Moody College Writing Support Program
News Story Template

We don’t want writing to be formulaic, but starting with a formula can help you get the feel of a journalistic story. Try outlining your piece, using this as a guide. Remember, the only information that belongs in a story is related to your focus. Set everything else aside for another day.

Lead: One to two sentences. Get the time element in here.

“Strongest quote position here”

Nut graph: Context and road map. What will this story cover? What has come before? How many people affected at what cost? News value established here, if not in the lead.

“By golly, here’s another good spot for a quote to launch the remainder of the story.”

(Outline your main points. You may have a different number, but put them in an order that makes sense. What does the reader need to know first to understand what comes next? In the body here, you may have other sources commenting on the points made.)

Point 1
Point 2
Point 3

Ending:
“This is the second strongest point in a story for a quote.”
OR
Look to the future (without an essayist’s opinion). What’s next?