

Chapter 5

NAME _____

Lesson 1 Persuasive Writing

Advertisements are one form of persuasive writing. Letters to the editor are another. A written speech may be persuasive. An article or essay can also be persuasive. For example, a scientist might write an article or essay to persuade other scientists that a theory is correct. A politician might write an article to persuade voters to support a local issue. Whatever the form that persuasive writing takes, the writer's goal is to try to make readers think, feel, or act in a certain way.

Here is an example of a short persuasive article.

Recess Before Lunch Is the Best Bet

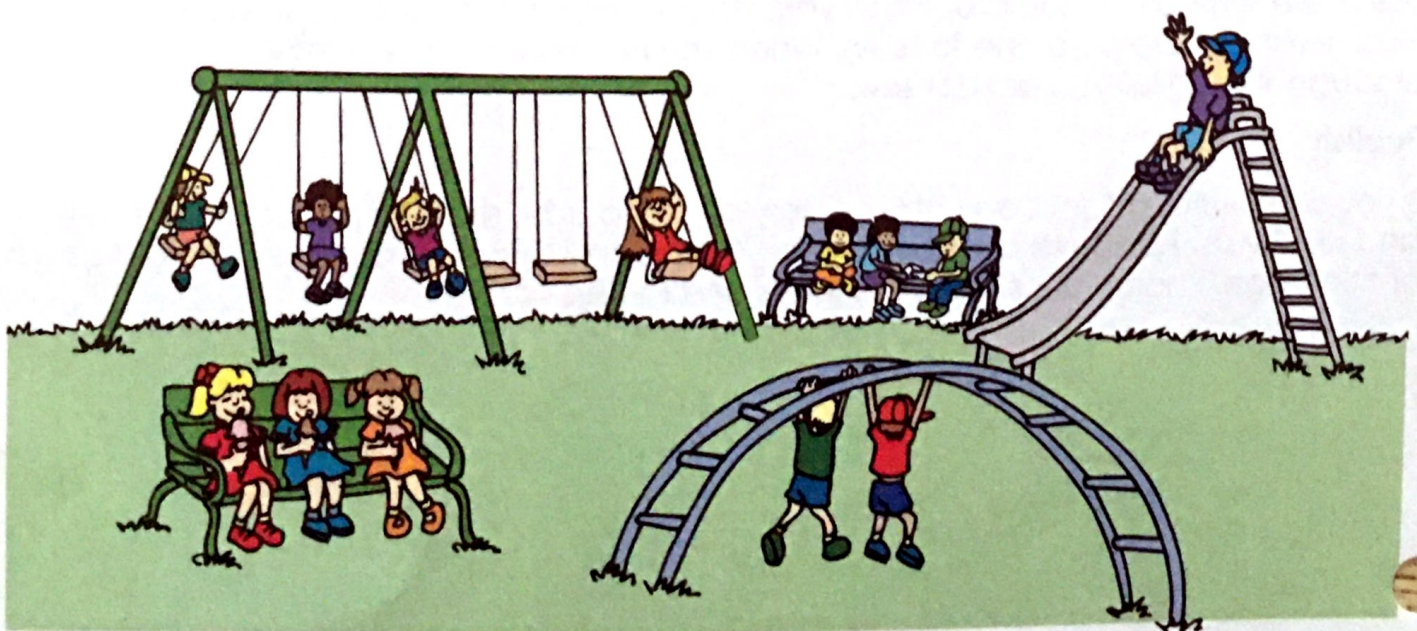
By Pamela Whitaker

Principal, Tri-City Elementary School

For decades, elementary schools have followed a routine that puts lunch before recess. Recently, however, a few schools have broken the mold and switched to recess before lunch. Tri-City Elementary is one of those schools.

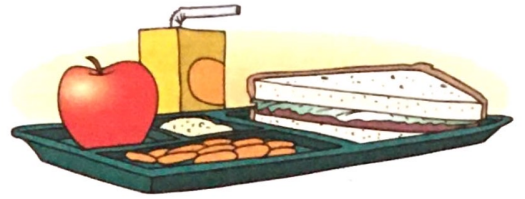
At recess, students burn off energy and build up appetites. Then, they come into the lunchroom really ready to eat. They drink more because they have just been exercising. According to the school nurse, taking in extra liquids helps children feel better and stay healthier. Students discard less food because their appetites are better, and they are not hurrying to be first out to the playground. Finally, the teachers believe that students return to the classroom more ready to learn.

Teachers, staff, parents, and students all think the new system is great. I would encourage every elementary school in the country to schedule recess before lunch.



Lesson 2 Facts and Opinions

Which of the following sentences is a fact? Which is an opinion? If you are not sure, ask yourself these questions: Which statement could be proven true? That would be a **fact**. Which is a belief or a personal judgment? That would be an **opinion**.



Our school cafeteria serves lunch to 448 children each day.

Our school cafeteria serves the best food in the school district.

Often, writers state both facts and opinions. That is okay, but readers must be sure to distinguish between the two. Look for facts and opinions as you read Ms. Whitaker's article again.

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Lesson 2 Facts and Opinions

Words such as *think*, *believe*, *should*, *must*, *never*, *always*, *like*, *hate*, *best*, and *worst* may signal that a statement is an opinion. Scan the article on page 72 again and circle any opinion signal words you find.

Write two facts from the article.

Write two opinions from the article.

Akira, a student at Tri-City Elementary, has written about the new lunch routine. Read the paragraph he wrote.

I used to eat my lunch in about 6 minutes. Terry and I used to race to see who could finish first. Recess is much more fun than lunch. Now that we have recess first, I don't eat so fast. Mom thinks I must be growing because I eat such big lunches now. I think recess is still more fun than lunch, but lunch is okay, too.

Write one fact from Akira's paragraph.

Circle any opinion signal words that you find in Akira's paragraph. Then, write one opinion that Akira states.

Now, based on Ms. Whitaker's and Akira's facts, state your own opinion about having recess before lunch.

Lesson 3 Emotional Appeals

How do writers get readers to think, feel, or act in a certain way when they write persuasively? They often appeal to readers' emotions. When writers make an **emotional appeal**, they try to get at something about which readers feel strongly. For example, Devon thinks that teachers shouldn't assign homework on weekends. He included this statement in a letter to the editor of the school paper:

We work hard at school during the week, but the weekend should be our time to relax and play with friends. I don't think it is fair that teachers give us homework over the weekend. We already spend all of our free time doing homework on weeknights.

Devon knows that most students feel strongly about homework. He also knows that students like to have time to play with friends. Though the statements are opinions (rather than facts), they have a strong emotional appeal and may persuade some readers to believe as the writer does.

Many people have strong feelings about positive issues such as these:

home	family	comfort	money
safety	justice	conservation	security

People may also have strong feelings toward negative issues such as these:

crime	injustice	waste
pollution	violence	danger

Name some issues about which you have strong feelings.

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Emotional appeals may tie into readers' positive or negative feelings. Read the letter to the editor on the next page. It makes an emotional appeal to a negative issue.

Lesson 3 Emotional Appeals

Dear Editor:

I am writing to voice my opinion on weekend homework. Kids our age need to spend more time exercising and playing with friends, not stuck inside working on homework. We work hard all week, writing book reports and doing math problems. By the end of the week, our brains are full and need to rest. We would learn even more if we didn't have to do homework over the weekend.

Devon

Ms. Tierney's 5th-grade class

Explain the emotional appeal in Devon's letter to the editor.

Now, write a letter to the editor in support of weekend homework. Remember to consider your audience. What kind of emotional appeal might make people favor weekend homework?

Dear Editor:



Lesson 4 Advertising

People who write advertisements are persuasive writers. They rely heavily on emotional appeals to convince the reader to buy their product. They know that people have strong feelings about wanting to feel good, to fit in, and to have fun. Advertisements constantly send people the messages people want to hear.



What message does the sock slogan send? (In other words, to what strong emotion does it appeal?)

What message does the eyeglass slogan send?

You already know that writers need to consider their audience when they write. Advertising writers know that thinking about their audience is especially important. Perhaps the most often-asked question is this: Who might buy this product, and what will persuade them to do so?

Suppose you are writing an advertisement for baby clothing. Who is your audience?

To what strong feelings do you need to appeal to get your audience to buy your baby clothing?

Lesson 4 Advertising

Would you make a good advertising copywriter? Create a slogan for a barbershop or a beauty salon. First, think about who the audience is. About what kinds of issues might they have strong feelings? In your slogan, make an emotional appeal.

Now, your next assignment is to create a slogan for a used car lot. Again, think of your audience and make an emotional appeal.

Create a new slogan for your school. Consider the strong feelings people have about keeping children safe, educating them, and feeling pride for both school and community.

Images can make emotional appeals, as well, and most advertisements use a combination of words and images to persuade people to buy a product. Look back at the slogans you created. Choose your favorite and create an image to accompany it. Your slogan and image should work together to make a very strong emotional appeal. Create your ad below.

Lesson 5 Order of Importance

When writers write about events, they use time order. When they describe a place, they use spatial order. When they write to persuade, they use **order of importance**.

Remember, when writers write to persuade, they try to make their readers think or act in a certain way. For example, you might try to persuade community members to donate canned food to the student council's food drive. As you persuade, you should save your most important ideas—your strongest arguments—for last. So, build ideas from least important to most important.

Student Council Food Drive

The Student Council's fall project is a food drive. The class that collects the most cans will earn book fair coupons. All canned goods collected will go to the Fourth Street Food Pantry. The Fourth Street Food Pantry provides food to approximately 60 families each week during the summer. In the winter, that number nearly doubles as winter heating bills rise and families have less money to spend on food. These families rely on the Food Pantry to keep themselves fed and healthy. If we all help just a little bit, keeping the Food Pantry stocked will be easy.



This writer gave several reasons why people should donate to the food drive. Can you find them? Number them in the paragraph. Then, underline the most important reason.

Lesson 6 Business Letter

A **business letter** is a letter written to a company, organization, or person you do not know. Writers usually write business letters to make a request, to express a concern, or to make a complaint. Whatever the reason for writing the letter, the writer usually wants the recipient to do something, so there may be an element of persuasion. It is important to be very clear about the action the recipient should take. Read this business letter, which is a letter of request. Notice its six parts.

<p>The heading includes the sender's address and the date.</p>	<p>1829 Marshall Avenue Erie, PA 16509 October 12, 2008</p>
<p>The inside address is the name and address of the recipient.</p>	<p>Fourth Street Food Pantry 827 N. Fourth Street Erie, PA 16509</p>
<p>A colon follows the greeting.</p>	<p>Dear Fourth Street Food Pantry:</p>
<p>The text of the letter is the body.</p>	<p>I am a member of the student council at Weber Elementary. For our fall project, we are having a food drive. We will donate everything we collect to the Food Pantry. Before we begin, I have some questions. We want to make sure that we collect the kinds of foods you need.</p>
<p>A comma follows the closing.</p>	<p>Should we collect only canned foods, or are "dry" items such as breakfast cereals and soup mixes okay as well? Please contact our advisor, Mrs. Burton, during the day at 555-2112 with this information.</p>
<p>The sender always includes a signature.</p>	<p>Thank you, <i>Miriam Medina</i> Miriam Medina</p>

Lesson 6 Business Letter

Weeks have passed and the food drive has gone very well. There is so much canned food stacked up in the gym that you need a truck to get it to the food pantry. Write to Mr. Strouse, the father of one of your classmates, who owns a delivery truck company. Ask that he donate his time to load and deliver the collected canned goods to the pantry. Remember, you must think about how to get him to want to do this for you. Be polite and persuasive. Also, be clear about how and when he should respond to your request.

1829 Marshall Avenue
Erie, PA 16509
December 18, 2008

Mr. Milt Strouse
Strouse Trucking
11674 Granger Road
Erie, PA 16509

Lesson 7 The Writing Process: Persuasive Article

The teachers and staff at your school work hard to make the school a good one. They want to make it even better, so they have asked how you think the school could be improved. Use the writing process to create a persuasive article about a change that you think would improve your school.

Prewrite

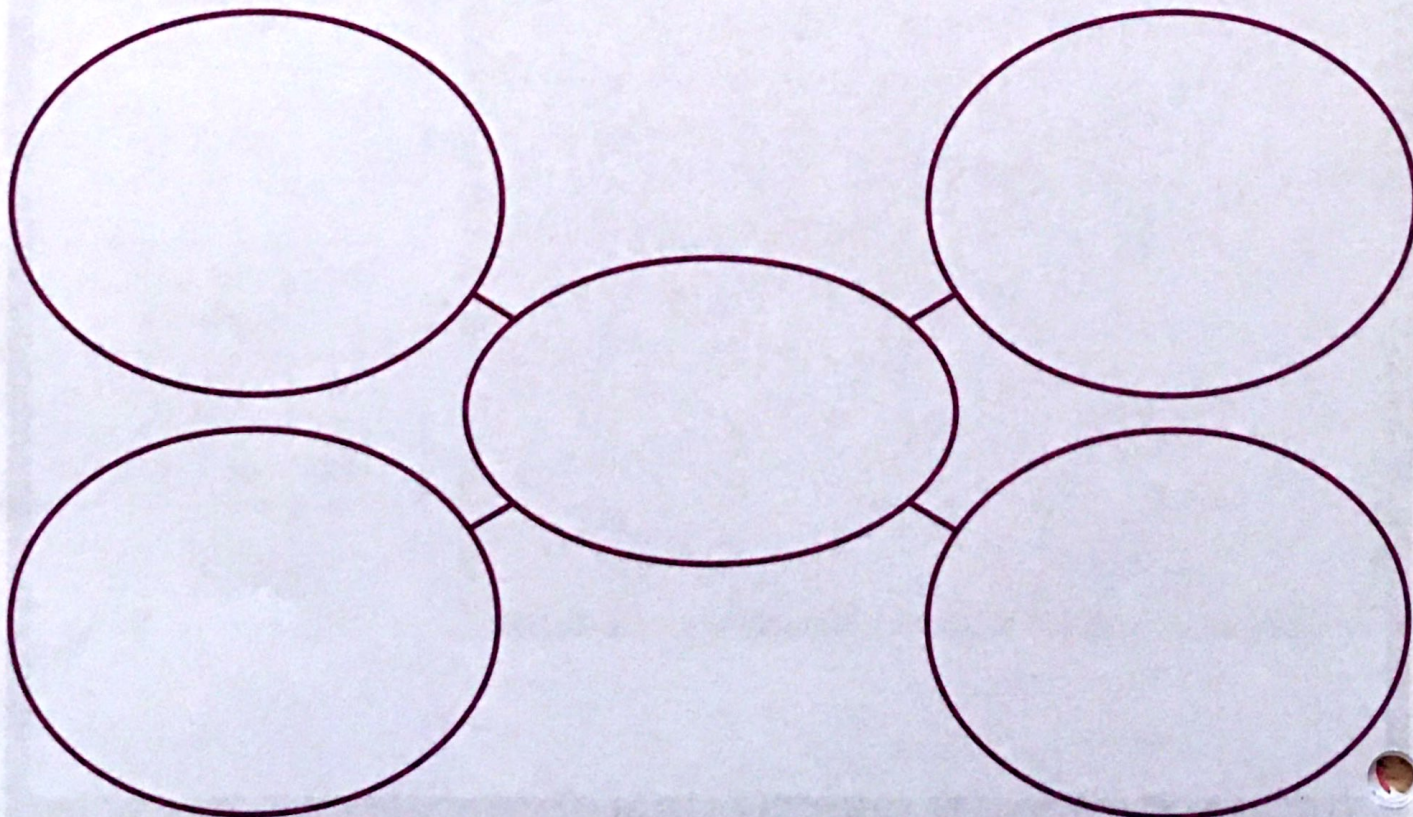
Write notes here about some things that could be improved at your school.

What Could Be Improved

How It Could Be Improved

Now, think about these issues for a few minutes. Which one do you feel most strongly about? Which change do you think is the most important? Write your choice here.

Use this idea web to record your reasons for suggesting this change. Remember, your goal is to persuade the teachers and staff that the change you are suggesting would be a good one for the school. What will make them agree with you? In addition to stating your opinion, you will have to give good reasons for believing as you do. Add more ovals to the idea web if you need to.



Lesson 7 The Writing Process: Persuasive Article

Now, it is time to organize the points you will make in your persuasive article. What is your strongest argument? Save that one for last. Write your important reasons or points, in these boxes. Then, number them in order.

Lesson 7 The Writing Process: Persuasive Article

Revise

Everything that you read has been revised at least once. Even the most experienced writers look over their work and make changes. Reread your own work slowly and carefully. Then, answer the questions below about your draft. If you answer "no" to any of these questions, those are the areas that might need improvement. Feel free to make marks on your draft so you know what needs more work.

- Did you state your opinion clearly at the beginning of the article?
- Did you give strong reasons to support your opinion?
- Did you organize those reasons in a logical order, such as least important to most important?
- Did you clearly state what you want your readers to think or do?

Think carefully about your audience. With persuasive writing, it is especially important to direct your arguments at your specific audience. Ask yourself these questions.

- What opinions do my audience already hold about this issue?
- What does my audience already know about this issue?
- What will they need to know in order to understand the issue?
- What emotional appeals might sway the audience to support my opinion?

It is always a good idea to read your work out loud at the revising stage. You might hear awkward sentences or ideas that don't flow quite right. Other sentences may not say exactly what you mean.

