Persuasive Letter: Grade 4
Writing Unit 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Title: Persuasive Letter</th>
<th>Duration: 3 weeks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concepts:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Writers study mentor texts to understand the genre of persuasive writing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Writers generate ideas for writing persuasive letters.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Writers learn strategies for writing effective persuasive letters.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Writers learn strategies for revising and editing persuasive letters.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Writers publish and share persuasive letters.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Materials to be provided by the teacher:
1. On-Demand Persuasive Letter Pre/Post-Assessment
2. Writer’s notebooks
3. Writing folders with notebook paper
4. Special paper for final drafts

Resources:
1. Lucy Calkins Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3-5, Book 3: Breathing Life Into Essays, Lucy Calkins
2. A Curricular Plan for the Writing Workshop, Grade 4, 2011-2012, Lucy Calkins
3. Writing to Persuade: Minilessons to Help Students Plan, Draft, and Revise, Karen Caine
4. Assessing Writers, Carl Anderson

Mentor Texts:
1. Click, Clack, Moo: Cows That Type, Doreen Cronin
3. Can I have a Tyrannosaurus Rex, Dad? Can I? Please!?, Lois G. Grambling
5. Hey, Little Ant, Phyllip and Hannah Hoose
6. Can I Keep Him?, Steven Kellogg
7. My Brother Dan’s Delicious, Steven L. Layne
8. The Salamander Room, Annie Mazer
9. I Wanna Iguana, Karen Kaufman Orloff
10. I Wanna New Room, Karen, Kaufman Orloff
11. Earrings, Judith Viorst
12. Don’t Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!, Mo Willems
13. Don’t Let the Pigeon Stay Up Late!, Mo Willems

Materials to be produced by the teacher:
1. Anchor charts:
   - Ideas for Persuasive Letters
   - Strategies for Writing Effective Persuasive Letters
   - Possible Leads for Persuasive Letters
   - Transition Words for Persuasive Writing
2. Enlarged copies of the following:
   - Choosing My Own Bedtime sample letter
   - Elements of Persuasive Texts
   - Persuasive Letter Organizer
   - Testing the Quality of My Reasons – sample
   - Testing the Quality of My Reasons – blank
   - Persuasive Letter Revision/Editing Checklist
3. Student packets that include the following:
   - Choosing My Own Bedtime sample letter
   - Elements of Persuasive Texts
   - Persuasive Letter Organizer
   - Ideas for Persuasive Letters
   - Persuasive Letter Organizer
   - Testing the Quality of My Reasons – blank
   - Strategies for Writing Effective Persuasive Letters – completed
   - Possible Leads for Persuasive Letters
   - Transition Words for Persuasive Writing
   - Persuasive letter Revision/Editing Checklist
**Persuasive Letter: Grade 4**  
**Writing Unit 4**

- **(Optional) Personal-sized anchor charts for students who would benefit from having their own copies**
- Individual copies of the following for the teacher:
  - Persuasive Letter Conferring Checklist
  - Persuasive Letter Assessment Rubric

**Notes:**

1. How to express an opinion, support it with evidence, and convey these thoughts using an intentional writing voice are skills that are absolutely essential in the elementary grades. Studying and writing persuasive letters increases the chances that students will leave our classrooms and be more thoughtful about the world in which they live.

2. In third grade, students learn to write personal essays in which they support a big idea with evidence in the form of stories from their lives. This kind of writing tells what the author believes, but personal essays are not persuasive because they are not primarily designed to convince the reader. They seem to say *Please think about this with me.* In this unit, fourth grade students are introduced to persuasive letters, written to persuade an audience to support an issue using a convincing voice. Persuasive letters seem to say *Please think this way.*

3. For students to write persuasively, they must have to trust one another and trust you. Creating this kind of classroom environment takes time. If persuasive writing is the first unit of study, students are more likely to select generic, safe (and overused) topics because they are worried about what the rest of the class will think. Your best bet is to begin a persuasive writing unit after students know one another and feel it is okay to share what they truly believe.

4. After reading through the sessions in this unit, you will want to write a persuasive letter of your own before you begin this unit to use as a mentor text. Be sure to save examples of your students’ persuasive letters to use as examples in the years to come.

5. As always, immersion in a genre in the form of reading is essential before you begin teaching a unit on writing in the genre. Spend a few days having students read persuasive letters and the recommended mentor texts included with this unit.

6. Administer the on-demand assessment prior to beginning this unit and score the students’ writing using the assessment rubric at the end of this unit. At the conclusion of the unit, administer the same on-demand assessment and look for improvements in your students’ development as writers.

7. Create permanent classroom anchor charts by adding new strategies as you go. If you choose to use a document camera to share the anchor charts from this unit, also create classroom anchor charts so students can refer to them later.

8. Use the *Conferring Checklist* located at the end of this unit.

9. Spend more than one day for a session if necessary.

10. A special thank you goes out to all authors of professional resources cited in this unit for their insights and ideas.
Overview of Sessions – Teaching and Learning Points Aligned with the Common Core

**Concept:** Writers study mentor texts to understand the genre of persuasive texts.  
W.4.1, W.4.8

Session 1: Writers determine the audience, the issue, and the evidence used in persuasive texts.  
W.4.1, W.4.8

**Concept:** Writers generate ideas for writing persuasive letters.  
W.4.1a

Session 2: Writers experiment with ideas for creating their own persuasive letters.  
W.4.1a

**Concept:** Writers learn strategies for writing effective persuasive letters.  
W.4.1a, W.4.1b, W.4.1c, W.4.1d

Session 3: Writers choose one idea and begin to draft a persuasive letter.  
W.4.1a, W.4.1b

Session 4: Writers draft a second persuasive letter and then choose one issue to develop into a finished piece of writing.  
W.4.1a, W.4.1b

Session 5: Writers create strong reasons to support their point of view.  
W.4.1b

Session 6: Writers create introductions for their persuasive letters.  
W.4.1a

Session 7: Writers build their first argument to support their point of view by using convincing language.  
W.4.1a, W.4.1b

Session 8: Writers build their second argument to support their point of view by including examples.  
W.4.1a, W.4.1b

Session 9: Writers build their third argument to support their point of view by emphasizing a point.  
W.4.1a, W.4.1b, W.4.1c

Session 10: Writers create concluding paragraphs for their persuasive letters that ends with a final plea.  
W.4.1d
**Persuasive Letter: Grade 4**

**Writing Unit 4**

**Concept:** Writers learn strategies for revising and editing persuasive letters.

W.4.5

Session 11: Writers revise their persuasive letters for meaning and clarity.

W.4.5

Session 12: Writers use revision/editing checklists to further revise and edit their writing.

W.4.5

**Concept:** Writers publish and share their persuasive letters.

W.4.4

Session 13 and 14: A writing community celebrates.

W.4.4
On-Demand Persuasive Letter Pre/Post-Assessment

Pre-Assessment Instructions:
Students should be at their regular writing seats and will need loose-leaf paper and pencils. They need to be able to add pages if they want. Write the following statement on the board:

“I think that we should adopt a pet.”

Tell students:
Read the statement, “I think that we should adopt a pet” aloud from the board. Have the students think about ways they might try to persuade their parents to agree with them.

“Let’s each write a letter to our parents and try to persuade them to agree with you on this issue. Write your letter in a way that shows our best work. You will have an hour to write your persuasive letter and include reasons you can use to support your opinion. Use everything you know about good writing.”

Have students begin writing their persuasive letters.

Note:
This on-demand assessment shows what students know about persuasive letter writing. Score these essays using the Persuasive Letter Assessment Rubric located at the end of this unit. Pay close attention to what your writers can already do and almost do. This information will help you focus on goals for your students. Use the same rubric to score their persuasive letters at the end of this unit to show what they have learned.

Post-Assessment Instructions (optional):
At the conclusion of this unit, administer the same on-demand assessment and look for improvements in your students’ development as writers.
**Persuasive Letter: Grade 4**

**Writing Unit 4**

### Session 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Writers study mentor texts to understand the genre of persuasive texts.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Point</td>
<td>Writers determine the <strong>audience, the issue, and the evidence</strong> used in persuasive texts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### References

- *Lucy Calkins Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3-5, Book 3: Breathing Life Into Essays*, Lucy Calkins
- *A Curricular Plan for the Writing Workshop, Grade 4, 2011-2012*, Lucy Calkins
- *Writing to Persuade: Minilessons to Help Students Plan, Draft, and Revise*, Karen Caine

### Materials

- Writing folders with student packets
- Enlarged copy of sample student persuasive letter: *Choosing My Own Bedtime*
- Enlarged anchor chart: *Elements of Persuasive Texts*
- Several copies (7-10) of persuasive picture books or sample persuasive letters

### Notes

- Make copies of the student packet for each student and put them in students’ writing folders prior to this session.
- Make group assignments for students (3-4 per group) who will be meeting to study mentor persuasive texts.
- Gather several copies of mentor texts from the suggestions at the beginning of this unit or locate and reproduce examples of persuasive letters or other persuasive texts.
- Post on the daily schedule or verbally ask students to bring their writing folders and a pencil to the meeting area.

### Connection

*Last year in third grade, we wrote personal essays where we told the world what we thought or how we felt. As fourth graders, we are going to learn how to write a letter to try to convince someone of something. These are called persuasive letters. Today, we are going to read some persuasive letters and other texts to determine the audience, the issue, and the evidence that authors consider when they write persuasive letters.*

### Demonstration/Teaching

- Explain the following elements of persuasive texts:
  - The **audience** is the person or people you are trying to convince of something.
  - The **issue** is the topic that you are writing about.
  - The **evidence** is the reasons you are using to frame your argument.
- Read aloud the sample student persuasive letter, *Choosing My Own Bedtime*. The highlighted sections indicate techniques the author used in the letter. These will be explained in subsequent sessions.
- Record the audience, issue, and evidence on the *Elements of Persuasive Texts* organizer.

### Active Engagement

- Read aloud one of the persuasive mentor texts and ask the students to listen for the audience, the issue, and the evidence.
- Have students work with their partners to identify the audience, the issue, and the evidence and record this information on the *Elements of Persuasive Texts* chart in their packets.
- Have one or two students share their ideas with the class.

### Link

*Writers, whenever you read a persuasive text, you will want to make sure that you understand the audience, the issue, and the evidence, or reasons, the author is using to convince you. Today, we will spend writing time working in groups to analyze another persuasive text to locate the audience, the issue, and the evidence. Jot your ideas on the *Elements of Persuasive Texts* chart.*

### Writing and

- Conduct small group conferences to help students read and analyze the persuasive texts.
### Persuasive Letter: Grade 4
#### Writing Unit 4

| Conferring | that you distributed to determine **the audience, the issue, and the evidence**.  
|            | • Provide alternate texts for groups who finish quickly, or trade texts among groups.  
| Teaching Share | • Convene students in the meeting area.  
|              | • Bring closure to today’s workshop by having two or three students share the ideas from their *Elements of Persuasive Texts* charts. |
Dear Mom and Dad,

Although you might not agree, I think that once a boy turns ten years old, he should be allowed to choose his own bedtime. There are several reasons why I think that I should be allowed to be the one to make this decision. My first reason is that I am the only one who knows when I am tired. Secondly, sometimes I have other things that I have to do before I go to sleep. Lastly, since I turned ten years old, I believe that I have earned the privilege of making more decisions in my life.

As I just mentioned, I am the only one who knows when I am tired. Sometimes I want to go to bed early because I am so tired. Do you remember when I played soccer and I came home exhausted? I fell asleep in the car because I was so tired. Many times I want to head to bed early. Other times, I am just not tired at the time you set for my bedtime. I try to fall asleep, but I just lie there and toss and turn. Sometimes I stay awake and read or look through my quarter collection, even when you think I am sleeping. It just makes no sense to have someone else tell you when you’re tired.

Additionally, I often have things to do before I go to bed. I am the kind of kid who wants to make sure everything is ready for the next day. Of course, I need to get my homework done, but I also have other things that I need to do at night. I need to pack my backpack to make sure that I don’t forget anything. Also, I never seem to have time in the morning to find what I want to wear. I am always looking for my shoes or my cap or my glasses at the last minute, and I have to hurry. If I took the time to get myself ready at night, I wouldn’t have to worry and rush so much in the morning.

Last of all, I just turned ten and I think I am old enough to have more privileges. Surprisingly, this new privilege would actually help me become more responsible. I might make mistakes and stay up too late sometimes, but then I would learn how to use my time wisely. I know that I can take on this privilege and show you that I can make decisions and manage my time well.

Choosing my own bedtime is important to me because I am ready to become more responsible for making these decisions on my own. Remember, I am ten years old now, and I should be allowed to take on more privileges. I will show you that I can do this.

Your smart and mature son,

Adam
### Elements of Persuasive Texts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Issue and Point of View</th>
<th>Evidence (Reasons)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mom and Dad</td>
<td>Choosing my own bedtime</td>
<td>• I am the only one who knows when I am tired.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• I have things to do before I go to bed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• I should have freedom to make more choices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Persuasive Letter: Grade 4

#### Writing Unit 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concept</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>References</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• <em>Lucy Calkins Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3-5, Book 3: Breathing Life Into Essays</em>, Lucy Calkins</td>
<td>• Writing folders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <em>A Curricular Plan for the Writing Workshop, Grade 4, 2011-2012</em>, Lucy Calkins</td>
<td>• Anchor chart:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <em>Writing to Persuade: Minilessons to Help Students Plan, Draft, and Revise</em>, Karen Caine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ideas for Persuasive Letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Enlarged copy of the Persuasive Letter Organizer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Note | • Post on the daily schedule or verbally ask students to bring their writing folders and a pencil to the meeting area. |

| Connection | Yesterday, we analyzed persuasive texts to determine the audience, issue, and evidence. Today, we are going to experiment with ideas for creating our own persuasive letters. |

| Demonstration/Teaching | • Explain that we might think about the members of our family or our teachers as our audience. Use an example from your life of a time when you tried to convince a family member or a teacher to think or act in a certain way. |
|                        | • Share the anchor chart, *Ideas for Persuasive Letters*, with the students. Explain that this is a list of issues that fourth grade students have used to write persuasive letters. The ideas on this list may also remind you of other issues that might be addressed in a persuasive letter. |
|                        | • Think aloud how some of the ideas remind you of issues in your own life that you might want to convince others to believe or to do and state your point of view. |
|                        | • Introduce the Persuasive Letter Organizer. |
|                        | • Record two or three of your own ideas for a persuasive letter in the first two columns of the chart. Explain why each issue is important and why you might want to convince someone to think or act in a certain way. |

| Active Engagement | • Have students refer to the anchor chart and think about an issue they might want to address in a persuasive letter. |
|                  | • Have them jot the name of the person they want to convince and the issue they want to address in the first two columns of the organizer in their packets. |
|                  | • Have students turn to their partners and share their ideas. Have them explain why this letter would be important to write. |
|                  | • Have one or two students share with the class. |

| Link | Writers, whenever you want to try to convince someone to think a certain way or to do something, you can write your ideas and your point of view in a persuasive letter. Today, we will spend writing time thinking of people we want to convince and issues that are important to us. Use the Persuasive Letter Organizer to make a list of your ideas and think about why each letter is important to write. |

| Writing and Conferring | • Conduct small group conferences to help students generate a list of people and ideas. |
Mid-Workshop Teaching Point

Writers, now that you have a list of several people and issues that you want to change, let’s look at the third column of our chart. (Demonstrate how you record two or three reasons you might use to convince your audience to see your first issue your way. These reasons might include experiences, observations, or events.) Think about how you plan to convince your audience to think or act in a certain way. Jot your ideas in the third column of this organizer.

Teaching Share

- Bring closure to today’s workshop by having two or three students share the ideas from their Persuasive Letter Organizers.

### Ideas for Persuasive Letters

1. A family member hogging the computer.
2. Playing outside before doing my homework.
3. Letting me sleep over at a friend’s house.
4. Letting me get a pet.
5. Having my sister give me some of her Halloween candy.
6. Buying me a cell phone.
7. Having my brother clean the bathroom when he’s done.
8. Having a TV in my bedroom.
10. Joining a club.
11. Participating in a sport.
12. Learning to play an instrument.
13. Buying whatever I want with the money I have earned.
14. Wearing my hair any way I like.
15. Not having to do chores around the house.
16. Playing outside for an extra recess after working hard.
17. Having more time to read in class.
18. Giving us less homework.
19. Sitting by your friend in class.
20. Having more computer time.
### Persuasive Letter Organizer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Audience</strong></th>
<th><strong>Issue and Point of View</strong></th>
<th><strong>Evidence (Reasons)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who do I want to convince?</td>
<td>What do I want to convince this person to do or think?</td>
<td>What reasons could I use to convince this person?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Session 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Writers learn strategies for writing effective persuasive letters.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Point</td>
<td>Writers choose one idea and begin to draft a persuasive letter.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### References

- *Lucy Calkins Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3-5, Book 3: Breathing Life Into Essays*, Lucy Calkins
- *A Curricular Plan for the Writing Workshop, Grade 4, 2011-2012*, Lucy Calkins
- *Writing to Persuade: Minilessons to Help Students Plan, Draft, and Revise*, Karen Caine

### Materials

- Writing folders
- Writer’s notebooks
- Sample student persuasive letter:
  - *Choosing My Own Bedtime*

### Note

- Post on the daily schedule or verbally ask students to bring their writing folders, writer’s notebooks, and a pencil to the meeting area.

### Connection

Yesterday, we made a list of people we want to convince and issues we want to convince others to believe or to do. Today we are going to choose one idea and begin to write a persuasive letter.

### Demonstration/Teaching

- Refer to the sample student persuasive letter as an example of the kind of writing that both you and the students will be doing in this unit. Explain that students will be learning the specific techniques for writing persuasively each day throughout this unit. They are not expected to draft an entire persuasive letter today. The idea is that students are merely experimenting with writing persuasively today and tomorrow.
- Explain that you are going to choose one of the issues from your list and begin to write your own persuasive letter. Demonstrate how you read over your *Persuasive Letter Organizer* and choose one idea that you care the most about.
- Explain that you are going to practice writing persuasively today and tomorrow before you decide on an issue and make a commitment to stick with it.
- Make sure that you have three reasons that you can use to persuade your audience. Record any additional reasons on your *Persuasive Essay Organizer*.
- Open your writer’s notebook and begin your letter with a salutation to your audience, the person you are trying to convince. Refer to the sample student persuasive letter.
- Begin your letter by stating the issue and listing the reasons in the first paragraph. Then, begin a second paragraph that elaborates on the first reason.
- Explain that persuasive letter writers want to convey to their audience that the ideas in their letter are important. It is essential that writers reach for precise words to capture their thoughts.

### Active Engagement

- Have students choose one of the issues from their *Persuasive Letter Organizer*, open their writer’s notebooks, and begin writing their first paragraph. Remind them to include the issue and list the reasons in the first paragraph.
- Have partnerships share their writing.
- Have one or two students share with the class.

### Link

*Writers, whenever you start to write in a new genre, it is best to experiment with one or two ideas before you make a decision about which one you matters to you the most. Today you will continue writing your persuasive letters, trying your best to convince your audience to think or act in a*
certain way. We will learn more about the strategies of effective persuasive letter writing over the next few days. For today, just do your best to persuade your audience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing and Conferring</th>
<th>• Conduct small group conferences to support students’ efforts at choosing an issue and beginning their persuasive letters.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Share</td>
<td>• Bring closure to today’s workshop by summarizing and reinforcing the focus of the day’s teaching point. You might share what one or two writers have done in ways that apply to other writers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Persuasive Letter: Grade 4

### Writing Unit 4

### Session 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Writers learn strategies for writing effective persuasive letters.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Point</td>
<td>Writers <strong>draft a second persuasive letter</strong> and then <strong>choose one issue to develop into a finished piece of writing.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### References

| Materials | • Writer’s folders  
• Writing notebooks  
• Sample student persuasive letter:  
  ➢ **Choosing My Own Bedtime** |

| References | • Lucy Calkins Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3-5, Book 3: Breathing Life Into Essays, Lucy Calkins  
• A Curricular Plan for the Writing Workshop, Grade 4, 2011-2012, Lucy Calkins  
• Writing to Persuade: Minilessons to Help Students Plan, Draft, and Revise, Karen Caine |

### Note

| • Post on the daily schedule or verbally ask students to bring their writing folders, writer’s notebooks, and a pencil to the meeting area. |

### Connection

*Yesterday we began to write a persuasive letter addressing one of the issues on our list. Today, we are going to choose another issue and begin a second persuasive letter.*

### Demonstration/Teaching

| • Refer to your **Persuasive Letter Organizer** and choose another issue that you might want to address in a persuasive letter.  
• Make sure that you have three reasons that you can use to persuade your audience. Record any additional reasons on your **Persuasive Letter Organizer**.  
• Open your writer’s notebook and begin your letter with a salutation.  
• State the issue and list the reasons in the first paragraph. Then, begin a second paragraph that elaborates on the first reason.  
• Remind students that persuasive letter writers want to convey to their audience that the ideas in their letter are important, so they reach for precise words to capture their thoughts. One way to make sure that we are writing persuasively is by choosing words that persuade. Begin a class chart of words that persuade. Include the following:  
  ➢ Important  
  ➢ Best  
  ➢ Effective  
  ➢ Strong reason  
  ➢ Deserve  
  ➢ Ready  
  ➢ Perfect solution  
  ➢ If ..., then ... |

### Active Engagement

| • Have students choose one of the issues from their list, open their writer’s notebooks, and begin writing their first paragraph. Remind them to include the issue and list the reasons in the first paragraph and choose words that persuade.  
• Have partnerships share their writing.  
• Have one or two students share with the class. |

### Link

*Writers, today you will continue writing your persuasive letters, trying your best to convince your audience to think or act in a certain way. We will learn more about the strategies of effective*
Persuasive Letter: Grade 4
Writing Unit 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing and Conferring</th>
<th>Persuasive letter writing over the next few days. For today, just do your best to persuade your audience. Include words in your letters that persuade.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Mid-Workshop Teaching Point | **Writers, you have been collecting persuasive ideas and writing about some of them for a few days. Now, let’s take the time to think about the idea we will stick with and develop into a finished piece of writing. Making this decision requires a lot of thought. As I look at my own ideas for persuasive letters, I might ask myself these questions:**  
  - Am I excited to write about this issue?  
  - Do I have enough to say about this issue?  
  - What might I say?  
  - Will this topic be easy or hard for me to write about?  
(Choose an issue and mark it with a star or sticky note. Have students choose an issue in the same way and then share their ideas with their partners.) |
| Teaching Share | **Bring closure to today’s workshop by summarizing and reinforcing the focus of the day’s teaching point. You might share what one or two writers have done in ways that apply to other writers.** |
Persuasive Letter: Grade 4  
Writing Unit 4  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concept</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>References</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- <em>Lucy Calkins Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3-5, Book 3: Breathing Life Into Essays</em>, Lucy Calkins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <em>A Curricular Plan for the Writing Workshop, Grade 4, 2011-2012</em>, Lucy Calkins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <em>Writing to Persuade: Minilessons to Help Students Plan, Draft, and Revise</em>, Karen Caine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Writer’s notebooks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Writing folders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Sample student persuasive letter:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Choosing My Own Bedtime</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Anchor chart:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Testing the Quality of My Reasons - Sample</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Note | • Post on the daily schedule or verbally ask students to bring their writing folders, writer’s notebooks, and a pencil to the meeting area. |

| Connection | Yesterday, we chose an issue that we want to stick with and develop into a really effective persuasive letter. Today, we are going to make sure that we have strong reasons that support our point of view. |

| Demonstration/Teaching | • Explain that in persuasive writing, we give our audience reasons to try to convince them. Good reasons probably will convince my audience. Weak reasons probably won’t convince my audience. If I want to have a strong argument, I need equally strong reasons to support my argument. |
| | • Demonstrate how you look over your list of reasons that support your issue. Think aloud whether or not the reason is likely to convince your audience. Is it a good reason or a weak reason? If it is weak, explain why. Post your reasons, whether they are good or weak, on the Testing the Quality of My Reasons chart. |
| | • For reasons that seem weak, think aloud about how you might change it or eliminate it. Perhaps you need to change the wording or elaborate on the idea. Perhaps you need to eliminate it and create a new one. Rewrite one reason, eliminate a weak reason, and create a new reason. You might have four or five good reasons when you are done. |

| Active Engagement | • Have students look at one reason they plan to use in their argument and consider whether it is a good reason or a weak reason. Have them think about why it is weak. Have students decide if it can be changed to make it stronger or if it should be eliminated. |
| | • Have students share their ideas about this reason with their partners. |
| | • Have one or two students share their ideas with the class. |

| Link | Writers, whenever you are writing persuasively, make sure that you have chosen good reasons to convince your audience. Today, continue to look through each reason and think carefully about whether it is a good reason or a weak reason. Then jot your reasons on your copy of the Testing the Quality of My Reasons chart. |

| Writing and Conferring | • Conduct small group conferences to support students’ efforts at analyzing the quality of their reasons and rewriting ones that are weak. |

<p>| Mid-Workshop Teaching Point | Writers, now that many of you have finished looking through your reasons and rewriting them to make them even better, get together with your partners and share the reasons that you think are the strongest. Ask your partner to help you decide which three reasons are the strongest ones – |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Share</th>
<th>ones that will help you make a convincing persuasive letter.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Bring closure to today’s workshop by summarizing and reinforcing the focus of the day’s teaching point. You might share what one or two writers have done in ways that apply to other writers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Testing the Quality of My Reasons

**Issue and Point of View:** My Mom (or Dad) should let me choose my own bedtime.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bad Reasons</th>
<th>Good Reasons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>(probably won’t convince my audience)</em></td>
<td><em>(probably will convince my audience)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I want to.</td>
<td>• I am the only one who knows when I am tired.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• It seems like a good idea.</td>
<td>• I have other things to do before I go to sleep.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I should get what I want.</td>
<td>• I should have more privileges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• I have been responsible in other ways.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Testing the Quality of My Reasons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue and Point of View:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bad Reasons</th>
<th>Good Reasons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>(probably won’t convince my audience)</em></td>
<td><em>(probably will convince my audience)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Session 6

**Concept**

Writers learn strategies for writing effective persuasive letters.

**Teaching Point**

Writers create **introductions** for their persuasive letters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>References</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • *Lucy Calkins Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3-5, Book 3: Breathing Life Into Essays*, Lucy Calkins  
• *A Curricular Plan for the Writing Workshop, Grade 4, 2011-2012*, Lucy Calkins  
• *Writing to Persuade: Minilessons to Help Students Plan, Draft, and Revise*, Karen Caine | • Writer’s notebooks  
• Writing folders  
• Sample student persuasive letter:  
  ➢ *Choosing My Own Bedtime*  
• Enlarged copy of the following:  
  ➢ *Testing the Quality of My Reasons*  
• *I Wanna Iguana*, Karen Kaufman Orloff  
• Anchor charts:  
  ➢ *Possible Leads for Persuasive Letters*  
  ➢ *Transition Words for Persuasive Writing*  
  ➢ *Strategies for Writing Effective Persuasive Letters* |

**Note**

- Post on the daily schedule or verbally ask students to bring their writing folders, writer’s notebooks, and a pencil to the meeting area.

**Connection**

Yesterday, we took a careful look at our reasons and then we chose three reasons that make the strongest arguments. Today, we are going to create **introductions** for our persuasive letters.

**Demonstration/Teaching**

- Explain that the structure of a persuasive letter is organized around a point of view. Several reasons that support the point of view are elaborated in each of the supporting paragraphs. The concluding paragraph returns to the point of view and leaves the reader with most important evidence to support the issue.
- Explain that persuasive letter writers use the **introduction** to convey to readers that the issue is important. It is essential that writers reach for precise words to capture their thoughts. One way to begin a persuasive letter is to **state the issue and your point of view directly**.
- Refer to the first item on the anchor chart, *Possible Leads for Persuasive Letters* and the sample student persuasive letter, *Choosing My Own Bedtime*. You might also refer to the mentor text, *I Wanna Iguana*, and read the first letter.
- Demonstrate how to create an introduction in this way using your own persuasive issue. Begin with a sentence that states your issue and point of view. Include the strongest reasons from your chart, *Testing the Quality of My Reasons*.
- Use transition words (that show sequence) to begin each sentence that lays out your argument. Order your reasons by stating the strongest reason last. Refer to the anchor chart, *Transition Words for Persuasive Writing*. Explain that transitions often require the use of a comma following the transition.

**Active Engagement**

- Have students turn to their charts, *Testing the Quality of My Reasons*, which includes their issue, point of view, and selected reasons.
- Have students open their writer’s notebooks and write the first sentence of their persuasive letters, stating the issue and their point of view.
- Have students share their first sentence with their partners and have their partners...
respond to the prompt, “Is my introduction clear? Does it state the issue and my point of view?”
  - Have one or two students share their ideas with the class.

Link
Writers, whenever we write persuasively, we want to make sure that our introduction states our issue and point of view clearly. Today you will continue to work on your introductions in your writer’s notebooks, making sure to state each reason clearly using transition words, so your reader can follow your thinking.

Writing and Conferring
- Conduct small group conferences to support students’ efforts at creating their introductions.

Mid-Workshop Teaching Point
Writers, your introduction must capture your reader’s interest. You probably just have a minute or two to grab their attention. There is another way that persuasive letter writers organize their introductions. (Refer to the anchor chart, Possible Leads for Persuasive Letters. Demonstrate how to write your own first sentence by asking a thought-provoking question followed by a sentence that states the issue and your point of view.)

Teaching Share
- Bring closure to today’s workshop by summarizing and reinforcing the focus of the day’s teaching point. You might share what one or two writers have done in ways that apply to other writers.

Strategies for Writing Effective Persuasive Letters

- **Introduction**
  - Opening sentence:
    - State the issue and point of view directly.
    - Ask a thought-provoking question followed by a sentence that states the issue and your point of view.
  - Use transition words to begin each sentence that lays out your argument.
Possible Leads for Persuasive Letters

• **State the issue and your point of view directly.**
  - The first sentence focuses the reader’s attention on your point of view about the issue.
  
  **Example:** I used to love reading, but required weekly reading responses have changed that. I have never disliked reading more.

• **Ask a thought-provoking question.**
  - The first sentence asks a question to get the reader thinking about the issue.
  
  **Example:** Did you know that iguanas are really quiet and you would never know they are around?

Transition Words for Persuasive Writing

• **Words to show sequence:**
  - First, ..., First of all, ..., To begin with, ...
  - Second, ..., Secondly, ..., In addition, ..., Next, ..., Then, ...
  - Lastly, ..., Finally, ..., Most of all ...

• **Words to add information or examples:**
  - For example, ..., For instance, ..., In order to ...
  - In addition, ..., Another, ..., Besides, ..., Together with, ..., Along with, ...
  - Let’s not forget, ..., Let’s remember, ..., Finally, ...

• **Words to emphasize a point:**
  - As I just mentioned, ...
  - For this reason, ..., In fact, ...
  - Surprisingly, ..., Again, ...

• **Words to summarize a point of view:**
  - Please consider/reconsider ...
  - In conclusion, ...
  - Remember, ...
  - This is important because ...
# Persuasive Letter: Grade 4

## Writing Unit 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concept</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>References</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Lucy Calkins Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3-5, Book 3: Breathing Life Into Essays, Lucy Calkins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A Curricular Plan for the Writing Workshop, Grade 4, 2011-2012, Lucy Calkins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Writing to Persuade: Minilessons to Help Students Plan, Draft, and Revise, Karen Caine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Writer’s notebooks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Writing folders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sample student persuasive letter: <strong>Choosing My Own Bedtime</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Anchor charts:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Transition Words for Persuasive Writing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Testing the Quality of My Reasons – Sample</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strategies for Writing Effective Persuasive Letters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Note
- Post on the daily schedule or verbally ask students to bring their writing folders, writer’s notebooks, and a pencil to the meeting area.

## Connection
Writers, yesterday we created our introductions for our persuasive letters. Today we are going to begin **building our first argument** to support our point of view using **convincing language**.

## Demonstration/Teaching
- Review the parts of a persuasive letter as you refer to the sample student persuasive letter (introduction, three supporting paragraphs, concluding paragraph).
- Demonstrate how to **build your first argument** in your first supporting paragraph. Explain that you are going to begin building your first argument using your first reason. Follow the same sequence of reasons that you stated in your introduction. Decide on sequential **transition words** (refer to the anchor chart, *Transition Words for Persuasive Writing*) to open your paragraph and use them to state your first reason in the first sentence. Choose transition words that are different from the ones you used in your introduction.
- Elaborate on this reason by providing precise **facts and details**. Push yourself to write more than three sentences to demonstrate the writing of effective paragraphs. Use **convincing language**. Refer to the sample letter *Choosing My Own Bedtime* to locate and identify facts and details.
- At the end of your paragraph, use a **concluding statement that links back to the reason** that supports the point of view.
- Explain that you will want to be especially careful when choosing your language because much of persuasion rests not so much on what we say, but in how we say it. Nothing is more persuasive than facts. Use precise facts and details whenever you can.

## Active Engagement
- Have students refer to their introduction to recall the first reason they used as support for their point of view.
- Have them refer to the anchor chart, *Transition Words for Persuasive Writing*, to choose which transition words they want to use at the beginning of their paragraph.
- Have them write the first sentence for their first argument in their writer’s notebooks. Remind them to use **convincing language**.
- Have partners share their statements with each other.
- Have one or two students share their ideas with the class.

## Link
Writers, whenever we build arguments to support our point of view, we choose our words.
Persuasive Letter: Grade 4
Writing Unit 4

carefully. Today, you will finish drafting your first argument for your persuasive letters. Be sure to elaborate on your reasons by using facts and details that will convince your audience.

| Writing and Conferring | • Conduct small group conferences to support students’ efforts at building their arguments.  
|                        | • Encourage students to elaborate by writing more than just three sentences. |
| Mid-Workshop Teaching Point | • Have partnerships meet to listen to each other’s arguments. Post the following questions for students to discuss:  
|                        |   ➢ Is my reason convincing?  
|                        |   ➢ Where was my reason most convincing?  
|                        |   ➢ Where was my reason least convincing? |
| Teaching Share | • Bring closure to today’s workshop by summarizing and reinforcing the focus of the day’s teaching point. You might share what one or two writers have done in ways that apply to other writers. |

Strategies for Writing Effective Persuasive Letters

• **Introduction**  
  ➢ Opening sentence:  
    ✓ State the issue and point of view directly.  
    ✓ Ask a thought-provoking question followed by a sentence that states the issue and your point of view.  
  ➢ Use transition words to begin each sentence that lays out your argument.

• **Building your argument in the supporting paragraphs**  
  ➢ Use transition words to begin each paragraph.  
  ➢ Elaborate by providing facts and details.  
  ➢ Write more than three sentences in each paragraph.  
  ➢ Conclude by linking back to the reason that supports the point of view.  
  ➢ Check to make sure that your argument is convincing.
Session 8

Concept  Writers learn strategies for writing effective persuasive letters.

Teaching Point  Writers build their second argument to support their point of view by including examples.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>References</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Lucy Calkins Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3-5, Book 3: Breathing Life Into Essays, Lucy Calkins</td>
<td>• Writer’s notebooks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A Curricular Plan for the Writing Workshop, Grade 4, 2011-2012, Lucy Calkins</td>
<td>• Writing folders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Writing to Persuade: Minilessons to Help Students Plan, Draft, and Revise, Karen Caine</td>
<td>• Sample student persuasive letter:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Choosing My Own Bedtime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Anchor charts:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Transition Words for Persuasive Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Testing the Quality of My Reasons – Sample</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Strategies for Writing Effective Persuasive Letters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note  Post on the daily schedule or verbally ask students to bring their writing folders, writer’s notebooks, and a pencil to the meeting area.

Connection  Writers, yesterday we created our first arguments for our persuasive letters. Today we are going to begin building our second argument to support our point of view by including examples.

Demonstration/Teaching  
• Review the parts of a persuasive letter as you refer to the sample student persuasive letter (introduction, three supporting paragraphs, concluding paragraph).
• Demonstrate how to build your second argument in your second supporting paragraph. Explain that you are going to begin building your second argument using your second reason. Follow the same sequence of reasons that you stated in your introduction. Decide on sequential transition words (refer to the anchor chart, Transition Words for Persuasive Writing) to open your paragraph and use them to state your second reason in the first sentence. Choose transition words that are different from the ones you used in your introduction.
• Elaborate on this reason by providing examples that support your point of view. Examples help your reader picture what you are trying to convey. Refer to the sample letter, Choosing My Own Bedtime, and locate the examples.
• Also note that the sample persuasive letter includes some examples that are compound sentences (two independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction, such as and, or but). Compound sentences require commas before the conjunction.
• Refer to the anchor chart, Transition Words for Persuasive Writing, and introduce transition words and phrases for adding information and examples.
• At the end of your paragraph, use a concluding statement that links back to the reason that supports the point of view.
• Remember to use precise facts and details whenever you can.

Active Engagement  
• Have students refer to their introduction to recall the second reason they used as support for their point of view.
• Have them refer to the anchor chart, Transition Words for Persuasive Writing, to choose which transition words they want to use at the beginning of their paragraph.
• Have them write the first sentence for their second argument in their writer’s notebooks.
• Have partners share their statements with each other. Then have them share examples...
Link

Writers, remember that whenever we build arguments to support our point of view, we choose our words carefully. Today, you will finish drafting your second argument for your persuasive letters. Be sure to elaborate on your reasons by using examples, facts, and details that will convince your audience. Remember to use transition words and phrases for adding information and examples.

Writing and Conferring

• Conduct small group conferences to support students’ efforts at building their arguments.

Mid-Workshop Teaching Point

• Have partnerships meet to listen to each other’s arguments. Post the following questions for students to discuss:
  ➢ Did my partner use great examples?
  ➢ Does my partner need to add more to the paragraph?

Teaching Share

• Bring closure to today’s workshop by summarizing and reinforcing the focus of the day’s teaching point. You might share what one or two writers have done in ways that apply to other writers.

Strategies for Writing Effective Persuasive Letters

• Introduction
  ➢ Opening sentence:
    ✓ State the issue and point of view directly.
    ✓ Ask a thought-provoking question followed by a sentence that states the issue and your point of view.
  ➢ Use transition words to begin each sentence that lays out your argument.

• Building your argument in the supporting paragraphs
  ➢ Use transition words to begin each paragraph.
  ➢ Elaborate by providing facts and details.
  ➢ Write more than three sentences in each paragraph.
  ➢ Conclude by linking back to the reason that supports the point of view.
  ➢ Make sure that your arguments are convincing.
  ➢ Add great examples to help your reader picture what you are trying to convey.
  ➢ Use transition words for adding information and examples.
  ➢ Make sure that you have enough information in your paragraphs to support your reasons.
# Persuasive Letter: Grade 4

## Writing Unit 4

### Session 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Writers learn strategies for writing effective persuasive letters.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Point</td>
<td>Writers <strong>build their third argument</strong> to support their point of view by <strong>emphasizing a point</strong>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### References

- *Lucy Calkins Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3-5, Book 3: Breathing Life Into Essays*, Lucy Calkins
- *A Curricular Plan for the Writing Workshop, Grade 4, 2011-2012*, Lucy Calkins
- *Writing to Persuade: Minilessons to Help Students Plan, Draft, and Revise*, Karen Caine

### Materials

- Writer’s notebooks
- Writing folders
- Sample student persuasive letter:
  - Choosing My Own Bedtime
- Anchor charts:
  - Transition Words for Persuasive Writing
  - Testing the Quality of My Reasons – Sample
  - Strategies for Writing Effective Persuasive Letters

### Note

- Post on the daily schedule or verbally ask students to bring their writing folders, writer’s notebooks, and a pencil to the meeting area.

### Connection

Writers, yesterday we created our second arguments for our persuasive letters. Today we are going to begin **building our third argument** to support our point of view by **emphasizing a point**.

### Demonstration/Teaching

- Review the parts of a persuasive letter as you refer to the sample student persuasive letter (introduction, three supporting paragraphs, concluding paragraph).
- Demonstrate how to **build your third argument** in your third supporting paragraph. Explain that you are going to begin building your third argument using your third and strongest reason. Decide on sequential transition words (refer to the anchor chart, *Transition Words for Persuasive Writing*) to open your paragraph and use them to state your third reason in the first sentence. Choose transition words that are different from the ones you used in your introduction.
- Refer to the anchor chart, *Transition Words for Persuasive Writing*, and introduce **transition words and phrases that emphasize a point**. Explain that a persuasive writer often wants to emphasize a point. Using these words helps the reader to understand what is important.
- Elaborate on this reason by providing **examples, facts, and details**. Use convincing language.
- At the end of your paragraph, use a **concluding statement that links back to the reason** that supports the point of view.
- Remember to use precise facts and details whenever you can.

### Active Engagement

- Have students refer to their introduction to recall the third and strongest reason they used as support for their point of view.
- Have them refer to the anchor chart, *Transition Words for Persuasive Writing*, to choose which transition words they want to use at the beginning of their paragraph.
- Have them write the first sentence for their third argument in their writer’s notebooks.
- Have partners share their statements with each other. Then have them share examples of a **point they will want to emphasize**.
- Have one or two students share their ideas with the class.

### Link

Writers, remember that whenever we **build arguments to support our point of view**, we choose our
words carefully. Today, you will finish drafting your third argument for your persuasive letters. Be sure to **emphasize a point** and then elaborate on your reasons by using facts and details that will convince your audience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing and Conferring</th>
<th>• Conduct small group conferences to support students’ efforts at building their arguments.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Workshop Teaching Point</td>
<td>• Have partnerships meet to listen to each other’s arguments. Explain that one way to convince our audience is to make sure that there are <strong>no holes in our arguments</strong>. Partners, listen carefully and try to take the opposite point of view. Listen for weaknesses in your partners’ arguments and help them strengthen their ideas and language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Share</td>
<td>• Bring closure to today’s workshop by summarizing and reinforcing the focus of the day’s teaching point. You might share what one or two writers have done in ways that apply to other writers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Strategies for Writing Effective Persuasive Letters**

- **Introduction**
  - Opening sentence:
    - State the issue and point of view directly.
    - Ask a thought-provoking question followed by a sentence that states the issue and your point of view.
  - Use transition words to begin each sentence that lays out your argument.
- **Building your argument in the supporting paragraphs**
  - Use transition words to begin each paragraph.
  - Elaborate by providing facts and details.
  - Write more than three sentences in each paragraph.
  - Conclude by linking back to the reason that supports the point of view.
  - Make sure that your arguments are convincing.
  - Add great examples to help your reader picture what you are trying to convey.
  - Use transition words for adding information and examples.
  - Make sure that you have enough information in your paragraphs to support your reasons.
  - Use transition words that emphasize a point.
  - Make sure there are no holes in your arguments.
**Persuasive Letter: Grade 4**

**Writing Unit 4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 10</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concept</strong></td>
<td>Writers learn strategies for writing effective persuasive letters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point</strong></td>
<td>Writers create concluding paragraphs for their persuasive letters that ends with a final plea.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>References</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• <em>Lucy Calkins Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3-5, Book 3: Breathing Life Into Essays</em>, Lucy Calkins</td>
<td>• Writer’s notebooks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <em>A Curricular Plan for the Writing Workshop, Grade 4, 2011-2012</em>, Lucy Calkins</td>
<td>• Writing folders</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| • *Writing to Persuade: Minilessons to Help Students Plan, Draft, and Revise*, Karen Caine | • Sample student persuasive letter:  
  ➢ *Choosing My Own Bedtime* |
| | • Anchor charts:  
  ➢ Strategies for Writing Effective Persuasive Letters  
  ➢ Transition Words for Persuasive Writing |

**Note**

- Post on the daily schedule or verbally ask students to bring their writing folders, writer’s notebooks, and a pencil to the meeting area.

**Connection**

*Writers, yesterday we created our third and strongest arguments for our persuasive letters. Today we are going to create our concluding paragraph.*

**Demonstration/Teaching**

- Review the parts of a persuasive letter as you refer to the sample student persuasive letter (introduction, three supporting paragraphs, concluding paragraph).
- Demonstrate how to create a concluding paragraph. Explain that you are going to summarize your reasons in this final paragraph. Begin by choosing transition words from the anchor chart, *Transition Words for Persuasive Writing*, to open your paragraph.
- The concluding paragraph does not provide new information. It summarizes the reasons and makes a final plea. This is where we use our most convincing language.
- At the end of your paragraph, use a concluding statement that not only links back to the point of view but also ends with a final plea.

**Active Engagement**

- Have students refer to the reasons they used as support for their point of view.
- Have them refer to the anchor chart, *Transition Words for Persuasive Writing*, to choose which transition words they want to use at the beginning of their paragraph.
- Have them write the first sentence for their concluding paragraph.
- Have partners share their statements with each other.
- Have one or two students share their ideas with the class.

**Link**

*Writers, whenever we create concluding statements for persuasive letters, we want to leave the reader with our strongest evidence and make a final plea. Today, we will finish our concluding paragraphs and reread our persuasive letters to make sure that they are very convincing.*

**Writing and Conferring**

- Conduct small group conferences to support students’ efforts at concluding their arguments.

**Mid-Workshop Teaching Point**

- Have partnerships meet to listen to each other’s letters. Post the following questions for students to discuss:  
  ➢ *Is my concluding paragraph convincing?*  
  ➢ *Did I succeed in persuading my reader?*

**Teaching Share**

- Bring closure to today’s workshop by summarizing and reinforcing the focus of the day’s teaching point. You might share what one or two writers have done in ways that apply to...
Strategies for Writing Effective Persuasive Letters

- **Writing an introduction**
  - Opening sentence:
    - State the issue and point of view directly.
    - Ask a thought-provoking question followed by a sentence that states the issue and your point of view.
  - Use transition words to begin each sentence that lays out your argument.

- **Building an argument in the supporting paragraphs**
  - Use transition words to begin each paragraph.
  - Elaborate by providing facts and details.
  - Write more than three sentences in each paragraph.
  - Conclude by linking back to the reason that supports the point of view.
  - Make sure that your arguments are convincing.
  - Add great examples to help your reader picture what you are trying to convey.
  - Use transition words for adding information and examples.
  - Make sure that you have enough information in your paragraphs to support your reasons.
  - Use transition words that emphasize a point.
  - Make sure there are no holes in your arguments.

- **Writing a concluding paragraph**
  - Use transition words to begin your paragraph.
  - Summarize the reasons.
  - Urge your audience to do something or to allow you to do something or to change their mind.
  - End with a statement that links back to the issue and your point of view or urges a call to action.
Persuasive Letter: Grade 4
Writing Unit 4

| Session 11 |
|------------------|------------------|
| **Concept** | Writers learn strategies for revising and editing persuasive letters. |
| **Teaching Point** | Writers revise their persuasive letters for meaning and clarity. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>References</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• <em>Lucy Calkins Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3-5, Book 3: Breathing Life Into Essays</em>, Lucy Calkins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <em>A Curricular Plan for the Writing Workshop, Grade 4, 2011-2012</em>, Lucy Calkins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <em>Writing to Persuade: Minilessons to Help Students Plan, Draft, and Revise</em>, Karen Caine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Materials</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Writer’s notebooks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Writing folders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sample student persuasive letter:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ <em>Choosing My Own Bedtime</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Anchor charts:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ <em>Transition Words for Persuasive Writing</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ <em>Strategies for Writing Effective Persuasive Letters</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Connection**

Writers, you have all been really focused as you have been creating your persuasive letters. Today, we will be rereading our persuasive letters through the lens of meaning and clarity.

**Demonstration/Teaching**

- Demonstrate how to revise for meaning and clarity as you:
  - Reread your persuasive letter aloud to yourself one paragraph at a time through the lens of **meaning**. Make sure that the information in each paragraph makes sense. It must all go together and all support the point of view. **Rewrite parts that need revision.**
  - Reread your persuasive letter aloud to a partner through the lens of **clarity**. Make sure that the point of view is clearly stated and the evidence supports the point of view clearly. Have your partner identify your point of view after listening to your introduction. Then, have your partner explain how the evidence supports the point of view after listening to each supporting paragraph. **Rewrite parts that need revision.**

**Active Engagement**

- Do this same work using the persuasive letter from a student volunteer. Read through the lens of meaning. Make sure that each part of the letter makes sense.
- Have the class work together with you and the volunteer to rewrite parts that need revision.

**Link**

So writers, today you will read your persuasive letters twice. **Read it first to yourself through the lens of meaning** to make sure that the information in each paragraph makes sense and supports your point of view. Then **read it to your partners. Your partners will listen through the lens of clarity. They will identify the point of view and explain how the evidence supports the point of view. Rewrite parts that need revision.**

**Writing and Conferring**

- Conduct individual student conferences to make sure that the students are **rewriting the parts that need revision.**

**Teaching Share**

- Bring closure to today’s workshop by summarizing and reinforcing the focus of the day’s teaching point. You might share what one or two writers have done in ways that apply to other writers.
### Session 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Teaching Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writers learn strategies for revising and editing their persuasive letters.</td>
<td>Writers use revision/editing checklists to further revise and edit their writing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>References</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Lucy Calkins Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3-5, Book 3: Breathing Life Into Essays, Lucy Calkins</td>
<td>- Writer’s notebooks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A Curricular Plan for the Writing Workshop, Grade 4, 2011-2012, Lucy Calkins</td>
<td>- Writing folders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Writing to Persuade: Minilessons to Help Students Plan, Draft, and Revise, Karen Caine</td>
<td>- Sample student persuasive letter:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Choosing My Own Bedtime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Anchor charts:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Transition Words for Persuasive Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Strategies for Writing Effective Persuasive Letters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Connection

Writers, we have been learning strategies to write effective persuasive letters. Today, we will use strategies to further revise and edit our writing.

### Demonstration/Teaching

- Refer to the Persuasive Letter Revision/Editing Checklist. Explain that you have already revised for the first two items on the checklist.
- Read the third item on the checklist. Reread your own persuasive letter through the lens of persuasion.
  - Ask yourself, “Is my argument convincing?” Is this letter likely to convince the reader to believe or act in a certain way?
  - Mark places that do not seem convincing.
  - Go back and rewrite parts that need revision those parts so they are more convincing.

### Active Engagement

- Continue reading through the lens of each item on the Persuasive Letter Revision/Editing Checklist, and then edit your persuasive letter with the students’ input.

### Link

Writers, whenever you revise and edit your writing, make sure to read your writing through one lens at a time. As you work today, refer to the Revision/Editing Checklist in your packets and use each item as a lens when you edit your own persuasive letters. Reread your letter with that lens and revise or edit your work. This is the time to get your writing as polished as you can get it.

### Writing and Conferring

- Conduct individual student conferences to support students’ efforts using a checklist to revise and edit their writing.

### Note

Say, Tonight I’m going to look over the persuasive letters that you’ve edited today. I’ll be your copy editor. Tomorrow, every minute of the day will be reserved for making final copies of our persuasive letters.
Reread your writing carefully. Put a check in each box under **Author** as you complete each item. Once all the boxes are checked, give this checklist to the teacher for the final edit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revise and edit for the following:</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Meaning and Clarity.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ask yourself,</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Is my point of view clearly stated?&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Do my reasons support my point of view?&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Is my argument convincing?&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Did I elaborate in each paragraph?&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rewrite parts that need revision.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Effective use of words and phrases.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ask yourself,</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Did I use effective examples, facts, and details?&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Did I use transition words and phrases that link ideas?&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rewrite parts to make your writing better.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Complete sentences.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check to make sure that each sentence is complete.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rewrite fragments and run-on sentences so they are complete.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Capitalization.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use capitals for sentence beginnings and proper nouns.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Make corrections if necessary.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Punctuation.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use periods, exclamation points, and question marks correctly.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use commas with transition words and conjunctions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Make corrections if necessary.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6. Spelling of high-frequency words.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refer to various resources.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Make corrections if necessary.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Persuasive Letter: Grade 4
### Writing Unit 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sessions 13 and 14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concept</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>References</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- <em>Lucy Calkins Units of Study for Teaching Writing, Grades 3-5, Book 3: Breathing Life Into Essays</em>, Lucy Calkins</td>
<td>- Writer’s notebooks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <em>A Curricular Plan for the Writing Workshop, Grade 4, 2011-2012</em>, Lucy Calkins</td>
<td>- Writing folders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <em>Writing to Persuade: Minilessons to Help Students Plan, Draft, and Revise</em>, Karen Caine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <em>Assessing Writers</em>, Carl Anderson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Day 13 Publishing
- Have students rewrite their revised and edited persuasive letters.

### Day 14 Celebration
- Plan to celebrate the fact that writing gives us new eyes to see and understand ourselves. Students have grown taller as writers. Their notebooks are fuller. Their texts are longer. Their voices are stronger. Take a moment to look all students in the eyes and help them feel celebrated.
- Have authors read their persuasive letters aloud in small groups and then have the authors answer just one writing question.
- Post student writing to celebrate the achievements of each student.
- Assess students’ persuasive letters using the *Persuasive letter Assessment Rubric*.
- Consider assessing the students’ writer’s notebooks.
### Persuasive Letter Conferring Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analyzing Persuasive Texts: Determines audience, issue, and evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generating ideas: Generates and records ideas for persuasive letters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Strategy: Experiments with writing persuasively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Strategy: Chooses an idea and tests the strength of reasons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Strategy: Creates an introduction that includes the issue, point of view, and reasons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Strategy: Creates supporting paragraphs that support the point of view and link back to the reason.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Strategy: Creates a concluding paragraph that links back to the point of view.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revision Strategy: Revises persuasive letter for meaning and clarity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revision/Editing Strategy: Uses a revision/editing checklist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 4     | The response is fully sustained and consistently and purposefully focused:  
• opinion is clearly stated, focused, and strongly maintained  
• opinion is communicated clearly within the context | The response has a clear and effective organizational structure creating unity and completeness:  
• effective, consistent use of a variety of transitional strategies  
• logical progression of ideas from beginning to end  
• effective introduction and conclusion for audience and purpose | The response demonstrates a strong command of conventions:  
• few, if any, errors in usage and sentence formation  
• effective and consistent use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling |
| 3     | The response is adequately sustained and generally focused:  
• opinion is clear and for the most part maintained, though some loosely related material may be present  
• context provided for the claim is adequate | The response has a recognizable organizational structure, though there may be minor flaws and some ideas may be loosely connected:  
• adequate use of transitional strategies with some variety  
• adequate progression of ideas from beginning to end  
• adequate introduction and conclusion | The response demonstrates an adequate command of conventions:  
• some errors in usage and sentence formation are present, but no systematic pattern of errors is displayed  
• adequate use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling |
# Persuasive Letter: Grade 4

## Writing Unit 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Statement of Purpose/Focus</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Elaboration of Evidence</th>
<th>Language and Vocabulary</th>
<th>Conventions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2     | The response is somewhat sustained with some extraneous materials or a minor drift in focus:  
• may be clearly focused on the opinion but is insufficiently sustained  
• opinion on the issue may be unclear and unfocused | The response has an inconsistent organizational structure, and flaws are evident:  
• inconsistent use of transitional strategies with little variety  
• uneven progression of ideas from beginning to end  
• introduction and conclusion, if present, are weak | The response provides uneven, cursory support/evidence for the writer’s opinion that includes partial or uneven use of facts and details:  
• weak or uneven use of elaborative techniques | The response expresses ideas unevenly, using simplistic language:  
• use of persuasive vocabulary may at times be inappropriate for the audience and purpose | The response demonstrates a partial command of conventions:  
• frequent errors in usage may obscure meaning  
• inconsistent use of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling |
| 1     | The response may be related to the purpose but may offer little or no focus:  
• may be very brief  
• may have a major drift  
• opinion may be confusing or ambiguous | The response has little or no discernible organizational structure:  
• few or no transitional strategies are evident  
• frequent extraneous ideas may intrude | The response provides minimal support/evidence for the writer’s opinion that includes little or no use of facts and details. | The response expression of ideas is vague, lacks clarity, or is confusing:  
• use of limited language or persuasive vocabulary  
• may have little sense of audience or purpose | The response demonstrates a lack of command of conventions:  
• errors are frequent and severe, and meaning is often obscured |