

# Persuasive Essays

For Chapter 4, students will read a sample essay that persuades readers to consider ways to change Japanese society so that women will be inspired to have more children. The chapter encourages students to think of arguments that support their position, and to consider a reader's possible counterarguments. Students will learn how to organize a persuasive essay, using language to present arguments and counterarguments. Students will practice writing a catchy hook. They will study various types of support that can strengthen their essays.

With your students, read the chapter introduction on page 89. As a class, talk about current, controversial topics in the news, in your town, or in your classroom.

**I****GETTING STARTED****A Think about the sample essay topic** *page 90*

Before reading the sample essay, students will look at statistics that show the declining birthrate in several countries around the world. To open the topic of declining birthrates, have students talk about births in their own families. Ask, for example: *How many children did your paternal grandparents have? How many did your maternal grandparents have? How many did your own parents have?* Record students' answers on the board. Based on your rough class survey, can the students see any trends?

Next, look at the bar graph on page 90. As a class or in small groups, have students discuss the questions at the bottom of the page.

**B Read the sample essay** *pages 91–92*

Read or have a student read aloud the focus question before students read the essay. Then have students read the sample essay, "Bringing Babies Back to Japan." After students read, put them in pairs to discuss the essay and the focus question. Have students been persuaded by the writer's position? If so, what were they persuaded of? If they were not persuaded, which points did they not accept?

If you wish, students can discuss these additional questions in small groups or as a class. Write the questions on the board.

- 1 In your opinion, who should be mostly responsible for raising children?
- 2 What are your attitudes about raising children?
- 3 Are your attitudes different from your parents' attitudes? Are your parents' attitudes different from *their* parents' attitudes?
- 4 What do you think has caused any changes of attitude?

## C Notice the essay structure *page 92*

Read through the information box, *Organization of Persuasive Essays*, with your students. Point out that this information relates to a common organizational pattern for the paragraphs in persuasive essays. In this organization, the writer anticipates the reader's likely response to the essay's arguments, addressing it directly at the beginning of a paragraph.

### Practice **1** *page 93*

As a class, discuss students' answers and ideas. Encourage students to think of other arguments in question 6.

#### Answers

- 1 Thesis statement: Japan's entire social structure, including families, businesses, and the government, must work together to encourage families to have babies.
- 2 Topic sentences: Paragraph 1: Now, Japanese women no longer seem interested solely in raising children, and society needs to accept this. Paragraph 2: Japanese companies need to recognize their role in shaping families and think more about supporting them. (Also possible: Usually, people don't think of a company as a force in shaping families, but this attitude should be reconsidered.) Paragraph 3: Even though the raising of children is not an easy job or a traditional job for Japanese men, we must accept that it is partly men's work, too. Paragraph 4: It is the government's job to help make child raising more affordable.
- 3 Looking after children is hard work, and most Japanese men don't have experience with it. → Men must also participate in raising children. Nobody wants to pay for another person's children. → Producing Japan's next generation is so important that the nation should offer attractive financial incentive for this work. Many people consider child raising the work of women. → Women should be able to have a career and raise children. It is not generally considered a company's job to help raise families. → Japanese companies need to make it easy for working parents to keep their jobs and have children, too.
- 4 In the fourth body paragraph, the counterargument comes later in the paragraph: *While it is true that many people don't want to pay higher taxes to support other people's children, producing the next generation of Japan is a question of our nation's existence.*

- 5 It summarizes the arguments, and it gives a final comment on the topic.
- 6 Answers will vary.

## D Select a topic *page 94*

Read through the information box, *Choosing a Topic*, with your students. Ask a few students to share their topics with the class. Ask each student directly, *Do you like your topic? Are you excited to write about it?* A student who likes a topic is much more likely to write a good essay about it. Likewise, a student who doesn't like his or her topic should be encouraged to consider some alternatives. (Remember, however, that liking a topic alone is not sufficient basis for an essay.)

## Practice **2** *page 94*

### Answers

My sister wants to have two kids. (4) She's an architect and she wants to keep her paid job. Child care is so expensive, they can't afford it. Lots of couples can't afford it. It makes me angry. (2) My sister is 37 and still has no children. This is sad because she really wants kids. Her husband can't help because of his company's rules. My friends and their families have the same problem. My pen pal in Norway says it's easier there. (3) They have great ideas. Companies offer affordable day care. Government gives tax incentives there. Men take leave to help raise children.

Japanese culture doesn't train men to help with raising children. It's a huge problem. I know not everyone will agree with me, but everybody needs to work together to solve this problem. (1) Someday I want to have children, but I don't want to have to give up my career to do it. I'm not the only one. This affects everybody. (5)

## Your turn *page 95*

Remind students that they are more likely to write effectively if they like their topic.

## E Brainstorm arguments *page 95*

Give students five minutes to brainstorm arguments. Some students may already have specific arguments to support their point. They are free to write these down directly. However, they should still spend time brainstorming, as this may help them to develop their support, and it may help them to uncover other support for their topic.

## F Discuss your ideas with others *page 95*

As they discuss their ideas with others, students should take notes. The purpose of the discussion is to generate ideas. Taking notes can help students, not only to remember what was said, but also to make and see new connections between ideas. This, in turn, can help them to envision the shape of their essay.

## II PREPARING THE FIRST DRAFT

### A Compose the thesis statement *page 96*

Read through the information box, *Persuasive Essay Thesis Statements*, with your students. Discuss why these four elements are considered essential in a thesis statement of a persuasive essay. As a class, look at the thesis statement in the sample essay and try to find its four main components. Some of the information overlaps, and this is normal, as the ideas are clearly intertwined.

Thesis statement: *Japan's entire social structure, including families, businesses, and the government, must work together to encourage families to have babies.*

### Practice **3** *page 96*

#### Answers

- 1 a Effective because it clearly states the topic, the writer's opinion, a course of action, and its purpose.  
b Ineffective because it doesn't express writer's opinion or a course of action.
- 2 a Effective because it states the topic and the writer's opinion. It implies a course of action and its benefits.  
b Ineffective because it suggests no course of action.
- 3 a Ineffective because it states a fact rather than an opinion and offers no course of action.  
b Effective because it clearly states the topic, the writer's opinion, a course of action, and its purpose.
- 4 a Effective because it clearly states the topic and the writer's opinion. It implies a course of action and explains the reason.  
b Ineffective because it states a fact rather than an opinion and proposes no action.
- 5 a Effective because it clearly states the topic and the writer's opinion. It implies a course of action and explains the reason.  
b Ineffective because it states a fact rather than an opinion and proposes no action.
- 6 a Effective because it clearly states the topic, the writer's opinion, a course of action, and its purpose.  
b Ineffective because it doesn't propose a course of action.

### **Your turn** *page 96*

Remind students that the first drafts of the thesis statements will not likely be the last. A good thesis statement often requires several rewrites.

## **B Plan the introduction** *page 97*

Read through the information box, *Catchy Hooks*, with your students. Then ask one student to share his or her thesis with the class. As a class, brainstorm some possible hooks to match the thesis. Write all ideas on the board.

### **Your turn** *page 97*

Remind students that this exercise is just meant to generate some options and discuss them with a partner. They do not have to settle on a hook right now. Indeed, they may find that new ideas come to them later.

## **C Organize your arguments** *page 97*

Read through the information box, *Organizing Main Ideas*, together with your students. Remind students that it is not always a clear, black-and-white issue to identify the strongest argument. An argument's strength rests on many factors, including the reader's likely response and how much supporting information the writer can give. Additionally, some students may feel that their main ideas can be ordered more persuasively in an order other than emphatic order.

While it is beyond the scope of this book to explore all of the possibilities, allow students to think through the options. While many options are possible, one not uncommon alternative to emphatic ordering is reverse-emphatic, where the strongest argument comes first. This is especially useful when the writer's argument rests primarily on one dominant point. Sandwich order is also sometimes popular, where a strong point opens, followed by a weak point, and ending with a strong point. Sandwich order may be effective when a writer has two strong points and one weak point.

## **D Add counterarguments** *page 98*

Read through the information box, *Double Lists*, with your students. As a class, discuss a scenario where a teenager wants to go out late to a concert with friends, but must first persuade her parents to let her go. List the teen's arguments, and the parents' likely counterarguments, on the board.

### **Practice** **4** *pages 98–99*

As a class, discuss students' completion of this chart.

## Answers

### Essay title: Fast Food Is Bad for You

Arguments against my opinion	Arguments for my opinion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• most fast-food places offer salads as a choice</li><li>• convenient</li><li>• cheap</li><li>• salty food tastes good</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• can cause expensive medical problems</li><li>• most fast food is very high in calories</li><li>• salt raises blood pressure</li><li>• easy to eat too often</li></ul>

### Your turn *page 99*

You may additionally have students circulate their papers so that two or more classmates can add different counterarguments. This will help to broaden students' perspectives on readers' likely responses.

## E Use argumentative language *page 99*

Read through the information box, *Language for Introducing Counterarguments*, with your students. As a class, generate two or three more common phrases that may be used to introduce counterarguments. (For example: *I recently read an article that argued X, but . . . A popular saying says that haste makes waste, but . . .*)

### Practice **5** *page 100*

After students have written their sentences, have them share them with a classmate.

#### Possible answers

- 2 Some people believe that riding the bus can save money. However, it must also be recognized that time is money, and taking the bus usually takes much longer.
- 3 Although many people claim that private gun ownership keeps us safe because guns may deter criminals from entering homes, one can also argue that guns are too dangerous for private citizens to keep in their homes because of the possibility of accidents.
- 4 While it is true that plastic is bad for the environment, some newer plastics are readily biodegradable.
- 5 Change can be very difficult and stressful, yet if we don't make changes in our lives, our lives will be very boring.
- 6 While studying overseas is expensive, it gives invaluable exposure to another culture.

### Your turn *page 100*

Have students work in pairs to review each other's sentences. A common problem with first-time writers of this type of sentence is that the argument and its counterargument do not really pair. For example, *While some people think that it's not fun to swim on rainy days, I like swimming in the lake.* This could be improved: *While some people think that it's not fun to swim in the lake on rainy days, I like swimming in the lake when it rains.*

### F Choose support *page 101*

Read through the information box, *Types of Support*, with your students. Talk about where you would be likely to find these different types of support. For example, you would be likely to find personal experience in a personal essay. In a newspaper article, you might expect to find more expert opinion.

### Practice **6** *page 101*

This activity may be done individually or with a partner.

#### Answers

2	d	5	e
3	f	6	c
4	b	7	g

### G Make a detailed outline *page 102*

Remind students that outlining is rarely a linear process, because it constantly generates new ideas and new associations. Encourage students to change their minds, cross out, draw arrows, and so on, as they draft their outline.

### H Write the first draft *page 102*

Remind students that they are just drafting their essays. While their brainstorm and outlines have surely stimulated their thinking, and can offer an excellent resource as they draft, students are not obliged to follow their outlines or to stick to their earlier ideas. They are free to write according to their thoughts.

## **REVISING YOUR WRITING**

### A Add support *page 103*

Read through the information box, *The Right Support*, with your students. Have students offer some observations about your school. For example, *More girls take calculus than boys.* Then consider what type of support would be needed to support each of these ideas.

## Practice **7** pages 103–104

Before doing this activity, students should read through the entire essay. Next, they should read through the five statements of support that they will add to the essay. Finally, they should focus on one support statement at a time, rereading the entire essay to determine its best location.

### Answers

- a after sentence 9
- b after sentence 3
- c after sentence 10
- d after sentence 2
- e after sentence 8

## **B** Benefit from peer feedback page 105

Circulate around the room during this activity and make sure that students' responses are complete and clear. Make sure students have adequate time to read and review their partners' essays, and also sufficient time to meet with each other to go over the feedback forms.

## **C** Improve the conclusion page 106

Read through the information box, *Concluding Statements*, with your students. Talk about why a concluding statement should be powerful.

## Practice **8** page 106

After students have discussed their answers, take a quick vote to see how the majority weighed in on this issue. Discuss their reasons.

Answers will vary.

### Your turn page 107

Encourage students to write concluding statements of different types, such as one question, one quote, and one prediction.

## **D** Make revision decisions page 107

Have students use a different color pen to mark changes on their paper. This may help them see how much they are changing. Although students may focus on changes recommended by their peers, remind them that they may want to make changes of their own, too.

## **E** Write the second draft page 107

Encourage students to try to limit themselves to revising the content and organization of their second draft, as changing such major elements in a third draft can be tricky.



## IV EDITING YOUR WRITING

### A Edit for modals *page 107*

Read through the information box, *Modals and Modal Alternatives*, with your students. Point out that modal alternatives are precisely that – alternatives. They offer variety, especially when a given essay includes a lot of modals.

### Practice 9 *pages 107–108*

#### Answers

Good dental care will keep your teeth healthy and attractive. First, you should eat right. You ~~don't should~~ <sup>shouldn't</sup> eat too many foods that are high in sugar. Next, you must care for your teeth well. Ideally, you should ~~to~~ <sup>to</sup> brush your teeth after each meal. However, often this is not practical. At a minimum, you ought <sup>to</sup> brush twice a day: morning and night. In addition to brushing, you should floss your teeth once a day. You must floss in order to clean between the teeth and to keep your gums healthy. When you floss, you must ~~to~~ <sup>to</sup> be careful to floss deep at the gum line. Finally, you should ~~to~~ <sup>to</sup> have regular checkups at the dentist's. In these ways, you can keep your teeth healthy and your smile bright for years to come.

### Practice 10 *page 108*

#### Answers

Even though the raising of children is not an easy job or a traditional job for Japanese men, we must accept that it is partly men's work, too. Japanese fathers ought to help more in the home. After all, the children are theirs, too. Also, the Japanese government and companies should set up a better system of parental leave so that both parents can care for their families. My brother-in-law, for example, didn't take his paternal leave because he thought it would hurt his career. I have heard many similar stories. Taking paternal leave should not threaten a man's job security. In Norway, for instance, men can and do take paternity leave without concern for their careers. Perhaps Japanese companies should consider making paternity leave a requirement so that there can be no question about its impact on one's career. Paternity leave is important because it helps families to understand the father's role sooner, when babies are young.

Modal changes for variety:

Japanese fathers ought to help more in the home. → It is essential that Japanese fathers help more in the home.

Taking paternal leave should not threaten a man's job security. → It is important that fathers be able to take paternal leave without threatening their jobs.

## Practice 11 page 108

### Possible answers

Good dental care will keep your teeth healthy and attractive. First, <sup>it is essential that you</sup> ~~you should~~ eat right. You shouldn't eat too many foods that are high in sugar. Next, <sup>it is important to</sup> ~~you must~~ care for your teeth well. Ideally, you should brush your teeth after each meal. However, often this is not practical. At a minimum, <sup>it is necessary</sup> ~~you ought to~~ brush twice a day: morning and night. In addition to brushing, you should floss your teeth once a day. <sup>It is important to</sup> ~~You must~~ floss in order to clean between the teeth and to keep your gums healthy. When you floss, you must be careful to floss deep at the gum line. Finally, <sup>it is essential to</sup> ~~you should~~ have regular checkups at the dentist's. In these ways, you can keep your teeth healthy and your smile bright for years to come.

### Your turn page 108

Encourage students to count their modals as they read, and to keep a running tally. This will give them a concrete reference for their use of modals. They may tally according to modal, such as "should = 4," as people tend to use the same words over and over.

## B Benefit from peer editing page 109

Read through the information box, *Peer Feedback*, with your students. Have students limit their editorial input to a circle with a question mark.

## C Write the final draft page 109

Final drafts can be assigned as homework.

**A Share your writing** *page 109*

For this activity, it may be best for students to read essays they have not read before.

**B Check your progress** *page 110*

Students can complete the *Progress Check* in class or as homework. If time allows, meet with students individually to go over the *Progress Check*.