

A life in the day of  
susan sarandon  
essay sample



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

The article ' A life in the day of Susan Sarandon' is an article featured in The Sunday Times Magazine, a supplement to a broadsheet newspaper. As it is a broadsheet newspaper as opposed to a tabloid is it to be expected that the readers will be quite intelligent. The article is non-gender specific and is aimed more towards adults. The article gives the reader an insight into the life of Susan Sarandon, but it can also be used to show readers about the dire situation the people of Tanzania and India are in. The main purpose of the article is to inform the reader about her life and we are able to learn about some of the work Unicef does.

The article is used to provide some entertainment for the reader. The overall structure of the piece is set out in a way so that we are able to get to know the life of Susan Sarandon as well as her family and the requirements of her various jobs - mother, actress and Unicef ambassador. The first paragraph in the article gives the reader an insight into the family of Susan Sarandon. It tells us a little of her history and the main subject of the article - her work for Unicef and as a star of various films and shows.

This enables the reader to have background knowledge about her without it having to be added into the rest of the article. The article seems to be structured as a normal run through the day. At the beginning Susan Sarandon seems like a quite ordinary mother whereas the work she does for Unicef shows her day is a far cry from ordinary life. The various angles from which the article is written show the reader all the different sides to her life. This gives us more of an insight to the type of person she is and makes the article more personal.

We are able to identify with Susan Sarandon from the point of view of an ordinary person e. g. ' When I get home I often don't get around to changing out of my gym clothes'. The beginning of the article portrays her life to be quite ordinary. By learning about her work for Unicef, for example - ' In Bombay I went to a refuge for kids whose mothers have HIV' we are also able to see the extraordinary side to her life. Although there is no direct address to the reader the relationship is quite close. The reader is able to feel as though they know Susan Sarandon quite well and this is because of the personal thoughts and feelings discussed in the article.

Intimate details such as ' Sometimes I get upset by what I see, but I don't allow myself to go on that journey. ' are feelings very personal to Susan Sarandon and we are able to get an insight into her character by the inclusion of these. Occasionally the article makes the reader think about things without actually addressing them personally. An example of this would be ' But how can you live with yourself if you don't give something back? ' Although she is not directly addressing the reader she is asking a question which makes the reader consider what she is doing and why.

The selection of personal details in the article makes the reader feel more included and makes it much more intimate. We are able to find out about her personality by the way in which she reacts and her feelings about certain aspects of her job as a Unicef worker. We can tell that Susan Sarandon is quite a caring person because of the way she feels when she leaves her children to go to work abroad, this is shown when she says - ' I leave them token presents for every day I'm away: a baseball card, a lipstick, chocolate'.

We are able to see through this statement that she wants to make her children happy and that they must be very significant in her life. Other details, which allow the reader to get to know Susan Sarandon, are the details about her life at home with her husband Tim. For example, the sentence ' When two people work outside the home and have artistic temperaments and needs, and both are powerful... ' shows what Susan Sarandon thinks of herself and her husband. We are able to see what type of a person she is by her own opinions of herself giving the reader a more intimate knowledge.

Another example of the reader being able to see her character is when she says to the people of Tanzania ' I'm really important' and then goes on to say ' I'm a female basketball star'. She is joking with them showing the reader that she is aware of people's feelings and likes to make them feel valued and included. The tone of the article is informal and this is conveyed by the use of colloquial language, for example, the use of ' kids' rather than children. The use of conversational language makes Susan Sarandon seem more real as opposed to an untouchable film star.

The tone of the article is serious in places; ' One woman began crying when I was talking to her'. Because the subject is serious a more serious and formal tone is adopted. Overall the tone is quite light-hearted and there is some sarcasm involved, an example of this would be ' I start to see my words coming out in bubbles'. The reader knows she isn't being serious but it makes the tone of the article less formal and makes her seem more familiar, we feel as though we know her more intimately.

The use of the 1st person personal pronoun - ' I', makes the article much more personal and makes it possible for the article to contain intimate thoughts and feelings, the use of the 1st person possessive pronoun - ' my', also gives a more intimate knowledge and understanding of Susan Sarandon. The use of proper nouns in the article such as ' India, New York, Bali and Tanzania' all give an insight into the wide range of places that Susan Sarandon works in. They give the reader a more detailed knowledge of Susan Sarandon's lifestyle, which is also the effect of time and place adverbials in the article.

Examples of these include ' At 5. 30am it'll be dinner time in New York' and this shows the reader the huge amount of distance between Susan Sarandon and her family when she travels abroad with Unicef. The use of the adverbial ' one day' creates a reminiscent feel to the article. This gives a more person feel to the article because they are Susan Sarandon's intimate memories. Compression adds to the colloquial feel to the article, as it is usually a spoken language feature. ' I'll, they're, don't' and ' I'm' are all examples of compression, which make the article less formal and more familiar.

There are a variety of sentence types in this article, the simple sentence structure gives a more colloquial feel to the article and is straight to the point without giving the reader too much detail. It is often used to introduce a new topic into a paragraph; an example of the use of simple sentence structures is ' During term time I walk my kids to school'. A lot of compound sentences are used in the article and a co-ordinating conjunction is used to introduce more detail, for example - ' I thought I couldn't have children, but I had Eva when I was 39 and Miles at 45'.

The use of the co-ordinating conjunction ' but' is used to give the reader more of an in-depth knowledge of her life and thoughts etc. There are some complex sentences in the article and these are used to give the reader a lot more detail. An example of this is ' I am blessed with great powers of empathy and imagination, which are the roots of acting and activism... ' The use of the subordinating conjunction ' which' enables the writer to include more detail in the actions, talents and thoughts of Susan Sarandon.

The article contains a medical semantic field, which includes Proper nouns such as ' Aids' and ' HIV' as well as other concrete nouns such as ' dysentery, malaria pill and acidophilus'. This semantic field focuses the mind of the reader on the medical side to Susan Sarandon's job. This semantic field shows that an understanding of the effects of diseases is vital to her in her job as a Unicef ambassador. The family semantic field, with words such as ' Children, term-time, real-life and mother' remind the reader that her family is very important and a significant part of her life.

The film industry semantic field reminds the reader of the importance of her principal job as an actress. It features largely in this article which shows its importance in her life, with words such as ' Bollywood, auditioning, acting job, movies and media circus' all featuring amongst the names of films she has starred in. Graphologically, the article has three features, which attract the reader. The first is the large picture of Susan Sarandon in the centre of the page. Readers who have seen her films and shows would be interested to know why she is pictured with, what look like, needy children.

Instantly the audience is aware that this article is not about Susan Sarandon in her familiar world of films and stardom. The two huge sets of speak marks at the beginning and end of the article attract the reader because we think the article will be her own words and feelings, something not often found in the media! The quote underneath the picture ' My own kids are so healthy and cherished that it's almost shocking' back up the idea that this article is written as though Susan Sarandon is writing it herself.

It involves her private life which is something not a lot of people would know about and may be interested in. The quote also creates a feeling of mystery as the reader may wonder why she finds it almost shocking that her children are so loved and healthy. Through various linguistic features we are able to see some of Susan Sarandon's personality and temperament, as well as her feelings and thoughts on various aspects of her life. The grammar, tone and selection of detail give us an insight into her life and the important aspects in her life, and it is only during the span of one day.