

CELEBRITY HIGH



[SEE YOURSELF IN PRINT!]
CELEBRITY HIGH JOURNALISM

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CELEBRITY HIGH

WELCOME TO CELEBRITY HIGH!

Celebrity High is a teen lifestyle magazine covering topics such as Sports, Academics, Health, Community, Business and Entertainment

The Celebrity High journalism program is an intensive writing program for teens ages 13-19 who are currently attending high school. No journalism experience is necessary, just a love for writing, photography or illustration and of course a passionate desire to work with Celebrity High!

EXPECTATIONS

- ★ You are expected to submit regularly (at least once per month – but feel free to submit more if you wish!)
- ★ You are expected to meet monthly deadlines – those who do not meet deadlines will not be published.
- ★ All submitted articles may not be published, but students are encouraged to continue to submit, edit and rewrite to improve their skills.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Celebrity High journalism program can be put on your college application as an academic-extracurricular activity

Celebrity High can help you generate writing samples for college, internships and more.

Celebrity High offers internships to select students. Writing for Celebrity High could lead to an internship for credit

The top student of each semester will receive an award of recognition

Working with Celebrity High gives you first access to coupons, gift certificates and more from our advertisers

Celebrity High could be an opportunity to sit down and interview your favorite celebrity!



CELEBRITY HIGH

WHAT TYPE OF CONTENT DOES CELEBRITY HIGH ACCEPT?

CELEBRITY HIGH ACCEPTS:

FEATURE ARTICLES
NEWS ARTICLES
PHOTOGRAPHS WITH CAPTIONS
ILLUSTRATIONS
FICTION
AND MORE!

HOW DO I COME UP WITH STORY IDEAS?

The short answer is to think about what you and your friends are interested in knowing about, talking about and learning about. Chances are if it interests you it will interest others. Some other handy tips are:

ADOPT A CURIOUS MINDSET AND BE OBSERVANT. You want to know the details about everything! Even a friend's casual mention can lead you to learn—and write—about subject. If you're not inquisitive, you may not learn that there is a story behind an initial brief comment.

STAY CURRENT. When you know what's going on, you can spot trends and areas where different stories might intersect. Subscribe to magazines, spend time reading news on the Internet. Some times you can even take two unrelated topics and combine them to make one killer story idea.

Watching the public Twitter feed can give you ideas for a story. You can just watch until you see an intriguing post that inspires you. Twitter can be a great place to pick up on new trends.

TALK TO PEOPLE. This might seem obvious, but many stories are about people. The more people you talk to, the better chance you have of stumbling upon a really great story. Talk to experts, they often have better access to cutting-edge information than you do.

KEEP A JOURNAL. Keeping a journal can be helpful. Flashes of inspiration can come at any time. It can help to have a journal where you can write down ideas as they come and where you can keep track of your general reflections and your dreams just as you are waking up.

GENERATING FICTION STORY IDEAS For fiction stories, you need inspiration. And actually, getting inspiration for fiction writing isn't so different from searching for non-fiction story ideas. It's still a good idea to read a lot and interact with others. Fictional stories need characters, and you can get great inspiration from people you know or people you briefly encounter. The public Twitter feed can give you non-fiction inspiration as well. You can even challenge yourself by picking five random tweets and forcing yourself to make a coherent story out of them.

Another fun approach is to co-opt a minor character from another work to use as your starting point. The most famous example is probably the book *Wicked*, whose main character is the Wicked Witch of the West from *The Wizard of Oz*, but there are many examples.

In truth, stories are everywhere if your mind is prepared to look for them. Happy hunting!

HOW TO INTERVIEW

Knowing proper interviewing techniques can mean the difference between a good and great story. Interviews are not just about questions and answers, but about understanding and thoughtfully listening to your subject. Follow these steps to conduct a great interview.

STEP 1 Decide what type of interview you'd like to do. The most common are face-to-face and phone interviews. Face to face gives you an opportunity to look at the person and see the look on their face when they're telling their stories. A phone interview gives the person a little more anonymity and might provide an easier outlet for someone to open up.

STEP 2 Set up a time or place to meet with your subject. If you are meeting face to face, meet in a place that is comfortable to the subject.

STEP 3 Bring a recorder and a notebook and pen. Turn the recorder on during the interview, but write down in the notebook key things that were said.

STEP 4 Start a conversation, not an interview. Have a conversation with your subject because you want them to be comfortable with what they're talking about. The more comfortable your subject is, the better the interview will be.

STEP 5 Listen. Let your subject talk. Don't be so quick to interject with more questions. Wait for a definitive pause before asking your next question.

STEP 6 Let the conversation steer your line of questioning. It's good to go into the interview with an idea of what you want to ask, but don't be afraid to ask your questions in response to what your subject has said.

STEP 7 Let the interview go as long as it needs to. Don't limit your time or your subject's chance to tell his story. This will ensure the most complete interview possible. After he is finished, thank them for their time.

How to Write a Feature Article

Articles aim to inform, entertain, persuade readers and require you to grab the reader's attention quickly and hold that attention. Writing a great article isn't always easy and there are a lot of aspects that combine together to make a great and smooth flowing article. The following hints, tips and ideas will apply to all types of feature articles, this includes magazine articles, newspaper articles, blog posts, and online article writing

PURPOSE - THE MISSION OF A FEATURE ARTICLE

Feature articles are detailed pieces of writing which explore a range of issues, opinions, experiences and ideas. Feature articles can be informative, entertaining, persuasive or they may simply satisfy the reader's curiosity about a particular topic. A feature article may provide more information about an important issue, offer an opinion about current affairs or simply present a personal or humorous perspective on modern day life. Unlike news reports which can quickly go out of date, feature articles have a more general focus and do not go out of date after a few days. Article writers go beyond just the facts on the surface and add colour, detail, background and personal comment. The appeal of feature articles is usually the personal perspective on offer.

TYPES OF FEATURE ARTICLES INCLUDE:

- ★ Analysis and opinion on current issues.
- ★ Profiles of, or interviews with well known-people. (Think Celebrity High Exclusive Celebrity Interviews)
- ★ Humorous reflections
- ★ Personal experience or anecdotes.
- ★ Background information on local, national or international events.
- ★ Human interest stories
- ★ Background information and personal opinion on your interest!

"Feature articles are not just dry facts, it provides story and information from a unique angle."

STEPS TO WRITE A FEATURE ARTICLE

- ★ Brainstorm ideas.
- ★ Whats the purpose?
- ★ Research your topic.
- ★ Grab the reader's attention.
- ★ Keep that attention.
- ★ Leave an impression.

STRUCTURE

Like any form of writing a feature article follows a standard structure. While it may vary depending on your topic, a feature article should always include a headline, introduction, the main body and a concluding paragraph.

How to Write a Feature Article(cont.)

TITLE & HEADLINE THE HEADLINE PERFORMS TWO IMPORTANT FUNCTIONS. AN EFFECTIVE HEADLINE: GRABS THE READER'S ATTENTION AND PERSUADES THEM TO READ THE ARTICLE HIGHLIGHTS THE MAIN IDEA OF THE ARTICLE.

INTRODUCTION The first paragraph outlines the subject or theme of the article, it may also:

- ★ PROVOKE THE READER'S INTEREST BY MAKING AN UNUSUAL STATEMENT.
- ★ PROVIDE ANY NECESSARY BACKGROUND INFORMATION.
- ★ INVITE THE READER TO TAKE SIDES BY MAKING A CONTROVERSIAL STATEMENT.
- ★ HEIGHTEN THE DRAMA OF AN EVENT OR INCIDENT TO INTENSIFY ITS APPEAL.
- ★ ESTABLISH THE WRITER'S TONE
- ★ CREATE A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE WRITER AND THE READER.

DETAILS (THE MAIN ARTICLE) The middle section consists of a number of paragraphs that expand the main topic of the article into subtopics. The usual components are:

- ★ Subheadings.
- ★ Facts and statistics which support the writer's opinion.
- ★ Personal viewpoints.
- ★ Opinions from authorities and experts.
- ★ Quotes and interviews.
- ★ Anecdotes and stories.
- ★ Specific names, places and dates.
- ★ Photographs, tables, diagrams and graphs.
- ★ A spin that grabs readers so they connect with what you are writing.

CONCLUSION The concluding paragraph should leave a lasting impression by:

- ★ Reminding the reader of the article's main idea
- ★ Suggesting an appropriate course of action.
- ★ Encouraging a change of attitude or opinion.

LANGUAGE OF FEATURE ARTICLES

- ★ A personal tone is created through the use of informal, colloquial (slang) and first person narrative.
- ★ Relevant jargon adds authenticity to the information and opinions.
- ★ Anecdotes help to maintain reader interest.
- ★ Facts validate the writer's viewpoints.
- ★ In humorous articles, exaggeration and generalization are used to heighten humour.
- ★ Rhetorical questions help to involve the reader.
- ★ Emotive words are used to evoke a personal response in the reader.
- ★ Effective use of imagery and description engage the reader's imagination.
- ★ The use of direct quotes personalizes the topic.

HOW-TO WRITE BETTER LEADS! (AND DRAW READERS IN)

The heart of a story is its first sentence. No other part is more important and no other part has the opportunity to say more. The first sentence is responsible for catching the reader's attention and setting the tone of the story - a lofty proposition for something that should be kept focused and brief. Yet, as important as the lead is, it has flexibility as well. There is no single right way to write a lead, but there are plenty of wrong ways.

What are **THE ATTRIBUTES OF A GOOD LEAD**? Brevity, for one. Writers can say more with less, but many have a hard time accepting this idea. There is an attitude that a writer needs to explain every aspect, every facet of a story in the first sentence. This is not necessary. The lead should be a tease that draws the reader into the body of the story. It is here that the writer has the space to make the details come alive. If the lead is too long or says too much, there is no reason for the reader to continue on into the text. A good rule of thumb is to keep any lead under twenty-five words. Much more, and it's time to revise.

A lead must be brief, but meaningful as well. It has to say something about the story. If a lead is vague, the reader will not continue reading. Another common problem is that writers often stick information in the lead that is interesting but not relevant to what follows. There may seem nothing wrong with this approach - it certainly draws the reader in, and it often is artfully written. But it is dishonest. As soon as the reader figures out the ploy, they will stop reading. A good lead keeps to the facts and focus of the story so the reader knows exactly what they are getting themselves into.

There are a few models to keep in mind when developing a lead for your story. The most common type of lead is the **SUMMARY LEAD**. This is an approach favored for most news stories today. It tells the basics, but nothing more - who, what, where, when, and why. There is nothing wrong with this approach; it is reliable and easy to write. But it is formulaic. If the reader isn't interested enough in the raw facts of the story, this lead offers them no additional incentive to continue.

The second type of lead is the **DESCRIPTIVE LEAD**. This explains the readers the atmosphere of a story instead of the raw facts. It is a way to make a story sensory, conveying tangible feeling through the words. But be careful. Writers often turn to cliché and clunky metaphors in the absence of detail. A descriptive lead should illustrate an image in the mind of the reader rather than provide a bare sketch.

Another common type is an **ANECDOTAL LEAD**. This type of lead structures the story around an individual and their experiences. It provides a focused, relatable narrative structure to the reader. Again, there is a cause for caution. Anecdotal leads work best with strong characters with strong voices. The average person probably is not worthy of an anecdotal league - reserve it for those rare sources.

A fourth model is the **QUESTION LEAD**. This may be used in a story that dispels a common perception or says something unexpected. It immediately places the issue central to the story in the minds of the readers and causes them to evaluate as they read. However, this can be a risky approach. Readers read stories to find answers, not more questions. If the body of your story is vague or wavering, a question lead is not the approach to take.

The **QUOTATION LEAD** is often a cause for contention among writers. This is when a writer starts directly with a quote from his or her story without any further clarification. A quotation lead - done correctly - is powerful. Sometimes the words of someone intimately involved with a story say more than the writer ever could. The danger is that a quotation lead may take the writer out of the driver's seat. The writer is supposed to be the reader's guide to a story, navigating them through the myriad mazes of facts and faces. A quotation lead may undermine this role. Use it with caution.

Leads may be **HUMOROUS** as well; there is nothing wrong with this when used appropriately. Often, nothing is more inviting than a funny joke, observation, or play on words. Just make sure it is funny. Nothing will kill a story quicker than a joke gone awry.

Remember, not every type can work in every situation. Sometimes the facts of a story dictate that you approach it in a certain way. Sometimes, a summary lead really is the best approach for a news story. Humor is often not appropriate and a writer may lose the facts in trying a descriptive or anecdotal lead. Remember, every word in the lead has to have some sort of purpose. Experiment, yes, but keep the underlying purpose in mind - the lead needs to draw the reader into the story, not turn them away.

How can a writer write better leads? Practice. Take a story and try and see all the different approaches. Find a new way of approaching it. Also, read. Read leads constantly. See how the best writers approach their leads and find ways of adapting and modeling that. It takes little or no time to read the first sentence of a lot of stories and there is plenty of benefit. By practicing, reading and keeping these models in mind, that first sentence will start becoming easier and easier to write.

OVERCOMING WRITER'S BLOCK

Writer's block can affect fiction and non-fiction writers. Writing is such a solitary experience; it's really all about you and your mind. But here are some tips that might get you moving:

Don't get too hung up on writing the first sentence or paragraph. If you have a great quote or a great plot point, and it falls in the middle of your story, write that first and come back to the beginning later. Jumping around can help you keep writing when you feel stuck.

Free writing. Try writing without stopping for 30 minutes. It doesn't matter what you write. Just make sure you are constantly putting pen to paper (or fingers to keys!) Give it a try if you are having a creative block; a bonus is that it can also be a good way to come up with story ideas.

Use deadlines as an incentive to focus the mind. If you don't have a real one set yourself a deadline and try to make it as real as possible. Line up friends to read your story and tell them you'll deliver it at a certain time. Plan a date, but let yourself go out only if you finish your story. Sometimes having consequences can make you get done what you need to.

One great way to set real deadlines and to meet other writers and get feedback is to participate with Celebrity High. Swap your stories for feedback, talk about your projects, and set goals for the next meeting!



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