

Wikipedia as text: Essence not essays



1. Wikipedia articles

A style in Wikipedia? If style is a form of personal expression, no.

If there is no style in Wikipedia, what style Wikipedia is?

simple, brief, laconic

try to **avoid esseism** (the is-this-so-or-is-it-so)

article in **balance**

No commercial, marketing language, overreactions "superlatives" such as "most", "most famous" (did someone measure this?)

Essence

- order of things: **first, second, third**
- **continuity** of the text – avoid abrupt text, text fluency
 - shorten too long and complicated sentences
 - avoid "passive" expressions (he made a jump > he jumped)
 - translate words and abbreviations that you assume common people do not understand into common language
 - instead of copying persons cv, try to find out what has the person actually **given for the world?** (the Picasso case)
 - omit repeats and repeated misspellings

narrative

non-fiction writing can be based on narratives, but does encyclopedia need to be narrative?

no narrative without content, content before narrative

2. Language in Wikipedia discussions

most discussions are about solving a problem

obscurity when stating the problem

dialectical (discussion) process: thesis, antithesis, synthesis

social media use of language has invaded Wikipedia discussions

-off-topic commenting (trolling)

-personal (ad homini)

-targetting (a person)

discussions tend to become duels (2 persons) or truels (3 persons) others stay away

opinionated (en) is persistent, poignant, strict, smartass, dogmatic, self-willed

Social media lacks **social dynamics**, discussions tend to get thick, they seldom lead to anything

no result or consensus not stated clearly

discussions are ineffective

When writing in discussions, consider:

Write your thesis, idea, question clearly in the first sentence.

Ask yourself:

- Did I say/write it clear enough?
- Did I give enough or too much rationale...
- Can I write it 50 % shorter?

When you write (speak, sing) you take the time of your readers and listeners.

In **any presentation you can say only three things**, all others your audience forgets.

”Hey, I did not happen to think it in this way...”

”The aim of argument should not be victory, but progress.”

Karl Popper

thanks, kiitos, merci, Ви благодарам