

Design

Design describes the visual features of a composition, including the use of headings, format, color, and illustration. Design is aesthetic but also functional. As we discuss throughout the book, the design features you and other writers choose can be important in achieving purposes and reaching audiences. Take a look at how Gilad uses images in his blog. Maps show readers exactly where this traveler is, the timeline indicates the duration of his trip, and the photos of Gilad help readers connect with him personally. Gilad's photos documenting his travels let readers see what he saw. Because one of his purposes is to allow others to share in his travels vicariously, the photos are particularly important.

Sources

Sources are the people, conversations, documents, books, journal articles, movies, and other works that we refer to for facts, perspectives, and models as we compose. For example, sources Gilad drew on for his travel blog (see below) include Google Maps, the people he meets, and tourist information, such as brochures from historical sites. In this book, we consider sources because sources shape what writers create.

When you compose in certain genres, such as academic and research essays, you need to document the sources you refer to. In other cases, such as novels, comics, and music lyrics, while you've read and used sources, you're not required to document them formally. Whether or not sources need to be documented depends on the rhetorical situation. Sources referred to in a research essay aimed at academic readers should be documented because readers will want to know where ideas and information came from; the purposes of song lyrics are different, though. Listeners of a song aren't listening for information, so the sources of information are less important. Throughout the book we look at the conventions of specific genres in this regard, and in [Chapter 13](#), we provide specific guidelines for using documentation styles.

The screenshot shows a travel blog post titled "Prologue - The beginning" by Gilad Hizkiyahu. The post is dated Monday, October 11, 2010, and starts with the text: "This really isn't an interesting part of my journey... This part is meant for those of you who wish to know me a little bit better, for some friends who hasn't been in close touch with me lately and for others who just happen to have too much free time and nothing better to do at the moment." On the right side of the post is a map showing a route from Herzlia, Israel, to various countries including Cyprus, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt. The map also shows major cities like Amman, Damascus, and Cairo. A red line on the map indicates the path of the trip. To the right of the map is a sidebar titled "About the Author" featuring a photo of Gilad and links to "Send a message", "Add as favorite", "Get email updates", "Turn blog into a book", "Share", and "RSS". Below the map is another sidebar titled "About this Blog" with the text "Gilad is doing South America".

Credit: Gilad Hizkiyahu.

► TRAVEL BLOG

Gilad Hizkiyahu, Excerpt from *Gilad Is Doing South America*. The design that Gilad chose for his blog showcases his text and visuals and allows him to link out to various sources.

To compose in different genres, you first should be able to identify them, see how other writers use them to achieve purposes and reach audiences, and learn some of the basic features so you can experiment.