

Tips for Writing a Column

Know your audience: The Eddy is created by and for high school students. It is a forum for teens to express what is important to them and their community. Consider age, interest, focus and reason to engage with this age group when writing a column.

First paragraph: The opening two sentences should express a reason and theme for the column. Use active sentences, including a focus on word choice and grammar. The hook needs to draw a reader's attention to the topic or issue.

Limit the use of "I" in the column and write statements rather than overusing personal pronouns; doing this sets a more professional tone to your writing. This rule does not apply to Blog submissions.

Body: Analyze the topic, issue and/or conflict. While the author should give the reader a reason for the 'other side', build the column with support, providing stronger reasons for the issue as the column concludes. Do not just raise an issue, but also provide a call to action.

Conclusion: The final paragraph should not just be a summary of the column but offer a solution to an issue and/or a call to action.

Tips for column writing:

- 1) Write about interesting topics or angles that draw a reader into the column.
- 2) Provide anecdotes and/or analogies which support a point, humanizing the story and/or issue.
- 3) Consider issues and conflicts students and adults share. Show how they affect the reader and results of the issue. Make opinion relatable. A good rule of thumb is offer three main discussion points that are supported with verifiable facts.
- 4) Research the facts about the issue and provide at least three links for readers to click on to confirm main points. Make sure facts are represented in the column. Links should be to recognized outside sources.
- 5) Be clear as to who the expert is and name them in the column. Provide a link to them as well.
- 6) Do not plagiarize!
- 7) Write with passion and conviction. No one wants to read an unconvincing point of view. However, never attack a person, leader or school. Write about the issue; the eddy is the place for a personal rant. Allow room for readers to respond.
- 8) Column length will vary but consider 300-400 words as appropriate.
- 9) The Author should submit a picture to go along with the story. See the Eddy submit feature on the home page for this.
- 10) Author should submit a personal photo so the Eddy can further highlight him/her and personalize the published work.
- 11) Authors should add a two-line caption of themselves stating their name, and their grade level.