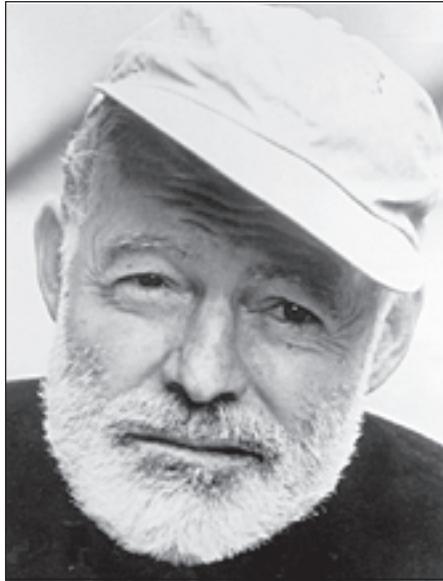


THE KANSAS CITY STAR.



This facsimile of The Star Copy Style sheet is one of the most often-requested pieces of memorabilia relating to the history of The Kansas City Star. This is the document that Ernest Hemingway would have been given during his tenure writing police and emergency-room items at The Star in 1917 and 1918. Hemingway later remarked to a reporter that the admonitions in this style sheet were “the best rules I ever learned in the business of writing.”

This early Star style sheet exists today in two different versions, but neither can be dated definitively. The version reproduced on the reverse of this page is believed to be the one used at the newspaper around 1915. It is likely that Hemingway used either this rule sheet or another very similar version.

This reproduction is the best available copy of the original deteriorated document.

The Star Copy Style

Use short sentences. Use short first paragraphs. Use vigorous English. Be positive, not negative.

The style of local communications is *To The Star*: in italics, out-of-town communications in this form. Salina, Kas. – *To The Star*.

Never use old slang. Such words as *stunt*, *cut out*, *got his goat*, *come across*, *sit up and take notice*, put one over, have no place after their use becomes common. Slang to be enjoyable must be fresh.

Use *Kas.*, not *Kan.* or *Kans.*, as an abbreviation for Kansas: use *Ok.*, not *Okla.*, for Oklahoma, *Col.*, not *Colo.*, for Colorado; *Cal.*, not *Calif.*, for California.

Watch you sequence of tenses. "He *said* he *knew* the truth, not "He *said* he *knows* the truth." "The community was *amazed* to hear that Charles Wakefield *was* a thief," not "*was amazed* to hear that Charles Wakefield *is* a thief."

The style of *The Star* is 9:30 o'clock *this afternoon* or *this morning* or *tonight*; not 9:30 *this forenoon*, 9:30 *p.m.* or 9:30 *this evening*. Also let the hour precede – not *this morning* at 9:30 o'clock. He walked *twelve miles*, not *a distance of twelve miles*; he *earned \$10*, not he *earned the amount or sum of \$10*; he went there to *see his wife*, not *for the purpose of seeing his wife*. He was absent *during June*, not *during the month of June*.

"Goods *valued at about \$25* were stolen," not "about *\$25 worth of goods* were stolen."

"Several fountain pens were stolen," not "*a number of fountain pens*" – if you know the number, specify.

Eliminate every superfluous word as "Funeral services will be at 2 o'clock Tuesday," not "*The funeral services will be held at the hour of 2 o'clock on Tuesday.*" He *said* is better than he *said in the course of conversation*.

In reference to specified time the word *on* is superfluous. Why write *on January 16; on Tuesday? January 16 and Tuesday* are enough.

Don't split verbs: He probably *will go*, not he *will probably go*. It previously *had been shown* better; not it *had previously been better shown*.

The verb precedes the time: He sold yesterday afternoon; not he yesterday afternoon sold. In certain instances, euphony or smoothness may admit a deviation from this rule.

Be careful of the word *also*. It usually modifies the word it follows closest. "He, also, went" means "He too went." "He went also" means he went in addition to taking some other action.

Be careful of the word "only." "He only had \$10," means he alone was the possessor of such wealth." "He had only \$10," means the ten was all the cash he possessed.

The Rev. Q.Z. Smith, D.D., not the Rev. *Dr. Q.Z. Smith*.

Mr. Smith or *Dr. Smith*; not the *Rev. Smith* or the *Rev. Mr. Smith* or the *Rev. Dr. Smith*. Never call a minister a doctor unless he is a doctor of divinity.

He *went* to police headquarters, *not he came* to police headquarters. "He *came* to the office of *The Star*" would be correct.

"The police tried to *find* her husband," not tried to *locate* her husband. To *locate*, used as a transitive verb, means to establish.

"He was ill *in* February" not "He was ill *during* February." *During* February would mean every fraction of a second of the month's time. A body may deliberate *during the day*, but that means no recess was taken in the entire period.

Don't split infinitives – He wanted to *live longer*, not to *longer live*.

Avoid the use of adjectives, especially such extravagant ones as *splendid*, *gorgeous*, *grand*, *magnificent*, etc.

Say the girl was of *light complexion*, not *light complected*.

Say *evening clothes*, not *full dress*.

Say *patrolmen not in uniform*, not *plain clothes men*. Do not use *cop*.

A burglar enters a building where persons are sleeping – use *thief* or *robber* in other cases.

Use *revolver* or *pistol*, not *gun*, unless a *shot-gun* is meant.

The thief *seized* her purse, not *grabbed* or *snatched*.

State things in writing, otherwise *say*, *assert*, *declare*, etc.

Say, "She was born in Ireland and came to Jackson County in 1874" not "but came to Jackson County." She didn't come here to make amends for being born in Ireland. This is common abuse of the conjunction.

"Smith *asserted* he had been arrested falsely," not *claimed* he had been arrested."

Use *we should, they would*. For instance, not, "We *would* like to see these abuses corrected." That would be an appeal. The simple statement is, "We *should* like to see these abuses corrected."

Don't say "He *had* his leg cut off in an accident." He wouldn't have had it done for anything "He *suffered* a broken leg in a fall," not "he *broke his leg* in a fall." He didn't break the leg, the fall did. Say a leg, not his leg, because presumably the man has two legs.

"The work *began*," not the work *was begun*."

He *was graduated* from Manual," not "*he graduated from Manual*."

Say Mary went shopping *with Mabel* – not "*in company with Mabel*."

"Honor *the memory* of J.V.C. Karnes" not "*honor* J.V.C. Karnes" after his death.

Say "John Jones of St. Louis," no comma between *Jones* and *of*.

"Mr. Roosevelt is a leader *who*, we believe, would succeed," not "*whom*, we believe, would."

"Mr. Roosevelt is a leader *whom*, we believe the people will choose," not "*who*, we believe."

"None saw him *except* me," not "none saw him *but* me." Don't use *but* as a preposition.

Use *or* after *either*, *nor* after *neither*, as a general rule. Certain deviations from this statement are good English, but extreme care in usage is best.

Indorsement of a candidate, not *endorsement*.

Say *Chinese*, not *Chinamen*.

Bodies are not *shipped* or *sent* – say "The burial will be in Ottumwa, Ia."

Several *persons* were in the room," not "several *people*." "The people of Kansas City" is correct.

Both *persons* were pleased, not "both *parties* were pleased." "Both parties to the contract" is correct.

He knew no good reason *that* he should not run" is better than "he knew no good reason why he should not run."

"He threw the *stone*," not "He threw the *rock*." Rock is unquarried stone.

Write 250,000, 500,000, 750,000 and 1,000,000, 1/4 million, 1/2 million, 3/4 million and 1 million respectively.

Numbers less than 100 should be spelled out, except in matter of statistical nature, in ages, time of day, sums of money and comparative figures or dimensions.

In writing of animals use the neuter gender except when you are writing of a pet that has a name. Then it is permissible to use the masculine or feminine

"The man *left* the car while it was in motion is simpler and better than "*alighted from* the car."

"The man was sentenced *to be hanged*," not *to be hung*."

"The death sentence was "*executed*," not "The man was *executed*."

The *execution* of the death sentence," not "the *execution* of the man."

The prisoner was *electrocised*, not *electrocuted*.

"None of them *is* so sorry as myself," not "none of them *are* so sorry."

He was "*eager* to go," not *anxious* to go." You are *anxious* about a friend who is ill.

"If I *were* king," not if I *was* king."

"The building was *partly* insured," not *partially* insured."

"It seemed *as if* he meant business," not "*as though* he meant business." Do not say "*she looked like* she would faint. Say *as if*."

A long quotation with out introducing the speaker makes a poor lead especially and is bad at any time. Break into the quotation as soon as you can. thus: "I should prefer," the speaker said, "to let the reader know who I am as soon as possible."

Try to preserve the atmosphere of the speech in your quotation. For instance in quoting a child, do not let him say "Inadvertently, I picked up the stone and threw it."

"He saw *more than* one thousand ducks flying" – not "*over* one thousand ducks." Also say "*fewer than*" instead of "*less than*," when numbers, not quantity, are considered. It is proper to write "He had more than \$10."

"He was *made* unconscious," not "he was *rendered* unconscious."

He *died* on the sidewalk," not "He *fell dead* on the sidewalk."

Never say "The deceased.

Such words as "tots," "urchins," "mites of humanity" are not to be used in writing of children. In certain cases, where "kids" conveys just the proper shading and fits the story, it is permissible.

Watch out for trite phrases such as "Burly negro," "crisp bank note," "cold cash," "hard cash," etc.

Avoid expressions from a foreign tongue "He received \$2 a day" is English, not "received \$2 *per day*."

A man marries a woman :she is married to him. "The voters will choose *among* the several candidates," "not *between*" the several." "Choose between two candidates is correct.

"Twenty attended the meeting among others, C.W. Armour, J.C. Nichols." The word *others* implies that the persons mentioned are apart from persons already mentioned, but the implication does not hold true. The sentence should read: "Twenty attended, among them, C.W. Armour and J.C. Nichols."

He died of heart *disease*, not heart failure – everybody dies of "heart failure."

Representative Bland, not *Congressman Bland*. The members of both the house and senate are *Congressmen*. The titles "Representative" and "Senator" distinguish them.

"He *suspected* the negro was guilty," not "He *suspicioned* the negro was guilty." "The police were *suspicious of him*," not "The police *considered him suspicious*." Do not use *suspect* as a noun.

The words *donate* and *donation* are barred from the columns of *The Star*. Use *give* or *contribute*. The use of *raise* in the sense of obtaining money has been forced into usage where no other word seems to do as well. But *raise* is not a noun.

Don't confuse the words *habit* and *custom* as "John Jones was a victim of the drug *habit*." "It was the *custom* of John Jones to go to the bank at 11 o'clock each day."

A man is not arrested for "*investigation*." There is no such charge as "*investigation*."

The Star does not use "*dope*" or "*dope fiend*." Use *habit forming drugs* or *narcotics* and *addicts*.

Don't say: "Three men put in an *appearance*." Just let them "*appear*."

Do not use *picnic* as a verb.

Say *luncheon*, not *lunch*.

You *expect* a record crowd, not *anticipate* it. But you can *anticipate* some legal action, for example, by taking some step of precaution, and be correct in usage.

Portion in almost all cases refers to food. "Portion" of an estate is correct, however.

Watch for plural collective nouns; they take singular verbs. "The committee *was* discharged." "The company *was* solvent." Three thousand dollars *was* stolen."

Spell it *program*, *quarter*, *quintet*, etc.

Call it *parent-teacher association*.

Do not use the term *squad* in referring to motor cars or traffic policemen. Write "Sergeant Jones of the motor cycle *police*," or "Lieutenant McCormick of the traffic *police*." A *squad* is a fixed and limited number of men.

In Jefferson City, preferable to *at* Jefferson City.

Probably with not *likely* will.

As to use of state after name of a city. Use state except where city is so well known as to make the name of the state entirely superfluous. Use state where there are two or more cities of that name. In connection with this, however, use *Independence*, when *Independence, Mo.*, is meant; use *Independence, Kas.*

Avoid using *that* too frequently, but govern use largely by euphony, and strive for smoothness.

Say the morning edition of *The Star*.

In most cases, *desire* is preferable to *want*.

Say *crippled boy*, but not a *cripple*.

Each other applies to two, *one another* to three or more.

Latter applies to one of two. Where more than two are considered, *last* is the word.

If is used to introduce a supposition clause, as, I shall not go *if* it rains. It is incorrect to say: I do not know *if* I can go. The correct form is *whether*: I do not know *whether* I can go.

Resolutions are adopted, not passed. Bills are passed and laws are enacted. The house or senate passed a bill; congress or the legislature enacted a law.

Do not use *evidence* as a verb. This wrong use is especially common and the past tense form *Burglarized* and *jailed* are equally objectionable.

Both simplicity and good taste suggest *home* rather than *residence*, and *lives* rather than *resides*.

"John Jones, who was arrested yesterday, and who furnished release bond, was arrested again today." The second *who* is superfluous.

Equally As - The *as* is superfluous.

He Was Presented With - This is an old offender, which gets in despite all injunctions and a general knowledge that the *with* is entirely superfluous.

A Woman of the Name of Mary Jones - Disrespect is attached to the individual in such sentences. Avoid it. Never use it even in referring to street walkers.

Admittance and Admission - *Admittance* is better than *admission* in relation to admittance fees and admittance to places, lodges, etc.

Motor car is preferred but *automobile* is not incorrect.

In marking typographical style in copy, conform to the adopted style sheet of *The Star*.