

## Quiz for Chapter 2, Suggested Answers

1. How can a technical writer go about profiling readers? By using the Five-W and H questions:
  - a. Who are the readers?
  - b. What do they need?
  - c. Where will they be reading?
  - d. When will they be reading?
  - e. Why are they reading?
  - f. How are they reading?

2. What do we mean when we say that readers are wholly responsible for reading your texts? (6 points)

We mean that we as writers have to make sure that our documents are as clear as possible. We won't be standing over our readers' shoulders explaining what we "meant to say," so we have to make sure that we get things right the first time.

3. Who are the four audiences for whom we write? List them and describe them.
  - a. Primary Readers: These are the action-takers, the people who will be reading the document and then doing something as a result.
  - b. Secondary Readers: These are the people who advise the primary readers. If the primary readers have to make a decision, then they might consult the secondary readers.
  - c. Tertiary Readers: These are the evaluators. They will be evaluating your proposal and your company and even to a certain indirect extent, you. It may be that these readers will never read your document, but you still want to keep them in mind as you write.
  - d. Gatekeepers: These are the supervisors at your company who will decide whether your document goes out at all. Though a document isn't really written directly for them, you still need to keep them in mind so that it can meet their requirements.
  
4. What are the four contexts of use for readers? List and describe them.
  - a. Physical Context—the places and instances where the actual readers will read the document
  - b. Economic Context—the money issues that affect how the document will be interpreted and the action that can be taken.
  - c. Political Context—the micro and macro political trends that guide readers
  - d. Ethical Context—the personal, social, and environmental issues that affect the readers
  
5. Consider the instructions for putting together a toy train. What are the four contexts of use for this particular document?
  - a. Physical Context—Readers will probably read the document while they're putting the train together, so it has to be easy to use. For example, it should be able to be left open so that the readers' hands are free. The type and the diagrams should be big enough so that readers can read them without holding the instructions as close as they would hold a book.
  - b. Economic Context—Readers have already bought the toy, so they're going to want to be able to put the toy together easily. They might be more inclined to be frustrated if they've already spent their money; therefore, we've got to make sure that it's easy to use. We don't want anyone getting so frustrated that they bring the box back to the store.
  - c. Political Context—Politics, at least in the larger sense, don't really affect this situation. The main thing that we're trying to do is make sure the customer is satisfied.
  - d. Ethical Context—The ethical context really is ours as the writers. We've already taken someone's money; therefore, we have to do everything we can to make them satisfied.
  
6. Consider instructions for hazardous materials. What are the contexts there?
  - a. Physical Context—Readers will probably read the document in a couple of situations. Normally, they'll be required to familiarize themselves with its content

before they ever begin work in an environment that might pose some hazard. However, they may well find themselves reading the document during an emergency. Therefore, it has to be easy to use.

- b. Economic Context—Economics matters because improper handling of hazardous waste costs money, either in clean-up costs, lost productivity, or health care. The number-one priority is safety, but economics does matter in this case.
  - c. Political Context—Politics, at least in the larger sense, don't really affect this situation. The main thing that we're trying to do is make sure the worker is safe.
  - d. Ethical Context—The ethical challenge is mutual here: We writers have an ethical obligation to ensure safety just as readers do. Again, we have to make this document as user-friendly as possible. If readers are wholly responsible for reading, we better make sure our instructions are as clear as a bell.
7. What is the difference between a need and a value? How might they conflict? A need is something the readers of the document cannot do without. If they need to make a decision, they need the best information or instructions possible, and therefore I need to make sure my document is clear. Values will vary more widely; they might change from person to person. If I need to give a great deal of information, but my readers value speed, then I have to craft my document in order to get around this conflict.
8. What are the basic search engine signs I can use in order to profile my readers?  
The + sign in front of a word tells the search engine to find only pages that have that word in them.  
The – sign in front of words will eliminate pages with information that I don't want.

? \* % Wildcard symbols can help with a phrase in which you don't know all the words.