Persuasive Writing

The **Persuasive essay** is generally arranged in the following pattern:

**Introduction**

**Assertion**

**Concession and rebuttal**

**Proof**

**Conclusion**

**INTRODUCTION**

The persuasive essay should open with a clear explanation of the controversy. The reader may not be familiar enough with the subject to have an opinion, or may not have recent information on which to make a decision. The introduction brings the reader up to date and "sets the stage."

This is also the section of the paper where the writer defines the key or controversial terms that will be important to the argument. The introduction may also summarize the various sides of the argument or issue. By clearly and succinctly stating the problem or controversy, the writer has prepared the reader for the **assertion**.

**ASSERTION**

After stating the controversy, the writer should clearly present the **assertion**, which will be expressed in the **thesis statement**. The reader should know what side of the argument or issue the writer is on. It is important not to be hostile or overbearing in tone.

*Also remember this is NOT where the writer defends or offers proof for the assertion.*

**CONSESSION/REBUTTAL**

The writer must acknowledge that there are other views that differ from the writer’s views. Failure to include them may indicate to the reader(s) that the writer is either ignorant, dishonest, or writing as if the side does not exist. It is also important that the writer does not exaggerate or distort the opponent(s) view. Furthermore, name-calling or scare tactics are unworthy of competent writers. The writer does not have to defend the opposing side, but fairly and reasonably state what they are.

**Proof**

This will be the longest section of the paper. It is similar to the body of the expository essay, which presents the thesis statement’s support. In a persuasive essay it presents the **evidence** for the **assertion**. The proof and arguments can be arranged in either of two ways: inductive reasoning or deductive reasoning. A generalization or assertion using a series of facts, examples, instances, and observations can support the argument. If using this method, the best arrangement is in order of increasing importance, saving the best or most dramatic arguments for last. Or the proof can be arranged in the form of a syllogism, with the body of the paper developing the major and minor premises. If using this method, the writer will probably use more than one syllogism, with separate paragraphs or sections for each premise and conclusion. When using ethical and emotional appeals, be sure to support them by sound reasoning. If used judiciously, they can strengthen (lie impact of the logic.

**CONCLUSION**

The conclusion of the persuasive essay should contain a brief but compelling restatement of the assertion. Try to avoid merely stating it in the same words. Present it in a fresh and pointed way so that the readers will remember it and reflect on it. As in the conclusion to the expository essay, do not introduce new arguments or facts in the ending. Its purpose is simply to draw together what has been written so that the reader has a clear idea of the writer’s intentions.