The Oracle Staff Manual: 2022-2023
The Archer School for Girls

Part 1: Introduction and Information

Welcome to the Oracle!

I believe a student-driven paper is a crucial part of an educational community. The Oracle is Archer's student news site: it is created, edited and controlled by students. When you become an Oracle reporter, you take on a vital role as the voice of the Archer student body. You tell your peers' stories. You seek out the truth to quell rumors. You help your classmates understand national and global events through a local lens. You take informed stances on important issues. You become a part of every aspect of the Archer community.

The Oracle staff is a family. We work hard and have high standards, but we support each other and have a lot of fun. This is a place where you will connect with students in different grades, learn from one another and be inspired by your peers. As you interview, research, write, take photos, create infographics and edit, you will find yourself growing more confident. The skills you develop as an Oracle staff member will serve you well in college and beyond, but being a part of this enthusiastic, skilled, committed and sometimes goofy tribe is the real treasure.

The 2014-2015 student editorial board created the original staff manual with me as a guide for all aspects of the Oracle, and each year's board reviews and updates it. It is a living document, and you are now a part of it. I can't wait to get to know you!
Ms. Taylor

2022-2023 Editorial Board
- **Editor-in-Chief**: Greta Irvine
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- **Culture Editor:** Rose Sarner
- **Sports Editor:** Surya Patil
- **Voices Editor**: Cadence Callahan
- **Multimedia Editor:** Maia Alvarez

Adviser: Kristin Taylor

Oracle website: http://archeroracle.org **WordPress login**: http://archeroracle.org/wp-login

Oracle Mission Statement:

As a student-run publication, the Oracle's mission is to provide a forum that encourages authentic voices and discussion in our increasingly diverse educational community. We serve as a resource for the Archer community and beyond to report relevant, interesting and newsworthy information. The Oracle staff is committed to fostering critical thinking in our reporting as well as providing diverse student perspectives. Through these endeavors, we strive to strengthen student voices.

School Information
The Archer School for Girls was founded in 1995 by Megan Callaway, Victoria Shorr and Diana Meehan.

Archer's Mission Statement
The Archer School for Girls empowers young women to discover their passions and realize their true potential in an environment that is both ambitious and joyful.
- We sustain a collaborative, student-centered teaching and learning environment that explores and contributes to the research on how girls learn and thrive.
- We engage girls in a purposeful, inquiry-driven curriculum that fosters critical thinking and life-long intellectual curiosity.
- We inspire girls to become confident, ethical leaders, strengthening their voices and capacity to contribute positively to their communities.
- We promote challenge-seeking, encourage creative risk-taking and embrace each girl's unique possibility.
- We support girls to develop meaningful relationships in a diverse and inclusive community rooted in empathy, integrity and responsibility.
- We graduate courageous, resilient young women who take responsibility for their own physical, financial and emotional well-being.

Address and Main Phone Number:
The Archer School for Girls
11725 Sunset Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90049
(310) 873-7000

Archer's Communications office maintains the school's primary website and updates it with the most current information. Here are some links to use for basic research throughout the year:
Open to the public:
Fast Facts: https://www.archer.org/about/fast-facts
Story and Mission: https://www.archer.org/about/our-story-and-mission
Board of Trustees: https://www.archer.org/about/board-of-trustees
Campus Master Plan: https://www.archer.org/about/campus-master-plan
Strategic Planning: https://www.archer.org/about/strategic-planning
Academic Programs, Course Catalog: https://www.archer.org/programs
College Guidance: https://www.archer.org/programs/college-guidance
Arts: https://www.archer.org/programs/arts
Athletics: https://www.archer.org/programs/athletics;
Team Pages & Schedules: https://www.archer.org/programs/athletics/teams-pages--schedules
Archer Athletics' Facebook Page: https://www.facebook.com/ArcherAthletics
Community (APA, Student Life, Alumni, etc.): https://www.archer.org/community/community
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion: https://www.archer.org/community/diversity-equity-and-inclusion

Available after logging in through archer.org:
School Directories (students, faculty/staff, parents), School Calendar etc.

Common Journalistic Terms
You are expected to know all of these terms, as we use them frequently.

Term	Definition
5 W's + H	Who, what, where, when, why and how: the basic information needed in all news stories.
angle	Short for news angle, it is that aspect of a story which a journalist chooses to highlight and develop. Usually the most newsworthy of its key points. Also called **hook** or **peg**. (from The News Manual)
AP Style	The definition of AP style is the grammar, capitalization and punctuation style of the Associated Press news agency, used by newspapers and other news and media outlets. We use the AP Stylebook as our primary style guide. Their website is here: https://www.apstylebook.com/
attribution	Telling your readers who or what your source is, generally by including the source's full name and job title or graduation year. For secondary sources (other articles, studies etc.), you should clearly identify the author, title and (if from another journalistic outlet) publisher.
beat	A reporter's assigned area of responsibility. A beat may be an institution, such as the courthouse; a geographical area, such as a small town; or a subject, such as science (from ASNE). You will be assigned several Archer beats to follow throughout the school year.
bias	An inclination that prevents objective consideration of an issue or situation (that prejudices you or your reader). In journalism, bias includes bias by omission, bias by source selection, bias by story selection and bias by word choice.
breaking	News that is currently unfolding and/or has not been reported by another news outlet.
byline	The line under the headline identifying the author (from ASNE).
caption	The text underneath an image identifying the 5 Ws/H and providing context for the reader. Caption forms vary based on the type of image.
conflict of interest	When journalists allow something with which they have a personal stake to interfere with their duty to be fair and objective in covering a story. Conflicts of interest can be real or perceived. Even perceived conflicts of interest should be declared openly (from The News Manual). For example, using a friend or family member as a source or reporting on an activity you are

	directly involved in would be a conflict of interest and undermine the Oracle's credibility.
copyright	The exclusive legal right, given to an originator or an assignee to print, publish, perform, film, or record literary, artistic, or musical material, and to authorize others to do the same (from the Apple Dictionary). We do not publish anything if we have not asked permission from the copyright holder unless it falls under "fair use."
credibility	The public's perception of how trustable, accurate and unbiased a news outlet is. This is our most precious commodity.
editorial	An article in a publication expressing the opinion of its editors or publishers (from ASNE). In the Oracle, these express the stance of the student editorial board on an issue and are published on the Opinion page in Voices.
graf	This term describes the short paragraphs used in journalistic writing.
headline	A word or short phrase in large type at the top of an article designed to either summarize the news or grab the reader's attention and make them want to read it. (from The News Manual)
infographic	A graphical representation that uses a combination of text and images to convey information or data. Infographics may be sidebars to add depth or clarify information in a story or may serve as an alternative story form on its own. Oracle's favorite infographic builder is currently Infogram which is used through WordPress.
inverted pyramid	The most common structure for writing a news story, with the main news at the start and the rest of the detail following in decreasing order of importance. (from The News Manual)
lead	1. The first paragraph or series of paragraphs in a story (sometimes spelled "lede") giving the 5 W's + H and context. The most basic type of lead is a summary lead. Other types include anecdotal, scene-setter, direct address, blind, roundup, startling statement and wordplay. 2. A tip that may lead a reporter to a story.
news vs. features	In the Oracle, "news" is defined as stories about current events (what is happening right now) and are highly time-dependent. Features explore topics and people in more depth and are not time-dependent.
newsworthiness	Determining what makes a topic worth covering, its news value. In *Inside Reporting*, Harrower defines the following seven news values: impact, immediacy, proximity, prominence, novelty, conflict and emotions. Breaking news that is presented to the whole world will look different to how we will

	cover it on a local level. We should not just summarize what local news sources have covered previously.
nut graf	The nut graf is the graf at the beginning of the story that contains as many of the 5 Ws as possible. A summary lead is its own nut graf, but if you use a more creative lead, the nut graf will come immediately after. Here's an article from Poynter with more details: "The nut graf tells the reader what the writer is up to."
on the record, off the record, on background	When a source speaks "on the record," you have permission to identify your source in your story by name. If a source says something is "off the record," you do not have permission to identify your source in the story or use that quote or information. Note: Make sure people understand that when they are talking with a reporter wearing their press pass, they are on the record unless they explicitly request to be off the record. Be wary of using any information obtained off the record; it is always better to find another source who is willing to be identified, as unidentified sources are not as credible. A third category is "on background." According to the AP News Values page, "on background" means that "The information can be published but only under conditions negotiated with the source. Generally, the sources do not want their names published but will agree to a description of their position." This type of source is used in sensitive situations where the reporter can't get an official to go on the record but wants to add some layer of credibility by naming the type of position the anonymous source holds.
photo credit	Giving credit to the photographer at the end of caption (see staff manual for Oracle format).
sidebar	A column beside a main story which has more information about - or another angle to - the main story to which it is attached. (from The News Manual)
source	Primary sources are the people you interview to gather information or original documents (such as emails, government records, photographs, etc.). Secondary sources are other articles or studies that interpret or report on those events or people.
verification	The process of making sure facts/quotes are accurate. It is important to cross reference facts between sources before including within a story.
Prior review/restraint	**Prior review** is the practice of a school administration/officials reading student news work before publication. **Prior restraint** is when an administrator/official inhibits, bans or restrains publication, often after prior review. (from NSPA)

AP Style Quick Reference
Style rules are generally quoted directly from the online AP Stylebook and are current as of summer 2022; rules specific to the Archer Student Media are indicated.

addresses
Use the abbreviations Ave., Blvd. and St. only with a numbered address: *1600 Pennsylvania Ave.* Spell them out and capitalize when part of a formal street name without a number: *Pennsylvania Avenue*. Lowercase and spell out when used alone or with more than one street name: *Massachusetts and Pennsylvania avenues*. All similar words (alley, drive, road, terrace, etc.) always are spelled out. Capitalize them when part of a formal name without a number; lowercase when used alone or with two or more names.

a.m., p.m.
Lowercase, with periods. *The class met at 10 a.m.* Avoid the redundant: *10 a.m. this morning.*

capitalization (Archer publications rules)
- Archer-specific names: the Rose Room, the Blackbox Theatre, The Eastern Star Gallery, the Media Space, the Fite Screening Room, the Saban IDEALab, the Zeller Student Center (formerly the dining hall). **Do not capitalize the courtyard, the parlor or the library.**
- Capitalize US-FLX.
- Club, organization and formal committee names are capitalized if they are specific: Ex. Asian Culture Club, Black Student Union, Best Buddies, Unaccompanied Minors, Community Service Leadership Board, Hermanas Unidas.
- Non-specific organization names are not capitalized: Ex. the orchestra, the choir and a cappella groups
- General sports teams are not capitalized; "varsity," "junior varsity" and "freshman" are not capitalized, but JV always is: Ex. Archer's varsity basketball team, the JV soccer team
- Specific sports team names are capitalized: the Panthers, the Lakers
- Mascot names are capitalized: the Panther
- Leave the term "spirit points" lowercase.

commas
Most AP comma rules are the same as standard English usage; however, AP Style does not use a comma before a conjunction in a series: *The flag is red, white and blue*. Remember that dates and states should be set off with commas, like this: *One Book began on Feb. 15, 2016, with a celebration in the courtyard. She grew up in Santa Monica, California, near the ocean.*

courtesy titles
Refer to all people by first and last name, without courtesy titles, on first reference: *Susan Smith or Robert Smith*. Refer to all people by last name, without courtesy titles, in subsequent references. **Use the courtesy titles Mr., Miss, Ms. or Mrs., and Dr. only in direct quotations.** When it is necessary to distinguish between two people who use the same last name, as in married couples or brothers and sisters, use the first and last name, without courtesy title. In cases where a person's gender is not clear from the first name or from the story's context, indicate the gender by using he or she in subsequent reference. If referring to a person who does not identify as male or female, ask them to identify their

pronouns (they/them/ze etc.) and use those singular pronouns for that person. Prior to interviews, we can ask sources if they feel comfortable sharing their pronouns although they do not have to if they don't want to. However, we have to be very sensitive and careful of this.

composition titles

Apply the guidelines listed here to book titles, computer game titles, movie titles, opera titles, play titles, poem titles, album and song titles, radio and television program titles, and the titles of lectures, speeches and works of art.

The guidelines, followed by a block of examples:
- Capitalize the principal words, including prepositions and conjunctions of four or more letters.
- Capitalize an article – the, a, an – or words of fewer than four letters if it is the first or last word in a title.
- Put quotation marks around the names of all such works except the Bible and books that are primarily catalogs of reference material. In addition to catalogs, this category includes almanacs, directories, dictionaries, encyclopedias, gazetteers, handbooks and similar publications. Do not use quotation marks around such software titles as WordPerfect or Windows.
- Translate a foreign title into English unless a work is generally known by its foreign name. An exception to this is reviews of musical performances. In those instances, generally refer to the work in the language it was sung in, so as to differentiate for the reader. However, musical compositions in Slavic languages are always referred to in their English translations.
  EXAMPLES:
  - *"The Star-Spangled Banner," "The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich," "Gone With the Wind," "Of Mice and Men"*
  - **Reference works:** *IHS Jane's All the World's Aircraft; Encyclopaedia Britannica*
  - Names of most **websites** and **apps** are capitalized without quotes: *Facebook*
  - **Exception**: *"FarmVille"* and similar computer game apps are in quotes.
  - **Foreign works:** Rousseau's "War," not Rousseau's "La Guerre." But: Leonardo da Vinci's "Mona Lisa." Mozart's "The Marriage of Figaro" if sung in English but "Le Nozze di Figaro" if sung in Italian.

dates

Always use Arabic figures, without st, nd, rd or th: *June 3, 2008,* not *June 3rd.*

gender identity and sexuality (section)

Gender is not synonymous with sex. Gender refers to a person's social identity, while sex refers to biological characteristics. Not all people fall under one of two categories for sex or gender, according to leading medical organizations, so avoid references to both, either or opposite sexes or genders as a way to encompass all people. When needed for clarity or in certain stories about scientific studies, alternatives include men and women, boys and girls, males and females. Archer Student Media recommends using "Archer students" rather than "Archer girls" to include nonbinary and transitioning students in our community.

Language around gender is evolving. Newsrooms and organizations outside AP may need to make decisions, based on necessity and audience, on terms that differ from or are not covered by the AP's

specific recommendations. For instance, the AP recommends the terms sex reassignment or gender confirmation for the medical procedures used for gender transition, while some groups use other terms, such as gender affirmation or sex realignment. **Please refer to the AP Stylebook online guide for more specific guidance on terminology and best practices.**

grade, grader
No hyphen in most cases: a fourth grade student, first grader, she is in the fifth grade. (A change in 2019.) Do hyphenate if needed to avoid confusion, such when combined with another ordinal number: He was the sixth fourth-grade student to win the prize; she is the 10th third-grader to join.

graduation year
Refer to students either by preceding their name with their grade level (junior Rio Hundley) or by including their graduation year in parentheses following their name: Rio Hundley ('21).

months
Capitalize the names of months in all uses. When a month is used with a specific date, abbreviate only Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec. Spell out when using alone, or with a year alone. When a phrase lists only a month and a year, do not separate the year with commas. When a phrase refers to a month, day and year, set off the year with commas.

> *EXAMPLES: January 1972 was a cold month. Jan. 2 was the coldest day of the month. His birthday is May 8. Feb. 14, 1987, was the target date. She testified that it was Friday, Dec. 3, when the accident occurred.*

numerals
In general, spell out one through nine in most uses and use figures for 10 or above. Use figures whenever preceding a unit of measure or points, as well as for team records or game numbers. Some sample uses of numbers: *first place; second quarter; 10th inning; a 3-pointer with 0.2 seconds left; 3-of-8 shooting; he made 3 of 4; the 6-foot-5 player; the 6-5 tight end; the 5-yard line; Game 6; The final score was 21-14. The team won its fourth game in 10 days. The team's record is 4-5-1. Johnson had seven catches for 188 yards. Stafford was 8 for 18 for 200 yards and two touchdowns.* See entries for individual sports for specialized uses, as well as entries for fractions and time. EXCEPTIONS: **Always write out a number if it is the beginning of a sentence.** Headlines <u>only</u> use numerals.

Use figures for:
- ACADEMIC COURSE NUMBERS: History 6, Philosophy 209.
- ADDRESSES: 210 Main St. Spell out numbered streets nine and under: 5 Sixth Ave.; 3012 50th St.; No. 10 Downing St. Use the abbreviations Ave., Blvd. and St. only with a numbered address: 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. Spell them out and capitalize without a number: Pennsylvania Avenue. See addresses.
- AGES: a 6-year-old girl; an 8-year-old law; the 7-year-old house. Use hyphens for ages expressed as adjectives before a noun or as substitutes for a noun. A 5-year-old boy, but the boy is 5 years old. The boy, 5, has a sister, 10. The race is for 3-year-olds. The woman is in her 30s. 30-something, but Thirty-something to start a sentence. See ages.

- PLANES, SHIPS AND SPACECRAFT DESIGNATIONS: B-2 bomber, Queen Elizabeth 2, QE2, Apollo 9, Viking 2 An exception: Air Force One, the president's plane. Use Roman numerals if they are part of the official designation: Titan I, Titan II. See aircraft names; boats, ships; spacecraft designations.
- CENTURIES: Use figures for numbers 10 or higher: 21st century. Spell out for numbers nine and lower: fifth century. (Note lowercase.) For proper names, follow the organization's usage.
- COURT DECISIONS: The Supreme Court ruled 5-4, a 5-4 decision. The word to is not needed, except in quotations: "The court ruled 5 to 4." – Court districts: 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.
- DATES, YEARS AND DECADES: Feb. 8, 2007, Class of '66, the 1950s. For the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, 9/11 is acceptable in all references. (Note comma to set off the year when the phrase refers to a month, date and year.)
- DECIMALS, PERCENTAGES AND FRACTIONS WITH NUMBERS LARGER THAN 1: 7.2 magnitude quake, 3 1/2 laps, 3.7% interest, 4 percentage points. Decimalization should not exceed two places in most text material. Exceptions: blood alcohol content, expressed in three decimals: as in 0.056, and batting averages in baseball, as in .324. For amounts less than 1, precede the decimal with a zero: The cost of living rose 0.03%. Spell out fractions less than 1, using hyphens between the words: two-thirds, four-fifths. In quotations, use figures for fractions: "He was 2 1/2 laps behind with four to go." See decimal units; fractions; percent, percentage, percentage points.
- DIMENSIONS, TO INDICATE DEPTH, HEIGHT, LENGTH AND WIDTH: He is 5 feet, 6 inches tall, the 5-foot-6 man ("inch" is understood), the 5-foot man, the basketball team signed a 7-footer. The car is 17 feet long, 6 feet wide and 5 feet high. The rug is 9 feet by 12 feet, the 9-by-12 rug. A 9-inch snowfall. Exception: two-by-four. Spell out the noun, which refers to any length of untrimmed lumber approximately 2 inches thick by 4 inches wide. See dimensions.
- DISTANCES: He walked 4 miles. He missed a 3-foot putt.
- GOLF CLUBS: 3-wood, 7-iron, 3-hybrid (note hyphen).
- HIGHWAY DESIGNATIONS: Interstate 5, U.S. Highway 1, state Route 1A. (Do not abbreviate Route. No hyphen between highway designation and number.) See highway designations.
- MATHEMATICAL USAGE: Multiply by 4, divide by 6. He added 2 and 2 but got 5.
- MILITARY RANKS, USED AS TITLES WITH NAMES, MILITARY TERMS AND WEAPONS: Petty Officer 2nd Class Alan Markow, Spc. Alice Moreno, 1st Sgt. David Triplett, M16 rifle, 9 mm (note space) pistol, 6th Fleet. In military ranks, spell out the figure when it is used after the name or without a name: Smith was a second lieutenant. The goal is to make first sergeant. See military units.
- MILLIONS, BILLIONS, TRILLIONS: Use a figure-word combination. 1 million people; $2 billion, NOT one million/two billion. (Also note no hyphen linking numerals and the word million, billion or trillion.) See millions, billions, trillions; dollars.
- MONETARY UNITS: 5 cents, $5 bill, 8 euros, 4 pounds. See cents.
- ODDS, PROPORTIONS AND RATIOS: 9-1 long shot; 3 parts cement to 1 part water; a 1-4 chance; 1 chance in 3. See betting odds; proportions; ratios.
- RANK: He was my No. 1 choice. (Note abbreviation for "Number"). Kentucky was ranked No. 3. The band had five Top 40 hits.
- SCHOOL GRADES: Use figures for grades 10 and above: 10th grade. Spell out for first through ninth grades: fourth grade, fifth grader.
- SEQUENTIAL DESIGNATIONS: Page 1, Page 20A. They were out of sizes 4 and 5; magnitude 6 earthquake; Rooms 3 and 4; Chapter 2; line 1 but first line; Act 3, Scene 4, but third act, fourth scene; Game 1, but best of seven.
- See act numbers; chapters; earthquakes; line numbers; page numbers; scene numbers.

- POLITICAL DISTRICTS: Ward 9, 9th Precinct, 3rd Congressional District. See congressional districts; political divisions.
- Recipes: 2 tablespoons of sugar to 1 cup of milk. See recipes.
- SPEEDS: 7 mph, winds of 5 to 10 mph, winds of 7 to 9 knots.
- SPORTS SCORES, STANDINGS AND STANDARDS: The Dodgers defeated the Phillies 10-3 (No comma between the team and the score); in golf, 3 up, but a 3-up lead; led 3-2; a 6-1-2 record (six wins, one loss, two ties); par 3; 5 handicap, 5-under-par 67 but he was 5 under par (or 5 under, with "par" understood). In narrative, spell out nine and under except for yard lines in football and individual and team statistical performances: The ball was on the 5-yard line. Seventh hole. In basketball, 3-point play and 3-point shot. In statistical performances, hyphenate as a modifier: He completed 8 of 12 passes. He made 5 of 6 (shots is understood). He was 5-for-12 passing. He had a 3-for-5 day. He was 3-for-5. He went 3-for-5 (batting, shooting, etc., is understood).
- TEMPERATURES: Use figures, except zero. It was 8 degrees below zero or minus 8. The temperature dropped from 38 to 8 in two hours. See temperatures.
- TIMES: Use figures for time of day except for noon and midnight: 1 p.m.; 10:30 a.m.; 5 o'clock; 8 hours, 30 minutes, 20 seconds; a winning time of 2:17:3 (2 hours, 17 minutes, 3 seconds). Spell out numbers less than 10 standing alone and in modifiers: I'll be there in five minutes. He scored with two seconds left. An eight-hour day. The two-minute warning. See times; time sequences.
- VOTES: The bill was defeated by a vote of 6-4, but by a two-vote margin.

percent
Use the % sign when paired with a numeral, with no space, in most cases (a change in 2019): *Average hourly pay rose 3.1% from a year ago; her mortgage rate is 4.75%; about 60% of Americans agreed; he won 56.2% of the vote. Use figures: 1%, 4 percentage points.*
- For amounts less than 1%, precede the decimal with a zero: The cost of living rose 0.6%.
- In casual uses, use words rather than figures and numbers: *She said he has a zero percent chance of winning.*
- At the start of a sentence: Try to avoid this construction. If it's necessary to start a sentence with a percentage, spell out both: *Eighty-nine percent of sentences don't have to begin with a number.*
- Constructions with the % sign take a singular verb when standing alone or when a singular word follows an of construction: *The teacher said 60% was a failing grade. He said 50% of the membership was there.*
- It takes a plural verb when a plural word follows an of construction: *He said 50% of the members were there.*
- Use decimals, not fractions, in percentages: *Her mortgage rate is 4.5%.*
- For a range, 12% to 15%, 12%-15% and between 12% and 15% are all acceptable.
- Use percentage, rather than percent, when not paired with a number: *The percentage of people agreeing is small.*
- Be careful not to confuse percent with percentage point. A change from 10% to 13% is a rise of 3 percentage points. This is not equal to a 3% change; rather, it's a 30% increase. *Usage: Republicans passed a 0.25 percentage point tax cut. Not: Republicans passed a 0.25 percentage points tax cut or Republicans passed a tax cut of 0.25 of a percentage point.*

profanity
- Do not use profane words in stories unless they are part of direct quotations and there is a compelling reason for them. Try to find a way to give the reader a sense of what was said without using the specific word or phrase. For example, *an anti-gay slur* or *sexist slur.*
- If the obscenity involved is particularly offensive but the story requires making clear what the word was, replace the letters of the offensive word with hyphens, using only an initial letter: *f---, s---.*
- Commonly used abbreviations or acronyms that contain an obscenity may be used if necessary to convey a meaning or mood: *WTF, snafu.* They should not appear in headlines unless the story turns on the use of such a term.

race-related coverage
Reporting and writing about issues involving race calls for thoughtful consideration, precise language, and discussions with others of diverse backgrounds whenever possible about how to frame coverage or what language is most appropriate, accurate and fair. Avoid broad generalizations and labels; race and ethnicity are one part of a person's identity. Identifying people by race and reporting on actions that have to do with race often go beyond simple style questions, challenging journalists to think broadly about racial issues before having to make decisions on specific situations and stories.

In all coverage — not just race-related coverage — strive to accurately represent the world, or a particular community, and its diversity through the people you quote and depict in all formats. Omissions and lack of inclusion can render people invisible. Be aware that some words and phrases that seem innocuous to one group can carry negative connotations, even be seen as slurs, to another. As with all news coverage, be sensitive to your varied audiences and their different perceptions of language and the larger world. For instance, many people see thug as code for a racial slur; Black boy has a loaded history and should be avoided in referring to Black males of any age; unarmed Black man could be seen as assuming the default is for Black men to be armed.

Do not write in a way that assumes white is default. Not: The officer is accused of choking Owens, who is Black. Instead: The white officer is accused of choking Owens, who is Black. **Please refer to the AP Stylebook online guide for more specific guidance on terminology and best practices.**

states
Write out the names of all of the states (*California* rather than the old *Calif.* pre-2014) except in datelines or when including a complete address. Use postal codes for states in complete addresses only.

titles
In general, confine capitalization to formal titles used directly before an individual's name.
The basic guidelines:
- LOWERCASE: Lowercase and spell out titles when they are not used with an individual's name: *The president issued a statement. The pope gave his blessing.*
- Lowercase and spell out titles in constructions that set them off from a name by commas: *The vice president, Joe Biden, was re-elected in 2012. Pope Francis, the current pope, was born in Argentina.*
- FORMAL TITLES: Capitalize formal titles when they are used immediately before one or more names: *Pope Francis, President Barack Obama, Vice Presidents John Jones and William Smith.*

- Other titles serve primarily as occupational descriptions: *astronaut John Glenn, movie star John Wayne, peanut farmer Jimmy Carter.*
- ABBREVIATED TITLES: The following formal titles are capitalized and abbreviated as shown when used before a name both inside and outside quotations: *Dr., Gov., Lt. Gov., Rep., Sen.* and certain military ranks (see AP Stylebook entry "military titles").
- ACADEMIC TITLES: The Oracle has established its own style guide for academic titles given our scholastic focus. We treat academic titles as formal titles and capitalize them when used immediately before the person's name: *Head of School Elizabeth English*, *English Department Chair Brian Wogensen*. Do not capitalize informal job titles such as "science teacher Hanna Robertson" — also, do not capitalize these titles if they come after their name: *Elizabeth English, head of school; Brian Wogensen, English department chair.*

Part 2: Oracle Content and Editorial Policies

Freedom of Expression and Forum Status Statement
Freedom of expression and press freedom are fundamental values in a democratic society. The mission of any institution committed to preparing productive citizens must include teaching students these values, both by lesson and example. Student media at Archer connects directly to the school's mission to "strengthen girls' voices" and "promote challenge-seeking and support risk-taking" in order to "graduate courageous, committed, and ethical young women."

For these purposes, as well as to teach students responsibility by empowering them to make and defend their own decisions, student news media at The Archer School for Girls are designated open forums for student expression where students make all final decisions of content.

This philosophy aligns with California's student free expression law (California Educ. Code Section 48907), which asserts students "shall have the right to exercise freedom of speech and of the press, including, but not limited to...the right of expression in official publications, whether or not the publications or other means of expression are supported financially by the school or by use of school facilities, except that expression shall be prohibited which is obscene, libelous, or slanderous." California Leonard Law (California Educ. Code Section 48950) extends this protection to private, secular secondary schools such as Archer. The legislative history of the law states, "It is the intent of this Legislature that a student shall have the same right to exercise his or her right to free speech on campus as he or she enjoys when off campus."

Therefore, student material published in school-sponsored media, whether in print or online, may not reflect the opinions or policies of The Archer School for Girls, and neither school employees nor the school itself are legally responsible for their content.

Role of the Editorial Board
The editorial board will consist of student editors who will make all decisions that pertain directly to Archer student media and their interests.
- Final content decisions and responsibility shall remain with the student editorial board.
- No member of the editorial board shall have more than one vote on the board.
- Student editors and staff who want appropriate legal advice regarding proposed content should seek attorneys knowledgeable in media law such as those of the Student Press Law Center.
- Editors are responsible for interpreting and enforcing this editorial policy.

Role of the Adviser
The adviser is a professional teaching staff member in charge of the journalism class just as in any normal classroom situation. The adviser's primary role is to offer advice and instruction, following the Journalism Education Association Advisers' Code of Ethics.

Media advisers will:
- Model standards of professional journalistic conduct to students, administrators and others.

- Empower students to make decisions of style, structure and content by creating a learning atmosphere where students will actively practice critical thinking and decision making.
- Encourage students to seek out points of view and to explore a variety of information sources in their decision making.
- Ensure students have a free, robust and active forum for expression without prior review or restraint.
- Emphasize the importance of accuracy, balance and clarity in all aspects of news gathering and reporting.
- Show trust in students as they carry out their responsibilities by encouraging and supporting them in a caring learning environment.
- Remain informed on press rights and responsibilities to provide students with sources of legal information.
- Advise, not act as censors or decision makers.
- Display professional and personal integrity in situations which might be construed as potential conflicts of interest.
- Support free expression for others in local and larger communities.
- Counsel students to avoid deceptive practices in all practices of publication work.
- Model effective communications skills by continuously updating knowledge of media education.

In addition to this adhering to the JEA Code of Ethics, the adviser:
- provides a journalistically professional learning atmosphere and experience for the students by allowing them to make decisions of content for the publication and ensuring the publication remains an open forum, limited only by the United States Constitution, California State Constitution and applicable court decisions as related to scholastic press rights.
- serves as a professional role model, motivator, catalyst for ideas and professionalism and an educational resource.
- may caution or act as a legal consultant and educator in terms of unprotected speech but will not act as a censor or determine the content of the paper.
- will keep abreast of the latest trends in journalism to share with students and will submit the paper and individual student contributions of journalism students to rating services and contests so the staff receives feedback.

Role of the Administration
Members of The Archer School for Girls administration serve as role models for empowered student journalists.
- The administration will provide students with a qualified journalism instructor to serve as a professional role model and adequate equipment, technological support and physical space to support the program.
- The student editorial board and staff may seek advice about content from the administration at any point.
- Student journalistic media, including social media, will not be reviewed by school officials outside the adviser or restrained by school officials prior to, during or after publication or distribution. Administrators may caution or act as legal consultants and educators, but they have no power of censorship or veto except as provided by the California Constitution.

Content of the Oracle

All writing in the Oracle, other than letters to the editor, will be written and edited by journalism students or trained contributing student writers. The editorial board determines content, priority, placement and space given to all material, including selecting "Featured" articles for the site's home page on a weekly basis and the content of the news ticker.

The overall purpose and goal of Archer student news media is to:
- inform, interpret and entertain its readers/viewers through accurate and factual reports, where information has been thoroughly gathered and completely verified;
- be accurate, fair and impartial in its coverage of issues that affect the school community;
- cover the entire school population as effectively and accurately as possible;
- localize national and global events; and
- serve as an educational laboratory newsroom experience for those on staff.

General guidelines for content (determined by editorial board):
- The Oracle will not publish any material that is obscene, libelous, invasive of others' privacy, violates copyright law or encourages substantial disruption of school activities (Tinker v. Des Moines).
- The Oracle will not publish any attack material regarding individuals' religion, gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, age, mental or physical ability, culture or sexual orientation.
- The Oracle will not publish any material for which there is evidence the author is using the paper for inappropriate personal gain.
- The Oracle will provide a chance for comment on all sides of a critical issue.

Archer Publications Code of Ethics

This code of ethics is based on the Society of Professional Journalists' Code of Ethics with additional source material adapted from the National Scholastic Press Association's Code of Ethics for High School Journalists. Created by Kristin Taylor, December 2016.

Pillar 1: Seek truth and report it.

Ethical journalism should be accurate and fair. Scholastic journalists should be honest and courageous in gathering, reporting and interpreting information. Scholastic journalists should:
- Strive for substantive stories that produce insight, generate accountability and inspire reader interest and engagement across the breadth of the school community.
- Support the open and civil exchange of views, even views they find repugnant. Welcome diverse perspectives, including rebuttals to editorial positions.
- Recognize a special obligation to serve as watchdogs over those in power. Be vigilant and courageous about holding those with power accountable. Give voice to the voiceless.
- Begin the search for truth with a neutral mind and not prejudge issues or events. Discover truth through gathering facts and perspectives.
- Use anonymous sources only if the information cannot be obtained elsewhere, and verify this information through another known source before publishing. To provide context, explain the compelling reason — danger, retribution or significant harm — for which anonymity was granted. Consider sources' motives before promising anonymity.
- Diligently seek subjects of news coverage to allow them to respond to criticism or allegations of wrongdoing in a timely manner. Strive for balance.

- Take responsibility for the accuracy of their work. Verify information before releasing it, and use original sources whenever possible. Confirm questionable sources' assertions before publishing them. Remember that accuracy is about more than getting the facts right; accuracy also requires putting the facts together in a context that is relevant and reveals the truth. Take special care not to misrepresent or oversimplify in promoting, previewing or summarizing a story.
- Engage in meaningful fact-checking with editors and peers. Gather, update and correct information throughout the life of a news story.
- Report on the student body and its interests. Avoid reporting on student media reporters and editors unless they are legitimate newsmakers. In these cases, those student journalists should have no influence on the coverage, and any conflict of interest should be disclosed.
- Be cautious when making promises, but keep the promises they make.
- Identify sources clearly. The school community and public are entitled to as much information as possible to judge the reliability and motivations of sources. Provide access to source material when it is relevant and appropriate.
- Identify themselves as reporters and not misrepresent themselves when engaged in a news media task. Avoid undercover or other surreptitious methods of gathering information.
- Boldly tell the story of the diversity and magnitude of the human experience, especially as it pertains to our school community. Seek sources whose voices we seldom hear and avoid over-coverage of the same subjects or sources.
- Examine the ways their values and experiences may shape their reporting, be aware of their biases and confront those biases consistently to ensure fair coverage. Avoid stereotyping.
- Label opinion, advocacy, commentary and advertising clearly.
- Tell the truth. Never deliberately distort facts or context, including audio and visual information. Technical enhancements, such as contrast and exposure adjustments for photos, are allowed so long as they don't create a false impression or distort the truthfulness of the image. Clearly label illustrations and re-enactments.
- Never plagiarize or fabricate information. Always attribute sources.

Pillar 2: Minimize harm.
Ethical scholastic journalism treats sources, subjects, peers and members of the public as human beings deserving of respect. Scholastic journalists should:
- Balance the school community's need for information against potential harm, especially considering Archer's grades 6-12 student body. Pursuit of the news is not a license for arrogance or undue intrusiveness, and student journalists have an inherent obligation to consider the impact of their reporting and the best interests of their audience.
- Show compassion for those who may be affected by news coverage. Use heightened sensitivity when dealing with sources who have experienced trauma or are in distress, and reject unreasonable intrusion by student media in their lives. Balance the public's right to know with an individual's right to be left alone.
- Be sensitive to the maturity and vulnerability of young people when gathering and reporting information. Protect younger students from their own poor judgment when their comments could put themselves and others in jeopardy.
- Know the legal rights of student journalists and balance those rights with ethical responsibilities. Having the right to say something doesn't make it right to say it.

- Realize that private people have a greater right to control information about themselves than public figures and others who seek power, influence or attention. Weigh the consequences of publishing or broadcasting personal information.
- Avoid pandering to lurid curiosity, even if others do. Know when to show restraint in pursuing stories.
- Be cautious about identifying students accused of criminal acts or disciplinary infractions. Avoid naming minors, but even if a student is over 18, be ready to show a compelling reason for identifying that name.
- Consider the long-term implications of the extended reach and permanence of publications, especially on our public, digital news site.
- Report immediately to school officials any person who threatens the safety of herself or others.

Pillar 3: Act independently.
The highest and primary obligation of ethical journalism is to serve the public. Scholastic journalists should:
- Establish an open dialogue with school leaders while showing courage and perseverance in defending media where students make final content decisions.
- Maintain a respectful relationship with school administration.
- Avoid conflicts of interest, real or perceived. Disclose unavoidable conflicts.
- Accept no gifts, favors or things of value that could compromise objectivity or credibility.
- Be wary of sources offering information for favors or money; do not pay for access to news. Identify content provided by outside sources, whether paid or not.
- Deny favored treatment to advertisers, donors or any other special interests **(such as administrators or friends)**, and resisted internal and external pressure to influence coverage.
- Distinguish news from advertising and shun hybrids that blur the lines between the two.

Pillar 4: Be accountable and transparent.
Ethical journalism means taking responsibility for one's work and explaining one's decisions to the public. Scholastic journalists should:
- Explain ethical choices and processes to audiences. Encourage a civil dialogue with the school community about journalistic practices, coverage and news content.
- Respond quickly to questions about accuracy, clarity and fairness.
- Acknowledge mistakes and correct them promptly. Except for minor grammatical or proofreading corrections, explain content corrections and clarifications carefully and clearly.
- Expose unethical conduct in journalism, including within their organizations.
- Use the power of student media judiciously, and be prepared to provide rationale for any decisions or actions taken by staff members.

Code of Ethics for National Press Photographers Association
Visual journalists and those who manage visual news productions are accountable for upholding the following standards in their daily work:
- Be accurate and comprehensive in the representation of subjects.
- Resist being manipulated by staged photo opportunities.
- Be complete and provide context when photographing or recording subjects. Avoid stereotyping individuals and groups. Recognize and work to avoid presenting one's own biases in the work.

- Treat all subjects with respect and dignity. Give special consideration to vulnerable subjects and compassion to victims of crime or tragedy. Intrude on private moments of grief only when the public has an overriding and justifiable need to see.
- While photographing subjects do not intentionally contribute to, alter, or seek to alter or influence events.
- Editing should maintain the integrity of the photographic images' content and context. Do not manipulate images or add or alter sound in any way that can mislead viewers or misrepresent subjects.
- Do not pay sources or subjects or reward them materially for information or participation.
- Do not accept gifts, favors, or compensation from those who might seek to influence coverage.
- Do not intentionally sabotage the efforts of other journalists.
- Do not engage in harassing behavior of colleagues, subordinates or subjects and maintain the highest standards of behavior in all professional interactions.

Ideally, visual journalists should:
- Strive to ensure that the public's business is conducted in public. Defend the rights of access for all journalists.
- Think proactively, as a student of psychology, sociology, politics and art to develop a unique vision and presentation. Work with a voracious appetite for current events and contemporary visual media.
- Strive for total and unrestricted access to subjects, recommend alternatives to shallow or rushed opportunities, seek a diversity of viewpoints, and work to show unpopular or unnoticed points of view.
- Avoid political, civic and business involvements or other employment that compromise or give the appearance of compromising one's own journalistic independence.
- Strive to be unobtrusive and humble in dealing with subjects.
- Respect the integrity of the photographic moment.
- Strive by example and influence to maintain the spirit and high standards expressed in this code. When confronted with situations in which the proper action is not clear, seek the counsel of those who exhibit the highest standards of the profession. Visual journalists should continuously study their craft and the ethics that guide it.

Photography during a Pandemic
- Photographers should always place public and personal safety first, taking all necessary precautions. If possible, take candid photos and ask the same of those submitting photos.
- For photos of Zoom sessions, take a screenshot on the computer or use a camera for higher resolution.
- For featured images on the Oracle, remember to take photos in horizontal position.
- When emailing for photos or if a photo has been submitted for publication, always verify photo credit, identification and 5 W's for a caption.

Conflicts of Interest
The Oracle's value is largely dependent on our credibility: can our readers trust us to be fair and impartial reporters? To ensure we maintain our credibility, Oracle reporters follow these guidelines:

- Reporters should not cover events or people in whom they have a personal interest. Examples: A softball player should not write an article about the softball team; A reporter should not write an article focused on a close friend or family member.
- Reporters should avoid using friends, family members or other members of the Oracle staff as sources. Quotations should reflect the diversity of the Archer community and demonstrate the writer's willingness to push outside her comfort zone.
- Reporters should not write op-eds about their beats.
- Reporters should not accept money, gifts or favors from sources or the subjects of their stories. Similarly, reporters should not offer money, gifts, favors or guarantees of favorable coverage to any source in exchange for information.
- Reporters may use their press passes to attend events for free, if permitted, but should not take a free ticket to another event beyond the one being reviewed, written about, or used as background material.
- Reporters should wear their press passes whenever working on a story to avoid any chance of misinterpretation of your role.
- **Reporters should avoid taking stances online (comments, blogs, posts to social media) about beats they cover.** For example, if you are covering the Archer community's feelings about national elections, you should avoid posting about your personal support of any one candidate, as that undermines your credibility as an unbiased reporter. Remember the crucial difference between journalism and activism.
- Reporters should disclose any potential conflict of interest in her story to her editor and, if no alternative coverage is possible, be transparent about this conflict in the article.

Academic Dishonesty

As a founding principle of The Archer School for Girls, honesty is expected in all academic endeavors. Academic honesty means that you reflect your own learning while crediting other people who helped shape the development and expression of your ideas. Plagiarism, fabrication of information and deliberate deception are examples of academic dishonesty in journalism. Archer's academic honesty expectations are clarified in the Community Expectations section of the Handbook. In addition to any consequences imposed by the Dean or Honor Council, deliberate plagiarism, fabrication or deception in an Oracle article will automatically result in a zero on that story and demotion from any leadership position.

Additional Journalistic Ethics Terms and Guidelines (Source: Kent State University's School of Journalism and Mass Communications)
- Fabricating is, in the phrasing first used by the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, the cardinal sin. Faking quotations, faking "facts" or "observations," or reporting things that did not happen is not only reprehensible but it could be actionable in court. As we have seen lately, it is also grounds for losing one's job.
- Plagiarizing, as defined by Webster, is "to steal and pass off as one's own the ideas or words of another." It is unethical and – in cases involving creative work – usually illegal. One of the worst sins a newsperson may commit is to plagiarize from a creative professional – to steal that writer's story outline, words or thoughts – and print them as one's own.

- Duplicating work is defined as submitting the same work to more than one instructor or publication without the prior knowledge and agreement of both. It is not acceptable unless both instructors approve all the details in advance.

Copyrighted Material

The Oracle does not publish copyrighted material without permission from the copyright holder unless covered by the provisions of "fair use," which we will discuss in class. For an introduction to copyright and fair use, read the Student Press Law Center's article "[Know Your Rights: Copyright and Fair Use](#)." The majority of all material published on the Oracle will be original. All non-student generated material will be clearly attributed and, if possible, hyperlinked to its source.

Site Organization and Coverage

The Oracle specializes in and emphasizes coverage of school news at Archer. The Oracle will cover community, state, national and international news only if it is directly relevant to the school community and includes a local angle.

- The Oracle will strive to provide equitable coverage to all school organizations and functions.
- The Oracle will focus on issues, not personalities. For example, a member of staff will not report on an individual simply because of their popularity status or personality traits.
- When faced with undesirable news such as student, staff or faculty crimes, student media will endeavor to publish the facts correctly, explain the issues and put a stop to any speculative stories that inevitably develop.
- Sections
  - **News**: This section covers current events and breaking news affecting Archer. All current events except those related to sports, arts and entertainment, travel or food will be published in this section.
  - **Features**: This section offers in-depth stories less tied to current events, including individual profiles and stories about larger issues.
  - **Sports**: This section includes news and features related to Archer athletics and professional sports with a local angle.
  - **Culture**: This section includes news, features and reviews about arts and entertainment, books, travel and food.
  - **Voices:** This section includes opinion writing (editorials, op-eds, columns and letters to the editor) and "Whimsies," a section for creativity and humor.
  - **Multimedia:** This section includes pieces from other sections that incorporate multimedia components such as videos, audio clips or interactive media. The Scoop podcast is also in this section.

Reviews

- Review ideas may be submitted to the editorial board by all members of the newspaper staff and contributing writers. The reviewers must have experience in the area in which they are writing reviews or be willing to do extensive research to prepare.
- All reviews will be bylined and all reviews will be the expressed opinions of the signed authors; the editorial board does not express opinions on these matters.
- All reviews will be to evaluate and inform, not to promote.
- The photo should be from the production's official promotional material.

- We do not link Wikipedia for artist's/actor's bios.
- If possible, reviewers will obtain direct quotes from participants, presenters and/or audience to provide a balanced view.
- Evaluative criteria used will be determined by the editorial board depending on whether the event/item being reviewed is professional or amateur in nature.
  - If the event/item is professional in nature (such as a published book or a professional restaurant), the reviewer will rate each element using the criteria outlined below.
  - If the event is amateur in nature (such as a review of a school play), the review will not rate individual elements and will balance truthful reporting with the obligation to minimize harm. Students will write features about student productions focusing on a particular angle rather than reviewing the production.
- In all types of reviews, the writer should include age guidelines and rating information in the summary box at the bottom of the article. For example, an art exhibit may include violent imagery, or a music album may contain explicit lyrics.

Review Criteria for Professional Events/Items
Reviewers will rate each criterion: 5 = Excellent, 4 = Good, 3 = Average, 2 = Poor, 1 = Very Bad

Book Reviews (Fiction)	Television Reviews
● Writing (quality, readability) ● Story (original, compelling plot) ● Characters (believable, interesting) ● Enjoyment (Is it a book you want to keep reading?)	● Binge Potential ● Acting ● Story ● Technical Quality
Book Reviews (Non-fiction) ● Writing (quality, readability) ● Purpose (How well does the book achieve its purpose?) ● Credibility (Is the author an expert? Does the research seem thorough and balanced?) ● Enjoyment (Is it a book you want to keep reading?)	**Documentary Review:** ● Narrative Flow ● Technical ● Impact
Movie/Play Reviews ● Story ● Acting ● Technical Quality ● Enjoyment	**Restaurant Reviews** ● Service ● Quality of food ● Ambiance ● Diversity of menu options ● Affordability

For reviews on categories not listed above, check with the Culture Editor to determine needed criteria. This will be determined on a case by case basis. Additionally, for film and TV show reviews, include the rating and the reasoning behind the rating in the summary box at the bottom of the article. MPAA film ratings should be taken from filmratings.com. Common Sense Media also provides ratings for television shows, books and more.

Interviews

Interviews are the most important part of good journalism. Oracle reporters represent the Oracle as a whole; therefore, all interviews should be professional and respectful. Respect does not mean deference, however; your primary purpose is to seek truth and report it, and sometimes that means asking hard questions.

- Good journalistic practice is to do all interviews in person or — if that is not possible such as during a pandemic — over a video platform like Zoom. **Phone interviews are fine, but email interviews are a last resort and should only be used when all other avenues have been exhausted.** Editors have the right to reject stories that rely heavily on email interviewing. **Email interviews should be approved ahead of time by the EIC.**
- Always wear your press pass when conducting an interview. This ensures that there is no confusion about your role or purpose.
- Oracle reporters don't practice "gotcha" journalism. The intent of a face-to-face interview is never to catch someone out. If you think a source has misspoke, allow the source to clarify or revisit a past question.
- Eliminate filler words such as "like" and "um" from interview quotes when writing the story. The editorial board made this decision in order to "minimize harm" to our young sources' reputations.
- Record all interviews (audio if possible; good notes if not) in order to verify quotes. Accuracy is vital. Save your notes and recordings in case you ever need documentation later.
- Just like professional journalists, sources should not preview a reporter's story before it's published. However, if the staff members, the adviser or the editors are concerned that a quote may not reflect the source's meaning or intent or they determine a subject is especially controversial, reporters may verify those quotes' accuracy with the source.
- If a potential source does not reply within 48 hours, the staff member will take the next steps to contact the potential source in a different manner (ex: phone number through Archer directory).

Guidelines for Middle School Interviews

Student journalists will take special care when interviewing middle school students in an effort to protect the younger members of our community. The Oracle recognizes that quotes from middle schoolers must always be included in context and must be handled with care. If a writer or editor is concerned a quote could be misinterpreted or cause harm, the quote will not be included.

Interview Procedures
> **Before the interview**
> - Do your research and develop 5-10 guiding questions based on this research (but remember that the best interviews are conversations, and you will likely go "off script" during your interview).
> - Contact your source and arrange a time and place for the interview. Be polite and clear. Try to set up an in-person interview or, if the source doesn't live nearby, do a Zoom interview. A phone interview is a back-up option. Only use an email interview if there is no possible way to speak in person; you should clear this with the EIC.
> - Arrive at least five minutes early with all necessary materials:
> - Your reporter's notebook
> - Pens/pencils
> - A recording device (phone or mini recorder); we suggest using Otter.ai for transcription help

- Your guiding questions
- Before your source arrives, jot down observational details about your surroundings. These might provide "color" for your story. If you are interviewing over a video platform, you might ask them a bit about their surroundings if they aren't using a digital background; if they are, jot down notes about what they've chosen to use as their background.

During the interview
- **Before asking any questions, start the recorder and ask permission to record. Get this permission on tape.** Important to briefly remind the interviewee that The Oracle is a PUBLIC website and by granting permission to be recorded, their words will be featured publicly on The Oracle website. If the source agrees to the interview but does not give you permission to record, you will have to rely on your note-taking skills.
- Check the spelling of the source's name, his/her title or role, graduating year (if a student) and contact information.
- Be courteous and attentive. Make eye contact and use body language to show you are listening.
- Even if you are recording, jot down notes or time code during the interview so you can easily find clips later. You could also note interesting details about what the source looks like or sounds like; this may provide color for your final story.
- Ask follow-up questions based on what you hear (e.g. "You said you love the sisterhood you see during Arrow Week—what do you mean by that? Can you give me an example of a time you saw that unfold?")
- Let the interview unfold and follow it where it goes. It's fine if you don't get to some of your questions.
- **Ask for clarification if you don't understand something your source says.**
- At the end of the interview, check your notes to make sure you aren't missing anything crucial.
- Consider ending every interview with these two questions:
  1. Is there anyone else I should contact to get more information about/insight into ____?
  2. Is there anything you'd like to add that I haven't covered yet?
- Thank your source for his/her/their time.

After the interview
- Transcribe any audio and review your notes. Follow up with your source if you have any clarification questions. If you are using Otter.ai to help with transcription, it is **extremely important** that you export your audio and your editing text to a folder in your Google drive called "interviews, 20-21." Even if you aren't using Otter, make sure you save your audio file from Voice Memo into that folder. This is crucial in case someone accuses you of misquoting them.
- Organize your notes and merge your research with your interview transcription. Look for your angle. What is the story really about? Pull out the best quotes and start planning your structure.
- Once your story is published, you may want to send an email with a link to the story to your source(s), depending on the situation.

Interviewing Imperatives

You should ALWAYS…

- Do your research ahead of time.
- Be on time
- Introduce yourself clearly (who you are and why you are there) and offer a firm handshake (in non-pandemic times!)
- Ask for permission to record the interview and clarify WHY you are asking ("Would you mind if I record this so I can be sure I quote you accurately? As a reminder, the Oracle is a public, student-run news site") but take notes also. Get the source's agreement and understanding on the recording.
- Ask the source to say and spell their name and read it back to them to make sure you have it right.
- Ask the source to clarify their graduation year, official title and/or position and read this back to them to verify you have it right.
- Be respectful and demonstrate your engagement through body language and eye contact
- Have a conversation...don't just fire away one question after another without listening.
- Create a Google folder for each story to store research notes, audio/video files from interviews, transcripts from interviews, and early story drafts. Keep this folder for at least two years after the story is published. This is SO important, as it's your evidence if anyone suggests you misquoted them or didn't give permission for you to record.
- Share this folder with the relevant section editor and editor-in-chief
- Use codes (not obvious ones) for the rare case when sources need to be on background, off the record, or anonymous; keep your code key separate and <u>not on a school computer, which the school technically owns and can access.</u>

For General Email Templates When Reaching Out for Interviews:
- Review templates in the Email section below.

Attribution

Journalists should accurately and clearly attribute their sources within the context of the sentence, not parenthetically. Attribution tells your readers who or what your source is, generally by including the source's full name and job title or graduation year. For secondary sources (other articles, studies etc.), clearly identify the author, title and (if from another journalistic outlet) publisher. After you've introduced the source with full name/title/year, use last name only in all future attributions.

- Use "**said**" to attribute sources you interview in person, on the phone or over Zoom. Put this at the end of the quote in the following format: [source name] said.
  - **Example (direct quote from in-person interview)**: "It's really exciting that Archer gets to be at the center of this movement to get more girls involved in science and engineering and research," Robertson said.
  - **Example (paraphrased information from in-person interview):** Archer's 2016-2017 student body consists of families from 75 different zip codes, Admissions Coordinator April Carletto said.

- If your information does not come from an interview you did in person, clarify what type of source it is.
  - **Example (direct quote from Zoom interview):** "It's really exciting that Archer gets to be at the center of this movement to get more girls involved in science and engineering and research," Robertson said in a Zoom interview.
  - **Example (direct quote from phone interview):** "It's really exciting that Archer gets to be at the center of this movement to get more girls involved in science and engineering and research," Robertson said in a phone interview.

- If your information is from an email or written statement, use "**wrote**" or "**according to,**" NOT said. Note: The Oracle does not allow email interviews unless there is no other way to get the information requested.
  - **Example (direct quote from email):** "It's really exciting that Archer gets to be at the center of this movement to get more girls involved in science and engineering and research," Robertson wrote in an email.
  - Example (**paraphrased information from email**): Archer's 2016-2017 student body consists of families from 75 different zip codes, Admissions Coordinator April Carletto wrote in an email.
  - **Example (information paraphrased from website):** Archer's 2016-2017 student body consists of families from 75 different zip codes, according to archer.org.

- Journalists go to the source whenever possible and avoid simply quoting from another journalist's article (after all, why would someone read your paraphrase when they could read the original story written by the person who did the interview?). In the rare instance that you do need to quote or paraphrase from a secondary source like this, however, you need to attribute that source clearly and hyperlink to it.
  - **Example (quote from article):** Dodgers pitcher Brandon McCarthy left the game due to a hip injury. "I need to have the body where I need it — mentally, physically, everything needs to be in line," he said in an interview with L.A. Times reporter Bill Shaikin.

- See 32-33 for examples of how to attribute photographs, images and infographics.

Editorials and Op-Eds

The editorial board will determine all editorial subject matter. The views stated in editorials represent that of the majority of the editorial board and will be signed "Oracle Editorial Board." Individual staff members may choose to write opinion pieces about any content. Signed op-eds, columns or reviews represent only the views of the author. Editors have the same freedom of speech as all writers, but they should consider their personal credibility as unbiased leaders of the Oracle when determining which issues to take a public stance on. The Oracle's guiding principles for opinion-writing are as follows (based on Chapter One in Fink's *Writing Opinion for Impact*):

- Remember that you are a reporter first. News reporters never write opinion pieces because it damages their credibility. Think carefully before writing an op-ed because you won't be able to report on the subject afterwards. Reach out to the EIC if you have questions.
- The primary purpose for opinion writing is to serve the public — primarily the students in the Archer community. Take a stance, but do so in their interest, not your own. Avoid conflicts of interest.
- Provide a forum — a marketplace of ideas — for your readers and larger community. Include space for a diverse range of perspectives and give voice to the voiceless.
- Be a watchdog: monitor those in positions of power to comment on and, if necessary, criticize their use of power.
- Present facts honestly and fully and draw fair conclusions from the stated facts, basing them on the quantity and quality of evidence and your understanding of the public good. Never mislead the reader or misrepresent a situation or person.
- Inform and guide your readers to cause change in the public's interest.

Letters to the Editor

As an open forum for student expression, the Oracle encourages letter submissions to the Editor in Chief that deal with issues pertaining to student life, welcoming diverse outlooks that may stray from commonly accepted opinions.

- Letters to the editor should be submitted via the form on the Oracle's website. Letters must be signed with the contact information provided so authorship can be verified before publication. Anonymous submissions will not be accepted.
- Letters should not exceed 600 words.
- The editorial board reserves the right to omit letters it deems unfit for publication — letters that are libelous, obscene, invasive of another's privacy or that encourage physical disruption of school activities will not be published. The Oracle will not publish spam or advertisements that are submitted as letters to the editor.
- The editorial board reserves the right to make grammatical modifications or cut long letters to the 600 word limit without altering the message.
- The board will review each letter upon submission within 36 hours. The letter can only be published after the majority of the board agrees to publish.
- If a letter is controversial, the editorial board will discuss as a group and consider whether a 24-hour delay on publication of the letter would be helpful.
- The byline will state the name of the writer. The headline will state "Letter to the Editor:_____" and the featured image will be a stock photo of "Letter to the Editor."
- The editorial board will contact the author if the board has concerns regarding clarity, accuracy or fact-checking.

- All letters to the editor become the property of the Oracle upon receipt.
- If the board receives many letters on the same subject, it will publish a representative sample (i.e. one of the submitted articles that will be determined by the Editorial Board).

Online Comments

As part of Archer's active and engaged community, the Editorial Board welcomes reader comments and debate and encourages community members to take ownership of their opinions by using their names when commenting. However, in order to ensure a diverse range of opinions, the editorial board does allow anonymous comments on articles as long as the perspective cannot be obtained elsewhere, and they are respectful and relevant. We do require a valid, verified email address, which will not be displayed, but will be used to confirm your comments. Because we are a 6-12 school, the Editorial Board reserves the right to omit profanity and content that we deem inappropriate for our audience. We do not publish comments that serve primarily as an advertisement or to promote a specific product. Comments are moderated and may be edited in accordance with the Oracle's profanity policy, but the Editorial Board will not change the intent or message of comments. They will appear once approved.

Photographs, Illustrations and Infographics

- Featured images should always be high quality photographs (or approved photo illustrations) except in special circumstances, which must be approved ahead of time by the EIC. Our general policy is to not use infographics for featured images, but illustrations are fine.
- All photographers will record the who, what, where, when, why and how of all photographs taken (individuals, places, things).
- Edit digital photographs minimally; limit changes to basic cropping (without removing important context), adjusting levels (brightness, contrast, white balance, etc.) and minor color adjustments.
- Artwork represents the interpretations of the artist, not necessarily the publication staff or The Archer School for Girls.
- The Oracle will not publish any photographs or illustrations that ridicule, demean or misleadingly represent any individual or group.

Writing Captions

In addition to having a photo credit (photo attribution), each image must be fully captioned following journalistic guidelines.

1. Identification sentence (explains the 5Ws in this picture; names all visible people; written in present tense). Do not assume what is happening – ask! Be sure you have verified the correct names of anyone pictured in the photo.
2. Secondary sentence (adds information that is not obvious in the photo and is written in the past tense) AND/OR
3. A quote from one of the people pictured to capture the tone or point of the image.

Examples:

Photo credit: Lola Lamberg

Seniors Mackenzie Turner, Lola Lamberg, Amelia Stone and Ava Salomon pose for a photo at the rose backdropped photo booth on May 1 during the evening senior prom celebration. The booth, set-up at Will Geer Theatricum Botanicum, "created a really fun atmosphere that everyone was enjoying.. and it was a place to connect," fitness and wellness teacher Dani LeNoir said.

Photo credit: Rio Hundley

Seniors gather on the front field of Archer to put up the annual Maypole. Senior Rio Hundley described the event as "refreshing." "We finally got to participate in a tradition and really bond as a class in person," Hundley said.

Group Photo Captions (aka "Gang Captions")

Gang captions are used to identify a large group of people in a photo when further context for the picture is not needed. These captions are used for group and team photos only. There is a specific format for these types of captions.

GROUP NAME. First Last Name, First Last Name, First Last Name and First Last Name. ROW 2: First Last Name, First Last Name, First Last Name and First Last Name. ROW 3: First Last Name, First Last Name, First Last Name, First Last Name, and First Last Name. BACK: First Last Name First Last Name, First Last Name, First Last Name and First Last Name.

Rules:
- GROUP NAME = All caps followed by a period. Use the formal group name rather than an acronym (i.e. "Black Student Union" rather than "BSU").
- Identify rows front to back and left to right. Remember to check the "your name in the yearbook" doc to see how students would like to be identified if you don't have their names on the clipboard, and include their graduation year in parentheses after the name. If someone in the group has a special title, include it before the student's name: i.e. Editor-in-Chief Anna Brodsky ('20).
- Don't write "Row 1"; it's assumed. List each name with a comma until the final "and" (no Oxford comma) and put a period after the final name. If more than two rows, start with "ROW 2:" If only two rows, use "BACK." Follow the same format. The last row should always be called "BACK" rather than numbering it.
- After the final period, write anyone "not pictured" as follows: NOT PICTURED: First name last name, first name last name and First name last name.
- Identify teachers by including "Faculty Adviser" before their name (ex: Faculty Adviser Kristin Taylor)

ORACLE STAFF. Editor-in-Chief Anna Brodsky ('20), News and Features Editor Ella Frey ('19) and Multimedia Editor Allie Worchell ('20). ROW 2: Rio Hundley ('21), Amelia Stone ('21), Chloe Richards ('21), Celeste Ramirez ('21) and Sports Editor Molly Goldberg ('20). BACK: Thea Leimone ('22), Culture Editor Elizabeth Haltrecht ('19), Emma London ('21), Voices Editor Lola Lamberg ('21) and Managing Editor Nicole Rosenberg ('20). NOT PICTURED: Faculty Adviser Kristin Taylor Photo by yearbook staff.

Attributing Images
- **For photos with a known photographer:** Write the caption as usual in the caption box. You do not need to put the photographer's name in the caption. Instead, in the "Photographer" field, enter the photographer's first and last name. That field will automatically generate the phrase "Image Source" before the name so we can attribute illustrations as well as photographs. DO NOT include graduation year in these attributions so your stories and photos remain linked under a single byline. Ex. Image Source: Ella Frey
    - Note: It is imperative to attribute the correct first and last names of sources who took outside images and very important to confirm who exactly took these pictures. Communications photos can be labeled "Archer Communications."
    - If you are using an image from someone outside of the Archer community, at the end of the caption, write "Photo used with permission from ___" after the caption in that box. The photographer's name should also be listed in the "Photographer" field.

- **For photos provided by a source who doesn't know the photographer:** If a photo is provided by the source but the photographer is unknown, include "Photo used with permission from ___" after the caption in that box. The contributor's name should also be listed in the "Photographer" field. Make sure the person providing the photo actually has permission to use the image.

- **For manipulated photos:** Manipulated photos will be treated as artwork and must be clearly labeled in the caption box. For example, imagine someone took a photo of a soccer player and then used a filter to make it look more like a drawing. The caption would be something like this: "Stretching to reach the ball, senior Yasmeen Namazie blocks a pass. Archer won this game against Milken 2-1." Photo Illustration by Syd Stone. Put the photographer's name in the Photographer field if it's different from the person who did the manipulation. If the person who took the photo also manipulated it, you can put "Photo illustration by ___" in the photographer box.

- **For Original Student Art:** Student art created for an article must be clearly labeled in the caption. The artist's name should also be listed in the "Photographer" field in the Media Library as "Illustration done by…"
    Ex. This digital illustration by junior Leslie Castaneda shows the diversity of skin colors in communities of color. List the artist's name in the "Photographer" field, as well.

- **For Creative Commons images**: As you know, **we try to avoid using stock images.** In the rare situation where you need to use an image licensed for reuse through Creative Commons, refer to this guideline for attribution. At the end of a description of the image, put the following: "Title of Photo" by Photographer Name is licensed under CC BY 2.0. In the "Photographer" field in the media library, write just the creator's name like this: Name, licensed under CC BY 2.0 [or whatever version of CC license they are using].

- **For an image from a .gov website:** Identify what is happening in the image in the caption box. In the "Photographer" field. Include the photographer's name (if listed) and the complete .gov URL.

- **For infographics:** If the article-writer created the infographic, you do not need to add attribution. If someone beside the person in the byline created it, incorporate that attribution at the bottom of the infographic. Ex. Infographic created by First Name Last Name. If you are using an infographic as a featured image or photo, put the creator's name in the "Photographer" field.

- **For videos:** If the article-writer created the video, list that name in the "Video Credit Line" in Wordpress. If someone other than the article-writer created the video or if the article-writer collaborated with someone else on the video, both creators should be listed in the "Video Credit Line" in Wordpress.

- **For edited photos:** If the selected featured image is one that has been edited or illustrated, credit the photographer and illustrator as follows: "**Original Photo:** Presley Sacavitch ('22), **Illustrated by:** Sara Morris ('22)"

WordPress Media Library Guidelines:
Keep the media library lean and organized. Remember that every image you upload takes up more bandwidth and server space, so it's crucial for you to be mindful about your images.
- Do the following in **Photoshop BEFORE uploading to the media library** on our website:
  a. Adjust levels and white balance.
  b. Crop the image for better photo composition.
  c. Resize the image to 3 x 2 ratio.
  d. After completing these three steps, export the image as a jpg to your desktop, highest quality, and then upload to the Media Library. Add your title, caption and photographer. Every image must be titled and have a complete photo caption (including photographer) saved in the media library. Your title should clearly identify the image.
  e. Remember: copy the caption also into the "alternative text" box, too; this allows visually impaired people to hear the caption read aloud.
- Upload only ONE copy of the image you are using. If your first upload doesn't work, DELETE it before uploading another version of it.

Controversial Issues
- Student reporters will not publish articles for the sole purpose of being provocative and creating controversy. However, the Oracle will not avoid important stories for the sole reason that their topic is controversial in nature. Any reporter writing about a controversial issue will follow these guidelines:

- All sides of the issue will be presented and reviewed so as to refrain from any bias. If one party declines to comment, the author should specify that in the article.
- In news, all sides of a school, community, city, state, national or international political issue will be presented factually so as to inform rather than promote or endorse.
- In cases of undesirable public record news such as student, staff or faculty crimes or lawsuits, the editorial board will first determine its newsworthiness and, if editors decide to publish, they will endeavor to publish the facts correctly, explain the issues and put a stop to any speculative gossip that inevitably develops.
- The Oracle will not publish stories involving private school matters such as suspensions unless the information becomes a matter of public record and the school population's right to know supersedes the individual's right to privacy.

The editorial board will decide when a controversial issue is newsworthy. They will read any controversial article and consider the following 10 questions before publication in the paper:

1. What do I know? What do I need to know? Can I obtain that information?
2. What is my journalistic purpose (what makes this story newsworthy)?
3. What are my ethical concerns?
4. What organizational policies and professional guidelines should I consider?
5. How can I include people with different perspectives and ideas in the decision-making process?
6. Who are the stakeholders — those affected by my decision? What are their motivations? Which are legitimate?
7. What if the roles were reversed? How would I feel if I were in the shoes of one of the stakeholders?
8. What are the possible consequences of my actions? Short term? Long term?
9. What are my alternatives to maximize my truth-telling responsibility and minimize harm?
10. Can I clearly and fully justify my thinking and my decision? To my colleagues? To the stakeholders? To the public? Is this a battle worth fighting?

"Put Up" Guidelines

JEA Scholastic Press Rights recommends taking the following 11 steps before publishing any article to avoid legitimate takedown requests:

1. Independently confirm information to be used for accuracy, context, perspective, truth and coherence.
2. Determine whether sources used are credible and representative of diverse and knowledgeable viewpoints.
3. Clearly attribute all information as needed for clarity and authority.
4. Avoid anonymous sources except in situations where they are the best source and identities need protection.
5. Determine whether sources used have conflicts of interest.
6. Ensure your information has gone through a vetting process with editors.
7. If using teens or young people as sources, do so with an understanding of minimizing harm as well as publishing truthful and contextual information.
8. If using social media sources, be sure information is attributed, accurate, in context and used legally and ethically.
9. Train and background reporters in legal and ethical issues.
10. If using crowd generated content, clearly indicate the source and ensure its credibility.

11. Be skeptical of any information you cannot verify.

Anonymous Sources

Promises of anonymity shall be given infrequently and with great care; anonymous sources are a last resort. When at all possible, a reporter should seek a source willing to go on the record on even controversial subjects. Promises of anonymity and use of anonymous sources can lead to publication of inaccurate information that would harm the Oracle's credibility and undermine its message. Editors must analyze the motives of those sources seeking anonymity, as well as the staff members' motives for promising anonymity or using anonymous sources. Editors shall clarify in writing the conditions under which promises of anonymity are given. Once made, they must be kept by any member of the staff aware of the source's identity, which may mean facing disciplinary action in extreme situations. Circumstances warranting use of anonymous sources should be discussed with the EIC and adviser, but the reporter should not disclose the identity of the source to the adviser, who is subject to different laws and employment obligations.

Promises of anonymity shall be given only for the following reasons (as per veteran adviser H.L. Hall):
a. There is no other way to get the information. If there is no other way, then verify the information with a second source. Don't rely on one person's word. Be sure both sources are reliable ones.
b. The information is important enough to the reader to warrant anonymity.
c. The source's privacy and/or reputation requires protection.
d. The source needs to be protected from academic, psychological or physical harm. It's possible a student's grade might be in jeopardy if he/she goes on the record. It's also possible a teacher's job might be in jeopardy if he/she doesn't remain anonymous.
e. The source's relatives require protection.

Profanity
- The Oracle will not print unnecessary profanity and follows the AP Stylebook's recommendation: "Do not use them in stories unless they are part of direct quotations and there is a compelling reason for them…. If the obscenity involved is particularly offensive but the story requires making clear what the word was, replace the letters of the offensive word with hyphens, using only an initial letter: s---."
- The editorial board will make the decision on whether content is considered profane or whether it is a cultural or non-vulgar slang term.
- When considering a rare use of profanity, the editorial board will consider the following four questions:
  a. Is the language necessary to communicate the message of the story? Is it going to divert attention?
  b. Is the word being used for shock value without journalistic justification?
  c. Is there a less offensive word or less offensive language to communicate the same idea?
  d. Is the fight worth waging?
- The editorial board reserves the right to edit quotes from unnecessary profanity or unnecessarily offensive words; quotes that have been edited will be noted accordingly when published.
- Any edited quote will be read back to the source prior to publishing and sources will have a chance to make changes.

- Staff interviewers have the right to ask a source when necessary to repeat a quote without the use of profane language.

Deaths
General Policies
- Any current student, staff member, faculty member or administrator who dies during the year will be recognized in the Oracle.
- In the case of multiple deaths, names will be listed in alphabetical order.
- The Oracle will first obtain permission from the deceased's family before publishing any information regarding the cause of death. (Add policies about suicide?)
- The Oracle will verify all facts with the family of the deceased. The writer will start reaching out by email and follow up with a scheduled phone call.
- The Oracle will publish a maximum of two Letters to the Editor regarding a deceased member of the community. In selecting the two letters, the Editorial Board should publish those letters that best represent the sentiments expressed in the letters as a whole.

Format
- Obituaries must remain within 300 to 400 words
- The featured image may be provided by the family or friends of the deceased. This image may express the character of the deceased, this may be a painting, photograph, etc.
- One headshot will be included in the obituary. This photograph may be chosen by the family of the deceased. It may be either a yearbook photo or a photo provided by the family. All photos must be of a similar size.
- The obituary will be signed "Oracle Staff."

Errors and Corrections
- Concerns about errors in the Oracle may be submitted to oracle@archer.org.
- The editorial board reserves the right to determine whether, in fact, an error has been made through additional research and fact-checking. The EIC will send an initial email to the complainant to let him/her know that the board is looking into the complaint and will get back to him/her as soon as possible with next steps.
- Significant errors will be determined by the editorial board. When a significant error is made in a published article, the author of the article in question must add a "Correction Statement." This statement will appear at the bottom of the article in italics followed by "Correction:" and the statement, which will acknowledge the error and describe the correction made. The correction statement must include the date and time the change was made.
  - The standard form for correction statements is as follows: *Correction Statement (Month Day, Year, Time): A previous version of this article stated that ____. The article has been revised to reflect that ____.*
- The EIC will contact the complainant to let him/her know the decision the board reached. If the board agrees an error has been made, the EIC will apologize on behalf of the Oracle and explain how we plan to make amends through the correction statement. If the board determines further action is required to make amends (such as taking down an article that has significant flaws), the EIC will share this plan as well. If the board determines that an error has not been made, the EIC will explain

the reasoning behind this decision and offer the complainant the option to write a Letter to the Editor voicing his/her opinion.

● Minor errors to published digital stories such as punctuation or spelling will be corrected by the editor or author; no correction statement is necessary.

Takedown Requests

The Oracle is a digital news source, but it is still part of Archer's historical record. The Oracle's primary purpose is to publish the truth, as best we can determine it, and be an accurate record of events and issues from students' perspectives. Writers and editors use the 11 "Put Up" steps before publication to ensure the validity, newsworthiness and ethics of each article. For these reasons, the editorial board will not take down past articles except in extraordinary circumstances.

If someone requests a takedown, the board will consider the following questions and actions:

● Does the article contain libel, inaccurate information, unwarranted invasion of privacy, obscenity or copyright infringement? If so, the editor-in-chief will remove this unprotected speech and add a corrections statement at the end of the article, as per the "Regarding Errors" policy. If, after careful investigation and discussion, the editorial board determines that the article is too heavily saturated with this unprotected speech to maintain, the board may decide to take the article down entirely. The board must come to consensus to make this decision.

● Does the article harm the requester so significantly that it outweighs all other factors? The editorial board will investigate this claim and weigh it against the value of an unaltered historical record. The board must come to consensus before taking down an article for this reason.

● If the content does not meet either of these extraordinary circumstances, it will remain posted.

Regardless of the outcome, the Editor-in-Chief will respond in writing to the request explaining the board's action(s) and rationale for the final decision.

Amendments to the Staff Manual

The editorial board reviews and updates the staff manual every summer before the new school year. Should an individual have an issue with something in this manual and wish to amend it during some other time of the year, they must adhere to the following process:

● Create a proposal (can be verbal or written) to share with the editorial board as to why they feel the change should be made

● Proposals must include the change they wish to make and why they feel it is necessary.

● Put the proposal to a vote: A two-thirds majority of the editorial board must be in support of the amendment in order for it to be ratified.

Editing Checklist: News and Feature Writing for All Sections
Based in part on Harrower's "Deadline Checklist" in *Inside Reporting, Third Edition*.

Wordpress Basics:
❏ Is your story categorized correctly in the proper section and saved as a draft? If it belongs in a subsection, have you checked both categories (such as "Culture" and "Arts & Entertainment" for a movie review)?
❏ Have you added simple, clear tags (proofread carefully) to your story to make it easily searchable? Remember, we don't use names as tags.
❏ Is your headline in the proper format? Is it effective? Does it clearly connect to the story?
❏ Have you effectively placed all photos, videos and infographics?
❏ Have you set a featured image and inserted its caption correctly?
❏ Is all media content free from copyright infringement? Have you always tried to use student-generated content?
❏ Do all photos include a photo caption following our standard format? Have you identified the photographer or illustrator? If the source of your photo comes from any other source, have you gotten permission and then linked to its URL and included the phrase "used with permission" or "courtesy of"?
❏ Is information accurately hyperlinked to a reliable and credible source?
❏ Once the section editor feels that the piece is ready for the EiC, label the story under "Pending Review" in WordPress.

Impact:
❏ Does your story have substance? Is it worth publishing? Does it add to our community? Is it appropriate for our entire readership? If not, is there a warning that it may be inappropriate for certain members of the community?
❏ What will be the impact of this story? Is it ethical? Is there anything controversial in the story that you should discuss with the editorial board?
❏ Does the story convey why readers should care? The story's news value should be clear through your reporting.
❏ Have you considered how your sources will react to this story? Are you sure you haven't violated their trust or embarrassed them? Have you conveyed their thoughts and views accurately?

Visual Storytelling:
❏ When appropriate, have you used sidebars or alternative story forms effectively to bolster your story? Have you selected the best infographic for the information you want to convey?
❏ Do your photographs and infographics tell a clear story? If someone looked only at your visuals, would she have an accurate idea of the thrust and tone of your story?
❏ Do your visuals demonstrate your understanding of basic photojournalism guidelines (rule of thirds, fill the frame, etc.)?
❏ Are your visuals easy to see? Are they a good resolution? For more detailed infographics, can the reader click on the image to see a larger version?

Accuracy:
❏ Have you verified all facts in the story, including spelling (especially of names), dates, job titles and addresses?

❏ Do all quotes accurately capture what was said and convey what was meant? Are they clearly and correctly attributed? If the quote comes from any source besides a face-to-face interview, is that clear in your attribution? For example, you must clearly state if the quote comes from an email or phone interview.

❏ Have you included attribution to other sources ("in an interview conducted by the New York Times…" or "according to Archer Athletics' Facebook page…") and inserted hyperlinks to these sources when possible?

❏ Have you personally tested all phone numbers, website links and email addresses?

❏ Have you checked the accuracy of facts or claims made by sources in your story? If you got conflicting claims, have you attempted to reconcile them?

❏ Have you tested all the math in your story? Do the numbers and percentages correctly add up? Does your infographic accurately represent your data?

❏ For stories about complex topics, have you tried running it by an expert in the field? For example, have you checked with a science teacher if you're writing about scientific advancement?

❏ In reviewing all the sources of information you used, are you sure that everything is reliable and up-to-date?

Fairness and Balance:
❏ Is the story fair? Are all sides of the issue represented?

❏ Have you given all of your sources a chance to respond to any negative charges or opinions?

❏ Is your story free from bias? Can readers clearly tell fact from opinion in your story? Are you sure your story doesn't disguise opinion as fact?

❏ Have you clearly labeled any facts that may be in dispute?

❏ Is there a diversity of voices quoted in the story? Have you avoided interviewing anyone who is a close friend or relative?

Writing Style:
❏ Is your lead effective? Have you selected an approach that best matches the story you are telling?

❏ Does the lead or nut graf clearly state what the story is about and include the 5 Ws?

❏ Does the story match the lead? Does it back up what the lead says the story will be about?

❏ Have you explained complex information in a way that anyone at school can understand? Do you personally understand everything in the story?

❏ If appropriate, does the story give readers enough tools to get involved (phone numbers, websites, event information, organizations to contact, etc.)?

❏ Have you cut out all redundancies? Are you only using the best, most substantive quotes?

❏ Have you clearly sourced and attributed all information that isn't general knowledge?

❏ Have you read your story out loud and weeded out wordiness, unnecessary adjectives and adverbs and unclear phrasing?

❏ Are sentences written in the active voice with strong verbs?

❏ Are sentences and paragraphs short enough? Have you started a new graf any time you change speakers?

❏ Have you removed all clichés, jargon and inappropriate slang?

❏ Have you proofread carefully for punctuation, spelling, grammar, mechanics and use of AP style? (Remember: if you aren't sure about an AP style rule, look it up!)

❏ Have you kept yourself out of the story?

Editing Checklist: Opinion Writing

Based in part on Harrower's "Deadline Checklist" and "Column Writing Criteria" in *Inside Reporting, Third Edition* and Howard Spanogle "What Should a Column Do?" in C:JET, 2000.

Wordpress Basics:

❏ Is your story categorized correctly in the proper section and saved as a draft? If it belongs in a subsection, have you checked both categories (ex. "Lifestyle" and "Books" for a book review)?

❏ Have you added multiple tags (proofread carefully) to your story to make it easily searchable?

❏ Is your headline in the proper format? Is it effective? Does it clearly connect to the story?

❏ Have you effectively placed all photos, videos and infographics?

❏ Have you set a featured image and inserted its caption correctly?

❏ Is all media content free from copyright infringement? Have you always tried to use student-generated content?

❏ Do all photos include a photo caption following our standard format? Have you identified the photographer or art creator (including graduation year, if a student)? If the source of your photo comes from any other source, have you linked to its URL and included the phrase "used with permission" if applicable?

❏ Is information accurately hyperlinked to a reliable and credible source?

Content and Stance:

❏ Does your column or review have substance? Is it appropriate for our entire readership? If you are reviewing something only appropriate for older students, have you made that clear in your review?

❏ Do you take a clear position on the issue or on what you are reviewing?

❏ Does your review or column demonstrate your expertise? Have you supported your opinion with specific examples, details and facts? Have you verified all facts?

❏ Have you acknowledged opposing views and rebutted them effectively?

❏ Is your critique honest, but fair?

❏ Do all quotes accurately capture what was said and convey what was meant? Are they clearly and correctly attributed? If the quote comes from any source besides a face-to-face interview, is that clear in your attribution? For example, you must clearly state if the quote comes from an email or phone interview.

❏ Have you included attribution to other sources ("in an interview conducted by the New York Times…" or "according to Archer Athletics' Facebook page…") and inserted hyperlinks to these sources when possible?

❏ In reviewing all the sources of information you used, are you sure that everything is reliable and up-to-date?

❏ Have you personally tested all phone numbers, website links and email addresses?

❏ **For Columns/Op-Eds:** Have you ended your column with a call to action or "punchline" to bring your opinion home for your reader?

❏ **For Reviews**: Have you completed the starred review criteria underneath your story using our established rating system? (If you aren't sure what the rating criteria are, please see the Lifestyle editor.) Do your stars match what you said in the review? If not, go back and adjust.

Writing Style:

❏ Is your lead effective? Is it clear, concise and compelling? For columns and editorials, is your stance clear early in the piece? For reviews, is your topic immediately evident?

❏ Does your opinion piece demonstrate your unique "voice"? Is it dynamic and compelling? Have you used rhetorical tools effectively to persuade your reader to your point of view?

❏ Have you explained complex information in a way that anyone at school can understand? Do you personally understand everything in the story?

❏ If appropriate, does the story give readers enough tools to get involved (phone numbers, websites, event information, organizations to contact, etc.)?

❏ Have you cut out all redundancies? Are you only using the best, most substantive quotes?

❏ Have you clearly sourced and attributed all information that isn't general knowledge?

❏ Have you read your story out loud and weeded out wordiness and unclear phrasing?

❏ Are sentences written in the active voice with strong verbs?

❏ Are sentences and paragraphs short enough? Have you started a new graf any time you change speakers?

❏ Have you removed all clichés, jargon and inappropriate slang except in direct quotes?

❏ Have you proofread carefully for punctuation, spelling, grammar, mechanics and use of AP style? (Remember: if you aren't sure about an AP style rule, look it up!)

Visual Storytelling:

❏ **For reviews**, have you included a sidebar providing necessary information about whatever you are reviewing (for example: dates, prices, location)? Have you selected the best infographic for the information you want to convey?

❏ Do your photographs and infographics tell a clear story? If someone looked only at your visuals, would she have an accurate idea of the thrust and tone of your story?

❏ Do your visuals demonstrate your understanding of basic photojournalism guidelines (rule of thirds, fill the frame, etc.)?

❏ Are your visuals easy to see? Are they a good resolution? For more detailed infographics, can the reader click on the image to see a larger version?

Part 3: Specific Staff Policies

Oracle Roles

Editor-in-Chief: The editor-in-chief (EiC) is primarily in charge of the overall content, quality and credibility of all Oracle publications as guided by the Oracle's staff manual and editorial policy. The EiC oversees the entire Oracle staff and leads editorial board meetings, which will occur once per rotation.The EiC is also an ethical leader, thoughtfully addressing ethical issues through the Archer Publications Code of Ethics. The EiC works closely with the journalism adviser to plan classes, write articles, review submissions, copy-edit in AP style and fill in wherever needed. The EiC works alongside The Oracle's social media manager in increasing the overall readership through social media, email and live announcements; they also regularly review the paper as a whole to ensure we are covering a diverse range of stories and are avoiding bias. They ensure an editorial is published every month, whether delegating to other editors or writing it herself. They review and approve pending comments on the website and model good journalism in their own writing. Although the EIC does not write as often as other members of the staff, they will still report and write as possible. If any conflict or concern arises with the administration or the larger community, the EiC is primarily responsible for addressing the situation. The EiC must be willing to practice and hone their journalism and editing skills over the summer and help plan the editorial board retreat and meetings with the adviser. The EIC should not have another major commitment or leadership position, as this position will involve underline considerable work outside of the normal class periods. Successful candidates will be very detail-oriented, AP Style and punctuation ninjas, responsive to emails, GroupMe messages and Trello comments, proactive, and organized with solid conflict-resolution skills and a true love of the Oracle, willing to make it their #1 priority.

News Editor: The News Editor [NE] is a member of the editorial board and attends weekly board meetings. As members of the board, they are ethical leaders, thoughtfully addressing ethical issues through the SPJ Code of Ethics and Archer's Honor Code. They oversee the coverage and quality of news and features about the Archer community (other than sports and culture news) and newsworthy, localized stories based on community, national and global news as guided by the Oracle's staff manual and editorial policy. The NE works closely with the staffers, the editor-in-chief, and school leaders to ensure that the section has ample relevant, well-written articles about Archer's programs and events and the larger global community with a local angle). The NE is in charge of keeping the breaking news ticker on the Oracle updated and relevant and has primary oversight of the Oracle Twitter account. They — along with the EiC — take the lead when big news breaks. They will review and update the breaking news guidelines in the staff manual each semester. They assign writers to articles, coach them through the process (including audiovisual elements, with help from the MME) and write regularly; if articles are missing in the end, they takes responsibility for replacing them. They ensure all articles are uploaded by deadline and copy-edit each article in AP style before notifying the EiC that they are ready for final approval. Given that the news category is all about timeliness, the news editor must be a strong, fast writer who can write or assist reporters to get articles up fast. Successful candidates will be very detail-oriented, responsive to emails, GroupMe messages and Trello comments, proactive, organized and knowledgeable about current events with a passion for the news. The NE must be willing to practice and hone their news reporting and AP Style skills over the summer.

Features Editor: The Features Editor [FE] is a member of the editorial board and attends weekly board meetings. As members of the board, they are ethical leaders, thoughtfully addressing ethical issues through the SPJ Code of Ethics and Archer's Honor Code. The FE oversees quality coverage of features (other than sports and culture features, which are overseen by those section editors) including in-depth articles about important local, national and global events and timeless topics, such as homelessness or the impact of coronavirus, and profiles people in and out of the Archer community. The key to this position is attention to detail, fact-checking and digging deeply to help reporters craft meaningful, in-depth pieces — not settling for superficial sources, but willing to seek out experts and research and use infographics to explain complex topics. The FE assigns writers to articles, coaches them through the process (including audiovisual elements, with help from the MME) and writes regularly; if articles are missing in the end, they take responsibility for replacing them. The FE ensures all articles are uploaded by deadline and copy-edits each article in AP style before notifying the EiC they are ready for final approval. Successful candidates will be tenacious, detail-oriented, responsive to emails, GroupMe messages and Trello comments and employ a creative approach to find interesting angles for articles. Since the FE does not have as many articles as the NE, they also take the lead on writing the weekly Oracle newsletter, which goes out every Monday morning, to feature Oracle reporters' work. The FE must be willing to practice and hone their feature-writing and AP Style skills over the summer.

Culture Editor: The Culture Editor [CE] is a member of the editorial board and attends weekly board meetings. As members of the board, they are ethical leaders, thoughtfully addressing ethical issues through the SPJ Code of Ethics and Archer's Honor Code. The CE oversees the Oracle's quality coverage of arts and entertainment (theater, dance, music, film), fashion and food—primarily at Archer but also outside our community with a local angle as guided by the Oracle's staff manual and editorial policy. The CE works closely with the editor-in-chief and school leaders to ensure this section has ample relevant, well-written articles: culture news, features, reviews, profiles, and commentary. The CE assigns writers to articles, coaches them through the process (including audiovisual elements, with help from the MME) and writes regularly; if articles are missing in the end, they take responsibility for replacing them. The CE ensures all articles are uploaded by deadline and copy-edits each article in AP style before notifying the editor-in-chief that they are ready for final approval. Successful candidates will be passionate about popular culture, current on arts and entertainment, responsive to emails, GroupMe messages and Trello comments and genuinely interested in spotlighting Archer's artists and technicians. Because this category uniquely spans both unbiased reporting on the arts and opinion-writing through reviews, the CE must be equally fluent in news reporting and review-writing, willing to practice and hone those skills and AP Style over the summer.

Sports Editor: The Sports Editor [SE] is a member of the editorial board and attends weekly board meetings. As members of the board, they are ethical leaders, thoughtfully addressing ethical issues through the SPJ Code of Ethics and Archer's Honor Code. The SE oversees the coverage and quality of sports articles (news, features and commentary) as guided by the Oracle's staff manual and editorial policy. The SE works closely with sports beat writers, the editor-in-chief and athletics directors and coaches to ensure the sports section has ample relevant, well-written sports articles — primarily at Archer, but also sometimes outside our community with a local angle. The SE is responsible for the sports category's "Schedule and Scores" section, ensuring rosters, games and scores have been inputted in a timely fashion. The SE assigns writers to articles, coaches them through the process (including

audiovisual elements, with help from the MME) and writes regularly; if articles are missing in the end, they take responsibility for replacing them. The SE ensures all articles are uploaded by deadline and copy-edits each article in AP style before notifying the editor-in-chief that they are ready for final approval. Successful candidates will be passionate about sports and genuinely interested in spotlighting Archer's athletes. Because our athletics director provides regular press releases, photos and Archer Athletics news, the SE must be very detail-oriented, responsive to emails, GroupMe messages and Trello comments, and have an effective system to manage and save relevant emails and be proactive about communicating with the director and coaches. The SE must be willing to practice and hone their sports reporting and AP Style skills over the summer.

Voices Editor: The Voices Editor (VE) is a member of the editorial board and attends weekly board meetings. As members of the board, they are ethical leaders, thoughtfully addressing ethical issues through the SPJ Code of Ethics and Archer's Honor Code. The VE oversees all subcategories in this section: Opinion (op-eds, editorials), columnists (regular columns from that year's columnists), whimsies (humor-writing, listicles, etc.) and letters to the editor as guided by the Oracle's staff manual and editorial policy. The VE works closely with columnists, contributing writers, Oracle reporters and the editor-in-chief to ensure this section has a variety of editorials/op-eds (on diverse topics and from diverse perspectives), commentary and whimsical submissions. The VE coaches staffers through the process of writing strong opinion pieces (including audiovisual elements, with help from the MME) and writes regularly; if articles are missing in the end, they take responsibility for replacing them. The VE copy-edits each written article in AP style before notifying the editor-in-chief that they are ready for final approval. Successful candidates will be very detail-oriented, responsive to emails, GroupMe messages and Trello comments, proactive, and organized with solid conflict-resolution skills — they must be able to work with outside columnists to provide timely feedback and keep them on schedule. The VE should also have a sense of fun, using the Whimsies section to pull in readers who might not usually read the Oracle. The VE must be willing to practice and hone their opinion journalism and AP Style skills over the summer.

Multimedia Editor: The Multimedia Editor (MME) is a member of the editorial board and attends weekly board meetings. As members of the board, they are ethical leaders, thoughtfully addressing ethical issues through the SPJ Code of Ethics and Archer's Honor Code. The MME's primary purpose is to increase the quantity and quality of multimedia elements in stories — audio and video — as guided by the Oracle's staff manual and editorial policy. The ME oversees any Oracle podcasts and works closely with all Oracle staffers and the editor-in-chief to ensure students have the tools necessary to integrate appropriate, effective audio/video within their stories, willing to Google and learn any tools they need. In addition to helping writers with their own audio/video elements, the MME also produces her own multimedia content, whether in partnership with a writer or as a standalone story. The MME takes the lead on Oracle social media accounts and adheres to all guidelines for social media laid out in the staff manual. Successful candidates will be passionate about multimedia journalism, responsive to emails, GroupMe messages and Trello comments and genuinely interested in helping Oracle staffers use multimedia to enhance their reporting. The MME must be willing to practice and hone their multimedia journalism and AP Style skills over the summer.

Additional Editorial Board Responsibilities:
The Editorial Board, led by the EIC, collaborates to write regular editorials for the Oracle, which demonstrate editorial leadership on issues relevant to the student body. The Board is also responsible for Oracle promotion and social media: the @ArcherOracle Twitter account, Oracle Facebook page and Oracle Snapchat. All social media posts created by staff members must be approved by an editor before being published. They adhere to all guidelines for social media laid out in the staff manual. Features Editor sends out an email to the community every Monday morning with links to the latest published Oracle articles from the oracle@archer.org email address.

Staff Writers
Staff writers are current members of the journalism class who do not hold editorial roles. In addition to their assigned beats, staff writers may choose or be assigned to write for any section of the Oracle. Staff writers are integral members of the Oracle and are encouraged to take initiative and go beyond the minimum requirements. Staff writers may work independently with student photographers and videographers to get multimedia content for stories.

Contributors
 Contributing writers and photographers may or may not have taken the Intro to Journalism class. If they have not, they must come to training to learn basic journalistic skills and expectations and to learn how to use our WordPress site. The Oracle primarily uses contributing writers in the Culture and Voices sections for reviews, op-eds and commentary to avoid issues with timeliness.

Faculty Adviser
While the editorial board retains control over content and publication, the adviser acts as a trusted professional to advise and facilitate this process. See "Role of the Adviser" in section two for a complete description of the adviser's role and responsibilities.

Oracle Reporter Responsibilities
All members of the journalism class are responsible for content creation for the Oracle. In addition to their assigned beats, staff reporters may pitch or be assigned to write for any section of the Oracle. All reporters (with the exception of the EiC) produce at least one independent article in addition to sports and news team coverage each month. Although they may work in teams, staff members are responsible for research, interviews, fact-checking, writing, editing, photography, captioning, infographic creation (when applicable) and headline creation for all of their own stories.

Sports Beats
All Oracle staff members have an assigned sports beat to ensure balanced coverage. To avoid conflicts of interest, reporters should have no personal connection to that team.
- Make initial contact with the athletic director, the coach and the team captains.
- Establish a relationship and let them know that you are their point person when news arises.
- Check in with them regularly and keep the sports scoreboard up-to-date.
- When something newsworthy happens, discuss the event with the sports editor and determine the best approach for coverage.
- Write the article in a timely fashion; news briefs should be completed within 24 hours so they can be posted as soon as possible. Spotlights and features are due on your assigned deadline. You are

responsible for providing visuals (photographs/infographics) to accompany the article; avoid stock footage or pictures taken by adult photographers; this is a student news site, so all content should be generated by students.

- Beat writers should not write opinion pieces about sports teams they cover; this would undermine their credibility as unbiased reporters.
- If sports are not happening normally due to unforeseen circumstances, such as the pandemic, the Sports Editor will work with the EIC to develop alternatives for coverage.

News Teams

The Oracle staff has a responsibility to post timely news coverage to serve the community. The staff will work in news teams who will be assigned one week in a rotation when they will be responsible for news coverage. During that week, your news team is responsible for:

- Keeping your eyes and ears open for NEWS happening in the Archer community and gathering facts/quotes about those news events. News can happen in many areas, from arts and sports to student life and localized coverage of national and global news.
- You must publish a minimum of two news briefs during this week (not opinion or review-writing, but these can be news pieces in any section). One story must be published by Wednesday; the other must be published by Saturday.
- **Create a Trello card for each story** and follow regular procedures (checklist, tag your editor, etc.)
- For each story, interview three people (NOT friends and cannot all be in the same grade); preferably finding at least one expert source. Remember to do your research.
- By Tuesday evening, put together the first brief article about the event using the LQTQ format (see next page) and save it as a draft in Wordpress; everyone on the team should proofread it and make sure the featured image is correctly captioned and attributed. FACT CHECK. Do the same for the second article no later than Friday night.
- The group is also responsible for posting every school day to Twitter and/or Instagram during the week; these posts may be related to the news stories or cover other things happening on campus.
- Tag EiC to give it a read through and publish.
- GOAL: Have each story published within 24 hours of being written.

Remember, these should be SHORT, accurate and interesting briefs about things happening around campus. News is everywhere. This process will help you to report and write on a deadline without compromising quality. Work as a team, divide and conquer (including deciding who will take each byline) and work smarter, not harder.

Guidelines for Co-Writing Articles

In general, writers are encouraged to write stories individually. However, there are times where collaboration is helpful. When working together on stories, you should observe the following policies:

- Copy your co-writer on every article-related communication you send.
- Be proactive about making sure that interviews are scheduled, the story concept is well-developed, and images are present well before the deadline.
- Distribute work evenly. If your partner conducts an interview, offer to transcribe (and other things of that nature).
- If you feel like you are contributing too much or not contributing enough, have a conversation to brainstorm what will be more effective moving forward.

- **Generally, only the person who primarily writes the article should be on a byline.** If the article is a true collaboration, the reporters may share a byline with adviser/EIC approval.

Editor Induction Ceremony

The ceremony was created by the 2015-2016 student editorial board in order to recognize and celebrate new editors. Follow the ritual exactly.

- To begin the ceremony, turn on "The Princess Diaries Waltz" and play on a continuous loop.
- The graduating editors take turns reading the Oracle's mission statement as follows:
  As a student-run publication, the Oracle's mission is to provide a forum that encourages authentic voices and discussion in our increasingly diverse educational community. We serve as a resource for the Archer community and beyond to report relevant, interesting and newsworthy information. The Oracle staff is committed to fostering critical thinking in our reporting as well as providing students' perspectives. Through these endeavors, we strive to strengthen student voices.
- Each inductee will simultaneously swear the Oath of Editorship over the holy AP Stylebook. The inductee will repeat after the graduating editors. Below is the oath:
- I, (state your name), do solemnly swear, that I will faithfully execute my duties as (state your new position) and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Mission Statement of the Archer Oracle.
- The inductees then kneel before the existing Editorial Board, and the section editors effectively "knight" them by placing a fake sword on their right shoulder, left shoulder, and top of the head.
- The inductee then stands before the Editor-In-Chief and the EIC places the new editor's press pass around her neck.
- POP THE (non-alcoholic) BUBBLY!

Staff Communication

Communication is a crucial aspect of being an Oracle staff member. In addition to email, we use GroupMe to stay in touch via cell phone.

- **Email**
  All reporters and editors are expected to check email regularly and respond promptly. Create a folder system to track your email and to flag important messages. Try the "touch it once" system: don't open an email until you have time to read and respond to it so you can deal with it and file it immediately. Remember that email is never truly private; be thoughtful about the way you communicate with each other, other members of the Archer community and people from outside our community. Any email can be forwarded with a single button, so consider the following questions before hitting "send":
  1. Is my email professional and polite? Have I addressed it to someone and signed it? (Ex. Dear Ms. Taylor...; ...Sincerely, Emma)
  2. Have I proofread carefully? Am I using standard grammar and spelling?
  3. Is my message concise? Can I cut it down for clarity?
  4. Is my message clear? Will the recipient understand why I sent it?
  5. If this message is about a conflict, would it be better for me to address it in person rather than in an email? (It is rarely a good idea to address conflict through email. Instead of airing your grievances in writing, send an email asking to set up a time to meet. Emails often escalate conflicts rather than resolve them.)

6. Would I be embarrassed if an adult I respect saw this email? (If so, either change it or delete it.)

● **Email Templates for Reaching Out for Interviews:**

_____

Reaching out to teachers/people you don't know in the Archer community:
Subject: Interview for The Oracle about _____ **(topic)**
Dear _____ **(name)**,

I hope you're doing well! My name is _____ **(name),** and I am a _____ **(job title)** for The Oracle. I am writing an article about _____ **(article topic.)**

I was wondering if you would be available for an interview about _____ **(specific topic you're interviewing them on)** sometime this week? Maybe on _____ ? **(suggest multiple days/specific times that work for you.)** Let me know whenever would work best for you. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
(Name)

_____

Coordinating if/when they respond about a specific day:

Dear _____ **(name),**

Thank you for getting back to me. Would _____ **(time)** work for you? And where would you like to meet? (Or suggest meeting place)

Sincerely,
(Name)

_____

Reaching out to students/people you know in the Archer community (very similar, but it can be a bit less formal):

Subject: Interview for The Oracle about _____ **(topic)**
Hi _____ **(name)**,

I hope you're doing well! My name is _____ **(name),** and I am a _____ **(job title)** for The Oracle. I am writing an article about _____ **(article topic.)**

I was wondering if you would be available for an interview about _____ **(specific topic you're interviewing them on)** sometime this week? Maybe on _____ ? **(suggest multiple days/specific times that work for you)** Let me know whenever would work best for you. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely **(or however you usually sign your emails)**,
(Name)

_____

Reaching out for expert interviews outside of the Archer community (this may be useful for big stories)

Subject: Interview Request for The Archer Oracle
Dear _____ **(name: use title like "Dr." if they have one)**,

I hope this email finds you well.

My name is _____ **(name),** and I am a ____ **(grade level)** at the Archer School for Girls in Los Angeles, California **(include location if they're out-of-state).** I am a
_____ **(job title)** for our school newspaper, The Oracle.

I am writing an article about _____ **(article topic.)** I was wondering if you might have a few minutes to hop on a quick phone or Zoom call in the next week for an interview? I think our readers would benefit from your perspective as _____ **(be specific what you're reaching out to them for.)**

If you have any questions, you can contact me either by email or by phone at **(put phone number if you're comfortable with that.)** Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
(First and Last Name)

_____

- **GroupMe (staff messaging app)**
  You will set up an account and be invited to join the Oracle group at the beginning of the school year. All reporters and editors are expected to read GroupMe messages and respond promptly. GroupMe is private within our group and shows up as text messages, so we don't have to be as formal in this setting. Nonetheless, its purpose is professional: we use it to communicate about the Oracle or to keep in touch when on a school trip together. If you want to send personal information to another student, do so using your personal phone number outside of this professional application. Everything in our GroupMe conversation should be appropriate for any teacher, administrator or parent to see, in the rare instance that it would be necessary and justified.

- **Trello (laptop/phone workflow app)**
  You will be invited to join the Oracle's Trello group at the beginning of the school year. We organize our publication in a board that has the following lists: story pitch, researching/interviewing, drafting/editing, section editor, EiC, published and sent in a newsletter. Every time you pitch a story, you must create a card with the following features:

Story Summary/Angle:

Potential Sources:

Photo/Visual Ideas:
[Insert checklist]
- ❑ Initial Research
- ❑ Schedule interview with [source name] (create a separate bullet for each source)
- ❑ Interview [source name] (create a separate bullet for each source)
- ❑ Photo shoot
- ❑ Transcribe interviews
- ❑ Draft
- ❑ Fact-check (VERY IMPORTANT)
- ❑ Create headline
- ❑ Insert images and add captions
- ❑ Insert featured image and add featured image caption
- ❑ Edit and proofread

> **Story Summary/Angle:** Sleepy Students -- How often do you see students falling asleep at their desks? Why is this happening? How does sleep impact neurological functions? Is anyone at Archer getting enough sleep?
>
> **Potential Sources:** Students themselves (start with a survey to determine average sleep; then randomly sample students in different grades around school to get quotes about how much sleep they get and why); Although I will find many people wanting to talk about lack of sleep, I could also seek out students who DO sleep well to ensure balance. UCLA's Sleep Research Center, find an expert source to interview there. Could also interview one of the Health and Wellness teachers here or Ms. Lancaster.
> **Secondary Sources:** UCLA Center for Sleep Research website, "Adolescents and Sleep" (pbs.org), Russell Foster's TED talk "Why do we sleep?"
>
> **Photo/Visual Ideas:** Photos of students napping in the library or senior lounge; photo of an alarm clock set to 6:00
> **Sidebar ideas:** 1. How much sleep is enough? Medical recommendations for hours of sleep per age 2. How to Know if You're Sleep Deprived (quiz the reporter would create based on her research); 3. How much sleep do Archer girls get? (stats based on grade/age); 4. How I Get Enough Sleep (a Q&A with a student from the school who manages her time well and manages to sleep each night).
>
> [checklist]

The Trello card must also include appropriate section labels and include a deadline approved by an editor. The Section Editor will check off the deadline when it is completed.

Writers are responsible for keeping their Trello story cards up-to-date and moving them to the correct "list" as they move through the publication process until it reaches the section editor list. The section editor will move the card either back to "drafting/editing" or up to "EIC check." The EIC will tag the adviser for final feedback, which the adviser will leave on the card. The reporter and EiC will make final decisions about any remaining edits, and the EIC will move the card to "published" once the story is live. The features editor will move the card to "sent in newsletter" once it has been promoted.

Working Outside the Classroom
Whenever possible, we will read, write and edit in class. That said, this class will often require outside time (attending events, conducting interviews, finalizing articles to meet deadlines etc.). It is extremely important that staff members manage their time wisely and lean into the challenge and joy of reporting the news.

Press Pass
- Every staff and contributing reporter/photographer will be issued an Oracle press pass on a lanyard at the beginning of the year. You are responsible for keeping the pass in good condition and accessible for use when necessary.
- Any time you are on assignment, whether investigating, interviewing or attending an event in your role as an Oracle reporter, you must wear your press pass. This is especially important whenever you are actively using your personal phone for Oracle-related work on campus.

- You may not participate in any form of activism while wearing your press pass, though you may attend an activist event as an unbiased reporter. Your pass indicates your intention: if you are wearing it, you are gathering facts.
- Your press pass generally grants you free access to Archer events when you are on assignment. You must make arrangements with the organizers ahead of time to reserve your ticket. Only students who are writing a story about a specific event or team or taking photographs of that event may use a press pass. Press passes may not be used to gain free admission for any other reason.
- Staff members who abuse the privileges of a press pass may have their press pass revoked, or in severe cases, may face removal from staff.

Grading
You will be graded on a point system; I do not weight category percentages. Your grade will be the total number of points you earn divided by the total possible. Here are some of the areas where you will gain points.
- Producing at least three Oracle pieces each month that meet the criteria for best journalistic practices
- Demonstrating knowledge of current events, AP Style rules and journalism terminology through occasional short assessments.
- Demonstrating your progress, growth, accomplishments and contributions to the Oracle by
  - Collaborating in news teams to cover breaking news and school events
  - Meeting individual deadlines for all assignments, overcoming obstacles in your path
  - Turning revisions around in a timely manner after getting feedback; editors for giving feedback and meeting editorial responsibilities in a timely manner
  - Regularly producing increasingly high quality photos, articles and journalistic content
  - Staying on top of digital communications, responding to GroupMe messages, Trello tags and emails promptly
  - Being a good journalistic citizen—following best practices and being a collaborative, positive presence in our newsroom, taking constructive feedback gracefully.

Part 4: Oracle Production Cycle

Step 1: Story Pitch/Assignment
At the beginning of each publication cycle, reporters check with the editors; they may be assigned a story or pitch one. The reporter may also be assigned a story or select a longer-term feature to work on. The reporter must publish 2-3 stories per month approved by the section editor and editor-in-chief. The EIC and journalism adviser will check everyone's stories on the Trello board. At the beginning of each month, we will hold time for writers to pitch their stories to the staff to get feedback and create new Trello cards (see "Staff Communication" section in Part 3) in the "story pitch" list for that rotation.

Step 2: Research, Interviews and Photography
The reporter should move the story card to the "research/interviewing" list on Trello during this phase and check off each step on the card's checklist as it is completed. The reporter uses workshop and outside class time to research the topic. This must involve at least **three primary sources/interviews** (including an expert source, if possible) and necessary secondary reading and research. The Oracle prefers using both an audio recorder and physical note-taking in a reporter's notebook during interviews to ensure accuracy. The reporter should compile this research and transcribe interviews (using Otter is fine, but be sure to listen to it a second time to correct the transcript) to check direct quotes. **Save all audio and written transcripts in your Google drive**. This is crucial for editorial fact-checking and in case sources claim they have been misquoted.

The reporter is responsible for taking her own photos to use with this story during the research and interview phase unless she has made specific arrangements with a classmate or contributing photographer. If the reporter is working with another student photographer, she is responsible for coordinating with that person. The section editor, editor-in-chief and the journalism adviser are available for questions and help during this phase.

Step 3: Drafting, Editing and Fact-Checking
The reporter should move the story card to the "drafting/editing" list on Trello during this phase and check off each step on the card's checklist as it is completed. The reporter drafts her story in WordPress following established guidelines for good journalistic writing (based on the type of writing she is doing: news/features, sports, reviews, opinion, etc.). Stories should be saved as "draft" on the WordPress menu.

Consulting the WordPress Media LIbrary Guidelines for proper procedure to edit and resize each photo, the reporter places photos (including the featured image) and captions each image containing the following elements:

If appropriate, the reporter may also create an infographic or illustration to complement the story (fast facts, pull-out quote, pie chart, etc.) and insert it as an image with appropriate caption; see "Photographs, Illustrations, and Infographics." Finally, the reporter creates a headline for the article that follows journalistic guidelines: it must be accurate, specific, and match the tone of the article. It should also be in present tense and eliminate unnecessary words (including conjunctions). The editors may work with the reporter to adjust this headline during the editing process.

Once the reporter has a complete draft, she must fact-check (verify, verify, verify!), proofread and make final edits using the Oracle Editing Checklist. This should all happen BEFORE deadline day. All items on the Trello card checklist should be completed by the beginning of class on deadline day.

Step 4: Deadline Day & Section Editor Coaching
On the reporter's deadline day, the reporter must have a complete story with photos inserted and captioned in Wordpress ready for feedback. Reporters should begin by peer editing using the Oracle Checklist and making initial edits. The reporter should move the story card to the "section editor" list on Trello during this phase. The reporter should then meet with the section editor, who will read and give feedback on the draft (we recommend initially doing this in person; editors should coach rather than make edits themselves). Reporters integrate that feedback into their drafts and alert the section editor again when they are ready. The section editor does a final reading, paying special attention to proofreading errors and AP Style errors, which she coaches the reporter to correct. When both are convinced the piece is ready and thoroughly proofread, they mark it as "pending review" in Wordpress, move the Trello card to the "EIC" checklist and alert the editor-in-chief. This process may take more than one day depending on how many articles the section editor is working on, but initial feedback should take no more than two days—less for time-sensitive articles.

Step 5: Final Feedback and Coaching from Editor-in-Chief
The editor-in-chief reads articles once they have been marked "pending review." If she sees significant errors, she kicks the article back to the Trello "drafting/editing" list and alerts the reporter and section editor that they need to revisit the draft to edit for content, clarity or proofreading errors. The EIC should conduct this meeting in person to foster communication and improve writers' skills; this also ensures that the reporter has a final opportunity to reread and verify the story is accurate and complete. Note: the journalism adviser is available to read the piece at any point to provide feedback for the reporter or editors, but it is not the adviser's role to edit, proofread or approve content. Reporters and editors are always welcome to seek feedback from the adviser at any point in the process; the adviser will always offer feedback after the EIC tags her for each article.

Step 6: Publication and Promotion
Once the article has been finalized and approved, the EIC publishes the article. The editorial board works together to promote the article via social media and newsletter.

Part 5: Technology policies

Laptop Expectations
- Students are expected to bring their laptops and chargers to class every day, as they are crucial to our process.
- In the event your laptop is being worked on by IT, you are responsible for either getting a loaner or using class time productively without it (interviewing, taking photos, doing a "woman on the street," helping a classmate edit, etc.).
- "Please do not work on outside academic or personal work during class periods."

WordPress Privileges
- The Oracle is a SNO WordPress news site, and every staff member and contributing writer will draft and edit in this program.
- Publishing rights are restricted to the EIC and the journalism adviser. The adviser will not censor content but serves as a final feedback person (see "Production Cycle"). The adviser will only act as publisher if the EIC has already approved the article.
- Any member of the editorial board or the journalism adviser may approve or delete a pending comment on the Oracle. Editors should refer to the comment policy for guidance; if they are unsure whether a comment meets these guidelines, they should contact the rest of the board to determine next steps.
- **Anything on the Oracle site is considered private until we publish it.** Do not screenshot, share or discuss articles in progress with anyone outside of our staff.

Oracle Email Account
- The Oracle has an email account: oracle@archer.org. All mail sent to this account is forwarded to the student editorial board and adviser.
- The Editor-in-Chief is responsible for either responding to this email or ensuring the appropriate person has done so within 24 hours. Any queries regarding controversial subjects or ethical concerns will be dealt with by the EiC.
- If the email is a letter to the editor, the editorial board is responsible for verifying authenticity, editing/proofreading for clarity (as per the Letters to the Editor policy in Part 2), creating an appropriate headline, adding the standard featured image, and posting to the Voices/Letters to the Editor section.
- All members of the Oracle staff should use the Oracle's official email when emailing the community about an Oracle-related inquiry or survey for a story. These emails and surveys must be approved by the EIC before being sent. The journalism adviser is available to answer questions or consult about Oracle communications.

Social Media
Oracle has a number of social media accounts. All social media is managed by the Oracle's student editorial board and will be used to share published content, report on live and recent events and engage the Archer community.
- Oracle Twitter: @ArcherOracle
- Facebook: [ArcherOracle](#)

- ○ Instagram (run jointly with yearbook): @archerstudentmedia
- The Oracle's official social media content is generated, moderated and edited by the Oracle staff and may not reflect the opinions or policies of The Archer School for Girls. Neither school employees nor the school itself are legally responsible for the Oracle's social media content.
- The editorial board reserves the right to remove comments that violate any provisions hitherto outlined by this policy or in the staff manual.
- Information posted on social media platforms should be held to the same standard as all other reporting in terms of information gathering, fact checking and journalistic ethics.
- The official social media accounts should avoid promotion of events, people or organizations and should remain objective, reporting what is fact. Reporters using personal social media to cover events should do the same. Do not state opinions, use exclamation marks or use emojis.
- Information gained through social media channels should be verified through multiple channels before passing it along to others.
- Audience engagement through social media should be done in a professional manner.
- Transparency is important. Mistakes made on social media posts should be corrected as soon as possible, and any deleted posts should be acknowledged in subsequent postings.
- Student reporters should consider that personal social media postings, if viewable by peers and/or the public, may impact your credibility as an unbiased reporter. Think carefully about your social media presence and actions even when not using one of Oracle's platforms.
- Individual reporters are expected to create their own professional/academic Twitter account to use for reporting, investigation and networking. These accounts should be treated as professional and kept strictly separate from personal Tweets.

Cell Phone Expectations

Cell phones are useful 21st century tools when used responsibly and professionally at appropriate times.
- During lessons and discussions, cell phones must be off or on do not disturb.
- Cell phone use during class workshop time is permitted for Oracle purposes only: researching, contacting a source, recording audio, taking photos or video, using GroupMe to communicate with another staff member, using an app for appropriate journalistic reasons, etc.
- Misuse of a cell phone during class will result in confiscation for the remainder of the period. Repeated misuse will result in a loss of cell phone privileges during class time or a referral to the Dean of Student Life, Equity and Inclusion
- PLEASE NOTE: Given Archer's "no phone zone" policy, if you need to use your phone for journalistic purposes outside of class, it is imperative you wear your press pass while doing so. Reporters misusing their press pass will face significant consequences.

Equipment Policy

Any equipment borrowed from publications should be used responsibly and returned in the condition it was lent. Students are responsible for damage to or loss of publications equipment. Staff will follow all sign out procedures as defined by the adviser and must return all equipment promptly. Staff members must sign the Equipment Usage Contract before using any piece of school equipment.

Part 6: Business and Advertising

Circulation

The Oracle is a public website with unlimited circulation potential. Articles published on the Oracle are promoted via social media and weekly emails.

Increasing Readership
- As a digital-only platform, the Oracle relies on word of mouth and social media to publicize its content. The Editorial Board works together throughout the year to monitor site statistics via Google Analytics and strategize ways to increase readership.
- Reporters are encouraged to share links in their personal social media accounts and to email a link to stakeholders once their articles are published.
- The Features Editor is responsible for sending a newsletter from the official Oracle email account every Sunday with links to articles published that week. The adviser and EIC will maintain a running list of published articles on a Google doc.

Advertising

The Oracle does not currently accept or publish advertisements.

Budget for Program

The Oracle is funded through the Publications budget. The Flexible Tuition coordinator may provide additional funding for National Conference fees to assist students who receive tuition assistance.

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