

# PERSUASIVE / ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING FEEDBACK AND SUPPORT

## 6<sup>th</sup> - 8th Grade English Language Arts

Challenge	Suggestions for Support
<p>Students are struggling to choose one side in an argument.</p>	<p>Students may need more background information before making a decision about what they would like to argue. Help students brainstorm their responses to the prompt before starting to write.</p> <p>Some students may benefit from working backwards though specific evidence as they build their main claim. This can also be modeled by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● selecting a particularly persuasive line of evidence from the research</li> <li>● building next to a topic sentence that would flow from that evidence</li> <li>● finally crafting a thesis statement that would include the subclaim from the topic sentence as part of the comprehensive argument</li> </ul>
<p>Students are struggling to write a hook.</p>	<p>A hook gets the reader wondering more about the topic. The point of a hook is to develop a reader’s interest and “hook” them into an essay. Here are some ideas for creating a hook in persuasive writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● An unusual detail</li> <li>● A strong statement</li> <li>● A quotation</li> <li>● A statistic or fact</li> <li>● An exaggeration or outrageous statement</li> </ul> <p>Remind students that a hook is an integral part of the introduction. Share and discuss examples. Practice creating a hook for a model essay together as a class.</p>

<p>Students are struggling to come up with background information.</p>	<p>Return to the research to review relevant background information. Find examples in the mentor texts. Draw from the lessons learned earlier in the unit. Ask students, what would someone need to know about this topic before forming an opinion?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Remind students that this section needs to be in their own words</li><li>● It is an objective summary of the main issue or controversy</li></ul>
<p>Students are struggling to write the thesis statement.</p>	<p>Review and model how to make a claim and then how to brainstorm reasons that support that claim -- these can be the three subclaims, or prongs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● The thesis has two parts - the claim and the 3 prongs (or sub-claims). The claim is the main argument, and the prongs are the 3 ways to prove that argument.</li><li>● Have students brainstorm a list of reasons why first, and then choose three from their list.</li><li>● Do more background research so that students can develop their ideas first.</li></ul> <p>Some students may benefit from working backwards though specific evidence as they build their main claim. This can also be modeled by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● selecting a particularly persuasive line of evidence from the research</li><li>● building next to a topic sentence that would flow from that evidence</li><li>● finally crafting a thesis statement that would include the subclaim from the topic sentence as part of the comprehensive argument</li></ul>

<p>Students are struggling to create topic sentences that flow from the thesis statement.</p>	<p>Remind students that prongs in a thesis statement give a preview, like a thumbnail does for a larger image. When a user clicks on a thumbnail image, it gets bigger and more detailed. The same is true for a topic sentence.</p> <p>Model for students how to answer WHY or BECAUSE in the topic sentence. Take one prong from a sample thesis statement, and add in the details that will help the readers understand WHY or HOW or BECAUSE.</p> <p>Some students may even benefit from using a sentence stem as a scaffold. Have students share ideas to formulate the wording and organization of these topic sentences, to practice constructing their own topic sentences (sub-claims) while receiving supportive feedback.</p> <p>Another strategy is to work backwards through specific evidence to build the main claim and the topic sentences. This can also be modeled by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● selecting a particularly persuasive line of evidence from the research</li> <li>● building next to a topic sentence that would flow from that evidence</li> <li>● finally crafting a thesis statement that would include the subclaim from the topic sentence as part of the comprehensive argument</li> </ul>
<p>Students are struggling to find evidence that supports the topic sentence.</p>	<p>Students frequently select evidence that does not match with the topic sentence for that paragraph. Sometimes this can be solved by changing the topic sentence (and the related prong in the thesis statement). Ask students to orally describe what is proven by the evidence they have selected; this can also be done in pairs or small groups, depending on the needs of the class.</p>

	<p>Another strategy is to start with the evidence and work backwards to build the main claim and related topic sentences. This can also be modeled by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● selecting a particularly persuasive line of evidence from the research</li> <li>● building next to a topic sentence that would flow from that evidence</li> <li>● finally crafting a thesis statement that would include the subclaim from the topic sentence as part of the comprehensive argument</li> </ul>
<p>Students are struggling to use transitional words, phrases, or clauses to manage the sequence of events.</p>	<p>Review and model how to use different transitional phrases to manage the different kinds of transitions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Transitional words and phrases can be used to show the sequence of ideas (<i>next, last, finally; in addition, moreover; further / furthermore; another; also; in conclusion</i>).</li> <li>● Transitional words and phrases can be used to show a relationship (<i>however; nevertheless; nonetheless; similarly; likewise; also; like; therefore, as a result, due to</i>).</li> <li>● Transitional words and phrases can be used to show cause and effect (<i>in fact; particularly / in particular; especially; clearly; importantly</i>).</li> </ul>
<p>Students are struggling to use precise words and phrases.</p>	<p>Review how to replace overused words with more powerful words. Words that can often be replaced with more powerful words include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Verbs: Use powerful verbs for emphasis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Example: <i>This pressure <u>creates</u> a toxic environment.</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>● Adjectives: Use powerful adjectives to describe the noun of the sentence to help the reader visualize and understand the argument <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Example: <i>The <u>aggressive</u> monitoring technology which leads to both <u>unrealistic</u> rates of productivity and an <u>unsafe</u> work environment is dehumanizing.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Adverbs: Use powerful adverbs to help a reader understand someone is feeling or acting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Example: <i>After I completed a task, the scan gun not only <u>immediately</u> gave me a new one but also started counting down the seconds I had left to do it.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Review how to use a variety of sentence structures. The length of a sentence can impact the mood of an argument. Additionally, using a variety of sentence structures makes the writing exciting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Shorter sentences can be used to emphasize a dramatic event or action, convey a quick detail, or emphasize the importance of a statement</li> <li>○ Longer sentences can be used to explain or analyze a point, to connect points, or to slow down the pacing of the writing</li> <li>○ Questions can be used to directly challenge or address the audience</li> </ul>
<p>Students are struggling to write a rebuttal.</p>	<p>Review idea of a rebuttal: An acknowledgement of the opposition. It offers both logical and ethical appeals to strengthen the persuasive argument. The word 'rebut' dates from the 1300s and means "to push back."</p> <p>The rebuttal should contain a topic sentence with a claim that gives one point from the other side of your argument. It should also include additional evidence from your side of the argument. The explanation should shut down the point you gave acknowledging the argument on the other side.</p> <p>Remind students that a rebuttal is a risk; it offers an opportunity for the audience to be persuaded to the opposite argument. When done well, however, the rebuttal is strategic and effective.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Rebuttals should also include textual evidence from the research</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sometimes students will identify a point that would make an excellent rebuttal during the initial brainstorming process when responding to the prompt</li> <li>• Review examples of successful rebuttals</li> </ul>
<p>Students are struggling to use persuasive language.</p>	<p>For students who need an additional challenge, introduce the three kinds of rhetorical appeals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Logical appeals (logos -- Greek for 'word') involve the strategic use of logic, claims, and evidence. This includes using strong evidence, like facts, statistics, personal experience, and expert authority, to help convince the reader.</li> <li>• Ethical appeals (ethos -- Greek for 'character') can establish the writer as fair, honest, credible, and knowledgeable about the topic. This includes understanding of the reader's concerns and any objections.</li> <li>• Emotional appeals (pathos -- Greek for 'suffering' or 'experience') connect with the emotions of the reader. This includes using strong, descriptive language or directly targeting the reader through humor, nostalgia, fear, empathy, or other emotions.</li> </ul>