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**NOVELTIES  
QUESTION AND ANSWER  
HOW-TO  
DIARY  
TALES RETOLD**

By Professor Dick Bohrer, M.Sc., M.A.

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24 Ways to  
**Sell Your Homework:**  
Articles

LESSON 1	Master Your Library
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<b>LESSON 4</b>	<b>Novelties</b> <b>Question and answer</b> <b>How-To</b> <b>Diary</b> <b>Tales Retold</b>
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LESSON 10	Inverted pyramid Repeated pyramid
LESSON 11	Problem and solution Sunk and saved
LESSON 12	Biography Autobiography

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# NOVELTIES

## QUESTION AND ANSWER

**One of the easiest structures to use is the simple question and answer format. All you do is write the question and then let your subject answer it. Nothing to it.**

**Oh?**

**The mastery** shows as you select meaningful questions. You must unravel the complex nature of your subject—be it economics or football. Your reader must get a clear view. That's what communication is all about. It's your business as a professional writer to raise the questions and see that they get good answers.

If your article is a character study, you want to unravel the subject so you bare all. You want his personality, his quirks, his charm, his secrets to come out in the open. Good questions do the work.

**There are** two kinds of Q and A styles. One is short question/short answer. The other is short-or-long question and long answer. You may wish to begin your questions with the letter Q followed by a colon. The same for the A—your answer.

Or you may want your first sentence to be a question and the whole article that follows to be the answer.

Arthur C. Clarke wrote an article beginning with the following lead:

**So you're going to Mars?**

He uses the whole article to answer that question. Interestingly, he writes in the point of time 50 years after space ships reached Mars and 30 years after the first colony was set up there. Since “it's a year since I got back myself,” he is able to act as travel agent for the tourist going to Mars.

He speaks of the cost of the trip, your physical examination, your luggage, blast off, the view, your state-room, leisure time en route, touchdown and living life on Mars.

His ending sums up the normalcy of the experience:

**Well, that's all I've got to say, except to wish you a pleasant trip. Oh, there is one other thing. My boy collects stamps, and I rather let him down when I was on Mars. So, if you could drop me a few letters while you're there, I'd be much obliged!**

**If you are** going to fill your article with questions and want them to be obvious to the reader, underline them so that the typesetter will print them in italics. (The editor actually will decide how he wants your questions to appear.)

With Q and A you don't need attribution (he said, she said).

And with Q and A, you have an interesting method to use when you have all the knowledge you need. You write the questions, and you write the answers. The article you are writing is no interview at all. It's your discussion of a problem as you see it.

**It enables** you to get right to the point so that you may explain a "how-to" or present an exposition or deal with a tricky problem you yourself know how to solve.

Q and A gives the reader the feel that he's right there with you when you are consulting with the expert. The reader doesn't need to know you are the expert. But whether you are the source of the answers or are an interviewer, Q and A lets you pack in the facts. There's no straying from the point; there's no wandering off into an anecdote when you use this technique.

Do you want to do a column? Take a good look at this column written a couple of years ago by our favorite, Art Buchwald.

**He writes** his humor seriously, but you can't read far before you realize he's pulling your leg. He uses the vocabulary of economics—he speaks of letting the dollar slide and of propping

it up and of pumping some life into it. He makes these every day phrases riotous. Learn to do likewise:

## To stop the dollar from falling, contact gnomes in Switzerland

BY ART BUCHWALD

**WASHINGTON** — Every time you pick up the newspapers these days you read that the dollar is falling. Most people, except those in financial circles, are not paying any attention to this. The main reason is they don't understand it.

Perhaps I should explain it in a question-and-answer format.

**Q: Where does the dollar go when it falls?**

**A: It falls below the West German mark, the Swiss franc and Japanese yen.**

**Q: Why is it falling?**

**A: Because money speculators in London, Zurich and Frankfurt are pushing it down.**

**Q: Is there anything worse than the dollar's falling?**

**A: Yes. It could be plunging or sinking.**

**Q: Why is the dollar falling at the present time?**

**A: Because the money speculators are worried about it.**

**Q: Why are they worried about it?**

**A: Because the United States has a huge trade deficit, no energy policy, and Arthur Burns just lost his**

**job as chairman of the Federal Reserve.**

**Q: Why would Arthur Burns' losing his job make the dollar fall?**

**A: Because nobody knows what his replacement, G. William Miller, will do when he becomes head of the Fed.**

**Q: What should he do?**

**A: Rescue the dollar and keep it afloat.**

**Q: Why can't we make a dollar that won't fall?**

**A: We could, but the cost could bankrupt us.**

**Q: How far will the dollar fall?**

**A: Until it bottoms out.**

**Q: And then, what will happen?**

**A: It will start rising again particularly if the West Germans and Japanese dredge it up?**

**Q: Why would they want to do that?**

**A: The lower the dollar falls the harder it is for them to sell their goods in the United States and the easier it is for the United States to sell its goods in the rest of the world. A strong currency has a lot of weaknesses.**

**A: Where does the British pound stand in all this?**

**A: The British pound is rising while the dollar is falling.**

**Q: How do you explain that?**

**A: The British have oil in the North Sea.**

**Q: So?**

**A: It's easier to float a pound on oil than it is a dollar on water.**

**Q: Can we go back to the dollar?**

**A: We can, but since we've been talking it's dropped two more cents.**

**Q: What caused it to do that?**

**A: Someone in Paris just read this article and called his banker in Brussels and told him to sell the dollar and buy Norwegian kroner with it.**

**Q: How did the Norwegian kroner get into this?**

**A: The West German mark and the Japanese yen are considered by the Belgians to be overpriced, so they're buying the Norwegian kroner instead. They may not keep kroner for long.**

**Q: What will they do with them?**

**A: Probably buy gold in Amsterdam as a hedge.**

**Q: What can I do to keep the dollar from falling?**

**A: The first thing is to let it slide, then prop it up and finally pump some life in it.**

**Q: How do I do that?**

**A: You have to get through to the gnomes in Switzerland.**

**Q: Gnomes in Switzerland? What do they have to do with all this?**

**A: They're behind the whole thing. When you see the dollar fall, you can bet there's a gnome in Switzerland dropping a rock on George Washington's head.**

Scanning through that, you might think that the author is an expert on high finance. On closer examination, you find he is probably using the vo-

cabulary of the trade with very little idea what he himself is talking about. That's what makes it hilarious.

But he proves my point. You can make difficult things easy to understand if you ask and answer your own questions about them.

If there is any place the writer must be sharp and crisp, it is in the questions he asks. "USA TODAY" printed an interview of Dr. Jerry Falwell before the last election. Look at the questions the reporter asked:

**USA TODAY: Why are you calling (this) "the year of destiny?"**

**USA TODAY: What are the indicators?**

**USA TODAY: Is there a revival of patriotism in America?**

**USA TODAY: Aren't some theologians predicting that the nuclear arms race is pushing mankind toward Armageddon?**

**USA TODAY: What should the church do to aid the homeless and hungry?**

**USA TODAY: What will your political role be in (the next election)?**

**USA TODAY: Some analysts have said that your political role has weakened? Has it?**

**USA TODAY: What are your views on the nonsexist Bible developed by the National Council of Churches?**

There's hardly a wasted word. Strong questions either evoke strong answers (as in Dr. Falwell's case) or

open cans of worms that leave the interviewee exposed and embarrassed.

**To pull this off**, you've got to know what you want to know. It's good to write down your questions early. But sometimes in an interview you find that you need to abandon your plans and follow up on a tidbit that slips out of his mouth that you know will appeal to your readers more than what you had planned.

Then, when writing it, include your questions—the exact words along with the question mark. You don't need to write down Q and A followed by colons because the article itself shows the reader it is a question-answer format you're following.

**Take an interview** I did one year with Coach Morgan Hout for Liberty University's fall football guide. He seated me on a comfortable chair in his office, let me plug in my recorder and then gave me rapid-fire answers to a number of questions I had. I was able to check my recorder when he turned to answer a frequently ringing phone. I used my own questions with his answers in the write-up. I've put my questions in light face in the article.

## **INTERVIEW WITH COACH MORGAN HOUT**

By Dick Bohrer

**Liberty University football coach Morgan Hout thinks his job is the toughest in college football today. But the school's high social standards, dress code and academic re-**

quirements are not the only pressure he's under.

"When Dr. (Jerry) Falwell talks about our playing Notre Dame, he's not talking about any other program," Hout says. "He's talking about us lining up in Rockne stadium up there and playing Notre Dame under the golden dome."

Does that bother Hout?

"Well, to us, at the stage our program is right now, James Madison is our Notre Dame. East Tennessee State is our Notre Dame. Eastern Illinois is our Notre Dame because these teams are Division IAA schools—where we aspire to be in two years. I believe Notre Dame at this point for us is relative."

And the real Notre Dame?

"I believe that's going to happen one of these days, and I hope I'm the coach when the two schools do play."

But how can coaching Liberty football be tough?

"Right now, we have seven seniors on our football team. We have five juniors. That's a very, very scary thing, and it really should never have happened."

Inadequate recruiting over the years is one explanation Hout gives. But he's turning things around.

"One of our goals from the beginning was recruiting for retention. We want to recruit people that will, number one, fit in here at Liberty spiritually and, number two, academically."

Does that mean dull football?

"We're going to be hard-hitting, we're going to be enthusiastic, and we're going to be exciting. We're thrilled with the students we recruited this year. But right now, we have to rebuild so many, many places. Most of the seniors we do have back are on defense. We have only one senior on offense. We're going to have to really depend on our freshmen and sophomores. But the Lord will help us.

"I seek God's will and blessing on my life as the head coach here. I love this situation. People say you can't do it with born-again Christians. But I believe you can. We're going to have an opportunity to prove that.

"We work hard at coaching these kids. They're going to be sound fundamentally. They're going to do things the right way."

You work so much with other peoples' kids. What about your own?

"The Lord's given us Morgan Diane. She's 5 this year. And Jonathan Christopher. He's 1."

What does your wife think about being a football widow?

"Hey, if she wasn't totally 100 percent into what we're doing here, we couldn't do it. She has been so supportive. This is such a tough, tough business. And I appreciate the wives of the men on my staff. They are super people, and they support their husbands and believe in them.

**“We’re just really thrilled with what God has done for us here at Liberty.”**

Hout considers himself a fundamentalist in more ways than one. Beginning his third year at Liberty, he believes in sound football.

“We didn’t put in a whole lot of new plays offensively or defensively during spring practice,” he says. “We were just working on our fundamentals—our blocking and our tackling, trying to learn how to take the right steps and read the right defenses.

“Fundamentally, soundness is how you win football games,” he says. It’s a principle he learned at the University of Maryland where he coached for six years as an assistant to Jerry Claiborne. Five of those six years, the Terrapins went to post-season bowl games.

“Coach Claiborne is as fundamental a football coach as there is in America—blocking and tackling. Fundamentals is what this game’s all about. We’re very fundamental here. We spend a lot of time on the fundamentals of the game.”

From Maryland, Hout went to Richmond as an assistant coach working with receivers.

In his first season at Liberty, the Flames’ offense averaged 304.8 yards per game. The team scored an average of 25.4 points a game and scored 30 or more points in five contests.

Last year, the James River flood terminated the season when the team’s clubhouse and equipment at Treasure Island washed downstream. Coach Hout canceled the rest of the season.

Until then, the Flames had had their ups and downs. The ups included a stunning 9-3 victory over Division I James Madison University, a 23-7 victory over Mars Hill and a 15-9 triumph over Wofford. The team tied East Tennessee 23-23. Not one of its four losses (to West Georgia, 7-10; to Southern Connecticut, 28-30; to Lenoir Rhyne, 16-18; or to Presbyterian College, 0-3) was by more than three points.

The games with Carson Newman and Towson State were canceled.

Will television on Liberty Broadcasting Network make a difference in Flames football in years to come?

“It will have a tremendous effect,” Hout says. “It helped us this year with recruiting, and it will help the school in the future with scheduling. Few other schools in America have every one of their games on TV. A parent can buy a dish for \$300 and point it up to Satcom IV and watch his boy play from anywhere in the country.”

And you plan on winning?

“I go to bed at night thinking about winning and get up in the morning thinking about winning. There’s nothing like the joy and elation of winning. We’re trying to

**develop the habit of winning here—not just on the football field, but in the classroom, in our boys' spiritual lives and in their social lives.**

**"That's one of the things I appreciate about being a Christian. Win or lose, we have the Lord. He's the Rock. He's the Foundation that keeps life solid and keeps our goals and priorities straight.**

**"Number one, we want to honor and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ with our actions on the football field."**

**Sorry to take so long to prove a point, but a writer can bring his interview questions right into his article and not only get quickly to the point and keep it there but also create more of an opportunity for the reader to savor the responses of the interviewee. We get to hear him structure his own responses. We see him under pressure. We discover how his mind works.**

Now for homework. Use the following articles as your grist for a question/answer series. In the first you might want to quiz the wife or the judge or Sumter himself. You choose.

## **Convict imprisoned 11 years late**

**PHOENIX, Ariz. (AP) — Although Arizona's governor says "it'd be crazy" to imprison a man who obeyed the law during 11 years**

**when officials neglected to summon him to serve a two-year sentence, the convict is assured at least two months' confinement, officials say.**

**Baron Edward Sumter, 37, was sentenced in 1974 for possession for sale of 120 pounds of marijuana. His conviction was upheld on appeal to the Arizona Supreme Court, but he was never turned over to the state Department of Corrections—and lived for years in fear that authorities would discover the oversight.**

**"I dreaded mail coming, knocks on the door, policemen in general. I hardly ever answered the telephone," Sumter said in an interview from prison, where he reported Wednesday after a Corrections Department clerk found the mistake while cleaning out old files.**

**"I've been really lying low, but they've always been able to find me," Sumter said.**

**His lawyer, Paul Hunter, has begun the process of applying for a gubernatorial pardon, which officials say could take two months even if it were to be expedited.**

**Still, the governor had some encouraging words for Sumter when asked about the case Thursday in Los Angeles.**

**"A lot of times, it's a little more complex than it appears," the governor noted.**

**"But if, in fact, this guy has had a steady job, is a family man who's been working to support his wife**

**and kids, has no record, has kept his nose clean, and is a productive citizen of that community, it seems to me that common sense and compassion says that it'd be crazy to stack another body in the Arizona State Prison for no purpose."**

The governor said he has no power to act on a pardon until he gets a recommendation from the State Board of Pardons and Paroles.

Sumter's wife, Alice Sumter, said she was thrilled with the governor's remarks.

"Oh, my goodness, I'm overwhelmed," Ms. Sumter said. "This is absolutely wonderful."

Of her husband, she said, "He's been a model citizen all this time. He made a mistake when he was 25 or 26 and hasn't done a thing since. I can't believe something like this is happening in the United States. After not hearing from them for six or seven years, he figured it was over."

At a hearing after Sumter was summoned back to Yuma from his home in Prunedale, Calif., Judge B. L. Helm at first said he was inclined to grant probation.

But he ordered Sumter to serve his time after a prosecutor argued that the judge had no power to change a sentence affirmed by the Supreme Court.

In this second exercise that follows, let your questions come from an attorney who is having Mrs. Cordie tell

her story at a hearing. Or be an inquiring reporter who wants to write a story. Write your questions in all cap if you wish. Again, the very fact that one paragraph will end with a question mark and the next will not will show that this is a Q and A sequence.

## Hospital rescue tale shows rights abused

**WASHINGTON (AP) – A 39-year-old Minnesota woman said Friday she would either "be a vegetable or be dead" if she had not been rescued from a state mental hospital by an outsider who learned about her bizarre tale.**

Judy Cordie, who said she has hired a lawyer to pursue legal recourse, appeared before the House health subcommittee in support of a measure designed to protect the civil liberties of Americans in mental hospitals.

"The seriously mentally ill are often unable to protect themselves from even the most severe abuses," said the subcommittee chairman.

He added that the topic of abuse of the mentally ill is one "most people would rather not consider."

A proposal of his, similar to one that passed the Senate on Wednesday, calls for the federal government to provide states with money

**to hire third-party advocates for the mentally ill.**

**Those advocates would have the authority to investigate incidents of abuse and pursue legal remedies on behalf of the estimated 159,000 people now in mental hospitals.**

**A similar advocacy program for the mentally retarded has been a success, the chairman said.**

**Testimony presented by Mrs. Cordie and Judy Melenchik of Reading, Pa., drove home the need for outside advocates, he said.**

**Turning to Mrs. Cordie, he said her story “sounded like one nightmare after another.”**

**Mrs. Cordie said she and her husband, Gary, first ran into trouble in their hometown of Fergus Falls, Minn., when they refused to send Mrs. Cordie’s 9-year-old daughter by a previous marriage to school. Instead, the girl was taught at home.**

**Mrs. Cordie, who described herself as a strict Christian, said her step-daughter, LeAnn, was taken away by local welfare officials on April 1.**

**Three months later, she said, she and her husband were arrested by local authorities and sent to a state mental hospital on grounds they suffered from “delusional religious beliefs.”**

**That assessment apparently stemmed from the couple’s practice of placing advertisements consisting**

**of Bible verses in the local paper, she said.**

**Once in the mental hospital, Mrs. Cordie said, she and her husband “were the target of abuse.”**

Joyce Fowler of my Liberty University feature writing class wrote the following question-and-answer article on that last assignment:

**Mrs. Cordie, what was your purpose in testifying before the house subcommittee today?**

**I wanted Congress to hear why there should be laws to protect people in mental hospitals.**

**What knowledge do you have about the subject?**

**A lot. I was—both my husband and I were sent to the Minnesota state mental hospital.**

**Why were you sent there?**

**Because the judge said we were religious nuts. Well, he didn’t say it exactly that way. He said we suffered from “delusional religious beliefs.”**

**What proof did the authorities have when they locked you up?**

**People around Fergus Falls knew about Gary and me running advertisements in the newspaper. The ads had Bible verses. Just Scripture. And they made it sound like we were lunatics for doing that. We were just sharing our faith, really.**

**Was that the only time you had run into trouble with the authorities?**

**No—LeAnn—last April. The welfare people took away LeAnn, my daughter from a previous marriage, because Gary and I wouldn't send her to public school any more.**

Why didn't you and your husband send her to school?

**We didn't like some of the things they were teaching her—or the environment at school. We're Christians, and we believe God gave our daughter to us. They—the state—shouldn't be able to tell us how to raise her. Besides, it wasn't like she wasn't being educated at all. I was teaching her at home.**

How long after your daughter was taken away were you and your husband arrested?

**Ah—about three months. Then we were sent to the mental hospital.**

What kind of treatment did you and your husband receive at the mental hospital?

**I—I try to forgive so God will help me to forget. But I don't know if I will ever forget what has happened. The dark, locked rooms, the screaming and cursing, the drugs, everything. . . . The worst part was trying to make someone believe we weren't crazy. We were the target of their abuse—constantly.**

How did you obtain your release?

**A lady, Judy Melenchik, who lives in Pennsylvania, saw our story on the news about how—and why—we were arrested. She said she knew then that she had to do something to help us.**

**Somehow, she worked through all the red tape and finally got us freed. I know God did it. If He hadn't impressed it upon her to help us, I'm sure I would either be a vegetable or be dead today.**

**It is so important to write conversation naturally. We'll get to that in a later chapter. And it is important to write accurately. For this reason, many professional writers will learn to use a recorder. They'll get a platform microphone that does not need to be aimed at a speaker's mouth. It will pick up all the conversation in a room.**

And they'll get a foot treadle/ear set device that will enable them (or their typist if they can afford the high prices) to control the on/off button of the recorder with the foot. This is a marvelous help in transcribing cassette tapes.

**But word-for-word transcribing can be the pits. It takes hours. I prefer to play the tape over and over while I do menial things around my office. I get the cadence of my subject's voice well in my ears. I learn what is the most significant thing he's said. I find where the interview went best so that, when I want to transcribe the mother lode, I know where it's to be found.**

And keep your reader in mind. You want to ask the questions he would have asked had he been there. You want to ask the questions he never thought of asking but is pleased to find you did.

**And look for color.** Question-and-answer technique can be barren if it stays too close to the point. Let the subject wander so some of the richness of his knowledge of his subject comes through. Don't wander too much. Keep on target—but colorfully.

How can you apply question-and-answer to your own life story? It's easy.

Be your adult self and be your child self. Have your adult self ask your child self questions about what you thought of liver and onions when you were eight, what you thought of Aunt Martha, what you thought of fourth grade, what you remember about Cousin David.

**Or turn it around** and have your child self ask your adult self why she always did everything she was told when she was young, why it's necessary to learn to sew, what good brussel sprouts are to the world, why it's important to read the Bible.

Be yourself and ask a late relative to tell about his life. Be your mate and ask about your first date.

Let the questioner be an attorney or a minister or a police sergeant or a principal and have him ask you significant questions about your life.

**Be an interviewer** asking yourself why you liked to read the Bobsey Twin books when you were in fourth grade, asking why you rarely did your homework in high school, asking how you learned to hit home runs so well, asking how it felt to win the Little League championship.

Q and A is an interesting device for dredging up memories. It will let you dream dreams. You can ask, "What will I be like at 75?" and you can answer, "Kicking my heels higher than ever."

Or you can be sobered by this sad note: AS NOW, SO THEN.

**Those words doomed** my youthful dreams. When I got to be 21, I'd be on top of the world. I'd be different. I'd be what I'd always dreamed of being—on time, homework done, disciplined, a winner. Those four words told me I'd always be punctually challenged, and I'd never finish my work.

Now I realize how colorful life was and I didn't know it. Looking back now, I have far more to write about than if I'd been strictly disciplined and good. Hey! I'm not promoting sin here!

Let Q and A bring that kind of thinking out of you. You may be surprised at what you find.

**The market?** It's unlimited. Youngsters are constantly asking questions.

Adults are, too.

You want to do an article on something you know well? Divide it into pieces, ask appropriate questions and provide the answers.

Let's say you know a lot about financial planning and you want to do an article to help boomers plan for retirement. People generally don't like to think about planning for a dim future so you begin by putting that in a question.

**Q. Is financial planning for retirement something that people tend to put off?**

The answer will be yes, of course, and you will explain that people should start early because money and time are the essential ingredients for building retirement income. Then you'll ask about how much income you should invest so you'll have enough in retirement and you'll ask about pitfalls in planning for those golden years. Do women live longer than men? What about inflation? Isn't Social Security enough? Benefits of mutual funds? Annuities?

**Let's say** you are an activist on abortion and want to do an article that will refresh national indifference. You may begin with an update on what is happening on the national stage and then go into a series of questions and answers.

What did the Supreme Court actually rule in 1973? Why are they still considering abortion issues? How widespread are abortions now? Why don't women want to give birth? How much do abortions cost? How do doctors feel about them? Do fathers have any rights?

**Let's say** you clip every article you find on a given topic so that you'll be well informed. You find there is so much information and so much misunderstanding about it that you feel the need to harness your material and write an article.

**Here, again,** divide it into pieces. Ask yourself what do people know about this and what should they know? Choose the most controversial aspect and use it in your leading paragraph. Then introduce your facts—perhaps you could use one of these transitions into the Q and A part of your article:

**Let's examine what is at stake and what can be expected if . . .**

**People are bothered by questions no one is answering, like . . .**

**What are the basic issues in question here?**

**Questions** are the life blood of the interviewer. Knowing how to ask good questions and knowing what to do with the material you glean, will make you a much sought-after writer. Your questions must be intelligent, and they must come out of your preparation. Some writers go into an interview prepared to ask 500 questions.

Be willing to be a performer. Be colorful, interesting, fun to be with so the interviewee doesn't get bored with you. Listen closely. Assure him/her of your trust. Use a tape recorder openly and take notes, too. Probe. Be understanding. Be humble. Look him/her in the eyes.

Pick up on little asides dropped like crumbs off the pie plate of an answer. Some crumbs have more body and soul than major answers to other

questions. Be willing to ask him to repeat. Be willing to ask for more details.

**Perhaps** the most valuable course I took in high school, not counting touch typing, was shorthand. I have used it my whole life long. It has helped me when interviewing. It has helped me in church when taking notes from my pastor's sermon. Gregg shorthand is easy to learn. College students, armed with shorthand, have an advantage over everybody else when it comes to taking notes. All reporters should master it.

For one thing, it saves time. For another, you have your interviewee's words down on paper seconds after he's uttered them. It helps you avoid the awkward pauses when you are trying to get something important down in longhand.

**It protects** you from legal action when you can produce the exact words your subject said.

Whether one is young or older, a shorthand tool in the hand helps you meet deadlines. You don't have to go back to the office or home to hook up to a transcriber. You have the exact words on your pad for immediate use.

Using both shorthand and a recorder gives you a double-edged sword when it comes to taking notes in an interview or speech.

Now this opens up a whole new type of article where you choose one question and spend the whole article defining it.

# HOW TO

On every street corner, it seems, there are people anxious to tell you not only what to do but how to do it.

This kind of article is easy to do because, following a short introduction of two or three paragraphs, you can tick off the steps to accomplish the task you are teaching.

The how-to article can read like an essay as it does in "How to Talk to a Baby" by Jean Kerr. She writes in inverted paragraphs, putting a declarative sentence first and then expanding on it.

She begins, "Babies, like some men, seem to like you better if you are indifferent." She explains in several paragraphs that babies ignore prancing adults who wiggle fingers and talk baby talk. "I'm more successful when I adopt indifference."

She finds she gets better results with total honesty. Regarding Pablum, she tells the child, "That's right, honey," I say, "it tastes just like library paste. But remember this—it's full of niacin, thiamine and riboflavins. Furthermore, you really don't have any taste buds yet, so what's the difference." She adds, "this seems to work just fine, and you have the satisfaction of knowing that you are building a relationship that is not based on a tissue of lies." Her hot-to is full of fun.

Other how-to's article can begin with questions as Jean Mayer did in this delightful "How to Murder Your Husband" article.

**Is your husband an oaf who doesn't appreciate you or show you the tenderness and affection you deserve? Would you like to have an extra dozen years of enjoying his money without him?**

Then consider these ten socially accepted methods for accelerating the advent of merry widowhood. They are scientifically designed to help you cut down your husband in his prime, without risking capital punishment, jail, or even the tacit disapproval of your social circle. And you can do most of it under the guise of wifely devotion, and loving indulgence of your spouse.

(If you *really* love and cherish your husband, however, take the opposite course to my advice. It may postpone his departure by many years, give you a vigorous and grateful companion for the autumn years, and ensure that your children's children will have a grandfather, for which they, too, will thank you.)

### **1. Fatten him up**

Obesity shortens life. It increases mortality from heart disease, other circulatory diseases, diabetes and kidney diseases. Obesity is particularly dangerous if your husband has high cholesterol, high blood pressure or lung disease.

Fattening up your husband is most easily accomplished by pressing second helpings upon him, getting him used to rich sauces and gravies, and persuading him that no meal is complete without a cake, made with plenty of butter and sugar. Fifty extra pounds on him should earn an extra ten years of freedom for you.

### **2. Keep him liquored up.**

When he comes home, he should have a stiff drink in his hand before he has time to take off his hat. Renew it frequently, and add to its deadliness by keeping a generous supply of snacks at hand.

### **3. Above all, keep him sitting down.**

The rugged athlete you married now spends most of his day sitting down. Your goal is to discourage any deviation from this sedentary schedule. Sitting neither rests him nor exercises him. And both would add years to his life.

Exercise, in particular, is horribly beneficial to your husband's health. Exercising moderately does not increase his appetite much and it keeps his weight down.

It may lower his cholesterol, may decrease his blood pressure, may even promote collateral circulation in his heart.

This means that, if his main coronary artery is shut down, other blood vessels may open so that his heart muscle receives blood, and he

survives what rightfully should have been your blessed release.

So by all means, if he has any notion of going for a walk with the kids, remind him of the football game on TV. Regularly ridicule any suggestion that a man of his age should attempt to swim, play tennis, climb mountains, learn to ski, take up touch football or otherwise move a muscle. If he insists on playing golf, make him a generous loving gift of a motorized golf cart.

*4. Feed him a lot of saturated fats.*

There is good evidence that a diet high in saturated fat (meat fat, hydrogenated vegetable oil, butter) raises the blood cholesterol, and high cholesterol can increase the likelihood of having a fatal coronary.

Polyunsaturated fats—found in large amounts in safflower oil, corn oil, polyunsaturated margarines and fish—may reduce cholesterol.

So, to hasten his departure, fill his diet with saturated fat: select meat heavily marbled with fat (it's tender; he'll love it) and give him plenty (he'll love you).

Never bake or broil when you can fry, always using butter or hydrogenated fat. Go heavy on the French-fried or hashed-brown potatoes and fried eggs. Eggs are high in cholesterol. They are good for you and the children; but consumed daily in pairs or threes, they will push your husband's cholesterol

practically out of sight. You can use eggs in any number of desserts, too.

*5. Get him used to heavily salted food.*

There is some evidence that a diet high in salt will induce hypertension in predisposed individuals. If you know his blood pressure is elevated, you have a clear signal to push up his salt intake and raise his blood pressure further.

*6. Fill him up with coffee.*

Preliminary evidence suggests that very strong coffee in large amounts may upset some people's metabolism. You can't count on it, but you may at least induce insomnia.

*7. Offer him cigarettes.*

Cigarettes are the would-be widow's best friend. Lung cancer, several other respiratory ailments and heart disease are all induced or accelerated by cigarette smoking.

Even if heavy smoking spoils his appetite a little, don't worry; it more than compensates the slight weight-reducing effect by the damage it does to the cardiovascular system.

*8. Keep him up late.*

Fatigue and lack of sleep appear to hasten the "cardiovascular storm" that may hasten him off the scene. Late television shows, frequent at-home entertainment and regular visiting should wear him out.

(You can always go back to bed in the morning after you have made

him eat his cereal with sugar and heavy cream, buttered muffins, three fried eggs and bacon.)

**9. Don't let him go on vacation.**

He might exercise, relax his tensions—and escape your cooking.

**10. For good measure, nag him and worry him.**

Money and the children are sure-fire topics. This will induce him to drink more and sleep less, will elevate his blood pressure, etc.

An experienced wife should know how far to goad her husband without actually driving him away (to more exercise, less fat, more sleep, and to a lower-pressure mate).

You can “how-to” virtually anything.

Roger Ailes with Jon Kraushar wrote an article called “How to Make a Good Impression.” He had been a media adviser to three Presidents. He began his article by remembering a conversation he had had with a confident 17-year-old criminal. He had asked him what kind of people he felt free to assault.

The response was those isolated people who shuffle along, head down, who never look at you and who seem frightened when they see you.

Roger asked, “Would I make a good victim?”

The tough said no, because Roger had walked into the room and looked this man right in the eyes and up and down as if measuring whether he could beat him up in a fight.

After this introductory anecdote, the author gave his thesis statement that research shows that we make up our minds about people within seven seconds of meeting them.

He then gives his how-to—how to make a good impression. His points are:

- 1. You are the message.**
- 2. Be yourself.**
- 3. Use your eyes.**
- 4. Listen before you leap.**
- 5. Focus your energy.**
- 6. Lighten up.**

With several of his points he gave an anecdote out of his personal experience. After developing his last point, he concluded with this paragraph:

**To make others comfortable, you have to appear comfortable yourself. Don't make any dramatic changes in your personality. Don't assume a phony posture. Just be yourself, at your best. The fact is, you already have the magic of making a good impression within you, because nobody can be you as well as you can.**

An author named Doug Garr wrote an article called “How To Survive Home Remodeling.”

With two anecdotes he demonstrates that home owners wishing to remodel can fall prey to unscrupulous contractors who do either a shoddy job or who never get around to finishing the one you've hired them to do.

He offers a method to keep that from happening and ticks his points off one by one with explanations and examples.

- 1. In the beginning.**
- 2. Making the choice.**
- 3. Reaching an agreement.**
- 4. Pay periods.**
- 5. Guaranteeing the job.**

Following his exposition, he ends with this paragraph:

**Remember that a remodeling job can be an emotional as well as a financial investment. Once the workers have gone, you and your family must live with the job they did. For that reason alone, it's well worth taking the time to find a contractor who's truly proud of his work—and who wants you to feel the same way.**

In each of these articles you have had a step by step procedure followed by a concluding message addressed to you, the reader.

The samples could go on and on because they all work the same way. In "How to Land the Job You Want," Charles Mangel began this way:

**You're out of work, probably for the first time in your life . . . Okay. What do you do?**

In the ellipsis here he gave statistics to show that "you" are not alone be-

cause 5 ½ million other Americans are in the same boat.

Then he lists the items you should consider as you look for a job:

- 1. Your Resume.**
- 2. Employment Agencies.**
- 3. How to Get Job Interviews on Your Own.**
- 4. Answering Job Ads.**
- 5. The Interview.**
- 6. Don't Doubt Yourself.**
- 7. Be Prepared to Change Job Direction.**
- 8. Don't Rely too Much on Your Friends.**
- 9. Keep Busy.**

He ends with a summary statement.

In "How to Be a Leader" by Sherry Suib Cohen, the first sentence states a fact: "Being considered a leader in our society is the ultimate compliment."

She adds that "Leadership bestows power, commands respect and, most important, fosters achievement. Unlike vitamins, though, leadership skills can't be easily gulped down. They must be carefully cultivated."

Then she gives the points that answer her title.

- Always give credit.**
- Take informed risks.**
- Show the way.**
- Keep the faith.**
- Get a compass.**
- Act the part.**
- Be competent.**
- Foster enthusiasm.**

SELL YOUR HOMEWORK: NOVELTIES – QUESTION AND ANSWER

**Delegate.**

Her ending shows a woman who saw need for a soup kitchen and delegated duties, demonstrating leadership.

The key: Write with authority. Include anecdotes and examples with the steps. End with the lesson learned.

# DIARY

**Diaries are universal. Readers recognize the diary method as soon as they see the entries. Every one of them will begin with a date. Or a time.**

Diaries can be merely chronicles, telling our famous five W's—who, what, where, when and why. But we expect more. We expect revelation. We want a sixth W. We want some wow!

When an article is written in diary form, we expect that it will deal with one event only. Don't wander. Also, we expect more than surface reporting. We want depth, analysis, insight, reaction. We want the private thoughts one would put in a diary. If we can't get that, we want a twitch-by-twitch account of what's going on.

**Reporters** will use a diary when they chronicle what led up to a significant event. Sports and news magazines use this device constantly, only they turn it into a chronological narrative.

Diary concentrates on time—hour by hour or day by day and says so by using days or hours to mark the beginning of each section. Articles of this nature have appeared after Watergates, murders of Presidents, acts of terrorism, crashes, homicides.

But each hour's or each day's entry is focused on contributing to the author's desired effect—exposure. You

want to bring the significant details to bear on your subject. You want to recreate experience for the reader. You want him to laugh or cry or change his mind or do something.

That's the goal of all dramatic writing. To reach it, you the writer must pay attention to specific details. Reveal them in the order they happened.

**Go for action.** Tell what your subject did, what he didn't do, what he planned, what he wore. Tell what went right and what went wrong. Pay attention to the details of setting as well as the details of action. We want to see the character on stage, moving innocently (perhaps), yet relentlessly, toward the outcome we know awaits him. If space requires that you make a choice between action and setting, go for the action every time. As you recreate, tell why and how things happened.

You want to get the reader involved in what happens. He wants to relive the sequence of events as if he had been the main character.

**Write simply** in a natural, conversational style. Don't let unusual words and convoluted sentence structures interfere with your narration. Don't ever let the reader become conscious of how you are telling the story. You want him to forget he's even reading. You want to catch him up in the experience.

The Gospel of Mark in the Bible is an example of a book-length diary. The reader is conscious, as sections begin with “the next day” and “the third day,” that he is reading an authentic diary.

**God the Son** is walking through the world en route to total rejection by the people He has made and chosen. A savage death awaits Him. The reader sees the plot thicken and reach a climax. And then he witnesses His death and resurrection. He learns WHY everything happened.

Words used in a chronological narration—a diary—of an event have remarkable powers. They can bring the past into the present so vividly that we can never forget them.

Our local sports columnist used this technique recently to narrate how a Liberty University football hero waited out the hours the day of the National Football League’s draft. This is how he did it:

## **St. Kelvin’s fire**

by Scott Tolley

**It flickered during the afternoon until New Orleans finally called.**

**The day’s beginning resembled the making of a movie.**

**It was only fitting that the end consisted of things movies are made of.**

**It was Tuesday’s National Football League’s draft, a new experience to a 22-year-old sports-writer and cer-**

**tainly a new experience for Liberty University senior wide receiver Kelvin Edwards.**

**There would be a lot of ifs, ands and buts about this particular day. Edwards certainly had the talent, the size and the speed. And because he could be labeled as “unknown quantity,” the day could turn into a long, drawn-out ordeal.**

**It did.**

**But the day was not without its laughs, although it had its yawns and its frustrations:**

**9:10 a.m.: Although hoping to arrive at Flames’ head coach Morgan Hout’s house at 8 a.m., an alarm clock not set at a deafening, dead-wakening level detained me from meeting my original goal. But I was comforted that I hadn’t missed anything traumatic by stumbling into Hout’s den over an hour late.**

**Sitting about the room were sports information director Chuck Burch, the sports editor of the “Liberty Champion” (student newspaper), a photographer, Hout and, of course, Edwards.**

**Edwards’ 6-foot-3, 207-pound frame was curled up on the sofa, staring at the television and ESPN’s draft show. It was obvious he had had little or no sleep the previous night, but he appeared wide-awake.**

**Although he managed to whisper a “Hey, Scott,” Edwards sat relatively motionless and emotionless, with his eyes fixed on the TV.**

His clothes, however, did all the talking.

Edwards had warned he would be dressed for the occasion, but I have to admit I was caught a little off guard. His ensemble consisted of a bright red shirt, peppered with minute black print. Dangling from his neck were two bright gold necklaces, one highlighted by a medallion of the Mercedes-Benz logo. He revealed later that the other necklace, a plain gold one, cost \$800, but was a gift.

His designer jeans were starched and had a crease that resembled the blade of a butcher knife. Protruding from the legs of his pants were a pair of fluorescent red socks, which outdid his shirt by a long measure. The only thing conservative about the outfit was the pair of tassel loafers masking the stop-light socks.

**9:30:** Here come the TV people and some pound cake. For the next 20 or so minutes, cameramen from Old-Time Gospel Hour and WSET set up enough equipment to transform Hout's den into an MGM studio. There were, of course, the cameras, two tall studio lights and a microphone that resembled one of those pylons you try to knock over on the highway.

The only thing missing was Steven Spielberg.

But Edwards remained oblivious to it all. In relative silence, he continued his long hard stare at the TV,

whether it be out of interest or lack of anything else to do.

**9:50:** The phone rang, but it was only one of over 10 false alarms that the entire group, particularly Edwards, would have to live with. Although still very early in the draft's first round, certainly not a place Edwards was expected to go in, the phone call created mild havoc. . . .

**10:15:** The floor began to become carpeted with various publications like USA Today, The Sporting News, a tabloid from the Cleveland Browns, and The Lynchburg News and Daily Advance. . . .

**10:45:** . . . And the boredom set in. Edwards began to get a little fidgety as the first round dragged on.

Looking out the window at a mound of mulch in the back yard, he said, "I'll have to come over sometime, Coach, and help you take care of that."

**11:00:** The phone rings again. And again the room comes to life. This false alarm, however, was a pleasant one. It was Fred Banks, a teammate of Edwards last year. . . .

**11:20:** The Dallas Cowboys have just completed a trade to move up in the draft and choose a UCLA receiver as the 19th pick overall. The Cowboys . . .

**11:29:** Photographer Mark Bailey whispers that Edwards has given up on the Cowboys. He says that during a photo session outside, Edwards said he wouldn't be headed to Dallas.

**12:50:** Edwards is clearly becoming frustrated. Four picks into the second round, Washington, the other team supposedly interested in Edwards, picked a lineman. . . .

**1:15:** ESPN's Roy Firestone did a live interview with Jerry Robinson, linebacker with the Raiders. He gave a word of advice to all the Kelvin Edwards's out there. . . . "Relax."

**1:55:** After everyone else had pulled their vulture routine on the smorgasbord upstairs, Edwards gave in and decided to grab a bite. His bite consisted of two monstrous . . .

**2:20:** Coach Hout glances over to a visibly tired Edwards and says, "Kelvin, you can go upstairs and lay down." Edwards wasted no time in following up Hout's advice. . . .

**2:45:** The third round was underway. Due to his absence, those few left in attendance took over where Edwards left off. Some were nodding off, some pacing, but most complaining.

**4:08:** The phone rings. "Hello? Yes, sir . . . Yes, sir . . . Yes, sir . . .

"Thanks!" Edwards said, and for the first time all day let out a grin that nearly consumed his face. Once the phone was hung up and he shouted, "New Orleans!" Both Hout and Edwards explode, jumping up from the sofa and into an embrace.

**4:30:** Edwards led a parade up the stairs the whole while chanting a slightly butchered version of "When the Saints Go Marching In."

He then bounced from phone call to phone call and from question to question. He never showed any annoyance at the onslaught of questions, mainly coming from the only media person still there—myself.

After throwing a few questions at Hout, I was able to witness a touching sight. Edwards finally got to call his mother. After finding out she had the flu, Edwards, sounding as if he was interrupting, said, "Hey, I just got drafted."

At that time, Edwards emotions surfaced as a tear came to his eye. His conversation was wrapped up with a comment to his mother about "The house is on the way."

**5:10:** Like a hyper kid on Christmas, Edwards glided back and forth from kitchen to back porch, occasionally tossing a football to himself, each throw resembling a one-hand touchdown grab.

Out on the porch, Edwards laughed at all the jokes and com-

**ments about him now being paid to be a saint.**

**In the midst of the laughs, the pats on the back, and the clicking of cameras, Edwards paused, looked toward the mulch pile in the backyard and with a perma-grin said, “Somebody’s going to have to start cleaning that up because I’m not now.”**

All those paragraphs for an illustration of a style? Is someone crazy? It was necessary. You had to see how effective the diary method of reliving time can be. The time entries become a ticking of the clock. You know, because stories like this have a climax, that something important is going to happen. You’re impatient that it happen now.

But the writer dallies. Skillfully, he talks of seemingly insignificant things like the pound cake, the socks, the nap, the mulch. You don’t realize that he’s planting a point he will pick up at the end when he refers to the mulch pile. That’s part of the craft of “plant-and-pick-up.”

The writer also goes from past to present tense. He wants you to have a “you-are-there” experience, and we are so engrossed with the story we don’t notice the change. It is not sloppy writing. You can do this in diary. Nobody cares. Readers just want to relive the experience.

**Then, finally,** the phone call we’ve been waiting for comes. We spend time listening to it because that’s what this story is all about. The falling action

begins after the last “Yes, sir . . . Thanks!”

We hang up the phone, we embrace, we sing, we call Mom and then we end.

This is as much a part of the art as delaying the climax. And it’s important that we get out of such a long story as this on a strong note—a good, terse statement or a significant quote. Scott Tolley used the quote and three one-syllable words—“I’m not now.” It’s effective and full of meaning. This boy’s got other, more important work to do!

Now, it’s not enough to know a new structure. What are you going to do with it? You are not a staff reporter, a hired journalist. You’re a free-lance writer who works with words.

**Number one**, you keep your eyes on your daily newspaper, looking for feature stories that need another telling. So what if the newspaper there has given the news and **EVERYONE** knows the whole story. That “everyone” is only a local everyone. There are millions of us out here who might be interested, too.

**Does the** story have implications or drama that would interest a world fascinated by items of human interest? If you’re interested, the world will be. Think of yourself as a representative. You’re human. What you like, everyone likes. What intrigues you, what piques your curiosity will intrigue and pique the world. So, learn to trust your instincts.

Read news stories twice: once to learn the news and again to look for items that would interest others.

**Has a grisly** murder gone unsolved? Has a family lost everything in a fire? Does a mother still grieve for a high school son who died in a traffic accident? A time-sequence structure will help you recreate for your reader the events that led up to the tragedy.

What about your own life? Can you remember every detail of an event when the doctor had to come in the dead of night or when a telephone call brought news that changed your life?

**Do you** remember the picnic that ended in tragedy? Everyone woke up to a bright and sunny day, never for the world dreaming that things would go wrong. Can you retell the events of that day in diary form?

Open the article by resetting the scene and establishing the tone of the day. Give us a theme sentence near the beginning that tells the direction the story is going. It might well capsule the whole story in just a few words.

But don't give away the ending. Use a sentence like, "It never occurred to any of us that there was any danger for children at Dixon Lake," and we readers will be watching all the children throughout the article. You've foreshadowed the climax and definitely hooked our interest.

**Give details** the way Scott Tolley did. Plague us with details. We want you to hurry and get to the point but think of the power you have over the reader.

Delay.

Delay.

Delay.

Then bring the climax on swiftly and go swiftly to the end.

Editors'll love ya!

Now, what can you do in diary structure with this article printed in a Sunday newspaper?

### **Man-led bird migration finishes with hope for endangered birds**

An ultra light leads sand hill cranes from the Midwest to Florida in a test that could aid the whooping crane

**CRYSTAL RIVER, Fla.** – A major step in insuring the survival of a flock of whooping cranes proved successful Saturday when a Canadian pilot, Bill Lishman, flying a single-engine ultra light guided a flock of sandhill cranes to the end of a month long 1,250-mile flight from Wisconsin.

Landing on a grassy part of a large Gulf Coast preserve, the cranes hopefully discovered a new migratory path from the Necedah National Wildlife Refuge in Wisconsin where they were hatched and raised in captivity.

The successful 39-day flight cost \$850,000 to run and made history as

**the longest man-led bird migration ever, scientists said.**

**There are only 400 whooping cranes in the world and only one migratory flock in North America. Having another migratory flock is vital to crane survival here.**

**The flight became the inspiration of the 1996 movie, “Fly Away Home.”**

Where will you begin the story?

You may have to (and I will forgive you) create some events in order to flesh out the chronology.

Use fiction techniques of emphasizing the human drama in the story. You want depth of emotion, conflict and suspense.

In the first part of the story establish the scene, the problem, the setting, the challenge.

The middle section builds suspense and shows the struggle as Bill faces the problems of catching the interest of his gaggle of geese. He will have problems with his ultra light airplane.

He could teeter on the edge of death en route with his flock. He weathers the crisis and lands successfully.

You could start each section with “Day One” “Day Two.”

Enjoy writing this. You might find a new career in writing articles in diary form.

# TALES RETOLD

## **Close on the heels of the parody is another article that retells a familiar tale.**

**Parody** steals the rime and meter and texture of the article it's based on. Its subject matter will be far from the subject matter of the original piece you are mimicking. That's part of the fun.

The "tales retold" method finds olden time similarities in the same subject matter of the story you're reporting.

It's taking the story of Marie, the homely secretary who never gets invited out, who never gets any notice or recognition and who gets snubbed by everyone in the office. She forgets her glasses the day the boss's son comes home from college. Wow! Love at first sight.

What a set-up for a writer who knows his/her fairy tales and can tag Cinderella into the scenario.

You find details of family rejection, momentary success, despair, and eventual reward in Marie's life; but you tell it, using our Cinderella story as a pattern.

If some formerly insignificant businessman runs for public office and wins the election to the surprise of everyone, you might recast the story along the lines of "The Valiant Little Tailor."

**Allusions** such as these are generally overlooked in books on writing and in college classes. But newspaper headline writers depend on familiar stories and poems to color their work.

Writers, too, do themselves a service by reading the Bible, Mother

Goose and Grimm's Fairy Tales, Aesop's Fables and Pilgrim's Progress. These are so much a part of our language and culture that almost everyone recognizes what is meant when a writer refers to them.

The Bible in both Old and New Testaments is rich in familiar narratives. Feature writing comes alive when we make reference to the stories of everyman.

**The focus** of this chapter is to recast your own stories by using the story structure of a tale everyone will recognize. Do you have an old family story in your saddlebag that you can adapt? If not, look through newspapers for stories that would fit.

It's a strange thing, this using the daily newspaper as a source for finding stories. If you set out to find a story that will lend itself to an allusion, you won't find one. If you are not looking for one, you'll inevitably find one. It's simply a matter of keeping your eyes open and having a battery of structures (say, 24?) and bringing them into play as you research for material.

The tales retold method is included here because it is one more way to write a feature article.

You need a hapless victim who suffers under the abuse of the world, the flesh or the devil. Here is your antagonist, your angry coach, who subjects your hero/heroine to a curse (100 years sleep, transformation into another form, imprisonment, the bench).

**You need** a shining hero, a prince or a soldier who hears about the problem and comes to the rescue. By sub-

tlety or bravery or relentless derring-do, he overcomes the coach and the curse and makes it possible for the home team to win or for the victim to have a life of fame and glory.

Some such stories may come across as tongue-in-cheek. But the public will love it.

You can bring off what will appear to be a straight story when you begin with something like:

**U.S. authorities who picked up hostage Benjamin Weir in Beirut Saturday seemed unaware that they were re-enacting an old time story.**

Weir's fairy tale started months ago when . . .

Now, it's important not to make light of a serious situation or to deal flippantly with another person's reputation or character. We're talking of literary allusions here and allusions should never be aspersions. It's very easy for the principal characters in a news event to take exception to your treatment if you're going to be unfeeling and careless. Don't put words in peoples' mouths that will injure them or others.

**But, sometimes,** especially with terrorism, a tale retold can show the foolishness of subjecting so humanitarian a person as Benjamin Weir to kidnapping and imprisonment.

Read through the article that follows and practice retelling it by casting it as an actual old time story.

Many feature writers earn their entire living retelling news stories in narrative form, stories that include background and details that the original newspaper stories did not have time to cover.

Six hostages still held

## **Lebanon frees one American**

**CONCORD, N.H. (AP) –** The Rev. Benjamin Weir is free after a 16-month kidnapping ordeal in Lebanon, but the President said Wednesday that he "will not be satisfied" until the six remaining American captives also are released.

Weir was released to U.S. authorities in Beirut on Saturday, but an announcement was withheld to determine whether the release of the other Americans might also be obtained.

"We were trying to keep it so quiet because we don't want to do anything that endangers the chances of the other six," the President said at the conclusion of a speech promoting his tax reform proposal.

But a White House spokesman, briefing the press after the President's speech, said it became apparent Tuesday night that no more releases were "imminent."

**Unconfirmed reports about Weir's release surfaced Sunday with an anonymous telephone call to the**

Reuters news agency. The Presbyterian Church said early Wednesday that Weir had been freed. Soon afterward, the President supplied the official confirmation that Weir was "back in America, safe with his family."

"I am happy for him and his family," the President said, "but I will not be satisfied and will not cease our efforts until all the hostages, the other six, are released."

Later, as he boarded Air Force One to return to Washington, the President held up six fingers and told reporters, "Six more to go."

Joella Knight, my Liberty University student, used the story of Billy Goat Gruff to retell Weir's story:

**Once upon a time there were seven American captives gruff. They wanted to cross the bridge of freedom to America, but a mean and nasty Lebanese terrorist troll wouldn't let them cross.**

**But, one day, the first American captive gruff began to cross the bridge to go to the green grass of America.**

**"Get off my bridge!" roared the mean, old Lebanese terrorist troll.**

**"Please let me cross," asked the first American captive gruff.**

**"No! If you don't get off my bridge, I am going to eat you," said the terrorist troll.**

**"Don't eat me," said gruff. "There are six other American cap-**

**tives gruff that want to cross the bridge. Six is much more than one."**

**"Okay," said the terrorist troll. "I'll let you cross, but I will not let the other American captives gruff cross."**

**So the first American gruff held his breath and crossed the bridge of freedom to America, confident that the other six American captives gruff would make it, too. After all, he knew his American gruff President would buck the mean, old terrorist troll out from under the bridge in the end.**

**You can sense** the power that this tale retold carries because every reader knows that those other six have remained for years in captivity. Printed in a newspaper as an editorial column, this would, in effect, call on the President to do something to free those still held—and to do it now.

This is the old principle—a flick of a whip more than a beating—will get a high-spirited horse galloping.

A serious issue treated lightly and rightly can have great effect.

So what will you do with this new technique? Try your version of the Benjamin Weir story. Look for a story from your own life or from your family's life that would be appropriate.

Think what you can do with the Sleeping Beauty, Beauty and the Beast and Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs with the following item from the New York Times News Service.

Think what the wicked queens and ugly fairies could have done if they had had the dimension of outer space to work with.

They wouldn't have needed poison apples, thorns of roses or needles to send their enemies into limbo.

They could have hired a capsule on a pay loader and sent their sweet pretties far beyond the reach of handsome princes.

## Company Plans Space Burial Mission

N.Y. Times News Service

**WASHINGTON**— A group of Florida undertakers has joined with a former astronaut in the world's first commercial space venture, with plans to rocket human ashes into an orbit of the Earth.

The Celestis Group of Melbourne, Fla., signed a contract last week with Space Services Inc., based in Houston, to fire a payload of cremated human remains into orbit at 1,900 miles above the earth.

Donald K. Slayton, one of the original seven American astronauts, is president of Space Services. He said the mission would cost about \$15 million.

The contract is subject to approval by the Department of Transportation, which indicated it had no objections at this point.

**John Cherry**, a funeral director in Melbourne, Fla., formed the consortium known as the Celestis Group, which consists of engineers and other morticians.

He said Thursday that a Conestoga nose cone designed by the group would contain as many as 13,000 capsules, each three-eighths of an inch by one and a quarter inch, holding ashes that have been reduced in volume by a technique developed by Celestis.

"Celestis is a post-cremation service," Cherry said in a telephone interview Thursday from his Melbourne office. "Once the funeral services are over, the cremains will be sent to us. Then we further reduce and encapsulate them; identify each by name, Social Security number and a religious symbol and place them into the pay loader."

He said the price of burial in space would be \$3,500 a customer.

On the first launching, he added, the nose cone will be coated with a reflective material to help relatives of the deceased view the satellite mausoleum as it passes overhead. Later missions will offer deep-space burials, in which capsules would be ejected from the nose cone and dispersed into the cosmos, he said.