



Author's purpose

Reading Comprehension Worksheet

Practice

A parent or tutor should read along with the student, helping as needed.

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 An author's **purpose** is the reason for writing something.

Sometimes the **purpose** is *to give us information*.

Sometimes the **purpose** is *to teach us something*.

Sometimes the **purpose** is *to make us laugh*.  
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Here are some story summaries. Think about the author's **purpose** for writing each one.

Magpie built the best nest of all the birds, so the birds asked her to teach them how. Magpie started with a mud pancake. Thrush said, "Aha!" and flew away. Thrush still makes her nest out of mud. Magpie added some twigs. Owl said, "Aha!" and flew away. Owl still makes her nest that way. Each time Magpie finished a step, one of the birds thought Magpie was finished, and flew away. Magpie got angry because the birds hadn't stayed, so she refused to show them ever again. And that is why different birds build their nests differently.

1. What is the author's purpose for writing this story?
 - A. to give us information
 - B. to teach us something
 - C. to make us laugh

Elephants love water. They are excellent swimmers, and they also love to splash and play in shallow water. They suck water up into their trunks, two gallons at a time, and spray it into their mouths. They love to squirt their elephant and human friends, too. Even though their skin is an inch thick, it is very sensitive, and can get sunburned. They roll in the shallow waters to get a nice protective layer of mud on their bodies. Mother elephants are also careful to keep their babies coated with mud.

2. What is the author's purpose for writing this story?
 - A. to give us information
 - B. to teach us something
 - C. to make us laugh

Hans received a bag of gold coins for the year's work, and set off down the road. The bag was heavy, so he traded it for a horse. The horse threw him into a ditch, so he traded it for a cow. The cow kicked him when he tried to milk it, so he traded it for a goose. Then he traded the goose for a grindstone that was really just an ordinary stone. When he was getting a drink of water from the stream, he accidentally knocked his stone into the water. Hans jumped for joy because now he was free of all his problems!

3. What is the author's purpose for writing this story? Circle the letter of your answer.
- A. to give us information
 - B. to teach us something
 - C. to make us laugh

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4. What is another example of a story written to give us information?

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5. What is another example of a story written to teach us something?

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6. What is another example of a story written to make us laugh?

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## Answer Key

1. B

2. A

3. C

4-6 Accept any reasonable responses.