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B.J.A. (HONS.) Mass Communication I Year

Sub. – Reporting & Editing

## **Subject : Reporting & Editing**

### **Syllabus**

## **B.A. (Hons) Mass Communication- I Year**

<b>Unit</b>	<b>Contents</b>
Unit-I	Concept of news: Definition and development of news values, Changing concept of news: Issues and challenges, Collection of news: source of information, observation and research, Sociological aspects of news Development and human interest insight in news.
Unit-II	Elements of news, Information VS News, News values, checking of news values, Structure of news, Precaution for news writing.
Unit-III	Hard news and soft news, subject based news, Business Reporting, Science Reporting, Sports Reporting, Film Reporting: Interpretative and Investigative Reporting; Online Reporting: Interviewing, Column writing.
Unit-IV	Principles of Editing, Fundamentals of copy Editing, Editing and Proof reading, Style sheet, Headlines, Types of Headlines, and Modern Trends in Headlines, Feature: Concept and significance, Types of feature, Articles/ special articles



## Unit 1

### Concept of news: Definition and development of news values.

#### What is News?

- **News, information, message – the difference**

News involves the concepts of news worthiness, news literacy and news consumption. It is obtained from reliable sources.

News is meant to make one aware of their surroundings, people and events taking place whereas information is regular pieces of facts that do not change with time.

The difference between information and message is that a message is a way to pass along information. Information itself is data used to inform someone. Information are facts.

- ***What is a reliable source?***

If a source is direct, clear and can be verified, it can generally be classed as a credible one. Here are some examples... A press conference, for example, would be classed as a credible source, because it can be accounted for by others and provides clear-cut information that journalists can relay straight to the public.

- **Who are news literates?**

People who are able to sniff out news from a piece of information and mostly are able to differentiate between a reliable and a non-reliable source of information are called news literates. They analyse the news and critically look at it. You need special skills to be called a news literate and these can be developed with time and experience. People posting information on the social media and circulating it might not necessarily be news literates, because the source from where they have got that information might not be reliable.



◎ **Journalism is a part of news literacy**

**Reliable information**

Reliable information is actionable information, which enables the news consumers to make a judgement, reach a conclusion or take an action.

**How do we know what's reliable?**

We are constantly bombarded with misleading information and have to rely on gatekeepers.

**Gatekeepers** – professionals who control the access to information; a monitor or guardian – example - the gatekeepers of the modern culture.

In media, they are the editors, censor board, media channels etc.

The consumers have to be much more discerning these days to consume only reliable information and so need to cross-check with other reliable sources and not be dependent only on gatekeepers.

In short,

*There are two main important news elements, apart from the others discussed below –*

- It should be an unpublished account.
- The story has to be informative/educative.

**What are news values?**

News values are the elements of story that journalists have used for decades to quickly assess and determine whether an idea or event is worth sharing — and if so, how prominently.



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There are seven news values that journalists typically consider in order to make coverage choices, and any organization that produces content can apply them as a starting point and rule of thumb when assessing contributed content.

**Other News elements –**

**Timeliness**

An event is more newsworthy the sooner it is reported.

**Proximity**

Events are more newsworthy the closer they are to the community reading about them.

**Impact**

Events are more newsworthy when they affect a greater number of people.

**Prominence**

Events are more newsworthy when they involve public figures.

**Oddity**

Events are more newsworthy the more out of the ordinary they are.

**Relevance**

Events are more newsworthy when they involve an issue that is top of mind in the public.

**Conflict**

Events are more newsworthy when they involve disagreement.

***Suggested for further reading –***

<https://guides.libs.uga.edu/reliability#:~:text=A%20reliable%20source%20is%20one,researchers%20for%20students%20and%20researchers> – reliable source.



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<https://adlive.io/news-2/forum/43d6fe-difference-between-message-and-information> - difference - information and message.

<https://medium.com/atlantic-57/these-7-news-values-can-help-you-make-smarter-content-choices-6b3cbc0bddf7> - news values.

*Note – Please make additional notes here.*

### **Changing concept of news – Issues and Challenges**

As we are moving towards a media environment, most people have access to more and more news and information about many issues. This is enabled in most parts of the country by digital media and the products and services of large technology companies. But many people do not necessarily engage with this information (because they find other offers more relevant, interesting and valuable than news). Also, the media industry that has historically produced most of this news is under significant pressure.

Considering the above situation, the following can be summed up as the **issues and challenges** of the media industry in general –

1. The need to move to an increasingly digital, mobile, and social media environment with increasingly intense competition for attention, which puts an increasing pressure on **legacy media** like broadcasters and newspapers. These remain important news producers but are becoming relatively less important as distributors of news. As their existing operations decline or stagnate, the development of new, sustainable business models for digital news production become more urgent.

2. The growing importance of a **limited number of large technology companies** with billions of users across the world who play an increasingly important role in the distribution of news through services like search, social



networking, video sharing, messaging and who capture a large share of attention and advertising by virtue of their attractive products.

3. The development of a **high-choice media environment** where internet users have access to more and more information, a range of increasingly sophisticated devices, and new forms of participation, and where people increasingly engage on the basis of interest—those most interested in news embrace these new opportunities to get, share, and comment on news, but a larger number of people opt for more casual and passive forms of use.

The Web has changed the nature of news in other ways:

- **Continual deadlines** – they have to serve the details of a news in a short span of time as there are competitors vying for user attention.
- **Interactive content** – the internet has facilitated the concept of interactive news, in which users can participate and share their opinion, which was not impossible earlier through legacy media.
- **Related links** – one story can divert to many other linked stories and take to different landing pages.
- **Nonlinear structure** – the user-friendly interface of these news portals make the linear structure divert into different links and makes it a non-linear format providing multiple news headlines on one page.
- **Personalized journalism** – the subscription of e-magazines or newsletters leads to specialized content being in-boxed to the user's mail-id.
- **Specialized beats** – exclusive coverage of news stories in different segments of news is being offered to the consumers. Beat reporting, also known as specialised reporting, is a genre of journalism focused on a particular issue, sector, organisation, or institution over time.





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**RSS:** stand for “Real Simple Syndication” to receive certain blogs or Podcasts regularly by subscribing to a site using a Web feed reader called an “aggregator” that will compile and deliver them to you.

**Aggregator:** a software that compiles web sites that you want delivered to you regularly and pushed them to you via e-mail or downloads them into a portable media player.

**Podcast:** a digital media information in audio or video form distributed over the Internet for use on a portable media player such as an iPod and MP3 player.

**Pod** (portable on demand)

### ***COLLECTION OF NEWS –***

### ***METHODS OF GATHERING NEWS***

The four most commonly used methods in news gathering used by journalists are ***observation, telephone conversations, research and interviews.***

#### ***OBSERVATION***

Observation consists of your actually seeing an event take place and then reporting what you have seen in the form of a news story. The difference between a good story and a poor one is often in the skill of the observer. Skilled observers use their eyes, ears, mind, notebooks and tape recorders. They make sure they get the concrete facts, specific figures and accurate information. They look for the **colorful, the dramatic** or the **unusual** in any situation.

**Skilled observers** always try to get **more information** than they actually need. They know it is easier to **discard excess material than to retrace their steps** after the story is told. Developing your powers of observation can come only through **experience**. You cannot become a skilled observer by simply reading a



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book. The key to becoming a good observer is to look for more than you see on the surface.

### ***TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS***

The telephone plays an important role in your daily work as a journalist. It saves you time, legwork and it often enables you to reach people who are ordinarily too busy to see you in person.

Telephone conversations may range from **full-scale interviews to brief queries** to verify or **amplify information**. But regardless of how often you use this method of news gathering, you should keep the following points in mind:

- Know what information you want before you dial. Keep your pencil and paper handy. Do not call someone and then ask that person to wait while you look for writing materials.
- Speak politely indistinct, well-modulated tones.
- Be cheerful and businesslike.
- Make sure you get your facts straight. Ask the other person to repeat figures or spell out names.
- Avoid three-way conversations among yourself, the person on the telephone and somebody else in your office.
- Recheck your information by reading it back to the person who has given it to you.
- Record the conversation using a "telephone pick-up" (a device that attaches to the telephone receiver and plugs into the microphone jack of the cassette tap recorder). Be sure to inform the person on the other end that you are recording the conversation for note-taking purposes only.
- Do not discuss classified information.





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Although a telephone is a very useful instrument, remember it is not the only, and not necessarily the best, method of gathering news. It should supplement, but not replace, all other methods. Whenever it is proper and convenient, use the telephone, but do not be afraid to engage in a little legwork

### ***RESEARCH***

Research is nothing more than digging out information from files and reference works. Research is used to verify or amplify facts in news stories and to give depth to feature stories and magazine articles.

The public affairs offices have adequate reference libraries. To do any extensive research, learn to use the facilities of the nearest public or college library. Here you can find the necessary books, encyclopaedias, almanacs, magazines, atlases, directories, indexes and similar References.

### ***INTERVIEWS***

About 90 percent of everything in a news story is based on some form of interviewing - either in person, by telephone, or occasionally, by correspondence. You must learn **who to get information from** and **how to record facts**. You must learn techniques for handling different kinds of people - how to draw some out, how to keep others on the topic and how to evaluate the motives or honesty of others. In short, you must learn how to get along with people and how to treat them with **tact and understanding** while still accomplishing your purpose.

### **The Social Construction of News**

The news is a socially manufactured product, rather than an objective **'window on the world'**.

Many events happen in reality which do not get reported in the news and those which do appear in the news are placed in a particular **order of priority**.



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It follows that the **content and format** of the news is a result of many decisions made by several media professionals and those they work with and that the news will thus reflect the biases of those who are involved in its creation.

**‘The News is Socially Constructed’**, means the news is a manufactured product, the result of decisions made by media professionals about **what to include and how to present** what is included.

### ***News Values***

News Values are general guidelines which determine how newsworthy an event is. The more news values an event has, then the more prominence the event will be given in a news programme or a newspaper.

### **Human Interest Insights**

A human-interest story is a feature story that discusses people or pets in an emotional way. It presents people and their problems, concerns, or achievements in a way that brings about interest, sympathy or motivation in the reader or viewer. Human-interest stories are a type of soft news.

Human-interest stories may be "the story behind the story" about an event, organization, or otherwise faceless historical happening, such as about the life of an individual soldier during wartime, an interview with a survivor of a natural disaster, a random act of kindness, or profile of someone known for a career achievement. A study published in the American Behavioral Scientist illustrates that human-interest stories are furthermore often used in the news coverage of irregular immigration, although the frequency differs from country to country. Human-interest features are frequently evergreen content, easily recorded well in advance and/or rerun during holidays or slow news days.



**Unit 2**  
**Structure of News –**  
**Inverted Pyramid**

News articles are written in a structure known as the “inverted pyramid.” In the inverted pyramid format, the most newsworthy information goes at the beginning of the story and the least newsworthy information goes at the end.



Courtesy New Life Ministries

After you have written your story's lede, order the information that follows in terms of most important to least important. There is NO formal conclusion in a journalism article the way there is in an essay or analysis paper.

Example –

Headline -

Railways to begin Bharat Gaurav trains to promote tourism. Details here

**Important Facts -**

A set of 3,033 coaches or 190 theme-based trains are being introduced under the Bharat Gaurav segment, the railways minister said during a press conference,



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adding that these trains can be run both by the private sector as well as the Indian Railways Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC).

(then background story if any.)

The lede (or lead) of a news article is the first sentence, usually written as one paragraph, that tells the most important information of the story. When writing a lede, it is helpful to use the “tell a friend” strategy. Imagine you had to sum up to a friend, in one sentence, what your story is about. How would you sum up quickly what happened? A story’s lede answers the “Five W’s” in a specific order: Who? What? When? Where? Why?

For example:

The Atlanta Police Department will hold a memorial service Wednesday at Holy Christ Church in Buckhead for fallen officer Lt. James Montgomery.

WHO: The Atlanta Police Department

WHAT: will hold a memorial service

WHEN: Wednesday

WHERE: Holy Christ Church in Buckhead

WHY: for fallen officer Lt. James Montgomery

### **Precautions in news writing -**

Libel

a published false statement that is damaging to a person's reputation; a written defamation.

"he was found guilty of a libel on a Liverpool inspector of taxes"

(usually associated with publishing (writing) wrong information about someone in newspapers or magazines)



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Libel is defined as the published defamation of a person's character based on misleading or inaccurate facts. Newspaper reporters can often run into issues of libel because it is their job to write truthful articles about people that might not always be flattering.

Example –

Reporting the business owners participated in unethical and illegal activities if they did not, which could lead to all three conditions of defamation.

Falsely reporting that a doctor has fake diplomas on his wall, which would damage the doctor's reputation and lead to people shunning or avoiding the doctor.

Even though we live in a country with a free press, journalists cannot write anything they want. Reporters do not have the right to state something about a person that could damage their reputation and that is untruthful.

One of the easiest ways to protect oneself from libel is to make sure to always do accurate reporting and to attribute all information in an article. If you write something about someone that you're unsure about, just ask yourself if it's true, and how you know it's true. Rumors, gossip, and information you received from an anonymous or unreliable source are all dangerous to report, and they could run you the risk of a libel case.

### **Attributing information**

ALL information in a news article MUST be attributed to the source where the reporter got his/her information. The reporter must indicate in his/her article where material was obtained from – from an interview, court documents, the Census, a Web site, etc. Direct quotes and paraphrasing can be used to attribute information obtained in an interview with a source.



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**For example:**

According to a police report, the suspect threatened the cashier with a gun before running away with the money.

In a 500-page government report, investigators reported evidence that the army had committed crimes against humanity.

**Integrating quotes**

The first time a source is introduced in an article, you should use that source's full name and title. After this initial reference, use the last name only.

**For example:**

"The swine flu vaccine is an incredible advance in modern medicine," said Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius.

When attributing a direct quote, always use the verb "said" and never any other verbs such as "explained," "whispered," etc. It is also more common to use the format "XXX said" instead of "said XXX."

**For example:**

"The housing crisis is growing out of control," Bernanke said.

Even when information from a source is not used in a direct quote and is paraphrased instead, it still must be attributed to that source.

**For example:**

Bernanke said the recession is probably over.

The recession will most likely begin to recede in six to eight months, Bernanke said.





### Unit 3

#### Types of News -

**Hard news** includes **politics and business**. Hard news journalism refers to **breaking news** and up-to-the-minute news about **serious, or hard-hitting topics** that are timely and urgent, usually based on **facts and rigorous research**.

*Political journalism, business journalism, are forms of hard news.*

**Soft news** primarily focuses on **entertainment**. Soft news journalism focuses on **lifestyle and entertainment** and typically revolves around **culture, art, and human interest events**. Soft news includes sports journalism, entertainment journalism, and **celebrity coverage**.

**Business journalism:** Business journalism aims to keep readers and viewers up-to-date on the **trends and changes** in the business world. It can cover many different topics, **including stock trading, economic policy, business mergers, and technological advances**.

Business journalism is the part of journalism that tracks, records, analyzes and interprets the business, economic and financial activities and changes that take place in societies. Topics widely cover the entire purview of all commercial activities related to the economy.

**Science journalism** conveys reporting about science to the public. The field typically involves interactions between **scientists, journalists, and the public**.

**Sports journalism** is a form of writing that reports on matters pertaining to sporting topics and competitions. Sports journalism started in the **early 1800s** when it was targeted to the **social elite** and transitioned into an integral part of the news business with newspapers having dedicated sports sections.



The increased popularity of sports amongst the middle and lower class led to the more coverage of sports content in publications. The appetite for sports resulted in sports-only media such as **Sports Illustrated and ESPN**. There are many different forms of sports journalism, ranging from **play-by-play and game recaps to analysis and investigative journalism** on important developments in the sport.

Technology and the internet age has massively changed the sports journalism space as it is struggling with the same problems that the broader category of print journalism is struggling with, mainly not being able to cover costs due to falling subscriptions. New forms of internet blogging and tweeting in the current millennium have pushed the boundaries of sports journalism.

### **Film Reporting**

As we all know, film journalism involves giving information about films. It is largely about writing news and feature articles about movies, taking interviews of people associated with films and giving movie reviews.

In other words, film journalism is aimed at people who share a deep interest in films and who would like to get more information or knowledge on films and people associated with films.

The following are examples of articles that fall under the film journalism category:

- *“Will release films in theatres, but only when we’re comfortable.” says director Kabir Khan*
- *Marathi horror film Lapachhapi gets a Hindi remake with Chhori*
- *Yogesh, popular lyricist of the 1970s, dies aged 77*



### **Interpretive (or Interpretative) journalism or Interpretive reporting**

Interpretive (or Interpretative) journalism or interpretive reporting requires a journalist to go beyond the basic facts related to an event and provide more in-depth news coverage. The lack of precise borders accompanied with diverse theoretical approaches related to what interpretative journalism is in the modern world results in the practice of interpretative journalism overlapping with various other genres of journalism, and furthermore operationalization of interpretative journalism becomes largely blurred.

Interpretive journalists must have atypical awareness with and comprehension of a subject with their work involving looking for systems, rationale and influences that explain what they are reporting.

The impact of interpretive journalism is when the reporting results in trend-setting articles, powerful think-pieces and further straying into the field of investigative reporting which has become the hallmark of good print journalism. But in recent times with the trend of breaking news and in finding ways to get viewers faster, journalists as well as readers have given up or just don't find time for traditional long-form interpretive reporting.

### **Investigative Reporting**

Investigative journalism is a form of journalism 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. Practitioners sometimes use the terms "*watchdog reporting*" or "*accountability reporting*."

Most investigative journalism has traditionally been conducted by *newspapers, wire services, and freelance journalists*. With the decline in income through



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**advertising**, many traditional news services have struggled to **fund** investigative journalism, which is **time-consuming** and therefore **expensive**. Journalistic investigations are increasingly carried out by **news organizations working together**, even internationally (**as in the case of the Panama Papers and Paradise Papers**), or by organizations such as **ProPublica**, which have **not operated previously as news publishers** and which rely on the support of the **public and benefactors** to fund their work.

The Paradise Papers are a set of over **13.4 million confidential electronic documents** relating to offshore investments that were leaked to the German reporters Frederik Obermaier and Bastian Obermayer,<sup>[1][2]</sup> from the newspaper Süddeutsche Zeitung. The newspaper shared them with the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, and a network of more than 380 journalists. Some of the details were made public on 5 November 2017 and stories are still being released.

The Panama Papers (Spanish: Papeles de Panamá) are 11.5 million leaked documents (or 2.6 terabytes of data) that were published beginning on April 3, 2016. The papers detail financial and attorney–client information for more than 214,488 offshore entities. The documents, some dating back to the 1970s, were created by, and taken from, former Panamanian offshore law firm and corporate service provider Mossack Fonseca.

ProPublica (<sup>/</sup>ˈproʊˈpʌblɪkə<sup>[2]</sup>), legally Pro Publica, Inc., is a nonprofit organization based in New York City. It is a newsroom that aims to produce investigative journalism in the public interest. In 2010, it became the first online news source to win a Pulitzer Prize, for a piece written by one of its journalists and published in The New York Times Magazine as well as on



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ProPublica.org. ProPublica states that its investigations are conducted by its staff of full-time investigative reporters, and the resulting stories are distributed to news partners for publication or broadcast. In some cases, reporters from both ProPublica and its partners work together on a story. ProPublica has partnered with more than 90 different news organizations, and it has won five Pulitzer Prizes.

The documents contain personal financial information about wealthy individuals and public officials that had previously been kept private.

### **Online Reporting**

Digital journalism, also known as online journalism, is a contemporary form of journalism where editorial content is distributed via the Internet, as opposed to publishing via print or broadcast. What constitutes digital journalism is debated by scholars; however, the primary product of journalism, which is news and features on current affairs, is presented solely or in combination as text, audio, video, or some interactive forms like newsgames, and disseminated through digital media technology.

Fewer barriers to entry, lowered distribution costs, and diverse computer networking technologies have led to the widespread practice of digital journalism. It has democratized the flow of information that was previously controlled by traditional media including newspapers, magazines, radio, and television.

Some have asserted that a greater degree of creativity can be exercised with digital journalism when compared to traditional journalism and traditional media. The digital aspect may be central to the journalistic message and remains, to some extent, within the creative control of the writer, editor, and/or publisher.



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It has been acknowledged that reports of its growth have tended to be exaggerated. In fact, a 2019 Pew survey showed a 16% decline of time spent on online news sites since 2016.

### **Column Writing**

A column is a recurring piece or article in a newspaper, magazine or other publication, where a writer expresses their own opinion in few columns allotted to them by the newspaper organisation. Columns are written by columnists.

What differentiates a column from other forms of journalism is that it is a regular feature in a publication – written by the same writer or reporter and usually on the same subject area or theme each time – and that it typically, but not universally, contains the author's opinion or point of view. A column states an opinion. It is said to be like an open letter. A column also has a standard head, called a title, and a by-line (name) at the top. These identify you[who?] and your[who?] column readers.

### **What is News Editing?**

In a news organization, news editing plays a vital role. A news story is written by hurried reporters and is rough-edged like a raw diamond. Hence, the copy is polished and honed by a team of editors. Thus, editing is done to achieve a balance of news between that originating within the organization and that pouring in from outside.

### **Objectives of Editing**

These are important objectives of editing:

- Accuracy
- Fact Checking
- Maintaining Objectivity
- Staying on Track





## Unit 4

### Principles of Editing:

The principles of Good News Editing:

- Accuracy
- Attribution
- Balance and Fairness
- Brevity
- Clarity
- Readability
- Human interest and
- Sharp observation

#### **Accuracy:**

The sub editor should be obsessed with accuracy because one mistake can destroy the reputation of a newspaper or magazine, and it takes just fraction of a second to make one. Checking and crosschecking names, figures and verifying facts are of utmost importance.

#### **Attribution:**

Always attribute the news to the source so that readers can judge its credibility. “A highly placed Defense Personnel, Finance Ministry Sources”. Etc. are attributions that help readers to arrive at their own conclusions, while steering clear of the suspicion that the reporter is giving his own version of the story.

#### **Balance and Fairness:**

Balance and fairness form the foundation of good editing. Balance is giving both sides of the picture, while fairness is not taking sides. It also means not providing support to political parties, institutions, communities or individuals, etc., through



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the columns of the newspaper. It is the attribute of a professional reporter and the duty of a sub editor to implement it.

**Brevity:**

Brevity is a great virtue in journalism appreciated by readers and editors alike. It is telling a story, as it should be, without beating around the bush. It saves time and space and wins applause when consummated to perfection.

**Clarity:**

Clarity is the ability to think clearly and translate it into paper—a quality that can take one to the higher echelons of media hierarchy. Readability has a bearing on sentence length and simple and forthright manner of expression.

**Readability:**

The average length of a sentence should not exceed 18 words, which is standard. It is not easy to read a sentence with more than 18 words. Beyond 25 words the sentence would be very difficult to read, though some accomplished authors have far exceeded the standard and yet remained readable because of their craftsmanship. But beginners are advised to stay out of long-winding and complicated sentence constructions. The best way is to write news stories using simple words, short and simple sentences.

**Editing and Proof Reading**

As you prepare your final draft, you'll want to leave time to edit and proofread. Editing strategies focus on making your text more readable by assessing clarity, style, and citations, while proofreading strategies focus on eliminating errors and mistakes in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and formatting. Follow the steps below to edit and proofread your draft.



## Editing Strategies

- Find a sentence where you can reduce the number of prepositions (e.g. “in the time of” or “at the bus stop”).
- Revise it.
- Find an “-ion” noun (e.g. customization).
- Make it a verb (e.g. customize).
- Find an expletive construction (e.g. “It is expected that...”).
- Revise the sentence to have a clearer subject and verb.
- Find passive voice (e.g. “The report was prepared by the committee”).
- Make it active (e.g. “The committee prepared the report”).
- Find your longest sentence. How many words are before the verb?
- Simplify that sentence’s subject.
- Consider breaking up sentences longer than 3 lines.
- Find two consecutive short sentences.
- Combine them.
- Find a passive verb (is, are, was).
- Replace it with an active verb.
- Find a cliché (“Since the beginning of time”).
- Be more specific.
- Find qualifiers (very, often, really, a lot).
- Determine: Are they necessary? Can they be more specific?
- Find a place where you use two words that mean the same thing (e.g. “hopes and dreams”).
- Pick one to use instead.



- Find a stock phrase (e.g. “the fact that” or “in the event that”).
- Determine: Do you need this? Is there another word you could use?

### Proofreading Strategies

Proofreading is usually the very last step in the writing process, providing a final check for any errors or issues before the writing is shared. Remember that while editing may occur throughout the writing and revision process, proofreading focuses on more sentence-level elements toward the end of the process. Here, you’re looking for issues like spelling errors, typos, incorrect or missing punctuation—really, anything that doesn’t look or sound right. Here are some tips for getting started:

- Take time away from your paper
- Look for one error or issue at a time
- Print it out
- Circle every punctuation mark
- Read backwards
- Read aloud
- Use a different font
- Change your location
- Swap papers with a friend
- Use “Search” for common errors

### Style-Sheet

In print media, organization style sheet has an important role to play for the **editors, authors and proof readers** etc. to maintain **uniformity and consistency** within a single manuscript across the news paper. This is called as **style sheet**. Traditionally, a copy editor for any news organization creates a



stylesheet as he/ she edits and passes the same style-sheet onto other professionals working on it to check. A style sheet is usually a **word document** file defining the **layout, design and presentation**. The style sheet specifies **the parameter, page size, font and its margin**. It is very important for any news paper to maintain a **uniform and a consistent** style for the whole document.

A style sheet is a file or form that is used in **word processing and desktop publishing** to define the layout style of a document. In modern word processors such as Microsoft Word, a style sheet is known as a **template**. The most well-known form of style sheet is the **Cascading Style Sheet (CSS)**, which is used for styling Web pages.

**Some formatting elements provided by style sheets include:**

- *Typeface/font*
- *Emphasis (bold, italics, underline)*
- *Justification*
- *Tab stops and indentation*
- *Color*
- *Superscript and subscript*
- *Drop caps, letter cases and strikethroughs*

You would have noticed that newspapers use only a set of fonts and colours, often limiting them to just about four or five. A stylebook is a set of guidelines that help staff to bring out a newspaper that is homogeneous, coherent and credible. It also provides guidelines on use of language, particularly those concerned with grammar. A stylebook is a guide for a writer or editor for a specific publication. It gives guidelines for usage of terms, typefaces, highlighting,



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etc. Each good newspaper has its own stylebook and follows it to the tee. Ever wondered why?

\* Staffs in a newspaper are always strapped for time. Even the friendliest editors may neglect informing the layout staff about a story until it is too late. One hardly has the time to sit and experiment with different fonts, sizes and colours.

\* Some papers tend to look chaotic because everyone on the layout desk wants to experiment with their page designs. While this might be fun, it detracts from the professionalism of the publication.

\* Copy for newspapers come from a variety of sources– its own reporters, agencies, freelancers etc. Each source has its own style of writing. Everyone's ultimate goal should be to create a coherent look for the overall paper. Pursuing one's own creative muse is nice but it should fall under this umbrella.

Having a stylebook helps reduce questions relating to design and production for newcomers and old-timers alike and reduce inconsistencies in the paper. A stylebook will also allow the staff to focus on more important issues, like writing better headlines, selecting and cropping photos better and originating better ideas for illustrations and graphics.

Despite all these precautions, newspapers continue to contain mistakes. Journalism is writing history in a hurry all right, but that should not be an excuse to present a chaotic, incoherent newspaper to the readers.

When an editor was asked about the philosophy of his newspaper's design, he said, "We want our content to drive our design, because design and design elements are meant to orient and signal the eye, prioritise the news and ultimately, provide easy entry points into our stories and packages." Therefore, one may conclude that a style sheet is written in stone.





### ***HEADLINES –***

Different types of headlines are used in journalism; the **specific type** used is based on the **structure of the news story**. Print media is geared toward informing the public on various topics. An important aspect in getting and holding the **attention of the public** is through the use of **attractive headlines, no longer than one, two or in some cases three lines**. Headlines should **summarize** in a few **striking words** the news story featured under it. The point is to get the attention of the reader and draw him into the story.

### ***FLUSH LEFT HEADLINES –***

This is one of the more **modern headline** forms in use. It consists of **two or three lines of headline**, each one set **flush left** to the left side of the space. The design is **simple** and allows freedom in writing the headline. **No rules** govern the writing of the flush left headline; however a **uniform style** for better results is generally adopted. This type of headline is **popular** because it is easy to write, allows flexibility in unit count and provides a **feeling of airiness** to the page with the white space.

### ***BANNER HEADLINE –***

Banner headlines are words printed in extra large letters across the top of the front page of the newspaper on extremely important stories; they are not used frequently, but when they are used, they have significant impact.

### ***INVERTED PYRAMID HEADLINE –***

There are **distinct advantages** to using the inverted pyramid headline style for news writing. People **often are in a rush** and seldom have time to read every word of a story. The advantage of the inverted pyramid headline is that it concentrates on presenting **pertinent facts first**. With inverted pyramid stories,



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the most important information **goes in the first paragraph**, and the less important information follows to the very **end of the story**. The inverted pyramid headline generally consists of **three lines -- the first runs across the column and the other two lines are shorter than the first line**. The headline is **created from the informative facts** presented at the start of the story, giving the reader the **most important points quickly**.

### ***CROSSLINE HEADLINE***

The cross-line headline is **quite similar to a banner headline**. While it is a **large headline**, it **does not span the entire width of the page**, but it **does run across all the columns of the story** it pertains to. The cross-line headline is one of the **simplest types of headlines**, consisting of a single line and one or most often more columns in width. It can run flush on both sides of the paper or it can have the **words centered over the columns**. This type of headline is generally used when there is more than one column for a story and to produce a **formal look**.

### **Features -**

Ask most people what a feature story is, and they'll say something soft and puffy, written for the arts or fashion section of a newspaper or website. But the truth is, features can be about any subject, from the fluffiest lifestyle piece to the toughest investigative report.

And features aren't just found in the back pages of the paper—the ones that focus on things like home décor and music reviews. In fact, features are found in every section of the paper, from news to business to sports.



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If you go through a typical newspaper from front to back on any given day, chances are, the majority of stories will be written in a feature-oriented style. The same is true on most news websites.

So we know what features aren't—but what *are* they?

Feature stories aren't defined so much by subject matter as they are by the style in which they're written. In other words, anything written in a feature-oriented way is a feature story.

### **Different Kinds of Feature Stories**

#### **Human interest**

Involves persons rather than things. Students who win an award or who do something significant such as scoring 1600 on SAT or qualifying for Olympic Games. Retiring teacher.

#### **Interviews**

Usually done with prominent persons. Can be either an informational or a personal profile feature. Informational interviews deal with an authority whose opinions on certain subjects, facts about things or comparison are of significant value. Personality interviews are interesting because of the individual rather than the subject matter.

#### **Informational features**

Of historical, social, practical interest. Basic purpose is not to entertain but to inform. History of the school. How-to-do-it features, such as "how to buy a good stereo" or "what to do if you're arrested or in an accident."

#### **Personality sketch**



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Develops a total picture of the person. Gets facts from the person himself. Attempts to reveal personality through anecdotes. Looks at mannerisms, actions, dress, experiences. Talks to other people about the subject.

If you're writing about a person, here are some facts readers will want to know.

- Name
- Personality
- Background
- Physical appearance
- Environment
- Hobbies
- His influence on others
- Anecdotes/observation

### **Featurettes**

What we used to call "Brites." Also called "mini-features." Clever. Attention-getting beginning with events told in chronological order. Conclusion - often a surprise - told quickly.



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## **Unit 5**

**News Reporting, Feature Article, hard and soft news,  
Interviews, Column Writing, News Checking, News Value and Editing  
(Topics already discussed in previous units)**

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