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Paper:4:The art of editing

Topic:Feature and News Story

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The two, however, cannot be divided into any watertight compartments. At Times, one overlaps the other. However, the feature has some distinct characteristics which make it a class by itself.

News is an objective and factual account of events where the reporter sticks to facts and tries to answer, as far as possible, the six basic questions which make a news story. He gives answers to who, what, where, when, why and how. The reporter weighs and evaluates the relative value of different ingredients in the story, and the most important of these are included in the lead. His purpose is to give facts or information of interest to the people.

The feature, on the other hand, goes much beyond the scope of the news story. It gives a new dimension to the news. It examines and dissects news and throws new light on different aspects. It tries to explore the background, probes in depth an idea or the event. It is not just a narration of facts. The purpose is to both inform and entertain, and also arouse curiosity, sympathy, humor and other feelings among the readers. A feature writer reacts to the people, situations, events and places, and provides a colorful background and explanatory matter to his feature story. His scope is much wider than news writing.

Some other differences

between News story and Features are given below:

News story deals with recent and current events. It is like a dairy product, a perishable commodity. A feature need not be only on a recent subject. The event might have taken place sometime ago but it can still be a subject of a feature, if it is of interest to the readers.

Brevity is the soul of news writing. News story has not much scope for subsidiary or background material. Every word counts in news writing.

Feature certainly occupies more space than an average news story.

Feature and news story differ a great deal in the style of writing. The news story's basic purpose is to give a glimpse of an event, a factual account of the happening.

The feature, on the other hand, follows an altogether different style. The feature writer has more freedom. He can freely react to situations, events, and

People with emotion and imagination. The feature can be written in a colorful and fiction style depending on the subject and circumstances.

A reporter writing a news story does not give heading, title, or sub-title. This is the function of the sub-editor.

The selection of a title and sub-title is definitely of greater importance in a feature. The title should 'sell' the feature.

The introduction or the lead in a feature need not be in summary format as in the news reporting. The style and length of the feature will also depend on the newspapers and periodicals for which the feature is written. Style may be literary, ornamental and colorful in a feature.

There are some other significant differences between news and feature. For instance, a news story is limited to a single time and place. It is not always a complete story in itself. On the other hand, Feature is a self-sufficient and self-contained piece.

While news stories are generally written in third person, Features which are more in a nature of personal rapport may be written in first, second and third person.

The purpose of the news story is to inform, educate and enlighten the readers about certain happenings. The feature, on the other hand, entertains, guides and instructs the readers.

