

Writing for Workers World/ Mundo Obrero Newspaper

1. WW guidelines for news writers and photographers
2. A typical WW production schedule
3. Developing WW coverage in your branch
4. Importance of a communist newspaper by Lenin



Common types of articles in Workers World Newspaper



- News stories
- Editorials
- Political commentary

News Stories



1. Accounts by comrades or close Party friends about actions or developing campaigns in their area
2. World events, proposed by a comrade and/or discussed during the WW editorial meeting and assigned to a writer

Who? What? When? Where?

1. These should appear early; the first paragraph or first few sentences. . . to identify what article is about.
Remember: Workers World is read across the U.S. and internationally by readers who may not be familiar with local names, places, movements, etc.
2. Struggle incites interest. Try to prioritize that element.

Which comes first?

The one that's most important.
It's a judgment call.

A date may mark an
anniversary.

A place, person or number of
people may be the most
significant.



Use **active** voice (“people rallied against”).
Not **passive** voice (“rally was attended by people”).
For any sentence, most significant facts come first.



On Oct. 3, in Billings, Mont., a rally against the privatization of public land was attended by 200,000 people.



A determined crowd of 200,000 people rallied against the privatization of public land in Billings, Mont., on Oct. 3.

Which of the following was edited to put the **active** voice and most significant facts first?



Police have been harassing people on Main Street for a long time. That's why they protested this week. It was the first time this happened in Newtown.

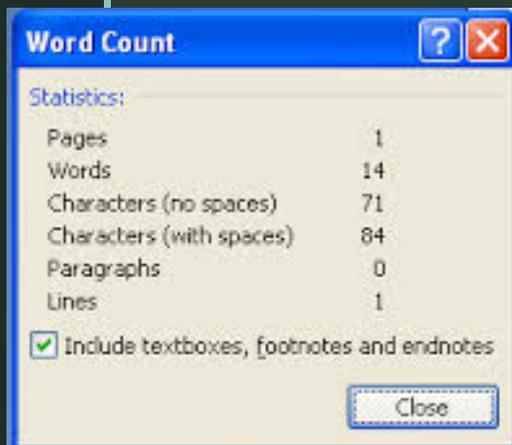


For the very first time, scores of people in Newtown, Mass., came out into the streets to protest police harassment on Oct. 3.

Descending order of importance and word count

Arranging your facts: Don't save best for last!

Ideally, if an article needs to be cut, the editor should be able to just lop off some of the ending.



Ask the editor what the word count should be. Try very hard to stay within those limits. Better that **you** choose what needs to be omitted before you submit the article.



Why? & How?

Usually come after **Who, What, When** and **Where**. It's where you elaborate on the facts at the beginning of the article. It's the meat of the political analysis, the background of the story:

- Why did people carry out a protest? What made them so angry?
- How did they get around police barricades to march on the freeway?
- Why did these workers go on strike for the very first time?
- How were they able to win their demands?
- How does the issue link to the fight that oppressed nations, women, LGBTQ2S+ people still have to wage to get equal treatment? Why in the 21st century must oppressed nations, women and LGBTQ2S+ people still have to fight just to get equal treatment?
- What's the significance of the action as it relates to capitalism and these concepts:
 - A. How does capitalism by its very nature lead to a greater concentration of wealth in fewer and fewer hands?
 - B. How can the workers and oppressed achieve liberation from this brutal system?

Sources of information



1. The name of a city added below the article byline (the writer's name) indicates the author was there and reporting first-hand, or that they are involved with the issue. Let the editor know every time you submit an article if you need to use a different byline than your own name and what that should be.
2. In news articles, don't write in the first person, ("I was there, I saw. . ."). If you were present at the event, or if there is a relevant personal fact that needs to be relayed, writers may refer to themselves as "this writer" rather than "I."

Sources continued



3. Cite information given by another person, a press release or local/national/social media. Direct quotes from a person may be used: "X told WW newspaper. . ." Direct quotes from a publication should have publication name and date in parentheses after the quote; (San Francisco Bay View, June 1) or (sfbayview.com, June 1) or ("Thousands of protesters drowned out racists in Minneapolis, on May 28," said the June 1 San Francisco Bay View.). Add the year for sources not from the current year.

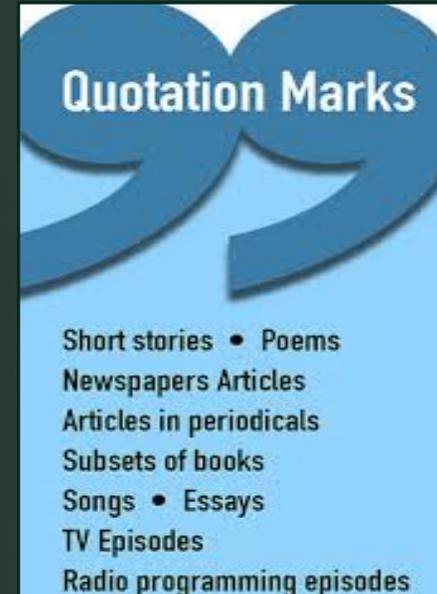
Sources continued



4. Online sources: For publications, the publication name and date are usually sufficient. To direct people to the web site, include the url. A short form can be created at tinyurl.com.
5. Put quote marks “ “ around direct quotes from a person or a media source. Otherwise, paraphrase information. Widely publicized information doesn't need sourcing.

Sources continued

6. Don't shy away from quoting the bourgeois media or individuals just because they're the enemy. In logic, it's called "admission against interest." Someone admitting to a fact that hurts their interests carries more weight than statements to their advantage. EPA officials admitting that Trump cuts will wreck the environment is a more convincing quote than if the statement came from a friendly source.



Sources continued



7. Lists of endorsers go better later or at the end of the article. Don't forget to list Workers World Party or any of your local mass organizations as endorsers. Or if you want to list key endorsers early for relations sake, you can then say later: "Other endorsers were" If a long list of speakers is mentioned, you can break them into groups with a point of interest at the start of each.



Check your facts

1. After writing your article, check your facts again, especially the spelling of names, places, dates, etc. Did you put in the key Who, What, When, Where?
2. You don't have to worry about whether you abbreviate a month, or add a hyphen between words, etc. Copy editors worry about style issue questions.

Political language and objectives



Our paper reflects our Party's general view of uniting the struggles-- including helping to unite the movement, despite any differences, against a common class enemy. Another objective of our paper is to distinguish ourselves politically, ideologically and historically when necessary, but NOT to make organizational or individual attacks on those in our movement. If you want to suggest a polemical, or strongly critical, article against another group's ideas, please consult the approach with the managing editor of that particular issue first. A good political guideline for this approach is to follow the social media protocols our party has adopted.

Political language continued

1. Our style is not to repeat bigoted language or slurs. If you want to show how bad the reactionaries are, find a way to let the reader know what they said without repeating the most offensive phrases.

The bourgeois media sometimes use the phrase “barnyard epithets.” It’s not the barnyard that offends us so much as racist, sexist, xenophobic, anti-worker, Islamophobic, anti-Jewish, anti-LGBTQ language, or words that insult people with disabilities or other groupings.

Political language continued

2. Workers World follows the Associated Press Stylebook. But we use our own WW style for politically sensitive words.

Some examples are:

- a. Capitalize Black. We recognize Black people in the U.S. as an oppressed nation.
- b. Use Latinx, Indigenous peoples and Native Nations.
- c. When referring to the U.S., never use the words "America" or "Americans" or "nation." We also don't say "United States of America" or "U.S.A" which is also chauvinist. Don't use "we" when referring to the U.S. and don't use the word "citizen" when referring to people who live in the U.S. because of the millions of immigrants forced to come here.

Workers World

The Associated Press
Stylebook

FULLY REVISED AND UPDATED
WITH MORE THAN 55 NEW ENTRIES.
THE INDUSTRY'S BEST-SELLING REFERENCE FOR 27 YEARS.
ESSENTIAL FOR JOURNALISTS, STUDENTS, EDITORS AND
WRITERS IN ALL PROFESSIONS

MORE THAN
2 MILLION
COPIES SOLD

Political language continued: more examples

- d. Avoid words like “hysteria” and “witchhunt” with their anti-woman roots.
Say “spouse” not “wife” or “husband.”
- e. Don’t use phrases like to “cripple” a law or “turn a deaf ear or a blind eye” that stigmatize people with disabilities. Try for a different expression than “We stand in solidarity.”



Political language continued

3. Sensitivity to commonly used words is a work in progress. Comradely feedback is welcome if problematic words slip through inadvertently.
4. The art of good political writing demands that we marshal the facts so readers draw the conclusions of our perspective without ending in a sermon.
5. Opinions can be stated frankly. But to be convincing, the information presented must justify the writer's passions.



Be sure to send in the photographer's name, and date and place of the photograph. Pictures can strengthen our newspaper with **photojournalistic information** that words don't convey. Photographs can both document and describe an event. As the old saying goes: "A photo is worth a thousand words."

Taking photographs for Workers World

Interested in taking photographs?
Refer to page 3 in the Workers World Development packet.

- Writing about small demonstrations of only two or three is great. They are a political test of the comrades. Some of WW's very small demonstrations built the party and our history.
- For instance, a small Portland protest of 3 people against U.S. intervention in Venezuela became part of the record of U.S. solidarity, important for morale here and in Venezuela.
- So--DO take pictures even if an action is small. Sometimes the picture of one placard and one face makes a strong statement.

Developing coverage in your branch

Suggestions for what branches should be thinking about

Here's what branches should be thinking about each week for WW newspaper:

1. Is there an action WWP is taking or participating in that we should report? Who should write it? Who should photograph it?
2. Is there an event in your city or area worth analyzing even if WWP is not "in it" (strike, election, referendum, fascist attack)? What should we say? Who will write?
3. Both one and two need discussion to coordinate assignments.
4. Your branch should have a liaison. They should be part of these discussions.



Branches continued:

5. If you have a branch meeting or some way of connecting each week, the WW coverage should be on the agenda—a branch meeting or whatever contact is reasonable for a small branch.
6. If the branch has a WW liaison or regular contact person, writers should check in with that person when planning and submitting articles.



Branches continued:

7. There should be an easy, clear way for the WW editors to connect and consult with the branch once an article is submitted and is being edited.
8. Of course, someone from the branch may want to take on other kinds of articles of a national or international scope or a feature. That would be a positive. Check in with your WW liaison and send your suggestions into articles. This is a democratically centralized way to proceed.

A communist newspaper as a collective organizer

From V.I. Lenin, "What Is To Be Done?"
section 5.2.

With a recent issue of Workers World newspaper in hand, be ready to discuss your thoughts on Lenin's points in relation to the WW and to your local work.



What is to be Done?

Vladimir Lenin



What is to be Done?
Vladimir Lenin

Quote #1. “We strive ‘to stretch a line’ ... where there are hardly any bricklayers anywhere, and we are obliged to encourage everyone who informs us even as regards the most common facts, in the hope that this will increase the number of our contributors in the given field and will ultimately train us all to select facts that are really the most outstanding.”

What point is Lenin making in this quote?

How does this relate to WW newspaper and to your local work?

➤ What point is Lenin making in this quote?

(The paper provides national outreach and recruitment, developing reporters from all parts of the country to report accurately on material conditions.)



What is to be Done?

Vladimir Lenin

Quote #2: An organizer "... could render priceless service to the movement by carrying on agitation among the unemployed; but such a person would be simply hiding his light under a bushel if he failed to inform all comrades ... as regards every step he took in his work, so that others, who, in the mass, still lack the ability to undertake new kinds of work, might learn from his example."

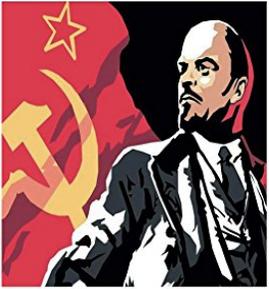
What point is Lenin making in this quote?

How does this relate to WW newspaper and to your local work?

➤ What point is Lenin making in this quote?

(The paper develops cadre by attention to and publicity for lessons learned through local struggles shared nationally.)

➤ How does this relate to WW newspaper and to your local work?



What is to be Done?
Vladimir Lenin

Quote #3. “What we require is to broaden the field, establish real contacts between the towns on the basis of regular common work...with the aid of a common newspaper, which will summarize the results of the most diverse forms of activity and thereby stimulate people to march forward untiringly along all the innumerable paths leading to revolution.”

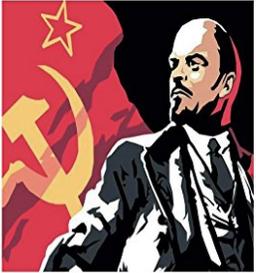
What point is Lenin making in this quote?

How does this relate to WW newspaper and to your local work?

➤ What point is Lenin making in this quote?

(The paper provides contacts, motivation and insight from local struggles, thus generating new activities in other areas.)

➤ How does this relate to WW newspaper and to your local work?



What is to be Done?
Vladimir Lenin

Quote #4: "... if we 'unite' ... it will be necessary to have for this purpose common institutions ... genuinely common work, exchange of material, experience, and forces, distribution of functions.... A study circle that has not yet begun to work, but which is only just seeking activity, could then start, not like a craftsman in an isolated little workshop unaware of the earlier development in 'industry' or of the general level of production methods prevailing in industry, but as a participant in an extensive enterprise that reflects the whole general revolutionary attack on the autocracy."

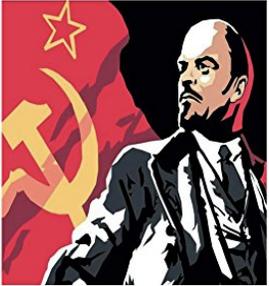
What point is Lenin making in this quote?

How does this relate to WW newspaper and to your local work?

➤ What point is Lenin making in this quote?

(The paper breaks down isolation, provides a united organized network, and gives an overview of the larger struggle.)

➤ How does this relate to WW newspaper and to your local work?



What is to be Done?
Vladimir Lenin

Quote #5. “The function of distributing a newspaper would help to establish actual contacts . . . we could, in the not distant future, establish a weekly newspaper for regular distribution in tens of thousands of copies throughout Russia. This newspaper would become part of an enormous pair of smith’s bellows that would fan every spark of the class struggle and of popular indignation into a general conflagration.”

What point is Lenin making in this quote?

How does this relate to WW newspaper and to your local work?

➤ What point is Lenin making in this quote?

(The paper provides a means of recruitment, energizing communities by local distribution of revolutionary ideas.)

➤ How does this relate to WW newspaper and to your local work?

Review of the main points:

1. How does Workers World Newspaper function as a communist newspaper to be a collective, democratically centralized organizing tool?
2. Lift the discussion out of the previous details of newspaper production and consider how the process of writing and reading the WW newspaper can enhance the following processes:

- National outreach and recruitment to develop local writers from all parts of the country to select and supply current, relevant economic and political details.
- Development in Marxist analysis through attention to material facts and lessons learned in local struggles.
- Motivation, insight and use of new struggle strategies initiated in other areas.
- A united organized country-wide network for revolutionary struggle.
- A means of Party recruitment, reaching into communities by paper distribution.

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