

Unit

1

Profiling a group of people —Here come the DINKs



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Learning objectives

- 1) Decide on a focus
- 2) Structure a feature story
- 3) Conduct observations

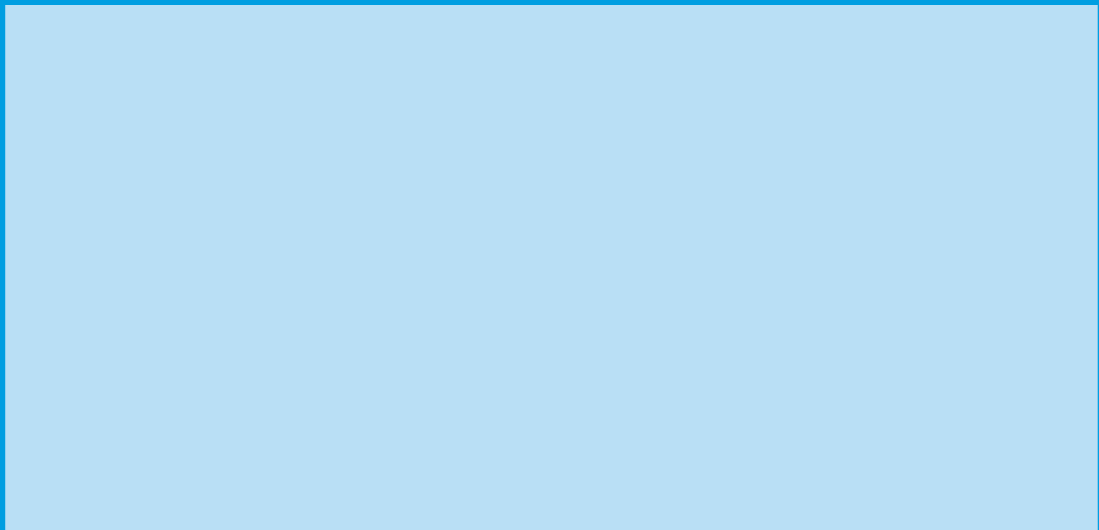
It seems that we humans are, by nature, interested in other people. Every day, we surf the Internet to read not only news about international relations, economic conditions, or natural and man-made disasters, but also stories about celebrities' lives and ordinary people's unusual experiences. Every day, we share news, tell stories, and measure ourselves against others. Thus, we feel connected and construct our identity.

In the world of journalism, these stories about people are called profiles. Among them, general or collective profiles give emotional accounts of a group of people, zooming in on their achievements, concerns, or problems so as to arouse readers' interest, sympathy, or motivation. A collective profile, in contrast to a microcosmic profile or personality sketch, addresses the commonality within the group and establishes its difference from others at the same time. It boasts ample room for reporting, real substance, and an authentic newsy flavor, which can truly render a sense of intimacy to readers.

WARM-UP ACTIVITY

Ten-minute fast writing

Is there a particular group of people that you admire, or that you are interested in or curious about? What do you know about the group of people? What are the reasons for your admiration, interest, or curiosity? Write a short paragraph describing the group of people.



Sharing your writing

Work in groups of four to five and read your fast writing to one another. Then select the best piece in your group and read it to the whole class.

Since the second half of the 20th century, the U.S. has witnessed a noticeable social trend of DINKs. Although it has not become the mainstream lifestyle, it has grabbed journalists' attention and been widely reported in newspapers and magazines. The following profile is one of these reports. Written by Martha Smilgis and published on the prestigious *Time* magazine, it manages to give an all-round portrait of this new cohort. Read the profile and decide 1) what ideas about DINKs have been covered in the profile and 2) why these ideas rather than others are reported in the profile.



Here Come the DINKs

Double-income, no-kids couples are the latest subset.

by Martha Smilgis

- 1 The members of this newly defined species can best be spotted after 9 p.m. in gourmet groceries, their Burberry-clothed arms reaching for the arugula or a Le Menu frozen flounder dinner. In the parking lot, they slide into their BMWs and lift cellular phones to their ears before zooming off to their architect-designed houses in the exurbs. After warmly greeting Rover (often an akita or golden retriever), they check to be sure the pooch service has delivered his nutritionally correct dog food. Then they consult the phone-answering machine, pop dinner into the microwave, and finally sink into their Italian leather sofa to watch a video cassette of, say, last week's *L.A. Law* or *Cheers* on their high-definition, large-screen stereo television.

- 2 These speedy high rollers are upper-crust DINKs, double-income, no-kids couples. They flourish in the pricier suburbs as well as in gentrified urban neighborhoods. There is no time for deep freezers or station wagons in their voracious, nonstop schedules. Many enterprising DINK couples slave for a combined 100-hour-plus workweek, a pace relieved by exotic vacations and expensive health clubs. Their hectic “time-poor” lifestyle often forces them to even schedule dinners with each other.
- 3 Consider the pace of Michele Ward, 26, and Kenneth Hoffman, 31, top executives at different Connecticut management-consulting firms. “The prime purpose of our answering machine at home is to keep in touch with each other,” says Ken of their jammed schedules. For pleasure, they sail and “cook seriously together,” whipping up veal Normandy or Persian duck in pomegranate sauce. They subscribe to four gourmet magazines and have a collection of 150 cookbooks. Their most recent vacation was three weeks in Tahiti and Bora Bora. “Part of me would like children, but, practically speaking, I don’t see how,” says Michele, who estimates the earliest date for childbearing would be five years later. Their ranch-style house has three bedrooms: one for them, one for the computer, and one for their Samoyed, Dillon.
- 4 David Eagle, 33, a Hollywood television producer, and Nancy Weingrow Eagle, 31, an entertainment lawyer, also fill out the DINK profile. In order to earn their hefty incomes, each one works 50 to 60 hours a week. They have two dogs and care for them the way they decorate their home—which is to say, lavishly. “Earthquake, our Labrador-Husky mix, has beautiful blue eyes. I have blue eyes, so people think I’m his father,” jokes David. “We’re going skiing tomorrow and taking both dogs with us.” In the late 1960s he supported Eugene McCarthy and was labeled a hippie. In the late 1970s he became a yuppie, and accepts DINK as a natural evolution. Little DINKerbells, however, are not yet part of the progression. “We have big responsibilities just being double income-ites,” explains David. “We aren’t ready to give up the quality time that is necessary to devote to our careers and transfer that to children.”
- 5 The origin of the acronym is not known, but it is often attributed to glib real estate agents or clever marketing M.B.A.s bored with the term yuppie. What separates DINKs from most other Americans is a much greater percentage of discretionary income. “DINKs are one of the few groups that are doing much better than the previous generation,” says Frank Levy, an economist at the University of Maryland.
- 6 Social pundits warn that DINKdom is often just a transitory state. “It is the moment before tradition sets in,” says Faith Popcorn, chairman of New York City’s BrainReserve, a hip consulting firm. “There is a desire for security, privacy, and a nest. Anything you can make that is easy and secure, warm and available; you can market to their cocoon.” Philip Kotler, professor of marketing at Northwestern University, divides DINKs into upper and lower classes: U-DINKs and L-DINKs. No

doubt, while the L-DINKs are rushing to graduate from Kmart to Marshall Field, the U-DINKs will be deserting the Banana Republic for Abercrombie & Fitch. Because busy U-DINKs tend to miss mass-media advertising, upscale magazines and direct mails are the most effective way to target them. Kotler cites the Sharper Image, a top-of-the-line techie catalog, as defining U-DINK style.

- 7 The big DINK dilemma is when or whether to have children. In 1986 the cost of raising a child to age 18 averaged almost \$100,000; of course, that figure does not include future college expenses. Like many DINKs, William Cohen, 33, an Atlanta lawyer, and Susan Penny-Cohen, 28, founder of a headhunting firm for lawyers and paralegals, have not yet planned to reproduce. "As our income grew, we found that we had less time," says William. Kotler suspects that the double-incomers' frenzy of consumption will exhaust itself, and more couples will see children as desirable: "Children may be the next pleasure source after the DINKs have tried everything else."
- 8 Therefore, DINKs will not be the last of the snappy acronyms. Get ready for the TIPS (tiny income, parents supporting) and, finally, NINKs (no income, no kids).

The sample is a typical feature story. A feature story refers to a newspaper or magazine article or a report of a person, a group of people, an event, an aspect of a major event, or the like, often having a personal slant and written in an individual style. Each feature author has his or her own selection of facts presented with the author's takes and attitudes interwoven in the feature story.

1 Topic and focus

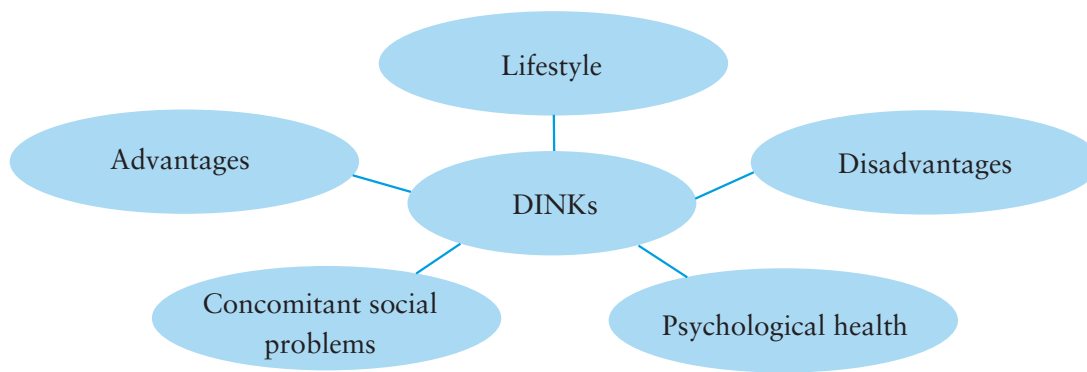
Every article addresses a particular issue, and that is a topic. It is usually concise enough to be stated in a short phrase. It answers the question—"What is the story about?" The sample feature, for example, is about DINKs.

A topic can be approached in different ways to have different focuses. In order to stand out from numerous similar stories and to get published, a feature must have a special focus. It's like taking a picture. Let's look at the pictures on the right. They are the same shot, but with different focuses. In the left picture, the focus is apparently the bride, yet in the right picture, the focus becomes the groom. We can distinguish between what strikes us as clear and what as blurry.



A focus determines what we want to take in and what we want to leave out, what to highlight and what to play down, so that it distinguishes itself from other features on the same topic. It is the answer to the question often asked by our professor after we hand in our essay—"So what's the point?" (or "So what?"). A focus is the center of our interest, what we want our feature story to communicate, and an angle that we take to bring our feature story to life. Without a focus, our writing will be just a bundle of unrelated or, at best, loosely related information and our readers' minds won't have a clear place to rest on.

Amongst all the possible hot issues, suppose we also choose to cover the topic of DINKs. Within it, there are many workable sub-topics such as the ones shown in the diagram on the next page.



We can pick one sub-topic and narrow it down by answering the question “So what?” and it becomes a focus. Let’s take the sub-topic of “DINKs’ psychological health” as an example. A viable focus can be that “DINKs have generally higher or lower psychological well-being than nuclear families.” After we decide on our focus, the weight of other information should be reduced in our feature story, e.g. reasons of being DINKs, DINKs’ fashion, or social problems caused by DINKs.

Discuss the following questions in your group.

- 1) What is the focus of the sample feature?
- 2) Reexamine your fast writing in the Warm-up Activity and extract from it a focus that might interest your target readers.

2 Developing a special focus

If an author wants a feature story to get published and highly engage readers, he or she will have to develop a special focus. No one likes to read a stale story, after all.

One way to locate a feasible and special focus is to do some preliminary research online or in the library after brainstorming (like using the aforementioned diagram) to find out whether our intended feature is a juvenile story (the topic itself is fresh and the subjects haven’t been widely reported yet) or a mature one, and what angles of the story have already been widely reported. A feature portraying a group of people can usually be approached from the following angles.

Angle	Explanation
History	The past of the subjects (the focused group of people)
Qualities	The characteristics and distinctiveness of the subjects

(To be continued)

(Continued)

Angle	Explanation
Values and standards	The beliefs of the subjects
Impacts (positive and negative)	How do the subjects affect other people? How are the subjects affected by circumstances and others?
Reactions	Others' reactions to the subjects vs. the subjects' reactions to circumstances and others
Futures	What do others think will happen? What do the subjects think will happen?

If a story is a juvenile story, the subjects' qualities or their values and standards should usually be the focus. If it is a mature story and the subjects have already been widely covered in newspapers, magazines, or newsletters, perhaps we can choose to dig into some of the unreported impacts or reactions from certain interest groups or institutions. The sample feature was written not long after the emergence of the social trend of DINKs, so it is a juvenile story. That is perhaps why the priority has been given to introducing DINKs—their lives and their dilemmas, rather than other people's reactions to DINKs or their future lives in old age.

We can try localizing our topic, giving it a local color by specifying the "5W+1H" questions (who, what, when, where, why, and how). The more specific our focus is, the more likely we are to scope out some scoops.

Besides, there are more techniques that can motivate our creativity and help us find a special focus.

First, we can think about the contrasting aspects of the group of people we are going to portray or consider opposing viewpoints about the subjects. Just like in the sample feature, being rich in money and poor in time are two contrasting aspects. Such a contrast creates a natural tension and strikes readers as illuminating.

Second, we can explore the connotations behind some novel expressions like "tiger parents," *xiaoxianrou*, and *wanghong*, since they are by themselves good topics for feature stories. Let's read the following sentence from a feature on *wanghong* where the term's connotation is the focus of the feature, i.e. the Internet stars' popularity and how that affects e-commerce.

The fans are helping this new breed of Chinese Internet stars to monetize their popularity—and to shake up the country's e-commerce industry in the process.

Third, we can look for special classifications or categories. The sample essay in Unit 2 of Book Three, i.e. “The Plot Against People,” is a typical essay using humorous classification as a special angle to present the topic. It was published in *The New York Times*.

Last, we can contrast our attitude to a subject with our readers’ to create a surprise for them. We would not be surprised to see an author cheerfully discussing a policy of putting more women into management in a company. Yet a different point of view with a different tone could give a feature story a fresh focus, as shown in the following example.

Hearing this (the policy), I felt an odd mix of admiration and unease. It is always impressive to see a company doing more than spouting the same old guff about making the workplace more equal...

...

At the same time though, I cannot help wondering what it must feel like to be a man whose opportunities for promotion seem to be shrinking—especially men who were not privately schooled or born to rich parents.

3 Structure analysis

The focus of a feature story is also reflected in its structure. A typical human-interest feature usually takes a “lead/hook+nut graph+body+conclusion” structure. Similar to an argumentative essay, a “gotcha” lead is set at the beginning to attract readers’ attention and arouse their interest in the feature. In the sample feature, the author uses some detailed descriptions as the lead to set the motif of illustration. A motif (a recurring theme or dominant idea) creates an atmosphere and produces a mood. In this way, readers are easily drawn into the story. Through the description, we can feel that the general motif features DINKs’ extravagant tastes and habits.

Then comes the nut graph where the focus of the feature is given and the reason for writing the feature is explained. It provides the context for the feature and gives the main idea in a nutshell.

As we can see from Paragraph 2 of the sample feature, a nut graph usually consists of three elements. First, it contains a transition connecting the lead with the nut graph (“These speedy high rollers are...”). The second element points out the focus (“speedy high rollers,” “upper-crust,” and “hectic” suggest a money-rich yet time-poor lifestyle). The third element provides a general picture of the current situation: Here it gives an overall description of the group of people (the rest of Paragraph 2).

Let's look at the following extract with a nut graph missing.

When Tad Pole left the Lawton Library last Tuesday afternoon, he couldn't believe his eyes.

"My bike was gone," he said. "That's the third bike I've had stolen this year. I had a huge lock on it, too."

Lynn had an expensive mountain bike stolen from outside Hoobler Hall last week. "I know at least three other people whose bikes have been boosted this year," she says. "That's it. From now on, I'm walking."

...

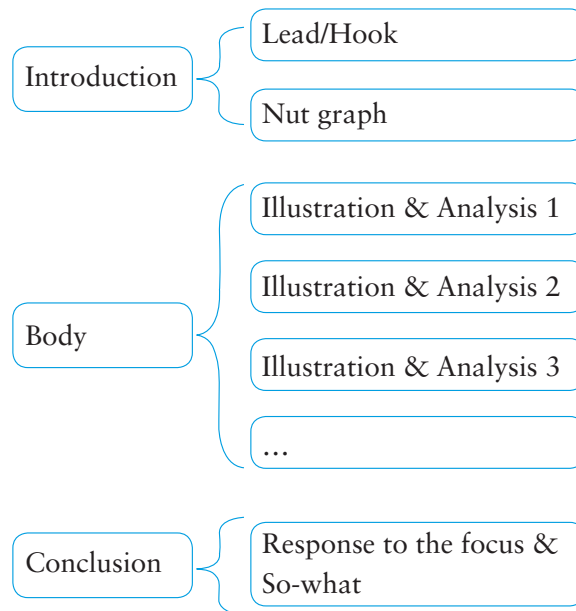
Apparently, it's about the prevalence of bicycle thefts on campus. A nut graph shown below can be inserted before the third paragraph.

Pole isn't alone (**transition**). Bicycle thefts on campus have hit an all-time high this year (**focus**). On average, 50 bikes are reported stolen annually, but so far this year, that number is 230 (**general situation**).

The body expands the focus by including supporting examples, interviews, dialogs, and in-depth analyses of the focus from different perspectives. Paragraphs 3-4 of the sample feature, for instance, have given concrete examples from observations and interviews to illustrate the focus, describing how DINKs lead lavish and busy lives. Paragraphs 5-7, on the other hand, analyze the focus from various viewpoints pertaining to the focus. For example, Paragraph 5 analyzes the origin (or history) of DINKs by comparing them with yuppies, which in turn accentuates the special feature of DINKs. When deciding which analytical perspectives to use, we should think about the angles previously introduced in the "Developing a special focus" section. We can select some of the angles as the analytical perspectives and sequence them in the order of relevance or importance.

In general, each body paragraph of a feature uses one or more rhetorical modes for illustration and analysis. The illustration and analysis usually progress from one level to a deeper level.

The conclusion of the sample feature responds to the focus humorously and adds the finishing touch with a so-what to provoke further thinking.



Complete the following outline on the basis of the sample feature. Examples have been given for your reference.

Topic: DINKs

Paragraph	Structure	Rhetorical modes	Main idea
Para. 1	Lead/Hook	Description	DINKs' extravagant tastes and habits
Para. 2	Nut graph		
Para. 3	Supporting example 1		
Para. 4	Supporting example 2		
Para. 5	Analytical perspective 1		The origin of the acronym
Para. 6	Analytical perspective 2		
Para. 7	Analytical perspective 3		
Para. 8	Response to the focus & So-what	/	

4 Observations for feature ideas

A feature, especially a human-interest story, usually starts from observations. Besides individual interest, hot topics, and current events, we can always extract newsworthy topics by observing our own lives, people, and things around us. Have we noticed the campus security guards? Have we had a glimpse of the busy delivery men? Are they happy with their jobs and lives?

All these casual open-minded observations can become our story prospects, as long as we are curious and inquisitive enough. We can see if we can find any patterns in our subjects or any deviations from the general order, such as different actions, different treatments, and something that is special, unusual, surprising, or controversial about the subjects. Such unstructured observations also help us pin down the focus of our feature story, although they could be a bit time-consuming.

More close or structured observations can be conducted when we have decided what to write about. During our observations, we can be outsiders or participants (e.g. when we take part in voluntary work). We should remain objective at this stage, avoid any prejudices and judgments, and record everything we see, hear, smell, touch, and feel. We can photograph or film scenes, record conversations, take notes, and make inferences and interpretations accordingly. The following are reference aspects for note-taking.

- Time: day or night, season, and the sequencing that takes place over time
- Space: the physical place or places
- Actors: the people involved
- Objects: the physical things which are present
- Acts: single actions that people do
- Activities: sets of related acts that people do
- Events: sets of related activities that people carry out
- Goals: the things people are trying to accomplish
- Feelings: the emotions felt and expressed
- Reflection: the author's personal response to any of the above

Observations can also be done when we are interviewing people for our feature stories. For instance, we may observe the settings of the interviews, the interviewees' facial expressions, and their gestures, postures, and other small acts.

Identify the details and examples in the sample feature that are likely to have come from the author’s observations of DINKs. Then classify the detailed information in the following table.

Aspect	Para. 1	Para. 2	Para. 3	Para. 4
Time	after 9 p.m.	/	jammed schedules	/
Space		pricier suburbs, gentrified urban neighborhoods		/
Actors				David Eagle, Nancy Weingrow Eagle
Objects				/
Acts		/		/
Activities			cooking and taking vacations	
Events	after-work life	/	/	/
Goals				
Feelings	busy, tired, comfortable			having quality time for career development
Reflection		hectic “time-poor” lifestyle		

An observation journal can be written afterward in preparation for the writing of the feature story. It usually includes the following parts.

- The first part: explaining the reason and purpose for observation and any preliminary arrangements, and if appropriate, providing an overview of the observation site

- The second part: giving an account of the observed details by using rhetorical modes such as description, narration, classification, process and procedure, comparison and contrast, and cause and effect.
- The third part: stating the significance of the findings and giving justified comments

5 Language features of a feature

A successful feature should be appealing to readers. Due to its journalistic nature, very often a feature is about hot issues. Its language, therefore, tends to be very up-to-date, vivid, and dynamic. In the sample feature, we may find a combination of both formal and informal, written and colloquial, elegant and popular expressions. Let's take Paragraph 1 of the sample feature as an example. Instead of using "drive off," "put dinner into," and "sit down on," the author uses "zoom off," "pop dinner into," and "sink into," which are accurate and lively. Readers can even visualize the scenario.

- 1 Identify and note down other vivid words and expressions used by the author in the sample feature. Examples have been given for your reference.

Paragraph	Instead of using	The author uses
Para. 2	belonging to the high social class	_____ (_____)
	expensive	_____ (_____)
	very eager for (achievements)	_____ (_____)
	strong-minded	_____ (_____)
	work very hard for	_____ (_____)
	very busy	_____ (_____)
	short of time	time-poor (popular)
Para. 3	prepare (a meal, etc.) very quickly	_____ (informal)
Para. 4	serve as typical DINKs	_____
	substantial	_____
	generously	_____
	follower or supporter of...	-ite (often derogative)
Para. 5	speaking fluently and without hesitation, but not sincerely or trustworthily	_____ (derogative)
Para. 8	lively, smart, trendy	_____

- 2 In Paragraph 2 of the sample feature, the author uses a combination of elegant and popular words and expressions. Now mark the words and expressions you have noted down in Paragraph 2 with *elegant* and *popular*. An example has been given for your reference.

YOUR TURN TO PRACTICE

- 1 Work in groups of four to five and work out a feasible focus for each of the following broad topics and three analytical perspectives for each focus. Afterward, report to the class so that other groups can evaluate whether your focuses are special, newsworthy, or attractive to readers.

Topic	Focus	Analytical perspectives
Taxi drivers in China		1.
		2.
		3.
Night owls in universities		1.
		2.
		3.
Students' favorite teachers		1.
		2.
		3.
Fans of pop stars		1.
		2.
		3.
Overachievers in school		1.
		2.
		3.
Gameaholics (people who are addicted to games)		1.
		2.
		3.

- 2 Read the following excerpts (leads for feature stories) and add a nut graph for each of them. Notice that the titles and the subtitles may reveal the focuses of the features.

Excerpt 1

The Startling Plight of China's "Leftover Ladies"

—China's men far outnumber women. Why is it so hard to find a good husband?

The Spicy Love Doctor was running late. A well-heeled crowd one recent Sunday afternoon had packed into the second-floor lounge of Beijing Trends Tower—home to the publishing offices of several glossy magazines, including the Chinese editions of *Cosmopolitan*, *Esquire*, and *Harper's Bazaar*—to hear Wu Di, a contributor to China's *Cosmopolitan* and the author of an alluring new book, *I Know Why You're Left Over*. The poised, professional crowd, outfitted in black blazers, leather boots, and trendy thick-framed glasses, was composed mostly of women in their mid-20s to

mid-30s—prime *Cosmo* readers—all there waiting patiently to hear Wu, who typically charges \$160 an hour for “private romance counseling,” explain their surprising plight: being single in a country with a startling excess of men.

Excerpt 2

Helicopter Parents Must Come in to Land

—Universities are places where students learn to think for themselves.

A couple of weeks ago, my 17-year-old daughter jumped on a train and headed north to an open day for prospective students at the university. It did not occur to my wife or me that our daughter might want us to accompany her (she is a normal teenager, for one thing, and, like most students of her age, is a veteran of solo travel on public transport) or that a parental presence at such events was normal or even expected. We certainly hadn't taken our parents with us when we were scoping out places to study.

Excerpt 3

The Rise of Student Entrepreneurs

At six a.m. every weekday, Charleh Dickinson meditates and does a spot of yoga before checking her work emails. So far perhaps a typical start of the day for many mindful entrepreneurs.

But unlike most business owners, Ms. Dickinson is also a third-year student at Sheffield Hallam University, where she juggles her studies with clocking up 50 hours a week managing her healthy food brand Designed2Eat, which she set up with her father two years ago.

While her dad, Peter Dickinson, is in charge of the accounts and legal side of the firm, Ms. Dickinson is the face of the business.

So in between lectures and studying, the food marketing management student can be handling sales, testing new products, and managing the brand's social media.

- 3 Watch the video clip “Return Home” and note down the details that you observe for different topics. For the last column, think of your own topic. Make sure that you separate observations from your interpretations as you write. For instance, if you say that someone is happy, that is your interpretation; but if you say that someone smiles a lot, that is your observation.

Aspect	Topic 1: Migrant workers going home for the Spring Festival	Topic 2: Empty nesters welcoming migrant workers home	Topic 3: Left-behind children during the Spring Festival	Topic 4:
Time				
Space				
Actors				
Objects				
Acts				
Activities				
Events				
Goals				
Feelings				
Reflection				

Major Assignment

Suppose you were the reporter of your university newspaper or news website. Write a feature of no less than 600 words to profile a group of people so as to be published either on the campus newspaper or website. It should start from your observations, embody a clear focus, and follow the style and structure of a feature story.

SUGGESTED STEPS FOR YOUR WRITING TASK

1 STEP

Selecting a topic

- Think about a certain group of people that you're interested in or you think are worth reporting. It can be people in a career that you admire, people that you are curious about, or people often mentioned in a catch phrase or a buzzword, such as the "Moonlight Clan" (*yueguangzu*) or SOHO (small office/home office, which can stand for a privately owned and operated business or an individual who is self-employed).
- Share your ideas in groups of four to five. Select one topic that interests you or that you think is newsworthy.

2 STEP

Deciding on a focus

- Do some preliminary research to see what aspects of your topic have been covered and what have not. Decide whether it is a juvenile story or a mature one.
- Share your research results within your group. Discuss to find a focus for your feature story. For instance, you can think about the following questions. 1) How do they work? 2) How do they live? 3) How do they feel about themselves? 4) What are their social values? 5) Are they facing any dilemmas?
- Write a paragraph to explain why you choose this topic, what your focus is, and how you decide on the focus.

3 STEP

Observations

- Choose a site for observing the group of people that you have decided to write about. Make sure that you can observe unobtrusively at the site.
- Have some casual talks with the target people you want to report on.
- Take notes of "who," "what," "when," "where," "why," and "how." Refer to the aspects introduced in the fourth section of the Post-reading Discussion.
- Write an observation journal of no less than 200 words.

4 STEP

Gathering information

- Think about what information you need to write your feature story.
- Do research in the library, conduct more focused observations, and have more in-depth interviews with the people that will appear in your feature story. For instance, you can ask the following questions. 1) Why did you choose to be...? 2) How do you like your job? 3) What are the major advantages and disadvantages of being a...?

5 STEP

First draft

- After you have gathered information for your feature story, begin writing your draft. Construct an outline to organize your ideas. You might duplicate the structure of the sample feature. Make sure that you provide sufficient illustration and analysis for your focus.

6 STEP

Peer review

- Exchange your first draft with one or two classmates.
- Carry out a peer review by completing the table on the next page, and then have a discussion with your peer reviewer(s).
- Pay attention to the focus and the structure of the feature story.

7 STEP

Revision and proofreading

- Revise your writing by referring to the comments made by your peer reviewer(s).
- Check the spellings, collocations, and word usage.

8 STEP

Submitting your work to your teacher

9 STEP

Further revision

- Improve your work according to your teacher's feedback.

Suggested Focuses for Peer Review

Title of the writing: _____

Author: _____ Reviewer: _____

Standard	Evaluation scale	Focused comments
Length and succinctness		
The writing is appropriately long and without redundancy.	1 2 3 4 5	
The writing is neat and legible, and is presented in an appropriate format.	1 2 3 4 5	
Content		
The lead/hook attracts readers into the feature story.	1 2 3 4 5	
The focus is special and interesting.	1 2 3 4 5	
The illustration and analysis are well linked and contribute to the focus.	1 2 3 4 5	
Organization and style		
The feature takes on the following structure: lead/hook+nut graph+ illustration+analysis+conclusion.	1 2 3 4 5	
There's a logical order in the layers of analysis.	1 2 3 4 5	
Language		
Elegant and popular expressions are appropriately used.	1 2 3 4 5	
The language flows smoothly; the whole writing is coherent and cohesive.	1 2 3 4 5	
No grammatical mistakes are present.	1 2 3 4 5	
The writing is free of misspellings; words are capitalized correctly; and sentences are punctuated accurately.	1 2 3 4 5	

Note: 1 =very poor; 2=poor; 3=fair; 4=good; 5=excellent

Global suggestions for revision: (to be written on a piece of paper)

Wolves or Angels in White?

What's the image of the doctor in modern society?

by Tan Jieyi

Have you ever watched a TV drama called *Healing Hands*? If you have, you may have an impression of such scenes: Five or six doctors gather in a pub after work, drinking beers, chatting, and sometimes, dating. They appear free and unstrained. But in fact, is this true about real doctors' lives? Absolutely no. Go into hospitals, and you'll see doctors who are always busy with their routine work: seeing patients and prescribing medicine, performing operations, and tutoring interns. Also, their spare time is occupied by reading, researching, writing papers, and preparing for examinations. Medical science is a fast-developing course of study, so actually, "lifelong learning" is the truth of doctors' lives. There is not much fun.

With the duty of healing the wounded and rescuing the dying, medicine is a sacred profession, and even more, a kind of mission and responsibility, accompanied by danger, pressure, and endless studies. Therefore, with the greatest respect, doctors were called "angels in white" in the past. However, with the rising disputes of medical treatments and problems of sales commissions of medicine, relations between doctors and patients have been strained and the doctors' image has changed.

Doctor Li, a registrar of a surgical department who has studied in the U.S., makes a wry smile when he talks about this issue. "Wolves, wolves in white. That's what we were called before SARS." As a surgeon, he regularly performs operations for patients. "If I could choose once again, I wouldn't choose to be a doctor, really," says Doctor Li, shaking his head. "Life is difficult for a doctor who has one foot in the hospital and the other in court," he explains. "Human beings aren't like machines. The differences between individuals, the reaction to medicine, and the unknown factors during treatments often make the therapeutic effect run counter to our wishes." He cites an instance to illustrate. Two years ago, Doctor Li performed an operation for a 12-year-old boy. Just at the beginning, when the skin was incised, the boy began to suffer from shock unexpectedly. The operation had to stop (the boy was rescued at last). "It takes risks to perform operations. But some patients don't understand that and can easily go to court."

Different from Doctor Li, Doctor Qi, Ph.D. of Psychiatry and a registrar of a psychological department, loves her job in spite of the hard work. Having a dream of becoming a good doctor like her parents, she got up at 4:00 a.m. every day when she was at university; now, on night shift every three days, she is always busy. "Sometimes I'm too busy to go home at noon though my son is waiting for me with an empty stomach. I find that I just don't have enough time to stay with him and I always let him down." However, a sense of responsibility forces her to study hard to keep pace with the world's advanced standard of medical science. "Since patients place their hopes on doctors, doctors should make themselves embody the level of contemporary medical science."

But not everyone can keep their ideals and passion for their work. “I used to live in *contradiction and under great pressure. And the sense of achievement of being a doctor was not strong anymore,” says Mr. Luo in sorrow, who used to be a doctor and now is a medical representative of a big company. “Some patients think that it’s your duty and show no gratitude. Even worse, some take precautions against you,” Mr. Luo explains. A patient’s failure to pay for his medical treatment can *make his doctor in a difficult position. On the one hand, the head of the hospital might say, “Whoever takes the debt on, he must pay for it.” And on the other hand, the patient might say, “If you stop the treatment, I’ll jump off a building!”

Besides the *intension between doctors and patients, there are lots of known and unknown dangerous factors following doctors like shadows, for example: infections caused by needlestick injuries and all kinds of infectious diseases. SARS has made the danger of this profession manifest. Among the cases of SARS reported all over the world, infected doctors and nurses made up a very high percentage. Furthermore, the mental pressure to doctors can’t be ignored. “Every time before I perform an operation, I have to decide which plan to choose and think about how to do it well...It makes me tense at least for four days and I perform operations almost every week,” says Doctor Li. To a large extent, it explains why among obituaries issued by hospitals, we can see some doctors leave us just in the prime of their lives.

The biggest dilemma for doctors is how to recreate their professional image. SARS might have been a turning point. When SARS was rampant, doctors’ image got an unprecedentedly great promotion. Their outstanding contribution and professional dedication were obvious. However, the contradiction between doctors and patients has been existing for quite a long time, so recreating the image of “angels” cannot be done in one go. In disputes of medical treatments, doctors are still subject to the censure of public opinion. “We pay a lot, but meanwhile, we are hurt a lot,” says Doctor Li.

If things go on like this, who will want to be a doctor in the future? “My daughter once told me that she wanted to be a doctor when she grew up and asked for my opinion,” says Doctor Fang, who is going to change his profession. “For a while, I didn’t know how to answer, but finally I said to her, ‘It’s a sacred profession as you could save many lives, and I hope you could stick to your ideal and do a good job all the time, no matter how difficult the work would be.’”

1. In this book, an asterisk (*) means this part is problematic or incorrect.

COMMENTS

This is a decently written feature story about doctors in China. On the whole, it's fluent, clearly structured, and well illustrated. Both the title and the subtitle are intriguing. The two question marks as well as the contrast between "wolves" and "angels" are effective in arousing readers' interest and enticing them to continue reading.

The hook starts with the image of the doctors in the TV drama *Healing Hands* and then shifts to the real life of doctors, which is on the basis of the author's observations. In Paragraph 2, after two sentences of explanations, the author gives the focus of the whole feature: "...with the rising disputes of medical treatments and problems of sales commissions of medicine, relations between doctors and patients have been strained and the doctors' image has changed (from angels to wolves)." Centering around this focus, Paragraphs 3-6 report the interviews with three doctors, which have vividly depicted from different perspectives the strained relationship between doctors and patients and the enormous pressure that doctors in modern society have to bear. The sufficient evidence has revealed how doctors can easily get entangled in lawsuits due to unpredictable risks in operations, or a predicament of being blamed by either the patients or the hospital. Under this stress, some doctors manage to maintain passion for the work; others, however, find it unbearable and have to change their jobs. Besides the tense doctor-patient relationship, doctors have to face other dangers in the profession such as infectious diseases. All the data comes from observations and interviews, which renders the feature more credible. What is even more commendable is the inclusion of some observed details such as "a wry smile" and "shaking his head." They have enhanced the authenticity of the interviews so that readers can well empathize with the doctors in the feature. Built on previous paragraphs, Paragraph 7 points out directly the big dilemma, and thus responds to the focus—the distorted image of doctors. The final paragraph ends the feature with a conversation between a doctor and his child, the undertone of which is quite illuminating.

For improvement, the focus of the feature can be more highlighted. There are parts of the feature whose purposes are ambiguous and whose relationships with the focus could have been more emphatic. For instance, Paragraph 6 is about the dangers of the profession, not about doctors' professional image. To contribute to the focus, the paragraph can cite interviews with some SARS patients to show that, in this event, doctors' image has been promoted. In this way, Paragraphs 6-7 can also see a closer link and a natural transition.

The wording of the feature is effective in general, despite three misused words in Paragraphs 5-6 (marked with asterisks). Can you revise them?

修辞层面

硬性新闻和 软性新闻

本册教材引入了一种新的写作体裁，那就是新闻特写文章，简称特写，又称特稿。特写和硬性新闻或纯新闻（俗称消息）主要有以下几方面的不同。首先，两者报道的方式不同。硬性新闻是对事件的即时客观报道；而特写不一定是即时的，它报道的话题可以不受时间限制。特写往往是再现与剖析某一事件或人物的某个剖面、某些细节。因此，它带有作者独特的视角，带有主观情感与态度。可以说，特写文章是描写、记叙与论说的结合体。它既具备事实报道的严谨，也有短篇小说写作的创作自由。另外，新闻报道和特写的目的也不同。新闻报道的目的主要是通知、告知。而特写更注重带给读者休闲和消遣，或以作者独特的角度和笔触引起读者的思考和强烈的情感反应。带有人情味的特写故事（human-interest story）尤其如此。比如，某地发生了地震，当天新闻铺天盖地。有关该地震在何时何地发生，造成多少人员伤亡和经济损失的这类报道，就是硬性新闻。而有些文章是关于当地居民的震前生活和震后感受，或是采访了地震中某个以一己之力救死扶伤的志愿者英雄，并介绍了他的为人及英雄行为背后的故事。这类文章往往能使读者心生共鸣：或感动，或悲伤，或崇敬。两种新闻体裁不仅目的不同，写作结构也不同。硬性新闻报道通常采用“倒金字塔”的写作格式。请看以下例子。

George Bush Senior Dies at the Age of 94

Former U.S. President George H. W. Bush has died at the age of 94 at home in Houston, Texas.

Bush Sr. served as the 41st U.S. president between 1989 and 1993, his term defined by the end of the Cold War and the Gulf War.

While his health had been failing in recent years, he still managed to make public appearances.

The former president died at 22:10 on Friday, a family spokesperson said.

In April, he was admitted to hospital with a blood infection but had since been discharged. Bush was also being treated for a form of Parkinson's disease.

He died seven months after his wife, Barbara.

“Jeb, Neil, Marvin, Doro, and I are saddened to announce that after 94 remarkable years, our dear Dad has died,” his son George Bush Jr., who went on to serve as the 43rd U.S. president, said in a statement.

“[He] was a man of the highest character and the best dad a son or daughter could ask for.”

...

The U.S. flag has been lowered to half-mast at the White House.

由上方来源于 BBC 的例子可以看出，最重要的信息，即 5W+1H 信息中的何人、何事、何时、何地，放在报道第一段，形成导语。接下来的各段落形成文章主体，交代为何、如何及其他相关信息。最后一两段则是最次要信息，构成结尾。这样“头重脚轻”的结构恰似一个倒三角形或倒金字塔。

新闻特写则没有固定的写作格式，常常具有作者的个人风格。但是许多特写文章都以一个引语开头，特写某一事件场景或者某个人物行为，然后再逐层深入地探讨、分析和论述。越是精彩、独特的观点，越要到后面才提出。

写作目的的不同也决定了硬性新闻报道和特写的语言特色有所不同。从前面的例子可以看出，硬性新闻报道的语言简练准确。而本单元的范文则显示出新闻特写语言的生动形象，且暗含作者的主观态度。这点从诸如 hectic、dilemma 等用词就可以看出。但是要注意：在特写文章中，作者常常还是在尽量以局外人的角度，客观呈现众生百态。一般来说，作者不会直接表达自己的观点；作者会通过刻画角度和选材内容来间接传达自己的观点。这和摄影、绘画是一个道理。摄影师或者画家想表达什么思想，不可能在自己的作品上直接写明，而是通过照片的拍摄或者绘画的角度、焦点、构图、取景等方面来呈现。所以观众在欣赏时，唯有对作品进行分析，方能领会。这也是为什么特写文章较少使用第一人称的一个原因。

新闻特写通常有两个标题：一个主标题和一个副标题。主标题一般直接给出文章主题（比如范文标题中的 the DINKs）；副标题常常更具体地表明文章的主旨或核心（focus）。主标题往往比副标题更简短精练，吸引眼球；而副标题则往往是对主标题的回应和诠释。以下是一些例子。

- Fathers Also Do Their Share of “Invisible Labor”
—On Father’s Day, let’s acknowledge the unsung ways that men keep families running.
- Online Starlets Are Refashioning Chinese E-commerce
—Social-media personalities are successfully monetizing their popularity.
- The New Whiz Kids
—Why Asian Americans are doing so well, and what it costs them

主标题和副标题

标题往往会采用一些修辞手法，从而变得更加鲜明生动，比如采用引用、双关、仿拟、头韵等。以下是一些例子。

1) 引用 (quotation)

- “What’s Love Got to Do with It?”
- “The Reality Is Very Hard”
- Waste Not, Want Not

注：此处引用谚语 waste not, want not 作为标题。谚语意为：俭以防匮。

2) 双关 (pun)

- Mutlu’s Muscles Are Golden

—Turkish Olympic weightlifting champ pondering fourth straight at Beijing Olympics in 2008

注：Mutlu（穆特鲁）被誉为土耳其举重“神童”，曾连续3次在奥运会举重比赛中获得金牌，后因被查出服用违禁药物，一度被禁止参赛。主标题中，golden 有“幸运”的意思，同时也可联想到金牌；副标题中，fourth straight 意为“四连冠”。

3) 仿拟 (parody)

这是一种巧妙、机智而有趣的修辞手法。它有意仿照人们熟知的现成语言材料，如成语、谚语、名言、警句等，根据表达的需要，临时创造出新的词语、短语、句子等，从而使语言生动活泼：或讽刺嘲弄，或幽默诙谐、妙趣盎然。

- India: A Tale of Two Worlds

注：该标题仿拟狄更斯一部小说的标题——*A Tale of Two Cities*。

- To Save or Not to Save

注：该标题仿拟莎士比亚《哈姆雷特》中的名句——“To be or not to be”。

- In the Mood for Mahjong

注：该标题仿拟王家卫导演的电影《花样年华》的英文译名 *In the Mood for Love*。

- The Actual Journey to the West

注：该标题仿拟《西游记》书名的英文译名 *Journey to the West*。

4) 头韵 (alliteration)

头韵是指相连单词的首音节的辅音相同，因而读起来有很强的节奏感，使读者印象深刻。

- Best in Business: Sowing the Seeds
- Safe, Secure, and Serious About It
—Beijing police gear up for Olympics.
- Vending the Vintage Vine
—China wines cultivate culture and commerce.

常用的修辞手法还有比喻、比拟、借代、夸张、对偶、排比、设问、反问等，我们不妨在设计标题时尝试运用。

语言层面

特写应追求文笔的巧妙以吸引读者。怎样才能做到这一点呢？

首先，要对当代英语不同语域（register）的语言特点了然于心，尤其是要善于区分正式文体与非正式文体的词汇特点、语篇特点等，并善于在特写中灵活运用。例如，在词汇方面，如果我们想评价某人的行为很不合时宜，我们可以采用正式的书面文体，写成 His conduct is totally inappropriate. 我们也可以引述被采访者的口语表述，写成 His conduct is out of line. 如果我们想表达某年轻人缺乏经验，正式的用词为 inexperienced，而非正式的用词则为 wet behind the ears. 不同文体的词汇应分别在适宜的场合派上用场。另一方面，特写文章多以夹叙夹议的形式呈现。一般在叙述部分，文字要活泼而不媚俗，往往在一番对事理的描绘之中，穿插一两个诙谐、风趣的句子。下面是从一篇英国报刊特写中选取的例子，其文笔幽默可见一斑。

Only 18 percent of men went to church, while more than one woman in four (26 percent) attended a service. Nearly twice as many women (21 percent) as men (11 percent) went to a carol service or concert (probably at their children's schools) and significantly more women (37 percent) filled the children's stockings or gave money to a Christmas charity (42 percent against 34 percent). It looks as though Father Christmas was more often a woman than a man this year.

句式杂糅是指在一个句子中糅合不同句式，没有使用正确的衔接词或者标点符号，从而造成语义混乱和结构混乱。下面两个句子就有这种问题。

- *They are curious about that why we don't feel dull that we haven't found a job at this age.
- *They all talked the things happened in their class, which I didn't know at all.

笔下何以生
花：语域与
语言特点

防微杜渐：
句式杂糅

第一句从句套从句，结构异常混乱。我们可以梳理句子的意思和结构，并且修改措辞，将其改为：They wonder why we don't feel dull about having no job at this age.

第二句的主句出现了两个动词作谓语——talked（一般作不及物动词，不能直接加宾语）和 happened。但是这两个动词对应的是不同的主语和句子层级。在这种情况下，我们可以将第二个动词变成分词形式来作定语，或者将其放在一个 that 引导的定语从句中来修饰 things，这样就解决了杂糅的问题。我们可以将其改为：They all talked about the things having taken place in their class, which I didn't know at all. 我们还可以将其改为：They all talked about the things that had happened in their class, which I didn't know at all.

My Recent Writing Companions



Congratulations! You've completed this unit! You must have made the acquaintance of many new writing companions in this unit. Write them down in the corresponding boxes below. Do not forget to revisit them constantly, and more importantly, to call them out to enhance your own writing whenever possible.

Words & phrases

--

Sentence structures

--

Writing skills

--