Inside Writing PERSUASIVE ESSAYS

... a self-contained student writing unit, complete with instruction, guidelines, activities, and writing space

WRITE SOURCE®
GREAT SOURCE EDUCATION GROUP
a division of Houghton Mifflin Company
Wilmington, Massachusetts
Consulting Educators

We want to offer a special thanks to urban curriculum coordinator Dr. Mildred Pearson and to the entire Write Source/Great Source team for all their help. In addition, *Inside Writing* is a reality because of the help and advice of the following educators:

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Planning Notes:
Persuasive Essays

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4TE  Daily Lesson Plans
9TE  About the Sample Persuasive Essay
10TE  Assessed Writing Samples
15TE  Optional Activities for Multiple Intelligences
       Additional Persuasive Writing Prompts
16TE  Correlations to Write Source Handbooks
Unit Overview:

Persuasive Essays

As with all Inside Writing units, the persuasive writing unit is ready to put in the hands of your students. Everything students need to complete their work is included in this booklet.

In this unit, students are asked to write a persuasive essay attempting to convince readers about an opinion on an issue that affects their community. During the unit, students will learn how to identify an appropriate issue, gather reasons and supporting details, and state an opinion. The unit includes a sample persuasive essay that calls on citizens to support the city's branch libraries. The side notes for the sample essay identify the main parts in a persuasive essay.

Rationale

- In the “Universe of Discourse,” persuasive writing is one of the most challenging and important forms of writing for students to develop. It requires students to take a stand on a topic and convince others to agree with their point of view.
- Most students have experience with issues that affect their community. They may also hear about issues in conversations with friends and family or in news reports.
- Students can learn to shape effective persuasive essays with clearly developed beginnings, middles, and endings.
- Persuasive writing is included on many district and state assessment tests.

Major Concepts

- An effective persuasive essay includes at least two or three main points, or reasons, in support of an opinion.
- The best way to support an opinion is with supporting details that appeal to reason.
- A persuasive essay is more likely to convince a reader when the writer feels strongly about the subject and uses an appropriate voice in his or her writing.

- Persuasive writing must go through a series of steps—prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing and proofreading—before it is ready to publish.
- Assessment is an important part of the writing process.

Strategies and Skills That Students Will Practice

- Identifying issues by completing sentences
- Identifying reasons for and against
- Gathering details
- Writing an opinion statement
- Writing the beginning, middle, and ending parts of a persuasive essay
- Using an appropriate voice
- Peer responding
- Punctuating direct quotations correctly
- Evaluating persuasive writing using an assessment rubric

Performance Standards

Students are expected to . . .

- use prewriting strategies to generate and organize ideas.
- support an opinion with thoughtful and convincing reasons.
- revise and edit their writing, striving for completeness, appropriate voice, effective word choice, smooth-reading sentences, and correctness.

Reinforcing Skills

- Students can use either the Writers INC or the Write Ahead handbook for additional instructions related to writing persuasive essays. (See page 16TE for handbook correlations.)
- Editing and proofreading skills can be reinforced and expanded by implementing exercises from Inside Writing Skills available for each level. (See page 7TE for suggestions.)
### Weekly Planning Chart

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Daily Lesson Plans: Week One

DAY 1

Understanding the Unit

- Discuss "About the Unit" (inside front cover). Note that the intended audience is the students' classmates and people in the community. Students will be expected to share their finished writing in class.
- Review the table of contents (page 1) and the assignment checklist (page 2). Students can use the checklist to keep track of their assignments. (Consider establishing due dates for each assignment.)
- Before students begin the unit, walk around the room in the style of a reporter doing on-the-street interviews. Ask several volunteers their opinions about a current issue in their community. Because students are being asked for an immediate response, they may voice opinions that are not well thought out or that are based purely on emotions. As a class, briefly discuss the students' responses. Allow students to clarify their opinions if they wish. Explain that developing an informed opinion is a process of examining the facts and weighing the various points of view on an issue.

Make sure that students have a clear understanding of what an opinion is before proceeding with the unit.

- Next, read aloud or ask a volunteer to read aloud page 3. Talk for a moment about the quotation. Discuss with students the importance of believing in a position in order to be persuasive. Students may suggest that it makes the writing more convincing because the writer has clear reasons for his or her opinion. Challenge students to see the connection between the quotation and the work they will do for this unit. (Students should understand that they need to care about the issue they will write about; otherwise they will be wasting their own and their reader's time.)

Completing a Persuasive Warm-Up Activity

- Implement "For or Against?" (page 4). In this activity, students are asked to express their opinions about several issues in their school and community. The purpose of this activity is to put students in a persuasive-writing mode, thinking about why they support something.

DAY 2

Working with a Sample Essay

Reading a Sample Persuasive Essay

Optional: Implement "Prereading Activity" (9TE).

- Have students read the sample persuasive essay (pages 5-6), or read it aloud to the class. After they read or listen, students should pay attention to the side notes, which identify the main parts of the essay. Remind students that they will need to include these parts in their own essays.
Reacting to the Essay

- Have students complete “Reacting to the Reading” (page 7). You may want students to work on this activity on their own or in small groups. Discuss their answers as a class. The questions will guide students back to the essay to locate its main features, including the opinion statement, the supporting reasons, and the call to action. Take a moment to focus on the question that asks students whether they were persuaded by the essay. Students should understand that even after reading a well-reasoned persuasive argument, they still may not agree with the writer’s opinion. Remind them that reading a persuasive essay is an active process. Students should question the writer’s reasons and supporting details as they read any persuasive essay.

Optional: Using “Important Stylistic Features” (page 9TE) as a guide, discuss two stylistic features—anecdotal evidence and using expert sources—in the model persuasive essay.

- As a class, assess the sample using the rubric on page 8. To get started, analyze the sample for content (stimulating ideas) by determining whether the essay states an opinion and presents reasons to support it. Then go on to organization, voice, and so on. You may also choose to limit your analysis to just one or two of the traits on the rubric. Inform students that their own persuasive essays will be assessed with the rubric.

Optional: Implement “Reading Persuasive Essays” (page 44). Provide newspapers or magazines for students to review. Students may work on this activity throughout the unit, whenever they have free time.

**DAY 3**

**Prewriting**

**Selecting a Subject**

- Implement “Selecting a Subject” (page 10), an activity in which students identify issues by completing sentences. Point out that the sentence beginnings are worded to express strong beliefs. Emphasize that believing in an issue can help students write convincing essays. (Remind students of the quotation on page 3.)

**Identifying Reasons**

- Implement “Identifying Reasons For and Against” (page 11). Encourage students to think of at least three reasons that support their opinions. Explain that they should also consider why people might not agree with their opinions. Tell students that understanding the opposing viewpoint can help them develop counterarguments like the following: In an essay that supports renovating an abandoned warehouse to create a recreation center, the writer recognizes that some people may not understand the value of saving old properties. The writer then suggests that community spirit can be created by turning the abandoned warehouse into a symbol of the city’s heritage.

**ESL Tip**

Students from some cultures may be unfamiliar with or even offended by the argumentative nature of persuasive writing. Take time to learn about students’ experience with persuasive writing. You may wish to adapt the rubric on page 8 in order to make it more appropriate for some students.
Gathering Details and Stating an Opinion

- Implement "Reviewing a Sample Gathering Chart" (page 12). Then implement "Gathering Details and Stating an Opinion" (page 13). Students may need to do research in order to find details that support their opinions. Suggest that students interview local experts for supporting details. Encourage students to include at least one quotation from an expert source in their essays. If students have trouble forming an opinion statement, have them follow the formula shown in the opinion statement at the bottom of page 12. Students should state a feeling and then supply their reasons. (If students cannot identify a strong feeling about a certain issue, then they should reconsider their subject.)

Learning How Persuasive Essays Work

- Review the parts of a persuasive essay by discussing "Learning How Persuasive Essays Work" (page 14).

**DAY 4**

**Writing**

Starting Your Persuasive Essay

- Implement "Starting Your Essay" (pages 16-17). Remind students that they should identify an issue and state their opinion about it in the opening paragraph. Point out that the sample paragraph on page 16 begins with a question.

Developing the Middle Part

- Implement "Developing the Middle Part" (pages 18-20). Point out that the writer identifies his or her most important reason in the first paragraph. Students should understand that the most important reason is either the first or last reason mentioned in the body of a persuasive essay. Remind them also to use counterarguments and identify the sources of any quotations they include in their essays.

**ESL TIP**

Work with students to develop a list of "clue words" that show importance. Using words such as more, most, least, less, best, worst, and so on, can show the order of importance of their ideas.

**DAY 5**

**Writing**

Ending Your Essay

- Implement "Ending Your Essay" (page 21). Discuss the call to action presented in the sample paragraph. Upon completion of their work, ask volunteers to share their endings with the class. Have listeners identify the call to action in each ending.

Forming a Complete First Draft

- Complete copies of rough drafts should be due the next class period. Review the tips on page 22 before students complete their first drafts. Remind students to store their first drafts in the back pocket of their unit booklets.
Daily Lesson Plans: Week Two

DAY 1

Revising

Skills Activity
• Implement “Writing with an Appropriate Voice” (pages 24-25). Students should use a respectful and reasonable voice like that in the sample essay (pages 5-6).

Peer Responding
• Have students react to one another’s writing using “Peer Responding” (page 26).

ESL TIP
To help students make constructive comments, share the comments that follow the “excellent” and “fair” assessed student essays (pages 10TE-13TE).

Optional: Share the “excellent” and “fair” assessed student essays (pages 10TE-13TE). (Make copies of the essays or display them on an overhead projector.) Students should consider whether their writing measures up to the “excellent” essay.

DAY 2

Revising

Using a Checklist to Revise
• Have students revise their first drafts, following “Using a Checklist” (top, page 27). Before they begin their work, review “Revising in Action” (bottom, page 27) to make sure that students understand the revising process.

Writing a Complete Revised Draft
• Provide time for students to complete their revising. Review “Revising Tips” and “Adding a Title” (page 28) with students before they write their complete revised drafts.

DAY 3

Editing and Proofreading

Skills Activity: Editing for Style
Implement “Combining Sentences by Subordinating Ideas” (pages 30-31). Discuss subordinate, or less important, ideas. Point out that not every sentence or idea in an essay has the same importance. Subordinating ideas is one way to show relationships between ideas in writing. Challenge students to combine at least one pair of sentences in their essay.

Skills Activity: Editing for Correctness
• Implement “Punctuating Direct Quotations” (page 32).

Inside Writing Skills activities to consider:
Sentence Combining: Using Subordinating Conjunctions (pages 78-79)
Using Interjections (page 124)
DAY 4

Editing and Proofreading

Reviewing Editing in Action
• Discuss the sample edited paragraph at the top of page 33.

Skills Activity: Checking for Correctness
• Discuss the sample proofread paragraph at the top of page 34. Then implement “Making Editing and Proofreading Changes” (pages 34-35). This activity could be done by individuals, with partners, or as a class, depending on students’ abilities. Note that students may solve editing issues in different ways.

Using a Checklist to Edit and Proofread
• Have students edit their revised writing, following “Using a Checklist” (page 36). Students may work in pairs to edit their essays.

Writing the Final Copy
• Review the tips on page 37. Then provide time for students to write and proofread their final copies (pages 38-40). Final copies should be due the following day.

DAY 5

Publishing

Sharing Final Copies
• Arrange students in small groups and have them share their final drafts. Provide copies of the rubric (page 8) for students to use to evaluate their classmates’ essays. Each student should write his or her name (Evaluator:) and the name of the writer (Writer:) at the top of the rubric. Have students evaluate each essay for the six traits listed on the rubric, and have them write at least one positive comment at the bottom of the rating sheet. (Each writer should have an opportunity to review the ratings.)

Assessment Note: We use a 5-point scale to evaluate the writing samples on pages 10TE-14TE, but the rubric can be used with any point scale.

Understanding the Publishing Process
• Discuss the variety of ways writing can be published (page 42).

Daily Lesson Plans: Week Three (Optional)

Extension Activities

Reflecting on Your Writing
• Have students complete “Reflecting on Your Writing” (page 45). This activity will help them think about their writing experience in this unit.

Preparing for a Writing Test
• Also consider implementing “Preparing for a Writing Test” (page 46). Students should review this sheet before they take a district or state assessment test.
About the Sample Persuasive Essay

The purpose of the sample persuasive essay (pages 5-6) is to convince an audience of people from the community to support the continued funding of branch libraries in their city. The writer contends that branch libraries promote culture and education, give the public access to resources, and save people time and money. In each paragraph, the writer provides concrete examples of how people in every part of the city benefit from being able to walk to a branch library and use its resources. The conclusion calls for readers to ask city council members to guarantee the funding of these important neighborhood libraries.

Prereading Activity

Explain to students that the sample essay will try to persuade people to support the funding of branch libraries in their city. Before students read or listen to the essay, have them each draw a two-column chart on a sheet of paper and label one column “Pros” and the other column “Cons.” Then allow students two or three minutes to list reasons the writer might give for or against funding branch libraries. Then, as students read or listen to the essay, ask them to check their predictions against the information in the essay. Lead a brief discussion of any pro or con reasons that the writer did not consider. Use this activity to illustrate how a reader considers and responds to a persuasive essay. Encourage students to question the opinion and reasons presented in any persuasive writing they read.

Vocabulary

folklore Traditional songs, dances, stories, and art forms of a cultural group
assets Advantages

Important Stylistic Features

ANECDOtal EviDence: In the essay, the writer uses anecdotal evidence to support the idea that more branch libraries are needed. By telling the story of a high school student who has to spend money and time to use the downtown library, the writer combines practical and emotional appeals. The reader can relate to the needless waste of money and time. He or she also will feel empathy for the student who must get past these obstacles just to use the library. Anecdotal evidence helps the reader imagine himself or herself in a certain situation and opens the reader’s mind to the writer’s viewpoint. You may suggest that students use anecdotal evidence to reach out to their readers.

USING EXPERT SOURCES: Any opinion is strengthened by information from expert sources. The sample essay draws on two expert sources—a student who takes the bus to the library and a librarian. Both offer strong support to the writer’s opinion. The student knows from firsthand experience that riding the bus downtown requires time and money. The writer includes the student’s experience to illustrate her point that branch libraries save patrons time and money. The writer further strengthens her opinion by quoting librarian Norah Colman. The quotation is effective not only because a librarian has firsthand knowledge of the library, but also because the description of children using the library appeals to the reader’s emotions. The writer wants readers to remember the excitement of their first trips to the library. Challenge students to talk to at least two credible sources as they prepare their persuasive essays. Take a few moments to review, during the revision stage, how to smoothly introduce quoted material into an essay.
Assessed Writing Samples

Pages 10TE-14TE include three sample persuasive essays assessed according to the rubric on page 8 in the unit. Use these samples to help students with their writing and revising. (See Week Two, DAY 1 in “Daily Lesson Plans,” page 7TE.) You may also use the samples to guide your own evaluation of your students’ essays. A 5-point scale is used to evaluate these samples, but the rubric will work with any point scale.

Persuasive Writing Assessment

EXCELLENT

Say No to the Road to Nowhere

When the early settlers first came to our city, they came by boat and on horseback. Later, railroads and roads were built. By the 1970s, the city was big, busy, and modern enough to need an airport. The first plane landed at Metro Airport in 1978, and the city’s residents were thrilled to have convenient access to air transportation. Today, however, Metro Airport faces financial challenges. Fewer planes fly in and out of the city because many travelers are willing to drive to nearby bigger cities to get direct flights from larger airports. City council members believe that they can get people from all over the state to use our airport if the city builds a highway through the center of town to the airport. However, building a new highway is not a great solution because our airport still will not offer the direct flights people want, the highway will split up existing neighborhoods and school districts, and traffic and pollution will increase in our city.

According to a local airport official, customer surveys have indicated that travelers prefer to take nonstop flights to their destinations. In fact, 75 percent of the people surveyed said they would rather drive to a distant airport to take a direct flight than drive to a local airport and have to change planes. Building a new highway, therefore, will not achieve the goal of attracting travelers to our airport. Metro Airport will still be a drain on the city’s budget.

Another reason to object to the highway is a practical one. The projected plans for the road would split several neighborhoods right down the middle. The road would also split local school districts apart. Students would have to walk twice as far to get around the highway to school, and some schools might even need to arrange for buses to transport students. Two of our city’s oldest neighborhoods, Green Island and Underwood Heights, would be torn up for years during the building of the road. Then, once it was completed, people would have to drive in their cars or take the bus just to get across their
neighborhoods. That means that many people would stop shopping and walking in their neighborhoods. Neighbors would lose touch with each other. The proposed highway would literally tear neighborhoods and schools apart.

Finally, the new road would increase traffic and pollution in our city by 10 percent. Some parts of the road would pass close to school buildings. The extensive construction and, later, the increased traffic noise would disrupt classrooms. Environmentalist Keith Paine has studied highways all around the country. He says, "Not only will air pollution increase from having more cars and trucks in the area, but the road will change the way rainwater is collected and drained. Now the rainwater will pick up even more oil and gas from the streets and put it into local streams." According to Paine, that kind of pollution always ends up in people's drinking water.

It is clear that building a new highway will not solve the problems of Metro Airport. Instead, it will create problems for the people of this city. Taxpayer dollars will continue to fund a declining airport, as well as build an unnecessary road. Residential areas and school districts will experience upheaval. And what will we gain? We will gain more traffic and increased health risks. We are better off without the road. Call your city council member, and attend the meetings that will be held this month to discuss the proposed highway. Don't let our city council take us down that road!

**Assessment Rubric**

5 STIMULATING IDEAS
The persuasive writing...
- States an opinion about an important subject.
- Contains specific reasons and details to support the opinion.

5 LOGICAL ORGANIZATION
- Includes a clear beginning, middle, and ending.
- Presents a logical argument.

5 ENGAGING VOICE
- Speaks in a convincing, positive voice.
- Shows that the writer feels strongly about his or her opinion.

4 ORIGINAL WORD CHOICE
- Explains unfamiliar terms.
- Uses clear, persuasive language.

5 EFFECTIVE SENTENCE STYLE
- Flows smoothly from sentence to sentence.

5 CORRECT, ACCURATE COPY
- Observes the basic rules of writing.
- Follows the form suggested by the teacher.

**COMMENTS:**

You clearly state your opinion in the opening paragraph, and you support it well in the body of your paper. Your reasons are clear and are arranged in an order that makes sense.

The voice of your writing is appropriate, and you have used an effective quotation from an authoritative source. Good work overall.
Summer School Is Cool

What do you think of when you think of summer? Do you think of sleeping late and maybe spending time at the community pool with your friends? Some people actually spend part of the summer in "school." Our community's Summer Learning Program gives kids extra practice with tough subjects, lets kids study advanced subjects, and offers a variety of music and art programs. Recently, it was announced that the Summer Learning Program may not happen this summer because of lack of funding. Do you want that to happen?

The Summer Learning Program is a great way to learn things you have to learn. Its also a great place to learn things you want to learn. It provides tutoring in many subjects. There are also classes that can help you prepare for standardized tests. Lots of students like the specialized classes, such as drivers education and mechanic's classes. In the past artists and poets came and gave workshops on painting and writing, too. One time there was even a class about how to be a clown—like a circus clown. Kids made funny costumes and painted there faces. There was even one of those people who makes animals and sculptures out of balloons. So you can see that the Summer Learning Program offers classes that are both helpful and fun for alot of people.

Another thing the Summer Learning Program does is keep kids busy. Many kids parent's work hard all year around and so the kids need a place to spend time during the day when school is out for the summer. In this program, they can learn new information like a foreign language or catch up on the algebra that confused them during the school year. Without these classes, were will kids go. They might just waste the three summer months watching TV or worse, getting into trouble.
You will help out a lot of kids if you support the funding of the Summer Learning Program. Show your support for kids in our community by writing a letter to the board of education and to the city council. This is an important issue for everyone. Please take time to help out.

**Assessment Rubric**

3 STIMULATING IDEAS
The persuasive writing...
- states an opinion about an important subject.
- contains specific reasons and details to support the opinion.

3 LOGICAL ORGANIZATION
- includes a clear beginning, middle, and ending.
- presents a logical argument.

4 ENGAGING VOICE
- speaks in a convincing, positive voice.
- shows that the writer feels strongly about his or her opinion.

3 ORIGINAL WORD CHOICE
- explains unfamiliar terms.
- uses clear, persuasive language.

3 EFFECTIVE SENTENCE STYLE
- flows smoothly from sentence to sentence.

2 CORRECT, ACCURATE COPY
- observes the basic rules of writing.
- follows the form suggested by the teacher.

**Comments:**
You touch on a couple of good reasons for supporting the Summer Learning Program, but the assignment calls for three clear reasons. The first paragraph also needs an opinion statement. Your voice is sincere, but it would help to include at least one quotation from an expert source as well as your personal reason for liking this program. The conclusion makes a clear call for action. Check your spelling and punctuation.
Down with Litter

Litter is a big problm in our neighborhoods. Everybody seems to think like litter just happens and that since they personally do not throw their trash on the ground than they are not responsible for dealing with it. But litter effects our whole community and so we should all pull together and make our city a good place to live.

Trash cans can be found on most street corners so why don’t people use them. The other day I saw an old guy just drop an empty coffee cup on the street and he was just three feet from a trash can. I picked up that cup and threw it away but that’s the kind of thing that causes the problem. People just don’t have any respect for their city or their neighbors.

Some people complain that the trash cans in their neighborhoods are always full so the trash just falls on the ground. The trash truck comes every Thursday. I don’t know why some cans never seem to get empty. People should call and complain if the cans are not emptied, the city wants to clean up this problem just as much as we all do.

The trash problem makes our city look bad. I know that friends of mine who live in other places say that our city is dirty. That’s a bad reputation to have. It makes people feel bad to live in a trashy place too. That’s why we should clean up this city.

**Assessment Rubric**

**2 STIMULATING IDEAS**
The persuasive writing...
- states an opinion about an important subject.
- contains specific reasons and details to support the opinion.

**2 LOGICAL ORGANIZATION**
- includes a clear beginning, middle, and ending.
- presents a logical argument.

**3 ENGAGING VOICE**
- speaks in a convincing, positive voice.
- shows that the writer feels strongly about his or her opinion.

**2 ORIGINAL WORD CHOICE**
- explains unfamiliar terms.
- uses clear, persuasive language.

**2 EFFECTIVE SENTENCE STYLE**
- flows smoothly from sentence to sentence.

**2 CORRECT, ACCURATE COPY**
- observes the basic rules of writing.
- follows the form suggested by the teacher.

**COMMENTS:**
Your issue choice and your opinion are clear, but your reasons are not well organized. You don’t explain why people should clean up the city until the last paragraph, when you mention the effects of a bad reputation. You should have at least three middle paragraphs, each with a clear reason that supports your opinion. Your conclusion should mention specific steps people can take. Try to include sources of information other than your own experience, too.
Optional Activities for Multiple Intelligences

Consider implementing one or more of the following activities during the unit. (The intelligences addressed in each activity are listed in italics.)

* **Warm-Up** (page 4)
  Work with a partner as you complete the checklist on page 4. Talk together about the reasons for your opinions.
  *Interpersonal Intelligence*

* **Reading a Sample Persuasive Essay** (pages 5-6)
  After reading, generate a formal outline of the opinion, reasons, and evidence given in the sample essay on pages 5-6. Use the outline as a model as you prepare your own essay later.
  *Visual-Spatial Intelligence*

* **Selecting a Subject** (page 10)
  After completing the sentences, freewrite on your own paper or in your journal for one minute about each issue. Use your responses to identify the topic that interests you most.
  *Intrapersonal Intelligence*

* **Revising** (pages 24-25)
  Circle the words in your essay that give it an appropriate voice—reasonable, informed, and direct. Look for other words that may distract from that voice, such as language that is emotional, disrespectful, too casual, or too difficult. Change those words to improve the voice in your essay.
  *Verbal-Linguistic Intelligence*

* **Editing** (pages 30-31)
  Go through each paragraph and assign each sentence a number that identifies its importance to your argument. Use a scale of 1 to 3—3 being most important, 2 being less important, and 1 being least important. Use the numbers to help identify sentences that could be combined by subordinating an idea.
  *Mathematical-Logical Intelligence*

Additional Persuasive Writing Prompts

For additional writing practice, assign one or more of these persuasive writing prompts.

- Turn your essay into an editorial, and submit it to your school or community newspaper. (Review the guidelines for editorials that appear on the newspaper’s opinion-editorial pages.)
- Design an advertising campaign (and possibly a poster) to support the argument in your persuasive essay. Think of a slogan and ways to communicate your opinion to a large audience.
- Start a letter-writing campaign by turning your essay into a petition. Ask friends, family members, classmates, and neighbors to sign it, and then submit it to local authorities.
- Rewrite your essay as a three-minute speech, and present it to the class.
- Write a persuasive essay that supports the opposite opinion of your essay.
- Write a satirical persuasive essay by overstating an opinion and giving extreme reasons (that no one would agree with) to make your point.
- Choose a partner and agree on a subject. Write opposing essays, pro and con.
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<th>Writers INC ©2001</th>
<th>Write Ahead ©2004</th>
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Checklist: **Persuasive Essays**

This checklist will help you keep track of the assignments in this unit. Check the box next to each unit assignment as you complete it.

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<th>Due Date</th>
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- Persuasive Warm-Up: For or Against? (page 4)
- Reacting to the Reading (page 7)

**PREWRITING: Planning Your Writing**

- Selecting a Subject (page 10)
- Identifying Reasons For and Against (page 11)
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- Starting Your Essay (pages 16-17)
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**Extension Activities**

- Reading Persuasive Essays (page 44)
- Reflecting on Your Writing (page 45)
- Preparing for a Writing Test (page 46)
“You have to believe in your position, or nothing will be driving your work. If you don’t believe in what you are saying, there is no point in your saying it.”

—Anne Lamott, *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on the Writing Life*

**Persuasive Essays**

“People need to ride their bikes instead of driving their cars to do short errands.” “People should not dump their trash on the roadside.” “People ought to pick up after their dogs in the parks.” Suggestions like these are often made at community meetings. City council meetings, neighborhood watch groups, and block parties are all gatherings where neighbors can share ideas about what is good for the community as a whole. Of course, not everyone will agree, so people will try to persuade others to see the value of a particular point of view.

In this unit, you will be asked to write a persuasive essay about an issue that affects your community. Your goal is to persuade others in your community to share your point of view and to take the action you suggest. You can persuade others by stating a clear opinion and then backing it up with strong, logical reasons.
### Persuasive Warm-Up: For or Against?

Look at the list of issues in the first column of the chart below. Identify your opinion about each issue by placing a check mark in the appropriate box.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>I support it.</th>
<th>I don’t support it.</th>
<th>I haven’t thought about it.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establishing weekday curfews for teens</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Limiting the number of students allowed in a store at one time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enforcing laws that require people to keep their pets on leashes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Requiring students to do volunteer service in order to graduate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Protecting historic buildings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Giving students representation in city government</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Now choose one of the six issues. State your opinion about the issue. Finally, list several reasons to back up your opinion.

I support/don’t support (circle one) the issue of ________________________________________________________

because  Adam

  1. ________________________________________________________

  2. ________________________________________________________

  3. ________________________________________________________

  4. ________________________________________________________

  5. ________________________________________________________

  6. ________________________________________________________

**Next Step:** Meet with classmates who wrote their opinions about the same issue. Generate a list of everyone’s reasons and share it with the class.
Reading a Sample Persuasive Essay

In this persuasive essay, the writer explains why local students and other community members should support the funding of branch libraries. The side notes explain the main parts of the essay.

Save Our Branch Libraries

The city just closed the Wyckert Branch Library, and now student Dawna Wilson must spend two dollars in bus fares to reach the main library. The Oakmont Branch Library is next on the chopping block because Mayor Berghoff considers branch libraries “outmoded, inefficient, little used, and expensive.” I disagree. Branch libraries are important because they promote culture and education, provide convenient access to information for residents in all neighborhoods, and save people time and money. For these reasons, we should support funding for our city’s branch libraries.

First of all, branch libraries benefit neighborhoods by bringing people together for cultural events and by encouraging learning. The Oakmont Branch Library presents a folklore lecture series each fall, shows a classic film each month, and hosts five weekly book clubs. In addition, many people learn to read through tutoring programs at their branch libraries. “When new readers first come here and realize that they will be able to read anything they want, their eyes just light up,” says Oakmont librarian Norah Colman. The Oakmont Branch library is not “outmoded” or “inefficient.” It does what no other library can do: function as the heart of the Oakmont community.

Furthermore, people throughout the city use the resources available at branch libraries. These resources include books, reference materials, computers, and even classes. As a result, anyone who doesn’t have a computer can walk into the library and have access to the Internet. People can go to the branch library to read books, magazines, and newspapers they can’t afford to buy, or they

VOCABULARY

folklore  Traditional songs, dances, stories, and art forms of a cultural group
can go to take useful classes, such as "English as a Second Language." Far from being "little used," the Oakmont Branch Library has 173 residents currently enrolled in regular classes, clubs, and activities, and patrons check out an average of 350 materials every day. Without branch libraries, many of the city's residents would not have access to educational materials and helpful services.

Finally, branch libraries save people time and money. When the downtown library opened 100 years ago, our city was smaller. Only 50,000 people lived here, and most of them lived downtown, so the library was in a central location. Today, more than 500,000 people live here, and the city is spread out. Many people who live in the outlying areas must travel 15 miles one way to get to the main library, and even using public transportation costs money and takes time. If the nearly 150 residents who use Oakmont Branch Library every day each have to pay $2 to go to the main library, that's $300 per day—or about $9,000 per month. The Oakmont Branch Library's municipal support amounts to $8,000 a month in taxes. Closing the library will cost residents more than leaving it open.

Clearly, branch libraries enrich our city's neighborhoods. They bring people together to enjoy culture and learning. They offer resources and opportunities that allow people to pursue their goals. They provide free sources of information and entertainment within walking distance of residents' homes. We should support branch libraries by demanding that our city council members fund them properly. Branch libraries bring the assets of the downtown library to people throughout the city.

**VOCABULARY**

**assets** Advantages
Reacting to the Reading

Respond to the sample persuasive essay on pages 5-6 by answering the following questions.

- What issue does the essay address?
  The essay addresses the issue of supporting the funding of branch libraries.

- Who is the intended audience?
  The audience is local students and other community members.

- What is the writer's opinion?
  The writer believes funding branch libraries is important.

- What main reasons support the writer's opinion?
  Reason 1: Branch libraries promote culture and learning.
  Reason 2: Branch libraries make resources available for all the city's people.
  Reason 3: Branch libraries save people time and money.

- Which reason do you think is strongest? Why?
  Responses will vary.

- Were you persuaded by the essay? Why or why not?
  Responses will vary.

Next Step: In small groups, discuss your answers to the last question. List ways the writer used to persuade people to agree with the stated opinion. Refer to this list for ideas when writing your own persuasive essay.
Evaluating: **Understanding the Traits of Effective Persuasive Writing**

The rubric (checklist) below will help you understand the traits found in effective persuasive writing. Use this rubric to help you develop your essay and as a final checklist for your completed writing. You can also use this rubric to evaluate your classmates’ essays. (Your teacher will give you a point scale to use for final evaluations.)

---

**Assessment Rubric**

**__STIMULATING IDEAS__**

_The persuasive writing..._

- states an opinion about an important subject.
- contains specific reasons and details to support the opinion.

**__LOGICAL ORGANIZATION__**

- includes a clear beginning, middle, and ending.
- presents a logical argument.

**__ENGAGING VOICE__**

- speaks in a convincing, positive voice.
- shows that the writer feels strongly about his or her opinion.

**__ORIGINAL WORD CHOICE__**

- explains unfamiliar terms.
- uses clear, persuasive language.

**__EFFECTIVE SENTENCE STYLE__**

- flows smoothly from sentence to sentence.

**__CORRECT, ACCURATE COPY__**

- observes the basic rules of writing.
- follows the form suggested by the teacher.

*Comments:*
Prewriting
Planning Your Writing
Prewriting  Selecting a Subject

The sentence beginnings below will help you identify community-related issues. Complete each sentence with a different issue that you could argue for or against in a persuasive essay. The first one has been done for you.

Responses will vary.

1. There should be a rule in our community that says
   **stray animals should not be put to sleep.**

2. There should be a rule in our community against
   **bullying on playgrounds.**

3. If I could change one thing in my community, it would be
   **the closing of community swimming pools when school starts in the fall.**

4. One thing I value in my community and would hate to lose is
   **the after-school activity center for teens.**

Now use the following checklist to test the issues you have identified above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is this issue important to you?</th>
<th>Does this issue affect the whole community, not just one small group?</th>
<th>Can you effectively argue for or against this issue?</th>
<th>Does a specific group need to be persuaded to support or oppose this issue?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. □ yes □ no</td>
<td>□ yes □ no</td>
<td>□ yes □ no</td>
<td>□ yes □ no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. □ yes □ no</td>
<td>□ yes □ no</td>
<td>□ yes □ no</td>
<td>□ yes □ no</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. □ yes □ no</td>
<td>□ yes □ no</td>
<td>□ yes □ no</td>
<td>□ yes □ no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. □ yes □ no</td>
<td>□ yes □ no</td>
<td>□ yes □ no</td>
<td>□ yes □ no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Next Step:** Place a check mark next to the issues in your list that have “yes” answers to all of the checklist questions.
Identifying Reasons For and Against

For each issue that you checked on page 10, use your own paper and complete a diagram like the sample below (which is based on the sample persuasive essay on pages 5-6). In the center box, write the issue. In the top boxes, write reasons for supporting the issue. In the bottom boxes, write reasons against supporting the issue. Add more boxes as needed. Store your diagram in the back pocket of this booklet.

- provide culture, promote learning
- convenient access to resources
- save people time and money

for saving branch libraries

against

- expensive to build and maintain
- resources more limited than those in the central location
- give people fewer reasons to go downtown

Next Step: Show your completed diagrams to a classmate. Talk about other reasons for or against the issues. Choose the best issue for your essay, and write it here.
Prewriting

Reviewing a Sample Gathering Chart

The sample gathering chart below is based on the persuasive essay “Save Our Branch Libraries” on pages 5-6. A reason for supporting branch libraries and the details backing up that reason are shown in each box. Similarly, in your essay, make sure your reasons are supported by details. Details include facts, examples, statistics, and expert opinions. Supporting details may be based on research, interviews with experts, and personal experiences or observations.

| Reason: Branch libraries are cultural centers that promote learning. |
| Supporting Details: |
| • Libraries host lectures and book clubs. |
| • Libraries are often the places where people learn to read. |
| • Branch libraries give people opportunities to learn new skills. |

| Reason: Branch libraries provide resources for people all over the city. |
| Supporting Details: |
| • Branch libraries provide books, tapes, CD’s, and computers. |
| • People without computers can find them in their neighborhoods. |
| • People can take useful classes. |

| Reason: Branch libraries save people time and money. |
| Supporting Details: |
| • The main library is 15 miles from some neighborhoods. |
| • Using public transportation costs money and takes time. |
| • The libraries must serve more than 500,000 people. |

Opinion Statement

Your opinion statement should make it clear that you support the issue you have chosen. It should also introduce your supporting reasons. Here is the opinion statement from the sample essay (pages 5-6):

Branch libraries are important (the writer’s feelings) because they promote culture and education, provide convenient access to information for residents in all neighborhoods, and save people time and money (introduces the supporting reasons).
**Prewriting | Gathering Details and Stating an Opinion**

Review page 12. Then, in the chart below, list three reasons, beginning with the strongest, for supporting the issue you chose (page 11). List details that support each reason.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason:</th>
<th>Supporting Details:</th>
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<tr>
<th>Reason:</th>
<th>Supporting Details:</th>
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<th>Reason:</th>
<th>Supporting Details:</th>
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**Forming an Opinion Statement**

Consider your feelings about the issue and your reasons for supporting it. Then write an opinion statement for your essay. Remember that this statement should identify your feelings about the issue and introduce the supporting reasons. (Review the sample opinion statement at the bottom of page 12.)
A persuasive essay tries to convince readers to think or act in a certain way. In your essay, you want to convince your readers to support a community-related issue. You should include at least three reasons plus supporting details to back up your opinion. The graphic below shows the three basic parts of a persuasive essay.

**Persuasive Essay Structure**

- **Beginning**
  - The *beginning* gets the reader's attention, identifies the issue, and states your opinion about it. (See page 16.)
- **Middle**
  - The *middle* presents the main reasons and details that support your opinion. (See page 18.) You can start with your strongest reason or lead up to it. You might also include counterarguments.
- **Ending**
  - The *ending* restates your opinion, reviews your reasons, and makes a call to action. (See page 21.)

**Transition Words and Phrases**

Here is a list of words that you can use to link reasons and supporting details in persuasive writing.

- *again*
- *finally*
- *in conclusion*
- *likewise*
- *along with*
- *for instance*
- *in fact*
- *most importantly*
- *also*
- *for this reason*
- *in the same way*
- *next*
- *another*
- *in addition*
- *lastly*
- *similarly*
Writing
Connecting Your Ideas
Writing Starting Your Essay

The first paragraph of your persuasive essay should grab the reader's attention, introduce your issue, and state your opinion about it. There are several effective ways to begin. You may pose a question, open with a quotation, make a surprising statement, or start with an interesting anecdote.

Sample Beginning Paragraph

This sample paragraph begins with a question. (The opinion statement is underlined.)
Also reread the first paragraph of the sample persuasive essay on page 5.

When you walk to school, do you ever think about the sidewalks you are using to get there? Few people ever do, unless the sidewalks are cracked and dangerous to walk on. In many of our neighborhoods, the sidewalks are breaking apart. According to the Public Works Department, about 12 miles of city sidewalks are considered dangerous and need to be repaired. Such repairs, however, are expensive. Because of city budget cuts, the sidewalks get worse and worse. Existing sidewalks need to be repaired, and new sidewalks need to be built so that people can walk the streets safely, get to school and work on time, visit local businesses, and enjoy the city's parks and museums.

Use the space below and on the next page to write a beginning for your persuasive essay. Remember to grab the reader's attention, identify your topic, and state your opinion. Also mention the supporting reasons that will appear in the body of the essay. If you don't like how your first opening turns out, try writing additional versions.

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Next Step: Share your writing with a classmate. After discussing your openings, circle the one you will use in your essay.
The middle paragraphs of your essay should present at least three important reasons that support your opinion (see page 13). Each paragraph should focus on one reason and its supporting details. You might also include counterarguments.

**Sample Middle Paragraph**

Personal safety is the most important reason that city sidewalks should be repaired. According to the local group Save Our Sidewalks (SOS), last year 73 people suffered injuries related to sidewalks. Half of those injuries resulted from accidents caused by sidewalks that had been improperly cleared of snow and ice. The other injuries were caused by uneven, unstable, or missing pavement. One victim, Jennifer O'Neil, was walking her dog when she tripped on a broken section of sidewalk. She was hospitalized with a broken ankle. Mrs. O'Neil said that she knew the sidewalk wasn't stable, but she was afraid to walk her dog in a busy street. "I didn't want to get hit by a bicycle or a car." People should not have to make such choices.

Write your middle paragraphs below and on the following pages. Remember to focus on a different reason in each paragraph. Then add details to support each reason. Refer to page 13 for help. Remember to either start with your most important reason or save it until last.
Writing Ending Your Essay

The ending of your persuasive essay should restate your opinion about the issue and make a call to action. Remember, a call to action tells your readers what you want them to do. In this case, tell them how they can support the issue you are discussing.

Sample Ending Paragraph

The call to action is underlined.

_The sidewalks are just as important to people, businesses, and the quality of life in this city as the roads are. Yet 10 times more funding is available for repairing roads than for repairing sidewalks. As a result, many people must walk in dangerously busy streets in order to get to work or to stores. Poorly maintained sidewalks result in many people being injured every year. That means that people should raise the sidewalk issue at city council meetings, join groups like Save Our Sidewalks, and write editorials to local newspapers. After all, without safe sidewalks, city life can be both difficult and dangerous._

Use the space below to write an ending for your persuasive essay. If you don’t like the first ending, try another version.

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Writing  Forming a Complete First Draft

After you finish pages 16-21, write a complete copy of your first draft. Do your writing on your own paper and store your work in the back pocket of this booklet. Keep the following tips in mind as you complete this copy.

Drafting Tips

1 Write on every other line and on only one side of your paper. This will make revising much easier. (If you use a computer, make sure to double-space.)

2 Keep your writing as neat as possible, but don’t stop to recopy just to make your draft look better. Concentrate on ideas, not neatness.

3 Keep your purpose and audience in mind. Your purpose is to persuade your classmates to share your opinion about an issue and to take the action you suggest.

4 Feel free to add new ideas that come to mind as you write your draft. After all, writing is a process of discovery.

5 Notice any parts you may want to change. You can make these changes when you revise.

6 Remember: A first draft is your first look at a piece of writing. You may rewrite some parts of your draft three or four times before they sound just right.
Revising
Improving
Your Writing
Revising Writing with an Appropriate Voice

In the same way that each person has a unique speaking voice, each writer has a distinctive writing voice. In writing, voice is shaped by the topic, the writer's attitude toward it, and the words the writer chooses to express that attitude. Your writing voice needs to be appropriate for the type of writing you are doing. In a persuasive essay, an appropriate voice is clear, reasonable, and informed. Sometimes writers use an inappropriate voice. For example, they may use slang or emotional language to get readers' attention. See the examples below.

Inappropriate voice:

The city council members have carelessly ignored the fact that there just aren’t enough phones at Quincy Park. Their carelessness could cause some really humongous problems.

Appropriate voice:

City council members need to consider how few telephones there are at Quincy Park. In an emergency situation, this lack of phones could cause serious problems.

Because the first example contains disrespectful language, readers may not be willing to consider the writer's ideas. The voice of the second example is clear and reasonable.

Read each passage below. Decide whether each writer used an appropriate voice for a persuasive essay. Write appropriate or inappropriate on the lines following each passage, and then explain the reason for your answer.

1. Most of the city’s litter problems can be traced to the lack of trash cans in public places. Officials at the Department of Waste Management say that there are 4,000 trash cans placed around the city. That’s only 1 can for every 100 people in the city. It is no surprise, then, that there is an overflow of trash.

   **Appropriate. The writer's language is clear and reasonable.**

2. According to some poet there is nothing more beautiful than a tree. I sure wish our city officials agreed. Those stingy people down at City Hall refuse to spend a few more bucks for planting trees in our city. The only green those guys like is the kind they carry in their wallets.

   **Inappropriate. The language is too casual and disrespectful.**
3. Most people will agree that baseball is a national pastime. Many of those same people say that they enjoy watching a game on a warm summer evening. However, most people don’t realize that building a new stadium will cost taxpayers millions of dollars, and the stadium will not create many jobs. Building a stadium is too great a financial risk for our city.

   Appropriate. The language is reasonable and direct.

4. City officials, who claim to want only the best for everyone, went overboard when they cancelled the Arts for Kids summer program. Without asking for anyone’s opinion, they announced at their fancy lunch meeting last week that the program was too expensive for the city’s budget.

   Inappropriate. The language is sarcastic and disrespectful.

Next Step: Find one or two passages in your own persuasive essay that may need a more appropriate writing voice. Ask a classmate to help you adjust your choice of words. Use the lines below to rewrite the passage (or passages).
Peer Responding

Your teacher may want you and a classmate to react to each other's writing by completing the response sheet below.

Response Sheet

Writer's name: ........................................ Responder's name: ........................................

Title: ........................................................................................................................................

I liked . . . ................................................................................................................................

● the beginning. It stated the issue and your opinion clearly.

● your choice of reasons. They all supported your opinion.

● the details in paragraph _____. The facts came from reliable sources.

● the quotation in paragraph _____.

● the ending because your call to action was clear and convincing.

I would change . . . ....................................................................................................................... 

● the part about _______________. It did not make sense.

● the middle part because the reasons were not presented in a logical order.

● the details in paragraph ____ because they did not support that reason.

● the sentence in paragraph ____ because your voice was not appropriate.

Strong words, phrases, and ideas in the writing: ........................................................................
Use the following checklist or the assessment rubric (page 8) to help you review and revise your first draft. Make as many changes in your draft as needed so that your persuasive essay contains a strong opinion statement, clearly supported reasons, and a logical call to action.

**Revising Checklist**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tr>
<td>Does the beginning paragraph get the reader's interest and state my opinion about a community issue?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does each middle paragraph focus on only one reason and its supporting details?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are all the reasons presented in the best order?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do my supporting details appeal mostly to reason?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the ending restate my opinion and make a call to action?</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Revising in Action**

When you revise, you improve the ideas and organization in your first draft. You can make improvements by adding new ideas, crossing out unnecessary ideas, rewriting unclear ideas, and reordering out-of-place ideas. See the example changes below.

An unclear idea is rewritten.

The neighborhood's signs in shop windows, at all around the McKinley-Wellington neighborhood restaurants, and on street corners read "NO LOITERING."

According to city officials, the signs are aimed at teenagers who hang out after school on the sidewalks and in the streets.

Adults complain that these young people block entrances to make driving hazardous, businesses, and cause loud disturbances. To solve the problem, the city should turn the abandoned textile warehouse into a neighborhood recreation center instead of the proposed mega-gas station. The station is part of a regional chain.

A new idea is added.
Revising Writing a Complete Revised Draft

After you finish pages 24-27, write a complete copy of your revised first draft. Do your writing on your own paper and store your work in the back pocket of this booklet. Keep the following tips in mind as you complete the revised copy.

Revising Tips

1. Write on every other line and on only one side of your paper. This will make editing much easier. (If you use a computer, make sure to double-space.)

2. Keep your writing as neat as possible, but don’t worry if you cross out a few words.

3. Focus on ideas that need to be changed. Add, cut, reorder, and rewrite different parts as needed.

4. Take your time. You can’t make all your changes at once.

5. Pay special attention to peer responses. Your peers may notice ideas that need to be clearer—especially if your peers are not as familiar with the particular issue as you are.

6. Save your marked-up first draft showing the revising changes you have made.

Adding a Title

At some point in the process, you need to write a title for your essay. A title for persuasive writing reads almost like an advertising slogan or a bumper sticker. You are “selling” your opinion. The title should hook your reader and introduce your opinion. Here are three guidelines to follow:

- Use strong, colorful words.
  Turn Textile Warehouse into Teen Center,
  not Teens on the Streets Cause Trouble

- Give the words rhythm.
  Summer School Is Cool,
  not Keep Summer Learning Program

- Be imaginative.
  Say No to the Road to Nowhere,
  not Say No to New Airport Highway
Editing
Checking for Style and Correctness
Combining Sentences by Subordinating Ideas

Combining sentences can improve the flow of your writing. By making two sentences into one, you can eliminate repetition and unnecessary words. Combine two sentences that are unequal in importance by subordinating one of the ideas.

Two sentences:

Three of the city council members thought the museum was a good idea. The council voted to wait another year.

Combined sentence:

Although three of the city council members thought the museum was a good idea, the council voted to wait another year.

The combined sentence uses an adverb clause to show that the first idea is less important. An adverb clause may be formed by adding one of the following words to the beginning of a sentence: although, if, after, because, when, while, and where. (Notice that a comma always follows an adverb clause that introduces a sentence.)

Use an adverb clause to combine each set of sentences below. (Use the word in parentheses.) Remember, you can change the order of words and the order of sentences to show importance. The first one has been done for you.

1. City pools are now closed. Funds are not available. (Use because.)

   City pools are now closed because funds are not available.

2. School starts in September. Children still want to use the pools in September. (Use when.)

   When school starts in September, children still want to use the pools.

3. Neighborhood groups have raised the issue. The city has refused to keep the pools open. (Use although.)

   Although neighborhood groups have raised the issue, the city has refused to keep the pools open.
4. People are concerned. They should call the city council members about keeping pools open. (Use if.)

If people are concerned, they should call the city council members about keeping pools open.

Edit the following passage by using adverb clauses to combine sentences. You may choose subordinating conjunctions from the list below. The first sentence has been done for you.

Answers will vary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>after</th>
<th>although</th>
<th>because</th>
<th>before</th>
<th>so that</th>
<th>though</th>
<th>unless</th>
<th>until</th>
<th>where</th>
<th>when</th>
<th>while</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**When**

1. Thanksgiving comes around each year. Then people tend to think of
2. giving to others—the homeless and those in need. The needs of others
3. exist year around. It seems that holiday times make people think of
4. reaching out with food and friendship. The needs don’t go away after
5. the holiday season. More people should get involved in local outreaches.
6. Often thrift shops and soup kitchens need volunteers. People are afraid
7. that they will feel embarrassed or strange. They should think about
8. how they would feel if they needed a helping hand. People say, “That’s
9. not for me.” They should give it a try. I think they would discover that
10. the joy of giving extends far beyond holidays marked on the calendar.

**Next Step:** Look for sentences in your essay that could be combined and edit them by creating adverb clauses. Afterward, if you like the new combined sentences, use them in your final draft.
Punctuating Direct Quotations

A direct quotation repeats someone's exact words. In a persuasive essay, writers use direct quotations from experts or from people with experience related to the topic. Direct quotations are punctuated in the following ways:

- Place the person's exact words inside quotation marks.
- Set the quotation off from the rest of the sentence with a comma.
- Commas and periods after the quotation are always set inside the quotation marks. Question marks and exclamation points are set inside the quotation marks if they punctuate the quotation. If they punctuate the whole sentence, set them outside the quotation marks.

"The mayor said, "I will do what I can to correct the problem."

"In fact, the number of neighborhood groups has doubled since the year 2000!"

Correct the punctuation of the direct quotations in the sentences below. If the punctuation is correct, write "C" (for correct) on the line. The first one has been done for you.

___ 1. Science teacher Kenny Hernandez asked, "How can I get students thinking about the way mechanical objects work?"

___ 2. Bicycle shop owner Linda Grau said "By providing bicycle repair workshops to young people, we can help them understand mechanical things."

___ 3. Mike Borden commented that his children, Henry and Beth, "Have turned into bike mechanics almost overnight."

___ 4. Just last week they asked, "Does your bike need fixing, Dad?"

___ 5. Beth explained, "Before I took Ms. Grau's workshop, I wasn't interested in mechanical stuff. Now I think it's cool."

Next Step: Review your answers with a classmate. Then check your own essay to make sure any direct quotations are punctuated correctly.
Your main job when editing is to check your revised writing for word choice, style, and sentence errors. See the examples below.

**First:** The McKinley-Wellington neighborhood does not need another retail establishment. The area has a balance of different stores, including a gas station at Mickey’s Market. "A mega-gas station would probably take customers away from our locally owned businesses," said Tim Leeds. Leeds is president of the McKinley-Wellington Neighborhood Association.

**Editing and Proofreading Symbols**

Use the following marks to show where and how your writing needs to be changed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>=</td>
<td>Capitalize a letter.</td>
<td>Lorraine Hansberry wrote <em>A Raisin in the sun</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/</td>
<td>Lowercase a letter.</td>
<td>Her play tells the story of the Younger Family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>Insert a period.</td>
<td>This play focuses on racial attitudes. It also . . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or sp.</td>
<td>Correct spelling.</td>
<td>Lena Younger, the family leader, is very religious.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y</td>
<td>Delete or replace.</td>
<td>Lena she makes a down payment on a nice house.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>Insert a comma.</td>
<td>Her son, Walter Lee, Jr., wants to buy a business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ v v v</td>
<td>Insert an apostrophe or quotation marks.</td>
<td>Walter Lee’s wife hopes for a larger apartment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>? i</td>
<td>Insert a question mark or an exclamation point.</td>
<td>What would Beneatha do with the money? i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>Start a new paragraph.</td>
<td>The play takes a surprising turn when . . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~~~~</td>
<td>Switch words or letters.</td>
<td>Walter gets the possible worst news.</td>
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</table>
Proofreading Checking for Correctness

When you proofread, you check the final copy of your writing for errors in punctuation, capitalization, grammar, usage, and spelling. See the examples below.

Another reason to turn the abandoned warehouse into a recreation center is to preserve one of the city’s historic buildings. In the late 1800s, our city was a leading manufacturer of textiles. The textile industry employed than more than half of the workforce of that era. Renovating such a historic building would inspire community spirit and pride. It could become a symbol of the city’s heritage.

Making Editing and Proofreading Changes

Edit and proofread the following persuasive essay to improve its style and correctness. (Use the editing and proofreading symbols listed on page 33.) The first correction has been done for you. Check off the errors as you correct them.

☐ spelling errors (4)  ☐ capitalization errors (2)  ☐ sentence fragment (1)
☐ usage errors (2)  ☐ errors in punctuating quotations (4)
☐ sets of short sentences to combine using adverb clauses (2)

Some answers may vary.

Getting Burned on the Job

1. When I got a job flipping burgers, I was excited, but I never expected to
   end up in the emergency room. My boss had told me how long to cook the fries
   but not how hot the fry handle would get. I was back on the job. I noticed that
   the other workers used the oven mitt. However, some of them had been
   burned. To. That’s when I realized the need for better job safety instruction.
Job safety is a common problem. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health says that 200,000 teenagers are hurt on the job every year, and a third end up in the emergency room. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) says about 180 workers under 20 years old are killed every year. Hazards at work come in many forms, including injuries that result from using hot materials, unsafe equipment, powerful machines, and vehicles. But on-the-job fatalities are most often due to violence associated with cash register robberies. According to the BLS, "Those aged 18 to 19 have the largest number of job-related fatalities in the retail industry."

What can young workers do to make their work environment safer? First of all, they should know their rights. Diane Bush of the University of California at Berkeley's Labor Occupational Health Program says, "Young workers should enter the workforce knowing they'll get health and safety training, and they should ask for it if they don't."

Second, if employers won't make the workplace safe, young workers can confidentially call the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to report problems. Finally, young workers should contact local, state, and national officials to tell them a safe workplace is important to them. Because of such efforts, California declared "Safe Jobs for Youth Month" and the whole nation should do the same.

Young people get their first jobs. They may get their first taste of freedom, money, and success. But the last thing they need is to get hurt. Workers have to demand safe workplaces, even if it means calling OSHA. If all of us work to make our jobs safe, we can change the world.

Next Step: Carefully read and mark your revised essay for editing and proofreading changes before making your final copy.
Editing and Proofreading: **Using a Checklist**

Use the checklist that follows to check your revised writing for style and correctness. Remember that this step is important only after you have revised the ideas in your first draft.

*It's very easy to miss errors when you edit and proofread; so make sure to ask a teacher, a classmate, or a family member for help.*

**Sentence Structure**
- Did I write clear and complete sentences?
- Did I combine some sentences by subordinating ideas? (pages 30-31)

**Punctuation**
- Did I end each sentence with the correct punctuation mark?
- Did I place commas after introductory adverb clauses? (pages 30-31)
- Did I punctuate direct quotations correctly? (page 32)

**Capitalization**
- Did I start my sentences with capital letters?
- Did I capitalize the first word of direct quotations that were full sentences? (page 32)

**Grammar**
- Did I use subjects and verbs that agree in number? *(Musicians perform; Lucia dances.)*
- Did I use the correct form of verbs (break, broke, broken)?

**Usage**
- Did I use the correct word (there, their, or they're)?
- Did I use specific nouns and vivid verbs?

**Spelling**
- Did I check for spelling errors?
- Did I use a dictionary or the spell checker on my computer?
Editing | Writing the Final Copy

After you complete pages 30-36, write a neat final copy of your persuasive essay on pages 38-40. Then proofread your final copy for errors. Keep the following tips in mind as you complete this copy.

Tips for Handwritten Final Copies

- Use your best penmanship.
- Write in blue or black ink.
- Write your name, your teacher’s name, the class, and the date in the upper left-hand corner of page 1.
- Skip a line, and center the title on the next line.
- Skip a line, and start your writing.
- Indent the first line of each new paragraph.
- Write your last name and the page number in the upper right-hand corner of every page after page 1.
- Leave a one-inch margin around each page.

Tips for Computer-Generated Copies

- Use an easy-to-read font.
- Use a 10- or 12-point type size.
- Double-space throughout your writing.
- Maintain a one-inch margin around each page.

Persuasive Essays 37
Publishing
Sharing the Final Copy

Prewriting
Writing
Revising
Editing
Publishing
Publishing Understanding the Publishing Process

Sending Your Writing Out

What types of writing can I submit to publishers?

Newspapers are interested in essays, editorials, and articles. Some magazines publish stories, essays, and poetry; others publish essays and articles only.

Where should I send my writing?

First consider local newspapers, magazines, and other community publications. For national publications, turn to the Writer's Market (Cincinnati: Writer's Digest Books) for ideas. Your school or local library will have a copy of this book.

How should I send my writing?

Writer's Market will explain that it is wise to write the publishers to request specific guidelines for submitting writing for their publications. Often, you will be asked to include a letter naming the title and the form of your writing (story, essay, article, and so on), a neat copy of your writing, and a self-addressed stamped envelope large enough for returning your writing after it has been read.

What should I expect?

Expect to wait awhile for a reply. Also realize that your writing may not be accepted for publication. In most cases, publishers choose only a few pieces of writing to publish. You may get a rejection letter. Though that sounds disappointing, even a rejection letter can prove helpful because publishers often explain why they did not select your writing for publication.

Submitting Your Writing On-Line

Where do I start my search for on-line publishing?

Start locally. See if your school has its own Web site for student writing. Also ask your teachers if they know of other Web sites that accept student work.

How do I search for these sites?

Use a search engine to find places to publish. Begin your search by entering a keyword phrase such as "submitting writing" or "student writing." Then check out sites from the list of results.

Does Write Source have a Web site?

Yes. You can visit our Web site at <thewritesource.com>. We suggest places where students can publish on the Net and invite students to submit for publication on our site as well.
Extension Activities
Extension Activity: Reading Persuasive Essays

Your teacher may provide you with an essay, or you may be asked to find one in a local newspaper (editorial or opinion page) or on the Internet. In either case, read the essay and answer the questions below.

Response Questions

- What is the writer’s opinion?

- What reasons does the writer give in support of his or her opinion?

- What action does the writer call for at the end of the essay?

- Has the writer convinced you to accept his or her opinion? Explain.

Next Step: Share the persuasive writing with a classmate; discuss your responses to the questions.
Extension Activity: Reflecting on Your Writing

Set your essay aside for a day or two. Read it to yourself, and, if possible, read it to someone else. Afterward, reflect on your writing by completing each open-ended sentence below.

- The thing I like best about my persuasive essay is . . .

- The part that I would like to change is . . .

- As a writer, I still need to work on . . .

- While completing my essay, the main thing I learned about persuasive writing is . . .
Extension Activity: Preparing for a Writing Test

When you take a writing test, you sometimes feel rushed. That means you need to have your thoughts well organized and your ideas for writing clearly in your mind. Answering the questions below will help you prepare for any persuasive writing you find on a test.

1. What is the purpose of persuasive writing? (See page 3.)
   
   The purpose of persuasive writing is to persuade others to share your point of view and to take the action you suggest.

2. In a test situation, you can't do research or conduct interviews with experts. What other sources of details can you draw on? (See pages 12-13.)
   
   I can draw on personal experiences and observations. I can include any facts or statements that I recall.

3. What three things should you always do in the opening paragraph of a persuasive essay? (See page 16.)
   
   The opening paragraph should grab the reader's attention, introduce the issue or topic, and state an opinion about it.

4. What is the best order in which to present the reasons in your paragraphs? (See page 18.)
   
   Present the strongest reason first or save it for last, building toward it.

5. What two things should you do in the concluding paragraph of a persuasive essay? (See page 21.)
   
   The ending should restate your opinion about the issue and make a call to action.