

8.1 Understanding an audience's beliefs and needs

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 12 marks

Objective

Build the skills to read an audience whose beliefs are **divided** 分歧.

You must be able to:

- infer that a text addresses more than one group
- identify which passages address which group
- explain how a writer holds a divided audience together
- avoid describing a single undifferentiated "audience"

1 Worked examples

Study these first. Each one shows the method for a task used later.

■ Signs of a divided audience

A text that concedes in one paragraph and asserts in the next is usually addressing two groups. So is one that explains a term and then uses specialist language a few lines later.

■ Which passage, which group

Match each move to the group it serves: the concession answers the sceptics; the technical passage rewards the specialists; the concrete case reaches the general reader.

■ Holding it together

A writer unites a divided audience by finding a value both hold —safety, fairness, cost —and arguing from it. That shared value is often the thesis's real foundation.

2 Practice

2.1 State two signs that a text addresses more than one group.

[2]

2.2 Explain how a writer can unite a divided audience. [2]

2.3 A speech concedes cost in paragraph two and cites technical data in paragraph three.

(a) State which group each addresses. [2]

(b) State what this shows about the audience. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 A text that explains a term and later uses specialist language most likely addresses [1]

- **A** one homogeneous group
- **B** more than one group
- **C** no audience
- **D** only specialists

3.2 A shared value used to unite a divided audience often functions as [1]

- **A** a digression
- **B** the foundation of the thesis
- **C** a concession
- **D** a hedge

3.3 A council report must persuade both residents and finance officers.

(a) Name one value both might share. [1]

(b) Explain how an argument from it could satisfy both. [2]

4 Go further

- work through the **8.1 Understanding an audience’s beliefs and needs** lesson on the **Learn** page;
- read the **Audience, Tone, and Sentence Craft** section of the AP English Language handout on the **Know** page.

Solutions

2.1 any two of: conceding in one place and asserting in another; explaining a term and then using specialist language; alternating concrete cases with technical data.

2.2 by finding a value both groups hold and arguing from it, which becomes the foundation of the thesis.

2.3 (a) the concession addresses sceptics about cost; the technical data addresses specialists. (b) that the audience is divided rather than uniform.

3.1 B. the two levels of assumed knowledge indicate two groups.

3.2 B. it is the common ground the whole argument rests on.

3.3 (a) e.g. long-term value for money, or safety. (b) residents care about the outcome and officers about the cost, and an argument that the outcome is cheaper over time satisfies both descriptions of the same value.