

Supplemental Materials to  
*Properties of Spoken Persuasive Language Samples from  
Typically Developing Adolescents*

- 1.) Protocol for Eliciting a Persuasive Language Sample
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- 3.) Persuasion Planning Sheet
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# Protocol for Eliciting a Persuasive Language Sample

Note: Words to be spoken by the examiner are in boldface. Instructions that the examiner is to follow silently appear in italics.

**Today I want to find out how well you can persuade. That's when you talk people into changing their mind and doing something you want. I'm going to make a recording. If you want, you can listen to it when we're finished.**

**I would like you to pick a rule or situation you would like to see changed in your school, job, or community. Imagine that I am an adult who has the power to make the change that you want. Here are a few examples:**

- 1. Pretend I'm the principal of your school and you want to persuade me to provide money for a special event; OR**
- 2. Pretend I'm your boss and you want to persuade me to change your hours or work schedule; OR**
- 3. Pretend I'm a government official and you want me to change the law so that taxes are raised or lowered for a specific purpose.**

**I expect you to talk for at least a few minutes, so be sure to pick an issue you know and care about. You can choose an issue from this list [*hand list to student*] or else pick one of your own.**

*Allow the student time to review the suggested issues before asking: **What issue have you picked?***

*If the student has difficulty choosing an issue, offer assistance. Review the list together. If a proposed topic is not an arguable issue (e.g., strawberry ice cream is better than chocolate), encourage the student to pick a different issue. If a proposed issue is too narrow, encourage the student to modify it. For example, if the student wants to argue for a change to his or her individual grade in a particular class, suggest that the issue be broadened into an argument for a school-wide change to grading policy.*

*Once an appropriate issue has been selected, clarify the intended target of the persuasion, e.g., principal, boss, government official, by asking, **Who will you be trying to persuade?***

*If there is a mismatch between the issue and the authority figure, help the student to resolve the problem. For example, if a student wishes to convince a boss to raise the minimum wage, help the student understand that this argument is best directed toward a government official.*

*Once a match has been established between issue and authority figure, proceed to the planning directions:*

**Talk to me as if I'm your [name of appropriate authority, e.g., principal, boss, senator] and tell me everything you can to persuade me. To do your best job, you'll first need to organize your thoughts. Here's a list of points you'll need to cover to make a complete argument [*hand the student a copy of the planning sheet*]. Please take the next few minutes to plan by taking notes in these blank spaces [*point to the empty boxes in the column on the right*].**

**But don't waste time writing sentences. Just jot down some key words to remind you of what you want to say. If you don't want to take notes, you can use the reverse side to draw a diagram or make a graphic organizer. Do you have any questions? Go ahead and start planning.**

*Skill at reading is not being assessed. Therefore, if the student appears to be having any difficulty understanding the planning sheet, read the text aloud to the student.*

*Allow enough time for the student to write something for each point on the planning sheet or to create a diagram or graphic organizer. Verify that the student has done some planning for each point. If not, prompt with: **Please do some planning for [name(s) of omitted point(s)].***

**When I turn on the recorder, you will be doing all the talking. I'm going to listen to what you have to say. Tell me everything you can think of. It's OK to look at your planning sheet to remind yourself of what you want to say. Feel free to add to what you've written. Remember: I expect you to talk for as long as you can.**

*Turn on recording device and have the student begin speaking. Do not engage the student in a debate. Instead, limit your encouragement to affirmations such as: **Uhhuh, mhm, I see, OK, ah, etc.***

*If the student finishes speaking before several minutes have elapsed or has not discussed one or more points on the planning sheet, prompt with: **Is there anything else you can tell me?***

*If the student still has not addressed all the points on the planning sheet, prompt with: **What about [name(s) of omitted point(s)]?***

*When the student has finished speaking, turn off the recorder. Review the recording for quality before releasing the student. If there's time, offer to let the student listen to the recording.*

## Suggested Persuasive Issues

Changing the time school starts in the morning
Allowing students to leave campus during the school day without special permission
Requiring students to do graded homework
Requiring students to take foreign language classes
Allowing teachers to socialize with students on social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, <i>etc.</i>
Including grades in physical education classes in students' grade point average
Allowing students to listen to their music using headphones during free periods
Changing the access teenagers have to entertainment that is violent or sexually suggestive; entertainment includes movies, music, and video games
Requiring school uniforms or a dress code for students
Awarding cash or other incentives to students who earn good grades
Replacing traditional textbooks with notebook computers or digital materials
Requiring cities to provide free wireless internet access in public spaces
Requiring people to get a license in order to become parents
Allowing alternatives to jail, such as counseling or public service, for convicted criminals
Requiring colleges to pay their student athletes a salary for playing
Requiring drug tests for professional athletes
Allowing employers to require drug tests as part of their hiring procedure
Requiring workers to pay for their own work uniforms or equipment
Raising the minimum wage
Changing the minimum age for voting, drinking, driving, or holding a job
Other: Issue of your choice

# Persuasion Planning Sheet

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I am talking to my \_\_\_\_\_ (*i.e., principal, boss, government official*)

## What to Talk about When Trying to Persuade Someone

Points	What's Covered	Notes
Issue Identification	<p>What rule or situation do you want changed?</p> <p>What would you change it to?</p>	
Supporting Reasons	<p>What facts or values or evidence helps your side?</p> <p>Be sure to include how your change would help or benefit the listener or people the listener cares about.</p>	
Counter-Arguments	<p>What are some good reasons on the other side?</p>	
Response to Counter-Arguments	<p>What can you say to knock down or weaken the reasons on the other side?</p> <p>What reasons on the other side can you agree with, either in whole or in part?</p>	
Compromises	<p>If you can't get your way 100%, what deals would be acceptable so each side wins a little?</p>	
Conclusion	<p>Briefly sum up your position:</p> <p>What do you want?</p> <p>Why do you want it?</p> <p>What are the first steps needed to make the change happen?</p>	

Please use the reverse of this page for an optional diagram or graphic organizer, or for additional notes.

## Persuasive Scoring Scheme

Characteristic	Proficient/Advanced (5)	Satisfactory/Adequate (3)	Minimal/Immature (1)
<b>Issue Identification &amp; Desired Change</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing rule or situation is clearly understood before supporting reasons are stated</li> <li>Desired change is clearly stated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing rule or situation can be discerned; may require shared knowledge</li> <li>Desired change can be discerned</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speaker launches into persuasion with no mention of existing rule or situation</li> <li>Desired change is difficult to determine</li> </ul>
<b>Supporting Reasons</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reason(s) are comprehensive; include detail</li> <li>Benefit(s) to others are clearly understood</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One or more reasons are offered to support desired change</li> <li>Benefit(s) to others are unclear or omitted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reason(s) are confusing or vague</li> <li>Significant/obvious reason(s) are not stated</li> <li>Reason(s) are not plausible; do not support change</li> </ul>
<b>Other Points of View (Counter-Arguments)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other point(s) of view are clearly explained; include detail</li> <li>Includes language to support or refute other point of view</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other point(s) of view are acknowledged OR</li> <li>Dismissive of other point(s) of view</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other point(s) of view are unclear or omitted</li> </ul>
<b>Compromises</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Includes language, with some detail, to support or refute compromising</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compromise(s) are acknowledged OR</li> <li>Dismissive of compromising</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compromises are unclear or omitted</li> </ul>
<b>Conclusion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Desired change is clearly restated/summarized</li> <li>Arguments are clearly restated/summarized</li> <li>Concludes using language such as, "to conclude", "therefore", "and so", "in sum", etc.</li> <li>First step(s) for change are mentioned</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Desired change is restated</li> <li>One or more supporting reasons are restated</li> <li>Ending is inferred and/or lacks transition to conclusion, e.g., "And that's all", "that's it", "I'm done"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Summary statement(s) are omitted</li> <li>Unclear to listener that the persuasion task is completed</li> </ul>
<b>Cohesion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Points are fully covered before moving on to another</li> <li>Transitions between points are smooth/clear using mature language                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Referents are clear</li> </ul> </li> <li>Listener can easily follow the argument</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Point are covered, but lack organization</li> <li>Transitions between points are acceptable                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Referencing is adequate</li> </ul> </li> <li>Listener can follow the argument with some effort</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Points are not fully covered before moving onto another</li> <li>Abrupt transitions between points</li> <li>Referents are unclear, hard to follow</li> <li>Argument is difficult to follow</li> </ul>
<b>Effectiveness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Argument is extremely compelling</li> <li>Argument is entirely plausible                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Argument is well stated</li> <li>Mature language is used</li> </ul> </li> <li>Minimal errors of syntax/form                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supported points well</li> </ul> </li> <li>Speaker's delivery is passionate                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speaker engages listener</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Argument is compelling</li> <li>Argument is plausible</li> <li>Argument requires little or no clarification                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acceptable syntax/form</li> </ul> </li> <li>Speaker's delivery is clear; not necessarily passionate                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effort to persuade is evident</li> </ul> </li> <li>Speaker makes some attempt to engage listener</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Argument is minimally or not compelling                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Argument is not plausible                                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Language is unclear</li> </ul> </li> <li>Errors of syntax/form may be prevalent</li> </ul> </li> <li>Speaker's delivery lacks effort; not passionate</li> <li>Speaker makes no attempt to engage listener                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speaker uses inappropriate/immature tone</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Scoring:**

Each characteristic receives a scaled score 0-5. Proficient/Advanced = 5, Satisfactory/Adequate = 3, Minimal/Immature = 1. Scores in between, 2 and 4, are undefined; use judgment. Significant factual errors reduce the score for that characteristic. Scores of 0, NA are defined below. A composite is scored by adding the total of the characteristic scores. Highest score = 35.

A score of 0 is given for student errors, e.g., not covering topic, not completing/refusing task, student unintelligibility, abandoned utterances.

A score of NA (non-applicable) is given for mechanical/examiner/operator errors, e.g., interference from background noise, issues with recording (cut-offs, interruptions), examiner not following protocol, examiner asking overly specific or leading questions rather than open-ended questions or prompts.