

Challenges and Institutions in Global Security

Master in Global and International Studies



VNiVERSIDAD
D SALAMANCA

Fulton T. Armstrong

American University
Syracuse University

Washington, DC

∞ Welcome ∞

Supporting Policy Through Actionable Analysis

Session 7: Communicating Analysis for Impact

What impact do you want to have?



DATES / TIMES

Session 1	Wed	11 Dec	4pm-7pm
Session 2	Thu	12 Dec	4pm-7pm
Session 3	Fri	13 Dec	6pm-9pm
Session 4	Wed	08 Jan	4pm-7pm
Session 5	Thu	09 Jan	4pm-7pm
Session 6	Fri	10 Jan	10am-1pm
Session 7	Mon	13 Jan	10am-1pm
Session 8	Tue	14 Jan	10am-1pm

All times CET

Questions or Comments
from
Previous Discussions?

QUIZ

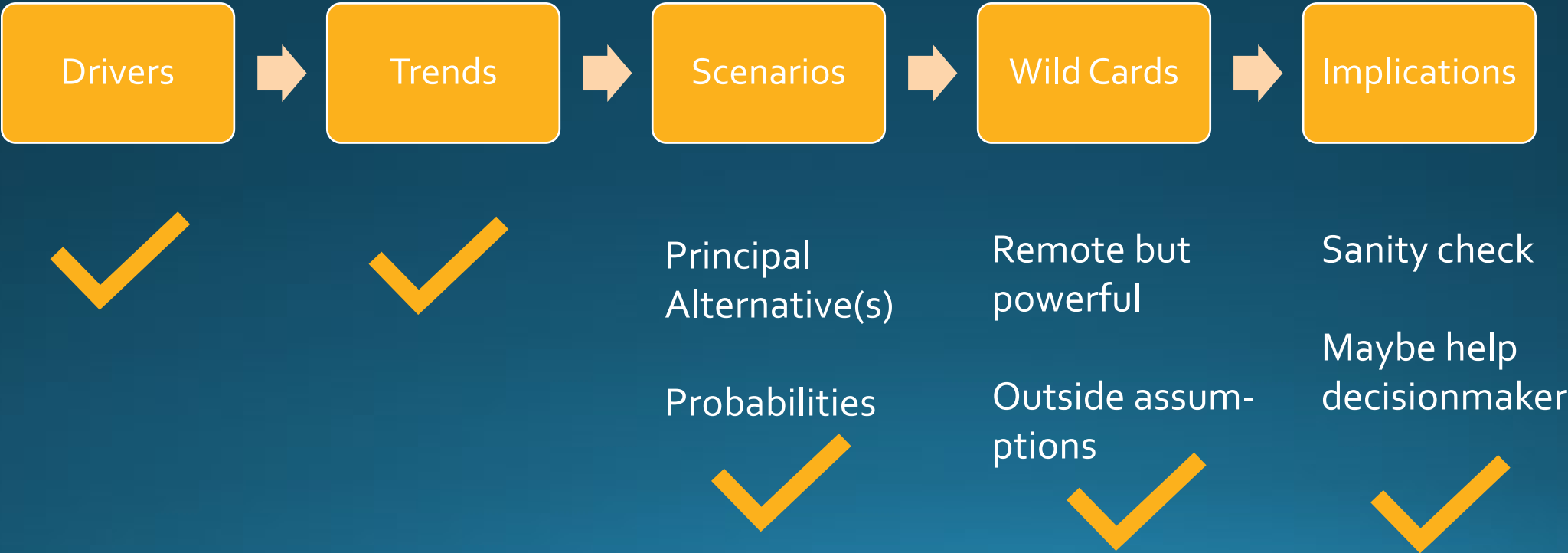
REVIEW and PREVIEW

Name: _____

True or False or “Not confident of my answer” (T, F, NC)

- _____ 1. Good analysis is often just common sense, but it is common sense that has been validated through a thoroughly conscious process.
 - _____ 2. The purpose of analysis is to help decisionmakers make decisions without showing a preference for one option or other.
 - _____ 3. The model on the analytical worksheet can be applied to the topic of a thesis or Capstone research project.
 - _____ 4. Not all elements of the model have to be included in the written and oral products you give policymakers.
 - _____ 5. Drivers and indicators are essentially the same thing.
 - _____ 6. The people who make decisions are our bosses, so we should avoid giving them analysis that they will find contrary to their wishes.
 - _____ 7. We should respect decisionmakers’ interest in making themselves look good in public.
 - _____ 8. If we’re not comfortable with a question from a decisionmaker, we should suggest a rephrasing that we can be comfortable with.
 - _____ 9. The vast majority of issues worth analyzing can be approached the same way.
 - _____ 10. Linear thinking is preferable in analytical products.
 - _____ 11. Brainstorming is helpful only when discussing scenarios.
 - _____ 12. Once you have identified the drivers of a situation, it is not appropriate to change them as you develop your scenarios.
 - _____ 13. Validating information – determining “real” and “fake” – is one of the first key steps of an analytical project.
 - _____ 14. The implications of scenarios tell decisionmakers why they should care, and the probabilities of scenarios communicate the urgency of the issue.
- _____ BONUS: It’s OK for an analyst to have a bias on an issue as long as they’re honest and adjust their conclusions if the bias is not supported by the facts..

Let's finish our analytical model



WHY do an alternative scenario (or two)?

Helps test your drivers.

Helps test your main scenario.



Raises sophistication,
confidence in
judgments.

Results in better product for
decisionmaker?



Prepares them and
educates them.

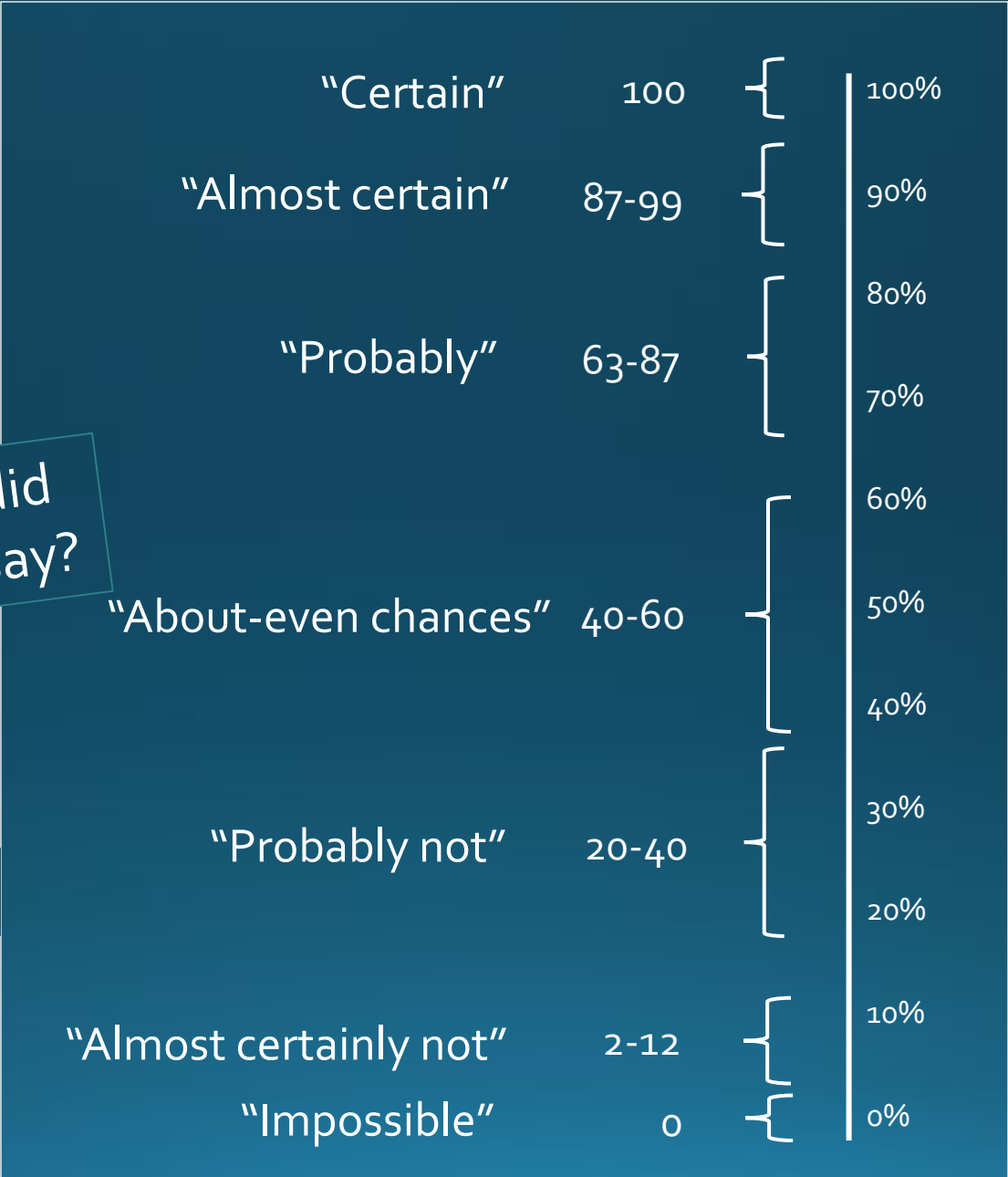
REVIEW

How do we state probability?

NOW, what did CIA analysts say?

"It's art, not science."

HANDOUT L



Source:
Informal CIA Working
Paper

Approved for Public Release by ODNI on 09 January 2025

UNCLASSIFIED



NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE COUNCIL



10 January 2025

ICA 2025-00008-B

Updated Assessment of Anomalous Health Incidents, as of December 2024

This Intelligence Community Assessment was prepared under the auspices of the National Intelligence Officer (NIO) for Counterespionage. It was drafted by the National Intelligence Council with contributions from the Intelligence Community.

UNCLASSIFIED

Released on 10 Jan 2025





NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE COUNCIL



10 January 2025

ICA 2025-00008-B

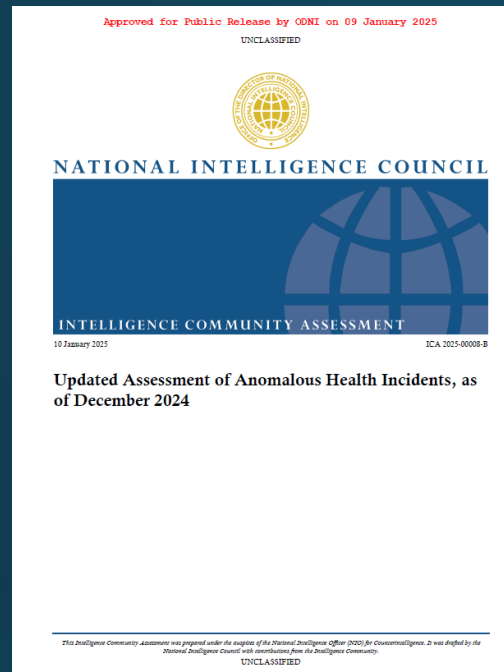
**Updated Assessment of Anomalous Health Incidents, as
of December 2024**

This Intelligence Community assessment was prepared under the auspices of the National Intelligence Officer (NIO) for Counterespionage. It was drafted by the
National Intelligence Council with contributions from the Intelligence Community.

UNCLASSIFIED

In line with the 2023 Intelligence Community Assessment (ICA), most of the IC continues to assess that it is “very unlikely” a foreign adversary is responsible for the events reported as possible anomalous health incidents (AHIs).





In judging that it is “very unlikely” that a foreign actor is responsible, five IC components place emphasis on sensitive intelligence reporting continuing to point away from foreign involvement in AHIs, the IC’s investigations of key incidents reported as possible AHIs, and a review of foreign intelligence and research regarding the development of novel weapons. Two components still have moderate-to-high confidence in this judgment, and three components still have moderate confidence. These components also judge it is “very unlikely” a foreign actor has used a novel weapon or prototype device to harm even a subset of the USG personnel or dependents who reported medical symptoms or sensory phenomena as AHIs.





NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE COUNCIL



INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

10 January 2025

ICA 2025-00008-B

Updated Assessment of Anomalous Health Incidents, as
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It may look a little silly – and the reasons for it may be silly – but it's part of the process of transparency.

...these shifts are based on
...they evaluate to indicate that foreign actors are
making progress in scientific research and weapons
development.

BRAINSTORMING

- Purpose: Ensure analysis considers all relevant information and interpretations
- Definition: Process of liberating ourselves from established line, avoiding linear thinking, and building confidence in the completeness of our analysis.

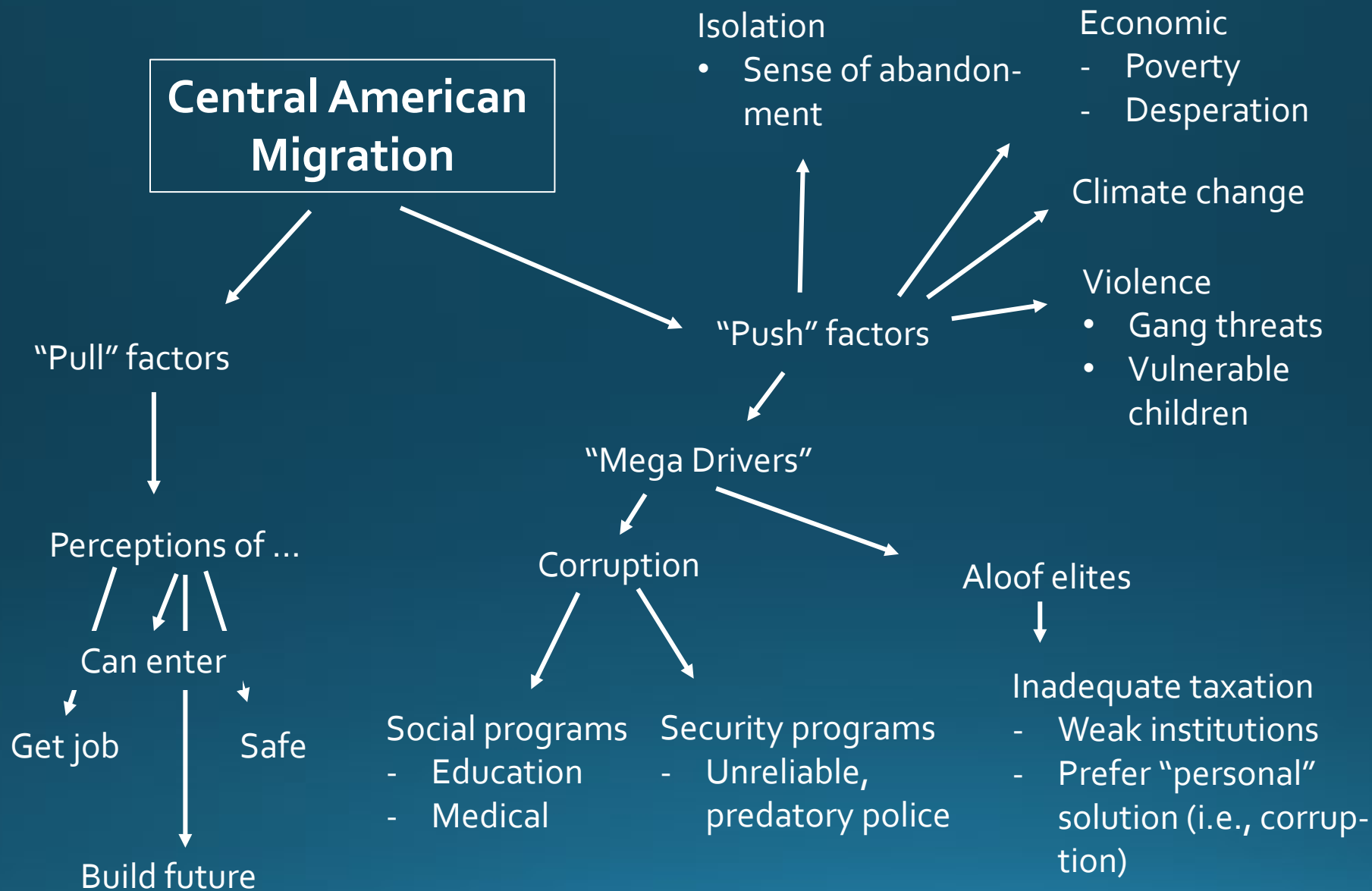
Guidelines:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Neutral peer leader | No judging |
| Quantity over quality | No defending |
| Keep the ball moving | Loose structure |
| Everyone talks | Keep it light |





A Simple Mind Map

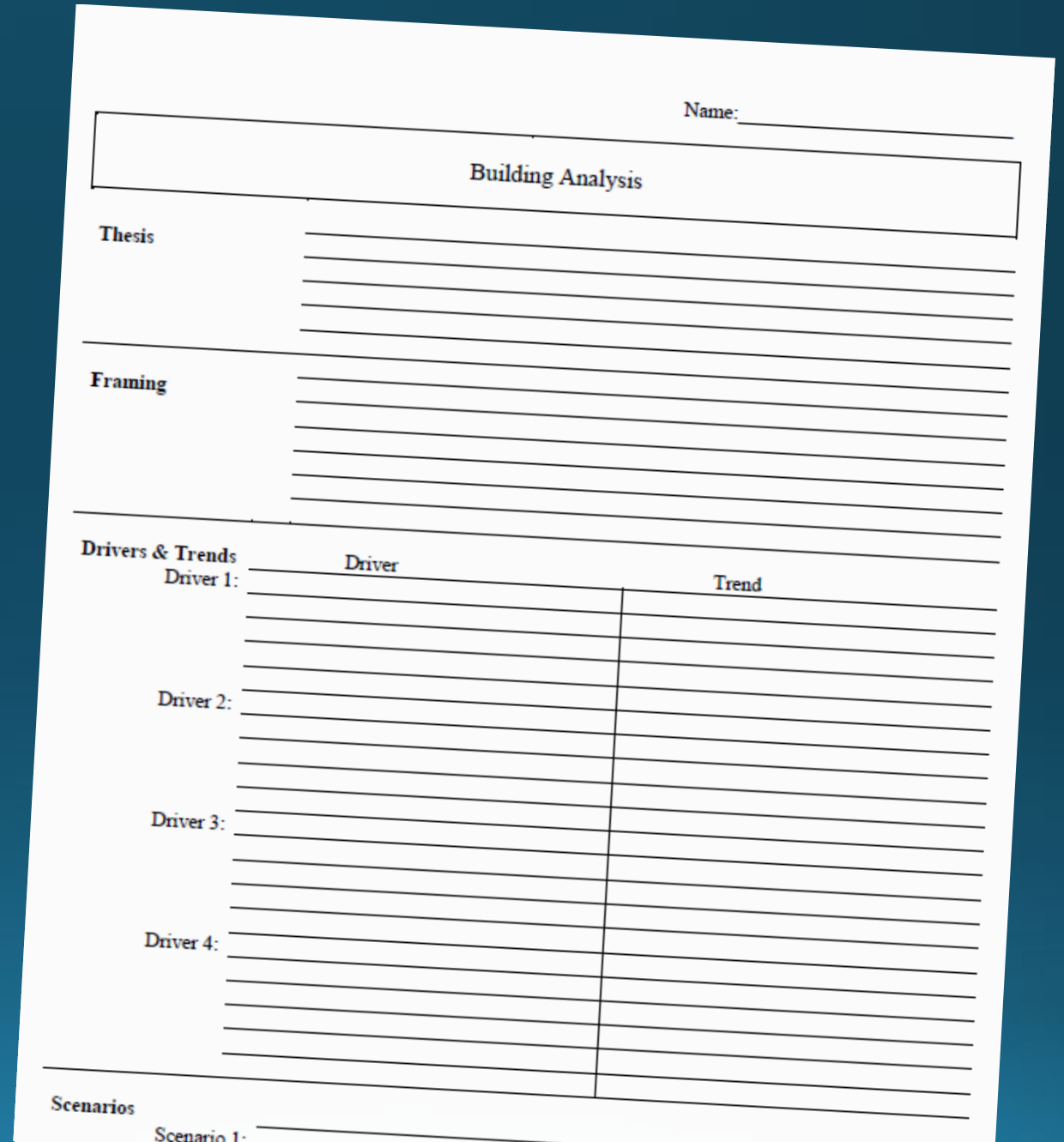


COMMENTS?

PREPS FOR TODAY: Communicating Analysis for Impact

- PREPS: 1. Sections in the guide on
- Words, Grammar, Sentences
 - Technology of Writing
 - What about AI?
 - Principles and Tips
 - How to Write Analysis
2. Begin to finalize YOUR ANALYTICAL WORKSHEET.
3. Prepare BRIEFING PREPARATION FORM.
- } pp. 77-126

Do you have a thesis?
What's your framing?
How do your drivers and trends look?
What are your scenarios and probabilities?
What wild cards have you identified?
What implications do you see?



Let's do a little more BRAINSTORMING

- Lead a brief discussion
 - Brief current thinking
 - Look at drivers/trends
 - Look at scenarios
- Prof will take notes

- Do you have a thesis?
- What's your framing?
- How do your drivers and trends look?
- What are your scenarios and probabilities?
- What wild cards have you identified?
- What implications do you see?

[illegible]

Session 7: Communicating Analysis for Impact

What is ANALYTIC WRITING?

Formats can vary, but ... purpose and tone do not.

Informs	Is objective (or at least transparent)	Explains / causes context importance
"Shows," doesn't just "tell"		Almost always institutional

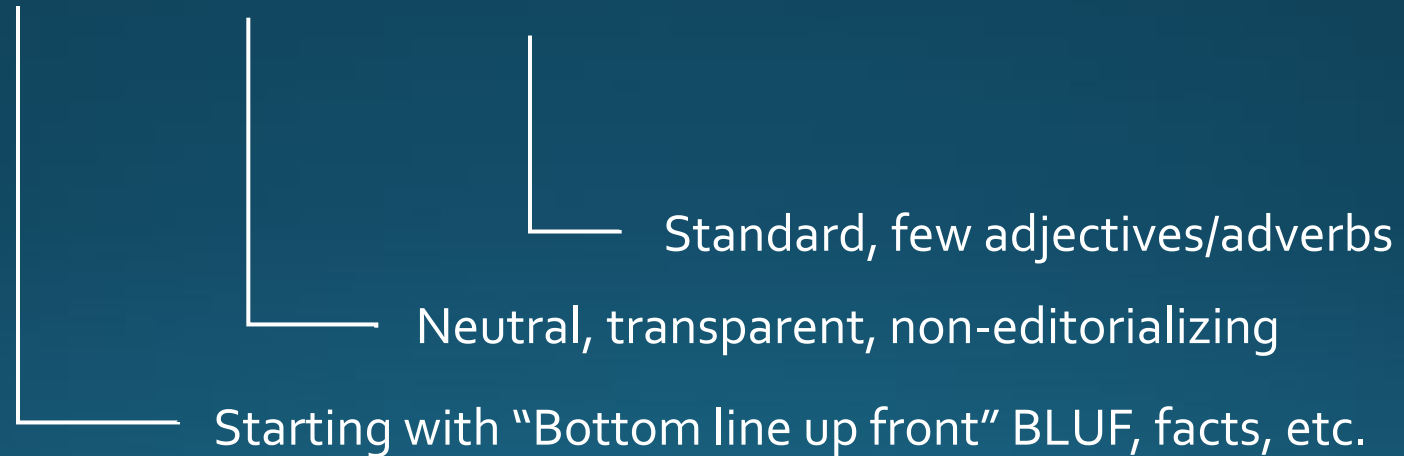
Empowers decisionmaker

IS "ACTIONABLE"

*What other kinds of writing are common, and how
are they different from analytic writing?*

What is ANALYTIC WRITING?

The structure; style and tone; vocabulary are different as well.



And that is what we're focused on.

A deep space photograph showing a dense field of stars against a black background. The stars vary in brightness and color, with many appearing as white or yellow points of light. Some stars have a soft, blueish-white glow around them, suggesting they are part of a specific stellar cluster or nebula. The overall composition is centered, with the text 'In the beginning was the Word' overlaid in a clean, white, sans-serif font.

In the beginning was the Word

The power of words

make us know, remember

make us think, build ideas

make us feel, laugh, cry

What are we
without
words?

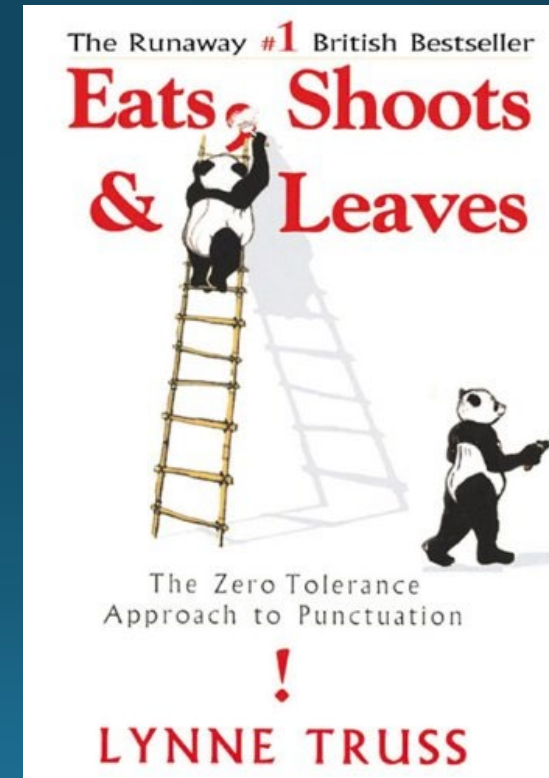
Have words
woken up
awareness or
consciousness
for you?

The DANGER
of using the
WRONG
combination
of words

“Let’s eat, Grandma”

VS

“Let’s eat Grandma”



**TABLES ARE
FOR EATING
CUSTOMERS
ONLY**

NO LOITERING

The DANGER of
using the
WRONG words



The DANGER of
using the
WRONG words

numbers, including some that featured a bucket and bells brigade of performers who beat rhythms on buckets and trash cans with drums sticks and hammer mallets. PHOTO BY JENNIFER STULTZ

MENTORING DAY

Students get first hand job experience

By Gale Rose
grose@pratttribune.com

Eager students invaded businesses all over Pratt Tuesday, October 24 as they looked for future job opportunities on Disability Mentoring Day.

The 97 students from 12 schools fanned out across Pratt and got first hand

experience what it would be like to work at those 40 businesses. They asked questions and got some hands on experience with various operations.

Paola Luna of Pratt High School, Gina Patton of Kingman High School and America Fernandez of St. John chose the Main Street Small An-

imal Veterinarian Clinic for their business. Students got a tour of the facility, learned what happens in an examination, got to handle various animals and watched a snake eat a mouse.

Luna said she was interested in animal health and wanted to know more about caring for hurt an-

imals. Patton likes all kinds of animals and said she learned a lot from the experience. Watching the snake eat the mouse impressed her the most.

Fernandez wants to become a veterinarian and enjoyed learning everything that veterinarians

SEE MENTORING, 6

ing Meyer ty Commissioner

• Hospital Pharmacist for 41 years
• 4 years Commissioner for Pratt Planning and Zoning Board of Appeals
• 3 years Pratt City Commission
• Graduate of Pratt High School and KU School of Pharmacy
• Past Member and President of Civic Groups and Organizations
• Experience and Knowledge of Financial Responsibility and Budgeting
• Supports Family Values, Education, and Business Growth
• Common Sense Approach for the Sustained Progress of Pratt

12 SATURDAY, October 28, 2017 ■ The Pratt Tribune ■ www.pratttribune.com

The Pratt Tribune 28 Oct 2017

ABC Former Lexington High standout Dorell Wright signs \$3 million deal with Heat/D2

SPORTS

Section D

Rangers get whiff of Colon



AL WRIGHT Angels center fielder Dorell Wright, combined with his efforts on a one hit show.

By The Associated Press

Angels' center fielder Dorell Wright, combined with his efforts on a one hit show.

The right-handed pitcher, who has been a steady presence in the Angels' rotation, was named the starting pitcher for the game against the Rangers.



SECTION 4, PAGE 10

REGION

THE OREGON JOURNAL

Homicide victims rarely talk to police

Many homicide victims and their families are reluctant to talk to police, according to a study by the Oregon Department of Justice.

The study, which was conducted by the Oregon Department of Justice, found that many homicide victims and their families are reluctant to talk to police.

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Miracle cure kills fifth patient

By The Associated Press

A fifth volunteer died Tuesday from an experimental drug tested as a miracle cure for hepatitis B, beyond medical reason even as scientists unraveled the mystery of what went gravely wrong in a clinical trial.

Aggravatingly, the first shot was in plain sight a year ago, but researchers at the National Institutes of Health didn't know enough about how the drug worked to recognize what it meant, the study's lead scientist says.

"Something terrible happened and we missed it," Dr. Jay Hoofnagle said in an emotional

interview describing the horror of realizing the drug was killing people months after they stopped taking it.

"The dreadful thing [is] waiting to see what will happen," he said, his voice trembling, before learning of the most recent death. "I just hope we've over the worst."

The drug Fialuridine, or FIAU, had shown great promise for fighting the hepatitis B virus, which can cause deadly cirrhosis and liver cancer. When dogs passed toxicity tests unharmed, the Food and Drug Administration approved FIAU for human trials.

Too late, scientists would discover that in humans, FIAU stealthily attacks the very building blocks of cells in livers, kidneys and nerves.

Five people treated with FIAU have died of liver and kidney failure, despite liver transplants for three of them. On Thursday, a 35-year-old woman succumbed after two months in critical condition, and two liver transplants at the University of Virginia Medical Center. One volunteer remains in serious condition there, and another is recovering from an Aug. 4 transplant at Emory University Hospital in Atlanta.

Bridges help people cross rivers

By MICHELLE DUNAVEN

Have you ever wondered what Buckled would be like without bridges across the Rock River? How would we get from east to west? Forties might be an answer, but not a very practical one.

Bridges have helped mankind traverse waterways, creeks and the like for hundreds and even thousands of years. And, throughout that time, bridges have evolved from a simple fallen log across a narrow creek to highly complex roadways spanning miles of shallow waterways, such as the 24-mile-long Lake Pontchartrain Causeway near New Orleans, La.

To Do:

The next time your family visits Discovery Center Museum, try to find the two different arch bridges and one suspension bridge in Rock River Discovery Park. If you want to learn how engineers build bridges and buildings, you might want to participate in our upcoming Exploring Architecture Camp, from 9 a.m. to noon Wednesday, July 29, through Friday, July 31. Open to children ages 8 to 11, the camp will explore engineering and architecture with blocks, balsa wood, and other materials.

For more information, call Discovery Center Museum at 903-414-1400 for admission fees and registration information.

To build your own bridge or building at home, you will need:

- Popsicle sticks
 - Gum drops
- By joining the popsicle sticks in to the gum drops, you can construct them together to create your own structure. How high can you make a tower stand? How long of a span can you give to a bridge? Remember, you can build it, you can break it.



All words are arbitrary and conventional.

But not all words are created equal, of course.

Onomatopoeia

buzz, howl, etc.

squirt

boom

giggle

Metaphors

crash

whiff

splash

honk

Clear roots



etymology

All words are arbitrary and conventional.

But not all words are created equal, of course.

Onomatopoeia

Metaphors

Clear roots



etymology

She flew to the window.

He/she roared, "No!"

He/she's a shining star.

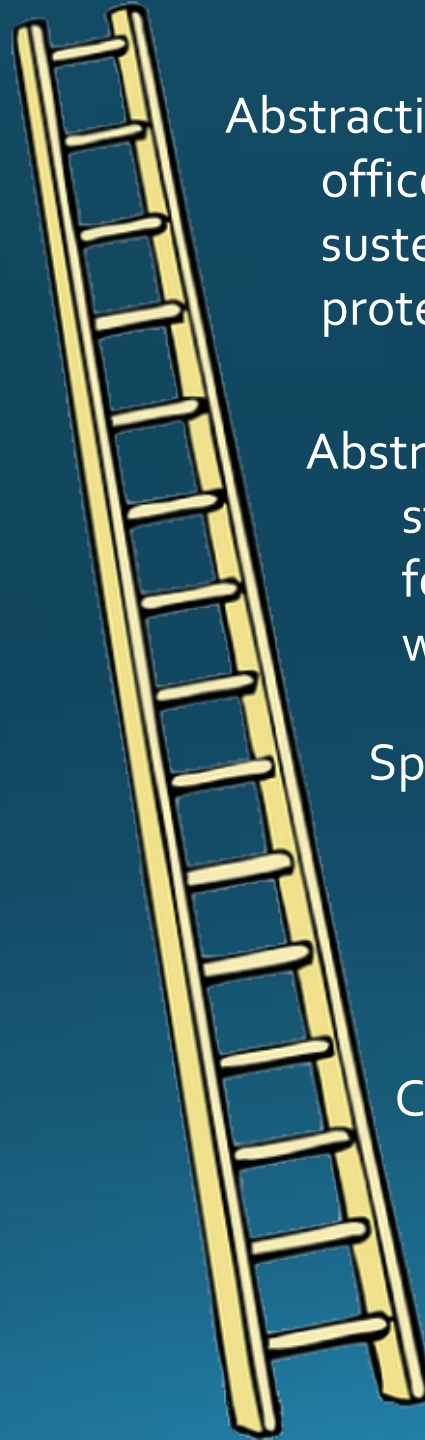
She looked at him icily.

It broke his/her heart.

It's raining cats and dogs.

I'm feeling blue.

On the opposite end:
"Ladder of Abstraction"



Abstractions

office necessities
sustenance
protection from the elements

Abstract things

stationery
food
wardrobe

Specific-general words

writing utensil
fruit
clothing

Concrete things

pen
grapes
socks

Words

Phrases

Clauses

Sentences

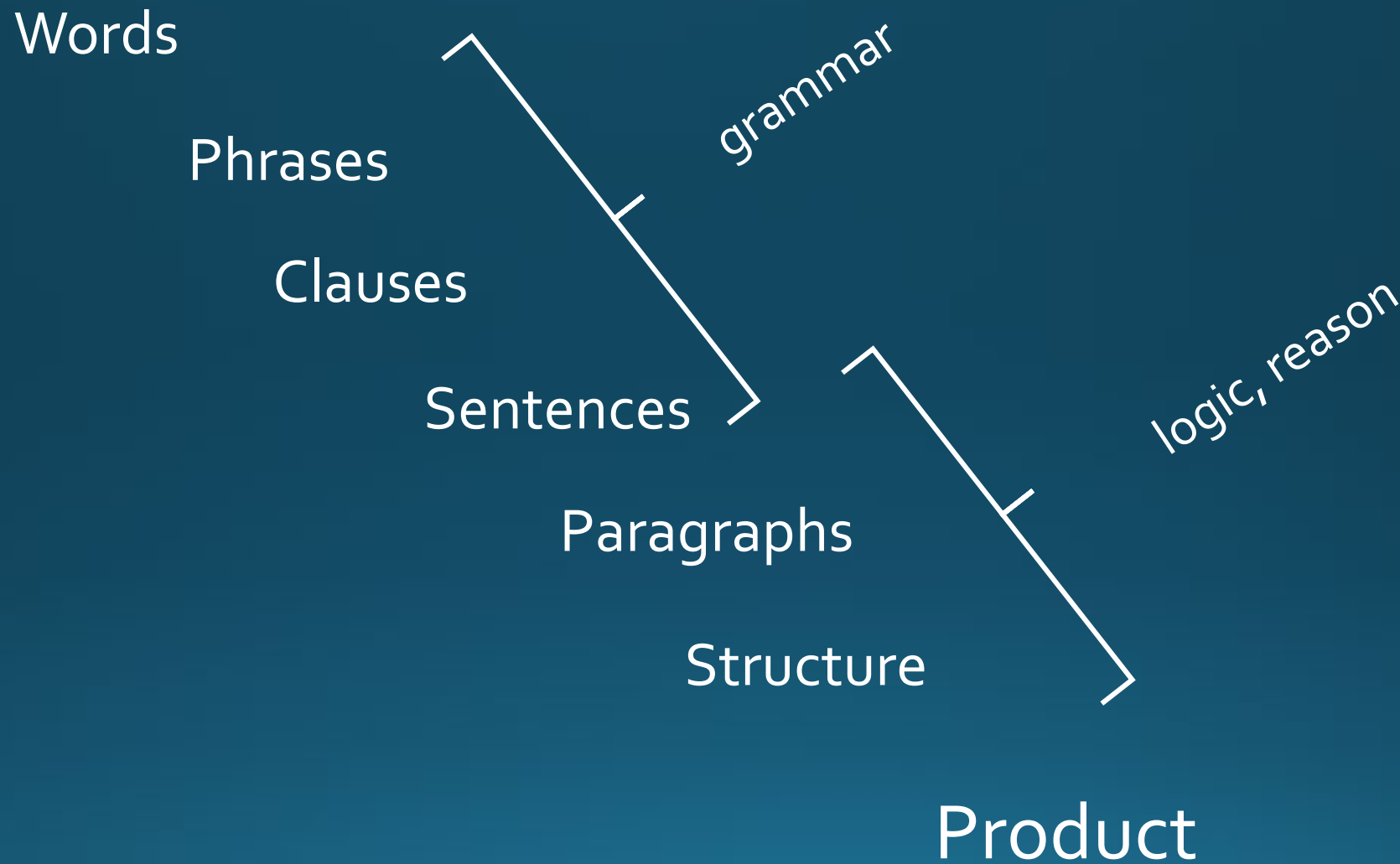
Paragraphs

Structure

Product

grammar

logic, reason



How powerful can a few written words be?

World's shortest novel: "For sale: baby shoes, never worn."

Haiku Summer grasses
All that remains
Of great warriors' dreams.

Matsuo Basho (17th Century)

I want to see
And to meet you
Stepping on the thin ice.

Mayuzumi Madoka (1962-)



The Snowflake

What is a snowflake?

In 40 words,

Write a thesis or conclusion.

Write an argument or explanation.

Write something about the implications.



EXAMPLE

What does collapse of Afghanistan mean?

The Taliban victory in Kabul has created conditions of repression and instability in Afghanistan. ... Restoration of Sharia Law, which international community rejects, has provoked suspension of financial, humanitarian aid, intensifying economic crisis and hunger. ... Taliban reaction likely to result in collaboration with terrorists.

BLUF

INFO / ARGUMENTATION

PREDICTION / IMPLICATION

41 words!

EXERCISE

B

Write a snowflake on your topic.

Thesis or conclusion or “main point.”

Argument or explanation.

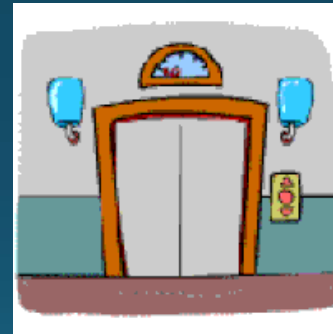
Something of predictions or implications.



Why invest time in a 40-word product?

"If you can't say it in 30 seconds,
it's not ready for prime time."

Lecture / Roadmap
Early thesis



It later becomes your
"elevator briefing"

Discussion

Why do we write?

Most important means of communication in analytic/policy world

Oral communication can be great in a jam, but its foundation is written

To inform ... to persuade ... to educate ... to record

Writing and thinking are integrally linked

We think by writing, and we write by thinking

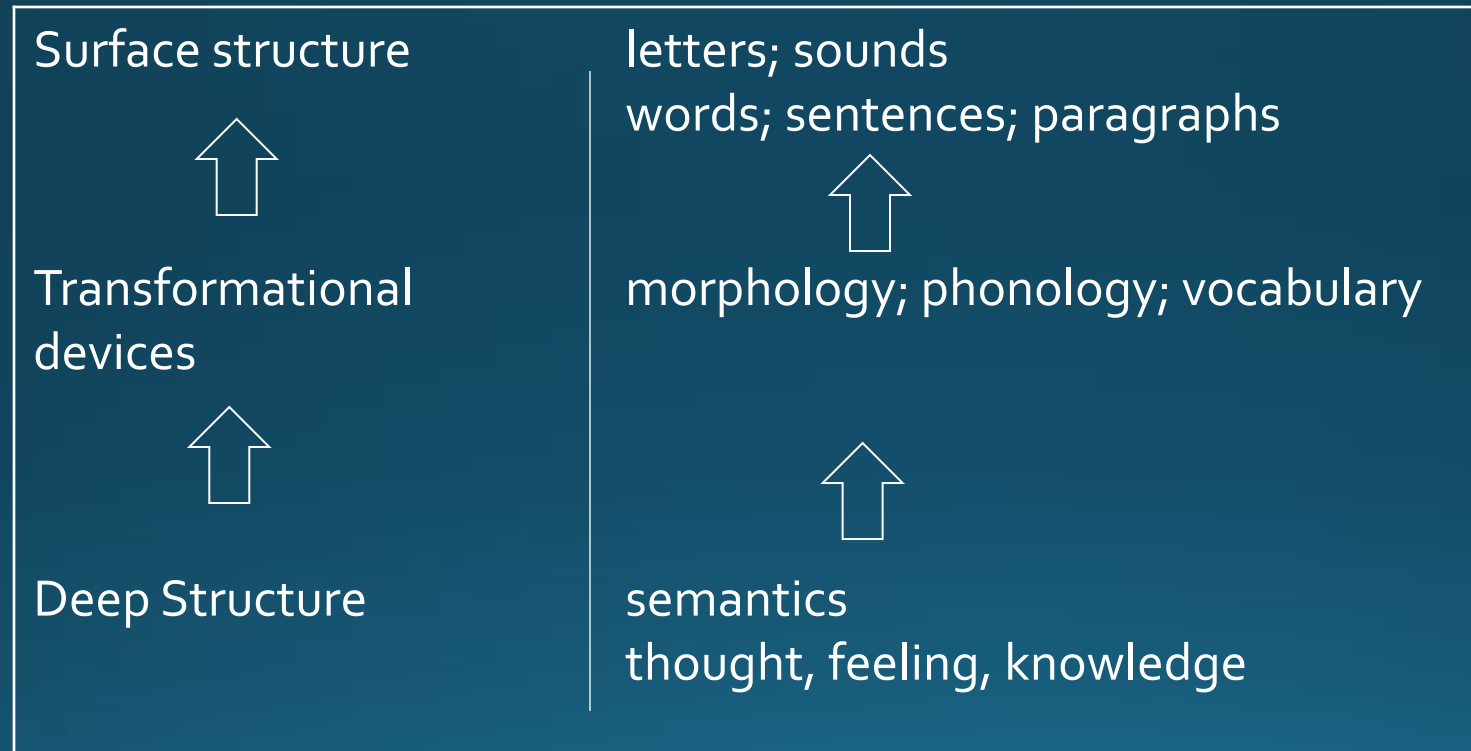
We build and hone our analysis by writing it

Old debate among linguists:

We can *feel* without words, but we can't think without them

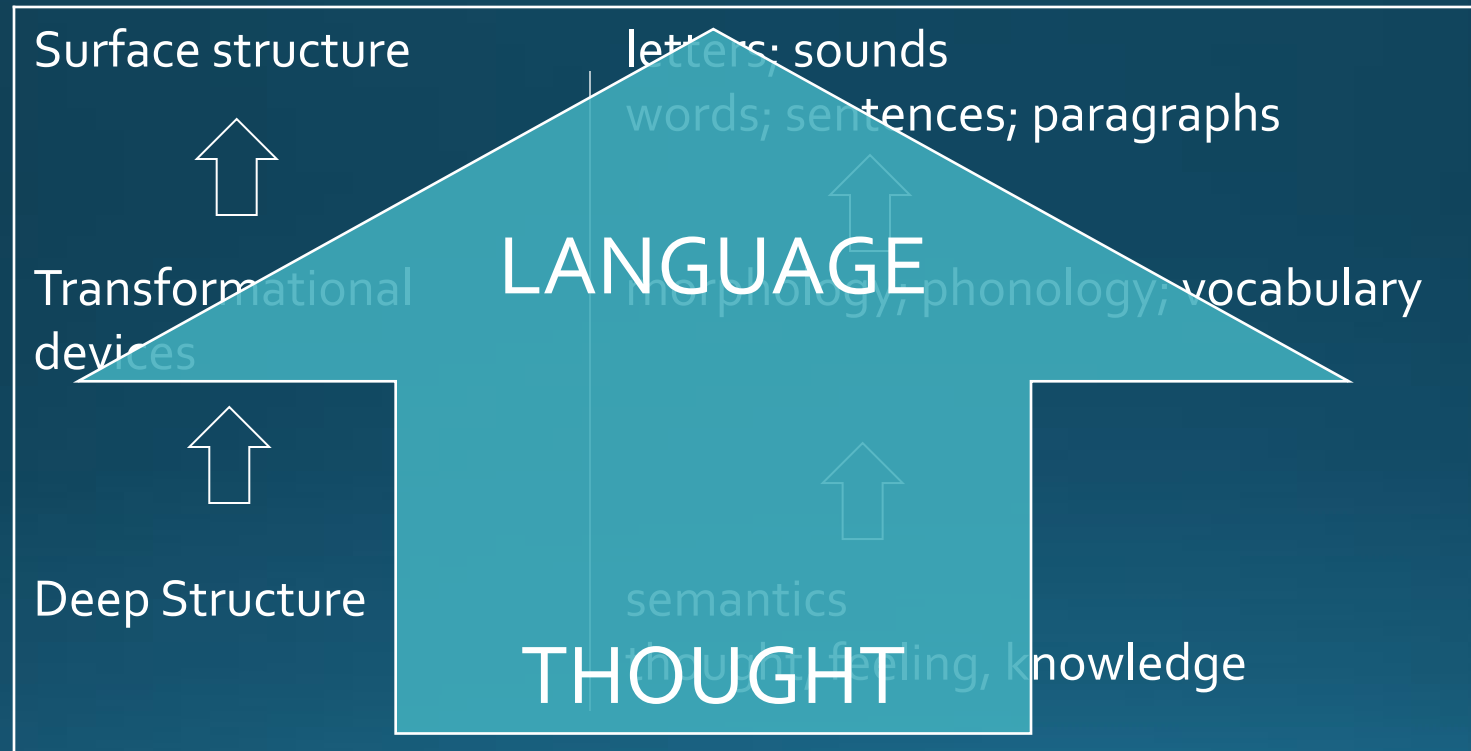
What happens when we write?

Multi-level process similar to any language production

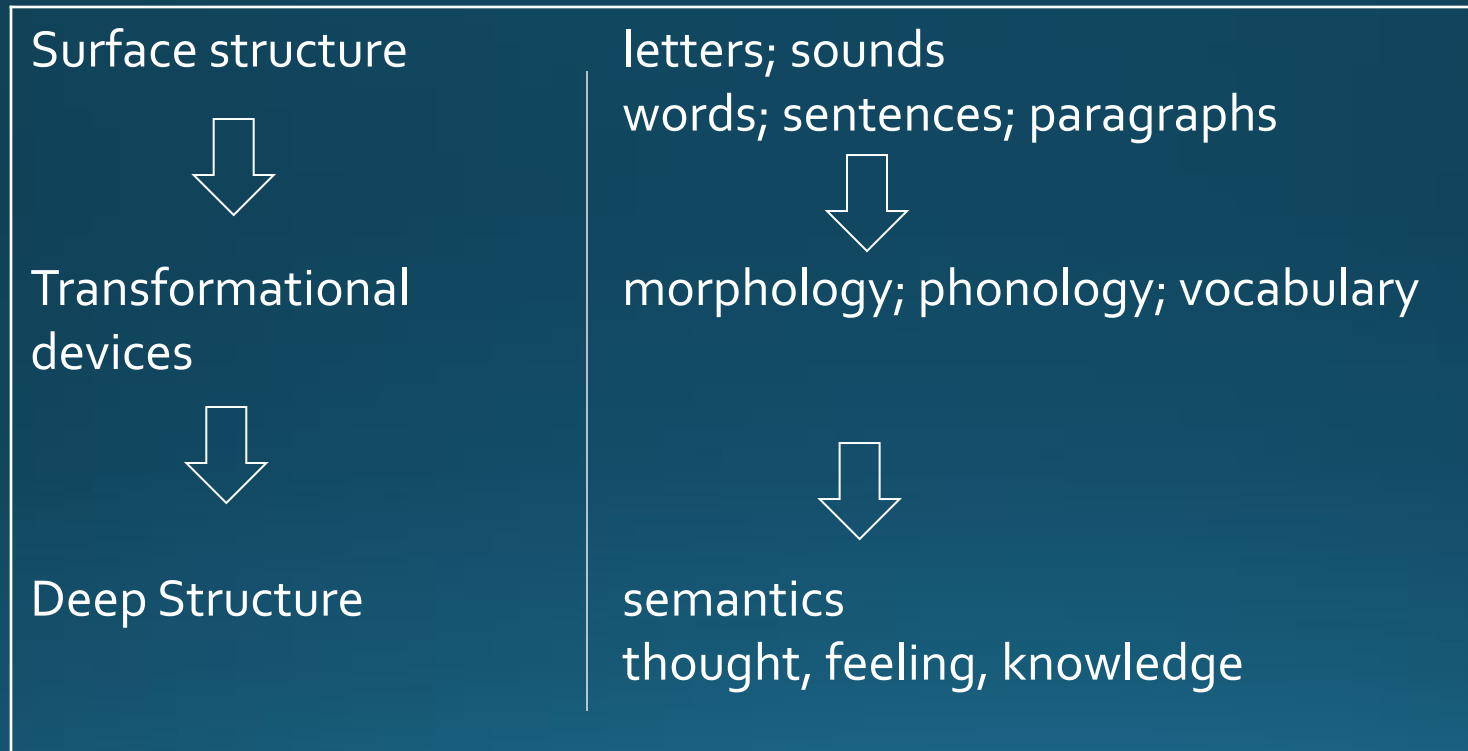


What happens when we write?

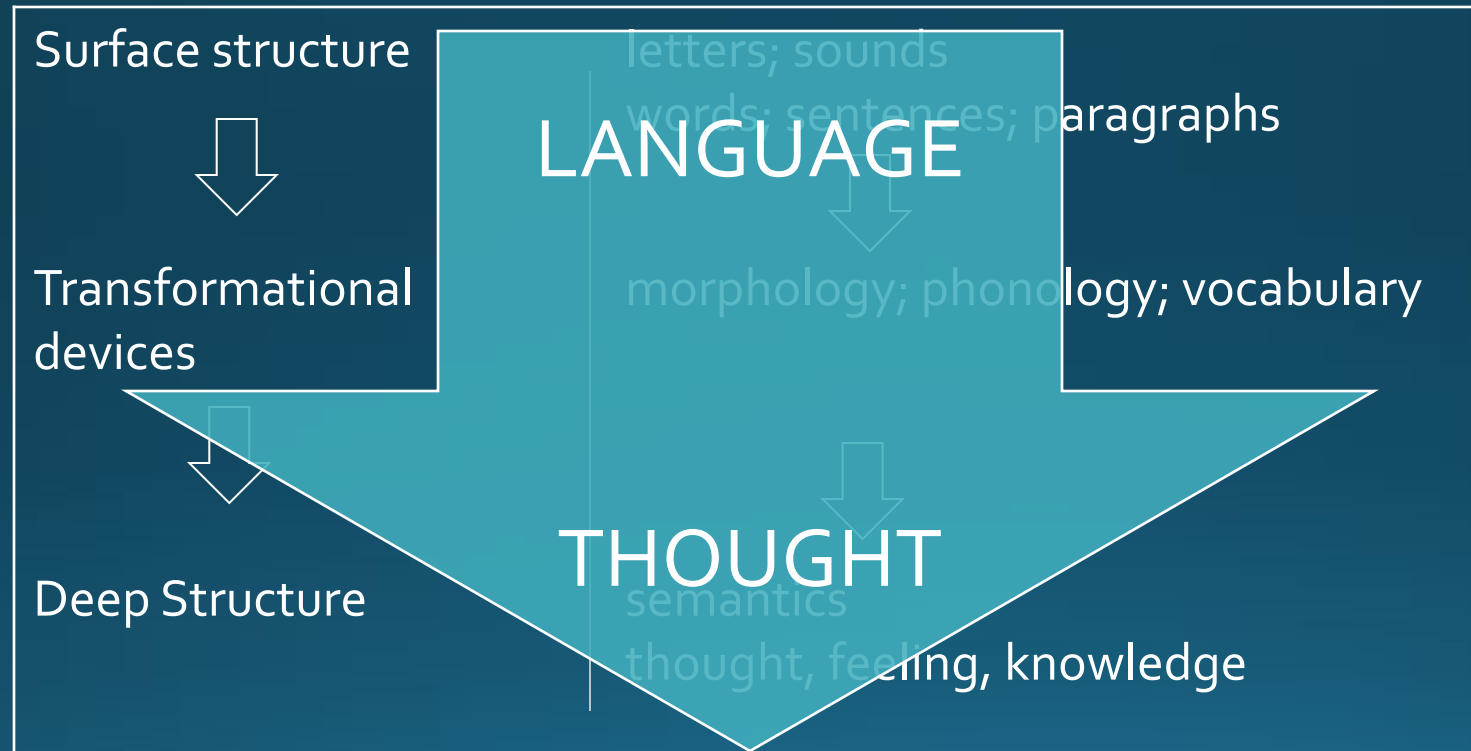
Multi-level process similar to any language production



And it goes both ways.



And it goes both ways.



CLEARER

LANGUAGE

LANGUAGE

CONCEPT: DRAFT AND SELF-EDIT

THOUGHT

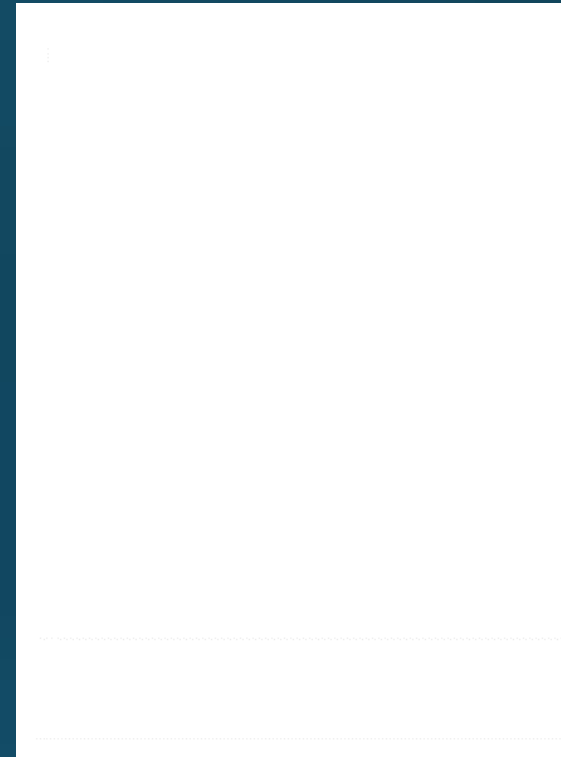
CLEARER

One reason it's difficult often
is that we try to write linearly.

Dead ends

No up-and-down flow

Slow our thought processes



Sometimes we don't have time
... or energy ... or drive to have the full dynamic, but ...

While each writer's brain operates differently, and
while there's no magic solution, there are always
ways to improve.

We can improve our products and our skills
by starting with a good ...

BASIC STRUCTURE

BASIC NEEDS

Main STYLE	
Satisfy your audience's need for:	
Brevity	Efficient; only detail with purpose
Conciseness	No ambiguity
Objectivity	Free of bias and opinion
Transparency	Honest (including on gaps)

BASIC STRUCTURE

Main STRUCTURE	
Satisfy your audience's need for:	
Clear, meaningful summary	Thesis – BLUF
Factual laydown, validation	What is really needed
Discuss causes and trends	Why and how it's happening
Scenarios and Implications	Why it's important, and what else could happen

One sentence or one paragraph

Perhaps one-quarter of your paper

Perhaps one half

Perhaps one quarter

BLUF (Bottom Line Up Front)

Main STRUCTURE

Clear, meaningful summary

Factual laydown, validation

Discuss causes and trends

Scenarios and Implications



December 19, 2016

Cuba: Preparing for President Trump

Cubans are already calibrating their expectations for relations with the United States under President Trump – hoping the normalization process does not unravel but preparing for a return to a sanctions-based policy from Washington. Conversations in Havana reveal deep concern that the President-elect's tweets and statements about Cuba, Mexico, and Latinos in the United States will translate into efforts to slow, stop, or reverse normalization. The past two years of dialogue have focused on mutual interests, without ignoring remaining differences between capitals but not allowing them to blot out hopes of mutually beneficial cooperation. Cuba will interpret a return to bombastic rhetoric, exaggerated conditions to reach a "deal," and the pressure tactics of the pre-Obama era as a sign of U.S. willingness to put bullying a small neighbor eager for improved ties ahead of its own national interests.

Cubans present the stiff upper lip in conversations and, not surprisingly, defiantly note that they've already survived decades of U.S. pressure, but their disappointment is palpable.

- Most concerned are entrepreneurs in Cuba's small but growing private sector, who depend on investment from U.S.-based relatives and friends. More than 100 Cuban private businessmen wrote a letter to Trump last week urging restraint.
- Nationalism has precluded Cubans from saying that normalization would be a major driver of their long-promised economic reforms, but few deny that improving ties with the United States would eventually present Havana important opportunities. U.S. retrenchment will remove important incentives for the government to move ahead with its reform strategy.
- Rumors about tensions between Cuban proponents of normalization and conservative opponents may have some merit, but Cubans across the spectrum will close ranks if Trump gets aggressive.

Cuba's reactions to Trump's election, including President Raúl Castro's congratulatory message to him, so far suggest that it will hold its tongue and resist being provoked. A U.S. return to full-bore Cold War tactics would not pose an existential threat to Cuba, even considering the country's difficulties dealing with unrelated problems such as the crisis in Venezuela. Popular reactions to the passing of Fidel Castro last month are being construed as evidence of residual political legitimacy for the government and support for it to deliver on promised improvements. Moreover, Cuba's progress in normalization; its effective contribution to the Colombia peace accord; its new political dialogue and cooperation agreement with the European Union; and the recent Havana visit of Japanese Prime Minister Abe have boosted the country's international image – and blame for collapse of normalization will surely fall solely upon the United States. However difficult it will be for the proud people of Cuba to resist rising to whatever bait the Trump Administration throws its way, showing forbearance in the bilateral relationship and moving "without hurry but without pause," as Raúl Castro said, with its national reform plan would protect the investment that Cuba has already made in normalization.

Our obsessive concern should be ...

What does my reader need most to understand the situation I'm writing about?

Especially if my reader is a decisionmaker, what do they need to know to adopt the best possible decision?



- helps politically
- promotes interests
- achieves strategic benefit
- minimizes errors and costs

What is “analytic writing”?

Main PURPOSE	
Satisfy your audience's need for:	
Information	What, where, when
Validation/substantiation	How we know. Quality of info.
Feel for the dynamics <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Causes- Trends	Why What next, how much momentum
Implications/Scenarios	Why it matters, what will happen

HANDOUT

HOW TO WRITE ANALYSIS

C

Writing analysis, like any writing, is a personal process. With experience, each writer discovers the best way that he/she prepares, drafts, and hones analysis. Nonetheless, there are seven basic steps to all analytic writing.

1. **ASSESS** what your reader needs.
Put yourself in your reader's shoes.
Think of the scope of the topic and key questions to answer.
Determine what the reader *really* needs – not just what is requested. Don't pander.
2. **GATHER** your information, **ABSORB** it, and **CHALLENGE** it.
Take only the level of notes that you need to establish landmarks in your data.
Don't build your information linearly; build it more like a Christmas tree.
Critique your sources as you read; ask how they're influencing you.
Mark questionable information.
Make note of information gaps.
3. **LOOK FOR PATTERNS** in your information.
Find common points and parallels in your data.
Ask again if your sources lean one way or other.
Identify gaps again.
4. Formulate your **HYPOTHESIS** and build your **ARGUMENTS**.
Draft your thesis sentence.
Write sentences capturing your main points.
Marshal facts to support your arguments.
Start building your paragraphs. (Tick formats work well.) Keep them soft, non-linear.
5. **TEST** and **BUILD** the bond between your hypothesis, arguments, and facts.
Ask yourself honestly if your thesis holds up.
Reorder data and make adjustments for maximum strength.
Go gather more information to test and strengthen your case.
Adjust, adjust, adjust.
6. Focus on **LANGUAGE** and **STRUCTURE**
Polish the thesis sentence and check it for consistency with arguments and facts.
Check the structure of sentences and paragraphs.
Edit, edit, edit.
7. Take a **BREATH** and **REPEAT** steps 4 and 5 until you're happy.

Basic, Simple Structure

- Grab attention and give BLUF
- Identify drivers – explaining what's happening and why
- Say where things are headed
- Name "wildcards" if meaningful
- Hit the reader between the eyes with the implications

Structure of a Simple-form Analytic Article

Main, Basic Elements to Satisfy Your Audience's Needs

Reader's Needs		Structural Element	
• Clear, meaningful summary	→	Thesis – BLUF	One sentence or short paragraph
• Enough facts to understand phenomenon	→	Factual snapshot, validation	Perhaps one quarter of paper
• Grasp of why and how it's happening	→	Drivers and trends	Perhaps one half of paper
• Idea of what will happen and what else could happen	→	Scenarios, Alternatives, and "Wild Cards"	Perhaps one quarter
• Why it's important	→		

Questions? Comments? Concerns?

DISCUSSION: GOOD WRITING

WISDOM OF THE WRITERS

On writing the first draft

“Write a shitty first draft and edit the shit out of it later.”

- *Anne Lamott, Novelist and Fiction Writer*

“It is perfectly okay to write garbage — as long as you edit brilliantly.”

- *C.J. Cherryh, Novelist*

“So the writer who breeds more words than he needs, is making a chore for the reader who reads.”

- *Dr. Seuss*

“All you have to do is write one true sentence. Write the truest sentence that you know. ... If I started to write elaborately, or like someone introducing or presenting something, I found that I could cut that scrollwork or ornament out and throw it away and start with the first true simple declarative sentence I had written.”

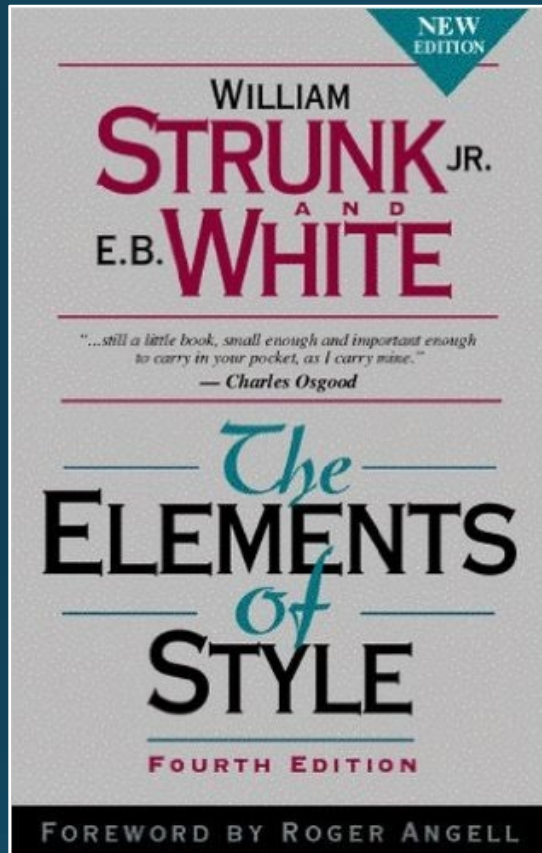
- *Ernest Hemingway*

“You’ve got to work it over. The first draft of anything is shit. ... It’s the hardest work there is. I like to do and can do many things better than I can write, but when I don’t write I feel like shit. I’ve got the talent and I feel that I’m wasting it.”

- *Ernest Hemingway*

“Get a pillow for your ass.”

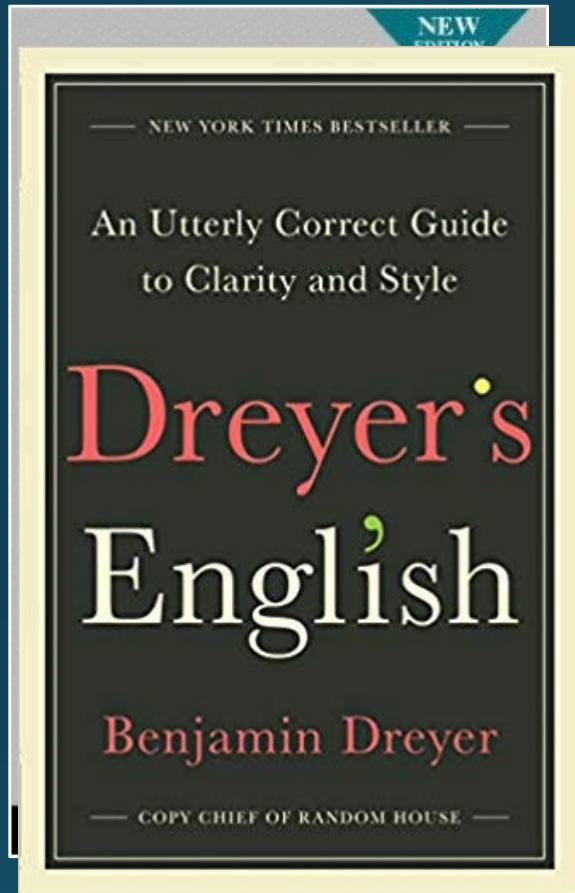
- *AOA*



GOOD ANALYTICAL WRITING
MUST BE
GOOD WRITING FIRST.

ADVICE
from
Strunk and White +
with a few
additional thoughts

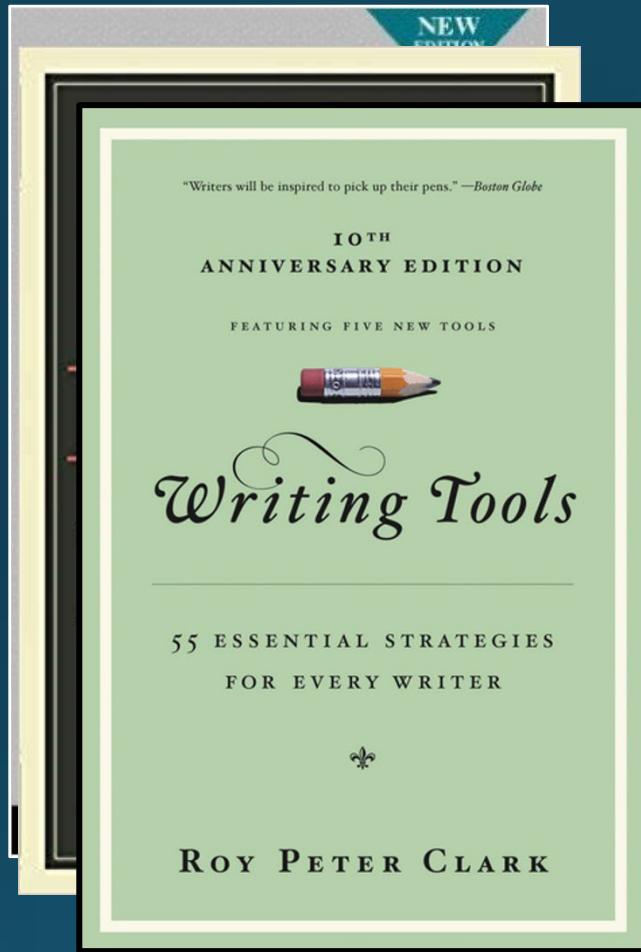
1. Elementary rules of usage
2. Elementary principles of composition
3. Wisdom from E.B. White



GOOD ANALYTICAL WRITING
MUST BE
GOOD WRITING FIRST.

ADVICE
from
Strunk and White +
with a few
additional thoughts

DREYER'S ENGLISH
by
Benjamin Dreyer

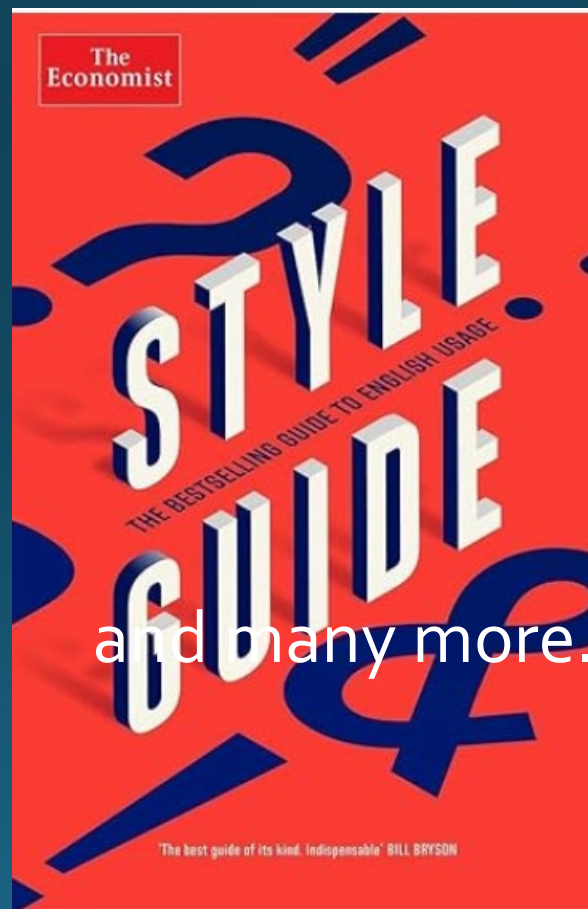
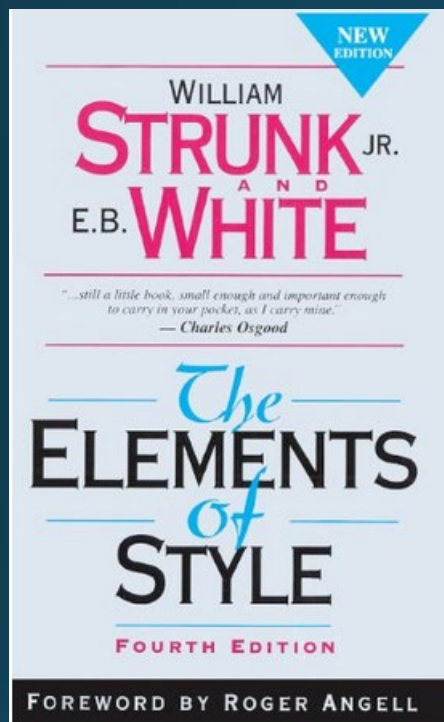


GOOD ANALYTICAL WRITING
MUST BE
GOOD WRITING FIRST.

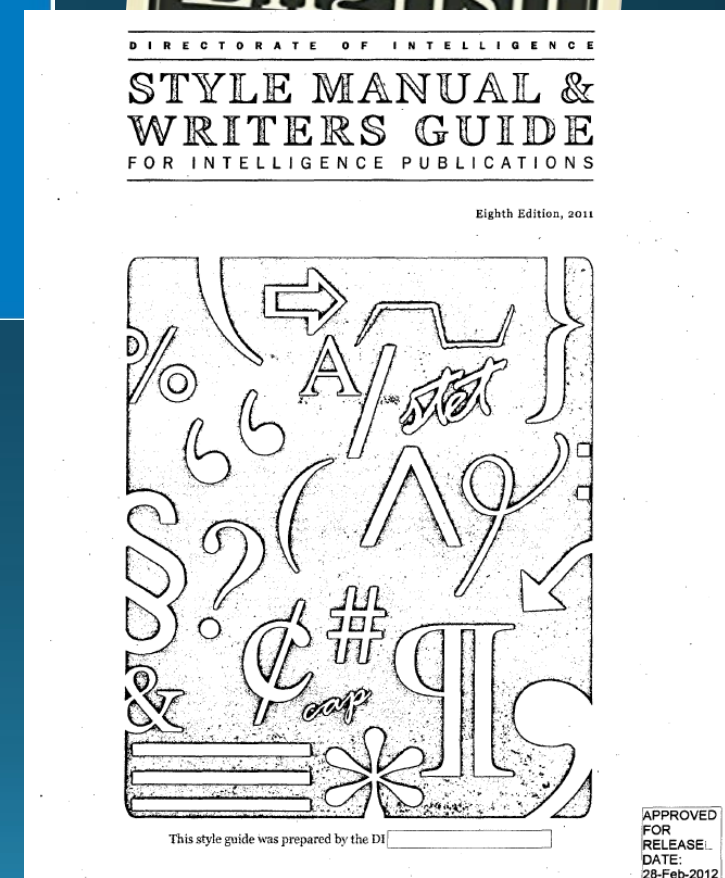
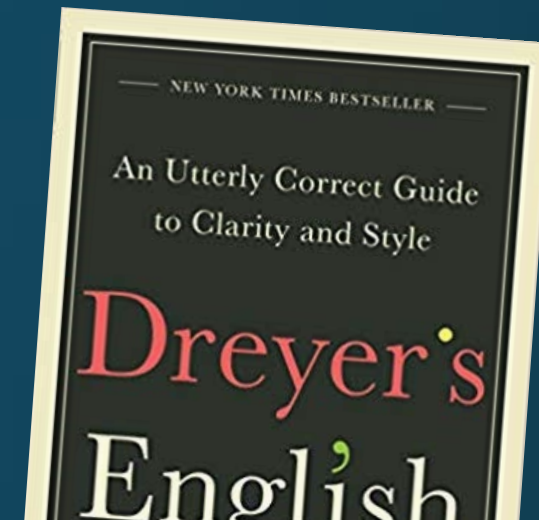
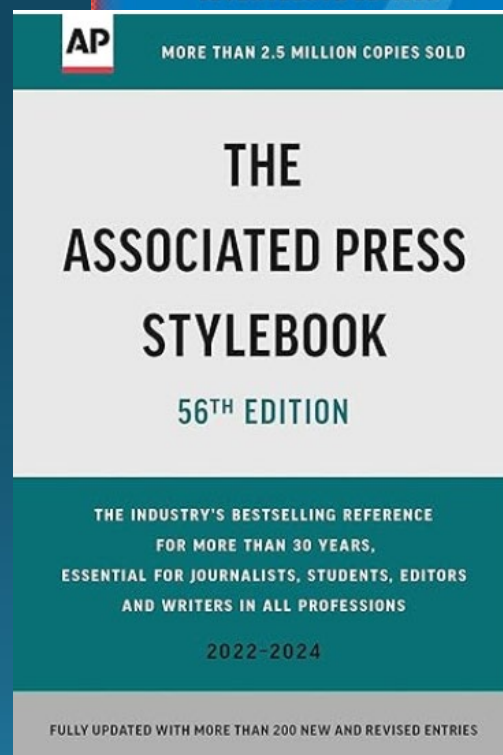
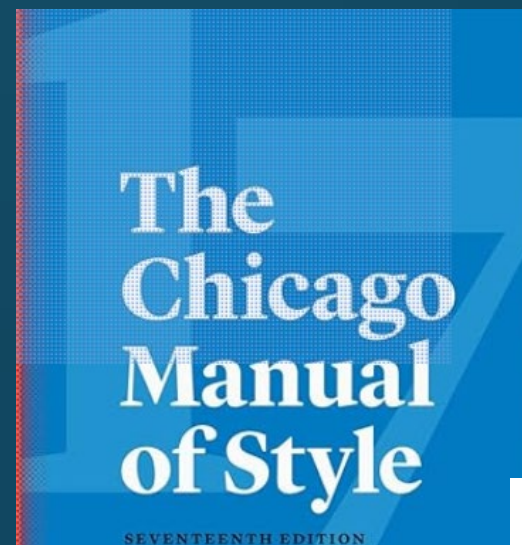
ADVICE
from
Strunk and White +
with a few
additional thoughts

WRITING TOOLS
from
Roy Peter Clark

Don't forget your style manuals



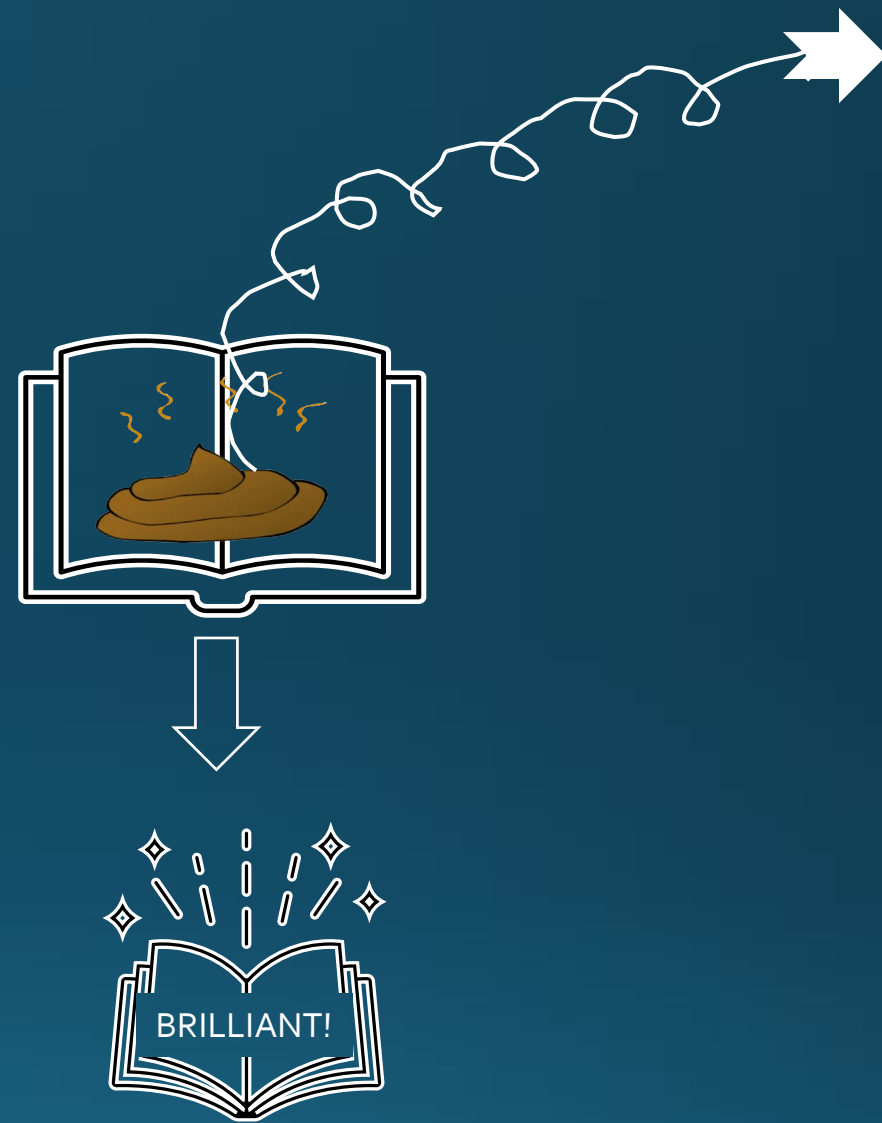
and many more.



The importance of SELF-EDITING cannot be overstated.

The first draft of every written product is,
almost universally, una m_____a.

The difference between a good and bad report is
that the writer has removed
la m_____a
through a process of rigorous self-editing.



Catch the weasels!

Weasel word:

a word used in order to evade or retreat from a direct or forthright statement or position

Refers to any term intended to give the impression that everything is fine when the speaker is really trying to avoid answering a question, telling the truth, or taking the blame for something.

Words and phrases include “may,” “might,” “could,” “can,” “can be,” “virtually,” “up to,” “as much as,” “help,” “like,” “believe,” “possibly” ...

CATCH ME
IF YOU CAN!



In writing, weasels are bad!

As we self-edit, we have multiple villains to look out for.

ENERGY-SAPPING LANGUAGE

Words and phrases that undermine clarity, meaning. Weasels. Jargon. Acronyms. Sensationalism and exaggeration.

Weasels



Sesquipedalians; fancy inside terms; show-off words.

Jargon

Meaningless alphabet soup

Acronyms



OMG! OMG!

Sensationalism and Exaggeration

Yikes! Wow!

adapted from:

Without
Josh Bernoff
Bullshit

Is



good or bad?

Is



good or bad?

Remember the importance of your THESIS or
BLUF or
MAIN CONCLUSION

THE THESIS STATEMENT

Your thesis is the “mission statement” (not just a summary) of your paper *(AU Writing Center)*

- What are you trying to prove or show?
- Why is your paper important?

Your thesis is your main point.

- It's an argument – a thought not everyone holds but you're going to defend

It is the roadmap for the reader.

- It tells where you're taking him/her.
- It reassures that you have a plan.
- You must follow it.

And ... the paragraphs' topic sentences are your signposts – moving the story along the way for you.

THE THESIS STATEMENT

FORM: Grammatical, natural, interesting.

Conforms to other rules of good writing.

Declarative sentence.

Often reflects structure of analysis.

“Hamburgers are more nutritious than pizza.”

“The economy is (or appears) headed toward a crash.”

“The riots in the streets spell big trouble for the regime.”

“She won the election by a landslide, but the people’s unrealistic expectations and splits in her own party pose major challenges.”

THE THESIS STATEMENT

Thesis or not a thesis?

- With new technologies, coal will become the cleanest fossil fuel.
- Wyoming is America's biggest coal producer.
- William Howard Taft was the most obese president in U.S. history.
- FDR did more to help the American people than any president in U.S. history.

Wyoming: 375.8 (42%)
West Virginia: 95.6 (11%)
Kentucky: 61.4 (7%)
Illinois: 56.1 (6%)
Pennsylvania: 50.0 (6%)

340 pounds

THE THESIS STATEMENT

Thesis or not a thesis?

- Obamacare brought 20 million people into health insurance plans.
- Obamacare is a disaster that almost certainly will be replaced.
- Canada's border with the U.S. is two and a half times longer than Mexico's.
- Security along Mexico's border with the U.S. is much more tenuous than along Canada's border.

THE THESIS STATEMENT

It is the main analytical hypothesis/conclusion – developed as you research and think.

Main requirement	➡	Why war in Ukraine?
Main hypothesis	➡	Various security, historical, political factors
Research	➡	Evidence supporting each factor
Main conclusion	➡	Judgment about importance of factors, probabilities, etc.
Thesis statement	➡	Concise statement of key conclusion(s)

THE THESIS STATEMENT

Or, simply put, the thesis sentence is the concise, validated, substantiated answer to your analytical question.

It is written in the voice you think is most appropriate for your ...

CLIENT

his/her needs
his/her options
his/her style

REQUIREMENT

scope
level of technicality

INSTITUTION

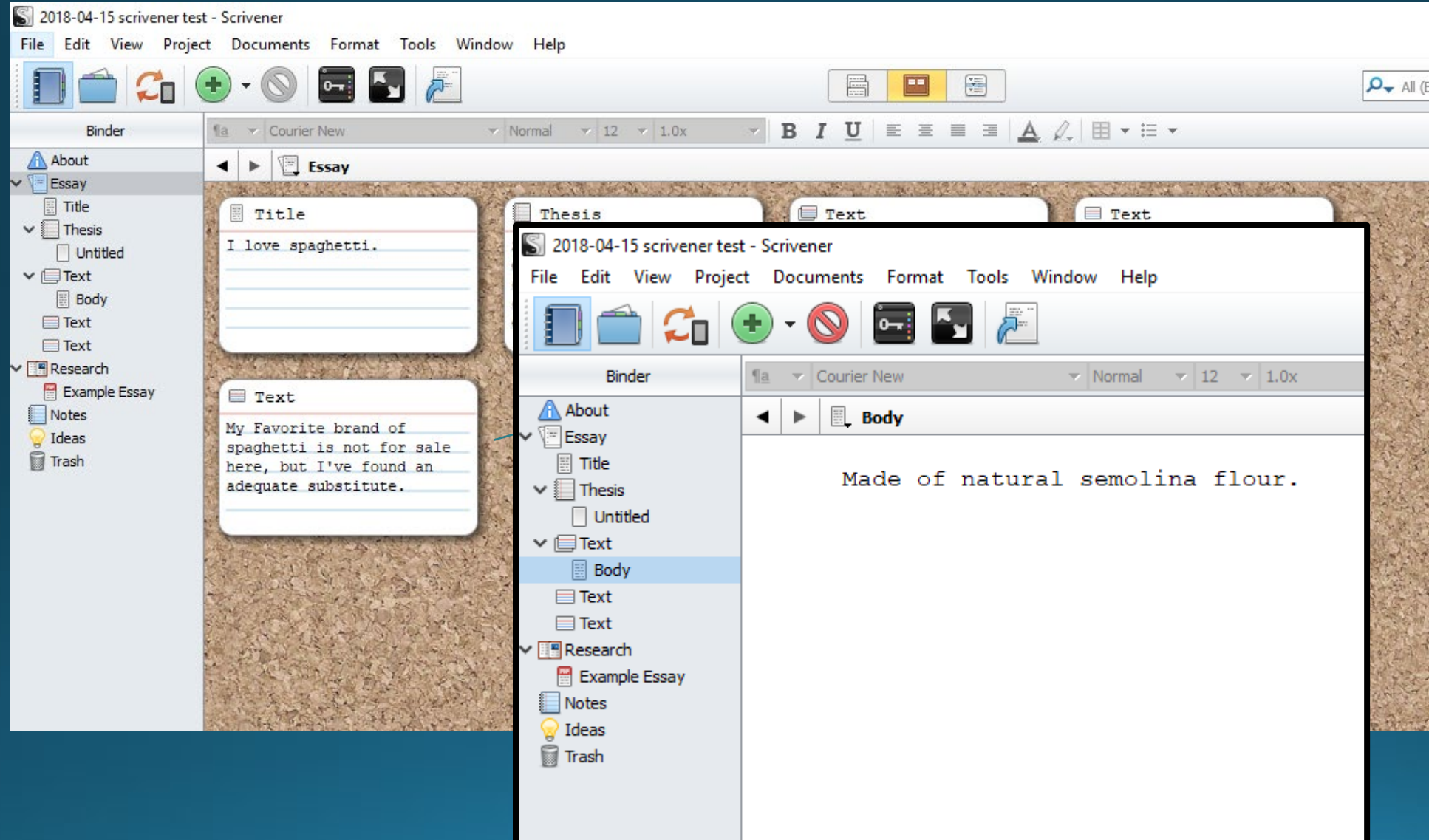
mission/ mandate
corporate style

EXAMPLES?

How best to manage our information and organize our paper?

(And not index cards)

Scrivener and similar software



Simple demonstration



File Edit Insert View Navigate Project Documents Format Window Help

War of the Worlds

War of the Worlds

- War of the Worlds
 - Summary
 - Overview
 - Author and book
 - H.G. Wells
 - Quote
 - The novel
 - Martians vs Humans
 - Martians so bad?
 - Humans so good?
 - Wells's message
 - Section inrto
 - Racism
 - Imperialism
 - religion
 - Impact
 - Panic in 1938
 - Research
 - source
 - source
 - source
 - Trash

The elements that I've already developed.

Summary

Author and book

Martians vs Humans

Wells's message

Impact

[[VIDEO]]

Powerpoint

AutoSave Off Presentation1 - PowerPoint Fulton Armstrong

File Home Insert Design Transitions Animations Slide Show Review View Help Soda PDF 11 Creator Search Share Comments

Paste New Slide Reuse Slides Layout Reset Section

Clipboard Slides

Font

Paragraph

Drawing

Editing

Voice

Thumbnails

earth-shattering idea

CREATIVE IDEA

original idea

brilliant idea

so-so idea

stupendous idea

deeply insightful idea

good idea

off-the-wall idea

amazing idea

BRAINSTORMY IDEA

Slide 1 of 1 English (United States) 67%

Do you have any tricks to share?

Next Class: TOMORROW
14 January
10:00am CET
ROOM 253A

Arming the Policymaker for Action now ... and in the Future

PREPS: 1. Sections in the guide on

Pulling it all together
Other challenges
Institutional cultures
Maintaining morale

} pp. 127-131

2. Bring your ANALYTICAL WORKSHEET to near-final form
3. Prepare a five-minute BRIEFING, per the form.

FOR EXERCISE

ALMOST READY?

PLANNING A BRIEFING	
Briefer(s):	Topic:
Decisionmakers:	
BLUF	
Minute 1:	
Minute 2:	

Minute 3:	
Minute 4:	
Minute 5:	

- BLUF
- Be prepared for interruptions.
- Remember it's for decision.
- Remember drivers.

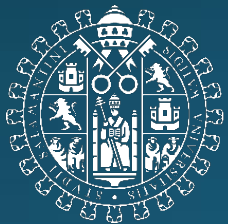
MY GUIDANCE TO FÁTIMA

Role-play a busy decisionmaker in the U.S. National Security Council. This decisionmaker is obvious a smart person but not specialist on the issues. He/she has to brief the President on the issues and possible positions in one hour.

- You can let them start the briefing but, if they don't give you a "bottom line up front" (integrated analytical conclusion), you should interrupt them after 30 seconds and say something like, "What's your main point?"
- You can interrupt them any time they use a fact, concept or word that you don't understand.
- You can show impatience and ask questions if they're taking too long to tell you what you need to know.
- You must stop them at the five-minute mark. (I will help you keep time.)
- You will then receive the second and third briefings in the same way.
- If you would like, you can offer them feedback after the third briefing.

Challenges and Institutions in Global Security

Master in Global and International Studies



VNiVERSiDAD
D SALAMANCA

Fulton T. Armstrong

American University
Syracuse University

Washington, DC