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| <h2>To Persuade or Not to Persuade? That is the Question!</h2> | | | | Student/Class Goal Postsecondary students often have to write essays or prepare speeches that persuade others or demonstrate how well they understand a topic. In the real world, a persuasive essay can be a sales letter, a job application or even a presentation to a group of people. | |
| Outcome <i>(lesson objective)</i> Students collect their ideas using a graphic organizer and write a persuasive essay. | | | | Time Frame Six 1-hour class sessions | |
| Standard <i>Convey Ideas in Writing</i> | | | | NRS EFL 5-6 | |
| Prewriting | Benchmarks | Drafting | Benchmarks | Editing and Revising | Benchmarks |
| Topic, purpose, & audience | | Organize writing | 5.11, 6.10 | Reread & revise | 5.17, 6.14 |
| Writing for purpose | | Sentences/paragraphs | | Proofread | |
| Writing for various tasks | 5,3, 6.3 | Descriptive language | 5.13, 6.11 | Feedback from others | 5.19, 6.16 |
| Generate ideas | | Sentence structure | 5.14, 6.12 | Checklists & rubrics | |
| Main idea/thesis | | Spelling | 5.15, 6.13 | Publishing | Benchmarks |
| Research | | Punctuation | | Technology | 5.20, 6.17 |
| Plagiarism | | Capitalization | | Publication | |
| Sources | | Parts of speech | | | |
| Organize ideas | 5.9, 6.9 | | | | |
| Organizational pattern | | | | | |
| Materials Notebook paper (draft/notes) computer (draft/final paper) <i>Persuasive Essay</i> Graphic Organizer <i>Why Do We Read?</i> Essay Example <i>Persuasive Essay</i> Rubric <i>Mosquito Madness</i> Essay <i>What Am I Going to Do With My Life?</i> Essay <i>Persuasive Essay Topics</i> Handout | | | | | |
| Learner Prior Knowledge Students will have had previous experience identifying persuasive techniques found in advertising, junk emails, etc. and have completed the lesson <i>Persuade Me, Please</i> . They will also have found and written thesis in a previous lesson. Students will also have had previous experience with comprehension, higher vocabulary, and reading strategies. | | | | | |
| Instructional Activities Step 1 - Introduce to the student the definition of a persuasive essay and briefly go over critical reading skills, and propaganda techniques. Teacher Note To introduce the beginning stages of argument, try the activity called Battle Bars . Students use their writing skills to describe how their group’s Snickers are a better buy than another group’s Kit Kats. They use examples of price, advertising appeal, ease of consumption, appearance, dangers, nutrition facts, feel, smell, and taste to support their topic. In persuasive writing, a writer takes a position FOR or AGAINST an issue and writes to convince the reader to believe or do something. Critical reading skills are the ability to analyze, evaluate, and produce what one reads. They are the ability to see relationships of ideas and use them as an aid in reading. Propaganda techniques manipulate the readers/viewers reason and emotions; to persuade you to believe in something or someone, buy an item, or vote a certain way. Discuss what a thesis is. This is one detailed sentence that states your main argument. It is typically used as the final sentence of the opening paragraph of your persuasive essay. Write your thesis statement at the top of your persuasive essay outline. Why should your essay include a thesis statement? | | | | | |

- Test your ideas by placing them in a sentence or two
- Better organize and develop your argument
- Provide your reader with a 'guide' to your argument

Tell the student how in the first paragraph to start out with something that draws the reader's attention. Then, state clearly what they are going to choose to write about. Finally, list your reasons.

Teacher Note You can model writing a persuasive essay by having students start with examples from their lives. Maybe write a first essay as a group with students picking a topic they agree on.

Teacher and students read the essay *Why Do We Read?* together. With the *Persuasive Essay* Graphic Organizer, model choosing the topic/goal and have students discuss what they think the essay would be. Write down the topic.

In the first paragraph start out with something that draws the reader's attention. Then, state clearly what you are going to choose. Finally, list your reasons.

Example of a thesis: We tune in to watch these TV stations while traveling the Internet highway; this situation has caused many people to change their attitudes on what they enjoy doing in their spare time. Many people do not read like they should because of modern technology. The bottom line is people should continue to read. *The reasons are quite clear because by reading you will be able to increase your knowledge, develop your general vocabulary, and make your imagination fly.*

Teacher Note You might want to prepare a PPT with the information about persuasive essays and thesis for students so they can take notes and have the information presented for their reference.

Step 2 – A [persuasive essay](#) will normally have a minimum of three supporting paragraphs. Start each supporting paragraph with a statement that supports your main thesis. Back up their statement with facts or testimonials from well known sources. Facts form the foundation of your argument and allow you to act as an authority on the subject. This persuasive essay is constructed using a title, thesis statement, supporting paragraphs and a conclusion and must be at least 500 words in length.

Next explain what it is to **Brainstorm**. Writing a persuasive essay is very much like writing an ordinary paper. Of course, before you begin, you have to come up with a good solid view, a foundation which you can base your entire paper on. It's best if you pick a topic which you strongly believe in. That way, you can defend your ideas better and make your paper sound a lot more convincing. The case that you are making needs to have enough depth and be worthy of support. You might want to consider opposing viewpoints to make it easier for you to realize how opposing people think.

Have students participate and share ideas. With the graphic organizer you could start filling in ideas. Explain how the graphic organizer is just taking your main idea and setting it up for you to get your ideas down on paper and how reason 1-3 will be the three paragraphs that you focus on. You could go with their ideas or share the ideas written below:

Reason #1 increase your knowledge
Reason #2 develop general vocabulary
Reason #3 make your imagination fly

Step 3 - Have the student focus on Reason #1 from the graphic organizer.

Reason #1 Increase your knowledge (Discuss with students how THEY could improve their knowledge by reading)
Some examples:

Fact/Example #1 will continually improve your mind and open many doors
Fact/Example #2 gain significant knowledge of life and a broader perspective of your environment
Fact/Example #3 gives an overall advantage over others who do not read on a regular basis

Paragraph #2 could look something like this:

Not only can a book take you to many different places, it will expand the knowledge that takes you on a journey of learning. As long as you read, it will continually improve your mind and open many doors. You can see that people who read more often frequently have a significant knowledge of life and a broader perspective of their environment. It gives that person an overall advantage over others who do not read on a regular basis.

Go into Reason #2/paragraph #3. Ask student what are some examples or use the ones given below.

Reason #2 Develop your general vocabulary (Ask students how THEY could improve their knowledge by increasing vocabulary)

Fact/Example #1 allow you to expand your vocabulary and ways to express your ideas to others

Fact/Example #2 increase fluency while expanding your vocabulary

Fact/Example #3 increase your skill base and not even realizing it while you are entertained at the same time

Example of paragraph #3:

Another significant factor reading offers are that books allow you to expand your vocabulary and ways to express your ideas to others. You continually expand your horizons when you pick up a book and do not even realize it. Not only does your vocabulary increase, but also your fluency increases at the same time. It is a 'win-win' situation for you and others that you communicate with. You are increasing your skill base and not even realizing it while you are entertained at the same time.

Breaking it down even further continue on the graphic organizer with reason #3

Reason #3 Imagination (Ask students how THEY could improve their knowledge by increasing vocabulary)

Fact/Example #1 children love to read and use their imagination and adults should keep this same perspective

Fact/Example #2 keep this ability, they would not forget the importance of using their imagination

Fact/Example #3 when using your imagination, it also represents a tool that could help to develop your professional career in a creative way

Example of paragraph #4

Books can take you anywhere. They can sweep you off your feet and take you back in time, experience a fight of whimsical wizards, journey off to solve a magical mystery, introduce a historical person, or simply make you laugh. Let your imagination run wild! Children love to read and use their imagination and adults should keep this same perspective. If adults remembered to keep this ability, they would not forget the importance of using their imagination. When using your imagination, it also represents a tool that could help to develop your professional career in a creative way.

Finally, it's the conclusion. Explain to the student how the conclusion is basically the introduction just re-written a little restating your main thought.

Paragraph #5/Example of conclusion:

In conclusion, I recommend that everyone would leave television and the Internet behind to enjoy a good old-fashioned book. There are excellent benefits from reading that include expanding your knowledge, increasing your overall vocabulary, and letting your imagination soar. I know that we should evolve with technology, but we must also not forget books. Make sure you choose an interesting book now and then to ensure that you will never stop reading.

Step 4 - Explain how the persuasive essay will be graded using the *Persuasive Essay Rubric*. Model grading your essay on *Why Do We Read?* clarifying any questions.

Step 5 - Students can now practice writing in pairs using the graphic organizer. They can choose one of the essays, either *Mosquito Madness* or *What Am I Going to Do With My Life?*. When they have finished their graphic organizer, they can connect with another pair to share their insights or connect to the other essay group to gain a broader knowledge base.

Step 6 - Student will pick a topic to write about from *Persuasive Essay Topics*, if needed. After the student has finished first draft, then work with peer(s) or teacher to edit draft of persuasive essay. After editing essay, student will rewrite/revise essay using constructive ideas presented by peers and teacher. Final essays can be shared with class and/or given to teacher for review.

Assessment/Evidence (based on outcome)

Persuasive Essay Graphic Organizer

Final essay and rubric

Teacher Reflection/Lesson Evaluation

This lesson has not yet been field tested.

Next Steps

Introduce other types of essays that a student may encounter in the future.

Technology Integration

11 Grade Prompts www.state.tn.us/education/assessment/writing_grade_11.shtml

Top 50 prompts www.custom-writing.org/blog/writing-tips/31.html

Good Persuasive Writing Essay Topics www.collegeuniversity.suite101.com/article.cfm/good_persuasive_essay_topics

Research Questions: Persuasion www.Valencia.cc.fl.us/lrcwest/kaysmith.html

Persuasive Essay Topics

www.collegeuniversity.suite101.com/article.cfm/persuasive_speaking_topics?CFID=37846821&CFTOKEN=44493631

Writing Persuasive or Argumentative Essays <http://www.studygs.net/wrtstr4.htm>

Battle Bars www.eduref.org/Virtual/Lessons/Language_Arts/Debate/DEB0201.html

Student Writing Models <http://www.thewritesource.com/studentmodels/#inc>

Mosquito Madness <http://www.thewritesource.com/studentmodels/wi-petpeeve.htm>

What am I going to do with my life? <http://essayinfo.com/blog/what-am-i-going-to-do-with-my-life/#more-49>

Purposeful/Transparent

Persuasive essays are written using models and graphic organizers to help students scaffold by selecting a goal, reasons, and examples as their guiding components.

Contextual

Students practice writing persuasive essays using topics that are currently debatable issues.

Building Expertise

Students are acquiring skills so they can write persuasive essays in their postsecondary courses.

Example of Persuasive Essay

Why Should We Read?

Over the years with the creation of modern technology, we have increased our access to cable or satellite dishes and have the evolving use of the Internet at our fingertips. We tune in to watch these TV stations while traveling the Internet highway; this situation has caused many people to change their attitudes on what they enjoy doing in their spare time. Many people do not read like they should because of modern technology. The bottom line is people should continue to read. The reasons are quite clear because by reading you will be able to increase your knowledge, develop your general vocabulary, and make your imagination fly.

Not only can a book take you too many different places, it will expand your knowledge and takes you on a journey of learning. As long as you read, it will continually improve your mind and opens many doors. You can see that people who read more often frequently have a significant knowledge of life and a broader perception of their environment. It gives that person an advantage over others who do not read on a regular basis.

Other significant factors that reading provides are the growth of vocabulary and better ways to express your ideas to others. Without being aware of it, you continually expand your horizons when you read a book. Not only does your vocabulary increase, but also your fluency increases at the same time. It is a 'win-win' situation for you and others that you communicate with. You are increasing your skill base and not even realizing it while you are entertained at the same time.

Books can take you anywhere. They can sweep you off your feet and take you back in time, experience a fight of whimsical wizards, journey off to solve a magical mystery, introduce a historical person, or simply make you laugh. Let your imagination run wild! Children love to read and use their imagination and adults should keep this same perspective. If adults remembered to keep this ability, they would not forget the importance of using their imagination. When using your imagination, it also represents a tool that could help to develop your professional career in a creative way.

In conclusion, I recommend that everyone would leave television and the Internet behind to enjoy a good old-fashioned book. There are excellent benefits from reading that include expanding your knowledge, increasing your overall vocabulary, and letting your imagination soar. I know that we should evolve with technology, but we must also not forget books. Make sure you choose an interesting book now and then to ensure that you will never stop reading.

Persuasive Essay Graphic Organizer

Name: _____ Date: _____

In the first box write your GOAL. Write THREE REASONS next. List fact/examples in branching boxes.

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graph LR; GOAL[GOAL] --- R1[REASON #1]; GOAL --- R2[REASON #2]; GOAL --- R3[REASON #3]; R1 --- E1[EXAMPLE]; R1 --- E2[EXAMPLE]; R1 --- E3[EXAMPLE]; R2 --- E4[EXAMPLE]; R2 --- E5[EXAMPLE]; R2 --- E6[EXAMPLE]; R3 --- E7[EXAMPLE]; R3 --- E8[EXAMPLE]; R3 --- E9[EXAMPLE];
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The diagram is a hierarchical graphic organizer for a persuasive essay. It consists of a large box on the left labeled **GOAL**. Three lines branch from the right side of this box to three separate boxes labeled **REASON #1**, **REASON #2**, and **REASON #3**. From the right side of each reason box, three lines branch out to three separate boxes labeled **EXAMPLE**. The boxes are arranged in a staggered, tree-like structure.

GOAL

REASON #1

EXAMPLE

EXAMPLE

EXAMPLE

REASON #2

EXAMPLE

EXAMPLE

EXAMPLE

REASON #3

EXAMPLE

EXAMPLE

EXAMPLE

Persuasive Essay Rubric

| Area | Criteria | Score 5 = always/excellent 4 = frequently/very good 3 = sometimes/good 2 = seldom/fair 1 = never/needs improvement | Student Score for each area |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Introduction | Includes a hook to get the reader's attention. (5 POINTS) | | |
| | Background/elaboration from "the hook." (5 POINTS) | | |
| | Thesis statement (goal) is clear. (5 POINTS) | | |
| First Argument | Topic sentence states the reason. (5 POINTS) | | |
| | Elaboration to back the reason is clear and persuasive. (5 POINTS) | | |
| Second Argument | Topic sentence states the reason. (5 POINTS) | | |
| | Elaboration to back the reason is clear and persuasive. (5 POINTS) | | |
| Third Argument | Topic sentence states the reason. (5 POINTS) | | |
| | Elaboration to back the reason is clear and persuasive. (5 POINTS) | | |
| Opposing Viewpoint | Topic sentence states the opposing view. (5 POINTS) | | |
| | Rebuttal is clear and makes sense. (5 POINTS) | | |
| | Elaboration to back the rebuttal is clear and persuasive. (5 POINTS) | | |
| Conclusion | Paraphrase of main points (5 POINTS) | | |
| | Effective restatement of the thesis statement. (5 POINTS) | | |
| | Personal comment or a call to action. (5 POINTS) | | |
| Voice & Tone | Demonstrates a clear understanding of the potential reader and uses appropriate vocabulary and arguments. (5 POINTS) | | |
| Mechanics | Exhibits variety in sentence structure. (5 POINTS) | | |
| | Spelling and grammar(5 POINTS) | | |
| | Capitalization and punctuation (5 POINTS) | | |
| | Variety of thoughtful transitions used and clearly show how ideas are connected. (5 POINTS) | | |
| TOTAL | POINTS (out of 100) | | |

Name _____ Date _____ Instructor _____

Mosquito Madness

<http://www.thewritesource.com/studentmodels/wi-petpeeve.htm>

I'm drifting off to sleep, listening to the summer night's breeze rustling the leaves on the oak outside my window. Peaceful. Dreamy. Safe.

I'm almost asleep when a loud buzzing sound fills my ear. A disturbing annoyance cancels all thoughts of sleep, disturbs all peace. Buzzzzzzzz...buzzzzzzzz...buzzzzzzzz. Only a mosquito can make that sound. How did it get in here? Buzzzzzz...buzzzzzzzz.

I swat and slap at this annoying creature. I'll get it; I know I will. I'll knock it down in midair and put it out of its misery. That itchy-bitsy pest can't survive my powerful swipes. So I swing to the left, to the right, above my head, over my stomach, everywhere. I don't miss an inch of the darkness. Nothing could survive this extreme attack of mine! I probably look like a crazed wind turbine. There, I'm certain now it has to be dead. I *had* to hit it, with my arms flying everywhere swatting and swiping. It is probably knocked dead, somewhere on the floor . . . I'll just clean it up in the morning.

Slowly my panting ebbs. Tranquility is returning. Then I realize my body is tensing, tensing. It is becoming so tense my muscles start to weaken. It must be tense because I am listening, listening. I'm listening so hard my ears feel like they're twitching. Silence. Blessed silence. No nasty creature here to bother me anymore. The breeze rustles the leaves; I'm on some beach—azure water, giant white clouds like full-blooming magnolias, warm sand. Suddenly, I snap awake: buzzzzzzzz...buzzzzzzzz...buzzzzzzzz. No! No! No!

Okay, this time I *will* get it. I swing my feet onto the floor, turn on the light, pick up a T-shirt, and listen. Nothing. I peer everywhere like an eagle. Eagle Eye they should call me—I don't miss anything. But, I look carefully into the light, and . . . nothing. Do lights attract mosquitoes? I think so. I scan the walls, the ceiling, my T-shirt gripped as hard as possible ready for the assault. Nothing. Silence. I watch the light. I stand still, listening and ready. Nothing. Silence. I wait, stiff as a board. Still nothing.

I decide to crawl back into bed, leaving the light on. I cling to the T-shirt. If that tiny pest is still in the vicinity, the light will attract it, and then I shall swat it, and then finally I shall have a peaceful night's rest. I wait, listen. A car goes by. The breeze rustles the leaves. How can I hear the buzz with all this racket? I get out of bed, close the window, get back into bed, and pick up my deadly weapon. Yes, now I can hear better; I am ready. The breeze won't disturb me now. I listen. I wait. First, I lie on my back. I can scan the space in my room now. Eagle Eye, that's me. I tune up both ears to 100 percent capacity. This is good. I was born ready for this adventurous game.

I feel my back growing stiff. Suddenly I am not comfortable on my back anymore. I need to turn. I'll turn toward the light. The light should attract this pestering nuisance. All I really need to do is watch the space around the lamp. I wad up the T-shirt. New strategy. Good strategy. I'm ready and waiting. One swipe and this war will be over. That mosquito will never bother anyone ever again.

Then I see it, clinging to the wall like super glue, waiting for me to just smack it. On the count of three, I am going to kill it. One . . . two . . . THREE! SWAT! SWAP! SMACK! SWIPE! Ahhhhhh, at last!

Finally, I've put that little bug out of its misery—and out of mine. And I guess I'll just clean it up (along with the broken lamp) in the morning.

What am I going to do with my life?

<http://essayinfo.com/blog/what-am-i-going-to-do-with-my-life/#more-49>

"One of the hardest choices any young person has to make is 'What am I going to do with my life?' and history is like a great buffet lunch of all kinds of choices that people have made with what they did with their lives..."

David McCullough

The history of XX century has proved that education is not only a right choice for a young person, but also it is an essential part of success in life and career. Every field of modern life demands the educated specialists to solve different problems facing our society. Democracy itself is based on educational values and proves the old statement "knowledge is power". People need this power in order to decide what values are true for them and what are false, rather than blindly follow social convictions or someone else's believes.

When people grow older, they become wiser and more experienced in many issues related to their life. Most of us acquire knowledge at the school of life, which is different for everyone in particular, but at the same time it teaches all people some important lessons they need to learn. College is like a small reproduction of the school of life. It teaches us many important lessons, which are not necessarily found in the curriculum. In a way, college reminds me a survival camp, except that it doesn't have physical trials, it tests only psychological, emotional and personal spheres of our life. That's why I believe that going to college is an important step for growing as an individual.

Perhaps, today some High school graduates assume that college is only about scientific and academic achievements, and therefore they find it boring and useless. Well, in a way it's an absolutely fair assumption. At college they teach curriculum that's not always applicable in our practical experience. However, there is another perspective, which I suggest to consider: college years will become the period of empowerment of your imagination, development of your skills, expression of your creativity, formation of your personality and finding your true self.

One of the distinguished features in the American education system is that, unlike in any other country of the world, it promotes and encourages creative and independent thinking among its students by means of interactive projects and activities. Besides, there are some practical issues to consider. First of all college provides the perfect training to achieve one's career ambitions. Usually its academic program is quite flexible to provide students with options for choosing the best curriculum. Besides, there are many interactive programs that allow participation in special activities aimed to give more deep knowledge and experience in a chosen area of interest. Thus, college life is not as boring as it might seem, especially when one is occupied with the activities that he or she really enjoys doing.

Education in college does not stop at the classroom, but rather continues through internships and extracurricular activities. Besides, there is a great emphasis on teamwork and technology, reflected by numerous exciting courses and programs. Thus, college helps to strengthen both the theoretical knowledge and the practical skills necessary to secure a position in a reputable company.

Of course, there will be life outside of the curriculum. And while it's fun and entertaining, it also is a very useful experience in facing and resolving life issues. Everyone, who enters

college, starts a new life that looks like a blank piece of paper. Whether one was a jerk or too shy, college gives everyone a second chance to become someone different, someone he or she always dreamt to become. It's a power of freedom to become someone new or someone true. This chance opens many interesting roads, but there is only one to chose.

Commitment to another five years of studying is not an easy choice and it's perfectly fair to question the meaning and sense of going to college. There are many examples of successful people who quit the college or never went there and nevertheless managed to succeed. However, it's just a theory of probability, since we don't know much about people, who quit the college and didn't become successful. Perhaps, there are a lot more of them. Perhaps, college education is just the insurance for the future success, but this insurance may one day become your lottery ticket.

Persuasive Essay Topics

- Should boxing be banned?
- Should the driving age be raised to 18?
- Should semi-automatic weapons be banned?
- Should hunting be outlawed?
- Should recycling be mandatory?
- Should schools require student uniforms?
- Should college athletes be paid?
- Should the death penalty be abolished?
- Should handguns be banned?
- Should assisted suicide be permitted?
- Should legal immigration be stopped?
- Should tobacco products be banned?
- Should the logging industry be allowed to harvest public forests?
- Should state lotteries be banned?
- Should alcoholic beverages be banned?
- Should alcoholic beverages be legalized for all ages?
- Should the Internet be censored?
- Should school prayer be allowed?
- Should music lyrics be censored?
- Should parents of teen vandals be held responsible for their child's damage?
- Should research on cloning be discontinued?
- Should affirmative action laws which give special privileges to minorities be eliminated?
- Should a rookie salary cap be enforced in pro sports?
- Should the U.S. provide foreign aid?
- Should females in the military be excluded from combat and other "hazardous" duties?
- Should parents of students who are excessively absent from school be prosecuted under the law?
- Should "home schooling" be permitted?
- Should Native Americans be allowed to have gambling casinos on their reservations?
- Should students failing their classes in high school have their driver's license revoked?
- Should pros be allowed to draft college athletes before they graduate?
- Should wolves be reintroduced to public lands?
- Should free, disposable needles be given to drug addicts?
- Should marijuana be legalized?
- Should adopted children be given the choice of contacting their biological parents?
- Should mothers who give their children up for adoption be allowed to keep their identity secret?
- Should welfare be limited by time?
- Should off-shore drilling be banned?
- Should school funding come from local property taxes?
- Should casino gambling be legalized in Ohio?
- Should the U.S. phase out the Electoral College (regarding presidential elections)?
- Should abortion be legal?
- Should students be required to pass proficiency tests in order to graduate from high school?
- Should people pulled over for DUI have their license suspended for life?
- Should pagers and cell phones be allowed in school?
- Should smoking be allowed in school?