

DigitalSports® Story Starters

Game/Team Tradition

Stories that detail a high school team, athlete, and/or fan traditions that take place prior to or during an event, whether it's every event or when competing against a particular opponent.

Example Tasks:

Attend an upcoming game at your school and pay attention to the ongoing traditions that take place within a team, a player, or even the fan base. This could be anything from a specific chant from the crowd during the game; a particular ritual from a player; or a team's pep talk before a game.

To get started, consider this:

Why did the team, player, or fan base participate in the tradition? Did they feel it was good luck? Did it help energize the team or give them momentum? What are the chants the fans use every year? Or is it as simple as something that has been practiced and repeated over the years?

Start by describing the type of tradition it is, the history behind it, and why you know/think they do it. Explain in as much detail as possible your thoughts behind your school's game/team tradition.

Notes:

Try and do as much historical research as possible when detailing a tradition. Sometimes, traditions start well before some of us are even born. Interview teachers, parents that attended your school, or alumni to get an accurate portrayal of how a tradition came to be and/or why it is currently practiced.

It wouldn't hurt to film and share it in your post, either!

Sports Feature

Gives the reader a glimpse into the larger picture about a high school team, its history, or another aspect of interest.

Example Tasks:

Do as much research as possible as it pertains to one or more of your schools' sports teams. How intense are practices? How dedicated is the team? Is there a particular sport that the school has now that it didn't used to have? Are there any new sports the school added throughout the years? Did any of the sports teams go through a phase of playing poorly but then turned their success around by winning a big game or championship?

To get started, consider this:

What steps did the school take to add a particular sport to its athletic curriculum? What hardships did a particular team go through in order to regain credibility or become

successful? Use as many statistics and records as possible. Remember: Displaying numbers always gives the reader a good idea of how much things have changed.

Notes:

Interviewing a coach, teacher, or alumni of the school usually provides the most accurate information and data when putting together a story. Use quotes to really make your piece jump out to readers!

Season Recap

Reporting on not just the final results, but also telling what the turning points and pivotal moments were that led to the end result.

Example Tasks:

What turned the season around (negatively or positively) for a particular team at your school? Was there a certain player or coach that helped the team exceed expectations? Was there a critical play that helped or hurt momentum? This can be anything from a game-winning touchdown; to a walk-off homerun; to a fumble that cost the team a game. What can a team look to improve in the off season?

To get started, consider this:

Sometimes, teams go through stretches of good or bad play. These stretches can usually be associated with changes the team may have made throughout the season that could have hurt or helped them. Look in to what may have been the “game-changer.”

You can also recap the success or failures of a particular team and determine, based off of what you’ve witnessed, what the team needs to do to improve or stay consistent next year.

Notes:

Interviewing a player or coach will always provide an accurate portrayal of how they felt the season went for them. Attending games throughout the season in which you can report on aspects of the game can also give you a great deal of information on how to recap a season.

Season Preview

Stories previewing the season of a high school team or sport that rely heavily on facts and statistics and use past performance of teams – coupled with information about their current players and performance trends – to predict how a team will perform over the course of a season.

Example Tasks:

Do as much research as possible as it pertains to a particular high school sport or team in an effort to provide the reader with an informational preview of that sport or team for the upcoming season. What players have historically been the best? Which players do you expect to have a break-out year from? What players or teams do you expect a bounce-back season from?

To get started, consider this:

What steps did the player, team, or sport take in order to prepare for the upcoming season? Sometimes if the previous season ends poorly, a team begins to focus on how to be more

successful for the next season. You can analyze the steps the team took, any personnel changes the team made, or use historical information to determine how the team might fare for the upcoming season.

Notes:

Interviewing a coach or player will most likely get you many great quotes as to how a team looks to prepare for the upcoming season.

Game Preview/Recap

Preview: Stories previewing a high school game that rely heavily on facts and statistics and use past performance of teams – coupled with information about their current players and performance trends – to predict how a game will go or how a team will perform.

Recap: Reporting on not just the final score, but also telling what the turning points and pivotal moments were that led to the end result.

Example Tasks:

Game Preview: Do as much research as possible as it pertains to an upcoming game for any sport at your school. What player is coming off a solid/poor performance? What changes have been made to make the team play better than their previous performance? Provide as many statistics as you can (team record, player stats, current winning/losing streak, etc.)

Game Recap:

Was there a play during the game that put the team ahead or behind? What player stood out as the “Player of the Game?” Did the coach or manager make a decision that impacted his/her team’s play? If a team loses, what aspects of the game need to be improved for the next game? If a team wins, what aspects need to be maintained?

To get started, consider this:

Game Preview: Focus on the historical data of a player or team following a win/loss against an opponent. Statistics really provide an accurate description of how a team or player may perform.

Game Recap: It’s always important to see player and coach reactions after a win or a loss. Pay attention to the emotional aspect to get a good sense of how a team or player feels following the game. It is also critical to provide as many statistics as possible when recapping a game.

Notes:

It is always a good thing to interview a player or coach before and after the game to see the difference in attitude and emotion. It gives the reader a sense of how the performance of a team or player throughout the course of a game changed.

Play of the Week

Details an exciting or otherwise pivotal play in a high school game that had an impact on the results of the competition.

Example Tasks:

What game-changing play in any sport led to a great win? Did the win end a losing streak? Did the win end a drought against a rival team? How did the fans react to the play?

To get started, consider this:

Plays of the week are often regarded as the most exciting part of a pivotal game. Describe the atmosphere of the arena, field, or playing surface in which the play occurred. Sometimes a pivotal play can literally turn an entire team or player around.

Notes:

Interview the player who you think deserves the play of the week honor. Ask him/her what he/she was feeling when that pivotal moment occurred and how he/she feels it will help the team out moving forward. Interview members of the fan base who were there to witness the play of the week and describe their emotion throughout the process.

Athlete Profile

Shares insight into a high school athlete who shows strong character traits and/or exceptional athletic prowess.

Example Tasks:

Is there an athlete in your school that epitomizes your schools' spirit? Did this athlete once struggle to be successful but overcame adversity to become prosperous? Has there been an athlete who has gone above and beyond expectations? Is there an athlete in your school that has played so well that he/she has received recognition from potential colleges?

To get started, consider this:

Spotlight an athlete and compare and contrast his/her statistics to see how much they have grown in their athletic career. What steps did the athlete take to display such an exceptional athletic prowess? Did he/she train in the off-season to become better?

Notes:

There is no better way to get an accurate portrayal of an athlete than to interview him/her. The athlete usually details the trials and tribulations that they've had to endure to get to the point where they are at.

****ALL stories must be specific to high school level only****

"Either write something worth reading or do something worth writing." ~ Benjamin Franklin