



# Digital Media Production/Advanced Digital Media Production

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Thursday, April 23, 2020



## HS Digital Media Production

Overall Lesson: **Caption Writing (day 1 of 2)**

Sub lesson for Thursday, April 23, 2020: captions

### Objective/Learning Target:

Students will be able to understand the format for writing a caption.



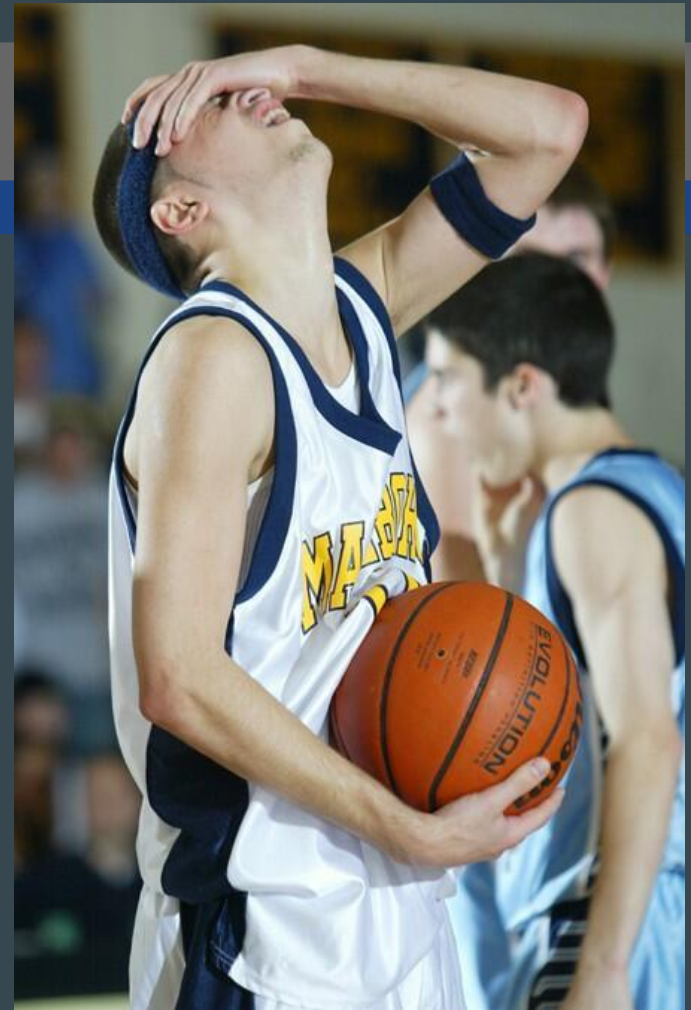
## Background Information

In any publication, photography is an important visual element. Even though a picture is worth a 1000 words, every picture used in a yearbook or newspaper publication needs a caption. A caption, also known as a cutline, is an element that explains the who, what, when, where, and why of a photo. **Captions** can also be used to tell readers something they would not otherwise know when looking at a photograph.

## Warm Up/Bellringer

Who is this? What is happening?

When a picture is used without caption information, the reader is confused.





## Lesson/Activity #1

In the extended caption format (which most publications use), there are five important elements to remember.

1. Don't start a caption with a name.
2. The most important information to include in the first sentence is the WHO and WHAT.
3. The first sentence should be written in present tense.
4. The second sentence should be written in past tense.
5. The second sentence should contain QUALITY information that is not obvious from looking at the picture.



## Lesson/Activity #1 (cont.)

Let's look at each of these elements closely.

### 1. Don't start a caption with a name.

You may wonder how you're supposed to start a caption without using a name. The key is to use some type of introductory phrase or clause. Here is a list of [175 Caption Starters](#) that will help you find a way to begin your caption without using a name.



## Lesson/Activity #1 (cont.)

2. The most important information to include in the first sentence is the WHO and WHAT.

The 5W and 1H of journalism are WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHY & HOW. In the first sentence of a caption, readers expect to see WHO and WHAT, so make sure those questions are answered.

## Lesson/Activity #1 (cont.)

3. The first sentence should be written in present tense.

Present tense refers to the verb (usually an action word). The main verb, or predicate, of the sentence is the action that the subject (the WHO) is doing. For example:

After missing the winning basket, Collin Thomas (11th) **realizes** the importance of his missed free throw.

The verb “realizes” is what Collin Thomas (the WHO) is doing.



## Lesson/Activity #1 (cont.)

4. The second sentence should be written in past tense.

Past tense also refers to the verb (usually an action word). Past tense should be used if you're telling about something that happened in the past. For example:

The basketball team **lost** the state championship by one point.

The verb “lost” is what the basketball team (the WHO) did.



## Lesson/Activity #1 (cont.)

5. The second sentence should contain **QUALITY** information that is not obvious from looking at the picture.

The purpose of an extended caption is to include more than what is happening in the picture. The information in the second sentence could be a quote from someone related to the picture or additional information that **ISN'T OBVIOUS** from looking at the picture.



## Lesson/Activity #2

**WRONG**

Ruth Ibarra (11th) is working on her assignment. She worked very hard to get her work done in class.

1. What's wrong with this caption?



## Lesson/Activity #2 ANSWER

**Ruth Ibarra (11th) is working on her assignment. She worked very hard to get her work done in class.**

### 1. Why is this wrong?

- a. Don't start a caption with a name. Use the 175 Caption Starters document to help you.
- b. Use present tense in the first sentence. "is working" should be replaced with "works"
- c. The first sentence doesn't tell us WHAT assignment or even what CLASS she is in. Be specific. (Don't be lazy. GO find out what assignment and class she was working on.)
- d. The second sentence needs to provide QUALITY information that is not opinion. Yes, this means you probably need to go TALK to the person in the picture to find out more information. (What was hard about the assignment? What did she learn from the assignment? Why did she take this class? What did she like about this class? How well did she do on this assignment? etc.)



## Lesson/Activity #3

# RIGHT

In Basic Photography, Ruth Ibarra (11th) works to finish her Photoshop assignment. Students took pictures of toys for their still life photography assignment and then completed Photoshop work on their pictures.

1. Why is this right?

## Lesson/Activity #3 ANSWER

In Basic Photography, Ruth Ibarra (11th) works to finish her Photoshop assignment. Students took pictures of toys for their still life photography assignment and then completed Photoshop work on their pictures.

Why is this right?

1. The caption started with a phrase instead of her name.
2. The verb in the first sentence is “works” instead of “is working”.
3. The first sentence contains specific information about what assignment she was working on.
4. The second sentence includes quality information that we didn’t know from looking at the picture.



## Lesson/Activity #4

1. Check your understanding of using present and past tense correctly in caption writing by taking this [Caption Writing Verb Tense](#) quiz. Don't forget to see your score and look over the questions you missed to help you understand the caption writing format.



# Additional Resources

[Captivating Captions](#)

[Caption Writing](#)