

# Introduction and Pretest

Your students should be familiar with the proofreading and technology skills in the intermediate level of the Writer's Guide before beginning this unit.

**PREPARATION** The pretest in this introduction to the unit should be used to determine if your students are working at the intermediate level of Persuasive Writing. It should be administered and scored before the students are introduced to the content of the unit.

Each student will need lined paper and a folder to use as a writing portfolio in which to keep writing assignments.

## Introduction

Introduce the students to the unit with an explanation like the following: *We're going to have fun learning to be authors who can write many different kinds of things. Sometimes authors work with other authors to produce one piece of writing. Authors who write together work in a cooperative group to produce a piece of writing. They enjoy sharing ideas. Sometimes we'll work cooperatively to write a class composition. A composition is a piece of writing. When we write a class composition, I'll write our ideas and our composition on chart paper for the whole class. Everyone will contribute ideas to our class composition.*

*Sometimes authors work alone. After we practice together, you'll produce a piece of writing of your own.*

*For the next few lessons, you'll be learning about persuasive writing. Persuasive writing uses words to convince people that an idea is a good one. When you write persuasively, you use opinions supported by reasons, facts, and examples to get others to believe what you say is important. You give others convincing proof to make them believe what you want them to believe.*

## Beginning Writing Sample

**PREPARATION** Write the following starter on the board: Students should have more recess time during the school day. Write one or more paragraphs to convince the school principal this is true.

Explain to the students that before they learn about persuasive writing, you'd like a sample of their writing. Tell them you'll save this sample so that you and they can see how their writing improves as they learn more about persuasive writing. Read the starter to the students. Ask them to write a persuasive composition on lined paper. Allow the students time to write. Ask the students to edit, proofread, and write a final copy of their compositions. Evaluate the students' writing using the rubric on the following page.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**RUBRIC**

Pretest

Posttest

**Scoring the Samples**

- Give the student a score of 0 if there is no evidence of the element.
- Give the student a score of 1 for each element at the emergent or minimum level.
- Give the student a score of 3 for each element at a satisfactory level.
- Give the student a score of 5 for each element at the mastery level.

Evaluating the Elements of a Piece of Persuasive Writing		
	The author of this composition . . .	Points Earned
O R G A N I Z A T I O N	Uses a sentence that clearly presents the topic in the opening paragraph.	
	Follows a logical sequence and order.	
	Develops related sentences to produce a middle.	
	Stays on the topic.	
	Uses a final sentence that brings closure to the composition.	
C O N T E N T	States own opinion in the opening paragraph.	
	Presents supporting details (reasons, facts, examples) that include anecdotes, statistics, and expert opinion.	
	Restates opinion in concluding sentence.	
	Presents supporting ideas from a variety of sources.	
	Excludes irrelevant information.	
S T Y L E	Captures reader's interest in the first paragraph.	
	Uses language appropriate for intended audience.	
	States opinion clearly.	
	Presents convincing proof.	
	Persuades reader using nonconfrontational language.	
M E C H A N I C S	Indents paragraphs.	
	Uses correct capitalization for titles and proper nouns.	
	Uses apostrophes in contractions and possessives.	
	Uses conventional spelling at a developmentally appropriate level.	
	Employs standard English usage.	
<b>Total Points</b>		

If the student scores . . .	
85–100 points	Administer the pretest for the advanced level of Persuasive Writing.
20–84 points	The student is properly placed in the intermediate level of Persuasive Writing.
0–19 points	Administer the pretest for the beginning level of Persuasive Writing.

Copyright © SRA/McGraw-Hill. Permission is granted to reproduce this page for classroom use.