Informing versus Persuading: Writing Two Different Ways

KS4 ENGLISH LANGUAGE | WRITING SKILLS | Ages 13-18 | ⏰ 4 min read

What's the Difference?

When you write, you usually have one main goal: either to **inform** someone (give them facts and information) or to **persuade** them (convince them to agree with your opinion or take action). These two goals need completely different writing styles.

Informing is like being a news reporter. You present facts, details, and evidence as fairly as possible. **Persuading** is more like being a lawyer in court—you're building an argument to win someone over to your side.

How Informative Writing Works

When you're informing, your job is to be **neutral** and **objective**. This means you don't show your personal feelings about the topic. You stick to the facts.

Informative writing uses: clear, straightforward language; a logical structure that's easy to follow; evidence and data that readers can check; and sentences that explain 'what happened' or 'how things work' rather than pushing an opinion.

Think of it like giving someone directions to a shop. You don't say 'this route is amazing!' You just point out the streets and landmarks they need to follow.

How Persuasive Writing Works

When you're persuading, you're trying to make readers **feel** something or **agree** with you. Your tone can be passionate. You choose your words carefully to create an emotional connection.

Persuasive writing uses: strong, emotional language; **rhetorical devices** like repetition and rhetorical questions; carefully selected examples that support your argument; and appeals to the reader's values, fears, or desires.

Think of it like recommending your favourite film to a friend. You don't just list facts about it—you describe how amazing it made you feel and why they'd absolutely love

it.

Spotting the Difference

Here's how to tell them apart in real life:

An informative sentence: 'Research shows that **65% of teenagers** get less than eight hours of sleep on school nights.'

A persuasive sentence: 'Teenagers desperately need more sleep—schools must start lessons later to protect young people's health and happiness.'

The informative version gives you a number and fact. The persuasive version uses words like 'desperately' and 'must' to make you agree that action should be taken.

Why Does This Matter?

Understanding the difference makes you a better reader and writer. When you read news or social media, you can spot when someone is informing versus persuading. When you write essays, reviews, or speeches, you can choose the right style for your audience and purpose.

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