

Behind the Headlines

News Writing

The 5 Ws of Journalism

The opening paragraph of a news report is the most important. It contains the key information and most recent facts about the story. The opening should answer the following questions, known as the 5Ws of journalism:

Who is the story about?

What happened?

When did the story take place?

Where did the story happen?

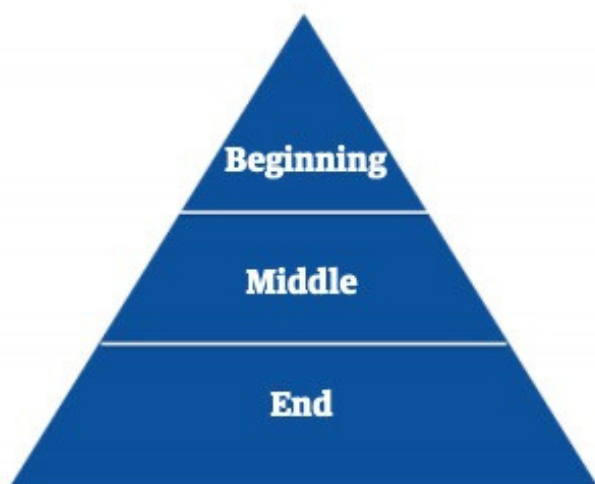
Why did it happen?

News reports are different to chronological narratives (such as novels) which start by introducing the setting and characters and reveal the final outcome of the story at the end.

Structure of a News Report

News reports do not tell the story in chronological order. The structure of a news report is top heavy with information because readers often only read two or three paragraphs before skipping to the next story. Details should usually - but not always - be included in order of importance, allowing subeditors to cut from the bottom if the story is too long.

Writing a chronological story



Writing a news report

