



# How Journalism Decided My Major

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A career in journalism is a possibility that I have dreamt of since I was in sixth grade. It doesn't matter which area my career is in; my only requirement is that I have a part in creating and managing a quality product. Writing, editing, photography, layout and design, law—all of these special interest areas intrigue me as possibilities for a career within the vast field of journalism and mass communication. Though my emphasis is visual communication within journalism, I've been interested in the art of writing since I was a little girl.

From the time that I started reading at age four, I have been following my journalistic process of writing. This process includes observing other authors' writing, writing my own short stories for assignments and for my own well being, critiquing and comparing my own writing to other similar examples, and submitting my work for final review. I have followed the steps to this process this far, ultimately ending in my decision to enter the field of journalism and mass communication as my profession of choice.

The beginning of these four steps began when I was little and watched as my parents turned pages containing the excitement of Disney characters or the adventures of the Berenstain bears. Not only did the colorful pictures impress me, but also how they and the storyline were able to correspond with each other. Through the illustrations, I was able to see the story in my head and create my own colorful pictures mentally. When I began reading chapter books a few years later, this creative skill helped me to see the ongoing plot. In visual communication, I am able to help show an event alongside its accompanying story.

Throughout elementary school, I was continually writing short stories that were similar to the short stories being read in my classes. Most of the time, these stories weren't finished because I didn't know how to effectively end a story. In my observance of other writers' works, I wrote similar styles. In elementary school, my sixth grade teacher encouraged me to pursue journalism as a career because of the enthusiasm that I had shown for various writing assignments.

In high school English classes, I learned that my writing was the most effective when I clearly wrote the description of the action. I had the

opportunity to use this skill in journalism and yearbook classes throughout high school.

I've learned that I can be a better writer if I compare my work to other writers and critique both articles. Journalism contains many self-taught styles that are used to make sure that articles are similar in writing. When I was in junior high, I realized that I enjoyed editing, which is a skill that will always be useful in journalism. I've had to learn that while editing is a necessary skill and important to use, constantly correcting grammar and punctuation can be tiresome after a period of time, to both the writer and the editor. At times, I still aspire to be an editor because that position encourages people to make assignments as accurate as they can be.

Journalism has always been an interest of mine because of the process it takes for an idea to become a reality by covering a story, writing the article, and presenting it as a quality product. I decided to enter a career in journalism in sixth grade because I will always have an outlet to write. There are many career choices within this field, but I am always willing to do what I enjoy, such as photography, or pursue a more demanding career, such as journalism law. Within any of these careers, I will be able to apply the journalistic process that has guided me to my major.

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**Whitney Warner**