**Hot AP Journalistic Writing Tips CHECKLIST for: self-editing your own work or peer editing NAME\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**General Punctuation Tips**

Do not use a comma in a series joined by a conjunction. (Do ex: She cared for rats, snakes and hamsters.)

Punctuation goes inside quotation marks

Semi-colons separate two independent causes (not commas

Us commas to separate introductory statements or quote and attribution

No exclamation points! :(

**Abbreviations**

Months are abbreviated when with a number or at the start of a sentence.

Months are spelled out when by themselves

Do not abbreviate days of the week (Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, etc.)

Do not use courtesy titles (Mr. Ms., etc.), nor abbreviate them.

Name and title may be creatively separated

Most formal or earned titles may be abbreviated (Dr., Rev., Gov., Sen. Rep., etc.)

Long titles are best after a name

Generally write out long words for first time (Skyline High School, Issaquah School District)

Do not use periods in abbreviations unless they are needed for clarification (U.S. rather than US)

**Capitalization and Acronyms**

Capitalize formal or earned titles before the name

Capital specific (proper) names (Journalistic Writing vs math)

There is no need to write out words if the acronym is far more common (AIDS, HIV, NAACP, USA

Capitalize names of classes when referring to the entire class

Do not capitalize names of classes when referring to a portion of the class or an individual

Only the first letter in the first word of a headline is capitalized

**Numbers**

Generally write out single-digit numbers (one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine)

Generally write out numerals 10+: 10, 997, 14,500, etc.

Do not use superscript (2nd, 4th, Dec. 25th

Write out times from 7:25 a.m. to 3:35 p.m.

Use No.1 (not number one)

Use percent (not %) unless you are dealing with a statistical study

**Formatting**

Only the first letter in the first word of a headline is capitalized, unless a word is a proper adjective (. . . one African friend)

Type By Your Name/s

No indenting

Short paragraphs (1-3 sentences)

Space between each paragraph

When quoting, start a new paragraph

Leading into a quote can be its own paragraph before the quote

AVOID getting a poster image from Google or Facebook or Twitter

Make use of sidebars for notable quotations or statistics

Primary sources (you need to experience it in order to write about it).

**Effective writing**

Use multiple speakers and/or multiple quotations in articles

If you can explain it in fewer words, do

Accuracy, accuracy, accuracy: If you’re wrong, it doesn’t matter how cool your writing sounds

No you, we, I, our (except in a Staff Editorial—use collective we . . . )

Let a quotation support, explain, or give an opinion about an issue

Use “said” (not stated, bellowed, confided, etc.: also not feels, thinks, believes) unless it is inside a specific quotation.