



How to Write an Editorial

The purpose of an editorial is to persuade readers. While a regular news story states the facts (and only the facts) from both sides of a story, an editorial is *expected* to take a position and voice personal opinion. We write editorials to influence public opinion, promote critical thinking about an issue, praise the efforts of others, or encourage people to take action

Always check the newspaper or magazine guidelines for editorials. These guidelines often provide word-count and other style guidelines. If you do not follow these guidelines, the editor is not obligated to print your article.

General Writing Tips:

- Usually no more than 250 words, so be clear and to the point.
- Don't try to be all-inclusive and state everything you know. Pick the position with the strongest argument and focus on making it clear and persuasive.
- Don't use "I" – "I believe we should support tourism by increasing funding" isn't as strong as "Tourism needs more funding."
- Avoid exaggeration.
- Use an active voice. The subject in your sentence performs the action. (Instead of "The letter was mailed by Marilyn" say "Marilyn mailed the letter.")
- Mix up rhythm of sentences to keep it interesting.
- Don't use run-on sentences.
- Readers expect to get more than just facts, so it's okay to entertain.
- Answer Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How.
- Format similar to an essay with an introduction, body and conclusion.

Introduction:

- Because you have limited words, make sure you have a catchy lead sentence or two.
- Often an introduction states the problem and solution in one or two sentences, and then the rest of the editorial supports the statement.

Body:

- Present opposition; don't ignore the opposition or your credibility will suffer.
- Dissect the opposition, and support your position with facts. Use constructive criticism.
- If the opposition has a valid point, acknowledge it to make you appear rational.

Conclusion:

- End with a strong statement.
- Sometimes people read nothing other than the first and last paragraph, so try reading both to see if your position is clear.