



Sixth Grade

ELA

Playing with Persuasive Diction: Appealing to Pathos

Learning Targets

- Analyze the figurative, connotative, and technical meanings of words and phrases used in a text.
- Identify and analyze examples of persuasive diction
- Match style and purpose in writing by applying looping and persuasive diction to add pathos.

Preview

In this activity, you will learn to harness the power of persuasive language to appeal to a reader’s emotions.

Learning Strategies

- Skimming/Scanning
- Marking the Text
- Looping

My Notes

What’s in a Word?

Consider how similar words can make you feel different ways. Would you rather be called *youthful* or *immature*? Would you rather be considered *curious* or *nosy*? Word choice, or diction, is an important aspect of argumentative writing. Because words can carry an emotional impact, each one represents an opportunity for the writer to convince his or her audience.

Learning from Advertisements

1. As you skim through ads, record words that stand out for their emotional meaning (strong connotative diction).
2. Sort the adjectives and verbs you find by adding them to the following lists:

Power Adjective List

- amazing, authentic
- best
- dependable, diagnosed
- easy
- free
- guaranteed
- healthy
- important, improved, instant
- limited, lucky
- mixed
- new
- powerful
- secure
- tested
- uneven, unique, unreal, unsurpassed
- vital
- wonderful

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My Notes

Power Verb List

abolish, achieve, act, adopt, anticipate, apply, assess
boost, break, bridge, build
capture, change, choose, clarify, comprehend, create
decide, define, deliver, design, develop, discover, drive
eliminate, ensure, estimate, evaluate, exploit, explore
filter, finalize, focus, foresee
gain, gather, generate, grasp
identify, improve, increase, innovate, inspire, intensify
lead, learn
manage, master, maximize, measure, mobilize, motivate
overcome
penetrate, persuade, plan, prepare, prevent
realize, reconsider, reduce, replace, resist, respond
save, sift, solve, stop, succeed
train, transfer, transform
understand, unleash
win

Introducing the Strategy: Adding by Looping

Looping helps you add to your thoughts, clarify your thinking, or generate new ideas. With looping, you underline an important sentence or a particular word or phrase in your writing. You then write a few more sentences to add new ideas. Repeat this process with the new sentences you wrote to help you keep adding ideas to your writing.

3. Imagine you have drafted the following note to your family trying to convince them where to go on vacation. Use looping to add an emotional appeal by underlining an important sentence, phrase, or word and then writing two more sentences in the space that follows. Be sure to use power adjectives and verbs in your new sentences.

Dear Family,

I would like to go to Colorado for our family vacation. We could go on a rafting trip there! I have heard that rafting is an exhilarating experience. My friend's family went last summer, and she described plunging down rapids and paddling against intense currents. Going rafting together would be exciting and would probably make our family bond even stronger.

Thank you for considering it.

Your daughter

Your two new sentences:

a.

b.

My Notes

Check Your Understanding

Respond to the following questions about the note you just revised.

- What is the relationship between persuasive diction and appealing to pathos?
- What power adjectives and verbs did you add that were especially effective?
- If you were going to improve the practice paragraph even more, what would you do? What do you notice is missing? Explain.

Revising for Persuasive Diction: Return to the body paragraph you wrote and revised for the model argumentative letter (Activity 3.11). Revise the paragraph for persuasive diction. To properly add pathos to the development of your argument, be sure to:

- Mark the text for appeals to pathos you may have already used.
- Add emotional appeals that support your logical appeals for a balance that fits your purpose and audience. Avoid accidentally creating a logical fallacy.
- Use looping to revise by adding new ideas and persuasive diction (power verbs and adjectives).

Timed Writing

On a separate piece of paper, write a response to one of the following prompts. Consider audience and purpose as you plan your draft. Remember to apply your knowledge of how to write a claim and support it with relevant reasons and evidence. If possible, use a word-processing program to create your draft and develop your keyboarding skills. If writing by hand, double-space your draft to provide room for revision.

Argumentative Writing Prompt: Write a letter to do one of the following:

- Convince a family member of something you would like to do over the summer.
 - Convince your principal or a teacher to change a school rule or policy.
 - Convince a friend of something you would like to do together over the weekend.
1. Now that you have drafted your letter, analyze the beginning and ending of your text. Explain how you started and ended your letter.



INDEPENDENT READING LINK

Read and Respond

Find at least five words or phrases that carry strong emotional meaning in your independent reading. Write them in your Reader/Writer Notebook and set a goal to use them in your own writing.