

Megan Garber, “Smart editorial, smart readers, and smart ad solutions”

## Megan Garber, “Smart editorial, smart readers, and smart ad solutions”: Slate Makes a Case for Long-form on the Web

According to [The Nieman Journalism Lab](#), “Megan Garber is an assistant editor at the Lab. She was formerly a staff writer at the [Columbia Journalism Review](#), where she reported on the future of news for CJR.org's [News Frontier](#) section. A finalist for a Mirror Award for media coverage, Garber also serves as an adjunct professor at Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism. She plays a quartz game of Scrabble.” The Nieman Journalism Lab tries to determine or predict the future of journalism in an Internet age. The [Nieman Foundation for Journalism](#) at Harvard University provides midcareer fellowships for journalists all over the world. The Lab examines the scope, purpose, viability, and practice of journalism as it is currently practiced.

[Click here to read Megan Garber's "Smart Editorial, Smart Readers, and Smart Ad Solutions."](#)

### Vocabulary

Read Megan Garber’s ["Smart Editorial, Smart Readers, and Smart Ad Solutions."](#) There will be words and concepts that you may not understand after a first reading. That’s okay. After a quick, but thorough, read, define these terms. You may use Wikipedia or an online dictionary. In fact, some of the terms, like “tl;dr” are defined within the body of the essay. Please write the terms along with their definitions on a sheet of paper. If the term is fairly complex, like “chick-lit authorship,” you may have to write a multi-sentence definition. Remember that the goal is to understand the terms so that you can understand the essay and the concepts. The act of writing by hand helps you **remember the definitions.**

- blog
- breezy
- Twitter
- tl;dr
- conventional wisdom
- complex narrative
- wrought
- perspective
- value proposition
- monetize
- ironic
- editorial staff
- compel
- endure
- signage
- chick-lit authorship
- reclamation
- quintessential
- pageview
- Huffington (as in huffingtonpost.com)
- traffic-baiting
- brand-building
- Michael Kinsley
- ratify
- aggregation-heavy sites
- unrivaled
- leverage
- metrics
- holistic
- bolster
- traction
- mandate
- malign
- vagaries
- extravagant

## Thinking Critically

Answer each questions as completely as you can, using well-formed sentences. Although there is no "correct" answer, please be sure to support your answer with evidence from the text.

1. What does Garber mean by “long-form journalism”? View the snippet on the [conventional wisdom](#) about long-form journalism. What is the main point of the speaker, Josh Tyrangiel, Managing Editor of TIME.com?
2. According to Josh Tyrangiel, “Our [time.com] goal is to make people smarter by saving them time.” He also claims that 95% of the stories of time.com are written specifically for the web. Examine a story from [Time.com](#). How long does it take you to read and understand the story? Does the story, to use Tyrangiel’s words, make you “smarter” in a short amount of time? Why? What do you learn from the story?
3. Examine any article from [slate.com](#). How is this article different, in terms of length, vocabulary, depth, writing style, or any other factor you find relevant, from the time.com story?
4. Tone, in writing, can be described using adjectives, such as formal, informal, stiff, chatty, colloquial, crude, elegant, objective, reserved, business-like, and conciliatory. The list is almost endless. What tone does Garber use in her essay? What textual evidence (words, phrases, and sentences Garber actually uses) support your answer? Does Garber’s tone enhance or detract from the effective delivery of her essay’s main point?
5. Who is the intended audience of Garber’s essay? What evidence can you offer to support your answer?

## Writing Assignment

Analyze your own behavior concerning the material you read online. For example, do you read Yahoo! news? Do you use Twitter? Do you use Facebook or MySpace? Do you search for and find information through a mobile phone, like a Google Android or an Apple iPhone? Do you take college or high school classes online? In other words assess what you read, listen to, and look at online. **Write a 750-word essay where you examine whether your own online practices** reflect Josh Tyrangiel’s perspective (shorter is better than longer) or whether they reflect Slate’s perspective as communicated by Garber in her essay (long journalistic pieces are relevant and commercially viable).