

6 Author's Purpose

2.A.4. a, b

Authors write to tell you something. Understanding *why* they write helps you to understand *what* you are reading. Did the author write to entertain? To teach? To persuade? When you know the **author's purpose**, you can change how you read. For example, you might take more notes about details if the passage is meant to inform, not entertain.

Ask An author's **viewpoint** is what she thinks about her subject. As you read, ask yourself what the author thinks. Ask yourself how it affects what she chooses to write and how she writes it.

Example

Why did the author write "A Born Astronomer"?

- (A) To explain what navigational devices are and how they work
- (B) To amuse the reader with stories about whaling and the sea
- (C) To tell about a woman astronomer who discovered a comet
- (D) To persuade the reader that Nantucket has a lot of history

D I S C U S S	(A) The passage does talk about navigational devices, but it doesn't tell how they work.	(C) The author <i>mostly</i> tells about Maria Mitchell and what she did. This answer choice fits what you have read.
	(B) The author probably does want you to enjoy the passage. But is that her <i>main</i> purpose? Probably not.	(D) The author does tell about the history of Nantucket. That doesn't seem to be the purpose for the passage, though.



Connections When you go to the movies, you see previews for other movies. What is the purpose of the previews?
