



# Journalism

## Merit Badge Workbook

This workbook can help you but you still need to read the merit badge pamphlet (book). No one can add or subtract from the Boy Scout Requirements #33215. Merit Badge Workbooks and much more are below: [Online Resources](#).

Workbook developer: [craig@craiglincoln.com](mailto:craig@craiglincoln.com). Requirements revised: 2006, Workbook updated: April 2008.

Scout's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Counselor's Ph #: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Explain what freedom of the press is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

and how the First Amendment guarantees that you can voice your opinion. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

In your discussion, tell how to distinguish between fact \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

and opinion, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

and explain the terms libel, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

slander, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

defamation, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

fair comment and criticism, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

public figure, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

privacy, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

and malice. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Discuss how these matters relate to ethics in journalism. \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

2. Do either A OR B:

a. Newspaper and magazine journalism:

1. All on the same day, read a local newspaper, a national newspaper, a newsmagazine, and (with your parent's permission) an online news source. From each source, clip, read and compare a story about the same event. Tell your counselor how long each story is and how fair and accurate the stories are in presenting different points of view. Tell how each source handled the story differently, depending on its purpose or audience .

Story \_\_\_\_\_

Local newspaper \_\_\_\_\_

How Long? \_\_\_\_\_

How Fair & Accurate? \_\_\_\_\_

Difference in handling? \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose or audience? \_\_\_\_\_

National newspaper \_\_\_\_\_

How Long? \_\_\_\_\_

How Fair & Accurate? \_\_\_\_\_

Difference in handling? \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose or audience? \_\_\_\_\_

Newsmagazine \_\_\_\_\_

How Long? \_\_\_\_\_

How Fair & Accurate? \_\_\_\_\_

Difference in handling? \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose or audience? \_\_\_\_\_

Online news source \_\_\_\_\_

How Long? \_\_\_\_\_

How Fair & Accurate? \_\_\_\_\_

Difference in handling? \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose or audience? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Visit a newspaper or magazine office Ask for a tour of the various divisions, (editorial, business, and printing). During your tour, talk to an executive from the business side about management's relations with reporters, editors, and photographers \_\_\_\_\_

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and what makes a "good" newspaper or magazine. \_\_\_\_\_

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b. Radio and television journalism:

1. All on the same day, watch a local and national network newscast, listen to a radio newscast, and (with your parent's permission) view a national broadcast news source online. List the different news items and features presented, the different elements used, and the time in minutes and seconds and the online space devoted to each story. Compare the story lists, and discuss whether the stories are fair and accurate. Explain why the different news outlets treated the stories differently and/or presented a different point of view.

Story \_\_\_\_\_

Local newscast: \_\_\_\_\_

News items & features: \_\_\_\_\_

Elements Used: \_\_\_\_\_

Time given: \_\_\_\_\_

Compare story lists: \_\_\_\_\_

How Fair & Accurate? \_\_\_\_\_

Difference in handling? \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose or audience? \_\_\_\_\_

National Network Newscast \_\_\_\_\_

News items & features: \_\_\_\_\_

Elements Used: \_\_\_\_\_

Time given: \_\_\_\_\_

Compare story lists: \_\_\_\_\_

How Fair & Accurate? \_\_\_\_\_

Difference in handling? \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose or audience? \_\_\_\_\_

Radio Newscast \_\_\_\_\_

News items & features: \_\_\_\_\_

Elements Used: \_\_\_\_\_

Time given: \_\_\_\_\_

Compare story lists: \_\_\_\_\_

How Fair & Accurate? \_\_\_\_\_

Difference in handling? \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose or audience? \_\_\_\_\_

Online news source \_\_\_\_\_

News items & features: \_\_\_\_\_

Elements Used: \_\_\_\_\_

Space given: \_\_\_\_\_

Compare story lists: \_\_\_\_\_

How Fair & Accurate? \_\_\_\_\_

Difference in handling? \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose or audience? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Visit a radio or television station. Ask for a tour of the various departments, concentrating on those related to news broadcasts. During your tour, talk to the station manager or other station management executive about station operations, particularly how management and the news staff work together, \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

and what makes a "good" station. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If possible, go with a reporter to cover a news event. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Discuss the differences between a hard news story \_\_\_\_\_

and a feature story. \_\_\_\_\_

Explain what is the "five W's and H."

W \_\_\_\_\_

W \_\_\_\_\_

W \_\_\_\_\_

W \_\_\_\_\_

W \_\_\_\_\_

H \_\_\_\_\_

Then do ONE of the following:

a. Choose a current or an unusual event of interest to you, and write either a hard news article OR a feature article about the event. Gear the article for print OR audio OR video journalism. Share your article with your counselor.

b. With your parent's permission and counselor's approval, interview someone in your community who is influential because of his or her leadership, talent, career, or life experiences. Then present to our counselor either a written or oral report telling what you learned about this person.

c. With your parent's permission and counselor's approval, read an autobiography written by a journalist you want to learn more about. Write an article that tells what you learned about this person and the contributions this person has made to the field of journalism.

d. Attend a Scouting event and write a 200-word article (feature or hard news) about the event. Use either the inverted pyramid style or the chronological style. Review the article with our counselor, then submit it to your community newspaper or BSA local council or district newsletter for consideration.

4. Attend a public event and do ONE of the following:

a. Write two newspaper articles about the event, one using the inverted pyramid style and one using the chronological style.

b. Using a radio or television broadcasting style write a news story, a feature story and a critical review of the event.

c. Take a series of photographs to help tell the story of the event in pictures. Include news photos and feature photos in your presentation. Write a brief synopsis of the event as well as captions for your photos.

5. Find out about three career opportunities in journalism.

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Pick one \_\_\_\_\_  
and find out the education, training, and experience required for this profession. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Discuss this with your counselor, and explain why this profession might interest you. \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

Online Resources (Use any Internet resource with caution and only with your parent's or guardian's permission.)

Boy Scouts of America: ► [scouting.org](http://scouting.org) ► [Guide to Safe Scouting](#) ► [Age-Appropriate Guidelines](#) ► [Safe Swim Defense](#)  
► [Scout](#) ► [Tenderfoot](#) ► [Second Class](#) ► [First Class](#) ► [Rank Videos](#) ► [Safety Afloat](#)

Boy Scout Merit Badge Workbooks: [BSA Troop 780](#) -or- [usscouts.org](http://usscouts.org) -or- [meritbadge.org](http://meritbadge.org) Merit Badge Books: [www.scoutstuff.org](http://www.scoutstuff.org)

Amer. Soc. of Journalists & Authors: <http://www.asja.org>

Amer. Soc. of Magazine Editors: <http://www.magazine.org>

Broadcast Education Association: <http://www.beaweb.org>

First Amendment Cent.: <http://www.firstamendmentcenter.org>

Freedom of Information Center: <http://foi.missouri.edu>

Nat Assn of Broadcasters: <http://www.nab.org>

The Poynter Institute: <http://www.poynteronline.org>

Society of Professional Journalists: <http://www.spj.org>

Student Press Law Cen.: <http://www.splc.org/legalresearch.asp>