



The Art of Persuasive Writing

Exploring Text Types

2009
13 minutes

Program Synopsis

The skills required to write in a range of different genres and for a variety of different audiences are acquired through instruction and practice. Whether it be a student required to research a topic for a written task or an oral presentation, or an employee being asked to prepare a report recording levels of achievement within an organization to argue for increases in funding, persuasive writing is an important skill to master. This program explores a purposeful, realistic scenario as the foundation for learning techniques for writing persuasively. Important components of an argumentative piece are presented in relation to a school based issue, providing the learner with a topic they have some knowledge of and a basis for quality research.

Related Programs

- Information Report Writing Skills – Exploring Text Types

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Introduction

Pip is an impulsive, feisty 13 year old who lives in a family of opinionated and eccentric people. Her sister is an environmental activist who frequently uses Pip on her crusades. Pip's mum is a film critic on the radio and her dad heads up an advertising firm - so her family have built their careers on being persuasive. While Pip's no stranger to an argument, she needs to learn how to harness her own passion and conviction, and make the most of her persuasive talents. When she is given the task of doing an oral presentation for her English class, she's forced to think about how to argue effectively to get what she wants and fight for what she believes in. Her mission: getting the near-inedible school canteen food improved Jamie Oliver style.

Program Rationale

The Art of Persuasion is aimed at an audience of Upper Primary teachers and students. The program is designed to highlight the important components required to research and construct a well structured, evidential and concise argument. Following the trials of a familiar teenage student and her seemingly eccentric and self-absorbed family, and a School Principal with a questionable diet, we sympathize with Pip's task to do something about changing the menu of food available at her school canteen.

Program Timeline

00:00:00	Copyright CLV Splash
00:00:00	My Name is Pip
00:00:55	The Assignment
00:02:48	A Few Pointers
00:06:47	Doing the Work
00:09:30	Presentation Day
00:10:26	The Power of Persuasion
00:11:40	Conclusion
00:11:59	Credits
00:12:59	End Program

Internet Resources:

- <http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/english/index.html>
- <http://www.vate.org.au/vate.nsf/Weben/Teaching%20Resources>
- http://www.education.vic.gov.au/search/connect/connect.asp?start=1&range=10&template=/teacher/results.htm&source=/teacher/&searchtype=Search,Featured&scheme=VEC&THSPath=VEC/Themes/English+Resources&Path=Themes/English+Resources&Pics=Y&XslTemplate=template/collapsedth_ul_li.xsl
- <http://www.factmonster.com/>
- <http://www.howstuffworks.com/>
- <http://www.writingfun.com/>
- <http://www.sbac.edu/~idylwild/writingtips.html>
- <http://www.thewritingsite.org/resources/genre/expository.asp>

Program Worksheet

Before the Program

1. Thinking about Persuasive writing / Argumentative writing
 - a) Define the terms Persuasive and Argumentative using a dictionary or online resource.
 - b) Re-write the definition in a sentence using your own words and include an example of where or when this style of writing would be used.
 - c) What do you think are important things to consider when writing a well structured, interesting and entertaining argument? (e.g. facts supported with evidence)
2. A good, clean argument!
 - a) Working with a partner or in a small group, think of a topic or issue that you have a strong opinion on e. g. the summer uniform shirt should not need to be tucked in to the shorts, or, I am old enough for my very own mobile phone.
 - b) Take two minutes to prepare your argument as an oral presentation.
 - c) In turn present your argument to the class. At the completion of your presentation, allow class members to ask questions on the topic.
 - d) De-brief with the class the experience of presenting your argument. Was it an easy task? What made an argument interesting, entertaining and convincing?
 - e) Create a list of dos and don'ts for presenting an argument (e.g. do state the issue or topic first)
3. Finding examples of persuasive writing
 - a) Set about researching or brainstorming as many uses as you can for writing in the persuasive style.
 - b) Collect a sample of persuasive writing from a newspaper or other relevant source. Highlight the arguments (one color) and the supporting evidence (another color).
 - c) Share your research findings with a small group.
4. Supporting your argument with facts
 - a) When writing a persuasive piece it is important to have clear, concise and well researched information supporting the main points of the text. Working with a partner or in a small group, make a list of as many sources as possible where a writer could research factual information.
 - b) Report back to your class and make a class list of information sources.
 - c) It is vital that the facts a writer sources to support an argument are true. Study the list of information sources and re-write or number the sources from most reliable to least reliable. (Think about how you may check the reliability of your information, in particular the use of facts obtained from websites)

During the Program

1. Make a list of the seven tips sent to Pip by her teacher Mr. Burton, to help the students' research and complete their writing task.
2. Mr Burton supplied his students with a template to help structure their writing pieces. Identify and record the outline and important points to consider in this template.
3. Make a list of the types of research and places Pip sourced to help construct a concise and well structured persuasive piece on the benefits of a healthier school canteen menu.

After the Program

1. What have you learned about producing a well-researched, well constructed persuasive writing piece?
2. Discuss the comment Mr. Burton wrote on Pip's submitted work.
3. Putting it in to practice
 - As a class decide on an issue (you may compile a list of possibilities) of importance within your school (uncomfortable winter uniform, out of date uniform, length of lunch time too short, homework should be reduced, not allowed to watch a particular TV series, home bathroom roster is not fair etc). Prepare a presentation, stating and supporting your views (remember the tips Pip's teacher gave the class). Decide with your teacher how this information will be presented (eg, as a letter to a principal, an article for a paper, a brochure, an oral presentation, a debate, etc)
 - Set up a mock Q & A session – have a presenter pose an issue for discussion, in two teams take a few minutes to discuss your argument (for or against) before presenting your case and answering questions from the opposing team.