

Purposes for Writing

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Inform

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PURPOSES FOR WRITING

Entertain

Writing that entertains gives the reader something to enjoy. It includes colorful language to help your ideas come alive on the page.

Inform

Writing that provides interesting details and facts to hold an audience's attention. Sharing what you know lets your audience learn about them, too. You can share by writing to inform your audience.

Explain

Writing that explains can answer "how to" questions. When you write to explain, you tell a reader how to follow steps and complete a task.

Persuade

Persuasive writing helps a writer to share opinions, and try to convince a reader to think, or act a certain way. Opinions are statements of what you believe. The writer always uses facts to back up an opinion.

Reflect

Reflective writing tells how you see things around you. Some writing shows how a writer feels and thinks. These pieces use colorful words to create pictures in the reader's mind

TYPES OF WRITING

Story Narrative

A good story entertains the audience. This means that a reader stays interested from the beginning to the end of the story. A favorite character, a special setting, and surprising events make a story fun to read and keep the reader interested.

These are the elements a writer uses to create a story.

- **Characters** are the people in the story who carry out the action.
- **The plot** tells what happens in the story and what the characters do.
- **Dialogue** is the conversation between characters that helps to make the story come to life.
- **Setting** shows the story's time and place.
- **Sequence of events** is the order of how things happen.

A story often tells about a problem, and how the characters solve it. Use imagination! A story comes to life with vivid descriptions, sensory images and original events.

Expository Writing

Expository writing informs the reader. To make your report stronger, use description to help others “see” your ideas. Share information that your audience may not already know.

- Gather your facts from books, magazines, and the Internet.
- Make a plan! Organize facts and observations in an outline.
- Develop your main idea with vivid, unusual details.
- Write a clear beginning, interesting middle, and a strong ending.
- Add interest to your report with photographs, drawings, a chart or a graph.

Explanatory Writing

Writing that explains rules or gives instructions is called *explanatory writing*. Sometimes it is called “how-to” writing. It lists the materials, equipment, or ingredients you need, and then gives each step.

- Make it easy for readers to follow your steps. List them by number.
- Use time-order words that tell when to do each step. Some time-order words you can use are *first, second, third, next, and last*.
- Give space-order details for size, shape, color, and position.
- Use space-order words like *below, over* and *beside*.
- Give details so the reader can “see” each step.
- Drawings or diagrams can show readers if they are on the right track.

Persuasive Writing

Good *persuasive writing* convinces a reader to think or behave a certain way. This type of writing gives you a chance to express your thoughts and opinions on a topic. The most convincing arguments give facts and reasons to back up the writer's position. How do you think persuasion is used every day?

- **Reviews** – A good review by a critic can sway an audience’s opinion about a book, movie, TV show, or play. Do book reports by classmates influence what you choose to read?
- **Advertisements** – Do advertisements make you want to buy things or attend special events? Try to notice times when your opinion may be swayed by a magazine ad or a TV commercial!
- **Editorials** – Newspaper editorials can reach a large audience. They often show strong feelings in articles about political events or human interest stories.

Tips to strengthen persuasive writing:

- Start by summarizing a few important facts.
- State your own opinions or feelings.
- Use strong verbs to make a point, such as *I think, I believe, or you can, you must, you should.*
- Use facts to support your opinion.
- Express powerful feelings with vivid adjectives, such as *important, serious, or exciting.*
- Express what you want your audience to do or think in easy-to-understand language.

Writing That Compares

Even when you are not aware of it, you are looking at things and comparing them. In your mind, you are noting how things you see are similar and different. It’s a way to tell one thing from another. Writing that compares tells how two things are alike or different. You can compare two people, places, things, animals, or ideas.

Good writing that compares:

- introduces a clear main idea.
- gives similarities and differences, or advantages and disadvantages, of two things.
- gives details that help the reader “see” the comparisons.
- uses comparing words, such as *also, like, but, and in the same way.*
- organizes facts and ideas logically.

You can use writing that compares for many different purposes—book reports, news stories, science papers, and even travel guides.

Personal Narrative

A *personal narrative* is a true story about something you have experienced. This type of writing helps you reflect—to look back and recall an experience in detail. What do you remember most? What was special or unique about a person or place?

A personal narrative comes to life when you express feelings in your own style. Use colorful description to help readers see and feel things exactly as you did. No one can tell your story as well as you!

Make a Plan

A good personal narrative has an order to help readers follow the events.

- Get your audience’s attention with a strong beginning.
- Plan a beginning, middle, and end to your story.
- Use description to help the audience see and feel things as you saw and felt them.
- Use time-order words such as *first, next, afterwards, and finally.*