

Grades 11-12 Counter Arguments

Strand: Writing/Research

SOL: 11.6 b
12.6 b

Materials:

- Pepsi Products
- Coke Products
- Interactive White Boards or computers
- Chart Paper and Markers (if technology is unavailable)
- Computer Access for students (optional)

Lesson:

1. The teacher will begin the lesson by asking the class if they have ever been in a debate with their parent/guardian. Ex: Have you ever really wanted to go somewhere with your friends and your parents said “no”? Ask the students how they handled the situation. Did they offer reasons why they should be allowed to go? Did they ask their parent to reconsider? Did the parent offer reasons they shouldn’t go? What was the outcome?
2. Define counter argument. Explain to students that the debate that they had with their parent was an exercise in counter arguments. Have students complete a “T” chart with their name at the top of one column and their parents at the top of the other. Then have them fill in the chart with the arguments that each side used. Explain how this connects to a persuasive essay.
3. Have the students choose the product they like the most: Pepsi or Coke.
4. Have the students who prefer Coke stand on one side of the room and Pepsi on the other.
5. Explain to the students that they are going to write down every positive argument they can think of for their selected product. Each group should have a recorder who takes the notes. Notes can be recorded on paper or on a white board.
6. When groups finish, each group posts their ideas on the board for the other group to review. Note: students will be amazed at how each group has similar arguments.
7. After the lists have been reviewed, students will choose the best three (3) arguments listed for the product they chose.
8. Each student will construct a thesis statement using the arguments chosen.
9. Each student will then use the arguments to construct a short essay persuading the opposition to choose authors chosen product. Paragraphs need to contain a topic sentences (argument), support, counter argument, and persuasive assertion to sway the audience.
10. Teacher will randomly share student essays with the class. The class will vote on the most persuasive essay.
11. Teacher will review the steps to counter argument in persuasive writing:
 - a. Consider the audience

- b. State the situation
- c. Make the assertion/ Choose a side
- d. List all the arguments FOR your position
- e. List points of opposition
- f. Come up with a plan to foil the opposition
- g. Choose the top three arguments for your position
- h. Write your thesis statement