

Audience Awareness

Millersville University Writing Center

O V E R V I E W

Definition

Generating Audience Awareness

- **Clearly target a specific audience**
- **Develop an understanding of target readers**
- **Accommodate your readers and their needs**

Practice

References

DEFINITION

What is Audience Awareness?

Audience awareness means accommodating your audience and their needs. It is important to always consider your audience because they influence what you write about and how you write about it.

Generating Audience Awareness

1. Clearly target a specific audience

- It is important to consider who your primary audience is because they are directly affected by your topic and they're who you are directly writing to.
- Also consider any secondary audiences who may read your text. This refers to individuals who are not your primary audience but will still likely read your text.

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2. Develop an understanding of target readers

Once you've chosen your audience, it is important to learn about their background and what they know about your topic. Having this information will help you meet their needs as readers. To understand your audience, analyze the **five facets of your audience**:

Demographics

Knowledge

Disposition

Context of use

Relationship between reader and writer

Generating Audience Awareness

The five facets of your audience:

Demographics- shared characteristics of a certain population such as race, gender, and/or occupation (you should never use demographics to stereotype your audience)

Knowledge- how much your audience knows about your topic and you, the writer

Disposition- the level of interest your audience has for your topic due to their preexisting beliefs, values, curiosity, biases, and concern

Context of use- the circumstances in which your audience reads your text

Relationship between reader and writer- whether the reader and writer have a horizontal relationship (a parallel and equal relationship) or a vertical relationship (a dissimilar and unequal relationship) as well as how close the reader and writer are to one another

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3. Accommodate your readers and their needs

- Consider the audience profile that you created and choose the most relevant facets of your audience that benefit your topic/purpose/message.
- Also accommodate your text based on your purpose (the aim of your text), genre (type of writing), mode (print, digital, visual, etc.), style, tone, and voice.

Audience Awareness

PRACTICE

On a separate piece of paper or the worksheet provided, answer the following questions:

1. Clearly target a specific audience

Who is your primary audience? Who is your secondary audience?

2. Develop an understanding of target readers

Learn about your audience's background and what they know about your topic by analyzing the five facets of your audience: demographics, knowledge, disposition, context of use, and relationship between reader and writer.

3. Accommodate your readers and their needs

Consider the audience profile that you created and choose the most relevant facets of your audience that benefit your topic/purpose/message.

Audience Awareness

References

Farkas, Kerrie R. H. The Transportable Writing Tool: A Guide for Writing and Revising. 2nd ed. Kendall Hunt Publishing Company, 2020.