

# Headline Writing

2012 KSPA Regional Contest

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## Description

You are a staff member of Ad Astra High School's The Star. Your newspaper is a monthly with the next edition to come out March 17, but you also have a website that posts breaking news. Your editor has asked you to write headlines for five stories, two that will appear online, and three that will appear in the next print edition, in three weeks.

## School Info

Name: Ad Astra High School  
Location: Aspera, Kansas  
Mascot: Box Turtles  
Enrollment: 850 (grades 9-12)  
School Colors: Green & Gold  
Yearbook: The Honeybee  
Newspaper: The Star

## Contest Info

This is a **carry-in** contest.

Please attach **your assigned contest number** in the upper right-hand corner on the back of your entry.

**Do not** put your name on the entry. If you do, your entry will be disqualified.

Students are not to request help or advice from anyone other than the KSPA Executive Director. All work must be that of the contestant.

## Assignment

You are to write a headline for each of the five stories provided. Headlines #1 and #2 will be straight sentence-style news headlines for the Web (immediate publication), headlines #3 and #4 will be sentence-style headlines for print (delayed publication) and headline #5 will be a feature headline using a title-style teaser laid out above an explanatory sentence-style subheadline. Headlines should be computer-generated and must fit the required space. All headlines should be printed on an 8.5- by 11-inch sheet of paper.

*Example Title-style:* **Lady HaHa**

*Example Sentence-style:* Campus comedienne breaks up lunchtime crowd

## Specifications

**Headlines #1 and #2:** Write 24-point Helvetica headlines, 6 inches wide, with only one line for articles #1 and #2. Then write 12-point Helvetica one-line subheads under the main headlines that give more detail without repeating words.

**Headline #3:** Write an 18-point Times headline, 4 inches wide, two lines long for Story #3.

**Headline #4:** Write a 30-point Times headline, 8 inches wide, one line long for Story #4, which is an opinion piece.

**Headline #5:** Write a feature headline, 6 inches wide by 3 inches high for article #5. Headline may incorporate graphics, art or other treatments to reflect the current design trends for feature headlines. Color may be used for this headline only. Indicate the type face(s) used below the final design.



## Story #1 (Breaking News for Website)

A majority of Ad Astra High teachers has voted “no confidence” in the school principal, several educators told district trustees Tuesday night.

“There is a lack of safety on campus,” said teacher Florence Henderson. “Teachers, parents and counselors are not valued. She has failed Mt. Diablo High School.”

Teacher Ann B. Davis said Principal Emmylou Harris’ refusal to create a “master schedule” that complies with requirements for low-income funding would cause the school to lose about \$3.2 million. Other teachers, who stood with “no confidence” signs during the board meeting, said students were not properly disciplined, and that teachers felt Harris has been unresponsive to their concerns and targets those who speak out.

Fifty-five teachers voted no confidence, compared to 11 who voted confidence, Henderson said. Thirteen teachers abstained.

## Story #2 (Sports News for Website)

After a furious rally from an 11-point deficit, the John Brown boys’ basketball team was looking to send its first Eisenhower Valley Conference contest of the year into overtime.

Unfortunately for the Crusaders, Ad Astra senior Mike Lookinland didn’t want to extend his stay in the John Brown High School Fieldhouse.

Lookinland raced down the court, and hit a basket and free throw attempt with 4.4 seconds left to play as Ad Astra withstood a late rally for a 43-40 victory Tuesday.

The win marks the first of the season for the Box Turtles, while the Crusaders remain searching for theirs.

“Barry (Williams) gave me a great pass, and when I saw the defender not set his feet, I knew it was my shot,” said Lookinland, who finished with a game-high 17 points. “We usually don’t allow as many points as we did tonight, but this taught us a lot on how to come back if we have to.”

Ad Astra held a 33-22 lead heading into

Board members and district administrators did not comment on the allegations. Before Tuesday’s meeting began, several teachers stood outside with “no furlough” signs, protesting the district’s attempt to negotiate seven furlough days before the end of the school year to save money.

During the meeting, the board adopted a “qualified” budget, showing that it may not be able to pay its bills through 2014 due to state budget cuts, declining enrollment, unsettled teachers’ union negotiations and the possible conversion of John Brown High to a charter school.

Board trustees also approved a \$4.3 million increase in the district’s contract with Solyndra for solar panels on 51 sites, including two schools that were closed last year. In addition, the board agreed to change its meeting dates to Mondays starting in January.

the fourth quarter, but John Brown cranked up its defensive pressure and put the Box Turtles back on their heels.

John Brown put its full-court press into effect, and forced eight turnovers in the final eight minutes of play, and while putting up 18 points powered by four 3-pointers — two each from Sam Butcher and Greg Brady.

The Box Turtles had three players finish in double digits, paced by Lookinland’s 17, while Keith Partridge and Ruben Kincaid finished with 12 and 11 points, respectively.

With as much excitement as the fourth quarter had, the third quarter couldn’t have been more different as both teams combined for eight points, with John Brown’s only points coming from a pair of free throws by Danny Bonaduce.

Ad Astra controlled play in the first half and held a 27-20 lead at the intermission, due in part by outrebounding the Crusaders 15-9.

### Story #3 (Feature)

The 25 students who make up Ad Astra High School's first marching band in about 20 years weren't enthusiastic about 7 a.m. practices in the beginning.

"A lot of people were very hesitant, and I think at first, a lot of people were a little upset," AAHS senior and marching band member Christopher Knight said. "The mornings were cold. Our feet were wet. We were all going, 'This is miserable, why do we want to do this?' But then after the first (AAHS football game where the band performed), we were like, 'This is really worth it.' You know, we realized the value."

This year is the first time AAHS has offered a marching band program since the late 1980s or early 1990s. The marching band is linked to the concert band, and concert band students were required to participate in the new undertaking.

"The kids were not happy with me," new AAHS band teacher Robert Reed said. "I was being paranoid about them all dropping."

Reed said marching band students feared that people might laugh at them during their inaugural performance at an AAHS football game. As the band marched toward the grandstand after its first song, the crowd rose to its feet and cheered.

"I didn't even expect that," Reed said. "That was pretty cool. Once that happened, (the band members) were hooked."

After that moment, Reed felt like his students understood why they had been practicing in 22-degree weather at 7 a.m.

"I was a little worried about how this was going to be received," Reed said. He was a student teacher at a school that boasted a marching band with 168 students, and had to make adjustments for the size of the AAHS band. "We looked good, we were just small, and that's the way it was. But the community loved it ... I was like, 'OK, I think this is the place that is going to be open to a little bit of change.'"

Knight said the unfamiliarity of marching is the most challenging part of the experience. He has been practicing music in some capacity since

second grade, and described marching band as a form of overtraining. In addition to the extra training, Reed sees the marching band as a way for students to warm up before concert band performances begin, and he hopes that the marching band, with a more visible place in the community, will work as a recruiting tool for the entire music program.

Participation in all of the Ad Astra School District bands has increased since the marching band's first performance this fall. Reed said a number of kids who dropped band at the seventh- and eighth-grade levels re-entered the class after seeing the marching band's first performance, and Knight said he's seen increased enthusiasm for the concert band's November performance.

Reed said his new job at AAHS keeps him busy, and the hardest part is making sure that he gets to spend enough time with students. He teaches six different bands and choirs at a variety of grade levels. Reed described the experience of being a first-year teacher and putting together a marching band as "pretty crazy." This is Reed's first teaching position after completing college at Kansas State University.

"They didn't really put the pressure on me. They just said, 'Do whatever you can,'" Reed said. "So I got something started."

The band members participated in about eight or nine three-hour-long rehearsals this season, and next summer, Reed hopes to start a band camp. The camp would give the marching band a chance to rehearse and "get things down" before the school year and marching band season. Reed said the band could use a sponsor before the camp.

The marching band does not have any performances scheduled in the near future, but the AAHS concert band will perform at 7 p.m. Thursday at Eve Plumb Middle School.

"(Marching band) is what it is, you're marching around. You don't always sound good outside. You're playing in freezing weather sometimes, but it gets people excited," Reed said. "When you do the rest of the stuff - the concert stuff - people are like, 'Oh that band.'"

## Story #4 (Opinion/Review)

Lights. Camera. Action. The movie starts. Acting? Check. Special effects? Check. Fun? Check. Everything is much better than I had expected.

A group of teenagers sit chattering in the corner of the theater. As I wish for them to be quiet to allow me to pay attention to the movie, I ask myself: "Why am I watching this, and why am I so absorbed in the movie?"

As I watched *The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 1*, I had to constantly remind myself that this movie was supposed to be bad. The effects were supposed to be awful and the acting was supposed to be pitiful. At least that was how the previous movies were.

But to be honest, I enjoyed *Breaking Dawn Part 1*. Sure, the acting isn't perfect, and neither are the special effects, but they were by far better than I had expected.

What made this movie memorable was the storyline. Having read all the *Twilight* books in middle school, I already knew the plot, and the movie stayed true to Stephanie Meyer's original version of the story from the books. So it wasn't the surprise factor of the storyline that made the movie for me.

I must applaud Bill Condon for directing the captivating *Breaking Dawn Part 1*, which was notably

better than the previous three movies directed by Hardwicke, Weitz and Slade, respectively. In the other movies, I chuckled every time Jacob transformed into a werewolf as I wondered who would ever believe the unrealistic shape-shifting effect. I laughed when Edward sparkled, and I kept thinking about how silly the actors must have felt when they saw themselves saying those lines on screen, all of which distracted me from paying attention to the movie.

This one, however, is not distracting. Although the voiceovers for the wolf scene are silly, I found myself absorbed in the movie without wondering about the ridiculousness of the scenarios for most of the hour and 48 minutes.

I liked Robert Pattison and Kristen Stewart's acting, both of which stay true to the characters. The movie reminds me of the books, and the jokes remind me of the story I haven't read or thought about for so long. *Breaking Dawn Part 1* is funny, cute and entertaining. It made me laugh and smile.

I left the theater happy and I don't consider those two hours to have been a waste of my time. I enjoyed *The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 1* more than I would like to admit, and I hope you do too.

## Story #5 (Special Headline)

After five hours of sleep, Sophie Choice crawls out of bed to get ready for school. Despite her nearly sleepless night, Sophie's spirits are high with the feeling of accomplishment. The night before, Sophie had been stressing out about studying for her upcoming SATs and three tests which she had to prepare for that night.

To many students, this mass of responsibilities can be seen as daunting to the point where the thought of even completing the tasks seems impossible. However, Sophie had many nights like this one and managed to pull through every time.

As a senior, Sophie is enrolled in four AP classes and spends many hours outside of school training for the varsity tennis team and practicing piano. Despite all of her extra-curricular activities, she has managed to maintain a 3.75 weighted GPA, secure her position on the tennis team while also

living a very active social life — all with the "help" of neuroenhancing drugs.

All across America, students on high school campuses are illicitly distributing prescription drugs. However, it is not with the usual motive of getting high. Quite the contrary — the high schoolers are popping pills with the hope that the effects will help them get better grades.

These prescription drugs are neuroenhancers, or drugs meant to treat patients with diagnosed conditions including Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and Narcolepsy by heightening cognitive functions and fighting drowsiness. The underground use of neuroenhancers, such as Adderall and Ritalin, has been gaining popularity on campuses all over the country.

Ritalin, scientifically known as methylphenidate, and Adderall, sometimes referred

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to as dextroamphetamine, are the Coca Cola and Pepsi of prescription stimulants, and are among the most commonly abused neuroenhancers. The narcolepsy medication, Provigil, or modafinil, is also gaining popularity as a "study drug," a drug used to increase a student's focus and ability to study, according to a National Survey Results on Drug Use.

Students at Ad Astra High School have taken up the practice of using these performance-enhancing drugs for reasons including simply wanting to excel in academics to feeling a physical need for a doctor's diagnosis.

"I first took Adderall because my sister who's in college takes it to [cram] for finals and [for] essay[s]," Sophie said. "She said it totally helps her so she brought me back some Adderall to try. She originally brought me some because I can't focus for s\*\*\* and I thought it would help me to study for finals."

Sophie believes that she has a case of ADD, but has not been diagnosed because of her parents' attitude towards performance-enhancing drugs.

"I seriously think I have ADD but my dad won't let me prescribe any [Adderall] because he thinks it's bad," Sophie said. "I don't think it's a bad drug. So many people are prescribed, I just don't see the difference if I'm using it to study and so are the people that are prescribed to it."

The pressure to do well on the SATs appears to be a common motive for this practice. Students want to do well, and study drugs have provided a way to increase their focus, and is said to result in higher scores.

"I really wanted some for the SATs [because] it would really help me focus and I could possibly score higher," Sophie said. "A lot of people take it for the SATs."

The increasing use of these drugs also raises a question of ethics: does the illicit use of these drugs with the intention of gaining a competitive academic edge constitute as cheating? With convincing arguments from both sides, the answer to this pressing question is in a very muddled gray area.

"Adderall definitely gives you an edge to just about anything you do when you're on the drug," Sophie said, "But I don't see it as cheating because I, myself, cannot focus at all and I think I should be

prescribed the drug, but my dad just won't let me."

Senior Julie Christie, who has been diagnosed with ADHD by a doctor, has been asked on multiple occasions by peers to distribute her prescription. She has refused each time, as she feels the results could be drastic.

"People have asked me [for my Ritalin] before," Julie said. "I just couldn't do it. If something happened to my friend I would feel so bad. I've never actually given it to someone. I thought about it [but] I couldn't bring myself to do it."

Other students seem shifty-eyed when they claim to have certain symptoms and obtain a prescription of the drug, and in, many cases, a 504 plan, which allows the student to receive extra time on standardized tests including the SAT. Many students who partake in the use of these drugs are often unaware of the health risks of unprescribed use.

"You usually have to get tested to see what kind of dose is good for you," Julie said. "And if they take a dose that is too strong for them it could end really bad."

According to an article in the Journal of American College Health by Barbara Prudhomme White, "prescribed use of methylphenidate appears to be relatively safe, [however] misuse or abuse of any stimulant medication can have adverse, if not deadly, consequences. When these drugs are taken in high doses, either nasally or orally, the risk of addiction increases, and physical side effects include cardiovascular complications, increased blood pressure and headache."

Just like any drug, unsupervised use of study drugs can result in negative side effects, and one should always look to a doctor's recommendation before taking any prescription drugs.

Julie Christie feels that the effects of the drugs are extremely favorable and helpful when dealing with the responsibilities that she has as a student.

"I first started taking it sophomore year, second semester," Julie said. "It's definitely helped me a lot. I can focus more, I feel like I know what I am doing more. I am more aware of my surroundings and it definitely has benefited me for the best."

In addition to the positive effects of the drug, receiving the prescription itself has also motivated Gaeta to make responsible decisions in the classroom.

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"Now I make sure I sit in the front and make sure that I am interactive with the teacher," Julie said. "[I know] when to socialize and to not socialize."

However, Julie does not intend on taking her prescription nearly as frequently upon graduating college.

"It's just for school so I can stay focused," she said. "Maybe once in a while for my job if I really have to focus. I really just use it to help with my school work."

Although she understands her peers' motives for wanting to illicitly use neuroenhancers, she cannot fully relate to those who simply want to make their studying easier.

"They don't need it, why are they taking it?" Julie said. "I don't want to have to take it."