*English Instructional Plan - Analyzing False Premise in Persuasive Writing*

**Primary Strand: 11.5 Reading**

**Integrated Strand/s: 11.6 Writing**

**Essential Understanding:** Understand a variety of persuasive techniques and rhetorical devices

**Essential Knowledge, Skills, and Processes:**

* Analyze and use a variety of persuasive techniques and rhetorical devices, including, but not limited to,
  + Ethos
  + Pathos
  + Logos
  + Claims/counterclaims

False premises

* + Ad hominem arguments
  + Begging the question
  + Straw man

**Primary SOL: 11.5 g)** Analyze false premises, claims, counterclaims, and other evidence in persuasive writing.

**Academic Background/Language:**

* Persuasive techniques
* Rhetorical devices
* Ethos
* Pathos
* Logos
* Claims/counterclaims
* False premises
* Ad hominem arguments
* Begging the question
* Straw man

**Reinforced (Related Standard) SOL:**

## Materials

* Computer (Lesson can be modified for use with paper and writing utensil.)
* Highlighters

## Student/Teacher Actions: What should students be doing? What should teachers be doing?

* Provide students with an entrance ticket when they enter class and ask them to define in their own words the terms “persuasive techniques” and “rhetorical devices.” Ask students to list as many persuasive techniques or rhetorical devices they know. Use this information to adjust the lesson as necessary.
* Brainstorm with students topics for persuasion that involve their own lives; have them think small and locally. Ideas might include dress code, using computers in the classroom, homework, a parental issue such as curfew, getting a pet, video game time, etc. Be sure that the list includes topics for which their own general knowledge and experience is evident. Avoid topics that would require research or that would become an emotion-based argument.
* Have each student pick a topic about which they have a strong opinion. With each student seated at a computer, have the student free write his/her opinion with supporting reasons. Allow five to ten minutes for the free write. At the end of the time, tell each student to finish the sentence he/she is currently writing. Do a “write around” where each student moves one seat to the next computer. Students read what is on the computer in front of them and add arguments or add counterarguments to what the first student has written.
* Repeat this “write around” for two to three more moves, allowing each new student to add or counter. This will not produce good writing, but it will get lots of opinions and reasons in writing for students to work with. Have each student print or save the piece he/she originated.
* The next day, have students take out the papers they originated and get two colored highlighters. As they read over the paper, have them highlight one side of the argument in one color and the other side in a different color.
* Display the fallacy definitions. Discuss with the class and have students take notes. Students should recognize persuasive techniques such as:
  + ad hominem — means “to the man” does not argue the issue, instead it argues the person;
  + red herring — is a deliberate attempt to divert attention;
  + straw man — creates the illusion of having refuted a proposition by substituting a similar yet weaker proposition; and
  + begging the question — assumes the conclusion is true without proving it; circular argument.
* Display *Practice False Reasoning* document. Have students work with a partner to match up the example with the type. Discuss answers with the whole class.
* Return to the write around the students did earlier. Have them read through the opinions and underline possible places where false reasoning might have been used. Collect the papers.
* Compile a list of sentences from the student papers that are examples of the four types of false reasoning. Post and use for discussion the next day.
* **Assessment (Diagnostic, Formative, Summative)**

Diagnostic: Entrance ticket

**ELL and Academic Language Learners:**

* Use visuals to show students the different persuasive and rhetorical techniques. Have a sentence under each picture that defines the word. Use a longer piece of text with that device underlined or highlighted.
* **Writing Connections:**
* Students are using the free write technique to write persuasive paragraphs that relate to their own lives.

**Extensions and Connections (for all students)**

* Students can research a topic and write a full persuasive essay apply their knowledge of persuasive and rhetorical techniques.

**Strategies for Differentiation**

* Vocabulary — Word Wall with the persuasive techniques and examples.
* Chart Paper — Brainstorm as a group and post in the class as an anchor chart for reference.
* Free write the format/procedure (teacher modeling)
* Model process as a group — exemplify process of adding arguments
* Modify using the “group” or collaborative learning strategy to produce a group product and also complete group reviews to create additional arguments/counter arguments

*Note: The following pages are intended for classroom use for students as a visual aid to learning.*

## Practice False Reasoning

Directions: Identify the false reasoning used for each of the following. Choose from red herring, ad hominem, begging the question, or straw man. Each will be used once.

1. The government doesn't take care of the poor because it doesn't have a tax specifically to support the poor.

2. I know your car isn't working right, but if you had gone to the store one day earlier, you would not be having problems.

3. Vaping has been shown to be as addictive as heroin and thus should be treated as a dangerous drug.

4. PETA’s strategies aren't effective because they are all hippies.