

Reporting on the Extraordinary: The Chronicle of Wonders

Learning objective: To identify and apply the key structural and linguistic features of a formal newspaper report, including the use of passive voice, formal vocabulary, and the five Ws (Who, What, Where, When, Why).

Read the following questions carefully. Use your knowledge of journalism to construct clear, objective, and engaging responses. Ensure you use the third person and maintain a formal tone throughout.

Max the monkey has just discovered a mysterious, glowing fossil in the local park, which has caused quite a stir in the community! You are an investigative reporter tasked with writing the front-page story for the local paper.

Word bank: Headline · Byline · Orientation · Passive voice · Witness testimony · Chronological · Formal register · Journalistic · Lead paragraph · Caption

1. Write a catchy, informative headline for a report about Max's discovery. Remember to use present tense and keep it brief. (1 mark)

2. The 'lead paragraph' must summarise the story using the five Ws. Write a lead paragraph that explains who found the object, what it is, where it was discovered, when it happened, and why it is significant. (3 marks)

3. Explain why it is important for a journalist to use the passive voice (e.g., 'The fossil was discovered by Max') rather than the active voice when reporting on a formal event. (2 marks)

4. Draft a short quote from a witness (such as Pip the bookworm) who saw the discovery. Ensure you use correct speech punctuation. (2 marks)

5. Compare and contrast the language used in a tabloid newspaper versus a broadsheet newspaper. Justify which style you are aiming for in this report. (3 marks)

6. What might happen if a journalist failed to double-check their facts before publishing a front-page story? Explain the consequences for both the newspaper and the person being reported on. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a layout for a newspaper front page including a space for the headline, a photograph with a caption, and two columns of text.



Extension challenge: Imagine the fossil is actually a time-capsule from 100 years ago. Write a follow-up 'Letter to the Editor' from the perspective of an elderly resident who remembers the day the capsule was buried. Use sophisticated vocabulary and emotive language.