Use Your Feelings to Brainstorm Ideas

1. Focus

Explain Using Your Feelings to Brainstorm Ideas

Say: When we write a persuasive letter, we are sharing our opinions about a topic. If I have an opinion, I have a strong feeling about something. I care about it in some way. When I brainstorm ideas for a persuasive letter, I need to think about subjects I feel strongly about. Otherwise, it will be hard for me to express my opinions. I’m going to show you how I use my feelings to brainstorm ideas for a persuasive letter.

Model Using Your Feelings to Brainstorm Ideas

Display a photo showing garbage that has not been disposed of properly. (You can find a photo using the interactive whiteboard resources.) Use the sample think-aloud provided or develop your own think-aloud to share with students. Demonstrate how you write your ideas on a brainstorming web on chart paper.

Sample think-aloud. Say: I wanted you to see this photograph because it shows something I really feel very strongly about. I do not like to see people litter. I feel angry when I see someone throw trash on the ground. In my opinion, this is wrong to do. I think people who throw trash on the ground are doing something harmful to the planet. They should not do this. I could write a persuasive letter about littering. I am going to put this idea on my brainstorming web.

Continue talking about other ideas that you will include on your brainstorming web.

Sample Brainstorming Web

- littering
- more parks in our neighborhood
- cleaning up after your dog
- people who make noise with their gum

Things I Feel Strongly About
2. Rehearse

Practice Using Your Feelings to Brainstorm Ideas

Invite students to work with a partner to brainstorm ideas for a persuasive letter by talking about topics they feel strongly about. Ask students to record their ideas in their writer’s notebooks. Students should share the following information about their topics:

- How do you feel about this topic?
- Why do you feel strongly about it?

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

Share Ideas

Bring students back together and invite individuals to share ideas they brainstormed. As students contribute persuasive letter topics, record them on your class brainstorming web. Reread them together, and invite students to comment on the ideas. Point out that often someone else’s ideas can help them think of ideas of their own.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We just learned that we can use our feelings to help us brainstorm ideas for a persuasive letter. As you brainstorm additional ideas for your own letters, ask yourself, “Do I have strong feelings about this topic? Do I have an opinion I want to share?” If you do, that might be a good topic for you.

Encourage students to apply the brainstorming strategy 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 how they used their feelings to brainstorm ideas. Encourage them to discuss some of the ideas they feel strongly about.

Strategies to Support ELs

**Beginning**

Invite beginning ELs to talk about or draw their ideas for things they think need to change. Write key words as they discuss their ideas, or label key items in their drawings. Help them use the words to form simple sentences that can support their writing.

**Intermediate and Advanced**

Provide sentence frames to help ELs talk to their partners about their topic for a persuasive letter. For example:

- I feel strongly about ______.
- We need to change ______.
- I think ______.
- A reason I feel this way is ______.

**All Levels**

If you have ELs whose first language is Spanish, share this English/Spanish cognate: reason/la razón.