

Subject Areas: English/Language Arts and Social Studies

Grade Level: 6 – 12 (ages 11-18)

Time: At least three 45-minute class periods; time outside of class as necessary

Lesson Objective:

Students will be better able to plan and compose persuasive speeches or essays.

Common Core State Standards¹:

Writing Standards for Grades 6-12 in English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Standard 1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

Standard 4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Standard 6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

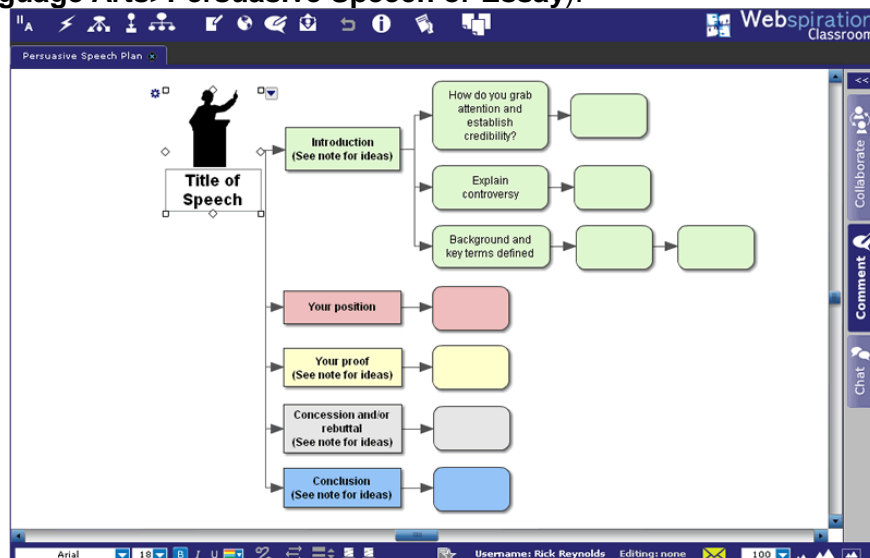
Listening and Speaking Standards for Grades 6-12 in English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Standard 4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Standard 5. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations. (Option)

Overview:

Public speaking is one of the most challenging tasks for many students. Fortunately, some of the anxiety can be reduced when students know they are organized and prepared, and the *Persuasive Speech or Essay* template will help students do just that (**Webspiration Classroom™ Starter> Templates>Language Arts>Persuasive Speech or Essay**).

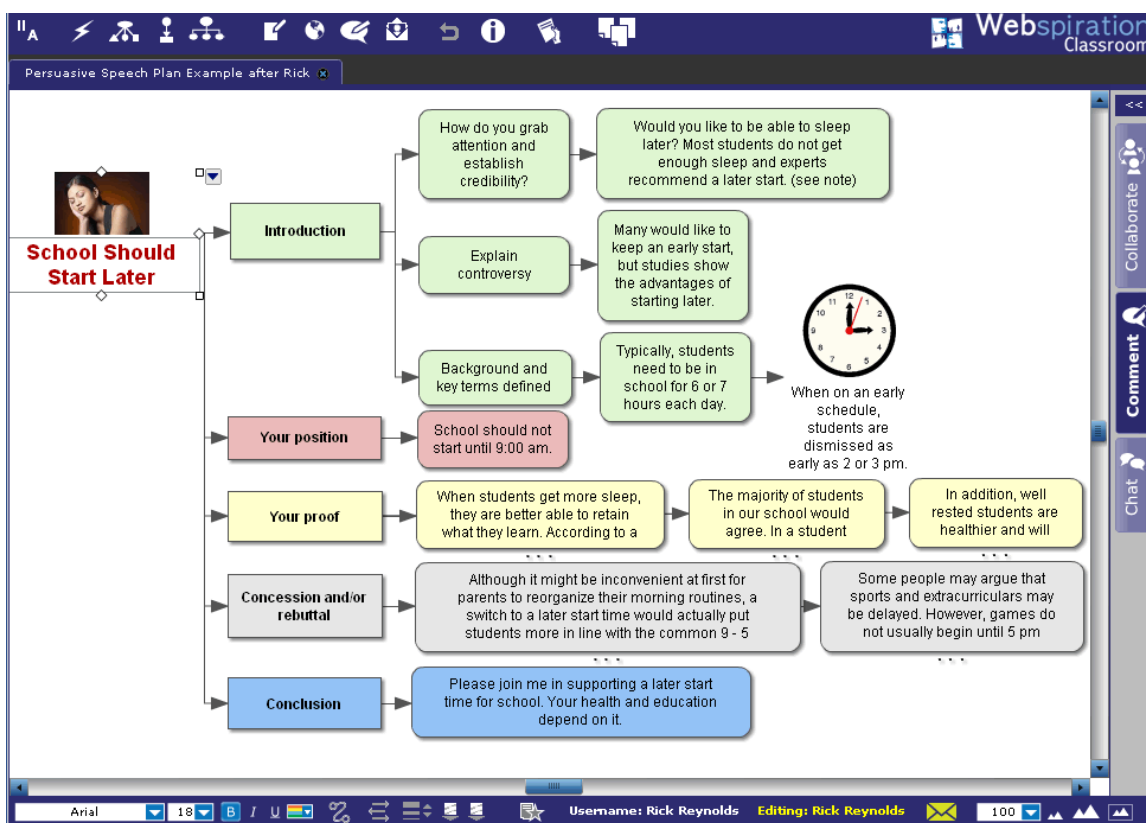


Preparation:

- This lesson requires Internet access and the Webspiration Classroom software application published by Inspiration® Software, Inc. It can be accessed by visiting <http://www.webspirationclassroom.com>.
- Access to library resources and/or the Internet would also be helpful for student research.

Lesson:

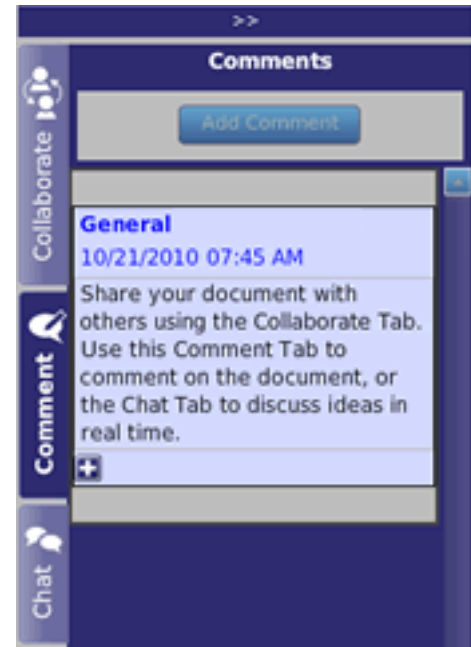
- Explain that Webspiration Classrooms offers many tools and templates to help with the writing process, including the *Persuasive Speech or Essay* template which they will be using today. Open it and explain the areas of the template to the students. Be sure students understand that they will first develop this plan and then compose the entire speech before they finally deliver it. Specify whether they will need to practice delivering their speeches from note cards, from an outline or from memory. If you would like students to use visuals as suggested in Standard 5 of the Listening and Speaking Standards, make your expectations clear.
- Open the *Persuasive Speech or Essay Example (Webspiration Classroom Starter>Learn to Use>Examples>Language Arts>Persuasive Speech Plan Example)* so students have an idea of a finished diagram. Be sure to point out the wording of the concession and rebuttal example, as this step is often quite challenging for students. Explain that acknowledging the opposition's viewpoint and forcefully arguing against it is one of the strongest persuasive strategies they can use.



- Prewriting: Have students select controversial topics. Then they can brainstorm ideas and record preliminary research about it in the blank area to the side of the diagram using the **RapidFire®** tool. It is important for students to do this preliminary research using library resources or on the Internet to ensure there is ample evidence to support their positions. They can paste Internet addresses which have valuable information into this brainstorming area for later use.


4. Once students have completed this prewriting, they are ready to develop a position statement. Explain to them that a position statement is normally one sentence that states what one will attempt to argue in the speech.

5. Explain that throughout the prewriting and writing process, students should obtain feedback from the teacher and their peers using the collaboration tools. Documents can be shared with others using the **Collaborate Tab**. The **Comment Tab** can be used to comment on the document, or the **Chat Tab** can be used, if it is turned on at your school, to discuss ideas in real time. This will be particularly useful as students write their concessions and rebuttals. Peers can raise counterarguments to each other's positions which must then be logically rebutted.



6. Students can complete the diagrams and go to **Outline View** to finish organizing and begin drafting their speeches or essays. Be sure to emphasize that they should keep a careful record of the sources they use for a Works Cited or Bibliography.
7. If students will be completing persuasive essays, they can download their projects to Inspiration® or a word processor, or transfer it to a Google Doc to complete the writing process. Be sure to point out to students that written essays are usually more formal than speeches. Therefore, students should avoid the first and second person. A formal Works Cited and parenthetical documentation also become that much more important.

Adaptations / Extensions:

- Complete diagrams or outlines can also be used as visual aids during persuasive presentations. Subtopics can be hidden or viewed using the **Subtopic Quick Controls**  to allow focused attention on the topics being discussed.
- Inspiration® may be used to help students brainstorm their ideas the topic. Students could begin the process in **Diagram View** by using the **RapidFire**® tool to quickly record what they know about the topic.
- This lesson can be used in any content area that requires students to speak or write persuasively.

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