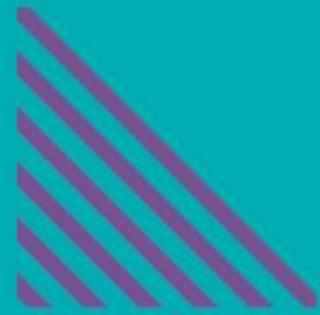


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# functional skills



L2.19\_R  
Identify different styles of writing and writer's voice



# Aims and Outcomes

By the end of this session learners **must**:

- **Identify** different writing styles
- **Identify** the difference in levels of seriousness and formality in journalistic styles

You **should**:

- **Identify** different tones in texts
- **Be aware** of opposite tones (e.g. serious-fun)

You **could**:

- **Understand** what writer's voice is.



# Style and tone

In your Level 2 reading exam, you will be required to identify and discuss the tone and style of various texts

This requires an all-round knowledge of understanding texts.

Unlike previous tasks, where you may need to identify formal or informal aspects, this part of functional skills looks at more specific areas.



# Style

All texts have a style. The style is usually determined by the audience and/or the purpose of the text. Styles include:

- Factual
- Academic
- Official
- Instructional
- Journalistic
- Fictional



# Factual texts

Factual writing can be found in many places – newspapers, magazine articles, textbooks, on the internet etc. Factual writing will usually be in

- A formal style – using long, complex sentences.
- Backed up with statistics and evidence
- It will be well-organised and have a clear layout so information can be easily found
- It may have footnotes, quotations or other forms of reference
- It may use diagrams or charts to explain complex data
- It will introduce its subject, then follow it with a balanced argument
- It will summarise its main points in a conclusion

# Academic texts

## **Academic writing is similar in style to factual**

- It will include the elements of factual writing, but may be even more detailed and precise.
- It will avoid any omissions or errors, as it will, most likely, be examined in great detail
- It will be clear and logical
- It may be dry or not fun to read because its purpose is to educate, not entertain
- Academic writing may offer other sources on the subject written about to add further balance
- It will usually include technical or very specific vocabulary



# Official texts

Official writing includes letters, business proposals and press releases, among many others. Its style includes these elements:

- Formal language
- Polite language, especially in letters
- Possible specific or technical elements
- Extreme detail, especially in legal documents
- Possible archaic\* language, including Latin
- Neutral and impersonal language

# Instructional Texts

**Instructional texts may include wikis or manuals. Their style includes:**

- Instructional Language (imperatives)
- Technical vocabulary specific to the subject
- Textual features such as illustrations, diagrams, bullet points etc.
- Advisory language (could, should, might)
- Precise language



# Journalistic texts

Journalistic texts range from tabloid to serious newspapers, magazine articles and online pieces. They can vary in style depending on the seriousness of the writer. Let's look at the two styles:

## **Serious / Broadsheet journalism**

- Logical approach to subject
- Serious subject matter
- Opinions made by writers are often thoughtful and balanced
- More text / fewer images
- Less eye-catching

## **Opinion Pieces / Tabloid journalism**

- More emotive
- Range of subject matter
- Opinions can vary from mild to extreme
- Eye-catching
- Use of images to imply meaning

# Fictional Texts

**Fictional texts are stories, poems, novels, scripts and so on. Here are their key features:**

- Often use flowery and imaginative language
- Will have imaginary characters and situations
- May take an unusual style, like poetry, with a different style of line spacing or paragraphing
- Will not quote sources or research (unless a historical novel, or a work based in reality)
- Longer texts will be organised into acts, chapters or episodes.



# Quiz

*In 2015, it resulted in about 114,800 deaths.[8] The condition was first described in the medical literature by the American physician James B. Herrick in 1910.[13][14] In 1949, the genetic transmission was determined by E. A. Beet and J. V. Neel.[14]*

1. This is an example of which writing style:



Journalistic



Instructional.



Fictional



Academic.

# Quiz

*In 2015, it resulted in about 114,800 deaths.[8] The condition was first described in the medical literature by the American physician James B. Herrick in 1910.[13][14] In 1949, the genetic transmission was determined by E. A. Beet and J. V. Neel.[14]*

1. This is an example of which writing style:



Journalistic



Instructional.



Fictional



Academic.

# Quiz

*The wind blew gently through her hair as she stood on the desolate riverbank*

2. This is an example of which writing style:



Journalistic



Instructional.



Fictional



Academic.

# Quiz

*The wind blew gently through her hair as she stood on the desolate riverbank*

2. This is an example of which writing style:



Journalistic



Instructional.



Fictional



Academic.



# Quiz

***The property aforementioned will remain the property of the leaseholder ad infinitum, unless there is a change in property law.***

3. This is an example of which writing style:



Journalistic



Instructional.



Fictional



Official.

# Quiz

*The property aforementioned will remain the property of the leaseholder ad infinitum, unless there is a change in property law.*

3. This is an example of which writing style:



Journalistic



Instructional.



Fictional



Official.

# Quiz

*After attaching the twine to the half-formed mannequin, glue the lower side of the torso to it.*

4. This is an example of which writing style:



Journalistic



Instructional.



Fictional



Official.

# Quiz

*After attaching the twine to the half-formed mannequin, glue the lower side of the torso to it.*

4. This is an example of which writing style:



Journalistic



Instructional.



Fictional



Official.

Now try activity 1

# Tone

Tone is less about what you say and more about how you say it  
Look at the tone types which are opposites of each other?

- Sarcastic
- Polite
- Optimistic
- Fun
- Pessimistic
- Serious
- Erratic
- Consistent
- Genius

# Optimistic or Pessimistic?

Decide which sentence has an optimistic tone and which a pessimistic one.

By the end of the concert, the crowd were ecstatic. I left feeling that I'd fallen in love with music all over again.

## Optimistic

Positive language. Emotive Language. Upbeat.

Managerless, rudderless, hopeless. This football team haven't got a hope of avoiding relegation.

## Pessimistic

Rule of three to exaggerate. Negative Language. No upside mentioned.

# Polite or rude?

Decide which sentence has an polite tone and which a rude one.

If everybody washed their dishes, we wouldn't have this STINKING mess!

## Rude

Direct language. Underlined word. Capitalised word. Strong adjective.

If all members could kindly leave via the back door, we would be very grateful.

## Polite

Requestful not demanding. Mannered vocabulary – kindly, grateful. Indirect.

# Genuine or sarcastic?

Decide which sentence has an genuine tone and which a sarcastic one.

Well done to all those 'bridgebuilders' who wanted peace in the country. We know have an even worse situation. Fantastic.

**Sarcastic**

Ironic *well done* and *fantastic*. Use of speech marks.  
Negative.

One day, all children in this nation will have the opportunity to attain an excellent education

**Genuine**

Inspiring. Idealistic. Positive.

# Serious or fun?

Which of these extracts is serious in tone? Which is fun?

She's been in the Big Brother house for two weeks. She'll pain the town red when she gets out!

## Fun

Trivial subject matter. Simple language. Cliched.  
Exclamation point.

By extracting the DNA, using hitherto unused techniques, the scientists can speed up their current process.

## Serious

Long sentence. Formal. Subordinate clause. Technical.

# Erratic or consistent?

Read the text and decide if it is erratic or consistent.

All my life I have been a supporter of the Independent democrats. You should be too! I first came across their policies in 1986, when I read their excellent manifesto for the local elections of that year. The opposition leader was an idiot, so it was a no brainer.

Begins in a fun, personal style. More formal second sentence.  
Rude final sentence.

That first election was brill. They secured an unprecedented 11% of the vote\* and won councils in Surrey, Glamorganshire and Teesside. “Couldn’t win a single seat!”, said some. My eye!

Shortened word – informal. Followed by formal style and academic style. Then, sarcasm.

It’s a shame they folded in 1991 without trace.

Short ending with no real summary

# Writer's voice

Now try activity 2

A writer's **voice** is their unique, personal way of writing  
It is often seen as **style + tone + attitude.**

Attitude is illustrated by a writer's beliefs and values, and is often the emotional part of their writing.

Writer's voice is a combination of everything in someone's writing to indicate who they are.



# Aims and Outcomes

Remember to  
complete your  
knowledge check

By the end of this session learners **must**:

- **Identify** different writing styles
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You **should**:

- **Identify** different tones in texts
- **Be aware** of opposite tones (e.g. serious-fun)

You **could**:

- **Understand** what writer's voice is.

# Congratulations!

You've completed this module on identifying different styles of writing and writer's voice for Level 2 Functional Skills English.

