

## Primary news activities III



### Editing a news article and writing headlines

The role of a **sub-editor** is to *check* and *edit* the news stories written by reporters. The sub-editor's job is to make sure that there are *no mistakes* in the news article before it is printed in the newspaper or published online.

**Editing** means looking at the following:

**Facts:** are all the names, dates, places and figures correct?

**Grammar:** do the sentences make sense when they are read aloud?

**Check:** punctuation and spelling used

**Paragraphs:** has a new paragraph been used for a new piece of information?

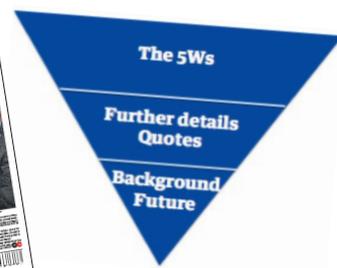
**Flow:** is the story interesting to read? Is it in a logical order? Is there any repetition?

Have a go at subediting the news article below. How many mistakes can you spot?

A paintin by Vincent van Gogh with an estimated value of up to £5m has been stolen from a dutch museum curently closed due to the coronavirus pandemic

The thieves took Van Goghs Parsonage Garden at Nuenen in Spring after smashing through the front glass door of the Singer Laren museum, in Laren, at around 3.15am on Sunday morning. No other art is believed to be missing.

The burgler alarm had been triggered by the brake-in but the thieves had fled by the time police officers arrived.



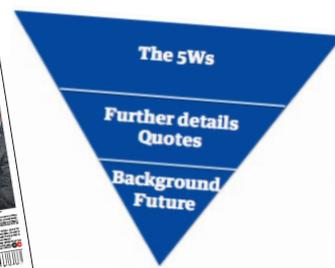
The sub-editor also writes the headlines for the news stories.

### Writing headlines:

- Short and punchy
- Leave out unnecessary words (the, and, of)
- Tell the story of the article in as few words as possible
- Use different language techniques such as alliteration
- Subject +verb+object - [click here](#) to try a headline generator for ideas
- No punctuation at the end of a headline
- Use an active verb

Bill Mann, former production editor at the Guardian's Weekend Magazine, volunteers at the Guardian Education Centre, helping students edit their stories and write their headlines. We asked him for his [top five headline writing tips](#) and for him it is all about the verb.

1. Make the verb do the work.
2. Pick it carefully.
3. Explore all possibilities.
4. It's not just a WHAT, it's a HOW.
5. Study the verb, learn to love it and marvel at its power to shape meaning.



Activity: **write some headlines for these story ideas.**

1. An article on how a pet is behaving now you are at home and spending more time with them.
2. An interview with someone at home about their day. It might be an adult who is leaving the house to go to work or perhaps working from home at the moment.
3. A report on a fun activity you have done at home in the last week.
4. Choose your own story idea.
5. Use our headline generator to create some funny headlines.

If an adult would like to share your story with us, we'd love to hear from you. Email us at [educationcentre@guardian.co.uk](mailto:educationcentre@guardian.co.uk) or contact us on Twitter [@GuardianEduCent](https://twitter.com/GuardianEduCent)

*Answers for editing activity:*

A painting by Vincent van Gogh with an estimated value of up to £5m has been stolen from a Dutch museum currently closed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The thieves took Van Gogh's Parsonage Garden at Nuenen in Spring after smashing through the front glass door of the Singer Laren museum, in Laren, at around 3.15am on Sunday morning. No other art is believed to be missing.

The burglar alarm had been triggered by the break-in but the thieves had fled by the time police officers arrived.