



Writing Leads

Summary / Inverted Pyramid Lead

5 W's 1 H

Who, What, When, Where, Why & How

Summary/ Inverted Pyramid Lead

- o Two children were injured when fire swept through the First Community Church, Detroit, Michigan, on May 10. The fire is believed to have started from unattended candles
- o This evening at about 9:30 p.m. at Ford's Theatre, the President, while sitting in his private box with Mrs. Lincoln, Mrs. Harris and Major Rathburn, was shot by an assassin, who suddenly entered the box and approached behind the President.

Question Lead

- Many editors dislike the question lead on the basis that people read newspapers to get answers, not to be asked questions
- If the questions is provocative, it can be used as a lead.

Question Lead

- o What is the first thing that a woman buys when she is told that she won \$250,000 in a contest?
- o How does your website conversion rates compare to other sites in your industry?

Staccato Lead

Consists of a series of jerky, exciting phrases, separated by dashes or dots, used if the facts of the story justify it.

Staccato Lead

- o *Midnight on the bridge . . .a scream . . .a shot . . .a splash . . .a second shot . . .a third shot. This morning, police recovered the bodies of Mr. and Mrs. R. E. Murphy, estranged couple, from the Snake River. A bullet wound was found in the temple of each.*

Punch Lead

- Short and punchy to attract readers
 - Blunt, explosive statement to summarize the article.

Punch Lead

- o The President is dead.
- o Friday the 13th is over, but the casualty list is still growing.

Quotation Lead

- This lead features a short, eye-catching quote or remark, usually set in quotation marks.
 - Use this only if the quotation is so important or remarkable it overshadows the other facts of the story.
- If not used correctly, it can be considered lazy journalism

Quotation Lead

- o "You really don't know what freedom is until you have had to escape from terrorist captivity", says Tom Dennon, an Air Force pilot stationed in Iraq.

Contrast Lead

The contrast lead draws contrast between two opposite extremes - tragedy with comedy, past with present, age with youth, beauty with ugly.

Contrast Lead

- Less than 3 years ago, two college friends decided to build a website to exchange their favorite videos.

Today YouTube is owned by Google and gets over 25 million unique visitors to the site each month.

Picture Lead

The picture lead draws a vivid word picture of the person in the story. The idea is to have the reader see the thing as the writer saw it.

Picture Lead

- o Standing tall and straight, easy to smile, unfurrowed brow under glistening eyes, Mary told of her dramatic attitude change, having seen her business results turn around after bringing in a consultant.
- o High seas, strong winds and heavy overcast provided the setting for a dramatic mission of mercy in the North Atlantic on the first day of the year.

Direct Address Lead

The Direct Access lead is aimed directly at the readers and makes them collaborators with facts in the story. It usually employs the pronouns "you" and "your".

Direct Address Lead

- o Your website conversion rates will increase by 50% in one month.

You will see measurable increases in web results if you follow our new "10 Points to Web Success" program announced this week.