# Use *We* to Create an Alliance with Your Audience

## Objectives

In this mini-lesson, students will:

- Learn how to enhance voice by using the plural pronoun *we* to create an alliance with their audience.
- Practice using the plural pronoun *we* in persuasive writing.
- Discuss how to apply this strategy to their independent writing.

## Preparation

### Materials Needed

- Chart paper and markers
- Interactive whiteboard resources

### Advanced Preparation

If you will not be using the interactive whiteboard resources, copy the modeling text and practice text onto chart paper prior to the mini-lesson. If necessary, copy the sentence frames from “Strategies to Support ELs“ on chart paper.

## 1. Focus

### Explain Using the Pronoun *We* to Create an Alliance with Your Audience

**Say:** When I write a persuasive letter, I want to convince my audience to agree with my point of view about an idea or problem. One strategy I use is to create an alliance with my readers through my writing voice. I use the pronoun *we* when I want to sound as though my readers and I are connected and think alike. When I make statements that include my audience, I put us on the same side of a problem. By doing this, I not only appear friendly but also suggest that readers really should see issues as I see them. Today I’m going to discuss an example of this narrative strategy so that you can learn to use it in your own persuasive letters.

### Model How Writers Create Alliances with Their Audiences by Using the Pronoun *We*

Display the modeling text on chart paper or use the interactive whiteboard resources. Read the passage aloud and ask students to listen for the author’s use of the plural pronoun *we*.

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**Modeling Text**

**Say:** This is a letter from a writer who doesn’t care about saving a tree or even building a mall. Instead, he feels strongly that the town should sell its park land so it can earn money and give that money to town residents. In this paragraph, he attempts to create an alliance by saying his readers want the same thing. He does this by using the plural pronoun *we* to put himself and his audience together. For example, he says, “We’re all stressed these days about money. We could all use a break. With the extra money, we can go to the new mall, buy a new outfit, and have dinner out. We can enjoy a nice movie now and then. Everyone will be happy, and *we’ll* all be stimulating the local economy.”

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**We’re all stressed these days about money. We could all use a break. With the extra money, we can go to the new mall, buy a new outfit, and have dinner out. We can enjoy a nice movie now and then. Everyone will be happy, and we’ll all be stimulating the local economy.**

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### Say:

This is a letter from a writer who doesn’t care about saving a tree or even building a mall. Instead, he feels strongly that the town should sell its park land so it can earn money and give that money to town residents. In this paragraph, he attempts to create an alliance by saying his readers want the same thing. He does this by using the plural pronoun *we* to put himself and his audience together. For example, he says, “We’re all stressed these days about money. We could all use a break.” Does he truly know that every person in town will want to buy a new outfit at the mall if it’s built? Or that everyone needs a break? Is he sure everyone will enjoy a movie? No—it is unlikely he knows how every single resident feels, especially since he doesn’t offer any facts to back up his words. However, the assumptions he makes are general enough that at least some people, perhaps many people, may share part or all of his feelings. So the writer states these assumptions as part of a narrative strategy to create an alliance between himself and his readers in order to persuade them to see the situation from his point of view.
2. Rehearse

Practice Creating an Alliance with an Audience by Using the Pronoun *We*

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

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I think more kids would use the Main Street playground if it stayed open later. I know I would. I need a place to play with my friends after soccer practice.
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**Practice Text**

Ask students to work with a partner to add voice and rewrite the practice sentence to create an alliance with the audience by adding the plural pronoun *we*. Remind students to add a comment that assumes the writer and the audience feel the same way. Each pair should write down their sentences and be prepared to read them to the class and explain how they added a comment that joins together the writer and the audience so that they sound like they share the same point of view about the issue.

**Share Practice Sentences**

Bring students together and invite pairs to read their sentences aloud and explain how the comments they added create an alliance between the writer and the audience. Record students’ 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 about a strategy used by writers to make their voice more persuasive. Writers use the plural pronoun *we* to join their point of view to their readers’ point of view. This creates an alliance between the writer and the audience. The author is making a confident assumption that readers share his or her point of view.

Ask students to identify a section of their persuasive letters in which they can strengthen the writer’s voice by using the pronoun *we* to form an alliance with the audience. During conferences, reinforce students’ use of this and other strategies using the prompts on your conferring flip chart.

4. Share

Bring the class together. Invite volunteers to read aloud a section of their persuasive letters in which they improved the writer’s voice by adding the pronoun *we* to form an alliance with readers.

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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 using the following sentence frames that express strong opinions with the plural pronoun *we*:

*We think ______.*

*We all want ______.*

**Advanced**

Pair ELs with fluent English speakers during the partner activity. Encourage students to discuss with one another what the writer and audience might be most willing to agree on.