

## Portfolio-appropriate Transactive Writing: Examples of Purposes

**Broad Purposes:** To help readers understand something better; to help readers do something; to strive to get something done

### More Specific Purposes:

1. Persuade readers to accept an idea or to take some action
2. Present information and explanation that are needed by or important to an authentic readership
3. Analyze a problem, situation, event, procedure, viewpoint, performance, etc. For example, analyze problems that affect readers and present ways to solve the problems; analyze conditions and make recommendations to help readers; discuss important causes or effects that certain readers need to know; draw needed comparisons and offer conclusions that can benefit selected readers; explain relationships, etc.
4. Evaluate something in order to help readers who can benefit from the evaluation
5. Argue/defend a position, seeking to convince others to accept or to reject a viewpoint or idea
6. Discuss procedures or processes that authentic readers need to understand; explain better ways of doing something; apply a process to a realistic problem or condition; help readers accomplish a task
7. Propose and justify a needed change, improvement, solution to a problem
8. Draw useful conclusions for selected readers based on observations or other research
9. Offer readers who need them ideas about possible consequences of something; predict outcomes that have relevance to readers
10. Alert readers to a danger or write to provide information and ideas that can help protect readers; help readers avoid a danger
11. Help readers understand something about which they may be confused or may have questions about or may not have recognized; clear up misunderstandings
12. Raise and discuss important questions for a reader to consider—question the reader might need answered
13. Present and support a plan, helping readers understand its benefits for them and others
14. Develop ideas about some event that has taken place, ideas that can help readers understand the events better or see something they may not have seen about the event
15. Identify problems that readers may not have recognized
16. Explain how to accomplish important goals or explain better ways to achieve the goals
17. Present and explain discoveries that have relevance to readers, especially selected readers
18. Present and discuss “news,” drawing conclusions that will help readers
19. Discuss a matter in order to correct a misunderstanding or error
20. Explain different views of something and draw conclusions that can benefit readers
21. Present and support ideas about something that readers might not have had understood
22. Present “news” gained from inquiry: survey, questionnaire, reading, observation, experiment, speaking with others; the news might be an insight or information that is useful to readers
23. Help learners in a discipline understand something better

Of course, many other options are available.

**Write with awareness of authentic readers.****Some examples of realistic/authentic readerships:**

1. **A specific individual or group whom you want to do something or agree with you about something (e.g., a letter to \_\_\_; a proposal to \_\_\_; an editorial for \_\_\_)**
2. **Readers of a particular publication (an actual one, a classroom/school publication, a realistic one)**
3. **People who think a certain way about an issue, problem, condition, etc., or have a particular opinion, viewpoint, position (e.g., those who support school uniforms or dress codes)**
4. **People who work in a particular role or job (e.g., the director of school food program)**
5. **People who need something or need help with something (e.g., those seeking a way to better health)**
6. **People who asked for something (e.g., an individual or group that has requested a report with recommendations)**
7. **People in a particular group (e.g., tourists, consumers, citizens, those concerned about protecting the environment, etc.)**
8. **People who share a special interest or hobby (e.g., hikers, boaters, fishermen, etc.)**
9. **People who face a particular problem (e.g., people who use wheel chairs, people having difficult with a computer operation)**
10. **People who seek a goal (e.g. parents interested in school safety, those interested in a better turnout for voting, those who want to succeed in a particular career, etc.)**
11. **People interested in students' ideas about a topic, issue, problem, need**
12. **People who have a misconception about something or whom the writer wants to persuade to see something a different way**
13. **People interested in artistic expressions (e.g., poetry, short stories, plays)**
14. **People interested in ideas about human experience**
15. **People who are critical thinkers**
16. **Learners in a discipline or readers seeking insight and information from one who has studied a particular subject.**

## Sample Approaches to Portfolio-appropriate Transactive Writing in Content Areas:

Of course, a variety of approaches are available, but seeing some options may help teachers make decisions about an approach through which they not only can help students develop as writers but also help students learn in the content area.

1. ***Write to address a significant question relevant to learning.***  
 EX: How can we better protect our environment? How is local geography influencing our community in positive and negative ways? How can we be wiser consumers?  
 Sample forms for transactive writing: article, text for speech, editorial, proposal, letter
2. ***Write to analyze a problem or to alert readers to a problem.***  
 EX: Poor nutrition; global warming; voter apathy; bad weather; credit card debt  
 Sample forms: letter, article, text for speech, editorial, report for authentic readership, academic paper
3. ***Write to advocate, propose, or recommend a needed change.***  
 EX: Better conservation of energy; changes in law or procedure; improvement in a school or community program  
 Sample forms: letter, memo proposal, formal proposal, article, editorial, speech
4. ***Write to help readers gain a better understanding of a selected subject, event, process, system, condition, text, artistic performance, culture, phenomenon, etc.***  
 EX: Genetic factors and health; Islamic culture; a historical event; a character in a novel; global warming; immigration procedures and rules  
 Sample forms: feature article for a magazine, academic article or paper to deliver at a conference or meeting
5. ***Write to persuade others to accept a position on a controversial issue.***  
 EX: Separation of church and state; issues relevant to civil liberties; stem-cell research; private gain from use of public lands; issues relevant to school or community rules  
 Sample forms: text for speech, editorial, feature article, academic article, letter
6. ***Write to persuade others to take a particular action.***  
 EX: Act to improve the school, community, or an organization; pass needed laws; purchase needed equipment or resources; change a policy; follow a certain exercise plan  
 Sample forms: letter, memo, proposal, editorial text for speech, paper for meeting
7. ***Write to analyze or evaluate a product, service, law, procedure, decision, condition, event, text, performance, common practice, etc.***  
 EX: A new computer program; a form of music or musical performance; a recent decision by the court or a school or community leader; an historical event, etc.  
 Sample forms: feature article, academic article, editorial, review for magazine, paper
8. ***Write to help readers accomplish a goal.***  
 EX: Improved relationships among cultures, groups; protection of habitat; improved skills in ceramics; better conditions for the handicapped; better equipment for a school program; better nutrition; better service at a restaurant or store

Sample forms: feature article, academic article or paper, letter, manual, proposal

9. ***Write to help readers gain a better understanding of an academic subject.***  
EX: A character or technique in a novel; an historical event; a natural phenomenon; a scientific principle or concept; a philosophy  
Sample forms: academic article, paper for conference or seminar, review for magazine
10. ***Write to help readers accomplish a task or accomplish a task better.***  
EX: Solve a problem in using computers; improve skills in a particular art form; influence legislators; address a consumer problem; create a budget; prepare better lunches