

Teaching Students How to Write for Different Audiences and Purposes in Their Discipline

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Audience Awareness: the ability to identify an audience, recognize their expectations, needs, and wants, and determine the writerly choices needed for effective communication

Questions to help students identify an audience:

- What am I trying to accomplish with my writing (purpose and goals)?
- What do I want my audience to do with the information conveyed in my writing?
- What might my audience need and want?
- What might my audience value or think is important?
- What is my audience less likely to care about?
- How much does my audience know about my topic? Does my audience have more or less knowledge than I do?
- Are they familiar with the jargon or terminology I'm using?
- What questions do I anticipate the audience might have?
- What does my audience expect with this kind of writing (tone, language, content, organization, arrangement, genre)?

Questions to help students make writerly choices to best communicate with their audience:

- What kind of writing makes the most sense in communicating to this audience for a particular purpose? (genre)
- What content do I need to include? What content can I leave out?
- What do I want my audience to think, learn, or assume about me as a writer and the topic I'm addressing, and what ways can I make that clear in my writing?
- What kind of organization, format, and/or arrangement would best help my audience understand what I'm trying to communicate?
- What kind of language and tone is most appropriate for this audience?
- What kind of appeals (ethical, emotional, logical) appeals might work best for persuading my audience?