

Presenter's Copy • Persuade Me, Please Activity

This activity is meant to be done in small or whole groups and should take 10 to 15 minutes. The handout excludes the CT Guide on the Side. After attendees mark up their copy of the CTLE and discuss in small groups, the presenter should walk through the CTLE using this guide. If attendees were given the *CT Teacher Resources* booklet, please refer them to the same CTLE on page 28.

Persuade Me, Please Language Arts Grade 5

Outcomes:

- Students will identify the variables in an effective opinion piece
- Students will determine criteria for an effective opinion piece
- Students will utilize criteria to create a persuasive essay or opinion piece
- Students will produce a publishable opinion piece.

Standards:

Common Core Writing Standards, Grade 5, Standard 4.
Grade 5, Standard 1.

Evidence:

Students will collectively develop criteria for an effective opinion piece and illustrate using a graphic organizer/rubric to assess writing. Students will individually produce and publish an opinion piece that meets the criteria they have set for the genre.

Activity:

Adapted from [Read, Write, Think](http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/persuading-principal-writing-persuasive-1137.html) (<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/persuading-principal-writing-persuasive-1137.html>)

1. Introduce the lesson by telling students they will write an effective opinion piece.
2. Students read and listen to a variety of opinion pieces.
3. Students identify examples of strong and weak persuasive writing and record commonalities on a graphic organizer.
4. Class uses graphic organizers to generalize criteria for an effective opinion piece and agree on the criteria for a rubric. This rubric helps students answer questions:
How shall I write my piece? What are the trade-offs? What are the important things? Are there conflicting criteria?
5. Class brainstorms issues in the school or community that they believe deserve action plans.

CT Guide on the Side

CT skills and dispositions included in this learning experience:

- Logically organizing and analyzing data
- Representing data through abstractions such as models and simulations
- Identifying, analyzing, and implementing possible solutions with the goal of achieving the most efficient and effective combination of steps and resources
- Generalizing and transferring this problem solving process to a wide variety of problems
- Able to handle open-ended problems
- Ability to communicate and work with others to achieve a common goal or solution

Record commonalities: The process of studying the examples, finding commonalities, categorizing them, finding patterns helps students to logically analyze and organize data.

Highlight Data Analysis: Making sense of data, finding patterns, making conclusions.

Use graphic organizers: The software and the resulting chart show a pattern that emerges of the characteristics of the opinion pieces in an organized way Highlight Data Representation: Depict and organize data in appropriate graph, chart, words, or images.

Agree on criteria: Ability to communicate and work with others to achieve a common goal or solution

Rubric: An abstraction of the criteria for a good opinion piece and informs student decisions about how to write their paper.

Highlight Abstraction: Reducing complexity to define main idea

Trade-offs: Students need to make decisions about their opinion piece that balance what is most important with criteria constraints, like word count or structure, to achieve the most efficient and effective combination of steps and resources.

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6. Each group uses a graphic organizer to explore the issue. (Examples of graphic organizers are found at the Read, Write, Think link above.)
7. Individually, students construct a letter to an appropriate school or community leader addressing the issue.
8. Students use a word processing program to draft and edit letter for grammar/content.
9. Students publish, and share with appropriate leaders.

Questions to ask related to the genre:

- Is the author's opinion supported by facts?
- Do the authors use similar vocabulary?
- Are the ideas presented in a logical and sequential manner?
- Is the reader engaged?

Questions teacher asks in the course of the process:

1. What is the problem or task?
2. What are the variables that make an effective opinion piece?
3. How are you going to solve the problem? (Determine group strategy)
 - Look for patterns in the essays. How are they similar/different?
 - Decompose the essays into smaller tasks
 - Identify steps to follow for each of the tasks identified
4. How are you going to represent/summarize your findings to communicate your thinking?
5. What are some real-world examples of other times you would use this thinking process? Questions related to specific technologies:
 - How can we use technology to help us analyze and organize the documents?
 - How can we use technology to help us edit and publish our final document?
 - o Spell check
 - o Track changes
 - o Embed comments/revisions
 - o Add visuals/diagrams that support facts

Strategies:

- Questions asked by facilitator directs students to their thinking process. They require reflection on problem identification, the identification of variables, the selection of thinking strategies, and application to real-world situations.
- Modeling of the following skills is essential to the success of the project: decomposition of a written piece pattern recognition generalization Probing Questions are designed to help students understand how to break down a task, generalize across samples, and organize information to communicate to an audience.

Notes:

This activity can be extended by including research into the specific problems to build background knowledge for facts and supporting details. Additional possibilities for incorporating opinion pieces into the curriculum may include analyzing and comparing two pieces of artwork, music, themed stories, or historical events.

Organizer to explore: Here the students transfer the use graphic organizer to explore an issue, rather than come to a consensus on the rubric.

Word Processing: Help students recognize that that spell and grammar checks are a feature of word processing automation.

Highlight Automation: Having computers or machines do repetitive or tedious tasks.

Represent/summarize findings:
Able to handle open-ended problems