

## Lead writing exercises

1. You are writing for a newspaper near this accident. Write a lead for this afternoon's paper.

WHO: Amtrak train called the Colonial  
WHAT: Collided with three Conrail locomotives on a switch that merges four tracks into two  
WHEN: 1:30 p.m. yesterday  
WHERE: Baltimore, Maryland  
WHY: Larry Case, Amtrak spokesman: The Conrail diesels, like the Amtrak, were northbound. The Conrail had apparently run a stop sign.  
OTHER: At least 15 dead, 175 injured. Worst accident in Amtrak's 132-year history.

2. From the following facts, write a lead.

Who: a nuclear weapon with a yield equivalent to 150,000 tons of TNT  
What: detonated  
Where: 40 miles from a meeting of pacifists and 2,000 feet beneath the surface of Pahute Mesa in the Nevada desert  
When: Tuesday  
Why: to test the weapon  
How: not applicable

Other information: Department of Energy officials are the source; 450 physicians and peace activists were gathered to protest continued nuclear testing by the United States.

3. From the following facts, write the first two paragraphs of a news article.

Who: 7-year-old boy missing for three years.  
What: found  
Where: in Brick Township, N.J.  
When: Monday night  
Why: not applicable  
How: A neighbor recognized the child's picture when it was shown after the movie *Adam: The Song Continues* and called police.

Other information: Police arrested the boy's mother, Ellen Lynn Conner, 27; she faces Oregon charges of kidnapping and interference with a custody warrant.

4. From the following facts, write the first two paragraphs of a news article.

Who: 40 passengers  
What: evacuated from a Northwest Airlines jet, Flight 428  
Where: at the LaCrosse, Wis. Municipal Airport  
When: Monday following a flight from Minneapolis to LaCrosse  
Why: A landing tower employee spotted smoke near the wheels  
How: not applicable

Other information: There was no fire or injuries; the smoke was caused by hydraulic fluids leaking onto hot landing brakes, according to Bob Gibbons, a Northwest spokesman.