



Pressure Tactics

Persuasion & Influence · Tier 1: How Persuasion Works · Component 6

Grades: 6–8 **Time:** 35–45 min (standard) **Format:** individual or pairs

Students learn to name the everyday pressure moves — urgency, scarcity, "everyone's doing it," the dare, and guilt — and to give each a calm, prepared response.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Pressure works by rushing you past your own judgment. A student who can *name* the move ("that's the urgency move") has already slowed it down. This component is about recognition and a ready response — empowerment, not fear. Keep the tone matter-of-fact.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- One copy of the **Student pages** (Student pp. 1–3) per student or pair.
- No prep required; examples are provided.

HOW TO RUN IT

1. **Read the explainer together (8–10 min).** Student p. 1 names the five moves.
2. **Work the activity (18–22 min).** Students match tactic to example (Student p. 2) and write a calm response to each (Student p. 3).
3. **Debrief (10–15 min).** Run the Discussion Guide (Instructor p. 3).

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

- Naming the move rather than just feeling rushed.
- Noticing the shared trick: all of these push you to act *now*, before you think.
- Responses that buy time ("let me think," "I'll check") rather than a yes/no reflex.

STANDARDS ALIGNMENT (COMMON CORE)

Codes reflect the grade 6 band; grade 7–8 equivalents apply equally.

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.3** — Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, distinguishing those supported by reasons from those that are not.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.8** — Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1** — Engage effectively in collaborative discussions, expressing ideas clearly.

Printing: Hand students the 3 Student pages. The 3 Instructor pages are for you.



Pressure Tactics

In depth: the moves, and the one trick they share

Pressure tactics are persuasion with the thinking time removed. Each aims a real human tendency at a fast "yes." The unifying tell: they all push you to decide *now*, before reflection can catch up.

THE MOVES

Five to name on sight

URGENCY. "Now or never," "act fast." A countdown replaces a decision.

SCARCITY. "Only a few left," "last chance." We fear losing more than we value gaining (loss aversion), so "might miss it" overrides "do I want it."

EVERYONE'S DOING IT. Belonging turned into a lever (bandwagon effect) — join or be left out.

THE DARE / CHALLENGE. Refusing is reframed as being scared or boring, so saying no costs status.

GUILT & THE SUNK STEP. "After all I did...", or "you already started, don't quit now" — past choices used to trap the next one (sunk cost).

TWO THINGS TO KEEP REPEATING

The shared trick is speed. Every tactic wants the decision before the thought. Naming the move ("that's the scarcity move") restores the pause. **Buying time is a full answer.** "Let me think about it," "I'll check first," "not right now" are complete, powerful responses — no reason or apology required.



Pressure Tactics

Debrief prompts & a sample answer key

DISCUSSION ANCHOR

- What do **all** these tactics have in common? (They rush you.)
- Why is "let me think about it" such a **strong** answer?
- Which move do you think works best on people your age, and why?
- How is a real deadline different from a **manufactured** one?

ONE-LINE TAKEAWAY

Pressure wants your answer before your thought. Take the thought back.

SAMPLE READS FOR PART A

EXAMPLE	TACTIC · CALM RESPONSE
"Only 2 left — buy in the next 10 minutes!"	<i>Scarcity + urgency → "If it's right, it'll be worth checking first."</i>
"Everyone's going. You're not going to be the only one who bails?"	<i>Everyone's-doing-it + dare → "I'll decide for me, thanks."</i>
"I bought you lunch, so you owe me this."	<i>Guilt → "That was nice, but this is a separate choice."</i>



Pressure Tactics

The moves — and how to slow them down

Pressure is persuasion with the thinking time cut out. Every move below has one goal: get your answer *before* you've had a chance to think. Name the move, and you take the pause back.

FIVE MOVES TO KNOW

Say them out loud when you spot them

URGENCY. "Now or never!" A countdown pretending to be a decision.

SCARCITY. "Only a few left!" We hate missing out more than we enjoy getting — so "might lose it" jumps the line.

EVERYONE'S DOING IT. Fit in or be left out. Belonging turned into a push.

THE DARE. Saying no gets reframed as being scared or boring, so "no" feels expensive.

GUILT. "After all I did for you..." or "you already started — don't quit now." Your past used against your next choice.

THE ONE THING THEY SHARE

They all rush you

Whatever the move, the trick is speed. So the answer is almost always the same: **take back the time**. "Let me think about it." "I'll check first." "Not right now." Those are complete answers. You don't owe a reason, and you don't owe a fast yes.



Pressure Tactics

Name: _____ Date: _____

The moves: Urgency · Scarcity · Everyone's-doing-it · The dare · Guilt

PART A — NAME THE MOVE

Write which tactic each line is using. Some use two.

WHAT THEY SAY	TACTIC(S)
1. "Only 2 left — buy in the next 10 minutes!"	
2. "Everyone's going. You're not going to be the only one who bails?"	
3. "I bought you lunch, so you kind of owe me this."	
4. "You already paid for one level — might as well buy the rest."	
5. "Scared? I dare you."	

PART B — THE COMMON THREAD

What do **all five** moves have in common? Write it in one sentence.



PART C — TAKE BACK THE TIME

Write a calm, no-drama response to each. A good response buys you time and doesn't need a reason.

To "Only a few left — decide now!"

To "Everyone's doing it — don't be the only one who doesn't."

To "After everything I did for you, you owe me."

PART D — REAL VS. FAKE DEADLINES

Some deadlines are real (a concert really is Friday). Some are manufactured to rush you. Write one way to tell them apart.
