

# AUDIENCE & PURPOSE

**AUDIENCE:** The person or group of people who will read what you have written

Before you begin writing, ask yourself a few important questions about your audience:

- Who is your audience? Your teacher? The entire class? A potential employer? Someone else?
- What does your audience already know about your topic? What do they need to know?
- What is your relationship with your audience? Peer to peer? Citizen to community? Student to teacher? Something else?
- What is your attitude towards your audience? Friendly? Hostile? Neutral? Something else?
- What kind of response do you want from your audience?

**PURPOSE:** The effect you hope to achieve with your writing

One purpose you likely have if you are writing for a school assignment is to get a good grade, so you should ask yourself:

- What are my teacher's expectations? Are there certain skills I am expected to demonstrate? Am I expected to show my knowledge about a certain topic? Anything else?
- What are my own goals with this assignment? To improve my organization skills? To communicate my ideas as clearly as possible? Another goal?

Beyond the goal of doing well on an assignment, writers usually have one of three main purposes. Identifying this purpose is as easy as P.I.E.:



**P**ersuade

If your purpose is to **PERSUADE** your audience, you will be trying to convince them to do something or to believe what you are saying. This is the purpose of persuasive essays, advertisements and editorials.



**I**nform

If your purpose is to **INFORM** your audience, you will focus on giving them factual information that will teach them more about the topic. This is the purpose of expository essays, textbooks and most news stories.



**E**ntertain

If your purpose is to **ENTERTAIN** your audience, you will want to appeal to their emotions. Whether you draw on positive or negative emotions, you will want to create an enjoyable and engaging experience for your readers. This is the purpose of narrative and descriptive essays, poems, short stories, novels, plays and most film scripts.

Your **AUDIENCE** and **PURPOSE** will affect the **style, mood, tone** and **content** of your writing, so consider them carefully before you begin writing.

# IDENTIFYING AUDIENCE & PURPOSE

Read the following paragraphs and identify their purpose (to persuade, to inform or to entertain). Then identify who the intended audience might be, and give reasons and examples that help explain how you came to these conclusions.

If you are planning to go on a hike, make sure you are prepared with the proper gear. Weather conditions can change throughout the day, and as you climb to higher elevations, the trail conditions can change as well. If you fall and get injured, it may not be possible for you to get off the trail on your own. It is also possible that you could get lost even on a trail that you have hiked before. In order to stay safe no matter what happens on a hike, make sure you have these ten essential items in your backpack before you hit the trail: a light source (e.g. head lamp), a signaling device (e.g. whistle), a fire starter, extra clothes, a pocket knife, shelter (e.g. thermal tarp), extra water and food, first aid kit, a GPS unit or compass, and a cell phone. It is also a good idea to let someone know where you are going and when you plan to be home, so they can initiate a search if you don't return safely.

## PASSAGE ONE:

Purpose: \_\_\_\_\_

Audience: \_\_\_\_\_

Reasons: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Hiking is a great fitness activity suitable for all ages. Fit, experienced hikers can enjoy steeper more challenging trails while beginners, young families and older people can choose flatter, scenic walking paths. There is something for everyone. Hiking is also great because it combines exercise with enjoyable experiences. Go out with family and friends and socialize as you walk. Explore a new place and have an adventure. Bring a picnic and enjoy your meal while at a beautiful viewpoint along the trail. Whether you go for a few hours or an entire day, you will always feel better after a good hike. For all these reasons and more, everyone should get out into nature this summer and go for a hike or two.

## PASSAGE TWO:

Purpose: \_\_\_\_\_

Audience: \_\_\_\_\_

Reasons: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

After an hour of climbing the steep, rocky trail, they were rewarded with an awe-inspiring view as they reached the peak of the mountain. A break in the trees allowed them to look out over the edge of the granite cliff at the sparkling, jade-coloured water of the lake far below. A red canoe glided across its surface.

“It looks like something from a postcard,” Ian said, as he pulled out his camera phone to capture the view. He inched closer to the cliff edge as he tried to frame his shot. He was still several inches from the edge when he lost his footing on some loose gravel. His feet flew out from under him, and he was sent skidding towards certain death.

### **PASSAGE THREE:**

Purpose: \_\_\_\_\_

Audience: \_\_\_\_\_

Reasons: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## **IDENTIFYING THE AUDIENCE & PURPOSE OF YOUR OWN ESSAY**

My essay topic is: \_\_\_\_\_

My audience is: \_\_\_\_\_

My purpose is: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe some of the ways that writing for this audience and purpose might affective the way you write your essay:

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\_\_\_\_\_

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