

Lead Writing

Writing is informative, but it is also entertainment, and in order to be successful and guarantee your readers stick around for at least another paragraph you need to treat your lead like a fifty-yard dash.

How to get reader attention?

Cut to the chase

You don't need to start from the beginning. Background information is important and necessary, but don't bore your readers with statistics and setups that seem superfluous until you've told them *why* you are writing this article and, more importantly, why they are reading it. writers need to present their very best information in those opening ten words in order to get "called back" by their readers *before* they can get to the research and the details. Let your opening line be the carrot dangling at the end of your reader's nose. *Then* in subsequent paragraphs you can explain why the carrot is orange and if it's indigenous to North America.



आवरण कथा/ नशे का धंधा

नशे का गोरखधंधा देश में तकरीबन 10 लाख करोड़ रुपये का होने का अनुमान मगर सरकारी एजेंसियों को प्रतिबंधित मादक पदार्थों के धंधेवाजों और गिरोहों के पीछे नहीं, छोटी मछलियों पर फंदा डालने में दिलचस्पी

कच्ची उम्र, पक्का नशा

आसान उपलब्धता ने छोटी उम्र से ही स्कूली बच्चों में नशे के सेवन की प्रवृत्ति बढ़ाई, हालात खतरनाक मोड़ तक पहुंचे

लक्ष्मी देव राय

स्कूलों के सामने छात्रों को नशीली दवाओं के सेवन और इससे होने वाले शारीरिक और मनोवैज्ञानिक नुकसान से निवारण करने जरूरी है। काफी लंबे समय में

ये, बिना हाथ से शीशे का टुकड़ा लोड़ दिया था। वह स्कूल में टीचर था और अच्छा खिलाड़ी भी। मुझे राक हुआ तो मैंने उसके गुरिन टेस्ट करवाया। टेस्ट रिपोर्ट आने के बाद उसके पता-पिता सत्ये में थे और विश्वास नहीं कर पा रहे थे कि उनका बेटा नशा करता है।" वह कहते हैं, कि लंबे समय तक नशीले पदार्थों का सेवन करने के कारण पाठ्यक्रम को भूलसाना पहुंच सकता है, ध्यान-वर्ष खर्च हो सकती है और बच्चों का व्यवहार बदल सकता है।

काले हुए देखा जा सकता है। यहां उन पर कोई निगरानी नहीं होती। ज्यादातर बड़े बच्चे छोटे बच्चों को इसकी लत लगाते हैं।"

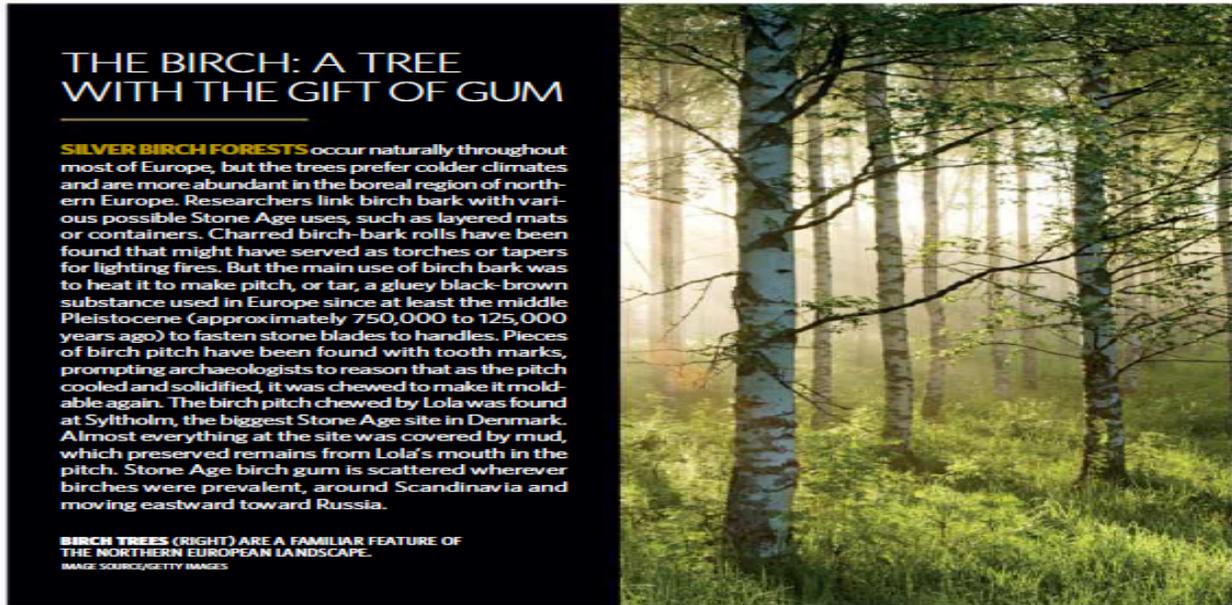
बच्चों के बीच, 'प्याऊ प्याऊ' ड्रग बहुत लोकप्रिय है और यह आसानी से उपलब्ध है। प्याऊ प्याऊ, सेफेड्रोन के लिए अन्य नाम है। यह बहुत ही शक्तिशाली ड्रग है, जो स्कूल और कॉलेज जाने वाले बच्चों के बीच बहुत आम है। इसके अलावा 16 से 18 साल के बच्चों के बीच परमिथियम बहुत आम है। सबसे खतरा ड्रग्स



No-frills newspaper-like leads or “summary leads” are very effective and a good base when beginning any article. The summary lead, as shown above, is most often used for news stories because it is concise and condenses a large amount of information into the fewest words possible. In a summary lead, you compress the entire article into the opening lines. The trimmings can always be added later, but make sure you’ve got the *why* in there first to avoid having your readers ask the dreaded question: *So what?* Who, what, when, why, how? These are the questions you want an audience to ask. Answer a few in your lead and leave some to be revealed—then your audience is hooked. Otherwise, they’ll turn the page and the race is over before it even began.

Webster's, eat your heart out.

Beginning your article with a definition is about as exciting as a root canal. If your reader wanted Webster's opinion, they would have read the dictionary, not your article.



Fall of the Reich: The Red Army Takes Berlin

At the end of a brutal campaign in spring 1945, the Soviet Union's forces barreled into Berlin, the last refuge of Nazi Germany. Taking this city would be the final step for securing victory for the Allied powers and ending World War II in Europe.

By spring 1945 World War II had been raging in Europe for more than five years. Years of brutal battles resulted in massive losses of human life and destruction of towns and cities. Since forces to capture German territory and press the Axis powers back. At the same time, the Soviets, led by Premier Joseph Stalin, began their campaign in the east. Over the year, the Red Army marched toward Berlin, intent on the destruction of the city. In April 1945, the Red Army launched Operation Bagration, a massive offensive on the eastern front aimed primarily at annihilating Army Group Center, the once mighty Nazi force that had reached the outskirts of Moscow in 1941 during Hitler's Operation Barbarossa. Having

Tell them something they *don't* know. Answer the question, why is this relevant right now at this point in time? And get that big clunky proper noun out of the first line.

Tell a story

Narrative leads are often used for feature articles, as they take you into the mind of the character. Telling the story from the main person's perspective raises the emotional bar and can be a great way to paint a scene for your readers.

Can I quote you on that?

If used well, a quote can be a very effective and eye-opening way to begin an article. If your article is lighthearted, let your quote be funny and clever. However, more serious articles call for a quote that creates tension, keeping your audience on the edge of their seats.

A lead needs a metaphor like a fish needs a bicycle

Not true. Metaphors are definitely attention-getters and very effective. They generate immediate visual images that scoop the reader up and into the text. Use them to get your story rolling, but remember less is more.

Credibility counts

Your readers are smart and their patience is thin, so don't over-dramatize. Clever is allowed, but cutesy is not.

Exaggeration is suspect

No matter what kind of lead you use, don't become so invested in your own words that you are unable to throw them out when necessary or at the very least find new places for them. Writing one lead may not be enough or it may just direct you to an even better one. Write five or ten. Let some of them be off-the-wall and others cut and dry; then see if you can blend them. Pitching a few different leads to an editor to show flexibility is never a bad idea. Be concise. The more a reader trips over your words, the less effective your point is and the less likely he is to keep reading. Lead sentences that extend more than a few lines and require taking lunch or bathroom breaks are *too* long. Remember, the lead is a fifty-yard dash; the mile is still to come.