

BEAT REPORTING

Now that the ladder is complete, we'll determine who will cover what.

- ▶ A 'beat' is an area or topic a reporter is assigned to cover — each staffer will be assigned to cover a specific person, club, sport activity or event and it is their job to stay in contact with that person or people involved. It will also be up to them to find and generate the stories of these activities as the year progresses.

Step one: Assign beats

- ▶ Look through the ladder and divide the pages. Think about which topics can be combined into a single beat. Then, think about how you could cover the beat — Q+A, attend yourself etc. Put this into the ladder.

Step two: Get ready

- ▶ If you are reporting on a sports beat:
 - Contact the captains and coaches of the sports teams and let them know you will be in contact for information. Tell them you will be looking for interesting stories, scores for games, and anything else to tell the story of the year.
 - Keep a record of all games, opposing teams and scores.
 - Find out about particularly interesting games or stand out plays or players.
 - Keep track of games and attend at least one game.
 - Talk to staff photographers about the photos you will need. Ask the coach about parent and professional photographers who may already attend the games.
- ▶ If you are reporting on a club activity beat:
 - Contact the club adviser and let them know you will be consistently going to them for information. Tell them you will be looking for interesting angles to tell the story of the year.
 - Find out about any upcoming events both inside and outside of school.
 - Talk to staff photographers about the photos you will need. Ask the club adviser about parent photographers who may already attend the events.

Step three: Research

- ▶ Read some example stories and see what sort of information you need to gather. Grab a reporter's notebook and plan your first visit. Go out and get the scoop!