



5TH GRADE

VOLUME 5.2

Persuasive Writing Unit for *Holes*

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Welcome to the 5.2 Persuasive Writing Unit for *Holes*!

If this is your first time using this guide, you will want to read through this introduction carefully, as it provides information that you will find critical to your establishment of a successful language arts block!

This persuasive writing unit is meant to be taught in conjunction with the *Read Side by Side Reading Program*, Unit 5.2, *Holes*. The book *Holes* will be used as a mentor text to build students' background knowledge and expose students to the craft of writing.

This unit takes approximately 15 days to complete, from brainstorming and planning to sharing the published piece! Lessons in this unit give students explicit instruction in the steps of the writing process and the structure of persuasive writing. Some craft and grammar lessons will be incorporated as students revise and edit their writing. You may want to supplement with additional craft, grammar, and spelling lessons between writing units.

Prior to starting the unit, you will want to consider how students will share their writing. Student read their writing aloud to their own classmates, visit another classroom, or make their writing available for others to read in the classroom, library or other public location.

After students have had the opportunity to publish their writing, assess their work using the checklist for grading a narrative story provided at the end of the unit.

Schedule

To complete this unit, you will need to set aside 30-minutes for writing, 2-4 times a week.

Instructional days begin with a whole-class lesson. Lessons will be 10-15 minutes in length, allowing a short time after the lesson for students to work on the assignment. While working, students will access the help of a writing partner as needed. It may be helpful to seat partners next to each other during the work time. The teacher then confers with partnerships as needed.

Working days allow students to get started right away on writing projects. During the work time, students will continue to access a partner or the teacher for help as needed. If it is challenging to find time every day for writing, teachers might assign these work-projects as homework.

Narrative schedule:

1. Brainstorm & Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make a list of writing ideas.• Select a strong idea from the list.• Complete the <i>Quadrant Chart</i>.• Design an illustration, cover or banner.	Day 1-4
2. Draft	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write a draft using the 4-quadrant method.	Days 5-8
3. Revise & Edit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use transition words.• Use strong words to convince the reader.• Include a call to action.	Days 9-10
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Edit and revise using a checklist.	Day 11
4. Publish & Share	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete a final product that is handwritten, typed, or other.• Share with a real audience.	Days 12-15

Day 1: Brainstorm Ideas & Plan: Introduction

Lesson Goals: Brainstorm ideas for writing in response to the prompt. Begin to plan a piece of writing using the *Quadrant Chart*.

Materials:

Article “5 Basic Survival Skills and Why They Are Important”
Quadrant Chart

Instructional Procedures:

1. *Introduction:* Introduce the persuasive writing prompt:

Persuade others to learn basic survival skills.

A persuasive piece of writing provides strong reasons for someone to do something and ends with a call-to-action or instruction about what to do and how to do it. In this writing piece you will convince the reader that they should learn basic survival skills, give examples of why these skills are important, and end with instructions for how to learn more about survival skills.

1. *Discuss:* In the book, *Holes*, Stanley and Zero had to learn to survive in the barren desert after running away from Camp Green Lake. What survival skills were most important in this story? Why might these same survival skills be important for anyone to learn?
2. *Read and Discuss:* The article, “5 Basic Survival Skills and Why They Are Important”
3. *Plan:* Choose 3 survival skills from the article to write about in your persuasive essay. Choose the skills that you could easily convince the reader are important using evidence from the book *Holes* and the article. (*Students might also choose to include evidence from any of the books in the Earthquake Terror Unit*)
4. *Draft:* Model drafting the introduction in Box 1 of the *Quadrant Chart*. Be sure the introduction answers the prompt.

Example:

Basic survival skills could save your life! I recently read the book *Holes* by Louis Sachar, which tells how two boys survive being lost in the desert for several days with no food and water. Anyone might find themselves in a similar situation. This is why I think it is critical for everyone to know basic skills such as finding clean water, foraging for food, and reading a map.

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to fill out the *Quadrant Chart* (Box 1) for their own persuasive essay. Then, give time for partners to share their writing plan and receive feedback.

- What do you like about my writing plan?
- What might I do to improve it?

5 Basic Survival Skills and Why They Are Important

Whether there is a natural disaster that leaves you stranded, or you get lost wandering too far off the trail, basic survival skills could save your life. Here are five basic survival skills and why they are important:

1. Finding and purifying water.

Humans can go without food for about three weeks but can typically last only three to four days without water. Therefore, it is important to learn how to find pure water for drinking. If water isn't pure, it can make you sick. Standing water will often carry parasites or bacteria. Listen for the sound of flowing water or watch the animals to see where they go to quench their thirst. As a last resort, dig a hole where the ground is damp; you may get lucky and find ground water. Boil the water if you can. This will eliminate impurities.

2. Starting and tending a fire.

Knowing how to build and tend a fire is an important life-saving skill because with a fire you can purify water, cook food, keep predators away, and even signal for help. Learn to start a fire with matches and dry kindling you've collected. Aim for small pieces of kindling—the smaller the fibers, the easier it is to burn.

3. Building a temporary shelter.

If you ever find yourself lost on a trail, you will want to know how to make a basic shelter to keep you protected from the harsh weather including sun, wind, rain, and cold. Seek out high and dry land away from water and mud. Common shelters are lean-to's, teepees, and igloos. Gain confidence using a sharp tool, such as an axe, to cut foliage for shelter building.

4. Reading a map and compass.

If you are lost, knowing how to read a map and a compass may save your life! If you don't have a map, get to high ground so you can look down on your surroundings. If you don't have a compass to tell you the direction of north, south, east, or west, use the sun to navigate. The sun will move from east to west across the day. In the morning, the sun is in the east, by mid-day the sun is overhead, and in the afternoon the sun will be in the west.

5. Hunting and foraging for food.

Humans need food to maintain energy. Therefore, knowing how to hunt and forage for food is important. Learn to make a simple spear, trap, fishing net, or fishing pole to allow you to hunt for food. Maybe an easier way to acquire food, depending on the season, is to learn to forage for edible plants. Start by learning what plants are edible and what plants are poisonous and how to recognize them.

QUADRANT CHART

(Name)

(Date)

(File Name)

(Title of Chart)

1	2
3	4

Day 2: Brainstorm Ideas & Plan: Body Paragraphs

Lesson Goals: Brainstorm ideas for writing in response to the prompt. Begin to plan a piece of writing using the *Quadrant Chart*.

Materials:

Quadrant Chart

Instructional Procedures:

1. *Plan:* Model planning the structure for the three body paragraphs.
 - *Main Idea*
 - *Supporting Fact(s)*
 - *Example(s) from book*
 - *Persuasive statement*
2. *Model* planning body paragraph 1 (Box 2).
 - Learn how to find clean water.
 - Humans can only go 3-4 days without water.
 - Stanley and Zero had no water. They were in a desert where there was no rain, and no lake. Stanley observed his surroundings. He dug a hole and found water.
 - Everyone should learn how to observe their surroundings to find clean water.
3. *Model* planning body paragraph 2 (Box 3).
 - Learn how to forage for food.
 - Humans need food for energy. They can only go 3 weeks without food.
 - Stanley and Zero had a small bag of sunflower seeds. When the seeds ran out, they were hungry and had no energy. Stanley searched for food and found onion plants.
 - It is important to learn what plants are edible and what plants are poisonous.
4. *Model* planning body paragraph 3 (Box 4).
 - Learn how to read a map.
 - It is easy to get lost when you are in a place that is not familiar.
 - Stanley and Zero used landmarks to make a map of their surroundings.
 - When you are lost, look around for clues that will help you find your way.

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to fill out the *Quadrant Chart* (boxes 2 & 3) for their own persuasive essay. Then, give time for partners to share their writing plan and receive feedback.

- What do you like about my writing plan?
- What might I do to improve it?

Day 3: Plan: Conclusion

Lesson Goals: Continue to plan a piece of writing using the *Quadrant Chart*. Plan the conclusion and call to action.

Materials:

Quadrant Chart

Instructional Procedures:

1. *Introduction:* Tell students that they will now be planning the conclusion of their persuasive writing. When writing a persuasive writing piece, the conclusion will summarize the key points of the piece of writing and provide instructions for how to learn more about basic survival skills.
2. *Plan:* Model summarizing the key points in the first part of the conclusion paragraph. Use the back of the *Quadrant Chart* to record your notes.

Example: In conclusion, basic survival skills are important for everyone to learn because they could save your life if you ever get lost or find yourself stranded. Knowing how to find clean drinking water, how to find edible plants, and how to read a map are critical skills that might save your life.

3. *Plan:* Model planning a call-to-action in the second part of the conclusion paragraph.

Example: I encourage you to learn more about basic survival skills. You can find out more by reading the book *Holes*, by Louis Sachar, the article “5 Basic Survival Skills and Why They Are Important” or watching a video on Youtube that teaches survival skills. You won’t regret it!

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to plan their own conclusion paragraph. Then, give time for partners to share their writing plan and receive feedback.

- What do you like about my writing plan?
- What might I do to improve it?

Day 4: Plan: Title & Illustration

Lesson Goals: Continue to plan a piece of writing by choosing a title, then making an illustration, cover, or banner.

Materials:

Art materials or illustration software.

Instructional Procedures:

1. *Introduction:* Tell students they will be writing a title for their persuasive essay and creating an illustration, cover, or banner for their writing. Share tips for writing a good title:
 - It should provide the main idea.
 - It should be relatively short.
 - It should get the reader interested.
 - It should put a picture in the reader's mind.

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to create a title and illustration, cover, or banner for their essay. Then, give time for partners to share their illustrations and receive feedback.

- What do you like about my illustration?
- What might I do to improve my illustration?

Day 5-8: Draft, Introduction, Body Paragraphs, and Conclusion

Lesson Goals: Draft the introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion.

Materials:

Transition Word List

Instructional Procedures:

1. *Introduction:* Tell students that they will now be drafting the introduction, the body paragraphs, and the conclusion of their persuasive writing piece.
 - Persuasive writing uses transition words between paragraphs (see list).
 - Persuasive writing concludes with a call to action.
2. *Model* drafting a persuasive essay that incorporates transition words and a call to action.

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to draft the introduction, the body paragraphs, and the conclusion. Then, give time for partners to share their writing and receive feedback.

- What do you like about my writing?
- What might I do to improve my writing?

TRANSITION WORD LIST

First,	Second,	Third,	In Conclusion,
First of all, To begin with, Initially,	Additionally, Also, Furthermore, Another, Equally Important, In addition, Next,	Last, Lastly, Finally,	In summary, In the end, As you can see, It is clear,

Day 9: Revise: Use strong language to convince the reader.

Lesson Goals: Revise a piece of writing to include strong language.

Materials:

Persuasive/Strong Word List

Instructional Procedures:

1. *Introduction:* Tell students that persuasive writing uses strong language to convince the reader.

Discuss the Persuasive/Strong Word List selected from the book *Holes*.

2. *Model* revising a piece of writing to include strong language from the list provided.

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to their writing to include strong language. Then, give time for partners to share their writing and receive feedback.

- What do you like about my writing?
- What might I do to improve my writing?

PERSUASIVE/STRONG WORD LIST:

Some examples of persuasive/strong words from the book *Holes*:

- Possible
- Impossible
- Survive
- Difficult
- One hundred percent
- Miserable
- Desperate
- Calm
- Encourage
- Grim
- Die of thirst
- Useful
- Entirely
- Certain
- Lucky
- Mental snapshot
- Worse
- Afraid
- Support
- Strength
- Grateful
- Protect
- Prepare
- Challenge
- Important
- Critical
- Life-saving

Day 10: Edit: Use commas appropriately.

Lesson Goals: Revise a piece of writing to use commas appropriately.

Materials:

How to Use Commas Sheet

Instructional Procedures:

3. *Introduction:* Tell students that good writers use commas appropriately.

Discuss the rules for using commas found on the *How to Use Commas Sheet*.

4. *Model* revising a piece of writing to include the appropriate use of commas.

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to their writing to include strong language. Then, give time for partners to share their writing and receive feedback.

- What do you like about my writing?
- What might I do to improve my writing?

HOW TO USE COMMAS

A comma is a punctuation mark that indicates a pause between parts of a sentence. It is also used to separate items in a list, set off direct quotations, and is used in dates, addresses, titles, and numbers. Here we present 4 rules for using commas. This is not a complete list of rules for using commas, but will get you started using commas in your persuasive writing. The examples for how to use commas come from the article, “5 Basic Survival Skills and Why They Are Important”.

1. Use commas to separate complete ideas (independent clauses). **Clue:** Look for the words and, but, yet, so, or for. These words are often used to join two independent clauses.

- Humans can go without food for about three weeks, but can typically last only three to four days without water.
- Listen for the sound of flowing water, or watch the animals to see where they go to quench their thirst.

2. Use a comma after an introductory phrase. A comma tells the reader that the introductory phrase has come to a close and that the main part of the sentence is about to begin.

- As a last resort, dig a hole where the ground is damp.
- If you ever find yourself lost on a trail, you will want to know how to make a basic shelter.
- In the morning, the sun is in the east.

3. Use a comma between items or phrases in a series (3 or more).

- Common shelters are lean-to's, teepees, and igloos.
- Knowing how to build and tend a fire is an important life-saving skill because with a fire you can purify water, cook food, keep predators away, and even signal for help.

4. Use commas to enclose phrases that are not essential to the meaning of the sentence (nonrestrictive clauses).

- Gain confidence using a sharp tool, such as an axe, to cut foliage for shelter building.

Day 11: Edit and Revise

Lesson Goals: Reread a piece of writing and make edits and revisions.

Materials:

Editing and Revision Checklist

Instructional Procedures:

1. *Introduction:* Tell students that they will now be editing and revising their persuasive writing pieces to make them easy to read as well as convincing.

2. *Edit:* Model rereading your writing and marking edits as you go:
 - Capitals
 - Punctuation
 - Spelling
 - Paragraphing

As you make editing marks, discuss the changes you will make and how they will help the reader understand the piece of writing better. Give students time to reread their writing and record editing marks.

3. *Revise:* Model rereading your writing and marking revisions as you go:
 - Complete sentences
 - Transition words
 - Persuasive/strong language (See list)
 - Details and elaboration to help the reader visualize
 - Key vocabulary

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to their edit and revise their writing. Then, give time for partners to share their writing and receive feedback.

- What do you like about my writing?
- What might I do to improve my writing?

Editing Checklist:

- _____ Sentences start with a capital letter.
- _____ I used capital letters for proper nouns.
- _____ I have punctuation at the end of each sentence.
- _____ I checked my words for spelling.
- _____ I indented paragraphs.

Revision Checklist:

- _____ I started with an introduction that is clear.
- _____ I ended with a conclusion that is clear.
- _____ I used transition words at the beginning of paragraphs.
- _____ I used language to show how one event may have caused another event.
- _____ Sentences make sense.
- _____ Sentences stay focused on the topic.
- _____ I added details and elaboration that are important to the topic.
- _____ I used key vocabulary.

Day 12-15: Publish & Share

Lesson Goals: Publish a piece of writing.

Instructional Procedures:

1. *Introduction:* Tell students they will now be preparing their piece of writing for others to read. This is called publishing.
2. *Discuss:* how stories will be published—handwritten, typed, or other. Let them know when and how their stories will be shared with the class.

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to publish their writing and share their writing with an audience.

Ideas for sharing:

- read essays aloud to classmates,
- read essays aloud to another class,
- make essays available for others to read (in the classroom, library, hallway bulletin board or other); and
- take essays home to share with family.

An **author's chair** is a fun classroom tradition. It is a decorated chair in which an author sits to share his/her writing. Teachers can paint a wooden chair or have each new class decorate a pillowcase to go over the back of a chair. This quickly transform a standard classroom chair into something special for young authors.

Checklist for Assessing a Persuasive Essay

Cover/Illustration/ Banner _____/4	_____ Has a title that is short. _____ The title puts a picture in the reader’s mind. <hr/> _____ Cover/illustration/banner introduces the main idea. _____ Cover/illustration/banner gets the reader interested.
Introduction Paragraph _____/3	_____ The introduction includes a thesis statement that answers the prompt. _____ The introduction presents two main ideas. _____ The introduction is written clearly to grab the reader.
Body Paragraphs _____/6	Body Paragraph 1 _____ Introduces one main idea. _____ Provides important details/reasons/examples to support the main idea. _____ Provides enough detail to adequately support the main idea. <hr/> Body Paragraph 2 _____ Introduces one main idea. _____ Provides important details/reasons/examples to support the main idea. _____ Provides enough detail to adequately support the main idea.
Conclusion _____/2	_____ The conclusion restates the answer to the prompt. _____ The conclusion includes a call to action.
Craft and Structure _____/3	_____ Paragraphs are well organized. _____ Paragraphs include transition words. _____ Strong language is used to convince the reader.
Revision and Editing _____/5	_____ Writing is edited for spelling. _____ Writing is edited for grammar. _____ Writing is edited for punctuation. _____ Writing shows evidence of revision. _____ Published writing is polished.
Collaboration & Effort _____/4	_____ Worked well with a partner. _____ Respectfully gave feedback to a partner. _____ Respectfully received feedback from a partner. _____ Showed good effort and persistence.
Total: _____/27	Comments:



Basic survival skills could save your life! I recently read the book *Holes* by Louis Sachar, which tells how two boys survive being lost in the desert for several days with no food and water. Anyone might find themselves in a similar frightening situation. This is why I think it is critical for everyone to know basic skills such as finding clean water, foraging for food, and reading a map.

Did you know that humans can only go three to four days without water? Now imagine you are lost in the barren desert with no water in sight! Knowing how to find clean water is a key survival skill. In the book *Holes*, Stanley and Zero were lost in the desert without water. They hoped for rain but it didn't come. Thank goodness Stanley knew to observe his surroundings and look for signs of water. When he and Zero were on Big Thumb, Stanley saw bugs and plants. He knew that bugs and plants both need water to live, and so he began to dig until the dirt turned to mud. Drinking groundwater saved Stanley and Zero's life! Everyone should learn how to observe their surroundings and find clean water. If you are ever desperate for water and dying of thirst, you will be glad you have this skill.

Another important survival skill is knowing how to forage for food. It is true that humans can survive for three weeks without food, but trust me, if you go that long without food you will feel miserable! Not only will you feel a nawing hunger, you will feel like your energy is gone. Zero could barely walk after going several days without eating. He found himself doubled over with stomach pains. Good thing Stanley knew how to forage for food! Stanley found life-saving onions to nourish their bodies. While eating plants could save your life, be careful not to eat plants that are poisonous. Everyone should learn how to tell the difference between edible and poisonous plants. It is better to be safe than sorry!

Finally, it is easy to get disoriented in the wilderness, which is why knowing how to read a map, compass, and your surroundings is a critical survival skill. Stanley and Zero became disoriented on the barren lake bed as they tried to return to Camp Green Lake. They used their observation of landmarks to make a map. They used the sun's position in the sky to determine east and west.

These simple tools guided them to safety. Even in our modern world of cell-phones and GPS, it is important to know basic navigation skills. You never know when you will find yourself lost, without modern tools to guide you.

In conclusion, I challenge you to learn basic survival skills because they could save your life when disaster strikes or you find yourself lost. Learning to find clean water, forage for food, and read a map or compass are some of the top skills everyone should learn. To learn more about survival skills, I suggest the book *Holes*, by Louis Sachar, the article “5 Basic Survival Skills and Why They Are Important” and tutorials found on youtube.com demonstrating basic survival skills. Survival skills are fun to learn and could potentially save your life!