

Determining Point of View

Theme: *Extreme Sports*

Did you ever read an article that tried to convince you to agree with the writer’s ideas? If so, you may have noted that certain words were chosen to appeal to your emotions. The writer may have made different choices if the text were meant to inform or entertain, for example. After all, content is shaped by the **author’s purpose**, or main reason for writing. Content is also shaped by the **author’s point of view**, or feelings about a topic. The words and ideas used in a text provide important clues about an author’s perspective.

In the picture below, what is each judge’s point of view about an athlete’s performance?



Circle clues that helped you figure out each judge’s point of view.

Read the chart below to analyze evidence that helped you determine points of view.

Topic	Evidence	Positive (+) or Negative (-)	Point of View
Athlete’s performance	Judge 1: gives a score of 10, smiles, uses the word “perfect”	+	Judge 1 thought the performance was wonderful.
Athlete’s performance	Judge 2: gives a score of 2, frowns, uses the word “awful”	-	Judge 2 thought the performance was terrible.

Recognizing an author’s reason for writing and feelings about a topic can help you decide what to do with the information. Should you treat it as a simple set of facts? Will you agree with the author, or will you develop your own opinion? To determine an author’s point of view, think about the words chosen, the opinions expressed, and the details given (or left out). All are valuable clues to an author’s purpose and point of view.



Read the essay about the extreme sport of ice climbing.

Genre: Essay

Climbing Ice! *by Melissa Thompson*

Imagine facing an enormous frozen waterfall. You are at the bottom of this huge ice formation, staring up and thinking through the steps you'll take to climb it. Yes, it's dangerous—and that's part of the fun!

For adventure-seekers, ice climbing offers a physical challenge and a unique thrill. The surface of ice varies greatly from one location to another, so an ice climber must be ready for any situation that could arise during a climb. One wrong step could lead to a deadly fall. Yet to enthusiasts, the risks seem small when compared to the reward of finally reaching the top!

Speed competitions are for ice climbers who need more adventure than simply scaling a steep ice wall. These events offer the rush of danger coupled with the excitement of speed and competition.

Explore how to answer these questions: *"What is the author's point of view about ice climbing? What words, phrases, or sentences reveal this viewpoint?"*

The author does not directly state her opinion or attitude about ice climbing. Complete the chart below to determine her point of view based on text details and word choice.

Topic	Words, Phrases, or Sentences	Positive (+) or Negative (-)	Point of View
Ice climbing	"dangerous," "unique thrill," "deadly fall"	+ and -	
Ice climbing speed competitions	"rush of danger coupled with the excitement of speed and competition"		

Based on details in the chart above, describe the author's purpose for writing this essay.



Close Reading

Consider the title and the words the author uses in the editorial's first paragraph. **Circle** words and phrases that help you understand the author's point of view.

Read the editorial about ice climbing. Use the Close Reading and the Hint to help you answer the question.

Genre: Editorial

Worth the Risk? *by Chris Lau*

Ice climbing is a dangerous sport in which people attempt to climb frozen waterfalls and icy mountainsides. Training and proper equipment, along with protective clothing, are essential, but they are not enough to guarantee safety. Even experienced climbers continue to be injured and killed while participating in this high-risk sport.

Do the thrills outweigh the risks? When an ice climber is buried under an avalanche, emergency responders are dispatched at great expense to the community. If by luck the climber survives, it may take months or even years for him or her to recover. Are such costs worth a few hours of excitement?

Hint

How would you describe the author's feelings about ice climbing? Is he simply providing information, or does he have another purpose?

Circle the correct answer.

What is Chris Lau's point of view about ice climbing?

- A He admires the bravery of people who participate in the sport.
- B He strongly encourages people to get the proper equipment and training before trying ice climbing.
- C He questions the wisdom of people who think the thrill of ice climbing is worth the dangers.
- D He downplays the high costs and serious risks of the sport.



Show Your Thinking

Look at the answer you chose above. Explain which words and phrases in the editorial helped you identify the author's point of view.



With a partner, discuss the differences between the two authors' purposes and points of view.



Read another essay about extreme sports. Use the Study Buddy and the Close Reading to help guide your reading.

Genre: Essay



To help me understand the author's point of view, I am going to pause at the end of each paragraph and restate it in my own words.

Close Reading

How does the author feel about whitewater rafting? **Underline** a sentence that gives his opinion of this sport.

Reread the last paragraph to figure out why the author believes people like extreme sports. **Circle** phrases that explain the author's own point of view.

Just for the Thrill of It *by Ken Moreno*

- 1 Your heart races. Your blood is pumping. Every nerve feels alive. For thrill-seekers, the charge of extreme sports keeps them coming back for more. And, of course, along with the excitement there's the breathtaking rush of danger and risk. It's an almost irresistible combination!
- 2 Extreme sports enthusiasts are always aware of the dangers. Most would agree that proper training and the right equipment are absolutely necessary to help minimize the risk. Yet even the most experienced participants will admit that training and equipment provide no guarantees when it comes to safety, so it's important to know what you're getting into.
- 3 Take whitewater rafting, for example. The raft is an inflatable boat designed to float down a rapidly flowing river. Split decisions must be made as rushing water shoots the raft past boulders, toward hidden snags, and over waterfalls. Controlling a raft's course can be exhausting. Still, rafting provides thrills at every turn and a wild ride!
- 4 Bungee jumping is another high-risk activity. Attached to a long, stretchy elastic cord, bungee daredevils jump from a high location, such as a bridge. They experience the thrill of freefall until the cord suddenly jerks them skyward again.
- 5 So what is it that attracts people to extreme sports? Most people have few chances in their daily lives to feel the rush that comes from pushing themselves to their limits and winning against great odds. Extreme sports can fulfill the need for that adrenaline rush and the satisfaction that comes from meeting a personal challenge.



Hints

Reread the title of the essay. Then reread the essay's last paragraph. Which answer choice connects most closely with these sections?

Which sentence describes the author's feelings about whitewater rafting?

What details and phrases does the author use to describe extreme sports and the feelings they create?

Use the Hints on this page to help you answer the questions.

- 1** With which statement would the author most likely agree?
 - A** Interest in extreme sports comes from people's need for excitement and adventure.
 - B** Extreme sports are dangerous only for people who are not physically fit.
 - C** Whitewater rafting is more exciting and more unpredictable than bungee jumping.
 - D** People who are thrill-seekers must be willing to prepare themselves for exhaustion and hard work.

- 2** Which sentence from the essay best shows the author's point of view about whitewater rafting?
 - A** "The raft is an inflatable boat designed to float down a rapidly flowing river."
 - B** "Split decisions must be made as rushing water shoots the raft past boulders, towards hidden snags, and over waterfalls."
 - C** "Still, rafting provides thrills at every turn and a wild ride!"
 - D** "Controlling a raft's course can be exhausting."

- 3** Describe the author's point of view toward extreme sports. Include at least two details from the essay to support your description.



Read the article. Then answer the questions that follow.

Flying Above the Water

by Tyrone Schenkel

1 Most people try to avoid risk as much as possible. For extreme-sport athletes, risk is their business. They put their careers, their bodies, and often their lives on the line to participate in their sport. The payoff is the indescribable rush that comes from doing what they do, as well as the knowledge that people watching are saying, “Can you believe that?”

2 One of the newest extreme sports is called kitesurfing. Mat Colefax is the sport’s pioneer. In the early 1990s, he began experimenting with the sport in Australia. Colefax explained how he got the idea: “I caught a glimpse on TV of large kites being used with beach karts and I immediately [pictured] using such kites with my surf and snowboards. The idea of kiteboarding flashed into my mind and my imagination ran wild.” In the early days of the sport, Mat sold a kite to Rebecca Nicholson, a young woman he met on the beach. She taught herself to fly it, and in 2003 became the first female world champion kitesurfer. She had become Rebecca Colefax by then. Today she and Mat spend their time promoting the thrilling sport.

3 Kitesurfers ride the waves on a board like surfers do, but they’re towed along by large kites flying in the wind. The sport is related to several other water sports. It’s like surfing and wakeboarding because of the board the riders use. It’s like waterskiing and windsurfing, too, but the wind in the kite, not a boat or a sail, provides the power. It’s also similar to parasailing in that when a parasail rider builds up enough speed, he or she is pulled into the air. Kitesurfers can get airborne, too. In fact, that’s one of the goals of the sport—to fly off the surface of the water and do tricks. One minute you’re on the water, and the next your heart skips a beat as you’re soaring through the air, performing aerial tricks with your feet still attached to the board. When you land back on the water, the kite continues to pull you along at breakneck speed.

4 Because so much equipment is needed to go kitesurfing, the sport can be expensive. To begin with, you’ll need to purchase a kitesurfing kite. The kite you fly in the park on a windy afternoon won’t provide enough wind power for the sport. Larger and stronger than backyard kites, kitesurfing kites can carry more weight. Some are inflatable, and all are made of tough fabric. You’ll also need a harness to attach the kite to your body. And don’t forget the kite lines and the control bar, which you’ll need to control the kite. Another vital piece of equipment is the kitesurfing board, of course. Some kitesurfers use wakeboards, but as a beginner, you might prefer a board made especially for kitesurfing. If you’re kitesurfing in warm weather, you won’t require much special clothing. In colder temperatures, however, consider wearing a wetsuit to keep warm. In some parts of the world, kitesurfers are required to wear helmets just like bicyclists are. Whether required or not, a helmet is always a good idea for your safety, as is a life vest.

5 This adventurous sport is sure to provide an adrenaline rush as you enjoy the freedom of the wind blowing in your face. But kitesurfing isn’t an activity you can take up on a whim. It’s a tough sport that can be dangerous for a beginner. After all, you could find yourself flying 40 feet in the air at a fairly frightening rate





of speed. Most kitesurfers recommend that beginners get professional instruction so they'll be certain to obtain the right equipment and know how to use it.

6 If you're ready to try this exciting sport, you'll want to know that Australia is the world's top kitesurfing hot spot. Since it's also popular in Brazil, some surfers hope that kitesurfing events might be added to the 2016 Summer Olympics, which will be held in that country. In the United States, the Hawaiian island of Maui and the North Carolina coast off Cape Hatteras both offer good kitesurfing conditions.

7 It can certainly be worth your while to explore the sport of kitesurfing. If you're looking for the incredible rush of a new and exciting challenge, find a way to experience this extreme sport.

Answer the questions. Mark your answers to questions 1–4 on the Answer Form to the right.

Answer Form

1 (A) (B) (C) (D)

2 (A) (B) (C) (D)

3 (A) (B) (C) (D)

4 (A) (B) (C) (D)

Number Correct

4

1 Read this sentence from the article.

One minute you're on the water, and the next your heart skips a beat as you're soaring through the air, performing aerial tricks with your feet still attached to the board.

Based on this sentence, with which statement would the author **most likely** agree?

- A Only professionals should attempt to perform kitesurfing tricks.
- B Kitesurfing is too dangerous for most people to attempt.
- C Performing aerial tricks while kitesurfing is as easy as doing tricks on waterskis.
- D Kitesurfing is a challenging but highly exciting water sport.

2 Which sentence from the article **best** illustrates how the author views kitesurfing?

- A "The idea of kiteboarding flashed into my mind and my imagination ran wild."
- B "Kitesurfers ride the waves on a board like surfers do, but they're towed along by large kites flying in the wind."
- C "This adventurous sport is sure to provide an adrenaline rush as you enjoy the freedom of the wind blowing in your face."
- D "After all, you could find yourself flying 40 feet in the air at a fairly frightening rate of speed."



3 Which sentence **most accurately** describes the author’s purpose for writing this article?

- A He wants to inform readers about the appeal and challenges of kitesurfing.
- B He wants to help readers to understand why kitesurfing can be very expensive.
- C He wants to compare kitesurfing to other types of extreme water sports.
- D He wants to encourage readers to help make kitesurfing an Olympic event.

4 In spite of his warnings, the author believes the thrill of kitesurfing is well worth the effort. Which sentence from the article **best** supports this statement?

- A “Because so much equipment is needed to go kitesurfing, the sport can be expensive.”
- B “Whether required or not, a helmet is always a good idea for your safety, as is a life vest.”
- C “If you’re ready to try this exciting sport, you’ll want to know that Australia is the world’s top kitesurfing hot spot.”
- D “If you’re looking for the incredible rush of a new and exciting challenge, find a way to experience this extreme sport.”

5 Although the author is enthusiastic about kitesurfing, he also wants readers to know what they’re getting into. What are some of the details that help him achieve this goal?

Self Check Go back and see what you can check off on the Self Check on page 93.