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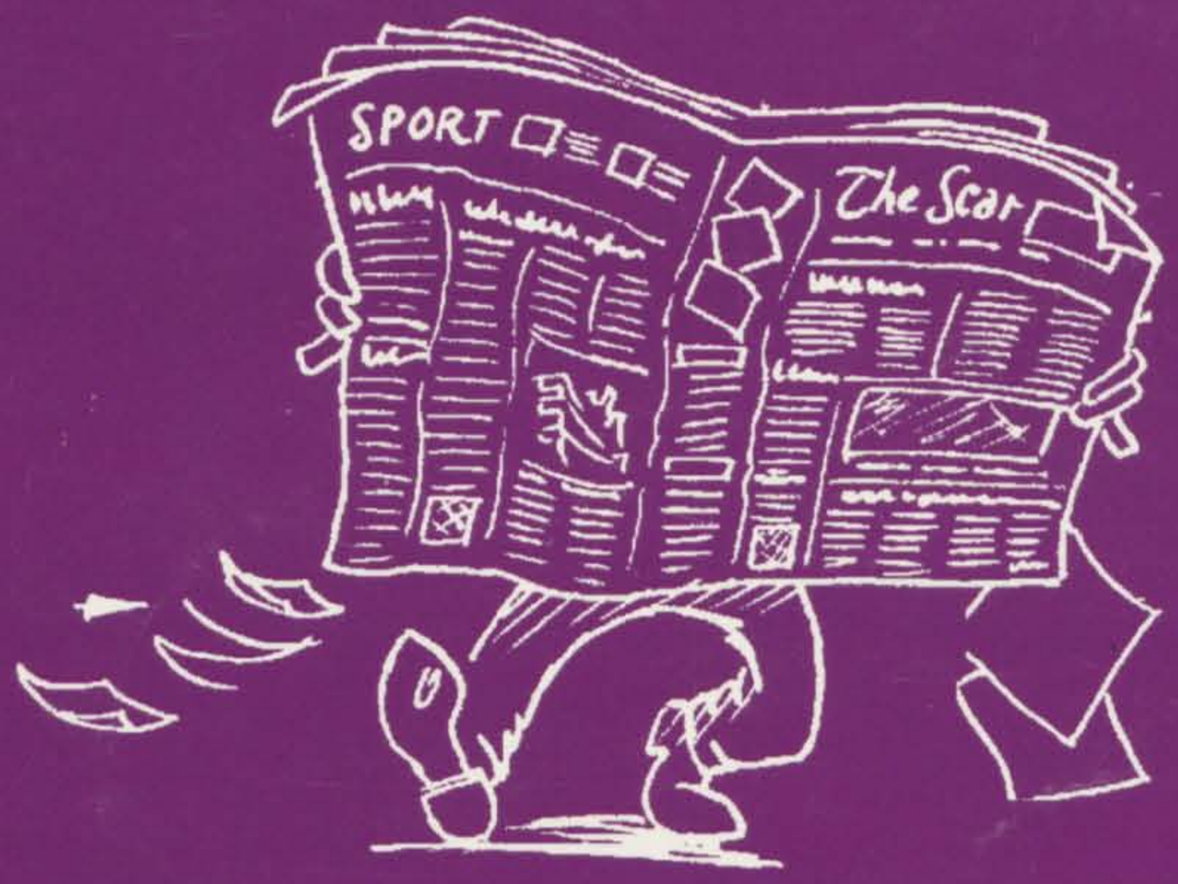
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CRITICAL LANGUAGE AWARENESS SERIES

Edited by Hilary Janks

Language and the News



Peter Rule

Materials for the Classroom



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Language and the News

Peter Rule

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FOREWORD

Newspapers are probably the most accessible and widely-read kind of writing. I read them to find out what is happening in the world, to keep myself informed. Can you think of other reasons, perhaps your own? At a time of rapid social and political change, information is vitally important in helping us to think and to act in our daily lives. Newspapers are a convenient way of keeping informed; they are relatively cheap, easy to get hold of and up-to-date.

So newspapers give us the news. But what is news? As a newspaper reader, I am interested in how newspapers differ. Look at the front pages of different newspapers on the same day: often they present completely different stories, or if they present the same story, there are differences in headlines, pictures and 'facts'!

We need to recognise that newspapers are not simply mirrors of the world. It is people who make newspapers. Whether they be reporters, editors, owners or advertisers, these newspaper people have attitudes and interests of their own. Their interests might be the same as yours, the reader's, or quite different. However, if we see news as simply printed words on a page which mirror the world, we might be influenced by the interests of the newspaper people without knowing it.

How can we detect these attitudes and interests when we read a newspaper? Surely facts are just facts, and news is just news? We need to be aware that newspaper people decide what is newsworthy and what is not, what to include and what to leave out. They also decide how to present particular stories to their readers. 'Facts' are always dressed up in the clothing of language.

The purpose of this book is to help you to develop a critical attitude towards newspapers and their makers. As we read newspapers in order to get information, we need to be aware that newspapers themselves are formed or constructed by those who make them, and that they might be forming our own attitudes and ideas as they are informing us about the world. The exercises in this book ask questions about facts and about news, about how and why news is formed as it is. I hope that they will help you to become more aware of your own formation.

Peter Rule

CRITICAL LANGUAGE AWARENESS (CLA)

This workbook is part of a series called *Critical Language Awareness*. All the workbooks in the series deal with **the relationship between language and power**. This relationship is not obvious and so the materials attempt to raise awareness of the way in which language **can** be used and **is** used to maintain and to challenge existing forms of power. There can be little doubt that power matters, both to people who have it and to those who do not. This series will try to show that because there are connections between language and power, language also matters.

In any **unequal relation of power** there are top dogs and underdogs. How people get to be on top in a society has to do with what that society values. It may be age or maleness or class or cleverness or a white skin. It is easier for those who have power to maintain it if they can persuade everyone in the society that there is nothing unnatural about these arrangements, that things are this way because that is the way they are meant to be.

If people **consent** to being powerless then the people in power need to use less **force** (armies, police, punishments) to maintain their power. Convincing and persuading people to consent to society's rules is often the job of families, religions, schools and the media. All these social institutions use language and it is largely in and through language that meaning is mobilised to defend the status quo.

But **language is also used to challenge the status quo**. By refusing to consent and by working together people can bring about change. What makes CLA 'critical' is its concern with the politics of meaning: the ways in which dominant meanings are maintained, challenged and changed.

When people use language to speak or write, they have to make many choices. They have to decide what words to use, whether to include adjectives and adverbs, whether to use the present, the past or the future, whether to use sexist or non-sexist pronouns, whether to join sentences or to leave them separate, how to sequence information, whether to be definite or tentative, approving or disapproving. What all these choices mean is that written and spoken **texts are constructed from a range of possible language options**.

However, not all the options are linguistic – many **texts are a combination of verbal and non-verbal elements**. Students are asked to think about the non-verbal choices such as photographs, pictures, gestures, graphs, which affect the meaning of texts.

Many of the choices are **social choices**. Every society has conventions which govern people's behaviour, including their language behaviour. There are social rules controlling who should speak, for how long, when and where, and in which language. There are social norms for polite and impolite forms of speech; there are taboo words and topics. These unwritten **rules of use** govern what a speech community considers **appropriate** language behaviour.

These **social norms are a good indication of power relations** as many of them reflect the values of the people or groups in society who have power. This is particularly true when different groups do not have equal language rights. Here is an obvious example. Where teachers have more power than their students, they can call their students what they like. They can use first names or surnames only, or even insulting names that they have made up. Students, however, have to call teachers by their surnames and a title such as Mr or Ms; some students even have to call their teachers 'Sir' or 'Mistress'.

We forget that these rules of use are **social conventions** – they start to look natural and to seem like common sense. We forget that they are human constructions. It is easier to remember this when we compare the rules of different speech communities. Some groups think that it is rude to look a person in the eye when you speak to them. Other groups believe the opposite. Neither is more natural than the other. Both are conventions.

Critical Language Awareness emphasises the fact that texts are constructed. Anything that has been constructed can be **de-constructed**. This unmaking or unpicking of the text increases our awareness of the choices that the writer or speaker has made. Every choice foregrounds what was selected and hides, silences or backgrounds what was not selected. Awareness of this prepares the way to ask **critical questions**: Why did the writer or speaker make these choices? Whose interests do they serve? Who is empowered or disempowered by the language used? We hope that students will also ask these critical questions about the workbooks in the series.

What the series hopes to do is to teach students how to become **critical readers**. Critical readers resist the power of print and do not believe everything they read. They start from a position of strategic doubt and weigh texts against their own ideas and values as well as those of others. This is not opposition for opposition's sake. If CLA enables people to use their awareness to contest the practices which disempower them, and to use language so as not to disempower others, then it can contribute to the struggle for human emancipation.

Hilary Janks

SUGGESTED METHODS FOR TEACHERS

I believe that students learn by talking and writing about new ideas. Often they do not know what they know until they have tried to put their ideas into words. In large classes it is impossible for everyone to talk to the teacher, and students often benefit from telling a friend their feelings and ideas. The friend gives them feedback that enables them to revise and change their opinions before committing themselves to a final answer.

1. To achieve this students need opportunities to:
   Work in pairs with the person next to them. Pair work is easy to organise and it makes everyone in the class speak to some other student.

   Work in groups (from 3 to 5 students).
   The teacher can give groups the same task or different tasks. For example if the students are working on an exercise, different groups can be asked to do different questions or all the groups can be asked to do the same questions. The teacher should keep track of what the groups are doing by
   - moving from group to group to listen to the discussion
   - seeing that all group members contribute
   - asking each group to make notes and sometimes to hand in written answers.

2. **Groups and pairs should report back to the whole class.** If the groups did different questions, they have the responsibility of explaining their answers to the rest of the class so that ideas can be pooled. If they did the same questions, not all groups need report back in order to compare their answers.

3. **Teachers should try to establish a spirit of co-operation rather than competition.** Students should be encouraged to help each other and to share what they know.

4. **Students should be encouraged to listen to one another,** especially during report backs. They should decide whether or not they agree with what the other person is saying. They should also be taught to make notes when their fellow students are speaking.

5. **It is a good idea to allow students to work in their mother tongue** to give them an opportunity at the start of the group work to understand the ideas. Because group work is followed by some spoken or written presentation in the medium of instruction, what is important is that by the end of the group work students are able to express their ideas in the language of the classroom.

6. **Students should also do individual work at school and at home.** This gives them practice in using the medium of instruction and encourages independence.

7. **Both group and individual work should sometimes be written.** In large classes it is not always possible to read everything that students write. Teachers should check students' books regularly to see that they are doing the work and that they understand the lessons. Some exercises should be marked carefully. Students need teachers to respond to what they are trying to say. It is also possible to go over exercises in class and to teach students how to check their own work.

8. **Some activities can be done in less depth than the workbook suggests.** Sometimes the workbook includes more than one activity on the same idea or concept. If the students grasp the idea with the first exercise, the teacher should feel free to do the related exercises more quickly (say with a brief read through) or not at all. Different students in the class can do different exercises in more or less detail according to their needs.

9. **Some activities can be done in more depth than the workbook suggests.** If the class gets really interested in something the teacher should encourage students to find similar examples in newspapers or magazines which they can bring to class for additional discussion. Teachers and students should devise their own exercises.

10. **Teachers and students should constantly relate the issues and activities in the workbooks to their own lives and experiences.** The workbooks are only a starting point for the exploration of the language and power issues that they raise, and lessons should not simply stick to the book.

11. **Teachers should help students to apply ideas in these workbooks to all their school subjects.**

12. **Teachers can make the ideas less abstract for the students** by encouraging them to do the research, the collages and the drawings as well as the dramatisations, debates and discussions suggested.

13. **Teachers should facilitate class discussions.** The workbooks deal with real and sensitive issues. Teachers need to help students to listen to one another and to try to understand the different histories and positions that other people in the class speak from. We need to hear other people and not try to convert them to our way of thinking.

14. **It is important to vary the approach used.** Different people learn in different ways. By varying the method, the teacher gives all the students a better chance of learning in ways that suit them best.

H Janks

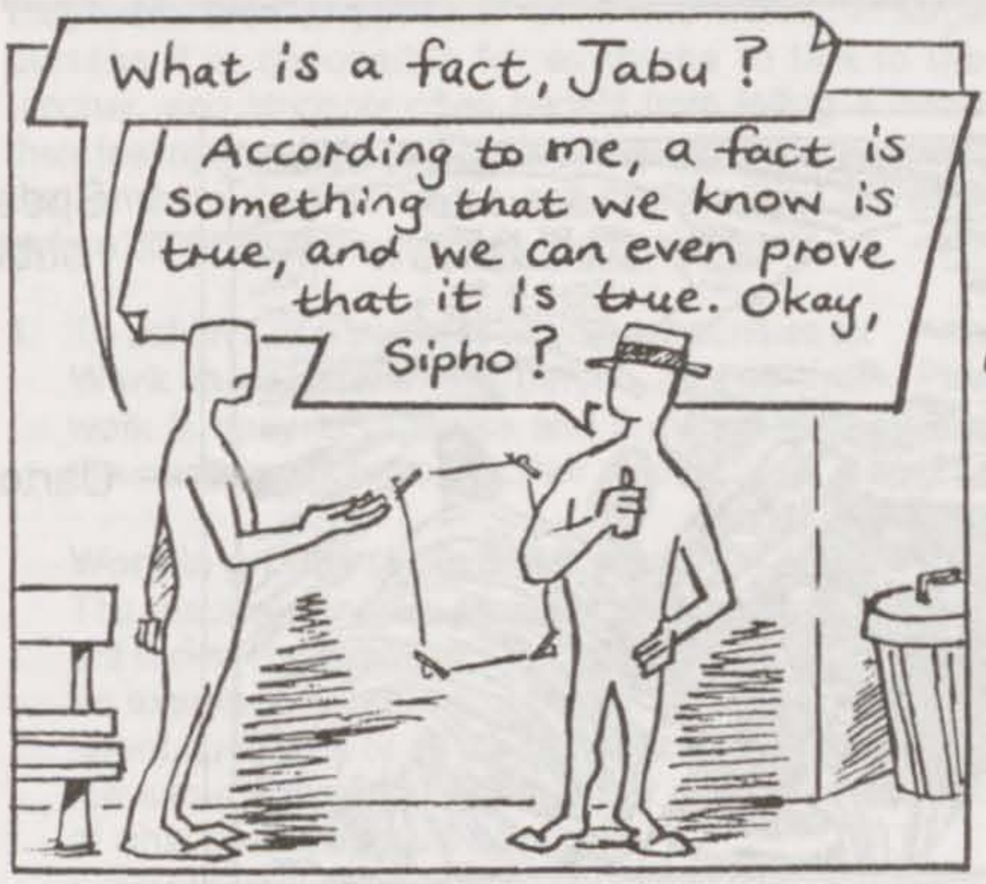
USEFUL TERMINOLOGY FOR TALKING ABOUT NEWSPAPERS

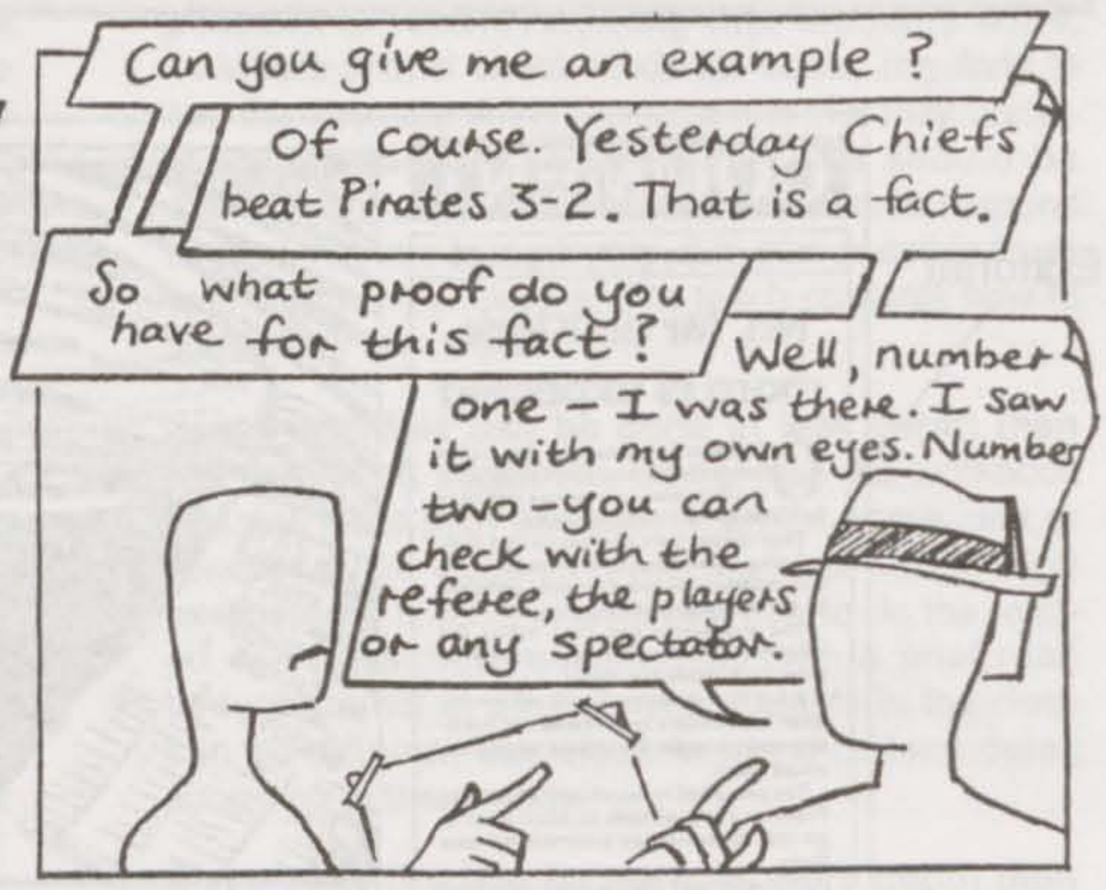
LAY-OUT: the way the print and pictures are arranged on the page.



INTRODUCTION 1 : WHAT IS A FACT?

Read the discussion below and then work on the exercises that follow.

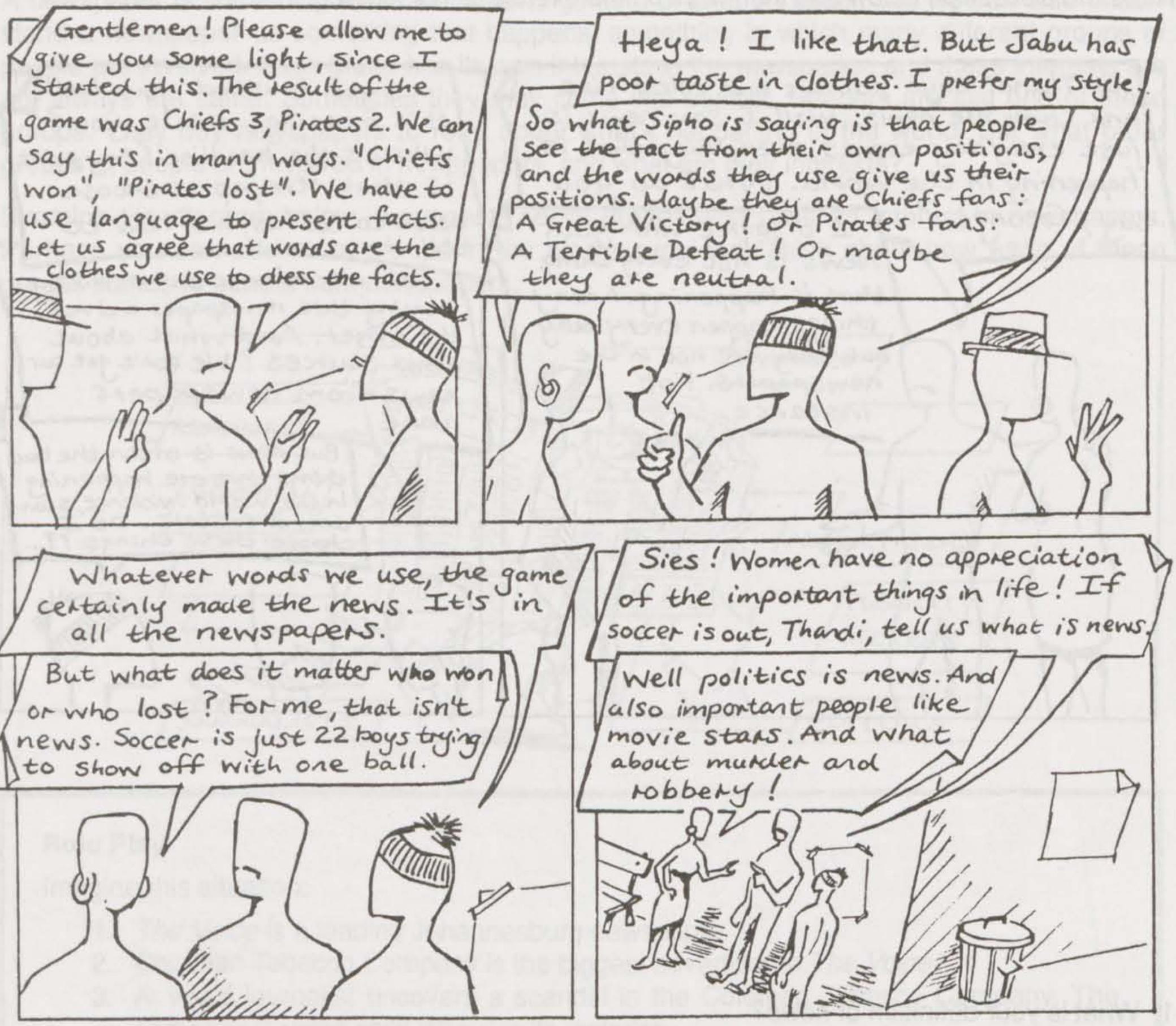








INTRODUCTION 1 : WHAT IS A FACT?



1. What is your definition of a fact?
2. a) Write down one example of a fact.
   b) Try to state this one fact in as many different ways as possible.
   c) Now compare these different statements of your fact. How exactly do they differ? Is one closer to the truth than the others?
3. a) Write a paragraph describing what happened in your class yesterday.
   b) Swop your paragraph with a classmate's. How does it compare with your paragraph? What are the similarities and differences?
   c) Discuss the differences between the paragraphs with your classmate. In your discussion, consider why you included certain things and left out others, and why you expressed yourself in the way that you did.

INTRODUCTION 2 : WHAT IS NEWS?

Read the discussion below and then work on the exercises that follow.



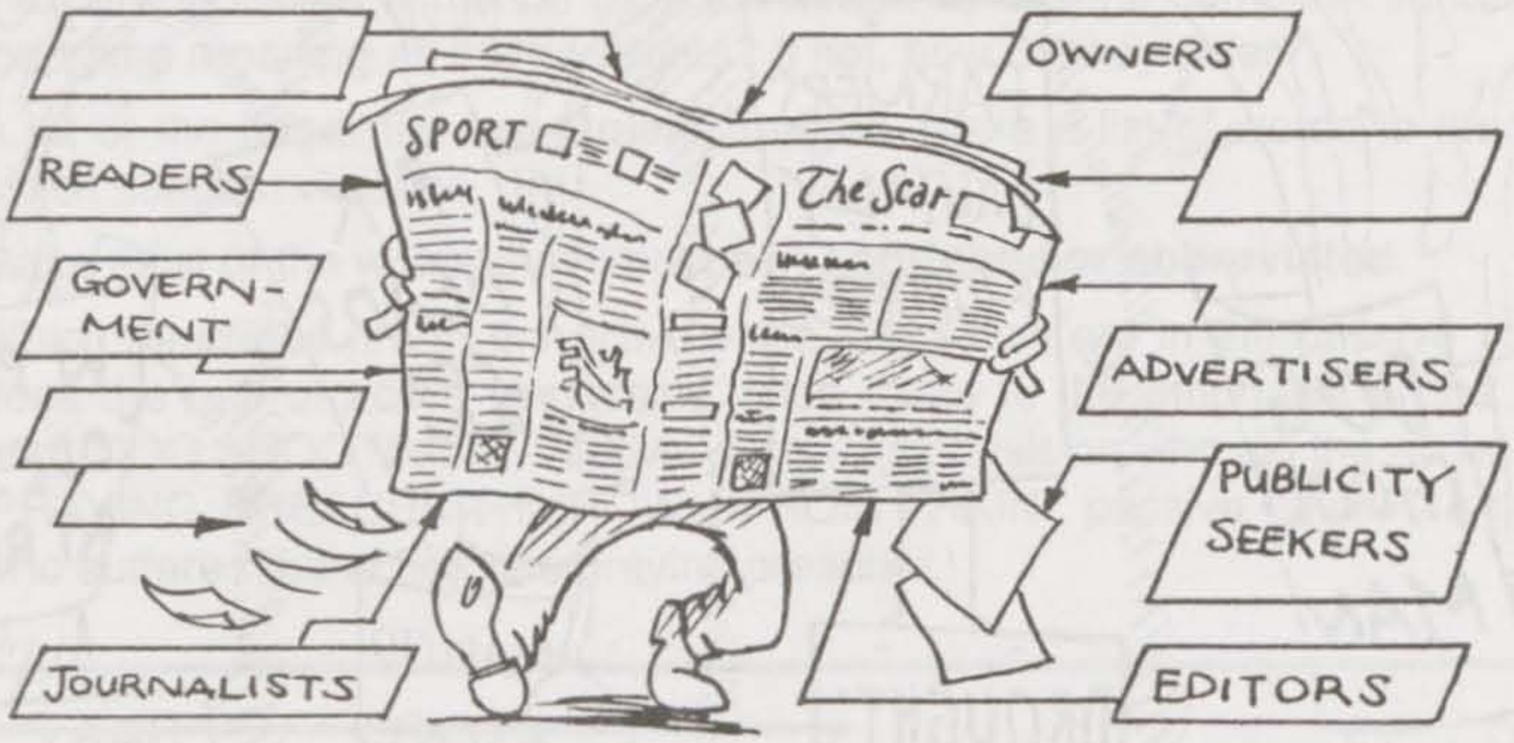
1. What is your definition of news?
2. On page 2 we saw how Jabu and George reported the result of the same soccer match in different ways. This showed us how news changes depending on who tells it to you. Give your own example of how different people would report the same event.
3. a) Where do you get your news from?
   b) What kinds of events do you consider newsworthy?
   (Compare your answers to a) and b) with a partner's.)
   c) In what way do people choose their own news?
4. Now think of the following kinds of people:
   a) accountant
   b) priest
   c) teacher
   d) unemployed person
   e) farm worker
   f) bank robber
   g) soccer star
   h) political activist
   i) primary school child
   j) pensioner

   What events do you think each of them would consider newsworthy? Why?

THE NEWSPAPER INDUSTRY: IN WHOSE INTERESTS?

A newspaper is something we read, an arrangement of print on paper. But we can also understand a newspaper as something that happens, something in which many different groups of people are involved. Each group has its own interests in the newspaper, and these interests are not always the same. Sometimes they may come into conflict. Readers are just one of these groups. They buy newspapers to read about what's happening in the world. But what other groups of people are involved in newspapers, and what are their interests?

Examine the diagram below. It suggests social groups who have an interest in newspapers. Perhaps you can add more groups in the blocks provided. Think about how each of these groups stands to benefit from newspapers.



Role Play

Imagine this situation:

1. *The Voice* is a leading Johannesburg newspaper.
2. Coleman Tobacco Company is the biggest advertiser in *The Voice*.
3. A *Voice* journalist uncovers a scandal in the Coleman Tobacco Company. The company is using child labour in its factories.
4. A photographer from *The Voice* has photographs of children working in a Coleman factory.

Role play a meeting at *The Voice* headquarters. At the meeting there is disagreement about whether *The Voice* should publish the pictures and story.

Characters:

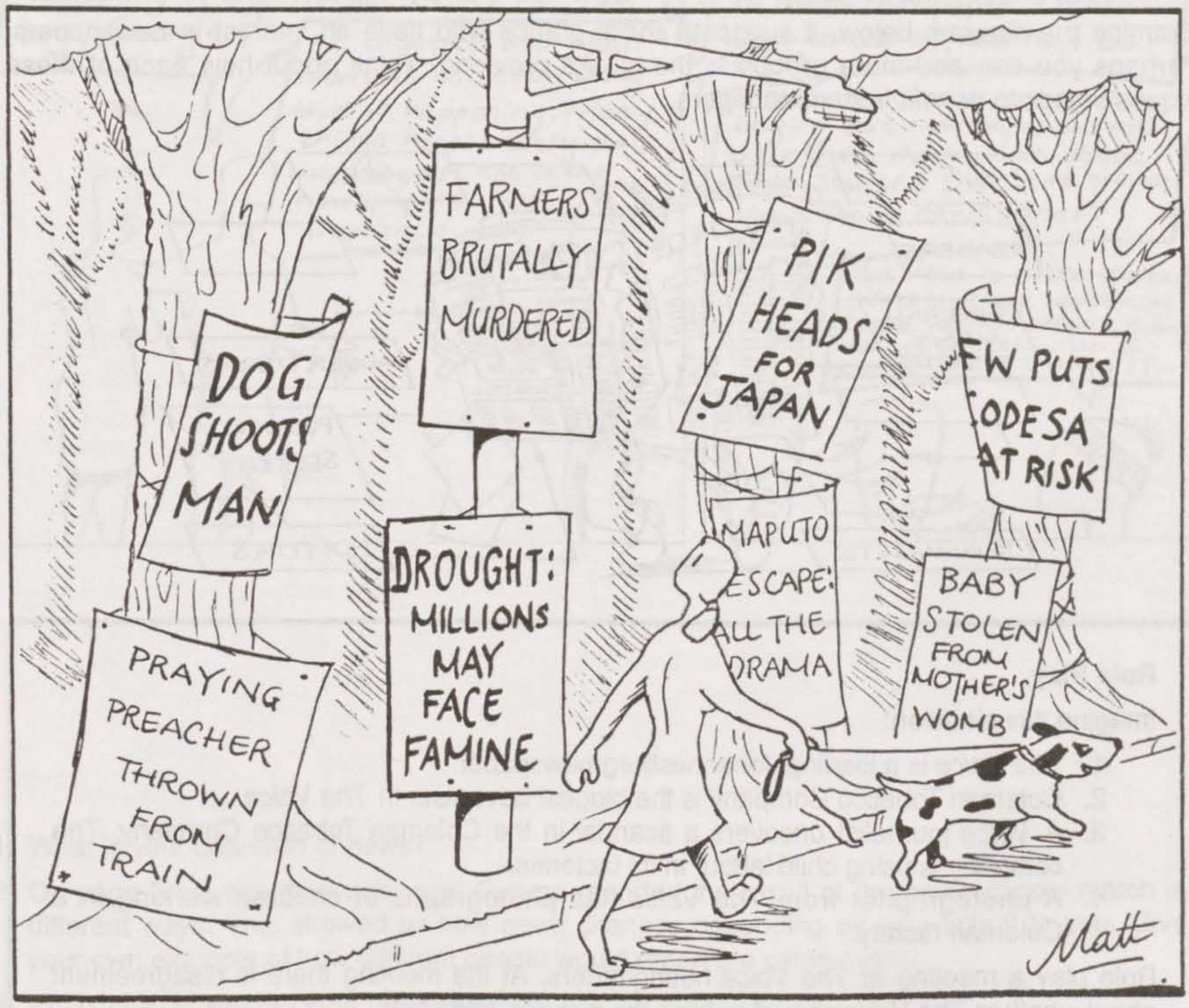
1. The owner of the newspaper
2. The advertising director of the newspaper
3. The editor
4. The journalist who uncovered the scandal
5. The photographer

After the role play: Discuss what you learnt from this activity about power relations among different interest groups in a newspaper.

BANNERS : THE NEWS ON THE STREETS

A banner is a headline that appears on a poster beneath the name of the newspaper. These banners are displayed on posters on street poles, trees, fences, etc.

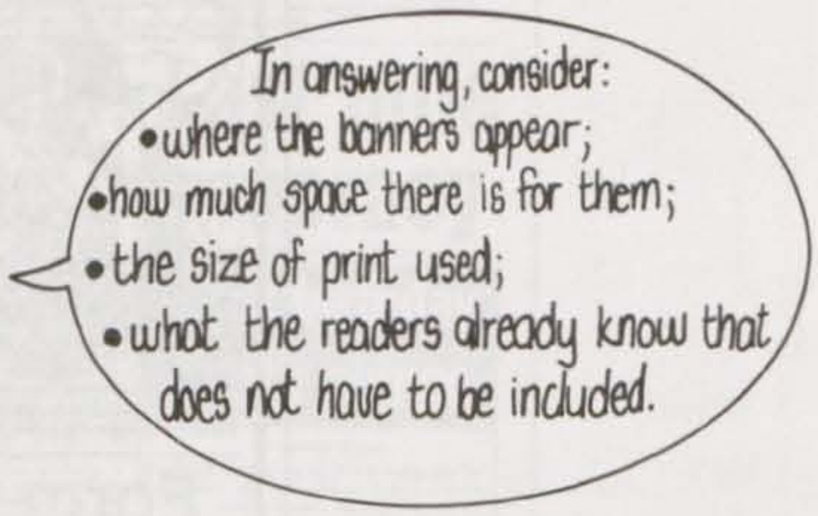
Examine the banners below and answer the accompanying questions. These banners were collected from various newspapers during February and March 1992.



BANNERS : THE NEWS ON THE STREETS

Questions

1. Identify all the **verbs** in the banner headlines on page 6. Categorise these verbs according to their **tense**, e.g. past, present, etc. Do you know when the events which the headlines refer to actually happened?
2. Are the headlines **complete sentences**? If not, what is missing? To answer this, write out the headlines as grammatically complete sentences. What words did you add?
3. Compare your sentences with a partner's. Are they the same, or is there more than one possible sentence for each headline? Do the complete sentences have the same meaning as the headlines? If not, how do they differ?
4. A lot of the headlines use **violent images**. Make a list of words in the headlines which suggest violence.
5. Make a list of the words that have been **shortened or abbreviated**.
6. Which headlines are in the active voice and which are in the passive voice? How does the use of active or passive voice relate to the emphasis of the headline? (e.g. 'DOG SHOOTS MAN': active voice – emphasis on who did the action: the dog. 'PRAYING PREACHER THROWN FROM TRAIN': passive voice – emphasis on who suffered the action: the praying preacher.)
7. Questions 1-6 are about the **language features** of banner headlines. These features include aspects such as tense, sentence form, choice of words and abbreviations. Why do you think banner headlines display the language features that they do?



Research Project

1. Look around in your neighbourhood or in town. Make your own collection of banners from different newspapers.

   Make a presentation to the class of these banners in which you comment on the following aspects:

   a) **language features** such as tense, sentence form, word choice, abbreviations, voice, etc.

   b) **comparison** of banners from **different newspapers** – do you notice differences? If so, what are they and how do you account for them?
2. Banners are used to sell newspapers. They are like advertisements for newspapers. Look at the banners that you have collected as well as those on the opposite page. How does the language of the banners make people want to buy the newspapers? And **who** do you think will want to buy the newspaper?

THE FRONT PAGE : THE FIRST- AND MOST-READ NEWS

People who read newspapers usually look at the front page first. Because of this, newspapers place the news that they most want people to read on the front page. The top left hand side of the front page is the most read part of the newspaper.

Examine the front page news of the *Sowetan* and *The Citizen* from Tuesday 18 May 1992 and then discuss the questions that follow. Concentrate on the headlines, pictures, captions and bold print. Ignore the fine print of the stories.



Police uncover credit cards racket, warn public -- see page 2

SOWETAN

MONDAY MAY 18 1992 LATE FINAL All areas 60c (including VAT)

WIN CASH PRIZES INSTANTLY!
safecracker
0873-0874-02
Calls charged at R5.97 per minute

Interim body 'next month'

By ISMAIL LAGARDIEN
Political Correspondent

THE new impetus given to Codesa could mean the appointment of a Transitional Executive Council next month when Parliament is expected to pass legislation.

The legislation, to be approved by Codesa, will empower President FW de Klerk to establish this body.

The Government has draft legislation ready for amendment by Codesa and ratification by a third plenary session which will take place before the end of June.

The single proviso is that agreement is reached on the critical issue of the voting percentage and procedure to pass a new constitution.

Codesa II was, however, rattled on Friday when a disagreement on the voting procedure and percentage between Government and the ANC put the entire negotiating process on the verge of collapse.

Mrs Winnie Mandela leads a protest song at a mass meeting in Watville where she called on residents to form defence units. Pic: JOE MOLEFE.

Form defence units — Winnie

By MZIMASI NGUDLE

FORM defence units and "we shall provide the means of defence", Mrs Winnie Mandela told a mass meeting called by the ANC on the East Rand yesterday.

Mandela told the emotionally charged meeting at the Etwatwa High School in Watsville that ANC membership had become a "death warrant".

She said the ANC casualty list in the ongoing violence was crippling the organisation's grassroots.

She said people were scared of joining the ANC because of numerous instances of violence where the majority of victims were ANC members.

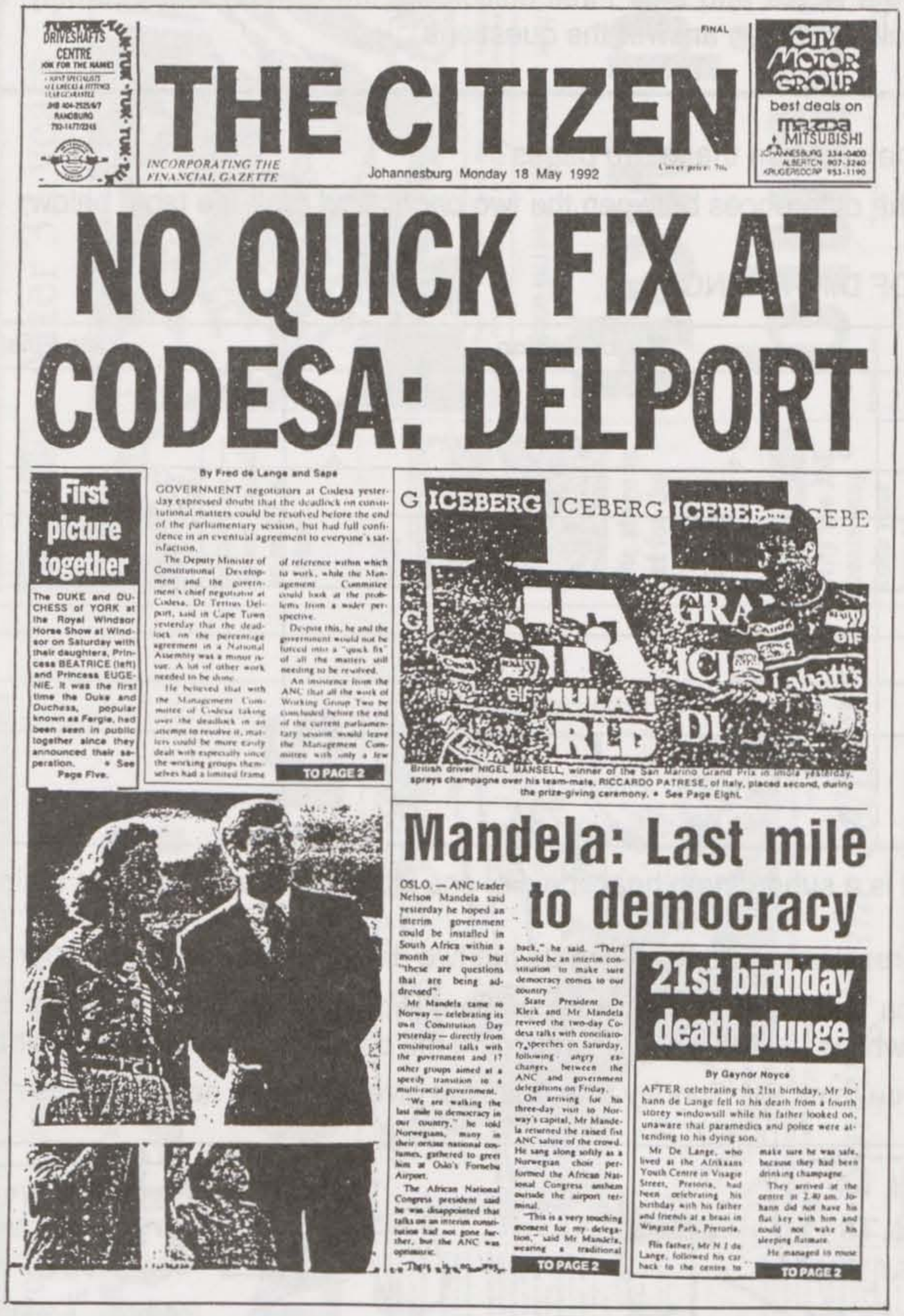
Calling residents to form defence units and strong street committees, Mandela said: "If tomorrow you form defence units and street committees, and you don't have the

To page 2.

18TH BIRTHDAY
SALE
up to
50%
discount on all goods
STOCKISTS OF
CARDUCCI CHRISTIAN DIOR FRANCO BIANCO
PIERRE CARDIN YVES ST LAURENT VIYELLA
THE GUYS
Cor. President and Kruis Streets. Tel. (011) 337-1650/1
Cor. Eloff and Bree Streets, Johannesburg 2000. Tel. (011)

1. Consider the way each page is arranged and the size of the print used. Which story is most important to each newspaper? How do you know?
2. Make a list of the stories and pictures that appear on the front page of:
   a) *Sowetan*. b) *The Citizen*.

3. What differences do you notice when comparing the two pages?
4. To understand why two newspapers from the same city do not present the same news on the same day, consider the following questions:
   a) Who reads each paper?
   b) What are the interests of the readers?
   c) Who writes the stories?
   d) What are the political standpoints of each paper? Which parties or policies do they support?
   e) Do the advertisements on the front page tell you anything about the readers?



DRIVESHAFTS CENTRE
JOIN FOR THE NAME!
RANDBURG

FINAL

THE CITIZEN

INCORPORATING THE FINANCIAL GAZETTE

Johannesburg Monday 18 May 1992

CITY MOTOR GROUP
best deals on mazda MITSUBISHI
JOHANNESBURG 334-0400
ALBERTON 907-3240
KRUGERSDORP 953-1190

NO QUICK FIX AT CODESA: DELPORT

First picture together

The DUKE and DUCHESS of YORK at the Royal Windsor Horse Show at Windsor on Saturday with their daughters, Princess BEATRICE (left) and Princess EUGENIE. It was the first time the Duke and Duchess, popular known as Fergie, had been seen in public together since they announced their seperation. • See Page Five.

By Fred de Lange and Sapa

GOVERNMENT negotiators at Codesa yesterday expressed doubt that the deadlock on constitutional matters could be resolved before the end of the parliamentary session, but had full confidence in an eventual agreement to everyone's satisfaction.

The Deputy Minister of Constitutional Development and the government's chief negotiator at Codesa, Dr Tertius Delport, said in Cape Town yesterday that the deadlock on the percentage agreement in a National Assembly was a minor issue. A lot of other work needed to be done.

He believed that with the Management Committee of Codesa taking over the deadlock in an attempt to resolve it, matters could be more easily dealt with especially since the working groups themselves had a limited frame of reference within which to work, while the Management Committee could look at the problems from a wider perspective.

Despite this, he and the government would not be forced into a "quick fix" of all the matters still needing to be resolved.

An insistence from the ANC that all the work of Working Group Two be concluded before the end of the current parliamentary session would leave the Management Committee with only a few

TO PAGE 2

British driver NIGEL MANSELL, winner of the San Marino Grand Prix in Imola yesterday, sprays champagne over his team-mate, RICCARDO PATRESE, of Italy, placed second, during the prize-giving ceremony. • See Page Eight.

Mandela: Last mile to democracy

OSLO. — ANC leader Nelson Mandela said yesterday he hoped an interim government could be installed in South Africa within a month or two but "these are questions that are being addressed".

Mr Mandela came to Norway — celebrating its own Constitution Day yesterday — directly from constitutional talks with the government and 17 other groups aimed at a speedy transition to a multi-racial government.

"We are walking the last mile to democracy in our country," he told Norwegians, many in their ornate national costumes, gathered to greet him at Oslo's Fornebu Airport.

The African National Congress president said he was disappointed that talks on an interim constitution had not gone further, but the ANC was optimistic.

"There's a lot more back," he said. "There should be an interim constitution to make sure democracy comes to our country."

State President De Klerk and Mr Mandela revived the two-day Codesa talks with conciliatory speeches on Saturday, following angry exchanges between the ANC and government delegations on Friday.

On arriving for his three-day visit to Norway's capital, Mr Mandela returned the raised fist ANC salute of the crowd. He sang along softly as a Norwegian choir performed the African National Congress anthem outside the airport terminal.

"This is a very touching moment for my delegation," said Mr Mandela, wearing a traditional

TO PAGE 2

21st birthday death plunge

By Gaynor Noyce

AFTER celebrating his 21st birthday, Mr Johann de Lange fell to his death from a fourth storey windowsill while his father looked on, unaware that paramedics and police were attending to his dying son.

Mr De Lange, who lived at the Afrikaans Youth Centre in Visagie Street, Pretoria, had been celebrating his birthday with his father and friends at a braai in Wingate Park, Pretoria.

His father, Mr N J de Lange, followed his car back to the centre to make sure he was safe, because they had been drinking champagne.

They arrived at the centre at 2.40 am. Johann did not have his flat key with him and could not wake his sleeping flatmate.

He managed to rouse

TO PAGE 2

The Back Page: If the front page of a newspaper presents the most important news, what about the back page? Does it present the least important news? Check your answer by looking at the back page of different newspapers.

THE FRONT PAGE : NEWS IN BLACK AND WHITE?

We have seen that different newspapers have different stories on their front pages. But what about different editions of the **same** newspaper? The two front pages displayed here are from the Africa and Late Final editions of the *Sunday Star*, 26 July 1992. Study the two carefully and then answer the questions.

1. What is the same on these two pages?
2. Analyse the differences between the two pages and fill in the table below:

ANALYSIS OF DIFFERENCES

	Africa Edition	**Late Final Edition**
Headlines	1. 2. 3.	
Sub-heads*		
Pictures (subject)		
Captions		
Stories (topic)	1. 2. 3.	
Writers	1. 2. 3.	

*A sub-head is a subordinate headline, i.e. one which is smaller than the main headline.

3. What impressions of South Africa do the two different pictures and captions present?
4. "The Africa and Late Final editions present two worlds: a black world for blacks and a white world for whites. In this way they reinforce the divisions in our society." What do you think?
5. Why do you think the *Sunday Star* does not give the same news to all its readers?



Africa Edition

NEWS: *Tearful Jani faces the 'Killer' with a scalpel* ▶6

SPORT: *All Blacks arrive — full squad and tour plans* ▶40



SUNDAY Star

JULY 26 1992 R2,20

Sunday Money



Soccer Inc — those poised to make a fortune ▶1

Life



The stage is set for the greatest Games ▶1

Insight

Why the JSE bears may take your money ▶22

Pick Six ▶36

BOND BOYCOTT *threats put banks on the defensive*

Freeze on home loans

BY HENTON KAMBEMA

A NUMBER of banks and building societies are putting a virtual freeze on the granting of bonds for black townships, according to Soweto City Council and builders.

The move comes after a call from the Civic Association of the Southern Transvaal for a bond repayments boycott.

But the steps now being taken by banks may lead to a number of building contractors going out of business.

Meanwhile, as a result of the banks' efforts to protect themselves, they now face deeper trouble.

Moses Mayekiso, president of the SA National Civic Organisation, has vowed to organise mass action against the financial institutions involved in the bond freeze.

Such action would include the occupation of offices, the blocking of building entrances and picketing.

▶ See Page 4

Bitter pill for Bucs

BY THOMAS KWENAITE

ORLANDO Pirates, still exuding boundless confidence after their historic win over English First Division side Crystal Palace last weekend, led arch-rivals Kaizer Chiefs 2-0 for most of their Coca-Cola Cup knockout game yesterday — and ended losers.

Two quick goals in the dying minutes of the game wiped the smiles off the Bucs' faces; the bitter pill was starting extra time on equal terms with their Phefeni rivals.

The unkindest cut of all was delivered by Fani Madida — striking Chief's winning goal in the 117th minute to earn his side a 3-2 win and a place in the semifinals, where they will tackle Hellenic at the Rand Stadium next Saturday.

Pirates' first goal was a cracker. Taking a free kick, Tshoane smashed in a tremendous shot. Full back Nyathi put Bucs two up.

▶ See Page 17



WE SHALL OVERCOME ... defiant protesters are forced into a prison van outside the Jeppe Street Post Office yesterday. PICTURE: DEBBIE YAZBEK

Singing to the cells

BY BRENDAN SEERY

SINGING and dancing their way into detention yesterday, hundreds of demonstrators showed their defiance as the siege of the Johannesburg Post Office came to a peaceful, if noisy, end.

As the mass-action campaigners were shoved into yellow SAP "paddy wagons", they sang liberation songs, toyi-toyied and stomped their feet on the floors of the vehicles, celebrating the victory of bringing the business of the Post Office to a halt on a busy month-end Saturday.

Police said they arrested about 300 people, including the general secretary of the Post and Telecommunications Workers Association (Potwa), Mlungisi Hlongwane. However, mass action organisers claimed at least 500 protesters were taken away. Journalists counted at least 15 three-ton prison vans – packed with around 25 to 30 people each – driven away from the main Post Office in Jeppe Street.

Police spokesman Lieutenant Wikus Weber said: "We had given warnings earlier in the week that we were not going to tolerate occupations of Government buildings."

Late Final Edition

NEWS: *Tearful Jani faces the 'Killer' with a scalpel* ▶6

SPORT: *All Blacks arrive — full squad and tour plans* ▶40



SUNDAY Star

LATE FINAL JULY 26 1992 R2,20

Sunday Money



Soccer Inc — those poised to make a fortune ▶1

Life



The stage is set for the greatest Games ▶1

Insight

Why the JSE bears may take your money ▶22

Pick Six ▶36

After 32 years ... we're back



IN IT TOGETHER ... the sight of South Africa's athletes in Barcelona's Olympic arena last night brought tears to millions of TV viewers back home. ■ Full TV guide and previews — See Life, Sport and Insight. PICTURE: AFP

NORWOOD KILLINGS: *Why wasn't suspect arrested months ago?*

How police blundered

BY JANINE LAZARUS

THE police could have arrested the Norwood serial killings suspect months ago before he struck again.

A Sunday Star investigation has shown that the police blundered by not following a vital clue vigorously enough.

Although the police acted swiftly and efficiently after last week's murder of a 16-year-old schoolgirl in Benoni, doubts have been raised about their previous investigations.

The Sunday Star has established that:

■ Fingerprints were found at the scenes of several rape and murder scenes in Norwood.

■ The police suspected that the killer-rapist was a policeman living at the Norwood barracks near all the Norwood attacks.

■ All policemen are fingerprinted.

■ Three months after the last Norwood attack the police said they had fingerprinted and cleared of suspicion "every policeman and his son who could be possible suspects".

Now the question that remains unanswered after the dramatic arrest of Lance-Sergeant Jacobus Petrus Geldenhuys at the Internal Stability Unit in Alexandra on Tuesday this week is:

Why were the police not able to trace the suspect months ago through fingerprints left at the scenes of rape and murder in Norwood?

In another dramatic development yesterday the Sunday Star learnt last night that detectives who searched Geldenhuys' Benoni house, found property belonging to a number of the women who were raped and murdered in Norwood.

Veronica Tayler's purse and handbag had been found on a roof near her house where they had apparently been tossed by her killer.

▶ Continued on Page 4

PrimeTime: STUNNING NEW TV SERIES REVEALS HITLER'S SA LINKS ▶18

NEWSPAPER HEADLINES : THE NEWS IN BOLD

On Thursday 20 February 1992 President FW de Klerk announced a white referendum with constitutional reforms. The following day Johannesburg newspapers featured this announcement on their front pages. Each newspaper had a different headline. **A headline is what you see first when you read a story in a newspaper. It tells you the main point of the story.**



WHITE PARTIES OK REFERENDUM

– The Citizen

FW bombshell

– The Star

WHITE VOTE

– Sowetan

KP-BOIKOT MOONTLIK

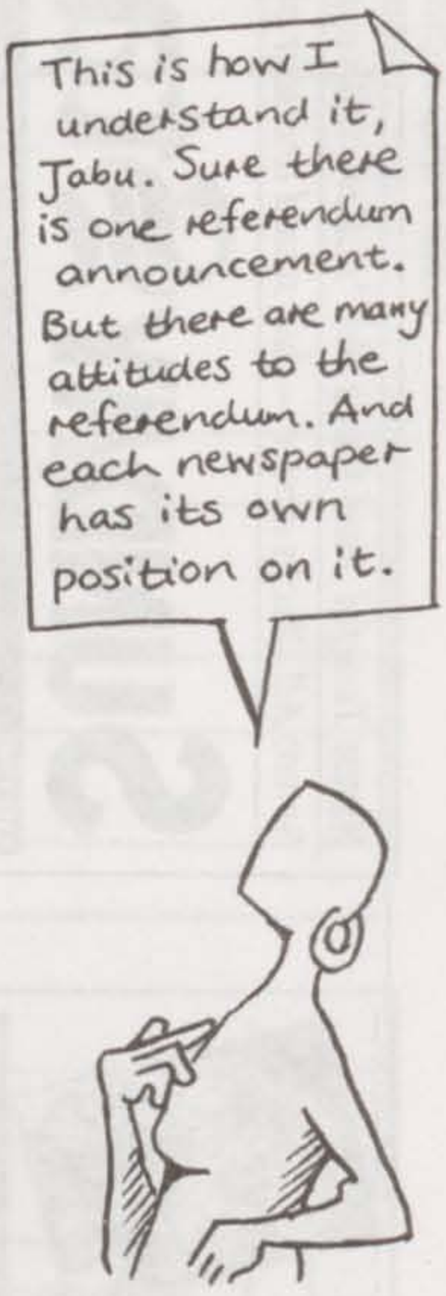
(CP Boycott Possible)

– Die Transvaler

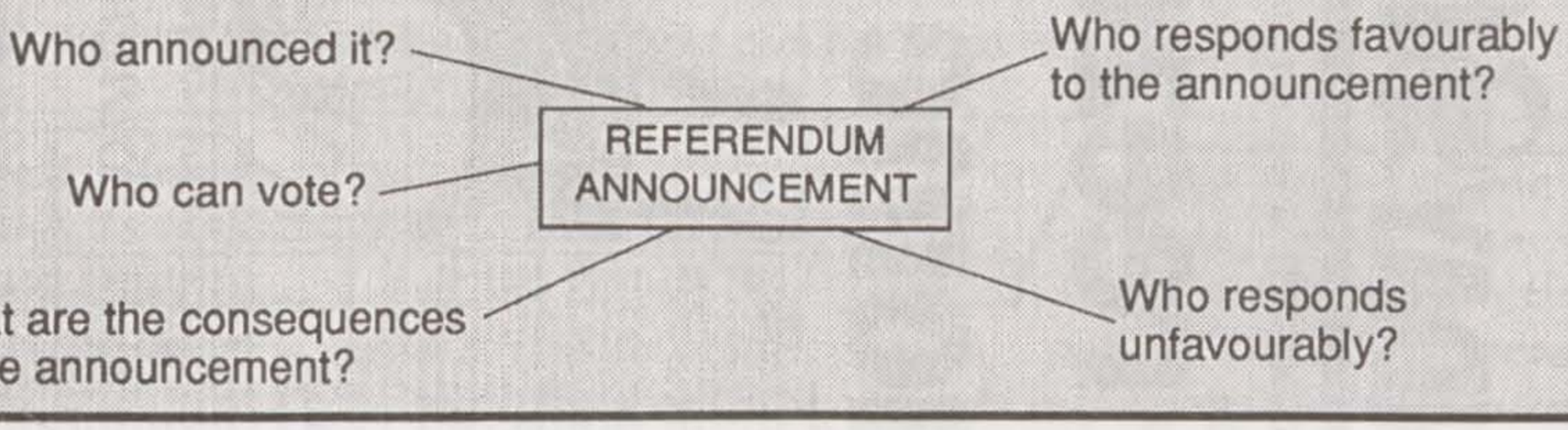
FW'S GAMBLE

Either he wins ... or you lose

– The Weekly Mail



We can begin to work out the attitude of the newspaper by looking at what the headline emphasises. The emphasis of the headline makes the reader see the story from a particular point of view. Examine this diagram carefully.



1. Look at the referendum headlines above. Look at the questions about the referendum announcement in the grey box. Now work out the *emphasis* of each headline by seeing which question it answers.
2. How do these headlines show whether the newspapers think there should be a referendum or not?

DIFFERENT LANGUAGE FOR DIFFERENT NEWS : REGISTER

The underlined words all belong to the register of sport, more particularly of soccer. A reader not familiar with soccer might find it difficult to work out what the story is about. We could say that **knowledge** of a particular register gives a person **power** to understand a certain aspect of life.

MOSCOW — Mark Hughes was sent off with less than two minutes of normal time remaining in the second leg of this UEFA Cup first round tie yesterday, and though United's 10 men played fluently through 30 minutes of extra time they then blew away another European campaign in a penalty shoot-out on the banks of the Moskva River.

When it came to sudden-death, United won an immediate advantage, Peter Schmeichel saved Torpedo's first shot and their second hit the crossbar. Denis Irwin gave United a 2-0 lead before Alexander Podshivalov, who has matched the Danish giant stride for stride in this tie, saved from Steve Bruce.

Different aspects of life feature in the news. These aspects may include world affairs, for example, or health issues, or education. Sometimes a newspaper will set aside particular pages for such news. The language of such news is often specific and specialised. Subject-specific language is called **register**.

Now examine the extracts below, and answer the questions that follow.

A.

JOHNNY CLEGG: THE CROSSING
Sun City Superbowl

AFTER three years away from the South African stage, Johnny Clegg is now playing at Sun City's Superbowl. The last of the shows take place tonight and tomorrow.

Clegg's current tour, *The Crossing*, is an historic event. Sipho Mchunu joined Clegg on stage for an ample portion of the show, bringing back to life the magic of Juluka. Just to see these two together again made the show worthwhile. Mchunu will appear with Clegg throughout the current tour.

B.

WALL STREET

NEW YORK — Stocks rocketed yesterday in a rally that caught many investors by surprise.

Analysts said the rise was mainly due to program and institutional buying which could herald the completion of a sector rotation.

"Strength is coming back to some sectors that were out of favour," said one. "Look at the leadership of both the motors and the drug stocks — you see all kinds of companies leading this."

C.

Greyville thriller

In a nail-biting finish, the four-year-old gelding Mighty Crystal got up in the last stride to win the R50 000 Michaelmas Handicap over 1 9000 m at Greyville in Durban yesterday. . The Crystal De Roche gelding touched off favourite Yellow Brick Road by a short head with third-placed Transfix just a head further back in third. — Sapa.

1. Make a list of the words and phrases specific to each subject discussed.
2. Where would you expect each extract to appear in a newspaper?
3. Which extract do *you* find most interesting/most boring? What kind of people do you think would be interested in each extract?
4. Can you think of any registers that do not appear in newspapers? If so, how would you account for their absence?
5. Of the four subject-specific registers represented above, which do you think has most power in society? In what way? Why is this so?

FROM BANNER TO PAGE : THE SHAPING OF A STORY

Examine the banner, the headline and the story below (*The Star* 30 March1992)

A BANNER

1. What is your first reaction to this banner?

2. Why do you think the banner begins with this word?

BABY STOLEN FROM MOTHER'S WOMB

3. What is the tense and voice of this verb? Do we know who did the action?

4. Why does the banner use this word and not the person's name?

5. What are the connotations of this word? (What other words does it make you think of?) How does the link between the words "womb" and "stolen" make you feel?

B HEADLINE

2. In what other ways does this headline differ from the banner?

1. According to this headline, who is the source of information?

C STORY

Baby snatched from my womb, says mom

RIO DE JANEIRO — Three men kidnapped a pregnant woman, induced labour and stole her baby, police said on Saturday. Authorities believe the child was taken by baby traffickers.

Isabel Santos (42) was kidnapped in a street in Rio's poor North Zone on Thursday, blindfolded and driven to a clinic. There a drug was used to induce labour.

Mrs Santos, who was nine months pregnant, heard her baby crying after the birth, but never saw the child because her head was covered during the ordeal. Later, she was given money for a taxi home. — Sapa-AP.

3. Who are the doers of the actions mentioned in the headlines? Why are they not mentioned there?

4. According to the story, who is the source of information?

5. Change the voice (active → passive, passive → active) of the underlined sentences. How do these changes shift the emphasis of the story?

6. What information is missing from the story? Do you think any other facts should be included?

FROM BANNER TO PAGE : THE SHAPING OF A STORY

News is constructed:

To construct something means to build or make it by fitting the parts together. We construct houses and cars, for example. But news is also constructed. Newspapers and the news that they present are made by people. Reporters and editors decide which stories should go into the newspaper. In this way they 'construct' the news. They choose certain facts and omit others. They also make choices about how to present their facts and what to emphasise. They do this by using the active voice instead of the passive, 'mother' instead of 'Isabel Santos', etc. How do you think they make these choices? What guides them in deciding?

Construct your own news

1. Rewrite the banner on the opposite page to put the emphasis on **who** did the action.
2. Rewrite the story headline to place the emphasis on the **role of the police**.
3. With a partner, compare your new banners and headlines. Then look back at the original banner and headline. Which do you think readers would find more interesting? Why?
4. Role play an interview between a reporter and Mr Josê Santos, the husband of Isabel, in which you discuss the baby-snatching incident. Then rewrite the story to include material from the interview. How does it change the story? Does it make it more or less interesting for the reader? Why?



FROM PAGE TO POSTER : THE SHAPING OF A STORY

Read carefully the story below which appeared in *The Star*, 31 March 1992

By Clyde Johnson
Lowveld Bureau

HAZYVIEW — Three policemen steered an aggressive 2 m crocodile from grounds of a Hazyview church at the weekend and led it to a nearby stream.

Warrant Officer Raymond Le Clus said constables Jacques Nel and Johan Niewenhuizen were on patrol when they were waved down by a man and woman on Sunday at 8 pm.

"Come quickly the crocodile has entered the grounds of the Hazyview Christian Church and we are terrified," they said.

The policemen found the reptile between the church building and a security fence and radioed for help.

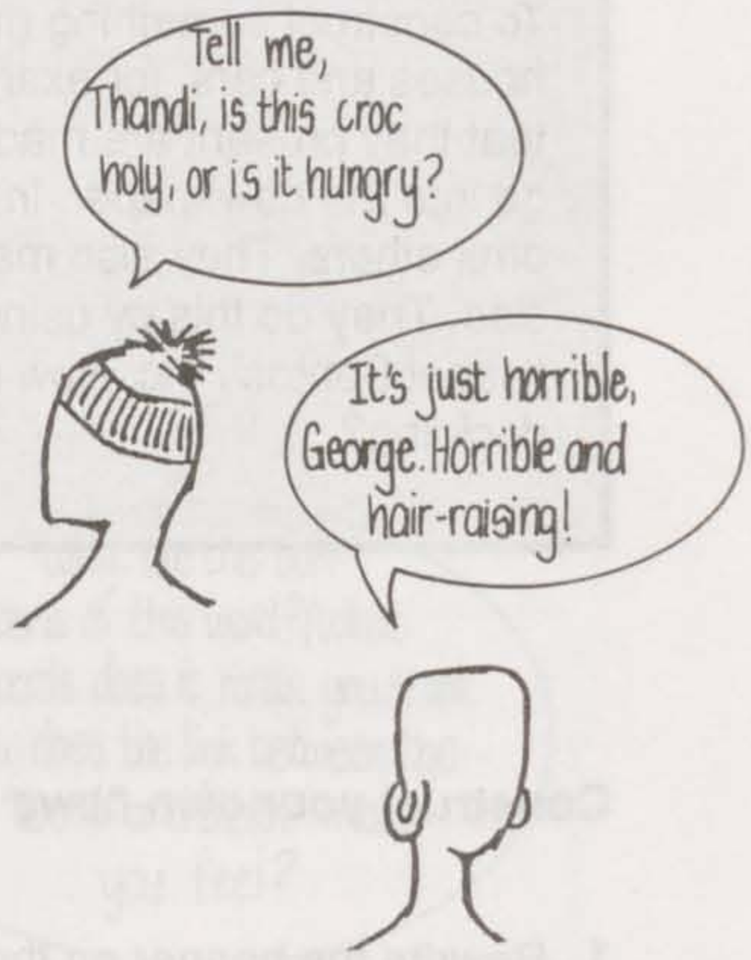
Warrant Officer Le Clus arrived shortly afterwards.

Using wooden poles they gently prodded the croc towards a back gate.

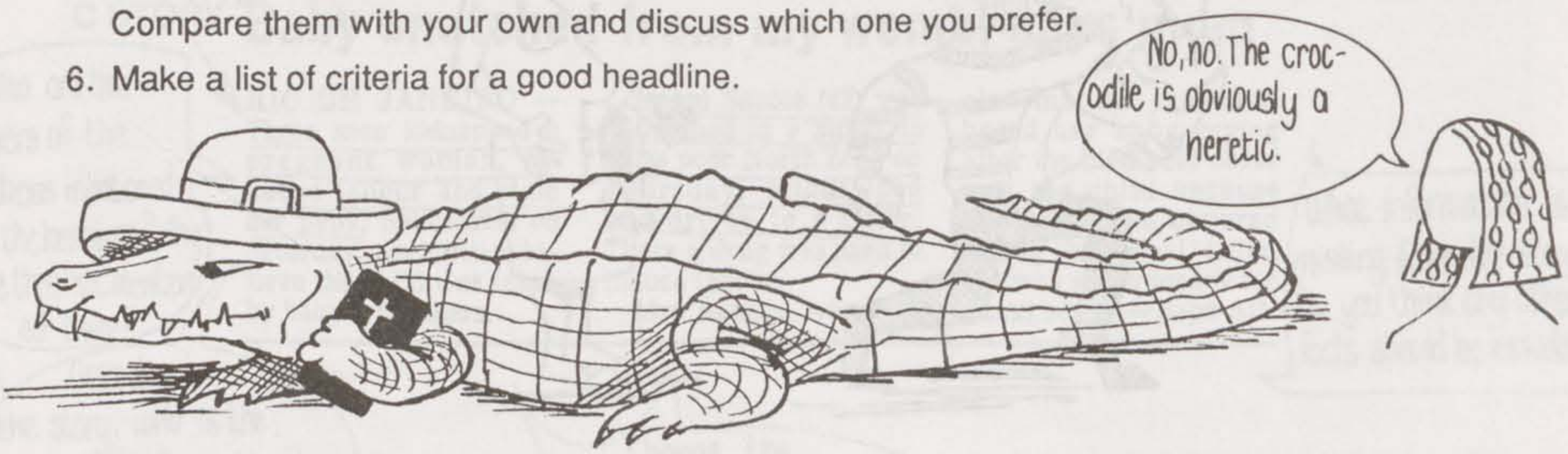
"It became aggressive and refused to budge so we tried to entice it with a dead chicken but that also failed," Warrant Officer Le Clus said. But after spraying it with a hosepipe the croc became calmer and slowly moved towards the gate.

Once it had left the grounds, about and hour later, the men — keeping their distance — accompanied the huge reptile to a stream about 50 m away. As they reached the water there was a splash, then another as it rapidly swam away.

The stream links up with the Sabie River and the policemen, satisfied the croc would come to no harm, left for home.



1. Now think of five banners for the story. Try to make your headlines interesting so that readers will want to read the story. When you construct your banners, remember the language features that you identified on p.5.
2. When you have made your list, rank them in the order of your preference.
3. Exchange your banners with a partner. Rank his/her banners and then discuss together why you ranked them as you did.
4. Choose your best banner and then construct a headline for your story. Bear in mind the differences between banners and story headlines that you noticed on p.14.
5. Look at the actual banner and headline of the story (printed at the bottom of the page). Compare them with your own and discuss which one you prefer.
6. Make a list of criteria for a good headline.



Banner Headline: CROCODILE IN CHURCH SHOCK

Story Headline: Angry church-going croc gets police escort upstream

NEWS REPORTS : WHO SPEAKS AND WHO IS SILENT/SILENCED?

Read carefully the story below and discuss the accompanying questions.

1. Look at the voice of the verb in this headline. What information is omitted from the headline and what information does it emphasise?

Minister, teachers sued for school caning

Court Reporter

The father of a Randburg schoolboy, who was caned after showing his private parts to girls in his Std 6 class, has sued three schoolteachers and the Minister of Education and Culture for more than R13 000.

The 17-year-old boy yesterday told the Rand Supreme Court that he dropped his pants at school in November 1989 after fellow pupils had dared him to. They had also offered him money.

The girls who saw him flash "just laughed", said the boy, who added that he now regretted exposing himself.

A week later his teachers found out about the incident.

The father has claimed in court papers that on the orders of M J Potgieter, and in the presence of Johan Grobler, Piet Otto administered a severe beating.

The father has claimed that the punishment, six cuts, was excessive and not justified by the offence. The boy was unable to sit or lie on his back for at least a week as a result of the injuries, which included severe weals and blood blisters.

The father has claimed R1 742 for the boy for medical and psychological expenses, R2 000 for estimated future expenses, and R10 000 for pain, suffering and inconvenience.

2. Where did the reporter get his/her information?

3. What information do we get from the schoolboy?

4. Rewrite the father's claims in direct speech. How does this change the story?

5. Whose views are missing from the article?

6. What do you think M J Potgieter, J Grobler and P Otto would say about the incident? Rewrite the story including their views and omitting those of the boy and his father, then compare the two stories.

7. Whose side do you think the court reporter is on? Try to refer to the story to support your views.



8. Why do you think the story appears in the newspaper? After all, most court cases never make the news.

Research Project

Look at any newspaper. What kind of people are usually quoted in the newspaper and whose views are generally omitted? Is this a form of discrimination?

Young? Men? Old? Women? Poor? Urban? Rural? Illiterate? Powerful?

NEWS REPORTS : WHAT REALLY HAPPENED?

Let's look at how *Sunday Star* reporters and editors construct the same news event in different editions of the newspaper. On 26 July 1992 the Africa and Late Final editions of the *Sunday Star* carried stories of mass action in Johannesburg. But what really happened in Johannesburg on that day?

VIOLENT CONFRONTATION with Inkatha averted in mass campaign

Marchers lay siege to Joburg post office

■ **Mass action:** The ANC campaign almost flared into violence yesterday, but the main Johannesburg march fizzled out.

BY SUNSTAR REPORTERS

HUNDREDS of demonstrators laid siege to the Johannesburg Post Office in Jeppe Street yesterday morning as the ANC's mass action campaign took off.

And in Durban and Maritzburg, the start of yesterday's campaign almost ended in bloody battles in the city centres when ANC marchers were confronted by armed Inkatha supporters.

But elsewhere in Johannesburg, the main thrust of the campaign — a march on John Vorster Square and then the Transvaal Provincial Administration offices — fizzled out before reaching its targets.

Defiance

In Johannesburg, hundreds of demonstrators showed their defiance by singing and dancing their way into detention yesterday, as the occupation of the Post Office came to a peaceful, if noisy, end.

As the mass-action campaigners were shoved into yellow SAP "paddy wagons", they sang liberation songs, toyi-toyied, and stomped their feet on the floors of the vehicles.

Police said they arrested about 300 people, but mass action organisers claimed at least 500 protesters were taken away.

WE SHALL OVERCOME ... defiant protesters are forced into a prison van outside the Jeppe Street Post Office yesterday. PICTURE: DEBBIE YAZBEK



Police spokesman Lieutenant Wikus Weber said: "We had given warnings earlier in the week that we were not going to tolerate occupations of Government buildings, and the people arrested at the Jeppe post office disrupted its normal functioning.

In Maritzburg, swift-acting ANC marshalls and leaders prevented a potentially explosive confrontation with Inkatha in Pietermaritz Street, immediately behind the Supreme Court building.

Police officials quickly escorted IFP supporters out of the area.

In the ensuing fracas, a journalist and a photographer were assaulted by an IFP supporter.

Armed

Police said the Inkatha members were armed.

Describing the incident as an "ambush", ANC leader Reggie Hadebe said this confirmed the organisation's suspicions that the IFP's counter mass-action campaign involved deploying armed members at strategic places.

During the Durban confrontation, IFP supporters grabbed and tore up an ANC flag in the no man's land between the two groups and then set it alight, holding it up defiantly on spear point. ANC youths responded by burning a poster of Inkatha leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi.

In both cities police intervened and kept the ' groups apart.

While police were escorting the Inkatha supporters in Maritzburg away from the ANC route, an IFP member struck Sunday Tribune reporter Prakash Naidoo and Natal Witness photographer Elaine Anderson. Threats were also hurled at journalist Lakela Kaunda.

At the Johannesburg march, about 500 supporters began the Peace and Democracy march on John Vorster Square at 10 am.

The crowd had swelled to about 1 000 by the time it reached the central Johannesburg police station, where march leadershanded over a petition addressed to President F W de Klerk which demanded a democratically elected Constituent Assembly and an interim government of national unity, among other demands.

In an address to the crowd gathered at the police station, ANC executive member Steve Tshwete bemoaned the poor turnout.

Contrary to the original plan, the march on the TPA's offices was cancelled because support was dwindling rapidly as the crowd made its way down the city's streets.

1. Compare the headlines, sub-heads and captions of the two stories. How do they differ in emphasis?

2. Make a list of all the actions associated with the Johannesburg march and the other marches in each story. What similarities and differences do you notice?

3. What do you think the attitude of the reporter is towards the march and the marchers in each story? Give examples from the stories to support your answers.

NEWS REPORTS : WHAT REALLY HAPPENED?

JOBURG PROTEST fizzles out due to lack of crowd support

Marchers fail to pitch up

■ **Mass action:** ANC supporters took to the streets around the country, but the main Johannesburg march to the TPA offices petered out after the expected thousands failed to pitch up.

BY MARK STANSFIELD



MARCHING FOR CHANGE . . . a smaller crown than expected join the "Peace and Democracy" march through Joburg on the way to John Vorster Square.
Picture: Gary Bernard

THE main thrust of the ANC's rolling mass action campaign in Johannesburg — a march on John Vorster Square and then the Transvaal Provincial Administration offices — fizzled out before reaching its target yesterday.

First, the expected thousands failed to pitch up at the scheduled 10 am start. Then, contrary to the plan, the march on the TPA's offices was cancelled because support was dwindling rapidly as the crowd made its way down city streets.

About 500 supporters began the Peace and Democracy march on John Vorster Square at 10 am.

The crowd had swelled to about 1 000 by the time it reached the notorious central Johannesburg police station where march leaders, including ANC deputy president Walter Sisulu, handed over a petition addressed to President F W de Klerk which demanded a democratically elected Constituent Assembly and an interim government of national unity, among other demands.

ANC executive member Steve Tshwete — in an address to the crowd gathered at the police station, bemoaned the poor turnout.

"It seems that to some of our people these marches are a waste of time, but they are designed to bring down the Sodom and Gomorrah of apartheid," he said.

The march was peaceful throughout.

In Pretoria an intended march on the Union Buildings was abruptly cancelled after police stopped the procession midway, apparently because protesters did not follow the prescribed route.

In Cape Town a "human chain" was successfully strung around the city's central business district as part of the campaign. The protest was peaceful, but police reported arresting several people at train stations for minor offences.

About 2 000 ANC supporters occupied a section of Durban's West Street after a tense stand-off with armed Inkatha Freedom Party supporters.

Earlier about 200 IFP supporters, armed with spears and sticks, arrived at the start of a march by the ANC and prevented the protesters from taking their planned route through the city centre.

The IFP supporters had been angered by a planned mock trial in which ANC supporters said they would "sentence" Inkatha leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi and De Klerk.

Heavily armed police quickly formed a barrier between the two groups.

The IFP group was at first reluctant to disperse, but left after police assurances that there would be no "sentencing" of the IFP leader.

The ANC criticised police for failing to disarm the IFP group.

4. Examine the captions and pictures in each story. Do you think the captions are appropriate to the pictures? Write two different captions for each picture saying what the picture is about and then choose the option that you think is best from your own captions and the original. Discuss why you think so.

5. Bearing in mind the front pages on p. 10-11, which edition do you think each story comes from? Develop an argument to support your answer.

6. Consider the way the information is ordered in each story. How does the order of information affect the emphasis of the story?

7. Now write your own version of what happened.

WHAT IS AN EDITORIAL?

'Comment' on p.1 of this book is an example of an editorial. It appeared in the *Sowetan* in June 1992.



Research

Find the editorials in two or three newspapers. The editorial is usually located in a column towards the middle pages of the newspaper. In some papers the editorial is called 'Comment' or 'Our View', or you can recognise it by the name of the newspaper at the top of the column. Read the editorials carefully and consider the questions to the right.

1. What do you notice about the kinds of words that the editor uses and the way s/he uses them?
2. How does the writer try to convince the reader that his/her view is right?
3. What is the relation between the editorial and other stories in the newspaper?

USING WHAT WE HAVE LEARNT

Now you have a chance to apply what you have learnt about language, power and newspapers. The questions below will help you to read the articles on the following pages critically. You should be able to use the questions on any article, although they will not all be equally useful for all articles.

Banners

Front page

Headlines

Boxes

Different editions

Reporters

Editors

Advertisers

Owners

Readers

Questions to ask of newspaper texts

1. Which people and events are in the news and which are not?
2. Which facts are selected for a text and which are not?
3. Where does the information come from? Who is quoted and who is not?
4. What words and phrases have been chosen to present the information?
5. Why is the information presented as it is?
6. What are the possibilities for using language to present the same information differently? How would this change the emphasis?
7. How are the facts ordered in the article?
8. Whose interests are served by the article? Whose interests are harmed?
9. How does the article strengthen or resist the positions of those who have power in society?
10. Does the article change your own point of view in any way? Why? Why not?

Pictures

Sub-headings

Captions

Editorials

Bold print

Back page

News stories

Censors

Newsmakers

Write down other questions that will help you to read newspaper articles critically. Use your own questions together with the questions on this page to read the articles on the following pages. Perhaps new questions will come to mind as you read.

TEXTS TO INTERROGATE

Now you have a chance to apply what you have learnt about language, power and newspapers. The questions below will help you to read the articles on the following pages critically. You should be able to use the questions on any article, although they will not all be equally useful for all articles.

ANC ducks the AWB's right hook

By ROSALEE TELELA

IT was a very uneven fight, with about 30 members of the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging vowing to stop at least 8 000 African National Congress marchers at the Jan Lotz Stadium in Krugersdorp, west of Johannesburg, this week.

In the centre of the ring was the United Nations referee, Hisham Omayad, while the police and members of the media took ringside seats.

The 8 000 ANC supporters gathered at the stadium outside Krugersdorp in preparation for a march to the town council as part of the nationwide mass action campaign. They intended presenting a memorandum to Minister of Local Government and local MP Leon Wessels. Watching their arrival was a small group of AWB supporters, armed with pistols and batons.

The last to arrive was the head of the UN monitoring team, Omayad, who was loudly greeted by ANC supporters cheering, ululating, and shouting slogans. He was accompanied by the PWV regional peace committee chairman, Rupert Lorimer.

Round one was about to begin. Lorimer pleaded with the 30 AWB supporters not to throw the first punch.

Inside the stadium the ANC marchers were dancing and singing. ANC Kagiso branch chairman Uhuru Mioloa said the police should not let the AWB carry "their traditional weapons".

AWB leader Colonel Henry de Beer gave an impromptu media conference — for whites only. A photographer from *The Sowetan*, Mbuzeni Zulu, was prevented from taking pictures by AWB members.

De Beer tried to go for a knockout, claiming that "the march is a provocative action ... it is totally illegal. They (the ANC) don't ask, they just take over". He threatened that "if the police don't stop this, we will".

An AWB supporter said "reinforcements" were on the way. At this point Omayad stepped in, asking De Beer to "give the police a chance to resolve the situation". He assured the AWB that the UN observers "understand their position", but added that the people of South Africa should resolve their own problems. "The United Nations is here strictly to observe," he said.

When marchers began to leave the stadium on their way to the centre of Krugersdorp, AWB members blocking the road were ordered by the police to move out of the way. Reluctantly they walked away, their fists clenched. The bout ended without a punch being thrown and the march continued, peacefully.

WM Aug 7-13

Misled meddlers de-manning the school manuals

GUARD YOUR tongue! That's the message to the staff of 720 schools on Merseyside as education chiefs crack the linguistic whip. These misled meddlers should brace themselves for the inevitable backlash.

For a start, they say in a draft report, words such as "manpower", "manning", "man-made", "man hours" and "chairman" should be outlawed as sexist. Instead, "workforce", "staffing", "artificial", "work hours" and "chair" would take over. "Manhole" would simply disappear.

There should be no more headmasters and headmistresses, only headteachers, and the phrase "officers and their wives" should become "officers and their partners".

Girl talk comes under special scrutiny: "Girls are female humans under 18 years of age; after that they become women. Addressing women as girls should be avoided."

The word "ladies" should be used only for titled women (what if they're under 18?) and "emphasis on physical characteristics of women is offensive" (not to Dolly Parton, it isn't).

And so the document goes on, at wearisome length, covering a wide range of subjects from racism to lesbianism. Perhaps the most ludicrous outcome, if the Liverpool City Council is daft enough to endorse the document, is that blackboards will be banished from the classroom. They will be replaced by "chalkboards".

Walker at large

DAVID WALKER



Makers deny SA drugs cost most

THE Pharmaceutical Manufacturers' Association (PMA) yesterday condemned as a fallacy suggestions that medicine in South Africa was the most expensive in the world.

PMA executive director Mr John Toerien said in a statement in Pretoria the claim — which was made by the Natal Coastal branch of the Medical Association of South Africa — was incorrect.

He also repeated an earlier statement that the medical forum mooted by Health Minister Dr Rina Venter should not only look at the "alleged" high cost of medicines, but rather develop an overall health strategy.

He said one could not compare the price of medicines and other items from country to country because economic conditions were so different. — Sapa.

Outcry over wild justice

COLOMBO - Sri Lankan Newspapers yesterday condemned as "Wild West justice'' and "constitutional kidnapping'' a US Supreme Court decision allowing Washington to abduct alleged criminals from foreign countries.

The government-owned *Sunday Observer* said the judgment, criticised by US neighbours Mexico and Canada, was a "20th-century version of the crude and violent Wild West that lassoed helpless natives to be tried in Yankee kangaroo courts''.

The staid *Sunday Times*, an independent newspaper, asked whether constitutional kidnapping was part of the New World Order US President George Bush was proclaiming.

It said the move would ring alarm bells in Sri Lanka and other small Third World nations.

The furore follows a Supreme Court decision allowing the United States to kidnap foreign suspects and bring them to trial. - *Sapa-Reuter.*

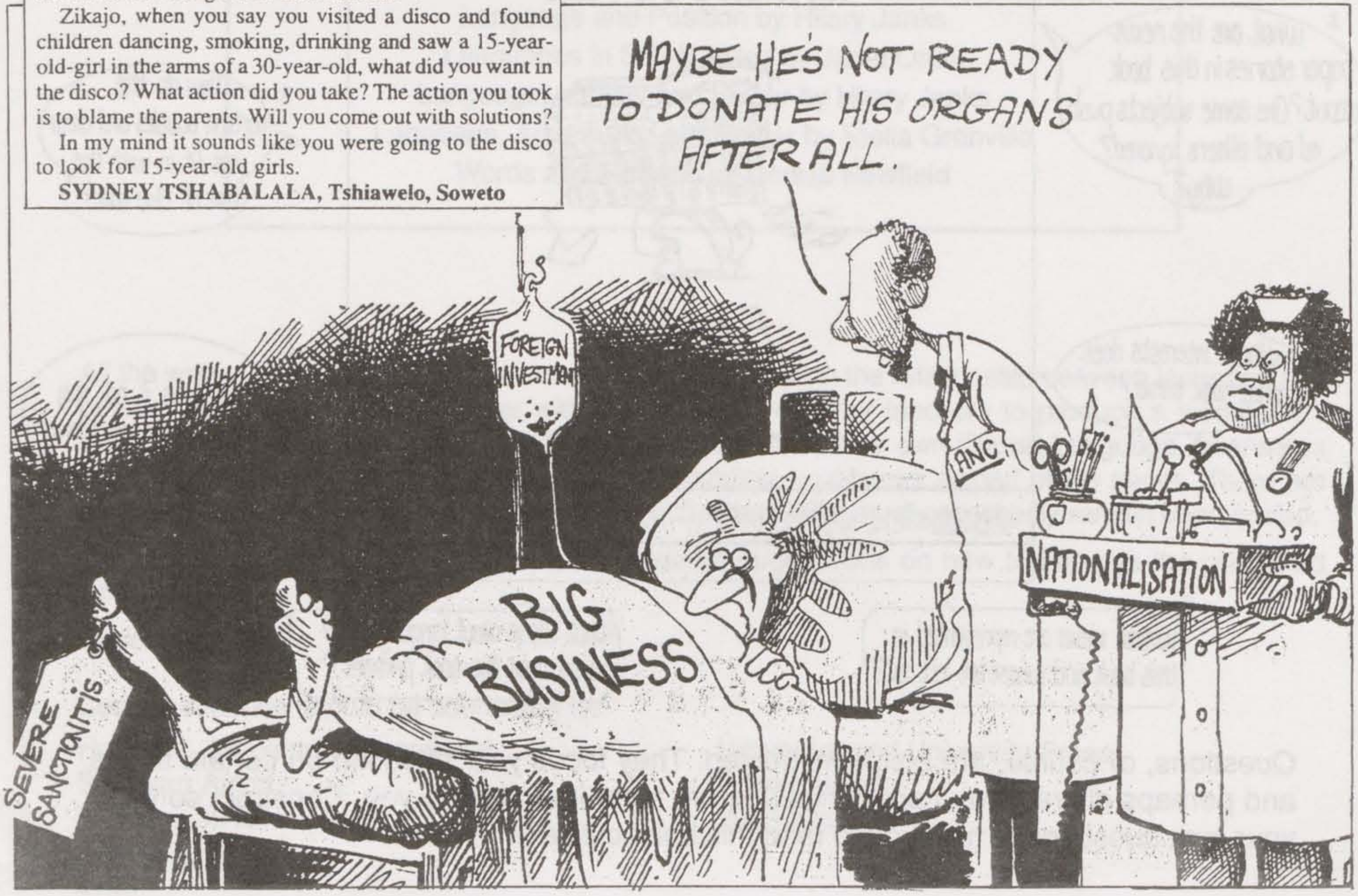
What did he want at the disco?

I WISH to respond to George Zikajo in his letter published in *Sowetan* of May 25 1992 under the heading: "Parents are not strict enough with their children''.

Zikajo, when you say you visited a disco and found children dancing, smoking, drinking and saw a 15-year-old-girl in the arms of a 30-year-old, what did you want in the disco? What action did you take? The action you took is to blame the parents. Will you come out with solutions?

In my mind it sounds like you were going to the disco to look for 15-year-old girls.

SYDNEY TSHABALALA, Tshiawelo, Soweto



READING THIS BOOK CRITICALLY

One of the aims of this book is to help you to read newspapers critically so that you can detect the ideas and attitudes that lie behind them. This will assist you in making up your own mind about where you stand rather than simply accepting the position which the newspaper defines for you as a reader.

Of course, this book is also based on particular ideas about people, education, language, news and power. What are these ideas? Some of them may be stated clearly, while others may be hidden. You, as a reader, may have other ideas.

Here are some questions to help you to examine the ideas and attitudes of this book critically:

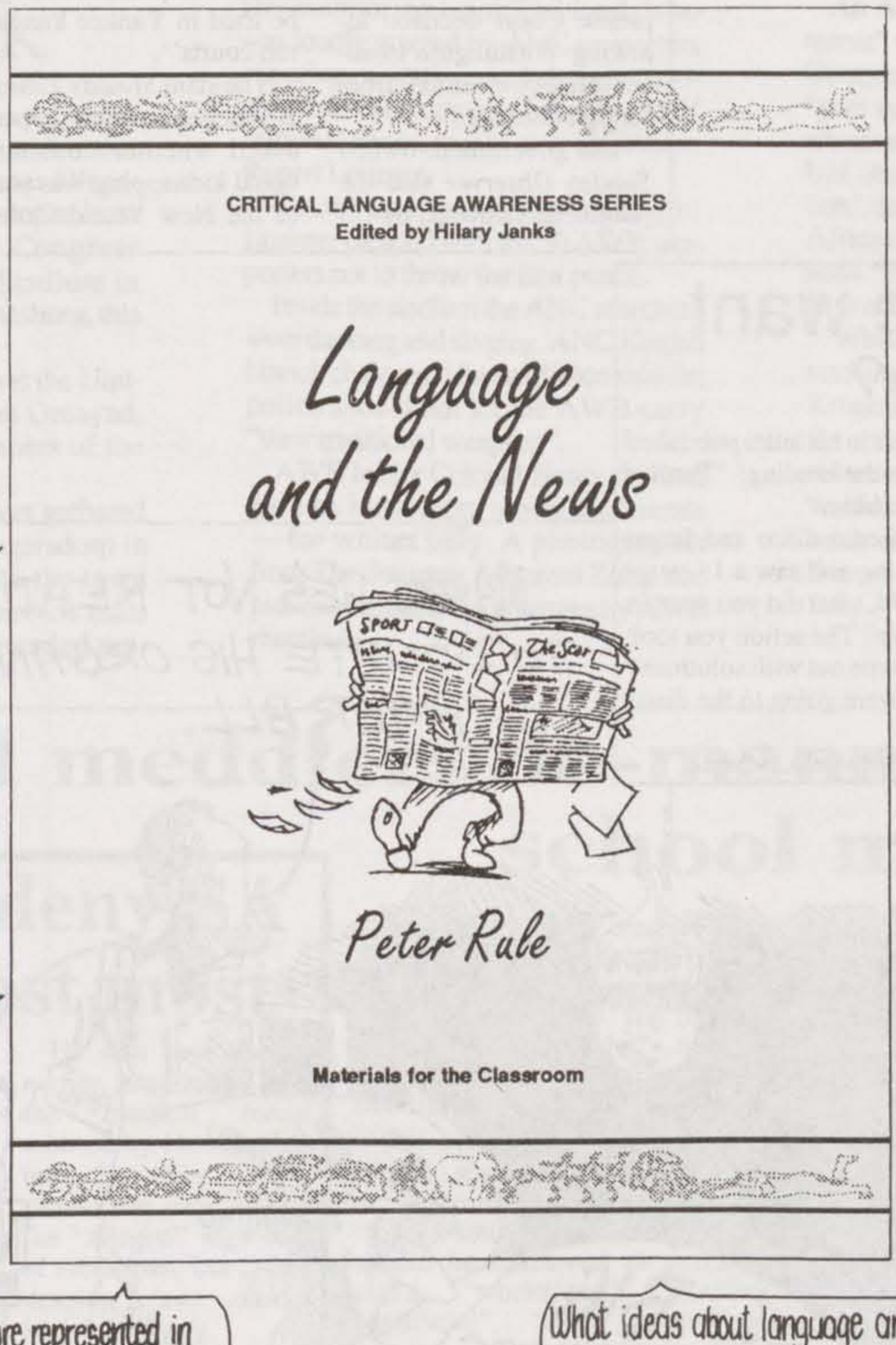
1. Which newspapers are included in this book and which are not? What reasons could there be for this?

2. How are the exercises ordered? How would a rearrangement of the order change the book?

3. What are the newspaper stories in this book about? Are some subjects pushed and others ignored? Why?

4. Whose interests does this book serve?

5. Whose views are represented in this book and whose are left out?



6. What ideas about language and power does the book present?

7. What does it not say about language and power?

8. How do the cartoon bubbles and drawings fit in with the text of the book?

9. How did this book try to change you? Why?

10. What is the attitude of the writer towards news and newspapers?

Questions, of course, are also constructed. They focus your attention on certain things and perhaps distract you from things that are more important to you. Construct some of your own questions to help you to read this book critically.



My name is Peter Rule. I am a teacher and a writer. At the moment I work at the University of the Witwatersrand in the Department of African Literature. I am thirty years old, and I grew up in Johannesburg, where I live today with my wife and young son. He is two years old and is teaching me a lot about the meaning of life.

Besides being a teacher, I am also a learner. I am often confused about what is true and what is not true, especially in a country as beautiful and terrifying as this our South Africa. This confusion leads me to ask questions, which I believe is the beginning of making knowledge. What I wish for you through this book is courage and determination in the search for what is true.

Other titles in the Critical Language Awareness Series:

Language and Position by Hilary Janks
Languages in South Africa by Janet Orlek
Language, Identity and Power by Hilary Janks
Language, Advertising and Power by Stella Granville
Words and Pictures by Denise Newfield

All the writers in this series are teachers who are interested in the relationship between language and power. They have worked together with their students or other teachers to produce a workbook. I would like to encourage students and teachers to construct their own Critical Language Awareness materials and am willing to consider publishing complete workbooks as part of the series. There are so many ways of exploring language and power that the series must necessarily remain open ended. The writers and I would also welcome constructive suggestions on how to improve the published workbooks.

Series Editor

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