

Teaching *Math* *and Marriage?*

Statistics say that almost half of all marriages end in divorce. But why should people simply accept that fact when something can and should be done? The place to start is in the schools. The three traditional R's (reading, writing, and 'rithmetic) should be followed by a fourth R—relationship skills.

Relationship skills include resolving conflicts, creating budgets, and dividing household chores. Marriage counselors and educators think that teaching these skills to the next generation will help lower the divorce rate.

Some people argue that “relationship classes” won't catch on. But this doesn't seem to be a problem. Many schools have already offered these classes with great results. The state of Florida noticed this success. They became the first state in the country to require public high schools to teach marriage skills.

Others worry that “relationship classes” will take time away from more important subjects, like math or science. Again, there's no need to worry. Students take all kinds of classes, such as dance, art, and drama, along with the basic subjects. And if schools want to offer students the brightest possible future, wouldn't a class that fosters successful relationships be time well spent?

Writer's Tip

- When writing a persuasive essay, think about both sides of the issue.
- *Address audience concerns* to build a more convincing argument.



Address Audience Concerns

- ▶ Reread the passage. Underline sections where the author addresses audience concerns. Then fill in the chart below.

Audience Concern	How Concern is Addressed
Relationship classes won't catch on.	

Your Turn

- ▶ Think about the topic of your persuasive essay. What concerns might an audience have about your position? In the chart below, list two concerns and ways you might address them.

Audience Concern	How to Address Concern

- ▶ Use your chart to write a paragraph for your persuasive essay that addresses an audience concern.