

| Skill area        | a                                                                                                                                                                                               | b                                                                                                                           | c                                                                                                          | d                                                                                            | f                                                                                                                      |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Spelling, grammar | There are no spelling or grammatical mistakes, and sentences are elegant and flow smoothly. Punctuation is used to enhance the meaning and readability of the story.                            | There are no spelling or grammatical mistakes. Sentences are not awkward.                                                   | There are few spelling and grammatical mistakes. Most sentences are not awkward.                           | There are more than three spelling and/or grammatical mistakes. Some sentences are awkward.  | There are many spelling and/or grammatical mistakes. Most sentences are awkward.                                       |
| Vocabulary        | Words are used appropriately, and seem perfectly chosen to create a vivid mental picture or otherwise add to the story. More difficult words are used if appropriate, but not just to show off. | Words are used appropriately, and seem well-chosen. More difficult words are used if appropriate, but not just to show off. | Words are used appropriately, but seem fairly ordinary and not particularly interesting. Clichés are used. | Words are used awkwardly or improperly, and get in the way of the story.                     | Words are used awkwardly or improperly, get in the way of the story, and are clearly not understood and used properly. |
| Headline          | Accurately represents the content of the article, pithy and attention-grabbing, and makes good use of contextual diction, alliteration. Memorable.                                              | Accurately represents the content of the article, short and interesting, and uses contextual diction.                       | Accurately represents the content of the article. Could be shorter and more to the point.                  | Doesn't give an accurate idea of the article's content. Not concise enough, not interesting. | Gives an inaccurate idea of the article's content. Not concise or interesting.                                         |
| Subhead           | Gives further context for the story and enhances the headline without repeating any information or adding unnecessary details.                                                                  | Gives further context for the story without repeating any information or adding unnecessary details.                        | Gives some further context for the story.                                                                  | Doesn't help clarify the story, repeats information or adds unnecessary details.             | Confuses the reader by repeating information or adding unnecessary details, or misstating the point of the story.      |

| Skill area             | a                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | b                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | c                                                                                                                                                               | d                                                                                                      | f                                                                                                                   |
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| Lead-in                | Engages the reader immediately and draws them into the story in a creative way. Is directly related to the context of the story, not gratuitous attention-getting.                                                                                       | Begins the story in an interesting way.                                                                                                                                                                                              | Begins the story in a logical but not terribly original or interesting way.                                                                                     | Doesn't begin the story at a logical or interesting starting point, or uses a tired cliché.            | Begins the story in a off-putting or cliché way.                                                                    |
| First ¶                | In pyramid style, all main facts (Who, What, When, Where, Why and How) are front-loaded so if article has to be shortened, they will still be included.                                                                                                  | Most pertinent information is summarized in the first ¶.                                                                                                                                                                             | Some pertinent information is contained in the first ¶.                                                                                                         | Little information is contained in the first ¶.                                                        | No real information is in the first ¶.                                                                              |
| Context, background    | Relevant contextual information is skillfully woven into the story in an interesting way so that even a reader totally unfamiliar with the subject will understand the content, and feel really knowledgeable about the subject after reading the story. | Relevant contextual information is woven into the story so that even a reader totally unfamiliar with the subject will understand the content and be able to follow it, feeling they learned something interesting after reading it. | Some relevant contextual information is included so that some readers totally unfamiliar with the subject will understand the content and be able to follow it. | Little context is given, so only readers already familiar with the subject will understand the story.  | No context is given, so it's hard to understand the story unless you know what the author is talking about already. |
| Methodical development | Arguments are developed in a logical sequence, and flow in an intuitive way, each building on the previous information to create a more complete picture of the facts.                                                                                   | Arguments are developed in a logical sequence and build on previous information to create a more complete picture of the facts.                                                                                                      | Arguments are in a somewhat logical sequence and usually build on previous information to create a more complete picture of the facts.                          | Arguments don't seem to be in a logical order, and don't seem to form a complete picture of the facts. | Arguments seem random and confusing, and don't give a complete picture of the facts.                                |

| Skill area   | a                                                                                                                                                                            | b                                                                                                                     | c                                                                                                                          | d                                                                                                                            | f                                                                                                                  |
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| Storytelling | The story has a beginning, middle and end. The story is captivating and memorable and leaves the reader wanting to read more from this writer.                               | The story has a beginning, middle and end. The story holds reader interest.                                           | The story has a beginning, middle and end. It is interesting if the subject is one that interests the reader.              | The story may not have a clear beginning, middle or ending, and isn't very interesting to most readers.                      | The story doesn't have a clear beginning, middle or end, and isn't interesting to most readers.                    |
| Content      | The story has real meat to it, and the author adds even more depth and nuance.                                                                                               | The story has something worthwhile to say, and says it.                                                               | The story says a lot about a little.                                                                                       | The story doesn't really have much to say.                                                                                   | The story is a lightweight piece of fluff.                                                                         |
| ID people    | Helpful identifiers are added to names when they first appear in the story, like; 'John Archer, longtime CHS librarian'; or 'Music teacher extraordinaire, Brian Handley,... | Identifiers are added to names in the story.                                                                          | Most names have identifiers.                                                                                               | Few names have identifiers.                                                                                                  | Names don't have identifiers.                                                                                      |
| 5 Ws + H     | All information is integrated into the story in a seamless, clever and imaginative way.                                                                                      | All information is included in the story in an interesting way.                                                       | All information is in the story.                                                                                           | Not all information is in the story.                                                                                         | There is little information in the story.                                                                          |
| Voice        | The active voice is used throughout the story. The author's voice is consistent and very appropriate for the story.                                                          | The active voice is used throughout the story. The author's voice is fairly consistent and appropriate for the story. | The active voice is used in most of the story. The author's voice is not consistent, and/or not appropriate for the story. | The active voice is used inconsistently in the story. The author's voice is not consistent and/or appropriate for the story. | The passive voice is frequently used and/or the author's voice is not consistent and/or appropriate for the story. |

| Skill area                                                   | a                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | b                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | c                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | d                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | f                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
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| <p><b>Balance</b></p> <p>Hard news</p>                       | <p>The story contains insightful information and background so both sides of an issue are presented clearly, fairly and accurately. The difference between opinions and facts is clear, and the opinion of the author is not evident.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <p>The story contains enough information so both sides of an issue are presented fairly and accurately. The difference between opinions and facts is clear, and the opinion of the author is not evident.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <p>The story contains enough information so both sides of an issue are presented fairly and accurately. The difference between opinions and facts is clear, and the opinion of the author is not very evident.</p>                                                                                                                                                | <p>The story does not contain enough information so both sides of an issue are presented fairly and accurately. The difference between opinions and facts is not always clear. The opinion of the author is evident.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                    | <p>The story contains misleading information so both sides of an issue are not presented fairly and accurately. The difference between opinions and facts is not clear, and the opinion of the author is evident.</p> |
| <p><b>Thoughtful opinions</b></p> <p>Editorials, reviews</p> | <p>Writing is clearly presented as opinion, not fact. Writer leads reader through their thought processes in a clear, logical way so their opinion seems a natural conclusion. Accurate historical references are used to strengthen arguments and/or give perspective. Author takes the high road, referring to others respectfully even if they don't share the same opinions (no cheap shots) and backs up their opinions with well-reasoned arguments, not rants or vitriol.</p> | <p>Writing is clearly presented as opinion, not fact. Writer shares their thought processes in a fairly clear way so their opinion seems logical. Accurate historical references are used to strengthen arguments and/or give perspective. Author takes the high road, referring to others respectfully even if they don't share the same opinions (no cheap shots) and backs up their opinions with well-reasoned arguments, not rants or vitriol.</p> | <p>Writing is clearly presented as opinion, not fact. Writer makes an attempt to explain their opinions. Accurate historical references are used to strengthen arguments and/or give perspective. Author doesn't take cheap shots at those who don't have the same opinion. Opinions are presented as somewhat well-reasoned arguments, not rants or vitriol.</p> | <p>Opinions are not clearly separated from fact. Writer does not take reader through their thought processes in a clear, logical way. No historical references are used to strengthen arguments and/or give perspective. Author refers disrespectfully to others who don't share the same opinions and rarely backs up their opinions with well-reasoned arguments, but instead rants or spews vitriol.</p> | <p>Writing is purely opinion, with no logical arguments presented. Cheap shots are taken at others who don't share the opinion of the writer. Article is simply a rant.</p>                                           |

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| News interview skills           | <p>Questions are extremely direct and get to the point, with no room for vague answers. Questions sometimes combine more than one question in a sentence, to cover more topics before they are cut off or subject gets in limo and drives off!</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <p>Questions are fairly direct and get to the point, with little room for vague answers. Questions sometimes combine more than one question in a sentence.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <p>Questions are fairly clear but could be more direct and pointed, not leaving room for vague answers.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <p>Questions are not direct and to the point, or unclear and leave room for vague answers.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <p>Questions are vague or off-topic.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Human interest Interview skills | <p>The subject comes through clearly. Enough research was done beforehand to generate questions that would draw the subject out on interesting topics specific to their experiences. Questions were open-ended (not yes/no) but not too general (tell me about your life), and interviewer listened to answers and let them lead naturally to other questions instead of waiting to pounce on the next question on their list. The interview became a fascinating conversation, with the subject doing most of the talking.</p> | <p>The subject comes through fairly clearly. Research was done beforehand to generate questions that would draw the subject out on topics specific to their experiences. Questions were open-ended (not yes/no) but not too general (tell me about your life), and interviewer listened to answers and let them lead naturally to other questions instead of waiting to pounce on the next question on their list. The interview became an interesting conversation with the subject doing most of the talking.</p> | <p>The subject comes through. Some research was done beforehand to generate questions that would draw the subject out on interesting topics specific to their experiences. Most questions were open-ended (not yes/no) but not too general (tell me about your life), and interviewer usually listened to answers and let them lead naturally to other questions instead of waiting to pounce on the next question on their list. The interview became a conversation.</p> | <p>The subject doesn't come through well. Not enough research was done beforehand to generate questions that would draw the subject out on interesting topics specific to their experiences. Not many questions were open-ended (not yes/no) or were too general (tell me about your life), and interviewer didn't listen to answers and let them lead naturally to other questions before pouncing on the next question on their list. The interview never quite became a conversation.</p> | <p>The subject doesn't come through. Research wasn't done beforehand so interviewer had little pre-knowledge of their subject. Not many questions were open-ended (not yes/no) or were too general (tell me about your life), and interviewer didn't listen to answers and let them lead naturally to other questions before pouncing on the next question on their list. The interview never became a conversation.</p> |

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| <p><b>Depth and Erudition</b></p> <p>Feature stories</p> | <p>Author has clearly researched the subject in depth and presents fascinating aspects, not getting bogged down in boring trivia, but bringing relevant and interesting facts to light, illustrating points with rich details and images that captivate and make a lasting impression on the reader. Writing draws on more than just personal experiences, bringing in experts and/or quoting other relevant sources.</p> | <p>Author has a good understanding of the subject and brings in some nice details to fill out and enrich the story. Writing draws on more than just personal experiences, bringing in experts and/or quoting other sources.</p>                                          | <p>Author has a reasonable understanding of the subject, but doesn't add more than what one would expect. Writing draws only on personal experiences.</p>                                                                                                                          | <p>Author seems to have only a surface knowledge of the subject.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                    | <p>Author clearly has a very shallow or incomplete knowledge of the subject.</p>                                                                                                                               |
| <p><b>Use of Humor</b></p> <p>When appropriate</p>       | <p>Wit and humor are tastefully evident, and consistent with the tone of the article. The references are obvious to the readers. The tone is not hurtful or mean-spirited, not insulting to any group based on ethnicity, sexual preference, or appearance, and not scatological or sexual.</p>                                                                                                                          | <p>Wit and humor are consistent with the tone of the article. The references are obvious to the readers. The tone is not hurtful or mean-spirited, not insulting to any group based on ethnicity, sexual preference, or appearance, and not scatological or sexual.</p> | <p>Wit, humor or silliness is consistent with the tone of the article. The references are obvious to most readers. The tone is not hurtful or mean-spirited, not insulting to any group based on ethnicity, sexual preference, or appearance, and not scatological or sexual.</p> | <p>The humor just seems silly and/or the references aren't obvious to the readers. The tone is potentially hurtful or mean-spirited, or insulting to a group based on ethnicity, sexual preference, or appearance, and not scatological or sexual.</p> | <p>The humor seems off. The references aren't obvious to the readers or the tone is hurtful or mean-spirited, or insulting to a group based on ethnicity or sexual preference, or scatological or sexual.</p> |