Sample Persuasion Paper: OUTSTANDING (score of 6)
Although papers in the high category differ in approach and quality, they stand out from other papers because they address the writing task effectively by using ample evidence based in the analysis of both numerical (quantitative) and verbal (qualitative) data and by original and relevant argumentation, ideas, and examples. The writing shows sensitivity to what style and tone are appropriate for the intended writer, reader, and situation.

The paper below is representative of responses in this category. It demonstrates analytic ability, original thinking, and writing competence. It follows directions by directly addressing objections Becca might have to the writer’s position. The organization follows a plan, and the style and tone are appropriate for the situation.

Dear Becca,
Regarding your question as to whether you should continue designing and selling your gold-plated ornaments or start pursuing a residential real estate appraiser license, there are several factors to consider. First, I think you should consider which you like to do more and which career will ultimately be more satisfying for you; this is something I cannot decide for you. The artistic work you are doing now has the benefit of inspiring your creativity and also provides you a more flexible schedule than the appraisal job would. However, based on a purely financial analysis, I think you should pursue the residential real estate appraiser licensing because, in the long run, working in appraising has the potential to consistently generate more profit than your ornament business.

According to your estimates, as a real estate appraiser, you would generate an average of $10,000 more in income than you currently receive selling ornaments. To transition to this new career, however, you’ll have to invest that estimated $10,000 difference in the 75-hour licensing course, business stationary, professional association dues, and cameras. This initial investment may seem like a big sacrifice, but your overall profit in your first year is equal to what you earned with your job designing and selling ornaments last year. Even if you net $30,000 after your first year as an appraiser (which would be your $40,000 salary minus the $10,000 start-up costs), the next year you can reasonably expect to earn at least $40,000, assuming no decrease or growth in demand. Given this relatively secure appraiser’s salary, however, $10,000 is a relatively small start-up fee, so you aren’t taking on any substantive risk.

On the other hand, another financial consideration that needs to be addressed is that your profit from ornament sales this year doubled from last year. This means that you can anticipate profits for the next several years of $60,000 or more. In fact, based on good word-of-mouth and an active online advertising campaign, there is a reasonable chance that you could even continue to double your annual sales so that in five years you could be making almost a million dollars ($960,000 to be precise) in profit, at which point, of course, you’d have to expand your production and distribution capacity. However, I think this estimate is overly optimistic because sales of luxury items like gold-plated ornaments are unpredictable and there will almost certainly be a peak and then plateau in sales revenue.

Consider, though, that the financial forecast for the real estate appraisal market in Boise also should include a potential for growth. The “Boise boom” in population and new home construction means not only that the market for real estate appraisals will remain stable but also that any increased demand in residential real estate will come with a concomitant need for appraisals. This demand means you could easily anticipate completing more than 4 appraisals per week, even up to the 8-10, so that your weekly salary could easily double from $800 to $1600 or even $2000 per week. With the boom in residential housing will also inevitably come a demand for more commercial real estate, which means you could expand your appraisal business to include commercial, which garners an even higher rate.

Finally, I understand, Becca, that the work days will be longer and the job more demanding but your kids are in school now, and are not as dependent as they once were. As I hope I’ve made clear, the money, at this point, is better and more consistent as an appraiser and you would be around people more often, but this should be weighed in contrast to your preference for a job that allows you to be creative and flexible with your time. Good luck and best wishes on your next endeavor and perhaps we’ll work together in the future.
Sincerely,
Mei
Sample Persuasion Paper: Flawed (score of 2)

The score guide describes papers in the 2 or 3 categories as those demonstrating developing competence or some incompetence. These papers may be flawed with such problems as lack of analysis, insufficient development, insufficient or inappropriate support, inappropriate style and tone, or lack of facility with written English. The paper below is representative of essays in this category.

It was really great to see you and your family at the barbecue last week. First of all, go with your heart, but sometimes that doesn’t give clear cut answers. I guess that’s why you have friends. Through the last many years we’ve been friends I can always tell that you are passionate about your ornament business. Stick with it. Creativity is a beautiful thing and to be able to work and making money off your own ideas is a ginormous asset, especially around the holidays with the family. According Forbes, Nordstroms sells $1 million ornaments. Right!!!

Your kids will learn to appreciate and love what their mom does instead of working 9-5 everyday. They might be too young to appreciate it now but this is your time to see them grow up even more. Plus I can’t wait to see the twins again!

Seriously though, you have to ask yourself; Am I ready to start up again? I am sure you are aware that nine of ten new businesses fail. You left the real estate because it was too demanding but from what you tell me the demands are still their if not greater. You also have to consider that tons of money has to go into real estate before money comes back trust me I know. Even as an appraisor. You say you miss being around people? People aren’t that interesting anyways.

You have a great heart go with what you love. Your family or money? Profits for last year were $30,000, about double those of the year before. Be there for your husband and your kids, the money will come. They will always remember it. And besides this way I can come up and visit. Say “hi” to the family!