

Unit 2 and 3 – Reflective Conclusion

Unit 2 – 3.2

Unit 3 – 1.1, 2.1, 2.2

The structure of news stories follows a simple four-paragraph format: the first paragraph details what has/is going to happen, the second and third deal with who, why, when and where, and the fourth must include a direct quote(s) that backs up paragraph one.

Journalists write in this manner because it makes the process of writing much easier and helps to effectively get the point across.

I originally struggled to source my story for Humans of Sheffield, as I wanted to write about the owner of a local café, Steamyard, because they try to make their food and drink as inclusive as possible, with various different milk alternatives, vegan/gluten free doughnuts and cakes. Unfortunately, we struggled in communication as I sent an email that got transferred to another person, who didn't reply, and then we tried to communicate via Instagram but this also failed. A week before my deadline I decided to give it up and source a new story.

In September, I had been to see The Seamonsters perform at Café Totem, the band members are all from Sheffield, and so I got into contact with lead singer Naomi Mann. She agreed to be interviewed, and I suggested a meeting place, however due to schedules we eventually had to conduct the interview via email.

When I had finally secured an interview, I read as many articles as I could find on Naomi and The Seamonsters, as well as 'stalking' both on social media, then began to brainstorm topics that I would like to discuss, in the end I narrowed it down to three umbrella topics: music, style and feminism, with about five questions for each topic. The way I approached my research and planning for the interview proved effective as I was well-informed and could get as much exclusive information as possible.

I double-checked my finished article with the information Naomi had given me, to ensure that it was accurate and portrayed her words in the best way possible, and I do think that with a bit more information on Naomi's early life and another edit, it would be fit for publication.

For my #sheffieldissuper piece I had my idea from the get go as I had seen the shop on my way to college, so I did a small amount of research before getting in touch with the owner via email.

I agreed a date to meet with the original owner's new business partner, as the owner was away on holiday. So, I did some more research and came up with the questions I thought would work best and get me the most information for my article. I went down to the interview, and the only problem I had was the fact that the shop co-owner had a breed of dog that

I'm allergic to in the shop and so I had to do the interview as quick as possible before I had a reaction. My interview was recorded in voice notes on my phone, and so I typed up the best parts of the answers afterwards. Then I used that, plus the information from my notes to write up my article. I originally struggled with going over the word count but managed to edit it down to just over 400 words.

I think that editing how I wrote the quotes to make them more direct, and polishing it a bit more would make the story suitable for publication.

The final two articles I wrote, a piece on sexual health among young people and queer men, and a piece on the rise of transphobic hate crimes were much more difficult to write as they tested my detailed research and maths skills.

To source information for all these stories I had to skim-read pages upon pages of government/police information to make sure that all my facts were accurate.

My research process consisted of getting a basic knowledge of the subjects, and creating an initial headline before delving deeper into my research and making sure I had covered all the significant points of interest that were linked to the story. Then I took all my notes and wrote my story up.

Overall, writing these articles helped me to learn skills such as the four-paragraph rule that I can implement into all my writing in the future, one of the key things I learned was not to ever start a sentence/paragraph with a number that isn't written (twenty-six as opposed to 26).

Going into my FMP I will aim to ensure that my written pieces all keep to an exceptional standard, sticking to the four-paragraph rule where applicable and ensuring I go back over my final piece with a fine tooth comb to make sure all my spelling and grammar is perfect.