

A. Exploratory Questions

What is unique about the Shelley, Idaho annual SPUD Days Festival?
What kinds of events do they have?
Why do they celebrate this every year?
When did the town begin celebrating it?
How many people attend?
How do they get enough potatoes to have a tug-o-war contest?

List at least 1 key exploratory question that will guide your reporting and writing.

B. Background Information

I'm interested in doing a point-of-view story about the annual Shelley, Idaho SPUD Days Festival, where the small farming community celebrates their main crop - potatoes. They have a variety of unique events, including a tug-o-war contest in a pit of instant mashed potatoes.

Notes:

The event is the first weekend in September every year (Thursday, Friday, and Saturday)

List of events on the town's website:
<https://www.idahospudday.com/schedule-1>

Using the questions you made in Box A, write a 2 to 3 line statement explaining what kind of story you want to write and give some brief background information. Make notes of any information you have that might answer 5Ws and H questions as they apply., including people you can interview.

C. News Value

Timeliness: If we can publish a preview story before the event begins, then we can promote our coverage and publish a story on or shortly after it's over. The preview would be useful to readers who are looking for things to do that weekend and may have never heard of the festival.

Oddity: A tug-o-war contest in a pit of mashed potatoes is attention-grabbing and not something that any other town does as far as I'm aware.

List each news value that applies to your story idea and explain in 2-3 sentences why you believe each one fits with your idea.

D.. Budget

I will need to drive 200 miles from the office to Shelley, Idaho and stay in a hotel for two evenings with some funds for food and other expenses.

List at least 2 budget items that could include costs, time, staff, and other resources that you will need to work on your story idea.

E. Publishing Format

We can publish the story with photos and video on the web and include the story and photos in our next adventure travel book. An e-book might be good too.

Explain what format or formats you plan on using to publish the story (e.g. photos, video, audio, web post, print, etc.)

F. Obstacles/Barriers

Cellular phone signals are poor in this area, so it will be challenging to transmit the story and photos on location. There's a McDonalds near the festival so we could make quick trips there to use their WI-FI.

I'm having a hard time getting an interview scheduled with the person in charge of the festival. I know someone who lives in Shelley who might be able to help me get in touch with the festival director.

List any challenges you will have to overcome to be successful. Give at least a 1-sentence explanation of each item. (e.g. access to places, people, uncomfortable subject, etc.)