

National 5



Persuasive Writing Unit

Persuasive writing involves dealing with a topic which you are personally interested in and knowledgeable about. The key here is to use facts and experiences to put across a series of points to support something you believe. Your aim is to persuade the reader to agree with you.

By completing this unit, you will develop your skills in a number of areas. Some of these areas are noted below.

Reading

- You will be able to find, sort, summarise, link and use information from different sources (Lit 4-14a)
- You will be able to make notes and organise them to develop your thinking (Lit 4-15a)
- You will be able to recognise some of the techniques used to influence opinion (Lit 4-18a)

Writing

- You will be able to select subject, purpose, format and resources to suit the needs of your audience (Lit 4-20a)
- You will use a range of resources and strategies independently and ensure that your spelling and vocabulary are accurate (Lit 4-21a)
- You will be able to review and edit your writing independently (Lit 4-23a)
- You will be able to engage and/or influence readers through your use of language, style and tone (Eng 4-27a)
- You will be able to persuade, argue, evaluate, explore issues or express and justify opinions with a convincing line of thought (Lit 4-29a)

Talking and Listening

- You will be able to make relevant contributions when engaging with others and to respond in ways appropriate to your role (Lit 4-02a)
- You will be able to communicate detailed information, ideas or opinions (Lit 4-09a)

Persuasive Writing should...

State argument clearly in the introductory paragraph.

Address the reader directly.

Use

Include rhetorical

Use descriptive

Provide evidence to

Contain clear explanations of

Include a conclusion in which all of the

Gathering Ideas

When it comes to choosing a topic to research and write about, try to think of something original. Essays on topics such as abortion, euthanasia and the death penalty can be interesting but these topics tend to be common choices. Instead, why not think about an issue that's particularly relevant to the area where you live or an issue that's currently very topical?

Consider some of the topics listed below.

- Gaming truly is a healthy pastime.
- All manufactured pop music should be banned
- Graffiti should be viewed as art, not crime
- Blood donation should be compulsory
- Scottish independence is to be avoided
- Intervention in Libya is to be encouraged
- Drug testing should be legalised in the workplace
- Too much public money has been spent on sculptures and other forms of 'art' in Cumbernauld
- The national minimum wage is too low
- Prisoners should have the right to vote
- The government was wrong to evict travellers from Dale Farm
- University tuition fees should not be introduced
- Music videos should be subjected to widespread censorship

Take a few minutes to discuss some ideas with a partner. Are there any issues that you feel particularly strongly about? Remember, when you write a persuasive essay, it is important that you truly believe in the stance you take.



Researching your Topic

Before you begin writing your essay, it is important to do some research on the topic you have chosen. The more knowledgeable you are about your topic, the more convincing your essay is likely to be.

There are various sources of information, including:
* the internet * newspapers *books *magazines
*journals

When reading information about your topic, you will find it helpful to make notes. Your notes will help you to recall valuable pieces of information when you come to write your essay.

So how do you make notes?

Below is a section from a newspaper article and overleaf there are some notes. Read over these to help you develop an understanding of how to form notes of your own.



Dummy runs that end in death

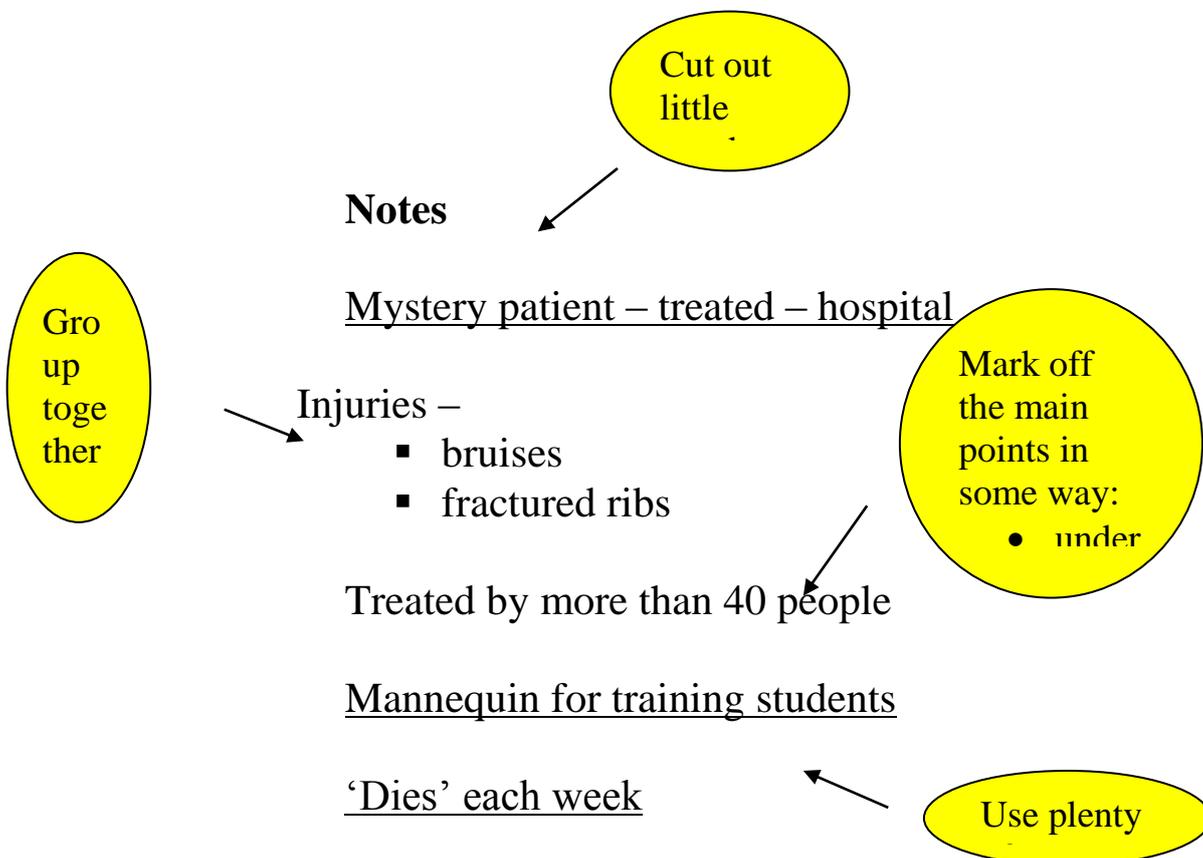
A mystery man lay unconscious in intensive care, his body covered in bruises. X-rays revealed eight fractured ribs. He was put on a ventilator, and lines to monitor blood pressure and feed fluids and drugs were inserted. For the next five days, he was tended by more than 40 people.

Despite their best efforts, he died (yet again). His carers had included student nurses Allan Reid and Julie Thirde, who are even younger than their patient.

The 21 year olds had to break the news to his parents and girlfriend, who somehow had tracked him down. Just as they will do so soon – in the real world of hospitals.

Because the mystery patient is a mannequin who lives in a simulated intensive care unit at Glasgow Caledonian University. He can wheeze, even have a cardiac arrest, on demand – and, unknown to the students, was doomed from the start: killed, week in, week out, by lecturers as part of their educational process.

The Herald



Experiment

Now do this activity to see how well you can make notes. Follow these instructions carefully.

- 1. Overleaf is another extract from a newspaper article. Read it carefully and make notes. Allow yourself no more than five minutes to do this.**
- 2. After five minutes, put your unit to one side.**
- 3. Use your notes to retell the article in as much detail as you can.**
- 4. Consult your unit again and check your version against the original.**
- 5. Underneath your version, write down any important ideas you have missed out.**

Europe continues to be blanketed in snow as the cold snap which has so far killed hundreds across the continent shows no signs of stopping.

Hundreds of villages across Eastern Europe were today completely cut off as temperatures plummeted in some places to -40C.

Rescue teams struggled to evacuate southern Bulgarians where villages flooded after rain and melting snow broke damn walls. Residents were also warned that there was more snow to come - which would be followed by severe floods when the temperature finally starts to rise and the snow melts.

Meanwhile temperatures in Britain are due to plummet to as low as -13C, with the big freeze due to last well into the weekend.

Around 146 towns and villages in Romania were isolated with no road or train connections because of blizzards.

Up to 174 villages had no electricity, said Alin Maghiar, spokesman for Romania's emergency department.

Electricity was also cut off to 300 towns and villages in Bulgaria, roads were closed and several border checkpoints with Romania and Turkey were shut, the Interior Ministry said.

Daily Mail

When writing notes solely for your own use, there are really only two rules:

- 1. make your notes as brief as possible**
- 2. make sure that you can understand them later**

You should also ensure that you keep a list of all the sources you have consulted in your research. You will need to include these as part of your essay.

Looking more closely at persuasive language

Before you begin planning your own essay, it will help to look a little more closely at persuasive devices. Log on to youtube to watch the speech Barack Obama gave on the subject of climate change. As you watch, make notes in the table below.

How confident does he appear?	1-Very 2-A Little 3-Not very
How does he use his voice to get his point across? (Think about his <i>tone, volume</i> and <i>pauses</i>)	
How does he use his body? What is his 'body language' like?	
What is Obama arguing? What is the	

purpose of his speech?	
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Now, with your learning partner, read over the text of Obama's speech and highlight or underline any emotive words or phrases used by Obama to give his speech persuasive power.

This Climate Change Catastrophe Can Be Halted

That so many of us are here today is a recognition that the threat from climate change is serious, it is urgent, and it is growing. Our generation's response to this challenge will be judged by history, for if we fail to meet it - boldly, swiftly, and together - we risk consigning future generations to an irreversible catastrophe.

No nation, however large or small, wealthy or poor, can escape the impact of climate change. Rising sea levels threaten every coastline. More powerful storms and floods threaten every continent. More frequent drought and crop failures breed hunger and conflict in places where hunger and conflict already thrive. On shrinking islands, families are already being forced to flee their homes as climate refugees.

The security and stability of each nation and all peoples -- our prosperity, our health, our safety -- are in jeopardy.

And the time we have to reverse this tide is running out.

And yet, we can reverse it. John F Kennedy once observed that 'our problems are man-made, therefore they may be solved by man.' It is true that for too many years, mankind has been slow to respond to or even recognize the magnitude of the climate threat. It is true of my own country as well. We recognise that. But this is a new day. It is a new era. And I am proud to say that the United States has done more to promote clean energy and reduce carbon pollution in the last eight months than at any other time in our history.

Rhetorical Devices

To make a speech more persuasive, speakers often use *Rhetorical Devices* - little language tricks which give the speech emphasis and authority.

- Match the rhetorical device to its definition.

First Person Plural

Using the words “we” and “our” to suggest the speaker is the same as the audience.

Pattern of Three

Using a quote from a respected or well-liked person.

Repetition

Using two opposite words together (e.g. “happy or sad”, “black and white”)

Quoting

Words with strong emotional connotations.

Contrasting pairs

The repetition of a letter sound at the start of several words.

Alliteration

Using a word more than once to emphasise a point.

Emotive Language

A list of three words or phrases.

- When you have done this, look back at President Obama’s speech and annotate it to show where he uses rhetorical devices.

Structure of a Persuasive Essay

Introduction

- Introduce the topic clearly to your reader stylishly
- Use persuasive techniques throughout.
- Establish the tone of your essay.
- Your point of view on the topic should be obvious.

Main Body Paragraphs

- You should write *at least* four main body paragraphs.
- Each paragraph should begin with a topic sentence and have its own specific point.
 - **Point** - a clear point that you are arguing.
 - **Evidence** - relevant and up-to-date evidence, it should be a fact, statistic or relevant opinion.
 - **Explanation** - a detailed explanation, using a variety of persuasive techniques.

Conclusion

- Sum up the points that you have made.
- Use persuasive techniques throughout.
- End in a particularly persuasive way.

Tips on Style:

- You may wish to use rhetorical questions to involve the reader in your essay and encourage them to consider more closely the points you are making.
- Using emotive language can be an effective way of persuading the reader to agree with your opinion.
- You may wish to use repetition to emphasise important points.
- It can be effective to use an anecdote to engage the reader.
- You should directly address the reader in your writing.

An example:

Introduction

Topic:

- Clear what the essay will focus

Opinion:

- Clear opinion stated.

Factory farming is the intense farming of animals and crops. Intensely farming animals began in the 1920s, revolutionising the industry. I would like to state that I am for factory farming- the

Arguments:

- Clear summation of points that are about to be made.

Persuasion:

- Ends with an attempt at using persuasive techniques for

An example: Main Body Paragraph

Point:

- Clear point made in first sentence. The reader immediately understands what the paragraph

Finally, everyone must remember that factory farming is not very different from traditional forms of farming. It has the obvious benefits of being cheaper and more efficient but it is essentially the same. Farming has always been the intervention of man into the natural world. People are just being sentimental when they moan about losing traditional farming methods. Technology has developed in the 21st

Evidence:

- Point is backed up by a logical and relevant

Explanation:

- Lengthy explanation that goes into more depth.
- Excellent

An example: Conclusion

Opening

- Good use of short, effective sentence

Summing up

- Excellent use of repetition.
- Arguments made in

In conclusion, factory farming must be saved. To ban factory farming would mean that we poorer people would not be able to afford food. To ban factory farming would mean that farmers would have a lower

Ending

- Good use of emotive language "must"
- Does not engage

Overleaf you will find a sample paragraph and a conclusion which have been taken from an essay on censoring music videos. Working with a partner, discuss and comment on the effectiveness of each paragraph, using the annotations above as an example.

Sample
paragraph

Secondly, current pop music promotes a way of life and an attitude to relationships that is unhealthy and damaging. Take Rihanna's latest effort in which she belts out that she "Found love in a hopeless place". Forgive me if I'm wrong but shouldn't love be a positive emotion that enhances your life? Not something that can be found in the depths of despair. Her music video isn't much better as she cavorts around in dilapidated flat taking drugs with her blond haired boyfriend, before she has an overdose of some sort. Rihanna isn't the only culprit, in an early Britney Spears video she can be seen slitting her wrists. This is not a great image to set to the young people that make up half of their fan base. Even though they have the 'radio/TV friendly' lyrics, they don't change the video at all. It could be on at any time of the day, with anyone, no matter how young watching it.

Conclusion

Not only are the lyrics and videos inappropriate but this is a fake and insincere way of making music. I don't understand how songs that are manufactured and moulded can sell enough records to get to that, once prestigious, number one spot? I think that if you are naming a track number one, it has to be made with real instruments, the songwriter must be in the band or group and the singer should be able to, well, sing, without the use of autotune. You must be able to reproduce the sound at a live gig (not just the vocals that's probably auto-tuned and mimed anyway, the whole sound). All record companies do is create a song on a computer, get someone to write some mindless lyrics that they know will sell and give it to a puppet like Britney Spears or the latest x-factor winner and they've got a hit! And what's it all about to them? It's about making money. But the so-called 'artist' only cares about fame, so they will be happy to sing anything the record label throw at them. And that is the problem; no one cares about the music. The most important part. No one cares. The big 'fatcat' record companies have made the music industry into a long, dark, shallow money trench full of thieves, fakes and pimps. They look for the hottest girls to sing the sexiest tracks for only one reason. To make money. No longer is the music scene for the talent musicians; it's for the businessmen that know how to sell.

Linking words and phrases

Listing	Giving examples	Generalising
first, second, third	for example	in general
first, furthermore, finally	for instance	generally
to begin, to conclude	as follows:	on the whole
next	that is	as a rule
Reinforcement	in this case	for the most part
furthermore	in other words	usually
moreover	Result/consequence	Highlighting
what is more	as a result/consequence	in particular
in addition	therefore	particularly
besides	accordingly	especially
as well (as)	consequently	Reformulation
in the same way	because of this/that	in other words
not only ... but also	thus	rather
Similarity	hence	to put it more simply
equally	for this/that reason	Expressing an alternative
likewise	so that	alternatively
similarly	in that case	rather
correspondingly	under these circumstances	on the other hand
in the same way	Deduction	the alternative is
Transition to new point	then	another possibility would be
now,	in other words	Contrast
as far as x is concerned	in that case	instead
with regard/reference to	otherwise	conversely
as for ...	this implies that ...	on the contrary
it follows that	if so/not	in contrast
turning to	Stating the obvious	in comparison
Summary	obviously	Concession
in conclusion	clearly	however
to conclude	naturally	even though
in brief	of course	however much
to summarise	as can be expected	nevertheless
overall	surely	still

Plan

Topic ideas

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Introduction

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Main Body Paragraphs

Point 1

Topic Sentence:
Evidence:
Explanation:

Point 2

Topic Sentence:
Evidence:
Explanation:

Point 3

Topic Sentence:
Evidence:
Explanation:

Point 4

Topic Sentence:
Evidence:
Explanation:

Conclusion

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Persuasive Essay

Self-Assessment Activity

Complete the checklist below. And be honest!

In my essay, I...	Tick or Cross
Introduced my argument clearly in the opening paragraph	
Used emotive language throughout to convince the reader to agree with my point of view	
Used topic sentences for each paragraph	
Used facts, figures or evidence to support my points	
Used persuasive techniques such as rhetorical questions, repetition, short sentences and personal pronouns	
Acknowledged that there are other points of view even though I disagree with them	
Summarised all the main points in my conclusion	
Checked that my spelling and punctuation are accurate	

If there are any areas where you feel you don't deserve a tick, return to your essay and try to modify it accordingly.



Persuasive Essay

Peer-Assessment Activity

Have your partner read over your work and then complete the checklist below.

In my essay, my partner...	Tick or Cross
Introduced their argument clearly in the opening paragraph	
Used emotive language throughout to convince the reader to agree with their point of view	
Used topic sentences for each paragraph	
Used facts, figures or evidence to support their points	
Used persuasive techniques such as rhetorical questions, repetition, short sentences and personal pronouns	
Acknowledged that there are other points of view even though they disagree with them	
Summarised all the main points in their conclusion	
Checked that their spelling and punctuation are accurate	

Remember to be honest in your assessment of your partner's work. The feedback you give will help them to constructively improve their essay.



