Story process: How to tell a story

1. Identify story's main idea and focus for audience.

2. Identify key people to speak to and gather their contact info.

3. Research the topic--what else has been written about this event, person, or idea? Spend a good amount of time gathering info prior to writing the story or reaching out to your contacts.

4. Reach out to key people to set up interviews.

5. When interviewing sources, bring a recorder or some other way to capture their quotes. Be sure to also have questions ready before hand, so that you are getting not just the key information, but also what is most interesting or startling about the topic.

6. Be thinking also about the visual elements. Ask for photos or ask if they would like to schedule a photo shoot.

7. Begin writing the story. Strive for a startling an interesting opening. Incorporate startling quotes or facts; make the piece something that you would want to read.

Note: Every story needs a catchy headline and subhead. The headline and subhead should contain the most important information such that if the reader only had the headline, s/he would know what the story is about.

8. Email the story to Aimee LaBrie at alabrie@ssw.rutgers.edu.

Please note that the story may be edited to fit the vehicle. The story will be posted on our news site or in the magazine once it has been approved.