

Different Text Types in a Newspaper

A text that is to be published in a newspaper needs to be in more formal language. To achieve a more formal tone, think about the following:

- no slang, no colloquial expressions
- avoid contractions (e.g. It's → It is /You're → you are /Can't → cannot)
- try to use appropriate and perhaps more sophisticated words and correct grammar
- verbs are often in the passive form in news
- aim for a polite and often objective tone (unless it is an opinionated piece)
- news language is often about KISS = Keep It Short and Simple (edit = do not use unnecessary words or phrases)

In all types of text in a newspaper you need a *Headline* and *Lead paragraph*

The headline needs to catch the reader's attention. E.g. Shark Attack at Beach

A Lead paragraph gives the most important information and is often written in **bold**.

Text types you might find in a newspaper

News Article: reports a specific incident or development. It is formal, objective and no personal opinions are to be included.

Opinion column: The purpose of an opinion column is to argue for a specific point. You want to address a problem, express an opinion and/or give a reaction to something. You want to be persuasive and convincing and cause debate.

Feature Story: The purpose of a feature story is to analyze a series of events or a development. It does not have to inform about something that has just happened. This type of text is semi-objective.

Feature Story – Profile: A feature story with focus on a profile is an examination of a certain person. Often an interview is included. Semi-objective.

Letter to the editor: Written by the readers of the newspaper where the reader expresses his/her opinion on a certain topic or react to a text earlier published in the paper.

Review: To evaluate a piece of art (books, films, shows, concerts, TV-programs, computer games etc). Generally descriptive and formal but also expresses the reviewer's professional opinion. Semi-objective.

News article: *objective reporting of an event/news item*

- **Headline:** every news article has a headline to attract the attention of the reader. The headline must state the topic of the news in a strong, short phrase or statement.
- **By-line:** this is the line with your name on it. It is called the "by" line because it tells BY whom the article is written.
- **The Lead:** Typically the "5 W's" (who, what, where, when and why) are answered in the headline and the first paragraph. A lead paragraph offers the reader information in a few short sentences.
- **Supportive paragraphs** tell the reader HOW the news occurred via description and quotes from witnesses to the news.
- Typically, paragraphs are very short.
- Typically, register is formal and objective.

Feature article: a *discussion of an event/issue/topic*

A feature story does not have to report on something that has just happened. It investigates a series of events or development. It gives a more thorough explanation, it may give background information, analyzes and gives new perspectives on an issue in society. Descriptions of settings and people are often included to create the atmosphere the writer is after. This is the reason the feature story is semi-objective.

A feature story could also focus on one person, include an interview and give a deeper profile of that person.

- **Headline**
- **Other typical features:** sub-headlines, images/photos, captions, quote blurbs
- **The Lead:** typically the first paragraph attracts attention and gets the reader interested in reading whole article
- **The Billboard:** following the Lead, the billboard gives the background information that the reader needs in order to understand the later discussion/analysis
- **The Body:** the main discussion/analysis of the topic; this is the lengthiest part of the feature
- **The Kicker:** concludes the feature; typically, it gives a solution, a recommendation or a thought-provoking idea for the reader to consider

Opinion column

The purpose of an opinion column is to argue for a specific point. You want to address a problem, express an opinion and/or give a reaction to something. You want to be persuasive and convincing and cause debate. In order to do this you must be truthful and use facts. You may also want to spice up your language with rhetorical devices.

You can use a basic five-paragraph structure.

- Title- must give something on your main point.
- Paragraph 1: Introduction. Make the reader interested, give some background information in the topic and state your thesis statement (your main opinion/what you believe).
- Paragraph 2: First argument (Why you believe it). Make sure that your argument is supported by facts. Give examples and explain the first argument thoroughly.
- Paragraph 3. Second argument
- Paragraph 4: Third argument. Do not forget to have counter-arguments, why your opponents are wrong.
- Paragraph 5. Conclusion. Briefly summarize your arguments and thesis. Perhaps call people to take action

Letter to the Editor

In Swedish “insändare”. Not written by a journalist, but by an interested member of the society who wants to express an opinion and/or respond to what someone else has written about previously (in an article or earlier letter to the editor).

- follow letter format, beginning with "To the Editor" and ending with a signature
- begin by indicating the article that you're responding to and a brief statement of the reason that you're writing.
- explain each point that you want to make to support your argument.

Review

A review evaluates a piece of art (books, films, shows, concerts, TV-programs, computer games etcetera). Generally descriptive and formal but also expresses the reviewer's professional opinion. Semi-objective. The general structure of a review:

- State the title and the author you are reviewing in your heading or clearly at the top.
- Describe the historical or social context of the work
- Summarize the plot briefly and name important characters
- Describe with more detail certain aspects that you select. You could focus on for example, language, structure or technique. Also, give your own opinions on the quality of the work. What in your opinion works, what doesn't?
- Comment on the message if possible and summarize your most important points in a conclusion. Possibly add a recommendation?