

Article describing recent research in a field of your choice  
Written for *Scientific American*

Imagine that the editors of *Scientific American* have contacted you and asked you to bring their readers up to date on research on a major public health topic. The magazine published an article on this topic some time ago, but a lot has happened in the intervening years. The editors are hoping for an article that is both engaging and enlightening.

They know that you have expressed interest in this topic and that you may have personal reasons for pursuing it, so they are willing to give you some latitude in defining the focus for your article. As long as you are able to accomplish your basic mission—to provide an update on recent research—they are open to different approaches.

The final version of your *Scientific American* Update should be between 2100 and 2400 words long. It should include a separate bibliography, which will be available online for *Scientific American* readers. As is typical of *Scientific American* articles, the final version of your Update will not include any form of citation.

This is your chance to educate readers on a vital topic. Help them understand its significance. Make it lively and informative. Highlight the roles of key researchers. Explain technical terms. Double-check your data; the editors do not want any embarrassing mail from readers.

Final Version, due Session 20

The **final version** of your *Scientific American* update should look very much like the *Scientific American* article “Quiet! Sleeping Brain at Work.” It should include a list of sources at the end (described as “Further Reading”). It should identify your sources, the researchers, and other key individuals in the body of your article (see, for example, how Stickgold and Ellenbogen identify the researchers Avi Karni and Dov Sagi on page 24 of “Quiet...”). It can include images, but the text takes priority.

MIT OpenCourseWare  
<https://ocw.mit.edu>

21W.034 Science Writing and New Media: Perspectives on Medicine and Public Health  
Fall 2016

For information about citing these materials or our Terms of Use, visit: <https://ocw.mit.edu/terms>.