

CHAPTER 3

Communication and Information Literacy in Horticulture

Chapter Outcomes

After studying this chapter, you will be able to:

- Understand the writing process and create effective written documents.
- Demonstrate critical thinking and conduct research.
- Recognize plagiarism and develop methods of documentation.
- Prepare effective presentations and visual aids.
- Describe information literacy.
- List careers related to horticulture and communication.

Words to Know

annotate	demographics	thesis
annotated bibliography	evidence	tone
audience	information literacy	voice
bibliography	paraphrase	works cited
communication	plagiarism	
critical thinking	skim	

Before You Read

Before you read the chapter, interview someone in the workforce (your supervisor, a parent, relative, or friend). Ask the person why it is important to know about communication and information literacy and how this topic affects the workplace. Take notes during the interview. As you read the chapter, highlight the items from your notes that are discussed in the chapter.





While studying this chapter, look for the activity icon  to:

- **Practice** vocabulary terms with e-flash cards and matching activities.
- **Expand** learning with the Corner Questions and interactive activities.
- **Reinforce** what you learn by completing the end-of-chapter questions.



What separates society today from that of the cavemen? There are many differences, but one of the first that may come to mind is communication. Cavemen had no cellular devices and could not even speak a formal language. Cave dwellers did have drawings and symbols painted on walls of caves as early as 40,000 years ago, **Figure 3-1**. In the twenty-first century, people all over the world are using technology to aid in communication. People are able to connect with one another regardless of time, geographical location, or language.

No matter what the language, to communicate successfully there must be a transfer of sounds, words, and/or images. **Communication** is a process in which a message is sent by one person and received and understood by another person. People communicate using speech or other sounds and using written words and images. People also communicate using nonverbal behavior. Some people are fearless public speakers, others use writing as a means to share ideas, and some create art or music to express their thoughts or feelings to others.

Written Communication

“Either write something worth reading or do something worth writing.”

—Benjamin Franklin

Writing is a part of everyday life. You should leave high school with the communication skills needed to compete in the workplace. Strong writing skills will make future education and training in the horticulture industry easier, **Figure 3-2**. Language skills are also important to developing information literacy. **Information literacy** is the ability to recognize when information is needed and to find, evaluate, use, and communicate information.



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Figure 3-1. The cave dwellers communicated with symbols and drawings. Perhaps some of these symbols are still used in today's society. **Do these look like some of the emoticons you use?**

Corner Question

Did you know that cavemen in the Stone Age communicated through symbols just as we do today?

Thinking Green

Recycling Paper

Nearly 69 million tons of paper and paperboard are produced in the United States every year according to the Environmental Protection Agency. Approximately 37% of this paper comes from recycled sources. Remember to purchase recycled paper products, and recycle all the paper products that you use, including that used for writing.

Have you participated in paper recycling events at your school or in your community? Does your school have a recycling program?



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Many students are insecure about their writing ability and fear critiques of their written work. Other students are comfortable with writing or even enjoy the process. As with other skills, writing skills can be improved with practice and instruction. The writing process involves a series of steps. Some steps, such as evaluating and revising your work, may be repeated during the process until you are satisfied with the finished work. The steps in the writing process include:

1. Determine the purpose of the message.
2. Consider your audience.
3. Select a means of presentation for the message.
4. Write a thesis, or refine the topic and identify the main points of the message.
5. Create a plan for the project and the message. Write the message according to the plan.
6. Review, revise, and proofread the message.



Purpose

The first step in the writing process is to determine the purpose of the message. In general, the purpose of a message is to inform the reader (or listener) about a topic or issue, to persuade the reader to take some action, or to entertain the reader. This chapter discusses the first two purposes, which are typically those used for writing in horticulture. First, identify which of these general goals apply to the message. Next, determine what topic you wish to provide information about or what action you want readers to take. What is the goal of the message? What do you want to accomplish with the message? Identify your reason for writing and you will have a better feeling about the assignment in general. If you have trouble identifying the purpose for writing, talk to the person who assigned you



Bob Nichols/USDA

Figure 3-2. A student is practicing language skills. This contributes to her overall literacy. **How do you practice your language skills on a daily basis?**

Corner Question

Who was an author of the US Constitution and a famous garden author?

“No occupation is so delightful to me as the culture of the earth, and no culture comparable to that of the garden...But though an old man, I am but a young gardener.”

—Thomas Jefferson

the task to gain a better understanding about the project. The purposes of horticultural writing are to:

- Explain a scientific process.
- Educate others about a horticultural topic.
- Report on your findings from a horticultural experiment or research.
- Broadcast information about a topic of interest.
- Persuade others to believe in a horticultural practice or product.

The purpose of your writing directs the way you will deliver your final written message or oral presentation. If the purpose of the message is to inform readers, use a direct approach. Present the main points of the message first and follow with supporting details. If the purpose of the message is to persuade readers to take some action, it may be better to begin by discussing related questions or issues and lead up to the main point of the message.

Audience

After you have identified a goal or purpose for your message, identify the audience for the message. The *audience* is the people who will read, hear, or see the message. You need to identify the audience so you can tailor your message to meet the needs or interest of the audience. If you are presenting information about daylilies to a garden club, you can use higher levels of scientific vocabulary than when presenting to a general audience. When presenting that same topic to an elementary school garden club, you will need to use terms that the students will understand. A paper or presentation must be appropriate for the audience receiving the message.

You will need to consider several demographic variables involving your audience. *Demographics* are characteristics or traits of a group, **Figure 3-3**.



Bob Nichols/USDA

Figure 3-3. These FFA officers from all 50 states are part of an audience in Washington, DC. **What demographics considerations do you think the speaker made when preparing his speech?**

Demographics that you may need to consider include:

- Age and gender.
- Cultural backgrounds.
- Expertise related to the topic.
- Physical and mental capabilities.

You may ask yourself why the physical capabilities of your audience should be considered. When writing horticultural messages, your audience may include those who have limited mobility. Understanding their limits can help you adapt your writing to meet their needs. For example, the instructions for doing gardening tasks may be modified for those with limited mobility.

Presentation

Presentation is the manner in which a message is sent to the audience. What form should the message take? Does the author need to create a printed document, such as a letter, pamphlet, or poster? Should an oral presentation given live or by video be used to deliver the message? What communication media will the author use? In some cases, the author may need to create a formal paper document. In other situations, a blog, website, webinar, or digital presentation created with a software program may be used to communicate words, images, and sounds to the audience, **Figure 3-4**.

Presentation also involves the way authors speak through their writing or speeches. Authors should consider the voice and tone used in their messages. **Voice** is the style of expression or degree of formality used in a message. Does the language need to be formal or informal? To answer this question, consider the purpose of the message and your audience. An article written for a scientific journal should probably use formal language. However, an article about horticulture written for fifth-grade students should probably use informal language. For instance, using pronouns such as *you* and speaking directly to the reader can make the writing informal. In scientific work or formal writing (often academic or industry-related), the author should refrain from using pronouns and write in a more objective manner. **Tone** is the quality of a message that reflects the writer's attitude or mood. Is the message serious or light-hearted, casual or official? Consider the difference in tone between, "A planning meeting will be held to discuss this issue on April 6 at 2 pm" and "Come hang out with us on Friday afternoon to celebrate wrapping up this project." The first example sounds serious and official; the second example uses a light-hearted, casual tone.



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Figure 3-4. A blog is an excellent way to reach an audience interested in a particular topic. **How is creating a blog entry different from communicating messages in other ways?**

Corner Question

How many publications are printed in the United States each year?

Did You Know?

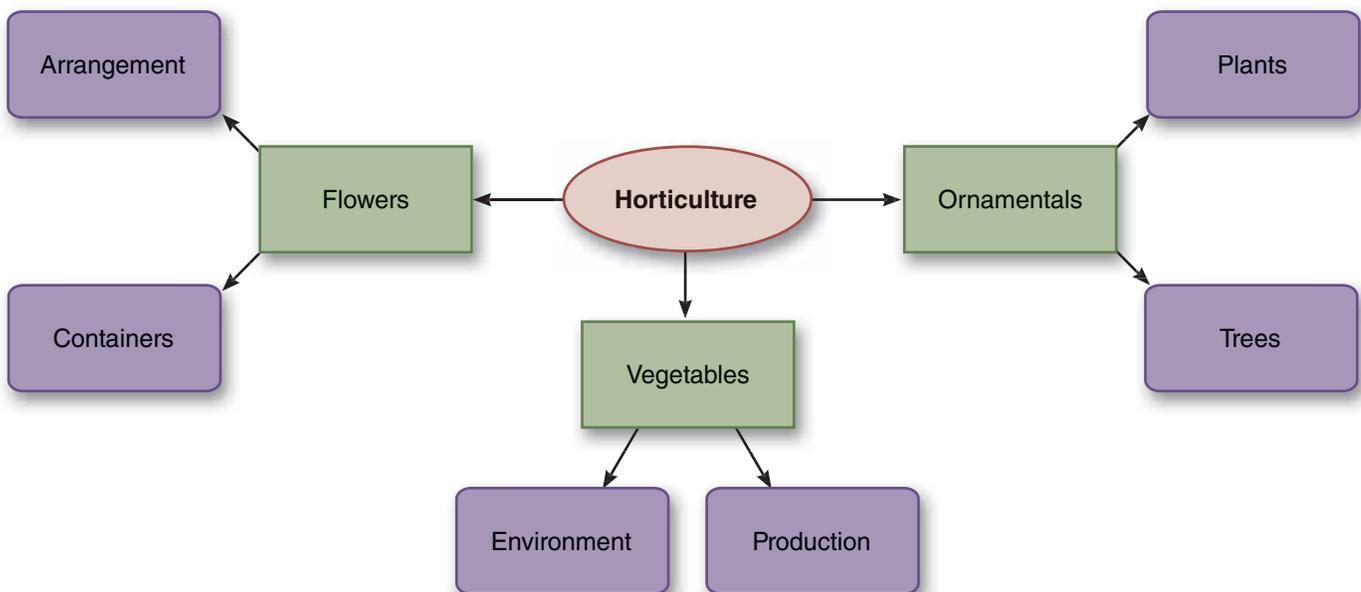
Nobel chemists and physics award winners are also writers. Scientists of all specialties are also writers. Scientists create reports and research papers to convey the findings of their scientific work. These papers help to document their investigations and express to the public what was learned.

Topic

The topic is the subject of a message. Selecting a topic may not be an issue if the writing assignment is about a specific subject or task. If you are asked to select a topic related to horticulture, you may need to consider several topics and select one. If you are given a broad topic to write about, such as growing vegetables, you may need to select a specific area of the subject. This will allow you to discuss the topic in some detail while keeping the message a reasonable length. In this example, for instance, you might write about growing peas. Activities you can do to help you select a topic include:

- Explore the Internet using a search engine.
- Skim through magazines for images or words to spark an idea.
- Read blog postings on the topic.
- Look at images on image-sharing websites.
- Investigate television channels, especially those that feature gardening or animal shows.
- Ask for suggestions from friends, family, or someone in the horticulture industry.
- Create a concept map related to a topic of interest, **Figure 3-5**.

A concept map is a graphic or diagram used to generate and organize ideas or facts. Start with one idea or word in a circle or “bubble.” From that word, draw a line to another bubble and write words or lists related to the main idea. Branch off the main idea and other bubbles, writing freely until you have no more related thoughts. You can create your concept map manually using pen and paper. You can also use programs available on the Internet that



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Figure 3-5. If you cannot come up with an idea for writing, try creating a concept map. **Which of the activities listed do you think will be most helpful in narrowing down a topic choice?**

allow you to create a concept map. This exercise may help you identify or narrow a topic for your message. A concept map can also help you identify the main ideas and supporting details for a message.

Thesis

You may be asked to express the topic of a message as a thesis statement. A *thesis* is a statement or theory that is proposed and then discussed to prove or disprove it. Developing a thesis requires time and critical thinking. The thesis can be a way of letting the reader know the position of the author. Frequently, the thesis responds to a question posed by the author. For example: Are roses the only flower appropriate to give someone you love on Valentine’s Day? The response is the following thesis: There is an endless assortment of flowers that can be given to show affection or symbolize romance besides roses.

A thesis should be clear and specific. Many young or novice writers select a topic that is too broad. The resulting thesis statement seems vague and may lead to writing something longer than is appropriate for the assignment. Focus your topic question and the thesis to answer the question. The outcome will be more defined writing that is clear, concise, and specific. Once the thesis is developed, you can begin to research and find evidence to help prove or disprove the statement, **Figure 3-6**. As you begin researching, you may find facts or evidence that may make you rethink your thesis altogether. Be open to the facts or expert opinions found in your research and adjust your message if needed.



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Figure 3-6. Once you have a thesis that is clear and focused, you can begin research to prove or disprove the statement. **What are some methods for researching your thesis?**

Project Plan

Writing a major research project or even a short essay can seem overwhelming to some students. In Chapter 2, you learned how thinking of a supervised agricultural experience (SAE) as a series of steps could make the project seem simpler. The same idea applies to a research paper, essay, oral presentation, or other writing project. A project plan, sometimes called a *plan of attack*, can help you organize and schedule the tasks needed to complete the project. Begin the plan by identifying all the tasks you need to do. For example, you may need to narrow the topic or write a thesis statement, do research, form conclusions, and write the message. You will also need to evaluate and possibly revise the message. You will need to decide the best way to present the message (written paper, oral presentation, or web page) unless that was stated in the assignment. After you have identified all the tasks, create a schedule. Working backward from the date the project must be completed, identify dates for completing each step in the process.

“You can’t think yourself out of a writing block; you have to write yourself out of a thinking block.”
—John Rogers

Corner Question

How many roses are produced for Valentine's Day? How many of those are red?

A discovery and research period will follow selecting a topic or writing of the thesis. This process should include a great deal of analysis and critical thinking (discussed later in the chapter) about information and evidence that you find. Upon completion of the research, you should create a plan for your paper. Identify the main points you want to present and arrange them in a logical order. Select supporting details for each main point. You may wish to use a topic outline or an essay map for this purpose. The message should begin by introducing the topic and giving the thesis statement if one is used. Follow the thesis or topic introduction with a brief preview of the main points that will be discussed. The introduction lays out a plan for the body paragraphs. Statements or facts in the introduction set up the skeleton or framework for the body of the document.

Think of the message plan as a list of supporting topics to your thesis or topic statement. Recall the earlier example thesis, "There is an endless assortment of flowers that can be given to show affection or symbolize romance besides roses." The following statements might be, "Instead of roses, consumers can purchase flowers that represent the qualities of love. These qualities can include patience, remembrance, faithfulness, and compassion. Each of these qualities has a specific flower associated with the trait."

In this example, the paragraphs in the body of the message will discuss a certain flower and its association with love. One, two, or three paragraphs may be used to support the thesis for each flower. This should convince the reader that this evidence supports the thesis and that there are indeed valid flower alternatives to roses for Valentine's Day.

The closing of the message should state conclusions or recommendations that can be drawn from considering the body of the message. A few key points from the message body may be repeated in the closing, perhaps using slightly different language. If the purpose of the message is to persuade the audience, a call to take some action should be part of the closing.



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Figure 3-7. Always check for spelling errors. Proofreading is essential to professional publications. **What other types of errors should you look for when reviewing your writing?**

Reviewing, Revising, and Proofreading

Authors must pay close attention to every aspect of their writing, **Figure 3-7**. A message that is unclear or that contains errors may not achieve your goals for the message. A poorly written message may also leave the audience with an unfavorable impression of the writer. Once you have written a first draft of the message, set it aside for a day or two (or at least a few hours). Taking a little time away from the project will make reviewing, revising, and proofreading easier. Review your message to see whether you have accomplished the purpose of the project and to see if the message is complete, clear, correct, and concise. Revise (make changes to) the message to correct any problems you find.

Safety Note

Pesticides

Always follow instructions on the label of a pesticide. Every chemical pesticide sprayed on plants in a greenhouse must have a label. The label is a legal and binding document that must be *read* and *followed* by the user. Be mindful of all safety considerations when using pesticides.

What safety precautions do you see in this image?



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Corner Question

Can reading aloud to a plant increase its growth? Why or why not?



As you review your work, try to see it from the point of view of the audience. Reading the message aloud may be helpful in finding errors or omissions. Mark changes within the copy (text) and in the margins. You may find it helpful to print or write the message with one or more spaces between the lines or with larger margins on the pages. This will allow more room to write notes.

Do not be afraid to have another person critique your work. Ask someone you trust who is a good writer (a friend, family member, or teacher) to review your work and make suggestions. Remember that someone who reads your work wants you to improve and has your best interests in mind. Take the comments in stride and make changes that will improve the message.

After you are satisfied with the content and organization of the message, proofread to find any errors you may have made in spelling, punctuation, or grammar. In addition to proofreading, use the tools available with your computer software. The spell check and grammar check features can help you find errors. However, you should not rely solely on the software. After proofreading, make corrections for a final draft of the message. Once you think everything is correct, read carefully one last time before you submit the document.

Critical Thinking and Research

Today's horticulture industry demands professionals who can think critically, **Figure 3-8**. *Critical thinking* is using objective reasoning or consideration before forming a judgment or taking some action. Critically thinking can lead to better decisions and innovative solutions to problems.



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Figure 3-8. A horticulturist must use critical thinking when making decisions about how to grow plants. **What are some examples of when a horticulturist may need to use objective reasoning?**

Thinking Green

Organic Chemical Herbicides

Some herbicides are not made from synthetic chemicals, and they can be used as an organic control to weeds. Citrus oils are one type of chemical weed control that is listed as organic. The oils are toxic and burn the foliage of weeds or unwanted plants.



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When researching a topic, critical thinkers answer questions using a series of steps. These steps include questioning, discussing or considering, and analyzing information. Horticulturists cannot accept everything presented to them as fact or at face value. Suppose someone told a gullible greenhouse grower that herbicides work to kill insects in the greenhouse and that they should be sprayed all over the plants. Following these directions, the grower would kill all the plants in the greenhouse. (Herbicides kill plants, not insects.) As you have probably learned, just because someone presents information as fact does not mean that it is factual.

To be a successful horticulturist, you must analyze information you research and review the information critically. To successfully research information and form your own educated opinions you must:

- Search for information.
- Preview search results.
- Find evidence and determine whether sources are credible.
- Annotate documents with questions and comments.
- Summarize the main points of information.
- Evaluate information to determine whether it is credible and factual.

Search

When you have chosen a topic to research or need to find the answers to a question, begin by thinking critically as soon as you begin a search for information. You may search for information using Internet search engines, magazines, newspapers, books, newspapers, web forums, blogs, and databases. Searching can be a daunting experience. There is so much information available that you may not know where to begin. Start by using search terms or words that are as specific or detailed as possible. Broaden your search terms only if you do not find the resources you were hoping to find. The broader your search parameters, the more time you will need to spend sorting through all the matches that are found.

Preview

Once you have begun to search, the second step is sort and preview search results. When the search engine returns a list of hundreds, thousands, or millions of search matches, you must decide which items from your search results are worth further reading and examination. Try using a table of contents or a summary to help shorten the amount of time you spend determining if this resource needs a more detailed exploration.

Skimming the work can help you determine what the overall text is about and whether to use the source. To *skim* means to read selected parts of a text looking for the main ideas. Skimming allows readers to get the general idea or purpose of a passage quickly without reading every word. A good method for skimming is to read the introductory paragraphs fully, then read any headings and only the first sentence or two of each paragraph after the introduction. Look over the rest of each paragraph to identify key terms, names, or dates. The last one or two paragraphs are usually a summary of the document. Read the entire summary. Skimming works well for nonfictional or informational reading. Skimming helps you save time and determine whether the material is appropriate for further research.

Find Evidence

After you have gathered sources of information, begin finding evidence. *Evidence* is information about a topic indicating whether a belief or position is correct or valid. You will use the evidence to answer a question or to prove or disprove a thesis. Search for graphs, charts, and images that help illustrate information. Search for quotes that relate to the topic or thesis of the message, **Figure 3-9**.

As you examine evidence, you must also determine if the sources you have chosen are credible and reliable. Information can come from a number of sources, some of which are reputable and credible and others that are not. Government documents and educational publications from universities and colleges can usually be considered safe. News agencies, such as the Associated Press or National Public Radio, and the Public Broadcasting Service (television), are also good sources for current events and research.



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Figure 3-9. Including data and graphics helps add credibility to a publication. How might the information in this image look if it were all text copy without graphics?

Corner Question

What movie by famed author and director Orson Wells debuted in 1973 and focused on forgery?

It is important to check and recheck your sources. When evaluating sources, do an Internet search to learn more about the document, organization, or author. Ask questions such as these to help you evaluate a source:

- Is the information relevant to the topic or thesis?
- Is the article or information current? When was it written?
- What is the purpose of the document or article?
- Does the author or organization have a bias or vested interest that may influence the information included in or omitted from the article?
- Are both/all sides of the information presented?
- Does the information include facts or opinions?
- Is the author(s) an expert in the subject area?
- Are conclusions or recommendations supported by credible evidence?
- Are there contradictions in the information?
- Have accepted standards been used in conducting or reporting research?
- Can you find the same information in other credible sources?

There are a number of reputable horticultural and trade journals. These publications include *Greenhouse Grower*, *Grower Talks*, *American Nurseryman*, *HortScience*, *Journal of the Society of American Horticultural Science*, and *HortTechnology*.

Some sources may seem to be legitimate. However, upon further investigation you may find that their “scientific” research does not adhere to many standards. The authors or organizations may want to influence readers, perhaps to buy a product or support a position or candidate. Other sources may not be what they first appear to be. For example, the website *The Onion*[®] appears to be a news website. However, it is actually a satirical news station that is entirely for entertainment purposes. None of the stories are true. If you did not research this site and took its reports as facts for your research, you could be tricked and your work would contain incorrect information.

Annotate

To *annotate* means to write questions or comments about a document while reading it. When reading information, question what you are reading. Create a list of points, questions, and assumptions as you read. What is the author’s viewpoint? What facts or data is presented by the author? Is this really fact or opinion? Answer these questions and you are one step further in the critical thinking process. You may find it helpful to create notes or annotations in the margins or on a separate page to use when you review the work later. Some computer programs will allow you to add notes or comments to a document.

Summarize

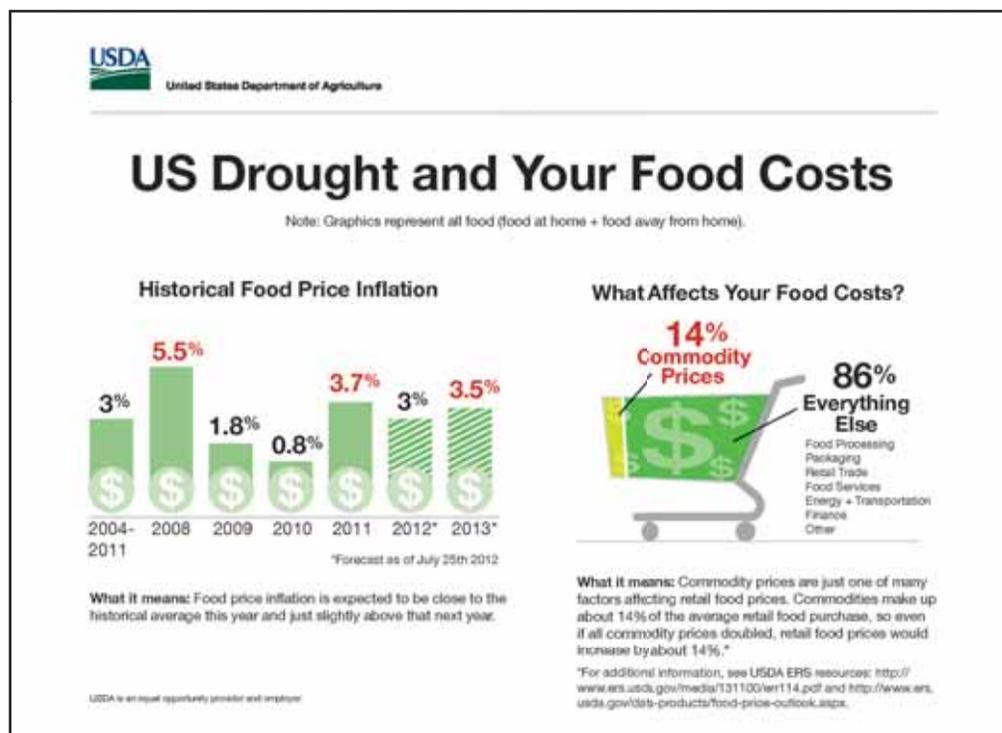
To summarize means to identify the main points of a document or passage. A summary should include the main points made by the author; however, you should state the points in your own words. If the information is very technical, use the same language as in the article. The summary should be concise without minor details. A summary will help you answer questions about a topic or provide evidence to prove or disprove a thesis.

Evaluate

After identifying the main ideas of information, evaluate or analyze the text further. To evaluate means to determine the worth, quality, or significance of something. Just as you evaluate the sources of information, you should also consider questions about the information itself:

- Is the information relevant to the topic or thesis?
- Is the information current?
- What is the purpose of the document or article?
- Is the information biased?
- Are both/all sides of an issue presented?
- Are conclusions or recommendations supported by credible evidence?
- Are there contradictions in the information?
- Does the information agree with other credible sources?

The evaluation of the information found in your research will assist you in proving or disproving your thesis or proving reliable information about a topic. Use information that you find to be credible to support your arguments. Evidence can include images or graphs, charts, and tables, **Figure 3-10**. Often, your audience will be more likely to accept your arguments or conclusions when your writing includes some information from other authors.



USDA

Figure 3-10. Evidence can include charts and graphs that will enrich your technical writing. **Why does including statistics or graphical data help enhance your arguments or conclusions?**

Corner Question

What female student was accused of cheating while studying at the Perkins Institute for the Blind?

Plagiarism and Documentation

Writers who are using others' ideas, words, information, and visuals should cite where the information came from and the original creator. As soon as you begin researching information, document the sources you use. Writers, regardless of experience level, must be very careful not to create a document that contains information created by others that has not been cited. Citing a source means telling exactly where the information came from (such as a book, website, or journal article) and who the author is.

Plagiarism

When doing research online, it may be tempting to cut and paste even a small part of another's work. Using work (such as ideas, writing, or images) created by someone else without permission and presenting it as one's own work is *plagiarism*. Plagiarizing is stealing. Whenever you use someone else's work of any kind (words, images, music) without acknowledging their work as the original, this is a form of robbery. Citing who originally made the work, where it is from, and when it originated makes the researcher or current author more credible to the audience.

Follow these guidelines when doing research for information:

- Do not wait until the last minute to start your writing. If you are less panicked you will not make careless or unintentional plagiarism mistakes.
- Record all sources of information you use.
- Create an *annotated bibliography* (a document that lists citations for sources used and briefly describes each work).
- Never sequence or organize your paper the same way as the author you have researched.
- Do not simply use synonyms of words used in an original work. Your work must be entirely unique or else you must cite the original author to avoid plagiarism.
- Do not cut and paste an author's work into your work. This is dishonest and can lead to disciplinary consequences. (An exception to this guideline is when you will identify the sentence or short paragraph as a direct quote from another source.)

Citing sources gives other authors credit and makes your work appear more credible. Readers will more likely think that your work has depth and that you have taken the time to substantiate your claims if you cite sources carefully. The reader may also appreciate being able to look into the sources that you have cited to further their knowledge.

Plagiarism offenses can include:

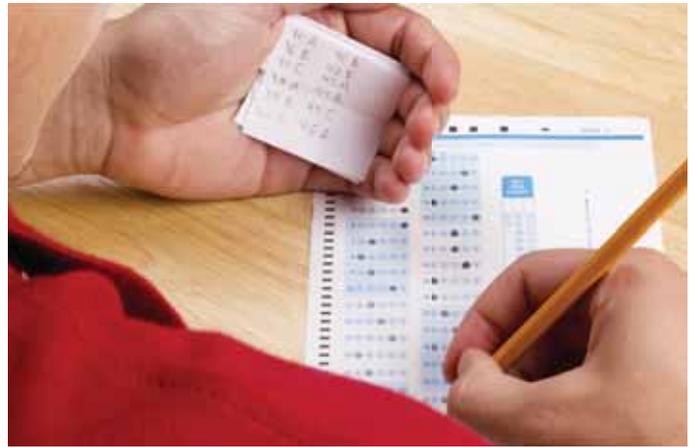
- Intentional copying of other work.
- Using passages from other work.
- Copying another work and making a few word changes.
- Using others' ideas.
- Not making clear where an idea from another author ends and your work begins.

“Art is either plagiarism or revolution.”

—Paul Gauguin

- Using images, data tables, graphs, and other visuals without citing the source.
- Not having a work cited.

Plagiarism has real consequences that can include disciplinary action in school or the workplace. As a student, receiving a zero on an assignment or in the course may seem improbable. However, software programs are available that make it easy for instructors or employers to check work for plagiarism. You can search your own work for plagiarism on any level using a tool such as Turnitin, a web-based writing assessment tool. This can help to prevent even an unintentional, but equally punishable, instance of plagiarism. Plagiarism is no different from any other form of cheating, **Figure 3-11.**



Constantine Pankin/Shutterstock.com

Figure 3-11. Plagiarizing is as serious as any other form of cheating or stealing. **How is plagiarizing similar to cheating?**

Outside of academics, professionals must be vigilant so as not plagiarize. Plagiarism of any work can lead to costly lawsuits or loss of employment. Plagiarism is no joke. Stealing is a crime, whether it is words, images, or ideas that are stolen.

Documentation

Citing sources helps to avoid the question of plagiarism. Citing sources gives your reader the essential information about your sources. Who, what, when, and where this information is from is included in every citation. However, there is no need to cite:

- Information that is common knowledge.
- Birth and death dates.
- Events or dates in history.

Keep track of all sources that you use and make a document to help you record your sources and the information that you used. Create a working bibliography with software. This can help you save, organize, label, and comment on excerpts and information from the Internet. Create an annotated bibliography with the same type of software. Simply enter the source information and then include a summary or the essential information that you should remember about that source.

You can *paraphrase* the information for an annotated bibliography. Paraphrasing is using your own words, sentences, and organization to summarize something written (or spoken) by someone else. To paraphrase:

- State the information in your own words and use your own sentence format. (It helps to put the document you are paraphrasing out of your line of vision, forcing you to rephrase.)
- Tell readers what the author presents in a shortened interpretation.
- Cite the author.
- Cite sources and format styles.



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Figure 3-12. Some professors are part of the Modern Language Association. **What do you think the qualifications are to be a part of the Modern Language Association?**

Brief citations should be included within the document. Generally, citations follow the referenced information with the author's name and the page number where it was found (if available). This type of citation follows the guidelines of the Modern Language Association (MLA) format for internal citations, **Figure 3-12**. This is the foremost professional association for researchers in language and literature.

There are countless variables when citing sources. There may be one or more authors. The work may or may not have page numbers. Citation formats vary with the source being cited. When in doubt, consult a reference guide such as the *MLA*

Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. This handbook can be found online and in print. This source can help answer your questions regarding citations.

At the end of the paper, a **bibliography**, also called **works cited**, should be used. A bibliography or works cited is a list of all sources used in the work. The full bibliographical reference should include information such as the name of the work, the author, the publisher, the publication date, and the page number. Only the documents that are cited within the paper should be included in the works cited. When creating the works cited, remember to:

- List works in alphabetical order by author's last name.
- Use the appropriate information and format for each type of source (book, media, website).
- Consult an authority on MLA citation formats such as the MLA website or use the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*.

In addition to MLA, other organizations, such as the American Psychological Association (APA), offer guidelines for writing and formatting references. The APA formatting style is generally used for social science papers. Regardless of the style you use for citations, follow the guidelines carefully for both internal citations and the works cited page.

Presentation Methods

A presentation is a speech or lecture given to an audience, either live or by video. The audience may be a small group or a large one. For some speeches, the presenter may already have a working knowledge of a topic, and there is no need to do research or write a detailed paper before giving a presentation. A simple outline to remind the presenter of the main points of the speech may be all that is needed. For other topics, presenters may need

Corner Question

How many members are in the Modern Language Association?

to do research before giving a presentation. Preparing a speech that requires research and writing is very similar to writing a paper. You should follow the steps of the writing process that you learned earlier:

1. Identify clearly the purpose of the message. Will it be to inform or persuade the listeners?
2. Consider your audience. (Review the information about demographics presented earlier.)
3. Select a means of presentation for the message. Will it be delivered live or via video?
4. Refine the topic, if needed, and identify the main points of the message.
5. Create a plan for the project and the message. Write the message according to the plan.
6. Review, revise, and proofread the message.

In addition to writing the message, you will need to practice delivering the message. You may want to open the message with a question, a quote, or an anecdote to get the attention of the listeners. It is a good idea to memorize this short opening. For the remainder of the presentation, speak from your knowledge of the subject. Study the information you have found in your research or the paper you wrote until you know it well. Then use an outline (on notecards or electronic slides) to list the main points you want to cover. Practice the speech several times until you can talk about each main point, filling in details or giving examples as needed.

You may also want to prepare or organize visual aids to use in the presentation. A visual aid is anything you show the audience to help them understand the message. A garden tool or plant could be a visual aid. Electronic slides that you project onto a screen can be helpful visual aids. You can use text that gives the main point you are discussing or show pictures, charts, or graphs to illustrate a point.

Additional suggestions that you may find helpful for a presentation include:

- Know your audience. Complete an audience analysis.
- Get the audience's attention. Use a "hook." (Hooks can be a shocking statistic, humor, or a quote.) Be sure anecdotes or quotes are appropriate, relevant to the topic, and in good taste.
- Establish a motive. Let the listeners know why it is important for them to hear your presentation. How will they benefit?
- Get to the point. For a message presented in direct order, tell your audience your thesis or topic statement right away. This will help get them interested.
- Summarize. Restate key words or points to emphasize their significance, **Figure 3-13**.



Lance Cheung/USDA

Figure 3-13. Summarizing the key points of your presentation will be helpful for both you and your audience. **At what point or points in the presentation would you summarize the key points?**

“There are always three speeches for every one you actually gave.

The one you practiced, the one you gave, and the one you wish you gave.”

—Dale Carnegie

Safety Note

Presentation Safety

- What technological equipment is used for your presentation? Where are the cords? Be sure that cords are taped down or otherwise secured so they do not present a tripping hazard for you or the audience members.
- Are you using a stage? Stay away from the edges so you do not fall. Pay attention to your location on the stage.
- Do not refer to cue cards while you are moving about on the stage. You could fall, trip, or lose your balance. Remain still while you quickly glance at your note cards or electronic slides.



carroteater/Shutterstock.com



David Foster/USDA

Figure 3-14. The Secretary of Agriculture answers questions after a presentation. When there is little time for preparation, this is known as an extemporaneous speech. **What do you think are the most important things to focus on when giving a speech without time for preparation?**

Corner Question

What horticultural product contaminated with *Salmonella* led to an outbreak of illness in 2014?

whose job is public relations to act on the company’s behalf with very little preparation. This type of presentation is also often associated with competitions. The FFA and other groups offer an extemporaneous speech event to test the skills and knowledge of FFA members. This is much like being part of a debate team where contestants are posed a question and asked to respond.

Presentation Types

Four basic types of presentations are discussed in this chapter, based on preparation and purpose. The two preparation types of presentations are prepared and extemporaneous. The two purposes for presentations are to inform or to persuade.

Prepared Presentations

With a prepared speech, the presenter knows ahead of time that he or she will be giving a presentation and has time to prepare it. The presenter knows who the audience will be, the date and location of the speech, and the topic of the speech. He or she has a period of time to do research, find answers to questions, write and practice the message, and organize visual aids. The presenter can create a presentation to inform or persuade listeners based on the objectives and the needs or expectations of the audience.

Extemporaneous Presentations

An extemporaneous presentation is an impromptu speech that is performed without advance preparation. There are times in industry when a business manager may have little or no time to prepare a statement or speech, **Figure 3-14**. It is common for an employee

FFA Connection Extemporaneous Public Speaking

In this event, a single participant from an FFA chapter is given only 30 minutes to prepare a speech that is between four and six minutes in length. The purpose of this event is for students to learn how to express themselves verbally and to prepare a speech in very little time. Participants are in official FFA dress and are judged on content presented, tone, eye contact, mannerisms, gestures, poise, articulation, and responses to questions. Contestants can participate at the local, state, and national FFA events.



USDA

Persuasive Presentations

When a landscape design company owner talks to his employees on Monday morning and motivates them to find more clients and reach out to older customers, he is trying to motivate his employees. This is often referred to as a pep talk, but it is literally a mini-motivational speech.

Persuasive speeches are those that try to convince the audience to believe in something or to take some action. This is no different from the times in a locker room when a coach tries to convince her team that they are unstoppable and that they can defeat their opponent. A persuasive speech can be formal or informal. One of the most memorable speeches in twentieth century history is that by the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. His “I Have a Dream” speech was persuasive and tried to unify a country ravaged by segregation.

“I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.”
—Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Informational Presentations

Informational speeches present material in a way to increase knowledge of a given topic. When an audience attends a lecture about vegetable gardening, they are expecting to gain knowledge of that horticultural topic. Extension agents and garden center employees often host workshops to help educate the public, **Figure 3-15**. These are considered informative presentations.



Communication with the Audience

The method of delivery and the type of presentation that you choose is based upon the needs of the audience. The topic that is chosen must meet the needs of the audience and the format of the presentation must be equally as suited for the attendees.

Deciding the best way to create a memorable experience for your audience comes after your audience analysis and topic choice. A presentation is only



Bob Nichols/USDA

Figure 3-15. An extension agent presents information to children about apples. This is an example of an informational speech where the audience is very important to the language of the speech.

Corner Question

What is the ideal speech duration?

“All the great speakers were bad speakers at first.”

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

effective when it impacts the audience in some way. A memorable speech is one that not only is rich with information but also creates a relationship between the audience and the speaker.

A speaker must be believable and relate to his or her audience. There are a number of ways to connect with the audience through stage presence. Stage presence is how a speaker presents herself or himself. To appear more credible and convincing, the presenter should make use of:

- Eye contact. This is easily achieved by scanning the audience and looking at one person, then another, and so on.
- Voice fluctuations. Tones should be changed and volume should vary.
- Mannerisms. Hand movements and overall body movement send a message. Look in a mirror or video yourself to determine your natural movements.
- Articulation. Speak clearly, slowly, and with intention.
- Poise. Stand tall and look confident and professional, **Figure 3-16**.



Lance Cheung/USDA

Figure 3-16. The poise or overall appearance and conduct of a speaker is very important to the audience. **What do the poises shown in this image convey to you about the speakers?**

Presenters connect more with their audience when they present their information with some humor and in a manner that appears more like storytelling. A story is even richer when it is accompanied by visuals. It is important to supplement your presentation with images, sounds, and other forms of media. These assist in creating an experience that will leave a lasting impression on the audience.

The presenter should imagine connecting with every person in the audience. If there is no microphone, the person should try to make her or his voice heard by the person furthest away in the audience. Every audience member should be able to hear the presenter clearly. It is okay to check in with the audience and ask if everyone can hear you. This is another opportunity for the speaker to connect with the listeners on a more personal level.

Information Literacy

Today's writers, presenters, and audiences are flooded by various forms of media with entertainment, marketing, and other information. People may feel overwhelmed and simply “tune out” many messages. Presenters must find a way to make an impression on listeners and have their messages heard.

Whether you are a writer, presenter, or audience member, you need to be literate and able to communicate effectively. Literacy was once defined as

Corner Question

What North American culture is known for its rich history in storytelling?

FFA Connection What to Know about Presentations

- Know your audience.
- Know your subject.
- Know your goals.
- Know how to organize your material.
- Know how to engage and connect with the audience.
- Know proper stage presence tips and techniques.
- Know that what you learn from this presentation can help you make your next presentation better.

the ability to read and write. Today, there are a number of forms of literacy that are important for everyone. Information literacy involves recognizing when information is needed and being able to find, evaluate, use, and then communicate the information to others.

An effective communicator must be able to adapt, and must be literate about various information resources. He or she must also be aware of ways to present or communicate information. For example, a presenter does not have to be in front of an audience in person. A presentation can take place using other vehicles of delivery. Virtual presentations can deliver engaging information and motivation for audiences. Presenters can use tools such as:

- Webinars.
- Video software.
- Slideshow software.
- Presentation software.
- Poster software.
- Blogs.
- Websites.

Some tools for virtual presentations provide formats for interacting with audience members. Presenters can create videos or reference videos so that the audience can more or less see a show. Presenters have the ability to include images and audio as well.

A webinar can be a good tool for reaching an audience with horticultural information. Webinars are one of the premiere tools used to educate people. Webinars, also called web conferences, allow audience members to see educational presentations from many locations. This method of delivery offers messaging, video, chatting, and media to be presented interactively. Participants can ask questions and speak just as they would in a face-to-face format. Some webinars require additional software as determined by the vendor of the webinar. Be sure to consider software needs when you are creating or participating in a web conference.

Information literacy is the foundation for lifelong learning regardless of one's occupation or study area. Two additional concepts are often associated with information literacy: independent learning and social responsibility.

Independent Learning

Independent learning relates to information literacy because a learner wants to gain knowledge based on his or her personal interests or without a formal class or other structured learning program. The learner will still have to follow critical thinking steps to answer a question or find a solution. The person who seeks independent learning will be information literate because of a desire to pursue and gain knowledge through self-directed study or experiences.



Robyn Wardell/USDA

Figure 3-17. A student travels and helps children learn how to garden from the back of a pickup truck. Giving back is important for social responsibility. **How do you give back to your community?**

Social Responsibility

Social responsibility means acting with consideration for the needs of others or society as a whole. Many students have a good understanding of their social and civic responsibilities. For example, you may feel a responsibility to help protect the environment for the benefit of everyone. You may believe that the right to vote for government officials is both a privilege and a duty. Social responsibility may include actions as simple as teaching younger children how to grow vegetables. Information literacy is needed to be an informed citizen, and it aids in practicing social responsibility, **Figure 3-17.**

Horticultural Communication Careers

Today's horticultural communicators work around the globe. These individuals are from many cultures, global locations, and horticultural specialties. A horticultural communication specialist may have a specific training (academic or informal) in a horticultural field, but it is a combination of their enthusiasm for plants and their ability to connect with an audience through effective communication that makes these writers, speakers, and conversationalists very powerful in the horticulture industry.

Horticulture Extension Agent

Extension agents are the liaison between a university's horticultural research staff and the industry and the public. A cooperative extension service agent educates industry members and the public about agricultural topics. Horticulture agents use garden cultivation as their medium for connecting with their audiences. Hort agents, as they are often called, have a four-year horticulture science or closely related degree. They often have years of experience in the horticulture industry before becoming an agent.

“The illiterate of the twenty-first century will not be those who cannot read and write but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn.”

—Alvin Toffler

STEM Connection

Information Literacy

The following forms of information literacy are needed by people in the horticulture industry and are essential to communicating effectively.

- Tool literacy—the ability to understand and use the practical and conceptual tools of current information technology relevant to education and areas of work and professional life.
- Resource literacy—the ability to understand the form, format, location, and access methods of information resources, especially daily expanding networked information resources.
- Social-structural literacy—the ability to understand how information is socially situated and produced.
- Research literacy—the ability to understand and use the IT-based tools relevant to the work of today's researcher and scholar.
- Publishing literacy—the ability to format and publish research and ideas electronically, in text and multimedia forms. Also, the ability to introduce information into the electronic public realm and the electronic community of scholars.
- Emerging technology literacy—the ability to adapt to, understand, evaluate, and make use of the emerging innovations in information technology and to make intelligent decisions about the adoption of new technology.
- Critical literacy—the ability to evaluate critically the intellectual, human, and social strengths and weaknesses, potentials and limits, and benefits and costs of information technologies.

(Jeremy J. Shapiro and Shelley K. Hughes, "Information Literacy as a Liberal Art." Educom Review, Volume 31, Number 2, March/April 1996.)



Bikeriderlondon/Shutterstock.com

Hort agents offer educational seminars and workshops and create publications to disseminate information. They are responsible for administering programs through the agricultural universities of the state in which they work. These agents have flexible hours, but may have to work some weekends. They almost always have to regularly travel in their county, state, or nation. They may even travel internationally for their occupation. An extension agent must enjoy working with people and have excellent written and verbal communication skills. The agent should have a passion for horticulture and for teaching as this position is a hybrid of both occupations.

Garden Writer and Speaker

A garden writer can be an independent (freelance) author or one that writes for a book, newspaper, magazine, journal, or website. Garden writers must have a wide knowledge of plant material and gardening topics. They must be excellent and fast researchers with a talent for the written word. Today's garden writers can be anywhere in the world since they can submit their work from home or other places to their editor or publisher.

Corner Question

What is the National Association of Landscape Professional's (NALP) Day of Service?





ljansempoi/Shutterstock.com

Figure 3-18. This woman is part of the Garden Writers Association. **How do you think photography connects to being a garden writer?**

Garden writers must often also be skilled in photography or art, **Figure 3-18**. Some garden writers are also skilled botanical illustrators.

Garden writers may also be lecturers or speakers. Speakers, often called lecturers, must be able to engage their audience and both entertain and educate. Some speakers may work only with small audiences, but others may speak formally in front of thousands at trade shows. Garden speakers may perform on radio, on television, or with live audiences. No matter the format, speakers must leave a lasting impression and communicate professionally.

The Garden Writers Association is an organization specifically for the thousands of garden writers and speakers across the United States. Its website provides information for garden writers, lecturers, and those who seek to employ a garden writer or lecturer.

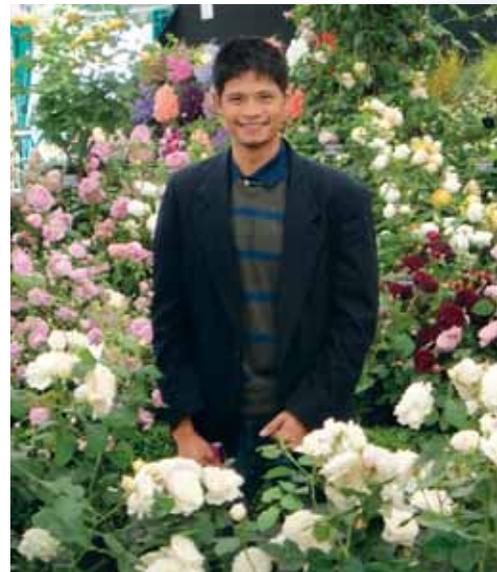
Career Connection

Rizaniño “Riz” Reyes

Garden Blogger

Rizaniño “Riz” Reyes grew up on a family fruit plantation in his native Philippines. When his family immigrated to the United States, he was naturally drawn to the produce and floral departments at their local supermarket. Soon he began to research different plants and flowers by viewing old garden catalogs, books, and gardening shows, such as *The Victory Garden*. Riz earned a degree in environmental horticulture and then landed a part-time position through the University of Washington Botanic Gardens. During this time, he ran a small specialty nursery where he grew and marketed his favorite plants and later added garden/floral design, writing, consulting, and maintenance services through his company, RHR Horticulture & Landwave Gardens.

Through his love for collecting and nurturing plants and his ability to share and communicate his growing interests, he has been able to visit numerous gardens and nurseries and meet renowned experts around the world through social media. Today, Riz appears on the Internet as a source for floral inspiration and horticultural opinion. He has several videos on YouTube, a website dedicated to his business ventures, and a blog called *A Next Generation Gardener*, where he chronicles his life experiences with plants and people. He also showcases unique topics for gardeners of all interests and levels of expertise. He was featured in a 2013 article as one of the up-and-coming young gardeners through *Organic Gardening* magazine.





CHAPTER 3

Review and Assessment

Chapter Summary

- Communication is a process in which a message is sent by one person and received and understood by another person(s). People communicate using speech or other sounds and using written words, images, and nonverbal behavior.
- The writing process involves determining the purpose of a message, considering the audience, selecting a way to present the message, refining the topic, identifying the main points, creating a plan for the message, reviewing the message, and revising and proofreading.
- Critical thinking is using objective reasoning or consideration before forming a judgment or taking some action. Critical thinking involves a path of analysis that includes searching for information, previewing results, finding evidence, annotating, summarizing, and evaluating information.
- Plagiarism is using work (such as ideas, writing, or images) created by someone else without permission and presenting it as one's own work. Under no circumstance should you present another's work as your own.
- Authors should follow standard formatting styles, such as MLA or APA, and document or cite all work in any document that is not original. At the end of the paper, a bibliography should be created to list all sources used in the work.
- A presentation is a speech or lecture given to an audience, either live or by video. When you are preparing a speech that requires research and writing, the steps will be similar to those for writing a paper.
- Both prepared and extemporaneous presentations may be given to inform or to persuade listeners.
- Information literacy involves recognizing when information is needed and being able to find, evaluate, use, and communicate the information to others. Independent learning and social responsibility are concepts related to information literacy.
- Several horticultural careers involve effective communication. These can include but are not limited to cooperative extension service agents, garden writers and lecturers, and garden bloggers.



Words to Know

Match the key terms from the chapter to the correct definition.

- | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| A. annotate | F. demographics | K. skim |
| B. annotated bibliography | G. evidence | L. thesis |
| C. audience | H. information literacy | M. tone |
| D. communication | I. paraphrase | N. voice |
| E. critical thinking | J. plagiarism | O. works cited |

1. Using objective reasoning or consideration before forming a judgment or taking action.
2. The ability to recognize when information is needed and to find, evaluate, use, and communicate information.
3. The people who will read, hear, or see the message.
4. To write questions or comments on a document as you read it.
5. A summary list of all research and sources that are used to create a text or presentation.
6. A statement or theory that is proposed and then discussed to prove or disprove it.
7. To use your own words, sentences, and organization to summarize something written (or spoken) by someone else.
8. To read selected parts of a text looking for the main ideas.
9. The quality of a message that reflects the writer's attitude or mood.
10. A document that lists citations for sources used and briefly describes each work.
11. A process in which a message is sent by one person and received and understood by another person(s).
12. Using work (such as ideas, writing, or images) created by someone else without permission and presenting it as one's own work.
13. Characteristics or traits of a group.
14. Facts or information about a topic indicating whether a belief or position is correct or valid.
15. The style of expression or degree of formality used in a message.

Know and Understand

Answer the following questions using the information provided in this chapter.

1. What are the steps in the writing process?
2. What are four important characteristics an author should consider about the audience for a message?
3. What are two methods of presentation an author can use to deliver a message?
4. What are four activities you can do to help you select a topic for a written message or oral presentation?



5. Why should writers avoid using a topic that is too broad?
6. How does a writer go about creating a project plan for a writing assignment?
7. How does the introduction of a message lay out a plan for the body of the message?
8. Why is it important to review, revise, and proofread a message?
9. What steps can you take to successfully research information and form your own educated opinions?
10. How is skimming a document different from reading the entire document?
11. What are three types of sources of information that are considered credible or reputable?
12. What are eleven questions you can consider to help you evaluate information from your research?
13. What are three examples of plagiarism?
14. How is paraphrasing different from simply copying a passage from a document?
16. How does a prepared presentation differ from an extemporaneous presentation?
17. What five things can a presenter do to appear more credible and convincing?
18. Name and describe seven forms of information literacy needed by people in the horticulture industry.
19. What is a horticulture extension agent? What education and experience are needed to be a horticulture agent?
20. For what types of employers does a garden writer work? Why is a garden writer often also a garden speaker?

Thinking Critically

1. You are visiting colleges during your senior year. Your parents want you to attend one school, your grandparents have another idea, and your friends would like you to go to yet another school. What methods could you use to determine which school is the best choice for you? Remember, you are the one who is going to college, and the choice needs to be the best for you. List five ways that you will determine your college of choice.
2. A horticulturist has been growing plants organically for the past three years, but she has never been formally certified as an organic grower. There are many expenses associated with becoming a USDA certified organic grower. Some of her customers are now asking that she become a certified organic grower. How can she determine if she really needs to be a certified organic grower, or if it would be best to continue to grow organically without the USDA certification?

STEM and Academic Activities

1. **Technology.** Watch a home gardening show. Find an episode that relates to a scientific process, such as respiration, absorption, photosynthesis, or translocation of plants. Retell the process in your own words. Highlight scientific processes and the inputs and outputs of those processes. Make note of where these processes occur in the plant.



2. **Engineering.** Properly plant a tree or shrub. Research how to properly plant a tree or shrub. Use several resources and determine what are the best suggestions or guides for your area. While planting, engineer a solution to any problem that you encounter (examples: very hard soil, steep grade of soil, pollutants, erosion, or pests).
3. **Math.** Landscape technicians must use math almost every day, specifically geometry. Homeowners will often find themselves lost in a sea of equations when trying to determine simple calculations involving landscape materials. Create a one-page publication for homeowners that explains how to calculate the amount of mulch to purchase in cubic yards for rectangular, circular, and triangular areas. Learners need both text and images to help them through this process.
4. **Language Arts.** Go to a garden or greenhouse and write about one of the flowers that you observe and can identify. Make sure to note as many details as possible. Do not use the name of the plant. When you are finished, have your teacher read this text and see if he or she can determine what plant you are describing. If your teacher can, you have done a good job. If not, your writing needs to include more detail, and you should try again.
5. **Language Arts.** Find a gardening magazine, either online or in print form. Find the section where people write about their problems and someone determines a solution to the problem. Write a letter to this individual about a problem that your school is experiencing in the garden, greenhouse, or classroom related to plants. If you or your teacher cannot find one, interview someone you know (most likely an adult) who has a gardening question. Send this letter to the author of the column and see if you get a response.
6. **Language Arts.** Go to a garden blog and write a comment to the author about one of the posts. Write one to two paragraphs and try to include details about the blogger's post to help jog the author's memory about what he or she wrote.

Communicating about Agriculture

1. **Writing.** Make a two-column chart and list the names and occupation or relationship of twelve people with whom you communicate on a regular basis in the first column. How is the way you communicate with these people influenced by your relationship? Use the second column to identify and write the different ways you speak and behave when in the presence of these individuals.
2. **Listening.** Record a half-hour news broadcast. Before viewing the broadcast, turn on your radio, and have your phone or laptop on. View the broadcast while using your phone or laptop. Once the broadcast is over, write down everything you remember seeing or hearing. Set aside the phone or laptop and turn off the radio. Watch the broadcast again. How much did you remember? How accurate were your observations? How were your observations affected by the distractions? Perform the experiment again (with a different broadcast), but eliminate all distractions. Compare your findings.



SAE Opportunities

1. **Exploratory.** Job shadow a garden writer or lecturer.
2. **Exploratory.** Research how to photograph plants or do botanical illustrations. Create a digital presentation or a website illustrating your findings. Create an online slideshow that documents your artwork. For every plant that is included, be sure to include its species so that others can learn about this plant. You could also write a short blurb about each of the plants and where and how they were photographed or illustrated.
3. **Exploratory.** Attend a garden seminar or lecture through your cooperative extension agent. All areas of the country have Master Gardeners. Contact your extension agent or Master Gardener for help in finding a seminar.
4. **Exploratory.** Research a topic in horticulture that interests you. Author a paper. Be sure to document your research throughout your text and create a bibliography. When you have completed your work, create a presentation. Present this to an audience at a local nursing home or school for the first round. Fine-tune your work and try participating in the Prepared Public Speaking CDE as well.
5. **Exploratory.** Contact your state's land-grant university and find the horticulture department. Visit the school and meet with one or more of the professors, faculty members, and students. Develop a publication that you can use to educate your school's horticulture program about the opportunities at this university. Highlight those faculty members and students that you spoke to and include quotes and photos of them for the publication. Be sure to get their permission before the interview.



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