

I have discussed argumentative and persuasive work a lot over the years.

In my book, I gave some examples of high-interest topics. Some tend to be controversial, so think them through. With that said, it is worth the investment of time. Argumentation and persuasion is essential to build advanced-level language skills. They will WANT to argue their opinion and will learn a ton of valuable language as they work through the task. Think dress codes v. their own choices.

One of my favorite themes to develop this skill is bullfighting. People have long been so divided on this, and even more so now, in my opinion.

We language teachers and linguists are conditioned to see practices from other cultures often (at least at first) as something that is different from what we would do and try to understand the why behind a certain practice.

I would share some specific resources (photos of relevant places, etc.) of this topic, but I have unpublished them as I realize even having them might lend the appearance that I am in favor of this. For example, I have a photo from many years ago of a sparse audience. It shows how fewer and fewer people go to these places in Spain. The Plaza de Toros in Barcelona is a market now, I think, since it is outlawed there. I even had some video clips, as well as some (at the time) statistics that showed how young people were being offered money to train as interest was waning. All compelling arguments against this, in addition to many peoples' personal opinions. In some of the arguments that I have heard from people not opposed to this, I have learned about the origins and about their passion to see it as an important cultural tradition. These have only strengthened my counterarguments AND ability to persuade and make arguments in Spanish.

Using your ideas and some source materials (reading, photos, etc.), work with students writing evidence to support each view – for and against. Write arguments on the board.

After exploring the text and ideas, give them this frame/outline to develop their ideas.

(Bilingual Support)

Topic Sentence (Introduce your opinion)

- Spanish: *En mi opinión*, la corrida de toros es _____ porque...

- English: In my opinion, bullfighting is _____ because...

Reason 1 (Introduce first reason)

- Spanish: *Primero*, ...
- English: First, ...
- (*Explain your first reason clearly. Give a short example or detail.*)

Reason 2 (Add second reason)

- Spanish: *Además*, ...
- English: In addition, ...
- (*Explain your second reason. Support with another example or fact.*)

Reason 3 (Optional – strengthen your argument)

- Spanish: *Por ejemplo*, ...
- English: For example, ...
- (*Give one more reason or a specific case that supports your opinion.*)

Counterargument (Show you understand the other side)

- Spanish: *Algunas personas piensan que...*
- English: Some people think that...
- Spanish: *Sin embargo*, ...
- English: However, ...
- (*Explain why you still disagree.*)

Conclusion (Restate your opinion)

- Spanish: *Por estas razones*, yo creo que la corrida de toros es _____.
- English: For these reasons, I believe that bullfighting is _____.
- Spanish: *En conclusión*, ...
- English: In conclusion, ...
- (*Finish with a strong closing thought.*)

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