

Reportage: Writing Skills

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Reporting is just a genre of writing, alongside essays and stories and bloggers most certainly fall into that genre. When they talk about reporting on a show like frontline, they mean the process a reporter goes through.

1. Interviews, research
2. Assemble a story
3. Fact-checking and editing
4. publishing

TYPES OF REPORTING

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- General reporting
- Political reporting
- Environment reporting
- Religious reporting
- Speech reporting
- Cultural reporting
- Sports reporting
- Parliament reporting
- Court/Crime reporting
- War reporting
- Investigative reporting

General reporting

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Reporting means gathering facts and presenting them objectively with all news writing skills. It is an active, creative, long and tough process of news, gathering, ideas and opinion collection, fact finding in order to serve the general public by informing them and enabling them to make judgement of the issues of the time.

The reporter either he/ she is general assignment reporter, beat reporter or specialized reporter wants to know at all cost, what is going on and why, what has happened and why and who is involved in what manner. He/she reports it to satisfy the curiosity of the public by giving due coverage to 5w`s & 1H which the people want to know.

Political reporting

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GENERALLY THE COVERAGE OF A POLITICAL CAMPAIGN, POLITICAL PERSONALITY IS NOT SUFFICIENT. MUCH TIME AND COVERAGE NEEDS TO BE GIVEN IN FOLLOWING A CANDIDATE AROUND AND LISTENING TO THE POLITICAL SPEECHES OVER AND OVER AGAIN. MOST OF THE POLITICAL REPORTERS TIME IS SPENT WHILE COVERING THE PURELY POLITICAL ASPECTS OF GOVERNMENT AND PERSONALITIES WHO RUN THE GOVERNMENT . HE/ SHE GOES BENEATH THE SURFACE OF ROUTINE POLITICAL EVENTS AND COMES UP WITH STORIES OF GREAT IMPORTANCE. FOR POLITICAL REPORTING THE BROAD KNOWLEDGE OF ELECTION LAWS, SYSTEM AND ORGANIZATIONAL SETUP OF DIFFERENT POLITICAL PARTIES, POLITICAL ORGANIZATION, PRE-CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES, CAMPAIGN, ELECTION PRACTICES, POLLING LAWS AND TECHNIQUES AND WAY OF RESULT COVERAGE AND THEIR PROPER INTERPRETATION ARE REQUIRED BY THE POLITICAL REPORTER HE/ SHE HAS TO INTERVIEW CANDIDATES, WRITE BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES AND EVALUATE THE CANDIDATES POSITION ON MAJOR ISSUES DURING A POLITICAL CAMPAIGN.

ENVIRONMENT REPORTING

The environment affects everyday life. people sensitive about it demand the due coverage of environment and the factors causing pollution etc. therefore the environment reporting can become a human service reporting.

Religious reporting

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Religious news are also part of the newspaper contents. It is one of the most sensitive beats and demands great care and responsibility on the part of the reporter covering various religious events. However impartiality is the only effective means to deal with this beat. The reporter has to report in fair, factual, impartial and unbiased way and maintain objectivity. A reporter has to be cautious in religious reporting and should always keep in view the highly sensitive nature of religious ideologies, conflicts and controversies.

SPEECH REPORTING

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► Speeches are the basis for sound stories published daily in the press. All those speeches taking place from time to time in the city are important to the participants but few are worthy of news coverage. Advance stories are also being written about speeches through which the readers are informed about the person to be delivering the speech, venue and topic etc. the reporter in speech reporting must be well aware of the ways of covering an event and how to get, write, arrange and structure the facts of speech in a news form. The additional information can be gathered at the end of the speech or to clarify some points which is a good practice.

Cultural reporting

- ▶ Cultural reporting requires a reporter to cover not only individuals. i.e. artist, craftsmen etc. but also to cover different cultural organisations, institutions and other events by upholding public interest. The cultural reporter is actually a cultural promoter. The reporter has a great responsibility to stimulate interest and participation in various cultural functions. When actually covering culture it is preferable to visit the pretty of cultural activity personally. The cultural news story writing style and contents must be based on information, entertainment and of general public interest. Music world cinema, theatre, television- literature, fairs etc. has great newsworthy material of public interest.

Sports reporting

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Sports reporting coverage remains the life blood of most sports pages. More opinions and news analyses appear on these pages. Sports reports are read mostly due to their contents and style. Sports reporter should take into account all the compulsory elements of the sports news item while reporting a news event. Sports reporting require qualities of background knowledge about games and their rules and regulations. The performance of the teams should be covered fairly. Impartially and in an unbiased way. For an important sports event, an advance story, a straight story, similarly background, prediction, follow up types of stories may be used.

Parliament reporting

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Parliament and its proceeding have always been the main interest of newspaper readers. Parliamentary reporting offers opportunities to the reporter to conduct first hand study of the practical working procedure, responsibilities, role and functions of parliament their members, different officials, the offices which they hold and their biographies besides the working of government. He/she remains in touch with the parliamentarians who may become an important source of news. In ~~parliamentary reporting all the techniques, proceedings and requirements of political and court reporting are involved~~ because it is highly technical and sensitive. It needs professional skills and there are chances that even an experienced reporter may misinterpret the arguments and the proceedings. A parliamentary reporter should be well acquainted with the legislative procedure in both the houses of parliament and could write reports of adjournment and privilege motions, as well as of questions hour, tea break discussions on private dealings bills and proceedings of the senate.

Court/Crime reporting

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Reporting crime news can be a demanding task and at times, if properly done, it even amounts to public service that perhaps can even be deterrent to certain types of crimes. However crime news reporting needs technical care on the part of reporter while covering his beat. A crime reporter should know what is meant by crime. The length the headline size and lead formation of a court/crime story is determined by the seriousness of the crime and court proceedings.

War reporting

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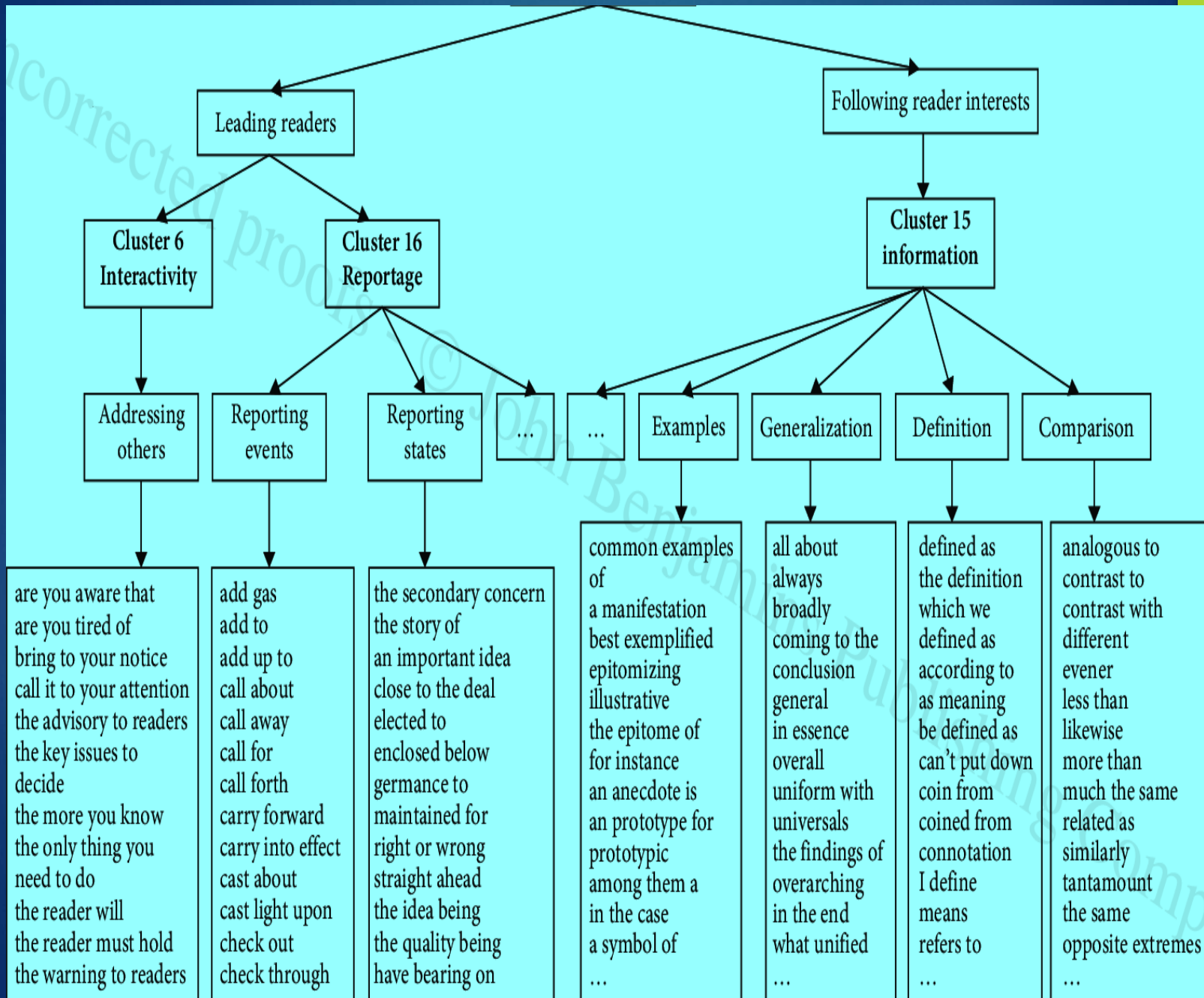
The coverage of war imposes major responsibilities on reporters. On the one hand, they must exercise the greatest care not to spread rumours and on the other hand, they must expose themselves to danger if necessary to determine the magnitude of war event. But whatever they do, they must always be conscious that careless war reporting can cause untold harm in a tense situation. The greatest care must be taken in reporting killings, injuries, prisoners, property loss and the area captured etc. the kind of weapons being used in the war can also be reported. The cause of war, beginning of war, major areas of war and who is at fault must be covered in war reporting. The fundamental precautions regarding war should be followed. Different news story types can be used in war reporting to give full coverage

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Investigative reporting

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In which reporters deeply investigate a single topic of interest such as serious crimes, political corruption, or corporate wrongdoing an investigative journalist may spend months or years researching and preparing a report. Investigative journalism is a primary source of information. Most investigative journalism is conducted by newspaper, wire services, and freelance journalist. Practitioners sometimes use the term `accountability reporting`.



LOCAL NEWS TODAY

NEWS SPORT LETTERS WEATHER FEATURES

HELP FLOODS INTO DELUGED SCHOOL

A clean-up operation is underway at Seaside School in Westwater-on-Sea, which was flooded overnight.

The drama unfolded in the early hours of yesterday morning. Head Teacher Mrs Porter received a call from the fire service. "My phone rang at 3.30am," Mrs Porter explained "and I was astounded to find myself speaking to a firefighter who told me that water was gushing out from underneath the school doors!"

Shire Fire and Rescue service confirmed that a crew had attended and informed the school management. The KS2 classrooms bore the brunt of the floodwater. A combination of an exceptionally high tide, strong on-shore winds and a torrent of torrential rain caused water to rise up through drains. This ripped up flooring and damaged furniture. Catering equipment in the School kitchen was also ruined. A local supermarket donated sandwiches and fruit for lunch as it was impossible to serve hot dinners.

At the height of the flood, the water was almost 20 centimetres deep in some places.



Local families raced to help the school after the building and play areas were flooded overnight.

The younger children were able to remain in their classrooms today, but the pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 had to work in the church hall next door.

"It's not fair, I think they certainly should have shut the school," complained Ahmed, a Year 6 pupil.

Sofia in Year 4 had a different view. "It's fantastic fun having lessons in the church hall, like an adventure," she exclaimed. Deputy Head Mr Maslin told reporters, "People have been fantastic. We have staff, parents and governors on site helping to clean up. That, as well as the very generous donation from the supermarket, means that we were able to open today."

A council official confirmed that they knew about the high risk of flooding in the school. "I'm not surprised in the slightest," he remarked. "This is an ongoing problem. It is caused by the fact that this part of the school lies just below sea level. When we have heavy rain and high tides, as we did last night, the water whooshes up through the pipes. The school has recently applied for planning permission to rebuild this part of the building. This should prevent future flooding."

FLOODED CLASSROOMS
More photos on page 5

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Reportage

- One room over, at a desk, Gang Lu works on a letter to his sister in China. The study of physics is more and more disappointing, he tells her. Modern physics is self-delusion, and All my life I have been honest and straightforward, and I have most of all detested cunning, fawning sycophants and dishonest bureaucrats who think they are always right in everything. Delicate Chinese characters all over a page. She was a kind and gentle sister, and he thanks her for that. He's going to kill himself. You yourself should not be too sad about it, for at least I have found a few traveling companions to accompany me to the grave. Inside the coat on the back of his chair are a .38-calibre handgun and a .22-calibre revolver. They're heavier than they look and weigh the pockets down. My beloved second elder sister, I take my eternal leave of you.

Look at the exam question and report and do the exercises to improve your writing skills.

Preparation

Fill the gaps with the correct word from the box.

| | | | |
|------------|-------------|-----------|-----|
| subheading | information | recommend | aim |
|------------|-------------|-----------|-----|

- You might be asked to write a report when a person in authority needs _____.
- In the first line of the introduction, you should say what the _____ of the report is.
- A report should be divided into paragraphs, each with a clear _____ on the left.
- At the end of the report, you will probably be asked to _____ what should be done.

Exam question

The American rapper and musician Macklemore is going on tour in your country. He has agreed to pay a one-hour visit to your school.

The headmistress of your school has asked you to carry out a survey amongst students and then write a report. She wants suggestions on:

- an activity to do with Macklemore which involves as many students as possible
- a present to give Macklemore to say thank you for coming to visit your school.

Write your report in about **180 words**.

Macklemore's visit to our school

Introduction

The aims of this report are to make suggestions for a suitable activity to do with the musician Macklemore when he visits our school and to recommend a present to give him. It is based on a survey of 70 students.

Activity with Macklemore

The majority of people surveyed thought that the best way for our students to have contact with the rap star was to organise an interview with Macklemore in the school hall. Macklemore could be on the stage and students could ask him questions using a microphone.

A suitable present

Most students thought that each class in the school could prepare one page containing a message, a drawing or a poem. The pages could then be put together to make a book to thank Macklemore for his visit.

Recommendations

I would recommend that we organise an interview with Macklemore in the main hall. All students would like to attend and representatives from each class could ask Macklemore a question. Perhaps we could also consider asking students to design a page for a book that we could give Macklemore as a thank-you present.

Top Tips for writing

- Write a title that shows what the report is about.
- Divide your report into clear paragraphs with subheadings.
- State the report's aim or aims in the introduction.
- Use more formal language, such as full forms rather than contractions.
- You will probably need to make polite recommendations in the conclusion.