

Writing the Editorial / Some Tips Before You Begin!

Before you write this editorial, you must first determine your *purpose*. Ask yourself: why am I writing this? What do I wish to accomplish, and more importantly, *how*?

On a sheet of paper, start with your byline. Write By your name. Skip a line and start. That's all I need for identification. Please write in ink, skipping every other line. Write only on one side of the paper.

FUNCTION OF EDITORIALS

1. to explain a subject, event or situation
2. to persuade the reader to think or act about a subject, even, or situation in a new or different way
3. to answer criticism (about a person, group, subject, event or situation) in the form a defense
4. to warn about a problem that you (as a staff) see lies ahead
5. to criticize the actions of a person, group, organization, event, or situation. Since this editorial is the voice of a newspaper staff, the editorial writer has special responsibilities to be constructive ***and*** to ***offer solutions*** to the actions he criticizes.
6. to praise or offer congratulations to a person, group, event, etc. When someone does something worthy of praise, pass it on!
7. to entertain when issues are not worth handling with heavy comment or criticism. Criticizing something through humor can sometimes be more effective than taking the gloves off and slugging away. These editorials are not easy to write but when done correctly, they are rewarding.

PARTS OF AN EDITORIAL

1. introduction: state as briefly as possible the background needed for the editorial
2. reaction: set the reader up to receive your opinion
3. details: give *accurate* information that supports your reaction and leads to a conclusion . If your opinions are strong, you must acknowledge these and demonstrate why your idea is preferable.
4. conclusion: after establishing background, detailed your argument and offered support. Now conclude. The subject/tone of your editorial will determine what you do there. Some possibilities: offer an admonishment; suggest a course of action; make an effort to lead, compromise, or appeal for a second chance; recommend several alternatives or options.

Submitted by Debbie Smelley, Starr's Mill High School