

Lesson A Grammar

Reporting events in progress

A Circle the best options to complete the news brief.

NEWS BRIEF

An end to the fighting?

After months of bitter struggle, the tide now seems to **have been turning** / **be turning** in the civil war. Over the last few weeks, opposition forces appear to **have been regaining** / **be regaining** the ground they lost last winter. Furthermore, international peace brokers were said to **have been reaching** / **be reaching** a critical point in peace negotiations. Since arriving in New York on Sunday, representatives from all parties are said to **be negotiating** / **have been negotiating** a ceasefire agreement. Political analysts believe that prior to the talks, the president **may be holding out** / **may have been holding out** for outside military assistance, but he is now rumored to **be considering** / **have been considering** a power-sharing agreement with the opposition.



B Complete the news brief with continuous infinitive forms of the verbs given.

Possible student tuition increases

Thousands of students were said _____¹ (prepare) for bad news ahead of an expected announcement of an increase in tuition fees. University officials and a representative board of students will _____² (discuss) this divisive issue for two days by midnight tonight, which is the agreed deadline for an agreement. Despite some early signs of an agreement, hopes of reaching a compromise now appear _____³ (fade). Student leaders have warned that students would _____⁴ (take) action. Sara Folly, a political science major, had this to say: "I decided to skip classes and show my support to the board of students. The university authorities seem _____⁵ (not listen) to us. Free education is something I really believe in." Tensions in college towns are said _____⁶ (increase) since the start of the tuition discussions, and police are said _____⁷ (monitor) the situation closely.

C Rewrite the underlined verbs. Add the verbs given and use continuous infinitive forms. Sometimes there is more than one possible answer.

1. The president's health problems are hindering his re-election campaign. (say)

2. Hopes of a lasting peace have grown since the ceasefire agreement. (appear)

3. The public prosecutor is considering legal action against corrupt banking CEOs later this year. (think)

4. Sporting officials say that the games have gone smoothly so far. (seem)

About
you

D Write your own news report about a current event or situation that is causing concern.

Lesson D Reading Newspapers

A Prepare Why do you think the newspaper market has been declining? Check (✓) the reasons.

1. ☐ The entertainment industry has become more popular than news. _____
2. ☐ Radio has taken part of the newspaper market. _____
3. ☐ The quality of journalism has declined. _____
4. ☐ People are reluctant to pay for news. _____

B Read for main ideas Read the article. Does the author mention any of the reasons in Exercise A? Write Y (yes) or N (no).

Why are newspapers dying?

The future of print journalism remains unclear

1 For people in the news business, it's hard to avoid the sense that newspapers are at death's door. Every day brings news of layoffs, bankruptcies, and closings in the print journalism industry.

2 But why are things so dire at the moment?

The decline begins with radio and TV

3 Newspapers have a history that dates back centuries. And while their roots are in the 1600s, newspapers thrived in the U.S. well into the twentieth century.

4 But with the advent of radio and later TV, newspaper circulation (the number of copies sold) began a gradual but steady decline. By the mid-twentieth century, people didn't have to rely on newspapers as their sole source of news. That was especially true of breaking news, which could be conveyed more quickly via broadcast media.

5 And as television newscasts became more sophisticated, TV became the dominant mass medium. This trend accelerated with the rise of CNN and 24-hour cable news networks.

Newspapers begin to disappear

6 Afternoon newspapers were the first casualties. People coming home from work began turning on the TV instead of opening a newspaper, and afternoon papers in the 1950s and 1960s saw circulations plunge and profits dry up. TV also increasingly captured more of the ad revenue that newspapers had relied on.

7 But even with TV grabbing more audience and ad dollars, newspapers managed to survive. Papers couldn't compete in terms of speed, but they could provide the in-depth news coverage that TV news never could.

8 So savvy editors retooled papers with this in mind. More stories were written with a feature-type approach that emphasized storytelling over breaking news, and papers were redesigned to be more visually appealing, with emphasis on clean layouts and graphic design.

The emergence of the Internet

9 But if TV represented a body blow to the newspaper industry, the World Wide Web may be the nail in the

coffin. With the emergence of the Internet in the 1990s, vast amounts of information were suddenly free for the taking. Most newspapers, not wanting to be left behind, started websites in which they essentially gave away their most valuable commodity – their content – for free. This model continues to be predominant today.

10 Now, many analysts believe this was possibly a fatal mistake. Many once-loyal newspaper readers realized that if they could conveniently access news online for free, there was little reason to pay for a newspaper subscription.

The recession worsens print journalism's woes

11 Recent economic hard times have accelerated the problem. Revenue from print ads has plunged, and even online ad revenue, which publishers hoped would make up the difference, has slowed. And websites like Craigslist have eaten away at classified ad revenue.

12 "The online business model just won't support newspapers at the level Wall Street demands," says Chip Scanlan of The Poynter Institute, a journalism think tank. "Craigslist has decimated newspaper classifieds."

13 With profits plunging, newspaper publishers have responded with layoffs and cutbacks, but Scanlan worries this will make things worse.

14 "They're not helping themselves by whacking sections and laying people off," he says. "They're cutting the things that people look for in newspapers."

15 Indeed, that's the conundrum facing newspapers and their readers. All agree that newspapers still represent an unrivaled source of in-depth news, analysis, and opinion, and that if papers disappear, there will be nothing to take their place.

What the future holds

16 Opinions abound as to how newspapers can survive. Many say papers must charge for their web content in order to support print issues. Others say printed papers will soon go the way of the Studebaker* and that newspapers are destined to become online-only entities.

17 But what actually happens remains anybody's guess.

*Studebaker—an automobile manufacturer in the United States that ultimately went out of business in the 1960s.

SOURCE: journalism.about.com

C Understanding viewpoints Check (✓) the points that the writer makes in the article.

- ☐ 1. The newspaper industry has always struggled in the U.S.
- ☐ 2. Twenty-four-hour cable news networks helped to make TV news dominate.
- ☐ 3. Afternoon papers were the first type of newspaper to disappear.
- ☐ 4. TV news tended to provide more in-depth coverage than newspapers.
- ☐ 5. Savvy editors launched new advertising and marketing campaigns to save their newspapers.
- ☐ 6. The decline in newspaper circulation began with the popularization of the Internet.
- ☐ 7. Profits from newspaper advertisements have been decreasing.
- ☐ 8. Laying off workers and making cutbacks is the only way forward if newspapers want to survive.
- ☐ 9. Other forms of media can't compete with newspapers when it comes to analysis and opinion.
- ☐ 10. There's a strong chance that free Internet content will bring about the end of print newspapers.



D Read for main ideas Circle the correct information to make true sentences about the article.

- 1. The history of newspapers began in the **seventeenth** / **twentieth** century.
- 2. In the middle of the twentieth century, sales of newspapers began to decrease **rapidly** / **slowly**.
- 3. To compete with TV, newspaper stories focused on **breaking news** / **detailed news coverage**.
- 4. Many experts think it was an error for newspapers to **go online and start websites** / **charge only for print**.
- 5. The conundrum facing newspapers today is that they are cutting back on what people **want** / **don't want** from them.
- 6. Some people believe that like the Studebaker, printed papers will become **a thing of the past** / **more expensive**.

E Read for detail Are the sentences true or false, or is the information not given? Write T, F, or NG. Correct the false sentences.

- 1. The newspaper industry has a long and largely prosperous history. ____
- 2. Newspaper workforces have lately been shrinking. ____
- 3. By 1950, TV advertising revenue had doubled. ____
- 4. To try and win back readers, newspapers changed the look of the page. ____
- 5. Most big newspapers have recently started charging subscriptions for online content. ____
- 6. Wall Street investors are hoping that online news will save the newspaper industry. ____
- 7. Craigslist is a more popular classified ads source than both print and online newspapers. ____
- 8. It is clear what the future holds for newspapers. ____

F Imagine that you work as a consultant in the news industry. A news corporation has asked you for advice on how to encourage younger readers to buy their print newspaper. Write your advice.
