Author’s Purpose
Persuade, Inform or Entertain? (PIE)

What is an author’s purpose?
The author’s purpose is the REASON why the story or article was written. Is the purpose to persuade, inform, or entertain?

- If readers changed the way they thought about a topic or issue, one of the author’s purposes may have been to persuade.
- If students learn while they are reading, one of the author’s purposes may have been to inform.
- If readers enjoyed what they read, one of the author’s purposes may have been to entertain.

Author’s Purpose: To Persuade
It’s the author’s goal to persuade the reader to agree with the author’s opinion.
Even though the author shares his opinion, he may provide facts or examples to support the opinion.
Examples: advertisements, commercials, newspaper editorials, etc.
Clues: Specific audience, opinion, supporting reasons

Author’s Purpose: To Inform
It’s the author’s goal to enlighten the reader with topics that are usually real or contain facts.
Facts are used to teach, not to persuade.
Examples: textbooks, cookbooks, newspapers, encyclopedias, etc.

Author’s Purpose: To Entertain
It is the author’s goal to tell a story or describe real or imaginary characters, places, and events
Examples: poems, stories, plays, comic strips, etc.
Clues: Characters, setting, problem, events, solution

Why is identifying an author’s purpose important for developing reading skills?
- Understanding the author’s purpose will help you identify the main idea and most important details.
- You are able to analyze information more thoughtfully when they know an author’s purpose.
- Identifying an author’s purpose may give you clues for how to pace your reading. For example, informational articles may require you to slow down in order to fully understand the ideas described.

How do we find the author’s purpose?
1. As you read ask yourself, “Why did the author write this?”
2. Consider the type of writing – advertisements typically try to persuade, textbooks are probably informational, and novels are usually to entertain.
3. Look for other clues – for example, opinion may be to persuade, facts may be to inform, characters interacting with each other may be to entertain.

Note: Authors may have more than one purpose for writing; try to identify the main purpose.
Author’s Purpose: Worksheet 1

Directions: Read the descriptions of each item and determine the author’s purpose in writing it (to entertain, inform, or persuade).

1. A story about a family trying to stick together and survive through the Great Depression in the Midwest in the 1930s
   Author’s Purpose: ____________________________

2. A section in a history book describing the conditions and causes of the Great Depression in the Midwest in the 1930s
   Author’s Purpose: ____________________________

3. An essay arguing that the current Recession is worse than the Great Depression.
   Author’s Purpose: ____________________________

4. An instructional booklet describing how to operate an MP3 player
   Author’s Purpose: ____________________________

5. An article where the author argues that an IPOD music player is better than a CD player
   Author’s Purpose: ____________________________

6. A poem about why the IPOD is the greatest electronic device ever made
   Author’s Purpose: ____________________________

7. The story of a young athlete who takes steroids and his life and future fall apart
   Author’s Purpose: ____________________________

8. A medical report describing the effects of steroids on the human body
   Author’s Purpose: ____________________________

9. A speech written by Jose Canseco listing the negative effects of steroids and urging young athletes to not use steroids
   Author’s Purpose: ____________________________

10. A booklet containing the school rules and the consequences for violating those rules
    Author’s Purpose: ____________________________

11. A story written about a young boy who moves to a new school and is bullied, but he gains self-confidence by joining a sports team and learns to stand up for himself.
    Author’s Purpose: ____________________________

12. An article about why zero-tolerance school rules are bad for students
    Author’s Purpose: ____________________________
Author’s Purpose: Worksheet 2

Directions: Read the descriptions of each item and determine the author’s purpose in writing it (to entertain, inform, or persuade).

1. A pamphlet urging people not to eat animals or use products made from animals or animal suffering because the author thinks that is cruel and unnecessary
   Author’s Purpose: Persuade

2. A book of over 1,000 knock-knock jokes
   Author’s Purpose: Persuade

3. A cook book containing recipes for making cakes, cookies, and other desserts.
   Author’s Purpose: Persuade

4. The story of a young woman who, after the death of her grandfather, quit her job in the business world and returned home to help her aging grandmother
   Author’s Purpose: Persuade

5. A politician’s speech about how health insurance should be provided to all families
   Author’s Purpose: Persuade

6. A poem about a “packrat,” a person who refuses to throw things away, even things that most people would consider garbage
   Author’s Purpose: Persuade

7. An article comparing and contrasting American and European health care systems
   Author’s Purpose: Persuade

8. The Shakespeare tragedy Romeo and Juliet, where two young lovers are forbidden from seeing one another due to a centuries old blood feud between their two families
   Author’s Purpose: Persuade

9. A young girl’s note to her parents giving reasons why they should buy a puppy.
   Author’s Purpose: Persuade

10. The horoscope section in a magazine predicting how things may happen for people based on the month in which they were born.
    Author’s Purpose: Persuade
Author’s Purpose: Worksheet 3

Directions: Read the descriptions of each item and determine the author’s purpose in writing it (to persuade, inform, or entertain).

1. The first issue of *Wolverine*, published by Marvel Comics in 1982
   Author’s Purpose: Persuade Inform Entertain

2. A pamphlet explaining how an unborn child may be affected when a pregnant mother smokes
   Author’s Purpose: Persuade Inform Entertain

3. A novel about a young girl faced with a difficult decision after getting pregnant her junior year
   Author’s Purpose: Persuade Inform Entertain

4. The terms of service for using the social networking site, Facebook
   Author’s Purpose: Persuade Inform Entertain

5. A speech written by Isiah Thomas urging young people to stay in school
   Author’s Purpose: Persuade Inform Entertain

6. Directions to the mall written by a friend or relative
   Author’s Purpose: Persuade Inform Entertain

7. The ingredients listed on the side of a candy bar wrapper
   Author’s Purpose: Persuade Inform Entertain

8. The lyrics to Michael Jackson’s song, “Billy Jean.”
   Author’s Purpose: Persuade Inform Entertain

9. A letter from a pregnant girl to her boyfriend giving reasons why they should keep the baby
   Author’s Purpose: Persuade Inform Entertain

10. The documentation and instructions for a new touch-screen tablet PC
    Author’s Purpose: Persuade Inform Entertain

11. A bumper sticker warning people to “Click it or Ticket,” in reference to wearing a seatbelt
    Author’s Purpose: Persuade Inform Entertain

12. The story of a teacher who helps some of her troubled students get to college
    Author’s Purpose: Persuade Inform Entertain

13. A brochure for custom glass windows with product descriptions, sample images, & coupons
    Author’s Purpose: Persuade Inform Entertain
Author’s Purpose: Worksheet 4

Directions: Read each passage and determine the author’s purpose in writing it (to entertain, inform, or persuade).

1. HAMSTERS FOR SALE: Humble Pet Store, in the mall: We have a large selection of hamsters for sale this week. They are interesting pets, and you will enjoy having one! They are only $17.99 this week!! Come and buy yours today!
What is the author’s purpose? __________________

2. Calligraphy is a form of handwriting. A special pen must be used. Letters are formed using up and down strokes. Most old documents were written in this form. Diplomas, certificates, and other awards are often written in calligraphy.
What is the author’s purpose? __________________

3. Katrina and her brother, Jesse were playing with the water hose outside one day. Jesse ran to the house to hide from Katrina so she wouldn’t squirt him with the water. The back door opened, and Katrina pointed the water hose toward the door ready to squirt Jesse. To Katrina’s surprise it was Mom who was now dripping wet! What is the author’s purpose? __________________

4. Skin Miracle’s amazing Wrinkle Remover Cream will make you look younger in thirty days or less. This remarkable cream has special ingredients to make your wrinkles disappear. The cost for a thirty day supply is $25.99. You’ll be amazed at what you see!
What is the author’s purpose of this writing? __________________

5. Tommy was not happy one little bit. His sister, Susan was making honor roll… again! His parents would let her do anything she wanted to do. Tommy was not making honor roll this time and he was not going to be allowed to do all the things he wanted to do. Poor Tommy! He decided he would just have to study harder and get back on the honor roll. He’d show them!
What is the author’s purpose of this writing? __________________

6. Laura Elizabeth Ingalls Wilder was born on February 7, 1867 in Pepin, Wisconsin to Charles and Caroline Ingalls. She met and married James Wilder in 1885. She published many books based on her travels to the West. Her writing became the basis for the “Little House” series. She died in 1957.
What is the author’s purpose of this writing? __________________