USING ONLINE MEDIA TO WRITE EXTENDED PERSUASIVE TEXT

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Can online media be used as a tool in the process of writing persuasive text? This article provides strategies for using online media to write persuasively and links the persuasive tasks to the Common Core State Standards.

Stepping into my local gym I was confronted with a bemusing sight. Five girls sat in the lobby furiously texting online friends, while completely ignoring their "in the flesh" friends sitting just across the table. Of course, this scene isn't that unusual, and it is just one way our ubiquitous screens have changed social practice. Today:

- Handheld electronic devices are competing with newspapers in mass transit systems.

- Smartphones are competing with conversations at dinner tables.

- Video on demand is competing with traditional network and cable TV.

- Reading on-screen devices such as eReaders, mobile phones, and tablets is competing with reading in traditional print form. (Bromley, 2010; Douglas, 2013; Ha & Fang, 2012; Mitchell, 2013)

Along with the proliferation of screens in our lives has come a profound change in the way we communicate in text. Children's electronic communication now includes short bursts of words characterized by the widespread use of informal grammar, acronyms, and emoticons. A big question for educators is what impact is this having on students' ability to write? Professor Abulafia, a historian at Cambridge University, asserts that students are writing, "…short messages in a sort of meta-language, with meta-spelling, on Twitter and Facebook…" He also states that students "…seem to find it very difficult…to write essays coherently" and lack "…the ability to write continuous prose, elegantly and precisely setting out an argument" (Henry, 2013, para. 7, 10, 12).

Educators are tasked with graduating students who competently write extended text and manipulate their writing strategies for expert use in the ever more demanding global marketplace. In spite of this goal, research has found that academic writing is one of the areas in which university undergraduates are the least prepared (Knudson, Zitzer-Comfort, Quirk, &

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Alexander, 2008; Mehta, Suto, & Brown, 2012; Singleton-Jackson, Lumsden, & Newson, 2009). The Common Core State Standards (CCSS), now adopted by 45 states, are designed to prepare students for success in college and careers. Are screens a barrier to implementing the CCSS, or can screens be used to assist students in becoming better writers?

This article examines methods of teaching students immersed in online media to write extended persuasive text, harnessing online media as a tool for teaching persuasive writing, and provides examples of strategies to inspire writing extended persuasive text for enjoyment. Put succinctly, this article is about using the power of online media to advance educators' goals. First, the article reviews the current educational environment. Second, the article addresses four motivating strategies that are designed to engage students in the persuasive writing task through the use of online media. Each of these four strategies have specific teaching examples using online tools to write extended persuasive text. Finally, these strategies and teaching examples are linked to the CCSS English Language Arts (ELA) standards.

The Current Educational Environment

The United States is prioritizing instruction in complex literacy tasks. This is reflected in the ELA framework of the Common Core State Standards Initiative (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010). The majority of the literacy standards focus on students analyzing complex, grade-appropriate texts to support their written arguments with evidence. The CCSS literacy standards require 70% of student writing to be analytical (opinion or informative/explanatory) at the grade 6 level.

There is evidence we are falling far short of this goal. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) data indicate that many students cannot produce persuasive writing that is rated as "adequate or better." The 2011 NAEP results in writing achievement indicate that 74% of eighth-grade and 73% of 12th-grade students are performing at or below the basic level. In contrast, only 3% of eighth and 12th graders are performing at an advanced level. Similarly, the Programme for International Student Assessment results indicate that students do not perform well writing continuous texts. Other research indicates that students continue to have difficulty with persuasive writing after graduating from high school (Crammond, 1998; Gilbert & Graham, 2010; McCann, 1989; NAEP, 2011, 2007).

There may be many reasons for the current shortfalls, but one contributor is students' exposure and interaction with a proliferation of short pieces of fragmented text that dominate texting, social networking programs such as Twitter and Facebook, news headlines, and short pieces of news on the internet. Sonn (2006) stated that "people have spontaneously and accidentally created what amounts to a new printed medium… with no real usage rules… while there is a collapse occurring in grammar and language" (p. 343). This domination of fragmented text and "e-shorthand" likely results in the skills associated with engaging in longer or more literary pieces of text decreasing unless they are explicitly and skillfully taught in schools (Abulafia, 2013; Bromely, 2010).

In recognition of the current shortfalls in the teaching of writing, the CCSS-ELA has substantially increased the emphasis on complex nonfiction text. In preparation for college and the workplace, students are required to read more informational text as they progress from grade to grade. In fourth grade, for example, students should be reading about the same amount of literary and informational text. The percentage of informational text grows to 55% by the eighth grade and 70% and by 12th grade. NAEP also requires a greater emphasis on informational text. For example, the nonfiction literary selections assessed are 50% of assessed text at fourth grade, 55% at eighth grade, and 70% by 12th grade.

Writing also has an emphasis on the creation of informational text in both CCSS and NAEP. NAEP assesses three types of text: (1) text designed to persuade, (2) text designed to explain, and (3) text designed to convey experience. For example, writing to persuade is 30% in fourth grade, 35% in eighth grade, and 40% by 12th grade. The assessments for CCSS such as the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) also integrate the ability to create an argument or persuade the reader in their real-world assessment tasks (PARCC, 2011).

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Teaching students to write extended persuasive text accomplishes the dual goals of requiring students to read more informational text as well as writing to persuade. The CCSS (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.9) address the goal of reading more informational text, requiring students to draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. For students to write extended persuasive text, they must be taught how to gather evidence from informational text for their argument through research, analysis, and reflection. Through the data-gathering process, students will be motivated to read for understanding and application.

Successfully achieving these standards, however, will remain a challenge when considering the lure of the screen. Rideout and colleagues (2010) found that young people spent an average of seven and a half hours a day seven days per week engaging in media content (when multitasking behaviors are included, the total increases to 10 hours and 45 minutes a day). Online, students are exposed to stimulation, excitement, and entertainment, often presented in fragmented text.

Although these can be entertaining and informative, students also need to master the real-life skills of argumentation and persuasion for life in the adult world. Research indicates that engaging students in the writing process by

providing opportunities and insights into the value of writing as a tool to persuade enables students to see that writing has value and can be used in real life (Parsons & Ward, 2011), and screens can become an ally in this process.

The term *new literacies* refers to theory and practice in using digital technologies in the field of literacy instruction. This includes the form of technology used through screens and digital code as well as the way it is consumed as a collaborative, shared process and product. New literacies incorporate mulitmodal processes to accessing and creating text as opposed to traditional hard copy, pencil and paper, and individual product and process. Examples of new literacies can include blogging, participation in online social networking, podcasting and video casting, photoshopping, digital storytelling, and many other forms of online resources (Gee, 2007; Jenkins, 2006; Lankshear & Knobel, 2006).

Promising research in the field of new literacies such as online reciprocal teaching (Henry, Castek, O'Byrne, & Zawilinski, 2012), interactive online gaming (Gee, 2008), online publishing (Jenkins, 2006), and online reading comprehension (Leu & Zawilinski, 2007) are just a few of the emerging areas that are promising for classroom practice. This research can provide a springboard for the use of online media as part of the process of writing extended persuasive text.

Using Online Media to Write Extended Persuasive Text

This article addresses four motivating strategies that are designed to engage students in the persuasive writing task through the use of online media: (1) using online media to create ownership, creativity, and enjoyment in writing extended persuasive text; (2) using online research to support arguments when writing extended persuasive text; (3) using online tools to write extended text for a real-world audience; and (4) using online tools to write extended persuasive text collaboratively and specific teaching examples using online tools to write extended persuasive text. These strategies are also linked to the CCSS-ELA standards.

It is important to note that before using any online material, teachers should consult their district's policies and procedures. Teachers should also consider the following when using online material for writing extended persuasive text: first, that the sites are reputable, of high quality, and models of expert writing. Second, proactive strategies are provided to reinforce online safety and responsible choices. Third, teachers create an environment in which they can ensure effective monitoring of students' online activity. Fourth, consider the school community and culture to ensure that the online sites are acceptable. Finally, preparing a list of links to appropriate sites for the students to choose from will allow them choice while enabling

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the teacher to preview the sites to deem them acceptable within district policy as well as high-quality instructional materials.

Using Online Media to Create Ownership, Creativity, and Enjoyment in Writing Extended Persuasive Text

Students tend to be more motivated to write when they have the opportunity to be creative and autonomous in their writing topics, media, and final product. Writing to satisfy teacher requirements or state-mandated tasks have not been found as motivating for students as when they are able to be creative or focus their writing on a topic of personal interest.

For example, research in the concept of control, challenge, and choice in writing tasks has found that students have greater respect for their product when they are able to discover and create during the persuasive writing process. Students' writing has been seen to flourish when they are able to take control of their work and experience and discover new ideas and information. When tasks have a personal value to students, students engage more with the task. Students are more motivated when they are given control of their learning, discover and engage, and apply real-life experiences to their classroom learning (Turner & Paris, 1995).

My students echoed this research in a discussion on engagement in persuasive writing. The students overwhelmingly stated that their enjoyment of writing

was "dependent on the topic." A student stated that "[persuasive writing] is fun depending on the subject… sometimes it's [persuasive writing] boring but if it's for fun it would be about sport or animals" and "sometimes I like it [persuasive writing] when it's something I'm interested in." Another student mused, "I didn't like it [persuasive writing] a couple of years ago but I started to like it more as my thoughts grew, when I really like a topic I can continue to try my best and get ideas to make it really good" (Standish, 2005).

Creativity is also an important factor for motivating students to write. This is particularly effective in persuasive writing. It involves giving students the opportunity to be innovative and to use their imagination to generate ideas. Alenizi (2008) found that when students are given a task where they used their creativity, the students evidenced higher levels of achievement. For example, I tasked my students with creating a prototype of a new safety device and modeling the process of patenting their invention. Once they were vested in their invention, they had to persuade local government authorities to purchase their invention for the police, fire, and ambulance service. Student comments on the persuasive writing task were overwhelmingly positive. Comments included: "it was fun—I could be creative," "I wasn't worried about being marked I was enjoying myself," "I had to come up with my own ideas—I could be creative," and, most telling, "I was being creative…thinking more" (Standish, 2012).

Can screens be used to create the same level of ownership, creativity, and enjoyment in writing extended text? With some time and planning, they can. Examples of online persuasive writing tasks include the following:

1. Students design a storyline for a printed text or short film with the use of an online storyboard. The teacher demonstrates the use of an online storyboard (e.g., free online storyboard creators such as www.storyboardthat.com or www.atomiclearning.com/story-boardpro) to create an outline for a narrative (print or film). As students design their storyboards, the teacher inserts a critical incident into the students' storyboard that the students must solve by writing a persuasive letter from the point of view of their main character.

   For example, if a student creates a storyline focused on her main character being a "secret agent" on a mission, the teacher can insert in the storyline that the agent's equipment has all gone missing. The student can then respond by writing a persuasive letter requesting replacement equipment. The teacher could determine how much equipment would be provided based on the effectiveness of the letter. The student would then continue the storyline using only the equipment provided.

2. Students create a "fakebook" page on a book character, historical figure, or author (e.g., www.class-tools.net/fb/home/page). Students use teacher-created reliable links to research the profile, background information, and possible status reports for their fakebook page.

   For example, students could create a fakebook page for the

character Meg Murry from the book *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle. Once the page is created from information using the book and online research, the teacher can begin a discussion on the page that covers an issue raised in *A Wrinkle in Time*. The students can then be invited to post responses to the initial question posed, as well as their fellow students responses. To encourage extended text, the students can be required to respond in the discussion using standard grammar and in responses that are a minimum of three paragraphs long.

3. Students write a persuasive script for a podcast that will be recorded for a real audience. For example, Figure 1 shows a student recording a podcast of a mock trial opening statement for the prosecution of Captain Ahab from *Moby Dick* for the violation of the Marine

Figure 1   Student Taping a Podcast From a Written Persuasive Script

Mammal Protection Act (MMPA, 1972). The teacher assigns the task of creating a mock trial opening statement. Students watch online clips of opening statements in a court scene such as To Kill A *Mocking Bird*.

The students and teacher then discuss and outline components of an effective opening statement by deconstructing the online clips. In collaborative groups, students are given a task to review the teacher-provided links to the MMPA and list examples from *Moby Dick* of violations of the act. From that outline students create an effective, persuasive script for their mock trial opening statement. Students record their podcast (on programs such as garageband or audacity). The podcast, with parental permission, could then be posted on the school's website, online school newsletter, or private online forums.

Using Online Research to Support Arguments When Writing Extended Text

Supporting an argument with evidence, fact, counterarguments, and research can be a complex task for students. Teaching students how to use their online skills to find, analyze, and reflect on information to support their argument enhances their persuasive writing ability as well as demonstrating to them how to harness the technology that they are using on a daily basis for real-world purposes.

To use the research from the Internet to write convincingly, students need to competently use persuasive devices in their writing. Persuasive devices such as appeal to authority/emotion/logic, celebrity endorsements, rhetorical questions, evidence (facts, statistics, graphs), and

"An excellent tool is seeing persuasive devices used in real life online examples."

call to action can be taught. An excellent tool in the teaching process is seeing persuasive tools used in blogs, social action clips, political speeches, advertising, and music videos online. These are powerful real-life examples for students. The ability to experience the persuasive devices in multimodal form and then deconstruct the impact of the persuasive tools can help students to use the devices in their persuasive writing.

Some examples of using online persuasive devices to support an argument include the following:

1. Research persuasive tools used in online media (e.g., political speeches, advertising, public service campaigns) to highlight persuasive devices such as word choice, phrases, positioning, argument techniques, text structure, and engagement of audience. Once various persuasive devices are identified, assign students to use the devices in their own persuasive essay.

For example, *Save the Dolphin* public service campaigns such as www.savejapandolphins.org can be shown to children and then students can find the persuasive devices used in the campaign. Once identified, the student can use those same persuasive devices to convince the reader of their point of view. A list of the

persuasive devices from the *Save the Dolphin* public service campaign are listed in Table 1. The persuasive devices table can serve as an example for students to create extended persuasive text.

Table 1   Persuasive Devices for Save the Dolphin Public Service Campaign

Persuasive devices	Examples of persuasive devices	Save the dolphin example
Word choice	Inclusive language (we all agree) Loaded words (negative associations such as capitalist, communist, salesman, politician) Metaphor (reinforce a point or create an image) Language style (formal, colloquial, colorful, plain, ornate, poetic, reasoned, informative) Hyperbole (gives emphasis, images, remember important points) Generalization (claims are true for the majority) Connotations (descriptive words carry subtle shades of meaning (improved, natural, tested) Active voice	My friend We are his only hope Brutally killed Senseless slaughter
Phrases	Catchy phrases or slogans Forceful phrases Concrete, descriptive, clear	Driven to a horrible fate Life in captivity Sold as food whose meat has toxic levels of mercury Right now (repeated)
Positioning	Provide a clear specific set of attributes Credible Focus on the positive side of your position Provide concrete evidence	My friend is – so much fun, most intelligent, saves lives, always smiling… Use of a variety of well-known celebrities to narrate
Text structure	Complex sentences Dramatic introductions Reinforcing powerful conclusions (reinforcing or stating most important point at the end) Engage reader and sustain interest (stories, anecdotes) Conviction in tone Short, sharp sentences Key information, examples and strong opinions in the body of the text Major point, repetition and summing up	Introduction – my friend (repeated with list of positive attributes) Conclusion – we are his biggest threat and only hope Descriptions of fate of dolphins (death, captivity) Short phrases by each celebrity Conviction in tone and in visual images
Argument techniques	Providing reasons and examples Reiterating important points Providing statistics Quoting experts Citing research	Driven to a horrible fate Life in captivity Sold as food whose meat has toxic levels of mercury
Engagement of audience	Rhetorical statements Emotive language Repetition of persuasive points Modality Metaphors	Fighting for his life Senseless slaughter Brutally killed Repetition – right now, my friend, his only hope Modality – we **are** his only hope, he **does not** belong in captivity, **are** being brutally killed

2. The teacher introduces argument frameworks to the students to improve their persuasive writing skills. To model the argument framework, the teacher introduces students to a social action blog such as www.change.org and deconstructs an argument framework including the statement of position, evidence statements, a counterargument, and a warranted conclusion. Figure 2 shows an example of deconstructing a social action blog from change.org as a joint construction activity with students.

3. Employ YouTube clips or blogs to highlight both the pro and con sides of an argument on a real-world issue such as the impact of pollution on the environment. Students and the teacher can jointly construct an outline of the pro and con arguments and persuasive devices used in the online materials. Students can then write a persuasive script using the outline created together with the teacher. The script can be performed and filmed as a role play on iPads or other recording devices.

Using Online Tools to Write Extended Persuasive Text for a Real-World Audience

Writing for a real-world audience has been shown to motivate students in their persuasive writing tasks as well as allowing them to target their argument for a specific market. When students understand that their persuasive writing will be read by an audience other than their teacher, the task becomes more relevant and motivating. Students are more likely to be intrinsically motivated if they have a real audience, as they naturally desire to convince the audience of their

Figure 2 Model Example of Argument Framework for a Social Action Blog

Using Online Material to Understand Argument Framework

The social action blog, change.org, has a piece arguing the TV show "The Biggest Loser" needs to contain a health warning. This style of argumentation in support of social change provides a good model for students to understand how persuasive text is constructed and used in the real world. An example of how a student could identify the outline of the site's argument is provided below.

Social Action Blog:
change.org

Statement of Position:
"The Biggest Loser" television show promotes unhealthy attitudes toward weight, exercise and dieting

3 Evidence Statements:
a. the show focuses on excessive and unsustainable exercise and dieting
b. the show's use of children as young as 15 may harm them
c. the show relies on guilt, shame and fear as motivators - these are not healthy forms of motivation and can result in negative body image and behavior

Counter Argument:
Obesity is a concern that must be addressed and part of that is bringing attention to the need to lose weight and how to lose weight.

Counter, Counter Argument:
But healthy diet and realistic exercise should be promoted to address obesity, not extreme methods based on projecting negative body image.

Warranted Conclusion:
The Biggest Loser should contain a warning against the excessive nature of activities and the dangers of unhealthy attitudes towards weight.

argument and they desire positive feedback (Crammond, 1998; Nolen, 2007).

The research literature indicates that students' perception of their audience affects their attitude toward writing (Crammond, 1998; Nolen, 2007). A group of students I recently

> *"Online media is a powerful way for students to reach a larger audience."*

interviewed overwhelmingly agreed that the teacher was the only audience for their persuasive writing in school, stating "the teacher is the only one who reads it," "the teacher grades it and will read it," and "the teacher grades the persuasive essays." One student did say that the students' writing was "not only for the teacher but also for other students to understand" (Standish, 2012).

When teaching writing to my preservice teachers, I always ask them to indicate whether they enjoyed writing in elementary school. Generally only a small minority of students respond by indicating they enjoyed writing. I then ask that handful what was it that

inspired their love of writing. Some typical responses include, "my parents wrote with me," "writing was important to my teacher and he/she shared that passion with the class," and "I was encouraged to write in school and share my writing," but the most telling response I've received to date was: "I didn't like writing until my teacher entered my work in a competition and it was published." Students need to know that their writing is important and it will be read. The larger and more important the audience is to the students, the more motivated they are to excel.

Screens enable students to have an instant audience for their writing, in contrast to paper assignments, which are generally read by the classroom teacher. Thus online media is a powerful way for students to reach a larger audience for their persuasive writing and for that audience to provide feedback to the writer. It also is more likely to provide an audience of peers that may be of substantially more importance to the students than adult audiences. There are many sites for students to reach a wide audience of readers online. Teachers should not post any students writing without permission from the student's parent or primary caregiver. Examples of reaching an online writing audience for students include the following:

1. Social media sites where students can post their writing and readers can respond (e.g., ThumbScribes .com; kidzworld.com)

2. Blogging sites for kids (e.g., edublogs.org, kidblog.org)

3. Online publishing sites (e.g., storyjumper.com, storybird.com, bookemon.com)

4. Online school newsletters (these are not space constrained in the manner paper versions are and

hence all students can participate in posting stories)

5. Online fan fiction in which students write about their favorite characters from popular media and the online audience will respond. Sites such as FanFiction. net enable students to create, critique, and share their writing (Jenkins, 2008).

Using Online Tools to Write Extended Persuasive Text Collaboratively

Research indicates that engaging students in researching and writing collaboratively improves the writing process and product. Oldfather and Dahl (1995) found that when students engage in collaborative tasks their on-task behavior improves, they develop stronger peer bonds, and collaboration leads to more discussions of work. It has also been found that students' writing performance improves in mixed-ability groups as students see the task from multiple perspectives. Researchers found that once this collaboration takes place, students get more involved within their work as they help each other co-construct meanings and gain self-confidence through their group and peer achievement. (Oldfather & Dahl, 1995; Shachar & Fischer, 2004; Souvignier & Kronrnberger, 2007).

Virtual collaboration online likely mimics the effect of face-to-face classroom collaboration in enhancing students written product. Online collaboration has the additional benefit of teaching students an essential skill for today's workplace, where online collaboration is an essential element in many fields.

Giving students the opportunity to use their online skills to read and research will harness the power of the screens that are part of their everyday

life (Douglas, 2013). Teachers can also use online tools to engage students in the persuasive writing process in a number of creative ways, including the following:

1. Teacher presents a selection of online popular music on a relevant issue to students such as friendships, families, romance, wealth, or self-image. Students

Figure 3   Model Student Outline for a Persuasive Essay on the Music Industry and Consumerism

Model Student Outline for Persuasive Essay Based on Online Music/Videos

Statement of Position

Hip-Hop music/videos promote materialism

Evidence to Support Position

Discussion of Hip-Hop lyrics promoting materialism, e.g.

"diamond plugs, septum rings,
I like money! Bling, Bling, Bling" (Lil Wayne)

"Money makes the world go around" (R. Kelly)

"Race that Benz, lots of cash" (Millionaires)

"If it aint the Gucci or the Louie then its Polo or its Rugby… Beamer, Benz or Bentley" (Lloyd Banks)

Discussion of music videos featuring luxury goods

Counter Argument

Hip-Hop can highlight problems with consumerism

Evidence to Support Counter Argument

Discussion of Hip-Hop songs that critique consumerism, e.g.

"For a hundred dollars and some change
consumption is in the veins
And now I see it's just another pair of shoes" (Macklemore)

Counter-Counter Argument

Despite voices to the contrary, overwhelmingly the most popular Hip-Hop artists today place an emphasis on materialism (cite to expert analysis found during online research)

Warranted Conclusion

Hip-Hop promotes consumerism.

Note. This is a sample where the lyrics were adapted. Caution should be used in ensuring that the material used is appropriate for the schools culture and community.

construct a mind map (an example of an online mind map site is www.popplet.com) of themes relating to the issue. Teachers and students collaboratively fill in the mind map after listening to music from online sites and reading the online lyrics. Students then use the themes from the mind map to collaboratively write an outline for a persuasive text about the issue highlighted in their lyrics. The students write statement of position (pro or con about their issue highlighted in the lyrics), find evidence from the lyrics to support that position, write a counterargument, provide evidence to support that counterargument from the lyrics, write a counter-counterargument, and finish with a warranted conclusion. For example, Figure 3 shows an outline for a persuasive text on the topic taking the position that popular music promotes consumerism (money, jewelry, clothes, overt symbols of wealth).

2. Teacher displays a selection of online advertisements. In groups the students explore google.com advertising terms and conditions to make a list of Google's suggestions to advertisers of how to target online audiences (www.google.com/adwords). Each group of students is asked to choose an

Figure 4   Model of Students' Collaborative Persuasive Letter on the Features of a Popular Online Game

● poptropica   ● Free Rice   ● Toontown Online   ● Club Penguin   ● Neopets   ● Funbrain
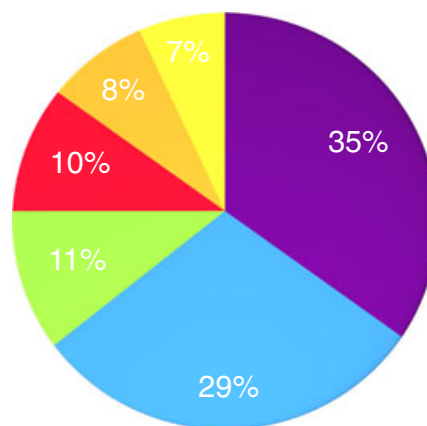
Dear Game Co.:

As you know, your Grimy Gorilla game has not been as popular with children as your competitors. We would like to offer you some suggestions for improving Grimy Gorilla. We've taken a class survey to find the most common features of popular games and we've done a little research on what gaming experts recommend. We've found that kids like games that are original, easy to learn, well designed and that include unpredictable situations.

Our survey found that originality is the most important feature of popular games. Grimy Gorilla currently looks a lot like Temple Run, only instead of an explorer being chased by monkeys, in Grimy Gorilla, a gorilla is chased by angry people. A more original scenario is important to improving the popularity of your game.

Secondly, researchers found children like games that have clear rules and are easy to learn. Currently Grimy Gorilla takes a long time to understand as the rules are complicated. For example, if you tilt Grimy Gorilla to the left, he falls off the path, unless he has just completed a leap, in which case he begins body rolls. When he is tilted to the right, he climbs down the wall and hides. However, if you tilt him to the right after making a leap, he stops running and begins to fight, unless the pursuers are a long way behind him, in which case he sits and eats a banana. It takes a long time for children to understand all these variations. In our survey, most give up before understanding all the rules.

Third, game design is very important. Experts have found game design must be simple and uncluttered, consistent in its graphics and design, and use easy to read text and appropriate color scheme. Grimy Gorilla uses very small text and very complicated graphics. Often it is hard to know where to look. Simple would be better.

Finally, the results of our survey showed that children like to have lots of possible ways to compete in the game. They want a challenge and they want to be able to control the events in the game. Grimy Gorilla currently includes a simple circle track. That becomes boring quickly. More variety and more choices would make the game much more interesting.

In conclusion, we believe that if you rework Grimy Gorilla to include our recommendations, it will be a big success for children.

Yours sincerely,

Note. Includes the students' survey results.

"With thoughtful planning and creativity, online media can be incorporated into writing instruction."

online advertisement from the teacher's sample advertisements and analyze why that advertisement was placed on the website, who they believe the audience is for that site, and what persuasive techniques are used. Students can then use their example advertisement and their list of Google's suggestions to advertisers to

design, write, and create their own online advertisement for a product (e.g., fashion accessories, extreme sports equipment, eco-vacations). This can include the students selecting their target market for their product and finding a site that they believe would create maximum exposure to their target market for their product.

Table 2   CCSS-ELA Standards, Four Strategies Engage Students in Writing Extended Persuasive Text, and Classroom Examples Discussed in the Article

Engagement link	Common Core State Standards ELA	Online persuasive writing teaching ideas
Using online media to create ownership, creativity, and enjoyment in writing extended persuasive text	*CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.1 Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence*	1. Design an online storyboard for a narrative. Students are presented with a critical incident that they must respond to with a persuasive text (Anchor Standards SL.2, SL.5). 2. Create a "fakebook" page on a book character, historical figure, or author. Students will respond persuasively to discussions (Anchor Standards SL.2, SL.5, W.8). 3. Compare two online news stories with different perspectives on the same issue. 4. Write a persuasive script for a podcast (Anchor Standards SL.2, SL.5, W.8).
Using online research to support arguments when writing extended text	*CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.*	1. Research persuasive tools used in online media to highlight persuasive devices (Anchor Standards W.8). 2. Create argument frameworks from a social action blog (Anchor Standards SL.2, SL.5, W.8). 3. Write and film a role-play using real-life online examples of issues (Anchor Standards SL.2, SL.5, W.8).
Using online tools to write extended persuasive text for a real-world audience	*CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience*	1. Online blogging sites for children (Anchor Standards SL.2, SL.5) 2. School online newsletters (Anchor Standards SL.2, SL.5) 3. Online children's publishing sites (Anchor Standards SL.2, SL.5)
Using online tools to write extended persuasive text collaboratively	*CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.6 Use technology, including the internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others*	1. Collaboratively write an outline for a persuasive piece analyzing popular music messages or themes on social issues (Anchor Standards SL.2, SL.5, W.8). 2. In a collaborative group, survey popular online gaming sites, analyze criteria for popularity, write a persuasive script for a less popular site to increase appeal (Anchor Standards SL.2, SL.5, W.8). 3. Collaboratively analyze advertisement placement on popular sites such as YouTube for target audience and persuasive techniques used by advertisers (Anchor Standards SL.2, SL.5, W.8).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.5 Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

3. Students survey classmates about online gaming preferences from a list of school-approved gaming sites. In groups the students collaboratively list the characteristics of popular games, tabulate the most popular games from the survey, and plot the results into a pie graph. Students then create a mind map of criteria for what makes a popular online game based on information collected in their survey. Students collaboratively outline a persuasive letter to the creators of unpopular games giving them well-supported strategies to strengthen the game's appeal to children. For example, Figure 4 is a model of a pie graph and a persuasive letter to the game publisher of an unpopular game (game title is fictional).

CCSS
The CCSS-ELA has substantially increased the emphasis on complex informational text such as extended persuasive text. The CCSS also include digital writing in Anchor Standards 6 and 8 as well as digital reading in the speaking and listening Anchor Standards 2 and 5. The strategies in this article address the CCSS-ELA emphasis on writing complex text, specifically extended persuasive text. Table 2 links the four strategies discussed and the related classroom examples to the CCSS-ELA standards.

Conclusion
The ability to write extended persuasive text competently is a necessary skill that is highlighted in the CCSS-ELA and in the NAEP assessments. Online media can be an impediment or assistant in reaching the CCSS-ELA goals.

With thoughtful planning and creativity, online media can be incorporated into writing instruction in a manner that will motivate students to develop their extended persuasive text writing skills. But more than that, by providing online topics in which students are already engaged and an online audience relevant to them, educators can instill a passion for persuasive writing in students—a passion that will develop their persuasive writing in a manner that not only prepares them for the demands of the real world, but imparts the joy and the power that comes with mastering the art of persuasive written expression.

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