

Writing Modes: The Four Purposes of Writing

Narration (Narrative Writing): Narration is story telling. In many ways it is the easiest kind of writing because it comes so naturally to most people. Practically everyone enjoys telling and hearing stories. Narratives usually progress chronologically, and must have a clear beginning, middle and end.

Examples: *short stories, novels, personal narratives, anecdotes, and biographies*

Description (Descriptive Writing): Think of description as painting a picture with words. Of course, when you use words, you can paint more than what you see, but also what you feel, hear, smell and taste. The idea of description is to make the thing described seem real to your reader's imagination. Not much writing is purely descriptive; writers typically weave description into longer narrative works.

Examples: *certain types of advertising, character sketches, and photograph captions*

Exposition is writing that explains or informs. It is a practical kind of writing (the kind you are reading right now!).

Examples: *encyclopedia entries, news reports, instruction manuals, informative essays, and research papers*

Persuasion (Persuasive Writing): Persuasive writing seeks to convince the reader of a particular position or opinion. Persuasive writing is in many ways the most difficult to do well because it requires knowledge of the subject, strong convictions, logical thinking, and technical skill.

Examples: *literary essays, editorials, advertisements, and book, music or movie reviews*