

NEWS & FEATURE WRITING WORKSHOP

Razak Faculty of Technology and Informatics, UTM

Research Week 2018

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What is News?

News is current events

Disseminated via

- Word of mouth
- Conventional media
- Social media

Elements of News

- Impact
- Timeliness
- Prominence
- Proximity
- Conflict
- Weirdness
- Currency

What is Newswriting?

The Basics

- Accuracy
- Concise, precise, specific and clear
- Factual
- Past tense
- Plain words, no jargons
- Quotation marks for quoted material
- Puncuations always go inside quotation marks
- Short, declarative sentences

BAD Writing vs **GOOD** Writing

- Racing was the main activity that took place on the highway.

NOTE: For the subject of a sentence, choose the main actor rather than a concept or idea. Starting with the verb rarely leads to a good sentence.

- More than ten vehicles ran into each other as they raced illegally on the Plus Highway near Rawang heading north.

NOTE: Sentence is factual and specific and has a strong verb. For good writing, “Show, don’t tell.”

Types of Leads

- Straight lead or Summary lead
- Descriptive lead
- Quotation lead
- Question lead
- 'You' lead or Direct Address lead
- Contrast lead
- Gag or funny lead

Writing the Lead

- Research the 5 Ws & H
- Determine most crucial info
- What is most interesting about this story?
- What aspect is most important for readers to know?
- Past Tense
- Keep it to 25 words or less
- Who-What-When-(Where)-(Context/Additional Relevant Information)-(Attribution).

- “Who” is the subject or main noun of the sentence, and “What” is the predicate or main verb and, sometimes, a direct object.
- The **Context/Additional Relevant Information** and **Attribution** usually comes after a comma.

- **Five passengers** were injured Thursday **when lightning struck an express bus, plunging it into the ravine** at the Karak Highway. (**Pahang police** announced this morning.)

- If the “**Who**” in your lead is an important person or organisation, you will write the designation and/or name.

- If the “**Who**” is an unknown, write a brief description in the lead and the name in the second para. This is called a “delayed-identification” lead.

- **Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad** today chaired the 132nd meeting of the menteri besar and chief ministers at Perdana Putra, the first such meeting after the Pakatan Harapan came to power.

- **A petrol station worker** in Sungkai suffered bruises on his face after being assaulted by a group of men due to misunderstanding.

- To avoid awkwardness or confusion, “**When**” will come before the “**What.**”
- “Where” can sometimes come before “**When**”.
- Do not lead with “**When**” unless it is the most important element in the story
- The prime minister **yesterday** sent two humanitarian teams into Palu (**yesterday**).
- On **Thursday**, the prime chief minister announced his resignation (on **Thursday**).

- Do not include **dateline** in your lead. It will be written by a copy editor if appropriate.

- **KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 16 (Bernama)** -- The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) has called up former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak to record a statement over an investigation, reportedly into the 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) and other cases.



Samples of Leads

- A non-governmental organisation, Pergerakan Pemuda Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu (PBB), wants the government to give more attention in Budget 2019 to school educational programmes and youth training centres in Sarawak as well as to rural infrastructure development projects.
- A strong earthquake, measuring 6.6 on the Richter scale, rocked the south-eastern part of the Loyalty Islands at 9.03am today, according to the Malaysian Meteorological Department.
- A man got injured after he was shot at in front of a 24-hour convenience store at Persiaran Tropicana, Kota Damansara, here this afternoon.
- The Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Mohamad V today conferred the Darjah Utama Seri Mahkota Negara (D.M.N) on the Sultan of Kedah Sultan Sallehuddin Ibni Almarhum Sultan Badlishah.
- Alliance Bank Malaysia Bhd's shares rose during the morning session today on a positive growth outlook.
- Money politics is seen as alarming in Parti Keadilan Rakyat's (PKR) election season.
- Professional football club Terengganu FC II (TFC II) emerged champions of the inaugural Challenge Cup after beating UKM 2-0 (4-2 aggregate win) in the second leg of the finals at the Sultan Ismail Nasiruddin Shah Stadium here, tonight.
- The United States (US) sees uneven geographic distribution during its post-crisis recovery, a report released by Economic Innovation Group (EIG) showed on Monday.

Editorialising

- Expressing an opinion is not allowed
- Words to avoid – adjectives / adverbs / verbs like many, few, usually, important, effective, influential, overweight, pretty, controversial, fortunately, again, seems, very, fast, full, refuses, claims, admits, denies
- Don't predict someone's mind like hopes, thoughts, ambitions, fears

Attribution

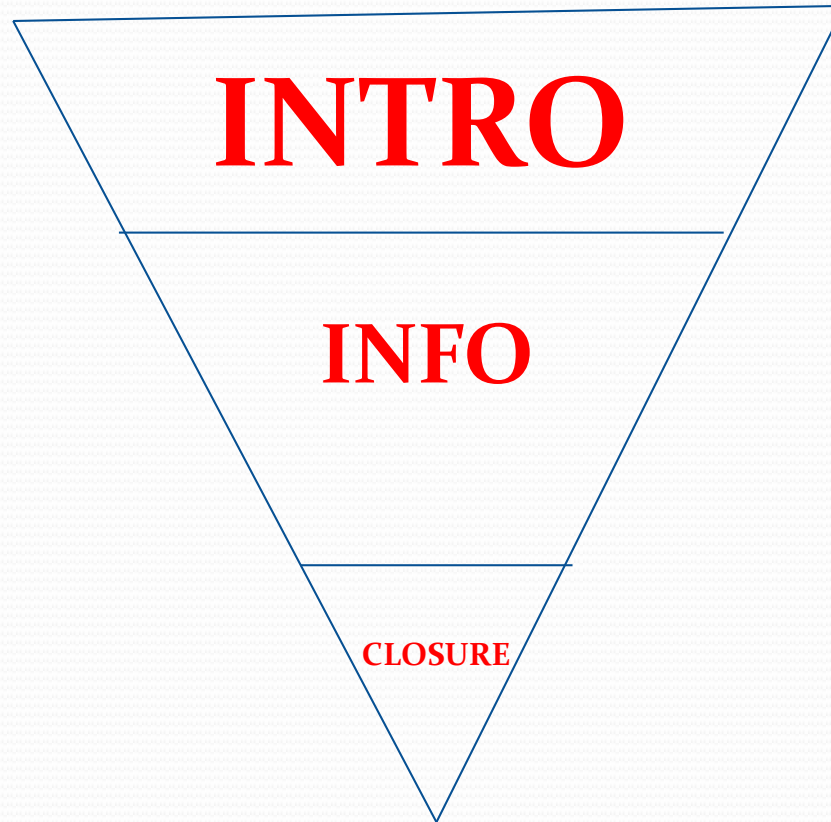
- Naming the source of information
- Direct quote, paraphrase, summary of contents of a text
- In leads, attribution is used when the lead is about a speech, a ruling or a statement
- Attribution to the police or similar authorities is used in crime stories, criminal allegations, accidents or disasters
- Sometimes, the attribution comes before the information when it is the most important element
- But normally, it is after the information

Attribution

- When you are using a direct quote or paraphrase.
- When you are stating a piece of information that you trust
- Attribute a prediction or an opinion.
- When in doubt, attribute.

Inverted Pyramid

Refers to a structure in which elements of the story are given in order of importance



Inverted Pyramid

Advantages

- Promotes what is coming in story
- Conveys most important info in the intro
- Saves readers time
- Quick means of info delivery
- Readers can leave whenever their info needs are met

Disadvantages

- Discourages people from reading entire story
- No conclusion, stories just stop
- No suspense, interest diminishes as story progresses

Inverted Pyramid

What to tell

- What do readers need to know?
- What is not already common knowledge?
- What needs to be verified?
- Myths cleared up

Chronological vs Inverted Pyramid

Rewrite this **Chronological Story** into an **Inverted Pyramid** style news story.

On October 16, Alex Tan bought some heroine from Othman Mamat.

But Alex's dog bit Othman in the leg during the transaction.

So Othman grabbed a shotgun and killed Alex's dog. Alex was furious.

He got in his car, chased Othman into an alley and crushed him against the wall. Othman died.

The next day, Alex confessed to police that he had run Othman over.

He was arrested and charged with second-degree murder.

Today, Alex pleaded guilty in court.

The judge sentenced him to 10 years in prison.

On his way to Sungai Buluh Prison, Alex leaped from a police van and escaped.

A search is under way.

HARD News vs SOFT News

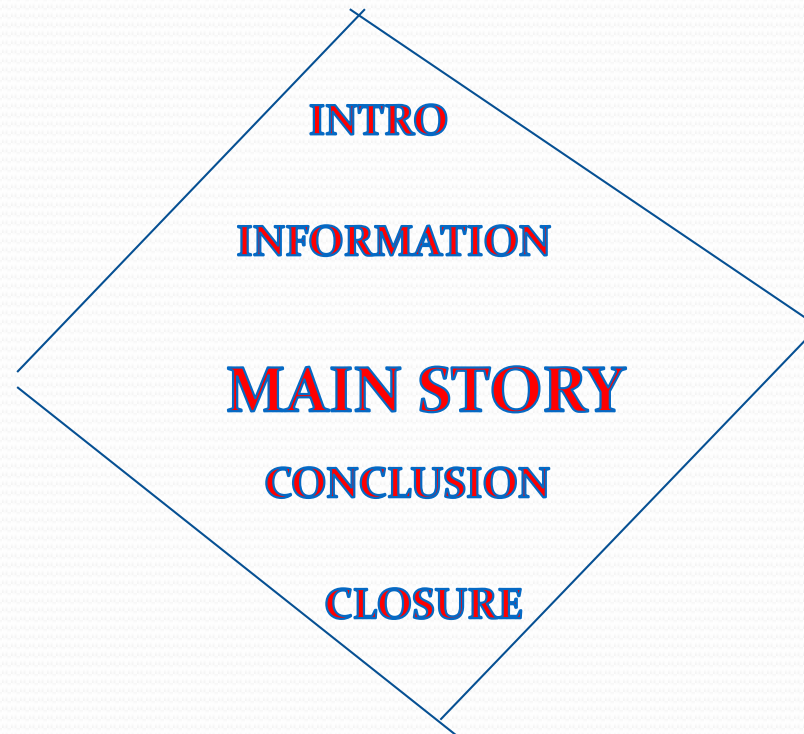
- Recent of breaking news
- Lead summaries the story
- One source, one angle
- Inverted pyramid structure
- Objective
- Factual
- Important
- Any issue
- Human focus
- Variety of sources
- Diamond structure
- Subjective
- Featurised
- Interesting

Features

Functions

- humanize
- add colour
- educate
- entertain
- illuminate

Diamond Structure



Features

Types of Features

- Personality profiles
- Personality profiles:
- Trend stories
- In-depth stories:
- Backgrounders
- Educational
- Entertainment

Organising Feature Stories

- **Choose the theme.**
- **Write a lead that invites an audience into the story**
- **Write clear, concise sentences.**
- **Use a thread**
- **Use transition.**
- **Use dialogue when possible.**
- **Establish a voice. A**
- **Conclude with a quotation or another part of the thread.**

Substance

- Facts
- Quotes
- Description
- Anecdotes
- Opinions
- Analysis
- Conclusion

Point of View

Autobiographies use the **First person** point of view with the use of either of the two pronouns “I” or “we.”

“**I** felt like **I** was getting drowned with shame and disgrace.”

Third person point of view is commonly used in feature writing with the use of pronouns like “he,” “she,” “it,” “they,” or a name.

“**Ismail** is a principled man. **He** acts by the book and never lets you deceive **him** easily.”

How to write a feature article

Prewriting

- Know the rules of attribution
- Ask open questions, be a good listener, and probe for anecdotes.
- Prepare for your interviews.
- Interview with breadth and depth.
- Write for a national audience.
- Keep an open mind.

How to write a feature article

Writing

- Decide on an approach.
- Focus on what's most compelling.
- Show, don't tell.
- Put your story in context.
- Don't overuse direct quotes.
- Fill holes
- Proofread.

Writing a review

- To offer an honest critique of the object under review, and to make a recommendation to your audience
- In a review you can be subjective
- More personal and informal in tone
- Create a rapport with the audience

Tips on reviewing a journal

- Include all details such as journal title, writer, date of release
- Summarise the content concisely
- Select and use short extracts/ examples to illustrate what struck you most about the journal. Was a particular topic interesting?
- Give your opinion, but always back it up with evidence. Be fair
- Make a final judgement, for example you could rate it out of five stars.

Writing feature leads

October 17 was not a good day for police officers in Kajang. It first turned bad when a man shot and wounded a doctor at Kajang Hospital, then shot and killed his mother (a patient) and then died of a gunshot wound himself.

It got worse, according to Bernama News Channel, when it was revealed that, contrary to early police statements that officers shot and killed the gunman, the man actually had taken his own life. To compound matters, after police issued a lengthy statement at a news conference about the shooting, identifying Ismail Ahmad as the gunman, BNC reported that this was an alias the individual gave to hospital staff and police now were working to discover his real identity.

The miscommunications that occurred in Kajang were the results of failing, perhaps unwittingly, to honor the first rule of crisis communications: release only confirmed information.

More people created Twitter accounts in 2016 than did all Twitter users in the prior five years. But a study at the end of 2017 found that about 30 percent of accounts have no followers and about 45 percent of accounts have never sent a single Tweet.

Watching events unravel in the Malaysian East, one could only conclude that the political leaders totally failed to realise the power of the people until it was too late for them to do anything about it.

National football team head coach Datuk Ong Kim Swee likes to joke. So when one day he told the players that he would retire and a female coach would replace him, all his players laughed.

“But when he did not laugh at his own story, we knew he was not joking,” said the captain of the team, Ali Rahman.

"When the doctor told me I had cancer, I was dumbstruck and feel like this life was meaningless," Suzana Osman, the 18-year-old girl, said in a sad tone.

Durians hanging at bus stops is a common sight along the main road from Serian to Kuching every time the durian season starts from December until mid-January next year.

Thank You

1. Foremost, I take this opportunity to record my heartfelt appreciation to the European Union – Malaysia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (EUMCCI) and TÜV Rheinland for the privilege of addressing this forum today.
2. Let me share with you my thoughts on “the role of cyber security in securing innovation in paving the way for industry 4”, which I believe is a great concern to every one of us in today’s Digital Age.

MALAYSIA COMMITTED TOWARDS CYBERSECURITY

Ladies and Gentlemen,

3. The International Telecommunication Union’s 2017 Global Cybersecurity Index has ranked Malaysia as the third most committed country towards cybersecurity, after Singapore and the United States.
4. This is recognition of Malaysia’s plans and strong cooperation among its government agencies. The Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation (MOSTI) is committed towards generating a secure cyber environment for individuals and corporations in Malaysia.
5. This shows the Malaysian Government’s commitment in strengthening our cyber security aspect in accordance with our aspiration for Malaysia to be a developed country.
6. But there is still more work to be done. I don’t need to say but the economic prosperity in the 21st century will very much depend on effective measures to protect our cyberspace and infrastructure.
7. It’s a fact of life today that cyber security acts as a shield for the nation’s economic development and societal well-being. The challenge therefore is to ensure Malaysia becomes a safe cyber place for business and a developed nation by 2020. According to Accenture, 65% of companies in Malaysia are still vulnerable to cyberattacks as they are not sufficiently protected.
8. At national level, the Eleventh Malaysia plan has identified cyber security as one of the technology focus areas, which has a strong emphasis on Information Communication Technology (ICT) investments to prepare the economy for Industry 4.0 and create conducive cyber physical systems.
9. The development of cyber physical systems will enhance Malaysia’s position at global economy, allowing the country to move from being a technological consumer to a technological producer. ICT is set to grow and contribute up to 18.2% to Malaysia’s GDP by 2020.

HISTORY AND THE LATEST DEVELOPMENT IN INDUSTRY 4.0

Ladies and Gentlemen,

10. Cyber security is crucial in ensuring innovation and sustaining future global trade between European Union and Asian region including Malaysia. It is useful for us to go back into history and review the journey that has brought mankind to where we are today: The Industrial Revolutions.
11. Historically, the first industrial revolution started in Europe, more specifically in Great Britain in the late 17th century. The revolution was the culmination of development in machine tools and factory system on the back of invention in steam power and iron production at that time.
12. While the First Industrial Revolution spurred the growth of industries, from coal, iron, railroads to textiles, the Second Industrial Revolution witnessed the expansion of electricity, petroleum and steel in the late 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. Indeed, the 2nd industrial revolution brought about much prosperity to Europe, North America and later expanded to Asia and rest of the world.
13. By the second half of the 20th century, a third industrial revolution appeared with the emergence of a new type of energy whose potential surpassed all its predecessors: nuclear energy. This revolution also witnessed not only the rise of electronics from transistors to microprocessor, but also the rise of telecommunications and computers.
14. As telecommunications continued to advance, the arrival of high-speed Internet at the dawn of the third millennium sparked the digital revolution that ultimately brings about the latest game changer.
15. So as I stand before an elite group of business leaders and entrepreneurs from European Union and Malaysia today, a fourth industrial revolution is underway, which builds upon the digital revolution.
16. But all these come at a price. The trends of technologies have introduced new vulnerabilities and opportunities for cyber attackers, hence adding more risks of cyber threats.
17. As technologies evolve, the criminals and other malicious actors also emerge. Therefore, there is a growing concern of increasingly insidious threats at various levels of societies. The trends of technologies have introduced new vulnerabilities and opportunities for cyber attackers, hence adding more risks of cyber threats.
18. We have also see how classified networks and industrial control systems were being compromised and how such attacks have affected businesses and government abilities to functions.

19. It is not an exaggeration to say that cyber-crimes are fast becoming the crime of choice and they are gradually replacing traditional crimes.

TO SAFEGUARD THE NATION CYBER SPACE FROM CYBER THREATS

Ladies and Gentlemen,

20. Cyber-attacks can happen anytime, what more with the imminent rise of 4IR. The expansion of cyber security ecosystem requires organizations to develop cyber resilience the ability to powerfully resist, react to and recover from potentially catastrophic cyber security threats, and reshape their environments for increasingly secure and sustainable cyber operations.
21. Cyber security would remain as national security concerns in years to come. Cyber threats are evolutionary and we have seen how they are growing in sophistication, hence Malaysia's approaches towards cyber security must continue to be revolutionary and innovative.
22. Malaysia in particular, with its aspiration of becoming an advanced nation driven by digital economy, must cope with the new dangers posed by new cyber-attacks in the light of 4IR.
23. Digital revolution has introduced malware as a criminal tool with Internet acts as a medium. In most cases, malware serves as the initial step to cyber-attacks and most of our computer systems now are exposed to various risks of cyber-crimes.
24. Amongst the disastrous Ransomware attacks was Petya, first seen in March 2016, and continued in 2017, ransomware variants, WannaCry had affected more than 230,000 computers in over 150 countries.
25. From Malaysia's landscape perspective, we received numerous reports on ransomware which being categorized under malicious code. In 2017, there were 814 malicious code incidents being reported to CyberSecurity Malaysia and this year, until February 2018, 58 were reported.
26. Clearly, cyber security will underpin the future growth of any digital economy and Malaysia is well positioned to capitalize on this impending trend.
27. As such, we need to develop a national cyber security innovation ecosystem that will transform cyber security challenges into new opportunities, ideas and solutions. A new mind set is vital if any economy is to survive and thrive in the coming decades.
28. The government of Malaysia will continue to give priority to cyber security for the next five years where the development of home-grown cyber security products and services will be emphasised to enable self-reliance.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN CYBER SECURITY

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

29. Whilst at the same, as part of global community, we will also aim to further strengthen our international cooperation to respond to global cyber challenges in order to protect its regional and global common interests. With such holistic approach, we hope to create and sustain a secure, resilient and trusted environment for 4IR to thrive.
30. There is a need, now more than ever, to collaborate with our key international partners, since cyber-attacks are borderless and beyond geographical boundaries.
31. Homeland security and traditional threats in the past were confined within physical boundaries. However, we have already seen today, the affairs of homeland security are no longer relevant in the case of cyber dimension.
32. To the military and in modern warfare, Cyberspace is recognised as the fifth domain apart of land, seas, air and space that need to be safeguarded.
33. One of the ways to address this would be through science diplomacy whereby international cooperation in cyber security detection, response and recovery should be emphasized.
34. My government understands the need to strengthen communication, enhance mutual trust, and promote regional cooperation to build a peaceful, secure, open and cooperative cyberspace.
35. So far, we have witnessed successful international collaboration and MOSTI thru CyberSecurity Malaysia intends to play a major and active role in developing close relationships and partnerships regionally and globally.
36. For example, at international level, EU-ASEAN collaboration project called **YAKSHA Horizon 2020** aims to use EU know how and local ASEAN expertise to develop a solution tailored to specific user and country needs.
37. Cybersecurity Malaysia is one of the ASEAN partners in collaborating with seven European partners.
38. The YAKSHA project will allow for heightened cyber security progresses and improve the competitiveness of European security industries in all ASEAN countries.
39. It also aims to develop innovative methods to pinpoint cyberattacks and create a system to store and analyze the collected data from occurring cyberattacks in the long-term.

CONCLUSION

Ladies and Gentlemen,

40. In conclusion, I hope cyber security will always remain a national security priority in Malaysia and certainly for many years to come. Therefore, I call upon all stakeholders in the cyber security ecosystem to adopt a more coherent and holistic approach to overcome cyber challenges in the era of 4IR.
41. With that, I would like to wish you all success, thank you for your presence, and hope you have a pleasant and an enjoyable afternoon. Thank you.