

- Which news story will your editorial team choose to feature on the front cover and lead the week's news?
- Which three would you choose as the main headlines stories for page 3?
- Not all can be included, so you will have to choose the news!

Extra challenge: Can you come up with headlines for your chosen stories?

Story 1

A TEAM of scientists is warning that bird flu is spreading among animals like never before. An outbreak of the virus has killed millions of birds in the USA since January 2022, and also spilled over to mammals. It's crossed from birds to cows, and from cows to cats and one raccoon. Researchers from Cornell University in New York say that this level of spreading of bird flu from one mammal to another "may cause the virus to adapt, enhancing its [ability to infect] other species – including people."

Writing in the science journal Nature, they report that infected cows eat less, find it harder to breathe and produce less milk. The milk that they do produce is infected with the virus. They want more to be done to prevent the spread among cattle and "reduce the risk of a pandemic in humans."

Story 2

A new study by the RSPCA shows a third of kids have never experienced wildlife in parks or gardens. It says 70% of kids aged seven to 15 have never seen a cow being milked, and 21% have never fed ducks. The RSPCA wants to inspire kids to love nature through their Young Photographer Awards. This contest, open to anyone under 19, encourages people to take amazing animal photos. The RSPCA hopes this will help young people connect with nature and treat animals kindly. Entries close on 15 August, and you can enter at young.rspca.org.uk.

Story 3

Nokia's parent company, HMD, is creating a new phone for kids that has internet, but no social media. The phone will help parents keep track of their children with features such as a locator and messaging. Surveys show many parents regret giving their kids smartphones due to the negative effects. HMD says it is working to include useful apps like education tools and maps, while limiting unnecessary distractions to keep kids safe and focused.

Story 4

Scientists have discovered that Mercury, the smallest planet in our solar system and the nearest to the sun, might have a ten-mile- thick (16km) layer of diamonds beneath its surface. Using data from NASA's MESSENGER spacecraft, researchers think that Mercury's early carbon-rich magma (melted rock) ocean created the layer. They say it could explain why Mercury's surface is so dark, and why its core is so heavy.



Story 5

WE'VE all dreamed of owning our own island, right? Now, there's one up for sale in Plymouth's harbour! Okay, so it's not quite the type of paradise you'd find in the Caribbean, Mediterranean or the Pacific Ocean, but Drake's Island does have its own private beach and cool cannons, plus permission to build a luxury hotel.

Over the years, the island's been a military site, a jail, a film location and more. The current owner is an ex-Royal Navy engineer called Morgan Phillips, who bought it for £6 million in 2019. "It has over 2,000 years of history," Mr Phillips, who gives guided tours of the island, told Sky News.

One catch – it's said to be haunted by 15 ghosts of military men! "They're here to protect us. That's what they did when they were alive," Mr Phillips said. "I've seen enough to say, stuff happens here that I can't explain. But all of it's really nice." He also says that: "Being the steward of this amazing landscape has been one of the great joys of my life." Now, though, he's ready to sell. He hasn't named a price yet – so if you're keen, save up some pocket money this summer and make him an offer!

Story 6

Scientists at King's College London have discovered that Komodo dragons, the largest living lizards, have a layer of iron that coats their already razor-sharp teeth. This metal coating helps keep their jagged-edge teeth sharp so they can catch their prey more easily. The lizards feed on almost anything, from small birds to horses and buffalo. Experts say this is the first time a metal coating of this kind has been found in an animal.

Story 7

The talented people who lend their acting and singing voices to videogames in the USA have gone on strike. The same goes for performers who lend their bodies for motion capture. They want big companies like EA and Activision to promise not to use artificial intelligence (AI) to copy their voices or their likenesses. They're worried that, if AI is used to generate characters in games, they won't be needed any more. Gaming expert George Osborn told Sky News: "Someone could try to use AI to completely generate a character based on a performer." Audrey Cooling, a spokesperson for the game companies, said that they were ready to protect performers from the use of AI.

Story 8

TWO fishermen had to be rescued after a whale flipped their boat over in New Hampshire, USA. The whale, which the fishermen had spotted earlier, breached (jumped out of the water) and landed on their boat, causing it to capsize. Luckily, two young brothers nearby saw the incident and rescued the men from the water. The US Coast Guard responded quickly and confirmed that no-one was hurt. Experts think the whale probably didn't see the boat as it was busy catching fish. The boat has been recovered and the whale is thought to have been unharmed.



Story 5

A study of 3,000 young people says they get two-thirds of their calories from ultra-processed foods (UPFs). UPFs are foods like ready meals that contain a lot of preservatives, sweeteners and flavourings, as well as those high in fat, salt and sugar. Some scientists are concerned this can lead to obesity, as well as diseases like type 2 diabetes and cancer. Lead author of the study, Dr Yanaina Chavez-Ugalde, said: "Consumption is at a much higher level than is ideal." Dr Esther van Sluijs, another of the researchers, said: "[UPFs] offer convenient and often cheaper solutions to time – and income – poor families, but unfortunately many of these foods also offer poor nutritional value."

Story 6

RARE footage has been captured of a tribe in Peru, just miles away from logging companies that are chopping down Amazon trees. The Mashco Piro people live deep in the rainforest. They're thought to be the largest tribe on Earth that avoids all contact with the outside world. Survival International said that the arrival of logging companies on Mashco Piro land is a "humanitarian disaster in the making". It's calling for their logging permits to be taken away.