



Vans vs. Converse

By: Amanda Martin

Elementary school music teacher; M.A.Ed. In Curriculum and Instruction

Pop Culture
Grades 9-12



Introduction

Vans vs. Converse: Which brand is better? Teenagers have always been drawn to both shoemakers, but why is that? Students will be asked to answer that question through the writing of a persuasive essay.

Learning Objectives

Students will write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence ([CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.1](#))

Materials Needed

- Journals/notebooks
- Notebook paper
- Laptops/computers

Procedure

1. On the board, display an image of Vans and Converse. Tell students that today the “great debate” over which shoe brand is the best will be settled. Ask students to stand up. If they like Converse better, they should stand on the left side of the classroom. If they prefer Vans, they should stand on the right side. Once all students are standing with their favorite brand, ask a few students to share out why they picked the brand they did.
2. Students should return to their seats and pull out their journals/notebooks for notes. As a class, discuss elements that make both Converse and Vans unique and similar. Construct a Venn diagram on the board and complete it throughout the discussion. Students should also construct and complete the diagram in their notes.
3. Students will now be directed to write a persuasive essay on why their chosen shoe brand (Converse or Vans) is better than its competitor. The idea behind their essays is to convince others that their brand is the best choice. Students should construct their essay in the following format:
 - Introduction (including thesis statement)
 - Body paragraph 1
 - Body paragraph 2
 - Body paragraph 3
 - Conclusion

Continued on page 2



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Continued from page 1

4. Students may use laptops/computers to research further information about their shoe brand to better support their viewpoints. You may also require students to create an outline for their essay if desired. Each body paragraph in the essay must be supported with evidence and facts! Once complete, student essays will be evaluated using the rubric below.
5. If time remains, students may share their viewpoints with the class. You may even allow students to participate in a debate concerning which shoe brand is the best.

Evaluation

Please use the rubric on the next page to evaluate each student's essay.



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Converse v. Vans	4 (Excellent)	3 (Good)	2 (Okay)	1 (NEEDS IMPROVEMENT)
The student includes an introductory paragraph.				
The student includes an appropriate thesis statement.				
Body paragraph 1 includes sufficient evidence to support the student's viewpoint.				
Body paragraph 2 includes sufficient evidence to support the student's viewpoint.				
Body paragraph 3 includes sufficient evidence to support the student's viewpoint.				
The student includes a paragraph of conclusion.				
The essay format is complete and fully represented.				
The student uses complete sentences with appropriate capitalization, grammar, and punctuation.				