

# [The town fiesta essay sample](https://assignbuster.com/the-town-fiesta-essay-sample/)

Find someone you think is interesting and newsworthy (someone who’s spending her summer doing something interesting, has overcome difficulties, has an unusual job or hobby, goes out of his way to help others, won a prestigious award, etc.). Write about the person without stating any of your own opinions in the story. Use third person (he said, she did), with accurate quotes in the person’s own words. Try to capture a sense of the individual’s personality and mood. Quote at least two other people who know the subject of your story well. Get an action photo of your subject – either take it yourself or get one from them. A list of sources and contact information is required. Your story should be between 600 and 800 words, unless otherwise specified by your editor. It is important that you begin work on this or any assignment immediately because it will take you several hours to conduct interviews and write a good story. Additionally, your sources may not be able to set aside time to interview, if you wait until the last moment.

Choosing a Topic for Your Story

Pick something newsworthy to many people, not just to you. Being in a sorority, doing community service, and playing the cello while working and maintaining a B-plus average is impressive. But it’s not newsworthy. Many students successfully juggle many tasks. However, if the same student was the only person to win a national award for community service or just got signed by a professional orchestra, that would be newsworthy. Similarly, being a member of a varsity sports team takes talent but it is not newsworthy. However, if the athlete set a school record for points scored or got drafted by a professional team, that’s newsworthy. In addition, keep in mind: If another reporter has already published a story about your subject, s/he’s not newsworthy. The person is old news. Choose someone else. Choose someone you have access to and whom you can interview (several times, if necessary). Make sure the person is OK with being written about in a story that may potentially be published. Avoid writing about close friends, significant others, family members and anyone who has authority over you (e. g., a boss, a professor, etc.). This is a conflict of interest. Don’t write about dead people – that’s an obituary, not a profile. Remember, you   
must be able to interview the person you are writing about. In addition, you will need at least two other sources.

How to Write a Profile Story

A profile story is a portrait of a person in words. Like the best painted portraits, the best profiles capture the character, spirit and style of their subjects. They delve beneath the surface to look at what motivates people, what excites them, what makes them interesting. Good profiles get into the heart of the person and find out what makes them tick. The problem is that lives are hard to fit into newspaper articles, no matter how much space is allotted for them. Reporters who simply try to cram into a profile all the facts they can come up with inevitably end up with something more like a narrative version of a resume than a journalism story. Like all other stories, profiles must have an angle, a primary theme. That theme should be introduced in the lead, it should be explored and often it will be returned to at the end of the story. Something of a person’s character, spirit and style will then be revealed through that theme. Whatever the theme, it takes a thorough understanding of a person’s life to create a revealing sketch of that life.

Reporters should spend time with their subjects while they’re doing whatever makes them newsworthy. For example, if you’re writing about a ballerina, try to observe her performing on stage or at least practicing in her dance studio. Good profiles – and all good journalism stories – show, instead of telling. Use all five senses when you interview someone. What are they wearing? Do they fiddle nervously with their pencil? Is there a chocolate smudge on their shirt? Is their hair stylishly spiked? Because a profile cannot be complete without quotes – there is no way to write a profile without extensive interviewing. Frequently, more than one interview is necessary unless the writer already knows his subject well Good profiles also contain quotes from people who know the subject of your story well. Spice your story with the words of family, friends, enemies and the subjects themselves. Finally, good profiles strike the appropriate tone. Think about your profile – is it someone who is involved in a serious issue, like eating disorders? You probably want to be more serious in your tone. Is it someone playful – a comic book artist, perhaps? You can be more playful. But remember – your personal opinion is not appropriate. You are there to merely paint a picture of this person – to let the facts speak for themselves.