Unit 4: Feature Writing

Content Area: **Language Arts Literacy**
Course(s): **School Newspaper**
Time Period: **January**
Length: **6 weeks**
Status: **Published**

Transfer

Unit Goals:

- Understand how feature stories are organized and written.
- Ability to identify and cater to one's audience when giving presentations, securing clients, and preparing product materials.
- Utilize appropriate recording devices (tape recorders, smart phones, webcams, tablets, etc.) to record interviews.

Enduring Understandings

By the end of this unit students will understand that…

- The purpose of a feature story is TO INFORM and TO ENTERTAIN
- Feature stories are similar to news stories in reliance on facts, accuracy, and often inverted pyramid structure.
- Feature stories often profile people in society, human interest stories, or surprises.
- Writing features allows more leeway for reporters' creativity.
- The different journalistic styles of reporting and writing are required to best represent different types of stories.

Essential Questions

By the end of the unit students will be able to answer…

- What factors determine a relevant and successful feature story?
- How do reporters approach writing a feature story?
- What differences are found in a feature story than traditional news?
- How does an understanding of specific formats impact a writer's ability to communicate effectively?

Content

Vocabulary

Vocabulary

5w+1H

Angle

Attribution

Banner

Beat

Bias

Byline

Caption

Column

Copy

Copy editor

Cutline

Deck

Editor

Editorial

Ethics

Feature

Flag

Grabber

Hard news

Headline

Hole

Human interest story

Investigative journalism

Inverted pyramid

Jumphead

Justified

Layout editor

Lead

Libel

Op ed page

Off the record

Plagiarism

Proofreading

Pull out quote

Side bar

Slander

Soft news

Source

Style

Summary lead

tabloid

Learning Objectives

- Analyze features stories for structure, style, and content
- Research and write different types of feature stories using a variety of different organizational methods
- Cite evidence from text to support opinion and research
- Evaluate potential feature stories in order to decide what is suitable for publication.
- Write catchy leads to grab reader's attention
- Highlight the people, places and events
- Tell high interest stories about people places and events
- Tell stories in simple, straightforward narrative style
- Show interesting nature of selected people, places and events using effective narrative storytelling devices such as sensory details, dialogue, anecdote and present tense

- Work with classmates to edit and peer review
- Read sample published stories
- Use technology to research and publish stories
- Use proper grammar and conventions in writing
- Avoid bias and misinformation in writing
- Use proper grammar and conventions in writing

- Read and discuss or present on sample feature stories identifying organization development and style
- Complete their own feature stories and maintain work in their portfolios
- Incorporate peer and teacher feedback in order to revise written work

Resources

Potential Works of Study

USA Today

Washington Post

Wall Street Journal

NYT.com

Local and national newspapers

The United States Constitution

Government databases

The Associated Press Archives

University libraries

The American Press Institute: High Five Integrated Language Arts and Journalism Curriculum

Content/Theme/Skills:

Human-interest stories, lead, nut graph, kicker, narrative style.

Types of features: personality, news feature, human interest, occasional piece, historical feature, informative feature, seasonal, consumer report, how-to article, behind-the-scenes, shared experience feature, background.

Standards

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.1	Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.5	Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.5	With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.6	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.8	Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.3	Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.