# Functional Writing – Debating using Persuasive Language

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- **Write a short personal argument using persuasive language.**
- **Produce particular words, phrases and tones that can be used in a persuasive context, both in writing and speech.**
- **Identify the main parties in Parliament and their percentage representation.**

### Introduction

Explain to the pupils that they are in a hot air balloon and they have to lose one person to keep the weight down. They have to write an argument to keep themselves in the balloon. Share their arguments within a group and discuss how the language they use contributes to how others respond to their argument. Highlight good examples of persuasive language.

### Language Study

Use printed examples from speeches, question time, debates from the parliament archives to highlight examples of persuasive language. Talk about its use in advertising. What is it? How does it work? Who uses it? When is it most likely to be used?

- Pupils reflect on their balloon arguments and edit them to make stronger arguments.

### Parliament – breakdown of parties

Explain to the pupils the make up of the Scottish Parliament, the main parties and their representation. Watch a debate and listen out for the use of persuasive language. Encourage the children to observe the way the opposing parties discuss issues with each other.

- Pupils will note examples of persuasive language from the debates. Discuss in pairs. Share as a class.

## Assessment Strategies

- A – oral report
- B – observation
- C – questioning
- D – discussion
- E – short answer, written text
- F – written text, longer piece
- G – written report
- H – practical activity
- I – picture/model
- J – audio/video
- K – practical investigation
- L – other
**Debate**
Pupils are given a topic to debate (see list). They are also told what side they will be on and what part they will play.
Pair the pupils up to discuss their role in the debate and what their strongest arguments are. The pupils then write their own arguments using their knowledge of persuasive language.

The pupils then take place in a live debate, each side arguing their case. Teacher acts as presiding officer to keep it fair and controlled.
Once all arguments have been aired and questions exhausted move to a secret ballot. Remind the pupils at this point that they can vote for either side. It may be in the course of the debate that by listening to other’s points of view, they have changed their mind.

**Results**
Announce the results in the style of a real ballot. Open a discussion about why that particular side won the vote, reinforce the use and power that persuasive language has on an individual.

**Further Activities**
Visit the Scottish Parliament.

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Teachers Notes:  
Functional Writing - The Debate using Persuasive Language  
Levels C-F

This is a set of lessons which comprise of an introductory lesson, a language study and a 3-4 lesson mini project on debating.

The pupils will have the opportunity to use persuasive language to produce arguments that will lead to a live debate. In order for them to carry out a debate in the correct way they will experience, through the Scottish Parliament archives, real footage and printed transcripts of debates and question time. This will help them to see how arguments can be carried out without resulting in fights.

Ideas for topics to be debated:
Congestion charges
Healthy eating in schools
Curriculum
Affordable leisure facilities
Nuclear/Renewable Energy
Gangs
Drugs
Transport
or any issue that is relative to the class, school or local environment.

For breakdown of parliament into main parties see:  