

Part 2: A teacher's guide

Teach 8th - 9th graders how to create efficient persuasive texts in five lessons.

▪ The theoretical foundation for this teaching unit

Scaffolding:

In Lev Vygotsky's theory about learning, Vygotsky talks about 'the zone of proximal development' (ZPD). This refers to the zone in which the students are highly challenged yet *supported* or scaffolded at the same time. This support system is a temporary assistance meant to equip the learner with skills, in order for him to be able to accomplish similar tasks alone (B. Derewianka, 2016, s. 54).

Functional grammar:

The book *Grammar and Meaning* explains grammar as a toolkit that equips the user to make meaning and achieve social goals. The theory on a functional approach to grammar acknowledges that language is organised according to its function, that a text is language used to achieve a specific social purpose, and that grammar is a set of resources used to organise words into meaning making sentences. The register is understood as the context that influences the meaning of text and is identified in three aspects: field (what topic), tenor (who are taking part) and mode (how the language is organized). This means that teaching functional grammar improves the student's understanding of the text as a whole (Humphrey, Droga, & Feez, 2012).

Focus on pair and group work:

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory points out that language development arises as a result of social interaction. This means that a learner in his ZPD who interacts with an interlocutor in a learning situation, can perform at a higher level because of scaffolding offered by a teacher or peers (Spada & Lightbown, 2013, s. 118). Other theories such as Pauline Gibbons theory on collaborative work points out that learners who interact with other learners are more likely to develop language since the amount of language input/output is increased (Gibbons, 2015, s. 49,50).

Before, during and after reading activities:

Pauline Gibbons theory on before, during and after reading activities suggests that a reading activity should be scaffolded by a number of activities to assure students' comprehension of text. Activities such as brainstorming acknowledges the student's in-the-head knowledge and connects prior knowledge with new information. (Gibbons, 2015) *Before reading* a text, the students should be made familiar with the topic, in order for them to comprehend the meaning of text. To ease a demanding reading task, the teacher should help students build up necessary linguistic knowledge so they may read with comprehension. *During reading activities* should engage the readers with the text and has the purpose for learners to become more efficient readers. *After reading activities* often works as a springboard for specific language learning, such as focus on functional grammar, vocabulary, etc. The students can also respond creatively to the text or focus on specific information gained from the text (Gibbons, 2015, s. 159).

The teaching-learning cycle (TLC):



The teaching-learning cycle is a five-stage scaffolding framework designed to develop students' knowledge in a particular curriculum field as well as enhance their language and literacy skills. (Derewianka & Jones, 2016)

1. Building knowledge of the field
2. Supported reading
3. Modelling/deconstruction
4. Joint construction
5. Independent use of the genre

▪ Implementation of the theory

Learning goals:

This teacher's guide is created according to the Danish curriculum standards with focus on the competence area written communication (undervisningsministeriet, 2019).

Learning aims: The students can produce a persuasive written text on a self-chosen topic.

The material will provide a linguistic focus and the students will learn about text coherency and functional grammar.

Overall structure of the unit

TLC is the framework of this teaching unit since the five lessons matches the TLC five-stages. In order to reach the goal of each stage, before, during and after reading activities were incorporated. Before activities in lesson 1 and 2: class discussion, floorstorming, look up the words and predict from title. During reading activities in lesson 2: reading in turns, give each paragraph a title and during reading discussion. After reading activities in lesson 3, 4 and 5: class discussion, an expert not an expert, turn up the language volume, match paragraph openers, find and mark, class brainstorming, collaborative writing task and independent writing task.

Pair and group work

to increase the student's input and output most tasks are created as pair work or groupwork. The students don't simply work in silence, they read for each other, negotiate meaning of text and share their opinions. The joint construction lesson is a collaborative whole-class writing task. The teacher's role is minimized to shaping students' language and modelling the text structure. The students freely discuss what they want to add to the text. The high level of peer scaffolding should enable all students to take part in the class discussion.

Elements of functional grammar

The teaching unit draws attention to aspects of functional grammar in several tasks. In the modelling/deconstruction phase, students are asked to discuss the text as a whole, to look into *the genre*. The students identify the specific purpose of text and learn which 'tools' from the grammatical toolkit that equips them the best to create a similar text. One 'tool' is awareness of *the tenor*, in this case the writer/reader relationship in persuasive texts. This aspect is addressed in lesson 3 *an expert not an expert*. The students are asked to compare an objective and subjective statement and to discuss which statement is most successful in persuading others. In this task the students become readers not writers, to enhance their understanding of the writers need to think as readers when writing persuasive texts. The students look into the effect of *turning up the language* and how modal verbs can affect the level of solidarity created between writer and reader. Lesson 3 part 2 focuses on *the mode* of text. The students learn how to organize cohesive persuasive texts and especially how to signal the organisation of text as seen in the tasks *match paragraph openers* and *find and mark*. This skill is important for lessons 4 and 5, however overall knowledge about text openers and paragraph openers also helps the students to develop good reading strategies, such as skimming and scanning a text more effectively.

Bibliografi

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1st lesson introduction to the topic building knowledge of the field

▪ **Class discussion:** In this unit you will teach about bullying and how to argue for your opinions and get your meaning across. Use questions such as **'why do you find it important to be able to speak your mind?'** and **'why do we need we talk about bullying?'** to connect the students' prior knowledge with their learning expectations.

- Activity: Floorstorming* (write the students' response to these visuals on the blackboard)

*The teachers create visual displays of images related to the text that is going to be studied, which are arranged on the floor. Students walk through the display and respond to it.



- Pair work

1. The students look up the meaning of these words and write the Danish translation in the box

| | |
|---|--|
| degrading comments mixed emotions betrayal teen suicide cyber bullying harass irresponsible several possible solutions bad language list concerned | |
|---|--|

2nd lesson the text supported reading

The students will now read a text called *Solutions for Facebook cyber bullying*, written by a teenager. But first a before-reading task, the students predict from the title

- Pair work

1. The students discuss what they think the text is about. What do they think the message of this text is?

The students look at the title and one sentence from each paragraph in the text:

This is one of the many possible cases of teen suicide due to cyber bullying

I know of families that won't let their kids on Facebook because they are concerned that their teen may be bullied.

Although cyber bullying is a problem, there are several possible solutions to this concern.

one of the solutions... is to get Facebook to hire a monitoring staff (overvågnings personale)

My next solution is to set up education and awareness

My third and final solution is to... let parents' access and see into the world of their teen's social life

2. Read the text

The students take it in turns to read one paragraph at a time. They should make sure both of them understand the contents. The students give each paragraph a title and writes it down.

Text: http://www.teenink.com/hot_topics/bullying/article/403212/Solutions-For-Facebook-Cyber-Bullying

3. The students discuss the text with their partner



useful phrases for discussion

1 What do you think is the most important message of this text?

2 Which solution do you think will be most successful in preventing cyber bullying?

3 How would you feel if your parents could see ALL that you wrote on Facebook?

4 Do you have another solution for preventing cyber bullying?

4. Class sum up

Do the students agree on what the most important message of the text is?

3rd lesson

how the text makes meaning

modelling/deconstruction

▪ **Class discussion**

What do the students remember from the text they read in the previous lesson? Ask the students to identify what kind of text *Solutions for Facebook cyber bullying* is.

This lesson is divided into two parts. First you will teach identifying and using **persuasive text** patterns. Then you will teach how to organise persuasive texts in text and paragraph openers.

Part 1

How to persuade with language

▪ Pair work

1. An expert or not an expert

The students compare two sentences.

First they look at this sentence from *solutions for Facebook cyber bullying*:

“According to *safety.lovetoknow.com/cyber_bullying_statistics*, 56% occurs from a chatting website like Facebook or Myspace, 49% Instant Messaging and texting, 28% from e-mail.”

Then they look at this similar sentence:

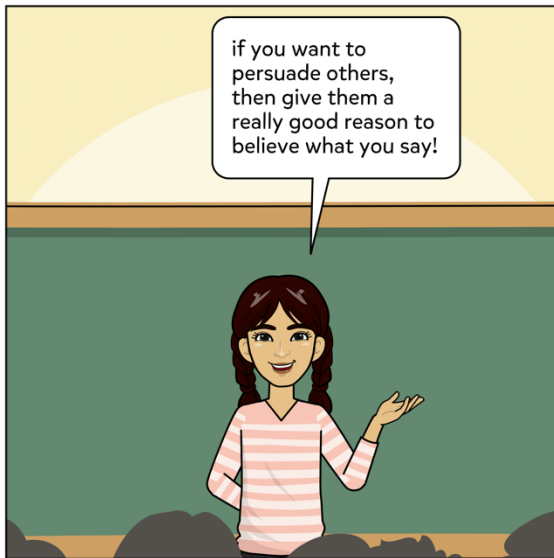
“I believe that 56% occurs from a chatting website like Facebook or Myspace, 49% Instant Messaging and texting, 28% from e-mail”



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1.1 The students discuss:

Which of these two sentences do you think are more successful in persuading others?



Try this!
Get an expert on your team for your next persuasive text and use objective statements.

Objective statements:
Experts agree (that)...
According to....
Studies show (that)...

subjective statements:
I think (that)...
I believe (that)...

2. Turn up the language volume



Still in pair work the students put these modal verbs in this sentence "we ____ make a difference" and organises them according to their persuasive force.

| | | | | | |
|------|--------|-------|--------|------|--------|
| can | might | would | should | must | could |
| weak | —————→ | | | | strong |
| | | | | | |

1.1 They find and mark modal verbs in the text *solutions for Facebook cyber bullying*. They try to exchange (bytte ud) some modal verbs to turn up the language.

1.2 They discuss how changing the modal verb effects the meaning.

▪ **Class sum up** on both exercises

Part 2 How to organise persuasive texts

Explain to the students
What are text openers and paragraph openers?

Text openers and paragraph openers guide the reader through the text and makes it easier and faster to find the specific information you are looking for.
Here is an example. The text opener is marked **red** and the paragraph openers marked **blue**:

*Trail bikes in national parks have become a huge problem for park rangers and **there are many reasons why they should be totally banned.***

*the first reason is that trail bikers cause lots of **damage** to the native plants in the area...*

The second reason is the **noise** from the train bikes...

Another reason is the **danger** of riding in National parks...

- Pair work

1. **Match paragraph openers.**

The students choose from the 3 texts below and match it to the correct paragraph opener.
The students read the paragraphs in turns.

...This noise is very annoying and spoils the peace and quiet of the park for visitors. It also scares many of the native animals away from their natural environment.

...Riders make tracks through the bush and destroy many of the plants and trees. The tracks are used again and again which makes it hard for the plants to grow back. This also causes severe soil erosion.

...Many riders go to isolated and rugged parts of the park. This increases the risk of an injury and means that riders are a long way from help if they have an accident.

2. **The students find and mark.**

They find and mark the **text opener** and **paragraph openers** in the text *Solutions for Facebook cyber bullying*.

- **Class sum up** on both exercises

4th lesson

let's create a text!

Joint construction

Class brainstorm. Find a topic for the collaborative writing task. It could be something the students want to change about their school. E.g. Why we should have longer breaks? The school should serve healthier food! Etc. This writing task may require collaborative research.

Remind the students that the text should include...

Objective statements:

Experts agree (that)...

According to....

Studies show (that)...

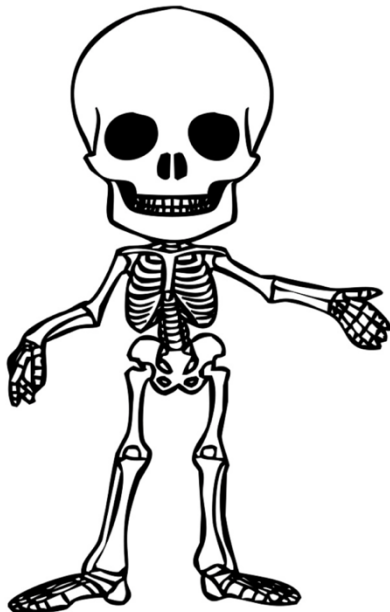
Note: shape the text as it

unfolds. *Can we say that in fewer words?*

How about we move this sentence here? Etc.

Text opener and **paragraph openers.**

Use the skeleton text structure in the collaborative writing task.



Skeleton text:

Topic: healthy food

According to experts...

there are many reasons that we should be served healthier food in school

The first reason is...

The second reason is that...

The final reason is that...

I believe that the strongest argument is that...

5th lesson

make your own persuasive text

independent use of the genre

▪ Group work

The students work together 3-4 people and find an issue they want to discuss and creates three arguments.

They research the topic and find out what experts have to say about the issue. They write the research and arguments down.



▪ Independent student work

The students use the structure from the skeleton text to create their own persuasive texts on the issue discussed in group work. The text should be 1 page long and include:

1. at least one objective statement
2. three arguments
3. their own opinion on the issue