



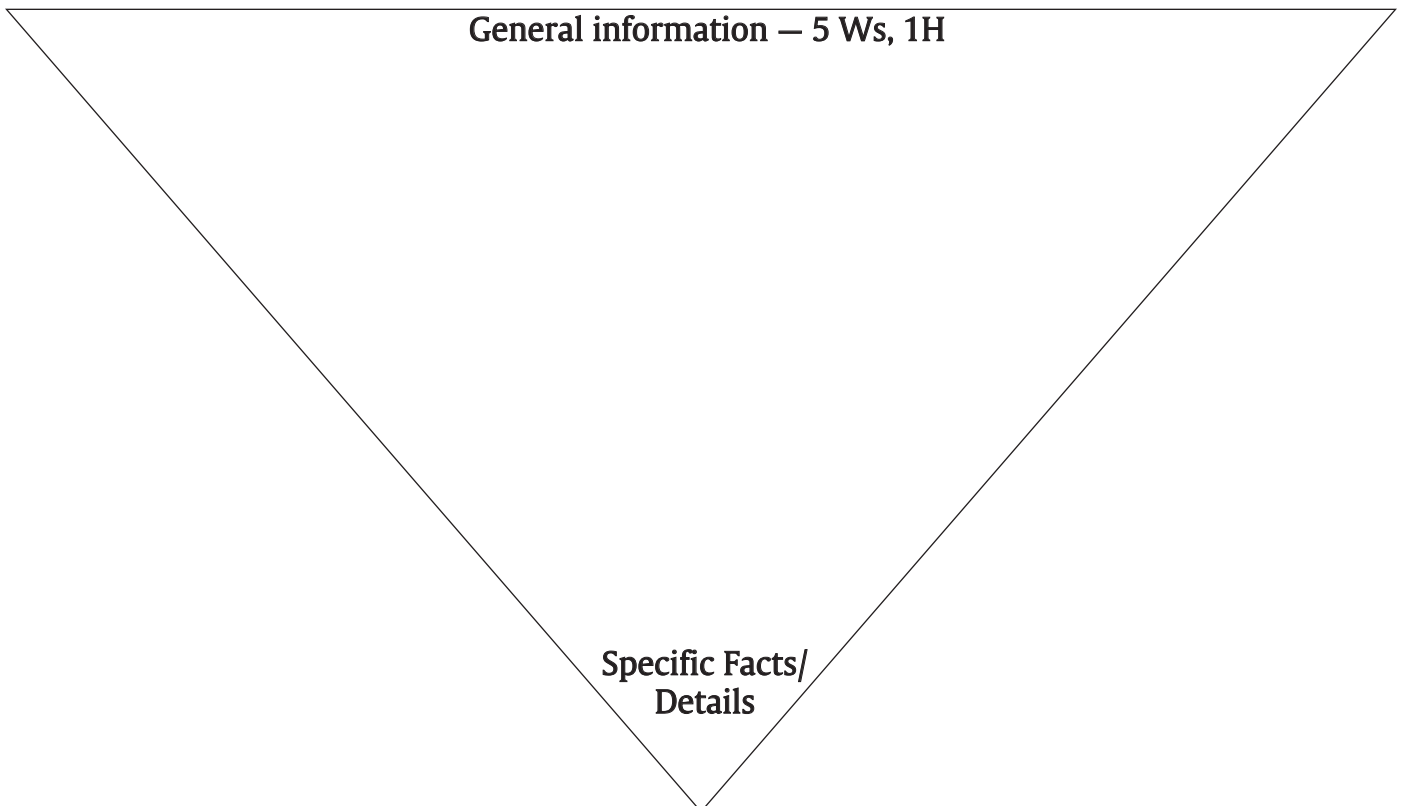
*Purpose for reading: To recognize articles' common organizational structure.*

**Introduction:** This lesson will teach you to:

- ▶ Use the inverted pyramid to analyze an article.
- ▶ Recognize the inverted pyramid structure in articles.
- ▶ Figure out where you will find the information you need or want in an article.

*When you know how a text is generally organized, you are able to figure out where to find the information you need. For example, I'm sure you have discovered by now that when a textbook bolds information, that information tends to be important and is usually a clue as to what the paragraphs preceding it are about. Since USA TODAY will be one of your "textbooks" for the semester, it is important to know how articles are generally organized. Luckily, all newspaper articles follow the same general structure, which is called the inverted pyramid. Once you learn this structure, you will be able to quickly find information in any article you ever read.*

1. **As a class**, study the inverted (upside down) pyramid below.





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- 2. **With a partner**, find an article that interests you both.
  
- 3. Read the first six sentences of the article and see if you can find the 5Ws (who, what, when, where and why) and 1H (how) of the story. When you find one, circle and label it.
  
- 4. Finish reading the article. As you read, underline words or phrases that are important.
  
- 5. Take a piece of unlined paper and draw an inverted pyramid (make your inverted pyramid as large as your paper will allow).
  
- 6. At the top of the inverted pyramid, write down the 5Ws and 1H of the story. Beneath your 5Ws and 1H, vertically list the important words or phrases that you found as you read the rest of the article. List them in the order they appeared in the article.
  
- 7. **As a class**, share some of your inverted pyramids. As you look at your list of words and phrases, do you find that the information becomes more and more detailed? Do you think the information at the top or bottom of the pyramid is most important? Why do you think reporters put the general information first and then the details?
  
- 8. Discuss how knowing where information is generally found can help you in skimming or reading future articles. How can knowing a text's structure (whether it is an article, a book chapter, a textbook, a poem, etc.) help you better comprehend what you are previewing, skimming or reading?