

Captivating Captions

We know, it's like pulling teeth trying to teach teenagers to write good captions. When all else fails, use a formula. Here's one we recommend:

>> Save cute for the kicker. If your students insist on joke captions such as "say cheese," try using kickers or lead-ins for your captions. Set your kicker off graphically by using a different font, thickness, size or all caps.

>> Use more than one sentence to describe a photo. Two to four sentences are best in order to give enough information. Consider using a quote.

>> First, using present tense, identify what and who is in the photo.

>> Next, using past tense, write about something not so obvious in the photo, such as the activity that took place before and after the photo was taken.

>> Identify everyone! If you can't identify everyone in a candid shot, don't use it. In group photos, ID the group and label rows as: Front, 2nd, 3rd, Back. Don't label as left to right since that is the natural way of reading.

>> Avoid phrases such as "seems to be" or "looks as if." Also, be specific. Don't use the words several, many or a lot. Give facts and figures.

>> Don't editorialize. Allow the action in the photo and the background information to tell a complete, factual story.

>> Don't be afraid to go beyond the scope of the photo to elaborate on the caption content. What was the score of the game? Did anything exciting happen at halftime? Were any records broken? Were any special presentations made before the game? These are all facts that could be mentioned

Try some of these 'caption starters' to help break the monotony of boring captions:

Trying to collect
To achieve this
Abandoned by
In honor of
Sweeping her off her feet
After finishing
With dinner time approaching
As the crowd
Caught in the spirit of
Taking time out
Carefully considering
As senior
While waiting for his
Trying to hide his
Upon learning to
Unable to
Behind the scenes
After the ceremony
To add a little fun
In anticipation
Wishing that
Looking for
While taking a breather
On her way home
During the parade
In the hope
Working on the
While enjoying the
To create the look
Accompanied by
Completing the
Before going out
Right in step with
In her spare time
With any effort

Look for more caption starters at

<http://www.yearbooks.biz/nav1024.cfm?cat=5&subcat=26&subsub=3&method=display&id=403>