

Arrangement Module 6: Basic Persuasive Arrangement—Division and Distribution

This module is designed for use in Lesson 5: Basic Persuasive Essay with Division and Distribution (see chart, Year-at-a-Glance). You should expect to use at least one class period to complete this module.

Getting Ready

To teach this module, you will need to:

Be able to

- Guide your student to identify what he and his hypothetical opponent agree on and the precise point at which they disagree.
- Use all the previous arrangement worksheets.
- Write a “Division” statement that shows where you and your opponent agree, and the precise point at which you disagree.

Understand

- That the point of disagreement is expressed in the thesis and counter-thesis.
- That our differences of opinion are rooted in something we agree on.

Know

- That a disagreement arises within the context of a wider agreement.
- That the “Division” includes a statement of agreement, a thesis, and a counter-thesis.
- How to write a “Division.”

To teach this module, you will need the following materials:

Arrangement Worksheet 5A: Guide to Division
Arrangement Worksheet 5B: Basic Persuasive Arrangement with Division and Distribution
Arrangement Template 5B: Complete Persuasive Outline

When they complete this module, your students will:

Be able to

- Add a “Division” to their essays by identifying the agreement and the point of disagreement.

Understand

- That the point of disagreement is expressed in the thesis and counter-thesis.
- That our differences of opinion are rooted in something we agree on.

Know

- That a disagreement arises within the context of a wider agreement.
- That the “Division” includes a statement of agreement, a thesis, and a counter-thesis.
- How to write a “Division.”

Presenting the Material

Pre-Grammar

Subject matter	Presentation
<p>Goal:</p> <p>Show your students that every disagreement has an agreement behind it.</p> <p>Another way to say this is that students will come to realize that whenever there is a disagreement it takes place in a context that contains a wider agreement.</p> <p>Discuss recent arguments with a few students.</p> <p>Guide them to identify the precise point of disagreement.</p>	<p><i>Have any of you had an argument in the last week or ten days?</i></p> <p><i>With whom did you argue?</i></p> <p><i>What was it about?</i></p> <p><i>What exactly was the disagreement?</i></p>

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<p>What did they disagree about? What did they agree about?</p> <p>Show them that sometimes we think we have a disagreement but it turns out we don't. This is called an "apparent disagreement"</p> <p>Analyze the argument to determine the actual disagreement, not the apparent disagreement.</p> <p>Transition to Grammar</p> <p>Point out that writing an essay helps us get along better and make better decisions by giving us practice at carefully identifying the precise point of disagreement.</p>	<p><i>What was your opponent's position? Do you and your opponent agree about anything?</i></p> <p><i>Sometimes we have "apparent disagreements" where we think we disagree but if we look more closely argue we find that we really agree after all</i></p> <p><i>Have you ever heard an argument like this:</i></p> <p><i>The senior boys and senior girls are discussing where to go for the senior trip. Girls: We should go to the beach. Guys: No, we shouldn't! Girls: You don't want to go on the senior trip! Guys: What are you talking about?! We do too. Girls: You just said you don't!</i></p> <p><i>Do they have a disagreement? What is it? What do they not disagree about?</i></p> <p><i>In this lesson, we are going to learn one of the most important steps in thinking about and developing an argument.</i></p> <p><i>We are going to learn to identify the precise point at which our agreement with our opponent becomes a disagreement.</i></p> <p><i>Learning this lesson can save you many years of heartache when you learn to apply it to your lives.</i></p>
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Grammar:

Subject matter	Presentation
<p>Goal: Offer your students clear types, or examples, of the process of finding the precise point of disagreement in an argument.</p> <p>Begin with a deliberative argument (i.e. one that discusses whether we should do something in the future). The students don't need to learn this term yet, but it will be used in year two, so you may want to "drop hints" by including the term in your instructions now.</p> <p>Notice the steps you go through each time you find the precise point of disagreement.</p> <p>First type:</p> <p>State the thesis first. Then state the counter-thesis by arguing for the negative of the thesis (i.e., negate the thesis)</p> <p>Since this argument is made up, your students won't have any context for it. They probably won't have already been thinking about it and they won't have seen anybody discussing it. So they'll have to pretend it has a context by making one up.</p> <p>In this case, most of the context is contained in the thesis – the senior trip. Your students will add flesh and blood to this context in order to come up with possible agreements.</p>	<p><i>Here's another senior trip argument.</i></p> <p><i>"I think we should go to Greece for our senior trip, and you think we should not go to Greece."</i></p> <p><i>Now we need to figure out what we DO agree on.</i></p> <p><i>You can find the agreement by thinking about the context or circumstances of the discussion.</i></p>

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<p>Write the agreement on the board: “Everybody wants to take a senior trip”</p> <p>Write the disagreement on the board “You want to go to Greece and I do not want to go to Greece.”</p> <p>Second type:</p> <p>First state the argument.</p> <p>Guide your students to separate the thesis from the counter-thesis.</p> <p>This example provides even less context than the first. This time your students should let their imaginations go a little bit to come up with an imaginary context.</p> <p>Brainstorm together for some possible contexts:</p> <p>Select one of the imaginary contexts and build this exercise around it. For purposes of illustration, we offer a fourth of July parade to be held in their state.</p>	<p><i>What are they not arguing about?</i></p> <p><i>Has either side argued that they don't want to go on a senior trip?</i> No</p> <p><i>We can safely assume that both sides do want to go. But they disagree about whether they should go to Greece or not.</i></p> <p><i>What do the two sides agree on?</i></p> <p><i>What is the precise disagreement?</i></p> <p><i>Now let's try a political argument:</i></p> <p><i>Senator Dove thinks the government ought to spend money on flags and Senator Hawk does not.</i></p> <p>Ask: <i>What is the affirmative thesis?</i> <i>What is the counter-thesis?</i></p> <p><i>Why might an argument like this come up?</i> <i>What might the flags be needed for?</i></p> <p><i>Let's use one of the contexts you have come up with.</i></p> <p>Choose one, either as a class or as the teacher</p>
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<p>In our illustration: they agree that they should celebrate the fourth of July with a parade.</p>	<p><i>What do the senators agree on?</i> Write their agreement on the board</p>
<p>In our illustration: whether the government ought to spend money on flags for the parade.</p>	<p><i>What exactly are they disagreeing on?</i> Write their disagreement on the board</p>
<p>Third type:</p>	<p><i>Here's something a little more personal:</i></p>
<p>State the thesis and counter-thesis</p>	<p><i>Dad thinks Elizabeth should quit soccer. Mom thinks Elizabeth should keep playing soccer.</i></p>
<p></p>	<p><i>What is the thesis?</i> <i>Dad thinks Elizabeth should quit soccer.</i></p>
<p></p>	<p><i>What is the counter-thesis?</i> <i>Mom thinks Elizabeth should keep playing soccer.</i></p>
<p>Brainstorm context</p>	<p><i>Why might such an argument arise?</i></p>
<p>Identify and record the agreement</p>	<p><i>If we select this context, what do Mom and Dad agree on?</i></p>
<p>Identify and record the disagreement</p>	<p><i>What do they disagree on?</i></p>
<p>This time, write the agreement and disagreement on the board using a chart such as the one found on the Division worksheet.</p>	
<p>Fourth type:</p>	
<p>You may want to do a fourth type or example by drawing on the students readings or experiences. If you do so they will not have to make up a context because the argument will already have a context.</p>	

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For example, if they are arguing whether Achilles should kill Paris, the context is provided in the Iliad and any other readings in which the student is engaged.

This fourth type would be helpful because the students would see that they are not expected to invent their own context for each essay.

If you choose to do this fourth type, you may prefer doing a “judicial” rather than a deliberative essay. Judicial essays are concerned with the past: whether something should have been done. Deliberative are concerned with the future: whether something should be done.

For example, if you are reading *The Inferno* you might ask: Were Dante’s responses to the people in the Second Circle appropriate?

Note about the challenge question: be careful about this as it could raise very heated discussions.

Present as many models of the process as you judge necessary. In each case, be sure your students

1. State the thesis
2. State the counter-thesis
3. Identify and record the agreement

Once you determine that your students grasp the process, proceed to the dialectic stage of the lesson.

Optional challenge question for argumentative classes:

Can you think of an argument where the two sides didn’t agree on anything at all?

Rhetoric B: Practice/ Application

Subject matter	Presentation
<p>Practice Students add to their practice essays by applying this lesson.</p> <p>Show them the division worksheet and instruct them to complete it in class. Some will find the challenge of applying this lesson to their own essays very difficult.</p> <p>Step them through each step very carefully and don't be overly precise about what they identify as the agreement. They will see and think more precisely through practice.</p> <p>Application For homework, students will add "division" to their essays. Instruct them to follow the steps outlined on the division worksheet (if you have not done so, we highly recommend replacing the worksheet in the book with the one on-line). Then follow the outline in Arrangement Template 4 to add it to your essay.</p>	<p><i>In the persuasive essay you're working on, think about the precise point where you disagree with your opponent.</i></p> <p><i>What is your issue?</i> <i>What is your thesis?</i> <i>What is your opponent's counter-thesis?</i> <i>What is the context of your argument?</i></p> <p><i>What do you and your opponent agree on?</i></p> <p><i>What, exactly, do you disagree on?</i></p> <p><i>Add a "division" to your current essay.</i></p> <p><i>Complete Arrangement worksheet 5A.</i></p> <p><i>Then follow the outline in arrangement template 5B to add it to your essay.</i></p> <p><i>Bring it back to the next class for me to check!</i></p>

Assessment

Ensure that each student is able to find the agreement behind the disagreement in their essays. Ensure that they create a "division" following the pattern outlined on Arrangement Worksheet 5A and that they add division to their essays following the outline presented on Arrangement Template 5B.