

## THINKING ABOUT YOUR AUDIENCE

The audience is the person who will read your essay or any paper that you write.

*Who is my reader?*

You might think that your reader is only your professor, but when you write an essay with only your professor in mind, you might not write as clearly as you should because you assume the reader already knows about your topic.

Ask yourself of these questions to understand who your audience is:

1. Does my assignment give any clues about my audience?
2. What knowledge may my readers have about the topic?
3. What questions will my reader ask about my topic?
4. Will my audience understand what I am trying to say?
5. How can I make my ideas clear?
6. How can I attract the interest of my readers?

Do I need to be formal?

When you write, think about the language you would use to write a letter to different people. Would you write to your mom the same way you would write to your friends or to your boss? What would be different? Similarly, the language of your essay will be different for every type of audience. Knowing who your audience will help you choose the language.

**TIP: Avoid being informal in an essay or a class paper, unless your professor allows it.**

**Exercise:**

Choose one of the following options and write a five-sentence letter directed to that specific audience:

\*Friend \*Mother \*Professor \*Boss \* Internship Recruiter \*Newspaper \*Director of your Department