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ABSTRACT

Intended for use by high school journalism instructors and school newspaper and yearbook sponsors, this booklet contains articles dealing with various elements of feature story writing. The first article describes the development of a set of criteria by the Journalism Education Association (JEA) for teachers to use in evaluating feature stories, and offers suggestions for using the criteria in the classroom. The second article explains how to use the criteria in a class that combines journalism instruction and the production of the school newspaper, while the third discusses the various patterns feature stories can take. The fourth article presents several ways to use quotations effectively in a feature story, and the fifth explains how features can make a yearbook exciting. The booklet also contains a copy of the JEA feature story evaluation guidelines and examples of various drafts of student feature stories, revised according to the evaluation criteria. (HTH)

# Feature writing

## in high school newspapers and yearbooks

Produced by the Washington Journalism Education Association
Dorothy McPhillips, president
Fern Valentine, editor

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## Inside —

# Feature criteria becomes guide for teaching and evaluating

by Fern Valentine

Feature stories are hard to write and harder yet to teach students to write. Unlike news stories which have who, what, where, when, why and how and the good old inverted pyramid to latch onto, feature stories can take many forms However, because of infrequent publication, school newspapers need to be loaded with feature treatment for all kinds of stories. Therefore, last summer journalism teachers at the annual Washington JEA workshop set to work on the problem.

Our task was to create a set of criteria for evaluating feature stories that could also serve as a guide for teaching them. Chuck Blondino from Educational School District 121 helped coordinate the sessions since he teaches a class on the Diederich method of evaluation that was sort of a model for the whole idea.

Some 15 years ago Paul Diederich, then Executive Vice President of Educational Testing Service, wrote an article on assessing student writing for the English Journal He advocated that standardized tests were an inadequate procedure for writing assessment; instead, schools should develop rating procedures which 1) identify key elements of writing and which 2) assign comparative point weighting to each of the key elements The value of the approach would be that teachers would use a common language, have a common assessment system and students would be able to determine why their themes were acceptable or unacceptable The last is, of course, much more useful in the improvement of writing than an arbitrary grade

Taking the Diederich scale for theme writing and revising it to fit features, the teachers set out to devise a list of the characteristics of an excellent, a fair and an unacceptable feature story

Teachers were asked to take the criteria back to their classrooms and try them out before a follow-up meeting to revise the criteria. At that meeting the final nine criteria were decided.

## Use of criteria in classroom

In my Beginning Journalism class I found the criteria to be an exciting teaching tool. I devised a unit on feature writing based on the criteria. First, I introduced and explained the list Students worked in groups and with partners evaluating feature stories printed in their textbook. The students discussed each point and compared answers until they had a thorough working knowledge of what an excellent feature story was like and what things made another mediocre or unacceptable.

I then gave them copies of stories that had appeared in our school paper, the Troy Invoice, to evaluate. Their evaluations had the double value of helping them assimilate the criteria and giving feedback to the reporters on newspaper staff.

When students began writing feature stories of their own, the criteria was used in each step of planning and writing their stories. This saved hours of individual conferencing as well as providing a vocabulary and reference points to direct their work. Just knowing that they had to focus on one central idea helped students organize their questions and interview notes. Often they found that an interesting interview could lead to a change in focus and a new central idea. The major advantage was that they realized they had to stick to one idea and not try to do everything in one story. Sidebar stories became a natural outcome of this process.

Using the criteria list as a guide, the teacher can set up a series of deadlines such as for central idea, interview questions, research completion, lead, etc. that will keep the students on task and prevent procrastination. These early deadlines also enable the teacher to catch students who are off track before they get to the first draft stage. Having a specific task such as writing interview questions or comparing leads, makes use of class time more valuable as well. Students can often work with partners or in groups helping each other evaluate their writing at each stage, although they are only graded on whether they meet the deadline or not at the early stages.

The criteria were used for self-evaluation of first drafts, group evaluations of second drafts and teacher evaluation of final drafts. The students were divided into groups of three or four students. Each group had some strong writers in it. These student groups evaluated the early drafts and made suggestions for determining the score in each category

Students could deal easily with criticism since no grade was going to be involved until the final copy was turned in.

All drafts and worksheets were turned in with the final copy so that I could see how students coped with criticism. The final drafts were real revisions since a deficiency in research would lead to the need for more interviews.

Almost always leads and endings needed rewriting, and if the central idea couldn't be located, a student had to begin over. Organization scores led to rearranging paragraphs and clearer transitions. The students found that they had definite areas defined that needed work and found revising became more than just correcting mistakes.

Students saved their grading sheets and reread them before they began future stories Having experienced evaluating stories in Beginning Journalism will also help these students train for future editors who will be able to communicate rewriting ideas better to their reporters.

The Feature Criteria can provide another way to teach feature stories and can provide opportunities for self-evaluation that are not only valuable learning experiences for the students, but time-savers for the teacher.

**The feature criteria and the student worksheet follow. Teachers are invited to duplicate them for use in their classrooms. Examples of student writing begin on page 10.**

## About the author . . .

**Fern Valentine has been advising the CSPA Medalist rated Troy Invoice at Auburn High School, Auburn, WA, for eight years. She is a former officer and workshop director of WJEA. A strong advocate of student-run publications, she teaches a Beginning Journalism class and advises a separate production class run by the editor. At the JEA convention in Anaheim, CA, her students took fourth place in Sweepstakes in the on-the-spot writing contests although they only had entries in eight of the 16 contests. The Troy Invoice editor took first in feature writing. Valentine will present a workshop on use of the feature criteria at the JEA spring convention in San Francisco.**

# Use varies in combination class

by E. Ann Marchbank

Not all teachers of journalism are as fortunate as Fern. Many fall into the same category I do here at Tyee. In other words, they only have one period in which to both teach journalism skills and produce a newspaper.

The feature criteria can still be used effectively in this type of setting. Once I introduced the feature story, I introduced the criteria and explained what was meant by each statement. It helped immensely to point out parts of past articles written by Tyee journalists to illustrate most items. The students do need to see examples (written by past students or published in texts) which illustrate the criteria items.

All writers include a criteria checksheet in their notebook for reference. The editors are required to memorize the criteria so that when they edit, they can make appropriate remarks to writers who need to improve certain facets of their articles. If the editors spot someone having trouble in several areas, they notify me so that the student can be given individual help.

The use of editors in this manner frees me to work closely with students who have serious problems. In a skill/production news staff, much teaching has to be done on a one-to-one basis. Material is presented quickly and practice is far too limited before we are into putting out our first paper and each succeeding paper. There will always be those students who do not catch on as quickly.

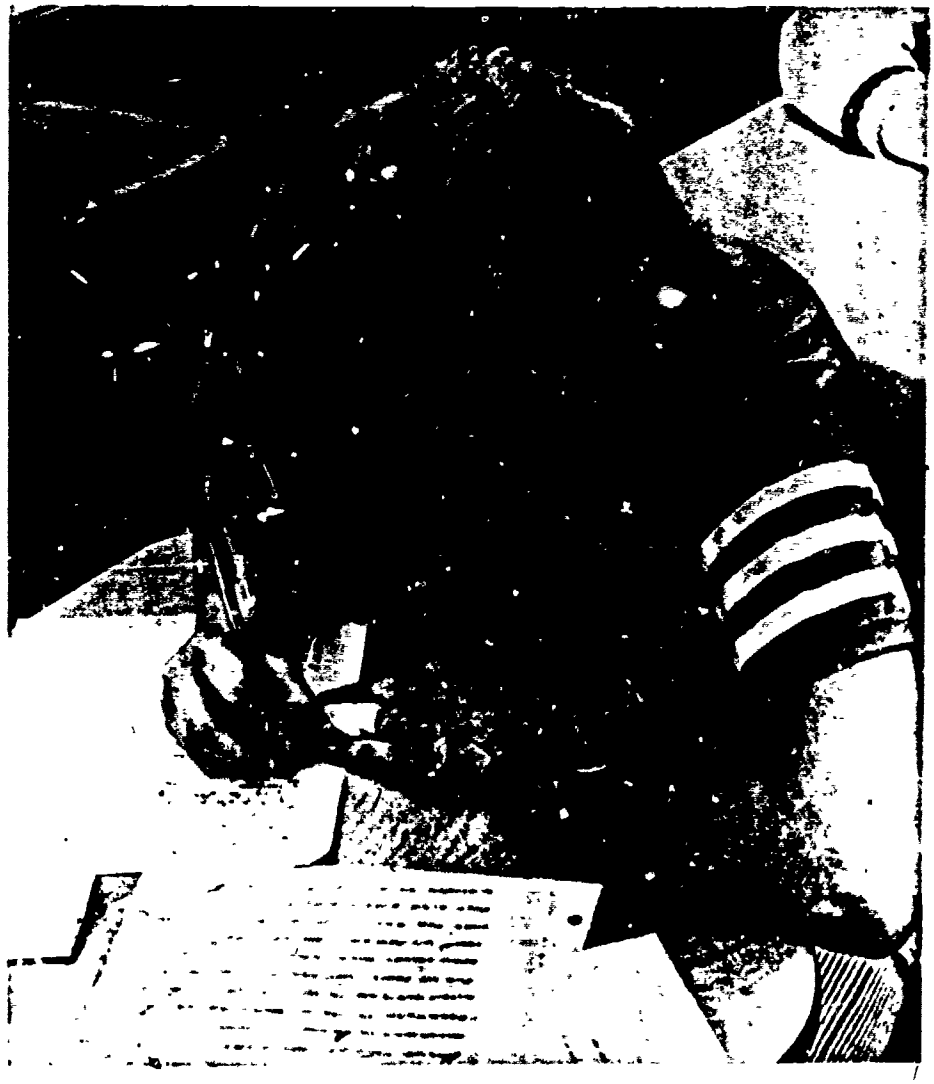
For those students, I prefer to sit down and discuss their article using the original copy of the criteria. On it I have circled the rating and explanation. I then point out the exact problems in their feature, stressing the ideal we are working toward.

This is only one more method of using the criteria. Each teacher will have to experiment with various ways of adapting them to fit their own style of teaching. I strongly feel, however, that if used in whatever way you do adapt them, you will find them to be an asset to your program, and your students' feature stories will improve.

## Editors are required to memorize the criteria . . .

## About the author . . .

E. Ann Marchbank is in her second year of newspaper advising although she has been teaching for more than 16 years. She advises the Tyee Signal at Tyee High School in the Highline District just outside of Seattle. She teaches a combined production/instruction class to 27 students grades 9 through 12. Despite the difficulty of putting out a paper and learning basic journalism at the same time, her students have won several writing awards.



Editors can use the criteria worksheets to aid reporters in rewrites.

## CRITERIA FOR FEATURE STORIES

These criteria will fit any type of feature story and are not intended for use with editorials, reviews, and columns, although some aspects are applicable.

5 - excellent 3 - fair 1 - unacceptable

### I. CENTRAL IDEA

5 Story focuses on best central idea with an identifiable angle and is limited to significant facts, relevant to audience.

3 Story generally sticks to central idea, but wanders occasionally from angle.

1 Story has no clear central idea, or angle, is not relevant to audience.

### II. RESEARCH

5 Uses first hand interviews. Relates subject matter to local area. Reflects sound interviewing techniques and attributes information or opinion to sources. Anticipates audience concerns and selects and develops important points.

3 Reflects interviewing but lacks indepth quotations. Some attempt at localizing. Leaves some obvious questions unanswered. Attributes some information to sources.

1 Summarizes some sources without attribution. No localization of subject matter. No first hand interviews. Develops unimportant points and/or irrelevant material. Directly includes reporter's opinion.

### III. WORD CHOICE

5 Selects words to add color and life. Uses appropriate person and active voice. Uses correctly a combination of direct and indirect quotations choosing significant statements to quote directly. Chooses words appropriate to audience.

3 Words are generally appropriate to audience and topic. Direct quotes are sometimes used when indirect would be clearer and as interesting. Uses orphan or buried quotes. Some attempt at color and life Few cliches or trite statements are used.

1 Words are often dull or inappropriate for audience. No significant quotes are used. Includes reporter in the story by using question/answer format or phrases such as "When asked . . . " Uses inappropriate person or passive voice.

### IV. ORGANIZATION

5 Appropriate sequencing of ideas; divides topic effectively into paragraphs that are short; effective from beginning to end; length appropriate to topic.

3 Understandable sequencing of idea, usually divides topic effectively into paragraphs, adequate movement from beginning to end.

1 Faulty or inadequate sequencing of ideas; does not use paragraphing successfully; inadequate movement from beginnning to end; length inappropriate for topic.

### V. LEAD

5 Uses lively lead with "hook" that creates an angle. Avoid rhetorical questions as opening statement

3 Introduces topic but no "hook" for reader attention.

1 Uses abstract question as a lead ("Have you ever wondered . . .?") Does not introduce topic. Uses trite, or cliche opening.

### VI. ENDING

5 Leaves reader with a finished feeling without summarizing. Ending is essential and often ties back to lead "hook."

3 Summarizes story.

1 Leaves reader in the air.

### VII. GRAMMAR, USAGE, SENTENCE STRUCTURE, AND PARAGRAPHING

5 Uses correct grammar, complete sentences and conventional subject/verb, pronoun/antecedent agreement. Uses clear syntax, appropriate modifiers and a variety of sentence forms. Usage is clear and acceptable. Uses paragraphs that are generally short, but varied in lengths Begins paragraphs with a variety of word choices.

3 Usually uses clear syntax, appropriate modifiers and a variety of sentence forms. Some errors in usage. Little variety in paragraph length or beginnings, but generally uses short paragraphs.

1 Writes run-on or fragmented sentences. Misplaces modifiers. Makes serious errors in subject/verb, pronoun/antecedent agreement. Does not vary sentence forms. Consistently fails to observe usage convention. Uses long paragraphs with repetitious beginnings.

### VIII. CAPITALIZATION, PUNCTUATION, AND SPELLING

5 Uses all punctuation according to standard usage correctly. Uses apostrophes in contractions and o show possession. Uses quotation marks correctly and places other punctuation marks correctly in direct quotations. Makes no spelling errors.

3 Usually uses all punctuation according to standard usage correctly. Uses quotation marks in direct quotations, but sometimes misplaces other punctuation in direct quotes. Makes few spelling errors.

1 Does not use correct punctuation consistently. Misuses quotation marks and other punctuation in direct quotes. Makes many spelling errors.

### IX. STYLEBOOK

5 Abbreviates, hyphenates, capitalizes and uses titles as indicated in the stylebook. Uses stylebook - preferred choices.

3 Usually abbreviates, hyphenates, capitalizes and uses titles as indicated in the stylebook. Usually uses stylebook - preferred choices.

1 Does not abbreviate, hyphenate, capitalize or use titles as indicated in the stylebook or often even as in standard English usage Does not use stylebook - preferred choices.

*(Developed by the Washington Journalism Education Association)*

Story _____ by _____

Evaluated by _____

_____ I. Central Idea

Why?

Suggestions:

_____ II. Research

Why?

Suggestions:

_____ III. Word Choice

Why

Suggestions:

_____ IV. Organization

Why?

Suggestions:

_____ V. Lead

Why?

Suggestions:

_____ VI. Ending

Why?

Suggestions:

_____ VII. Grammar, Usage, Sentence Structure, and Paragraphing.
Identify words, sentences and paragraphs that need work on copy

_____ VIII. Capitalization, Punctuation and Spelling
Identify errors on copy

_____ IX. Stylebook
Identify errors on copy

# Time makes a difference . . . but feature patterns not exclusive

by Dorothy McPhillips

Specific and exclusive patterns of feature stories do not exist but overlap. There are many kinds of feature stories and many combinations For the beginning adviser a breakdown of some of the more traditional kinds with some basic terms or definitions might aid in teaching students to recognize possibilities both in reading the daily newspaper and in writing for their school newspaper. But first a look at the differences between the straight news story, the news-feature and the feature story is necessary.

The feature story differs from the straight news story because of one single element, time. A feature story can be printed anytime, but a news story must be printed today for news is perishable. Stories with leads pinpointing "today," "last night," "yesterday," or "Wednesday" in Tuesday's or Thursday's paper must be printed or the leads re-written changing the time element Straight news written for today's edition if not used must be re-written for tomorrow's paper

Not so the feature story It depends on other factors and can be printed anytime.

The news-feature, however, has a news peg, something that links the subject or the person to a timely event. Such are the stories about seasonal holidays with historical relationships and background material which explains the holiday and links it to the present.

Tom Rolnicki, NSPA director, in a recent Minnesota High School Press Association newsletter, encourages the use of news-features as an answer to stale news coverage caused by infrequent publications.

"Timeliness is more loosely defined in news-features to mean current — not necessarily today, yesterday or last week Thus the news-feature may be linked in time to an event that occurred a year ago," Rolnicki writes.

High school newspapers carrying a story on the prom playing up an interview with the queen on what it's like to be elected to royalty are running news-features There may be a straight news story on the coming prom and a "color story" or "sidebar" on what it's like to be elected queen Both would be considered news-features because as stories they are wholly dependent upon the student body's interest related to the prom and would hardly be carried six months before or after the prom

The news story can be developed into a news-feature or a feature story but seldom the other way around News-features often become plain feature stories when the time element is lost. For example, note how the news story becomes a news-feature and then a feature story.

1) A news story runs in tonight's paper on how an adviser wins recognition and is presented with an award at last night's banquet It carries all of the five W's but the fact that the presentation was made at last night's banquet makes it a news story.

2) A **news-feature** on the presentation of the award is carried weeks later in a local paper and the emphasis is placed on the reason the award was given. The story has lost its timeliness, but is linked to the award which was presented.

3) A feature story is carried months later on the adviser, delving into the background, experience and personality of the adviser and the award is just one of the items mentioned. The story has no time element. It is no longer a news-feature but a feature story.

Some news-features may be more feature than news, depending upon human interest or humor or pathos involved in the event.

"A short, featurized account of the arrest of bungling burglars contains a news element because a burglary is a major crime. But the comedy of errors leading to the burglar's arrest provide the opportunity to render the facts in feature writing style, emphasizing the human follies and not the crime." (*Feature Writing for Newspapers*, Daniel R. Williamson)

Any of the following could be news-features if they are developed because of a news-related event. In other words, if they are connected to a time element, they would be news-features; without the time element, they are feature stories.

The **Human Interest Feature** tugs at the heartstrings It has an emotional impact, gripping the reader with feelings of love, hate, fear, curiosity, pity or concern. It has general interest but no great news value It might be simply funny

"Human interest stories get into the newspapers because of their oddity, their pathos, their entertainment value rather than because they contribute significantly to knowledge of ongoing community life." (*Reporting*, Charnley)

The **Human Interest News-Feature** has one difference. It is news-related, either with an immediate event or one of current interest

The **Sidebar** is usually strong in human interest and serves to supplement a major news story with something more than the facts Therefore, the Sidebar should be considered a news-feature because it is news-related.

The **Personality Feature** deals with an individual, often one who is or has been in the news, is in public life, the entertainment world or a specific field of endeavor of interest to the reading audience. An example is Rod Vahl's story on Peter Sturtevant, Jr , National News Editor, in April/May Quill and Scroll. A personality feature paints a picture of an individual, his or her lifestyle, experiences, success and/or failure. It's a people story where the reader should be able to see the subject without the reporter getting in the way

In school newspapers, personality stories are often developed about the student body president or classmates who are doing unusual things. such as training for the Olympics, sky diving, working as candy stripers and graduating early.

To be avoided are personality features which are fill-in-the-blank type of interviews often recognized in the "student or teacher of the week" stories in school newspapers.

A personality feature story on students graduating early and printed close to the end of the term would be a **Personality News-Feature** because it would be news-related

An **Informative Feature** can be on any subject and is basically information without interpretation. It can tell of some event or some development in detail giving additional information and background material to aid the reader in understanding events. It can detail problem areas and point out trends in society, schools, business and religion It might be the "how to" article, also.

High school newspapers carry informative feature stories on the change in styles, problems with drugs, discipline,

## About the author . . .

**Dorothy McPhillips, WJEA president, received one of the 1981 National Scholastic Press Association Pioneer Awards, which recognizes contributions to school publications and journalism education. She has served as both first and second vice president of the national JEA, as president of Orange County JEA and California state representative-at-large, before returning to her home state of Washington to work with WJEA. McPhillips retired from teaching at R.A. Long High School in Longview, WA, in 1980.**

educational innovations and career planning to name a few. An **Informative News-Feature** is developed as the result of a timely student body survey with the results printed in the next publication.

The **Interpretative Feature** goes a step beyond the informative feature and involves the use of both commentary and background material. In the metropolitan newspaper, it is often labeled "analysis." The writer is identified and if the story presents opinion, it is known to be the reporter's. Since most features carry bylines, this no longer denotes specifically the reporter's opinion within a story. Therefore, interpretative features would be better carried on the opinion pages and labeled interpretation or analysis. The **Interpretative News-Feature** aids the reader in understanding complicated news events. In the high school it might be an explanation which interprets what a change in attendance or discipline policies which have just been announced will mean to the students.

An **In-Depth Report** can also be a feature story. It gives the background of an event or topic, presents the problem, the implications and might even suggest some possible solutions. It is recognized by its length and the detail in the story. It requires a great deal of research, many interviews and good analytical thinking on the part of the reporter. It often runs in a three-part series. Drop-outs dropping back in, shoplifting, career planning, runaways are some topics possible for in-depth reporting on the high school level. The In-Depth Report can also be news-related and developed as a news-feature.

The **Color Story** is essentially a descriptive story which attempts to put the reader firmly into the setting or experience it is describing. Making the reader involved in the story through the use of the senses, both audible and visible, is the goal of the reporter. The Color Story can also be a news-feature when linked with a time element, which often is done when describing the crowd at the homecoming or the bonfire before the game, as well as the changes in seasons, or the mood of the student body during a motivational assembly.

# Quoting effectively makes the feature

**by Dorothy McPhillips**

The use of quotes, both direct and indirect, is an important part of feature writing. Getting the quote is one thing but using it effectively is another.

Direct quotes add life to a story when they begin a paragraph and are not buried deep within. It is *almost always* better to begin with a quote than the source. Quotes and sources should be handled in such a way that the reader knows immediately who is being quoted. For example, this:

"Clothes are like cars," says Gregg Zacky of Palisades High. "People project their own image of themselves through what they wear and what they drive."

Not this:

Gregg Zacky of Palisades High says, "Clothes are like cars."

A new paragraph should begin with the direct quote as in the following. It's easily marked when copyreading for the printer to make the change.

Steve Cohan, a varsity football player at Granada Hills High School doesn't mind the floor plan in stores as much as the prices. He says he's solved the problem by making some of his wardrobe do double duty. "I take my little brother shopping with me, we're getting close to the same size. So we sometimes buy something we both can wear. We have a money allotment for clothes," explains Cohan.

Avoid the unnatural break that splits the sense of the quote. This:

"Nobody dresses quite the same," says Cohan, "and I think everyone accepts you for who you are, not what you wear."

Not this:

"Nobody dresses," says Cohan, "quite the same."

It is necessary to introduce the source only once in a block of continuous quotes — at the first natural break. It is wrong to sprinkle re-introductions through a continuous quote and to wind up the final paragraph with, "We're competing with them," he concluded.

If running quotes are interrupted in any manner, however, the source should be re-introduced when the quotes pick up again.

The following over-identifies the source with a direct and indirect quote in one paragraph. It would be better separated into two paragraphs, one beginning with the direct quote.

At Granada Hills, there is no peer pressure to dress a certain way, says Cohan, though the athletes do tend to dress up more than other students. "The ski look is popular right now but dressing is pretty individualized at our school," says Cohan, who models layered tops and pleated pants from The Broadway, Sherman Oaks. "Nobody dresses quite the same."

Avoid the editorial "we," "our," "us" in anything but direct quotes. For the indirect quote make it this: Spellman said another vehicle is needed to improve the economy of *this* state. Not this: Spellman said *we* need another vehicle to improve the economy of *our* state.

The best word to use when hanging a statement on a source is the word "said." Don't worry about repeating it for it seldom interrupts the reader's flow of information, but does provide a check on the source. Avoid the stiff-necked "stated" which implies a formal statement, and watch out for many verbs which hold editorial connotations such as "asserted" and "charged."

Always in the news story and sometimes in the news-feature specific information is needed on the circumstances surrounding direct and indirect quotes. The readers need to know whether the remarks were made in an interview, a press conference, a speech, a radio or TV appearance, a statement, or a letter to a friend of family.

But too often high school journalists create a dulling effect on a story by using "when asked." While the reader needs to know the circumstances surrounding the information, seldom is it of any interest to the reader to know that the reporter asked the question. This also puts the reporter in the story. Simply say what the interviewee said; don't tell the reader you asked the question. It's a challenge to work the information into a story without using "when asked."

When advisers encourage staff members to get significant quotes and evaluate their work on that basis, it is also important to teach them an effective way to use them. The Associated Press Stylebook or a chapter from a basic journalism textbook on the proper use of quotations should be a part of every high school journalism course.

# Features make yearbooks exciting

by Barbara Nilson

To see a thing, one must look at that thing long. One must BE that thing . . . and so it is in creating copy for yearbooks.

Creativity comes from being curious and expressing that interest in an exciting and descriptive way so that the reader too can identify with the 'thing' or happening.

Instead of the stale recounting of the "same old facts," copy in yearbooks can turn into mini-features or even full length human interest stories if staffs are ambitious and want a challenge and are willing to take time to look at a 'thing' long.

This is not easy, especially when many high school yearbook staffs say "why have copy at all?"

There are many warm up exercises to get students looking at 'things' long. Usually the first one tried is to give students a roll of lifesavers and have them go out into the hall before class begins and present the candy to the first person they see (preferably someone they don't know) and say, "here, I would like you to have this." Nothing more.

When the students have all returned to class, tell them they are to describe exactly what happened . . . what the person looked like in detail, what were his/her reactions, what were their comments, what were their facial expressions?

This exercise usually reveals to the staff that they are missing a lot in observation skills.

The next exercise is to put common items (the kitchen and your desk are usually excellent sources for this) into paper bags and give each student one "grab" day. They are to peek into their bag and describe the article according to its feel and shape only, so that a blind person could recognize it. The descriptions are then given to another member of the class who must find the item. It is usually fun to time this, and sometimes the students have to keep their eyes closed and find it only from the feel.

Another exercise is to bring an unusual item to class to sell. Have each student write a classified ad giving every detail so that the reader will want to buy.

An exercise that helps with writing descriptive material is to select an intangible word representing a feeling or emotion that is difficult to describe. Make a collage of pictures representing that word and then study the pictures until the student is able to express in words the mood created by them.

A daily journal is an excellent vehicle for getting ready to write stream-of-consciousness copy. Have students carry a small notebook with them everywhere and write down their thoughts and reactions all during the day and night (?). These could be shared orally on certain days during the week or selected passages turned in for the teacher to share to begin with if the staff is somewhat shy.

To move from a one person impressionistic copy to a conversation the students could utilize a tape-recorder and then write out dialogue. This would help to use this style realistically.

The staff could also have special weeks to bring in poetry, songs, favorite prose passages, advertisements, etc. These are discussed as to their use of style and figurative language.

Now that the staff is beginning to really look at the 'things' around them, it is time to begin the mechanics of writing feature copy for the yearbook. They are instructed in the basic format for newspaper feature stories stressing that the form is like a spool and the beginning and ending are of equal importance.

Usually it is easier to decide what form and style to use if the staff is working from a theme. But if the book doesn't contain a theme as the pivot point, then the determining factors would be how best to express tone or mood of the book or the important events that occurred that year. No matter what influences the staff's decision, it is important to be consistent.

Some examples of copy selected on the basis of theme are a brochure text for "Quaker State." Franklin High School, Seattle, WA. Part of the opening copy reads.

**Increasing** recreation has played an important part in our state's history. They too [recreational activities], like the clubs, were established in 1912, and have grown with the emphasis on equal women's teams because of Title IX.

Approximately 15 per cent of the residents were active in 10 different sports during the fall and winter. Among the ten kinds of sports . . .

During the spring there were four kinds . . . These athletic events were open to all residents of Quaker State.

Facilities for the . . . Others had to use facilities that were some distance from Franklin such as the Quaker swimmers . . .

In spite of such inconveniences, residents of our state helped make recreation an exciting thing to watch and to participate in whether the motive was to have fun or build up **fitness.**

Another theme used by Franklin was fashioned after the popular Jonathan Livingston Swift book. The students carried his philosophy all the way from endsheets through the conclusion. Part of the opening section reads:

Free to fly. Yes we were. But it was more than that — we were longing to fly — to test our strengths and our weakness — to stretch for that perfect goal — to withstand all trials . . . to live fully.

The summer was almost over. School was an accepted fact, not a vague dream of the future. We were preparing for our athletic tests of courage, and boosting our spirits ever higher. The days of sun and laughter were but a happy fading memory.

Descriptive feature writing captures the school year for many as in the Student Prince, Venture, Princeton High School, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Opening: The starburst of a welder's torch displaying a student's skill . . . a colorful stack of books depicting Princeton courses . . . a solitary student awaiting a ride after school . . . a computer printing information for students and staff alike . . . colorful leaves in fall . . . an experiment in chemistry . . . student expression in art . . . all reflect Viking's Ventures, '74-'75.

# — take a 'long' look

Conclusion: A scarlet and gray backdrop thrust against the setting sun . . . row after row of chairs lined across the Viking gridiron . . . graceful arcs of growing ferns . . . all are treasured symbols . . .

Ever since James Joyce, stream-of-consciousness copy has been a challenge. Kennedy High School, Seattle, WA, used it in first person musings.

Tennis — a game of love? But I hate my opponent . . . No, no, no not AT the net — over the net! The back of my hand is getting sore — can I please use a racket? I've got the tennis blues — my Mom just washed my shorts with my new jeans. Will our Team's Dynasty ever make 'prime time'? Billy Jacobson causes a real racquet at the assembly! How about a second place finish at State? When we're not winning, we're courting our way to second in the N.P.S.L.! How can we have a cone match if our heads aren't pointed?

Copy for Senior page in supplement:

What do you mean I only have 39.50 credits? Don't you count Saturday work crew? But Mom, I'm a SENIOR — you don't need to write my name on my lunch sack anymore. Maybe, just maybe, after four years they'll say my name right. I've got the tassel for the rear-view mirror — now all I need is the! . . .

The narrative or dialogue style can also be used as demonstrated in the Thunderbird, Sammamish High School, Bellevue, WA.

Opening: "You can tell me, man. Ever since we were in Spanish we've been together. Tell me what's bugging you."

"Bailey, do you realize that three years in this school are almost over? I'll probably never see you or anybody ever again. Can you face it? Just saying goodbye to you and Barb and Fleming? No more football or basketball or Yazzolino's afterward. All that stuff we're leaving behind."

"No more homework, though."

"Shut up, Bailey."

Conclusion: "You tell me what it means then, Bailey. Three years of my life in this crazy school. Well, what do I have to show for it besides one heck of a senior fine?"

"You've been educated or something along that line, haven't you?"

"I've passed my classes. What does that prove? I mean, I know that schooling is important, but something's missing. Are we supposed to just shove these years in the back of our minds and bring 'em out when we wanna talk about the time we almost blew up the chemistry lab or something? There's more to school than that. There's more to life for that matter, but what is it?"

"I know what you want, man. You want . . . The Secret of Life!"

"Knock it off, Bailey."

"I suppose I could always say that you are a leaf floating down the river of life . . . Well, forget it — no way is it as bushy and poetic as that . . ."

". . . I guess the secret of life is living it your hardest — giving it everything you've got. So that when you get done with a part of your life — "

"— school?"

"Yeah, or a job, or when a friend leaves — well, you can look back on it and like what you see. Be satisfied with what happened and with what you've done . . . Get it?"

". . . Bailey, you're a genius."

"Yeah, I do alright . . . Let's go Home."

The use of feature stories that continued in the photo captions were outstandingly utilized in the Cayuse '81, Walnut High School, Walnut, CA. This book used the theme, "A Day at the Races," and received Western's Medallion, Columbia's Gold Medallion and NSPA's First Class Rating.

On a page headed Feature Feature Feature we find this feature story and captions.

Everything from a broken ankle to a bloody nose was commonplace in athletics. Injuries of all kinds were both expected and feared by all who were involved. Every coach, every athlete and every parent knew that there was a great risk involved with many sports. Some players were lucky enough to get through their particular season with barely a scratch. For others, broken bones, concussions, twisted ankles and various other mishaps meant the end of the game, the season, or perhaps sports participation altogether.

We could give a lot of statistics and facts on athletic injuries. Instead we've decided to let the athletes themselves explain their experience on what it was like to feel the pain and face the realization that there was something wrong with their bodies. They will tell you how it affected their performance and how they overcame everything from being knocked unconscious, to trying to compete while battling a bad case of the flu. It's something athletes face every day while they are . . . COMPETING WITH PAIN by Tod Bolsinger and Drew Johannsen.

The testimonials were in boldface italic under each picture of the athlete. Here is one example:

I received a concussion during the LaSerna game. It was a bit ironic because I was hit by one of my own teammates. I had trouble remembering what happened after I got hit. I tried to recall the score at least a dozen times after I was taken away but I just couldn't do it. People would ask me questions and two minutes later I would forget what they asked. I was scared and confused; I'd never been through anything that scary in my life. At times I wondered if it was worth going through this again, but I loved the game too much to quit.

I also suffered from pinched nerves in my neck and shoulders. It got so bad, I had to wear a whiplash collar and a neck roll to prevent the injury from reoccurring.

Injuries can drag on mentally for weeks after they are healed. There is something tough about getting into the swing of things after you're hurt. You just have to have a strong mind and a strong heart. — John Hayden, football.

Obviously these staffs looked at 'things' long and were sensitive enough to their school to write features that were read.

## About the author . . .

Barbara Nilson has been adviser of the yearbook or newspaper or both for the past 20 years at Franklin High School in Seattle, WA. She has been involved in workshops for journalism students, chair of the Youth Contest for Washington Press Women and co-chair of the national JEA convention Seattle '80. Currently she is vice president and newsletter editor for Washington Press Assn.; newsletter editor for WJEA; Region III director, JEA; co-program chair for Seattle '83, JEA conference, and a contributing editor to C:JET.

# Student examples show classroom use

**Following are two examples of student writing. The first is from Fern Valentine's Beginning Journalism class and the second is from Irene Hicks's class at Bethel High School. In each case, the first draft is given, then the criteria worksheet, and finally the rewritten story. Neither story is perfect, but they were chosen to show the improvement possible using the criteria guidelines in rewriting a feature story.**

## First draft — DECA

**By Cheri Carnino**

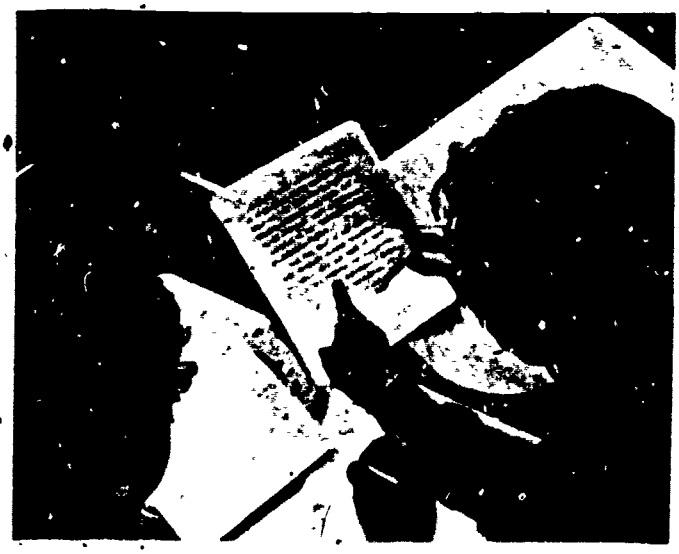
Some may wonder how the Troy Emporium and the Snack Shack run. Probably the administration right? Wrong. Take a closer look and you will notice that their employees are AHS DECA students. Take a behind the scenes look and you will also notice that the students also manage both stores.

The senior DECA is a two hour class. The first hour could be classified as an average class, but the second hour is devoted to the stores. Each month a new group of students is picked from the class to be on the managing team.

These students completely manage the whole thing. Phil Isernio is the advisor of this special group of students, and he is always glad to say how proud he is of them. He is always behind his students when they need help, but his main concern is to give students the opportunity to accomplish the tasks that come with running a business on their own.

One goal that is accomplished by every student in DECA is to obtain a job. If you come into the class without a job, Isernio will be sure to do his best to help find you one. He helps his students to be prepared to get a job. When working in the student stores you learn all the tasks that are involved in getting a job. And by working in these stores you may find out what kind of career to choose from managing to working as a salesperson, but you also discover that you don't want to get into this type of career.

# # #



**Feature criteria guidelines help students zero in on specific problems.**

## Worksheet

Story DECA by Cheri Carnino
Evaluated by Chris Maxwell and Beth Watts

3 **I. Central Idea**
**Why?** Needs a clearer angle.
**Suggestions:** Illustrate the student involvement with more quotes and description

3 **II. Research**
**Why?** Need to interview students and Isernio. Story too short.
**Suggestions:** Interview Isernio and Lamana.

1 **III. Word Choice**
**Why?** Use of "you." No lively wording. No direct quotes.
**Suggestions:** Use description to add color. Add significant quotes.

3 **IV. Organization**
**Why?** Seems to skip from student store to outside jobs.
**Suggestions:** Zero in on student store and how students run it.

2 **V. Lead**
**Why?** Uses abstract question. No hook.
**Suggestions:** Find an angle and a hook that will get reader attention.

1 **VI. Ending**
**Why?** Leaves reader in air.
**Suggestions.** Once you find angle and hook you should be able to tie in ending.

3 **VII. Grammar, Usage, Sentence Structure and Paragraphing**
Last paragraph is too long. All of the sentences with "you" in them will have to be rewritten.

2 **VIII. Capitalization, Punctuation and Spelling**
Use a comma after an introductory clause or phrase. See sentences in last paragraph.

2 **IX. Stylebook**
Write out Distributive Education on first reference Hyphenate two hour when used as an adjective in second paragraph.

# Final Draft — DECA

**By Cheri Carnino, Auburn High School, Auburn, Washington**

"Frito Lay Company, may I help you?"

"Yes, this is Sue from Auburn High School. I would like to order four more boxes of Cheetos, and could you get them here by next Tuesday?"

Almost every student has passed through the Troy Emporium or stood in line at the Snack Shack at least once, but few realize this is the product of hours of work by Senior Marketing and Distributive Education Class.

Ordering is just one of the many tasks involved when managing the Snack Shack or the Troy Emporium, according to Sue Brown, head of inventory and stock control for the Snack Shack.

Senior DE is a two-hour class, but it's the second hour when all the students turn into employees. Every student in the DE class is considered an employee for both stores.

Phil Isernio is the adviser, sometimes known as the boss to his students, to this unusual class. Isernio is proud to admit that his students take full responsibility for the two stores. He said, "The program is only as good as the people involved."

The students are expected to find new kinds of merchandise that will sell well in both stores, and to keep all the old merchandise stocked.

Students arrive at class ready to function with expertise. Scattered about, some restock refrigerators, some check inventory and make lists of needed items, and some make calls to order more and more merchandise.

Each student is given the chance to be part of the managing team. Dave Lamana plays the leading role of manager and the rest of the team ranges from promotional coordinator to personnel adviser.

"It's fun, but sometimes hectic, but my future goal is to be a manager and this is good experience," said Lamana.

"It's nice to know that you have dependable and reliable students to get the tasks done." said Isernio.

"Is this Archway Cookie Company? This is Sue from Auburn High School . . ."

# # #

# First draft — Pilots

**by Dianna Morgan**

Taking off from ordinary activities three Bethel students have spent their extra time earning their student pilot licenses.

Jay Newlin, Ron Lanway and Mike Biever attend flight lessons at Spanaway Airport, each setting different goals for himself.

During spring trimester last year, Jay attended night school at Clover Park Vocational School for groung training, which is taken alongside flight lessons.

A couple of years ago Jay received a Discovery Flight from his parents, which lets you discover the unique sensation of flying. Jay commented, "It's hard getting used to the three dimensional world up there."

Although undecided about making flying a profession, Jay enjoys flying with freedom from speed limits and roads.

Mike Biever started to soar in January at Spanaway. Living next to an airport for 14 years, Mike has been motivated to fly as long as he can remember.

Hoping to be a commercial pilot by the age of thirty Mike stated, "It's great to be able to look down and see so many places."

Ron Lanway can also be found above the clouds flying a cessna 150 for a hobbie. Ron finds it a personal challenge to fly since his dad is a pilot "It's fun and neat to see everything so high."

The next step for Jay, Ron and Mike is to complete the 40 hour requirement to receive their private licenses

# # #

# Worksheet

Story Pilots by Dianna Morgan
Evaluated by Criteria committee

**2 I. Central Idea**
**Why?** No identifiable angle.
**Suggestions:** What are the "goals"? Zero in on time or uniqueness

**3 II. Research**
**Why?** You seem to ask all three the same questions Too short for feature about three people.
**Suggestions:** Develop the uniqueness of each student Anticipate audience concerns about costs, fear, etc

**2½ III. Word Choice**
**Why?** Need more significant quotes. Could be more colorful. Redundant "their" in lead.
**Suggestions:** Use vocabulary of pilots to add color. Get better quotes perhaps about personal challenge or fear Get rid of "you" in third paragraph.

**3 IV. Organization**
**Why?** Has definite order, but seems contrived.
**Suggestions:** Use better transitions to avoid sounding like three people answering same questions.

**2 V. Lead**
**Why?** No real "hook."
**Suggestions:** "Taking off" is colorful, but otherwise you need to get the reader interested.

**2 VI. Ending**
**Why?** Then what? You leave reader up in the air to some extent.
**Suggestions:** Tie back into hook in lead.

**3 VII. Grammar, Usage, Sentence Structure and Paragraphing**
Third sentence awkward. Do not bury quotes in your paragraphs.

**2 VIII. Capitalization, Punctuation and Spelling**
Typo in third paragraph-groung. Hobbie in eighth paragraph. Capitalize Cessna.

**2 IX. Stylebook**
Use last names on second reference consistently. Hyphenate 40 hour since it is used as an adjective.

*(continued on features 12)*

**NOTE:** Irene Hicks, adviser to Bethel High School's Brave Talk, brought this story to the second meeting of the criteria committee. Teachers critiqued it using the criteria. A composite of their remarks is included.

"I felt the criteria were most useful in working on features Although it is still not an excellent story, it is improved and we were able to zero in on some of the problems," said Hicks.

(continued from features 11)

# Final draft — Pilots

by Dianna Morgan

While some of us are trying to keep our wheels on the road, three students at Bethel are trying to keep their wings in the air.

Descending from regular activities, Jay Newlin, Mike Biever and Ron Lanway spend a few hours each week at Spanaway Airport learning the art of flying.

All three have earned their solo license which is equivalent to a driver's permit. Recently the three traveled 50 miles to Hoquiam to prepare for their 300 mile cross-country trip required in order to apply for a private license.

Newlin was the first of the three to take off, attending Clover Park Vocational School last spring for ground training.

Newlin's first interest was aroused a couple of years ago when he received a Discovery Flight ticket from his parents. The ticket gives a preview of flight instruction. It shows the prospective pilots the facilities, introduces instructors and lets them fly an airplane with the aid of an instructor.

Still undecided about whether to make flying a profession, Newlin commented with inspiration, "I like the freedom of not being restricted to roads or speed limits."

Next off the ground, Biever started flying in January at Spanaway when he decided to make a career out of flying. Hoping to become a commercial pilot by age 30, Biever stated, "Living near an airport for 14 years was really my first motivation to fly."

Lanway may also be found above the clouds flying a Cessna 150. Following in his father's footsteps, Lanway finds flying interesting and challenging. According to Lanway, "It really depends on how far a person wants to go with flying. Whether he wants to make a career out of it or just fly for fun." Although Lanway doesn't plan to make flying a profession, he admits it's only a hobby

The flight training includes more than flying 3000 feet above the ground. It involves meteorology, navigation, regulations, communication and the aviation theory.

New pilots must learn all procedures and locations of the instruments. On the right are engine instruments and on the left are the flight instruments.

# # #

Students work together using feature criteria guidelines to evaluate their writing.

Student groups evaluating first drafts save teacher time and emphasize student editing.

WJEA WASHINGTON JOURNALISM EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

# Credits . . .

This insert was produced and paid for by the Washington Journalism Education Association. Fern Valentine served as editor. In accordance with its major goal of assisting production advisers, teachers are invited to reproduce any portion of this insert they wish for use in their classrooms.

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Members of the WJEA Summer Workshop Feature Criteria Committee:

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Jerry Guenser, Monroe High School
Joanne Harkonen, Bothell High School
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Ed Timbers, White River Middle School, Buckley
Beth Watts, Puyallup
Linda Wood, Bellarmine Prep, Tacoma

Biondino, Hicks, Marchbank, Minard and Watts also attended a followup meeting in October to finalize the criteria.

Beth Watts deserves special thanks for helping develop the teaching methods for use of the criteria as well as for gathering examples when she substituted for Valentine for four weeks during the feature writing unit.

Student photos are by Andy Kropp, Troy Invoice staff, Auburn High School.

Feedback on use of these materials in the classroom would be appreciated. Please send comments to Fern Valentine, 1712 2nd Street Northeast, Auburn, WA 98002.