# *Who Are You?*

## (As a Writer)

Earlier, I declared that you're already a writer. It's best to just embrace this identity right out of the gate. The definition of "writer" is someone who writes, so you qualify.

But what kind of writer are you?

When do you write? How do you write? What are your attitudes toward writing?

In this opening experience, you'll explore your previous experiences as a writer.

### AUDIENCE

You're writing for someone who is curious to know about you and your experiences as a writer: what you've done, how you feel, what you hope to do.

They know nothing about you or your past experiences writing but want to get an idea of what you've done and where you're coming from.





### PROCESS

*1. Consider your past.*

Before writing the piece itself, spend some time thinking about your experiences as a writer: what you've done, where you've done it, why you've done it.

Consider your attitudes toward these things you've done. How do you see yourself? What has shaped your views? Consider making a timeline that charts the kind of writing you've done at different times in your life.

*2. Draft.*

Remembering that your audience knows nothing about you, draft a communication to them that fulfills their needs. You'll write directly to your audience.

*3. Revise.*

Review your draft for coherence and structure. Are you telling the audience what they need to know and in an order that helps them understand your message? Are you exemplifying your message?

Think of it like a game of show-and-tell. Saying "I like writing" makes your experience vague and abstract to your audience. They're likely to wonder why you like writing or what sorts of things you like to write or when you like to write.

Instead, show your audience your message through examples that illustrate what you're telling them.

*4. Edit and polish.*

You're making your first impression on someone with whom you'll be working. Try to make the kind of impression you desire.

## REFLECT

In the process of considering the audience as you were writing, hopefully you learned something about yourself.

Some questions to consider:

How diverse are your writing experiences? Have you written lots of different things or do you feel like you've mostly done variations of the same thing?

Which sounds more true to you: "I am a good/bad writer" or "I am good/bad at writing"? Why would you choose one over the other?

How much (if any) of your attitude about writing is linked to what happened in school and/or grades? What about other kinds of feedback you've received on your writing?

When have you most enjoyed writing? When have you least enjoyed it? What is the difference between those experiences?

You won't be surprised to hear me say that declaring you are good or bad, as though this is a fixed and immutable state, is not a great way to improve a skill. Even saying you are good or bad at writing probably isn't that helpful. Remember that there is no finish line for writers. Worry less about how good you are, and think more about how practicing writing will make you better.

## REMIX

Considering your reflections, design your ideal writing situation. What kind of writing would you be doing? How would you be doing it? Who would be reading it? Who would be judging it? Where would you be writing? What would you be writing about?



Put this into a brief statement on its own, something that could fit on a four-by-six index card. Keep this nearby when you're writing as a way to reflect on what you're doing in the moment and to see if there are ways to bridge any gaps between the actual and the ideal by changing your point of view.