*Educational Television (ETV) Programme Series on Exploring Text Types at the Secondary Level (II) – Feature Article*

*This set of worksheets is designed for use with the ETV Programme on ‘Feature Article’, which is one of the three ETV programmes on ‘Exploring Text Types at the Secondary Level’. Students are encouraged to view the programme by themselves, download the worksheets and learn more about the respective text structure and language use. Teachers can also make use of the ETV programme and adapt the worksheets in support of the teaching of feature articles.*

**English Language**

**Exploring Text Types – Feature Article**

A feature article is an in-depth study of any specific area, with related information or analysis and the writer’s opinion. We can usually find feature articles in magazines, newspapers and weblogs. In this ETV programme, Charlotte, an intern in the News Department of a TV station, is tasked with writing a feature article about social media and how it affects teenagers.

1. ***Features of Feature Articles***

Activity 1

In the ETV programme, Charlotte seeks help from a news anchor, Ms Yuen Chan, for some tips on how to write a feature article and make it interesting. Put a tick (🗸) in the appropriate box(es) to show the suggestions provided by Ms Chan.

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| □ | 1. The topic selected should be of interest only to the writer. |
| □ | 1. The topic should be timely and important or relevant to readers. |
| □ | 1. The article should contain exaggerating stories to appeal to readers. |
| □ | 1. Information and background about the topic should be provided as much as possible. |
| □ | 1. Interviews should be conducted to collect the perspectives and viewpoints of different people. |
| □ | 1. Only one or two aspects should be focussed on to capture the reader’s attention. |
| □ | 1. The conclusion must include a summary of the main idea or a suggestion of an appropriate course of action. |
| □ | 1. Questions can be raised in the introduction to make the article interesting. |

Activity 2

The following is the feature article written by Charlotte about social media and how it affects teenagers. Identify the text features by filling in the blanks with appropriate words.

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| --- |
| **Social Network Sites – Friends or Foes?**  Using alliteration to grab the reader’s attention  Millions of young people log in to online social network sites on a daily basis and it is changing the way young people make friends or communicate. While young people find these social network sites an inevitable part of their lives, are there any downsides to this? Are these social network sites friends or enemies?  Choosing a timely topic 2.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to the audience  1.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Social network sites provide a convenient way for teenagers to make friends and connect with others. Despite geographical distances, teenagers can connect, exchange information and share their photos instantly. ‘I talk to my friends every day on this social network. My best friend just moved to Australia and I get to talk to her every day on the Internet. She tells me about her school and social activities. It’s like she has never left,’ said Jimmy, a F.3 student in a local secondary school.  Interviewing suitable people to identify as many different 4.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and viewpoints as possible  Using 3.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to make the article intriguing  Body  To others, social network sites encourage creativity and cultural exchanges. Gabriel, David, Patrick, and Roland set up a band after knowing each other on social network sites. ‘I love to play bass and write new songs. I just recently posted a new song on the Internet. And I really didn’t expect to get a lot of the positive feedback,’ said Gabriel. ‘Yes, we usually post our songs on the Internet and it’s really great to get a lot of feedback from people we never met but share the same musical interest and passion as we do,’ David agreed. |

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| The popularity of these social network sites also leads to a newly-emerged problem – cyber bullying. Teenagers are constantly at a high risk of becoming prey to bullies who are friends or people they don’t know on the Internet. Bill, a victim of cyber bullying a year ago, recalled, ‘After a school’s football match, I went on the Internet as usual and saw my friends posting photos of me making a mistake in a match and negative and harsh comments on my performance, and they put the blame on me for losing. What was even more unbearable was that people that I didn’t even know were criticising and laughing at me. I couldn’t take it anymore.’ He continued, ‘After that incident, I quit the football team. I deleted my web page and have never been on social web sites anymore.’  Body  The popularity of online social network sites seems to open a new world of opportunities and a new set of communication and networking skills that teenagers may not be well-prepared to cope with. Whether or not these sites are one’s friend or enemy depends a lot on how well one is taught or guided to ensure a responsible attitude towards them.  Providing an 5.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to the questions raised in the introduction  Conclusion |

1. ***Organisation of Feature Articles***

Activity 3

With reference to the sample text on pp.2 & 3, identify the purpose of each part by completing item nos. 1-8 with appropriate words. Also, fill in the last column regarding the features of different parts.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Part*** | ***Purpose*** | ***Further information*** |
| Introduction | providing 1.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ information  OR  raising the 2.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ you want to explore | The questions raised in the first paragraph are:  1st Question  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  2nd Question  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| Body | expanding the main 3.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   * giving 4.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ or facts to illustrate * giving quotes or 5.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ * getting different 6.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on the topic | Interview 1  Interviewee: Jimmy  Example:  Social network sites provide a convenient way for teenagers to make friends and connect with others.  Interview 2  Interviewees: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Example:  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Interview 3  Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Example:  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| Conclusion | 7.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the main idea  OR  8.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ an appropriate course of action | The writer ends the article by providing an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to the questions raised in the introduction. |

1. ***Development of Ideas in Feature Articles***

Activity 4

Study the sample text on pp.2 & 3 again and complete the following activities.

1. A mind map is a diagram used to show the connection between ideas in a text. Fill in the following mind map which shows you how ideas are organised in the sample text.
2. An idea can be developed through explanations and/or examples. Study the following paragraph taken from the feature article, identify the different parts, and fill in the boxes with the options provided below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| explanation | topic sentence | example |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **(i)** Social network sites provide a convenient way for teenagers to make friends and connect with others. **(ii)** Despite geographical distances, teenagers can connect, exchange information and share their photos instantly. **(iii)** ‘I talk to my friends every day on this social network. My best friend just moved to Australia and I get to talk to her every day on the Internet. She tells me about her school and social activities. It’s like she has never left,’ said Jimmy, a F.3 student in a local secondary school. | (i) |
| (ii) |
| (iii) |

1. Think of one more disadvantage of social network sites. Develop your idea by writing a topic sentence and then giving explanations and/or examples.

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1. The question “Are these social network sites friends or enemies?” is raised in the introduction. Identify the answer in the concluding paragraph in response to this question.

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1. ***Techniques Commonly Used in Feature Articles***

Activity 5

Many techniques are commonly used in feature articles to catch the reader’s attention. For example, in the sample text on pp.2 & 3, Charlotte raises two questions in the introduction and provides the answer in the conclusion. Match the following examples with the techniques provided by filling in the letters in the appropriate boxes.

**Techniques:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Emotive word | 1. Question |
| 1. Anecdote | 1. Shocking statement |
| 1. Quote |  |

**Examples**:



Upon returning home from school, Simon rushes to his bedroom, turning on the computer and spending endless hours in front of the computer messaging with his friends. He no longer goes for basketball sessions with his friends and refuses to dine out with his parents.

It is not uncommon to hear the disheartening news about some innocent teenage girls being deceived into being a photo model but eventually sexually harassed and even ruthlessly murdered by some strangers whom they have just met on these social network sites.

The number of active users on Facebook, a common social network site, has skyrocketed from 100 million in 2008 to 1.35 billion in 2014.

“Facebook also has a fundamental characteristic that has proven key to its appeal in country after country—you only see friends there”, quotes David Kirkpatrick, the author of *The Facebook Effect: The Inside Story of the Company that is Connecting the World*.

While young people find these social network sites an inevitable part of their lives, are there any downsides to this? Are these social network sites friends or enemies?

1. ***Writing a Feature Article***

Activity 6

Write a feature article on the following topic or a topic which could be of interest to your target readers. Share your work with your friends for their comments.

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| --- |
| *Research shows that people are leaving a large amount of personal information on the Internet without being aware of the possible consequences of their actions. Write a feature article discussing whether protecting online privacy is the responsibility of an individual or the government. Give your article a title.* |

1. ***Self-evaluation***

After completing the self-study worksheet, tick the appropriate boxes below to indicate how well you have learnt.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Excellent | Good | Fair |
| 1. The features of feature articles | □ | □ | □ |
| 1. The organisation of feature articles | □ | □ | □ |
| 1. The development of ideas in feature articles | □ | □ | □ |
| 1. The techniques commonly used in feature articles | □ | □ | □ |