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# Point of View and Author's Purpose

## VOCABULARY

compost  
curds and whey  
dazzling  
rind  
shabby  
tuffet

All writing has a **point of view**. The point of view in nonfiction writing depends on the **author's purpose**. This is the reason for writing. Would you enjoy reading an article about rats? The author may have a pet rat and think rats are cute and fun. That is his point of view. A lady who found a rat in her kitchen would have a very different point of view. Each article would be told in a different way. Each story feels different to the reader.

A story or poem has a point of view, too. It can be told from the point of view of one or more characters. It can be told from the point of view of someone outside the story.

When you read, ask yourself three questions. Who is telling a story? Why is the author writing? How does the author want me to feel?

## Author's Purpose in Informational Text

The author's purpose is the reason for writing. It is why the author writes something. Informational text is all about facts and ideas. Authors write these texts for four reasons:

- to explain, or to teach something
- to persuade, or to get the reader to do or believe something
- to describe, or to tell about something
- to entertain, or for fun or pleasure.

## Guided Practice

Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

### The Circus Is Coming to Town!

Come to the Funniest Show in America!  
The Clown Car Circus is coming to your town!  
We have silly clowns! Magic tricks! Funny jokes!  
Balloon animals! Tumbling! Amazing animals!  
See clowns with dogs! Clowns in cars!  
Clowns playing music! Juggling clowns!  
Funny faces, baggy pants, and big shoes!  
The Clown Car Circus has them all!  
It's fun for all ages!  
Clown Car Circus clowns are the best clowns  
in the world!



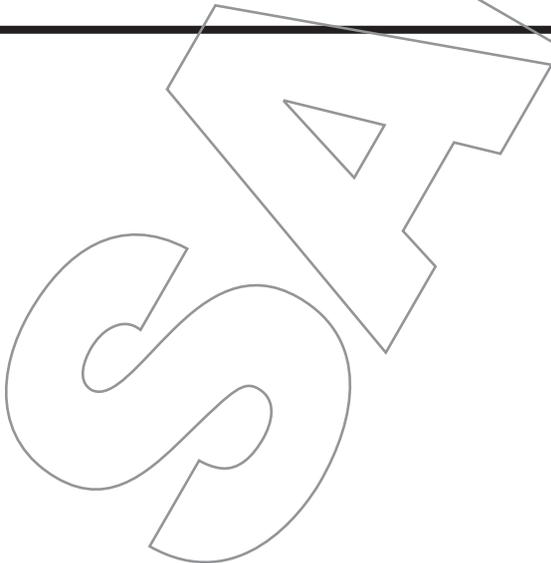
**June 3–10**

Downtown Park

Big top opens at 7 p.m.

Kids can win a prize!

Wear a clown costume on Kids Clown Night, June 5.



What is the author's purpose in this passage?

- A to get readers to come to the circus
- B to tell readers that clowns are scary
- C to tell readers that they can be clowns
- D to get readers to buy clown costumes

The author's purpose is his reason for writing. An author may want to teach, convince, describe, or entertain. What is the writer's goal here?

Who do you think this was written for?

- A people who do not like circuses
- B people who like clowns
- C children
- D everyone

The **audience** is the people something is written for. This passage is an advertisement. Look at the line "It's fun for all ages."

Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

## The Circus Yesterday and Today

by Keith Peters

1 In 1871, P. T. Barnum started a circus. He liked to make people laugh. He also liked to make money. So he found interesting people for his circus, like the tallest man in the world. He added performing animals. He had lions and elephants. He hired clowns and acrobats. They all performed under a big tent. Barnum's circus was called "The Greatest Show on Earth." People everywhere flocked to the show.

2 By the 1970s, this kind of circus was no longer popular. People worried about the animals. They thought the animals were unhappy. The audience wanted something better.

3 In 1984, a new and better kind of circus was growing. Some street performers put together a show. It had acrobats and clowns. They wore wild costumes. There were no animals. This circus also had no tent. Instead, it performed in arenas and theaters. It had dazzling light shows and music. Its name is Cirque du Soleil. This means "Circus of the Sun." Today it performs all over the world. It's the most popular circus ever.

**dazzling**  
bright and flashy



What is the main purpose of this passage?

- A** to get people to come to circuses
- B** to describe how P. T. Barnum started a circus
- C** to explain how circuses have changed over time
- D** to convince readers that animals do not belong in circuses

**This passage tells about two different circuses. P. T. Barnum's circus was long ago. Cirque du Soleil is a circus today.**

What is the author's point of view about Cirque du Soleil?

- A** It is not as good as Barnum's circus.
- B** It is boring without animals.
- C** It is colorful and noisy.
- D** It is the kind of circus people today want.

**Look at the details in paragraphs 2 and 3. The author says that people worried about the animals in circuses. Then he tells you how Cirque du Soleil put together a circus without them. This new circus became popular.**

Look at the photograph. How does it support the author's point of view?

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**Think about what the author says about Cirque du Soleil. Does the picture give you the same information? Here's a sample answer:**

The photograph shows performers in wild costumes. There are bright lights in the background. It looks very exciting. The picture helps the author show you that Cirque du Soleil is a new and better kind of circus.

SAMPLE



Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

## Learn How to Be a Clown

by Hilda Ramos

Do you like to make people laugh? You can learn to be a clown. Just follow these easy steps:

1. Choose the kind of clown you will be. Choose a clown that likes to do what you like to do. Are you a fancy clown or a shabby clown? Are you a goofy clown or a scared clown? Are you a baby clown or an old clown? Are you a dancing clown or a clumsy clown?
2. Choose a name that fits your clown. Your name can fit how you look, how you act, or what you do. You can add words to your real name.
3. Choose a costume for your clown. Find clothes in thrift shops. Use clothes that are too small or too big. Use clothes that do not match. Use hats, glasses, suspenders, or other items for your costume. Look for clown noses, ears, and hair in costume stores.
4. Choose your clown face. First, draw and color your clown face on paper. Use make-up to cover your face. Then use bright colors to show off your eyes, nose, cheeks, or mouth.
5. Choose your act. What can you do that makes people laugh? Can you speak in a funny voice? Can you play music? Can you tumble? How can you do something in a silly way? What props do you need?
6. Then put it all together and be a clown!

**shabby**  
not well kept



What is the author's purpose for writing this passage?

- A** to entertain with a story about clowns
- B** to persuade children to be clowns
- C** to tell about clown college
- D** to explain the steps in how to be a clown

**Look back at the passage. The numbers are a clue to the structure and purpose of the text.**

Who is most likely the author of this passage?

- A** someone who wants to be a clown
- B** someone who teaches clown school
- C** someone who is afraid of clowns
- D** someone who knows a clown

**Think about who would write directions. Who would know this information?**

## Point of View in Literary Text

Stories have points of view, too. When you read, you must ask yourself, “Who is telling the story?”

The person telling a story is the **narrator**. Some stories are told from one character’s point of view. This is called **first-person point of view**. You can tell because the person telling the story uses the word I. Stories can also be told from the point of view of another character in the story. It can be told by more than one character. Or, it can be told by someone who is outside the story. This is called **third-person point of view**. You can tell because these stories use he, she, and they. They do not use I.

Poems have a point of view, too. The person telling a poem is the **speaker**. The speaker may be a character. Or, the speaker may be someone outside the poem.

### Guided Practice

Read two poems. Then answer the questions.

#### Poem 1

### Little Miss Muffett

*by Mother Goose*

- 1 Little Miss Muffet,
- 2 Sat on a tuffet<sup>1</sup>,
- 3 Eating her curds and whey<sup>2</sup>;
- 4 Along came a spider,
- 5 Who sat down beside her,
- 6 And frightened Miss Muffet away.



<sup>1</sup>tuffet: stool

<sup>2</sup>curds and whey: cheese, like cottage cheese

## Poem 2

### My Side of the Story

*by Arachne Voulos*

- 1 This little old spider
- 2 Would never hurt her;
- 3 Just doing what all spiders do,
- 4 I was spinning away
- 5 On my web that fine day,
- 6 To catch me a fat fly or two.
  
- 7 When Little Miss Muffet,
- 8 Plopped down on the tuffet,
- 9 To lunch on some fine cottage cheese.
- 10 I was not excited,
- 11 She was not invited,
- 12 She never asked, “May I?” or “Please?”
  
- 13 Now the part that I dread—
- 14 When the hat on her head,
- 15 Caused my new web to go flying;
- 16 Straight down I dropped,
- 17 Beside her I plopped,
- 18 Missy Muffet ran away crying.
  
- 19 It was not the wee spider,
- 20 That sat down beside her,
- 21 Who caused all the trouble, I say.
- 22 It was Little Miss Muffet,
- 23 The girl on the tuffet,
- 24 Who forgot her manners that day.

From whose point of view is the nursery rhyme “Little Miss Muffet” written?

- A Miss Muffet
- B a speaker
- C the spider
- D the tuffet

The person telling the story can be part of it. He or she uses the word I. Or the speaker can be outside the story, looking in.

Who is the speaker in “My Side of the Story”?

- A Miss Muffet
- B the spider
- C an outside speaker
- D Miss Muffet’s mother

In lines 4, 10, and others, the speaker uses the word I. In line 5, the speaker uses the word my.

Which choice best describes the point of view in the second poem, "My Side of the Story"?

- A** Do not mess with spiders or they will eat your lunch!
- B** Everyone knows that Miss Muffet is a polite little girl.
- C** It is not fair to blame the spider for scaring Miss Muffet.
- D** The spider had fun scaring Little Miss Muffet away.

**The new poem is written from the spider's point of view. The spider says he did nothing wrong.**

Describe the author's purpose in the new poem, "My Side of the Story."

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**An author's purpose can be to explain, describe, persuade, or entertain. The author wants you to believe it was not the spider's fault.**

## Test Yourself

Read three passages. Then answer the questions.

### Passage 1

#### Lemonade for Sale

Take time to cool off. Meet your neighbors.

Talk to your friends.

Enjoy a cup of ice-cold lemonade!

1 Lemonade stands are popping up all over town. Students from our schools are hard at work. This weekend, they will be selling homemade lemonade. They want to make \$1,000! The money will build a display for children at the park.



2 Bring the grandparents! Bring the aunts and uncles. Bring the cousins. Bring the dog. Come down to River Town Park this Saturday and Sunday. Buy lemonade for just \$1 a cup. Stands will be open from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m.

3 Come and have some fun. Check out the bright, colorful lemonade stands. See our kids in action. Taste the lemonade. Vote for your favorite. Which lemonade will become River Town's Official Favorite this year?

Help our kids. Help our town.

## Passage 2

### Lemonade Days

by Harris Evans

1 It happens every year. It happens for three days in June. People sell lemonade all across America. They make money to fight cancer. They call it Lemonade Days.

2 It started with a 4-year-old girl. She was in the hospital. The little girl had cancer. She wanted to get better. She wanted to have a lemonade stand. The little girl wanted to help the doctors at her hospital. She wanted them to find a cure for cancer.

3 Soon she felt better. The little girl went home. She opened a lemonade stand. She and her brother worked hard to raise money. It took them four years. But they made more than one million dollars.

4 The little girl's family kept raising money. They started Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation. The foundation made more than ten million dollars. They gave it to the doctors and scientists. The doctors and scientists work to find cures for children's cancer.

Go online to learn more about Alex's Lemonade Stand. Go to [alexlemonade.org](http://alexlemonade.org).



## Passage 3

# Lemon Surprise

by Keva March

1 Last summer, my sister Diane and I ran a lemonade stand. We wanted to raise money for the children's hospital in our town. We got all our supplies together. Then I set up a table by the sidewalk. Diane posted signs for "Freshly squeezed lemonade!"

2 That's what made our lemonade special. We cut each lemon in half. Then we squeezed the juice from each half. The rinds and seeds we tossed in a bucket. We mixed the juice with water, sugar, and ice. Then we poured it in a cup. Each cup was super tasty and fresh!

3 Our lemonade was a big hit! By the end of the day, we had made over a hundred dollars! That's a lot of lemons.

4 "You did a great job, girls!" Mom said. "But now it's time to clean up."

5 "I'll take the stuff inside and wash the pitcher," I told Mom.

6 "Don't forget the lemon squeezer, Tansy," she reminded me. "Diane, collect all the trash and put it in the bag."

7 "What should we do with the lemon rinds?" I asked. "This bucket is full. It's too heavy for me to lift."

8 "Your brother Tom can take it to the garden," she replied. "He'll dump it in the compost pile. The rinds will break down into food for the garden plants."

**rind**  
the rough outer skin of a lemon or orange

**compost**  
plant matter that has broken down

9 Summer went by, and soon it was fall. One day, Mom was working in the garden. She was turning the compost pile. Then she called out to me. “Tansy, come here. I have a surprise for you.”

10 Mom poked at the compost. There were some rotten lemon rinds. There were also some little green sprouts!

11 “Are those lemon trees?” I asked in surprise.

12 Mom laughed. “They are! Let’s pot up one or two to see if it grows into a tree. We can keep it inside over the winter.”

13 My little lemon tree is growing well now. It always reminds me of the day I had the lemonade sale.



1 What is the author’s purpose in writing passage 1?

- A to describe or explain something
- B to persuade someone to do something
- C to tell someone how to do something
- D to tell a funny story about lemonade

2 From whose point of view is passage 1 written?

- A someone who has a dog
- B someone who likes lemonade
- C someone who wants to go to River Town
- D someone who wants people to give money

- 3** Why did the author write passage 2?
- A** to make the reader feel sad
  - B** to make people afraid of cancer
  - C** to show what people can do help cure cancer
  - D** to help the reader build a lemonade stand

- 4** From whose point of view is passage 3 written?
- A** Tansy
  - B** Tansy's mom
  - C** Tansy's sister
  - D** an outside narrator

- 5** Explain how you know your answer to question 4 is correct.

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- 6** Which best tells the author's purpose in passage 3?
- A** to entertain
  - B** to describe
  - C** to persuade
  - D** to explain