

# Persuasive Letter

Attention-grabbing opening

Opinion statement

Reason #1: Reduce noise

Evidence (fact)

Elaboration

Reason #2: Reduce air pollution

Evidence (facts)

Elaboration

Reason #3: Add beauty

Evidence (examples)

Dear Snyder City Council:

Often, the more familiar we are with a place, the less attention we pay to its details. I learned this last week when I took a long walk downtown. Even though I've lived here all my life, I have never pictured our city as being much more than buildings, cars and trucks, and concrete stretching in every direction. Last week, I saw a lot more than that. I saw what our city is missing: trees. As members of the Snyder City Council, you can complete the picture and provide several benefits to the city by starting a tree-planting program.

Trees help absorb traffic noise. According to a study by the U.S. Department of Energy, a patch of trees 100 feet wide and 45 feet tall can cut noise levels in half. Now that the highway has been widened, noisy truck traffic is increasing in our community. Planting trees in downtown areas and along the roads entering town would benefit residents, businesses, and visitors by making our streets quieter.

Trees reduce air pollution, too. They remove dust and other particles, including the sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide that contribute to acid rain and ozone pollution, from the air. They also absorb carbon dioxide and convert it into the oxygen that we need to breathe. In fact, just one acre of trees produces enough oxygen for eighteen people. A cleaner town is a healthier town for all of us.

Add to these reasons the simple fact that trees are beautiful. Imagine your houses with no trees around them. Would your backyards

## Persuasive Letter *continued*

Evidence (fact)

Elaboration

Reason #4: Increase comfort

Evidence (facts and examples)

Elaboration

Summary of reasons

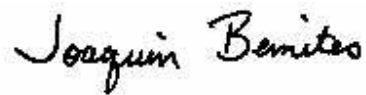
Call to action

be as welcoming as they are now? Would you enjoy the view from your front windows? The American Forestry Association reports that full-grown trees can raise the value of a piece of property by as much as 20 percent! It's easy to see that trees aren't just for the birds. They give people, too, a sense of being "at home."

The most important benefit of a tree-planting program, though, is that it will make our downtown area much more comfortable. You probably have noticed that daytime temperatures here are already in the eighties even though it is only April. You also must remember how cold and harsh our winter winds are. Well-placed trees can lower air and surface temperatures by as much as 20 degrees in the summer and reduce wind speeds by as much as 50 percent. Tree-protected buildings have lower heating and air-conditioning costs, and tree-lined streets are more pleasant than bare streets come rain or shine.

A quieter, cleaner, prettier, more comfortable downtown is a downtown where people enjoy shopping and socializing. Make our city a better place for all of us. At the next City Council meeting, please vote to start a tree-planting program. We can surely grow from there!

Sincerely,



Joaquin Benites

# Persuasive Letter

## Definition

A **persuasive letter** is meant to change its readers' minds or to convince them to take action. It is usually focused on an issue that is very important to its writer—an issue that the writer has a strong opinion about.

Much persuasive writing uses the structure illustrated in the framework below. After you look over this framework, you can print it and use it as a guide when you write your own persuasive letters or essays.

## Framework

## Directions and Explanations

**Introduction**

- Attention-grabbing opening
- Opinion statement

**Start by getting your readers' attention** Beginning your letter with a brief story or a question can capture your readers' attention and help them understand why the issue is important.

**Write a clear opinion statement** Let your readers know what your issue is and what you think about it.



**Body**

- Reason #1 and supporting evidence
- Reason #2 and supporting evidence and so on

**Support your opinion with two or more good reasons** Write a paragraph for each reason. Arrange reasons in order of importance (starting with the most important) or in climactic order (ending with the most important).

**Use facts and examples** Support each reason with facts or specific examples.

**Elaborate** Explain the meaning of each fact and example or sum up your point.



**Conclusion**

- Summary of reasons
- Call to action

**Summarize your reasons** Write one sentence that restates your reasons.

**Tell readers what they should do or think about the issue** Your call to action should be reasonable and specific.