

This is supplementary material for the webtext “Wikipedia as Editorial Microcosm” by Joshua DiCaglio et al., published in *Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy*, 29(1), available at <http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/29.1/topoi/dicaglio-et-al/index.html>.

## Getting Started

Now that you have articles selected, don’t wait to get started. Here are the three things that you need to do ASAP:

### 1) Assess your article more carefully

While you may have examined your articles initially, take some more time to do so now. In particular, it will be useful to:

- **Read through them both carefully again**
- **Find articles to compare them to.** Having one or two “good articles” or “featured articles” of a similar topic/form can be really useful for referring to in terms of what yours might look like.
- **Look at the wikiprojects of relevance** - You can find these tagged at the top of the talk pages in the yellow box. Not all wikiprojects are active, but even older ones can give you a sense of particular issues and standards, as well as provide a list or links to good articles in that topic.
- **Look at guidelines specific to your article** - Many kinds of articles have their own style guidelines. If you want to check if your topic has specific guidelines, you can either check on the Wikiproject or you might also check out the list of subpages to the [Wikipedia Manual of Style](#)

Remember, you know you are getting better at comprehensive editing when you start to notice things that you didn’t notice before. Don’t expect this to be a process you finish at this step, but try your best to look more carefully at what is going on here. We’ll spend time highlighting particular issues for the next few weeks,

### 2) Making Contact (refer to [Communication](#) document for more assistance)

Within your first week, you want to leave some sort of evidence that you’re working on this page. Doing so sooner rather than later is important because:

- 1) If anyone is watching the page, it will show up on their radar
- 2) It signals to anyone else who is planning on working on it (including other students in other classes) that you’re working on it.
- 3) You can solicit assistance, ask particular questions, or respond to previous talk page questions in a way that begins or continues previous conversations.
- 4) Having your plans and intentions clear can help other editors who are checking your edits see that you’re being communicative ahead of time.

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In this initial post, remember: you can own your status as a student but don't expect this to give you any special privileges. Try to make your posts clear, concrete, and directly engaged with the issues of the page. Don't just say "there is a lot to fix here!" -- If you can point to the issues you're looking at, the more concrete the better.

### 3) Deciding on your Approach

There are a lot of ways to approach the actual editing work here. Your approach will depend partially on your personal preference and partially on the needs of your articles. Not every article, for instance, will make sense to edit in a sandbox. Take a moment to consider your options.

- **Will you use a sandbox?** - Doing so lets you do extensive rewriting and reorganizing directly within the Wikimarkup interface but in a way that lets you do intermediate edits without messing up the page. Remember, that Wikipedia prefers editing to be done on Wikipedia as much as possible. However, if you do edit outside of wikipedia (by copy/pasting into Word or the like) make sure you copy/paste the entire wikimarkup, otherwise you'll lose a lot of markup in transition.
- **Will you focus on particular issues first?** - If so, which?
- **When and how will you solicit feedback or input from the community?** -- Are there particular questions or issues that you think the community might want to respond to? For instance, there might be a conversation already going in the talk page about an important issue. Or there might be an editor who previously added an inappropriate section and is still active -- they probably will want to be roped in as you work on that section. In these cases, you should plan on getting those parts done first so that you leave time for response.
- **Note: Do both articles on a similar timeline.** Don't focus on one article first and then the next, since you can't predict or see in advance all the issues you might find as you begin working and/or who might want to be involved from the community.

We'll be talking about major issues as we go, so don't expect to see everything that you need to do right now.