



Author's purpose

Grade 4 Reading Worksheet

An author can write to:

<u>P</u> ersuade	<u>I</u> nform	<u>E</u> ntertain
Get you to do something or believe something	Give you information	Tell you a story you will enjoy

Sometimes, an author writes for just one purpose.

Other times, an author writes for more than one purpose.

Read each passage. Underline details that may help you figure out the author's purpose(s). Then answer the questions!

Passage #1: How are guide dogs trained to help people?

If you've ever seen a dog walking next to someone who couldn't see very well, it is likely that the dog was a guide dog. Guide dogs, while they are animals, have extremely important jobs. These dogs help people who are blind or who have visual impairments stay safe as they go through their everyday lives. It's not easy to get a job as a guide dog; they go through months of training!

Step 1: The Early Months

Guide dogs start their training very young. Most puppies are just a few weeks old when they begin! When they are puppies, they are raised by volunteers who take care of them and teach them basic obedience skills, such as:

- how to walk on a leash
- how to be house-trained
- how to sit, stay and come
- how to stay calm in crowds and among other animals

The volunteers are encouraged to take the puppies to many different places, like stores, restaurants, parks and more so that they get used to all different environments. Puppies stay with their volunteer families until they are about twelve months old.





Step 2: Guide Dog School

After they've spent a year with their volunteer family, guide dogs are sent to guide dog school. This school teaches them the specific skills they need to become a guide dog. They are taught by professional trainers who help them learn how to:

- walk without getting distracted
- stop at curbs and before stairs
- avoid obstacles
- recognize dangers like holes in the ground



At guide dog school, they are also taught a skill called "intelligent disobedience." This helps train the dogs to know when not to follow commands if doing so would be unsafe. For instance, if their owner commands them to walk forward but there is traffic coming, the dog will stay still to protect them.

The amount of time that dogs stay in guide dog school varies, but many are there for about a year. Not all dogs pass guide dog school, but those dogs are still able to become other kinds of helpers or even just great pets.

What is the author's main purpose? Circle one.

Persuade

Inform

Entertain

Why did you choose this purpose? Explain with evidence from the text!

Passage #2: The Backpack that...Talked??

It was a field trip day for the entire fourth grade at Baker Elementary School. All of the students and chaperones were waiting outside to board the buses so they could go to the Boston Science Museum. Every student had been instructed to bring a backpack packed with a notebook, a pencil, a snack and a water bottle.



Micah's backpack had ripped last week, so his mom had found him a new one at a thrift store over the weekend. Thrift stores sell clothes and other items that people once owned but no longer want. His mom loves finding good deals at thrift stores all over the city.

Usually Micah likes what his mom picks out, but this time he wasn't so sure. This new backpack was bright red, huge and had a zipper across the front of it that looked kind of like a mouth. He didn't care too much though—as long as the backpack could hold his things, he was happy. Little did he know that this backpack would do a lot more than that!

It all started on the school bus. Micah was sitting next to his friend, Rosie, when he thought he heard her whisper, "Are we almost there yet?"

"What did you say?" he asked Rosie.

"I didn't say anything!" Rosie said, surprised.

"Oh! Umm, okay," Micah muttered. Then he thought to himself, "Where did that come from?"

When they arrived at the museum, things got worse. Plus, it became very clear that it wasn't Rosie who was talking. In fact, it wasn't any student who was talking... It was Micah's backpack! And not only was it talking, but it was not being very polite!

"Class, please stay in line," Mrs. Heist instructed as they walked into the museum's lobby.

"Well, that's no fun!" the backpack said. "Let's go off on our own!"

Micah reached around and tugged on his backpack's zipper. "Be quiet!" he whispered.

The backpack laughed. "You can't stop me!" Thankfully, though, he did quiet down for a few minutes.

Until they walked into the space exhibit, that is. Then the backpack yelled: "Countdown to blast off! 3...2...1!"



Everyone in the small museum room turned to look at Micah.

"Micah," Mrs. Heist exclaimed, looking surprised. "Was that you?"

"No, it's..." he started to say before he stopped, realizing that no one would believe he had a talking backpack. "Never mind, I'm sorry."



Things didn't improve when they walked through the next exhibit. It was all about prehistoric birds, and the backpack made a new bird sound each time they passed another picture. Then, in the reptile room, he did the exact same thing.

By lunchtime, Micah was exhausted by trying to hide the sounds of his backpack. Even though he had been so excited about this field trip, all he really wanted to do was go home.

In one last attempt to get his backpack to behave, he brought it into a stall in the bathroom.

"Listen," Micah said. "Please stop! You're ruining today!"

"I'm not trying to ruin things," his backpack replied. "I'm just here to help you have fun."

"Well, you're not succeeding," Micah said. Then he took a deep breath and thought for a moment.

"I think you're funny," he continued, "but my teacher doesn't. So how about this: If you keep talking, can you promise that you'll whisper everything quietly so only I can hear you?"

"Deal!" the backpack whispered quietly, to prove what it was capable of.

Thankfully, he kept true to his word. For the rest of the day, his backpack whispered jokes and funny comments that only Micah could hear. It kept Micah happy and even made him giggle to himself, but he was no longer disrupting everyone. It was a great compromise.

That night when Micah got home, he hung his backpack in his closet. "I think I might save my money and buy a different backpack," he told his mom. "I'll save this one for special occasions."



What is the author's main purpose? Circle one.

Persuade

Inform

Entertain

Why did you choose this purpose? Explain with evidence from the text!



Passage #3: Radio Script

Note: To be read on air after the 6PM News and before the music starts again

This is a message out there to all of our listeners who are within walking or biking distance of school, work or the store. If you can get somewhere without jumping in your car or your parents' car, do it!

Why?

For starters, it's healthy! It's healthy for your body: It gets your heart pumping and your muscles working. It's healthy for your brain: When your body moves, more oxygen is delivered to your brain. This might help you focus more and can help you feel less stressed. It's also healthy for the planet! Most cars cause pollution. Walking and biking are zero-emissions, which means they don't emit anything that is bad for the environment.

It's also fun. Sitting in traffic is never a good time. Use that time that you would have spent behind the wheel or as a passenger to get some fresh air! During the time that you may have otherwise spent in traffic, you'll get to enjoy the outdoors and see your own neighborhood. Plus, you'll arrive at work or school more relaxed than before!

So tomorrow, think twice before you reach for your car keys or go to open your car door. Think about how far you'll be traveling and see if you can do it on foot or by bike instead!



What is the author's main purpose? Circle one.

Persuade

Inform

Entertain

Why did you choose this purpose? Explain with evidence from the text!



Passage #4: Can we make vegetables taste like ice cream, please?

Close your eyes and think of broccoli, Brussels sprouts or turnips. Did your face wrinkle up? If you're one of the lucky few who love each of these vegetables then maybe reading this piece isn't for you. But if not, take a second to imagine that biting into each of these vegetables tastes like eating a spoonful of ice cream. Wouldn't life be better if this were the case?

First, ice cream-flavored vegetables would make dinner an entirely different experience. Imagine if your cabbage tasted like chocolate chip cookie dough, your peas tasted like caramel swirl or your spinach tasted like strawberry. Kids wouldn't have to spend dinnertime pushing their vegetables around their plate. Instead, they might serve themselves seconds!

Second, vegetables that taste like ice cream would help kids be healthier. It's no secret that vegetables are good for you... that's why adults always want us to eat them. It's also no secret that ice cream tastes much more delicious. If vegetables could taste like ice cream, it would be a win-win situation. Kids would want to eat lots of them and they would be healthier because of it!

Finally, vegetables that taste like ice cream would make dinner more pleasant for everyone. Parents wouldn't have to spend every evening trying to convince their kids to eat their vegetables. Kids wouldn't have to hide their string beans in their napkins or feed their squash secretly to their dogs. Your dog may be a little hungrier, but your parents would be much happier if you ate all your vegetables without being asked!

So, vegetable inventors, this writing piece is for you. Kids around the world would like to have vegetables that taste like ice cream. If you could make this happen, we will be healthier and happier and our family dinners will be a lot more peaceful. It shouldn't be too hard to do, right?



The author likely had two purposes for writing this piece. What are the author's purposes? Circle two.

Persuade

Inform

Entertain

Why did you choose these purposes? Explain with evidence from the text!



Answers

Passage #1: Inform
Passage #2: Entertain
Passage #3: Persuade
Passage #4: Persuade, Entertain

Why did you choose this purpose or purposes? Explain with evidence from the text!

Accept any student responses as long as they include text evidence and explain how this evidence supports the correct author's purposes.