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WRITING FOR MAGAZINES

Key Concepts

- ☞ Definition of magazine
- ☞ Characteristics of magazines
- ☞ Difference between a newspaper and a magazine
- ☞ Basics of magazine writing
- ☞ Magazine writing styles
- ☞ History of magazines
- ☞ Types of magazines
- ☞ Content of magazine
- ☞ Future of magazines

Significant Learning Outcomes

The learner will be able to:

- discover the characteristics of magazines
- compare the difference between a newspaper and a magazine
- write a magazine article
- discuss various magazine writing styles
- identify the contents of a magazine
- identify the trends in magazines

A daily newspaper which brings you news and views every 24 hours remains fresh only for a short period of time. Your reading appetite slowly vanishes after the first read and you may not touch it again for a serious analytical reading because we have the radio, television, internet, social network etc. with us throughout the day. They constantly inform us the happenings of the day with text, pictures and sound no matter where we are or what we are doing.

Unlike newspapers, a magazine never reports daily news. But we flip through its pages almost every day and re-read the contents till the next issue of the magazine reaches us. Sometimes we refer the select contents many times for several months as it documents information which is valuable and relevant over a period of time.

Magazines deal with socio-cultural and political issues more deeply than daily newspapers. They have a special feel and mission and exhibit even an overall special tone. The magazines are generally read more attentively during leisure time. Its language and style of presentation is quite different from newspapers. The variety and richness of the content, its social focus and visionary perspectives are more valued by the readers. The success of a magazine is based on intelligent observation, imagination and consistency in articulating the views on all matters of public life.

We have already studied in detail news writing and editing in the previous year. Are there any significant differences between magazine writing and newspaper writing? What are the different types of magazines available in the market? What are the common contents in magazines? We shall attempt to answer some of these questions in this chapter.

What is a magazine?

A magazine is a publication that is issued periodically. It generally contains essays, stories, poems, articles, fiction, recipes, images etc. Magazines are directed at general and special audience, often published on a weekly or monthly basis.

We know that the word "magazine" is derived from Arabic word *makhazin* or "storehouse," which contains a collection of facts and fiction, all bundled together in one package. *Gentlemen's Magazine*, founded in 1731 is considered as the world's first magazine. Then we had *The Economist*, *Collier's*, *The Saturday Evening Post*, *National Geographic*, *Time*, *The New Yorker*, *Life*, *People* etc. In the present age of the tablet and social media, the idea of a "magazine" is returning to its storehouse roots. Functionally, a magazine still represents the idea of a bunch of thematically-related content put together as one package.

A magazine can also be considered as a cabinet of curiosities; i.e. a display case in which interesting, unusual and occasionally 'eccentric' objects are collected and displayed as a conversation piece or an expression of the writer's wide-ranging interests or tastes. The readers are treated with a fascinating, mind-expanding and unique set of wonders they had never dreamt of.

Characteristics of magazines

While popular magazines provide broad overviews of topics, scholarly journals provide in-depth analysis of topics and report the findings of research, and trade magazines report on industry trends, new products or techniques. A popular magazine which caters to the general public uses non-technical language. The contents of these magazines include interviews, general interest articles and various types of features. They usually cover a wide range of topics based on research, source comments and generalizations. Articles are usually written by a staff writer or a journalist; in some cases, interesting articles of freelancers are also encouraged. They generally contain many interesting and sometimes sensuous photographs to attract readers. In general, magazine articles are easy to read, fairly brief in length, and may include illustrations or photographs.

Magazines don't necessarily follow a specific format or structure in writing the articles. Its attractive appearance, eye-catching cover pictures and illustrations on quality paper make it more appealing

to the reading public. Magazines also contain many colourful and impressive advertisements.

Difference between newspaper and magazine

Newspapers and magazines are two important forms of print media that are read by millions of people around the world. Some of the most common differences between newspapers and magazines can be seen through their size and appearance, content, style, target audience, design and layout, readability and advertisements. Let us have a glance through these factors:

Size and appearance

Newspapers are bigger in size and they can be folded. A story above the middle fold in the front page of a newspaper is considered as the most important story and one that appears just below the fold is generally the second most important story. If there are many important stories on a newspaper page, then the treatment given to a story will decide its importance: such as, photos/graphics with a more important story and with no visual elements in other stories. The eyes of a reader can scan an entire page without a fold. A magazine tends to have a "book-type" size while the newspaper is really meant to be spread arms length for the reader to grasp its contents.

Content

Newspapers deal with reports clearly, briefly and objectively. A magazine writer focuses on specialized topics and current issues of public interest.

Newspapers remain the primary source of authentic, reliable and latest information about what is happening around the world and even in one's own locality. But magazines are not sources of fresh content to the extent of publishing breaking news. However, its content is specialized and recent in nature. Thus, we have various magazines such as entertainment, science, share markets, sports, glamour and movies. Newspapers are more versatile in content and hence they never fall short of content as there is always

something happening in different parts of the world. On the other hand, magazine content is always based on the liking of the readers of diverse backgrounds.

Style

Newspapers focus on catchy headlines to create interest in the reader. Many reporters and editors are employed in newspapers to prepare specialized reports and interpretative articles. But magazines have lesser staff. A magazine writer has more freedom to express or has more room for subjectivity. S/he has the tenacity and freedom to express things in a creative manner. It further enhances the writer's mastery of the expression by imploring these seemingly circular methods of self expression. The newspaper writer on the other hand is compounded to a somewhat strict, strong and straight writing mostly based on facts and figures.

Design and layout

Newspapers are known for their simple layout and design. While the content is usually in black and white, the style and font are fairly consistent throughout. Magazines have much more visual expression than newspapers because magazines are not subject to one consistent layout. Magazines use lots of colour, different types and sizes of fonts and break up their articles with images and colour.

Target audience

The main difference between a newspaper and a magazine is that newspapers are written for a general audience, while magazines are for specific types of audiences.

A magazine attracts varied target audience. A newspaper's target audience is determined by its geography and its focus is broad. Here, the editor determines what the people should read, what they want and desire. In contrast, a magazine's target audience is determined by demographics and interests. ('Demographics' mean the physical characteristics of the individual such as race, gender, interest, education level etc.). Hence the target audience of a magazine is usually separated geographically, but they share common interests; for example, a common interest in sports,

fashion or beauty. A magazine editor should understand the nature of the target audience.

Readability

News stories are usually written in a matter of fact style. But magazines employ colourful language so as to make the content enjoyable. The newspaper readability level corresponds to a difficult classification built around tight grammatical and syntactical rules. Linguistic subjectivity which relies on expressive adjectives enhances the readability of magazines.

Display ads

Though magazines and newspapers both provide readers with information, their format and appeal differ considerably. Magazines are more advertiser-driven than newspapers. Newspapers are slightly different in this regard. Newspapers are driven more by readership than by advertisers. They focus more on catchy headlines in an effort to capture the reader's interest and get him to read the entire story. Part of the reason for this is that people often associate what they read with an ad they see near the piece. Our minds just naturally attach and group objects and associations together. Advertising giants know this and place their ads exactly in proper alignment with stories and articles they want to associate with their products on those specialized magazines.

Visual strength

The visual strength of magazine is enhanced with the effective use of colour in magazines. In magazines, we can also use a colour background whereas newspapers normally have only a white background. This means you can present more attractive colour contrasts in your magazine visuals.

Shelf life

Another strength of magazine is longer life. Newspapers are read only once and then discarded. In contrast, magazines are commonly kept for several days, weeks or months in magazine racks which provides for possible repeat reading.

Magazines use some of the highest-quality paper and ink to produce a visually appealing product meant to be kept and read longer than a newspaper. Magazines tend to focus on entertainment pieces, provide how-to-do articles and features about certain subjects within their chosen marketing niche. Magazines also have advertisements taking up large amounts of page space to balance the cost of production.

Let us do

Prepare a write-up of about 300 words on the characteristics of your favourite magazine.

Check Your Progress

- ✍ Define magazine.
- ✍ How does a magazine differ from a newspaper in its size and appearance?
- ✍ What are the factors that influence the readability of a magazine?

Basics of magazine writing

The joy of magazine writing lies in its variety. Anything from a celebrity interview to a food recipe can be the topic for magazine articles and this variety demands versatility. Coverage of events for magazines offers challenges as well as opportunities to journalists. A creative flair and innovative skill may help in producing masterpieces and also in creating an everlasting impression on the reader's mind. The language used depends, to a certain extent, on the objective of the magazine. Literary style is generally preferred by the magazine press. Thus magazine writing requires a different way of thinking, writing and structuring.

Effective magazine writing is accessible, interesting, lively, colourful, grabbing and relevant. Whatever be the type of publication a journalist writes for, the basic approach is the same: write for your readers. However, good writing for magazines depends on the adherence to some well known guidelines. Though there are not many lengthy rules, there are guidelines a magazine writer should

follow to produce a stylish copy. The most important among them can be summarized as follows:

- Know whom you are writing for, their interests and concerns.
- Know what you want to say and achieve.
- Always prefer the concrete to the abstract.
- Be accurate and readable.
- Have an attention grabbing intro.
- Spend considerable time thinking about fresh ways to approach the subject.
- Keep materials and sentences short.
- Promote a vibrant style.
- Know the publication's editorial policy to achieve your direction.

Magazine writers often develop a strongly personal style that is opinionated, anecdotal and gossipy while developing the content. The quality of the content and style are equally important. The word play and tricks of style make the piece entertaining to read.

How to structure a magazine article

As soon as you're ready to write a magazine article, you need to think about structure. With magazine articles, you can move beyond the inverted pyramid style of news by scattering important points throughout the article.

Tell a story

The important thing to remember is that you're telling a story to your readers. That means you need a beginning, a middle and an end. It also means you need to think about where you're taking your reader and create a logical path to that end point.

The beginning

To get people to read your article, you need to find a way to grab them. For example, you can begin an article with a quote or an anecdote from a person's life. However, you can also set the scene or use anything that will attract the reader's attention.

The middle

With most magazine articles, you talk to a person or people. People like reading about other people, so if your interviewee says something good, use a quote rather than the reported speech. This makes your magazine article more interesting.

The ending

Finally, end with a bang. This could be in the form of an important point, a revelation or another anecdote or quote. The idea is to satisfy your reader and to get that reader interested in your other writings as well.

Extra credit

When you do research for an article, you often have information left over that didn't make it into the main piece. Don't get rid of this. Use it to create a sidebar or table (editors will love this), or as the starting point for another article.

Magazine writing styles

Readers are primarily interested in what you have to say. Depending on the way in which you say it may encourage them either to read on or to give up the piece.

Writing style is always personal; it is your own. Like your signature, it is unique and distinct. Writing style reveals the writer's personality or voice. The aims and objectives of the magazine are clearly reflected in the style of writing. The potential readership of magazines also determines the style. The specialized magazines have their own unique style of writing and presentation depending on the above discussed criteria.

Let us now discuss some of the common styles used by the magazines in their presentation of articles.

Narrative writing

Narratives are works that provide an account of connected events. In a narrative style, you'll need to tell a story in such a way that the audience learns a lesson or gains an insight. Narrative writing is a

type of writing in which the author places himself as the character and leads you to the story. Here, being a narrative, a story or event is told through characters and dialogues. Narrative writing has definite and logical beginnings, intervals and endings. Narrative writing uses many literary techniques to provide deeper meaning for the reader and it also helps the reader use his / her imagination to visualize situations. Literary techniques include metaphors, similes, personification, imagery, hyperbole, alliteration, back story, flashback, flash-forward, foreshadowing and narrative perspective or point of view. It also makes use of literary elements such as setting, plot, theme, characters, style/structure, perspective, voice etc. since literary techniques are best understood in the context of one of these elements. Figurative language is a common element in narrative writing.

Serialised narrative writing

In this style you cannot find out what's going to happen next. You have to wait. Here the writer really understands how to hold a reader by his/her side and make them stick on with the piece till the end. That's the skill absolutely essential for this style of writing.

The first and most essential quality of a serial narrative is that it has to be immensely, intensely and inescapably readable. They should have a powerful pull on all readers with the power of a delicious sense of enforced writing. The writer can also make use of dialogues in this style to convey the real emotional spirit, if necessary. One of the reasons for a serial narrative's power is that the plot unfolds gradually because it is unfolding the rhythms of life. The writing should end with something that makes the reader feel it wasn't a waste of time.

Descriptive writing

Descriptive writing focuses on describing a character, an event or a place in great details. It is sometimes poetic in nature in which the author is specifying the details of the event rather than just the information of that event. In a descriptive style, the writer needs to describe a person, object or event so vividly that the reader feels like s/he could reach out and touch it. The writer attempts to convey

as many of the senses related to the subject as possible for a clearer understanding of what is being described. Descriptive writing has a unique power and appeal, as it evokes sensory description through sights, smells, sounds, textures and tastes through the text to your reader. Hence word choice in descriptive writing is critical. Each word must be critically evaluated to see if it contributes to the overall description. Therefore, this style tends to use more adjectives and adverbs, as well as figurative language and imagery to create details that allow the readers to envision the scenery and events in their minds.

Persuasive writing

This writing revolves around convincing someone. Persuasion requires great skill and effort to convince your readers to endorse your opinion or viewpoint. You write with the sole objective of persuading your readers. Persuasive writing utilizes the power of words to confidently and passionately convey a very important matter. Such writings are usually written with precision and authority.

Persuasive texts are set out to argue and prove a case by presenting ideas that follow in logical progression. It aims to convince a targeted audience of the validity of a viewpoint on an issue by presenting logical arguments. Anticipating and answering possible objections or opposing arguments, all types of persuasive writings should present well researched evidence to support the case and also provide facts from authorities to prove or disapprove an argument. The most common forms of persuasive texts include essays, editorials, letters to the editor, opinion articles, feature articles, interviews, speeches and submissions.

Imaginative writing

Imaginative writings present ideas, issues and arguments in an imaginative and credible way through description, characters, settings, figurative language, the five senses, etc. An imaginative writing assumes the form of fiction, specifically of short story. Depending on the idea, the imaginative article can discuss anything from space travel to civil rights. Because of this wide variation,

some imaginative pieces require a very serious response, while others invite a much more light-hearted, fantastic one. Usually, imaginative write-ups start with a hypothetical situation and ask how you would respond to it. It should be credible and plausible and must convey information through description and figurative language. Add sensory details and realistic conversation. Also include imaginary interactions with the characters. The characters should be dynamic in nature and they should see things differently or act differently by the end of the story. Narrate and describe events, characters and situations. For an imaginative writing, you will not have to use formal language, but you need to show your mastery of writing.

Visual writing

Visual writing is a good language for story telling in any medium. It focuses on the mind, distinctive details from the intricately interconnected experiences of the individual. Visual writing creates depth, quality and pacing. Visual style isn't an extension of the writing, but it has to be embedded into the writing in a way that the reader may not even be aware of its presence. This means visual style is not about adding more but enriching an already existing text. Visual communication engages meaningful experiences and feelings within individuals through richly embedded image symbols which are conveyed either directly through text or indirectly through other senses. One aspect of visual language is that it is a fluid language and it spontaneously convey meanings. Another aspect of visual language is the composition of images used and the scenes it creates. A third aspect of visual language is dialogue which uses words that invoke images. The dialogue creates movement in the story.

Multiple inverted pyramid

In the field of magazine journalism, the term 'multiple inverted pyramid approach' refers to a style of writing which informs and entertains the readers through self-sufficiently built plots of information, each of which may be arranged in the form of an inverted pyramid. The fact is that the idea of the whole story is

spilled in the first paragraph itself. The reader can decide whether to continue reading the details or to go into something else. But even if the reader stops at a certain point, this form of writing may provide some essential facts to the readers.

Let us do

The best magazine style is one which is accessible, lively, colourful, grabbing and relevant. Is this statement true in your opinion regarding the various writing styles? Divide the class into seven groups and ask each group to give a presentation on the basis of the above mentioned seven magazine writing styles.

Check Your Progress

- ✍ Differentiate narrative writing and serialized narrative writing.
- ✍ What are the techniques involved in visual writing style?
- ✍ How is multiple inverted pyramid style used in magazine writing?

History of magazines

Now a days, it seems that magazines shape our lives, telling us what to wear, what to eat and what to think about. Although this is the age of the internet, we continue to enjoy magazines, admire their pages, photos, illustrations and headlines. This popularity is due to the fact that magazines cater to all sorts of interests and passions. Most magazines look more or less the same at first glance, but they target different audiences.

The 1700s ushered in a time of increased literacy and intellectual development among the society in Europe. Thus the hunger for knowledge enabled magazines to become a popular cultural staple. Early periodicals were so expensive that only the wealthy could afford them. As a result, early publications were geared toward the most learned, cultured and sophisticated individuals of the day.

English printers produced three essay periodicals that set the stage for modern magazines: Daniel Defoe's *The Review* (published in 1704); Sir Richard Steele's *The Tatler* (published in 1709); and Addison and Steele's *The Spectator* (published in 1711). Since the periodicals were published several times a week, they resembled our modern newspapers. However, their content was more similar to that of modern magazines.



Fig 1.1

In 1731, an Englishman named Edward Cave edited a periodical called *The Gentleman's Magazine*. Cave's goal was to create a magazine that the general public would be interested in. His publication contained everything from essays and poems to stories and political musings. Cave achieved two noteworthy accomplishments: he coined the term "magazine," and he was the first publisher to successfully fashion a wide-ranging publication.

After realizing that colourful sketches and illustrations contributed to magazine sales in 1842, British news agent Herbert Ingram created the first illustrated magazine *The Illustrated London News* filled with dozens of woodcut designs. This magazine also earned the distinction of being the first to incorporate photos. Magazines became incredibly popular by the end of the 18th century. At that time, there were more than 100 magazines in the United States. Some of the most influential early American magazines were *The Pennsylvania Magazine* and *The Massachusetts Magazine*.

By the 1830s, however, less expensive magazines aimed at the general public began to emerge. Rather than maintaining the intellectual air of their predecessors, these magazines focused on amusement and entertainment. The magazine market throughout the world increased exponentially in the late 1800s, due to increased literacy. As a result, magazines became more specialized. Periodicals were created specifically for lawyers, artists, musicians and other professionals. Literary review magazines became popular during the 1800s.

Magazines in India

The journalistic revolution in India came from the magazine sector. In the Indian magazine scenario, general interest magazines are flourishing and the special interest magazines are growing in number.

The first breakthrough in Indian magazine industry was made by *Stardust* which ended the old fan-magazine culture of film journalism and introduced bright, witty, celebrity journalism to India. The second breakthrough, *India Today* was India's first successful attempt at quality, up-market serious journalism. It was well-produced, well-written and covered politics and social trends with style and panache. Niche magazines on lifestyle, travel, education and automobile have established themselves in India. Today, India has become a glorious store house of both general interest and specialised magazines which include *Outlook*, *Frontline*, *Femina*, *Competition Success Review* and *Vanitha* that have been quite successful in catching the attention and imagination of people.

Magazines in Malayalam

The first printed magazine in the Malayalam language - the *Jnananikshepam* - was published from Central Travancore in 1848. Archdeacon Koshy and Rev. George Mathen were behind the eight-page magazine which served the cause of propagation of religion and the dissemination of knowledge. Another Kottayam-based periodical which made its appearance around this time was the *Vidyasamgraham* brought out under the auspices of the Kottayam CMS College in 1864. This magazine started in 1864 had the credit of the first college magazine in Kerala. From then onwards, a magazine culture had evolved in Kerala with a set formula: sensational news features, serialized novels, short stories and film gossips. Some of the popular weeklies in Malayalam such as *Mangalam* and *Malayala Manorama* have exceeded the million mark in circulation baffling the conventional magazine publishers. The other major Malayalam periodicals include *Mathrubhumi* weekly, *Madhyamam* weekly, *Kala Kaumudi*, *Dhanam*, *Samakalika Malayalam* weekly etc.



The Illustrated Weekly of India

The Illustrated Weekly of India was an English language weekly newsmagazine. It started publication in 1880 (as Times of India Weekly Edition, later renamed as The Illustrated Weekly of India in 1923) and ceased publication in 1993. Also simply known as Weekly by its readership, The Illustrated Weekly of India was considered to be an important English language publication in India for over a century. The magazine was edited by A.S. Raman, Khushwant Singh, M. V. Kamath, and Pritish Nandy. A.S. Raman was the first Indian editor of The Illustrated Weekly of India, succeeding Sean Mandy. Khushwant Singh who was then a sub-editor of the magazine took over as editor upon Raman's departure. Cartoons in the latter half of the magazine were by R.K.Laxman and Mario Miranda.



Fig 1.2

Types of magazines

Today, there are thousands of magazines worldwide. They inspire, inform, educate and entertain audiences across the globe. Nearly 600 years after the advent of the printing press, magazines continue to change the nature of things throughout the world. The major categories of magazines are briefly explained below:

1. General interest magazines

This type of magazine is published for a wider audience to provide information, in a general manner and the focus is on many different subjects. The main purpose of a general interest magazine is to provide information for the general audience. No background knowledge or expertise is assumed. Articles usually provide a broad coverage of topics of current interest. They are written by journalists, freelance writers or staff correspondents of the magazine. These periodicals may be quite attractive in appearance, with articles often heavily illustrated with photographs. The language of these publications is geared to any educated audience. There is no specially assumed target audience. Mere interest and a certain

level of intelligence is only required to read and enjoy such magazines. These are usually published by commercial enterprises, though some are published by professional organizations. Examples of general interest periodicals are: *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Outlook*, *India Today* and *The Week*.

2. Special interest magazines

Special interest publications are magazines directed at specific groups of readers with common interests. Most special interest magazines cater to any specific interests or pursuits. For instance, there are magazines that cover sports, news, fashion, business, music and so on. While some attempt to cover all aspects of a broad subject, others are concerned only with a particular element of the general subject. *Sports Illustrated*, for example, contains stories on practically any sport, but *Golf Digest* carries only stories related to golf. Other special interest publications find their audiences through different demographic segmentations. There are magazines published primarily for men (*Field and Stream*, *Gentlemen's Quarterly (GQ)*, etc.), women (*Woman's World*, *Grihalekshmi*, *Vanitha* etc.), boys (*Boys' Life*) and girls (*Teen Vogue*). Specialized periodicals also serve most professions, industries and organizations.

Specialist magazines have been growing in recent years, not only in terms of the number of readers, but also in the increasing number of consumer advertisers who have seen the benefits of the medium. Circulation varies for a special interest magazine. But, even though the circulation is small, it is usually stable over the short term and offers an advertiser a well-defined market. Obviously, for a specialist product, there is no better place to advertise than in a magazine which concerns itself directly with the product area, such as gardening or photography.

We can categorize some special interest magazines into the following genres based on their content and target audience:

a. Farm magazines

These are magazines featuring news and information pertaining to the agricultural sector. It is a resource for farmers and vendors of farmers' markets. There are various farm magazines that contain information about various farming equipment, farming practices, ideas and technology suitable to small and big farms, raising unusual livestock, growing high-value crops, direct marketing of their products to bring in more income, the latest techniques for growing bountiful, nutritious crops and many more articles that could provide information to the farmers who are their target audience. They also share the success stories of artisans and farmers, on government policies and programmes and also about how to promote their business by reaching new customers and develop value-added products.

b. Sports magazines



Fig 1.3

A sports magazine usually features articles or segments on sports comprising of many photographic images and illustrations. Some magazines concentrate on all general sports news and related issues while others concentrate on specific sports or games such as football, baseball, athletics etc. But the common aim of any sports magazine is to take fans inside the game and provide a mix of columns, features, profiles of their favourite players, scores, statistics and analysis of the game. News and information about sports, reviews, interviews, expert advice, player profiles, season previews, predictions and pre-game analysis as well as quality photos are some of the main ingredients in a sports magazine.

c. Business magazines

Most of these magazines are dedicated to the dissemination of information related to particular business areas like accounting, banking, finance, international business, management, marketing and sales, real estate, small business etc. They explore latest news and reviews on current trends in the world of business. Business magazines offer readers an unparalleled look at business and economic news, with incomparable access to business drivers around the globe. It also provides the most recent news about trends and developments in global business, financial markets and personal finance.

d. Environmental magazines

The aim of this type of magazine is to provide information about environmental issues and to share ideas about our very diverse and dynamic environment so that readers can live more sustainable lives and connect themselves to ideas and ongoing efforts for change, as well as for building a more just and sustainable future. They cover everything environmental - from the big issues like climate change, renewable energy, toxins and health to the topics that directly impact the readers' daily lives: population, poverty, consumption and the environment in general. In-depth reviews of major policy reports, conferences, environmental education initiatives, environmental reports and photos from around the world with an emphasis on human involvement in an environmentally changed scenario are some of the highlighted features of environmental magazines.

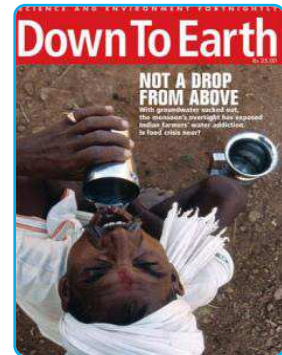


Fig 1.4

e. Entertainment magazines

Entertainment magazines are usually glossy in nature and provide entertainment. They usually carry news, original stories, scandals, gossips and exclusives about celebrities in various entertainment fields such as film, music, TV, fashion and related similar areas of the industry. Cultural criticism, beauty, lifestyle trends and shopping guides also find expression in such magazines. As its main focus is on celebrity fashion or lifestyle, it is graphically rich in nature, featuring many photographs or other images.

f. Automobile magazines

Automobile magazines offer a rich and varied examination of the automotive universe in all its forms, illustrated with vibrant photography. They present interesting automotive news in the industry and celebrate the automotive lifestyle and its personalities, past and present. It also offers insights into emerging trends in the industry and also creates images of whatever comes next in the written and visual form. Updates in motor vehicle arena such as newly arrived cars and bikes, contemporary style of vehicles, recommendations to buyers, reviews of newly launched vehicles are some of the attractive elements in these magazines.



Fig 1.5

g. Children's magazines

The main aim of children's magazines is to engage children to learn new things through entertainment and to provide memories that last a lifetime. The content is delivered through colourful images, read-aloud stories and various fun activities that both the parent as well as the child can enjoy together. Children's magazines are designed to set young children on the path to become curious, creative, caring, confident individuals through reading, thinking and learning with a wide variety of stories, puzzles, crafts, games and activities. 3D children's magazines are now on sale in Kerala.

h. Women's magazines

Women's magazines play a variety of roles as educator, family counsellor, beauty specialist and life style expert. Women's magazines, on many occasions, have become an arena for debate and promotion of education for women. The personal nature of the content also makes it a unique material specifically for women. The gorgeous photographs, engaging designs and innovative styles make them attractive. The outlook of a women's magazine is an intelligent perspective that is focused on personal style - the way women actually look, think and dress. They reflect the spirit of today's woman - changing with the times, moving with trends, styles and fashion.

i. Men's magazines

Men's magazines bring the latest style tips, travel guides, lifestyle improvement, offering advice and information useful to men on a variety of topics including money, health, sports, cars, adventure, politics and so on. Men's magazines use masculinity as a marketing tool.

j. Literary magazines

A literary magazine devoted to literature, usually publishes short stories, poetry, essays, literary criticism, book reviews, biographical profiles of authors, interviews and any content related to literature. Its aim is to promote literature, encompass an overall sense of the word, preserve indigenous literature and provide a platform for creative writers through its articles.

We can also include several other types of magazines in the special interest magazine genre. Magazines on architecture, art, computer, customer, film, health, history, horror fiction, luxury, music, political issues, public relations, satire, science fiction, shelter, trade, wildlife etc. are some among them.



Little Magazine



Fig 1.6

The term "little magazine" can be applied to a range of different publications, but usually it is used to suggest a literary magazine produced without concern for immediate commercial gain and with a guiding enthusiasm for contemporary literature, especially poetry. It publishes experimental and non-conformist writings of relatively unknown writers. A little magazine may champion work by a very small number of authors or a particular style, or attempt to provide a cross-section of what its editor sees as the contemporary scene. They are usually non commercial in their outlook.

Let us do

Collect copies of Indian and international magazines. Categorize the magazines based on their content.

Check Your Progress

- ✍ State the differences between general interest and special interest magazines.
- ✍ Name two children's magazines in Malayalam.
- ✍ is an example for sports magazine.
- ✍ Who are the target audience of business magazines?

Content of magazines

The value of magazines depends on reader trust, which in turn, is built on the basis of content delivery. Hence editorial integrity must not be compromised at any circumstance and maximum consideration must be given to achieving variety in content.

Let us analyse some of the varied contents that build up a magazine:

a. Cover story

The cover story is the beacon in any magazine. It may refer to a story in a magazine whose subject matter appears on its front

cover. The cover page quite often carries stunning headlines to facilitate a compulsive buying of the magazine. If the content does not come up to the expectations of the buyer, the magazine will not survive long. The cover story ought to be well-written and it should contain solid documentation, ample details and illustrative examples in smooth and clear prose.



Photograph of Sharbat Gula

The portrait of an unknown girl taken by Steve McCurry turned out to be one of those images that sear the heart. It ran on the cover of the National Geographic magazine in June 1985. Her eyes are sea green. They are haunted and you can read the tragedy of Afghanistan, a land drained by war in those eyes. She became known as the "Afghan girl," and for 17 years no one knew her name. She is Sharbat Gula, belonging to one of the Afghan tribes called Pashtun. When Steve met Sharbat in 2002 to take her portrait again; no one, not even she was not sure about her age. He guessed she must be 30 then.



The portrait of Sharbat Gula published in the cover page of National Geographic in 1985 (left) and in 2002 (right)

Fig 1.7

Time and hardship have erased her youth. The second meeting between the woman with green eyes and the photographer was quiet. Married women in her tribe strictly follow certain cultural traditions. So she did not smile at Steve. Her expression, he said, was flat. She cannot understand how her picture has touched so many. She does not know the power of her eyes.

b. Editorial

The magazine editor sums up the week's events or recalls the most important event for editorial topic. Magazine editorials give opinions on important contemporary social, political, economic, or legal issues and intend to persuade readers to agree to a particular point of view. Thus an editorial is more about opinions than facts.

c. Articles

A magazine article is a piece of nonfiction writing targeted for a specific interest group. The first paragraph is a creative beginning which captures the reader's interest and hence it must be interesting. The second part is the middle of the story. It includes the main points on how the writer has approached the subject and also gives the writer's personal expertise and opinion related to the topic. The final paragraph, the ending, should bring the article to a satisfying resolution from the reader's point of view.

d. Features

Feature stories are articles that have human-interest and focus on particular people, places and events. Feature stories are descriptive, colorful, thoughtful, reflective pieces of journalistic writing about original ideas.

Structure of a feature

A feature article takes a specific format and outline. There will always be a title, introduction, body of the story and a conclusion. The title of the article should grab the reader's attention quickly to keep them reading. It should highlight the general topic of the story. The introduction of the story is contained in the first few paragraphs of the article. It should provide whatever background information is relevant to the story and should create a relationship between the writer and the reader.

The body of the feature should be broken into pieces with subheadings for easy organization. This section has most of the details of the story. It includes names, places, time and quotes from those interviewed. The opinions of the writer, those at the location of the story and from experts of the subject are presented in the body of the article. Pictures, diagrams and charts that illustrate the story would also be included.

The conclusion should leave a lasting impression on the reader and provoke some sort of reaction. The conclusion should prompt an immediate response from the reader or encourage him / her to shift his / her stand on a particular issue.

Types of features

Profiles or personality features

A profile is a type of feature story that usually focuses on the personality of an individual on what is important or interesting about that person. Although profiles are usually of people, (a celebrity profile for example), a journalist can also profile an entity, like a sports team or a company. Generally, the person and his/her achievements is the focus of the article. Profiles reveal an individual's character and lifestyle and exposes different facets of the subject so that readers feel they know the person. It is simply a word sketch drawn in a creative manner. The word 'profile' comes from 'profilare', meaning 'one side of the face'.

Historical features

These features commemorate important dates in history or turning points in our social, political and cultural life. They offer a useful juxtaposition of then and now. Historical features take the reader back to revisit an event and the issues surrounding it.

Objectivity and neutrality should be your aim at all times when conducting research and crafting a historical feature. You should aim at reporting the facts and nothing else.

News features

A news feature is a kind of feature story that focuses on a hard news topic. News features combine a feature writing style with hard news reporting. News features typically try to shed light on problems in our society. What is expected of a news feature is a narrow, focused topic that can be covered reasonably well in a limited space. It thoroughly explores an issue through research, statistical data and most importantly, interviews with news sources.

Human interest features

Human interest is hard to define. The best known kind of feature story is the human interest story that discusses issues through the experiences of another. Human interest features are those that involve a reader emotionally, stimulating or depressing him/her,

angering or amusing him/her and awakening sympathy or distaste. A human interest story may emphasise relationships, drama, conflict, or oddity. Such features can be written about almost anything - persons, places, animals and objects. However, it is more personal and intimate, than being objective.

Let us do

Prepare the following features to be published in your school magazine:

- a. Profile of a famous personality.*
- b. Human interest piece from your locality.*
- c. News feature about the school re-opening function.*
- d. Historical feature about place of importance in your locality.*

Columns

Columns, which are essentially opinion pieces, represent the strong, informed and focused opinion of the writer on an issue of relevance. Knowing how to present a strong point of view is an important skill for any column writer. It has a clearly defined point of view and represents clarity of thinking. Columns contain the strong, unique voice of the writer. To write a good column requires more than just the ability to articulate an opinion. The opinions must make sense, provide insight and be convincing.

Reviews

A review provides critical assessment, factual information and also it should describe the work and express an opinion about it. A review in a magazine is an evaluation of an art form like film, drama, musical productions or a newly published book. There are no rules about the structuring of a review. It is important to justify the reviewer's assertions with illustrations, explanations or arguments. Format your review by writing down your personal feel about the work and also write about the positives and negatives of the work.

Essays

It is a short literary composition on a particular theme or subject, usually in prose and generally analytical, speculative or

interpretative. Essays are written compositions about anything. In terms of writing, you need only to create a handful of original sentences for the entire essay: a thesis, a theme, a mini-thesis that begins each paragraph and a concluding sentence that says what it all means.

Photo features

A photo feature is also known as photo essay. It is a set or series of photographs that propose to tell a story. The true spirit of what defines a photo feature is the capture of an exceptional moment within a common, everyday occurrence. A photo feature simply captures nice moments within a cultural environment or a happening that illustrates the quality of life in some sense. Photo features shall consist of pictures or sequences with informative content and emotional impact, including human interest, documentary and spot news.

Let us do

- *Prepare a photo feature on an important event.*
- *Attempt to write a review of a film you have seen recently.*
- *Write a column on any of the current issues.*
- *Prepare an essay on 'clean campus'.*

Check Your Progress

- ✍ What is the importance of cover stories in magazines?
- ✍ Describe the steps involved in making a photo feature?
- ✍ What is a profile?

Practicals for External Assessment

- ✍ Writing various types of feature stories such as profiles, human interest features, columns, reviews, essays etc.
- ✍ Preparing a photo feature (Production work)
- ✍ Pasting models of various types of features with brief descriptions of their peculiarities in the scrap book

Future of magazines in the digital era

Increased competition, penetration of online and e-formats and cross media ownership negatively affect the print media sector. News magazines join the market regularly and the existing ones disappear for want of readers, lack of finance or due to take overs. This tendency is called 'magazine churn'. Advertising revenue (much more than circulation revenue) seals the fate of most consumer magazines. The shift of advertising revenue to the web is the biggest problem faced by broad-circulation magazines today. While they are becoming increasingly adept at generating revenue from their web sites, web-only publishing models substitute print magazines.

Therefore, digital magazines are set to grow fast over the next several years in the magazine industry as publishers begin to enter the digital arena.

Mobile phones which are becoming popular will be the dominant platform of the future with a booming number of magazine consumers on mobile. Its exclusive in-house technology captures the growing mobile user base by redefining the reading experience on mobile and tablet platforms which will rely on a competitive monthly subscription model to access the world's best titles. Those tablets will have apps that are incredibly immersive, including magazine apps, which will take advantage of people's social graphs, location data and other features to offer a more interactive experience.

Let us sum up

Magazines may be referred to as popular press publications with articles written by journalists or freelancers, who gather information from various sources and synthesize it into their stories or reports. The audience for articles in magazines is the special target group from the general public.

Magazines are generally intended to inform or entertain readers on general interest topics in broad subject areas. It is slick and glossy in appearance and contains photographs and illustrations, published at regular intervals. People who subscribe to magazines

read it at their convenience. Magazines are more advertiser-driven than newspapers.

A magazine article is a piece of nonfiction writing targeted at a specific interest group. It is possible to write a good magazine article through a strong interest and a willingness to learn through research and interviews. The reader's attention has to be grabbed with an arresting opening paragraph. Keep the theme in mind as you write the body of the article. Everything you write should support the theme. The ending of a magazine feature should bring the piece to a satisfying resolution for the reader. Clear thinking is the key to good writing. A magazine usually expresses its content in various styles - narrative, serialized narrative, persuasive, visual, imaginative or in multiple inverted pyramids.

Most magazines look more or less the same at first glance, but they target different audiences. Based on target audience and content specialization, there are various types of magazines such as general interest magazines, special interest magazines, entertainment magazines, farm magazines, sports magazines and children's magazines.

Putting together a magazine content determines the style of your magazine. Magazine is generally built around humorous anecdotes, fiction, news reports, exclusive interviews or any combination of genres in the form of cover stories, editorials, articles and various types of features.

In the present age of tablets and social media the idea of a "magazine" is returning to its storehouse roots. The future of magazines will be in the hands of digital publishers who would provide endless opportunities to craft experiences with magazine apps. Functionally, a magazine still represents the idea of a bunch of thematically related content put together as one package. Great magazines also contain a magical spark, which means a magazine is something more than the mere contents.

Let us assess

1. State the major characteristics that make magazines the favourite medium for advertisers.

2. Do you think that each magazine has its own style of writing? Elaborate the answer on the basis of the different writing styles adopted by magazines?
3. Which is the first college magazine in Kerala?
a. Jnananikshepam b. Vidyasamgraham
c. Bhashaposhini d. Vivekodayam
4. is an automobile magazine published in India.
5. Your school has decided to publish a campus magazine. As a member of its editorial team, state your suggestions on the contents to be included.
6. 'Profile tells you what a person is'. State the idea conveyed by this statement.
7. Tablets and mobile phones are the future determinants of magazine culture. Evaluate this statement on the basis of the future trends in the magazine industry.

Extended Activity

Collect cover pages of interesting cover stories and prepare a picture album.

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Glossary

Citation	A citation is a reference or footnote to an item (such as a book or periodical article); a citation contains the author, title, date of publication, and any other information needed to locate the item
Cover lines	Information about major articles given on the front page of a magazine
Centre spread	Middle two pages of a stapled magazine. Often sold to premium advertisers or used as an editorial feature
Complementary copy	Free copy of a magazine sent to potential advertisers, the press or editorial contributors
Cover-wrap	Extra cover wrapped around a magazine, usually for advertising purposes. Rare until 2006 in magazines
Issue	All the copies of a periodical with the same cover date and distributed at the same time
Journal	A type of periodical which contains signed scholarly articles. Journals are usually published by academic or association presses and include bibliographies
Sidebar	A text that accompanies a feature story, usually framed at the side of the page
Trade Magazine or Trade Publication	A magazine published specifically for an industry, business, service, technical, scientific or trade audience. Also called "business to business" or "specialized business magazine"
e-zine	A magazine that is available on the Internet