

01 Newswriting

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.

(2.5) Content/coverage 4 3 2 1 0

- Clear, interesting central focus/angle
- Illustrates mastery of journalistic writing: accuracy, balance, clarity/conciseness, objectivity & timeliness
- Effectively incorporates source material: background information and speaker quotes
- Good use of specific detail and description rather than generalizations

(3) Organization 4 3 2 1 0

- Skillful lead that informs and captures the reader
- 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/repeating info; attributes info correctly
- Fits format of a new story (not necessarily inverted pyramid)

(3.5) Conventions 4 3 2 1 0

- Follows AP style
- Contains few convention errors
- Adheres to accepted legal and ethical journalistic practices

(2.5) Word Choice 4 3 2 1 0

- 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 cliches
- Avoids passive verbs

(3) Sentence Fluency 4 3 2 1 0

- 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

(2) Voice 4 3 2 1 0

- 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:

- Good word choice.
- Smooth transitions between ideas.

Judge 2: Generally good use of quotes.

Ranking/Scores: This story did not earn an award. See scores in parenthesis before each individual category.

SUGGESTIONS

Judge 1:

- Missing the what, when and why element of a news story.
- Writing could “show” rather than “tell” more by including more detail.

Judge 2: Make sure your story structure follows the angle your lead gives (intends).

Judge _____

Judge _____