Using Inferring to Examine the Author’s Purpose

Rarely does an author state explicitly his/her purpose for writing a particular text. Students must make inferences to answer questions dealing with the author’s purpose. The following questions might be used to help students think about author’s purpose.

• List the things you think the author had to know to write this selection.

• Why did the author write this selection?

• What do we learn about the author’s thinking?

• What is the author trying to make us think about?

There are often several purposes that can be justified for authors to have written a selection.

Having students provide support for the purpose they chose will help them learn to base their answers on information found in a text.

