



## Feature Story (less than 4 minutes)

The **Feature Story** contest focuses on creating an engaging, in-depth, and human-interest broadcast segment that highlights a person, event, or topic. Unlike hard news stories, which focus on timeliness and urgency, feature stories often dive deeper into emotional, personal, or unique elements, allowing for more creativity and storytelling.

### Key Elements of the Feature Story:

#### 1. Human Interest and Emotional Appeal:

- The feature story often emphasizes a **personal or human-interest angle**, giving it an emotional or unique perspective that connects with the audience on a deeper level. It can highlight inspiring individuals, tell the backstory of a significant event, or focus on an intriguing or touching subject.
- Examples of topics include student achievements, a unique hobby, overcoming challenges, or a profile of someone making a difference in the community.

#### 2. Narrative Structure:

- The feature story should follow a **storytelling arc**, much like a narrative:
  - **Introduction:** Begin with an engaging hook to draw the audience in, often using a compelling visual or an emotional moment.
  - **Development:** Build the story with details, interviews, and sound bites that add depth to the subject. This could involve background information, character development, or a buildup of suspense or intrigue.
  - **Climax:** Highlight the most significant or emotional moment of the story, such as a turning point, challenge, or triumph.
  - **Conclusion:** End with a satisfying resolution, offering closure or a forward-looking statement, and leaving the audience with a takeaway.

#### 3. Rich Details and Descriptions:

- Unlike hard news stories, feature stories are **rich in detail**. They often include descriptive language, sensory details, and background information to provide context and immerse the viewer in the story.
- Example: If the feature is about a student artist, include descriptions of the artwork, the creative process, and the emotions involved, such as, "She dips her brush into the paint with focused precision, adding vibrant hues to the canvas, creating a piece that captures both joy and melancholy."

#### 4. Use of Sound Bites and Interviews:

- The story should include **interviews** with key individuals involved in or affected by the subject of the feature. These sound bites help add a personal perspective and emotional depth to the story.
- **Placement of Sound Bites:** The sound bites should complement and enhance the narrative, breaking up the reporter's narration and adding authenticity. For example, if the story is about a student's recovery from an injury, include a heartfelt interview from the student and their coach or family member.
- Example: "It was tough, but I just had to push through," says Sarah, a senior recovering from a serious injury that sidelined her for months.



5. **Visual and Audio Synchronization:**

- **Visuals are key** to feature stories. The images should reflect the story being told, often showing candid, emotional, or significant moments that align with the narration.
- **B-roll** is critical and should be carefully chosen to illustrate the events being described. For example, if the feature is about a community event, include footage of people participating, interacting, or reacting emotionally.
- **Natural Sound:** Use of natural sound enhances the immersive quality of the story. If the story is about a school band performance, include the sounds of instruments tuning, the band playing, and audience reactions to give a more vivid picture.

6. **Creative Writing Techniques:**

- A feature story allows for more **creative writing** than a standard news piece. The writing can include metaphors, similes, and other literary techniques to make the story more engaging and relatable.
- Example: “For Sarah, the soccer field is more than just a place to play—it’s her sanctuary, where the challenges of the day fade away with every pass and goal.”

7. **Pacing and Time Management:**

- The feature must be **well-paced** to fit within the 4-minute limit. Each section of the story (introduction, development, climax, conclusion) should have enough time devoted to it to feel complete, but the pacing must ensure that no section drags on too long.
- Avoid overloading the story with too many interviews or details. Instead, focus on the most impactful moments and quotes.

8. **Visual Storytelling:**

- In a feature story, the **visuals** are as important as the words. The images should tell part of the story themselves, allowing viewers to experience the emotions or actions being described.
- Example: If the feature is about a student athlete overcoming injury, show footage of the athlete practicing, struggling during rehabilitation, and eventually succeeding on the field.

9. **Transitions:**

- Smooth **transitions** between different parts of the story are essential for maintaining flow. This could be between different interviews, moving from narration to a sound bite, or transitioning between different aspects of the subject’s story.
- Example: “While Sarah’s journey to recovery was difficult, it wasn’t without its moments of triumph.” (Transition from discussing challenges to showing her successful return to the field.)

10. **Strong Ending:**

- The conclusion of the feature story should leave the viewer with something to think about, whether it’s a message, a lesson learned, or a look to the future. Ending with a powerful quote or a forward-looking statement often works well.
- Example: “For Sarah, the next goal isn’t just on the soccer field, it’s in life—and she’s ready to score.”



### Criteria for Judging:

- **Storytelling:** The ability to craft a compelling narrative with a clear structure and engaging content.
- **Emotional Impact:** How well the story connects with viewers emotionally and personally.
- **Creativity:** Use of creative writing techniques and visual storytelling.
- **Audio and Visual Quality:** Technical execution, including clear visuals, appropriate sound bites, and smooth editing.
- **Pacing and Time Management:** Proper pacing within the 4-minute limit, ensuring all essential parts of the story are covered without feeling rushed or drawn out.
- **Engagement:** How captivating the story is, and whether it holds the viewer's attention from start to finish.

In summary, the **Feature Story (less than 4 minutes)** contest challenges students to create an engaging, detailed, and human-interest-focused broadcast segment. It encourages creativity, emotional storytelling, and effective use of interviews, sound bites, and visuals to connect with the audience on a deeper level.