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Academic Writing

Understanding the Academic Audience and Purpose

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Introduction to Academic Writing

Discuss these following scenario:

Imagine you are a computer scientist, and you have written an important paper about cybersecurity. You have been invited to speak at a conference to explain your ideas. As you prepare your slides and notes for your speech, you are thinking about these questions:

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What kind of language should I use?

What information should I include on my slides?

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Now, imagine you are the same computer scientist, and you have a nephew in 3rd grade. Your nephew's teacher has invited you to come to his class for Parents' Day, to explain what you do at work. Will you give the same speech to the class of eight-year-olds? How will your language and information be the same or different?

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Before you start to write, you need to know:

➢ Who is the intended audience? (Who are you writing this for?)
➢ What is the purpose? (Why are you writing this?)
➢ What is the context? (What is the situation, when is the time period, and where are your readers?)

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Isn't my instructor my audience?

➢Thinking about your audience differently can improve your writing, especially in terms of how clearly you express your argument.
➢The clearer your points are, the more likely you are to have a strong essay.

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Purpose

INFORMATIVE WRITING	PERSUASIVE WRITING
describes	argues
explains	defends
tells a story	convinces
summarizes	justifies
analyzes	advocates
compares/contrasts	supports

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Putting yourself in the reader's position

➢The structure of your paper can make your paper easy or difficult to read.
➢Decide what kind of organizational pattern will help your audience see your purpose.
➢Also, decide what guideposts and transitional markers your audience will need in order to follow your organization.
➢Finally, decide what and how many examples your audience will need in order to understand your general statements.

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