

DISCOVERING 'THE DISPATCH'

Basic Functions of a Newspaper

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Newspapers have 4 basic functions – to inform, to interpret the news, to provide a service to readers, and to entertain. These functions explain what the newspaper does, and they are why people read it.

Newspapers help readers become informed citizens and make better decisions by providing lots of facts. Hard news stories, vital statistics, weather, sports stories and scores, and event calendars are examples of items that help inform readers.

Some newspaper articles help

interpret, or explain, the meaning of news to readers. These stories often include the opinion of the writer or newspaper management. Editorials, opinion columns, news analysis, and reviews are some examples.

Newspaper stories provide information that helps readers solve their business, home, recreation, and daily living problems. Ads assist in informing readers about products and services. Hard news stories, feature stories, classified ads, and

display ads are items that provide a service.

Some items in the newspaper are designed to amuse or provide enjoyment to readers. Feature stories, comics, puzzles, and humor columns are entertainment items.

To inform, to interpret, to provide a service, and to entertain are the 4 basic functions of a newspaper. Did you know that there were so many important reasons for reading a newspaper? Can you think of more?

Word Play

Can you explain how this equation plays with words?

2 inform
2 interpret
2 provide a service
+ 2 entertain

4 basic functions of a newspaper (2 cool!!)

Activities

1. Go through today's *Dispatch*. Using a marker, label items that are in the paper to inform, to interpret, to provide a service, and to entertain. Share your results with others. Were your results the same or different? Why did you choose what you did? Are there any items that might fit in more than one category?
2. Pick a book that you've recently read, and create a newspaper for it. For example, "The Little Piggy Press" could be written for "The Three Little Pigs." You could pretend that you are writing it as a character from the book or for a character in the book. Be sure to include at least one item to inform, one to interpret, one to provide a service, and one to entertain.

Be a Reporter

Directions: Find examples of the 4 basic functions of a newspaper in today's *Dispatch*. Fill in the table below.

	Article/Item	Page	Why did you put it in this category?
TO INFORM			
TO INTERPRET			
TO PROVIDE A SERVICE			
TO ENTERTAIN			