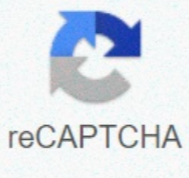




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## What are literary techniques in travel journalism

So, you want to be a travel writer? There are plenty of reality doses out there already, so we're going to focus on the positives, and what you can do to maximize your chances of travel writing professionally. One of the first steps: you should absolutely know your markets, and what types of travel writing are popular in them. In today's competitive market, this knowledge can both help you structure your article and target the right audience. In this post, we break down modern travel writing into three distinct categories: freelance journalism, blogging, and book-writing. Then we identify the prevalent types of travel writing each category is known for, to give you an initial sort of compass in the industry. Freelance Travel Journalism Credit: jpete2 @ Pixabay The truth is this: the travel sections in major publications (New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal) are slimmer now, so competition will be tall. But there are other outlets. Local newspapers are sometimes open to travel pitches from freelancers. Certain websites pay for travel articles, while magazines can be great for targeting niche audiences. So what are the common types of freelance travel journalism? Destination articles Here, the game's in the name: destination articles tell readers about a place to which they might want to travel one day. One of the most standard type of travel stories, these pieces act as the armchair reader's bird-eye view of a place. Useful or interesting facts pepper the writing. History, points of interest, natural scenery, trendy spots: a destination article can touch upon them all within the framework of a broad narrative. Where the average article gives readers a sense of the destination, the best of the best convinces readers that this is a destination they want, nay, need to visit. As such, though some destination articles are written in first person, the focus is rarely on the writer. Instead, the destination is the star of the show. For examples of destination articles, check out: Credit: judithscharnowski @ Pixabay Special-interest articles Special-interest articles are offshoots of destination articles. Instead of taking the reader on a tour of an entire country or city, these pieces cover one particular aspect of the destination. This kind of writing can cover anything from art in Colombia, ghost towns in the U.S., trekking in Patagonia, alpaca farms in Australia, motorbiking in Brazil, railroads in France, volunteering in Tanzania – you get the gist. Since special-interest articles are narrower in topic, many writers tailor them for niche magazines or websites. Before you start pitching, we recommend flipping through the Writer's Handbook, one of the most useful guides to the freelance publishing market, to see which publications fit your target audience. For a taste of some special-interest articles, see: Holiday and special events Holiday and special events travel articles ask writers to write about a destination before the event takes place. The biggest global events are magnets for this type of travel writing, such as the World Cup, the Olympics, the World Expo, fashion weeks, and film festivals. Depending on the publication, regional events work just as well. Want to see what special events pieces look like? Have a read through these: Round-ups You'll recognize a round-up article when you see one, as it'll go, "40 best beaches in West Europe," or, perhaps, "20 of the greatest walks in the world!" It's a classic tool in any magazine or newspaper writer's toolbox, taking a bunch of destinations and grouping them all under one common thread. Ultimately, a clear motif makes this type of article a breeze to read, as they're a play on the ubiquitous List Format. But, OK, before you jump at this excuse to sacrifice your belly at 99 food trucks in New York City, remember that your premise should be original, not to mention practical. What's tough is coming up with X ways to do Y in the first place, as that demands you put in the travel and research to produce a thorough write-up. Credit: cowins @ Pixabay Want even more examples of round-up articles? Here you go: Personal essays Publishers are experiencing something of a personal essay fatigue, so the market for more might be scarce these days. However, quality trumps all, and a good personal travel essay is just plain good writing in disguise: something that possesses a strong voice while showing insight, growth, and backstory. Just don't make it a diary entry. In an interview with The Atlantic, travel writer Paul Theroux said: "The main shortcut is to leave out boring things. People write about getting sick, they write about tummy trouble. They write about waiting. They write three pages about how long it took them to get a visa. I'm not interested in the boring parts. Everyone has tummy trouble. Everyone waits in line. I don't want to hear about it." Here's a jumping-off point for personal travel essays: Taking the Great American Roadtrip (Smithsonian) Op-eds Have a burning opinion to share? Sometimes publications end up giving op-eds to staff, but there are always open calls for opinion pieces. Travel op-eds are much rarer than political opinion pieces, but there's a pattern to the ones that make the cut: good persuasive writing. If you can come at a topic from a unique angle (and argue your case clearly) then you may be able to publish your opinion. If you're in the mood for travel op-ed articles, see: Travel Blogging Credit: KuyaAndy @ Pixabay When typing "travel blog" into Google returns 295 million results, we can guess it's a fairly competitive market. Here's the plus side: bloggers get to write what they want and go where they please. When it comes to blog posts, there are no editors, no gatekeepers. Only you and the "PUBLISH" button. We won't go revisit the types of travel writing we covered earlier (such as the roundup format). Instead, we'll explore some of the other formats bloggers use to tell their travel stories. Since the rules of travel blogging are next to non-existent, our tally below is by no means definitive. And, again, our best advice is to note what your favorite bloggers do on their blogs. Already running a successful travel blog? You might consider turning that blog into a book! How-To How-To articles are already fairly popular in magazines, but they're positively omnipresent in the travel blogging world. Blogs provide a direct communication platform, allowing trust to build up quicker with the readers. As a result, for the search query, "How to travel Europe on a budget," six out of the top ten results are posts from trusted independent blogs. A How-To article is the most standard form of advice column a travel blogger can produce. It's intrinsically useful, promising that it'll teach something by article's end. A blogger's challenge is delivering fully on that promise. How to read more How-To articles? We got you covered: Itineraries Itineraries reveal the schedule that the writer took at a given destination, city-by-city or sight-by-sight. They're meant for the traveler who's embarking on a similar trip and needs a template. Typically, you'll find that an itinerary post is an easy place for you to slip in recommendations, anything from the accommodation you used or the restaurants you tried. You can use itinerary posts to reinforce your blog's brand. For instance, an itinerary posted on a blog focused around budget travel will probably maximize cost-saving chances. For more itineraries, see: Longform posts Longform travel blogging tells a travel story through extended narrative content, as it takes a week's worth of adventure and shapes it into a story. Longform blog posts about travel often end up being creative nonfiction: a way to present nonfiction – factually accurate prose about real people and events – in a compelling, vivid, dramatic manner. Photography can add another dimension to the form, as Emmanuel Nataf (our co-founder!) shows on his travel blog. And Reedsy's very own Arielle provides a glimpse into why she prefers longform travel writing on her blog. Steps, a Travel Journal: My favourite kinds of stories are the ones that give you a real sense of place. That's why I enjoy longform travel blogging: I get to describe the character of a place through the experiences I encountered there. If you want to dip your toe into the sea of longform posts, you can also read: Books Credit: skeeze @ Pixabay When it comes to writing a book, you can take all the challenges about travel writing from above and magnify it times 2,000. If you're asking readers to commit to you for more than 100 pages, you'd best make sure that your book is worth their while. As far as examples go, travel writing's boomed in the mainstream book market recently. But there's much more to it than Eat, Pray, Love and its descendants. Travelogues In travelogues, authors record their adventures in a way that illustrates or sheds insight upon the place itself. Travelogues possess a storied past, from Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's Turkish Embassy Letters in 1763 to Mark Twain's 1867 The Innocents Abroad, which paved the way for the sort of comic travelogues that Bill Bryson's perfected today. Up for some travelogues? Check out: Travel memoirs Nowadays, travel memoirs are practically synonymous with Elizabeth Gilbert's wildly popular Eat, Pray, Love and Cheryl Strayed's bestselling Wild, which were both recently adapted into Hollywood blockbusters. That said, be aware that you'll need a pretty exceptional personal story for your memoir to compete in today's market. If you're still set on writing or self-publishing a travel memoir, it's tricky to balance personal backstory and travel for 400 pages, so think about taking on a professional for a second pair of eyes. Did you know? You can find Nicki Richesin, a top Bloomsbury editor who's edited for Cheryl Strayed, on our marketplace. In addition to Eat, Pray, Love and Wild, you can read: Guidebooks As Oscar Wilde said, "I never travel without my diary. One should always keep something sensational to read in the train." But these days, people are replacing diaries with travel guides – the ubiquitous Lonely Planet becoming one of the more common sights on transit. Travel writing in guidebooks is straightforward, informative, and fact-filled. In addition, there's a certain amount of responsibility that comes with the job. Lonely Planet alone is read by millions of travelers worldwide. General Tips and Guidelines Credit: myeviajes @ Pixabay As we mentioned before, the trick to producing great travel writing is ultimately simply writing well. To that extent, you should make sure to follow all the guidelines of good writing – not least, spell-checking your article before submitting or publishing it anywhere. You don't want an editor or reader to see it while it still reads lik edis. Also, keep in mind the tone, style, and vibe of the publication and platform (and by extension, your audience). A story about a moon-rock could go into a kid's magazine or it could go into Scientific America. Finally, some category-specific tips: If you're freelance writing, always check submission guidelines. Publications may accept only pitches or they may welcome articles "pre-written articles). Some sources only take travel articles that were written within 6 months of the trip. If you're blogging, brand your website (same advice you're an author who's building an author website). If you're writing a book, get a professional editor! An unedited book is an unwieldy thing, and professional eyes provide direction, continuity, and assnance. (Layout designers can be important if you're publishing a travel photography book, in the meanwhile.) Travel writing isn't a cinch. In fact, it's a long and often hard grind. But by figuring out what type of travel writing you want to try your hand at, you're taking the crucial first step. Have you tried travel writing before? Want to show us the cool travel blog that you're keeping? We're always in the mood for great travel writing + pretty pictures. Leave us a note in the comments and we'll be sure to check it out! Other Times Other Places Is it lack of imagination that makes us come to imagined places, not just stay at home? Elizabeth Bishop Travel Writing and Global Change: Lavinia Spalding delivers a Tedtalk about how sharing travel stories can lead to understanding and positive change. In this section you'll come to understand the conventions of travel writing, learn a bit about the history of the genre, question why people are compelled to travel – and to write about it – and investigate both what it means to be a tourist and the impact of tourism on places in the world. You'll also investigate the overlap between language and literature that exists in the wide and varied genre of travel writing. You'll read non-fiction texts that feel like stories and see imaginary scenes presented as fact. You'll learn to decode elements of travel writing and question texts more closely. finding analysis points and learning to evaluate various pieces of writing. These kinds of skills underpin your success in Paper 1 at the end of your course. Begin your study by reading The Travel Narrative from the list of articles below, and then choose one or two more pieces of wider reading to enrich your study: Class Activity: why do we travel? This title of this story, from the Travel Tales website, suggests the writer has a desire to be informed about a far away place. But the word 'authentic' and the picture of a 'local' also suggests curiosity about other people. As you will have learned by now, people travel – and write about the places they visit – for a variety of reasons, the most common are: to find the self; curiosity about the 'other'; religious or spiritual reasons; to search for one's roots; to be informed. In this activity, you'll practice identifying these purposes in travel writing. Visit Travel Tales, a collection of stories and articles curated and edited by Lavinia Spalding. Slowly scroll down the home page of her site, reading the titles and blurbs of the various stories you find there. Can you infer the purpose of travel from these snippets of information? Refer to The Travel Narrative (above) for more information of the purposes of travel writing. Areas of Exploration Guiding Conceptual Question 'Cultural practices' refers to traditional or customary practices of a particular ethnic, national or cultural group. They can be considered in the same way as symbolism in literary texts; physical manifestations of abstract beliefs and values. One reason we travel is to discover the beliefs and values of different people, as practiced in rites and traditions which have often been passed down from generation to generation. Before you work through the resource below, can you think of any practices that are special in your culture? These may include religious, medical, artistic, culinary, political, family or any other behaviour that reveals underlying beliefs and values: How do texts reflect, represent or form a part of cultural practices? Learner Portfolio 1 Do you love the outdoors yourself? Have you ever grasped the bleakness that exists when the natural world is destroyed? If the answer to these questions is 'yes' opinion columnist Nicolas Kristof, from The New York Times, might strike a chord with you. He has been writing about the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) for years now and is a prolific and highly respected columnist for the New York Times. Common topics in his columns are the environment, human rights and charity. Read a small collection of articles curated from his blog 'On the Ground' (above) and discuss them with your classmates and teacher. You could use the following four questions to guide your discussion and to structure your learner portfolio entry for this topic: What arguments does Kristof make about nature, the natural world and hiking?How does Kristof discuss nature, the natural world, and hiking and why? Identify 5 different techniques or stylistic elements of his writing and consider their effect on the reader.Apart from nature, what else does Kristof write about and why? Learner Portfolio 2 Watch Lavinia Spalding's Tedtalk (above) and, if you have not done so already, visit Travel Tales to browse some of the stories from her collection. Near the end of this talk Lavinia issues a challenge: to write your own literary travel story, inspired by a place you've been or a person you've met on a journey you have taken. Take her up on this challenge by writing a piece of literary non-fiction about a place you have been on a journey you have taken in your life. Through your writing make the purpose of your travel clear: to find the self; discover the 'other'; become informed; search for your roots; take a religious or spiritual journey. Paper 1 Text Type Focus: travel writing At the end of your course you will be asked to analyze unseen texts (1 at Standard Level and 2 at Higher Level) in an examination. You will be given a guiding question that will focus your attention on formal or stylistic elements of the text(s), and help you decode the text(s)' purpose(s). Travel writing is an extremely fluid genre and you could be presented with a text that contains a variety of tropes (such as maps, photographs, itineraries, reported or direct speech, humour, metaphors... the list goes on) and may even share similarities with literary texts. Use these practice texts to familiarise yourself with the different features of Travel Writing and add them to your Learner Portfolio; you will want to revise text types thoroughly before your Paper 1 exam. You can find more information – including text type features and sample Paper 1 analysis – by visiting 20/20. Read through one or two of the exemplars, then choose a new paper and have a go at writing your own Paper 1 analysis response: Viewpoint: travel writing often documents the personal experiences of someone exploring a new place or country so is often first person.Perspective: an outsider's perspective is common when reading travel writing, particularly if the destination is new, exotic or remote. Alternatively, the piece might be written from an insider's perspective and is inviting you to visit or share an experience in a different part of the world.Structure: look out for chronological timelines, past – present structures or a linear journey of discovery. Guidebooks will have clear headings and subheadings and will probably include box-outs and the like.Information: travel writing often seeks to be informative and can present you with facts and figures, names and dates, historical or architectural or geographical information and more.Description: if the writer is trying to make the destination tantalising, or to help transport the reader, you might find examples of visual imagery, vivid description, even figurative comparisons, helping you visualise a far-off place.Visuals: photographs, maps, or floor plans of famous locations are all visual features that you might encounter in travel writing, particularly guidebooks. Body of Work: Alison Wright Photography Alison Wright: Portraits of the Human Spirit is a National Geographic documentary that delves into Alison Wright's wanderlust and evaluates the achievement of her photography. Alison Wright is an author, photographer and speaker who has published several collections of photo-essays including Faces of Hope: Children of a Changing World and The Spirit of Tibet: Portrait of a Culture. Her most recent collection from 2018 is titled Human Tribe. Her mission is to document endangered cultures and traditions from around the world, including raising awareness of human rights and other issues. Alison has won numerous awards and accolades including the Dorothea Lange Award in Documentary Photography for her photographs of child labor in Asia and a two-time winner of the Lowell Thomas Travel Journalism Award. She was named a National Geographic Traveler of the Year in 2013. Here is a small selection of her photography to use in class, or you can explore Alison's complete body of work here. The presentation of beliefs and values through images is a powerful tool that can help preserve minority cultures in the face of globalisation and help to balance historical injustice by educating those who have lost touch with the past or with alternative ways of living. Texts of all kinds – written, spoken, visual – can help protect cultural heritage that might otherwise be lost. Alison Wright's work can be seen in the wider context of cultural preservation, an important global issue in our increasingly homogenised and globalised world. Towards Assessment: Individual Oral "Supported by an extract from one non-literary text and one from a literary work, students will offer a prepared response of 10 minutes, followed by 5 minutes of questions by the teacher, to the following prompt: Examine the ways in which the global issue of your choice is presented through the content and form of two of the texts that you have studied. (40 marks)" Please find suggestions here; but always be mindful of your own ideas and class discussions and follow the direction of your own programme of study when devising your assessment tasks. Alison Wright's photography would make a good text to consider using in your Individual Oral. The named author would be 'Alison Wright' and you can consider her work in light of the Field of Inquiry: Culture, Identity and Community. A pertinent Global Issue might be 'Cultural Preservation'. Though the colonial era has passed, its legacy lives on in the education systems, laws, political systems and other cultural practices that have displaced indigenous traditions and beliefs. In this context, the reassertion of minority cultures through texts is a powerful tool that can help balance out historical injustices and educate those who have lost touch with alternative ways of life. You could easily pair her work with any literary text that reveals aspects of culture, describes cultural practices, or reflects cultural beliefs and concerns. Speak with your teacher about ideas for pairing texts, or use the suggestions below as a starting point: Broken April by Ismail Kadare – you might like to consider the idea that some cultural traditions are worth preserving, while others should rightly be consigned to the dustbin of history. An apt comparison might be found in chapters 4 or 7 of this novel, in which Kadare subtly implies the Kanun is a dying tradition. Alternatively you could explore the symbolism of Diana's eyes in light of the way Wright focuses on eyes in her newest collection Human Tribe.Keats' Odes – suffused with the imagery of drink, drugs and consumption, Keats' poetry reveals attitudes towards medication that might seem strange to a reader today. You could focus on Ode on Melancholy or Ode to a Nightingale in order to explore this idea.Pygmalion by George Bernard Shaw – the play is awash with peculiar Victorian mores revealing all kinds of beliefs and attitudes about class, poverty, prudery, morality and more. Doolittle's speeches, Mrs Higgins' at-home or conversations between Higgins, Pickering and Mrs Pearce could all be passages that you might like to select for this activity. Towards Assessment: HL Essay Please find suggestions here; but always be mindful of your own ideas and class discussions and follow the direction of your own programme of study when devising your assessment tasks. If you are an HL student who enjoyed this section of work, and find the topic of travel writing interesting, you might consider this Body of Work to write your Higher Level Essay. You could extend your research beyond Human Tribe to include some of her other published collections. Angles of investigation might include: to what extent you think she is successful in her aim of bridging the gap between different cultures; whether her photography constitutes a modern form of travel writing; to what extent her photography reveals and represents cultural practices; whether you feel the photographs form or impose an identity onto people from an outsider's perspective. Here are some suggestions for you – but always follow your own lines of inquiry should your thoughts lead you in a different direction: How is colour and composition used to present ideas about identity in Alison Wright's photography?How does Alison Wright imply a close connection between people and the natural world in her photography collections?How does Alison Wright use metonymy in her photographic work?Explore the symbolism of eyes in Alison Wright's photographic collections. Wider Reading and Research Outpost Magazine – a Canadian adventure-travel publication published six times a year, Outpost is known for its long-form adventure narratives from across the world.My Favourite Travel Book – six famous travel writers nominate their favourite travel books.The Most Inspiring Talks on Travel – a selection of the best Tedtalks about travel, including Lavinia Spalding's talk.The Truth About Tribal Tourism – visit this Rough Guide blog to discover how your sustainable tour may not be as friendly to people or places as you might have thought... Categories-Other Times Other Places, Time and Space

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