



Syllabus with Lesson Table

Course Description

Award-winning author Daniel Schwabauer, creator of the highly-praised *One Year Adventure Novel* and *Cover Story*, fuses journalism with history in an innovative essay writing course. In the guise of a 1930s newspaper editor, Daniel Schwabauer teaches his newest cub reporter—the student—how to think critically, how to separate fact from interpretation, how to follow a lead, and how to use supporting evidence in a persuasive *and* ethical way. Under his training, the student reads the work of journalists of the past and writes personal essays, narrative essays, persuasive essays, and expository essays, all in the form of articles for the fictional *Metropolitan World*.

Course Credit

Byline is designed for grades 9–12 and is 1 high school English credit. With some additional reading and writing, the course can also be listed for 0.5 credits of high school History, as detailed on the website. The course takes approximately 120 hours to complete.

Objective

Byline trains students to think and to organize their ideas into essay-style content. The objective is original and coherent essays that are not simply formulaic. Students will log 9,000+ words during the course.

Skills students will learn:

- Critical thinking
- Separating fact from interpretation
- Writing intelligently without jargon
- Following leads
- Using supporting evidence

Types of Written Content

Even higher education writing sites don't use the same terminology for essays. *Byline* was therefore designed with the idea that there are four types of essays that all the other types are based on:

The Narrative Essay (“Telling a Story”)

Includes:

- Biographical essays
- Autobiographical essays

The Descriptive Essay (“Painting a Picture”)

Offers more artistic freedom.

The Expository Essay (“Just the Facts”)

Structure: Thesis–Body–Conclusion

Often includes:

- Definition and example
- Comparison and contrast
- Cause and effect
- Analysis (Some analytical essays are Persuasive Essays.)

The Persuasive Essay (“Convince Me”)

Also known as the Argumentative Essay.

Structure is similar to the Expository Essay but contains an opinion.

Analytical Essays (such as the book report or review) are often types of persuasive essays.

Although presented in journalism terms, the writing in *Byline* corresponds to these four types of essays. For example:

- Editorials are often persuasive essays.
- Hard news is usually a form of expository essay.
- Features are generally narrative or descriptive essays.
- Sports columns and features tend to be narrative or descriptive or a combination of both.

“Flex” Projects

To make the course accessible for younger or struggling students, six of the 22 writing assignments are marked as Flex Projects. This means students do not need to write the actual paper to receive full credit, provided they complete the readings, exercises, and outlining included in the *Training Manual* and *Reporter’s Notebook*.

Byline is divided into six units, with one Flex Project per unit. Students on the Flex Track complete 16 projects/essays by the end of the school year, instead of all 22. A student on the Flex Track will log at least 5,000 words, as contrasted with the 9,000+ logged by the standard student.

Grading

Grades are based on a point system. Points are awarded for four things:

- *Training Manual* lessons
- *Reporter’s Notebook* entries
- Completed project writing
- Unit tests

For a full breakdown on points and grading rubrics, please see the *Teacher's Guide* pages 6–10 and 146–153. “Flex” projects are noted, and an adjusted grading rubric is provided.

Approach to Grading

Grading may be done at your convenience. However, we recommend teachers grade all the work for each unit at the end of the unit. This amounts to spending one or two hours each month when your student has completed all twelve unit lessons.

The main reason for grading at the end of a unit is that it allows your student(s) to be creative without feeling that they are being evaluated on their ideas. Many writing courses teach students to self-edit as they write. By separating the creative process from the analytical process, *Byline* helps students enjoy being creative. They need the freedom to jot down bad ideas as well as good ones, and that’s hard to do when someone is looking over your shoulder. Waiting till the end of the unit also allows students to change or expand answers as they progress, instead of feeling stuck with their previous answers because they have already been graded—which can be an extra obstacle to creativity.

Applying This Approach to Groups

Our general suggestion to grade at the end of each unit is probably unrealistic for a group setting, considering how many students’ work you may have to evaluate. It is fine to grade more often, as long as you grade piece-by-piece rather than lesson-by-lesson. We recommend allowing students a gap of time between handing in a piece and receiving feedback on it—we suggest at least one week. It is much easier for students to be objective about their writing pieces after they have some emotional distance.

Reading

Students read the works of historic journalists, all of which are printed in the textbook (*The Training Manual*):

Ernest Hemingway
H. L. Mencken
Mark Twain
G. K. Chesterton
Ray Stannard Baker
Jack London

Julius Caesar
James Connolly
Jacob A. Riis
Nellie Bly
William Allen White
Damon Runyon

Two newspapers are also included with the program. These newspapers are not required reading, but they are both designed to provide students with examples of the pieces of writing assigned in *Byline*. The examples in the *Metropolitan World* are written by the instructor himself, in the persona of the Editor in Chief. The articles in the *Retro Metro* are real, historical pieces of journalism. Journalists represented who are not already listed above are:

Stephen Crane
Richard Harding Davis
Russell B. Porter
Theodore Roosevelt
Grantland Rice

Henry Stanley
William Randolph Hearst
Westbrook Pegler
Francis Church

Your student can read them at any point, but the *Training Manual* alerts the student to relevant examples they can find in these newspapers.

Additional Resources

Website

Our website offers a variety of extra items under the “Resources” tab, such as online auto-graded unit tests, writing aids, links to research tools and musical recordings referenced in the course videos, and other helpful articles.

Historic Journalism Podcast

The *Byline* Podcast is a great opportunity to supplement your student's experience, and it's completely free! Twice each month Daniel Schwabauer highlights captivating news stories of the past and digs deeper into the lives of the reporters who covered them. Listen on the podcast webpage, or wherever you download podcasts. See the Lesson Table for suggested points in the course to listen to podcast episodes.

Extra! Extra!

Dedicated to sharing fascinating old news stories we don't have space to feature on the *Byline* podcast, this section of our website is a great place for students to supplement their coursework and find ideas for stories of their own.

0.5 History Credit (Optional)

With a little extra work, *Byline* can count as half a high school History credit. That's in *addition* to a full Language Arts/English credit! Here is what's required:

- Read all the articles in the *Metro* and *Retro World* newspapers.
- Read 3–5 stories from the *Extra! Extra!* page on the website or listen via the podcast.
- Write two additional articles of 500–800 words using any of the strategies described in the program. These articles should be inspired by something in the printed newspapers or on the website/podcast, but can be hard news, feature stories, editorials, etc.

It is your decision whether you wish this half credit to be U.S. History or World History. If your student writes exclusively about U.S. events and personalities, list it as “U.S. History”; if, instead, your student covers historical topics in other countries, list it as World History. Visit the “Optional 0.5 History Credit” page on the website to find a handy breakdown of which podcast episodes relate to U.S. History and which ones to World History.

The Witherspoon Awards

We run an end-of-year competition to showcase the work produced by the year's reporters-in-training. The competition is framed as an award sponsored by the *Metropolitan World's* fictional owner, Madge Witherspoon. The results are announced in a live webinar. See the contest webpage for information.

About the Instructor

Daniel Schwabauer, M.A., is editor of Crosswind Comics and creator of *The One Year Adventure Novel*, *Byline*, and *Cover Story* writing programs. His professional work includes stage plays, radio scripts, short stories, newspaper columns, comic books and scripting for the PBS animated series Auto-B-Good. Daniel's young adult novels, *Runt the Brave* and *Runt the Hunted*, have received numerous awards, including the 2005 Ben Franklin Award for Best New Voice in Children's Literature and the 2008 Eric Hoffer Award. The series concludes with *The Curse of the Seer*. He graduated from the University of Kansas Master's program in Creative Writing in 1995. He lives in Olathe, Kansas, with his wife.

Lesson Table

Lesson	Title	Run Time	Project	Word Count	Story Type	Essay Type	Essay #	Points	Related Readings		
1	<i>Chronojournalism</i>	15:36							<i>Metro World</i>	<i>Retro Metro</i>	Podcast / Blog
2	<i>Noting to See</i>	12:26									Note: our podcast has a distinct chronology that's meant to complement, not follow, the coursework.
3	<i>Yesterday's News</i>	14:15									
4	<i>Past, Present ...</i>	10:25									
5	<i>Yellow Journalism</i>	12:18									
6	<i>Colorful Thoughts</i>	13:33									
7	<i>Six Honest Serving Men</i>	12:58	Finger Writing: Irena Sender	300–500	Character Studies	Descriptive	1	40	<i>Forgotten Hero: Elizabeth Van Lew</i> , pg 2	<i>Much-Feared Man</i> , pg 3; <i>Plain and Fancy Killings</i> , pg 11	Episode 1: <i>The Old Jim Horse</i> , by Lincoln Steffens
8	<i>Moment of Truth</i>	12:46									
9	<i>Finger Writing</i>	13:29									
10	<i>Cleriwho?</i>	10:54	Clerihow	4 lines	Poetry				<i>Poetry</i> , pg 3		Episode 2: <i>Capturing a Confederate Mail</i> , by Ray Stannard Baker
11	<i>Close-ups</i>	10:20	Close-up poem	4–6 lines							
12	<i>Wholigans</i>	10:29	Person poem	5–6 lines							
13	<i>What's What</i>	12:09	Hindenburg Story	450–550	Current Event	Narrative	2 (FLEX)	50	<i>Hindenburg Airship Explodes!</i> , pg 1	<i>Hindenburg Burns</i> , pg 4	Episode 3: <i>Getting Captain Cameron</i> , by Ray Stannard Baker
14	<i>Backdrop</i>	12:31									
15	<i>Making Change</i>	11:11									
16	<i>Upside Down</i>	16:16	Hyperbolic Warning Op-Ed	600–700	Column	Persuasive	3	50	<i>Birds of a Feather</i> , pg 3	<i>Stranger than Fiction</i> , pg 6; <i>War, Freedom, and Fascists</i> , pg 12; <i>Yes, Virginia</i> , pg 12	Episode 4: <i>War Correspondents</i> , by Richard Harding Davis
17	<i>Just Plain Wrong</i>	16:18									
18	<i>In All Seriousness</i>	14:02									
19	<i>The Feature</i>	14:32	Wellington Hotel Fire Story	750+	Feature	Narrative	4	60	<i>Tillerman McDermott</i> , pg 4; <i>She Crossed Swords</i> , pg 6	<i>Voyaging Under the Sea</i> , pg 1	Episode 5: <i>To Be Treated as a Spy</i> , by Richard Harding Davis
20	<i>Pyramids</i>	12:00									
21	<i>Changing Hearts</i>	12:08									
22	<i>Advance Stories</i>	13:26	Advance Brief	1–3 par.s	News Briefs	Expository	5	10	<i>News Briefs</i> , pg 7	<i>News Briefs</i> , pg 2; <i>British Troops at Lexington</i> , pg 5	Episode 6: <i>The Burning of Louvain</i> , by Richard Harding Davis
23	<i>Onesies</i>	14:23	Coverage Brief	1 par.		Expository	6	10			
24	<i>Listen My Children</i>	8:54	Follow-up Brief	3–5 par.s		Expository	7	10			
25	<i>Tick Tock</i>	12:30	Crossing the Rubicon	500+	Current Event	Narrative	8 (FLEX)	50	<i>Letters</i> , pg 8		Episodes 7 & 8: <i>Lost Children and Death Comes to Cat Alley</i> , by Jacob Riis
26	<i>Crossing the Rubicon</i>	12:56									
27	<i>You Were There</i>	12:08									
28	<i>Sound's Good</i>	11:58	Review	250–500	Review	Descriptive	9	50	<i>Immortal, Beloved</i> , pg 2	<i>The Patent Office</i> , pg 5; <i>Peter Pan</i> , pg 11	Episode 9: 'Twas 'Liza's Doings, by Jacob Riis
29	<i>Fairy Dust</i>	8:50									
30	<i>Storm-Rage</i>	13:58									
31	<i>Man of Action</i>	11:03	James Connolly Action Narrative	800+	Personality Feature	Narrative	10	80	<i>Chased by Man O' War</i> , pg 6; <i>The Deserter</i> , pg 7	<i>The Search for Dr. Livingstone</i> , pg 9	Episode 10: <i>The Making of an American</i> , by Jacob Riis
32	<i>Seven Wonders</i>	13:12									
33	<i>Hurdles</i>	12:23									
34	<i>Suspenders</i>	10:59									
35	<i>First!</i>	11:13									
36	<i>Fired</i>	11:10									

37	<i>Raking Muck</i>	13:54	Nellie Bly Muckraking Story	800+	Investigative Reporting	Descriptive	11 (FLEX)	100	<i>Tenement Rats</i> , pg 4	<i>The King of the Lobby</i> , pg 8	Episodes 13 & 14: <i>Nellie Bly Breaks In and Behind Asylum Bars</i> , by Nellie Bly
38	<i>Contexting</i>	11:46									
39	<i>What a Cite</i>	10:39									
40	<i>Nellie Bly</i>	11:33									
41	<i>Exposé</i>	10:44									
42	<i>Copy Cat</i>	10:12									
43	<i>Pulitzer's World</i>	12:22	Editorial	200–300	Editorial	Persuasive	12	30	<i>A Plague of Ships</i> , pg 3	<i>Spain's Victory of Peace</i> , pg 12	Episode 15: <i>The Heart Wife</i> , by Upton Sinclair
44	<i>"To an Anxious Friend"</i>	14:15									
45	<i>The Editorial</i>	12:44									
46	<i>Op-Ed</i>	17:19	Column	500+	Column	Varies by column	13	50	<i>Valentines Day</i> , pg 3; <i>Cheese</i> , pg 3 (Lesson 46)	<i>A Plan to Save the Forests</i> , pg 5; <i>Stranger than Fiction</i> , pg 6; <i>Roosevelt</i> , pg 12	Episode 16: <i>Kebeeth the Aleut</i> , by Frank Vanderlip and Harold Bolce
47	<i>Advice Squad</i>	12:13									
48	<i>"My Father's Suit"</i>	13:08									
49	<i>Black and White</i>	15:03	Press Release: War	200–300	Press Release (War)	Expository	14	40	<i>Caesar to Rescue</i> , pg 6	<i>Action at Last!</i> , pg 3	Episode 17: <i>The Tammany Commandment</i> , by Josiah Flynt
50	<i>Monster Men</i>	14:38									
51	<i>This Means War</i>	15:01									
52	<i>October Surprise</i>	11:30	Press Release: Political Book	300–500	Press Release (Political)	Expository	15	50	<i>Lincoln's Beard</i> , pg 2		Episode 18: <i>The Real King Solomon's Mines</i> , by H. Rider Haggard
53	<i>Crucible</i>	14:10									
54	<i>Lincoln's Beard</i>	15:03									
55	<i>Pursuing Happiness</i>	12:18	Press Release: Commercial Product	300–800	Press Release (Commercial)	Expository	16	50	<i>Wheel-man Crosses America</i> , pg 2	<i>Statement from the Railroad</i> , pg 9	Episode 19: <i>Kit Carson's Duel</i> , by Emerson Hough
56	<i>About Bananas</i>	10:59									
57	<i>America for Me</i>	16:11									
58	<i>Watchdogs</i>	13:53	Short Feature (Watchdog): Product	500+	Watchdog Feature	Expository	17 (FLEX)	50	<i>The Hi-Rider Menace</i> , pg 1	<i>Taming the Bicycle</i> , pg 10	Episode 20: <i>The Caliph and His Court</i> , by Arthur Ruhl
59	<i>Story News</i>	12:09									
60	<i>Sidebars</i>	14:49									
61	<i>How Now</i>	11:55	Sports Story	300–500	Hard News Sports Story	Narrative	18	40	<i>Braddock Topples Baer!</i> , pg 1	<i>Try Bobsledding</i> , pg 7; <i>Homer No. 51</i> , pg 7	Episode 21: <i>Stories from the Royal Humane Society</i> , by Ray Stannard Baker
62	<i>The Importance of Color</i>	11:55									
63	<i>Sport Shorts</i>	12:33									
64	<i>The Sports Feature</i>	10:30	Sports Feature	500–800	Sports Feature	Descriptive	19	50	<i>Your First Baseball Game</i> , pg 5	<i>The Four Horsemen</i> , pg 6; <i>Carpentier Sure to Give</i> , pg 7	
65	<i>The Voice of the Teller</i>	12:14									
66	<i>Idol of Cheering Millions</i>	10:53									
67	<i>Time Traveler</i>	13:29	Time Traveler Comparison Story	500+	Current Event Feature	Varies	20 (FLEX)	50	<i>The Path of the Cyclist</i> , pg 5	<i>The Battle of San Juan</i> , pg 1; <i>Like a River of Steel</i> , pg 3	
68	<i>Challenger</i>	13:08									
69	<i>Danger, Will Robinson!</i>	10:43									
70	<i>Story Flow</i>	8:10	News Briefs	100	Brighteners	Expository	21	10			
71	<i>Brighteners</i>	6:11	Brighteners	100		Varies	22	10			
72	<i>Going to Press</i>	6:12									