



General Feature Writing

The **General Feature Writing** category emphasizes the ability to craft a well-structured, engaging story that goes beyond basic reporting. A feature story typically focuses on human-interest topics, profiles of individuals, or in-depth explorations of events or trends. Unlike hard news, which prioritizes timeliness and facts, feature writing allows for more creativity, detailed descriptions, and a narrative style. The story is written for a broadcast and should capture the audience's attention while offering insight into the subject matter.

Key Elements of General Feature Writing:

1. Creative and Engaging Writing Style:

- Feature writing should be **more creative** and engaging than straight news reporting. The writing should draw the reader or viewer in by using descriptive language, storytelling techniques, and a conversational tone where appropriate.
- The goal is to **evoke emotions** and connect with the audience on a deeper level, often by focusing on human-interest angles or personal stories.
- Example: In a feature story about a school librarian who has been at the school for 30 years, the writing might describe her relationship with the students and how she's seen the school evolve over time, painting a vivid picture of her impact.

2. Strong Narrative Structure:

- The feature should have a **clear narrative arc** that includes an introduction, body, and conclusion. Unlike news stories, which follow the inverted pyramid style (most important information first), feature stories allow for more creative structuring.
- The story should build towards a central theme or point, with a smooth flow between sections, and the writing should gradually reveal more details and depth as the story progresses.
- Example: The introduction could begin with a day-in-the-life of a teacher, leading into the main body that explores their impact on students, and concludes with their personal reflections on teaching.

3. Rich Detail and Descriptions:

- Feature writing relies on **rich detail** to bring the subject to life. The use of descriptive language and specific examples helps the audience visualize the subject and connect with the story.
- The writer should paint a vivid picture by focusing on details that make the subject unique, whether it's the sights, sounds, emotions, or personalities involved.
- Example: In a feature about a student athlete, rather than just reporting their achievements, the writing might describe the sound of the crowd cheering as the student makes the winning play, capturing the excitement and emotion of the moment.



4. **Human-Interest Focus:**

- A strong feature story often focuses on **people** and their experiences, making the story relatable and compelling. The writing should highlight the human side of the subject, emphasizing the emotions, challenges, or triumphs of the individuals involved.
- The feature might explore personal anecdotes, character traits, or the broader impact on the community.
- Example: A story about a student overcoming adversity would focus on their journey, the obstacles they faced, and how they managed to achieve success despite the odds.

5. **Quotes and Sound Bites:**

- **Quotes and sound bites** play a crucial role in feature writing for broadcast. The writing should integrate interviews with key figures that provide personal insights, emotions, or reflections.
- These quotes should be well-chosen to reinforce the main points of the story and add authenticity. In broadcast, sound bites should be used in a way that complements the written script.
- Example: In a feature on a coach retiring after 20 years, the coach might reflect, “It’s not just about the games—it’s about shaping these young people into responsible adults.” This quote adds emotional weight and depth to the story.

6. **Depth and Context:**

- Feature writing allows for **more depth** than hard news. The writer should explore the subject from multiple angles, providing context, background, and details that help the audience understand the broader significance of the topic.
- Research and reporting should provide historical context or explain why the story matters, enriching the audience’s understanding of the subject.
- Example: A feature on a school’s new arts program might delve into how the program was developed, the challenges it faced, and how it has impacted students’ creative expression.

7. **Emotional Appeal:**

- The writing should evoke an **emotional response** from the audience. Whether it’s humor, empathy, inspiration, or sadness, the goal is to make the story resonate emotionally, encouraging the audience to care about the people and issues being presented.
- Example: In a feature about a long-standing teacher’s retirement, the writing might focus on the emotional farewell from students and colleagues, highlighting the lasting impact the teacher had on the school community.

8. **Strong Conclusion:**

- The feature should have a strong **conclusion** that ties the story together and leaves the audience with a lasting impression. This could be a reflection, a forward-looking statement, or a powerful quote that encapsulates the essence of the story.



- The conclusion should provide closure, summarizing the key points while reinforcing the emotional or thematic elements of the feature.
- Example: A feature on a successful fundraising event might conclude with the line, “Thanks to the community’s support, dozens of students will now have the opportunity to pursue their college dreams.”

9. Reporter’s Voice:

- In feature writing for broadcast, the **reporter’s voice** is often more prominent than in news stories. The writing can be more personal and reflective, with the reporter guiding the audience through the story with their own observations or commentary.
- The tone should still be professional, but it can be more relaxed or conversational, depending on the subject matter.
- Example: The reporter might introduce the feature with a personal reflection: “When I first met Mr. Johnson, I could see why students say he’s the heart of this school. His dedication goes far beyond the classroom.”

10. Visual and Audio Integration:

- Since the writing is meant for broadcast, it should seamlessly integrate with the **visuals** and **audio** in the video story. The writing should guide the audience through the accompanying footage, with descriptions that match what’s on screen and transitions that are smooth.
- The writing should complement the **b-roll** footage, sound bites, and natural sound to create a cohesive narrative that keeps viewers engaged.
- Example: As the script describes a classroom filled with eager students, the visuals should show the actual classroom in action, creating a strong connection between what is being said and what the audience sees.

Criteria for Judging:

- **Creativity and Style:** The feature should be written in an engaging and creative style that draws the audience in, with vivid descriptions and a strong narrative voice.
- **Depth and Detail:** The story should go beyond the surface, offering in-depth reporting with rich details and context that make the subject come alive.
- **Emotional and Human-Interest Appeal:** The feature should evoke emotions, whether through personal stories, humor, or compelling insights into the human experience.
- **Integration with Visuals and Audio:** The writing should work seamlessly with the video story, ensuring that the audio matches the visuals and that the feature flows smoothly in the broadcast format.
- **Narrative Structure:** The feature should follow a logical and well-organized structure, with a clear beginning, middle, and end.

In summary, **General Feature Writing** for broadcast requires a creative approach to storytelling that engages the audience with compelling narratives, rich detail, and emotional depth. It is an



opportunity to explore human-interest stories, profiles, or in-depth topics in a way that goes beyond traditional news reporting, offering a more personal and immersive experience for the viewer.