* **Planning and Research**

Persuasive writing requires taking a side on a controversial topic and convincing readers to join that side. You must choose a position (your stand on the topic).

After choosing a position, you will gather supporting evidence including relevant facts, interesting statistics, quotes from experts and personal comments.

**For example**, a student writing to convince the administration to improve school lunches could get statistics from the Food and Drug Administration website, facts from a nutrition book in the library and expert quotes from the school's home economics teacher as evidence.

* **The Introduction**

The first few sentences should grab the readers’ attention with vivid word choices and figurative language that sets a tone. The **introductory paragraph clearly introduces the essay's topic and it ends with a statement of your position on the topic**.

**For example**, the statement might say “Middle school students should be provided cafeteria lunches that appeal to the tastes of young teenagers and provide a nutritious meal.”

* **The Body**

Each paragraph begins with a topic sentence (your argument) that clearly states one reason why the reader should agree with the student's claim. The rest of the paragraph presents supporting evidence from the research that elaborates on the topic sentence.

**For example**, the school lunch topic: *first body* paragraph might focus on comparing the calories, fat and sodium content of current school lunches with healthier alternatives using statistical information. The *next paragraph* could discuss how healthier food can also taste better using quotes from a home economics teacher.

**You are also required** to include a counter argument (rebuttal) paragraph in which the writer anticipates possible counter claims against the statement and uses evidence to explain why the counter claims are not valid/true.

* **The Closing**

The closing is the last chance you have to make a memorable statement about the topic that will convince the reader to think or act differently, focusing on a call to action in a sentence or two that states the change the student has argued for in the essay.

**For example**, a persuasive essay about cafeteria food could end with "The principal and school board should require the middle school cafeteria to revise its menu to reflect healthy choices that will also be popular with students who eat there every day."