

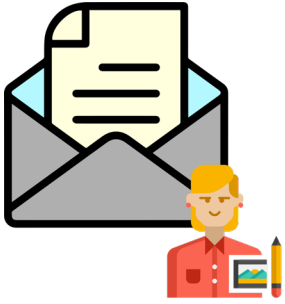


Easy Read Edition

Sharing Your Story For A Political Purpose

**Part 5: Letters to the Editor
and Op-Eds**

Words to Know in Part 5



Letter to the Editor

A kind of written news story that shares the opinions of everyday people who don't work in the news.



Op-Ed

Another kind of written news story that shares the opinions of everyday people. It is like a letter to the editor. But it is longer and not written as a letter.

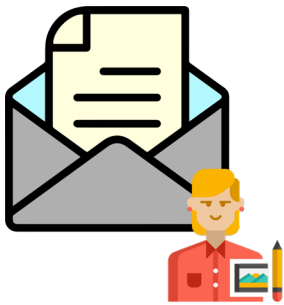
Letters to the Editor and Op-Eds



A letter to the editor is a kind of written news story.



Everyday people write letters to the editor for newspapers, magazines, or websites.



A **letter to the editor** shares the opinions of everyday people who don't work in the news.



People usually write letters to the editor about problems that have already been in the news.



Letters to the editor can be a good chance to share your story.

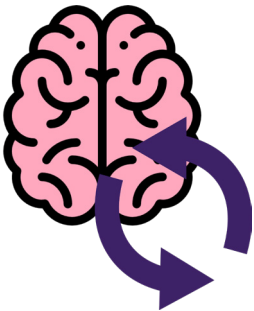


Lots of people read the news.

When you write a letter to the editor, you can:



- Help people learn about a problem or policy they didn't know about before.



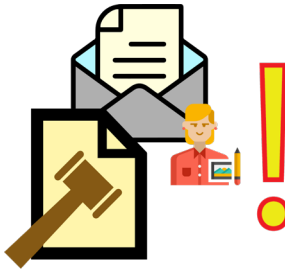
- Make people change their mind about a policy.



- Get people more interested in a policy. They might talk about your letter to the editor to other people.



Elected officials also keep track of letters to the editor.



If they see a lot of letters to the editor about a policy, they will think the policy is important.



Your letter to the editor could help your elected officials make better policies.



Most online newspapers and magazines have letters to the editor.



They have a section of their website where people can send letters to the editor.



Different news websites have different rules about letters to the editor.



For example, one site might only take letters to the editor that are less than 500 words.



Another kind of written news story is an **op-ed**.



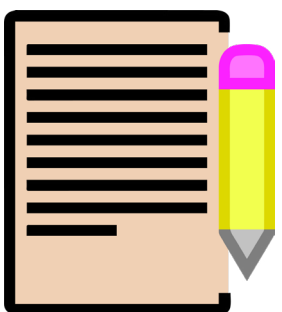
An op-ed is a lot like a letter to the editor. Everyday people can write op-eds.



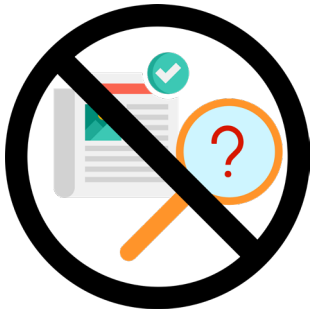
But an op-ed is a little different. They get written more like news articles.



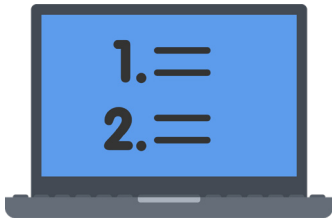
Op-eds don't get written like letters. You don't say things like "Dear Editor".



Op-eds are also longer than letters to the editor.



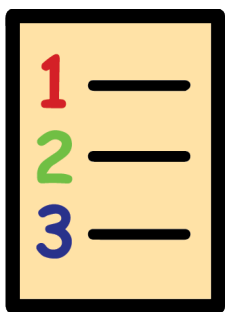
And they don't have to be about problems that have already been in the news.



There is a website with a list of the op-ed and letter to the editor rules for over 100 news websites.



It is called <http://www.theopedproject.org/>



It also has some tips on how to write a good op-ed or letter to the editor.



Look at this website if you want to learn more about op-eds or letters to the editor.



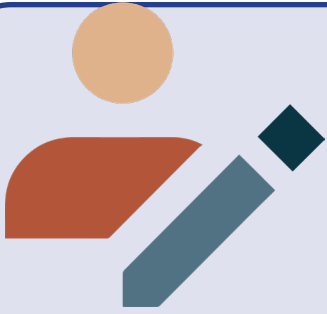
Here is a template for a letter to the editor.



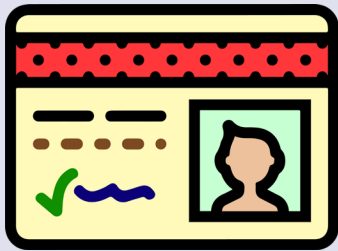
This letter to the editor wants to get people to contact their elected officials.



It asks them to support a certain policy:



Dear Editor,



My name is **[your name]**.



(If you are writing for an advocacy group, say, I am writing on behalf of **[name of advocacy group]**).



[I/We] support **[name of policy]**.



This policy is very important to **[me/us]** because **[reason]**.



[Use this space to share your story.]



Show how the policy would affect you.



Show how the policy you are writing about would help people].



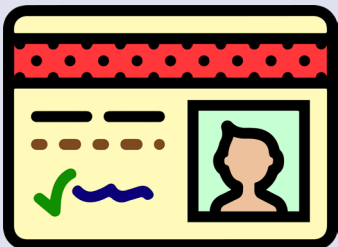
[I/we] hope people will contact their elected officials.



Please ask them to vote "Yes" for **[name of policy]**.



Thank you,



[Your name]

Scenario Script



The bees have been in the news in Normaltown a lot.

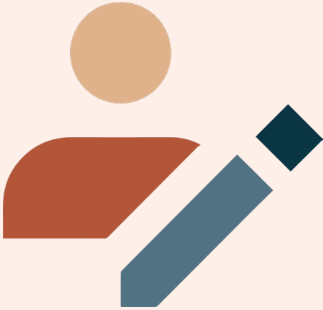


So Sally wrote a letter to the editor to the Normaltown Gazette.



She wrote about the Beekeeping Act before it got passed.

Here is her letter to the editor:



Dear Editor,



My name is Sally Jones.



I am writing on behalf of the Stop the Bees Community Group.



We support the Beekeeping Act.



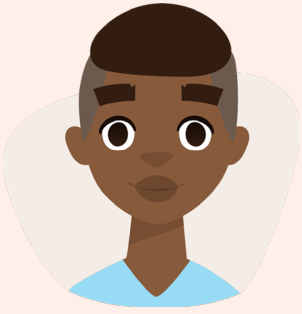
This policy is very important to us because our town has so many bees.



It is impossible to go outside without being attacked by bees.



So many of my friends and neighbors got hurt by the bees.



My own nephew was attacked by bees 57 times.



He is still in the hospital right now.



Everyone is afraid to go outside.



We don't feel safe in our city.



The Beekeeping Act will help fix this problem.



It would give money to build a bee colony away from our town.



Passing the Beekeeping Act will help us feel safe again.



It would also save money on health care for people hurt by the bees.



We hope people will contact
Representative Smith.



Ask her to vote "Yes" on the Beekeeping
Act.



Thank you,



Sally Jones