

Final Reflection

In the beginning, I was slightly nervous about the “Unfamiliar Genre Project.” It seemed like a lot of work, and I had chosen what seemed like one of the harder genres to do. But by the end, the project taught me a lot about journalism, and, surprisingly, myself.

In the past, whenever I did a project, I would always just jump in, head first. This strategy worked with varying levels of success. Sometimes I ended up very proud of the work I’d done, but usually I would be upset. For this project however, we used a different way. I learned that you could research things from your topic, and figure out a blueprint of your work before even starting.

I started out slowly, not quite understanding what I was supposed to be doing. I ended up surfing the New York Times website almost everyday, just reading through all of their science articles. At first I didn’t see the benefit, but as I read more and more, I found myself planning my own article in my head. I knew what I wanted and what I didn’t want. This is a good strategy, and I will definitely use it in the future.

My actual writing process hasn’t changed much from my other writing endeavors. What I always do it just sit and write. This has always worked for me in the past, and continued its winning streak for this project.

Usually, after I sit and write my first draft, a huge editing process goes on. I don’t do much editing on paper; I mostly read through it on the computer several times, and do my editing there. This time I tried it a bit differently. I just kept printing out copies, and editing the hard copies. This seems to work better for me.

Another thing I did was have people read my work. Most of the time I just have my mom read and edit it, but this time I branched out. I had peer editors and teacher editors as well as parent editors.

I had my Computer Applications student teacher look over it, and she really helped out with correct formatting, and balancing the article properly. I’m very glad that I shared it with her.

The whole time I was doing this process, I had thoughts sprinting through my head. At first I was thinking, “This is so stupid, its never going to work.” But after a few drafts, I began to believe in myself.

In the end, this project was very insightful. I learned a whole new way to read and write. I learned a new editing process that I will use forevermore. And I learned to believe in myself and get things done!

Green and Red: Not Just For Christmas

By Elspeth Hayden
Journalism I



The light filtered slowly through the thick bubble, gradually bringing the city into a state of awareness. As the city woke, the citizens buzzed around busily, like a hive of bees securing their winter's food.

The metaphor was only compounded by the bubble surrounding them, creating the hive-like atmosphere. The translucent half sphere was all that kept the city from destruction.

The humans can't survive without atmosphere. They built their Mars colony inside this fragile dome; leaving all of their lives in the metaphorical hands of a nonliving creature, incapable of harming them, intentionally.

Terraform: verb. To transform a planet so as to resemble the earth, especially so that it can support human life.

Mars has long been in the eyes and minds of humans, especially scientists. From evidence that has been found, we know that Mars might once have had an environment like Earth's. And a select group is in favor of returning it to that state.

This is the future of humanity. Many believe that it is our birthright, and since we discovered the red planet we get to colonize it.

Others say that we should leave Mars as it is because there is the possibility of life, and the existing life must be protected at all costs.

These two opposing groups are becoming as vehement as Democrats versus Republicans, their equivalents in the scientific world.

The people who support terraforming Mars are called "Greens", perhaps because of the color they wish Mars to be. Their opponents are called "Reds"; probably because of the color they want Mars to stay.

Greens believe that at some point the Earth will be destroyed or become incapable of sustaining life. Either an asteroid will hit, or a huge volcano will explode, or perhaps even humanity itself will completely ruin the atmosphere with pollution.

Greens believe that our only way out is to have the option to live somewhere that's not the Earth. Mars seems a likely place, because

of its once similar atmosphere, and the fact that there are no life signs. It's also far enough away to not be affected by anything that harms the Earth.

Greens believe that the most important thing is to save humanity, whether or not there was life on Mars first.

Reds like to believe in life. They think that there is life on Mars, and that they WILL discover it. They believe that no matter how small, the life deserves study and research.

Reds think of Mars as a time capsule. Mars' surface shows the history of the universe, and might be able to help us predict what is to happen in the future.

Reds also believe that by studying how life was created on Mars, they can discover how life was created in this solar system. Perhaps they'll even find life in places other than Mars.

So while most people associate red and green with the holiday season, the colors are gaining publicity in a different place: space.

The people who support terraforming

Mars are called

"Greens" ... Their

opponents are called "Reds."

Angier, Natalie. "The Ambivalent Bond With a Ball of Fur." New York Times 2 Oct. 2007. 28 Nov. 2007 <<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/02/science/02angier.html?n=Top/Reference/Times%20Topics/People/A/Angier,%20Natalie>>.

A cute little article about our pets and their effect on us. It wasn't that interesting to read, but in heart it was a good article. I enjoyed the idea of the article, but it was a little dry for my taste. If I were to write something like that, I would flesh it out more.

Angier, Natalie. "The Dance of Evolution, or How Art Got Its Start." New York Times 27 Nov. 2007. 27 Nov. 2007 <<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/27/science/27angi.html?ref=science>>.

The article explains how and why art came to be. This article is found online, in the science section. This pushes the boundaries of a science article though, with a lighter view. The whole article seems to contain more "fun" than is usual for its genre. This article helped me decide what I wanted my article to be like.

Angier, Natalie. "In Science Classrooms, A Blast of Fresh O2." New York Times 30 Oct. . 28 Nov. 2007 <<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/30/science/30angi.html?pagewanted=2>>.

A sort of review on today's society. This article tells about an accelerated ninth grade science class and its very different view of the subject. An interesting twist on the science genre. Instead of reporting on discoveries made by already proclaimed scientist as per usual, it focused on the next generation.

Angier, Natalie. "In the Dreamscape of Nightmares, Clues to Why We Dream At All." New York Times 23 Oct. 2007. 28 Nov. 2007 <<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9B07E4DA1539F930A15753C1A9619C8B63&sec=&spon=&pagewanted=3http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9B07E4DA1539F930A15753C1A9619C8B63&sec=&spon=&page>>.

Another lighthearted article, this time about dreams vs. nightmares. It defines nightmares, and tells about their levels: enough to make you uncomfortable, enough to make you wake up, enough to make you wake up screaming. This article was light on the facts, heavy on the interest. Even though I wasn't into the topic, I enjoyed reading it just because of its craft.

Associated Press, The. "Rulings on Endangered Species Are Reversed." New York Times 28 Nov. 2007. 28 Nov. 2007 <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/28/us/28brfs-RULINGSONEND_BRF.html?_r=1&ref=science&oref=slogin>.

A short little article about the new endangered species rulings and how they were affected. While this small blurb was jammed with good info, I prefer something longer, with more details.

Chang, Kenneth. "A Hazy Future for a 'Jewel' of Space Instruments." New York Times 20 Nov. 2007. 28 Nov. 2007 <<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/20/science/space/20scop.html?ref=space>>.

This article seemed to have been written for information. It told of the Arecibo radio telescope, and the funding that has been cut. The article wasn't that enjoyable unless you knew the background, which most people don't. Because I want my article accessible to everyone, I won't write it like that.

Ely, Elissa. "A Stable Doctor for a Scattered Life." New York Times 27 Nov. 2007. 27 Nov. 2007 <<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/27/health/views/27case.html?ref=science>>.

This article is more of a cautionary tale about medicating people. I didn't like this article very much, because I'm not into medicine or the like. While it was well written, I didn't find the content to be appropriate for all readers. I decided that I want my article to be accessible for all.

Fountain, Henry. "Wash Your Clothes: Elephants Can Smell You A Mile Away." New York Times 27 Nov. 2007. 27 Nov. 2007 <<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/27/science/27obelep.html?ref=science>>.

An article reviewing the intelligence of elephants. I loved this article, from its content to its craft. The article was very good at getting the facts across without seeming to boring. I want to write an article with this type of intensity.

Fountain, Henry. "Water on Mars May Have Piled Up As Ice Near Equator." New York Times 6 Nov. 2007. 28 Nov. 2007 <<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/06/science/space/06obmars.html?ref=space>>.

Simply an elaboration on a blurb, this article was very boring. It was filled with facts that not everyone could understand. I think that all articles should be more fun to read, instead of a chore.

Hedström, Peter. "Experimental Macro Sociology: Predicting the Next Bestseller." Science 10 Feb. 2006: 786-87. 27 Nov. 2007 <<http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/summary/311/5762/786?maxtoshow=&HITS=10&hits=10&RESULTFORMAT=&fulltext=sociology&searchid=1&FIRSTINDEX=0&resourcetype=HWCIT>>.

A dry article about the science of predicting what will sell. I didn't enjoy reading it very much. I want all people to be able to enjoy my writing, not just those with Ph. D.s. The article could have been more interesting if there was more detail and less facts.

Research Journal

November 27, 2007

Diary,

As I looked through an assortment of articles today, I realized something important. I looked at two websites mostly; Science.com and nytimes.com. From scanning through articles on both sites, I came to realize that I would rather write like the authors of New York Times. The Science authors tend to write "hard-core" science, for scientists to read and understand. It was too complex for me to understand. The articles in New York Times were science for anyone. I loved the way they made science accessible to all. I especially like Natalie Angier's writing. I have read her book, Woman, and I now am really enjoying her science articles.

Elsbeth Hayden

November 28, 2007

Diary,

I'm still reading other articles. This is taking a lot longer than I thought it would. I thought that I would already have a draft by now, but this is proving more difficult than believed.

Elsbeth Hayden

November 29, 2007

Diary,

Today we looked at audience and purpose. I decided to pull a Natalie Angier and write for everyone. She manages to write science writing and yet everyone can understand it, not just people with Ph. Ds. And while she writes articles full of science, they are also entertaining. I want to be able to do that. The purpose of science writing is to inform or educate people. So therefore my purpose is to inform and educate, as well as entertain.

Elsbeth Hayden

November 30, 2007

Diary,

Today I thought of a great title for my article. If I do it on terraforming Mars, I would put in a funny story at the beginning, like about aliens.

Elsbeth Hayden

December 2, 2007

Diary,

So far I know what I want to write (science), what I want to write about (Mars) and how I want to write it (Natalie Angier style). All that's left is actually writing it. I think that my biggest problem is getting the research done. I'm going to have to look up a lot of information. Luckily, my mom and dad are both scientists, so they can give me a lot of help.

I guess what I need to do is give myself a kick in the pants and get started. Once I begin, I'll have no problems.

Elsbeth Hayden

P.S. I have illustrations. That's a plus!

December 4, 2007

Diary,

Today I looked at even more samples online, and I found what is going to make or break me. In publications like *Science* and *Science News*, the articles are written completely for scientists. There is no way a normal person would understand them. But the *New York Times* is written at an eighth grade reading level, accessible to all. So I'm going to write in the style of the *Times*: easy for all to read.

Elsbeth Hayden

December 7, 2007

Diary,

While still reading, I'm also (finally) starting my REAL drafts. It's good that I finally started. The due date is approaching and I'm getting a little nervous. This project is more complicated than I thought at the beginning. And I trashed the illustrations.

December 12, 2007

Dear Diary,

I spent today with my bibliography. I was able to type up my first draft. I then annotated it, and ended the day with a complete annotated bibliography.

December 13, 2007

Diary,

Today was a slower day. I decided to do some more background research, and spent to the day looking for more examples and getting help.

December 18, 2007

Diary,

I spent today doing a lot of work. I finished my annotated bibliography for good, and got my reading off the Internet. I also did another draft, and tried formatting it. Then I got a little iffy; I couldn't decide if I wanted it in Internet format or newspaper format. I will decide that tomorrow.

December 19, 2007

Diary,

Today I read over my research journal. I wanted to make sure that it was complete. I then put my final reflection together. I had three or four separate parts that needed connection.

December 20, 2007

Diary,

All of my parts are mostly finished, with a few tweaks needed here and there. Now all I have to do is spend the rest of the night figuring out the order the pieces will go in. I need to have it organized so that it makes sense, and portrays the good side of my writing to the reader. I also want to give the genre a good front.

How to write a Science Article

by: Elspeth Hayden

Content Example

↳ what it's about

Huron

Community Service
all students

Proposal

Opinions from:

- ★ students
- ★ teachers
- ★ principal

Craft Example

↳ How it was written

font, format

structure (columns, etc.)

style - writer's voice

fact/quote pattern

▽ + balance

attribution

1 Quote/PP

transitions, lead

ETC.

Content in Science

discoveries/new theories

interviews w/ scientists

historical science

children's science

All types of research:

- * Biology
- * Chemistry
- * Air? Space
- * etc.

Craft in Science

format

columns

doesn't have to have as many quotes

✓ + balance

transition + balance

Audience

Reader + Expectations

- need
- want
- Looking for

Placement / Marketing

Publication

Dear my audience will be
 draft: my audience will be
 general, but especially accountants
 for a new York Times
 type publication
 your expectations
 are for
 the

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Audience in Science

Once

Adults

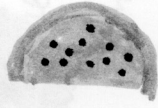
Expect: Informed of new info
 entertained

Electronics

Scientists

informed of new info

informed
 as being
 entertained



6

Purpose

Message, point
reason

- Entertain
- Inform
- Educate

Purpose in Science

to Educate/Inform
can be entertaining
Show new discoveries

the
draft:
my purpose is
to inform the public
of something they didn't
know (scientifically)
I hope to also be
able to entertain
them



Organization

Put together

BONES

Focus

Logical sequencing

INTERNAL

subject, topic, subtopic

CONTENT

eg movie:
I will focus
at the start
the whole
in from way. Then I
will write about the forest
I will write about the forest
I will write about the forest

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Organization in Science

Focus → art

Intro w/ hook

interesting facts

book titles for more info

Subject → art

topic → dance

subtopic → mothers/children

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Presentation

SHIN

- Shows
- Looks like
- columns
- Font
- Spacing
- Headline
- Pictures

Presentation in Science

- online -> single column (more like essay)
bigger, easy to read font
- Block -> DS between P
- Long headline -> funny
- one picture @ end

in on online
with wide
single column
space between
to look format

Voice

style
sands

accessible
simple
friendly

- ★ How they express themselves
- ★ Subject matter (content)

→ Do you know the writer w/o a byline

my article: I can't write in an accessible way, I want my article to be written
like everyone can read them

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Voice in Science

Can be written for scientists only
can be written for everyone
Contains lots of science (facts)

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Word choice

words they choose put together

vocabulary

put together

audience affects words

Word choice in Science

Angier: Writes using descriptive words

amusing words, alliteration,

anagrams

writes for everyone so it's

easy to understand

51
try
my article
at
for a
vocabulary
want everyone to be
able to read it & share
want to keep
some dignity

Sentence Fluency

Flow (not choppy)

sounds "put together"

Structure of sentences

simple: subject + action

compound/complex

Adds personality/voice

combining sentence types



FL
my article:
I want it to sound
together and flowing.
I will do this by using
both simple and complex
sentences. I also hope to
put together and create a
voice for myself.

Sentence Fluency in Science

Sentences are fluent +

complete
article flows

complex & simple sentences used

different columnists have voices

Proofreading

Run-on/Comma Splice

My name is Sarah, and I am a teacher.

;
i/but
space
faster

connects ideas

I'm a teacher named Sarah.
Essential?

Brendan, a student in journalism, knows about sentences.

I don't care whether you can name the problem so long as you can fix it, but I do care if you are completely checked out or frustrated, or giving up on proofreading.

Because it is so icy outside, school officials in Ypsi and Milan declared a snow day; Ann Arbor 14 didn't were still in session.

Proofreading in Science

all nonessential info taken out

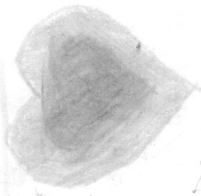
left with basics

basics explained in detail w/o extras

correct proofreading/spelling/simmon
UNLESS
it's a pun

in context; I will have correct proofreading. I will have the correct proofreading. I will have the correct proofreading.

Leads



Beginning

HOOK -> draws reader in
attention grabber

Ex:

- * quote - really controversial
- * story telling
- jumping to a scene
- * SWs + 1+
- * playful words (cute)

in my world: I have a lead. I started out with an imaginary story for a mad colony. I made it in 10 days.

The audience knows it's just a story

Leads

Leads in Science

the lead:

is about dancing

the article is about "art" and how it started.

The author writes about dance as the start of art starts with dancing the "ballet"

- p.1 Content Example
- p.2. Craft Example
- p.3 content in Science Writing
- p.4. Craft in Science Writing
- p.5. Audience
- p.6 Audience in Science Writing
- p.7. Purpose
- p.8 Purpose in Science Writing
- p.9 Organization
- p.10 Organization in Science Writing
- p.11 Presentation
- p.12 Presentation in Science Writing
- p.13 Voice
- p.14 Voice in Science Writing
- p.15 Word Choice
- p.16 word choice in Science Writing
- p.17 Sentence Fluency
- p.18 Sentence Fluency in Science Writing
- p.19 Proofreading
- p.20 Proofreading in Science Writing
- p.21 Leads
- p.22 Leads in Science Writing