

6. Does this writer convince you that parenting classes might make a difference? If you were writing a persuasion paragraph to oppose or support this writer, what would your topic sentence be?

PRACTICE 3

So far you have learned five basic methods of persuasion: **facts, referring to an authority, examples, predicting the consequence, and answering the opposition.** Ten topic sentences for persuasive paragraphs follow. Write one reason in support of each topic sentence, using the method of persuasion indicated.

Facts

1. A stop sign should be placed at the busy intersection of Hoover and Palm streets.

Reason: _____

2. People should not get married until they are at least twenty-five years old.

Reason: _____

Referring to an Authority

(If you cannot think of an authority offhand, name the kind of person who would be an authority on the subject.)

3. These new Sluggo bats will definitely raise your batting average.

Reason: _____

4. Most people should get at least one hour of vigorous exercise three times a week.

Reason: _____

Examples

5. Pets should be allowed in children's hospital rooms because they speed healing.

Reason: _____

6. Mace and pepper spray should be legalized because they can prevent crime without causing permanent injury.

Reason: _____

Predicting the Consequence

7. Companies should (should not) be allowed to conduct random drug testing on employees.

Reason: _____

8. The federal government should (should not) prohibit the sale of handguns through the mail.

Reason: _____

Answering the Opposition

(State the opposition's point of view and then refute it.)

9. This college should (should not) drop its required-attendance policy.

Reason: _____

10. Teenagers should (should not) be required to get their parents' permission before being allowed to have an abortion.

Reason: _____

PRACTICE 4

Each of the following sentences tells what you are trying to persuade someone to do. Beneath each sentence are four reasons that attempt to convince the reader that he or she should take this particular course of action. Circle the letter of the reason that *seems irrelevant, illogical, or untrue*.

1. If you wanted to persuade someone to do holiday shopping earlier, you might say that
 - a. shopping earlier saves time.
 - b. more gifts will be in stock.
 - c. stores will not be overly crowded.
 - d. Usher shops early.
2. If you wanted to persuade someone to buy a particular brand of cereal, you might say that it
 - a. is inexpensive.
 - b. contains vitamins and minerals.
 - c. comes in an attractive box.
 - d. makes a hearty breakfast.
3. If you wanted to persuade someone to move to your town, you might say that
 - a. two new companies have made jobs available.
 - b. by moving to this town, he or she will become the happiest person in the world.
 - c. there is a wide selection of housing.
 - d. the area is lovely and still unpolluted.
4. If you wanted to persuade someone to vote for a particular candidate, you might say that she
 - a. has always kept her promises to the voters.
 - b. has lived in the district for thirty years.

- c. has substantial knowledge of the issues.
 - d. dresses very fashionably.
5. If you wanted to persuade someone to learn to read and speak a foreign language, you might say that
- a. knowledge of a foreign language can be helpful in the business world.
 - b. he or she may want to travel in the country where the language is spoken.
 - c. Enrique Iglesias sings in two languages.
 - d. being able to read great literature in the original is a rewarding experience.
6. If you wanted to persuade someone to quit smoking, you might say that
- a. smoking is a major cause of lung cancer.
 - b. smoking stains teeth and softens gums.
 - c. ashtrays are often hard to find.
 - d. this bad habit has become increasingly expensive.

PRACTICE 5

As you write persuasive paragraphs, make sure that your reasons can withstand close examination. Here are some examples of *invalid* arguments. Read them carefully. Decide which method of persuasion is being used and explain why you think the argument is invalid. Refer to the list on pages 158–159.

1. Men make terrible drivers. That one just cut right in front of me without looking.

Method of persuasion: _____

Invalid because _____

2. Many people have become vegetarians during the past ten or fifteen years, but such people have lettuce for brains.

Method of persuasion: _____

Invalid because _____

3. Candy does not really harm children's teeth. Tests made by scientists at the Gooey Candy Company have proved that candy does not cause tooth decay.

Method of persuasion: _____

Invalid because _____
