**Writing an Editorial**

Editorials are opinion pieces. Opinion pieces involve sharing your opinion. This is, quite obviously, not the point of [writing the news](https://edusson.com/blog/how-to-write-a-news-story) or writing for a newspaper. This means there are plenty of rules involved. If you want your audience to value your opinion and, in turn, take you seriously as a writer, you need to know the difference between a hard-hearted rant and a fair point of view. You should be writing the latter, not the former. Sharing your opinion is fine but save the anger for your social media pages (and, even then, you should keep your settings on “private”). In journalistic writing, editorials should be well-researched and factual.

Below are five steps that will help you in your opinionated endeavors.

**1. Choose a relevant, newsworthy topic**

This is where I would usually insert a very long paragraph about the importance of making your stories newsworthy and relevant to the public. However, when it comes to opinion pieces, you really only need to focus on the second half of that equation.

The most important part is relevancy. Why do you think this opinion needs to be shared? Facts that have been brought to your attention. What is it about this particular topic that makes readers want to listen? The beauty of opinion writing is that it can be about literally anything, as long as you bring value to the topic. I can write an editorial about breakfast cereal. As long as I make it relevant to my audience, it’s going to get published.

**2. Research all aspects of your topic**

Have you ever heard someone say that there are three sides to every story? There’s the side you hear from, say, one person. Then there’s the side you hear from your another. And then, of course, there’s the truth. As journalists, we usually try to get to the “truth” part of the equation. As an editorial writer, you need to do something in between. While you need to pick either the main character or an antagonist, you still need to have a good idea of what the “truth” really is. That means having a good sense of what happened in the book.

**3. Develop a well-constructed opinion**

Once you’ve gathered all of the information you can about your topic, you need to pick your side and develop a valid opinion. Yes, there’s a difference between a valid opinion and an invalid opinion. An invalid opinion would be something like, “I don’t want to do the homework because I don’t feel like it.” A valid opinion would be something like, “I don’t want to do the homework because I feel that it’s detrimental to the student body to be forced to work for hours after school, well into the part of the night when they should be with friends or spending time with their family.” It’s pretty apparent that the second argument is better. But why? It’s all about the reasoning you present. Not only do you need to use language that engages your audience and proves that you know what you’re talking about, but you need to develop clear reasons why your side is the right side.

**4. Create an outline**

Once you’ve finished developing your argument, you need to make an outline for your story.? In what paragraph will you include quotes from the book(if you include any at all)? At what point will you acknowledge the other side, then refute their claims? These are all very important structural components of an editorial, and you need to be prepared to include them. When you’ve finished your outline, go ahead and [write](https://edusson.com/blog/how-to-write-a-feature-story) the piece. It should flow smoothly, now that you’ve done your research.

**5. Read your piece out loud before publication**

I always emphasize reading your work out loud before submitting it to a professor or an editor, but this step is particularly important for editorial writers. You need to ensure that your article doesn’t sound over-the-top or like a rant. It’s extremely important that your work sounds professional and succinct, even if it isn’t traditional in nature.

With that being said, go and find a topic. The world is waiting to hear what you have to say.

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