

Appreciating the Newspaper

Daily newspapers provide a wealth of information and offer an informative, thoughtful, even entertaining way to find out what's going on in the world around you. For some people, a newspaper is the only reading they do as adults. Here are some tips on how you can be a more critical reader, even if all you're doing is finding a movie showtime or looking for an apartment to rent.

NEWS

Generally the main sections in any newspaper include international, national, state, and local or regional news.

- Look for the 5Ws and the H in the lead paragraphs (Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How)
- There should be no editorializing (opinion or commentary) in a **hard news** story. It should be all fact.

EDITORIAL

The editorial section of the paper is where writers are allowed to present their opinions and persuasive pieces of writing. They most often take the forms of:

- Staff Editorials. These are pieces written by staff writers and published unsigned, signaling that they should be perceived as the collective opinion of the newspaper itself
- Signed editorials. These pieces are written by individual reporters and published with a **by-line** (a line in a newspaper naming the writer of an article). They are meant to be taken as the opinion of that individual reporter
- Op-Ed (reflective) pieces. These stories--either reflective or persuasive--are meant to give insight, depth, or reflection on a specific issue or to outline the author's specific point-of-view
- Letters to the editors. These are letters written by readers of the newspaper who feel compelled to comment on issues they've read in previous issues

FEATURES

Sometimes called **soft news**, this section contains more lighthearted pieces intended to entertain, inform, or instruct readers on things they will enjoy. Such pieces include:

- Entertainment. These stories might concern how movie ticket prices are increasing, what movie studios are merging, or how the local symphony is doing financially
- Human Interest. These are the "A pet dog got lost and found his way home from 200 miles away" and "People who met on Facebook match for bone marrow transplant" type stories. If someone has an interesting coin collection or Civil War memorabilia, you'll find that story here
- Movie, television, music, plays reviews. Staff writers give you a heads up on what to catch on the tube, at the local cinema, concert venue, or regional theater
- Celebrity interviews. If a famous person has a new movie, CD, book, or television show to promote, chances are you'll be able to read an interview with that star in this section
- Social column (parties, fund-raisers). In these columns, staff writers follow the local events among social dignitaries. They might cover the local hospital fund-raiser, the political \$1,000/plate dinner, or a new restaurant opening
- This section also includes movie times, advice columns, celebrity gossip, obituaries, and comic strips

SPORTS

This section includes:

- Columns. Daily or weekly signed columns will appear that give reflection, insight, and depth to current sporting issues
- News. Has your team just made a trade? Do you have a new coach? You'll read about it here

- Features. Did a local town boy or girl make it to the big leagues? Did a player overcome adversity to continue to play? These kinds of human interest, soft news stories can also be found here in sports
- Box Scores. These are the little teeny boxes that list the scores and stats in the sports section. For many sports fans, this is often all they read.

CLASSIFIED ADS

This section includes:

- Big ads for local stores
- Classified ads for items, services, roommates, and residential rentals
- Help wanted ads (jobs, etc.)

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1. Describe the front page of today's on-line edition of The Argus. At a glance, what do you see?
2. The **teaser** is an eye-catching graphic element, on page one or section fronts, that promotes an item inside; it is also called a promo. What stories are being promoted in the teaser of today's newspaper?
3. Click on the name of the newspaper.
 - Copy the information that is included in its **folio** (the name and logo near the top of the front page and the information directly below it.)
4. Copy any one of the **headlines** on the front page.
 - Briefly predict what you think the story will be about (be specific don't just paraphrase the headline!)
 - Is it hard news, a feature story, or an editorial?
5. Click on the story to read it in its entirety.
 - Is it international, national, state, and local or regional news?
 - Summarize what the article is about by describing its 5 W's and H.
 - How meaningful is that story to you? Explain why you should care or why you don't.
6. Click on **A: Main**. Look at the table of contents that list the pages. How many are there? Just based on the headlines, what kind of news stories are on each page? (Ignore the ads, and answer according to the majority of stories). List page A01, A02, A03, etc.
7. Click on **B. Local News**.
 - Read the headlines; then click to open the one you find most interesting or appealing.
 - Summarize what the article is about by describing its 5 W's and H.
 - How meaningful is that story to you? Explain why you should care or why you don't.
8. Click on **Across**, then click on each of the pages.
 - Describe five items presented in this section.
 - Why do you think this section is called Across?
9. Find an editorial.
 - What form does it take (staff editorial, signed editorial, OP-ED, letter to the editor)
 - Identify the writer's major thesis or claim.

- Copy the author's supporting evidence, or analyze the author's use of rhetorical devices (is the writer appealing to logos, pathos or ethos?) Then describe how well the writer convinces you to do/believe what he or she is suggesting or claiming.
- What is the author's call to action? In other words, what does he or she expect you to do as a result of the editorial? This may either be implied or directly stated.

10. Write a feature story. Review a movie, music, or television show, conduct a mock celebrity interview, or write an article about a friend's hobby after talking to him or her about it.

11. Click on **C. Sports**, then find the box scores for any sport. Summarize, in your own words, what the details tell you.

12. Find an interesting or relevant advertisement.

- Copy or summarize what the ad is selling or advertising.
- Identify how the ad uses logos, pathos and/or ethos. Copy and explain words or phrases, or describe images, that are significant in getting the ad's main idea across. Consider word choice, graphic placement, audience, purpose and connotation in your response
- Briefly explain what about the ad made it particularly interesting or relevant.