

Journalism Grading Structure

A detailed writing rubric is available @ themeanmissbean.com/journalism_rubric.pdf to clarify how writing is assessed, and the various aspects you should consider.

Each student will write at least two pieces per week, one free-choice and one assigned. Free-choice can include other genres not listed, like poems, satire, cartoons, fake ads, etc.

Each student must write at least two examples of each of the seven genres listed on the table at right during the course of one semester, to be compiled in a portfolio turned in the last week.

Students may re-write and edit portfolio pieces to polish them, even after they have been used in the paper, so that the portfolio represents their best effort, and shows improvement over time.

Assignments are turned in via email to:

wizmo@themeanmissbean.com

Each piece should have a suggested headline and subhead, a byline and a pullquote, if applicable, and these should be at the beginning of the article.

Spell check and proofread before sending emails.

Genres are described in more detail on the next page.

| | % of grade | # each semester |
|---|------------|---|
| Quizzes + Tests | 5 | |
| Interviews | 10 | 2 minimum |
| Hard news reporting | 10 | 2 minimum |
| Reviews | 10 | 2 minimum |
| Editorials | 10 | 2 minimum |
| First-person narratives | 10 | 2 minimum |
| Sports stories | 10 | 2 minimum |
| Feature stories | 10 | 2 minimum |
| Journal | 5 | |
| Group work; editing, ideas @ meetings, writing Headlines, sub heads, pull Quotes, adding to discussions | 10 | graded each issue and peer graded |
| Portfolio of writing + editing + other contributions | 10 | Compiled each issue, graded once a semester |

| genre | description |
|---------------------|---|
| Feature | Features are the human side of journalism, articles that are factual, yet go beyond the facts, exploring the world in a personal and compelling way. Features can examine any topic, from the latest news and trends to profiles of people. Features are common in magazines and newspapers and they sometimes evolve into books. Feature writing lets you combine the reporter's investigation with a storyteller's flair, adding details and developing the story more than a strictly hard news story. Often the writer is almost invisible, letting the story unfold without interjecting their voice. There are some great examples at http://www.pulitzer.org but it takes some digging to get to the complete text of winning feature stories. Features are in your newspaper every day. |
| Hard news reporting | News reports are written in pyramid style, with all the important information (Who, what, when, where, why and how) contained in the first ¶, and details added in the following ¶s in order of importance, so if the article needs to be shortened, it is cut from the bottom up, removing the least important information. Reports are factual and facts are checked for accuracy. The reporter's opinions are not evident. |
| Sports story | Sports reporting can take many forms, interview, feature, news report, opinion, first-person narrative, but should always give enough background so that even people who don't know the sport can follow the article and make sense of it. Statistics should be used carefully, not overwhelming the article with numerical gibberish, but adding important information to emphasize points. |
| Review | Gives an educated opinion about a work of music, art, theater, dance, film, literature, architecture or other art form. Includes background information, history, influences and enough description so reader can get a sense of whether they would agree or disagree with the reviewer. Reviewer builds a persuasive argument for their opinion, but doesn't give away the ending! |
| Editorial | Expresses an educated opinion and builds a logical, persuasive case for it. Cites historical examples, references and/or quotes to back up their arguments and make them more dimensional. |
| Interview | A series of questions, sometimes conversational, sometimes in a more formal question and answer format, that draw out the subject in an interesting and informative way. Doing research beforehand to get background information so questions can be intelligent and pertinent, asking open-ended questions (not yes/no) that are not too broad (tell me about your life) and listening to responses so the next question can be a natural outgrowth of the answer, instead of just marching through a list of questions make for a better interview. Ideally, the reader should feel like they are overhearing a fascinating conversation focused on the interviewee. |