

In-Class Exercises

In grading headlines, I follow the guidelines in my handout on writing headlines and in my handouts on writing with clarity. Judging headlines, as with judging any sort of writing, isn't an exact science. A headline can be technically perfect but still lack verve, style, and audience appeal. I use these general guidelines and then adjust up or down depending on the types of errors I find in grammar, punctuation, style and similar elements:

A (90 to 100): Work that could be published with little or no editing.

B (80 to 89): Work could be published with minor editing and may contain small flaws in phrasing, grammar, punctuation, style, and similar elements.

C (73 to 79): Work that would require substantial editing before publication and contains problems in focus, phrasing, grammar, punctuation, style, and similar elements.

D or below (0 to 69): Work that misses the important elements of a story; contains poor phrasing, factual errors, problems with taste or judgment, or problems in phrasing, grammar, punctuation, style, and surface elements. This work would require substantial rewriting.

Examples of A work

Both of these examples have sound basics: proper spelling, grammar, usage, and the like. They also show good judgment in choosing information and explaining it to audiences.

Examples of B work

These examples, for the most part, show a good grasp of the subject matter but also have flaws in judgment, mechanics, writing, and the like.