Choose Words That Speak Directly to Your Audience

1. Focus

Explain Speaking Directly to Your Audience

Say: When I write a persuasive letter, I want to get my readers to agree with my ideas. First, I need to make them pay attention to me. Then I need to speak directly to them. I need to use words that make them sit up, listen, and take my point of view seriously. I need to think about who my audience is and what words will make a difference to them. Today I’m going to show you how good persuasive writers speak directly to their audience.

Model Speaking Directly to Your Audience

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

I remember what you told me when I was little. You said, “You’re not old enough to take care of a dog.” Well, I am twelve years old now. I get myself up. I make my own breakfast. I also help some neighbors take care of their pets.

Modeling Text

Read aloud first two sentences. Say: Wow! This writer has already got my attention. He remembers what I told him when he was little, and he quotes me right in his letter. That lets me know that he understands my point of view. He knows why I don’t want him to have a dog. I wonder what he will say now that he has my attention? I’ll keep reading to find out.

Read aloud the rest of the sentences. Say: What a clever writer this young man is. First he tells me he understands why I don’t want him to have a dog—because he wasn’t old enough to take care of one. And now he gives me three concrete examples to prove that he is old enough and responsible enough now. He tells me he gets up by himself, makes his own breakfast, and takes care of the neighbors’ pets. It’s really hard for me, as the reader, to ignore his argument. He addressed my concerns directly. He spoke right to me.

Objectives

In this mini-lesson, students will:

- Learn how to choose words to address their audience directly in a persuasive letter.
- Practice addressing their audience directly by revising a section of their persuasive letter.
- 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 onto chart paper prior to the mini-lesson.
2. Rehearse

Practice Speaking Directly to Your Audience

Invite students to reread the persuasive letter they have been working on during independent writing and to look for an opportunity to speak directly to their audience. (Note: Students who have not yet begun to draft their letters should work with a partner who has a text.) Students should write down their revised sentences and be prepared to read the original text and the revised text to the class.

Share Practice Sentences

Bring students together. Invite several students to read aloud their original and revised sentences. Ask them to explain how their revised text speaks directly to their audience and makes the letter more persuasive. Invite other students to comment on the effectiveness of the revisions.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: Today we learned that in a persuasive letter, we need to speak directly to our audience. If we speak directly to our audience, we get their attention. And once we have their attention, we can use facts and details to persuade them. As you write your letters, look for ways to speak directly to the audience you want to convince.

During independent writing time, encourage students to choose words for persuasive letters that address their audience directly. During 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 examples of sentences in which they’ve used words that address their audience directly.

Strategies to Support ELs

Beginning
While other students complete the partner practice activity (or during independent writing time), work with beginning ELs to support their efforts to compose a letter orally or in writing.

Intermediate and Advanced
Pair ELs with fluent English speakers during the partner activity.