Write to the Audience

1. Focus

Explain Writing to an Audience Using Informal Language

Say: When I write a persuasive letter, I write it for one person or for a special group of people. These are my readers, or my **audience**—the people I want to convince to agree with my ideas. I keep them in mind while I write. If I’m writing a letter to young children, I use simple words that those children will know. If I’m writing to adults I don’t know well, I often use formal language. I use formal names, and I don’t use slang. If I’m writing to good friends or family members, I use more informal, personal language that sounds a lot more like how I speak, since I know those people well. Today we’re going to look at an example of a letter by a boy writing to his parents. You can hear in his letter that he is writing to those specific two people to persuade them to let him have a dog. We’ll talk about how he does this, and then we’ll practice writing sentences with a specific person or set of people in mind. This will help us write our own persuasive letters.

Model Using Informal Language to Write to an Audience

Display the modeling text on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources.

1. I have always wanted a dog. I am desperate to have a dog. I love animals more than anything. (Well, I love you more, of course.)

2. You said, “You’re not old enough to take care of a dog.” Well, maybe that was true. But I am twelve years old now. I get myself up every morning. I make my own breakfast. I walk to school and back alone.

Modeling Text

**Read example 1.** Say: In this letter, I see many examples of the writer using informal language to write to his parents. After saying how much he loves animals, he adds, playfully and in parentheses, “Well, I love you more, of course.” This language is relaxed and easygoing, as if he might be sitting in the kitchen talking with his parents.

**Read example 2.** Say: In this example, I see that the writer is directly addressing the audience for the letter, his parents. He reminds them of a conversation they had and that other people wouldn’t know. He uses an informal voice that sounds like he’s talking when he says, “Well, maybe that was true.” Then he gives his parents examples that are aimed specifically at what they know about their son. He reminds them in simple language of all the responsible things he does, such as making his breakfast and cleaning his room, now that he is twelve. These are all ways that his letter is written with his audience in mind.
2. Rehearse

**Practice Writing to an Audience Using Informal Language**

Write the practice text on chart paper or use the interactive whiteboard resources.

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I would like to have a pet goldfish.
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**Practice Text**

Ask students to imagine they are writing a letter to a parent or guardian to ask for a pet goldfish. Ask them to write three sentences specifically to this adult. Remind them that they can use informal language that is appropriate for a letter to someone they know well. Students should write down their sentences and be prepared to read them to the class. They should be ready to explain how these sentences are written for a specific audience.

**Share Practice Sentences**

Bring students together and ask them to read aloud their sentences and explain what it is about these sentences that shows they have been written for a specific audience. Record sample student sentences and post these as models for students to use as they write their own persuasive letters.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

**Say:** We just learned that writers of persuasive letters keep the readers in mind while writing. Remember, the goal of a good persuasive letter is to convince somebody to agree with you or to act as you hope they will. As you write your persuasive letter, remember to write it with your audience in mind.

Encourage students to choose a section of their letters that they can improve by using language that is specifically aimed at the audience during independent writing time. During student conferences, reinforce students’ use of this and other strategies using the prompts on your conferring flip chart.

4. Share

Bring the class together. Invite two or three students who have effectively addressed their audience to read aloud that section of their persuasive letters. Provide support for students who are struggling to incorporate this strategy.

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**Strategies to Support ELs**

**Beginning and Intermediate**

While other students work with partners or during independent writing time, work one on one with beginning ELs. Model generating oral sentences about asking a parent or guardian for a pet using the following sentence frames: *I want _____, I know _____.* Record your sentences on chart paper. Invite students to read them aloud with you. Then ask students to generate additional sentences of their own using the same sentence frames.

**Advanced**

Pair ELs with fluent English speakers during partner practice.

**All Levels**

If you have students whose first language is Spanish, share these English/Spanish cognates: *convince/convencer; informal/informal; language/el lenguaje; persuasive/persuasivo(a).*