

## Quadrant II - Notes

Paper Title: Mass Communication

Paper Code: COG149

Module Name: The Nature of Journalism - The Role and Power of the Press -  
Elements of a Newspaper - Journalistic Values - writing an article for a newspaper

Module No: 4

### **The Nature of Journalism**

Journalism can be understood as the work of collecting and writing news stories for newspapers, magazines, radio, television or online news sites. Journalism must select and present that which is newsworthy. It includes everything from reportage on politics and public affairs, to celebrity stories, lifestyle messages, medical updates, weather, science, education, and much more.

### **The Role and Power of the Press**

In modern times, journalism and the press play an important role in maintaining the social, political and economic order. People across the world rely on the press in order to remain informed and up-to-date with current affairs and happenings.

Independent, professional, responsible and free press, that is, free from bias and influence play an important role in democratic societies. Alongside information, the press also provides entertainment to the people. However, as journalism, media and the process have become increasingly commercialised and industrialised, there is the additional risk of the press being a vehicle of propaganda.

### **Elements of a Newspaper**

A newspaper uses a combination of Photos & Text. Some of the key elements of a newspaper are:

1. Byline – the name of the reporter who wrote the story.
2. Caption/Cutline – the text used to describe a photograph.
3. Masthead – the forehead of the newspaper where the title of the newspaper is published. It also gives the place of publication, publication date etc.
4. Headline – the title of a news report run in display type to catch the attention of the readers. A headline summarises the most important point in a news report.

### **Journalistic Values**

The core values of journalism are closely connected to the role and function of journalism in society and strive to maintain ethical practices in journalism. Different organisations specify different values, however, some of the main principles are as follows:

1. Journalism should be accurate and fair. Journalists should be honest and courageous in gathering, reporting and interpreting information. Objectivity should also be present in journalism.
2. Journalists must treat sources, subjects, colleagues and members of the public as human beings deserving of respect and empathy.
3. Journalists must be independent voices; we should not act, formally or informally, on behalf of special interests whether political, corporate or cultural.
4. Journalism means taking responsibility for one's work and explaining one's decisions to the public, accepting accountability.

### **Writing an article for a newspaper**

News articles cover the basics of current events. They answer the questions: who, what, where, how, and when? Feature articles are longer and more in-depth than regular news articles. They cover one subject from multiple angles and are written in a more creative, entertaining format.

The best way to structure a newspaper article is to first write an outline. Review your research and notes.

A good newspaper article includes 5 elements (Headline, byline, lead paragraph, explanation and additional information).

Headline: This is a short, attention-getting statement about the event.

Byline: This tells who wrote the story.

Lead paragraph: This has ALL of the **who, what, when, where, why and how in it.**

Explanation: After the lead paragraph has been written, the writer must decide what other facts or details the reader might want to know. The writer must make sure that they have enough information to answer any important questions a reader might have after reading the headline and the lead paragraph.

Additional Information: This section can also include direct quotes from witnesses or bystanders.