

IDENTIFYING AUTHOR'S PURPOSE – FURTHER INFORMATION

This lesson provides the opportunity for you to explicitly model how to search for clues to determine the author's purpose in a text. This process involves identifying the main idea or main focus of each paragraph in a text and then considering this information to determine what outcome the author was hoping to achieve. In order for this lesson to be successful, it is important to understand: 1) main idea and how the main idea of a paragraph can be determined; and 2) What is meant by author's purpose and what the possible purposes of a text are.

Main Idea - In this context the main idea refers to the main point of a passage, or what it is mostly about. The main idea is often found in the first or last sentence of a paragraph. It is a point that is repeatedly focused on within the passage, or a point that all details relate to.

Author's Purpose - Many teachers and educators refer to three main purposes for texts:

- Persuade
- Inform
- Entertain

These are very general categories and do not always explain clearly the reason a text has been created. For example, 'informing' could mean to provide information as is done in a description or an information report, however a procedural text would also fall into this category as it is providing information about how to do something.

Rather than adhering to the above list, it can be beneficial to allow students to express the purpose of a text in their own words. They may explain purpose as:

- To explain how to make a cake.
- To try and convince someone to recycle.
- Just for fun.

Exploring author's purpose in this manner allows students to consider the reason a text has been created in a more detailed and authentic manner.

The skill of being able to identify the author's purpose is vital to being an aware reader. It is also pertinent to achievement in Year 5 NAPLAN, for which:

- At the minimum standard, Year 5 students generally interpret ideas in simple texts and make connections between ideas that are not stated. They identify the purpose of a text as well as parts of a text such as diagrams and illustrations.

(Source: <https://www.nap.edu.au/naplan/reading/minimum-standards>)