Do people understand what you're writing?

Let's start with the early premise of how people read online: **they don't**. People only skim text when reading online and we need to provide as much information as high in the page as we can before people loose interest.

The characteristics of good online writing, combined from [How Users Read On The Web](#) from Jakob Nielsen and [Online Content Writing](#) from IZEA.

- **Text is scanable**. Making your content easy to scan means that people will find what they need quickly and, maybe, come back when they need more information
    - It has highlighted **keywords** (hypertext links serve as one form of highlighting; typeface variations and color are others)
- **It has headings**. Use headings to break things up and make the content easier to scan. That way, people can easily jump to the section that is most relevant to them
    - meaningful **sub-headings** (not "clever" ones)
- **The most important info comes first**. Use the [inverted pyramid](#) to organize information for online reading
- **It's list-like**. Lists are easy to skim and scan and also satisfy people's need for information
- **It has small paragraphs**. The University of Maryland recommends **fewer than 70 words** per paragraph. Jakob Nielsen suggests **half the word count** than conventional writing. Convey **one idea** per paragraph
- **Make it objective**. People care less about your opinion than they care about the data they came to your site for

Writing for Different Contexts

The first challenge is to write content that will make sense when taken out of context. Fortunately, you can personally assess your content's usability in the most common out-of-context scenarios:

- Does the headline make sense if it's all you see? Does it have sufficient information scent to attract those users who would be interested in the full story? (

- It shouldn't be misleadingly attractive to users who'd be disappointed if they clicked
- Does the summary work to supplement the headline when the two pieces of microcontent are displayed together?
- Is the lead picture clear? Lists use small images to represent products or articles; if your image isn't clear, crop it if possible.

Links

- https://izea.com/2019/01/08/online-content-writing/
- Jakob Nielsen
    - https://www.nngroup.com/articles/how-users-read-on-the-web/
    - https://www.nngroup.com/articles/concise-scannable-and-objective-how-to-write-for-the-web/
    - https://www.nngroup.com/articles/inverted-pyramid/
- More
    - https://www.nngroup.com/videos/establishing-tone-voice/
    - https://www.nngroup.com/videos/chunking/
    - https://www.nngroup.com/videos/plain-language-for-experts/