

## ACTIVITY 6.1 DEEP SPACE DAILY

From Chapter Six of the Deep Space Diary [discoverydiaries.org/activities/deep-space-daily/](https://discoverydiaries.org/activities/deep-space-daily/)

### LEARNING LEVEL

KS2, P5-7, Y4-6

### CURRICULUM LINKS & DIFFERENTIATION IDEAS

View detailed curriculum links for England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales in the Teacher Toolkit, plus differentiation ideas for your region and year level.

[discoverydiaries.org/resources/teacher-toolkit/](https://discoverydiaries.org/resources/teacher-toolkit/)



### Learning Objective

To write a newspaper report using a range of devices to structure writing.

### Resources Required

- Smartphone/device or computer to access Zap code (optional)
- Selection of newspaper articles
- Books and internet access for research purposes

### Background to this Activity

The James Webb Space Telescope is our most advanced space telescope to date, helping us understand the Universe we live in. Scientists from across the world use Webb to study objects in space, so that we can learn more about our home planet and the history of our Universe.

But without the help and skills of science writers – sometimes called scientific journalists – the important findings of Webb can't be presented to the broader community, including other scientists, researchers and the general public. Since we can't all be space experts, we rely on scientific writers to provide a link between Webb's discoveries and the community. Communication plays an important role in helping us fully benefit from the important information Webb is collecting.

Literacy and visual literacy are excellent ways to engage students who may not be confident in STEM. This activity asks students to combine science and the arts by creating a four-page publication of space news.

### Running the Activity

#### Prior Learning

This task should be the final stages of a short series of writing lessons focusing on the genre of report writing.

Students should have opportunities to study a number of newspaper reports in class, prior to writing their own report. Here is a suggested plan for preceding lessons:

#### Lesson 1:

Look at a selection of newspaper articles and identify features which can be found in several of the examples (headlines, paragraphs, facts, speech, photos etc). Make a list of these.

#### Lesson 2:

Look at some examples of catchy headlines in local newspapers. Focusing on headlines, encourage students to think of short and snappy headlines for a range of scenarios (cat stuck in tree, flooding, celebrity visiting town etc). They could work in groups to develop puns/catchy headlines to match the different scenarios.

#### Lesson 3:

Have students look at the five 'Ws' (who, what, when, where, why) and try to identify them in the different newspaper report examples (typically the introductory paragraph includes this information).

### Deep Space Daily Task

#### Success Criteria

Pupils should be familiar with the features of newspaper article writing and should work with their teacher/educator to devise success criteria for their writing. Suggested success criteria include:

- headlines
- facts (not opinions)
- quotations
- photos and captions
- paragraphs
- connectives.

Newspapers use headlines to grab your attention. Headlines try to tell the story in as few words as possible.

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Headlines may use alliteration/catchy slogans/puns.

Quotations tell us what has been said and who said it. They can help to tell the story by giving the reader the opinions of the people involved.

Photos help to tell the story by giving readers a snapshot of what happened, where it happened or who it happened to. Photos also need a caption underneath them. A caption is a short sentence explaining what is happening in the photograph.

Paragraphs help the reader clearly understand the information in the story. Each new paragraph could also be given a subheading. This is a very short title that tells the reader a little about what the paragraph will be about.

#### Research

Students' newspaper articles will obviously be based around discoveries in space. Depending on your class, you may decide to leave this task more open-ended or you may prefer to narrow students' choices to a few particular discoveries. Either way, before beginning to plan their article, students will need to carry out research using books and the internet to find out relevant facts to include in their article. Allow students to print out and collate notes for their newspaper reports.

#### Planning

Students will need time to plan their newspaper articles before they begin to write. A template has been included ([discoverydiaries.org/toolkit/article-planner-template/](https://discoverydiaries.org/toolkit/article-planner-template/)), but you may wish to modify this or create your own, depending on the needs within your classroom.

Following this planning time, it may be a good idea to set aside some time for students to write the 'speech' parts of their articles, following separate success criteria for writing direct speech, for example.

#### Independent Writing

Students will use their plans to begin writing their newspaper articles. Remind them to keep an eye on the success criteria which you agreed on together as a class. Students could draw their own pictures, use pictures from the internet or create digital images using drawing software or apps.

Encourage students to use a dictionary and thesaurus throughout this task to improve the quality of their writing. You may also decide to provide a range of connectives in a word bank.

#### Self-Assessment

Students should check and edit their work as per the usual practice.

Have students revisit the success criteria when they are finished and make improvements where necessary. To inform Assessment-for-learning, you may want students to make a note of changes they have made at this point.

#### Peer-Assessment

With a copy of the success criteria in front of them, ask students to read and evaluate a peer's writing. Share examples between students of similar ability and use positive feedback techniques (e.g. two stars and a wish or similar).

### Questions for the Class

- What are the main features we can find in newspaper articles?
- Who is the audience you are writing for?
- What are connectives? Can you identify any in your articles?
- What are the five 'Ws' (who/what/where/when/why) within your report?

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## Additional Challenges / Extension Activities

Working together, the class could compile a newspaper by drawing pieces from all class members, and produce copies of it to distribute to other classes in the school.

## Ideas for Differentiation

Support:

- Group work/shared writing with the teacher/educator or paired work
- Provide students with word banks for challenging vocabulary
- Give students a particular 'discovery' to write about
- Voice recorders could be used during the planning session to help students develop their ideas
- Pupils with Specific Learning Difficulties could use dictation software

Challenge:

- Students to type up and present their newspaper report using MS Publisher
- Students to read their report to another class
- Students to include a relevant web-link in the article
- Students to record sources in a bibliography to be handed in with the article

## Useful Links

Students interested in pursuing a career in science writing, communication or scientific journalism can read interviews with professionals here:

[discoverydiaries.org/5-minutes-with-lucy-hawking-author/](https://discoverydiaries.org/5-minutes-with-lucy-hawking-author/)

<http://www.biochemist.org/bio/03002/0041/030020041.>

[pdf](#)

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/video/2013/mar/25/bill-bryson-science-amazing-video>

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/video/2013/mar/06/tim-radford-science-writer-video>

**ZAP!** Students can independently access multimedia resources using the Zappar mobile/tablet app. See Zappar instructions at the link below and note that the mobile/tablet will need to be on a WIFI connection: [discoverydiaries.org/toolkit/discovery-diaries-zappar-instructions/](https://discoverydiaries.org/toolkit/discovery-diaries-zappar-instructions/)

If you don't have access to the internet in the classroom, all Zap code content is available to download on the activity's web page (see link to the left) as a PowerPoint presentation or as bundles of images.



**GET ZAPPAR  
ZAP THE CODE**



Find more great space-themed STEM resources at <https://www.stem.org.uk/esero>