

Audience

As you begin the creative process, remember one important part of the creative process: deciding what **audience** you intend to reach.

Your audience is those people who will respond to your paper/project. You need to know the knowledge and expertise of your audience and know how that affects your paper/project and presentation of ideas and evidence.

Your audience will influence your choice of **vocabulary**, **sentence structure**, the kind of **evidence** you use to support your thesis, and even the **color**, **sound**, **space**, and more that you select for your written or digital message.

More attention to style is required for a paper/project made for a university professor or assignment than for texting a friend. However, each professor has different expectations and required methods. Keep in mind both the preferences of the instructor and the requirements of the project. A variety of approaches may be used in writing within the somewhat narrow limits of an academic paper/project.

Purpose

Alongside audience, it is important to consider purpose.

Is it your intent to **inform** your audience? To **persuade** them?

Consider the possible characteristics of your audience.

- What are their values and attitudes?
- What reasons might they have for reading your work?
- How much do they likely already know about your subject?
- What do they probably believe about your subject?
- What questions are they likely to have about your subject?
- How best can you inform, persuade, or otherwise appeal to them?

One key is to assess how different your own perspective may be from that of your intended audience.

Audience Checklist

Who is going to read this paper?

- One person? Large group? Small group? General audience?
- Interested readers? Uninterested?
- Favorable readers? Neutral? Hostile?
- Easy to persuade? Difficult to persuade?
- Age? Religion? Sex? Race? Income? Education? Politics?

What do readers know about the subject?

- More than I do? Same? Less?
- Well informed? Somewhat informed? Poorly informed?
- Technical language? General? Simple?
- Do we share values and attitudes?
- Readers have great, some, or little power to affect me.