

21CLD Learning Activity Description

1. Title of Learning Activity & Average Age of Students

Title: School Change

Average Age of Students: 11

2. What did you hope your students would learn from this learning activity?

Students are learning how to write a persuasive essay. They are learning how to frame an argument about something they think is important. I want students to learn that writing has power, so we are mailing our letters to the school leader.

3. Did you have learning goals from more than one discipline (for example, literature and history, or science and math) for this learning activity?

No.

4. Were students required to work in pairs or as a group on any part of this learning activity?

No

Working in groups was optional. Please describe below the work that students did together.

Working in groups was *required*. Please describe below the work that students did together.

No.

5. Were students allowed to work with technology (ICT) such as computers or digital cameras for any part of this learning activity? Please describe.

- No technology was used for this learning activity.
- Students *could* use technology for this activity
- Students were *required* to use technology for this activity

No technology was used for this learning activity.

6. What criteria did you use to judge the quality of students' work on this learning activity? Were students aware of the criteria in advance of completing the learning activity?

I used the six point writing rubric to grade their letters. This rubric was given to students prior to them submitting work.

7. How long did the learning activity take?

- a. Completed in a single class period
- b. Completed in 2-4 days
- c. Required one week or more to complete

8. What verbal instructions did you give to students?

Think about your audience: make sure the reasons you describe for making the change you propose will be compelling to the school leader. Start by creating pre-writing notes to organize your thoughts. Check carefully to be sure your sentences are complete, and your spelling and punctuation are correct.

9. Is there any other information you would like to include to help another teacher using this learning activity be successful?

For Part 1, I provided a set of letters to the editor that have been published in the local newspaper. Students analyzed the letters, but I did not collect their work. Rather, the whole class discussed the strengths and weaknesses of each sample and came up with a list of the most important features.

I ask students to use the six point rubrics to score their own work before I give them my score. I'm helping them to understand how the six points are applied, and how they can improve their own writing.

School Change: What Are Your Ideas?

PART 1. Analyzing

Compare any two (2) sample letters from the set I provided. Does each letter convince you?

List the strengths and weaknesses of each. Try to develop two principles of good persuasive writing based on your analysis. Be prepared to share your answers during our class brainstorm.

PART 2. Letter Writing

The school leader is looking for ways to improve our school, without increasing cost. He has asked our class for ideas.

Choose something about the school that you would like to change, and figure out what you could say to the school leader to persuade him to make the change you want. Write a letter to the school leader explaining the change and giving three reasons to make that change. Write neatly and be careful with spelling and punctuation because we will give the letters to him so he can consider our ideas when he decides what to do.

Process:

1. Decide on a change you would like to make.
2. Generate reasons why the change you want would benefit the school.
3. Decide which 3 reasons would be most likely to persuade the school leader to do what you want.
4. Write a persuasive letter to the school leader using the principles of persuasive writing we generated as a class. You should devote one paragraph to each of your three reasons.

