

An author's **point of view** is his or her attitude toward the subject. A writer may not directly state his or her point of view. However, the language a writer uses can reveal his or her point of view. Here are some guidelines for identifying a writer's point of view:

- Determine the purpose of the writing (to inform, explain, persuade, or entertain).
- Identify the tone of the writing (serious, humorous, sympathetic, etc.).
- Notice the style of the writing (descriptive, narrative, expository, persuasive, instructive, or a combination of these).
- Identify the main idea of the writing (either stated or implied).

Example

Many citizens are not aware that Baxter State Park was a logging area from the mid-1800s until 1965. The area was first logged for pine. After that, it was logged for spruce and then pulpwood. In 1965, the logging rights expired, and the state legislature decided to convert the woods into a protected preserve. Baxter State Park is a remote park and has few visitors. I recently spent time in the woods there. As I looked around at the trees, I couldn't help thinking, "What an awful waste of good lumber."

Author's Point of View: The purpose of the writing is mostly to inform. Its tone is serious and the style is descriptive until the last sentence, which expresses the author's point of view. The implied main idea is that Baxter State Park should once again be logged. The phrase *awful waste* points to a viewpoint that the trees in Baxter State Park are more valuable for lumber than as part of a preserve.

Test Example

Read the passage. Then answer the question.

People often borrow money to make large purchases. Before you take out a loan, it's important to know the cost of borrowing money. Interest rates can vary greatly. Fees and penalties can vary as well. Is there a fee to apply for the loan? What is the fee for a late payment? Is there a penalty for paying off the loan early? Borrow money if you need to, but be smart about it.

1. Which sentence from the passage best expresses the writer's attitude toward borrowing money?
 - A. People often borrow money to make large purchases.
 - B. Interest rates can vary greatly.
 - C. Fees and penalties can vary as well.
 - D. Borrow money if you need to, but be smart about it.
- D. This option summarizes the writer's attitude: borrowers should be intelligent about borrowing money.

Practice

Read the passage. Then answer questions 1 through 4.

Do you watch children's television programs with your child? If so, you're aware that your child is being bombarded by rapidly changing images, as well as loud music and other bone-jarring sounds. The colors are intense, too. I can picture my child's brain scrambling from so much sensory input. It's just too much coming at his still-developing brain.

No wonder kids are having problems concentrating in school. How boring it must seem to have a teacher sitting in front of the class and displaying the pages of a book while reading the text in a calm voice. Where's the flash and excitement?

Even if you don't have a child, try spending fifteen minutes watching a children's program on television. Listen to the use of language. You'll hear characters speaking in short, choppy phrases instead of complete sentences. How can educators inspire children to speak with a rich vocabulary using clear sentence structure when they're exposed to so much abbreviated yak-yak?

Have you noticed that watching television is the opposite of reading a book? Reading requires attention, patience, and engagement. No wonder children have trouble mustering attention, patience, and commitment when television, by contrast, demands so little of them and delivers so much more instant pizzazz. Reading encourages children to draw conclusions and stretch their imaginations. Television says, "All you have to do is show up. We'll do the work for you!"

Parents, help steer your children toward a healthier sensory diet. You wouldn't feed them candy bars for supper. Turn off the television and give them more nourishing fare. Read a book to them. Teach them to be active participants in the life of the mind instead of passive receivers of flash and noise.

1. Which of these best describes the writer's main purpose in this passage?
 - A. to persuade
 - B. to inform
 - C. to entertain
 - D. to explain
2. Which sentence from the passage best expresses the writer's attitude toward children's television?
 - A. She is amused by how much trouble television producers go to in order to keep children's attention.
 - B. She is worried that it may be harmful to those children who are sensitive to loud noises.
 - C. She is outraged by how overstimulating and damaging it is and thinks it should be avoided.
 - D. She is neutral about it but prefers that children spend most of their time reading.

3. Which of these approaches does the writer mainly use in the passage?
 - A. presenting both sides of the issue
 - B. supporting main points with scientific evidence
 - C. using quotes from recognized experts
 - D. using statements intended to appeal to readers' emotions
4. Which of these would most likely strengthen the writer's argument in the passage?
 - A. listing children's television programs
 - B. using facts or statistics to support her main points
 - C. using quotations from children who enjoy watching television
 - D. using quotations from parents who monitor screen time