

Writing for the Web

Improving user experience
by writing the way they
read.

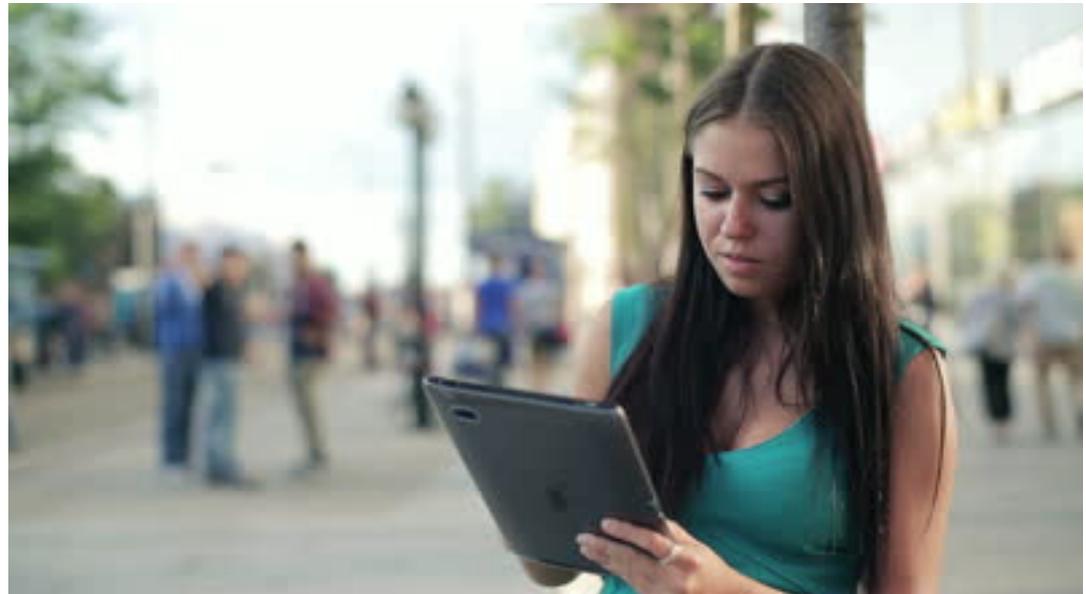
How Users Read on the Web

- They don't.



How Users Read on the Web

- They don't.
- People rarely read web pages word for word.



How Users Read on the Web

- Instead, they SCAN.
- They scan the page and pick out individual words and sentences.
- They are looking for something meaningful to them.



How Users Read on the Web

- If you write text that is scannable, your users will read your page faster.
- They will retain your message better.
- They will have a better experience on your site.

How Users Read on the Web

- They will stay longer.
- They will come back more often.
- You will build trust.



The Dreaded Wall of Text

descriptive (we're wasting valuable exposure time with a mysterious name - losing the opportunity that on each occasion when the name of the organization is mentioned, that in itself could be sending an introduction to a new idea, like if the name were Technology Solves A11 Movement for a sloppy example), but it will also forever tie the movement to what some will call the conspiracy stuff (9/11, religion, etc.) because of your identically named movie Zeitgeist, and this will only distract and alienate from the RBE prize. I was in the 9/11 Truth Movement and saw up front & personal so many who had an instinctively negative visceral reaction to any suggestion that 9/11 was an inside job, that they would hear no more. Also, why alienate those with strong beliefs in their religion? Is it really necessary for us to first convince everyone they've been lied to about everything their whole life before introducing a sane alternative to a profit based society when there are no good jobs anymore even in the first world? People are desperate for an alternative and these other things I think are unhelpful distractions to a beginner's introduction to the possibility of another way. Activists for a new system won't get so many bites at the mainstream media exposure apple that we can afford to squander any by tying a hand behind our back with unimportant inconsequential stuff like names and logos. Perhaps if we eliminate these easily changed hurdles, the movement will grow faster and have less fuck and debunking charges to respond to. Trust me, I know that responding to 9/11 debunking charges is a full time job in itself, it's a rabbit hole. Unless we get away from the Zeitgeist movie name, we will be linked to the what people call the 'conspiracy' stuff. Of course, this suggestion should not in anyway detract from your contribution, Pieter. You actually created the movement, right? and probably lots of us learned of BECAUSE of your movie's addressing of the 'conspiracy' stuff. This is truly only a request for a superficial and easily made change to de-link the V.P. and a R.B.E. with the unrelated items others deem conspiracy and/or non-positive theories. I say easily made because people's flyers, dvd sleeves, logos, stuff that is printed when needed, can be changed digitally on computers through existing technology generally available to those who print the stuff (just retyping, or simple editing, right?) and there are stockpiles of stuff with the current names on it that would be wasted I assume? Thanks in advance for your consideration, and please also address whom you think such a decision as to the movement's name should be made.

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Credit: hyperboleandahalf.blogspot.com

The Dreaded *Wall of Text*

- *Wall of Text* is the web term for one giant block of writing that is incredibly hard to read/scan.
- There are few (if any) paragraph breaks, and no subheadings.

PREPARE YOURSELVES

**WALL OF TEXT IS
COMING**

memegenerator.net

Tips for Scannable Text

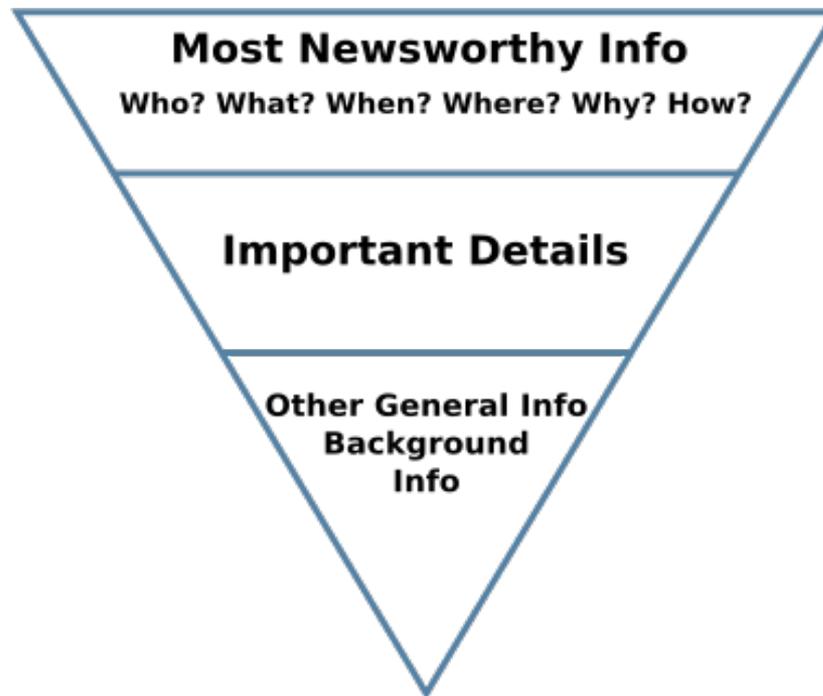
- Use the *inverted pyramid*.
- Write simply.
- Limit yourself to one idea per paragraph.
- Break texts into lists.
- Use headings and subheadings.
- Highlight keywords.

Let's take a look at each of these...

Use the *Inverted Pyramid*

- People decide whether they want to keep reading based on the first sentence or two.
- Get to the point fast!
- Structure your text like an inverted pyramid.

Use the *Inverted Pyramid*



Use the *Inverted Pyramid*

- Put the most important stuff at the top of your text.
- Users should be able to read your *lead paragraph* and get the idea of the whole piece.



Use the *Inverted Pyramid*

- A lead paragraph should be 1-2 sentences, and 30–35 words.
- Tell the main who, what, when, where and how of the story.



Use the *Inverted Pyramid*

- Content that's progressively less important comes lower down.



Use the *Inverted Pyramid*

- The second paragraph is where you develop some idea that is in the lead.



Use the *Inverted Pyramid*

- Present information in decreasing order of importance.



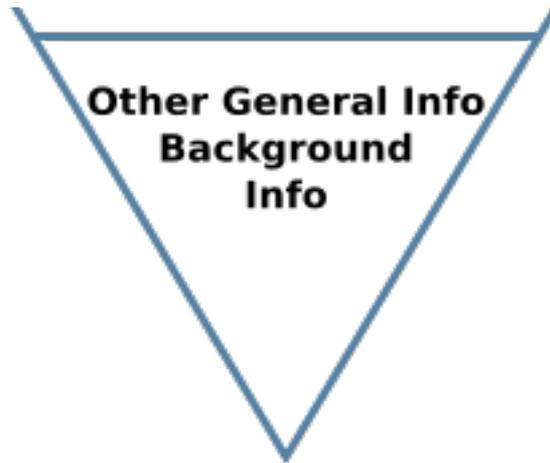
Use the *Inverted Pyramid*

- Each new paragraph should present the reader with some new information.
- But it should be tied to the previous paragraph by the skillful use of transitions.



Use the *Inverted Pyramid*

- Put stuff that's not essential to the user's understanding at the end.



Write Simply

"it is all very well for you to write simply and the simpler the better. But do not start to think so damned simply. Know how complicated it is and then state it simply."

Ernest Hemingway

Write Simply

- If your text is clear and concise, your users will spend less time reading—and will be happier.
- Use vocabulary that is easy to follow.
- Avoid jargon and clever wordplay. Explain jargon if you must use it.

Write Simply

- Get to the point quickly with:
 - Short words and phrases
 - Concise 2- to 3-sentence paragraphs
- Use about half of the word count you might use for printed text.

Write Simply

- Take out the fluff and the unnecessary, paring the content down to an understandable minimum.
- Reduce flowery parts of speech like adjectives and adverbs.
- Replace passive phrases with active phrases.

Write Simply

- Never center text on the page. That's harder to read.
- When you're done, re-read your copy.
- If you can't work out what it says, what hope do your users have of understanding it?

Write Simply

- Limit yourself to one idea per paragraph.
- This helps you stick to shorter chunks of text.
- Put keywords at the beginning and end of paragraphs, where people pay the most attention.

Write Simply

- A great tool is HemingwayApp at hemingwayapp.com.
- The goal is to reduce the grade level required to read your text.

Hemingway App makes your writing bold and clear.

The app highlights long, complex sentences and common errors; if you see a yellow sentence, shorten or split it. If you see a red highlight, your sentence is so dense and complicated that your readers will get lost trying to follow its meandering, splitting logic — try editing this sentence to remove the red.

You can **utilize** a shorter word in place of a purple one. Mouse over it for hints.

Adverbs are **helpfully** shown in blue. Get rid of them and pick verbs with force instead.

Phrases in green have **been marked** to show passive voice.

Write Simply: Case Study

Wall of Text at

coto.edu/about_us

About College of the Ouachitas

College of the Ouachitas in Malvern (Hot Spring County) is a comprehensive two-year college in south-central Arkansas. In addition, the college oversees the Ouachita Area Career Center (OACC), post-secondary programs in cosmetology and nursing, the Ouachita Area Adult Education Center (OAAEC), and the Workforce Center. College of the Ouachitas is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and is a member of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA).

The college began as a vocational school. In 1969, the State Board of Education established Ouachita Vocational Technical School (OVTS) to offer occupational and technical training for Clark, Dallas, Grant, Hot Spring, and Saline counties, and the school opened in January 1972 with 292 students. The school also began providing General Equivalency Diploma (GED) courses later that year. While a permanent campus was under construction, classes met in the former Wilson High School building, which had been the African-American high school prior to integration. In 1985, the State Board of Education designated OVTS a high school vocational center to provide career-oriented training to students in the area's eleven high schools. The vocational-technical school taught automotive technology, cosmetology, food service, small-engine repair, welding, classes designed to meet the specific needs of area businesses, and post-secondary practical nursing.

OVTS operated until 1991, when it became Ouachita Technical College (OTC). In 1988, the Arkansas Business Council Federation called for educational reforms that included transferring post-secondary vocational programs from the State Board of Vocational Education to the State Board of Higher Education and converting vocational-technical schools into two-year colleges. To that end, the state legislature approved the "Two-Year Postsecondary Reorganization Act of 1991" (Act 1244). The initial bill did not include OVTS, but at the urging of local business leaders and educators, state senator George Hopkins introduced a separate bill to redesignate OVTS as Ouachita Technical College. That legislation (Act 617) was signed into law prior to Act 1244, making OTC Arkansas's first technical college.

Conversion from OVTS to OTC occurred on July 1, 1991, and Governor Bill Clinton appointed the Board of Trustees in October of that year. To facilitate the transformation, OTC worked with Henderson State University (HSU) to offer general education classes at OTC. HSU developed a curriculum and provided faculty for courses that allowed OTC students to earn college-level credits. In February 1994, the NCA granted OTC accreditation candidacy, and the school assumed responsibility for the college programs. Four hundred and eighty-two students enrolled for fall classes, and in May 1995, the college bestowed forty-five graduation awards, which included associate degrees, technical certificates, and certificates of proficiency. Upon full accreditation from the NCA two years later, OTC officially became an institution of higher education.

With accreditation, OTC began improving its academic facilities. To support that effort, the City of Malvern passed a one-cent sales tax dedicated to the college. The revenue allowed OTC to construct a 35,000-square-foot facility, which opened in 1999 and provided classrooms, offices, and a library. To help meet the growing demand for medical-care training, OTC constructed an allied health building in 2003, which houses the certified nursing assistant (CAN), licensed practical nurse (LPN), and registered nurse (RN) programs.

The college experienced tremendous growth in enrollment, especially early in the twenty-first century when OTC was among America's fastest-growing two-year colleges. From an initial enrollment of 210 students in 1991, the student body expanded to 2,080 for the fall 2010 semester. In October 2006, OTC had 105 full-time employees, twenty-seven of whom were faculty members. In July 2011, the name of the college was officially changed to College of the

Write Simply: Case Study

o coto.edu/about_us



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Hemingway
Editor

Write Edit Help

Readability



Grade 17 (Poor)

Words: 791 More

4 of 36 sentences are hard to read.

23 of 36 sentences are very hard to read.

6 phrases have simpler alternatives.

2 adverbs. Aim for 3 or fewer.

2 uses of passive voice. Aim for 7 or fewer.



College of the Ouachitas in Malvern is a comprehensive two-year college. The main campus is in Hot Spring County in south-central Arkansas. The college also oversees:

- the Ouachita Area Career Center (OACC)
- post-secondary programs in cosmetology and nursing
- the Ouachita Area Adult Education Center (OAAEC)
- the Workforce Center.

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Classes met in the former Wilson High School building while a permanent campus was under construction. This building had been the African-American high school before integration. In 1985, the State Board of Education designated OVTS as a high school vocational center. Its new mission was to provide career-oriented training to students in the area's eleven high schools. The vocational-technical school taught:

Hemingway
Editor

Write Edit Help

Readability



Grade 10 (Good)

Words: 778 More

7 of 102 sentences are hard to read.

6 of 102 sentences are very hard to read.

1 phrase has a simpler alternative.

2 adverbs. Aim for 9 or fewer.

2 uses of passive voice. Aim for 20 or fewer.

Break Texts into Lists

- Lists make text even more scannable.
- They break up large blocks of text into smaller chunks that are easier to read.
- They give the user's eye something to lock onto when they scan the page.

Break Texts into Lists

- If you find you are using a lot of commas within a sentence, consider a bulleted list instead.

Bulleted Lists: Case Study

<http://blogs.scientificamerican.com/oscillator/fist-bumps-are-for-germophobes/>

Hemingway Editor
Write Edit Help

Readability
Grade 13 (OK)

Words: 184

- 0 of 8 sentences are hard to read.
- 5 of 8 sentences are very hard to read.
- 0 phrases have simpler alternatives.
- 2 adverbs. Aim for 1 or fewer.
- 0 uses of passive voice.

Fist bumps are back in the news this week after the publication of a study finding that fist bumps transfer fewer bacteria than the more customary handshake. Researchers dipped rubber gloves in a solution of *E. coli* and measured the number of bacteria transferred onto a clean glove after a variety of different greetings, including fist bump, prolonged fist bump, high five, prolonged high five, moderate handshake, and strong handshake. Fist bump had the lowest amount of transfer: only about a quarter of the number of bacteria got onto the clean glove in that experiment compared to the typical moderate handshake.

I've seen some eye rolling from microbiology friends about this news, and other studies having to do with the "cleanliness" of various behaviors and surfaces. Most of the time bacteria are just not that big of a deal and we are totally covered in bacteria ALL THE TIME. Is it surprising that you can transfer bacteria through handshakes? Do we really have to worry about this?

But there are some situations where the transfer of bacteria through handshakes could actually be quite dangerous.

Hemingway Editor
Write Edit Help

Readability
Grade 7 (Good)

Words: 169

- 3 of 17 sentences are hard to read.
- 1 of 17 sentences is very hard to read.
- 0 phrases have simpler alternatives.
- 0 adverbs. Well done.
- 0 uses of passive voice.

Fist bumps are back in the news this week. A study finds that fist bumps transfer fewer bacteria than the more customary handshake. Researchers dipped rubber gloves in a solution of *E. coli*. They measured the number of bacteria transferred onto a clean glove after a variety of different greetings:

- fist bump
- prolonged fist bump
- high five
- prolonged high five
- moderate handshake
- strong handshake

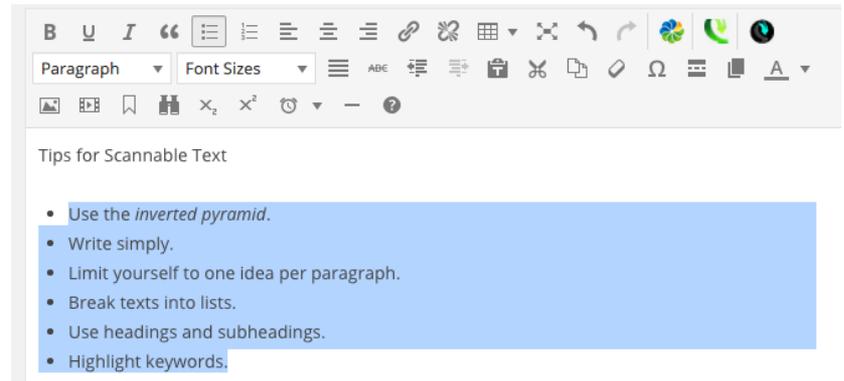
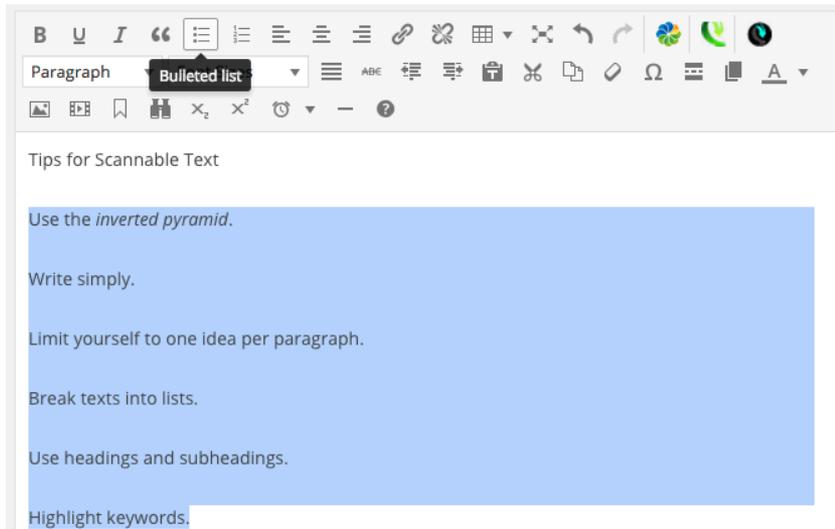
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But there are some situations where the transfer of bacteria through handshakes could be quite dangerous.

Bulleted Lists: in WordPress

- Separate list items with a line return/enter.
- Select the list items.
- Click the bulleted list button.



Headings and Subheadings

- Headings are a great way to make a long sequence of paragraphs easier to scan.
- Headings announce exactly what the chunk of text is about.
- This lets your user decide whether they want to invest their time in reading that bit.

Common Uses of Headings

- A **main site heading** appears on every page.
- It gives the users context if they arrived there through a search engine (or any place else besides the home page.)
- This heading is usually in the form of a logo in the top left corner.



Common Uses of Headings

- **Sidebar headings** let the user know where the links go, or why the content is different from the main column.
- Sidebars sometimes also break down content into lists.

RECENT POSTS

Seahorse Coloring Page

Elephant Coloring Page

Owl Coloring Page

How to Draw a Walrus
Worksheet

Octopus Coloring Page

CATEGORIES

Biology

Botany

Coloring Pages

Zoology

Common Uses of Headings

- A **page heading** is typically found above the main content and announces the topic of the page.
- This is what you enter in the top text box when creating a page or post in WordPress.

Add New Page

Enter title here

Subheadings

- **Subheadings** in the body text help to break up the page.
- They alert users to distinct transitions in topic.

Clever Problem-Solving?

For instance, in a 2003 experiment, researchers challenged dogs and wolves with an impossible puzzle: a tasty treat trapped in a box, with no way to remove it. While the wolves kept trying, the dogs quickly gave up and looked to the nearest human for help.

“This has traditionally been interpreted as the clever, socially advanced, response to this problem,” wrote researcher Monique Udell and her colleagues, but they say it could also be a sign that dogs are less persistent and less independent problem-solvers than wolves – especially when there’s a human available to ask for help. Or maybe dogs are just better at knowing when they’re barking up an impossible tree.

Udell and her team reasoned that if looking to humans for help really was a brilliant strategy for tackling unsolvable problems, then dogs shouldn’t resort to it when facing a puzzle they could actually solve.

Solving the Puzzle

To test that, the researchers presented a puzzle box containing a treat to 10 pet dogs, 10 shelter dogs, and 10 wolves raised by human caretakers. It was a much easier puzzle than the 2003 task; during a test run, an eight-week-old puppy solved the puzzle. Each dog or wolf had two chances to solve the puzzle: once in a room by themselves, and once with a familiar human standing a few feet back, looking at the box but not interacting with the animal.

Although dogs and wolves all showed interest in the puzzle box at first, wolves were much more persistent than dogs. They spent more time looking at the box and more time in contact with it, physically working on the puzzle. And 80 percent of the time, the wolves solved the puzzle and got the treat.

Dogs, on the other hand, didn’t stick with the task, and they sought help more quickly. When there was a human in the room, the dogs spent more time looking at the human, and less time working on the puzzle box, compared to wolves. Not surprisingly, the dogs had a much lower success rate: only about 10 percent.

Looking to Humans

But when researchers gave the dogs a third chance to solve the puzzle – this time with active encouragement from a human – they showed much more interest in the puzzle. Dogs with human encouragement spent more time looking at the box and more time in contact with it than they had when the human didn’t get involved.

Subheadings

- Subheadings point out details of possible interest.
- Users scan subheadings first to decide what and whether to read.

Social anxiety

Kids worry about fitting in, making friends, what others think of them, being teased, and being left out. Encourage your child to face, rather than avoid, social situations, and talk about ways to make friends. According to the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), teaching children social skills, problem solving, and conflict resolution supports good mental health.

Grades

Some kids worry about whether or not they'll be able to earn all A's in math, make the honor roll, or maintain a certain grade point average. Remind your child that you do not expect perfection.

Stress

Some kids become anxious or stressed out when they feel that their school environment is unorganized, or that classroom expectations are unreasonable. The NASP suggests that parents can help kids learn to deal constructively with challenging situations by offering to help come up with a solution together when your child tells you about a problem.

Making the team

Whether your child wants to make the cheerleading squad, get a part in the school play, or simply not be the last one picked for kickball at recess, it is important to remind him that not everyone succeeds every time. There are always other opportunities to be involved or be a part of a team. Practice together: fluff the pompons, rehearse the lines, or roll the ball to help your child master the skills of his choice.

Peer pressure

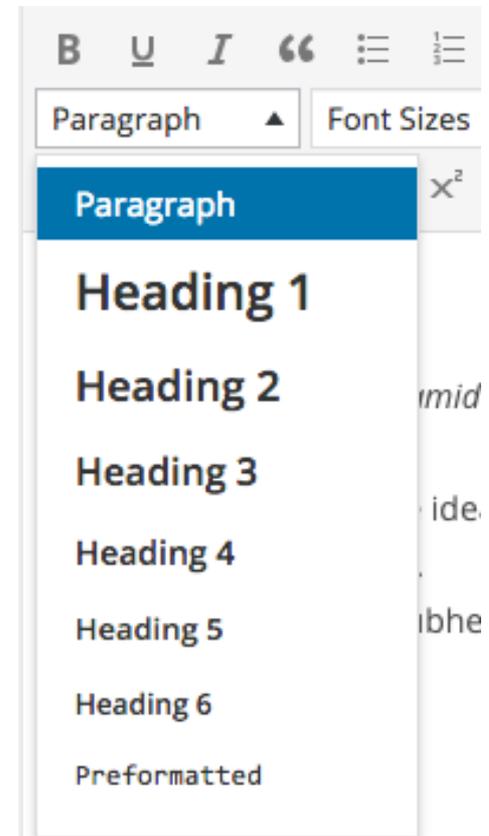
Kids just want to fit in, and they may worry about what their classmates expect from them. Encourage your child to talk about his concerns. Putting his fears into words may be helpful. Listen, but in most situations, the NASP says, "resist the urge to jump in and fix a problem for your child—instead, think it through and come up with possible solutions together. Problem-solve with kids, rather than for them. By taking an active role, kids learn how to tackle a problem independently."

Subheadings

- HTML comes with six different header levels: `<h1>` through `<h6>`.
- The different heading levels are used to **signify hierarchy** in your content.
- A level one heading `<h1>` is the most important heading, `<h2>` is the next-most important, and so on.

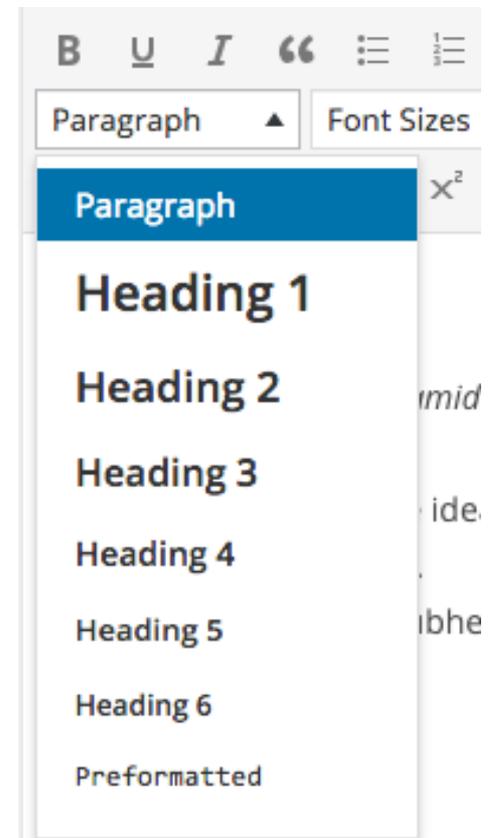
Subheadings in WordPress

- The heading levels can be formatted with this dropdown.



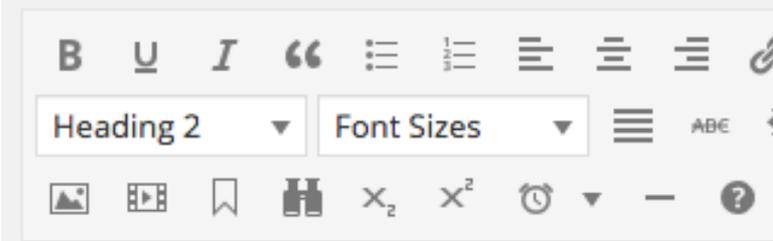
Subheadings in WordPress

- The page heading is already set as the Heading 1 for the page.
- Within your body text, start with Heading 2.



Subheadings in WordPress

- Most of your subheadings will be Heading 2.



The screenshot shows the Gutenberg editor toolbar. The heading dropdown menu is open, showing 'Heading 2' selected. Other options visible include 'Paragraph', 'Text', 'Text Block', 'Text Block', 'Text Block', 'Text Block', and 'Text Block'. The font size dropdown is also visible, showing '18pt' selected. Below the toolbar, the text 'Tips for Scannable Text' is highlighted in blue, followed by a bulleted list of writing tips.

Tips for Scannable Text

- Use the *inverted pyramid*.
- Write simply.
- Limit yourself to one idea per paragraph.
- Break texts into lists.
- Use headings and subheadings.
- Highlight keywords.

Subheadings in WordPress

- If you need to further divide content within a section, use Heading 3.
- Remember, it's about hierarchy!

WHAT IS THE HONORS PROGRAM ALL ABOUT H2

HonorsBrochure 1 5_v3

HONORS COURSES ARE: H3

- University transferable
- Smaller than regular classes (usually limited to fifteen students)
- Dependent upon student participation and research
- More challenging

STUDENTS WHO COMPLETE (5) HONORS COURSES WITH A 3.0+ GPA RECEIVE: H3

- A certificate celebrating the accomplishment
- A \$100 cash award
- An "Honors Scholar" notation on their transcript and at graduation
- Qualification for the UCLA and HTCC TAP

HOW CAN I QUALIFY FOR THE HONORS COURSES? H3

- Maintain a 3.0 GPA or better based on high school or college transcripts
- Be eligible for or successful completion of ENGWR 300 (formerly English IA)

HOW DO I GET CERTIFIED FOR UCLA TAP? H3

- Complete five (5) Honors courses while a student at SCC (one of those courses may be completed at another Los Rios District campus)
- Maintain a 3.2 GPA
- Apply to UCLA in the Fall
- Become UCLA TAP certified by Honors Program Coordinator and Transfer Center Director during Spring semester prior to transfer
- (There are many additional transfer advantages for SCC Honors students at other California colleges and universities. [Click here](#) for a list of schools that partner with the SCC Honors Program)

Subheadings in WordPress

- Note: the *Sub Headline* content type in the Flexible Content template will display as `<h2>` headings (Heading 2).

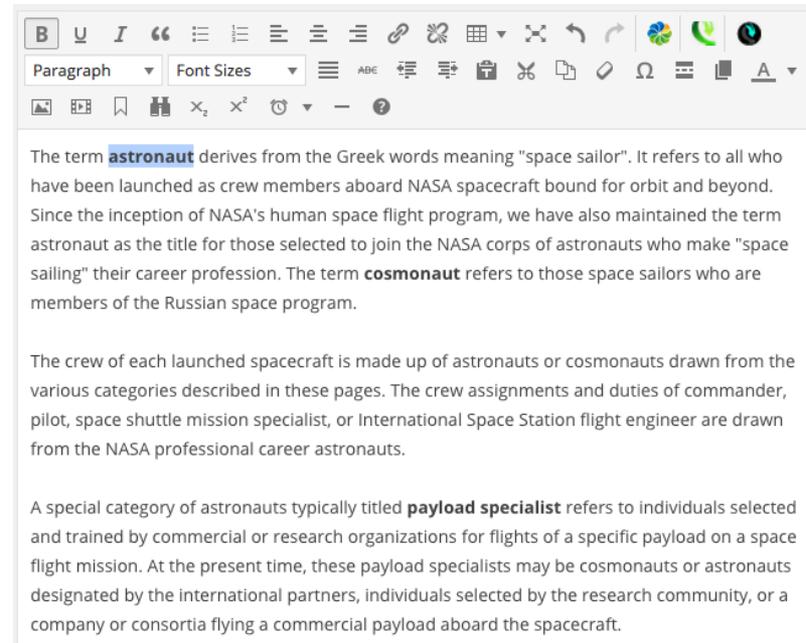
Content
Create the types of content you want on the page.

1 Sub Headline

Sub Head
Place the text you want to appear as a Sub headline in this field.

Highlight Keywords

- Make your keywords stand out.
- Use the **B** button to make text bold.
- Avoid using the U button to underline. This makes web text look like a link.
- Use italics sparingly, as they reduce legibility.



The screenshot shows a rich text editor toolbar with various icons for text formatting, including bold (B), italic (I), underline (U), and link (A). Below the toolbar, the text content is displayed. The word "astronaut" is highlighted in blue, and the word "cosmonaut" is bolded. The text discusses the history and terminology of space exploration, including NASA's human space flight program and the Russian space program.

The term **astronaut** derives from the Greek words meaning "space sailor". It refers to all who have been launched as crew members aboard NASA spacecraft bound for orbit and beyond. Since the inception of NASA's human space flight program, we have also maintained the term astronaut as the title for those selected to join the NASA corps of astronauts who make "space sailing" their career profession. The term **cosmonaut** refers to those space sailors who are members of the Russian space program.

The crew of each launched spacecraft is made up of astronauts or cosmonauts drawn from the various categories described in these pages. The crew assignments and duties of commander, pilot, space shuttle mission specialist, or International Space Station flight engineer are drawn from the NASA professional career astronauts.

A special category of astronauts typically titled **payload specialist** refers to individuals selected and trained by commercial or research organizations for flights of a specific payload on a space flight mission. At the present time, these payload specialists may be cosmonauts or astronauts designated by the international partners, individuals selected by the research community, or a company or consortia flying a commercial payload aboard the spacecraft.

Final Word

- Beautiful and appropriate images can improve the user's mood and comprehension.
- Don't use clip art! It usually is too goofy, low-quality, or overused.

They Use Their Device As A Second Screen [↗](#)

According to a 2014 [Statistica report](#), up to 71% of tablet owners use their devices as a **second screen** or engage in activity on their device while carrying out other tasks.

People will use their tablets when watching television, use both smartphones and tablets simultaneously, and listen to music through their device as they carry out other unrelated activities.



You're unlikely to have 100% of a visitor's attention, so don't make them think! ([View large version](#))