

Grade 6 English Language Arts  
Week of January 4 – January 8

**Lesson 5: Writer’s Workshop – Opening**

One way to convince people about something is to write a persuasive argument. Persuasive letters can be written to newspapers, schools, businesses, community groups... even parents. A typical persuasive argument contains a **powerful opening**, a body with **supporting reasons**, and a **convincing conclusion**. In this lesson, we will focus on the opening.

## Open Strongly

The opening of a persuasive argument is where you introduce the topic and state your position (point of view) on it. It should “grab” your reader’s attention and make him or her want to read on.

**Here is an Example:**

*Did you ever wonder who made those designer jeans and fancy running shoes you’re wearing? If you found out it was a child working for pennies a day in a smelly, crowded factory, rather than going to school, would you still buy those clothes? I doubt it very much. Child labour is a serious problem in some parts of the world. We need to shop carefully so we don’t support businesses that employ child workers.*

As you can see, the opening of a persuasive argument catches your interest and introduces an important issue. It also includes the author’s position on the issue. Evidence to support that position will come in later paragraphs.

**Hook – sentence or sentences near the beginning of a text that grab the reader’s attention and make the reader want to keep reading**



- 1 Write a hook sentence to grab your reader's attention.
- 2 Introduce your topic by telling the who, what, and why you're writing about.
- 3 State your claim by answering the question, "What are you persuading your audience to do?"



## Know Your Audience

Is your topic one you'd like to actually send to someone? Who? Your school principal? The mayor? A city council? Your MLA (elected provincial member of the legislative assembly)? Your MP (elected federal member of parliament)? A local service club, store, or newspaper?

For your opening statement to be really effective, you need to know who will be viewing, hearing, or reading it. You should always keep these points in mind.

- Does your audience know you?
- Do you think your audience agrees or disagrees with your point of view?

You might need to add more points and examples for an audience that is not likely to share your point of view. Otherwise you could end up writing a persuasive letter that isn't convincing.

Your opening should be just a few sentences long to introduce your opinion or idea. It should introduce what you will explain in your body paragraph(s).

# Writer's Workshop 2: Opening

Write the first draft of your opening statement for your persuasive essay.

Step 1: Write a hook sentence to grab your reader's attention.

Step 2: Introduce your topic by telling the who, what, and why you're writing.

Step 3: State your claim by answering the question, "What are you persuading your audience to do/think?"