A GUIDE TO AUDIENCE

*in academic writing*

- **what is an audience?**

Audience is a blend of real and imagined members: actual people outside the text and the audience members implied within the text. It is subjective to the writer and his or her rhetorical situation.

- **what does this mean?**

Your audience is not just the people outside of the text A.K.A. your professor or the other students in your class, but also people implied within the text A.K.A. scholars in the field or a person who knows nothing about your topic. The reader outside or inside of the text depends on the class, the prompt or assignment, and the subject matter being written about.

- **what are some examples?**

Keep in mind that all assignments are different and many professors prefer a variety of different things in a paper.

In lab reports, the main audience is usually other students who have not yet completed the experiment.

In papers for a literature class, the main audience is usually the professor or some other scholar who is already familiar with the literature being discussed in the paper.

**WHEN WRITING FOR SCHOOL**

*WHO IS THE MOST IMPORTANT MEMBER OF YOUR AUDIENCE?*

The majority of the time, the **professor** is the most important audience member or he or she is *indirectly* the most important audience member. He or she has created the assignment and written the prompt and will also be evaluating your execution of said assignment.

- **how can I consider my audience while writing?**

By being aware of your audience. Think about who will be reading what you are writing in order to be sure that you communicate your ideas clearly. Make sure to consciously adjust your message (how you say something and what information you include) in recognition of the needs of different readers.