

Checklist for Writing for the Brentwood Bugle

These checklists were created for you to use as you develop your ideas, conduct interviews, take photos and write the articles. They will help to guide you so that you are able to submit the best possible articles and photos that you can. From there, our editor can guide you to complete your submission and make it ready to be published.

Ideas

- ___ My idea is simple. It has an emotional and interesting angle
- ___ I know exactly what I want to find out and where I need to get my information (who, what, when, where, why and how)
- ___ I know who my audience is
- ___ I know why I care about this idea and why I think people will care about it too
- ___ I have talked to an adult (parent or teacher) about my idea
- ___ I have discussed my idea with the Editor of the Bugle before I begin to write or attend the event.

Interviews

- ___ I have decided how to introduce myself including who I am, the publication I am interviewing for and what I am planning to write about
- ___ I have included some easing questions at the beginning of my interview
(Reminder: easing questions are the ones at the beginning of the interview that put the interviewee at ease. They include some general conversation questions. For example if they interview is about an event in the community they may include questions such as how long the interviewee has lived/worked in the community, if they have children, how often they have attended the event, the best part of the event, etc.)
- ___ I have included my “Heart of the Matter” questions
(Reminder: Heart of the Matter questions are those bigger questions that ask about things such as what the event means to the community, or members of the community.)
- ___ I have discussed my questions with an adult to be sure that they are appropriate and will give me the information that I need.
- ___ Anything I want to use as a quote from the interview has been recorded exactly as it was told to me.
- ___ I have asked for permission from the parents/guardians before interviewing any minor

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Formal interview:

- ___ I have called the interviewee to make an appointment for the interview.

- During this call I have introduced myself and set up a time and place that is convenient for both of us.
- ___ I have asked the interviewee how to spell their name and I have spelled it back to him/her so that I know how to spell it.
- ___ Before I ask interview questions I ask permission of the interviewee to tape record the interview if I am using a recorder.
- ___ I have arrived on time for the interview and I am prepared for the interview.
- ___ I have remembered to thank my interviewee for their time.
- ___ I have given my interviewee my name, email address, and phone number in case he/she would like to contact me later.

The “on the spot” interview

- ___ I have chosen the questions I will ask including easing and heart of the matter questions
- ___ I have chosen several different people to interview including children, teens, adults, or people doing different jobs
- ___ During each interview I introduce myself and ask them to spell their name. I spell it back to them to ensure I have their names written correctly.
- ___ I have remembered to thank each of the interviewees at the end of the interview.

Writing the article

- ___ I have an interesting lead sentence (1st sentence- catches the interest of the reader)
- ___ I have a bridging sentence (2nd sentence- connects the first sentence to the rest of the article)
- ___ I have not used the word “I” anywhere in the article unless I am quoting someone else!
- ___ I have lots of paragraphs.
- ___ I have a new paragraph with each new speaker.
- ___ My article flows- I have put all of the ideas that belong together, together.
- ___ My sentences are not too long.
- ___ My article is between 300-500 words. If it is shorter I have talked to my editor about it.
- ___ I have checked my capitols, periods and quotations carefully.
- ___ My spelling is correct, especially the names!
- ___ I have had an adult read and okay that my article is ready to submit to the editor.
- ___ I have included my own name, age, phone number, email address and school for the editor.
- ___ I can use any font and size for my article but the format I should use is Word (.doc or .docx)

***Be sure you have completed this checklist BEFORE you submit your article to the editor!**

Photos

- ___ My photo is in focus
- ___ I find the photo interesting.
- ___ My photo matches the story in the article
- ___ I can see the faces of the people in the picture and each one is not smaller than a dime.
- ___ I have taken lots of pictures!
- ___ I have not made any changes to my photo before I submitted it to my editor
- ___ Any names and captions have been spelled correctly
- ___ I have asked for permission from the parents/guardians before taking the photo of any minor
- ___ I have sent my photo in "jpg" format. The preferred size is 1-2 MB