NOTES ON THE 2/24/2015 NEWS ARTICLE ASSIGNMENT: Important STEPS

STEP 1: IDENTIFY MAIN IDEAS FROM HEADLINE AND SUBHEADING
For any article assignment, first thing to do: Read the headline and subheading and ask yourself, "What ideas are in this?"

One idea is that there is a "show" of diversity at the Oscar ceremony (this is a little play on the word "show" since the Oscars are a television "show," and this year the Oscars "show" us Hollywood's diversity. What does diversity mean in this context?

The subheading says that there was a "number of minority presenters" who worked during the Oscars ceremony, BUT this is "in light of" - which means, in contrast to - the fact that there is a "dearth" of nominees of color. What is "dearth?" Take a guess . . . and then look it up before you continue here.

STEP 2: USE MAIN IDEAS TO LOCATE LEAD
So, the article - and the Lead, therefore - must be about 3 ideas:
1) the lack of minority artists nominated for Oscars this year
2) in contrast with
3) the Oscars ceremony itself (the "show") which displays (shows) a great deal of diversity by using many minority presenters.

STEP 3: USE LEAD TO IDENTIFY DETAILS, BACKGROUND, AND STATEMENTS
After you identify the Lead, any paragraph in the article that talks about the Lead ideas - this thesis - is going to be a Detail paragraph. With each and every paragraph, think to yourself, "What is the main thrust of this paragraph? What is its central message? Is it giving me factual information that directly supports the lead?" If so, that is Detail.

STEP 3A: UNDERSTAND BACKGROUND INFORMATION
If it is giving me information that is interesting, but is not directly supplying facts that prove THIS LEAD true, it must be Background.

STEP 3B: FIND STATEMENTS
Watch for Statements: Be careful; think about the function of any words that appear in quote marks. If the quote is of what someone said at the awards (in their acceptance speech, for example), that would be Detail because the article is primarily about the show itself and its relationship to people of color, and it is possible that the reporter will tell us exactly what was said at this event. Anything said at the ceremony would be Detail.

If, however, the quote is something that someone said ABOUT the Oscars, or ABOUT diversity at the Oscars, or ABOUT the "dearth" of nominees, or ABOUT the history of the Oscars, then that would be a Statement (an expert/witness/official verbal communication).