

Writing a Newspaper Article

Your Name

Title of course
Professor's name
Date

If you have to write a newspaper article, you have to keep several things in mind. First of all, there is a certain outline of a newspaper article that you have to stick to. The parts are as follows:

- Headline
- Byline
- Lede
- The story

The headline and the byline show what the article is about and who wrote it. The lede is a preview of the whole story. It should tell a reader what happened, when, where, and who did this. Talking about the story, try to follow the rule of an inverted pyramid. It can be described as a principle, when you tell the most important information first, then it is followed by the less important details. In other words, try to think that there will not be enough space to publish your whole article, or the reader is too impatient to read it to the very end.

There are also some peculiarities of presenting the story in your article. Peter Cole states that the traditional news introductory paragraph has two related purposes: to engage the reader instantly and to summarise what the story is all about. The good intro depends on your judgment and decisiveness. It declares why the story is being published, what is the newest, most interesting, most important, most significant, most attention-grabbing aspect of the story. It is not a summary of everything yet to come. The best intro will contain a maximum of two or three facts, maybe only one. In a popular tabloid it will consist of one sentence, probably no more than 25 words. The worst intro will be uncertain of what the story is all about and will contain several ideas. The best intro will demand that you read on. The worst will make it likely that you will move on (Cole, 2008).

Holding the reader's interest does not stop until he or she has read to the end. You have already planned your structure, the hierarchy of information. After the intro you are amplifying the story, adding new, if subordinate, information, providing detail, explanation and quotes. And doing all this so that the story reads smoothly and seamlessly. News stories are about providing information, and

there is nothing more frustrating for the reader than finishing a story with unanswered questions still hanging. Journalism students are taught about the five Ws: who, what, when, where and why. They are a useful tool to check you have covered all the bases, though not all will always apply. It is always difficult to detach yourself from your own prose when you read it through, but try. Try to put yourself in the place of the reader coming cold to the story, interested in it and asking the questions that will make it clear. Have you dealt with them? The subeditor, or text editor, will soon tell you if you haven't. There is always a problem over how much knowledge to assume, particularly with a running story of which today's is another episode. You cannot always start from the beginning for the benefit of reader recently arrived from Mars, but you can include sufficient to ensure it is not meaningless. It is a matter of judgement (Cole, 2008).

Bibliography

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