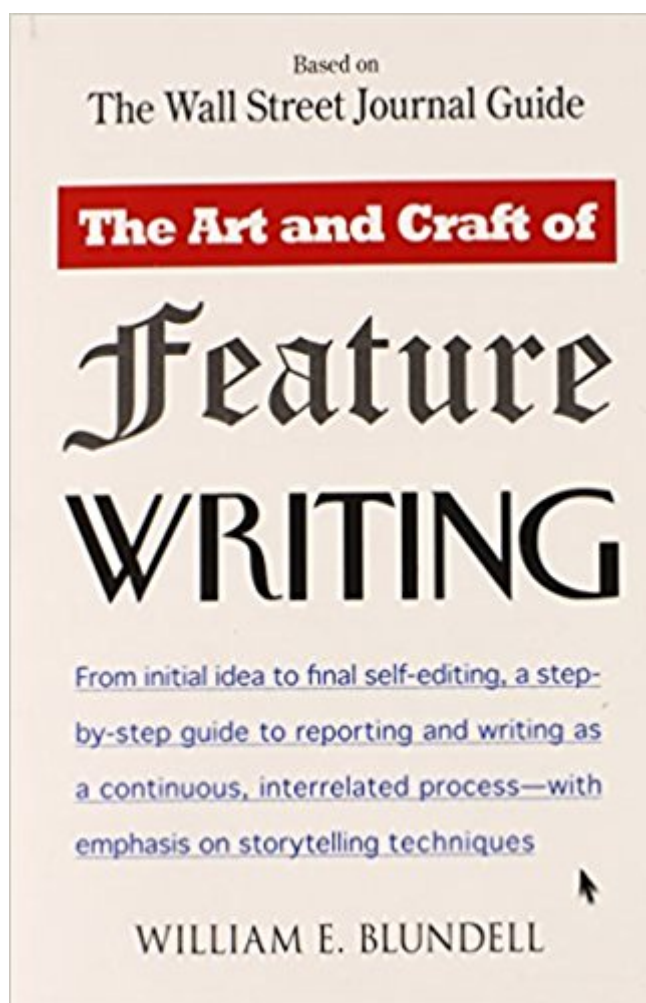


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# The Art And Craft Of Feature Writing: Based On The Wall Street Journal Guide



## Synopsis

Storytelling—how to catch and hold a reader's interest through artful narration of factual material — William E. Blundell, one of the best writers on one of America's best-written papers—The Wall Street Journal—has put his famous Journal Feature-Writing Seminars into this step-by-step guide for turning out great articles. Filled with expert instruction on a complex art, it provides beginners with a systematic approach to feature writing and deftly teaches old pros some new tricks about:

- How and where to get ideas
- What readers like and don't like
- Adding energy and interest to tired topics
- Getting from first ideas to finish article
- The rules of organization
- How—and whom—to quote and paraphrase
- Wordcraft, leads, and narrative flow
- Self-editing and notes on style

plus many sample feature articles.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

William E. Blundell was a news editor at the Wall Street Journal, where he was a reporter, page-one writer, Los Angeles Bureau chief, and national correspondent. He won the Mike Berger Award, granted by the trustees of Columbia University, for distinguished metropolitan reporting in New York;

the Ray Howard Public Service Award of the Scripps-Howard Foundation, and the Distinguished Writing Award for non-deadline feature writing, granted by the American Society of Newspaper Editors.

High quality "how to" on reporting and feature writing. An excellent gift for the budding (or struggling) journalist. Somewhat less useful for non-journalists seeking to blog or to write op-ed pieces.

There is a voice in this book, and you can just HEAR this guy as he admonishes writers and drills into their heads the step-by step guide to reporting and writing. The tone is firm with a direct approach to feature writing as the author is adamant that, "reporting and writing can NOT be divorced." I like the sharp conversational tone; it's like sitting in the classroom. He is very clever with the similes and metaphors to clearly drive his point. Although this book has made the rounds for years, Blundell offers refreshing ideas and unique insight to writing. He speaks of experience as a Wall Street Journal writer. This is HIS voice, and not a slew of other professional writers churning out a how to book. I like a quote of his when he tells us that the READER requires specific information and our first priority is to meet that requirement and also that the reader has a deeper and more universal need that has to be met or, he flees. The author said, "nothing is easier than to stop reading." You won't find the usual writing book addressing topics like these. A sample chapter is Raw Materials - generating ideas; Extrapolation (beyond the event lies a broader, more significant story); Synthesis (assembling promising story ideas from what looks like a junkpile of spare parts); Localization (thinking big); Projection (declining to follow the media sheep to a pasture already overgrazed) and Viewpoint Switching (thinking of a story as a piece of terrain with varying topography). Also topics titled Shaping Ideas; Story Dimensions, Planning and Execution, Organization, and you get great insight into Handling Key Story Elements that delves into the dreaded leads and endings. What is interesting in a unique approach to his section titled Wordcraft. He assumes that you the reader already know grammar, syntax and usage. So his goal is to show us how to achieve certain effects at certain places in the story. You will read some full texts on sample stories that are sprinkled throughout the chapters. Blundell also provides reading material for the writer. He says, "whole forests have died to fill the marketplace with other writing books." One suggestion is Zissner's "On Writing Well." This is a unique writing book and is meant to read completely. ....Rizzo

The reviewer from Laguna Niguel who says this book is boring apparently has been reading too

many textbooks and therefore is only used to reading textbooks. Yes, the examples in this book are out of date, but so what? The full-text examples are still excellent articles after 15 years or so; great writing is always great writing even after it goes from being current events to being history. In 1984, I saw the transcript of Blundell's lectures on feature writing that became the basis for this book, and I still use this book in teaching my feature writing course and my magazine writing course, because nothing else comes close. Among many other accomplishments, this book gives students a SYSTEM for coming up with original story ideas and original story angles that most of them couldn't come up with on their own--in direct contrast to other books that use poetry or other gimmicks to try to make students "feel creative" and then be creative. Rather than being read once or not at all and/or being used only for reference, this is a book that should be read over and over again.

Easy to understand and was helpful. Helped me develop my writing more than the professor did.

This book is an illuminating look at what is required for successful and engaging feature writing. The examples throughout the book are some of the best newswriting I have ever read. The author does a great job of laying out methods and pointing out things the novice may not think of and the expert may have forgotten. The strong point of this book is definitely the examples and the included narratives that explain why these stories were successful.

Good resource guide.

EXCELLENT!

It gives you what you expected.

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