

Persuasive Paper

INTRODUCTION

Attention-grabbing anecdote—logical appeal

Opinion statement

BODY

First reason

Evidence: Expert opinion

Evidence: Fact and example

Evidence: Expert opinion

Evidence: Anecdote—emotional appeal

The Joystick of Learning

If you had five eggs and three were rotten, would you throw out all five? The directors of our local youth center might. Aiming to rid the center of violent video games, they have written a proposal that would ban *all* video games. Obviously the murder, mayhem, and massacres common to some video games have no place in a youth center, but not all video games are violent. In fact, many video games can have a positive impact on the lives of teenagers. Our youth center should not deprive local teenagers of the many potential benefits of video games just because some video games are violent.

Even though most video games are played for recreation, video games can also serve as especially effective learning tools. According to Sandra Calvert, a child psychologist at Georgetown University, video game playing can improve spatial skills that help children understand subjects such as geometry and geography. Video games also teach problem-solving and strategy skills. In fact, some simulation games teach students how to apply skills they learn in school. One game, *Transport Tycoon*, teaches players how to run a worldwide transportation corporation. According to Danish researcher and professor Carsten Jessen, *Transport Tycoon* is a good learning tool for high school students studying business and economics. Also, students who learn practical skills while playing games enjoy what they learn and are motivated to learn more. Tony Mendiola, a local high school student, says that

Persuasive Paper *continued*

Second reason

Evidence: Example

Evidence: Expert opinion

Third reason

Evidence: Example

Evidence: Expert opinion

Emotional appeal

playing *Transport Tycoon* and other games like it has helped him pay more attention in class. "I didn't enjoy economics before my uncle brought home those games, but now I'm more interested and even answer questions in class."

Video games can also help young people relax. For example, college students often meet with friends for an hour of video games between hours of studying. They say that the break is a good stress reliever. Researchers recognize that stress can begin long before college, however. Today's children also can be overworked and stressed. Professor Calvert believes that the combined benefits of relaxation and learning linked to video games can have a positive effect on students' lives.

Finally, video games also help young people develop important social skills. Usually when teenagers play video games, if only one player is operating the mouse or joystick, that player's friends watch, give advice, or learn tips and tricks from the player. Professor Jessen compares the interaction that goes on during video game playing with the interaction that previous generations enjoyed while swapping baseball cards, collecting stamps, and playing other non-computerized games. One goal of our youth center is "to provide a setting where youth can socialize in a relaxed environment." Do we want to ban an activity that promotes the center's goals?

Video games, like many activities, can be both fun and educational

Persuasive Paper *continued*

CONCLUSION

Restatement of opinion

Call to action

when enjoyed in moderation. Research has found that video games are excellent tools for teaching some skills and, therefore, can be valuable parts of the learning process. However, it's important to remember that our youth center was not designed to replace our schools. It should be a safe place for kids to meet, relax, and socialize as well as to learn new skills. Research has shown that video games play a positive role in promoting these types of interaction, so I urge our youth center board to reconsider its current proposal. Only ban the "rotten eggs" from our center. Let's keep the good ones.

Persuasive Paper

Definition

A **persuasive paper** tries to convince readers to change their opinion on an important issue. A good persuasive paper clearly states an opinion, supports that opinion with reasons and evidence, and sometimes urges readers to take a specific action.

Many persuasive papers use the structure illustrated in the framework below. Print this framework and use it as a guide when you write your own persuasive paper.

Framework

Directions and Explanations

Introduction

- Grab your readers' attention.
- Describe the issue and give background information.
- State your opinion.

Wave a red flag Surprise your readers with a startling example, a statistic, or an anecdote. Make them want to know what comes next.

Explain the issue Tell your readers about the issue, and provide any information that will help them understand the issue better.

Present your thesis Let your readers know what issue you are going to address and where you stand on that issue.



Body

- Present your first reason and give support.
- Present your second reason and give support, and so on.

Support your opinion with organized reasons Give convincing reasons that back up your opinion.

Provide evidence for each reason Use facts, anecdotes, and expert opinions to back up your reasons. Your evidence may include both logical and emotional appeals.



Conclusion

- Restate your opinion.
- Summarize reasons or include a call to action or both.

Bring it home Restate your opinion in a new way. You might also summarize your reasons or urge your readers to take action.