

Persuasive Writing

Persuasive Paragraph

How would you complete the next sentence? “The best event at school is . . .” Would you say hat day, grandparents’ day, the school carnival? A special event can make a whole week, or even a whole year, more fun.

In this chapter, you’ll write a paragraph that uses reasons to convince others to agree with your position on a special school event.

Writing Guidelines

Subject: A special event at school

Form: Persuasive paragraph

Purpose: To persuade (convince the reader to do something)

Audience: Parents and students





Persuasive Paragraph

A persuasive paragraph starts with a **topic sentence**, which states an opinion about something. The **body sentences** give reasons that support the opinion, and the **closing sentence** may state the opinion in a new way. In the following paragraph, Willis tells about a favorite school event and gives reasons why everyone should attend.

Topic Sentence

Have Some Summer Fun!

The Cass School summer carnival in January is a special event everyone should attend. First of all, there are activities for everyone. This year, one classroom had a fishpond for little kids. Another room painted a clown with a huge mouth on a board for a beanbag toss. Other rooms had shoe scrambles and relay races. Secondly, each room gives prizes like yo-yos, bug-eyed glasses, and light-up pens. Winning a prize always adds a little excitement to each activity. The best part is the clown contest. It is pretty funny to see how students become clowns using old clothes, face paint, wigs, big clunky shoes, and wild ties. Adults and kids laugh and laugh at the clowns. For a little summer fun in January, the Cass School carnival is worth a visit.

Body Sentences

Closing Sentence



Respond to the reading.

On your own paper, answer each of the following questions.

- **Ideas** (1) What does Willis like about the school carnival?
- **Organization** (2) What reason is most important to him?
- **Voice & Word Choice** (3) What words or phrases show excitement about the topic?

Prewriting Selecting a Topic

Think of events you enjoy at school. Making a quick list will help you find an idea for your persuasive paragraph.

Quick List

- field day
- school carnival *
- Arbor Day tree planting
- student-teacher basketball game



Prewrite

Create a quick list. List events at your school. Star (*) the one you choose.

Writing an Opinion

Next, form your opinion. An opinion is something you believe.

Formula: A specific subject (Cass School carnival)
+ your opinion (is a special event everyone should attend)
= a good opinion statement



Prewrite

Write your opinion statement. Use the formula above to write your own opinion statement.

Gathering Reasons

You'll need to give good reasons to support your opinion.

First of all, there are activities for everyone.
Secondly, each room gives prizes.
The best part is the clown contest.



Prewrite

Complete sentence starters. Copy and complete the underlined sentence starters above to find three reasons that support your opinion.



Writing Creating Your First Draft

The first draft of your paragraph should start with your topic sentence, which states your opinion about a special school event. The body sentences should give your reasons along with details and examples. The closing sentence can restate your opinion.



Write your first draft. Follow the suggestions above. Remember that your audience includes adults and students. Use your opinion and reasons from page 185.

Revising Improving Your Paragraph

When you revise, check your paragraph for *ideas*, *organization*, *voice*, *word choice*, and *sentence fluency*.



Revise your paragraph. Use these questions as a guide.

- 1 Does my topic sentence give an event and my opinion about it?
- 2 Do my body sentences give reasons for my opinion?
- 3 Is my writing voice convincing?
- 4 Do I use specific nouns and strong verbs?
- 5 Do I use complete sentences?

Editing Checking for Conventions

Editing means looking for errors in *conventions*.



Edit your work. Ask yourself the following questions.

- 1 Does each sentence end with punctuation?
- 2 Have I checked my spelling?
- 3 Have I used the right words (*threw*, *through*)?

Persuasive Writing

Promoting an Event

When a circus comes to town, performers try to convince people to come and see the show. They parade elephants down Main Street, put up posters, and appear on TV. There are many ways to promote a circus.

You can promote an event by writing a persuasive essay. In the essay, you name the event or activity and give the reader reasons to become involved. This chapter will help you write an essay that will make an event a big success!

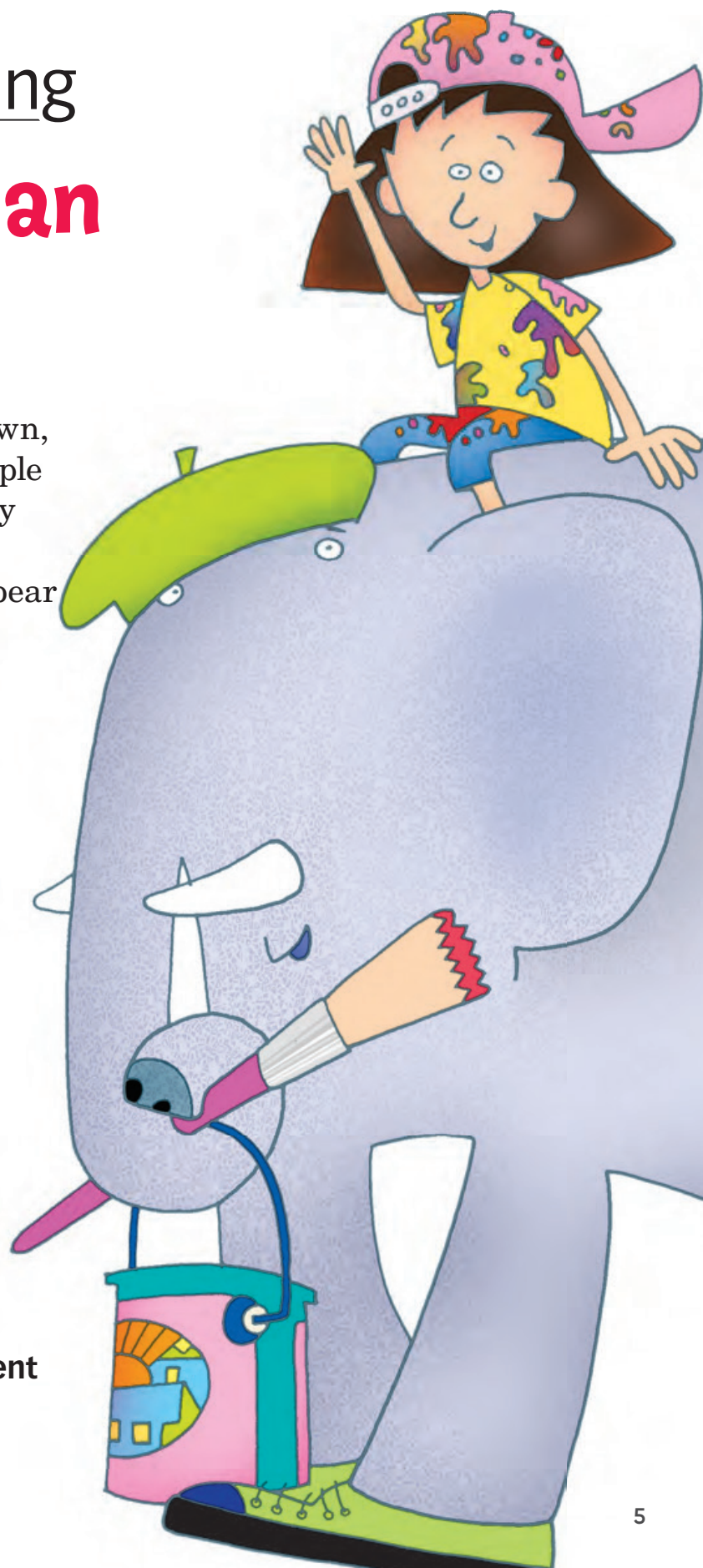
Writing Guidelines

Subject: An event or activity

Form: Persuasive essay

Purpose: To promote an event

Audience: Classmates





Understanding Your Goal

Your goal in this chapter is to write a persuasive essay that promotes an event or activity. The traits listed in the chart below will help you reach your goal.

Your goal is to . . .



Select an event or activity and gather strong reasons for people to become involved in it.

Organization

Create a clear beginning, middle, and ending and lead up to your most important reason.



Use a writing voice that sounds clear and convincing.



Choose words that make your writing persuasive.



Write complete sentences that flow smoothly from one to another.



Check your essay for correct punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and grammar.



Get the big picture. Look at the rubric on pages 220–221. It can help you measure your progress as you write.

Persuasive Essay

In the following persuasive essay, Desirée promotes a contest at her school. The side notes tell what each part of the essay does.

Help Make History

Beginning

The beginning gets the reader's attention and gives the opinion statement (underlined).

Sometimes at recess, I stand by the mural wall. I like the people painted there. One girl is my favorite because my mom painted her 20 years ago. The paint is fading and flaking off this mural, so it is going to be replaced. Jones Elementary is having a new mural contest, and every student should get involved.

The first reason kids should help out is that the mural represents Jones Elementary. Students will decide what kind of picture they want. Then they can draw pictures and enter them in the contest. The artist hired by the school will choose pictures that tell the city something about us.

Middle

Each middle paragraph gives reasons to support the opinion.

Also, kids need to help because the new mural is going to take a lot of work. The artist can't do it all alone. She needs a whole crew of kids to help paint the new mural. Some kids can help after school.

**Middle**

Transition words and phrases help show which reason is most important.

Other kids can help on Saturdays. If everyone helps, the mural will get done quickly.

The most important reason to get involved is that this mural is going to be around for 20 years. When we are grown up, we will want to point to the wall and tell which parts we painted. As Mom says, "The mural is part of our history and part of our future."

Ending

The ending asks the reader to do something (a call to action).

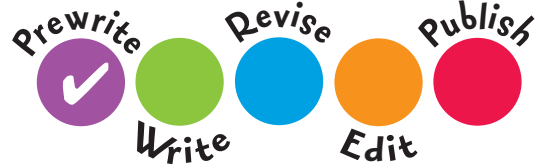
The mural wall is important to everybody at Jones Elementary, so everybody should enter the mural contest. Start dreaming of a new mural, draw your best ideas, and send them in. Then get ready to put on a painting shirt and help make history!



Respond to the reading. On your own paper, answer the following questions about the sample essay.

- **Ideas** (1) What reasons does Desirée use to promote the mural contest?
- **Organization** (2) What transition words or phrases does Desirée use to connect her middle paragraphs?
- **Voice & Word Choice** (3) What verbs does Desirée use to make her voice sound convincing?

Prewriting



The writing process starts with prewriting. During this step, you decide on a topic and get ready to write your first draft.

Keys to Prewriting

1. **Select** an event or activity to promote.
2. **Gather** reasons people should be involved in the event.
3. **Write** an opinion statement and topic sentences.
4. **Write** a call to action.
5. **Create** an organized list of your opinion and reasons.



Prewriting Selecting a Topic

To find a topic, you need to think about events and activities in your school or community. Jerome used a T-chart to list possible topics for his essay.

T-Chart

Special Events	
School	Community
book fair	fishing contest
zoo field trip	St. Patrick's Day parade
young author contest	boat races
summer reading *	food drive



Create a T-chart. Label your chart like the one above. In each column, list events or activities you could promote. Put a star (*) next to the topic you choose.

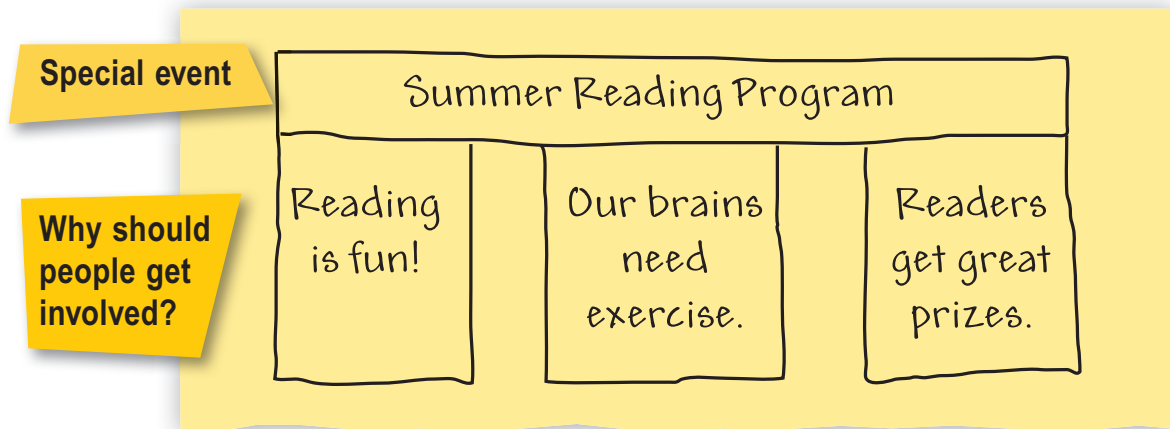
Focus on the Traits

Ideas Remember to select an event that students aren't required to attend. You don't need to promote an event that every student has to go to. For example, Jerome did not pick the zoo field trip because the whole class would be going anyway.

Gathering Reasons

Your essay must tell people why they should get involved in the event you chose. A table diagram can help you gather reasons. The tabletop names the event, and the table legs answer the question “Why should people get involved?” Here is Jerome’s table diagram.

Table Diagram



Prewrite

Create a table diagram. Draw a tabletop like the one above and write your special event or activity in it. Then draw at least three table legs. In each one, answer the question “Why should people get involved?”

Focus on the Traits

Organization Reasons support your opinion just as legs support a table. A table with two legs won’t stand up. You need at least three reasons before you have strong support.



Prewriting Writing an Opinion Statement

Your opinion statement should name the event and tell people to get involved. Use the word *should* to make a strong opinion statement.

**name
the event**

Summer
reading
program



**tell how people
should get involved**

Befford students
should sign up
for it.



**a strong
opinion statement**

Students at Befford School
should sign up for the
summer reading program.



Write your opinion statement. Follow the formula above to write your own opinion statement. Try a few different versions.

Writing Topic Sentences

Each of your topic sentences will be about one of the reasons in your table diagram from page 193. The sentences will begin the three middle paragraphs of your essay. Here are Jerome's topic sentences.

1. To start with, reading is fun.
2. Also, the summer reading program gives out great prizes.
3. The best reason is that the summer reading program keeps your brain strong.



Write your topic sentences. Include one reason from your table diagram in each topic sentence. Use transition words and phrases to connect your ideas.

First of all,

In addition,

Most importantly,

The first reason

Another reason

The biggest reason

To start with,

Also,

The best reason

Creating a Call to Action

Persuasive writing tries to convince the reader to do something. A **call to action** is usually written as a command, with the understood subject, *you*, referring to the reader. Jerome wrote this call to action in his essay.

(You) Go to the library, sign up, and get ready to read!

Practice

Change the following statements into commands (remove the subject and helping verb). Begin your command with the main verb.

1. Students should come to band information night.
2. People should bring canned food for the local food pantry.
3. Students should volunteer for the school cleanup day.
4. Everyone should donate money to the Arbor Day fund.
5. Kids should get pledges for the jump rope fund-raiser.
6. Students should take part in the reading challenge.



Prewrite

Write a call to action. Write a command sentence about your event that tells the reader what to do. Make sure to start your sentence with a verb.

Focus on the Traits

Voice Writing your call to action as a command makes your voice more persuasive. A command tells the reader how to respond to your idea—with action.

