

# Starting the school year with Edge

Teaching tip by co-author Svein Arild Pettersen

Your new textbook, *Edge*, has a specific structure including six key concepts with which you should familiarize yourself. First, skim-read *Edge Explains: Six Key Concepts*, pp. 14-15.

## SIX KEY CONCEPTS

**1. AUDIENCE**  
TO WHOM SOMETHING IS WRITTEN OR SAID

All texts, written or oral, seek to reach a particular audience. This audience has a broad general background, whereas a book club, a friend's letter, a private speech, or a presentation has a more specific intended audience. You should always consider the audience of a text at the outset, because it will affect all aspects of the text.

When you write and create a presentation, try to think about your audience's expectations and needs:

- What information, interest, or advice do you need to provide?
- What do you already know about the topic?
- What information do you need to understand?

## 2. PURPOSE

WHY SOMETHING IS WRITTEN OR SAID

Think about the overall purpose that you intend to accomplish with your writing.

The purpose of a text depends on the situation and the purpose of the writer. The purpose of a text is to inform, to persuade, to entertain, and to connect. The purpose of a text is to inform, to persuade, to entertain, and to connect. The purpose of a text is to inform, to persuade, to entertain, and to connect.

Have a clear idea of the purpose for your writing by asking yourself:

- Why am I writing or speaking about this?
- What do I want my audience to know or do?

**3. GENRE**  
HOW SOMETHING IS WRITTEN OR SAID

The genre of a text depends on the form of the text. The genre of a text is to inform, to persuade, to entertain, and to connect. The genre of a text is to inform, to persuade, to entertain, and to connect.

**4. CONTENT**  
**5. STRUCTURE**  
**6. AND LANGUAGE**

The content of a text is the information that is conveyed. The structure of a text is the way in which the information is organized. The language of a text is the words and sentences that are used to convey the information.

**CONTENT:**

- the content is relevant for the audience and purpose
- your main ideas are clear and focused
- your main ideas are supported by facts and examples from reliable and relevant sources

**STRUCTURE:**

- the structure is clear and logical and easy to follow
- there are clear links between your ideas
- you have used a genre that suits the audience and purpose

**LANGUAGE:**

- you use a clear and precise vocabulary
- you make use of a range of grammatical forms to create effective sentences
- your spelling and punctuation are correct

Then, as you read the introductory article *English and Englishes* by Andrew Weir,

Introductory essay

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## English and Englishes

By Andrew Weir

*I got a right leg for the boy works at the broo. He thinks he's the heid bummer noo, but I kent his faither, ken.*

How much of the above do you understand? Would you call it English?

These sentences wouldn't sound out of place in the town of Dundee, in Scotland, where I grew up. In standard English, it might be something like "I got a real fight from the guy that works at the unemployment office. He thinks he's the boss now, but he shouldn't get above himself, you know."

You surely already know that there are lots of different ways that people speak English. The above – an example of Scots – is perhaps even "more different" than you've come across before. How does it differ from what you might be used to? Obviously, it differs in vocabulary – *leg* for "fight", *heid bummer* for "boss", *broo* (from "bureau") for "unemployment office" – and in pronunciation – *heid* (rhymes with "need") for "head", *noo* (rhymes with "two") for "now", and *richt* (with the *ch* sound of German *Reich*) for "right" (which here means "real, big"). More subtly, it differs in grammar, too; for example, *the boy works at the broo* would need the word *that* in standard English, *the boy that works at the broo*.

Probably more familiar to you are the differences between British and American English. There are different spellings of course, like *colour* (British) vs. *color* (American). And of course, the pronunciation is different too; an American English speaker, for example, pronounces the word *hot* with quite a different vowel from a British English speaker. These are differences of *accent*: of how someone pronounces words. Sometimes you might hear people say things like "He doesn't have an accent", but this is impossible; everyone, up to and including the Queen, "has an accent", that is, they pronounce words in a particular way.

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consider the following:



1. Who is the target *audience*?
2. What is the *purpose* of the text?
3. In what *genre* would you place the text?
4. How do you assess the *content* of the text? Is the content relevant for the audience and purpose? Are the main ideas clear and focused? Are they supported by facts and examples from relevant and reliable sources?
5. How is the text *structured*? Is the structure clear?
6. Does the style of *language* seem appropriate for this text type?

Write a sentence or two for each question, supporting your answers with examples from the text.