

from A DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Reading Skill

ANALYZE AUTHOR’S PURPOSE

An author’s purpose, or reason for writing a particular work may be to inform, entertain, persuade, or express an opinion. Johnson wrote his dictionary entries to inform readers of the meanings and spellings of words, but he hoped to achieve something else with his preface. To determine Johnson’s purpose for writing the preface, examine the main ideas expressed, supporting details used, and descriptions that convey the author’s opinions or feelings

Directions: In first two columns of the chart, record main ideas and details or descriptions from the selection that suggest the author’s purpose. In the last column, record the author’s purpose that is reflected in each idea.

Main Idea	Details/Descriptions	Purpose