

Theme

Protest and Persuasion

Story Title

The Revolutionaries

Writing Lesson

Persuasive Letter

National Writing Standards

4 Communication Skills; 5 Communication Strategies; 7 Evaluating Data; 12

Applying Language Skills

6-1 Trait®

Word Choice, Conventions, Sentence Fluency, Organization, Ideas, Voice

Art Making and Meaning Question

Artists' Lives

What are the background and life experiences of the maker?

Objectives

Students will:

Incorporate the elements of a formal letter.

Identify a real problem or issue that exists in their community or school.

Select an individual to help with the issue.

Compose a persuasive letter.

Preparation

Prepare copies, transparencies, or use art images from ArtsConnectEd

Supplement, or from other sources. Make copies of the "Revolutionaries."

Prepare an example of a business letter and label the parts of a business letter.

Make copies of the business letter guidelines and format for the students.

Provide students with prompts for writing a persuasive letter.

Activities

1.) Ask the students if they have ever experienced a time when they thought that a rule or law should be changed? Have they ever wanted to make improvements at their school or in their community? Have they ever felt they or someone else were treated unfairly and wanted to do something about it? Have they ever wanted to take a stand for or against an idea, action or situation?

2.) Tell the students that all experiences influence our lives, whether they are fair, unfair, positive or negative. How we react to these experiences shape who we are. Taking a stand can be a positive reaction to the influences we experience in our lives.

- 3.) Inform the students that writing a persuasive letter is an effective tool for bringing about change in their school or community.
- 4.) Give students a few examples of issues or problems that are of interest to them. Participate in a brainstorming activity with the students. Write their ideas on an overhead or the board.
- 5.) Select one or two issues of concern, ask the students to think of an individual(s) that they could write to about their concerns.
- 6.) Show students the business letter example. Instruct students how to write a persuasive letter.
 - The beginning of a formal letter introduces the issue and asks a question.
 - The body incorporates details to persuade the reader.
 - The closing includes a call to action.
 - After selecting a topic, gather information.When beginning to write, get to the point, be professional, and make provisions for an easy response (Sebranek, Kemper, Meyer).
- 7.) Direct students to use the business letter guidelines and format and peer edit their persuasive letters.
- 8.) Mail the letters.

Resources

Erickson, M. (2005). *Art making and meaning: Understanding through questions*. Tucson, AZ: CRIZMAC.

Sebranek, P. Kemper D. & Meyer, V. (2005). *Write source: A book for writing, thinking, and learning*. Wilmington, MA: Houghton Mifflin.