

# Synonyms and Antonyms

**Synonyms** are words that have nearly the same meaning.

**Antonyms** are words that have opposite meanings.

## Synonyms

Synonyms can be adjectives, nouns, verbs, adverbs, or prepositions, as long as both words are the same part of speech. "Pupil" and "student" are one example of a synonym pair. The list below gives you more examples of synonyms.

Word	Synonyms
hate	abhor, deplore
sad	dejected, discouraged
lavish	extravagant, abundant
naive	trusting, gullible
wise	sagacious, astute
brilliant	shrewd, ingenious

**Remember:** Textbooks can use synonyms to clarify terms or ideas discussed. You can use synonyms to determine the meanings of unfamiliar words.

## Antonyms

Some thesauruses will list antonyms of words after the synonyms. "Increase" and "decrease" are one example of an antonym pair. There are more examples listed on the chart below.

Word	Antonym
admire	despise

elegant	crude
sweltering	freezing
courteous	uncivil
famished	satisfied
malicious	benevolent

**Remember:** Antonyms can help readers understand the meanings of words by showing opposites. Look for a sentence structure that shows contrast. Words like *however*, *but*, and *though* show that opposite ideas may be introduced.

## Examples

1. Replace the underlined word with a synonym.

I understand the speaker.

- A. dislike
- B. comprehend
- C. misunderstand
- D. enjoy

**Explanation:** "I understand the speaker" means the same thing as "I comprehend the speaker," so "understand" and "comprehend" are synonyms. The answer is B.

2. Replace the underlined word with an antonym.

Stapling 1,000 books by hand is very tedious work!

- A. simple
- B. difficult
- C. interesting
- D. boring

**Explanation:** An antonym is a word that means the opposite of another word. Find a word that means the opposite of "tedious." Something that is NOT tedious

is "interesting." The answer is C.

**Tip:** Replace the underlined word with each answer choice. If the meaning of the sentence is the same, then you've found a **synonym**. If the meaning of the sentence is the opposite of what it was before, then you've found an **antonym**.

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# Greek & Latin Roots

*You can often figure out the meaning of a new or unfamiliar word by breaking the word into smaller parts. Most English words are made up of word parts called roots, prefixes, and suffixes. Many of the most common **roots**, **prefixes**, and **suffixes** come from the Greek and Latin languages.*

Before you can use word parts to help you understand new words, you must first learn the meanings of different word parts. Here are some common ones:

Root	Meaning	Prefix	Meaning	Suffix	Meaning
-biblio-	book	anti-	against	-able	capable of
-dict-	to say	bi-	two	-al	relating to, of, or characterized by
-ped-	foot	bio-	life		
-lingua-	language or the tongue	circum-	around		
-lect-	choose or read	deca-	ten	-cracy	form of government
-phon-	sound	dis-	not	-dom	state, condition
-port-	to carry	im-	not		
-log-	word	in-	not or without	-en	to become or made of
-magni-	large	mal-	poorly or badly	-ennial	years
-micro-	small	mis-	bad or wrong	-ful	full of
		non-	not	-hood	a group sharing characteristics or a condition
		omni-	all or universally		
		post-	after	-ic	characterized by or related to
		pre-	before		
		pseudo-	false	-ish	like or similar to
		psych-	relating to the mind		
					a specialist in

re-	again	-ist	a specialist in a science, art, or skill
semi-	half	-less	without
sub-	below or under	-logy	the study of
un-	not	-ly	in a way or manner
		-ment	state of being
		-ness	quality, state
		-oid	resembling
		-ous	full of or having the qualities of
		-ward	in a direction

**Hint:** One good way to learn word parts is to memorize keywords for each word part. For example, memorize the keyword **preheat** for the prefix **pre-**. If you know that you preheat the oven before you bake something in it, you will remember the meaning of pre- when you think of the keyword preheat.

## Example Question

Which of these words means "to say before?"

- A. predict
- B. premonition
- C. preview
- D. predecessor

### Explanation:

If you break these words into parts, the **structural cues** tell you that the correct answer is **A. predict**. The prefix **pre-** means *before*, and the root **-dict-** means *to say*.

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# Context Clues

*One key to being a good reader is being able to understand the words you read. Sometimes, you might not be able to understand some vocabulary words that the author uses. When this happens, it helps if you can at least understand the other words in the paragraph that you are reading. The information in the paragraph can be a clue to help you understand the words you don't know. This is called a **context clue**. Context clues are the words around the unknown word. It is also the information that makes up the rest of the paragraph.*

These are some things to look for when using context clues:

Punctuation marks, such as a comma or a dash, may give you a clue about the unknown word.

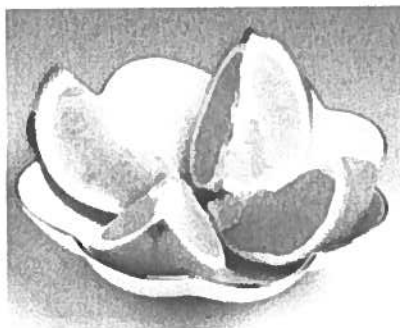
*example:* Suzie found the painting **evocative** of an older style—like something she had seen in Diego Rivera's work.

Key words, such as "or" and "that is," may give you a hint to the definition of an unfamiliar word.

*example:* The tar had a **pungency** to it, that is it smelled like a million dead birds covered in sewage.

Read the following passage, and answer the example questions.

## The Most Amazing Orange



I once had the most exquisite orange I have ever tasted. It was more elegant than caviar and more **luscious** than velvet. The

citrus flavor all at once lulled my taste buds into a blissful calm while throwing them into a frenzy of craving. I couldn't help but **devour** each and every bit within mere seconds as I crammed piece after piece of orange into my watering mouth. Ever since that one spectacular orange, I have never been satisfied with another. If only I had **savored** it or made it last a little longer.

1. What does the word **luscious** mean in the passage above?

- A. tart
- B. fluffy
- C. expensive
- D. rich

**Explanation:** The correct answer is choice D, "rich." The passage states that the orange was "more elegant than caviar and more luscious than velvet." Velvet is rich, or elegant.

2. What does the word **devour** mean in the passage above?

- A. to eat hungrily
- B. to pick at
- C. to set aside
- D. to destroy

**Explanation:** The correct answer is choice A, "to eat hungrily." The speaker says, "I crammed piece after piece of orange into my watering mouth." This is a description of eating the orange.

3. What does the word **savored** mean in the passage above?

- A. to season
- B. to smell
- C. to enjoy
- D. to study

**Explanation:** The correct answer is choice C, "to enjoy." The speaker says that he or she should have "made it last a little longer." When a person enjoys something, they want to enjoy it for as long as possible.

## What would Sherlock Holmes do?



Make sure to read the entire passage. An unknown word may make more sense after you read the entire paragraph or passage.

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2

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# Multiple Meaning Words

**Multiple meaning words** are words that have various meanings. You have to use context clues to figure out which definition of the word is being used in the given sentence.

The word **cram** is a familiar word; however, it has multiple meanings that could confuse the reader. Look at the dictionary entry below to learn all the meanings of **cram**.

**cram** (kram) v.

1. to pack tight
2. to eat quickly
3. to prepare hastily for an exam
4. to force or stuff something into a small space

Definition 1: Erin **crammed** her suitcase full of clothes for her trip to Europe.

Definition 2: Jacob was in a hurry, so he **crammed** his sandwich and left.

Definition 3: The night before the test, Jonah and Ivan **crammed** for the test.

Definition 4: Ava **crammed** tissue paper into her nose when she had a bloody nose.

## Examples

How many meanings can you think of for the words in bold?

- The decisive battle for the Second Punic War was the Battle of Zama. During the war, the Romans fought against the **forces** of Hannibal from Carthage. At Zama, the Romans were able to **gain** the upper hand when they defeated the exhausted Carthaginians. The victory left the Carthaginians vulnerable.
- *Citizen Kane* is considered one of the best movies of all time. The main character

of the movie is based upon the American newspaper **giant** William Randolph Hearst. The movie follows the life of the character as he pursues **power** and **wealth**.

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# Connotation and Denotation

**Denotation** is the literal dictionary meaning of a word.  
**Connotation**, however, is the emotional suggestion of a word.

Words express more than just their dictionary definitions, also known as **denotation**. Words can bring up pictures or stir feelings in the reader. Authors use **connotation** to influence their readers and support their point of view. For example, look at these two words below that have the denotation "different from the ordinary."

**bizarre**

**eccentric**

Which word has a positive connotation? Which one has a negative connotation? If your sister asked you how she looked with her new hairstyle and new outfit and you did not want to hurt her feelings, would you say that she looks **eccentric** or that she looks **bizarre**.



Although the two words mean the same thing, **bizarre** has a negative connotation. Therefore, your sister may not take **bizarre** as a compliment. Below are more examples of positive and negative connotation:





**Negative:** Uncle Pete's floral shop is **disorganized**.

**Positive:** Uncle Pete's floral shop is **eclectic**.

**Negative:** Fiona always tells people what she really thinks. She is **tactless**.

**Positive:** Fiona always tells people what she really thinks. She is **straightforward**.

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2

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# Author's Purpose and Attitude

*A challenging but essential task for the reader is to determine the **author's attitude**, which is related to the author's **tone**. The reader must determine this aspect of a passage by analyzing the author's perspective and point of view—how the author thinks and feels about a particular subject.*

In speaking, one's gestures, voice inflections, pauses, and facial expressions can reveal a speaker's attitude toward the subject matter. However, because none of those things can be experienced by reading a work or text, an author's attitude or tone has to be inferred from less obvious clues.

You must closely read an author's writing to notice the clues and details he or she may reveal through words. There are several steps that may help you determine the author's attitude.

**First, you may want to examine the author's purpose for writing.** There are a number of verbs that can describe an author's purpose.

- argue
- condemn
- describe
- enlighten
- entertain
- explain
- express
- illustrate
- inform
- instruct
- investigate
- narrate
- persuade
- report
- teach

- warn

**Next, think about the tone of the work.** Examine the choice of words the author uses to get his or her point across. If the author's purpose for writing is to persuade, are the words he or she uses overwhelmingly positive or negative? Think about whether or not the words reveal favoritism toward a particular point of view.

**Finally, think about whether the author has fairly presented all the sides of an issue.** Examine whether or not sufficient evidence has been given to dispute opposing viewpoints. Omitting or downplaying a viewpoint can reveal how an author feels about a topic.

The following is a list of words that can help describe the author's attitude or tone.

- arrogant
- compassionate
- critical
- cynical
- defensive
- humorous
- impartial
- inspirational
- ironic
- moralizing
- nostalgic
- patriotic
- perplexed
- pessimistic
- reflective
- reverent
- satirical
- sentimental
- serious
- witty

**Ask yourself these questions when you are attempting to determine the author's attitude in a passage:**

1. What is the author's purpose in writing?
2. Has the author presented all sides of an argument?
3. If so, is the article balanced toward all positions or biased toward one?
4. Is there enough evidence to support each side?
5. Is the evidence reliable and convincing?
6. Does the author use words that convey emotion?
7. Does the article seem to present propaganda?

*example:*

Consider the author's attitude in the passage below.

Conserving water is important for our environment, future generations, and your wallet. Most people don't realize this, but water is a finite resource. All the water we will ever have is on the planet right now. It is important to consider this when thinking about the importance of water conservation. If we are not good stewards of water, our future generations will suffer for it. Fresh drinking water resources are limited for people, but also remember that animals and water species also depend on it for life. It is important for us to think about and facilitate their survival in addition to our own. Cutting back on the water used during showers or for watering plants outdoors can also help save you money.

The author's purpose for writing this passage is to convince readers that water conservation is important. He or she presents the argument by discussing reasons why saving water is important. The author's attitude in this passage is serious.

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1

2

Next

# Word Choice

*Sometimes, authors choose words to show how something feels, looks, or acts. These words give the reader a better idea of what is happening in the story. They can show you how exciting something is or how happy a person feels.*

Authors use different words to show how something looks, feels, or acts. Look at this example below:



The ivory tower's pointed cap rose in the distance as we walked through the olive green grass. I looked to my right and a palm tree loomed. Its emerald green leaves strained toward the sky and the ground all at once. The tree's tan trunk was a pineapple-like scaffold.

The author chooses descriptive words for this paragraph. Compare them to the following paragraph: "We walked through the woods and a big white building was in front of us. I saw a big palm tree." The first paragraph uses words to paint a picture.

Writers also use language to set the mood of a passage or support a theme. Look at this example below:





The long, dark road unwound before Chrisette like a serpent striking its prey. The car's windshield was continuously covered in a fine spray of water as the wipers swung back and forth like a pendulum. Through the blurry glass, Chrisette could just make out a figure in the darkness.

The author uses words to set a mood of foreboding in this passage. He or she could have simply said, "Chrisette was driving in the rain. It was dark outside. She could barely see the road in front of her."

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# Main Idea and Supporting Details

*The **main idea** of a passage is the idea that most of the passage covers. It is the basic point that the author wants to convey to the reader. In simpler terms, the main idea is the idea that the passage is mostly about. The sentences that explain, describe, or support the main idea are called **supporting details**.*

The **main idea** can range from an idea that the author wants the reader to agree with in a newspaper article to a main event that takes place in a story. Each passage you read, whether it is 5 sentences or 500 pages, has a main idea. When you are looking for the main idea, ask yourself:

- Why did the author write this passage?
- What is the point he/she is trying to make?
- What is the passage mostly about?
- What idea is conveyed in the passage?

Once you have found the main idea, check it against the passage. The sentences in the passage should support, describe, or explain this idea. These sentences are **supporting details**. They are used to make the author's main idea stronger. If the sentences do not support the main idea, then you have the wrong main idea. Look over the sentences again and see what point or idea they are trying to explain.

**Note:** Main idea and topic are not the same thing. A topic is a general category, like the paparazzi or global warming. A main idea is a specific idea about that topic, like "The paparazzi should not be allowed to follow celebrities in their cars," or "Global warming is already impacting the North and South Poles." Think of it like a research paper assignment. Your teacher might want you to write about the 2008 presidential election. That is the topic. If you write about the confusion of the American public over the numerous candidates in the pre-primary election, that is the main idea.

## Example:

Once winter is gone and spring officially arrives, it is time to enjoy longer days,

warm weather, and new seasonal produce. During the spring, many vegetables and fruits are at their peaks. This includes green beans, corn, sweet onions, peas, greens, and squash. On the fruit front, apples, citrus fruits, and pears have made way for juicy stone fruit, like peaches, nectarines, and plums. Melons and berries are also available in the spring.



What is the **main idea** of this passage?

Many seasonal fruits and vegetables hit their peak during the spring.

This passage mostly focuses on the variety of produce available in the spring. The rest of the passage details the various vegetables and fruits that one can find during the spring.

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2

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# Summarization

A **summary** is a shorter way to tell about the events or details of a passage. It includes only the most important details or events. A summary conveys what a passage is about to a reader. Look at this example of a summary of this passage on Asian elephants.

## Asian Elephants

Asian elephants are an endangered species. These large animals have learned to adapt to their environment as it has changed over time. Today, they still shape their environment. Their foraging helps maintain the areas in which they live. They pull down trees to eat leaves, branches, and roots. This creates areas in which new young trees and other plants grow, creating food for the elephants and other animals. The elephants also create trails through the brush. Other animals can use these paths. Termites eat elephant droppings and start termite mounds underneath the piles of droppings.

Today, the Asian elephants' forest homes are being destroyed. The demand for forest products is high. These products include coffee, tea, rubber, and hardwoods. Other industries, like crop farming and iron and ore mining have reduced the amount of land required by elephants for food supplies. Hydroelectric projects have created flooding, which also pushes back the land mass available to the Asian elephants. Only 35,000 to 40,000 Asian elephants survive today. They live in an inconsistent range in Southeast Asia.

## Summary

The survival of the Asian elephant affects everything around it from termites to the forest in which they live. The destruction of their forest home threatens the Asian elephants' livelihood and the existence of other animals.

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2

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# Inferences and Conclusions

When you make **inferences** or draw **conclusions**, you make guesses about things not directly stated in the passage. You use details provided by the author along with what you know of real life to make conclusions and inferences. The author of a passage may not tell you everything directly. Some authors “show” something by using specific details. You should use details as clues to help you figure things out.

Imagine that you are in a lobby of a building that does not have windows. You see people walking in with damp clothes. Some people are wiping water off their glasses. Some people have squeaky shoes that leave water footprints. You should know that it is raining outside even though no one has told you it is raining. You can just tell from the evidence around you.

## Tips for Making Inferences



Read a passage carefully.



Look for details about what a person does. What do the person's actions tell you? What can you conclude about the person's traits?



Look for details that describe a place or event. Based on real life, what do those details tell you?



Look for facts given in a nonfiction passage. Ask yourself, what do those facts mean overall? What do the facts tell me about the subject?



Analyze the way the author discusses and describes the topic. What can you tell about the author from his or her writing? How does the author probably feel about the topic?



Make an inference or conclusion about something in the passage. Find the details that led you to that conclusion.

*example:*



## A Coffee Complication

"Just another morning," Lane grumbled to herself as she smacked the alarm clock until the buzzing noise finally quieted. With a heavy sigh, she pushed herself upright and stumbled out of bed. Lane was not a morning person, and she knew it. She had a set system of getting up that she managed to follow even in her zombie state. If nothing else, she could follow a routine.

She mumbled incoherently as she shuffled along the hallway. Lane slowly opened her eyes so that when she reached the kitchen, her eyes were almost fully open. As she reached for the coffee pot, Lane cocked her head to the side in confusion. It was empty. She shook the pot as if magically coffee would appear. Still nothing. She became more anxious as she began frantically checking for coffee, coming up with nothing. However would she survive a morning without coffee?

First, Lane looked to make sure the coffee maker was plugged in. Then, she checked to see that water was filled up to the four-cup line. Then she opened the top to see if there was a filter holding grounds. That, she noticed, was empty. She frantically searched each and every kitchen cabinet, but she couldn't find coffee. She sighed and ran through her options. There was a coffee shop a couple of blocks away, but it was in the opposite direction of school. She knew that would make her late for her first class, which would throw her off the rest of the day. The grocery store was on the way to school. Lane could stop by there and buy coffee filters and grounds to make coffee. But she would have to come back home to make it, and again that

would make her late for school. Feeling hopeless, Lane wondered if she could convince one of her teachers to let her have some coffee from the teacher's lounge. As quickly as the idea had come to mind, she dismissed it. Finally, Lane raced to get ready for school. If she worried over her lack of coffee any longer, she was going to be late anyway.

1. Based on her behavior, what can be inferred about Lane's character?
- A. Lane is disorganized.
  - B. Lane is constantly alert.
  - C. Lane likes structure.
  - D. Lane is very laid back.

**Explanation:** The correct answer is choice C, Lane likes structure. Notice how Lane dismisses several different answers to her problem when she realizes that it will mess up her schedule. She also has a routine for getting up and moving each morning that she follows without thinking. The speaker even says, "If nothing else, she [Lane] could follow a routine."

2. What can the reader infer will most likely happen next?
- A. Lane will go through the day without coffee.
  - B. Lane will go to a coffee shop to buy a cup of coffee.
  - C. Lane will run to the store to buy what she needs to make coffee.
  - D. Lane will ask to go into the teacher's lounge to grab coffee.

**Explanation:** The correct answer is choice A. Lane runs through several different options for what she could do about her coffee situation, but dismisses them all for one reason or another. She is even described as feeling "hopeless" about the situation as she desperately tries to think of a possible solution. This suggests that Lane will begrudgingly forgo caffeine for the day.

## Get a Clue

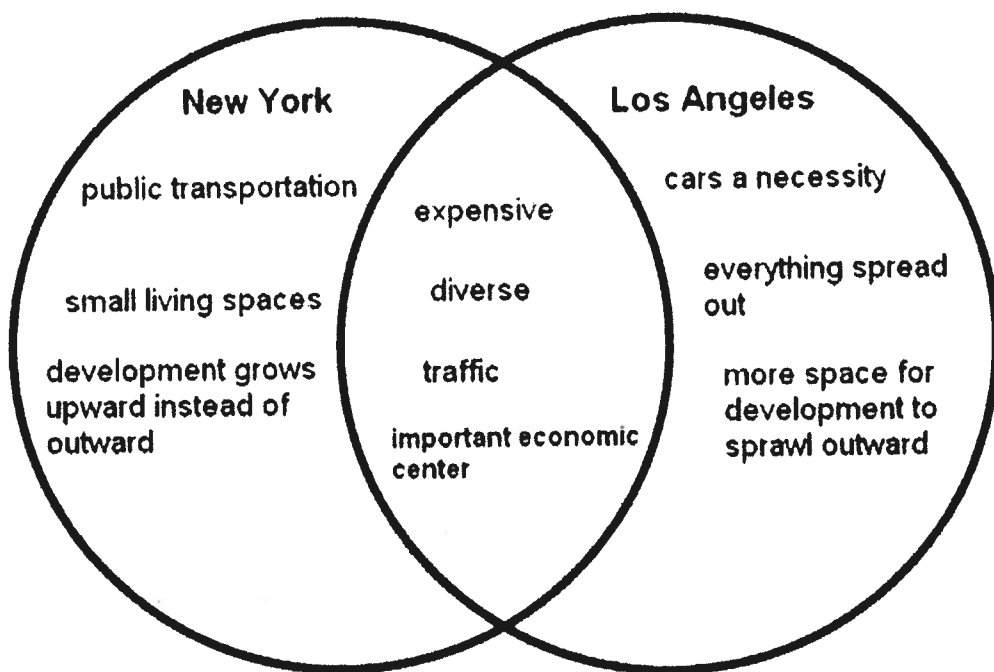


The author of a passage may not tell you everything directly. Some authors show something by using specific details. You should use details as clues to help you figure things out.

# Compare and Contrast Passages

**Compare and contrast** is a concept that is used to examine information in order to show the similarities and differences between two or more thoughts or ideas. It is important to be able to see the similarities and differences between items and ideas within a passage and between multiple passages.

Compare and contrast organization can show the relationships between items, people, or ideas. Look at this Venn diagram to get a visual picture of what comparing and contrasting looks like.



## Compare = similarities

Look for words like the following:

- similar
- in the same way
- likewise
- just like
- as well



- in addition

## **Contrast = differences**

Look for words like the following:

- different
- in contrast
- on the other hand
- however
- on the contrary
- instead
- although
- but

When you have to compare passages you have to use your comprehension skills to show that you can compare and contrast the information presented in more than one text. Look for similarities and differences in the following:

- main idea
- point of view
- purpose
- characters
- setting
- problems/conflict
- themes

## **Example:**

### **Life on the Bayou**



**Passage 1**

Riding my bike on the bayou with my father was one of my favorite pastimes growing up. Those memories are probably the most unforgettable ones I have. We were inseparable then. The bayou was our special place. The concrete trails surrounded by deep dark bayou water and the lush green foliage were like a second home to me. When I have children, I would like to move back there and share those experiences with them.

**Passage 2**

Our hometown of Houston, Texas, is also known as the Bayou City to its inhabitants. There are more than 2,500 miles of waterways located here. The Bayou Preservation Association is a group of citizens who have made it their mission to protect and preserve these beautiful waterways. We spread public awareness about the streams and promote conservation. BPA believes the concrete bayous most Houstonians know and love destroyed animal habitats and countless trees. We hold town meetings, review policy, and plant trees. All of our work is done in the name of saving the bayou for our children's children to enjoy.

Can you see the differences between these passages? Think about the main ideas, purposes, and points of view of the two passages. Both have a fondness for the Houston bayou and would like to see them preserved for future generations. However, one is more about nostalgia, and the other passage is aimed at convincing people to save the bayou.

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# Genres

**Genre** is a French word that means "type" or "kind." When we talk about genres of writing, we are talking about the different types of writing such as fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. Each of these broad categories has multiple forms within it. For example, biography and autobiography are both kinds of nonfiction. Below are some of the main characteristics, or features, of different literary genres.

**Fiction** is the class of literature made up of works whose content is produced by the imagination and is not necessarily based on fact. Fiction consists of narration invented by the imagination. It is usually told in prose form, the ordinary language people use in everyday speaking or writing that does not use the meter or rhyme characteristic of poetry or verse. Common types of fiction include novels and short stories.

A **novel** is a fictional piece of writing usually of considerable length, typically having a plot that is unfolded by the actions, speech, and thoughts of the characters.

A **short story** is a fictional prose narrative that is shorter and less complex than other pieces, usually under 10,000 words.

**Nonfiction** is a literary work in which the content is based on fact. Nonfiction writing is not made up or imaginary. In other words, it is not fiction. There are many kinds of nonfiction writing, including biographies, autobiographies, diaries and journals, essays, reviews, speeches, and newspaper articles.

A **biography** is an account of a person's life written, composed, or produced by another person. A biography is written by someone other than the person whose life is being described. Many famous people have biographies written about them that tell their life story. If you were to write a book about the life of George Washington, you would be writing a biography.

An **autobiography** is a piece of writing that a person writes about his or her own life. Autobiographies are written in the first person using the pronouns "I," "me," "us," and "we." If you were to write about your summer vacation, that work would be autobiographical.

A **diary** is a written account of events or circumstances in a person's life where each entry is dated. A **journal** is similar to a diary in that it includes a dated record of daily events. Both diaries and journals may include a person's thoughts and feelings about the events that are recorded. The difference is that a journal is more likely to be a continuous log of each day's events, whereas a diary is not used everyday.

An **essay** is a relatively short literary composition in prose on a single subject, usually presenting the personal view of the author. The writer discusses a topic, often restricted in scope, or tries to persuade the reader to accept a particular point of view.

A **newspaper article** gives information about current events that happen locally or around the world. Newspapers are published every day.

**Poetry** is a type of writing designed to convey experiences, ideas, or emotions in a vivid and imaginative way. Poems are characterized by literary techniques such as rhyme and rhythm. Poetry is usually (but not always) written in short lines, and the lines often rhyme. A poem may tell a story, create images, or just share a feeling or thought.

**Technical documents** provide directions to do something. These documents—such as manuals and applications—are not used for entertainment but for practical purposes. For example, a college application instructs a student how to provide information needed on the form.

**Cross-genre** refers to a work that has characteristics of more than one genre. With the development of different artistic movements over time, artists and authors have often played with the boundaries of genres. For example, some poems may read like a cross between a story and a biography.

## Development of Genres

Genres have changed with time and movements in art and literature. Many modern poems are not written in strict meter and form. New genres such as flash fiction (fiction that can be read out loud under five minutes), concrete poetry (poems that are visually arranged to represent a shape and to add meaning to the written words) have developed to suit the busy lives of today's readers. However, short stories, novels, lyric poetry, and biographies are still composed and widely read today.

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2

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# Character Analysis

*You can understand stories better when you understand characters. This is called **character analysis**. When you analyze characters, think about the following items.*

## Trait:

a special quality or something special about someone's personality.

*examples:*

- hair color, eye color, height, weight, age, beliefs, likes, dislikes, opinions, behavior
- "Jenny's relatives thought she was shy, but her friends knew that she was outgoing and just liked to spend lots of time reading."



## Motivation:

what causes someone to act in a certain way. It can be an emotion, desire, need, etc. A motivation is the reason we do something.

*examples:*

- "Tripping over his untied shoes, Maurelio dragged himself to the coffee machine because he was desperate to wake up."
- "Susan was unclear about the instructions for the assignment, so she emailed Mrs. Reed last night."
- "Ron delivers pizza on the weekends because he needs to raise money to pay for his college tuition."



## Conflict:

when characters have different interests or goals.

*examples:*

- "With tears in her eyes, Jessica angrily asked Nico why he didn't return her phone calls. Nico looked away and replied that he didn't want to be her friend anymore."
- "When they stayed over at their grandmother's house, Joshua and Peter had an argument about who would sleep on the top bunk."
- "Ben told the cashier that he didn't agree with how much money the store charged for CDs. The cashier told Ben that he needed to pay the money, anyway."



## Point of View:

the side from which a story is told. It can affect how facts are shown and how we look at the characters.

*examples:*

- "My name is Kevin, and I'm a trustworthy person. Would you believe me if I told you that I'm from the Planet Xnychon?"
- "Brenda was telling people at the office that Timothy had been calling her names

behind her back. Their boss Mr. Fairfield told Timothy that he needed to get Timothy's side of the story."



## Relationships:

the connection of people in friendship, family, work, school, or other activities.

*examples:*

- mother, sister, friend, teacher, neighbor, father, boss, etc.
- "One nice thing about going to the same school as your sister is getting to share her lunch when you forget yours."



*Think about how all these character traits affect the story. A character's traits or relationships might affect his or her point of view. Motivation affects action and changes. When we understand all of these things, a character becomes easy to understand. When writing your own characters, think about all these things. You'll be on your way to making an interesting and deep character.*



# Setting

**Setting** is the time, place, and circumstances in which a story takes place. It tells the reader where and when the story occurs.



**The main components of setting include . . .**

- place (geographical location)
- time
- weather
- social conditions
- mood (atmosphere)

**When analyzing setting, remember . . .**

The setting of a story is not always directly stated. Sometimes you have to use clues to recognize the setting. Below are some examples of sentences that would give the reader clues about the setting.

"I closed my eyes and listened to the waves brushing back and forth across the wet sand."

"Armand felt dizzy as he looked over the railing of the Eiffel Tower."

"No matter what, I am determined to stay awake to see the first man walk on the Moon."

Authors take great care when choosing settings for their stories. The setting can have an effect on the reader by mirroring the mood or theme.

Stories about loss or death often take place in winter.

Suspenseful or scary stories often take place in dark, secluded places.

Futuristic stories often take place in outer space or on another planet.

In some stories, the setting can have an effect on the characters or conflict.

The setting is part of the conflict when a character becomes shipwrecked on a desert island.

The setting affects characters when a historic event such as a war changes their lives.

The setting also influences the characters when they travel to a place that is foreign to them and must learn new customs.

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1

2

Next

# Plot

**Plot** is the storyline or sequence of events that take place in a story. It is what happens in a story. All fictional stories have a plot, and all plots have a conflict and a resolution. **Conflict** is the opposition between characters or forces that shapes or motivates the action of the plot. The **resolution** is how the conflict is solved and brought to an end.

## Sample Story

Sweating profusely, Jerry was still trying to overcome his shock on winning the scholarship. He shouldn't even be at this banquet in the first place. The banquet was for finalists, not cheaters.

He'd only entered the scholarship contest for extra credit. He'd needed the extra points to make a B in English. Another C on his report card would have made him grounded for another three weeks. No way was he going to let that happen.

So he had paid his friend Lenny to write the essay for him. Lenny needed the money, and he hated to write. It was a win-win situation. He didn't know that Lenny was going to make a huge mistake. How could Lenny mix up his own submission with the paper he wrote for Jerry? How could he give Jerry the better paper to turn in?

*Lenny should be here, not me!* Jerry wanted to cry out. He should've just written his own paper. It wasn't that hard of an assignment.

The other guests were enjoying themselves, conversing with their neighbors and relishing their meal, a mouthwatering plate full of steak and potatoes. But Jerry's plate remained untouched. Sick to his stomach, he felt like he was going to be found out at any moment, like the word "CHEATER" was stamped on his forehead. He smiled feebly as one person after another came up to congratulate him.

The guilt was driving him nuts. Excusing himself, Jerry finally got up and left



the banquet hall. He couldn't take the charade any longer. He needed to tell someone the truth. One way or another, Lenny was going to get this scholarship.

## Sample Questions

1. What is a major **conflict** in this selection?

Jerry is overwhelmed with guilt for cheating in a contest.

2. What is a **resolution** to Jerry's conflict?

Jerry can tell someone the truth so that Lenny can get the scholarship that he deserves.

3. Why did Jerry enter the scholarship contest?

He wanted to get extra credit in his English class so that he could make a B on his report card.

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# Theme

*A **theme** is a central or recurring idea that is explored in a piece of writing, sometimes in the form of a life lesson or moral. A theme can also be described as a message that makes the reader think about life, human nature, or the world. The theme is not usually stated in a single sentence. Instead, the reader must determine the theme by extracting it from the events that occur in a story. Recognizing a theme is important because it helps the reader understand the meaning of a story.*

## Some Common Themes Found in Literature:

- Man is man's worst enemy.
- Good is stronger than evil.
- A person grows by facing obstacles.
- Enjoy life now because we all die too soon.
- Love conquers all.
- Treat others the way you want to be treated.

Notice that the themes aren't describing particular events or characters. They are broad ideas that can apply to all people.

*example:*

### The Wolf and the Goat

by Aesop



A wolf saw a goat grazing at the edge of a high cliff. The wolf smacked his lips at the thought of a fine goat dinner.

"My dear friend," said the wolf in his sweetest voice, "aren't you afraid you will fall down from that cliff? Come down here and graze on this fine grass beside me on safe, level ground."

"No, thank you," said the goat.

"Well, then," said the wolf, "aren't you cold up there in the wind? You would be warmer grazing down here beside me in this sheltered area."

"No, thank you," said the goat.

"But the grass tastes better down here!" said the exasperated wolf. "Why dine alone?"

"My dear wolf," the goat finally said, "are you quite sure that it is MY dinner you are worrying about and not your own?"

**Question:** Which of the following **best** describes a theme of the passage?

- A. You can't change who you are.
- B. Honesty is not always the best policy.
- C. Be cautious if an enemy is being kind.
- D. A good friend is hard to find.

**Explanation:** In the above story, the wolf is trying to trick the goat into coming down from the cliff. The wolf wants to eat the goat for dinner, but the goat knows to be cautious around its enemies. He or she does not fall for the wolf's tricks. One theme, or message, of this passage is "Be cautious if an enemy is being kind."

## Tips for Identifying Theme:

- Look closely at the title. Sometimes you will find a clue about the theme.
- Look for ideas that are repeated more than once.
- Look for lessons that the character learns.
- Think about what happens in the story and how it can apply to life. For example, if the main character must survive an approaching tornado, the theme may be, "Nature is at war with mankind."

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# Tone and Mood

**Tone** is the reflection of an author's attitude toward his or her subject.

Have you ever been in a conversation with someone, and you were able to tell if that person was angry, sad, or happy? Usually, the person talking to you will give hints about how he or she is feeling with gestures like a frown, a smile, or a nervous twitch.



Authors give the similar hints when they write. An author's **tone** gives the reader an idea about how the author feels about a certain subject. They aren't hints that can be seen like the hints in a conversation; however, things like word choice and attitude can be recognized in writing. For example, pay close attention to the author's tone in the passage below:

The school's decision to add four more vending machines shows that it thinks the health of its students is unimportant. Instead of working to make needed changes, like adding better computers to the school, it decided that students need sugar, caffeine, fat, and empty calories instead. It is ridiculous! What kind of message does it send to the students? We are taught in our health classes to avoid sugary, fatty foods, but now, students have four more chances to swell up on junk food. The so-called food sold in these vending machines will make the student body grow, but it will be measured in pounds.

The author's tone in this passage is angry. He or she has a problem with the school's new vending machines filled with junk food. Think about how the author uses language to show his or her anger about the school adding new vending machines:

- The author uses the words "junk food" instead of "snacks" to show how bad the food is. They have similar meanings, but "junk food" has a negative connotation.

- The author uses words like "ridiculous" instead of "wrong" to show anger because "wrong" doesn't express how angry the author really is.
- The author makes a comment on the school's needs by bringing up computers and then bringing up sugar, caffeine, fat, and empty calories that the vending machines will cause. This comparison shows that the vending machines are a bad choice.
- The author uses the phrase "student body" to make a comment on students gaining weight instead of using it as a way to talk about the population of the school.

***Mood*** is the atmosphere that a writer creates for a reader that plays on the reader's imagination and emotion through the use of descriptive adverbs or adjectives.

Can you recall a time in life when you were scared? What were the events taking place around you that scared you? What made things scary for you? How would you describe that feeling to someone else? Writers use descriptions of a situation to create mood. For example, pay attention to the mood in the passage below:

I rose from bed with a noise ringing in my ears so loudly that I almost lost my balance. The noise sounded like the screeching moan of claws being drug against glass. The sharp, squeaking sound cut through the darkness of the night and woke me from my dream. My first thought was that a bear was trying to get inside of the cabin, but a bear's claws would have shattered the glass. As I happened on the window, the full moon shined against whatever was making the noise from behind, like a giant spotlight. I saw behind the curtain the shape of something tall and lanky with long arms reaching out to the window. I immediately yanked the curtain aside as a long squeal bleated out against the window pane. Filling the pane outside was a dying willow—its branches pushing against the glass with a gust from the winds outside.

The author of this passage uses several descriptions to create a scary mood. Think about how the author's language creates a scary mood:

- The author uses the phrase "screeching moan of claws." Claws are usually associated with animals. Just think about how scared the character must feel thinking that an animal is outside scratching against the window.
- The narrator says, "I saw behind the curtain the shape of something tall and lanky with long arms reaching out to the window." Think about the character being alone in a cabin in the woods. He or she must feel terrified to see such an image outside of the window.



- The narrator says, "I immediately yanked the curtain aside as a long squeal bleated out against the window pane." The character isn't sure what's outside the window until he or she pulls the curtain away. All the lead-up to that point is meant to show how scary the mood is.

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# Point of View

*Point of view refers to the way a story is told, the perspective or angle of vision or position from which the events are narrated for the reader. Sometimes the author "tells" the story; sometimes one of the characters does so. Sometimes this narrator knows all about everything; sometimes the narrator is limited in her or his knowledge and outlook. These methods of storytelling and the examples of point of view are detailed below.*

## First Person

First person point of view uses "I" or "we." First person is often used when someone is stating an opinion or sharing a feeling.

*example:*

I went to the store today. When I was in the cereal aisle, I bumped into an old friend and had a nice conversation.

## Second Person

Second person point of view uses the word "you." Second person is a good choice when giving directions or anytime you're speaking directly to someone. Second person is almost never used to tell a story.

*example:*

You should work on getting your room cleaned. First, pick up the clothes on the floor. Then, you need to run a vacuum and dust the tables.

## Third Person

Third person point of view uses "he," "she," or "they." Sometimes "it" is used when talking about a thing instead of a person.

*example:*

When studying the history of Earth, it becomes evident that

dinosaurs existed far longer than human beings have so far. One would be impressed to learn how many millions of years these great creatures survived and thrived on Earth.

### Third Person Limited

In third person limited point of view, the narrator is a non-participant, but only knows the thoughts and feelings of a single character. In other words, the narrator's knowledge of the situation is limited only to one character.

*example:*

Zo had seen the building of the Great Wall, the fall of Berlin Wall, and everything in between. He wondered if humans would ever really learn how to live in peace. Zo wasn't on Earth to be a teacher. He was there to observe and document what he learned about humans. But it was so hard for Zo not to get involved.

### Third Person Omniscient

In the omniscient mode, the writer is a non-participant, but is able to see into and have unlimited knowledge about any or all of the characters. From this angle, the author can roam anywhere, see anything, and comment on or interpret events at will.

*example:*

Faye breathed deeply while she waited her turn to take the stage. She always felt sick and nervous before a performance. Faye worried that she would forget the words or that her voice would crack. But, every time she took her place in front of the microphone, every word and every note came out perfect and clear.

Nick was acting like his happy self. Nothing seemed to bother him. Nick was always ready to entertain an audience. But on the inside, he struggled severely with self-doubt.

The voice in Nick's head was relentless. *You're going to fail this time for sure. And when you do, it will all be over. No one will ever hire you to sing again. Your family will be so disappointed.*

Whenever the first guitar riff rang out, the voice in Nick's head became silent, and his own voice poured forth like a honey-filled river. Each time, every listener fell in love with the sweet, rich sound of Nick's voice.

## Narrator

*The **narrator** is who tells a story. In many cases, the narrator tells or recalls the events. The narrator shows the actions of the characters in the story to the reader.*

To identify and describe the narrator, a reader must find out who is telling the story. The narrator is the voice that "talks" to the reader. He or she is not necessarily the author of a story. It could be a character that the author made up to tell the story. It also could be simply an all-knowing narrator that relates the story to the reader.

## **The Narrator as a Character**

The narrator can be someone in the story who tells the story from his or her point of view. When the narrator is a character in the story, sometimes another character says the narrator's name. The narrator usually uses words like "I," "me," and "we" to show that a person from the story is personally experiencing the action. When the author has one of the characters in the story narrate the events, it gives the reader a close connection to the events.

## **The Unnamed Narrator**

Sometimes, the narrator won't be named in the stories you read. When this happens, it may be because the story is told from the point of view of someone all knowing. He or she knows all of the characters' thoughts and actions. The narrator can be a part of the story, or the narrator can just tell the story.

When the narrator doesn't act or speak to the other characters, the narrator is a voice outside of the story action. He or she usually uses words like "he," "she," "it," and "they."

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2

Next

# Historical Context in Literature

**Historical context**, the historical setting of the story, may not be important in all works of fiction, but in some, it is very important. For example, there would be no ***A Tale of Two Cities***, by Charles Dickens, if the French Revolution had never happened. The characters of Charles Darnay and Lucie Manette may have been created in Dickens' mind, but the political and moral conflicts in the story reflect what was happening at that time in history.

Here are a few examples of the relevance of historical context in some famous fictional works.

***The Grapes of Wrath*, by John Steinbeck:** a story of the hardships of Tom Joad and his family during the Dust Bowl Days of the 1930s. Tom witnesses the unjust ways that migrant workers were treated by the government at that time—including watching a good friend die at the hands of an official—and does what he can to fight back.

***Inherit the Wind*, by Jerome Lawrence:** based on the real-life 1925 "Scopes Monkey Trial," this courtroom drama revolves around the trial of Bert Cates who is accused of teaching Darwin's theory of evolution to his students. Two great lawyers take on the major moral issue of the day.

***Stones From the River*, by Ursula Hegi:** narrated by a dwarf named Trudi, this story recounts day-to-day life in a small town in Germany during World War II. Through Trudi's eyes, we learn about the horrific moral dilemmas faced by the townspeople—such as whether to help hide their own Jewish neighbors from the Nazis, or turn them in, in order to save themselves.

***Cry, the Beloved Country*, by Alan Paton:** a novel set in the political and historical context of Apartheid-White minority rule in South Africa in the 1940s. A priest, Stephen Kumalo, learns that his son, Absalom, has been accused of killing a white man. Absalom's anger and fear in this oppressive political system, and his feelings of helplessness to better his life, lead him to commit the murder, which destroys his own life, as well those around him.

In stories such as these, the plot and the moral issues of the story are developed around a real-life historical setting. Novels and plays that are based on historical events can be quite interesting for the reader, because even though they are fiction, the historical element makes it feel like they really happened!

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1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

Next

# Allegory

*Allegory is a form of extended metaphor in which all of the elements of the story have meanings that lie outside the narrative itself. In other words, the story is symbolic of another story. The underlying meaning has moral, social, religious, or political significance, and characters are often personifications of abstract ideas as charity, greed, or envy.*

Published in 1678, *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan is among the most famous allegories of all time. The allegory tells of Christian, an everyman character, who makes his way from the "City of Destruction" (Earth) to the "Celestial City" (Heaven) of Zion. The story features such characters as Envy, Piety, and Charity.

Other famous allegories include Dante's *The Divine Comedy*, William Langland's *Piers Plowman*, and Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*.

*Star Wars*, *The Matrix*, and *The Wizard of Oz* are all films considered to be allegorical. Think about these films. What about the stories seem symbolic? What makes you think they might be allegories?

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1

2

3

4

Next

# Poetry

*A poem is a type of writing designed to convey experiences, ideas, or emotions in a vivid and imaginative way. Poems are characterized by literary techniques such as meter and rhyme and often use language, meaning, sound, and rhythm to evoke a specific response. Poems can be categorized into various poetic forms based on their characteristics.*

A **ballad** is a poem that tells a story. It is often of folk origin and intended to be sung. Ballads often consist of simple stanzas and usually have a refrain (a repeated phrase or stanza).

A **stanza** is a division in poetry shown by a line break. In poetry, a stanza is the equivalent of a paragraph, only a stanza is made up of lines of poetry. In the poem below, each stanza is made up of four lines.

*example:*

Yankee Doodle went to town  
A-riding on a pony  
Stuck a feather in his hat  
And called it macaroni.

Yankee Doodle, keep it up  
Yankee Doodle dandy  
Mind the music and the step  
And with the girls be handy.

Father and I went down to camp  
Along with Captain Gooding  
And there we saw the men and boys  
As thick as hasty pudding.

Yankee Doodle, keep it up  
Yankee Doodle dandy  
Mind the music and the step  
And with the girls be handy

A **blank verse** poem is written in iambic pentameter. That means each line has ten syllables. The syllables have a pattern of unstressed syllable, stressed



syllable, unstressed syllable, stressed syllable, and so on. The lines do not have an end rhyme scheme.

*example:*

But do not let us quarrel anymore,  
No, my Lucrezia; bear with me for once:  
Sit down and all shall happen as you wish.  
You turn your face, but does it bring your heart?

*Robert Browning*

A **couplet** is a pair of lines that usually rhyme. Couplets can appear in other poetry forms, such as sonnets.

*example:*

O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!  
It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night

*William Shakespeare*

An **elegy** is traditionally written in response to the death of a person or group. In content, it is similar to an epitaph (written on a tombstone) or a eulogy (written using prose). An elegy focuses on the loss or grief itself.

*example:*

Too proud to die; broken and blind he died  
The darkest way, and did not turn away,  
A cold kind man brave in his narrow pride

On that darkest day, Oh, forever may  
He lie lightly, at last, on the last, crossed  
Hill, under the grass, in love, and there grow

*Dylan Thomas*

An **epic** poem is a long poem narrating the heroic exploits of an individual in a way central to the beliefs and culture of the society. Typical elements include fabulous adventures, superhuman deeds, majestic language, and a mythical setting.

*examples:*

*The Odyssey* by Homer

*Beowulf*

Unlike ballads and epic poetry, **lyric** poetry does not attempt to tell a story. It is of a more personal nature. Rather than portraying characters and actions, the lyric poet addresses the reader directly, portraying the speaker's feelings, states of mind, and perceptions. Lyric poetry often is written with a specific rhyme scheme and meter.

*examples:*

"Daffodils" by William Wordsworth

"I Hear America Singing" by Walt Whitman

A **haiku** (pronounced HIGH-koo) is a Japanese form of poetry, also known as hokku. It consists of three unrhymed lines of five, seven, and five syllables.

*example:*

Springtime in the woods (*five syllables*)  
A little white snake went in (*seven syllables*)  
The pond very fast. (*five syllables*)

**Narrative** poems are poems that tell a story. They have characters and plot just like a story. Sometimes they have dialogue, themes, and conflicts. Narrative poems can sometimes be categorized as another form, such as ballads or epics.

*examples:*

*The Canterbury Tales* by Geoffrey Chaucer

"The Raven" by Edgar Allan Poe

An **ode** is a poem that focuses on one subject and finds an original way to express what is good and unique about it. The structure of odes has changed over the last 100 years, but traditional odes follow a rhyme scheme of ABABCDECDE for each stanza.

*examples:*

"Ode on a Grecian Urn" by John Keats

"Ode to the Confederate Dead" by Allen Tate

**Free verse** is poetry written without regard to form, rhyme, rhythm, meter, or line breaks. A poem written in free verse doesn't have a clear traditional form.

*examples:*

"Oh Captain! My Captain!" by Walt Whitman

"To a Stranger" by Walt Whitman

A **sonnet** is a form of poetry written in fourteen lines and ending in a couplet. Sonnets also have a specific rhythm the poet must follow. They are usually written in iambic pentameter.

*example:*

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?  
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:  
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,  
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:  
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,  
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;  
And every fair from fair sometime declines,  
By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimm'd;  
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,  
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;  
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,  
When in eternal lines to time thou growest;  
So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,  
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

*William Shakespeare*

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2

3

4

Next

# Drama

*Dramatic literature can be one of the most exciting parts of your studies of English. Drama is not only a genre favored by important writers like William Shakespeare and Oscar Wilde, but it is also simply fun to read aloud or perform for an audience.*

Here are some important words you should know when studying dramatic literature:

## Comedy

Comedy refers to any play which consistently features humor and light-hearted events.

## Tragedy

A tragedy deals with humans as victims of destiny, character flaw, moral weakness, or social pressure.

## Cast

A play will list the names of the characters needed. Some lists will even give a little description of each role, such as who the character is or what he or she is wearing. The list of characters, or "cast," is shown at the top of the play.

## Dialogue

Dialogue is the words spoken by characters in a play.

## Soliloquy

Soliloquy is narrative spoken by a single actor in which his or her thoughts are revealed to the audience. It can be written as if the actor is speaking to himself or herself. Usually, the actor is alone on stage, or the other performers are temporarily not engaged in the play.

## Dramatic Monologue

Similar to soliloquy, a dramatic monologue is a long speech by a single actor. The actor can either be alone on stage or interacting with other performers.

## Character Foil

A character foil is a character whose traits are in direct

contrast to those of the principal character. The foil therefore highlights the traits of the protagonist.

## Scene Design

Scene design is the creative process of developing and executing aesthetic or functional designs in a production, such as costumes, lighting, sets, and makeup.

## Aside

The term refers to a speech or comment made by an actor directly to the audience about the action of the play or another character. The audience is to understand that this comment is not heard or noticed by the other characters in the play.

## Stage Directions

Stage directions tell actors how to move and speak. Most stage directions are in parentheses ( ) or in *italics*. They can also tell you where the play is taking place or give information about how to make the stage look to set the scene.

## Prop

A prop is an article or object that appears on the stage during a play. The word "prop" comes from the term "theatrical property." Props in the play *Romeo and Juliet* include the swords used in the fight scenes.

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1

2

Next

# Informational Genres

*The word **genre** means "type" or "kind." From these definitions, we know that **informational genres** must be types of writing that give information. There are many different ways to give information. Below is a list of common informational genres.*

**Textbooks** are books used in schools or colleges for the complete study of a subject.

An **encyclopedia** is a reference book that has information on a wide variety of subjects. Encyclopedias are good for summary reports on a great many topics.

**Magazines** contain a collection of articles, stories, pictures, or other features. Magazines can be about all sorts of things, including sports, like in *Sports Illustrated*, or fashion, like in *Teen Vogue*.

**Newspapers** are publications that usually come out daily or weekly. They contain current news, editorials, feature articles, and usually advertising.

**How-tos** are usually short pieces of writing that explain how to do something, like make a birdhouse.

**Personal correspondences** are writings between friends. When you write your friend a note in class, you are writing a personal correspondence.

An **autobiography** is a piece of writing that person writes about his or her own life. Autobiographies are written in the first person using the pronouns "I," "me," "us," and "we."

A **biography** is a piece of writing about someone's life. A biography is written by

someone other than the person whose life is being described. If you were to write a book about the life of George Washington, you would be writing a biography.

**Essays** are short pieces of writing on a single subject, usually presenting the personal view of the author. Essays can be personal or persuasive (show an opinion).

**Advertisements** persuade people to buy things or do something.

**Research reports** rely on many sources of information to give the full story about a certain topic. A research report might include interviews, encyclopedia entries, and even newspaper articles.

**Comparative essays** discuss two or more subjects, often contrasting their similarities and differences, toward the goal of making an argument.

**Technical writing** gives information or explains how to do something in language that is easy to understand. It usually includes lists or easy-to-understand descriptions that guide the reader through steps.

A **persuasive essay** uses evidence to support an opinion and an active voice to convince the reader that the writer's opinion is correct. Persuasive pieces usually begin with an argument, are followed by facts and counter arguments, and conclude by restating the argument.

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2

Next

# Following Directions

*When you are following directions to complete a task, it is important to read all of the directions first, before beginning the task. By reading all of the directions first, you will have a better idea of what to expect as you complete your task.*

## Forms and Applications

When filling out forms and applications, you should always read the entire form very carefully. Check to make sure you have written the proper information in the proper location. Make sure your writing is legible.

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YES / NO (Please circle one)

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*A **warranty** is a guarantee given to the purchaser by a company stating that a product is reliable and free from known defects and that the seller will, without charge, repair or replace defective parts within a given time limit and under certain conditions.*

*A **contract** is an agreement between two or more parties, especially one that is written and enforceable by law.*

As with all legal documents, it is very important to read warranties and contracts very carefully before signing them. Reading legal documents is just like reading anything else, like a story or news report. The text might have words that you do not know, but you can use context clues to figure out what the words mean.

Comment on Lesson

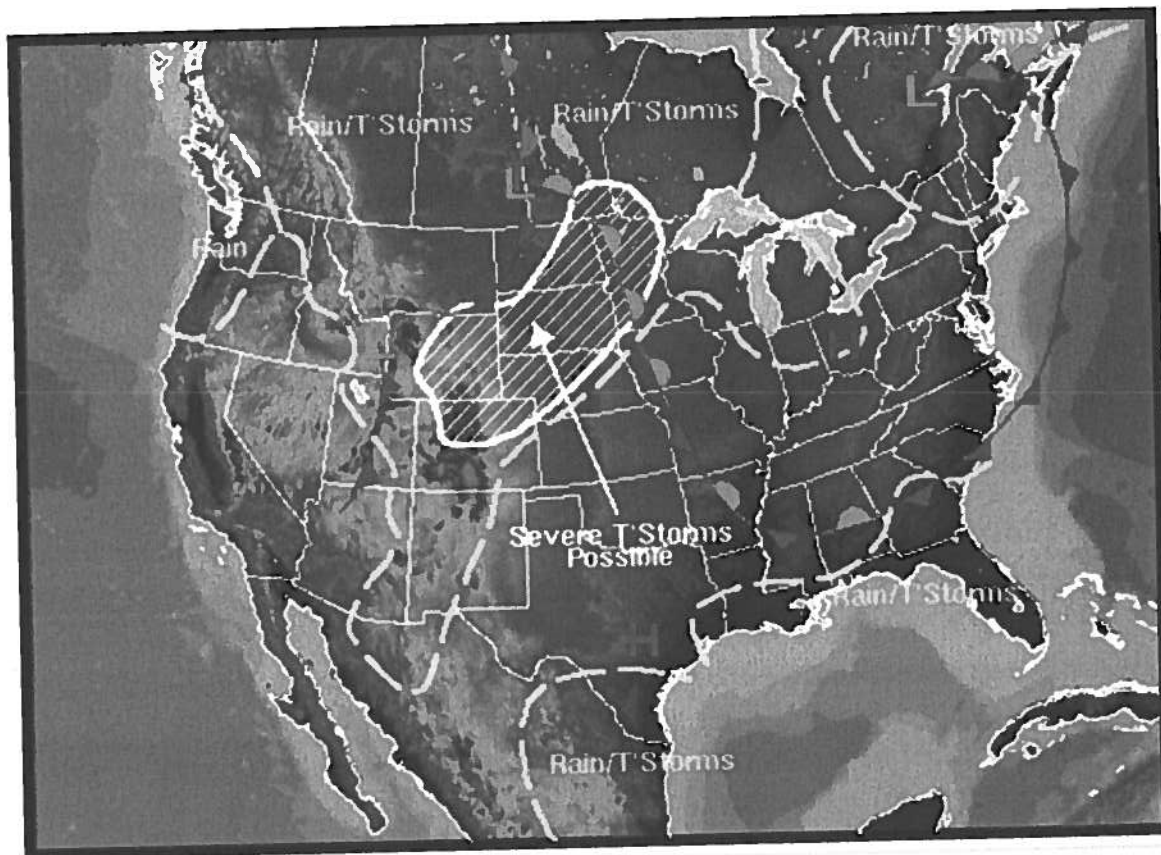
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# Graphics

*Graphics are figures that give information through pictures and shapes. Learn about different types of graphics below.*

## Weather Map

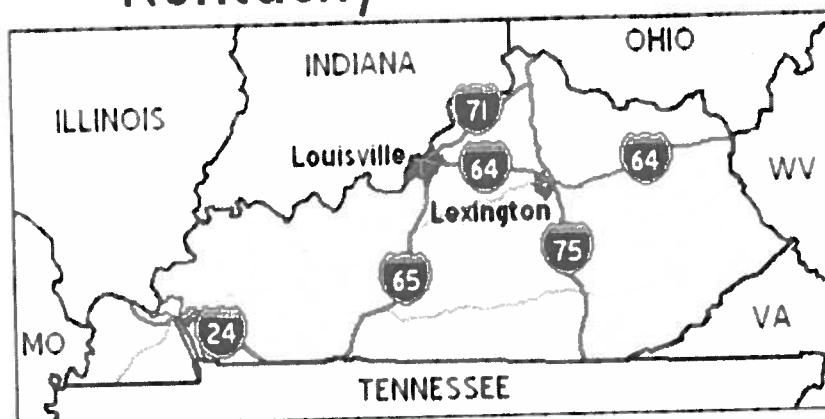
A weather map uses colors and symbols to show weather conditions across an area. Look for a key to help you understand what the colors and symbols mean. This example shows high and low pressure systems across the United States and Canada. It also shows various cold fronts, warm fronts, and thunderstorm activity.



## Road Map

A road map is published primarily to assist travelers in moving from one place to another. Some road maps show only interstate highways, while others show a detailed network of roads, including the back roads.

## Kentucky Interstates



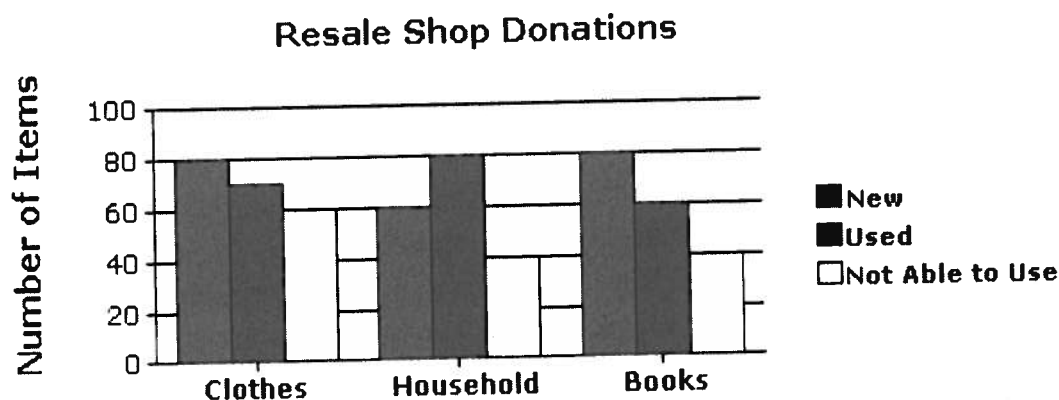
## Bar Graph

A bar graph is useful for representing the trends of a set of data. The different bar colors help separate the data.

The chart below shows data regarding the three main types of donations a charitable resale shop received.

	New	Used	Unable to Use
<b>Clothes</b>	80	70	60
<b>Household</b>	60	80	40
<b>Books</b>	80	60	40

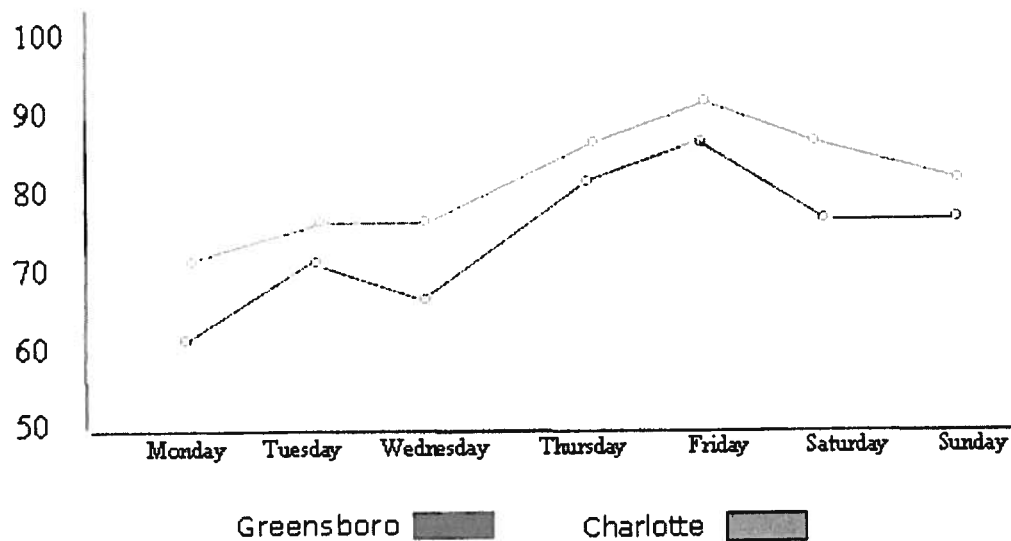
This bar graph of the data above helps the reader get a clearer picture of the donations:



## Line Graph

A line graph is good for making comparisons in data, such as the temperature

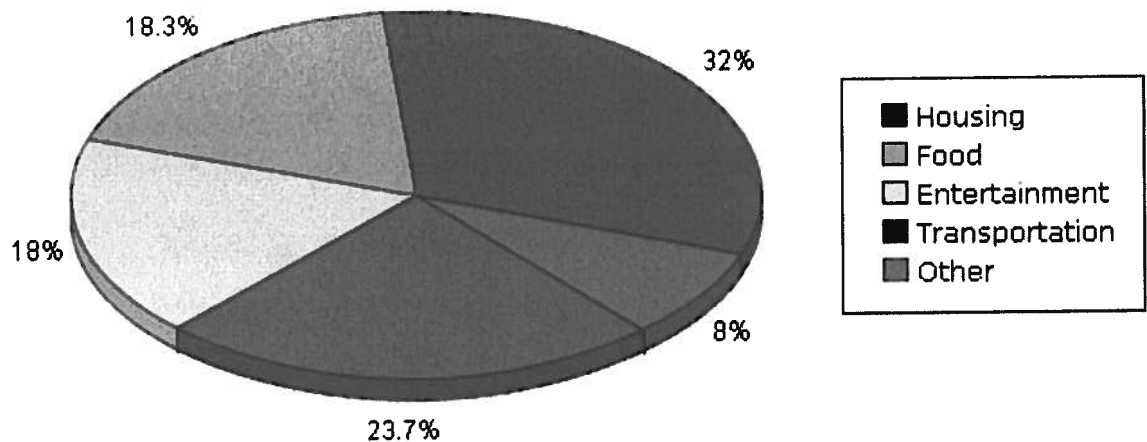
differences, or for showing growth trends, such as improvement in math scores over the course of a year.



## Pie Chart

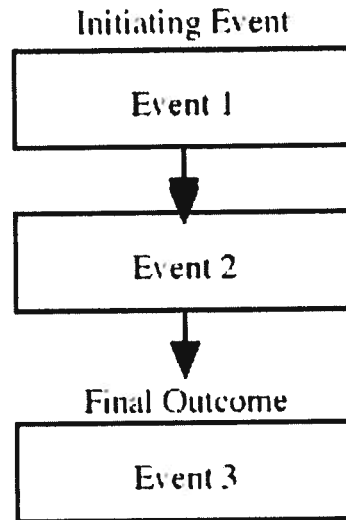
A pie chart shows how the relative sizes of the parts compare to each other and to the whole. The pie chart is the type of graph most commonly used for displaying percentages.

Karie's Monthly Budget



## Flow Chart

A flowchart is used to show the steps of a process or event in order.



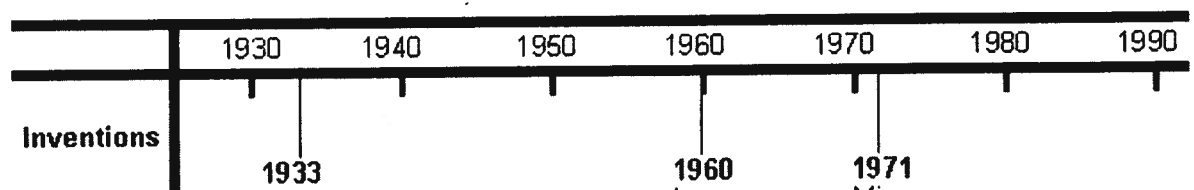
## Table

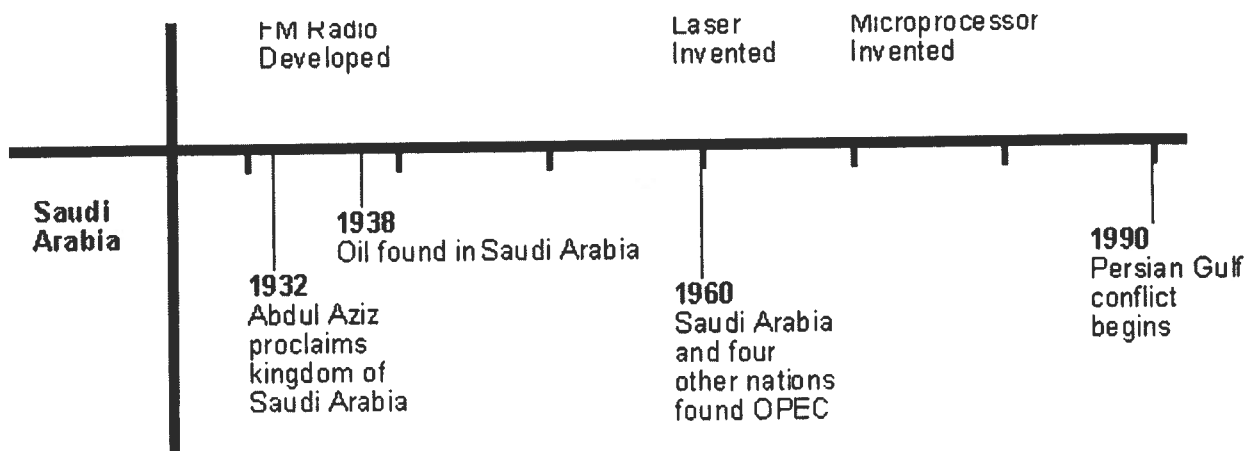
A table is one way to organize information in boxes using rows and columns. The first column is the main subject of the table. The other columns give more information about the subject in the first column. Each row has all the information for one subject.

Number below poverty level (1,000)				
	Individuals		Families	
State	2000	2005	2000	2005
Alabama	672	754	146	168
Alaska	55	71	11	13
Arizona	780	824	150	159
Arkansas	439	462	96	100
California	4,520	4,673	832	850

## Timeline

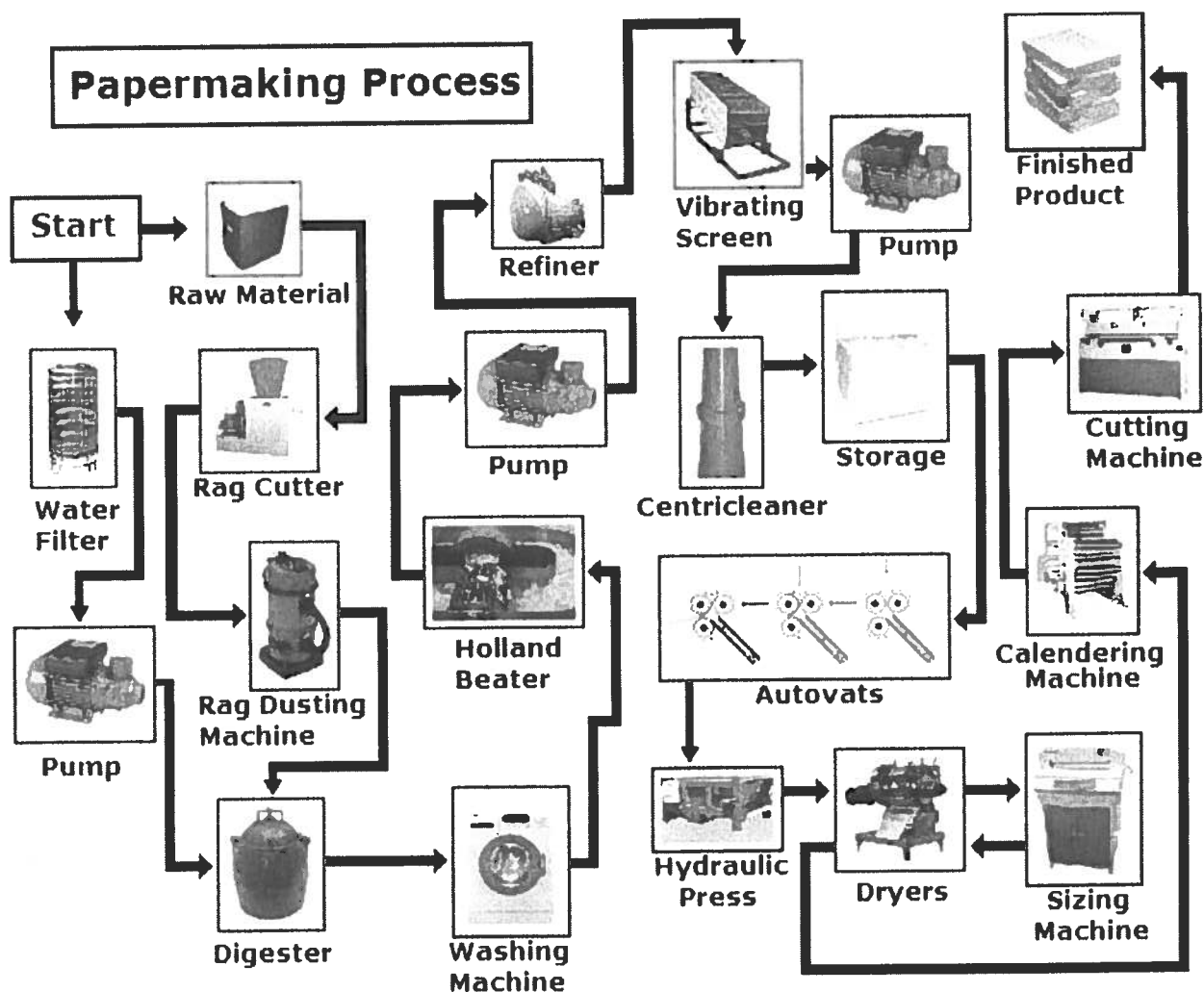
One common way of putting events in chronological order is by creating a timeline. A timeline is read from left to right or from top to bottom and is marked by years, decades, or centuries.





## Diagram

A diagram shows the steps in a process with words and pictures. The process can be how to make a product or how a service is done. Below is a diagram showing the process for making paper.



# Fact and Opinion

*To be a good reader, you should be able to tell the difference between a **fact** and an **opinion**. Figuring out facts from opinions is something you do already. You may do it without even knowing it. Below are some definitions and examples of facts and opinions. They will help you tell the difference between facts and opinions.*

## Fact

A fact is a statement that you can check or prove with evidence (proof). This evidence may be in what someone says, something you see, or something written in a book or text. In other words, a fact is something that can be proven. Facts are usually found in newspapers, textbooks, and news shows on television.

*examples:*

David Byrne was in the band Talking Heads.

Chipotle sauce has a smoky flavor.

Vicki Myron wrote *Dewey*, a book about a library cat.

"Loogie" is a slang word for "phlegm."

**\*\*Audrey thinks that Jason is the cutest guy in school.**

## Opinion

An opinion is a statement that cannot be proven true or false. Opinions are what people believe, feel, or decide about something. An opinion cannot be proven right or wrong. Opinions are usually found in editorials, letters to the editor, and in debates.

*examples:*

David Byrne is a talented musician.

Chipotle sauce is best on Mexican food.

*Dewey* is a book worth reading.

People should not hawk loogies in public.

1

2

Next

# Author Bias

**Bias** is a term that is used to describe a particular attitude or slant authors take toward a subject by not accurately covering both sides of the issue. Having a preference for something is normal, and, as such, bias can be conscious or unconscious.

Writers often have strong feelings about the subjects they write about. These feelings can be revealed through their words. A writer's bias can be positive or negative. Here is an example of bias in a hotel review.



## The Rodham Hotel is a Dump!

We stayed at the Rodham Hotel on Grand Cayman Island during our vacation. From the very beginning, I was a little worried about our choice to stay there. Our family normally stays at the Hotel Roosevelt. Whenever we stay there, we always get great service. The staff is so friendly and helpful. The free breakfast the hotel provides each morning is delicious, and the shuttle service it supplies is very convenient. The Hotel Roosevelt certainly leaves its guests with high expectations for their hotel stays. Not surprisingly, the Rodham Hotel was unable to meet our standards. I will never stay there again.

Sincerely,  
June Wilson

The author's bias against the Rodham Hotel is apparent when she begins comparing it to the Hotel Roosevelt. In fact, she never states what was wrong



with the Rodham Hotel. She only states what was right with the Hotel Roosevelt. This is one example of a writer having a negative bias toward something.

## Things to Consider

When you are reading, make sure you look out for bias in the writer's words. There are a few things you should always consider.

**The writer's background:** Who is the writer? Is there something in his or her background that might contribute to a bias towards certain subjects? Is there information present in the writing that reveals this bias?

**The writer's motivation:** Ask yourself why this piece of writing was written. What was the writer's motivation? Is he or she trying to influence you to buy something or convince you to support a certain cause?

**The bigger picture:** A very important question to ask yourself before you make up your mind about an issue is whether or not the writer is telling the whole story. Gather all the information you can on both sides of the issue before you make a decision.

**Read the following passage.**

### Benefits of Volunteering



The best thing I could have ever done was become a volunteer at Marsh Evans Retirement Center. The residents at Marsh have brought so much joy and wisdom to my life. Their candor and wit have encouraged me to be more open with people in my everyday life. The information I have garnered from my conversations with them is invaluable. There are retired doctors, airplane pilots, and homemakers living at Marsh. I now have a variety of information on everything from medical diagnosis to housekeeping. Everyone should have the privilege of adopting a grandparent. As far as I am concerned, no other volunteer

opportunity will impact you more than this one.

**Question:** Does the writer have any bias present in this passage? Is the bias positive or negative?

**Answer:** The author of this passage feels that everyone should volunteer at a retirement center. This is revealed through sentences like, "As far as I am concerned, no other volunteer opportunity will impact you more than this one." He or she has a positive bias toward volunteering at retirement homes.

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2

Next

# Techniques of Argument

*An argument is a position or thesis put forth by a writer about a particular subject or issue. A writer then supports the argument with evidence.*

## Argument by Emotion

Sometimes called emotional appeal, the writer uses argument by emotion to get the reader to connect to his or her argument by invoking emotion in the reader. The writer uses words that convey strong feelings to persuade readers. He or she often uses the phrases "I feel" or "I believe" in the argument.

*example:*

I can't understand how you officials can sleep at night, knowing our town isn't safe with those predators on the loose. You must do something about this coyote problem for our children's sake!

The author's use of words like "predator" and mentioning the safety of children appeals to readers' emotions.

## Argument by Logic

Argument by logic uses logic, evidence, and claims to convince readers the author's argument is true. Logic is essential for a strong argument.

*example:*

If you do not begin to exercise regularly, then you will face health risks later in life.

## Analogy

Analogy is one form of argument by logic. In this form, the reasoning employed is based on the idea that if two things have some things in common, then they also probably have other things in common.

*example:*

Sarah likes theme parks, roller coasters, and attending Frightfest. Eric likes theme parks and roller coasters, so he will like Frightfest, too.

## Argument by Authority

A writer forms an argument by authority by using the words of someone who may be considered an expert on a subject to persuade readers.

example:

You should not smoke because the Surgeon General says that smoking can cause lung cancer.

## Expert Opinion

Expert opinion is someone who is an authority on a particular subject and can give an educated opinion. Examples include: a doctor, a lawyer, researcher, institution of higher learning, etc.

## Statistics

Statistics can provide concrete evidence to support an author's argument. The use of stats in an argument falls under the adage, "Numbers don't lie."

example:

The high school graduation rate has remained flat at 74% from 2002 to 2006. Nearly half of all children in the world live below the poverty line.

## Ways to strengthen arguments

- **Examples** The more concrete examples the writer has, the more convincing his or her argument is.
- **Facts**  
A concrete fact is always more reliable and convincing than someone's opinion. Facts are essential to building a strong argument.
- **Anecdotes**  
An anecdote is a short, often amusing, story that helps personalize the writer's argument.

Comment on Lesson

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