**Op-Ed Template**

An op-ed can be an effective way to both tell your story and take a position on a relevant issue or policy. In this template, we will show you the basic structure of writing an op-ed and give you a few quick tips on potentially getting your op-ed published.

Op-Ed Format (Generally between 600-800 words)

1. *Introduction (First Paragraph)* – Catch your reader’s attention! You want to make sure your reader continues with the article so you can use statistics, language that stands out, or a particularly catchy anecdote to get your reader’s attention. In your introduction, you want to also have a thesis or argument statement. This is a sentence where you make your position on a particular policy or public issue clear and explain why you are taking that position.
2. *Tell Your Story (Second and Third Paragraph)* – This is where you tell your story! Your story should directly relate to the policy or public issue that you are taking a stance on. Maybe your story inspired your position? You want to continue to be concise and use language and detail that captures the reader’s attention.
3. *Connect Your Story to The Issue and Expand Your Opinion (Fourth and Fifth Paragraph)* – Here, you want to transition to talking about the issue that is the topic of your op-ed. Directly connect why your story makes you passionate about this issue. Also, you have an opportunity to expand on the position that you developed in your thesis statement. While you still want to keep your points concise, you can add research, statistics, or points that further backup your argument.
4. *Conclusion (Sixth Paragraph)* – You want to tie everything together in your concluding paragraph. It’s often good practice to rephrase your thesis statement here. If you have a call to action (this is when you ask the reader to do something), the conclusion can be a great place to add this.

Tips for getting your op-ed published

While writing is essential, it is just the first part of getting an op-ed published. Here are a few tips for getting your op-ed out there:

* Reread and revise – An op-ed that flows well and is error free has a much higher chance of getting published. Make sure you read your op-ed through a few (maybe three) times. Also, if you have a friend or colleague who you think would provide helpful advice, ask them to read your op-ed and give you feedback.
* Write while your issue is relevant – Publications are going to want to publish an op-ed when the topic is relevant. If the school board is voting on a measure, try to send your op-ed either right before or right after the vote. Timing can be a key part of getting your writing published.
* To find out where to submit your op-ed, go to the website of the publication that is catching your interest. They should have a place on their website where they detail how to submit an article or op-ed. Many times, publications receive a number of different submissions. It’s important to be persistent and recognize that you might not get your first op-ed published. Keep trying!
* While publications like the New York Times, the Washington Post, and Politico can be household names, these aren’t necessarily where you want to start with your op-ed. If you are writing on a local school choice issue, make sure you are submitting your op-ed to your local publication.