

The Sentinel
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Writing Format

[Inverted pyramid style](#)

[Headline](#)

[The Lede](#)

[The “Nut-Graf”](#)

[More evidence](#)

[The Tail](#)

[Article vs Essay](#)

Conduct an interview

[Deciding who to interview](#)

[Steps](#)

[Ground rules](#)

[Open vs close ended questions](#)

Clean up your writing

[Eliminate unnecessary words](#)

[Quotes](#)

Storytelling process

[Steps to write an article](#)

Photojournalism

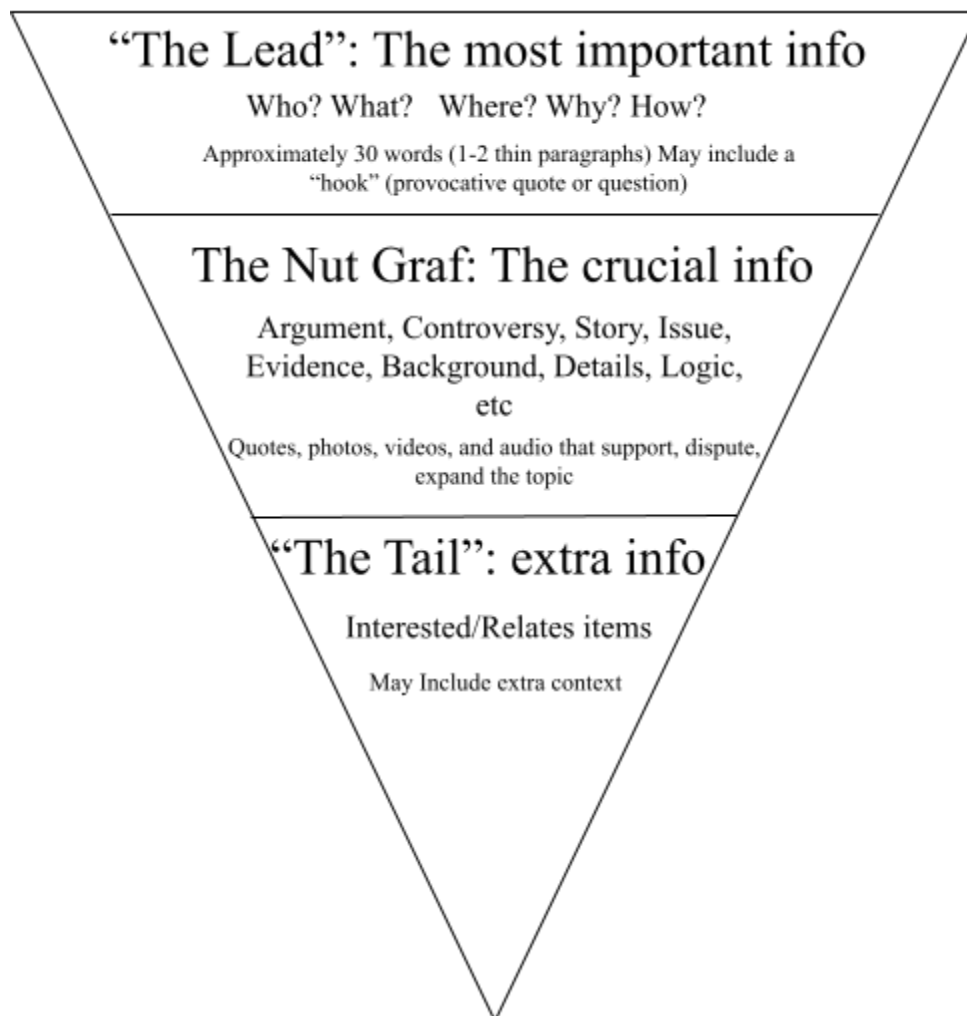
[10 principles](#)

Editing

[Think about the story](#)

[Practice](#)

Inverted pyramid style



Headline

Simple statement

Entice the reader, think of it as an ad for your article

Gives you informations, ideally entertains the reader enough to keep reading

Not to long, not to short

Fairly conversational/informal

Precise and vivid

Three ideas for headline

- What in your story most intrigued you?
- Can use a powerful quote (single quotation)
- Focus on the Human angle/impact on people (is someone to blame?)

Examples:

Is Zoom Fatigue a Real THing?

Nature Lover and Environmental Activist

Unmasking the Challenges of Mask Protocols at School

Do We Really Need March Exams?

Secondary headline = “deck”

- Make the article very easy to understand
- Seems like the “next sentence” after the headline

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Leading the Reader On The Lede: The Critical Element

The lede often refers to the first paragraph of the story - technical or conceptual, the lede provides a basic direction for the reader and the writer. For the reader, it sets up the story. It might introduce the subject, entice the reader to read on, or both.

Implicit question - What Do you need to know next?

1. Summary lede: delivers all essential parts of the story, everything they need to know

- a. Who was involved, what happened, where did it happen, why, and when - multipara lead

A barge on the Monongahela River near Pittsburgh ran into a bridge piling Monday, collapsing the bridge and standing motorists. No one was reported hurt, but drivers are likely to be forced to rely on alternative routes for weeks or even months.

2. Feature (anecdotal) lede

- a. Tells the reader a story/incident that is representative of the issue you're reporting; can be more emotional; can be history about a character; setting the scene; short story

The phone rang at Robert Walker's suburban Denver home one Saturday in October. At the other end of the line was John White, the company's South Carolina Broker.

3. Creative lead

- a. Almost no context

He did not know that the moment he stepped off the curb his whole life would change.

4. Ironical lede

- a. Set mood or tone

The mayor of one of China's most exotic cities today visited the fertile flatlands of northwest Ohio to sample some products of a Chinese-American food factory. He pronounced the fare good -- for American tastes

5. Today angle

- a. Set mood or tone by manipulating time

Twenty-five years ago on a wintry February morning, a search party found the wreckage of a single-engine plane on a farm nine miles Northwest of the Mason City Municipal Airport

6. Leading with a Question or quote

- a. Readers continue to find out the answer

Who among us would deny that life is fraught with problems -- with missed opportunities, missteps, bad decisions, and bad luck?

"You must think I'm crazy," Doris Jones said as she began the interview.

The “Nut-Graf” Approach

The nut or seed: the core of the story

After the lead, the rest of the article should be written from most to least important

The body: crucial info expanding on the topic - argument, controversy, story, evidence, background, both sides of the story

Nut graf (nut paragraph): This happens during the third or fourth paragraph. Explains any additional content for why the story is important; the essential theme, why it matters, central message, serves as transition from lead, connects it to the rest of the story; 1 + paragraphs. After the reader learns about what the story is about, the nut graph is the pay off.

Examples:

After she woke in the dark to sweep city streets, after she walked an hour to buy less than \$2 worth of food, after she cooked for two hours in the searing noon heat, Fanta Lingani served her family’s only meal of the day.

First she set out a bowl of corn mush, seasoned with tree leaves, dried fish, and wood ashes, for the 11 small children, who tore into it with bare hands. Then she set out a bowl for her husband. Then two bowls for a dozen older children. Then, finally, after everyone else had finished a bowl for herself. She always eats last.

A year ago, before food prices nearly doubled, Lingani would have had three meals a day of meat, rice, and vegetables. Now two mouthfuls of bland mush would have to do her until tomorrow.

More evidence

Following the nut graf, we would get more evidence, quotes to prove it

- background: provides context for readers who haven't followed every development; key details to support the nut graf, dives deeper into subject/person; provides statistics
- color = description that comes from observing, interviews, etc.
- Quotes: add viewpoints to fact-based, show perspectives, complement the text; can be experts, affected person
 - Paraphrasing: sometimes you can say it more succinctly; synthesize or summarize, but don't lose the exact meaning of the original statement; maybe you didn't get the full quote word for word or the quote is weak
 - kicker: bookends the lede, could go in a different direction to give the reader something to think about; use a powerful quote

The tail paragraph

Includes any extra interesting or related information

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Conclude your article by giving a good concluding sentence. This is often a restatement of the leading statement or a statement discussing potential future developments relating to the story. If appropriate, you can direct readers to places where they can find out more information.

If you're writing about a current event or an issue unrelated to the school, try to tie your article back to SLS. Moreover, what should SLS student's take away from your article? Should SLS do anything differently? Etc.

What is an article vs. an essay

[Example article:](#)

Essay

1. Structure
 - a. Hook = first sentence
 - b. Funnel method → thesis
 - c. Integrate/embed quotes into sentences
 - i. 2-3 quotes in every paragraph
 - d. Long paragraphs
 - e. Conclusion restates these
2. Characteristics
 - a. Sophisticated wording
 - b. Transitions
 - c. Opinion, persuasive
 - d. Prose

Article

1. Structure
 - a. Main idea up front
 - b. No argument — trying to remain unbiased (report, not persuade)
 - c. Directly attribute every single quote -- block quotes
 - i. Only use “said” or “wrote”
 - d. Bite-sized paragraphs
 - e. No formal conclusion
2. Characteristics
 - a. Objective
 - b. Essentially storytelling — scene-setting is serving to bring the reader there

Similarities

3. Big picture at the end
4. Key idea near the front
5. Use quotes to back up what you’re saying
6. Not just a topic; should have an argument or “angle”
7. Specific sections with smooth transitions between them
8. Provides context, bigger picture
9. Use more sources to add nuance and perspective

How do you decide who to interview?

- Who can provide the most accurate/interesting information? Who can best tell the story?
- Who does this topic impact? Are there any notable figures in it?

How to Conduct a Journalistic Interview

10 Step process!!

Step 1: Research

Be informed about your subject before coming up with questions

Step 2: Contact the person you wish to interview

Ask when a good time would be to do the interview. In person interview is always better than asking questions over email

Step 3: Brainstorm questions

Step 4: Come prepared

A pencil, a notebook or computer, a list of good questions, a recording device (always ask permission before recording an interview)

Step 5: Be on time

Step 6: Conduct your interview in an organized manner

- Identify yourself at the outset of the interview
- State the purpose of the interview
- Make it clear if you are going to record
- Tell the source how much time the interview will take (if you can)
- Start with easy questions, save harder questions for the end
- Look at the person in the eye when asking questions
- Give the source ample time to reply
- Ask the interviewee to clarify complex or vague answers
- Read back answers if requested
- Take notes on what the person looked like and where he or she sat (what they wore, was it in an office, objects that surround them)

Step 7: Take notes even if you are recording

Jot down highlights, make notes about the sounds in the background, note your surroundings. Any key words/phrases they said. Anything stand out to you

Step 8: Body language; eye contact, nodding, leaning forward/taking notes

Step 9: Take notes after

As soon as you can after the interview, annotate your notes; where would this piece of information work well? Do you need to learn more?

Step 10: More research

Expand on your notes by following up on things you learned in your interview with more research.

The Interviewer's Ground Rules

1. Identify yourself at the outset of the interview
2. State the purpose of the interview
3. Make it clear if you are going to record
4. Tell the source how much time the interview will take (if you can)
5. Start with easy questions, save harder questions for the end
6. Look at the person in the eye when asking questions
7. Give the source ample time to reply
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Ingredients for a great Article

During your interview spice things up with more context and details

What to add to an article

- During the interview, comment on the surroundings, what the person is wearing (make observations)
- Incorporate quotes and outside sources
- Link to external research

Open vs close ended questions

Open ended questions: does not require a specific answer

- cannot be answered with a simple 'yes' or 'no,' and instead require the respondent to elaborate on their points.
- Designed to encourage a full, meaningful answer using the subject's own knowledge and/or feelings.
- **When to use:** use when you want to develop better understanding of the topic

How? What happened? How did you do that...? What did you think of...? What happened when you...?

Close ended questions: calls for brief, pointed reply

- Give limited insight and encourage a short single-word answer.
- Useful for quantitative data.
- **When to use:** when you want answers that can be plotted on a graph and used to show trends and percentages

Open-ended questions are almost always the best strategy for journalists.

How can you turn close ended questions to open ended questions?

Don't ask: 'Are you going to resign?'

Do ask "Many people have called for your resignation. What's your reaction?"

Don't ask: Was your trip successful

Do ask: What did you manage to accomplish on the trip

Don't ask: Do you get to work by driving, busing, or walking

Do ask: How do you get to work

Get rid of unnecessary words.

One simple way is to delete *there is, there are, there was, there were*

There were half a dozen vintage airplanes standing in the foreground of the museum

Half a dozen vintage airplanes stood in the foreground of the museum.

He said that **there was** a 13 percent decrease in drunk-driving citations on the state's highways, roads and streets last year, but **there was** a substantial increase in the number of accidents blamed on drivers' cell phone usage.

He said drunk-driving citations decreased 13 percent on the state's highways, roads, and streets last year but the number of accidents blamed on drivers' cell phone use increased.

There was a surgeon working intently on a prone figure.

A surgeon worked intently on a prone figure

The president said **that** making the country greener is part of his plan to increase jobs.

The president is making the country greener because it is part of his plan to increase jobs

Around the world **there are** millions of children that are starving

Around the world millions of children are starving

There are three things that can happen when you drive through a yellow light, and two of them are bad.

Three things can happen when you drive through a yellow light, and two of them are bad.

The police officers said **that** they had a warrant and they wanted to inspect the house for weapons and drugs, but **there was** a pit bull preventing them from entering the front door.

The police officers had a warrant and wanted to inspect the house for weapons and drugs but a pit bull prevented them from entering the front door.

The ambassador said **that** she wanted to know why **there were** not enough limousines waiting for members of her delegation.

The ambassador wanted to know why not enough limousines were waiting for members of her delegation.

Quotes

Quotes come first; attribute them afterwards

We want quotes to capture humanity, not facts

How to embed quotes

- Only use ‘said’ and ‘wrote’; can add ‘, wiping tears’ (don’t want to editorialize; just get it written down); **Always past tense**
- First reference: “quote,” first name last name said.
- Second reference: “quote,” last name said.
- Don’t want “stacked quotes” — should be a transition between the quotes

Different types of quotes:

- Direct quotes — complete quote
- Partial quotes — like essay writing; use it when you only want this one part
- Interrupted quotes — attribution interrupts the quote; usually the quote is a more powerful ending to the article
 - interrupting one sentence: ,” Smith said, “and . . .”
 - two sentences: ,” Smith said. “And . . .”
- Summary quotes — just paraphrase

Steps to write an article

1. Research
 - a. Online resources
 - b. Journal articles/studies (Google Scholar, etc.)
 - c. Newspaper/mag articles (domestic and foreign)
 - d. Books, photos, videos
 - e. Reports/surveys
 - f. Blogs (by experts)
 - g. Social media
 - h. People with firsthand experience
2. Reporting
 - a. Visit sites
 - b. Arrange meetings/interviews
 - c. Talk to strangers
 - d. Wander around aimlessly
 - e. Be open to spontaneity
 - f. Record key facts/info
 - g. Jot down descriptions/details about place
 - h. Record interviews, take note of good/important quotes
 - i. Take meticulous notes
3. Writing
 - a. Synthesize notes
 - b. Identify key characters/quotes
 - c. Map out structure of the story (punchy intro/lede → contextualizing nut graf → main body sections → resolving kicker)
 - d. Write with a mind to word count (700-1000)
 - i. Edit, edit, and edit again
 1. Make sure you're using active voice
 2. Edit unnecessary adjectives and adverbs
 3. Proofread for typos/grammatical mistakes
4. Editing — omission, condense, word changes
 - a. Story: does it make sense? are there any big gaps?
 - b. Facts: recheck data, documents
 - c. Concision: Cut the fluff
 - d. Sources: Check for accuracy, representation
 - e. Mechanics: Grammar, punctuation?
5. fact check — decide how much you want to send to sources
 - a. Double-check every fact based on reputable sources (scholarly articles, gov't sites, experts) — and note the source
 - b. Facts are verifiable statements, including...
 - c. Names/titles/place names
 - d. Stats/figures
 - e. References to time, distance, date, season, location, sex, age, physical descriptions, etc.
 - i. Historical facts
 - ii. Argument/narrative that depends on facts (e.g., "He's the most important artist working today")
 - iii. biographical info

Photojournalism

How is this photo telling us a story; telling a story in a frame; both storytelling and art form

Ten practical principles for photojournalists

1. Think of yourself as a reporter, but with a camera: consider who, what when, where, why
2. Show the story: try to include all relevant elements in a single image, including surroundings, relevant people/actions; need to provide context
3. Be present, pay attention: anticipate things, look for expressions on subjects' faces or posture of surrounding crowds
4. Find unusual angles: move around, try to get as many angles as possible so that you can reveal something in a more interesting/aesthetic way
5. Look for emotion: capture expressions, body language, interactions
6. Anticipate eyes open, camera ready
7. Avoid obvious posing: cover people doing things, not people posing
8. Respect your subjects: be compassionate - even if at a distance - when photographing others' pain
9. Have guts: be courteous, assertive
10. Always want the bigger picture plus the intimate photos

Editing: an opportunity to make writing better because it focuses on the big picture

Copy editing: a check that focuses on the teachings quality of the writing

Think about the story

1. **Angle** - Is there a more interesting angle that could be used
2. **Extras** - Is there another additional way to help tell this story
Think Multimedia!
 - Infographic
 - Security camera footage
3. **Interviews** - Who else could be interviewed? What other question could be asked?
4. **Opening** - Is there a more creative way to begin?
5. **Understanding** - What else should the reader know?
6. **Purpose** - Why is this story being told?

Example:

In a unique way of taking advantage of online school and all the time students now spend cooped up in their houses, Ms. Joan Applebaum assigned a hands-on “lab” of sorts to her junior chemistry students for their final projects: to hand-make bread.

The only ingredients necessary were water and flour, which students were required to mix every day and keep an eye on their dough as it developed and grew. The entire process lasted about a week or so.

Maria Jensen was one student to participate in the project. “I liked it, it was a fun change-up from what we usually do in class and it was a fun way to end the year. It was also new for all of us including Ms. Applebaum so no one really knew how it was gonna go,” she said.

Unfortunately, most students’ bread didn’t turn out to be bakery-ready. “My bread turned out super hard and I couldn’t really eat it,” Jensen said. Hannah Flint had similar results. “My bread was a FLOP,” she said. Thanks to the activity being conducted in students’ homes, some ran into problems. “My dog jumped on our table and started eating it. And I forgot to feed it for a few days,” Flint said.

Ms. Applebaum helped the students through the process, although it was her first time conducting the experiment as well. “During live class, she helped talk through the steps of making it and tips she had for us and also posted a lot of helpful sources on PSL,” Jensen said.

Overall, the 11th-grade chem students enjoyed this activity. “I think it was way better to have an interactive exercise like the bread project instead of just continuing to do online assignments and stuff like that. Good decision on the chem teachers’ part,” Flint said.

Angle:

- Go bigger - focus on more changes in general not just bread
- Go more focused on the specific experiment and give more detail
- Look at one student experiences

Opening:

- Could be more interesting... go specific

Extras

- Recording of people making the bread
- Photo of the lab
- Infographic recipe
- Before and afters

Interviews:

- Parents of students doing the project
- Teacher! -> ask about the point of the lab CONNECT to chemistry how is this graded
- Re-Interview - students: liked/didn’t not just friends

- Other teacher (battle of the chem teachers)

Opening

- Could be a lot more interesting... go specific on water and flour
- Describe the scene
- Start with teachers perspective
- Bread is basic...
- Story about the dog..

Understanding

- Give more context of students' baking experience
- How engaged have you been - was this engaging
- What has online school been like in general?
- How does this connect to chemistry?

Purpose - why is story being told

Example 2

As the school year comes to a close, this is a time where old journey's end and new ones begin for all seniors. Many end up taking the traditional route of going to college, but some branch off and go a different way. Senior Hernando Tellez is one of those seniors who is going in a different direction; rather than head straight off to college, Tellez is taking a gap year.

Choosing this route is often hard to do, and most of the time students will end up just going to college. "I thought that it would be a good time to relax after having gone to school for so many years in a row. This will hopefully make me more excited for college, and I will then enjoy the experience a lot more," Tellez said.

When making a decision like this it is important to have a supportive family to help through this process. "At first my family was skeptical about a gap year, but as I explained my thought process more to them they became more and more supportive of it," Tellez said.

Typically senior students will apply in the winter/spring to colleges with the help of the school and counselors. This process isn't easy and usually requires lots of guidance. "It will be the same application process pretty much except I will apply during the summer instead. Benilde will still be helping me in this process as well," Tellez said.

Tellez plans on spending his gap years productively. "I will pretty much be working trying to get some extra money, and I will also try to learn some new skills with all of this time," Tellez said.

Angle

- How hard the process is
- What he plans to do with the time off
- Gap year could be focused more on the stress of highschool
- More argumentative - people who go on gap years and people who don't go on a gap year

Interview

- Re interview Tellez - process isn't as interesting. Ask about his feelings and have him expand more on why he chose to take time off and what he plans to do
- Someone who already took a gap year - did they enjoy it?

Multimedia

- Survey - how many people

Understanding

- Needs to be more specific, very repetitive in intro
- Contradictive

Practice

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/05/19/insider/00copyeditquiz6.html>