

Week 6 (10-12 to 10-16-09)

Author's tone, attitude, and purpose



Monday 10-12-09



Tuesday and Thursday (10-13 and 10-15-09)

Reading activities

This week, we are going to be working on author's purpose. Students will also learn ways to uncover how an author feels about a topic by examining the choices he or she has made in creating the work.

An author writes for many reasons. An author may give you facts or true information about a subject. Some authors write fiction stories or stories that are not true. They write these stories to entertain you. Other authors may write to persuade or to try to get you to do something.

The chart below identifies the purposes behind various newspaper articles and/or television programs.

INFORMATION	PERSUASION	ENTERTAINMENT
News accounts	Advertisements	Cartoons
Feature articles	Editorials	Poems, stories
Weather	Columns	Sitcoms
Documentaries	Letters to the editor	Movies
	Political ads	Talk shows
	Commercials	Sports



FCAT TIPS:



The test might ask questions about an author's **tone**, **attitude**, and **purpose**. Information about these three things can be found by noticing the choices an author has made, especially the words he or she has chosen to describe the facts in the selection.

⇒ **Tone**

Tone reveals the emotions that an author brings to a subject. Tone can be **positive**, **negative**, or **neutral**.

Positive: conveys good feelings. It might show happiness, pride, enthusiasm, humor, and other positive emotions.

Negative: communicates bad feelings about the topic. It might show sadness, anger, hate, or a number of other negative emotions.

Neutral: is neither positive nor negative. If an author has no opinion (or doesn't want to show one), he or she will avoid using words that express any sort of feeling at all. Words used to describe this tone include fair, balanced, objective, neutral, detached, and impartial.

⇒ **Attitude**

Attitude and **tone** are closely related. The **author's tone** can hint at her **attitude** toward—her approval or disapproval of—the subjects dealt with in the selection.



Practice Activity 1

All three of the following paragraphs describe the same experience, but each is written by a different author. Read each selection and answer the questions that follow.

Selection 1

I just saw this awesome new movie, *Space Heroes*! It's about this cool kid named Freddy, who finds out that he's really an alien from Altair. An amazing starship, with brilliant red and green lights flashing, shoots out of the sky like a falling star and zips him back to his home planet, where he meets his handsome old bother, Zendar. Zendar flies a futuristic starfighter in a battle with some creepy green creatures. Needless to say, Freddy and Zendar save the galaxy, and Freddy falls in love with a beautiful alien girl called Mella. The special effects blew my mind, and the acting was great.

Selection 2

In the new film *Space Heroes*, a boy named Freddy discovers he is not from Earth. A spaceship from his home world arrives and takes Freddy back to Altair. There Freddy meets Zendar, who enlists him in a conflict with a rival alien race. An Altairian girl, Mella, serves as a love interest.

Selection 3

Hollywood has coughed up another chunk of garbage. *Space Heroes*, which should have been called *Space Zeros*, is a boring exercise in special effects with a weak plot. The main character turns out to be an alien. We can tell because a clunky spaceship decorated in Christmas lights appears out of nowhere and drags the kid to another planet. No one on Earth seems to notice this. For some reason, his brother needs a thirteen-year-old kid with no experience to help him defend the planet Altair from some unconvincing green rubber bad guys. And because every lousy science fiction movie needs a romantic subplot, there's a girl character named Mella who looks cute and gets rescued a lot. Unfortunately, no one saved her from being in this movie.

1. **What is the tone of Selection 1?**
 - a) neutral
 - b) very positive
 - c) slightly positive
 - d) slightly negative

2. **What is the tone of Selection 2?**
 - a) positive
 - b) neutral
 - c) slightly positive
 - d) very negative

3. **What is the tone of Selection 3?**
 - a) neutral
 - b) slightly positive
 - c) slightly negative
 - d) very negative

4. **Find the words in Selection 1 that support your answer to number 1.**

5. **Find the words in Selection 3 that support your answer to number 3.**

6. **Which word or phrase best describes the author's attitude toward the movie in Selection 1?**
 - a) slightly bored
 - b) somewhat opposed
 - c) somewhat approving
 - d) very approving

7. **What is the author's attitude toward the movie in Selection 3?**
 - a) curious
 - b) hesitant
 - c) critical
 - d) undecided

8. **What is the author's purpose for writing Selection 2?**
 - a) to convince readers that a movie won't be any good.
 - b) to inform readers of basic details about a movie.
 - c) to persuade readers to go see a certain movie.
 - d) to entertain readers with a story about a space alien.

Practice Activity 2

1. The Underground Railroad was a secret organization which helped slaves escape to freedom. Many slaves were able to escape because of the conductors and station masters. The northern states were free states and slaves were free once they arrived in the north. Secret codes and signals were used to identify the conductors and station masters.

What is the author's purpose of this writing? _____

2. Most people think that gorillas are mean, but actually they are shy. It seems that such a huge animal with very large teeth would be aggressive. Hollywood movies help convey this image of the scary, ferocious gorilla. In fact, gorillas only attack if they are provoked. However, gorillas usually don't have to fight other animals because of their impressive size.

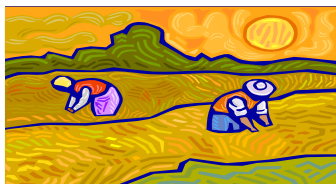
The author believes that

- a. Gorillas are misunderstood as vicious animals.
- b. Gorillas are mean animals.
- c. Gorillas don't like other animals.
- d. Gorillas communicate well with other animals.

3. In some parts of the world, food shortages cause many people to starve. Somehow people must increase the world's food crop. To do this, governments should grant more money to scientists who are studying little-known, edible plants. There are about 20,000 kinds of edible plants; although only about 100 of them are grown as food crops. Spending money to end hunger in this way should be a goal for all governments.

The author's purpose in writing this selection is to—

- a) persuade people to eat more plants
- b) describe the work of scientists
- c) explain the causes of world hunger
- d) propose a possible solution to food shortages.



4. A visitor to a city in Bolivia such as La Paz might find the following recommendations in a brochure in the hotel room:

If it is your first day here in our lovely city, you must take it easy and rest. We recommend that you not walk for even short distances. You must not climb stairs.

These recommendations are posted in hotel rooms to help warn visitors of the potential hazards of being at a high altitude. You see, La Paz is located at a high altitude in the Andes Mountains. People who are not used to living at such altitudes can contract *sorojche*, or altitude sickness. Nausea, headaches, and tired muscles are some of the symptoms of this illness. These symptoms are caused by lack of oxygen from the thin air at high altitudes.

People who rent cars in La Paz are given containers of water to take with them. Car radiators quickly boil over in high altitudes because water boils at a lower temperature in high altitudes than in low altitudes. Water needs to be replaced often in radiators of cars driven at high altitudes.

This article was mainly written to—

- a) explain the hazards of a place in a high altitude
- b) describe the things to see and do in La Paz
- c) welcome visitors to Bolivia
- d) train people how to take care of cars in foreign countries

Answer Key

Practice Activity 1

1. b
2. b
3. d
4. awesome, cool, amazing, brilliant, handsome, needless to say, blew my mind, great.
5. coughed up, chunk of garbage, Space Zeros, boring, weak plot, clunky, decorated in Christmas lights, appears out of nowhere, drags, for some reason, no experience, unconvincing green rubber bad guys, lousy.
6. d
7. c
8. b

Practice Activity 2

1. to provide readers with information about the Underground Railroad.
2. a
3. d
4. a

**Friday
10-16-2009**



Silent Reading

