

Writing an Article

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Purpose

An article is a piece of writing published in a newspaper, magazine, or newsletter, intended for a general or specific audience. Articles may:

- **Describe** — give details about a person, place, event, or thing
- **Explain** — make clear why or how something happened
- **Inform** — tell the reader about something
- **Instruct** — tell a reader how to do something

Newspaper Article / Report

- A newspaper article should be factual and concise.
- Use language appropriate for the average reader.
- This type of writing requires consciousness on the part of the writer in aiming to provide unbiased and factual information.

Structure

- **Catchy Title/Headline** — centred, concise, and relevant to the topic
- **Byline** — "By [Author's Name]" — centred, directly below the title
- **Introduction** — brief overview of the topic or event
- **Body** — 1–3 paragraphs covering main points, supporting evidence, and any counter-argument
- **Conclusion** — brief closing statement, outcome, or final relevant detail

An article typically ranges from **3 to 5 paragraphs** in total (introduction, body, conclusion).

Key Conventions

- Write in **third person** unless the task specifies otherwise
- Use **formal language** throughout
- Each body paragraph should have a clear topic sentence and flow logically
- Avoid slang, contractions, exaggeration, and unsupported personal opinions
- Aim to provide unbiased and factual information

DOCUMENT EXAMPLE

SOCIAL MEDIA: FRIEND OR FOE TO THE YOUTH OF TODAY?

By Aisha Mohammed

In the twenty-first century, social media has become an inescapable feature of daily life. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and X attract billions of users worldwide, a significant proportion of whom are young people between the ages of thirteen and twenty-four. While social media offers undeniable benefits, its impact on the mental health, academic performance, and social development of today's youth is a matter of growing concern.

Proponents of social media argue that these platforms serve as powerful tools for communication and learning. Students are able to collaborate on assignments, access educational resources, and stay informed about global events with unprecedented ease. Furthermore, social media provides marginalised young people with communities of support, allowing individuals who might otherwise feel isolated to connect with others who share their experiences and values.

Despite these advantages, the negative consequences of excessive social media use cannot be ignored. Research conducted by the Royal Society for Public Health found that heavy social media use is associated with increased rates of anxiety, depression, and poor self-image among teenagers. The curated nature of online profiles encourages unhealthy comparisons, and cyberbullying continues to affect one in five young people.

It is clear, therefore, that social media is neither wholly beneficial nor wholly harmful. The responsibility lies with parents, educators, and policymakers to promote digital literacy and healthy screen-time habits. With proper guidance, social media can be shaped into a force for good — but left unchecked, it remains one of the most pressing challenges facing the youth of our generation.