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My View, My Voice

K-2

21
STRATEGIES
for **POWERFUL,**
PERSUASIVE WRITING

Catchy title
Quesadillas Por Favor
We think that the cafeteria should serve quesadillas more often.
Our favorite food is quesadillas. We think they are
delicious. We took a poll, and 18 out of 20 voted for quesadillas.
as the best food. We eat in the cafeteria five days a week. We
notice that the cafeteria serves quesadillas, a lot of kids
get really excited when we go to school. It's so good!
Feel like you should make everyone happy!

Rebekah Coleman & Carolyn Greenberg

Foreword by Pam Allyn

My View, My Voice

21

STRATEGIES
for POWERFUL,
PERSUASIVE WRITING

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Rebekah Coleman and Carolyn Greenberg

Foreword by Pam Allyn



SHELL EDUCATION

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Introduction



“Don’t raise your voice. Improve your argument.”
—Desmond Tutu

Why Persuasive Writing Matters

Welcome to *My View, My Voice: 21 Strategies for Powerful, Persuasive Writing*. You may be wondering, “Will this book help me teach persuasive writing?” We say, “Yes, it will!” Let us persuade you as to why.

Each day, we experience a constant shower of words and images meant to influence our views—mostly to get us to spend money, join a cause, cast a vote, or otherwise change the course of our thoughts and actions. Students are no exception. Students are inundated with advertising via commercials, billboards, T-shirts, cereal boxes, Internet ads, apps, and video games. Some companies even bank on long-term brand recognition—most students don’t understand what GEICO does, but they love that gecko!

We navigate this daily bombardment and *try to* make wise choices, which is not always easy. Conflicting ideas, emotional appeals, faulty logic, and fallacious evidence cloud the picture. It is challenging and time consuming to vet sources and tease out fact from falsehood.

With daily advertisements in every facet of our lives, consumers can easily miss opportunities to thoughtfully critique the opinions and arguments that surround them. Some people may be so easily swayed that they never form stable, actionable opinions. Others form superficial views that are based on how they feel rather than solid reasoning and evidence. When pressed to defend such views, the lack of sound backing may cause one to falter or skirt the issue with a defensive, “Well, that’s my opinion,” or “That’s just how I feel.” They may hold so tightly to stances that they refuse to hear anyone else, thus making collaboration, compromise, and progress impossible. Additionally, loose understanding of their convictions may render some vulnerable to being taken advantage of by people who maliciously seek to influence their behavior for personal gain.

With undoubted advances in technology and communication, the future we face will likely contain more persuasive appeals than ever before. What innovative methods will advertisers, politicians, news media outlets, and others seeking to spread their messages develop in the future? Who knows? We all may be receiving messages telepathically or via personal drones before we know it!

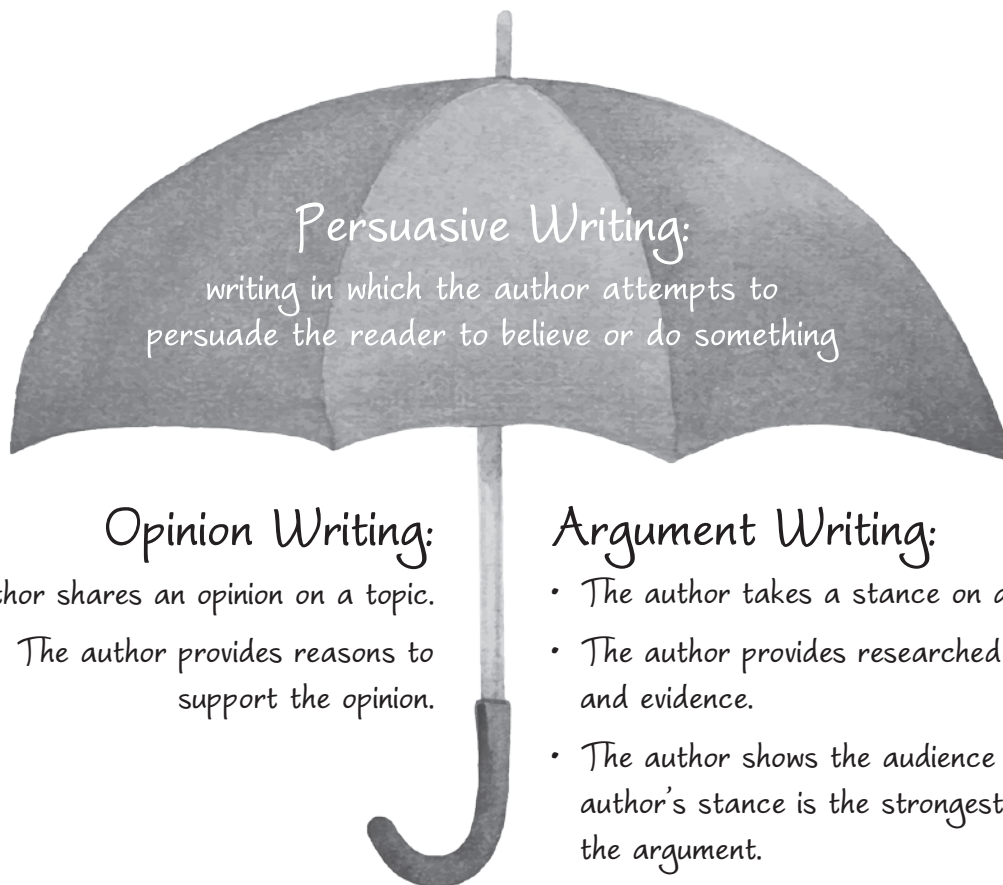
This means that we, as teachers, must prepare students now.

Introduction *(cont.)*

We need to explicitly teach our students how to become confident, critical consumers of others' opinions and arguments. Students must practice exploring conflicting views and information on a topic, keeping an open mind to possibilities they may not yet have considered. They must learn to distinguish between an argument based on facts and logic and one that may be enticingly loud, simple, and clear but not necessarily true. They must build strong skills and strategies to evaluate the soundness of the reasoning, relevance, and credibility of evidence, with a goal of establishing personal views that are truly informed, not simply emotional. They must not only believe in their views but also be able to express them clearly and stand behind them with logic and evidence. Such skills are critical for both success in school as writers of opinions and arguments (Graff and Birkenstein 2010; Hillocks 2010) and to productively engage with others in society (Andriessen 2006).

We, as teachers, can help. Even very young students can begin to understand what opinions and reasons are. We can help them become aware that not everyone has the same view, which is how we can learn from one another. **Students should learn to recognize and think critically when others try to influence them in the real world. They can develop awareness of audience and appreciate the power and importance of sharing one's opinion to persuade others.** They should experience and enjoy writing in many different forms as they use words, visuals, and traditional and digital tools to express themselves.

Older students are ready to move from opinion writing to the more sophisticated subgenre of argumentation. This will compel them to explore increasingly complex, arguable issues that have broad impact on communities, countries, and the world. They can understand and demonstrate that arguments can be good and productive when engaging with purpose and



diplomacy. They can weigh evidence to develop and support their thinking to convince readers of their opinions. They can be guided to consider what it means to be credible and to evaluate arguments of others in order to make effective choices.

The *My View, My Voice* series challenges K–8 students to explore, analyze, and evaluate the views of others in order to develop and share their own views. Our goal is for students to not only *learn to argue* effectively but also to *argue to learn*—an important distinction that Jerry Andriessen describes in “Arguing to Learn” (2006). Learning to argue refers to a student’s ability to articulate views and reasoning effectively. Arguing to learn suggests a willingness to engage in a respectful exchange of views with others in search of new information and insight. We assert that both of these capacities are essential to be an effective persuasive writer. This book for kindergarten, first-grade, and second-grade teachers provides age-appropriate learning opportunities and strategies to help students build the skills and strategies they need to effectively use in persuasive writing.

Learning to argue and arguing to learn suggests that students should not only develop opinions and arguments but that they should also actively engage in social discourse to express and refine their ideas. Having a view on a topic goes hand in hand with sharing it with others. Never before have there been more opportunities and tools to share opinions with friends, local communities, and even worldwide! Students today are sharing their views in myriad ways: social media, blogs, video game conversations, and more. In fact, 59 percent of kids join social networks before the age of 10! (Lange 2014). It’s human nature for people to want to share their ideas and persuade others to agree with them. However, what is really important is not just that kids are sharing their opinions but *how effectively* kids are sharing their opinions. When we shout our opinions loudly or argue a point without listening to the other side, we are arguing just to be heard but not to work together to achieve a common goal (Andriessen 2006).

To be clear, this work has a larger purpose. Engagement in persuasive writing provides students with an avenue to examine a topic, develop informed views, express their voices, and defend their ideas with logical reasoning based on evidence. This skill set is essential to students as it is a crucial component of being an active and responsible citizen in society. The freedom of expression is the cornerstone of the democratic process. Benjamin Franklin wrote, “Freedom of speech is a principal pillar of a free government: when this support is taken away, the constitution of a free society is dissolved.”

We want students of all ages to understand that they have views and voices that empower them to engage in productive debate and make positive changes in both big and small ways. This is particularly important for students who come from vulnerable communities and marginalized groups. Finding one’s voice and learning to use it effectively can change the trajectory of a life for the better (Carnegie Council on Advancing Adolescent Literacy 2010, 2).

In recent years, curricular reforms in schools have recognized and elevated the importance of argumentative reading and writing skills. This is particularly evident in the Common Core Standards for English language arts for grades 6–12 (National Governors Association, Council of Chief State School Officers 2010.) Despite the strong focus on persuasive writing in today’s educational standards and testing, teaching persuasive writing remains challenging for many educators. As teachers and leaders in the educational field, we have worked with a multitude of teachers and schools from around the country. We have discovered that the art of persuasive writing is not well understood, well taught, or even enjoyed by many teachers. Likewise, and perhaps as a result, many students struggle with persuasive writing, which research confirms (Newell et al., 2011, 276–277). We provide five of the most common challenges and explain how this book addresses them.

Introduction *(cont.)*

Five Key Obstacles to Successful Teaching of Persuasive Writing

1. Persuasive writing is hard!

Explanation: Effective persuasive-writing instruction builds developmentally appropriate foundations on which students may grow and develop the skills they need to be strong persuasive writers. One challenging cornerstone of strong persuasive writing, particularly in argument writing (see umbrella graphic on page 8), is providing credible evidence to back up one’s views. This requires students to research sources to help them develop and support their thinking. This often means reading and synthesizing information from a variety of genres and content areas, requiring challenging skills and strategies for students and teachers who may not have strong understandings of how to teach them (Newell et al. 2011, 276). As stated earlier, persuasive writing results tend to be weak in schools (Newell et al. 2011, 276). As a result, plenty of bright, college-educated teachers never learned some of the fundamentals of strong persuasive writing. These fundamentals include, but are not limited to, evaluating the strength of an argument, locating relevant sources and determining their credibility, framing an argument with logical reasoning and strong evidence, and addressing and refuting counterarguments.

The *My View, My Voice* Solution: We have broken the teaching of persuasive writing into a series of developmentally appropriate strategies with examples, explanations, and lesson samples. This will empower teachers to plan the focused instruction, demonstration, and scaffolding that students need to be strong persuasive writers. This book offers 21 strategies and 10 lessons with plenty of explanation and a variety of resources to support them.

2. The scope of the persuasive writing that schools explore is too narrow.

Explanation: Mention persuasive writing to most teachers and students, and you will conjure images of dry pencil-and-paper essays, often five paragraphs in length, focusing on tired, overused topics such as “Why Smoking Is Bad for You” and “Should Students Wear Uniforms?” Yawn. This instructional rut is largely due to factors such as teachers’ limited repertoire of strategies for teaching persuasive writing, “that’s how we’ve always done it” habits, and widespread teaching to the requirements of state tests, which often have a persuasive-writing component. School curriculum typically spends so much time focused on this stale, artificial writing, which by the way only exists in schools, that a world of authentic (and engaging) persuasive genres goes largely ignored (Freedman 1996; Newell et al. 2011).

The *My View, My Voice* Solution: *My View, My Voice* broadens the horizons for our persuasive writing students and their teachers. We encourage students to explore a wide variety of real-world genres, media, and purposes for persuasive writing as both readers and writers. It is fine to teach students to write strong essays, but why not also encourage them to analyze and create movie trailers, blog posts, speeches, and posters? This variety is more likely to appeal to student interests and learning styles, meet the needs of diverse learners, and prepare students to be critical consumers of the many persuasive messages they encounter in their everyday lives.

3. Students aren't reading enough persuasive writing.

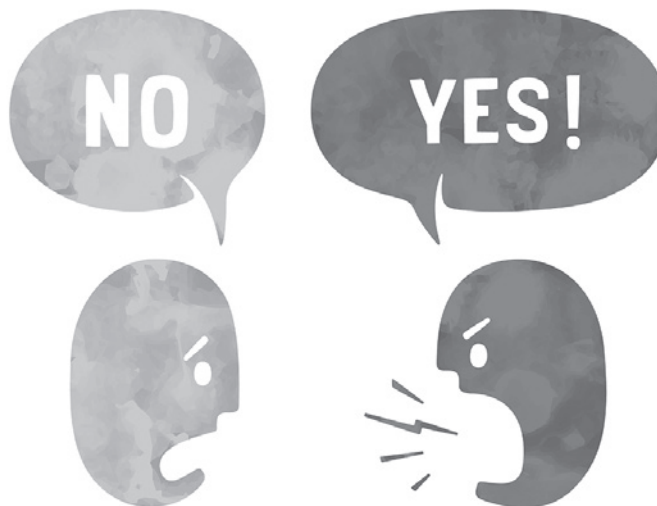
Explanation: Pam Allyn, director of LitLife, Inc. often says, “Reading is breathing in, and writing is breathing out.” Indeed, reading and writing go hand in hand. Reading persuasive text will make your students strong writers of persuasive text (NCTE 2016). Yet many classrooms do not spend the time they need reading, analyzing, and annotating persuasive texts. Part of the challenge, as stated above, is that the range of persuasive writing that students explore as readers and writers tends to be very limited. Another part of the challenge is that it is hard to find persuasive texts that are appropriate for younger students, particularly at the K–5 level (Biancarosa and Snow 2006, 18).

The *My View, My Voice* Solution: *My View, My Voice* recognizes that in order to become a strong persuasive writer, it is essential to combine explicit writing instruction with strategic reading of persuasive texts (Crowhurst 1990; Newell et al. 2011). Each *My View, My Voice* text provides a sampling of editorials, infographics, advertisements, social media posts, and high-interest topics at varied and appropriate reading levels for teachers and students to analyze and use as models for writing. We also expand the scope of texts that students typically read in school and direct teachers to where to find authentic examples to provide for their students.

4. Authentic engagement in argument requires “arguing.”

Explanation: As students build their capacities to develop and support their views, collaboration is key. Students who engage in collaborative conversations strengthen their abilities to reason and express themselves (Reznitskaya et al. 2007, 449). Many teachers and students, however, have negative associations with the notion of argument. Teachers often value conflict-free zones in their classrooms (Newell et al. 2011, 276) and may worry that conflict will develop into undesirable competition or combativeness that we often see play out in the media (Johnson and Johnson 2009). Students may be afraid to disagree with their teachers and peers (Newell et al. 2011, 276). They may fear being perceived as disrespectful by the teacher or that others will not like them if they have differing views. They may feel safer going along with the majority or staying silent.

The *My View, My Voice* Solution: *My View, My Voice* encourages teachers and students to recognize the power of conversation when trying to learn about a topic and develop points of view. We prompt them to redefine their attitudes toward argument and recognize the productive value of disagreement in a purposeful, controlled setting. We provide tips for classroom management and scaffolding to keep the conversation going.



Introduction *(cont.)*

5. Teachers are the only people who are reading students' persuasive writing.

Explanation: The fundamental purpose of the persuasive genre—to *persuade others to believe or do something*—establishes an inextricable connection between the writing and the audience. The very mission of persuasive writers is to influence their audiences in some way. Therefore, students are expected to make compelling points and provide powerful support that will shift the thinking and behavior of...wait....who? Most of the time, no one in particular, except maybe the teacher sitting at her desk with a pile of other similar assignments. That's not very exciting for kids, is it? Yet when students can identify authentic audiences for their writing, they are more likely to make wise, thoughtful choices about what to include, how to organize the content, and the voice or tone they choose to use (Crowhurst 1990; Graham et al. 2012).

The My View, My Voice Solution: *My View, My Voice* establishes the audience as an essential player in the writer-reader relationship right from kindergarten. While simply identifying a theoretical audience is a step in the right direction, we advocate that teachers inject authenticity into their students' writing whenever possible. Authenticity is a magic ingredient that awakens motivation, passion, and attention to quality in young writers. Therefore, we provide suggestions for writing to real people to make real change.



The K–8 Continuum

Kindergartners, first graders, and second graders are full of opinions and love to share them! Ask them their favorite colors, and you may get explanations as colorful as a rainbow. Mention that it is time to leave the playground and return to the classroom, and the list of reasons for why they should stay to play will be as long as the walk back to the classroom. Students at this age ask questions of the world, share their opinions on all topics, and are not afraid to speak their minds. Identifying one’s own voice and learning how to be an effective advocate for one’s self, one’s community, and one’s world are a crucial part of the educational journey.

Students this age have strong and powerful voices, and we provide tangible and easy-to-implement learning opportunities and strategies to channel their voices, strengthen their opinions, listen to the opinions of others, and cultivate their persuasive techniques when sharing their opinions through both speech and writing. For many students, this will be their first foray into the world of persuasive writing, and in *My View, My Voice*, we provide all the tools necessary to support teachers and students along the journey.

What does persuasive writing look like across the grades of kindergarten to grade eight? What is consistent? What shifts across the years? Across all grades, *My View, My Voice* guides students to understand that the primary purpose of persuasive writing is to persuade—to influence the beliefs and behaviors of others—and that this is most effectively done by providing logical reasoning and evidence to support one’s views. We encourage students of all grade levels to examine and evaluate the purpose and effectiveness of the persuasive techniques writers use as they explore a wide variety of genres both as readers and as writers. We charge all students to find topics that matter to them and motivate them to make a difference by sharing their views in order to persuade others. Across all grades, we teach students to use conversation, collaboration, and information from a variety of sources to support and refine their views.

As students advance up the grade levels, they practice increasingly complex persuasive strategies.

In kindergarten through grade two, students write opinion pieces that present their opinions on a topic and provide relevant reasons and evidence to support their opinions. In grades three to five, they also begin to build skills to identify faulty logic and weak arguments in order to strengthen their own. By grades six to eight, students advance beyond writing opinion pieces to the more sophisticated genre of argument writing. They take stances on arguable issues and compose arguments that provide reasons based on researched evidence, taking opposing views into account. Students explore detailed protocols to evaluate sources for their evidence and to identify bias.

The **My View, My Voice Strategy Continuum Kindergarten to Grade 8** table shown on pages 14–15 provides an overview of the 21 strategies crafted for each grade band. It allows you to see what we expect students to experience now and what we are preparing them for in the future.

Introduction *(cont.)*

The My View, My Voice Strategy Continuum

Kindergarten to Grade 8

	GRADES K–2	GRADES 3–5	GRADES 6–8
1	Writers distinguish between fact and opinion.	Writers explore the relationship between fact and opinion.	Writers discover and explore persuasive writing in the real world.
2	Writers discover and explore persuasive writing in the real world.	Writers discover and explore persuasive writing in the real world.	Writers distinguish between opinion writing and argument writing.
3	Writers consider the impact of characters' opinions in literature.	Writers analyze the elements of persuasive writing.	Writers recognize that an argument can be a positive thing.
4	Writers explore the elements of opinion writing.	Writers examine the techniques that strengthen persuasive writing.	Writers examine the techniques that strengthen persuasive writing.
5	Writers form opinions about topics they know well.	Writers form opinions about issues they care about.	Writers recognize faulty logic in persuasive pieces.
6	Writers form opinions about issues they care about.	Writers consider multiple viewpoints on an issue.	Writers recognize bias.
7	Writers provide reasons for their opinions.	Writers evaluate the strength of reasoning in persuasive pieces.	Writers evaluate the credibility of sources.
8	Writers use conversation to develop their ideas.	Writers recognize faulty logic in persuasive pieces.	Writers evaluate the strength of the argument in persuasive pieces.
9	Writers provide additional information to support reasoning.	Writers use conversation to develop their ideas.	Writers explore the various sides of an issue to identify a claim.
10	Writers try to convince the audience to agree with their opinions.	Writers provide logical reasons to back opinions.	Writers develop sound reasons rooted in evidence.
11	Writers use primary and secondary research to support their opinions.	Writers provide evidence to support reasons.	Writers provide evidence from credible sources to support reasons.

Introduction *(cont.)*

	GRADES K–2	GRADES 3–5	GRADES 6–8
12	Writers add call-to-action messages to their pieces.	Writers use research to support their opinions.	Writers use original research, interviews, and polls as supporting information.
13	Writers plan how they want people to respond to their call-to-action statements.	Writers match the evidence to the audience, purpose, and reasoning.	Writers acknowledge and refute counterclaims.
14	Writers use linking words and phrases to connect ideas.	Writers use effective words and phrases to connect ideas.	Writers keep their audience and purpose in mind.
15	Writers choose descriptive words that strengthen their messages.	Writers establish a credible, persuasive voice and tone.	Writers use academic language to express, connect, and clarify ideas.
16	Writers add visual support to strengthen their pieces.	Writers add visual support to express and clarify ideas.	Writers establish a credible, persuasive voice and tone.
17	Writers write structured opinion pieces.	Writers write structured opinion pieces.	Writers add multimedia and visuals to express and clarify ideas.
18	Writers express opinions in a variety of genres.	Writers express opinions in a variety of genres.	Writers write structured argument pieces.
19	Writers revise for publication.	Writers revise for publication.	Writers persuade an audience in a variety of genres.
20	Writers edit for publication.	Writers edit for publication.	Writers revise and edit for publication.
21	Writers publish and share opinions with an authentic audience.	Writers publish and share opinions with an authentic audience.	Writers publish and share opinions with an authentic audience.



Model Lesson F

Strategy 10

Writers try to convince the audience to agree with their opinions.

Purpose

This lesson introduces three persuasive techniques that date back to the writings of the philosopher Aristotle of ancient Greece. These timeless techniques that even the youngest students can employ will add some convincing emphasis to anyone's persuasive writing. The teacher demonstrates how to use all three, and then the students try them out in their own pieces.

Materials

- ◆ a list of topics of interest to students (See Strategies 5 and 6 for topic ideas, if needed.)
- ◆ copy of "Save the Tigers" for modeling during the lesson (page 110)
- ◆ *Three Ways to Persuade* chart (page 109)
- ◆ writing paper for students to write/dictate their own pieces

Procedure

Model

1. Explain that students will learn about three tools that people have been using to persuade others for thousands of years, which are still being used today.
2. Present the "Save the Tigers" opinion piece, and read it aloud with lots of expression. Ask students to turn and talk to each other about the following questions:
 - ◆ What opinions do you notice in the piece?
 - ◆ What does the writer want others to do (call to action)?
3. Clarify that the purpose of the piece is to persuade people to work hard to save tigers. Present the poster that displays three ways that writers persuade others. Explain the first one. Point out the icon to remind them what the technique is about.
4. Reread the sample piece with the students, and look for evidence of the focus technique. Have them turn and talk with partners to speculate where they think the evidence is. This particular piece has evidence of all three. (There is no expectation that students should include all three in their pieces.) If the students can't find the evidence, help them out.
5. Repeat with all three techniques. Below are the sentences that represent each technique.

Pathos: *I am sad that there are not as many tigers as there used to be in the world.*

Ethos: *I have read many books on tigers.*

Logos: *I learned that there are only about 3,890 tigers left in the world. Twenty-five years ago, there were 100,000!*

Coach

Begin a shared writing with the class on a topic that interests them. Write a couple of sentences, and then ask students to suggest ideas for demonstrating that they are experts (ethos), adding feelings (pathos), or adding facts (logos) to make their pieces more persuasive.

Practice

1. Each student will choose a topic and compose an opinion piece that:
 - a. states an opinion on the topic
 - b. provides at least one reason to support the opinion
 - c. uses at least one of the techniques: ethos, pathos, or logos
 - d. includes an illustration that relates
2. Meet with students, supporting them with the elements of their pieces. Consider pulling a small group to efficiently address this new concept. Guide them to express clear opinions and at least one reason for their opinions. They should illustrate their pieces.
3. To encourage the use of ethos, pathos, and logos, refer to the chart in the lesson.
 - a. *What makes you an expert on this topic? Can you add that to your piece?*
 - b. *How does this make you feel? How might others feel? Can you add that to your piece?*
 - c. *How do you know that is true? Can you add that to your piece?*

Don't expect students to use all three. Even one attempt with teacher prompting is a step toward stronger persuasive writing.

Closure

Have some volunteers share their writing. Celebrate the presence of a clear opinion, reasons, and relevant illustrations. If students attempted to use ethos, pathos, and logos, react with enthusiasm. "That made your writing even stronger! Congratulations!"

Differentiation

1. If introducing ethos, pathos, and logos all in one lesson seems like too much, introduce each one separately in three different lessons.
2. Reinforce the concept by reading persuasive pieces together and looking for the presence of expertise (ethos), stirring the emotions (pathos), and factual logic (logos). It may be surprising how prevalent these techniques are in real-world writing.

Tools for Success *(cont.)*

Reproducible Items

FACT AND OPINION CARDS FOR TEACHER

Apples are a type of fruit.

Dogs are the best pets to have.

Cats have whiskers.

My grandmother is really nice.

People drive in cars.

Reading is fun.

Chairs have legs.

I like basketball.

Our class has a teacher.

My favorite color is red.

People eat food.

Bananas are delicious.



Tools for Success *(cont.)*

FACT AND OPINION CARDS FOR STUDENTS

I like cats.

Milk is delicious.

I love music.

Basketballs
are round.

Plants need water.

The sun is hot.

We go to school.

Pink is pretty.



Tools for Success *(cont.)*



What I Care About

Handwriting practice area for 'What I Care About' with multiple sets of solid top and bottom lines and a dashed middle line.

Things I Care About

My Opinions

Two columns of handwriting practice lines for 'Things I Care About' and 'My Opinions', each with multiple sets of solid top and bottom lines and a dashed middle line.

Three Ways to Persuade



1. Ethos: Be an expert.

Handwriting practice lines for the first section, consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line, repeated three times.



2. Pathos: Add a feeling.

Handwriting practice lines for the second section, consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line, repeated three times.



3. Logos: Add a fact.

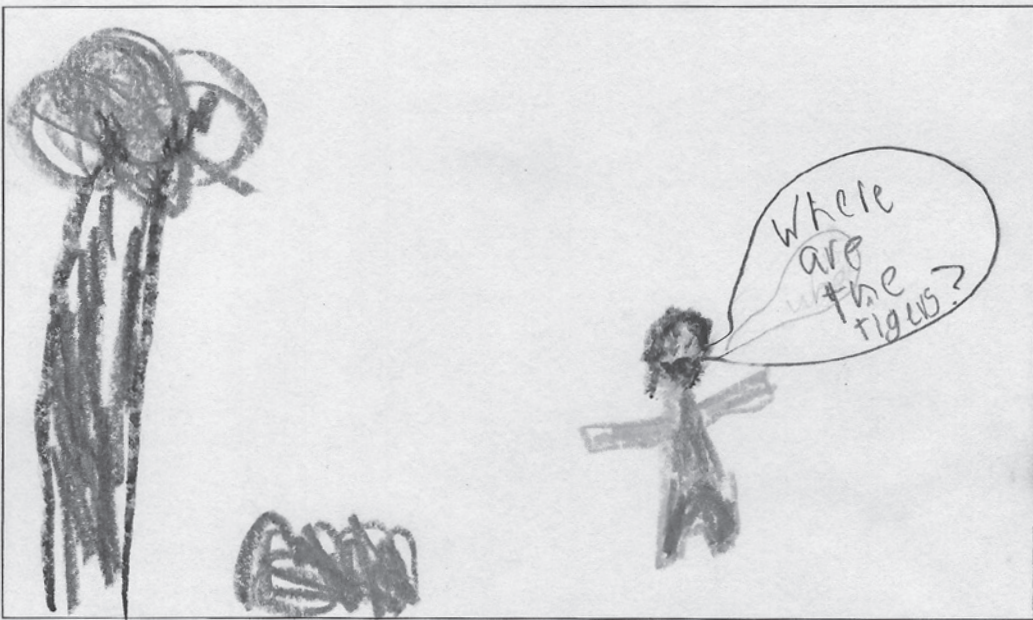
Handwriting practice lines for the third section, consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line, repeated three times.



Save the Tigers

Do you like tigers? Tigers are amazing animals. They are beautiful and can run fast. I am sad that there are not as many tigers as there used to be in the world. I have read many books on tigers. I learned that there are only about 3,890 tigers left in the world. Twenty-five years ago, there were 100,000! People should work harder to save the tigers. If all the tigers die, people will miss them so much!

SAMPLE BOOK REVIEW



Do you like tigers? Tigers are amazing animals. They're beautiful and can run fast. I am sad that there are not as many as there used to be in world. 25 years ago there were the 100,000. Today there are 3,200. We should work harder to save the tigers. If all the tigers die, we will miss them so much!

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