

Lesson Skill: Counterarguments

Strand Writing

SOL 11.6

12.6

Materials

- Pepsi products
- Coke products
- Chart paper
- Markers
- Computer access for students (optional)

Lesson

1. Ask the class if they have ever been in a debate? For example, “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 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. Give each group a piece of chart paper and a magic marker.
5. Explain 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.
6. When both groups finish, each group posts their chart paper ideas on the board.
7. After reviewing the lists, students should choose what they deem to be several of the best arguments listed for the product they chose.
8. Students construct a thesis statement using their chosen arguments.
9. Students use the arguments to construct a short essay persuading the opposition to choose their chosen product. Paragraphs need to contain a topic sentence (argument), support, counterargument, and persuasive assertion to sway the audience.
10. Students share essays with the class. The class votes on which essay did the best job persuading them.
11. Teacher will review the steps to counter argument in persuasive writing:
 - State the situation
 - Consider the audience
 - Make the assertion/choose a side

English Enhanced Scope and Sequence

- List all arguments
- List points of opposition
- Come up with a plan to foil the opposition
- Choose the top arguments
- Write the thesis statement

Strategies

- Vocabulary — Word Wall
- Thesis statement organizer from previous unit
- Prior to beginning the lesson — go over the “big picture” with students