

What is Wicked Writers: Be the Change?

The **National Literacy Trust**, in partnership with the stage musical Wicked, have created a brand new **writing** competition all about creating a positive change for the environment. The competition opens on **29 January 2024** and entries must be submitted by **11 March 2024** for pupils to be in with a chance of winning.

The competition concludes with an exciting judging panel including children's author MG Leonard and incredible prizes including tickets to see **Wicked** at the Apollo Victoria Theatre in London, a writing workshop with the MG Leonard, and a delivery of amazing books for your pupils. All shortlisted students will see their writing in print in a publication which will be distributed to schools. You can find more information [here](#).

What's included in this resource?

- Resource aims
- How to use the resource
- Lesson outlines
 - Lesson one: Explore and analyse persuasive writing
 - Lesson two: Plan a piece of persuasive writing inspired by 'Be the Change'.
- Curriculum links
- Appendices:
 - Persuasive writing activity prompts

- Persuasive and emotive language word bank
- Wicked Writers competition planning template.

Resource aims

Wicked Writers: Be the Change celebrates the positive impact that people can have on the environment by engaging students aged 9-14 in persuasive writing. The lesson plans detailed in this resource develop pupils' writing and vocabulary skills as they embark on a journey to explore and analyse persuasive writing and create their own competition piece to inspire change.

How to use the resource:

Take your pupils on a writing journey through our lesson plans, which will help them work towards writing persuasively about environmental issues.

We have provided a variety of options for different ages and pupil needs. **Lesson One** gives pupils the chance to explore and deconstruct examples and examine features of persuasive writing, while **Lesson Two** provides time to plan and write persuasive features. Beyond this, teachers will need to allocate more time for writing, editing, and submitting the competition piece of work.

You may wish to spend longer on **Lesson One** if your students are unfamiliar with persuasive writing and its features. Decide beforehand how you would like your pupils to work. For example, pupils could work in pairs or small groups to share and plan ideas and then work independently.

The suggested lesson could be delivered during your literacy lessons over the course of the week, or you may wish to deliver the activities across a whole day. To create a successful piece of persuasive writing, follow the learning sequence below:

1. **Build confidence** when using persuasive language and develop key vocabulary
2. **Read and listen** to great examples of persuasive writing that have inspired positive change
3. **Analyse in detail** an example of persuasive writing
4. **Plan** a piece of persuasive writing
5. **Write** persuasively and ***be the change you wish to see!***

Lesson One: explore and analyse persuasive writing

In this lesson, students will explore and analyse examples of persuasive writing and language choices that have incited change, which they can use as inspiration for their own competition piece.

Persuasive writing is a form of nonfiction writing that is written to persuade a reader of a belief, an opinion or an idea. This type of writing uses authoritative, emotional, factual and logical arguments.

Persuasive/emotive language aims to persuade the reader or listener to share the writer or speaker's point of view, using language chosen specifically to create an emotional reaction.

Ask students to think of examples in pairs.

Starter activities

Build your students' persuasive vocabulary skills. Choose the activity that works best for your students from the options below.


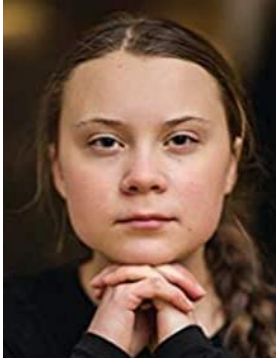

Would you rather? (Appendix one)	Invite pupils to discuss the <i>Would You Rather</i> questions in Appendix 1 and try to persuade others why their opinion is the right one. You may wish to do this in small groups, or as a class.
Discuss the statement (Appendix two)	Invite pupils to discuss the statements in Appendix 2 and decide whether they agree or disagree. Now challenge them to put forward a persuasive argument to either support or challenge one of the statements. What language is used when they express agreement with a statement? What language is used when they express disagreement? Map this on the board for students to refer to later.
Heads or tails (Appendix three)	Flip a coin to select a statement from the heads or tails table in Appendix 3 . For each statement selected, have half of your class argue for it and half against it. Students may want to use the word bank to support their answers.

All activity prompts can be found in the appendices alongside a word bank, which students may want to use to enhance their persuasive and emotive vocabulary.

Main learning activities

This year, the theme for the **Wicked Writers: Be the Change** competition is the **Environment**. Invite pupils to explore some great examples below. You will find

transcripts of these speeches in the resources pack. You may wish to both watch the videos and read the transcripts.

	<p><u>Leonardo DiCaprio</u> – <i>Climate Summit</i></p> <p>The Hollywood actor spoke persuasively about the climate crisis at the opening of the Climate Summit 2014 In his role as UN Messenger of Peace.</p> <p>Video here:</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vTyLSr_VCcg</p>
	<p><u>Greta Thunberg</u> – <i>UN Climate Conference</i></p> <p>16-year-old climate activist Greta Thunberg chastised world leaders at the UN Climate Action Summit, New York for failing younger generations by not taking sufficient steps to stop climate change.</p> <p>Video here:</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KAJsdgTPJpU</p>
	<p>Sir David Attenborough – <i>COP26 Summit</i></p> <p>The famous nature broadcaster spoke about the history and threat of climate change at the COP26 Climate Summit in 2021.</p> <p>Video here:</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o7EpiXViSIQ</p>

Working in small groups, invite pupils to select one example and explore the transcript together in greater depth, discussing the following:

- *What positive environmental change is the speaker calling for?*
- *What is the purpose of their speech?*
- *Who is their intended audience?*
- *Why is this change important to the speaker?*
- *How does the audience know the topic is important?*
- *What language has the speaker used to elicit emotion in the listener/reader?*
- *Do you notice anything interesting or unusual about the format of the speech?*
- *How do you feel after reading/listening to this persuasive piece?*

To further analyse this piece of persuasive writing, pupils will need six different coloured pens. With each colour, invite pupils to highlight key features found in their chosen persuasive writing example. You may want to explore and discuss each of the features first to elicit pupils' understanding. For support, consider modelling this activity before pupils work independently.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Facts ▪ Opinions ▪ Arguments ▪ Conclusion ▪ Emotive language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Modal verbs ▪ Literary language devices such as alliteration, metaphor, rhetorical questions, hyperbole, repetition and rule of three/triplets
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At the end of the session, invite pupils to feed back to the class in their small groups about the persuasive features they identified, explaining what made the speech an effective piece of persuasive writing. As pupils give their feedback, create a class toolkit that documents the features of persuasive writing with examples for students to use in their own pieces.

Plenary

Choose a persuasive writing feature that you have focused on today, for example emotive language or rhetoric. Provide pupils with a statement from one of the starter activities and ask them to write a persuasive sentence for or against the statement that uses the chosen language feature. If your pupils require more support with persuasive writing, this activity could be extended into a whole lesson to provide students with more time to practise using persuasive language devices.

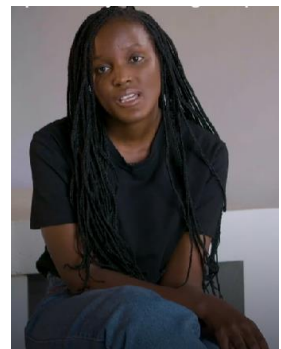
Lesson Two: plan a piece of persuasive writing using the prompt 'Be the Change'.

In this lesson students will explore the idea of writing persuasively to motivate others to be the change they wish to see on the theme of the **environment**. They will consider environmental issues they feel passionately about and plan their writing for the competition.

Starter

Watch the video:

Invite pupils to watch the video featuring climate activist Vanessa Nakate: 'You Cannot Leave This Responsibility to Young People.' Link [here](#).



Main activity

The call to action '**Be the Change**' encourages students to write about something they are passionate about that could motivate their audience to change something. For this competition we are focusing on the **environment**. Think about Greta Thunberg and Vanessa Nakate for a moment, they are passionate about preserving the environment. Their speeches have inspired other young people across the world to stand up to governments and politicians asking them to champion environmental action. Ask pupils to discuss with their peers what environmental issues they are passionate about and why. This could

be about something they observed in their communities or wider issues concerning the planet.

You could then ask pupils to share their ideas in one of the following ways:

Post-it notes

Ask each pupil to write their passions and how they'd like their audience to take action on a post-it note. You can then collect them together and explore them as a class.

Partner talk

Ask students to work in pairs to discuss a change they'd like to see and how they'd like others to take action. Once they have done this, ask pupils to present their partner's ideas to the rest of the class.

Class mind map

Ask your pupils to add their idea for change and call to action onto a class mind map, then invite them to discuss the chosen ideas further.

Ideas students might feel passionate about may include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Global warming ▪ Air pollution ▪ Plastic pollution ▪ Overpopulation ▪ Flooding ▪ Renewable energy ▪ Food insecurity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fossil fuels ▪ Deforestation ▪ Ocean acidification ▪ Access to clean water ▪ Fast fashion and textile waste 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Endangered species ▪ Littering ▪ Recycling ▪ Food waste ▪ Melting ice caps and sea level rise ▪ Overfishing
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Once pupils have a topic for their persuasive writing piece, ask pupils to use the template sheet found in **Appendix 5** to plan their competition piece.

For support: you may wish to model completing the planning format to the class by choosing a topic that all pupils can provide ideas towards.

Pupils who need extra support could use the class topic and the shared contributions as inspiration.

Plenary

Ask pupils to present their plans to each other (you could do this in pairs, small groups or as a class). Invite the pupils to share what they would like to change when it comes to the environment and what they will be trying to persuade their audience to do. Ask them to also share the ways they plan to persuade their audience i.e. *what type of language will they use? What emotion do they want their audience to feel? How will they achieve this? Are there any facts or phrases that they think will be particularly powerful?* After presenting ideas, pupils might

want time to return to their plans to edit them based on the feedback they receive or to add extra detail.

Next steps

Once pupils have finalised their plan, encourage them to use all they have learned about persuasive and emotive vocabulary to write their competition piece. Their writing could motivate others to **be the change they wish to see!**

Curriculum Links

KS2 English programme of study (in the national curriculum in England):

Writing composition

Pupils should be taught to plan their writing by:

- identifying the audience and the purpose of the writing
- noting and developing initial ideas, drawing on reading and research where necessary.

KS3 English Programme of Study (in the national curriculum in England):

Writing

Pupils should be taught to:

- Write accurately, fluently, effectively and at length for pleasure and information
- Write for a wide range of purposes and audiences, including: stories, scripts, poetry and other imaginative writing
- Consider how their writing reflects the audiences and purposes for which it was intended.

Language, literacy and communication (in the curriculum for Wales):

Expressing ourselves through language is key to communication		
Progression step two	Progression step three	Progression step four
I can talk to plan writing and write for different purposes and audiences.	I can use familiar <i>idiomatic language</i> and appropriate <i>register</i> in my communication.	I can use familiar <i>idiomatic language</i> and appropriate <i>register</i> in my communication.
I can explain information and share ideas, opinions and feelings using relevant vocabulary.	I can interact with others, talk and write about my thoughts, feelings and opinions, and show empathy and respect.	I can share my thoughts, feelings and opinions with others using a range of techniques for different effect, and show empathy and respect.
I can communicate using an increasingly varied and precise vocabulary.	I can adapt and manipulate language, and make appropriate choices about vocabulary, <i>idiomatic language</i> and <i>syntax</i> to express myself with fluency and clarity.	I can make informed choices about vocabulary, <i>idiomatic language</i> and <i>syntax</i> in order to express myself with fluency, clarity and accuracy.
I can use single and multi-clause sentences, and make choices to meet the intended audience and purpose.	I can recognise the appropriate language for different audiences and purposes, varying my expression, vocabulary and tone to engage the audience.	I can select and adapt the appropriate language for a range of audiences and purposes, conveying meaning effectively to the audience.

Literacy and English experience and outcomes (in the curriculum for excellence, Scotland):

	Second level	Third level	Fourth level
Creating texts	Learn to use language and style in a way which engages and/or influences their reader.	Engage and/or influence readers through their use of language, style and tone as appropriate to genre	
	Persuade, argue, explore issues or express an opinion using relevant supporting detail and/or evidence.	Persuade, argue, evaluate, explore issues or express an opinion using a clear line of thought, relevant supporting detail and/or evidence.	Persuade, argue, evaluate, explore issues or express and justify opinions within a convincing line of thought, using relevant supporting detail and/or evidence.
	Explore the elements which writers use in different genres. They can use what they learn to create stories, poems and plays with an interesting and appropriate structure, interesting characters and/or settings which come to life.		

Language and literacy (in the curriculum for Northern Ireland):

KS2

During Key Stage 2 most pupils should:

- use a widening range of vocabulary in their writing to using more imaginative and increasingly precise vocabulary
- write for a variety of purposes and audiences, selecting, planning and using appropriate style and form
- use the skills of planning, revising and redrafting to improve their writing, including that which they have composed digitally
- use a variety of stylistic features to create mood and effect.

KS3

Language and Literacy

During Key Stage 3 most pupils should:

- be able to talk about, plan and edit work
- communicate information, meaning, feelings, imaginings and ideas in a clear and organised way
- develop, express and present ideas in a variety of forms and formats, using traditional and digital resources, for different audiences and purposes
- write with increasing accuracy and proficiency.

Appendix 1

Would you rather...?	
...be able to read minds or talk to animals?	...never have advertisements again or never have to queue again?
...discover humans on another planet or figure out how to extend human life by 100 years?	...have a successful podcast or a successful YouTube channel?
...be a successful artist or a successful business owner?	...visit every country in the world or be able to play every musical instrument?

Appendix 2

Discuss the statement
Everyone around the world should have access to clean water.
Endangered species are more important than large companies making a profit.
Taking care of the environment is entirely in the hands of adults.
We don't need to worry about problems like flooding unless it's affecting our own neighbourhood.
The climate crisis will affect everyone equally.

Appendix 3

Heads	Tails
Eating insects would help reduce meat consumption	Literacy is more important than maths.
We should all buy less clothes	Xbox is better than PlayStation.
All public transport should be free.	Pupils under the age of 18 should not be allowed on the internet.
The UK should invest in recycling more.	Pizza is better than chocolate.
We should all be vegetarians	Pupils should not wear school uniforms

Appendix 4

Persuasion and emotive language word bank

Positive/for		Negative/against	
Commands: Write, do, act, stop, discover		Commands: Write, do, act, stop, discover	
Advantage	Certain	Abolish	Aggravate
Accurate	Confident	Appalled	Careless
Convenient	Definitely	Damaging	Eliminate
Effective	Guaranteed	Harmful	Inconsiderate
Implore	Proven	Insensitive	Offend
Safe	Strongly suggest	Provoke	Severe
Trustworthy	Urge	Unreliable	Unstable

Appendix 5

Write persuasively to motivate others to make a positive change related to an environmental issue that is important to you. This might be a change you want to see in your school, your local community, the United Kingdom, or the world.

Use the planning template below to plan your persuasive piece

Planning Template



Theme:	
Key facts:	
Introduction	Who is my piece intended for and what is its purpose?
Argument one	Why is this theme important to you?

Argument two	Why might this be important to others?
Argument three	What needs to change and why?
Conclusion	What will your closing remarks be?

What literacy techniques are you going to use?	Alliteration	
	Repetition	
	Metaphors	
	Exaggeration	
What emotive language are		

you going to use?	
Further information you may want to include	