PSYCH1140: Audience, Tone, & Purpose

Tuesday, 15 February 2022

Elements for effective writing

Remember that to write (and read) is to take part in a conversation, it is a social activity.

To be able to effectively convey a message through writing one should therefore consider:

- Purpose - reason or intention for writing.

- Audience - who the writing is for.

- Tone - the writer's attitude towards the topic of the writing.

<u>Purpose</u>

There are many reasons to write: to inform, persuade, or simply entertain. In academic writing there are generally 4 main purpose of writing:

- To summarize - distills a large chunk of information down to the essentials.

- To analyze - deconstructs a complex topic into its individual elements (or points), examine each element and how they relate to each other.

- To synthesize - integrates multiple ideas from multiple texts to motivate a new idea.

- To evaluate - to consider an idea/ text and make a judgment/ opinion about it.

<u>Audience</u>

Knowing who you're writing to can help you decide on how to structure your writing, what kinds of information you should include or omit or the kinds of words you should use. When considering your audience, a few things you can think about:

- Demographics - data about your audience such as age, race, gender, ethnicity, religious beliefs, etc. Certain topics may necessitate closer consideration of your audience's demographics than others.

- Education - audience's level of schooling can help you decide on diction or writing style.

- Prior knowledge - whether the audience already has some understanding about the topic you are writing about.

- Expectations - readers' expectations may be set by where you're publishing your work.

Fun watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VTvJOb2hJ6k (Neuroscientist explains memory to 5 levels of expertise).

Tone

Tone of the writing can influence the readers' perception and thoughts about the writing and the author's intention. Tone is highly influenced by the purpose and intended audience of the writing. Tone shapes the mood or overall feeling of the writing

Let's explore this a little bit more

Break into 4 groups and discuss the materials assigned for today's class.

Group exercise sheet