

2017/2018

Journalism Pre/Post

Write a News Story

Directions: Students choose a newsworthy event that they witness (or witnessed recently) and write a news story. Students should be assigned the task ahead of the day of assessment and come prepared with their notes/ideas, etc. Teachers may want to also give a grade for process and preparation.

An effective new story must have:

- A headline – subject and verb provide focus for the story
- Use the inverted pyramid style (the most important details of the story should be towards the beginning and be less and less important to understanding the story as the story develops. Stories should not be chronological.
- Inverted pyramid – 2 to 3 different sources; include primary + secondary + professional/authority sources.
- A news lead that includes the who, what, where, when and maybe the why and how. The news lead should be a 1 – 2 sentence paragraph.
- Length should be 300 – 600 words.
- No bias, only facts.
- No use of personal pronouns.
- Body paragraphs should be short (2-3 sentences or 60 words). Develop one detail per paragraph.

Scoring Guide for Feature Writing Using Six Traits

Total Points: 18

	Fully Developed		Developed	Developing		Not Developed
	Excellent Response 6 Points	Skillful Response 5 Points	Sufficient Response 4 Points	Uneven Response 3 Points	Insufficient Response 2 Points	Unsatisfactory Response 1 Point
Ideas and Content	Goes into depth about a person, event, idea, etc. Provides specific facts using quotes which help story go into depth. Uses appropriate leads. Exceptionally clear, focused, engaging with relevant, strong supporting detail. Exceptionally clear, focused, engaging with relevant, strong supporting detail.	Focuses on specific person, event, etc. Provides specific facts. Uses quotes. Uses appropriate leads. Clear, focused, interesting ideas with appropriate detail.	Evident main idea with some support which may be general or limited. The story shows some research, but it is too general. General quotes are used. Ideas are generally tied to topic.	Main idea may be cloudy because supporting detail is too general or even off-topic. The story shows some research, but more information is needed. There is an occurrence of vague words. Quotes are used, but not really relevant.	Main idea is partially understood because of a weak introduction. The story doesn't show that the writer did research at all. Few quotes are used, but not effective. Story is unfinished.	Not focused on specific person, event, or idea. No quotes from reliable sources. Includes references from the writer only. Lacks central idea; development is minimal or non-existent. The story is incomplete.
Organization	Effectively organized in logical and creative manner. Creative and engaging intro and conclusion. Balance throughout the whole feature article. Organization is well controlled, with logical sequence of reasons and strong transitions.	Strong order and structure. Inviting intro and satisfying closure. Consistency throughout the whole feature story. The organization enhances the main idea, and is controlled. The order, structure, and presentation move the reader through the text effectively.	Organization is appropriate, but conventional. Attempt at introduction and conclusion is general. Generally consistent throughout feature article. The organization is effective and efficient with overall structure. Attempt at Introduction and conclusion.	Attempts at organization; may be a "List" of events. Beginning and ending not developed. Organization has been attempted, but is ineffective. Beginning and ending are not developed.	Lack of structure; disorganized and hard to follow. Missing or weak intro and conclusion. Organization provides some signs of development, but not effective. Transitions are weak; connections between ideas are difficult to follow. Lack of structure.	Lack of coherence; confusing. No identifiable introduction or conclusion. The writing lacks direction due to ideas and details being loosely connected. Illogical flow that hinders understanding. No organization is evident.
Voice	Writing is clear, concise, to the point, and specifically related to a particular type of feature article. Expressive, engaging, sincere. Strong sense of audience.	Descriptive, broad range of words. Word choice energizes writing. The writer confident and effective with style and voice.	Language is functional and appropriate. Descriptions may be overdone at times. The writer is genuine and generally involved in the topic. The tone is appropriate.	Words may be correct but mundane. No attempt at deliberate choice. The writer's voice may be inappropriate or non-existent. Tone is generally used correctly at certain points of the story.	Monotonous, often repetitious, sometimes inappropriate and unclear. Writer not aware of audience. The writing isn't informative or convincing.	Limited range of words. Some vocabulary misused. Unclear and inaccurate. Reader can't focus on meaning of writing.