



Start writing essays

Getting the tone right

Jane Van Hool

Richard Dawkins is Professor of Public Understanding of Science at Oxford University, and a best-selling author. He writes about science in a way that non-scientists can understand. How does he achieve the correct tone and register to address a wide variety of readers?

Richard Dawkins:

You should make things as simple as possible, but no simpler. So, I am not in favour of over-simplifying to the point of falsification, but I'm also not in favour of spelling out every tiny detail.

Jane Van Hool:

Helena Kennedy writes for a variety of different audiences. How does she vary her tone?

Helena Kennedy:

I think you do it by imagining the person being there in the room, and so I write for my sisters when I'm writing in a woman's magazine, I'll write for my mother if it's in a tabloid newspaper, and I'll write, you know, for colleagues if it's going to be in a legal journal.