

Writing in Plain Language: a PD workshop for CIPMM



Moira White, PMC Training

Session Outline

- Part 1: Writing for Today's Readers
- Part 2: Starting Your Document
- Part 3: Writing
- Part 4: Finishing Your Document

Learning Objectives

- Write for how people read today
- Use a proven technique to organize ideas and research
- Apply plain language principles for maximum impact
- Condense text
- Communicate in clearly and concisely
- Write persuasively





Writing for Today's Readers

Part 1

Communicating today





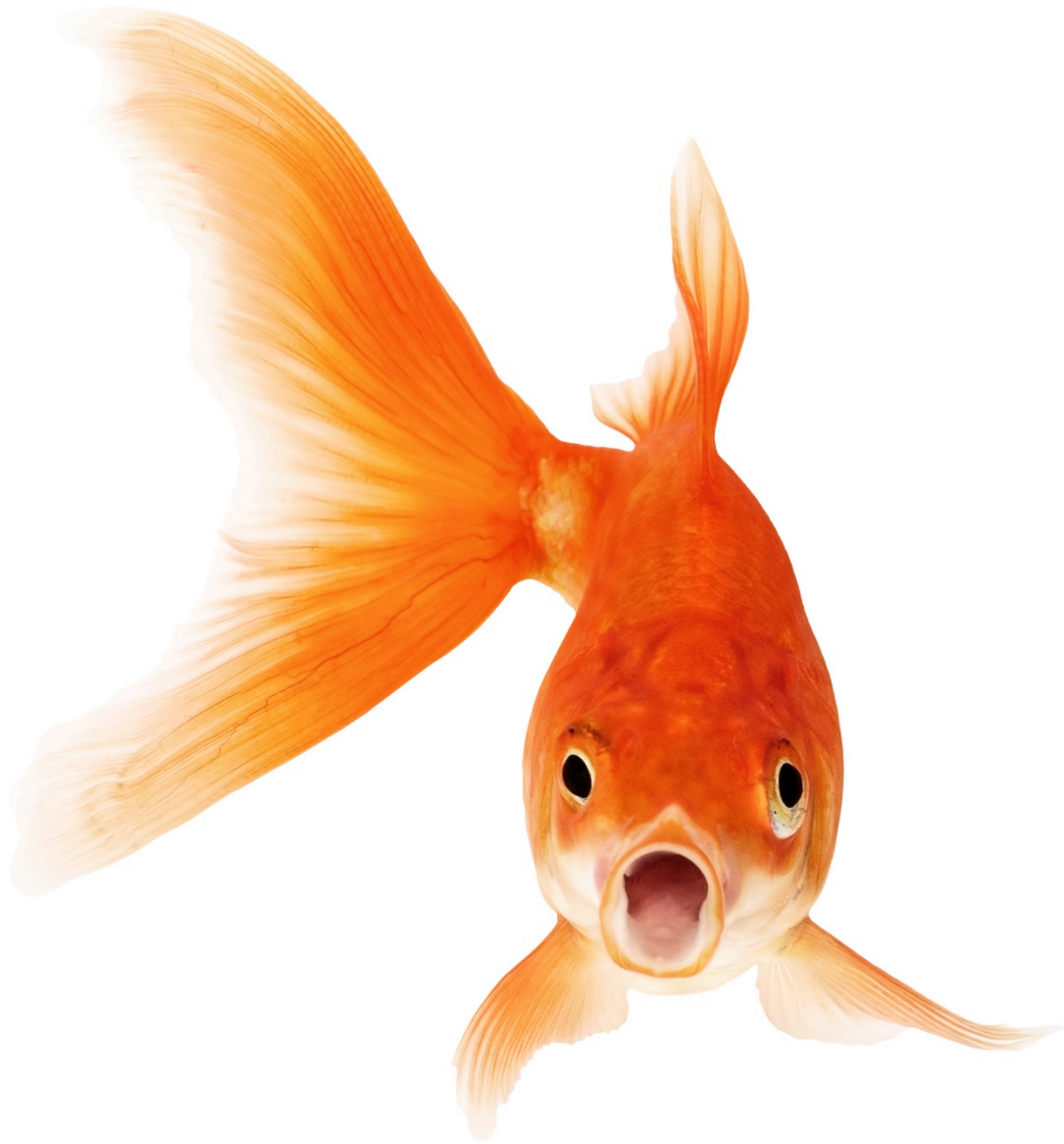
How do people read today?

- They don't — they skim



wiseGEEK

= ?



toothbrush and shaving cream in the pocket, and his deodorant and washing powder in the other. Instead he went to a café close to the railway station.

Twenty years ago Queenie must have made her way to Exeter St. David's. Had she gone straight from here to Berwick? Had she family there? Friends? She had never mentioned either. Once, a song had come on the car radio and she had wept. "Mighty like a Rose." The male voice filled the air, steady and deep. It reminded her of her father, she said between gulps; he had died only recently.

"I'm sorry, I'm sorry," she whispered.

"It's all right."

"He was a good man."

"I'm sure."

"You'd have liked him, Mr. Fry."

She had told a story about her father; how he played a game when she was a child where he pretended she was invisible. "I'm here! I'm here!" she'd be laughing; and all the time he'd look straight down at her, saying, as if she wasn't there, "Come here this minute. Where are you, Queenie?"

"It was so funny," she said, nipping the end of her nose with her handkerchief. "I miss him very much." Even her grief possessed a compact dignity.

The station café was busy. Harold watched the holidaymakers negotiating the small spaces between the tables and chairs with their suitcases and backpacks, and he asked himself if maybe Queenie had sat in this same spot. He pictured her, alone and pale, in her old-fashioned suit, her neat face staring resolutely forward.

He should never have let her go like that.

"Excuse me," a gentle voice above him said, "is this seat free?" He shook himself back to the present. A well-dressed man was standing to his left and pointing to the chair opposite. Harold wiped his eyes, surprised and ashamed to discover that once again he had been crying. He told the man that the seat was indeed free, and urged him to take it.

The man wore a smart suit and deep blue shirt with small pearl cufflinks. His body was lean and graceful. His thick, silver hair was swept back from his face. Even as he sat he folded his legs so that the crease of his trousers fell in line with his knees. He lifted his hands to his lips, holding them there in an elegant steeple. He looked the sort of man Harold wished he had been; distinguished, as Maureen would say. Maybe he was staring too hard because after the waitress had delivered a pot of Ceylon tea (no milk) and a toasted teacake, the gentleman said with feeling, "Goodbyes are always hard." He poured tea and added lemon.

Harold explained that he was walking to a woman he had let down in the past. He hoped it was not a goodbye; he very much hoped his friend would live. He didn't look the man in the eye, but focused instead on the toasted teacake. It was the size of the plate. The butter had melted like golden syrup.

The man sliced one half into slim soldiers and listened as he ate. The café was loud and busy, the windows so steamed they were opaque.

"Queenie was the sort of woman people don't appreciate. She wasn't a dolly bird, like the other women at the brewery. She maybe had a little hair on her face. Not a mustache or anything. But the other chaps laughed. They called her names. It caused her pain." Harold wasn't even certain he could be heard. He marveled at the neatness with which the gentleman posted the

- [how your age will affect your monthly payment](#);
- whether you plan on [working while receiving your pension](#);
- how much you have contributed and how long you have been making [contributions to the CPP](#);
- your [personal savings, investments or company pension plan](#);
- your [retirement planning](#) and the lifestyle you want when you retire;
- your current health, family health history or any disabilities;
- whether you have any other income such as business investments, rental income, etc.

The [Canadian Retirement Income Calculator](#) and your CPP Statement of Contributions within [My Service Canada Account](#) can also help you determine the best time to start your CPP retirement pension and get an estimate of how much you might receive.

Eligibility details

Your CPP retirement pension does **not** start automatically. **You must apply for it.** Before you apply, you must:

- be at least a month past your 59th birthday;
- have worked in Canada and made at least one valid [contribution](#) to the CPP; and
- want your CPP retirement pension payments to begin within 12 months.

How much you could receive

The amount of your CPP retirement pension is based on how much you have contributed and how long you have been making [contributions](#) to the CPP at the time you become eligible. Read more about [CPP retirement pension amounts](#).

A certain number of your lowest earnings months may be automatically dropped from the CPP retirement pension calculation under the [general drop-out provision](#). This may help increase the amount you will receive.

You can also request the [child-rearing provision](#) which may increase your retirement pension amount if you had zero or low earnings because you were the primary caregiver raising your children.

[Credit splitting](#) may affect the amount of the CPP retirement pension for both you and your former spouse or common-law partner.

Note: If the cost of living goes up, so does the amount of your CPP benefits. Your monthly benefits are adjusted every year in January based on the [Consumer Price Index](#).

What you need before you start

To apply for your CPP retirement pension online, you must sign in to your [My Service Canada Account](#) and submit your application online. If you have not yet registered for a My Service Canada Account, you will require a [Personal Access Code](#).

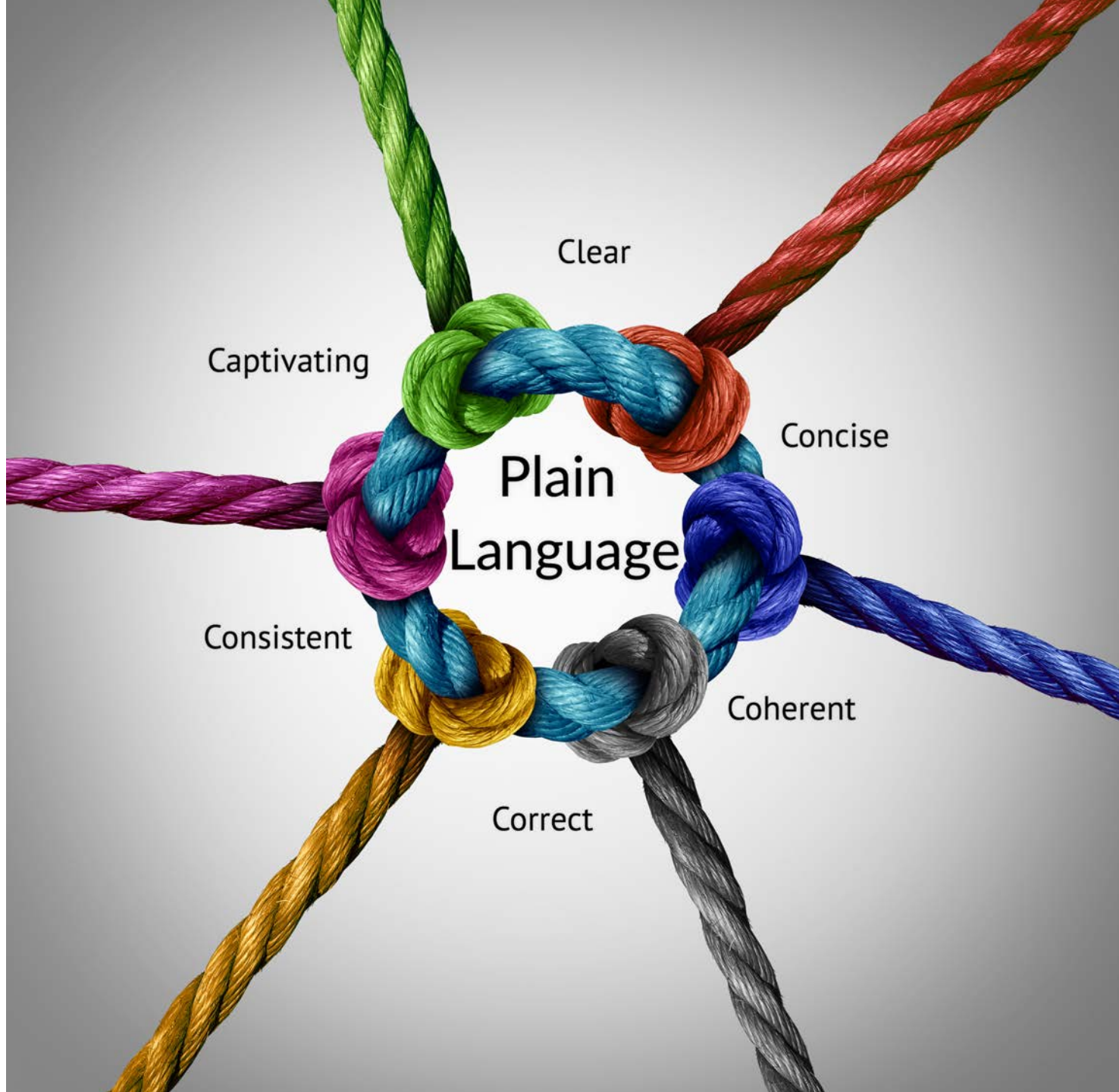
When you apply online for your CPP retirement pension, you must confirm your personal information and provide the following information:



Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication.

- Leonardo da Vinci





Clear

Captivating

Concise

Plain
Language

Consistent

Coherent

Correct

con·cise: *adjective* (of speech, writing, style, or a person) brief, but comprehensive in expression





Clear





1534

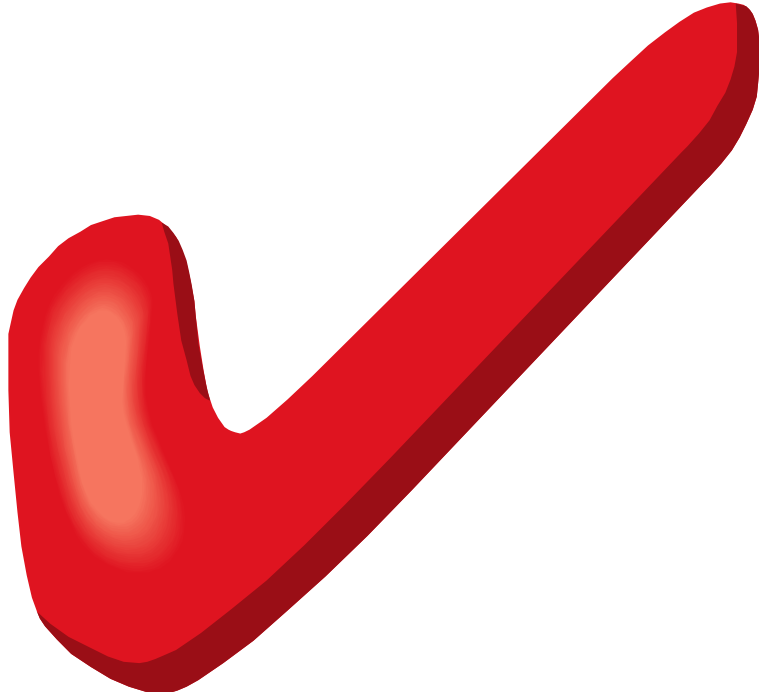
ONTARIO
BN4-478





Our sales associates are encouraged to check out the customers in the aisles.

Correct





To: Jleblanc@canada.ca ▾

Cc:

Bcc:

Subject: Quick meeting this morning

From: Moira White – moirawhite@me.com

Signature: ▾

Slut Julie,

Would you have time to meet for a few minutes later this morning? I'd like to go over the main points of my presentation before meeting with the DG this afternoon.

Thanks!



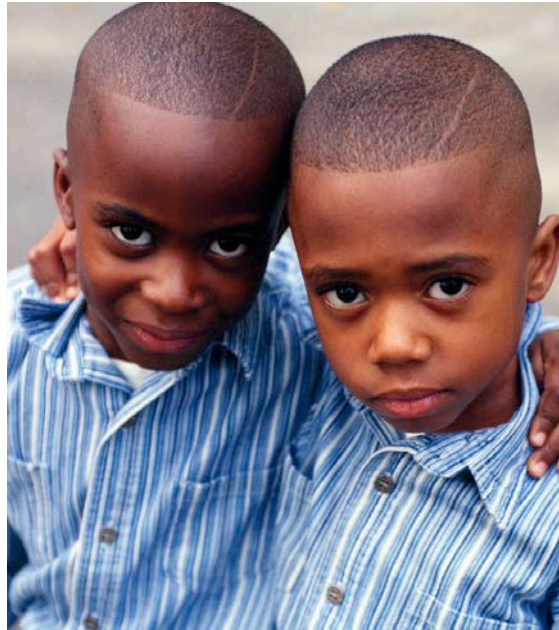
The procedure is actually quite simple. First, you arrange things into different groups depending on their makeup. One pile may be sufficient depending on how much there is. If you have to go somewhere else due to lack of facilities, that's the next step; otherwise you're pretty well set. It is important not to overdue any particular endeavour: it's better to do too few at once than too many. In the short run, this may not seem important, but complications can arise from doing too things at once.

Laundry Instructions

The procedure is actually quite simple. First, you arrange things into different groups depending on their makeup. One pile may be sufficient depending on how much there is. If you have to go somewhere else due to lack of facilities, that's the next step; otherwise you're pretty well set. It is important not to overdo any particular endeavour: it's better to do too few at once than too many. In the short run, this may not seem important, but complications can arise from doing too many things at once.



The form in which thoughts occur to a writer is rarely the same as the form in which readers can absorb them.



Consistent

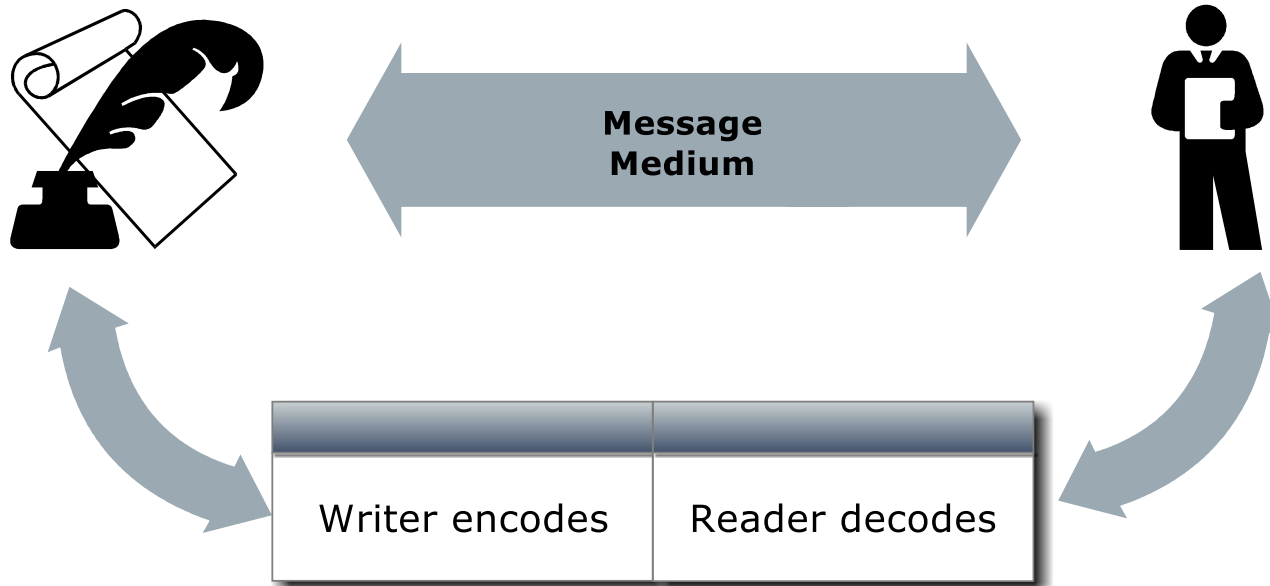
Consistency matters today

- procedure
- process
- technique
- system

- Cabin
- Cottage
- Camp
- Chalet

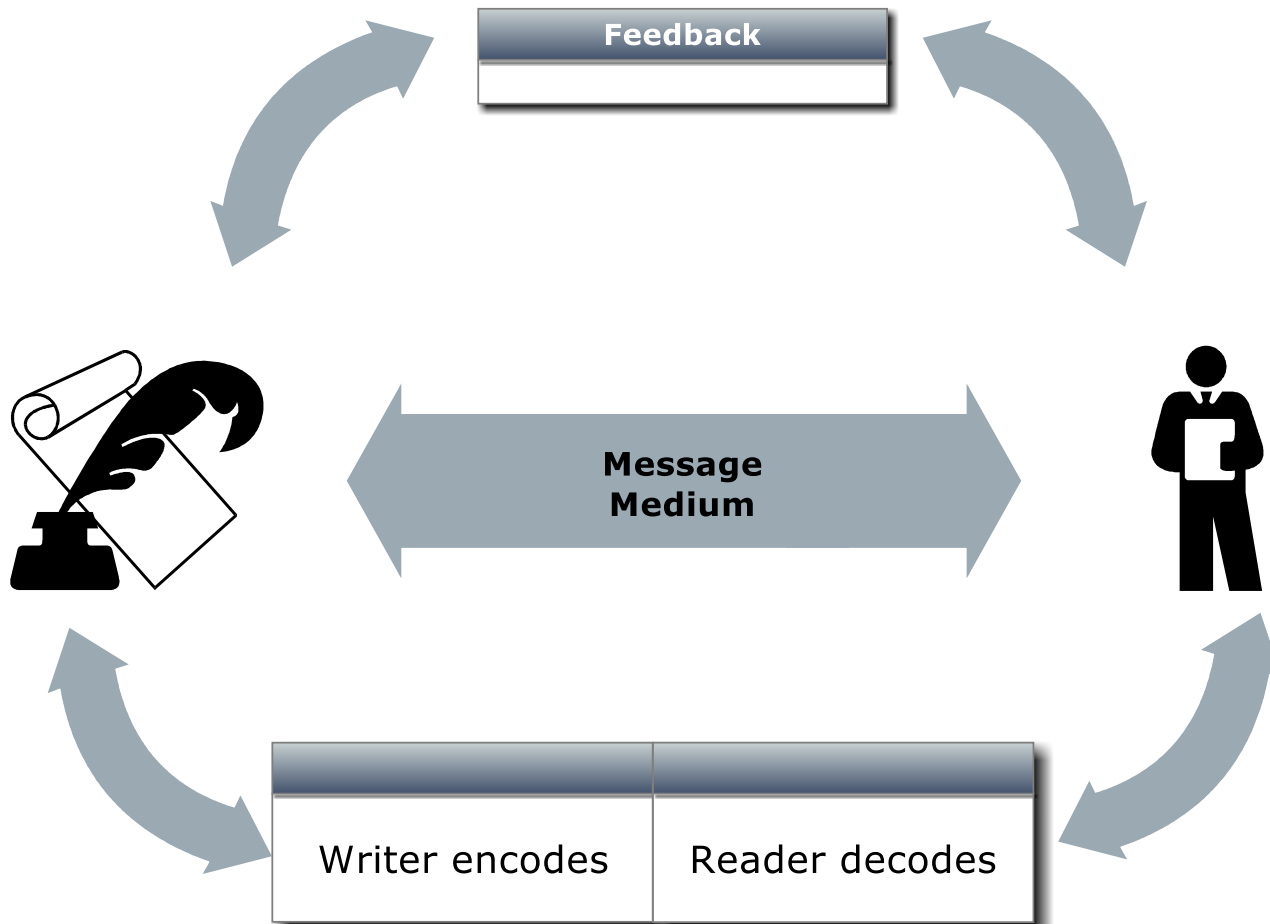


The Writer-Reader Loop





The Writer-Reader Loop



Best way to communicate?



- Incorporate plain language techniques

Starting Your Document

Part 2

Step-by-step approach



A person in athletic wear is shown in profile, stretching their right leg against a vibrant sunset background. The person is wearing a maroon long-sleeved shirt and black leggings. They are standing on a concrete ledge, holding their right foot with their right hand. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright orange and yellow glow that fills the sky with scattered clouds. The overall mood is one of preparation and focus.

The Beginning:

1. Planning

2. Outlining

3. The Work — Writing

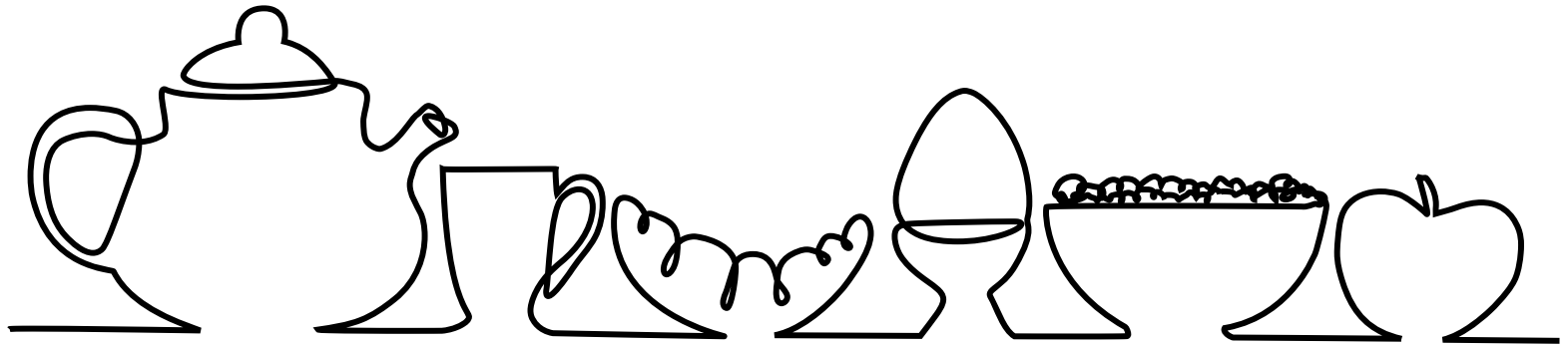


4 & 5: The End — Revising & Editing



1. Planning



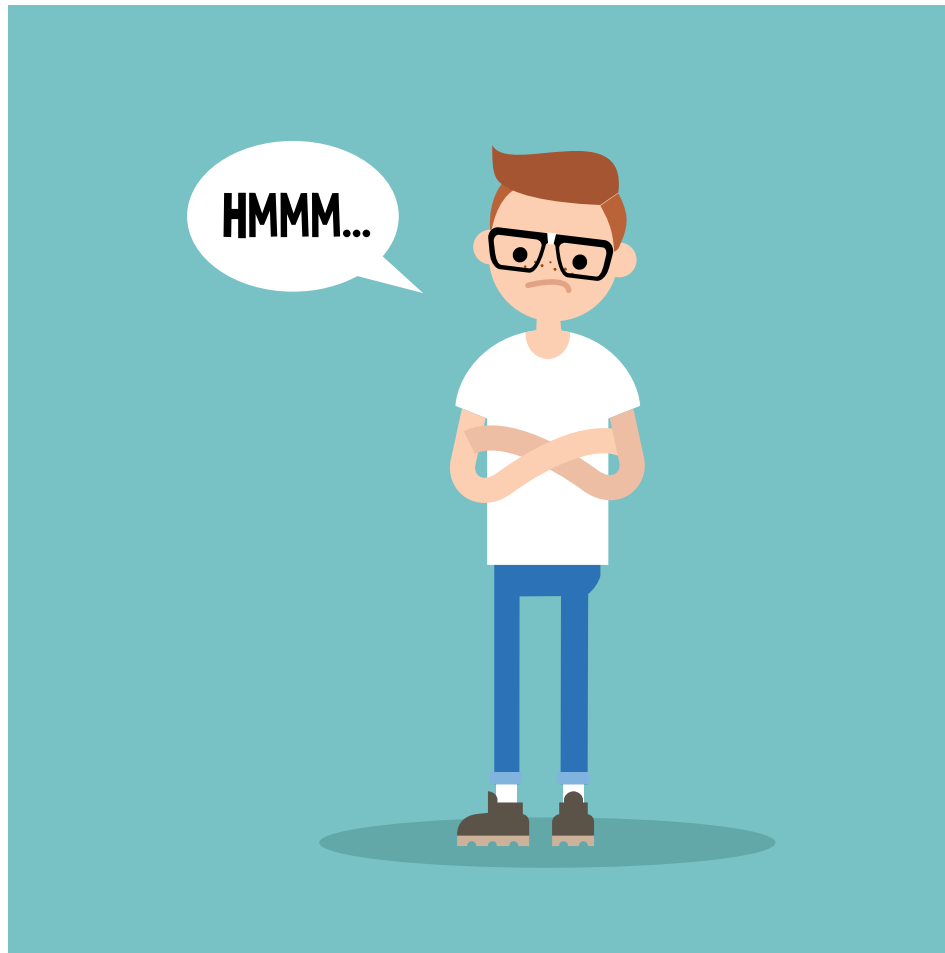


- Know your reader
- Establish an appropriate tone
- Determine the document's purpose and impact

Know Your Reader!



Identify what your reader needs
to know — and why



- How complex is this subject
- What are its political ramifications?
- How close are my readers to this subject?

Think about the purpose!

- My purpose in writing this is to _____ (my
reader) _____ so
that he/she will do/think_____.



Perspective...

Know your reader!



Tools to help gauge readability

In Word:

- Tools → Spelling & Grammar → Options → Show readability statistics
- File → Proofread → Spelling & Grammar → Options → Show readability statistics

Or

- Hemingway App
(www.hemingwayapp.com)

Our attention spans are getting shorter, but it's not because we are getting stupider; in fact, the opposite is true, but we sure have more distractions around us than people used to.

For example, back around 1400, only those who were very rich could read. Free education was unknown in most of the world; usually only the clergy or a very few were taught how to read and write. Gutenberg had not yet invented the modern process of printing with movable type, so most books were laboriously hand-copied or were printed from whole-page woodcuts, so of course, only the wealthy could afford to own books and have a library as well as afford the education that would let them learn to read in the first place. Thus, when a reader settled down in 1390 or so to read Chaucer's Canterbury Tales he (and it would almost certainly have been a "he" as few females were taught to read and write) went to his library, closed the door, and immersed himself in the text, usually reading aloud. He had servants to cook the meals, pour the wine, clean the house, answer the door, sew his clothes, work the fields, and feed the animals. He would have been able to read uninterrupted for hours.

Write

Edit

Readability



Grade 16

OK ⓘ

Paragraphs: 4

Sentences: 12

Words: 364

Characters: 1688

0 of 12 sentences are hard to read.

6 of 12 sentences are very hard to read.

2 adverbs. Aim for 1 or fewer.

3 words or phrases can be simpler.

Our attention spans are getting shorter. It's not because we are getting stupider. In fact, the opposite is true. But we sure have more distractions around us than people used to.

For example, back around 1400, only those who were **very** rich could read. Free education was unknown in most of the world. Usually only the clergy or a **very** few **were taught** how to read and write. Gutenberg had not yet invented the modern process of printing with movable type. Most books were **laboriously** hand-copied or **were printed** from whole-page woodcuts. Only the wealthy could afford to own books and have a library. Only the wealthy could afford the education that would let them learn to read in the first place. **Thus, when a reader settled down in 1390 or so to read Chaucer's Canterbury Tales he went to his library, closed the door, and immersed himself in the text.** He usually read aloud. He had servants to cook the meals, pour the wine, clean the house, and answer the door. He had servants to sew his clothes, work the fields, and feed the animals. He would have been able to read uninterrupted for hours.

Write

Edit

Readability



Grade 8

Good ⓘ

Paragraphs: 4

Sentences: 25

Words: 350

Characters: 1623

4 of 25 sentences are hard to read.

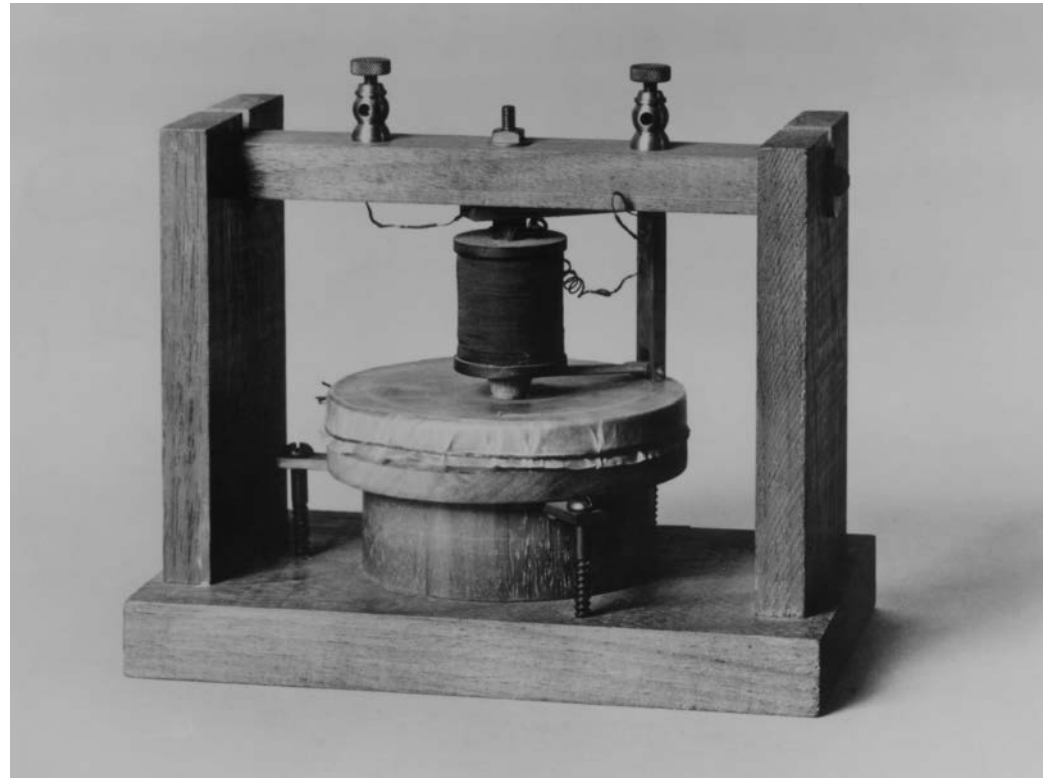
1 of 25 sentences are very hard to read.

1 adverbs. Aim for 1 or fewer.

3 words or phrases can be simpler.

Tone matters

What are some of the
different tones you might
take in your writing?



Appropriate tone for colleagues

- Collaborative
- Information exchange
- Operational support
- Cooperative

Tone with clients and the public

- Avoid technical terms and jargon

Document Purpose



Document Purposes

- Provide a record of decisions
- Plan a way forward
- Report on discussions
- Ask someone to do something
- Inform your readers
- Respond to an RFP
- Influence actions
- Explain how to do something

Sell your ideas



- Think before you start to write. Start from the end point: what do you want your reader to **take away**?

Step 2

- Outline Your Document

Organizing information



WHAT?



SO WHAT?



NOW WHAT?

Planning Sheet		
Communication Product		
Due date & reviewer (AC & SOs)		
What is this about?	List one or two main objectives	
So what?	Why should my reader care?	
Now what?	What have I done?	
	What do I want my reader to do?	
Reader(s)	What do they already know?	
	What else do they need to know?	
	Do I anticipate any reactions or concerns?	
	How can I address them?	
Context	How much background information should I provide?	
Research and analysis		
Gaps?		
How can I fill them?		

Organize Your Information

Organize information

Design a document so that readers find information in the order in which they need to know:

- What?
- So what?
- Now what?

Help your reader find information



Exercise: pages 12-13



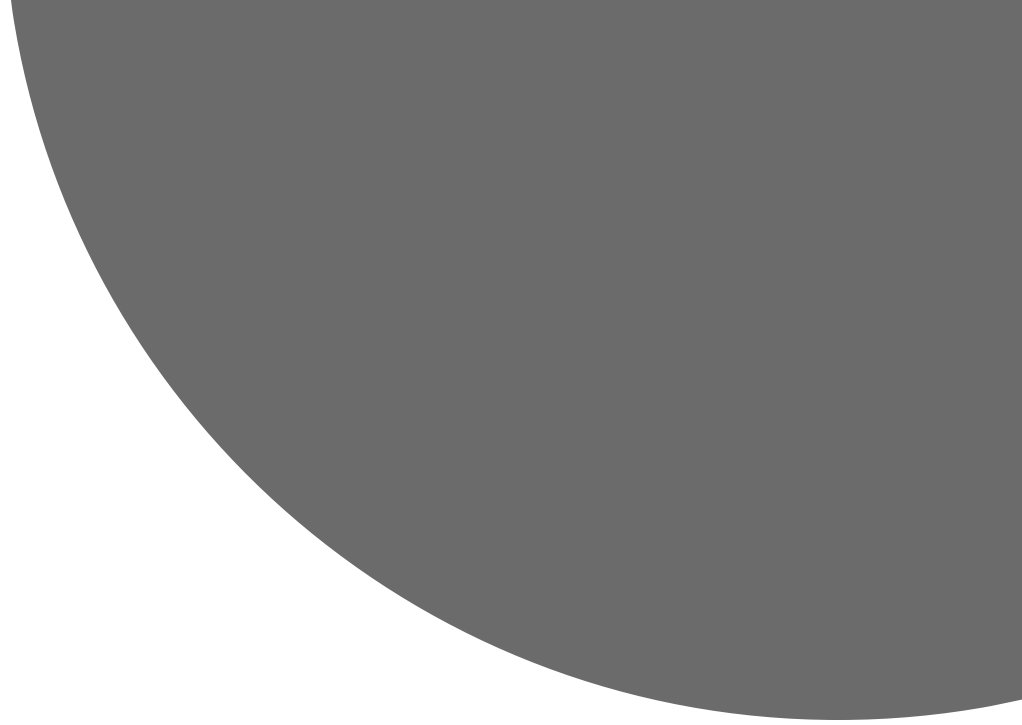
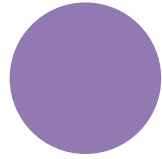
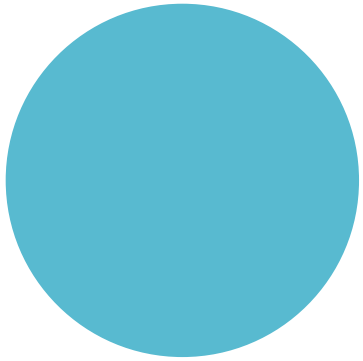
Writing

Part 3

3. The Work — Writing



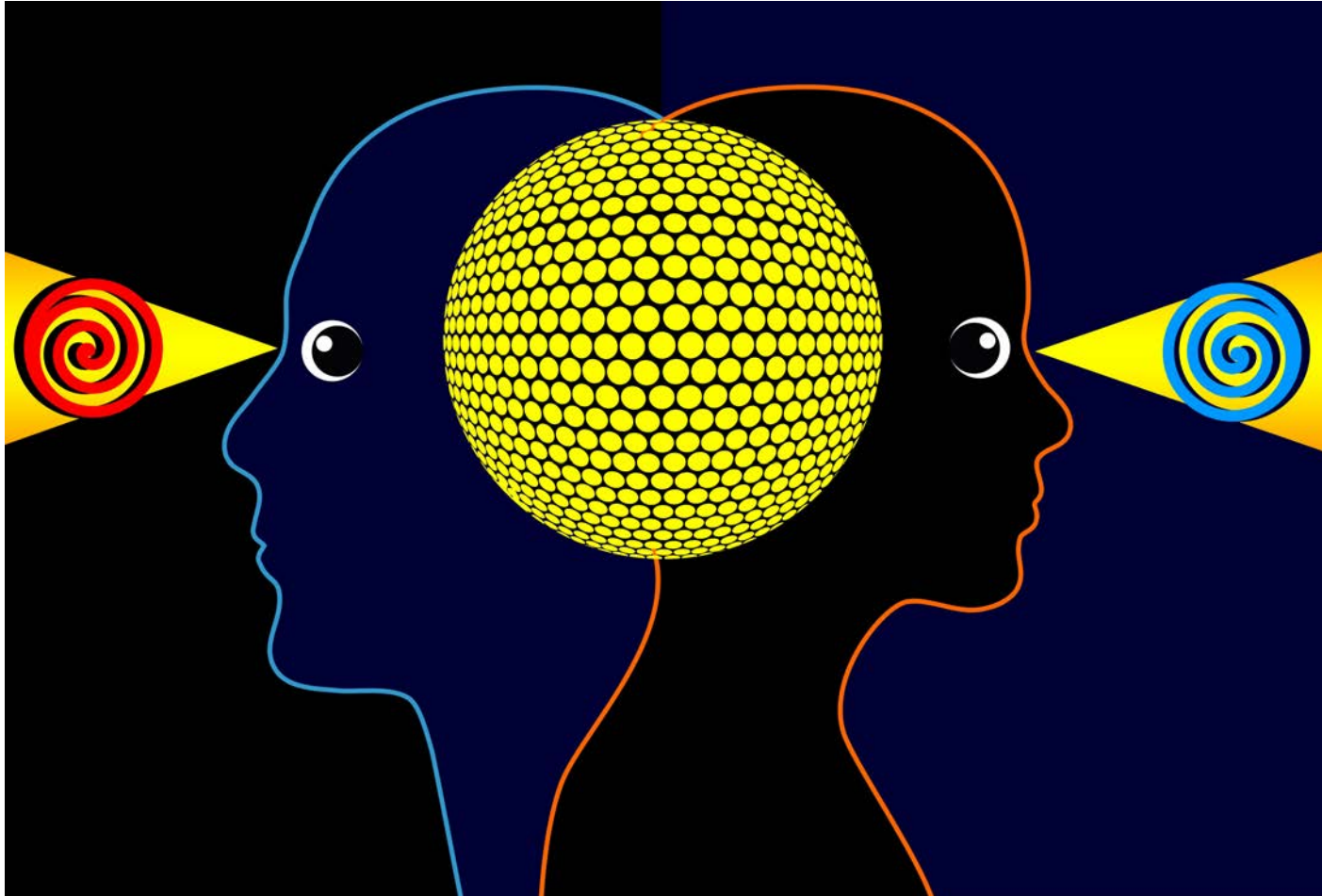




Paragraphs

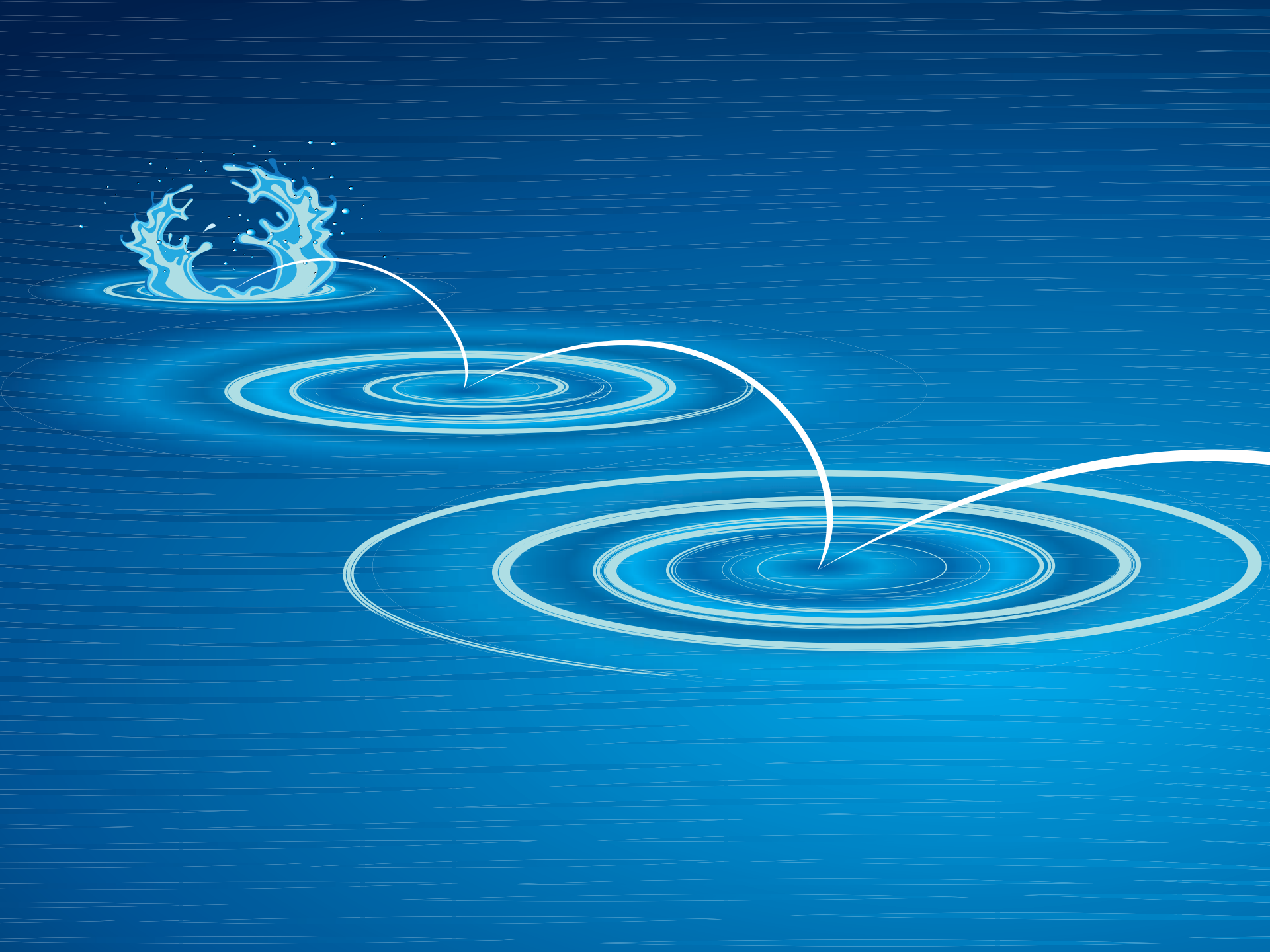
3.1

Paragraph = one coherent
thought



Paragraphs

- A paragraph should contain one main idea.
- A document can be structured effectively using topic sentences.



Topic sentence exercise 1



Unify paragraphs



Unity of
thought



Unity of tone



United point of
view

Paragraph Unity, p. 18: Where does unity fall apart? What rules are broken?



Connecting ideas

- Repeat key words
- Use pronouns
- Use connecting words and phrases

Repeat key words



Use pronouns

se juri de la paroisse de St Joseph
assurés de l'ordonnance ont été
la loi, avons vu leur Mariage
Donné la même destination par
notre Mente de l'abbé et le en
re père, Joseph L'écuyer
Vradan, Charles pour am
autres dore quelques uns
ne d'élargir le savoir de ce

M. Massé Pp.

le vingt quatre par nous
le jour de la fête
cultivateur de cette paroisse et de
le père. Le père est Louis
Marie L'écuyer qui n'a
l'avec nous le père absent
M. Massé Pp.

le vingt quatre par nous
le jour de la fête
cultivateur de cette paroisse et de
le père. Le père est Louis
Marie L'écuyer qui n'a
l'avec nous le père absent
M. Massé Pp.

le vingt et de Louis qu'on a vu, Charles
Carré bien que de l'ordonnance et de plusieurs autres. Dans
un a regardé nous les autres ont d'élargir le savoir de ce
organes le usant l'ordonnance. M. Massé Pp.

B. le vingt trois février mil huit cent quatre par nous
Soudigne a été baptisé en suite née le jour des légitimes
M. Massé Pp. mariage de Charles Tremblay cultivateur de cette paroisse
Tremblay et de Marie Côté son épouse. Le père est à l'Ambrone
quentin et la maraine Marie Côté qui ont d'élargir le
savoir de ce organes le savoir de ce organes le père absent.

B. le vingt quatre février mil huit cent quatre par nous
Soudigne a été baptisé Marie Msi de leur de l'abbé
Marie Marie mariage de Joseph Bonneau journalier en titre
Bonneau paroisse et de Marie Larose son épouse. Le père est à l'Ambrone
et la maraine Angélique Larose qui
ont d'élargir le savoir de ce organes le père absent.

B. le vingt quatre février mil huit cent quatre par nous
Soudigne a été baptisé Emilie née
Emilie depuis quatre jours de la légitime mariage de Joseph
Morisse journalier en titre paroisse et de Marie
Côté son épouse. Le père est à l'Ambrone
et la maraine Angélique Larose qui ont d'élargir le
savoir de ce organes le père absent.

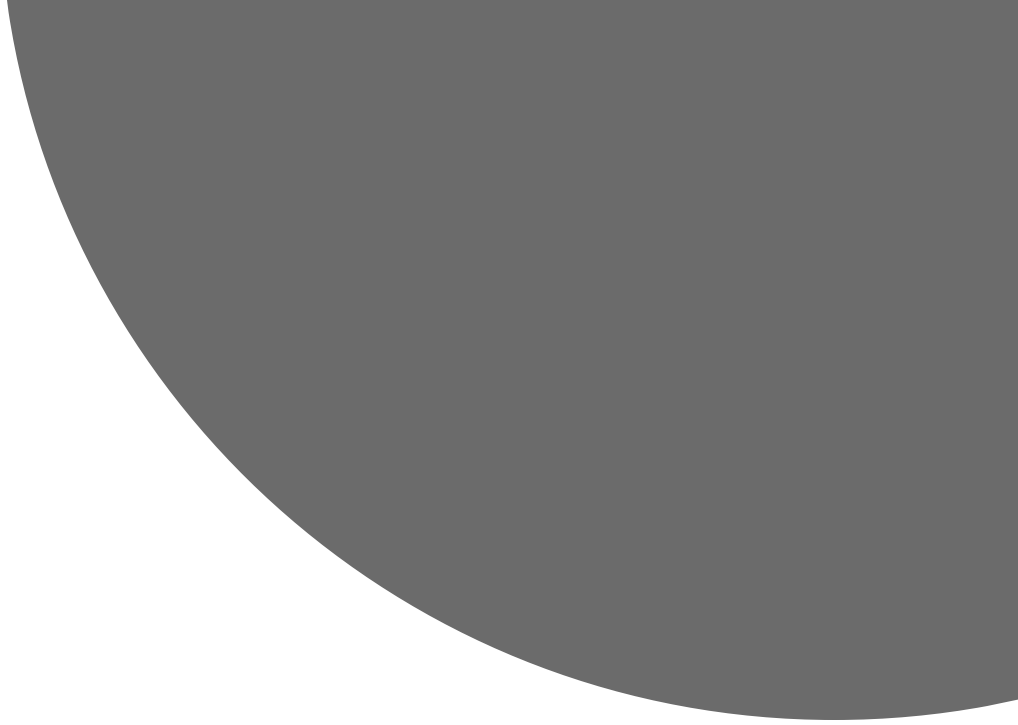
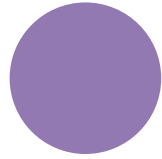
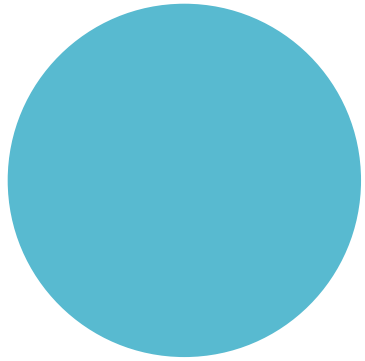
Sp. le vingt sept février mil huit cent quatre par nous
Soudigne a été inhumé dans la sépulture de cette paroisse
le corps de Charles Bourget forgeron épouse de Marguerite
Jonnson, décédé depuis deux jours âgé de quarante cinq
ans, environ, et n'est pas en prière et les Ambrones
Carré et plusieurs autres qui ont d'élargir le savoir de ce
organes le savoir de ce organes le père absent.

B. le vingt sept février mil huit cent quatre par nous
Soudigne a été baptisé Protasie née le jour des légitimes
M. Massé Pp. mariage de Charles pour cultivateur en titre paroisse et de
Christine pour son épouse. Le père est à l'Ambrone
Bon et la maraine Angélique Larose qui ont d'élargir le
savoir de ce organes le savoir de ce organes le père absent.

Many students
are no longer
learning
cursive
writing. **That** is
a shame.



Use connecting
words & phrases



Sentences

3.2

Sentence
length?

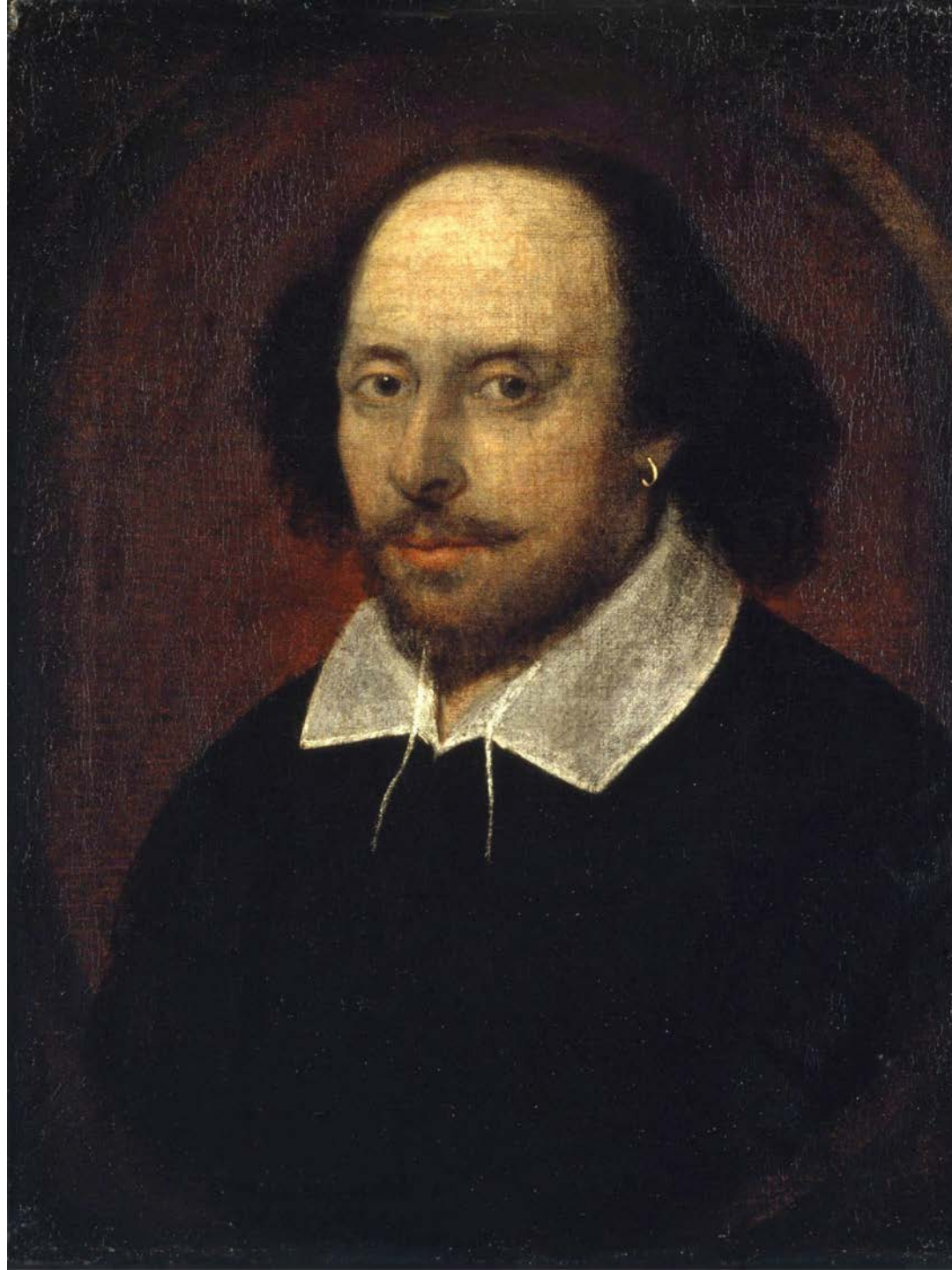
- 80?



1500s



50



Today?

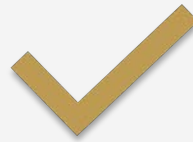




Ways to shorten sentences



Divide the sentence into smaller sentences



Use bullets



Unpack embedded ideas

Our attention spans are getting shorter, but it's not because we are getting stupider; in fact, the opposite is true, but we sure have more distractions around us than people used to.

For example, back around 1400, only those who were very rich could read. Free education was unknown in most of the world; usually only the clergy or a very few were taught how to read and write. Gutenberg had not yet invented the modern process of printing with movable type, so most books were laboriously hand-copied or were printed from whole-page woodcuts, so of course, only the wealthy could afford to own books and have a library as well as afford the education that would let them learn to read in the first place. Thus, when a reader settled down in 1390 or so to read Chaucer's Canterbury Tales he (and it would almost certainly have been a "he" as few females were taught to read and write) went to his library, closed the door, and immersed himself in the text, usually reading aloud. He had servants to cook the meals, pour the wine, clean the house, answer the door, sew his clothes, work the fields, and feed the animals. He would have been able to read uninterrupted for hours.

Write

Edit

Readability



Grade 16

OK ⓘ

Paragraphs: 4

Sentences: 12

Words: 364

Characters: 1688

0 of 12 sentences are hard to read.

6 of 12 sentences are very hard to read.

2 adverbs. Aim for 1 or fewer.

3 words or phrases can be simpler.

Our attention spans are getting shorter. It's not because we are getting stupider. In fact, the opposite is true. But we sure have more distractions around us than people used to.

For example, back around 1400, only those who were **very** rich could read. Free education was unknown in most of the world. Usually only the clergy or a **very** few **were taught** how to read and write. Gutenberg had not yet invented the modern process of printing with movable type. Most books were **laboriously** hand-copied or **were printed** from whole-page woodcuts. Only the wealthy could afford to own books and have a library. Only the wealthy could afford the education that would let them learn to read in the first place. **Thus, when a reader settled down in 1390 or so to read Chaucer's Canterbury Tales he went to his library, closed the door, and immersed himself in the text.** He usually read aloud. He had servants to cook the meals, pour the wine, clean the house, and answer the door. He had servants to sew his clothes, work the fields, and feed the animals. He would have been able to read uninterrupted for hours.

Write

Edit

Readability



Grade 8

Good ⓘ

Paragraphs: 4

Sentences: 25

Words: 350

Characters: 1623

4 of 25

sentences are hard to read.

1 of 25

sentences are very hard to read.

1 adverbs. Aim for 1 or fewer.

3 words or phrases can be simpler.

Remember!

Vary sentence length to increase readability:

- Many Canadians see the CPP as a safety net. They rely on it to provide additional income in retirement. Others do not agree with them and save for themselves.
- Many Canadians see the CPP as a safety net, relying on it to provide additional income for their retirement years. But others disagree.

Bullets

In case of fire, notify the switchboard of the fire's location, leave the building immediately, using the stairs—do not use the elevators or you will end up trapped between floors if electrical power is cut off, either by the fire or as a safety measure, while the unobstructed vertical shaft attracts heat and smoke like a natural chimney—direct the spray from fire hoses at the base of the flame, but do not return to the building until instructed to do so.

Or...

In case of fire:

- Leave the building immediately
- Use the stairs, not the elevator
- Call the fire department
- Stay outside until instructed to return

Bulleted list exercise, p. 23 & 24



This technology's graphical interface helps you determine:

- the **activities** in your process
- the **resources** you need
- the logical **order** of your activities
- the **conditions** you require for the next activity to begin.

- Protect
- Target
- Respond... with greater efficiency and agility
- Embrace
- Support
- Protect

The original 2014 audit found that the City could save up to \$106,00 by

- developing policies and procedures to govern the use of City vehicles, parking passes, and car allowances
- implementing better controls over the use of City vehicles and mileage claims
- tracking and documenting these controls and costs

Unpack embedded ideas

Embedded ideas are buried within sentences. Take the following steps to unpack them:

- Break the sentence into distinct ideas.
- Look for the main clause and subordinate clauses.
- Rearrange the sentences in a logical manner.

Embedded ideas

- Exercise, pages 26–27



PSC and TBS collect the information you provide for three purposes:

- to confirm the eligibility of your appointment
- to safeguard the integrity of the appointment
- to allow for statistical studies, which are published annually

The FBI and Justice Department reviewed criminal cases from the FBI lab dating back to 2012. This investigation found flawed forensic testimony in almost every case.

Use prepositional phrases wisely

- Extra prepositional phrases can confuse the reader.
- Order them carefully.

Prepositions

- A **linking word** that often introduces an adjective or adverbial phrase
- Prepositions are always in prepositional phrases
- Include *above, after, around, at, before, beside, by, during, for, from, in, of, on, over, up to, with*

- The bike path beside the canal was finally resurfaced from Fifth Avenue to Pretoria Bridge.
- She walked down the garden path.
- The cake with the beautiful pink icing fell onto the wooden floor.

Exercise

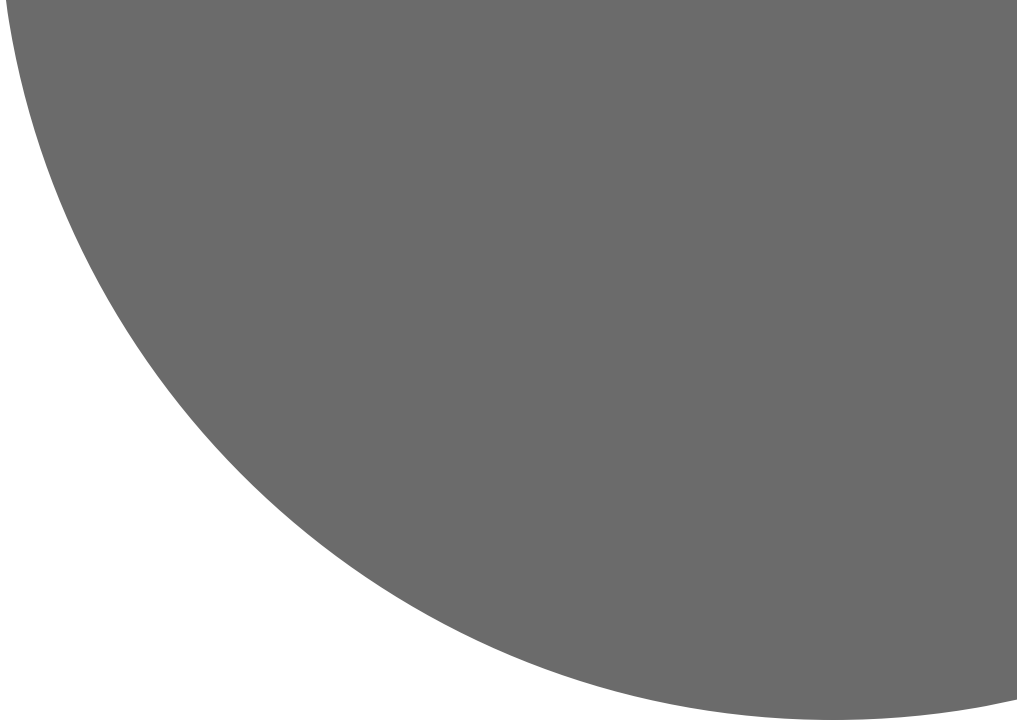
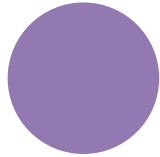
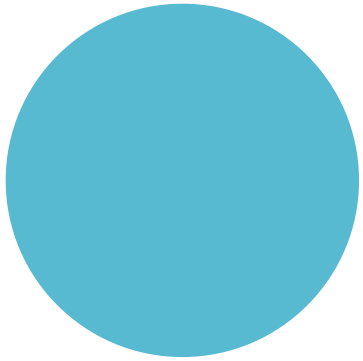
- Identify and underline the prepositional phrases at the bottom of page 28.
- What's left?



Prepositional Phrases

- In Canada, the process of extradition is initiated by an incoming request on behalf of a foreign state or tribunal for the arrest of a fugitive currently located on Canadian territory.
- The snow plow on our street at night woke up everyone in our family by circling the boulevard in front of our house at 3 a.m. with its lights blinking.

- Many houses in the northern community of Ft. McMurray were destroyed by a raging wildfire in May 2016.
- Police across the country were out on the long weekend looking for drug- and alcohol-impaired drivers on the country's roads.
- NYEW provides a unique opportunity for Grade 12 students from across Canada to experience what it's like to be a cadet in training at RCMP Depot for seven days in March 2019.



Words

3.3

Communicate effectively

- Use simple, everyday words
- Understand hierarchies of abstraction
- Use the active voice
- Use positive statements
- Activate your verbs
- Avoid noun strings
- Remove expletives
- Cut out unnecessary words

The writer who breeds more words than he needs is making a chore for the readers who read.



Concrete → Abstract

- rust
- rot
- decay
- end
- die
- deterioration
- decline
- age
- finiteness
- mortality
- entropy
- impermanence

Active voice

Doer  doing  doee/what

The committee  approved  the changes.

Passive voice

(Doee/what) **having something done**
(by the doer)

The changes **were approved** by the
committee.

- The committee approved the changes.
 - The changes were approved by the committee.
-
- The dog bit the man.
 - The man was bitten by the dog.

Change these passives into the active voice

- Next week, all tenders for the new facility will be reviewed by the committee.
- The fact that she had signed a contract was ignored by the complainant.
- The cookie was given to me by Mommy.
- Mistakes were made.

When to use passive voice

- When giving no attribution
- To be vague
- When action is more important than the actor
- Some web headings

Active voice exercise: p. 31





Use positive statements

- The procedure will not be ineffective.
- She did not think that studying Latin was a sensible way to use one's time.
(Strunk and White)
- The CDC study doesn't say that the vaccine didn't work.



Exercise: Page 32

Activate your verbs!

Noun + active verb = energy

- The candidate argued that his party could best create jobs.

Noun + equating verb or linking verb + noun = ho-hum

- The candidate's argument is that his party could best create jobs

Activate your verbs

- There is therefore an expectation on the part of the complainant that the dispute will be resolved in her favour.
- The committee made a resolution that a study be carried out by the board into the feasibility of the provision of plain language contracts by the telecommunications service providers.

Killer “B”s

is
am
are



be
been
being



was
were



to be

Energy Levels

- Energy Level 1 (high): Active transitive verbs
- Energy Level 2 (OK): Active intransitive verbs
- Energy Level 3 (weak): Passive verb
- Energy Level 4 (snore): Equating verbs

Energy Level 1

High: Active transitive verbs

Doer → doing → doee

The dog bites the man.
The tornado hit the house.

3 out of 3: 100%

Energy Level 2

Moderate: Active intransitive verb

Doer → doing

The dog bites.

The tornado hit.

2 out of 3: 70%

Energy Level 3

Low: passive verb

Doee → has something done → doer

The man was bitten by the dog.
The house was hit by the tornado.

Weakest 2 out of 3 and in reverse order:
50%

Energy Level 4

Very low: equating verb

No doer, no doee, but some action.

A=B

The man is angry.

The dog is a biter.

The house is a mess.

The tornado was big.

0 out of 3: less than 25%

Watch out for...

- ment
- tion
- ance
- ence



Active verb exercise

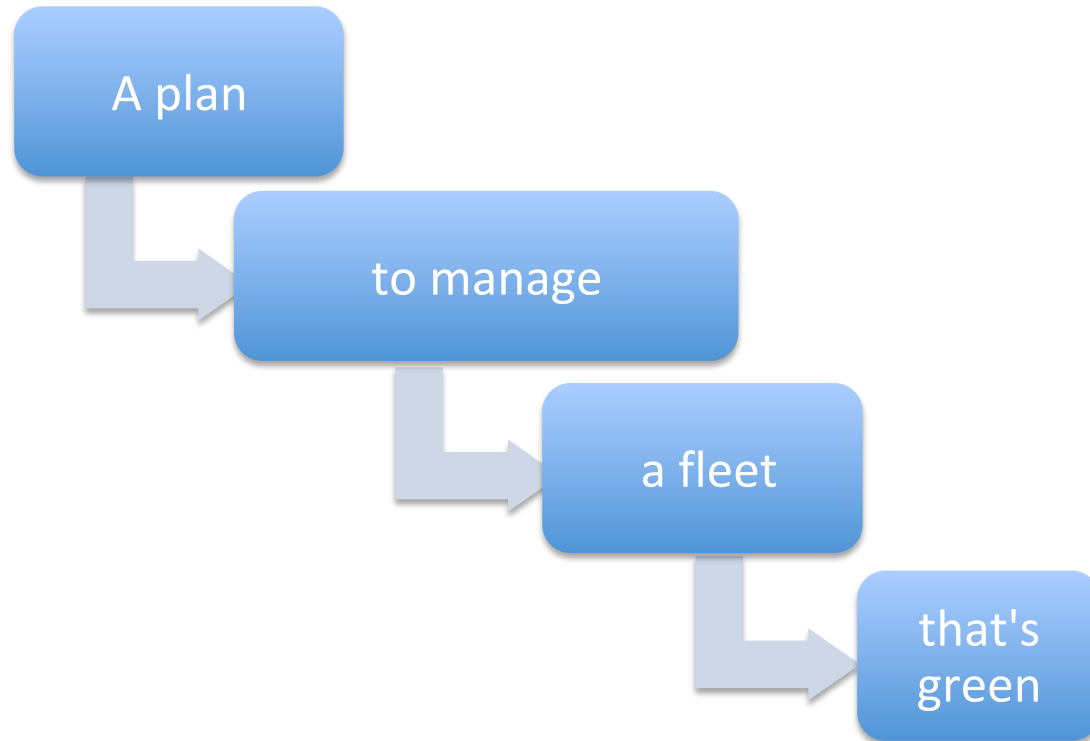
- Page 34



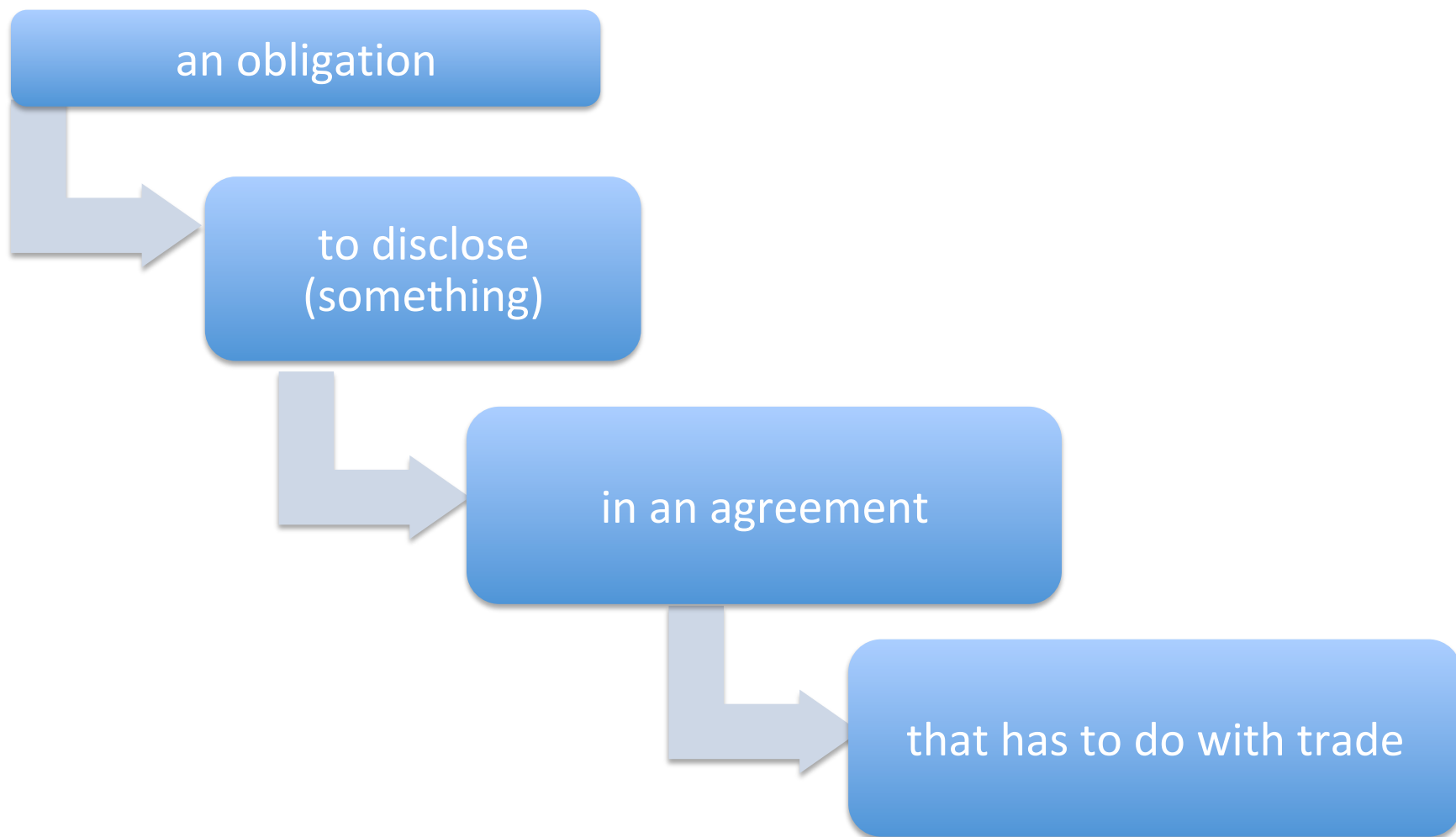
Avoid noun chains

- In English, nouns can be used to modify other nouns
- Noun clumps make readers go back to see what is being modified
- Noun clumps are harder to decode

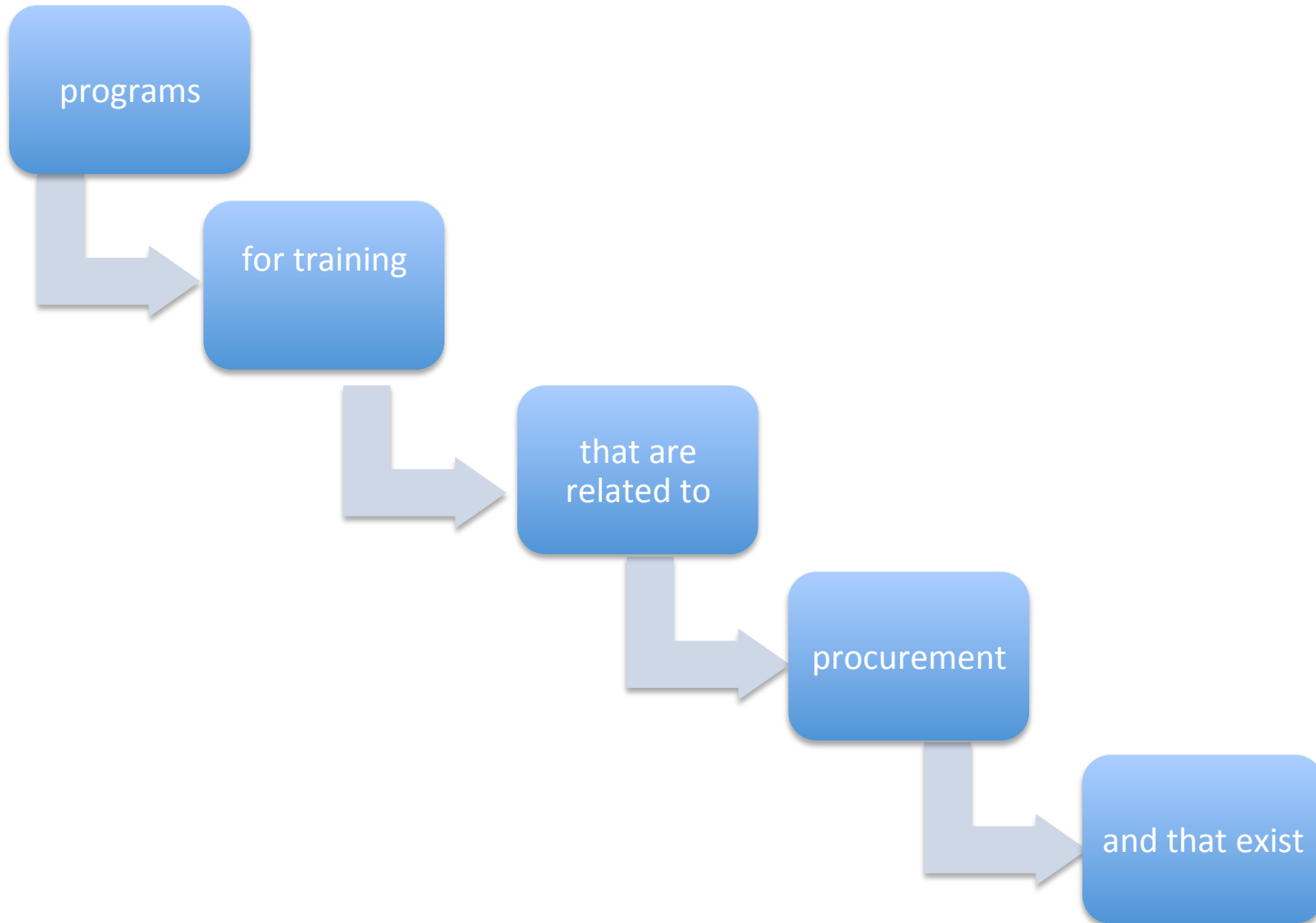
- Green fleet plan management



- Trade agreement disclosure obligation



- Existing procurement-related training programs



Avoid noun clumps

- Helpful integrated municipal infrastructure asset management tool

Avoid
unnecessary
expletives



- There is one person here today who has to leave early.
- **There is** one person here today **who** has to leave early.
- One person here today has to leave early.

- It is the Arctic countries that will be most affected by climate change.
- **It is** the Arctic countries **that** will be most affected by climate change.
- The Arctic countries will be most affected by climate change.



Exercise!

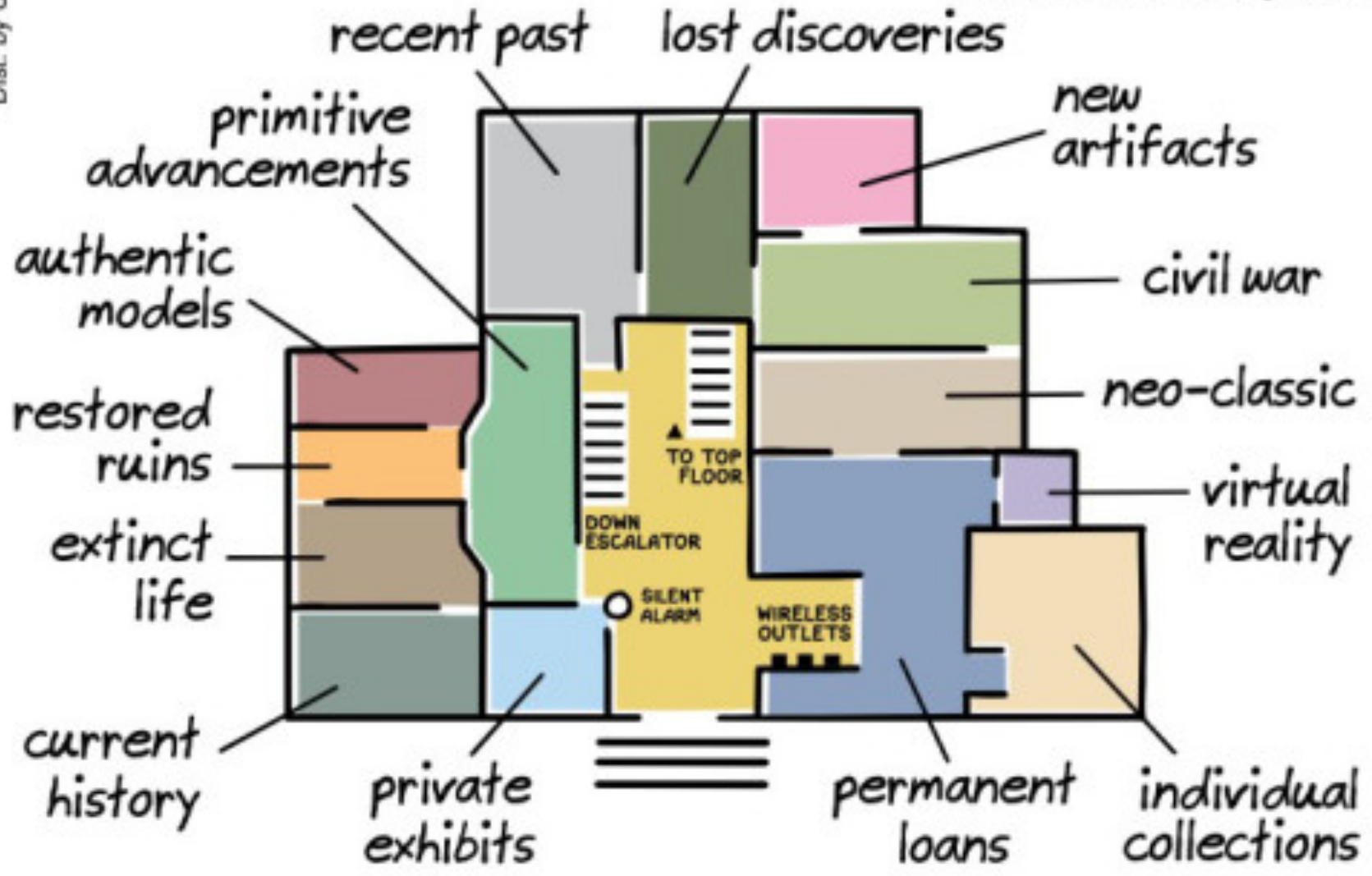
Page 35

Oxymorons

- Original copies
- Exact estimate
- Unbiased opinion
- Extensive briefing

at the oxymoron museum

© John Atkinson, Wrong Hands

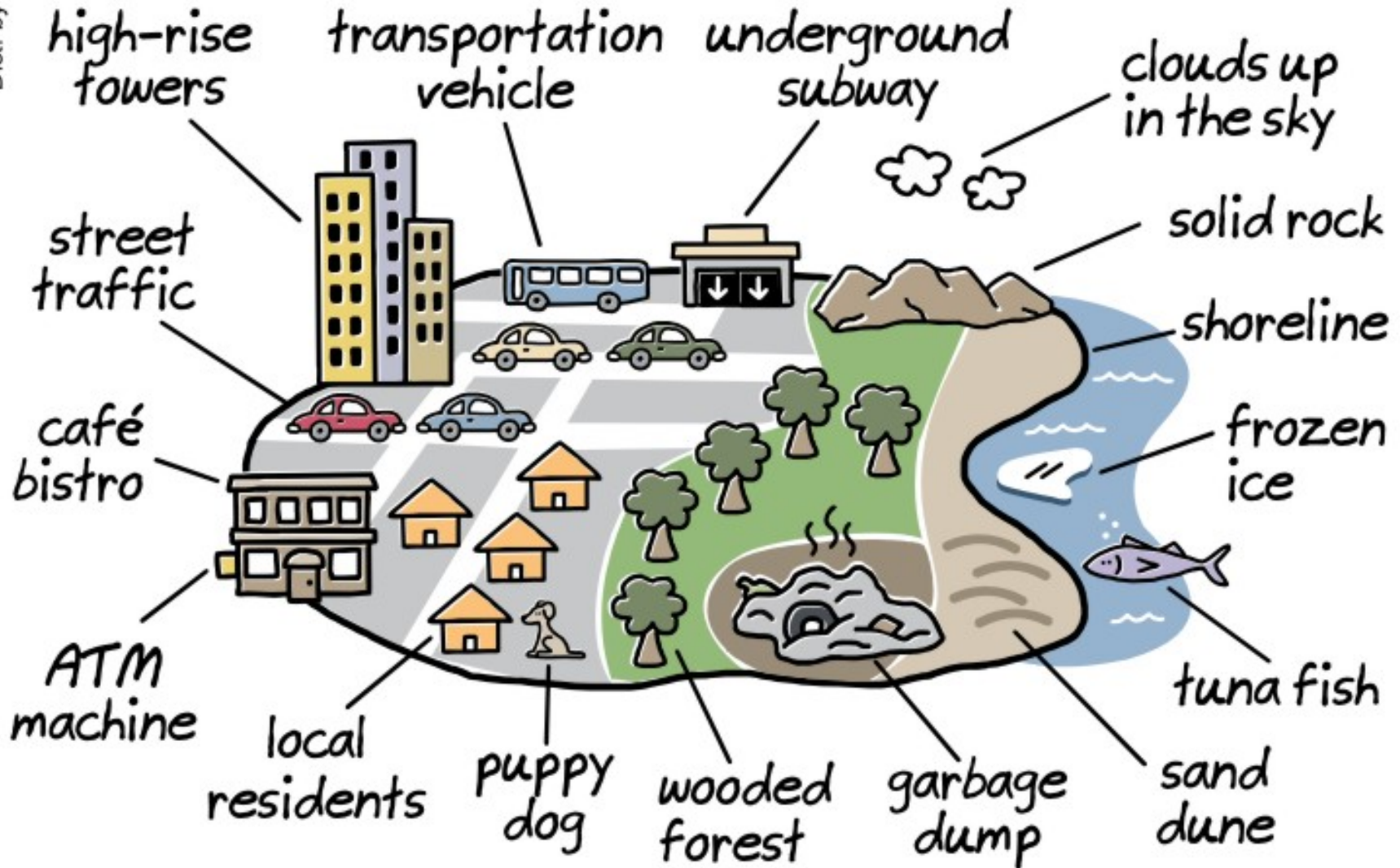


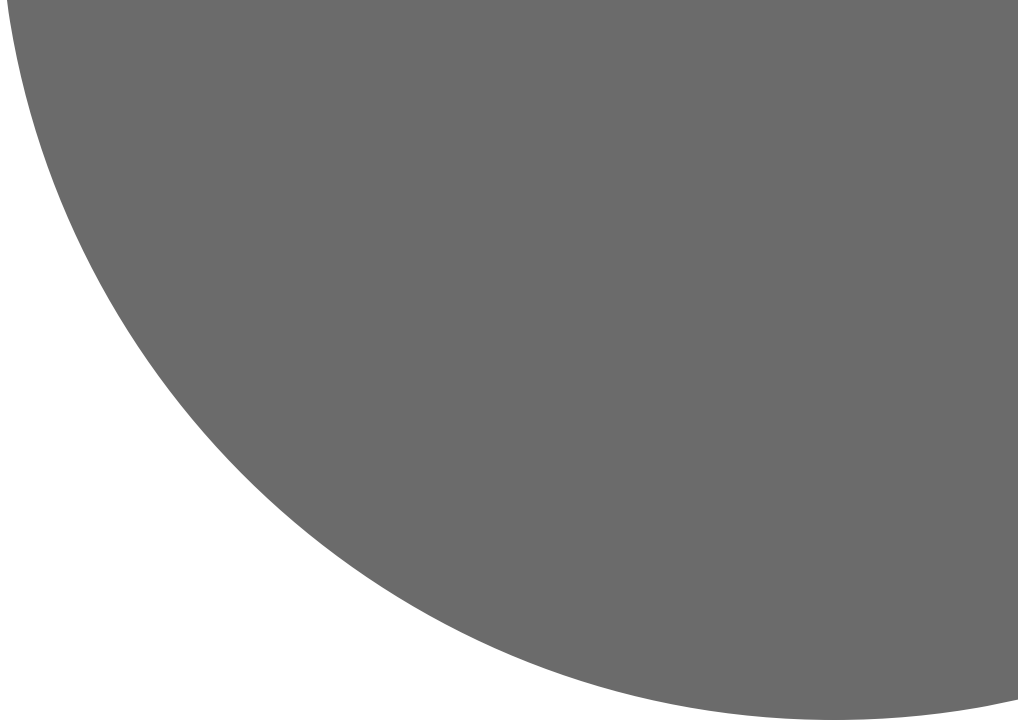
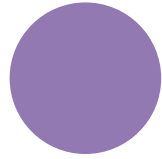
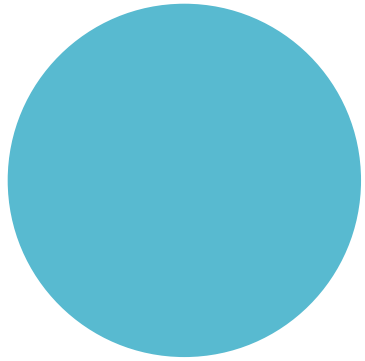
Redundancies, etc.

- Advance planning
- Foreign imports
- Doctorate degree
- Skirt around
- Few in number
- Filled to capacity
- Depreciated in value
- SIN number, PIN number, HIV virus, ATM machine, NDP party

in the town of Redundantown

© John Atkinson, Wrong Hands





Persuasion

3.4

Persuasion



Persuasion

- Avoid long narratives: readers get lost.
- Be aware of the difference between facts and the interpretation of those facts.

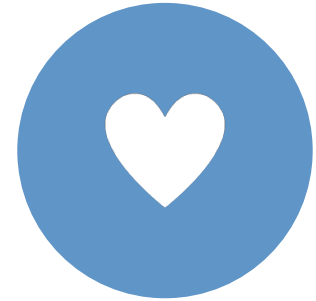
Persuasion requires three elements:



CREDIBILITY (APPEAL
TO ETHOS)



TANGIBLE EVIDENCE
(APPEAL TO LOGOS)



APPEAL TO EMOTION
(APPEAL TO PATHOS)

Credibility

- Credibility comes from experience, truth, trust and goodwill.
- Credibility builds upon credibility.
- To be credible, you have to
 - be believable
 - present clear ideas
 - not contradict yourself, either in words or behaviour

Tangible evidence

- Claims are backed up with supporting evidence
- Appeals to the rationality of the readers

Appeal to emotions

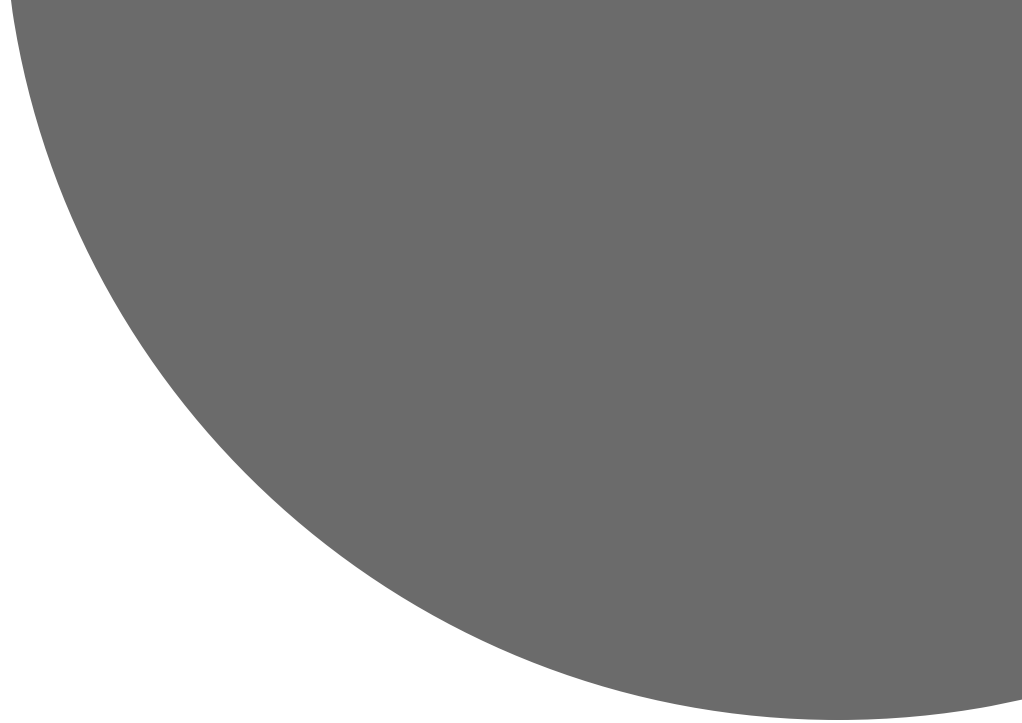
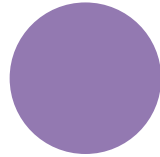
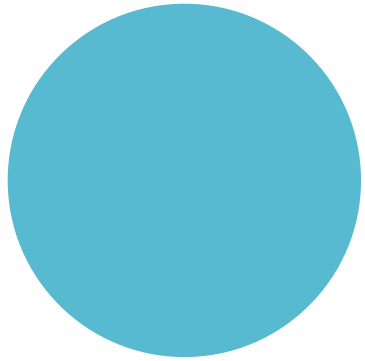
- Addresses the mood of the readers
- Helps the reader identify and sympathize with an issue

Strengthening Ideas

- Present solid arguments that build on your main idea
- Make them accessible using plain language
- Provide examples

Finishing Your Document

Part 3



Revise for Readability and Strength

Step 4

- × The information in this paragraph is not necessary.
- ✓ This information is essential
- ↓ This paragraph can be reduced
- ↑ This paragraph needs more information
- ? I'm not sure if the reader needs this information.

Editing for conciseness



How long?

- Long enough to cover everything important
- Short enough to keep me interested



Exercise!

- Page 40



Revise for readability

- Use white space effectively
- Left-justify text
- Use margins effectively

Use white space effectively

- This?

Wemindji is a small Cree community on Paint Hills Bay off James Bay on the Maquatua River in Quebec, Canada, with a population of 1238 people. Wemindji, which is Cree for “red ochre mountain,” gets its name from the red pigment found in the hills surrounding it. At one time it was also known as “Nouveau Comptoir.” A fairly new community, Wemindji comprises Cree families that were displaced from the trading post on an island in the Vieux-Comptoir River, known as “Old Factory.” This post was founded in the 17th century and operated alternately under British or French control. In 1959 the community was relocated 45 kilometres north to its present location. An annual summer trip to Old Factory is regarded as a significant event as it brings the community together for a gathering called “going back home.” This growing village offers a multitude of services including Health Care, Public Safety, Fire Department, Police Services, Social Services, and a School as well as Adult Education and Day Care. It also owns a

- Or this?

Wemindji is a small Cree community on Paint Hills Bay off James Bay on the Maquatua River in Quebec, Canada, with a population of 1238 people. Wemindji, which is Cree for “red ochre mountain,” gets its name from the hills surrounding it. At one time it was also known as “Nouveau Comptoir.”

Wemindji, which is Cree for “red ochre mountain,” gets its name from the hills surrounding it. At one time it was also known as “Nouveau Comptoir.”

A fairly new community, Wemindji comprises Cree families that were displaced from the trading post on an island in the Vieux-Comptoir River, known as “Old Factory.” This post was founded in the 17th century under British or French control. In 1959 the community was relocated to its present location. An annual summer trip to Old Factory is a significant event as it brings the community together for a gathering at its original location called “going back home.”

This growing village offers a multitude of services including Health Care, Police Services, Social Services, Elementary and High School Education and Day Care. It also owns and operates a variety of facilities including a Fitness Centre, the Mawabuj Gardens Arena, a baseball field, a Golf Course, and hiking trails. The Community Hall is the prime location for community events such as weddings, meetings, concerts, workshops and conferences.

Visitors find that Wemindji is a welcoming and remarkable place. Numerous events throughout the year, focusing on making each summer special, are held. The Music Festival held every July is one of its larger events, bringing in local and regional talent to the stage. An annual canoe expedition is held every summer trip to the Old Factory when several locals paddle down Paint Hills Bay.

SHAPE

Shape

Letter case

OUR EYES RECOGNIZE WORDS BY THEIR SHAPE AS WELL AS BY THE LETTERS THEY INCLUDE. TEXT SET IN ALL CAPS IS THE LEAST LEGIBLE BECAUSE EACH WORD IS THE SAME SHAPE.

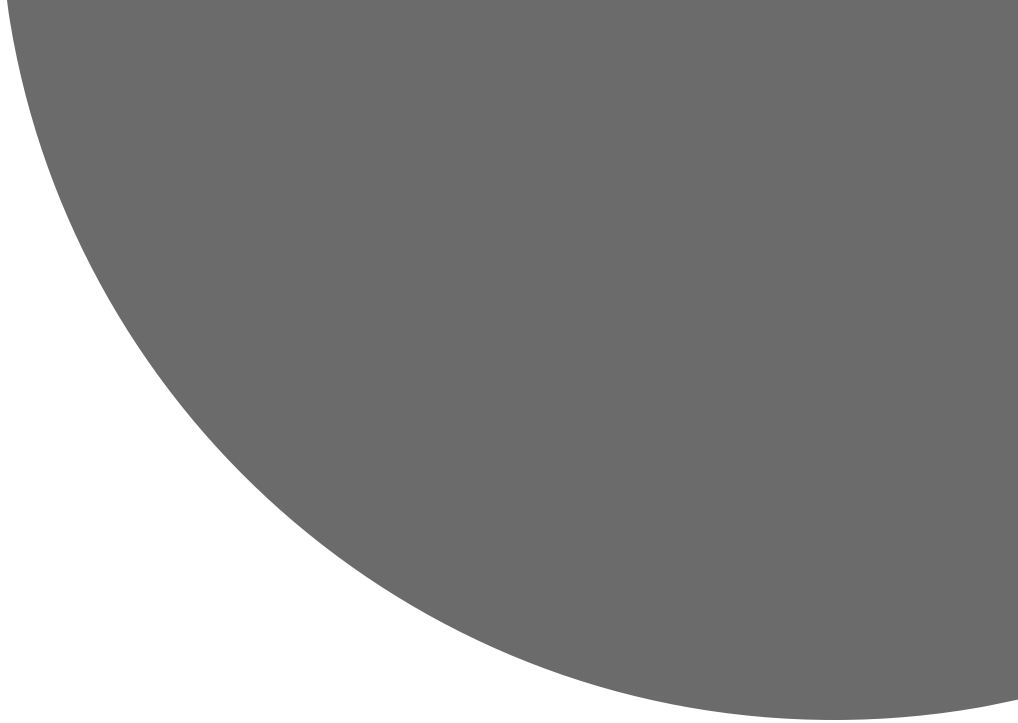
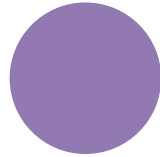
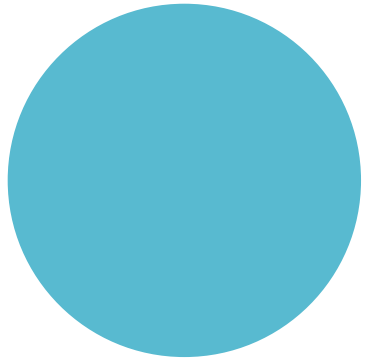
Another Problem Occurs When You Use Title Case In Sentences. Title Case Is A Mixture Of Upper And Lower Case And Is Suitable For Titles Only Because It Is Too Hard To Read.

Within the field of typography there is still a strong belief that words can be recognized as a whole. According to this idea, words form a certain shape—referred to as so-called bouma (shape)—and we can recognize (and therefore read) this shape or outline if we have seen it over and over again.

WITHIN THE FIELD OF TYPOGRAPHY THERE IS STILL A STRONG BELIEF THAT WORDS CAN BE RECOGNIZED AS A WHOLE. ACCORDING TO THIS IDEA, WORDS FORM A CERTAIN SHAPE—REFERRED TO AS SO-CALLED BOUMA (SHAPE)—AND WE CAN RECOGNIZE (AND THEREFORE READ) THIS SHAPE OR OUTLINE IF WE HAVE SEEN IT OVER AND OVER AGAIN.

Readability

- Is the tone convincing?
- Have I expressed myself clearly?
- Is there any ambiguity?
- Is the length appropriate
- Does the content match the reader's level of knowledge?
- Have I said everything as concisely as possible?



Edit for Correctness

Step 5

Edit for Correctness

- Typeface changes
- Twins (brackets, quotation marks, em dashes)
- Strings of small words
- Proper nouns
- Correct spelling and punctuations

Proofreading is *not* reading

To be a good proofreader...

you have to

- turn off auto-correct
- s-l-o-w d-o-w-n

So, what about Spell Check?

Heir to the Throne

Air to the Thrown

Spelling

Context matters:

- compliment/complement
- form/from
- files/flies
- public/pubic

Hone techniques for spotting errors



Errors are like grapes



Errors hide in little letters in the
middle of long words

“the Conversation
Council’s recycling
record comes under
fire”

- Limited resources exist in the undeserved community.
- Limited resources exist in the underserved community.

Always check the spelling of names!

Tips for Self-Editing

- Print and proofread.
- Read your work out loud.
- Make more than one pass through the document
- Use a ruler



Moira White

Performance Management Consultants

moira@ubiquitext.ca

www.ubiquitext.ca

www.editors.ca