

LESSON 3

U: TO IDENTIFY THE FEATURES OF PERSUASIVE LETTERS.

National Curriculum Links

Reading

Understand what they read by:

- identifying how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning

Writing

Pupils should be taught to plan their writing:

- by identifying the audience for and purpose of the writing, selecting the appropriate form and using other similar writing as models for their own

STARTER:

Emotive language – children work with a partner to make the sentences below more emotive by adding adjectives or changing verbs.

The _____ city of Verona, which was a peaceful place before your _____ feud, wants you to restore tranquillity.

Your _____ children have paid the _____ price.

Mercutio and Paris, who were both _____ friends of mine, lost their lives as a result of your _____ feud.

MAIN TEACHING:

Remind the children that they are going to be writing persuasive letters in role as Prince Escalus at the end of the play, writing to both the Capulets and the Montagues to persuade them to end their feud.

Today they are going to be looking at two examples of persuasive letters based on Romeo and Juliet and will be discussing the features which they think make the letters persuasive.

Ask the children what features they would expect to see in a persuasive letter.

Then give out the two examples of persuasive letters below to each talk partner, both of which they should read together. Ask each pair to discuss what makes the letters persuasive. What features has the writer used to persuade the recipient?

Record their ideas and draw out the following key features:

- **First person**
- **Rhetorical questions**
- **Adverbs of possibility (e.g. perhaps, obviously, certainly, surely)**
- **Modal verbs (e.g. should, might, will, must)**
- **Cohesive devices to link paragraphs (e.g. firstly, secondly)**
- **Emotive language**
- **Arguments supported by facts and evidence**
- **Organised in paragraphs**

Make sure these are displayed so that all children can see them for the next part of the lesson.

Using 7 different coloured pencils, they need to find examples of each feature and colour them in different colours (e.g. all the adverbs of possibility might be coloured in red). They should also create a key to show which colour matches which feature.

Examples of Persuasive Letters

Dear Lord Capulet,

I am writing to ask for your fair daughter's hand in marriage. There are three reasons which I believe will persuade you to agree to this match.

Firstly, I'm sure it is clear how much I love your daughter. Surely you and Lady Capulet are aware of the deep affection I have for Juliet. You must never doubt that I will put her needs first in everything I do. If you allow me to marry your beloved daughter, I will treat her like a precious flower and make sure she is kept safe and free from all harm.

Secondly, as well as my absolute love for Juliet, I can also offer her a very comfortable position in Verona's aristocracy. In your excellent care, Juliet has become accustomed to a high standard of living and I'm sure that you want this to continue for her. As you may be aware, I have inherited a substantial estate from my late father. This, as well as my successes in business, would allow me to offer Juliet the kind of life she has always had. She would have everything she desired and more if you allowed me to make her my bride. Certainly that is what every father dreams of when he finds a match for his daughter.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, I have some concerning news to share. At your ball last night, I saw the lovely Juliet talking to a masked guest. Although I'm sure this conversation was innocent, a friend told me that this mysterious guest was a Montague. Are you willing to risk your only daughter falling into the hands of a Montague? Surely the only way to ensure that this meeting does not blossom into an ill-fated relationship is to make sure that Juliet is married as quickly as possible. You know that you can trust me to make her a happy bride, before she has the chance to fall in love with another unsuitable man.

I hope that you can see what an excellent match your daughter and I would make. Please arrange our wedding as soon as possible before it is too late!

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Count Paris

Dear Father,

I know that you are very angry with me because I have not agreed to marry Count Paris. I am sorry that I have upset you and I feel it is important that you know my reasons. I hope that I can persuade you to my point of view.

Firstly, I believe that I am far too young to get married. I know that my mother was already married at my age, but things are different now. I am only fourteen years old and so still a child; I want to spend time with my family before becoming a wife and leaving home. Surely you want to hold onto our precious time together too. Perhaps in a few years I will feel more ready for marriage and will be able to accept your proposal. However, I do not yet feel mature enough to become someone's wife.

Secondly, I think it is important to get to know someone before getting married. I have hardly spent any time with Count Paris and have not had the chance to see if I could fall in love with him. When I get married, I want to marry for love. I have noticed that those people who marry to elevate their social status often have unhappy marriages because they do not love their spouse. Do you want me to have a happy life, father? If you do, you will take into consideration my desire to marry for love instead of forcing me into a marriage of convenience.

Finally, I am concerned about the real reasons behind Count Paris' intentions. During our ball, I overheard Paris talking to his friends about the cost of the party; he seemed to be excited about the prospect of marrying into a family with so much money. Are you sure that Paris wishes to marry me out of love? Or could there be other, more superficial, reasons? I know that you would want your daughter to enter into an honest marriage. Can we really trust Paris, a man we hardly know?

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. I hope you know that I love you very much and I do not go against your wishes easily. I hope you understand my feelings now and will not hold my decision against me. Please do not make me marry a man I hardly know and do not love.

All my love,

Juliet

At the end of the lesson, take feedback from the class and ask them to share the examples of each feature they have found in the persuasive letters.

Finally, each child then writes the success criteria of a persuasive letter in their book, using examples from the models to show their understanding.