Some Hints for Story Structure:
Putting Together the Pieces of the Puzzle

1. **Use Summary ledes: Keep'em short, simple, vivid, active.**

Example 1: *Guns, God and gays.*

Example 2: *Education, jobs and crime top the list of issues in the Syracuse mayor's race.*

2. Use Anecdotal ledes: Make'em vivid, lively – and symbolic, illustrative, and illuminating.
Example: *During Liberia's 14-year civil war, Victor Fayiah fought off and on for the government. He spent days on the front lines, battling rebel advances. Only one thing, he said, could make him stop: George Weah, the Liberian soccer sensation.*

3. **Support the lede.**
   Some techniques to do that:
   - ✓ *Supporting quote or soundbite.*
   - ✓ *Cite examples (see Guns, God and gays story)*
   - ✓ *Use statistics that illustrate the issue or problem.*
   Examples and statistics are EVIDENCE of the problem or issue.

4. **Craft a nut graf to summarize your main themes (usually 3).**
Example 1 (usually with summary ledes): *In his speech, Mayor Driscoll also promised to <u>create</u> a job bank for the city's poor, expand medical services for children and <u>hire</u> more police officers.*
Example 2 (with anecdotal ledes): *Jones is one of the 10 million Americans caught in the nation's tangled welfare system.*

5. **Make info easy for your audience to understand.**
   Some techniques to help you do that:
   - ✓ Use PLACE transitions and parallel sentence structure: *<u>In the 3rd District</u>, blah-blah. <u>In the county</u>, blah-blah<u>. In the mayor's race</u>, blah-blah.*
   - ✓ Use bullet lists, especially for examples, statistics and numbers (note that bullet lists need a set-up sentence with a colon): *Consider these examples:* Or *Pollsters pinpoint these controversial races:* Or *The contested races include:*
   - ✓ Use topics such as *education*, followed by the position of each candidate.
   Example: *<u>On education</u>, both candidates promised big improvements. Driscoll cited his pledge to hire more teachers. Mahoney pledged to add classroom assistants.*
     - ✓ Translate numbers into simple concepts: *One in six Americans lack health insurance. More than 15 percent of Americans lack health insurance.*

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