

INRO TO JOURNALISM / WALL-SIMMONS

NEWS STORY RUBRIC

Reporter _____

Topic _____

Objectives	Exemplary Performance 100-90 points	At or Above Average 89-80 points	At or Below Average 79-70 points	Low Performance 69 points or less	Points Earned
Effective and Appropriate Lead	The most important facts of the story are quickly summarized in the lead; captures the actual news/angle of the event; follows summary lead format -- Subject-Verb-Object- Time Element – Attribution ; one sentence 25-30 words; does not start with a quote or question or date; lead is crisp and clear in its language and written in third person and active voice.	The lead presents most of the important information from the story; falters a bit in the summary lead format -- Subject-Verb-Object- Time Element – Attribution ; the language in the lead is somewhat dry; may be two sentences or exceeds the 25-30 word limit	The lead lacks important information from the story; reader may be confused about the actual news or angle of the story; does not follow Subject-Verb-Object- Time Element – Attribution and may lean to chronological organization; may be two sentences, may start with the where or when or exceed the 25 word limit; language in the lead is passive, dry	Lead presents extremely little useful information; the reader does not know what the story is about; the lead does not at all follow class guidelines of Subject- Verb-Object- Time Element –Attribution ; language is below average	
Effective Organization and Flow (deals with inverted pyramid structure)	Story in inverted pyramid form with info in decreasing order of importance; meets cutoff test ; strongly organized and clearly follows reporting graf / quote graf format ; reporting paragraphs are substantial (2-3 sentences) and report information, not just repeating what the following quote graf says; clear transitions and logical connections which create a sense of being tightly woven together	Story is for the most part organized and most transitions and connections are clear, but either organization is somewhat lacking or the sense of flow is somewhat abrupt or story is not in inverted pyramid and would not met the cut off test or story sometimes strays from reporting graf / quote graf format or reporting graf lack enough substance	Story lacks strong organization; jumps around too much or lacks effective transitions; not in inverted pyramid form; little attempt to follow reporting graf / quote graf format ; facts often seem strung together in a loose or chronological order	Story is choppy or incohesive; no attempt at inverted pyramid style; no organization attempted; story is simply a list of seemingly unrelated facts; writer disregards reporting graf / quote graf format	
Clear Focus and Unity (deals with story angle and content)	Angle is unique and narrowed / manageable; focus of story is clear; nothing detracts from primary angle; everything contributes to overall theme	Angle is fairly clear, but one or two things in the story detract from the primary focus; angle could be more narrowed or more unique	Story lacks a strong angle and sense of unity and focus; several things seem to detract from focus	No clear angle or focus; story is rambling and awkward	
Adequate Use of Primary and Secondary Sources, Mainly Interviews	Evidence of reporter trying to get as many sources (primary and secondary) as necessary to adequately present all sides in the story; all are identified; all info is properly attributed to sources; all info is accurate, thorough	A minimum of three Sources (primary and secondary) are used and clearly identified in story; most information is attributed to sources; information is accurate	Two or fewer sources are Used or sources are all secondary; some sources are improperly identified or some info or opinion is given without attribution; info is accurate but may not be as thorough	One or fewer sources used in story; or sources are improperly identified; much info is given without attribution; inaccurate info	
Quotes Show Evidence of Careful Reporting	Strong evidence of good research and interviewing by the use of relevant and effective story-telling quotes that cover a broad range of the topic	Most quotes show evidence of effective interviewing and use of good follow-up questions; quotes could reflect a broader variety of sources	Quotes are present, but do not always add to the story; one or two of the quotes show evidence of good interviewing, but most do not help propel the story	Quotes are short, weak or ineffective; no evidence of follow-up questions being asked	

Objectivity (deals with editorializing and being omniscient)	All sides of the issue are presented clearly, without bias and given an appropriate amount of coverage; differing opinions are given similar prominence in the inverted pyramid; word choice is careful not to assign guilt/innocence, praise/scolding to any party or to imply omniscience; opinions are carefully cited to others and the writer's opinions are not stated	All sides of the issue are presented clearly, without bias and given an appropriate amount of coverage; problems may exist in the placement of the differing opinions in the article; word choice is generally careful not to assign guilt/innocence, praise/scolding to any party or to imply omniscience;; opinions are carefully cited to others and the writer's opinions are not stated	All sides of the issue are presented clearly, without bias and given an appropriate amount of coverage; problems may exist in the placement of the differing opinions in the article; word choice is sometimes biased or implies omniscience; it is not always clear whose opinions are cited; the writer may express vague opinions ("Go team!")	All sides of the issue are not equitably covered or only one side of the issue is covered; problems exist in placement of the differing opinions in the article; word choice is often biased or when opinions are expressed, it is not clear whose opinions they are; often, opinions appear to be that of the writer, either vaguely or with the use of first person; the writer may express omniscience or vague opinions ("Good luck girls soccer")	
Interesting and Effective Writing Style	Writing is strong and effective with a clear voice and a variety of sentence structures and lengths; piece is crisp - tightly written; exceptionally strong and effective word choice	Writing is adequate but not extremely compelling or original; may be wordy or voice may be unclear; word choice / diction may not be as vivid or sophisticated	Writing is rather bland; has no clear voice and or sense of originality; may be wordy or redundant; diction and/or sentence structure may be immature or repetitive	Writing lacks a clear voice and original style	
Correct use of Journalism Style	NO errors in journalism style (quotes, dates, scores, numbers, money, percents, time, commas, etc.); short paragraphs; quotes stand alone; attributions in subject-verb order; sources have ID in first reference	Has few (one or two in story) errors in journalism style; or may have non-journalistic paragraph structure; or sources may not be cited correctly	Has several errors in journalism style or non-journalistic paragraph structure	Has many errors in journalism style and/or non-journalistic paragraph structure	
Grammar and Spelling	Story is well edited and spell checked; NO errors, including the proper spelling of all names; punctuation is accurate; a thorough understanding and consistent application of capitalization skills is present; grammar and usage are correct and contribute to clarity and style; paragraphing is sound and paragraphs are brief; first person is never used	Story is spell checked and all names are correct; however, moderate editing would be required to polish the text for publication; punctuation is usually accurate; a thorough understanding and consistent application of capitalization skills is present; grammar and usage are generally correct and contribute to clarity and style; paragraphing is sound and paragraphs are usually brief; first person is not used	Story is spell checked and all names are correct; however, piece has several grammatical errors; editing would be required to enhance readability before publication; punctuation is usually correct, but internal punctuation is sometimes missing /wrong; most words are capitalized correctly; control over some capitalization skills may be spotty; paragraphing may run together; first person is almost never used	Names are misspelled or spell check was not run; or has many grammatical errors; errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, usage and grammar and/or paragraphing distract the reader and make the text difficult to read or errors in grammar or usage are very noticeable, frequent, and affect meaning or paragraphing is missing or first person regularly used	
Effort, Improvement, Presentation	Evidence of <u>substantial time</u> ; student is working at <u>highest potential</u> ; details are <u>thorough</u> and <u>factual</u> ; there are no errors in content ; student sought help in or out of class from teacher and students; student chose a <u>challenging topic</u> ; revisions <u>obvious</u>	Evidence of extra time; student is working near highest potential; some improvement; student sought help in or out of class; revisions made	Some amount of time is evident though more attention should have been given; not working near potential	Time was not used productively; little or no time or care; no attention paid to basics; gross errors; sloppy; little or no revision evident; this piece is not up to par with high school writing	

FATAL FLAWS: (if any one of these flaws occurs the story will earn an automatic 50 points and no higher)

- _____ **Writer buries the news and does not feature it in the summary lead.**
- _____ **Writer has no distinct angle.**
- _____ **Writer has only one source.**
- _____ **Writer uses unattributed opinion, editorializes or tries to be omniscient.**
- _____ **Writer seems unaware of reporting graf/quite graf format or consistently writes weak reporting graf.**

Comments:

Total