

## Module 7: Realism in the Family

### Authentic Assessment: Realism Editorial Rubric

Imagine that you are a journalist working for a prestigious newspaper praised internationally for its hard-hitting exposés on the social injustices and corruption in the world. Your boss is the editor and has just sent you an email asking you to write an editorial for an upcoming "special edition" of the newspaper. This is a great career opportunity for you as it will expose more people to your work and could launch your career further than you ever dreamed. The editor wants a dynamic editorial that is based on fact but also creatively addresses the topic. Below is a copy of the editor's notes regarding the assignment.

*Good morning! Great job on your recent article that we published last week! I have an assignment that's a great opportunity, and I think you're the best person for the job.*

*I need a hard-hitting, fact-based editorial about some kind of ongoing, modern-day social injustice, but I also need you to connect this social injustice to the past. You know, make connections and draw parallels; connect the dots for the readers, so to speak. It doesn't matter which issue you write about. You could connect the Civil War or Vietnam War to the War on Terrorism, compare racial inequalities from the 1850s to now, talk about the treatment of women, or discuss the drastic change in the treatment of immigrants. You can write about any social injustice as long as you can draw a parallel to the past.*

*Also, I need you to incorporate direct quotations from writers and literary works from the Realism era that support your editorial. It wouldn't hurt to find some modern quotes either. Use song lyrics or political speeches if you want. People usually tend to like that. But whatever you decide, be sure to use at least three direct quotes and cite your sources. I'm going to include some of my personal favorite writers from the Realism era below, just in case you need some help getting started:*

- *Mark Twain*
- *Ambrose Bierce*
- *Edwin Arlington Robinson*
- *Edgar Lee Masters*
- *Frederick Douglass*
- *Stephen Crane*
- *Harriet Jacobs*
- *Kate Chopin*
- *Jack London*
- *Charlotte Perkins Gillman*
- *Walt Whitman (his poetry spans the gap between Romanticism and Realism, so... you can use him too.)*
- *There are others, so feel free to find one not listed here.*

*So remember, you're going to compare two different social injustices (one from the Realism era and one from today) in the editorial. Talk about how they are alike and similar. Make sure the average reader can understand the connection. To help with that, pull in quotes from Realist and contemporary writers. Got it? If you can do all of that, you just might earn a raise and promotion!*

*Editor-in-Chief*

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### How to Write an Editorial

An editorial in a newspaper is an opinion article that expresses the views of the writer or newspaper and generally touches on topics that are current events. Like a persuasive essay or speech, editorial articles strive to influence public opinion and effect change. They usually include the following:

- An introduction paragraph that objectively explains the issue
- The writer's stance on the topic with supporting evidence or reasons
- The opposing viewpoint on the topic that is refuted, or disproved
- Recommended solutions to resolve the problem (It is not enough to present a problem; the effectiveness of the editorial stems from the solution offered.)
- A strong concluding paragraph that concisely summarizes the editorial's stance and recommended solution

Before you begin, review the Realism Editorial Rubric to help you complete your assignment and understand how your work will be graded. You may need to use resources outside of this course to complete this assignment. If so, please submit a Works Cited document. If you need assistance, visit the Developmental Module for information on citing resources.

### Realism Editorial Rubric

As you complete your editorial, please review the rubric below to help you complete your assignment and understand how your work will be graded.

|                               | <b>25 Points</b>   | <b>20 Points</b>  | <b>15 Points</b>   | <b>10 Points</b>  |
|-------------------------------|--|---|--|---|
| <b>Introduction Paragraph</b> | The introduction paragraph introduces the topic in an objective manner, briefly summarizes the writer's stance and the opposing viewpoint on the topic, and concisely states the recommended solution or call to action. | The introduction paragraph introduces the topic in a slightly biased manner, briefly summarizes the writer's stance and the opposing viewpoint on the topic, and states the recommended solution or call to action. | The introduction paragraph introduces the topic in a biased manner, summarizes either the writer's stance or the opposing viewpoint on the topic, and states the recommended solution or call to action. | The introduction paragraph introduces the topic in an extremely biased manner, summarizes either the writer's stance or the opposing viewpoint on the topic, and does not state the recommended solution or call to action. |

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|   |  |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| <p align="center"><b>Content</b></p>                            | <p>In the body of the editorial, the problem of the topic is explained clearly and objectively. The opposing viewpoint is presented and convincingly refuted. The writer's stance is explained and effectively supported with reasons. A recommended solution or call to action is offered. At least 3 direct quotes are used and cited.</p> | <p>In the body of the editorial, the problem of the topic is explained. The opposing viewpoint is presented and adequately refuted. The writer's stance is explained and supported with reasons. A recommended solution or call to action is offered. Only 2 direct quotes are used and cited.</p> | <p>In the body of the editorial, the problem of the topic is unclear or confusing. The opposing viewpoint is presented but not adequately refuted. The writer's stance is not supported with any reasons. A recommended solution or call to action is unclear or missing. Only 1 direct quote is used and cited.</p> | <p>In the body of the editorial, more than one of the following items are missing: an explanation of the problem of the topic, the opposing viewpoint, the writer's stance on the topic, or a recommended solution or call to action. There are no direct quotes used and cited.</p> |
| <p align="center"><b>Closing Paragraph</b></p>                  | <p>The closing paragraph concisely summarizes the writer's stance and recommended solution or call to action in an effective and persuasive tone.</p>  | <p>The closing paragraph adequately summarizes the writer's stance and recommended solution or call to action.</p>   | <p>The closing paragraph does not clearly summarize the writer's stance; the recommended solution or call to action is restated weakly.</p>  | <p>The closing paragraph does not summarize the writer's stance and/or restate the recommended solution or call to action.</p>   |
| <p align="center"><b>Grammar, Spelling, and Works Cited</b></p> | <p>The writer makes no errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content. The formatting of quotes, paraphrased information, and source information adheres to the proper formatting guidelines.</p>   | <p>The writer makes 1-2 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content. There are minor formatting (quoted and paraphrased material and source information) errors. Overall, the editorial adheres to the formatting guidelines.</p>                                      | <p>The writer makes 3-4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content. There are several formatting errors (issues with quoted and paraphrased material and source information).</p>   | <p>The writer makes more than 4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content. An attempt at formatting is made, but it does not follow the proper guidelines.</p>   |

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#### **Reflection**

The editorial is your chance to express your own opinions regarding the Realism era and modern social injustices. You have been supplied with several examples of social injustices through the course of this module. Some issues are more easily righted than others. For instance, while the fight for equal rights among all Americans has come a long way, there is still a long road ahead to ensure equality for all, especially as modern society becomes more and more diverse. The important thing to remember is that change does not happen if there is no one pushing for it.

After you have completed the assignment, think about the following questions and write your responses to them. Submit your work to the dropbox when you have completed your reflection.

- What kind of change would you like to see in the world?
- What wrongs do you feel need to be righted?

Once you have completed your Realism Editorial and reflection, please submit them with the Works Cited document to the dropbox.