



Top Ten Tips on Writing Strong Opinion Pieces

Focus on one main idea or a single theme in your op-ed.

Look for opportunities to wed your specific area of expertise or interest with news developments. Timeliness is crucial. One day can mean the difference between acceptance and rejection. Be timely, and even controversial in your opinion. Support it with facts or the strongest proof you can muster.

Always write for the lay reader.

Be clear and straightforward. Use simple words, short sentences, short paragraphs.

Have a clear editorial viewpoint.

State that point in your first paragraph, and then proceed to back up your opinion or prove your thesis.

Take pains to educate the reader with your special insight, but take care not to condescend or preach. Keep the tone of your piece on high ground.

Express a strong call to action.

Write with verve and “fire in your gut.”

Don’t ramble or deviate from your principal points. An op-ed is neither a history lesson nor an essay that slowly builds to a point. Make your point in the first paragraph.

Use short, declarative sentences.

Long, complex sentences and paragraphs raise the “Fog Index” for even the brainiest of readers.

Op-eds typically run 800 words long.

More and more op-ed editors prefer email submissions (they don’t like email attachments, though).

Every op-ed you submit must have a strong, brief headline that sums up your viewpoint. Always write your headline first. Doing so will keep you focused and on track.



Media Contact

Suelan Toye
Media and Communications Officer
Faculty of Arts
416-979-5000 x 3868
stoye@arts.ryerson.ca



@RUFacultyofArts