Use “I” Statements in a Persuasive Letter

1. Focus

Explain Using “I” Statements in a Persuasive Letter

Say: When I write a persuasive letter, I want readers to agree with my ideas. I tell them what I think, and I try to get them to think that way too. Often I begin my sentences with the word I. This lets my readers know that I am writing about my feelings and opinions. Using “I” statements helps me connect to my audience. My readers feel as if I am talking right to them. Today I will show you how I write “I” statements to talk about my ideas and connect with my readers.

Model Using “I” Statements in a Persuasive Letter

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

You have said, “Dogs need to be walked every day.” I agree. That is not a problem for me. I would walk my dog before breakfast every morning. I would never complain about that—even if it is pouring!

Modeling Text

Ask students to listen for sentences that start with I as you read aloud the sentences from “Please Let Me Have a Dog!”

Say: This writer really wants his mom and dad to let him have a dog. I notice that he starts many sentences with the word I. He’s trying to connect directly to his mom and dad. He wants to show that he understands their concerns. By using the word I, he is trying to convince them that their concerns will not be a problem for him. I think using “I” statements in the letter is very effective.

Objectives

In this mini-lesson, students will:

• Learn how to structure sentences with I in a persuasive letter.
• Practice writing sentences that start with I.
• Discuss how they can 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.
2. Rehearse

Practice Using “I” Statements in a Persuasive Letter

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

Getting up in the morning is not a problem. Making breakfast is easy for me. Doing my homework every night is something I always do.

Practice Text

Ask students to work with a partner to revise the sentences so they start with I. Each pair should write down their sentences and be prepared to read them to the class and explain how starting the sentences with I changed the impact of the sentences.

Share Practice Sentences

Bring students together and invite partners to read aloud their revised sentences and explain how they revised them. Ask: How do the revised sentences change the way you feel as you read them? Record students’ sentences and post these as models for students to use as they draft or revise their persuasive letters.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We just learned that starting sentences with I can help you communicate your feelings and opinions in a strong way. Using “I” statements also helps you connect to your audience. As you revise your persuasive letters, remember to think about when you should include “I” statements.

Encourage students to examine their use of “I” statements in the persuasive letters they are working on during independent writing time. During conferences, reinforce students’ application of this and other strategies using the prompts on your conferring flip chart.

4. Share

Bring students together. Invite volunteers to read aloud sentences from their persuasive letters in which they’ve used “I” statements.

Strategies to Support ELs

Beginning

While other students complete the practice activity with their partners (or during independent writing time), meet one on one with beginning ELs to support their oral production of sentences that begin with I. Model expressing simple opinions using the sentence frames I think ______, or I like ______. For example, say: I think baseball is fun. I like to play tennis. Record your sentences on chart paper and read them with students. Use gestures to ensure that students understand your meaning. Then ask students to add their own opinions orally using the same sentence frames. Record their ideas. Reread them together.

Intermediate and Advanced

Pair ELs with fluent English speakers during the partner activity.