Organization

The structure of a wikipedia article is not dictated except in very broad strokes. Nonetheless each topic and type of article tends to have some limits in terms of what is usually appropriate. Each particular article will have further aspects that will dictate its organization, as with all writing.

However, part of what is interesting about what we're doing is that we want to work both with the logical structure of the topic **and what happens to be there**. That is, your organization decisions can be based partially on what is already present. Part of what we want to do is to reorganize what other wikipedia editors have already contributed and rework it into what makes the most sense given what is there and what the topic needs, while also removing information violating WP:NOT.

FYI, many of the **most successful projects for this assignment make bold edits involving the organization.** Don't do so if it's not appropriate and make sure that you properly make room for the community of potential editors (we'll talk about this in the next module), but do spend extra time thinking about and examining the organization of your pages.

Guideline Pages

WP:Writing better articles
WP: Article Size recommendations
WP: Copying within Wikipedia

How to find specific guidelines on organization for your topic

Some topics have additional conventions for how to organize an article. To find these:
- Go to your page's talk page
- Look at the Wikiprojects listed at the top of the talk page.
- Click on the most relevant Wikiprojects
- Each of these is different and some are more developed and active than others. Poke around the page to see if there are any genre specific guidelines.
- Either way, if you go to a similar page, you can often learn a lot about possible organizations from like pages. But, note that not all similar pages are good articles and they might not apply directly to your article.

Major Issues

1) **Illogical content organization**

Sometimes the content within sections is not in the best place that it could be in the article. This causes issues for readers as well as editors. The article will often stall because no one has come in to create a logical flow of information for the article that is intuitive enough for future editors to engage with.

Example: Basic Life Support (Before and after)
  This article had content that was not intuitive in terms of the flow of information and therefore made readers struggle with understanding it. The editor was able to move the information into a different organizational structure which greatly helped the quality of the article.

Example: 23 Blast (Before and After)
  Compare the "Production" sections in these two pages and you will see how the student was able to craft a better organization without having to change too much of the information. Note that they moved paragraphs around between sub-sections as well as creating an entirely new section here. The "After" article's structure also leaves space for future editors to add onto and continue to move things around. Note that the student did not address a lot of Original Research here, and doing so would have improved the organization even further.

Example: **Deaf President now (before and After)**
  The original structure was almost entirely organized around the described protest. The new organization makes room for other kinds of content and directs the article into a more productive form.

2) **Illogical section organization**

Some articles have a logical flow of content within sections, but the sections themselves aren't placed in the most logical spot within the article or they don't match other good articles in that genre. In the example below, the editor looked for the most logical organization of the article in terms of where sections should go, and moving those sections around helped a great deal with the cohesion of the article.

Example: 2009 swine flu pandemic in Australia -- (before and after)

Before   After

Contents [hide]

Contents [hide]

3) **Section titles and the Table of Contents**

The titles of sections within an article as well as how the Table of Contents looks can be a huge indicator for the quality of an article. For example, the article below was originally posted to Wikipedia as an essay and therefore was separated into sections with titles that are appropriate for an essay. This article looked much more appropriate for Wikipedia once an editor separated the sections out and gave them names that matched the style of other articles in this genre.

Example: Art and World War II -- Before + After

Before

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1 The Fate of Art in Nazi Germany

2 Art as Ideology in Totalitarian and Democratic Regimes

3 War Art in Britain: A Liberal Patronage

4 Art and Artists in Occupied France: Collaboration, Resistance, and Escapism

5 German Artists in Exile

6 Art and the Holocaust

7 References

After

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1 Historical context

2 Art in Nazi Germany

    2.1 Nazi art

    2.2 Degenerate art

3 Persecuted artists

    3.1 Exiled artists

    3.2 Artists in internment camps

4 World War II art

    4.1 Protest art

    4.2 Political art

    4.3 Holocaust art

5 References