



Lesson Plans

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NewsBrands
Ireland

An Initiative from NewsBrands Ireland.



News Literacy Tutorial

Pages:

12 13



40-60 minutes



Handout for
differentiating
News Writing
Styles.
PDF to print/
photocopy

Material to be used

Read pages 12 and 13.

After these have been read, either silently and independently, or with the group as a whole have a discussion on the different emphasis in each piece.

Optional: Differentiating News Writing Styles

The following tasks can be done individually, in pairs or in small groups.

1. **News:** Ask them to bullet point the factual details in this version of the story.
2. **Analysis:** Get them to choose three words or phrases that indicate how the journalist is adding their analysis to the story.
3. **Feature:** List three feelings which the feature version of the story evoked in them.
4. **Colour:** Identify words or phrases that created drama or tension in this version.
5. **Comment:** What comments have they to make on what is said here about how news is written?
6. **Fake News:** How do they think victims' families feel in situations like this?

Take **feedback** from these to focus group discussion.

News Writing Styles: The Differences



Read the different pieces numbered 1 – 6 on pages 12 and 13 and complete the following:

1. News

Bullet point any facts you found in this version of the story.

-
-
-
-
-
-

2. Analysis

Choose three words or phrases that indicate to you that the journalist is adding to the facts with their own analysis.

-
-
-

3. Feature

Identify three feelings which the feature version of the story evoked in you:

I felt _____ because _____

I felt _____ because _____

I felt _____ because _____



4. Colour

Pick out words or phrases which you feel created drama or tension in this version of the story.

-
-
-
-
-
-

5. Comment

What comment have you to make on what is said here about how news is written?

6. Fake News

How do you think victims' families feel in situations like this?

Do you think the journalists or news outlets who don't check their sources thoroughly and who are later proved to have published hoaxes or misinformation should be punished?

Writing styles

Different newspapers and different sections within newspapers require a range of varied writing styles, irrespective of whether they are broadsheet publications or 'red top' tabloids. What is required in a news story is far removed from a background feature on tracker mortgages, 12 paragraphs of colour from an All-Ireland Hurling Final, or summing up a complex court case in 800 words.

Skilled journalists can deliver whatever style is required across the spectrum, from news to features to analysis to commentary. However, such skill is slowly crafted from constant honing, and observing and learning from the best.

While the building blocks of a news story continue to form the basics of good journalism, the ability to deliver informed analysis and authoritative commentary are increasingly essential in a world of confusing social media noise.

Here are some examples of the different writing styles deployed across various newspapers when 'The Beast from The East' met 'Storm Emma' to cause havoc across the country earlier this year.



1 News

A news story is all about the facts.

In an era of 'fake news', the words of C.P. Scott are more important than ever: "Comment is free, facts are sacred".

Always tick the five W boxes and one H:

Who (was involved), what (happened), where (did it take place), when (did it take place) why (did it happen) and how (did it happen)?

Broadsheet: The country is facing total shutdown from 4pm today with people ordered to stay indoors, schools and colleges closed, rail and bus services halted, and motorists ordered it would be 'suicidal' to take to the roads. The warning was issued as it was confirmed the 'Beast from the East' and 'Storm Emma' will clash directly over Ireland today. The Government said between 22cm and 28cm of snow will fall by tomorrow afternoon. People in Cork City, which will be among the first areas hit by the storm, face a further hazard as they brace for high tides and flooding.

Tabloid: A killer blizzard is due to sweep across the country today, with people warned to stay indoors after 4pm, Taoiseach Leo Varadkar said there is a real risk to life over the next 48 hours as snow of up to 25cm is expected combined with storm-force winds.

The "total whiteout" is predicted to be the worst winter weather since 1982. "We are on red alert. Everybody should stay indoors," Mr Varadkar said.

2 Colour

A colour piece strives to capture an event in words, in a way that brings it alive for the reader who wasn't there. Where a news story is hard fact-driven, colour paints vivid pictures.

(My children) finally had their whiteout, the first one they would properly remember. And, joy to beat all joys, schools were closed. The first ring to the door from a pal came before 9am, the first snowball fight came about one and a half minutes later and the first attack of tears because "he hurted me" about one and a half minutes after that.

And then there was the inevitable snowman. The thing the happy, smiling pictures don't tell you is that constructing these guys with fresh, powdery snow takes a long, long time and a lot of hard work... A day and a half in, several snowball fights, one life lesson ("never eat yellow snow") and one mini-snowman later, the novelty of spending every minute of their first snow break from school in the actual snow was starting to wear off, just a touch. "I feel very cold now," the six-year-old ventured in her smallest voice. "Can I watch Netflix?"



Country braces for total shutdown

Cork City faces high tides and flooding as storm approaches

Storm Emma is set to hit the south coast of Ireland with high winds and heavy rain. In Cork, the city is bracing for high tides and flooding as the storm approaches. The city council has issued warnings for residents to be prepared for power cuts and transport disruption.



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RSA makes €1.7m windfall from L-drivers missing test

The Road Safety Authority (RSA) has made a windfall of €1.7 million from L-licence drivers who failed to appear for their driving tests. The revenue was used to fund road safety initiatives.

Government 'not provoking' UK on Brexit

The Irish government has stated that it is not provoking the UK over Brexit. The Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar, said that Ireland is committed to a peaceful and orderly transition.

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Lavinia in Limerick
McManus home for €3.5million

Margaret Atwood interview
'Women's rights are human rights... It's not a hard concept'

A sporting thank you
Bringing a tear to a stone

THE IRISH TIMES



People urged to stay indoors for blizzard

Up to 10cm of snow forecast to fall by noon tomorrow in Limerick and Munster. Public transport is expected to be disrupted and schools are likely to close.

Draft deal on Brexit rejected by May

The draft deal on Brexit was rejected by the House of Commons. The deal was seen as a significant step forward but it was not enough to secure a majority.

Mandatory retirement may be abolished

The government is considering abolishing mandatory retirement. This would allow people to continue working beyond the age of 65.

Weather
Forecast for the next few days.

Home News
Latest news from the home.

World News
International news.

Business + Technology
News from the business and technology sectors.

Sports Thursday
Sports news for the day.

THE IRISH TIMES
Daily newspaper published in Ireland.

5 Analysis

Newspaper analysis goes beyond the immediate facts of a news story and places them in a broader and deeper context, assessing and evaluating their wider impact beyond the immediacy of a specific event.

The big freeze is set to cost more than €160m as the blizzard keeps most of the country housebound. Industry sources expect the economic cost to shops, restaurants and bars will be more than €70m each day - following a shutdown of most businesses and transport modes yesterday and today.

Transport companies such as Dublin Bus, Irish Rail and Bus Éireann have all effectively been in shutdown since early on Wednesday.

Both bus companies closed entirely yesterday and today.

Irish Rail and Dublin Bus are both expected to experience revenue losses for fares of around €600,000 for each day, working out at €1.2m each over the course of the two days.

Bus Éireann is anticipating revenue losses of around €250,000 for the two days without any services.

Insurance Ireland say it is too difficult to estimate the damage cost of this latest blizzard.

However, the last big freezes in Ireland in January and December 2010 saw payouts of €297m and €224m respectively.

The restaurant sector alone lost around €50m in revenue, as businesses count the cost of the weather-related disruption.

Business lobby groups, for the most part, shied away from estimating the cost in lost revenue, but Restaurants Association of Ireland chief Adrian Cummins said it would be around the €50m mark for his members.

3 Feature

Unlike a news story, a feature need not be time sensitive and should have readers on a hook from the arresting intro to the closing par. Aside from colour writing it's the form best suited to flair and creativity.

The apocalypse is nigh - 7 things that will inevitably happen when Storm Emma hits Ireland.

We have notoriously short memories when it comes to the weather here in Ireland. Granted, it has been eight years since we've endured a genuine cold snap, but you can be sure we learned nothing from that experience.

Here are a few things that will inevitably happen in the coming days...

Fear of the unknown causes the anxiety to rise. All those unanswered questions: Will the schools close? Will I need to take time off work? How bad will the roads be? Is our car rear wheel drive? Should we buy those claw things for the wheels? What if the pipes burst? Where are the candles? Do we have enough heating oil to survive the week? Is Netflix paid up? Are we stocked up on bread, milk, wine?

Nary a snowflake to be seen and the supermarkets have already been cleaned out. The shelves are not just empty of bread but milk and meat too. Because perishables are exactly what you need in a crisis, aren't they? Before Ophelia hit last year, Irish retailers in some areas saw a spike in sales likened to a 'mini Christmas' and it looks like they're raking it in again ahead of the Beast from the East.

4 Comment

Comment can take the form of a newspaper editorial or it can be the personal opinion of a journalist or contributor.

If the country was a company, Ireland Inc would be reported as having undergone a disorderly wind-down. At short notice, its internal infrastructure, including Government offices, failed to function. Short of taking in the roads ('Father Ted'-style), the instructions not to travel couldn't have been any clearer.

There was a run on the national currency... which apparently is now bread. And the CEO, Leo Varadkar, made a moody statement telling workers the next 24 hours "are going to be a challenge for us".

But hopefully by the end of today we'll be able to say that the future for Ireland Inc looks positive.

Perhaps what's more remarkable than the fact that the Government called for a national shutdown is the fact that people listened.

By 4pm the country had heeded the warnings. Housing Minister Eoghan Murphy, along with Mr Hogan and Ms Cusack, beat their own retreat to Buswell's Hotel across from Leinster House where they waited it out.

This evening the country faces a new challenge. The shops will be restocked, and in time roads will be cleared.

Local authorities, the Defence Forces and the Government must relaunch Ireland. And the pressure will be on to do it in an orderly fashion.

100KPH Beast from East bites

IRISH DAILY STAR
25 FEARR AN STAR
Thursday March 8, 2018 €1.00

SORRY... WE'RE CLOSED

No work today as country to shut down from 4pm