some of them are engraved certificates suitable for framing. But if you find one gathering dust in Grandma's attic, know that it is worth much more than its face value – perhaps almost 10 times as much.

In other words, a bond that says it's worth \$100 could be worth nearly \$1,000. But don't be fooled into thinking that the oldest ones are the most precious.

A \$100 bond issued in January 1943, which stopped earning interest in 1983, is worth just \$399.80. But a \$100 bond issued in January 1965, which earned a more generous rate until 2005, is worth a cool \$936.44.

Bonds issued after 1965, however, earned interest for just 30 years. As a result, a \$100 bond issued in January 1966 is worth just \$512.52 today – a bit more than half the value of the bond issued a year before.

If your search turns up a bond certificate, you can find out how much it is worth with the Treasury Department's savings bond calculator at [www.TreasuryDirect.gov](http://www.TreasuryDirect.gov).

You can plug in the bond's serial number, or enter the bond series (EE, E, I or "savings note") and the month and year the bond was issued.

The resulting chart will show the original purchase price and how much it's currently worth. If the bond is still earning interest, the chart also will tell you the interest rate.

If you have multiple bonds – millions of people bought as many as a dozen bonds a year through payroll deductions – you can keep plugging in bond numbers or issue dates and the calculator will create a running tally.

If you have misplaced a savings bond, you can use the Treasury Hunt tool on the TreasuryDirect website, which searches using the owner's Social Security number.

If you find a bond through Treasury Hunt, your next step is to ask the government to replace it or to send you the amount of money it's worth. To do that, you must submit a form called PD F 1048, which you can either download from the website or receive by mail after making a request through the website.

Treasury Hunt, however, goes back only to 1974. If you're convinced that you own a bond purchased before then, you need to fill out the PD F 1048 form to have the Treasury search its paper files.

If you suspect your late parents or grandparents owned savings bonds, you can find out by entering their Social Security numbers into the Treasury Hunt tool. If that turns up any unredeemed bonds, you'll need to go through the same process as if you'd lost a bond.

But in this case the Treasury will ask for additional documentation to show that you are the rightful heir, said Stephen Meyerhardt, spokesman for the savings bond program.

If there are multiple heirs, another form on the Treasury's website allows you to ask for the bond's value to be divided and for each share be sent to its owner.

If you're looking for the fastest way to get cash for your savings bonds, take them to a local bank, credit union or savings and loan. Most serve as redemption agents for savings bonds.

At a time when money is scarce, Meyerhardt said, make sure you're not sitting on bonds that are no longer earning interest.

"Some people know they have them, but they don't want to cash them in for some reason," he said. "These are registered government securities, and we stand ready to replace them or cash them out to the person who is entitled at any time."

**Los Angeles Times**

**It's no time to panic**

**Economic crisis is leading some to abandon time-honored wisdom.**

**Jonah Goldberg**

**December 16, 2008**

We are in what might be called the Great Freakout of 2008.

The Federal Reserve is a hair's breadth from pushing interest rates to zero percent. After that, all that's left is offering a free set of steak knives with every bag of cash. We're moving quickly toward nationalizing the domestic auto industry, fast on the heels of partially nationalizing banking. The outgoing Bush administration is having a clearance sale on its few remaining items of fiscal restraint, while the incoming Obama crew is promising infrastructure "investments" the likes of which we haven't seen since the 1950s.

Meanwhile, journalistic Brahmins, who last year would have spontaneously combusted at any hint of government meddling in the Fourth Estate, now openly debate whether we should revive the Federal Writers' Project to give jobs to scribes thrown out in the cold by newspaper downsizing.

The freakout is understandable. Economic trust is breaking down. Investors are buying Treasury bills that pay no interest because they're scared to leave their money even in insured banks. Consumer spending has dropped off a cliff. Some analysts forecast an annualized GDP rate of negative 8 % for the fourth quarter. Soon you'll be able to pay for a Cadillac with chickens.

But here's a point nearly everyone understands from his own life experience: It is not a good idea to make big, life-altering decisions when you're freaking out.

Everyone's had moments when everything appears to be falling apart. (If you haven't, here's a heads up: You're long overdue.) And these are precisely the moments when we should take a walk around the block. After all, we adopt healthy habits and strong principles because we trust that they will minimize chaos and misery in our lives. The inevitable crises don't call for trading that course for eternal panic.

The same holds true with public policy. George W. Bush's harshest critics certainly understood this point when it came to 9/11. Their narrative holds that the Bush administration and its enablers, driven mad by 9/11, made wholesale

changes to our constitutional order in the name of an elusive "security" that were unwarranted, counterproductive and immoral. I don't think the Patriot Act was overkill, but anyone who has dealt with the absurdities of air travel in recent years knows the drawbacks of policy by freakout.

But now that we have the equivalent of an economic 9/11, much of the same crowd sees its chance to lock in ideas that would be unthinkable during saner times, this time in the name of "economic security." As Rahm Emanuel, President-elect Barack Obama's incoming chief of staff, said last month, "You don't ever want a crisis to go to waste; it's an opportunity to do important things that you would otherwise avoid."

So much for "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

Contrary as it might seem these days, economic knowledge is cumulative. We know things today that we didn't know 50 or 100 years ago. As Christopher DeMuth, outgoing president of the American Enterprise Institute, noted in a recent speech, we know that tightening the money supply at a moment like this is among the worst things you can do. The United States tightened money at the dawn of the Great Depression, and that's one of the reasons it was "Great." Today, based on that knowledge, we're doing the opposite.

And the more we know, the richer we get. If you plotted a trend line of Western prosperity since the dawn of capitalism, you'd see a line moving reliably upward over centuries. Zoom in close on any given period and the more jagged the line appears, zigging up and zagging down like a stock that's volatile on a given day, but trending steadily upward over the year.

Look at that line from, say, 1929 to 1939, and sure, there was a lot more zagging down than zigging up. But in part that's because policymakers thought the crisis was proof that capitalism itself had been discredited.

Today you can hear similar talk from a chorus of progressives, convinced that *laissez faire* is dead and we must now rethink everything, reinvent our economic order or return to what New York Times columnist Paul Krugman calls "New Deal economics."

By all means let the nation do what it must to keep the downward dip as short and shallow as possible. But let's not, in a quest for security, abandon good habits and forget the hard-learned lessons that have given us so much.

**Los Angeles Times**

**Woman undergoes face transplant in Cleveland**

**Surgeons at the Cleveland Clinic replace about 80 % of her face with skin and muscles harvested from a cadaver. It's the most extensive such operation ever performed and the first in the U.S.**

**By Karen Kaplan and Shari Roan**

**December 17, 2008**

A woman being treated at the Cleveland Clinic has an almost entirely new face following the most extensive facial transplant ever performed, the medical center said Tuesday. The surgery was the first face transplant in the U.S. and the fourth in the world.

Few details about the patient have been released in advance of a news conference scheduled for today. About 80 % of the patient's face was replaced with skin and muscles harvested from a cadaver.

The family of the patient has asked that her name and age not be released so she can remain anonymous, the clinic said. It was not clear when the surgery took place.

Dr. Maria Siemionow, the Cleveland Clinic plastic surgeon who performed the marathon procedure, is well known among microsurgery specialists, and colleagues were quick to praise the achievement. They said face transplants would become routine in the coming years.

"We're on the threshold of a whole new way of correcting defects," said Dr. Warren C. Breidenbach of the University of Louisville, who performed the first hand transplant in the United States.

Siemionow and her colleagues at the Cleveland Clinic spent years preparing for the surgery, practicing on animals and doing trial runs on 20 cadavers, said Dr. James Bradley, a professor of plastic surgery at UCLA Medical Center who has seen several presentations by Siemionow at research meetings. About 50 candidate patients have been considered for the procedure.

"They've done their homework," Bradley said of the transplant team.

The idea of performing a face transplant dawned on Siemionow when she was training as a hand surgeon with Breidenbach in Louisville, Ky.

Many of the patients she treated had suffered extensive injuries from burns, and though hands could be repaired and arms and torsos covered by

clothes, their faces remained permanently scarred and on display, she wrote in a memoir published last year titled "Transplanting a Face."

"Those who suffered extensive damage to their faces would forever be socially crippled in a society that appears to value beauty above all other human characteristics," she wrote.

The first facial transplant was performed in 2005 on Isabelle Dinoire, a 41-year-old mother of two in France, after the lower part of her face was mauled by her pet Labrador. Two other individuals have received face transplants since then – a man in France who suffered from a genetic condition and a man in China who was mauled by a bear who had attacked his sheep.

The surgery in Cleveland probably lasted six to 10 hours as surgeons painstakingly grafted the blood vessels, muscles and skin from the donor onto the patient, Bradley said. It could take months before the nerves have healed enough to gauge the success of the procedure, he added.

After the swelling subsides, the patient won't look exactly like the donor. "You look more like a cousin" of the donor, Bradley said. "The bone structure is your own, but the skin is from another person."

Transplanting a face isn't any more of a technical feat than transplanting a hand, surgeons said. But a face transplant has a unique set of complications.

"You have to wait for a donor, and that's not easy," Breidenbach said. "A lot of donor families are in shock and grief because their loved one died and they have to donate a very visible part of the person."

Finding the right patient is even more difficult. Candidates for the surgery at Cleveland Clinic "undergo evaluation by the most rigorous clinical and psychological examinations devised," Siemionow wrote.

The patient's psychological state is especially important because recovery depends most of all on a willingness to adopt a healthy lifestyle that will minimize the risk of infection, Siemionow said.

All transplant patients commit themselves to a lifetime of drugs that suppress their immune systems so their bodies won't reject the donor tissue. Compared with internal organs such as a kidney or liver, the risk of rejection with a transplant involving skin is especially high, Bradley said.

The immunosuppressant drugs have severe side effects and could shorten a patient's life by as much as 10 years, doctors said.

The surgery is sure to be controversial, but Michael H. Shapiro, a law professor and bioethics expert at the USC Gould School of Law, said it was easily justifiable.

"This is not Botox," he said. "We are talking about people whose life prospects are impaired because the human race can't handle disfigurement. That's just a brute fact. We can try to overcome it, but in the meantime, what are these people supposed to do?"

As word spread over the last few years that the Cleveland Clinic intended to conduct a face transplant, Siemionow was touched by the outpouring of interest from patients willing to undertake such a drastic procedure.

"There is a need," she wrote.

### ***3. Read and consider the editorials:***

**Analyze editorial writing by filling in the chart below, show how the writers address the components of the editorials**

<b>Components</b>	
Present position	
Facts to support the position	
Opposing position	
Facts to support opposing position	
Challenge opposing position with facts	
Appeal to reader	

### **Analyze the authors' purpose**

- *What current event or problem has influenced the authors to write the editorial?*
- *Are the authors defending a particular point of view?*
- *For whom is the material intended? (e.g. Journalists, academics, politicians, businessmen, students, the general public etc.).*
- *How do the authors' arguments or perspective relate to other material in the field?*

**Los Angeles Times**

**REWRITING THE RULES**

**Bush rewrites the rules**

**Last-minute changes being pushed through by the administration, such as altering H-2A visa rules, are creating disasters that Barack Obama will have to reverse beginning Jan. 20.**

**December 16, 2008**

The anticipation is almost unbearable. For some, it seems as if Dec. 25 will never come. Others can hardly wait for Sunday and the start of eight days of miraculous light and celebration. And for those whose gifts arrive with camels and kings, the lapse between now and Jan. 6 feels like an eternity. To the season of yearning we now add Jan. 20. That's when President Bush will finally set down his pen.

Not content to leave office as the most unpopular president in recent history, Bush is cementing his legacy of hardheaded autocracy by pushing through a record number of last-minute and particularly noxious changes in federal regulations. Bypassing congressional debate and often receiving public comments through government websites, the administration has in recent months issued dozens of "midnight regulations" that in some cases could take years to reverse. This isn't just leaving a stamp on the country; it's more like inking a tattoo.

Although other presidents have crafted rules the next administration might not, none has been so aggressive or destructive as Bush. His administration has attacked environmental safeguards, reproductive rights and public safety. It has acted to permit uranium mining near the Grand Canyon, curtail women's access to birth control, allow visitors to carry loaded guns in national parks – which are among the safest public places in the country – and open millions of acres of unspoiled land to mining.

Last week, the Department of Labor weakened the nation's already flawed agricultural guest worker program. The new H-2A visa rules, which take effect in January, revise the way wages are calculated and will lower them substantially. In California, farmworker advocates say, the current \$9.72 hourly wage would drop by 18 %. The new rules also reduce requirements for growers to prove they have made a good-faith effort to recruit U.S. workers and limit how much they have to reimburse workers for their trips home. This is precisely what opponents of immigration reform feared: policies that disadvantage citizens and encourage the easy exploitation of migrants



Furthermore, the changes won't even narrow the labor gap. In California, only about 1 % of the state's 450,000 farmworkers are recruited through the H-2A visa program, and growers say the rule changes won't help them; they'll continue to push for the Agricultural Job Opportunities, Benefits and Security Act, a bipartisan effort that would free migrant workers to move among employers and eventually allow them to gain legal status and become U.S. citizens.

Once Barack Obama is sworn in, he'll have the power to clean up these regulatory disasters. That alone makes Jan. 20 feel like Christmas, Hanukkah and Three Kings Day rolled into one.

### **Los Angeles Times**

#### **Targeting L.A.'s 18th Street gang**

**New laws and a lawsuit give Los Angeles prosecutors new tools to go after the gang and its ill-gotten gains.**

**December 14, 2008**

Part of Los Angeles is run, according to allegations in a lawsuit filed Monday, by a man locked up in federal prison in Florence, Colo. The city attorney's office asserts that Frank Martinez, also called "Puppet," directs the criminal activities of the 18th Street gang in a part of Pico-Union, controlling the sale and distribution of drugs, making rules for conduct and administration in his zone of influence, presiding over the collection of "rent" from businesses under the gang's "protection" and ordering punishment of people who cross him.

An adjacent area, according to the same suit, is run by Sergio Pantoja, known as "Tricky," from the Metropolitan Detention Center in downtown Los Angeles. The area around MacArthur Park is said to be controlled by Ruben Castro, called "Nite Owl" and "Tecolote," from the Terminal Island Federal Correctional Institution.

The notion that Los Angeles is carved into territories run by criminal enterprises may strike residents as something out of a movie script set in the wrong time (didn't organized crime here end in the 1950s?) or the wrong place (don't the Sopranos work out of New Jersey?)

But the allegations are not new. For more than a decade, police and prosecutors have been charging, and often convicting, 18th Street gang members for criminal actions that oppress communities and undermine the

quality of life of the people trying to live, work, worship and go to school there.

Still, the gang persists. It isn't possible to snuff out its destructive power simply by arresting leaders who, prosecutors say, use their federal cells as throne rooms from which they run their kingdoms.

What if the gang's shot-callers and godfathers could be broken financially? What if their riches, gained from squeezing money and spirit out of their neighbors, could be confiscated in civil suits and used at least in part to compensate the communities they have so successfully oppressed for so long?

That's the thinking behind a bill signed into law last year, a follow-up bill by state Sen. Gil Cedillo (D-Los Angeles) and Assemblyman Kevin de Leon (D-Los Angeles) this year, and last week's suit filed by City Atty. Rocky Delgadillo.

The earlier bill limited cities, counties and states to going after gang assets that were gained through criminal means. No one sued; causation was too hard to prove. The new version confronts the gang as a nuisance and permits officials to try to get members to pay for the damage they have caused, regardless of where their money came from.

If Delgadillo's lawsuit is a gimmick, filed to get a little media attention and soon forgotten, we don't need it. Gangs too often have provided fodder for political grandstanders. Nor do we need it if it's simply a cover for heavy-handed tactics like civil forfeiture, in which prosecutors take the cars or other property of accused criminals before proving their case.

But this suit appears to be the real thing. It could work. It could be, in some respects, like the suits brought by Morris Dees and the Southern Poverty Law Center to defang the Ku Klux Klan and other racist organizations that preyed on Southern communities. It could help undermine the power of gangs over Los Angeles neighborhoods – if the city proceeds with equal measures of intelligence and resolve.

City lawyers must recognize that, similarities aside, the gang from which they are seeking money is not the Klan. Even without sheets and hoods, Klan members were always separate from the people they sought to victimize; that separation was the essence of their self-image.

In Los Angeles, by contrast, the line between gang perpetrator and victim is permeable, and sometimes nonexistent. Youth, for their own mental and physical safety, often must adopt gang dress and attitude. The same teenager

sized up by a cop as a gangbanger could just as accurately be described by a gang services worker as a casualty, in need of education, work, counseling and hope. Violent criminals should not be coddled, but neither should troubled youth be criminalized.

The "tough on crime" approach to gangs all too often winds up targeting youth on the cusp of gang life. Instead of diverting them, it treats them as hardened criminals and punishes them so severely that their opportunity for a life outside the gang is put out of reach. The city attorney's gang injunctions became a snare that captured young people, branded them as gang members and never – until this year – provided them an opportunity to get off the injunction list, no matter how far they sought to distance themselves from their former gang ties. (The city attorney's new "exit ramp" from the list is a wise step in the right direction.)

City lawyers will have their hands full proving in court that a gang is the costly cause of a community's decline, and not just its effect. And they will have to use wisdom to determine when to keep their hands off an asset – a gold watch bought by a gang member for his grandmother, for example – because grabbing it does more harm in the neighborhood than good.

The biggest challenge may come at the end of the process, when the damages are awarded and turned over, as the law requires, to the "governing body" of the appropriate jurisdiction. The funds, in other words, will go to the City Council, which for years employed insufficient oversight over gang programs and this year gave up control over prevention and intervention programs to the mayor's office.

City Hall is full of special funds that were meant to reimburse communities for nuisances of one kind or another, but seldom do residents have any say over how the money is spent, and too often council members use the funds to promote their own political interests.

The council shouldn't wait to discuss how any money from nuisance suits against gangs will be spent. Now is the time, before any money comes in, and before anyone knows how much there will be, to hammer out a process that will allow neighborhoods to take part in discussing how they should be compensated. The council must act with as much creativity and diligence as the lawmakers who drafted the bill did, and as the city lawyers who are trying to put it to work are, so far, demonstrating.

**Los Angeles Times**

**Obama's choice on education**

**Which way Obama will push the nation on schools is unclear, but the priorities must be accountability, funding and learning.**

**December 12, 2008**

Education was relegated to the outskirts of the presidential campaign this year, always a fourth or fifth runner-up to such pressing matters as the economy, Iraq and healthcare. With few people asking penetrating questions on the issue, Barack Obama was able to sound as though he sided both with traditionalist teachers unions and with accountability-minded reformers.

Now that it's time to name an Education secretary, no one is sure in which direction he's headed. Stanford University professor Linda Darling-Hammond, who was named to Obama's education transition team, is one of the most-mentioned candidates. As a severe critic of the No Child Left Behind Act and an opponent of merit pay for teachers, she is favored by teachers unions. The accountability camp prefers names such as New York schools Chancellor Joel Klein, who has spearheaded large-scale reforms in the nation's largest school district. One side says that what students need are major improvements in health and social services, as well as drastic increases in school funding. The other says that schools wrongly lay the blame for students' low achievement on poverty instead of on lackluster teaching and low expectations.

Both are right. Schools are short the money needed to turn barely literate teenagers into employable young adults, and No Child Left Behind is riddled with faults. It unfairly punishes many schools and has had the effect of narrowing curricula. Yet greater accountability also has led to significant improvements, and new infusions of cash must be contingent on evidence that they result in stronger achievement. Higher pay for teachers? Absolutely – as long as it's tied to merit pay and an end to tenure.

It would be a shame for the reform movement to lose momentum at this point. For all of its weaknesses, the federal accountability law has pushed schools into higher gear. For more than a decade, this country's students ranked in the middle among industrialized nations in math. In the most recent round of testing, they were in the top third, the result of focused math instruction backed up by regular testing. In addition, Darling-Hammond's early attacks on Teach for America, a nonprofit organization that recruits some of the brightest college graduates into the teaching profession, give us little confidence that she would support innovative approaches to education.

At the same time, reformers must be open to how badly No Child Left Behind itself needs reform. After years of public battering, schools need a leader who is less an ideologue than a pragmatist, who puts children ahead of both union and political priorities.

**Los Angeles Times**

**California taxes, California needs**

**It's one thing for California to pay more in federal taxes than it gets back; it's another to be hurt by it.**

**December 13, 2008**

Usually it's conservatives who argue that some jurisdiction or another is being mistreated because it gets less back in spending or services than it pays in taxes. Don't raise our taxes, they argue, until we get our money's worth. But now Democrats are the ones arguing for federal help based on California's contribution to the national Treasury. They're partly wrong, and partly right.

They're wrong if they believe the feds will sweep away California's \$14.8 – billion shortfall in the current fiscal year, the \$25 billion in the coming fiscal year and, while they're at it, the state's structural deficit, legislative Republicans' stranglehold on budgeting and voters' penchant for passing initiatives they can't afford. This page has designated that sort of wish-upon-a-star approach to budgeting a dead end.

And they're wrong if they now buy into the conservative argument that Californians' taxes should be considered fees for service, and that they have a right to get back a dollar in goods or programs for every dollar they pay. Taxes support the nation as a whole, and if more tax money from this state goes to, say, Mississippi because that state needs more federal help, that's the way it should be.

Within reason, of course; California should not be expected to damage its economy for the sake of Mississippi, in part because that would decrease Californians' ability to contribute to federal efforts in any state.

Assembly Speaker Karen Bass (D-Los Angeles) is on to something when she calls for increasing federal contributions in carefully targeted areas. In recent meetings in Washington, Bass and Assembly Budget Chairwoman Noreen Evans (D-Santa Rosa) pinpointed several programs for which more rational federal reimbursements would help not only this state but the nation. For example, if California were like other states and got more than the bare minimum Medicaid assistance percentage, Medi-Cal reimbursements would not have been cut so deeply, physicians would not be leaving in droves, more

hospitals would not be close to collapse, and much of California's wealth would not have to be pumped into the costs of delayed medical care. The same goes for California's allocation from the State Children's Health Insurance Program.

And of course, if the federal government took responsibility for paying the costs of illegal immigration, the state would not be as deep in the hole on programs such as prisons and healthcare.

Bass is right to insist that the feds meet their obligations. California is not entitled to a bailout, but a smart investment in the state would benefit the entire nation.

**Los Angeles Times**

**Obama's green team**

**Obama's choices to lead the Energy Department and the EPA must seize the opportunity to turn around national policy.**

**December 15, 2008**

The current Energy secretary, Samuel W. Bodman, is a former chemical-company CEO and financial-services executive. The next one is likely to be a Nobel Prize-winning physicist who runs a national laboratory dedicated to renewable energy, next-generation biofuels and other technological solutions to global warming. If there's a clearer signal of the radical course correction we can expect under President Obama, we've yet to see it.

Seldom have Washington's corridors of power been as well positioned for a change of direction as they will be next year on environmental issues. The chairs of the committees that oversee energy and environmental matters in both houses of Congress are California Democrats who would bleed green if you cut them, and the Cabinet choices Obama is expected to announce this week are to President Bush's appointees what gardeners are to gophers.

Obama's choice for Energy secretary is Steven Chu, director of the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. Though the job mostly entails overseeing nuclear waste and weapons, he also will direct government research into alternative energy and be in charge of upgrading the electricity grid to handle new power sources. He will bring scientific rigor to a position that has lacked it for the last eight years.

For head of the Environmental Protection Agency, Obama has reportedly picked Lisa Jackson, who spent 16 years at the EPA as an enforcement officer before becoming head of New Jersey's chief environmental agency. Her biggest job will be cleaning up the mess left behind by her predecessor,

Stephen L. Johnson, a career EPA bureaucrat whose primary qualification was that he was willing to obey every directive handed down from his superiors, no matter how severely they undermined his agency's mission. Jackson will have her hands full trying to undo the damage done to wildlife protections and pollution standards by the most environmentally irresponsible administration since the EPA's founding in 1970. If confirmed, she should start by granting California the waiver to regulate tailpipe emissions of greenhouse gases that was denied for political reasons by Johnson.

Also said to be on tap: Carol Browner, President Clinton's EPA chief, in an as-yet-undefined position coordinating climate-change policies, and Nancy Sutley, a Los Angeles deputy mayor overseeing energy and environmental issues, as head of the White House Council on Environmental Quality. Together, they'll aim to head off the worst effects of global warming, a vast challenge that will be complicated by the nation's economic woes. Yet the political support for the needed changes is enormous – if they can't get it done, it may never happen.

### **Los Angeles Times**

#### **Zimbabwe, through South Africa**

#### **Zimbabwe's Mugabe won't yield to Western pressure.**

#### **Maybe his key ally, South Africa, should step up.**

**December 13, 2008**

In one of his most strongly worded statements directed at the government of Zimbabwe to date, President Bush recently joined a chorus of international leaders and statesmen in calling for its monstrous president, Robert Mugabe, to step down. As he has done since the United States first started imposing targeted sanctions against his country in 2002, Mugabe shrugged and blamed Western interference for Zimbabwe's problems. Memo to Bush et al: This strategy is not working.

Mugabe's tyrannous rule and refusal to cede power have turned Zimbabwe from a relatively prosperous country into a sinkhole of poverty and disease whose populace, lately suffering from cholera, is fleeing in droves and threatening the stability of its neighbors. The situation is so bad that even African leaders who are ordinarily reluctant to interfere in the internal affairs of other nations are calling for military intervention; Kenyan Prime Minister Raila Odinga and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Desmond Tutu have both recently pleaded for international troops. No one is eager to send any, least of all the United States, already bogged down in two Middle Eastern wars. Yet if the military option is still off the table, there's another potential solution that



hasn't been sufficiently explored. The world may be directing its anger and sanctions at the wrong country.

Zimbabwe is deeply reliant on South Africa, its key trading partner and the source of much of its imported energy, food, machinery and other goods. Some say that cutting off these resources would only harm Zimbabwe's poor, yet in a country with inflation running at 231,000,000 %, it's hard to imagine how they could be any worse off; meanwhile, without Pretoria's support, Mugabe would be unable to pay the military and police forces he needs to prop up his regime. Yet South Africa has refused to exercise its vast leverage, paralyzed by fears of angering a domestic contingency that still sees Mugabe as a hero who liberated his country from its racist white rulers.

In the 1980s, the United States and other countries organized an economic protest against South Africa's apartheid government that helped bring about its end. The country has made great democratic strides since then, but it still has a ways to go; as the world acknowledged the 60th anniversary on Wednesday of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it pointed up how many of them are being violated in Zimbabwe while Pretoria looks the other way. Perhaps with a little more 1980s-style activism, South Africa would get the push it apparently needs to join the fold of responsible democracies and end the suffering at its doorstep.

### **Los Angeles Times**

#### **How to try terrorists**

**A chaotic hearing for Khalid Shaikh Mohammed and four other defendants at Guantanamo Bay puts the spotlight back on the value of military commissions.**

**December 10, 2008**

In confessing responsibility for the 9/11 attacks, Khalid Shaikh Mohammed and four other defendants may have hastened just punishment for their roles in an atrocity that killed almost 3,000 people. Satisfaction at that possibility is tempered, however, by a realization that the way these "high value" detainees have been treated has sullied this country's reputation. It will be up to President-elect Barack Obama to repair the damage.

At a chaotic hearing Monday at Guantanamo Bay Naval Base, the defendants signaled a willingness to enter guilty pleas, but later declined when questions arose about whether they would be eligible for the death penalty – or, as they see it, martyrdom – if they weren't convicted by a military jury.



Even these unrepentant killers deserved better treatment, but the silver lining is that once their case is finally resolved, it might be easier for the next administration to reform or replace the military commissions created to try suspected terrorists.

#### Chaos at Guantanamo tribunal

Mohammed and his co-defendants are the poster children in arguments by the Bush administration for why Guantanamo detainees shouldn't be tried in civilian courts. Evidence ties them to terrorist activity, but some of it wouldn't be admissible because it was obtained using "alternative" interrogation methods (i.e. torture). Moreover, public access to some of the evidence might threaten national security. With them out of the way, there is a less compelling case for trying other detainees in military courts.

Whatever happens to Mohammed and his fellow defendants, the new administration is likely to be pressed by the courts, as the Bush administration was, to refine the procedures governing the detention and trial of suspected terrorists. In June, the U.S. Supreme Court held that inmates at Guantanamo have the constitutional right to challenge their confinement by petitioning for a writ of habeas corpus. Last week, the justices said they would rule on whether the government may indefinitely imprison a legal U.S. resident designated an "enemy combatant."

Finally, although administration officials have said that waterboarding no longer will be used, the CIA retains the right under the law to use alternative interrogation methods that are prohibited by the Army Field Manual. Obama, who has promised to close that loophole, must ensure that Congress doesn't reopen it.

Mohammed's reappearance is a reminder that the terrorist threat is real and that some of those detained after 9/11 are ruthless men who wish the worst for this country. The tragedy is that the means used to apprehend, interrogate and punish terrorists has caused collateral damage to both innocent individuals and this country's image. Obama must do better.

***4. Read the advertisements and consider the advertising language. The following guides (of Asa Berger, professor emeritus of Broadcast & Electronic Communication Arts at San Francisco State University) can help foster an awareness of this process. Use them for class or group discussions or your own individual analysis of ads or commercials. You may be surprised by the messages and meanings you uncover.***

## **How to Analyze an Advertisement**

1. What is the general ambience of the advertisement? What mood does it create? How does it do this?
2. What is the design of the advertisement? Does it use axial balance or some other form? How are the basic components or elements arranged?
3. What is the relationship between pictorial elements and written material and what does this tell us?
4. What is the use of space in the advertisement? Is there a lot of 'white space' or is it full of graphic and written elements?
5. What signs and symbols do we find? What role do they play in the ad's impact?
6. If there are figures (men, women, children, animals) what are they like? What can be said about their facial expressions, poses, hairstyle, age, sex, hair color, ethnicity, education, occupation, relationships (of one to the other)?
7. What does the background tell us? Where is the advertisement taking place? What significance does this background have?
8. What action is taking place in the advertisement and what significance does it have? (This might be described as the ad's "plot.")
9. What theme or themes do we find in the advertisement? What is it about? (The plot of an advertisement may involve a man and a woman drinking but the theme might be jealousy, faithlessness, ambition, passion, etc.)
10. What about the language used? Does it essentially provide information or does it try to generate some kind of emotional response? Or both?
11. What techniques are used by the copywriter: humor, alliteration, definitions" of life, comparisons, and so on?
12. What typefaces are used and what impressions do they convey?
13. What about aesthetic decisions? If the advertisement is a photograph, what kind of a shot is it? What significance do long shots, medium shots, close-up shots have?
14. What sociological, political, economic or cultural attitudes are indirectly reflected in the advertisement? An advertisement may be about a pair of blue jeans but it might, indirectly, reflect such matters as sexism, alienation, stereotyped thinking, conformism, generational conflict, loneliness, elitism, and so on.

## **SOUND ASLEEP PILLOWS**

### **ORIGINAL PILLOW**

**£19.99**

### **MEMORY FOAM PILLOW**

**£29.99**

**FROM APPROX USD \$37.18 / €25.19**



Lying in bed and drifting off to sleep listening to your favourite music is heaven. Be it whale song, the sound of waves breaking on the shore, or Born Slippy if you're a bit strange. It's not so much fun for your partner of course, and even less fun for you if, as inevitably happens, you end up throttling yourself on your headphone cord or wake up with aching ears from wearing ear buds too long. Enter the Sound Asleep Pillow Original and the new ergonomically designed, contour moulding Sound Asleep Memory Foam Pillow. Both are ingenious and deeply comfortable pillows that have buried deep within them, a speaker. Inaudible to anyone except the dozer, (and even the princess who was so fussy about peas in her mattress wouldn't be able to feel the speaker in her pillow) the pillows have a phone jack at one end that will plug into your iPod/MP3 player/radio, and play your music gently

through the pillow. Now your partner can sleep in peace, and you can listen to whatever you like! Nodding off has never been so wonderfully self-indulgent.

## **Features**

### *Sound Asleep Original:*

A super comfy, hollowfibre filled pillow with a built-in speaker.

A removeable wire that attaches the pillow to your MP3 or other music player via its headphone jack.

The speaker is buried so when you are nestled in you can hear clearly without disturbing those around you.

You can't feel the speaker so no uncomfy lumps or bumps.

Fabric is made from 50 % cotton and 50 % polyester.

The connector cable is approximately 124 cm long.

Suitable for ages 14 years+.

Size: 66 × 37 × 18 cm.

### *Sound Asleep Memory Foam Pillow:*

The memory foam is ergonomically designed for head and neck support.

The foam has small holes which help circulate air and improve the sound quality.

The pillow moulds to your top half's natural body shape.

The built in speaker allows you to listen to music in bed without disturbing those around you.

The pillow connects to any music source.

The memory foam helps relieve neck tension and tinnitus.

The pillow's cover is made of 80 % cotton and 20 % polyester.

The filling is 100 % Memory Foam.

The connector cable is approximately 124 cm long.

Suitable for ages 14 years+.

Size: 49 × 30 × 8.5 cm.

**TWILIGHT UMBRELLAS  
COLOUR PHASING STARS**

**£19.99**

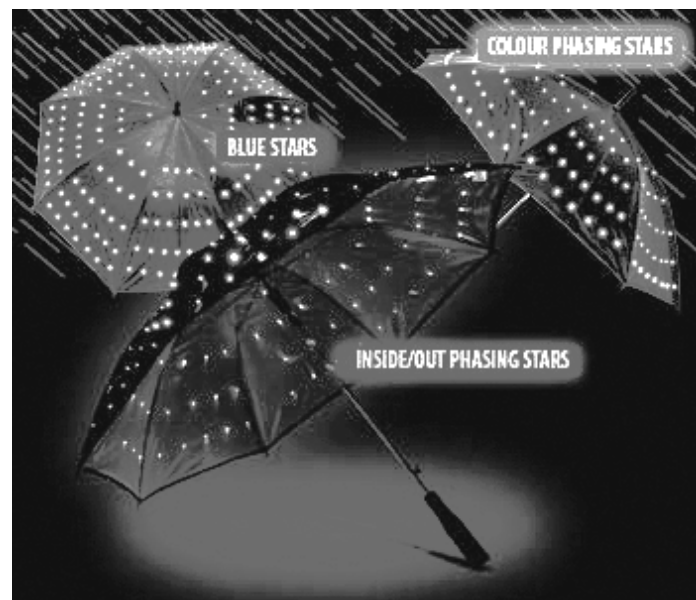
**INSIDE AND OUT PHASING STARS**

**£24.99**

**BLUE STARS**

**£17.99**

**FROM APPROX USD \$33.4**



Rain is grim enough already without adding a dull umbrella to compound the misery. These three cheery rain-beaters laugh in the face of glum weather. The original Twilight Umbrella is studded with a galaxy of tiny blue fibre optic lights, while the Colour Phasing Umbrella has fibre optics that phase (rather unsurprisingly) through five different colours. Unfortunately both of these show their stars on the outside, which is fine for passers by, but don't you really want to be able to see the show yourself without having to stare into a puddle? Thankfully, the third Twilight Umbrella has arrived just in the nick of time. It has colour phasing stars that not only light up the outside of the umbrella, but light up the inside as well, letting you walk around in your own bubble of rainbow coloured calm while the heavens empty around you. Not

only do they make you visible, but these funky light-up umbrellas stand out happily from all the dreary black ones out there. Perfect for brightening up your commute during the long winter months.

## Features

Black Twilight Umbrellas with funky glowing lights.

Available in black with tiny blue fibre optic lights, black with tiny colour phasing fibre optic lights, or the NEW Inside and Out Umbrella with colour phasing LEDs inside and out.

The umbrellas have an automatic open button.

Switch on handle to control coloured lights.

Suitable for ages 5 years+.

Requires 3 × AAA Batteries (not included) per umbrella.

Size: 87 × 6 × 6 cm (unopened).

## SPIDER WEB MAKER

**£7.99**



Spiders, despite their creepy crawly nature, are capable of turning the average household nook or cranny into an architectural paradise of structural engineering. Love or hate the little arachnids, there's no denying that spider

webs can be truly breath taking when caught in the right light. They do, however, tend to become dust magnets when they are indoors, so draw the spider out of the house with the Spider Web Maker. It's been designed to create the perfect spider home, complete with hidey hole, for any garden spider looking to settle down to a life of web building and catching mozzies of an evening.

All you need to do is stick the Spider Web Maker in your garden, sit back, and wait for one of your arachnid chums to finish their architectural delight. Marvel at the visual spectacle that is the spider's web from your very own garden.

## Features

A spider web maker designed specifically to attract spiders.

Made from environmentally friendly bamboo and plant resin.

Includes an information booklet written by Natural History Museum scientists, letting you know all about spiders and their webs.

Suitable for ages 6 years+. Size: 37 × 29 × 25 cm.

## SAT NAG

**£7.99**



The Sat Nag is the greatest in-car invention since the Sat Nav. Actually no, it's better than a Sat Nav, and even if it's guaranteed to get you nowhere fast,

it's one of those jokes that just keeps on giving. Press the button on the front and a very well-recorded, patronising woman's voice will come out with one of a host of hysterical Sat Nav-type commands. With such crackers as: "I know you're a man, but it's been 35 minutes now, so can you please admit you're lost and ask someone the way"; and "In 100 metres turn left. No right, err, no left. Sorry, I never can tell my left from my right", as well as "In 50 meters I'm going to put on my most annoying voice and say 'Is your short cut really faster when we get stuck in traffic like this, well, is it darling?'" and "In 100 meters I'm going to talk to you in that special voice, which should let you know you've upset me in some way that is bound to be your fault".

There are loads of them, and the main reason they're so darn funny is that (whilst ducking a flying shoe) they're so accurate, we've all been there, and boy are we all going there again. There are a few 'not in front of the children' comments, but none that are too offensive. This anti-compass has a holographic screen, highlighting the important roads such as Whiny Lane, Backseat Drive and Earache Avenue, and will have you howling with laughter both at the idiosyncrasies of women in passenger seats and also how dumb men are behind the wheel – every car should have one.

## **Features**

The in-car gadget that gets you nowhere fast.

This mock-up Sat Nav is crammed with totally unhelpful and embarrassingly familiar offerings from a patronising woman's voice such as "In 100 metres turn left. No right, err, no left. Sorry, I never can tell my left from my right".

The Sat Nag has a holographic screen highlighting roads such as Earache Avenue.

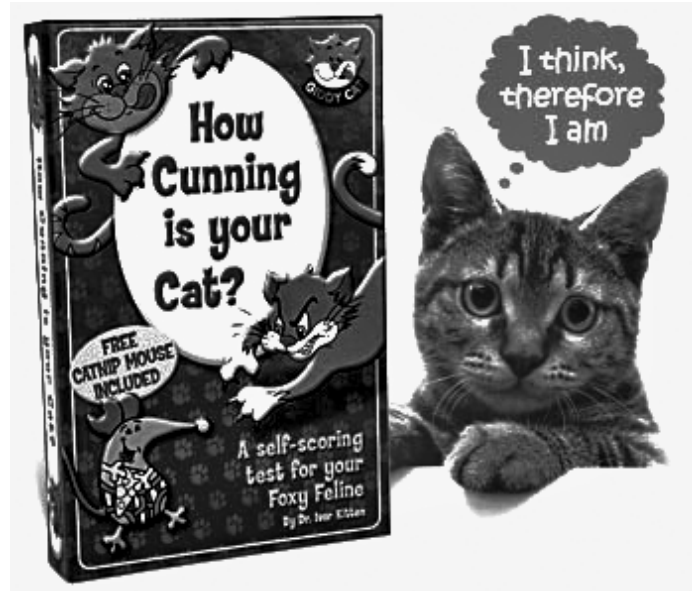
Suitable for ages 16 years+ (some strong language).

Size: 10 × 8 × 2 cm.



## HOW CUNNING IS YOUR CAT?

£4.99



Leave a cat in a room with a spoon, 2 paperclips and a packet of mints and before you know it they'll have made a fully functioning helicopter, which, as we all know, is the first step in their nefarious plan to enslave mankind. Actually, hang on a minute, that's MacGuyver we're thinking of, isn't it? Luckily Dr Ivor Kitten (groan) has compiled 9 quick and easy tests that make up the How Cunning Is Your Cat? test. It's the sure fire way of finding out if your moggy is a creature of comfort or a homicidal maniac. Hopefully it'll be the former, and your cat will vent its inherent frustration at the stupidity of humans on the Catnip mouse included in the box. Or maybe you'll wake up one morning tied to its scratching post while it steals your credit cards and takes over your identity, pausing only to force feed you Kitty Numbkins Tuna Treats. Whilst there's no point worrying about what might happen, it's wise to take the precaution of putting Tiddles to the test, just so you can prepare yourself.

### Features

A series of 9 tests to determine just how cunning your cat really is.

Tests include: testing your moggy's curiosity, body image and intelligence.

A free catnip mouse has been included to give Tibbs a bit of encouragement.

Suitable for cats.

Size:  $23.5 \times 15 \times 4$  cm.

## **MP3 SUNGLASSES**

**£49.99**



These 1GB wireless MP3 Sunglasses effortlessly bring sunshine and music together. Unlike previous versions, the earphones themselves are super-adjustable and very comfortable, and the sound quality is excellent. The player's controls are situated on the arms of the glasses, the lenses are blue tinted and will filter out 100 % of harmful UVB and UVA rays. They come with a semi-rigid sunglasses case and a USB cord so you can hook them up to your computer for downloading your tunes. You can charge them up from the mains or the cigarette lighter in your car, and a full charge will give about four to five hours of play. Rather cool looking we reckon, so now you can kick back in the sun, or get on your bike with no wires in sight, and listen to all your favourite tunes. Excellent.

### **Features**

Sporty sunglasses with a wireless, built-in MP3 player.  
The MP3 player is 1GB and holds 240 songs.

Multi-adjustable earphones move on retractable shafts to fit snugly into your ears.

The player's controls are integrated in the arms.

Controls include on/play/off/forward/back/volume up/down.

The lenses are blue tinted and the arms are graphite in colour.

Distortion-free polycarbonate lenses which filter out 100 % of harmful UVA and UVB rays.

The lenses are flip-up should you desire.

The glasses are optically correct for driving.

A semi-rigid sunglasses case.

A USB socket and cable for hooking up to your home PC.

Chargeable via the mains or through your car's cigarette plug.

Lens cleaner.

A 2–3 hours charge is equal to 4–5 hours play.

Size: 14 × 7 4.5 cm (folded).

## POPTASTIC

**£4.99**



There are some things in life that you just can't stop yourself from doing, and popping the bubbles on a sheet of bubble wrap is most definitely one of them. We reckon it's nigh on impossible to pass even the smallest scrap of bubble wrap and not want to grab it and squeeze those little bubbles until they make that deeply satisfying 'POP' noise. This compelling, if not addictive, pastime used to be restricted to when you moved house, or someone sensible sent you something in the post. Now fortunately someone with way too much time on their hands, and who obviously wasn't busy designing the new space probe, has come up with an electronic version that fits on your key ring. It's

the bubble wrap that never runs out of bubble. Every time you press one of the electronic bubbles, it makes a satisfying popping noise. We've tested several and this one was our winner. Bloody ridiculous, but just you try putting it down.

### **Features**

7 compelling, utterly addictive buttons to 'pop'.

The buttons don't disintegrate after the first pop like traditional bubble wrap, they go on and on and...

With each push of the buttons, a popping sound is activated.

On about the 200th 'pop' the 'pop' becomes a ridiculously random sound like an alarm beep.

Suitable for ages 8 years+.

Requires a LR41 battery (included).

Size: 4 × 1.5 cm.

## **EZVISION EYEWEAR**

### **EZVISION ORIGINAL**

**£149.00**



The EzVision original and the newly introduced EzVision X4 are all very Blade Runner meets Minority Report. These space age shades are your very own take anywhere movie screens. Both versions are super light-weight and plug into your iPod Video or any portable video/movie/DVD player, and show your movies as though you're looking at a huge screen. The Original shows you movies at the equivalent of a 50 inch TV screen, and the X4 a 60 inch. They allow you to zone out from the world around you and get right into the

movie, slide show, or whatever. There are retractable headphones that are built into the arms of the specs, so you can truly plug-in and zone-out. Watch movies in bed without disturbing your better half, chill out on the train in front of a top film, or plug in in-flight and free yourself from those horrible little seat-back screens. They have a 6–8 hour re-chargeable battery, an integral volume control, and come with adaptors to connect to iPods (and we tried it successfully with the new Zune player too) and DVD players. When you can't get to the cinema, bring the cinema to you.

Please note that the EzVisions are not compatible with the iPod Classic 80G and 160G, iPod Touch, iPhone or Nano 3G without a separate AV Composite Cable provided by Apple.

## **Features**

EzVision Original:

Video eye-wear offering a 50 inch virtual screen to watch DVDs, videos from your Video iPod, TV, or games from your gaming station.

Resolution of  $320 \times 240$ .

Built-in headphones.

Portable and lightweight at just 68 g.

Fit like a pair of glasses.

An eight hour rechargeable battery pack with volume control for the ezVision.

Adaptors to connect to iPods and DVD players.

Compatible with iPod Video 30GB, 60GB and 80GB.

Suitable for ages 14 years+.

Requires an AC wall charger (UK adaptor included).

Size:  $16 \times 6.5 \times 3$ cm (folded).

EzVision X4:

Video eye-wear offering a 60inch virtual screen to watch DVDs, videos from your Video iPod, TV, or games from your gaming station.

Resolution of  $640 \times 480$ .

Built-in headphones.

Fit like a pair of glasses.

An six hour rechargeable battery pack with volume control for the ezVision.

Adaptors to connect to iPods and DVD players.

Compatible with iPod Video 30GB, 60GB and 80GB.

Suitable for ages 14 years+.

Requires an AC wall charger (UK adaptor included).

Size:  $14.5 \times 2.7$  cm (folded).

## **FLYING ANIMALS**

### **FLYING MONKEY**

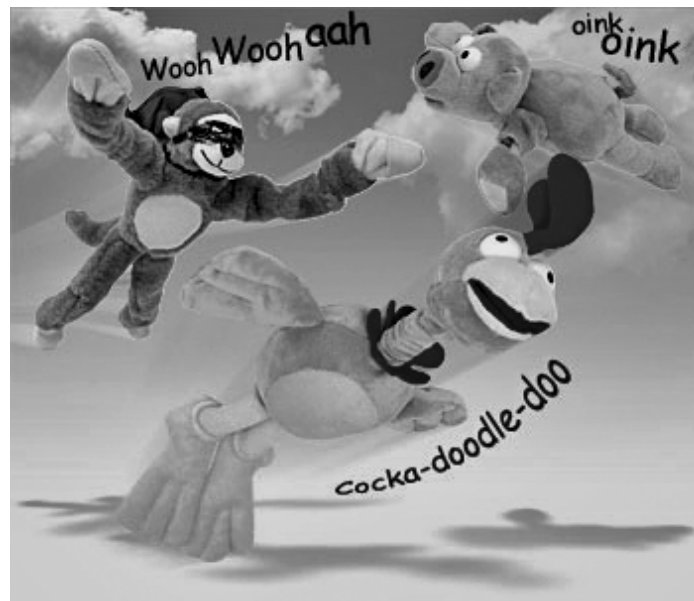
**£4.95**

### **FLYING PIG**

**£4.95**

### **FLYING ROOSTER**

**£4.95**



Where evolution failed, we have succeeded, whether or not that is a good thing remains to be seen. Pigs, primates and chickens have never been known for their flying prowess – much to the embarrassment of chickens especially, all that effort to grow wings only to spend your life in a constant state of disappointment, it's heart breaking. Well help is at hand, call them obscure evolutionary hiccups, or call them what they are, very stupid – whatever you call them, the Flying Monkey, Pig and Rooster have been sailing around the office in a thoroughly un-land-dwelling way. Their arms (or head in the case of the Rooster) conceal super-elastic bands, you simply insert your fingers into little pouches on their hands (or head), pull back their legs, and catapult them across huge distances. As they fly you'll hear a screech of glee from the Monkey, a cock-a-doodle-doo from the Rooster, and a squeal of delight from the pig. Next time someone poo poos your brilliant idea with a 'Pigs might Fly' comment, you can prove that they do by catapulting this ballistic Babe across the room, give the Rooster his first chance at flight, and if someone is in need

of some super-hero assistance then you can fire the be-caped primate to their rescue. There is of course nothing sane about any of these aerial animals, but that's the point.

Please note, this product is exempt from all special promotions and discount offers.

## **Features**

A flying toy monkey dressed like a superhero, a perfectly pink flying pig, or a rooster raring to crow.

The monkey wears a mask and a cape.

The toys' arms (or neck in the rooster's case) are stretchy so you can get good leverage to fling your pig, monkey or rooster across the room.

The toys' arms are approx.32 cm long before stretching and 75 cm when stretched.

By inserting your fingers under the rooster's jowl, or the monkey or pig's paws, pull back and catapult across huge distances.

The monkey yodels, the pig 'oinks', and the rooster crows in flight and when it hits your chosen target.

Suitable for ages 12 years+. Size: approx.  $32 \times 27 \times 6$  cm.

## **FROSTY BEER MUGS**

### **SET OF 2**

**£9.99**



Here's your chance to recreate that legendary beer glugging scene at the end of the movie Ice Cold in Alex. Although perhaps Ice Cold in Barchester under Barrow, or wherever you live, doesn't have quite the same ring.

Anyway, you'll find these wondrous Frosty Mugs keep your beer (or other beverage) colder than an Eskimo's whatsit. That's because the durable acrylic tankard is filled with a clear non-toxic gel that freezes solid. To all intents and

purposes, you're drinking your pint out of a mug made of ice – but without the inconvenient drippy effect that would ensue when it melted all over your trousers. Just keep a few of these stacked in the freezer (chuck out those fish fingers, priorities please) and you'll always be prepared for those moments when only an iced beer can bring you salvation. They're the perfect chilling system for beer and lager, because who in their right mind would want to commit the cardinal sin of diluting beer with ice cubes?

Buy the twin pack for summer drinking deux. Or go for the full monty 6-pack and get a bunch of mates round for a bit of a chilled sesh.

### **Features**

Durable acrylic double-wall construction.

Contains safe non-toxic freeze gel.

Top rack dishwasher safe.

Approx one pint capacity.

15 cm high, diameter 8 cm.

### **HUMUNGA TONGUE**



There are few things more fun than laughing at dumb animals looking stupid – but enough about Big Brother, the Humunga Tongue is the absolute perfect dog toy. Not only is this absurd thing huge fun for your dog, but you may well just wet yourself when you see it running about with this thing hanging out of his/her mouth. A ball and a tongue in one, it's a joy to throw and a scream to watch them panting back with. A great toy for your dog and an even better one for you – an added bonus is that you'll get the most



awesome pictures of your dog which even people who don't really care will think are hysterical.

Please note this is not a chew toy.

## **Features**

Fetch toy made from non-toxic natural rubber.

Red tongue shaped toy with rubber ball attached.

Large is designed for larger dogs.

Medium is designed for medium sized dogs.

Mini is designed for (you'll never guess...) small dogs.

Size:

Mini:  $16 \times 4 \times 4$  cm – Ball diameter of 4 cm.

Medium:  $21 \times 6 \times 5$  cm – Ball diameter of 4.5 cm

Large:  $24\text{cm} \times 6 \times 5$  cm – Ball diameter of 5 cm.

## **LASER COSMOS**

**£99.99**

**APPROX USD \$185.98 / €125.99**



Just occasionally a product comes along that simply blows us away. We get to see a lot of crazy and sometimes brilliant inventions, but Laser Cosmos is without a doubt the most superb one we've seen. There is no product out

there that comes even close to the sheer excellence of this galactic wonder – sorry to sound quite so effusive, but really, it's staggering.

Imagine lying in your room, and having the ceiling whipped away to reveal the vast outreaches of the cosmos whirling overhead, complete with misty blue nebulae (which you can turn on and off!) and the occasional shooting star. Fully adjustable and requiring no set up, this super powerful space projector scatters a random panoply of sparkling green stars that will fill any room from the tiniest bedroom to the largest warehouse with a crystal clear animated star display. What's so clever about this (apart from everything of course) is that it seems so three-dimensional, the varying brightness of different stars makes some seem close and others to come from distant galaxies.

Created from powerful green laser and holographic technology, a display this bright and clear has never been available before. It's utterly mesmerising, and had us transfixed for hours (literally). Whether you're zoning out to music, throwing a party or just chilling, this stunning cosmic light show is like nothing we've ever seen before. Truly one of the most amazing light shows you will see anywhere.

## **Features**

Romantic, mesmerising star and cloud projector.

The Laser Cosmos will fill any room, no matter how big or small with a carpet of stars, blue clouds (optional), and even shooting stars.

The Laser Cosmos itself is shaped like a funky 3D star.

The Laser Cosmos can be pivoted to any angle.

A Laser Stars projector lens.

A cloud formation projector lens.

A cloud brightness control.

The projector is self-focussing.

For best results use in total darkness.

Use for no more than four hours at a time (the On/Off switch is helpful here).

Suitable for ages 8 years+.

Requires a mains adaptor (UK adaptor included).

Size: 29 × 25 × 20 cm.

## PLUG AND PLAY SNOWBOARDER

**£39.95**



TV Snowboard game. This superb piece of kit rips the usual games console from your hands and puts you on the board itself, controlling the action on screen with realistic snowboard control. Your moves on the board control the action with four adrenalin-pumping games: Free Ride, Slalom Competition, Half-Pipe Competition, and Big-Air Competition. You ride the board like the real thing, tilting left and right to carve turns, perform tricks and grabs, and you lean forwards and backwards to control your speed. You can even compete for time and style points. This is an excellent way of stopping yourself sliding into that catatonic hunched game playing state reminiscent of most plug 'n play games, and get into the action. So get off the sofa and onto the slopes without freezing your whatsits off!

### **Features**

Forget the snow, snowboard in the comfort of your sitting room.

A mini snowboard.

A control pad that links to your tv.

View your slopes on your television set.

Ride the board like the real thing – tilting in every which way.

4 adrenalin pumping games.

Compete for time and style points.

1 or 2 player mode.

Ages 8 years+.

Suitable for a maximum weight of 13 stone.

Requires 4 × AA Batteries (not included).

Size: 43 × 16 × 6 cm.

## RHYTHM STICKS

**£9.95**



Rumsticks that don't need a drum – holy wonderment! Each of these wicked drumsticks a.k.a Rhythm Sticks has a speaker in its base, and when you 'hit' the air with them, they make a great drum sound! Is this just us, or isn't this like everyone's dream come true? You'd think so if the racket going on 'round here was anything to go by. Any time someone cracks a joke there's a scramble for the stix so someone can do a drum roll and cymbal crash. Switches on the sticks let you choose between a classical drum beat, an electronic drum beat (so we can all drum along to the intro of East Enders now) and a cymbal crash and the ends even light up with each beat – vital for night drumming.

There are many, no doubt, that will wish these things came with headphones. Well tough, they just don't understand that us drummers need to make a lot of noise. That's the whole point of drumming. If you only get one set of these, then you're going to have a lot of fighting on your hands from everyone else who'll be desperate to have a go.

### **Features**

Drum, crash and snare sounds.

Light up tip.

Melody noise to beat along to.

Requires 4 × AA batteries (these batteries are for demo purposes only, you'll need a decent set to really thrash away).

Each stick 35 cm long.

# **SHOCKBALL**

**£14.99**

**APPROX USD \$27.88 / €18.89**



There's nothing quite as nerve-wracking as playing pass the parcel with a time-bomb, or quite as much fun. Shockball is basically catch for the brave and the hard. This red metal-studded ball contains a hidden wickedness - that is rather given away by the name. Turn it on and then start throwing it to one another and at some random point in the all too near future, the person catching it will get zapped. You never know when it's going to 'go live', so it turns catch on its head – instead of worrying whether or not you can catch the ball, now you'll worry about what will happen if you catch the ball. This rubber-coated land mine has been the cause of lots of shrieks in the office – though oddly they seem to come before the person's even caught the thing. There's nothing like a bit of anticipatory fear to spice up a game!

## **Features**

A rubber coated 'throw and catch' ball with a twist, 18 conductive metal pads to shock you by surprise.

An internal timer that randomly decides to time-out and shock whoever is holding the ball at that point.

An on/off switch so if you want a break from the shocks you can just play regular catch.

Colours may vary.

Suitable for ages 14 years+.

Requires 2 × AAA Batteries (not included).

Size: 7 × 7 × 7 cm.

This item emits Electric Shocks.

Do not use if you have a pacemaker.

Keep away from pets.

## **SPEEDING GRANDADS**

**£3.99**

**APPROX USD \$7.42 / €5.03**



Stanley and Arthur may be getting on a bit, but age has not curbed their enthusiasm to feel the need for speed. These two hi-octane octogenarian speedsters are ace contenders for the pavement pentathlon. Pull them back and release them on their unique fast-track race against time. Each speedway geezer sits on a mini scooter complete with oxygen tanks to fuel their enthusiasm. One pull back and off they'll whiz, but who's got what it takes, Stanley or Arthur? We've no idea as they look remarkably similar, and we don't really care, because they're both a blast.

Please note, this product is exempt from all special promotions and discount offers.

### **Features**

A pair of speeding granddads.

Each granddad is sat on a shiny motorised scooter complete with OAP basket.

A pull back and go motion sets the granddads off on their need for speed mission.

Suitable for ages 8 years+.

Size: 7 × 6 × 3 cm (each granddad).

**AEROGARDEN AND SEEDS**  
**AERO-GARDEN WITH HERB SEEDS**

**£119.00**

**WEB DESIGN**



Say goodbye to pathetically small bunches of limp herbs bought for a small fortune from your local supermarket, and say hello to the simplest and most advanced indoor herb and plant grower on the market. It doesn't matter a jot if you're rubbish at growing stuff, this remarkable AeroGrow Kitchen Garden (complete with Herb Kit) contraption will do everything for you. All you do is pop the growing pods into the machine and plug it in, it tells you when and how much water to add, when to add nutrients (all included), and the internal micro-processor controls everything – even how much light the plants need. Your plants will grow at three times the speed they would in a traditional earth pot, and supply you with the freshest herbs possible. The machine comes with a seven pot herb kit that includes Cilantro, Chives, Italian Basil, Purple Basil, Dill, Mint, and Parsley. You can also buy extra kits and be growing Chillies, Baby Tomatoes and more Gourmet Herbs with consummate ease in no time at all. Have your very own kitchen garden actually in your kitchen, and all with zero maintenance and sub-zero talent.

**Features**

- A clever at home growing kit based on Aeroponics.
- Built-in Grow Lights allowing plant growth all year round.
- 7 pre-seeded herb pods for fast seed germination.

An Aeroponic Optimizing Chamber for creating a rainforest environment to encourage the plant growth.

A micro-processor to adjust nutrient delivery, water flow and light cycles.

An indicator to remind you to add water and nutrients.

Suitable for the novice gardener.

Choose to add a Chilli, Herb or Cherry Tomato Seed Kit.

Suitable for ages 14 years+.

Size: 41 × 39 × 27 cm.

## **INSTANT POOL**

**£39.99**



The instant inflatable pool that doesn't need hours of inflating! The trouble with many inflatable pools is that you need fancy pumps and ages of pumping, but this clever summer plunger uses the water you fill it with to hold itself up, which is rather clever. You only have to inflate the top edge ring, and then as you fill the pool, the water lifts the sides – brilliant. At eight foot wide and over two feet deep it's big enough to have a real good dip on hot and sunny days, but not so unwieldy as to take over the garden. Simple to set up and dismantle, this tough Instant Pool (made from heavy duty 3 ply PVC) is the best way to keep cool this summer.

### **Features**

An 8ft, heavy duty PVC pool that assembles and dismantles in minutes.

A water capacity of 80 %.

The pool has an inflatable top ring.

The pool's side walls are made from heavy duty 3 ply PVC and Polyester.

A flow control drain valve.

A set up DVD is included.

Size: 244 × 66 cm.

Pump not included.



## FRIDGE MAGNET PHOTO FRAME

£29.99



Photos and magnets have become the ultimate fridge accessories, with smiley snaps of your friends and family adorning fridges across the land. So it makes sense that someone has had the bright idea to combine the two with the Fridge Magnet Photo Frame. No longer will your fridge be restricted to just a few photos, as this mini digi-frame can store up to 66 of them and scroll through them at whatever speed you desire between 5 and 80 seconds. It has 32MB of internal memory, supports JPG, GIF and BMP images, has both automatic and manual image change modes, and will scroll away happily through your photos for up to 11 hours from a single charge. A very bright idea that ensures you'll never tire of the photos on your fridge ever again.

### Features

A digi-photo frame for your fridge.

The frame has a magnetic back to affix to your fridge or other metal surface.

The frame has a 32MB internal memory (can store 66 photos).

Photos are displayed in 320 × 240 resolution.

Software is included for uploading your own pics onto the frame.

Choose to view your photos manually or in an auto slideshow.

Slideshow timings between photos are adjustable from 5 secs up to 1 minute 20 seconds.

It supports JPG, BMP and GIF file formats.

It charges via USB (cable included) and has an 11 hour display time from a full charge.

The frame has a pop out stand should you choose to have it free standing.

The software provided with the frame requires Windows XP.

[Click here to download Mac software.](#)

Not compatible with Windows Vista

Suitable for ages 14 years+.

Size:

LCD Screen:  $5 \times 4$  cm

Magnet Frame:  $8.3 \times 5.5 \times 1.2$  cm.

## **CARABINER CORKSCREW**

**£5.99**



An impromptu bottle of wine or beer just isn't the same when you have to trek out to the office for a corkscrew. The Carabiner Corkscrew puts an end to all that dull pre-planning and is a bottle opener and a corkscrew in the cunning guise of a carabiner keyring. With a screw-in safety lock and flick-out corkscrew, you can slip your keys off it before you begin uncorking to stop all that annoying key jangling, and when open, the curved carabiner gives you a great grip for even the most stubborn of corks.

### **Features**

A clever little corkscrew in the cunning guise of a carabiner.

A screw-in safety lock and flick-out corkscrew.

The carabiner can be used as a handy key ring too.

Suitable for ages 18 years+.

Size:  $8.5 \times 4.5 \times 0.7$  cm.

Do not use the carabiner as a carabiner as this will quite likely result in plummeting to the ground at high speed.

## DIGITAL LUGGAGE SCALES

**£19.99**



It's all very well being able to buy a flight to Cancun for £2.99 on 'Oh my God bring a sandwich Airways', but you pack one thong too many (which is in fact one thong), and Bam! you're slapped with a heinous excess baggage charge. And even if you got it right on the way out, by the time you've squeezed your sombrero or questionable Cambodian wood carving into your case for your return, you're going to have to whip out your holiday exhausted credit card to get them home. These lightweight and compact Digital Luggage Scales will, very precisely, weigh your cases so you'll know whether or not to ditch that Mongolian Yak carpet before you embarrass yourself at the airport.

### Features

The end of excess baggage charges.

A portable design so you can slip into your luggage for use on return journeys.

The scales have a large digital display so is super clear to read.

Choose to have your reading in either lbs or kgs.

The maximum weight the scales can hold is 100lbs or 44kgs.

There is an automatic hold feature that allows you to pick up and set down your item to be weighed whilst holding the weight on the screen.

The weighing process is easy – attach the strap to your object and lift, wait for the beep and set down.

The beep signifies that the weight has been identified, locked and displayed.

Suitable for ages 14 years+.

Requires 2 × AAA Batteries (included).

Size: 13 × 7 × 2.5 cm.

## **FETCH STICK**

**£3.99**



Why they think it's fun heaven only knows, but throw a stick for a dog and it'll be in seventh heaven. You on the other hand have the unenviable task of handling a bug ridden sodden bit of wood, and there's just no way you'll let your dog take that into the car.

Well fortunately for all dog owners with stick addicted dogs, there's Fetch, a rubbery stick look-a-like that isn't slimy, doesn't scatter bark all over the place, is dog chew friendly, and to take your dog into ninth heaven, it even squeaks. No more hunting about for decent sticks, or seeing the pitiful sight of your dog with either a twig or a bloomin' great log in its mouth, now you'll have the perfect throwing stick wherever you are.

### **Features**

A soft, squeaky 'stick'.

A realistic replica of a stick for even the most cunning canine.

Squeaks when squeezed.

Made of soft plastic.

Wipes clean.

Suitable for medium to large dogs.

Size:  $33 \times 9 \times 5.7$  cm.

## **ILOGIC SOUND HAT**

**£14.99**



This beat box beanie is a blast. Pop the iLogic Sound Hat on your bonce, plug it into your iPod or any MP3 player, and you'll be amazed at the sound quality from the integral speakers that fit snugly over your ears.

Wearing a hat with headphones is a near impossibility, and ear buds (aside from being fairly uncomfortable) have a tendency to fall out or tug at your lugs in a very uncomfortable manner. This top hat cures all the woes of listening to music on the go, and just to add icing to the cake, other people can't hear that horrifying squeaky wail of whatever it is you're listening to. So no more dirty looks on the bus from people who simply don't understand the importance of shutting yourself off from the world on public transport. Plug in and chill out without the chill.

### **Features**

A cosy black hat with inbuilt speakers resting over your ears.

The lining of the hat is fleecy for extra warmth softness.

A 98cm wire with a 3.5mm jack is tucked into the internal lining but can be unravelled to plug into your MP3 (or other music playing device with a headphone jack).

The wire gives enough freedom to have your player in your pocket/bag and still be very comfortably listening within your hat.

The hat is made from 100 % polyester and can be hand-washed warm (make sure to remove the speakers).

Suitable for ages 8 years+.

Size:  $27 \times 18 \times 2$  cm (when flat).

### **DIABLO SANDWICH TOASTER**

**£19.99**



Toasted sandwiches may be devilishly good, but sandwich makers are, as we all know, a right nightmare. A) they're pig ugly, and B) within minutes they've become magma-encrusted horrors of hygiene.

So get rid of it, and get a Diablo, the brand new answer to perfectly-sized and perfectly-formed toasted sandwiches every time. Titanium-coated with a deep reservoir, the Diablo will toast your toasty to perfection, and works over gas, electric or ceramic hobs, as well as over an open fire! Its chic design is a million miles from those huge white plastic toasters, and not only is it dishwasher-safe, it's so compact it'll fit in your kitchen drawer.

It comes with a pile of delicious recipes, from simple sandwiches to pizza calzone and cherry turnover – though of course the great thing about toasted sandwiches is experimenting with weird and wonderful ingredients. Use it at home, at college – it's great for students, camping, or over the BBQ – the Diablo is set to revolutionise the world of toasted sandwiches. No mess, no plug, no problem.

### **Features**

Titanium-coated, deep reservoir, hob and campfire sandwich toaster

Plastic handles for heat protection

Makes round, almost instant, toasted, deep fill sandwiches.

A full range of delicious recipes for this versatile piece of cookware included inside: from simple sandwiches to pizza calzone and cherry turnover!

Size: 36 (length) × 10.5 × 3.5.

## **CARABINER MUG**

**£8.95**



Possibly the coolest camping and trekking mug around, the Carabiner Camping Mug is compact and virtually indestructible – heck we like it so much we haven't waited to go camping to use, it just looks so chic. It holds 8oz of your favourite bevy, and keeps it warm thanks to its insulating double-walled construction, and attached to its side is the coup de grace, a tough karabiner handle allowing you to clip it onto your belt or bag when you're on

the move. It's handy, tough, lightweight and deeply attractive, what more could you possibly want from a mug?

### **Features**

Sleek stainless steel mugs with a coloured karabiner handle.

Compact and virtually indestructible.

One mug holds 8oz of your chosen drink.

An insulating double-walled construction keeps your drink hot for longer.

Thanks to the karabiner your mug can be hooked onto your belt, bag for practical travelling.

Colours may vary.

Size: Mug:  $11 \times 8 \times 7$  cm.

Karabiner:  $8 \times 4 \times 0.7$  cm.

Always supervise children in the preparation of hot drinks.

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## APPENDIX

### GLOSSARY OF JOURNALISTIC JARGON

Journalists, who spend so much time trying to keep the jargon of police, doctors and lawyers out of the paper, use a lot of it themselves. These are a few terms that, if you're new to a newsroom, may make you wonder.

A.C.E. or Ace	Assistant city editor
agate	Small type often used for statistical data on sports and stock pages. It is a type size of approximately 5 1/2 points tall, a point being 1/72nd of an inch.
B-copy	The background of the story is outlined first without having the specific or major details of the story. Also called A matter.
beat	A reporter's topic area. Courts, religion, education and Macomb County are all beats. Think of reporters covering their areas as a cop might walk a beat.
box	A sidebar or extra information.
break	The part of a story that is continued on another page. Sometimes several breaks are gathered together on a "break page." Also called jumps.
breakline	A mid-sentence or paragraph that continues the story on the following page. Sometimes used to mean turnline.
breakout (highlighted text box)	The synopsis of the story. Key highlights of the story that stand out.
brief	A small or tiny story.
brite or bright	A funny, short story.

broadsheet	The size of most dailies, including the Wall Street Journal, New York Times, USA Today and the Free Press. Folded in half, it's a tabloid, or tab.
budget	The various news departments' proposals for what they want to put in the newspaper. Has to do with space and news, not dollars.
bug	A short bit of type, such as (AP). In this case, it would signify that the story is from the Associated Press.
bulldog	An edition timed to come out in the early evening, as soon as stock closings can be published. (Could also be the city editor.)
bullet	Arrows, dots or squares that point out key topics of the story.
byline	The name of the writer, appearing at the top of an article. Artists and photographers typically get credits. When the reporter's name appears at the end, it often is preceded by a dash and is called a signer.
chaser	A late edition of the newspaper for which the presses are not stopped until the plates are ready. Those pages, then, are said to be "chasing" a running press. The longer it takes for them to get there, the more papers are missed.
cold type	Type that is set photographically on paper, an advancement from type that was set in hot lead.
column inch	One inch tall and one column wide. It is used to measure ads and articles.
copy boy	Obsolete term replaced in many papers with copy aide, these are men and women who keep the newsroom running by attending to various duties such as office machines, handling phones, assembling paperwork and driving around town to retrieve photos and other material.

copy desk	The desk where articles are edited, headlines and captions are written, newspaper style is enforced and deadlines are either made or missed.
cq	Correct as is; lets copy editors know that something has been checked and needs no further checking. Usually, these letters are put just after the copy they refer to.
cutline	A caption. The term comes from the day when engravings or "cuts" were used to make the impression on the page
dateline	The city or place designation at the beginning of a story. Some newspapers strictly enforce a rule that the dateline must say where the reporter was when the story was gathered. A foreign story gathered by phone at home, then, might run with no dateline.
deadline	Every paper has dozens in a day for the hundreds of parts that go into it. You might ask what the deadline is for the piece you're working on, the deadline for the last type to be set or the time when the presses should start.
double truck	An ad or editorial project that covers two facing pages. If it prints across the gutter between the two pages, and if the pages are on the same sheet, rather than two adjacent sheets, it might be called a "true" double truck. This name comes from the days when the heavy forms for newspaper pages, largely filled with lead type, were rolled around the composing room floor on heavy carts called trucks. Two pages for one project meant a double truck.
ears	The little white spaces on either side of the newspaper's name on the front page. Some newspapers put weather or lottery information in them. (An expression sometimes heard in newsrooms, "Go stick it in your ear," has nothing to do with this.)
embargo	The time when something can be released. News may be released early so that news outlets can be ready to publish or air it, but there may be a restriction

	on when it can be released to the public. Breaking an embargo – reporting information early – may cause sources to be less willing to release news.
first reference	The first time someone is mentioned in an article, and generally should have their full name.
flag	The newspaper's name on page one. Also called the nameplate.
FOIA	Used as a noun or a verb (when it is done to balky government officials), it is the Freedom of Information Act.
folio	The page number, newspaper name and date appearing in the corner of a page.
FTE	Full Time Equivalent; an accounting term that refers to staffing. A full-time employee is one FTE; a two-day-a-week employee is .4 FTEs. A newsroom may have a budget number of total FTEs that will be comprised of full- and part-time workers.
G.A.	Short for general assignment. A G.A. is a reporter who does not have a beat, but who might be called on to write about anything.
graph	A paragraph.
gutter	The space between two columns.
hairline	A.5-point rule.
hot type	From the days when type was set with molten lead, replaced with photographically produced cold type.
HTK	Head (line) to come. It means that the story has been edited and the headline will come later.
inside	Not on the front page, as in, "we'll run this story inside."
jump	The part of a story that continues on another page. Also called a break. The readers get directions from jump lines.

justify	Type that is aligned evenly on the left and the right
lead	The start of a story, usually one to three paragraphs. Pronounced lede, and sometimes spelled that way, too.
leading	Refers to the spacing between lines of type. The size of the type plus the space to the next line.
lede	The start of a story. It is spelled this way to prevent confusion with lead, a metal that was used extensively in hot-type days, and a term that refers to the spacing of lines in a story.
leg	A column of type. A two-column headline will likely have two legs of type under it.
mainbar	Formed in a backward sort of way, a main bar is simply the main story, but stated this way to distinguish it from secondary sidebar stories. It's a little like calling the city's main library the main branch to distinguish it from the true, secondary branches.
masthead	This term is used to mean three things and can get confusing. It is used to mean the name on page one, for the box on the editorial page with the names of top editors, and for the box of names, phone numbers and addresses that appears in the first few pages of the newspaper
morgue	Outdated term for the library.
mug	A mug shot or a small photo of someone. If someone says, "get me a mug," don't come back with coffee.
nameplate	The newspaper's name on page one, is also called the flag or masthead.
nut graf	The paragraph in a story that tells readers what the story is about and why they should care. Some papers have rules about how close this should be to the top of the story.

op-ed	Opposite of the editorial page. May contain columns and guest viewpoints.
paginate	The act of making a page on a computer screen.
paraphrase	To summarize or rewrite in your own words a quote. Paraphrasing should not have quote marks.
pica	A unit of measurement. There are six picas in an inch; each pica contains 12 points.
point	A unit of measurement equaling 1/72nd of an inch. For measuring typographical elements.
pool	A certain number of reporters or one reporter who goes out and represents everyone else. For example, a high-interest court case, a presidential appearance or a concert may not have room for all the journalists who want to cover it, so the organizers may restrict coverage to a press pool. Pool coverage is usually shared with other media outlets.
proof	Any printed copy before it goes to press. Usually made on a printer or photocopy machine.
rag right, rag left	Not justified. Uneven on either the right or the left.
refer	Pronounced reefer, but spelled this way, it refers readers to inside or related stories. At some papers, these have been called whips.
rim	The copy editors, collectively. Dates back to the days when the copy desk was a horseshoe-shaped piece of furniture with rim editors around the outside and slot editors on the inside, doling out and checking work.
rule	A straight line on the page, usually expressed with its width as in, "a 1-point rule." Don't call them lines, except in hairline.
scoop	As a noun, a story no one else has; as a verb, to do it to the competition.
sidebar	A story that accompanies the main story, detailing a particular angle or aspect, such as the hero's early childhood.

single-copy sales	Newsstands, store sales. Anything not home delivered.
slot	One of the people on the copy desk who checks over the copy editors' work before committing it to type. Also used as a verb: "Hey, Terry, slot me on this, will you?"
slug	An internal name for a story, usually just one word. Elex might be the slug for a story on school elections.
spike	To kill something. At one time, when editors were finished with a piece of paper, such as a story, headline or page proof, they would slam it down on an upright nail on their desk. Then, they would know they were done with it, but could go back to it later if they needed to. Today, many newsroom computers have a "spike" key for killing a story or file.
spot story	A small story that is usually more specific, as opposed to a bigger story like a feature story
spread	A package that goes across the crease of two facing pages to combine them.
skybox	A term for promotional boxes that are usually above the nameplate of the newspaper. Also known as a teaser
stet	A proofreading symbol that means leave it the way it is.
stringer	A writer or photographer who is not a full-time employee, but who is paid by the job. The term comes from the days when a writer would get paid by the column inch and would measure his or her contribution by holding a string along the story to measure its length, knot it, measure the next column or story, and so on, reporting the final length for pay.
strip	A story that goes all the way across the top of the page – or nearly so. Some people will call it a strip if it goes almost all the way across. Others will say it's not a true strip if there is anything above it, but will grudgingly concede the point.

stylebook	The newspaper's book of rules and policies for handling copy. Can include everything from spelling of local streets to policy for handling profanities and juvenile crime victims
tab	Short for tabloid. Refers to any newspaper or section folded to that size.
takeout	A longer story that takes a step back from daily, breaking news stories to put a running story with frequent developments into context and perspective.
thumb corner	The upper, outside corner of pages. So-called because that's where a reader might grab them to turn to the next page.
teaser	Shows what is in the inside of the paper or previews a story or series. Same as a promo but smaller.
turnline	Tells you to go to the next page where the article continues.
widow	A short line of type, left at the top of a column. The worst: single words. Computerized typesetting makes them far more common than a fussy page makeup person would have tolerated. Some people use this term to refer to any short line at the end of a paragraph and trim stories deftly by eliminating just enough words to eliminate the widows.
zone	Part of a newspaper's circulation area. If the newspaper divides its circulation area into zones, advertisers may buy ads in just their local areas. Often, news coverage is zoned to complement zoned advertising.



## **DIRECTION WORDS FOR CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF NEWS ARTICLES**

COMMENT ON	Point out the important features, criticise.
COMPARE	Identify characteristics or qualities that resemble each other. Emphasise similarities and also mention differences where appropriate.
CONTRAST	Stress the dissimilarities and differences between things, events, problems, or qualities.
CRITICISE	Express your judgement about the merit or truth of the factors or views mentioned. Draw conclusions, discussing both the limitations and the good points.
DEFINE	Provide concise, clear, and authoritative meanings. Give the limits of the definition, but omit detailed explanations. Show how the item defined differs from items in other classes.
DESCRIBE	Recount, characterise, outline, and relate in sequence.
DIAGRAM	A drawing, chart, plan, or graph. Diagrams should be labelled and there should be an accompanying explanation.
DISCUSS	Examine, analyse carefully, and give reasons for and against. Be complete and give details, usually with a view to assessing how satisfactory something is.
EVALUATE	Carefully appraise in relation to some standard, referring to advantages, limitations, and costs and benefits as appropriate; attempt to come to a judgement.
EXAMINE	Investigate critically, appraise a subject in detail.
EXPLAIN	Clarify, interpret, and elaborate on the material presented. Give reasons for differences of opinion or results, and try to analyse causes.
ILLUSTRATE	Use a concrete example, diagram, or figure to explain or clarify a problem.
INDICATE	Identify, and then focus attention so as to clarify.

JUSTIFY	Prove or give reasons for conclusions or decisions.
OUTLINE	Present the essential features, showing main points and subordinate points. Omit minor details. Stress the arrangement or classification of things.
REVIEW	Examine a subject critically, analysing and commenting on the important or controversial statements.
STATE	Present the main points in a brief and clear sequence, usually omitting details or examples.
SUMMARISE	Give the main points or facts in condensed form.

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