



TOP 10 TIPS FOR WRITING DETAIL-PACKED CAPTIONS

Captions are the most read copy in a yearbook because they provide the immediate information about what is happening in the photographs featured on the spread. As such, they should be filled with facts and details that the reader wouldn't otherwise know.

1. Interview more than one person per photo. Get the facts that may not be obvious.
2. Verify name spelling of subjects in photos with the official school registration list.
3. Group captions should begin with the group's name followed by rows designated as Front row, Row 2, Row 3, Back row, in a different typeface from names or in parenthesis.
4. First sentence, written in present tense, should answer the important questions of who, what, when, where, why and how.
5. Remaining sentence(s), written in past tense, provides additional information about the event or subject that would not be obvious from looking at the photo.
6. Photo credits may be included at the end of the caption, if not credited elsewhere. Simply use "Photo by" followed by photographer's name.
7. Photo stories, longer captions including details that might otherwise be found in copy, may result in the need for less copy. Photo stories should be at least three sentences long and could include quotes from subjects in the photograph.
8. Do's of caption writing should be followed: answer all obvious questions, variety of phrasing, use complete name, first sentence written in present tense, active voice when explaining the action.
9. Don'ts of caption writing that should be avoided include: overuse of lead patterns, passive verbs, stating the obvious, commenting on or talking to the photo.
10. Gag or joke captions should never be used. They are unprofessional and alienate the readers.