

RECOGNIZING AUTHOR'S PURPOSE



EXERCISE: Label each passage according to its primary purpose:

- (I) to inform
- (P) to persuade
- (E) to entertain.

- _____1. When the president or the Justices of the Supreme Court feel the cost of living is rising faster than their wages, where must they go begging for a raise? To Congress, of course. But when senators or congress people feel it's time for a higher paycheck, to whom do they turn? To themselves, that's who! I believe it's high time the Congress had to go to another branch of government for its pay hikes. Maybe then we could start thinking about lowering the national debt.
- _____2. Tofu is a product gaining popularity as a low-calorie, cholesterol-free meat substitute. Once found only in Oriental markets and health-food stores, tofu is now sold in many supermarket produce sections. The white, cheese-like substance, made from the thickened milk of soybeans, has many qualities that appeal to the health-conscious. It is very high in protein and low in sodium. Tofu has little flavor of its own, but fans feel it mixes well in stir-fry combinations, sauces and soups.
- _____3. Early birds are an odd breed. It's bad enough to face an alarm clock at dawn, but at least you can throw a clock across the room. It's not so easy to throw an early bird, especially if it happens to be your roommate or wife. These birds are actually energetic in the morning, getting things done and speaking in full sentences. Surely, if the good Lord had expected people to function so early, he wouldn't have created party animals and late night TV. Obviously, mornings are for the birds.
- _____4. Drug awareness programs aimed at children usually focus on illegal drugs — cocaine, marijuana, and heroin — and ignore a substance that is even more likely to harm them. Alcohol, an addictive drug that contributes to the deaths of more than 10,000 young people annually, is treated casually by much of society. To counteract the influence of enticing beer ads and alcohol in the home, schools must take alcohol abuse as seriously as other addictions.

- _____5. The Census Bureau has just announced that the population of America has reached a median age of 32.1 years. This means that for the first time in our nation's history, there are as many Americans over thirty-two as below. There are three reasons for this. First, the surge of population called the Baby Boomers—born after World War II—is approaching middle age. Second, the Baby Boom was followed by a sharp decline in population; for the next ten years, very few babies were born. Third, our nation's older people are living longer, thanks to improved health care and health awareness.
- _____6. Clio had often seen him standing by the baboon exhibit, watching for as long as an hour at a time. The sign said, "No Feeding," but he often dropped peanuts into the exhibit. He should have known better, working, as did she, at the zoo. But one glance at his blue eyes, and Clio easily forgave him. Whenever she saw him, she used any excuse to head his way. Sometimes he looked her straight in the eyes and smiled, without saying a word. She had to find out where his office was. Was he the new curator of cats?
- _____7. We often hear that we should "vote the candidate" instead of voting a straight party ticket. But giving steady support to one party or the other is a better way to make votes count in the long run. Important issues in Congress are usually decided largely on party lines. If you usually agree with the positions of one party, it makes good sense to vote for that party's candidate even if you disagree with the candidate about some particular issues.
- _____8. The cheetah, one of the big cats of Africa, is the fastest animal on earth. Cheetahs have been clocked running at seventy miles an hour; forty miles per hour is the top speed achieved by its closest competitor, the horse. The cheetah's speed is made possible by its extremely flexible back, which allows it to bring its hind legs far ahead of its front ones with each stride. But it can hold its great speed only for brief distances. If pursued by a fast attacker with more stamina—a man on horseback or a car, for example—the cheetah will simply lie down in exhaustion soon into the race.