

Share What You Know

- Different Viewpoints
- Understanding Purpose and Perspective

Learn the Skill

- Purposes for Writing
- How to Identify Author's Purpose
 - Step 1: Look at the Basics
 - Step 2: Examine the Clues
- Tips for Identifying Author's Purpose
- How to Determine Author's Perspective
 - Step 1: Analyze Direct Statements
 - Step 2: Examine Language and Tone
 - Step 3: Infer Author's Perspective
- Tips for Determining Author's Perspective

Practice & Apply

- Identify Author's Purpose
 - Passage 1
 - Passage 2
- Analyze Author's Perspective
 - Analyze a Memoir
 - Infer Perspective in a Memoir
 - Try It Out
- Review Games
 - Write with a Purpose
 - Whirl-a-View



1 of 21

Different Viewpoints

Suppose these people are serving on a panel to discuss bike helmets and safety.

Record the different opinions that each panelist might have on the topic.



Panelist	Reason for Participating	Viewpoints/Opinions
a doctor who treats patients with head injuries		
a teenager who refuses to wear a helmet because they are "lame"		
a manufacturer of bike helmets		



2 of 21

Understanding Purpose and Perspective

Examining the **purpose** and **perspective** behind a person's actions and opinions can help you better understand where that person is coming from.

Looking at purpose and perspective in writing can help, too. You can:



Purposes for Writing

Explore the reasons authors may have for writing.



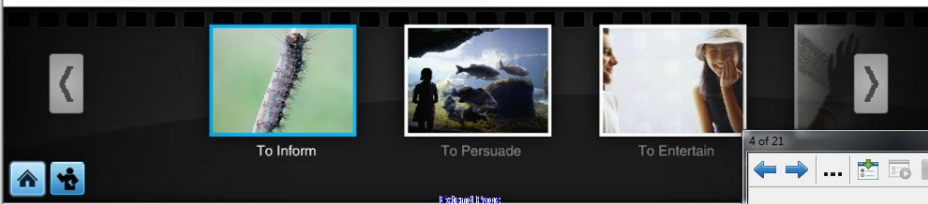
To Inform

Clues in the Writing: facts and statistics

Example:

The gypsy moth is one of the most destructive forest pests in North America. Since the mid-1800s, the insect has been most harmful to oak and aspen trees. Gypsy moths can strip a tree of its leaves in just weeks.

Moths spread from tree to tree when they are caterpillars. They spin silk lines from tree branches, and hang from the lines. Then they are blown by the wind to other trees.



Purposes for Writing

Explore the reasons authors may have for writing.



To Persuade

Clues in the Writing: opinion statements, evidence, appeals to emotion, and calls to action

Example: The aquarium is in desperate need of funds. Operating expenses have increased, and we must raise more money. Our expert staff is the best in the state. But they can't keep up the habitats without you. If you care about the aquarium, please make a contribution today. We—and the sea creatures—depend on your support.



To Inform



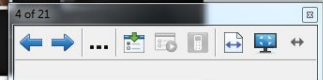
To Persuade



To Entertain



Expand Image



Purposes for Writing

Explore the reasons authors may have for writing.



To Entertain

Clues in the Writing: amusing situations or characters and humorous details

Example: Maggie struggled to reel the fish into the boat. As she did, her foot slipped, and she landed on the boat's floor. The fish flapped wildly in her face as she lay on her back, swiping at it. Finally, she clenched the fish in front of her face. It was a 3-inch minnow. Maggie peered over the edge of her canoe to see her four brothers bent over laughing. "Ha ha . . ." she said.



To Inform



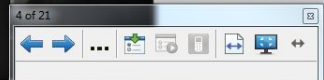
To Persuade



To Entertain



Expand Image



Purposes for Writing

Explore the reasons authors may have for writing.



To Express Thoughts or Feelings

Clues in the Writing: writer's personal feelings, descriptions, and observations

Example: When the storm began, I didn't think there would be any danger. It was just another downpour during the rainy season. But as the water began seeping through the windows into pools on the floor, my mother panicked. It went on this way almost a whole day. I was scared that we would lose everything my mom had worked for.

Navigation bar with icons for home, search, and back/forward. Below are thumbnails for 'To Persuade', 'To Entertain', and 'To Express Thoughts or Feelings'. A 'Extend Page' link is visible.

4 of 21
 Navigation icons: back, forward, search, print, refresh, zoom in, zoom out.

Purpose: Look at the Basics

Write the title, text type, and topic. Then identify the audience.

from *Books and Islands in Ojibwe Country: Traveling in the Land of My Ancestors*

Memoir by Louise Erdrich

Boats make me very uncomfortable. At any moment, I think we'll ram into a rock. The boat will sink. But I'll still be gripping the baby. I'll tow her to shore. There are plenty of islands around here, and I never go out onto the lake without carrying in my pocket a Ziploc baggy of waterproof matches. Once I tow the baby to shore, I'll light a fire, fan



Title, Text Type, Topic, and Audience

To Inform

Clues: Facts and statistics

To Persuade

Clues: opinion statements, evidence, appeals to emotion, calls to action

To Entertain

Clues: intriguing situations or characters, humorous details

To Express Thoughts or Feelings

Clues: writer's personal feelings, descriptions, and observations

Review the Purposes

Home and search icons.

[Extend Page](#)

5 of 21
 Navigation icons: back, forward, search, print, refresh, zoom in, zoom out.

Purpose: Look at the Basics

Write the title, text type, and topic.
Then identify the audience.

baby. I'll tow her to shore. There are plenty of islands around here, and I never go out onto the lake without carrying in my pocket a Ziploc baggy of waterproof matches. Once I tow the baby to shore, I'll light a fire, fan the smoke, and eventually someone will come to investigate. We will be saved. During this short ride, I become so lost in my fantasy of boat wreck that it is only with a wrench that I return to the immediate fact that we are traveling along, so far so good. . .



Title, Text Type, Topic, and Audience

To Inform

Clues: Facts and statistics

To Persuade

Clues: opinion statements, evidence, appeals to emotion, calls to action

To Entertain

Clues: intriguing situations or characters, humorous details

To Express Thoughts or Feelings

Clues: writer's personal feelings, descriptions, and observations

Review the Purposes



[Extend Page](#)

5 of 21

Purpose: Look at the Basics

Write the title, text type, and topic.
Then identify the audience.

from *Books and Islands in Ojibwe*
Country: *Traveling in the Land of My Ancestors*

Memoir by Louise Erdrich

Boats make me very uncomfortable. At any moment, I think we'll ram into a rock. The boat will sink. But I'll still be gripping the baby. I'll tow her to shore. There are plenty of islands around here, and I never go out onto the lake without carrying in my pocket a Ziploc baggy of waterproof matches. Once I tow the baby to shore, I'll light a fire, fan



Review the Purposes

Title, Text Type, Topic, and Audience

Title: *Books and Islands in Ojibwe*
Country: *Traveling in the Land of My Ancestors*

Text Type: Memoir

Topic: Fear of traveling in a boat that is about to sink

Possible Audience: Readers interested in Ojibwe Native American history



[Extend Page](#)

Back

19 of 21

Purpose: Examine the Clues

Look for clues in the writing that reveal the purpose. Then choose the purpose.

from *Books and Islands in Ojibwe Country: Traveling in the Land of My Ancestors*

Memoir by Louise Erdrich

Boats make me very uncomfortable. At any moment, I think we'll ram into a rock. The boat will sink. But I'll still be gripping the baby. I'll tow her to shore. There are plenty of islands around here, and I never go out onto the lake without carrying in my pocket a Ziploc baggy of waterproof matches. Once I tow the baby to shore, I'll light a fire, fan



Review the Purposes

to persuade

to inform

to express thoughts or feelings

to entertain

You are correct! The author is expressing thoughts about her trip and sharing her fear of a boat wreck.



Tips for Identifying Author's Purpose

Choose a text you have recently read in class and use it to complete these sentence frames.

In the text titled _____, the author focuses on the topic _____.

The author's main purpose is _____.

I can tell because of the following clues in the writing: _____.

The audience for the text is likely _____.



Perspective: Analyze Direct Statements

You can determine an author's perspective in three steps. First, analyze direct statements in the following passage.

Highlight sentences in which the author directly states his feelings about earning money.

from *How I Served My Apprenticeship*

Essay by Andrew Carnegie

I cannot tell you how proud I was when I received my first week's own earnings. One dollar and twenty cents made by myself and given to me because I had been of some use in the world! No longer entirely dependent upon my parents, but at last admitted to the family partnership as a contributing member and able to help them! I think this makes a man out of a boy sooner than almost anything else, and a real man, too, if there be any germ of true manhood in him. It is everything to feel that you are useful.



Back

20 of 21



[Extend Page](#)

Perspective: Examine Language and Tone

Next, look at a writer's choice of words and phrases. Which of the following phrases convey Carnegie's tone, or attitude, toward earning money through work?



One dollar and twenty cents

some use in the world!

admitted to the family partnership as a contributing member



and a real man, too

Correct! "A real man" communicates Carnegie's tone of pride.

Reread the Passage

9 of 21



[Extend Page](#)

Infer the Author's Perspective

When analyzing perspective, it helps to consider the author's background. What does the background on the pull tab add to your understanding of Carnegie's beliefs?

Using the excerpt on the last screen as well as the background, decide which statements Carnegie would have agreed with.

Parents should accept children into the family only once they contribute financially.

To be a man, a boy must follow in his father's footsteps.

Hard work brings personal fulfillment as well as wealth.

It is admirable to work one's way up from poverty to riches.

Read This Background

Infer the Author's Perspective

When analyzing perspective, it helps to consider the author's background. What does the background on the pull tab add to your understanding of Carnegie's beliefs?

Using the excerpt on the last screen as well as the background, decide which statements Carnegie would have agreed with.

Parents should accept children into the family only once they contribute financially.

To be a man, a boy must follow in his father's footsteps.

Hard work brings personal fulfillment as well as wealth.

It is admirable to work one's way up from poverty to riches.

Read This Background

Andrew Carnegie (1835–1919) was raised in Dunfermline, Scotland, the center of the linen manufacturing industry at that time. Carnegie was expected to become a successful weaver, like his father. However, the Industrial Revolution destroyed the livelihood of all employed in the industry. Steam-powered looms replaced the skilled, hand-loom weavers. Carnegie's family fell from success into poverty. Carnegie later wrote, "It was burnt into my heart then that my father had to beg for work. And then and there came the resolve that I would cure that when I got to be a man." He later became one of the richest businessmen of his age.

Infer the Author's Perspective

When analyzing perspective, it helps to consider the author's background. What does the background on the pull tab add to your understanding of Carnegie's beliefs?

Using the excerpt on the last screen as well as the background, decide which statements Carnegie would have agreed with.

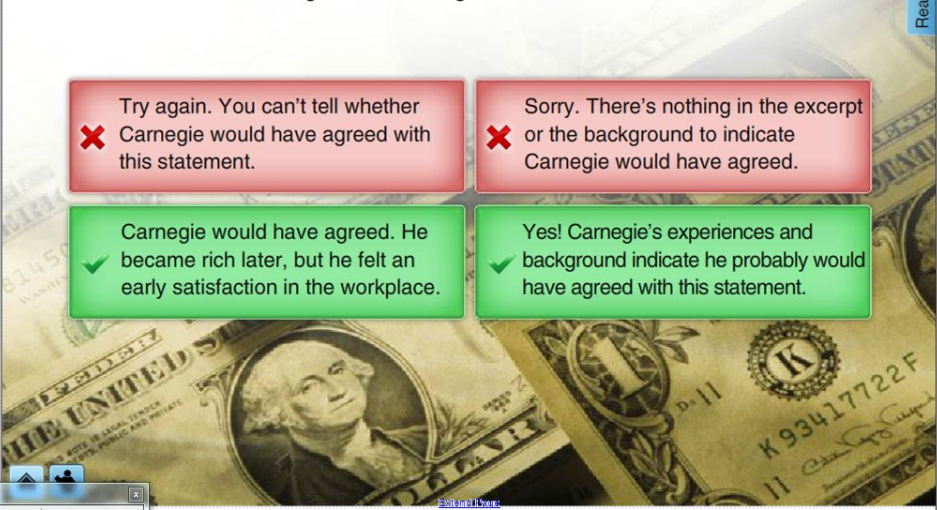
Read This Background

✗ Try again. You can't tell whether Carnegie would have agreed with this statement.

✗ Sorry. There's nothing in the excerpt or the background to indicate Carnegie would have agreed.

✓ Carnegie would have agreed. He became rich later, but he felt an early satisfaction in the workplace.

✓ Yes! Carnegie's experiences and background indicate he probably would have agreed with this statement.



[Extend Learning](#)

Tips for Determining Author's Perspective

Use these sentence frames to help you analyze an author's perspective in any text you read.

_____ by _____ is about the topic of _____.

The author shares his or her feelings in direct statements like _____.

Words and phrases such as _____ help to communicate a _____ tone toward the topic.

I know the following about the author's upbringing, values, and experiences: _____.

The author's perspective on _____ seems to be _____.



[Extend Page](#)

Passage 1: Identify Author's Purpose

Read the passages from the poem "On the Downtown Side of an Uptown Street" by William Johnston.

Select the poet's main purpose. Highlight clues that reveal the purpose.

On the downtown side of an uptown street
Is the home of a girl that I'd like to meet,
 But I'm on the uptown,
 And she's on the downtown,
On the downtown side of an uptown street.

On a downtown car of the Broadway line
Often I see her for whom I repine,
 But when I'm on a uptown
 She's on a downtown,
On a downtown car of the Broadway line.

to express thoughts/ feelings ❌	to inform ❌
to entertain ✅	to persuade ❌

Review the Purposes

- To Inform**
Clues: Facts and statistics
- To Persuade**
Clues: opinion statements, evidence, appeals to emotion, and calls to action
- To Entertain**
Clues: intriguing situations or characters and humorous details
- To Express Thoughts or Feelings**
Clues: writer's personal feelings, descriptions, and observations

[Extend Page](#)

Passage 2: Identify Author's Purpose

Read this excerpt from a speech by President Lyndon B. Johnson.

Click each button to help you identify and analyze the author's purpose.

- Original Text
- Topic
- Audience
- Clues to Purpose

This speech was delivered during a time when equal rights were not guaranteed by law. What is the topic of this excerpt?

from Special Message to the Congress: The American Promise March 15, 1965

All Americans must have the privileges of citizenship regardless of race. And they are going to have those privileges of citizenship regardless of race.

But I would like to caution you and remind you that to exercise these privileges takes much more than just legal right. It requires a trained mind and a healthy body. It requires a decent home, and the chance to find a job, and the

[Extend Page](#)

Passage 2: Identify Author's Purpose

Read this excerpt from a speech by President Lyndon B. Johnson.

Click each button to help you identify and analyze the author's purpose.

Original Text

Topic

Audience

Clues to Purpose

Consider the audience listed in the title. What purpose might a president have in addressing this group?

from Special Message to the Congress: The American Promise March 15, 1965

All Americans must have the privileges of citizenship regardless of race. And they are going to have those privileges of citizenship regardless of race.

But I would like to caution you and remind you that to exercise these privileges takes much more than just legal right. It requires a trained mind and a healthy body. It requires a decent home, and the chance to find a job, and the

Passage 2: Identify Author's Purpose

Read this excerpt from a speech by President Lyndon B. Johnson.

Click each button to help you identify and analyze the author's purpose.

Original Text

Topic

Audience

Clues to Purpose

Look at the highlighted parts of the speech. What can you infer is Johnson's purpose? Explain your reasoning.

from Special Message to the Congress: The American Promise March 15, 1965

All Americans must have the privileges of citizenship regardless of race. And they are going to have those privileges of citizenship regardless of race.

But I would like to caution you and remind you that to exercise these privileges takes much more than just legal right. It requires a trained mind and a healthy body. It requires a decent home, and the chance to find a job, and the

Passage 2: Identify Author's Purpose

Read this excerpt from a speech by President Lyndon B. Johnson.

Click each button to help you identify and analyze the author's purpose.

Original Text

Topic

Audience

Clues to Purpose

Look at the highlighted parts of the speech. What can you infer is Johnson's purpose? Explain your reasoning.

right. It requires a trained mind and a healthy body. It requires a decent home, and the chance to find a job, and the opportunity to escape from the clutches of poverty.

Of course, people cannot contribute to the Nation if they are never taught to read or write, if their bodies are stunted from hunger, if their sickness goes untended, if their life is spent in hopeless poverty just drawing a welfare check.

So we want to open the gates to opportunity. But we are also going to give all our people, black and white, the help that they need to walk through those gates.

Analyze a Memoir

Read the following passage from *Kaffir Boy*, a memoir by Mark Mathabane.

Highlight statements in which the author shares his feelings about his childhood birthdays. Circle words that strike you.

My tenth birthday came and went away, like all the other nine, uncelebrated. Having never had a normal childhood, I didn't miss birthdays; to me they were simply like other days: to be survived. Strangely, however, on each birthday I somehow got the feeling that I had aged more than a year. Suffering seemed to age me more than birthdays. Though I was only ten, black life seemed to have, all along, been teaching me the same lessons of survival, and making the same demands upon me for that survival, as it was doing to grown-ups. Thus, emotionally, I had aged far beyond my ten years.



Answer

Infer Perspective in a Memoir

Consider the statements you highlighted and the words you circled.
What can you infer about Mathabane's values and beliefs?

**Determine which statements Mathabane would likely agree with.
Then click to check your answers.**

Reread the Passage

<p>✔ Yes. Mathabane says his early life taught him lessons of survival more appropriate for "grown-ups."</p>	<p>✘ Sorry, no. Mathabane learned important lessons from "black life," not from a formal education.</p>
<p>✘ Try again. The author says suffering aged him "emotionally," but he does not say this is desirable.</p>	<p>✔ Yes! Mathabane is looking back on his childhood many years later. That suggests it had an impact on him.</p>

Try It Out

Choose a nonfiction text to read. Use the chart to infer the author's perspective.

Finish with a statement about the topic that you think the author would agree with.



Title, Author, and Topic:
What direct statements does the author make about the topic?
What words and phrases does the author use? What tone is communicated?
Author's Perspective: Formulate a statement the author would likely agree with.

Write with a Purpose

Click the toggle switch next to a purpose of your choice. Use that purpose to write a one- or two-paragraph text about the topic that displays.

To Entertain	having lunch at a celebrity's house
To Inform or Explain	what causes a rainbow
To Persuade	convince your community to adopt pets from the local shelter
To Express Thoughts/Feelings	someone you admire