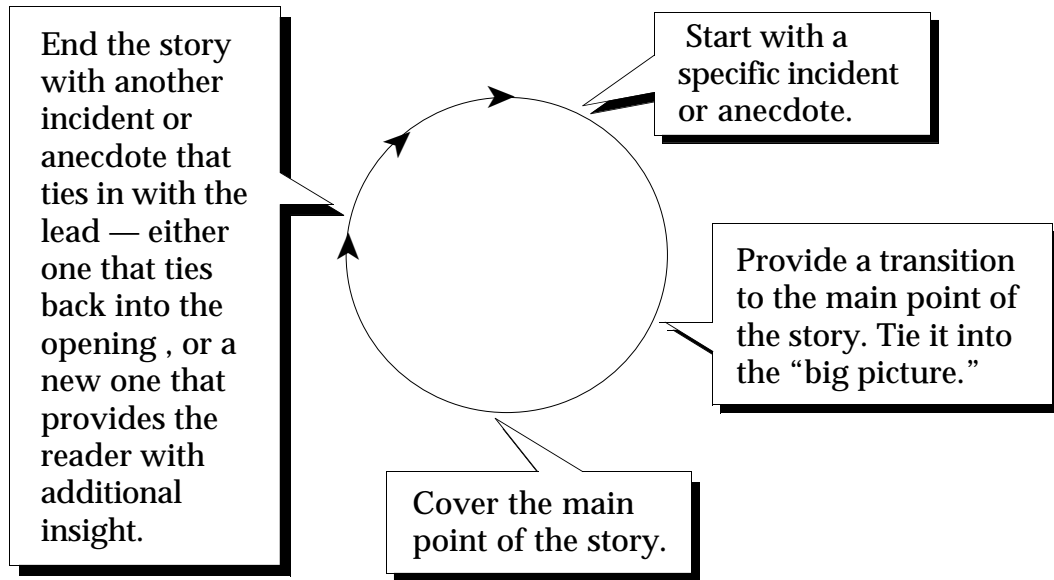


# The Wall Street Journal. Feature Formula



## *Kissers get pox alert*

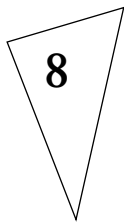
**Specific incident** { CORVALLIS (AP)— A sweet lesson in the art of kissing turned a bit sour for 26 students at Oregon State University when they learned after class that one of them had come down with chicken pox.

**Transition** { “Wouldn’t you know it, the most contagious time is just before you break out,” said a harried Charlotte Headrick, assistant professor of speech communication, as she posted a “chicken pox alert” on the Mitchell Playhouse bulletin board.

**Development of the story’s main point** { At Thursday’s class, Headrick delivered her ever-popular lesson on the art of kissing on stage: how not to bump noses, who gets the last line, who ends up downstage. Then she passed out peppermints and assigned the 26 class members to kiss someone else at least five times.  
“It was a real high-energy class,” said Headrick.  
On Friday she got word that a male member of the class had come down with chicken pox and had gone back to his family’s home to recover. He couldn’t be reached for comment.  
According to a spokeswoman at the Student Health Center, students who haven’t had chicken pox face an incubation period of 14 to 21 days.

**End ties back into lead** { There’s nothing much the luckless classmates can do but wait and watch for any symptoms to appear, Headrick said.  
And refrain from practicing what they learned in class.

Associated Press/From The Oregonian, Portland, Ore., 1/29/85



## **FEATURE WRITING**

**ROB MELTON**  
**PORTLAND, OREGON**

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**PERIOD** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

### **Assignment 4**

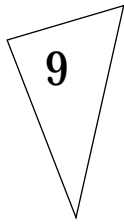
Study the Wall Street Journal feature formula on Page 7. Then read the story “Deputy wings it, nabs ‘ostrich’ on the loose” on Page 9. Answer the study/discussion questions here.

### **Study/Discussion Questions**

1. Every feature story has a hook — something stated or implied that makes the reader want to read the story. What is this story’s hook? Explain how the writer has used it to keep the reader involved in the story.
  
2. Every good feature has a conclusion which, for the reader, is the promised payoff or punchline. What is this story’s promise or payoff?

### **Activities**

1. **Underline the words which tie together the lead and the conclusion. How are the lead and the conclusion related?**
2. **Circle the puns and cliches which are used throughout the story. Why do you think the author included these in this story?**



9

## FEATURE WRITING

ROB MELTON  
PORTLAND, OREGON

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PERIOD \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

### Assignment 5

1. Read the following story. Then, in the left-hand column, identify and label the four parts of the Wall Street Journal feature formula used in this story.
2. Underline the words which tie together the lead and the conclusion. How are the lead and the conclusion related?
3. Circle the puns and cliches which are used throughout the story. Why do you think the author included these in this story?

## *Deputy wings it, nabs 'ostrich' on the loose*

OAKRIDGE (AP)—Lane County sheriff's deputy Mike Seymour could have buried his head in the sand when he got the call about an ostrich on the loose west of the Oakridge city limits.

Instead, he stuck his neck out.

"The ostrich was off to the side of the road," Seymour said. "It was standing there doing what ostriches do, I guess. Other people were there, throwing bread at it. I really didn't know what to do. It was my first ostrich in 15 years of law enforcement."

So he, uh, winged it.

He nabbed the vagrant bird by tying a noose around its legs while two Oakridge police officers threw a blanket over its head.

The "ostrich" actually was a South American rhea, a flightless bird closely related to ostriches. It was one of four rheas owned by Sherry Short, who keeps a variety of animals on her ranch near Oakridge.

Short said Wednesday that over the weekend a cougar got inside the wire enclosure that held the four exotic birds and killed one of them while the other three escaped. One was found nearby, but it died Sunday, she said.

Short said she has not heard of any sightings of the fourth bird, but she said she believes it is still alive.

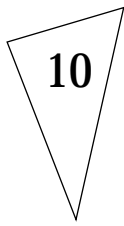
"They eat vegetation," she said. "They love dandelions and they're real good about walking down main streets."

"You can walk right up to them," Short said, but she warned against trying to catch one. They have powerful legs and their kick can be dangerous, she said.

The rheas, which Short said she bought from a friend, are worth more than \$100 each. She said she might hire someone to track and kill the cougar to prevent further attacks on her livestock.

Seymour, meanwhile, will keep an eye out for further fowl play. "I'll be on ostrich patrol until the other one's captured," he said.

Associated Press/From The Oregonian, Portland, Ore.



10

## FEATURE WRITING

ROB MELTON  
PORTLAND, OREGON

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PERIOD \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

### Assignment 6

Find a feature story which uses the Wall Street Journal formula. Identify the four parts of the story which conform to the formula.

1. Copy the paragraph containing the specific incident or anecdote that begins the story.
2. Copy the transition which is used to bridge the specific incident/anecdote to the main point of story.
3. Summarize the main point of the story.
4. Copy the ending paragraph which uses an incident or anecdote that ties back in with the lead.
5. Does the conclusion tie back into the original incident or anecdote, or does it use a new one? What effect does this technique have on the reader?
6. What are some advantages of using or adapting the Wall Street Journal formula?