

03 Feature Writing

Critique of Entry

The Critique Sheet is not HOW the entry is judged but is used for feedback to the contestant. Sometimes it is a special spark or creative element that will push one entry to the forefront over another in order to receive an award. High marks do not necessarily mean an award will be given.

(2) Content/coverage	4	3	2	1	0
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- Clear, interesting central focus/angle
- Illustrates mastery of journalistic writing: accuracy, balance, clarity/conciseness, objectivity and timeliness
- Effectively incorporates source material: background information and speaker quotes
- Emphasizes relevant interest elements: conflict, consequence, human interest, prominence, proximity, timeliness
- Adheres to accepted legal and ethical journalistic practices

(2) Organization	4	3	2	1	0
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- Skillful lead (feature technique), middle and a strong sense of closure
- A clear, strong angle governs story structure, and it progresses in logical order
- Skillfully transitions between ideas
- Employs concise, clear paragraphs addressing one point
- Uses quotations liberally without stating the obvious or repeating information
- Fits format of a feature story (human interest, personality sketch, news feature, informative feature)

(2) Conventions	4	3	2	1	0
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- Follows AP style
- Contains few convention errors
- Adheres to accepted legal/ethical journalistic practices

(2) Word Choice	4	3	2	1	0
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- Uses precise language
- Refrains from redundancy
- Uses techniques such as imagery and/or figurative language if appropriate
- Eliminates unnecessary wordiness
- Uses dynamic, specific verbs
- Does not employ clichés
- Avoids passive verbs

(1) Sentence Fluency	4	3	2	1	0
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- Contains sentences that are concise and well built
- Variety of sentence beginnings
- Natural rhythm, cadence and flow
- Appropriately reduces clauses to phrases or single words

(1) Voice	4	3	2	1	0
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- Tone is objective and fair
- Writing connects directly with the reader, showing an awareness of audience and purpose
- Writing shows and does not tell
- Writer captures the voice of those interviewed
- Writing evokes an emotional response

4 = excellent
3 = good
2 = average
1 = poor
0 = element is missing or does not meet the criteria for judging

STRENGTHS

Judge 1: Reads smoothly. Nice transitions.

Judge 2: A good draft; with some editing, this could be quite good. Has potential.

Ranking/Scores: This story earned an Honorable Mention. See scores in parenthesis before each individual category.

SUGGESTIONS

- Present tense in first sentence makes the quote confusing. Make sure to pay more attention to tense usage.
- Make sure to make your single focus clear early in the draft (nutgraf).

Judge _____

Judge _____