

Yearbook Creation

Writing Content—Captions

Captions are the most read copy in the yearbook. Like body copy, they should be well researched, interesting, informative and follow the journalism rules for grammar.

At a minimum, captions should identify the people pictured in the photos. If there are less than five people, identify everyone. Otherwise, identify the main people in the photo.

Caption Tips

- Research what is happening in the photo
- Begin with strong, descriptive nouns and verbs (avoid starting captions with people's names)
- Use full names to identify the people pictured
- Write concisely
- Use active voice
- Don't make up information or use joke captions

Writing

Write yearbook captions in complete sentences, unless the caption is strictly for identifying the people pictured. The information in captions should complement the main story but should not be repetitive.

Captions are often comprised of at least two statements, each with its own purpose.

- The first sentence should answer the five Ws and H (who, what, where, when, why and how). Write this part of the caption in the present tense.
- The second statement might include what happened before or after the photo was taken, or some detail the reader wouldn't know by looking at the photo. This sentence is usually written in the past tense.

Quotes are a good way to bring color and depth to a caption. Look at the two examples below. It is easy to see why a direct quote adds impact to a caption.

- Tisha is thinking about how she will do on the final exam.
- "My stomach was doing somersaults before the test. Once I started answering questions, I just got into the zone and did the best I could," said junior Tisha Hall.

Captions for Group Photos

For group photos such as organizations or clubs, identify the students by row. Get the students' names before they leave the picture site. Always start with the same row in all pictures: front or back. You do not need to indicate "left to right" in the caption.

Designing

Place captions directly above, below or beside the photo.

Captions throughout the book should be the same size and font. The caption font is usually smaller than the body copy.

For example, if the body copy is 10 point Times, the caption copy should be 8 point Times.

Create a caption design for each section.