

Journalism (The CKM Prospector) Syllabus 2011-12

C.K. McClatchy High School, 3066 Freeport Blvd, Sacramento, CA 95818

Instructor	Mr. Johnston	E-mail	Michael-johnston@sac-city.k12.ca.us
Phone	916-264-4400 x. 3001	Office Hours	Drop in: Wednesday at lunch or by appointment in room D-1
Room	D-1	Prospector E-mail	CKMProspector@gmail.com

Goals:

- ✓ Students will produce a professional newspaper (The Prospector) for C.K. McClatchy High School
- ✓ Students will maintain a yearlong journal/portfolio/string book.
- ✓ Students will turn in assignments on time.
- ✓ Students will write several rough drafts for each article and learn to edit work.
- ✓ Students will learn to be punctual; making sure school paper is published on time.

Evaluation:

Grading is based on a point system. All articles (i.e. interviews, photographs), projects, presentations, attendance, and class participation will be assigned point values. Arriving tardy and missing class will affect participation points. Just like a regular class, all late work (other than an excused deadline that has been arranged with the instructor) will not be accepted.

I grade using the following percentage scale:

90-99%	A	70-79%	C	Below 60%	F
80-89%	B	60-69%	D		

Participation points:

Each student is given 10 points each day for their class work. Points will be deducted for poor work habits, missing deadlines, not following editing process, errors in observing journalistic writing style, errors in writing conventions, incomplete or missing work, failure to sell ads. The Editor-in-Chief and Section Editors may also deduct points from student writers. Likewise, Mr. Johnston will also deduct points from editors.

Students can...

- ✓ Work on newspaper related work
- ✓ Read daily newspapers
- ✓ Edit peers' articles
- ✓ Discuss with peers or instructor how to improve newspaper

Students cannot...

- × Do homework or read novels (unless if it is for the book review columns)
- × Surf on internet (This does not include actual research)
- × Sit around and talk about their weekend (we'll talk about this)
- × Use class time for personal or school business (Unless your Newspaper work is done)

Quizzes:

There will be quizzes throughout the school year. They consist of your knowledge of daily news and facts from the AP Stylebook at the end of this student manual and from our textbook. Students may not make up quizzes that they miss because they are late to class.

Individual and group work:

Work will be graded individually and as a group.

Individual: Articles will be handed in on time to be considered full credit--meaning: all work are to be turned in and signed off by section editors and Mr. Johnston on or before deadline.

Group: Students will be working as a group at least half of the time to produce the newspaper and will receive grades that reflect both the quality of the work, the effort of the group, and individual contribution to the group. Students who do not pull their weight will see this reflected negatively in their grade. Groups will be expected to assess their own work and the work of the group members regularly. Ways to “pull your weight” include placing inserts, delivering the paper, and helping out when emergencies arise.

Having positive attitude is an important criterion in this class. Everyone should treat each other with respect just like a professional working environment.

End-of-Issue/String Book:

After each issue is distributed, students will complete an “End-of-Issue/String book” form in which they list and evaluate their journalism work during the time the issue was being put together.

The string book must be a 2” binder with nine dividers (one for each issue). Articles must be neatly mounted on white paper. Rough drafts must also be included in the string book. You may keep the string book in class between issues.

The end-of-issue / string book will be evaluated based on its completeness, neatness, and correct assembly. It will be evaluated at the end of each semester.

Points will be deducted if the student’s string book is missing, late, incomplete, or sloppy.

Ad Sales:

The Prospector is entirely self-supporting and needs to raise approximately \$5,000 per year to continue to operate. The cost goes up if we want to print some pages in color. Therefore, it is essential that all staff members work together to make the newspaper financially solvent.

Students must bring \$100 revenue to the newspaper each semester—far less than many other school papers require. For every dollar not sold, 3 points will be deducted from your grade. While I will keep track of the revenue you are responsible for, I suggest it is in your best interest to keep your own records as well.

Selling Ads. See section on Advertising in this manual. You will receive training in ad sales.

Fundraising: The Prospector Staff is *required* to help with our Fundraising events. Not all students must work on all events, but you must work on at least one in each semester.

Congeniality Coordinator. This position is for one (preferably nondriving) student. The job includes (1) arranging distribution day food fests (only if 100 percent on time articles turned in) and late night dinners by getting donated food and (2) organizing other bonding activities for the class (such as secret pals). Students must apply for the position.

Ad sales incentives:

Extra Credit. Anything you sell over your required amount (\$100 per semester) earns you extra credit (1 point for every dollar over) or carries over to the next semester (but cannot carry over to the next school year), your choice.

Lesson and Projects:

Throughout the year the adviser and editors will give lessons on aspects of journalistic writing that are needed to improve the overall quality of writing in The Prospector. Some of these activities will be in the form of drills at the beginning of the period. Others will involve work from videos watched in class. Sometimes lessons will involve research on and/or writing about current events. Failure to complete these projects or failure to do quality work will be grade deductions.

Current Events:

On the Monday after the production week is over, students will be expected to come in with an article from a newspaper or newsmagazine (or the online version thereof) about a current event in an assignment area. Students will share their current events in groups and discuss them as a class. Failure to bring in a current event or participate in this activity in a courteous fashion will result in grade deductions.

Story Ideas/Beat Reports/Brainstorming:

Students will be expected to submit a Story Ideas and Beat Report form each Monday following production week. These will be collected in Brainstorming sessions to determine story topics for the next issue. Failure to submit the Story Ideas/Beat Reports form and to participate courteously in the Brainstorming session will result in grade deductions.

Maintenance of the Staff Room and Journalism Equipment:

Have you seen your mother in this class? Students will be expected to keep the room neat and to put equipment away at the end of the period.

Maintain Photo and art files. Correctly refile any photos or art left out.

Please do not eat near the computer area, if you must eat and drink, do so at your desk only, and clean up after yourself.

Note 1: Please be reminded that there are other classes who share the same classroom; you need to clean up all working areas.

Note 2: Please check your designated folder daily, and clean out the graded work into your portfolio.

Camera:

Students can bring their own cameras to class, but these should be labeled and kept locked up. We are not responsible for loss, theft, or damage. Students who damage or lose the journalism cameras are responsible for paying for the damage or loss. (This includes theft of the camera. So hang on to it!)

Each student who uses the two class cameras must date and sign the checkout list and date the return date (be sure to do all steps to relief yourself from being responsible if the camera is lost after you use it).

Materials:

 A large binder (2" minimum) for your string book with nine dividers (will be kept in class)

 A writing utensil, notebook papers, and reporter's notebook.

 You will be provided with a press pass.

Standards of Conduct:

Students in the journalism class have privileges and responsibilities. Students are expected to observe the following standards to maintain a good class grade (and to produce a good newspaper):

- Students must be on time to journalism class and must not let journalism duties keep them from completing coursework in other class.
- Journalism students cannot disturb other classes or school programs while carrying out newspaper duties.

- When off-campus on newspaper business, journalism students are to conduct themselves in a professional manner that brings credit to The Prospector and C.K. McClatchy High School. Failure to do so jeopardizes continuation of the class.
- Journalism students must sign out before leaving class (only if leaving in the middle of class). Students must not leave without a journalistic reason to do so unless I give permission. Students who abuse the freedom of movement in the journalism program will receive one warning; after a second warning, they will lose hall pass privileges for as long as the adviser sees fit; if the problem persists, the student can be removed from class.

Removal from the Staff/Class:

Reasons that a student can be removed from the staff/class include but are not limited to:

- Violation of the climate of trust necessary for a happy staff, e.g., abusing hall pass privileges, invading other staff members' possessions, taking journalism equipment without notice, falsely using newspaper business as a reason for being out of class or being admitted at no charge to events.
- Consistently missing deadlines or failure to turn in assignments (two issues puts you on probation; three issues can mean removal.)
- Being quarrelsome, uncooperative, negative, or difficult on a regular basis.
- Plagiarism--Cheating and plagiarism are very serious offenses. Students are expected to try their best and do their own work. If a student is caught cheating on quizzes or plagiarizing on articles and homework assignments, they will be dealt with according to the school policy: 1st offense - fail assignment, 2nd offense - fail semester.
- Using false information in a story, including false quotations.
- Consistent failure to turn in quality work.

Absences:

Regular attendance is needed to receive a passing grade. A student's participation grade will be negatively affected by poor attendance. If a student is regularly missing class I will call home to arrange a parent conference. Should you need to be absent, please excuse it within 72 hours of the last day of absence. You have the same number of days as the length of your absence to make up missing homework assignments. Since some assignments are required to publish the school paper, you need to pre-arrange with Mr. Johnston if you need to be absent.

Students will not be allowed to complete make-up work or extra credit at the last minute when grades are due. I expect all work to be done in a timely fashion.

Tardy Policy:

Students are expected to arrive on time for class and be ready to begin the class when the bell rings. If the student arrives late to class without a pass it will affect the student's participation points for that day. The student will be unable to make up any graded class work done during the time the student was late.

This class will strictly follow the school's tardy policy.

Late Work Policy:

ABSOLUTELY NO LATE WORK IS ACCEPTED FOR THIS CLASS. All work should be turned in on the day it is due to meet deadlines.

Cell Phone and Headphone Policy: ABSOLUTLY NO CELL PHONES are allowed to be on or in use in my classroom unless on pre-approved Newspaper business. Cell phones may only be on before and after school and during the lunch period. If students are caught using their cell phone during class time they will lose points for the day and lead to cell phones being confiscated. If the student is warned about cell phones more than four times I will call a parent conference to discuss the situation. If parents need to contact their children, please do so through the school's main office at 916.264.4400

Music is allowed during individual work time but it must be in headphones. Please keep classroom in a low noise environment since creative work is being produced constantly. Please do not use headphones during Staff Meetings or Brainstorming sessions.

Special Needs:

If a student has special learning needs or other needs that I should be aware of they will notify me as soon as possible by letter. I will be calling all the parents to introduce myself and check in as the semester starts. This would be a good time to briefly mention any important issues.

Extra help:

If a student is not doing well in the class or feels they need extra help I am completely willing to discuss what we can do to help them succeed.

**All policies above are subject to change as deemed necessary by Mr. Johnston