

# Progression in persuasion texts

## Purpose

- to argue a case from a particular point of view
- to attempt to convince the reader/listener

Persuasive texts (both oral and written) usually involve carefully and strategically, selecting and organising information – often as a series of major points, each of which may require elaboration (explanation, evidence and/or examples) – and have the specific intention of encouraging the reader into a particular way of seeing or understanding things. This intention may, however, sometimes be covert. Such texts generally make use of devices like vocabulary choice, rhetorical questions and even simple psychology in order to influence the reader (e.g. *Any sensible person can see that...*). They often also combine other modes of communication (e.g. visual images) with written text in order to achieve the desired effect on their audience.

Like all text types, variants of persuasion can occur and they can be combined with other text types. Persuasion is not always necessarily a distinct text-type in its own right, and elements of persuasive writing can be found in many different texts, both on paper or on screen.

## Audience

Children should listen to, speak, read and write explanation texts for a wide range of audiences, varying language features and text structures to suit the audience and purpose.

## Generic text structure

The structure of a persuasive text is often (but not always):

- thesis – an opening statement, for example, *vegetables are good for you*
- arguments: often in the form of point plus elaboration, for example, *they contain vitamins. vitamin c is vital for...*
- reiteration: summary and re-statement of the opening position, for example *We have seen that... so ...*

## Language features

The language features of a persuasive text are often (but not always):

- written in simple present tense
- focus mainly on generic participants, for example, vegetable, not a particular vegetable
- mainly logical connectives, rather than connectives which signal time, for example *this shows, however, because*
- a movement usually from the generic to the specific

## Knowledge for the writer

- use good reasons and evidence to convince your reader
- use facts rather than just persuasive comments
- you may wish to counter arguments
- try to get the reader interested and on your side – appear reasonable!
- tantalise your reader so that they agree with you
- use strong, positive language
- short sentences can help to give emphasis
- make the reader think that everyone else does this, agrees or that it will make them a happier, better person, for example *Everyone agrees that... We all know that...*
- draw the reader in, e.g. *At long last... The x have been waiting for you*
- be informative, persuasive and sound friendly
- alliteration can help to make slogans more memorable, e.g. *Buy British Beef*
- use humour as it can get people on your side
- a picture that tugs at the heart-strings can be more effective than 1,000 words..
- reread and decide whether you would be persuaded
- recognise that persuasive texts can be adapted or combined with other text types depending on the audience and purpose

## Progression is achieved through

- speaking and listening preceding reading and writing
- teacher modelling and scribing preceding children's independent attempt
- increased understanding by the children of the form and features of persuasive writing and then increasing ability to manipulate elements of writing to persuade others
- increasing complexity, subtlety, challenge of task (persuading a reader to change their mind), and/or adding additional features such as multi-modal elements (visual images, video, vox clips, etc.)
- increasing ability to recognise persuasion and understand the persuasive devices used in the writing of others; in their own writing to persuade effectively as appropriate to their purpose and audience.

## Links to key aspects of learning

Units of work on persuasion will involve children in using elements from all of the cross curricular, key aspects of learning explored in *Learning and Teaching in the Primary Years* - creative thinking, communication, empathy, enquiry, evaluation, information processing, managing feelings, motivation, problem solving, reasoning, self awareness and social skills.

In debating and writing persuasive texts, children will particularly use communication and

- self-awareness  
Example FS: Talk about how they respond to certain words, stories and pictures by behaving or wanting to behave in particular ways (e.g. pictures of food that make them want to eat things)
- empathy  
Example Y3: Through role play and drama explore particular persuasive scenarios (e.g. a parent persuading a reluctant child to go to bed.) and discuss the effectiveness of different strategies used.
- reasoning  
Example Y4: Analyse how a particular view can most convincingly be presented, e.g. ordering points to link them together so that one follows from another; how statistics, graphs, images etc. can be used to support or reinforce arguments
- evaluation  
Example Y4: Evaluate advertisements for their impact, appeal and honesty,  
Example Y6: Through reading and analysis, recognise how persuasive arguments are constructed to be effective

## Cross curricular links

Across the age phases *many* opportunities for exploring persuasive texts occur in all other of areas of the curriculum. For example:

- **Geography/ knowledge and understanding of the world (FS)**  
FS Stepping stone: Find out about their environment and talk about those features they like and dislike  
KS1 POS: recognise how the environment may be improved and sustained  
KS2 POS: (study) an issue arising from changes in land use
- **Art and design/ creative development (FS)**  
FS Stepping stone: Talk about personal intentions and describing what they were trying to do  
KS1 POS: Review what they and others have done and say what they think and feel about it  
KS2 POS: Compare ideas ,methods and approaches ...and say what they think and feel about them

Guidance on curriculum choices which are supportive for bilingual learners is available in unit 3 of Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching with bilingual children in the primary years

## Children with Special Educational Needs and/ or Learning Difficulties/ Disabilities

Learning objectives should be chosen which are related to the aspect on which the whole class is working. If with appropriate access strategies and support a child can not work towards the same learning objective as the rest of the class, teachers may want to track back to an earlier objective. The structure and the new electronic format of the renewed frameworks for literacy and mathematics support multi-level curriculum planning, and allow teachers to easily track back through a progression strand to locate earlier learning objectives. It also makes direct links to a wealth of other useful materials which will help to plan teaching and children's learning. Further guidance and principles on tracking back can be found in *Including all children in the literacy hour and daily mathematics lesson: management guide (Ref 0465/)*. Further useful references for children working significantly below age related expectations can be found in the QCA/DfES documents *Planning, teaching and assessing the curriculum for pupils with learning difficulties (QCA/01/736 [www.nc.uk.net/ld](http://www.nc.uk.net/ld) and the QCA DVD 'Using the P scales' QCA/05/1589.*

Planning for individual children or groups of children based on assessment for learning will be informed by knowledge of their priorities. For the majority of the time it will be appropriate for children to work on objectives that are similar and related to the whole class. However, at other times you will also have to consider whether the children have other priority needs that are central to their learning, for example a need to concentrate on some key skills.

For further guidance on planning for children with SEN/LDD see the library section and *Learning and teaching for children with special educational needs in the primary years (ref 0302/2004 G)* *Teaching the literacy hour and daily mathematics lesson in special settings.* *Teaching the daily mathematics lesson for children with severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties (ref 0033/2003)*

## Children who are gifted and talented

Children who are working well above the overall level of their class or group will benefit from planning that may:

- add breadth (for example enrichment through a broader range of content, tasks and resources)
- increase depth (for example extension through complexity)
- accelerate the pace of learning by tracking forward to later objectives within or across key stages

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For further guidance on planning for gifted and talented children see the library section and [www.nc.uk.net/gt/general/05\\_environment.htm](http://www.nc.uk.net/gt/general/05_environment.htm).

## Children learning English as an additional language (EAL)

Children learning EAL must be supported to access curriculum content while also developing cognitive and academic language within whole-class, group and independent contexts. With the exception of children learning EAL who also have SEN, it is critical to maintain a level of cognitive challenge which is consistent with that of the rest of the class. Children who are /have become conversationally fluent will continue to require explicit attention to the development of the academic language associated with the subject and of specific aspects within the subject. Planning should identify the language demands of the objectives and associated activities and making sure EAL learners know and can use the language demanded by the curriculum content of the unit/lesson then becomes an additional objective. In order to identify the language demands, teachers and practitioners should consider the language children will need to understand in order to access this activity, and the language they will need to be able to produce, either oral or written, in order to demonstrate success in achieving the learning intentions.

Children learning English as an additional language may require support in developing:  
the range of persuasive devices which use language differently, e.g. rhetorical questions, deliberate ambiguities, range of countable nouns, colloquial expressions  
accuracy in subject-verb agreements, appropriate use of modals and range of determiners  
These are explored in Unit 2 of Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching with bilingual children in the primary years

For further guidance on planning for children learning EAL see the overview of planning for each year group, the library section and also *Learning and teaching for bilingual children in the primary years: Unit 1 Planning and Assessment for Language and Learning and Unit 2: Creating the Learning Culture, Making it work in the classroom*.

<b>Progression in persuasion texts</b> <i>This progression should be considered in relation to progression in narrative as the study of non-fiction and fiction recounts complement each other.</i>	
<b>Foundation Stage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk about how they respond to certain words, stories and pictures by behaving or wanting to behave in particular ways (e.g. pictures of food that make them want to eat things)</li> <li>• Watch and listen when one person is trying to persuade another to do something or go somewhere. Recognising what is happening.</li> <li>• Give oral explanations (e.g.) their or another's motives; why and how they can persuade or be persuaded.</li> </ul>
<b>Year 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read captions, pictures, posters and adverts that are trying to persuade. Begin to recognise what they are trying to do and some of the ways they do it.</li> <li>• Through games and role play begin to explore what it means to persuade or be persuaded, and what different methods might be effective.</li> </ul>
<b>Year 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As part of a wide range of reading, explore simple persuasive texts (posters, adverts, etc.) and begin to understand what they are doing and how.</li> <li>• Evaluate simple persuasive devices (e.g.) Say which posters in a shop or TV adverts would make them want to buy something, and why)</li> <li>• Create simple signs posters and adverts (involving words and/or other modes of communication) to persuade others to do, think or buy something.</li> <li>• Continue to explore persuading and being persuaded in a variety of real life situations through role-play and drama.</li> </ul>
<b>Year 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read and evaluate a wider range of simple persuasive texts, explaining and evaluating responses orally.</li> <li>• Begin to use words, pictures and other communication modes to persuade others when appropriate to particular writing purpose.</li> <li>• Through role play and drama explore particular persuasive scenarios (e.g. a parent persuading a reluctant child to go to bed.) and discuss the effectiveness of different strategies used.</li> </ul>

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<b>Year 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read and analyse a range of persuasive texts to identify key features (e.g. letters to newspapers, discussions of issues in books, such as animal welfare or environmental issues). Distinguish between texts which try to persuade and those that simply inform, whilst recognising that some texts might contain examples of each of these.</li> <li>• Analyse how a particular view can most convincingly be presented, e.g. ordering points to link them together so that one follows from another; how statistics, graphs, images, visual aids, etc. can be used to support or reinforce arguments</li> <li>• From examples of persuasive writing, investigate how style and vocabulary are used to convince the reader.</li> <li>• Evaluate advertisements for their impact, appeal and honesty, focusing in particular on how information about the product is presented: exaggerated claims, tactics for grabbing attention, linguistic devices such as puns, jingles, alliteration, invented words</li> <li>• Both orally and in writing to assemble and sequence points in order to plan the presentation of a point of view, e.g. on hunting, school rules using more formal language appropriately.</li> <li>• Use writing frames if necessary to back up points of view with illustrations and examples</li> <li>• To present a point of view both orally and in writing, (e.g. in the form of a letter, a report or presentation) linking points persuasively and selecting style and vocabulary appropriate to</li> <li>• the listener/reader; begin to explore how ICT other use of multimodality might support this. (e.g. showing pictures.)</li> <li>• Design an advertisement, such as a poster or radio jingle, on paper or screen, e.g. for a school fête or an imaginary product, making use of linguistic and other features learnt from reading examples</li> <li>• Explore the use of connectives, e.g. adverbs, adverbial phrases, conjunctions, to structure a persuasive argument, e.g. <i>'if..., then'</i>; <i>'on the other hand...'</i>; <i>'finally'</i>; <i>'so'</i></li> </ul>

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<b>Year 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read and evaluate letters, e.g. from newspapers or magazines, intended to inform, protest, complain, persuade, considering (i) how they are set out, and (ii) how language is used, e.g. to gain attention, respect, manipulate</li> <li>• Read other examples ( e.g. newspaper comment, headlines, adverts, fliers) to compare writing which informs and persuades, considering for example the deliberate use of ambiguity, half-truth, bias; how opinion can be disguised to seem like fact</li> <li>• Select and evaluate a range of texts, in print and other media, on paper and on screen, for persuasiveness, clarity, quality of information</li> <li>• From reading, to collect and investigate use of persuasive devices such as words and phrases, e.g. <i>'surely'</i>, <i>'it wouldn't be very difficult...'</i>; persuasive definitions, e.g. <i>'no one but a complete idiot...'</i>, <i>'every right-thinking person would...'</i>, <i>'the real truth is...'</i>; rhetorical questions, e.g. <i>'are we expected to...?'</i>, <i>'where will future audiences come from...?'</i>; pandering, condescension, concession, e.g. <i>'Naturally, it takes time for local residents...'</i>; deliberate ambiguities, e.g. <i>'probably the best...in the world'</i> <i>'known to cure all...'</i>, <i>'the professional's choice'</i></li> <li>• Draft and write individual, group or class persuasive letters for real purposes, e.g. put a point of view, comment on an emotive issue, protest; to edit and present to finished state</li> <li>• Write a commentary on an issue on paper or screen (e.g. as a news editorial or leaflet), setting out and justifying a personal view; to use structures from reading to set out and link points, e.g. numbered lists, bullet points</li> <li>• Construct an argument in note form or full text to persuade others of a point of view and: present the case to the class or a group; use standard English appropriately; evaluate its effectiveness. Explore how ICT or other use of multimodality might support this. (e.g. develop a PowerPoint presentation.)</li> <li>• Understand how persuasive writing can be adapted for different audiences and purposes, e.g. by using formal language where appropriate, and how it can be incorporated into or combined with other text types.</li> </ul>
<b>Year 6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through reading and analysis, recognise how persuasive arguments are constructed to be effective through, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the expression, sequence and linking of points</li> <li>– providing persuasive examples, illustration and evidence</li> <li>– pre-empting or answering potential objections</li> <li>– appealing to the known views and feelings of the audience</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Orally and in writing, construct effective persuasive arguments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– using persuasive language techniques to deliberately influence the listener.</li> <li>– developing a point logically and effectively</li> <li>– supporting and illustrating points persuasively (using ICT and multi-modality where and when appropriate)</li> <li>– anticipating possible objections</li> <li>– harnessing the known views, interests and feelings of the audience</li> <li>– tailoring the writing to formal presentation where appropriate</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Use reading to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– investigate conditionals, e.g. using <i>if...then</i>, <i>might</i>, <i>could</i>, <i>would</i>, and their persuasive uses, e.g. in deduction, speculation, supposition</li> <li>– build a bank of useful terms and phrases for persuasive argument, e.g. <i>similarly... whereas...</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Overall, participate in whole class debates using the conventions and language of debate including standard English. In oral and written texts help to build the ability to choose the appropriate style and form to suit a specific purpose and audience, drawing on knowledge of different non-fictional text types and adapting, conflating and combining these where appropriate.</li> </ul>