



# *Secretary's Scribbles*

## **BLOG SURVEY**

*BY SARA RACITI*

# *Introduction:*

For over two years, I have written content for my short story blog called Secretary's Scribbles that revolves around the characters of my trilogy, The Terra Testimonies. The blog's purpose is to keep the characters alive even after someone has finished reading the books. Throughout that time, I have had a decent number of viewers and followers but not as many as I would like. Sadly, not many of my friends even knew I had a blog despite my weekly shares and posts. I was unsure as to whether it was the content I posted, the ways I shared it, or if they simply didn't care. So, with this survey, I hoped to raise awareness for my blog and discover what people really want to read.

For this survey, my target audience was writers, readers, and other lovers of literature. Their ages varied but their location was mainly the United States. In the beginning of the survey, I asked them questions about what they like to read in their spare time, how long of a blog post they would read, and other general blog related questions. Towards the end, I asked questions that were more specific to my blog: where did you find it, why do you read it, and so on.

After reviewing the data from 65 respondents, I was able to understand more about my blog now that I saw it through my viewers' eyes. Taking all the answers into consideration, I hope to build up my blog audience which will lead to more views, more followers, and hopefully more people to read the novels from my trilogy.



# Summary of Research:

Weblogs, now more commonly known as Blogs, have been around since 1997, but they did not become popular until the early 2000s (Chapman, 2011). According to Chapman, it was reported that, in 2005, 32 million Americans were reading blogs (para 12, 2011). From what I can see, that number has grown exceptionally since then. No matter where you go, you are bound to come across a blog of some kind. Whether it be on Tumblr, Wordpress, or Wix, blogs are now common and popular. Unfortunately, this means that bloggers now have a lot of competition if they want to make their weblogs known.

With all this rivalry, bloggers need to understand more about their audiences. There are many reasons why individuals read blogs. It could be they are looking for information, need to identify with someone, or they simply like how your blog looks (Kissane, 2015). Individuals also read blogs for entertainment. There are countless fanfiction and short story blogs on the internet, most can be found on Wattpad, Scribd, and Medium (Turndog, 2014). Whatever the reason, bloggers must make sure that they post content that's relative, engaging, and keeps them coming back for more.

In conclusion, blogging has been a popular way of sharing stories since the early 2000s. Whether it be personal experiences or a fiction tale, people enjoy reading weblogs. Every day, new content is being created and put on the internet. According to Worldometers' blog post counter, there have been already over 2 million blog posts on July 17, 2017 before 11:00 am! With these numbers, if bloggers want to win over their audience, they need to truly understand what people want to read and how to deliver it to them.



# Survey Questions and Results:

## 1. What is(are) your favorite literary genre(s) to read during your spare time?

For this question, I wanted to know what kind of literature my audience preferred to read. That way, my blog post would be more appealing to them rather than push them away. Most people (22%) chose “Mystery” as their favorite. Coming in second place was “Action/Adventure” with 19%. 17% chose “Other” and entered in some genres I missed (Fantasy, Classics, Religious, etc.). “Science Fiction” was 16%, “Romance” was 14%, “Comedy” was 11%, and finally, “Horror” was a low 2%.

It appears that my audience really prefers a good Mystery. They’d also enjoy an action-packed story or a futuristic Sci Fi. These are great results. These three top genres are my favorite and what my writing mostly reflects. However, even though all my work contains a mystery within them, that was never the predominate genre. Now, I know that people may become more engrossed in my story if it’s a daring mystery that needs to be solved.

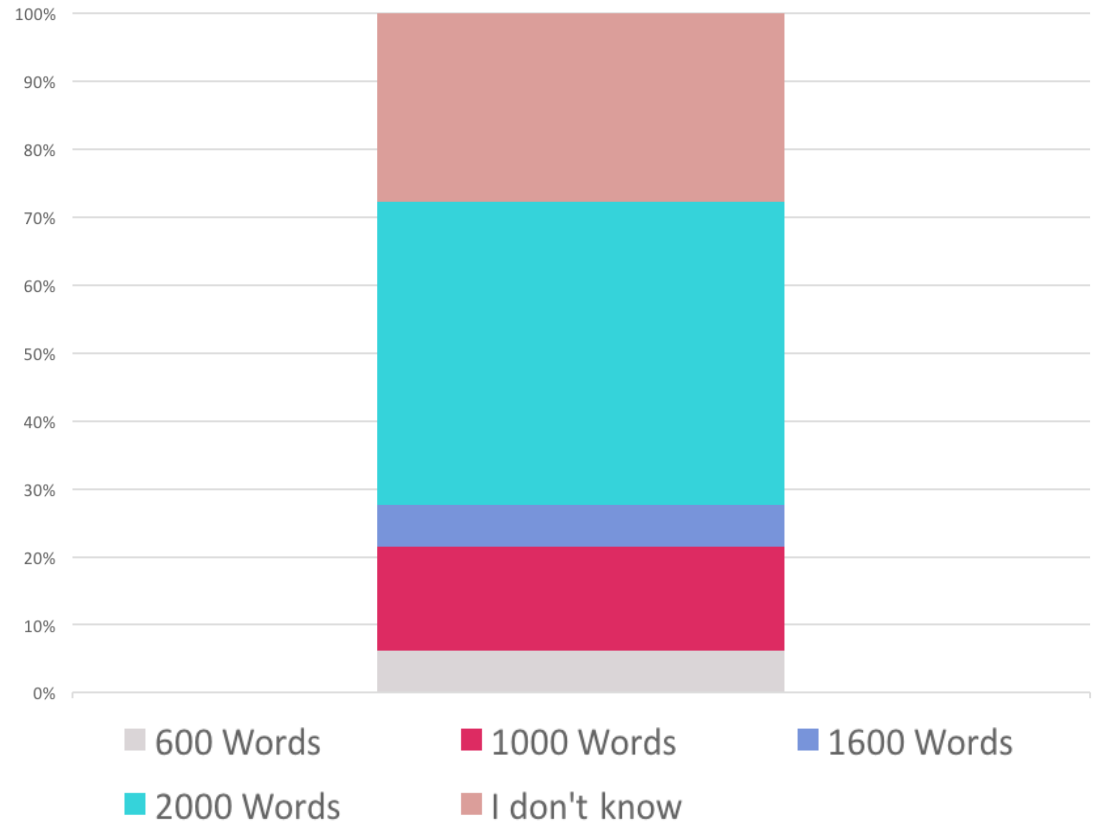


■ Action/Adventure ■ Romance ■ Sci Fi ■ Mystery ■ Horror ■ Comedy ■ Other

## 2. What is the maximum amount of words you would read in a single short story?

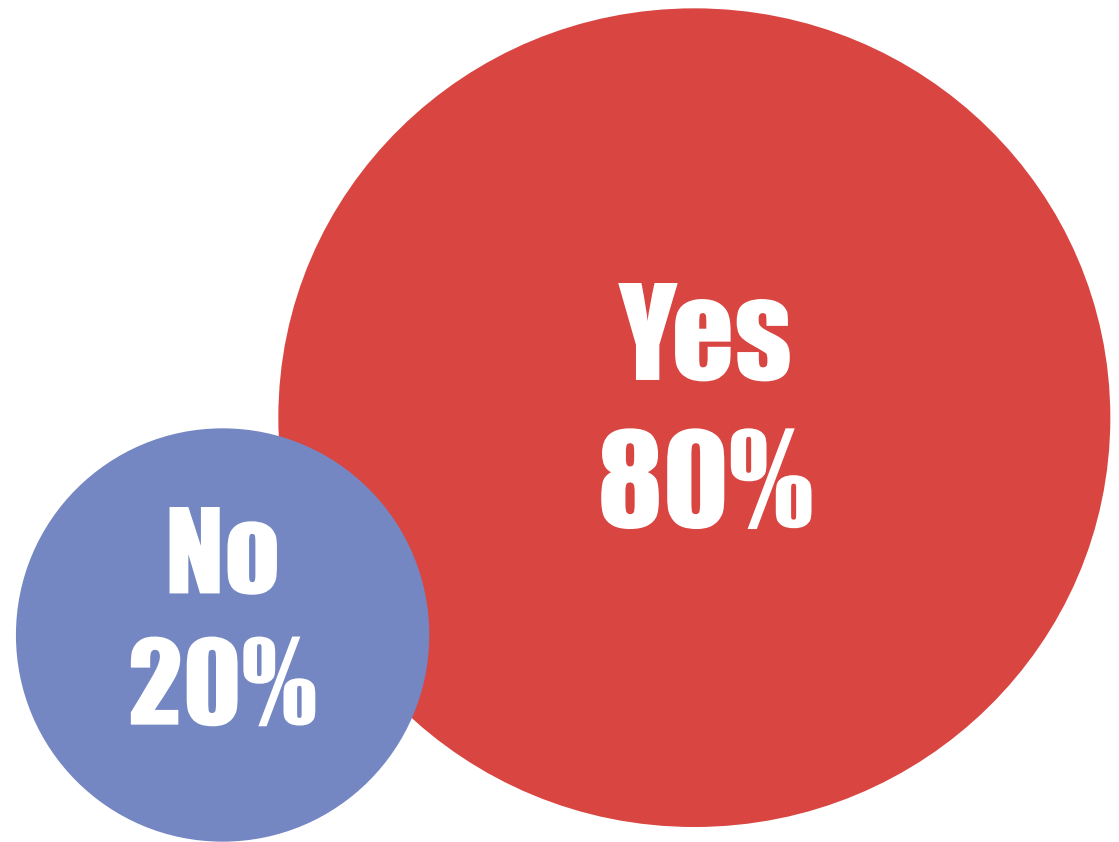
Reviewing the answers, I was actually quite surprised at the results. Out of 65 people, 29 (44.62%) said they would willingly read 2000 words (10 min worth) in one short story. 18 (27.69%) said that they weren't sure. 10 (15.38%) said that 1000 words (5 min) was their max. Both 600 words (3 min) and 1600 words (8 min) got 4 (6.15%) responses.

The reason this surprised me was because I always figured that, when people were on the internet, they wanted to jump from one thing to the next as quickly as possible (which is probably why 1000 words got “third place” over 1600 words). The fact that most respondents said that they would be willing to read a max 2000 words in one short story shows me that they enjoy reading and probably would like my slightly longer posts. From what I see, the reason why “I don't know” received the second most votes was because people aren't sure how much they would be willing to read until they know what they are reading. With these results, I can choose the correct word count that will engross readers rather than scare them away.



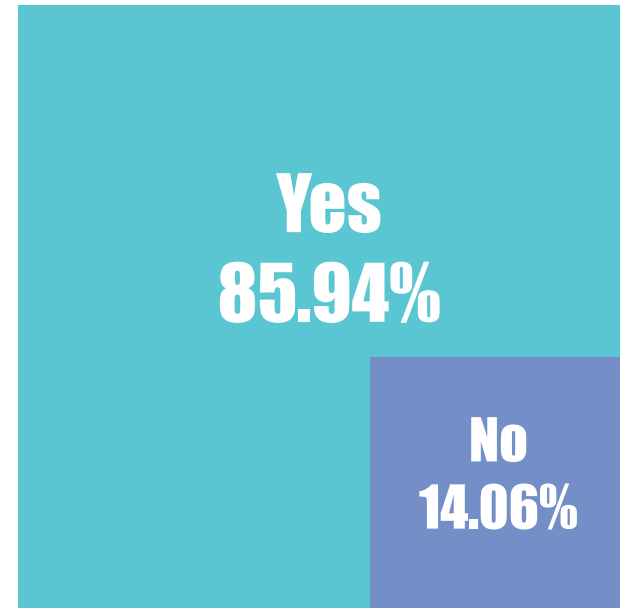
### 3. Do you enjoy reading short stories that stand alone, having no plot connection to other posts?

Standalone stories are a big part of my blog. Most of the time, they do not connect. Seeing that 80% of responses said they enjoy reading stories with no other plot connection was reassuring. A reason why most people probably said yes was because they may not keep up with the blog every single week. If the stories are standalone, they can jump around from post to post and not be confused. That relieves pressure off the reader so they would not need to remember every single week to read the posts (even though I would like them to). Others said no because they would prefer to have one, consistent story to go back to every week. Similar to how we watch the newest episode of our favorite TV show the moment it comes on the air. Either way, these results will assist in the plot development of my future posts.



#### 4. Would you be willing to, once in a while, read a collection of posts that make up one big story?

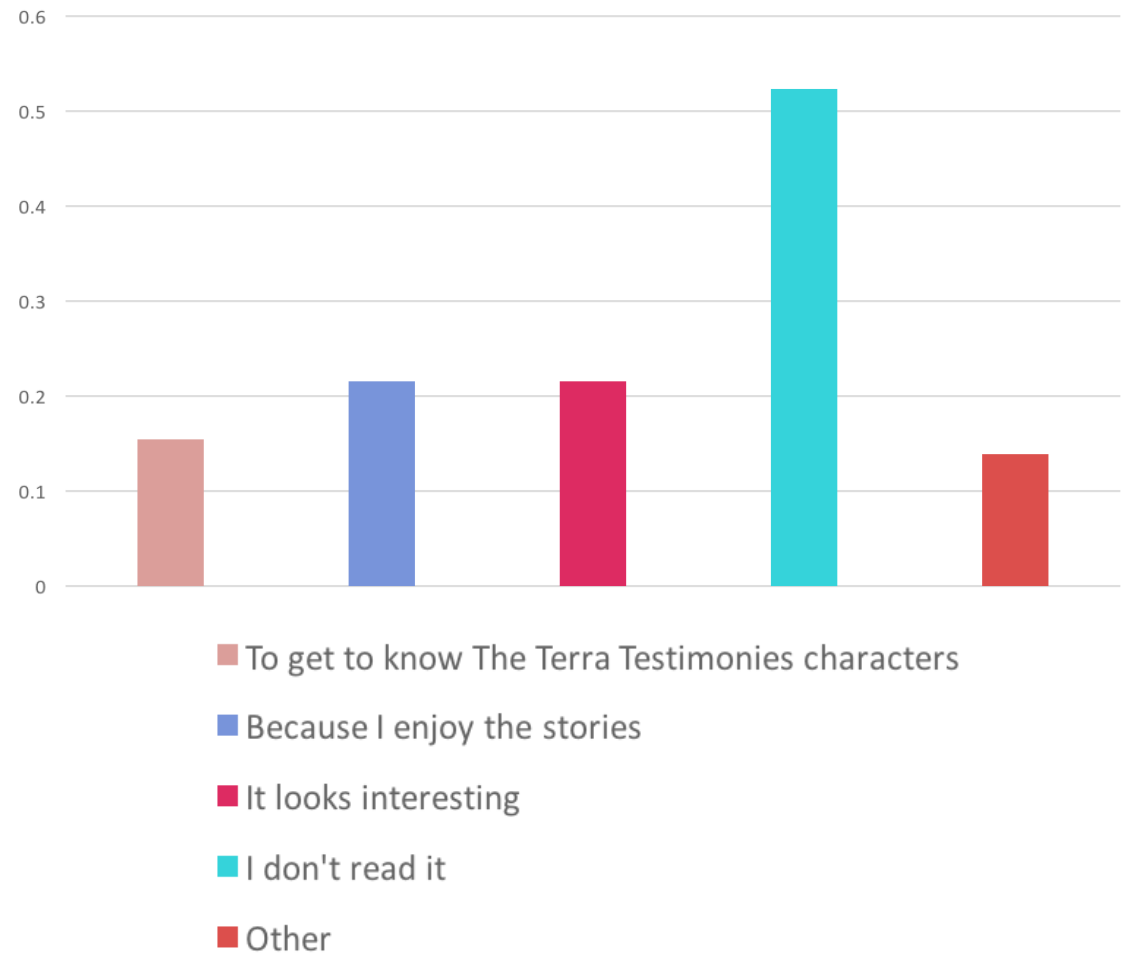
This question is completely opposite of the previous one but compliments it. 55 people (85.94%) said that they would be willing to occasionally read a collection of posts that connect. 9 (14.06%) said that they'd rather not. Taking the results of the previous question in mind as well, people would read the short stories whether they connect or not. It appears that they would enjoy them either way, which is perfect for me. If I, once in a while, have an inspiration for a big story, they'll read all the posts that connect to it.



## 5. Why do you read Secretary's Scribbles' blog posts?

Now, the questions regarding my blog begin. These results were a little...disappointing. 52.31% of people don't read my blog, 21.54% say it looks interesting, 21.54% say they read it for the stories, 15.38% say they want to know my characters better, and finally, 13.85% chose other (some responses included they may start reading, they never heard of it, they don't have time, etc.)

I guess this is the push where I need to advertise more. Over half of my respondents never read my blog despite my strategy of posting once a week and to every social media account I manage. Despite these results, this is okay! Thanks to this survey, I am hoping to have raised awareness for my blog. People now know my blog is out there and will hopefully come back to it in the future!

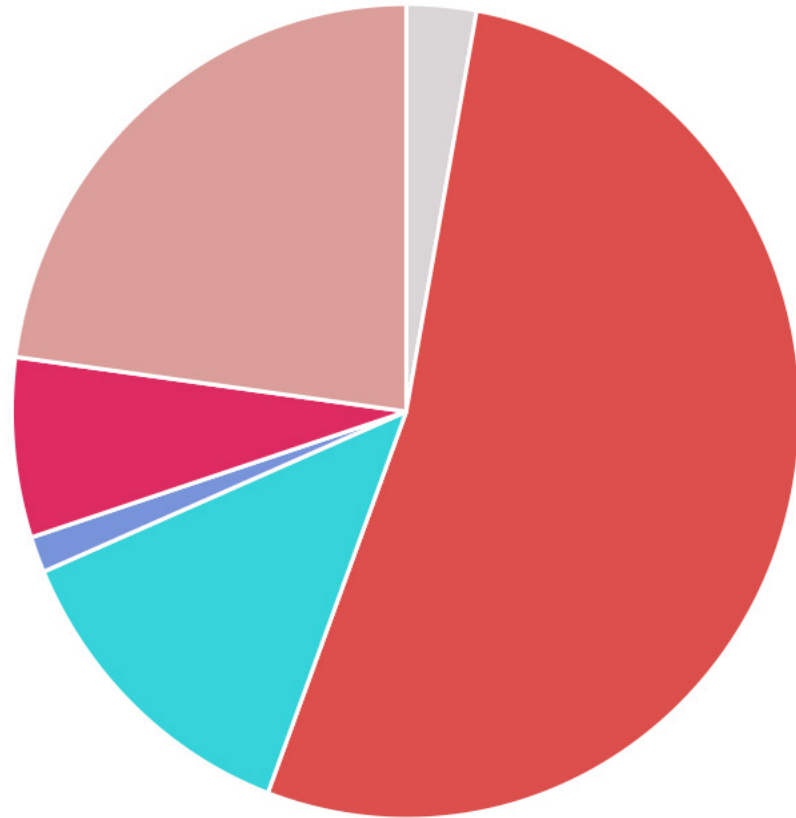




## 6. How did you first hear about Secretary's Scribbles?

From looking at these results, Facebook is where 56.92% of my respondents first heard about my blog. 24.62% chose “Other” (The author, friend, etc.). I was surprised that Instagram was 13.85% and Twitter was only 3.08%! I began sharing my posts on Twitter long before Instagram. Finally, 7.69% said they didn’t know and only 1.54% found it on Wordpress, the platform my blog is created on.

It seems like Facebook would be my best bet for sharing my blog posts. It is easier to find and share on this platform. However, I will most definitely keep up with Instagram. My Instagram blog sharing strategy has been a little sporadic, but it appears like its working anyway. Hopefully, I can find a way to raise awareness on my Twitter as well!

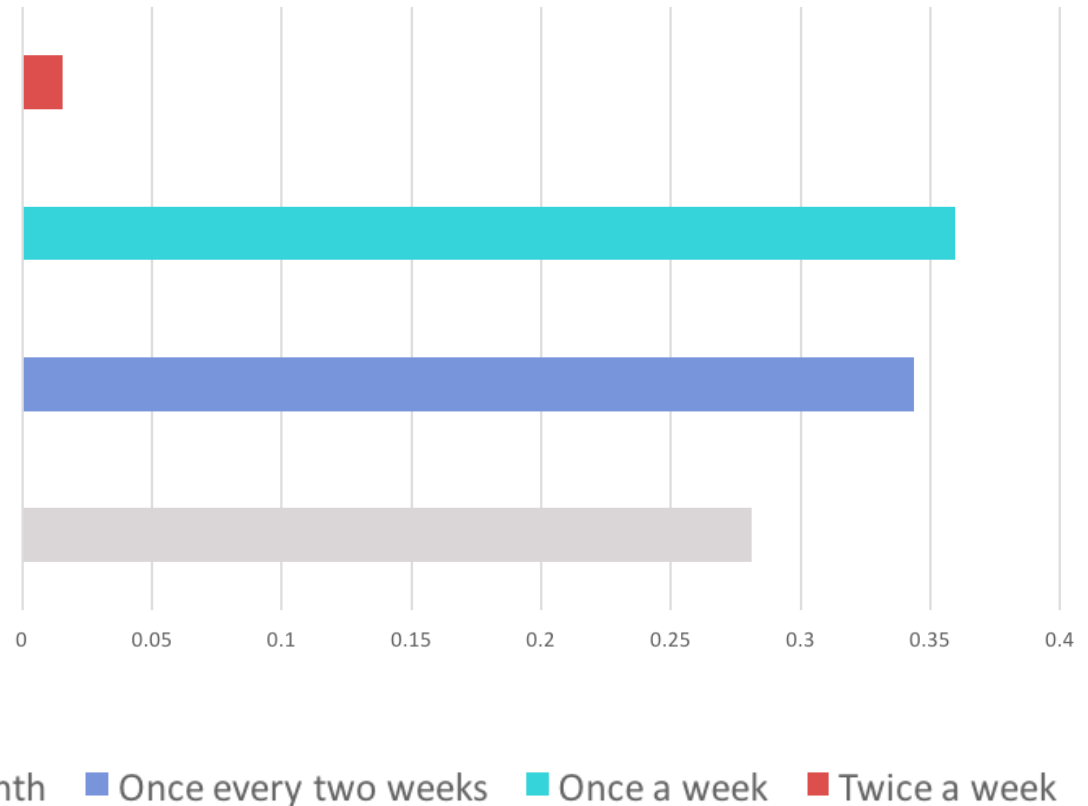


Twitter Facebook Instagram Wordpress I don't know Other

## 7. How often would you like to see new content?

For this question, posting content once a week and every two weeks got almost the same results. 22 people (34.38%) said once every two weeks and 23 (35.94%) said once a week. 18 (28.13%) said once a month and only 1 person (1.56%) said twice a week.

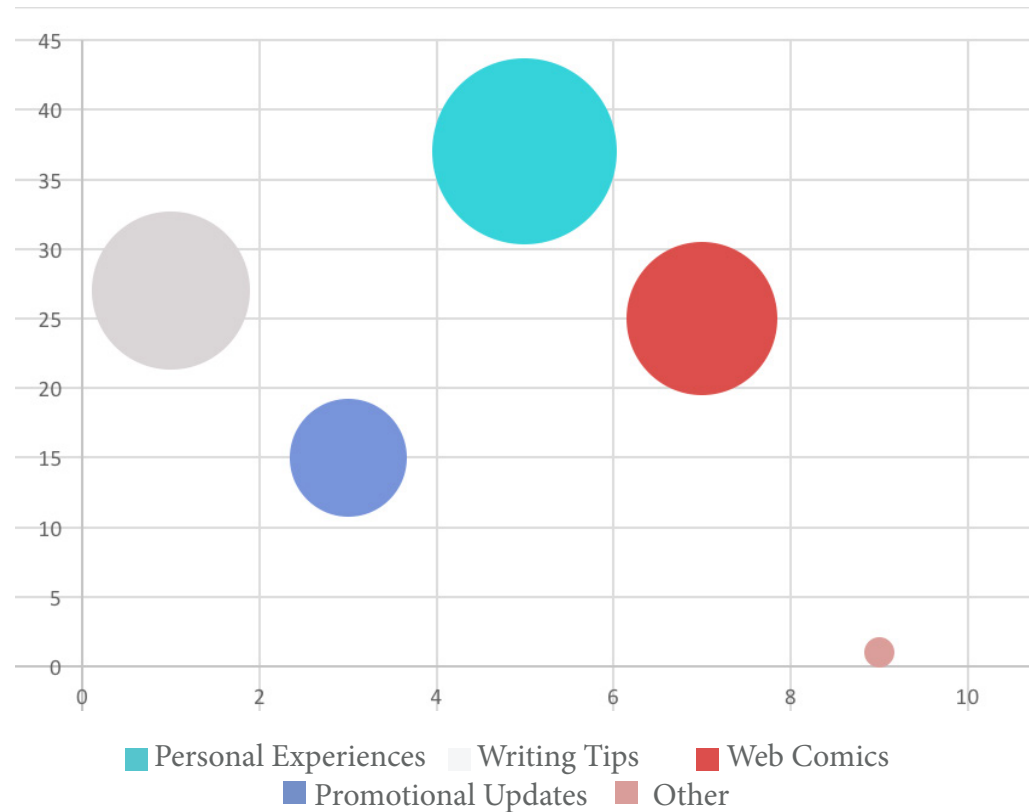
Since most of the responses were for once a week, it shows me that they enjoy having something they can look forward to on a regular basis. Also, since the “once every two weeks” option received almost the exact same amount as “once a week”, it shows that people can wait a little longer for new content but they still want to see it. This is helpful for me because it lets me know that, even if I don’t have time to create a post one week, most of my viewers won’t be disappointed. It gives me the impression that they would like to see content every week but if I miss a week they will be fine with it.



## 8. If Secretary's Scribbles was to add posts other than short stories, what would you like to see?

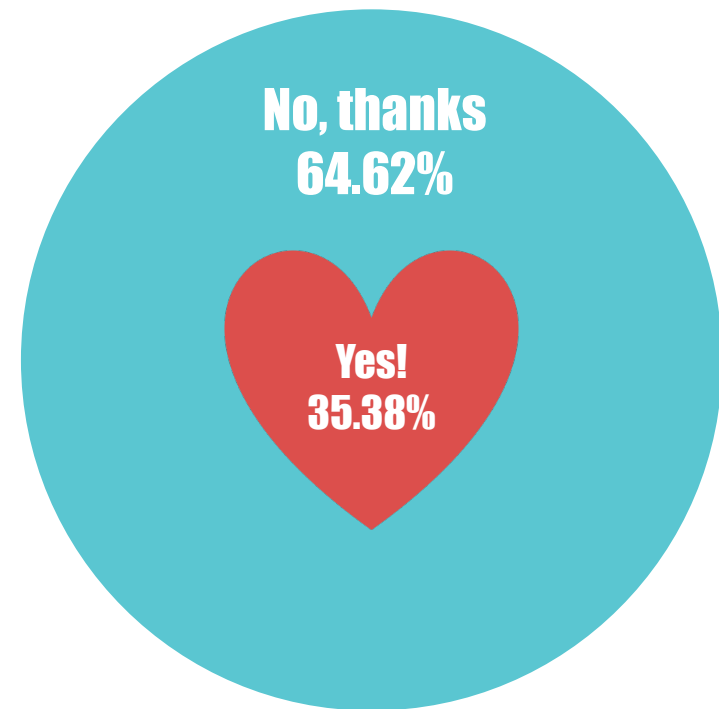
Finally, I asked if Secretary's Scribbles was to have other content, what would it be? 56.92% of responses were "Personal Experiences", 41.54% were "Writing Tips", 38.46% were "Web Comics", 38.46% were "Promotional updates for The Terra Testimonies", and 1.54% were for "Other" (the response was 'Any').

Honestly, I kind of expected this. When I looked at other blogs, not many of them contained short stories. Those were mostly found on Tumblr and other Fanfic sites. From these results, people want to hear more about me and my journey as a writer. With all the upcoming events that I have, these might be easier now. Also, people want to read more writing tips. I share all my writing tips and help on my YouTube page, but I often forget to share those videos to my blog as well. Since this is what people are looking for, I'll make sure to post my videos to my blog when they are released.



**9. I appreciate you taking the time to fill out this survey! To say thanks, you have the option of receiving a 20% off coupon for Sara Francis' novel, *The Isles*.**

Bonus question! I asked my survey takers if they would like to receive a coupon as an incentive. 64.62% of them said no. 35.38% of them said yes and gave me their emails. Possibly, the reason the majority said no was because they were not interested in purchasing my novel right now or they did not want to be signed up for my email list. Either way, it's okay. They took my survey and know I am out there. For now, that is enough.



# *Final Interpretation and Analysis:*

After reviewing and analyzing all the results, I was pleased with the outcome. The answers were honest and non-biased. They gave me what I asked for. These results molded my next blog strategy. I now know to write more mystery based short stories that are up to 2000 words. The posts should be standalones but can connect if I am inspired and my readers won't mind. I also know that they want to hear more about me and what I have done in the writing industry. When they are finished, I know to focus on posting them to Facebook and Instagram where I will get the most views.

It appeared that most people didn't know about my blog and what I do before this, so this survey did more than give me information. It helped me to raise awareness for my blog and my novels. Also, I have an email list of people who are interested in hearing more about me and what I do. Thanks to this survey, not only do I know what people would like to see on my blog, others also know Secretary's Scribbles is out there and will hopefully come back to it in the future.

# Reference List

Chapman, C. (2011, March 14). A Brief History of Blogging. Retrieved from: <https://www.webdesignerdepot.com/2011/03/a-brief-history-of-blogging/>

Kissane, D. (2015, October 23). The Nine Reasons People Read Blogs. Retrieved from: <https://www.webdesignerdepot.com/2011/03/a-brief-history-of-blogging/>

Turndog. (2014, October 28). 14 Free Platforms to Share Your Short Stories Online. Retrieved from: <https://www.webdesignerdepot.com/2011/03/a-brief-history-of-blogging/>

Worldometers. (n.d.). Blog posts written today:. Retrieved July 31, 2017, from <http://www.worldometers.info/blogs/>