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PERSUASIVE WRITING



The type of writing that requires the most effort is persuasive. Not only are you trying to get your audience to change their position on a point, but you are also working on making the topic connect with that audience. Without making that connection, the readers will not consider your argument.

Argumentative, or persuasive, writing is very important and can be difficult, but many people find this type of writing rewarding. It is human nature to want to make things better and the argumentative paper is an outlet for that.

Persuasive writing (argumentative and persuasive are interchangeable names for this type of paper) promotes a particular position and asks the audience to engage in a course of action.

The vast majority of a persuasive paper is informative; make sure that the audience understands the problem, what makes it a problem and what the solutions are. It is all working towards persuading the audience to act, so you first have to educate the audience so they understand the topic and why they need to get engaged.

There are different types of persuasive paper, but most all come down to four distinct elements that need to be explored.

PROBLEM

This part of the paper explains the topic to the audience. This is where the audience sees how big the problem is, what the terminology involved is, how much it costs, the history of the problem and where the problem is heading. One of the biggest parts of this is showing the audience how this applies to them. When the audience can see that the problem impacts them, they are more likely to get involved.

CAUSE

In the informative writing unit, you learned about the causal analysis, examining and analyzing what lead up to an event or what made it happen. This is important to show the audience, especially showing the reader how they might be a part of the problem. When the audience sees that they are

causing the problem or continuing its effects, they can become more motivated to get involved and try to solve it.

SOLUTION

What would be a possible, logical, practical solution that people can get behind? You need to advocate a solution that will make a significant difference, but one that the audience can understand and rally behind. If the audience doesn't understand it or see how it will make a difference, they might not buy into it.

When selecting a solution, it might be beneficial to focus on one solution. When the audience has a buffet of solution options, they will often pick the one that costs them the least, but that might not be the most effective. By putting all of your weight behind one, you are indicating to the reader that this is the best option and will make the most difference.

BENEFIT

This part of the process gives the reader a reason to buy into the solution. As bad as it might sound, the audience will want to see that they will get something out of getting involved. The audience needs to see validation for their choice to back your solution, so show them what the benefit to them would be.

For example:

Topic - Starting an all-in-one curbside recycling program in your town

Problem - Too many people in your town are not recycling.

Cause - People feel it is too difficult to recycle because they have to keep separate bins for different types of recycling and then they have to drive it somewhere to recycle.

Solution - Find a company that will provide and pick up a recycling bin to residents that can use to put all their recyclables in without sorting and separating.

Benefit - Not only will you be helping the planet, but it is easy and there is nothing you have to do other than put the recyclables in and roll that bin to the curb.

TIPS FOR WRITING THE PERSUASIVE PAPER

1. **Proof** - You almost can't provide too much proof to prove your position. It is critical that you provide your reader with an overwhelming amount so that they don't question anything.
2. **Credibility** - The proof that you provide needs to be from credible sources. The audience needs to see that the information is believable and that the source is one that they are comfortable with. You must provide the necessary information for the reader to find these sources so they can verify them. This is to be done both in the introduction of the source and in the citations.
3. **Conviction** - The audience needs to see that you believe this and in what you are arguing. When the reader sees this conviction, they feel more at ease to buy into it as well. In a verbal setting, this conviction can be contagious, firing up the crowd and swaying emotions.

There are five characteristics of persuasive writing.

1. The persuasive writing starts with a clear and emphatic stance. It is important that the reader knows in advance what you think so as they read, they understand how that support works into the overall topic.
2. Good persuasive writings engage the audience by making connections to them. The reader needs to see how the problem applies to them as well as how it benefits them to be involved. Without this, it is unlikely that the audience will take note.
3. A logical approach to the persuasive paper is a must. You have to walk your reader through the problem and solution in a way that builds up to a strong call to action. While there are many different ways to do this, it is important that it makes sense to the reader.
4. Because the reader is interested in the topic and what you are wanting them to do, you must stick to the topic. Do not add in things that are distracting or draw the reader away from your main argument. That goes for information that is not directly related to the topic as well as other solutions or ideas that dilute your point.
5. Editing is always important, but in persuasion, it is so much more. The readers, who are being asked to change their minds, are looking for reasons to buy into your point. If they sense the argument is not well written, the implication is that the thoughts are not well thought out either.



Now answer questions 1-11

Read the following persuasive work on homework and answer the following questions.

Homework is an important part of the learning process in middle school. One reason is that homework gives students additional practice of skills covered in class. Middle school classes are too short to teach a new concept and practice it sufficiently for students to master. Students need both guided practice in class and independent practice at home. And since teachers are too busy in class to do this, homework can take the place of that overworked, apathetic teacher. Another reason for homework is that it provides time to complete longer assignments. For example, the ideal composition process allows time for students to think and to reflect on their ideas, as well as time to revise and to proofread their writing. Also, reports and special projects often require research that cannot always be done at school. In addition, since all students do not work at the same speed, giving students time at home to finish work keeps them from falling behind. Finally, the most important reason for homework is that it ensures review. New material and old material are practiced in daily assignments. Students who do their homework daily are prepared for tests and make better grades. In conclusion, not only is homework essential to mastering new skills and maintaining previously learned skills, but it also guarantees constant review and provides time for longer assignments, as well as additional time for students who need it. Students, do your daily homework, make better grades, and learn more!



Now answer questions 12-19