

## Lesson Skill: Author's purpose in nonfiction

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**Strand** Reading — Nonfiction

**SOL** 3.6

4.6

5.6

### Materials

- Chart paper with four headings: To Inform, To Explain, To Persuade, To Entertain
- Copies of the same newspaper or magazine for each student
- Colored paper for each student

### Lesson

1. Discuss the different types of text found in print media, and talk about how articles or items are written by various authors with different purposes in mind. Explain the four primary purposes—to inform, to explain, to persuade, and to entertain—and have students express their understanding of what they mean.
2. Show students an example of a news article where the purpose is to inform. Read through the article as a class, and see if students can explain why the article's intent is to inform. Help them find clues; point out that the article is made up of facts, not opinions. Note also that the article is nonfiction, i.e., about real people and places and may have an accompanying photograph(s). On the chart paper, under the heading "To Inform," write the characteristics.
3. As a class, read an editorial, a report, and a comic from the newspaper. Discuss the clues shown in each that show the editorial article is to persuade, the report is to explain, and the comics are to entertain. Record the characteristics from each article/item that show the author's purpose.
4. Help students create an organizer by folding a piece of colored paper into four sections, and have them label each section with the four headings.
5. Distribute newspapers or magazines to students. Have them choose four articles/items where the author's purpose is to inform, explain, persuade, and entertain. As a class, choose the articles/items that best represent the four purposes. Have students read each article and record in their organizer the reasons the articles/items belong under the respective headings. Students may work in pairs or groups for this activity.
6. Reconvene to discuss what they have written. Reiterate the four purposes and the characteristics of each. Remind students that authors have a purpose, whether it is in fiction or nonfiction.

### **Strategies for Differentiation**

- Provide students with visuals of characteristics to support discussion.
- Have students use a four-flap organizer and write each purpose and its characteristics. Have them find examples of each, cut them out, and glue them under the appropriate flap.