



Understanding different types of text

A text can come in any form and be any kind of writing. Letters, adverts, user-guides, emails, postcards, notes and magazine articles are all different types of text.

When reading something, it helps to know what type of text it is. It also helps to know why it has been written. For example:

- An advert is written to **persuade** you to buy something.
- A user-guide is **instructive** and is written **to tell you how** to use something (such as a video recorder or washing-machine).
- A formal (business) letter might be written to **inform** you about school dates.
- A personal letter might be written by a friend, **describing** a holiday.

Persuasive texts

A **persuasive** text tries to encourage you to do something. It may:

- Use capital letters, exclamation marks, questions and repeated words to catch your attention.
- Use adjectives to make something sound attractive.
- Give only one side of an argument.
- Take the form of an advert; but it may also be a letter from a friend trying to persuade you to go to a class.

For example, the following text is written to persuade the reader to take a holiday:

Enjoy an **Enchanting** Holiday in the Maldives

Scattered across the Indian Ocean lie islands with the **finest** white sand beaches and **clearest crystal blue** waters. These are the **MALDIVES!** Over 1,000 coral islands. Temperatures here are always in the 80s.

What can our holiday offer you?

Luxurious accommodation aboard the fabulous Orient Explorer.

Water sports for the **entire** duration of your holiday.

Drinks and entertainment included **at no extra charge**.

Chauffeur-driven **limousine** to and from the airport.

Combine this with another seven-night holiday in our **opulent** apartments at the Kelai Country Club.

Prices start from **just** £899 per person.

Have a go at spotting all the persuading words that are used in the text.



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It's important to understand the difference between what is a **fact** and what is the writer's **opinion**. Try and work out what is **fact** and what is **opinion** in the text above.

Instructive texts

An **instructive** text tells you how to do something. It will often use commands and pictures. It will be direct, without extra words, like adjectives. For example:

Cut the bread into small squares. Arrange in layers and sprinkle with sugar and raisins.

Informative texts

An **informative** text should give facts, information or news in a clear, step-by-step way. For example:

Your course will start with an initial assessment in week 1, followed by a guided tour of the building.

Descriptive texts

A **descriptive** text tells you what something is like. The writer is trying to help you imagine or 'see' a person, place or thing.

Describing words, such as adjectives and adverbs are used, as well as descriptions of the five senses: look, sound, smell, touch, taste. For example:

He was a big man with short curly hair, brown teeth and a flat nose. A scar crossed his right cheek from ear to chin.

Letters

Texts such as **letters** often look the same but can have different purposes. For example:

- A **personal** letter from a friend can be set out in whatever way the writer wishes and will often describe a person, place or thing.
- A **circular** letter is sent to many people and, like an advert, will often try to persuade the reader to buy something.