1. **Accuracy**
   Make sure you have the facts right (including how to spell names).

2. **Audience**
   Keep in mind the audience who will read the paper. Is your story of interest to them?

3. **Interviews**
   It may be necessary to schedule an interview. Prepare your questions ahead of time. Take notes during the interview and ask for clarification when needed. If possible, use a quote to make your story more interesting.

4. **Research**
   Use reference materials to get the facts you need, or check facts that you have collected.

5. **Writing**
   Start with a good lead. You want to grab the reader’s attention and make him or her want to read more. Don’t forget to answer the five *Ws* and leave out your opinion!

6. **Images**
   It’s never too soon to start thinking about what images you want to go along with your story. Do you need a digital photo or clipart? Make sure you don’t wait until the last minute.