

Literature-Based Activity Sheets and Grade 10 Learners' Argumentative and Persuasive Writing Performance

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Abstract: This study examined changes in Grade 10 learners' performance in argumentative and persuasive writing after instruction using literature-based activity sheets. A one-group pretest-posttest design was implemented at Teresa National High School in Rizal, Philippines, during the third quarter of School Year 2025–2026. The intervention integrated scaffolded writing tasks with summarized versions of Langston Hughes's "Thank You, Ma'am" and Guy de Maupassant's "The Necklace." Learners' outputs were evaluated using rubrics validated by education specialists and classroom practitioners; three Grade 10 English teachers independently scored each output, and their ratings were averaged. Descriptive statistics and dependent-samples t tests were used to analyze performance. The reported overall mean increased from 17.10 (SD = 5.66) before instruction to 34.93 (SD = 12.36) after instruction, out of 60 points. Mean scores increased in argumentative essay writing, persuasive essay writing, and the use of varied writing techniques. The source analysis reported statistically significant pretest–posttest differences for all three competencies and for the combined score (all $p < .001$). These findings suggest that scaffolded, literature-based activity sheets may support students' essay-writing performance. However, the one-group design, absence of pilot testing, limited instructional period, and inconsistent sample-size description warrant caution when interpreting the results and limit causal conclusions.

Keywords: literature-based instruction, activity sheets, argumentative writing, persuasive writing, Grade 10 learners

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1. INTRODUCTION

Writing is a complex literacy practice through which learners generate, organize, and communicate ideas. Academic writing requires more than grammatical accuracy: students must establish a position, develop coherent paragraphs, support claims with evidence, and revise their work for clarity and flow (Graham, 2018). Argumentative writing adds the demands of considering different positions and evaluating evidence, while persuasive writing draws on both reasoning and rhetorical appeals to influence readers (Ferretti & Graham, 2019; Nussbaum, 2021). These demands can be difficult for secondary learners who have had limited opportunities for sustained composition and guided feedback.

In the Philippine context, national literacy indicators underline the need for continuing instructional support. Reports from the Second Congressional Commission on Education describe a decline in student proficiency from 30% in Grade 3 to 0.47% in Grade 12 (EDCOM 2 Communications, 2026). Results from the 2019 Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics also showed that 46% of Filipino Grade 5 learners performed in the lowest writing-proficiency band (UNICEF Philippines, 2022). At Teresa National High School, the source manuscript reports that Quarter 3 English 10 Least Mastered Skills reports across School Years 2023–2024 to 2025–2026 identified continuing difficulties in argumentative composition and persuasive techniques. Together, these indicators support the need for structured opportunities for learners to practice extended writing.

A literature-based approach offers one way to connect reading, discussion, and composition. When learners draw on a narrative to explore an issue, they have shared content from which to develop claims, examples, and interpretations. Teacher prompts and staged activities can make writing more manageable by guiding idea generation, drafting, and revision. This approach is compatible with the view of writing as a recursive cognitive process involving planning, translating ideas into text, and reviewing written work (Flower & Hayes, 1981). It also reflects scaffolding, in which temporary and structured support helps learners complete demanding tasks and develop greater independence over time (Wood et al., 1976). Research discussed in the source manuscript likewise describes the instructional value of connecting literary texts to guided writing practice (Hur, 2016).

The present study examined Literature-Based Activity Sheets in Writing developed for Grade 10 learners at Teresa National High School. The materials used literature as a springboard for scaffolded activities in argumentative essays, persuasive essays, and writing techniques. Specifically, the study described learners' pretest and posttest performance in these three competencies and tested whether the scores differed significantly after the intervention. The null hypothesis stated that no significant pretest–posttest differences would be observed.

2. METHOD

Research Design

The study used a one-group pretest–posttest design. Learners completed writing assessments before and after instruction with the Literature-Based Activity Sheets in Writing. Because there was no control group, the design measured changes over the intervention period but could not rule out other explanations for those changes.

Setting and Participants

The study was conducted at Teresa National High School in Teresa, Rizal, during the third quarter of School Year 2025–2026. The school had 725 Grade 10 enrollees distributed across 11 sections. The source manuscript describes a multistage sampling process in which one section was randomly selected from three sections handled by the lead researcher and 30 learners were then selected using simple random sampling.

Instructional Materials and Measures

The intervention consisted of Literature-Based Activity Sheets in Writing aligned with selected Grade 10 English competencies. For argumentative writing, learners read and discussed a summarized version of Langston Hughes's "Thank You, Ma'am" and practiced developing an introduction, supporting and opposing positions, a refutation, and a conclusion. For persuasive writing, learners worked with a summarized version of Guy de Maupassant's "The Necklace" and practiced writing an introduction, body paragraphs, and a conclusion. Prompts, examples, guided choices, and structured writing stages were used to support idea generation, organization, and revision.

Performance was assessed in three areas: composing an argumentative essay (25 points), composing a persuasive essay (15 points), and using varied argumentative and persuasive writing techniques (20 points), for a total of 60 points. The argumentative-writing rubric covered essay structure (30%), support and evidence (30%), clarity (25%), and transitions (15%). The persuasive-writing rubric covered essay structure (30%), support and story connection (30%), clarity (25%), and transitions (15%). Writing techniques included such elements as logical reasoning, textual evidence, emotional appeal, and a call to action. The researcher-made assessments and rubrics underwent face and content validation by professors, English teachers, master teachers, and a statistician.

The pretests and posttests were not pilot-tested, so reliability coefficients were not established.

Procedure

Before data collection, informed consent was obtained from learners and their parents or guardians. For each essay genre, learners first read and discussed the summarized literary text, completed a pretest, received instruction using the activity sheets, and then completed a posttest under comparable conditions. Argumentative-writing instruction took place over 15 class days, and persuasive-writing instruction took place over eight class days; each session lasted 45 minutes. Three Grade 10 English teachers, including the lead researcher, scored the learner outputs independently using the validated rubrics. The final score for each output was the average of the three ratings. Scores were encoded in Microsoft Excel and submitted to the University Statistics Center for analysis.

Data Analysis

Means and standard deviations were used to summarize pretest and posttest performance. Dependent-samples *t* tests were used to test pretest–posttest differences. Performance levels were interpreted using the University Statistics Center Performance Scale, which classifies scores as Poor, Fair, Satisfactory, Very Satisfactory, or Outstanding. The source tables display *p* values as .000; these are reported below in APA style as *p* < .001.

3. RESULTS

Pretest and Posttest Performance

Learners' mean scores increased after instruction in all three assessed competencies (see Table 1). Before the intervention, the mean scores for argumentative writing, persuasive writing, and varied writing techniques were all classified as Fair. After the intervention, argumentative and persuasive writing were classified as Very Satisfactory, while writing techniques and the combined score were classified as Satisfactory.

Table 1
Grade 10 Learners' Performance Before and After the Intervention

Competency	Maximum score	Pretest (SD)	M Pretest level	Posttest (SD)	M Posttest level
Argumentative essay	25	6.90 (2.151)	Fair	15.00 (6.012)	Very Satisfactory
Persuasive essay	15	5.05 (2.429)	Fair	9.83 (3.192)	Very Satisfactory
Writing techniques	20	5.26 (2.013)	Fair	10.17 (4.422)	Satisfactory
Combined score	60	17.10 (5.660)	Fair	34.93 (12.357)	Satisfactory

The combined mean increased from 17.10 (SD = 5.660) to 34.93 (SD = 12.357), a reported gain of 17.833 points on the 60-point scale. The argumentative-writing mean increased from 6.90 to 15.00, while the persuasive-writing mean increased from 5.05 to 9.83. Scores for writing techniques increased from 5.26 to 10.17. Posttest standard deviations were larger than pretest standard deviations in all reported areas, indicating greater variation in learner scores after instruction; improvement was not uniform across the group.

Differences Between Pretest and Posttest Scores

The source analysis reported statistically significant pretest–posttest differences for each competency and for the total score (Table 2). The largest reported *t* value for an

individual competency was for persuasive writing, followed by argumentative writing and writing techniques. For all comparisons, the reported p value was below .001, leading the original analysis to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 2
Dependent-Samples t-Test Results for Pretest–Posttest Performance

Competency	Pretest M (SD)	Posttest M (SD)	Mean gain	t(41)	p
Argumentative essay	6.90 (2.151)	15.00 (6.012)	8.095	9.814	< .001
Persuasive essay	5.05 (2.429)	9.83 (3.192)	4.786	10.200	< .001
Writing techniques	5.26 (2.013)	10.17 (4.422)	4.905	7.925	< .001
Combined score	17.10 (5.660)	34.93 (12.357)	17.833	11.722	< .001

4. DISCUSSION

The results show that mean performance improved after the Grade 10 learners worked with the literature-based activity sheets. Across the three measured competencies, the original analysis reported statistically significant differences between pretest and posttest scores. The performance categories also moved from Fair before instruction to Satisfactory or Very Satisfactory after instruction. These changes are consistent with the intended role of the materials: literary texts provided a shared context for writing, while prompts and staged tasks supported learners in organizing ideas and constructing essays. The pattern is compatible with cognitive-process and scaffolding perspectives on writing. Breaking an essay into smaller components can support planning and text production before learners assemble a complete draft, while revision prompts can make reviewing more explicit (Flower & Hayes, 1981). Similarly, guided choices and modeled structures can temporarily reduce task complexity while learners practice increasingly independent performance (Wood et al., 1976). The present data do not directly measure these mechanisms, but the design of the activity sheets offers a plausible instructional explanation for the improvements observed in the pretest–posttest comparison.

The findings also align with related work, Benonguil and Barnido (2022) discussed the role of literary texts in English language instruction, while Lacsá (2022) reported improved English achievement associated with learning activity sheets. Research on argumentative-writing difficulties likewise emphasizes the need for structured instruction that addresses organization and support for claims (Pacursa, 2019). These studies provide context for the present results, although differences in participants, subject matter, and study design mean that they should not be treated as direct replications.

5. LIMITATIONS

Several limitations constrain interpretation. First, the one-group pretest–posttest design did not include a comparison group; therefore, changes cannot be attributed exclusively to the activity sheets. Second, the study was conducted in one school and within a limited instructional period: 15 class days for argumentative writing and eight for persuasive writing, with sessions of 45 minutes. School activities, holidays, and weather interruptions affected scheduling. Third, the assessments were not pilot-tested, and reliability coefficients were unavailable. Fourth, the intervention used summarized versions of the literary texts, so the findings may not generalize to instruction using complete texts. Finally, the increased posttest standard deviations show that learners did not improve to the same degree, supporting the need for differentiated scaffolding and feedback.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Within this study's limits, the findings suggest that literature-based activity sheets may support Grade 10 argumentative and persuasive writing. The materials linked literature with guided practice in essay structure, evidence, reasoning, rhetorical appeals, transitions, and revision. Teachers may adapt these scaffolds while providing extra time and targeted feedback. Future research should pilot-test instruments, report reliability, and use comparison groups where feasible.

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