## Use the Problem-and-Solution Text Structure

### 1. Focus

**Explain Problem-and-Solution Text Structure**

*Say:* Writers of persuasive letters try to get a person to think a certain way about an issue or do something about it. They do this by presenting a problem and then offering a solution to the problem.

**Model Identifying the Problem-and-Solution Text Structure**

Ask students to listen as you reread sections of the letter “Clean Up City Park!”

**Identifying the Problem**

*Page 7, after first paragraph.* *Say:* The writer thinks that there is a problem with City Park. He makes this clear by saying it’s a mess with trash all over and garbage floating in the lake.

**Identifying a Solution**

*Page 9, after last paragraph.* *Say:* The writer suggests a solution to this problem. He uses the signal word *propose* to tell the reader that he is suggesting a solution. He follows the words *I propose* with his suggestion about organizing a park cleanup once a month. The author suggests people volunteer to clean up the park.

**Create a Class Problem-and-Solution Anchor Chart**

On chart paper, work with students to list the problem and the solution. Then read page 10 and ask them to listen for other solutions that the writer has. Add these to the chart. Underline examples of signal words the writer uses. Post the chart in the classroom as an example of identifying a problem and providing solutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Solution</th>
<th>Solution</th>
<th>Solution</th>
<th>Solution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The park needs to be cleaned up.</td>
<td>Volunteers <em>could</em> clean up the park once a month.</td>
<td>Posters <em>could</em> advertise the cleanup effort.</td>
<td>Sports teams and schoolchildren <em>could</em> make the posters.</td>
<td>Then parents would also be involved.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Words We Use to Talk About Problem and Solution**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>We believe Because</th>
<th>We should If . . . then</th>
<th>We could Then</th>
<th>We need to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Sample Problem-and-Solution Anchor Chart**

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**Objectives**

In this mini-lesson, students will:

- Listen to a persuasive letter excerpt and analyze the problem-and-solution text structure.
- Recognize the problem and solution in a mentor text.

**Preparation**

**Materials Needed**

- Mentor text: “Clean Up City Park!”
- Chart paper and markers
- Interactive whiteboard resources

**Advanced Preparation**

If necessary, copy the sentence frames from “Strategies to Support ELs” on chart paper.
2. Rehearse

Practice Using the Problem-and-Solution Text Structure in Oral Conversation

Turn and talk. Ask students to use the problem-and-solution text structure to talk to a partner about the problem of needing more time to read books for fun. Then have them explain the possible solutions to make more time for fun reading.

If your class includes English learners or other students who need support, use “Strategies to Support ELs.”

Share Ideas

Bring students together. Invite volunteers to share their ideas for their solutions to the problem. As students talk, highlight any signal words students use, for example, **We believe, We should, Then, If . . . then,** etc. Add these words to the anchor chart.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: **When you write your own persuasive letter, make sure you clearly state the problem. Then suggest solutions to the problem. You can use signal words to talk about problems and solutions.**

Encourage students to clearly state the problem and suggest solutions in their persuasive letters during independent writing time, as appropriate. During student conferences, reinforce students’ use of this and other strategies using the prompts on your conferring flip chart.

4. Share

**Bring students together. Invite volunteers to share the problems they are writing about in their persuasive letters and the solutions they have suggested.**

**Strategies to Support ELs**

**Beginning**

Invite beginning ELs to draw a picture of a problem. Help them discuss their pictures using a simple sentence frame: *The problem is _____*. Encourage them to tell you using words and gestures how they think the problem might be solved.

**Intermediate and Advanced**

Provide these sentence frames to help students describe how to solve the problem of not having enough time to read:

- **We could _____**.
- **Then _____**.
- **We need to _____ because _____**.
- **As a result _____**.