1. Focus

Introduce the Mentor Persuasive Letter

Say: In order to become a good persuasive text writer, it helps to read examples of other people’s persuasive writing. Today I’m going to read you a persuasive text that is a letter to a town mayor. As we read the letter, we will look for some features that you can look for whenever you read a persuasive text. You will be using many of these features in your own persuasive writing.

Say: The title of this persuasive letter is “Clean Up City Park!” What do you think might be some reasons the writer has for cleaning up the park? Allow students to share their ideas.

If your class includes English learners or other students who would benefit from vocabulary or oral language development to comprehend the persuasive text, use “Make the Mentor Text Comprehensible for ELs.”

Read Aloud the Mentor Persuasive Letter

Read aloud the text, stopping at some or all of the places indicated (or at other points you choose) to highlight three key features of a persuasive text:
1. Persuasive letters are written to a specific audience.
2. Persuasive texts take a strong position about a topic.
3. Persuasive texts use powerful words and phrases to influence the reader.

A Specific Audience
Page 7, after greeting. Say: I can tell right away who the audience for this letter is. The audience is who the letter is written to. The greeting tells me that this letter is written to the mayor. Writers of persuasive letters have a specific audience in mind.

A Strong Position
Page 7, after first paragraph. Say: The writer states his position right away. I can tell that the author is upset by the way City Park looks. He wants the mayor to do something about the mess in the park. A good persuasive letter states the position right away and then goes on to provide reasons to support the position.

Powerful Words and Phrases
After reading page 7. Say: The author uses strong words and phrases to make the mayor understand the problem. He describes the park using the words a dump, a mess, and dangerous. These are strong words that are meant to make the mayor take notice and feel bad about the condition of the park. He uses the word heartbroken to describe how the mayor would feel if he saw how bad the park is and the word disturbed to emphasize how the mayor would feel.
Writers of persuasive text choose their words carefully, using words that are more likely to get a reaction from their readers. Words like the ones this writer used can help to convince the mayor to agree with his point of view.

**Powerful Words and Phrases**

Page 9, after first paragraph. Say: The writer uses strong words to describe how bad the lake is so that the mayor will fully understand the problem. He says the water is brown with garbage floating in it, that the trash is killing the fish, and the mayor would be disgusted. These words are chosen to make the mayor feel guilty and want to make changes to the lake.

### 2. Rehearse

**Respond Orally to the Mentor Persuasive Letter**

After reading, invite students to share their own ideas and reactions about the text by asking questions such as:

- How did the writer try to persuade the reader that City Park needs help?
- Which words or phrases did you think were the most powerful?
- What did you think of this text?

If necessary, model the following sentence frames to support ELs and struggling students:

- The writer tried to persuade the reader by ______.
- The strongest words were ______.
- I think the text was ______.

### 3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: Remember that when you write persuasive text, you will have a specific audience in mind. You will need to state your position clearly and use powerful language to help your audience understand your position.

Encourage students to think of at least one issue they feel very strongly about and to write down their position in a statement.

### 4. Share

Bring students together. Invite two or three students who wrote strong position statements to read them aloud to classmate. Discuss why the position statements are strong.

**Make the Mentor Text Comprehensible for ELs**

**Beginning**
Point to the pictures on pages 6 and 8 or use the interactive whiteboard resources to introduce vocabulary and concepts related to the text, for example, garbage, trash, mess, and lake.

**Intermediate and Advanced**
Involves students in a background-building discussion about litter and trash in public areas and cleaning up the areas. Show students the pictures from the mentor text. Ask: What is trash? What should we do with our trash? What is the problem with the lake? What can we do about trash in our parks and lakes?

**All Levels**
If you have students whose first language is Spanish, share the following English/Spanish cognate: park/el parque.