

Grade 7 Literacy

Week of November 9 – November 13

Lesson 1: Writer's Workshop – Persuasive Argument

Imagine you're sitting in the waiting room at the dentist's office. The receptionist says you'll have about a fifteen-minute wait. The last thing you want to do is think about what's going to happen while you're sitting in the dentist's chair, so you grab a magazine and start flipping pages.

You stop to look at an advertisement for a new brand of toothpaste that promises to whiten your teeth in just ten days. The model in the ad has a perfect smile. Wouldn't it be great if the orthodontist could make your teeth look that fantastic? Just in case he can't, you decide to buy a tube of this amazing new toothpaste.



You flip a few more pages and the title of an article catches your eye—*The Importance of Preventing Sunburns*. You read the article and are shocked to discover that young people are being diagnosed with skin cancer. You still plan to go to the beach with your friends this weekend, but you'll definitely remember to take sunscreen. In fact, you can pick up some at the drug store when you buy the toothpaste.

The dentist's assistant calls out your name. Wow! Those fifteen minutes flew by.

And in that brief time, you were persuaded to buy a new product and think about a way to protect your health.

That's the power of persuasion!

Workshop Overview:

1. First, you need to choose an issue you want to convince someone about.
2. Then, you need to identify your position on the issue.
3. Next, you need to research information about your issue to include in your argument and outline a plan for your persuasive argument essay and speech.
4. You need to write your essay.
5. Finally, you need to practice presenting it as speech.

Writing Targets:

By the end of this workshop you will have incorporated the following into your piece:

- A clear opening statement
- At least three supporting points in your body paragraphs and your speech that are supported by facts, examples, statistics, quotations, and occasionally emotional appeals
- You have identified and responded to opposing views
- A clear closing statement
- A highly persuasive argument
- Confident, fluent and engaging oral presentation

Choosing Your Topic

You are going to be writing a persuasive or argumentative essay using a specific essay format. You will need to choose an issue or concept that you have an "opinion" about, that is meaningful, and that you can support with facts and information in order to convince others that your opinion is a reasonable one. You need to choose your topic carefully and it must be on the theme of the stewardship of nature.

The following ideas may appeal to you or you may have an idea of your own that is not on the list below:

1. First Peoples' should regain rights to their lands.
2. People need to spend more time outside.
3. Alberta's oil sands are causing ecological harm OR Alberta's oil sands are justifiable.
4. Green cars are not green.
5. Connecting with nature has many important benefits.
6. Destruction of the world's forest is justified by a human need for land and food.
7. Garbage disposal should not be free to encourage recycling
8. Do animals have rights? Using animals for scientific research is inhumane.
9. Hunting is unethical and should not be allowed.
10. The Northern Gateway Pipeline project in BC should not be passed.
11. Leather and fur clothes should be outlawed.
12. Wind power plants help reduce effects of global warming.
13. Government should ban plastic bags.
14. Whaling should be prohibited.
15. There should be mandatory water rationing during drought conditions?



Once you have chosen your topic you can begin your research.

Arguments For & Against

Use the chart as you complete your research. Be sure to keep track of the websites and texts you use as you will be required to submit a bibliography.

Research your issue using a variety of sources, such as the Internet, newspapers, books, and magazines. You might even interview people who are involved or affected to hear their side of the story. Look for information that can be proven (facts rather than opinions) as it is most persuasive.

Be sure to include notes/information that will allow you to create **three or more** arguments that support your opinion and **at least one** counter-argument that opposes it.

The topic I have chosen is:

Arguments For	Arguments Against

My position is _____ (list for or against).

