

Important Concepts . . .

Preview Review



Language Arts Grade 8 TEACHER KEY

W3 - Lesson 2: Persuasive Writing

Important Concepts of Grade 8 Language Arts

W1 - Lesson 1	Literary Techniques
W1 - Lesson 2	Poetic Elements
W1 - Lesson 3	Literary Techniques and Advertising
W1 - Lesson 4	Media and Technology
W1 - Quiz	
W2 - Lesson 1	Short Story Elements I
W2 - Lesson 2	Short Story Elements II
W2 - Lesson 3	Narrative Paragraphs
W2 - Lesson 4	Descriptive and Expository Paragraphs
W2 - Quiz	
W3 - Lesson 1	Explanatory Writing
W3 - Lesson 2	Persuasive Writing
W3 - Lesson 3	Essay Writing
W3 - Lesson 4	Persuasive Essay Writing
W3 - Quiz	

Materials Required

Textbooks:

1. *ResourceLines* 7/8
2. *SightLines* 8

Language Arts Grade 8

Version 5

Preview/Review W3 - Lesson 2 TEACHER KEY

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Preview/Review Concepts for Grade Eight Language Arts

TEACHER KEY



***W3 - Lesson 2:
Persuasive Writing***

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson, you should

- recognize and understand the structure of a persuasive paragraph
- explain when a persuasive paragraph is used
- understand the effectiveness of a logical argument in persuasive writing
- write a persuasive paragraph of your own

GLOSSARY

logical argument - an approach to writing that makes sense; helps to support your opinion

persuasive paragraph - a paragraph in which the writer attempts to convince the reader of something

W3 - Lesson 2: Persuasive Writing

Semicolon

A semicolon signals a longer pause than a comma. Semicolons are used in three main ways.

- to separate two complete thoughts if no coordinating conjunction is used (The thoughts must be closely related.)

Example:

The storm was coming; we had to get back to shore.

- in a sentence where a statement is made first and then an explanation is given (Words such as *however*, *besides*, *that is*, *instead*, *therefore*, *then*, and *for example* are used before the explanation.)

Example:

You studied hard for your Language Arts test; therefore, you have a good chance of passing.

- between items in a list if the items contain commas

Example:

On our summer vacation we visited many places: Camrose, Alberta; Victoria, British Columbia; Saskatoon, Saskatchewan; and Saint John, New Brunswick.

Activity 1

1. Rewrite the following sentences and place semicolons in the correct places.

- a. I love gardening it relaxes me.

I love gardening; it relaxes me.

- b. The “Worlds” athletes were from London, England Paris, France Bonn, Germany and Toronto, Canada.

The “Worlds” athletes were from London, England; Paris, France; Bonn, Germany; and Toronto, Canada.

- c. She was very smart however, it was not enough to get into medical school.

She was very smart; however, it was not enough to get into medical school.

- d. It was a boring speech we fell asleep.

It was a boring speech; we fell asleep.

- e. We had hoped to finish the assignment by noon however, the computer breakdown prevented us from completing it.

***We had hoped to finish the assignment by noon; however, the computer
breakdown prevented us from completing it.***



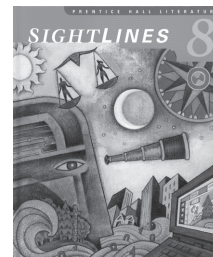
Persuasive Writing

Persuasive writing attempts to convince the reader of something. The writer states an opinion in a strong manner and uses **logical arguments** for support.

Activity 2

The article you read, “Why Canada Has to Beat Its Literacy Problem”, is an example of **persuasive writing**. June Callwood was trying to convince her readers that literacy is important to the well-being of Canadians. She used several examples and cause-and-effect relationships to support her point.

Re-read “Why Canada Has to Beat Its Literacy Problem” on page 176 in *SightLines* 8. On the lines below, write what you think are the author’s three **most powerful** arguments.



Answers will vary. Student opinion accepted. “five million Canadians need another chance” “schools are a disgrace, with a failure rate of fully one-third of all high school students” “loss of hope for oneself is a descent into desolation without end” “today inability to read is a ticket to social segregation and economic oblivion” “the divide between the literate and illiterate has never been wider” “the sense of being caged and blinded is not morbid fantasy” “Canada has nearly five million adult citizens who are described as functionally illiterate”

Here are two more examples of persuasive writing.

- A. Work is a necessary evil. We need to work to receive money for buying things we require to live. It is hard for everyone to survive by living off the land. Most people must rely on what they can buy; to buy food, clothing and shelter, we must work. This does not make work good; it only makes it necessary. What is good about working for long hours and for wages which most of us find very poor? Human beings were given brains and souls. They should be able to use these instead of spending most of their lives simply trying to survive. Most people are frustrated by this fact, which is why they consider work to be necessary, but evil.
- B. Work is good for people; it stimulates them physically, emotionally, and intellectually. Even sitting properly at a desk, concentrating on a task, can improve posture and strengthen back muscles. Solving problems at work, especially those that are interesting and challenging, is good for stimulating the intellect. The resulting pride and satisfaction from a job well done can have excellent effects on one's esteem and help our lives outside of work to be better as well. Work is very important to keep our bodies and minds healthy and happy.

The author of paragraph “A” does not like work. This is made clear by calling it a “necessary evil”. Besides stating an opinion, logical support is supplied for why work is necessary and why it can be considered “evil”. Even if you disagree with this opinion, or find it too negative, you must admit that it is expressed effectively to be considered an effective expository paragraph. **When expressing a mostly negative point of view, be extremely careful that it does not become an emotion-only rant.** Remember what happened with the author in the paragraph about sexism that you read in a previous lesson.

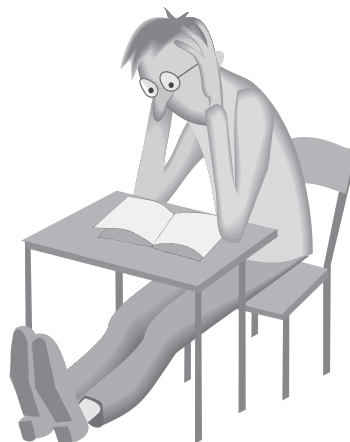
The author of paragraph B has also written an effective paragraph. The opinion expressed is very different from that of the previous author, or maybe it was written by the same author on another day when things seemed more positive. Nonetheless, author B has written a logical, well-supported expository paragraph. For example, the claim that “people who work are healthier than those who don’t” is supported by describing that our posture and muscles may be improved even if we are working at desks.



Activity 3

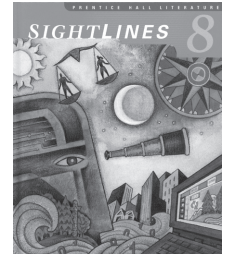
Using paragraph B about work, list the following elements of an persuasive piece of writing.

1. Topic sentence: *Work is good for people; it stimulates them physically,*
emotionally, and intellectually.
2. Supporting sentences:
 - a. *Even sitting properly at a desk, concentrating on a task, can improve*
posture and strengthen back muscles.
 - b. *Solving problems at work, especially those that are interesting and*
challenging, is good for stimulating the intellect.
 - c. *The resulting pride and satisfaction from a job well done can have*
excellent effects on one's esteem and help our lives outside of work to be
better as well.
3. Concluding sentence: *Work is very important to keep our bodies and*
minds healthy and happy.



Activity 4

In the text *SightLines 8*, turn to page 94. Choose one of the three topics bulleted in the first column, top left of page 94.



In the space below, write a **persuasive paragraph**. State your opinion on the topic and remember to develop a logical argument that will support your case.

Persuasive writing must have a clearly stated argument or thesis. If your reader does not know what point you are trying to make, you are unlikely to convince him or her of anything.

Include **at least three** reasons or facts that support your argument. Decide which of your supporting points is the strongest.

Be sure that you use appropriate transitions to help your paragraph flow smoothly. Vary the length and type of sentences. Be careful that your sentences begin in various ways.

An effective way to organize persuasive writing is to save your strongest argument or evidence for last. This means that your reader will best remember your strongest point.

Remember to finish with a general concluding sentence (review the previous examples). Finishing with a strong, memorable closing is likely to have a convincing effect on your reader – such as the one used by June Callwood, “What a lovely goal for the new millennium.”

[illegible]

Learning Log

Take time to reflect on and record your learning process for this lesson.

1. What do I know about the correct use of the semicolon?

Answers will vary.

2. What have I learned about persuasive writing?

Answers will vary.

3. What do I still need to work on to improve my persuasive writing?

Answers will vary.



