

An editorial is an article written by or under the direction of the editor of a newspaper or magazine, or a statement broadcast on radio or television. Editorials give opinions on important social, political, economic, or legal issues of the day and intend to persuade readers to agree to a particular point of view. An editorial, printed on the editorial page of newspapers, is an example of persuasive writing and many of the suggestions in TN 24: Persuasive Writing are relevant.

Editorials reflect the views of the owners, managers or board of directors of media companies. Editorials of major papers are often viewed by readers in terms of their positioning as right (conservative), centre (liberal), or left (socialist) on the political spectrum. Furthermore, editorials usually do not shy from controversy, in the hope of not only presenting the issues to the reading public, but also of drawing response from the public and attracting new readership in the competitive marketplace.

Editorial Structure

An editorial is similar to an essay in that it focuses on a specific issue or topic, offers a thesis, and provides evidence and supporting arguments to convince its readers. The title clearly identifies the topic; the introductory statement includes the writer's view on the issue; the body provides supporting evidence and examples; and the conclusion restates the writer's view and provides a final appeal for the reader to agree to that view.

Suggestions for Students

Planning the Editorial:

- Decide what issue you will write about and clearly define the issue.
- Consider who your intended audience will be (for example, it may be the general readership, or it may be directed at those who hold a particular view that may or may not already have been expressed in the media or other public forum).
- Brainstorm a variety of strategies you can use to gain reader support for your view on the issue. These might include acknowledgement of the reader's current viewpoint, listing benefits of the view you are promoting, providing reliable evidence, and using of sound reasoning.
- Develop logical and ethical arguments; avoid purely emotional rhetoric.
- Conduct necessary research both to gather information about the audience you are writing for, and to collect evidence, examples, and support for the view you are promoting.
- Develop an outline to follow before you begin writing.

Writing the Editorial:

- Follow the pattern and style of editorial writing.
- In most editorials, the opinion of the writer is given near the beginning, followed by supporting evidence and reasoning (direct approach).
- The first person plural voice (we, our) is most common in editorial writing and is appropriate in establishing the credibility of the writer.
- Editorials should be short, precise, and well organized.
- Develop a strong introductory statement to capture the reader's attention and to state your opinion. Use a logical sequence for presenting your arguments, and an effective conclusion to maximize the impact on the reader.