

Lesson 4: Stick the Landing

UNIT: Skatepark

TRANSCRIPT

HOOK 1

Hi, writers. It's Margaret.

When Mia started writing her letter about getting a skatepark, I started watching a lot more skateboarding videos, like this one.

Uh-oh. It looks like this video froze, hmm.

DISCUSSION 1

Discuss: How does it feel to have the video end like this?

HOOK 2

Maybe you said you would feel confused because the video didn't have an ending or maybe you'd feel frustrated or annoyed because you wouldn't know if this skateboarder landed his cool trick. It turns out there's actually more to this video. Let's take a look!

That was awesome and way better to see the whole video from beginning to end.

Just like this video, Mia's letter needs an ending. But she doesn't need to land an awesome trick.

She needs to end her letter in a memorable way so that the mayor will clearly understand what Mia wants him to do. The mayor gets lots of letters every day. Mia wants to make sure that when he finishes her letter, it stands out and he'll want to help.

You already wrote two paragraphs about Mia's reason for building a skatepark in the community. These are your body paragraphs. They are only part of the letter you're working on to the mayor.

Today, we'll add an ending to Mia's letter. We'll work on the introduction later. There was a lot of great information in Mia's letter for why a skatepark should be built, but it's possible that the mayor doesn't clearly understand what Mia wants him to do.

Since this is the last paragraph the mayor will read, Mia wants to make this last paragraph memorable.

DISCUSSION 2

Discuss: Why do you think it's important to make the ending, or conclusion, of this letter memorable?

HOOK 3

Maybe you said the conclusion should be memorable so that the mayor keeps thinking about it even when he's done reading it. Or maybe you said he'll share Mia's idea with other people who can help. You may have said something else, and that's great.

Mia knows that by making this last paragraph memorable, the mayor will seriously consider what she's asking for. Writers make conclusions memorable so that their reader is left with a powerful idea. That way, there's a higher chance that they will do what you asked or agree with you.

There were a lot of ideas in Mia's letter, like:

- The city should turn the abandoned pool into a skatepark
- Skateparks give kids a community space to hang out
- Atita Verghese built skateparks in India
- Skateparks are an opportunity for kids to exercise and stay healthy
- According to Dr. Ikenna, skateboarding is a fun way to stay active and also strengthens your heart, lungs, and muscles.

Mia wants to restate some of her ideas, but not all of them—just the main points or the big ideas. So, she decided to use this idea because it's her purpose or thesis, and also these two because they are her reasons.

She started her sentence like this, *"To review,"* then she added the rest of her sentence using these big ideas from her letter, *"the city should turn the abandoned pool into a skatepark because skateparks give kids a community space to hang out and It's a place to exercise and stay healthy."* These are some great big ideas the mayor will be reminded of as he finishes reading Mia's letter.

Mia also wonders if the mayor has ever been to a skatepark. Mia thinks back to the last time she was at a skatepark. She remembers the sound of wheels rolling on the pavement, and kids laughing, brightly colored skateboards, and cheering when someone would land a trick. What if she could get the mayor to imagine the future of their community with the addition of a skatepark?

DISCUSSION 3

Discuss: Imagine you're in the new skatepark. What kinds of things would you see or hear?

HOOK 4

I'm sure you came up with some really great ideas. Here's what Mia came up with:

- Just think about the community with a skatepark. There would be laughter, cool tricks, and lots of new friends being made. There would also be people of all age finding ways to have fun in the skatepark!

Now, Mia needs a closing.

This could be two sentences, one that thanks the mayor for reading her letter, and one that leaves him with a final convincing thought. Like this:

- Thank you for considering my idea. With your help, we can create a community skatepark for everyone to enjoy! Sincerely, Mia Fuentes.

Here's how her conclusion looks. Notice how Mia restated her big ideas, had the mayor imagine a future with a skatepark in the community, and added a closing. She now has a well-constructed conclusion that will leave the mayor with a powerful idea and a clear understanding of what Mia wants him to do.

Now, it's your turn to write a conclusion. You'll restate your big ideas, have the mayor imagine the future with a skatepark, and close with a thank you and final convincing sentence.

I'll get you started, step by step.

STEP 1

Get your supplies.

STEP 2

Get your Build Your Reasons worksheet.

Take a look at the thesis and the reasons. These are your big ideas. Before you write, think about how you can combine big ideas into one sentence.

Try using these sentence starters and these connecting words to help you. I'll give you one minute.

STEP 3

Now get your Intro / Conclusion Draft worksheet.

Find the box labeled "Conclusion."

Write your sentence with your big ideas here.

Remember, here is how you can start your sentence. These are your big ideas to combine, and here are some connecting words you can use.

STEP 4

Now write two or more sentences about what you want the mayor to imagine when he thinks about a new skatepark in the community. If you're not sure what to write, you can start like this.

STEP 5

It's time to write a closing.

Write one sentence that thanks the mayor for reading your letter, and one sentence that leaves him with a final convincing thought.

You can use this example or come up with your own.

STEP 6

Find the box that says Sign-off. This is where you'll write, "Sincerely," and your name.

STEP 7

Whisper-read your entire conclusion to yourself. Make sure you:

- Restated your big ideas
- Had the mayor imagine the future
- And included a closing

If you need to make changes, you can do that now.

HOOK 5

Great job writing a conclusion! Here's how Mia's letter looks so far.

Now she needs to work on the beginning of her letter. Most letters start with, "Dear, [Name]"—whoever you're writing to.

There's also a paragraph here at the beginning. This is where Mia can tell the mayor why she's even writing to him in the first place.

When writers introduce what their writing is about, it's called an introduction. Mia has written introductions before, and she knows that the first sentence should really get the mayor's attention. Writers call this a hook because it hooks the reader's attention.

Here are some ideas that she has:

- Maybe she could start with a personal story: Last summer I tried to build a ramp so that I could practice doing a backflip on my skateboard.
- Or maybe she could start with a question: Have you ever felt the excitement and thrill of being at a skatepark with people whizzing by on wheels?

DISCUSSION 5

Discuss: Think about how you would hook the mayor's attention. How would you start this letter? You can use one of these ideas or come up with your own.

HOOK 6

I'm not sure how you answered, but all of these strategies would be a great way to start our letter because each one can get the mayor's attention.

As the writer, you'll get to decide which type of hook you would like to use.

Mia decided to use this one:

- *Have you ever felt the excitement and thrill of being at a skatepark with people whizzing by on wheels?*

Now that Mia has the mayor's attention, she can tell him her thesis and reasons:

- *The city should turn the abandoned pool into a new skatepark because skateparks create a community space where kids can hang out, and it's a place to exercise and stay healthy.*

Now, Mia needs a transition sentence to connect her introduction to the rest of the letter. This sentence can give a quick preview of what to expect in the next paragraphs. Here's what she wrote:

- Continue reading to better understand reasons that a skatepark can help our community.

All of these parts together make a full introduction. The hook will get the mayor excited or interested to read more. The thesis and reasons will let him know why Mia is writing the letter. And a transition sentence will connect the introduction to the rest of the letter.

It's your turn to draft an introduction for your persuasive letter to the mayor. You'll add a greeting, a hook, your thesis and reasons, and a transition sentence.

I'll get you started, step by step.

STEP 8

Get your Intro / Conclusions worksheet.

Find the box labeled "Greeting." This is where you can write, "Dear Mayor Westin."
Don't forget to put a comma at the end of your greeting.

STEP 9

Think back to the hook you wanted to use in your letter. It might have been a story or a question. When you know what your hook is, write it here in the box labeled "Introduction."

STEP 10

Next, use your notes to copy your thesis. You can copy it exactly from your notes or put it into your own words.

STEP 11

Now write your sentence that states your reasons here. You can use this sentence or come up with your own.

STEP 12

Now, write your transition sentence. You can use this sentence or come up with your own.

STEP 13

Whisper-read your entire introduction—make sure you:

- Use the hook to get the mayor's attention
- Wrote your thesis
- Wrote your reasons
- And included a transition sentence

If you need to make changes, you can do that now.

WRAP UP

Well done, writers! You have a complete draft of your persuasive letter with an introduction, two body paragraphs, and a conclusion. Way to go! Your draft for your letter is complete. That makes me want to jump for joy!

In the next lesson, you'll edit your writing and get it ready to share. Make sure you put all your V.I.P.s somewhere safe. I'll see you next time.