

OBITUARY

- **Purpose:** not just to both inform (provide an account of the subject's CV, tell of service arrangements etc), but also to describe and entertain (convey their personality).
- **Audience:** wide readership (need for accessible writing) – being informed about a sometimes famous, but possibly anonymous figure (thus the need to include some elements of colour about their personal and family life). The style of writing will depend upon the newspaper/format in which the obit appears.

Features of Obituary

- Formal (low frequency, Latinate lexis, figurative writing, predominantly declarative sentences; rhetorical features such as parallel pairs etc)

Structure of Obituary

- **Announcement of the death.** The opening is one sentence that gives basic information about who the person was and when s/he died. You might mention the place of death, and possibly the cause. Celebrity/famous person: include mention of their public role.
- **Basic biographical information:** place of birth; relevant education; marital life (if appropriate).
- **Additional information about their role in life:** adjectives, figurative language to describe the person; keep a balance between public and private; between contrasting elements of their personality, perhaps. Consider using iterative imagery.
- **Provide survivor information:** one sentence is often included, listing the person's children, grandchildren, and other important family members.

Do's

- Give a balance of their public and private lives ("You have to get over and communicate primarily what they are famous for, but you don't want a dry recitation of facts," says Daily Telegraph obituaries editor Harry de Quetteville.)

Don'ts

- "Jokes ... don't really work in obituaries, unless the subject is a jokey character," (Nigel Starck, author of *Life After Death*, a history of obituaries)
- Consider not going through a life chronologically. Look for themes, for example as a way to illustrate the person's personality.

SCRIPT FOR CHILDREN

Consider these features found in “Horrible Histories”

Features designed to entertain:

- Creation of dialogue which seems like speech;
- creation of dialect/idiolect (often not standard English)
- Ellipses and non-fluency features used for effect.

Features designed to inform:

- Logical steps, guiding the reader;
- use of second person pronouns to engage the reader.
- clarity of layout;
- variety of sentence types;
- multi-modal (pictures and words);
- mix of register with some spoken language features used.

Features of Sports commentaries

- Non-fluency features, such as incomplete utterances (“That was...Oh he’s gone down”)
- Repetitions: “Now the replay ... the replay is key” “It was good, it wasn’t as good”
- Vocalisations and non-verbal sounds (Ooh. Alley Oop”)
- Colloquial language (Gets the grab)
- Extended metaphors and clichés (king, throne etc) – indicating the experienced nature of these commentators
- Variety of sentence types including interrogatives (Can SW handle the pressure?) to encourage interaction (from the audience and co-host)
- Minor sentences (typical of sports commentaries, with limited time, and need for pace - time-critical utterances)

SPEECH

Features of Rhetoric

- **Repetition:** of sounds, words or grammatical constructions for persuasive effect.
- **The rule of three:** three part sentence (tricolon) or lists of three
- **Contrasting pairs:** two parts of a sentence, one in contrast or antithesis to the other
- **Rhetorical questions:** questions where no answer is expected
- **Imagery and figurative language**
- **Hyperbole** – using exaggerated language to make a point
- **Understatement (litotes)** – the opposite of hyperbole
- **Bathos:** anti-climax, i.e. starting with something serious or high-flown and ending with something silly or mundane “They came, they saw, they did some shopping”

Ideas from Gillard

- **Part-scripted, formal speech delivered to the Australian Parliament**
- **Directed to a dual audience including general electorate**
- **Persuasive speech, also designed to inform**
- **Criticism of Abbot for his alleged hypocrisy**
- **Gillard’s personal, emotional response**
- **Gillard responding as a politician, and as a woman**

SATIRE

Features of Satire

- ▶ **EXAGGERATION and HYPERBOLE:** enlarging, increasing, or representing something beyond normal bounds so that it becomes ridiculous and its faults can be seen.
- ▶ **INCONGRUITY:** presenting things that are out of place or are absurd in relation to its surroundings.
- ▶ **REVERSAL:** presenting the opposite of the normal order (e.g., the order of events, hierarchical order). Use of **VERBAL IRONY**, presenting the reality as being different from and opposite to expectation.
- ▶ **PARODY:** To imitate the techniques and/or style of some person, place, or thing, exploiting of an individual's style or expression, or of other conventions and content of other genres.

Types of Satire

- ▶ *Horatian satire* – witty and indulgent, it seeks to criticise rather than attack its subject. The Roman lyrical poet Horace, states that its purpose may be "to hold up a mirror" so readers can see themselves and their world honestly.
- ▶ *Juvenalian satire* is biting, bitter, and angry; based on the style of the Roman poet Juvenal, seeing the vices and follies in the world as intolerable, and using large doses of sarcasm and irony.

Structure of "A Modest Proposal"

- ▶ Explain the problem (emulating the serious tone, polysyllabic, low frequency lexis, complex sentence type) (too many children)
- ▶ Present the solution (Swift does this in paragraph 10) (sell and eat the children)
- ▶ Raise possible objections and dismiss them (not so many children in Ireland)
- ▶ Resolution (richer Irish parents, boosted economy)

Features of "A Modest Proposal"

- ▶ serious tone; literalised metaphors (economy "devoured" the parents); facts and statistics to increase sense of rational argument (economic theories); use of persona, hyperbole, litotes, repetition, verbal irony etc.