

Persuasive Essays

What controversial topics do you discuss with your friends and classmates? Do you examine all sides of an issue before you take a position? Are you often able to convince your friends of your opinion?

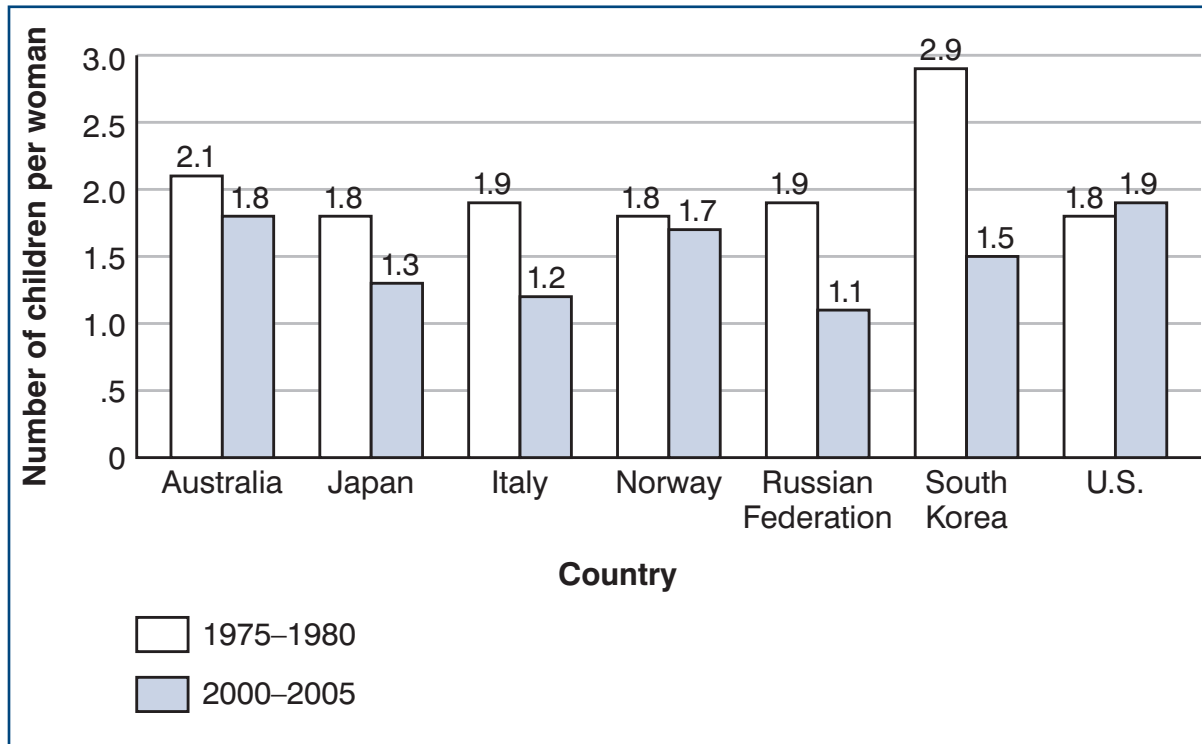
In this chapter, you will write a persuasive essay. You will learn how to present and support your arguments, how to counter likely opposing arguments, and how to convince your reader of your point of view.

I GETTING STARTED

A Think about the sample essay topic

You are going to read an essay by a student who is concerned because many women are choosing to have fewer children in her country. The student's essay is controversial because she argues for changes that would transform Japanese society. Before you read the essay, look at the information in the graph and discuss the questions that follow.

Figure 4.1 Fertility rate changes in selected countries



Source: http://earthtrends.wri.org/country_profiles

- 1 Why do you think people are having fewer babies in some countries?
- 2 What happens to a country when its birthrate declines? What might be some benefits and drawbacks in this situation?
- 3 Do you plan on having children? Do you plan on having a career? Why is it difficult to do both?
- 4 Should companies and governments help working couples care for their children? If so, what should they do? If not, why not? How would you persuade someone of your point of view?

B Read the sample essay

You are going to read an essay on shrinking families in Japan. As you read the essay, ask yourself what the writer's main point is and whether the writer has persuaded you to adopt her point of view. Then share your ideas with a partner.

Bringing Babies Back to Japan

Japanese society is facing its most serious threat in recent years. Japan's birthrate keeps falling steadily. If this continues, the population will get smaller and smaller. While the number of babies is decreasing, the average Japanese life span is increasing. It is one of the longest in the world. This is a national catastrophe because there are fewer working-age people who pay into the social security system, and there will eventually be too few workers. The Japanese can no longer delay addressing the issue of its shrinking population. The only way to grow the population is by bringing babies back to Japan. Japan's entire social structure, including families, businesses, and the government, must work together to encourage families to have babies.

In the past, many people thought raising children to be the only goal and responsibility of women. Now, Japanese women no longer seem interested solely in raising children, and society needs to accept this. Japanese women want to work, either for money or for their own interests. In fact, like many women in the world today, they would like to both work and raise children. But Japanese society is against this. Some companies, for example, even tell women to quit working when they get married or have children. As a result, Japanese women are having fewer children or no children at all. Society should help set up ways for them both to work and to have children.

One major force in society that has the power to enable women both to work and to raise children is Japanese companies. Usually, people don't think of a company as a force in shaping families, but this attitude should be reconsidered. Japanese companies need to recognize their role in shaping families and think more about supporting them. First, they should offer affordable child care, and the government should help them. This would allow women to have children and still have a good career. According to my pen pal in Norway, for example, Norway has a good system of child care, where working mothers can even visit their children at lunchtime. Furthermore, in Norway, you can see a high rate of working women and a stable birthrate. The Norwegian child-care system is an appropriate example for Japan to follow.

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. It is essential that Japanese fathers 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 parental leave because he thought it would hurt his career. I have heard many similar stories. It is important that fathers be able to take parental leave without threatening their jobs. In Norway, for instance, men can and do

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take paternity leave without concern for their careers. Perhaps Japanese companies should consider making paternity leave a requirement so that there could 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.

Some Japanese couples think that parenting is too expensive. It is a pity that couples have to abandon having children for economic reasons. It is the government's job to help make child raising more affordable. Many countries' governments are using different ways to help parents financially. These may include tax breaks or one-time payments to new parents. 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. Everyone, therefore, must help pay.

Increasing the birthrate is a key defense against the shrinking of Japanese society. There needs to be a balance between raising children and working. In order to find this balance, all members of Japanese society should participate in raising and paying for the cost of children. In the long run, a vibrant young population helps everyone, including companies, families, and taxpayers, in Japanese society. We had better take matters seriously for a bright Japanese future. Imagine your own old age, without any children. What would happen?

Adapted from an essay by Yuki Nagami

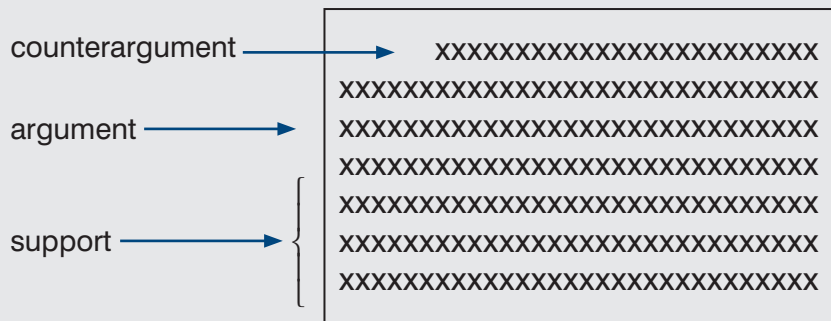
C Notice the essay structure

ORGANIZATION OF PERSUASIVE ESSAYS

A persuasive essay is like an imaginary dialogue between a reader and the writer. The writer uses arguments to try to convince the reader to think something or to take a certain action. But the writer also has to imagine how the reader will argue against his or her arguments, and answer those objections.

Body paragraphs in persuasive essays, therefore, often have a unique organization. First the writer expresses a reader's likely response (a counterargument) to the argument that will follow. Then the writer presents the argument and its support. By addressing a reader's likely response first, the writer strengthens his position.

The organization of such a body paragraph looks like this:



Practice 1

Answer these questions about “Bringing Babies Back to Japan.” Then discuss your answers with your classmates.

- 1 What is the thesis statement? Underline it twice.
- 2 This essay has four body paragraphs. Underline the topic sentence in each one.
- 3 Look at the following lists. They show the four main arguments and the four counterarguments in the essay. Draw lines to match the counterarguments with the arguments.

Counterarguments	Arguments
Looking after children is hard work, and most Japanese men don’t have experience with it.	Japanese companies need to make it easy for working parents to keep their jobs and have children, too.
Nobody wants to pay for another person’s children.	Women should be able to have a career and to raise children.
Many people consider child raising the work of women.	Men must also participate in raising children.
It is not generally considered a company’s job to help raise families.	Producing Japan’s next generation is so important that the nation should offer attractive financial incentive for this work.

- 4 Find where the four arguments and counterarguments appear in the essay. Notice that in one paragraph the counterargument does not come at the beginning of the paragraph. Which paragraph is it?
- 5 Which of the following functions does the conclusion serve? Check (✓) as many as apply.
 - _____ It summarizes the arguments.
 - _____ It recommends a course of action.
 - _____ It gives a final comment on the topic.
- 6 If you were writing on this topic, what other arguments would you use to support the writer’s thesis?

D Select a topic

CHOOSING A TOPIC

When you select a topic for a persuasive essay, choose one that is controversial. It should not be a topic about which most people have the same opinion. You should also choose a topic that you have a strong opinion about. It should be a topic that you have some personal connection to and that you know something about.

Here are some good questions to ask yourself as you choose your topic:

- 1 Is this really a controversial topic that people will have different opinions about?
- 2 Do I have a strong opinion about this topic?
- 3 Do I have enough knowledge about this topic?
- 4 Do I have a personal connection to this topic?
- 5 Will my readers be interested in this topic?

Practice 2

The writer of “Bringing Babies Back to Japan” brainstormed about her topic before she chose it for her essay. Read her brainstorm notes below. They show why this is a good topic for this writer because the content of each underlined part shows that she could have answered “yes” to the five questions in the *Choosing a Topic* box. Discuss with a partner how each underlined part matches up with one of the questions in the box.

My sister wants to have two kids. 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. 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. They have great ideas. Companies offer affordable daycare. 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. 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.

Your turn

Choose a topic from the list below or use one of your own ideas. Ask yourself the questions in the box *Choosing a Topic* on page 94.

- 1 The adoption of children from a foreign country
- 2 Cell phone manners or safety
- 3 Requirements for getting into a university
- 4 Global warming
- 5 Downloading music or movies without paying
- 6 School uniforms
- 7 Other topic: _____

E Brainstorm arguments

Follow these steps to find arguments to support your topic.

- 1 Brainstorm about your topic using listing or freewriting.
- 2 Read through your brainstorming notes and circle any arguments that you can use to support your topic.
- 3 Write down three arguments that you might use in your essay.

F Discuss your ideas with others

With a partner or in a small group, follow these steps to share your topic and your main arguments.

- 1 Explain why you chose your topic.
- 2 Ask your classmates if the topic is interesting to them.
- 3 Explain to your classmates your main arguments. Ask them which arguments they think are the most persuasive.
- 4 Ask what other arguments they can think of to support your thesis.
- 5 Ask what arguments they can think of that oppose your thesis.
- 6 Choose three or four arguments to focus on in your essay. Write them down.

A Compose the thesis statement

PERSUASIVE ESSAY THESIS STATEMENTS

An effective thesis statement for a persuasive essay contains the following:

- the topic
- the writer's opinion about the topic
- a course of action, either implied or stated
- the reason the course of action is necessary

Practice 3

In each pair of sentences, decide which sentence is not an effective thesis statement for a persuasive essay and explain why. Then identify the elements that make the other sentence an effective thesis statement.

- 1 a** Private gun ownership should be legal because it increases the safety of individual citizens.

b Private gun ownership is a hot topic of debate among Americans.
- 2 a** Teachers who grade students strictly inspire their students to perform at a higher level.

b Teachers in the United States don't grade as strictly as teachers in my country.
- 3 a** Recent technological innovations have made battery-operated cars more fuel-efficient.

b Governments should increase buyers' motivation to purchase battery-operated cars because of their fuel efficiency.
- 4 a** To prevent people from taking drugs, we need to first understand why they are tempted by drugs.

b People who take drugs are often aware of the dangers of drug use, but they abuse them anyway.
- 5 a** Following a traditional Greek diet can help you lose weight and build health.

b Greeks eat a lot of olives and olive oil, which are high in "good fat."
- 6 a** High schools should help students find part-time jobs in their field of interest, both to help them learn the employment process and to gain work experience.

b High schools don't support students' career building enough.

Your turn

Write the thesis statement for your essay.

B Plan the introduction

CATCHY HOOKS

Remember that you should begin an essay with something that catches your reader's interest – a hook. Review some common hooks in the box *Hooks* on page 29. Then look at three other ways to help you get ideas for your hook.

- Appeal to emotions or find multiple meanings in key words in your title or thesis.
Babies are so sweet and adorable and lovely. But what if women stopped wanting them?
- Put forward a common stereotype that you might challenge in your essay.
All women want to do is to stay home and bring up babies. Right? Wrong!
- Refer to a song, a common saying, or proverb that relates to your topic.
A famous Japanese poem compares the treasure of children to silver, gold, and jewels. But many Japanese women are saying, “No children for me!”

Your turn

Write down three or four possible hooks for your introduction. Show them to a partner. Have your partner tell you which hook might work best for your topic.

C Organize your arguments

IDENTIFYING THE STRONGEST ARGUMENTS

The main ideas in a persuasive essay should be ordered to maximize their persuasiveness. It is often a good idea to put your strongest argument at the end. That way your reader considers it last and may finish your essay feeling persuaded.

Identifying your strongest argument often requires thinking and rethinking the possibilities. Consider which arguments are most persuasive, and also which ones you can most easily support with explanations, examples, and facts.

Follow these steps to help you decide the best order for the arguments in your persuasive essay.

- 1 Write your three or four main arguments each on a separate slip of paper.
- 2 Put the slips on your desk in any order. Read through them.
- 3 Put the arguments in emphatic order. (See the box *Emphatic Order* on page 23.)
- 4 Now mix up the slips of paper and exchange them with a partner.
- 5 Put your partner's arguments in emphatic order while your partner orders yours.
- 6 Discuss the orders you chose. If your partner ordered your arguments differently, talk about why. However, the final decision will be yours.

D Add counterarguments

DOUBLE LISTS

A persuasive essay tries to convince the readers to think or to believe something or to take a certain action. Therefore, when you write a persuasive essay, it is important to consider your audience. Who are your readers and what are their likely opinions about your topic? Once you identify the likely arguments against your topic, you can counter them more effectively.

To help you identify your reader's counterarguments, try making a *double list*. On one side put your arguments, and on the other the counterarguments you anticipate from your readers. Even if you will not write directly about these counterarguments against your topic, you should know what they are so that you can think of ways to make your own arguments stronger.

My Arguments	Possible Counterarguments
1	1
2	2
3	3

Practice 4

Here is a double list of ideas a writer made for his argument: *Fast food is bad for you*. Complete the chart on the following page by writing the ideas into either the "Arguments against" or the "Arguments for" column (three ideas have already been placed for you). Then draw a line to show which argument for the writer's opinion responds to an argument that is against the writer's opinion.

most fast food is very high in calories
can cause expensive medical problems
convenient
most fast-food places offer salads as a choice

salt raises blood pressure
salty food tastes good
easy to eat too often
cheap

Essay title: *Fast Food Is Bad for You*

Arguments against my opinion	Arguments for my opinion
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• most fast-food places offer salads as a choice•••	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• can cause expensive medical problems○ most fast food is very high in calories••

Your turn

Follow these steps to develop your arguments.

- 1 Write down your topic and four arguments that you might use in your persuasive essay. Write each argument on a different piece of paper.
- 2 Give the four pieces of paper to four different classmates and have each person write a counterargument to it.
- 3 When you get the pieces of paper back, make a double list of your arguments and counterarguments.

E Use argumentative language

LANGUAGE FOR INTRODUCING COUNTERARGUMENTS

When writing a persuasive essay, writers often present the counterargument first and then their own argument. You can introduce the counterargument and argument with phrases such as the following:

Counterargument

Some people believe . . .
While it is true that . . . ,
Although many people claim that . . . ,

Argument

However, it must also be recognized that . . .
it can also be argued that . . .
one can also argue that . . .

Practice 5

Read the arguments and counterarguments. Then write one or two sentences that introduce them. The first one has been done for you as an example.

1 Counterargument: Most fast-food places offer salads as a choice.

Argument: Most fast food is very high in calories.

While it is true that most fast-food places offer salads as a choice, it must also be recognized that most fast food is very high in calories.

2 Counterargument: Riding the bus can save money.

Argument: Time is money, and taking the bus usually takes much longer.

3 Counterargument: Private gun ownership keeps us safe because guns may deter criminals from entering homes.

Argument: Guns are too dangerous for private citizens to keep in their homes because of the possibility of accidents.

4 Counterargument: Plastic is bad for the environment.

Argument: Some newer plastics are readily biodegradable.

5 Counterargument: Change can be very difficult and stressful.

Argument: If we don't make changes in our lives, our lives would be very boring.

6 Counterargument: Studying overseas is expensive.

Argument: Studying overseas gives invaluable exposure to another culture.

Your turn

Look at the double list that you made in the *Your Turn* following *Practice 4* on page 99. Write sentences that introduce the counterarguments and the arguments. Some of these sentences may serve as good topic sentences in your body paragraphs.

F Choose support

TYPES OF SUPPORT

Writers use different types of support to argue or prove their points. The type of support a writer uses will depend on the topic, the audience, and the assignment. Of course, writers can use more than one kind of support in an essay.

- **Personal experience:** The writer tells about an experience he or she has had.
- **Expert opinion:** The writer tells another person's opinion. The other person should know a lot about the topic or have some personal experience that is relevant.
- **Examples:** The writer describes an instance of something to illustrate the point.
- **Analogy:** The writer compares the situation to another similar situation.
- **Facts and statistics:** The writer uses true statements or numbers to prove the idea. Often this information comes from other sources, such as books, newspapers, or Web sites.
- **Reason:** The writer uses reasoning or logic to argue the point.
- **Emotion:** The writer makes an emotional appeal to the reader.

Practice 6

What types of support are used in the following sentences? Write the letter of the kind of support next to each of the sentences below. The first one has been done for you.

- a** personal experience
- b** expert opinion
- c** examples

- d** analogy
- e** facts and statistics

- f** reason
- g** emotion

- a **1** I once spent three hours researching a basic fact on the Internet.
- _____ **2** Driving cars hurts the planet in the same way that smoking cigarettes hurts the body.
- _____ **3** Individual citizens cannot always understand the impact of their actions. Therefore, the government has the responsibility to make laws to protect the environment from individuals.
- _____ **4** The geophysicist M. King Hubbert says, "Our ignorance is not so vast as our failure to use what we know."
- _____ **5** When employers offer their overweight employees a cash bonus to lose weight, those workers lose an average of 10 to 15 pounds.
- _____ **6** Managing the demand for transportation can provide multiple benefits, such as less traffic, increased safety, and improved environmental quality.
- _____ **7** It would be a great tragedy indeed to allow this situation to continue.

G Make a detailed outline

Follow these steps to complete a detailed outline for your persuasive essay.

- 1 Make an outline similar to the one on the right.
- 2 Write your hook.
- 3 Note any background information you need to include.
- 4 Write your thesis statement.
- 5 List the arguments that you will use in the body paragraphs of your essay.
- 6 For each argument, write two or three specific pieces of support. Include different types of support, such as reason, personal example, expert opinion, and so on.
- 7 Plan your conclusion.

I. INTRODUCTION

Hook
Background
Thesis statement

II. FIRST MAIN IDEA

Support 1
Support 2
Support 3

III. SECOND MAIN IDEA

Support 1
Support 2
Support 3

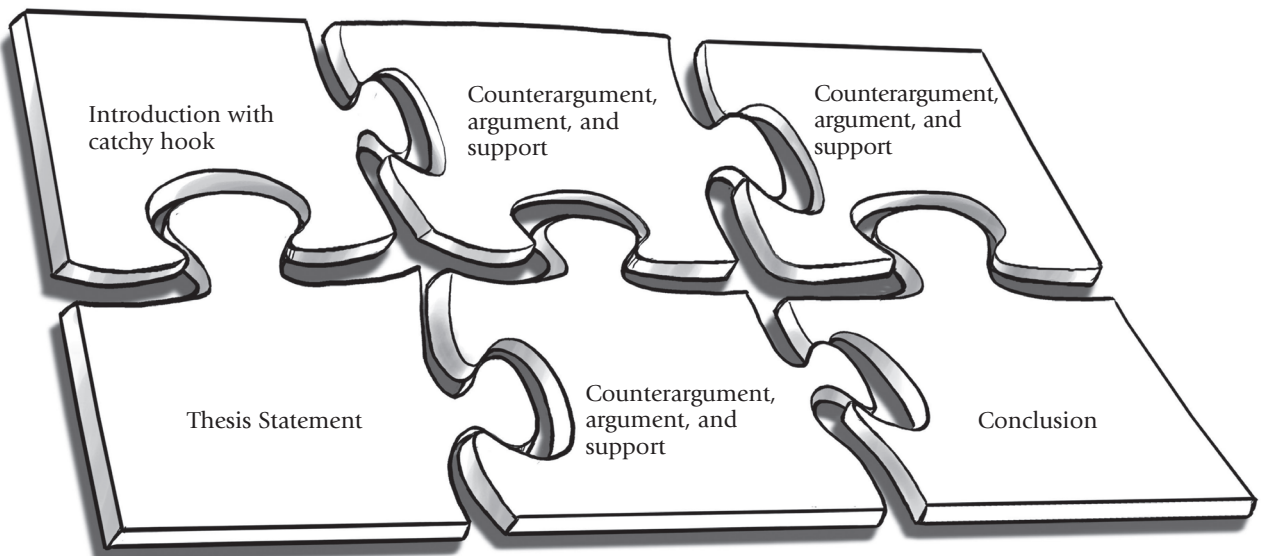
IV. THIRD MAIN IDEA

Support 1
Support 2
Support 3

V. CONCLUSION

H Write the first draft

In this section, you have planned all the pieces that you need for your essay. You have thought through the major arguments, counterarguments, and support for your essay. You have also considered the introduction and the conclusion. Put these pieces together to create the first draft of your essay. Add a title.



III REVISING YOUR WRITING

A Add support

THE RIGHT SUPPORT

When you make a claim, you need to support it. Different types of statements may require different types of support. For example, if your essay claims that experts agree on a certain fact, then it would be good to quote a specific expert on that fact. If you claim that a large number of students miss breakfast before school, you could report on your personal experience and that of your friends.



An essay always needs strong support.

Practice 7

Read this draft of a persuasive essay on euthanasia. The student could improve this essay by adding support to various statements throughout the essay. Read the supporting sentences on the next page and identify the best place to put each piece of support.

A Way Out

¹Euthanasia, or mercy killing, should be a choice for a patient who has an incurable disease and doesn't want to live anymore. ²A doctor should be able to help a patient die by injecting or giving a lethal drug. ³This is a very controversial idea, and many people say it is unethical for a doctor to kill someone. ⁴I believe that euthanasia should be legal because it is a way for people to end their own suffering.

⁵Some suffering in life may be a normal thing that a person must learn to accept. ⁶It is also true that some suffering can be addressed with pain-killers

continued

or therapy.⁷ However, some suffering cannot be relieved by drugs.⁸ For patients who are in such pain, every day is just a terrible struggle.

⁹ There are several countries around the world that allow organizations or doctors to help patients to die. ¹⁰ In parts of the United States, such as the state of Oregon, people are also beginning to recognize the importance of legalizing physician-assisted suicide. ¹¹ As the population of the United States ages, this is going to become a bigger and bigger issue with more and more of the elderly wanting to end their lives painlessly.

Adapted from an essay by Stacy Lee

- a** Both the Netherlands and Belgium, for example, started to allow physician-assisted suicide in 2002.

After which sentence could you add this *example* support? ____

- b** On the other hand, I have watched a close relative die in terrible pain, and for me, it was unethical to allow such pain.

After which sentence could you add this *personal experience* support? ____

- c** One reason is that we know the population is going to keep aging and that by 2050, 25 percent of the U.S. population will be over 85 years old.

After which sentence could you add this *reason* support? ____

- d** This is called Physician-Assisted Suicide or PAS.

After which sentence could you add this *fact* support? ____

- e** We must stop the suffering of these patients and stop the suffering of their families and friends who have to watch them.

After which sentence could you add this *emotion* support? ____



Without strong support, your essay is headed for disaster!

B Benefit from peer feedback

Exchange essays and books with a partner. Fill out the form below about your partner's essay. Then return the book and discuss your answers.

PEER FEEDBACK FORM

Writer's name: _____

Date: _____

Reviewer's name: _____

- 1 On your partner's paper, underline the thesis statement twice.
- 2 Answer these questions about the thesis statement. Mark each ☒ or ☐ X.
 - ☐ Is the thesis statement in the introduction?
 - ☐ Does the thesis statement contain a course of action, implied or stated?
- 3 Underline the topic sentence of each body paragraph once.
- 4 What types of support are used in each body paragraph?
 - Body paragraph 1: _____
 - Body paragraph 2: _____
 - Body paragraph 3: _____
- 5 Which are the writer's strongest and weakest arguments?
 - Strongest: _____
 - Weakest: _____
- 6 Can you think of any other persuasive arguments to support the writer's position?

- 7 Does the writer consider and address counterarguments for each argument? If not, what other counterarguments do you think the writer should consider?

- 8 Answer these questions about the conclusion. Mark each ☒ or ☐ X.
 - ☐ Does the conclusion summarize the main points of the essay?
 - ☐ Does the conclusion end with a strong concluding statement?
- 9 Draw a star (★) in the margin next to your favorite sentences. Choose two or three. Put a question mark (?) next to any sentences that you didn't understand.
- 10 Any other comments: _____

C Improve the conclusion

CONCLUDING STATEMENTS

In the same way that an introduction needs to start with a good hook to catch the attention of the reader, a good conclusion should end with a powerful *concluding statement*. The concluding statement is the writer's last chance to persuade the reader. It leaves the reader with a final, provocative thought.

There are many ways to write a memorable close to an essay. A concluding statement can be:

- a question
- a call to action
- an interesting quotation
- a logical extension of the topic
- a prediction about the future

Practice 8

Which of the four concluding statements do you think best completes this conclusion to an essay about meditation? Write the letter on the line. Discuss your answer with a partner.

Everybody should meditate on a regular basis; it is good for one's health and even good for the planet. You can meditate just by sitting quietly for a few moments by yourself. Or you can practice a formal set of routine practices. When meditation is practiced as part of a routine, it's an excellent way to develop oneself. Through meditation, we can focus our minds and grow as human beings. _____

- a** Most important, meditation can help to focus our minds on greater goals for the common good, such as world peace.
- b** As the poet Robert Louis Stevenson said, "Quiet minds cannot be perplexed or frightened, but go on in fortune or misfortune at their own private pace, like a clock during a thunderstorm."
- c** Considering what it offers us, I recommend that everybody try to schedule a specific time for meditation at least three times a week.
- d** Now that you know what meditation can offer, are you willing to give it a try?

Your turn

Reread your conclusion. Write down two or three possible concluding statements for your essay. Decide which one is most memorable.

D Make revision decisions

Reread your essay and think about your partner's peer feedback. Mark any changes that you want to make on your paper.

E Write the second draft

Use the notes you wrote on your first draft to make revisions. Write the second draft of your essay.

IV EDITING YOUR WRITING

A Edit for modals

MODALS AND MODAL ALTERNATIVES

In a persuasive essay, the writer usually states why it is advisable or necessary for the reader to accept the essay's thesis. Two common ways to express advice and necessity in English are with modal verbs. These verbs can be tricky to use correctly. There are also some effective alternatives to using modals. Using them can offer some variety to your essay.

Modals

should
ought to
must

Modal alternatives

It is important that . . .
It is essential that . . .
It is necessary that . . .

Practice 9

Edit the following paragraph for the correct use of modals. There are five errors.

Good dental care will keep your teeth healthy and attractive. First, you should eat right. You don't should eat too many foods that are high in sugar. Next, you must care for your teeth well. Ideally, you should to brush your teeth after each meal. However, often this is not practical. At a minimum, you ought 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

continued

keep your gums healthy. When you floss, you must to be careful to floss deep at the gum line. Finally, you should to have regular check-ups at the dentist's. In these ways, you can keep your teeth healthy and your smile bright for years to come.

Practice 10

The paragraph below is an earlier draft of the fourth paragraph of the essay “Bringing Babies Back to Japan” on pages 91-92. In the draft, underline the modals. Then look at the paragraph on pages 91-92 and note how the writer changed the modals to add variety.

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 parental leave because he thought it would hurt his career. I have heard many similar stories. Taking parental 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.

Practice 11

Rewrite the paragraph in *Practice 9* on page 107 and this page by replacing modals in some of the sentences with modal alternatives. Changing five modals, for example, will give the paragraph greater variety.

Your turn

Read through your second draft. Fix any modals that you may have used incorrectly. If you have overused certain modals, try replacing them with modal alternatives.

B Benefit from peer editing

PEER FEEDBACK

Remember it is often easier to see errors in other students' writing than in your own. It is often a good idea to let a partner read your essay and look for errors that you may have missed. Editing a partner's paper is also a good way to sharpen your own editing skills.

Exchange drafts with a partner. Read your partner's draft and check it for modals and alternatives to modals. Also, look for other grammar or usage issues that seem unusual. Circle anything that you have a question about and put a question mark next to it.

C Write the final draft

Write the final draft. As you write, make sure that your spelling, punctuation, and formatting are correct. Check for any grammar errors.

V FOLLOWING UP

A Share your writing

Let's look at the persuasiveness of your writing. After all, the purpose of a persuasive essay is to convince readers. Follow these steps.

- 1 Write your thesis statement on a separate sheet of paper. Have a partner read your thesis statement (but not your essay) and indicate whether he or she agrees with it, using the following scale.

0	1	2	3	4	5
disagree	mostly disagree	partly agree	agree 50%	mostly agree	completely agree

- 2 Have your classmate read your entire essay. After reading the essay, your classmate should again indicate agreement on the above scale.
- 3 Repeat this activity with two or three classmates. Do you feel that your essay has achieved its goal of persuading readers?

B Check your progress

After you get your essay back from your instructor, complete the *Progress Check* below.

PROGRESS CHECK

Date: _____

Essay title: _____

Things I did well in this essay:

Things I want to work on in my next essay:

Look at your *Progress Check* on page 87 of Chapter 3. How did you improve your writing in this essay?
