

Saving the Night Sky

The world is running out of dark places.
But we can change that.

About the Story

Learning Objective: to understand how a writer uses rules of capitalization, then practice applying those rules in a paragraph

Featured Skill: grammar, usage, and mechanics

Standards:

The article and its suite of support materials support this Common Core anchor standard: L.2

For more standards information—including TEKS—go to Scope Online.

WRITE LIKE A PRO

Capitalization

1. Capitalize the first letter of a sentence.
2. Capitalize the first letter of a proper noun (a name).
3. Capitalize the first letter of a title.

Saving the Night Sky
The world is running out of dark places. But we can change that. By Maggie Pierce

1:43:31 a.m. on January 17, 1994, after the sun goes down, the presence of too much artificial light is causing problems. However, first, light pollution can disrupt our natural sleep cycles, which makes us tired and can negatively affect our health. Light pollution also confuses animals. Baby sea turtles, which hatch on beaches at night and use starlight shining on waves to guide them to the ocean, can lose their way in the presence of artificial light. Light pollution even harms plants, causing some trees to bloom too early or keep their leaves too long.

Keeping Skies Dark

Around the world, some cities have taken steps to decrease light pollution. In Hollywood, Florida, for example, beachfront homes are required to dim their lights at night to protect sea turtles. Meanwhile, the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) is working to have night also dark. It has certified more than 200 locations worldwide as "Dark Sky Places." These places stay dark by using outdoor lighting only when needed and making sure bulbs are not too bright. You can help reduce light pollution too. In fact, it's as easy as flicking off lights when you're not using them. You can also use light bulbs that give off warm-white or amber light, which don't disrupt animals as much as the white or blue light that many bulbs produce.

Light Pollution

The brightening of the night sky is a result of something called light pollution: excessive use of artificial light. And Los Angeles is hardly the only city affected. Since the early 1900s, light pollution around the world has increased by at least 40 percent. Some 2,500 stars can be seen from Earth, but in most cities, only a few dozen are visible. In fact, the world is running out of dark places.

Light Pollution

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2. Capitalize the first letter of a proper noun (a name).
3. Capitalize the first letter of a title.

WRITE LIKE A PRO CHALLENGE

Now take what you've learned about capitalization and apply it to your own writing. Imagine that you are a music critic and write a review of an album of your choice. (The album can be real or fictitious, from the past, present, or future.) Your review should include:

- the album's title and the artist's name and place of birth
- the name of the record company and the date of the album's release
- a quotation (from the artist, one of the songs, another critic, fans—you decide)
- your opinion (Should it be a Grammy?)

30 Scholastic Scope ~ December 2023/January 2024

Your Teaching Package

Find your full suite of support materials at scope.scholastic.com.

Audio:

- Text-to-speech

Activities to print, project, or share digitally:

- Anchor Chart: Capitalization
- In-Magazine Activity: Interactive Version

Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

1. Prepare to Read (5 minutes)

- Draw students' attention to the directions in the upper left-hand corner of page 30 or at the top of the digital story page. Read the directions aloud.

2. Read and Discuss (25 minutes)

- Have students read the article and the rules in the yellow circles with a partner.
- Optionally, before students complete the **Write Like a Pro Challenge**, give them some extra practice applying the rules in each yellow circle using the activity below.
 - Post these six prompts on chart paper around your room:
 1. What is your favorite movie, podcast, or book?
 2. What is your favorite holiday?
 3. What is your dream vacation destination?
 4. Write a sentence containing the word *earth* or *Earth*.
 5. Write the initials for an imaginary association, then tell us what they stand for. For example: WRPSA=World Rock Paper Scissors Association
 6. What is one of your favorite quotes from a book, song, movie, or poem?
 - Have students answer each question on a sticky note and place it on the corresponding chart paper.
 - Have students take a gallery walk to view their classmates' answers and application of capitalization rules.

3. Write (25 minutes)

- Have students work in pairs or independently to take the **Write Like a Pro Challenge** on page 31 of the printed magazine or at the bottom of the digital story page:

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- *the album's title and the artist's name and place of birth*
 - *the name of the record company and the date of the album's release*
 - *a quotation (from the artist, one of the songs, another critic, fans—you decide)*
 - *your opinion: Should it win a Grammy?*
- Project students' reviews on your whiteboard to share the albums they wrote about and the words they capitalized. (Alternatively, have students exchange their reviews with a partner and check each other's work.)
 - Distribute the **Anchor Chart: Capitalization** for students to keep as a handy reference in their notebooks.