

## Masthead Application Writing Prompts

Thanks for your interest in *the Nugget*! To complete your masthead contributor application, choose one of the two prompts below and follow the instructions provided. These prompts will help us understand more about your critical thinking and general writing skills. Your submission will be evaluated based on your ability to follow instructions, organize information and relate to our audience — students like you! You should have a basic understanding of grammar and news writing, but we’re not looking for perfect submissions. If you have any questions, reach out to Alleah ([alleahb@nait.ca](mailto:alleahb@nait.ca)).

### Prompt 1:

**Instructions:** Carefully read through this article from the NAIT Newsroom: [NAIT wellness dog of more than a decade retires](#). Write a 300-400 word article using the facts and material below. This should be written in third-person (no “I” or “you”) in a neutral tone. Your goal is to be selective and thoughtful with the information, then organize and paraphrase it in your own words to tell a news story for NAIT students.

#### The Basic Information:

Use the following facts to write your news story.

- **Who:** Flynn, the school’s first official wellness dog
- **What:** Retired from campus life after over a decade of service
- **When:** Retirement celebration held Mar. 19, 2025
- **Where:** CAT Building atrium, Main Campus
- **Why:** He’s turning 12 in November and is retiring for health and rest after years of student support work

#### Quotes:

Choose **ONE** of the following quotes to include in your article (note: these quotes are made up for the sake of the assignment — assume the information quoted is correct).

**QUOTE A** – Dr. Patricia Bird, Flynn’s veterinarian:

“Flynn is always very well-behaved when he comes into the clinic. The staff love him, and he gets a liver treat after each appointment. In fact, some of my staff graduated from NAIT’s Animal Health Technology program.”

**QUOTE B** – Jamal Singh, third-year Bachelor of Technology student:

“Having a wellness dog like Flynn on campus is important to students. There were days when just seeing him in the hallway brightened my spirits during hard times. He was like a quiet friend who showed up right when I needed him.”

**QUOTE C** – Tony W., a facilities staff member who helped set up Flynn’s retirement event:

“We ordered over 250 mini cupcakes in the shape of a dog paw for the retirement celebration, and they were gone in less than 30 minutes.”

### **Additional Information:**

Choose from the following details to help you tell the story and paraphrase them in your own words. Use as many or as few of these details as you think necessary, but some of these are not correct. Make sure you use the [provided article](#) to verify and re-write as needed.

- Flynn joined NAIT in 2014 and became part of the Student Counselling team
- Flynn, a labradoodle, helped more than 152,000 students while at NAIT
- Linda Shaw, Flynn’s handler, is a NAIT counsellor and human-animal interventionist
- You can donate to Flynn’s Fund, a mental health initiative that helps NAIT students
- Flynn also worked with Shaw at the Royal Alexandra Hospital and NorQuest College
- Shaw adopted Flynn as a puppy and started bringing him to campus
- Flynn once interrupted a classroom to de-escalate a student argument
- According to Shaw, interacting with calm dogs can increase your heart rate and raise your blood pressure

### **Prompt 2:**

**Instructions:** Write a 400-500 word article on a topic you are interested in. Think niche, personal, emotional, local, cultural or opinionated — whatever you write about, it must be either:

- 1) **Something only YOU could write, and/or**
- 2) **Something only NAIT students could relate to**

Primarily, we are looking for writing samples that would not be found anywhere else (nor can they be generated, *\*cough cough\**). **We want writing that shows:**

- Authenticity and strong voice
- Complete originality and creativity
- Arguments backed up with relevant sources
- Thoughtful, specific personal anecdotes or experiences
- Relatability to our audience (NAIT students living in Edmonton)

### **Tips:**

- Include some structure
- Look at articles from *the Nugget’s* website to get a feel for our content
- Try not to be cliché — you can talk about burnout, for example, but either make it really interesting/informative (good use of sources), or really uniquely yours (good use of personal anecdotes). Even better if it’s both!