

# Understanding Author's Viewpoint

## Skills Reviewed and Maintained

- **Comprehension**  
**Classifying**  
**Drawing Conclusions**  
**Main Idea**
- **Writing**  
**Letter to the Editor**

## Teach

- Tell students that the main idea of a paragraph is the paragraph's most important idea.
- Ask students to think about campaign speeches, editorials, and magazine articles they have read or heard. Remind them that author's viewpoint refers to a writer's attitude toward the subject or issues described.
- Critical readers must judge if the writer has a balanced or biased viewpoint. Balanced writing presents both sides of an issue. Biased writing presents one side more than the other.
- Write some statements on the board. Have students classify each as biased or not biased.
- Have students point out loaded words that signal bias. Be sure they understand that loaded words can be positive or negative.

## Practice

### Introducing Vocabulary

- Before students read the speech, introduce the vocabulary words and discuss their meanings. Have students brainstorm synonyms for each word.

### Reading the Passage

- Have students look at the illustration. Ask what conclusions they can draw about the details in the picture. Have students make predictions about the speech.

### Checking Comprehension

- Have students identify statements that support the main idea.

### Practicing Comprehension Skills

- Remind students that biased writing presents only one side of an issue, while balanced writing considers both sides. Ask students if the author of the speech presented one side or both sides of the issue.

### Practicing Vocabulary

- Have students identify specific words and ask them to underline them. Make an exercise and make students answer it. Review the answers with the group.

## Apply

### Making the reading and writing connection

- Have volunteers read aloud their letters to the editor. Classmates can judge whether the writing shows a balanced or biased viewpoint and cite evidence to support their judgments.

**ESL Strategy**

- Pair students acquiring English with a classmate who is more English proficient. Partners can scan the passage for loaded words and create a chart that lists the words in English and in the student's first language.

**Multiple Intelligences: logical, verbal-linguistic, interpersonal**

- Have students group-research about the topic before reading it and present their findings to the class. Ask the class to draw conclusions about the research.

**Home-school Connection**

- Students and a family member can read a newspaper article, editorial, or letter to the editor. Then they can circle any loaded words and make a two-column chart, classifying the words as either positive or negative. Finally, they can judge if the piece is biased or balanced.