

RW1 Spring2020-PROFILE ASSIGNMENT

PURPOSE

This is a *feature* story that attempts to find the personality, the motivations and the accomplishments of one person. The person does not have to be well-known, but **must be interesting, must be good at what he/she does, or must represent a group of people that are in the news now or part of a trend. There should also be a 'news hook' to your story: a reason for this person to be of interest NOW.**

FOR EXAMPLE:

A good profile subject could be someone really quirky, like the one-man-band guy who plays in the subway. Or it could be the new principal of a school. Or it could be a homeless person who is one of many in the city. You should also look at your own interests. Love soccer? Profile of one of the members of the New York City Football Club. Chocolate? Profile an artisanal chocolate maker in Brooklyn. Theater? Interview the props manager at your favorite Broadway show. You get the idea.

REPORTING TECHNIQUE

- Choose an interesting person who will give you full access. ***Your subject cannot be someone you know nor a Hunter-connected person.***
- You must interview your subject at least TWICE: once for an initial interview, and second for any follow-up questions after doing your orbital interview(s).
- You must interview at least TWO ADDITIONAL people about your source, either people they know or experts in their field. These additional interviews are called orbital interviews - the people who are around your main subject a lot.
- ***Do not*** interview anyone by email. Period. You are to conduct a video conference interview with all subjects.
- In your interview, look for TURNING POINTS: why the person does what she does; what makes the person tick.
- Don't forget the basic biographical background on the person's life: schooling, job, family, address, age.
- Make sure you gather at least one SCENE or ANECDOTE for the opening and maybe kicker ending.

WRITING TECHNIQUE

- Choose a feature lede for your story, most likely an anecdote that the source shares with you. A feature style structure, for instance, would start with a story or scene that brings this person to life for a reader who has never met him or her. The backbone of your profile (identified in the nut graf) should be an aspect of the subject's work, professional or personal life, a hobby, passion or

an incident from his or her background that is revealing and provides insight into the subject's persona and character.

- Include at least two quotes from your source, and one each from your other sources (at least four total).
- Make sure the story summarizes his/her life while highlighting what makes this person special.

WORD LENGTH

1,000-1,200 words (put word count on first page under slug)

PITCH DEADLINE: April 29, 2020

NOTE: The pitch should include the name of your profile subject, and a short (25-word) summary of what makes him or her interesting and relevant. You should also indicate that you have reached the person and they have made a general commitment to meet and talk with you on a timeline that will allow you to complete the final draft on time. The pitch is due to me by email.

FIRST DRAFT DEADLINE: May 6, 2020

NOTE: The first draft should be a relatively polished version of the story, incorporating all the basic elements needed for the final draft (quotes, scenes, color, additional sources, etc.) and indicating what, if any, further improvements you might expect (such as other sources to contact or different leads or story structures). I will give you comments, feedback and suggestions on this draft so that you can turn in a very polished final version on May 20.

FINAL DEADLINE: May 20, 2020 at midnight

SUBMISSION

- Upload to Blackboard assignment under Feature Profile Assignment (submit here). The story's first page should include your name, story slug (character name), date and word count.
- List name and contact information for *all* sources on a separate sheet.
- You will need to ask your subject for two photos of himself/herself. Those images will be posted with your story on your online portfolio website.

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GRADING

Your profile will be graded on a scale of 100 points. There will be six parts:

1. Lede: Between 0-20 points achievable
2. Story organization: Between 0-20 points achievable
3. Writing: Between 0-25 points achievable
4. Accuracy and proofreading: Between 0-10 points achievable
5. Reporting and news judgment: Between 0-20 points achievable
6. Twitter and Instagram: Between 0-5 points achievable

As I read your story, I will evaluate your reporting and writing on the following criteria:

1. Does the profile have a focus, a single theme or idea that holds it together? Does the opening anecdote reflect the theme? Is it compelling?
2. Does the nut graf reflect the theme clearly and creatively?
3. Is the profile well organized? Does it lead the reader logically through?
4. Does each paragraph contain a single idea?
5. Is the profile well written? Does every word count?
6. Have you used description and colorful quotes to bring your subject to life?
7. Have your other sources added another dimension to your subject? Are those quotes woven seamlessly into the narrative?
8. Is your ending satisfying to the reader? Does it tie back to the opening?
9. Have you double-checked the spelling of all proper nouns?
10. Have you corrected AP style errors, spelling, grammar and punctuation?