Open in two tabs
bit.ly/wbcgrade
bit.ly/wbcyoast

Can Google Read?

How Writing Affects Rank in Google Search

Who are we? What do we Know?

Nancy Koziol

Author & Wine Blogger

Director of Content for Digital Firefly
Marketing

- Responsibilities include staying on
  top of all content-related trends to
  help DFM and its clients rank

Live music addict, player of board games,
hiker of mountains

John Cashman

CEO and Owner of Digital Firefly Marketing

15 years of SEO and PPC experience

Start-up veteran

Wine drinker

Husband to Terri, father to Charlotte & ViVi

digital firefly
marketing

WINE BLOGGERS
CONFERENCE

Desired Learning Outcomes

You'll walk out of here knowing:

- The seven components of readability and why they matter.
- How to access two FREE tools to assess your writing.

Our goal is to empower you to never diminish the depth of emotion in your content and harness the power of search engine optimization (SEO) to make sure that your content ranks for your desired keywords.

What is Readability?

Measures how likely web content is to be read.

7 Components

EASY	
Subheadings	**No more than 300 words between subheadings**
Paragraph Length	**No more than 150 words per paragraph**
Sentence Length	**75% of sentences have fewer than 20 words**
Repetition	**Consecutive sentences should start with a different word**
MODERATE	
Reading Level	**6th-8th grade reading level (hemingwayapp.com)**
Transition Words	**At least 30% of sentences have one**
DIFFICULT	
Voice	**90% of sentences are written in the active voice**

Subheadings

damewine.com

Home   Sample Policy   Who is Dame Wine®?

started to light that passionate fire within me again. Despite being born in 1975 and not considered a millennial, I have really embraced the generosity and joy that many millennials have brought to social media, and Wine Folly was the first to do it on a grand scale.

Wine Folly: The Essential Guide to Wine

Madeline Puckette and Justin Hammack are partners who are the owners of Wine Folly. Justin Hammack developed the site's infrastructure so it was a free, open-resource for wine knowledge while Madeline is not only the face of Wine Folly but she is a certified sommelier with a background in design – the combination of both led her to create Wine Folly's legendary wine infographics. I was thrilled when they released their Wine Folly book that covered the fundamentals, styles of wine and wine regions in a digestible, visual way that was accessible to everyone. It is no surprise that it became a best-seller.

Madeline Puckette

Over the years, I have been given a chance to meet Madeline a couple of times as well as hear her speak. She is so raw and honest about how she came to wine. Her beginnings started out as a beautiful curiosity to learn as much as she could, then she unfortunately found herself surrounded by a crowd that seemed glamorous, but was toxic, to finally

Break up text

Tell reader where info is.

Visually organize information.

Dame Wine uses subheadings well.

WINE BLOGGERS
CONFERENCE

Paragraph Length

The pretty face of Texas wine is Hill Country AVA. It is the second largest AVA in the country in terms of territory and according to some measures the fasting growing as a tourist destination. Blessed with rolling hills, picturesque ranchlands, and the charming town of Fredericksburg teeming with restaurants and German- themed shops representing the heritage of the early settlers here, these attractions support a very accessible wine trail, all just a short drive from the cosmopolitan city of Austin. It's no mystery why the area is growing as a destination. There are now over 52 wineries in the AVA and the number grows each year. However, what you won't find in Hill Country is lots of grapes. Most of the wineries here grow some grapes on estate vineyards but the real engine of Texas wineries is the High Plains about an 7 hour drive northwest of Austin near the New Mexico border. About 80% of the Texas grapes used to make wine in Hill country come from the High Plains according to January Wiese, Executive Director of the Texas Hill Country Wineries association. Wiese reported that acreage under vine in Hill Country is growing. "We had something like 202 acres 4 years ago. That's grown to around 850 acres." Yet, she explained, Hill Country features high land prices, ranchers with large tracts of land who prefer cattle to vineyards, and a more humid climate exacerbating disease pressure. Thus, Hill Country is likely to remain a minor player in terms of grape tonnage compared to the High Plains which now has about 3500 acres under vine .

Long paragraphs are daunting.

They often ramble.

Clear topic sentences and paragraphs related to the TS make readers happy.

Roving Decanter paragraphs well.

digital firefly marketing

WINE BLOGGERS CONFERENCE

Sentence Length

The 2014 Château de Mercuès Malbec de Cahors (88% Malbec, 12% Merlot), full of purple fruit, already had a velvety quality to it, with impressively well-integrated tannins considering its youth. That was good, but yowza, the 2011 Château de Mercuès "Cuvée Malbec 6666" (100% Malbec) was out of this world. It smelled rich, almost porty, and the aroma practically leapt from the glass. Complex and lengthy, it kept driving steadily forward, developing and unfolding at its own pace. It reminded me of that guy who doesn't need to shout to show he owns the room because he's confident and knows he's in control. And then there was the 2009 Château de Mercuès "Icône," the winery's "icon" bottling, created in consultation with Paul Hobbs, who's something of an icon himself. I wrote a page of notes about this super rich, dense wine. What insistence, what driving force! Good God. Have a sip of this one, Alice!

Reign in those commas!

Ban the semicolon!

~~Establish a practice of replacing a whole lot of words with fewer words to say something that's really rather simplistic.~~

Edit.

Odd Bacchus gets sentence length.

digital firefly marketing

WINE BLOGGERS CONFERENCE

Repetition

Weigh its necessity.

Reading Level

6th to 9th grade reading level is best.

Use Hemingway app.

It's not as awful as you think.

As the afternoon stretched before us I drank local wine and chatted both with winemakers and the other writers on my trip. At some point, sun and wine and welcome had me feeling philosophical so I looked to my Norwegian compatriot and said, "This. This is terroir." By forgetting everything except the vines, wines, people and moment I was in - by opening my heart as I tasted - I truly understood the sense of place that is vital to making quality wine.

Transition Words

Use to signify:
- Rank
- Causality
- Comparisons and contrasts
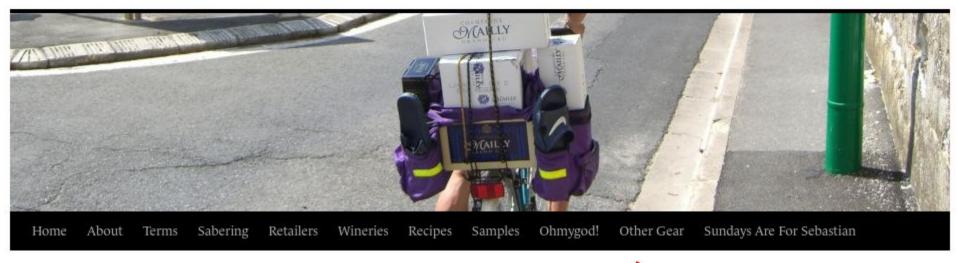- Emphasis
- Time/Location

Active Voice

The subject of the sentence is doing the action. Jeff does this really well.

the drunken cyclist

I have three passions: wine, cycling, travel, family, and math.

Home   About   Terms   Sabering   Retailers   Wineries   Recipes   Samples   Ohmygod!   Other Gear   Sundays Are For Sebastian

digital firefly
marketing

WINE BLOGGERS
CONFERENCE

Never Forget

When you write your truth it's most authentic. Never write for clicks, shares, traffic.

That said... everyone's writing can be better, tighter and more clear.

Use these as guides to creating content that gets found *and* read. Not as a reason to write things in a formulaic way.

Two Great Tools

Yoast

Wordpress Plugin or Online Version

Free version is FINE

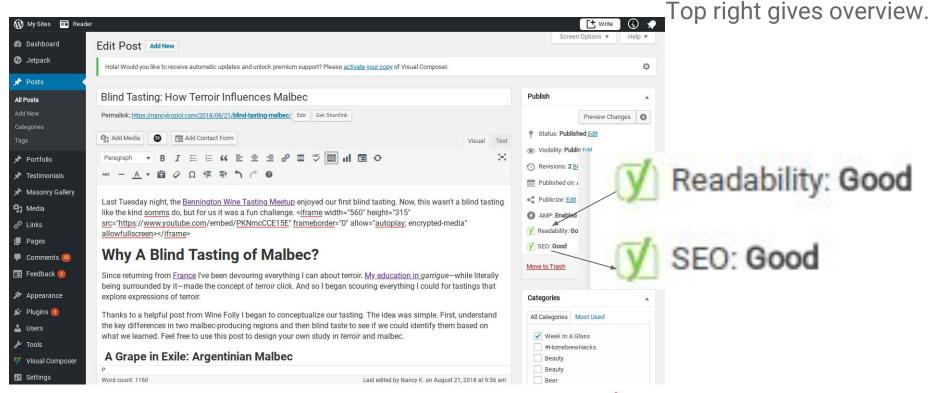Wordpress version is better than online

"Content Analysis"

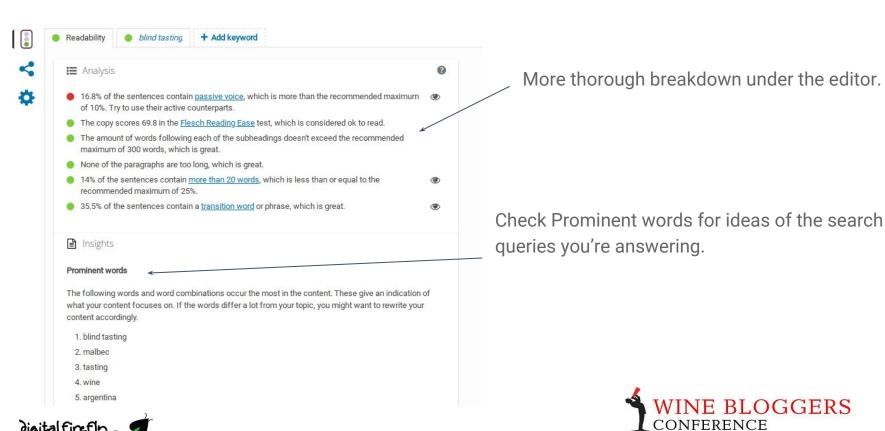**Hemingway App**

Use to figure out reading level.

WINE BLOGGERS
CONFERENCE

Using Yoast as a Guide

Top right gives overview.

Readability: Good

SEO: Good

Using Yoast as a Guide

Readability • blind tasting + Add keyword

≡ Analysis

● 16.8% of the sentences contain passive voice, which is more than the recommended maximum of 10%. Try to use their active counterparts.

● The copy scores 69.8 in the Flesch Reading Ease test, which is considered ok to read.

● The amount of words following each of the subheadings doesn't exceed the recommended maximum of 300 words, which is great.

● None of the paragraphs are too long, which is great.

● 14% of the sentences contain more than 20 words, which is less than or equal to the recommended maximum of 25%.

● 35.5% of the sentences contain a transition word or phrase, which is great.

📄 Insights

Prominent words

The following words and word combinations occur the most in the content. These give an indication of what your content focuses on. If the words differ a lot from your topic, you might want to rewrite your content accordingly.

1. blind tasting
2. malbec
3. tasting
4. wine
5. argentina

More thorough breakdown under the editor.

Check Prominent words for ideas of the search queries you're answering.
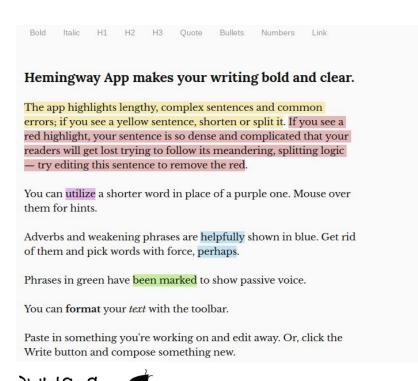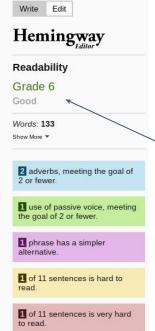
Get Your Reading Level

Way easier to understand than Flesch Reading Score.

6-9 grade reading level

is the sweet spot!

How does Google read, understand and rank your content?

At some point Google visits your site.

1. It "reads" it using a spider
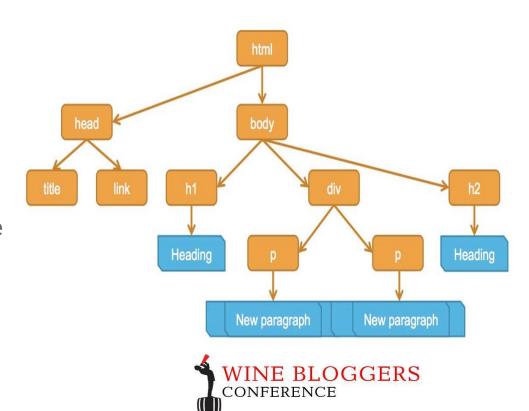2. It "understands" it using Hummingbird
3. It ranks it using RankBrain

digital firefly
marketing

WINE BLOGGERS
CONFERENCE

Google Reads Using a Spider

- Using cues from HTML
    - **Title** = Title of Article
    - **Body** = Text of Article
    - **H** = Section Heading
    - **P** = New Paragraph
    - **Link** = Link to other webpage

Downloaded to Google to process

WINE BLOGGERS
CONFERENCE

Google Hummingbird "Understands" content during search queries.

Google Hummingbird

1. Pre Hummingbird: match keyword to search.
2. Post Hummingbird: Understand words in context, which is more natural to search.
3. Understand concept and relationship between keywords.

digital firefly
marketing

WINE BLOGGERS
CONFERENCE

Hummingbird = Contextual Search
Wine with Steak

Before Hummingbird

- List of website matching keyword phrase "wine and steak"
- *May not match user intent*

After Hummingbird

- Google answers directly
- List of articles of best wine pairings with steak
- List of local steak restaurants with wine lists
- *Better match to user's intent*

digital firefly
marketing

WINE BLOGGERS
CONFERENCE

Working with Hummingbird

Before Hummingbird

- Keywords, keywords and more keywords
- Match the keyword search

After Hummingbird

- User intent
- What search queries are you answering?
- Readability became more important

digital firefly
marketing

WINE BLOGGERS
CONFERENCE

The Machines Take Over – RankBrain

RankBrain

1. Google uses AI to tweak its algorithm
2. Adjust inputs
3. Test results
4. Understands search query

The Google Algorithm – Important Inputs

Inputs that affect search results

1. Links to article
2. Domain authority
3. Device
4. Location
5. Keywords
6. And 195 more…

digital firefly
marketing

WINE BLOGGERS
CONFERENCE

RankBrain Before and After

Before RankBrain

- Google engineers would code the algorithm manually
- Test results
- Push or roll back changes

After RankBrain

- AI continually adjusts inputs
- Tests user results
- Pushes or rolls back changes *in real time*

Understanding the Search Query

15% of search queries Google has never seen before

Uses context from Hummingbird to "connect the dots"

Goes from keyword matching to concept matching

Search: Red wine tips I should know

Result: Beginners' guide to red wine

It understands "tips" and "I should know" = beginner

digital firefly
marketing

WINE BLOGGERS
CONFERENCE

Taking Advantage of Hummingbird and RankBrain

- Readability, especially active voice, show Google connection between subject and action
- Write to answer a search query, not a keyword
- Push or roll back changes

Questions? Comments? Want to Chat?

Our cards are on every table - not enough at yours? Just come grab one from the front!

Let's grab a drink and have a chat.

Pop us an email or give us a call.

Learn more about what we do at
www.digitalfireflymarketing.com
www.nancykoziol.com

Follow us on Facebook!
@digitalfireflymarketing
@OethicalOenologist

Follow Nancy on Insta:
@oethical_oenologist

And she tweets @WriterNancy

WINE BLOGGERS
CONFERENCE