

PRESS PASS

Welcome to Press Pass 2017 - the sixth year of the NewsBrands Ireland Newspapers in Education (NiE) initiative.

How does Press Pass work?

During November, participating schools will receive a selection of local and national newspapers. These are used in conjunction with this workbook to give students a better understanding of how news is gathered and shared across many platforms and the important role newspapers play in our society and the necessity for a free press in any functioning democracy.

What is the aim of Press Pass?

The main aim is to encourage students to read and write more. Using newspapers as part of the daily curriculum, teachers and students will get a better understanding of news and current affairs and be exposed to a range of views and analysis - sometimes radical, sometimes infuriating, but always engaging and entertaining - to help them form opinions of their own.

What is the Press Pass guidebook for?

This guidebook is to be used in class in conjunction with the newspapers and lesson plan. It looks in detail at the main writing styles and range of skills that make up your daily newspaper:

- What is news and how to write a news story
- The difference between news and features
- The skills required to write commentary
- What makes a good photograph
- The secrets behind good sports journalism.

It also gives some practical hints and tips to students who plan to enter our search for the Student Journalist of the Year.

What about the competition?

We are always on the look out for new talent and the next generation of budding writers and journalists.

Students can enter the competition in any one of the five categories: news, features, comment, photojournalism and sport. Details of how to enter, the rules, guidelines, tips and instructions are explained in the different sections throughout this guidebook. If you're looking for some inspiration, check out the winning entries in this year's NewsBrands Ireland Journalism Awards - www.journalismawards.ie

How to enter

Schools can submit up to three entries in each category. The closing date for entries is 28th of February, 2018. Schools must submit all entries using the entry system in the competition section of the Press Pass website: www.presspass.ie

The winners

Our panel of judges will choose the winning entry from each of the five categories - plus two runners-up from each section.

An overall winner will also be selected by the judges and all winners will be announced at a national awards ceremony in April 2018.

Teacher's Lesson Plan

A new Teacher's Lesson Plan to accompany this workbook can be downloaded from www.presspass.ie. Designed to equip teachers with practical guidelines and tips for teaching the Press Pass module, the Lesson Plan has options to run the course as a 6 week or 12 week module - entirely dependent on your class group's interest and ability.

Good luck - and enjoy the process!

NewsBrands Ireland



CONTENTS

Why news matters
Pages 4-5

The competition
Pages 6-7

What is news and
how to write it
Page 8-9

News tutorial
Pages 10-11

News literacy tutorial
Pages 12-13

How to conduct an
interview
Pages 14-15

Twitter and social media
Pages 16-17

From tweet to front
page
Pages 18-19

Features
Pages 20-23

Photojournalism
Pages 24-27

Comment
Pages 28-31

Sport
Pages 32-35

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“Knowing what you are looking at is the first step to figuring out what you can believe.”

? Can you trust what you see or read?

We’ve all heard the phrase ‘fake news’. In the world of social media, where everyone is more connected than ever before, it’s often difficult to know what’s real and what’s fake.

When news happens, there is often a race to get the information out into the public domain. But just because the information is first, does not automatically mean it is right.

You need to be able to trust what you read. At a time when the world seems to be caught up in a war of words, you need to carefully choose what you read.

Newspapers provide certainty, in a world of uncertainty, offering readers not just a greater understanding of the world around them, but transparency into how news is collected and presented to readers.

Why news matters

? What is news?

Ask 100 people ‘what is news?’ and you’ll get 100 different answers.

The Oxford Dictionary defines news as “new information, fresh events reported”. In other words, something new, that affects someone, somewhere.

It could be as simple as an event in your school, like a student winning a national award; something that happened on your street, like a shop burning to the ground; or something more global, like the election of US President Donald Trump.

? Can you tell what kind of content is it?

We’re bombarded with information 24/7 - on our phones, on our ipads, on our TVs and across our newspapers.

It’s difficult to keep up. With so much data flying around, it’s hard to know what to believe. The first step, is to identify what kind of content you are looking at - is it news, a feature, a sports story, a blog post, a personal post on social media, a rumour, or someone’s opinion?

To help with that, you need to find out where the content is coming from - the source.

Is it from a news organisation? Is it from a group or organisation that you know,

or maybe never heard of? Or is it from a recognised website or blogger?

Once you find where the information is coming from, you can then start asking other important questions like trying to find out who the author is; or a little bit more about the organisation he/she works for.

Maybe then you might look at things like the motivation they might have for writing what they have written, the evidence they provide to back up the material and how fair and balanced the article or feature is.



Las Vegas police stand guard along the streets outside the Route 91 Harvest Country music festival on October 1, 2017 in Las Vegas, Nevada where Stephen Craig Paddock killed 59 people and injured more than 500. Photo: David Becker/Getty Images

HOW TO ENTER

As part of the Press Pass initiative, students and schools have an opportunity to enter our prestigious competition, the winners of which will be honoured at a national ceremony early next year. The competition has five categories: News, Features, Comment, Photojournalism and Sport. There are strict and specific rules for each category which must be adhered to.

All entries must be submitted via the competition section of the Press Pass website: www.presspass.ie

IMPORTANT!

- The work must be your own. It cannot be copied from any other source.
- News, feature and sport articles must be fact and not fiction.
- Any and all quotes you use must be taken from interview(s) you have conducted.

If you do not adhere to the strict guidelines, your entry will not be considered by the judges.



Fallow deer clash antlers during rutting season in Phoenix Park Dublin. Picture: Niall Carson



CATEGORIES

NEWS

For your news article, you can only choose from one of the options below:

- 1) Interview a local personality / politician / celebrity. Write the article based on your interview.
- 2) Identify an issue relevant to you, your school, or your area. Interview people relevant to your subject of choice. Write an article based on your interview.
- 3) Focus on an event in your local area. Write an article, giving details of what is / has happened, how, why, when and who was involved.

FEATURES

For your feature article, you can only choose from one of the options below:

- 1) Write a profile of a person/ group/organisation you admire.
- 2) Interview a well known personality. Write a feature based on your interview.

Articles must be no shorter than 600 words and no longer than 800 words.

PHOTOJOURNALISM

Photojournalism covers all the categories: News, Features, Comments, Sport.

Entries include photographs, graphics, cartoons or caricatures. All entries must be submitted in jpeg format with a minimum image size of 3MB.

COMMENT

For your Comment piece, you can only choose from one of the options below:

- 1) Write a letter to the Editor of no more than 400 words.
- 2) Choose an issue that affects you, or something that you have opinion on. Write a comment piece of between 400-600 words.

SPORT

For your Sport article, you can only choose from one of the options below:

- 1) Attend a local sporting event. Write an account of what happened - 400 words.
- 2) Write a profile of a sports personality you admire - 500 words.
- 3) Interview a well known sports personality. Write an article based on your interview - 500 words.

Ard Fhear! A Neighbour's Inspiration

By Tomás Ó hUallacháin
Pobalscoil Chorca Dhuibhne, An Daingean

Two elderly customers prop the counter, their eyes fixated on their settling pints. Applying the crème de resistance is Tomás Mac a tSaorsigh. Saddle sore, Tomás hands the men their pint of plain. 'Anois a bhuachaillí' exclaims Tomás in his native tongue. The young cyclist, after his 3,053 mile exertion, is at his ease manning the bar of his father's premises in the Corca Dhuibhne Gaeltacht.

Inspired that a 22 year old neighbour could accomplish such an achievement, I have Tomás join me in the snug once his only afternoon customers are, like their pints, settled.

I asked what made him cycle alone from San Diego to Florida's St. Augustine. "When 16 year old Kerry teenager Donal Walsh tragically passed from cancer in 2013, a charity in his name was established. I felt the best way to turn a hobby into an awareness mission was to cycle across the U.S to help raise funds for the Donal's Live Life Foundation.

For 42 days Tomás battled headwinds and punishing terrain on his epic journey, punctuated by only 7 days



Learn from last year's winner

recovery. Departing on October 24th it wasn't until December 11th that he free wheeled to his finish line having seen California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas.

Tired imagining it, I asked how he any downtime whatsoever. "In Austin I took three days off and had a badly needed night on the beer."

As someone who'd get lost in a shopping mall, my admiration for his effort soared. Curious, I asked how he managed those infinite, tumbleweed

accompanied US roads. "Leaving Ireland I was sceptical, scared about cycling a different country. Yet I've met incredible people on the way."

His inventory was limited. A bike bought in San Diego, sunscreen, two panniers, two pairs of bib shorts and an Irish team gilet. Two Donal Walsh cycling jerseys, three pairs of socks, runners and a light jacket.

Cycling shoes, gloves, some casuals and a tub of chamois cream completed the list.

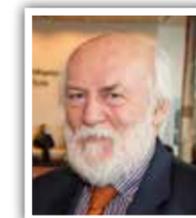
Headwinds were a low point. "Thinking I'd have a westerly wind at my back I cycled from west to east. If anyone wants to cycle across America go east to west. The wind will be more generous!"

I asked Tomás about social interaction 'en-route.' "I experienced great warmth and generosity," he said. "Familiar with Americans from our family pub, I know they're great people."

"I was offered food, accommodation and was treated like a king. The American people have been absolutely incredible to me."

He called his experience 'priceless,' learning much of the diverse U.S. cultures and landscapes, and significantly raising €3907 for the Foundation. For a young man who found cycling after his father banished him from the Playstation, Tomás is an inspiration to us all.

As the old men beckoned our heroic peddler to pull another two pints, a line from their overheard conversation summed up my admiration. 'He's a better man than any of us.'



"In an era of "alternative facts" the responsibilities of journalists are always increasing. But it is also important to recognize that the real skill of the journalist does not reside just in the facts, but the narrative in which he or she embeds them. It is not a coincidence that most journalists describe what they produce not as an "article" but as a "story."

Prof. John Horgan, Chairman of the Judging Panel



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NEWS

“What you see is news, what you know is background, what you feel is opinion”

- Lester Markel, American journalist, 1894-1977

What is the job of a journalist?

Even in the age of 24-hour news cycles, digital platforms and social media, the key function of a journalist remains the same - gather the information and present it fairly and accurately. The key for any journalist is to give an accurate and balanced report of whatever they are working on and whatever platform they are reporting on - print or digital. If a criminal is gunned down in broad daylight, it's the job

of the journalist to tell the reader what happened, who it happened to, how it happened, why it happened and when it happened. If you answer those five key questions, then 99 times out of 100, you've done your job properly. Remember, news is supposed to be fair, accurate and balanced - it's not your view on what's happened, not what you think might or should have happened. It's what actually happened - the facts of which you have checked, and double checked.

Do

- ✔ **Do:** Make your story interesting and relevant.
- ✔ **Do:** Always check your facts. Credibility is the most valuable asset to a reporter.
- ✔ **Do:** Be balanced - always give both sides of the story.
- ✔ **Do:** Use lots of quotes. People love reading what other people say.

Don't

- ✗ **Don't:** Start your news articles with a question. Stick to the basic introduction formula and you can't go wrong.
- ✗ **Don't:** Editorialise - news stories are fact not opinion. It is not your job to argue a point of view, or sum up with your opinion. Just present the facts and let the reader draw his/her own conclusions.
- ✗ **Don't:** Get flowery - keep your sentences and paragraphs short.
- ✗ **Don't:** Use lots of heavily descriptive language. When you've finished, go through the entire story and try to remove any words that aren't completely necessary.



Controversial N86 Upgrade Continues To Divide Opinion As Next Phase Begins

By Kate Ní Dhubháin
Pobalscoil Chorca Dhuibhne, An Daingean



Learn from last year's winner



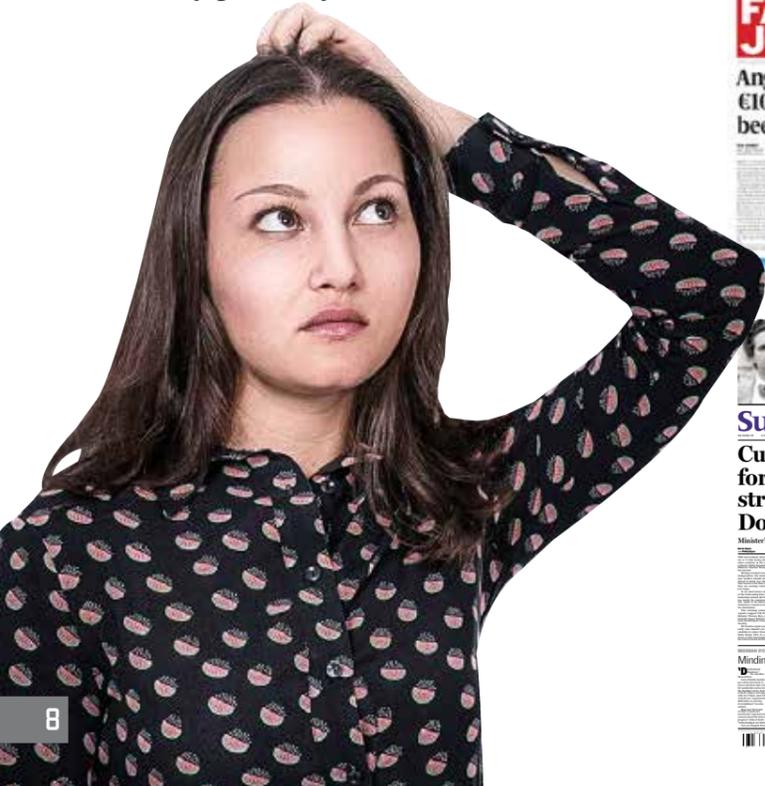
After an allocation of €3.8 million announced by Brendan Griffin TD in January 2016, the long awaited upgrade of the 16.5km stretch of the N86 between Dingle and Annascaul has commenced in recent weeks. Motorists have observed the staked outlines of the proposed route while heavy machinery has begun groundworks between Baile na Saor Lower and Lispole. Mired in controversy from the start of the initial project, this new stretch is also causing ripples in the community with some opposed to the changes and others still seeking clarity on many issues surrounding the proposed route.

With a timeframe of 18 months to complete the project, Allman and McSweeney, the company awarded the contract to build the road, have started to excavate along the proposed route. While the intention is to improve road safety by removing the series of sharp hairpin bends renowned with the road, many objectors feel that the 'character' of the road is being denuded. One local who wishes to remain anonymous said "Isn't this why

they come here in the first place? Those hairpins are an attraction in themselves.' When asked whether the changes will help improve safety the local replied that 'the road as it is enforces safety. Those hairpins slow cars down. You can't pass out.' However more seasoned road-users want to see the changes, citing faster commute times with safer stretches to overtake the 'glut of tourists' on this popular national route. One Dingle motorist cited the summer months as

frustrating having to deal with erratic driving from tourists, impromptu picture stops and 'dangerously slow driving.' For pupils of Pobalscoil Chorca Dhuibhne, the new proposals will be welcomed. Students say the improvements will greatly enhance their journey to school by shortening their trips both ways. "Any few minutes extra at home in the morning or gained for homework or community pursuits come evening is to be welcomed" says Jason Mac a tSithigh, Chairman of the

Pobalscoil Chorca Dhuibhne Students' Council. School bus drivers were also enthusiastic about the upgrade, citing the straightening of the road as necessary to eliminate the potential danger posed by high sided coaches packed with students negotiating hairpin bends. Others have different issues with this project. Landowners along the route have been served CPO's by the NRA and County Council. While many have accepted the arrangements, some have not owing to a lack of clarification on the exact route and the likely outcome for their property. Kay Devane of 'Kate's Shop' in Lispole claims she still has 'no idea' how the road will affect her premises and another adjacent property, stating "This is going on for 6 years and some locals still don't know for certain how they will be effected." With landowners still seeking a clarification meeting with NRA and Council representatives it appears that this project, like the N86 itself, is set for tailbacks of its own.



“A news story, unlike any other journalistic endeavour, has a carefully crafted formula for success. The job of the news reporter is to tell the reader what happened, who it happened to, how it happened and when it happened.”

Press Pass Judging Panel



How to Write News

Your job is to make the news story as relevant, interesting, informative and as accurate as you can.

Always remember who you are writing for. The person reading the Irish Times will want the information written and presented in a certain way, so too the person reading the Irish Sun.

So whether you're writing for the school newspaper, or the New York Times, be aware of your audience.

Keep the story simple and straight-forward. Make it as easy as possible for the reader to digest the information.

The opening paragraph (or intro) is vital - it's your only chance to grab the reader's attention and entice them to read on.

Remember - you've lost 30% of readers after the first paragraph and 50% by paragraph four.

How to Structure a News Story

Remember the five Ws when writing news - Who, What, Where, When and Why. Answer these for the reader and you've done your job.

The Introduction

The most important section of any news story is the opening paragraph. The intro communicates the facts of the article in the first few lines.

FOR EXAMPLE: A man was gunned down in front of shocked shoppers in the latest gangland tit-for-tat murder.

What?

The What - summarise what happened.

The 31-year-old, identified as one of the country's leading drug dealers, was shot six times in the head and chest.

When?

The When - give the reader some more of the key details.

He was shot shortly after 1pm, by a lone gunman, as he walked down Grafton Street in front of hundreds of shoppers.

DOUBLE JOY FOR BEYONCÉ



Celeb couple share good news

BY EDWARD MCCARTHY

Beyoncé has given birth to twins in Los Angeles, according to reports on several celebrity news websites.

The singer, who is 35, and her partner, the rapper and music producer Jay Z, already have a five-year-old daughter, Blue Ivy.

E! News, citing multiple unidentified sources, reported the birth and that Jay Z and Blue Ivy were seen at a Los Angeles area hospital on Thursday.

Us Weekly, also citing multiple unidentified sources, reported that the couple welcomed twins earlier this week. "Bey and Jay are thrilled and have started sharing the news with their family and closest friends," one source told People.

A representative for Beyoncé did not respond to a request for comment.

The celebrity news websites did not provide additional details, such as the date and time the twins were born or the sex of the infants.

The performer, one of the most powerful women in the music business, announced the pregnancy on her Instagram account in February along with an image of her posing in lingerie and caressing a noticeable baby bump.

The announcement had more than 8m "likes" in the first 24 hours to become the "most liked" Instagram post ever.

The R&B singer performed live at the Grammy awards in Los Angeles two weeks later, proudly displaying her swelling belly in a motherhood-themed show. She has since posted numerous pictures of her bare baby bump on social media accounts.

The birth of Blue Ivy caused a paparazzi storm in 2012, with New York's Lenox Hill hospital shutting down part of its maternity wing to accommodate the family.

News of the pregnancy came less than a year after the release of Beyoncé's 2016 album Lemonade, in which she appeared to address longstanding rumours of trouble in her eight-year marriage.

The lyrics of several songs spoke about being cheated on, and regretting being married. But Beyoncé made clear in the final tracks of the album and in music videos featuring Jay Z that she had decided to stay in the relationship.

The couple has never addressed the rumours publicly.

news@newspress.ie

Headline

Five times as many people read headlines as the actual story

Picture

Detailed picture enhances the story

Byline

Journalist who broke the story

What

Tell the reader what happened

Why

How the controversy erupted

Additional info

Further details to enhance story

Email

Contact for newsroom

Headline

Must give people a reason to read on

Font

Large, bold text to show it's the most important element of design

Sub head

Holds the reader's attention by giving more details

Intro

The golden rule is KISS - keep it short and simple

Who

Who it happened to

When

Exact details of when it happened

Who?

The Who - who is the story about.

Gardai believe the murdered man was Joe Bloggs, from the inner city. Bloggs was a career criminal who was one of the main importers of cocaine into the country.

Why?

The Why - vital background information

Bloggs had survived an attempt on his life last year and was, according to sources, 'a dead man walking' after double crossing his former partner in crime.

Where?

The Where - give more details of the attack.

Bloggs was just passing the entrance of HMV when a hooded man approached and pulled a gun from his jacket pocket, according to eyewitness accounts.

In this case, you would use plenty of quotations, what people saw, what they heard, what they did, what happened next.

Key tips

Know your audience - who are you writing for? Regardless of the platform you are writing for - always remember - be brief and to the point Never forget the the 5 Ws - **Who? What? When? Where? Why?**

1. Tell the reader how you know what you know - source every new piece of information.
2. Be clear and accurate - make sure your story makes sense.
3. Reread for accuracy and fairness before you finish.
4. Check all the numbers, dates and details.
5. Check your spelling and punctuation - ensure names are spelled correctly and consistently throughout the story.
6. Check for balance. Is the story balanced and fair? Does it tell both sides of the story?

Writing styles

Journalists use different writing styles to tell the same story.

From straight news reporting – the how, why, what, where and when, to colour and analysis, the writer can use a variety of formats to inform the reader, provide greater context and understanding, and in some cases behind the story itself.

Included here are a number of examples of how journalists told the story of the bomb attack during the Ariana Grande concert in Manchester. And of course, how some on social media told stories that never happened at all.

1 News

Twenty-two people have been killed and at least 59 people injured in a terrorist bombing during an Ariana Grande concert at Manchester Arena. Children are known to be among the dead. It is the worst terror attack in the UK since 56 people were killed in the 7 July London bombings in 2005. Footage showed thousands of people fleeing the arena in a panic after an explosion ripped through the foyer as people milled out of the arena at 10.33pm.



Ariana Grande who is to become an honorary citizen of Manchester after organising a concert to raise funds for victims of the terror attack in the city. Picture: Dave Hogan, AP

2 Analysis

The most thankless job in live music has just got a little harder again. The horrific events following the Ariana Grande show at the Manchester Arena last week have put the focus once more on security at concerts and live music events. As with the murderous attack on the Bataclan venue in Paris during a show by the Eagles of Death Metal in 2014, a show attended by people who simply want to see a band or pop act has proven to be an easy target for terrorists.

Security at live music shows is already a huge priority for promoters. Those who regularly go to concerts know what to expect when they approach the door in terms of bag checks, pat-downs and the like. Such scrutiny is further heightened when it comes to festivals and big outdoor shows, with security forming a huge part of the pre-event planning and budgeting.



3 Feature

A boy of 15 yesterday gave a harrowing account of how he survived and recovered from the terror blast that killed his best friend. Adam Lawler revealed that he spent a week in intensive care and had five operations to remove more than 20 nuts



and bolts blown into his body during the Manchester Arena bombing. It left him almost blind in his right eye, with a gaping wound in his face, seven broken teeth, shattered bones in both legs and many other shrapnel wounds. Adam also told of how his



4 Colour

Inside the arena, a sea of pink balloons; 'Ariana superfans' – girls, mainly – thrilled at seeing the star herself perform live; mums and dads proud to be taking their youngest, primary school age daughters to their first ever pop concert. The killer could have been in no doubt he was targeting innocents. Ariana Grande, at 23 not much older than her fans, gave a final "Bye bye Manchester!" The lights came on. The children and their parents started to file out of the Manchester Arena. And then it happened.

5 Comment

The news is an important medium, and the media has a responsibility to share it to the best of their ability. But the media also has a responsibility to the people – both its audience and the human beings who make up any story. Newsrooms need to not just discourage bad, invasive reporting but ban it entirely, and stop sending their employees

to help traumatise victims. The media culture we've fostered is a toxic one, and it's no wonder people the world over find themselves with a deep-seeded hatred of what we do. In these trying times, good media is needed more than ever – not sensationalist cruel hate that is anything but in the public interest.



6 Fake news

The posts all have something in common – they were all sent after an attack in a European country and were all fake. Attached to each was a picture of someone who wasn't at the scene; some weren't even in the same country. In the wake of the Manchester attack, family members of people genuinely caught up in Monday night's terror searched



desperately for news of their loved ones. Many turned to social media. Collages of the missing were created by people who wanted to help. But as their posts went viral, so did the hoaxes. And this time, some ended up being published by major news outlets in the media scramble which traditionally follows a terrorist attack.

HOW TO CONDUCT AN INTERVIEW

An interview is one of the best sources of news. Talking to someone, asking questions, asking the **right** questions is a great way of eliciting information. Some of the best, most informative and interesting stories have come from interviews.



1) The more you do your homework in advance, the easier it will be.

Find out as much as possible about the person you are interviewing in advance - your background knowledge will tell you your subject you are really interested in their story.

2) Be ready

Try to anticipate what kind of story you will end up with. You should know what to expect from the interview, but keep an open mind in case there's a different story - a better angle - or a second story.

3) Key questions

- Write down your questions in advance.
- Have an idea of what information you want to get - that should help you frame your questions.
- Make sure you cover all the key areas you want to talk about.
- Be realistic - there's no point asking 50 questions, if you only have time, or room in your article, for 10.
- Work out the timing - how long your questions will take to ask, how long the interviewee will allow you.
- Don't be afraid to ask about the time in advance - nothing worse than turning up only to discover that the person you are interviewing has only 10 minutes to talk.
- Be interesting - if you ask boring questions, you'll get boring answers.

4) Be

Check and double check every detail. If the answer is not clear, or you don't understand it, don't be afraid to ask it again. Check the spelling of names, addresses and other unusual details - don't presume you know. It would be a pity to get personal or other details wrong because you didn't take time to check.

5) Note taking

Make sure you take down the details correctly. Not much good if you can't read your writing afterwards! If you plan to record (either audio or video) the interview make sure the device is working properly, you have enough storage room and battery power.

6) Listen

You're there to listen, not to talk. Let **them** do the talking and then make sure you gather plenty of quotes.

7) Wrap up

Just before you leave, make sure you've asked all your questions and covered all the topics. Then ask the "bucket question" - "Is there anything else you feel I should know / you would like to tell me?" Get a phone number, in case you need to double check any details later.

8) Read it

Always read what you write. Make sure the transcript of your interview makes sense, reads well, is accurate and a fair reflection of the interview.



Twitter and Journalism: Nestmates Since the Beginning



Ever since Twitter made its public debut at the SXSW tech festival in 2007, journalists have been among its most loyal users. At SXSW, journalists followed each other on Twitter to find out where the best speakers and panel discussions were. After the festival, they followed their colleagues from across the country, along with celebrities, politicians, sports stars, and government services - all of whom were joining the service at a rapid rate.

Soon enough, a journalist without a Twitter account became the exception, not the rule.

Why? What is Twitter's unique value to a journalist? Well, it's a public platform. If you Tweet, chances are anyone in the world with an internet connection and some know-how will be able to see it. For journalists, this means that they can track what their colleagues are up to, what stories other news outlets are producing, and, crucially, what the subjects of their own stories are saying.

Over its eleven years, Twitter has become the go-to platform for public figures to make statements and interact with people. Whether it's an apology, a declaration of support for a particular cause, or an invitation to share in a joyous announcement, people break news on Twitter everyday and journalists have this amazing news source at their fingertips. Literally!

Being such an open platform, Twitter enables journalists to see the many sides of a story. They may find themselves chasing the accuracy of a press release and come across a user who has valuable information that proves or disproves the statement. A journalist might be watching a political debate on TV and find that the claims being

“Fundamentally, Twitter is a tool that enhances a journalist's ability to verify stories”

made by a politician are being rebutted in real-time by a user who claims to know the truth of the matter and whose Tweets are going viral as the politician speaks.

Fundamentally, Twitter is a tool that enhances a journalist's ability to verify stories. Storyful, a company that was set up on these very shores, built its business, in part, on Twitter's capacity to carry a journalist to the truth of a story, if that journalist has the nose for it. As we say here, Twitter is what's happening.



Tips to help you get the most out of Twitter and build your own following



1. TWEET YOUR BEAT

One of the best ways to increase Twitter engagement is to Tweet regularly about the subjects you cover. Our research shows that for people who post a concentrated number of Tweets in a short time span, follower growth is far higher than average (1.5x). Live-tweeting or posting updates about a news event related to your beat is one way to grow followers and increase interaction.

2. USE HASHTAGS FOR CONTEXT

Tweets with hashtags (the # symbol, immediately followed by the subject or keyword related to the Tweet) can increase engagement almost 100% for individuals. Journalists and news publishers use hashtags to organise conversations, gather feedback, and to identify and engage with Twitter users discussing a particular topic.

3. @CITE YOUR SOURCES

When tweeting about or to a Twitter user (individual or brand), include their Twitter handle (the @ sign, followed by the username). Post tweets that include URLs, but also tweets with @ mentions, and Tweets with no links at all.

4. SHARE WHAT YOU'RE READING

News accounts receive 100% more active engagement on a high-performing Tweet when a URL is included. To increase the engagement on your account and Tweets, mix it up a bit: when individuals share URLs to non-company sources, they experience a bump in follows. Use the Retweet button as a tool to curate content for your followers. Individuals with above expected follower growth send 200% more Retweets compared to individuals with below expected follower growth.

POPULAR IRISH JOURNALISTS ON TWITTER



@cooper_m
Presenter,
The Last Word, Today FM



@roisingle
Deputy Features Editor,
The Irish Times



@fionnansheahan
Editor,
Irish Independent



@McConnellDaniel
Political Editor,
Irish Examiner



@ElaineByrne
Columnist,
Sunday Business Post



@leeofthemail
Political Editor,
Mail on Sunday

FROM TWEET TO Front page

News moves very quickly. It's only a matter of seconds from when a story breaks that it appears on social media and then on newspaper websites

1 Press statement

Press statement issued from Garda HQ announcing that Garda Commissioner Nóirín O'Sullivan has quit her job.

Issue Date: 10/09/2017

Statement from Garda Commissioner Nóirín O'Sullivan

Garda Commissioner Nóirín O'Sullivan today announced that she is retiring from An Garda Síochána after 36 years of privileged, enjoyable and proud service. Ms. O'Sullivan notified Taoiseach Leo Varadkar and Justice Minister Charlie Flanagan this afternoon, thanking them for their continued confidence in her. She also thanked former Taoiseach Enda Kenny and former Tánaiste and Minister for Justice Frances Fitzgerald.

"The support for me to continue in the role is evident," the Commissioner said today. "However, I devoted much of my summer break to considering if continuing would be the right thing to do.



3 Internet

News website are quickly on the story, with greater detail and background.



4 Front pages

The following morning, the front pages are dominated by the story, with newspapers offering greater insight, comment and analysis.

2 Tweets

Within seconds, the news of her departure breaks across Twitter.



Features Tutorial

What is a feature?

The main differences between a feature and a news story are style and length.

Whereas news is straight-up factual and strictly structured, features are longer, more analytical and softer focussed.

Features can vary widely, from fashion to diet fads, celebrity profiles to human interest stories. They can accompany a news story, or in most cases they have their own section in newspapers and magazines.

How to write a feature

Writing a feature affords the journalist the luxury to use more colourful, descriptive language. In addition, a feature story doesn't have to follow the conventional structure of a news story, i.e. the most important part of the story at the top of the article.

With a feature, once you catch the reader's attention from the start, you can then build to the climax, or the main point, and work around that with descriptions or important information on the topic.

It is a common style for journalists to start a feature with a very graphic, descriptive introduction to draw in the reader, building the information slowly but surely, and then round it off nicely, letting the reader feel satisfied that they know all they need about the subject by the last line.

Some writers end lighter stories with a funny line at the end,

others with a knock-em-dead punchline - a 'shock' tactic.

Others finish with a technique of referring back to the line at the start and 'tying it up nicely'. As well as offering journalists a greater range of writing styles, feature pages also offer real scope to page designers.

Some of the best looking pages in newspapers and magazines are often the features pages because the design rule book is thrown away.

The pages are meant to be colourful, striking and controversial, firstly to hook the reader, and secondly to differentiate the features section from other parts of the paper.

The hook for a feature is often a news story - the story behind the story as it were.



Content

Very relevant given our fascination with celebrity



Headline

Catchy headlines help grab the attention



Design

Colourful graphics and panels are very effective

MADGE: I'VE NO ADOPTION PLAN
MADONNA was last night in Malawi - reportedly to adopt two more children. A government official in the African country claims the singer made a court application in capital Lilongwe. But Madonna denied the claims last night, insisting she was in Malawi to work with her charity. The 36-year-old said: "I'm in Malawi to check on the children's hospital in Blantyre and my other work with the Raising Malawi charity. The rumours of any adoption process are absolutely untrue." The Totally untrue... Madonna

WIN €50K CASH
COLLECT 10 TOKENS INSIDE THE IRISH SUN STARTS THIS SATURDAY

BEST ACTRESS OSCAR WITHIN NEGGA'S REACH
I hope Ruth wins...it's about time my record was broken
Says BRENDA FRICKER

OSCAR-winner Brenda Fricker reckons it's about time that her record was broken.
The 71-year-old nabbed a gong for her stellar role in My Left Foot in 1989, and said she wishes Irish Oscar hopeful Ruth Negga "buckets of luck" ahead of the awards next month.
Ruth, a 35-year-old Irish-Ethiopian, has been nominated for best actress at the 89th Academy Awards for her role as Mildred Loving in the civil rights biopic Loving.
Brenda told the Irish Sun that she has her fingers crossed for the Limerick beauty to come out on top.
She said: "I wish her huge buckets of luck and hope she wins. About time my record was broken!"
"Her life will change, her cheques will be bigger and her choices will be so much better. I couldn't wish her more luck."
Brenda received the Oscar for Best Supporting Actress for her moving performance as the headstrong mum of Christy Brown in My Left Foot.
Daniel Day-Lewis also won a Best Actor award for his role as the determined writer battling cerebral palsy in the poignant film.
Brenda told how she was warned about sour grapes after her win and said: "They were right: 'I hope she [Ruth] gets a better reception from her peers for being nominated - which is huge - or indeed for winning than I did, because winning the biggest prize deserves joyful celebration."
The Irish people were glorious! Stunning in their pride and joy, they cried openly and so did I, but... I've had sour grapes whispered at me. I was hurt."
And she added: "I could mention three other Oscar winners - English - who told me they felt as if they were a criminal the way their peers treated them."
But that's all in the past for the retired actress who lives in Dublin.
She said: "It's of no importance to me anymore. I think things have changed. I hope so and hope already that she [Ruth] is being lauded for her talent and being spoilt and fussed over for her nomination."
And she had this advice for the actress on the cusp of international stardom.
She said: "My best advice, and it is the honest one, is that talent is the last thing she needs to hit the heights."
"Talent is two-a-penny all around you. She needs good health, a streak of steel to spot the others around her who dispute it as 'ambition' and a tough heart."
"Trust nobody. Prepare for loneliness and be tough enough to handle it."
Brenda revealed that nothing would tempt her back into the world of show business.
She said: "No I don't miss it at all. I'm pleased to get away from dangerously ambitious people. Nothing would bring me back."
Ruth, who was born an only child

Need for road cash
GOVERNMENT spending on regional and local roads in 2017 will not be enough to prevent the network decaying further. The Transport Department said it will spend €2.4 billion this year improving regional and local roads, with national roads getting €160 million. But its 2015 investment in Land Transport report said at least €380 million is needed a year.

JACK TO SCHOOL
Two carjackers nabbed a lad a good day at school after stealing his parents' motor and finding him in the back, in Chicago, US.

RACE DRAMA... Ruth with Joel Edgerton in her Oscar-nominated role from Loving

By FIONA ELLIS
OSCAR-winner Brenda Fricker reckons it's about time that her record was broken.

Winning combination
Daniel Day-Lewis and Brenda Fricker clutch their Oscars for My Left Foot (1989). Day-Lewis went on to win Best Actor again for There Will Be Blood (2007) and Lincoln (2013).

Crowned king of actors
2003's Lifetime Achievement Oscar went to Galway-born Peter O'Toole, who was also twice nominated for playing the same role - Henry II in Becket and A Lion In Winter.

A lifetime in show business
Ranelagh-born actress Maureen O'Hara, pictured with her gang at the IFAs in 2004, went on to win the Academy Awards Lifetime Achievement in 2015.

Making music together...
Glen Hansard and Marketa Irglova were awarded Best Song Oscar for Falling Slowly in 2007's Irish musical romance Once, which was made on a €112,000 budget.

A Crying shame for Jordan
Director Neil Jordan won the Oscar for Best Original Screenplay for 1993's The Crying Game but missed out on Best Director. He was also nominated six years later for The End of the Affair.

More than greaspaint...
Dublin native Michele Burke has twice won Oscars for her makeup and hairstyling skills - in Quest for Fire (1981) and Bram Stoker's Dracula (1992) - and been nominated six times.

A flair for the artistic
Set decorator and art director Josie Macola won an Oscar for her work in 1985's Out of Africa and was twice nominated for The Sandlot (2000) and Tom Jones (1963).

Divine intervention
Dublin actor Barry Fitzgerald, perhaps best known for his role in The Quiet Man, with his Oscar for playing Father Fitzgibbon in 1944's Going My Way. Also pictured is Bing Crosby, who won Best Actor.

Keeping it in the family
The father-and-daughter director-and-producer team Terry and Oonagh George receive their Oscars for 2012's The Shore, Best Live Action Short Film.

ROLE MODEL... Brenda, left, with her Oscar for Best Supporting Actress in My Left Foot, far left

SET DANCING

By Caitriona NiChonail
Coláiste Ghobnatan, Baile Mhic Ire.

All teenagers love discos, right? Wrong. Some teenagers love discos, but for others, there's limited appeal in standing at the edge of a dancefloor, too socially awkward to venture into the heaving throng and prevented by throbbing bass rhythms from holding any kind of meaningful conversation.

Which may go some way towards explaining why set dancing is taking the youth social scene by storm, as increasing numbers turn to traditional dances and discover the age-old activity anew.

If you need proof of the masses of young people swapping disco music for trad tunes, take a trip to Milltown Malbay in Co Clare at the start of July for the annual Willie Clancy festival. Your chances of actually trying set dancing will be limited by only one thing: Finding a square inch of space among the hundreds crowding the dance floors, both day and night.

What's the attraction? "It's a social experience; you get to meet new people," says Liam from Co Cork, an 18-year-old student whose love of set dancing began four years ago. Unlike the individual nature of disco dancing, in a set of eight people all moving in strict formation he explains "you're forced to connect; you have to work together, otherwise you'll collide with somebody else".

The social interaction spans generations, class, gender, and a strong sense of community is evident among set dancers. Others are attracted to the activity as a keep-fit exercise and during upwards of three

Learn from last year's winner



hours of non-stop dancing are to be found with sweat dripping from their hair and just about everywhere else – a far cry from the self-conscious appearance-checking of your average teenage disco-goer.

While occasions such as Willie Clancy week are the highlights of the set dancing calendar, the learning and socialising begins at home, where céilís and classes are on the agenda of many young people.

With 30 years' experience in learning and teaching set dancing and organising céilís, Larry Creed is delighted to see the upsurge in young people carrying on the tradition.

"Seeing young people dancing, I think, there's a great buzz, being with them," says Cork farmer Larry, who runs céilís every Thursday in the Abbey Hotel in Ballyvourney.

Larry has witnessed health benefits too from the hobby he took up himself as a 16-year-old. "I have seen people coming to céilís who had health problems, or other problems, and they

seem to be able to park their problems outside the door, and go in and enjoy themselves, and that is a great source of joy," he says.

Larry's dancing career began under the tutelage of Clondrohid dancing teacher Ted Kelleher, who to this day still passes on the tradition to groups of enthusiastic children and teenagers.

Workshops with the likes of Pat Murphy and Connie Ryan followed, and Larry enjoyed competitive success in groups at Scór and Fleadh Cheoil, with sets including the Sliabh gCua, the ever-popular Sliabh Luachra, Cashel, and Larry's favourites, the Newport and West Kerry sets.

He views the discipline of competitions as a useful starting point, from which dancers can go on to broaden their knowledge of sets and discover the more relaxed atmosphere of the céilí.

"When I started in competitions it was quite serious," he recalls. "Not serious

in the sense that you had to win every night you went out, but you had to do it properly."

Now, he says, steps are still precise, parts are danced accurately, but enjoyment levels have increased for young people attending céilís. "Now, you can still do it properly, and have a ball."

Set dancing's future is secure, he believes, judging by the numbers of young people taking up the activity, with competitive dancing beginning at an ever-younger age.

"The big difference at the moment is that there's a lot more youth taking part; they're being taught for set competitions at a very young age. You'd often see it in competition in under-eights category, which is the future of set dancing really."

His own son Shane was bitten by the set dancing bug aged nine, before going on to perform with the show Celtic Steps in Killarney's INEC.

Having taught dancing in Denmark and the length and breadth of Ireland, while organising the long-running Abbey Hotel céilís back at home, Larry appreciates both the wider international appeal of Ireland's dance tradition and the sense of community belonging shared by set dancers young and old.

These delights, for teenager Liam, are only beginning to unfold, and whatever their ages, backgrounds, or level of dancing expertise, when they step out onto the floor he says "everyone's in the same boat, and they're all brought together by their love of dancing"



A feature should be entertaining, colourful but important

"Of the hundreds of essays we trawled through across the four categories the Features winner was easily one of the stand out entries."

Press Pass Judging Panel

Before you begin

Many news reporters struggle with the freedom of the feature article, and vice versa with feature writers who are asked to report on a news story.



They are two very different disciplines, and few manage to straddle both sides of the journalism divide with equal success.

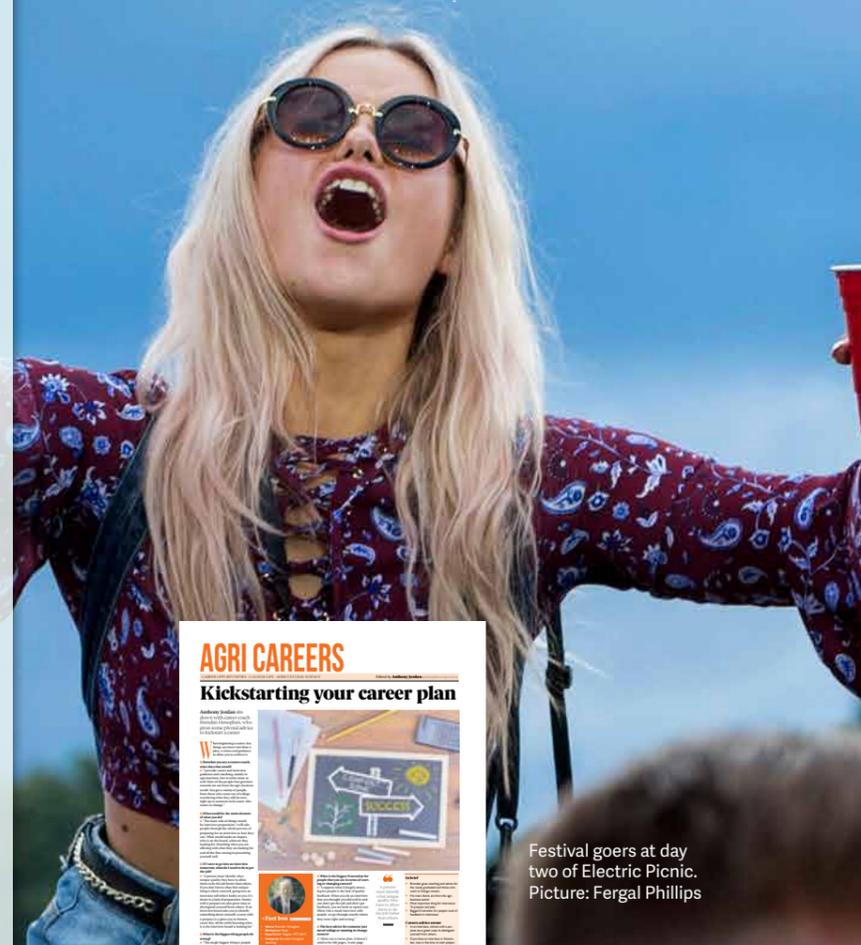
Think of the feature article like a short story mixed with a parable - it should be entertaining, colourful but with important information to convey.

Check list

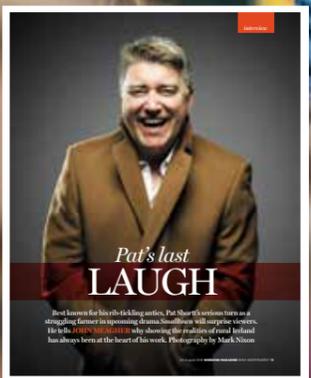
- ✓ How much space do I have?
- ✓ Always read over your article at least twice, do a spell check, and make sure all unusual words, names, website addresses, phone numbers and place names are correct.
- ✓ What exactly do I want to include/exclude?
- ✓ Make notes on the structure of the article - the main points of the story you wish to get across, and in what order. And cross them off as you write them.
- ✓ What is my deadline?
- ✓ Don't vary from the word count suggested, at least not by more, or less, than 50 words.

Tips to writing features:

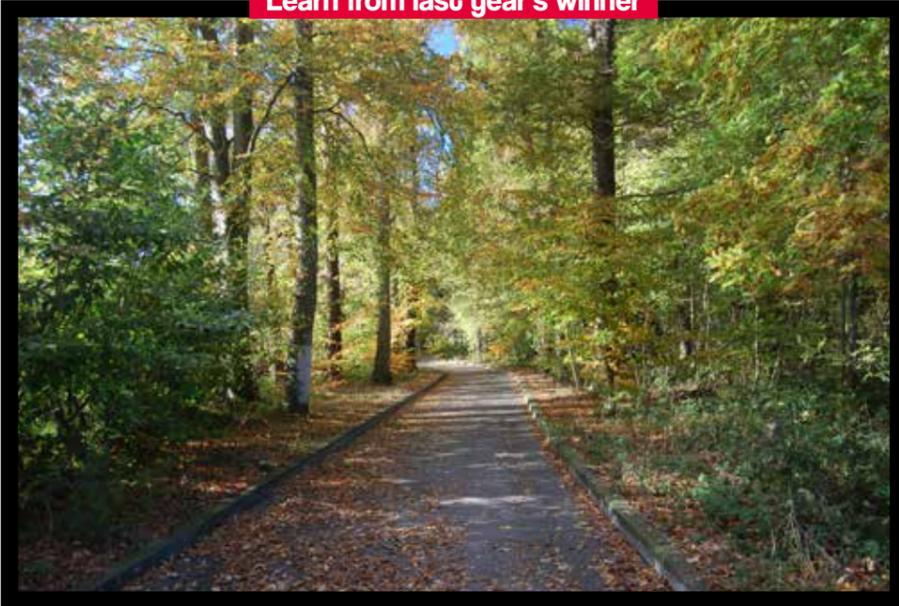
- Look at your chosen theme carefully. Consider the questions suggested and attempt to answer some of them.
- Always try to find an original angle, or hook, for your feature. Because features allow you more freedom, you have an opportunity to be more adventurous.
- Start with the important - get all the essential details in the opening paragraphs.
- Use plenty of quotes. If they are not quotes you gathered yourself, make sure you detail the source of where they are from.
- As with news, include all the essential details - the who, what, where, when and why.



Festival goes on day two of Electric Picnic. Picture: Fergal Phillips



Learn from last year's winner



Jack Farrell,
Causeway Comprehensive School

1st place Press Pass awards 2016
An Autumn Stroll



A heavy rain shower over Poolbeg in Dublin as seen from Dun Loaghaire. Picture: Marc O'Sullivan



With the Six nations under way the amateur players of Ardee and Arklow show they play for the love of the game in their Leinster league clash. Picture: Garry O'Neill



Senator Ivana Bacik demonstrating a electroencephalogram (EEG) in Trinity's Long Room as part of a pop-up festival in Trinity College Dublin. Picture: Mark Stedman



Spring lambs on David and John Bakers Farm in Naul Co Dublin. Picture: Fran Veale

STRIKE A POSE

An unfolding event, a portrait of modern Ireland, human emotion, a stunning landscape, a study of wildlife, children jumping on a trampoline, someone catching a fish — it really is a personal opinion as to what makes a good photograph. More often than not it is simply a case of being in the right place at the right time — with a camera in hand, of course. Nowadays using a camera is much more simplified. With the automated features in pocket cameras and on phones, it really is a case of point and shoot.

Photographs communicate information in a powerful way and the key to analysing or reading the information a photograph communicates is simple. We use specific questions to decode, evaluate, and respond to photographic images. When looking at a photograph we need to consider not only the content of the photograph but the intent of the photographer. It is important to think consciously and critically and to pay attention to all aspects of the image.



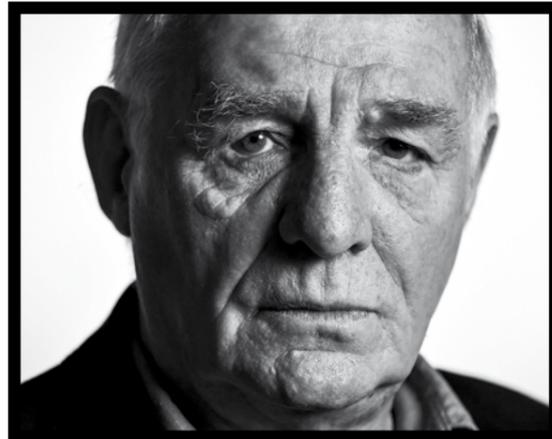
The 'Sky Train' created by Michael Bulfin at Lough Boora Discovery Park Co. Offaly. Picture: Cathal Noonan

Tips to taking a better picture



- Move in closer - fill the frame for a better shot.
- Be quick, and always be ready to take your shot as things change in front of you.
- Photograph the same subject from different angles and distances to get the best effect.
- Where is the light coming from? See how it affects your picture and think about how you can make the most of the light you have.
- Emphasise your main subject and avoid any unnecessary distractions.
- You have a maximum file size of 3MB for entries - you might also consider having a minimum size of 1 MB to make sure your photo is big enough.

Munster's Simon Zebo sheds a tear during a minute's silence in memory of the late Munster head coach Anthony Foley before a match the day after his funeral. Picture: Brendan Moran



Former Republic of Ireland soccer player and sports pundit Eamon Dunphy. Picture: Paul Mohan



Rowers in Cork City on a foggy morning training session. Picture: Emma Jervis



A girl looks at a Boeing 767 airplane in the Sea after being tugged from Shannon airport around the west coast destined for for a Glamping park in Enniscrone. Picture: Clodagh Kilcoyne



Rebecca Smyth and her Irish Wolfhound dog called Amazing Grace look at the sunrise during the Winter Solstice at Newgrange. Picture: Clodagh Kilcoyne



Sinn Féin Deputy Leader Mary Lou McDonald stands in a prison cell a recreation from the 1916 cells in Kilmainhan Dublin. Picture: Leon Farrell



**Comment is free,
but never easy**

Bruce Springsteen performs at Croke Park in Dublin. Picture: Ramsey Cardy



Facts are sacred, comment is free. So said the fabled editor of the Manchester Guardian, CP Scott, around the start of the last century. This dictum has been handed down through generations of newspapers, usually interpreted as a shot across the bows of those who would comment rather than report. In the near century since Scott's heyday, comment has been elevated within the pages of newspapers, but today, in the internet age, his dictum has more relevance than ever. The web is choc-a-bloc with comment, much of it little more than top of the head opinion, the kind of stuff that would have Scott spinning in his grave. For those of us who do write opinion

pieces in newspapers, there is a lot more required than just the capacity to have an opinion. The first tool of the opinion writer should be the ability to write. You may have a subject that is difficult to sustain. On these days, the reader might derive enjoyment from reading something that is well written. Our old friends the facts are sacred in comment. For opinion to hold any water it must be based on fact. For example, if you are arguing that the Government is doing a terrible job, then facts require that you back up such a contention. Opinion poll results, policies that have had a devastating impact on some people, the performance of leading politicians, all of

these must be analysed in furthering such an argument, and facts must be sprinkled throughout the offering. Never, ever rely on the web for your facts, for if you do, you will fail, if not today, then certainly in the near future. Experience is a good ally for the opinion writer. In order to garner opinions you must have some knowledge of the way things work, such as politics, the courts, areas like planning or education. If you have a reasonably good knowledge then you are aware when something is not right, and your passion is ready to be fired up. Comment may indeed be free, but when it's done properly, it certainly isn't easy.

There is a difference between fact and opinion

News is fact - opinion is your point of view. If teachers vote to go on strike, news is the account of what they did. Opinion is your view on their decision - good or bad. The views expressed are your own. They may not be shared by everyone, but they are how you feel about the teachers going on strike, whether you think they are right or wrong, the effects the strike may have on you and other students.

But the key is to say something only if you have something to say. There is no point sitting on the fence. Be provocative, stir a few emotions, ruffle a few feathers. There is nothing better than a good rant, once you can back up your argument. Never try to be controversial for the sake of it.

Over to you...

- Newspapers are as much about views as news. Can you distinguish between the two? Select some examples.
- Choose an opinion piece from one of the papers supplied. What interests you? Write your own version.
- Look at the letters page in one of the papers supplied. Choose one that you agree/disagree with? Outline why.
- Compare and contrast how broadsheet and tabloid papers handle comment. Which do you prefer? Why?
- Write a letter to the editor in not more than 400 words.



Girls Just Wanna Have Fun...damental Rights

By Siofra O'Dwyer
Scoil Mhuire, Buncrana



I am sixteen years old. I live in a country where if I was raped and impregnated tomorrow, I would be denied a termination on that pregnancy. I live in a country where if I was having a baby who had no chance of survival, I would be forced to endure the ordeal of carrying a child I knew was already not for this world. I live in a country where if I sought an abortion in my own home, I would be persecuted and imprisoned. And I am angry.

The 8th Amendment of the Irish Constitution illegalises abortion in Ireland, therefore denying women of their right to bodily autonomy, their right to control over their own bodies, their right to have a choice in what happens within their own womb.

I am angry, because this Amendment means that a Syrian refugee who was raped and impregnated in her home country came to Ireland in early 2014 and was denied an abortion. Despite seeing a number of agencies, her pregnancy was too far advanced by the time she was assessed by a three-doctor panel, and she was forced to have a caesarean section

against her initial wishes. This woman came to our country seeking asylum, and was instead forced through an ordeal no woman should have to go through. How can we consider this country a safer place for women than the one she just left? I am ashamed.

I am angry, because a woman I met on a bus told me the story of her friend. Her friend, who so desperately wanted a baby, and was overjoyed when she found out she was pregnant. However, a scan revealed that a foetal abnormality meant that the baby would not survive

more than a few minutes after being born. This woman then had to face the fact that her only alternative to being forced to carry and give birth to a child who would not survive, was to leave her home and seek an abortion elsewhere. I am heartbroken.

I am angry, because in 2015, 3451 women travelled from Ireland to England and Wales to have an abortion. That's over 9 women a day. Over 9 women a day who had to leave their home, the support of their family, and the comfort of their bed, in order to obtain a basic

human right. Over 9 women a day who cook dinner and exercise and make tea and play with children and go to school and work hard and love hard and yet, are seen as criminals in the eyes of our government. I am disgusted.

We need to learn to trust women. Trust women to know what is right for them. Trust women to make the right decisions regarding their own bodies. Trust women to know what is best for themselves, rather than letting a government decide what goes on inside her.

Because it's your mother. Your sister. Your daughter. Your niece. Your cousin. Your girlfriend. Your wife. It's every woman who is being robbed of the right to control her own body.

The people of Ireland are calling for a change. No, it isn't up to the church or the state to decide a woman's fate. No, get your rosaries off our ovaries, if you please. Yes, it's time to Repeal the 8th.

I am sixteen years old. I live in a country that denies women their fundamental human rights. And yes, I am angry.



“It is purely coincidental that these awards are announced on a week where we celebrated International Women's Day where thousands of people marched in Dublin to repeal the eight amendment.”

No matter when this piece was written though and despite your own personal opinion on this highly contentious issue, this is an opinion piece that strikes a core.”

Press Pass Judging Panel



Taoiseach Enda Kenny campaigning during the general election despite reports that he and his party were losing the support of voters. Picture: Gerry Mooney

What makes a good sports journalist?

The ingredients that make a sports reporter are similar to that of a decent stew. An unorthodox comparison, but bear with us! No one dominant component brings about that delectable flavour, more a combination of everything flung into the pot. A good sports reporter possesses every kind of spice you will find in a kitchen cabinet, and more.

You can write, sure, but can you investigate? Can you sniff out a back page lead? Can you ask the hard questions? Can you go where no one else is willing to go? Above everything else, are you willing to do all of the above?

Many exceptional writers didn't or don't have the work ethic to cut it. Sports reporting does not entail sitting at your desk, waxing lyrically about your favourite soccer team.

Heck, most sports reporters have never seen the inside of an office. You are on the beat all day, every day and you have to know how to utilise that. If Henry Shefflin is cutting the tape on some new clubhouse in the middle of nowhere, get yourself there and ask him how long his injury will keep him out of action.

Come away with a story. Objectivity is another important rule. Credit where credit is due and likewise, criticise when criticism is called for. Last, but by no means least, a good sports reporter is one who is prepared to start at the bottom and work their way up.

Ewan MacKenna and Vincent Hogan all started somewhere and you can be sure it wasn't on the pages of this country's most respected national newspapers. All-Ireland finals and Six Nations clashes are covered by those with years of experience. Be prepared for U10 soccer games and schools camogie finals. The path ahead is long and winding, but know that when you eventually reach the summit, the view is out of this world.



26 August 2017; Conor McGregor, right, and Floyd Mayweather Jr during their super welterweight boxing match at T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas, USA. Picture: Stephen McCarthy, Sportsfile

Tips to becoming the best

Sport is news

Sports writers work to some of the tightest deadlines in journalism and are still expected to uphold all the same professional, legal and ethical standards, so having that solid foundation of what it means to be a reporter is fundamental. Sports reporting could take a journalist anywhere.

Read everything

If you want to end up as a sports journalist or, to be honest, any type of journalist, listen to the radio, monitor Twitter, watch TV, read the papers with as professional an eye as you can.

Follow the best in the business. Look at what they are doing.

Absorbing the styles and techniques of the best writers will not only help to influence your writing style and structure but also help to develop that eye for a story, of what is newsworthy and how to pursue it.

Over to you...

- Interview a local sporting hero. Invite them to visit your class for a questions and answers session.
- Write up a match report. Go to a game of your choice, take notes, try and get a few quotes and write up your account of what happened.
- Monitor and track a live game on the web or on Twitter. Record your account.
- Interview a well known sports reporter/columnist /editor. Talk to them about their job, how they became involved in journalism, their loves/hates etc.



Tips to becoming the best

Get the skills

The skills and knowledge employed by journalists are exactly the same as for sports journalists. The basics are the basics no matter which area of journalism you're in: speed, accuracy, diligence, hard work.

Get the experience

What potential employers are looking for is evidence on a CV that you have the motivation that journalism requires.

If you're offered work experience, don't just sit in the corner looking at the internet. Go to the editors and ask: What can I do?

Finding a niche or a specialism can make the difference in a competitive world because if you can show that you are as knowledgeable as anyone else in your field – be it tennis, golf, Formula 1 or football – then you have more chance of getting commissioned or getting that first job.



Pauric Glackin Letterkenny IT competing in the Kayak Intervarsities hosted by GMIT Mayo Campus in Castlebar Co. Mayo. Picture: Keith Heneghan



Eoghan Rua and Gleamore players battle for the ball in the Final of The All Ireland junior Club Hurling final. Picture: Donall Farmer

Hero to Some, Legend to All An interview with Andy Moran

By Emma McGoeey
Mean Scoil Mhuire, Longford



Learn from last year's winner



Andy Moran, Mayo senior team player and former Mayo captain, represents all that is honourable about the GAA – positivity, health, fitness, ability and determination.

At 34 years of age Andy Moran balances being a club and county footballer for Ballaghaderreen and Mayo, a husband, a father to a 2 year old daughter and the co-owner of a gym, Castlebar HealthQuarters. Previously attending St Nathy's secondary school in Ballaghaderreen his love of football was nurtured by teacher and coach John O'Mahony. He later went on to study business and marketing at college and became a sales-rep before opening his gym. I spoke to him about GAA in the modern era.

In his local GAA club of Ballaghderreen, young Moran's skills were encouraged and developed by well recognised coaches like Brian Tansey and John Gaffney.

When I asked him what he thought was the most valuable skill that a young player should learn his answer was resilience. Moran believes that we live in a society where young players give up too easily. "Young people need to learn how to lose. They take setbacks too personally and you need to get up and go again in life and in

football."

Originally playing soccer for Longford Town, it was quite a difficult decision to choose between it and Gaelic football. However, a phone call from John Maughan, Mayo under 21 manager at the time, made the decision easy to pick GAA.

His opinion of the mark coming into play in the GAA is not one of hope. "The mark is being taken from Australian Rules, which is a completely different game. It will make the game more negative instead of positive."

Many people have opinions on whether the GAA should go professional or not. Moran's stance on it is that it should remain amateur, however in

the next ten years he believes we will see some sort of professionalism in the GAA as there is a certain element of the GAA making a lot of money however it is not the players reaping these benefits.

Although not one to dwell on the past Moran admits he regrets certain things throughout his career. One of those regrets being, of course, not having an All-Ireland senior medal for Mayo in his back pocket. Another would be not allowing his body to recover fully after he broke his leg during training for the International Rules series in 2011, which he believes led to his cruciate injury in 2012. "I firmly believe that I have put

everything into the game that I possibly could have. I don't think I was the most naturally gifted footballer in the world but I think I've really maximised the capabilities that I had"

When asked if he was given the opportunity to change anything in the GAA, Moran would bring in a 50 yard penalty for negative play in a game, meaning the ball should be moved up 50 yards instead of 13 metres. It would also be very important to him that in underage football there would be no designated free-taker. "If you win the free you should be the one taking the free."

I mooted the possibility of him entering the world of punditry or management in the future but it is not an aspiration of Moran's. "My dream after football is to become a coach. I'm half training to be a coach at the minute. If I were to become the manager of a team I would be more coach than manager."

In my opinion Andy Moran is the epitome of everything that is right with the GAA. He is tenacious, hard-working and an example to young players everywhere. I for one was left inspired by his aura of positivity and determination. I hope the GAA learn how to hold onto key figures like Moran and weave them into the future fabric of the GAA.

“So much of Mayo's recent football history is of what might have been; tantalisingly close but never managing to bridge the gap to All-Ireland glory that now stretches back to 1951. Andy Moran is one of those who knows the heartache of near misses and narrow defeats more than most – but this time he's with a winner.”

Press Pass Judging Panel



Triathlete Aileen Reid photographed for a series of portraits on Irish Olympians. Picture: Morgan Treacy



Paul O'Donovan and Gary O'Donovan of Ireland celebrate following the Men's Lightweight Double Sculls final during the 2016 Rio Summer Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro Brazil. Picture: Stephen McCarthy



South Africa's Lebogang Shange competing in the Men's 20km Race Walk at the Rio Olympics. Picture: Morgan Treacy

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