News Feature

A news feature is a "perishable story related to a current event or situation that is of interest to your readers and combines various feature writing techniques with elements of straight newswriting."

The news feature format combines the best elements of news and feature writing styles to present the news in its context -- with the human elements included.

Feature writing involves interpretation, style, imagery, description and emotional appeal. It gives depth to facts and records human drama.

Purpose

News features have a news peg and a focus. The focus plays a dominant role in telling the story and is usually featured in the lead.

Content

The writer presents the human side of the news along with the facts. The writer does this by using feature writing techniques such as quotes, vivid verbs and descriptive writing.

Ending

A news feature is the skilled telling of a complete story and needs a strong feature conclusion where the writer makes or reinforces a point. There are seven types of feature endings.

- A SUMMARY ending summarizes the points made in the story. It usually keys on impact, effects or outcome.
- A TIE-BACK ending plants a fact, idea or scene in the lead and completes it at the end.
- A WRAP-UP ending ties up loose ends, answers questions or solves problems posed in the lead.
- A CLIMAX ending provides a natural ending to a story told in chronological order.
- An UNENDING ending leaves a key question unanswered. It is used to stimulate reader thinking -- to get the reader involved with the situation posed in the story.
- A STINGER ending is a surprise ending designed to jolt the reader.
- A COMBINATION ending combines two or more of the above.

Some elements particularly important in a news feature include:

- Transitions, which hold the story together and move the reader smoothly from one paragraph to the next.
- Focus -- the reason the story is written.
- Content -- includes both the facts and details of a news peg and the interesting context surrounding it.
- Organization of the content. Everything should be where the reader expects it.
- News features must be timely and must answer the W's as fully as possible.