

Newspaper Op-Ed

An Op-Ed is a highly focused opinion piece that aims to stir the reader's emotions while presenting facts that support the author's point of view. It sits opposite the publication's editorial page which hosts articles written by the senior editorial staff or publisher on an issue on which their readership is interested.

Learning Objective: To write persuasively about contemporary social issues, *integrating historical* information and ideas, and present ideas in a clear, succinct way in a public forum.

Assignment: Write an Op-Ed article on one issue concerning the built environment and health that clearly threatens or impacts the general public or at least some large segment of the public. It should be related to policy and/or ethics of popular interest dominating the news, or look ahead to something that will fit as a connection to what you want to write about. Select a position, build your arguments logically from historical and interdisciplinary facts and statistics (researched or first hand information), then clearly restate your position and issue a call to action, recommendation or solution (do not call for more research). 500-700 words

Your successful Op-Ed will:

- Be **timely**
 - Tell your reader **why he or she should care** about this topic, plug in to **self-interest**.
 - Be **crystal clear** about what you are arguing and why. Make your point with a bold statement in the first sentence or two then convince the reader through the rest of the piece. Take a strong stand but maintain a reasonable posture in its tone. (approximately 25 words)
 - Use **simple and easy to understand language**; do not use jargon unless it is absolutely essential!
 - Use **powerful direct language** to educate your reader with active voice, and verbs; drop adjectives and adverbs.
 - Use **short declarative** sentences and short paragraphs
 - **Educate** your reader following a **personal (first person) conversational** approach
 - **Acknowledge** the other side of the argument
 - Use **facts and emotions** (humor works well) to drive action and include **great examples** that bring your article to life
 - **End as strong as you start** (approximately 100 words)
- Extra credit | submit for publication