Audience

*Audience is* the group of people who will be reading a particular piece of writing. Some writing has no specific or intended reader; it simply aims to inform a general, reasonably educated audience. Personal writing often has no audience; it is simply an extension of the writer's thoughts and feelings. Sometimes, however, the needs of a very specific audience must be considered.

The following questions will help you analyze your audience:

1. What are the readers' background experiences?
2. What attitudes and biases do they have?
3. Is there anything about the readers that might make them think differently than me?
4. Is there anything in my paper that could be difficult for a reader to follow or understand?

Try to analyze the audience of different pieces of writing.

1. Type of vocabulary used
   - professional or layman
   - "educated" or conversational
   - formal or slang

2. Tone
   - factual
   - emotional
   - humorous

3. Kinds of Evidence Used
   - Why are quotations used? (emotional appeal?, facts?, etc.)
   - Are generalizations made without supporting them?
   - What will the reader believe without second guessing?

4. Amount of Background Provided

5. Point of View
   - Whose side is presented and how is this done?

Audience awareness consists of anticipating and fulfilling the needs of the reader. A good writer will take the time to think out the specific needs of his audience and will check his writing for any errors or omissions that might block the understanding of a reasonably intelligent person.