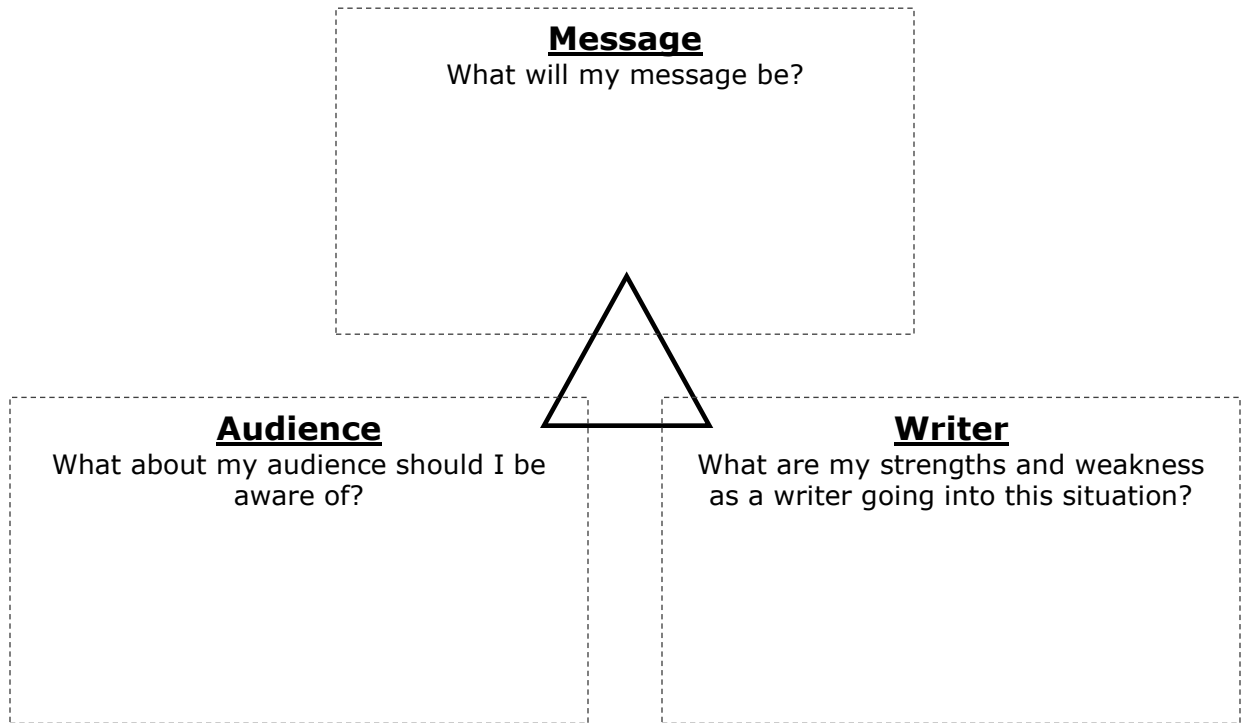


The Writing Situation

As you write and revise in college, you may begin at any time to move from writing for grades to writing for greater purposes. Your readers won't always be teachers; they will be coworkers, committees, officials, or larger audiences. Your purpose will be to win their trust and convey a message, not just demonstrate your writing skills. This predicament, wherein we consider the choices we face regarding our message, our audience, and our place as writers, has been called the "writing situation." What might you consider about each element of the situation that could help you win over your reader and accomplish your purpose? Jot down some ideas that come to mind.



Looking at the following continuum between truth-seeking and persuasion, we can see how different types of arguments might work for different audiences and purposes. With these things in mind, how might you write your piece? (Before you are tempted to shoot for the classical argument as a "happy medium," think about your writing situation.)

Exploratory essay examining all sides of an issue	Dialogic argument asking a resistant audience to consider a different point of view	Classical argument aimed at a neutral or possibly skeptical audience	Friendly one sided argument	Aggressive one -sided argument or propaganda
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This continuum is adapted from Ramage, Bean, and Johnson. *Writing Arguments: A Rhetoric with Readings, Concise Edition*, 4th Ed. New York: Pearson Longman, 2007. Figure 1.2.

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