



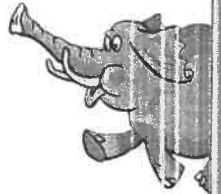
The Heys School

English

Writing to Persuade and Argue

Persuading and arguing is about getting someone else to agree with your point of view.

- Q1** Which of the following are tricks you can use to make your writing more persuasive? Choose one or more from options i)-v) and write them down.
- i) Keep your writing polite. Don't intentionally offend people who disagree with your views.
 - ii) Use humour, contrast and repetition to put people off your main point.
 - iii) Use descriptive words to emphasise your points.
 - iv) Get the reader on your side by saying "us" and "we".
 - v) Back up your points with elephants.



- Q2** Rewrite the following sentences, changing the language to make them sound less vague and more convincing.
- a) People should maybe think about the effect smoking could have on their health.
 - b) One question we might ask is, "If the government have evidence about why we should eat spinach, would they mind sharing it with us?"
 - c) If you don't want to go on the trip, it's probably best if you ask your mother to write a letter to the teacher explaining why.

- Q3** Using adjectives makes your writing more persuasive, and adjectives work really well in groups of three. Copy down the sentences and fill in the blanks with adjectives.

e.g. **We need to keep the local park; it is peaceful, beautiful and unique.**

- a) I enjoy swimming because it is relaxing, fun and
- b) It's important to read the newspapers because they are thought-provoking, and
- c) We all know that homework is / and

There's more
than one
possible
answer for
each of these.

- Q4** Copy out the following sentences, underlining the parts where you think the author is trying to be persuasive.
- a) How can you allow these poor, desperate people to go without food for any longer?
 - b) Some people are living in a fantasy world and don't know how normal people live. They seem to think that everyone has enough money to spend on whatever they please.
 - c) Their team is disorganised, unmotivated and unprepared.
 - d) If you love theme parks as much as we do, we know that you'll have the time of your life here at Dizzyworld — you'll never want to leave!

Writing to Persuade and Argue

You can't ignore other people's points of view. To argue that your opinion is right, you need to say why other opinions are wrong — without getting rude or personal.

Q5 Are the following paragraphs persuasive, or not? Explain each of your answers.

- a) You could vote for Claire Harris if you want to see an improvement in employment and a clamping down on crime in the local area. She introduced the Young Offenders Scheme. On the other hand, you could vote for Edward Jones. He has agreed to increase spending on health and education.
- b) You should vote for Claire Harris because she is intelligent, honest and cares about the local area. Her scheme to help young offenders back into employment has been a major success and is the envy of other constituencies. People backing Edward Jones forget the appalling crime and unemployment rates which this constituency suffered the last time he was in power.

Q6 Use the evidence from the boxes below to make two properly backed-up paragraphs, following on from the opening lines a) and b).

- a) The death penalty should not be reintroduced in Britain.
- b) The death penalty should be reintroduced in Britain.

Keeping people in prison costs the government money — on buildings, staff, food and healthcare. People who have committed horrific crimes and are sentenced to life imprisonment are wasting government resources.

Reintroducing the death penalty would also act as a deterrent to criminals. It would show them that the legal system in Britain is strong and it won't let them get away lightly with their crimes.

Lord Justice Hodgeman has said on this issue, "Although I have great faith in the British legal system, we should not lie to ourselves that it is infallible."

There have been several recent cases in Britain where long-serving prisoners have been found innocent because of new evidence. If we had the death penalty in Britain, these people would have been wrongly executed long ago.

Q7 Write a short article for your school newsletter arguing **either** that cars should be allowed in the school playground **or** that cars should be banned from the school playground. Mention all of the points from the table below in your article.

Why Cars Should be Allowed in the Playground	Why Cars Shouldn't be Allowed in the Playground
It's hard for teachers to find other parking nearby.	They increase the amount of noise outside school.
It's the safest place for teachers to leave their cars.	Children might be run over and injured or killed.
As long as people drive slowly it should be safe.	There will be less space for children to play and exercise.

Structuring Your Writing — Introductions

The introduction to a piece of writing is dead important. If your intro is no good, then people might think that the rest of your writing won't be great either.

- Q1** Pretend you're writing a speech to give to the Parent-Teacher Association of your school. Which of the following words and phrases, i)-x), would be good to use in your introduction?
- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| i) Good morrow fair gentlemen | vi) In my introduction to this essay |
| ii) Good evening | vii) Hi, it's darn good you could all come tonight |
| iii) Okey-dokey | viii) Welcome |
| iv) We are here tonight to discuss | ix) In conclusion |
| v) We are here tonight to rant about | x) The key issue I am going to discuss is |

- Q2** In a persuasive essay you need to make sure your argument is clear in the introduction. Which of these introductions does this better? Explain why.

i) **The issue of security is important in modern schools. Tragedies have taken place when violent outsiders have been able to walk unchallenged into school grounds. If security isn't improved in all schools, we have to ask ourselves: how long will it be before another tragedy happens?**

ii) **The issue of security is important in modern schools. A lot of schools have increased security since a series of violent incidents over the last few years. Some people think this is the right course of action to protect children. Others believe it creates an unhealthy atmosphere of fear and paranoia.**

- Q3** Below are an author's notes for the introduction of a story called 'Dancing Bob'. Use the information below to write an introduction to the story.



What happens

- Bob is getting ready for a night out
- He turns on some funky tunes
- He opens his wardrobe — all his clothes have been torn to shreds
- Bob hears a noise downstairs

How it should feel

Happy, lighthearted

dramatic, surprising

scary — what's going to happen next?

- Q4** Read this introduction to an essay about someone's favourite book. Explain why this introduction is not very engaging.

I want to talk about my favourite book which is called 'Treasure Island'. It's about a boy and a treasure map and some pirates. It's pretty good, so I think you should probably read it.

Structuring Your Writing — Introductions

Sometimes it's best to start a piece of writing by telling 'em what you're going to tell 'em.

Q5 Which of the following introductions (i-iii) signpost clearly what the structure of the leaflet is going to be? Explain how.

i Schools can help the environment; a few simple things can make a big difference. We all know that recycling is important, but so are many other issues, for example educating children about the environment. This leaflet is all about how you can make your school environmentally friendly.

iii Schools can help the environment, for example by recycling and reusing materials in class. This is very easy to do — try turning a painting over and doing another on the back. Simple! This leaflet will give you loads of other hints for making your school a greener place.

ii Schools can help the environment; a few simple things can make a big difference. This leaflet provides information about some easy steps schools can take. Three main areas are covered: recycling and reusing materials, school bus services and educating pupils about the environment.

Q6 Signposting the structure of an essay is good, because it lets the reader know what to expect. Write out the phrases and sentences below that would be useful for this.

- i) The main argument in favour of this will appear somewhere in this essay.
- ii) The second half of this essay will discuss the disadvantages...
- iii) Without a doubt, nothing can be done about this situation.
- iv) There are three main issues at stake here; they will be discussed in turn.
- v) The first half of this essay will discuss the advantages...
- vi) The second reason for supporting this point of view...
- vii) Finally, this essay will consider the impact on...
- viii) This is a controversial topic.

Q7 Below is part of an essay plan. It's for an essay explaining why the writer likes going on holiday to the Lake District.

Paragraph 1: Beautiful scenery e.g. lakes, mountains, valleys, pretty villages

Paragraph 2: Lots of outdoors activities e.g. walking, climbing, kayaking

Paragraph 3: Fun things to visit e.g. aquarium, wild animal park, pencil museum

Write an introduction for this essay, signposting all of these points.

Structuring Your Writing — The Middle Bit

Once you've got your intro sorted, you need to structure your middle paragraphs.

Q1 The boxes **i-vi** below summarise the types of paragraphs in a typical persuasive essay. Put **i-vi** into a logical order and write them out.

- i)** Give a reason to support your argument. Back it up with evidence.
- ii)** Conclusion — bring together main points why your argument's right.
- iii)** Give a reason why people might not agree with your argument. Give evidence of why they are wrong.
- iv)** Give a second reason why people might not agree with your argument. Give evidence of why they are wrong.
- v)** Introduction — outline your main argument.
- vi)** Give a second reason to support your argument. Back it up with evidence.

Q2 Look at the plan below. Write the first sentence for each of the main paragraphs.

Why we should do more sports in school

Intro

Paragraph 1: Sports keep people fit and healthy.

Paragraph 2: Sports help develop team skills.

Paragraph 3: There are loads of sports to choose from, so there's bound to be something for everyone.

Conclusion

Chronological — in the order in which things happened.

Q3 Write down the correct chronological order for these paragraphs.

- i)** We now know that the golden death mask Schliemann found in Grave Circle A is unlikely to belong to Agamemnon. The graves date from c.1500 BC, while the Trojan War probably happened in 1200-1100 BC.
- ii)** The ruined cities of Tiryns, Mycenae and Pylos, in Greece, date from as far back as 1500 BC. They are mentioned in Homer's epic poems 'The Iliad' and 'The Odyssey'. For example, the character Agamemnon in 'The Iliad' is called the ruler of Mycenae.
- iii)** The ruins of Mycenae were excavated by the German archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann in the nineteenth century. He was a romantic man. When he found a golden death mask in Grave Circle A at Mycenae, he claimed that he had "seen the face of Agamemnon".
- iv)** Further excavations are still happening at Mycenae. Archaeologists want to find out more about ancient Mycenaean religions; evidence so far includes frescoes, shrines and statues of goddesses. How much more can they find in the ruins of this great city?

Structuring Your Writing — The Middle Bit

When you've got a long piece of writing to do, always make sure you sketch out a plan first. That way you can work out the best way to order your writing before you start.

Q4 Read the following notice.

Beanthwaite High School Athletics Club

Last Night Out Before Training

For the attention of athletics club members:

The club has decided to pay for a free meal out on the eve of the training period for the County Athletics Championships.

The club coach urges students to remember that:

- the championships will soon be upon us
- all their hard work will be rewarded with good performances
- athletes who don't work hard will regret it later

- a) Write down **three** key topics you would expect the coach to cover in a speech given to the students at the event.
- b) Write down your **three** key topics on a piece of paper as headings. Then write down **two** points the coach could make under each heading.

Q5 Read the following extract from a newspaper article.

Kill Your Speed

Speed limits must be reduced in urban areas. The current risk to lives from traffic is too great. If a driver runs over a pedestrian when he is doing 20 mph, there is a one in five chance he will kill them. This is already a high risk — so why are city speed limits usually as high as 30 mph? Being in a hurry is no excuse. Neither are the improvements in traffic control and pedestrian crossings.

This kind of table is a pretty good way to plan out a piece of persuasive writing.



- a) Imagine you're going to write a letter to the newspaper in reply to the article, either for or against the reduction of city speed limits. Draw a table with two columns, one for arguments which support your view, and one for points that are against it. From the extract, find **two** points to go under each heading.
- b) Write down **two** more points, of your own, under each of the main headings.
- c) Number the points you have under each heading in order of importance. Cross out any which seem unimportant.

Middle bit — keeps your nose away from your feet...

The middle bit of an essay may not have the emotional impact of the introduction or the incredible power of the conclusion. But, like the meat in a sandwich, it's still dead important.

Structuring Your Writing — Conclusions

Phew... on to the conclusion already. The conclusion is the last paragraph of an essay. It should bring everything together and tie it up nicely — in a triple reef knot perhaps.

Q1 Is the following statement true or false? Explain your answer.

"The conclusion is a good place to bring in new information. There is no need to be consistent with what has gone before in the essay — capturing the reader's interest is key."

Q2 Which **three** of the following things (i-viii) should you include in a conclusion?

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| i) a final statement about the topic | v) an introduction to a new topic |
| ii) a small portrait of Alan Rickman in charcoal | vi) a rant about what you think |
| iii) a summary of the main points in your essay | vii) yesterday's mashed potatoes |
| iv) all the points in your essay explained in detail | viii) your own view on the topic |

Q3 Match up each type of text (i-iii) to the right conclusion (A, B, C).

- i) a letter ii) a story iii) a persuasive text

A) The band left the stage to deafening cheers. They grinned at each other, too dazed with happiness to speak. Their gig had been a triumph. At last, all their struggles had paid off. It was the best night of their lives.

B) I want to thank you again for your kind donation. The money raised will contribute towards building a new school in Bolivia, which will make a huge difference to the local community.

C) I urge you again to go home, dig out your bike from the back of the garage, and get cycling. I promise it will be the best decision you have ever made in your life.

Q4 Conclusions to persuasive texts can be tricky — you have to be forceful without being rude. Explain why each of these conclusions is good or bad.

- a) In conclusion, destroying the rainforest is probably not a great idea. It's pretty important and we might regret it if we cut it down. It would be nice if we campaigned a bit to try and save it.
- b) The rainforest is a unique and priceless resource. It provides us with oxygen and medicines, and is home to countless species of wildlife. We urgently need to stop its destruction in order to save it for future generations. Please, join the fight to protect our rainforest — once it is lost, it will be lost forever.
- c) I strongly believe that the rainforests shouldn't be cut down. Any other views are deeply misguided. It shows a real lack of intelligence that people could destroy something so precious. We should all campaign to stop the destruction of the rainforests. 'Anyone who doesn't is lazy or selfish.'

