DID you know that paper planes have played a vital role in the history of aviation? A paper plane is after all a type of glider, a fixed-wing aeroplane that is supported in flight by air, rather than an engine. The people who invented the earliest forms of powered flight all studied paper model aeroplanes. But the first paper planes were folded in China and Japan more than 2500 years ago. Engineering students still use paper planes to learn about flight and aerodynamics, and it is worth remembering that NASA’s space shuttles returned to earth like gliders. Like all aeroplanes, paper planes are effected by forces such as thrust, lift, drag and weight. Thrust is the energy you supply to your paper plane when you throw it.

If you are a fan of The Wonder Weekly, there is nothing to stop you creating a newspaper at home. Modern newspapers are designed using a computer program. But it is not that long ago that these designs, or "layouts" as they are known, were produced on paper with a pencil, a ruler and an eraser.

Your challenge is to layout the front page of your own newspaper, either the old-fashioned way or with the benefit of technology, if you have access to a computer and a program such as Publisher or InDesign.

Start by ruling even columns on a page to guide you. The Wonder Weekly uses five columns, but you could have six or seven if you wanted to.

Then you will need a name for your newspaper, which is called a "masthead".

Take flight with paper and a plan

"Education perhaps more than anything else is a passport to a better life." - Peter Underwood AC
Take flight with a plane challenge

From Page 1
The wings of aeroplanes are shaped so air travels more quickly over the top of the wings than beneath, and the difference in pressure causes lift.

While drag is the air that slows your plane down.

Weight is gravity at work.

Your challenge is to develop your own paper plane from a sheet of A4 paper.

You may already have a design you use regularly.

If you do, experiment with some modifications (slight changes) to the design, or try designing something completely new.

The instructions we have provided, right, are for a simple but quite effective dart.

If you have online access there are many sites which provide instructions for various designs.

Test your designs and piloting skills for distance and accuracy.

There are three categories of competition - longest distance, longest air time and aerobatics, and strict rules have been developed by the Paper Plane Association.

There are many sites which provide instructions for various designs.

For the distance test use the largest indoor space available, and providing there are no family members or breakables in your path, launch your plane.

A good way of testing accuracy is to place a clothes basket or a bucket (or any target really) in the middle of a room.

Stand back a few metres, and see if you can land your plane in the target area.

The Guinness World Record for the farthest flight by a paper plane is 69.14 metres, and was achieved in an aircraft hanger at McClellan Air Force Base, in California, USA, in 2012.

Joe Ayoob, a former American football quarterback, flew the paper plane designed by John Collins from a single sheet of uncut A4 paper.

People from around the world, including Australia, have competed in the Paper Wings world paper plane championships.

The front page of your newspaper is the best news story of the day, which runs with a large headline.

You could just draw scribbly lines to indicate the text of the story, or you could write a news story about any topic you like.

You might even like to interview someone for your article.

People who work in the newspaper profession are known as journalists.

Those who research and write stories or articles are known as reporters.

While the journalists who check their articles and layout the newspaper are called subeditors, and in some cases editors.

Artists and photographers are also employed in the editorial department of newspapers.

Journalists can also work for other publications, such as magazines or online publishers, television and radio.

You can study journalism and other forms of media at the School of Creative Arts and Media, at the University of Tasmania.

But back to your newspaper.

If you intend to write a story, leave space for a headline and write it last.

The most important item on the front page is the best news story of the day, which runs with a large headline.

The front page also features a large photo, which can relate to the main story or a second story.

The Burnie Bugle, or Harry’s Herald, or Zoe’s Mail, or perhaps the suburb or town where you live, (e.g. The Burnie Bugle).

The Peter Underwood Centre has a new, weekly broadcast, UCTV Alive for Kids.

To find out more: www.facebook.com/UnderwoodCentre/