**Analyze The Pros – News Gathering**

Read the One Story selection ‘Obscene’ Paycheck: Centinela Valley superintendent’s compensation of $663,000 comes as state wants more transparency (<http://www.dailybreeze.com/social-affairs/20140208/centinela-valley-schools-chief-amassed-663000-in-compensation-in-2013>) and answer the following questions.

**Evaluate the story:**

1. How did the headline catch your interest?

2. Was the lead effective? Y/N

If yes, what caught your attention?

If no, how would you have started the story differently to catch readers’ interest?

3. Identify the 5Ws and H in the story.

Who is the story about:

What:

When:

Where:

Why:

How:

**Evaluate the reporting:**

4. Using links provided or citations within the story, list at least two different documents the reporter used, and briefly describe the information found in each document.

5. Using citations in the story, list at least three people the reporter interviewed for this story.

6. Who supported the superintendent’s pay package?

7. Who opposed it?

8. Who were disinterested sources, who provided information but not opinion?

9. How do you think the reporter got the idea for this story?

10. What happened to the superintendent after this story was published? (Follow links to related stories from the web site to find out.)

**Bonus Question:**  The headline in the original printed edition uses the word “obscene” in quotation marks. Explain why this word is in quotes.

**KEY**

Evaluate the story:

1. How did the headline catch your interest? In print, the word “obscene” is a great attractor. In both, the salary figure -- $663,000 – is large enough to pique interest in how he made so much.

2. Was the lead effective? Y/N

If yes, what caught your attention? The lead is clear and straightforward but the phrase “so loaded with out-of-the-ordinary perks” is a real attention grabber.

If no, how would you have started the story differently to catch reader interest? Student option here. Accept any reasonable answer.

3. Identify the 5Ws and H in the story.

Who is the story about: Jose Fernandez, superintendent of Centinela Valley Schools

What: Received extraordinarily large compensation for a small school district, $663,000

When: 2013 (last year)

Where: Centinela Valley Schools

Why: School board approved based on superintendent’s perceived ability to turn the district around

How: Special clauses in contract plus a home loan of more than $900,000

Evaluate the reporting:

4. Using links provided in the original story regarding Fernandez’s pay (<http://www.dailybreeze.com/social-affairs/20140208/centinela-valley-schools-chief-amassed-663000-in-compensation-in-2013>) or citations within the story, list at least two different documents the reporter used, and briefly describe the information found in each document.

1) The superintendent’s contract, base salary plus adjustments and additional compensation

2) Additional compensation documents, describing the low-interest loan

3) The loan documents, executing the loan

4) W-2 documents provided by LAUSD and LA Office of Education for compensation of other area superintendents

5) A letter from State Comptroller John Chiang

5. Using citations in the story, list at least three people the reporter interviewed for this story.

Sandra Goins, executive director of South Bay United Teachers

Steve Murillo, owner of First Manhattan Mortgage and Realtors in Manhattan Beach

Bob Cox, the district’s assistant superintendent of human resources

Board President Maritza Molina

Jane Robison, a spokeswoman for the Los Angeles County District Attorney’s Office

Julie White, a consultant with the Association of California School Administrators

Michael Simidjian, with the firm Dannis Wolliver Kelley who works with the board on contract

Jack Foreman, the Centinela Valley teachers union president

6. Who supported the superintendent’s pay package? Cox, Molina

7. Who opposed it? Goins, Foreman

8. Who were disinterested sources, who provided information but not opinion? Murillo, Robison, White, Simidjian

9. How do you think the reporter got the idea for this story? Most likely from a simple request for the superintendent’s contract and pay documents following the state comptroller’s call for more transparency in government administrators’ pay.

10. What happened to the superintendent after this story was published? The superintendent was fired. A movement began for the recall of school board members. Several lawsuits. An FBI investigation.

**Bonus Question:**  The headline in the original printed edition uses the word “obscene” in quotation marks. Explain why this word is in quotes. Award bonus points to anyone who answers that the word is in quotes because it’s a quotation from Sandra Goins, executive director of South Bay United Teachers.