

# **Teaching Persuasive Reading and Writing**

**A Sample Unit of Lessons and Strategies  
for High School Teachers**

**Jefferson County Public Schools  
Version 2.0**

## INTRODUCTION

This unit was developed to give starting points for teaching Persuasive Reading and Writing. Ninth and tenth graders are working toward the KCCT assessment. They should be able to read and comprehend persuasive materials well by the end of the 10th grade. Eleventh and twelfth graders should continue to read persuasive texts as models for transactive writings they will write in classes across the curriculum.

The reading texts referenced in this unit include a variety of persuasive readings from advertisements to anthology texts to JCPS student writings. The unit's student writings need to be used as samples rather than models of proficient writing. You should also be on the lookout for persuasive writings in school publications, newspapers, and periodicals that you can use with your students, even after this unit is completed.

The final product of the unit's writing instruction is a persuasive letter emphasizing the techniques and strategies a writer uses for persuasive writing. People write persuasive letters to convince others to think a certain way and/or take an action. Persuasive letters are written daily to a variety of audiences, including businesses, government officials, parents, and school personnel. They call for actions that range from voting for or against proposed legislation to replacing a defective product with a new one. While similar to editorials and letters to the editor, persuasive letters differ in that they address a more specific audience than a general readership of a publication. This genre lends itself well to use in other content classes as well as English. It is good to remind your students and their content teachers to be on the lookout for opportunities that allow them to respond to the events and issues of their world with persuasive writing.

It is expected you will use these lessons with your own personal style added and with the needs and interests of your students in mind. Feel free to adapt these lessons for your individual classroom needs. The length of the lessons will vary due to your school's individual time schedule. Work with the activities in chunks of time, not necessarily class period to class period. We have incorporated the Writer's Notebook and designed this unit around the workshop model that exposes students to a variety of strategies, allows the students to practice them, and encourages student choice through using "seeds" from the Notebook they use in their final writing.

We have also included a Word Wall in this unit as a way to accomplish word work, one of the components of our JCPS Five-Block Literacy Model. As you introduce a high-frequency word that relates to the unit, print it on a paper strip, talk about its definition with the class, and place it on the wall with the other unit words. Review the word throughout the unit, especially as it occurs in other lessons. Remember to use reading and writing instruction as an intentional way to help your students develop vocabulary in context.

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## Immerse Students in Persuasive Reading and Writing

- Collect samples of persuasive writing for class file (advertisements, editorials, letters, speeches, etc.).
- Use the Writer’s Notebook as a place for gathering “seed” ideas that students can later develop into published pieces. The following entries allow students to look at a variety of persuasive techniques and various forms of persuasion they encounter in everyday life:

Watch the evening news, or browse newspapers or magazines. Brainstorm a list of changes you’d like to see in your home, school, community, and/or world. What bothers you? What message would you give to a person who could affect a change of policy in this area?

Look in the local newspaper. Find an advertisement for a product you would like to purchase. Why is this ad effective or not effective? Be prepared to share your ad with your classmates.

List a series of adjectives you might use to sell an object you now own.

List specific facts about your school that you could use in a flyer to persuade eighth grade students to attend your high school. Look at your student handbook or planner for suggestions (courses offered, activities, dress code, etc.).

Think about the last time you asked your parents, teacher, or boss for a favor or a privilege. What arguments did you use? Were your arguments effective? Why or why not?

Finding a job requires you to sell yourself to your employer. How could you convince an employer that you are the best candidate for the job? Include specifics and qualities you possess.

- Create a class Word Wall for new vocabulary introduced in this unit. Leave Core Content terms on the wall for frequent reference.
- On a regular basis, allow students to write persuasively on topics they feel passionately about. Avoid “cookie cutter” assignments where all students must write on the same topic.
- Provide a multitude of opportunities for student publication of persuasive writing:
  - “Your View” column in the *Courier-Journal*
  - “The Best” column in the *Courier-Journal*
  - school newspaper
  - letters to school council/principal
  - public service spots for broadcast on school television network

letters of application to prospective employers and prospective colleges

- Create a wall of published student authors and their writing.
- Share with students your own persuasive writing that's been used to achieve "real-world" results.

## **ADDRESSING STUDENTS' NEEDS IN THE WRITER'S WORKSHOP: AN OVERVIEW**

This unit was designed to prepare students to draft a persuasive letter. To honor the needs of writers we suggest the following guidelines to use with your students as they apply the writing process of prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and publishing.

1. Honor students' learning styles. Some students like to draft in pencil, some in pen, and some will choose to word process their drafts. Some students will like to draft at home and use class time to conference. Some students will be intimidated by the computer and will need instruction and encouragement.
2. Allow library time and access to Internet for research.
3. Your time should be used to conference with individual students. Draw students' attention back to the checklist found in this unit entitled "Characteristics of an Effective Persuasive Letter."
4. Encourage students to evaluate their work against the Kentucky Holistic Scoring Guide.
5. Implement mini-lessons that address students' problems with sentences, language, and correctness.
6. Establish time throughout the unit for revision using strategies such as peer conferencing and teacher conferencing.
7. Reading their written text aloud is an editing strategy that students can use to understand the need for punctuation. As they read aloud, they can hear the places where they need to insert commas, periods, or other marks of punctuation, based on the flow of the text.

**UNIT:** Persuasive Reading & Writing

**TOPIC:** The Purpose of Persuasion

**LESSON 1 OBJECTIVE:** Students will identify the purpose of persuasive techniques used in advertising.

**CORE CONTENT:**

RD-H-3.0.1 Students will locate, evaluate, and apply information for a realistic purpose.

RD-H-3.0.13 Students will identify a variety of persuasive and propaganda techniques and explain how each is used.

**VOCABULARY:**

Persuasive techniques

(Require students to define and place on a “Word Wall” strip for classroom display.)

**RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:**

- Several ads from popular magazines
- Manila folders containing ads using various persuasive techniques for group activity
- Individual Student Handouts of “Persuasive Techniques” chart
- Overhead Transparency of “Persuasive Techniques”
- Reflective notebook

**TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:**

• **Writer’s Notebook**

What does it mean to persuade someone? List several methods one might employ to persuade another. Explain how these methods might be effective in the art of persuasion?

• **Share**

Invite students to share their thinking. As they do, list key ideas and/or concepts of persuasion students mention on the overhead or chalkboard.

Using student-generated ideas, guide students toward the following explanation of persuasive writing:

*“Persuasion is about convincing the reader or listener to think or act in a certain way.”*

- **Mini Lesson:** *Emotional Appeals* (Distribute copies of “Persuasive Techniques” chart)

“Perhaps the first step to understanding persuasion is to recognize the role it plays in our everyday lives. Advertisers attempt to persuade consumers each day using a variety of techniques known as emotional appeals.”

1. Review chart with students.
  2. One-by-one, hold up several different ads using various emotional appeals while asking your students to state which technique(s) they think are at play in the ads. Encourage them to refer to the chart.
- Divide the class into groups of three. Give each group a manila folder of pre-selected ads. As the groups examine the ads, they are to identify specific examples of persuasive techniques depicted in the ads.
  - After adequate time, ask groups to select a reporter to share the ads and the group’s identification of persuasive techniques used in them.

- **Writer’s Notebook**

Return to whole class. Refer students back to the purpose of persuasion. Invite students to compose a reflection on one of the ads they looked at, using the following prompt:

“Explain what the ad was attempting to get the viewer to do. How effective was the technique(s)? What was the ad’s strength or weakness?”

**ENRICHMENT:** Bring in a collection of junk mail and have students determine persuasive techniques used in each piece.

**TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:**

Surf the internet to analyze electronic persuasive techniques.

**ASSESSING THE LEARNING:**

Observe groups and respond to group reports.



<b>Persuasive Techniques</b>	<b>Explanations</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<b>HUMOR</b>	Uses jokes, plays on words, clever pictures or cartoons	Dancing men with blue heads see technology products.
<b>GLITTERING GENERALITIES</b>	Makes broad, unsupported statements often using “all,” “every,” “always,” “never”	“Every time you vote for this candidate, you are supporting funding for flag-burning.”
<b>BANDWAGON</b>	Suggests “everybody is doing it” so the reader should too	“People in towns all over America subscribe!”
<b>LOADED LANGUAGE</b>	Uses emotionally charged or “strong” words that evoke feels or reactions	“The unpatriotic hiring of that stupid coach from the ‘other’ university...”
<b>FEAR AND INSECURITIES</b>	Draws on threats and peoples’ concerns and insecurities	“Who will take care of your children if you die without a will? Call Attorney Jones now.”
<b>CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT</b>	Uses testimonials from well-known or the official-sounding	“Got Milk” (photo with Jennifer Lopez in a mustache)
<b>SEX APPEAL</b>	Subtle suggestions that a product will improve one’s gender image	(Slinky young woman smoking a Virginia Slim.)
<b>SOMETHING FOR NOTHING</b>	Promises special deals, discounts, bargains	“100% refund, no questions asked, if not satisfied...”
<b>PLAIN FOLKS</b>	Appeals to common, average readers making product seem honest and authentic	(Grampa sitting on the front porch downing a Coke and rocking Junior.)
<b>SCIENCE AND STATISTICS</b>	Uses numbers and scientific jargon to promote mystique of technology	“Anti-static microfiliament padlets reduce feedback 95% with optional application.”
<b>COMPARISONS AND NEGATIVES</b>	Uses competitor’s name/image and ‘put down’ comparisons	“Saran Wrap is better than the Kroger brand product every time.”
<b>SNOB APPEAL</b>	Uses exclusive “high class”, exotic place, life style appeals	(Lexus parked in front of a mansion with youth at wheel.)

**UNIT:** Persuasive Reading and Writing

**TOPIC:** What Really Ticks You Off?

**LESSON 2 OBJECTIVE:** Students will use oral sharing to generate topics about which they have opinions and will use this list to begin a persuasive piece of writing.

**CORE CONTENT:** WR-H-1.4 Transactive writing

**VOCABULARY:** anecdote

**RESOURCE MATERIALS:** butcher paper taped to one wall of classroom with the title “What Really Ticks Us Off!!” written in large letters  
markers

**TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:**

- The day before you begin this activity, ask students to list in their Writer’s Notebooks 3-4 things that really tick them off. They may focus on concerns about school policies, behaviors they notice in other people, or issues of global importance, but it should be something for which they can affect change.
- As they enter the class with their lists, divide students into two long lines where they face a partner (Virginia Reel-style). If your class is large and your room is small, you may want to arrange to meet in the gym, cafeteria, outdoors, or in a hallway for this activity.
- Ask students to share with the person across from them in the line one of the issues that tick them off. Allow 2-3 minutes for each partner to share.
- Then ask one of the lines to shift down one person. The last person moves to the other end of the line. Allow another 4-5 minutes to share with new partners. As students repeat their “beefs” to their new partner, they think of additional ammunition for their argument and perhaps find the opportunity to relate a personal experience.
- After sharing with at least two different people, students return to their seats and write for 10-15 minutes in their Writer’s Notebooks on their topic. Encourage them to think about why this issue is important and encourage them to include in their reflection personal anecdotes that may give the reader/listener some context for the issue. Ask students to construct a definition for the term *anecdote* and add to classroom Word Wall.
- During writing time or the sharing time that follows encourage students to go to the butcher paper entitled “What Really Ticks Us Off!” and list their topics.

- In small groups of 3-4 students, allow 10-15 minutes for sharing from Writer's Notebook.
- Conclude the lesson by drawing students' attention to the collection of topics on the wall. Make observations about the diversity or commonality evident in the topics and compliment students on the passion with which they attack issues that impact them personally. Suggest that this entry may be the beginning of a persuasive piece they will be writing and revising during this unit.

**TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:** Students can use Co:Writer, Write Aloud, and/or Inspiration software to reflect on the topic that really ticks them off.

**ASSESSING THE LEARNING:** Observation notes on student involvement during oral sharing and during writing time.

**UNIT:** Persuasive Reading & Writing

**TOPIC:** Introducing Reading Strategies

**LESSON 3 OBJECTIVE:** Students will identify and apply a variety of appropriate reading strategies to make sense of persuasive text.

**CORE CONTENT:**

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| RD-H-3.0.5 | Make, confirm, and revise predictions.    |
| RD-H-3.0.7 | Formulate opinions in response to a text. |

**VOCABULARY:**

Strategy

(Require students to define and place on a “Word Wall” strip for classroom display.)

**RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:**

- β Prepare overhead transparency with the following prompt in large print.  
(A model is attached to this lesson.)  
*“List the characteristics of a good reader. Explain how a person ‘becomes’ a good reader.”*
- β Overhead of graphic organizer attached to this lesson
- β Student copies of graphic organizer attached to this lesson
- β Overhead of “Strategies Strong Readers Use”
- β Student copies of “Strategies Strong Readers Use”
- β a persuasive essay  
(For this lesson, “Darkness at Noon” by Harold Krents is used. This persuasive essay can be found on page 454 of the Harcourt Brace & Company *Elements of Literature Third Course*. If you do not have this text, you can adapt this lesson for use with another persuasive essay.)

**TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:**

- **Writer’s Notebook:**
  1. Display prompt on the overhead or use a transparency of the attached model.
  2. Provide a few minutes for students to respond.
- **Class Share Session:**
  1. Invite a few students to share their entries.
  2. As students list the characteristics aloud, record students’ ideas on the overhead. Use this as a springboard to “Strategies Strong Readers Use.”
  3. Using the overhead, review with and/or introduce reading strategies to the class.
  4. Explain to students that this lesson requires them to consider which strategies they use when reading.

β **Guided Practice:**

1. Explain to students that they will apply a specific reading strategy today as they read “Darkness at Noon” (e.g., “Today we will apply a prediction strategy and the read aloud strategy...”)
2. Ask students to respond to the following on the graphic organizer:  
If you were to read a persuasive essay titled “Darkness at Noon,” what might it be about?  
If your prediction turns out to be what the essay is about, anticipate what ideas, words, phrases, and facts or opinions the writer should include.
3. Ask for a student volunteer to read the text aloud.
4. Instruct students to complete the graphic organizer as they listen to the essay.

β **Writer’s Notebook**

1. Direct students back to the student resource “Strategies Strong Readers Use.”
2. At the bottom of the graphic organizer, ask students to record at least three strategies they used while listening to the essay.
3. Instruct students to select one strategy they used today in class to elaborate on in the notebook. For example, a student who made a personal connection may draft an anecdote or a student who struggled with vocabulary may reflect on how s/he handled the problem.
4. Instruct students to respond to the following prompt:  
“In your opinion, how well did Krents convince his reader to think or act in a certain way? Discuss convincing examples Krents used as well as less convincing ones. If you were to have a writing conference with Krents, what would you like to talk to him about?”

β **Debriefing**

Students who would like to share might be given that opportunity.

**ENRICHMENT:**

Provide a graphic organizer for students to use to help with staying on task.

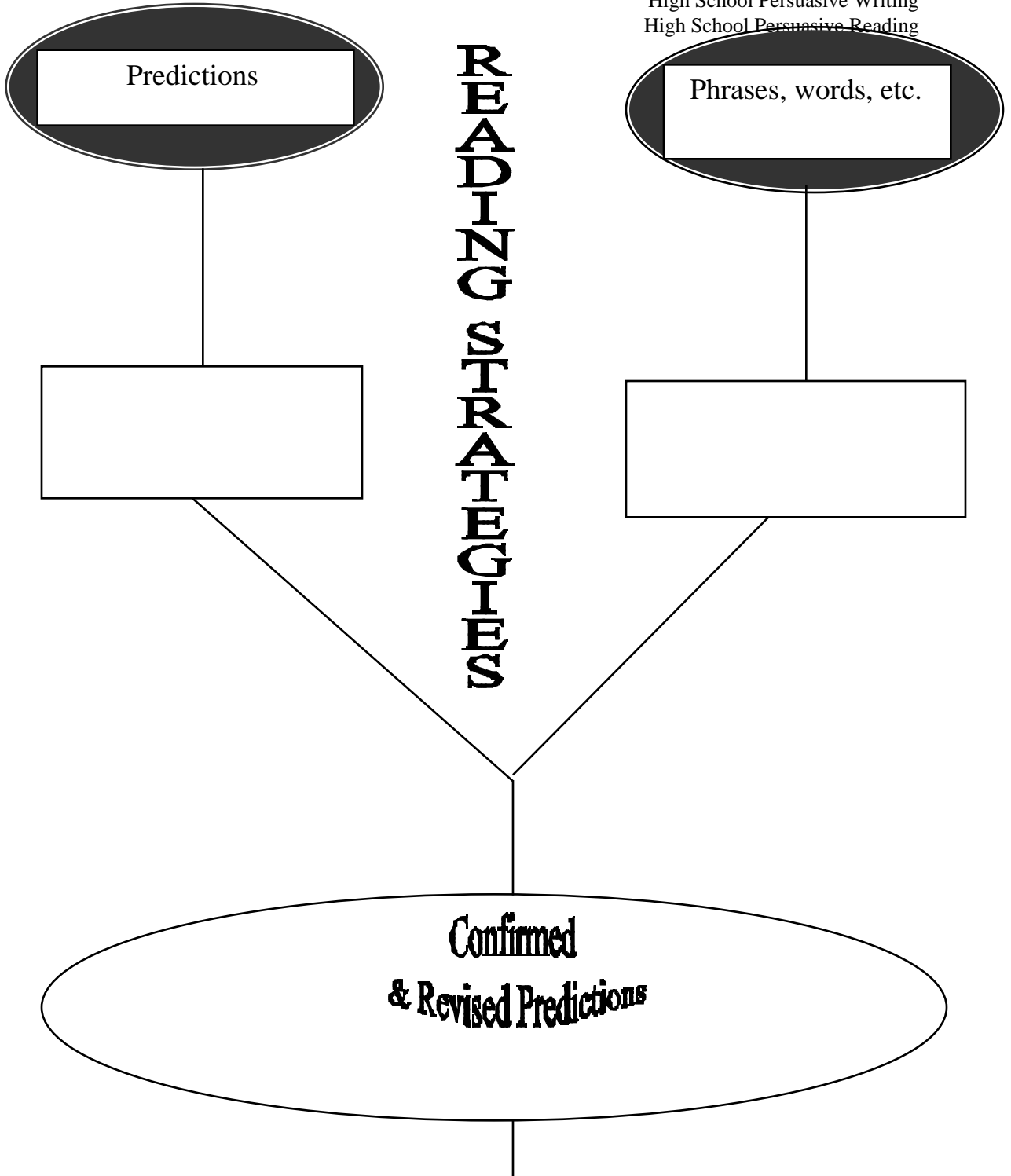
**TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:**

Instead of using an overhead projection, create a Power Point presentation to introduce reading strategies.

**In your  
Writer's Notebook,**

**β List the characteristics  
of a good reader.**

**β Explain how a person  
“becomes” a good  
reader.**



**READING STRATEGIES USED WITH THIS TEXT**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Select one of the strategies to reflect upon in your notebook.

## Strategies Strong Readers Use

- Establish a purpose for reading
- Re-read
- Make personal connections to the reading
- Read on in order to better understand
- Look at punctuation
- Second guess
- Verify previous understanding
- Make predictions
- Ask questions
- Talk to someone about what is being read
- Respond to reading through writing
- Replace unfamiliar words with another word that makes sense in the context of the sentence
- “Persistence, patience, and practice!”
- Read Aloud
- BEFORE READING, read over any questions, tasks, or vocabulary you are expected to complete after reading!



**UNIT:** Persuasive Reading and Writing

**TOPIC:** Using a Think-Aloud to Understand Persuasion in Advertisement

**LESSON 4 OBJECTIVE:** Students will learn and practice the strategy of a Think-Aloud

**CORE CONTENT:** RD-H- 3.0.8 Identify the purposes of persuasion.  
RD-H-3.0.14 Analyze and evaluate the use of persuasion within a passage.

**VOCABULARY:** advertisement, persuasion, purpose, think-aloud

**RESOURCE MATERIALS:**

copies of two teen-directed advertisements with **text** and visuals  
two blank transparencies and marker  
student copies of Think-Aloud Checklist for Reading a persuasive text  
overhead projector  
three paper strips for Word Wall

**TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:**

A Think-Aloud is a conversation between two persons throughout a new text. They read it aloud together, stopping at any point when either partner has a thought to articulate. As a student explains his thoughts while reading, the teacher can listen carefully to understand how that student is making sense of the text. “Thinking aloud” (Feathers, *Infotext Reading and Learning*, 1993) also helps the student recognize and internalize his own reading processes (metacognition). Teachers must model the “thinking aloud” process for most students before they can do it alone.

- Review the purpose(s) of persuasion by recording student responses on the overhead:  
**A persuasive writer influences the reader to....**
  - adopt a point of view (think)
  - accept an idea
  - act in a certain way (act)
  - take a course of action
- Review several of the persuasive techniques advertisers/writers use (see lesson 1). Record student responses on overhead. (Lesson One)
- You will select a student in advance to model a Think-Aloud for the class; explain to him what a Think-Aloud is and consider practicing with the checklist.

- You will be modeling many of these thinking strategies for your class:
  - engaging in informal conversation about thinking
  - making connections to your own prior knowledge and experiences as related to the advertisement
  - making connections with text (text-self, text-text, text-world)
  - demonstrating thinking/understanding before, during, and after reading
  - verbalizing author's purpose/intent of advertisement
  - providing personal preference as it relates to advertisement
  - making predictions before reading based on graphic information on the advertisement
  - checking accuracy of predictions during and after reading
  - responding to advertisement with evaluative language ("I think..." or "I dis/agree...")
  - evaluating validity or truth of advertisement
  - identifying persuasive tone and language in advertisement
  - identifying persuasive techniques and/or propaganda
  - "talking through" problems or unknown words in advertisement
- Explain to the class that you and the student will read the advertisement aloud and stop at points to help each other figure out what the advertisement means. You and the student will take turns reading aloud, perhaps a paragraph or section at a time. You will stop to voice any and all thoughts that come to you, such as unfamiliar words, questions, predictions, confirmations, disconfirmations, responses/reactions, confusions, needs for clarification, connections to other texts or situations.
- Since the advertisement has graphics as well as text, take the lead to ask some questions and make some predictions based on the graphics as you and the student read the advertisement. Lead the student into responding to your comments.
- Ask the student if he wants to read first or wants you to begin. Does he want to go one paragraph at a time? Remember to interrupt the reading with any and all thoughts. He will be inclined to keep reading. Let him see you using your checklist.
- The rest of the class will read the advertisement silently as you and the student model the think-aloud. They will use the checklist to note their own responses.
- Ask class to write about the demonstration in Writer's Notebooks. They should talk about their own thinking as they were reading and listening. Ask a few students to share their comments. Remember, it may be their first exposure to the Think-Aloud, so don't force the issue.
- Pair students for their own Think-Aloud, giving them another advertisement. Have them determine how they will take turns with their reading. Have them refer to the Think-Aloud Checklist to guide their thinking. Circulate as they work. Provide feedback and also note specific thinking strategies you hear to share with class after

they have concluded their Think-Aloud. Have the student who modeled the Think-Aloud with you circulate taking notes also.

- Reflect with the class about which thinking strategies you observed. Ask a helper for his constructive observations. Ask students to add their reactions to the Think-Aloud.
- Have students write in their Writer's Notebooks about the effectiveness of these two advertisements as examples of persuasion. Remind them you are asking them to "think about their thinking."

-To what degree did the advertisements influence you to consider (i.e., see benefits of) product/activity/ service? This doesn't mean you would necessarily rush out to buy them, but you might.

-If so, what detail, graphic, and/or technique seemed to help persuade you?

-If not, what got in the way?

- Review definitions of *advertisement*, *persuasion*, and *purpose*. Have students put the word strips on Word Wall.

**TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:**

Using Power Point or Hyper Studio, create a comic strip or story board to show a character attempting to persuade another character.

**ASSESSING THE LEARNING:** observation notes from Think-Aloud pairs; student response in Writer's Notebooks

## **THINK-ALLOUD Checklist for Reading a Persuasive Text**

- Questions: Do you think...?  
Why is that graphic in the advertisement?
- Predictions: The picture makes me think...  
I think the persuasion technique is Bandwagon.
- Confirmations: Your were right about...  
That's another example of loaded words....
- Disconfirmations: I sure was wrong when I said...  
This advertisement is for\_\_\_\_\_ not \_\_\_\_\_.
- Responses/ Reactions: I like that color; it's really soothing.  
That picture sure wouldn't sway me.  
She is one good-looking chick!  
I never thought about that idea.
- Confusions/ Need for Clarification: I don't know that word.  
What does \_\_\_\_\_ mean?  
Would you reread that sentence for me; I'm  
confused  
Huh?
- Connections: That's a lot like the advertisement for...  
I remember one time...  
I did that when I tried to get...

**UNIT:** Persuasive Reading & Writing

**TOPIC:** Premise and Supporting Statements

**LESSON 5 OBJECTIVE:** Using a graphic organizer, students will locate the premise and supporting statements in a selected piece of persuasive writing. (In this lesson, Grade 12 Marker Paper for Persuasive Letter is used.)

**CORE CONTENT:**

RD-H-3.0.1	Locate, evaluate, and apply information for a realistic purpose.
RD-H-3.0.6	Paraphrase important parts of a passage.
RD-H-3.0.9	Identify an author’s position based on evidence in a Passage.

**VOCABULARY:**

Premise, supporting statements, debatable issue  
(Require students to define and place on a “Word Wall” strip for classroom display.)

**RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:**

- β Overhead of graphic organizer “Premise & Supporting Statement”
- β Overhead of Grade 12 Benchmark letter “School Board Member”
- β Student copies of the graphic organizer
- β Student copies of marker paper

**TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:**

• **Writer’s Notebook:**

*(Ask students to copy the prompt below into their notebooks and respond.)*

“There are two sides to every debatable issue. Often, we are called upon to decide what we believe is best when all information is considered. Thinking “pro or con,” recall a time when you had to decide which side of a debatable issue you believed in (dress code, recycling, crime versus punishment). Share that experience in your notebook and state at least two specific reasons for the decision you made.”

• **Mini Lesson**

- Invite students to share from their notebooks.
- Introduce the word “premise” to students, asking them to develop a definition of it in their notebook.
- Invite a student or two to share a definition. (Coach their understanding accordingly.) Provide students with a working definition of “premise.” Feel free to use the following working definition:  
*A **premise** is not a statement of fact; it is a debatable statement with which other people may or may not agree.*

- Remind students that the purpose of persuasive writing is to convince a reader of the value or truth of a writer’s opinion. Segue into the definition of debatable statement.  
*If there are two sides to every **debatable issue**, a writer must provide **convincing support** for a premise so that others will not dismiss a writer’s thinking.*
- Display the graphic organizer included with this lesson plan on the overhead. (Students should be provided with their own blank copy.)
- Write an example of a premise on the overhead. For example, “The school should provide students with more choices in the dress code.”
- Ask students to write two convincing supporting statements on the graphic organizer for the dress code premise.
- Share.
- Create two class-generated premises (about which some students may later choose to write) and record on the overhead. For example, “Sixteen-year-old licensed drivers should be allowed to have other teenage passengers in their car while driving.”
- As individuals, ask students to develop two convincing supporting statements for each premise that a writer might use.
- Share.
- **Guided Practice**
  - Divide class into groups of three. Provide them with copies of the Grade 12 Marker Paper for Persuasive Letter.
  - Ask students to continue using the graphic organizer and identify the premise and supporting statements of this student-written persuasive letter.
  - Ask students to re-read and reflect on the Writer’s Notebook entry that they wrote, searching for an appropriate premise and convincing supporting statements for a letter they may write. Caution them to choose a topic that is important to them. Students should be able to articulate a specific change or action that should happen and tell why that change or action is reasonable or feasible. This should be a topic that they know something about and know where they can find out more information. They will be choosing their topic by the end of the next lesson.
- β **TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:** Allow students to use the internet to locate sources of information. Identify premises and supporting statements.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PREMISE</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">A debatable statement with which others may or may not agree</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Convincing <b>SUPPORTING STATEMENTS</b></p>
<p>1. The school should provide students with more choices in the dress code.</p>	<p>Supporting Statement 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attendance would improve. <i>(Where could I find facts or statistics to support this is so my writing is informed?)</i></li><li>• The numbers of students assigned to in-school suspension would decrease. <i>(What would be convincing support for this statement?)</i></li></ul>

## **LETTER-GRADE 12**

5000 Elm Street  
Any Town, KY 40000  
March 1, 1996

\_\_\_\_\_ School Board  
2102 Oak Street  
Any Town, KY 40000

Dear School Board Members:

The gymnasium at \_\_\_\_\_ High School is not conveniently accessible to persons relying solely on a wheelchair as a means of transportation.

There is only one handicapped parking space in the proximity of the high school, and this parking space is often occupied by persons not requiring the convenience of handicapped parking. Surely, the available number handicapped spaces at \_\_\_\_\_ High falls far short of the recommendations set forth by the A.D.A.

Furthermore, there are only four wheelchair accessible entrances to the main school building from the street. None of these is in close proximity to the gymnasium. At night time, only one of the four entrances is available by a wheelchair user. This entrance, being adjacent to the main lobby of the school building, is frequently blocked with the car of an inconsiderate driver, thus rendering all wheelchair accessible entrances to the school unapproachable by an unassisted wheelchair user.

In the event that the only ramp to the school is approachable by a wheelchair, the disabled person requiring the assistance of a ramp would have to travel the same distance, if not farther, than most able-bodied persons.

Even then, the concrete walkways to the gym are not easily navigated by a wheel chair user. The ground beneath the walkways has shifted leaving the pathways to the gymnasium in poor shape. I have fallen out of my wheelchair twice on these walkways.



The ramp connecting the walkways to the gymnasium is also baldly in need of repairs. The base of this ramp has been chipped so severely that one would call it nothing short of a small curb. Assuming that this ramp could be accessed by a wheelchair, the user could not reach the top of the ramp due to its steep incline.

Craig Hospital, T.E.A.R. Hospital, the Lakeshore Foundation, and every other rehabilitation facility that I have heard of suggest that “any ramp designed for use by a wheelchair should provide one foot of length for every inch of rise” thus yielding an incline of a little over eight degrees. It would not surprise me if the presiding ramps at \_\_\_\_\_ High School are three times steeper than the ramp incline suggested by these prestigious rehabilitation facilities.

I would like to propose a solution to the problems addressed above. There is currently somewhat of an accessible ramp leading to the gymnasium. It leads to a door next to the girls’ bathroom. If this door was open, a chair could get inside with ease. But, this ramp is even farther from the handicapped parking space than the ramp in poor condition.

I propose to build another ramp from the road to the sidewalk on Glen Cove Drive, nearest to the easily accessible ramp as possible. I also propose to designate a parking space on either side of this ramp as handicapped parking. Furthermore, one of these spaces should be deemed as “wheelchair only.” Your approval would greatly facilitate the ease and enjoyment of all my trips to the high school gymnasium for years to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Senior Student

**UNIT:** Persuasive Reading and Writing

**TOPIC:** Distinguishing Fact From Opinion; Choosing a Topic for a Persuasive Letter

**LESSON 6 OBJECTIVE:** Students will examine the difference between fact and opinion.

**CORE CONTENT:** RD-H 3.0.14 Analyze and evaluate the use of persuasion within a passage  
WR-H-1.4 Transactive Writing

**VOCABULARY:** fact, opinion

**RESOURCE MATERIALS:**

- student-written letter used in previous lesson
- two different colored highlighters for each student
- copies of “Premise and Supporting Statements” (See lesson 5)

**TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:**

- Good persuasive writing expresses an opinion and is based on facts. It is important that students understand the difference between the two. Have students copy these definitions into their Writer’s Notebook:

Fact: A statement that can be verified or proven true.

Opinion: A personal judgment; an expression of someone’s beliefs or a feeling that cannot be proven true or false.

- Distribute the letter that students read in the previous lesson. Ask students to go through the letter and highlight all of the facts in one color. Then they should go through the letter again, this time highlighting all of the opinions in another color.
- Put students in groups of 3 or 4 students. Have them compare their papers. After the groups have compared their papers, have groups report about sentences on which they all agreed. Discuss those sentences that some students marked as facts and others marked as opinions or did not mark at all.
- Have students look at their entries in their Writer’s Notebook from this unit. Have them select two opinions that they have stated in one or more entries. For each opinion, they should list two facts that support the opinion. You may need to give students library time in order for them to find facts to support their opinions.
- At this point in the unit, students should be ready to choose their topic for their persuasive letter. Have them complete the “Premise and Supporting Statements” handout used in Lesson 5 for the topic for their persuasive letter.

**ASSESSING THE LEARNING:**

Collect the “Premise and Supporting Statements” handout from each student. Review each topic to assure that students are planning to pursuing a reasonable topic. Do not let students begin to write on a topic that will result in frustration for them, such as a topic about which little is known (either by the writer or the world); a topic that is pointless to argue; a topic on which there is little disagreement; a topic that is not suitable for classroom discussion; a topic that is too broad; or a topic that will in any other way prohibit students from achieving a well-written letter to include in his/her writing folder or portfolio.

**UNIT:** Persuasive Reading & Writing

**TOPIC:** Fallacies of Logical Relevance

**LESSON 7 OBJECTIVE:** Using a student-written persuasive letter, students will analyze the piece for logical fallacies of relevance.

**CORE CONTENT:**

- RD-H-3.0.7 Formulate opinions in response to a reading passage.
- RD-H-3.0.8 Identify purposes of persuasion.
- RD-H-3.0.9 Identify an author's position based on evidence in a passage.
- RD-H-3.0.10 Recognize the appropriateness of an argument for an intended audience.
- RD-H-3.0.14 Analyze and evaluate the use of persuasion within a passage.

**VOCABULARY:**

Logic, fallacy, annotate  
(Require students to define and place on a "Word Wall" strip for classroom display.)

**RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:**

Overhead transparency of "Logical Fallacies of Relevance"  
Student copies of "Logical Fallacies of Relevance"  
Several highlighters in a variety of colors  
Student copies of "Dear Representative Smith"  
Student copies of "Give Me One Good Reason"  
highlighters

**TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:**

- β Give students a copy of the "Dear Representative Smith" letter.
- β Connect students to prior learning by asking them first to read the letter. Then using the graphic organizer from the "Premise and Supporting Statements" (see lesson 5), require students to identify writer's premise and at least two supporting statements.
- β **Mini Lesson:**
  - β On the overhead, display the student resource "Logical Fallacies of Relevance"  
(Explain that students will be expected to apply these terms as they analyze a student-written persuasive letter.)
  - β Invite students to generate examples of the fallacies to list on back of their resource.
- **Guided Practice:**
  - β Provide students with copies of the letter "Dear Representative Smith."
  - β Working individually, in pairs, or groups of three, ask students to select three different colored highlighters.

- β Ask students to develop a color-coded legend on their own sheet of paper that they will use to highlight the following information in the letter that they are about to annotate. (Pairs and groups may submit one sheet of paper with all students' names recorded on it.) For example, a yellow highlighter might be used to identify the writer's premise, a green highlighter to note supporting statements, a pink highlighter to identify fallacies in the writer's logic.
  - β Ask students to re-read the letter, using their legends to highlight the following:
    - 1. Premise
    - 2. Supporting statements
    - 3. Logical fallacies
  - β Debrief the learning experience through a closing share session in which students share their legends and observations about the persuasive piece of writing.
- β **Writer's Notebook:**  
Persuasive writing is meant to convince its reader to think or act in a certain way. Read the persuasive letter, "Letter to Representative Smith."
- a. Identify what the writer wanted her reader to think about or do.
  - b. List all of the writer's supporting statements.
  - c. Evaluate the effectiveness of these supporting statements in persuading the intended audience.
- β **ENRICHMENT:**  
Invite students to complete the reinforcement exercise "Give Me One Good Reason."
- β **TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:**  
Allow the students to use the internet to select a passage appropriate for a similar analysis.
- Create e-mail pen pals at another school and analyze and give feedback on persuasive letters that students send.

# Logical Fallacies of Relevance

## Personal Attack

A common technique in which one challenges one's opponent personally, rather than his arguments.

**Example:** "Mr. K gave me that grade because he doesn't like me."

## Begging the Question/Circular Reasoning

This fallacy generally involves a statement in the form of "This is true because it is." ("We all know that teachers have stupid rules...") followed by a restating of the writer's opinion. ("...because that's part of being a teacher.")

## False Cause and Effect

An assumption is made that one event directly caused another to happen. The second event followed the first event; therefore, the first event caused the second event.

**Example:** "When teachers refuse to take late work, more students drop out of school."

## Non Sequitur

This fallacy expresses a common bias or appeals to a popular sentiment. It occurs any time the premises and conclusions of an argument are essentially unrelated.

**Example:** "A teacher who expects his students to do their work on time is mean. Therefore, students should be able to turn in their work whenever they want."

## Complex Question

Forcing a "yes or no" answer to a question that includes an underlying assumption that may be false.

**Example:** Should John be cheated of a diploma just because his teacher was totally unreasonable about turning in work late?

## Hasty Generalization

This fallacy involves making a generalized statement about "everyone or everything" citing one or two circumstances.

**Example:** "No one does well in Mr. K's Class. He just shouldn't be an English teacher."

adapted from:

*Elements of Literature Third course.* (1997). New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

PRIME. (2001, May). Mathematics Encyclopedia: Fallacies. Retrieved May 22, 2001 from the World Wide Web: [http://www.mathacademy.com/platonic\\_realms/encyclop/articles/fallac.html](http://www.mathacademy.com/platonic_realms/encyclop/articles/fallac.html)

4017 H.S. Truman Drive  
Louisville, KY 40000  
January 24, 2000

Representative Mary Smith  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1004 Longworth House Office Building

Dear Representative Smith:

Today, in countries like the Philippines, the waiting list for green cards into America peaks well into the thousands. People all over the world want to live in America, the country where dreams come true and new ones can be made. Therefore, it would be a tragedy for America to enforce an English-only law. The law would require all government facilities and public organizations, like schools and colleges, to teach and/or conduct business in English. A decision to enforce the law in America would not be wise because it would go against the public's view of America, encourage illiteracy, and create a lost society.

America is considered the melting pot of the world because she consists of people from many different ethnic backgrounds. Despite the fact each citizen is American, cultural differences do exist in this society. One of the main differences is language. Many races take pride in their diverse history. They speak their native tongue at home, cook their native foods, and wear indigenous clothing. Appreciation for heritage, though, does not overshadow non-native's pride in being American. For this reason, creating an English-only law in America is not advisable. Strict laws mandating rules such as "English, or nothing at all" may be perceived by non-natives as threatening to their heritage. It could cause them to feel intimidated or looked down upon by native Americans. Instead of letting freedom ring, they may decide to head back home, taking with them their rich culture, customs, and beliefs (which are actually the heart and soul of America today.)

In addition to distorted views of America, an English-only law would create another problem. America would have a vast majority of illiterate citizens. The purpose for conducting classes in Spanish, French, or Italian, for example, is to allow the non-native students to learn at their proper level and speed. If the nation were to enforce an English-only law, non-natives would be forced to slow their own learning process in order to learn because they cannot understand the language being spoken. Such a predicament would not only hold the students back, it would also discourage students from learning. Some might realize that enforcing English-only laws would slow the rate of learning. They may then feel incapable of succeeding, losing sight of their educational goals. Viewing themselves as lost causes and failures, non-natives may drop out of school, having attained only a minimal level of education.

If non-native American citizens decide to stay in America after getting word of the threatening law, their presence may create a lost society. Distorted dreams and broken confidences may eventually cause non-natives to drown themselves in sorrow and self-

worthlessness. America is created with people of diverse heritages, cultures, and languages. American must continue to be the melting pot of the world. Do not encourage the English-only law.

Sincerely,

Senior Student



## GIVE ME ONE GOOD REASON

Describe what is wrong with the logic used in the following examples:

1. If it is all right for the President of the United States to have people write some of the speeches for him, I don't see why students shouldn't be allowed to have people write papers for them.
2. Smoking can't be that bad for your health; millions of people do it every day.
3. Buses are always late! We've waited at least twenty minutes every morning this week.
4. It must be true. I read it in *The Courier-Journal*.
5. I don't permit questions in my class because if I let one person ask a question then everyone else will.
6. If we really believed in the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, then we would have abolished prisons long ago.
7. I should be able to stay out late. Everybody else does.
8. Hunting is not cruel. It gives tremendous pleasure to many people and employment to even more.
9. More young people are attending school than ever before. Yet, juvenile crime and alienation from the family is on the rise. Clearly, education is corrupting our young people.
10. Kentucky will win more football games next year since Tim Couch will be able to pass the football a lot.

**UNIT:** Persuasive Reading & Writing

**TOPIC:** Audience and Opposing Arguments

**LESSON 8 OBJECTIVE:**

Using the student-written persuasive letter, “Letter to Representative Smith,” students will evaluate the appropriateness of the writer’s supporting statements for the intended audience.

**CORE CONTENT:**

RD-H-3.0.4	Interpret the meaning of jargon and/or dialect used in a passage.
RD-H-3.0.9	Identify an author’s position based on evidence in the passage.
RD-H-3.0.11	Accept or reject an argument, giving supporting evidence from the passage.

**VOCABULARY:**

Tone, audience, evaluate  
(Require students to define and place on a “Word Wall” strip for classroom display.)

**RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:**

Student copies of “Appealing to the Audience”  
Two copies for each student of “Supporting Statements & the Opposition”  
Overhead transparency of “Letter to Representative Smith” (see lesson 7)  
Student copies of “Letter to Representative Smith” (see lesson 7)  
Overhead transparency of prompt

**TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:**

- **Warm Up:**  
Provide students with copies of “Appealing to the Audience.” Invite student volunteers to share and explain their choices. Have students write in their Writer’s Notebook what they have learned about writing for an audience by doing this exercise.
- **Guided Practice:**
  - Distribute “Supporting Statements & the Opposition” to students.
  - Distribute “Letter to Representative Smith” to students.
  - Invite students to pair up and read the letter aloud to one another.
  - After reading, ask students to use “Supporting Statements & the Opposition” to identify and record the following information:
    - Identify the writer’s purpose
    - List at least three supporting statements the writer uses to defend the issue.
  - Instruct students to stop and wait for others upon completion of the task.

- Invite students to share findings aloud as information is recorded on the overhead transparency “Supporting Statements & the Opposition.”
- Remind students of the two-sided coin metaphor. Consider using a segue like, *“I am going to ask that we become more aware of opposing arguments so that we can be prepared to address arguments others’ might have with the topics you have chosen for your persuasive letters...”*
- Instruct students to draft arguments that the opposition would use to argue against each of the supporting statements recorded on the organizer.
- Invite students to share thinking aloud and record the information on the overhead.

**Writer’s Notebook:**

Provide students with the following prompt on the overhead or on a student handout: (A copy of the prompt suitable for creating a transparency is included with this lesson.)

Evaluate the effectiveness of the writer’s argument and supporting statements.

**TASK:** Choose A or B and write an explanation for your choice in the Writer’s Notebook. No fence sitting!

If you were Representative Smith, would this student’s letter:

A. Encourage you to vote for an English-only law? What in the writer’s letter did you find unconvincing or weak?

OR

B. Encourage you to vote against an English-only law? What in the writer’s letter convinced you to provide your support?

**Applying the Learning:**

Students now will choose the audience for their persuasive letter. Using another copy of the handout on page 39, students will determine at least two arguments that their audience will have to their position. Remind students that if their audience has no opposing arguments, then there is really no point in writing them the letter. Students will turn in their lists of arguments for each side of the issue about which they are writing.

**ASSESSING THE LEARNING:**

Collect and review each student’s lists of arguments. Do not let students begin to write until they have identified an appropriate audience, that is, someone who has the authority to act on the writer’s request. Also, do not let students begin to write until they have identified arguments for both sides of the issue.

## APPEALING TO THE AUDIENCE

### PART I.

#### **Choose the argument that is more likely to persuade the given audience:**

1. Audience: Person to whom you are applying for a part-time job.
  - a. Although I have no work experience as a cashier, I am treasurer of the Spanish Club at my school. Also, I could provide you with letters of reference from my teachers and guidance counselor at school.
  - b. I would like a job as a cashier at your store because I really need money to pay for my car insurance.
  
2. Audience: Voting for your friend as class officer.
  - a. If you elect Steven, you will be wasting your vote. No one likes his snobby attitude.
  - b. Steven has promised to help the class earn enough money to hold the Senior Prom in a nice facility. In the past he was instrumental in persuading the administration to allow a dance after the basketball game.

#### **Choose the audience most suited to fit the argument:**

3. By reducing the time to change classes, students will have to run to class, which will cause many hazards such as bumping into each other. This will cause disciplinary problems.
  - a. parents
  - b. classmates
  - c. principal

#### **Which tone is most appropriate for the intended audience?**

4. Situation: A high school student is giving an oral book report to the class.
  - a. Good afternoon. I shall endeavor to impart to you my views on a work of literature.
  - b. I would like to share with you my thoughts and feelings experienced while reading our last novel.

## **PART II.**

Combine your ability to support your opinion and your awareness of audience. Provide one argument you feel will appeal to each of the indicated audiences without changing the facts or your position.

### **Defend your opinion that students should have part-time jobs during the school year.**

- a. Audience: Your parent
  
- b. Audience: Your classmates
  
- c. Audience: Your principal

### **Defend your rights to get your drivers license at age 16.**

- a. Audience: Your legislature
  
- b. Audience: Your parents
  
- c. Audience: Your classmates

### **Express your desire to see an “R” rated movie.**

- a. Audience: Your best friend
  
- b. Audience: Your parent
  
- c. Audience: The movie rating committee

## **SUPPORTING STATEMENTS & THE OPPOSITION**

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### **WRITER'S AUDIENCE AND PURPOSE:**

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<b>WRITER'S ARGUMENTS</b>	<b>OPPOSITION'S ARGUMENTS</b>
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

## **Evaluate the effectiveness of the writer’s argument and supporting statements.**

### **TASK:**

Choose A or B and write an explanation for your choice in the Writer’s Notebook. No fence sitting!

If you were Representative Smith, would this student’s letter:

A. Encourage you to vote for an English-only law? What in the writer’s letter did you find unconvincing or weak?

OR

B. Help you to decide not to vote for financial support of the arts. What in the writer’s letter convinced you to provide your support?

**UNIT:** Persuasive Reading and Writing

**TOPIC:** Characteristics of the Persuasive Letter

**LESSON 9 OBJECTIVE:** Students will generate list of characteristics of the persuasive letter and analyze several student samples for their effectiveness

**CORE CONTENT:** RD-H-3.0.9 Identify the author’s position based on evidence in a passage.  
RD-H-3.0.14 Analyze and evaluate the use of persuasion within a passage.  
WR-H-1.4 Transactive Writing

**VOCABULARY:** characteristics, effective

**RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:**

2 paper strips for Word Wall  
student copies and transparency of Characteristics of an Effective Persuasive Letter  
student copies of several student-written persuasive letters  
blank transparencies and marker  
highlighters  
overhead projector

**TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:**

- For several days students have been talking about persuasive techniques and reading persuasive texts. They have begun to think about a persuasive letter they will write. This is a good time to assess what they know about effective persuasive letter writing and have them look at several student **samples**. Don’t feel threatened if your students “correct” the writing; use that also as a teaching exercise.
- Ask students for a definition of *characteristics*. They should come up with *traits, attributes, qualities*. Have one of them add the paper strip to the Word Wall. Ask for a definition of *effective*. They might respond *does what it should do, gets the job done well*. Have another student put that paper strip up on Word Wall.
- Put students in groups of four, one of whom will be the recorder and another the reporter. **Remember to plan the groups so that students will be able to focus on the tasks you will ask them to do now and later in the period.** Ask them to generate a list of no more than **four or five** characteristics of an effective persuasive letter.
- Record answers for each group on overhead as each reporter reads from group’s list. Hear all responses, but only record a characteristic once.



- Pass out the student copies of the characteristics list compiled for this unit. Ask them to compare the two. Since they will use this list of characteristics as a guide/checklist to evaluate others' work as well as the letter they will write, they need to take a few minutes to add anything from overhead list that is missing on teacher list or to restate a characteristic in a way that is more understandable to them.
- Put students into groups. You will give each group copies of one student-written persuasive letter. There will be several different letters, but everyone in the group will have the same letter, and some groups will have the same one. Two student-written persuasive letters are included with this lesson. You can also use "Dear School Board Members" from Lesson 5, "Dear Representative Smith" from Lesson 7," and "Dear Superintendent" from Lesson 12. You might want to draft a persuasive letter yourself to use with a group. You can also add any persuasive letters you may have collected. (Do not use the letter to Representative Northrup that appears with the next lesson.)
- The group selects a recorder. He will list group members' names on group copy. The group will read their letter aloud, taking turns in whatever way they agree. Then they will use the Characteristics List to see how effective their sample letter is. When they come to an evidence of an effective persuasive letter, the recorder will highlight that phrase or sentence/s and number it to match the numbers on the handout. They should not expect their letter to have all of the characteristics.
- If there is time, have a few groups share characteristics they found in their letters. Collect each group's original list and a highlighted copy of letter. Students will need the Characteristics List tomorrow and on several other days so they should put it in their Writer's Notebook or binder.
- Students should begin drafting their persuasive letters. Caution them to adhere as closely as possible to the Characteristics of an Effective Persuasive Letter (on next page).

**ASSESSING THE LEARNING:** Review each group's highlighted copies of sample persuasive letters.

## **Characteristics of an Effective Persuasive Letter**

**A good persuasive letter should include most of the following characteristics:**

- 1. addresses the appropriate audience (reader), one with the authority to take the action the writer desires**
- 2. engages the reader in the first paragraph**
- 3. expresses the situation clearly and succinctly (precisely and without wasted words)**
- 4. indicates a thorough knowledge of the situation and evidence of deliberation (careful and thorough consideration)**
- 5. acknowledges and addresses the reader's anticipated point of view**
- 6. provides specific details to support the writer's opinion**
- 7. develops ideas through a logical sequencing of information**
- 8. states clearly the outcome the writer desires with suggestions for implementation (carrying it out or accomplishing it)**
- 9. leaves the reader with a vision of why the action desired would be beneficial**
- 10. follows business or friendly letter format, depending on the audience**

30 January 2001  
1934 South Park Road  
Louisville, KY 40119

Licensing and Regulations  
908 West Broadway: 2 East  
Louisville, KY 40203

Dear Director Lansing:

Boom! An infant falls off the changing table as the childcare worker walks away for only a split second. Bam! A child slips and falls as he runs through a puddle of water that was not immediately wiped clean. These are just two examples of the types of accidents that happen in today's daycare centers. And there is much worse. Daycare authorities should set higher standards and require that they be followed. I am asking you to help.

Are the employees of daycare centers qualified? Gwen Holman, director of Building A Rainbow Childcare, knows that she employs only qualified workers. She double-checks to be positive that they are "capable and without records of conviction." She runs "background checks on every employee." She was firm when she said she would "fire anyone who leaves any child unattended." Holman never takes chances when it comes to the children in her care. She feels that "child safety standards should be stricter and if the rules are not followed the daycare center should be shut down – no questions asked."

A daycare is like a home away from home for children and should be safe outside as well as inside. "Daycares are just not safe enough for my young children," vowed Cynthia Hoskins, mother of two young children. "When I am home with my children, my doors are locked. I don't like that when my children are in daycare that the doors are always unlocked, just waiting for someone crazy to walk right on in," she continued. Yes, locked doors would help. But there are other things that parents can do before enrolling their children. Prospective parents should look for a clean place; friendly caring people, the ratio of children to worker, and the activities that are going on. They should check for smiles on children's faces and a lot of laughter.

Ms. Holman was sad when she told me that "not once has a parent of my daycare center said, 'Is this facility safe or have you ever had safety problems of any sort?'" She agrees that "parents need to take a stand and put their foot down if they don't like what they see. They need to demand that centers take extra safety measures." I agree.

Your position gives you such power. Please use it to help our children safe.

Sincerely,

March 13, 1998

Mr. Gene Abell, Editor  
Lexington Herald Leader  
100 Main & Midland  
Lexington, KY 40508

Dear Editor:

Last Thursday, you published an article in your paper entitled, "Put The Fire Out-Smoking Kills Us All." The writer of the article, Mr. George Dunley, attacked the tobacco industry in ways that were simply illegitimate, not to mention completely ludicrous. I feel that his statements have given many unknowing readers the wrong message about the consequences of tobacco use.

My purpose, however, is not to advocate the use of tobacco products, but to bring to light the fact that Mr. Dunley, along with many other health officials, is attacking the wrong market. The heart of the country knows what our underlying health and social problem is-alcohol abuse. Tell me, why are these officials striking tobacco when hundreds of people are being neglected, abused, and are losing their lives each year from the effects of alcohol?

I ask you to read the following scenarios and choose which item in parentheses best fills in the blank. I think you agree that alcohol is the nation's greatest problem.

- A husband comes home at 3:00 a.m., stoned out of his mind on (Marlboros/Jim Beam). He starts an argument with his wife, draws back his fist with rage in his eyes, and begins to repeatedly beat her.
- She's on her way to the doctor's office with her new baby. She rounds the next curve only to see a pick-up headed straight for her. The driver of the truck has just finished a (carton of Marlboro's/case of Budweiser.)
- A child is crying out for his mother in the background of loud music. She hasn't cooked a meal in days, and the boy's only food comes from school, (when he goes). The mother's need for (Vodka/GPC's) is causing her son to go undernourished.

I'm sure your answers further prove that alcohol has truly been ignored as a major problem for the United States. You see, we don't need to be worrying about the few and far between effects of tobacco as long as we have alcohol in the picture. True, it's proven that smoking causes cancer-to the smoker. But that's their choice. An individual has the right to choose what he or she does with their body. Equally, alcoholics destroy themselves with their habit. So these two facts weigh the same in matter.

But alcohol physically harms others, not just the alcoholic. Sure, secondhand smoke may inflict some harm, an amount so small it's virtually immeasurable. It makes little difference in your health to be around a smoker for

only a short period of time, such as at a ballgame or the grocery store, a restaurant, etc. You would have to sustain contact with a smoker for years for the effects to infringe upon your health.

However, the general public, as well as the children of alcoholics, cannot protect themselves from the effects of alcohol. They cannot prevent another driver from causing an automobile accident, possibly losing their lives. They can't be sure when someone is going to show up on the street—anywhere—and start a fight with an innocent bystander. People have little protection against the violence created by alcohol.

All the officials scream that tobacco smoke is offensive and harmful to others surrounding the smoker. But the American public isn't blind—even alcoholics know why the government is picking on tobacco and leaving alcohol alone. The tobacco industry is too weak to fight back. Moreso, however, the government enjoys the large profits from alcohol taxes. Why would they give them up? By the way, they're about to enforce further taxation on tobacco products. Odd, isn't it, that they warn us of the "major health risks" of tobacco and use it as an excuse to add taxes, when, if it were truly harmful, they would prohibit them altogether. They know that alcohol is the true killer of our society, but they also know that smokers will smoke, no matter what the cost.

So alcohol goes on doing its damage and the tobacco market pays for it; it's really no surprise. We know what to expect from our politicians. But you can do a lot for your community yourself. Discourage the use of alcohol among your family, friends, and strangers alike. Set an example for everyone you come in contact with. The next time you hear someone complain about cigarette smoke, ask them, "What about alcohol?"

Thank you,

D \_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_

**UNIT:** Persuasive Reading & Writing

**TOPIC:** Strategies for Answering Open-Response Questions

**LESSON 10 OBJECTIVE:** Students will use the “F/T/S” strategy to respond to an open-response question connected to classroom instruction.

**CORE CONTENT:**

RD-H-3.0.14 Analyze and evaluate the use of persuasion within a passage.

**RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:**

Overhead transparency of graphic organizer “Focus/Task/Support”  
Student copies of graphic organizer “Focus/Task/Support”  
Student copies of Prompts 1 and 2 F/T/S organizer  
Student copies of Open Response Question “Dear Ms. Northup”

**TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:**

- **Review:** Review with students the previous work with “Characteristics of an Effective Persuasive Letter.”
- β **Mini Lesson:** A Strategy for Answering Open Response Questions
  1. Display transparency of graphic organizer “Focus/Task/Support” on overhead.
  2. Explain to students that one strategy to prepare an answer for an open response question is to identify the focus statement, task request and required support.
  3. Using the example on graphic organizer, model for students how to “break a question down.”
  4. Then give students two other Open Response Questions from common released items. Have them use the graphic organizer to identify the Focus/task/Support for those two questions. After all have finished, discuss their answers and record on the transparency.

**Independent Practice:**

1. Provide students with the open response question “Dear Ms. Northup.”
2. Encourage the students to use the “F/T/S” organizer to plan their response.
3. Allow time for students to complete the response

**TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:** Have students create a table in ClarisWorks or other word processing program to use as a graphic organizer.

**ASSESSING THE LEARNING:** Collect and score student answers to the Open Response Question.

## FOCUS/TASK/SUPPORT

**PROMPT:** “The diagram above shows a cell with organelles. Select four organelles from the diagram and explain how the structures and functions of those organelles within the cell are similar to the structures and functions of the different parts of your school.

<b>FOCUS</b>	<b>TASK</b>	<b>SUPPORT</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I need to be thinking about cells and organelles as a structure...</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I need to select 4 organelles (I am thinking they are parts of a cell) that I use as examples.</li><li>• I need to EXPLAIN how the structure and function of <i>each</i> of those organelles <u>is like</u> a structure or function of <u>something in my school</u>. (It reminds me of metaphor and simile stuff from English class.)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I need to relate the membrane to something at school...a hallway – they both contain things.</li><li>• I need to show that I know the cell’s membrane controls movement in and out of the cell.</li></ul>

**PROMPT 1:**

“For many years, countries have released industrial and human waste into the ocean. In recent years, scientists have begun to see changes in the ocean’s ecosystem due to contamination by this waste.

- A. Identify **three** ways that changes in the ocean’s ecosystem might affect human life.
- B. Discuss **two** possible strategies to help solve the problems associated with the contamination of the ocean’s ecosystem.”

**PROMPT 2:**

“This advertisement is organized and presented to be persuasive. Discuss **three** techniques that the author uses to organize and present information in a persuasive manner.”

<b>FOCUS</b>	<b>TASK</b>	<b>SUPPORT</b>



Reading Open-Response Question  
High School

**Dear Ms. Northrup**

**Core Content Assessed:**

RD-H-3.0.14 Analyze and evaluate the use of persuasion within a passage.

**Prompt:**

This student letter to Representative Anne Northrup is written to be persuasive.

- A. Identify the writer's purpose.
- B. Discuss three characteristics of persuasive writing demonstrated in the letter.

**Scoring Guide:**

<b>Score</b>	<b>Description</b>
4	Student identifies the writer's purpose. Response includes a clear discussion of three characteristics of persuasive writing.
3	Student identifies the writer's purpose. Response includes a general discussion of three characteristics of persuasive writing. <b>or</b> Student identifies the writer's purpose. Response includes a clear discussion of two characteristics of persuasive writing.
2	Student identifies the writer's purpose. Response includes a limited discussion of one or more characteristic of persuasive writing.
1	Student does not identify writer's purpose and minimally discusses one or more characteristics of persuasive writing.
0	Response is totally incorrect or irrelevant.
Blank	No response

Possible persuasive characteristics:

- Addresses the appropriate audience, one with the authority to take the action the writer desires (Representative Northrup's vote can secure the preservation of national arts and humanities endowments.)
- Engages the reader in the first paragraph (writer establishes need and uses quotation)
- Expresses the situation clearly and succinctly
- Indicates a thorough knowledge of the situation and evidence of deliberation

- Acknowledges and addresses the opposing point of view (“I realize that the United States has a huge deficit. . .” and “One of the complaints. . .”).
- Provides specific details to support the writer’s opinion (“Already the United States spends only a third of what Germany spends. . .”)
- Develops ideas through a logical sequencing of information
- States clearly the outcome the writer desires with suggestions for implementation (“I hope that you will consider these thoughts the next time you are asked to vote. . .”)
- Leaves the reader with a vision of why the action desired would be beneficial (“Art teaches. . . the significance of life.”)

Ms. Anne Northrup  
Representative  
1004 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Ms. Northrup:

I am writing to you in hopes that I might persuade you to look more deeply into the importance of art. I strongly believe that the national arts and humanities endowments, such as the National Endowments for the Arts (NEA), should be preserved and willingly supported not only by private citizens, but by our nation's government. In the editorial, *Art, Government and the NEA: An Assessment*, Kurt Joachim Coleman states, "It would be a very sad chapter in American history if the NEA simply vanished. The NEA has funded programs of definitive value to the nation, a point often overlooked by its detractors."

I realize that the United States has a huge deficit and every effort is being made to balance the budget, but I believe the cuts should not be made at the expense of the arts. Do you not agree that art has played a major role in world civilization? What would we know about the Greeks and the Romans without their sculptures, or the caveman without their hieroglyphs? If Michelangelo had not been commissioned, would we have his fresco in the Sistine chapel? I am afraid that without the support of the NEA, the arts will suffer. Already, the United States spends only a third of what Germany spends in one year on the arts.

One of the complaints about the National Endowment for the Arts is that money has been squandered on obscene and pornographic expressions labeled as art. I agree that this problem needs to be addressed. The only problem is deciding who gets to choose what is too obscene or pornographic for art and whether, or not it should be commissioned. I believe that the NEA should be preserved, but its course altered. If the NEA created some form of ethical and moral codes, art could be appreciated on a much higher level, the people of this nation would support it on a much higher level. If the people of this nation began contributing to the arts and really supporting it, the government would do the same. I think that a government supporting the arts is a strong government.

I do not believe in the funding of private artists, unless they follow guidelines of moral and ethical standards. I believe that a person has the right to express their creativity, whether it be obscene or not. I believe that the NEA has the right to reject the funding of artists who do not follow their ethical and moral codes. I think that the funding should instead, support university art programs, orchestras, performing arts (such as ballets and operas), and art museums.

I hope that you will consider these thoughts the next time you are asked to vote on issues involving the National Endowments for the Arts. As a young artistic scholar, my hope is that our country will support the arts and establish a greater appreciation of the importance of art. As Henry Miller said, "Art teaches nothing, except the significance of life."

Sincerely yours,

**UNIT:** Persuasive Reading and Writing

**TOPIC:** Weaving Personal Stories into Persuasive Writing

**LESSON 11 OBJECTIVE:** Students will use personal anecdotes to provide context in their persuasive writing.

**CORE CONTENT:**

- RD-H-3.0.1 Locate, evaluate, and apply information for realistic purpose
- RD-H-3.0.14 Analyze and evaluate the use of persuasion in a passage
- WR-H-1.4 Transactive writing

**VOCABULARY:** anecdote, audience, purpose

**RESOURCE MATERIALS:**

- transparency of a brief descriptive passage from any source
- student copies of “The Holocaust Redux” and “Choosing Our Lessons: An Open Letter to School Councils”
- Chart paper and markers

**TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:**

- Tell students that you will model a reading strategy called *induced imagery* that will help them recognize the value of personal stories and descriptive writing in a persuasive letter (Opitz, Michael F., Rasinski, Timothy V., *Good-bye Round Robin*, 1998).
- To model induced imagery, find a brief passage (about 100 words) that contains a lot of description to read aloud to the students. It helps to make an overhead transparency of the passage so students can follow along as you read aloud. Stop frequently to tell them *what* mental pictures you are forming, *why* mental imagery is important, and *how* you do it.
- Distribute copies of “The Holocaust Redux” to students. Explain that this is a persuasive piece written by a Kentucky senior.
- Either pair or group students and ask one student to read aloud the first two paragraphs in “The Holocaust Redux.” The rest of the group members share images they see while listening to this passage and talk about why they think they form these mental pictures.
- Invite 1-2 students from each group to share their responses with the whole class.
- Ask students to finish reading the piece either silently or aloud with their groups. After they finish reading, encourage small group discussion about the contributions a personal story made in this piece.
- After groups have had time to share, generate class discussion about the effectiveness of using personal stories in a persuasive piece. Record student responses on chart paper.

Responses may include:

Story drops the reader right into the middle of the problem.

Description helps the reader develop mental pictures of the setting or the people involved.

Reader makes a personal connection to the problem.

Story provides a different way to present evidence for argument.

Story adds emotional appeal to arguments.

- Ask students to return to the persuasive letter that they are writing and look for a way they can either begin their piece with a personal anecdote or embed one.
- Distribute the open letter entitled “Choosing Our Lessons: An Open Letter to School Councils” as an additional example of weaving personal stories into persuasive writing. Ask students to read the piece and comment in their Reflective Notebooks on the effectiveness of the story in this persuasive letter.

**EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE**

**LEARNERS:** Pair struggling readers with stronger readers for paired reading strategy. Allow pairs to read loud in hallway away from distractions if needed.

**TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:** Have the students develop a presentation of their anecdote in software such as Powerpoint. Include graphics to enhance and have students project their “stories” onto a screen. Allow others to ask questions for more information and let students revise their Powerpoint presentations. Use e-mail or teleconference to “share” with students beyond the classroom.

**ASSESSING THE LEARNING:** observation notes from guided imagery with groups; evidence of personal anecdotes in drafts of the students’ persuasive letters

# The Holocaust Redux

The wind whipped my hair into my face and I shuddered involuntarily. The sun shone bright and piercing, yet it had warmth for this barren, windswept mountainside. As we climbed the rocky path towards the camp, the silence was oppressive. The picnic we had planned for later suddenly seemed a frivolous and trivial topic of discussion.

My stomach gathered itself into a zillion knots which I could not reason away. I tried unsuccessfully to convince myself that I was being incredibly foolish and immature. Buchenwald, along with all the other concentration camps, had been unoccupied for fifty years! For goodness sakes, it had been a public museum for almost that long! Somehow, my throat still tightened with fear as the great iron gate, set in massive concrete walls, loomed before us like an ominous cloud, warning of a storm's rapid approach.

Amidst such sepulchral solemnity, the intricate, metal gate boasted a gaudy pattern centered around three words – "JEDEM DAS SEINE." I squeezed my father's hand, silently imploring him to reveal its sinister message. His bass, for once gentle, muttered, "EACH TO HIS OWN?" I wondered what was meant by the mysterious proverb. Was it a threat, hinting that all who entered here were doomed to a predestined fate? How could I know its original intent? Perhaps it were best that I did not.

As I wandered over the site and witnessed the excavations and

memorials giving testimony to the heinous acts committed there, my mind was flooded with queries. I was left incredulous at the acts of barbaric cruelty and inhumanity portrayed everywhere I turned my sated eyes. How could one human inflict so much pain and suffering on another with such strict composure and routine? How could they have devised such horrors? What evil possessed them to the point at which they lost all moral and natural respect for the sanctity of human life? How could they develop such immeasurable pride as to honestly believe themselves superior to other human beings who, beyond a

**"I was left incredulous at the acts of barbaric cruelty and inhumanity portrayed everywhere I turned my sated eyes."**

meaningless title, had flesh and blood no different from their own? It was simply beyond my comprehension. The answers offered appeared weak, hollow and insufficient to my probing mind. The sun scudded behind a cloud, and as it emerged with

greater brilliance, its light shone a sudden ray of enlightenment into the tangled forest of my thoughts. I realized that what had occurred there was significant and pertinent to me. It did not offer me the option of walking away, forgetting, and living on without giving it any further consideration. The message of that particular camp, giving voice to the injustice of the Holocaust in its entirety, was not mysteriously granted

to me alone as a novel revelation. Rather, since the Holocaust's termination, and through its disclosure in memorials and museums, its message is shouted to all of society, *especially* here in North America, where we are increasingly ungrateful, unmerciful, prejudiced, and egotistical.

**“I left that day feeling overwhelmingly ashamed of myself and my generation...”**

I left that day feeling overwhelmingly ashamed of myself and my generation, for our selfish complaining, our cruel, derogatory comments and our haughty attitudes of self-superiority and self-gratification. Has the lesson of the Holocaust not sunk in? Must every person be forced to revisit the concentration camps as my family did, to be solemnly reminded of the results of pride and racism? Must such horrors be perpetually regurgitated for our country to realize what amazing blessings we experience, yet consistently take for granted? What fools we are if we simply see and hear, but do not act. Today, now, while we have the chance, while the responsibility is ours, as a whole society, we must fight such inhumanity from ever reoccurring.

The matter goes beyond simply discouraging genocide. To truly and victoriously fight against the ideology which produced the Holocaust, we must also avoid all forms of racism or stereotyping. I feel that, in America, this

responsibility weighs most heavily on youth. Several recent school shootings give witness to the hate, prejudice, and racism existent among students. These feelings are mostly unfounded and those who are picked on are merely scapegoats, the brunt of pent up frustration or depression. If teens would recognize these dangerous red lights around them, progress towards victory against Holocaust terrors could begin. We must all evaluate our own reactions, conscientiously refraining ourselves from categorizing people into invalid stereotypes where they are too quickly blamed by an unfair title instead of standing behind their personal reputation.

**“ If teens would recognize these dangerous red lights around them, progress towards victory against Holocaust terrors could begin.”**

Atrocities like the Holocaust are initiated in the mind in which hate, pride, and prejudice are permitted to fester. We need to be acutely cautious in our anger, so that we do not blame the innocent or act rashly. We must guard ourselves against all poisonous seeds which, if left to the course of nature, could sprout into new holocausts. Above all, we must *never* forget the past, so that we will be enabled, through remembering, to truly grasp history's lessons, and never demean ourselves to the level of repeating the world's most regrettable mistake.

## Choosing Our Lessons: An Open Letter to School Councils

The voice on the other end of the phone was small and quivery. For a moment, I didn't realize it was my 14-year-old son.

He was in the high school office, threatened with in-school suspension. His crime? He had on khakis, his button-down shirt (tucked in, of course) and his ankles were covered by socks. But his belt loops were empty. In his haste to dress that day, he had forgotten his belt.

Although my son was a quiet, well-behaved student who had never been in trouble before, now he was on his way to detention, yanked out of line on his way to lunch by a gloating school authority. Unless he came up with a belt within ten minutes, he would miss his next class.

The vice-principal was unbending. "This will teach him a lesson about responsibility," he told us over the phone. I could imagine my son sitting in the office awaiting his fate, overwhelmed with all the "lessons" he had learned in the last few minutes: (1) that his trusted scoutmaster thought it was *funny* to get him in trouble (yes, he was the school official who'd spotted the empty belt loops); (2) that there is no distinction between flaunting a rule and simply forgetting to follow through; and (3) that ten years of being a model student count for nothing when you make a small slip. As the vice-principal said, "That's life."

While his parents were busy trying to figure out how to leave meetings and race across town, \*\*\*\*\* was rescued instead by a kind-hearted teacher. She ran to her room and brought him a belt that she had tucked in her desk drawer for just such emergencies. But what if she had not happened to walk into the office? Instead of learning a lesson from her about kindness that day, he would have learned that it was far more important to wear a belt than to attend class.

Is this the message we want students to get? That appearances are more important than intellectual activities? I don't really think so. And that's why I'd like to suggest that schools which have or are considering a dress code think long and hard about the messages they are sending when they establish consequences for non-compliance.



School Councils must reaffirm that the most important place for students to be is in class. I urge school councils and site-based management teams to provide reasonable gradations in consequences and to avoid studiously any punishments that take students out of the classroom for dress code infractions. Instead, consider a system like the following:

- 3 *Issue a warning and provide a quick opportunity for compliance.* Parents or school organizations may be enlisted to provide a supply of appropriate clothing which students could be allowed to put on, should they be charged with violating the dress code.
- *Add any after-school detentions or service hours that seem appropriate, perhaps increasing these upon subsequent infractions, but keep kids in the class.* The distraction caused by sending a student home is surely as great as or greater than that caused by the breaking of the rule itself. Save this consequence, perhaps, for students who bare private parts of their anatomies.

Such a policy will solve other problems as well. Students who want to leave class will lose their easiest ticket out. Teachers may be more likely to enforce the dress code when lapses do not result in an offender's missing class activities and assignments. Finally, the school climate may actually improve when – by our reasoned response – we stop equating acts of violence, verbal abuse, vandalism, and thievery with forgetting to wear a belt.

School Councils must see the whole picture---not just the empty belt loops---and keep the emphasis where it belongs: on academics, rather than on apparel.

Sincerely,

Jean Hicks, Director  
Louisville Writing Project

*Used with permission of the writer.*

**UNIT:** Persuasive Reading & Writing

**TOPIC:** Using Transitions in Persuasive Writing

**LESSON 12 OBJECTIVE:** Using a student-written persuasive letter, students will apply transitions to connect ideas, to form complex and compound sentences, and to form a conclusion.

**CORE CONTENT:**

RD-H-3.0.9 Identify an author’s position based on evidence in a passage.

RD-H-3.0.12 Compare and contrast differing points of view in two or more passages.

ELA-EII-W-1 Students will respond to reading, listening, observing, and inquiry through applying writing-to-learn strategies in situations such as journals and graphic organizers and writing-to-demonstrate-learning strategies in situations such as open-response questions and graphic organizers

**VOCABULARY:** Transitions

(Require students to define and place on a “Word Wall” strip for class display.)

**RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:**

Overhead transparency of the model student-written persuasive letter  
“Dear Superintendent”

Student copies of student-written persuasive letter

Student copies of “Connecting & Concluding Transitions”

Graphic organizer—“Premise and Supporting Statements” (see lesson 5)

**TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:**

Appropriate transitions enable the reader to understand the writer’s intent and follow the development of the idea throughout a persuasive piece of writing.

β **Mini Lesson:** Student resource “Connecting & Concluding Transitions”

1. Display transparency on the overhead and review it with students. Call particular attention to the punctuation so that students will use it correctly.
2. Inform students that they will apply these transitions to a piece of student writing for this lesson.

β **Guided Practice:**

1. Use a carefully selected piece of persuasive writing. (For this lesson, “Dear Superintendent” is used and included with the lesson.)
2. Instruct students to complete the following tasks on the “Premise/Supporting Statements” graphic organizer from the earlier lesson.
  - A. Identify the main premise of the text by circling it and labeling in the margin “PREMISE”.

- B. Identify the three supporting statements the writer used by underlining them and labeling them numerically (i.e. #1, #2. etc.)
  - C. Identify the conclusion by circling it and labeling it in the margin “CONCLUSION.”
3. Instruct students to apply a different transition from “Connecting & Concluding Transitions” to the supporting statements which they identified in “Dear Superintendent.”
  4. Instruct students to apply a concluding transition from “Connecting & Concluding Transitions” to the conclusion of the student-written letter.

**Applying the Learning:**

Students should read the drafts of the letters which they are writing and insert appropriate transitions through the piece.

**β EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS:**

Students will need to review “Connecting & concluding Transitions,” explaining the importance of transitions in writing prior to the guided practice.

**β TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:**

Use PowerPoint as a graphic organizer. Create a graphic organizer, then break it into frames. Allow students to present and explain how each frame transitions to the next.

**ASSESSING THE LEARNING:** Read student drafts of their persuasive letters to locate the use of appropriate transitions.

## CONNECTING & CONCLUDING TRANSITIONS

(adapted from *Writers, Inc.*)

### Connecting Transitions

(Particularly useful for persuasive writing)

Firstly,	Secondly,	Furthermore,	Moreover,
In addition,	Finally,		

### Transitions for Complex and Compound Sentences

(These might be embedded within the supporting statements)

- A **compound sentence** is composed of two or more independent clauses. These clauses may be connected by a coordinating conjunction:

, and	, so	, nor	, but
, yet	, or	, for	

**Example:** We're going to buy a new car; and we have a good down payment

- A **compound sentence** may also be created by the use of a semicolon and a conjunctive adverb:

; moreover,	; besides,	; otherwise,	; instead,
; however,	; therefore,	; incidentally,	; similarly,
; anyway,	; still,	; meanwhile,	; of course,

**Example:** We're going to buy a new car; of course, we will need to save our down payment.

- A **complex sentence** is composed of one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses. Subordinating conjunctions and relative pronouns create complex sentences.

although	because	that	since
when	what	while	after
which	as	as if	who
before	if	whose	unless
until	whatever	whether	whenever
whichever	whereas	as long as	whoever
even if	so that	whom	though
as though	whomever	as soon as	just
in order that	considering		

**Example:** Although we do not have a down payment, we have a good credit rating.

### Concluding Transitions

(Used to establish the closure of persuasive writing.)

In conclusion,	In summary,	Thus,
----------------	-------------	-------

Dear Superintendent,

Should physical education be a course that is required for high school students to take? Even though Americans, in general, are not physically fit, should we as high school students have to suffer through 55 minutes of sweat. I think that physical education should be an optional course because it takes time out of the day were something could be taught. You are only required to take physical education for one full semester so after the semester is over w will go back to our unfit selves. At the end of the class we have to change back into our regular clothes, and when we go to our next class, we are too tired to think.

If we take physical education (P.E.) everyday, another class could be taught in this time. There are so many things that we have to know or take in order to graduate or excel and P.E. is taking up another slot for us doing just that. Schools that have regular six day classes, barely get enough classes to graduate because they have to take P.E.

As high school students we are only required to take P.E. for one full semester. Americans, in general, aren't physically fit. After one semester we go back to being out of shape, so that one semester of P.E. is a waste of time. I go to \_\_\_\_\_ High School where students in the magnet program have to take P.E. over the summer because they couldn't fit P.E. into their school schedule.

As speaking of schedules; six day classes are very tight. After P.E. is over you have to go back to your locker room to change your clothes. Most of the time, you are worn out so when you get to your next class, all you want to do is lay down. You can barely concentrate because you are so tired. It's very hard to stay attentive but you have to stay attentive. If we didn't have P.E. as a required class we wouldn't have this problem of tiredness.

Physical education shouldn't be a required class for various reasons. Physical education takes time away, that we could be learning something else. After that one semester, we go back to being out of shape and then it is so hard to pay attention in your next class because you are so tired. Physical education shouldn't be a required class for high school students—it should be an option.

Thank you for your time,

(retyped- retaining student's original text)

**UNIT:** Persuasive Reading and Writing

**TOPIC:** Looking at Leads and Conclusions

**LESSON 13 OBJECTIVE:** Students will read and identify the characteristics of effective leads and conclusions for persuasive letters.

**CORE CONTENT:**

RD-H-3.0.14 Analyze and evaluate the use of persuasion within a passage

WR-H-1.4 Transactive Writing

**RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:**

Copies of the samples pieces of persuasive writing already used in this unit

Copies of handout on effective leads and conclusions

**TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:**

- Explain to students the important of an effective lead and an effective conclusion. If the lead is not engaging, the reader may not continue to read the letter. If the conclusion is not strong, the reader may not act on the purpose of the letter.
- Distribute the handout on effective leads and conclusions. Have students read the lists and ask for students to explain the types of leads and conclusions listed on the handout.
- Put students in groups. Have them collect all of the samples of persuasive writing that they have already read during this unit. Students should reread the samples and determine the techniques used for leads and conclusions. A reporter should write down answers to the following questions for each piece of writing:
  - What lead technique is used by the author of this piece?
  - What conclusion technique is used by the author of this piece?
  - Are the lead and conclusion effective in this piece?
  - How could the lead or conclusion be improved?
- Groups should report their findings to the entire class. Add any new techniques that students mention to the lists of effective leads and conclusions.

Students will read the drafts of the letters they are writing to determine the effectiveness of their leads and conclusions. They will need to revise leads and conclusions which are not effective.

**ASSESSING THE LEARNING:** Collect and review the groups' reports.

## **WRITING EFFECTIVE LEADS**

1. Rhetorical question or a series of questions
2. A descriptive scenario or anecdote about the subject
3. A startling or unusual fact
4. A quotation from a well-known figure
5. A statement of the main idea
6. An example
7. An anecdote or vignette

## **WRITING EFFECTIVE CONCLUSIONS**

1. A thought-provoking question
2. A call to action
3. A summary or thoughtful synthesis of what you wrote
4. A quotation
5. An evaluation (your opinion)
6. A prediction
7. A humorous, witty, or ironic comment

**UNIT:** Persuasive Reading and Writing

**TOPIC:** Using Connotative Language to Set Tone

**LESSON 14 OBJECTIVE:** Students will identify and use connotative language.

**CORE CONTENT:** RD-H-3.0.2 Interpret literal and non-literal meanings of words.  
RD-H-3.0.3 Interpret concrete and abstract terms in meaningful context.  
RD-H-3.0.13 Identify a variety of persuasive and propaganda techniques and explain how each is used.  
WR-H-1.4 Transactive Writing

**VOCABULARY:** connotative meaning, denotative meaning, loaded words, tone

**RESOURCE MATERIALS:** List of words that have strong connotative definitions, thesauri, variety of old magazines for cutting, scissors, glue sticks, butcher paper, markers

**TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:**

- Begin this lesson by asking students if they would prefer being described as *slender* or *emaciated*. Ask for their reasons. Explain that both are synonyms for the word *thin*, but while *slender* conjures up images of a figure with some shape, *emaciated* suggests an unhealthy degree of thinness.
- Have students write the following definitions in their Reflective Notebook:
  - denotative meaning - a word's dictionary definition
  - connotative meaning - a word's suggested or implied meaningPoint out that the denotative meaning for *slender* and *emaciated* may be *thin*, but the connotative meaning goes beyond that definition and carries emotional impact.
- Have students write two different synonyms for the word *old*. One should have a positive connotation and one a negative connotation. Share example with class.
- In small groups of 3-4, ask students to think of other words whose synonyms may have strong connotative meaning. Ask groups to use a thesaurus to find examples.
- Direct students' attention to a word wall where you have taped a large piece of butcher paper with the title "Loaded Words" written in large letters. Explain that we sometimes call words with strong connotations "loaded" words because they are loaded with emotional significance. Invite groups to write their "loaded" words on the word wall as they find them.
- After 10-15 minutes, ask each group to share one of their favorite finds. Elicit from the class ways in which this kind of vocabulary might be useful or harmful in persuasive writing.
- Suggest to the class that when writers want to persuade a reader they can use subtle techniques like word choice to set the tone of the piece. Nowhere is this more evident than in advertisements.



- Tell students they will be looking through magazines for ads that use connotative words to convince the reader to buy a product. They may work in groups on this project. As they find good examples, ask them to cut the ad out and highlight or underline the “loaded” words. After 15-20 minutes, ask students to share their best examples and add them to the word wall.
- Ask students to copy their favorite examples from the Word Wall into their Reflective Notebooks. They may want to use some of these words in their own writing as they work on persuasive pieces during this unit.

**TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:** Use Inspiration software to web words with similar meaning but different connotations. Create a class database of connotative words. Include fields for word, definition, part of speech to make searching/sorting easier.

**ASSESSING THE LEARNING:** Observation notes during group work

**UNIT:** Persuasive Reading and Writing

**TOPIC:** Using Connotative Language to Set Tone

**LESSON 15 OBJECTIVE:** Students will identify and use connotative language.

**CORE CONTENT:**

RD-H-3.0.2 Interpret literal and non-literal meanings of words.

RD-H-3.0.3 Interpret concrete and abstract terms in meaningful context.

RD-H-3.0.13 Identify a variety of persuasive and propaganda techniques and explain how each is used.

WR-H-1.4 Transactive Writing

**VOCABULARY:** connotative meaning, denotative meaning, loaded words, tone, editorial

**RESOURCE MATERIALS:**

Copies for each student of one example of an editorial written by a syndicated newspaper columnist such as Ellen Goodman, George Will, Molly Ivins, or William Raspberry, and a news article written about the same subject  
copies for each student of “The Holocaust Redux” (see Lesson 11)

**TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:**

- Refer students to their Reflective Notebook and the Word Wall created in previous lesson to review definitions of *connotative* and *denotative* meanings.
- Tell students that today they will be looking at two pieces of writing that deal with the same topic. Distribute copies of both to each student.
- Ask them to underline or highlight the connotative language they find in each piece.
- Ask students to compare the amount of connotative language in the news article with that in the editorial. Remind them that the purpose of an editorial is to persuade and the purpose of a news article is to inform. Elicit responses explaining why they find more connotative language in an editorial.
- Ask students to get out the copy of “The Holocaust Redux,” a student-written editorial. Tell students you are going to introduce a reading strategy called Paired Guided Reading that will give them a purpose for their reading and allow them to discuss what they read with a partner (Stephens, Elaine C., and Brown, Jean E., *A Handbook on Content Literacy Strategies: 75 Practical Reading and Writing Ideas*, 2000).
- Pair students and ask them to put a mark at the end of the third paragraph in “The Holocaust Redux” and another at the end of the sixth paragraph.
- Instruct students read to the first mark silently. Ask them to highlight or underline words that have strong connotations. When both partners have completed the first three paragraphs, they can compare words and discuss why they highlighted these words.
- Students continue to the next mark in the same manner, stopping to compare notes and discuss the effectiveness of the language.

- Finally, they will finish with the final two paragraphs of the editorial.
- Have students write the definition for *tone* in their Reflective Notebooks and add to classroom Word Wall.  
tone: the writer's attitude toward his/her subject and audience
- Ask students to draw some conclusions while working with their partner about the tone the writer sets through word choice in "The Holocaust Redux."
- For homework ask students to return to the persuasive letter they are writing and look for places where they can add connotative language to influence the reader's attitude. Ask them to be prepared to share a "before" and "after" passage tomorrow.

**TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:** Use Inspiration software to web words with similar meaning but different connotations. Use the internet to locate articles with connotative language. Cut and paste to a word processing program and use text features to underline, bold, or italicize connotative language.

**ASSESSING THE LEARNING:** Observation notes during group work, student responses in Reflective Notebook, evidence of connotative language in drafts of persuasive letter

**UNIT:** Persuasive Reading and Writing

**TOPIC:** Basic Letter-Writing Skills

**LESSON 16 OBJECTIVE:** Students will recognize and use the format for a Full Block Business Letter.

**CORE CONTENT:** RD-H-3.0.1 Locate, evaluate, and apply information for realistic purpose.  
WR-H-1.4 Transactive Writing

**VOCABULARY:** Full Block letter, heading, inside address, salutation, body, closing, signature, letterhead

**RESOURCE MATERIALS:**

Student copies of the following persuasive letters used previously in this unit and/or others that follow conventional business letter format.: “Dear School Board Members,” “Dear Director Lansing,” “Dear Representative Smith,” and “Dear Editor Abell”  
Overhead transparencies of these letters  
Student copies of “Form of a Full Block Business Letter”

**TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:**

- Arrange students in groups of 3-4. Have them get out the sample letters listed under Resource Materials above. Ask them to look at the samples and record similarities in format in their Writer’s Notebook. Encourage discussion within the group. They should notice features such as all letters have the address of the person sending the letter, all letters have a signature, etc.
- After 10-15 minutes, ask groups to share their findings. As students talk about common features, introduce the correct terminology by writing it next to the text feature on the overhead transparencies of the letters. Be sure to include the following terms:

<u>heading</u>	the writer’s complete address and the date. Companies include this in their letterhead
<u>inside address</u>	the reader’s name and address. If the person has a title, place it on the second line.
<u>salutation</u>	Begins with “Dear” and ends with a colon (:)
<u>body</u>	paragraphs of the letter where arguments are presented. Single space within the paragraphs and double space between paragraphs
<u>closing</u>	Sincerely, Sincerely yours, or Yours truly, followed by a comma
<u>signature</u>	the writer’s handwritten and typed name

- Add these words to the classroom Word Wall.
- Refer to the letters again to point out conventions of punctuation and capitalization found in the business letter. Have students take notes in their Writer’s Notebooks.
- Distribute copies of “Form of a Full Block Business Letter.” Ask students to refer to their draft of a persuasive letter to fill in the blanks on this sheet. Have them write the first sentence for each of the body paragraphs in the body section. They should write the first sentences for any paragraphs after the third paragraph on the back of the handout. They may discover that they need to find the title, correct spelling, or address of the person to whom they are sending the letter.
- Students will use this form as they draft their final copies of their persuasive letter. They should return to the Characteristics of an Effective Persuasive Letter (see Lesson 9) to assure that they have completely revised their letter.

**TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:** Create a computerized template for business letters and have students type their letters in the template.

**ASSESSING THE LEARNING:**

Assess the final drafts of persuasive letters using the Kentucky Holistic Scoring Guide for Student Writing. You may want to point out that you will be looking *specifically* for the following skills that students have learned in this unit:

Audience and Purpose:

Purpose is narrowed and focused; the audience can be clear about the writer’s expectations about what he or she should do or believe as a result of reading this letter.

Audience’s arguments are included and effectively refuted.

Idea Development:

Arguments are supported with facts and other appropriate supporting evidence.

Premise is developed through the use of logic, not fallacies.

Organization:

Transitions allow for the reader to follow the argument easily.

Language:

Connotative language is used effectively.

Correctness:

Proper letter format is used.

# Form of a Full Block Business Letter

Heading

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Inside  
Address

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Salutation

\_\_\_\_\_:

Body

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Closing

\_\_\_\_\_,

Handwritten  
Signature

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Typed  
Signature

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## Extensions/Accommodations for ECE and other Diverse Learners

Students with disabilities may require additional accommodations.  
Refer to IEP (Individual Education Plan)

### Organize and Structure

- **Establish routines to insure that students have consistent opportunities to process information and to maintain an effective learning climate.**
  - Activate prior knowledge with a written or verbal review of key concepts at the beginning of class.
  - Present the agenda for the lesson and task expectations verbally and in written form.
  - Establish well-defined classroom rules. Have students model and rehearse behavioral expectations.
  - Set clear time limits. Use a timer to complete tasks.
  - Utilize student's peak learning times to teach important lessons.
  - Use verbal/nonverbal cues and frequent breaks to keep students focused.
- **Plan and organize classroom arrangement to minimize disruptions and enhance efficiency.**
  - Allow adequate space for effective traffic patterns, furniture, and equipment.
  - Arrange classroom to limit visual and auditory distractions.
  - Provide preferential seating (near teacher, good view of board, special chair or desk) to increase attention and reduce distractions.
  - Keep student's work area free of unnecessary materials.
- β **Display and use visuals, posters, objects, models, and manipulatives to increase memory, comprehension and establish connections to core content. Examples include....**
  - Mnemonic devices such as COPS (Capitalization, Organization, Punctuation, Spelling).
  - A model of the final product before beginning an experiment, project, lab, etc.
  - Posters of steps for specific learning strategies (open response, writing process, formulas).
  - **Use varied student groupings to maximize opportunities for direct instruction and participation.**
  - Use of one-on-one and small group instruction for students who require additional support.
  - Carefully consider student abilities, learning styles, role models, type of assignment, etc., when grouping students for cooperative learning and with peer partners.
  - Collaborate, co-teach, or consult with ECE, Comprehensive Teachers, etc.
- **Prior to instruction, design and organize content to strengthen storage and retrieval of information.**
  - Design instruction that incorporates a multi-sensory approach (visual, auditory, tactile/kinesthetic) to insure that all learning styles are accommodated. Include

demonstrations, simulations, hands-on activities, learning strategies, and mnemonic devices.

- Identify and focus on information critical for mastery. Determine the content students need to know (vs. what is nice to know). Organize instruction around the *big* ideas.
- Design an agenda showing exactly what the students will learn.
- Sequence presentation of content from easier to more difficult.
- Prepare study guides, a copy of class notes, or graphic organizers ahead of time. Allow some students to use partially completed copies during the lesson.
- Provide simplified versions of books and materials with similar content.
- Design specific management procedures to insure acquisition of content and task completion using...
- Planners, agendas, assignment sheets, homework/personal checklists, folders, notebooks, and/or parent notes.
- Written as well as verbal cues/prompts, color-coding, symbols, picture clues.

### **Instruct Explicitly**

- **Present and pace explicit instruction to reinforce clear understanding of new concepts and make connections to prior learning.**
  - Teach, model and rehearse learning strategies pertaining to the content of the lesson including organizational guides, cooperative learning skills, and memory/mnemonic devices. (KWL, Venn Diagrams, SQRW = Survey Question, Read, Write, etc.).
  - Introduce new concepts by clearly connecting them to prior knowledge using key vocabulary, chapter review questions, agenda, syllabus, etc. Present in both written and verbal form.
  - Present assignments/directions in small steps/segments.
  - Use short phrases, cue words, and signals to direct attention (my turn, your turn, eyes on me).
  - Adjust the volume, tone, and speed of oral instruction.
- **Frequently monitor students to enhance memory, comprehension, and attention to content.**
  - Use frequent and varied questioning strategies. Target higher order thinking skills.
  - Call on students by name. Restate student responses. Provide positive and corrective feedback.
  - Use and model 'think aloud,' self-questioning, problem solving, and goal setting techniques.

### **Reduce**

- **Condense main ideas and key concepts to avoid overload and allow for developmental mastery.**
  - Modify requirements of assignments based on information critical for mastery.
  - Provide clear, visually uncluttered handouts/worksheets.



- Adapt assignment and test formats. Use alternate modes such as short answer, matching, drawing, true/false, and word banks.
- Break tasks into manageable segments. Adjust duration of instruction and independent work.
- Reduce redundancy and unnecessary practice.
- Use activities that require minimal writing. Avoid asking students to recopy work.
- Adjust amount/type of homework and coordinate assignments with other teachers.
- Provide credit for incremental learning.

### **Emphasize and Repeat**

- **Use repeated practice/targeted cues to increase retention of essential concepts and to develop ability to monitor own learning.**
  - Provide frequent, but short, extra practice activities in small groups.
  - Have student read/drill aloud to self or peer partner.
  - Highlight text or use coding methods for key concepts.
  - Use bound notebooks and/or learning logs to store vocabulary, facts, references, and formulas.
  - Allow students guided practice and test taking strategies before assessments.
  - Frequently restate concepts/directions using short phrases.
  - Use computer activities, games, and precision teaching drills for practice activities instead of worksheets.

### **Motivate and Enable**

- **Enhance opportunities for academic success to remediate faulty learning/thinking cycles and to reduce failure.**
  - Create unique learning activities including skills, posters, clay models, panoramas, dramatizations, etc. (see textbook manuals for alternative activities).
  - Offer students choices of topics/projects and alternative methods to demonstrate knowledge (oral tests/presentations, illustrations, cooperative groups, etc.).
  - Allow flexible timelines for assignment completion, homework, and testing with retakes.
  - Consider the students learning styles when designing extent of involvement in a learning activity.
  - Extend time for students to process ideas/concepts, which are presented in lectures/discussions.
  - Use technology such as taped text, word processors, scanners, and audio feedback software.
  - Provide spare material and supplies.
  - Provide personal word lists/spelling aids for written assignments.
  - Adjust grading procedures to reflect individual goals, only correct answers, and percent of completed work. Allow extra credit projects to bring up grades.

- **Enhance opportunities for behavioral success to reduce frustration and confusion.**
  - Increase positive comments and student interactions (make 3 positive statements for every one negative statement).
  - Use positive and specific verbal/nonverbal praise. Provide immediate feedback.
  - Review rules regularly. Provide varied rewards and consequences.
  - Maintain close physical proximity to students especially during independent work sessions.
  - Alert students several minutes before transitions occur.
  - Use personal contracts and goal setting which match the student's needs, interests, and abilities.
  - Teach self-monitoring skills using progress charts/reports. Gradually wean students from artificial incentives.
  - Maintain regular communication with parents.

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