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**The Goals of a News Article**

Most journalists (the people who write news articles) try to follow certain guidelines in their work. These principles of journalism help make sure that when people open a newspaper, they can believe what they read.

1. A news article tells the truth. The journalist writes facts that are, to the best of his/her knowledge, true. A careful journalist only states things that he/she can prove to be true, and will ‘cite’ the source of any uncertain information. For example, in the statement, “According to Mr. Rufiange, principal of Morinville Public School, most students take Computers as an option class,” even if it is later discovered that more students take Drama instead of Computers, the journalist has not lied. He/she has only claimed that Mr. Rufiange says more students take Computers, which is still a true statement.
2. News is factual. Something that is factual can be proved or disproved. For example, “Last Saturday was a rainy day,” is a factual statement, because it can be clearly shown that last Saturday either was or was not rainy. “Rainy days are depressing,” is not a factual statement, because it is a personal opinion.
3. News articles are objective. They do not reflect the personal opinions of the journalist. Quotes and opinions of witnesses and observers to events may be included in the article, but they must be cited.
4. News articles relate information that affects or is of interest to the public. Some newspapers print articles that are of interest to a smaller audience. When the audience is concentrated in a particular region, such as a particular city or province, the newspaper is known as a ‘local’ paper.
5. The purpose of a news article is to report the facts of a current event or problem. Although many people enjoy reading the news, the purpose of a news article is not entertainment. The purpose of a news article is to inform.
6. The language used in news articles is often different from the language that is used in everyday conversation, or in stories or narratives. The style of writing is impersonal, and the vocabulary is often more formal.