



WRITING OP-EDS

These tips are based on materials developed by the OpEd Project (theopedproject.org).



BASIC OP-ED STRUCTURE

> COMPELLING OR COLORFUL LEDE

Ideally base your introductory thought and sentences around a news hook.

> THESIS

Introduce the main argument of the piece toward the top of the oped.

> ARGUMENT BASED ON EVIDENCE

Stats, news, reports from credible organizations, expert quotes, research, history, first-hand experience.

1st Point: Evidence, Evidence, Conclusion

Transition, followed by **2nd Point:** Evidence, Evidence, Conclusion

Transition, followed by **3rd Point:** Evidence, Evidence, Conclusion

Note: The body need not be formulaic; it's most important that the body offer some EXPOSITION OF THE ARGUMENT with SUPPORTING EVIDENCE.

> "TO BE SURE" ARGUMENT

Pre-empt potential critics by acknowledging any flaws in the argument, and/or addresses any obvious counter-arguments.

> KICKER/CONCLUSION

Often circles back to your lede – and may offer thoughts on how to solve a problem the piece outlines. Like the lede, it should be clear and pithy.

KEY QUESTIONS FOR OP-EDS



What's the the main idea? How long does it take to get there?



What's the news peg/hook? Why should people care about this now?



What standing does the author have on this issue? Is s/he an expert, or does s/he have personal experience of it?



Does the piece offer a fresh argument – one that's not obvious/consistently talked about? Is it surprising/counterintuitive or does it offer new information – or at least synthesize it in a new way?



Does the piece follow a logical argument? Does it make sense or is it a struggle to understand?



Does it have supporting evidence for its argument?



Could a broad audience understand this piece, or is it full of technical jargon or inside baseball references?



If it outlines a problem, what's its solution?



Wait, how long is this thing?

