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WRIT159A
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Assignment 2: APT-analyze scientific content

Article: [How Ecstasy and Psilocybin are Shaking Up Psychiatry](#)

Author: Paul Tullis

Journal/Magazine: Nature

Publication date: 1/28/2021

Page count: 4

APT-analysis-

Audience: The author seems to be targeting lay people who are interested in science, but the general public can easily digest this article. The diction and syntax of the article is flowery. There are some scientific terms used in the piece, but it is then described in ways to allow the audience to understand, or a more common name is provided. An example of the language used is

“When Rutter returned the next day, one of the researchers handed him two pills containing a synthetic form of psilocybin, the psychoactive ingredient found in magic mushrooms. Rutter lay down on the bed and put on headphones and an eye mask. Soon images of Sanskrit text appeared to him. Later, he saw golden bejewelled structures. Then his mind went to work on his grief.”

This demonstrates the easy to digest wording the author uses. He provides context for lesser known terminology, and also utilizes flowery language to keep the audience engaged.

Purpose: The purpose of this article is to educate and bring awareness to these stigmatized products. MDMA and psilocybin are drugs that the general public associate with negative connotations. These drugs, however, show promising results to treat mental illness in controlled doses and environments. The research on using psychoactive drugs to treat mental illness is still very new, and this article informs readers on the benefits it has and where the current state of research is at.

Tone: The author uses an optimistic yet realistic tone that comes off sounding light-hearted in this article. He writes the enthusiasm and excitement that the field of psychiatry has in regards to the potential benefits psychoactive drugs can have for mental illness treatments, but then balances it with a serious and critical tone when discussing clinical risks and hurdles that are being faced with the current research. The article starts off flowery and playful when he says “On a sunny day in London in 2015, ...”. The article follows the anecdote of a patient who had depression and was given psychoactive drugs to treat it. The author uses the patient’s story as a framework for his article, and throws in the hopes and realisms that researchers are currently facing. By using an anecdote to structure his article, it gives off a balance tone between excitement and caution.