

**MODULE 1****WRITING FOR AN  
AUDIENCE****TOPICS TO COVER**

1. To understand what an audience is.
2. To recognise who your audience is and their interests.
3. To understand different types of media.

**KEY FEATURES**

1. To create a body of work suitable for your audience.
2. To consider what your audience would like to read about.
3. To develop a project you can deliver.

The key focus of creating a magazine/newspaper/blog is to provide content for your audience. So it is vital that you identify who this is from as early as possible. This section will walk you through how to do that and pointers to get your team of writers to identify exactly what that audience may be looking for.

**AUDIENCES AND WHAT THEY  
WANT?**

Your audience is who will be reading your publication. The chances are, that in a school setting, you will be targeting your project at the parents/carers of students, the wider school community and of course the staff and students themselves. In a community setting your audience will be those connected to your writers, those who work within the organisation and other people with a vested interest such as funders, for example.

One of the easiest ways of identifying what your audience is interested in is by asking them. You could have your team create a questionnaire asking

**TOP  
TIP**

Teamwork is embedded in the Write2 programme and we encourage you, as facilitators, to encourage this at every opportunity.

them what they would like to read about, or they could decide themselves what they feel their audience would like to read.

Usually, when we run these sessions, the content is based on things going on in school or events linked to the organisation. Over the years we have found that parents seldom get the 'full story' about events and things going on in school from the students themselves. So, covering events such as trips, visits, sporting achievements and other news worthy events are great content ideas for your writers to show their writing skills while entertaining readers.

## DIFFERENT TYPES OF MEDIA

Once you have determined the audience you are catering for, it is worth discussing with your group just what they understand by 'Media' and how different types of media reach different audiences. As this isn't a Journalism course per say, we have focused on the following key areas:

1. Print - newspapers
2. Print – magazines
3. Online – websites/blogs
4. Social Media

It is worth having your team think about what sort of media would work best for your publication if it hasn't already been predetermined. A TV show might not be viable but a short video for social media to promote your publication probably could be. But it is vital to get input from your team to consider what works as well as what doesn't for your product and your audience.

## HISTORY OF MEDIA

If time permits, you may like to give your team an overview of just how media outlets have developed over the years. This programme will focus primarily on newspapers, magazines and online. The resources for this section will give you timelines boasting facts about each area of media.

**Print** – from the Romans to the Germans, tablets (and the not the iPad variety) and printing presses feature on this worksheet which explains how the newspaper came to be and how it has evolved over time.

**Magazine** – this will cover the basics of the glossy world of magazines. How they survive on advertising and the content they wow us with each month and the demise of some of our favourites

**Online** – the area of the media that has grown the fastest but has the potential to be the most damaging to long-standing newspapers and magazines. Totally dominating how we digest the news, is the internet the titan of all media outlets?

**Social Media** - Consider how social media is used to spread the news as well. Considering this was only developed towards the back end of the 20th

century, platforms such as Twitter and Facebook have become key channels for breaking news.

## **YOU ARE A JOURNALIST – SO WHAT NOW?**

As your team of writers will throughout the sessions be acting as journalists, it is important to have them understand what a journalist does and what might be expected of them while working on this project. This can be done by asking them what they think a journalist is and what they write about. Obviously, for older writers, it could be about asking them what the key aspects of being a journalist are. These tend to include:

1. Researching,
2. Writing,
3. Editing,
4. Interviewing,
5. Communicating,
6. Planning.

It is also worth talking about the guidelines that journalists have to follow as you may choose to implement some of these into the development of your team. These are things like word count, deadlines, teamwork, pitching etc. You may not have the time to utilise all these factors during every session but as a confidence builder, we have found pitching ideas is always something our writers enjoy and which builds confidence amongst the team.

In the primary setting we might encourage them to work in pairs to pitch their ideas whereas, in the secondary setting, your writers might be happy to work alone and present their ideas to the rest of the team without support. From there the team can agree whether the story fits within their publication. This is also a great opportunity for feedback to be given.

### **TOP TIP**

**Allowing your team to take on the role of journalists at the beginning of your programme will show what is expected of them from the beginning.**

## YOUR PUBLICATION

This is one of the most exciting parts – seeing your publication become a reality. You have identified your audience and considered what sort of format you will be using to reach your audience. Now comes the fun stuff, how it will be presented, its name etc. Involving the writers in these decisions is always interesting and will always encourage debate amongst your team.

**Some examples of how other schools/organisations put their magazines together are below:**

### SCHOOL A

This was a primary school that opted to have an A5 magazine printed at the end of the school year. It was created by a group of 12 children over the course of a term where they worked with a team leader to create content. The layout and printing were handled by the team leader and the magazine was sold at their end of year performance. This school put out six magazines using this method as it was an opportunity for targeted groups of children to develop their literacy skills while inspiring younger writers who also were considered to be a part of the editorial team when they were also in Year 6.

### SCHOOL B

This was a secondary school that chose an A5 magazine printed half-termly. Each year group was responsible for the content featured in it each term. The publication encouraged a great deal of competition within the year groups to see who could have the best magazine. Sessions to create content were the responsibility of a team leader but students determined a theme for their version. These magazines were given away FOC to parents, carers and people from the community.

### COMMUNITY GROUP A

This was a group of army cadets worked with a team leader to create a magazine for their anniversary. Sessions were delivered each week over 15 weeks and the end result was distributed to the cadets, their families and key stakeholders at their anniversary dinner. The content was based on the stories of former and current cadets and the activities they take part in to encourage new cadets.

### COMMUNITY GROUP B

A monthly newsletter was created by a group of young carers to be enjoyed by others also involved within that group. It was distributed both physically and online and as the work of group members who voluntarily attended sessions held weekly by a team leader.

## THINGS TO CONSIDER

How often will you publish? Will it be termly, perhaps a bumper end of year edition or maybe even monthly? There are lots of options to consider but the key things that you need to consider when determining this are:

1. How much time will you have to create your publication?
2. Will you have enough content?
3. Who is responsible for printing?
4. Will you encourage submissions from other students or just those selected to make up your team?
5. Will you charge for the publication?
6. How will you distribute it?

Bringing your team into these discussions, even if decisions have already been made behind the scenes, is empowering for them and really allows them to take ownership of the publication.

Once you have discussed these areas with your writers and you have a plan, the big question then becomes what you are going to call your publication.

## THE NAME

We all know the importance of a name, what it stands for and it is always a very exciting time when you see the ideas flourish from your team. There is no right or wrong way to do this. We have seen schools mind map certain words and values to come up with their name. There have been names shouted out by each student and then the top three choices, selected by a Head Teacher, for example, and then voted upon by the team.

This is a great opportunity to introduce your students to democracy – giving them the chance to vote on the name of the publication. You may already have a name used on a similar publication and want to continue to use that name, but the sooner you can give your publication a name, the more realistic it becomes for your team of writers.

## SUCCESS CRITERIA

- Your writers understand what an audience is
- Recognising who will be reading your publication will be easily identifiable by your writers
- Content and a name for the publication will be discussed
- Various media platforms will be covered
- Show experience and ability to share ideas with others in the group\*\*

*\*\*advanced learning*