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The Elements of Web Communication (for Amateurs)

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The Elements of Web Communication (for Amateurs)

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Table of Contents

Your website is important !

Wayne State

Your website is text

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So
what

?

Reading Online

Reading Online

How far down do most people read?

Reading Online

How far down do most people read?

60%

Reading Online

But 1 in 10 only make it this far

Reading Online

"Power Browsing"

Reading Online

"...when you add verbiage to a page, you can assume that customers will read 18% of it."

Reading Online

"On an average visit, users read half the information only on those pages with 111 words or less."

Reading Online

THIS ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Phasellus fermentum ullamcorper **IS**, at accumsan elit fringilla vitae. Vestibulum non ligula fermentum, venenatis nisl id, convallis sapien. Pellentesque quis scelerisque metus. Curabitur quis orci viverra, **ONE HUNDRED ELEVEN**, lobortis leo. Nulla ac mi aliquet, facilisis turpis sit amet, maximus justo. Quisque a risus ut **WORDS** elementum mollis eu nec metus. Donec nec lacus eu diam consectetur consectetur quis non purus. Maecenas commodo egestas vestibulum. Praesent sit amet felis sollicitudin, aliquam ligula vel, consequat mauris. Integer placerat justo porttitor sagittis ornare. Sed dignissim lorem ut facilisis maximus. Morbi accumsan bibendum velit vitae auctor. Morbi vel consectetur lorem. Vestibulum scelerisque, massa sed euismod posuere.

Reading Online

How many Americans own a mobile phone?

Reading Online

How many Americans own a mobile phone?

90%

Reading Online

How many Americans go online on their phone?

57%

Reading Online

How many Americans **only** go online on their phone?

19%

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Reading Online

How many 18-29 year olds **only** go online on their phone?

45%

Reading Online

They don't scroll.

They won't read all your text.

They're seeing your site on a mobile device.

Reading Online: Recommendation

Make it brief.

Reading Online: Recommendation

Strunk & White.

Strunk, W. Jr., and White, E. B. 1979. *The elements of style* (3rd ed.). NY: Macmillan.

Reading Online: Recommendation

14. Use the active voice.

Reading Online: Recommendation

14. Use the active voice.

"Cards can be obtained by residents living in the boundaries of the city, without a fee."

Reading Online: Recommendation

14. Use the active voice.

"City residents can get a free library card."

Reading Online: Recommendation

14. Use the active voice
15. Put statements in positive form

Reading Online: Recommendation

14. Use the active voice.
15. Put statements in positive form
17. Omit needless words

Reading Online: Recommendation

Use pronouns.
Use bullets and numbered lists.
Use clear headlines and subheads.
Use images, diagrams, or multimedia
Use white space.

Reading Online: Recommendation

Use the active voice.

Put statements in positive form

Omit needless words

Use pronouns.

Use bullets/numbered lists.

Use clear headlines and subheads.

Use images, diagrams, or multimedia

Use white space.

Reading
At All

Reading At All

Not all Americans read well.
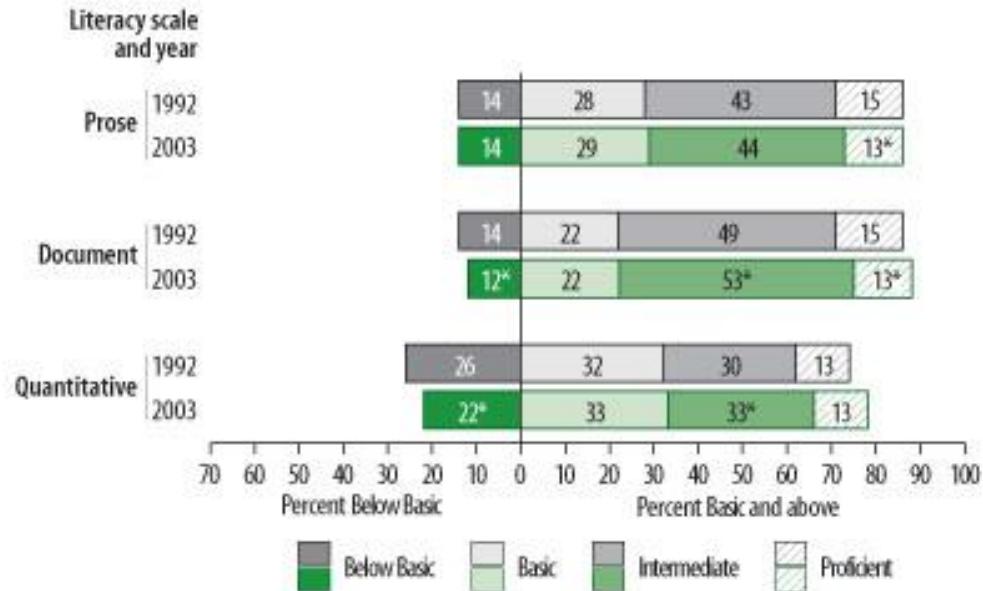
Reading At All
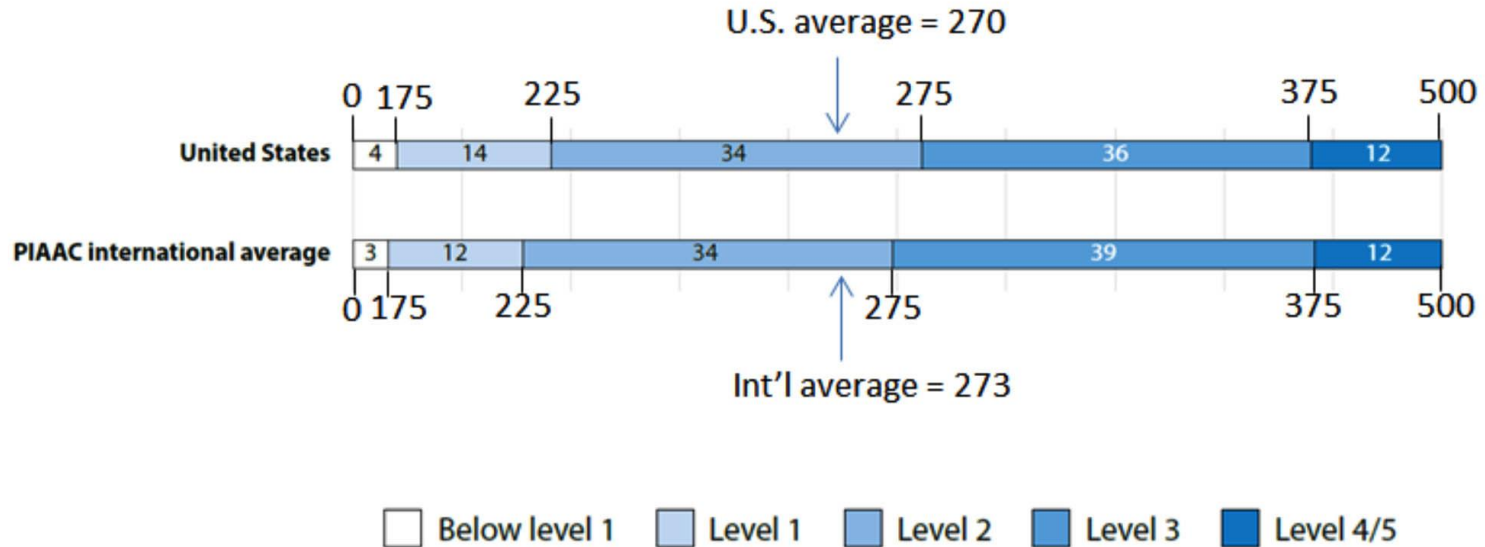
Reading At All

Reading At All: Recommendation

Make sure they can understand.

Reading At All: Recommendation

Know your audience.

Reading At All: Recommendation

Microsoft Word

Reading At All: Recommendation

Read-able.com

Reading At All: Recommendation

Shorter sentences, fewer syllables.

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Reading At All: Recommendation

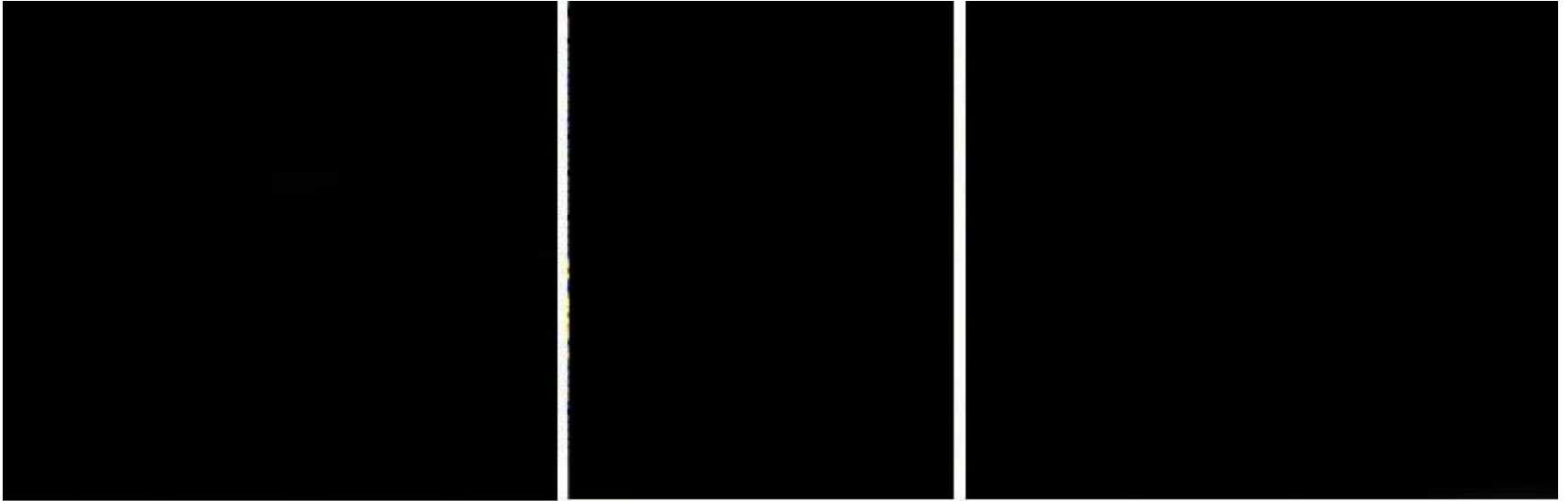Short words, and not as many.

Reading At All: Recommendation

"A personal project of coder David Simpson, this will evaluate your text on a number of different readability algorithms, either by URI or direct input. Let's try it shall we?"
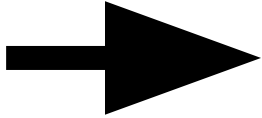
Reading Patterns

Reading Patterns

Note: illustration redacted for archiving, available at http://www.nngroup.com/articles/f-shaped-pattern-reading-web-content/

Reading Patterns

➡️

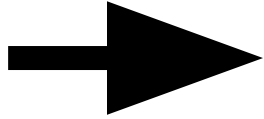Users start reading at the top left corner of the page

Reading Patterns

And move horizontally

Reading Patterns
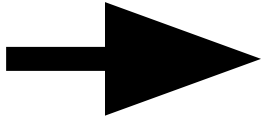
In an F formation

Reading Patterns

In an F formation

Reading Patterns

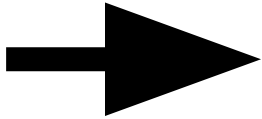After reading the first or second line of text on a page, users begin scanning the text.
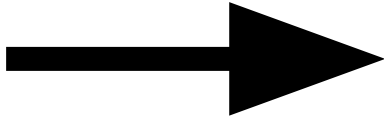
Reading Patterns

They're looking for keywords.

They don't read word by word.

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Reading Patterns

Users rarely, if ever, focus on the bottom right corner of the page.

Reading Patterns: Recommendation

Put it where they'll see it, how they'll read it.

Reading Patterns: Recommendation

- Most important at the top

Reading Patterns: Recommendation

- Most important at the top
- Make it easy to scan

Reading Patterns: Recommendation

- Most important at the top
- Make it easy to scan
- Chunk it

Reading Patterns: Recommendation

- Most important at the top
- Make it easy to scan
- Chunk it
- Think keywords

Reading Patterns: Recommendation

- Most important at the top
- Make it easy to scan
- Chunk it
- Think keywords
- Text should be near related choices

From Lior, Linda Newman. 2013. *Writing for interaction: crafting the information experience for Web and software apps.* Waltham, MA: Morgan Kaufmann.

We already know this stuff!

Ranganathan's Law 4:
Save the time of the reader.

Ranganathan, S.R. (1931). *The five laws of library science.* London: Edward Goldston, Ltd. Available at http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.$b99721;view=1up;seq=13

Who is the reader?
What is she doing?

Save the time of the reader: Recommendation

User profiles and task analysis

Save the time of the reader: Recommendation

"Walk me through a typical day."

Save the time of the reader: Recommendation

"Describe what you do on our website."

Recap

Make it brief.

Make sure they can understand.
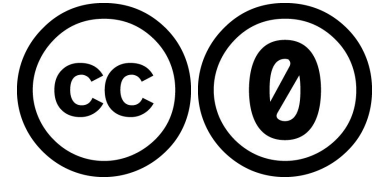
Put it where they can see it.

Resources

http://www.usability.gov/

http://alistapart.com/topic/writing

http://www.nngroup.com/topic/writing-web/

http://read-able.com

Responses?

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http://digitalcommons.wayne.edu/libsp/106
This presentation is best considered along with its narrative, available as a supplemental file at the above link.

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