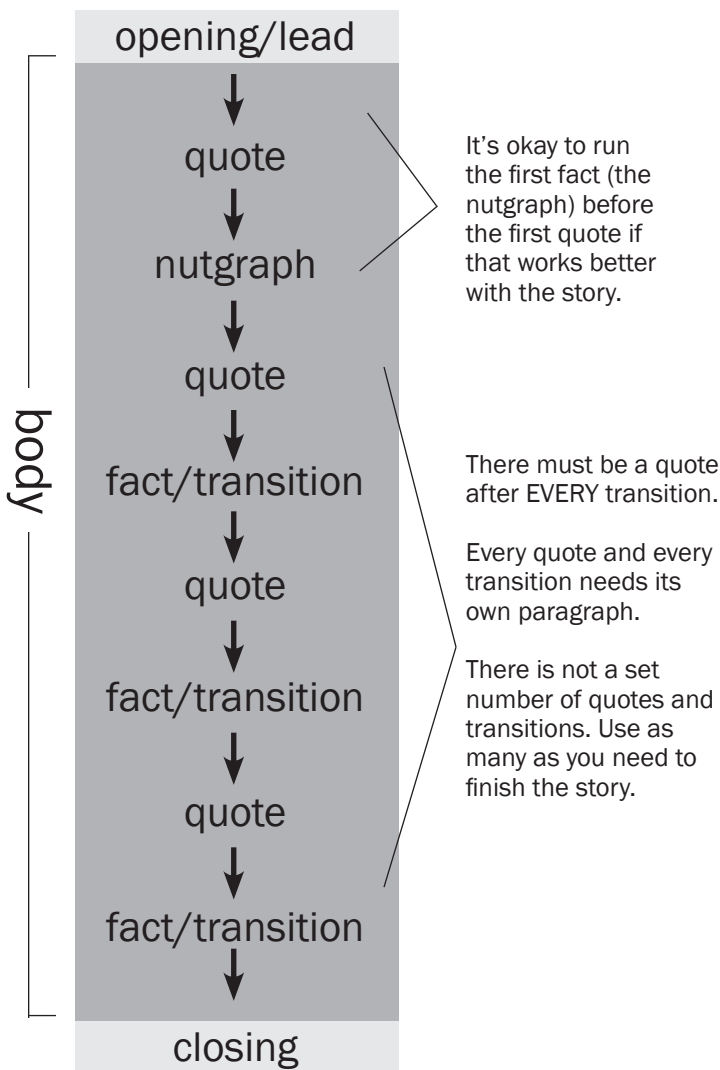
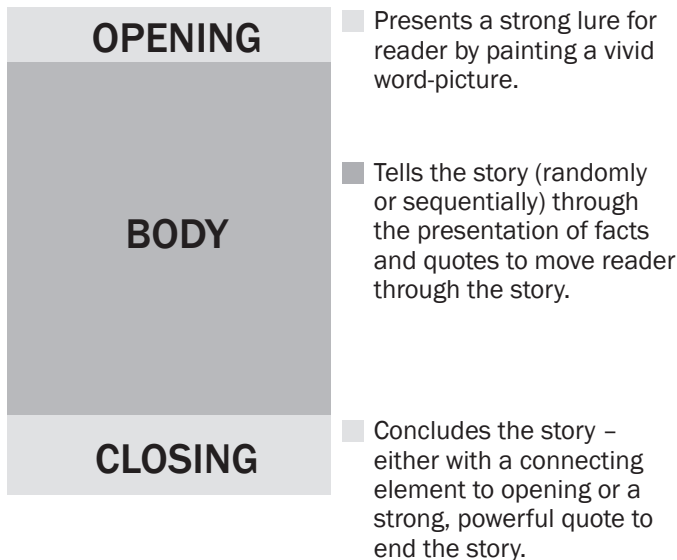


story formula

Forget everything you learned in English class. Well, almost everything. While journalism stories have an opening, body and conclusion, there's no flowery language or long paragraphs.

In a graphic, here's how journalism stories work:



parts of the story

LEAD

The opening, called the “lead” is the most important part of the story. It can be straight news or feature, but it needs to draw the reader in.

The lead can be as short as one word or it can be a few sentences. But try to keep it under 35 words.

NUTGRAPH

Usually following the lead or the first quote, this paragraph tells you the crux of the story, i.e. what the story is about.

QUOTES

Quotes are the heart of the story, giving the emotions, opinions and reflections of the facts. **DO NOT QUOTE FACTS.**

TRANSITIONS

Transitions present the factual information and paraphrase indirect quotes.

Transitions help readers move smoothly from one part of the story to the next. They help arrange facts in order and serve as bridges from one quote to the next.

CONCLUSION

The best conclusion is a natural extension of the story. It flows as smoothly and effortlessly as the ending of a song.

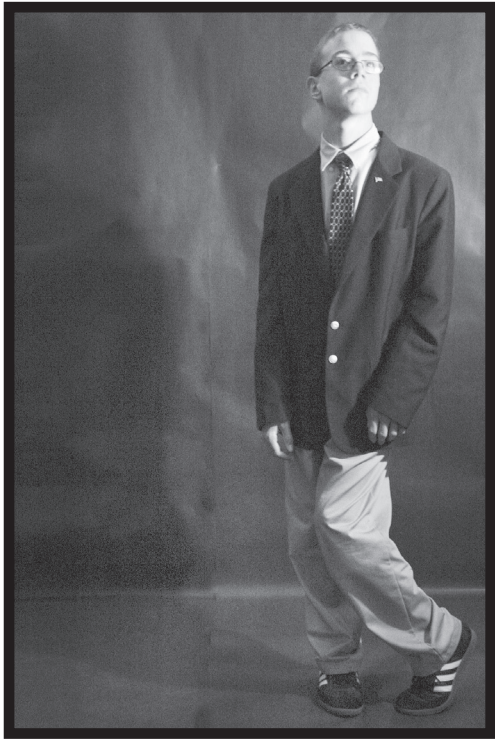
Closing provides reader with a strong ending thought or visual, usually a powerful quote, but could also be a connecting element back to the opening.

other important things to remember:

- The story is told through a series of short paragraphs. Each quote and each fact needs its own paragraph. **DO NOT COMBINE TOGETHER.**
- You can't have a quote right after a quote. You can't have a transitions right after a transition. There **MUST** be a quote between each transition. There **MUST** be a transition between each quote.
- The quotes support or further expand on the facts in the transition. The transitions give facts and bridge from one topic to the next, one speaker to the next.

story formula

Forget everything you learned in English class. Well, almost everything. While journalism stories have an opening, body and conclusion, there's no flowery language or long paragraphs.



You see them in the halls. You sit with them at lunch. But how well do you really know your classmates? Find out what they never told you in their...



Last in a series of *The Connection's* spot on students

GERALDRICHARDSON

Lead →
Intro to the story.

Hop, now step. With all his concentration. Hop, now step. *Even*, he says to himself – *keep your legs even*. One, now two. One, now two.

Quote →
First quote sets the tone of the story, logically follows angle of lead or tells story from individual perspective.

Twisting and hobbling, his feet unevenly hit the floor. But he doesn't mind. He's used to it.

"The way I walk used to really upset me," freshman Gerald Richardson said. "But it doesn't matter anymore. I know I can't change who I am, and I never could. I had no choice in how I turned out, but I have a choice in how I deal with it."

Nutgraph →

Explains what the story is about.

Richardson was born premature, weighing only two pounds. Seconds after birth, his condition worsened. Trauma in his lungs led to a stroke in his brain – doctors thought he wouldn't survive.

But Richardson made it. He was physically damaged for life – brain tissue was impaired, and he was diagnosed with cerebral palsy, a disorder marked by muscle impairment that affects his control of movement.

Quote →
Nice, detailed quote to support first fact.

"I never knew I was different until I started school," Richardson said. "I realized I didn't move the way the other kids did. I tried to imitate them, but I just couldn't do it. I'm okay with it now, but back then I couldn't understand what was wrong."

Transition →

Provides new facts for reader

Living his entire life with cerebral palsy has given Richardson a unique perspective on life.

Quote →
Nice, detailed quote to support transition

"I've been called a lot of things. 'Cripple, idiot, retard.' Once in elementary, some kids threw rocks at me, and another time they pushed me off the slide," Richardson said. "I'm never angry with the people who tease me. I could be wrong, but I believe people should be nice to each other. Maybe if I'm nice they'll realize I'm just a normal person, too."

Sometimes comments from others still get to the freshman.

"I can tell when people are being overly nice to me," Richardson said. "Their voice gets high-pitched and they say things like I was a toddler. It makes me feel sick, like I want to throw up. If I need help, I'll ask for it. Otherwise I don't want it. I can handle my life – they don't have to try and make me feel better. At least when people tease me they're telling the truth."

Richardson takes regular and advanced classes, including three pre-AP classes this year. The freshman says he studies an average of five to six hours a night but says he often has to work harder than most of his classmates.

"Sometimes I can't get things right away," Richardson said. "It seems like other people can understand an idea or concept quickly when I have to study for a long time. It's frustrating, but feeling bad won't help me. I have to strive to be the best I can be."

Richardson has a history of academic accomplishments. He was inducted into the Junior National Honor Society at Dessau Middle School in his seventh grade year and elected president of the club. Richardson also contributes to as many community service projects as he can, and he hopes to set an example that anyone can accomplish their goals.

"My one wish is that people would be try to be nicer to each other," Richardson said. "I want the world to be better for everyone. Even if people don't think so, I can take care of myself and I can handle everything that happens to me. A lot of people are much more worse off than I am. I would wish them to have an easier life because I think my life is pretty good."

← Transition
Flows nicely from last quote to new one.

← Quote
Nice, detailed quote to support transition

← Transition
Provides bridge to new facts.

← Quote
Backs up transition.

← Transition
Provides bridge from last paragraph to next quote

← Conclusion
A final quote to wrap up the story and leave the reader with a sense of closure.