

Parts/Patterns

3-step Headline Writing Process

> **Headline Parts**

- **Primary** – Main headline that contains a few well-selected and creatively designed words
 - **Secondary** – Accompanies the primary; it is short, catchy and offers specific information and added details about the story
 - **Label** – At-a-glance word or short phrase that details page/spread content
 - **Precis** – Combination of secondary headline and lead of the story into a single element
 - **Sub-headline** – Subordinate headline set between paragraphs or within the body of the story
 - **Specialty** – showcased quote or factoid which adds value to primary and secondary headlines
- > **Basic Patterns**
- **Kicker** – One-line secondary headline set above the primary; provides specific facts and sometimes reads into the main headline
 - **Wicket** – A multi-line secondary headline set above primary; sometimes showcases a quote
 - **Hammer** – A primary/secondary combination with the primary set above secondary
 - **Tripod** – A combination of primary and secondary headlines, presented side by side

1 List 10-15 key words that describe and relate to the story topic.

FOR EXAMPLE *a story on weekend spending trends...*

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. cash or coin | 6. free events |
| 2. hoping for money from parents | 7. coffee shops |
| 3. dates/parties | 8. gas money for cruisin' |
| 4. going to the movies | 9. fun times |
| 5. mall shopping w/friends | 10. work, work, work |

Brainstorm rhyming words for key words that have strong storytelling merit.

2

FOR EXAMPLE *rhyme time...*

1. **money**: funny, honey, sunny, bunny, runny
2. **fun**: ton, run, done, sun, ton
3. **cash**: dash, smash, rash, bash, lash
4. **free**: see, knee, key, be, fee

Transition key word & rhyming words into inspired words & phrases that creatively capture story excitement.

3

FOR EXAMPLE *apply literary devices to add appeal...*

- **money**: "money business" (pun with phrase that uses word, "funny")
- **cash**: "dash for the cash" (cliche phrase & rhyme)

Making headlines easy with the 3-step process

1 List 10-15 key words that describe and relate to the story topic. Topic idea: _____

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| • | • | • |
| • | • | • |
| • | • | • |
| • | • | • |
| • | • | • |

Brainstorm rhyming words for key words that have strong storytelling merit.

2

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3

primary headline idea:

secondary headline idea:

>>> **Headline Writing**

On Your Own

To heighten the verbal/visual thrill of headlines, literary devices & graphic techniques add a cutting edge.

> **Word Wise**

- **Alliteration**
 - Repetition of the same or similar consonant sound in words close together
- **Antonym**
 - A word of opposite meaning
- **Cliche**
 - Common word or phrase, often figure of speech
- **Homonym**
 - Words that sound alike but mean different things
- **Onomatopoeia**
 - The use of sound to echo word meaning
- **Pun**
 - Play on words based on multiple meanings
- **Rhyme**
 - Repetition of vowel sounds in accented syllables
- **Synonym**
 - One of two or more words which have the same meaning

> **Graphic Details**

- **Typography**
 - Blending of type fonts & faces, sizes, alignment, spacing & capitalization can magnify headline personality
- **Lines**
 - Boxes & lines can attract attention oftentimes unifying headline package
- **Second color & tints**
 - Second color &/or black/second color % tints can highlight key thoughts
- **Photos & art**
 - Photos & art can illustrate headline idea & invite readers into the story content
- **Electronic enhancers**
 - Treatments add dimension to headline

Make Headlines

Once you have completed the “big idea sheet” and analyzed your gathered information & photos for the most important elements of the story and page/spread content & you have completed the three-step creative process, you are ready to write & design your headline. Choose the headline type that best suits content you want to showcase in the headline, or design one of your own using magazines for inspiration.

Kicker

Wicket

Hammer

Tripod

Original design

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CREATING **headlines**

Headline hunting

Professional graphic designers create cool ideas. Go to these publications for inspiration.

- >ESPN
- >Sports Illustrated
- >Teen People
- >Skateboarding magazines
- >GQ
- >Rollingstone
- >WIRED
- >YM

Turn heads

Find headline ideas in the following dictionaries or a thesaurus:

- >definition

Creating headlines that capture readers in both words and design is as easy as 1, 2, 3.

1

Make head on tails

Nine out of 10 readers said they read the headlines before they consider any other text on the spread. Therefore, the headline design and copy must be strong on each page/spread.

Heads-up

With well-written & creatively designed headlines, you can:

- > offer readers an attention-getting & -keeping entry point into the content of the verbal-visual story.
- > unify all other content elements.
- > create a focal point for the page/spread.

2

Head start

By initiating the content process with the headline, writers can give innovative directions to the story enhancing its overall impact as well as providing photographers with more content focus.

3

**in this
module**

HEADLINE WRITING | HEADLINE BRAINSTORMING | HEADLINE DESIGN | SOURCES | PRACTICE

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