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From:

Subject:

Date:

Professor Roe

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Chapter 5 Assignment

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The purpose of this memo is to breakdown, compare, and contrast two articles; ‘Gout: An Update’ by Aaron T. Eggebeen and ‘Getting to Know Gout’ by Ken Flieger. These articles address separate audiences but are based on the same subject, gouty arthritis. Gout is a form of arthritis, a medical condition that causes pain and tenderness to the joints. This memo will examine the distinguishably different approaches by the authors of these articles

**Discussion**

The audience of each article differs, which can be assessed by the author’s use of terminology. Eggebeen’s article is targeted towards individuals in the medical field, such as students and residents, who need specific knowledge and facts contained within the article. Eggebeen is also targeting currently practicing medical professionals, which is implied by the title and the regular references to newly discovered treatments.

Subsequently, Flieger writes his article in an easily understandable fashion, gearing it towards readers of the FDA Consumer magazine, who are looking for an interesting topic to captivate them. He is wary of overloading his audience with information but provides useful information for readers who are ignorant of the medical concerns regarding gout.

The purpose of Eggebeen’s article is strictly to inform the audience of gout and the symptoms, diagnoses, and treatments in a detailed manner. He takes a scholar heavy approach, educating readers who are currently or plan to use this information to treat patients with gout.

Flieger also uses his article to educate, but his intention is more focused on providing an entertaining reading experience by filling the article with interesting facts and quotes. It’s unlikely that Flieger’s audience will ever need this information when it is not readily available to them by a trained physician.

Eggebeen’s article gets straight to the point, refusing to stray from its scope. He uses references and medical terminology of which his audience is acutely aware. Eggebeen backs his claims with a surplus of facts and specifications to any treatment he proposes. He lays out the most common medical information regarding gout, then provides users with known treatment and diagnoses, before he goes into newer treatment options and discoveries.

The scope of Flieger’s article is much more scattered, avoiding any claims of misinformation by being as broad as possible while still captivating. Flieger attempts to capture the reader’s attention by starting his article off with a large graphic representing the gout stereotype. Flieger’s article is laid out to be a quick one time read, as opposed to Eggebeen’s detailed article which can be studied and referenced regularly by his audience.

The vocabulary of each article contains regular medical terminology, however, Eggebeen’s use is much heavier and he does not stop to give explanations. Flieger mostly uses medical terminology when either he gives an explanation or there is plenty of surrounding context for the reader to derive from.

Eggebeen only uses one graphic image which an X-Ray with a short subtitle. He does, however, use many tables which each contain relative information such as breakdowns of treatments, costs, diagnoses, and more. He is very detailed in his approach, so these graphic tables can be extremely helpful to his audience. For readers referencing this article regularly, these tables are useful as they can quickly give them the information they need.

Graphics play a large role in Flieger’s article. He uses a satirical cartoon as the front cover of his article, which is much more likely to catch a reader’s attention than a block of text. Flieger then places two more graphics, each taking up a significant part of their respective page. These graphics give context to the reader via a visual analysis of gout symptoms and the Autumn Crocus which is used to create medicine to treat gout.

References are a principal component in medical articles. Without solid references, authors may not be trusted, and the audience can justifiably question any facts they present. In Eggebeen’s article, every notable point stated as a fact is backed by a reference, which is referenced near his statement and cited in detail near the end of the article. In total, Eggebeen uses thirty-four sources as a reference, and he uses them frequently.

On the other side of this argument lies Flieger’s article. Although Flieger uses references in his four-page article, they are far and few between. When he does reference another work, Flieger uses loose citations, often with only a mention to the author or organization. Flieger does not have a works cited portion at the end of his article.

Neither author uses an excessive number of headings or white space, but both use their fair share. In Eggebeen’s work, the text is the dominant element and he only uses headings when it is deemed necessary. The article’s editor formats the document in a textbook layout, as I assume this is a textbook, keeping the alignment of the text strict. Titles are used to separate topics, but they are less significant to the overall format of Eggebeen’s article compared to Flieger’s.

Flieger, on the other hand, uses clean and consistent spacing similar to a news article. He keeps his text close, but not so close that a reader will lose interest. He uses large fonts on the headings of each page to re-immerse readers who may be fatigued, and titles every five or so paragraphs which are separated by a new line.

**Conclusion**

The authors of ‘Gout: An Update’ and ‘Getting to Know Gout’ both clearly know the subject they are writing on. The major differences lie in their approach to addressing the audience, their vocabulary, and their use of external sources such as references and graphic images. While Eggebeen is very detail-oriented in his approach, Flieger is much more prone to using “fluff” words and a casual tone to address his audience. Eggebeen and Flieger use a strong abundance of medical terminology, logical organization, and remain within the scope of their articles to educate the audience on an often heard of the subject, which is not commonly discussed in detail.