

# Story Assignment Grading Considerations

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## Journalism 310: Writing for Mass Media

### Grades JRNL 310 Story Assignment Grading Considerations

Grade in terms of 100 points per story, but award a letter grade instead using this scale:

97.5-100 = A+.....92.5-97.4 = A.....89.5-92.4 = A-  
87.5-89.5 = B+.....82.5-87.4 = B.....79.5-82.4 = B-  
77.5-79.4 = C+.....72.5-77.4 = C.....69.5-72.4 = C-  
67.5-69.4 = D+.....62.5-67.4 = D.....59.5-62.4 = D-

The formula should appear at the top of the paper. Use the following example:

spelling -10  
lead -7.5  
major grammar -5  
minor grammar -2.5  
clarity -2.5  
attribution -2.5

Use this formula even if a major name or factual error results in an F. Still grade and use format.

1. **Name errors and other major fact errors** (wrong address, etc.) receive an **F** on the assignment.
2. **Spelling and word use:** Misuse of *its/it's*, *your/you're*, *their/there/they're*, *our/are* receive an **F** on the assignment. Use of *very*, *really* and *great*, other than in quotes, cost 10 points. All other spelling errors lose 10 points. Capitalization errors are considered minor grammatical errors and lose 2.5 points each. Reward particularly strong active verbs with +2 points!!
3. **Leads:** backing into the lead, lead too long, failure to emphasize the news, beginning with attribution, clarity, etc., cost up to 7.5 points. Really poor leads lose the entire 7.5.
4. **Organization errors**, usually in the first half of the story, cost up to 7.5 points. An organization error is a serious deviation from inverted pyramid style or construction of the story that would lose the reader entirely. Multiple organization errors still cost only 7.5 points.
5. **Editorializing** (injection of author's opinion) costs 5 points.

6. **Grammar:** A major grammar error such as subject-verb, tense, run-on or sentence fragment, etc., costs 5 points each. A minor grammar error such as misplaced modifiers, pronoun case, pronoun-antecedent disagreement, or punctuation errors (other than those responsible for run-ons or fragments) costs 2.5 points each.

7. **Attribution errors** (outside the lead) such as beginning with attribution, loaded attribution, *said he/she* errors, etc., cost 2.5 points each.

8. **Clarity** (huh?) errors cost 2.5 points each. Clarity can be an improper word use to a confusing phrase or sentence.

9. **Quotations:** Say-nothing quotes, lengthy quotes, redundant transitions and set up grafs, etc., cost 2.5 points.

10. **AP Style errors** cost 1 point each, up to 10 points, then only half-point each. Jargon, slang, clichés, wordiness and redundancies cost 1 point each.

11. **Content:** Failure to include necessary information, using inappropriate information, basic misinterpretation of information or other content problems not covered by any of the above categories cost up to 12.5 points. Please write comments on the paper where appropriate, particularly at the end. Comments can be severe, particularly when students make the same mistakes repeatedly, but try to offer some encouragement along with any severity. It's nice to write an occasional "good" where appropriate, such as a good lead, good sentence or transition, etc.

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