An editorial is an article (written, spoken, filmed) that presents the creator’s opinion on an issue.

Long ago, in the newspaper era, an editorial reflected the majority vote of an editorial board at a magazine or newspaper and was unsigned, much like the ones inside the front cover of Maclean's magazine or in the Guardian newspaper.

Editorials are meant to influence public opinion and cause people to take action on issues.

They are best when they present well-constructed and persuasive (and convincing) arguments.

Types of Editorials

- **Explanation/Interpretation**
  - Used to explain how an organization handled a sensitive or controversial subject.

- **Critical**
  - Criticize actions, decisions, situations while providing solutions (focus is on problem).

- **Persuasive**
  - Focus more on the solution and positive action (like political editorials).

- **Praise**
  - Commend people and organizations for something done well (these are uncommon).
So What Does an Editorial Look Like?

Editorials have a topic that is current, interesting to the writer and – hopefully – the audience.

Editorials begin with an **objective** (no choosing sides…yet) identification of the issue since your audience may need some facts clarified.

They must know why this issue is an important one.

Editorial creators must do some research to discover **facts** and **expert opinions** that both support and **refute** their opinions.

Editorials…

After clarifying the issue, they state an opinion as a thesis statement – this is the editorial’s **proposition**.

They also acknowledge the opposing viewpoint and then reject it using research (facts, expert opinions, and statistics).

It is weak to ignore the other side of any issue.

It is strong to acknowledge the other side and then tear it down.

They appeal to audience’s logic and emotion using logical and emotional language and **rhetorical devices**.

Editorials offer realistic solutions that aren’t commonly recommended. Anyone can complain. **Editorials offer solutions**.

Editorials…

Good editorials wrap up with a concluding punch that restates the proposition in different and inspiring language.

The first person plural (we, our) is most common in editorial writing – indicates more people feel this way.

Tells the audience that you’re all in this together.

In writing or speaking, keep it to a formal 500 words.

Make every word count.

As always, good editorials develop a strong introductory and concluding statement to gain interest and maximize impact on audience.
Editorial: Sample Structure

1. Lead with an objective explanation of the issue at hand (using the who, when, what, where, why and how):
   - Members of Parliament, in an effort to reduce the Canadian budget, are looking to cut funding to provinces whose names begin with the letters ‘P’ and ‘S’. Meetings were held in Whistler, British Columbia…
   - Pull in facts and quotations from relevant sources. Facts make your arguments stronger.
   - Additional research is necessary to strengthen arguments and convince the audience you are right.

Sample Structure

2. Present the opposing viewpoint first, in order to tear it down.
   - Politicians feel that these cuts are necessary since only two provinces are affected and the United States would happily adopt these two provinces as the fifty-first and fifty-second states.
   - As an editorial creator, you obviously disagree with this viewpoint, but it is important to acknowledge it.
   - Use facts, opinions, and expert opinions to objectively state the opposition’s stance.
   - Don’t ignore the opposition’s strongest arguments. You gain nothing by refuting a weak position.
Sample Structure

3. Directly refute the position taken by the opposition.

- Our federal political decision-makers perhaps need supervision.
  The principles upon which this country was founded, we’re certain, included all letters of the alphabet, including ‘P’ and ‘S’.
  Statistics show, given the choice, most Canadians quite enjoy a vacation in Canada’s smallest province without having to buy a passport to do so.

When We Create Our Own Editorials:

- 500 words maximum (we will write ours).
- Proper MLA format for pages, in-text citations, and References (use Citation Machine to generate citations).
- Double-spaced.
- Editorials must include a minimum of two expert opinions and must show evidence of rhetorical devices.
- Electronic copies must also be submitted.
- Assessment is focused on the presentation of your research, use of rhetoric, and an awareness of audience.
- Points are also awarded for use of transitional phrases to link sections and passages together.
- Before submission, students will be exposed to an assessment rubric. Please read it over carefully before beginning the process.