

Shifting from Persuasion to Argument

Persuasive writing is based on emotional appeals to the audience, whereas argumentation is based on logic and evidence.

A logical argument ...

convinces the audience because of the perceived **merit** and **reasonableness** of the *claims* and *proofs* offered rather than either the emotions the writing evokes in the audience or the character or credentials of the writer.

(Common Core State Standards, Appendix A, p. 24)

- Persuasive writing is not as rigorous because it allows students to write solely based on their experiences and emotions, without having to gather **evidence** and **facts** or consider the other side.

Here's an example of how the genres differ:

(From Benjamin and Hugelmeier)

If a student were asked to persuade her parents to get her a four-legged pet, she might resort to whatever works between her and her parents. Whining, pouting, insisting, and threatening to run away would be fair game, assuming such techniques have worked in the past.

If she were asked to create an argument for why she should have a four-legged pet, and if the audience were less subjective than her parents—let's say, the directors of an animal shelter—she should offer evidence about her suitability as a potential pet owner: her history taking care of someone or something that depended on her, her knowledge, her schedule, her physical strength.