



# GRADING RUBRIC - COPY/FEATURE WRITING

## **AN *EXCEPTIONAL* STORY EXHIBITS ALL OF THE FOLLOWING CHARACTERISTICS:**

- The lead compels the reader to look at the story because it is anecdotal, shocking, surprising or emotional.
- The conclusion ties to the beginning, uses a summary quote or just stops.
- Reported stories are written in third person, past tense while specialty stories might be in first person, present tense.
- The story, written in active voice, simple sentences and short paragraphs, makes every word count.
- Strong quotes carry the story forward, are properly attributed and do not repeat previous information.
- The story is organized to flow logically, through the use of transitions, and not necessarily chronologically.
- Picture-painting verbs have been used.
- The story is specific and has been fact checked.
- There are no style, spelling, punctuation or grammar errors.
- Information in the story answers all of the reader's questions.
- Writing avoids expressing the writer's opinion.
- Writing compels the reader to become involved and continue reading.

## **A *COMMENDABLE* STORY EXHIBITS ALL OF THE FOLLOWING CHARACTERISTICS:**

- Lead emphasizes the most important aspect of the story.
- The conclusion ties to the beginning, uses a summary quote or just stops.
- Organization of the story flows smoothly and logically but not necessary chronologically.
- Picture-painting verbs have been used.
- There are no style, spelling, punctuation or grammar errors.
- Information in the story answers all of the reader's questions.
- Quotes propel the story forward and are properly attributed.
- The story, written in active voice, simple sentences and short paragraphs, makes every word count.
- Writer avoids expressing his/her opinion.
- Reporting copy is written in third person and past tense.
- The story has been fact checked.
- Writing compels the reader to become involved and continue reading.

## **AN *ADEQUATE* STORY EXHIBITS ALL OF THE FOLLOWING CHARACTERISTICS:**

- Lead emphasizes the most important aspect of the story.
- Some opinion is expressed in the conclusion.
- Reporting copy is written in third person and past tense.
- Organization of the story has a beginning, middle and end but lacks flow.
- Picture-painting verbs have been used.



- Writing becomes wordy and often in passive voice.
- Quotes are properly attributed, but don't always propel the story forward.
- There are limited style, spelling, punctuation or grammar errors.
- Some questions may be left unanswered.
- Writer generally avoids expressing his/her opinion.
- Not all of the facts in the story have been checked.
- Writing does not motivate the reader to continue.

**A STORY WITH *SOME EVIDENCE OF ACHIEVEMENT* EXHIBITS THE FOLLOWING CHARACTERISTICS:**

- The lead introduces the story.
- The conclusion may express opinion, predict or speculate.
- Story lacks discernable organization.
- Writing becomes wordy and scope of coverage is limited.
- Inconsistencies in person and tense may appear.
- Quotes, when used, may not be accurate or attributed.
- Verbs are passive in voice and bland.
- Fact checking is not evident.
- There may be errors in style, spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- May leave the reader with unanswered questions.
- Writer's opinion is expressed.
- There is little in the story to compel the reader to continue.

**A STORY WITH *LITTLE OR NO EVIDENCE OF ACHIEVEMENT* EXHIBITS THE FOLLOWING CHARACTERISTICS:**

- Story lacks discernible organization.
- Inconsistencies in person and tense appear.
- Does little to inform the reader about the topic or event and leaves reader with many questions.
- Writing becomes wordy and scope of coverage is limited.
- Verbs are passive in voice and bland.
- Fact checking is not evident.
- Errors in style, spelling, grammar and punctuation are evident.
- No quotes are used.
- Writer's opinion is overtly expressed.
- There is little in the story to compel the reader to read on.