

Area/Skill - LA, Writing	Cognitive Skill Level - Application/Evaluation	Correlation to Framework - 01.04	Lesson Number - 25
<p>Activity Title - Writing - The Persuasive Essay</p> <p>Goal/Objective</p> <p>To review the elements of organizing and writing a persuasive essay and providing a way for students to become more involved in their community.</p> <p>Lesson Outline Introduction</p> <p>Review the key elements of a good persuasive essay. Have students give examples, such as a good persuasive essay appeals to emotions, a sense of right/wrong, or to reason.</p> <p>Activity</p> <p>Divide the class into groups of five students. Assign a persuasive topic to each group. Have each group decide whether they will be arguing for or against the topic. Sample topics could include such things as building an interstate highway in the middle of a residential area, having students attend school all year long, instituting a state income tax, etc. Have each group work together to develop a five-paragraph essay that defends the group's viewpoint. Each student within the group should take primary responsibility in writing one of the five paragraphs (introduction, three supporting paragraphs, conclusion).</p> <p>Debriefing/Evaluation Activity</p> <p>State the topic. Have each group identify which position was developed through their essay. Have the students read their essays aloud. Allow the class to debate whether or not their viewpoint would be swayed based on each specific persuasive essay.</p>			<p>Materials/Texts/Realia/Handouts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper and pencils • Dictionaries
<p>Real-Life Connection</p> <p>People often state their opinions in real life. Have students brainstorm different situations where it may be necessary for a person to convince others that his/her opinion is the correct one. Write the suggestions on the board.</p>			<p>Extension Activity</p> <p>Have the students write persuasive letters that express their opinion on a topic. Sample ideas could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing a letter to one's congressman regarding voting issues • Writing a letter to a radio/television station regarding their programming <p>ESE/ESOL Accommodations</p> <p>Allow students to write 10 sentences about the topic—five pro and five con.</p> <p>Provide a graphic organizer into which students can write their ideas for each of the paragraphs.</p> <p>Allow students to verbally dictate their paragraph.</p>

GED 2002 Teachers' Handbook of Lesson Plans

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Introduction

Ask: Has there ever been a time when you had such strong feelings about an issue that you needed to share your opinion with more than just your immediate circle of family and friends? *Say:* Sometimes people need to express their opinions publicly. In fact, sometimes people want not only to express their opinions, but to also persuade others to agree with them. This is called persuasion. Persuasive writing appeals to one's emotions, one's sense of right/wrong, and one's sense of reasonability.

Main Activity

Say: Today, you are going to try and persuade others to agree with your viewpoint—not through your verbal persuasion skills, but rather through written persuasion. Persuasive writing is simply writing about your opinion on a topic in such a way as to persuade others to agree with what you have to say.

Divide the class into small groups of five. Provide each group with an issue about which to write. Sample issues can include those that affect one's community or such things as mandating year-round school, implementing a state income-tax, or putting up a stop light in a residential area.

Say: In each of your groups, develop an essay that will persuade the class to agree with your opinion. Build the essay in five paragraphs with the first paragraph introducing your opinion, the next three paragraphs describing the reasons for your opinion, and finally an impassioned conclusion that will persuade your classmates to agree with your viewpoint.

If the students have not mastered the skills of a five paragraph format, you may wish to have them write a letter to the editor of the local newspaper. The letter should express the group's opinion and should be no more than 100 words in length.

Debriefing/Evaluation Activity

Ask: Which of you were in agreement with the position statement? Which of you opposed or were against the position?

Have students read their essays or letters to the class. After an essay or letter has been read, discuss with the class whether or not their opinion about the position changed based upon what they heard.

Ask: How many of you changed your position based on what you just heard? What arguments or phrases were highly persuasive? How could the writing have been more impassioned? Less?

Depending on the issue, you may wish to have students attend a city council, county commission, or school board meeting. Have the students identify issues that were discussed and how individual members attempted to persuade the group to back his/her opinion.