

PINKER, S. THE SENSE OF STYLE: SCIENTIFIC COMMUNICATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

(Run time – 77:29)

<http://video.mit.edu/watch/communicating-science-and-technology-in-the-21st-century-stein-pinker-12644/>

Name:

Student #:

Date Submitted:

Instructions: The purpose of this worksheet is to focus your attention on key elements of the video. Answer each of the following questions in any format that conveys the information (e.g. full sentences; list; diagram). You will NOT be graded on writing style. You may type or neatly hand-write your answers. Submit your completed worksheet via Blackboard by the specified due date. See syllabus for instructions on uploading files.

1. According to Pinker, what is the “...signature element of a university education”? Write a few sentences stating whether you agree or disagree, and why.
2. What distinguishes between “classic prose” and “non-classic prose”?
3. According to Pinker, prose itself should not be the object of attention, but be a window onto something in the world. Another way of looking at this is to ask, “what is good writing supposed to accomplish (what is its value)?” Answer this question in a sentence or two.
4. What is “metadiscourse”, and why should it be minimized?
5. Write a short (4-5 sentence) paragraph (on any topic) that includes examples of metadiscourse, and then RE-write the paragraph to convey the same information while minimizing metadiscourse.
6. According to Pinker, what is the “curse of knowledge” as it pertains to writing? State at least **two strategies** you can use to avoid this “curse” and strengthen your writing.