

Lesson 6 Who Will Read It?

Dr. Platt is a scientist. He knows everything there is to know about platypuses. He is writing to a fellow scientist.

My study of *Ornithorhynchus anatinus* has taken a new turn. I am concentrating on the electroreceptors in their snouts. The species' ability to detect prey in this way is probably key to their survival.

Dr. Platt is also writing to his favorite niece. She likes platypuses, too, but she is only eight years old. He tells her what he is learning about platypuses, but he uses different words than when he wrote to his scientist friend.

A platypus's snout is very special. It has special nerves, or sensors, that can sense the muscle movements of its prey. So, a platypus doesn't even have to see what it's going to eat for lunch! It can sense a frog or an earthworm, even in the mud.

Dr. Platt wrote each letter to a different reader, or audience. He used certain words for one audience, and a different set of words for the other audience.

It is important for all writers to keep their audiences in mind. Writers must think about what the audience knows and what they don't know. They must also think about what the audience is or is not interested in.

Think of something you know a lot about.

What I know about: _____

What I know about it: _____

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Write a paragraph to someone who also knows quite a bit about your specialty. Share a new idea about the topic, or tell about something that happened. Remember, your audience also knows about the topic.

Now, write to someone who does not know much about this special interest of yours. It might be a grandparent, a younger cousin, or a family friend. What might you need to explain? What kinds of words might you need to use? Give the same information, or nearly the same information, as you did in the paragraph at the top of the page. Remember your audience.
