

# Determining the Author's Purpose, Tone, Point of View, and Intended Audience

---

## Authors' Point of View

An author's *point of view* refers to his or her position on an issue or, in other words, the author's opinion or belief regarding an issue.

- Authors may have conflicting points of view (opinions) about controversial issues
- When authors favor one side of an issue, they are said to have a *bias* in favor of that side of the issue.
- Authors may be unbiased (neutral or objective).

## Author's Intended Meaning

The authors *intended meaning* is what the author wants readers to understand, even if the words appear to be saying something different.

- A sarcastic tone, for example, can change the meaning completely.
- Ask yourself, "What is the author's *real* meaning?"

## Author's Intended Audience

*Intended audience* means the people the writer has in mind as the readers.

- The intended audience will be:
  - A specific person (e.g., a newspaper editor)
  - A group of people (e.g., college students, parents)
  - The general public (e.g., the public at large; the "typical" American adult)

## Author's Tone

***Tone* refers to the author's use of words and writing style to convey his or her attitude towards a topic.**

- If you misinterpret the tone (such as sarcasm), you may misinterpret the message.
- Tone and purpose go together.
- Ask yourself what the author's voice would sound like if he or she had spoken the words rather than written them.

## The Edge

- In literature, "point of view" means the person through whose eyes the story is being told.
- The author's tone helps you understand the author's intended (real) meaning.
- There are many words that can be used to describe an author's tone.
- Don't confuse a description of a topic with a description of the tone. (A sad topic could be presented in a neutral tone.)
- Be specific about who the intended audience is. (Do not say the intended audience is "the readers." Tell who those readers would be.)

## Author's Purpose Chart

| Story/Poem   | Article/Passage                                |
|--|--|
| To tell  | To give facts                                  |
| To entertain (with a scary story, humorous story...) | To inform                                      |
| To teach (a moral or fable)                          | To make it clear                               |
| To show  | To teach                                       |
|  | To persuade/convince                           |
|  | To show (differences/similarities, effects...) |
|  | To explain                                     |
|  | To demonstrate                                 |
|  | To prove                                       |
|  | To give an account of (biographies)            |
|  | To develop (a setting, an idea, a character)   |