

# Newsletters

## Project Overview

Newsletters are publications that are distributed on a regular basis (weekly, monthly, yearly, and so on) to target a particular audience who share a common interest. Newsletters usually cover a main topic, or theme, with various articles or advertisements related to the topic or theme. They can be used to promote products or services; to maintain relationships, as in club or alumni newsletters; to offer information to experts on a particular topic; or to offer information on a particular organization. Newsletters can be sent via e-mail or standard mail or distributed manually. In this project, students work in teams to create the theme, purpose, and content of a newsletter and to design the page layout and graphic elements with Adobe InDesign, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop, and Adobe Acrobat.

*Student product:* Newsletters

**Note:** Portions of this project align to the Adobe Certified Associate objectives. Within the instruction steps and technical guides, the specific learning objectives for the exam(s) are referenced with the following format: <sup>1.1</sup>

## Project Objectives

The objectives for this project are met by using all of the associated activities along with the specific project guidelines.

### Project management skills

- Organizing into print production roles
- Managing tasks based on roles
- Identifying asset needs
- Working with copy
- Creating and managing a project plan
- Engaging in full print production process

### Design skills

- Designing a nameplate
- Using design to differentiate content
- Designing multi-column and multi-page layouts
- Incorporating color and page layout consistently using themes
- Integrating imagery and text to express story content
- Providing clear navigation
- Using design techniques to provoke interest

## Research and communication skills

- Analyzing newsletters
- Using design tools to communicate between team members
- Accessing, evaluating, and synthesizing content from multiple sources
- Reviewing and revising content to match goals
- Collaborating with teammates
- Presenting a newsletter
- Understanding the journalistic code of ethics

## Technical Skills

### *Photoshop*

- Creating and editing image assets for a newsletter

### *InDesign*

- Creating templates
- Reusing objects with the Library
- Putting text on a path
- Creating multi-page spreads
- Transforming objects
- Managing text flow between frames and columns
- Importing text from Microsoft Word
- Adding page numbers
- Adding captions
- Exporting a page layout as an Interactive PDF

### *Illustrator*

- Creating and modifying graphical assets for a newsletter

## Project Activities

- *Activity:* Planning design projects
- *Activity:* Design comps
- *Activity:* How to create page layouts in InDesign
- *Activity:* Conducting focus groups
- *Activity:* How to draw and add text with Adobe Illustrator
- *Activity:* Using templates and reusable assets in InDesign
- *Activity:* Research and writing for design projects
- *Activity:* Design projects review and redesign
- *Activity:* Publishing with InDesign
- *Activity:* Presenting design projects

## Background preparation resources

[Technical and content information](#)

[Keywords](#)

[ISTE NETS\\*S Standards for Students](#)

[Adobe Certified Associate objectives](#)

## Project Steps

1. Introduce students to the goals of the project:
  - Create a newsletter.
  - Research and write newsletter content.
  - Utilize team roles in meeting the deliverables during the newsletter production.
  - Identify standard newsletter publishing practices and cite sources.
  - To implement reusable design throughout the production cycle.
  - To build a print and interactive PDF version of a newsletter.
2. Show students examples of newsletters, including examples from businesses, schools, and community-based organizations. Ask students to examine each newsletter and identify common elements that all newsletters use. Discuss how the following elements vary based on the theme of the newsletter:
  - Nameplate
  - Content (and number of articles or entries)
  - Table of contents
  - Masthead
  - Titles and headers
  - Page numbers
  - Bylines
  - Continuation lines
  - Pull quotes
  - End signs
  - Photos/illustrations
  - Mailing panels

**Note:** If necessary, review the *Design principles* activity.
3. Introduce the guidelines students should adhere to as they create their newsletters. Guidelines might include:
  - Length should be 3–4 pages.
  - Include the various elements of a newsletter (nameplate, masthead, pull quotes, etc.).
  - Include 3–4 distinct sections.
  - Include 2–3 articles.
  - Include 3–4 photographs.
  - Create a 3- or 4-column page layout.
  - Create a comp for review and one for redesign.
  - If appropriate, include the advertisement from Project 4.
  - Apply copyright and fair use guidelines for any applicable content or assets. [1.2](#), [1.2](#), [1.2](#)
  - Follow the journalist code of ethics in the creation of newsletter content.

- Follow sustainable design principles and make an effort to comply with economic, social, and environmental sustainability principles.

**Note:** You might want to ask students to create the newsletter for a particular organization in the school or community. Additionally, you might make a guideline that one version of the newsletter must have a mailing panel and another version should be e-mailed.

4. Form student teams of two or three people. Where possible, mix members with different strengths, such as visual design or technical skill. Discuss the concept of working as a team and roles in newsletter production.<sup>1.3, 1.3, 1.3</sup> Some roles to cover include:

- Editors
- Writers
- Photographers
- Designers

**Note:** Explain to students that they are responsible for managing the tasks that fall under their assigned role; however, all students will do work across the roles. Because this is a class simulation, students will use the roles to help them manage the project better. You can combine or split roles as necessary to accommodate the number of members on a team. If necessary, review the *Introduction to project planning, project management and teamwork* activity.

5. Allow teams time to distribute roles and brainstorm the theme, purpose, audience, and goals for their newsletter.

**Note:** If students are creating the newsletter for an organization, have them interview their clients to ascertain the goals, audience, and purpose and to brainstorm an appropriate theme. Have them alter questions from their previous client interviews and adapt them to this project. If it is difficult to find clients you can use the ideas in the client scenarios section of the extension activities to help you create client profiles. If necessary, review the *Working with clients* activity.

6. Explain that because newsletters are created multiple times, streamlining the production process would be helpful. Discuss the advantages of the following:

- Creating and working with reusable assets (page layout elements, images, graphics, illustrations, etc.).
- Creating and implementing a style guide with lists of fonts, colors, heading styles, and so on for their newsletter (this is especially helpful for consistency and in passing knowledge on to new workers).
- Creating and using templates for their newsletter

7. *Activity:* Planning design projects  
(Suggested time: 50 -100 minutes)

ACA Exam Objectives: 1.6, 2.6, 1.3, 1.4, 1.4, 2.6, 1.5, 1.6, 1.3, 1.4, 1.3, 1.4

Follow these steps to utilize this activity for this project:

- a. Use this activity to teach students how to create a project plan while managing projects.
- b. Ask students to create an initial project plan, assigning task managers and due dates for major milestones. Explain that they will build out more details when their design is approved.

8. *Activity: Design comps*  
(Suggested time: 50 minutes)

ACA Exam Objectives: 1.6, 1.3, 3.2, 1.5, 1.3, 1.3

Follow these steps to utilize this activity for this project:

- a. Use this activity to introduce the concept of a design comp and how they are used to create and present multiple design ideas.
- b. Allow teams time to sketch two different designs, on paper, of their newsletter elements (including the nameplate) and sections, identifying which elements will be reusable and maintaining consistency across pages to improve readability for front and internal pages.

**Note:** It is recommended that teams conduct a review and redesign cycle of their page layout sketches as they prepare to create the design comps. If necessary, review the *Review and redesign* activity.

- c. Allow time for teams to use their sketches to create two design comps in Photoshop and review these with their client. Engage in review and redesign cycles with their client until an approved look is reached.

**Note:** If students are not working with a client, you or other student groups could serve as the "clients."

9. *Activity: How to create layouts in InDesign*  
(Suggested time: 50-100 minutes)

ACA Exam Objectives: 2.2, 2.5, 3.4, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6

Follow these steps to utilize this activity for this project:

- a. Use this activity to teach students how to place objects on a page to create a page layout. The focus is how to:
  - Add text and graphic frames
  - Combine graphic and text frames to make page layouts
  - Use InDesign layers
  - Place objects on the page
  - Place text over images
  - Reuse objects
  - Use graphic frames as masks
- b. Based on their approved designs, ask students to build a mock prototype in InDesign. Explain that students should use placeholder text for headers and articles and use graphic frames with short descriptions as placeholders for images and graphic elements.

**Note:** If necessary, review the *How to work with text and styles* activity.

10. *Activity:* Conducting focus groups  
(Suggested time: 50-100 minutes)

ACA Exam Objectives: 1.1, 2.6, 1.1, 1.4, 1.1, 2.6,  
1.1, 1.6, 1.1, 1.4, 1.1, 1.4

Follow these steps to utilize this activity for this project:

- a. Use this activity to introduce the purpose of a focus group and general tips for conducting one in order for students to inform and improve their designs.
  - b. Ask students to test the prototype with potential users of the newsletter. Some items to review and gather feedback for include:
    - Consistency across pages
    - Reusable elements
    - Hierarchy of information
    - Readability of chosen fonts
    - Use of white space and rule of thirds
    - Alignment of content and graphic elements
  - c. Allow teams time to implement any changes to the overall page layout and design based on feedback.
11. Now that they have their page layout design, explain that they need to brainstorm the scope of their newsletter, including number of pages, number of sections, number and content of articles, number and content of photographs, templates, style guide. Have teams update their project plans to include details they can now start tracking.
12. Have teams review and get approval for their final scope with you to be sure it is appropriate and achievable within the given time.
13. Ask your students to use their nameplate sketch to create the newsletter nameplate in Illustrator.  
**Note:** If necessary, review the *How to draw and add text with Adobe Illustrator* activity.

14. *Activity:* Using templates and reusable assets in InDesign ACA Exam Objectives: 2.5, 4.1, 4.5, 4.6  
(Suggested time: 50-100 minutes)

Follow these steps to utilize this activity for this project:

- a. Use this activity to teach your students how to use reusable techniques in InDesign, such as:
  - How to use the library
  - Using the content dropper
  - Using linked content
  - Creating templates
- b. Have your students create a template for their newsletter according their design comp.
- c. Allow teams time to create any needed image and graphic elements in Photoshop and/or Illustrator and import them to the InDesign library.  
**Note:** If necessary, review the *Editing images and graphics* activity.
- d. Using the template and their design comp, have students finalize the page layout.

15. *Activity:* Research and writing for design projects  
(Suggested time: 50-100 minutes)

ACA Exam Objectives: 1.2, 2.1

Follow these steps to utilize this activity for this project:

a. Use this activity to introduce how to research and write content for theme, purpose, and audience, specifically focusing on the following:

- Writing, editing, organizing, and managing content
- Communicating information to particular audiences
- Accessing, evaluating, and synthesizing content from multiple sources
- Understanding the journalistic code of ethics

b. Ask students to conduct research on the articles they plan to include. Remind students to validate the content for currency and accuracy as they gather information for articles.

**Note:** If students are creating the newsletter for a client, they might need to gather this content from the client and then synthesize the information into articles.

c. Discuss the journalistic code of ethics and how it applies to the content they write for their newsletter.

d. Allow teams time to write drafts of the articles to be submitted for instructor review and approval.

**Note:** Ask students to use commenting tools in Acrobat to review and improve articles.

e. Allow teams time to finalize their article content and import it into their newsletters in InDesign.

16. *Activity:* Design projects review and redesign  
(Suggested time: 50 minutes)

ACA Exam Objectives: 1.1, 2.6, 1.1, 1.4, 1.1, 2.6, 1.1, 1.6, 1.1, 1.4, 1.1, 1.4

Follow these steps to utilize this activity for this project:

a. Use this activity to teach your students how to engage in a formal review and redesign process to help them improve and expand their design skills.

b. Instruct the students to have a final editing review of the content and design.

c. Allow teams time to finalize their newsletter.

17. *Activity:* Publishing with InDesign  
(Suggested time: 50-100 minutes)

ACA Exam Objectives: 2.1, 3.5, 4.1, 5.1, 5.2

Follow these steps to utilize this activity for this project:

a. Use this activity to introduce publishing and exporting page layouts from InDesign. Demonstrate how to prepare page layouts for print and how to prepare page layouts for multiscreen devices.

b. Ask student to create a PDF version of the finalized newsletter that can be printed.

c. Ask students to create an Interactive PDF version of the finalized newsletter than can be e-mailed.

**Note:** If necessary, review the *Creating interactive documents by using InDesign* activity.

18. *Activity*: Presenting design projects  
(Suggested time: 50-100 minutes)

ACA Exam Objectives: 2.6, 1.4, 2.6, 1.6, 1.4, 1.4

Follow these steps to utilize this activity for this project:

- a. Use this activity to teach your students how to present their work to an audience.
- b. Explain that each team will present their newsletter to the class, identifying and explaining the following:
  - The design decisions they made so they could implement the theme and purpose through the nameplate, page layout, image and graphic elements, and content of the newsletter.
  - How they plan to distribute their newsletter.
  - What they learned through this process and how they will continue to use and enhance these skills in the future.
  - The advantages and challenges of working in a team with assigned roles.

## Extension Activities

You can extend the project in the following ways:

- *Milestones*: To help students manage their time during longer projects, you can create milestones that give intermediate deadlines within the larger project. For this activity, you might have a class discussion to identify deadlines for the following:
  - Write up challenges in the review and redesign cycle
  - Create a style guide
  - Research similar newsletters
- *Online, interactive newsletters*: Ask students to consider how the design, page layout, and typography would change if they were creating an online version. Ask students to add interactivity and publish the newsletter online using the export to HTML feature in InDesign.
- *Client scenarios*: Use some of the following scenarios to create client profiles:
  - *Science club*: The science club wants to distribute a quarterly newsletter with articles on upcoming events, special features on club members and their areas of interest, and to highlight new and important research. Students need to research the science topics (perhaps tied to their science class) for the newsletter contents and make it specific to the science club
  - *Architecture firm*: An architecture firm wants to distribute an internal newsletter to employees highlighting company news, events, projects, and shared practices. Students need to research content for the newsletter and showcase images taken at a project site before, during and after projects.

## Assessment

This is a high level view of what student should create during this project. Refer to the assessment rubrics in each activity for more detailed/specific assessment rubrics for each part of the project.

	<b>0 – Does not meet expectations</b>	<b>3 – Meets expectations</b>	<b>5 – Exceeds expectations</b>
<b>Newsletter – content</b>	Absent or incomplete.	Newsletter theme and articles are for a target audience. Newsletter consists of 2-3 articles. Content is readable and properly aligned. Content adheres to the journalistic code of ethics, and appropriate copyright and fair use guidelines are applied when needed.	Newsletter theme and articles are for a target audience. Newsletter consists of 3 or more articles that are well-written and copyedited.  Content is easy to read, properly aligned, and has a clear hierarchy established through the use of titles and headers. Content adheres to the journalistic code of ethics, and appropriate copyright and fair use guidelines are applied when needed.
<b>Newsletter – design</b>	Absent or incomplete.	Newsletter is 3-4 pages, and the nameplate design supports the newsletter theme. Newsletter includes elements such as titles, headers, page numbers, captions, pull quotes, and so on. Newsletter includes 3-4 sections and 3-4 images. Newsletter uses a multi-column and multi-page layout. Newsletter utilizes consistent design through page layout templates and consistent styles. Newsletter is prepared for print and e-mail distribution.	Newsletter is 3-4 pages, and the nameplate design clearly and consistently supports the newsletter theme and goals.  Newsletter titles, headers, page numbers, captions, pull quotes, images, and so on are appropriately used to support the theme and connect to the target audience. Newsletter includes 4 or more sections and 4 or more images. Newsletter uses a multi-column and multi-page layout to create clear sections and readable content. Templates and consistent use of styles and font create a consistent design throughout the page layout.

<b>Teamwork</b>	Absent or incomplete.	Student collaborates with other students as required to provide feedback or assistance. Fulfills assigned team roles and contributes equally to project work. Sometimes consults with other team members on major project decisions but makes minimal effort to help others build skills. Teams plan and manage multiple steps to ensure delivery to client and approval for design comps, content, and a final product.	Student collaborates freely with other students to provide feedback or assistance. Fulfills assigned team roles and contributes equally to project work. Consults with other team members on major project decisions and voluntarily helps others build skills to complete the project.  Teams efficiently and effectively collaborate and interact with peers, experts, and others to create design comps and final newsletter. Teams efficiently and effectively plan and manage multiple steps to ensure delivery to client and approval for design comps, content, and a final product.
<b>Time management</b>	Unable to manage time.	Student allots time for each phase of the design and development process.  Completes most phases on schedule.	Student thoughtfully and effectively allots time for each phase of the design and development process.  Completes all phases on schedule.

## Background preparation resources

- To view video tutorials aligned with the skills required to complete this project, visit Adobe TV: <http://tv.adobe.com>
- For more teaching and learning resources on the topics in this project, search for resources from the community on the Adobe Education Exchange: <http://edex.adobe.com/>
- For an overview of the interface and for more information on the technical aspects of *Adobe Photoshop*, see *Photoshop Help*.
- For an overview of the interface and for more information on the technical aspects of *Adobe Illustrator*, see *Illustrator Help*.
- For an overview of the interface and for more information on the technical aspects of *Adobe InDesign*, see *InDesign Help*.

## Newsletters

- The 12 parts of a newsletter: [http://desktoppub.about.com/od/newsletters/a/newsletter\\_part.htm](http://desktoppub.about.com/od/newsletters/a/newsletter_part.htm).
- Articles and tutorials for planning a newsletter from start to finish: [http://desktoppub.about.com/od/newsletterplanning/Newsletter\\_Planning\\_and\\_Strategy.htm](http://desktoppub.about.com/od/newsletterplanning/Newsletter_Planning_and_Strategy.htm).
- Articles and tips for writing newsletter content: [http://desktoppub.about.com/od/newslettercontent/Newsletter\\_Content\\_How\\_to\\_Write\\_a\\_Newsletter.htm](http://desktoppub.about.com/od/newslettercontent/Newsletter_Content_How_to_Write_a_Newsletter.htm).
- Articles and tips for designing and publishing newsletters: [http://desktoppub.about.com/od/newsletters/Newsletter\\_Design\\_and\\_Publishing.htm](http://desktoppub.about.com/od/newsletters/Newsletter_Design_and_Publishing.htm).
- Articles and tutorials on newsletter design: [http://desktoppub.about.com/od/newsletterdesign/Newsletter\\_Design\\_How\\_to\\_Create\\_a\\_Newsletter.htm](http://desktoppub.about.com/od/newsletterdesign/Newsletter_Design_How_to_Create_a_Newsletter.htm).

## Keywords

- bylines
- continuation lines
- end signs
- masthead
- nameplate
- pull quotes

## ISTE NETS\*S Standards for Students

This project is aligned to the ISTE NETS\*S Technology Standards. Depending on the subject and content area the student selects you may research your own state content standards to see how this project aligns to your state requirements.

### ISTE NETS\*S: Curriculum and Content Area Standards – NETS for Students

#### 1. Creativity and Innovation

Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology. Students:

- a. apply existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products, or processes.
- b. create original works as a means of personal or group expression.
- d. identify trends and forecast possibilities.

#### 2. Communication and Collaboration

Students use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others. Students:

- b. communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences using a variety of media and formats

### 3. Research and Information Retrieval

Students apply digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information. Students:

- a. plan strategies to guide inquiry.
- b. locate, organize, analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and ethically use information from a variety of sources and media.
- c. evaluate and select information sources and digital tools based on the appropriateness to specific tasks

### 4. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

Students use critical thinking skills to plan and conduct research, manage projects, solve problems and make informed decisions using appropriate digital tools and resources. Students:

- a. identify and define authentic problems and significant questions for investigation.
- b. plan and manage activities to develop a solution or complete a project.
- d. use multiple processes and diverse perspectives to explore alternative solutions

### 5. Digital Citizenship

Students understand human, cultural, and societal issues related to technology and practice legal and ethical behavior. Students:

- a. advocate and practice safe, legal, and responsible use of information and technology.
- b. exhibit a positive attitude toward using technology that supports collaboration, learning, and productivity.
- c. demonstrate personal responsibility for lifelong learning.

### 6. Technology Operations and Concepts

Students demonstrate a sound understanding of technology concepts, systems, and operations. Students:

- a. understand and use technology systems.
- b. select and use applications effectively and productively.
- d. transfer current knowledge to learning of new technologies.

## Adobe Certified Associate Exam Objectives

### Adobe Certified Associate, Web Authoring objectives

- 1.1 Identify the purpose, audience, and audience needs for a website.
- 1.2 Identify web page content that is relevant to the website purpose and appropriate for the target audience.
- 1.6 Understand project management tasks and responsibilities.
- 2.6 Communicate with others (such as peers and clients) about design and content plans.

## **Adobe Certified Associate, Visual Communication objectives**

- 1.1 Identify the purpose, audience, and audience needs for preparing image(s).
- 1.2 Demonstrate knowledge of standard copyright rules for images and image use.
- 1.3 Demonstrate knowledge of project management tasks and responsibilities.
- 1.4 Communicate with others (such as peers and clients) about design plans.
- 3.2 Demonstrate knowledge of layers and masks.

## **Adobe Certified Associate, Video Communication objectives**

- 1.1 Identify the purpose, audience, and audience needs for preparing video.
- 1.4 Demonstrate knowledge of the production planning and management process.
- 2.6 Communicate with others (such as peers and clients) about design and content plans.

## **Adobe Certified Associate, Interactive Media Communication objectives**

- 1.1 Identify the purpose, audience, and audience needs for interactive media content.
- 1.5 Understand project management tasks and responsibilities.
- 1.6 Communicate with others (such as peers and clients) about design and content plans.

## **Adobe Certified Associate, Graphic Design & Illustration objectives**

- 1.1 Identify the purpose, audience, and audience needs for preparing graphics.
- 1.2 Demonstrate knowledge of standard copyright rules for artwork, graphics and graphic use.
- 1.3 Demonstrate knowledge of project management tasks and responsibilities.
- 1.4 Communicate with others (such as peers and clients) about design plans.

## Adobe Certified Associate, Print & Digital Media Publication objectives

- 1.1 Identify the purpose, audience, and audience needs for preparing page layouts.
- 1.2 Demonstrate knowledge of standard copyright rules for content use in page layouts
- 1.3 Demonstrate knowledge of project management tasks and responsibilities.
- 1.4 Communicate with others (such as peers and clients) about design plans.
- 2.1 Demonstrate knowledge of the appropriate properties of page layouts for print, web and digital publishing.
- 2.2 Demonstrate knowledge of design principles, elements, and graphic composition.
- 2.5 Understand key terminology of page layouts
- 3.4 Demonstrate knowledge of layers.
- 3.5 Demonstrate knowledge of exporting, packaging, saving, and organizing files.
- 4.1 Demonstrate knowledge of how to create multiple-page documents.
- 4.3 Demonstrate knowledge of how to use frames in a page layout.
- 4.4 Add text to a page layout.
- 4.5 Add graphic, image, and video content to a page layout.
- 4.6 Demonstrate knowledge of how to create special page elements using InDesign tools.
- 5.1 Demonstrate knowledge of how to prepare page layouts for publishing to print.
- 5.2 Demonstrate knowledge of how to prepare page layouts for export to multiscreen devices.

### For more information

Find more teaching materials for using Adobe software in your classroom on the Adobe Education Exchange: <http://edex.adobe.com/>.



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