

# Author's Purpose

Use the text to answer each question below.

1. A purpose is a reason for doing something. So an **author's purpose** is the author's reason for writing something. The author's purpose could be to persuade you. This means that the author is trying to convince you of something. An author can also try to inform you or entertain you. When you're trying to decide what the author's purpose is, you should use evidence from the text, like words and phrases.

According to the passage, an author's purpose is

- A. the writer's reason for writing a text.                      B. the universal message of a text.  
C. the author's reason for becoming a writer.              D. the character who tells the story.
2. When authors inform you of something, they give you information or teach you to do or make something. How can you tell if a text was written mainly to inform? Here's a hint: the author will stick mostly to facts.

Which of the following passages was written mainly to inform?

- A. "In the ancient city of London, on a certain autumn day...a boy was born to a poor family who did not want him. On the same day another English child was born to a rich family of the name of Tudor, who did want him. All England wanted him too."
- B. There are many different kinds of octopuses. Some are as small as 2 inches while some can grow as big as 18 feet. Octopuses have thousands of suckers on their arms that they use to taste and feel.
- C. "When night is almost done,/ And sunrise grows so near/  
That we can touch the spaces,/ It's time to smooth the hair/  
And get the dimples ready,/ And wonder we could care/  
For that old faded midnight/  
That frightened but an hour."
- D. "Once upon a time there lived a queen who had been the mother of a great many children, and of them all only one daughter was left. But then *she* was worth at least a thousand. Her mother...was so terribly afraid of losing her that she quite spoiled her, and never tried to correct any of her faults."

3. To figure out the author's purpose, it's important to know the difference between facts and opinions. A fact is something that's always true. A fact can be proven. An opinion is someone's feeling or belief that can't be proven. People can agree or disagree with opinions. Words like "think," "believe," "feel," "best," "worst" and "must" are all clues that an author is sharing an opinion. If the author gives an opinion in a text, their purpose might be to persuade.

Which of the following is an example of an author's opinion?

- A. A giant panda's diet is over 99% bamboo.      B. The oldest living panda is 37 years old.  
C. Panda's paws have thumbs.      D. Pandas are the most beautiful animals.
4. Writing that persuades, or tries to convince, can also inform. This is because authors sometimes use facts to support their opinions.

*Read the following passage.*

*I believe that solar powered buildings are the future of architecture. A good example of this is the Mirebalais Hospital, which was built in Haiti in 2013. The hospital has 1800 solar panels that produce 140 megawatt-hours of electricity on a sunny day. That is more electricity than the hospital uses. The hospital is able to give the extra energy to other structures that need electricity. I'm sure that the hospital's doctors and patients appreciate this building. I would love to visit this hospital one day.*

In which of the following sentences does the author state a fact to support her opinion?

- A. "The hospital has 1800 solar panels that produce 140 megawatt-hours of electricity on a sunny day."  
B. "I would love to visit this hospital one day."  
C. "I believe that solar powered buildings are the future of architecture."  
D. "I'm sure that the hospital's doctors and patients appreciate this building."

5. How can you tell if an author's purpose is to entertain? The author might use funny, silly or imaginary details. The text might also include elements of a story, like characters, setting and plot.

Which of the following passages was written primarily to entertain?

- A. The tallest building on the continent of Africa is in South Africa. It is called the Carlton Centre and it stands 732 feet high. It was built in 1973.
- B. You should save some of your money in a savings account. Putting money in a savings account is a smart move because it means you will have cash in case of emergency.
- C. A human baby has over sixty more bones than an adult. Most babies also have a head that appears larger when compared with the rest of their bodies.
- D. "An accomplished wizard once lived on the top floor of a...house and passed his time in thoughtful study...What he didn't know about wizardry was hardly worth knowing..."
6. A text can have more than one purpose. For example, a funny TV commercial might persuade you to buy something and entertain you, too.

*Read the following passage.*

*Cat owners should put bells on their cats' collars. Many cat owners don't know that pet cats sometimes hunt and kill birds. Partly because of this, some birds are becoming endangered. If cat owners attached bells to their cats' collars, they might be able to stop birds from dying. The bells would allow cats to roam freely while alerting birds that a cat is nearby.*

This passage was written to

- A. persuade and inform.
- B. inform and entertain.
- C. entertain only.
- D. inform only.