

What can I do to Protect, Preserve and/or Restore the Shuswap Watershed?

Suffering from Writers' Block?

Here are some tips that might help you win the Shuswap Watershed Poster Contest. You may already have other strategies that you have been taught. Try to use them. Don't be afraid to **ask your teacher** for tips and help. Remember your essay must be submitted to the SD.83 School Board Office by 8:30 AM on Friday, April 9.

1. **Identify your main idea or point of view.** Your purpose will be to persuade your audience to accept this idea or point of view. *You might want to choose one of the **Key Threats** from the Watershed Poster, decide what your point of view is, and write about it. Choose something you already have some knowledge about and care deeply about. **For Example:** Maybe you live near Gardom Lake and have some strong opinions on Invasive Species. The Ministry of Environment recently used rotenone to kill the perch and bass in the lake. (and the other gilled organisms which live in the lake)*
2. **Identify your audience.** To write an effective persuasive essay, try to understand your audience. For example, are your readers undecided about your issue? Or are your readers hostile to your point of view? *Your audience will be the contest judges, your fellow students, and the people who attend the Shuswap Watershed Celebration on April 22,23. Your audience could also include the general public if your essay is printed in the paper or on the shuswapwatershed.ca website.*
3. Considering your audience, **identify the strongest supporting points** for your persuasion. *Some people find it helpful to make a Mind Map or Brainstorm their topic. This will help you have many ideas and get you into the creative side of your brain.*
4. **Identify the most significant opposing view.** Explaining and then refuting the opposing view strengthens the credibility and scope of your essay. *Remember there will always be some people who don't agree with your point of view. Try to put yourself in the position of other people and think what they might think. Using the Gardom Lake example, some people think we should be able to catch perch and bass in B.C. because they are easier to catch than trout, they are good eating, and it's lots of fun.*

5. **Get someone to check your spelling and grammar and edit your work.**

Simple mechanical mistakes can detract for the power of your essay. When you read your own work, sometimes you can't see the mistakes. Make sure you have followed the **less than** 1000 word maximum guideline. Don't try to "pad" your essay if it is only 500 words that is fine - Quality before quantity

How to organize your persuasive essay:

Introduction

- Your introduction should hook your reader's attention and provide background information on your topic or controversy. **For example:** *If you chose to write about how you would stop surface runoff from polluting the lake, you would need to explain what the sources of the runoff are and how they end up in the lake and the damage they cause. Don't be afraid to show your personal, emotional connections and use personal examples. Try to appeal to all the senses of the reader and create an emotional response with them.*
- The paragraph should end with a clear statement of your main idea or point of view.

Body paragraphs

- Your body paragraphs should present the points in support of your main idea.
- Each body paragraph should focus on **one** point.
- Be sure to provide evidence or examples for each point.
- Be sure to include lots of actions that you and others could take to help solve the issue you choose to write about for the Shuswap.

Opposing view

- After presenting your supporting points, develop one paragraph to accurately explain and then refute the most significant opposing view. **For example:** *The solutions to many issues are expensive. How would you convince your audience that they may have to suffer economically to flourish environmentally? (Dr. Fish says "Prevention is the best policy)*

Conclusion

- Creatively restate your main idea and supporting points and end strong.

- Try to leave your audience even more connected to your topic and persuaded by your main idea or perspective.

Give credit

Use inspirational quotes from other people but be sure to recognize the source.

For example: The outline for how to write a persuasive essay was found on <http://www.writeexpress.com/persuasive-essay.html> and then expanded upon.