

It's traditional in languages like English to organise written work into separate units containing different ideas. These units are followed by a space, designed to give the reader a break and take in the point being made. We call them paragraphs, and almost everyone – except for [Morrissey](#) – instinctively knows how to use them.

However, things have changed.

In a book, when you look at a page, you might see 500 words or more. The page will appear superficially attractive if there are as few as three or four paragraph breaks: that's over 100 words per paragraph.

On a web page, you might only see 200 words or fewer. But there's still a need to have a decent number of paragraph breaks. Suddenly, the required paragraph length may be under 50 words – less than half of what we might have used on paper.

This article has 150–200 words, and five paragraphs. I hope it looks reasonably attractive. But it might look odd if printed out on A4 paper. The lesson to be learned is to consider your medium when writing your articles or correspondence.