

PREFACE

In this course, we shall deal with various aspects of Feature Writing. The SLM divided into four units. Each unit introduced is thoroughly described, number of examples are included in this SLM.

The block consists of the following units :

- Unit - I : Features
- Unit - II : Types of Features
- Unit - III : News Story and Feature Article.
- Unit - IV : Reviewing
- Unit - V : Photo-Features

The first unit of this block deals with the :

- ◆ Know the definition of the term "Feature"
- ◆ Describe the characteristics of Features
- ◆ Discuss the method of writing in-depth feature story
- ◆ Examine the relation between feature and fiction
- ◆ Examine the relation between feature and literature

The second unit of this block deals with the :

- ◆ Explain the types of features
- ◆ Enumerate the features of News and Informative features
- ◆ Discuss the characteristics of Descriptive features
- ◆ Describe the characteristics of Historical features
- ◆ Examine the importance of Personality features.

The third unit of this block deals with the :

- ◆ Explain the difference between the news story and feature story
- ◆ Discuss the factors to be followed while writing the news story
- ◆ Examine the similarities and dissimilarities between the news and feature

Chapter	Particulars	Page No.
UNIT - III		
NEWS STORY AND FEATURE ARTICLE		
3.0	Learning Objectives	31
3.1	Introduction	31
3.2	Distinction Between a Featurised News Story and a Feature Article	31
3.3	Feature Topics, Titles, Leads	34
3.4	Slant in Features	37
3.5	Planning a Feature	38
3.6	Importance of Human Interest Features	39
3.7	Summary	40
3.8	Key Words	40
3.9	Answers to Check Your Progress	40
3.10	Terminal Questions	40
3.11	Further Readings	41
UNIT - IV		
REVIEWING		
4.0	Learning Objectives	45
4.1	Introduction	45
4.2	Basic Principles and Do's and Don'ts of Reviewing Books, Stage Plays and TV Programmes	45
4.3	Summary	48
4.4	Key Words	49
4.5	Answers to Check Your Progress	49
4.6	Terminal Questions	49
4.7	Further Readings	49
UNIT - V		
PHOTO-FEATURES		
5.0	Learning Objectives	53
5.1	Introduction	53

Chapter	Particulars	Page No.
5.2	Photo Features	54
5.3	Freelance Journalism	55
5.4	Scope and Approach to Freelancing For Newspapers & Magazines	55
5.5	Summary	57
5.6	Key Words	57
5.7	Answers to Check Your Progress	58
5.8	Terminal Questions	58
5.9	Further Readings	58

**B. A. JOURNALISM AND MASS
COMMUNICATION**

I - YEAR

FEATURE WRITING

BA - JMC - I YEAR

FEATURE WRITING

UNIT - I

Definition of a Feature - Features vis-à-vis Fiction and Literature

UNIT - II

Types of Features - Descriptive Features - Historical Features - Personality Features

UNIT - III

Distinction between a Featurised news story and a feature article - Feature topics, titles, leads - Slant in features - Planning a feature - Importance of human interest features

UNIT - IV

Basic principles and Do's and Don'ts of reviewing Books, Stage Plays and TV programmes

UNIT - V

Photo features - Freelance Journalism - Scope and approach to freelancing for Newspapers & Magazines

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

FEATURE WRITING

A feature story also feature article, or simply feature is a piece of journalistic writing that covers a selected issue in-depth. As such a feature need not address an immediately topical subject as would be expected of a news story, is usually considerably longer, and may well present an opinionated view. Features are commonly seen in newspaper supplements and magazines.

While the distinction between published features and news is often clear, when approached conceptually there are few hard boundaries between the two. It is quite possible to write a feature in the style of a news story, for instance. Nevertheless features do tend to take a more narrative approach, perhaps using opening paragraphs as scene-setting narrative hooks instead of the delivery of the most important facts. As the print media faces ever stiffer competition from other sources of news, feature stories are becoming more common as they can be more engaging to read. At many newspapers, news stories are sometimes written in "feature style", adopting some of the conventions of feature writing while still covering breaking events. Wire services such as the Associated Press, which previously made a point of distinguishing only news, now also include feature stories.

A story that has as its basis a timely happening with a human interest angle. Often a news happening can be made much more interesting or newsworthy by being written in a semi-feature style. This is especially true of events that have already taken place and about which everyone knows. A news feature story differs from a human interest story in that the content of the news-feature story probably would appear in the paper as news whereas the content of the human interest story would not appear at all if were not for the interest created in the fact by the style of writing.

Informative feature story, this type does not use many of the fiction writer's devices since its purpose is to inform more than entertain. It may be very closely related to the so-called "new journalism", which is explained in topics for informative feature stories are much broader today than they once were when sub-features were usually about clubs and extra-curricular events, customs, traditions, colleges and universities and their requirements, vocations, the curriculum, and the like. These subjects still are suitable for good features if handled interestingly, but today's press has extended itself into the world outside that very much interests readers. This type, to be interesting demands that the reporter include names, if at all possible, human interest elements, unknown or little known facts, intriguing incidents, and an interesting form and form and form with which they are presented.

UNIT - I

FEATURES

Unit - I : Features

STRUCTURE

- 1.0. Learning Objectives
- 1.1. Introduction
- 1.2. Definition of a Feature
- 1.3. Features Vis-a-Vis Fiction and Literature
- 1.4. Summary
- 1.5. Key Words
- 1.6. Answers to Check Your Progress
- 1.7. Terminal Questions
- 1.8. Further Readings

1.0. Learning Objectives

After reading this unit, you will be able to

- ◆ Know the definition of the term “Feature”
- ◆ Describe the characteristics of Features
- ◆ Discuss the method of writing in-depth feature story
- ◆ Examine the relation between feature and fiction
- ◆ Examine the relation between feature and literature

1.1. Introduction

A feature story also feature article, or simply feature is a piece of journalistic writing that covers a selected issue in-depth. As such, a feature need not address an immediately topical subject as would be expected of a news story, is usually considerably longer, and may well present an opinionated view. Features are commonly seen in newspaper supplements and magazines.

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The Pulitzer Prize for Feature Writing is awarded annually for a distinguished example of feature writing in an American newspaper or magazine, giving prime consideration to high literary quality and originality.

1.2. Definition of a Feature

Journalists and readers very often misunderstand the term ‘feature’. Though the dictionary defines it as “a special article”, it is more than that. M.V.Kamath gives the following definition: “A feature..... must

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fill the reader with new information of which he has been hitherto ignorant. It must provide him with all that he wanted to know, but had no time to inquire about”.

Characteristics of features:

- ◆ A feature can be on any subject. A news story may become a feature if the human interest angle is played up.
- ◆ A feature presents the background of the news item. Analysis and explanation must form its parts. A feature should also anticipate developments.
- ◆ A feature writer has to be a specialist in the field.
- ◆ Depending on the subject dealt with, we have different types of features, sports features, adventure features, science features, human interest features, wildlife features, personality features, photo features etc.
- ◆ A good feature is timely. It must be from an expert in the field. If it is illustrated, it will be an added attraction. A feature on gardening or on wildlife without illustrations will be dry.
- ◆ Features may inform, instruct, and advice, but their primary purpose is to entertain. They are usually read after the news in moments.
- ◆ Features may be of any length, ranging all the way from rather long magazine articles to short human interest stories.
- ◆ They are factual and require, but they are related to news stories in few other ways - they may or may not be timely. If they are timely and related to a current news event, they are likely to appeal more to readers.
- ◆ They may be written in any form and style is appropriate to the content and purpose of the story.
- ◆ They permit the reporter to use all his knowledge and ingenuity to write a story original in idea and treatment.
- ◆ Features are well organized. They rarely have a news lead. Instead, they are more often have novelty leads.
- ◆ Features usually strike the keynote in the opening sentences, which permit the reader to come into quick contact with the crux of the story and become interested.
- ◆ They usually are not cut in make-up. Thus, the reporter may use any devices of the fiction writer, suspense, surprise, dialogue, description, narration, climax, and the like. The inverted pyramid does not fit the purpose of a feature story.
- ◆ Features depend upon the writer to apply his imagination to the facts, yet they are not fiction.
- ◆ Features are written with friendly simplicity, since during leisure, when they are usually read, a reader wanted to relax and be entertained. A person does not want to difficult prose. If the feature story informs, the reader still wants it done in easy-to-read prose.
- ◆ They apply all the principles of effective writing to achieve unity, coherence, and emphasis.
- ◆ They use specific nouns, adjectives and verbs to create vivid images, sounds, and feelings for the reader.

Check your Progress

1. What is the definition of M.V.Kamath for "Feature"?

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2. How do we have different types of features?

1.3. Features Vis-a-Vis Fiction and Literature

One primary purpose of a feature story is to educate. Like news stories they are factual and require reporting. Unlike news stories, the form and style of a feature is written with what is appropriate to the content and purpose of the story. They follow the order of introduction, body and conclusion like most fiction. They are well organized and entail a novelty lead rather than the standard summary news lead. They depend upon the writer applying his imagination to the facts, yet they are not fiction. They apply all of the principles of effective writing to achieve unity, coherence and emphasis. They use specific nouns, adjectives and verbs to create vivid images, sounds and feelings for the reader. The types of feature stories include the following: news-feature; informative feature; personality sketches; personal experience or accomplishment story; human-interest story.

Writing the in-depth feature story

Writing the feature story demands intellectual curiosity. One must be willing to investigate the story from every angle before starting to write the story behind the story. Interviewing others about the subject is another way to tell the story. In literature a character description entails a physical description, a list of the character's deeds and words, and what others say about the character. So be it with the feature subject. Student reporters should ask themselves "Who has a stake in this story?" and seek their views. Coming up and brainstorming ideas for the feature should not be too difficult. Adults are often delighted when young people ask for interviews. People who are outstanding in their fields of endeavor are great subjects for students to write about. One often wonders how they made it.

- ◆ Feature stories are human-interest articles that focus on particular people, places and events.
- ◆ Feature stories are journalistic, researched, descriptive, colorful, thoughtful, reflective, thorough writing about original ideas.
- ◆ Feature stories cover topics in depth, going further than mere hard news coverage by amplifying and explaining the most interesting and important elements of a situation or occurrence.
- ◆ Feature stories are popular content elements of newspapers, magazines, blogs, websites, newsletters, television broadcasts and other mass media.

While journalists reporting late-breaking hard news don't have enough preparation time and copy length to include much background and description, writers of features have the space and time to evoke imagery in their stories and fill in details of the circumstances and atmosphere.

- ◆ A feature story is not meant to report the latest breaking news, but rather an in-depth look at a subject.
- ◆ Feature articles range from the news feature that provides sidebar background to a current event hard news story, to a relatively timeless story that has natural human interest.
- ◆ Features generally are longer than hard-news articles because the feature penetrates deeper into its subject, expanding on the details rather than trying to concentrate on a few important key points.
- ◆ In hard news stories, often referred to as inverted pyramid style, the reporter makes the point, sets the tone, and frames the issue in the first paragraph or two.
- ◆ In a feature story, on the other hand, the writer has the time and space to develop the theme, but sometimes postpones the main point until the end. The whole story does not have to be encapsulated in the lead.

Feature stories are journalistic reports. They are not opinion essays or editorials. They should not be confused with creative writing or works of fiction.

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- ◆ The writer's opinions and attitudes are not important to the story.
- ◆ The writer keeps herself or himself out of the story.
- ◆ Writing in the third person helps maintain the necessary distance.

Telling stories

Hard news stories report very timely events that have just occurred. Feature stories, on the other hand, are soft news because they are not as timely, not as swiftly reported. Feature writers have the extra time to complete background research, interviews and observation for their stories. Here are some suggestions for polishing feature writing skills and developing an eye for feature story ideas.

- ◆ Feature stories give readers information in a pleasing, entertaining format that highlights an issue by describing the people, places, events and ideas that shape it.
- ◆ Feature stories are really more like nonfiction short stories than hard news stories.
- ◆ While there should be a news peg for the existence of a story at a particular time, the immediacy of the event is secondary in a feature story. In fact, sometimes there is no immediate event.
- ◆ The power of a feature story lies in its ability to amplify the focus on an issue through first-rate storytelling, irony, humor, human appeal, atmosphere and colorful details.
- ◆ Features have a clear beginning, middle and end and are longer than hard-news stories.

Gathering data

Journalists use three tools to gather information for stories: observation, interview and background research. After completing these, the writer brings the story to life through colorful description, meaningful anecdotes and significant quotes.

- ◆ These elements are obtained when interviewing and observing by jotting down everything encountered - smells, noises, colors, textures, emotions, details seen and heard in the surroundings.
- ◆ The journalist keeps an open mind while interviewing subjects and researching sources.
- ◆ The writer avoids steering the story or imposing personal ideas on the sources.
- ◆ The writer avoids deciding on the theme of the story until sufficient information has been gathered to show a direction or point of view.

Story format

The information in a feature is organized differently from hard news stories. Sometimes a writer uses several paragraphs of copy at the outset to engage the reader before getting on with the main elements of the story.

After the title and opening paragraph grab a reader, narrative hooks are used to persuade the reader to continue reading. These hooks are attractive story elements such as action, mystery, drama or appealing characters intended to pull the reader forward through the story. They are complex narratives that come to life through colorful description, meaningful anecdotes and significant quotes.

- ◆ In hard news stories, the reporter makes the point, sets the tone, and frames the issue in the first paragraph or two.
- ◆ In feature stories, the whole story does not have to be encapsulated in an inverted pyramid lead. The writer can develop the storyline in a variety of ways and choose to postpone the main point until later in the copy or even the end.

A writer can choose to tell the story out of order to engage the reader's interest.

- ◆ A story could begin with a dramatic moment and, once the reader is curious, the story could flash back to the history needed to understand it.

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- ◆ A story-within-a-story could be used with a narrator in the outer story telling the inner story to satisfy the curiosity of readers.
- ◆ A storyline could alert readers that the story began in a way that seemed ordinary, but they must follow it to understand what happened eventually.

As with any news reporting, feature stories are subject to the journalistic standards of accuracy, fairness and precision. The quality of a story is judged on its content, organization and mechanics.

Check your progress

3. What is the primary purpose of Feature story?

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4. State the ways to write a feature story.

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5. Compare feature stories and hard news stories.

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1.4. Summary

A feature story also feature article, or simply feature is a piece of journalistic writing that covers a selected issue in-depth. As such, a feature need not address an immediately topical subject as would be expected of a news story, is usually considerably longer, and may well present an opinionated view. Features are commonly seen in newspaper supplements and magazines.

Journalists and readers very often misunderstand the term 'feature'. Though the dictionary defines it as "a special article", it is more than that. M.V.Kamath gives the following definition: "A feature..... must fill the reader with new information of which he has been hitherto ignorant. It must provide him with all that he wanted to know, but had no time to inquire about".

In literature a character description entails a physical description, a list of the character's deeds and words, and what others say about the character. So be it with the feature subject. Student reporters should ask themselves "Who has a stake in this story?" and seek their views. Coming up and brainstorming ideas for the feature should not be too difficult. Adults are often delighted when young people ask for interviews. People who are outstanding in their fields of endeavor are great subjects for students to write about. One often wonders how they made it.

1.5. Key Words

1. **Feature** : A feature story also feature article, or simply feature is a piece of journalistic writing that covers a selected issue in-depth.

2. **Hard News** : Hard news is term often used to refer to general news.

3. **Soft News** : Soft news noun news that does not deal with serious topics or events

✓ **Literature** : Literature is the art of written work and can, in some circumstances, refer exclusively to published sources.

5. **Fiction** : Fiction is the form of any work that deals, in part or in whole, with information or events that are not factual, but rather, imaginary and theoretical.

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1.6. Answers to Check Your Progress

1. "A feature must fill the reader with new information of which he has been hitherto ignorant. It must provide him with all that he wanted to know, but had no time to inquire about".
2. Depending on the subject dealt with, we have different types of features, sports features, adventure features, science features, human interest features, wildlife features, personality features, photo features etc.
1. One primary purpose of a feature story is to educate. Like news stories they are factual and require reporting. Unlike news stories, the form and style of a feature is written with what is appropriate to the content and purpose of the story. They follow the order of introduction, body and conclusion like most fiction.
2. Writing the feature story demands intellectual curiosity. One must be willing to investigate the story from every angle before starting to write the story behind the story. Interviewing others about the subject is another way to tell the story.
3. Hard news stories report very timely events that have just occurred. Feature stories, on the other hand, are soft news because they are not as timely, not as swiftly reported. Feature writers have the extra time to complete background research, interviews and observation for their stories.

1.7. Terminal Questions

1. Explain the salient features of "Feature stories".
2. Describe the characteristics of Features.
3. Discuss the method of writing in-depth feature story.
4. Examine the relation between feature and fiction.
5. Examine the relation between feature and literature.

1.8. Further Readings

1. Mass Communication; Keval J.Kumar
2. The News Paper - An international history; Anthony smith
3. Mass communication and journalism; D.S.Mehta in India.

UNIT - II
TYPES OF FEATURES

Unit - II : Types of Features

STRUCTURE

- 2.0. Learning Objectives
- 2.1. Introduction
- 2.2. Types of Features
- 2.3. Descriptive Features
- 2.4. Historical Features
- 2.5. Personality Features
- 2.6. Summary
- 2.7. Key Words
- 2.8. Answers to Check Your Progress
- 2.9. Terminal Questions
- 2.10. Further Readings

2.0. Learning Objectives

After reading this unit, you will be able to

- ◆ Explain the types of features
- ◆ Enumerate the features of News and Informative features
- ◆ Discuss the characteristics of Descriptive features
- ◆ Describe the characteristics of Historical features
- ◆ Examine the importance of Personality features.

2.1. Introduction

Unlike flavours of ice cream, there are only two basic kinds of newspaper features. One type is the news feature, which usually is tied to a breaking news event, is placed in the same general location as the breaking story, and is often written under deadline pressure. This type of news feature is called a "sidebar," in that it is a "side" article that accompanies the main news story. A variation is a news feature that appears after the publication of the hard news story. Such a follow-up story is often called a "second-day" feature. The other basic kind of feature is the timeless story, which does not have to be used immediately in the newspaper and can sometimes be written leisurely over a period of two or three days or even weeks or months.

2.2. Types of Features

Feature stories are nonfiction pieces; they are journalism's equivalent of an assigned essay. Feature stories are classified broadly into two different kinds. They are as follows:

- ◆ News feature story
- ◆ Informative feature story

News Feature Story

A story that has as its basis a timely happening with a human interest angle. Often a news happening can be made much more interesting or newsworthy by being written in a semi-feature style. This is

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especially true of events that have already taken place and about which everyone knows. A news feature story differs from a human interest story in that the content of the news-feature story probably would appear in the paper as news whereas the content of the human interest story would not appear at all if were not for the interest created in the facts by the style of writing.

Informative Feature Story

This type does not use many of the fiction writer's devices, since its purpose is to inform more than entertain. It may be very closely related to the so-called "new journalism", which is explained in Topics for informative feature stories are much broader today than they once were when sub-feature were usually about clubs and extra-curricular events, customs, traditions, colleges and universities and their requirements, vocations, the curriculum, and the like. These subjects still are suitable for good features if handled interestingly, but today's press has extended itself include the world outside that very much interests readers. This type, to be interesting demands that the reporter include names, if at all possible, Human Interests elements, unknown or little known facts, intriguing incidents, and an interesting form and form and style and form with which they are presented.

Check your Progress

1. Define Feature stories. Mention the types of feature stories.

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.....

2. What is meant by News feature?

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.....

2.3. Descriptive Features

Feature can entertain, inform or inspire a reader. Good features should be interesting, and be supported by facts and direct quotes. A news story tells what happened but a feature story makes the reader feel what happened. We must have imagination to be a feature writer.

Feature stories tend to be descriptive, another element of the definition. News stories are supposed to be objective, which often precludes description. For example, the news writer would rarely describe the subject of a news story by height, weight, hair colour, and kind and type of clothing, unless that description was vital to the story. Yet the feature writer routinely uses this type of description. A kind of description, evoking imagery, is encouraged in a feature story. But it would likely be edited out of any news story.

A feature story must remain above all journalistic, in addition to being original and often descriptive. By that, the feature writer is expected to subscribe to the same standards of journalistic accuracy as the news writer. He or she must verify the information, quote accurately and be fair and precise with description. And the feature writer follows journalistic "style." Style is nothing more than a uniform approach to punctuation, capitalization, abbreviation, titles and, in some cases, spelling. Most American newspapers today have a fairly uniform journalistic style. At one time, however, newspaper reporters would have to master a local style every time they moved to a new newspaper.

In summary, a feature is subject to the same accuracy and style requirements as any other story in the publication. A feature story traffics in entertainment or information or both. It should also have entertaining moments, perhaps through examples or "anecdotes" told by the mechanic. However, there is nothing wrong with a feature that's very entertaining, with little valuable information. "Entertainment" in this context can mean an interesting, amusing—or moving—feature story.

A feature story, then, is significantly different from a news story. The feature has a beginning, middle and an end, and is intended to be read completely and edited with care. The feature can be written about almost anything, but commonly is written about an unusual person, place or activity. It is accurate,

usually filled with description and may be sheer entertainment, information-oriented or a combination of both.

NOTES**Check your Progress****3. What are the characteristics of good feature should be?**

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.....

2.4. Historical Features

These features commemorate important dates in history or turning points in our social, political and cultural development. They offer a useful juxtaposition of then and now. Historical features take the reader back to revisit an event and issues surrounding it. A variation is the date in history short feature, which reminds people of significant events on a particular date.

The historical feature is usually loosely pegged to a breaking news event, which gives the feature writer an excuse to do some research in the library and to show readers how their community or world has changed.

Newspapers provide a window into the lives of our ancestors through advertisements of popular products, 'gossip' columns, notices of births, deaths and marriages, long-forgotten news items pertinent to the day and even editorial comments reflecting community sentiments.

Components of Historical Features

There are following components of historical features :

Traditional Tales

- ◆ A simple beginning, series of events in the middle leading to a predictable ending
- ◆ Details and description support the plot
- ◆ The story is for telling and re-telling

Language Features

- ◆ A simple or traditional opening and end e.g. One day, Once upon a time, Long, long ago, and they all lived happily ever after; always keep your promises etc.
- ◆ Good and evil characters
- ◆ Characters are often foolish or play tricks
- ◆ Animals have human attributes e.g. bad wolves, silly sheep, cunning foxes, clever cats
- ◆ People are stereotyped e.g. princesses are pretty and need to be rescued, strong men are rescuers, stepmothers are evil etc.
- ◆ The number three is important e.g. three little pigs, three wishes, three fairies, three bears
- ◆ Magical or supernatural forces e.g. fairies, witches, animals or objects that can grant wishes
- ◆ Clear values e.g. honesty = goodness, riches = happiness, beauty = happiness, greed = badness
- ◆ Literal description e.g. Red Riding hood had a red cloak the little pig's house of straw etc.

Myths

- ◆ Myths are traditional stories told to explain natural phenomena e.g. How the tortoise got its shell, and religious beliefs e.g. How the world began

NOTES

1. Physical characteristics: Plot development rests on historical accuracy. Plot development rests on historical accuracy. Plot development rests on historical accuracy.

1. Facial features

- a. What features best give insight to the appearance? What features are distinguishing?
- b. Does he have a fine, delicate face, or a craggy face with a long chin and beaked nose?
- c. What is the color of his eyes? Their demeanor (sleepy, beady, probing, etc.)?
- d. What characterizes his mouth? Is it wide, thin, gaping?
- e. Are his cheeks high, puffed, hollow, bony?

2. Skin complexion

Is the texture chalky, tanned, chocolate, wan?

3. Hair color and style

- a. Is it thick and oily, thinning or receding?
- b. What color is it? Is it shiny, black? Carrot red?
- c. How does he wear it? Crew cut, parted, slicked down?
- d. Does he have facial hair? What kind?

4. Physical stature

- a. How tall is he?
- b. How much does he weigh? How is that weight distributed?
- c. Is he fit and muscular? Or is he "padded?"

5. Clothing (even if the person normally wears a uniform to work)

- a. What colors does he prefer? Does he tend to dress in dark-basics, bright solids, or pastels?
- b. Does he prefer a particular style?
- c. Does he normally wear a hat? Is it a 10-gallon cowboy hat, or a bowler?
- d. Does he wear a necktie? What kind - wide, narrow, bolo, dark or plain? A bow tie?
- e. What kind of shirt? Traditional, or brightly colored? Cufflinks?
- f. Jewelry? Is that jewelry symbolic, like a cross? Gaudy, like a diamond necklace?
- g. Eyeglasses or contact lenses? What kind/style?
- h. State of clothing: rumpled or well-pressed?
- i. Socks or stockings? What kind/color?
- j. What kind of shoes? Are they well-kept (polished or scuffed)?
- k. How about the fit of the clothes? Are they ill-fitting, perhaps indicating a weight loss/gain or careless shopping, or do they appear tailored?

6. Habits and mannerisms

- a. Does he smoke? How much? Cigarettes? Cigars? Pipe tobacco? Milds or regulars? Filtered or unfiltered? Kings or 100s? How does he hold the item? How does he inhale and hold the smoke?
- b. Does he have nervous ticks? Does he nod and jerk his head or tap his pen on the desk? Does he chew his lip or bite his fingernails?
- c. What does he do with his hands? Are they clasped, scribbling, "talking?"
- d. Does he squirm, or sit calmly?

2.5 Personality Features

A very common type of feature is the profile that reveals an individual's character. A very common type of feature is the profile that reveals an individual's character. A very common type of feature is the profile that reveals an individual's character.

practically anyone or anything. Of course, profiles are a very common type of feature. A very common type of feature is the profile that reveals an individual's character.

an understanding of how the person looks, words, and actions. A very common type of feature is the profile that reveals an individual's character.

of personality features. A very common type of feature is the profile that reveals an individual's character.

And it doesn't involve the use of any special techniques. A very common type of feature is the profile that reveals an individual's character.

The personality feature is a more specialized type of profile. A very common type of feature is the profile that reveals an individual's character.

other people's human nature. A very common type of feature is the profile that reveals an individual's character.

A good writer can capture a character's personality in a few lines. A very common type of feature is the profile that reveals an individual's character.

The writer can depict the subtle characteristics that make a person who they are. A very common type of feature is the profile that reveals an individual's character.

A personality feature is a more specialized type of profile. A very common type of feature is the profile that reveals an individual's character.

usually allows the writer to show the character's personality. A very common type of feature is the profile that reveals an individual's character.

away from the profile. A very common type of feature is the profile that reveals an individual's character.

To accomplish this, the reporter must be alert. A very common type of feature is the profile that reveals an individual's character.

templated it might take the form below. A very common type of feature is the profile that reveals an individual's character.

standardized checklist. Such a list can be used to help the writer. A very common type of feature is the profile that reveals an individual's character.

applicable to many subjects. Each. A very common type of feature is the profile that reveals an individual's character.

that the person is following a checklist. A very common type of feature is the profile that reveals an individual's character.

Rather, look at the checklist as an illustration of the need for accuracy. A very common type of feature is the profile that reveals an individual's character.

operator in our research. A very common type of feature is the profile that reveals an individual's character.

NOTES

7. Posture and bearing

- a. Does he slouch or sit/stand upright? Are his shoulders squared or slumped?
- b. Does he walk with his head down, or his back straight and his head held high?

8. Voice and speech pattern

- a. How does the voice sound – high and squeaky? Low and guttural? Husky? Gritty?
- b. Is the manner of speaking gruff or whining?
- c. Does the volume tend to be loud or soft?
- d. Is there a noticeable accent?
- e. How precise is his grammar? Does he speak in flawless grammar, normal conversational English, or does he misuse words, use slang and very poor grammar?
- f. What is his speaking pace – fast, rhythmic, slow?
- g. What is his style – flowery, blunt, rambling?

9. Overall physical impression

- a. Does he resemble someone famous?
- b. Does he appear to fit a classic occupational stereotype?
- c. Does the police chief look the image of an Irish policeman?

II. What is his personality?**1. Expression**

- a. How does he express himself verbally? Is he gruff or salty? Does he beat around the bush or come right to the point?
- b. How energetic is he? Is he nervous or calm by nature? Is he aggressive or lethargic?
- c. What is his temper? Does he rarely lose it? Does he have a short fuse?
- d. How does he generally interact with others? Is he somewhat shy and reticent? Is he pushy or domineering?
- e. Does he have a sense of humor? Is he fond of practical jokes? Does he laugh often at himself? at others?
- f. Is he self-confident? Does he boldly proclaim his views, even when unpopular? Does he appear arrogant or meek?
- g. Does his public image agree with his private character? Is he often grim and angry publicly, but good-humored away from the public eye? Or vice versa?
- h. How tenacious is he? Is he easily discouraged, or stubborn, perhaps bull-headed? Does he seem to enjoy battling long odds?

III. Intelligence and ability to cope**1. What his colleagues say**

- a. How do his co-workers, friends and enemies rate his professional competence?
- b. Is he considered brilliant or pedestrian?
- c. Is he the type of genius who forgets to tie his shoelaces? Can he carefully balance his office's budget, but leave his personal budget in shambles?

NOTES

- d. Does he have a sharp or photographic memory? Does he have to write notes to himself to remember even major items? Does he lose the notes regularly?
- e. Does he have a "natural" instinct that assists him in his job?

IV. Background

1. Bio stats as they apply to your story

- a. When and where of birth; parents' names?
- b. Dates and places where he has lived? Present residence?
- c. Education?
- d. Honors/awards?
- e. Spouse? Date of marriage? Children and ages? Family accomplishments?
- f. Highlights of childhood?
- g. Military service?
- h. Religious affiliations and activities?
- i. Chronological account of career?

V. Anecdotes/insight material

1. Amusing, informative or profound incidents/mileposts & observations from:

- a. The subject himself.
- b. Friends and family member.
- c. Co-workers and peers.
- d. Adversaries.

VI. Present status

1. What makes him of public interest?

- a. What, exactly, does he do?
- b. How does he do it?
- c. How do others rate his performance?
- d. What are the frustrations and rewards of his job?
- e. Is he happy about his function?
- f. Anecdotes about his job.

VII. Dreams

1. What he hopes to accomplish

- a. Is he doing what he always wanted to do? If not, what was his original dream?
- b. Is he ambitious? What are his ambitions?
- c. Philosophically, what does he hope to accomplish in life?

VIII. Surroundings

1. Where does he work?

- a. What does his office look like?
- b. Does he have symbolic knickknacks on his desk?
- c. Does he keep pictures of his family?
- d. Is his office/desk cluttered or fastidiously neat?

No newspaper or magazine would be complete without personality-driven feature stories. They're the insight-filled articles about our favorite celeb or the inspiring tale of one woman's refusal to say no when the rest of the community gave up on trying to eliminate gangs from the community. These two types of stories seem polar opposites, but what holds them together and defines them is the strong central character that creates the reason for the story to be told. Create our own personality feature story by learning everything there is to know about the unique subject we wish to write about, then craft our piece carefully so that each word is a reflection of that person's inner light.

- ◆ Get comfortable with feature writing style by reading lots of personality pieces in magazines and newspapers. Find a few that we like better than others and figure out why. We may be attracted to the way the story starts or the pace at which it moves. Perhaps we find the writer paints such a vivid portrait; we feel we know how the subject of the story thinks.
- ◆ Draw a clear distinction between the personality-driven and the action-driven story. Action driven stories pay less attention to thoughts, actions and reflections of people and focus more on the details. For instance, an action story takes a reader to a restaurant and describes the food and wine. A personality feature explores, in detail, the story of why the pastry chef gave up a promising career as a stockbroker to become a master baker.
- ◆ Decide what sort of approach we will take to research our article. We may wish to build the entire feature around a single interview with the subject or we may decide to interview others to determine what they think about the subject. Many writers use voice recorders. Others prefer pen and pad. Some use questionnaires to compare viewpoints of multiple interviewees.
- ◆ Go through all of our research and interview notes and look for one great quote or note that sums up our subject and has the ability to stand alone as a headline. For example, we take these words as a direct quote: "The woman doesn't know the meaning of the word 'no'." Our working headline might be: "Meet the woman who doesn't know the meaning of the word 'no'." It's descriptive, punchy and attention getting.
- ◆ Understand that all feature stories follow the same structural outline: an introduction, the body of the story and an ending that reaches some conclusion. Our conclusion may be that our main character is even more remarkable than we first imagined, or we might find out that there is a hidden side to their personality that begs to be revealed. Explore either to massage the story or finish a first draft.
- ◆ Head out into the world if we find our first story draft is too thin. We might need more research in the form of interviews or background data; alternately, we may wish to re-interview the subject of our story to fill in some blanks. This is pretty commonplace and requires diligence to get the story right.
- ◆ Add pacing and excitement to our story by sprinkling it with dialog. Direct quotes — both from the central character and/or the folks we've interviewed — bring personality-driven stories to life. Insert interesting anecdotes, endearing quirks and personal philosophies into the body of the story. At no time during this stage should we offer or acquiesce to appeals of the subject or others to see the unfinished draft.
- ◆ Write a second draft that accommodates new material and revisions. Experienced writers know not to file the first or second draft of a story — even when they're on deadline. This is the time to be ruthless about meeting time constraints by hunkering down and focusing on making final decisions on the text.

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- ◆ Before submitting, see if our story meets the personality-driven feature test: It should be lavished with descriptions, feelings, character flaws, accomplishments, dreams and comments that showcase the subject's persona. Action-driven feature stories may be rife with bends, twists and turns, but personality pieces reveal the true nature of the subject in such a way that readers feel they've grown to like or dislike the person based only on the assumptions drawn from our writing ability.

Check your Progress

5. Differentiate action-driven and personality-driven features.

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2.6. Summary

Often a news happening can be made much more interesting or newsworthy by being written in a semi-feature style. This is especially true of events that have already taken place and about which everyone knows. A news feature story differs from a human interest story in that the content of the news-feature story probably would appear in the paper as news whereas the content of the human interest story would not appear at all if were not for the interest created in the facts by the style of writing.

Informative feature story type does not use many of the fiction writer's devices, since its purpose is to inform more than entertain. It may be very closely related to the so-called "new journalism", which is explained in Topics for informative feature stories are much broader today that they once were when sub-feature were usually about clubs and extra-curricular events, customs, traditions, colleges and universities and their requirements, vocations, the curriculum, and the like. These subjects still are suitable for good features if handled interestingly, but today's press has extended itself include the world outside that very much interests readers. This type, to be interesting demands that the reporter include names, if at all possible, Human Interests elements, unknown or little known facts, intriguing incidents, and an interesting form and form and style and form with which they are presented.

2.7. Key Words

1. **Sidebar** : One type is the news feature, which usually is tied to a breaking news event, is placed in the same general location as the breaking story, and is often written under deadline pressure. This type of news feature is called a sidebar.
2. **Second-day feature** : A variation is a news feature that appears after the publication of the hard news story. Such a follow-up story is often called a "second-day" feature.
3. **Historical Feature** : Historical features take the reader back to revisit an event and issues surrounding it.
4. **Personality Feature** : A personality feature, also known as a profile, is an in-depth look at a person's lifestyle, characteristics, emotions, hobbies, appearance or just what makes the person tick.
5. **Informative Features** : This type does not use many of the fiction writer's devices, since its purpose is to inform more than entertain.

2.8. Answers to Check Your Progress

1. Feature stories are nonfiction pieces; they are journalism's equivalent of an assigned essay. Feature stories are classified broadly into two different kinds. They are as follows: News feature story, Informative feature story.
2. A news feature story differs from a human interest story in that the content of the news-feature story probably would appear in the paper as news whereas the content of the human interest story would not appear at all if were not for the interest created in the facts by the style of writing.

3. Good features should be interesting, and be supported by facts and direct quotes. A news story tells what happened but a feature story makes the reader feel what happened. We must have imagination to be a feature writer.
4. A simple or traditional opening and end e.g. One day, Once upon a time, Long, long ago, and they all lived happily ever after; always keep your promises etc.
5. Action driven stories pay less attention to thoughts, actions and reflections of people and focus more on the details. For instance, an action story takes a reader to a restaurant and describes the food and wine. A personality feature explores, in detail, the story of why the pastry chef gave up a promising career as a stockbroker to become a master baker.

NOTES

2.9. Terminal Questions

1. Explain the types of features.
2. Enumerate the features of News and Informative features.
3. Discuss the characteristics of Descriptive features.
4. Describe the characteristics of Historical features.
5. Examine the importance of *Personality features*.

2.10. Further Readings

1. Mass Communication; Keval J.Kumar
2. The News Paper - An international history; Anthony smith
3. Mass communication and journalism; D.S.Mehta in India.

UNIT - III

NEWS STORY AND FEATURE ARTICLE

Unit - III : News Story and Feature Article

STRUCTURE

- 3.0. Learning Objectives
- 3.1. Introduction
- 3.2. Distinction Between a Featurised News Story and a Feature Article
- 3.3. Feature Topics, Titles, Leads
- 3.4. Slant in Features
- 3.5. Planning a Feature
- 3.6. Importance of Human Interest Features
- 3.7. Summary
- 3.8. Key Words
- 3.9. Answers to Check Your Progress
- 3.10. Terminal Questions
- 3.11. Further Readings

3.0. Learning Objectives

After reading this unit, you will be able to

- ◆ Explain the difference between the news story and feature story
- ◆ Discuss the factors to be followed while writing the news story
- ◆ Examine the similarities and dissimilarities between the news and feature
- ◆ Describe the topic, title and leads of a feature
- ◆ Enumerate the slants in features
- ◆ Describe the planning of the feature
- ◆ Discuss the importance of the *Human Interest Features*

3.1. Introduction

Feature stories, while journalistic, are first and foremost stories, with beginnings, middles and ends. These stories—albeit with different characters in different circumstances—tend to recur so frequently that they can be divided into familiar categories built around topics of universal appeal. There are at least 15 widely recognized types of newspaper features and many more when individual variations within categories are considered. All can be either news or timeless features, with the exception of the “commemorative” feature, which is almost always tied to a breaking news event. Remember that while some categories are about things, people are more interesting. The effective feature writer will try to transform the “thing” feature into a “people” feature.

3.2. Distinction Between a Featurised News Story and a Feature Article

A news story informs us succinctly that, say, another fly has been trapped in a spider web. The feature article explores the circumstances of the entrapment in detail.

- ◆ Why do we know about the fly’s character? In other words, why did it fly so perilously close to a web?
- ◆ What was the lead-up to the incident? Had something provoked this risk-taking behaviour? Was the weather a factor?

NOTES

- ◆ What do we know about this particular spider's history as a fly killer?
- ◆ Was there anything unique about the shape or location of the web?
- ◆ What lessons can be taken from this tragic incident?

News Reporter

A news reporter lays out the facts of what happened and sometimes includes reactions from affected parties. The feature writer is more forensic. They probe deeper, spending more time on the 'how' and 'why' of what happened. If they fail to go beyond the facts reported in news (and sometimes this is very difficult) they probably haven't succeeded ... and probably won't be published.

By the way, both styles of writing are good skills for life whether we are a journalist or not. News articles answer who, what, when, where, why and how. This means that the article answers the question:

1. Who was involved?
2. What happened?
3. When the event occurred.
4. Where the event happened.
5. Why the event happened.
6. How the event occurred.

Feature Article

A feature article is much more creative. It also tells about a news event, however in the beginning of the article there is a smaller creative story leading in to the main story that article addresses. A newspaper article is where we discuss about what happened and what people said and then we add a conclusion, while a feature article has a cover story and then follows on in the magazine. It has quotes and endures picture and a big heading, so get artistic and make it flashy and noticeable.

Features can be defined as non-fiction stories written using the writing techniques of fiction. It is non-fiction stories because the text is created from reality, from information reported from real life situations and not created from material that exists only in the mind of the author. The content of a feature story is never imagined or created, although it may be treated imaginatively and creatively. Comparison between feature stories and news stories or deference between News Writing and Feature Writing are explained below.

Similarities

1. Like news stories, features also must be accurate in every detail
2. It must be based on real life and happenings, not on imaginary characters.
3. It must be written economically and clearly

Dissimilarity

1. Features are not done rigidly for a particular days dead line
2. Features are more casual, conversational, and cleverly written
3. It does not structure information in an inverted pyramid style.
4. Features have leads that may or may not be one paragraph
5. Features offer readers entertainment or the enjoyment of learning something new or experiencing something in a new way.
6. Feature stories often contain more quotations and even dialogues than news stories.

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7. Feature writer can put more of himself or herself in to a story. Where as in news stories, writers stay out of sight as much as they can.
8. Feature writer can put more of description of actions, description of people and description of places.

We write a feature in the same way we would write any essay, but most feature stories tend to have a more narrative style.

Here are some types of feature stories that we can write:

- ◆ Analysis - an investigation of how something works, or the reasons behind an event.
- ◆ Behind the Scenes - write about an event from the inside, using a viewpoint that the average reader will not ever get to see, such as back stage at a concert or inside the employees-only area of any business.
- ◆ Background - the history of a person, business, place, or event.
- ◆ Chronology - a listing of events in some sort of timely order.
- ◆ Color Piece - a detailed description of something to add more information, such as a detailed interview with a celebrity or a detailed description of an event.
- ◆ Expert Roundup - information from various experts about something.
- ◆ Fact box - a listing of facts about something.
- ◆ Fly on the Wall - writing about an event as if we were observing it; this is most often used for events that the average reader will never get to attend, such as closed courtroom trials and board-room meetings of big businesses.
- ◆ Full Texts - extracts of writing from another source, such as an excerpt from a popular book.
- ◆ In Disguise - a piece written using information that you got while disguised, such as getting a job as a waiter to write about the restaurant business, or pretending to be homeless to write about the welfare industry.
- ◆ Interview - a question and answer session with another person.
- ◆ Opinion Poll - The results of a poll or series of questions asked to many different people in order to get their opinions.
- ◆ Profile - a detailed description of a person, often including an interview.
- ◆ Testimony - a first-hand account of something.
- ◆ Review - an opinion piece rating something, such as a movie or book, product, or form of entertainment.

News writing and features are different styles of writing that we find in any publication around the world, whether they are newspapers, magazines or websites. There are many distinctions between the two sets of writing genres because they perform different functions.

The factors that determined whether an article is fit for news or features include: time, writing style, the writer, location and length. There are other differences but these are the main ones. When we learn how to write like a journalist, we would come across both types of writing styles. All journalists are expected to be competent at news writing and crafting features, though some do specialize, as we shall see later.

Time: News articles are time-dependent and must therefore be released as soon as possible after an event, speech, occurrence, interview or incident that has news value. Features, however, are more refined articles and are written to be timeless. For instance, if a runner breaks the 100 meters world record, the news should be sent out within minutes, if not seconds, after his achievement. One or two days later, it would no longer be news. However, a profile of the runner with his background, interests and life story would still provide interesting reading weeks or months after his record performance.

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Writing style: A news story is written fast and therefore uses simple, effective words, focusing on nouns and verbs to tell the story. There is no flowery content. All we find is straightforward sentences with words at a premium. Features offer we a bit more license to expand our writing with color, adjectives and vignettes.

The writer: Some writers are more comfortable bashing out news stories in a matter of minutes and struggle to sit down for more than half an hour writing long prose. Conversely, feature writers are more at ease processing their words before spending up to three or four hours writing their article. Sometimes, it is possible to tell when a news story has been written by a feature specialist, or vice-versa, just by looking at the first paragraph. Of course, we do have writers who are experts at both forms of writing.

Location: By location, we mean where in the publication we find the article. In a newspaper, we would have a section dedicated to feature stories while news articles can be found sprinkled throughout the publication. Magazines are made up mostly of feature-type articles while websites also have a section for features.

Length: A news story can be anywhere from one sentence to 600 words, though that is stretching it. News writing involves punchy articles that tell the story as soon as possible. Features are generally long articles that can exceed 2,000 words in a magazine. Features require more words because they go into more depth and personal detail than news stories.

Check your Progress

- 1. What is the difference between news and feature story?

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- 2. For what questions the news articles should answer?

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3.3. Feature Topics, Titles, Leads

Importance of Head and Title

Headlines or titles, illustrations, and names of authors are the three things that first catch the eye of the reader as he turns over the pages of a newspaper or magazine. When the writer's name is unknown to him, only the illustrations and the heading remain to attract his attention.

The "attention-getting" value of the headline is fully appreciated not only by newspaper and magazine editors but by writers of advertisements. Just as the striking heads on the front page of a newspaper increase its sales, so, also, attractive titles on the cover of a magazine lead people to buy it, and so, too, a good headline in an advertisement arouses interest in what the advertiser is trying to sell.

A good title adds greatly to the attractiveness of an article. In the first place, the title is the one thing that catches the eye of the editor or manuscript reader, as he glances over the copy, and if the title is good, he carries over this favorable impression to the first page or two of the article itself. To secure such favorable consideration for a manuscript among the hundreds that are examined in editorial offices is no slight advantage. In the second place, what true of the editor and the manuscript is equally true of the reader and the printed article. No writer can afford to neglect his titles.

Variety in Form and Style

Because newspapers and magazines differ in the size and the "make-up" of their pages, there is considerable variety in the style of headlines and titles given to special feature articles. Some magazine sections of newspapers have the full-size page of the regular edition; others have pages only half as large. Some newspapers use large eight-column display heads on their special articles, while others confine

their headlines for feature stories to a column or two. Some papers regularly employ sub-titles in their magazine sections, corresponding to the "lines," "banks," and "decks" in their news headlines. This variety in newspapers is matched by that in magazines. Despite these differences, however, there are a few general principles that apply to all kinds of titles and headlines for special feature articles.

Characteristics of a Good Title

To accomplish their purpose most effectively titles should be (1) attractive, (2) accurate, (3) concise, and (4) concrete.

The attractiveness of a title is measured by its power to arrest attention and to lead to a reading of the article. As a statement of the subject, the title makes essentially the same appeal that the subject itself does; that is, it may interest the reader because the idea it expresses has timeliness, novelty, elements of mystery or romance, human interest, relation to the reader's life and success, or connection with familiar or prominent persons or things. Not only the idea expressed, but the way in which it is expressed, may catch the eye. By a figurative, paradoxical, or interrogative form, the title may pique curiosity. By alliteration, balance, or rhyme, it may please the ear. It permits the reader to taste, in order to whet his appetite. It creates desires that only the article can satisfy.

In an effort to make his titles attractive, a writer must beware of sensationalism and exaggeration. The lurid news headline on the front page of sensational papers has its counterpart in the equally sensational title in the Sunday magazine section. All that has been said concerning unwholesome subject-matter for special feature stories applies to sensational titles. So, too, exaggerated, misleading headlines on news and advertisements are matched by exaggerated, misleading titles on special articles. To state more than the facts warrant, to promise more than can be given, to arouse expectations that cannot be satisfied—all are departures from truth and honesty.

Accuracy in titles involves, not merely avoidance of exaggerated and misleading statement, but complete harmony in tone and spirit between title and article. When the story is familiar and colloquial in style, the title should reflect that informality. When the article makes a serious appeal, the title should be dignified. A good title, in a word, is true to the spirit as well as to the letter.

Conciseness in titles is imposed on the writer by the physical limitations of type and page. Because the width of the column and of the page is fixed, and because type is not made of rubber, a headline must be built to fit the place it is to fill. Although in framing titles for articles it is not always necessary to conform to the strict requirements as to letters and spaces that limit the building of news headlines, it is nevertheless important to keep within bounds. A study of a large number of titles will show that they seldom contain more than three or four important words with the necessary connectives and particles. Short words, moreover, are preferred to long ones. By analyzing the titles in the publication to which he plans to send his article, a writer can frame his title to meet its typographical requirements.

The reader's limited power of rapid comprehension is another reason for brevity. A short title consisting of a small group of words yields its meaning at a glance. Unless the reader catches the idea in the title quickly, he is likely to pass on to something else. Here again short words have an advantage over long ones.

Concreteness in titles makes for rapid comprehension and interest. Clean-cut mental images are called up by specific words; vague ones usually result from general, abstract terms. Clear mental pictures are more interesting than vague impressions.

Sub-titles

Sub-titles are often used to supplement and amplify the titles. They are the counterparts of the "decks" and "banks" in news headlines. Their purpose is to give additional information, to arouse greater interest, and to assist in carrying the reader over, as it were, to the beginning of the article.

Since sub-titles follow immediately after the title, any repetition of important words is usually avoided. It is desirable to maintain the same tone in both title and sub-title. Occasionally the two together make a continuous statement. The length of the sub-title is generally about twice that of the title; that is, the average sub-title consists of from ten to twelve words, including articles and connectives. The articles,

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"a," "an," and "the," are not as consistently excluded from sub-titles as they are from newspaper headlines.

Some Types of Titles

Attempts to classify all kinds of headlines and titles involve difficulties similar to those already encountered in the effort to classify all types of beginnings. Nevertheless, a separation of titles into fairly distinct, if not mutually exclusive, groups may prove helpful to inexperienced writers. The following are the nine most distinctive types of titles: (1) label; (2) "how" and "why" statement; (3) striking statement, including figure of speech, paradox, and expression of great magnitude; (4) quotation and paraphrase of quotation; (5) question; (6) direct address, particularly in imperative form; (7) alliteration; (8) rhyme; (9) balance.

In writing a good title for a feature story, we should take time to plan, think, and strategize. The title is oftentimes the most overlooked part of a feature story, when in fact it is at times as important as the lead or introduction. It is actually the very first material our readers will encounter, because the title is written above the lead. In print media, titles or headlines are the initial magnet that draws people into reading, so writing a good title for a feature story is also as critical as writing a good and effective lead.

Here are some tips in writing a good title for a feature story:

- ◆ Make sure our title is still connected with the topic or the thoughts, ideas, and facts presented in a feature story. Do not put "just any title." Some writers have this tendency to rush the writing of their title since they think it less important. Sometimes they write it during the last minute, just before handing in their feature story to their editors, teachers, professors, or feature writing contest judges, and therefore having only a little time in conceiving and conceptualizing a good and effective one.
- ◆ The title for a feature story could be likened to the lead, so make it strong and interesting enough that it will draw our readers' attention.
- ◆ Playfully connect our title with the topic of our feature story.
- ◆ Present our title with a tinge of ambiguity.
- ◆ Use our wits in thinking of a good title that matches our feature story's topic.
- ◆ Writing a good title for a feature story includes wits, skills, time, organization, planning, and an ample amount of thinking and pondering.

Feature Lead

Professional writers understand that leads are crucial to an article's success: once they have the information they need, writing pros may require only a couple hours to draft a feature article – but developing the lead may consume a day or two of cogitation and research. Leads deserve the writer's time and best efforts; they are the results of rumination time well-spent.

1. Tell a story

Get the reader involved in a brief narrative that leads to the principal point you wish to make in your article.

2. Cite a surprising statistic or trend

"If trying to target the online community with our marketing efforts has felt like aiming a crossbow at a barn swallow, consider this: more people created Twitter accounts in 2010 than did all Twitter users in the prior three-and-a-half years. But a study at the end of 2009 found that about 25 percent of accounts having no followers and about 40 percent of accounts having never sent a single Tweet. Now where do you aim?"

3. Find a new twist to a common phrase or expression to make our point:

"Winners never quit – they get fired from their TV show. You may not be as vital to your organization as you think you are."

4. Relate our lead to a topical cultural or political theme:

“Watching events unravel in the Middle East, one could only conclude that Egypt’s leaders suffered from far more than a tin ear when listening to the hundreds of thousands of protestors outside their doors. They totally failed to realize the power of the people (a resurgent phrase reminiscent of the ’60s) until it was too late for them to do anything about it.

“While the dissolution of a dictatorship and the ascent of democracy are to be celebrated on the geopolitical scene, the course of events in Cairo should serve as a lesson for brand marketers and corporate leaders here in America.”

5. Make a strong, even audacious declaration:

“Advertising used to be simply a distraction. At some point it became just plain intrusive. But today, it’s often downright sneaky and even self-destructive. When every company invades the consumer’s space, some marketers reason, it’s not enough simply to interrupt the consumer. By their logic, advertisers need to sneak up on their target and covertly grab their attention, their lapels and their wallets. The fact is that businesses are committing brand suicide with these tactics.”

6. Contradict conventional thinking:

“Agencies and marketing companies typically draw a bead on the big, well-known brands when they’re hunting for new business. The big names look great hanging on the wall, and they add spice and substance to the agency’s resources. But Target may not always be the best target; Dove or Deere may not always be your most handsome trophy.”

Check your Progress

3. Why the title is important to an article?

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4. What is the role of a Lead in a feature story?

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3.4. Slant in Features

Unlike flavours of ice cream, there are only two basic kinds of newspaper features. One type is the news feature, which usually is tied to a breaking news event, is placed in the same general location as the breaking story, and is often written under deadline pressure. This type of news feature is called a “sidebar,” in that it is a “side” article that accompanies the main news story. A variation is a new feature that appears after the publication of the hard news story. Such a follow-up story is often called a “second-day” feature.

The other basic kind of feature is the timeless story, which does not have to be used immediately in the newspaper and can sometimes be written leisurely over a period of two or three days or even weeks or months. The news feature is perhaps a little less common than the timeless feature in most American newspapers. This may be because the news feature often results in at least two stories on a given event: the news, or “cover,” story and its news feature. Two stories, of course, mean the editor will have to find twice as much space and commit twice the staff time to coverage of a single event. At many newspapers where space and personnel are at a premium, editors are often reluctant to make that decision. In addition, feature stories, because of their use of description and detail, are often very difficult to write under deadline pressure. Thus, because of space, staffing and time problems, many editors are prone to ignore feature angles on breaking local stories.

For example, assume you are the editor of a small-town afternoon newspaper. Your deadline is about noon. A school bus filled with children on a field trip crashes at about 9:00 A.M., and you learn about the accident shortly before 10:00 A.M. You could easily assign a reporter to the story, which could gather

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the facts by telephone and have the news story written by noon. However, if you want a sidebar feature about the crash—perhaps a personality profile of the heroic bus driver who pulled injured children from the wreck—the story would be far more difficult to write by the noon deadline because it would probably require an interview with the driver, who might not be immediately available by telephone. In addition, the thorough feature writer would want to see the crash site firsthand and interview witnesses as well as surviving children. That means more time. All of this would be difficult for one reporter to accomplish by the noon deadline and probably would require assigning a second reporter to write the feature.

A good editor would assign the second reporter to do the feature if a reporter were, in fact, available. If the editor lacked personnel, the available reporter could write the news story for deadline and the feature for publication on the following, or second, day of the coverage. It is also possible, of course, to write a news feature about a continuing news event and to publish that feature on a day when there is nothing about the main event in the paper. For example, if gasoline prices have been skyrocketing for the past few weeks, it might be appropriate to research and write a feature about the expense of getting a gallon of gasoline from the well to the neighbourhood service station.

Here's another example. A child is bitten by a rabid skunk. A feature writer is assigned to do a story on the medical treatment required for humans who have been exposed to rabies. This story might follow the original news story by four, five or even more days. Both of these examples, however, are generally known as second-day stories. The other basic type of feature, the timeless feature, is described by just what the words imply—a story frozen in time. Like frozen food, the timeless feature will keep for a long time without spoiling. A timeless feature might be written in early March and held for April or even May before it is published.

The careful feature writer, of course, will check back with the subjects of the story before it is published to ascertain that no facts have changed since the interview. In most instances, nothing will have happened. In other cases, ages or addresses will have to be updated. In rare instances, feature writers will find that major changes will have occurred, perhaps even including the death of the featured subject or of others in the story. The news feature and the timeless feature have a number of characteristics in common. They are original, both in form and subject matter. They both use description to give them life. They are held to tight journalistic standards of accuracy. They inform or entertain, and sometimes they do both. In short, they both fall within the definition of what a feature story is supposed to be.

In addition, news and timeless features share at least one other characteristic: They are popular with readers. Many studies have shown that readers of general-circulation newspapers tremendously enjoy well-written features. And a feature story with a photograph is an almost unbeatable recipe for high readership because studies have shown that pictures also have extremely high readership value. And in that sense, feature stories are a lot like ice cream. Few ice cream lovers are neutral about a hot fudge sundae smothered with rich, foamy whipped cream and capped with a blushing cherry. And few newspaper readers are neutral about a well-written, anecdotally rich, professionally illustrated news or timeless feature.

3.5. Planning a Feature

The concept is to write something like a non-fiction short story: quotation-filled, descriptive, entertaining, informative. First, it needs to do some research check the newspaper library for previous stories about the subject. Story will be even stronger if a nationally or an internationally recognized source is used. Beginning reporters working for small-circulation dailies are expected to be able to write both news and feature stories. Often a reporter's first months on the job may consist of even more feature writing than weighty news writing, until a "beat" is assigned or the reporter otherwise gains the confidence of the editor.

Feature writing, then, is a crucial weapon in the arsenal of writing talents required of the professional print journalist, particularly now, when broadcast news also is focusing more and more on such popular stories. A feature story is a journalistic article that is typically both original and descriptive. Some feature stories are geared toward entertainment with little information. Other features inform, but entertain little. The best combine both aspects.

NOTES

A feature story is original in two ways. First, it is original in respect to the way it is written. News stories are commonly written in what is called the inverted pyramid style. This rigid form, which evolved about the time of the American Civil War, demands that a story begin with a one-paragraph lead of one or perhaps two sentences summing up the essence of the story. The lead is short, typically less than 35 words. The rest of the story is written in a declining order of importance, with information proceeding from the most important to the least important.

The Inverted Pyramid made sense during the Civil War because stories often were filed using telegraph lines, which could be disrupted at any time. In that situation, it obviously was a good idea first to send a summary—or what journalists today call the lead of the story—and then to transmit the rest of the story with information in a declining order of importance. The inverted pyramid style of news-writing makes even more sense today, for two reasons. First, readers can quickly scan the story by reading the lead and perhaps a few additional paragraphs. Second, busy editors can cut lengthy news stories simply by removing less important material from the bottom of the story. Unlike the news story's inverted pyramid style, the feature story's form is more fluid. Feature stories probably date to the beginning of world journalism, but they began to assume their modern form in the United States in the "penny press" of the 1830s. They most strongly resemble short stories in structure. For example, they have distinct beginnings, middles and ends. Feature stories, unlike news stories, aren't intended for the scan-fling reader. They must be read completely in order to make sense. They also must be edited carefully by removing various sections from throughout the text, rather than just from the end. Features are also original because they can be about virtually any subject that falls within the realm of "human interest," unlike news stories, which presumably are written only because they cover newsworthy events.

Check your Progress

5. Define Inverted Pyramid Style.

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3.6. Importance of Human Interest Features

Human interest obviously means what "interests" people and a good rule of thumb is that anything that interests the feature writer and the editor is also likely to interest a substantial number of readers. Human-interest stories can be about both "people" and "things," but journalists know that "people" stories typically are more interesting and are more often read than are stories about "things." For that matter, stories about unusual events are more interesting than stories about usual events.

In journalism, a human interest story is a feature story that discusses a person or people in an emotional way. It presents people and their problems, concerns, or achievements in a way that brings about interest or sympathy in the reader or viewer.

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, or profile of someone known for a career achievement.

Human interest stories are sometimes criticized as "soft" news, or manipulative, sensationalistic programming. Major human interest stories are presented with a view to entertain the readers or viewers while informing them. Terry Morris, an early proponent of the genre said she took "considerable license with the facts that are given to me." Although this could be considered a strategy, it has been referenced as a successful method of persuasion.

The purpose of a human interest feature is to engage readers emotionally. Human interest is a very broad feature category. Basically, any feature topic that can interest people is considered a form of human interest feature. Human interest features are written to inform, entertain or involve readers emotionally. Immediacy, in human interest features, is replaced by reader interest.

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3.7. Summary

A feature article is much more creative. It also tells about a news event, however in the beginning of the article there is a smaller creative story leading in to the main story that article addresses. A newspaper article is where we discuss about what happened and what people said and then we add a conclusion, while a feature article has a cover story and then follows on in the magazine. It has quotes and endures picture and a big heading, so get artistic and make it flashy and noticeable.

Features can be defined as non-fiction stories written using the writing techniques of fiction. It is non-fiction stories because the text is created from reality, from information reported from real life situations and not created from material that exists only in the mind of the author. The content of a feature story is never imagined or created, although it may be treated imaginatively and creatively.

3.8. Key Words

1. **Features** : Features can be defined as non-fiction stories written using the writing techniques of fiction.
2. **Title** : Headlines or titles, illustrations, and names of authors are the three things that first catch the eye of the reader as he turns over the pages of a newspaper or magazine.
3. **Human Interest Story** : Human interest story is a feature story that discusses a person or people in an emotional way.
4. **Lead** : A lead is the first sentence in an article, it's purpose is to grab our attention and draw us into the story.
5. **Subtitles** : Sub-titles are often used to supplement and amplify the titles. They are the counterparts of the "decks" and "banks" in news headlines.

3.9. Answers to Check Your Progress

1. A news story informs us succinctly that, say, another fly has been trapped in a spider web. The feature article explores the circumstances of the entrapment in detail.
2. News articles answer who, what, when, where, why and how. This means that the article answers the question: Who was involved? What happened? When the event occurred? Where the event happened? Why the event happened? How the event occurred?
3. A good title adds greatly to the attractiveness of an article. In the first place, the title is the one thing that catches the eye of the editor or manuscript reader, as he glances over the copy, and if the title is good, he carries over this favorable impression to the first page or two of the article itself.
4. Professional writers understand that leads are crucial to an article's success: once they have the information they need, writing pros may require only a couple hours to draft a feature article but developing the lead may consume a day or two of cogitation and research. Leads deserve the writer's time and best efforts; they are the results of rumination time well-spent.
5. A feature story is original in two ways. First, it is original in respect to the way it is written. News stories are commonly written in what is called the inverted pyramid style.

3.10. Terminal Questions

1. Explain the difference between the news story and feature story.
2. Discuss the factors to be followed while writing the news story.
3. Examine the similarities and dissimilarities between the news and feature.
4. Describe the topic, title and leads of a feature.

5. Enumerate the slants in features.
6. Describe the planning of the feature.
7. Discuss the importance of the Human Interest Features.

3.11. Further Readings

1. Mass Communication; Keval J.Kumar
2. The News Paper - An international history; Anthony smith
3. Mass communication and journalism; D.S.Mehta in India.

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UNIT - IV
REVIEWING

Unit - IV : Reviewing

STRUCTURE

- 4.0. Learning Objectives
- 4.1. Introduction
- 4.2. Basic Principles and Do's and Don'ts of Reviewing Books, Stage Plays and TV Programmes
- 4.3. Summary
- 4.4. Key Words
- 4.5. Answers to Check Your Progress
- 4.6. Terminal Questions
- 4.7. Further Readings

4.0. Learning Objectives

After reading this unit, you will be able to

- ◆ Understand the importance of reviewing in Journalism
- ◆ Explain the role of reviewers in the field of Journalism
- ◆ Describe the basic principles of reviewing the books
- ◆ Discuss the Do's and Don'ts when reviewing the stage plays
- ◆ Examine the rules to be followed while reviewing TV programmes

4.1. Introduction

The purpose of reviewing is to catch and filter out obvious vandalism and obviously inappropriate edits on articles under pending changes protection, a special kind of protection that permits anonymous and newly registered editors to submit edits to articles that would otherwise be semi- or fully protected under one or more of the criteria listed in the protection policy.

Reviewers do not take responsibility for the correctness of edits they accept. A reviewer only ensures that the version of the article visible to a casual reader is broadly acceptable. The reviewer checks the pending change(s) for an article and can then decide to accept it, revert it or modify it then later accept it. Reviewers are not expected to be subject experts and their review is not a guarantee in any way of an error-free article. They are expected to have a reasonable editing history, distinguish what is and what is not vandalism, and be familiar with basic content policies. Reviewer rights are granted by administrators; and in cases of misuse of the right or to protect Wikipedia from possible misuse, the rights can be removed by an administrator after a community discussion has taken place. The permission can also be removed at the request of the user, or the arbitration committee.

Film criticism is the analysis and evaluation of films, individually and collectively. In general, this can be divided into journalistic criticism that appears regularly in newspapers and other popular, mass-media outlets and academic criticism by film scholars that is informed by film theory and published in academic journals.

4.2. Basic Principles and Do's and don'ts of Reviewing Books, Stage Plays and TV Programmes

Review Books

Many writers have the feeling that the book critics hardly read their books before writing the reviews.

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They believe that the critics write their reviews only by reading the blurb and the few descriptive sentences inside the dust jacket. But this is not always correct. Of course, the authors sometimes do get this impression that either due to less space in the newspaper or due to the critic being overworked, a very sketchy review of their book is published.

There are generally three types of book reviews published in the newspapers:

1. Firstly, there is the essay type. It is a review that is comparatively longer written by an authority on the subject.
2. The second is a short review, which is given once a week in the review column by a reviewer who reviews a number of books.
3. The third is a sort of feature article that is put together from the contents of the book without giving any detailed judgment on it. A reporter generally writes this in the manner of a news story.

Hundreds of books get published every week. An author should be quite elated if even a small mention of the book is made in the book review column which usually gets published once a week. When a reviewer has been assigned more than one book on the same subject, he would usually review the most outstanding work in the beginning and comment upon others in the tail end. Usually, the new titles are sent to the newspaper offices a month or so before the official date of publication. A slip is also sent along with the book on which the title of the book, the name of its publisher, the name of its author, price of the book and the official date of the publication.

Book review should not be done in a superficial manner, but the reviewer should read the book thoroughly and give his opinion frankly in an objective and responsible manner. Both official reviews and unofficial consumer reviews are vital to a book's launch into the market. Readers are becoming more and more dependent on reviews of all kinds when choosing which books to buy, and bookstore buyers tend to look at a book without reviews as less professional—but, of course, it depends on how the reviews are handled.

Review Plays

Many a time, the critic can mould or sway public opinion regarding shows favourably or unfavourably even as it is staged in a city for the first time. It is said that a critic can make or break a new show on its inaugural staging or premier screening on the first day. The star-cast of every theatrical staging aspires to know the comments they have received in the press. There is no doubt that the critic wields a considerable power as far as failure or success of a theatrical show is concerned.

A critic should remember the given points while filing his comments:

1. He must keep in mind the audience for whom he is writing and what they are likely to enjoy.
2. He should maintain widely accepted norms and standards of rating the performance levels and accordingly adjudge if the show can be classified as good or bad.
3. He must highlight the finer points and aspects of the performance of a new show in clear terms, so that the readers can know whether they will enjoy it or not.
4. A critic should try to know not only the tastes of the refined class and the art fraternity but also the liking of the masses.
5. He should be able to comprehend the intricacies of both, a tragedy as well as a comedy, and thereby rate the show weighing all the aspects and nuances of art.
6. He should always mark the performances of amateurs and professionals and amateurs from different perspectives because amateurs cannot be judged by the same yardstick that is used to judge professionals.
7. A critic should not be swayed by his word spinning power and personal prejudices. He should not attempt to destroy a play by adverse comments merely to demonstrate his power.
8. The criticism should be objective, well balanced and honest.

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The critics of national newspapers have to work very hard. They are required to see a number of performances which, at times, can come up to one per night the whole week through in the prime season. After every performance, they have to rush to write their comments, so that the same appear in the next day's newspaper.

Generally, special shows of new films are screened for the media and film critics. Every national newspaper hosts a special column for film criticism, which is generally published once or twice a week, and especially on weekends or Sundays. When a particularly noteworthy film is released, a critic may be asked to review the film. There is a little difference between a theatre is a live performance in which a different mood and effect may prevail in every performance. Sometimes, even the leading players may be replaced. On the other hand, the film remains the same for every show, as it is a completely finished product. That is, a film show remains the same, even if it is seen after months or years.

A film critic should remember the following points:

1. He must be able to understand and assess various techniques of film making like acting, direction, photography, story line, locations etc.
2. The film critic should be aware of the productions of famous directors and producers.
3. He should also be conversant with the famous actors and actresses.
4. He should give a true assessment of a film, which should be objective and clear cut.
5. He can also inform his readers whether a film is average, below average, mediocre or excellent.
6. He should give a brief description of the story of the film, discuss the quality of music and rate the acting of individual actors and actresses.

Contemporary radical filmmakers and theorists have constructed a political aesthetic out of their response to the work (plays, films, theoretical and critical writings) of Bertolt Brecht and Jean-Luc Godard. This aesthetic identifies art as a form of ideology whose principal function is to make the capitalist social formation seem natural. The convention of Realism is the main instrument for performing this function. As part of its struggle against the naturalization effect, Marxist art has to oppose Realism. To do so it needs to produce an art that is self-reflexive and foregrounds form. Such an art demands active and critical audiences, not the passive ones demanded by Realism.

This political aesthetic emerges out of an analysis of the failure of revolutionary politics in the capitalist countries of Western Europe, the United States, and Japan in the period since the end of the Second World War. The analysis draws on a well-known characterization of these as affluent societies. It argues that capitalism's increased productive capacity over the past thirty years has led to the development of consumption as a major social process. By making available an enormous range of commodities (washing machines, television sets, frozen food, long-playing records, pocket calculators, jogging suits, Kleenex, electric toothbrushes, package vacations, etc.) the mass of people are encouraged to regard themselves as passive consumers. Consciousness of their role as active producers is suppressed.

Mass media like cinema and television play a central role in this process. The nature of the cultural commodities they offer (soap operas, variety shows, documentaries, advertisements, news programs, pop music shows, comedy series, feature films) and the framework they are offered in immeasurably adds to people's sense of themselves as consumers not producers.

The analysis is made distinctive when it is joined with Louis Althusser's philosophical account of ideology. The social world is constructed ideologically around the concept of the subject. People think of themselves as subjects in the active sense of the word, unique centers of consciousness who control their own destiny. In fact, they are subjects in the passive sense, products of a structure which generates their consciousness and controls their destiny.

Television Review

Writing a television review can be challenging, yet fun. A television writer must know the guidelines for writing a review, which are usually given before the assignment is provided. The company will send us these guidelines and then send us the television listings they want us to research, read and review in our own words. Learn how we can write a great television review.

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- ◆ Start by watching the television shows we need to review. Watch as many episodes that we can and start taking notes on the topic of suggestion, the theme and the genre of the television show. Take note of how we feel while watching the show.
- ◆ Scribble down points about the television show. Write down the situations that happen in the television show, and note if it is a comedy, a sci-fi or a drama show. Figure out if there is a captivating topic in each episode, and decide which audience and age group it appeals to.
- ◆ Compile a draft review of the assigned television assignment and write down what things we like and what we do not like. Analyze the characters and practice describing them. People want to know how we feel about the characters in the show.
- ◆ Ask ourselves if we would like to watch this television show and if it makes us want to watch more. Decide if we like the way the show is introduced to the audience and if it keep us intrigued and interested.
- ◆ Format our television review by writing down our personal feelings about the show and then write about the pros and negatives of the television show. People like to know the bad and good side of a show they might or might not watch. Give them an opinion from both sides and tie it up in the end with our overall opinion.

Check your Progress

1. What are the three types of book reviews in a newspaper?

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2. What will be the reviewer do, when he assigned to review more than one book?

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3. In what manner a book review should be done?

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4. What are the duties of critics of national newspapers, while reviewing stage shows?

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5. State the role of mass media in reviewing stage plays.

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4.3. Summary

Many writers have the feeling that the book critics hardly read their books before writing the reviews. They believe that the critics write their reviews only by reading the blurb and the few descriptive sentences inside the dust jacket. But this is not always correct. Of course, the authors sometimes do get this impression that either due to less space in the newspaper or due to the critic being overworked, a very sketchy review of their book is published.

Many a time, the critic can mould or sway public opinion regarding shows favourably or unfavourably even as it is staged in a city for the first time. It is said that a critic can make or break a new show on its inaugural staging or premier screening on the first day. The star-cast of every theatrical staging aspires

to know the comments they have received in the press. There is no doubt that the critic wields a considerable power as far as failure or success of a theatrical show is concerned.

Writing a television review can be challenging, yet fun. A television writer must know the guidelines for writing a review, which are usually given before the assignment is provided. The company will send us these guidelines and then send us the television listings they want us to research, read and review in our own words. Learn how we can write a great television review.

4.4. Key Words

1. **Reviewing** : The process of reviewing is intended as a quick check to ensure edits don't contain vandalism, violations of the policy on living people, copyright violations, or other obviously inappropriate content.
2. **Reviewers** : Articles with pending changes applied can be reviewed by administrators or users called reviewers who hold the reviewer permission.
3. **Film Criticism** : Film criticism is the analysis and evaluation of films, individually and collectively.
4. **Book** : A book is a set of written, printed, illustrated, or blank sheets, made of ink, paper, parchment, or other materials, usually fastened together to hinge at one side.
5. **Stage Plays** : A play is a form of literature written by a playwright, usually consisting of scripted dialogue between characters, intended for theatrical performance rather than just reading.

4.5. Answers to Check Your Progress

1. Short review, essay type and feature article are the three types of book reviews in a newspaper.
2. When a reviewer has been assigned more than one book on the same subject, he would usually review the most outstanding work in the beginning and comment upon others in the tail end.
3. Book review should not be done in a superficial manner, but the reviewer should read the book thoroughly and give his opinion frankly in an objective and responsible manner.
4. The critics of national newspapers have to work very hard. They are required to see a number of performances which, at times, can come up to one per night the whole week through in the prime season. After every performance, they have to rush to write their comments, so that the same appear in the next day's newspaper.
5. Mass media like cinema and television play a central role in this process. The nature of the cultural commodities they offer (soap operas, variety shows, documentaries, advertisements, news programs, pop music shows, comedy series, feature films) and the framework they are offered in immeasurably adds to people's sense of themselves as consumers not producers.

4.6. Terminal Questions

1. State the importance of reviewing in Journalism.
2. Explain the role of reviewers in the field of Journalism.
3. Describe the basic principles of reviewing the books.
4. Discuss the Do's and Don'ts when reviewing the stage plays.
5. Examine the rules to be followed while reviewing TV programmes.

4.7. Further Readings

1. Mass Communication; Keval J.Kumar
2. The News Paper - An international history; Anthony smith
3. Mass communication and journalism; D.S.Mehta in India.

UNIT - V
PHOTO-FEATURES

Unit - V : Photo-Features

STRUCTURE

- 5.0. Learning Objectives
- 5.1. Introduction
- 5.2. Photo Features
- 5.3. Freelance Journalism
- 5.4. Scope and Approach to Freelancing For Newspapers & Magazines
- 5.5. Summary
- 5.6. Key Words
- 5.7. Answers to Check Your Progress
- 5.8. Terminal Questions
- 5.9. Further Readings

5.0. Learning Objectives

After reading this unit, you will be able to :

- ◆ Describe the characteristics of Photo features
- ◆ Explain the nuances of Freelance journalism
- ◆ Discuss the attributes and functions of freelancer
- ◆ Examine the scope and approach to freelancing for newspapers
- ◆ Examine the scope and approach to freelancing for magazines

5.1. Introduction

A photofeature is also called a *photo essay*. As the name suggests it is a story or an essay on a subject told using photographs. It can be done on anything that is photographed, a place or person etc.

You may have come across photofeatures in magazines on certain interesting issues. How does a photo-journalist work on a photofeature?

A photofeature is generally conceived at the desk of the editor of the magazine or newspaper who will brief the photo editor about it.

Now who is a photo editor? A *photo editor* is the overall in charge of the photo section in a newspaper or magazine. He chooses the photographer and discusses the topic. He may also choose a reporter who will write the story around the photo essay. It is also the job of the photo editor to decide and select on the best pictures that convey the whole story.

You have already learnt that a single picture is worth a thousand words". Therefore a good photo essay which comprises of few very nice pictures will have a greater impact on its viewer than the best written essay.

Let us consider the example of a photo feature that will be based on a family and attempts to list five photographs which shall introduce them to others. If there are parents, their daughter, and grandparents in the family you may have the following photographs:

- ◆ Group photo of the whole family having a meal together.
- ◆ father leaving for work.
- ◆ mother preparing food in the kitchen

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- ◆ daughter coming home from school
- ◆ grandparents watching television.

These are the few photographs that will make a brief photo essay on the above family. Of course there may be many other interesting pictures that could be taken. In this unit, we will focus on various aspects of photo features.

5.2. Photo Features

Photo feature is the emphasis of the feature is on the photographs instead of the written material.

The definition of feature is that it can provide a visual effect and information for the average person. It provides the news to the reader with some sense of understanding the story. Feature can also introduce something very positive balance news that deals with the negative side of the news. Also, feature photography has been viewed all over the world.

There seems to be a lot of confusion about the content that fits the category of feature photo, in both amateur and professional Photojournalism competitions. Although most working photojournalists say they know a good feature photo when they see one, even they have a hard time defining it.

One national press competition specifies, "Un-posed shots with eye-catching subject matter and storytelling qualities that can elicit an emotional response from the viewer." When the topic arose again recently on the National Press Photographers Internet discussion, one award-winning staff photographer defined it as "photos that celebrate life," and another said it was "a 'slice of life' that could catch the reader's attention." A group of staffers who had recently judged a newspaper contest commented that there seemed to be a lot of incorrectly categorized entries with subject matter that missed "the true spirit of what defines a feature photo, which is the capture of an exceptional moment within a common, everyday occurrence."

A professor emeritus of photojournalism at a major university proclaimed that "news is the information needed to be an informed citizen; a feature photo has no compelling 'news' reason to run, but can illustrate a positive life moment, completely un-staged."

So, if a feature photo is one with no actual "news" reason to run, and "news" means information needed to be an informed citizen, then a feature photo simply captures a nice moment within the culture, or a happening that illustrates quality of life in some sense. While these events may not be important individually, cumulatively they portray the quality of life within the culture. And "culture" covers everything in our individual and collective lives. Feature can introduce something positive to balance news that deals with the negative and, for the media to present a complete report on the culture, it is important along with straight news.

Feature is one of the three major categories of photos captured by working news photographers, the other two being news and sports. This was the reason for including these three sections in the Photojournalism Division (PJD) annual Published Picture of the Year contest for its Ollie Fife award, even though news represents a relatively small percentage of amateur photojournalism due to more limited opportunities. When PJ exhibitions began attracting mostly sports action shots, the PJD attempted to encourage feature entries by introducing a human-interest medal and eventually establishing human-interest sections in PJ exhibitions.

Eventually, because this category was frequently misunderstood, it was defined as, "an image depicting a person or persons in an interactive, emotional or unusual situation, excluding sports action." It should be noted that a shot fitting this definition, even if taken in a sports environment, is eligible as human interest, whereas a traditional sports winner usually shows the peak of action or captures an exciting moment, hopefully with a storytelling facial expression.

Check your Progress

1. Define Photo Feature

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2. What are the three types of Photo?

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5.3. Freelance Journalism

Freelance journalism is one of the more hectic forms of freelance writing. If we want to become a successful freelance journalist and get many freelance journalism jobs, we'll need to be comfortable with spending much time hunting down stories, traveling from place to place, and writing under short deadlines. If we enjoy all of that, and if we're interested in some of the best opportunities for personal creativity, then freelance journalism may be for us.

A freelancer, freelance worker, or freelance is somebody who is self-employed and is not committed to a particular employer long term. These workers are sometimes represented by a company or an agency that resells their labor and that of others to its clients with or without project management and labor contributed by its regular employees. Others are completely independent. "Independent contractor" would be the term used in a higher register of English.

Fields in which freelancing is common include: music, journalism, publishing, screenwriting, filmmaking, acting, photojournalism, cosmetics, fragrances, editing, photography, event planning, event management, copy editing, proofreading, indexing, copywriting, computer programming, web design, graphic design, website development, consulting, tour guiding, video editing, video production, translating and illustrating.

Freelance practice varies greatly. Some require clients to sign written contracts, while others may perform work based on verbal agreements, perhaps enforceable through the very nature of the work. Some freelancers may provide written estimates of work and request deposits from clients.

Payment for freelance work also varies greatly. Freelancers may charge by the day, hour, a piece rate, or on a per-project basis. Instead of a flat rate or fee, some freelancers have adopted a value-based pricing method based on the perceived value of the results to the client. By custom, payment arrangements may be upfront, percentage upfront, or upon completion. For more complex projects, a contract may set a payment schedule based on milestones or outcomes.

In writing and other artistic fields, "freelance" and its derivative terms are often reserved for workers who create works on their own initiative and then seek a publisher. They typically retain the copyright to their works and sell the rights to publishers in time-limited contracts. People who create intellectual property under a work for hire situation are sometimes referred to as "independent contractors" or other similar terms. They have no copyright to the works if they are "works made for hire," a category of intellectual property defined in U.S. copyright law – Section 101, Copyright Act of 1976. This is the opposite of the situation with a regular employee; the relationship between a freelancer and a client is one between two business equals. The protections of the intellectual property rights that naturally vest in the creator of the work are considered to have been sold in toto in a work for hire agreement.

Check your Progress

3. List down the fields which include in Freelance Journalism.

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4. Write about the payment for the freelancers.

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5.4. Scope and Approach to Freelancing For Newspapers & Magazines

Newspaper journalism involves a much narrower range of subject matter than magazine journalism, significantly shorter articles, and a greater focus on form; this is the nature of many freelance journalism

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jobs. Typical newspaper articles follow a hierarchical format: the most pertinent information first, the least pertinent last.

The scope for journalism jobs in the world is more and it can as well be done from home as a freelancer. The main areas of job opportunity are in magazines and newspapers and these two are considered to be a main source for journalism even after the internet has happened to prevail a lot in the economy.

Mostly all the local and national newspapers use freelance journalists, on an improvised basis or on standard basis. In most of the meetings or any major events we can find more number of journalists all around. By taking into account the newspaper selling capacity, we will be able to arrive at a decision that still it is a promising industry and this is a suitable place for the journalist to promote their skills and to earn good money. So in this case freelance journalism has started to become popular, which in turn helps the people who have the passion for this job. Only fixation necessary for journalism are hard work and determination.

In the world of internet, most of commercial websites cover almost all the areas. The scope for journalism is more in this field as a good website always look for the content. List the specialty and skills in the websites which will help to make a path in the individuals' career. Editor or a webmaster is the deciding authority in this field and it is necessary to show the sample works and make them impress.

Some of the ways through which the journalism can be explored, are as follows:

- ◆ First and foremost is to begin freelancing from the school, college or university journals. Gain knowledge and work experience by working in a local newspaper or television channel or radio channels. This may depend on the choice of the individual whether to go in for print journalism or broadcasting.
- ◆ Form a network with other professional in the same field, to discuss things and be in touch with today's economy. They can also join online websites or any discussion forums, or freelance groups.
- ◆ Check for any opening through job portals or newspapers on a regular basis and subscribe to any of job magazines.
- ◆ Register the profile and sample writings in job portals and ensure to update often. Be specific to enter the interested or specialized area of work.
- ◆ Be a member of journalists associations. Most of the associations hold a website which will be helpful for the members and they charge a minimum amount of fees for it.
- ◆ Work as a freelancer to any of the news agencies to gain experience and before doing so, check whether they pay for it.
- ◆ Often try to attend workshops or seminars, which will help to meet many people and help to get to know things and will get exposure to those kinds of meetings.
- ◆ The resume of a journalist must be in such a way to explain his skills, specialized field, ambition and suitable for this kind of job etc. which make an impact on the employer or the client. In this field it is necessary to be careful about the copyright, as many of the publications assign the journalists rights only to them, which will not allow the journalist to work with any other publications.

A freelancer, of course, has the freedom to write for any number of newspapers, magazines, and on any subject. He may write on economics, sports, business, industry or any topic of human interest. He may write for one newspaper or journal on one subject, or for another on quite a different subject. Sometimes, a freelancer who contributes to some newspaper or magazine regularly becomes a popular person. A regular contribution is called a 'column' because it occupies a set space in a newspaper.

Undoubtedly, for an unknown freelancer, it is very difficult to earn his livelihood from journalism itself. Those who move to freelance writing after serving on the staff of some famous newspaper or magazine are in a much better position, because, while in service, they come to know the working of the newspapers thoroughly and can also develop very good contacts within the media. They may not have much difficulty in selling their articles. This is a fact that a freelance journalist has to struggle very hard in the beginning to establish himself or herself in highly competitive profession.

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A freelance journalist cannot afford the time and effort to write an article without prior demand on the chance that it may be accepted by some or the other newspaper, because, if by chance that article is not accepted, it will be a sheer waste of his resources, labour and time. He has to write such as are readily accepted by editors, so that he does not have to starve. For this purpose, he must know the requirements of each newspaper and magazine, so that he can write articles and features that are acceptable to them.

A freelancer must try to have good contacts with the editors of newspapers and magazines as well as with those who have the authority to accept his articles. He must also write continuously so as to keep himself in the public eye all the time. A freelancer should never depend only on one magazine, newspaper or periodical, because if he keeps all his eggs in the same basket, then he may face a lot of financial hardship, when that single source no longer needs him.

A freelancer should keep the latest addresses and telephone numbers of the important newspapers and magazines handy. He should try to have regular contacts with the concerned people of those magazines. He must have a systematic schedule of working. Being a freelancer does not mean that he should waste his time in an irresponsible manner. On the other hand, he must utilize every minute of his time to the best of his abilities, as his time is highly valuable. He should allot sometime for researching new information and writing his articles, and sometime for maintaining his contacts with the newspaper media.

A freelancer has more scope and demand in magazine journalism than in daily newspapers, because the magazines are generally understaffed and most of the articles and features they publish are invited from outsiders. The magazines are always on the lookout for good and readable articles of general human interest. If a freelance journalist can offer them well-written, accurate and well-researched articles according to their requirements, then he might be in a position to develop extremely cordial, rewarding and fruitful relations with them. But he must deliver his articles before the deadline set by the editors of these magazines.

Check your Progress

5. Write down the scope for freelancers in journalism in the world.

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5.5. Summary

Freelance journalism is one of the more hectic forms of freelance writing. If we want to become a successful freelance journalist and get many freelance journalism jobs, we'll need to be comfortable with spending much time hunting down stories, traveling from place to place, and writing under short deadlines. If we enjoy all of that, and if we're interested in some of the best opportunities for personal creativity, then freelance journalism may be for us.

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5.6. Key Words

- Column** : A freelancer who contributes to some newspaper or magazine regularly becomes a popular person. A regular contribution is called a 'column'
- Freelance Journalism** : Freelance journalism is one of the more hectic forms of freelance writing.
- Freelancer** : A freelancer, freelance worker, or freelance is somebody who is self-employed and is not committed to a particular employer long term.

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4. Newspaper Journalism : Newspaper journalism involves a much narrower range of subject matter than magazine journalism

5. Freelance Journalist : A freelance journalist is essentially a writer who is not attached to any newspaper or journal.

5.7. Answers to Check Your Progress

1. Feature photo is one with no actual "news" reason to run, and "news" means information needed to be an informed citizen, and then a feature photo simply captures a nice moment within the culture, or a happening that illustrates quality of life in some sense.
2. Feature is one of the three major categories of photos captured by working news photographers, the other two being news and sports.
3. Fields in which freelancing is common include: music, journalism, publishing, screenwriting, film-making, acting, photojournalism, cosmetics, fragrances, editing, photography, event planning, event management, copy editing, proofreading, indexing, copywriting, computer programming, web design, graphic design, website development, consulting, tour guiding, video editing, video production, translating and illustrating.
4. Payment for freelance work also varies greatly. Freelancers may charge by the day, hour, a piece rate, or on a per-project basis. Instead of a flat rate or fee, some freelancers have adopted a value-based pricing method based on the perceived value of the results to the client. By custom, payment arrangements may be upfront, percentage upfront, or upon completion. For more complex projects, a contract may set a payment schedule based on milestones or outcomes.
5. The scope for journalism jobs in the world is more and it can as well be done from home as a freelancer. The main areas of job opportunity are in magazines and newspapers and these two are considered to be a main source for journalism even after the internet has happened to prevail a lot in the economy.

5.8. Terminal Questions

1. Describe the characteristics of Photo features.
2. Explain the nuances of Freelance journalism.
3. Discuss the attributes and functions of freelancer.
4. Examine the scope and approach to freelancing for newspapers.
5. Examine the scope and approach to freelancing for magazines.

5.9. Further Readings

1. Communications; Ahuja, B.N
2. Introduction to mass communication; Ault, Edwin emery
3. Mass communication - principles and practices; cassata , mary B