**Questions about audience**

**Identity and expectations**

* **Who *are* my readers?**
* **What are my readers’ expectations for the genre of my writing?**

Do readers expect features such as a particular organization and format, distinctive kinds of evidence, or a certain style of documenting sources?

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* **What do I want readers to know or do after reading my work?**

How should I make that clear to them?

* **How should I project myself to readers?** How formal or informal will they expect me to be? What role and tone should I assume?

**Characteristics, knowledge, and attitudes**

* **What characteristics of readers are relevant for my subject and purpose?** For instance:

Age and sex

Occupation: students, professional colleagues, etc.

Social or economic role: subject-matter experts, voters, car buyers, potential employers, etc.

Economic or educational background

Ethnic background

Political, religious, or moral beliefs and values

Hobbies or activities

* **How will the characteristics of readers influence their attitudes toward my subject?**
* **What do readers already know and *not* know about my subject?**

How much do I have to tell them? What aspects of my subject will be interesting and relevant to them?

* **How should I handle any specialized terms?** Will readers know them? If not, should I define them or avoid them?
* **What ideas, arguments, or information might surprise, excite, or offend readers?** How should I handle these points?
* **What misconceptions might readers have of my subject and/or my approach to it?** How can I dispel these misconceptions?

**Uses and format**

* **What will readers do with my writing?** Should I expect them to read every word from the top, to scan for information, to look for conclusions? Can I help readers by providing a summary, headings, illustrations, or other aids?