TEXT ANALYSIS CHECKLIST (Michele Catanzaro - GPC Science communication workshop)

Newsworthiness

Is it new? (Why are you writing it now?)
  · Is it a novel fact?
Is it important? (For my readership, not for me!)
  · Target: Is my reader a layperson or an expert?
  · Space: Is it close to my reader?
  · Time: Is the subject currently in the public sphere?
So what?
  · Impact or applications: in health, environment, technology, industry, economy, governance, culture, ethics…
  · Past: How does it change things? What problem does it solve or pose?
  · Future: What future events can be expected?
  · Actions: What actions should be done?

How solid is it?
  · What is the reputation of the authors? Are they expert in the field?
  · At what stage is it? (preprint, peer-reviewed, etc.)
  · How strong is the evidence? Is the statistics good? Could it be reproduced?
  · Is it correlation or causation?
  · What does it explain? What not?

Effective writing

Headline, subheads, and lead
  · Does it focus on what matters more?
  · Does it pick the main topic?
  · Is the reading easy?

Structure of the text
  · Does it apply the inverted pyramid structure?
  · Does it have a clear structure/sequence/narrative? (chronologic, list, etc.)
  · Does it treat each issue separately or mix things? (eg. one per paragraph)
· Does it keep the attention high?

**Sentences and words**

· Is it accurate and factual? Does it provide fact & figures?
· Does it provide comparisons to explain numbers?
· Does it provide metaphors/anecdotes/examples to explain complex concepts?
· Does it use short sentences and avoid subordinate clauses?
· Does it use present tense and avoid passive?
· Does it use unnecessary adjectives?
· Does it use first person? (I, we)
· Does it use impersonal expressions? (“it is thought”, “has been announced”, “people say”)
· Does it avoid technical jargon? Does it explain it?
· Does it avoid rhetoric, euphemisms or clichés?

**Quotes**

· Are they used to convey interpretation/opinion?
· Are there too many of them?
· Are they used to clarify or just to please the authors?