

Persuasive Piece: Plea for a Bicycle

Dear Mom and Dad,

I think I should get a bicycle. I have wanted a bicycle for a long time, and I think that I am ready. If I get a bicycle, it will be good me and for the entire family.

I am 10 years old now, so I am old enough to be safe and responsible with a bicycle. I am strong enough to ride without falling. I am smart enough to watch out for cars. I will stay on the bike path when I can and stay away from people walking. I would take good care of my bicycle by keeping it clean and locking it up whenever I park it.

If I had a bicycle, I would get much more exercise. Everyone knows that kids need lots of exercise. I would spend more time outdoors and less time sitting inside playing video games. I would ride up and down hills and all around the neighborhood. This would help to keep me healthy and strong.

My bicycle would be helpful to the whole family. I would be able to ride to my friends' houses and soccer practice, so you would not need to drive me all the time. I could do errands like riding to the store or the post office. You have bicycles that you hardly ever use, so maybe now we could all go for family rides together. It would be so much fun!

If I get a bicycle, I promise to be careful riding it and taking care of it. It would be good for me and for our family. My birthday is coming, plus I have a little money saved so I can help pay for it. Please! Please! Please! You won't be sorry!

Hopefully yours,

Taylor

Close Reading**Setting the Stage (Introduction)**

Slowing down with reading instruction is imperative for creating critical thinking skills. When students linger over a text, they can start to identify patterns and pinpoint an author's underlying message and purpose for writing the text. Stylistically, it is also important for students to realize that writing is a true form of artistry and self-expression. Gather the class to set the stage for the close reading exercise. Explain the importance of close reading and also remind students of recent teaching objectives that they should be on the lookout for specifically. You could say:

Friends, I want to encourage you to slow down when you're reading to make sure you notice every word on the page. Have you ever wondered why an author chose one word over another? Nothing on the page is an accident! Author's read and reread their work and write each sentence carefully. As readers, our job is to try to figure out what the author was thinking as he

or she was writing. We should always take time to pause and ask questions. Why did that character do that? Why does the author choose to use one word instead of another word?

As you read today, I want you to decide if you agree with the author or if you disagree with the author. To do this, you'll have to figure out the why the author is writing and what it is he or she wants you to do after reading this text.

Whole-Class Practice

Read the first paragraph, and then have a whole-class discussion to model close reading before breaking into small groups or individual practice time.

Let's start by looking just at the first paragraph, the introduction. There is enough information in just the first couple of sentences that tell me that the author is writing a letter today to ask her parents for a bicycle. I can also tell from these first sentences that her parents might not be ready to buy her a bicycle or might think that she is not old enough to own a bicycle. I think this is true because she mentions that she has wanted a bicycle for a while. She also uses a lot of strong, positive language about bicycles to try to change her mom's and dad's minds by telling them that a bicycle will bring good things not just for her but for their whole family. I am curious to see how she will prove that a bicycle will benefit her family.

Let's keep reading. Remember to think about whether you agree or disagree with the author's opinions and what makes you feel this way. (Finish reading and go through a handful of questions from the Core Ready worksheet. Then have students finish with Independent Practice.)

Independent Practice

Have students reread the text independently or in small groups. Ask them to answer a question from each box of the Core Lens guiding worksheet. Have students discuss their thinking with a partner while you circulate to monitor progress.

<p>7 Core Ready Lenses <i>Guiding Questions for Close Reading Instruction</i></p>	<p>The Personal Lens</p> <p>1) Have you ever wanted something really badly but your parents said "no"? What did you do to try to convince them to say "yes"?</p> <p>2) How old do you think children should have to be to own a</p>
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		bicycle? Why do you feel this way?
<p>The Linguistic Lens</p> <p>1) Who is the author trying to convince to buy her a bicycle? How do you know? Give at least three examples from the text.</p> <p>2) Do you think Taylor has asked her parents for a bicycle in the past, before she wrote this letter? What words in her letter make you feel this way?</p>	<p>The Semantic Lens</p> <p>1) In your own words, rewrite three reasons that Taylor gives to show her parents that she is ready to own a bicycle.</p> <p>2) In your own words, why does Taylor think that her whole family will benefit if she gets a bicycle?</p>	<p>The Analytical Lens</p> <p>1) Taylor gives many reasons to show her parents that she is ready to own a bicycle, which reason do you think is the best? Why do you think this is the best reason?</p> <p>2) How do you think Taylor’s parents will react to this letter? Can you think of any reason they may have to say “no” to her request for a bicycle?</p>
<p>The Context Lens</p> <p>1) What has happened or may have happened in Taylor’s life to make her feel the way she does about owning a bicycle?</p> <p>2) Has Taylor left out any information that you are curious about?</p>	<p>The Metaphoric Lens</p> <p>1) Besides explaining the benefits of owning a bicycle, what else does Taylor do to convince her parents to buy her a bicycle?</p>	<p>The Critical Lens</p> <p>1) Did the author do a good job of convincing her parents that she is ready to own a bicycle? Why do you feel that way?</p> <p>2) Does Taylor mention any reasons why owning a bicycle might <i>not</i> be a good idea? Why do you think she decided to include or not include reasons against owning a bicycle?</p>