

EDITORIAL · 06 OCTOBER 2020

Why *Nature* needs to cover politics now more than ever

Science and politics are inseparable – and *Nature* will be publishing more politics news, comment and primary research in the coming weeks and months.

<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-02797-1>

READING IS SKIMMING AND SCANNING

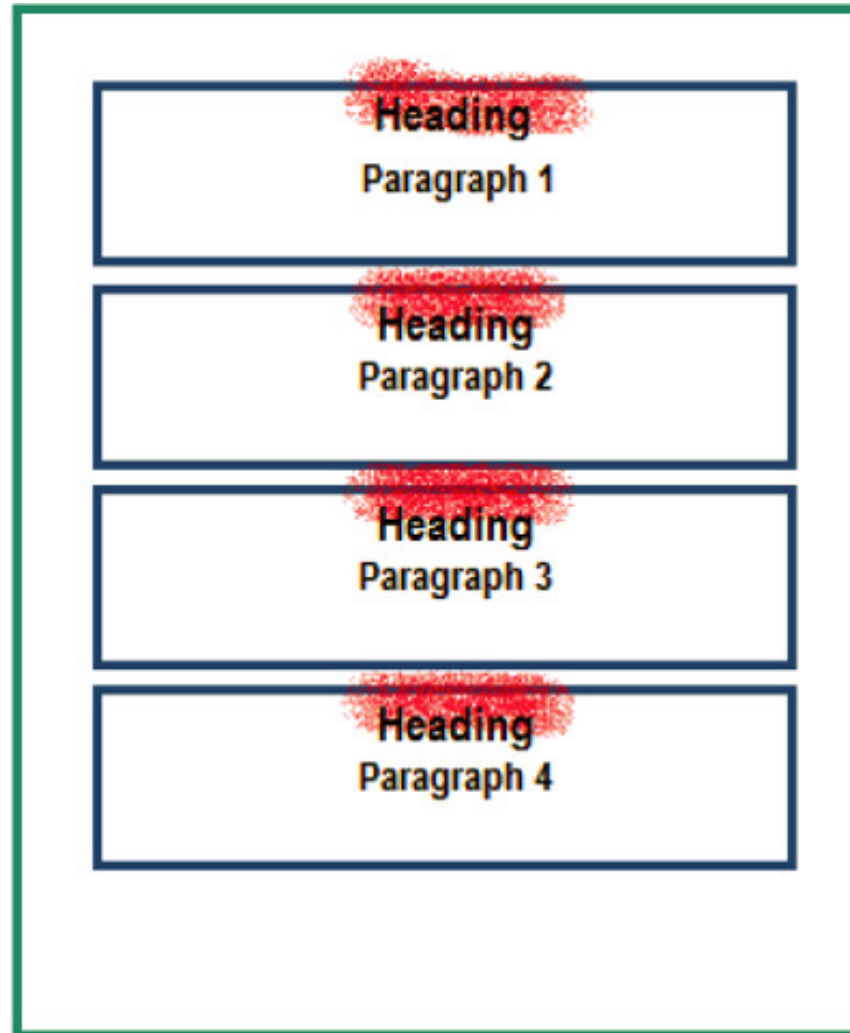
EXPLORATION

IMPATIENCE/SPEED

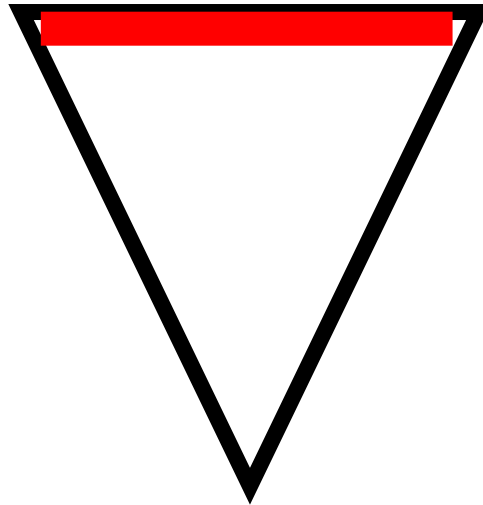
SELECTION

MEMORY

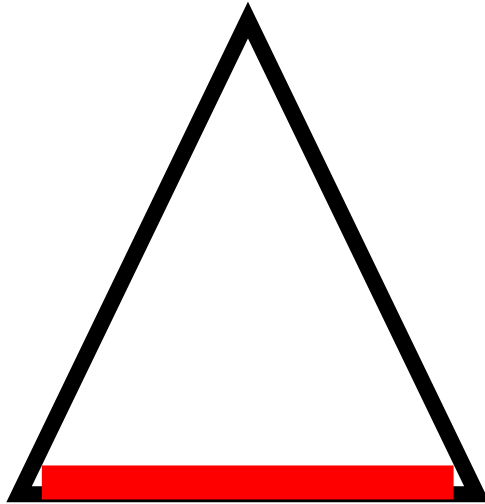
Organize each paragraph around core concepts



POINT FIRST PARAGRAPH



POINT LAST PARAGRAPH



THE IMPORTANCE OF STARTING A NEW PARAGRAPH

«Using **white space** helps the reader process the information in the story/work, **gives their eyes a break and keeps them interested**. Look at each page as if it were a work of art.

Some sentences will have more impact on their own.

Other sentences need more information and will evolve into a long paragraph of vital information. [...] **[K]eep in mind that the longer the paragraph, the more chance that someone will skip it**. Our eyes tend to naturally look for white space.

And the sentences closest to the white space are the ones most remembered»

By Cheryl Kaye Tardif



LONG FORM

VS

**SHORT FORM
(NEWS)**

Spinosaurus dinosaur was 'enormous river-monster', researchers say



**HOW DOES NEWS ABOUT A PIECE OF
RESEARCH USUALLY COME UP?**

HOW DOES NEWS ABOUT A PIECE OF RESEARCH COME UP?

A SCIENTIFIC
PUBLICATION



A PRESS RELEASE



THE MASS MEDIA

Genome duplications as evolutionary adaptation strategy

by Heidelberg University



NEWS VALUE

NOVELTY

IMPACT

PROXIMITY

TIMELINESS

EMOTION

CONFLICTS

STORIES/PEOPLE

**WHY IS THE SHORT FORMAT A GOOD
EXERCISE TO DO?**

**WHY IS THE SHORT FORMAT A GOOD
EXERCISE TO DO?**

**BECAUSE IT SUMMARIZES SOME
CRUCIAL CONCEPTS OF
COMMUNICATION**

STRUCTURE

TITLE (CATCHY, SHORT AND CLEAR)

FIRST SENTENCES

FIRST PARAGRAPH (LEAD)

OTHER PARAGRAPHS

THE LEAD

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FIRST PARAGRAPH

Informative

Self-sufficient

Appealing

THE REST OF THE TEXT

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OTHER PARAGRAPHS

Give more information

Data/explanation/details

Declining
importance...

THE CONCLUSION

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OTHER PARAGRAPHS

Future perspectives

Possible application

Additional information...

A final quote...

SHORT FORMAT

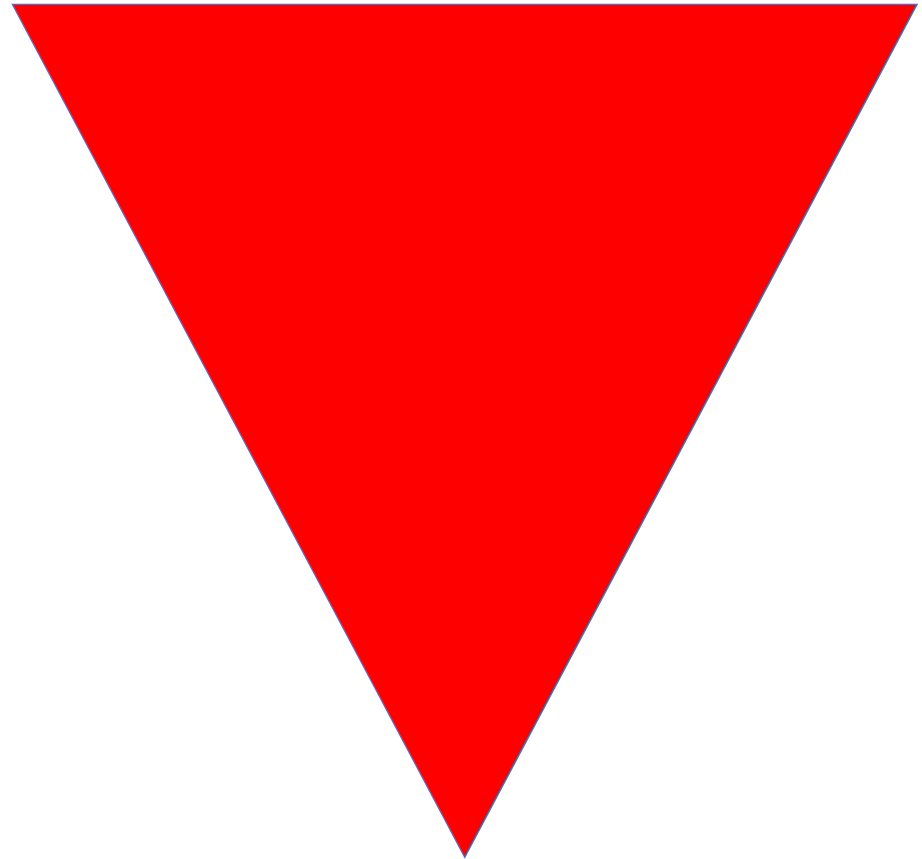
STRUCTURE

LEAD

EXPLANATION

CONCLUSIONS

CONTENT HIERARCHY



SHORT FORMAT

LEAD

EXPLANATION

CONCLUSIONS

The 1900 Storm
GALVESTON ISLAND, TEXAS

Remembering the Great Hurricane, September 8, 1900 A Galveston County Daily News presentation

The 1900 Storm: Tragedy and Triumph

Courtesy of Resenberg Library

One night of terror became a lasting part of Galveston's identity

By **HEIDI LUTZ**
The Daily News

A Galveston Daily News reporter in 1900 said the story of the Sept. 8, 1900 hurricane could never truly be written.

Linda Macdonald's grandfather said nothing could ever make him forget the sounds of that night.

And for many, no words could ever be spoken again about the deadly hurricane that reshaped the Gulf Coast forever.

As Galvestonians and the rest of the country mark the centennial of the deadliest hurricane in U.S. history, its story continues to linger in the minds of virtually everyone who lives along a coast. It is the reminder of what can happen when the winds blow and the tides rise along the hurricane-prone coasts of America.

Its tale of death, devastation and eventual recovery is close to the hearts of Galvestonians. And as its centennial anniversary comes and goes, and its stories are passed on again, the 1900 Storm will become part of the history of another generation.

'The storm'

For locals, any reference to "the storm" is obvious. If someone says a house survived the storm, there is no doubt it predates Sept. 8, 1900.

If people say they had family who died or survived the storm, there is no doubt that they are referring to a family history that goes back more than 100 years.

For in Galveston, "the storm" always refers to the hurricane that tore across Galveston on Sept. 8, 1900, and left the city in ruins.

Those who managed, either by sheer luck or the grace of God, to survive the storm faced the challenge of moving forward.

In his memoirs, meteorologist Isaac Cline referred to the morning after the storm as "a most beautiful day."

It was indeed a sunny, warm day, the kind of day people came to Galveston for at the turn of the century. But few visitors would walk the sandy shores for months after the infamous hurricane.

Instead, bodies of the dead that were improperly buried at sea washed ashore on those beaches, leaving even more treacherous work for the cleanup crews.

The storm left behind a legacy that extends across the country. As families moved from the island, they carried with them the story of that night.

Story untold

The story of Galveston's tragedy can never be written as it is. Since the cataclysm of Saturday night a force of faithful men have been struggling to convey to humanity from time to time some of the particulars of the tragedy.

They have told much, but it was impossible for them to tell all, and the world, at best, can never know all, for the thousands of tragedies written by the storm must forever remain mysteries until eternity shall reveal all.

Perhaps it were best that it should be so, for the horror and anguish of those fatal and fateful hours were mercifully lost in the scorching tempest and buried forever beneath the raging billows.

Only God knows, and for the rest let it remain forever in the boundlessness of His omniscience.

But in the realm of finity, the weak and staggered senses of mankind may gather fragments of the disaster, and may strive with inevitable incompleteness to convey the merest impression of the saddest story which ever engaged the efforts of a reporter.

Published Sept. 13, 1900, in The Galveston Daily News

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NN/g Eyetracking by Nielsen Norman Group nngroup.com
Published in conjunction with the City of Galveston 1900 Storm Committee
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MECHANICS OF WRITING

SOME GENERAL RULES

- **AVOID JARGON** (or explain)

- **MAKE IT SIMPLE** (in content and style)

- **SELECT THE STUFF**

- **USE EXAMPLES AND METAPHORS**

- **DON'T DWELL ON TECHNICAL ASPECTS**

- **DON'T BE POMPOUS**

- **SHORTEN YOUR SENTENCES**

- **DON'T DWELL ON SECONDARY CLOSES**

- **DIVIDE THE TEXT INTO PARAGRAPH**

“We notice language when it’s awkward and may blame ourselves for not being smart enough to figure it out.

When the writing is good, we notice the ideas and the data”

Let's move on to practice

EXERCISE

Go to the website www.eurekalert.org and choose one of the press-releases you can find there. Read it and highlight the most important information there reported.

Write a short article (1300 characters spaces included) for the science section of an online news website.