



USING SPECIFIC AND ACCURATE WORDS LESSON 5

Signs, Signs, Everywhere the Signs:

Signs communicate information for a specific audience. For example, stop signs tell drivers to come to a halt. Construction signs tell pedestrians to use caution. Grocery store signs tell shoppers what's on sale. The amount of information on a sign differs depending on its purpose and its audience.

Think about the kids menu from Chili's. It's loaded with pictures, hardly any words, so that little kids can pick a main dish, a side item, and a drink without even knowing how to read. The adult menu, on the other hand, is loaded with mouth-watering, detailed descriptions about each dish. A high-end, upscale clothing store may have their signs loaded with pictures of attractive models in their clothes, focusing on the fashion, while signs for clothes at a discount store like K-Mart is going to have signs that focus on the prices far more than the fashion.

Know your audience.

What do I do:

1. Pick an animal you might find at an aquarium. This could be just about any fish, sea creature, or an aquatic mammal, you decide. Use the Shedd Aquarium website if you want to get a little inspiration.
2. Think about who might be wandering around an aquarium any given day—there might be kids and their parents, maybe even some marine biologists studying the creatures on exhibit.
3. You're going to make a sign for your favorite aquarium animal. Actually, you're going to make three signs. One for little kids, one for teens and adults, and one for expert scientists. Think about what you need to put on each sign—most zoo and aquarium info signs contain the animals name, their scientific name, their habitat, their maximum size, their life span, and their eating habits. Use books from the library and the internet to gather the appropriate information.
4. Plan out how you want to make your signs look. Remember the Chili's kid's menu? Pictures and simple text might be great for little kids, but adults, especially the experts, need more information to satisfy them. That's why you're making three signs.
5. Make your signs.