

THREE WAYS TO START A STORY

THE LEAD:

The preceding paragraph of any story is called "The Lead" or "The Intro". It is also called "The Window of the story". According to Aristotle;

"Leads - used by editors to introduce the central subject matter of article".

IMPORTANCE:

Lead is the most important paragraph of any writing. It has special importance just like the prime time of any channel because;

- It is the window of story.
- It attracts the reader's attention.
- It enables the reader to understand what article is about?
- It summaries the story.
- If the introductory sentence is wrong than the reader cannot understand the subject of the article.
- If lead will boring then reader will toss the magazine aside.
- It foretells something of what lies ahead.

- A strong lead can save a mediocre story while a wrong lead can doom a good one.

CHICKEN-EGG PROBLEM:

- The difficulty in the business of creating leads for stories seems as the chicken-egg problem from the writer's point of view.
- It is essential for a writer to make the lead of his story comprehensive, interesting and according to the mood of the story.
- It is a challenge for writers because of which mostly writers devote one half of their writing time to its creation.

KINDS OF LEADS:

LITERARY CLASSIFICATION:

According to "literary classification of leads" by Aristotle, there are three kinds of leads which are as following;

1. **Narrative:** A lead of a piece of writing in the style of an essay.
2. **Descriptive:** A lead which describes the situation as well personality.
3. **Expository:** A lead which explains the situation.

KINDS OF LEADS BY THE MODE OF STORY:

There are some other kinds of leads which categorize by the mode in which data are physically presented on the page as;

- **Summary:** A lead which summarize the whole story.

- **Striking statement:** A lead with a statement which grasp the attention of the audience. " "
- **Bam-bam-bam:** A lead with very powerful impact.
- **Anecdotal:** A lead with dramatic and storytelling style.

PRIMARY TYPES OF MAGAZINE'S ARTICLE LEADS.

There are three primary types of leads of magazine articles as:

1. The startling assertion lead plus general statement.
2. The round up (bullet-lead) plus general statement.
3. The indirect lead plus general statement.

GENERAL STATEMENT:

The attachment of the concept of the general statements with each kind of lead is essential because it is an integral part of constructing any effective introduction to a magazine story and it identifies the main theme of the article.

THE STARTLING ASSERTION LEAD:

Assertion means "Statement" and as the name highlights that there is always a statement with unexpected fact in the start of the story. It successfully gets the reader into the main theme of the story.

EXAMPLE:

Early in 1979 five women at a chemical plant in Willow Island, West Virginia, made public the fact that they had themselves sterilized in order that they might keep their jobs...

GENERAL STATEMENT:

These cases dramatize extremely complicated and emotional issues.

EXAMPLE:

There is another delightful example by Russell Baker's column in New York.

As a product of the American educational system, I may not know anything about history but I know what I like, and one thing I'm crazy about is the French Revolution. It was one revolution that had everything.

(New York Times, July 31, 1980.)

CHARACTERISTICS OF ASSERTION LEAD:

- This kind of lead presents a straight forward story.
- This kind of lead presents the story in a dramatic way.
- It grasps the attention of the reader.

This kind of lead" has its limitations it is not too effective for opening the more complex trend stories.

- It lacks the human touch which is generally required for personality profiles.
- Sometimes the implied counterpart can be even more valid but not so effective.

THE ROUND-UP LEAD:

The word "round-up" or indicates towards a very much affective and powerful lead.

- It is also called "bullet lead" or "bam-bam-bam" lead.
- It is particularly effective for getting in the trend stories. Because a trend is generally the result of a lot of small changes which become significant as a trend together.
- A round-up or bullet lead deals to highlight a spread of these changes then links them to a general statement.

EXAMPLE:

1. Wendy's is putting salad bars in its hamburger restaurants.
2. McDonald's is presenting the McChickens.
3. And burger king is looking for an entree to breakfast.

GENERAL STATEMENT:

Far from being the start of a new wave of fast-food expansion, those moves actually are effort to keep customers coming in the door after 25 years of nonstop growth, fast food sales stood virtually still last year- setting off strident competition for a stagnant market.

The three bullets come at the reader fast. To gather they provide the ground work of general statement. That they are competing fiercely over a stagnant market in some round-up leads a general statement precedes the bullet items.

CHARACTERISTICS OF ROUND-UP LEAD:

- It is considered as the powerful lead.
- It seems that the lead spits the nuggets of information at the readers like machine gun.
- It is the best leads for trend stories.
- Number of bullet items can be increase up to four or decrease up to two
- It is a lead with variety of concepts.
- General statement keeps the bullets in the balance.
- The round-up lead sometimes loses its effects due to the interest of the reader.
- It lacks diversity.

THE INDIRECT- LEAD:

As the name of the lead indicates that it indirectly grasp the reader's attention and take him/her into the story. The lead may tell a little story, describe a place, or relate a little bit of history

- The reader feels himself wandering in the different directions but suddenly the indirect lead runs a corner and loops into the main theme of the article.
- They are hardly to classify but from the wealth of possibility it also can be divided into these basic types.

1. Anecdote, plus general statement.
2. Scene-setter, plus general statement.
3. Recap, plus general statement.

THE ANECDOTE:

The lead tells a short, pointed story about a situation. Sometimes the story is rarely typical of an individual life. Sometimes it is about a broad social condition. Sometimes it plugs the reader into a specific environment.

EXAMPLE:

One freezing morning last December, William Proxmire joined a New York city sanitation crew and spent half a day wrestling garbage cans along a route in Brooklyn. What impelled the 62-year-old senator to undertake such a chore? Very simple, says Proxmire, as chairman of the senate banking committee, he had oversight responsibilities for New York's federal loan program and was thus interested in the efficiency of the city's operations. There was no better way to study sanitation than to join a garbage crew.

THE RECAP:

The name shows that the lead is a visit into an incident from past as well as to recall the memories about a person's life with some new additions.

EXAMPLE:

Centuries ago, the Roman poet Martial recognized that parents could inflict psychological and economic hardship on their children by disinheriting them. "If you want them to mourn," he dryly noted, "you had best leave them nothing." Two thousand years later, people still follow his advice and vindictively leave their children little but a legacy of infighting and guilt. Yet other, more benign, motives seem to be multiplying. (Psychology Today, May 1980).

CHARACTERISTICS OF RECAP LEAD:

It enhances the knowledge of readers about the known area and leads them towards new dimensions of that topic.

There is a new twist of the dusty background of major themes of the story. The lead highlights the hidden aspects of the revised topic. All Recap leads don't show classical tones. The lead changes the old topics into colorful fashion of present. It also shows the development of the topic.