



Advanced & Digital Media Virtual Learning

HS/Advanced & Digital Media

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Lesson: [Quote Selection (5/7/20)]

Objective/Learning Target:

Understand the value of good quotes in journalistic writing. Follow a process to select good quotes that help build a cohesive story.



Bell Ringer

1. In journalism, can you tell a news story properly without using quotes?

MAKING THE RIGHT

quote selection

Contents

1

Quotes Make the Story

Journalistic storytelling requires us to allow other voices to tell the story.

2

Quote Selection Process

How to choose the right quotes for a story

3

Assignment

Rewriting an old story using this more formalized process



1. Quotes make the story

Remember a journalist is telling someone else's story, so their quotes are the most important part.

Perspective

- **Journalists covering the news are not telling their own story. They are gathering information through research and interviews to tell a story that people need to know.**
- **Interviews with sources inform the story and build the backbone of the story that is being told.**
- **Quotes from sources are necessary to accurately tell a story and provide the audience with verification that other people have vetted the information and expressed that the information is correct.**

Three things quotes can do

1. **Quotes can provide context. They can explain why events or situations are important.**
2. **Quotes can provide information. They can provide details about events that the subject experienced that would otherwise not be known.**
3. **Quotes can provide emotion. They are often the emotional backbone of a story. They express the feelings of the subject in relation to the story being told.**

Quotes Build the Story

- **Stories need to be built around the quotes that were gathered in the reporting process.**
- **Before you even start writing the story you should go through your interviews and perform the very important process of figuring out what quotes are the most important to help tell the story.**
- **Think of yourself as a narrator that's simply weaving the quotes together to tell their story instead of telling a story that you reported.**



2. Quote selection process

Selecting quotes is essentially building the entire story.

The Process

1. First you'll need to put all of the quotes you've gathered for the story into one place. I usually organize them on a doc like [this](#).
2. The second step is to put all of the factual research onto the doc so that it looks something like [this](#).
3. Now, you want to start pairing off quotes from different people that talk about the same thing and pair quotes that line up with your research (either they provide context or they restate information from the research or they provide emotion to the research). [That part looks like this](#).

The Process Continued

4. Once you have everything separated you can start figuring out your story. What are the critical pieces? The organization should tell you. Things that have multiple quotes from multiple people lined up with research are going to be critical elements of the story.

5. From there you need to start making tough decisions. Not every quote can make the story. Look for quotes that are either unique in their content or provide real emotional impact. Quotes that are simply factual can be written in the story and not used as a quotation.

The End Product

- Here's a link to the story that resulted from all of the quote sheet examples on the previous slides.
- Here's a video of me walking you through why I selected specific quotes (or sound bites since it's a broadcast story).



3. Assignment

Restructuring an old story

Re-doing a Story

- Find an old story that you've written or turned into a broadcast.
- Find the raw interviews that you recorded or wrote down.
- Now, re-do that story using this process for quote selection and see how different the story comes out this time.