When we can successfully write to persuade, we know we have mastered both the craft of writing and the subject matter we are writing about. At school you are asked to write persuasively in order to demonstrate that you:

- have absorbed all the relevant information
- can interpret the information
- can use the information as a basis for arguments

All persuasive texts include arguments. We can argue:

- to support a point of view
- for and against both sides of an issue or debate
- to challenge a point of view

The table below outlines the types of texts which help us to persuade others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of text</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exposition</td>
<td>to argue for a particular point of view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>to discuss both sides of an argument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge</td>
<td>to challenge another person's point of view</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Using the facts to persuade

In Chapter 2 we learnt how English speakers trace their culture back to the Ancient Greeks. The Greeks not only gave us the patterns for narratives which we still use today, they also gave us patterns for the texts we use to persuade people. The Greeks called the language we use to persuade people rhetoric.

Today, English-speakers still follow ideas about rhetoric laid down by Aristotle, one of the most famous of the Ancient Greek scholars. Aristotle said that we persuade people and win arguments by using facts and evidence rather than by merely appealing to people’s emotions.

**Text type: exposition**
Purpose: to argue for a particular point of view

**REMEMBER**
THE OVERALL DESIGN OF EXPOSITIONS

Expositions have the following three stages:

- a thesis which introduces the issue and the writer’s point of view

- a series of arguments which support the thesis

- a restatement of the thesis which is a stronger and more direct statement of the thesis introduced in the first stage

The arguments contain any factual information, evidence, description or explanation which supports the thesis.

Sometimes expositions begin with a background stage which provides any information the reader needs in order to follow the arguments.

**ACTIVITY 8.1**

Write down the stages of an exposition, and then identify which paragraphs in the model text following belong to each stage.
MODEL OF AN EXPOSITION

The dangers of logging in old-growth forests

1 Old-growth forests are forests which have remained largely undisturbed by agriculture and harvesting. Logging, no matter how well managed, damages forever their environmental value. These forests provide a unique habitat for many species of plants and wildlife. In addition, they are essential for the stability of the global climate system. Furthermore, these forests are storehouses of biodiversity which scientists have not yet been able to document or evaluate.

2 Old-growth forests are home to a great many species of plant and animal life. These species depend for their survival on complex ecological relationships which have taken many thousands of years to develop in the forest environment. When the old trees are logged, the habitats and food chains they provide will not return for many hundreds of years. This will inevitably lead to the extinction of many plants and animals.

3 Scientists are only just beginning to understand the role played by forests in the global climate system. Humans have already caused the world’s climate to change. It is the forests which restore balance to the system. We cannot tell at exactly what point the world’s climate will be dangerously affected by the loss of too many trees. Already the loss of trees in the Himalayas has contributed to terrible flooding in Bangladesh. Every tree we log takes us closer to more disasters of this kind.

4 Finally, old-growth forests contribute to biodiversity. Biodiversity refers to the numbers of different plants and animals which exist on the planet. Scientists say that life on Earth cannot survive without a great variety of species. Each old tree in an old-growth forest supports an ecosystem of enormous diversity. Each tree that is logged contributes to the extinction of life on Earth as we know it.

5 It seems obvious that no economic argument in support of the logging can possibly justify the destruction of trees in our old-growth forests. It is vital that we protect this priceless resource in the interests of the health and safety of all people on the Earth into the future.
Text type: discussion
Purpose: to discuss both sides of an argument

REMEMBER
OVERALL DESIGN OF DISCUSSIONS

Discussions have the following four stages:
- an issue stage which introduces the issue and summarises the debate
- arguments for one side
- arguments for the other side
- recommendation or judgment which is presented as the most logical conclusion

The arguments can include any factual information, evidence, description or explanation which supports the side being argued.

Sometimes discussions begin with a background stage which provides any information the reader needs in order to follow the arguments.

ACTIVITY 8.2

Write down the stages of a discussion, and then identify which paragraphs in the model text below belong to each stage.

MODEL OF A DISCUSSION

Logging in old-growth forests

1. One of the most controversial issues in our community is whether old-growth forests should be logged. Some people believe that it is vital for Australia's rural economy to continue logging in native forests. People on the other side of the debate claim that logging will lead to the destruction of Australia's few remaining wildernesses.

2. Supporters of the logging industry say that only 1% of old-growth trees are harvested and that all these trees are replanted. This, they claim, brings new life to the forests. At the same time they point out that logging brings employment to rural communities. This is important at a time when Australia’s country towns are dying as more and more people move to the cities to find work.

3. On the other hand, there are a growing number of people in the community who oppose logging. They argue that logging destroys the habitat of a great number of native animals and plants. The consequence of this is the extinction of many species. Furthermore, they point out that forests are vital to the environment because they absorb carbon dioxide and produce oxygen.

4. Although logging supports rural communities, it also threatens the environment. After looking at both sides of this debate, I believe that new industries should be developed for the rural sector and that we should leave areas of untouched wilderness to be preserved for future generations.
Text type: challenge
Purpose: to challenge or argue against another person’s point of view

REMEMBER
OVERALL DESIGN OF CHALLENGES

Challenges have the following three stages:

- a position challenged stage which introduces the point of view the writer wants to argue against
- arguments against
- anti-thesis which is presented as a logical conclusion

Challenges are often used when people write letters to the editor of a newspaper.

ACTIVITY 8.3

Write down the stages of a challenge, and then identify which parts of the model text below belong to each stage.

MODEL OF A CHALLENGE

Dear Sir

1. The logging industry claims that country towns in NSW will die if logging in the state’s forests is reduced to sustainable levels.

2. What the logging industry has never made clear is how people in country towns in NSW, or any other person on the planet for that matter, will survive if the world’s forests are destroyed.

3. Sustainability is essential for all our survival, no matter where we live.

S. Jones
Westbrook

REMEMBER
THE LANGUAGE OF ARGUMENT

When we write arguments, we use whatever language resources will work most effectively to sway the reader to our way of thinking. Writers have a whole menu of different kinds of language to choose from when they write arguments, although of course they don’t use all the items in every argument.
**ACTIVITY 8.4**

Match the items in the list on the left with examples from the model persuasive texts on the right. One has been done for you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What the language of arguments does</th>
<th>Examples from persuasive writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| a Introduces and sequences arguments and viewpoints | i These resources are used to make the arguments more 'factual' and so more powerful, for example:  
*the consequence of this is* (explanation)  
*these forests are storehouses of biodiversity* (description)  
*only 1% of old growth forests* (evidence) |
| b Focuses on the topic and organises arguments with topic sentences | ii The focus of the texts are *logging* and *old growth forests*. These words occur in the topic sentences and frequently occur at the beginning of sentences. |
| c Explains, describes and uses evidence in arguments | iii Technical terms and abstract nouns add to the 'factual' quality of the arguments eg *habitat*, *sustainability*. |
| d Uses technical terms and abstract ‘packaging’ nouns | iv Cause and effect are shown with words like *lead to*, *contributes to*, *the consequence*, *cause*. |
| e Shows cause and effect | v The texts include attributes such as *Supporters of the logging industry claim* … |
| f Judges and evaluates | vi The texts include judgments and evaluations such as:  
*logging damages forever*  
*it threatens the environment  
*sustainability is essential for all our survival* |
| g Assesses degrees of what is probable or usual | vii Arguments are introduced and sequenced using linking devices such as *first, furthermore, on the other hand, in conclusion, although, after looking at both sides of this debate* |
| h Attributes assessments to expert sources | viii The reader is persuaded with emotional and colourful words such as *forever, depend for their survival, terrible, disasters, will die*, only, threatens, destroyed, essential, no matter. |
| i Appeals to the reader | ix Words like *must, never and inevitably* assess how probable or usual something is. |
| j Uses ‘objective’ language | x Opinions are made to sound ‘objective’ using expressions such as *It seems obvious that, it can be seen that*. |
| k Uses emotional or colourful language | xi The writer appeals to the readers with words such as *we should leave areas untouched, it seems obvious that, it is vital that*. |
**Writing a persuasive text**

**ACTIVITY 8.5**

Use the language of arguments table in the previous activity and the model texts in this chapter to help you write a persuasive text. The following steps will help you to plan your text.

| STEP 1 | Choose an arguable issue which relates to a school subject | Examples:  
*Should immunisation be compulsory?*  
*The study of history is irrelevant. Discuss.*  
*The impact of humans on the environment has gone too far. Do you agree with this assertion?*

| STEP 2 | Research your topic | Read about how other people view the topic.  
Make notes as you read.  
Think about your own views on the topic.

| STEP 3 | Outline your point of view and all possible arguments. | Use the structure provided in Table A below.

| STEP 4 | Draft your persuasive text | Review:  
*the stages of the persuasive report you have chosen*  
*the language of arguments*

| STEP 5 | Edit and proofread your text | Put your draft away.  
Read it again the following day.  
Check your writing for:  
*spelling*  
*punctuation*  
*layout and presentation*  
Use a spellchecker or dictionary to help you.  
Make any necessary changes.  
Ask at least one other person to proofread your work.  
Listen to their comments.  
Make any necessary changes.

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**Table A**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic/issue/position challenged:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thesis/Judgment/recommendation/anti-thesis (ie my point of view)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Arguments which support my point of view | Arguments which challenge my point of view |
Project work: Putting it all together

At school you can be asked to do projects in all your subjects. A project is really a collection of different kinds of writing about the same topic or theme. Each text achieves a different purpose, but together all the texts contribute to developing your understanding of the topic.

Here is an outline for a project. This outline is an example of how you can put together different kinds of writing around a single theme.

Theme: Is science about making discoveries?

Archimedes

People usually think of science as being about making discoveries. For example, people still remember a famous scientific discovery made by Archimedes, a mathematician who lived in Ancient Greece about 2200 years ago.

Archimedes didn’t call himself a scientist, but a lot of the work he did is what we would call science today. According to legend, Archimedes made his great discovery in the bath. The king had given Archimedes a very difficult problem to solve. One day, as Archimedes was getting into the bath, he noticed that the water rose higher and even overflowed. He was so excited that he ran into the street, forgetting to put on his clothes, and shouted out: ‘Eureka!’, which means ‘I found it’. He had discovered how to solve the king’s problem. Today scientists call this ‘discovery’ Archimedes’ principle.

ACTIVITY 8.6

Use the following steps to prepare a project about Archimedes.

| STEP 1 | Research the story of Archimedes’ discovery | Look for his story in:

|      |                                           | • an encyclopaedia
|      |                                           | • in a library
|      |                                           | • in science textbooks
|      |                                           | Find the answers to these questions:
|      |                                           | • What was the problem the king asked Archimedes to solve?
|      |                                           | • What did Archimedes discover when he got into the bath?
|      |                                           | • Do we still use this discovery today?
|      |                                           | Write this story in the form of a NARRATIVE.

<p>| STEP 2 | Write the story of Archimedes’ life       | To do this you need to write a short BIOGRAPHICAL RECOUNT. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STEP 3</th>
<th>Write about the experiment which Archimedes did</th>
<th>To do this you need to write a short PROCEDURE for an experiment to illustrate Archimedes’ principle.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STEP 4</td>
<td>Explain Archimedes’ principle</td>
<td>To do this you need to write a short EXPLANATION.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEP 5</td>
<td>Write a PERSUASIVE TEXT in response to the theme ‘Science is about making discoveries’</td>
<td>Interview someone who is a scientist. Ask the scientist if they think science is about discovery. If they don’t think science is about discovery, ask them what they think science is about. Take notes during the interview and use these notes to write your persuasive text. Choose which type of persuasive text you wish to write.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEP 6</td>
<td>Edit and proofread your text</td>
<td>Put your project away. Read it again the following day. Check your writing for:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• punctuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• layout and presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Use a spellchecker or dictionary to help you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Make any necessary changes.</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Listen to their comments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Make any necessary changes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEP 7</td>
<td>Design a presentation format for your project.</td>
<td>For example, you could present your project as a book, a chart or a scroll. Illustrate the texts in your project with appropriate illustrations and diagrams. You could include your historical recount timeline and your explanation flow diagram as illustrations. Decide how to place your texts and illustrations on your format. Think about design features such as margins, the font used for headings, underlining and use of colour.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>