

6 ¶ PERSUASIVE ESSAY

INTRO

Begin with an interesting and evocative introduction that includes a **thesis** and a list of **three reasons** to support your thesis. Perhaps begin with two or three simple but dramatic **questions**; then state your thesis and three reasons.

BODY PARAGRAPH I: REASON #1

Expand upon reason #1. Use specifics, including data, where appropriate, to illustrate your point.

BODY PARAGRAPH II: REASON #2

Expand upon reason #2. Use specifics, including data, where appropriate, to illustrate your point.

BODY PARAGRAPH III: REASON #3

Expand upon reason #3. Use specifics, including data, where appropriate, to illustrate your point.

BODY PARAGRAPH IV: COUNTER-ARGUMENT

Begin “Some people might argue...” and after you explain what some people might argue, refute their argument.

CONCLUSION

Restate the introduction AND/OR inspire an action.

4-7 ¶ RESPONSE-TO-LITERATURE ESSAY (When the prompt asks about theme or author’s message)

INTRO

Just as with a persuasive essay, begin with a question or two and then offer the beginning of an answer. Perhaps say: “(Author) in his/her story (Title), which is a story about (theme) addresses these very questions. Ultimately, his/her message is _____.”

BODY PARAGRAPH I: SUMMARY (OPTIONAL)

Provide a short summary of the poem or story.

BODY PARAGRAPH II: LITERARY ELEMENT FROM THE MENU

Choose a literary element or device from the “menu” that is pertinent to the poem or story *and* which supports your thesis.

For example, “The author’s use of **figurative language**, namely personification, reinforces his/her message...”

Or “The author’s use of the **first person point of view** makes the story more personal and therefore more powerful...”

Or “The author’s choice in **setting** enhances the mood, which in turn deepens the message...For example, the opening scene where the main character is sleeping in the forest...”

Prove your point by referring to, paraphrasing or quoting the text.

BODY PARAGRAPH III: LITERARY ELEMENT FROM THE MENU

Choose another literary element or device from the menu.

BODY PARAGRAPH IV: LITERARY ELEMENT FROM THE MENU (OPTIONAL)

Choose another literary element or device from the menu.

BODY PARAGRAPH V: RELATE THE STORY OR POEM TO YOUR LIFE, TO ANOTHER TEXT OR TO THE WORLD (OPTIONAL)

Relate the poem or story to your life, to another text or to the world. Perhaps begin, “This story reminds me of ...”

CONCLUSION

Restate the introduction AND/OR invoke an even greater curiosity AND/OR inspire an action.

MENU OF LITERARY ELEMENTS AND DEVICES

In a Literary Response and Analysis essay, for **each** of your body paragraphs, you may want to focus on **one** separate literary element. Choose those that pertain to the text and that support your thesis. Here are a few possibilities:

POINT OF VIEW

Is the narrator speaking from the **first** or **third person point of view** and how does that choice affect the text? If it's written from the first person, does that make the reader relate even more to the main character(s)? If it's third person, which third person is it? *Objective? Limited? Omniscient?* Explain the narrator's effect on the text.

DIALOGUE

What do the characters say and what does this tell us about their personalities and their relationships?

MOOD/TONE

What is the overall feel of the text? Is it light and happy or dark and scary? How do you know? What words or actions help to create the mood? How does the mood enhance the author's message?

DICTION (WORD CHOICE)

What words does the author choose and how do they affect the text? Is there **alliteration** (Peter Piper Picked a Peck of Pickled Peppers)? Is there **hyperbole** (I told you a MILLION times)? [Hyperbole may also be discussed under "figurative language."] Is there rhyming? Do any of the words have double meanings? What are the **connotations** of certain words? How do the particular words chosen affect the text and hence the author's message?

RHYTHM, PATTERNS AND/OR REPETITION

What is the **rhythm** or **meter** of the text, and how does that enhance the message? Are there **patterns** or **repetition**?

SETTING

How does the **setting** (time/place) of the text affect the characters, action or mood and in turn the author's message?

RECURRING THEMES OR MOTIFS

What **ideas** recur throughout? Is there a consistent allusion to the central theme, which might pertain to *friendship, love, generosity, honesty* or *bravery*? Is there one primary theme and then also additional secondary themes?

What **objects** or **symbols** recur throughout? Are there boats, bodies of water, trees or birds that recur throughout the text and therefore either enhance the mood or have symbolic significance?

ACTION/PLOT

Are there surprising **plot-twists** in the text? Is there **suspense**, which keeps you on the edge of your seat? Is there **foreshadowing** (dropping hints about what will happen later) and/or **flashbacks** (going back in time to show what happened earlier)? How does the author's crafting of the plot enhance the author's message?

CHARACTERS

Who is the **protagonist** or **hero**, and who is the **antagonist** or **villain**? What is the hero's main **struggle**? Is it **internal** or **external**? What are his/her **traits**? Do any of the characters **change** during the text? When, why and how do they change, and how does that enhance the author's message?

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE (PERSONIFICATION, METAPHOR, SIMILE)

Does the author use **personification** (when things act like people), **metaphor** (when things are said to be other things "I know why the caged bird sings" implies that the main character IS a caged bird) or **simile** ("Her hair is as smooth as silk...")? How does the author's use of figurative language enhance the author's message?

STORY WITHIN A STORY

Is there a smaller story within the main story that works as an **allegory**? Sometimes that smaller story gives us clues about the larger, main story.

SYMBOLISM

Does one of the characters love birds or planes or trains? Any of those – a bird, a plane or a train – could be a symbol for freedom. Or are there other symbols that represent **other ideas**?

IMAGERY

What **pictures** do you see **in your mind** when reading the text? What did the author do to conjure those images?