



Putting It All Together

Annotated Writing Sample – Persuasive Essay

This before and after writing sample with annotations can be used to model how to use the Seven Steps to improve a piece of writing.

Group students and give them a copy of the 'before' text. Ask them to read the text and discuss possible improvements based on the Seven Steps techniques. Remind students to use Seven Steps terminology when making suggestions and get them to record their ideas in the blank column next to the text.

Now, display the 'before – annotated' text and get students to compare their suggestions to those in the annotations.

Next, ask students to revise the text based on the suggestions. They could do this individually or in groups.

Finally, display the 'after' text and get students to compare it with their own revised versions. Did they come up with different and creative ways to make the text more engaging using the Seven Steps?

Before

Everyone Should Learn to Cook

I think everyone should learn to cook because cooking is fun, learning how to cook makes you a healthier eater and you need to eat three times a day.

Firstly, cooking is fun as shown by popular TV shows like *MasterChef* and Jamie Oliver. It's great to get into the kitchen and try to copy some of their recipes. You get to cook what sounds good to you too.

Secondly, research shows that kids who learn how to cook are healthier eaters. 'Kid's meals' in restaurants are often deep-fried and unhealthy. I would much rather have a healthy, homemade stir fry than oily chicken nuggets any day.

Thirdly, you eat three times a day, I figure that's about 20 times a week or over 1,000 times a year. That's a lot of takeaway, a lot of bad food and a lot of stress if you can't cook.

Finally, cooking is messy which is so much fun. I can chop and squeeze and knead and make as much mess as I like – and if I produce something we can eat for dinner, Mum has to clean up the kitchen.

In conclusion, as I have shown cooking is an essential skill. Learning to cook will also save you money because it is much cheaper than eating out or ordering takeaway all the time. So for that reason everyone should learn to cook.

Before – Annotated

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Step 6: Ban the Boring

This text sticks rigidly to the 'persuasive formula'. As you develop your writing skills it is important to move beyond the formula to make your writing more interesting.

Step 2: Sizzling Starts

Try using a personal experience or anecdote to introduce the topic to engage the reader's interest. Give your reader some credit and let them infer meaning.

Step 5: Show, Don't Tell

Make the first body paragraph more powerful by **SHOWING** us why cooking is so much fun. Make the second body paragraph more powerful and persuasive by **SHOWING** us the contrast between the healthy and unhealthy food.

Step 3: Tightening Tension

The final body paragraph should contain the strongest argument. Try strengthening the argument in the third body paragraph with examples and place it last.

Step 1: Plan for Success

The final body paragraph repeats the point made in the first body paragraph. Make sure that you have a different argument in each body paragraph. Try combining the first and last body paragraphs to strengthen your first argument.

Step 7: Endings with Impact

Don't introduce new reasons in the conclusion. Try linking back to the introduction to tie everything together and End with Impact.

Step 4: Dynamic Dialogue

Try adding a bit of dialogue to the conclusion to make the writing more vibrant.

After

Everyone Should Learn to Cook

If you like your vegetables raw and your sausages burnt (or worse, the other way around!) then you'd be right at home in our house. Someone should have taught my mother how to cook. You want to stress my mum out? Ask her what's for dinner. The last time Mum tried to cook a family meal she burnt the tea towel. My brother and I learnt to cook at a very early age – call it self-defence, I guess, but somehow we had to stop us all starving to death.

Cooking is actually fun. Look at all the shows like *MasterChef* and Jamie Oliver, everyone is watching them. It's great to get into the kitchen and try to copy some of their recipes. You get to cook what sounds good to you too. Best of all, I can chop and squeeze and knead and make as much mess as I like – and if I produce something we can eat for dinner, Mum has to clean up the kitchen.

Research shows that kids who learn how to cook are actually healthier eaters. I mean have you seen what they serve up for 'kid's meals' in restaurants? Chicken nuggets, fish in batter and chips, all deep-fried – that's a disaster in the making for your stomach, your health and your weight. I wouldn't deep-fry anything at home, just pouring all that oil into a saucepan is enough to make me nervous. No, give me a few veggies chopped up, some sliced lamb, throw it all in, a quick flick around the pan for a couple of minutes and hey everyone, 'dinner is served'.

You eat three times a day, I figure that's about 20 times a week or over 1,000 times a year. That's a lot of takeaway, a lot of bad food and a lot of stress if you can't cook. When my mum left home she was terrified about cooking. Her mother hadn't taught her how and sometimes I swear she only married Dad because he knew his way around the kitchen. At least when my brother and I leave home we'll be able to fend for ourselves. Besides, there is something very satisfying about creating something and serving it up to people – and then lapping up all the compliments.

Cooking is creative, but really it is a simple and essential skill. Even Mum agrees. She's started watching *MasterChef* too (okay, the junior version, but that's a start). Tonight, she has promised to serve us a seafood stew.

'Do you think it's safe?' I asked my brother.

'I'm not sure,' he muttered. 'But just in case, hide the tea towels.'