



Teaching Argumentation

Many teachers ask, "What is the difference between 'persuasion' and 'argumentation'?" Even though people may use these terms interchangeably, one way to delineate the two is to think of "persuasion" as convincing people to *act* differently and "argumentation" as convincing people to *think* differently, the latter of which endures.

In this one-day workshop, teachers learn the Jane Schaffer Writing Program® methodology and how that methodology applies to the argumentation process. Strategies include how to 1) obtain the facts of an issue from primary and secondary sources, evaluating their relevance to the topic at hand as well as the thesis statement; 2) acknowledge both sides of an issue by understanding concession and confutation, also known as counterargument or counterclaim; 3) refute the other side's position; 4) develop and synthesize ideas in an organized, logical, and rational manner; 5) embed quotations; 6) create effective commentary or analysis; 7) produce a debatable thesis; and 8) begin and end an essay with an effective introduction and conclusion.

As with all JSWP workshops, the focus starts with the body paragraphs, then shifts to the essay as a whole. Four argumentation layouts provide differentiation for On-Level, SPED, ELL, G/T, Honors, and AP®/IB students with a special section on the ACT®. In addition, instruction on classical elements, such as audience, purpose, and occasion and Aristotle's artistic proofs (ethos, logos, and pathos) provide insight on how orators and writers create a unique voice and style. The JSWP shaping sheet helps students to edit and revise their drafts to explore grammatical areas of strength and weakness and to create a variety of sentence types, openings, and lengths prior to producing a final draft.

A two-day workshop allows teachers time to practice a synthesis type question where participants select multiple sources to defend a thesis while acknowledging the validity of others' perspectives. Teachers have more time to ask questions relative to situations that arise in the classroom; to produce prompts that coincide with a district's or campus' scope and sequence; design a model to be implemented during the introduction of argumentation to students; and discuss problem areas and research techniques.