

# Chapter 6: Writing & Rhetoric

## Project Assignment

### Project Goal

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In Chapter 6, you studied several strategies for successful critical writing. One of the most important parts of writing critically is understanding audience limitations. The goal of this project is to demonstrate your communication skills by taking on the role of both audience member and communicator.

### Directions

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As discussed in Chapter 6, communication is often constrained for a variety of reasons. We adjust our communication depending on our audience. For example, how do you discuss love and relationships when talking with friends versus parental figures? Use this example as a basis to conceptualize how audience influences author and vice versa. Here are a few communication constraints to consider:

- Why does the audience care about this topic?
- What is the most effective way to deliver this information to the audience?
- What are my audience members' characteristics, backgrounds, and perspectives?

In this project, you are going to practice working within these constraints.

#### Part 1

Divide the class into two groups.

#### Part 2

In your group, spend time brainstorming a list of ten to twenty topics that you can discuss without conducting extensive research, like current events, shared experiences, etc. Then, brainstorm a separate list of five to ten different types of audiences, like “classmates and instructor” or “extended family members.” Consider general communication constraints when brainstorming your topics and audiences.

#### Part 3

One group will play the role of “communicator,” and the other will play the role of “audience.” Flip a coin to designate the roles for the first round (the roles will swap in round two).

#### Part 4

Switch lists with the other group and review their lists of topics and audiences.

#### Part 5

The communicator group must choose one topic from the list they received, and the audience group must pick an audience from the list they received. The communicators should *not* share the topic they will discuss, but the audience *must* share the audience they selected with the communicators.

#### Part 6

The communicators will have five to ten minutes to prepare their message for the chosen audience. During this time, the audience should select a topic for when the groups switch roles.

#### Part 7

Now, the communicators will present their message to the audience. Throughout Part 7, occasionally pause to discuss how the communication is unfolding. Is the topic/message communicated clearly? Is the information tailored appropriately to the chosen audience?

#### Part 8

Switch roles and repeat Parts 4–7. (Make sure to choose a different topic and audience for the second round.)

**Part 9**

Individually, write a reflection paragraph discussing your experience with this project. Your reflection paragraph should include a topic sentence, supporting details, and a concluding sentence. Make sure to use standard academic English rules, and respond to the following questions.

- What was the hardest part of the exercise?
- What were your group's most and least successful communication strategies?
- How did you adapt your communication after learning more about the audience?
- As an audience member, did you understand the communicator's topic quickly?
- Were any rhetorical strategies employed in the communication?
- How might this exercise help you approach constraints in your own writing?

**Project Materials**

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Pen and paper

**Student Checklist**

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**Part 1**

Group

- Divide the class into two large groups.

**Part 2**

Group

- Brainstorm a list of ten to twenty topics.
  - Topics should be simple to communicate without extensive research.
- Brainstorm a list of five to ten different audiences.

**Part 3**

Group

- Determine which group will play the role of "communicator" and which will play the role of "audience" first. (Roles will switch later.)

**Part 4**

Group

- Swap lists with the other group and review their topics and audiences.

**Part 5**

Group

- Communicator group picks one topic.
  - Do *not* share topic with the other group.
- Audience group picks a specific audience.
  - Do share chosen audience with the other group.

**Part 6**

Group

- Communicator group prepares their communication.
- Audience group chooses a topic for the next round.

**Part 7**

Group

- Attempt communication.
- Pause frequently to discuss how communication is unfolding.

**Part 8**

Group

- Switch roles and repeat Parts 4–7.

**Part 9**

Individual

- Write a reflection paragraph.
  - Include a topic sentence, supporting details, and a concluding sentence.
  - Address the provided reflection questions.
  - Use standard academic English rules.
- Revise/proofread work.

 **Writing Assignment****Writing Assignment Goal**

In Chapter 6, you studied several different strategies for writing critically. One key skill is the ability to identify your purpose and audience so that the tone and content in your writing is successful. The goal of this writing assignment is to demonstrate your ability to write for different purposes and audiences.

**Directions**

One of the first steps of successful critical writing is to understand the purpose of your composition. You can begin to identify the purpose of your writing by categorizing it in one of the following ways:

- Writing to respond
- Writing to summarize
- Writing to propose
- Writing to discuss
- Writing to describe
- Writing to argue
- Writing to analyze
- Writing to evaluate

**Part 1**

Choose any topic to write critically about. Consider selecting a topic that you are familiar with or can research quickly and easily. Here are a few examples:

- Culturally traditional foods
- Climate change
- Affordable travel destinations
- Existence of ghosts/the paranormal
- Shakespeare's plays
- Budgeting skills and strategies

You must also choose **two** writing purposes from the list in the “Directions” section. Remember, your topic should influence your writing purpose and vice versa; not all topics will be appropriate for all writing purposes.

## Part 2

Connect your topic and purposes to an audience. Consider the following examples of audience types:

- **Pupils:** audience members with virtually no knowledge about your topic; they need background information, definitions, descriptions, facts, statistics, etc. They are more connected to the personal elements of your writing. Writers often communicate to this audience through letters, narratives, instructions, or reflections.
- **Peers:** classmates or coworkers with similar levels of knowledge to your own. Writers often communicate to this audience through research papers, academic essays, or narratives.
- **Supervisors:** professors or managers who may be familiar with your topic but expect clear information to reinforce the concepts/topic at hand. Writers often communicate to this audience through business proposals, reports, research essays, or formal e-mails.
- **Experts:** authorities who have substantial knowledge about the subject matter/topic you chose; they expect technical language and can easily understand complex ideas and arguments. Writers often communicate to this audience through reports, research papers, or academic essays.

Select **two** audiences that are appropriate for the topic and two purposes you chose during Part 1.

## Part 3

Your goal in Part 3 is to successfully communicate your topic to the audiences and purposes you've chosen. You will write two paragraphs of at least 250 words each. Refer to the following example outlines for how to structure your paragraphs:

### Paragraph 1

Topic: Culturally traditional foods

Audience 1: Peers

Purpose 1: Writing to describe

- Topic sentence
- Support sentences
- Concluding sentence

### Paragraph 2

Topic: Culturally traditional foods

Audience 2: Supervisors

Purpose 2: Writing to evaluate

- Topic sentence
- Support sentences
- Concluding sentence

You will write about the same topic in both paragraphs but adjust your writing style and supporting sentences based on the audience and purpose at hand. You must use standard academic English rules.

## Part 4

Share your paragraphs with a classmate or present them to the class. Have your classmates try to guess your audience and purpose for each paragraph. However, before submitting the assignment to your instructor, clearly state your purposes and audiences.

## Writing Assignment Materials

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Pen and paper

## Student Checklist

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### Part 1

Individual

- Choose one topic.
- Choose two writing purposes.

**Part 2**

Individual

- Choose two of the following audience types:
  - Pupils
  - Peers
  - Supervisors
  - Experts

**Part 3**

Individual

- Write Paragraph 1 on your chosen topic, first purpose, and first audience.
  - Include at least 250 words.
  - Include a topic sentence, supporting details, and a concluding sentence.
  - Use a writing style that connects with your specific audience and purpose.
  - Use standard academic English rules.
- Write Paragraph 2 on your chosen topic, second purpose, and second audience.
  - Include at least 250 words.
  - Include a topic sentence, supporting details, and a concluding sentence.
  - Use a writing style that connects with your specific audience and purpose.
  - Use standard academic English rules.
- Revise/proofread work.

**Part 4**

Group

- Share your composition with your classmates.
  - Ask classmates to guess your audiences and purposes.
  - Clearly state your audiences and purposes for your instructor.