

# WRITING PERSUASIVELY

## PARENT TIPS

### What is Persuasive Writing?

Persuasive writing is just that: writing that tries to persuade or convince a reader about a position, action, etc. Often, young people think of persuasive writing as something that is reserved for you, the adult: campaign speeches, what the boss does where their dad works, the infomercials that try to sell thingamajiggers, the lawyer pleading a case in a courtroom, etc.

### Steps in the Process

Focus: When helping your child to focus on a topic for persuasive writing, help them to look for something about which they have definite ideas and feelings, and also about which they have some first-hand knowledge. Be sure they know enough about a topic to write about it! Not sharing a bedroom is probably much more relevant to elementary students than whether the government should invest considerable money in space exploration.

Plan and Organize: Help your student to use a planner to organize the ideas they have. Think in 3's: 3 reasons, 3 details for each reason.

Write: Encourage the use of concrete, specific details that will help the reader experience the writing, instead of just reading it. Don't forget a conclusion that restates those 3 reasons.

Revise: Encourage your child to read his/her work to you or someone else. Ask him to listen as he reads.

### Textbook Support for Persuasive Writing

Our adopted texts contain examples of persuasive writing:

Houghton-Mifflin Rewards 3.2 Text p. 278; 3.2 Practice Book p. 136

Houghton-Mifflin Journeys 4 Text p. 412; 4 Practice Book p. 228

Houghton-Mifflin Expeditions 5 Text p. 624; 5 Practice Book p. 362

Houghton-Mifflin Triumphs 6 Text p. 570; 6 Practice Book p. 348

Prentice-Hall Bronze 7 Text p. 322

Prentice-Hall Silver 8 Text p. 412

In addition, the Houghton-Mifflin website offers a good collection of benchmark papers for all types of writings, grades 2-8. <http://www.eduplace.com/rdg/hme/>

### Persuasive writing

- Is meant to convince or influence
- Requires careful organization
- Relies on evidence (reasons) to support the opinion offered
- Requires factual backup to support the reasons
- Should include a conclusion that restates purpose and summarizes main points

## STUDENT TIPS

### **Plan!**

What should I write about? Choose something that is important to you, something about which you have some knowledge! Writing a letter to your parents trying to persuade them that you should not have to share a bedroom is going to be more meaningful to you than writing to a congressmen encouraging him to spend more money for space travel. Think about what you know—don't try to write something about which you know very little.

A Graphic Organizer? Think of it as an outlining tool. It helps you to put your ideas in a good order.

Think in 3's: 3 parts (beginning, middle, end), 3 reasons, 3 examples or details for each reason.

- Tell your audience what you are going to write about (introduction/beginning).
- Write about it (this is where the reasons and details come in—one paragraph for each reason).
- Tell your audience what you wrote about (conclusion/end).

### **Write!**

Use your graphic organizer as a plan for your writing! Be sure that you have a beginning, middle and ending. Think about your audience: who is going to read what you write?

### **Revise: Make it Better!**

Variety: use sentences of different lengths. Be sure they start with different words. 5 short sentences in a row, all starting with "I", does not make for interesting reading!!

Verbs: action words add interest. Just like you did with narrative writing, show your reader, don't tell them.

When you think you're finished, read your work one more time. Better yet, have someone read it to you!!

### **Need help?**

Ask your mom to help you look for examples of student persuasive writing. Reading what other students have written will give you ideas of how to do your own writing!

# Persuasive Writing Web Resources

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/writing/index.asp?topic=Persuasive>

This site, although rated for 3-5 graders, contains much material that would be helpful, maybe even more appropriate, for middle schoolers. Both the teacher and student sections are well prepared. Interactive lessons are included, as well as printable worksheets that students can use as they work through the tutorials. The teacher section provides a time-frame for completing the lessons, breaking the components down into a day-by day plan. Students who follow the suggestions will be able to produce excellent pieces of persuasive writing!

<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/>  
[http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/persuasion\\_map/](http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/persuasion_map/)

Both of these links refer to the same website. The first one will take viewers to a searchable lesson-plan archive. A search using “persuasive” as the keyword turned up a list of 45 lessons for various grade levels from K all the way through high school. Many of the lessons incorporate the persuasion map tool that is accessed via the second link above. After using the tool, students can print a graphic organizer that shows their plan.

<http://home.earthlink.net/~jhholly/persuasive.html>

This is a list of 17 persuasive prompts, most appropriate for upper grade students. When your 8<sup>th</sup> grader is looking for speech topics, this might be a good place to go! Many deal with issues that could link to amendments or civil government issues of today.

<http://www.icivics.org/curriculum/persuasive-writing>

This persuasive writing unit is most appropriate for older students. 8<sup>th</sup> graders who are studying the constitution would probably find it to be interesting. There are many power point lessons included, along with teacher helps. The lessons have high interest as well as visual appeal. Before using this with your student, preview it yourself to see if it matches your needs.

[http://www.greatsource.com/iwrite/students/s\\_pers.html](http://www.greatsource.com/iwrite/students/s_pers.html)

With the page, start with the tutorial, then proceed to the various types of persuasive writing... The “Opinion” lesson most closely matches what many of our students will write. The lesson goes step-by-step and offers good help for a parent who may not be confident enough to tackle persuasive writing alone! Included within the teaching are printable organizers and planners, as well as templates that students can use to actually prepare and print their pieces of persuasive writing.

<http://writing.pppst.com/persuasive.html>

If none of the links above have been what you think you need to help your student master persuasive writing, click on this one. But be prepared!! What you will find is a LONG list of MORE LINKS!!! A few are dead, but the rest make up for it. You could use this list and tackle persuasive writing for the entire school year—there’s that much!!



## Persuasive Writing Outline/Brainstorming

I. Opinion: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

II. Reason #1 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

A. DETAIL #1: \_\_\_\_\_

B. DETAIL #2: \_\_\_\_\_

C. DETAIL #3: \_\_\_\_\_

III. Reason #2 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

A. DETAIL #1: \_\_\_\_\_

B. DETAIL #2: \_\_\_\_\_

C. DETAIL #3: \_\_\_\_\_

IV. Reason #3: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

A. DETAIL #1: \_\_\_\_\_

B. DETAIL #2: \_\_\_\_\_

C. DETAIL #3: \_\_\_\_\_

V. Conclusion (restate opinion and reasons)



# PERSUASIVE WRITING SAMPLE RUBRIC

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment/Title \_\_\_\_\_

**I think....**

**Parent/Teacher thinks...**

☺ 4 3 2 1 ☹

### Is it interesting to read?

☺ 4 3 2 1 ☹

Writing is easy to understand and follow. (*organization, idea*)

Detail is precise and rich.. (*word choice*)

Reader's attention is captured. (*idea, voice*)

Sentences show variety in length, beginning words, type and structure. (*fluency*)

An appropriate amount of information is given. (*idea*)

The text sounds good when read aloud. (*fluency*)

☺ 4 3 2 1 ☹

### Is it easy to read and understand?

☺ 4 3 2 1 ☹

The writing clearly has a beginning, middle and end. (*organization*)

A reader can easily identify the opinion of the writer.

The opinion is supported with 3 or more clear reasons.

Each reason is supported with details: facts or other appropriate information. (older students)

Appropriate transitional words and phrases enhance the paper's flow. (*organization*)

Sentences are grammatically and structurally correct: no run-ons or fragments. (*fluency, conventions*)

Paragraphs are structured: topic sentence, details, closing or bridge sentence. (*organization*)

Spelling, capitalization and punctuation are correct. (*conventions*)

☺ 4 3 2 1 ☹

### Is the assignment complete?

☺ 4 3 2 1 ☹

The writing is of a persuasive nature.

A graphic organizer or plan has been used and is attached.

A rough draft (attached) shows evidence of revision and editing.

The final draft is visually attractive and appropriate for the purpose of the assignment.

In complete sentences, use the vocabulary of this rubric to tell what you like about this piece of writing.

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Tell what you will seek to improve in your next piece of writing.

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