

Physics 496, Fall 2017

Review Criteria for “Writing for a General Audience”

News Story Elements	Level: Mastery [5]	Level: Proficient [4]	Level: Marginal [2]	Level: Unacceptable [0]
Title	Accessible, engaging title, geared to audience, follows P496 title rules	Follows P496 rules in general, not written at appropriate level	Run-on title, lacking meaningful content for audience	Inappropriate title (level, language, does not preview content, does not engage audience)
Byline	All elements present (name, date, and place of article, with place written according to AP convention)	Two of three elements present	One element present	No byline
Strong “lede”	First sentence; immediately captures the reader’s attention and makes him/her want to keep reading	First sentence sets context but is not very engaging	First sentence does not set the context and is only marginally engaging	No discernible lede
Central finding (the “news”)	The news is clearly identified and the main points are self-evident	The “news” does not stand out in the article		No central finding is identified
Organization	The inverted pyramid is used; all main points are included in the first three paragraphs	The inverted pyramid is used, but some important points come further down in the story	The inverted pyramid is sort of evident, but the overall structure does not conform to the journalistic style	Inverted pyramid style is absent
Direct quotation(s) from the interviewee	Quotation(s) is well integrated and significantly enhances the story	Quotation(s) generally support and enhance the story	Quotation(s) seem disconnected from the narrative	No direct quotation(s) used in the story
Two illustrative images	Images are engaging, appropriately described in the text, and credit is given to the source	Images are not particularly engaging or well integrated with the text; credit is given	Images are inappropriate for the audience level, are not sufficiently described in the text, or the credit is incomplete	Images are missing

General interest to the target audience	Story is engaging for intended audience, written at an appropriate level of detail	Story may be of interest to intended audience, but written at the wrong level (too detailed or too simple)	Story is marginally interesting to the intended audience	Story is not appropriate for or interesting to the intended audience
Four embedded hyperlinks	Hyperlinks take the reader to interesting supplemental material, at an appropriate level for the intended audience	Hyperlinks are of lesser interest and utility to the intended audience	Hyperlinks go to inappropriate or uninteresting material	No hyperlinks are embedded in the story
Funding agency acknowledgment and disclaimer	A funding acknowledgment and disclaimer has been included, using the required language	The funder has been acknowledged but not the grant number	The funding acknowledgment lacks the necessary disclaimer	No acknowledgment of funding
Grammar, punctuation, spelling	Zero errors; conforms to technical writing conventions	1–3 minor errors, e.g., a subtle typo or errant punctuation	Some major errors, such as egregious spelling errors, sentence fragments, and serious grammatical errors	Article appears to have been written carelessly and not proofread—frequent grammar, spelling, punctuation, and stylistic errors