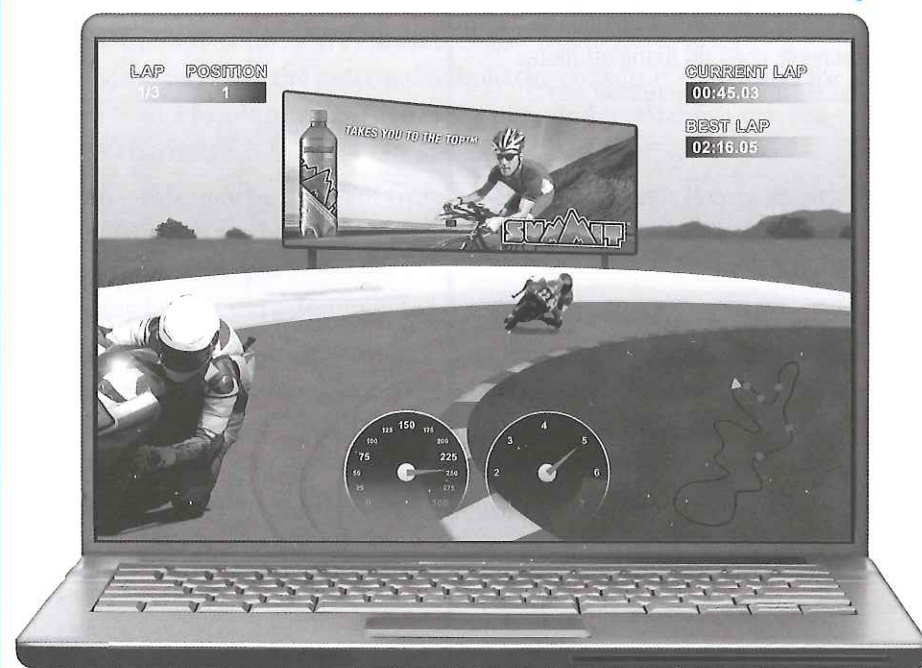


An advertisement in a video game:



Reception Editorial

While much of a newspaper or news magazine attempts to offer bias-free news and information, the editorial is a place where the news organization can offer opinion on an issue, reflect on current events or promote critical thinking. Editorials are opinion pieces that attempt to reflect the ideas of an institution—of a critical, news-gathering organization—and as such often portray a consensus opinion that attempts to be balanced and thoughtful. Often, in order to clarify the differences among opinion, factual reporting and advertising, newspapers or online news sites keep editorials and opinion pieces by individuals in a separate section known as the “op-ed” pages. The editorials of large news organizations have the potential to influence public opinion and can even work as a call to action, influencing public debate, corporate culture, and local or national elections.

The editorial is an interesting text type to examine in relation to its influential position as well as its rhetorical strategies. Because an editorial does not have a single author (it may even be the result of a vote and the collaborative writing of an editorial board) it often has the air of authority and lack of personal bias that an opinion piece from a featured journalist or outside commentator may not carry. The presumption of lack of bias, however, can never be completely solid. For one thing, a newspaper is often owned by a corporation with its own interests. Also, newspapers, like many media institutions, rely on support from advertisers and these corporations need to protect their interests. And though an editorial may reflect a group opinion and careful deliberation, it is still written by people with their own leanings, hopes or motives. Rhetorically speaking, an editorial capitalizes on its own position of authority (often a very important position near the front of a newspaper, magazine or website). Editorials are known for being

concise, clear and reasoned, and they usually incorporate the following contextual or rhetorical features:

- **Timeliness**—an editorial focuses on a current news event or pressing concern of the community. Editorials function through their immediate relevance.
- **Clearly stated thesis**—an editorial always makes its opinion clear from the start, often stating an argument or major decision in the title itself.
- **Reasoned argument**—an editorial attempts to make an argument based on a systematic argument that is clearly outlined in the body of the article.
- **Clear explanation or interpretation**—an editorial often informs as it argues. Facts and figures as well as key issues that influenced the decision of the editorial board are outlined in the body.
- **Balanced approach**—an editorial attempts to convince the reader of its authority and relative lack of bias by considering (and dismantling) opposing opinions.
- **Persuasion or praise**—an editorial clearly works to persuade and often becomes a call to action.

Activity

A brief editorial

The editorial below was selected because you may be able to separate yourself from the political debate being discussed. In this way, you can read the editorial for its rhetorical features. As you read, see if you can identify the features listed above. Also, take note of how you may be able to use the text type of the editorial as a model for a **written task 1**. Though you are not allowed to write an essay

for **written task 1**, the editorial is a close cousin to the essay and is a permissible text type. You may want to take care if you choose to use an editorial as your text type, however. The editorial should not be a way for you to bypass the intent of the written task and simply produce an essay on some topic. An editorial on a language issue, for example, should be timely and relevant, and should clearly follow some of the features above (or some other features that you may study in your own class and you can mention in your rationale).

Break the Logjam

This has to be good news for the embattled UPA government. The main opposition party, the BJP, has sent out a positive signal for cooperation with the government three days before Parliament reconvenes its budget session. Arun Jaitley’s statement that the BJP would support the smooth passage of the pension fund regulatory development authority Bill—an important item on the reforms agenda—raises fresh hopes of breaking the policy logjam at the Centre.

Given that the current policy paralysis has slowed growth, fuelled inflation and spooked business all round, it’s of the very essence that the government gets cracking on reform. If and when passed, the pension Bill is expected to open up multiple savings and investment channels. Lending statutory backing to the pension regulator, the legislation will steer funding for long-gestation infrastructure sectors. Besides, it would facilitate alternative sources of low-cost retirement savings, and ensure a market-linked safety net for workers in both organised and unorganised sectors. So far the Left parties and the BJP have been instrumental in stalling the Bill. As a result, it has been hanging fire for seven years. However, things could now be looking up. The BJP decided to change tack after the government accepted its amendments to the pension Bill. If the present spirit of cooperation endures, the forthcoming Parliament session could well turn out to be a productive exercise in passing fruitful legislation. But for this we need to see robust collaboration, not only between the ruling coalition and the opposition, but also from recalcitrant allies within the UPA, like the Trinamool Congress. Of late we have repeatedly witnessed Parliament being held hostage by the BJP as well as the Trinamool Congress, stalling a range of legislations like FDI in retail, the pension Bill and so on. It’s not that the Congress is a united house itself. There are rumblings within the ruling party on crucial financial sector Bills, including the banking amendment legislation, aiming to lift the 10% cap on voting rights of investors, and raising the FDI limit from