

## Real-world Writing Purposes “Field Guide”

| Purpose             | Defining Characteristics                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Natural Habitats                                                        | Example                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Express and Reflect | <p>The writer...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>describes something from <i>their own</i> experience</li> <li>uses that experience to reflect on who they are as a person, and/or broader questions about the world.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Memoirs</b></p> <p><b>Blogs</b></p> <p><b>Personal Essays</b></p> | <p>I made it the mantra of those days; when I paused before yet another series of switchbacks or skidded down knee-jarring slopes, when patches of flesh peeled off my feet along with my socks, when I lay alone and lonely in my tent at night I asked, often out loud: “Who is tougher than me?”</p> <p>The answer was always the same, and even when I knew absolutely there was no way on this earth that it was true, I said it anyway: “No one.”</p> <p>- Cheryl Strayed, <i>Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail</i></p> |
| Inform and Explain  | <p>The writer...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gives the reader <b>interesting</b> information they don’t already have</li> </ul>                                                                                              | <p><b>Newspapers &amp; magazines</b></p>                                | <p>Lance Armstrong is happy. In fact, he looks better at 42 than I’ve ever seen him, less gaunt in the face, thicker in the chest, bluer in the eyes. I found a man sitting in his den, surrounded by his seven Tour de France chalices, his 3-year-old, Olivia, on his lap, kissing him and laughing.</p> <p>-Rick Reilly, “<a href="#">Life goes on for Lance Armstrong</a>” (ESPN.Com)</p>                                                                                                                                                   |
| Evaluate and Judge  | <p>The writer...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“reviews” something (could be a restaurant, song, brand of cell phone, etc.)</li> <li>may compare two or more things (“Who’s a better dancer, Rihanna or Beyonce?”)</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Reviews</b></p> <p><b>Sports commentary</b></p>                   | <p>The most talked about book of the fall has arrived. And let me tell you- it’s definitely memorable. Just not in a good way. Alex Gino’s <i>George</i> carries an important message, no doubt, especially for the target age (8-12/Middle Grade). Unfortunately, the writing is executed quite poorly.</p> <p>-Review of <i>George</i>, by Alex Gino (<a href="#">bookreviewsbyava.tumblr.com</a>)</p>                                                                                                                                        |

[This “Field Guide” is adapted from Appendix 1 of Kelly Gallagher’s *Write Like This* (Stenhouse Publishers, 2011). Gallagher adapted his list from Bean, Chappell, and Gillam’s *Reading Rhetorically* (Longman, 2003)]

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|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Enquire and Explore                 | <p>The writer...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>takes on an open-ended question or problem</li> <li>explores it and “wrestles with it” during the course of the piece</li> </ul>                                                                                     | <p><b>Blogs</b></p> <p><b>Podcasts</b></p> <p><b>Literary Journals</b></p>                                                              | <p>When we speak about the ever-expanding chasm that defines modern American politics, we usually focus on cultural issues such as gay marriage, race, or religion. But as often has been the case throughout our history, the biggest source of division may be largely economic.</p> <p>-Joel Kotkin, <a href="#">“Are We Headed for an Economic Civil War?”</a> (<i>Daily Beast</i>)</p>                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Analyze and Interpret               | <p>The writer...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>examines a novel, scientific study, statistic, movie, poem, meme, etc., and analyzes its form and content, thereby revealing interesting things about both the thing under analysis, and the wider world.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Academic articles</b></p> <p><b>Genius Annotations</b></p> <p><b>Magazines with a specific focus (rap, motorcycles, etc.)</b></p> | <p>By calling himself “the King”, Eminem is casting himself as the heir to Elvis (“the king”), who decades earlier delighted teenagers and infuriated parents with his scandalous hip gyrations (Eminem compares himself to Elvis again in the song “Without Me”).</p> <p>Also, he uses alliteration with the words “ludicrous lucrative lyrics” and uses assonance with the “u” sound in “rude”, “ludicrous”, “lucrative”, “who”, “youth”, “music”, “huge”, “spew”, “food”, “beautiful music”, “disputed”, “viewed” and so on.</p> <p>-Analysis of the song “Renegade” on Genius.com</p> |
| Take a stand/<br>Propose a Solution | <p>The writer...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>makes an argument about something that matters to him or her.</li> <li>may be writing in order to propose a specific solution, or simply to expose a problem.</li> </ul>                                             | <p><b>Editorials</b></p> <p><b>“Comment” pages (back of newspaper)</b></p> <p><b>Letters to the editor</b></p>                          | <p>I teach theory and practice of social media at NYU, and am an advocate and activist for the free culture movement, so I’m a pretty unlikely candidate for internet censor, but I have just asked the students in my fall seminar to refrain from using laptops, tablets, and phones in class.</p> <p>-Clay Shirky, <a href="#">“Why I just asked my students to put their laptops away”</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                        |

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