



**FACULTY OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES & ALLIED
INDUSTRIES**

ILLUSTRATING STORIES

What is illustration ?

An **illustration** is a decoration, interpretation or visual explanation of a text, concept or process, designed for integration in published media, such as posters, flyers, magazines, books, teaching materials, animations, video games and films.

An illustration is a drawing, painting or printed work of art which explains, clarifies, illuminates, visually represents, or merely decorates a written text, which may be of a literary or commercial nature

The origin of the word —illustration is late Middle English (in the sense ‘illumination; spiritual or intellectual enlightenment’): via Old French from Latin *illustratio(n-)*, from the verb *illustrate*.

USING ILLUSTRATIONS

It’s easier for us to understand information using illustrations. One of our very first means of communication were illustrations, way before any form of modern writing. as a matter of fact, cave drawings from over 35,000 years ago were recently found, so communicating through illustrations is something we’ve been practicing for a longtime.

This didn’t happen by chance, a big part of our brain is devoted for visual processing and researchers claim that over 90% of the information we process is visual.

Illustrations help bridge cultural gaps

To convey an idea in writing, we need to create multiple versions of our text according to the different languages of our readers. When we use illustration, we can convey the same idea to people who don’t share a common language.

Illustrations add delight to our products.

Illustrations that create a delightful experience not only help us convey the idea of our product, they help us inject content and character into a product that otherwise, might have been a bit boring.

Illustrations spark your user’s imagination.

Illustrations grow your imagination. Illustrations give our users just the right amount of room for interpretation and help them imagine themselves in that situation.

USE OF PHOTOGRAPHS

The advent of photographs mechanically printed into newspapers opened up market for press photography. Pictures were mostly taken for their action and content rather than any aesthetic consideration. Today, they are used in the newspapers for different reasons.

Photographs in Journalism inform, educate and enlighten readers about current issues and also reflect on the past as well. Photographs in Newspaper enhance the credibility of the stories. As they depict reality, they also furnish evidence to show the authenticity of a news story or give proof of an event that occurred.

Its aesthetic values enable a photograph to serve as a tool to attract reader's attention and break the monotony of news content. Thus, photographs enhance and beautify the pages of a newspaper.

A photograph in Newspaper speaks more than a thousand words. No formal education is required to understand a picture. Photographs are therefore able to break through literacy barrier to effectively communicate a message. It is a universal language

Here are a few ways images can enhance a story:

- **Images grab attention:** If you include an image in a media release, article in a magazine, or blog post it will grab the reader's attention better than a block of text. This may lead to more people reading the article that accompanies the image.
- **Images tell a story:** Sometimes a picture is better at communicating a story than the written word. For example a very emotional scene of a family that has just been reunited after a traumatic event may connect with a reader more than if the scene was only written.
- **Images can convey a message quickly:** People often skim through website articles without stopping to read the full article. A picture is a great way to convey your message quickly to an audience without them reading through a lot of text.
- **Shareability:** Images can be easily shared by other people, which means your story will be seen by a larger audience. You could even link the image back to an article you want your target audience to read

USE OF GRAPHS

Graphics journalism is a specialized form of journalism that uses graphic forms to present information. These forms often use words as well as illustration, so the graphics journalist must have the ability to write -- especially to use words

efficiently.

Graphics journalism generally backs up and adds information to other reporting and writing that the publication has done. Graphics journalists usually take one part of a story -- that which lends itself to graphic presentation -- and do additional reporting so that a graphic can be developed for the story. Such reporting is very difficult because it must be precise and complete. And it must produce the information that can be properly used in a graphic form.

The most common types of charts the journalist uses are bar charts, line charts and pie charts. These are used to present numerical data. Certain principles apply to using these different kinds of charts, and the graphics journalists must know what they are and follow those principles precisely. For instance, a pie chart can only be used to show the parts of a whole and for no other purpose.

Maps are widely-used graphic forms for many publications, and a good map can give the reader a sense of place and location for the events being reported on. Maps are also subject to certain conventions. For instance, the top part of the map is usually the most northern point. Graphics journalists must understand and observe these conventions. Even a simple map -- if it is to be informative for the reader -- takes a good deal of skill to report and construct.

The chief goal of the graphics journalist is to present accurate information in a form that is understandable and engaging.

WRITING PHOTO CAPTIONS

Photo caption

Photo captions, also known as cutlines, are a few lines of text used to explain or elaborate on published photographs.

In some cases captions and cutlines are distinguished, where the caption is a short (usually one-line) title/explanation for the photo, while the cutline is a longer, prose block under the caption, generally describing the photograph, giving context, or relating it to the article.

Photo captions are often the first elements of a publication to be read. Writing photo captions is an essential part of the news photographer's job. A photo caption should provide the reader basic information needed to understand a photograph and its relevance to the news. It should be written in a consistent, concise format that allows news organizations to move the photo to publication without delay.

Professional standards of clarity, accuracy and completeness in caption writing should be as high or higher than any other writing that appears in a publication. A poorly written caption

that is uninformative or worse: misleading can diminish the impact of a good photo and undermine its credibility as journalism. If readers can't trust the accuracy of the simple information included in a caption, why should they trust what they read in the rest of the publication?

How to Write Good Captions in Photojournalism

Captioning photos is an important part of journalism. Captions must be accurate and informative. [1] In fact, most readers tend to look at the photos, and then the captions, in a story before they decide whether they want to read the story itself.[2] Use the following points to help write a caption that will intrigue the reader enough to read the story.

Learning Caption Basics

1. Check your facts.

One of the most important aspects of any type of journalism is accuracy. If you use incorrect information, the story or photo loses credibility. Before uploading or printing any photo captions, make sure you've checked that anything stated in the caption is accurate.

Don't print an incorrect caption if you have trouble checking your facts, either because you can't find an appropriate source, or because you're on a deadline. It's better to leave the information out if you aren't sure it's accurate

2. Describe something that isn't obvious.

If a photo caption simply describes the visuals in the photo, it's fairly useless. If you have a photo of a sunset and simply caption is as —a sunset you're not adding any additional information for the reader. Instead, describe details of the photo that are not obvious, like the location, the time of day or year, or a specific event that is taking place.[4]

For example, if you have a photo of a sunset you might want to caption it as: —Pacific coast sunset, March 2016, from Long Beach, Vancouver Island."

Also avoid using terms like: —is shown, —is pictured, —and looks on, or —above.

3. Do not start a caption with certain words.

A caption should not begin with the words _a, _an, or _the. These words

are too basic and take up valuable captioning room when they aren't necessary. For example, instead of saying: —A blue jay in the boreal forest;|| simply say: —Blue jay flying through boreal forest.||[5]

Also, do not start a caption with the name of someone, start the caption with a description first and then include the name. For example, don't say: —Stan Theman near Sunshine Meadow Park.|| Instead say: —Jogger Stan Theman near Sunshine Meadow Park."

When identifying where someone is in a photo, you can say —from left.|| You do not have to say

—from left to right."

4. Identify the main people in the photo.

If your photo includes important people, identify who they are. If you know their names, include them (unless they've asked to remain anonymous). If you don't know their names, you might want to put a description of who they are instead (e.g. —protesters on the streets of Washington, DC||).

While it shouldn't need to be said, make sure any and all names you use are spelled correctly and have the proper title.

If the photo includes a group of people, or some people who are not relevant to the story (i.e. their names are not required to tell the story), you do not have to name each of them in the caption

5. Be as specific as possible.

This advice goes hand-and-hand with being accurate. If you are unsure of where the photo was taken, or who is in the photo, find out. Showing a photo without any specific information may not be useful to the reader, especially if you cannot inform them of the context in which the photo was taken.[8]

If you were working with another journalist for the story, contact them for more information if needed.

If you are trying to identify a specific person in the photo, describing where in the photo they are is very useful. For example, if Bob Smith is the only one in a hat, you can say: —Bob Smith, back row in hat."

While specific is good, you can also phrase your caption so that it starts general and becomes more specific, or starts specific and ends more generally. Either method ensures specificity, but creates easy-to-read statements

6. Label historical photos properly.

If you're using an historical photo in your story, make sure it's labelled properly and includes the date (at least the year) it was taken. Depending on who owns the photo, you may also need to credit another photography and/or organization (e.g. museum, archive, etc)

7. Use the present tense in captions.

Because most photos being shown as part of a news story are of things happening —right now, use the present tense in the caption. An obvious exception would be any historical photos, where using the past tense makes sense.[11][12]

The nice thing about using the present tense is that it portrays a sense of immediacy and increases the impact of the photo on the reader

8. Avoid humour when the photo isn't intended to be humorous.

If the photo you're captioning is of a serious or sombre event, don't try to be funny in the caption. Funny captions should only be used when the photo itself is a joke or of a funny event that is intended to make the reader laugh

9. Remember to always include credits and citations.

Every photo should include the name of the photographer and/or the organization that owns the photograph. In actual photographic magazines and publications, photos also include the technical details of how the photo was taken (e.g. aperture, film speed, f-stop, lens, etc.)[14] When writing the credits, you don't have to use the term —credited to or —photo by if the information is presented in a consistent and understandable format. For example, maybe the credits are always italicized or are a smaller font size

Enhancing the Story with Captions

1. Use the caption to tell the reader something new.

When a reader looks at the photo they're usually confronted with some form of emotion and some information (based on what they see in the photo). The caption, in turn, should provide the reader with a piece of information they were unaware of from simply looking at the photo. In short, the caption should teach the reader something about the photo.[15]

Captions should intrigue a reader to investigate the story further and look for more information. Captions should also refrain from repeating aspects of the story itself.

The caption and the story should complement each other and not be repetitive

2. Avoid making judgemental statements.

Captions should be informative, not judgemental or critical. Unless you were actually able to speak to the people in the photo, and asked them what they were feeling or thinking, don't make assumptions based only on their appearance in the photo. For example, avoid —unhappy shoppers waiting in line unless you actually know they were unhappy.[16] Journalism is intended to be objective and informative for the reader. Journalists are supposed to present the facts in an unbiased way and allow the reader to form an opinion

3. Do not worry about length of the caption.

A photo may say a thousand words, but sometimes a few words are required to put the photo in context. If a lengthy description is required in order to allow the photo to make sense, that's okay. While you want to try to be as clear and succinct as possible, don't limit the information in your caption if it will be helpful

4. Write in a conversational language.

Journalism, in general, doesn't use overly complicated language. But it also doesn't use cliches or slang. Captions should follow the same basic language requirements. Write your captions in a conversational tone, similar to the way you'd address a family member if you were showing them the photo. Avoid cliches and slang (and acronyms). Don't use complicated words if they aren't needed.[19]

If the photo is accompanied by a story, try to use the same tone in the caption that was used in the story

5. Include unessential story items in the captions.

Stories that accompany photos tend to be about something specific and, obviously, tell a story. If there is a piece of information that is useful to understanding the photo, but isn't necessary in telling the story, put it in a caption instead of in the body of the story.[21]

This doesn't mean that captions are only used for unimportant items of the story, but rather items that are not essentially to the telling of the story. A caption can be a free-standing mini-story that can include items not used within the story itself.

Again, remember that the caption and story should complement each other. Not repeat each other

6. Determine what punctuation should be used.

If the photo is simply of a person (e.g. headshot) or a photo of a very specific item (e.g. umbrella), it's okay to caption the photo with the name of the person or item without any

punctuation. In other cases, it is also okay to use incomplete sentences in a caption, but this may depend upon the publication and their requirements.[22]

An example of a caption without punctuation might be: —Toyota 345X Transmission"

An example of the difference between a complete and incomplete caption: Complete — —Actress Ann Levy takes the Acura 325 for a spin on the British test drive course in London. Incomplete — —Taking the Acura 325 for a spin."

7. Simplify descriptions in subsequent captions.

If multiple, consecutive photos in a story show either the same place or person or event, it is not necessary to keep repeating the details of these items in each caption. For example, if you introduce the person in the first caption using their full name, you can simply refer to them with their last name in subsequent captions.[23]

It is okay to assume that someone viewing and reading one photo have viewed and read the captions of the previous photos since they likely are in a specific order that tells a story.

You can also skip being too detailed in the caption if the story itself provides a lot of details. For example, if the story tells the details of the event, you do not have to repeat those details in the captions

8. Identify when photos have been digitally altered.

Photos are sometimes enlarged, shrunk, or cropped in order to fit the situation, story, page, space, etc. This type of altering doesn't need to be explained because it doesn't change what is in the image. However, if you've changed the photo in any other way (i.e. changed the colour, removed something, added something, enhanced something unnaturally, etc.) you must identify this in the caption.

The caption doesn't have to explicitly say what you've changed, but should at least state

—photo illustration."

This rule also goes for unique photography methods like time-lapse, etc

9. Considering using a caption-writing formula.

Until you get use to writing captions, you might want to start by using a specific formula. Eventually your captions will likely follow this formula, or something similar, without you needing to think about it. But until then, rely on the formula to ensure you've included all the needed items.[25]