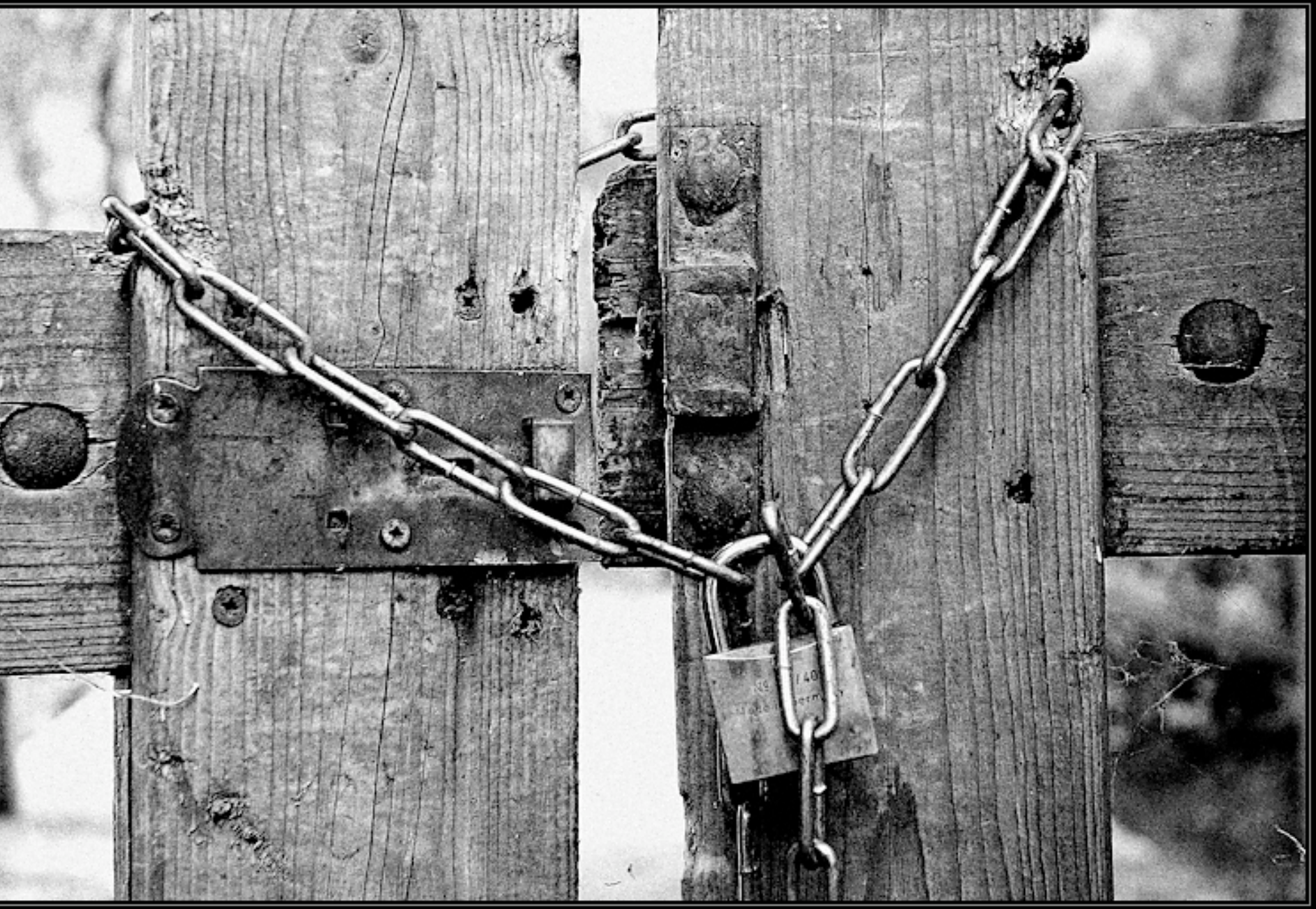


Old Wooden Gate

Photo: Rune Sætre

Brief history of research on writing and learning to write

Three main perspectives:

Writing as skills – focus on mistakes

Writing as a process – focus on development

Writing as a product – focus on genres

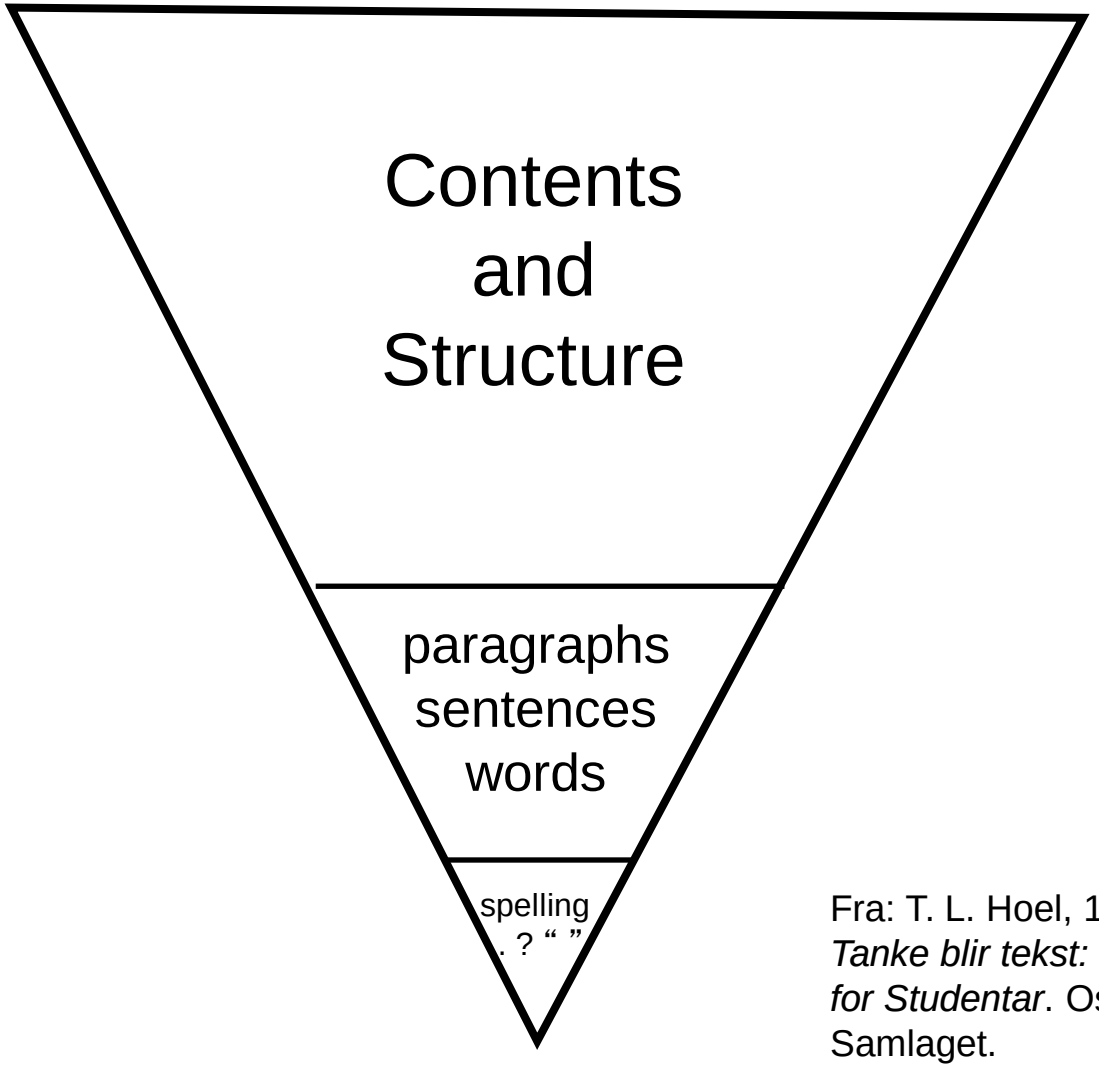
History – Writing as skills

fix it” approach

(fikx itt)

(students doesn’t write well anymore)

Fixes the sentences, not the text.



Fra: T. L. Hoel, 1995
Tanke blir tekst: Skrivehjelp for Studentar. Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget.

Writing as a process

generating ideas
- brainstorming
- mind mapping
- free writing

writing to learn
learning to write

drafting
giving response
receiving response

Research on genres

- structure
  - IMRAD
- grammar
  - tense
  - voice
- lexis
  - word choice - general
  - terminology

What is a genre?

You could say that

- an architect's plan is like a recipe, and that a
- doctor's prescription is a recipe that can only be made by a qualified pharmacist,
- preparing an article for publication in such-and-such a journal,
- writing sonnets

are also like recipes; but do we get good sonnets and good science reports from instructions in this form? Recipes are a genre; but genres are not recipes.

(Freadman, 1994)

Genre

In the morning, variable winds, but calmer later in the day. Showers, but also periods with sunshine. Toward the end of the day, quiet.

Genre

In the morning
variable winds
but calmer
later in the day.

Showers
but also periods with sunshine.

Toward the end of the day
quiet.

Life

In the morning
variable winds
but calmer
later in the day.

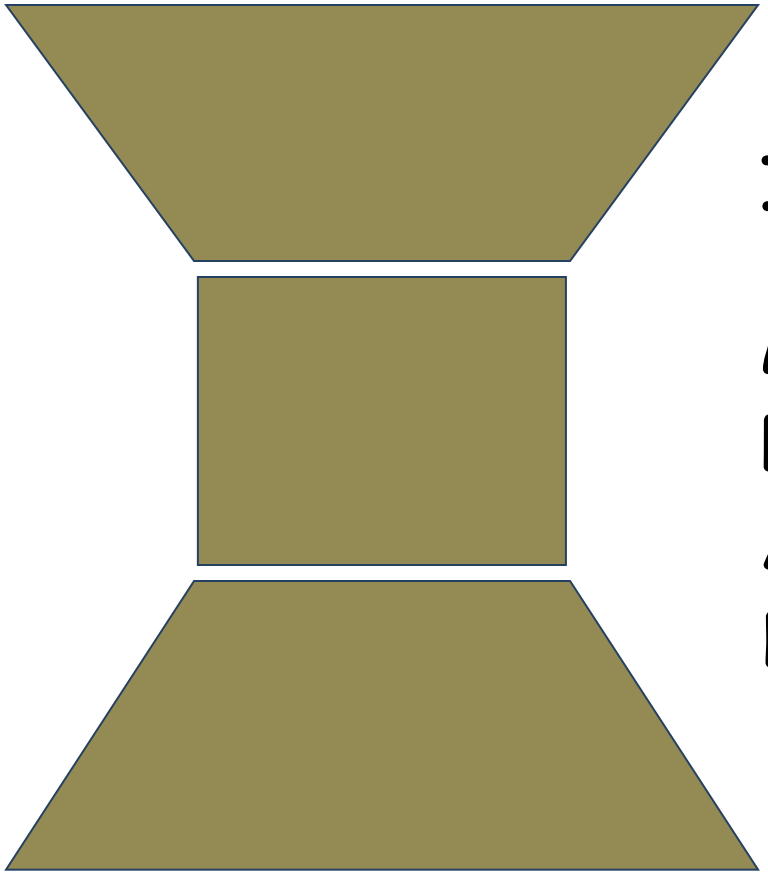
Showers
but also periods with sunshine.

Toward the end of the day
quiet.

Groundhog / Woodchuck


groundhog.org
the official site of the
punxsutawney groundhog club

I M R A D



Introduction

Material and methods
Results
And
Discussion

(Swales, 1990)

Titles tell the reader

- The topic of the study
- The nature of the study (experiment, survey, case study)
- The scope of the study (indicate delimitations)

Titles

- Fitting Flexible Manufacturing Systems to the Task
- A probabilistic approach to performance forecasting for FMS as part of an automated factory.
- Causing a stir in welding circles
- Preliminary Modeling of the Friction Stir Welding Process

Hanging titles

- Disturbance, invasion, and reinvasjon: managing the weed-shaped hole in disturbed ecosystems
- Resistance to infection with intra-cellular parasites – identification of a candidate gene
- Environmental Contour Lines: A Method for Estimating Long Term Extremes by a Short Term Analysis
- Identification of Combination Trades and Design of a Suitable Vessel for Operation in the Most Attractive Trades: A feasibility study

Titles - examples

- Analysis of the ballast system of WindFlip
- Monitoring of hull condition of ships
- Shutdown preparedness monitoring
- Turnaround strategy development: a case study
- Design of micromixers using CFD modelling

Avoid ambiguity

- Multiple Infections among Newborns Resulting from Implantation with Staphylococcus aureus 502jA

- Isolation of Antigens from Monkeys Using Complement-Fixation Techniques

Abstract – two main kinds

- Indicative abstract
  - Proposal for presentation at conference
  - Review article
- Informative abstract – summary abstract
  - Research article

Abstract – perhaps all the reader sees

- Summary of the article
- Mini IMRaD
  - Introduction (motivation & purpose)
  - Method
  - Results
  - Discussion (implications)

Abstract
perhaps all the reader sees

Must be clear/informative enough so that

- the search engine picks it up
- the reader can find it
- the reader can see what it is about
- the reader can see if it is worth buying

Abstract – informative/summary

For papers reporting original research

- state the primary objective and any hypothesis tested;
- describe the research design and your reasons for adopting that methodology;
- state the methods and procedures employed, state the main outcomes and results, and
- state the conclusions that might be drawn from these data and results, including their implications for further research or application/practice.

http://journalauthors.tandf.co.uk/preparation/index.asp

Sometimes the only discernible difference between a genius and a lunatic is the ability to communicate.

If you run up to a random crowd of people waving your arms around and shouting “My frogs are blue!” you’re more likely to end up in a padded cell next to a guy who picks up alien transmissions through his fillings than on the cover of *Science*.

But if you manage to track down the right group of people (say, other frog researchers), capture their attention (“Hey, do you remember Weinburger’s theory that pigmentation at the chromosomal level is fixed at birth in amphibians?”), be specific about exactly what you did and found (2I exposed 50 frogs to ultraviolet light for 547 hours, after which their skin took on a distinctly bluish hue”), and explain what it means “This shows that Weinburger was wrong!”), you just might find yourself holding a Nobel Prize rather than a bottle of Haldol.

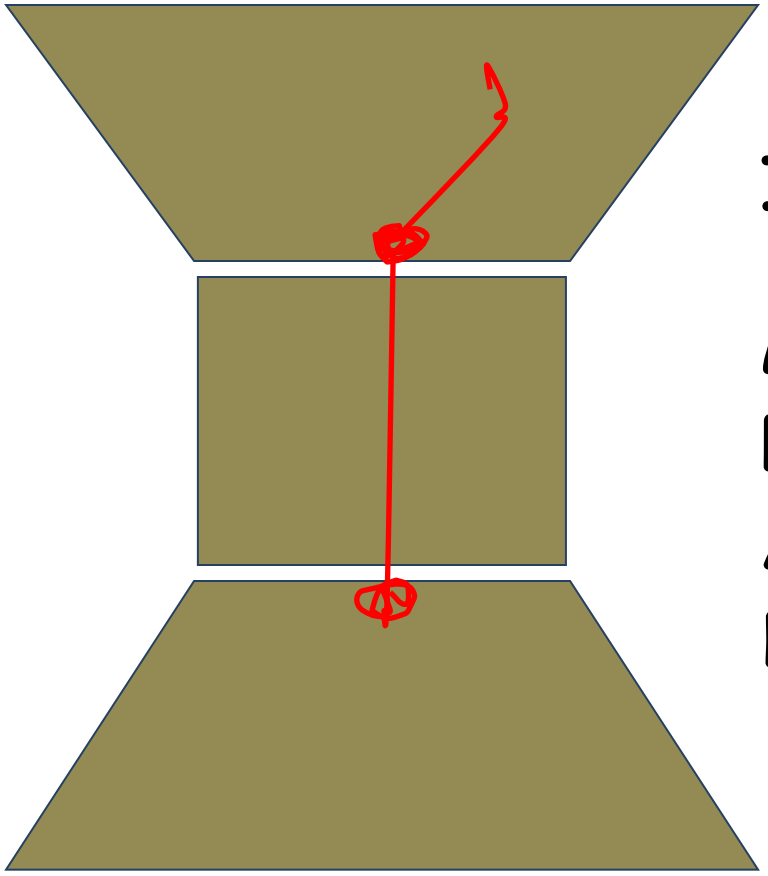
Nygaard, L. (2008). *Writing for scholars*, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Introduction - Create a research space (CARS)

- Establish a research territory
  - background
  - problem
- Prepare for present research (establish a niche)
  - add to ongoing research
  - indicate a gap in knowledge
  - raise questions (conflicts) about previous research
- Introduce present research
  - hypothesis
  - purpose

(John Swales 1990)

I M R A D



Introduction

Material and methods

Results

And

Discussion

(Swales, 1990)

Introduction – matches conclusion

End of introduction - purpose:

. . .in this paper we want to argue that deep hierarchies are an appropriate concept to achieve a general, robust, and versatile computer vision system. Even more importantly, we want to present relevant insights about the hierarchical organization of the primate visual system for computer vision scientists in an accessible way.

Conclusion:

We have reviewed basic facts about the primate visual system. . .[which is] very valuable as a proof of principle and a source of inspiration for building artificial vision systems.

(Krüger et al., 2013)

Introduction – matches conclusion

End of introduction - purpose:

However, previous models have not used grid cells to perform goal-directed planning of trajectories.

The model presented here performs goal-directed forward linear look-ahead probes of potential trajectories through the environment using a circuit of head direction cells…

Discussion:

The model presented in thispaper demonstrates goal-directed behavior for finding a spatial goal, such as a hidden platform….

(Erdem & Hasselmo, 2012)

Material and methods

- Subjects or objects - selection criteria
  - People
  - Animals
  - Objects/equipment
- Procedure(s)
- Analysis
- Ethical committee

Results

"Objective" observations of findings

- comprehensive and analytic view of the results
- points out relevant results

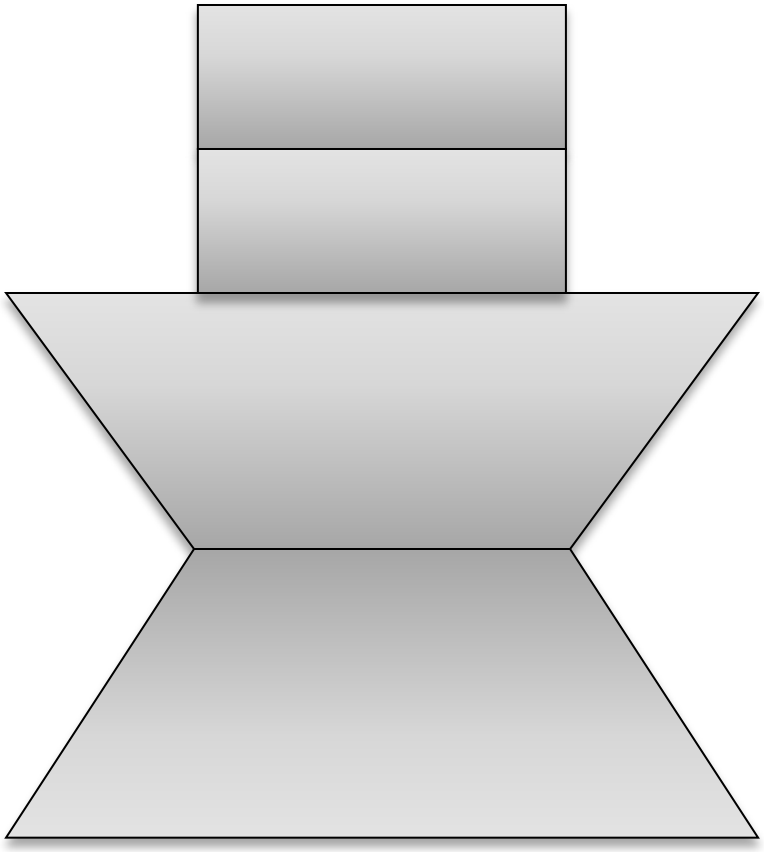
Tables and figures

- present a lot of information (numbers) in little space
- numbers to be explained and interpreted, but NOT repeated in text

Discussion

- What was the purpose of the study?
- Do the findings answer the research question(s)?
- What do the findings mean?
- How do they compare with others' findings?
- What are the implications?
- Limitations? How valid and reliable is the study? What could/should have been done differently?

Where to start????



Results

Material and methods

Introduction

and

Discussion

Topic sentence summarizes the paragraph

Scandinavians seem to worship the sun. In the winter, charter flights from Scandinavia to warm climates are fully booked. In early spring, when it is still too cold to sit outside, you can see many people standing with their face turned towards the sun, their eyes closed and their facial features set in an expression of deep content. In late spring, people strip on the beaches, long before the water is warm enough for swimming.

Paragraphs

The importance of a topic sentence

Utility costs for the argon process are 75% greater than for the proposed hydrogen process.

This gives the impression that we should choose the hydrogen process. However…

Getting published

- Become familiar with ICMJE

  http://www.icmje.org/icmje-recommendations.pdf
- Decide on an appropriate journal
- Learn about the journal's requirements

Getting published

Answer from the journal

- accepted for publication as is
- accepted for publication (with minor changes)
- accepted with major changes
- not accepted for publication

Getting published

Answer from the journal

- accepted (with minor changes)
  - celebrate ☺
  - make changes and document them
  - resubmit

Getting published

Accepted with major changes

Do **not** get discouraged ☹

- Read referees' comments carefully
- Make corrections, additions, rewrite
- Document your changes
- Resubmit

Getting published

Not accepted for publication ☹

Do **not** get discouraged

- Read referees' comments carefully
  - "We're sorry, but. . . at this time"
  - "The article is worthy of being published, but not in our journal. We recommend that you submit it to . . ."
- Rewrite and send to appropriate journal