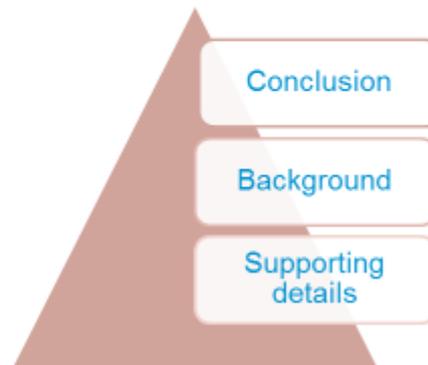
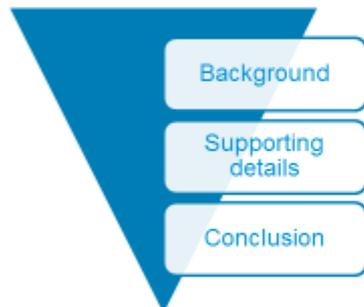


Science writing – my tips!

- Read around! Get a feel for what other blogs on the website are like and how people write about their research in other places. Take a look at [The Conversation](#) – these are more news pieces than blogs, but give a good idea of how to convey your research as a story. Take a look at blogs on various charity websites to see how they convey complex topics, for example [the BHF](#), [Diabetes UK](#).
- The Wellcome Trust has a lot of resources:
 - <https://blog.wellcome.ac.uk/tag/wellcome-trust-science-writing-prize/>
- Take a step back and think ‘Why does what I’m doing matter?’ For instance, will it help improve the lives of people with a certain disease? How will it improve their lives? Try to make people identify with the problem – not everyone will know someone living with what you’re researching.
- Don’t use the passive tense – really easy to slip into as that is the norm in academic writing. So ‘I shook the flask’ not ‘The flask was shaken’.
- Be careful with metaphors – used carefully they can be great. But if you get too deep into the metaphor, it can get really confusing!
- Don’t use acronyms and jargon. There are words that you use all the time as a researcher that just don’t mean anything to a non-specialised audience. If you had to learn what a particular definition or technique was when you started in the field, then others aren’t going to understand!
- Be enthusiastic! If you’re excited about your research, other people will be too.
- Think about your audience – fine balance between being patronising and not using overly complicated or unusual words. For instance, for people writing health information leaflets (Public Health England etc.), they suggest pitching at a 14 year olds reading level. This means not only vocabulary but sentence structure – do you really need a semi colon?! Shorter sentences are much easier to follow, as are shorter paragraphs. The Conversation editors aim to keep sentences to 17 words and paragraphs to three sentences.
- The public want to hear to different things to your colleagues:

Getting your message across

What your colleagues want to know



What the public wants to know

- [Up-goer five](#) – fun (but almost impossible) challenge to try writing your project using only the most common 1,000 words in English use. Worth having a play as it highlights how words we think are common as scientists, just don't feature in everyday language. In the example below I tried to write up my PhD in one sentence – the words underlined in red are not in the most 1,000 used words.



THE UP-GOER FIVE TEXT EDITOR

CAN YOU EXPLAIN A HARD IDEA USING ONLY THE [TEN HUNDRED](#) MOST USED WORDS? IT'S NOT VERY EASY. TYPE IN THE BOX TO TRY IT OUT.

My research looks at how cancer cells spread to the brain and cause damage.

UH OH! YOU HAVE USED NON-PERMITTED WORDS (RESEARCH, CANCER, SPREAD, DAMAGE)