



Writing Practice 2

Use either a narrowing tree or group or individual brainstorming to narrow your topic to one that can be developed to fit the length of your assignment.

Topic: _____

Narrowed topic: _____

Determining the Writing Context

Determining the writing context means examining your purpose in writing, your audience, and the tone you wish to use. As the writer, you have lots of options to choose from in how to present your ideas.

Ask yourself questions such as these:

- Do you want to inform your readers or persuade them?
- Is your audience predetermined or can you choose who you want your readers to be?
- Do you want this to be a serious piece or a humorous one?

Purpose

Your purpose includes why you are writing, what your goals are, and what you hope to accomplish. Understanding your purpose will help you determine what to include and what to leave out of your writing and will help you shape your topic sentence or thesis. The purpose of most college writing is to **inform**, to **persuade**, or to **entertain**.

If your topic is “a place of business” and your purpose is to inform, you might provide factual information on a particular business such as a restaurant and provide its name, location, type of food, hours of operation, and prices.

Topic: Place of business

Purpose: To inform

Ernesto's Restaurant

Ernesto's Restaurant, located at 2100 South University Avenue, specializes in Mexican food. Some of the most popular dishes are fajitas, burritos, chimichangas, and chiles rellenos, and the prices for entries range from four to six dollars. Ernesto's also offers a children's menu (priced two to three dollars) with items such as chicken bites, hamburgers, and grilled cheese sandwiches. The restaurant is decorated with tropical plants and travel posters of Mexico. The atmosphere is casual, and the clientele is mostly students and families.

If your purpose instead is to persuade, you might wish to convince your audience that the restaurant you have chosen is a good or bad place to go. You might include much of the same information, but you would also include details that slant the information as either positive or negative.