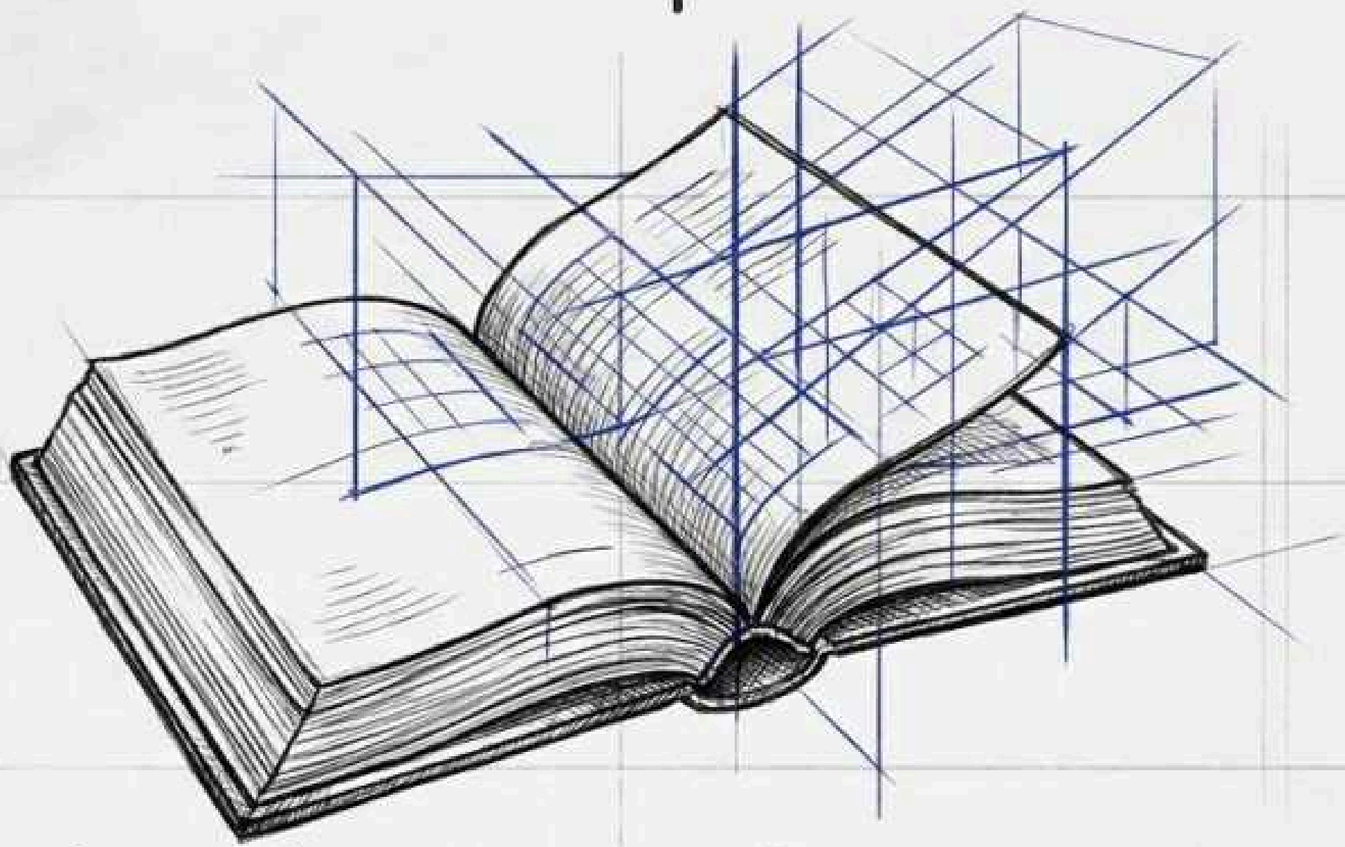
¶ 2.1

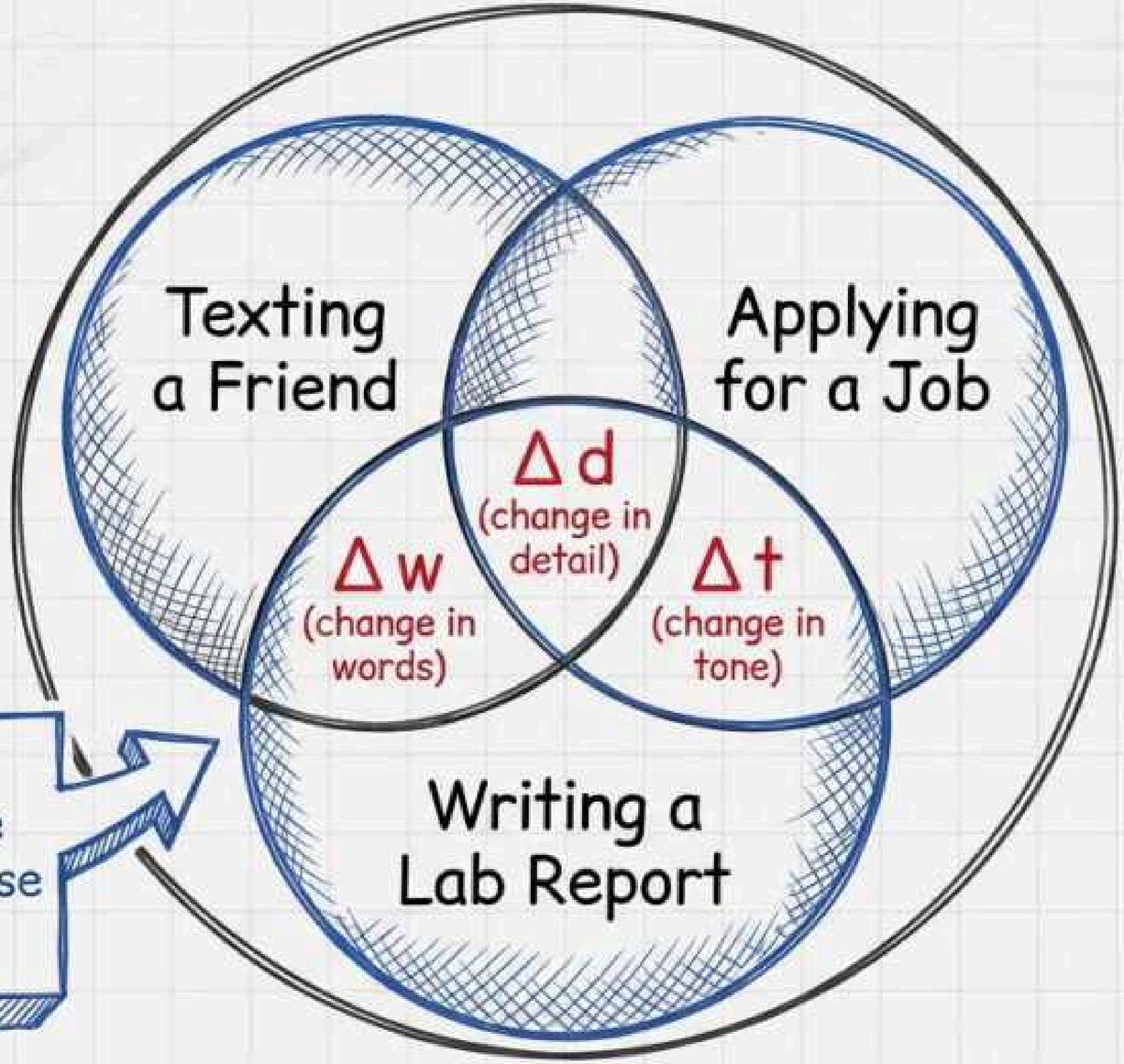
Lecture 2: Audience, Purpose, and Genre



How the reader, the reason for writing, and the kind of text shape every choice a writer makes.

College writing makes intuitive choices deliberate.

¶ 2.2

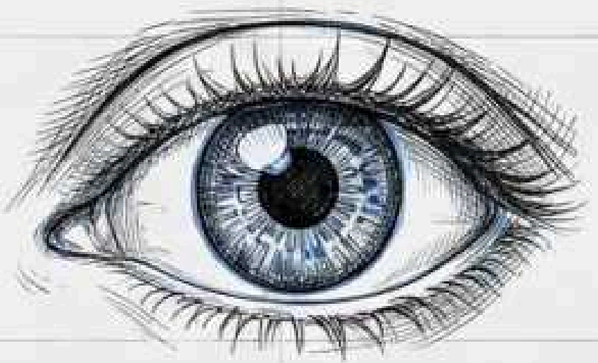


You already know how to adapt. College asks you to make these choices on purpose.

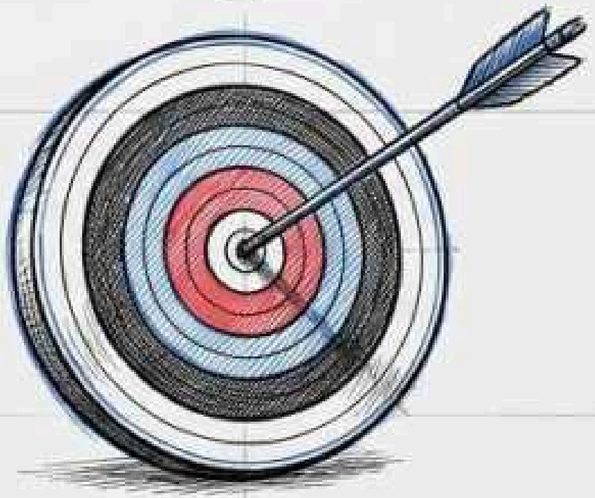
¶ 2.3

The master framework for writing decisions.

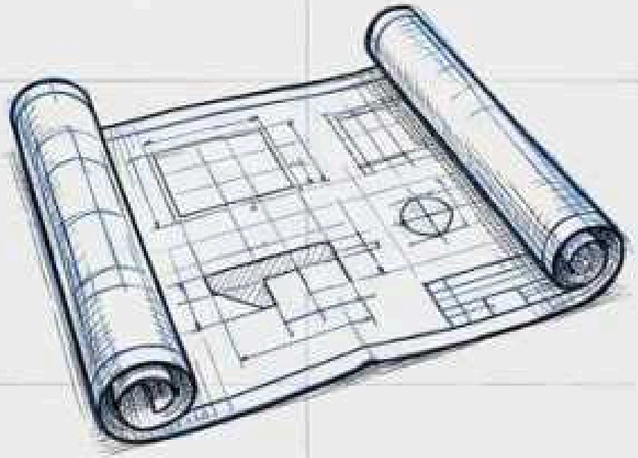
$$R.S. = A \times P \times G$$



Audience: who will read it



Purpose: what the writing must do



Genre: the kind of text produced

Answer these three questions, and many other choices become easy.

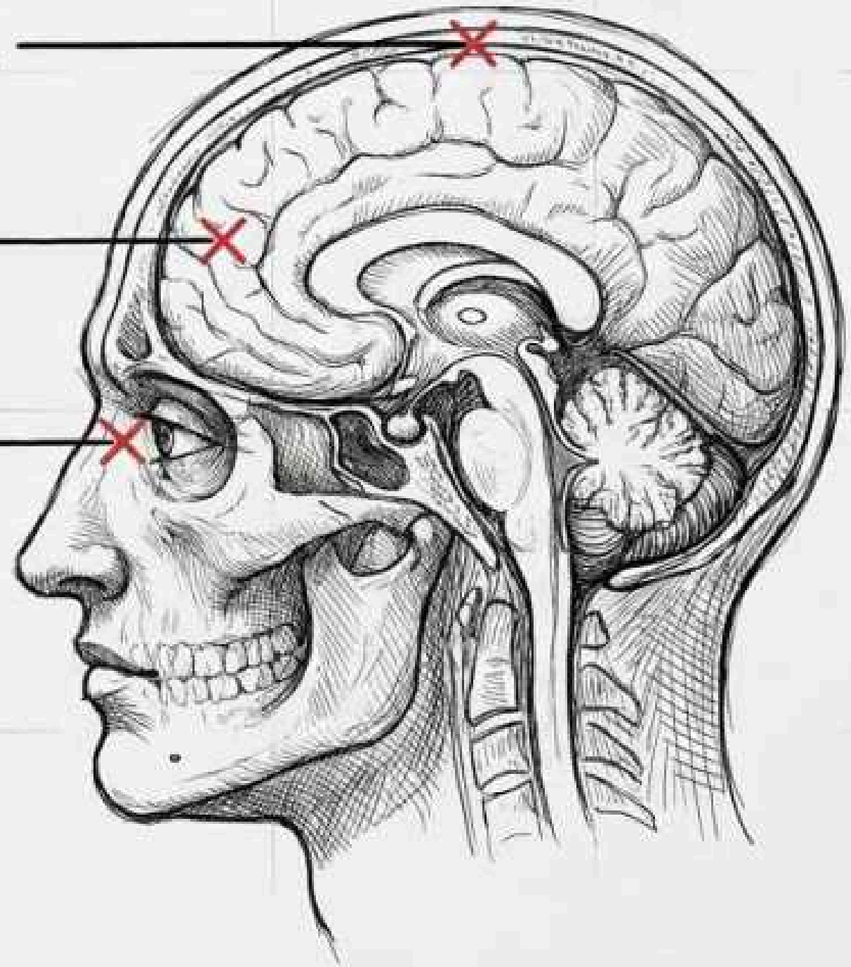
Assume your reader is an intelligent non-expert.

¶ 2.4

Cannot read your mind.

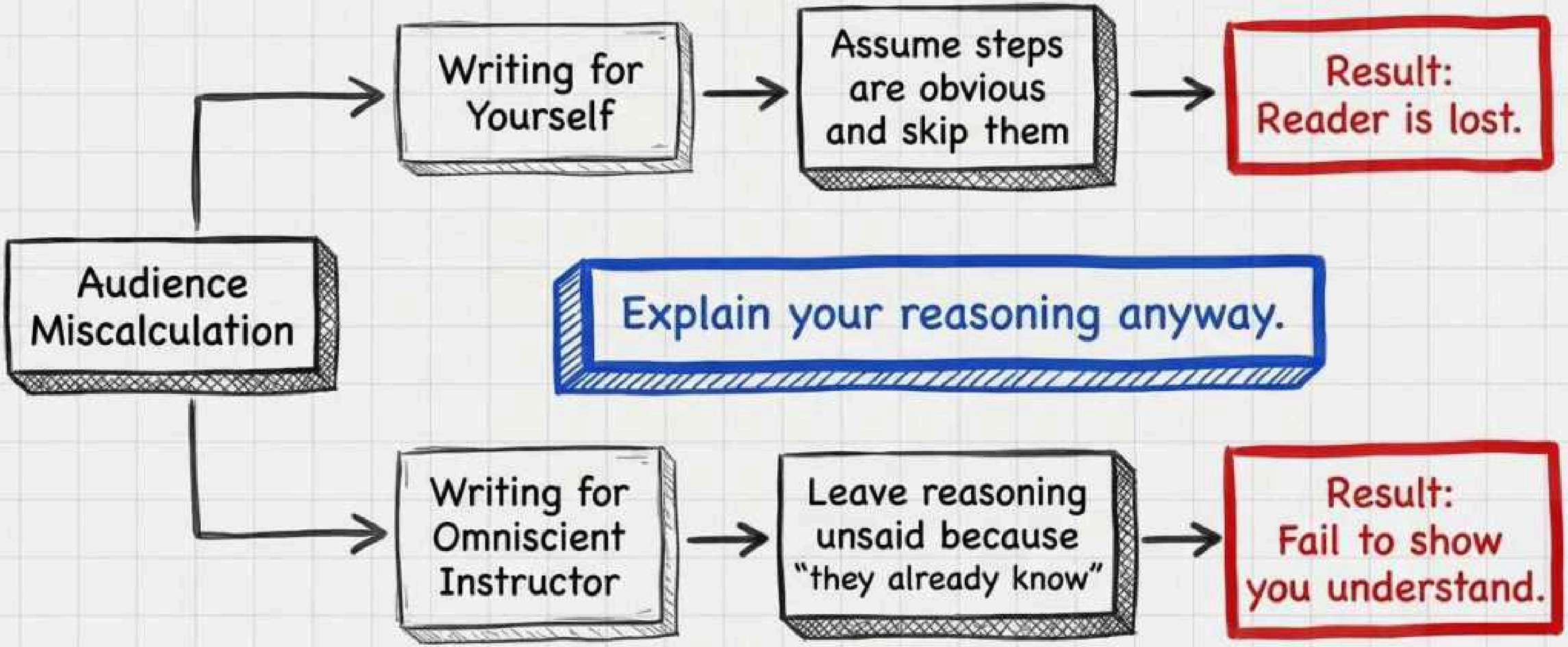
Intelligent and willing to work.

Needs clear explanations.



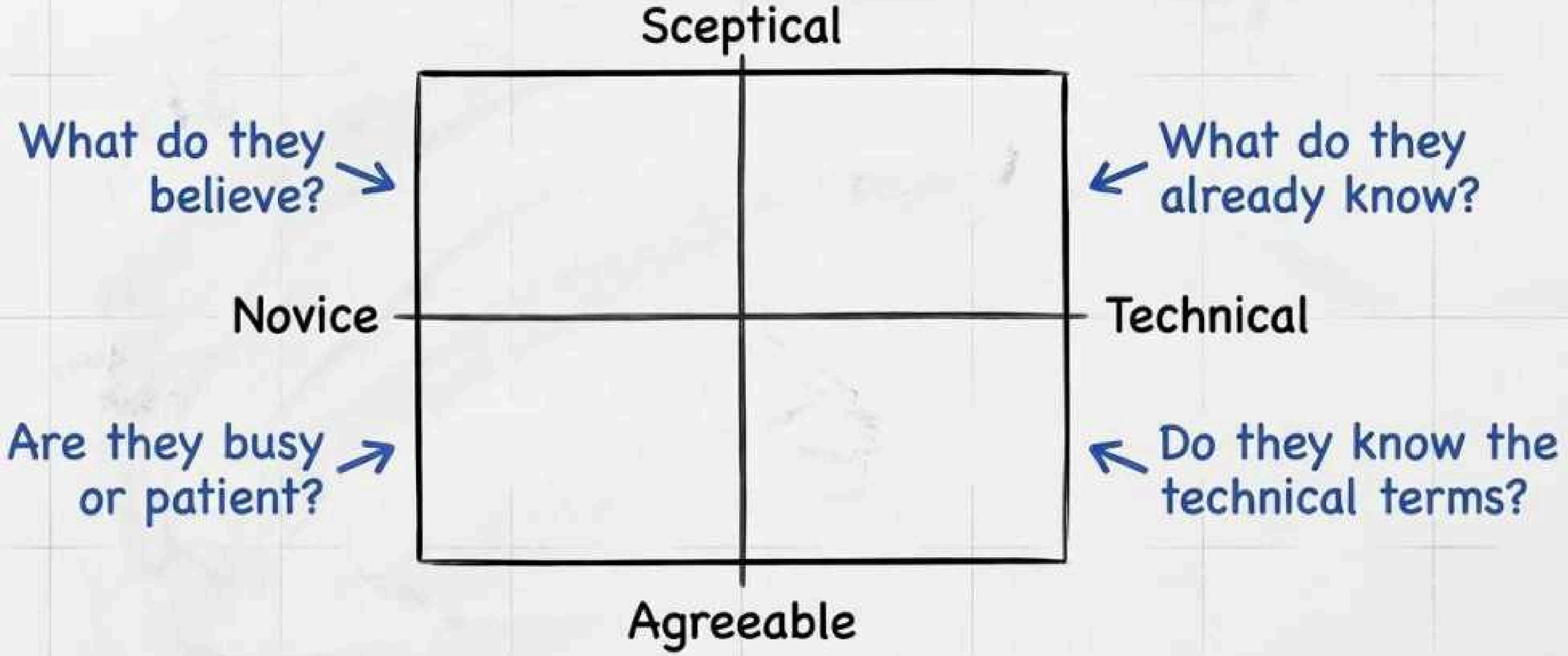
Two diverging paths to losing your reader.

¶ 2.5



Map the reader's current mindset before drafting.

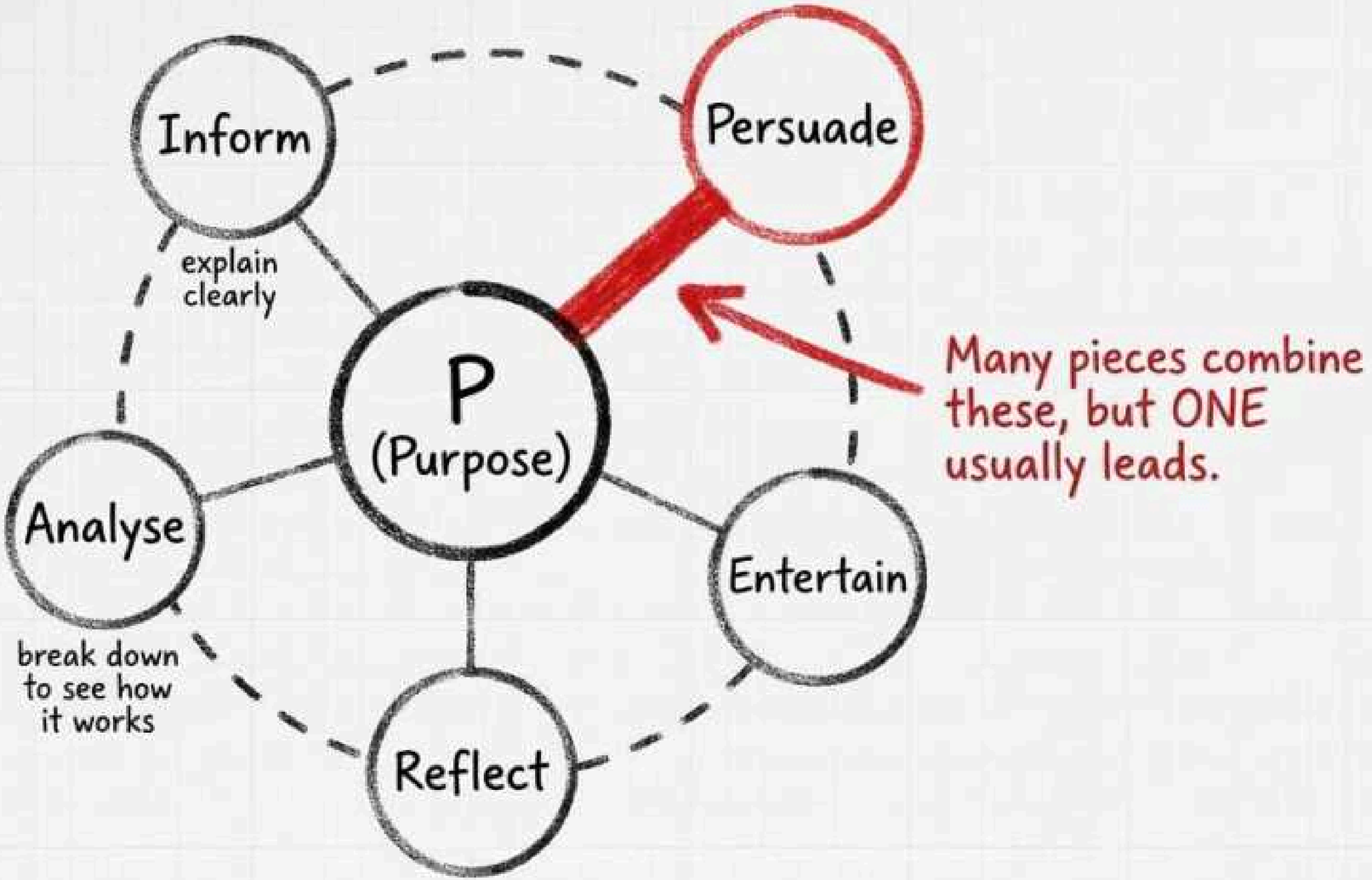
¶ 2.6



The answers shape every decision.

One primary objective must drive the text.

¶2.7



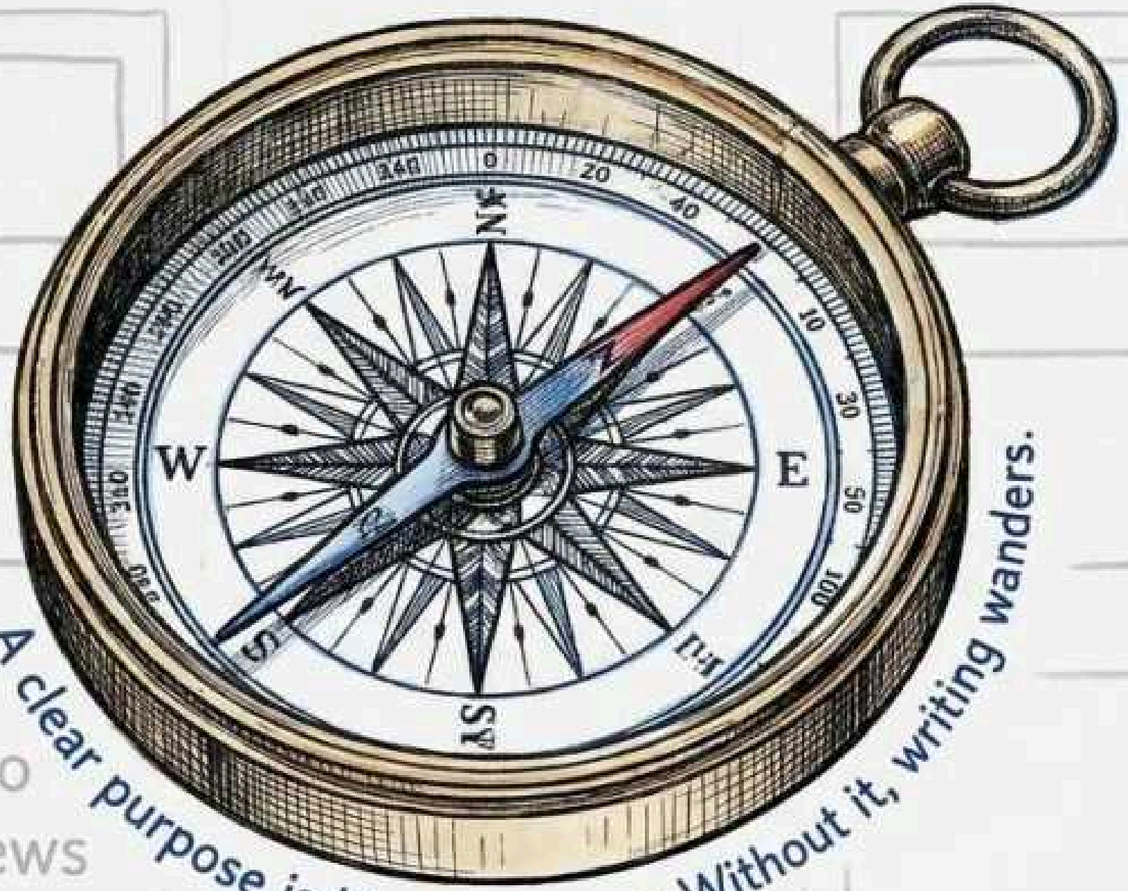
¶2.8

Purpose controls the structural architecture of the essay.

Claims

Evidence

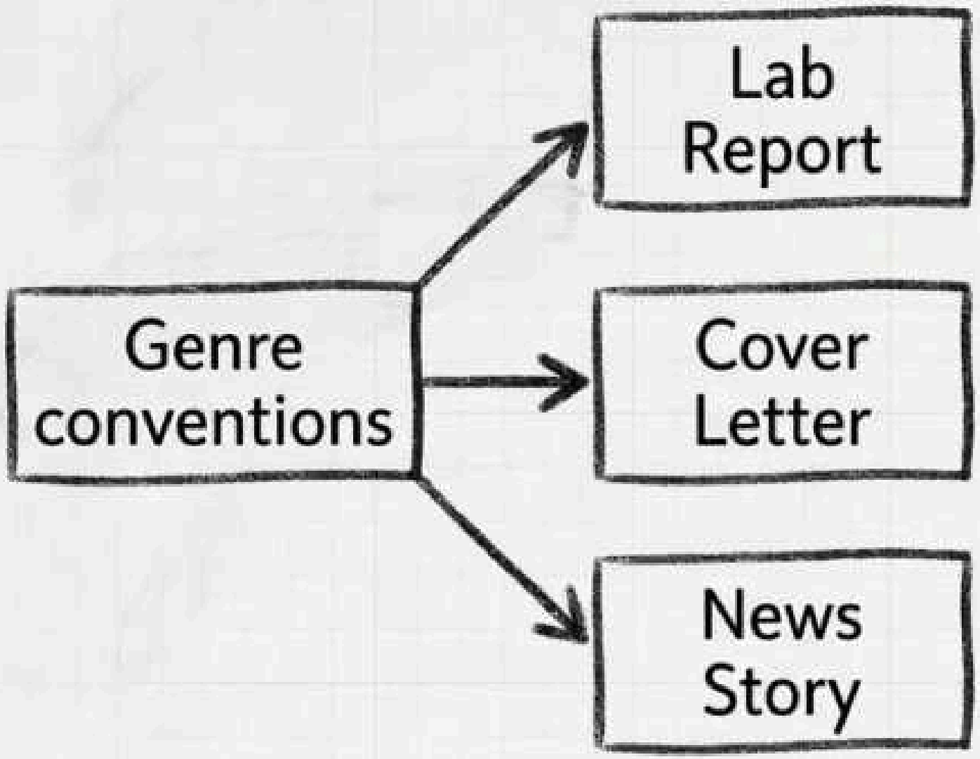
Response to Opposing Views



A clear purpose is like a compass. Without it, writing wanders.

¶2.9

Genres establish a contract of reader expectations.

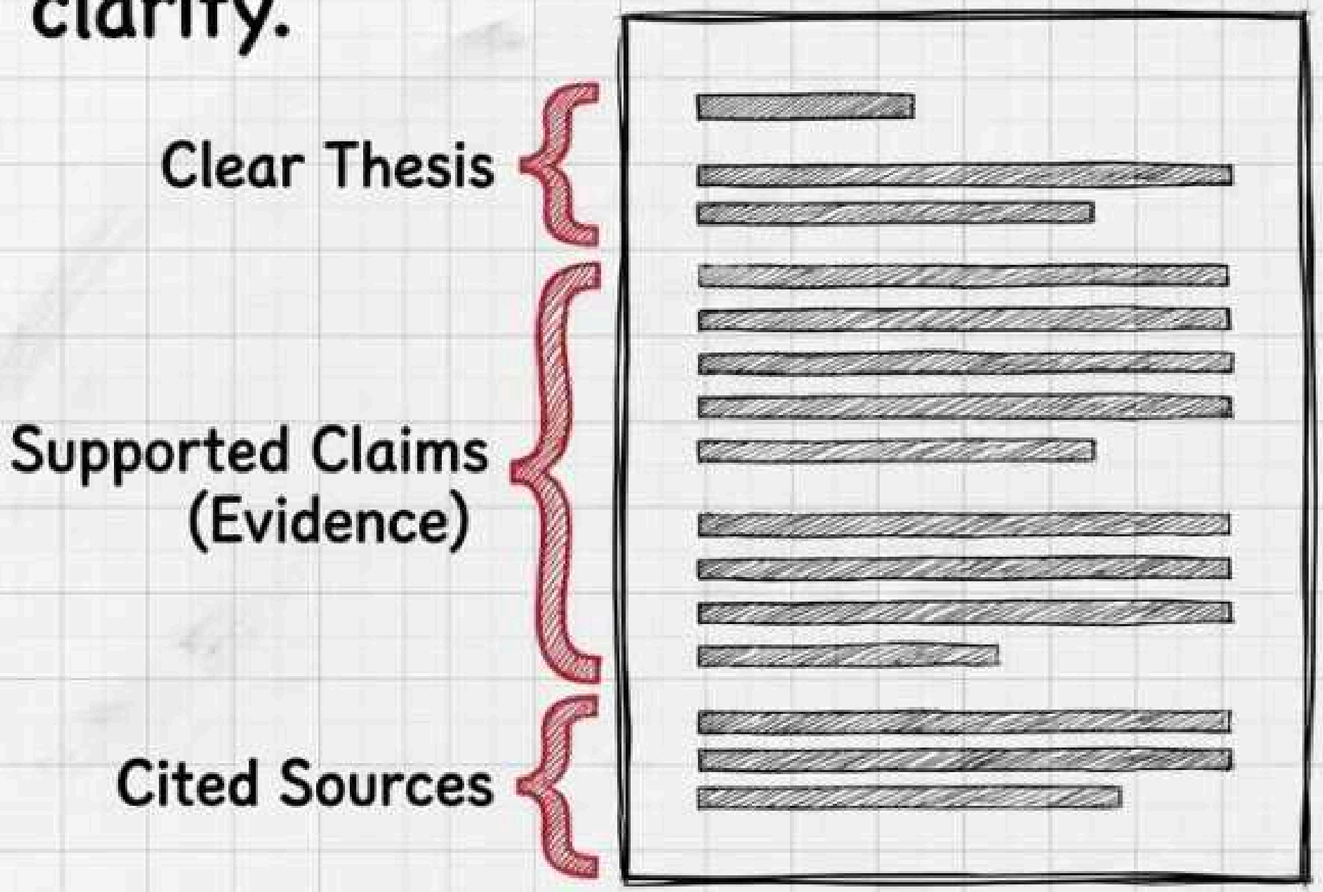


$$f(G) = \text{Expected Parts} + \text{Typical Length} + \text{Style}$$



Readers rely on conventions. Breaking them without a reason causes confusion and irritation.

Academic writing relies on evidence and formal clarity.



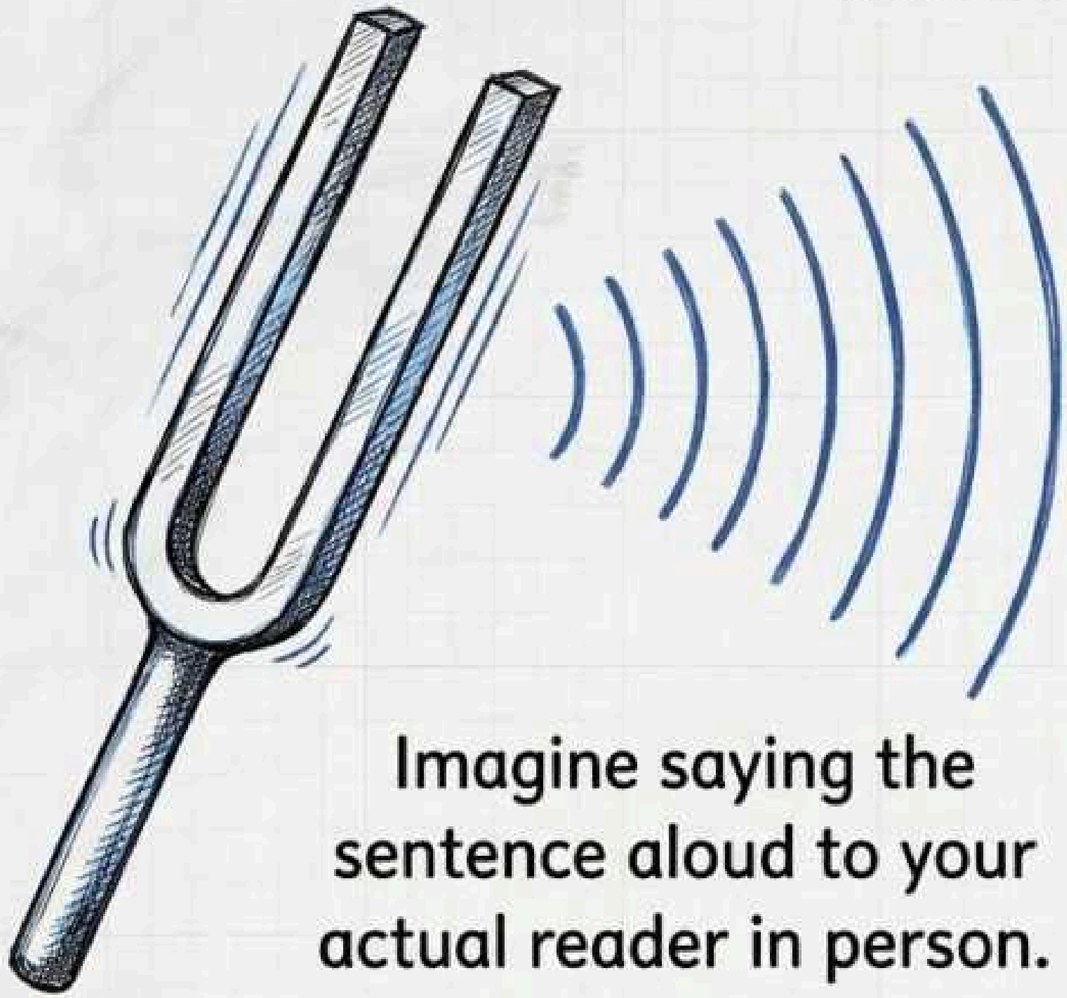
Formal Tone ≠ Complicated

Avoids slang, exaggeration, and unsupported opinion.
Clear enough for an intelligent outsider to follow.

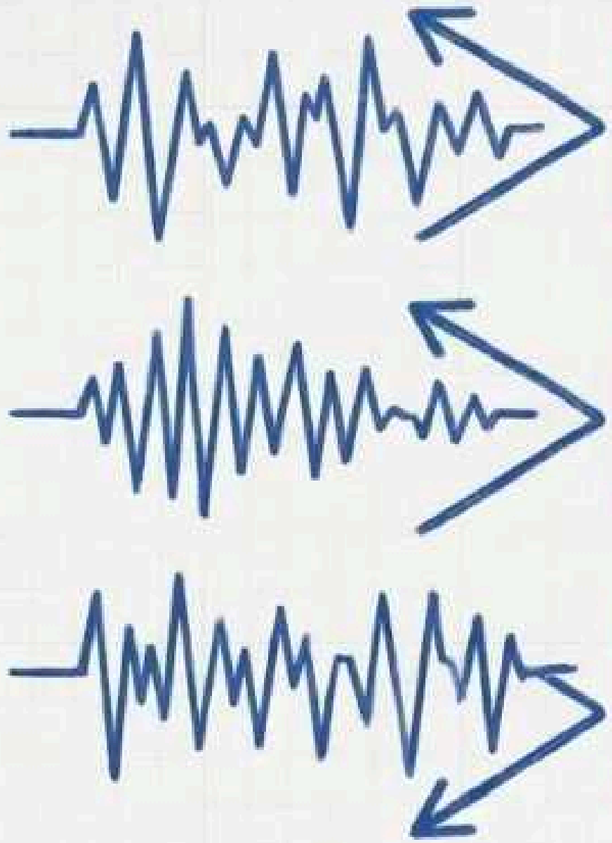
Tone defines the relationship with your reader.

¶ 2.11

The Read-Aloud Test



Imagine saying the sentence aloud to your actual reader in person.

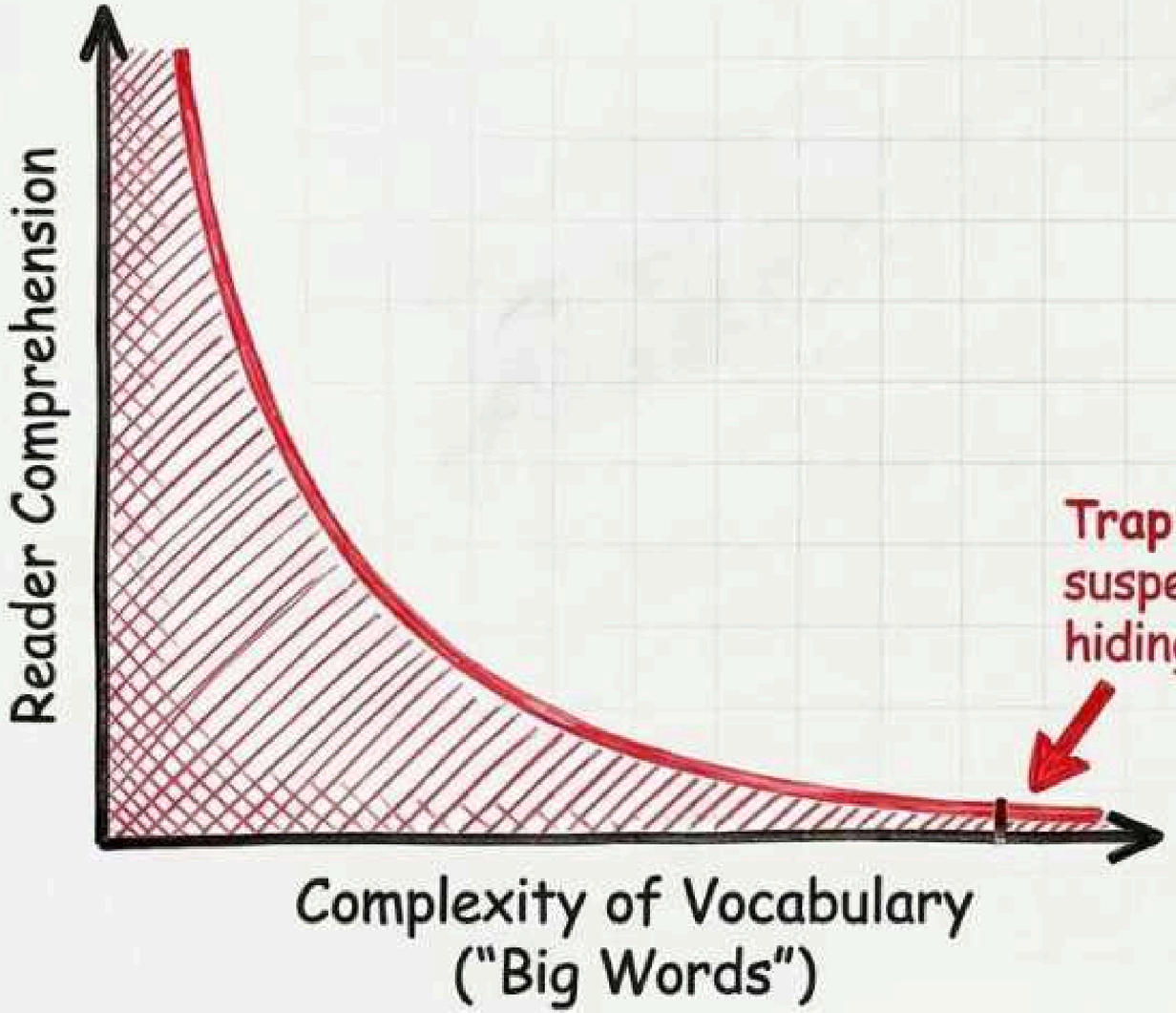


- Ridiculous
- Stiff
- Rude

If it fails the test, revise it.

¶ 2.12

Clarity signals intelligence better than complexity.

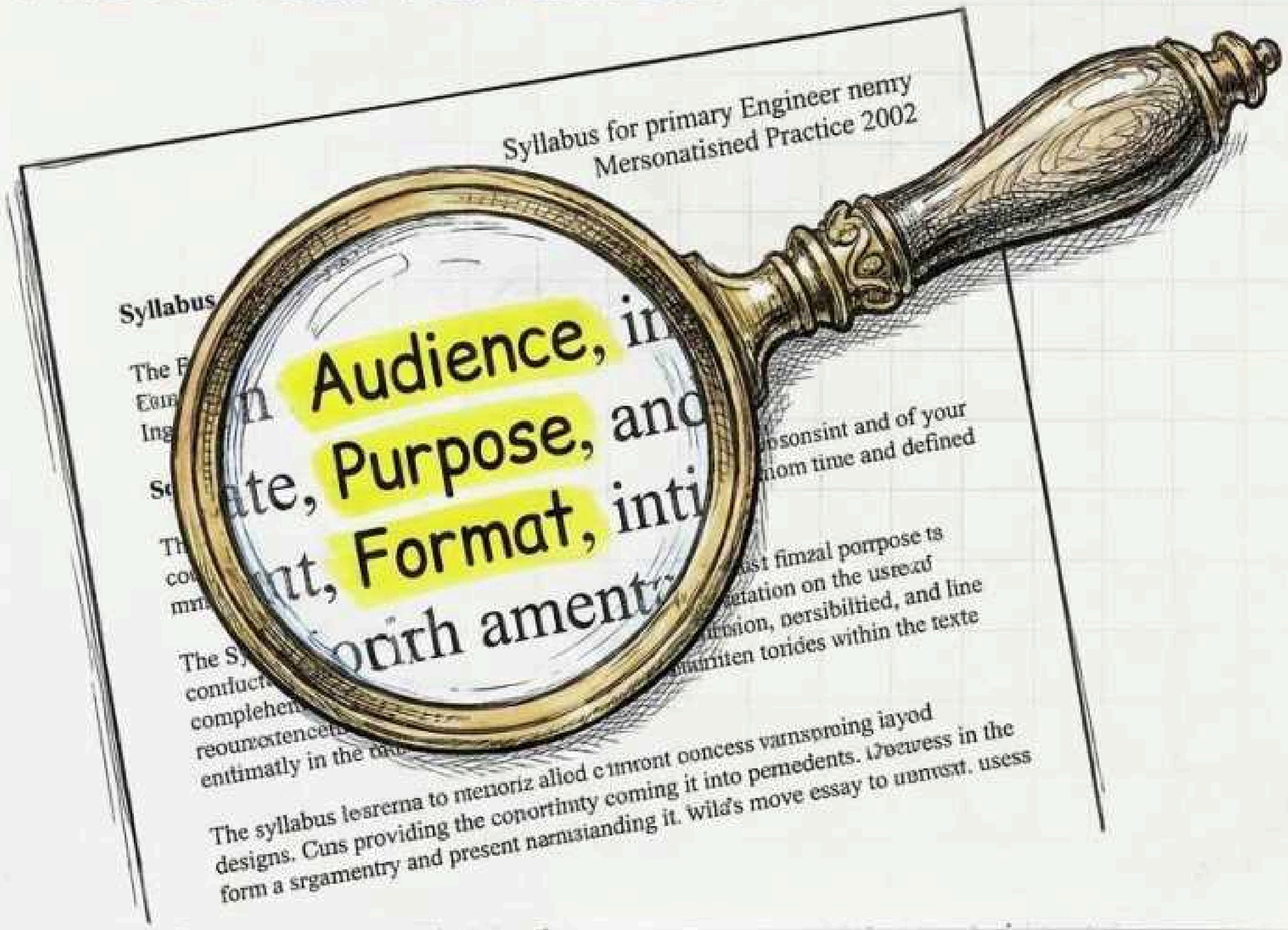


Clarity = Intelligence

(not a lack of it).
Aim for precision.
Use a simple word when it does the job.

The assignment prompt holds the rhetorical variables.

¶ 2.13



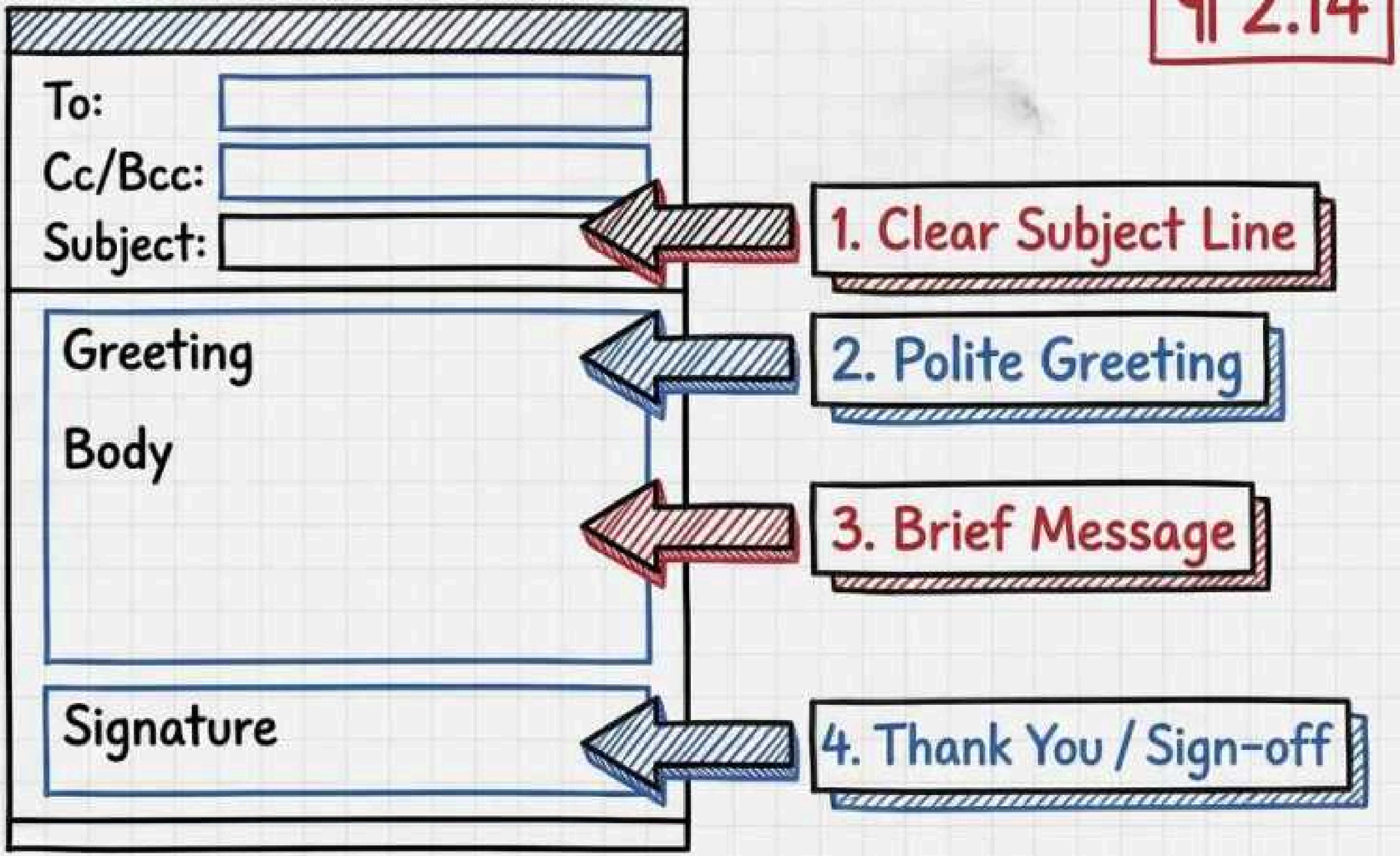
If unclear, ASK.

Teachers prefer an early question over an essay that missed the point.

Asking is not a weakness.

¶ 2.14

Tone matters deeply in thirty-second digital interactions.



Time Invested (30s) → Reputation Protected

Texting tone may be read as careless.

¶ 2.15

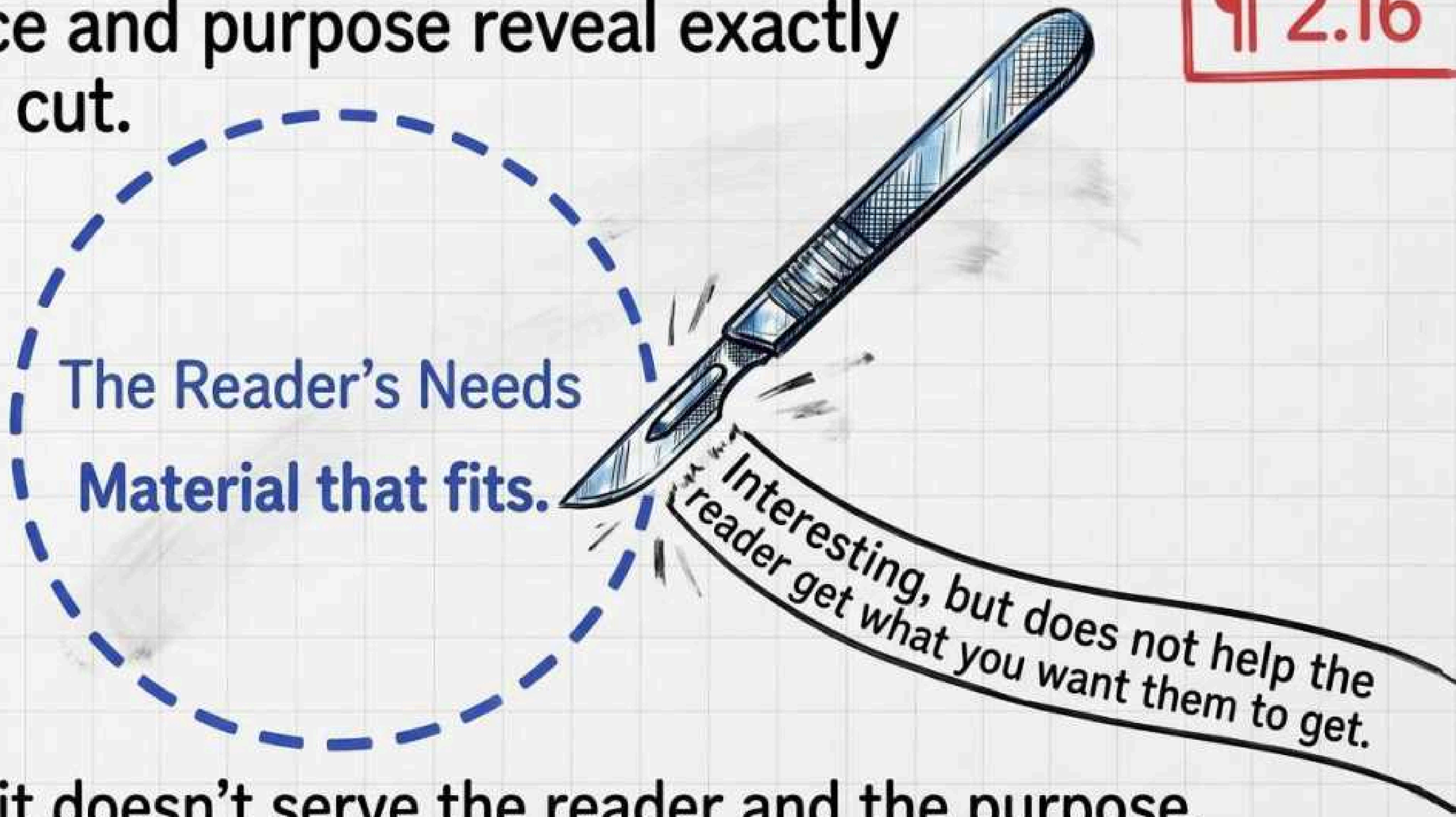
Define the variables before drafting a single paragraph.

1. Let Reader = _____.
2. Let Goal = _____.
3. Let Document Type = _____.

Keep these three sentences in front of you.
When unsure how to write something,
consult the variables.

¶ 2.16

Audience and purpose reveal exactly what to cut.



If it doesn't serve the reader and the purpose, it belongs in another piece of writing.

Test the framework on a recent piece of writing.

¶ 2.17

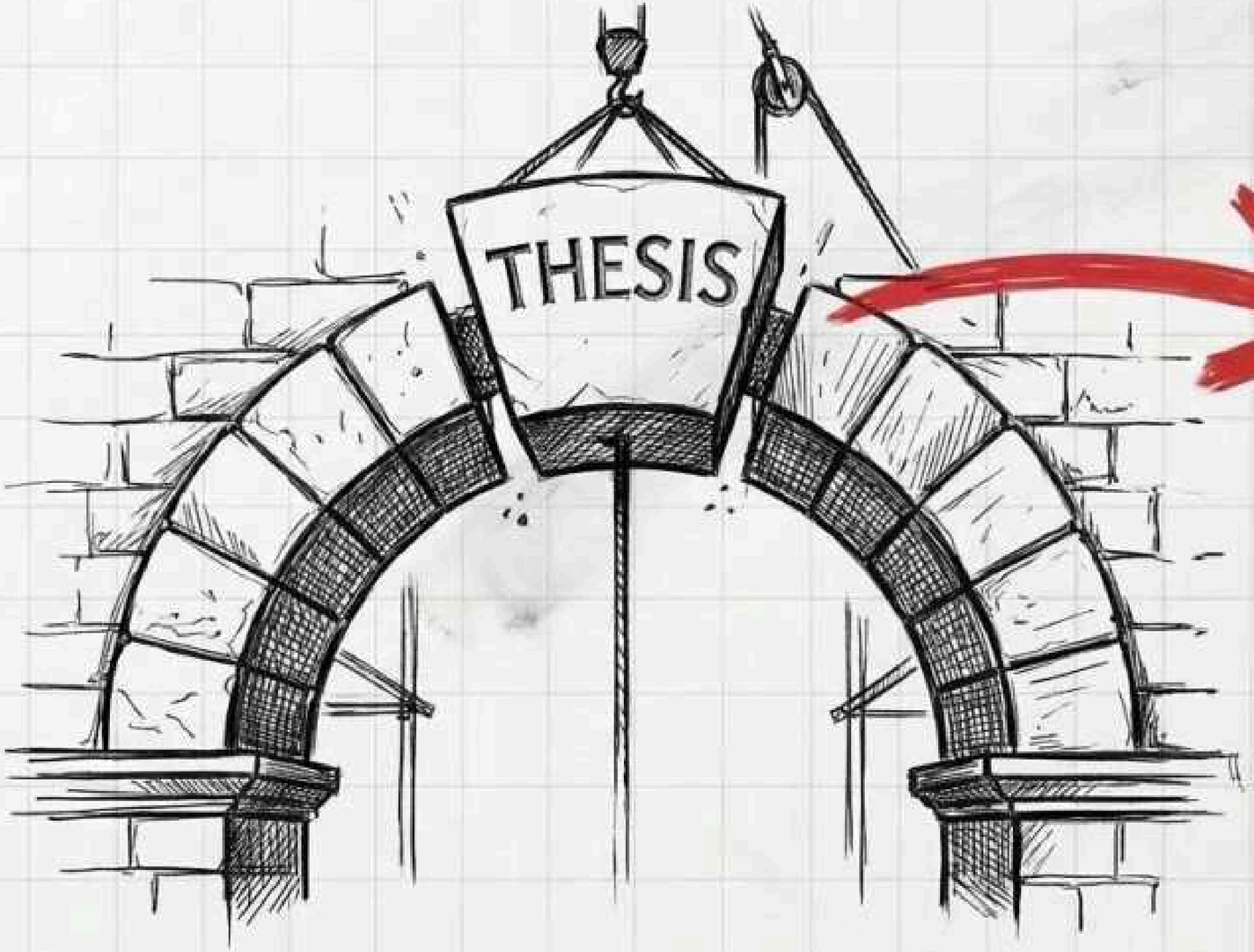
The Prompt

Choose a recent email or assignment.
Who was the reader?
What did you want them to understand or do?

- ☐ Did it match audience?
- ☐ Did it match purpose?
- ☐ What would you change?

¶ 2.18

The thesis serves as the structural keystone of an argument.



Next: Lecture 3 — **The heart of an argument and how to build a case around it.**