“Feature Article” Writing

Grades 3-6

The lessons provided for the feature article study have been given as a guide for the unit of study. Many other lessons can be developed in addition to or in place of these. Below are possible ways to increase the level of sophistication of writing at different grade levels.

Although grade levels are noted on the lessons, they are not limited to these grades. Differentiation in instruction can be accomplished by using the lessons as teaching points in individual conferences.

Third grade: “All about” feature article which may include the sections such as: how to, different kinds of, definition page, diagram, introduction and conclusion. Piece now will be formatted into article form as opposed to an “All about” book. Focus will be on structure. (details to focus on: facts, examples)

Fourth Grade: Feature Article with a more narrowed focus. Begin teaching students to look for an angle. (details to focus on: facts, examples, commentary)

Fifth Grade: Feature article using research to add to the content of the piece (details to focus on: facts, examples, commentary, quotes, statistics)

Sixth grade: Feature article using research to guide the piece. (details to focus on: facts, examples, commentary, quotes, statistics)

Articles are included in the back of the packet. Some articles have ideas for lessons shown on the page with a second clean copy included.

Teachers are encouraged over time to add articles they find to accomplish the lessons, so students read a variety over the years.

Many thanks to Carl Anderson for all his work with the All Write Consortium teaching informational writing. Some of the articles in the back are supplied from Toolkit Texts thanks to the work of Steph Harvey and Anne Goodvis.
# “Feature Article” Writing

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“Feature Article” Writing
(Grade 3-6)

Lesson: Discovering Elements of Feature Articles Through Immersion

Day One: Reading as Readers

Rationale: Before writers can successfully write their own feature article, they need to spend time noticing, reading, and thinking about this genre of writing.

Materials: Copies of at least five feature articles with varying topics to peak interest in this genre, chart paper and markers

Connection: Over the past few years writers, you have written informational books teaching others all about something in which you are an expert. This year, we are going to think of other ways writers can do this work. I know many of you enjoy reading magazines such as Ranger Rick, Boy’s Life and Highlights Magazine. These magazines contain articles that feature subjects of interest to many of you, and that is the genre we will begin to explore in this unit of study—feature articles.

Teach: Each of you will receive a packet of feature articles to read and enjoy. The best way to learn about a genre is to spend time reading in the genre first. I’m going to read aloud one of the articles right now. As I read, just enjoy the piece. See what you can learn about the subject presented. Then we’ll talk about some of the things you learned and enjoyed. (It will be easier to focus on elements of feature articles if the kids first have the opportunity to respond as readers. Name one or two things you learned in the article. Then allow time for students to talk about the piece as readers.)

I enjoy this genre as a reader because it gives me a chance to learn something new about a topic in one or two pages rather than read a whole book.

Have-a-go: You have some other articles in your packet to read. Pick one to read on your own. I will give you time to do that, and then we will split into groups according to what you read, so you have a chance to respond to the articles.

Link: As we begin to look at feature articles as another way for us to write informational pieces, it is important to read a lot of this genre and enjoy it as readers, so we can then begin to think about it as writers and how to go about the work of writing feature articles.

*Note: Immersion can last for several days.
*If you study feature articles in reading first, you can skip the immersion in writing workshop.
“Feature Article” Writing  
(Grade 3-6)  

Lesson: Discovering Elements of Feature Articles Through Immersion  
Day Two: Reading as Writers

Rationale: Before writers can successfully write their own feature article, they need to spend time noticing, reading, and thinking about this genre of writing.

Materials: Copies of at least five feature articles with varying topics to peak interest in this genre, chart paper and markers

Connection: Now that we have enjoyed the articles as readers, we are going to put on our writers’ caps and read the articles again looking at them as writers.

Teach: To think like a writer I ask myself questions like: What things stand out to me as a writer? What features do I notice? What craft do I notice? These are the kinds of questions writers ask as they begin to think about how writers write in this genre.

Let’s go back to the first article we read yesterday together and reread it with our writers’ hats on. I’ll read it out loud and you follow along silently. *(Read the article)* Here are some things I notice right away about this kind of writing. It has a Title like many other genres do, but I notice it seems to have smaller titles, or subtitles, for the different sections in the article. Also, the sections follow each other on the page. *(Give a few more examples and then ask students to tell what they notice.)*

Let’s start a chart of noticings of feature articles. *(Ask students for ideas and list things under chart.)* You have a good start thinking about feature articles. There are other articles for you to read and enjoy as well.

Have-a-Go: On your own, read an article to see what else you notice. *(Bring students back to discuss their findings. Add more to list.)*

Link: Remember writers, for us to write in a certain genre, we need to read in that genre first.

Sample of a possible list for the chart – there could be many more (Next page)
**Feature article noticings:**

Each part follows the other over one to two pages
- titles
- subtitles
- illustrations
- diagrams
- pictures
- captions
- charts
- maps
- facts
- definitions

Speaking to the reader “you”
- quotes from experts, famous people, and people affected by the subject
- statistics
- use of punctuation: parentheses, bullets, dash
- words in bold
- leads
- fun facts
- endings/conclusions
“Feature Article” Writing
(Grade 3-6)

Lesson: Creating an Expert List

Rationale:
One genre of writing in real life is “informational.” Writers write about topics that they know a lot about.

Materials:
Writer’s notebook

Connection:
Writers, we’ve spent a few days looking at articles that are about informational topic.

Teach:
All of us are experts about something—quite often we’re experts about many things. We’ve noticed that authors write about topics they know a lot about and/ or have spent time researching. I know a lot about several things too! I know a great deal about tomatoes and music and walking. In my writer’s notebook I’m going to start a list of the topics I know lots about. (Teacher makes a list in her notebook—or on overhead—of topics on which he/she is an expert.)

Have-a-Go:
Writers, think quietly for a minute about the things you know a lot about. (Allow time for thinking.) Now turn to your elbow buddy. Take turns telling each other what you’re an expert about. (Allow time.) Would anyone like to share with all of us what you’re some of the things you know all about? (Allow time for several share.)

Link:
When you go back to your seat, get your notebook out. Start a new page for your expert list. As the days go by, you may think of more things that you know all about. When you do, you can add them to your list!
“Feature Article” Writing  
(Grades 5-6)  

Lesson: Creating a List of Topics for a Feature Article in a Content Area Study

Rationale: Authors often write about topics of study as a way to learn more about the topic and to teach others about the topic. **It is important to give some choice in a content area study. By brainstorming a list together, students feel they have some ownership in topic choices.**

Materials: chart paper; markers; books, articles, etc. on the content

Connection: Writers often choose to write feature articles on topics they know a lot about. But sometimes we write about a topic as a way to learn more about the topic. Not only does writing it down help us to think more deeply about a topic, but also gives us a chance to teach someone else what we are learning.

Teach: Even when you don’t get to pick the subject in a content article study, you still have a lot of choices within the topic. Just like we learned to narrow our focus (find an angle) on topics we chose, we need to consider all the angles we can choose from a content unit of study as well. A great way to do this is brainstorm a list of possible narrowed topics on our content study of_______.

(Example) – We are studying the Civil War. That is a huge topic. Let’s break this down into some smaller ideas: weapons, famous battles such as Gettysburg, famous people like General Lee or Grant, uniforms, underground railroad...

Have-a-Go: Turn and talk with a partner. What are some other smaller topics that could come from ____________.

Link: There are many books, articles, etc in the room for you to look at to help you think about what your topic in this content study will be. Spend some time reading on the topic and see if you can find even more ideas we can add to our list. As you continue to read, begin to see if you find yourself interested in one of these smaller topic ideas.
“Feature Article” Writing
(Grades 3-6)

Lesson: Thinking About the Parts for the Feature Article

Rationale: Writers plan their work by thinking about the parts to their piece.

Materials: overhead copies of the feature articles, overhead projector, overhead markers, blank transparency, writers’ notebooks

Connection: Writers, you have written expert lists and now are ready to pick a topic to write for your feature article. One thing you can do to help choose a topic is consider what the parts of your piece will be.

Teach: Today we will use a writing strategy that can help you choose a topic and also begin to plan your article. Writers choose two to three possible topics and then make a list of what the parts of each of those topics might be. Let’s look at the article, __________, (Have one text you will use over and over as your touchstone text.) Let’s consider the parts of the piece. There is a lead that is like an introduction to the piece, then there are a series of parts. (Go through and highlight each part in the article.) The final part is the conclusion or ending. So let’s think about what you will need in each of your feature articles. Everyone will need leads and conclusions, and you will want to add other parts that fit your article. This article has ___(3,4,5…) parts besides the lead and conclusion. This next article, __________, has ___ parts in it. So you see, it is up to you the writer to think about what parts you will need and how many parts.

So if I am going to try making a list of parts for several of my ideas, I start by heading a page in my notebook with my first topic, tomatoes. (Tomatoes is more of an all about article suitable for third grade. For upper grades use a topic more focused such as Using tomatoes in favorite recipes. * Write you list on transparency as you talk. You write off of your own list.)

Under my heading I will list ideas for parts to the piece. What tomatoes are, kinds of tomatoes, how to plant tomatoes, favorite recipes with tomatoes, why tomatoes are good for you to eat. I have quite a few parts I could write for this piece. My next topic could be walking. I write the heading and now I write my parts under that. Walking to be fit, different kinds of equipment used for walking, diagram of muscles impacted from walking, walking schedules, special walking events. And of course, there is always a lead and an ending. So now I have several topics with
parts. I can look this over and make a decision on a topic that I feel I have the most to say.

**Have-a-Go:** Look at the notebook entries of your expert list. Turn and talk to a partner about several topics you think you may try to get you started on this process.

**Link:** Remember writers, by thinking through our parts on several topics, we can make a decision to write on the one we have the most to say, and we also begin to organize our writing!
“Feature Article” Writing
(Grades 4-6)

Lesson: Narrowing the Focus of the Topic- Finding an Angle

**Rationale:** By narrowing the focus of a topic, the writer can teach one aspect of a larger subject in greater detail.

**Materials:** Packet of articles including “Rattler Tattler,” teacher’s notebook

**Connection:** We have begun to think of topics we can write about for feature articles. What I have noticed when I look at your lists is that most of your topics are very general. For example: BMX bikes, riding horses, World War 2. These are very broad topics in which you could write a whole book.

**Teach:** Today we want to think about how to take our broad topic and narrow it down to one aspect of that topic called an angle, so our articles will be focused and not so general. Look at your packet of articles. Notice in the first article, it is about____. *(Example: “Rattler Tattler”- it isn’t everything you want to know about rattlesnakes. The piece is angled to speak about how the rattler gets a bad rap. Show how the articles are angled to a more narrowed topic)*

Let me show you how I find an angle. The way I do that is write my topic down in my notebook at the top of the page. Then I think about all the different things I know about my topic or I want to learn about my topic. For instance, you see how I have the big topic of riding horses. Under that I have written English style, western, side saddle, barrel racing, and dressage. Now I have narrowed riding horses down to smaller categories. *(See next page example.)*

Next, I pick one of these categories to see if I can break this down into sections for my article. I want to make sure my topic is narrowed but not so narrow that I don’t have much to say. Notice in my notebook I now have English style and under that I have made a list: what to wear, tack, saddles, how to ride. So I still have plenty to say about this topic. I also want to try out one or two more of these narrowed topic ideas before deciding which angle I will use in my feature article. So in my notebook I will do some more work.

**Have-a-Go:** Look at the topic you have chosen. Is your topic pretty broad? Talk with a partner about your topics. Discuss whether you can narrow your topic even more. *(Allow a few minutes and then have a quick discussion.)*
**Link:** As you go to work today, you may want to try the strategy I used to see if you can narrow your topic more. How many of you think you need to do some of this work? Great. Let me know how it goes!

**How the teacher notebook might look:**

**Topics for Feature Article**

- Four wheeling
- Riding horses
- Finding “Just right” books
- Raising kittens
- Tomatoes

**Riding Horses**

- English style
- Western
- Barrel riding
- Dressage
- Taking lessons

**English Style**

- What to wear
- Tack
- Saddle
- How to ride
- Kinds of horses for English
- Why people choose this style
“Feature Article” Writing  
(Grade 3-6)

Lesson: Organizing the Notebook into Sections/Parts

Rationale: By organizing the parts of a piece, a writer can structure the text in a logical way.

Materials: teacher- writer’s notebook, students’ notebooks, sticky notes

Connection: Writers, you have done the hard work of picking a topic (narrowing the topic-grades 4-6) and you have also considered the parts of your piece. The next step in the process is organizing your work in a way that will keep your work focused.

Teach: A great way to keep your work focused is to keep each section of your topic on separate pages. In this way, I can jot down things I know about my topic and things I learn about my topic under the section that it fits best. In my notebook, I wrote what each part was about at the top of a blank page and then skipped to a new page and wrote the next part. I reserved pages for every part that will be in my article. (You also could have the students do the same thing on separate loose leaf pages.) What I like about this is that I can keep all of my notes, thinking, my facts, quotes …any information I find and organize it by each section and I don’t have to separate all of my ideas later. After I think I have enough information for a section, I can then write the section on paper. Once I have written all of my parts, then I can choose the order I want them to go in my final draft.

Have-a-Go: Find the next page in your notebook that is empty. Right now look at the topic you chose and the parts. Find a spot in your notebook where you have plenty of empty pages to set up your parts. I have a sticky note for each of you to mark that spot so when you go back to your seats you can begin to organize your parts. Once you have that done, you can begin to write down notes, facts, and things you know for each of your sections.

Link: Organizing your writing can be a great strategy in any kind of writing you do, whether it is informational or fiction or persuasive. Let’s get to work!
“Feature Article” Writing  
(Grades 5-6)

Lesson: Taking Notes on Research

**Rationale:** Writers often research their topic to provide interesting and current information to their reader. It is important for the writer to write what he has learned from another source in his own words. Copying word for word from another source is illegal.

**Materials:** Book on example topic, chart, markers

**Connection:** Many of you are writing feature articles on topics about which you have some knowledge. But often writers research their topics even more looking for interesting information that can make the article even better. BUT, it is important to remember that we never write word for word what another author said.

**Teach:** I want to share a strategy that helps me write information I have just learned in my own words. I read for a little bit on my topic. When I find interesting information, I stop reading. I go to a friend and ask if I may tell him something I just learned. Watch. I’ll show you how I do this. *(Have book ready. Read a small section out loud.)* Hmm. This is interesting. I need to share this with somebody. John, may I share some new information with you? I just learned that...

Next I go to someone else and share it with her. By now, I am telling what I have learned in my own words. I am ready to write this new information in my notebook. I find the section it fits best under and write it down—in my own words. *(In your notebook show how you go to the appropriate section.)*

**Have-a-Go:** Let me read some more about________. After I read, turn and talk with a partner. Tell each other what you learned. After a few minutes, we’ll switch and you can share with another person. *(Read and the give them time to share twice.)* Would someone like to share what you learned?

Do you see how this information is now in your own words? You have said it differently than the author.

**Link:** As you read on your topic today, you may want to use this strategy so you won’t copy other writers’ words.
“Feature article” Writing
(Grades 3-6)

Lesson: Creating a Lead for Feature Articles- Day 1

Rationale: Leads can create voice to a piece of writing, provide a focus for the piece, and encourage a reader to continue reading.

Materials: Published examples of leads for feature articles on overheads- “Peek at Your Body’s Extra Pieces,” “Clean Up Your Act,” overhead projector

Connection: Writers, many of you have begun to write sections of your feature article. I think you have all picked such interesting topics. It is so important that you begin your article in a way that encourages your reader to keep reading as well as provide the focus of the piece. That is what the lead of a piece does.

Teach: Today we will think about two different kinds of leads that writers sometimes use when writing informational pieces such as you are. There are more than two kinds of leads, but we will just look at two today.

One lead that some writers use is putting the reader into a scene. The writer puts the action in present tense and provides several details that set the scene. This gives the reader a sense of “being there”. Let’s look at an example where the writer uses this technique. (Put piece on overhead- Example: Peek at Your Body’s Extra Pieces) Notice the lead: “Lie back, close your eyes—and imagine that your doc has just removed your appendix.” It creates interest so the reader will want to find out more. Think about your piece. Is there a way for you to create a scene or setting to pull your reader into your piece? For instance, if you are writing about monarch butterflies, you could say something like, “You lie so cozy in your little cocoon, thinking, ‘This is the life!’ when suddenly things begin to change.”

Another strategy is to appeal directly to the reader by using the word “you”. The reader feels the writer is having a conversation directly with him! An example of this is the “Peek at Your Body’s Extra Pieces.” It actually fits both ideas. Another one would be “Clean Up Your Act.” “Have you ever tried to get out of taking a bath?” By using “you” the writer has a conversation with us! How might you use this strategy as a lead in your writing?

Have-a-go: Let’s imagine you want to write an article on goldfish. How could you put the reader into a scene? (Ask for ideas and provide constructive feedback.) Let’s use the same topic and try talking directly to the reader. How might we do that? (Again, get ideas and provide feedback. You may want students to try each strategy in their notebooks to get a feel for each kind of lead.)

Link: Remember writers, leads can help to create a mood so that your reader will want to read on. These two strategies for leads can be used in many kinds of informational writing, so it is a great tool to keep in your writer’s tool belt for the rest of your life.
“Feature article” Writing  
(Grades 5-6)

Lesson: Creating a Lead for Feature Articles- Day 2

Rationale: Leads can create voice to a piece of writing and encourage a reader to continue reading.

Materials: Published examples of leads for feature articles on overheads such as “Rattler-Tattler,” “Jai Alai: The Fastest Game in the World,” and “Peer Pressure,” overhead projector

Connection: Yesterday we talked about leads that put the reader in a scene and/or speak directly to the reader. Today we will look at two different kinds of leads so you have some different strategies to add in your lead tool belt.

Teach: Today we will consider leads that begin with a riddle and leads that compare things. Look at the article “Peer Pressure.” Do you notice how the writer begins with a riddle as a way to introduce the topic of the piece? (Read the lead.) This is a great way to pull the reader into the piece and create interest. For example if you are writing about baseball, you could say, “What has a diamond, but isn’t a gem; has a bat, but no wings; and has lots of people that want to run home?” It is important that the writer think of specific details about his subject that provide fun clues to answer the riddle.

In “Rattler Tattler” we see a different kind of lead. (Read the lead.) The author compares rattlesnakes to Bart Simpson. Making comparisons can create an image or picture for the reader that immediately creates interest. If I use baseball again, I might think of aspects of baseball I can compare to things that are very different but have one thing in common with baseball. I think baseball is a very slow sport. There is a lot of “wait time” between plays, but it is worth the wait. So, now I have to think of a different subject than sports that is slow but is worth the wait. I know, a butterfly coming out of its cocoon. That seems slow, but the beautiful butterfly makes it worth the wait! So I could say something like, “Baseball is like a butterfly coming out of the cocoon. It’s a slow process, but worth the wait.”

Have-a-go: Turn and talk with a partner. Talk through a possible lead you can do using one of the two techniques, a riddle or a comparison. (Give them several minutes.) Let’s hear a few ideas you came up with.

Link: Remember writers, leads can help to create a mood so that your reader will want to read on. You now have four strategies for leads that can be used in many kinds of informational writing, so it is a great tool to keep in your writer’s tool belt for the rest of your life.
“Feature Article” Writing  
(Grades 3-6)

Lesson: Kinds of Details in Feature Articles

Rationale: Writers need to consider what kinds of details make sense in feature articles.

Materials: Overhead of article “Jai Alai: The Fastest Game in the World.” Overhead projector, overhead markers

Connection: Writers, many of you are now writing the sections of your feature article. It is important to think about the kinds of details writers use to make each section interesting and easy to understand.

Teach: One of the best ways to think about the kinds of details we might use in an article is to look at a feature article and name the kinds of details the writer uses. We are going to see what we notice from the article “Jai Alai...” to help us consider what kinds of things we can add in our feature articles. Here under the section, “History of Jai Alai” I’ll read each sentence and think about what kind of detail it is. *(Read each part. The sentences are facts about the sport.)*

Now let’s look at the next section, “The Equipment and Court”. *(Read each sentence and talk about 1. facts, 2. definitions with words in bold, 3. words italicized when used again, 4. making a connection [comparing something known to the unknown] about being stung by a fastball, and the 5. diagram.)*

So writers can use different kinds of details when writing the sections of the article. I am going to put these on a chart to help us remember the kinds of details you can add as you write your sections.

Have-a-Go: Read the next section, “Rules of the Game” with a partner and see if there are any other details we can add to our list. *(Allow time for them to read and discuss.)* What did you notice in this section? *(6. extra information in parentheses, use 7. bullets for a list)*

Link: As you go to work today on your piece, see if you can add some of these details to your article.
Lesson: Speaking Directly to the Reader

Materials: “Peek at Your Body’s ‘Extra’ Pieces” by Bob Condor –Chicago Tribune, overhead projector, overhead markers

The Connection: I’ve been looking over the drafts of your feature articles and I’ve had conversations with several of you about your feature articles. You are including good information for your readers, but the articles sound a little flat—more like a selection from an encyclopedia. Let’s look at our touchstone text, the body parts piece, to see how Bob Condor puts voice into his writing.

Teach: Notice the lead of the piece. (Read the lead.) Bob Condor pulls you into the piece and actually puts you into the setting by speaking directly to you, the reader. He writes in second person- using “you and your”. This is an effective lead that interests the reader and makes him want to read on. Let’s look for other places in the text where the author speaks directly to the reader. (Read more from the text noticing places the author uses second person.)

By speaking directly to the reader, the author makes you, the reader, an active participant in the text. This is one way writers can make informational writing more interesting to the reader.

Have a go: Think about your feature article. Consider how you might use this strategy in your piece. Talk to a neighbor about how you can do this. (Allow a few minutes for discussion.)

The Link: Remember, when we write for an audience we want to teach them and also engage them so they will read to the end of the piece. Speaking directly to the reader is one way we can do this.
“Feature Article” Writing  
(Grades 3-6))

Lesson: Adding Information Through the Use of Parentheses

Rationale: Writers can add detail in informational writing through the use of parentheses to explain, define, or give commentary.

Materials: Articles on overhead transparencies (“Look at Your Body’s Extra Pieces,” “Jai Alai: The Fastest Game in the World”), student copies of the same articles and highlighters, overhead projector, overhead markers, chart paper and markers.

Connection: Writers, we have been looking at ways to add more detail to our feature articles. One thing you have noticed, and it’s on our chart, is adding extra information in the parentheses.

Teach: Today we will look at several articles where the writer uses this technique so we can think about why and how the author does this. In this way we can do the same work in our writing. First let’s look at the jai alai piece. Look at your article and just go through and highlight places where the author uses the parentheses. *(Allow some time for this.)* Now turn to a partner and see if you can come up with reasons the author has added the parentheses to the piece. *(Some of the things to note: pronunciation of a word, added information to explain something further, to define something- then discuss as a group how they might use these strategies in their work.)* So let’s chart reasons to use parentheses.

Now let’s do the same thing with the body parts piece. Go through and highlight places the author uses the parentheses. Then talk with your partner to see if there are other reasons authors use this technique. *(For example, commentary, in which the writer adds his own thoughts. Then help students consider how they might do that.)* Let’s add this to our chart too.

Have-a-Go: Think about your article. Take a minute. Are there any words in your article where you may need to provide a pronunciation or a short definition? Are there places where a little extra information can help make your writing clearer? Are there any places in the article where you can add a little commentary to spice up your piece?

Link: Using the parentheses to add more detail to your piece is a strategy you can use not only on this piece now, but any time you write to inform readers.

**Other possible punctuation lessons: bullets, dash, ellipsis, colon**
“Feature Article” Writing
(Grades 5-6)

Lesson: Finding Quotes for Feature Articles as a Kind of Detail

Rationale: Informational writing often includes quotes from experts, famous people, or people affected by the topic of the piece. This gives more authenticity to the article.

Materials: overhead of “Peek at Your Body’s Extra Pieces” or “Peer Pressure” article, overhead projector, overhead markers

Connection: Your feature articles are moving along. Some of you are finished with your first drafts and are ready for revision and some are still working on the draft. You may now be thinking, “How can I add more detail to my piece—details that will help me teach my reader about my subject?” One kind of detail in feature article writing is to use quotes from experts, famous people, or from everyday people who are affected by the topic.

Teach: So let’s focus on how can you find and add a quote to your feature article in a way that is interesting and that will help teach the reader about your subject. Let’s look at the text, “Peek at Your Body’s Extra Pieces.” In this piece the writer uses a quote by an expert to explain parts of the body that can be safely removed. (Put piece on the overhead and read the quote.) In the “Peer Pressure” article, the quote by psychologist James Gioia tells how children are influenced by their peers. Both expert quotes fit well in their particular sections of the articles and add detail to support those parts. So a writer can look at the focus of one part of the piece and see if a quote will help explain or expand on the idea of that part. The writer can research on the web or in books or magazines to find expert quotes and/or quotes by famous people. (You should have certain sites, which are considered reliable for factual information, available to the class.) As you read about your topic, you may find interesting quotes that may be useful to your piece. Write the quote down including the name of the person who said it. Then also write down the name of the article or book, the author’s name, and if it is an article in a magazine, the name of the journal and date. *(See below)*

Have-a-Go: With a partner continue reading the peer pressure piece for more quotes. What other quotes do you find and who is being quoted? *(Discuss why certain people are quoted in the piece. Allow time for students to read and discuss.)*

Okay, writers. What did you notice? *(Perhaps …more quotes from Gioia-an expert. Possibly… quotes from kids-people affected by the subject.) Why do you think a kid is quoted in this piece?*(discuss) So you can also get quotes from people you know—people who are affected by your subject.*
**Link:** Remember adding a quote from an expert, someone famous, or people affected by the subject is one more way to provide information to your reader on your subject. As you read and continue to work on your pieces be watching for interesting quotes from experts, famous people, or people affected by the subject.

*Teacher will need to teach a lesson on:*

1. How to punctuate the quote
2. Teacher’s preferred format for giving credit to sources.

**Other possible lessons:**

1. Format for quoting text
2. Format for crediting sources.
“Feature Article” Writing  
(Grades 3-6)

Lesson: Writing the Conclusion

Rationale: When reading a feature article, the ending is what stays with the reader. It is important to end an article so that it is satisfying to the reader and maybe even encourages the reader to find out more on the topic.

Materials: Jai Alai: The Fastest Game in the World,” “Clean Up Your Act,” and “Rattler Tattler”), overhead projector

Connection: Writers, we know that the lead of the piece creates interest and lets the reader know what the piece is going to be about. The conclusion of the piece is also important. The goal is to leave the reader satisfied and maybe pique her interest to find out more on the topic.

Teach: There are different techniques writers use to end an article. Today we will look at two techniques. The first is -end the article with a very interesting fact- in other words- save the best for last! The Jai Alai piece ends by explaining that Jai Alai has the record for being the fastest game in the world. Notice the author even used this fact as part of the title for the piece. You might want to consider saving your most interesting fact for the last part of your piece. This is a simple technique, but very affective.

Another strategy is to use the same technique from your lead--but not the same words-- in your ending. In “Clean Up Your Act,” the writer begins by speaking to you, the reader. “Have you ever tried to get out of taking a bath?” Notice the end uses the strategy of speaking to the reader again. “Now most people bathe and change their clothes every day. And your neighbors think that you’re weird if you don’t!” Notice the author’s ending comes back to the big idea in the piece too.

In “The Rattler Tattler” the author begins by making a comparison. “Rattlesnakes are the Bart Simpsons of the animal world.” It ends with, “So remember, the rattlesnake is a lot like the Grand Canyon. If you stand back, you can see the beauty—but up close, things could get a little rocky.” This comparison at the end pulls the reader back to the big idea of the piece in a satisfying way.

Have-a-Go: Turn and talk to a partner. Think about these two techniques as you discuss with your partner how you might try one. Try writing in the air- talk it out. *(Allow time).* Does anyone want to share their possibilities?
Link: Just remember that endings are just as important as beginnings. Keep this in mind as you continue to work on your articles today.
“Feature Article” Writing
(Grades 3-6)

Lesson: Putting Sections in an Order for the Final Draft

Rationale: Writers place their sections in a feature article in a logical way.

Materials: student sample or teacher sample of his sections, each section on an overhead, overhead projector.

Connection: Many of you have most of your sections written for your feature article and are trying to think how best to organize the final piece so it makes sense.

Teach: Writers order their parts so the reading flows from one section to the next. In some articles, the writer does this through a sequence of events. In other words, it is chronological, or time ordered. Not all feature articles have a chronological order. *(Teacher will use his own sections. The following example used, Riding English style, is just how it might go.)* Riding a horse English saddle style has no time order. So to organize, I need to think what would make the most sense to tell my reader first, next, and so on. Obviously, I begin with my lead. Then I ask myself, what makes sense next? I think I need to tell about the tack-the equipment- a rider needs before telling how to ride. So you see, you, the writer are in charge of making these decisions by asking yourself, what makes sense, first, next, then, and so on.

Have-a-Go: Let’s finish figuring out how I might organize my horse article. What would make sense next? *(Go through your piece or a sample of sections from some other source.)*

Link: If you are ready to put your sections in order, you will need to ask these questions today. You may want to plan your order and then ask several people if your order makes sense to them, before you begin your final draft. Let’s get to work.