WRITING THE STORY

The Inverted Pyramid, Lead and Nut Graf
Lead Checklist

- Includes 5Ws and 1 H
- Presents conflict of story
- Offers specific details
- Brief: 25-30 words (max of 40)
THE INVERTED PYRAMID

WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY, HOW, ETC...
Include “nut graf”
SUPPORTING DETAILS
BACKGROUND DETAILS
GENERAL DETAILS

MOST IMPORTANT INFORMATION
LEAST IMPORTANT INFORMATION
What’s a Nut Graf?

• Paragraph immediately following lead.
• It’s your “so what”?
• Why is story compelling or why does it matter?
• Gets reader to connect with story while providing relevant details.
Write Your Story …

- Review your lead (make it compelling: who, what, when, where, why how)
- List facts you have for story
- Prioritize facts and fill in pyramid
- Write nut graf (so what?)
- Write remaining paragraphs
- Vivid imagery, yet simple language
- Active voice, not passive
- Be accurate
Time to Revise

• After completing rough draft, give it a day or two before editing so you are “fresh”
• Go over rough draft in pencil, marking changes needed
• Look not just at structure and AP style, but flow of ideas through lead, nut graf and support
• Cut out everything that does not add directly to a reader’s understanding
• Be hard on yourself! Make less work for your editor…