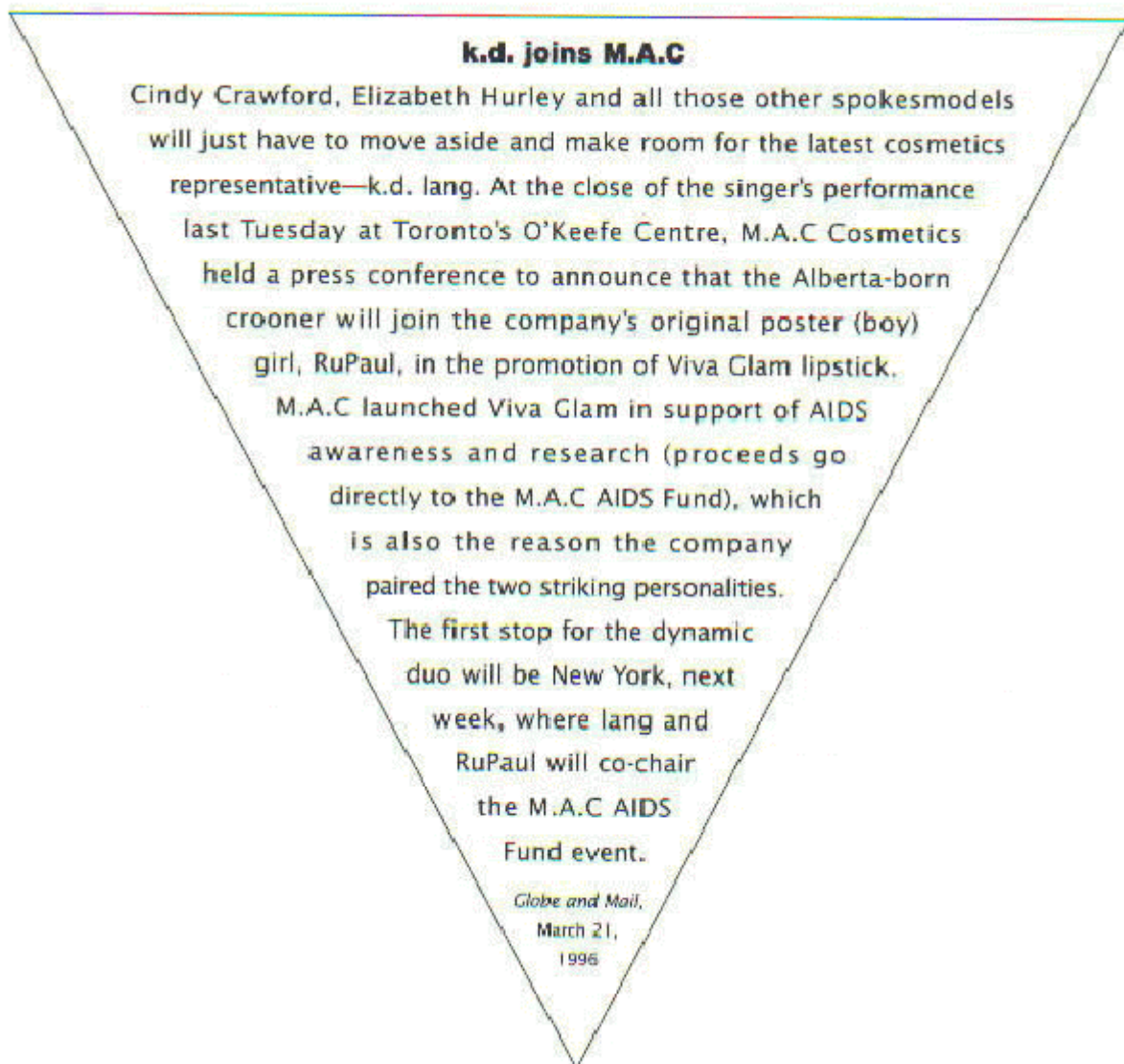


Virtually every good news story contains answers to what journalists call the 5 W's:

Who, What, Where, When, and Why. There is also an H - **How**. The arrangement of these facts differs depending on the type of story (e.g., straight news, feature) and the medium.

In a news story for a paper, the information is generally arranged in the inverted pyramid style, in order of importance, with the most important information first. The facts that explain or support the lead follow. The story is written this way so that, if necessary, an editor can reduce the length of the article simply by cutting the material at the end without harming the substance of the story.

The following sample uses the inverted pyramid technique:



The following tips will help you write effective news stories.

1. Be objective. Don't give your opinion about events.
2. Write in the third person, using names and pronouns (he, she, they). Never use the second person (you) or the first person (I, we). The third person sets an objective tone and does not confuse the reader.
3. Always provide the source of any information or quotation so that the reader can evaluate its credibility.
4. Try not to open a news story with a direct quotation. A direct quotation delays the information and asks readers to make deductions or figure things out.
5. Keep sentences and paragraphs short.
6. Do not write an ending to a news story. When space runs short in a newspaper, magazine, or broadcast, the end of the story is cut first.

Read the fairy tale "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" as it would appear as a news story, below.

Home Invader Caught Napping

An attempted home invasion backfired last night when the perpetrator fell asleep on the job. Goldie Lox was arrested outside 711 Fairy Tale Lane after she was found asleep in one of the home's three bedrooms.

"Luckily the Bayer family was not home when Lox broke in. Who knows what she might have tried," commented Sgt. Grimm of 13th Division. Constable M. Goose, first on the scene, reported that the intruder had helped herself to cereal, broken some furniture, and disturbed the bedding on all three beds. Damage was minimal.

The Bayer family was shaken, but so far had found nothing missing. The family's six-year-old son Theodore, known as Teddy, told reporters that he would "never sleep in that bed again."

The police report suggests that the Bayers may have left their front door unlocked. The community liaison officer reminds all residents not to neglect standard safety precautions.