Guiding Content

Many things on Wikipedia should not be there or are in the wrong place, but are not caught by the many filters and checks in place. This handout provides some guidance on identifying such content and points to some ways to handle it.

Resituating Existing Content

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1. Resituating leads (see also, document on Leads)

The "Lead" is the portion before the table of contents in a Wikipedia article. The lead is particularly important since it sets up the article's purpose and provides the basic information about what the article's topic is. Many kinds of intervention first happen in the lead. Sometimes you need to alter the lead to guide or resituate the content and focus of an article.

Example: Desilo: (Before + After)
Before
"Desilo is a small valley in southern Bosnia and Herzegovina, located near the Neretva river and the Croatian border. Archeological investigations in a small lake there in 2007 led to interesting finds of Illyrian boats. Desilo was in antiquity probably connected with the Neretva via Lake Hutovo Blato. References to the Neretva can be traced as far back as ancient times. In the era of ancient Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Neretva was known as Narenta, Narona and Naro(n), and was home to the ancient Illyrian tribes of the Ardiaei and the Daorsi. The river Neretva provided them life, turning them into town builders, shop makers, seafarers and fishermen that were renowned in ancient times."

After
"Desilo is an underwater archaeological site in southern Bosnia and Herzegovina, located near the Neretva (or Narenta) river and the Croatian border. The site was first discovered in the late 20th century, but Desilo's history can be traced as far back as ancient times. Investigations by a University of Mostar archaeological team in 2007 uncovered many sunken boats at the bottom of the small lake in Desilo valley. The archeologists believe these boats to be Illyrian ships, dating back to the first and second centuries B.C. Further excavations in 2008 by University of Oslo archaeologists found evidence suggesting that Desilo was an Illyrian trading post. These archaeological findings are significant because they are the first known discovery of Illyrian ships. Additionally, Desilo functioning as a trading centre suggests there were peaceful interactions between the Illyrians and the Romans."

Example: Podcast - ([Before](#) and [After](#)) - Note how much the editing cut down on the length of the lead. They worked to combine like information here and move some out to more appropriate sections.

Example: Zachary Karabell – ([before](#) and [after](#)) - In addition to basic tone and WP:OR problems, this one had too much information in the lead, which had to be moved down to the appropriate sections.

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2. Rewriting for Essay-like problems

Often, you'll need to rewrite whole sections to make the article sound like a Wikipedia article:

Example: Art in World War II ([before](#) + [after](#)) – had a lot of rewriting stemming from the article's essay nature. This one is more obviously an essay than others you may find, see the first line of the lead.

Example: Women in the Enlightenment ([Before](#) + [After](#)) - This was an example of an essay-like article, which had to be both reorganized but then rewritten for appropriate tone.

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3. Integrating quotes

In some cases, editors will have gathered quotes about a topic, but not integrated them into an article. Students can then integrate these quotes into an appropriately informative style. Keep in mind that Wiki MOS recommends avoiding the use of direct quotes, as they can create NPOV issues.

Example: African American Representation in Hollywood ([before](#) + [after](#))– example of lots of quotes.

The presence of African Americans in major motion picture roles has stirred controversy dating back decades before Hattie McDaniel played Mammy, the house servant, in *Gone with the Wind*. "Through most of the 20th century, images of African-Americans in advertising were mainly limited to servants like the pancake-mammy Aunt Jemima and Rastus, the chef on the Cream of Wheat box."[1] The roles that the African-American community were generally offered, usually fell into one or more of three themes; a tale of rags to riches, thug life, or segregation. "Many researchers argue that media portrayals of minorities tend to reflect whites' attitudes toward minorities and, therefore, reveal more about whites themselves than about the varied and lived experiences of minorities". Producing films in this way is what leads to a singular perspective and opinion to dominate mainstream media.[2]

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4. Create new section with existing content

Sometimes content will exist that deserves its own section. Students might make that new section for the content. Occasionally, these sections might be small with the expectation that they will likely be expanded by others later.

Example: Marching (before and after) - In this case, the article did not really have a clear organization at all. Providing some structure and opening up some sections makes space for other kinds of content.

Example: Lightning McQueen (before and after) – Lots of information from the lead was moved to create a new section: see "Character Design" and "Notable Miscellaneous Appearances." Removing the Miscellaneous information was not the right move, but creating this small section allows space for future editors to add onto it.

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5. Weaving together disconnected content

When information is provided piecemeal or content has been moved around, work needs to be done to rewrite content to weave it together into a more coherent form.

Example: Super Bowl Curse Before + After - The content here needed a better frame that makes it appropriate for Wikipedia. To do so, the student had to rework the organization a bit, but mostly rewrite the lead and first part of each section to be more appropriate. This could also be considered a remedying of OR.

Example: Forestry in Russia - Before and After - When the student began, this article was just a sketch with random information. The student not only reorganized it into more sensible headings but wove that content together more coherently. It's not ideal, but at least gets the article into a more coherent form for others to work on.

Deleting Content

Removing content is ultimately a bold edit. Generally, you don't want to lose content that might be valuable for wikipedia down the line, but we also don't want to leave content that is inappropriate.

WP:Deletion– (This policy page is about the deletion of entire articles)
WP:Content removal – (This page is about removing content within an article. -- This is the most useful page for our sakes but note that it is advice, not policy)

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1) Identifying content to be removed

The issue of deciding whether content should be removed is often complicated:

- ❖ if a statement is unsourced, for instance, might it be easily sourced? It might be worth checking yourself before removing.
- ❖ If a statement is original research, might it be rephrased rather than deleted?
- ❖ If it is promotional, might a portion be retained in a non-promotional way?

The most common deletions will be for information that is unnecessary or excessive (such as fancruft). However, again, the issue can sometimes be controversial: you need to think carefully about what is within the range of notability for that article.

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2) Removing the content

If you think you should remove content, first gauge whether or not it is a minor or major removal.
   a) If it is minor and relatively uncontroversial, you probably should go ahead and just do it, citing the issue in your edit summary.
   b) If it is major and related to a policy violation (such as WP:Promo), you might want to go ahead and delete it and note it on the talk page, notifying anyone who might be involved in it.
   c) If it is major and related to more general content focus issues, you will want to post something about it on the talk page (tagging relevant parties) and **provide some time for response and discussion before deleting**.
      i) If your article is not one that receives a lot of traffic, waiting a period of time (perhaps a week or so) might be sufficient.
      ii) If your article does have a lot of traffic, be sure to let the conversation play out even if it means you don't finish the deletion yourself.

Example: Jake the Dog – (before + after) – Removed 2 sections (1 & 2) because the first presented information that was not relevant to the topic of the section, and the second elaborated a huge amount about information that was covered in a couple lines in the lead. Ultimately, these edits were noticed by the community and the current state shows that other editors were able to restore a deleted section to a more appropriate form for the article.

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3) Trimming content - sometimes problematic content can be fixed by resituating or trimming the content

Example: Fascism in Italy – (Before + After) – While this article could still use further trimming, the student started the process and signaled future editors with more knowledge to continue this effort. Note how the large paragraphs make it difficult to focus on – creating sub-headings can help solve this issue.

: Rowing ([Before](#) + [After](#)) -- A whole section of this article violates WP:NOT and was greatly trimmed by the student: see [this section](#). It had a ton of information, but none of it was sourced and was likely provided by an enthusiastic rower.

Moving content to new articles

Often a section of an article will expand so much that you need to break it off into a new article. To do so:

- notify the other editors in the talk page
- create the new page yourself. Be sure to make the new page stand on its own as an appropriate wikipedia page
- In the original article, leave a kind of "summary" version of the content from the new article created
- [Add a "main article" tag to that section.](#)

Example: Virtual Reality ([Before](#) + [After](#) + [Virtual reality applications](#)) – The student created a new article for a section of the "Virtual Reality" article because the applications section was notable enough to have its own article. This section was taking up a large section of the original article, so the student elected to move it.

- Note that they did not remove the info they copied to the new article.See the [Current Article](#) to see how creating a new branch-off article should be reflected in the parent-article. You should briefly introduce the topic (although the current article is not brief enough) and link the new "Main Article" you created, as you can see directly below the section title.

Applications   [edit source]

Main article: Applications of virtual reality

Virtual reality is most commonly used in entertainment applications such as video

Moving Content from other Articles

1. Getting content from other articles

Example: Ancient Music – ([before](#) and [after](#)) – Articles like this will need information from other articles that are more specific to certain regions of the world in order to keep a worldwide perspective. Note the table of contents. Several civilizations are mentioned that will have their own articles where you can retrieve information from.

Ancient music is music that developed in literate cultures and replaced prehistoric music. Ancient music refers to the various musical systems that were developed across various geographical regions such as Mesopotamia, India, Persia, Egypt, China, Greece and Rome. Ancient music is designated by the characterization of the basic notes and scales. It may have been transmitted through oral or written systems.

Contents [hide]

1 Egypt
2 Mesopotamia
    2.1 Harps of Ur
    2.2 Hurrian music
3 Ancient India
4 Ancient China
5 Ancient Greece
6 Ancient Rome
7 See also
8 References
9 External links

Example: Hobby – (Before + After) – Articles that are this broad will need some information from other places (usually other Wikipedia articles). Examine the table of contents here to see that there are sections dedicated to topics that have their own articles.

Finding content from earlier versions

Example: The Little Mermaid – (Before + After) – The student editor was able to go back through the article history and bring back some content that had been deleted a while ago. If you do this, include information about what version you retrieved this content from, like the date and name from the article history. This editor linked it on the talk page.

explaining spirits/their role in the ending) (undo | thank)

- (cur | prev) ◯   22:49, 11 March 2019   Aggiegal19 (talk | contribs) . . (35,180 bytes) **(+3,643)** . . (→*Themes and interpretations:* <mark>Brought back information from previous version (linked in talk page) and revised it; fixed some of the refs</mark>) (undo | thank)

- (cur | prev) ◯   02:32, 11 March 2019   181.74.49.15 (talk) . . (31,537 bytes) **(+190)** . . (→*Adaptations*) (undo)

- (cur | prev) ◯   18:09, 10 March 2019   Aggiegal19 (talk | contribs) . . (31,347 bytes) **(+40)** . . (*renamed sections 3, 4,*

Planned Revisions   [edit source]   [subscribe]

Hello, I have been assigned this article for my Technical Editing class, and I will be working on it heavily for the next two weeks (until about 17 March 2019). This is a summary of my editorial goals, and I will start implementing organizational changes towards the end of next week and stylistic revision/copy-editing the following week.

- Organization
  - Debate Over Ending could be changed to "Critical Response" with subsections for debate over ending. This will allow for further subsections about critical interpretations related to entire story
  - Previous version of article had a "Psychoanalytic Interpretations" subsection instead of the current "Potential Homosexual Subtext" section <mark>(see previous versions from Aug 2013 such as: [[2] ↗].</mark> I think incorporating the information that was previously there with what is currently here can help flesh out this section and also bring back some better citations that were lost with the change.

Merging Articles

WP:Merging

Example: Chrisitan Prayer – (before + after) – This student merged another article into this article, creating the section "Types of Prayer in the New Testament" with the retrieved content. They proposed it first on the talk page, then moved on with the edit after waiting for community response.

Example: Intrapersonal Communication and Internal Monologue - (Before + After) - The student merged these two articles. They took a good amount of time in attempting to situate the content in a cohesive form, but eventually they decided it was best to signal for future editors with more expert knowledge to finish that part of the process.