eWriting for Kids!

TEACHER GUIDE

PERSUASIVE LETTER

Learning Objectives

Students will:

1. Write a persuasive letter organized with a strong opening, 2 or more reasons to support their position, 2 or more answers to reasons against their position, a memorable closing, and appropriate tone for their audience.

2. Revise and edit their first drafts to strengthen organization, arguments, and word choice and to observe conventions.

3. Add multimedia enhancements to help convince readers.

Common Core State Standards: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.1.A, B, C, D; W.5.1 A, B, C, D [12]

Overview

WIN THEM OVER! an interactive learning game, introduces five keys to writing a persuasive letter.

> SYNOPSIS
>
> Amid wild audience cheers, writing gameshow host Jake introduces 5th grader Gabriela, whose prize-winning persuasive letter, *My New Allowance*, reveals 5 keys to success. Jake invites the student viewers to apply the keys in a letter persuading parents to buy *A Puppy for Our Family*. After organizing ideas, children revise and edit a draft by selecting options. Students who make convincing choices earn the fun of playing with a virtual puppy.

Next, students write original persuasive letters, using the framework and motivation provided by the software..

Teacher Materials (in order of suggested use)

INTRODUCING LEARNING-GAME
1. **FORM OF A FRIENDLY LETTER** Mini lesson to refresh skills
2. *WIN THEM OVER!* Learning game, about 25 minutes seat-time

BEFORE INDEPENDENT WRITING
3. **TOPICS TO WRITE ABOUT**
4. **PERSUASION MAP graphic organizer**

AFTER STUDENTS WRITE FIRST DRAFTS
5. **REVISING VIDEO 11** min.
6. **REVISING YOUR PERSUASIVE LETTER** Step-by-step form.
7. **EDITING MARKS VIDEO** 5 min**.** How to use EDITING MARKS handout.
8. **EDITING MARKS HANDOUT**

AFTER STUDENTS PUBLISH FINAL DRAFTS
9. **LETTER TO AN EDITOR** Mini-lesson for follow-up activity

INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN:

Preparatory Skills

It is recommended that students be able to:

1. Recognize the correct form and punctuation of a friendly letter.
2. Write compositions of two or more paragraphs, each using a topic sentence, supporting sentences, and a concluding sentence.
3. Apply 4th Grade conventions.

Suggested Time

Two to five periods. User testing indicates that a five-period sequence produces effective learning, but the timing may vary significantly depending on student needs.

Session One—*LEARNING SOFTWARE*

INTRODUCE *WIN THEM OVER!* (about 25 min. seat-time) is suitable for use in class or as a "flipped" homework assignment before class. Students may benefit from a preliminary discussion such as:

A. What is the difference between a fact and an opinion?
B. How do you convince someone to agree with your opinion?
C. What does it mean to support your opinion?

Sessions Two/Three--INDEPENDENT WRITING

CHOOSING A TOPIC

o Students choose topics for their own persuasive letters. Advise students to pick topics they are passionate about. The more passionate, the more likely it is that they will persuade their audiences. Examples include letters to:
o Parents, requesting a sleepover with a friend, visit to a museum, or a family picnic. How about changing chores, learning a musical instrument, or getting something you've always dreamed about?
o Your principal, requesting better lunch foods or permission to use mobile devices during breaks.
o A newspaper editorial page, opposing a proposed extension of school days.

PREWRITING User testing indicates that filling out a PERSUASION MAP will help students generate and organize ideas.

FIRST DRAFT Students write their first drafts. (one or two class periods)

Session Four—REVISING & EDITING and FINAL DRAFTS

1. VIDEO TUTORIALS

Students view video tutorials that model how to use REVISING and EDITING handouts to mark first drafts. (Note: Misspellings are ignored in the REVISING video because students are encouraged to defer correcting them until EDITING.)

2. PREPARING TO REWRITE

   Individually or collaborating with peers, students mark their first drafts using the REVISING GUIDELINES and EDITING MARKS handouts.

3. FINAL DRAFTS

   Authors revise, edit, and polish their drafts. They are encouraged to add multimedia enhancements.

Why not put yourself in the picture?	*Add your own graphics.*

Session Five—PUBLISHING Students

• Share their work with classmates, parents, and other students through presentations and media. Letters and responses are saved to their personal portfolios.

• Exchange letters with a few classmates. They may vote to see how many students in the group were convinced by each writer.

• Start or join an online group so they can blog their persuasive letters and receive feedback. (Make sure this is a school-approved secure site.)

ASSESSMENT:

RUBRICS (Read/Write/Think and Capistrano USD) are provided for reference in evaluating student letters.

(13a, 13b)

Teachers can dictate brief critiques into smartphones which transcribe and post them to students' digital portfolios to help improve future compositions. WTO is self-scoring. Students earning 75 or higher win WTO badges.

MULTIPLE EXPOSURES:

Curriculum experts "place particular emphasis on students' ability to write sound arguments... as students must think critically . . and anticipate counterclaims." Common Core State Standards, Appendix A (Research)(14)

Many teachers consider Opinion compositions the most challenging of the genres for 4th and 5th graders. Children need multiple exposures to this task. The 5-key template introduced in this lesson can be reused

several times in lessons on writing editorials, speeches, safety and health messages and others. For example, see our mini-lesson on writing a LETTER TO AN EDITOR.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- CCSS Common Core State Standards Initiative
  http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/5/

- **COGNITIVE RIGOR MATRIX: Applying Webb's Depth-of-Knowledge Levels to Bloom's Taxonomy K. Hess' Cognitive Rigor Matrix & Curricular Examples 2009**
  www.nciea.org/publications/CRM_ELA_KH11.pdf

- **ISTE STANDARDS—Students International Society for Technology in Education**
  http://www.iste.org/docs/pdfs/20-14_ISTE_Standards-S_PDF.pdf

- **ISTE STANDARDS—Teachers (NETS) International Society for Technology in Education 2000**
  http://www.iste.org/docs/pdfs/nets_for_teachers_2000.pdf?sfvrsn=2

- **SBAC Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium**
  http://www.smarterbalanced.org/sample-items-and-performance-tasks/

WATERMAN FOUNDATION