

2022 State Journalism Championship



#7 Newspaper Feature Writing

Time Limit – 1:15

Directions:

Students will assume the role of a reporter for a school newspaper and write a feature story based on the information below. Entries will be evaluated on originality, reader appeal and interest.

When you are finished:

- 1. Type your first and last name at the top right of the document.**
 - 2. Save your document as a PDF with the filename: yourfirstlastname_NPfeature_Class (For example: SusieSmith_NPfeature_ClassA).**
 - 3. Notify the proctor when you are finished.**
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From the given information, write a feature story as you would for the high school newspaper. You may use statements attributed to individuals as direct or indirect quotes. You may not change the meaning of a statement.

You are a reporter for the Leaguetown Press, the student newspaper of Leaguetown High School.

Leaguetown High School, located in the middle of the state, has an enrollment of 1,100 students in grades 9-12. Junior Alissa Bettman has been living in a homeless shelter with her mother for six months. Alissa and her mother, Jane Carter, became homeless when her step-father kicked them out of his house after an argument. With nowhere to go, Alissa and her mother turned to the Lasting Hope shelter for women and children. Along with going to school, Alissa works part-time at Subway. She is saving her money to help get herself and her mother into their own apartment before her senior year starts. Her mother is currently looking for work. Alissa was involved in drama club and volleyball her freshman and sophomore years at Leaguetown. However, due to her current circumstances, she had to quit volleyball and drama. Her grades have struggled since becoming homeless, and she hopes getting into their own apartment will help her be able to focus on her studies more, as the shelter is sometimes chaotic and loud.

ALISSA BETTMAN, homeless junior

“Being homeless is a lot tougher than I thought it would be. I wanted to get away from my step-father, but at least in his home I had my own room and my own bathroom. Now I share a bedroom with my mom and a bathroom with a dozen other people.”

“I’m not ashamed of my situation. As a teenager, I have no control over it. I have come to realize that I’m not to blame and I don’t care what others think of me. I know that I am doing the best I can with what I have right now.”

“I know a lot of people are worse off than me, so I try not to dwell on the negative. At least my mother and I have a roof over our heads and food to eat. Lasting Hope has been good to us, but I still can’t wait to get out of there and live on our own again.”

“My friends do not understand what it is like to be me. As a result, I am losing friends. They are focusing on Homecoming and I am focusing on trying to live. My teachers aren’t getting it either.”

“When we were first kicked out, it was really scary. I didn’t know where we were going to go. That night we slept in our car. When I went to school, I was a trainwreck. Fortunately my guidance counselor, Katie Davis, saw me. She pulled me into her office and got it out of me. When we were finished talking, not only did I feel better, but she lined up Lasting Hope for my mom and I. She is awesome.”

KATIE DAVIS, counselor

“Alissa came to me with worries about where her mother and her were going to sleep after a few nights of sleeping in their car. I could tell she was really upset and worried. Leaguetown works closely with Lasting Hope for many reasons, so I knew it would be a good, temporary place for them.”

“Alissa is a strong, young woman. I know she will rebound from this difficult time. We meet weekly to discuss how things are going and to plan for her future.”

JANE CARTER, mother

“Sometimes I feel like a failure as a mother since we are living in a shelter, but I know it was the right thing to do to get out of an abusive environment. I hope Alissa realizes that even though our situation is not ideal currently, it is still better than where we were.”

“I am so proud of Alissa for staying in school and having a job. I, myself, am hoping to get a job soon so we can move into our own two-bedroom apartment. I know we both need our own space.”