

1. How to identify Cowboy Builders

Here are some very quick steps to identify the cowboy builder. As for now these steps are jumbled together. Sort them out in the order you find them most important:

- Good builders do not knock on people's doors and say they are working in the area and have a lorry load of tarmac left over or they have noticed that there is a ferret nesting in your chimney stack. Thank them politely and ask them for a business card and contact details so you could perhaps call them when the house owner returns from holiday.
- If a builder says he can start tomorrow the chances are he has no other work to do. Good tradespeople are always busy.
- A cowboy will probably only have a mobile phone. No land line means he is not traceable. Good builders may work from home but they will not be frightened to give you their number and address.
- People who say "Trust Me" the lot can very rarely be trusted.
- Cowboy builders may suggest that giving them cash will reduce the bill. It will, but it also means there is no proof that they ever did the job. Always insist on a written receipt on a piece of headed paper.
- Cowboy builders do have an infuriating habit of treating you like a child. They use a lot of unnecessary jargon and when you ask for an explanation you get a look tantamount to "Don't worry your pretty head about it". Make sure your builder explains everything to you in clear terms that you fully understand.
- If you have an emergency job you will not have time for any of the practices below but make sure you understand the companies call out terms before you let them into your house.

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2. Study advertisements A and B below and answer the questions:

- a) What is the purpose of these adverts?
- b) Study advertisement 1 and 2 below; then describe the differences and similarities.
- c) How do these adverts appeal to you? What exactly is it in the text or layout that appeals to you?
- d) Would you hire one of these companies to renovate your house? Why, why not?

Advertisement A

“Man for hire – English, 44, charming, intelligent, own 4x4 & trailer, no job too small, £ 25 an hour”...” I've done building, carpentry, decorating, house moves, gardening, dog walking, bike maintenance.

Go to this website for the full advertisement (Gumtree.com):

<https://www.gumtree.com/p/general-services/man-for-hire-english-44-charming-intelligent-own-4x4-trailer-no-job-too-small-£25-an-hour./1180097366>

Advertisement B

“Friendly, reliable, local handyman – no job too big or too small” ... “Whatever the job, big or small, I would love to help. I know first-hand how hard it is to find reliable, trustworthy tradespeople, particularly if you're busy”.

Go to this website for the full advertisement (Gumtree.com):

<https://www.gumtree.com/p/property-services/friendly-reliable-local-handyman-no-job-too-big-or-too-small/1148923478>

3. Excerpt from web article

Teacher reads the text with students. Explain difficult/important words.

Avoiding Cowboy Builders: How to Avoid Rogue Tradesmen and Find Trustworthy Tradesmen

“Summary: Finding good builders and avoiding the cowboys. Nearly everyone has had a bad experience with a rogue tradesman or cowboy builder. This project gives you the steps to follow to avoid the bad builders and find trustworthy and reliable tradesmen.

How can I avoid cowboy builders and tradesmen? We have been asked that question so many times by people who have been ripped off by the unscrupulous cowboys operating all over the country. There is no simple answer other than to take full responsibility for your own home. This page, as with every single page on this website, is written by qualified tradesmen. We know what we are talking about and over the last 30 years we have seen horror stories which could easily have been avoided by the client taking responsibility for their home.

Do not disregard any of this advice because the job you want done is only small. Even removing a radiator can cause enormous problems and if everything that can go wrong, does go wrong, your heating can be down for days. Why take chances with anything in your home?

Imagine you had an expanding business and were in a position to offer someone a job. This recruit would be paid by you to do the job you employed them to do. You would need to trust them to do the job in a way which had your best interests at heart. You would need to give them a contract stipulating exactly what was expected of them, and the amount of money they would get on a pre assigned day.”

(Excerpt from <http://www.diydoctor.org.uk/projects/cowboybuilders.htm>)

In groups of three answer these questions:

- a) What is the purpose of this text? List five words that supports your decision.
- b) What are the main points the writer is trying to make?
- c) How we can identify them?
- d) How does the writer use evidence to back up his/her point of view?
- e) Does the writer give any illustrations to prove his/her point?
- f) Which connectives are used to structure arguments?
- g) Which genre is this text? Look at explanations below and give reasons for your answer.

Narrative

stories that raise issues
stories from other cultures
travel to fantasy worlds

Persuasive

letters to complain
(crazy complaints to a newspaper)
advertisements/brochures for holidays
pamphlets for holiday destinations

Discussion

should we travel to countries where
there are moral issues to consider?

Report

facts about different countries
animals/plants found in different
countries

Recount

postcards
holiday diary
newspaper report

Instructions

route finders
directions
timetables
recipies from different countries
rules (at the beach/hotel)
aeroplane instructions for safety
how to check in
how to behave in different countries

Explanation

why do certain phenomena occur in
different countries?

4. **Individual task to be handed in**

Assignment: Compose an advertisement for your company. Take notice of what you have learned from the examples above (including the videos).

- Text here will be: words, sentences, pictures, logo, etc.
- Appeal to the reader/customer
- Give reasons: Why should they believe you are a reliable and skilled worker?