There are **four main types of writing**: expository, persuasive, narrative, and descriptive.

* Expository – Writing in which author’s purpose is to inform or explain the subject to the reader.
* Persuasive – Writing that states the opinion of the writer and attempts to influence the reader.
* Narrative – Writing in which the author tells a story. The story could be fact or fiction.
* Descriptive – A type of expository writing that uses the five senses to paint a picture for the reader. This writing incorporates imagery and specific details.

**1. Expository Writing:**

Expository writing explains or informs—it talks about a subject without giving opinions.

Expository writing's main purpose is to explain. It is a subject-oriented writing style, in which authors focus on telling you about a given topic or subject without voicing their personal opinions. They furnish you with relevant facts and figures but do not include their opinions. This is one of the most common types of writing styles, which you always see in textbooks and how-to articles. The author just tells you about a given subject, such as how to do something.

**Key Points:**

* Expository writing usually explains something in a process.
* Expository writing is often equipped with facts and figures.
* Expository writing is usually in a logical order and sequence.

**When You Would Use Expository Writing:**

* Textbook writing
* How-to articles
* Recipes
* News stories (not including opinion or editorial pieces)
* Business, technical, or scientific writing

**2. Descriptive Writing:**

Descriptive writing focuses on communicating the details of a character, event, or place.

Descriptive writing's main purpose is to describe. It is a style of writing that focuses on describing a character, an event, or a place in great detail. It can be poetic when the author takes the time to be very specific in his or her descriptions.

**Key Points**:

* It is often poetic in nature
* It describes places, people, events, situations, or locations in a highly-detailed manner.
* The author visualizes what he or she sees, hears, tastes, smells, and feels.

**When You Would Use Descriptive Writing:**

* Poetry
* Journal or diary writing
* Nature writing
* Descriptive passages in fiction

**3. Persuasive Writing:**

Persuasive writing tries to bring other people around to your point of view.

Persuasive writing's main purpose is to persuade. Unlike expository writing, persuasive writing contains the opinions and biases of the author. To convince others to agree with the author's point of view, persuasive writing contains justifications and reasons. It is often used in letters of complaint, advertisements or commercials, affiliate marketing pitches, cover letters, and newspaper opinion and editorial pieces.

**Key Points:**

* Persuasive writing is equipped with reasons, arguments, and justifications.
* In persuasive writing, the author takes a stand and asks you to agree with his or her point of view.
* It often asks for readers to do something about the situation (this is called a call-to-action).

**When You Would Use Persuasive Writing:**

* Opinion and editorial newspaper pieces
* Advertisements
* Reviews (of books, music, movie, restaurants, etc.)
* Letter of recommendation
* Letter of complaint
* Cover letters

**4. Narrative Writing:**

A narrative tells a story. There will usually be characters and dialogue.

Narrative writing's main purpose is to tell a story. The author will create different characters and tell you what happens to them (sometimes the author writes from the point of view of one of the characters—this is known as first person narration). Novels, short stories, novellas, poetry, and biographies can all fall in the narrative writing style. Simply, narrative writing answers the question: “What happened then?”

**Key Points:**

* In narrative writing, a person tells a story or event.
* Narrative writing has characters and dialogue.
* Narrative writing has definite and logical beginnings, intervals, and endings.
* Narrative writing often has situations like actions, motivational events, and disputes or conflicts with their eventual solutions.

**Examples of When You Would Use Narrative Writing:**

* Novels
* Short stories
* Novellas
* Poetry
* Autobiographies or biographies
* Anecdotes
* Oral histories