**Op-Ed? Where to start?**

* In Class, format will be reviewed
* Short videos will be discussed in class
* Go find and read Op-Eds to get used to the style

**The structure** of an Op-ed:

* Lead paragraph: grab the reader’s attention. Why should I care? What is your one BIG idea: this should be clear by the end of the first sentence or, at the latest, at the end of your first paragraph.
* Supporting paragraphs: build on this one BIG idea with claims, facts, anecdotes, and statistics. Consider having a “to be sure” paragraph to pre-empt objections, but this is not necessary in all cases.
* Last paragraph: do not summarize. Take your argument further. If you are arguing for action, propose a solution. Bring the story “full circle” with a compelling last sentence.

Here are Op-ed **writing tips** from the McGill Institutional Communications Department (MICD). These tips were adapted for CÉGEP students by Michel Fournier-Simard in the Fall of 2022, the **emphasis** are mine, the text is (mostly) not.

**Source:** [**https://www.mcgill.ca/newsroom/faculty-students-and-staff/op-ed**](https://www.mcgill.ca/newsroom/faculty-students-and-staff/op-ed)

The MICD link Includes a list of helpful resources on writing an Op-ed, which I encourage students to look at.

**\*\*\***

An op-ed is an opinion piece on a newsworthy topic. Op-eds provide an opportunity to inform and stimulate public debate. Some tips for writing them:

* This is not your typical CÉGEP paper, you have more freedom in style, it is YOUR Op-Ed, your voice. Normally, we want you to be neutral. Here, I want you to give me your opinion (backed up convincingly).
* Make sure you have a **thesis**. **This is not a descriptive piece.**
* Craft a clear message, **focus tightly on one idea** or argument and tell readers, high up in the piece, **why they should care**.
* Write in strong, lively language – but don’t rant.
* **Make it timely**. Tie your piece to the strongest possible news peg – a high-profile Supreme Court ruling or major space-exploration launch, for example -- and deliver it several days ahead of that event, if possible.
* Keep sentences and paragraphs **short and simple**.
* Choose a **strong title** for your piece
* Weave in relevant facts and statistics to bolster your case, but try to avoid using too many of them.
* Anecdotes and examples may help illustrate points and add colour to the piece.
* If you have a good graphic to drive home a point, offer it.
* **Steer clear of academic jargon** and technical terms; if readers (and editors) have to labour to figure out what you’re saying, you’ve lost them.
* Consider working on pre-empting objections.
* If you’re focusing on a problem, propose ways to fix it.
* Do not rant. Suggest something.
* **Finish on a note that reinforces your message**.
* Remember you are writing with a targeted audience in mind, and a specific objective.
* No works cited in an Op-Ed, you can either directly refer to sources, or [Embed](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J63yPl4BGH4) URLs in your text.