Writing to persuade

Letter to the BBC

- Because we are also aiming to send this to other production companies it is advisable to word process it. We need to keep to the conventions of formal letter writing, as below.

  Your address
  xxxxxxxxxx
  xxxxxxxxxx
  postcode

  Their address
  xxxxxxxxxx
  xxxxxxxxxx
  xxxxxxxxxx
  postcode

  Date

  Dear sir or madam,

- Begin writing your introductory paragraph by explaining what you want them to do. You can incorporate a bit of praise for them here.

- Next you need to discuss the syllabus and numbers taking it – relate this to target audience.

- You should now discuss the other exam board texts and the films made of them and explain how many students study for English/lit. GCSEs.

- Next you need to explain what a good book *Heroes* is and why it would make a superb film/drama production (choose one or the other).

- In the next paragraph you could explain some key moments from your storyboard and link this to target audience.

- Conclude by reminding them about their need to make educational programmes and the target audience that they would gain. Try to ‘talk numbers’ here – 1) students taking examination – 2) get some research on viewing figures for a large BBC Drama production like *Pride and Prejudice*.

Remember to use some of the persuasive techniques you have learned:—

  e.g. Facts, figures, anecdotes, emotive language, exaggeration, repetition, rhetorical questions, triples.

Remember to use some appropriate discursive markers:—

  e.g. When building up an argument – firstly, moreover, furthermore, another important point etc.  
  When concluding an argument – finally, consequently, ultimately, as a result, in conclusion etc.
Writing to persuade

Information

- The examination board is AQA and the syllabus is syllabus A
- Approximately 365,000 students sit the English Literature exam each year
- *Heroes* is a new book for examination in 2004
- The other prose texts are *Of Mice And Men, Lord of the Flies, To Kill a Mockingbird, I’m The King of the Castle, Kes, The Catcher in the Rye*
- Most of these have at least one film or drama production made of them
- Many students learn better when they have an audio and/or visual stimulus to help them
- Many parents buy videos of revision materials for their children
- *Heroes* is an exciting story
- There are many cliff-hangers
- The characters are interesting
- It has themes which are relevant to young people as well as older people – love, hate, revenge, what is a hero
- There is a sense of mystery running through the novel
- The BBC has a reputation for producing high quality drama
- The BBC has programmes devoted to examination revision
- The BBC has the need to make educational programmes written into its charter
Original Writing – The Attack

You are a US soldier in Normandy during the invasion. You are on the outskirts of a small village waiting to capture the village from the Germans.

Section 1
Describe your surroundings. Are you inside or outside a building? Is the village modern or ancient? Use some details to communicate this. Think about the weather – bad weather such as heavy rain, fog or sleet help build up atmosphere. What can you see and hear – in your immediate surroundings and ahead in the main part of the village? Try to build up tension as you are waiting for orders to attack – sudden noise when it’s silent is useful. Think about using short sentences for effect.

Section 2
As you wait for orders to attack think back to when you arrived in France. How long have you been here? Which beach did you land on? What was the coast battle like? (Find out some historical info to help you here.) What type of casualties were there? How did you feel about your comrades being killed/injured? What about your feelings about being alive?

Section 3
Come back to the wait. Time seems to be passing very slowly – how can you communicate this? Can you hear the enemy in the village ahead? Are you whispering to a comrade? Are you hungry? Thirsty? When did you last eat? What was it? The waiting seems endless – try to communicate this.

Section 4
Philosophise!! Why did you join the army? What are your views on war? On killing others? On life itself? What about heroism? What are your hopes for the future? At the end of this paragraph you get your orders to attack.

Section 5
The attack! You approach the village centre. Decide who you are with (or alone). What can you see and hear? Use small, seemingly insignificant details such as paint peeling or burning car/jeep tyres etc. How do you locate the enemy? What weapon(s) are you using? What are they using? Describe what happens in the battle.

Section 6
The aftermath.
In this paragraph you need to take stock. Have you captured the village? Has much of it been destroyed? Use small details to make it realistic (a door hanging on by one hinge or a church window smashed etc.) What about deaths/ injuries in your platoon? Where to from here?