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PERSUASIVE LETTERS



# Our School Can Save Trees

# Stop Junk Food Ads for Kids

# Please Let Me Have a Dog!





by Cynthia Swain

Benchmark EDUCATION

**Genre:** Persuasive Letters
**Level:** K/20*

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- Make text-to-text connections
- Analyze the genre

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- Evaluate fact and opinion

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- Emotion words

**Tier Two Vocabulary**
(see Glossary)

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**Writer's Tools**
- State and defend your position

**Writer's Craft**
- How to write a persuasive letter

**THEME CONNECTIONS**
- **Being a Good Citizen**
- **Responsibility**

*The reading level assigned to this text is based on the genre examples only. "Focus on the Genre," "Reread," and "Writer's Craft" features were not leveled. These sections are intended for read-aloud or shared reading.

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**The Readers' & Writers' Genre Workshop series includes eleven fiction and nonfiction genres. There are two titles with multiple stories for each genre.**

## How to use this book

1. Learn about the genre by reading pages 2–3. Get background information about the power of letter writing on pages 4–5.
2. Read the persuasive letters for enjoyment.
3. Reread the letters and answer the questions on pages 11, 15, and 21.
4. Reread the last letter. Pay attention to the comments in the margins. See how an author writes a persuasive letter.
5. Follow the steps on pages 22–23 to write your own persuasive letter.
6. Complete the activity on the inside back cover. Answer the follow-up questions.

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**Creative Director:** Laurie Berger
**Senior Art Director:** Glenn Davis
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# Please Let Me Have a Dog!

## Three Persuasive Letters

by Cynthia Swain

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# Persuasive Letters

## What is a persuasive letter?

A persuasive letter is a letter that tries to convince readers to believe or do something. A persuasive letter has a strong point of view about an idea or a problem. It includes facts and examples to support an opinion, and it usually suggests a solution.

## What is the purpose of a persuasive letter?

People write persuasive letters to "sway," or change the minds of, their readers. They want readers to see their points of view. They may want readers to take action, too.

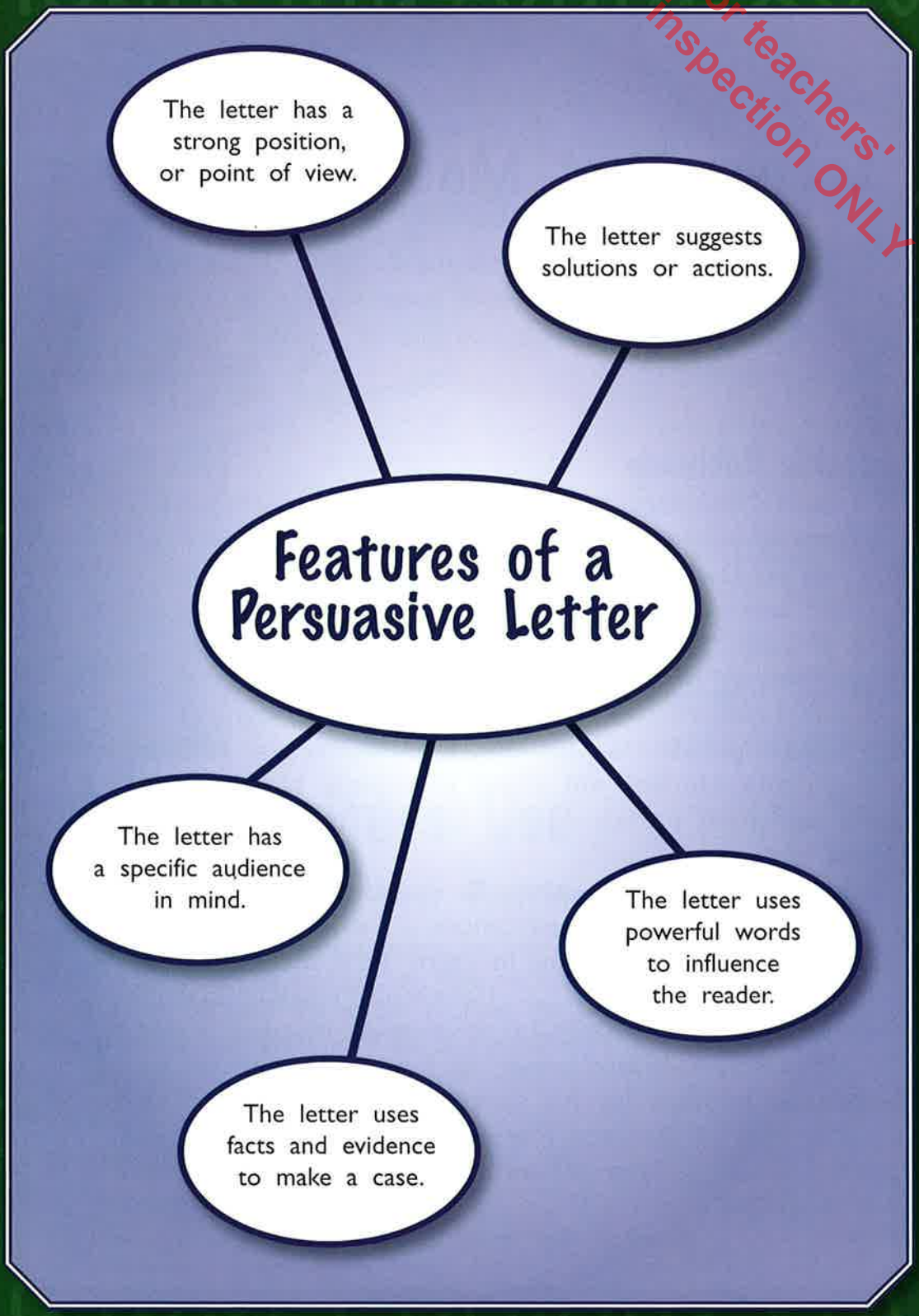
## Who is the audience for a persuasive letter?

People write persuasive letters to all kinds of people: parents, friends, citizens, business leaders, world leaders, and others. They write letters to make people understand their views. Often they want to change their audience's opinions. For example, someone might write to a leader about a law they don't agree with. The writer might want the leader to change the law.

## How do you read a persuasive letter?

Keep in mind that the writer wants you to support his or her position. Ask yourself, *What is this writer's position, or opinion? Does he support it with facts and good reasons? Do I agree with him?* A good persuasive writer knows his audience. He knows what facts and reasons might change his reader's mind.

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# Letters That Made a Difference

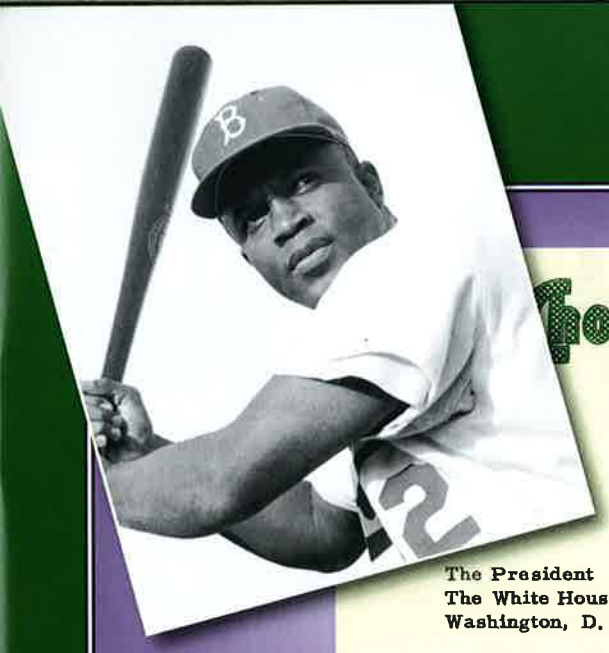
A letter can change a person's mind. Some letters can even help change the world. People have been writing letters for centuries. Here is one example of a letter writer who made a difference.

## Jackie Robinson

Jackie Robinson was the first African American baseball player to play Major League Baseball. He joined the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947. Before then, black players could not play in the Major Leagues. They had to play in a league for black players only. Robinson became a great player in the Major Leagues. But he wasn't just a ballplayer. He was also a fighter for the rights of black people. During his life, he wrote letters to many presidents. He was not afraid to express his opinions. He told each president what he thought should be done and why.

In 1958, Robinson wrote to President Eisenhower. He said, "17 million Negroes cannot . . . wait for the hearts of men to change. We want to enjoy now the rights that we feel we are entitled to . . ." He asked President Eisenhower to make a strong statement in support of equal rights.

In 1967, Robinson wrote to President Johnson. He thanked Johnson for his support of civil rights. Then he asked him to do even more: "We need an even firmer stand as the . . . gap between black and white Americans gets wider."



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Robinson wrote to Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon.

Rockfall of Nuts

425 LEXINGTON AVENUE
New York 17, N. Y.

THE WHITE HOUSE
MAY 14 11 36 AM '58
RECEIVED

May 13, 1958

The President
The White House
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. President:

...g in the audience at the Summit Meeting of Negro ...sterday when you said we must have patience. On ... say this, I felt like standing up and saying, "Oh ...ain."

...lly remind you sir, that we have been the most ...ll people. When you said we must have self- ... wondered how we could have self-respect and remain patient considering the treatment accorded us through the years.

17 million Negroes cannot do as you suggest and wait for the

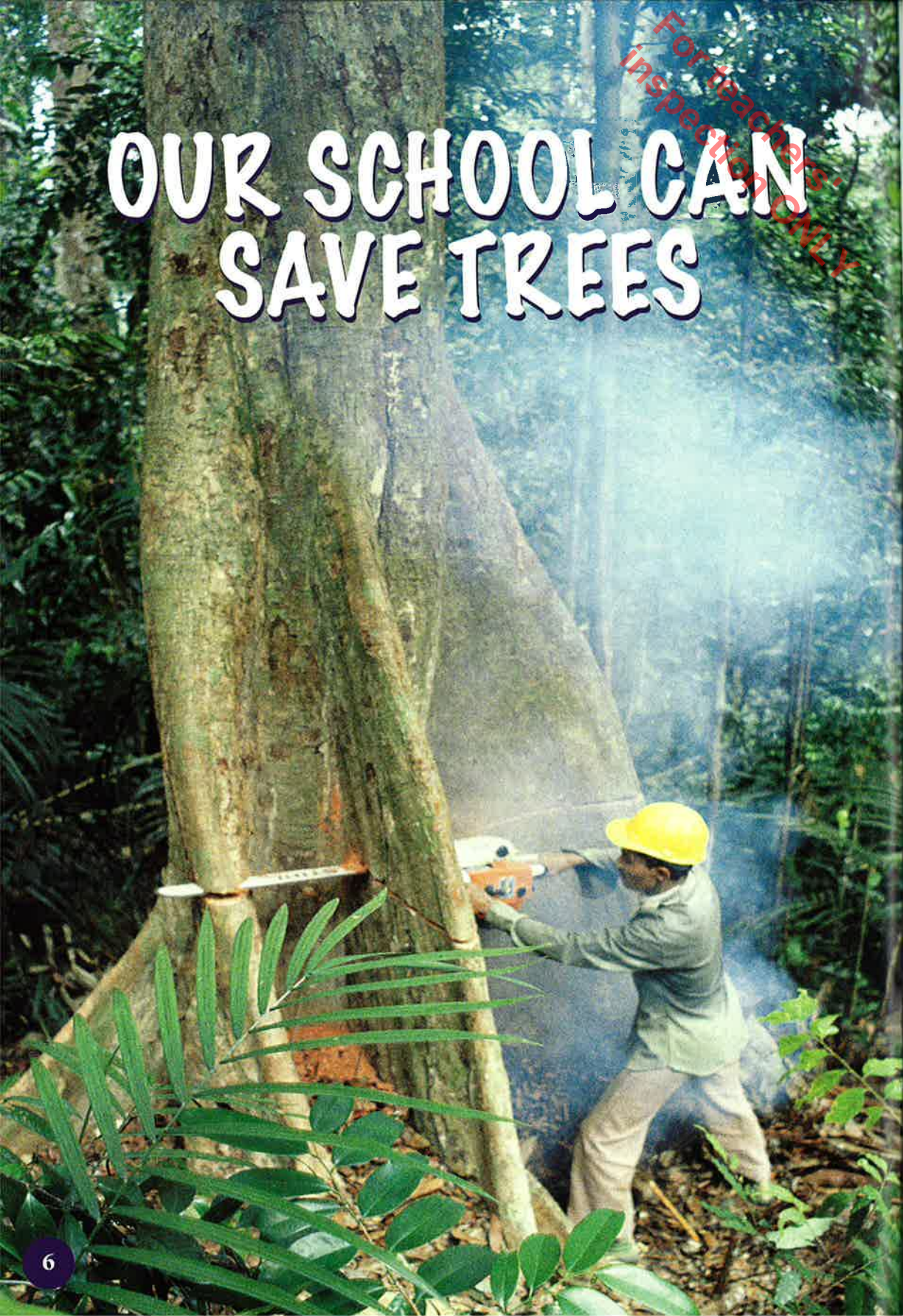
# Tools Writers Use

## State and Defend Your Position

When a writer states a position, he expresses a strong opinion. He must make his opinion, or view, very clear to the reader. He needs to convince the reader to have the same opinion. Persuasive writers support their positions in the following ways:

- They clearly state a position.
- They provide facts.
- They give concrete examples.
- They may quote other people.
- They may also use language to share their emotions.

# OUR SCHOOL CAN SAVE TREES



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