

12 RULES FOR WRITING YOU SHOULD NEVER, EVER, EVER BREAK

DATES

- Do this:
Monday, Aug. 21, 2011
- Do NOT abbreviate March, April, May, June or July
- Do not use “on” in front of the date:
...will be held Monday, Aug. 4, 2005
- Always spell out the day of the week
- No day of week IF THE DATE IS IN THE PAST:
...was held on Aug. 4, 2005

NUMBERS

- **ALWAYS** spell out numbers **one** through **nine**
- Use numbers for 10 and up
- Age is to be written like this:
4-year-old female; four years old
- **ALWAYS** spell out the name of the grade; NEVER use a number with letters after: **5th is incorrect**, it must be *first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth*

TIME, DATE, PLACE

- **ALWAYS** list event information in the format of time (3 p.m.), date (Friday, October 12), and place (in the cafeteria).
- DO NOT ABBREVIATE days of the week ever!
- Use the other rules that apply to dates.

COURTESY TITLES

- Use “Mr.” or “Ms.” or “Dr.” with first and last name the first time they are mentioned in the story.
- Use their LAST NAME ONLY any time they are referenced again, unless the person is a “Dr.” then always use the “Dr.” and the last name. Ex: *Dr. Terry Robinson explained... Dr. Robinson added...*
- Never use “Miss” or “Mrs.”

STUDENT IDENTIFICATION

- Use grade level and full name on first reference: *Junior Mary Jones stated that.... Jones also referred*
- Unless it is at the beginning of a sentence the student’s grade level is never capitalize: *freshman, sophomore, junior and senior.*
- After addressing the student once by their full name, USE ONLY THEIR LAST NAME FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE STORY UNLESS THERE ARE TWO STUDENTS WITH THE SAME LAST NAME.

SCORES

- Use numerals and a hyphen to represent the winning score: *10-8*
- The WINNING score always goes first, even if the Bulldogs lost!
- Reporters describe the game and the action, not the loss, the win or the emotion.

TIME

- Midnight
- Noon
- 4 p.m. (always use periods)
- 8-11 p.m. (only use p.m. ONCE)
- 2 a.m. - 3 p.m.
- NEVER 4:00 p.m.
- ALWAYS 4 p.m.
- ALWAYS 4:04 p.m.
- NEVER “a quarter to 5”

CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

- ALWAYS spelled out on the first reference: *Student Council, National Honor Society*
- After first use of Student Council, it become StuCo
- *National Honor Society becomes NHS*
- *Mexico High School become MHS*
- *Mexico Middle School becomes MMS*

MONEY/PERCENTAGES

- \$4
- 75 cents
- \$1,000 - never a thousand dollars
- \$1 million - DO NOT need “dollars” after.
- Percent is one word. It is always *50 percent*; never use this symbol: %

SCHOOL TEAMS/LOCATIONS

- Teams are not plural: it is *boys golf, not Boys’ Golf*
- Basketball court/gym - Filbert Court
- Other gym - Gooch Gym
- Sports Complex lobby
- Football Field - Hawthorne Heights
- Softball Field - Gallup Field
- Cross Country or DXC

EVENTS

- Homecoming - capitalized
- Prom - capitalized
- Powderpuff, Powderbuff - capitalized
- Prom - capitalized
- Winterwarming - capitalized
- Prom queen
- Homecoming queen
- Homecoming parade
- Homecoming spirit week

GRAMMAR/PUNCTUATION

- NO COMMA before “and” in a series.
- Use colons only when what comes before the colon is a complete sentences and there is a list afterward.
- Italicize books, papers, TV shows, magazines and websites.
- *www.website.com, Pretty Little Liars, Olympus Has Fallen*