



How Writers Trick You Into Believing Them

KS4 ENGLISH LANGUAGE

PERSUASIVE WRITING

Ages 13-15 ⌚ 4 min read

What Are Persuasive Techniques?

Persuasive techniques are tricks writers use to convince you to think or feel a certain way. They're everywhere—in adverts, social media posts, news articles, and even books. Writers aren't always being sneaky on purpose; sometimes they just want to explain their ideas in the most powerful way possible.

The key thing to understand is that persuasion is different from proving something is true. A writer might use emotion instead of facts, or exaggerate to make their point stronger. When you recognise these tricks, you become a smarter reader.

Emotional Appeals

One of the most powerful tricks is making you **feel** something. Writers describe sad situations, celebrate heroes, or show how unfair something is. They want your heart to say yes before your brain has time to ask questions.

Think of it like a friend asking to borrow money by telling you about their sick puppy instead of showing you their bank account. The sad story works better than the numbers.

Repetition and Rhythm

Writers repeat important words, phrases, or ideas to make them stick in your head. "**Never give up, never surrender, never stop trying**" sounds more powerful than "**You should keep trying.**" The pattern makes it memorable and persuasive.

Politicians and advertisers love this trick because once you've heard something **three times**, you start to believe it's true—even if it isn't.

Authority and Experts

Writers mention **famous people, scientists, or experts** to make their argument stronger. If a dentist recommends a toothpaste, it seems more trustworthy than if a random person does. We naturally trust people who seem knowledgeable.

Think of it like asking your PE teacher about sports instead of asking the school cook. The expert's opinion carries more weight.

Exaggeration and Superlatives

Writers use extreme words like "**amazing**," "**incredible**," "**the best**," or "**the worst**" to make things sound bigger and more important than they are. "**This film is okay**" doesn't sell tickets, but "**This film is the most spectacular adventure ever made**" definitely does.

Word Choice Matters

The exact words a writer chooses can change how you feel. Calling someone a "**freedom fighter**" sounds different from calling them a "**rebel**," even if they're the same person. A "**used car**" **sounds worse than a "pre-owned vehicle."**

Becoming aware of these tricks makes you a better reader and thinker. You'll start spotting persuasion everywhere and be able to decide for yourself what's actually true.