



## **Middle and High School Persuasive Writing Project Teacher Notes**

This project involves having the students write a persuasive essay on a Bible topic. Learning objectives for students are:

1. Gain knowledge of the subject matter.
2. Learn to use Bible reference tools such as concordances, dictionaries, and Greek lexicons. If available, learn to use computer-based resources.
3. Be able to think critically and clearly.
4. Be able to write clearly.
5. Be able to build persuasive arguments.
6. Increase organizational skills.
7. Understand why persuasive arguing is important to converting people to Christ.

Students will likely not do the work required at home. For students who have never written a paper before, they will require close supervision. Therefore, ample time should be provided in class to do the work. Some students may choose to complete portions of their work outside of class, but make sure they bring it in and check it.

### **Preparation**

Despite the efforts of prior teachers, most middle school students, and many high school students, do not know how to organize themselves to accomplish a longer term task. Students need to learn to break down larger assignments into smaller tasks. Prepare ahead of time a notebook with 5 divider labels for each for each student. The dividers should be labeled as follows: Instructions, Facts, Outline, Draft, and Final. Place a copy of the student instructions inside the instruction section. Place wide ruled notebook paper in each of the remaining sections. You will also need to provide the students with notecards.

### **Classroom Discussion and Instructions**

Introduce the assignment to the students. Help the students understand that what they will be doing is nothing they are not capable of doing, so they shouldn't be intimidated. Ask the students if they have ever tried to persuade someone to do something. A good example is a child trying to convince his parents to change their minds on some decision he doesn't like. Explain that this is "persuasive arguing", and that humans learn to do this naturally.

Explain that our job is to go out and teach others about Christ (Mark 16:15-16, Matthew 28:19-20). Persuasive speaking and writing is key to spreading the Gospel of Christ. The Apostle Paul engaged in such persuasive arguments in Acts 26. Have the class look up this chapter and read it. Paul declared that he was not mad, but spoke "words of truth and reason". King Agrippa told Paul, "You almost persuade me to become a Christian." Ask the students if they have ever had someone at school tell them something that was contrary to what the Bible says. Explain that



what we will be learning here will help them have discussions with their friends and convince them of what the Bible really says and that they should obey it.

There is no required length in a persuasive essay, however most are about 5 paragraphs long. These essays usually begin with an introductory paragraph that introduces the concept about which the paper will attempt to convince the reader. The essay will typically contain 2-4 paragraphs providing evidence and logical arguments to support the concept, and a conclusion which restates the concept, succinctly states the key pieces of evidence, and draws a final conclusion that appeals to the reader to accept the conclusion. Point out that the goal is to convince the reader in as few and concise words as possible. It is therefore very important to make sure that all information in the paper is pertinent toward the subject of the essay. Students should not include broad generalizations, personal opinions, and/or arguments on other subjects. Only relevant evidence and examples should be presented. Evidence should be in the form of scriptural references. All examples must also include scriptural references.

The topic of this essay will be obedience. The position students are to convince the reader of is, "Obedience to God is necessary to be saved." Essays should answer the following questions:

1. What is obedience?
2. Why is it important to understand obedience?
3. Does God require obedience?
4. What are we to obey?
5. What happens to those who obey God?
6. What happens to those who disobey God?
7. What should our response be given this knowledge?

Hand out the notebooks now. Explain the paper writing procedure to be followed, demonstrating where each piece of work goes in the notebook. The paper writing procedure to be used is taught in many public schools today, so the students should be somewhat familiar with it. The procedure is:

1. Collect facts supporting the paper position; write each fact on a note card and stick on paper in the "Facts" section of the notebook. The specific facts to be collected are defined by the general outline below.
2. Organize facts into a logical order using the chosen outline. Review for flow and completeness.
3. Write an outline containing all the facts collected. Review outline for completeness.
4. Write a draft paper from the outline. Review draft for completeness and grammar.
5. Correct the draft to create the final paper.

Persuasive papers need to be organized in a way that builds a case. There are numerous ways to organize a paper. Students may choose either of the two following general paper structures, or for more experienced students, they may create their own general structure. Regardless of the choice, all students will rewrite the general outline to contain their specific facts.



## Example Outline 1

- I. Introduction
  - A. *Declaration of the importance of obedience*
  - B. *Summary of evidence to be presented that backs up the declaration*
- II. Law and Commandments
  - A. *Definitions of law and commandments*
  - B. *God's laws for man*
    - i. Scriptures showing we are under law today
    - ii. Four examples of commands we have been given to follow today
- III. Obedience and Disobedience
  - A. *Definitions*
    - i. Obedience
    - ii. Disobedience
  - B. *God's Promises*
    - i. To the obedience
    - ii. To the disobedience
  - C. *Examples: command, person's actions, result/consequences*
    - i. Disobedience example 1
    - ii. Disobedience example 2
    - iii. Obedience example 1
    - iv. Obedience example 2
- IV. Conclusion
  - i. Restatement the importance of obedience
  - ii. Summarization of the key pieces of evidence
  - iii. What one's response should be, given this knowledge



## **Example Outline 2**

- I. Introduction
  - A. *Declaration of the importance of obedience*
  - B. *Summary of evidence to be presented that backs up the declaration*
- II. Law and Commandments
  - A. *Definitions of law and commandments*
  - B. *God's laws for man*
    - i. *Scriptures showing we are under law today*
    - ii. *Four examples of commands we have been given to follow today*
- III. Obedience
  - A. *Definition of obedience*
  - B. *God's Promises to the obedient*
  - C. *Examples: command, person's actions, result/consequences*
    - i. *Obedience example 1*
    - ii. *Obedience example 2*
- IV. Disobedience
  - A. *Definition of disobedience*
  - B. *God's Promises to the disobedient*
  - C. *Examples: command, person's actions, result/consequences*
    - i. *Disobedience example 1*
    - ii. *Disobedience example 2*
- V. Conclusion
  - i. *Restatement the importance of obedience*
  - ii. *Summarization of the key pieces of evidence*
  - iii. *What one's response should be, given this knowledge*

Visit [BibleSchoolResources.Net](http://BibleSchoolResources.Net) for more free Bible school materials.