

Writing a News Report for the OSSLT



Learning Goals

- I can identify the difference between a news report and a news cast
- I can make up facts and information to answer the questions who, what, where, when, why, and how in a news report based on a headline and picture
- I can organize my information into the form of a news report and use language appropriate to the form
- I can use direct and indirect quotes to develop my report

The Task

- On the literacy test, you will be given a headline and an image
- From there, you are responsible for brainstorming the details and information
- You will need to write a full news report

The Rules

- You must begin with a lead paragraph that answers these questions: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?
- The rest of the paragraphs will fill in the important details and will be NO LONGER THAN 2-3 sentences each
- Must be written in third person (absolutely no personal language, except in quotes)
- Must include a minimum of two quotes, either indirect or direct (word for word what somebody connected to the story said)

Rules Continued

- Think of the event as just having happened → we would then consistently use the past tense
- Make sure you focus on a single event and a single moment in time to avoid your report sounding more like a story
- Make sure when referring to people in your report, you call them by their first and last name the first time, and last name thereafter....NEVER by the first name (too informal)
- If the person has a title, use it to add authority. For example, Mrs Mardero, principal of St. Charles College said....

Scoring Guide for Long Writing Topic Development
Section IV News Report Question 1

| Code | Descriptor |
|------------------|---|
| Blank | The page is blank with nothing written or drawn in the space provided. |
| Illegible | The response is illegible or irrelevant to the prompt. |
| Off topic | The response is off topic. |
| Code 10 | <p>The response is related to headline and/or photo but is not a news report.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The response is a news report related to the headline and/or photo. It identifies an event, but provides no supporting details, or provides details that are unrelated to the event. There is no evidence of organization.</p> |
| Code 20 | <p>The response is related to headline and/or photo but only partly in the form of a news report.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The response is a news report related to the headline and/or photo, but the focus on an event is unclear or inconsistent. There are insufficient supporting details: too few or repetitious. There is limited evidence of organization.</p> |
| Code 30 | The response is a news report related to the headline and photo with a clear focus on an event. There are insufficient and/or vague supporting details or the connection of the details to the event is not always clear. There is evidence of organization, but lapses distract from the overall communication. |
| Code 40 | The response is a news report related to the headline and photo with a clear and consistent focus on an event. There are sufficient supporting details, however, only some are specific. The organization is mechanical and any lapses do not distract from the overall communication. |
| Code 50 | The response is a news report related to the headline and photo with a clear and consistent focus on an event. There are sufficient specific supporting details to develop the news report. The organization is logical. |
| Code 60 | The response is a news report related to the headline and photo with a clear and consistent focus on an event. There are sufficient specific supporting details, which are thoughtfully chosen to develop the news report. The organization is coherent demonstrating a thoughtful progression of ideas. |

Storm Shuts Down Region



(Very Poor Answer)

News Report
Topic Development
Code 20

Storm Shuts Down Region

In January 15, 2009, a heavy
snow storm came to Canada
in city. Many car
accidents and injuries happened
during the past 2 weeks.



Annotation:

The response is a news report related to the headline and/or photo, but the focus on an event is unclear or inconsistent. There are insufficient supporting details: too few or repetitious (January 15, 2009, ...during the past 2 weeks). There is limited evidence of organization.

(Poor Answer)

Topic Developer
Code 30

Storm Shuts Down Region

January 13/11

Last night in the city of city, came a big storm, closed down schools, roads and businesses. It snowed three feet of snow. In the picture to the right you can see resenden helping out their nabours to plow their drive way and sidewalks. For the kids that are not going to school, will probly have a realy fun time playing in the snow making snowman, snow houses.



Annotation:

The response has a clear focus on an event (came a big storm). Supporting details are insufficient and vague (resenden, nabours, kids, probly have a realy fun time). There is evidence of organization.

(Better Answer)

Topic Development
Code 40

Storm Shuts Down Region

It is a nice, quiet town in city Ontario, hundreds are left stuck in their homes due to heavy overnight snowfall on December 27th 2010.



Most residents of the town are unable to leave their property because of the two feet of snow holding their vehicles hostage!

Joe, seen clearing snow from his driveway stated, "We have not seen such a bad storm since 1999!"

Most residents of the town are expected to be house bound for the next few days because the roads aren't expected to be cleared until December 30th, just in time for New Years.

Annotation:

There is a clear and consistent focus on an event (*stuck in their homes due to heavy overnight snowfall*). There are sufficient supporting details. Some are specific (*hundreds, two feet, Joe, 1999, December 30th*). Other details are vague (*most residents, few days*). The organization is mechanical.

(Best Answer)

Topic Development
Code 50

Storm Shuts Down Region

- Last December city nOntario suffered at the hands of Mother Nature. There was a huge snowstorm that left the citizens buried under four feet of snow.
- Schools and workplaces had to be shut down so the city could decide what to do and how to fix the mess.
- "It took me over three hours to clear my driveway, and another half hour to clear my car," says one citizen, name.
- Another local citizen, name gave us his thoughts. "I woke up the first morning and looked out the window. My first thought was 'the kids are going to have a snowday'. Then I got a call from my boss telling me not to come in today. My wife got the day off too. We spent the rest of the day trying to clear our driveway."
- A man who helped plough the roads gave us his opinion as well. "The snow on the roads was four feet deep and heavy. It took over three days and a million dollars to get it all cleared up."
- The people of city really suffered the wrath of Mother Nature. Fortunately no one was hurt and no basements flooded.



Annotation:

There is a clear and consistent focus on an event (*huge snowstorm*). There are sufficient and specific supporting details (*four feet of snow, Mary Hathaway, Logan Hodd, three hours, another half hour, a million dollars, basements flooded*). Quotations add additional details (personal perspectives from a citizen and a man who ploughs the road). Organization is logical. The final paragraph returns to the idea of "Mother Nature" from the first paragraph.

Writing a News Report

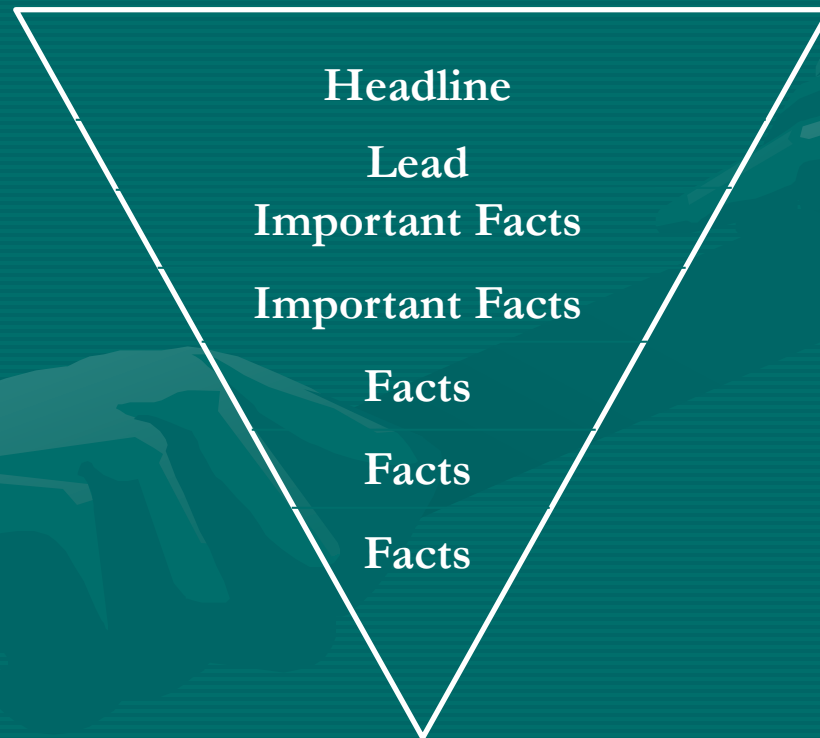
The Inverted Pyramid

Most news stories are written in the inverted pyramid style.

This means all the **important** information — **most of the 5 W's** — can be found in the **lead**.

Information and quotes are added according to their importance.

The least important information can be found at the bottom of the story, or pyramid.



Strategies for a News Report

Look closely at the *picture* and the *headline*.
Think of an event that relates to them.

Create interesting “facts” answering the questions:
who, what, where, when, why and *how*

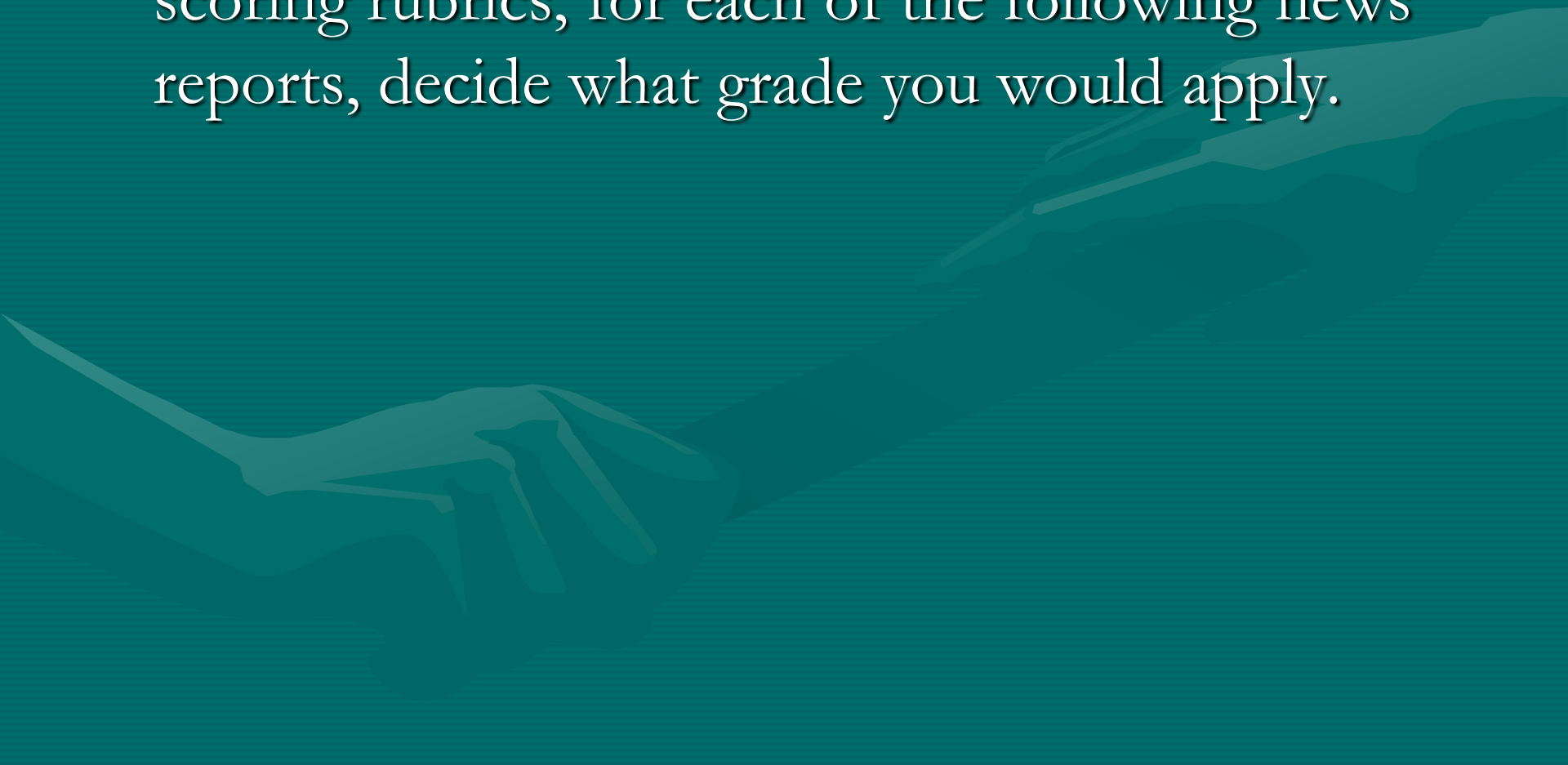
Use **quotations** to make the report more interesting.
Write in short paragraphs.

**Be sure your news report reflects the picture and headline
or it will be scored much lower.**

Write your report in the *third person* (i.e. “he said,” not “I said”).

What Score would you give?

- Using what you now know about the OSSLT scoring rubrics, for each of the following news reports, decide what grade you would apply.



Topic Development

Storm Shuts Down Region

It is a nice quiet town in [redacted] city, Ontario, hundreds are left stuck in their homes due to heavy overnight snowfall on December 27th 2010.



Most residents of the town are unable to leave their property because of the two feet of snow holding their vehicles hostage!

Joe, seen clearing snow from his driveway, stated, "We have not seen such a bad storm since 1999!"

Most residents of the town are expected to be house bound for the next few days because the roads aren't expected to be cleared until December 30th, just in time for New Years.

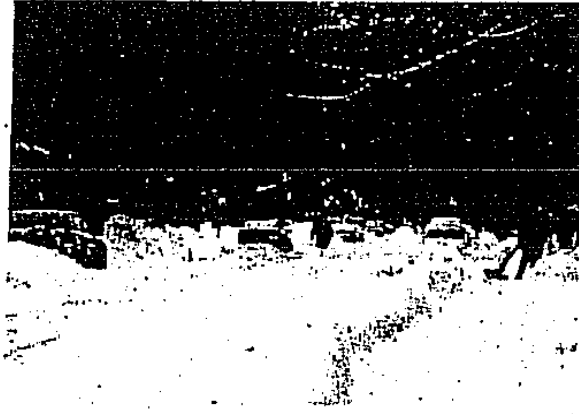
How'd you do?

- If you said “below”, you are correct
- This person received a score of 40

There is a clear and consistent focus on an event (*stuck in their homes due to heavy overnight snowfall*). There are sufficient supporting details. Some are specific (*hundreds, two feet, Joe, 1999, December 30th*). Other details are vague (*most residents, few days*). The organization is mechanical.

Topic Development

On Tuesday March 30th a snowstorm hit the southern coast of Ontario, shutting down many of the work areas. The storm that started from Vancouver travelled at 24 km/h and reached city closing down many regions, specially the region. Weather official, Mary Kate says: "Canada can be unpredictable, but we weren't expecting this huge amount this late in the year." The storm closed down schools, banks and even universities. "The problem is that we weren't even warned about it so, we were very unprepared. We actually didn't have our equipment handy when we first heard about it" says name, one of the region's experts in snow management. The storm caused many cars to get stuck in the road for as much as 2 hours. "The depth of 17 cm of snow is the most shocking snow disaster we have ever had since 1938," says old Jack, one of the senior citizens. Due to this disaster many plans, meetings and lessons were delayed. Students were advised not to even attempt going to school after, one student name slipped into a 60 cm wide hole and broke her leg. "It was very scary as I was trying to break free from the whole and my body was half buried in snow" she says. The mayor of city declared this day "zero day" since nothing could get done. "I guess this is a wake up call that we need to always be prepared for snow," he said. After all Canadian weather has always had a remarkable history.



How'd you do?

- If you gave this student a score of 60, you are correct

There is a clear and consistent focus on an event (*snowstorm*). Sufficient specific supporting details (*southern coast of Ontario, Vancouver, 24 km/h, York Region, Mary Kate, 170 cm, 1978, 50 cm*) are thoughtfully chosen to develop the news report. Organization is coherent. Quotations are effectively placed. Final statement is an effective conclusion, connecting to the ideas in the response.

Conventions

30, 40 or below (explain)

- For each of the following, you are not focusing on the quality of the news report
- You are focussing only on such things as spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.

Conventions

Code 20

Storm Shuts Down Region

We have had a lot of bad snow falls this year but anything like this one. People are not even trying to get to work the snow is 10 feet high so no one is going any where for



a long time some can not even open there door to get out it's been 3 day and the snow is still higher then ever just last night the snow started again but not as bad we are trying to do something about it but no one wants to get out there to the snow it's really cold and wet it started to rain well it was snowing in about two day we should have all the snow cleaned up we are hoping.

How'd you do?

- If you scored this student “below”, you are correct
- They received a code 20

Errors distract from communication. Reading rhythm is interrupted by omissions (comma) and erratic use of capitals, by run-on sentences, by errors in usage (*“in about two day,”* *“it’s been 3 day”*) by improper use of apostrophes (*want’s*) and by omitted words.

Conventions

Storm Shuts Down Region

On January 18th there has
been a major snow storm



How'd you do?

- If you said “below, you are correct
- This was scored as a 10

This response provides insufficient evidence.

Conventions

Storm Shuts Down Region

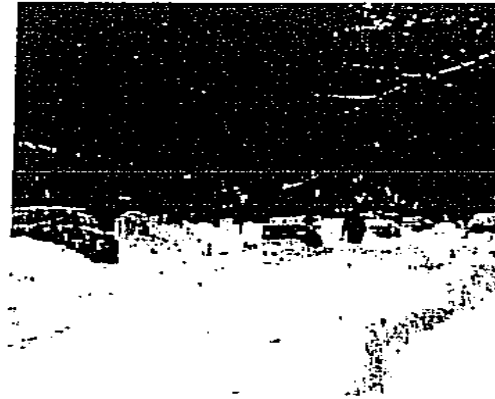
December 15, 2001 in

city

, Ontario Canada

the region was shut down due to weather.

The weather was so ~~terrible~~ terrible that the power was cut, automobile were not able to run and all heating was off.



On this day schools were shut down, work places and every bus ~~of~~ and train were not able to run. The region has been shut down for three days and help is on it's way. The plow trucks are not able to run through the city as well due to the roads being such a mess.

The city had no warning of this storm, it had happened over night with shock.

Some people are stuck in houses and other in work buildings. The luck for this city of having help should be soon, but as far now there is nothing you can do but wait. Good luck

city

How'd you do?

- If you scored this student with a 30, you are correct

Effective use of conventions is evident in the written work (e.g., effective use of quotations and semicolon). Errors in spelling (*do*, *automobile*, *it's*) do not distract.

Conventions

Storm Shuts Down Region

A record breaking snow storm shuts down the region of town for hours, and left hundreds of people without electricity for up to 6 hours!

Early Monday morning name had a huge amount of snow drop down on them from mother nature! Many people had different thoughts on the storm. When we asked them later that night

Mary-Lou a third grader from school said, "I love the snow! It's so much fun to play in, and we get a day off school!" On the other hand when we asked Mary-Lou's mother what she thought of the storm she gave a very different answer!

"I don't mind the snow, but getting this much of it is just too much!" she said.

As we drove around some of the towns in the region we saw many people shoveling, and cleaning up to four feet of snow off their drive ways. I'm sure everyone will be happy to see spring coming up soon!



How'd you do?

- If you gave this student a perfect score of 40, you are correct

Control of conventions is evident through the use of punctuation. Some spelling errors (*"diffrent," "shovoling," "comming,"*) and lack of commas (*"Mary-Lou a third grader from . . ."*) do not undermine the overall control of conventions.

Let's put it all together

- Using your own words, let's come up with a list of what a successful news report will look like
- Our list should include information from the beginning of the note (rules), as well as from the rubrics on topic development and conventions.



Success Criteria for a News Report

- Beginning paragraph (lead) will answer 5w and how
- 4-6 paragraphs
- 2-3 sentences
- Very few/minor spelling, grammar mistakes (5 or less)
- Stay focussed on one idea (connected to pic and headline)
- Many supporting details (specific. Numbers, names etc)
- At least 2 quotes (direct and indirect)
- Use length provided as a guide
- Recap with conclusion
- Make it “flowy”, use good transition words
- Title or first and last name
- Tag the person with their title (Ms. Mardero, principal)

Lead Paragraph

- Although there are no rules for what order you put the lead in, the following formula ALWAYS works
 - When + Where + Who + What = first sentence
 - Why + How = second sentence

Example:

Students Fundraise for a Good Cause

Who?

What?

Where?

When?

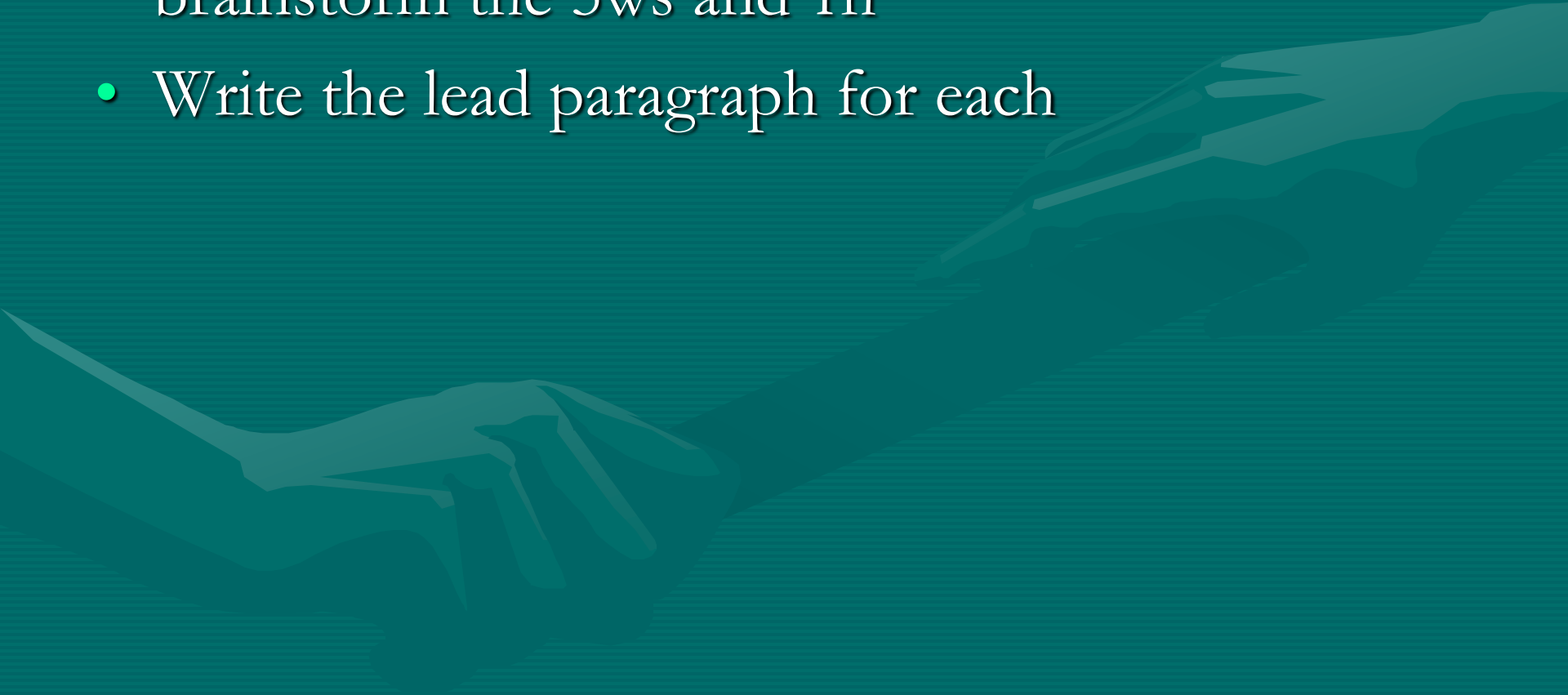
Why?

How?



Your Turn

- For the following headlines and images, brainstorm the 5ws and 1h
- Write the lead paragraph for each



Samples

School purchases cell phone signal blocker



Sample 2

School board to change school schedule

