Inside Writing PERSUASIVE ESSAYS

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

WRITE SOURCE®
GREAT SOURCE EDUCATION GROUP
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Consulting Educators

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Planning Notes: 
Persuasive Essays

2TE  Unit Overview
3TE  Weekly Planning Chart
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, this 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 (editorial) on a school-related topic that they have strong feelings about. During the unit, students will learn how to write a strong opinion statement and how to gather and organize supporting reasons and details. The unit includes a sample editorial in which the writer expresses an opinion on an important topic for the young people of her school district. The side notes for the sample 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 an issue and convince others to see the value in their point of view.
- All students have strong feelings about school life, from new administrative policies to the food in the cafeteria, from study halls to cliques.
- Students can learn to shape effective persuasive essays, with clearly developed beginnings, middles, and endings.
- Persuasive writing is included on most 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.
- A persuasive essay must go through a series of steps—planning, writing, revising, and editing and proofreading—before it is ready to be published.
- Assessment is an important part of the writing process.

Strategies and Skills That Students Will Practice

- Listing to select a subject
- Using an “argument” planning web
- Writing an effective opinion statement
- Writing the beginning, middle, and ending parts of an editorial
- Organizing support in persuasive writing
- Using concise, clear language
- 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 reasons and convincing details.
- revise and edit their writing, striving for completeness, 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 persuasive writing. (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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>WEEK ONE</th>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1   | Understanding the Unit  
Reviewing the Unit Basics | inside front cover, 1-3 | understanding the assignment and persuasive writing |
|     | Completing a Warm-Up Activity | 4 | writing a convincing letter |
| 2   | Working with a Sample Essay  
Reading and Reacting to a Sample Editorial | 5-8 | analyzing and assessing an editorial |
| 3   | Prewriting  
Selecting a Subject | 10 | listing to select a subject |
|     | Gathering Details | 11 | freewriting for information |
|     | Developing Reasons | 12-13 | thinking through an argument |
|     | Learning How Persuasive Essays Work | 14 | understanding essay structure |
| 4   | Writing  
Starting Your Essay | 16-17 | developing an effective beginning |
|     | Developing the Middle Part | 18-19 | sharing the supporting details |
| 5   | Writing  
Ending Your Essay | 20-21 | forming a closing and making a call to action |
|     | Forming a Complete First Draft | 22 | completing the first draft |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>WEEK TWO</th>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1   | Revising  
Skills Activity: Avoiding False Arguments | 24-25 | eliminating faulty reasoning |
|     | Peer Responding | 26 | using a peer-response sheet |
|     | Optional: Sharing Assessed Models | 10-13 | evaluating student writing |
| 2   | Revising  
Using a Checklist | 27 | revising the first draft |
|     | Writing a Complete Revised Draft | 28 | completing the revised writing |
| 3   | Editing and Proofreading  
Skills Activity: Editing for Style | 30-31 | checking word choice |
|     | Skills Activity: Editing for Correctness | 32-33 | writing complete sentences |
| 4   | Editing and Proofreading  
Reviewing Editing in Action | 34 | learning how to edit |
|     | Skills Activity: Checking for Correctness | 35-36 | checking for style and correctness |
|     | Using a Checklist | 37 | editing and proofreading |
|     | Writing the Final Copy | 38-40 | completing the essay |
| 5   | Publishing  
Sharing Final Copies | 8 | using a rubric to assess writing |
|     | Understanding the Publishing Process | 42 | discussing publishing ideas |
Daily Lesson Plans: Week One

DAY 1

Understanding the Unit

Reviewing the Unit Basics

• Discuss “About the Unit” (inside front cover). Note that the intended audience is the students’ classmates. Students will be expected to share their finished writing in class.

• Review the table of contents and “Checklist: Persuasive Essays” (pages 1-2). Students can use the checklist to keep track of their assignments. (Consider establishing due dates for each assignment.)

• Write the word “opinion” on the board, and ask students to explain what the word means to them. Write some of their definitions on the board or on an overhead for discussion. (We define an opinion as “the expression of a feeling or belief about something.”) The second and fourth examples state opinions.
  ■ Our baseball team had its first practice.
  ■ Our baseball team has the best pitching in the league.
  ■ I read during study-hall periods.
  ■ Study halls are a waste of time.

• Then read page 3 out loud and discuss the quotation with students. During your discussion, connect the quotation to persuasive writing: To be persuasive, an individual must know both sides of an issue because “understanding is a two-way street.”

Completing a Persuasive Warm-Up

• Implement “How convincing are you?” (page 4). In this activity, students are asked to write a convincing letter to a parent or guardian, an employer, or a teacher. They could convince a parent why they should have a privilege, persuade an employer to give them a raise, or prove to a teacher an assignment is unnecessary. Then have students complete the “Next Step.”

  FSL TIP

Review the letter format and also suggest several topics; model one or two orally before asking students to do the activity.

DAY 2

Working with Persuasive Writing

Reading a Sample Letter to the Editor

Optional: Implement “Prereading Activity” (page 9TE) to help students put the model in perspective.

• Have students read the sample editorial (pages 5-6), or read it out loud to the class. Ask students to pay special attention to the side notes. These notes identify the main parts of persuasive writing. Remind students that they will need to include these parts in their own editorials.
Reacting to the Reading

- Have students complete “Reacting to the Reading” (page 7) on their own, in small groups, or as a class. The questions on this page address the main elements in the essay—the opinion statement, the supporting ideas, and the call to action. Discuss the students’ responses as a class.

Have students read the questions before reading the editorial. This will give a focus to their reading. This activity may be more effective if done with a partner.

Optional: Using “Important Stylistic Features” (page 9TE) as a guide, discuss two stylistic features—counterargument and envelope structure—in the sample.

- As a class, assess the sample using the rubric on page 8. To get started, analyze the essay for ideas by determining if the writing states an opinion and contains analysis of one or two reasons for the opinion. Inform students that the rubric will be used to assess their own editorials.

Optional: Implement “Reading Editorials” (page 44). Provide magazines, newspapers, or Internet articles for students to review. Students can work on this activity throughout the unit whenever they have free time. (Establish a due date.)

DAY 3

Prewriting

Selecting a Subject

- “Selecting a Subject” (page 10) is an activity in which students brainstorm for a topic that they have strong opinions about. You may want students to work on their own, in a small group, or as a class. (See page 15TE for additional ideas.)

Gathering Details

- Implement “Gathering Details Through Freewriting” (page 11). Have students write down everything that comes to mind about their topics. Students are to write as freely and rapidly as they can.

Developing Reasons

- Implement “Prewriting: Thinking Through an Argument” (page 13). Remind students to refer to their freewriting for ideas.

- Review the sample planning web (page 12) before asking students to complete their own.

Learning About the Editorial

- Discuss “Learning About the Editorial” (page 14). Make sure students understand that the supporting points in an editorial are often organized according to their importance. Usually, the most important point is given first or last.
DAY 4

Writing
Writing the Beginning
- Implement "Starting Your Editorial" (pages 16-17). Remind students that an opening paragraph should do two things: get the reader's attention and clearly state an opinion. Note: If time permits, ask for volunteers to share their paragraphs with the class.

Developing the Middle Part
- Implement "Developing the Middle Part" (pages 18-19). Before students begin their work, discuss the sample on page 18. Make sure students understand objective and subjective arguments. Point out that this paragraph includes six sentences (a topic sentence and five supporting sentences). Students should write two or more middle paragraphs, each including at least four or five sentences.

DAY 5

Writing
Ending Your Essay
- Implement "Writing a Strong Ending" (pages 20-21). Before students begin their work, discuss the sample at the top of the page. Orally model one or two examples of a call to action.

Forming a Complete First Draft
- Complete copies of first drafts should be due for the next class period. Review the tips on page 22 before students write this copy.

Daily Lesson Plans: Week Two

DAY 1

Revising
Skills Activity
- Implement "Avoiding False Arguments" (page 24) as an all-class activity. Remind students that there are several types of false arguments. Have students exchange papers with a classmate and check each other's thinking.

  ESL Tip

Collect examples of false or questionable arguments from ads and commercials for a bulletin board display. Use these for more practice making logical statements.

- Have students review their essays for faulty reasoning by completing "Balancing Appeals to Reason and to Emotion" (page 25).

  Note: In persuasive writing, students should generally lead up to their most convincing reason. Sometimes, however, it can be effective to lead off with the strongest reason.
Peer Responding
- Have pairs of students react to each other's writing using "Peer Responding" (page 26) as a guide.
  Optional: Share the "excellent" and "fair" assessed editorials (pages 10TE-13TE) to help students measure the effectiveness of their own writing, and to determine how much revising they may have to do. (Make copies of the editorials or display them on an overhead.)

DAY 2

Revising
Using a Checklist to Revise
- Make sure the students revise their first drafts using "Revising: Using a Checklist" (top, page 27). Emphasize that revising is the process of improving the ideas, organization, and voice in writing. (Checking for spelling, punctuation, and grammar should wait.)
- Review "Revising in Action" (page 27) before students begin their work. Inform students that revising may be the most important step in the writing process.
  Tip: Ask students to make a specific number of changes. For example, ask them to cross out an unnecessary idea, add one new supporting point to make a reason clearer, and so on.

Writing a Complete Revised Draft
- Have students write a complete revised draft. Review "Revising Tips" and "Adding a Title" (page 28) with students before they write their revised drafts.

ESL TIP
Provide a chart or handout with many titles that hook readers and introduce the subject. These published titles will help students develop a feel for what makes a good title.

DAY 3

Editing and Proofreading
Skills Activity: Editing for Style
- Implement "Checking Your Word Choice" (pages 30-31).

Skills Activity: Editing for Correctness
- Implement "Writing Complete Sentences" (pages 32-33) to help students present clear, complete sentences.

Inside Writing Skills activities to consider:
Nouns (pages 93-98)
Verbs (pages 105-109)
Verb Tenses (pages 110-111)
Two-Word Verbs (page 114)
DAY 4

Editing and Proofreading

Reviewing Editing in Action
• Discuss the sample edited paragraph at the top of page 34.

Skills Activity: Checking for Correctness
• Discuss the sample proofread paragraph at the top of page 35; then implement
“Making Editing and Proofreading Changes” (pages 35-36). 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 37).
Students may work in pairs to edit their essays.

Writing the Final Copy
• Review the writing tips on page 38. Then provide time for students to write and
proofread their final copies (pages 39-40). Assign a due date for final copies.

DAY 5

Publishing
Sharing Final Copies
• Arrange students into small groups and have them share their final drafts. Provide
copies of the rubric (page 8) for students to use to evaluate their classmates’ editorials.
Each student responder should identify him- or herself (Responder’s name:) and the
name of the writer (Writer’s name:) at the top of the rubric. Have students evaluate
each editorial 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
10-13, 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 Editorial

In the sample editorial (pages 5-6), the writer expresses an opinion on an important subject for the young people of her school community. She provides specific reasons to support her opinion that the Upland School District should build soccer fields. Further details support each of her reasons. The closing paragraph makes a specific call to action and recommends an affordable solution.

Prereading Activity

Discuss with students the topic of improvement, especially in regard to school issues—more basketball courts, computer labs, track fields, technology classes, and so on. Invite students' opinions, guiding the discussion to include varying points of view on each issue. This discussion will put students in the proper mind-set to appreciate the sample essay.

Vocabulary

headwork Thinking
spectators Those who look on or watch
motto A short statement about an ideal

Important Stylistic Features

COUNTERARGUMENT: In supporting an opinion, it is necessary to offer clearly explained reasons. However, as students research and think through the arguments in favor of their positions, they need to ask this question: What objections to my position could be raised? In the editorial on pages 5-6, the author anticipates an objection involving the cost of soccer fields. Students need to plan how to handle such objections in their writing. The author of the sample essay shares several ways to keep down the cost of building soccer fields.

It might seem that dealing with objections, or making concessions, would weaken an argument. However, if concessions are based on solid thinking, they actually strengthen an argument by taking away the reader's doubts or questions.

ENVELOPE STRUCTURE: The author begins and ends the editorial by convincing people to appreciate the sport of soccer. She states the need for individuals in the Upland School District to create quality soccer fields to benefit the area's youth. In the opening paragraph, this information gains the reader's attention before the specific reasons and supporting details are provided. In the closing paragraph, a reference to improving the quality of life for students by establishing soccer fields is restated. Editorials organized in this manner (envelope structure), keep the reader's attention. Tell students that they may choose to structure their editorials in much the same way.
Assessed Writing Samples

Pages 10TE-14TE include three sample editorials assessed using 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.) A 5-point scale is used to evaluate these samples, but the rubric will work with any point scale. (These samples may also guide your own evaluation of students’ final work.)

Persuasive Writing Assessment

Lack of Respect a Growing Problem

Have you ever talked back to a teacher or other school official only to find yourself in the office with a referral and day of ISS? If you have, you’re not alone. These days Northern has more students in ISS for disrespecting authority and fellow students than ever before. Clearly, we need to find ways for teachers, administrators, and students to respect one another. Principal George Miller commented, “Disrespect has been a major issue in schools, and I definitely see it as a problem.” Disrespect can come in many forms. It can be as simple as talking back, refusing to do homework, not throwing away your trash at lunch, being disruptive, or simply catching an attitude with a teacher, administrator, or other staff member. According to Miller, “It’s not only what you say, but how you say it. Some students seem to think that they can say and do what they want; it’s almost like a mind-set.”

We need to change that mind-set. We must find ways to keep teachers from becoming the target of student disrespect, which interferes with teaching and learning. “Teachers who try to be friends with students sometimes get walked all over,” said senior Michelle Donnelly. Junior Phil Reinhardt observed, “The teachers that are too nice end up having no respect in their classroom.” Of course, there are always some students who don’t respect any teachers, friendly or not, and refuse to do homework, sit through a single class period, or listen to a word they say. Senior Jamie Schartner said, “I lose respect for teachers when they have the policy of ‘do as I say, not as I do.’” Sometimes a teacher has a teaching style that causes a lack of respect. For example, a quiet and independent student won’t necessarily enjoy it when a teacher grades for classroom participation and assigns a lot of group work. This kind of clash could be avoided by evaluating and adjusting the teaching approach.

It’s not just teachers, but administrators as well. Administrators must model respect in the tactics they use to deal with students sent down to the office with referrals for talking back, being tardy (another form of disrespect), and a number of other referral-worthy actions. Many times, administrators have to step in when there’s a problem that the teacher can’t handle, making them appear to be the bad guys. This means that most of the communication between the
administrators and students is in negative situations, causing a bad relationship and, therefore, a lack of respect. We need more ways for administrators to interact with students in positive situations.

Students often don’t respect other students either. They need to learn to treat each other as they would want to be treated. Instead of starting verbal disagreements, which may eventually lead to physical fights during and after school, students need to understand viewpoints and lifestyles that are different from their own. Junior Emily Gigger pointed out, “Students are praised by fellow classmates when they act out and make fun of teachers and other students.” This approval from their peers only encourages them to continue with their actions. Students should develop a sense of self-confidence and come to rely on their own sense of right and wrong in these instances. Often, students don’t respect those in lower grade levels, especially the freshmen, simply because they’re younger. On other occasions, it’s a “he said, she said” dispute and best friends are fighting because of something another person said. “I think that students should respect their classmates, no matter what their differences,” commented Schartner.

There have to be some solutions to help students gain respect for society in general, which includes administrators, teachers, and fellow students. Obviously, more positive communication and understanding is needed between students and authority figures. So what can be done? For starters, each side has to try harder to see things from the other’s point of view. In addition, everyone needs to think about what they can do personally to help improve the situation—and then do it. As they often say, “A journey of a thousand miles begins with one step.” We need to take that first step.

**Assessment Rubric**

4. Stimulating Ideas
   - The persuasive writing . . .
     - focuses on an opinion about a timely subject.
     - contains specific reasons and details to support the opinion.

4. Logical Organization
   - includes a clear beginning, convincing middle, and strong ending.
   - presents reasonable, logical arguments.

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

5. Original Word Choice
   - uses clear, persuasive language.
   - explains unfamiliar terms.

5. Effective Sentence Style
   - flows smoothly from sentence to sentence.
   - uses a variety of sentence lengths and beginnings.

5. Correct, Accurate Copy
   - observes the basic rules of writing.
   - follows the form suggested by the teacher.

**Comments:**

You address three main areas within the issue of “respect in schools.” Your quotations by administrators and students are effective. Perhaps you could have added a teacher’s viewpoint.

Finally, your conclusion suggests the size of the problem and proposes a call to action that begins with each individual.
Dear Editor,

I would like to take a few minutes to talk to you about the problem of clothing choice at school. In my high school, a guy was just suspended for the "crime" of wearing unusual clothes and doing his hair green. I don't think any kids should be punished for their choice in clothes.

What a kid wears is a personal thing, a way to show their individuality. Like being unique is suppose to be so special, but then we get in trouble when we try to show it. In the olden days, when people started wearing long hair, beads and sandals, they didn't get hassled for it. Now, we wear wide-leg jeans that are too big and different colored hair, we get bad looks from people but we can sometimes get punished too. It doesn't make no sense.

Fashion is a very basic right in a teen's life. We think alot about what we look like and what others think about us. If you think about it, school is one big fashion show. People look at what you wear and are always looking for trendsetters. It seems like the teachers and principal don't get how teens are about their clothes. If we are not aloud to wear what we want, we might get made fun of, and you just KNOW what happens to kids when that happens. Kids can really suffer from it.

It's discrimination when certain kinds of clothes aren't aloud. People think that just because you wear all black and have spiked hair, you're a troublemaker or something. They don't understand that it's just fashion, and all kids who dress in black and wear chains don't think the same way. Clothes don't make you into something you're not. When you don't trust others because of the way they dress, you've gone too far. And our school has gone too far.
If we have to fit into some kind of a mold for what is acceptable for us to wear, we don’t have no more freedom of expression or freedom of choice. Everyone has a right to dress, think, feel and act however they want to, as long as they don’t forget that others have that right to. So stop blaming the clothes.

Sincerely,
Frank H.
Grading Students on Effort

Dear Editor,

I just want to say a few things about the talk that's been going on around this school about changing the ways were graded.

School would not be any easier if grades were based on effort instead of by how many a student got wrong or right. Sure it sounds like a good idea at first, but it isn't really a good idea.

If grades were based only on your effort, students would not have to get the answers right. It would make the work a whole lot easier, but how would a student ever learn how to do it? Doing your work would have no point. They will need to know how to do things the right way if a person does have these skills, they probably won't hold a job very long. Students have to learn that their is a right way and a wrong way. If they can work which ever way they want, they will not be doing it right and that they will not learn how to be successful.

This way of grading would be difficult for both the students and teachers. There is no real definite way of measuring how much effort a student has put in. The teachers would have to get used to a hole new method and they would have to figure out some way to grade the students based on effort. It would also not be fair to the students. Plus one teacher would have a hard time watching everyone in the class work all at once.

So you can see that if this did happen, both the students and the teachers would have a much harder time. It would not help anyone who planned to get a job. Because it does not teach the students how to do things the right way. Next time you think that this would be a better way of grading, think again.

Thanks,
Sean T.

Assessment Rubric

2 STIMULATING IDEAS
The persuasive writing...
- focuses on an opinion about a timely subject.
- contains specific reasons and details to support the opinion.

2 LOGICAL ORGANIZATION
- includes a clear beginning, convincing middle, and strong ending.
- presents reasonable, logical arguments.

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

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

2 EFFECTIVE SENTENCE STYLE
- flows smoothly from sentence to sentence.
- uses a variety of sentence lengths and beginnings.

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

1 Incomplete 2 Poor 3 Fair 4 Good

COMMENTS:

Even though you make some good points, your letter is not very persuasive. To develop an effective argument, you need to identify strong supporting points and then develop each one of these points thoroughly (at least one paragraph per point).

You never seem to crack the surface and get down to specifics. Have a trusted editor help you check for errors.
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)
  Write your own public service announcement using persuasive and convincing words encouraging listeners to believe your opinion.
  *Verbal-Linguistic Intelligence*

* **Prewriting** (pages 10-11)
  Pretend you have the opportunity to be the school-board president for a day. Choose a topic and prepare a speech convincing the community of your viewpoint. Explain why this issue and your opinion on it are important.
  *Verbal-Linguistic Intelligence*

* **Reacting to the Reading** (page 7)
  Find one study (or article) on the Internet that does or does not support your opinion on a topic. In a paragraph, compare your reasons to those used in the article.
  *Logical-Mathematical Intelligence*

* **Prewriting** (page 10)
  Discuss with a partner why the topic you chose means so much to you.
  *Interpersonal Intelligence*

* **Prewriting** (page 13)
  Create a storyboard (small illustrations and captions) or a collage that depicts the main points of your persuasive essay. Share your creation with the class.
  *Spatial Intelligence*

* **Writing** (page 22)
  On your own or in a small group, write lyrics to an appropriate tune to reflect your thoughts and feelings about your topic.
  *Musical Intelligence*

* **Revising** (page 25)
  Enhance your editorial by drawing and including a picture or cartoon that depicts your feelings about the issue you chose. (You may also scan in a picture on the computer.)
  *Intrapersonal Intelligence*

* **Publishing** (page 42)
  Design a Web site that deals with your issue.
  *Spatial Intelligence*

Additional Persuasive Writing Prompts

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

- A new cell tower is being considered for your neighborhood. Write a letter to the city that is for or against this plan.
- It's your job to plan your next family reunion. In a letter to your relatives, try to convince them to plan something a bit different next year.
- In an essay, persuade the reader to agree with your opinion about the advantages or disadvantages of having a part-time job.
- Your school board is considering eliminating music from the curriculum. Write a letter to agree or disagree with this decision.
### Correlations to Write Source Handbooks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inside Writing</th>
<th>Writers INC ©2001</th>
<th>Write Ahead ©2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PERSUASIVE ESSAYS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Introduction</td>
<td>98, 115, 185</td>
<td>101, 115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Persuasive Warm-Up</td>
<td>42-45</td>
<td>41-45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Reading and Reacting</td>
<td>121, 187, 189, 191, 193-194, 196-197</td>
<td>101, 117, 179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Understanding Traits</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>19-23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PREWRITING: Planning Your Writing**

| 10 Selecting a Subject | 43-45, 116, 186 | 41-45, 118 |
| 11 Gathering Details | 46-50, 116, 186, 188, 190, 192, 195 | 49-55, 110, 118, 180 |
| 13 Thinking Through an Argument | 118-119, 445-446 | 121-122, 283-286 |
| 14 Learning How Persuasive Essays Work | 106, 120 | 60, 119 |

**WRITING: Connecting Your Ideas**

| 16 Starting Your Essay | 51, 55, 65, 117, 187, 189, 191, 193, 196 | 56, 61, 97, 118 |
| 18 Developing the Middle Part | 52, 56-57 | 62-63, 119, 179 |
| 20 Ending Your Essay | 58, 122, 187, 189, 191, 194, 197 | 64, 117, 119, 179 |
| 22 Forming a Complete First Draft | 12-13, 54-58 | 12-13, 59-64, 105, 121 |

**REVISING: Improving Your Writing**

| 24 Avoiding False Arguments | 118, 445-446 | 121, 285-286 |
| 25 Balancing Appeals to Reason and Emotion | 444-446 | 284-286 |
| 26 Peer Responding | 69-74 | 73-75 |
| 27 Using a Checklist | 26, 68, 123 | 24, 72, 123 |
| 28 Writing the Revised Draft | 59-67, 117 | 65-71, 119 |

**EDITING: Checking for Style and Correctness**

| 30 Checking Your Word Choice | 24, 78, 130-131 | 20, 22, 79, 132-133 |
| 32 Writing Complete Sentences | 81-94 | 83-94 |
| 34 Reviewing Editing in Action | 16-17, 75-77 | 16-17, 77-80 |
| 35 Proofreading in Action | 18-19, 75-78 | 17, 80 |
| 37 Using a Checklist | 79, 123, 198 | 81, 125 |
| 38 Writing the Final Copy | 20, 30-32, 117 | 18, 26-27, 116-117 |

**PUBLISHING: Sharing the Final Copy**

| 42 Understanding Publishing | 30-32, 33-39 | 35-39 |

**Extension Activities**

| 44 Reading Editorials | 189, 325-326 | 179-180, 256 |
| 45 Reflecting on Your Writing | 5-6, 21-26, 35 | 10, 19-24, 34 |
Inside Writing PERSUASIVE ESSAYS

Getting Started: Learning About Persuasive Writing
3 Introduction: Persuasive Essays
4 Persuasive Warm-Up
5 Reading and Reacting to a Sample Editorial
8 Evaluating: Understanding the Traits of Effective Persuasive Writing

PREWRITING: Planning Your Writing
10 Selecting a Subject
11 Gathering Details Through Freewriting
12 Using a Planning Web
13 Thinking Through an Argument
14 Learning About the Editorial

WRITING: Connecting Your Ideas
16 Starting Your Editorial
18 Developing the Middle Part
20 Writing a Strong Ending
22 Completing the First Draft

REVISING: Improving Your Writing
24 Avoiding False Arguments
25 Balancing Appeals to Reason and to Emotion
26 Peer Responding
27 Using a Checklist
28 Writing a Complete Revised Draft

EDITING: Checking for Style and Correctness
30 Checking Your Word Choice
32 Writing Complete Sentences
34 Reviewing Editing in Action
35 Making Editing and Proofreading Changes
37 Using a Checklist
38 Writing the Final Copy

PUBLISHING: Sharing the Final Copy
42 Understanding the Publishing Process

Extension Activities
44 Reading Editorials
45 Reflecting on Your Writing
46 Preparing for a Writing Test
Checklist: **Persuasive Essays**

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

- Persuasive Warm-Up: How convincing are you? (page 4)
- Reacting to the Reading (page 7)

**PREWRITING: Planning Your Writing**

- Selecting a Subject (page 10)
- Gathering Details Through Freewriting (page 11)
- Thinking Through an Argument (pages 12-13)

**WRITING: Connecting Your Ideas**

- Starting Your Editorial (pages 16-17)
- Developing the Middle Part (pages 18-19)
- Writing a Strong Ending (pages 20-21)
- Completing the First Draft (page 22)

**REVISING: Improving Your Writing**

- Avoiding False Arguments (page 24)
- Balancing Appeals to Reason and to Emotion (page 25)
- Peer Responding (page 26)
- Using a Checklist (page 27)
- Writing a Complete Revised Draft (page 28)

**EDITING: Checking for Style and Correctness**

- Checking Your Word Choice (pages 30-31)
- Writing Complete Sentences (pages 32-33)
- Making Editing and Proofreading Changes (pages 35-36)
- Using a Checklist (page 37)
- Writing the Final Copy (pages 38-40)

**Extension Activities**

- Reading Editorials (page 44)
- Reflecting on Your Writing (page 45)
- Preparing for a Writing Test (page 46)
"It is not best that we should all think alike; it is difference of opinion which makes horse races."

—Mark Twain

Persuasive Essays

You may not think about it often, but you are bombarded every day with persuasive messages. Billboards, newspaper advertisements, editorials, and television commercials are all forms of persuasion. Some persuasive messages sell a product or promote a worthy cause. Others express an opinion or argue a point.

In this unit, you will be asked to write an editorial suitable for a school newspaper. An editorial is a brief persuasive essay (usually 500 words or less) expressing an opinion about an important topic. Effective editorials come to the point quickly and speak with confidence. Many editorials also call for something to be done about the topic (a call to action).

Writing persuasively requires careful thinking and planning. You must understand your topic's strengths and weaknesses, you must form a reasonable opinion about your topic, and finally, you must convince your readers to agree with you.
Persuasive Warm-Up: How convincing are you?
Write a convincing letter explaining one of the following: (1) why you should be allowed to do something (written to a parent or guardian), (2) why you shouldn't have to do a certain assignment (written to a teacher), or (3) why you deserve a raise (written to an employer).

Next Step: Review your letter by answering the questions below. Write your answers on your own paper. (Keep your paper in the pocket at the back of this folder.)

- Is my letter convincing? Why or why not?
- What reasons do I give to support my argument?
- Is my argument based on solid facts and evidence?
- How could I strengthen my argument?
Reading a Sample Editorial

In the sample editorial that follows, the writer expresses her opinion on an important topic for the students in her school district. She provides specific reasons to support her opinion that the Upland School District should build soccer fields. In her closing paragraph, the writer proposes a solution and a logical call to action.

Build Fields for Teams

Soccer is the world’s most popular team sport, and soccer programs have become popular in the United States in the last two decades. Unfortunately, the young people in the Upland School District have no official soccer fields. You may wonder if the Upland community should be concerned about this. The simple answer is yes. Upland should build quality soccer fields to benefit all of the students in the school district.

Soccer is one of the best sports for children, from kindergartners through high school seniors. First of all, it is very inexpensive, so anyone can participate. Secondly, it is wonderful exercise. Soccer programs encourage gender equality because girls and boys can play together for many years. Youth soccer is often a family activity, with parents, brothers, sisters, and other relatives coming to watch and even helping to coach the teams. Finally, soccer is a sport that strengthens group skills by requiring both headwork and teamwork. Having good fields encourages young people to engage in this healthful physical activity.

Soccer programs should start for children in kindergarten, and their fields should be smaller. That means schools need fields of varying sizes. The fields must be graded properly, and good grass must be planted and maintained because well-prepared fields help to prevent injuries. Schools also need strips of land beside the fields for spectators to sit or stand on, but bleachers are not necessary. Blankets and folding chairs work just fine.

VOCABULARY

headwork  Thinking
spectators  Those who look on or watch
Some people may say this building project will cost too much money. However, a soccer field costs much less than a gymnasium, an indoor track, or a swimming pool. Some districts have saved on costs by finding some skilled volunteers to operate the earth-moving equipment. Community groups have also helped by holding fund-raisers. Creating a soccer field is a cause that people can get excited about. They see it as something they can do for the youth of their area.

Upland’s School District should form a committee to consider plans, land, and funding for soccer fields. The committee’s motto could be “Where there are soccer fields, there are strong, healthy kids.” The people’s goal should be to improve the quality of life for our youth by establishing soccer fields in the Upland School District. It’s the right thing to do.

**VOCABULARY**

**motto** A short statement about an ideal
Reacting to the Reading

Respond to the sample editorial by answering the following questions.

- What is the writer’s opinion? In other words, what issue does the writer feel strongly about?
  
  She feels the school district should provide soccer fields for all children from kindergartners through seniors in high school.

- What are three reasons that the author gives to support her opinion?
  
  Soccer is an inexpensive sport. Soccer is for boys and girls.
  
  It is wonderful exercise. Soccer strengthens group skills.
  
  Soccer can be a family activity.

- What plan of action does the writer suggest?
  
  She proposes forming a committee to consider plans, land, and funding for the soccer fields.

- How does the writer show that she has thought through her counterarguments (opposing viewpoints)? List one good example from paragraph four.
  
  Because the writer knows the main argument against her is the cost of the fields, she suggests cutting costs by using volunteer labor and having community groups hold fund-raisers.

- How would you describe the writer’s line of thinking? Was she reasonable, logical, convincing, and so on? Explain.
  
  I think she was quite reasonable. Her reasons are logical and appropriate for the audience, and she anticipates the objections her readers may have.
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 editorial and as a final checklist for your completed writing. You can also use this rubric to evaluate your classmates' editorials. (Your teacher may give you a point scale to use for final evaluations.)

Assessment Rubric

___ STIMULATING IDEAS

The persuasive writing . . .

- focuses on an opinion about a timely subject.
- contains specific reasons and details to support the opinion.

___ LOGICAL ORGANIZATION

- includes a clear beginning, convincing middle, and strong ending.
- presents reasonable, logical arguments.

___ ENGAGING VOICE

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

___ ORIGINAL WORD CHOICE

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

___ EFFECTIVE SENTENCE STYLE

- flows smoothly from sentence to sentence.
- uses a variety of sentence lengths and beginnings.

___ 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 subject of your editorial should be a timely school-related issue that you feel strongly about. With a partner, list on the chart below topics that you have an opinion about. Brainstorm as many ideas as you can. (Example topics are given to help you get started.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Life</th>
<th>School Sports</th>
<th>After-School Jobs</th>
<th>School Policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>study hall</td>
<td>athletic banquets</td>
<td>late shifts on school nights</td>
<td>dress code</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Working alone, circle one idea you would like to write about. Consider your main feelings about this topic. Then write your opinion about it on the lines below.

**Example opinion:** Athletic banquets are fine, but banquets for honor students and for those who help in the school or in the community should also be held.

**Opinion about my topic:**

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Persuasive Essays
Prewriting | Gathering Details Through Freewriting

To gather more information about your subject, write rapidly about everything that comes to mind. You may begin your freewriting by thinking about the following questions:

- Why do I care about this subject?
- What do I know about it? (personal experience, history, problems)
- What are the main facts, reasons, feelings, or opinions about this issue?
- What might others who disagree say? (opposing viewpoints)
- What do I want readers to think or do? (call to action)

My opinion (from page 10): ................................................................................................................
.........................................................................................................................................................

My freewriting: ........................................................................................................................................
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Prewriting Using a Planning Web

The sample web below is based on the editorial, "Build Fields for Teams," on pages 5 and 6. Review the web before you complete your own web on page 13.

- Soccer is one of the world's most popular sports.
- Soccer serves boys and girls, and often is a family activity.
- Soccer is a great sport for children from K-12.
- Upland School District should create quality soccer fields to benefit the area youth.
- Playing on well-prepared fields prevents injuries.
- Good fields encourage young people to be active and healthy.
- Soccer strengthens group skills.
- Volunteer labor can keep costs down.
- Soccer is an inexpensive sport.
An opinion should be supported with good reasons. Write your opinion in the center of the web below. Then use the ideas from your freewriting (page 11) to write reasons in the other boxes. These will be the main points that you must prove to support your opinion. Fill in as many boxes as necessary.

Planning Web
Prewriting Learning About the Editorial

All forms of persuasive writing try to convince readers to think or act in a certain way. In your editorial, you want to convince readers to agree with your opinion and support your call to action. You should include three or more main reasons plus supporting details to back up your opinion. The graphic below shows the basic parts of an editorial.

Persuasive Structure

- The **beginning** gets readers interested in the subject and states your opinion about it. (See page 16.)
- The **middle** includes the main reasons and details that support your opinion. (See page 18.)
- The **ending** restates your opinion and makes a proposal or call to action. (See page 20.)

Transition Words and Phrases

Here are some 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
Starting Your Editorial

Before you begin developing the main points of your editorial, spend some time working on the opening lines. Beginnings are important and should do two things: (1) get your reader's attention and (2) clearly state your opinion.

Ideas for Gaining the Reader's Attention
- Share important background information.
- Ask a challenging question.
- Begin with an informative quotation.
- Provide a dramatic, eye-opening statement.
- Open with some interesting dialogue or an engaging story.

Sample Beginning Paragraph
Welcome to the wonderful world of block scheduling. On our tour today, you will see a decline in the dropout rate and an increase in the number of students on the honor roll. Later on, be sure not to miss the increase in attendance and library usage and the decrease in overall violence. As we begin our tour, you can see the rise in average GPA and SAT scores on the left. A little farther along, you will notice that the average amount of stress for students, teachers, and administrators has declined. You see, block scheduling isn't only about 85-minute classes. It's about improving attitudes and learning opportunities throughout the school.

In the space below and on the next page, write the beginning of your editorial. Use the sample above as a guide. Make sure that you get the reader's attention and clearly state your opinion.
Next Step: If you don't like how your first beginning sounds, try writing one or two other versions on your own paper.
Whenever you state an opinion, you must support it with clear reasons. This is a basic principle for all types of persuasive writing. The middle paragraphs of your editorial should contain the main reasons from your planning web (page 13). Make sure to include specific details to develop or support each reason. One of the middle paragraphs should also address a major opposing viewpoint (see the first paragraph on page 6).

Always base your opinion on facts and objective judgments. An objective judgment says something specific and can be tested. A subjective judgment is based purely on your feelings or emotions. For example, a student who says, “Cafeteria food is disgusting” is making a subjective judgment. A student who states, “The pasta is undercooked” is making an objective judgment.

**Sample Middle Paragraph**

This sample middle paragraph develops one of the main reasons that supports the writer’s opinion.

*In a block schedule, there is more intense learning and understanding going on than in traditional scheduling. For example, in a block schedule, the teacher cannot possibly lecture for the entire 85 minutes. This means that the students who are hands-on learners and the students who need to read to learn can do just as well as the students who learn by listening to a lecture. The block schedule also gives teachers more time to work with students one-on-one. This means that problem areas can be identified earlier and corrected. So in short, everybody learns more!*

In the space below and on the next page, write your middle paragraphs. Remember to include a main reason and supporting details in each paragraph. In one paragraph, address an opposing viewpoint. If you need more room, use your own paper to write your other middle paragraphs.
Writing a Strong Ending

Having a strong ending is equally as important as having an interesting beginning. The ending of your editorial should remind readers about the importance of your opinion and make a clear call to action. You want your readers to agree with your plan and know how to act on it.

Sample Ending Paragraph

The bottom line when it comes to block scheduling is that there are lots of reasons why it's going to be a great change. So be open and don't fight it. Let go of your fears and be positive. If you walk into your first class feeling negative about block scheduling, how can you take advantage of all the benefits that block scheduling brings to the table? So calm down, sit back, relax, and make sure all body parts are safely in the vehicle as we begin our journey into the wonderful world of block scheduling.

In the space below and on the next page, write your ending paragraph. Remind readers about the importance of your opinion and make a call to action.
Completing the 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. Having plenty of space will make revising much easier. (If you use a computer, be 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. You’re trying to convince your readers to agree with your opinion.

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 later when you revise.

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

Your editorial will be strong only if your thinking or reasoning is strong and logical. Recognizing false arguments will help you to avoid them in your own writing.

Read the explanations and examples of false arguments below. Then rewrite the arguments so that the reasoning is more logical and makes better sense.

Bandwagon: This type of thinking claims that if everyone else is doing it, you should, too. This thinking avoids the real question: “Is this idea or claim a good one?”

Example: Everyone on the team wears Air Jets, so Air Jets are clearly your best choice.

More logical: Everyone on the team wears Air Jets, but you should try Air Jets for yourself. You know what’s best for you.

Broad Generalization: Generalizing is thinking that looks at everything or everyone in a group in exactly the same way. It makes no exceptions.

Example: All teenagers spend too much time watching television.

More logical: Some teenagers spend too much time watching television.

Either-Or Thinking: This thinking considers all issues or arguments as two possible extremes—it’s either this or that. It eliminates all the options in between.

Example: Either this community votes to build a new school, or the dropout rate will skyrocket.

More logical: Either this community votes to build a new school, or they need to come up with another plan to ease overcrowding.

Half-Truths: A half-truth is only part of the truth. It is misleading because it leaves out “the rest of the story.”

Example: The new recycling law is bad because it will cost more money than it saves. (This statement ignores the possible benefits of recycling.)

More logical: The new recycling law will cost more money than it saves, but it will benefit the environment.

Next Step: Check your editorial for any false arguments or illogical thinking. Then exchange papers with a classmate and check each other’s thinking.
Revising

Balancing Appeals to Reason and to Emotion

You can support your opinion in two ways—by appealing to reason or by appealing to emotion. You appeal to reason by providing facts, statistics, and expert opinions that support your opinion. The best persuasive essays rely primarily on appeals to reason.

Appeals to Reason . . .

Appeals to reason ask readers to use their intelligence. Read the following example of an appeal to reason:

According to the Association of Science Educators, nearly half of all school science labs are not sufficiently equipped. (The claim that “nearly half of all school science labs are not sufficiently equipped” is supported by a reliable source—the Association of Science Educators. Therefore, this example appeals to reason.)

Appeals to Emotion . . .

Emotional appeals speak to readers’ feelings. Emotional appeals may be strong, but they seldom hold up over time. Read the following example of an appeal to emotion:

The science labs in our schools are in such bad shape, they are a disaster waiting to happen. (The claim that the school science labs are “a disaster waiting to happen” is not supported by any statistics or expert opinions. Therefore, this example appeals to emotion, not reason.)

Review your editorial. In the chart below, write the main points you give to support your opinion. Then identify the type of appeal—to reason or to emotion—used in each case. Your editorial should rely primarily on appeals to reason.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Supporting Points</th>
<th>Type of Appeal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Next Step: Change the appeals in your editorial if they rely too heavily on emotion.
Peer Responding

Your teacher may want you to react to a classmate's editorial by completing the response sheet below. Be sure to look carefully at the beginning and ending. Also look for false arguments (generalizations, either-or-thinking, half-truths) and appeals to emotion.

Response Sheet

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

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

I like . . .

- the beginning of your editorial because it really gets my attention.
- your opinion statement. It is clear and strong.
- your voice. You obviously feel strongly about your subject.
- your arguments. They are clear and logical.
- the ending. Your opinion makes sense.

I would change . . .

- the order of your arguments. Present them in the order of their importance.
- the third paragraph; it has some generalizations.
- the ending. It still needs a call to action.

Strong words, phrases, and ideas in the writing: .................................................................
Revising Using a Checklist

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 editorial 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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does the beginning paragraph gain the reader's attention and include an opinion statement?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do the middle paragraphs support the opinion with clear reasons and carefully considered arguments?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is the information in the middle paragraphs presented in a logical order?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does the ending call for the reader to do something (call for action)?</td>
</tr>
</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 unneeded idea is cut.

Last year, one of our classes went to a museum. It was a great trip. We saw all kinds of cool things and even got to do some hands-on learning. But this year, our school decided that there is no money for field trips, so we're not going anywhere. I think this is a stupid decision. How do they expect students to have a good feeling about school if they cut out the best part? I think somebody should change it so that students can learn things in real places, not just classrooms.

A sentence is cut and wording is added.

My question is, how do they
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 stop to rewrite just to make your draft look better. Concentrate on ideas, not neatness.

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 the best changes all at once.

5. **Pay special attention to peer responses.** Your peers are your audience, and your goal is to convince them to agree with you.

6. **Save your first draft** so that you have a record of the changes you have made.

**Adding a Title**

At some point in the process, you need to write a title for your editorial. 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.**
  We’re a School, Not an Airport, not Rolling Backpacks Are a Real Problem

- **Give the words rhythm.**
  Avoid Rush Hour at Harrison High, not Crowded Hallways Are a Problem

- **Be imaginative.**
Editing
Checking for Style and Correctness

Prewriting
Writing
Revising
Editing
Publishing
Checking Your Word Choice

In a persuasive essay, or editorial, it is important to use words that add to the meaning and tone of your writing. However, it's just as important to resist the temptation to "pad" your writing with words and phrases that add nothing to your point. Can you spot the unnecessary words or phrases in the following sentence?

The difficult math problem, which was not easy to understand, caused me to fail the math test with an F.
(If you say a problem is *difficult*, you don't need to say that it's *not easy to understand*. If you say you *failed a test*, you don't need to say you got an *F*.)

Make the following sentences clearer by crossing out any unnecessary words or repeated ideas. See the editing and proofreading symbols on page 34. The first one has been done for you.

1. Ms. Li's overcrowded algebra class, which is always full of math students of many different backgrounds, should move to a bigger classroom that has more room.

2. A field trip to Caterpillars R Us was cancelled due to lack of interest because it didn't appeal to enough students.

3. On most days, Cal usually spends about an hour of his time studying.

4. The music teacher gives private music lessons to advanced students who are further ahead than others.

5. After this school year is over, Juan and Bob will be getting jobs working for pay.

6. Taking a foreign language class in which we learn to communicate in a non-native tongue helps us to comprehend and understand another language.

7. Darnel takes the bus to and from school every morning and every afternoon.
The following sentences contain trite expressions, euphemisms, cliches, and slang. Rewrite them so their tone is more formal but natural and clear. The first one has been done for you.

1. I should not have dissed the principal as I did; oh well—live and learn.
   I should not have talked back to the principal.

2. Prior to becoming a teacher, Mrs. Jones raised her children 24/7 and engaged in numerous enterprises using the family living quarters.
   Prior to becoming a teacher, Mrs. Jones raised her children and worked out of her home.

3. In terms of getting my research paper done, Rome wasn’t built in a day; it doesn’t take a rocket scientist to realize it’s going to take a while.
   Getting my research paper done is going to take a while.

4. Because all the fish in Mr. Patrick’s aquarium mysteriously kicked the bucket, the lab is off-limits to all students for now until it is determined that students may return.
   Because all the fish in Mr. Patrick’s aquarium died mysteriously, the lab is off-limits to all students for now.

5. Chuck is indisposed and will not be in attendance at school today.
   Chuck is ill and will not be in school today.

6. Because she hid Vanessa’s purse, Mi-Sun got into big-time trouble with the big guy in the school office.
   Mi-Sun got into trouble with the principal for hiding Vanessa’s purse.

Next Step: Now review your editorial for repetition and wordiness. Also rewrite any overused expressions or cliches.
**Editing For Correctness**

**Writing Complete Sentences**

It is important to present your ideas in clear, complete sentences. Sentence errors such as fragments, comma splices, and run-ons make your writing hard to understand.

- **A fragment** is a group of words that is missing either a subject or a verb or doesn’t express a complete thought.
  
  *Sentence fragment:* Next to that car over there.
  
  *Correct:* I parked next to that car over there.

- **A comma splice** is an error made when you connect two simple sentences with a comma instead of a comma and a coordinating conjunction or a semicolon.
  
  *Comma splice:* I’ve been driving to school, I use my parents’ car.
  
  *Correct:* I’ve been driving to school, and I use my parents’ car.
  
  *Correct:* I’ve been driving to school; I use my parents’ car.

- **A run-on sentence** occurs when two simple sentences are joined without punctuation or a comma and a coordinating conjunction.
  
  *Run-on sentence:* My parents allow me to drive every day I must maintain a B average.
  
  *Correct:* My parents allow me to drive every day, but I must maintain a B average.
  
  *Correct:* My parents allow me to drive every day; I must maintain a B average.

Write “C” in front of each sentence, or pair of sentences, that is correct. Write “CS” in front of each comma splice, “RO” in front of each run-on sentence, and “F” in front of each fragment. Then fix the sentence errors. The first one has been done for you. **Corrections may vary.**

**F** 1. Many students have very poor driving habits.**They**
   
   Treat stop signs like yield signs and speed limits like suggestions.

**CS** 2. This kind of driving endangers everyone.**Police need to get tougher**
   
   about enforcing traffic laws.

**C** 3. Young drivers often misjudge weather conditions and stopping distance, and many accidents result from that kind of bad judgment.

**CS** 4. Some people believe that all the new safety equipment guarantees their protection.**Still, no matter how much technology improves cars, people**
   
   are the key component.
5. People fear being struck by lightning during a storm, but they think
nothing of driving fast on wet pavement. Driving too fast for conditions
is much more dangerous and causes more accidents than lightning ever
could.

6. While risks to life are many, driving carelessly is one risk that can easily
be eliminated.

7. Foolish risks and excessive speed rarely save more than a few seconds;
everyone who drives should stop to think about that.

Review the following paragraph. Find the fragments, run-on sentences, and comma splices and
correct them. Corrections may vary.

1. Those who pass the driver's test need to remember that it's their
   responsibility to drive carefully. Driving carefully isn't as easy as it sounds.

2. The number of vehicles on the road means that drivers must be alert at all
   times. Must always watch the road ahead to deal with potentially dangerous
   situations. For example, a driver may have to drive slower than the posted
   speed due to weather, traffic congestion, or children near the road. Good
   drivers are patient and polite; they avoid eating, daydreaming, or getting
   caught up in cell-phone conversations while driving. Careless behavior
   behind the wheel may cause property damage, lead to serious injury, or even
   result in death. Although stricter law enforcement will help, there are not
   enough police to watch everyone, so drivers must use their cars or trucks in
   ways that respect others. Responsible drivers are considerate of other people.

Next Step: Review your corrections with a classmate. Then check your editorial for
fragments, comma splices, and run-on sentences.
Your main job when editing is to check your revised writing for word choice, style, and sentence errors. See the examples below.

A comma splice is corrected.

My opinion is that the principal or the school board should look a little harder for ways to pay for field trips; for example, they should talk to some of the local business places located here in our town. Instead of whaling on students for skipping school and not learning enough, they could make learning more interesting so students would come to school and learn. Also, they could have a raffle and sell tickets. There are lots of ways to raise money, they just have to choose the best ones.

A wordy sentence is fixed.

Slang is corrected.

A run-on is corrected.

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>
</thead>
<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>✓</td>
<td>Insert a period.</td>
<td>This play focuses on racial attitudes. It also ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Correct spelling.</td>
<td>Lena Younger, the family leader, is very religious.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Delete or replace.</td>
<td>Lena she makes a down payment on a nice house.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Insert a comma.</td>
<td>Her son, Walter Lee, Jr., wants to buy a business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Insert an apostrophe or quotation marks.</td>
<td>Walter Lee's wife hopes for a larger apartment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Insert a question mark or an exclamation point.</td>
<td>What would Beneatha do with the money?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓</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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Proofreading  Checking for Correctness

When you proofread, you check the final copy of your writing for errors in usage, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and spelling. (Use the editing and proofreading symbols listed on page 34 to mark your changes.) See the examples below.

Spelling errors are marked.

The important thing to remember is that field trips are interesting not just for fun. They are interesting and educational and give students a reason to go to school. Instead of cutting trips the school should be trying to add trips and other learning experiences. If teachers want students to attend their classes and learn something worthwhile, having field trips is one way to do it. And when you think about what is real spent on other things, field trips are a real bargain.

Making Editing and Proofreading Changes

Edit and proofread the following editorial to improve its style and correctness. Use the editing and proofreading symbols listed on page 34. The first correction has been done for you. Check off the errors as you correct them. Some answers may vary.

- spelling errors (4)
- capitalization errors (1)
- run-on sentences (2)
- usage errors (5)
- comma splices (3)
- errors in punctuation (4)

Cell Phones—Don’t Go to School Without One

1 Should high school students have access to the Internet while at school? Should students be able to drive cars to school? As long as students use the Internet and cars responsibly, few people would argue against these conveniences for high school students. However, when it comes to another modern convenience—the cell phone—our school says no.
School rules should reflect the changes in society, and cell phones are part of today's adult world just like the Internet and automobiles.

The main objection our school has to students having cell phones at school is that they disrupt classroom learning, however, if some simple rules are established—such as cell phones must be turned off during class—classroom learning wouldn't be disrupted. Students know that they have to follow the rules, they know that if they do not, their privileges get taken away. Most students can be trusted with this responsibility.

One important reason to allow students to have cell phones at school is that their activities require communication with parents and employers. Things are complicated enough, cell phones can help make scheduling a little easier. Another reason that in case of school violence or disasters, cell phones can help students communicate with families or emergency personnel. Although it is unfortunate that this reason must be argued, problems are a reality.

High schools exist not only to teach students reading, writing, and arithmetic but also to teach students to be thoughtful, dependable adults. In order to learn responsibility, students need to have some authority over their own lives, if they show that they can make the right decisions, I feel students should be allowed access to their cell phones during nonclass time at school.

**Next Step:** Carefully read and mark your revised editorial for any editing and proof-reading 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, complete sentences? (pages 32-33)
- Did I vary my sentence lengths and beginnings?

**Punctuation**
- Did I end each sentence with the correct punctuation mark?
- Did I use commas correctly?
- Did I punctuate dialogue or quotations correctly?

**Capitalization**
- Did I start my sentences with capital letters?
- Did I capitalize the specific names of people and places?

**Grammar**
- Did I use the correct verb tenses?
- Did I use subjects and verbs that agree in number? *(Musicians **perform**; Lucia **dances**.)*

**Usage**
- Did I use the correct word (like *their*, *there*, or *they're*)?
- Did I drop all unnecessary words and phrases and avoid clichés? (pages 30-31)

**Spelling**
- Did I check for spelling errors?
- Did I use a dictionary or the spell checker on my computer?
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 Final 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.
Publishing
Sharing the Final Copy
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 Editorials

Your teacher will either provide you with an editorial to respond to or ask you to find one in your local newspaper or on the Internet. In either case, read the editorial and answer the questions below. Responses will vary.

Response Questions

• What is the writer's main point or opinion?

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

• What plan of action does the writer suggest?

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

Next Step: Share the editorial with a classmate and discuss your evaluation.
Extension Activity: Reflecting on Your Writing

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

Responses will vary.

- The thing I like best about my editorial is . . .

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

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

- While completing my editorial, the main thing I learned about 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 the things you have learned about writing clearly in your mind. Answering the questions below will help you prepare for any persuasive writing you find on a test.

1. To write persuasively, you must understand your topic’s strengths and weaknesses. What two other things must you remember about persuasive writing? (See page 3.)

   You need to form a reasonable opinion about your subject and convince your readers to agree with you.

2. To write an effective persuasive essay, is it more important to have strong feelings about your subject or to be objective about it? (See page 10.)

   To write an effective persuasive essay, it’s more important to have strong feelings about your subject.

3. What graphic organizer can you use to gather support for your opinion? (See page 12.)

   You can use a planning web to gather support for your opinion.

4. What two things should you do in the beginning paragraph? (See page 16.)

   In the beginning paragraph, you should get your reader’s attention and clearly state your opinion.

5. What should your middle paragraphs contain? (See page 18.)

   Your middle paragraphs should contain the main reasons for your opinion and details to support each reason.

6. What should you accomplish in the ending paragraph? (See page 20.)

   Your ending should remind readers about the importance of your opinion and make a clear call to action.