Creating Newsletters & Other in MS Word
By Curt Minich

1. **Planning your newsletter**

   - Identify the audience (e.g. students, students & parents, community). This may seem trivial but it is actually pretty important. It will define the tone of your newsletter, the depth of the content in your articles, the vocabulary that you use, the kinds of graphics that you use, and even the font size.
   - Choose an appropriate title that is not too long. It needs to easily fit across the top of the front page.
   - List the ideas for columns prioritized in order so that you know which article to cut out if you don't have room for the last article. Decide who is going to write each article (you or your students). If you do ask students to write the articles, require them to submit their articles as Microsoft Word documents on a floppy disk. Also require them to submit articles with a specified font such as Times New Roman font in font size 10 or 12.
   - Decide whether your newsletter will be mailed or hand-delivered. If it is going to be mailed, you will need to leave room for a bi-fold or tri-fold area to place the address.
   - Collect any graphics that you wish to use in the newsletter by copying them from a web site, taking digital pictures, or scanning photographs. Of course, you may also use the clip-art that is found within MS Word.

2. **Using the Newsletter Wizard.**

Your copy of Word may have a newsletter wizard option, which can guide you step-by-step to a professional looking newsletter. By the way, ClarisWorks or AppleWorks that comes with Macintosh computers have wizards as well.

In Microsoft Word 97:
   a) Click the **File/New** menu command.
   b) Click the **Publications tab**. (Note that some copies of MS Word do not have this tab.)
   c) Double-click the **Newsletter icon**.
   d) Answer the questions, clicking **Next** to continue until you are able to click the **Finish** button.
   e) **Edit** the newsletter that the wizard created for you.

In Microsoft Word 2002 (or Word XP):
   a) Click the **File/New** menu command.
   b) Click the **General Templates** link on the right of the screen. (Note that some copies of MS Word do not have this tab.)
   c) Look under the available tabs and double-click any icon that's related to newsletters.
   d) Answer the questions, clicking **Next** to continue until you are able to click the **Finish** button.
   e) **Edit** the newsletter that the wizard created for you.

3. **Using a Microsoft Template.**

Your copy of Word may have come with some newsletter templates. If it did, they would likely be found under the File/New menu command under the Publications tab if you are using Word 97. If you are using Word 2002 or Word XP, follow steps a & b above but click the Templates on Microsoft.com link that you may see along the right edge of the screen.

If you cannot find any suitable templates, you should check Microsoft's web site at:
http://office.microsoft.com/templates
Here you will find many templates for various kinds of documents including those made especially for teachers (e.g. seating charts, lesson plans, etc.) under the Education link. There are many newsletter templates under the category Marketing > Marketing Materials. When you find, click on its entry and then click Download Now. You simply have to edit one of the available newsletter templates.

4. Creating a newsletter from scratch.

a/ Use the **Insert/Text Box** menu command in order to set up your title, articles, and placeholders for graphics or clipart. When you use this menu command, you must drag your mouse to create a rectangular text box.

b/ Click inside of a text box to obtain a blinking cursor that allows you to type text into a text box. The text in the text box can always be edited by clicking your cursor in the text box.

c/ To delete an unwanted text box or graphic, single-click the text box or graphic to select it and then press the **Delete** key on the keyboard.

d/ Click on a text box, and use the **Format/Text Box** menu command to turn off the border around a text box if you wish. Click the Colors and Lines tab. Then change the entry for Line Color to "No Line". Click the Ok button and you will see the border around the text box has disappeared.

e/ Click a text box and use the four-headed arrow to drag and move a text box to a different location.

f/ Use text boxes that have fill "color effects" or shades of gray for an interesting look. To do so, single-click a text box to select it. Then, click the **Format/Text Box** menu command. Click the triangle next to Color "No Fill" and then choose "Fill Effects". (If you are planning to print out your newsletter on a black-and-white printer or photocopy your newsletter, don't bother getting carried away with color.)

g/ Click inside of a text box to obtain a blinking cursor that allows you to insert a graphic into the text box using the **Insert/Picture** menu command.

h/ Click on a text box, click the **Format/Text Box** menu command and then click the Wrapping tab in order to make a text box transparent or to make words "flow around" a graphic.

i/ To cause a text box to appear as if it is behind another text box, right-click the text box and use the **Order/Send to Back** or **Order/Send Behind Text** menu commands.

j/ Use the **Insert/Picture/AutoShapes** and **Insert/Picture/WordArt** to insert other kinds of interesting objects into a newsletter, especially if you want to "fill up" some space.

k/ [FOR COURAGEOUS BEGINNERS ONLY] When you want an article to continue from one column to another column you need to create two text boxes. Type your text into the first text box and just after you have typed enough text that it starts scrolling, right-click the text box and choose the **Create Text Box Link** menu command. Then click the **"coffee cup"** icon in the center of the second, empty text box where you want the rest of the article to appear.

5. Using Graphics in a Newsletter

a/ You can insert a graphic directly into a Word document (i.e. your newsletter) using the **Insert/Picture** menu command. But often it is easier to work with the graphic if you first insert a text box and then use the Insert/Picture menu command to insert a graphic within that text box.

b/ Use the **Insert/Picture/Clip Art** menu command to choose a piece of clip art from the library that comes with Word.

c/ Use the **Insert/Picture/From File** menu command to choose a digital picture or a scanned photo that you previously saved somewhere on your computer's hard drive.

d/ To "borrow" a graphic from the Internet, right-click over a graphic on the Internet and click the **Save Picture As** (or Save Image As) menu command to save a picture somewhere on your hard drive. Be sure to follow copyright laws since you are not the owner of this graphic. Then, use Word's **Insert/Picture/From File** menu command to insert this picture into your newsletter.

e/ Single-click a graphic and use the buttons on the floating Drawing toolbar to make minor edits to the graphic including contrast, brightness, cropping, and transparency.