

succinct



succinct

Word of the Day - for Toastmasters everywhere
Sunday 13th January 2019



succinct

(adjective) suk-SINKT

Brief and clear, concise, of brief duration.

The word is interesting because it is derived from the Latin for girded up and is occasionally still found in its meaning of *close-fitting* or *tight*.

Occasionally, there is a purple-passage tendency that is grating to the puritanical British reader - the Kaiser is introduced as "*a middle-aged man with restless, bright blue eyes and curly, iron-grey hair*", and so on. Neither is he **succinct**, and his whole enormous study is built like a baroque battleship, with gun-turrets sticking out all over the place.

Ben Pimlott, *Guardian*, 24 January 2004, *Guardian* reviewing Robert K. Massie's *Castles of Steel: Britain, Germany and the Winning of the Great War at Sea*.

What was different about *The Observer* is that Orwell's theory of journalistic writing - **succinct**, provocative, transparent - was designated the house style to which all the newspaper's writers were expected to aspire during its 'golden age' of the Fifties.

Andrew Anthony, *The Observer*, 11 May 2003, *Observer* writing on the centenary of George Orwell's birth.

I beg the reader to remember that the idea of 'covering' is of most variable extent: the glory may envelope one in a voluminous robe—a princely mantle that may require a long suite of train-bearers, or may pinch and vice one's arms into that **succinct** garment (now superannuated) which some eighty years ago drew its name from the distinguished Whig family in England of Spencer. Anticipating, therefore, that I shall—nay, insisting, and mutinously, if needful, that I will—be covered with glory by the approaching result, I do not contemplate anything beyond that truncated tunic, once known as a 'spencer,' and which is understood to cover only the shoulders and the chest.

Thomas de Quincey, in *The Uncollected Writings of Thomas De Quincey* (*Shakespeare's Text—Suetonius Unravelled*).