

The first
appendectomy



Celeste Chen Ms. Filowitz Language Arts 1 (Pre-IB) Period 5 7 September 2012 Writing Assignment #1: Author's Purpose When composing a literary selection, an author has a point he or she wants to put across. There is a purpose, whether it be of the conscious or subconscious mind, almost every time an author composes. In Dr. Nolen's case, he crafted this selection, "The First Appendectomy", to inform the reader of the challenges of a young surgeon.

To begin with, it is shown in many different ways that Dr. Nolen wanted to inform his reader of the issues a young doctor faces. Dr. Nolen writes with an urgency and a sense of a ticking clock, as shown in his frequent usage of measurements of time. "He could have tied off all the vessels in two minutes. It took me twenty." (149) Therefore, the reader can infer from the selection, that the work of a surgeon is difficult and stressful, as a surgeon is racing against time as he or she is operating.

The dangers of going over time are prominent enough to extract much needed confidence, for an efficient surgery, from the heart of an amateur. Dr. Nolen wants to inform the reader on the challenges a young surgeon faces, such as forgetting how to perform a certain task, stressing over how much time is left and trying to impress a senior advisor. Dr. Nolen forgets how to perform this simple appendectomy. "... for the life of me could not decide where to make the incision. (147) It is apparent, that Dr. Nolen wanted to exhibit the obstacles of a first-time surgeon. Having a purpose to compose a selection is very important for an author, for it sets the tone of the piece. Dr. Nolen decided to inform readers on how a young surgeon struggles in his first surgery. Many people do not quite realize how stressful

and nerve-wracking a surgery can be, and Dr. Nolen writes this piece to show to the public exactly that.