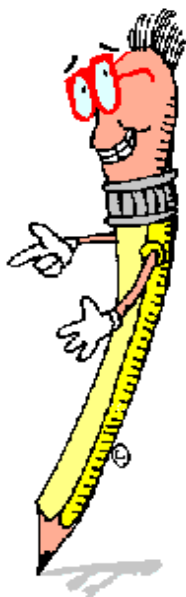


# Persuasive Writing Lesson Plan

Directions: Read the entire lesson. Use the outline as a writing guide. Analyze the published editorials using the Peer Review questions. Write your own persuasive article following the outline as a guide. Use Peer Review to improve your article. Submit your article to CLASS! to be published!

## Make a Stand

In persuasive writing, a writer takes a position FOR or AGAINST an issue and writes to convince the reader to believe or do something. Persuasive writing is often used in advertisements to get the reader to buy a product. It is also used in essays and other types of writing to get the reader to accept a point of view. In order to convince the reader, you need more than opinion; you need facts or examples to back your opinion. So, be sure to do the research!



- Opening with a Statistic or Fact: Sometimes a statistic or fact will add emphasis or interest to your topic. It may be wise to include the item's authoritative source.
- Opening with a Question. (Have you ever considered how many books we'd read if it were not for television?)
- Opening with an Exaggeration or Outrageous Statement. (The whole world watched as the comet flew overhead.)

The introduction should also include a thesis or focus statement. There are three objectives of a thesis statement:

- It tells the reader the specific topic of your essay.
- It imposes manageable limits on that topic.
- It suggests the organization of your paper.

## Writing the introduction

The introduction has a "hook or grabber" to catch the reader's attention. Some "grabbers" include:

- Opening with an unusual detail: (Manitoba, because of its cold climate, is not thought of as a great place to be a reptile. Actually, it has the largest seasonal congregation of garter snakes in the world!)
- Opening with a strong statement: (Cigarettes are the number one cause of lighter sales in Canada!)
- Opening with a Quotation: (Elbert Hubbard once said, "Truth is stronger than fiction.")
- Opening with an Anecdote: An anecdote can provide an amusing and attention-getting opening if it is short and to the point.

Through the thesis, you should say to the reader: "I've thought about this topic, I know what I believe about it, and I know how to organize it."

Example:  
[GRABBER-OPENING WITH A STRONG STATEMENT] Of all the problems facing the environment today, the one that bothers me the most is global warming. Some scientists say that the earth is getting warmer because of the greenhouse effect. [THESIS STATEMENT] In this paper I will describe the greenhouse effect and whether the earth's atmosphere is actually getting warmer.

## **Building the body**

The writer then provides evidence to support the opinion offered in the thesis statement in the introduction. The body should consist of at least three paragraphs. Each paragraph is based on a solid reason to back your thesis statement. Since almost all issues have sound arguments on both sides of the question, a good persuasive writer tries to anticipate opposing viewpoints and provide counter-arguments along with the main points in the essay. One of the three paragraphs should be used to discuss opposing viewpoints and your counter-argument.

### **Elaboration:**

- Use statistics or research, real-life experiences, or examples.
- Generating hypothetical instance: Used particularly when creating an argument and you want the reader to see a different point of view. Use cues for the reader. (eg.: suppose that, what if...)
- Clarifying a position: Think about what needs to be explained and what can be assumed.
- Thinking through a process: Think through the procedure from start to finish. Most often the sentence will begin with a verb. Provide background information a reader may need. Illustrate whenever appropriate. Define special terms used. Use cues for the reader. (e.g...: first, second, next, then etc.)
- Drawing comparisons: Choose something similar to what is being explained. Use one of two patterns: Opposing or Alternating. End with a conclusion. Use cues for the reader.
- Making an analysis: You can analyze a problem by looking at the parts and therefore help the reader to understand.
- Drawing an analogy: Use an analogy to explain or elaborate and idea by identifying significant likenesses between two objects or ideas when otherwise they are quite different. This is helpful when the comparison is made to something that is familiar to the reader.

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## **Forming a conclusion**

A piece of persuasive writing usually ends by summarizing the most important details of the argument and stating once again what the reader is to believe or do.

- Restate your thesis or focus statement.
- Summarize the main points: The conclusion enables your reader to recall the main points of your position. In order to do this you can paraphrase the main points of your argument.
- Write a personal comment or call for action. You can do this:
- With a Prediction: This can be used with a narrative or a cause and effect discussion. The conclusion may suggest or predict what the results may or may not be in the situation discussed or in similar situations.
- With a Question: Closing with a question lets your readers make their own predictions, draw their own conclusions.
- With Recommendations: A recommendations closing is one that stresses the actions or remedies that should be taken.
- With a Quotation: Since a quotation may summarize, predict, question, or call for action, you may use a quotation within a conclusion for nearly any kind of paper.

## **Summary**

As a general guideline, when writing a persuasive essay:

- Have a firm opinion that you want your reader to accept.
- Begin with a grabber or hook to get the reader's attention.
- Offer evidence to support your opinion.
- Conclude with a restatement of what you want the reader to do or believe.

## Persuasive Essay Outline

### I. Introduction

Get the readers attention by using a “hook.” Give some background information if necessary. Include a thesis or focus statement.

### II. First argument or reason to support your position

Give topic sentence explaining your point. Give information to back your point.

### III. Second argument or reason to support your position

Give topic sentence explaining your point. Give information to back your point.

### IV. Third argument or reason to support your position

Give topic sentence explaining your point. Give information to back your point.

### V. Opposing Viewpoint

Provide the opposing viewpoint so that the reader will know you have considered another point of view and have a rebuttal to it. Give your rebuttal to the opposing point. Offer elaboration to back your rebuttal.

### VI. Conclusion

Summary of main points or reasons. Restate the thesis statement. Provide a personal comment or a call to action.



## Don't Forget Transitions

Transitions are words and phrases that connect ideas and show how they are related. They move the essay smoothly from one idea to the next.

Examples of transition words: First, Lastly, For example, However, Similarly, Conversely, Finally, In conclusion, As a result, Therefore, Moreover, Likewise, Accordingly, In contrast

## Peer Review Checklist

Ask someone to read your rough draft to see if they understand and can follow your argument. Ask them to consider the following questions. Their answers should show you that your argument makes sense.

- What is the thesis statement?
- How is the thesis explained?
- What are the main arguments?
- How did the author back up each point?
- What are the opposing point(s)?
- What is the writer's solution?

## CLASS! Anti-Tobacco Editorial Contest

Analyze the following editorials for correct format using the Peer Review Checklist. Are all the elements of persuasive writing present? How convincing is the author? Try one yourself. Write a persuasive editorial of 500 to 1,000 words to convince readers that they should not use tobacco products. Be sure to include links to your information sources. Submit your article to CLASS!, and if your article is published, you will receive \$25. Be sure to include your name, school, grade, mailing address, phone and e-mail address. If your article is published, you will be notified after publication and will receive a check by mail. Submit articles by e-mail, fax or U.S. mail to: CLASS! Publications, 4505 S. Maryland Parkway, UNLV Box 451025, Las Vegas, NV 89154-1025, Fax: 895-1505, E-mail: classpub@unlv.edu.

## Sample editorials:

### #1 Tobacco effects teach tough lesson

Have you ever been close to death? Have you ever witnessed someone else who was close to death at one point? If a smoker has not seen or experienced this, then it could be hard to sway them to quit smoking. If tobacco kills, then why use it? The answer is lack of knowledge and addiction.

A close friend of my family was diagnosed with lung cancer as a result of her smoking. Luckily, they caught it in time and treated it, and she survived. However, I watched someone dear to me, someone I love, go through a hell that no one should have to experience. Some smokers think they “fit in,” but all they’ll really be fitting into is a body bag.

If smokers can’t come up with a reason to quit for themselves, then they should do it for someone else. The people who love them don’t want them to smoke. They hate the smell, and they don’t appreciate the effects of secondhand smoke.

Tobacco can cause all sorts of problems, such as shortness of breath, heart disease, lung cancer and even strokes. The smoker’s appearance suffers because tobacco ingredients damage skin and turn teeth yellow.

Make the smart choice for yourself, your friends and family and everyone else. Don’t smoke.

### #2 Secondhand smoke endangers pets as well as humans

When you light up a cigarette, you have to understand all the hazards that people around you suffer. In this case, pets are the least considered. All these creatures are considered part of the family, but when it comes to smoking, people don’t think twice about what it does to their pets. What they don’t know is that cigarette smoke affects animals the same way as , or even worse than, humans.

“I have a dog that I love. I think that people should be more careful,” says Yessenia Martinez, a student at Las Vegas High School.

According to a study done by Colorado State University, the dogs that live with an individual who smokes constantly are more likely to develop cancer.

“There are some people who don’t care about smoking in front of the kids or other family members. They won’t care about their pets either,” says Martinez.

Veterinarian Sam Lynch agrees. “An animal living with people who smoke is more likely to live a shorter life,” he says. “They can have the same problems that humans have. A very common cancer dogs can develop due to secondhand smoke is bladder cancer.

Other problems that cigarette smoke can cause to dogs and cats are respiratory problems. The

study from Colorado State University found that dogs inhale the smoke just like people do, and cats inhale it from their hair when they are cleaning themselves. Respiratory problems due to secondhand smoke are more common in cats. Many of them can even develop asthma.

Secondhand smoke is a very dangerous substance and can harm the entire family. Children and pets have smaller organs, so they are more likely to get sick easier.

If you smoke, you have to decide if you want to put your loved ones, including your pets, at risk.



### #3 Smokers lead lonely lives

When it's said that "tobacco is whacko," it's no joke.

The truth is that tobacco isn't cool, it isn't hot, and it's not fashionable. Purchasing tobacco is like purchasing a pair of Converse with no soles. You can't do anything with them, and they aren't good for anything.

Since these are our high school years, it's natural that the girls and guys want to look their best. It's hard to look beautiful or handsome with a puff of smoke crawling out of your lips or a greasy dollop of tobacco in your mouth.

Tobacco can ruin that million-dollar smile that you were born with or that your parents paid for by staining your pearly whites into yellow monsters. Chemicals in tobacco leave a residue behind on your teeth, making them appear dull and dingy. No matter how much you brush, the residue doesn't come off. You have to use special tar-removing toothpaste. That's right — tar, as in the substance used to pave streets!

Using tobacco also causes the skin to degenerate as soon as you start smoking. A protein in tobacco damages the skin from the inside like ultraviolet rays from the sun does on the outside. This protein destroys the elasticity of your skin, making it sag and darken or become more yellow. This is the same process that occurs when skin ages, only smoking accelerates the process by years! If you make it to middle age and start using wrinkle cream, it will be too late to save your looks because you used tobacco in your younger years.

Tobacco chemicals also inhibit the immune and growth systems in the human body. If you have acne, it will take longer to get it to heal if you are a smoker because your immune system is weakened, and it's pulling double duty to save your lungs. In addition, hair loss can result from the same cause.

If yellow teeth, sagging skin, acne and baldness aren't enough to steer someone away from smoking, how about that smell? Even the smell of cigarette smoke on someone's hair and skin is enough to make other people lose their breath. Cigarette odor emits chemicals that irritate the sense of smell and the lungs. As gross as it sounds, that makes your body produce protective fluids that can make you cough and gag. Just imagine what it's doing to you if you're the smoker!

Believe me, people will notice someone with yellow teeth, sagging skin, acne, baldness and an odor that makes them gag, but who wants to be noticed for that? It comes as no surprise that eight out of ten boys and seven out of 10 girls surveyed said they would not date a smoker. That's okay, though, because smokers spend so much money on tobacco, they don't have any left to go on dates. Plus, there are so many non-smoking places now that smokers are often left out in the cold while the party goes on without them.

Many teenage smokers have heard all this before and would like to quit, but don't know how. One of the worst things about smoking is that it's so addictive — it's worse than a craving for Sour Cream and Onion Pringles!

It's hard, but it's not impossible. Once you start down that road, your health, and your social life, will show signs of recovery.

