

Writing an Editorial

www.aoifesnotes.com

What is an editorial?

- ✦ *Presents us with the newspaper's view of a topical issue*
- ✦ *Reflects the view of those who own and run the paper*



Layout

- ✿ *Like any discursive article in that they will have an introduction, body of the article and a conclusion*
- ✿ *Strong thesis statement is important: make your opinion clear*
- ✿ *Address and refute opposing viewpoints*
- ✿ *Strong conclusion that may be a call to action*

Register

- ✦ *Appears **objective** and uses **language of argument***
- ✦ *Before writing you should revise features of the language of argument (available on the Language Genres section of this website)*
- ✦ *Does not engage in **ad hominem argument** (this means attacking the person making a case rather than the case they are making)*
- ✦ *Focus on **issues** rather than individuals*

Content

- ✦ *Suggest solutions*
- ✦ *Constructive criticism*
- ✦ *Facts and figures*
- ✦ *Do not include any anecdotes*
- ✦ *Generally it is best to avoid the word 'I' completely. If you must use it, keep it to an absolute minimum*

Structure - Introduction

- ✿ *Make it clear what the topic is, give some background to it, say who it affects and why it should be discussed. In other words, give the 'who, what, when, where, why'*
- ✿ *Outline the key points of the issue or controversy in an objective fashion*



Body of the editorial State the opposition's viewpoint and refute it

- ✦ *State the opposition's viewpoint: 'The HSE, backed by the government, believes these closures are necessary to ensure a more streamlined, cost-effective service.'*
- ✦ *Make sure the opposition's case is a strong one. If it is weak, there is little need to oppose it.*



- ✦ *‘The government plans to reduce spending in the health sector by closing three regional hospitals in 2016. A meeting of the HSE executives was held in Dublin last night to discuss the proposal. What neither the government nor the HSE has taken into consideration, however, is that this plan, if implemented, will actually cost significantly more money in the medium to long term.’*

Facts, figure, quotations etc.

- ✦ *Give plenty of evidence from those who support your position*
- ✦ *Obviously, this can be invented but should be credible*
- ✦ *Give moral/ethical reasons for your stand*
- ✦ *Propose solution(s)*



Conclusion

- ✦ *Restate your viewpoint*
- ✦ *Be passionate*
- ✦ *Mention the legacy we will leave future generations if we do not act now*
- ✦ *Quotation*
- ✦ *Rhetorical question*



Examples

- ✦ <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/20/opinion/the-supreme-court-the-nativists-and-immigrants.html?ref=opinion&r=0>
- ✦ <http://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/editorial/the-silent-victims-of-austerity-1.2498198>