

## Grades 9-12 Persuasive Writing

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### Strand: Writing

**SOL** 9.6  
10.6  
11.6  
12.6

### Materials

- Copies of a nonfiction article
- Sticky-notes
- “Class Controversy” handout
- Interactive computer board or overhead projector
- Highlighters

### Lesson

#### DAY ONE

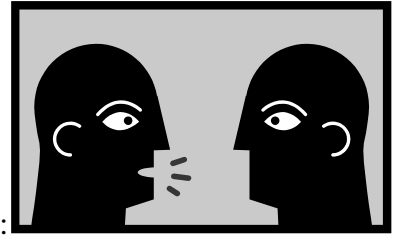
1. Ask students to think about a time that they tried to persuade a friend or parent during an argument or discussion. What makes a good persuasive argument? (Students can free-write a response or discuss in small collaborative groups). Reiterate sound arguments, detailed support, and logical connections between ideas.
2. Assign students to read a current editorial or persuasive essay. (Examples are easily accessible in weekly news magazines, local newspapers, or [teachertube.com](http://teachertube.com) ) Divide the class into an even number of small groups. Provide each group with a prompt for debate. (Each group’s prompt will match one other group, but the two groups will argue opposite sides. (This exercise can also be done with literature for example, for the prompt “*In the story, is Sir Gawain brave?*” One group will argue in YES he is brave, while the other group will argue NO he is not brave.)
3. To develop an effective persuasive argument for their prompt, students will brainstorm ideas for detailed support. Provide each student with a pad of sticky notes. Give students a few minutes to list as many facts and details as possible on the sticky notes (one fact per note). Then, allow students to collaborate within their groups. They will combine and organize their ideas by creating different “piles” of sticky notes. They are beginning to form a persuasive argument.
4. Distribute the “Class Controversy” handout. Using the sticky note brainstorm, each group will identify at least four major supportive details for a persuasive argument. Encourage students to develop counter arguments and to refer to the text for support as well. Students will record the groups’ major ideas on one side of the chart.
5. Groups will share their arguments with the entire class. As other groups report, students will take meticulous notes on their controversy charts. Further class discussion may emerge with the presentations; encourage the development of the arguments and counterarguments.

6. After all groups have presented, give groups time to confirm or revise their arguments. Explain that by using the “Class Controversy” handout they have created a basic outline for a persuasive essay. Students now have thorough arguments, possible counterarguments, and details listed on the chart. For homework, each student will select a particular stance on their topic and write a draft of their persuasive essay.

## DAY TWO

1. Using an interactive computer board or projector, show the students a sample persuasive essay. Read the essay to the students. As a class, identify and underline the thesis statement of the essay. Then, highlight supportive arguments that the author uses in the essay.
2. Students will sit in the debate groups once again. Students will bring the rough draft of the paper and a highlighter. Instruct students to underline the thesis of their own paper. Remind them that a truly effective persuasive paper has a clear and focused argument.
3. Assign each student a partner from their *opposing* group. Students will peer edit and revise the essays, focusing particularly on the writer’s use of persuasive arguments and supportive details. As students read, they will highlight the support found in the essay. Then, the partners will discuss each paper. Together, students will skim through the essay, and indicate whether the highlighted support was strong (+) or weak (-). In the cases of weak support, partners will discuss and add changes to strengthen the persuasive paper. Encourage them to cite the text.
4. After the revision session, students will be ready to type a final draft of the persuasive essays. As a class, discuss:
  - What makes a strong persuasive argument?
  - How did collaborative brainstorming help the writing process?
  - Why is it important to have a clear thesis in a persuasive essay?
  - Why is it helpful to have someone with a different point of view revising your paper?

**Attachments, Link, or Resources**



**Class Controversy!**

Create a developed *persuasive argument* through our class discussion:

1. Generate ideas through your individual brainstorm.
2. Collaborate with your group to organize the ideas into solid arguments. Write at least **FOUR** of these supportive arguments in the appropriate box below.
3. As other groups present, *take notes!* Their ideas present possible counterarguments and may inspire more ideas to defend your side of the argument.

Prompt	Group 1: PRO	Group 2: CON