

# **Article writing**

Article writing is not as complex as story writing, anyone with a basic grasp of grammar and syntax can write an article. But this section of the course is more than writing articles, it is about writing articles that will make you earn.

What is an article? How do you write them as a beginner? How can you write them in a way acceptable?

Read further.

## **What is an article?**

A written composition in prose, usually nonfiction, on a specific topic.

These are what a writer may aim to achieve when writing an article:

### **Gives advice and courses of actions**

Example: 5 medicinal benefits of Kolanut and why you should take them frequently

## **Drives exposure on newsworthy stories**

Example: Bandits kidnap 23 in offa village

## **Influences the current opinions of their readers**

Eg: Peter Obi: Why the youths should vote for him as President

## **How do you write articles?**

As I have always preached, the first step to writing anything is reading. An article writer or intending article writer should read. Read all sorts of articles. As a sports article writer, I spend my spare time reading sports articles anywhere I can find them. I read from the pro in the sports article writing profession like **Guillem Balague** and **Phil McNulty** who both write for the BBC.

So if you are an intending fashion article writer, read a lot of fashion articles. If you are an intending entertainment article writer, read a lot of entertainment articles.

## **Select a topic to write about**

Have a specific topic that you want to write about before you start writing. This gives you the chance to focus your energy on it.

If you're writing an article on BB Naija, select a specific topic. Is it a fight between two housemates? Is it an article on the advantages and disadvantages of the competition? Select a specific topic.

### **Identify your target audience**

You need to take the viewpoint of the reader of your article to recognize the target audience you're trying to reach. Your target audience now is Nigerian subscribers of Opera News.

### **Research facts that reinforce your article**

Having the facts is essential to writing a powerful article that captivates a reader. You want to have a centralized area to keep your facts, so you can assemble all the elements of your story in one place. It's suitable to have a notebook where you can write down ideas quickly, but it'll be easier for you to write notes digitally on a word processing document on your computer or smartphone.

Some examples of research you can gather include:

- Statistics
- Quotes from sources related to the topic you're writing about
- Definitions regarding the topic of the article
- References

### **Come up with an outline of your article**

Your article should have a basic format before you begin writing, so you can spend more time on the content instead of the structure. Your resources can also aid you to come up with a format that's clear and understandable to the reader.

The four main pieces of an outline that you should draw out should be:

**Title:** The title is normally the one piece of an article that a viewer sees online. Make sure it is catchy enough.

The importance of a great title can never be overemphasized! When you come up with an article idea or come across a news/story online, the first thing you should think about is the proper title! As random as this may sound, a great title can actually help you write a good article! And apart from helping you write a good article, a great title can also

help in giving your article great reach based on Google's "Search Engine Optimization" (SEO).

Most times, a great title determines whether your article will be clicked on or not! And no matter how amazing you think your article is or how much time you spent on writing it, if your title isn't great, you might not get any clicks!

**Intro paragraph:** The introductory paragraph introduces the main point of what you're trying to say about a topic. This is the ideal method of attracting attention from your audience because you're exhibiting value that demonstrates why they should continue reading your piece.

**Body paragraph:** The body paragraph allows you to construct and organize supporting information that backs up the point you're trying to make. Use examples from your research above to accentuate your topic and inform your audience about new information and why it's impactful for them.

**Conclusion:** The conclusion of your article can end with a call to action or something for the reader to consider in the future. You want them to focus on the value they received from what they learned, so

they can tell others to read your content and share it with their network.

## **Write a rough draft and pare down your outline**

You should write everything down first before you begin editing, so you can unleash your creative process on paper. You can edit everything after and reflect on what you can do differently to enhance the article's quality and which subjects you plan on elaborating on. Make sure that you start writing and editing from the top to the bottom of the article, so you can save time on your first draft.

Read aloud until your draft is error-free

The last step is for you to read your article aloud multiple times before you submit it for approval. You want to ensure that'll be concise and understood by the reader.

## **There are three ways to write an article.**

1. Opinion articles
2. News articles

### 3. Rewriting

#### **Opinion Articles**

An opinion article, as the name suggests, is an article where you express your opinion on an issue. It is a kind of essay where the contents of the article are solely your opinion.

As a sports article writer, if I wanted to write an opinion article now, here are the steps I'll follow.

**I'll first of all select the topic.**

The topic is Cristiano Ronaldo and how Manchester United fans were saying that he was the cause of the club's woes the previous seasons.

**I'll move on to the creation of an outline.**

**Remember that the four main pieces of an article outline are:**

**Title**

**Intro paragraph**

**Main body**

**Conclusion**

Remember that a great title determines whether your article will be clicked on or not! And no matter how amazing you think your article is or how much time you spent on writing it, if your title isn't great, you might not get any clicks!

**So following the outline, my Title will be:**

Why Cristiano Ronaldo is not the cause of Manchester United's Problems.

We move onto the next step.

### **Introductory paragraph**

Remember, The introductory paragraph introduces the main point of what you're trying to say about a topic. This is the ideal method of attracting attention from your audience because you're exhibiting value that demonstrates why they should continue reading your piece.

So here's mine:

*Manchester United has endured a disastrous run of form since Ronaldo's arrival. They only have one win in their last seven premier*



*league games which is not a good record considering the caliber of players on the team.*

*The most disappointing display of all was the 4-1 loss to Watford. It was embarrassing in all ramifications as Watford held Manchester United hostage.*

**So you can see that my introduction addresses the problems of Ronaldo's club.**

We move onto the next stage:

## **Main Body**

Remember, the main body allows you to construct and organize supporting information that backs up the point you're trying to make. Use examples from your research above to accentuate your topic and inform your audience about new information and why it's impactful for them.

So here's mine:

*To say that Ronaldo is the cause of Manchester United's problem is the height of clownery. It is a warped view usually propagated by people who do not watch football but like to join the narrative.*

*How on earth is Ronaldo the cause of Manchester United's problems?*

*Ronaldo Is Manchester United's top scorer this season with nine goals.*

*Ronaldo has given more points to United this season than any other player.*

*Ronaldo has single-handedly pulled Manchester United from the brink of defeat a lot of times this season. He scored the winner against Villarreal on September 29th.*

*Then in the next Champions League game, Ronaldo headed the winner against Atalanta with just nine minutes of the match remaining.*

*He scored a brilliant volley and grabbed an assist in a 3-0 win over Tottenham and also surfaced with a brace to save Manchester United from losing in a 2-2 draw against Atalanta.*

*It is evident that Cristiano Ronaldo has done what he was brought to do. He was brought to score goals and he did just that. It is evident that because of Ronaldo, Manchester United are still in the mix for a round of 16 spots in the UCL*

*What else should he do? Take De Gea or Maguire's place?*

**In the body of the Article, I attacked the notion that Ronaldo is the cause of the problems at Manchester United and questioned their reason for saying so.**

**Using well researched facts, I made a case for Ronaldo. That's a good body of an opinion Article.**

We move on to the last.

## **Conclusion**

Remember, The conclusion of your article can end with a call to action or something for the reader to consider in the future. You want them to focus on the value they received from what they learned, so they can tell others to read your content and share it with their network.

**In this case I left them with something to consider.**

So here's mine:

*It is unfortunate that one of the greatest players of the game is always at the receiving end of ill-informed criticism*

**That sums up a good opinion article.**

**The next kind of article is:**

**News Articles:**

News articles are written to inform and educate readers on current affairs/events. They are used to provide readers with information they need/want to know about the world around them

Writing a news article is different from writing other articles or informative pieces because news articles present information in a specific way. It's important to be able to convey all the relevant information in a limited word count and

**How to write a News Article**

**Choose a News**

You must choose the news you want to write about before beginning. It could be a case of jungle justice you witnessed, or the Governor of your state commissioning a landmark project. There is a lot of news everywhere.

## **Research your topic**

To begin writing a news article, you need to research the topic you will be writing about extensively. In order to have a credible, well written, well-structured article, you have to know the topic well.

If you've ever written a research paper you understand the work that goes into learning about your topic. The first phase of writing a news article or editorial is pretty similar.

Begin by asking yourself the "5 W's" (sometimes "6 W's").

**Who - who was involved?**

**What - what happened?**

**Where - where did it happen?**

**Why - why did it happen?**

**When - when did it happen?**

**How - how did it happen?**

## **Create an outline**

The outline of a news article consists of:

- **Headline or Title**
- **Lead**
- **The story**
- **Conclusion**

## **Headline or Title**

The title of your article should be catchy and to the point.

Remember, Most times, a great title determines whether your article will be clicked on or not! And no matter how amazing you think your article is or how much time you spent on writing it, if your title isn't great, you might not get any clicks!

So mine is:

GEORGE FLOYD'S MURDERER SENTENCED TO 22 YEARS IN PRISON

We move on to the next step.

## **Lead**

The lead is the first sentence or paragraph, written to provide a preview of the entire article. It summarizes the story and includes many of the basic facts. The lead will help readers decide if they want to read the rest of the news article or if they are satisfied knowing these details.

Here's mine:

*Derek Chauvin, the ex-police officer convicted of killing George Floyd in the US city of Minneapolis last year has been sentenced to 22 years in prison.*

**You can see that the lead has given a short summary of what I want to talk about**

We move on to the next step:

### **The story**

Once you've set the stage with a good lead, follow up with a well-written story that contains facts from your research. The article should not contain your opinions. Detail any events in chronological order. Use the active voice—not passive voice—when possible, and write in clear, short, direct sentences.

Here's mine:

*According to the judge, the sentence was because Chauvin abused his position of trust and authority and also because of the cruelty he showed to George Floyd.*

*Derek Chauvin had snuffed life out of George Floyd when he pressed his knees on his neck while on active duty.*

*Mr Chauvin was also ordered to register as a predatory offender which will bar him from owning guns for the rest of his life.*

*The sentence came after Derek was convicted of second degree murder and other charges.*

*Mr Chauvin offered his condolences to the family of George Floyd but never apologized.*

*Joe Biden the president of the United States reacted to the sentence calling it appropriate.*

**You can see that this goes in line with the above definition of a story.**

We can now move on to the next step.

**Conclusion**



Your conclusion can be your last bit of information, a summary, or a carefully chosen quote to leave the reader with a strong sense of your story.

Here's mine:

*That was the end of the highly publicized case starting from when Chauvin knelt on the neck of George Floyd for more than 9 minutes, leading to his death. The cruel death brought a huge wave of protests across America.*

**That was the last bit of information.**

**Now I've successfully written a News article.**

## **ARTICLE REWRITING**

Article rewriting is a common practice used in the writing industry in which the words, phrases, and sentences of an article are crafted uniquely without changing its meaning. It can also be called rephrasing and restructuring the articles.

As you know, plagiarism is illegal and worthless from a business perspective; therefore, article rewriting is a safe way to get contents.

Let's say there's a popular news article that you saw and you like. You weren't there when it happened but you would love to use the content. You can copy the content and rewrite.

Let's say you got this content online.

**Three men were burnt to death in the Utako area of Abuja after they were caught stealing.**

You can rewrite it to:

**In the Utako area of Abuja, three men stole and were caught. They were immediately burnt to death.**

That's manual Rewriting.

You can also choose to rewrite articles with the help of Article rewriters like **Quilbot**