Writers Workshop Unit of Study
7th Grade – Launching the Writer’s Notebook

ELA
Common Core Standards

Memoir
Writers Workshop Unit of Study
7th Grade – Launching the Writer’s Notebook

Table of Contents

Preface
Learning Progression, Grades 6-8 ................................................................................. 1
Learning Progression, Grades 9-12 ................................................................................ 2

Background Section
Abstract ........................................................................................................................... 3
Standards ........................................................................................................................... 5
Overview of Sessions – Teaching Points and Unit Assessments .................................. 6

Resource Materials Section
Resource Materials needed for each session follow the table of the Overview of that Session
Session 1 .......................................................................................................................... 7
Session 2 .......................................................................................................................... 8
Session 3 .......................................................................................................................... 10
Session 4 .......................................................................................................................... 13
Session 5 .......................................................................................................................... 17
Session 6 .......................................................................................................................... 24
Session 7 .......................................................................................................................... 26
Session 8 .......................................................................................................................... 27
Session 9 .......................................................................................................................... 28
Session 10 ......................................................................................................................... 29
Session 11 ......................................................................................................................... 33
Writers Workshop Unit of Study
7th Grade – Launching the Writer’s Notebook

Preface

The following unit supports and aligns to the Common Core State Standards. This research-based work is the outcome of a collective effort made by numerous secondary teachers from around the state of Michigan. Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA) initiated a statewide collaborative project bringing together educators from around the state to create and refine a K-12 English Language Arts model curriculum. The launching unit is situated as the opening writing unit of study within a yearlong sequence of writing units. This unit develops foundational habits of mind, a process approach to writing, and reading like a writer. This foundation is essential to support writers in the complexities of subsequent writing units that focus deeply within the three main types of writing (opinion and argument, informational, and narrative). Each unit within the MAISA yearlong model curriculum presents a string of teaching points that scaffold and spiral the content and skills. Units of study are structured to be student-centered rather than teacher-driven. Sessions emphasize student engagement and strive to simultaneously increase critical thinking and writing skills. Writing and thinking processes are stressed and are equally important to the end-writing product. Sessions are designed as a series of mini-lessons that allow time to write, practice, and conference. Through summative and formative assessments specific to each unit, students will progress toward becoming independent thinkers and writers.

Significant input and feedback was gathered both in the initial conceptualizing of the unit and later revisions. Teachers from around the state piloted and/or reviewed the unit, and their feedback and student artifacts helped in the revision process. Special thanks go to lead unit writers Bryan Hartsig and Lisa Kraiza, who closely studied the CCSS, translated the standards into curriculum and practice, and revised with a close eye to classroom teacher feedback. Throughout the yearlong collaborative project, teachers who are reviewing units are finding how students’ habits of mind have shifted from task-oriented to big-picture thinking, utilizing a critical literacy lens.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Personal Narrative</th>
<th>Memoir</th>
<th>Poetry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Becoming a Community** | • Use writers’ notebooks to gather, record, strategize, and recognize importance within personal narratives.  
• Establish writing time as a way to build community within a classroom.  
• Develop writers to feel supported and encouraged by those around them. | • Establish a way of living as writers in an open, sharing community.  
• Establish a special time to share our stories within the classroom community.  
• Encourage developing writers to feel safe about the writers’ workshop format. | • Establish a way of living as writers in an open, sharing community.  
• Understand the writers’ workshop framework, in order to explore and analyze observations, feelings, and ideas of other poets in the class community.  
• Develop habits and routines for a writer’s notebook such as: collecting entries, reading to survey and analyze a range of poetry, and writing to experiment with the elements of poetry. |
| **Reading Immersion and Drafting** | • Discover the writer’s independence, using support structures provided within the community by peers and the teacher.  
• Use anchor charts, partnerships, and other strategies to immerse students in the work of writers.  
• Recognize strategies that teach students to identify long, drawn-out stories, as opposed to small, focused, meaningful stories. | • Use strategies to draw from events in our lives, pulling out the small moments in order to reflect on their meaning.  
• Examine the memoir, in order to contemplate what we have learned from the small moments in our lives, and how we relate to others and live in the world.  
• Use Think/Pair/Share while establishing a community to live wide awake, while sharing and responding to stories of others. | • Use poetry immersion to understand that poets use narrative poetry to deeply express themselves.  
• Use strategies to generate poetry in a variety of ways, while studying the decisions of other narrative poets.  
• With anchor charts and survey tools, understand the use of writing strategies such as listing, observing, describing, and telling stories.  
• Reinforce community and the ownership of writing skills. |
| **Revising and Editing** | • Consider activities in the workshop as a process to reflect, provide feedback, and grow as writers within a safe community.  
• Use conferencing with peers and the teacher as a way to improve upon revision skills.  
• Develop the understanding that personal narratives are valuable tool that can improve writing and share our most meaningful stories with others. | • Analyze the mood, tone, and characteristics of the memoir.  
• Assess writers’ skills by conferencing with writers’ groups.  
• Use peer discussions and sharing times to revise and edit for meaning and clarity.  
• Develop the understanding that memoirs are powerful opportunities for writers to engage readers and share various perspectives and experiences. | • Consider enticing word choice, the use of sensory detail, and the free expression of self.  
• Produce a narrative poem that expresses a powerful emotion, a meaningful experience, or a strong belief.  
• Develop the understanding that narrative poems are powerful opportunities for writers to engage readers and share various perspectives and experiences. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Becoming a Community</strong></td>
<td>Personal Narrative</td>
<td>• In a writer’s notebook, record memories, conversations, and bothersome things.</td>
<td>• Read and write, examining the voices of other poets, and developing a voice in one’s own writing.</td>
<td>• Write to discover an event’s personal meaning.</td>
<td>• Explore ideas, feelings, or attitudes by generating poems from various angles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Recall an event with a strong emotional impact, and sequence the details to capture the problem and its impact on the narrator and other characters.</td>
<td>• Use strategies to generate ideas and writing. Use these strategies multiple times to promote new thinking.</td>
<td>• Use inquiry strategies for this exploration work.</td>
<td>• Write every day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Respond non-judgmentally.</td>
<td>• Respond non-judgmentally.</td>
<td>• Respond non-judgmentally.</td>
<td>• Respond non-judgmentally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Immersion and Drafting</strong></td>
<td>Poetry</td>
<td>• Read a range of poetry, looking for personal connections.</td>
<td>• Read a range of poetry to admire the ways that poets structure their works.</td>
<td>• Determine how much truth to tell and what to leave out.</td>
<td>• Examine several poets’ beliefs about writing and poetry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Fall in love with and experiment with words.</td>
<td>• Use details and figurative language to describe observations.</td>
<td>• Determine the angle of the memoir/event.</td>
<td>• Compile a list of poets’ decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Write under the influence of another author.</td>
<td>• Reread and identify poems for publication.</td>
<td>• Explore the emotions of the event.</td>
<td>• Generate poems from the poet study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reread to discover the significance of stories and expand writing.</td>
<td>• Reflect on habits, writing strategies, and attitudes after rereading writer’s notebook.</td>
<td>• Reread the writer’s notebook for a memoir topic and plan a project.</td>
<td>• Identify and study a mentor poet. Experiment with the decisions of this poet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reveal characters by describing their physical characteristics, behaviors and mannerisms, dialogue, and thoughts.</td>
<td>• (Optional) Pay close attention to sensory detail, taking the reader to the place and situation.</td>
<td>• Engage in response groups to provide feedback to peers.</td>
<td>• Reread poetry generated in the writer’s notebook, in order to plan a series of poems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Revise line breaks to explore an emerging poem.</td>
<td>• Revise for emblematic details, word choice, and stylistic decisions that convey tone.</td>
<td>• Engage in response groups to gain insight into revision work.</td>
<td>• Reflect on poetic decisions and their effects on the meaning of poems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Create surprise or emphasis by creating and breaking patterns.</td>
<td>• Engage in response groups, acting as critical friends.</td>
<td>• Create a revision plan.</td>
<td>• Engage in response groups to gain insight into revision work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Use response groups to gain insight and make revisions to drafted poems.</td>
<td>• Create revision plans.</td>
<td>• Revise while using a repertoire of decisions, collected while studying a mentor poet.</td>
<td>• Create a revision plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Create a revision plan using a repertoire of decisions.</td>
<td>• Edit with an eye toward sentence variety.</td>
<td>• Edit to impact the pace and the reader’s ability to understand the poem’s intention.</td>
<td>• Edit to impact the pace and the reader’s ability to understand the poem’s intention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Edit punctuation and capitalization using universal and unique standards of poets.</td>
<td>• Create a collection of poems.</td>
<td>• Reflect on habits, writing strategies, and attitudes after rereading writer’s notebook.</td>
<td>• Reflect on habits, writing strategies, and attitudes after rereading writer’s notebook.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Copyright © 2010-2017 by the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators and Oakland Schools.
Writers Workshop Unit of Study
7th Grade – Launching the Writer’s Notebook

Abstract

WHAT IS A LAUNCHING UNIT?
The launching unit engages learners as partners in a year of learning, beginning with this brief, two- to three-week unit. The unit establishes the teaching and learning environment through writing tasks, mentor-text reading tasks, and decision-making, as students generate and nurture their writing. These tasks and decisions establish norms, writing and reading habits, and ways of living together in a classroom, in which all students develop confidence and competence. The non-negotiable results are student choice, teachers’ feedback that is focused on strengths, and student reflection. The launching unit helps students do the following:

- Imagine an identity as a writer
- Read in order to appreciate, study, emulate, and experiment with the decisions of other writers
- Develop a voice that expresses both emotions and ideas through a variety of genres
- Engage in a safe community of writers that encourages risk-taking and growth

PHILOSOPHY
In this unit, students are introduced to the concept of the reader’s/writer’s notebook. They build a community of readers and writers as they read, discuss, write, respond to and share their work. They read memoirs and generate their own memoir ideas using the same structures and devices. Students experiment with the skills that real writers use to create meaningful memoirs. By analyzing the memoir structure and maintaining a goal of crafting their own memoirs, students develop a disciplined writing life, one that’s focused on the generation of a wide range of ideas. This begins in the notebook, but students work to take one of their memoirs through the publication process.

BECOMING A COMMUNITY OF MEMOIR WRITERS
- Students will establish writers’ notebooks and use strategies to gather ideas for writing stories that matter. They will gather ideas by responding to content from mentor memoirs.
- Students will explore mentor memoirs and use strategies to develop questions for analysis.
- Students will understand how memoir, which focuses on a small moment in time, uncovers a new understanding about themselves.

READING IMMERSION AND DRAFTING MEMOIRS
- Students will analyze memoir structures such as: dialogue, description, and reflection, using mentor memoirs. They will experiment with the writing of such structures.
- Students will develop an understanding for literary devices in memoir. They will learn how these devices can be used to convey meaning. They will experiment with the use of literary devices in their writing.
- Students will experiment with possible memoir ideas, using previous notebook entries.
- Students will improve their writing skills through their evaluation and imitation of other memoir writers.
- Students will form reader-response groups to share their memoirs. These groups will help students determine if their memoirs convey the messages they are trying to get across. The groups will also analyze mentor memoirs.

ASSESSMENT
Working in a collaborative environment, students become a group of writers who support each other. Students mine their own lives for ideas; make revisions to their work; write with an authentic audience in mind; and learn from established writers, in order to add to the their repertoire of writing decisions. As a result, grades are not determined upon a list of writing elements or a rubric that defines product quality. Instead, students are assessed upon the enactment of a writing process, as well as the habits and strategies of a writer and critical reader. Students write in readers/writers’ notebooks and develop portfolios of work. (The notebook is the primary tool by which the teacher and student assess growth.) Students also self-assess and prepare written reflections. This combination serves as evidence of a student’s growth over time and the metacognitive awareness of that growth.

STUDENT OUTCOMES
The launching unit provides students with these vital opportunities to see themselves as capable thinkers and decision-makers:

- Students become more flexible in their writing and thinking as they have time to experiment with words and ideas.
- Students practice a variety of ways to generate ideas and revise writing.
- Students investigate the ways in which other writers work through complex ideas and face difficult writing decisions.

Copyright © 2010-2017 by the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators and Oakland Schools.
While students do create polished pieces of writing, the objective is much deeper: the unit establishes a writing community wherein each student is empowered with a repertoire of generative and revision strategies. This unit sets forth a workshop approach, which develops reading, writing, and thinking skills that resonate throughout the school year.

TEACHER DECISIONS FOR UNIT IMPLEMENTATION
This unit can be designed in many different ways with many different teaching points. However, it would be impossible to write one unit to meet the needs of all audiences. Knowing this, teachers should expect to adjust the lessons in order to meet the needs of their students—while staying true to the intent of the unit. We recommend that teachers study and understand the intent of the lesson series. The lessons have a purposeful sequence, but they may require that teachers make adjustments in pacing or to extension activities. Teachers are encouraged to gather their own sources (mentor texts, etc.) that reflect district curriculum and/or student interests. Please see the resources section for additional ideas.

UNIT ORGANIZATION
The unit is divided into three parts:

• **BECOMING A COMMUNITY OF MEMOIR WRITERS:** The sessions in this unit are typical of every launching unit. Students will develop a community by personalizing readers’/writers’ notebooks, and by developing a safe community in which they can take risks with their writing and thinking. Students begin with a few strategies to get started and grow their confidence as writers and peer-responders.

  *The work in this unit is vertically aligned and extends prior learning with the expectation that students come prepared to generate on the first day, using strategies for early drafting from previous years of writing and study.*

• **READING IMMERSION AND DRAFTING MEMOIRS:** The sessions in this part of the unit are focused on immersing students in the memoir genre. Students will be reading a collection of memoirs in order to dissect the writing process as well as the genre’s format. The focus will be on the event had a profound impact on the writer.

  *The work in this unit is vertically aligned and extends prior learning with the expectation that students understand the repertoire of decisions taught in the Grade 6 unit.*

• **REVISING AND EDITING A MEMOIR:** The sessions in this part of the unit encourage students to go deeper into the decision-making process. Students revise memoirs using specific technical decisions, as well as to use the repertoire of decisions they developed in Grade 6 or in the reading of mentor texts. In addition, students participate in writer-response groups, gaining feedback from peers in preparation for publication.

  *The work in this unit is vertically aligned and extends prior learning with the expectation that students understand the repertoire of decisions taught in the Grade 6 unit.*

Instructional Sequencing, Scaffolding, and Pacing
The daily pacing of the unit’s sessions is based on a 50-minute class period. Teachers’ pacing will change based on the duration of the class period, student population, familiarity with content, process, and/or instructional practices.

The instruction scaffolds students through a four-tiered process.

1. **Teaching Point:** The teacher models the strategy, process, skill, or habit of mind, using a mentor text written by the teacher, students, and/or published writers or other materials.

2. **Active Engagement:** Students rehearse the writing, thinking, and/or critical reading or viewing just modeled by the teacher.

3. **Independent Practice:** Students complete a mini-task independently or in small collaborative groups. During independent practice, the teacher conference with individuals or small groups to assess student performance, which allows the teacher to differentiate the lesson and task. The teacher may stop the independent practice to adjust the mini-task. The teacher may also stop the practice in order to adjust the teaching point, and to include teaching points that deepen the learning.

4. **Share:** Students share their work, in order to examine, analyze and/or reflect on the range of responses created by other students. Sharing also enables students to self-monitor the effectiveness of their writing strategies. The teacher may also share an exemplar to reinforce or enhance the session’s teaching point(s) and student performance.
Standards

Common Core Standards: Narrative: The following College and Career Readiness (CCR) anchor standards apply to reading and writing in narrative template tasks. Refer to the 6-12 standards for grade-appropriate specifics that fit each task and module being developed. The standards numbers and general content remain the same across all grades, but details vary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>CCR Anchor Standards for Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCR Anchor Standards for Writing Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overview of Sessions: Teaching Points and Unit Assessments

**TEACHING POINTS:**

**Becoming a Community of Writers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Unit Assessment Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The teacher will share with the students an example of a memoir. Students will be asked to evaluate the memoir based on the lesson they felt the writer was attempting to reveal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Memoir writers record their thoughts, ideas, memories, and stories in a writer’s notebook for further development.
2. Memoir writers look for seed ideas that focus on a brief period of time, a place, or a recurring behavior.

**Reading Immersion and Drafting**

3. Memoir writers explore events that remain lodged in memory; they reconstruct those events to uncover the events’ significance.
4. Memoir writers take small moments and establish context, point of view, and sequence.
5. Memoir writers immerse themselves in the memoir genre in order to guide their own writing.
6. Memoir writers analyze the structures of memoirs in order to improve their thinking and writing about meaningful moments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mid-Unit Formative Assessment Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At the end of session 5, students select a piece to work on, reflecting on the strengths of that piece. Use the reflection to determine to determine students’ understanding of the narrative elements as well as their own writing process.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Revising and Editing**

7. Memoir writers use narrative techniques such as dialogue to demonstrate why events are significant.
8. Memoir writers use a variety of transition words and phrases, signaling shifts from one time frame or setting to another.
9. Memoir writers use relevant descriptive details and sensory language, capturing action and conveying events.
10. Memoir writers provide conclusions that reflect on the meaning of events.
11. Memoir writers celebrate their journey toward a new understanding or realization.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post-Unit Summative Assessment Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will use memoir-writing techniques to publish one full memoir. The memoir will be based on a significant event in which the student gained a new understanding about himself or herself; other people; or the broader world. The conclusion of the memoir will reflect on the meaning of the event. Student memoir writers will celebrate and share this new understanding.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Session 1

### Preparation
- Provide composition notebooks for all students.
- Offer an example of a teacher’s notebook, as well as any other examples available from previous students, etc.
- Magazines, colored paper, markers, craft supplies, and any other items that would assist in personalizing notebooks.

### Teaching Point
**Memoir writers record their thoughts, ideas, memories, and stories in a writer’s notebook for further development.**

### Active Engagement
- Teacher explains to students that we are on a journey to become better writers. On that journey, we will be using writers’ notebooks.
- These notebooks are for students to record thoughts, ideas, stories, notes, and images that will lead us on the journey to become a writer.
- Everyone’s notebook is his or her own, and no one else will read your notebook unless you have given permission. Discuss how the teacher will be checking the notebooks, but not reading personal entries without the student’s permission.
- Discuss that writing time is sacred and that we will honor that time with quiet, respect and tolerance.

### Independent Practice
- Students will be given this time to personalize their notebooks.
- Explain that personalizing their notebooks gives them ownership and self-awareness. Teacher will show and explain how she or he decorated the notebook.

### Share
**Focus Question:** How does having a personalized writer’s notebook enhance the journey of becoming a writer?
- Students can show off their work to decorate notebooks. Continue to explain that personalizing notebooks will occur over time and does not need to be done in one session.
- Finally, have a last chat about being respectful with our minds, hearts, and bodies with what we say and do in regards to each other’s notebooks.
- Last, explain that students will only share what they want to share. They are writing in their notebooks for themselves only.

### Homework/Extension
Students can bring in other items from home to continue to personalize their notebooks.

### Assessment
Every student should have a notebook.

Pre-unit assessment task: The teacher will share with the students an example of a memoir. Students will be asked to evaluate the memoir based on the lesson they felt the writer was attempting to reveal.
### Session 2

#### Preparation
- Composition notebooks for all students.
- My Map Book by Sara Fanelli

#### Teaching Point
**Memoir writers look for seed ideas that focus on a brief period of time, a place, or a recurring behavior.**

#### Active Engagement
- Tell students that they will be writing a memoir. Explain that a memoir is a piece of narrative writing that is based on an author’s past experience. The memoir reflects on what was learned from that experience and usually focuses on a brief period of time, a place, or a recurring behavior.
- Explain that writers need to look inside their lives for ideas to write about.
- Memoir writers gather topic ideas that cover a brief period of time, a place, or a recurring behavior, as they contemplate their place in the world.
- Let’s make a “map” of our worlds in our notebooks.
- Teacher will read/show My Map Book by Sara Fanelli. It is best projected on a screen, so students can see the colors and the words on the pages.
- Explain that the writer has created maps of his most special places. The maps are labeled and decorated with important memories and details.
- Tell the students that they will also create maps in their notebooks of their special places.
- They will use these maps to search for writing ideas that will be developed over the length of this unit.
- The teacher will demonstrate by creating a map of his/her own on the overhead, projector, or chart paper.
- Teacher will talk aloud about what s/he is drawing and why s/he is labeling various locations. For example, “This is a map of my room growing up. Here is the window I would look out, watching my grandma in the garden instead of napping.”
- Teacher will begin to create anchor charts on the characteristics of memoir. These will hang in the classroom.

#### Independent Practice
- Students will work on their maps. Limit maps to 2-3 places so as not to cloud the memory pool.
- Students should label the locations and be able to speak to the memory of that place.

#### Share
**Focus Question:** What strategies help reconstruct a memory and reveal the feelings of the writer?
- Students can turn and talk to their shoulder-partner about their maps.
- Teacher will debrief with the class about the mapping experience and review the definition of memoir.

#### Homework/ Extension
Students will need to begin thinking about and writing down possible memoir ideas, using their maps as guides.

#### Assessment
Teacher may assign points for the students’ maps, as well as circulate and check in during the pair-and-share time.
Memoir Topics

1. "Where I Grew Up" stories
2. Family stories
3. Pet stories
4. Friendship stories
5. Defining moments
6. Great achievements or creations
7. Pain/conflict stories
8. School stories
9. Stories about wishes or dreams that came true
10. Stories about disappointment or losses
11. Place stories
12. Rites-of-passage (realizing you are growing up)
13. Nature stories
14. Physical hurt
15. Overcoming obstacles
16. First time I...stories
17. "Caught ya'!" stories
18. Holiday stories
19. Stories that go along with a special photograph or object
20. Name stories
### Session 3

#### Preparation
- Composition notebooks for all students.
- Students’ maps from the previous session.
- *My Map Book* by Sara Fanelli
- **What Will I Write About?** sheet *(see attached sheet)*
- A folder for each student. This is a Writing Folder, in which students keep and maintain all the tools for the remainder of the unit.
- Print copies of *Sentence Starters* sheet *(see attached sheet)*

#### Teaching Point
*Memoir writers explore events that remain lodged in memory; they reconstruct those events to uncover the events’ significance.*

#### Active Engagement
- All memoirs have a purpose.
- Memoirs are about specific periods of time, places, and events.
- Memoirs give authors insight into what they have learned about themselves or about others.
- Now that you have mapped out your world, let’s narrow the focus to a few events or moments that could potentially be turned into a memoir.
- Use the What Will I Write About? Tool to organize your thoughts into possible memoir writing topics.
- Teacher will demonstrate how to use the tool with his/her own map on the overhead, projector, etc.
- Begin to create anchor charts that list the characteristics of Memoir.
- Have students keep their tools in their Writing Folder that will be referred to throughout this unit.
- Share and discuss the Sentence Starters sheet. This gives students several template sentences that they can use to begin sentences.

#### Independent Practice
Students will complete their What Will I Write About? sheet using the maps they created in the notebooks from the previous session.

#### Share
**Focus Question:** *How do the writer’s feelings about a memory help to explain the significance of the event?*

Students can turn and talk to their shoulder-partner, discussing their findings and how these events/experiences hold personal significance.
- Teacher will debrief with the class about the What Will I Write About? sheet and have students report their findings.

#### Homework/Extension
Students will need to begin thinking about and writing down possible memoir ideas.

#### Assessment
- Teacher may assign points for the What Will I Write About? sheet, as well as circulate and check in during the pair-and-share time.
- Teacher may also use the Writing Folder as a way to assess.
Sentence Starters:

I believe that...
There are times when...
When I was younger...
I think...
I wish...
I sometimes wonder...
(Topic) is...
I always thought that... but now I think/believe...
(Topic) means...
Sometimes there are...

Sentence Enders:

Now I think that...
Now I understand...
In conclusion, I believe...
It is sad to think...
I only wish that...
It made me realize that...
I now know...
Although I cannot prevent/stop...
I wish I could have...
What Will I Write About?

Memoirs include events, experiences, and emotional shifts that make the story important to the author. These emotions lead to a new understanding about the world. Now that you have created maps of your world, what events are you considering writing about for your memoir? What new understandings have you experienced?

Using your map(s) to guide you, generate ideas from different events in your life that may help you choose a topic for your memoir.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event from your life</th>
<th>Your response to the event</th>
<th>New understanding?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Session 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Writers’ notebooks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>What Will I Write About?</strong> sheet from previous session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Elements of Memoir Anchor Chart</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Planning a Memoir</strong> (see attached sheets)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Writing Folders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The web is a great resource for information. You may want to share the following link with your students on the fine points of memoir-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qw2U42FoZls">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qw2U42FoZls</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Point</th>
<th><strong>Memoir writers take small moments and establish context, point of view, and sequence.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active Engagement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• “Last session we chose a few events that have potential to be the focus of memoir writing.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• “I will now ask you to choose one to work with, and see what from your reflection will make for a worthy memoir.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teacher will refer to the anchor charts that have been posted in the room, and which focus on the structure and characteristics of memoir.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teacher will give students the Planning a Memoir Part I sheet. Students will be asked to choose one of their events and pull out an idea using the guidelines.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The teacher will model this process on a projector, etc. with his/her own writing example, talking aloud so the students can hear the thinking behind the process.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• While modeling, give the students the leeway to change their topic if they are not getting anywhere with their first choices.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Students will complete Planning a Memoir Part I.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The teacher will then place on the overhead, projector, etc. Planning a Memoir Part II.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The teacher will review that events in memoirs have purpose. “Memoirs show what the author has learned AFTER experiencing a memorable moment. In order to do that, they also need to show feelings from BEFORE the moment as a way to build up to this realization.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• “Using this tool, we are going to practice the same thing with our own events.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teacher will demonstrate how to use the tool with his/her own writing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Students will complete Planning a Memoir Student Worksheet.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Students will complete Planning a Memoir Part I.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Students will complete Planning a Memoir Student Worksheet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teacher will judge how much time is needed for the students to complete these tasks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Share</th>
<th><strong>Focus Question:</strong> What strategies or techniques can be used in a memoir to express feelings and emotions?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Between each part, students can turn and talk to their shoulder-partner, discussing their findings and what they are choosing to write about. Always remind the students to be respectful in how they reflect, share, and discuss each other’s writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Teacher will debrief with the class about the Planning a Memoir Student Worksheet and have students report out the writing decisions they have made.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Homework/Extension | Students will need to begin thinking about and writing down possible memoir ideas. This is a good place to discuss the Memoir Rubric and the expectations for the task.  |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Teacher may assign points for the What Will I Write About? sheet, as well as circulate and check in during the pair-and-share time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teacher may also use the Writing Folder as a way to assess.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
planning A Memoir

STUDENT WORKSHEET

Fill in the chart and answer the questions regarding your chosen event for your memoir.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Events</th>
<th>Purpose—why include the details?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. (Situation before the event)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. (Situation before the event)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. (Situation before the event)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. (The event itself)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. (The situation after the event)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What is your memorable moment?

What was your learning or realization from that moment?

Copyright © 2010-2017 by the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators and Oakland Schools.
Planning A Memoir

Part I: Choosing a Moment

✓ Needs to be a small moment (for example, not an entire trip to Cedar Point, but the first time you rode on a roller coaster)
✓ Needs to be meaningful
✓ Need to be able to answer: “What did you learn from this experience?” And: “What lessons do you want to communicate by writing about this topic?”

Take one of your Events from your What Will I Write About? sheet. Create a cluster or brainstorm web, or list the people, places, or things you associate with your topic. Identify the SMALL MOMENT.
Planning A Memoir

Part II: Memorable Moment
Keep the following in mind:

✔ Every event has to have a purpose.
✔ The memoir needs to show attitudes or feelings BEFORE, so that the reader understands the author’s learning at the end.
✔ The memoir needs to show the BEFORE in several parts, not just one.
✔ The memoir needs to show the AFTER. How did the learning change the author’s life? Why was it significant?
✔ Every event needs to be connected to the author’s learning, by showing or explaining the event’s significance. If the event doesn’t have that connection, it shouldn’t be included.

Example
Memorable Moment: The first time I got up on a surf board.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. (before)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting thrashed by the waves</td>
<td>Shows how miserable I was</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. (before)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching others make it look so easy</td>
<td>Shows I felt like a failure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. (before)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting cold, deciding to go in after one more try</td>
<td>Shows I was ready to give up try</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. (memorable moment)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successfully riding first wave to the beach</td>
<td>Shows my excitement and disbelief at success.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. (after)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staying out and continuing to surf</td>
<td>Shows how success totally changes my attitude about surfing and believing in myself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Preparation** | • Writers’ notebooks  
• Elements of Memoir Anchor Chart  
• Memoir Study *(see attached sheet)*  
• Reader Response Chart *(see attached sheet)*  
• Writing Folders *(see attached sheet)*  
• Excerpts of a variety of memoirs that will fit the culture of your classroom. Recommendations are: Bad Boy; A Memoir by Walter Dean Myers; When I Was Your Age, Volume I Original Stories About Growing Up (there is a Volume II as well); 13: Thirteen Stories That Capture the Agony and Ecstasy of Being Thirteen by James Howe; Harris and Me by Gary Paulsen. There are numerous possibilities here. Use what you enjoy and the students will enjoy the stories as well. |
| **Teaching Point** | **Memoir writers immerse themselves in the memoir genre in order to guide their own writing.** |
| **Active Engagement** | • “Writers look to other writers for inspiration. When writing your own memoir, it is helpful to look at other authors in the same genre. This allows you to see how they have crafted their events and expressed their understandings of those moments.”  
• “We are going to read and study a collection of memoirs. This will allow us to look for the elements we’ve studied of memoir.”  
• “All of you are going to be reading a selection of memoir stories. I will give you a tool to reflect on these memoirs. As readers, you will respond to the memoirs.”  
• Teacher will give students the Memoir Study tool along with their Writing Folders.  
• Teacher will have students group into fours. Call these groups Reader Response Groups, as they will be responding to what they are reading. There should be enough copies of each memoir for the group, as well as the Memoir Study sheet.  
• Teacher will model how to read and answer the sheet. This is where it is important to have established turn-and-talk protocols. Explain to the students that each group member has important insights to add to the conversation. It is acceptable for everyone to have different responses to the reading.  
• Have the Reader Response Chart posted in the room and review the questions.  
• Students are to read together and answer the questions. You may time the task as you see fit depending on how many memoirs you will have the students reading.  
• Repeat the process with the remaining memoirs. |
| **Independent Practice** | Students will read the various memoirs in their reader response groups, using the Memoir Study tool. |
| **Share** | **Focus Question:** How do others’ memoirs help us to gain insight into our own stories and realizations?  
• At the end of the reading and responding time, the teacher will facilitate a class discussion on the findings and the students’ responses to the Memoir Study sheet, as well as use the guiding questions on the Reader Response Chart. |
| **Homework/Extension** | Students can take the inspiration from these memoirs and apply it to their own writing, as they are to begin drafting their own memoirs.  
Students also complete a reflection. Have students look through their entire notebooks while home. Reread entries to siblings, relatives, and parents as they sift for the right story idea to pursue.  
After students have selected their best piece to continue working on, they should write a reflection in their writers’ notebooks explaining why they chose this particular piece. The reflection should address:  
1. The current strengths of the piece in terms of its narrative elements. What narrative elements did you include that make this piece worth working on more? Be specific.  
2. Also discuss the process you undertook to draft this piece. What steps did you take. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher may assign points for the Memoir Study, as well as circulate and check in during the Reader-Response time. Points may be allotted for participation. Writing Folders may also be used as an assessment tool. Mid-unit assessment: At the end of session 5, students select a piece to work on, reflecting on the strengths of that piece. Use the reflection to determine students' understanding of the narrative elements as well as their own writing process.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Memoir Study

While writing your own memoir, it is helpful to read other examples to get ideas for expressing meaning and realizations. Answer the questions on our readings as we discuss the various memoirs.

Title ____________________________________________________________ Author __________________________

What moment or event is being described in the memoir?

What were the author’s feelings BEFORE this moment or event?

What are the author’s feelings AFTER this moment or event?

Explain the author’s new realization or understanding, following from this moment or event.
What moment or event is being described in the memoir?

What were the author’s feelings BEFORE this moment or event?

What are the author’s feelings AFTER this moment or event?

Explain the author’s new realization or understanding, following from this moment or event.
What moment or event is being described in the memoir?

What were the author’s feelings BEFORE this moment or event?

What are the author’s feelings AFTER this moment or event?

Explain the author’s new realization or understanding, following from this moment or event.
Title ___________________________________________ Author _________________________
__________________________________________

What moment or event is being described in the memoir?

What were the author’s feelings BEFORE this moment or event?

What are the author’s feelings AFTER this moment or event?

Explain the author’s new realization or understanding, following from this moment or event.
Reader Response Group

ALL QUESTIONS & UNDERSTANDINGS
SHOULD REVOLVE AROUND THE FOLLOWING:

“What is the meaning of this piece?”

- I wonder…
- What is this about…
- I notice…
- This makes me think of…
- I like how…
**Session 6**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Writers’ notebooks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Elements of Memoir Anchor Chart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Memoir Study sheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Writing Folders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Memoir Structure Chart</strong> <em>(see attached sheet)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Excerpts of a variety of memoirs that will fit the culture of your classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recommendations are: <strong>Bad Boy; A Memoir</strong> by Walter Dean Myers; <strong>When I Was Your Age, Volume I Original Stories About Growing Up</strong> (there is a Volume II as well); <strong>13: Thirteen Stories That Capture the Agony and Ecstasy of Being Thirteen</strong> by James Howe; <strong>Harris and Me</strong> by Gary Paulsen. There are numerous possibilities here. Use what you enjoy and the students will enjoy the stories as well.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Teaching Point | **Memoir writers analyze the structures of memoirs in order to improve their thinking and writing about meaningful moments.**  |

| Active Engagement |  |
|  | • “Memoir writers make very specific and purposeful decisions about what they’ll include in their memoirs.”  |
|  | • Remind students of the following:  |
|  | o Every event in the memoir has to have a purpose.  |
|  | o The memoir needs to show attitudes or feelings *before* the event, so that the reader understands the author’s learning at the end.  |
|  | o The memoir needs to show the *before* part several times.  |
|  | o The memoir needs to show the *after*. How did the learning change the author?  |
|  | o Every event needs to build toward, show, or explain the significance of the author’s learning.  |
|  | • “Let’s look at the memoirs we have read, as well as the ones we are writing ourselves, and pull out the *before, after and the learning.*”  |
|  | • Teacher will model the Memoir Structure Chart. Students will continue to analyze the memoirs they were reading from the previous session.  |

| Independent Practice |  |
|  | • For this task, students may remain with their Reader Response Groups to complete the chart.  |

| Share | **Focus Questions:** *How does understanding the writer’s feelings about a memory help to explain the significance of the event? How do the narrative components of memoir aid in the telling of the story?*  |
|  | • Groups will report their thinking and the teacher will chart the information on the overhead, projector, chart paper, etc. for the class to see.  |

| Homework/Extension | Students can take the inspiration from these memoirs and apply it to their own writing.  |

| Assessment | Teacher may assign points for the Memoir Structure Chart, as well as circulate and check in during the Reader Response time. Points may be allotted for participation. Writing Folders may also be used as an assessment tool.  |
MEMOIR STRUCTURE

Fill in the chart, explaining with details from the text on the author’s experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Memoir</th>
<th>BEFORE Event</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>AFTER Event</th>
<th>Learning or Realization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How was the author feeling or dealing with life?</td>
<td>What happened that changed the author?</td>
<td>Now how was the author feeling or dealing with life?</td>
<td>What did the author learn or realize from this experience?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Session 7**

### Preparation

- Writers’ notebooks
- Elements of Memoir Anchor Chart
- Writing Folders
- Copies of the students’ memoirs, as well as good dialogue examples from the mentor memoirs that you have been using.
- For this session, the following text is recommended: *Mechanically Inclined: Building Grammar, Usage, and Style into Writer's Workshop* by Jeff Anderson and Vicki Spandel (Paperback - Jan 1, 2005). Any mentor text or grammar book on the fundamentals of dialogue would also work.
- There are also many web resources to use with students. Suggested websites include:  

### Teaching Point

**Memoir writers use narrative techniques such as dialogue to demonstrate why events are significant.**

### Active Engagement

- “Writers, let’s go back to our memoirs and see what we can learn about the narrator, which is ourselves. Remember that memoirs have something to say or teach about the author’s memorable experience.”
- “It is important to show what the narrator is experiencing, not just tell the experience, and one of the ways is through the use of dialogue.”
- Review how dialogue can directly and indirectly reveal information about characters in memoir, in addition to revealing why events are significant.
- We learn a lot about a character in a story by the things that they do and the things that they say. Memoir writers use a variety of dialogue to add interest and depth to the story they are telling. Dialogue also gives insight into what the characters are thinking, their feelings, and how they act. Understanding how to punctuate and use dialogue is an important skill for a memoir writer to have.
- Teacher will review on the overhead, projector, etc. the rules and uses for dialogue. The students should contribute to the list of rules.
- Use copies of mentor texts with dialogue to show these rules; also, show text with errors so students can see errors corrected.
- Conclude with a discussion on tagging dialogue with action, emphasizing that *how something is said* reveals information about a character as well.
- At the end of this session create a “Dialogue Rules” Anchor Chart to post in the room, capturing the class discussion.

### Independent Practice

Have students return to their own memoirs to revise dialogue, incorporating a variety of uses that directly and indirectly reveal information as the memoir progresses.

### Share

**Focus Question:** *What strategies or techniques can be used to express emotion in a given memoir?*

- If time allows, students can turn and talk to peer edit with each other. They can do this with their Reader Response Groups, too, checking for the correct use of dialogue.

### Homework/Extension

Students should continue to revise and edit their memoirs as they work toward a final piece. Refer back to the Memoir Rubric.

### Assessment

Teacher will circulate and check in during the independent revising time. Points may be allotted for participation. Writing Folders may also be used as an assessment tool.
## Session 8

### Preparation
- Writers’ notebooks
- Elements of Memoir Anchor Chart
- Writing Folders
- Copies of the students’ memoirs, as well as good transition examples from the mentor memoirs that you have been using.
- For this session, the following text is recommended: *Mechanically Inclined: Building Grammar, Usage, and Style into Writer’s Workshop* by Jeff Anderson and Vicki Spandel (Paperback - Jan 1, 2005). Any mentor text or grammar book on transition words would also work.
- Transition Words Chart Copies of lists can be found in *Mechanically Inclined: Building Grammar, Usage, and Style into Writer’s Workshop* by Jeff Anderson and Vicki Spandel (Paperback - Jan 1, 2005), as well as other resources that your district may already have on hand.

### Teaching Point
*Memoir writers use a variety of transition words and phrases, signaling shifts from one time frame or setting to another.*

### Active Engagement
- “Adverbs and conjunctive adverbs can add depth and coherence to texts. Often they act as transition words to help guide a reader through a writer’s ideas, signaling a contrast or comparison, or supporting an idea.”
- Memoir writers use transition words to signal shifts in time and sequence.
- Transition words link sentences and paragraphs.
- Teacher will review on the overhead, projector, etc. the rules and uses for transition words.
- Teacher will also display a list of common transition words for the students to review. Copies of lists can be found in *Mechanically Inclined: Building Grammar, Usage, and Style into Writer’s Workshop* by Jeff Anderson and Vicki Spandel (Paperback - Jan 1, 2005), as well as other resources that your district may already have on hand.
- Teacher will also need to review comma usage as it relates to transitions, i.e. adverbs and conjunctive adverbs.

### Independent Practice
Have students return to their own memoirs to revise the use of transition words.

### Share
*Focus Questions: How do the narrative components of memoir aid in the telling of the story? What are the ways in which these narrative components can be manipulated to write an effective memoir?*
- If time allows, students can turn and talk to peer edit with each other. They can do so in their Reader Response Groups, too, correcting the use of transitions in their memoirs.

### Homework/ Extension
Students should continue to revise and edit their memoirs as they work toward a final piece.

### Assessment
Teacher will circulate and check in during the independent revising time. Points may be allotted for participation. Writing Folders may also be used as an assessment tool.
## Session 9

### Preparation
- Writers’ notebooks
- Elements of Memoir Anchor Chart
- Writing Folders
- Copies of the students’ memoirs
- Examples of good descriptive details, including sensory-language examples from the mentor memoirs that you have been using
- A list of definitions of figurative-language devices and descriptive words
- The web is a great resource for literary devices and figurative language. Here are some suggestions:
  - [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RKexdSZNiLc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RKexdSZNiLc)
  - [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EQL-wEeO3hc&NR=1](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EQL-wEeO3hc&NR=1)
  - [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G1c6zF9aJxs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G1c6zF9aJxs)

### Teaching Point
*Memoir writers use relevant descriptive details and sensory language, capturing action and conveying events.*

### Active Engagement
- Memoir writers use imagery and figurative language to create an effect on the reader.
- Memoir writers make use of descriptions that create vivid pictures in the minds of the readers. The most common types of figurative language are similes, metaphors, and personification.
- Teacher defines similes, metaphors, and personification for the students and provides examples from the texts.
- Teacher will model for the students how to take some “plain” description and make it more powerful through the use of imagery and figurative language.
- Read aloud a passage from a text or other source, and ask students to point out phrases or sentences that help them “see” the experience.

### Independent Practice
Have students return to their own memoirs to revise their use of imagery and figurative language.

### Share
**Focus Question:** How do the narrative components of memoir aid in the telling of the story? What are the ways in which these narrative components can be manipulated to write an effective memoir?
- If time allows, students can turn and talk to peer edit with each other. They can do so in their Reader Response Groups, too, correcting the use of transitions in their memoirs.

### Homework/Extension
Students should continue to revise and edit their memoirs as they work toward a final piece.

### Assessment
Teacher will circulate and check in during the independent revising time. Points may be allotted for participation. Writing Folders may also be used as an assessment tool.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Preparation** | - Writers’ notebooks  
- Memoir Reflection sheet  
- Elements of Memoir Anchor Chart  
- Writing Folders that include all the drafts, charts, notes and copies of the students’ memoirs  
- Copies of mentor memoirs that you have been using in class that have strong conclusions. “Everything Will Be Okay” by James Howe, from *When I Was Your Age: Volume I Original Stories About Growing Up*, is a good example here, but any memoir will do. |
| **Teaching Point** | *Memoir writers provide conclusions that reflect on the meaning of events.* |
| **Active Engagement** | - “We have talked about memoirs’ being used to show a personal understanding or realization based on an event in an author’s life.”  
- “Memoirs are structured so that there is an understanding BEFORE the event and then the realization or final understanding AFTER the event.”  
- Explain to the students that a memoir’s conclusion is the anchor to the story. This is where the final realization is revealed to the reader. The “ah-ha” or “I see” moment. A reader connects with the author at this juncture.  
- Distribute copies of the example memoir you are using so that each student has a copy to mark up.  
- Read the story as a class and then ask the students to mark what they feel is the BEFORE, AFTER, and new understanding or realization.  
- Have students complete the Memoir Reflection sheet. First they’ll do it on their own, then they’ll turn and talk with a shoulder partner.  
- Teacher will model, and when class completes the task, students will share responses. |
| **Independent Practice** | - Students now move to their own memoirs. With the same shoulder partner, the students will fill out a Memoir Reflection sheet for their partners’ memoirs.  
- Student partners will discuss each other’s BEFORE, AFTER, and new understanding or realization. When completed, the students will return the Memoir Reflection sheet to their partners so that they may use them for revision. |
| **Share** | **Focus Questions:**  
*What is the definition of a meaningful conclusion and how does the conclusion enrich the memoir? What does it mean to be reflective? How does being reflective make one a better writer?*  
- Have students share their reflections about each other’s BEFORE, AFTER, and new understanding or realization.  
- This is a good place to chart any new thoughts on the writing of memoir. |
| **Homework/Extension** | Students should continue to revise and edit their memoirs as they work toward a final piece. Refer back to the Memoir Rubric. |
| **Assessment** | Teacher will circulate and check in during the independent turn-and-talk time. Points may be allotted for participation and for the Memoir Reflection sheets. Writing Folders may also be used as an assessment tool. |
Memoir Reflection

Title and Author of Memoir used

1. What moment or event is being described in the memoir?

2. What were the author’s feelings BEFORE this moment or event?

3. What are the author’s feelings AFTER this moment or event?

Explain the author’s realization or new understanding from this moment or event. Include the following:

♦ What is significant for the author?
♦ What do you feel the author is trying to say to the reader?
♦ What is the author’s realization?
♦ Think on a deeper level.

_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
Launching the Writer’s Notebook 7: Session 10

Name___________________________ Date________________ Hour___________

## Memoir Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Memorable Moment</strong></td>
<td>Clear memorable moment.</td>
<td>Memorable moment is somewhat clear.</td>
<td>Memorable moment is unclear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Understanding or Realization</strong></td>
<td>The writer has made clear what he or she has learned or realized from this memorable moment.</td>
<td>The writer has made it somewhat clear what he or she has learned or realized from this memorable moment.</td>
<td>Meaning or learning is unclear from the experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure/Organization of Memoir</strong></td>
<td>Writer shows attitudes and feelings through events BEFORE the moment, during the meaningful moment, and AFTER the moment.</td>
<td>Writer somewhat shows attitudes and feelings through events BEFORE the moment, during the meaningful moment, and AFTER the moment.</td>
<td>Writer is not able to show attitudes and feelings through events BEFORE the moment, during the meaningful moment, and AFTER the moment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Style/Voice</strong></td>
<td>Meaning is shown through several literary devices weaved into text, including similes, metaphors, personification and onomatopoeia.</td>
<td>Meaning is shown through few literary devices weaved into text, including similes, metaphors, personification and onomatopoeia.</td>
<td>Limited use of literary devices. Weak contribution to meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mechanics</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates solid grasp of standard writing conventions and uses them effectively.</td>
<td>Writer shows reasonable control over a limited range of standard writing conventions.</td>
<td>Errors distract the reader and make the text difficult to read.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Points_________________ Final Grade_________________

Teacher’s Comments:
Memoir Reflection II

Student Memoir Title: ____________________________________________

1. What moment or event is being described in the memoir?

2. What were the author's feelings BEFORE this moment or event?

3. What are the author's feelings AFTER this moment or event?

Explain the author's realization or new understanding from this moment or event. Include the following:

♦ What is significant for the author?
♦ What do you feel the author is trying to say to the reader?
♦ What is the author’s realization?
♦ Think on a deeper level.

____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________

Copyright © 2010-2017 by the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators and Oakland Schools.
### Session 11

| Preparation | • Clean, typed copies of all the students’ final memoirs  
|             | • A treat/snack for the class such as juice and doughnuts  
|             | • A podium or lectern  
|             | • An author’s chair  
|             | • Post-it notes |

| Teaching Point | **Memoir writers celebrate their journey toward a new understanding or realization.** |

| Active Engagement | • “Today we are going to celebrate the writing that we have done as memoirists. You have worked hard to be reflective, thoughtful, and purposeful in your writing.”  
|                  | • “We have read, shared, and revised, and now it is time to celebrate our accomplishments with each other, because that is what writers do and that is who we are: writers.”  
|                  | • Explain to the class that authors give readings of their work for audiences. On a voluntary basis, and in no particular order, students will come up and read their memoirs to the class. If students feel their memoir is too personal to read aloud they do not have to, but they could choose to have it read by another student or the teacher. This is something that you may need to have arranged in advance, depending on the length of the class period.  
|                  | • Remind students that this time, like writing time, is sacred and we honor everyone with good audience skills. Again, this is something that will have needed to be established in advance.  
|                  | • Once the readings are done, students will lay their memoirs on their desks. The class will circulate the room with their post-it notes around, going to each desk and giving a word, phrase, or sentence of encouragement and positive feedback; this is similar to a gallery walk.  
|                  | • When students return to their seats, they may take the comments that were left and put them in their Writing Folders or writers’ notebooks. |

| Independent Practice | • Students will read their memoirs as though at an actual reading. They are expected to take this as a serious, reflective moment that aids in their growth as writers.  
|                     | • Those in the audience must demonstrate good audience skills with respect and quiet. |

| Share | **Focus Question:** *How can celebrating the writer and writing make one a more thoughtful and reflective writer?*  
|       | • Students can reflect on this experience in their writers’ notebooks and share with the class if time allows. |

| Homework/Extension | N/A |

| Assessment | Students’ final memoir piece is the formal, summative assessment, based on the rubric provided. You may also provide points for good audience participation.  
|            | Post-unit summative assessment task: Students will use memoir-writing techniques to publish one full memoir. The memoir will be based on a significant event in which the student gained a new understanding about himself or herself; other people; or the broader world. The conclusion of the memoir will reflect on the meaning of the event. Student memoir writers will celebrate and share this new understanding. |
ELA
Common Core Standards
# Readers Workshop Unit of Study
## 7th Grade – Independent Reading

**Table of Contents**

### Preface
Learning Progression, Grades 6-8 ........................................................................................................ 1
Learning Progression, Grades 9-12 ..................................................................................................... 2

### Background Section
Abstract .................................................................................................................................................. 3
Standards ............................................................................................................................................... 4
Overview of Sessions – Teaching Points and Unit Assessments ........................................................... 5

### Resource Materials Section
Resource Materials needed for each session follow the table of the Overview of that Session
Session 1 Resource Materials ................................................................................................................. 6
Session 2 Resource Materials ................................................................................................................ 7
Session 3 Resource Materials ................................................................................................................ 13
Session 4 Resource Materials ............................................................................................................... 17
Session 5 Resource Materials ............................................................................................................... 19
Session 6 Resource Materials ............................................................................................................... 20
Session 7 Resource Materials ............................................................................................................... 22
Session 8 Resource Materials ............................................................................................................... 24
Session 9 Resource Materials ............................................................................................................... 26
Preface
The following unit supports and aligns to the Common Core State Standards. This research-based work is the outcome of a collective effort made by numerous secondary teachers from around the state of Michigan. Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA) initiated a statewide collaborative project, bringing together educators from around the state to create and refine a K-12 English Language Arts model curriculum. The Independent Reading unit is situated as the opening reading unit of study within a yearlong sequence of reading units. The unit emphasizes students’ recognizing reading comprehension, reader independence, and reader identity. The foundation of a reading identity and strategies to engage with text scaffold readers into the complexities of subsequent reading units that are focused deeply within the three main types of writing. Each unit within the MAISA yearlong model curriculum presents a string of teaching points that scaffold and spiral the content and skills. Units of study are structured to be student-centered rather than teacher-driven. Sessions emphasize student engagement and strive to simultaneously increase critical thinking and writing skills. Sessions are designed as a series of mini-lessons that allow time to read, practice, respond, and conference. Through summative and formative assessments specific to each unit, students will progress toward becoming independent thinkers and readers.

Significant input and feedback was gathered both in the initial conceptualizing of the unit and later revisions. Teachers from around the state piloted and/or reviewed the unit; their feedback and student artifacts helped in the revision process. Special thanks go to lead unit writers Bryan Hartsig, Lisa Kraiza, and Judy Kelly, who closely studied the CCSS, translated the standards into curriculum and practice, and revised with a close eye to classroom teacher feedback. Throughout the yearlong collaborative project, teachers who are reviewing units are finding how students’ habits of mind have shifted from task-oriented to big-picture thinking, utilizing a critical literacy lens.
### Middle School Independent Reading Unit Learning Progressions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>6th</th>
<th>7th</th>
<th>8th</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Developing the Identity of the Reader** | • Engage in conversations about books.  
• Utilize strategies to choose "just-right" books.  
• Read with stamina and fluency. | • Engage a community of readers through sharing, critique, analysis, and recommendations.  
• Select just the right book after determining reading needs, interests, purposes and goals. | • Engage in conversations and continue to create a community of readers through sharing, critiquing, and analyzing while making recommendations to others.  
• Select “just-right” book based on reading needs, interests, purposes, and goals.  
• Apply learning from unit to make decisions about next book choice. |
| **Interacting with Texts and Self-Monitoring** | • Make connections with the characters.  
• Infer characters' attributes and motivations.  
• Remain focused while reading. | • Utilize selected reading tools, graphic organizers, and conversation to identify central ideas and character attributes.  
• Track the interacting and distracting voice, while making personal connections to the text.  
• Make connections about problems using character conflicts (internal/external), what characters say and do, character thoughts, and their reactions to other characters. | • Connect with the main characters by forming opinions about various characters’ points of views.  
• Analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.  
• Analyze character conflicts by citing literal information and evaluating dialogue related to conflicts. |
| **Exploring Genre—Elements and Structures** | • Identify that stories are created through scenes and narration.  
• Identify the rising tension in the story.  
• Revise and refine thinking about characters.  
• Notice and connect recurring images or ideas that may point toward the theme. | • Identify scenes as the building blocks of the story, depicting action and conversations.  
• Identify the purpose of narration throughout the story.  
• Track causes of rising tension across the plotline.  
• Reflect on the text as a whole and provide a well-thought-out critique, using the information gathered during the reading process. | • Analyze how scenes and narration contribute to the rising and falling tension of the story.  
• Identify the theme of the story.  
• Use all the information gathered during the reading process to analyze the work as a whole and provide a well-thought-out critique. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>9th Grade</th>
<th>10th Grade</th>
<th>11th Grade</th>
<th>12th Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Developing the Identity of the Reader | • Set goals for reading.  
• Use strategies to find a “just-right” book.  
• Engage in discussion with other readers.  
• Develop preferences for texts and authors through exploration of various fictional works. | • Set goals for reading stamina and fluency.  
• Use strategies to find a “just-right” book.  
• Engage in discussion with other readers.  
• Develop preferences for texts and authors through personal study and discussion with peers. | • Set goals to explore unfamiliar nonfiction genres.  
• Use strategies to find a “just-right” book.  
• Engage in discussion with other readers.  
• Develop preferences for texts and authors through personal study and discussion with peers. | • Set goals to read and explore unfamiliar genres.  
• Use strategies to find a “just-right” book and related texts.  
• Engage in discussion with other readers  
• Develop preferences for texts and authors through personal study and discussion with peers. |

| Interacting with Texts and Self-Monitoring | • Develop fluency by connecting to characters and the narrative voice.  
• Develop theories about author’s purpose and identify central idea  
• Make connections to text, in order to evaluate the actions and emotions of the characters and narrator as they face conflicts. | • Develop fluency by connecting to the narrative voice  
• Develop theories about author’s purpose and identify central idea  
• Make connections to text, in order to evaluate the author’s insights. | • Develop fluency by connecting to the style and structure of the text.  
• Develop theories about author’s purpose and identify central idea.  
• Make connections to text, in order to evaluate the insights and claims the author reveals across the text. | • Make cross-text connections.  
• Synthesize thinking across multiple texts and multiple genres.  
• Evaluate the author’s insights. |

| Exploring Genre—Elements and Structures | • Analyze, through examination of internal and external events, how complex characters develop.  
• Analyze, through examination of conflicts and character choices, how complex characters advance the plot.  
• Analyze, by tracking and confirming theories about the novel’s central idea, how complex characters establish theme.  
• Analyze the genre via the reading experience. | • Examine conflicts and character choices, in order to analyze the implications of how complex characters advance the plot.  
• Analyze, by tracking and confirming theories about the novel’s central idea, how complex characters establish theme.  
• Analyze the genre via the reading experience | • Analyze how different types of evidence support the central idea, claims, and insights expressed by the author.  
• Analyze how the author establishes and connects insights, in order to influence a reader.  
• Analyze the counterclaims the author introduces to influence a reader.  
• Analyze the genre via the reading experience | • Analyze how the same theme is expressed in multiple genres.  
• Analyze how different authors establish and connect insights to influence readers.  
• Analyze the differing claims the authors introduce to influence readers.  
• Analyze the genres via the reading experience |
Readers Workshop Unit of Study
7th Grade – Independent Reading

Abstract

Independent Reading
Students will participate in a reading workshop that hones independent reading skills through brief, specific lessons; teacher and student models; and thinking activities. Looking at important aspects of narratives and reading strategies, the students will learn the academic and social importance of independent reading, employing the selected tools and instruction. The unit emphasizes interaction between readers and texts; readers learn to connect with characters, infer their motivations, notice how plotlines develop, and determine themes. The unit encourages students to recognize reading comprehension. One of the goals of this unit is to include a combination of teacher and peer conversations, helping to develop reader independence and students’ identities as readers. This unit emphasizes reading volume and stamina; students will track how much and how long they read. Finally, the strength of this unit is to use the reading-strategy tools so that even those who are reluctant find themselves to be successful readers.

Key Concepts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Central idea</th>
<th>Voice</th>
<th>Inference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>Point of View</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plot</td>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td>Scenes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting</td>
<td>Critique</td>
<td>Internal and external conflict</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Philosophy
In the 7th grade independent reading unit, students spend an extended amount of time (20 minutes per day) reading fiction, building stamina with texts that interest them, and then discussing the books they have chosen. Students read fiction while becoming thoughtful in their analysis of the texts they read.

Students participate in a reading community that involves them in an authentic reading experience, and which focuses on specific reading strategies. Since reading partnerships are crucial in developing this community, care must be taken in matching up students. Students may be matched by reading interests: favorite authors, genre, or topics.

The reading strategies aid each student’s understanding regardless of his or her reading level. Students develop strong and meaningful reading skills through the use of specific mini-lessons, shared reading, conferencing, and independent reading.

Notes for the teacher

- Student choice of text is of utmost importance in this unit, as is finding a text at the appropriate reading level. Students should be allowed to choose from a variety of fiction genres. This could include classic literature, short story collections, young adult novels, or graphic novels.
- Teachers should not be concerned if students select books that the teacher has not read. There will be an opportunity for teachers to read some selections during the workshop, and the lessons do not require the teacher to have intimate knowledge of each book.
- Students are expected to read at least two texts during the course of this unit, but if they finish a text before the established deadlines, they should select another book and continue. This should not affect their ability to take part in the mini-lessons. Likewise, if students abandon a text that was initially chosen, they should choose another, shorter text to meet the same deadlines.
- Student-to-student discussion is imperative in this unit, so we highly recommend that students are grouped in reading partnerships or clubs (small groups). These groups might be reading the same text, texts with similar themes, or texts of the same genre.
- The teacher conference is key to success in this unit. A rubric and monitoring chart are included, as is a list of suggested interventions. We recommend that the teacher conference with each student at least once per book, even more if possible, to evaluate progress and to use the interventions.

The focus of this unit is reading fiction independently to “make it easier for individuals both to enter the [reading] zone and to get their feet under them as opinionated, versatile, critical readers who have goals and plans” (Atwell, 2007).
**Standards**

*Common Core Standards: Narrative:* The following College and Career Readiness (CCR) anchor standards apply to reading and writing in narrative template tasks. Refer to the 6-12 standards for grade-appropriate specifics that fit each task and module being developed. The standards numbers and general content remain the same across all grades, but details vary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>CCR Anchor Standards for Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.RL.1</td>
<td>Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.RL.2</td>
<td>Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.RL.6</td>
<td>Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.RL.10</td>
<td>By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overview of Sessions: Teaching Points and Unit Assessments

Unit Title: Independent Reading

Unit Description (overview):

The independent reading workshop provides a systematic method to support students as they read on their own. Students will learn to organize their thinking through the use of reading-strategy tools, kept in reading folders. Teachers begin each session with a mini-lesson that targets a specific reading skill or strategy. Students are then encouraged to silently read books of their own choosing while the teacher monitors and confers with individuals. At the closure of each session, students share in partnerships or whole-group discussions to identify strategies and their new learning.

Teaching Points

Developing the Identity of the Reader

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Unit Assessment Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have students complete a quick review of a book that they have recently read. They are to include a short summary of the book as well as their opinion of the story. Store in reading folder so that students can track their learning progression from unit start to unit completion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Readers create a community by sharing, critiquing, analyzing book recommendations.
2. Readers select just the right book after determining their reading needs, interests, purposes, and goals.

Interacting with Texts and Self-Monitoring

3. Readers use reading tools, graphic organizers, and conversation to identify central ideas and character attributes in texts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mid-Unit Formative Assessment Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spot check all reading folders and hold conversations with groups of students to ensure comprehension of assignment tasks. Students should have a wide variety of reading tools gathered and completed within their reading folders. As teacher, you should notice shifts in student thinking. Encourage all readers to continue on a thoughtful path, noticing explicit details about text and how stories are woven into pieces of literature.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Readers track their interacting voices, as well as their distracting voices, while reading texts.
5. Readers connect with main characters while analyzing their points of view.
6. Readers empathize with characters’ conflicts.

Exploring Genre—Elements and Structures

7. Scenes are the building blocks of a story. They are connected through the story’s narration.
8. Readers follow the plot to identify the tension in the story.
9. Readers use all the information they have gathered during the reading process to analyze the work as a whole and provide a well-thought-out critique.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post-Unit Summative Assessment Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students are to complete an individual book critique of their independent reading book that encompasses a summary or synopsis of the story, details concerning character attributes, tension, plot structures, as well as an opinion of the book’s overall likability.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Session 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Point</th>
<th><strong>Readers create a community by sharing, critiquing, analyzing book recommendations.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concept</td>
<td>Developing the Identity of the Reader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>• Have a basic working knowledge of the contents of the novels in your class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Bring colorful post-it notes—enough for each student to have a healthy stack.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Create a special, designated area in the classroom for housing the independent reading books.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Bring chart paper &amp; colorful markers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Find online sites—Amazon, Barnes and Noble—that have useful language for book recommendations, and prepare this language on printed pages, on an overhead, or on a projector.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggested Materials</td>
<td>• Quality collection of multi-genre fiction novels that span various interests and reading levels of your students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• A book that you have marked with post-its; book should highlight striking and enjoyable moments for modeling. (Moments within the text that made you think or intrigued you.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Quotes framing pedagogy/lesson intent]</td>
<td>“A book is not only a friend, it makes friends for you. When you have possessed a book with mind and spirit, you are enriched. But, when you pass it on you are enriched threefold.” “Henry Miller”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Question</td>
<td>How can students create a community of readers by sharing book interests, highlights and ideas?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Engagement</td>
<td>• Discuss with students as an intro that today you will be learning about why people choose the books they do. Talk about and share experiences about how recommendations can influence those choices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Show students examples of online locations (Scholastics, Amazon, Barnes and Noble) to find useful language for making such book recommendations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Read aloud the prepared sections of your book; model how you made notes using post-its.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Leave the option open to create an anchor chart and record student thoughts about why and how other people’s analyses and critique can be so instrumental in their next book selection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Practice</td>
<td>• Have students go to the special, designated area in the classroom for housing the independent reading books. There, they’ll make their first novel selection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Once selections have been made, have students return to their reading area of choice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Encourage students to remember the discussion points today as they think about and label their text using the post-its.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Students begin to read.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Teacher should be moving about the room to ensure students are using post-it notes to mark enjoyable moments within the text they have chosen. Allow students to switch their books, if they’d like to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share</td>
<td>• Open the classroom to discussion, at which time students are to share what they have noted in their text as meaningful to them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Create a chart or bulletin board of novel titles. Have students attach the post-its they created under the novel titles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>Pre-unit assessment: Have students complete a quick review of a book that they have recently read. They are to include a short summary of the book as well as their opinion of the story. Store in reading folders so that students can track their learning progression from unit start to unit completion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Session 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Point</th>
<th>Readers select a just-right book after determining their reading needs, interests, purposes, and goals.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concept</td>
<td>Developing the Identity of the Reader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>• Have a basic working knowledge of the contents of the novels in your class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Bring reading folders for each student for housing handouts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Chart paper &amp; colorful markers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Make copies of “How to Choose a ‘Just Right’ Book” handout (see attached sheet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Make copies of “Independent Reading Unit Guidelines” handout (see attached sheet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Make copies of the “Exit Slip” (see attached sheet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Make copies of “Goldilocks Strategy” handout (see attached sheet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggested Materials</td>
<td>Quality collection of multi-genre fiction novels that span various interests and reading levels of your students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Focus Question

How do readers select captivating books?

#### Active Engagement

- Explain to students that they will each be reading a novel of their own choosing. Share that you will be guiding them into choosing a book that is “just right” for them using the strategies on the Just Right Book Chart.
- Using the 7th Grade Independent Reading Unit Guidelines, discuss teacher and student responsibilities for the duration of the unit. Give a copy to each student to house in their Reading Folders.
- Distribute copies of “How to Choose a ‘Just Right’ Book for Independent Reading” to help students determine if a book is a “just right” for them or not. You can use the “Goldilocks Strategy” handout as well. Display the sheet(s) on the overhead or document camera, or create as a poster/anchor chart for reference.
- Using one of your own reading books, model the thought process of using the Just the Right Book Chart.

#### Independent Practice

- Invite students to browse the books again by reading the book jackets or backs, then by flipping through the pages and reading a small section to get a sense of the narrator and story. Choose one book.
- Students read a page aloud to partner to see if they’re fluent and comfortable with the book. They should use the suggestions in “How to Choose a ‘Just Right’ Book.” Did the book seem interesting? Could they read it smoothly? Did they make pictures in their heads as they read?
- Repeat this process.
- Students note, in their readers’ notebooks or folder, which books felt comfortable. At the end of the process they should have made their choice.

Monitor to support and differentiate: Monitor and confirm student book choice by listening to students read a page from their “just-right” book.

In pairs, have students share their book choices.

#### Share

Students share their chosen books. (At this point, it may be helpful for the teacher to make note of what book each student is reading.)

For future reference, create a bulletin board of 7th grade favorite books, authors, genres, and topics.

#### Homework

If students have not found a “just right” book in class, they look for books at home or the library. They need a book to begin reading tomorrow.

#### Assessment

Students turn in Exit Slips when they leave the classroom. Use the information gathered to help students choose a “just right” book.
# Middle School Booklist for Independent Reading Unit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Lexile</th>
<th>Grade Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skeleton Man</td>
<td>Joseph Bruchac</td>
<td>730</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Tiger Rising</td>
<td>Kate DiCamillo</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because of Winn Dixie*</td>
<td>Kate DiCamillo</td>
<td>610</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Secret Language of Girls</td>
<td>Frances Dowell</td>
<td>870</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catching Fire (Book 2)</td>
<td>Suzanne Collins</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mocking Jay (Book 3)</td>
<td>Suzanne Collins</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hunger Games (Book 1)</td>
<td>Suzanne Collins</td>
<td>810</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crossed (Book 2)</td>
<td>Ally Condie</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matched (Book 1)</td>
<td>Ally Condie</td>
<td>680</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Chocolate War*</td>
<td>Robert Cromier</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Mighty Miss Malone</td>
<td>Christopher Paul Curtis</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bud Not Buddy</td>
<td>Christopher Paul Curtis</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Slave Dancer</td>
<td>Paula Fox</td>
<td>970</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Rodrick Rules*</td>
<td>Jeff Kinney</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darnell Rock Reporting</td>
<td>Walter Dean Myers</td>
<td>710</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>145th Street</td>
<td>Walter Dean Myers</td>
<td>760</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hatchet</td>
<td>Gary Paulsen</td>
<td>1020</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soldier's Heart</td>
<td>Gary Paulsen</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The River</td>
<td>Gary Paulsen</td>
<td>960</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodsong</td>
<td>Gary Paulsen</td>
<td>1090</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woods Runner</td>
<td>Gary Paulsen</td>
<td>870</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Golden Compass* (His Dark Materials)</td>
<td>Philip Pullman</td>
<td>930</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry Potter Series*</td>
<td>J.K. Rowling</td>
<td>880-990</td>
<td>5.3-7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holes*</td>
<td>Louis Sachar</td>
<td>660</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Slippery Slope</td>
<td>Lemony Snicket</td>
<td>1150</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseball in April</td>
<td>Gary Soto</td>
<td>830</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petty Crimes</td>
<td>Gary Soto</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking Sides</td>
<td>Gary Soto</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loser</td>
<td>Jerry Spinelli</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Runaway</td>
<td>Wendelin Van Draanen</td>
<td>740</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sammy Keyes &amp; the Hollywood Mummy</td>
<td>Wendelin Van Draanen</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sammy Keyes &amp; the Skeleton Man</td>
<td>Wendelin Van Draanen</td>
<td>890</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Crazy Summer</td>
<td>Rita Williams-Garcia</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jumped</td>
<td>Rita Williams-Garcia</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miracle’s Boys</td>
<td>Jacqueline Woodson</td>
<td>660</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The House You Pass on the Way</td>
<td>Jacqueline Woodson</td>
<td>560</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Movie available

| Text Complexity Grade Bands and Associated Lexile Ranges (in Lexiles) |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Text Complexity Grade Band in the Standards       | Old Lexile Ranges       | Lexile Ranges Aligned to CCR Expectations |
| 6-8                                               | 860-1010                 | 955-1155                 |

Common Core Standards for English Language Arts Appendix A Page 8
How to Choose a “Just Right” Book for Independent Reading

First, preview the book and ask yourself:
1. Does the book cover look interesting?
2. Read the summary on the back cover. Are you interested?

If yes, now use the Five Finger Test:
1. Open the book to a random page in the middle.
2. Hold up Five fingers on one hand.
3. Begin reading at the top of the page.
4. Put down a finger each time you stumble over a word or come to a word you don’t know.
5. If you can get to the bottom of the page & still have at least one finger up, this book has passed the Five Finger Test!

Easy
✓ You can read the words fluently (smooth & with an interesting voice)
✓ You know how to pronounce all the words
✓ You have a lot of prior knowledge for the topic
✓ You totally understand what is going on in the story
✓ Your thinking comes easy as you read the words

Challenging
✓ Many of the words are too hard to decode (failed the Five Finger Test)
✓ You don’t know what the TRICKY words mean
✓ Your reading becomes choppy
✓ You loose focus as you are reading
✓ Your thinking is confused
✓ You are not enjoying the book because you have to do too much word work
✓ Your reading rate slows way down

Just Right
✓ You can understand what you are reading
✓ You enjoy the book
✓ You can read the book with smooth fluency, but there are some choppy places
✓ You can figure out the TRICKY words & still get the meaning of the story
✓ Your reading rate is just right—not too slow & not too fast

Lastly, if you are reading the text and you…
➢ Understand & enjoy the topic
➢ Can tell a friend what’s happening from each chapter
➢ Can read the sentences aloud smoothly & fluently (as fast as you speak in conversation)
➢ Find just a few places (less that 4 words per page) where you have to think about what the meaning of a word might be

Then you are reading a “JUST RIGHT” book!

Reading a “Just Right” book helps you become a better reader!
# 7th Grade ELA Independent Reading Unit Guidelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>The Student’s Role</th>
<th>The Teacher’s Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Mini-Lessons     | • Listen to and participate in lessons  
                  • Listen to and follow directions for reading and for responding in journals | • Provide mini-lessons on management, literary works, and effective reading strategies, using examples from real texts  
                  • Remind students to apply what they’ve learned during mini-lessons to their independent reading |
| Reading          | • Select an appropriate book  
                  • Read silently without disturbing others  
                  • Use the tools in reading folders  
                  • Keep organized | • Assist readers in choosing “just right” books  
                  • Monitor and analyze students’ responses and reading logs |
| Conferences      | • Confer with teacher about different aspects of reading  
                  • Know when a conference is needed  
                  • Sometimes read aloud for teacher observation  
                  • Share and talk about reading tools with the teacher | • Have engaging conversations with students  
                  • Assist students with the craft of independent reading  
                  • Sample students’ oral reading, checking often for fluency and phrasing  
                  • Talk about reading tools |
| Group Sharing    | • Share thinking in pairs, small groups, and large groups  
                  • Evaluate personal reading progress and what was learned from personal reading | • Invite students to share  
                  • Reinforce concepts taught during mini-lessons  
                  • Ask the class or a group to summarize what they have learned |

**I will be successful at this Independent Reading Unit if I...**

1. READ.
2. Write my response based on the strategy I am learning.
3. Write at least half a page.
4. Use the tools I was given.
5. Don’t skip lines.
6. Don’t worry about the writing so much; this is just a rough draft of my thoughts.
7. READ.
EXIT SLIP

Name ____________________ Date ___________ Hour ______

The Book I chose today:

Last book I read.

Favorite book(s) I have read.

Topics I like read about.

Favorite genre.
The Goldilocks Strategy

Easy Books
Ask myself these questions. If I am answering yes, this book is probably an easy book for me. I'll have fun reading it.
- Have I read it lots of times before?
- Do I understand the story?
- Do I know (can I understand) almost every word?
- Can I read it smoothly?

Just-Right Books
Ask myself these questions. If I am answering yes, this book is probably a “just right” book for me. I’ll give it a try.
- Is this book new to me?
- Do I understand what I have read so far?
- Are there just a few words per page I don’t know?
- When I read, are some places smooth and some choppy?
- Can someone help me with this book? Who?

Hard Books
Ask myself these questions. If I am answering yes, this book is probably a hard book for me. I’ll give it another try later (perhaps in a couple of months).
- Are there more than a few words on each page I don’t know?
- Am I confused about what is happening in this book? Do I feel bored?
- When I read, does it feel pretty choppy?
- Is everyone busy and unable to help me?
- Is there a way to get this book closer to a “just right” book?
### Session 3

#### Teaching Point

*Readers use reading tools, graphic organizers, and conversation to identify central ideas and character attributes in texts.*

#### Concept

Interacting with Texts and Self-Monitoring

#### Preparation

- Bring chart paper & colorful markers
- Prepare copies of the “Character Attribute Tracking Tool” (see attached sheet)
- Prepare copies of the daily reading log and character attribute chart for each student.

#### [Quotes framing pedagogy/lesson intent]

“When we read a story, we inhabit it. The covers of the book are like a roof and four walls. What is to happen next will take place within the four walls of the story. And this is possible because the story’s voice makes everything its own.”  ~John Berger

#### Focus Question

*Why is it important to track and recognize central ideas and character attributes while reading?*

#### Active Engagement

- Distribute Daily Reading Log and Character Attribute Tracking Tool to each student.
- Be certain to review the meaning of attribute and how it relates to characters in stories. At this point, you may want to start an anchor chart of literary definitions that can be added to as the unit progresses. It is important make sure students know what evidence can define characters’ attributes.
- Explain that, from now on, you expect students to use both tools daily, tracking their reading progress as well as making connections to the characters and central ideas they encounter.
- **Note to teachers: Students’ volume of reading grows as they track their reading. It is beneficial for students to be able to track and view their growth.**

#### Independent Practice

- Have students retreat to their special, designated reading area of choice with their novel, reading folder and tools.
- Allow for approximately 20 minutes for the students to read and interact with their text using the session tools.
- Teacher will engage in various student conferences to monitor shifts in student thinking and engagement.

#### Share

Ask students to review the definition of attribute and have them share those that they noted on their Character Attribute Charts. This can be done as a whole class or in groups.

#### Assessment

Mid-unit assessment:
Spot check all reading folders and hold conversations with groups of students to ensure comprehension of assignment tasks. Students should have a wide variety of reading tools gathered and completed within their reading folders. As teacher, you should notice shifts in student thinking. Encourage all readers to continue on a thoughtful path, noticing explicit details about text and how stories are woven into pieces of literature.
### Character Attribute Tracking Tool

#### (NAME OF CHARACTER BEING TRACKED)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATTRIBUTE</th>
<th>EVIDENCE FOUND ON PAGE #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATTRIBUTE</th>
<th>EVIDENCE FOUND ON PAGE #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATTRIBUTE</th>
<th>EVIDENCE FOUND ON PAGE #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Pages Read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Questions and Connections
As you read, keep track of your thinking. Remember, if you aren’t thinking, you aren’t really reading!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What am I confused about?</th>
<th>What does the text make me think about?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What am I wondering or questioning?</td>
<td>What does this text remind me of?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How does asking questions help you as a reader?

Why is it important to make connections as you read?

What does it mean to be an active reader?
Session 4

Teaching Point

*Readers track their interacting voices, as well as their distracting voices, while reading texts.*

All readers have two voices in their heads - an interacting voice and a distracting voice. (Tovani, 2000) They learn to pay attention to the interacting voice and to turn off the distracting voice.

Concept

Interacting with Texts and Self-Monitoring

Preparation

- Read a section of your text and pay attention to your interacting and distracting voices.
- Make copies of "Reading Log" *(see attached sheet)*

Suggested Materials

- Choose a book you will read during independent reading time. You will model lessons using this text.
- Copies of the Independent Reading Log for all students to use and store in their reading folders.

Focus Question

Focus Question: *How do readers stay focused on what they are reading? How do they refocus when their attention drifts?*

Active Engagement

- Explain to students that all readers have two voices in their heads - an interacting voice and a distracting voice. They need to learn to pay attention to the interacting voice and to turn off the distracting voice.
- **Interacting voice:** The voice inside the reader’s head that makes connections, asks questions, identifies confusions, agrees and disagrees with ideas. This voice deepens the reader’s understanding of the text.
- **Distracting voice:** The voice inside the reader’s head that pulls him away from the meaning of the text. It begins a conversation with the reading but gets distracted by a connection, a question, or an idea. Soon the reader begins to think about something unrelated to the text.

Teacher models and thinks aloud: Model your distracting voice, which took your attention away from the text. How did you notice you were distracted? How did you refocus?

Independent Practice

Review "Reading Log" with students.
- Allow 20 minutes for students to begin reading their chosen books.
- Have students complete the Reading Log and store in their reader’s notebook/folder.
- Remind students to be aware of their interacting and distracting voices. They should note these thoughts in their Reading Log while also tracking their personal connections and refocusing moments.

Share

Students share their interacting and distracting thoughts with the class

Optional for teacher: Begin an anchor chart that captures the kinds of interactive thinking the students comment on.

Homework

If students have not found a "just right" book yet, they continue looking for one outside of school.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MY INTERACTING VOICE</th>
<th>MY DISTRACTING VOICE</th>
<th>MY REFOCUSING MOMENTS</th>
<th>MY PERSONAL CONNECTIONS TO THE TEXT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What questions do I have that make connections, ask questions, identify confusions, agree and disagree with ideas?</td>
<td>What is pulling me away from the meaning of the text?</td>
<td>What did I do to refocus on the text?</td>
<td>What does the text make me think about?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Session 5

| Teaching Point | *Readers connect with main characters while analyzing their points of view.*  
Readers understand that authors control points of view. Those points of view can vary from text to text and character to character. |
|---|---|

| Concept | Interacting with Texts and Self-Monitoring |

| Preparation |  
- Familiarize yourself with the texts in this session’s active engagement.  
- Choose a book you will read during Independent Reading time. You will model lessons using this text.  
- Blank copies of **Venn diagram**, or other compare-contrast tool for each student. |

| Suggested Materials |  
- Copies of the following: *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs* by Jon Scieszka and the original *The Three Little Pigs*. |

| Quotes framing pedagogy/lesson intent | “We begin to learn wisely when we’re willing to see the world from other people’s perspective”  
*Toba Beta* |

| Focus Question | **Focus Question:** *How is point of view controlled by the author?* |

| Active Engagement |  
- Explain to the students that the author decides from whose point of view the story will be told.  
- As an example of point of view, use an ordinary school day story, such as a student getting in trouble. There is the student’s view, the teacher’s view, principal’s view, etc.  
- Discuss how varying characters’ points of view provides different information in a story.  
- Explain that you will be using the story of the Three Little Pigs to examine point of view.  
- Divide the class into two groups. One group will be the original Little Pigs and the other *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs*.  
- Have a student volunteer read the story to their group.  
- Students should be mindful of the main character’s point of view. Who is telling the story? What information or details are they giving? How does the one telling the story impact the story’s direction?  
- Reconvene as a whole group to compare and contrast the two stories. Teacher will chart, using a Venn diagram or other organizer, to compare and contrast points of view.  
- Ask probing questions to initiate classroom discussion: *Who is telling the story? What impact does the point of view have on the story and its outcome? How does the point of view enhance the story’s meaning?*  
- Be certain to post the charts that are created in the class for the students to reference. |

| Independent Practice |  
- Give each student a blank copy of a Venn diagram or other compare-contrast tool.  
- Invite students to return to their own independent reading book and choose a pair of characters to chart variations of point of view. |

| Share |  
- Discuss findings with a partner or other readers at the table. |

| Invitation | Invite students to take an event or scene from the story and rewrite it from another character’s point of view. |
### Session 6

**Teaching Point**

*Readers empathize with characters’ conflicts.*

Just like people, characters in stories have conflicts that create problems for themselves and others. Readers make associations between character conflicts and themselves.

**Concept**

Interacting with Texts and Self-Monitoring

**Preparation**

- Teacher chosen reading to demonstrate the teaching point
- Make copies of the “Conflict and Personal Connections” chart. *(See attached sheet)*

**Suggested Materials**

- One of the books that students are reading during independent reading time.

**Focus Question**

Focus Question: *How does the author help a reader to understand, get connected to, empathize with, like or dislike a character?*

**Active Engagement**

- Explain to students that all characters have conflicts and that is what drives and moves a story along.
- These conflicts influence the problem that is to be resolved in a story.
- Explain that there are internal conflicts and external conflicts.

**External:** External conflict can exist between two characters, like the conflict that exists between a controlling father and youthful, mischievous son. External conflict can also be the conflict that occurs when a human encounters a physical challenge, like when one is lost in a snowstorm.

**Internal:** Internal conflict exists when a character struggles with an ethical or emotional challenge. You can identify an internal conflict when you sense that a character is asking himself or herself, “Am I doing the right thing?” or, “Should I speak out against this behavior?”

- Teacher should use the students’ book they to model how to use the Conflict & Personal Connections Chart. Teach can use the overhead, Promethean, etc.

**Independent Practice**

- Instruct the students to return to their own books and complete the Conflict & Personal Connections Chart.

**Share**

- First, have students turn and talk to a partner or table group about the conflicts, as well as the connections they have made to their own lives.
- As a whole group, discuss how an author creates conflict(s) to help a reader understand, get connected to, empathize with, like, or dislike a character.

Record conflicts they have noted on post-its and paste to previously created bulletin board of book titles.
CONFLICT & PERSONAL CONNECTIONS CHART

Good readers make personal connections to characters and conflicts within a story.

BOOK TITLE: ______________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character Name: ____________________</th>
<th>My Personal Connection:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conflict:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internal/External</strong> (Circle one)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character Name: ____________________</th>
<th>Conflict:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conflict:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internal/External</strong> (Circle one)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character Name: ____________________</th>
<th>Conflict:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conflict:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internal/External</strong> (Circle one)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character Name: ____________________</th>
<th>Conflict:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conflict:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internal/External</strong> (Circle one)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Focus Question:** How does the author help a reader to understand, get connected to, empathize with, like, or dislike a character?
### Session 7

#### Teaching Point
*Scenes are the building blocks of a story. They are connected through the story’s narration.*
Narration and scenes work in tandem to move a story forward. Scenes contain the dialogue and the action, whereas the narration works to hold the scenes together with the history and background of the characters. Readers examine both narration and scenes as significant elements of fiction, in their relation to the movement of the story.

#### Concept
Exploring Genre—Elements and Structures

#### Preparation
- Teacher-chosen reading to demonstrate the teaching point.
- Make copies of “Scenes and Narration Tracker” (see attached sheet)
- Use one of the books that students are reading during independent reading. Have a prepared section that demonstrates scene and narration. A good suggestion is the novel *Jumped* by Rita Williams-Garcia; pages 4-6.

#### Focus Question
Focus Question: How does narration within scenes help a reader to understand and connect with the character(s)? How do scenes building upon one another move a story forward and create meaning and connection to the story?

#### Active Engagement
- Explain to students that, like movies and TV shows, books contain scenes. The difference is that in TV and movies, there is usually no one narrating the action.
- Scenes in stories are punctuated with the character’s narration. Scenes are the action and the dialogue between characters, but the narration is the character telling what is going on—not living in it. The narration holds scenes together and gives it background.
- Using your own independent-reading book, show the students your prepared section that demonstrates both scene and narration. For the purpose of this teaching point.
- Read the pages aloud to the students in addition to having them projected from a document camera, overhead, Promethean, etc. Students are to notice the two things going on: what is happening in the scene and how the character is feeling. From *Jumped*, For example: *The scene is of Leticia sitting through her remedial Geometry class. The action is her sitting there, taking notes following the lesson until the last ten minutes when she desires to leave and begs the teacher to sign her pass. The narration from Leticia leads us to understand her feelings of hurt, anger, etc.*
- As a whole class, have the students share what seems to be narration and what’s scene.
- Chart the students’ responses.
- Give each student a Scene and Narration Tracker. Model using it with the excerpt you just covered with the students from *Jumped*.

#### Independent Practice
- Instruct the students to return to their own books and complete the Scenes and Narration Chart.
- The teacher will monitor the students to check for understanding.

#### Share
- Have students turn and talk to a partner, or talk as a table group. They’ll discuss their findings.
- The teacher will circulate at this time, conferring with students and eavesdropping on conversations to check for understanding and personal connections.

#### Invitation
Ask students to construct a character sketch of their main character based on the information gathered in this session.
### Scenes and Narration Tracker

**Book Title**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page Number(s)</th>
<th>Scene: What is the action occurring?</th>
<th>Narration: What are the character’s feelings? Thoughts? Concerns?</th>
<th>Connection: How does this information help me to understand this character better?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Session 8

| Teaching Point | **Readers follow the plot to identify the tension in the story.**  
In common usages, tension refers to a sense of heightened involvement, uncertainty, and interest an audience experiences as the climax of the action approaches. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concept</td>
<td>Exploring Genre—Elements and Structures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Preparation | • Teacher-chosen reading to demonstrate the teaching point.  
• Copies of Plot Chart for every student. *(See attached)*  
• Use one of the books that students are reading during independent reading time.  
• Have a prepared section that demonstrates tension. A good example is in the novel *Jumped* by Rita Williams-Garcia. Pgs. 1-4 |
| [Quotes framing pedagogy/lesson intent] | “Tension staples the reader’s eyes to the page.”  
~Ralph Fletcher |
| Focus Question | **Focus Question:** *How does tension help to shape the plot?* |
| Active Engagement | • Explain to students that tension is what creates interest and energy that holds a reader in the story. Tension is what makes a reader want to keep reading.  
• Using your own independent reading book, show the students your prepared section that demonstrates how an author creates underlying tension that drives the plot. For the purpose of this teaching point, I suggest *Jumped* by Rita Williams-Garcia. Pages 1-4 fit in well here, as the author has created tension within the character of Leticia with her thoughts.  
• Show the students how to be thoughtful while using a plot map to identify tensions in the story. |
| Independent Practice | • Instruct the students to return to their own books and complete the Plot Chart.  
• The teacher will monitor the students to check for understanding of tension. |
| Share | • Have students turn and talk to a partner or table group about their findings.  
• The teacher will circulate at this time, conferring with students and eavesdropping on conversations to check for understanding and student connection. |
| Invitation | • For extra credit students can use a blank Plot Chart to complete using a movie they have recently seen, looking for moments of tension. |
EXPOSITION
what sets the story in motion)

RESOLUTION
(how story is concluded)
### Session 9

#### Teaching Point

*Readers use all the information they have gathered during the reading process to analyze the work as a whole and provide a well-thought-out critique.*

Book critiques are important at the end of a reading. A critique uses details to give a synopsis, share an opinion, and quantify the reading’s value or rating.

#### Concept

Exploring Genre—Elements and Structures

#### Preparation

- Finished teacher critique for modeling.
- Use a book that students are reading during independent reading time.
- Large visual display of “Book Critique” Rubric for initial conversation. *(See attached)*
- Copies of the rubric for each student.

#### [Quotes framing pedagogy/lesson intent]

“Reading without reflecting is like eating without digesting.” ~Edmund Burke

#### Focus Question

**Focus Question:** What are essential elements of a book critique?

#### Active Engagement

- Briefly explain what literary analysis is. *Literary analysis takes evidence from the text, such as character attributes, and discusses its implications. Literary analysis relies on quotes, summaries, and thoughtfulness to prove a point.*
- How is literary analysis different from plot summary? Plot summary describes overall plot & characters of the text, whereas literary analysis uses specific elements of plot and character to identify the underlying tensions. Plot summary gives no insight into the significance of a text or the author-created tensions that drive it; instead it has the feel of a book report.
- Explain that the students will be creating their own critique or review of their independent reading novel.
- Share your critique of the book you have been reading throughout the unit.

#### Independent Practice

- Have students return to their areas and use their reading folders to write a thoughtful critique of their independent reading book.

#### Share

- Encourage students to share orally within small groups they may choose to work in.

#### Assessment

**Post-unit assessment task:** Students are to complete an individual book critique of their independent reading book that encompasses a summary or synopsis of the story, details concerning character attributes, tension, plot structures, as well as an opinion of the book’s overall likability.
# Critique Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ON TARGET</th>
<th>ALMOST THERE</th>
<th>NOT YET</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUMMARY</td>
<td>All sentences help to tell the plot of the story.</td>
<td>Uses sentences that tell some of the plot of the story.</td>
<td>Does not tell the plot of the story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESPONSE</td>
<td>Uses many details from the book to describe characters and the conflicts they encounter.</td>
<td>Uses some details to describe characters and the conflicts they encounter.</td>
<td>Does not use details to describe characters and the conflicts they encounter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAVORITES</td>
<td>Describes favorite part of book with details about the tension the author creates.</td>
<td>Describes favorite part of book with few or no details about the tension the author creates.</td>
<td>Does not describe favorite part of book with details about the tension the author creates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RECOMMENDATION</td>
<td>Forms opinion on book and uses specific reasons from the text to support opinion.</td>
<td>Forms opinion on book, but uses few specific reasons from the text to support opinion.</td>
<td>Does not form opinion of the book.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Writers Workshop Unit of Study
7th Grade – Argument Paragraph

ELA
Common Core Standards

Prove Your Point
# Writers Workshop Unit of Study

## 7th Grade – Argument Paragraph

### Preface

- Learning Progression, Grades 6-8 .......................................................... 1
- Learning Progression, Grades 9-12 .......................................................... 3

### Background Section

- Abstract ........................................................................................................... 7
- Standards ........................................................................................................ 9
- Overview of Sessions – Teaching Points and Unit Assessments .................. 10
- Argument Paragraph Rubric-Prove Your Point ............................................. 12

### Resource Materials Section

Resource Materials needed for each session follow the table of the Overview of that Session

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource Materials</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Session 1 Resource Materials</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 2 Resource Materials</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 3 Resource Materials</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 4 Resource Materials</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 5 &amp; 6 Resource Materials</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 7 Resource Materials</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional Lessons Resource Materials</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 8 Resource Materials</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 9 Resource Materials</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 10 Resource Materials</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Writers Workshop Unit of Study
7th Grade – Argument Paragraph

Preface

The following unit supports and aligns to the Common Core State Standards. This research-based work is the outcome of a collective effort made by numerous secondary teachers from around the state of Michigan. Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA) initiated a statewide collaborative project, bringing together educators from around the state to create and refine a K-12 English Language Arts model curriculum. This one unit is situated within a yearlong sequence of units. Depending upon the unit’s placement in the yearlong scope and sequence, it will be important to recognize prior skills and content this unit expects learners to have. This unit also has a later, companion argument-writing unit, in which writers build upon the foundational understandings this unit establishes. Each unit presents a string of teaching points that scaffold and spiral the content and skills. The unit is structured to be student-centered rather than teacher-driven. Sessions emphasize student engagement and strive to increase critical thinking and writing skills simultaneously. Writing and thinking processes are stressed and are equally important to the end writing product. Sessions are designed as a series of mini-lessons that allow time to write, practice, and conference. Through summative and formative assessments specific to each unit, students will progress toward becoming independent thinkers and writers.

Significant input and feedback was gathered both in the initial conceptualizing of the unit and later revisions. Teachers from around the state piloted and/or reviewed the unit, and their feedback and student artifacts helped in the revision process. Special thanks go to lead unit writer Delia DeCourcy, who closely studied the CCSS, translated the standards into curriculum and practice, and revised with a close eye to classroom teacher feedback. Throughout the yearlong collaborative project, teachers reviewing units are finding how students’ habits of mind have shifted from task-oriented to big-picture thinking, utilizing a critical literacy lens.
## Middle School Argument Writing Unit Learning Progression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Make &amp; Support a Claim</th>
<th>Letter of Complaint</th>
<th>Prove Your Point</th>
<th>Proposal Essay</th>
<th>Develop Complex Commentary</th>
<th>Op-Ed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentor texts: paragraphs and essays by students about year-round school</td>
<td>Mentor texts: sample complaint letters from real life scenarios</td>
<td>Mentor texts: video clips, magazine &amp; newspaper articles, essays that outline a problem and suggest solutions</td>
<td>Mentor texts:</td>
<td>Mentor texts: paragraphs and essays by students about school uniforms</td>
<td>Mentor texts: op-eds from newspapers, magazines, and other student-friendly publications</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Differentiate between fact and opinion; support an opinion with evidence.</th>
<th>Craft a formal complaint letter about a real-life situation.</th>
<th>Research and identify effective evidence to support a claim.</th>
<th>Identify a problem and outline potential solutions.</th>
<th>Craft commentary to explain evidence that proves a claim.</th>
<th>Take a stand on an important social issue and call readers to action.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Generating ideas for argument writing</td>
<td>• Distinguish between fact and opinion.</td>
<td>• Define key terms of argument and the complaint-letter genre.</td>
<td>• Understand the relationship between claim and evidence.</td>
<td>• Define key terms for the proposal-essay genre: problem, plausible solution, cause and effect.</td>
<td>• Define the relationship between claim, evidence, and commentary.</td>
<td>• Define key terms for the op-ed genre: debatable claim, fact vs. opinion, problem, issue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understand the concepts of claim and evidence.</td>
<td>• Analyze examples of complaint letters.</td>
<td>• Define and identify the two main evidence types.</td>
<td>• Analyze examples of proposals.</td>
<td>• Generate and select viable evidence to support the claim.</td>
<td>• Define and identify the two main evidence types.</td>
<td>• Analyze examples of op-eds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understand the prompt and pre-write to discover and narrow a claim.</td>
<td>• Generate and select viable complaint-letter topics.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Examine how commentary works.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Understand the parts of the op-ed: lede, debatable claim, counterargument, structures.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Creating/Planning</th>
<th>Find evidence from credible sources to support the claim.</th>
<th>Find evidence through research and personal reflection to support the argument.</th>
<th>Understand the prompt.</th>
<th>Use search terms and driving questions to perform research on the problem.</th>
<th>Under the prompt.</th>
<th>Understand how to create a logical argument using ethos, logos, pathos, and kairos.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Revise the original claim.</td>
<td>• Draft a problem statement.</td>
<td>• Revise the original claim.</td>
<td>• Select the most effective and credible evidence to support the claim.</td>
<td>• Select the most effective and credible evidence to support the claim.</td>
<td>• Select the most effective and credible evidence to support the claim.</td>
<td>• Develop a strong lede.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Support the claim with evidence.</td>
<td>• Support the problem statement with relevant evidence.</td>
<td>• Select the most effective and credible evidence to support the claim.</td>
<td>• Cite sources.</td>
<td>• Draft the solution.</td>
<td>• Cite sources.</td>
<td>• Craft the counterargument.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cite sources.</td>
<td>• Determine the best structure for the letter.</td>
<td>• Generate commentary to explain how the evidence supports</td>
<td>• Generate commentary to explain the cause and effect of the problem.</td>
<td>• Draft the solution.</td>
<td>• Craft complex commentary to make new points about each piece of evidence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Copyright © 2010-2017 by the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators and Oakland Schools.
| Revising and Editing | • Examine the persuasiveness of the claim and evidence. | • Provide and receive constructive feedback. | • Revise content and structure. | • Provide and receive constructive feedback. | • Revise content and structure. | • Provide and receive constructive feedback. | • Revise content and structure. |
| • Reconsider the organization of the evidence. | • Reconsider evidence. | • Edit for grammar and spelling. | • Edit for grammar (fragments and run-ons) and spelling. | • Reconsider evidence. | • Edit for grammar (commas and dashes) and spelling. | • Reconsider evidence. | • Edit for grammar (commas and dashes) and spelling. |
| • Edit for grammar and spelling. | • Try different organizational strategies. | • Reflect on the process to learn from the experience. | • Try different organizational strategies. | • Reflect on the process to learn from the experience. | • Try different organizational strategies. | • Reflect on the process to learn from the experience. | • Try different organizational strategies. |
| • Reflect on the process to learn from the experience. | • Publish for an authentic audience. | • Publish for an authentic audience. | • Publish for an authentic audience. | • Publish for an authentic audience. | • Publish for an authentic audience. | • Publish for an authentic audience. | • Publish for an authentic audience. |
| • Publish for an authentic audience. | | | | | | | |
### Learning Progressions for High School Argumentative Writing: Basics of Argumentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>9th Grade</th>
<th>10th Grade</th>
<th>11th Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>Media and Marketing</td>
<td>Social Issues in Film</td>
<td>Power in Social Settings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Becoming a Critical Reader of Argument** | • Connect prior knowledge about the persuasion in these ways:  
  1. Consumers are bombarded with arguments that may seem invisible.  
  2. Products are marketed for their real and perceived values.  
  • Define methods and sub-genres in the field of marketing and advertisement. | • Review prior knowledge about the basics of argument.  
  o Argument is a basic of daily life.  
  o People encounter argumentative claims in daily living: news, reading, conversation, online blogs.  
  o Elements: claim, evidence, counterclaims, and explanation  
  • Read film as an argumentative text to become a critical citizen, studying and voicing opinions about problems that create concerns for society.  
  • Identify the multiple claims in a film, exploring/exposing various aspects of a social or political issue.  
  • Identify a claim of personal interest and collect evidence from the film to support the claim.  
  • Study the elements of film critique to prepare for writing an argumentative film critique. | • Engage in reading the world as a reflective observer, constructing facts and claims about the ways we acquire or use power in social settings.  
  • Read print and digital texts, and develop claims based on reflective observation and primary research of individuals in a public sphere.  
  • Explore evidence after reflecting on information gathered from reading about power. Focus and clarify multiple angles or claims that might be taken from the evidence.  
  • Engage in conversations with others who study power in social settings. Compare and propose issues that matter and actions that might be considered. |
| **Exploring Ideas—Generating, Planning, and Drafting** | • Inquire through search and reflection to identify the stances or positions advertisers use to persuade buyers. Consider persuasion for both impulse and planned consumerism.  
  • Collect and analyze evidence to develop and support claims about effective methods used by advertisers.  
  • Compare and analyze methods used by various advertisements.  
  • Develop a claim based on evidence collected through exploration of marketing methods, purposes, and effectiveness of advertisements.  
  • Focus an essay by developing multiple | • Research the social issue and claim of personal interest to identify the valid and invalid evidence used in the film.  
  • Develop a claim about the effectiveness of the film’s portrayal and defense of a social issue.  
  • Collect and evaluate evidence to support a claim.  
  • Organize the key points, evidence, reasons and explanations to develop a line of reasoning that will convince a reader and support the claim. | • Identify a single claim that seems most interesting based on evidence gathered through primary and secondary research.  
  • Organize the evidence to develop a line of reasoning, planning the structure and transitions in the essay.  
  • Write a first draft, utilizing the basic elements of an argumentative essay: claim, counterclaim, evidence and explanation. |

Copyright © 2010-2017 by the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators and Oakland Schools.
claims to anticipate alternate views or counterclaims.
- Identify relevant evidence, reasons and explanations.
- Plan an argumentative essay based on research.
- Write a first draft using a variety of evidence to convince a reader.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Developing Ideas—Revising and Editing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revise by outlining and annotating a first draft to identify the elements of an argument: claim, counterclaim, evidence (a variety), and explanation.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluate explanation and insert or rethink the explanation to:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. connect the explanation to the evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. increase the clarity of the explanation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. increase the validity of the argument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revise by rereading, and identify the academic/topical vocabulary used in the essay. Insert or thread “insider” language used by advertisers into the essay.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Edit using a checklist of common errors that might include: spelling, punctuation, control of syntax, sentence variety.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Trace the diction to identify methods of appeal, and trace diction to reduce and control emotional appeal and develop logical appeal and tone. |
| Revisit the conclusion to clarify and extend the argument, utilizing research on the issue to extend the essay into new thinking. |
| Edit for sentence variety, considering punctuation present in more sophisticated sentence structures. |

| Revise the order and structure of the essay to: |
| 1. make connections. |
| 2. identify and repair diction. |
| 3. identify and repair evidence, considering validity and bias. |
| 4. create a logical relationship between evidence, claims, counterclaims, and explanation. |
| 5. increase clarity and reasoning. |
| 6. trace diction to identify methods of appeal, and trace diction to reduce and control emotional appeal and develop logical appeal and tone. |
| Edit words, punctuation, sentences, correcting for common errors. |
| Develop sentence variety to engage a reader. |
### Learning Progressions for High School Argumentative Writing: Argumentative Genres

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>9th Grade</th>
<th>10th Grade</th>
<th>11th Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Becoming a Critical Reader of Argument** | • Connect prior knowledge about personal narratives to personal essays.  
  1. Writers of personal narratives create a plot line by organizing stories into a sequential story line, which enables readers to make connections and inferences to identify the central idea or theme.  
  2. Writers of personal essays create a line of reasoning by organizing stories of personal experience with other types of evidence to support a claim.  
  • Trace a line of reasoning in a personal essay to connect the claim, evidence (personal stories), comments (explanation), and counterclaims.  
  • Annotate personal essays to notice and name the elements of argumentative essays. | • Engage in reading about the world to become a critical citizen, studying and voicing opinions about problems that create concerns for society.  
  • Study the genre of op-ed articles to develop a menu of writing decisions that will allow for a successful op-ed in a multi-draft writing process.  
  • Identify the audience of the article and author bias to evaluate the validity of an author’s argument.  
  • Engage in conversations with peers about world issues and propose actions that can improve these issues.  
  • Evaluate op-eds to determine which article is most effective. | • Engage in reading about the world to become a critical citizen, studying and voicing opinions about problems that create concerns for society.  
  • Study the genre of editorial articles to develop a menu of writing decisions that will enable a successful editorial in a multi-draft writing process.  
  • Identify the audience of the article and author bias to evaluate the validity of an author’s argument.  
  • Engage in conversations with peers about world issues and propose actions that can improve these issues.  
  • Evaluate editorials to determine which article is most effective. |
| **Exploring Ideas—Generating, Planning, and Drafting** | • Explore an idea or topic in various ways:  
  o positive and negative emotions connected to an idea or topic  
  o personal dialogue to explore various beliefs on an idea or topic  
  o collection of stories that illustrates a belief  
  o multiple angles to discover new thinking  
  • Read mentor texts to study how essays connect.  
  • Identify evidence to support a belief. | • Develop a habit of reading and responding to the world to identify conflicts and their impact on individuals. Use this habit to create an inquiry on a topic/problem/issue of personal interest.  
  • Explore a topic of interest to see it from multiple angles and perspectives.  
  • Engage in primary and secondary research to gather information about the topic of interest.  
  • Experiment with a variety of elements to structure and develop a line of reasoning.  
  • Write a first draft using a repertoire of | • Develop a habit of reading and responding to the world to identify conflicts and their impact on individuals. Use this habit to create an inquiry on a topic/problem/issue of personal interest.  
  • Explore a topic of interest to see it from multiple angles and perspectives.  
  • Engage in primary and secondary research to gather information about the topic of interest.  
  • Experiment with a variety of elements to structure and develop a line of reasoning.  
  • Write a first draft using a repertoire of |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Developing Ideas—Revising and Editing</th>
<th>writing decisions (craft and structure).</th>
<th>writing decisions (craft and structure).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Experiment with a variety of structures to develop a line of reasoning in order to write a first draft.</td>
<td>• Revise the order and structure of the essay to create a line of reasoning that creates a logical relationship between evidence, claims, counterclaims, and explanation.</td>
<td>• Revise the order and structure of the essay to create a line of reasoning that creates a logical relationship between evidence, claims, counterclaims, and explanation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Revise the order and structure of the essay to create a line of reasoning that creates a logical relationship between evidence, claims, counterclaims, and explanation.</td>
<td>• Reflect on the decisions you have made that develop a focus, controlling idea, and logical development of the argument.</td>
<td>• Reflect on the decisions you have made that develop a focus, controlling idea, and logical development of the argument.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reflect on the decisions that develop a focus, controlling idea, and logical development of the argument.</td>
<td>• Trace the diction to identify methods of appeal, and trace diction to reduce and control emotional appeal and develop logical appeal and tone.</td>
<td>• Trace the diction to identify methods of appeal, and trace diction to reduce and control emotional appeal and develop logical appeal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Revise by studying and creating concise stories that serve as evidence and make clear points to support the claim.</td>
<td>• Edit words, sentences, and punctuation.</td>
<td>• Edit on the word, sentence and punctuation level, identifying and correcting common errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Edit words, sentences, and punctuation.</td>
<td>• Develop sentence variety to engage a reader.</td>
<td>• Develop sentence variety to engage a reader.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Writers Workshop Unit of Study
7th Grade – Argument Paragraph

Abstract

Sequencing with Other Units
This unit should be taught early in the academic year. With its emphasis on developing a claim, supporting it with evidence, and crafting relevant commentary, the unit can act as a foundational unit for all other expository writing. The concepts introduced here should be reviewed and built on as the year progresses. The development and support of an opinion in this unit highlights the ongoing need for students to find their writing voices, something teachers can also support through full-class discussions and small-group discussion, in addition to informal, generative writing in which students explore their ideas and are not graded.

This unit works best following a non-fiction reading unit, since the texts can act as a springboard and model for the writing. While students should be provided with a prompt around which to craft an argument, we strongly suggest providing some choice in the writing topic to increase student investment and agency in the writing task.

If you use this unit as a standalone unit, select a theme or central topic around which to focus. For example, you could have students write about a school-wide initiative (recycling, respect, bullying) or topic around a theme in an upcoming text (independence or utopia for The Giver etc.) With any of these topics, evidence can come in the form of facts and statistics, as well as personal experience, interviews, and textual evidence.

Writing Workshop Approach
A foundational belief of this unit is that writing is a series of choices a writer makes—not a formula students follow or a worksheet they fill in. To that end, the handouts and sessions provide choice for the novice argument writer—choice in topic, organizational structure, and evidence types. If we provide our students with a rigid graphic organizer and ask them to fill it in, they are not learning to become independent writers and thinkers. Similarly, if we set them off to write an argument paragraph without enough scaffolding, they will flounder. But by showing writers the various options available to them as novice crafters of an argument, they can make choices about their content and structure and continue to become more autonomous in their writing.

The mentor-text sessions and prewriting sessions in this unit are especially important in helping to establish students’ writerly independence during the drafting phase. The introduction of mentor texts helps students understand what they are striving for, to see what is expected and how all the pieces work together. In addition, engaging in a variety of pre-writing activities will allow students to explore, eliminate, and select ideas, claims, and evidence. This experimentation will keep the argument-paragraph-writing process from becoming formulaic. While there are particular elements that students must include in a well-formed paragraph, the claims they make and evidence they provide should be unique from student to student.

The unit asks students to reflect on their writing experiences and choices at the end of the unit. The inclusion of reflection is another move toward helping students become more independent in their thinking and writing. As students become more aware of the reasons behind their choices during a writing task, and what the outcome of those choices are, and how they arrived at their final product, they will become increasingly more confident as writers and thinkers, better able to self-direct their own learning processes. The goal is for them to see the teacher as a resource in the writing process rather than the person who steers the ship.

Key Terms

Argument
- In life – conflicts that use language.
- In writing – opinions that can be backed up with evidence.

Persuasion – to move another person or group to agree with a belief or position through argument, appeal, or course of action.

Copyright © 2010-2017 by the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators and Oakland Schools.
Fact – information that is certain and can be proven.

Debatable Claim – an opinion that is a matter of personal experience and values that must be backed up with evidence. Others can disagree with this claim.

Evidence - details, facts, and reasons that directly relate to and support a debatable claim.

   Anecdotal Evidence - evidence based on personal observation and experience, often in the form of a brief story. Can come from the writer, friends, family, and acquaintances.

   Factual Evidence - data, confirmed facts, and research performed by experts. Found by the writer performing research.

Commentary – sentences in an argument paragraph that explain what is important about the evidence and tell the reader how it proves and supports the claim.

Topic Sentences – the first sentence of a paragraph, which provides a promise to the reader about what is to come. In an argument paragraph, the topic sentence must contain a debatable claim and should provide a sense of the evidence that is to come.

Subordinating Conjunctions – words and phrases such as because, even though, since, if, when, and while are helpful in crafting commentary and topic sentences because they point to the relationship between the claim and the evidence.
**Standards**

*Common Core Standards: Argument Writing:* The following College and Career Readiness (CCR) anchor standards apply to reading and writing in narrative template tasks. Refer to the 6-12 standards for grade-appropriate specifics that fit each task and module being developed. The standards numbers and general content remain the same across all grades, but details vary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>CCR Anchor Standards for Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CCR Anchor Standards for Writing Arguments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>CCR Anchor Standards for Writing Arguments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overview of Sessions- Teaching Points and Unit Assessments

1. Pre-Unit Assessment Task
To figure out which skills you need to focus on and further develop for a particular kind of writing task, it’s helpful to attempt that writing task, review the results, and assess where you need the most improvement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Unit Assessment Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>During a single class period, have students write an argument paragraph that makes a debatable claim that is supported with a variety of evidence types and contains commentary.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TEACHING POINTS:**

**GENERATING IDEAS FOR ARGUMENT WRITING**

2. Arguments and Claims
Arguments persuade the reader to believe a debatable claim by providing effective evidence. A debatable claim is an opinion, while effective evidence is made up of facts, details, and reasons that directly relate to and prove the claim.

3. Evidence
Writers use two types of evidence in argument pieces: factual and anecdotal. Factual evidence is statistics, confirmed facts, and expert research. Anecdotal evidence is the writer’s personal experience, the experience of family and friends, and the experience of reliable acquaintances and interviewees.

**DRAFTING**

4. Understanding the Prompt and Pre-writing to Discover Your Claim
   a. Writers closely examine the writing prompt to ensure they understand what they are being asked to do.
   b. To develop a debatable claim, a writer must first study the evidence on the topic and ask, “What is this evidence telling me?” They free write to answer this question, research to further examine evidence, and then begin to generate ideas that may become the claim.

5. & 6. Drafting Claim and Evidence
Writers use only the best evidence that will most effectively support their claims and persuade the reader to agree with their points of view. For evidence to be effective, it must come from a variety of credible sources and be correctly cited.

7. Drafting Commentary
Writers provide commentary to explain to the reader how the evidence proves the claim.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mid-Unit Assessment Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instruct students to revisit the commentary they wrote during the pre-writing phrase (session 4) and to highlight or underline any sentences they think could be useful for this draft of the paragraph to prove the debatable claim and explain evidence. Next, revisit the Drafting Commentary Anchor Chart - Strong Commentary Verbs list with students and encourage them to use these verbs as they write commentary for their evidence. Finally, instruct students to free write answers for the Drafting Commentary Anchor Chart - Three Commentary Questions for each piece of evidence they have selected to support their argument.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Optional Lesson (for students with more advanced writing skills)

Ways of Organizing an Argument Paragraph
There are many ways to structure an argument paragraph. Writers must decide how to arrange the commentary and evidence to best reflect the logic of their argument and most effectively persuade the reader to agree with the debatable claim.

Optional Lesson (for students with more advanced writing skills)
Transitions
Transition words and phrases define relationships between ideas. In an argument paragraph, they show the reader how the commentary and the evidence are connected.

8. Topic Sentences
   a. A topic sentence begins a paragraph and is a promise to the reader about what to expect in the paragraph.
   b. When crafting argument paragraphs, writers include the claim and a summary of evidence in the topic sentence.

REVISING AND EDITING
9. Revision
Writers revise throughout the drafting process. When argument writers have completed a draft, they revisit all the components of the piece to make sure it is as persuasive as possible.

10. Editing and Reflection
   a. Writers closely edit their pieces to make sure they don’t have any sentence fragments or run-ons, which make it difficult for the reader to understand the argument.
   b. When a draft is revised and complete, writers reflect on the final product and process to determine what they will do differently the next time they take on a writing task.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post-Unit Assessment Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We all have plenty of opinions, but can you support yours to create a strong argument? For this writing task, you will identify and build an argument in response to a prompt by crafting a debatable claim, supporting it with evidence, and explaining that evidence with commentary to persuade your reader. Whether you’re arguing about the best television show or why a character is a hero, you must show your reader how you arrived at this conclusion by laying out your thinking in the form of a claim and supporting evidence. Your argument will be one paragraph in length, so it should be focused on one central idea and provide enough evidence to persuade your reader that your argument is strong. One piece of evidence should be from a credible secondary source. (Though this assessment is listed after the final session, students will have worked on this paragraph for several sessions.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Argument Paragraph Rubric – Prove Your Point

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>On-Target</th>
<th>Novice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td>The paragraph:</td>
<td>The paragraph:</td>
<td>The paragraph:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Creates a unified and persuasive argument; every sentence supports the</td>
<td>• Creates a fairly unified and persuasive argument; almost all sentences</td>
<td>• Struggles to create a unified and persuasive argument; multiple sentences do not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>key claim.</td>
<td>support the key claim.</td>
<td>directly support the key claim.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Contains a topic sentence with a debatable claim and summary of the</td>
<td>• Contains a topic sentence with a debatable claim and summary of the</td>
<td>• Contains a topic sentence with either a debatable claim or summary of the evidence, but not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>evidence.</td>
<td>evidence.</td>
<td>both.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Employs multiple evidence types, including a secondary source.</td>
<td>• Employs a variety of evidence types, including a secondary source.</td>
<td>• Employs only one evidence type.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• All sources are credible and properly cited.</td>
<td>• Most sources are credible and properly cited.</td>
<td>• Sources are not credible; citations are missing or incorrect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Includes commentary that intricately and complexly explains how the</td>
<td>• Includes commentary that explains how the evidence proves the claim.</td>
<td>• Commentary missing or does not fully explain how the evidence proves the claim.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>evidence proves the claim.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>The paragraph:</td>
<td>The paragraph:</td>
<td>The paragraph:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Shifts seamlessly back and forth between evidence and commentary.</td>
<td>• Logically flows between evidence and commentary.</td>
<td>• Struggles to organize evidence and commentary in a logical manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Style &amp;</td>
<td>The paragraph:</td>
<td>The paragraph:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanics**</td>
<td>• Contains no fragments or run-ons; engages complex sentence structures.</td>
<td>• Contains minimal fragments or run-ons.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Consistently maintains a formal voice.</td>
<td>• Maintains a formal voice throughout with only occasional lapses.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Readily employs diction specific to the chosen topic.</td>
<td>• Employs diction specific to the chosen topic.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Process</strong></td>
<td>The writer:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checklist</td>
<td>o Pre-wrote to discover ideas for a debatable claim.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Drafted to organize and analyze evidence and devise commentary.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Revised his/her draft to achieve greater coherency and clarity.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Edited for sentence-level clarity and an error-free essay.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept</td>
<td>PRE-UNIT ASSESSMENT TASK</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point</strong></td>
<td><strong>To figure out which skills you need to focus on and further develop for a particular kind of writing task, it's helpful to attempt that writing task, review the results, and assess where you need the most improvement.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Preparation** | Create a constructed-response prompt that asks your students to take a position on a given topic and support their claim with evidence. Below is a model—the sample prompt used in this unit.  

*After reading the excerpt from "Why McDonald’s Fries Taste So Good" by Eric Schlosser, develop an argument for why people should or should not eat fast food. Use evidence from Schlosser’s article, as well as evidence from another outside source. Be sure to employ a variety of evidence types: anecdote, facts, reasons, experts, etc. To ensure that your reader is persuaded by your argument, explain your evidence through well-written commentary. End the paragraph with a strong statement that summarizes your point.* |
| **Active Engagement** | During a single class period, have students write an argument paragraph that makes a debatable claim that is supported with a variety of evidence types and contains commentary.  

Assess the results of the pre-unit assessment task using the Argument Paragraph Rubric, focusing on students’ understanding of the concepts of claim, evidence, and commentary, as well as their ability to logically organize an argument paragraph. This task will help you assess how much depth you need to go into regarding argument concepts and paragraph parts. In addition, you will be able to identify students for whom you might compact some of this curricular material or who need remediation. |
### The Elements of Argument

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Session 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arguments and Claims</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Teaching Point

*Arguments persuade the reader to believe a debatable claim by providing effective evidence. A debatable claim is an opinion, while effective evidence is made up of facts, details, and reasons that directly relate to and prove the claim.*

#### Suggested Materials

- **Argument Concepts Anchor Chart** *(see attached sheet)*
- **Take a Stand** handout *(see attached sheet)*
- **Argument Videos**
  - Seinfeld Pizza Argument [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3lOG3rD5CrQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3lOG3rD5CrQ)
  - Seinfeld Giving Cash as a Gift [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aQlhrrqTQmU&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aQlhrrqTQmU&feature=related)

#### Preparation

- **Review the Argument Concepts Anchor Chart**
- **Select and prepare the students who will perform the argument dramatization or select a Youtube video that illustrates the concept of argument and will appeal to your students.**
  Alter the **Take a Stand** handout so the items reflect the interests of the students in your classroom.

#### Active Engagement

1. **The Road Ahead: Your Goal**
   
   **Full Class**
   
   - Share the final goal of this unit with your students—to write a strong argument paragraph. If you had them complete the pre-unit assessment, this is a good time to hand those back and help students understand what they most need to work on in this unit.
   - Review the concept and purpose of a paragraph as needed.
     - A group of sentences that focuses on a single idea.
     - The sentences are presented to the reader in a logical order so the reader understands the writer’s thinking.
     - Begins with a clear statement of what the paragraph will be about.
   - Share this session’s teaching point with the students by putting it on the board, emphasizing that this is an argument unit and that argument is one of the key types of writing they will use throughout their lives.
   - As a group, have the students highlight, underline, or circle all the terms in the teaching point that they don’t know the meaning of. It might look something like this:
     *Arguments persuade the reader to believe a debatable claim by providing effective evidence.* A debatable claim is an opinion, while effective evidence is made up of facts, details and reasons that directly relate to and prove the claim.
   - Assure your students that by the end of the class today, they will have a better understanding of all these terms.
2. **Argument: Key Concepts**
   
   **Full Class – Argument Dramatization**
   
   - Select two of your more performance-savvy students to engage in the dramatization of an argument. You’ll need to prep them ahead of time.
     - Provide the students with a topic that is highly relevant to them—a school issue or decision about a hypothetical situation.
     - Ask them to take opposite sides of the argument and let them know that their goal is to convince the other person to agree with them.
     - Let the students argue about the topic so the rest of the class hears their stances (claims) and reasons (evidence). This shouldn’t be too rehearsed, though you don’t want it to go on so long that the students get repetitive.
   - As an alternative, show a brief video depicting an argument
     - Seinfeld Pizza Argument [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3lOG3rD5CrQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3lOG3rD5CrQ)
     - Seinfeld Giving Cash as a Gift [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aQlhrrqTQmU&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aQlhrrqTQmU&feature=related)
Discussion
- Pause the scene:
  o Ask the students to name each arguing arguer’s claim/stance.
  o Define debatable claim using the Argument Concepts Anchor Chart.
  o Ask students to name the reasons/evidence each person provided.
  o Which were most relevant and effective? How come?
  o Define evidence using the Argument Concepts Anchor Chart.
- Ask the class who had the more persuasive/convincing argument and why?
- Define argument and persuasion using the Argument Concepts Anchor Chart.
- Ask your students to create a simple mathematical statement of the components that compose a persuasive argument given the previous exercise.

ARGUMENT = DEBATABLE CLAIM + EVIDENCE

3. Claims and Evidence Practice

Full Class Activity – Take a Stand
- Ask your students to review the difference between fact and opinion. Remind them that opinions are claims.
- Explain that they are about to engage in an activity that asks them to state opinions and evidence to prove those opinions. When they’ve finished recording their opinions and evidence, they’ll “vote with their feet” and share their opinions and evidence.
- Have your students complete the Take a Stand handout.
- Following completion, have students get up from their seats and take part in a “Vote with Your Feet” exercise in which they go to one side of the room or the other to indicate their opinion for each item.
- Have a few students on each side of the room provide their evidence/facts for each opinion.
- Alternately, you can have the group pool their ideas and select the three strongest/most effective pieces of evidence to present to the class.
- Have the class discuss what the most effective evidence to support each opinion is and what makes it so effective.

Independent Practice – Formative Assessment Mini Task

4. Mini-Argument Mini-Task
As their pass out of class, have your students create a mini-argument that combines their claim and their evidence from one of the items in the Take a Stand activity. The mini-argument should be 1-3 sentences in length.

Examples:
I prefer to go to the beach for vacation instead of the mountains because I love the feel of the sand between my feet, I love to fish, and my favorite thing in the world is to go out on the boat.

I prefer to go to the mountains for vacation instead of the beach because I hate it when sand is everywhere, I like to hike, and I prefer cold weather.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>On-Target</th>
<th>Novice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Claim</td>
<td>- debatable and multi-part</td>
<td>- debatable</td>
<td>- a statement of fact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence</td>
<td>- provides more than 3 facts and/or reasons that support the claim</td>
<td>- provides 3 facts and/or reasons that support the claim</td>
<td>- doesn’t support the claim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Argument Concepts – Anchor Chart

**Debatable Claim** – an opinion that is a matter of personal experience and values that must be backed up with evidence. Others can disagree with this claim. Also know as an opinion.

**Evidence** – details, facts, and reasons that directly relate to and support a debatable claim.

**Argument**
- In life - conflicts that use language.
- In writing - opinions that can be backed up with evidence.

**Persuasion** – to move another person or group to agree with a belief or position through argument, appeal, or course of action.

Claim = opinion on a topic
Evidence = facts, reasons, details
## Take a Stand Activity

**Directions:**
1. For each item, state your opinion/preference one way or the other. (Yes, you must pick one.)
2. Give three pieces of effective evidence (facts, reasons, details) for why you feel this way.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice</th>
<th>Evidence 1</th>
<th>Evidence 2</th>
<th>Evidence 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chocolate or Vanilla?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beach or Mountains?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math or Language Arts?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun or Snow?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hip-Hop or Country Music?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### The Elements of Argument

#### Session 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Teaching Point** | **a. Arguments persuade the reader to believe a debatable claim by providing effective evidence. A debatable claim is an opinion, while evidence is made up of facts, details and reasons.**  

**b. Writers use two types of evidence in argument pieces: factual and anecdotal. Factual evidence is statistics, confirmed facts, and expert research. Anecdotal evidence is the writer’s personal experience, the experience of family and friends, and the experience of reliable acquaintances and interviewees.** |

| Suggested Materials |  
|---------------------|---|
| Evidence Types handout (see attached sheet) | Name That Evidence Type activity (see attached sheet) | Evidence Types Mini-Task handout (see attached sheet) |

| Preparation | Review the handouts and activities and revise them as needed for your population of students. |

| Active Engagement | **1. Effective Evidence = Persuasive Argument**  
**Full Class – Discussion and Defining Evidence Types** |
|------------------|---|
| • Ask your students:  
  o How do you persuade your parents to change their minds when they won’t let you go to the mall or take part in an activity?  
  • Discuss persuasion and its relationship to effective evidence. Call upon examples from the previous lesson as necessary.  
  • A helpful analogy for thinking about argument is a house or building.  
    o The walls = the evidence  
    o The claim = the roof  
    o The walls hold up the roof just as the evidence supports the claim.  
  • Share the teaching points by reviewing the evidence types on the Evidence Types handout.  
    o Define anecdote: based on or consisting of reports, observations, or the telling of a story.  
  • Review the table on the Evidence Types handout with a sample claim and different types of evidence.  
    o Ask students to add their own evidence for this debatable claim and to slot it into the proper category depending on the kind of evidence it is.  
  • Challenge Question (on Evidence Types sheet) – have students respond to this question in writing, then discuss as a class. Points of discussion might include:  
    o Anecdotal evidence is just one person’s story while data, stats and research are evidence from a huge pool of people.  
    o Anecdotal evidence balances factual evidence by making it more true to life/human by providing details about actual people.  
    o If a writer provides only anecdotal evidence, the argument may be weaker since it is solely a personal argument. |

| Guided Practice | **2. Practice With Evidence Types**  
**Small Group – Name That Evidence Type** |
|-----------------|---|
| • Have students complete the Name that Evidence Type! activity in small groups.  
  • Consider doing the first one or two items together as a class until students get the hang of the activity.  
  • Circulate to check on student progress, to answer questions, and to coach the students on these new concepts.  
  • To make the activity more competitive, assign points for each item that is correct and put the group’s scores up on the board. Encourage groups to go for the bonus points.  
| **To make this a game show-style activity, have the groups complete each item simultaneously, record their answer on a piece of paper, hold answers up at the same time, and then assign groups points for correct answers.** |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Practice – Formative Assessment Mini-Task</th>
<th><strong>3. Evidence Types Mini-Task</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Ask students to complete the Evidence Types Mini-Task table on their own to formatively assess their understanding of the concepts: debatable claim, anecdotal evidence, and factual evidence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- You can give your students a general topic to make a claim about (related to the current or a previous unit) or give them the freedom to devise one on their own—something of great interest that they have some knowledge about.

**Mini-Task Rubric**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>On-Target</th>
<th>Novice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Claim</strong></td>
<td>- debatable and multipart</td>
<td>- debatable</td>
<td>- a statement of fact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anecdotal Evidence</strong></td>
<td>- provides two pieces of differing types (personal, family, interviewee)</td>
<td>- provides two distinct pieces</td>
<td>- only one piece given or categorizes it as factual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factual Evidence</strong></td>
<td>- provides two pieces of differing types (facts, data/statistics, expert research)</td>
<td>- provides two distinct pieces</td>
<td>- only one piece given or categorizes it as anecdotal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Effectiveness of Evidence</strong></td>
<td>- all evidence directly relates to and proves the claim - this is the best evidence to prove the claim</td>
<td>- all evidence directly relates to and proves the claim</td>
<td>- some of the evidence does not relate to or prove the claim</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evidence Types

Evidence = details, reasons, and facts

Anecdotal
- personal experience
- family & friends' observations
- acquaintance or interviewee's story

Factual
- confirmed facts
- data & statistics
- research by experts

EXAMPLE

DEBATABLE CLAIM
My school lunch isn't as healthy as it should be.

ANECDOtal EVIDENCE
details, brief stories, personal observations

Writer’s personal observation/experience - Today I was served chicken nuggets, French fries, chocolate milk, a roll and a few brownish carrots and pieces of celery.

Friends’ experience – My friends and I always feel sluggish after lunch. Tanesha said, “I can hardly stay awake in art class after rushing through our 20 minute lunch.”

Acquaintance’s story – Matt, the boy I sit next to in history class, says he feels sick after eating fried chicken nuggets, which aren’t real chicken but the parts of chicken processed and pressed together.
**DEBATABLE CLAIM**

*My school lunch isn’t as healthy as it should be.*

**FACTUAL EVIDENCE**

Facts, data, statistics, research by experts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Confirmed facts</th>
<th>Poor diet can lead to energy imbalance and can increase one’s risk to be overweight and obese. (Center for Disease Control)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Data/Statistics</td>
<td>A single serving of chicken nuggets (5 pieces) can contain up to 500 milligrams of sodium, the total amount of salt children should consume daily. (<a href="http://www.webmd.com">www.webmd.com</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research by experts</td>
<td>A 2008 study by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation found that by the time many healthier commodities [that are processed before being served in school lunch] reach students, “they have about the same nutritional value as junk foods.” (<a href="http://www.nytimes.com">New York Times</a>)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Challenge Question:** Why is it important to have a mix of both anecdotal and factual evidence in an argument paragraph or essay?
NAME THAT EVIDENCE TYPE!

- Label the pieces of evidence below as A for anecdotal or F for factual.
- For bonus points:
  - Indicate whether the Anecdotal Evidence is
    - P = personal
    - F = family or friends
    - A/I = acquaintance or interviewee
  - Indicate whether the Factual Evidence is
    - C = confirmed facts
    - D/S = data or statistics
    - R = research by experts

CLAIM: School lunches aren’t as healthy as they should be.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A/F?</th>
<th>Bonus!</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“A study by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 2006 found that 23.5 percent of high schools offered fast food from places like Pizza Hut and Taco Bell” (The New York Times).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>My friend Michelle says that at her school, French fries and pizza are options in the cafeteria every single day of the week (Chen).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“One of the first indications of a good lunch program is enthusiasm among the people serving the food,’ said Marion Nestle, professor of nutrition and food studies at New York University and author of What to Eat (North Point Press, 2007)” (The New York Times).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Last week, the only thing I ate at school for lunch was tater tots and French fries and by the time I got on the bus, I was starving and had a headache.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>According to the Cafeteria Director at Davis Elementary, who I interviewed last week, for 20 cents more per student, they could make homemade French fries that are baked instead of fried in grease (Jones).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Though the United States Department of Agriculture is requiring schools to serve healthier foods at lunch, French fries will remain on the menu because potato lobbyists persuaded Congressmen to keep them on the list of approved food. (National Public Radio—npr.org)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NAME THAT EVIDENCE TYPE!
Teacher Version

- Label the pieces of evidence below as A for anecdotal or F for factual.
- For bonus points:
  - Indicate whether the Anecdotal Evidence is
    - P = personal
    - F = family or friends
    - A/I = acquaintance or interviewee
  - Indicate whether the Factual Evidence is
    - C = confirmed facts
    - D/S = data or statistics
    - R = research by experts

CLAIM: School lunches aren’t as healthy as they should be.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A/F?</th>
<th>Bonus!</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>D/S</td>
<td>“A study by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 2006 found that 23.5 percent of high schools offered fast food from places like Pizza Hut and Taco Bell” (<em>The New York Times</em>).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>My friend Michelle says that at her school, French fries and pizza are options in the cafeteria every single day of the week (Chen).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>“‘One of the first indications of a good lunch program is enthusiasm among the people serving the food,’ said Marion Nestle, professor of nutrition and food studies at New York University and author of <em>What to Eat</em> (North Point Press, 2007)” (<em>The New York Times</em>).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Last week, the only thing I ate at school for lunch was tater tots and French fries and by the time I got on the bus, I was starving and had a headache.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>A/I</td>
<td>According to the Cafeteria Director at Davis Elementary, who I interviewed last week, for 20 cents more per student, they could make homemade French fries that are baked instead of fried in grease (Jones).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Though the United States Department of Agriculture is requiring schools to serve healthier foods at lunch, French fries will remain on the menu because potato lobbyists persuaded Congressmen to keep them on the list of approved food. (National Public Radio—npr.org)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Evidence Types Mini-Task

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>DEBATABLE CLAIM:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anecdotal</td>
<td>EVIDENCE #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factual</td>
<td>EVIDENCE #2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anecdotal</td>
<td>EVIDENCE #3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factual</td>
<td>EVIDENCE #4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Concept

**Understanding the Prompt and Pre-writing to Discover Your Claim**

#### Teaching Point

1. Writers closely examine the writing prompt to ensure they understand what they are being asked to do.
2. To develop a debatable claim, a writer must first study the evidence on the topic and ask, “What is this evidence telling me?” They free write to answer this question, research to further examine evidence, and then begin to generate ideas that may become the claim.

#### Quotation

Although many teachers begin to teach some version of argument with the writing of a thesis statement (a claim), in reality, good argument begins with looking at the data that is likely to become the evidence in an argument and which gives rise to a thesis statement or major claim. That is, the thesis statement arises from a question, which in turn arises from the examination of information or data of some sort.

This year, I had an opportunity to examine a set of lesson plans that began with the writing of thesis statements. There was no mention of data of any kind. Students were supposed to find problems somewhere and make some claim about them. However, without analysis of any data (verbal and nonverbal texts, materials, surveys and samples), any thesis is likely to be no more than a preconception or assumption or clichéd popular belief that is unwarranted and, at worst, totally indefensible.

For that reason, my graduate students and I have approached the teaching of argument from the examination of data, as a first step. We have tried to find data sets that require some interpretation and give rise to questions. When the data are curious and do not fit preconceptions, they give rise to questions and genuine thinking. Attempts to answer these questions become hypotheses, possible future thesis statements that we may eventually write about after further investigation. That is to say, the process of working through an argument is the process of inquiry. At its very beginning is the examination of data, not the invention of a thesis statement in a vacuum.

- George Hillocks, *Teaching Argument Writing, Grades 6-12*

#### Suggested Materials

- Dissecting the Prompt handout (see attached sheet)
- Argument Paragraph Pre-Writing handout (see attached sheet)

#### Preparation

- Dissecting the Prompt handout
  - Revise this handout to reflect the constructed response prompt your students will be writing about.
  - Dissect your own writing prompt to determine how clearly and specifically it is written and then revise it as necessary.

#### Teaching Point

Writers closely examine the writing prompt to ensure they understand what they are being asked to do.

#### Active Engagement

1. Dissecting the Prompt
   - **Full Class**
     - Have students dissect the writing prompt using the questions on the Dissecting the Prompt handout.

2. Argument Paragraph Pre-Writing
   - **Solo**
     - Have students complete the steps on the Argument Paragraph Pre-Writing handout.
     - Note that this step asks them to examine evidence, so if your students need more time to gather evidence, be sure to build this into your timeline.

#### Share

- **Pairs**
  - Have students share their debatable claims and their 3 most effective pieces of evidence with a partner in preparation for completing the mini-task that follows.
### Mini-Task: Debatable Claim and 3 Pieces of Evidence

As their pass out of class, have students submit a debatable claim with three pieces of evidence—at least one factual and one anecdotal. Formatively assess this work using the rubric below and determine if students have progressed in their understanding of evidence and claim.

#### Mini-Task Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>On-Target</th>
<th>Novice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Claim</td>
<td>- debatable and multi-part</td>
<td>- debatable</td>
<td>- a statement of fact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence</td>
<td>-provides three pieces, each of a different type, that directly prove the claim</td>
<td>-provides three pieces, some of similar type, that directly prove the claim</td>
<td>- not enough evidence provided; or it is all of the same type; or it does not prove the claim</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dissecting the Writing Prompt

The word “dissection” is typically used in relation to biology. We dissect animals to understand the anatomy (bodily structure of an organism).

Argument Prompt:

After reading the excerpt from “Why McDonald’s Fries Taste So Good” by Eric Schlosser, develop an argument for why people should or should not eat fast food. Use evidence from Schlosser’s article, as well as evidence from another outside source. Be sure to employ a variety of evidence types: anecdotes, facts, reasons, experts, etc. To ensure that your reader is persuaded by your argument, explain your evidence through well-written commentary. End the paragraph with a strong statement that summarizes your point.

1. **Highlight** the main verbs in the prompt.

2. **Underline** the components the prompt tells you to include in your paragraph.

3. Re-read the prompt to understand the steps you will need to take to write your paragraph. List each of those steps below.

   a.

   b.

   c.

   d.

   e.
Argument Paragraph Pre-Writing

Take Out Your Writer’s Notebook...

1. Begin with **evidence**. In your Writer’s Notebook, write down everything you know about your chosen topic (facts, statistics, reasons, details, anecdotes, experience, observations).
   - a. Re-read and examine any articles you have read on the topic in class.
   - b. Perform further research on the Internet and in the library as needed.

2. Notice which pieces of your evidence are factual and which are anecdotal. You might need to balance this out later in the drafting process.

3. Examine your evidence.
   - a. What does the evidence tell you?
   - b. What is your **opinion** about this topic based on the evidence you recorded?
   - c. Write a **draft of your debatable claim** in your Writer’s Notebook.

4. Now focus on the WHY of your argument. This means you’ll be pre-writing for **commentary**—an element of argument you’ll learn more about in a later lesson. Answer these questions in your Writer’s Notebook.
   - a. Why is this topic/claim important?
   - b. What does the evidence tell us?
   - c. Why do you feel this way about this topic? Why does it concern you?
   - d. Why should your readers care about this argument?
### Teaching Point

Argument writers use only the best evidence that will most effectively support their claims and persuade the reader to agree with their points of view. For evidence to be effective, it must come from a variety of credible sources and be correctly cited.

#### Suggested Materials

- Variety of Evidence Checklist (see attached sheet)
- Evaluating Web Sites Tutorial [http://lib.colostate.edu/tutorials/webeval.html](http://lib.colostate.edu/tutorials/webeval.html)
- Credible Sources on the Internet handout (see attached sheet)
- Citing Sources handout (see attached sheet)

#### Preparation

- Review the handouts listed above.
- Watch the Evaluating Web Sites tutorial.
  - For more information see: [http://lib.colostate.edu/howto/evalweb.html](http://lib.colostate.edu/howto/evalweb.html)
- Revise the websites listed on the Credible Sources on the Internet handout as needed.
- Revise the Citing Sources handout to reflect the kinds of sources your students will be using in their paragraphs.
  - MLA In-text Citations: [http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/resdoc5e/RES5e_ch08_s1-0001.html](http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/resdoc5e/RES5e_ch08_s1-0001.html)
  - MLA List of Works Cited: [http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/resdoc5e/RES5e_ch08_s1-0011.html](http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/resdoc5e/RES5e_ch08_s1-0011.html)

#### Teaching Point

Argument writers use only the best evidence that will most effectively support their claims and persuade the reader to agree with their points of view. For evidence to be effective, it must come from a variety of credible sources and be correctly cited.

The goal with these sessions is to help students to evaluate the credibility and effectiveness of the additional evidence they find for their argument. Following these activities, it is very likely that your students will need more time to research for additional evidence.

### Active Engagement

1. **Revisit the Claim and Evidence**
   - Solo
   - Introduce the teaching point.
   - Have students revisit their claim and what they believe are the three strongest pieces of evidence in their writers’ notebooks.
   - Ask each student to complete the Variety of Evidence Checklist to determine what other kinds of evidence could be helpful in persuading their audience to agree with their claim.

2. **Finding More Evidence**
   - Group/Solo
   - Show your students the Evaluating Web Sites Tutorial [http://lib.colostate.edu/tutorials/webeval.html](http://lib.colostate.edu/tutorials/webeval.html)
   - Review the Credible Sources on the Internet handout.
   - In small groups, have students complete the Website Credibility Activity on the handout.
   - Reconvene as a full class to share findings. This should prompt a lively discussion about how students determined credibility—especially for sites like Wikipedia, which are controversial and whose credibility varies from entry to entry.
   - Send students off to find more and better evidence to support their debatable claims.

3. **Citing Sources**
   - Full Class/Solo
   - Engage students in a brief discussion about why sources need to be cited. Why would a reader care about where evidence comes from and how does citing make an argument more persuasive?
     - Gives information credibility
     - Allows the reader to seek out more information on the topic

### Independent Practice

- Review the key components of the Citing Sources handout and complete the citing example as a class.
- Have students practice citing their own sources and circulate to assess their understanding of citations.
|   | More Research Time  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Solo</td>
<td>Give students additional time to research to find the most effective and credible evidence for their argument.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Variety of Evidence Checklist**

Check the box next to each kind of evidence you currently have for your argument.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FACTUAL EVIDENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confirmed facts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data and statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research by experts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANECDOTAL EVIDENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends’ and family’s experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee’s or acquaintance’s experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you have **2** pieces of factual evidence and **1** piece of anecdotal evidence?

What **kind** of evidence would most improve the persuasiveness of your argument?

What specific part of your argument should this evidence concern?
Credible Sources on the Internet

What does **CREDIBLE** mean?
*convincing, able to be believed*

How do you determine if an Internet source is **credible**?

**WHO** – Who is the author?
- If there is an “about” page, read it.
  - Is this person or organization an expert in their field?
  - What is their educational background?

**WHAT** – What kind of information is provided and how high is its quality?
- If the site provides a deep knowledge of your topic with references to studies and statistics, it is probably high quality.
- If the site provides only general facts, you should find better, more detailed information elsewhere.

**WHERE** – Where is this site on the web? What is the web address?
- **.com** – hosted by a company, often a site for profit, advertisements on websites suggest the information will be biased, though online magazines are often .com sites. Be careful and explore further.
- **.org** – hosted by a non-profit organization, reliable information depending on the background and mission of the organization. Be careful and explore further.
- **.edu** – hosted by an educational institution, typically reliable and expert information.
- **.gov** – hosted by a government institution, typically reliable and expert information.

**WHEN** – When was it published? Is this the most up-to-date information?

**WHY** – What is the author’s, organization’s, or company’s goal in publishing this information?
- Is the goal to
  - Provide excellent information to the public? – Great!
  - Persuade the audience of an argument or opinion? – Be careful!
  - Sell the readers a product? – Move on fast!
Website Credibility Activity

Directions:
• Mark each website below as C for credible, NC for not credible, and then give your reason for this determination.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C/NC</th>
<th>Website</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Healthy School Lunches</td>
<td><a href="http://www.healthyschoollunches.org/index.cfm">http://www.healthyschoollunches.org/index.cfm</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Explain what difficulties and questions came up as you looked at these sites. What were you unsure about in terms of credibility?
Citing Sources

What does it mean to cite a source?

- An in-text citation is a note in an essay that tells the reader where a piece of information or an idea came from.
- In-text citations always appear in (parentheses).
- At the end of an essay, a writer includes a list of works cited that gives details about all the in-text citations.

Why do writers cite sources?

- To avoid plagiarism--the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own.
- To prove that the evidence is real and credible.
- To inform the reader about where to find more information on the topic.

What gets cited?

- Quoted information from a secondary source.
- Paraphrased information from a secondary source.
- Information obtained in an interview.
- Any idea that is not your own.

How do you cite a source?

- Insert the in-text citation before the period at the end of the sentence in which the quotation or paraphrase appears.
- For any in-text citation, include the first item that appears in the works-cited entry that corresponds to the citation (e.g. author name, article name, website name).
- See the list below for examples concerning different types of sources.

Articles and Essays

Include the following information in the works-cited entry in this order:

- Article's author
- Title of the article in quotations marks
- Magazine or newspaper’s title in italics
- Date of publication
- Page number
- Medium

In-Text Citation

A new study has revealed that eating school lunches is a contributor to childhood obesity (Melnick).

Works Cited Entry

**Websites & Webpages**

Include the following information in the works-cited entry in this order:

- Author and/or editor names (if available)
- Article name in quotation marks (if applicable)
- Title of the website
- Name of institution/organization publishing the site
- Date of resource creation (if available)
- Date you accessed the material.

**For websites and pages, remember to use *n.p.* if no publisher name is available and *n.d.* if no publishing date is given.**

*In-Text Citation*

The National School Lunch Program has existed since 1946 and “provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day” (“National School Lunch Program”).

*Works-Cited Entry*


*Personal Interview*

For any information you get in an interview with a family member, friend, acquaintance or interviewee, include the following information in this order:

- name of the interviewee
- the phrase “Personal interview”
- the date of the interview

*In-Text Citation*

My friend Michelle says, “At my school, French fries and pizza are options in the cafeteria every single day of the week” (Chen).

*Works-Cited Entry*

Chen, Michelle. Personal interview. 20 June 2011.

**You Try!**

A. Insert an in-text citation into one of the sentences in your paragraph that has information from a secondary source.

B. Create a works-cited entry for the in-text citation at the end of the paragraph.
### Teaching Point

Writers provide commentary to explain to the reader how the evidence proves the claim.

Commentary is typically the toughest concept for students to grasp in this unit because it requires them to analyze evidence. Some students are not developmentally ready to analyze, so the concept will need to be re-taught and practiced throughout the year. The more modeling and practice you can do with your students, the more likely they will be to grasp the concept.

At the end of this lesson, students should have all the components of their argument paragraph drafted with the exception of a topic sentence.

### Suggested Materials

- Commentary Anchor Chart *(see attached sheet)*
- Commentary Examples & Practice handout *(see attached sheet)*
- Drafting Commentary Anchor Chart *(see attached sheet)*

### Preparation

Review the handouts listed above and revise them to suit the needs and interests of the students in your classroom.

### Active Engagement

#### 1. Defining Commentary

**Full Class – Discussion**

- Write the word “commentary” on the board.
- Ask your students to identify the root of the word – “comment” and to explain/define what it means.
- Next, have them hypothesize about what the commentary in an argument paragraph does and why it is needed. They will likely come up with the ideas in the formal definition below.
- Share the definition of commentary below and have students record it in their writers’ notebooks.

**Commentary** – sentences in an argument paragraph that explain what is important about the evidence and tell the reader how it proves and supports the claim.

- Review the Commentary Anchor Chart.
  - To help students see how the word “because” can function in a sentence, have them practice writing sentences with the word “because.” Use sentence starters like:
    - ____________ is important because….
  - You may wish to pare down the list of commentary verbs to ones your students will be familiar with plus a couple new verbs.

#### 2. Examining Commentary Examples

**Full Class**

- On the Commentary Examples & Practice handout, review the claim together and each piece of factual evidence.
- Have students read the commentary out loud.
- On their own, have students underline the commentary verbs and circle instances of “because.”
- Review as a class what students marked and ask:
  - How does this commentary show us how the evidence proves the claim?

### Independent Practice

#### 3. Practice Writing Commentary

**Solo or Small Group**

- Have students complete the You Try! Section of the Commentary Examples & Practice handout. Encourage them to return to the questions for writing commentary on the Commentary Anchor Chart.
- Ideally, students would write 2-3 sentences. Have them work in pairs to share ideas.

### Share

**Full Class**

- Ask your students to reconvene and share their commentary sentences out loud or by recording their best sentence on the board or a sticky note that goes up on the board.
- Formatively assess their understanding of commentary using the Mini-Task Rubric below.
### Independent Practice – Formative Assessment Mini-Task

**Drafting Commentary**
- Instruct students to revisit the commentary they wrote during the pre-writing phrase (session 4) and to highlight or underline any sentences they think could be useful for this draft of the paragraph to prove the debatable claim and explain evidence.
- Revisit the **Drafting Commentary Anchor Chart - Strong Commentary Verbs** list with students and encourage them to use these verbs as they write commentary for their evidence.
- Instruct students to free write answers for the **Drafting Commentary Anchor Chart - Three Commentary Questions** for each piece of evidence they have selected to support their argument.
- Circulate to assist students who have questions, to push individual student thinking further, and to read what students are writing.
- As you check in and/or conference with students, formatively assess their understanding of evidence and commentary using the rubric below.

### Mini-Task Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>On-Target</th>
<th>Novice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Selection of evidence</td>
<td>- selected 2-3 strong pieces of evidence</td>
<td>- selected two good pieces of evidence</td>
<td>- selected one piece of evidence or weak pieces of evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commentary</td>
<td>- re-explains the evidence</td>
<td>- re-explains the evidence</td>
<td>- does not reach the point of analysis by using “because” or another explanatory conjunction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- tells why each piece of evidence is important</td>
<td>- tells why each piece of evidence is important</td>
<td>- provides more facts and details rather than commentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- explains how the evidence supports the claim</td>
<td>- explains how the evidence supports the claim</td>
<td>- reasons provided as commentary do not deepen reader’s understanding of the argument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- fluidly and logically links pieces of evidence and commentary together</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Questions for Writing Commentary – Ask Yourself:

- **What** do I need to make sure the reader understands about this evidence? (Re-explain the evidence.)
- **Why** is this evidence especially important?
- **How** does it prove and support the claim?

**The Importance of **BECAUSE**

“Because” is a word that tells a reader they are about to hear an explanation. It signals **significance** and **relationship**. It’s an effective word to use when writing commentary. Take a look:

- These statistics are important **because** they point to the effects of poor nutrition and how serious the school lunch problem is.
- Leaders and decision-makers must pay attention to such experiences **because** they prove that there is a relationship between what we eat and how well we learn.

**Strong Commentary Verbs**

from *Rules for Writers* by Diana Hacker

Use these verbs when writing commentary. Note the two verbs underlined in the sentences above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>acknowledges</th>
<th>compares</th>
<th>insists</th>
<th>claims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>adds</td>
<td>confirms</td>
<td>notes</td>
<td>underscores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>admits</td>
<td>declares</td>
<td>observes</td>
<td>exemplifies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agrees</td>
<td>denies</td>
<td>points outs</td>
<td>implies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>argues</td>
<td>emphasizes</td>
<td>rejects</td>
<td>proves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asserts</td>
<td>highlights</td>
<td>reports</td>
<td>exhibits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>believes</td>
<td>illustrates</td>
<td>responds</td>
<td>suggests</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Commentary Examples & Practice

Debatable Claim: My school lunch isn’t as healthy as it should be.

#1
Factual Evidence: A single serving of chicken nuggets (5 pieces) can contain up to 500 milligrams of sodium, the total amount of salt children should consume daily. (www.webmd.com)

Commentary: These numbers are important because they point to the effects of poor nutrition and how serious the school lunch problem is. Chicken nuggets, commonly served to students in school lunchrooms, exemplify the poor nutritional quality of school food. If children eat that much sodium on a regular basis, they are headed for a life of weight gain and high blood pressure.

#2
Anecdotal Evidence: My friends and I always feel sluggish after lunch. Tanesha said, “I can hardly stay awake in art class after rushing through our 20 minute lunch.”

Commentary: Tanesha’s statement about feeling tired after inhaling her lunch confirms the negative effects that foods high in carbohydrates and sugar can have on young minds that need protein and vegetables, brain food, to be more lively and active class participants. If she ate more nutritious food at lunch, she might be more awake for art class. Leaders and decision-makers must pay attention to such experiences because they prove that there is a relationship between what we eat and how well we learn.

You Try!
Debatable Claim: School lunch isn’t as healthy as it should be.

Factual Evidence: “A study by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 2006 found that 23.5 percent of high schools offered fast food from places like Pizza Hut and Taco Bell” (The New York Times).

Your Commentary: don’t forget to use those strong commentary verbs!
(re-explain the facts)

(tell what’s important about them)

(explain how this evidence proves and supports the claim)
Debatable Claim: My school lunch isn’t as healthy as it should be.

#1
Factual Evidence: A single serving of chicken nuggets (5 pieces) can contain up to 500 milligrams of sodium, the total amount of salt children should consume daily. (www.webmd.com)

Commentary: These numbers are important because they point to the effects of poor nutrition and how serious the school lunch problem is. Chicken nuggets, commonly served to students in school lunchrooms, exemplify the poor nutritional quality of school food. If children eat that much sodium on a regular basis, they are headed for a life of weight gain and high blood pressure.

#2
Anecdotal Evidence: My friends and I always feel sluggish after lunch. Tanesha said, “I can hardly stay awake in art class after rushing through our 20 minute lunch.”

Commentary: Tanesha’s statement about feeling tired after inhaling her lunch confirms the negative effects that foods high in carbohydrates and sugar can have on young minds that need protein and vegetables, brain food, to be more lively and active class participants. If she ate more nutritious food at lunch, she might be more awake for art class. Leaders and decision-makers must pay attention to such experiences because they prove that there is a relationship between what we eat and how well we learn.

You Try!
Debatable Claim: School lunch isn’t as healthy as it should be.

Factual Evidence: “A study by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 2006 found that 23.5 percent of high schools offered fast food from places like Pizza Hut and Taco Bell” (The New York Times).

Your Commentary: don’t forget to use those strong commentary verbs! (re-explain the facts)
(tell what’s important about them)
(explain how this evidence proves and supports the claim)
Drafting Commentary Anchor Chart

### Strong Commentary Verbs
from *Rules for Writers* by Diana Hacker

Use these verbs when writing commentary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>acknowledges</th>
<th>compares</th>
<th>insists</th>
<th>claims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>adds</td>
<td>confirms</td>
<td>notes</td>
<td>underscores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>admits</td>
<td>declares</td>
<td>observes</td>
<td>exemplifies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agrees</td>
<td>denies</td>
<td>points outs</td>
<td>implies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>argues</td>
<td>emphasizes</td>
<td>rejects</td>
<td>proves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asserts</td>
<td>highlights</td>
<td>reports</td>
<td>exhibits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>believes</td>
<td>illustrates</td>
<td>responds</td>
<td>suggests</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3 Commentary Questions

How would you re-explain this piece of evidence?

What is important about this piece of evidence?

How does this piece of evidence prove your claim?
### OPTIONAL SESSION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Ways of Organizing an Argument Paragraph</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Point</td>
<td><strong>There are many ways to structure an argument paragraph. Writers must decide how to arrange the commentary and evidence to best reflect the logic of their argument and most effectively persuade the reader to agree with the debatable claim.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Suggested Materials**
- Argument Organization Anchor Chart (*see attached sheet*)
- Understanding & Identifying Argument Paragraph Components handout (*see attached sheet*)
- Name That Paragraph Structure Activity (*see attached sheet*)

**Preparation**
- Review all the handouts listed above and revise as appropriate for your students.
- **Understanding & Identifying Argument Paragraph Components** handout
  - Review the teacher version of the handout.
  - Replace sample paragraph as desired. (*See the resources section for other sample argument paragraphs.*)

**Teaching Point**
*There are many ways to structure an argument paragraph. Writers must decide how to arrange the commentary and evidence to best reflect the logic of their argument and most effectively persuade the reader to agree with the debatable claim.*

***

If students begin to grasp the idea that writing structures are not fixed but are, instead, based on the logic of the argument and the purpose of the writing piece, they are much less likely to become dependent on the 5 paragraph essay structure down the road, a structure that stifles deep thinking and a writer’s creativity. Writers need to explore and experiment with structure so they see how ideas and evidence fit together. This lesson is a place for that experimentation.

This lesson continues to reinforce the concepts of claim, evidence, and commentary, while asking students to consider how to organize ideas.

**Active Engagement**

1. **Organizational Possibilities**
   - **Full Class**
     - Share the teaching point with your students, as well as the Argument Organization Anchor Chart.

2. **Sample Argument Paragraphs**
   - **Full Class – Understanding & Identifying Argument Paragraph Components**
     - Read the paragraph out loud as a class.
     - Use the questions on the handout to facilitate a discussion of the paragraph.
     - Consider having your students answer the questions on their own or in pairs first prior to this discussion so they come to the conversation with answers in mind.
     - The challenge questions will be the most difficult (abstract) for the students but are the most important for them to consider and will help them in the final activity of the lesson.

**Guided Practice**

- **Pairs/Small Group – Name That Paragraph Structure!**
  - Have the pairs/groups identify the organizational structure for each of the paragraphs they were given by identifying the evidence and commentary in the paragraph.
  - Circulate to assist groups.
  - Reconvene the class and ask groups to share their findings.

3. **Discuss discrepancies in findings to determine student thinking and to clarify ideas.**

**Independent Practice**

4. **Choosing a Structure**
   - **Solo**
     - Have students experiment with the block and alternating formats for their own paragraphs. Encourage them to try both formats to determine which works best for the logic of the argument.
Argument Paragraph Organization Anchor Chart

BLOCK ORGANIZATION (note: either the evidence or the commentary can come first)

- Claim (Topic Sentence)
- Evidence
- Evidence
- Commentary
- Commentary

ALTERNATING ORGANIZATION (note: either the evidence or the commentary can come first)

- Claim (Topic Sentence)
- Evidence
- Commentary
- Evidence
- Commentary
Understanding & Identifying Argument Paragraph Components

The “fact” that junk food is cheaper than real food has become a way we explain why so many Americans are overweight, particularly those with lower incomes. This is just plain wrong. I frequently read confident statements like, “when a bag of chips is cheaper than a head of broccoli...” or “it’s more affordable to feed a family of four at McDonald’s than to cook a healthy meal for them at home.” In fact it isn’t cheaper to eat highly processed food: a typical order for a family of four — for example, two Big Macs, a cheeseburger, six chicken McNuggets, two medium and two small fries, and two medium and two small sodas — costs, at the McDonald’s a hundred steps from where I write, about $28. In general, despite extensive government subsidies, hyperprocessed* food remains more expensive than food cooked at home. You can serve a roasted chicken with vegetables along with a simple salad and milk for about $14, and feed four or even six people. If that’s too much money, substitute a meal of rice and canned beans with bacon, green peppers and onions; it’s easily enough for four people and costs about $9.

Hyperprocessed - extremely processed so that all the natural vitamins are sucked out of the food. Chicken McNuggets are an example. Chicken parts are chopped up and smushed together, then breaded and fried to form the nuggets.

1. Why did the writer put the word “fact” in quotations in the first sentence of the paragraph?

2. Summarize the paragraph’s debatable claim in your own words.

3. Is the argument persuasive? Were you persuaded to agree with the writer? Why or why not?

4. Does the writer provide enough evidence to prove the claim? (Underline the evidence.)
5. What other evidence would make this an even more persuasive paragraph?

6. Does the writer provide commentary that explains the evidence, why it’s important and how it proves the claim? (Put a star next to each commentary sentence.)

7. What method of organization does this paragraph use?

8. Challenge: explain why the paragraph is organized in this way. How does this organization support the argument?

9. Challenge: How else could the sentences have been arranged? How would this rearranging change or affect the argument?
Name That Paragraph Structure!

- Underline the key claim in the paragraph.
- Highlight the evidence in blue.
- Highlight the commentary in yellow.
- In the box next to each paragraph, put a “B” for block organization or an “A” for alternating organization.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization A or B?</th>
<th>Argument Paragraph</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From the blog of Karen Le Billon, author of <em>French Kids Eat Everything</em></td>
<td>Learning doesn’t stop in the lunchroom, in my opinion. If we are giving our children a short lunch break, we are teaching them that food is an inconvenience, and eating is an interruption in the day. We encourage them to gobble their food, when the research shows that eating more slowly is healthier. In fact, the French spend longer eating, but eat less—in part because that ‘fullness feeling’ (satiety signal) needs about 20 minutes to get from your stomach to your brain. But the French also spend longer eating because they believe that it’s important to teach kids to eat well – it’s a life skill, like reading.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| from “Our Schools’ Sweet Tooth,” by Emily Ventura and Michael Goran  
*The Los Angeles Times* March 2, 2011 | A few straightforward changes to the [school lunch] menus would lead to considerable reductions in sugar intake. Removing the chocolate milk from breakfast and lunch could mean a reduction of 4 teaspoons per day per child, which adds up to nearly a gallon of sugar per child over the course of the school year. However, politics related to federal funding make such seemingly simple changes more difficult. If the district took away chocolate milk and kids decided not to drink the plain milk, it could lead to reduced funding from the USDA. For the district to receive federal reimbursement for meals, students may not decline more than one item at breakfast or more than two items at lunch. Though technically students may skip the milk altogether and the district would still be reimbursed, chocolate milk is one of the most popular items and helps to ensure student participation — and hence funding. |
### Name That Paragraph Structure!

**Teacher Version**

- Underline the key claim in the paragraph.
- Highlight the evidence in blue.
- Highlight the commentary in yellow.
- In the box next to each paragraph, put a “B” for *block organization* or an “A” for *alternating organization*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization A or B?</th>
<th>Argument Paragraph</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **B**               | From the blog of Karen Le Billon, author of *French Kids Eat Everything*  
Learning doesn’t stop in the lunchroom, in my opinion. If we are giving our children a short lunch break, we are teaching them that food is an inconvenience, and eating is an interruption in the day. We encourage them to gobble their food, when the research shows that eating more slowly is healthier. In fact, the French spend longer eating, but eat less— in part because that ‘fullness feeling’ (satiety signal) needs about 20 minutes to get from your stomach to your brain. But the French also spend longer eating because they believe that it’s important to teach kids to eat well – it’s a life skill, like reading. |
| **A**               | from “Our Schools’ Sweet Tooth,” by Emily Ventura and Michael Goran  
*The Los Angeles Times* March 2, 2011  
A few straightforward changes to the [school lunch] menus would lead to considerable reductions in sugar intake. Removing the chocolate milk from breakfast and lunch could mean a reduction of 4 teaspoons per day per child, which adds up to nearly a gallon of sugar per child over the course of the school year. However, politics related to federal funding make such seemingly simple changes more difficult. If the district took away chocolate milk and kids decided not to drink the plain milk, it could lead to reduced funding from the USDA. For the district to receive federal reimbursement for meals, students may not decline more than one item at breakfast or more than two items at lunch. Though technically students may skip the milk altogether and the district would still be reimbursed, chocolate milk is one of the most popular items and helps to ensure student participation — and hence funding. |
### Concept

**Transitions**

*Transition words and phrases define relationships between ideas. In an argument paragraph, they show the reader how the commentary and the evidence are connected.*

### Suggested Materials

- Transition Words & Phrases Anchor Chart *(see attached sheet)*
- Identify the Transition handout *(see attached sheet)*
- Transition Madlibs *(see attached sheet)*
- Organize the Paragraph Parts and Improve Flow Activity *(see attached sheet)*

### Preparation

- Review the handouts listed above and revise to suit the needs, interests, and abilities of the students in your classroom.
- For gifted students or an additional challenge for your students, remove the transition type under each blank on the Transition Madlibs handout.
- **Organize the Paragraph Parts and Improve Flow Activity**
  - Revise as needed for your students’ skill level and interests.
  - Reproduce this handout and cut it into strips and mix them up, then paperclip the sentences together.

### Active Engagement

#### 1. Transitions: Purpose and Type

**Full Class – What are transitions?**

- Ask students how they would define the word “transition.” Gather the answers on the board.
- Discuss times when students have made transitions from one stage or place to another.
  - Between grades
  - When moving
- Ask what students had to do in order to transition—what did that involve?
- Ask students how a transition might be used in writing.
- Introduce the teaching point.
- Share the Transition Words & Phrases Anchor Chart.
- Review the purposes of transitions and the different transition types.
- To illustrate the concept of the transition as an idea bridge, share the following sentences:

  I won’t be going to the mall with my friends *since* I didn’t finish homework.

  Kwan doesn’t eat vegetables, *in particular* green vegetables like broccoli and lettuce.

- Ask students to identify the type of transition used in each sentence by looking at the Transition Anchor Chart.
- Discuss with students how the transitions bridge the information at the beginnings of the sentences to the ends of the sentences.
  - Ask: What kind of idea does the transition tell the reader to get ready for?

#### Guided Practice

#### 2. Identify the Transition Activity

**Solo or Pairs**

- Have students complete the Identify the Transition handout.
- Review responses as a class and spend time discussing possible alternate transitions (the fourth column of the table in the handout).

#### 3. Transition Madlibs Activity

**Small Group or Full-Class**

- For additional practice, have students complete the Transitions Madlibs Activity. This can be a lively exercise to complete as a class or have students complete in small groups.

#### 4. Organize the Paragraph Parts & Improve Flow Activity

**Small Group**

- Give each group of students a set of sentences to organize.
- Instruct them to spread the sentences out on a desk or the floor and experiment with what they think is the best organizational structure, given the main claim.
- Have students insert additional transitional words and phrases between the sentences to make the flow of the argument and logic more clear. This will help them consider and reconsider their chosen organization.
Full Class
- Ask each group to share the **Organize the Paragraph Parts & Improve Flow Activity** by recording their sentence order on the board (using the numbers assigned to each sentence).
- As a class, analyze the similarities and differences between responses. Note that there are many possibilities for how to organize the paragraph and that the transitional words and phrases can be key in making an organizational structure work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Practice – Formative Assessment Mini-Task</th>
<th>Revised Paragraph with Transitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Have students insert transitions between and within sentences of their own argument paragraph draft.</td>
<td>• Formatively assess students’ use of transitions to determine their ability to connect ideas and sentences using the proper type of transition.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mini-Task Rubric – Sample Revised Paragraph with Transitions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>On-Target</th>
<th>Novice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transition selection</td>
<td>-Uses multiple transition types</td>
<td>-Uses a few different transition types</td>
<td>-Uses only one transition type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition placement</td>
<td>-Places transitions at all needed and desirable moments in the paragraph</td>
<td>-Places transitions at some needed and desirable moments in the paragraph</td>
<td>-Places transitions at only one or two moments in the paragraph; some placement is incorrect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Transition Words & Phrases

## Anchor Chart

**What are transitions and what do they do?**

- They are words and phrases that form *idea bridges* for the reader to let them know how the information they just read is related to the information they are about to read.
- Transitions show the reader how your ideas fit together so they are more likely to be persuaded by your argument.

**Where are they located?**

Transitions are located within sentences, between sentences, and between paragraphs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Transition</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To prove</td>
<td>Because, since, for the same reason, obviously, furthermore, in fact, in addition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To provide an example</td>
<td>for example, for instance, in other words, namely, specifically, to illustrate, to demonstrate, in particular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To show result</td>
<td>accordingly, as a result, consequently, so, thereby, therefore, thus, finally,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To add more information</td>
<td>also, and, as well, besides, equally important, finally, furthermore, in addition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To show cause</td>
<td>as, because, for, since, due to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To show sequence</td>
<td>first, (second, third, fourth, fifth), next, following this, subsequently, consequently, finally, therefore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To show time</td>
<td>afterward, before, currently, eventually, finally, immediately, in the future, in the past, later, meanwhile, next, often, sometimes, soon, subsequently, then, today, when</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To summarize ideas</td>
<td>finally, in conclusion, in short, in summary, to sum up, therefore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To compare ideas</td>
<td>in the same way, likewise, similarly, similar to, also, again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To contrast ideas</td>
<td>at the same time, but, conversely, even so, even though, however, in contrast, nevertheless, nonetheless, on the one hand, on the other hand, still, yet, in comparison, in contrast, on the contrary, as opposed to, despite, unlike, although, conversely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Identify the Transition

• Circle or highlight all the transitions in the paragraph below.
• Underneath the paragraph, record the transitions and indicate what type each one is.
• Next, in the column titled “new transition,” replace each transition with another transition that could also do the same work.

The Benefits of Chocolate

People should feel free to eat chocolate on a regular basis, despite concerns about obesity in America, because consuming chocolate in moderation can have positive health effects. For example, it is a food that improves one’s mood. Specifically, many people report experiencing a feeling of pleasure during and after eating chocolate. In addition, eating chocolate, especially dark chocolate, has been proven to be good for the heart because it acts as an anti-oxidant, meaning that it frees the body of toxins. However, it’s important to pay attention to how much chocolate you consume. Eating large amounts will counteract the positive antioxidant effects this candy can have. Eating an entire bag of Hershey kisses in a single day, for instance, will only cause weight gain. Therefore, the next time you reach for a chocolate bar, you can feel good about it, as long as you don’t eat the whole thing!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Transition</th>
<th>Type of Transition</th>
<th>New Transition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Identify the Transition
Teacher Version

• Circle or highlight all the transitions in the paragraph below.
• Underneath the paragraph, record the type of each transition.
• Next, replace each transition with another transition that could also do the same work.

The Benefits of Chocolate

People should feel free to eat chocolate on a regular basis, despite concerns about obesity in America, because consuming chocolate in moderation can have positive health effects. For example, it is a food that improves one’s mood. Specifically, many people report experiencing a feeling of pleasure during and after eating chocolate. In addition, eating chocolate, especially dark chocolate, has been proven to be good for the heart because it acts as an anti-oxidant, meaning that it frees the body of toxins. However, it’s important to pay attention to how much chocolate you consume. Eating large amounts will counteract the positive antioxidant effects this candy can have. Eating an entire bag of Hershey kisses in a single day, for instance, will only cause weight gain. Therefore, the next time you reach for a chocolate bar, you can feel good about it, as long as you don’t eat the whole thing!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Transition</th>
<th>Type of Transition</th>
<th>New Transition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>despite</td>
<td>To contrast ideas</td>
<td>even though there are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>because</td>
<td>To show cause</td>
<td>since</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>For example</td>
<td>To provide an example</td>
<td>In particular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Specifically</td>
<td>To provide an example</td>
<td>To illustrate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>In addition</td>
<td>To prove</td>
<td>Furthermore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>However</td>
<td>To contrast ideas</td>
<td>At the same time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>for instance</td>
<td>To provide an example</td>
<td>for example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Therefore</td>
<td>To summarize</td>
<td>Thus, So, In conclusion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Dangers of Drinking Soda

Who doesn’t enjoy the bubbly, sugary taste of Coke or Sprite on a hot summer day? ________ (to contrast ideas) drinking soda regularly can have harmful effects on your body. Doctors and experts refer to soda as “liquid candy” ________ (to prove) it is so sweet and high in calories. ____________ (to show result) this sugary liquid can cause cavities and enamel erosion, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics (webmd.com). ____________ (to prove) some studies have linked regular soda consumption to an increased risk of childhood obesity (everydayhealth.com). ____________, (to contrast ideas) Maureen Storey, Associate Director of the Georgetown Center, says: "Portion sizes have expanded dramatically and it is simply wrong to blame increases in obesity on food or beverages that contain carbohydrates" (abc.com). ____________, (to contrast ideas) soda does suppress the appetite, making eating healthy foods, ____________ (to provide an example) fruits and vegetables, less appealing. ____________, (to prove or add more information) researchers have discovered that the more caffeinated soda kids drink, the less sleep they get, which can affect school work and sports participation (msnbc.com). If you must drink soda, ____________ (to show result), drink it in moderation and try to cut back to only one or two cans per week.
Organize the Paragraph Parts & Improve Flow

Directions:
- These sentences are in the wrong order. Organize them so they form the most persuasive argument.
- Insert additional transitional words and phrases to improve the paragraph’s flow and logic.

Make Pizza a Healthier Vegetable

1. And making the crust with whole grain rather than white flour is a perfect way to introduce more whole grains into children’s diets.

2. The new nutrition standards for school lunch call for more whole grains and produce, as well as less sodium and fat (HuffingtonPost.com).

3. According to the nutrition standards for school lunch, the tomato paste on pizza qualifies it as a vegetable (New York Times).

4. But how much nutrients does tomato paste really have? While it does contain some vitamin A, C, and D, as well as iron, it’s packed with sodium (nutrietfacts.com).

5. According to a study by the University of Minnesota, students don’t mind and will actually eat whole grain pizza crust, since it’s disguised by the sauce, cheese, and toppings (Institute of Medicine).

6. So let’s keep pizza on the school lunch menu and boost its nutritional content. It’s easy to make pizza with nutritious and delicious ingredients. Our students deserve that and much more.

7. Pizza served at school could and should be healthier.

8. This Italian food can be made with low-fat cheese, vegetable toppings, and whole grain crust to provide kids with a desirable choice that supplies maximum nutrition.

9. Veggie pizza should be served to give students an additional serving of daily vegetables.

10. So cafeterias should make their pizza a better representative of the “vegetable” the standards label it as.

11. Schools can and should do better for their students, who are growing and need to fuel their bodies each day so they can learn during class time.
Organize the Paragraph Parts & Improve Flow
Teacher Version

Directions:
• Organize the sentences below in the order that makes the most sense and forms the most persuasive argument.
• Insert additional transitional words and phrases to improve the paragraph’s flow and logic.

Make Pizza a Healthier Vegetable

Sentence Order: 7, 3, 4, 11, 2, 10, 8, 9, 1, 5, 6

Pizza served at school could and should be healthier. According to the nutrition standards for school lunch, the tomato paste on pizza qualifies it as a vegetable (New York Times). But how much nutrients does tomato paste really have? While it does contain some vitamin A, C, and D, as well as iron, it’s packed with sodium (nutrientfacts.com). Schools can and should do better for their students who are growing and need to fuel their bodies each day so they can learn during class time. The new nutrition standards for school lunch call for more whole grains and produce, as well as less sodium and fat (HuffingtonPost.com). So cafeterias should make their pizza a better representative of the “vegetable” the standards label it as. This Italian food can be made with low-fat cheese, vegetable toppings, and whole grain crust to provide kids with a desirable choice that supplies maximum nutrition. Veggie pizza should be served to give students an additional serving of daily vegetables. And making the crust with whole grain rather than white flour is a perfect way to introduce more whole grains into children’s diets. According to a study by the University of Minnesota, students don’t mind and will actually eat whole grain pizza crust, since it’s disguised by the sauce, cheese, and toppings (InstituteofMedicine.edu). So let’s keep pizza on the school lunch menu and boost its nutritional content. It’s easy to make pizza with nutritious and delicious ingredients. Our students deserve that and much more.
### Drafting  
#### Session 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Topic Sentences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Teaching Point** | a. A topic sentence begins a paragraph and is a promise to the reader about what to expect in the paragraph.  
b. When crafting argument paragraphs, writers include the claim and a summary of evidence in the topic sentence. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Argument Paragraph Topic Sentences Anchor Chart (see attached sheet)  
• Practice with Topic Sentences handout (see attached sheet) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review the handout listed above and revise it as needed to reflect the skill level and interests of your students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. A topic sentence begins a paragraph and is a promise to the reader about what to expect in the paragraph.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. **The Purpose of a Topic Sentence**  
**Full Class**  
• Prior Knowledge - Ask students what they know about topic sentences, and record on the board.  
• Introduce the teaching point. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. When crafting argument paragraphs, writers include the claim and a summary of evidence in the topic sentence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guided Practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2. **Key Components of an Argument Paragraph’s Topic Sentence**  
**Full Class**  
• Review the Argument Paragraph Topic Sentence Anchor Chart with the class. |

| 3. **Practice with Topic Sentences**  
**Small Group**  
• Have students dissect the parts of the sample topic sentences, then review the outcomes as a full class.  
**Solo**  
• Ask students to write two different versions of their topic sentence (using writing from session 7). The claim will remain the same, but the summary of evidence should be worded differently in each sentence and might emphasize different aspects of the evidence or be structured differently. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Full Class**  
• On the board or a large piece of butcher paper, have students record their topic sentences.  
• Ask them to put parentheses around the claim and brackets around the summary of evidence.  
• This sharing will allow students to check to make sure they have both components in their sentences and for you to assess their understanding of topic sentences. |
What is a summary? A brief statement that distills a large amount of information down to its most important parts.

What should you include in your summary of evidence? The main idea of your evidence.

Sample Argument Paragraph Topic Sentence

People should not eat fast food because it causes health problems.

**SENTENCE DISSECTION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Debatable Claim</th>
<th>Summary of Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People should not eat fast food</td>
<td><em>because</em> it causes health problems.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conjunctions

Use words like **because** and **since** to join the claim with the summary of evidence.
Practice with Topic Sentences

Dissect These Sample Topic Sentences
Directions:

• Circle the debatable claim.
• Underline the summary of evidence.

1. Chocolate milk should not be served in school lunches because of its high sugar content.

2. My school lunch isn’t as healthy as it should be since it leaves me feeling sick and tired after I eat it.

3. People should feel free to eat chocolate on a regular basis, despite concerns about obesity in America, because consuming chocolate in moderation can have positive health effects.

You Try!

1. Now, return to your argument paragraph and summarize your evidence.

2. Add your claim to this summary of evidence using a conjunction such as “because” or “since.” And that’s a topic sentence!

You Try Again!
Rewrite your topic sentence so the summary of evidence is worded differently. And try a different conjunction.
### Session 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Revision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point</strong></td>
<td>Writers revise throughout the drafting process. When argument writers have completed a draft, they revisit all the components of the piece to make sure it is as persuasive as possible.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Materials</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Argument Paragraph Rubric (see attached sheet)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Argument Paragraph Revision handout (see attached sheet)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Review the rubric.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Review the handout listed above and revise it to reflect the key concerns your feel students should address in their paragraph revisions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Engagement</th>
<th>1. Rubric Review</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small Group/ Full Class</td>
<td>Review the major components of the Argument Paragraph Rubric (content, organization, style and mechanics).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assign each small group a single on-target rubric component to paraphrase.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reconvene the class and have each small group report back with their paraphrase of the on-target rubric component to ensure that students are clear of the writing expectations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Revision</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Solo</td>
<td>Have students complete a revision of their argument paragraphs using the Argument Paragraph Revision handout. (Their argument paragraphs will consist of their writing from sessions 7 and 8.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Share | As time allows, have students pair up and explain to their partner the revision work they have done and still need to do. |
# Argument Paragraph Rubric – Prove Your Point

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>On-Target</th>
<th>Novice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td>The paragraph:</td>
<td>The paragraph:</td>
<td>The paragraph:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Creates a unified and persuasive argument; every sentence supports the key claim.</td>
<td>• Creates a fairly unified and persuasive argument; almost all sentences support the key claim.</td>
<td>• Struggles to create a unified and persuasive argument; multiple sentences do not directly support the key claim.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Contains a topic sentence with a debatable claim and summary of the evidence.</td>
<td>• Contains a topic sentence with a debatable claim and summary of the evidence.</td>
<td>• Contains a topic sentence with either a debatable claim or summary of the evidence, but not both.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Employs multiple evidence types, including a secondary source.</td>
<td>• Employs a variety of evidence types, including a secondary source.</td>
<td>• Employs only one evidence type.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• All sources are credible and properly cited.</td>
<td>• Most sources are credible and properly cited.</td>
<td>• Sources are not credible; citations are missing or incorrect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Includes commentary that intricately and complexly explains how the evidence proves the claim.</td>
<td>• Includes commentary that explains how the evidence proves the claim.</td>
<td>• Commentary missing or does not fully explain how the evidence proves the claim.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>The paragraph:</td>
<td>The paragraph:</td>
<td>The paragraph:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Shifts seamlessly back and forth between evidence and commentary.</td>
<td>• Logically flows between evidence and commentary.</td>
<td>• Struggles to organize evidence and commentary in a logical manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Style &amp; Mechanics</strong></td>
<td>The paragraph:</td>
<td>The paragraph:</td>
<td>The paragraph:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Contains no fragments or run-ons; engages complex sentence structures.</td>
<td>• Contains minimal fragments or run-ons.</td>
<td>• Contains multiple fragments or run-ons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Consistently maintains a formal voice.</td>
<td>• Maintains a formal voice throughout with only occasional lapses.</td>
<td>• Is written in an informal voice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Readily employs diction specific to the chosen topic.</td>
<td>• Employs diction specific to the chosen topic.</td>
<td>• Occasionally employs diction specific to the chosen topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Process Checklist</strong></td>
<td>The writer:</td>
<td>The paragraph:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Pre-wrote to discover ideas for a debatable claim.</td>
<td>• Creates a fairly unified and persuasive argument; almost all sentences support the key claim.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Drafted to organize and analyze evidence and devise commentary.</td>
<td>• Contains a topic sentence with a debatable claim and summary of the evidence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Revised his/her draft to achieve greater coherency and clarity.</td>
<td>• Employs a variety of evidence types, including a secondary source.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Edited for sentence-level clarity and an error-free essay.</td>
<td>• Most sources are credible and properly cited.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Argument Paragraph Revision

CONTENT

Topic Sentence
- Underline your claim. Make sure it’s debatable (not a fact—it should be a statement that can be argued about)
  - Does your claim reflect what you’re actually arguing for in your paragraph?
- Re-read the summary of evidence.
  - Does it refer to all the evidence you discuss?
  - Is it worded clearly and in an interesting fashion?

Evidence
- Ask yourself: Is this the best evidence to use to prove your argument?
- Is there a variety of evidence—both factual and anecdotal?
- Did you cite all your factual evidence correctly?

Commentary
- Did you explain each piece of evidence?
- Did you tell the reader how this evidence proves your claim?
- Did you explain why your claim is so important?

ORGANIZATION

Structure and Flow of Argument
- Ask yourself—is this the best order for my evidence and commentary?
- Experiment with re-organizing your evidence and commentary. What does this do to the flow and logic of your argument? Does it make more sense now?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revising and Editing</th>
<th>Session 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concept</strong></td>
<td>Editing and Reflection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Teaching Point**   | a. Writers closely edit their pieces to make sure they don’t have any sentence fragments or run-ons, which make it difficult for the reader to understand the argument.  
b. When a draft is revised and complete, writers reflect on the final product and process to determine what they will do differently the next time they take on a writing task. |
| **Preparation**      | • Devise an activity to teach or review sentence fragments and run-ons. |
| **Suggested Materials** | • [Post Revision-Reflection Anchor Chart](see attached sheet) |
| **Assessment**       | Students’ final paragraphs will serve as the post-unit assessment. |
| **Notes on Publication** | **Publication Options**  
  • Create a website or wiki about the subject your students are arguing for and share the link with parents, other students, and other schools, and interested parties.  
  • Post the paragraphs on a class blog and have other students/teachers comment on them via #Comments4kids (Twitter hashtag). |
Post-Revision Reflection
Anchor Chart

In your Writer’s Notebook, reflect on these questions:

1. What was the most exciting part of writing your argument paragraph? How come?
2. What was the most difficult part of writing your argument paragraph? How come?
3. If you still had more time to revise your piece, what would you work on/change?
4. What did you learn about yourself and your process as a writer?
5. What will you do differently the next time you tackle a writing project?
Resources

Teaching Argument – Pedagogical and Theoretical Resources

Common Core State Standards Appendix A
http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards

A Curricular Plan for the Writing Workshop – Grade 6 by Lucy Calkins (Unit 4 – personal and persuasive essays)

Nonfiction Matters: Reading, Writing, and Research in Grades 3-8 by Stephanie Harvey
http://www.amazon.com/Nonfiction-Matters-Reading-Writing-Research/dp/1571100725/ref=hl_ni_t

Everything’s an Argument by Lunsford and Ruszkiewicz

They Say, I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing by Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein

Teaching Argument Writing, Grades 6-12: Supporting Claims with Relevant Evidence and Clear Reasoning by George Hillocks, Jr.

Essays and Arguments website by Prof. Ian Johnston of Vancouver Island University -
http://records.viu.ca/~johnstoi/arguments/argument8.htm

Internet Resources for Argument Components

Google Search Literacy Lesson Plans – Effective Searching, Selecting Evidence, Evaluating Sources
http://www.google.com/insidesearch/searcheducation/lessons.html

Scholastic website on persuasive writing – online exercises for selecting the evidence that fits the claim and using the correct transition

Resources for Finding Mentor Texts

Bibliography of non-fiction books, articles, and videos on high interest topics from the Columbia Teacher’s College Reading and Writing Project

Calliope – world history for kids (ages 9-14)
Cobblestone – American History for kids (ages 9-14)
http://www.cobblestonepub.com/resources_cob_tgs.html

Discover – articles on science, technology and the future
http://discovermagazine.com/

Muse – past and present, history, science and the arts (ages 9-14)

National Geographic – cultural, scientific, geographic, anthropological, and historical investigations of past and present events.
http://www.nationalgeographic.com/

National Geographic Explorer for Kids (Pathfinder edition for grades 4-6)
http://magma.nationalgeographic.com/ngexplorer/

Odyssey – science for kids (ages 9-14)
http://www.odysseymagazine.com/

Smithsonian Magazine
http://www.smithsonianmag.com/

Time for Kids
http://www.timeforkids.com/

PBS Video- Watch award-winning documentaries, including current episodes from Nova and Nature, as well as archived videos
http://video.pbs.org/

History.com- Video clips and full length shows on history topics from Ancient China to the Vikings to Watergate.
http://www.history.com
Sample Argument Paragraphs

Excerpt from *Fast Food Nation* by Eric Schlosser

McDonald's began switching to frozen french fries in 1966 -- and few customers noticed the difference. Nevertheless, the change had a profound effect on the nation's agriculture and diet. A familiar food had been transformed into a highly processed industrial commodity. McDonald's fries now come from huge manufacturing plants that can peel, slice, cook, and freeze two million pounds of potatoes a day. The rapid expansion of McDonald's and the popularity of its low-cost, mass-produced fries changed the way Americans eat. In 1960 Americans consumed an average of about eighty-one pounds of fresh potatoes and four pounds of frozen french fries. In 2000 they consumed an average of about fifty pounds of fresh potatoes and thirty pounds of frozen fries. Today McDonald's is the largest buyer of potatoes in the United States.

*commodity - a useful or valuable thing

Excerpt from *Kitchen Confidential* by Anthony Bourdain

My first indication that food was something other than a substance one stuffed in one's face when hungry — like filling up at a gas station — came after fourth grade in elementary school. It was on a family vacation to Europe, on the Queen Mary, in the cabin-class dining room. There's a picture somewhere: my mother in her Jackie O sunglasses, my younger brother and I in our painfully cute cruise wear, boarding the big Cunard ocean liner, all of us excited about our first transatlantic voyage, our first trip to my father's ancestral homeland, France.

It was the soup.

It was cold.

This was something of a discovery for a curious fourth-grader whose entire experience of soup to this point had consisted of Campbell's cream of tomato and chicken noodle. I'd eaten in restaurants before, sure, but this was the first food I really noticed. It was the first food I enjoyed and, more important, remembered enjoying. I asked our patient British waiter what this delightfully cool, tasty liquid was.
"Vichyssoise," came the reply, a word that to this day — even though it's now a tired old warhorse of a menu selection and one I've prepared thousands of times — still has a magical ring to it. I remember everything about the experience: the way our waiter ladled it from a silver tureen into my bowl; the crunch of tiny chopped chives he spooned on as garnish; the rich, creamy taste of leek and potato; the pleasurable shock, the surprise that it was cold.

My first indication that food was something other than a substance one stuffed in one's face when hungry — like filling up at a gas station — came after fourth grade in elementary school. It was on a family vacation to Europe, on the Queen Mary, in the cabin-class dining room. There's a picture somewhere: my mother in her Jackie O sunglasses, my younger brother and I in our painfully cute cruise wear, boarding the big Cunard ocean liner, all of us excited about our first transatlantic voyage, our first trip to my father's ancestral homeland, France.

It was the soup.

It was cold.

This was something of a discovery for a curious fourth-grader whose entire experience of soup to this point had consisted of Campbell's cream of tomato and chicken noodle. I'd eaten in restaurants before, sure, but this was the first food I really noticed. It was the first food I enjoyed and, more important, remembered enjoying. I asked our patient British waiter what this delightfully cool, tasty liquid was.

"Vichyssoise," came the reply, a word that to this day — even though it's now a tired old warhorse of a menu selection and one I've prepared thousands of times — still has a magical ring to it. I remember everything about the experience: the way our waiter ladled it from a silver tureen into my bowl; the crunch of tiny chopped chives he spooned on as garnish; the rich, creamy taste of leek and potato; the pleasurable shock, the surprise that it was cold.

Excerpt from Fast Food Nation by Eric Schlosser

Chicken McNuggets were introduced nationwide in 1983. Within one month of their launch, the McDonald's Corporation had become the second-largest purchaser of chicken in the United States, surpassed only by KFC. McNuggets tasted good, they were easy to chew, and they appeared to be healthier than other items on the menu at McDonald's. After all, they were made out of chicken. But their health benefits were illusory*. A chemical analysis of McNuggets by a researcher at Harvard Medical School found that their "fatty acid profile" more closely resembled beef than poultry. They were cooked in beef tallow, like McDonald's fries. The chain soon switched to vegetable oil, adding "beef extract" to McNuggets during the manufacturing process in order to retain their familiar taste. Today Chicken McNuggets are wildly popular among young children—and contain twice as much fat per ounce as a hamburger.

*illusory – not real, based on illusion

Underline – claim

Blue - evidence

Yellow – commentary
Chicken McNuggets were introduced nationwide in 1983. Within one month of their launch, the McDonald's Corporation had become the second-largest purchaser of chicken in the United States, surpassed only by KFC. McNuggets tasted good, they were easy to chew, and they appeared to be healthier than other items on the menu at McDonald's. After all, they were made out of chicken. But their health benefits were illusory*. A chemical analysis of McNuggets by a researcher at Harvard Medical School found that their “fatty acid profile” more closely resembled beef than poultry. They were cooked in beef tallow, like McDonald's fries. The chain soon switched to vegetable oil, adding "beef extract" to McNuggets during the manufacturing process in order to retain their familiar taste. Today Chicken McNuggets are wildly popular among young children—and contain twice as much fat per ounce as a hamburger.

*illusory – not real, based on illusion

From the blog of Karen Le Billon, author of *French Kids Eat Everything*  

Learning doesn’t stop in the lunchroom, in my opinion. If we are giving our children a short lunch break, we are teaching them that food is an inconvenience, and eating is an interruption in the day. We encourage them to gobble their food, when the research shows that eating more slowly is healthier. In fact, the French spend longer eating, but eat less—in part because that ‘fullness feeling’ (satiety signal) needs about 20 minutes to get from your stomach to your brain. But the French also spend longer eating because they believe that it’s important to teach kids to eat well—it’s a life skill, like reading.

Excerpt from “Sixth Graders: Give Us Time to Eat at School” by Talia Bradley and Antonia Ritter  
http://www.startribune.com/opinion/commentaries/147833575.html

Lunch is an important social time. Teachers always tell us to socialize at lunch and recess, not in the classroom. But we cannot do that if we are scarfing down our lunches in 11 minutes. And at recess nobody can socialize or run around if they are hungry or we feel sick. Lots of kids stay in classrooms during lunch so they have time to actually eat and socialize. Pretty soon nobody will be going to the lunchroom or recess. We don't have time to eat there; by staying in our teachers' classrooms, we do.
Lunch is an important social time. Teachers always tell us to socialize at lunch and recess, not in the classroom. But we cannot do that if we are scarifying down our lunches in 11 minutes. And at recess nobody can socialize or run around if they are hungry or we feel sick. Lots of kids stay in classrooms during lunch so they have time to actually eat and socialize. Pretty soon nobody will be going to the lunchroom or recess. We don't have time to eat there; by staying in our teachers' classrooms, we do.

Excerpt from Our Schools' Sweet Tooth,” an op-ed in the Los Angeles Times by Emily Ventura and Michael Goran


A few straightforward changes to the [school lunch] menus would lead to considerable reductions in sugar intake. Removing the chocolate milk from breakfast and lunch could mean a reduction of 4 teaspoons per day per child, which adds up to nearly a gallon of sugar per child over the course of the school year. However, politics related to federal funding make such seemingly simple changes more difficult. If the district took away chocolate milk and kids decided not to drink the plain milk, it could lead to reduced funding from the USDA. For the district to receive federal reimbursement for meals, students may not decline more than one item at breakfast or more than two items at lunch. Though technically students may skip the milk altogether and the district would still be reimbursed, chocolate milk is one of the most popular items and helps to ensure student participation — and hence funding.

from “Getting Real About the High Price of Cheap Food” by Bryan Walsh

Time Magazine August 21, 2009

With the exhaustion of the soil, the impact of global warming and the inevitably rising price of oil — which will affect everything from fertilizer to supermarket electricity bills — our industrial style of food production will end sooner or later. As the developing world grows richer, hundreds of millions of people will want to shift to the same calorie-heavy, protein-rich diet that has made Americans so unhealthy — demand for meat and
poultry worldwide is set to rise 25% by 2015 — but the earth can no longer deliver. Unless Americans radically rethink the way they grow and consume food, they face a future of eroded farmland, hollowed-out countryside, scarier germs, higher health costs — and bland taste. Sustainable food has an elitist* reputation, but each of us depends on the soil, animals and plants — and as every farmer knows, if you don't take care of your land, it can't take care of you.

Inevitably – impossible to avoid or prevent
Industrial- manufactured, processed
Elitist- believing you are superior to others due to intelligence, social status, or wealth

Underline – claim
Blue - evidence
Yellow – commentary

With the exhaustion of the soil, the impact of global warming and the inevitably* rising price of oil — which will affect everything from fertilizer to supermarket electricity bills — our industrial* style of food production will end sooner or later. As the developing world grows richer, hundreds of millions of people will want to shift to the same calorie-heavy, protein-rich diet that has made Americans so unhealthy — demand for meat and poultry worldwide is set to rise 25% by 2015 — but the earth can no longer deliver. Unless Americans radically rethink the way they grow and consume food, they face a future of eroded farmland, hollowed-out countryside, scarier germs, higher health costs — and bland taste. Sustainable food has an elitist* reputation, but each of us depends on the soil, animals and plants — and as every farmer knows, if you don't take care of your land, it can't take care of you.

Inevitably – impossible to avoid or prevent
Industrial- manufactured, processed
Elitist- believing you are superior to others due to intelligence, social status, or wealth
# Readers Workshop Unit of Study

## 7th Grade – Narrative Reading

### Table of Contents

**Preface**
- Learning Progression, Grades 6-8 ............................................................... 1
- Learning Progression, Grades 9-12 ............................................................... 2

**Background Section**
- Abstract ........................................................................................................ 4
- Standards ....................................................................................................... 5
- Overview of Sessions – Teaching and Learning Points ................................ 6

**Resource Materials Section**
- Session 1 ...................................................................................................... 8
- Session 2 ...................................................................................................... 12
- Session 3 ...................................................................................................... 15
- Session 4 ...................................................................................................... 17
- Session 5 ...................................................................................................... 21
- Session 6 ...................................................................................................... 24
- Session 7 ...................................................................................................... 25
- Session 8 ...................................................................................................... 28
- Session 9 ...................................................................................................... 31
Readers Workshop Unit of Study
7th Grade – Narrative Reading

Preface

The following unit supports and aligns to the Common Core State Standards. This research-based work is the outcome of a collective effort made by numerous secondary teachers from around the state of Michigan. Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA) initiated a statewide collaborative project, bringing together educators from around the state to create and refine a K-12 English Language Arts model curriculum. The Narrative Reading unit is situated as the second reading unit of study within a yearlong sequence of reading units. The unit emphasizes students’ recognizing reading comprehension, reader independence, and reader identity. Each unit within the MAISA yearlong model curriculum presents a string of teaching points that scaffold and spiral the content and skills. Units of study are structured to be student-centered rather than teacher-driven. Sessions emphasize student engagement and strive to simultaneously increase critical thinking and writing skills. Sessions are designed as a series of mini-lessons that allow time to read, practice, respond, and conference. Through summative and formative assessments specific to each unit, students progress toward becoming independent thinkers and readers.

Significant input and feedback was gathered both in the initial conceptualizing of the unit and later revisions. Teachers from around the state piloted and/or reviewed the unit; their feedback and student artifacts helped in the revision process. Special thanks go to lead unit writers Bryan Hartsig, Lisa Kraiza, and Judy Kelly, who closely studied the CCSS, translated the standards into curriculum and practice, and revised with a close eye to classroom teacher feedback. Throughout the yearlong collaborative project, teachers who are reviewing units are finding how students’ habits of mind have shifted from task-oriented to big-picture thinking, utilizing a critical literacy lens.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Middle School Learning: Narrative Reading</th>
<th>6th</th>
<th>7th</th>
<th>8th</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Developing the Identity of the Reader** | • Participate in reading community  
• Engage in thoughtful discussions about stories | • Prepare to talk and share with others  
• Engage in community-building activity | • Continue conversations about reading and being readers  
• Immerse in the culture of a particular text (historical time period)  
• Become researchers |
| **Interacting with Texts and Self-Monitoring** | • Analyze the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone  
• Analyze how an author develops the point of view of the narrator  
• Analyze how a particular section contributes to meaning | • Identify the narrator(s) within a text  
• Track text to develop theories about text’s meaning  
• Define elements of narrative text  
• Discuss author craft, decisions, and intents while noting repetition  
• Identify and contrast points of view from different characters within a text | • Analyze the different points of view (perspective) of the characters and the reader with the creation of irony and humor  
• Analyze how character development in a historical story occurs through the details.  
• Track the scenes and how they create tension and drama in historical fiction  
• Identify the various character perspectives within scenes and events and their creation of drama. |
| **Exploring Genre—Elements and Structures** | • Notice the different effects of reading vs. listening to texts  
• Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres | • Analyze how story elements contribute to meaning while evaluating individual chapters, time segments or narrators  
• Analyze and track literal text to track conflicts and make inferences | • Compare and contrast a film version of the text or some other aspect of the time period and the development of character and storytelling in that piece  
• Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts written about the same time period, addressing author’s decisions, dialogue, theme |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High School Learning Progressions: Narrative Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Text</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Fiction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Analyzing Genre: Craft and Structure**
- Analyze an author’s choice on structure—order of events
- Use knowledge of narrative structure to predict plot while reading and summarize a text after reading
- Use three basic truths (they want something, they change or do not change, and there is a cost) about characters to analyze character development
- Develop a framework for reading narrative texts with the universal theme of the hero’s journey
- Develop and use background knowledge of the universal structure of narrative texts based on the hero’s journey
- Develop critical reading habits through use of genre knowledge
- Analyze the cumulative impact of diction on meaning and tone by determining the connotative and figurative meaning of words and phrases

**Developing Strategies for Close Reading: Key Ideas and Details**
- Identify and connect important details to determine the central idea
- Build meaning by identifying story elements (setting, speaker, character(s), problem and want, character relationship, and back story)
- Build meaning by examining how characters deal with problems
- Analyze the representation of a subject or key scene in two different artistic mediums: What is emphasized in each treatment? And what is absent in each treatment?
- Use genre knowledge to track and connect events and details, in order to identify the central idea and the author’s slant on the universal theme of the hero’s journey
- Use literary point of view to study development of the main character
- Research background information on an author, the culture of the author’s country, and/or the historical period of a text to reread a narrative text from the cultural or historical point of view
- Analyze a key scene in two different artistic mediums: What is emphasized or what is absent in each treatment?
- Use genre knowledge to track and connect events and details to identify the central idea(s) in a satire
- In a close rereading of a narrative text, examine the characterization in order to determine the author’s point of view
- Identify important details and connect those details throughout a story to understand the theme(s) or central idea(s) of a story
- Use genre knowledge to track and connect events and details to identify the author’s intent about the characters in a drama
- In a close rereading of a drama, study, through soliloquy, development of the main character
- Analyze and compare the original text and its various interpretations to determine the author’s intent
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9th Grade</th>
<th>10th Grade</th>
<th>11th Grade</th>
<th>12th Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Text</strong></td>
<td>Short Fiction</td>
<td>World Literature: Comparative Reading of Multiple Texts</td>
<td>Genre Study: Analytical Reading of Multiple Texts - Satire in American Literature</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Applying Context: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas** | • Apply knowledge of a particular point in history to clarify the central idea and context of the story  
• Consider the story as a whole to identify a central idea or theme  
• Make connections to other texts, genres, and world experiences | • Establish multi-draft reading to compare authors and works from different countries and/or historical periods.  
• Through analysis and comparison of different world texts, form claims about the struggles a hero faces and conquers based on the historical and/or cultural point of view of the author. | • Make connections between texts (historical, biographical, literary, cultural) in order to more clearly understand central idea(s) or theme(s).  
• Read a range of texts in a genre in order to establish reading preferences.  
• After gaining an initial knowledge of the craft and structure of a genre, apply skills to analyze longer and/or more complex texts from the same genre. | • Research background information on the playwright and his times, to experience drama from cultural and/or historical point(s) of view  
• Through analysis and comparison of different world texts, form claims about how the characters are universal and reveal something important about human life |
Abstract

Narrative Reading
This narrative reading unit, used in succession with the current MAISA ELA Common Core Model Curriculum, will develop student understandings about texts within multiple genres. Students will be able to deconstruct and interpret texts in a variety of meaningful ways while encountering more complex text genres as the unit progresses. Students will participate in a reading workshop that hones reading skills through brief, specific lessons, teacher and student models, and thinking activities. Using important aspects of narratives and reading strategies, the students will learn the academic and social importance of reading while employing the selected tools and instruction. The unit emphasizes interaction between readers and text; readers learn to analyze intentional use of narrative elements, identify various narrators within a text, discuss authors’ crafts, and track theories about textual meaning while contrasting points of view from different characters. The unit encourages students to recognize that successful stories require many elements and actions of the author to change the lives of characters within a story. The Giver is used as the demonstration text. This text shows resolution of conflicts created by the author, while providing easy-to-spot character shifts. Finally, the strength of this unit is to use the reading strategy tools so that even those who are reluctant find themselves to be successful and engaged readers.

Philosophy
In the 7th grade narrative reading unit, students engage in the art of close narrative reading while becoming thoughtful in their analysis of the text they read. Readers determine ways of managing complex texts while citing evidence within a specified narrative text. Students participate in a reading community that involves them in an authentic reading experience, focusing on specific reading strategies. Readers learn ways of talking and participating effectively within the reading community. Through interaction with the text, self-monitoring, and community discussion, students establish ways of reading with agency. The unit is intended to hone skills in developing theories about meaning while tracking textual evidence. Students develop strong and meaningful reading skills through the use of specific mini-lessons, shared reading, and conferencing that is focused on the analysis of intentional use of narrative techniques.
## Standards

*Common Core Standards: Narrative*: The following College and Career Readiness (CCR) anchor standards apply to reading and writing in narrative template tasks. Refer to the 6-12 standards for grade-appropriate specifics that fit each task and module being developed. The standards numbers and general content remain the same across all grades, but details vary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>CCR Anchor Standards for Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.RL.1</td>
<td>Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.RL.2</td>
<td>Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.RL.3</td>
<td>Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.RL.4</td>
<td>Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.RL.6</td>
<td>Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.RL.7</td>
<td>Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (e.g., lighting, sound, color, or camera focus and angles in a film).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.RL.10</td>
<td>By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overview of Sessions: Teaching Points and Unit Assessments

Unit Title: 7th Grade – Narrative Reading

Unit Description (overview):
- The Giver is used as a text of reference in demonstrating the skill sets for student learning in this Unit. It is not prescribed as the only novel for use.

In the 7th grade narrative reading unit, students will read common texts, building on the reading identity and reading communities started in the independent reading unit. These shared experiences will strengthen their individual reading identities and the classroom community. The unit is a systematic way of supporting and guiding students as they read. Students will learn to organize their thinking through the use of reading tools and reading folders. The narrative reading unit continues the specific instruction of reading strategies through mini-lessons at the beginning of each session, as in the independent reading unit. Yet this unit pushes the students into looking at the text deeply, looking at the ways they can handle multiple strategies and theories across the unit. The learning that each tool in the reading folders represents should be carried across sessions as threaded conversations, so students are watching/tracking narrative techniques. The students continue to implement strategies independently or in partnerships while teachers monitor and confer. These tools also provide a vehicle for continuous assessment of the reading strategies taught. The unit will focus on identifying, analyzing, theorizing, evaluating and discussing specific and intentional elements of the narrative genre.

Teaching Points:
Developing the Identity of the Reader
1. Readers see themselves as part of a reading community; they come to discussions prepared to share their thinking and to listen to the opinions of other readers.
2. Students identify narrative elements in order to reflect on the meaning of a piece of literature.

Pre-Unit Assessment Task
Choose a snippet of dialogue from a poignant moment within the novel. The dialogue should be somewhat provocative and spark the interest of the reader. The dialogue snippet should also stimulate anticipation for the upcoming novel’s contents. Readers are presented with the dialogue snippet of choice and asked the question: “What is the meaning of this dialogue snippet and what narrative element or structure do you think this dialogue came from?” Students will hold conversation and discussion surrounding the dialogue snippet as a community-building activity. Answers are to be recorded within the Pre-Unit Performance Task Tool provided to each student in session #2. This performance task should be stored in the reading folders that were established in session #1. The essential learning described in this pre-unit performance task will evolve as the unit transpires and will develop into a written response for the unit summative assessment by session 9.

Exploring Genre—Elements and Structures:
3. Readers identify the narrator(s) within the text.
4. Readers track texts to develop theories about texts’ meaning.

Mid-Unit Formative Assessment Task
THROUGHOUT ALL SESSIONS AS NEEDED: Spot check all reading folders and hold conversations with groups of students to ensure comprehension of assignment tasks as presented within the unit. Students should have a wide variety of reading tools from the unit gathered and completed within their reading folders. The teacher should notice shifts in student thinking while looking for depth of knowledge. Encourage all students to continue on a thoughtful path, noticing explicit details about text, analyzing intentional narrative elements within the text, and tracking text to develop theories about meaning. Reading folders are essential tools to guide teachers in checking for understanding while helping teachers to hold conversations with their students about their thinking within the unit.

5. Readers define elements of a narrative text.
6. Readers discuss an author’s craft, decisions, and intents. Readers also discuss repetition within the text.

Interacting with Complex Text and Self-Monitoring:
7. Readers identify and contrast points of view from different characters within a text.
8. Readers track conflicts and make inferences that deepen understanding by analyzing literal text.

Copyright © 2010-2017 by the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators and Oakland Schools
9. Readers analyze how narrative elements contribute to the meaning of the text while evaluating individual chapters and time segments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post-Unit Assessment Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SESSION #9:</strong> Students are to use the information gathered during the unit to analyze specific narrative elements. Students are to respond in writing about how these elements contributed to the overall meaning of the narrative text. Using their reading folders as a reference guide for their written response, students will include details from the text used to identify all the narrative elements of theme, characters, plot, structure, setting, and point of view. Students will include educated opinions about how each of the narrative elements contributed to the overall meaning of the text. Students will provide a clear description of how all these narrative elements together interact over the course of the text to provide meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Preparation** | • Continued emphasis on classroom community as previously established in the Launching Writing and Independent Reading Units.  
• Classroom set of *The Giver*, by Lois Lowry.  
• Enough copies of the 7th Grade Narrative Reading Guidelines for all students. (See attached sheet.) |
| **Suggested Materials** | • A copy of the Giver or your novel choice that you have marked with post-its, highlighting moments related to the content within this unit for modeling.  
• Reading folders - it is suggested that they have 2 pockets and the bracket inside to help with organization (duo-tang).  
• Teacher example of how they chose to personalize and set up the folder.  
• Crayons, markers, stickers, glue, etc. |
| **Focus Question** | Focus Question: *Why is it important to respect the thoughts of others as they share within our community?* |
| **Active Engagement** | • Review “7th Grade Narrative reading unit Guidelines” with students. They are slightly different from the Independent Reading Unit. Inform students how they can be successful during this unit. Each student should receive a copy to be placed in their reading folder for future reference.  
• Create an anchor chart “How we live in a reading community.” (This chart should be hung in class as reference.) Encourage students to add, change, or modify the list during discussion and chart creation. You may want to have students paste a copy to the back of their reading folders.  
• Introduce the reading folder and describe that they can be personalized and are going to be used to house learning materials throughout the unit.  
• Teacher explains that we have a special time during our school day to work just on reading.  
• During our reading time, we must be respectful of everyone. We will have many different ways of organizing our reading – independent, group, partner, popcorn, etc.  
• Students will choose their way to read unless otherwise instructed by the teacher. If it’s on their own or in small groups, let them venture in the room and choose a spot to read.  
• We as readers will have special reading folders (duo-tang) in which we will keep tools and work to help us visualize and think deeply about our reading work. These are our own reading folders, which we can use to conference with others about what we have learned, are struggling with, or want to discuss about the story.  
• We have a special place in our classroom where we store our reading materials and all will understand where our reading folders are stored. Teacher and students make agreements about how and where materials will be stored and respected.  
• Teacher demonstrates for the students how s/he has organized his/her own reading folder for the unit.  
• Class discusses and agrees on how to organize the reading folders as new teaching and learning tools present themselves. |
| **Share** | • Show a copy of the book just as a preliminary and brief introduction to what will be read during the unit. It may also be helpful for personalization and to use the title as part of decoration.  
• Have students turn and talk briefly to describe with a partner how best to personalize the reading folder for the upcoming unit. Teacher may want to show his/her personalized folder.  
**Reminder: you may want “the ways we live in a reading community” pasted on the back of the reading folder** |
| **Invitation/Homework** | • Allow students to use this time to personalize their reading folders to promote a sense of excitement and ownership. Decorate the front cover of the reading folder. Students may also...
| Extension | • Encourage students to take a guess as to what the novel may be about just by viewing the front cover. This can easily be discussed within the last few minutes of the session. |
# 7th Grade Narrative Reading Unit Guidelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>The Student’s Role</th>
<th>The Teacher’s Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mini-Lessons</td>
<td>• Listen to and participate in lessons</td>
<td>• Frequently mention management, author’s craft, and effective reading strategies, using personal examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Think about how to utilize the tool being used and strategy taught while reading</td>
<td>• Invite students to apply to their reading what they’ve learned during mini-lessons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>• Use the strategies taught throughout your reading</td>
<td>• Monitor students’ use of strategies taught and frequently discuss reading folders and tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Keep organized within the reading folder</td>
<td>• Provide the materials necessary for students to stay organized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conferences</td>
<td>• Confer with teacher about different aspects of reading</td>
<td>• Engage students in conversations about their reading related to the unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Identify when a conference is needed</td>
<td>• Coach students on reading strategies and how they can be applied to other subject areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Discuss reading strategies with the teacher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Be prepared to discuss the tools you have completed and the tracking you’ve done</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing</td>
<td>• Share thinking in paired discussion, small-group discussion, and whole-class discussions in a responsible manner</td>
<td>• Invite students to share</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Evaluate personal reading progress and how you have changed as a reader: What are you doing differently as a reader?</td>
<td>• Reinforce concepts taught during mini-lessons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Assist students as they evaluate themselves as readers and encourage realizations students have about their reading</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I will be successful at this Independent Reading Unit if I...

1. READ.
2. Use the strategies taught.
3. Complete the tasks given.
4. Come prepared to discussions.
5. Assess my reading progress.
Ways We Live In A Reading Community

1. Be respectful of all members of our community as they share. It is a time to celebrate the thinking of others.

2. Encourage others in the classroom to share and be productive members of our classroom.

3. Give positive feedback when responding to other readers’ thoughts. We want to help and be constructive with our comments.

4. Be attentive to the person sharing. Listen well and see if you can offer insightful feedback.

5. Be ready to share and discuss your reading folder contents at all time. The teacher will speak with you individually as a way to ensure your understanding.

6. Evaluate your progress regularly. Seek advice or help as needed from classmates and/or your teacher.
## Session 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Developing the Identity of the Reader</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point</strong></td>
<td>Students identify narrative elements in order to reflect on the meaning of a piece of literature.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Preparation
- Continued emphasis on classroom community as previously established.
- **TEACHER REFERENCE SUMMARY:**
  Lois Lowry's *The Giver* centers on Jonas, a young boy in a dystopian world of the future. The Ceremony of Twelve introduces him to a whole new existence, as the Receiver of Memory. He's blessed (or cursed). Separation from family and friends is a traumatic event for most 12 year olds, but Jonah is introduced to a whole new world of secrets and lies. The Committee of Elders seeks the advice of The Giver to remember what came before (a past long forgotten), but the responsibility is also fraught with unimaginable terrors. Jonah experiences the history of hatred, pain and war—which leaves him “desperately alone.” Nobody else knows (or could know). And, the reality of what he has always believed to be harmless practices causes him to make the decision to leave the community. He’s already been estranged/alienated from all that he’d previously held dear. His new understanding of himself and his society makes it impossible for him to stay. He decides he must leave... In his horrendous flight/journey, he rescues Gabriel from euthanasia—experiencing hunger and pain in his trek toward the Nirvana of Elsewhere.
- - Esther Lombardi
- 3 corners of the room labeled **setup, conflict, and resolution**
- Snippet of dialogue posted for all to see within the room
- Make copies of the pre-unit performance task (*see attached sheet*)

### Suggested Materials
- A copy of *The Giver* or your novel choice that you have marked with post-its, highlighting moments related to the content within this unit for modeling.
- Classroom set of *The Giver* by Lois Lowry or your own novel choice.
- Personalized reading folders.
- Snippet from Chapter 20, page 154: “There’s nothing we can do. It’s always been this way. Before me, before you, before the ones who came before you. Back and back and back”
- Familiarity with Kagan Cooperative Learning Strategies to use within the unit. *(This may be helpful in varying the way your learning communities work throughout the unit.)*

### [Quotes framing pedagogy/lesson intent] **“The ability to read awoke inside me some long dormant craving to be mentally alive.”**

**Autobiography of Malcolm X, 1964**

### Focus Question
Focus Question: How does having a reading community help you in answering the question given about the snippet of dialogue presented to you?

### Active Engagement
- Share the snippet of dialogue with the readers.
- Explain how you want students to be thoughtful in the tasks presented to them within this session.
- Explain that they will be working with this snippet as a pre-unit performance task. *(This may be time to explain what that means so students are not fearful of rights or wrongs.)*
- Pass out the pre-unit performance task tool and explain how to use the tool.
- Review the structures of narrative that are offered on the tool as choices.
- Instruct students that they will first work independently to determine what the dialogue snippet may mean to them. They will then determine what structure (*setup, conflict, or resolution*) the snippet would best fit under.

### Independent Practice/Share
- Students complete the pre-unit performance task.
- After all students have recorded their thoughts, have them take their tool to the labeled corner they have chosen in their tool.
- Have students in each corner express their reasons for the choices they made and preferences as to the dialogue’s meaning.
- Call on students from one corner at a time to announce to the classroom their reasons for that choice.
- Inquire if the meaning they envisioned contributed to the choice they made.

### Community Decision
- Make decisions as a group of where to store this pre-unit tool within the reading folder. *(Carried out each time a teacher provided material is given.)*

### Pre-Unit Performance Task
Choose a snippet of dialogue from a poignant moment within the novel. The dialogue should be somewhat provocative and spark the interest of the reader. The dialogue snippet should also stimulate anticipation for the upcoming novel’s contents. Readers are presented with the dialogue snippet of
choice and asked the question: “What is the meaning of this dialogue snippet and what narrative element or structure do you think this dialogue came from?” Students will hold conversation and discussion surrounding the dialogue snippet as a community-building activity. Answers are to be recorded within the Pre-Unit Performance Task Tool provided to each student in session #2. This performance task should be stored in the reading folders that were established in session #1. The essential learning described in this pre-unit performance task will evolve as the unit transpires and will develop into a written response for the unit summative assessment by session 9.
“There’s nothing we can do. It’s always been this way. Before me, before you, before the ones who came before you. Back and back and back” -The Giver-

**WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS DIALOGUE SNIPPET AND WHAT PART OF A NARRATIVE STRUCTURE DO YOU THINK THIS DIALOGUE CAME FROM?**

RECORD YOUR THOUGHTS IN THE BOX CONTAINING THE STRUCTURE YOU THINK IT CAME FROM.

**YOU SHOULD ONLY WRITE IN ONE OF THE BOXES BELOW!!!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NARRATIVE STRUCTURE: <strong>SETUP</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What does it mean:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What narrative element did this snippet come from?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NARRATIVE STRUCTURE: <strong>CONFLICT</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What does it mean:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What narrative element did this snippet come from?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NARRATIVE STRUCTURE: <strong>RESOLUTION</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What does it mean:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What narrative element did this snippet come from?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Point</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Preparation | • Continued emphasis on classroom community as previously established.  
• Read multiple chapters of the novel in preparation to discuss narrator.  
• Determine a cooperative structure for a day of classroom discussion prior to session #3. |
| Suggested Materials | • A copy of The Giver or your novel choice that you have marked with post-its, highlighting moments related to the content within this unit for modeling.  
• Classroom set of The Giver by Lois Lowry or your own novel choice for use with the targeted learning.  
• Personalized reading folders.  
• Who’s the Narrator handout (see attached sheet).  
• Examples of different forms of narration. |

**Quotes framing pedagogy/lesson intent**

I go straight from thinking about my narrator to being him.  
*—S. E. Hinton*

**Focus Question**

**Focus Question:** Why is it important to determine what type of narrator is present?

**Active Engagement**

Explain: The act or process of telling the particulars of a story is referred to as narration. Along with exposition, argumentation, and description, narration loosely described is one of four rhetorical modes of discourse used by an author. More narrowly described, narration is the fiction-writing mode whereby the narrator communicates directly to the reader. The narrator is often used to convey the author’s voice.

Discuss different possibilities for a narrator. There are six: first person, second person, third person, third-person objective, third-person limited and third-person omniscient. **Focus on the first three for discussion and understanding.**

Create an anchor chart defining the focused three to incorporate into your narrator lesson. Create and use several short pieces of dialogue (maybe snippets of dialogue from the independent reading unit) to demonstrate first-, second-, and third-person dialogue.

**Independent Practice**

- Pass out Narrator handout.  
- Encourage students to carefully read all examples of dialogue and identify what type of narrator is present in each dialogue snippet. Great opportunities to have communities discuss and answer together.

**Share**

- Report out results from the Narrator tool and ask the question: *What type of narrator is depicted in The Giver* (or your novel choice)?  
- Discuss as a thoughtful community of readers.  
- In The Giver, the narrator tells a third-person’s story (he, she, him, her), but the narrator only describes characters’ behavior and dialogue. The narrator does not reveal any character’s thoughts or feelings. Again, readers will be able to understand characters’ thoughts and motivations based on characters’ actions and dialogue, which are narrated; however, the narrator will not explicitly reveal characters’ thoughts and/or motivations in narration.  
- The story is told by a third-person narrator whose point of view is limited to what Jonas observes and thinks.

**Assessment**

Check all reading folders and hold conversations with groups of students to ensure comprehension of reading strategies. Students should have a wide variety of reading tools gathered and completed within their reading folders. Notice shifts in student thinking. Encourage all readers to continue on a thoughtful path, noticing explicit details about text and how stories are woven into pieces of literature.
WHO'S THE NARRATOR?

IS IT FIRST PERSON?
IS IT SECOND PERSON?
IS IT THIRD PERSON?


Before each practice begins, make sure you check the court and remove any debris from the playing surface. When your players arrive, check that they have the proper footwear and that they've removed any jewelry, which could injure the player wearing the jewelry or another player. Always carry a list of emergency phone numbers for your players, and know where the nearest phone is located. You should also have a first-aid kit, and you might want to take a first-aid course.

Narrative Perspective: ________________

If it is third person, which character's thoughts are revealed?

______________________________

2. The Sun Also Rises by Ernest Hemingway

I could picture it. I have a rotten habit of picturing the bedroom scenes of my friends. We went out to the Cafe Neapolitan to have an aperitif and watch the evening crowd on the Boulevard.

Narrative Perspective: ________________

If it is third person, which character’s thoughts are revealed?

______________________________

3. The Giver by Lois Lowry

He wondered what lay in the far distance where he had never gone. The land didn’t end beyond those nearby community. Were there hills elsewhere? Were there vast wind torn areas like the place he had seen in memory, the place where elephants died?

Narrative Perspective: ________________

If it is third person, which character’s thoughts are revealed?

______________________________
### Session 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Exploring Genre—Elements and Structures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Point</td>
<td>Readers track texts to develop theories about the texts’ meaning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Preparation**         | • Continued emphasis on classroom community as previously established.  
                          | • Read multiple chapters of the novel.  
                          | • Knowledge of stopping points, think marks, or other tracking tools from the independent reading unit. |
| **Suggested Materials** | • A copy of *The Giver* or your novel choice that you have marked with post-its, highlighting moments related to the content within this unit for modeling.  
                          | • Classroom set of *The Giver* by Lois Lowry or your own novel choice.  
                          | • Personalized reading folders.  
                          | • Learning tools for classroom distribution. Suggestion: offer students choice of 2 options they need to use. (See attached sheets.) |
| **Focus Question**      | “I need you, the reader, to imagine us, for we don’t really exist if you don’t.” - *Vladimir Nabokov* |
| **Active Engagement**   | • This session is designed to continue the establishment of thoughtful reader participation with the text. It is a continuation of independent readers’ tracking text as a comprehension tool to help deepen understanding of the reader’s assigned text.  
                          | • Guide students in a discussion of what a thoughtful reader is. A reader must embrace participation with the text—they think, identify, analyze and infer to deeply comprehend the text. Reflect on activities from the previous independent reading unit as discussion points.  
                          | • Discuss the tools distributed, which are to be used throughout the rest of the narrative unit. [These are the tools attached after the end of this session.] |
| **Independent Practice**| • Send students to read during class and use the tools of choice provided within this session to guide and reflect on their reading.  
                          | • ***These reading tools should be used and continued and replenished for readers throughout the unit. ***  
                          | • Students are to make decisions about storage of these tools in their reading folders and use them every time they read. |
| **Assessment**          | Check all reading folders and hold conversations with groups of students to ensure comprehension of reading strategies as needed. Students should have a wide variety of reading tools gathered and completed within their reading folders. Notice shifts in student thinking. Encourage all readers to continue on a thoughtful path, noticing explicit details about text and how stories are woven into pieces of literature. |
**STOPPING POINTS**

**Directions:** Use the stopping-point chart below to stop two times during each day of reading. Record the page number you choose to stop on and write what you felt to be the most important information that you just read.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stopping Point</th>
<th>Important information you read in the text.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Page #:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page #:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page #:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page #:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page #:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page #:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# CHARACTER ATTRIBUTES

Character’s Name ______________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is the character attribute?</th>
<th>Give evidence from the text that supports that attribute. Please copy the text word for word, using quotation marks, and give the page number for a citation.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SUMMARIES OF MAJOR PLOT EVENTS

**Directions:** Write a brief summary after completing your reading of each chapter. Think about characters and conflicts as you develop summaries of the major plot events.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER #</th>
<th>CHAPTER #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Session 5

Concept | Exploring Genre—Elements and Structures
---|---
Teaching Point | Readers define elements of a narrative text.

**Preparation**
- Continued emphasis on classroom community as previously established.
- Read multiple chapters of the novel.
- One of the most important things for interpreting narrative is to understand the elements of narration:
  - Theme: the central meaning of a text
  - Characters
  - Plot and Structure: selection and arrangement of incidents that give a story focus. How and why do certain events happen?
  - Setting: cultural, social, physical context of a story's action.
- Determine a cooperative structure you can use for the entire class, which will form definitions for narrative elements. (Use Kagan as resource.)

**Suggested Materials**
- A copy of *The Giver* or your novel choice that you have marked with post-its, highlighting moments related to the content within this unit for modeling.
- Classroom set of *The Giver* by Lois Lowry or your own novel choice.
- Personalized reading folders.
- Copies for each student's reading folder of “Elements of a Narrative” anchor chart that will be created. (*See sheet attached after session.*)
- Create an anchor chart to match.

**Focus Question**
Focus Question: Why is it useful to understand elements of narrative to understand the narrative?

**Active Engagement**
- Explain to students: One of the most important things for interpreting narrative is to understand the elements of narration.
- Describe the expectations and structures being used for the discussions today. Introduce the elements of narrative and have students participate in forming definitions for each while participating in a specific cooperative structure.
- **Theme**: A theme is the central topic, subject, or concept the author is trying to point out.
- **Characters**: An individual (usually a person) in a narrative (usually a work of fiction or creative nonfiction).
- **Plot**: A literary term defined as the events that make up a story, particularly as they relate to one another in a pattern, in a sequence, through cause and effect, how the reader views the story, or simply by coincidence. One is generally interested in how well this pattern of events accomplishes some artistic or emotional effect.
- **Structure**: Narrative structure consists of the traditional parts of a story and the order in which the reader encounters them; these provide a framework for the unfolding of the story. Often represented visually as a triangle, these parts consist of set-up, conflict, and resolution. Structure can take a variety of forms, often depending on the genre of the story. For example, a writer who wishes to build tension may begin with a dramatic flashback before visiting the initial events of a story.
- **Setting**: The setting is the environment in which a story or event takes place. Setting can include specific information about time and place or can simply be descriptive. Often a novel or other long work has an overall setting within which episodes or scenes occur in different specific settings. Geographical location, historical era, social conditions, weather, immediate surroundings, and time of day can all be aspects of setting. Setting provides a backdrop for the action. Think about setting not just as factual information but also as an essential part of a story's mood and emotional impact. Careful portrayal of setting can convey meaning through interaction with characters and plot.
- **Point of View**: Literature provides a lens through which readers look at the world. Point of view is the way the author allows you to "see" and "hear" what's going on. Skillful authors can fix their readers’ attention on exactly the detail, opinion, or emotion the author wants to emphasize by manipulating the point of view of the story.

[Quotes framing pedagogy/lesson intent] You know, we love stories and we love narrative; we love to get lost in an author's world.
*Jeoff Bezos*
| **Assessment** | Check all reading folders and hold conversations with groups of students to ensure comprehension of reading strategies as needed. Students should have a wide variety of reading tools gathered and completed within their reading folders. Notice shifts in student thinking. Encourage all students to continue on a thoughtful path, noticing explicit details about text and how stories are woven into pieces of literature. |
# Elements of Narrative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Point of View</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Session 6

**Concept**
Exploring Genre—Elements and Structures

**Teaching Point**
Readers discuss an author’s craft, decisions, and intents. Readers also discuss repetition within the text.

**Preparation**
- Continued emphasis on classroom community as previously established.
- Read multiple chapters of the novel.
- If you are not using The Giver as your text, you may choose to use it for this specific session.
- Prepared definition of **the author’s craft**: The deliberate choices authors make in the words they use, the ways they structure pieces of writing, and the tones they create in a selection; elements of author’s craft lead the reader to feel and react in ways that the author intends.
- Prepared definition of **repetition**: An instance of using a word, phrase, or clause more than once in a short passage—dwelling on a point.

**Suggested Materials**
- A copy of The Giver or your novel choice that you have marked with post-its, highlighting moments related to the content within this unit for modeling.
- Classroom set of The Giver by Lois Lowry or your own novel choice.
- Personalized reading folders.
- Chart paper to record discussion points.

**Quotes framing pedagogy/lesson intent**
All good books have one thing in common—they are truer than if they had really happened and after you’ve read one of them you will feel that all that happened, happened to you and it belongs to you forever: the happiness and unhappiness, the good and evil, ecstasy and sorrow, the food, wine, beds, people and weather. If you can give that to reader, then you’re a writer. -Ernest Hemingway

**Focus Question**
Focus Question: Why is author craft and word choice so important?

**Active Engagement**
- Session 6 will be entirely based in discussion. It will be a day of thinking about author craft. Manage session 6 in whatever manner seems fit for your classroom.
- Use the author’s name as often as possible during today’s discussion.
- Define **author’s craft** and discuss how authors make decisions and have intentions when they write.
- Define **repetition**.
- Discuss how Lois Lowry, the author, uses the word *utopia* throughout the text.
- The repetition of *utopia* is used like a sales pitch or branding, as if trying to convince the reader and community. What importance did the use of the word *utopia* play on the reader? Did you notice the word and ponder its use? Discuss.
- Ask if any students questioned the word choice after developing a better understanding of the text.
- Is the community a utopia? What role does this word play in the story?
- Lois Lowry is driving home the meaning of *utopia* by the repetition of the word.
- Discuss possible theories of why Lois Lowry used the word in a repetitive way. Readers should share their theories with the class.
- Readers should be using rational explanations during this time. What is the effect of the word? What is the purpose?
- Build a definition for *utopia*.
- Build a definition for *dystopia*.
- Wrap up: Did Lois Lowry write the book to convey a dystopia and not a utopia? Why does she do that?

**Invitation**
- Write summaries of today’s discussions about author’s craft.
- Make t-charts to distinguish if the novel is a utopia or dystopia.

**Assessment**
Check all reading folders and hold conversations with groups of students to ensure comprehension of reading strategies as needed. Students should have a wide variety of reading tools gathered and completed within their reading folders. Notice shifts in student thinking. Encourage all students to continue on a thoughtful path, noticing explicit details about text and how stories are woven into pieces of literature.
# Session 7

**Concept**  
Interacting with Complex Text and Self-Monitoring:

**Teaching Point**  
Readers identify and contrast points of view from different characters within the text.

**Preparation**  
- Continued emphasis on classroom community as previously established.
- Read multiple chapters of the novel.
- Review the definition of:  
  **Point of View:** Literature provides a lens through which readers look at the world. Point of view is the way the author allows you to "see" and "hear" what's going on. Skillful authors can fix their readers' attention on exactly the detail, opinion, or emotion the author wants to emphasize by manipulating the point of view of the story.

**Suggested Materials**  
- A copy of *The Giver* or your novel choice that you have marked with post-its, highlighting moments related to the content within this unit for modeling.
- Classroom set of *The Giver* by Lois Lowry or your own novel choice.
- Personalized reading folders.
- Copies of handouts attached after this session.

**Focus Question**  
Focus Question: Why does point of view play such an important role in narrative text?

**Active Engagement**  
- Demonstrate an understanding that the author determines the point of view.
- Demonstrate an understanding that different points of view exist between characters.
- Demonstrate an understanding that people have different points of view about a topic in real life.  
  (Give a few examples.)
- Have the students turn and talk in groups and present a few real-life examples themselves.
- Stories are not reflections of reality but are selective versions of it, told from a particular view. The author positions the reader to respond to a story in particular ways through the use of language, point of view, etc.
- List some possible events. One example, from *The Giver*: When Jonas's number is skipped at the ceremonies; when Jonas's parents send Lily away to talk to him privately; when Jonas is given the assignment with highest honor and respect; what Lily is thinking when Jonas lays his hands on her, trying to give her memories, etc.)
- Explain the handouts to be used and pass them out.

**Independent Practice**  
- Encourage students to choose two characters and an event or scene to work with during today's session.
- Students are to complete the work as given.
- Circulate the room and guide those who struggle, while checking for understanding and that students are performing meaningful work.

**Share**  
- Have a few students you particularly recognized during your conferencing time report out their findings and explain their thoughts.

**Assessment**  
Check all reading folders and hold conversations with groups of students to ensure comprehension of reading strategies as needed. Students should have a wide variety of reading tools gathered and completed within their reading folders. Notice shifts in student thinking. Encourage all readers to continue on a thoughtful path, noticing explicit details about text and how stories are woven into pieces of literature.
EVENT/ SCENE SUMMARY

Novel Title:___________
Chapter:___________

What did the character see?

What did the character hear?

Character Name:

What did the character think?

What did the character feel?

Directions: Fill in the chart as completely as possible using two different characters. This works best when there is greater contrast between the characters. Be thoughtful in your selections.
Which character’s point of view MOST likely showed an accurate depiction of what happened? Explain your thoughts.

__________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________

How does the characterization work you’ve completed change your perspective of what you have read?

__________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________

Which character do you feel was most affected by the experience? Why do you feel this way?

__________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concept</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Preparation** | • Continued emphasis on classroom community as previously established.  
• Read multiple chapters of the novel.  
• Use focus question to guide the session. |
| **Suggested Materials** | • A copy of The Giver or your novel choice that you have marked with post-its, highlighting moments related to the content within this unit for modeling.  
• Classroom set of The Giver by Lois Lowry or your own novel choice.  
• Personalized reading folders.  
• Handouts attached after this session. |
| [Quotes framing pedagogy/lesson intent] | Don’t leave inferences to be drawn when evidence can’t be presented.  *-Richard Wright* |
| **Focus Question** | Focus Question: How does the analysis of literal text help you make inferences that deepen your understanding of the text? |
| **Active Engagement** | • Choose 3-4 chapters, and have students search for 2 main conflicts. (*The Giver suggestion: chapters 14-17.*)  
• Instruct that students are to search out 3 pieces of literal evidence (actual snippets of text) for each conflict selected.  
• Discuss and establish a working definition of literal evidence.  
• Explain that students will be analyzing such evidence to make inferences about characters or the conflicts. |
| **Independent Practice** | • Send students to work on the activity.  
• Identify a learning structure for the activity. (*Suggestion: teams of four: 2 text researchers looking for literal evidence, 1 recorder, 1 discussion leader- keeping things focused.*)  
• Students complete the handouts while working in teams. |
| **Share** | • Hold a closing discussion, drawing on student feedback about how students using this activity deepened their understanding within this session.  
• Create an exit slip as a conclusion. |
| **Assessment** | Check all reading folders and hold conversations with groups of students to ensure comprehension of reading strategies as needed. Students should have a wide variety of reading tools gathered and completed within their reading folders. Notice shifts in student thinking. Encourage all students to continue on a thoughtful path, noticing explicit details about text and how stories are woven into pieces of literature. |
ANALYSIS OF CONFLICT

Directions: You have a two-column organizer provided. Complete the chart as a team while reading or rereading the chapters assigned.

- In the left column of the organizer you will identify literal evidence (snippets of text copied from the book). It should focus on text from the assigned chapters only. The literal evidence must specifically introduce, explain or give greater meaning to some conflict in the story.

- In the right column of the organizer you are to document your inferences about the literal evidence gathered. Consider the following options for your inferences:
  1. How does the evidence introduce the conflict?
  2. How does the literal evidence help the reader understand a character better?
  3. How does the evidence help enhance the tension?
  4. How does the literal evidence contribute to the meaning/theme of the story?

What two main conflicts did you identify for chapters 14-17?

1. _____________________________________________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________________________________________

2. _____________________________________________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________________________________________

3. _____________________________________________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________________________________________
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter &amp; Page Number</th>
<th>Literal Evidence About The Conflict:</th>
<th>Inferences About The Literal Evidence Gathered:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept</td>
<td>Interacting with Complex Text and Self-Monitoring:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Point</td>
<td>Readers analyze how narrative elements contribute to the meaning of the text while evaluating individual chapters and time segments.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Preparation  | • Continued emphasis on classroom community as previously established.  
|              | • Novel should be finished.  
|              | • Review post-unit assessment task. |
| Suggested Materials | • A copy of The Giver or your novel choice that you have marked with post-its, highlighting moments related to the content within this unit for modeling.  
|              | • Classroom set of The Giver by Lois Lowry or your own novel choice.  
|              | • Personalized reading folders.  
|              | • Copies of the post-unit assessment task. |
| [Quotes framing pedagogy/lesson intent] | “Read, read, read. Read everything -- trash, classics, good and bad, and see how they do it. Just like a carpenter who works as an apprentice and studies the master. Read! You’ll absorb it. Then write. If it’s good, you’ll find out.” -William Faulkner |
| Focus Question | Focus Question: How do specific elements of a narrative contribute to the meaning of a narrative text? |
| Active Engagement | • Review instructions for the post-unit assessment task. |
| Independent Practice/ | • Students use the reading folders as they respond in meaningful ways to the teachings held within the unit.  
|              | • They complete the post-unit assessment task. |
| Share        | • Partner response as part of the post-unit assessment task. |
| Assessment   | Post-unit assessment task: Students are to use the information gathered during the unit to analyze specific narrative elements. Students are to respond in writing about how these elements contributed to the overall meaning of the narrative text. Using their reading folders as a reference guide for their written response, students will include details from the text used to identify all the narrative elements of theme, characters, plot, structure, setting, and point of view. Students will include educated opinions about how each of the narrative elements contributed to the overall meaning of the text. Students will provide a clear description of how all these narrative elements together interact over the course of the text to provide meaning. |
| Invitation   | • Celebrate as a class, have a party, discuss all that was accomplished and what the readers have learned! Literary Analysis. |
USE THE RUBRIC ATTACHED TO GUIDE YOUR WRITING DURING THIS ASSIGNMENT

GOAL:

Students are to use the information gathered during the unit to analyze specific narrative elements. Students are to respond in writing about how these elements contributed to the overall meaning of the narrative text. Use your reading folders as a reference guide for your written response.

A SUCCESSFUL RESPONSE WILL INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

1. Many details from the text used to identify the theme, characters, plot, structure, setting, and point of view

2. Opinions about how each element contributed to the overall meaning

3. A description of how these elements interact over the course of the text to provide meaning
Directions: Give specific examples of each narrative element from the text. Your responses should reflect examples that contributed to the overall meaning of the text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IDENTIFY THE THEME OF THE TEXT:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IDENTIFY A MAIN CHARACTER OR MAIN CHARACTERS FROM THE TEXT:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IDENTIFY THE PLOT OF THE TEXT:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IDENTIFY THE STRUCTURES USED IN THIS TEXT:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IDENTIFY THE SETTING OF THE TEXT:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IDENTIFY THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE SELECTED CHARACTER(S):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# RUBRIC: NARRATIVE TEXT WRITTEN RESPONSE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ON TARGET</th>
<th>ALMOST THERE</th>
<th>NOT YET THERE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DETAILS</strong></td>
<td>Response includes details from the text used to identify all the narrative elements of theme, characters, plot, structure, setting, and point of view.</td>
<td>Response includes a few details from the text and identifies some of the narrative elements.</td>
<td>Response does not include details from the text or identify the narrative elements of the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OPINIONS</strong></td>
<td>Response includes educated opinions about how each of the narrative elements contributed to the overall meaning of the text.</td>
<td>Response includes opinions about how a few elements contributed to the meaning of the text.</td>
<td>Response does not include opinions. Does not discuss how narrative elements contributed to the meaning of the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DESCRIPTION</strong></td>
<td>Response provides a clear description of how these narrative elements interact over the course of the text to provide meaning.</td>
<td>Response tries to provide a description of how some of the narrative elements interact over the course of the text to provide meaning.</td>
<td>Response does not provide any description of how the elements interact or provide meaning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Name & Hour: _____________
Narrative Title: ___________

Response:______________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
USE THE INFORMATION BELOW TO HELP YOUR PARTNER IMPROVE HIS/HER RESPONSE

GOAL:

Does the writer use all the information gathered during the narrative-reading process to analyze specific narrative elements? Does he/she discuss how these elements contributed to the overall meaning of the narrative text? Use the checklist below to provide feedback to your partner.

DOES YOUR PARTNER’S RESPONSE INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING?

- Many details from the text used to identify the theme, characters, plot, structure, setting, and point of view

- Include opinions about how each element contributed to the overall meaning

- Provide a description of how these elements interact over the course of the text to provide meaning

GIVE SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS YOU HAVE FOR YOUR PARTNER TO REVISE HIS/HER RESPONSE

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
**Writers Workshop Unit of Study**  
7th Grade – Literary Essay

**Table of Contents**

**Preface**  
Learning Progression, Grades 6-12

**Background Section**  
Abstract

**Resource Materials Section**  
Session 1
Session 2
Session 3
Session 4
Session 5
Session 6
Session 7
Session 8
Session 9
Sessions 10-14

---

*Copyright © 2010-2014 by the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators and Oakland Schools.*
Writers Workshop Unit of Study
7th Grade – Literary Essay

Preface
The following unit supports and aligns to the Common Core State Standards. This research-based work is the outcome of a collective effort made by numerous secondary teachers from around the state of Michigan. Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA) initiated a statewide collaborative project, bringing together educators from around the state to create and refine a K-12 English Language Arts model curriculum. This one unit is situated within a yearlong sequence of units. Depending upon the unit’s placement in the yearlong Scope and Sequence, it will be important to recognize prior skills and content this unit expects learners to have. This unit also has a companion reading unit where readers closely study narrative text. Each unit presents a string of teaching points that scaffold and spiral the content and skills. The unit is structured to be student-centered rather than teacher-driven. Sessions emphasize student engagement and strive to increase critical thinking and writing skills simultaneously. Writing and thinking processes are stressed and are equally important to the end writing product. Sessions are designed as a series of mini-lessons that allow time to write, practice, and conference. Through summative and formative assessments specific to each unit, students progress toward becoming independent thinkers and writers.

Significant input and feedback was gathered both in the initial conceptualizing of the unit and later revisions. Teachers from around the state piloted and/or reviewed the unit and their feedback and student artifacts helped in the revision process. Special thanks go to lead unit writers Kristine Butcher and Monica Phillips, who closely studied the CCSS, translated the standards into curriculum and practice, and revised with a close eye to classroom teacher feedback. Throughout the yearlong collaborative project, teachers reviewing units are finding how students’ habits of mind have shifted from task-oriented to big-picture-thinking, utilizing a critical literacy lens.
## Literary Essay Learning Progressions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Text and Focus of Analysis</strong></td>
<td>Choice of Genre Character</td>
<td>Choice of Genre Theme</td>
<td>Choice of Genre Character &amp; Theme</td>
<td>Short Fiction Theme</td>
<td>Novel Theme</td>
<td>Multiple Genres Author’s Craft</td>
<td>Drama Multiple Interpretations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theory Building and Creating a Claim</strong></td>
<td>• Use prompts to push thinking • Elaborate on ideas and theories • Identify supporting evidence • Analyze and evaluate evidence (actions, thoughts, and dialogue) • Use theories to create a claim</td>
<td>• Use prompts to push thinking • Elaborate on ideas and theories • Identify and evaluate supporting evidence • Analyze author’s decisions • Test theories to create a claim</td>
<td>• Identify and evaluate explicit and inferred evidence • Evaluate evidence for relevance to the claim • Analyze author’s decisions to develop characters and plot, which develop the theme • Test and revise theories to create a claim</td>
<td>• Read on multiple-levels: plot and meaning • Make connections across a short text • Examine and analyze multiple interpretations of a work’s deeper meaning to create a claim</td>
<td>• Read on multiple-levels: plot and meaning • Make connections across a long text • Analyze decisions that writers use to develop themes • Evaluate evidence to confirm and revise theories and create a claim</td>
<td>• Develop a theory to identify the most effective author • Analyze the craft and structure of multiple texts by different authors • Evaluate multiple texts by different authors to formulate multiple claims • Formulate a claim • Create a warrant to connect claim and evidence</td>
<td>• Develop a theory about an author’s intent and primary purpose • Analyze an artist’s/author’s interpretation of an original text to formulate a claim • Distinguish a primary claim and counter-claim • Create a warrant to connect claim and evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organize Evidence to Develop a Line of Reasoning and Support a Claim</strong></td>
<td>• Organize evidence in chronological or priority order • Use direct quotes and paraphrasing as evidence</td>
<td>• Organize evidence in chronological, priority, or categorical order • Use direct quotes, paraphrasing, and summary as evidence • Connect examples in a paragraph • Support a claim with analysis of an author’s decisions</td>
<td>• Choose effective order: cause-effect and compare-contrast • Use extended and connected example paragraphs</td>
<td>• Choose and connect evidence to create a claim • Draft and select a variety of body paragraphs: extended example, connected example, and summary</td>
<td>• Choose and connect evidence to create a claim • Draft and select a variety of body paragraphs • Identify a relationship and line of reasoning that will be developed for the essay’s structure • Formulate body paragraphs that include explanation and reasons to connect the claim and evidence</td>
<td>• Choose and connect evidence to create a claim • Draft and select a variety of body paragraphs • Identify a relationship and line of reasoning that will be developed for the essay’s structure • Formulate body paragraphs that include explanation and reasons to connect the claim and evidence • Include counter-claims</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revising and Editing</td>
<td>Use peer reviewers to identify strengths and set goals for revisions</td>
<td>Use transitions and key words to create cohesion</td>
<td>Use peer reviewers to identify strengths and set goals for revisions</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use commas in relation to direct quotes and introductory transitions</td>
<td>Use commas, ellipses, and dashes to indicate a pause, break, or omission</td>
<td>Make decisions in a final draft to maintain formality and cohesion: a title, citation of evidence, and formatting</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence level</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence level</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence level</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consider decisions about format (font, style, alignment, spacing) to maintain appropriate style</td>
<td>Position phrases and clauses</td>
<td>Follow parenthetical-citation format and work-cited format to reference text</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Follow parenthetical-citation format and work-cited format to reference text</td>
<td>Use transitions and key words to create cohesion</td>
<td>Use peer reviewers to identify strengths and set goals for revisions</td>
<td>Use commas, ellipses, and dashes to indicate a pause, break, or omission</td>
<td>Make decisions in a final draft to maintain formality and cohesion: a title, citation of evidence, and formatting</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence level</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence level</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence level</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence level</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence and paragraph level</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence and paragraph level</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence and paragraph level</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence and paragraph level</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence and paragraph level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence and paragraph level</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence and paragraph level</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence and paragraph level</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence and paragraph level</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence and paragraph level</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence and paragraph level</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence and paragraph level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence and paragraph level</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence and paragraph level</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence and paragraph level</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence and paragraph level</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence and paragraph level</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence and paragraph level</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence and paragraph level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence and paragraph level</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence and paragraph level</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence and paragraph level</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
<td>Examine and upgrade word choice</td>
<td>Revise for meaning at the sentence and paragraph level</td>
<td>Respond to common grammar, mechanics, and spelling errors</td>
<td>Select and organize valid evidence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Writers Workshop Unit of Study
7th Grade – Literary Essay

Abstract

WHAT IS A LITERARY ESSAY UNIT?

These units present literary analysis as a form of an argument. In doing so, the lessons honor a student’s ability to consider multiple points of views and theories about an author’s intent; to sort and sift through textual evidence to develop a claim that is unique to their own reading of the text; and to logically explain how the text supports their claim. While many literary analysis lessons assume that a student will regurgitate a literary critic or teacher’s thesis, these lessons ask student readers and writers to actively engage in theory-building, claim-making, selecting and organizing evidence, and revising and editing. This four-step process models the writer’s workshop philosophy. Classrooms that use the workshop model make explicit that the process of learning to read, write, and think are just as important as the finished essay.

These middle school (grades 6-8 grade) units are scaffolded by complexity of topic and types and presentation of evidence:

**Sixth grade focuses**: Developing and proving a theory as a claim about a character, using direct quotes and paraphrased examples as evidence. Students explain evidence by focusing on key words.

**Seventh grade focuses**: Developing and proving a theory as a claim about a text’s theme, using direct quotes, paraphrased examples, and the author’s decisions as evidence. Students introduce key evidence and explain evidence by connecting it back to the claim.

**Eighth grade focuses**: Developing and proving a theory as a claim about the relationship between the analyzed text’s theme and character development. Students use direct quotes, paraphrased examples, key words, summaries of key events, and authorial decisions as evidence. In this unit, students are introduced to the writing of an extended body paragraph and a connected body paragraph, both of which scaffold into the high school literary essay units.

ASSESSMENT

Students working in a collaborative environment become a group of writers, thinkers, and readers who support each other; share their theories, claims, and evidence; actively make decisions and revisions to their work; write with an authentic audience in mind; and expand their repertoire of writing decisions. The unit rubric delineates the qualities of effective literary essays that result from exploring literary texts in a community of writers. A second assessment asks students to self-assess and reflect upon their learning. This combination serves as evidence of a student’s achievement and the development of metacognitive skill.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

The literary essay unit is designed to provide students with the vital opportunity of seeing themselves as capable thinkers and decision-makers in the following ways:

- Students become more flexible in their writing and thinking as they track theories.
- Students develop a repertoire of strategies for analyzing character development, the author’s purpose, craft, and thematic development within and across texts and/or genres.
- Students practice a variety of writing methods that establish a line of reasoning.
- Students engage with quality, grade-level texts, gaining in complexity.
- Students investigate the ways other writers write about complex ideas, synthesize the ideas of others in order to confirm or disconfirm their theories, and create an argumentative essay.

TEACHER DECISIONS FOR UNIT IMPLEMENTATION

The work in this unit is vertically aligned and extends prior learning with the expectation that students understand the repertoire of decisions taught in previous grades. The unit is designed to follow the Narrative Reading Unit and build on the skills and concepts presented in that unit. With that in mind, all three of the Literary Analysis units assume that students are writing their literary essays about a text they have chosen to read individually or in small groups.
For this reason, the unit lessons suggest using an anchor text, which is a text familiar to the whole class that can serve as an example when the teacher is modeling a concept for the class. The lessons also suggest use of mentor texts that serve as strong examples of literary analysis. Teacher and student-generated paragraphs or entire essays can serve as mentor texts, as can excerpts from professional book, music, or film reviews.

Knowing this, teachers should anticipate adjusting and adapting the lessons to meet the needs of their students while staying true to the intent of the unit. We recommend that teachers study and understand the intent of the lesson series. The lessons have a purposeful sequence, but it may require that teachers make adjustments in pacing or decisions about extension activities. Teachers are encouraged to gather their own sources (mentor texts, etc.) that reflect district curriculum and/or student interests. Please see the Resources section for other sources to deepen your understanding of literary essay instruction.

**UNIT ORGANIZATION**
The unit is divided into five parts:

- Theory building and creating a claim
- Organizing evidence to develop a line of reasoning and to support a claim
- Drafting and managing types of evidence
- Revising and editing
- Reflecting and celebrating

Handouts that support the lessons are found immediately following each session. These handouts are referenced in bold font in the “Preparation” section of the session.

*The work in this unit is vertically aligned and extends prior learning with the expectation that students understand the repertoire of decisions taught in previous grades.*

**Instructional Sequencing, Scaffolding, and Pacing:**
Daily pacing of the unit’s sessions is based on a 50-minute class period. Individual teacher pacing will change based on duration of the class period, student population, familiarity with content, process, and/or instructional practices.

Instruction scaffolds students through a four-tiered process.

1. **Teaching Point:** Teacher models the strategy, process, skill, or habit of mind using a mentor text written by the teacher, students, and/or published writers or other materials.
2. **Active Engagement:** Students rehearse the writing, thinking and/or critical reading or viewing just modeled by the teacher.
3. **Independent Practice:** Students complete a mini-task independently or in small collaborative groups. During independent practice, the teacher confers with individuals or small groups to assess student performance to differentiate the lesson and task. Teacher may stop the independent practice to adjust the mini-task and/or session teaching point or for planned teaching points that extend or deepen student performance.
4. **Share:** Students share to read, examine, analyze and/or reflect on the range of responses created by other students. Sharing also enables students to self-monitor effective strategy use. The teacher may also share an exemplar to reinforce or enhance the session’s teaching point(s) and student enactment.

**Key Terms Used in This Unit:**

**Theory:** We use the term here when describing a student’s initial hunch or guess about a literary text’s meaning, as expressed through a central theme. The lessons ask students to first develop several theories about a text’s deeper meaning before diving back into the story or novel to see which of their theories can be supported with evidence (examples from the text). Following this, the students select one or combine a few theories to create a claim about their interpretation of the text. (See below for an explanation of “claim.”) This teaches students a habit of mind that thoughtful and experienced readers, writers, and thinkers routinely use. It also reflects two guiding principles about literary analysis: 1) that multiple interpretations about a text can co-exist, and 2) that a reader’s interpretation must be backed up with evidence from the text.

While it may seem to students and even to teachers that generating multiple theories is a waste of precious time when only one may be used in the final paper, it is in fact a pathway to a richer understanding of the text and of the nature of argument and critical thinking. It also reflects the philosophy of the writer’s workshop that all too often is only applied to “creative writing” — that writers often explore and reject multiple ideas before choosing one to polish and take to publication.

**Claim:** In this context, a claim is a sentence or two that states the student writer’s interpretation of the author’s intent. It is a statement, not a question, but it is “arguable” — it is an interpretation that must be justified and supported through reasons and examples. (For example, the statements that “This story is about life” or “This character feels a lot of emotions” are too general to be arguable; all stories reflect some truth about life, and nearly all fictional works contain a character that experiences emotions.) No, a claim is by nature a “stance.” A theory is more of a question. It may be helpful to frame or to refer to a claim as a thesis. A
thesis is usually broader than a claim (it may contain the reason or explanation for why the author thinks the claim, or statement, is true) but for consistency and alignment with the Core Standards, and to reflect our philosophy that a literary analysis essay is essentially an argument, we use the term “claim” throughout the units.
**Standards**

*Common Core Standards: Informational Writing:* The following College and Career Readiness (CCR) anchor standards apply to reading and writing in narrative template tasks. Refer to the 6-12 standards for grade-appropriate specifics that fit each task and module being developed. The standards numbers and general content remain the same across all grades, but details vary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>CCR Anchor Standards for Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CCR Anchor Standards for Writing Narrative**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>CCR Anchor Standards for Writing Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Overview of Sessions - Teaching Points and Unit Assessments

## Pre-Unit Assessment Task

Use the post-unit assessment from the previous reading unit on literature. Use the assessment to gauge students’ abilities to analyze literary texts.

The prompt for that unit was: Students are to use the information gathered during the unit to analyze specific narrative elements. Students are to respond in writing about how these elements contributed to the overall meaning of the narrative text. Using their reading folders as a reference guide for their written response, students will include details from the text used to identify all the narrative elements of theme, characters, plot, structure, setting, and point of view. Students will include educated opinions about how each of the narrative elements contributed to the overall meaning of the text. Students will provide a clear description of how all these narrative elements together interact over the course of the text to provide meaning.

## TEACHING POINTS:

### BUILDING THEORIES

1. Literary essayists identify ideas about the story’s theme.
2. 2.1 - Literary essayists test their theories by looking for examples from the text.
   2.2 - Literary essayists reread to test their theories.

### ORGANIZING EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT CLAIMS

3. 3.1 Literary essayists review their evidence and create a supportable claim about theme.
   3.2 Literary essayists reread to test their theories, and they change their claim based on new evidence.
4. 4.1 - Literary essayists identify reasons and evidence to explain and support the claim.
   4.2 - Literary essayists evaluate their evidence to identify which examples best support and explain their claims.
5. Literary essayists evaluate their evidence to identify which examples best support and explain their claim.

## Mid-Unit Assessment Task

Students complete the handout “Seventh Grade Literary Essay Rough Plan Format.”

## DRAFTING AND MANAGING TYPES OF EVIDENCE

6. Literary essayists select and organize their evidence to create a plan for drafting.
7. Literary essayists draft body paragraphs by presenting evidence through paraphrase and direct quotes.
8. 8.1 - Literary essayists introduce evidence and connect it back to the claim with key words.
   8.2 - Literary essayists also connect the body paragraphs in the essay with transitions and key words.
9. Literary essayists write an introductory paragraph that summarizes the text’s plot, acknowledges alternate or opposing claims about the theme, and states the essay’s claim. They write a concluding paragraph that makes a broader connection to the reader.

## REVISIGN AND EDITING

10. Literary essayists use peer reviewers to identify strengths and set revision goals.
11. Literary essayists use words and expressions that have a formal tone and use the convention of third person (such as “the reader” or “one”) to refer to themselves, the writers.
12. Literary essayists study punctuation commonly used in essays. They use this knowledge to edit their essays.
13. Literary essayists follow parenthetical-citation formats and works-cited formats to reference the text(s) used in their essays.
14. Literary essayists reflect on their writing decisions and the impact of those decisions.

## Post-Unit Assessment Task

Use students’ self-reflection responses and final essays as the post-unit assessment. Rubrics are included.

The prompt for the final essay is: Carefully read and reread your chosen text to see how the author revealed themes throughout the story or novel. Craft a claim that argues for the validity of one of the themes. Construct a literary essay that logically presents the reasons and evidence in support of the claim. Include an introductory paragraph and concluding paragraph that acknowledges alternate or opposing claims about the theme(s). Maintain formal language throughout, and MLA style for citations. Utilize the writing process, especially drafting, revision and conferencing, in order to create a cohesive essay worthy of sharing with others.
Use this rubric to formatively assess students as they move through the corresponding sections of the unit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROCESS RUBRIC</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Developing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEVELOPING THEORIES</td>
<td>● Demonstration evident of trying multiple different theories on theme.</td>
<td>● Demonstration evident of trying a few different theories on theme.</td>
<td>● Little or no demonstration of trying different theories on theme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Demonstration of a variety of textual evidence gathering.</td>
<td>● Demonstration of textual evidence gathering.</td>
<td>● Little or no demonstration of textual evidence gathering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Demonstration of altering theories based on textual evidence.</td>
<td>● Some demonstration of altering theories based on textual evidence.</td>
<td>● Little or no demonstration of altering theories based on textual evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORGANIZING EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT CLAIMS</td>
<td>● Claim created directly connects to the theory building and evidence gathered.</td>
<td>● Claim created has connection to the theory building and evidence gathered.</td>
<td>● Claim created does not connect to theory building and/or evidence gathering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Sorting and sifting to find most relevant supporting evidence is demonstrated.</td>
<td>● Sorting and sifting to find most relevant evidence is attempted.</td>
<td>● Sorting and Sifting of evidence is evident, but not logically demonstrated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Planning of reasons and evidence is clearly demonstrated.</td>
<td>● Some planning of reasons and evidence is demonstrated.</td>
<td>● Planning of evidence needs improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Plans demonstrate new and revised evidence.</td>
<td>● Plans demonstrate some new evidence.</td>
<td>● No new evidence is introduced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRAFTING AND MANAGING TYPES OF EVIDENCE</td>
<td>● Planning and organization of evidence in a logical manner that fits the argument is presented.</td>
<td>● Planning and organization of evidence is presented.</td>
<td>● Little or no planning or organization of evidence is presented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Multiple drafts of body paragraphs utilizing different approaches to presenting evidence is demonstrated.</td>
<td>● A draft of each body paragraph trying different approaches to presenting evidence is demonstrated.</td>
<td>● Little drafting of body paragraphs is demonstrated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Cohesion between intro, body, and conclusion is demonstrated with key words and transitions.</td>
<td>● Key words are used to create a connection between intro, body, and conclusion paragraphs.</td>
<td>● Connections between intro, body, and conclusion paragraphs need improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REVISING AND EDITING</td>
<td>● Conferring, revision and editing work is clearly demonstrated on draft work and evident in final copy.</td>
<td>● Conferring, revision and editing work is demonstrated on draft work and mostly carried over to final copy.</td>
<td>● Little conferring, revision and editing work is demonstrated on draft work; final copy looks a lot like initial draft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Focused effort on following comma usage rules is clear in drafts and final copy.</td>
<td>● Some effort on following comma usage rules is evident in drafts and final copy.</td>
<td>● Improvement needed on following comma usage rules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Style and format are formal in nature.</td>
<td>● Style and format are mostly formal in nature.</td>
<td>● Style and format are casual in nature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● (Reflection) Writer demonstrates strong awareness of the impact his/her writing decisions have on the reader.</td>
<td>● (Reflection) Writer demonstrates some awareness of the impact of his/her writing decisions.</td>
<td>● (Reflection) Writer does not demonstrate much awareness of the impact of his/her writing decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literary Essay Rubric</td>
<td>Meets Expectations</td>
<td>Developing</td>
<td>Basic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction &amp; Claim</strong></td>
<td>- Introduction <strong>cohesively</strong> includes: connection, summary, claim.</td>
<td>- Introduction includes: connection, summary, claim.</td>
<td>- Has only a claim statement to open the paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Thesis statement <strong>clearly presents</strong> claim(s) to be proven.</td>
<td>- Introduction presents theory (ies) as claim(s) to be proven.</td>
<td>- Paragraph does not clearly present claim(s) to be proven.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Body Paragraphs:</strong> Claim</td>
<td>- all paragraphs have a clear focus from the claim, using key words.</td>
<td>- some paragraphs could be more clear about the focus from the claim.</td>
<td>- paragraphs still need to stay focused on claim.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content (weighted)</td>
<td>Evidence: - Examples support claims in various ways (quoted, paraphrased).</td>
<td>Evidence: - Examples support claims, but lack variety in presentation.</td>
<td>Evidence: - Many examples weakly support the claim and are not quoted or paraphrased correctly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Connections: - Statements are positioned around all examples to connect the examples to the claim.</td>
<td>Connections: - Statements are positioned around some examples to connect the examples to the claim.</td>
<td>Connections: - Many examples are missing statements to connect the examples to the claim.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>- Evidence presents claim(s) in an effective, logical structure (chronologically or by priority).</td>
<td>- Evidence presents claim(s) in a logical structure (chronologically, or by priority).</td>
<td>- Evidence does not seem to be presented in a logical structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Transition words are cohesive to the structure used.</td>
<td>- Transition words are cohesive to the structure used.</td>
<td>- Transition words are unconnected or not used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conventions</strong></td>
<td>- Evidence of editing for spelling, capitalization &amp; punctuation (especially quotation marks and commas).</td>
<td>- Attempts were made to edit, but needs improvement.</td>
<td>- Lacking conventions; no evidence of editing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Uses formal vocabulary/word choice.</td>
<td>- Vocabulary/word choice is casual.</td>
<td>- Vocabulary/word choice needs improvement to be clear.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Session 1

**Concept**

Responding to and Theorizing About a Theme

**Teaching Point**

_Literary essayists identify ideas about the story’s theme._

**Preparation**

Copies of the following handouts, included after this session: (or prepare to project on an overhead)

- **Theme: The Basics (if needed)**
- Teacher-created prompts to deepen student thinking about theme
- Prepare some method to display “Thank-you, ma’am,” by Langston Hughes. Here’s a link to the story:
  
  [http://photos.state.gov/libraries/hochiminh/646441/antt/Thank%20You_%20Ma_am.pdf](http://photos.state.gov/libraries/hochiminh/646441/antt/Thank%20You_%20Ma_am.pdf)

**Suggested Materials**

- Students’ individual texts, read in the previous unit, with notes, bookmarks, or post-its
- Notebooks, or piece of paper to use as an “exit slip” for assessment purposes
- Anchor text

**Active Engagement**

**TEACHER MODELS AND THINKS ALOUD**

- Review teaching point
- Explain that readers develop theories about the story’s theme by noticing details and events, and then making a connection between them. Readers look at the big ideas permeating across a text to determine themes.
- Point students to “Thank-You, Ma’am” or the alternative anchor text.
- Share teacher-created prompts to deepen thinking about theme (consider big ideas, what does the writer want the reader to understand, what is the major conflict, etc.)
- Think aloud by answering three or more prompts about the anchor text. You may jot key words or thoughts on the board as you think aloud.
- If you feel students need to review theme, you may choose to share the handout titled “Theme: The Basics”
- Ask the whole class to look at the words on the board and connect the thoughts on the board to form a theory. Tell them that a theory is a hunch, or an idea, and that the purpose of this session is to come up with theories first about the meaning, or theme, in the anchor text, and then with some theories about themes in their individual texts.
- Any of the responses to theme prompts could become the basis for a theory.
- Ask the class to brainstorm some theories about a theme from the anchor text. Record their theories on the board. Do not judge or rule out any theories at this point.
- When finished, share two of your own theories about a theme from the anchor text. For examples of theories from “Thank-you, Ma’am,” see the “Finding Support for Theories” handout (this handout will be shared with students in Session 2).

**Independent Practice**

- Direct students to take out their individual texts. Using answers from the theme prompts, have students choose three (or more, depending on time and fluency of students) and develop a response to each in their notebooks. The teacher should circulate to make sure the students are writing about their own texts, not the anchor text used by the teacher to model thinking.
- Now, ask students to spend time reviewing the responses (sticky notes, handouts, graphic organizers, etc.) they collected in the previous unit, as well as the new responses generated from theme prompts, to create two or three theories about a theme from their independent text.

**Share**

Before the end of the session, ask a few students to share any “ah-ha” moments as they dug deeper into understanding their texts. You may encourage students to use oral prompts such as: “At first I thought my character …. but now I think…” or “I realized…”

**Assessment/Extension**

Have students hand in one of their theories on piece of paper (an “exit slip”) that they must hand you on the way out the door.
Theme: The Basics

Theme is like the moral of the story. It’s the message or meaning.
✓ Theme is bigger than just these characters and this story.
✓ Theme and subject is NOT the same thing.
✓ A theme can be taken outside of the book and applied to the real world we live in.
✓ Literary works may contain many themes as long as you are able to support your idea with evidence.
✓ Readers construct themes based on their own experience and on how the author wrote the story.

Ways to find the theme:
1. Look for changes in the main character.
2. Watch for clear statements of theme – what does the author write or say that stands out as part of the message?
3. Examine the title.
4. Look at the main conflict. What is the character’s major struggle or conflict? What message is sent from the way it is resolved or how s/he reacts to it?
5. What “big ideas/subjects” does the story seem to be about?
6. Pivotal Moments: what makes one moment significant?

Prompts to capture your thinking about theme:
✓ I think the author is saying...
✓ The character teaches/shows readers...
✓ The story or scene really got me thinking about...
✓ The biggest problem the character faced was...
✓ The way the character solved/reacted to the problem shows me that...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 2</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concept</strong></td>
<td><strong>Finding Support for Theories</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Teaching Points** | *Literary essayists test their theories by looking for examples from the text.*  
*Literary essayists reread to test their theories.* |
| **Preparation** | • Exit slips with student theories, handed in from Session One. Hand back to students with your questions on them, prompting them to think deeper (one-word questions such as “Why?” or “How” can be effective).  
• Make copies of Finding Support for Theories handout. Prepare to project the handout, revealing only the first two rows of the examples from the anchor text filled in. A teacher example using “Thank-you Ma’am” is included here.  
• This session may take more than one class period. |
| **Suggested Materials** | • Students’ individual texts, read in the previous unit, with notes, bookmarks, or post-its.  
• Copy of anchor text. |
| **Teaching Point 1** | *Literary essayists test their theories by looking for examples from the text.* |
| **Active Engagement** | TEACHER MODELS AND THINKS ALOUD  
• Review teaching point.  
• Projecting the handout “Finding Support for Theories—Teaching Example,” review the rows that you have filled out: the theory, the evidence, and the larger meaning (theme).  
As a whole class on the overhead, complete the remaining row using the anchor text. |
| **Independent Practice** | • Direct students to take out their individual texts.  
• Individually (or in partnerships or small groups, if students have read a common text), students begin filling out the Finding Support for Theories handout. Do not allow too much time for this—you will give them more time to complete it during the remainder of the session, or for homework. |
| **Share** | Teacher asks two or three students to share a theory, one example, and the larger meaning. |
| **Teaching Point 2** | *Literary essayists reread to test their theories.* |
| **Active Engagement 2** | TEACHER MODELS AND THINKS ALOUD  
• Review teaching point.  
• Tell them that, like scientists, we will test our theory by reviewing the evidence. If a theory sounds good but has very few examples throughout the text to support it, they may need to change their theory.  
• Projecting the handout “Finding Support for Theories—Teaching Example,” think aloud about which theory you think could best be supported.  
• Discuss changes you could make to your theory to strengthen it. |
| **Independent Practice 2** | Using their individual texts, have students complete the Finding Support for Theories in small groups or individually. They should complete it before Session 3. |
| **Share** | Ask for volunteers to share an example of a theory that they changed, and why they changed it. |
# Finding Support for Theories

## Discovering Themes

Using the Anchor Text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible Theory on Theme</th>
<th>Initial Evidence from Text</th>
<th>This evidence gets us thinking about...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trust is earned</td>
<td>-“The woman did not watch the boy to see if he was going to run now, nor did she watch her purse.” -The boy sits on the far side of the room so the woman can see him. He wants her to trust him now. -After spending time together, she gave him $10.</td>
<td>Once you break trust with someone it is hard to earn it back. It is an important moment in the story to show the woman he is being careful around her now.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trusting others is hard</td>
<td>-Mrs. Jones tells Roger, “You could have asked me” instead of snatching her pocketbook. -“The door was open. He could make a dash for it...he could run!” -“The boy wanted to say something else other than “Thank you, ma’am.”</td>
<td>People don’t trust that others will help them. We jump to conclusions about people and their reactions instead of talking to them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust comes with kindness</td>
<td>-She took notice and care to tell him to wash his face. -She asks, “Ain’t you got nobody at home to tell you to wash your face?” -At the end she gives Roger $10 to go buy the suede shoes and tells him to behave.</td>
<td>The woman spent time getting to know Roger, and he spent time getting to know her. She was kind to him and he finally was kind to her. This created trustworthiness between them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Individually, or in small groups working on the same text, write two of your theories in the left column. Name those that you feel you can find support from multiple places in the text (middle column) and that perhaps have a larger meaning connected to life (right column).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible Theory on Theme</th>
<th>Initial Evidence from Text</th>
<th>This evidence gets us thinking about...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept</td>
<td>Turning Theories Into Claims</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Points</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Literary essayists review their evidence and create a supportable claim about theme.</em>&lt;br&gt;They reread to test their theories, and they change their claim based on new evidence.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preparation</strong></td>
<td>Handouts to have copied:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Collecting Supporting Evidence handout (blank, for students). Teacher should complete with claim and evidence about anchor text. (Sample answers are not provided here).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suggested Materials</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Students’ individual texts, read in the previous unit, with notes, bookmarks, or post-its.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Anchor text</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point 1</strong></td>
<td><em>Literary essayists review their evidence and create a supportable claim about theme.</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Active Engagement 1</strong></td>
<td>TEACHER MODEL AND THINK ALOUD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Review teaching point</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Define a claim as a statement that expresses the theory the writer will try to prove. A theory is questionable like a hunch; a claim is a stand, one that will be argued in the rest of the essay.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Using the teacher-created theories about the anchor text, think aloud how you might connect theories or big ideas to create a claim. For example: “Distrust and fear can only be overcome with kindness.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Partner students and give them about five minutes to come up with a different claim about the anchor text. Encourage them to come up with claims that explore different themes or meanings. For example, the teacher examples from “Thank-you, Ma’am” all have to do with trust. But ideas like poverty, strength, generosity, wisdom, and youth also could be explored.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• When completed, ask for volunteers to write their claims on the board.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent Practice 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Students generate two claims about a theme in their individual texts, based on “Finding Support for Theories” handout completed in Session Two and on any additional thinking they have done.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point 2</strong></td>
<td><em>They reread to test their theories, and they change their claim based on new evidence.</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Active Engagement 2</strong></td>
<td>TEACHER MODELS AND THINKS ALOUD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Review teaching point</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Project or hand out “Collecting Evidence (Teacher Example)” you have partially filled out on the anchor text.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Model how you gathered a variety of types of evidence to support the claim. Name for students the type of evidence you have collected: a direct quote, a key word, a significant event, or a literary device the students are familiar with, such as metaphor or symbol. Emphasize the importance of including the page number, as a way to nudge students to re-read and find exact examples.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ask students to work in small groups or partnerships to complete the “Collecting Evidence (Teacher Example)” Check for understanding. Have students turn in to you. You will select two or three to use in Session Four as examples.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent Practice</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hand out a blank copy of Collecting Evidence for students to use as they re-read their individual texts, collecting a variety of evidence to prove their claims.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment</strong></td>
<td>Conference with students as they collect evidence to check for variety and accuracy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Collecting Supporting Evidence

Text Title ____________________________________________________________

Theme: ___________________________________________________________________________

Types of Evidence: Direct Quotes, Character Action, Thoughts, Dialogue, Key Events, Author’s Device

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Evidence</th>
<th>Page Numbers</th>
<th>Textual Evidence</th>
<th>Relevance to a Claim or Reasons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pg. #</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pg. #</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pg. #</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pg. #</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Session 4

**Concept**
Identifying Reasons and Evaluating Evidence

**Teaching Points**

*Literary essayists identify reasons and evidence to explain and support the claim.*

*Literary essayists evaluate their evidence to identify which examples best support and explain their claims.*

**Preparation**
- Teacher-generated prompts to deepen student thinking
- Teacher-generated responses to two to three prompts about the anchor text (example not included here)
- Highlighters (in two different colors)
- **Collecting Supporting Evidence—Teacher Example** on anchor text, completed in Session 3 by teacher and students. Select two or three student examples from the previous session to use in Teacher Models and Thinks Aloud for today’s session.
- **Collecting Evidence—Student Examples**
- **7th Grade Literary Essay—Rough Plan Format** handout, attached after this session
- Session 4 may take more than one class period.

**Suggested Materials**
- Individual texts
- Anchor text
- **7th Grade Literary Essay—Rough Plan Format** handout

**Teaching Point 1**

*Literary essayists identify reasons and evidence to explain and support the claim.*

**Active Engagement**

**TEACHER MODELS AND THINKS ALOUD**
- Review teaching point
- Project teacher-created prompts to deepen student thinking (This makes me realize... for example.... This connects to...) Project or hand out teacher example of responses to two or three prompts. (Not provided here).
- Now, talk through the difference between reasons and evidence. Reasons are independent of the book – the supporting statements that explain the claim. Evidence is the examples used from the text to show the reasons/claim. Using underlines and circles (or colored markers or highlighter tool on the word processing application), mark or highlight sentences or phrases from your writing that explains the claim vs. sentences or phrases of your language that is evidence (examples from the text) in support of the claim.
- Explain that the goal of today’s writing is to push thinking to explain why the claim about the theme is true. Each explanation becomes a reason, which could serve as the topic sentence of each body paragraph.

**Independent Practice 1**
Hand out copy of teacher-created prompts to deepen thinking and colored highlighters. Ask students to choose two or three prompts and respond to them with a fast write (not editing or stopping). Then have them go back and highlight, in two different colors, reasons and evidence.

**Share**
Ask for a few volunteers to share some of the reasons they identified. Ask them to explain how the reasons connect or explain the claim.

**Teaching Point 2**

*Literary essayists evaluate their evidence to identify which examples best support and explain their claim.*

**Active Engagement**

**TEACHER MODELS AND THINKS ALOUD**
- Review teaching point.
- Project a teacher sample or a student example of “Collecting Evidence” handout, collected from students in Session 3. Talk through the student’s evidence. Think aloud to the class if the student’s examples are the best examples to prove the claim and reasons. Are there additional examples that could be used for support? Are there a variety of types of examples (key words, events, direct quotes, and literary devices) used to support?
- Hand out another example of Collecting Evidence—student sample #2, with student name removed, if desired. In pairs, ask students to evaluate the evidence and to highlight or underline the two pieces of evidence that best support the claim.
- Discuss as a whole class. Ask if some examples should be eliminated or replaced, and/or if they need to be supported with additional examples to prove the claim.
- Point out that good evidence comes from 1) throughout the text, and is not found in just one place; and 2) comes from a variety of types of evidence (direct quotes, key events, literary
| Assessment/ Extension | Pass out **Literary Essay—Rough Plan Handout** and have students complete the claim, three reasons, and at least one example per reason for the next session. |
Seventh Grade Literary Essay Rough Plan Format

**Claim**

**Reason 1:**
- Supporting Evidence 1 [direct quotation or important events]
- Supporting Evidence 2 [direct quotation or important events]

**Reason 2:**
- Supporting Evidence 1 [direct quotation or important events]
- Supporting Evidence 2 [direct quotation or important events]

**Reason 3:**
- Supporting Evidence 1 [direct quotation or important events]
- Supporting Evidence 2 [direct quotation or important events]
### Session 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Re-reading to Find Evidence for Reasons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Point</td>
<td><em>Literary essayists reread to find additional evidence to support the reasons and the claim.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>At least two students need to come to class with their homework from Session 4: <em>Literary Essay: Rough Plan</em> handout completed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggested Materials</td>
<td>Individual texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extra blank copies of <em>Rough Plans Format</em> for students who wish to begin again. Found in Session 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Engagement</td>
<td><strong>TEACHER MODELS AND THINKS ALOUD</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Ask for two student volunteers to present their homework by writing it up on the board or overhead. Each student should write their claim, their reasons, and at least one piece of evidence for each reason.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Talk through each student example. Discuss as a class the evidence and whether or not it connects to the reasons and the claim. Also ask them to notice how the reasons connect to each other. Does one reason happen as a result of another? (This is in preparation for Session 6.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Review teaching point.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Discuss with students that best examples should connect the claim and the reason, and be found throughout the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Practice</td>
<td>Ask students to review their texts, looking for the best examples to support their reasons and claims. They may add on to their <em>Rough Plan</em>. They may wish to begin again with a fresh Rough Plan handout.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>Conference with students over their claim, reasons, and examples. If you wish, <em>Rough Plans</em> may be used as a mid-unit assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept</td>
<td>Organizing Reasons and Examples to Logically Build an Argument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Point</td>
<td><em>Literary essayists select and organize their evidence to create a plan for drafting.</em> They organize the reasons that explain the claim in a way that logically builds their argument. Chronological order, priority order, and categorical order are three ways reasons and evidence logically connect to one another.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Preparation | • Prepare copies of the handout *Organizing Reasons and Examples to Logically Build an Argument*  
• Prepare copies of the handout *Organizing Structures: Student Examples* |
| Suggested Materials | • Individual texts  
• Anchor texts |
| Active Engagement | TEACHER MODELS AND THINKS ALOUD  
• Review Teaching Point. Define *chronological order, priority order, and categorically.*  
• Review Handout “*Organizing Structures.*” Point out the varying transitions writers use to signal to the reader their organizing structure. You may wish to also point out that literary essayists use other structures, in addition to these three presented here. |
| Independent Practice | • Hand out *Organizing Structures: Student Examples*  
• Ask students to complete individually, then check their answers with a peer sitting next to them |
| Share | Ask for a few student pairs to share their answers and their thinking with the class. |
| Independent Practice | Have students review their *Rough Plans* to decide on an organizational structure they will use. If groups of students share a common text, you may wish to have them meet with their groups to decide. Conference with them as they do this. |
| Assessment | Have students hand in an “Exit Slip,” where they write down the type of structure they will use, and a sentence explaining why they chose that structure. |
Organizing Reasons and Examples to Logically Build an Argument

Essays organized chronologically present reasons by time or sequence. Reasons and supporting examples to support the claim are given in order from the beginning of the book, to the middle, and to the end. Chronological order is a persuasive method to organize a literary essay when claiming that a character has changed over the course of the story.

Common Chronological Transitions:
- First, Next, Then, Last
- At the beginning, Near the middle, At the end
- Initially, Later on, Finally

Essays organized by priority present reasons and examples by importance or significance. This structure is considered when evidence can be ranked from more compelling to less compelling or vice versa.

Common Priority Transitions:
- Most important, In fact, Accordingly
- Besides, Further, Furthermore, Moreover
- Most significantly, Next, Further, Less Important

Essays organized categorically present things by classification, or sorting things into categories. You may choose to organize your essay categorically if you:
- have multiple claims and can categorize each into a group,
- are describing or defining; listing down the general ideas and discussing them,
- are presenting evidence containing two aspects: similarities/differences, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, problem/solution.

Common Category Transitions:
- One way, Another way, A third way
- First off, Second, Third
- Also, In the same way, Just as
- However, In contrast, On the other hand
STUDENT ESSAY SAMPLES: The paper’s introduction is present to provide the claim. The topic sentence of each body paragraph has been listed and bolded. Use them to determine the organizational structure this writer chose for the essay.

Life Lessons

In the story “Thank You, Ma’am,” by Langston Hughes, a young man named Roger tries to steal a woman’s purse. She stops him and drags him home to her house. In the hour that follows, he learns a lot from her. Hughes presents the theme of learning lessons as a result of your mistakes. The boy learns that life is hard for everyone, being poor doesn’t mean you should make poor decisions, and that people can be generous if you have a real need.

Many people have hard lives in one way or another.

More important, Roger learns from Mrs. Jones is to make good decisions no matter what.

Most significant, Mrs. Jones’ actions teach readers to be generous.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

How do you know?

Respect and Trust go Hand in Hand

Most young people can benefit from having a trusting relationship with an older person. In the story “Thank You, Ma’am,” by Langston Hughes, a young man named Roger meets an older woman by trying to steal from her. Through the course of the story, she shows the boy respect and trust go hand in hand.

At the beginning of the story, Mrs. Jones’ reaction to Roger’s stealing shows her distrust for him.

Early on at her house, the boy learns that Mrs. Jones is willing to trust him if he is respectful.

Later on, Mrs. Jones shows respect for Roger in hopes that he will show that he is trustworthy.

By the end of the story, it is clear that Roger respects Mrs. Jones and they have a mutual trust.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

How do you know?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Presenting Evidence: Direct Quotes and Paraphrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Point</td>
<td>Literary essayists draft body paragraphs by presenting evidence through paraphrase and direct quotes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Preparation | • Prepare copies of the handout Presenting Evidence: Direct Quotes, Paraphrase  
• Mentor texts: Other literary essay samples from students or from published essays (not provided here). |
| Suggested Materials | • Individual texts  
• Anchor text  
• Resource from Vanderbilt University Writing Studio explaining when and how to use Summary, Direct Quote, and Paraphrase: [http://www.vanderbilt.edu/writing/resources/](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/writing/resources/) (go to Handouts/Incorporating Sources/Effective Quotes, Paraphrase, and Summaries) |
| Active Engagement | TEACHER MODELS AND THINKS ALOUD  
• Review teaching point  
• Explain that direct quote and paraphrasing are methods literary essayists use to present evidence in a literary analysis essay. You may use this definition for clarification:  
  Quote Direct word-for-word quotes should be marked with quotation marks. Direct quotes should be used only when something has been especially well said, or when the writer wants to respond or react to the language the character or author has used.  
  Paraphrase A paraphrase is a retelling of an idea in different words. Usually a paraphrase has fewer words than the original, so it is a little like a summary, except that the paraphrase is on a smaller scale and deals with only a small section of the original text at a time.  
  Source: [www.calstatela.edu/academic/english](http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/english)  
• Share a sample essay that uses direct quotes (not provided here). Point out the direct quotes lifted from the text. Direct students’ attention to notice how direct quotes are set up and punctuated.  
• Within the same sample, share examples of paraphrasing. Draw students’ attention to noticing how and where the writer used his or her own words to describe events from the text.  
Ask students to notice how the literary essayist explained her evidence. What words does she use to illustrate how the evidence supports the claim? (Repeated key words and synonyms)  
• Distribute Handout: Presenting Evidence: Direct Quotes, Paraphrase  
• Direct students to circle and underline (or highlight) the evidence, and underline the key words and phrases that connect the evidence back to the claim. |
| Share | Ask for 2-3 students to share how they marked up their handout, and to explain their thinking. |
| Independent Practice | Ask students to draft a body paragraph, using direct quotes and paraphrasing as evidence. Ask them to explain how the evidence supports or proves the claim. More examples and direct teaching on this follow in Session 8. |
| Assessment | Students should complete one body paragraph for homework. The paragraph should contain a topic sentence with a reason (this can be taken from the Rough Plan); a quote or paraphrase as evidence; and language containing key words or phrases that explain the evidence and connect it back to the claim. Use this formatively to notice where students are successful or need help in presenting evidence. |
Presenting Evidence
Direct Quotes, Paraphrasing

Teacher Example from “Thank-You, Ma’am,” by Langston Hughes

**Direct Quote**

The first way of seeing right and wrong in this story is when Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones took in the boy and nurtured him; she tried to teach him between right and wrong. For example, Mrs. Jones replies, “Well you didn’t have to snatch my pocketbook to get some blue suede shoes... You could have just asked me.” The boy, now, after being told he should just ask for help, believes that the right thing to do is ask, not take.

**Paraphrase**

The first way of seeing right and wrong in this story is when Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones took in the boy and nurtured him; she tried to teach him between right and wrong. For example, Mrs. Jones tells him he should have asked her for her money instead of trying to take it. The boy, after being told he should just ask for help, believes that the right thing to do is ask, not take.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concept</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preparation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suggested Materials</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Active Engagement and Share</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent Practice</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point 2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Active Engagement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent Practice</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Presenting Evidence
Direct Quotes, Paraphrase, and Key Word Connections
Teacher Think-Aloud

Circle: Evidence (direct quotes, summarizing and/or paraphrasing). Label the type of evidence used.

Underline: Connections to the claim – sentences/phrases. Notice where around the evidence the connections occur and the key words/synonyms used to connect.

Like most young people who have a relationship with a grandparent or other older person, Roger’s time with this Mrs. Jones helps him learn how to be kind to others. Even though Roger tried to steal the lady’s purse, the lady tries to teach him how to treat others. Mrs. Jones shows how kindness can help others when she wants the boy to wash his dirty face. On page 19, the lady said, “Ain’t you got nobody at home to tell you to wash your face?...Then it will get washed this evening.” She is being kind to the boy by pointing out that he needs to clean his face and providing the water and towel to clean his face. The boy should be thankful for the lady caring for him. She also showed undeserved kindness to the boy on page 20. She served him a meal of ham, beans and cocoa. The lady was being kind by giving him a clean towel to dry off. Even though Roger had mistreated her, Mrs. Jones tried to show him that kindness is the proper way to treat people.

POSSIBLE INTERPRETATION:
(Evidence is bolded. On the board or on hard copies, circle the evidence instead.)

Like most young people who have a relationship with a grandparent or other older person, Roger’s time with this Mrs. Jones helps him learn how to be kind to others. Even though Roger tried to steal the lady’s purse, the lady tries to teach him how to treat others. Mrs. Jones shows how kindness can help others when she wants the boy to wash his dirty face. On page 19, the lady said, “Ain’t you got nobody at home to tell you to wash your face?...Then it will get washed this evening.” She is being kind to the boy by pointing out that he needs to clean his face and providing the water and towel to clean his face. The boy should be thankful for the lady caring for him. She also showed undeserved kindness to the boy on page 20. She served him a meal of ham, beans and cocoa. Even though Roger had mistreated her, Mrs. Jones tried to show him that kindness is the proper way to treat people.

*notice paraphrase and quote with the face example, and notice paraphrase with the meal example
*notice underlined connections before and during the face example, and before and after the meal example.
Circle: Evidence (direct quotes or paraphrasing). Label the type of evidence used.

Underline: Connections to the claim – sentences/phrases. Notice where around the evidence the connections occur and the key words/synonyms used to connect.

The first way of seeing right and wrong in this story is when Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones took in the boy and nurtured him; she tried to teach him between right and wrong. She gave him food, a nice conversation, and even a chance to escape. Mrs. Jones was being sensitive to the boy she caught. She was trying to teach the young man that if you treat people right it will get you further. For example, the boy told Mrs. Jones that he tried to steal her purse for one reason, to buy blue suede shoes for himself. She then replies, ‘Well you didn’t have to snatch my pocketbook to get some blue suede shoes... You could have just asked me.’ The boy, now, after being told he should just ask for help, believes that the right thing to do is ask, not take.
Introducing and Connecting Evidence

Story Evidence = Introduce, Evidence, Connect

Mrs. Jones shows how kindness can help others when she wants the boy to wash his dirty face. On page 19, the lady said, “Ain’t you got nobody at home to tell you to wash your face?...Then it will get washed this evening.” She is being kind to the boy by pointing out that he needs to clean his face and providing the water and towel to clean his face.

INTRODUCE (introducing the context of the example):
Mrs. Jones shows how kindness can help others when she wants the boy to wash his dirty face.

EVIDENCE (quote or paraphrase the text example):
On page 19, the lady said, “Ain’t you got nobody at home to tell you to wash your face?...Then it will get washed this evening.”

CONNECT (explain the connection/explanation to the reason/claim—remember key words):
She is being kind to the boy by pointing out that he needs to clean his face and providing the water and towel to clean his face.

Your Turn
Break apart the presented story example to show

Story Evidence = Introduce, Evidence, Connect

Mrs. Jones has the wisdom to leave the door open and her purse on the bed to show Roger that she will trust him to do the right thing. Roger feels he must honor her trust by taking the time to sit on the far side of the room so she could see him. They both treat each other with respect, which leads to them trusting each other.

INTRODUCE (introducing the context of the example):

EVIDENCE (quote or paraphrase the text example):

CONNECT (explain the connection to the reason/claim—remember key words):
Introducing and Connecting Evidence: Literary Devices

Mrs. Jones says, “You Lie!” when the boy claims he didn’t mean to take her purse. Hughes uses Mrs. Jones’ dialogue to reveal to readers that she sees through the boy and will not accept lying his way out of a consequence. The dialogue shows how trust is broken through lies and dishonesty.

INTRODUCE (name/describe the device being used):
Hughes uses Mrs. Jones’ dialogue to reveal to readers that she sees through the boy and will not accept lying his way out of a consequence.

EVIDENCE (quote or paraphrase the text example):
Mrs. Jones says, “You Lie!” when the boy claims he didn’t mean to take her purse.

CONNECT (explain the connection to the reason/claim- remember key words):
The dialogue shows how trust is broken through lies and dishonesty.

Your Turn:
Break apart the presented story example to show

One way Langston Hughes expresses his theme of compassion is through one of the character’s reaction to conflict. In the story, a boy named Roger decides to grab Mrs. Jones’ purse and take off. Fortunately, he was unsuccessful. She quickly asked him questions like: “What did you want to do it for?”; ‘Ain’t you got nobody home to tell you to wash your face?’; and ‘Was I bothering you when I turned that corner?’” The author uses the conflict between the boy and the woman as a chance to show compassion through Mrs. Jones’ reactions. By her asking of his intentions and showing concern for his home life, she shows the boy the true way to treat others.

INTRODUCE (name/describe the device being used):

EVIDENCE (quote or paraphrase the text example):

CONNECT (provide the connection to the reason/claim):
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Introductory and Ending Paragraphs: Using the Claim and Key Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Point</td>
<td>Literary essayists write an introductory paragraph that summarizes the text’s plot, acknowledges alternate or opposing claims about the theme, and states the essay’s claim. They write a concluding paragraph that makes a broader connection to the reader.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Preparation | • Student Examples from “Thank-You, Ma’am,” by Langston Hughes handout, attached after this session  
• Student drafts of body paragraphs, completed after Session 8  
Consider creating a chart of what is included in introductory paragraphs and/or conclusions.  
An introductory paragraph should include:  
• Text Reference: the title and author of the novel or short story  
• Plot Summary: a brief review of the most significant event(s) in the story to introduce the topic (in this case, theme)  
• Claim: Arguable theory about the theme  
• Acknowledge alternate or opposing claims: In a phrase or a sentence, briefly summarize a different claim that could be made, and dismiss it  
• Mention of Evidence: Author decisions you will discuss that prove the claim (Key moments, character development, the story’s conflict, etc.).  
A conclusion paragraph should include:  
• A restatement of the claim in another way  
• A statement that reconnects to the reader (something to ponder, application to their life, emphasis on significant essay points) |
| Suggested Materials | • Individual texts  
• Anchor text |
| Active Engagement | TEACHER MODELS AND THINKS ALOUD  
• Review Teaching Point.  
• If prepared, share charts reminding them of introduction/conclusion components.  
• Share handout: Student Sample Introduction and Conclusion paragraphs.  
• Notice together the key words/synonyms are used in both the introduction and conclusion that create cohesiveness. Explain how connecting these two pieces are important to bringing cohesiveness to the essay. |
| Share | • Pair students and have them trade drafts of body paragraphs. Partners identify the key phrase or words that should continue through the essay.  
• Have pairs share with whole class some of the key words they found in each other’s essays that created cohesion. |
| Independent Practice | Students draft introduction and concluding paragraphs. Encourage them to highlight their claim to be sure it has been restated and followed through from introduction to conclusion. |
| Assessment | Conference with students as they write. As you find good examples of student sentences or paragraphs, read aloud to whole class. |
Sample Introduction

People talk about “random acts of kindness.” These are rare in our world today. Sometimes though, you see the trust between people through their acts of kindness like a stranger give a compliment, or a teacher asking about a student’s day. In the short story “Thank You, Ma’am,” the boy gets a random act of kindness by the woman he was stealing a purse from. Some people would find it crazy for a woman to be kind to a boy who tried to rob her. But the story shows the power of kindness and trust. The author, Langston Hughes, uses the boy’s story to teach readers the importance of having kindness and trust in our world.

Sample Conclusion

From the events in the story, Langston Hughes’s themes are shown through the valuable lessons the woman teaches the boy. By taking him in and pampering him, she imparts a kindness he has never known. Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones was a strong role model for the boy, showing him the power in trust between two people. A very important lesson taught to all is to build trust in relationships by treating others with kindness.
The following sessions are ideas on how to complete the writing process within the literary essay. Some samples are given under resources, but not all lessons are provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Session 10 | Peer Conferencing<br><br>Teaching Point: Literary essayists use peer reviewers to identify strengths and set revision goals.  
Preparation: Prepare copies of the handout Peer Conferencing, attached after this session. |
| Session 11 | Revising: Create Formal Style and Tone through Word Choice<br><br>Teaching Point: Literary essayists use words and expressions that have a formal tone and use the convention of third person (such as “the reader” or “one”) to refer to themselves, the writers. |
| Session 12 | Editing<br><br>Teaching Point: Literary essayists study punctuation commonly used in essays. They use this knowledge to edit their essays.  
This punctuation includes: commas, ellipses and dashes, which indicate a pause, break or omission. |
| Session 13 | Polishing and Publishing: Citation<br><br>Teaching Point: Literary essayists follow parenthetical-citation formats and works-cited formats to reference the text(s) used in their essays. |
| Session 14 | Reflection<br><br>Teaching Point: Literary essayists reflect on their writing decisions and the impact of those decisions.  
Preparation: Prepare copies of the handout Literary Essay Writing, provided after this session  
Review the celebration suggestions, provided in a handout after this session  
Assessment: Use students’ self-reflection responses and final essays as the post-unit assessment. Rubrics are included. |
### Peer Conferencing

**Writer _________________________ Reader (s) _____________________________________**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tell what you liked:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ask Questions:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Give Advice:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Writer’s Plan**

1. 

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

2. 

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

3. 

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________
Literary Essay 7: Session 14

SAMPLE Self-Reflection

Literary Essay Writing
During the process of generating ideas from “Thank You, Ma’am” toward writing a literary essay, reflect on the decisions that you made to organize and craft your essay to include a strong claim statement with supporting paragraphs. Reflect on the process you used to connect each paragraph back to the claim and what decisions you made regarding the type of evidence you used and how you presented your evidence.

1. **(ANCHOR TEXT)** Name something that you admired that was imitated in your own writing from the mentor essays studied. Consider the effect it had on you as the reader. Lift an example from the text. (2pts)

2. What strategies did you use that were helpful in generating a claim statement? Give an example of how this planning had an effect on your essay. (3 pts.)

3. **(YOUR OWN WRITING)** What did you purposely decide to put into your draft to improve your essay writing? Share two different examples, lifting exact words/lines from your own writing. Name the decision used and the effect you wanted on the reader.

   Example 1: (2 pts.)

   Example 2: (2 pts.)
Suggestions for Celebrating Publication

Author’s Gallery: Students leave their final piece on their desk with a piece of paper that says “Compliments.” Students walk around and quietly read peer essays, leaving positive notes on the writer’s “Compliment” paper.

Author Stations: Set up several stations including students reading aloud their essay, others open to for visitors to silently read. Perhaps some essays are accompanied by illustrations of the book/story discussed or a visual character analysis. Hang a string of tissue paper flags with students' discoveries about writing literary essays written on them as decoration.

Field Trip to Another Class: Visit a class that would be interested in the same level texts and share student pieces in small groups.

Moving Circle: Sit in two big concentric circles. The inside circle would move around while the outside circle stayed.

Small Groups: Sit in groups of four or five and share the pieces. It helps if there is one leader per group facilitating the discussion and reflection.

Invite parents: Give them a compliment sheet to fill out after the celebration to give to their child or to another student in the class. Students love compliments!

Class Book: Type an anthology of their work to send home or post on your website at the end of the unit.
Readers Workshop Unit of Study
7th Grade – Informational Reading

ELA
Common Core Standards
# Readers Workshop Unit of Study

## 7th Grade – Informational Reading

### Table of Contents

**Preface**

| Learning Progressions 6 - 8                                                                 | 1 |
| Learning Progressions 9 - 12                                                               | 2 |

**Background Section**

| Abstract                                                                                      | 5 |
| Standards                                                                                     | 6 |
| Overview of Sessions – Teaching and Learning Points                                          | 7 |

**Resource Materials Section**

| Session 1                                                                                     | 8 |
| Session 2                                                                                     | 11 |
| Session 3                                                                                     | 15 |
| Session 4                                                                                     | 17 |
| Session 5                                                                                     | 20 |
| Session 6                                                                                     | 24 |
| Session 7                                                                                     | 27 |
| Session 8                                                                                     | 29 |
| Session 9                                                                                     | 32 |
| Session 10                                                                                    | 37 |
Readers Workshop Unit of Study
7th Grade – Informational Reading
Preface

The following unit supports and aligns to the Common Core State Standards. This research-based work is the outcome of a collective effort made by numerous secondary teachers from around the state of Michigan. Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA) initiated a statewide collaborative project, bringing together educators from around the state to create and refine a K-12 English Language Arts model curriculum. The Independent Reading unit is situated as the opening reading unit of study within a yearlong sequence of reading units. The unit emphasizes students’ recognizing reading comprehension, reader independence, and reader identity. The foundation of a reading identity and strategies to engage with text scaffold readers into the complexities of subsequent reading units that are focused deeply within the three main types of writing. Each unit within the MAISA yearlong model curriculum presents a string of teaching points that scaffold and spiral the content and skills. Units of study are structured to be student-centered rather than teacher-driven. Sessions emphasize student engagement and strive to simultaneously increase critical thinking and writing skills. Sessions are designed as a series of mini-lessons that allow time to read, practice, respond, and conference. Through summative and formative assessments specific to each unit, students will progress toward becoming independent thinkers and readers.

Significant input and feedback was gathered both in the initial conceptualizing of the unit and later revisions. Teachers from around the state piloted and/or reviewed the unit; their feedback and student artifacts helped in the revision process. Special thanks go to lead unit writers Bryan Hartsig, Lisa Kraiza, and Judy Kelly, who closely studied the CCSS, translated the standards into curriculum and practice, and revised with a close eye to classroom teacher feedback. Throughout the yearlong collaborative project, teachers who are reviewing units are finding how students’ habits of mind have shifted from task-oriented to big-picture thinking, utilizing a critical literacy lens.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>6th</th>
<th>7th</th>
<th>8th</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Analyzing Genre: Craft and Structure</strong></td>
<td>• Analyze the difference between narrative and informational text</td>
<td>• Understand that authors present information in a variety of ways</td>
<td>• Analyze the different structures of informational text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Analyze how informational-text features organize the elaboration of key ideas</td>
<td>• Locate specific information, and read to gather information</td>
<td>• Determine a central idea of a text, while analyzing its development over the course of the piece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Analyze an author’s shifts in structure while elaborating an idea</td>
<td>• Read purposely to explore new and unfamiliar concepts</td>
<td>• Provide an objective summary of the text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Build background knowledge about new topics</td>
<td>• Determine an author’s shifts in structure while elaborating an idea</td>
<td>• Analyze how a text makes connections and distinctions between individuals, ideas or events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Developing Strategies for Close Reading: Key Ideas and Details</strong></td>
<td>• Determine a central idea and how it is developed</td>
<td>• Make connections to what they know and new information</td>
<td>• Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Determine what is important</td>
<td>• Use strategies to decode context of words they don’t understand using clues in text</td>
<td>• Analyze what an author has explicitly said and what is implied in the text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Summarize a central idea</td>
<td>• Use effective strategies to navigate different structures of informational text</td>
<td>• Evaluate textual evidence as it relates to the author’s claim and determine supporting ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Determine the meanings of specific words</td>
<td>• Determine an author’s purpose and how it is conveyed</td>
<td>• Analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Determine an author’s purpose and how it is conveyed</td>
<td>• Evaluate details and assess if they are relevant and support the central idea</td>
<td>• Evaluate the different forms of informational text: i.e. print, digital, multimedia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interacting with Multiple Texts: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</strong></td>
<td>• Compare two authors’ presentations of ideas</td>
<td>• Examine one or more central idea and be able to provide a summary of the text using an author’s presented evidence</td>
<td>• Analyze two or more texts on the same topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Evaluate how two different authors advance their evidence to support the central idea in informational text</td>
<td>• Analyze how two different authors advance their evidence to support the central idea in informational text</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Copyright © 2010-2014 by the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators and Oakland Schools.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Range of Text Complexity to Increase Rigor</th>
<th>9th Grade Informational Text Structures and Features</th>
<th>10th Grade Core Democratic Values</th>
<th>11th Grade Bill of Rights</th>
<th>12th Grade Social Issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Developing Strategies for Close Reading: Key Ideas and Details</strong></td>
<td>Current Events Magazine and news print texts</td>
<td>United States History Poetry, song, speech (video), photography, print article, digital website text, political cartoon and poster, U.S. foundational documents: speech (audio &amp; print) and letters</td>
<td>Comparative View of Rights in America (Poetry, song), educational video, print text, graphs and charts, contemporary speech/transcripts, foundational legal documents, including The Bill of Rights</td>
<td>American and Global Social Issues Educational video, photographs, print text, infographics, foundational speech/transcripts, websites, poetry, and memoir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop a multi-draft reading process for a range of current-event articles: magazine and news</td>
<td>• Develop a multi-draft reading process for a range of informational texts: audio speech, print, cartoons/posters, and letters</td>
<td>• Develop a multi-draft reading process for a range of informational texts: educational videos, print text, graphs and charts, speeches/transcripts, foundational legal documents</td>
<td>• Develop a multi-draft reading process for a range of informational texts: educational videos, photographs, print texts, infographics, memoirs, poetry, and foundational speeches/transcripts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text</td>
<td>• Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of history, political views, statements (position of America) and foundational (Constitutional) knowledge</td>
<td>• Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text</td>
<td>• Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of history, political views, statements (position of America) and foundational knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Determine a central idea or multiple central ideas of a text.</td>
<td>• Determine a central idea or multiple central ideas in sophisticated foundational documents</td>
<td>• Determine a central idea or multiple central ideas in sophisticated foundational documents</td>
<td>• Determine a central idea or multiple central ideas in sophisticated foundational documents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Analyze how the author uses text structure and text features to shape and refine specific details; provide an objective summary</td>
<td>• Analyze development of multiple central ideas over the course of the text, including how they emerge and are shaped and refined by specific details</td>
<td>• Analyze development of multiple central ideas over the course of the text, including how they emerge and are shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text</td>
<td>• Analyze development of multiple central ideas over the course of the text, including how they emerge and are shaped and refined by specific details</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyzing Genre: Craft and Structure</td>
<td>• Identify and analyze types of text features</td>
<td>• Identify craft decisions that impact meaning and author intent/central idea: diction, academic, or historically relevant vocabulary</td>
<td>• Identify craft and structural decisions that impact meaning and author intent/central idea: diction, academic, legal, or historically relevant vocabulary.</td>
<td>• Identify craft decisions that impact meaning and author intent/central idea: diction, academic, or historically relevant vocabulary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify, analyze, and evaluate the impact and effectiveness of these authoring decisions on meaning and author intent/central idea in current print media</td>
<td>• Identify details that create historical or factual context and develop and shape the central idea</td>
<td>• Identify details that create historical or factual context that impact diction, identification of key details, and a central idea</td>
<td>• Identify details that create historical or factual context and develop and shape the central idea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Write an objective summary of parts of a text to identify the</td>
<td>• Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text or historical context and analyze how specific word choices shape</td>
<td>• Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text or historical context and analyze how specific word choices shape</td>
<td>• Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text or historical context and analyze how specific word choices shape</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Copyright © 2010-2014 by the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators and Oakland Schools.
| Interacting with Multiple Texts: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas | function of the part and its relationship to other parts of the text  
• Identify and analyze types of structural organization  
• Identify and analyze diction for bias | shape meaning or tone to create audience response  
• Develop strategies to accumulate a text in parts (chunks) that connect to make a key point, set historical background, develop or support a statement on the position of the United States or political/social claim  
• Write an objective summary of parts of a text to identify the function of the part and its relationship to other parts of the text  
• Assess how point of view or purpose shape the content and style of a text | Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text or historical context and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone to create audience response  
• Develop strategies to accumulate a text in parts (chunks) that connect to make a key point  
• Write an objective summary to identify the function of the part and its relationship to other parts of the text  
• Assess how the rhetorical features affect the content and style of a text  
• Consider various points of view on a subject and how those alternate views contribute to forming a position on the topic | meaning or tone to create audience response  
• Develop strategies to accumulate a text in parts (chunks) that connect to make a key point, set historical background, or develop or support a statement on the position of the United States, other country, or political/social claim  
• Write an objective summary of parts of a text to identify the function of the part and its relationship to other parts of the text  
• Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text | Gather relevant information from multiple sources  
Create a works-cited page to provide proper documentation  
Apply knowledge of text structures, text features, genre, and bias to examine how ideas and events can be conveyed differently by different authors and publications | Connect the themes in literature to historical events and foundational concepts and beliefs established by the Constitution and other foundational documents  
Through analysis of paired foundational documents of historical or literary significance, identify the relationship between the documents and the influences they still hold for Americans or writers/readers of today’s social and political events  
Through analysis of paired foundational documents and a range of informational texts, identify a topic/idea to research and extend current thinking about the themes and concepts in the foundational documents | Through analysis of a foundational document of legal significance and a contemporary political speech, identify the relationship between the document and the influences it still holds for Americans or writers/readers of the world today  
Through analysis of paired foundational documents of historical or literary significance, identify the relationship between the documents and the influences they still hold for global citizens or writers/readers of today’s world  
Through analysis of paired foundational documents and informational texts, identify a topic/idea to research and extend current thinking about the themes and purposes of the foundational document  
Consider individuals’ responsibilities to protect rights | Connect the themes in literature to current social issues, historical events and beliefs established by foundational documents  
Through analysis of paired foundational documents of historical or literary significance, identify the relationship between the documents and the influences they still hold for global citizens or writers/readers of today’s world  
Through analysis of paired foundational documents and a range of informational texts, identify a topic/idea to research and extend current thinking about the themes and concepts in the foundational documents |
Readers Workshop Unit of Study
7th Grade – Informational Reading

Abstract

Informational Reading
Students will delve into the world of informational reading. They will explore a variety of informational text structures that will challenge their ability to analyze, cite evidence and draw inferences from text. The student goals for this unit include being able to identify two or more central ideas, understanding specialized vocabulary in context and the capability to provide an objective summary of the text. Students must understand the ways that good readers tackle informational text in order to get a strong understanding of the information given. The students will trace and evaluate informational text and assess whether the evidence behind the text is relevant to the claims presented.

Philosophy
The 7th grade informational reading unit is aligned with the CCSS. Students will develop an understanding and appreciation of informational text. Through a scaffold approach to reading instruction, students will become active and independent readers of informational text. Students will be able to analyze, evaluate, and make connections to a variety of informational texts. Students engage in the art of close informational reading while becoming thoughtful in their analysis of the text they read. The 7th grade informational reading unit is focused using essential questions and purposeful focus questions. Teachers can differentiate content, process, and product where appropriate to allow each student to achieve his or her potential. Reading folders are used to actively engage students in the reading process. Students participate in reading communities that involve them in an authentic reading experience, which focuses on specific informational reading strategies being taught. Through interaction with the text, self-monitoring and community discussion, students establish ways of reading informational text with agency. The unit is intended to hone skills in developing theories about meaning while determining relevance of evidence used to support source claims. Students develop strong and meaningful reading skills through the use of specific mini-lessons, shared reading and conferencing focused on the analysis of intentional use of informational structures. Remember: focus questions are designed to anchor your classroom discussions.

Key Concepts
Evaluation
Conventions
Analysis
Inference
Nonfiction
Evidence
Structure
Interpretation
Connections
Text Features
Exploring Text
### Standards

*Common Core Standards: Narrative:* The following College and Career Readiness (CCR) anchor standards apply to reading and writing in narrative template tasks. Refer to the 6-12 standards for grade-appropriate specifics that fit each task and module being developed. The standards numbers and general content remain the same across all grades, but details vary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>CCR Anchor Standards for Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.RIT.1</td>
<td>Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.RIT.2</td>
<td>Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.RIT.4</td>
<td>Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.RIT.5</td>
<td>Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.RIT.6</td>
<td>Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.RIT.8</td>
<td>Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.RIT.9</td>
<td>Analyze how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.RIT.10</td>
<td>By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Overview of Sessions – Teaching Points and Unit Assessments**

**Unit Description (overview):**
This unit provides strategic literacy tasks relevant to students who are analyzing informational text. These literacy tasks, coupled with informational text exploration, will serve your students well across the school day within other content areas. The tools, tasks and suggested teaching provided encourage the development of a student’s ability to navigate informational text of all kinds (expository, literary, narrative, etc.). Readers delve into the world of informational reading. They explore a variety of informational text structures that challenge their ability to analyze, cite evidence and draw inferences from text. The student learning for this unit includes being able to examine one or more central ideas (and main ideas in a passage of text), decode specialized vocabulary used in context, provide an objective summary of text using analysis of authors’ presented evidence, and begin to understand how different authors advance their evidence. Students must understand the ways that good readers tackle informational text in order to get a strong understanding of the information given. The students will trace and evaluate informational text and assess whether the evidence behind the text is relevant to the claims presented.

---

**Pre-Unit Assessment Task**
*This is to be used as a comparison tool looking for progress made between Sessions #1 and #8:***
***Responses will likely be misinformed and students will struggle. That is OK***

Students will be prompted with a rubric to use their “Gathering Information” handout to summarize central ideas from the text and to analyze how those ideas are developed across the text. The summary describes the purpose of the informational text and the author’s point of view. It demonstrates various strategies to disseminate the information given. The summary is written in a student’s own words.

**Teaching Points:**

**Analyzing Genre: Craft and Structure:**
1. Informational readers understand that authors present information in a variety of ways.
2. Informational text readers read to find specific information.
3. Informational readers read purposely to explore new and unfamiliar concepts.

**Developing Strategies for Close Reading: Key Ideas and Details:**
4. Informational text gives readers a chance to build background knowledge about new topics.
5. Informational readers make connections to what they know and to new information.
6. Informational text readers use strategies to decode the context of words they don’t understand, using clues in text.
7. Informational readers use effective strategies to navigate different structures of informational text.

**Interacting with Multiple Texts: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:**
8. Informational readers evaluate details and assess if they are relevant and support the central idea.
9. Informational text readers examine one or more central ideas and are able to provide a summary of the text using an author’s presented evidence.

**Post-Unit Summative Assessment Task**
Students will be prompted with a rubric to use their learning from this unit to craft a summary that includes analysis of the main ideas and relevant details. The summary should describe the purpose of their chosen informational text and the author’s intent or point of view. The summary is written in the students’ own words.
10. Students determine how two different authors advance their evidence to support the central idea in informational text.
## Session 1

### Analyzing Genre: Craft and Structure

#### Teaching Point

Informational readers understand that authors present information in a variety of ways.

#### Preparation

- Prepare student reading folders for students to house their informational text tool and all other tools used in this unit.
- Decide as a classroom how to organize the reading folders.
- Prepare copies of “Gathering Information” handout, which is included after this session.
- Either make copies of—or prepare a chart of—“Informational Text Features” handout, which is included after this session.
- Prepare copies of the rubric that’s attached after this session.

#### Suggested Materials

- Collect multiple copies of several different pieces of nonfiction from books, articles, magazines, online sources and newspapers. These should appeal to the students and their interests. You are building a collection of materials to be used throughout the unit.
- Chart paper, markers, etc.
- Reading Folders

#### [Quotes framing pedagogy/lesson intent]

“Knowledge is power. Information is liberating. Education is the premise of progress.”  

- Kofi Annan

#### Focus Question

**Focus Question:** How can informational text features be applied to other content areas?

#### Active Engagement

- Distribute reading folders.
- Create an anchor chart to define informational texts and how they are used for authors to present information. Discuss how they contain features to help us navigate. Be creative, add your own, and have students search for answers.
  - **Informational text:** is a type of real-world writing that presents information that is factually necessary or valuable to the reader: Textbooks, Internet, magazines, newspaper articles, etc.
- Model how you explore informational materials and how to properly use the gathering information tool.
- Review the “gathering information” handout and teaching point.
- Distribute the handout and reading folders.
- Students will browse the collection of prepared nonfiction samples and choose samples they are interested in.
- Students may pair up in small groups to fill out the handout in their reading folders using their chosen selections.

#### Share

Report out findings from group work. Create another chart or add to the anchor chart and discuss the different ways that informational text is presented. Focus discussion on how this enhances a readers’ understanding of information presented in the genre of nonfiction. Discuss that good readers are able to locate and analyze information presented in informational text.

#### Extension

Students can be asked to find an informational text sample from home and fill out the same gathering information text tool.

#### Pre-Unit Assessment Task

**This is to be used as a comparison tool looking for progress made between Sessions #1 and #8:** 

***these are intended to be misinformed and students will struggle!!*** IT IS OK

Students will be prompted with a rubric to use their Gathering Information handout to summarize central ideas from the text and to analyze how those ideas are developed across the text. The summary describes the purpose of the informational text and the author’s point of view. It demonstrates various strategies to disseminate the information given. The summary is written in a student’s own words.
# Informational Text Features

Informational text has features to help you navigate!

## Text (words):
- **Font:** bold, large type, italics, labels, bullets, highlighting
- **Textual Cues:** *for example, but, such as, therefore, notice*
- **Parts:** index, glossary, appendix, margin notes, footnotes

## Graphics:
- Illustrations
- Word Bubbles
- Photos
- Arrows
- Maps
- Lists
- Graphs
- Timelines
- Tables
- Diagrams & Charts

## Informational Text Definition:

## Different Types of Informational Text:
**GATHERING INFORMATION FROM INFORMATIONAL TEXT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Informational Text</th>
<th>What is the Purpose of the Text?</th>
<th>Is The Text Informational?</th>
<th>Student Group Checklist (yes or no)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>I participated in my group discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>I was prepared for my work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IMPORTANT FACTS AND DETAILS I NOTICED USING TEXT FEATURES:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Paragraph #s</th>
<th>Text Feature Found</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this section:

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

In this section:

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

In this section:

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________
NAME: ________________________

Directions: Use the information you have gathered and the rubric below to write a summary of the selection your group chose to browse today.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 points</th>
<th>3 points</th>
<th>2 points</th>
<th>1 point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• My summary includes a thorough analysis of the main ideas and relevant details.</td>
<td>• My summary includes some analysis of the main ideas and relevant details.</td>
<td>• My summary includes little analysis of the main ideas and relevant details.</td>
<td>• My summary includes no analysis of the main ideas and relevant details.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• My summary fully describes the purpose of the informational text and the author’s intent or point of view.</td>
<td>• My summary mostly describes the purpose of the informational text and the author’s intent or point of view.</td>
<td>• My summary somewhat describes the purpose of the informational text and the author’s intent or point of view.</td>
<td>• My summary does not describe the purpose of the informational text and the author’s intent or point of view.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• My summary provides an excellent demonstration of strategies used to disseminate the information given. The summary is written in my own words.</td>
<td>• My summary mostly uses strategies to disseminate the information given. The summary is written in my own words.</td>
<td>• My summary at times uses strategies to disseminate the information given. The summary is written in my own words.</td>
<td>• My summary does not use strategies to disseminate the information given. The summary is not written in my own words.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Is this my best work?

Is this my best work?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concept</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Preparation** | - Prepare copies of “scavenger hunt” worksheet, attached after this session, to fit your selected class set of articles or periodicals.  
  - Print copies of and post the “informational text features” poster, attached after this session, or self-create as an anchor chart within the room. |
| **Suggested Materials** | - Class set of informational articles or student periodicals. *(We like Current Events from Weekly Reader or Scope Magazines.)*  
  - Chart paper, markers etc.  
  - Reading Folders. |
| **Focus Question** | **Focus Question:** How do you use informational text features to help you locate and find information for analysis? |
| **Active Engagement** | - Review session teaching point and share focus question.  
  - Discuss and review the “informational text features” poster. Give printout of poster for students to keep and reference in reading folders.  
  - Distribute reading folders and discuss the “scavenger hunt” worksheet and its use for this session.  
  - Model some of the “scavenger hunt” with an example article or periodical.  
  - Encourage discussion and input from the students as you model the activity.  
  - Focus on developing an understanding that these features help you locate and gain understanding of the information presented. |
| **Independent Practice** | - Complete scavenger hunt can be completed in groups of 2 or modified for independent practice. Students should put completed work into reading folders for sharing time. It is advised to have each student keep his/her own paper during group work. These will be reference for future sessions. |
| **Share** | - Teacher will visit each group during work time and conference with the groups to check for understanding and informally assess. Focus conference discussions on determining the students’ understanding of informational text features. Redirect as needed. |
| **Community Decision** | - Decide where to store the scavenger hunt within the reading folder. You may also have students decide to display within the room in some manner. |
| **Assessment** | Check all reading folders and hold conversations with groups of students to ensure comprehension of informational reading strategies being taught. Students should have a wide variety of informational reading tools gathered and completed within their reading folders. Notice shifts in student thinking. Encourage all readers to continue on a thoughtful path, noticing explicit details about informational text. Students should recognize how these moves support their analysis of the informational genre. Conference with groups. *(See share time.)* Points given for completed scavenger hunt placed in reading folders. |
# Informational Text Features Poster

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Convention</th>
<th>Purpose: How does it help me as a reader?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Close-Ups</td>
<td>See detail in something small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maps</td>
<td>Helps us know the specific location of the topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photographs</td>
<td>Shows us exactly what something looks like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of Print (Bold, Underline, Italics, etc.)</td>
<td>Tells us, “Look at me! I’m Important!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>Identifies main ideas and tells us what page they are on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captions</td>
<td>Words under a picture that identifies the person, place or thing being discussed in the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glossary</td>
<td>Helps you define the meaning of words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labels</td>
<td>Helps you identify the parts of a picture, graph or other type of illustration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration</td>
<td>A drawing or sketch of a detail or main idea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapters/Sections</td>
<td>The way books are organized in order to tell you about different parts/characteristics of a topic.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mysteries to Solve: How do we read and understand informational text? How do we use features of informational text to locate and understand information?

You and your super sleuth partner are on a quest to solve the mysteries above. You will be given some basic character traits about informational text features and some books/articles to use. Your job is to find examples of informational text features from the materials provided AND complete the following informational chart. You MUST try to find at least ONE example of each feature listed below!

Here are the suspects you will be looking for:

- Photographs
- Illustrations
- Captions
- Maps
- Charts
- Timelines
- Chapter titles
- Labels
- Index
- Glossary
- Types of print-- bold/highlighted words
# Informational Text Feature Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text Feature</th>
<th>Where YOU found an example (Book, Title, Page Number, etc.)</th>
<th>How it helps you understand the text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Photographs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maps</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chart</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeline</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Titles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of Print (bold/highlighted words)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Wrap Up:** Which features do you think is most helpful & why?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Analyzing Genre: Craft and Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point</strong></td>
<td>Informational readers read purposely to explore new and unfamiliar concepts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Preparation** | - Prepare enough copies of “research-based survey” handout, attached after this session.  
  - Preview the websites listed on the based survey provided  
  - Reserve computer lab or cart that can accommodate each student for independent work during this session. |
| **Suggested Materials** | - Chart paper, markers etc.  
  - Reading Folders.  
  - Research survey  
  - Access to internet browsing |
| **Focus Question** | **Focus Question:** What importance does informational text play in everyday life? |
| **Active Engagement** | - Have a discussion in which students describe why they browse the Internet: Mostly for information, whether enjoyment or research we are exploring.  
  - Review session teaching point and share focus question.  
  - Revisit “informational text features” handout from previous sessions with your students.  
  - Discuss how informational text exists in all places of our everyday lives. Focus the discussion on how technology is and can be the primary source for informational reading in today’s digital world.  
  - Define and give examples of what a new and unfamiliar concept is. Brainstorm and chart your discussion points. This is the perfect chart to hang within the room for further deep discussion. |
| **Independent Practice** | - Hand out copies of the “research-based survey” to use during work time allotted. Students are to visit each website provided and complete the survey independently. The surveys are to be placed in their reading log folders upon completion for future discussions.  
  - Students answer the focus question. |
| **Share** | - Form student groups to allow reflection and sharing of information gathered from the research survey. Have students revise their focus question answer upon completion of group discussion. |
| **Assessment** | Student-completed research survey.  
  Participation in activity and discussions.  
  Mid-unit assessment task: Check all reading folders and hold conversations with groups of students to ensure comprehension of informational reading strategies being taught. Students should have a wide variety of informational reading tools gathered and completed within their reading folders. Notice shifts in student thinking. Encourage all readers to continue on a thoughtful path, noticing explicit details about informational text. Students should recognize how these moves support their analysis of the informational genre. |
| **Extension** | **Using:** Overhead Projector, Promethean Board, Chart Paper  
  - Hold a guided sharing session to report group findings in response to the focus question. |
### Research-Based Survey Tool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Website:</th>
<th>Article Title</th>
<th>Informational Text Features Present</th>
<th>New Concept/Information</th>
<th>Interesting Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.cnn.com">www.cnn.com</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.msn.com">www.msn.com</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.myfoxdetroit.com">www.myfoxdetroit.com</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.sikids.com">www.sikids.com</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.nationalgeographic.com">www.nationalgeographic.com</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choose your own:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Independently:** *What importance does informational text play in everyday life?*

**Revised:** *What importance does informational text play in everyday life?*
Session 4

Concept  Analyzing Genre: Craft and Structure

Teaching Point  I Informational text gives readers a chance to build background knowledge about new topics.

Preparation
- Review the research-survey tool and lesson from previous session.
- Reserve your computer lab or cart that can accommodate each student for independent work during this session.
- Preview any additional websites to be used for research in addition to those used in the previous session.
- Prepare copies of “KWHL Chart” handout for the students, included after this session, as well as one for the overhead, promethean, etc. to use as a reference.
- **Note: see session 5 preparation early!**

Suggested Materials
- Collection of multiple copies of several different pieces of nonfiction from books, articles, magazines, online sources and newspapers. These should appeal to the students and their interests. You are building a collection of materials to be used throughout the unit.
- Chart paper, markers etc.
- Reading Folders.

Focus Questions  **Focus Questions:** How does learning about new and real things help us to become better readers of informational text? What strategies and/or tools do we use to understand this new information? What kinds of text features advance the information that is being given?

Active Engagement
- Review session teaching point and share focus questions.
- Discuss how students had to research and gather information in the previous session. Point out that it is natural to feel overwhelmed with this influx of new information.
- Have the class brainstorm (either whole class or pair & share) ways that readers of informational text can organize and process new information. Chart out the students’ answers.
- Refer back to students’ research survey, which should be in their reading folders.
- Distribute copies of “KWHL Chart” handout.
- Explain to students that they will need to select a topic of interest from survey.
- Instruct the students that they are going to research and gather more detailed information on the topic.
- They need to choose something that is real and unfamiliar.
- Model KWHL Chart prior the students’ independent practice.
- You may want to have students pair up to complete the task. The choice is yours.
- The students are to “take notes” using the KWHL Chart.

Independent Practice  Students may complete their KWHL Chart in pairs or individually. Students should put completed work into reading log folders for sharing time. It is advised to have each student keep own paper during group work.

Share  Teacher will visit each student or student group to conference for understanding and informally assess. Teacher will debrief students on strategies used to gather and process information. Students will report out and share what they have learned in their research. Teacher will chart out answers while revisiting focus questions. Redirect as needed.

Extension  Continue to research topic of interest on your own and bring in more information to share with the class. Encourage exploration of their interests.

Assessment  Points given for completed KWHL Chart placed in reading folders.

Check all reading folders and hold conversations with groups of students to ensure comprehension of informational reading strategies being taught. Students should have a wide variety of informational reading tools gathered and completed within their reading folders. Notice shifts in student thinking. Encourage all readers to continue on a thoughtful path, noticing explicit details about informational text. Students should recognize how these moves support their analysis of the informational genre.
K-W-H-L Chart

Readers of informational text use tools and strategies to organize and process new and real information. Use this chart to help you gather information and think through your topic of interest. Fill in the blanks below with your notes and ideas.

What is your topic?  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>K</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>L</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What I Know</strong></td>
<td><strong>What I Want to Know</strong></td>
<td><strong>How will I find this information?</strong> (Where else can I look?)</td>
<td><strong>What I Learned</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Session 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Developing Strategies for Close Reading: Key Ideas and Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Point</td>
<td>Informational readers make connections to what they know and to new information.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Preparation
- Select texts that allow for one or more of the following connections: text to self, text to text, text to world.
- Prepare enough copies of “connection think mark” handout, which is included after this session.
- Prepare a chart using the “personal connections” sheet, included after this session.
- Prepare copies of “personal connections tic-tac-toe” handout, included after this session.

## Suggested Materials
- Selection of informational texts along with previous articles and periodicals that enable all students to connect with the content. (See resource sheet, attached after this session, for examples of informational texts we like for this session.)
- Make sure the informational texts are not loaded with complex vocabulary that will compromise comprehension.
- Include texts that ask questions and include illustrations. This will act as a springboard to conversations.
- Chart paper, markers etc.
- Reading Folders

## Focus Questions
**Focus Questions:** How do good readers make personal connections to informational texts? What strategies can good readers employ to help make such personal connections?

## Active Engagement
- Review session teaching point and focus questions.
- Revisit the informational text feature poster from session 2. Teacher should lead discussion to reinforce that text features help you make connections to text.
- Have students use “connection think mark” tool independently to guide their reading while recording their connections to the text.
- The “connection think mark” tool should be stored in their reading folders and can be used as an assessment.

## Independent Practice
Students complete the “connection think mark” tool while exploring the informational texts provided and chosen.

## Active Engagement 2
- Create a “personal connections chart,” using the attached sheet, for culminating activity of session 5. Discuss as a whole group what words or features from the text helped to make the personal connection and what the personal connection was.
- Review and answer the focus questions during the proceeding discussion.
**CONNECTION THINK MARKS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THINK MARK #1</th>
<th>THINK MARK #2</th>
<th>THINK MARK #3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>![Question Mark]</td>
<td>![Question Mark]</td>
<td>![Question Mark]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>When I saw a picture of</strong></td>
<td><strong>When I saw a picture of</strong></td>
<td><strong>When I saw a picture of</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>________________________</td>
<td>________________________</td>
<td>________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I remembered.....</td>
<td>I remembered.....</td>
<td>I remembered.....</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I saw something like this</strong></td>
<td><strong>I saw something like this</strong></td>
<td><strong>I saw something like this</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>when I watched or read</td>
<td>when I watched or read</td>
<td>when I watched or read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>________________________</td>
<td>________________________</td>
<td>________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I remembered.....</td>
<td>I remembered.....</td>
<td>I remembered.....</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>This book is like</strong></td>
<td><strong>This book is like</strong></td>
<td><strong>This book is like</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TITLE OF ANOTHER BOOK</td>
<td>TITLE OF ANOTHER BOOK</td>
<td>TITLE OF ANOTHER BOOK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I remembered.....</td>
<td>I remembered.....</td>
<td>I remembered.....</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PERSONAL CONNECTIONS CHART

Good readers make personal connections to a story. Words help us to make those connections.

TITLE: ___________  AUTHOR: ___________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words from Text:</th>
<th>My Personal Connection:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Page# _____</td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page# _____</td>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page# _____</td>
<td>3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page# _____</td>
<td>4.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Focus Questions: How do good readers make personal connections to text? What strategies can good readers employ to help make such personal connections?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUGGESTED INFORMATIONAL TITLES</th>
<th>ISBN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Through My Eyes</td>
<td>978-0590189231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smile</td>
<td>978-0545132060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It came from Ohio</td>
<td>978-0590939447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always Running: La Vida Loca</td>
<td>978-0743276917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zlata’s Diary</td>
<td>978-0143036876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Greatest: Muhammad Ali</td>
<td>978-0590543439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Cinderella</td>
<td>978-0440228653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We Beat The Street</td>
<td>978-0142406274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facing The Lion</td>
<td>978-0792272977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlikely Pairs</td>
<td>978-0761323785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Last Days of Southside Shorty</td>
<td>978-1584302674</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trickster: Native American Tales: Graphic Collection</td>
<td>978-1555917241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frozen Man</td>
<td>978-0805046453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme Animals: Toughest Creatures on Earth</td>
<td>978-0763630676</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracking Trash</td>
<td>978-0547328607</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soldier</td>
<td>978-0756645397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cars on Mars</td>
<td>978-1570914621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the Court with Kobe Bryant</td>
<td>978-0316137324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miracle Boys</td>
<td>978-0142406023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concept</strong></td>
<td>Developing Strategies for Close Reading: Key Ideas and Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point</strong></td>
<td>Informational text readers use strategies to decode the context of words they don’t understand, using clues in text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Preparation** | • Prepare copies of “exit slip” handout, included after this session  
• Prepare copies of “stopping point tool” handout, included after this session  
• Prepare enough copies of the chosen active engagement mentor article for each student.  
• You may want to visit session 7 preparations now. |
| **Suggested Materials** | • Choose two high-interest informational articles. One will be used for teacher modeling and the other will be used for student practice. Places to search for your mentor articles would include weekly readers, online news sites, magazines, etc.  
• Students should have their reading folders present to use previous tools during this session as reference.  
• Gather highlighters, post-it notes or index cards for use as a means to document stopping points or—use attached stopping points tool provided. |
| **[Quotes framing pedagogy/lesson intent]** | “Teachers are wise to recognize that we need to model not only a love of text but also a fascination with words themselves. If you wear your love of language on your sleeve, exuding interest in words and taking great pleasure in understanding them, you’ll help your children be more attentive to vocabulary.”  
~Lucy Calkins |
| **Focus Questions** | **Focus Questions:** How do you decode tough words you don’t understand? What types of strategies are helpful during decoding? |
| **Active Engagement** | • Review session teaching point and share focus questions.  
• **Possible teacher narration:** “When reading informational text, we encounter lots of new words. Using context clues can help you figure out the meaning of many of these words. Sometimes just rereading the sentence can help you figure out the word. If that doesn’t help, read the sentence before and after the one with the tough word for clues. In informational text, writers sometimes include a definition of the word or say it in another way immediately after the word. Other times you can figure out the meaning by using the details in the paragraph the word is part of. You’ll also find meaningful clues in informational text features such as labels, captions, photographs, and illustrations. Knowing informational text features can help you figure out a word’s meaning quickly. That’s what we’ll work on today.”  
• Use the teacher mentor article to model the use of the attached “stopping point” tool. Teacher should focus attention on strategies noted in the narration during this whole-group instruction exercise. |
| **Independent Practice** | Each student should read his or her mentor article independently. Students should use the stopping point strategy to list out tough words in their informational text. Students should be able to discuss how they determined possible meanings for their tough words and identify any clues or strategies they used during the process. Teacher must move around the room and encourage students to use strategy suggestions offered in the active engagement. All completed work should be placed in the reading folder. |
| **Share** | Report out student findings by creating an anchor chart. Students will share their tough word lists and possible meanings they discovered while using specific strategies taught to them during the active engagement session. The anchor chart should be a valuable tool. |
| **Assessment** | Use the focus questions on an exit ticket as an informal assessment. Check for Session 6 content understanding.  
Check all reading folders and hold conversations with groups of students to ensure comprehension of informational reading strategies being taught. Students should have a wide variety of informational reading tools gathered and completed within their reading folders. Notice shifts in student thinking. Encourage all readers to continue on a thoughtful path, noticing explicit details about informational text. Students should recognize how these moves support their analysis of the informational genre. |
**STOPPING POINT TOOL**

*RECORD TOUGH WORDS FROM THE INFORMATIONAL TEXT YOU ARE READING.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article Name:</th>
<th>Paragraph # ______</th>
<th>Paragraph # ______</th>
<th>Paragraph # ______</th>
<th>Paragraph # ______</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>word #1</td>
<td>word #2</td>
<td>word #3</td>
<td>word #4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What possible meaning can you establish for this tough word?</td>
<td>What possible meaning can you establish for this tough word?</td>
<td>What possible meaning can you establish for this tough word?</td>
<td>What possible meaning can you establish for this tough word?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What possible meaning can you establish for this tough word?</td>
<td>What possible meaning can you establish for this tough word?</td>
<td>What possible meaning can you establish for this tough word?</td>
<td>What possible meaning can you establish for this tough word?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What possible meaning can you establish for this tough word?</td>
<td>What possible meaning can you establish for this tough word?</td>
<td>What possible meaning can you establish for this tough word?</td>
<td>What possible meaning can you establish for this tough word?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe the clues or strategies you used to determine the meaning. How did you do it?</td>
<td>Describe the clues or strategies you used to determine the meaning. How did you do it?</td>
<td>Describe the clues or strategies you used to determine the meaning. How did you do it?</td>
<td>Describe the clues or strategies you used to determine the meaning. How did you do it?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EXIT TICKET

Name_______________________________ Date______________________ Hour___________

Directions: Answer the following questions as a reflection on your learning today. Please hand these to me on your way out the door.

1. How do you decode tough words you don’t understand?

2. What types of strategies are helpful during decoding?

3. How will you apply what you learned in this lesson to reading in other content areas?

4. List some of the tough words that you were able to decode.

5. What other questions, comments or concerns do you have for me?
## Session 7

### Concept
Developing Strategies for Close Reading: Key Ideas and Details

### Teaching Point
Informational readers use effective strategies to navigate different structures of informational text.

### Preparation
- Review strategies taught in the previous sessions.
- Prepare brochure template for all students, using handout attached after this session. Brochure is to be folded along dotted lines.
- If you prefer explore digital brochure creation options.

### Suggested Materials
- Have mentor texts, articles and anchor charts from previous sessions available for use.
- Students should have their reading folders present to use previous tools during this session as reference.
- Chart paper, markers etc.

### Focus Question
**Focus Question:** Why is organization and strategy use such an important tool in navigating and analyzing informational text?

### Active Engagement
- Review session teaching point and share the focus question. Give time for students to discuss what they have learned thus far.
- Discuss how students had to research, gather and analyze information in previous session. Point out that it is natural to feel overwhelmed with this influx of new information while reading informational text.
- Express that it is important to review and revisit new strategies for ourselves and for others.
- Instruct the students they are going to be making a brochure of all the strategies learned thus far in this unit.
- Model how to start planning a brochure using the template provided or create one of your own.
- Demonstrate how to pull usable information from their reading folders, anchor charts in the room and texts to construct the brochure.

### Independent Practice
Students will complete their brochure. Depending on your resources and preferences, students can either hand write the information or create their own in a digital manner. (Lots of programs you can explore for this.) You may even want to schedule computer lab time for this session.

### Share
Conduct a **Gallery Walk** for the students to view and evaluate each other’s brochures. Students will use Post-It notes to place comments on the brochures they see. One way would be to use the three-comment method:
- One positive statement
- One thing the student could have added to enhance the brochure
- An “I wonder...” statement

### Assessment
The brochure can be a graded assessment. Student participation in the Gallery Walk may also account for points earned.
INFORMATIONAL TEXT READING STRATEGIES BROCHURE

NAME:
DATE:
HOUR:

LIST AND DEFINE THE LITERACY TASKS THAT YOU HAVE BEEN TAUGHT TO USE WHEN ANALYZING INFORMATIONAL TEXT.

GIVE EXAMPLES OF HOW, WHEN AND WHERE TO USE THESE STRATEGIES WHEN ANALYZING INFORMATIONAL TEXT FEATURES.

AS A RESULT OF USING THESE STRATEGIES, WHAT KINDS OF NEW INFORMATION HAVE YOU LEARNED ABOUT YOUR ABILITY TO NAVIGATE INFORMATIONAL TEXT?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concept</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Preparation** | - Review strategies as needed from previous sessions.  
- Print copies of the “finding relevance in text” handout, which is included after this session. You may need several of these per student.  
- Review extension activity and active engagement 2. |

| **Suggested Materials** | - Continue to use multiple copies of several different pieces of nonfiction from books, articles, magazines, online sources and newspapers. These should appeal to the students and their interests. Make sure you replenish or add new choices often to keep student interest high.  
- Students should have their reading folders present to use previous tools during this session as reference.  
- Chart paper, markers etc. |

| **Focus Question** | **Focus Question:** Why is being able to determine the relevance of details in informational text so important to the comprehension of informational text? |

| **Active Engagement** | - Review session teaching point and share the focus question.  
- Choose a mentor article or chapter from an informational book to help model the use of the “relevance in text” tool.  
- Create a poster of the “relevance in text” tool out of chart paper and use for teacher instruction.  
- Call on students and encourage them in helping to fill out and discussing the relevance in text tool. Encourage discussion that will lead to discussing the focus question. Have students defend their thinking and oral response during this classroom discussion. |

| **Independent Practice** | Students are to choose an informational text that they haven’t explored before within this unit. Students will complete their own “relevance from text” tool. The tool will be kept in their reading folders. Encourage students to see if there are text features that support their notations on very important details. |

| **Share** | Choose students to share their findings with the class. Encourage debates from the audience and encourage students to defend the choices they made while completing the task. Teacher should guide the debates and offer positive feedback to the volunteers. |

**Teacher moment:** The ability to find very important details that support main ideas while using evidence to analyze relevance is a great jump in student learning while reading informational text. |

| **Active Engagement 2** | - Use the alternate “Finding Relevance in Visual Texts” while showing newscasts or from the past. (There are a multitude of these on virtually every news website.)  
- Have students complete “Finding Relevance in Visual Texts” in small groups while viewing your selection. |

| **Extension** | - Students are to view a specific newscast at home and complete “Finding Relevance in Visual Texts.” The main idea will be a specific news topic. |

| **Assessment** | The relevance in text tool and featured discussions can be used for assessment.  
Check all reading folders and hold conversations with groups of students to ensure comprehension of informational reading strategies being taught. Students should have a wide variety of informational reading tools gathered and completed within their reading folders. Notice shifts in student thinking. Encourage all readers to continue on a thoughtful path noticing explicit details about informational text. Students should recognize how these moves support their analysis of the informational genre. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VERY IMPORTANT DETAIL #1</th>
<th>VERY IMPORTANT DETAIL #2</th>
<th>VERY IMPORTANT DETAIL #3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WHY IS THIS DETAIL IMPORTANT IN SUPPORTING THE MAIN IDEA?**

|                          |                          |                          |
|                          |                          |                          |
|                          |                          |                          |
|                          |                          |                          |

**WHAT TEXT FEATURES SUPPORT THIS AS BEING RELEVANT?**

|                          |                          |                          |
|                          |                          |                          |
|                          |                          |                          |
|                          |                          |                          |

How is informational-text elements’ relevance important to the understanding of a text?
MAIN IDEA: ________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VERY IMPORTANT DETAIL #1</th>
<th>VERY IMPORTANT DETAIL #2</th>
<th>VERY IMPORTANT DETAIL #3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHY IS THIS DETAIL IMPORTANT IN SUPPORTING THE MAIN IDEA?</th>
<th>WHY IS THIS DETAIL IMPORTANT IN SUPPORTING THE MAIN IDEA?</th>
<th>WHY IS THIS DETAIL IMPORTANT IN SUPPORTING THE MAIN IDEA?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DO ANY VISUAL ELEMENTS SUPPORT THIS AS BEING RELEVANT?</th>
<th>DO ANY VISUAL ELEMENTS SUPPORT THIS AS BEING RELEVANT?</th>
<th>DO ANY VISUAL ELEMENTS SUPPORT THIS AS BEING RELEVANT?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
<td>_______________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*How is visual elements’ relevance important to the understanding of a text?*
### Session 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th><strong>Interacting with Multiple Texts: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point</strong></td>
<td>Informational text readers examine one or more central ideas and are able to provide a summary of the text using an author’s presented evidence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Preparation** | - Review “highlights for review” sheet, a teachers’ resource, included after this session.  
- Print copies of “main idea template” handout, which is included after this session.  
- Print copies of the “summary assignment” handout, which is included after this session.  
- Print copies of the rubric handout, which is included after this session.  
- Print tools and create anchor charts as needed for student and teacher use. |
| **Suggested Materials** | - Continue to use multiple copies of several different pieces of nonfiction from books, articles, magazines, online sources and newspapers. These should appeal to the students and their interests. Make sure you replenish or add new choices often to keep student interest high.  
- Students should have their reading folders present to use previous tools during this session as reference.  
- Chart paper, markers etc. |
| **Focus Question** | **Focus Question:** Why are central themes, main ideas and relevant details so important when writing a summary of informational text? |
| **Active Engagement** | - Review the handouts and teaching point. Share the focus question.  
- Use the following to create anchor charts:  
  - The **main idea** is the most important idea in a passage or piece of writing. The main idea tells what the text is mostly about. Every passage has a central theme, and each paragraph in a passage also has a main idea.  
  - **Details** are pieces of information that tell about the main idea. Details explain the main idea, telling who, what, when, where, why, or how. Details can describe a person, place, or thing. Details can tell the order in which events happen, and details can explain how to do something.  
  - Choose an article that appeals to students and model the “main idea template” handout for finding central themes and main ideas. Each student should complete a “main idea template” during the whole-group instruction.  
  
Encourage students to use rich writing strategies to enhance their summary writing. This would be the perfect time to review the “summary assessment rubric” handout. |
| **Independent Practice** | Students are to choose their own informational text from the teacher-provided selections. Each student is to complete a main idea template, summary and a summary assessment rubric for their chosen piece of informational text. Teacher should visit each student to ensure understanding and offer feedback for remedial instruction. |
| **Share** | Teacher should ask for volunteers to present their summaries. During sharing time encourage each volunteer to walk their way through the self-assessment, asking for feedback from the whole group. Encourage use of similar vocabulary from the self-assessment rubric during class discussion. |
| **Unit Summative Assessment Task** | Post-unit assessment task:  
Students will be prompted with a rubric to use their learning from this unit to craft a summary that includes analysis of the main ideas and relevant details. The summary should describe the purpose of their chosen informational text and the author’s intent or point of view. The summary is written in the students’ own words. |
HIGHLIGHTS FOR REVIEW IN THIS TEACHING SESSION:

- A paragraph is a grouping of sentences related to a particular topic or central theme. Every paragraph has a key concept or main idea. The main idea is the most important piece of information the author wants you to know about the concept of that paragraph.

- When authors write, they have an idea in mind that they are trying to get across. This is especially true as authors compose informational text. An author organizes each paragraph's main idea and supporting details in support of the topic or central theme, and each paragraph supports the paragraph preceding it.

- A writer will state his/her main idea explicitly somewhere in the paragraph. That main idea may be stated at the beginning of the paragraph, in the middle, or at the end. The sentence in which the main idea is stated is the topic sentence of that paragraph.

- The topic sentence announces the idea (or portion of the idea) to be dealt with in the paragraph. Although the topic sentence may appear anywhere in the paragraph, it is usually first - and for a very good reason. This sentence provides the focus for the writer while writing and for the reader while reading. When you find the topic sentence, be sure to underline it so that it will stand out not only now, but also later when you review.

* for use during modeling – Session 9
Why are central themes, main ideas and relevant details so important when writing a summary of informational text?

ANSWER ON THE BACK PLEASE!
### Summary Assignment

**NAME:**

**USE THE RUBRIC TO CRAFT A SUMMARY OF THE TEXT.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 points</th>
<th>3 points</th>
<th>2 points</th>
<th>1 point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● My summary includes a thorough analysis of the main ideas and relevant details.</td>
<td>● My summary includes some analysis of the main ideas and relevant details.</td>
<td>● My summary includes little analysis of the main ideas and relevant details.</td>
<td>● My summary includes no analysis of the main ideas and relevant details.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● My summary fully describes the purpose of the informational text and the author’s intent or point of view.</td>
<td>● My summary mostly describes the purpose of the informational text and the author’s intent or point of view.</td>
<td>● My summary somewhat describes the purpose of the informational text and the author’s intent or point of view.</td>
<td>● My summary does not describe the purpose of the informational text and the author’s intent or point of view.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● My summary provides an excellent demonstration of strategies used to disseminate the information given. The summary is written in my own words.</td>
<td>● My summary mostly uses strategies to disseminate the information given. The summary is written in my own words.</td>
<td>● My summary at times uses strategies to disseminate the information given. The summary is written in my own words.</td>
<td>● My summary does not use strategies to disseminate the information given. The summary is not written in my own words.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Is this my best work?**
Summary Assessment Rubric

Name: __________________________

Number of points earned for my summary: _________________________

Reasons supporting my rating:
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
### Session 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Interacting with Multiple Texts: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point</strong></td>
<td>Students determine how two different authors advance their evidence to support the central idea in informational text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preparation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
  - Review strategies as needed from the previous sessions.  
  - Session 10 is introductory in nature and is an essential skill learned in the 8th grade Informational Reading Unit. |
| **Suggested Materials** |  
  - Post-its, highlighters and any other tools used for annotating text.  
  - Have mentor texts, articles and anchor charts from previous sessions available for use. Make sure you have available different texts on the same topic.  
  - Copies of two informational articles on the same topic with different authors for each student.  
  - Copies of the “Nonfiction Author Comparison Chart,” which is included after this session. |

**Quotes framing pedagogy/lesson intent**

“That which can be asserted without evidence, can be dismissed without evidence.”  
~Christopher Hitchens

| Focus Questions | **Focus Questions:** How do authors use informational text features to advance their claims? Why is it important to compare different authors’ key points on the same subject? |
| **Active Engagement** |  
  - Review session teaching point and share the focus questions.  
  - Discuss how authors advance their interpretations of main ideas using key points as evidence. Aside from just finding the main idea in an informational text, it is important to be able to pull out the author’s key points in discerning the advancement of the main idea.  
  - Remind the students that text features also help an author to advance their point (claim) in a work of informational text. Bold print, pictures, highlights, etc. help to make author’s points in an article. Authors will use informational text features to help to aid in the interpretation of a given topic.  
  - Model for the students how to use the “Author Comparison Chart” using two informational texts on the same subject written by two different authors. Choose high-interest topics the students will engage with. We have included links of articles on cyber bullying: “Cyber bullying: A Growing Problem” [http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/02/100222104939.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/02/100222104939.htm) and “Students Take A Stand Against Cyber bullying” [http://www.edweek.org/dd/articles/2011/02/09/02cyberbullying-teens.h04.html](http://www.edweek.org/dd/articles/2011/02/09/02cyberbullying-teens.h04.html)  
  - Remind students to use annotation tools to help decipher the information in the articles; review annotation skills as needed. A mini-lesson may be needed.  
  - Remind students how to pull usable information from their reading folders and anchor charts to assist in this task. |
| **Independent Practice** | Students will read their articles and complete their “Author Comparison Charts.” You may choose to read the articles together and then have them complete the chart. Students may work in pairs if you wish, or simply work independently. Teacher should conference with students during work time to ensure understanding. |
| **Share** | Students will pair and share their findings. The class will report out and teacher will chart information. We suggest making a poster of the “Author Comparison Chart” and filling it in with the students’ findings. This could be done on an overhead, Promethean or other device depending on the technology available in your district. |
### Nonfiction Author Comparison Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Article:</th>
<th>Name of Article:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Main Idea:</strong> What is the point the author is making?</td>
<td><strong>Author:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Key Points (Evidence)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Textual Features</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>_____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>How does this author advance evidence to support the main idea?</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>______________________________________________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Writers Workshop Unit of Study
7th Grade – Informational Essay

ELA
Common Core Standards
Chronological Account of an Historical Event

Copyright © 2010-2014 by the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators and Oakland Schools.
# Table of Contents

**Preface**
Learning Progression, Grades 6-8 ................................................................. 1  
Learning Progression, Grades 9-12 ................................................................. 2  

**Background Section**
Abstract ................................................................................................................. 4  
Standards .............................................................................................................. 6  
Overview of Sessions – Teaching Points and Unit Assessments ..................... 7  
Informational Essay Rubric .................................................................................... 9  

**Resource Materials Section**
Resource Materials needed for each session follow the table of the Overview of that Session  
Session 1 .................................................................................................................. 10  
Session 2 .................................................................................................................. 15  
Session 3 .................................................................................................................. 19  
Session 4 .................................................................................................................. 24  
Session 5 .................................................................................................................. 27  
Session 6 .................................................................................................................. 33  
Session 7 .................................................................................................................. 37  
Session 8 .................................................................................................................. 44  
Session 9 .................................................................................................................. 46  
Session 10 ............................................................................................................... 48  
Session 11 ............................................................................................................... 51  
Session 12 ............................................................................................................... 55  
Informational Essay White Paper ....................................................................... 57  
Resources ............................................................................................................... 62
Writers Workshop Unit of Study
7th Grade – Informational Essay
Chronological Account of an Historical Event

Preface

The following unit supports and aligns to the Common Core State Standards. This research-based work is the outcome of a collective effort made by numerous secondary teachers from around the state of Michigan. Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA) initiated a statewide collaborative project, bringing together educators from around the state to create and refine a K-12 English Language Arts model curriculum. This one unit is situated within a yearlong sequence of units. Depending upon the unit’s placement in the yearlong Scope and Sequence, it will be important to recognize prior skills and content this unit expects learners to have. This unit also has a companion reading unit where readers closely study informational texts through a critical literacy lens. Each unit presents a string of teaching points that scaffold and spiral the content and skills. The unit is structured to be student-centered rather than teacher-driven. Sessions emphasize student engagement and strive to increase critical thinking and writing skills simultaneously. Writing and thinking processes are stressed and are equally important to the end writing product. Sessions are designed as a series of mini-lessons that allow time to write, practice, and conference. Through summative and formative assessments specific to each unit, students progress toward becoming independent thinkers and writers.

Significant input and feedback was gathered both in the initial conceptualizing of the unit and later revisions. Teachers from around the state piloted and/or reviewed the unit and their feedback and student artifacts helped in the revision process. Special thanks goes to lead unit writer Delia DeCourcy, who closely studied the CCSS and translated the standards into curriculum and practice. Throughout the yearlong collaborative project, teachers reviewing units are finding how students’ habits of mind have shifted from task-oriented to big-picture thinking, utilizing a critical literacy lens. The following unit contends that significant reading from multiple resources is needed prior to a writer’s developing a claim of scope and depth.
### Informational Writing Unit Learning Progressions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mentor Texts: Texts used in prior nonfiction unit; texts with headings and visuals; texts that address cause-and-effect processes</td>
<td>Mentor Texts: Texts used in prior nonfiction unit; texts that address a significant historical event</td>
<td>Mentor Texts: Texts used in prior non-fiction unit; texts that address a critical social issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOCUS</td>
<td>Explaining a Cause-and-Effect Phenomenon</td>
<td>Exploring an Historical Event</td>
<td>Explaining the Two Sides of a Critical Social Issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify and Research a Topic</td>
<td>• Define and explore cause and effect</td>
<td>• Define and explore historical events</td>
<td>• Define and explore comparison/contrast and critical issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Analyze examples of nonfiction about cause and effect in the real world</td>
<td>• Analyze nonfiction about historical events and the information provided</td>
<td>• Analyze examples of comparison/contrast on a critical issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Identify and select a cause-and-effect topic</td>
<td>• Select an historical event to write about</td>
<td>• Select a critical issue and identify its two sides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Conduct online research</td>
<td>• Conduct online research</td>
<td>• Conduct online research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synthesize Information and Determine an Organizational Pattern</td>
<td>• Select, organize, and structure information logically</td>
<td>• Select, organize, and structure information logically</td>
<td>• Select, organize, and structure information logically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Determine a central idea</td>
<td>• Determine a central idea</td>
<td>• Determine a central idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Analyze key facts, details, quotations, and examples</td>
<td>• Analyze key facts, details, quotations, and examples</td>
<td>• Analyze key facts, details, quotations, and examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Draw conclusions to illustrate the importance of the topic</td>
<td>• Use visuals to support facts, details, and analysis</td>
<td>• Use visuals to support facts, details and analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Create transitions between paragraphs to improve organization and flow</td>
<td>• Create transitions between paragraphs to improve organization and flow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Craft introductory and concluding paragraphs to provide the reader with context and importance</td>
<td>• Craft introductory and concluding paragraphs to provide the reader with context and importance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a Product to Inform an Audience</td>
<td>• Revise to reconsider the central idea, improve structure and organization, and expand or cut content</td>
<td>• Revise to reconsider the central idea, improve structure and organization, and expand or cut content</td>
<td>• Revise to reconsider the central idea, improve structure and organization, and expand or cut content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Publish the product and reflect on the process</td>
<td>• Publish the product and reflect on the process</td>
<td>• Publish the product and reflect on the process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text Focus of Research</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identify and Research a Topic</strong></td>
<td>Multiple Genres: Digital, Oral, and Print</td>
<td>Multiple Genres: Digital and Print</td>
<td>Articles: Digital and Print</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Trends</td>
<td></td>
<td>Core Democratic Values</td>
<td>The Bill of Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify and Research a Topic</td>
<td>- Identify requirements of a research task and final product</td>
<td>- Draw on prior knowledge of core democratic values to develop an inquiry</td>
<td>- Draw on prior knowledge about the Bill of Rights to develop an inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Examine essential questions to focus topic of research</td>
<td>- Develop collaborative research skills to explore a subject in both breadth and depth</td>
<td>- Independently manage a guided inquiry to cite explicit and inferred evidence on subtopics related to the rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Review research to narrow the focus of further investigation</td>
<td>- Use a guided inquiry to cite explicit and inferred evidence on character traits, laws, and values</td>
<td>- Independently survey a series of articles and websites to identify a research topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Develop questions to gather relevant information</td>
<td>- Survey a series of sources (video and print) to identify key information to narrow a search for a potential topic</td>
<td>- Read texts to identify stance and position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Use different types of questions to find quality and relevant information</td>
<td>- Synthesize and categorize the results of sources to identify potential claims</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Develop a system for primary research using quality research questions</td>
<td>- Identify elements (graphics, image, sound, words) of texts that represent or define the author’s purpose</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Develop a system for secondary research tracking sources and analyze information gathered</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop an Informed View</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Examine initial findings to determine what is interesting, relevant, and important</td>
<td>- Conduct primary research, recognizing stances taken in texts or interviews</td>
<td>- Choose and craft a type of primary research that best suits the research topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Summarize and categorize existing research</td>
<td>- Create visual texts to develop access to shared research data</td>
<td>- Conduct primary research to gain insight into other people’s experiences with the topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Develop a theory about a perspective on the topic</td>
<td>- Identify diverse perspectives and evidence to support each perspective from primary research</td>
<td>- Conduct relevant secondary research to gain insight about the topic and related subtopics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Synthesize findings from primary research with information gathered in secondary research</td>
<td>- Generate visual texts that</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconcile Current Thinking with New Reading</td>
<td>Create a Product to Inform an Audience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Reread to confirm or disconfirm a theory</td>
<td>- Organize information logically for the product that will be created</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Create a claim and identify evidence (facts, reasons, and/or examples) that supports the claim</td>
<td>- Use proper documentation to avoid plagiarism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Explain how the evidence or data supports the claim</td>
<td>- Prepare to present findings by making sure that the research question was answered, the task’s requirements were fulfilled, and by rehearsing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Consider an audience</td>
<td>- Present findings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Engage in additional research</td>
<td>- Self-evaluate the research product in order to become better researchers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Revise claim to incorporate new information</td>
<td>- Select a product (collaborative or individual) appropriate for the research</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use the revised claim to organize supporting evidence</td>
<td>- Cite and format documentation and bibliography</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Assess supporting evidence and identify reasons for additional research</td>
<td>- Study informational essays to identify key decisions writers make</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Engage in further research to confirm or disconfirm the claim</td>
<td>- Draft an essay in order to inform an audience and to propose (a) solution(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Revise claims to incorporate new information</td>
<td>- Cite and format documentation and bibliography</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Construct an informed view on the causes and effects of a social problem and then find evidence that challenges or confirms that claim</td>
<td>- Create an effective multi-media product to publish findings and propose solutions for the social issue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Conduct further research to determine whether to/how to revise the informed claim</td>
<td>- Cite and format documentation and bibliography</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Identify implications of the social problem and possible solutions</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Writers Workshop Unit of Study
7th Grade – Informational Essay
Chronological Account of an Historical Event

Abstract
In this writing unit, students will engage in informational/explanatory writing by examining an historical event and conveying ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content. First, they will brainstorm historical events of significant interest to them about which they may have some prior knowledge. After selecting a topic and learning about chronological structure, summary, and descriptive writing, students will develop a research question to drive the search for credible sources. After researching, they will develop a central idea, which will help them select and group relevant details, quotations, examples, and other information into categories. Students will write a first draft in which they organize information by time order and will analyze information to explain the relationship between key moments of the event. They will conclude with a paragraph that summarizes their findings and explains to the reader the cultural importance of this event. The first draft will be taken through peer review and multiple revisions to strengthen the clarity of ideas, organization of the essay, and completeness of analysis. Students will also reflect on their choices to help them become more autonomous as writers.

Philosophy and Notes About This Unit
This unit should follow a non-fiction unit in which the texts act as mentor texts for the writing unit. Historically focused informational texts that are written in a lively manner would be ideal mentor texts.

Of particular importance is that students select an historical event they are extremely interested in. This interest will translate not only to their motivation for this writing project, but also to their readers as students write with increased engagement and passion about their topic.

A foundational belief of this unit is that writing is a series of choices a writer makes—not a formula that students follow or a worksheet they fill in. To that end, the handouts and sessions provide choice for the novice writer—choice in topic and organizational structure. If we provide our students with a rigid graphic organizer and ask them to fill it in, they are not learning to become independent writers and thinkers. Similarly, if we set them off to write without enough scaffolding, they will flounder. But by showing writers the various options available to them as novice crafters of an informational piece, they can make choices about their content and structure and continue to become more autonomous in their writing.

The mentor texts from the preceding reading unit and pre-writing sessions in this writing unit are especially important in helping to establish students’ writerly independence during the drafting phase. The introduction of mentor texts helps students understand what they are striving for, to see what is expected, and how all the pieces work together. In addition, engaging in a variety of pre-writing activities will allow students to explore, eliminate, and select information. This experimentation will keep the writing process from becoming formulaic. The content and structure of each student’s informational essay should be unique to his or her topic and controlling idea.

The sessions recommend that you, the teacher, research and write alongside your students. As teachers of writing, we must model what it means to be a learner, researcher and writer. In doing so, we show that learning is worth engaging in. We model curiosity. And we illustrate that learning is a never-ending endeavor. By researching and writing with our students, we also model a passion for learning that can inspire their passion for their chosen topic during the informational essay unit. And we can speak first hand about the frustrations, difficulties, and victories of finding and organizing information, selecting the best structure, and revising to perfect a piece.

While this unit offers operational curriculum, realize that the writing process is malleable and will be different for each student. Teaching using Writing Workshop pedagogy is an art, not a science. On drafting and revising days, some students may be writing new material, others will be re-thinking and revising what they’ve already written, while others may be returning to research a point they haven’t addressed yet in their draft. It’s important to have flexibility with your students and their processes as they investigate their topics. This can look like chaos in a classroom, but if each student has a clear sense of what s/he needs to accomplish during a class period that is designated as a work day, they can be focused. One way of keeping track of your students is to keep an accountability sheet on a clipboard at the front of the room where they write down at the beginning of the class what they plan to accomplish that day. As they leave at the end of class, they then record whether or not they met their goal and if they didn’t, what
they did accomplish. This tool will help you manage this moving machine with many parts, otherwise known as the writing workshop. The formative assessment mini-tasks will be an important tool for you in determining which students need more instruction, support, freedom, encouragement, and structure.

The unit asks students to reflect on their writing experience and choices. The inclusion of reflection is another move toward helping students become more independent thinkers and writers. As students become more aware of why they make the choices they make during a writing task and what the outcome of those choices are and how they arrived at their final product, they will become increasingly more confident as writers and thinkers, better able to self-direct their own learning process. The goal is for them to see the teacher as a resource in the writing process rather than the person who steers the ship.

Key Terms

**Informational/Explanatory Writing** - Informational/explanatory writing conveys information accurately and is organized around a controlling idea with a coherent focus, answering a question that addresses what, why, and how.

**Summary Writing** – The key points worth noting from a text without including examples and details. In reference to history, the main facts about an event including who, what, where, when, and how.

**Descriptive Writing** – Writing that uses vivid language and sensory details to paint a picture for the reader.

- **Vivid Language** – Using concrete and powerful words to convey image and meaning. With an historical account, this also includes eye-witness accounts and descriptions

  - EXAMPLE
    - vague: The food was bad.
    - vivid: The pale turkey slices floated limply in a pool of murky fat.

- **Sensory Details** - Using sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste to sketch an impression in writing.

  - EXAMPLE
    - Without sensory detail - I walked down the street.
    - With sensory detail - The sidewalk scorched my feet and the sun beat down on my face and shoulders. I let out a shriek as sweat poured down my face.

**Chronological Structure** – A text structure that uses time order to determine the order in which information is presented.

**Historical Event** - An event whose outcome affects future events for a culture, a significant number of people and/or the direction of a culture, government, or community.

**Brainstorming (Idea Generation)** - A first stage process where the writer produces a list of ideas, topics, or arguments without crossing any possibilities off the list. The goal is to create a “storm” of creative energy to open up thinking about the writing task and access ideas the writer might not have realized she had. For resources on brainstorming techniques visit: [http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/brainstorming.html](http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/brainstorming.html)

**Prior Knowledge** – All the information the writer has stored in his/her brain about a selected topic. Writing down this information increases writerly confidence as a student begins a writing task, as well as ready’s the mind to accept and retain new information about the topic, thus helping the writer to make connections between prior knowledge and new knowledge.

**Research Question** – An overarching question that steers the research and writing of an essay. These questions should be:

- Not easily answered
- Analytical in nature
- Open-ended
- Require research and thinking to craft an adequate response

**Information Question** – According to Bloom’s Taxonomy, these fact-based questions are the lowest level of question asking. The answers to these questions contribute to addressing the overarching research question.

**Central Idea** – The overarching idea behind an informational essay. The term central idea can also be used in reference to a paragraph, where the central idea should sit in the topic sentence.

**Analysis** – In an informational text, analysis helps the reader understand how to interpret the facts and details they are given and make connections between different pieces of information.

**Headings and Sub-Headings** – The titles given to each section of an essay that appear in bold and divide information into categories. Sub-sections of information within these categories can be titled with related sub-headings.

**Introductory Paragraph** – The first paragraph of an informational text that hooks the reader, introduces a thumbnail sketch of the historical event, then makes clear the essay’s central idea.

**Concluding Paragraph** – A paragraph that sums up the major ideas presented in the essay. For an essay that focuses on an historical event, writers need to assert why this event was so important and how it affected future events in the society, culture, or community.
Standards

*Common Core Standards: Informational Writing*: The following College and Career Readiness (CCR) anchor standards apply to reading and writing in narrative template tasks. Refer to the 6-12 standards for grade-appropriate specifics that fit each task and module being developed. The standards numbers and general content remain the same across all grades, but details vary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>CCR Anchor Standards for Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCR Anchor Standards for Writing Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overview of Sessions: Teaching Points and Unit Assessments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Unit Performance Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To assess students’ skills as writers of informational texts that chronicle key moments in an historical event, students will write such an essay. Students should write on a topic that they have prior knowledge of and that interests them significantly. Teachers will assess the results of the pre-unit performance task using the Informational Essay Rubric, focusing on students’ understanding of the chronological text structure and use of summary and description writing. This performance task will help determine skill strengths and deficits of the class as a whole and of individual students and will help the teacher determine how much depth to go into regarding text structure, central idea, analysis, and essay organization.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teaching Points

**INFORMATIONAL ESSAY MENTOR TEXT STUDY**

1. Informational Writing Strategies: Chronological (summary + description)
   Writers of informational essays use many different strategies to convey information to the reader, including cause and effect, definition, compare and contrast, and classification. A chronological structure provides summaries and descriptions of a significant event’s key moments in the order in which they occurred.

2. Informational Text Models: Chronological
   Writers examine pieces by other writers to learn about informational essay strategies. Writers use a chronological structure in informational essays to show how one moment followed and even led to another in creating what became a significant event. Summary and descriptive writing about key moments makes that chronological relationship clear.

**SYNTHESIZE INFORMATION AND DEVELOP AND ORGANIZATIONAL PATTERN**

3. Topic Brainstorming: Finding a Passion
   Writers usually produce their best writing when focused on a topic they care about. They brainstorm and pre-write to identify and explore possible topics, then carefully select a topic based on their interests and the assignment.

4. Developing a Research Question
   Writers develop research questions to focus their investigation of a topic. These questions should be open-ended and require research and considerable thinking to answer.

5. Researching & Organizing Information
   Writers perform research to increase their knowledge of the chosen topic. They sort through their prior knowledge and research information, categorizing facts, details, quotations, and examples into categories and sub-categories.

6. Determining the Central Idea
   Writers determine a central idea to focus the drafting of their essay. In an essay focused on chronology, the central idea will point to the key moments in an historical event and state why these moments were so important.

**Mid-Unit Performance Task**

Students will identify a historical event and identify research questions. They will note the key moments in their essays, their central ideas, and the gaps in information that they need to fill.

7. Drafting Strong Informational Paragraphs
   Informational essay writers select key facts, details, quotations, and examples to support the central idea in the topic sentence as they draft body paragraphs. They also analyze this information to help the audience make sense of the facts and link them to the central idea.

8. Finding a Structure for Paragraphs and the Essay Using Transitions
   Writers of informational essays select a logical structure for their piece as they draft. With the chronological pattern, the key moments are discussed in the order in which they happened. Within the paragraphs of a chronological account, writers organize summary, description, and analysis to have the greatest impact on the reader. Writers use transitions within and between paragraphs to help readers understand the logical flow of ideas.

9. Using Visual to Support Facts, Details, and Analysis
   Informational essay writers select, or craft, and carefully place pictures, graphs, charts, and headings and sub-headings to help the reader visually understand their central and supporting ideas.

10. Drafting Introductory and Concluding Paragraphs
    Informational essay writers craft introductory and concluding paragraphs that make clear to the reader the importance of the topic. With the chronological structure, the concluding paragraph discusses how the historical event affected the culture or future events.
CREATE A PRODUCT TO INFORM AN AUDIENCE

11. Revising & Peer Review
When they have completed a draft of their essay, informational essay writers may engage in peer review to get feedback on their writing. They may also use a reverse outline to determine the effectiveness of their piece. Using all this information, they formulate a revision plan, then make changes accordingly.

12. Publishing & Reflecting
To complete the writing process, writers must share their pieces with an audience—either in print or on the web—and then celebrate the accomplishment of completing a significant writing task. They then reflect on the writing process to become more independent writers in the future.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summative Assessment Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is there an historic event you are interested in and would like to know more about? Now is your chance to show what you know and deepen your understanding of a particular historical event. For this informational essay, you will craft a chronological account of key moments in an historical event. After deciding on a topic, you will devise a research question, find credible sources, and sift and sort information to determine a central idea. You will draft body paragraphs that include summary, description, and analysis to convey the key moments and impact of this event, organizing them in chronological sequence. After writing a first draft, you will engage in peer review and revise to strengthen the clarity of your ideas, organization of your essay, and completeness of your analysis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Informational Essay Rubric – A Chronological Account of an Historical Event

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>On-Target</th>
<th>Novice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td>The writer:</td>
<td>The writer:</td>
<td>The writer:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Artfully presents the hook, thumbnail sketch of the event, and central idea in the introductory paragraph.</td>
<td>• Presents the hook, thumbnail sketch of the event, and central idea in the introductory paragraph.</td>
<td>• Presents the hook, the thumbnail sketch of the event, or the central idea in the introductory paragraph, but not all these crucial elements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Has crafted a central idea that outlines multiple key moments and their importance.</td>
<td>• Has crafted a central idea that outlines key moments and their importance.</td>
<td>• Has crafted a central idea that does not outline key moments and their importance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Thoughtfully presents an abundance of summary and description highly relevant to the central idea and topic sentences.</td>
<td>• Presents summary and description highly relevant to the central idea and topic sentences.</td>
<td>• Presents little summary or description or does not balance one with the other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Always carefully analyzes summary and description to explain their importance in the historical event.</td>
<td>• Often analyzes summary and description to explain their importance in the historical event.</td>
<td>• Occasionally or never analyzes summary and description; the essay is fact-heavy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Uses the concluding paragraph to examine the historical event’s effect on society/culture and future events.</td>
<td>• Uses the concluding paragraph to examine the importance of this historical event and its lasting impact on society/culture and future events.</td>
<td>• Uses the concluding paragraph only to summarize what has already been explored in the essay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>• The chronological structure is clear and evident.</td>
<td>• The chronological structure is evident.</td>
<td>• A chronological structure is not used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Headings and sub-headings, if used, always have effective titles and assist the reader in understanding how information is organized.</td>
<td>• Headings and sub-headings, if used, usually have effective titles and often assist the reader in understanding how information is organized.</td>
<td>• Headings and sub-headings, if used, create confusion for the reader about how information is organized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The use of signal words and phrases creates a logical flow between sentences and paragraphs.</td>
<td>• The use of signal words and phrases usually creates a logical flow between sentences and paragraphs.</td>
<td>• Signal words and phrases are rarely or never used to create a logical flow between sentences and paragraphs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Each paragraph has a clear central idea that is presented in the topic sentence.</td>
<td>• Most paragraphs have a clear central idea that is presented in the topic sentence.</td>
<td>• Few paragraphs have a clear central idea that is presented in the topic sentence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Style &amp; Mechanics</strong></td>
<td>• Writing voice is engaging and consistently appropriate for the intended audience.</td>
<td>• Writing voice is engaging and usually appropriate for the intended audience.</td>
<td>• Writing voice is not engaging or is not appropriate for the intended audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The word choice is specific to the chosen topic.</td>
<td>• The word choice is somewhat specific to the chosen topic.</td>
<td>• The word choice is not specific to the chosen topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sentence structures are varied and complex.</td>
<td>• Sentence structures are often varied and sometimes complex.</td>
<td>• Sentence structures are not varied or complex.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The essay contains no errors in spelling or punctuation.</td>
<td>• The essay contains minimal spelling and punctuation errors.</td>
<td>• The essay contains multiple spelling or punctuation errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Process Checklist</strong></td>
<td>The writer:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Brainstormed to discover multiple topics and selected one suited to the writing task.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Researched to explore and refine his/her topic choice.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Drafted to organize and analyze information.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Revised his/her draft to achieve greater coherency and clarity.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Edited for clarity and an error-free essay.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept</td>
<td>Informational Writing Strategies: Chronological (summary + description)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Point</td>
<td>Writers of informational essays use many different strategies to convey information to the reader, including cause and effect, definition, compare and contrast, and classification. A chronological structure provides summaries and descriptions of a significant event’s key moments in the order in which they occurred.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Suggested Materials | o Video on chronological text structure: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RJJGh7YuemU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RJJGh7YuemU)  
 o Chronological Account of an Historical Event Terms Anchor Chart, included after this session  
 o Descriptive Writing handout, included after this session  
 o Summary Writing handout, included after this session |
| Preparation | • Review the videos and handouts, including terms and writing exercises.  
 • If you choose to play the YouTube clip, you’ll need some means to project it for the full class. |
| Quotation | History should be studied because it is essential to individuals and to society, and because it harbors beauty... In the first place, history offers a storehouse of information about how people and societies behave... The second reason history is inescapable as a subject of serious study follows closely on the first. The past causes the present, and so the future. - Peter Stearns, The American Historical Association |

**Active Engagement**

| 1. Significant Historical Events & Chronology – The Concept |  
|----------------------------------------------------------|---|
| • Full Class: Historical Events |  
| o Brainstorm: together develop a list of historical events students are familiar with. Ask them to name any major historical occurrences they can think of. They should record these in their writers’ notebooks for possible later use. |  
| o Ask your students: Why do we study the past? |  
| o Ask students to think about the events they named and to write down in their writers’ notebooks what we can learn about/from the event as individuals and as a society. |  
| o Have some students share their responses with the class. |  
| o Ask: How do we decide which events are important? |  
| o Together: Define the term historical event using the previously discussed ideas. Something like: an event whose outcome affects future events for a culture, a significant number of people and/or the direction of a culture, government, or community. |  
| • Full Class: Chronological Order |  
| o As a class, select one of the historical events from the list (one most students are familiar with) and ask the students what happened during this event. |  
| o Write the items in chronological order. |  
| o Ask: Why did I list these items in the order that they happened? |  
| o Make the point that history has the word “story” in it and when we talk about historical events, there is typically a beginning, middle, and an end. For people to understand events, they need to know the order of things. |  
| o Define “chronological order” and explain the breakdown of the word: |  
| ▪ Chrono – time  
 ▪ Logic - order |  
| o Consider showing this video about the chronological text structure: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RJJGh7YuemU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RJJGh7YuemU) |  
| o Explain that the historical account students will be writing for this unit will be the chronological story of the event and to keep the reader’s attention, they have to select the most interesting and important moments in that story. |  
| o Come to some agreement as a class about the key moments in the historical event you sketched out on the board that are the highlights of that story. |  
| o Ask students to briefly tell about a major (or minor) event in their own life by listing out the key moments chronologically. |  
| o Pair and share. |  

| 2. Summary & Descriptive Writing |  
|---------------------------------|---|
| • Full Class: Writing Types |  
| o Share/review the definitions of summary and descriptive writing from the anchor chart. |  
| o Have students practice with vivid and sensory writing as needed by giving them poor |
- examples that they must improve on.

- **Small Groups**
  - Students work through the Descriptive Writing handout.
  - Debrief as a full class.
  - Students work through the Summary Writing handout in small groups, except for the last activity in the handout, which they'll complete in Independent practice.
  - Debrief as a full class.

### Independent Practice
Students complete the activity at the end of the Summary Writing handout that asks them to first write a descriptive paragraph about an event, then write the summary version of that same event.

### Pre-unit assessment task
To assess students’ skills as writers of informational texts that chronicle key moments in an historical event, students will write such an essay. Students should write on a topic that they have prior knowledge of and that interests them significantly. Teachers will assess the results of the pre-unit performance task using the Informational Essay Rubric, focusing on students’ understanding of the chronological text structure and use of summary and description writing. This performance task will help determine skill strengths and deficits of the class as a whole and of individual students and will help the teacher determine how much depth to go into regarding text structure, central idea, analysis, and essay organization.

You can use the rubric included before session 1 to assess student performance.
Chronological Account of an Historical Event
Terms Anchor Chart

**Historical Event** - an event whose outcome affects future events for a culture, a significant number of people and/or the direction of a culture, government, or community.

**Key Moments** – significant happenings during an historical event that propel the event forward or having a lasting effect.

**Chronological Structure** - a text structure that uses time order to determine the order in which information is presented.

   Chrono = Time  
   Logic = Order

**Summary Writing** – the key points worth noting from a text without including examples and details. In reference to history, the main facts about an event including *who, what, where, and when*.

**Descriptive Writing** – Writing that uses vivid language and sensory details to paint a picture for the reader.

   **Vivid Language** – using concrete and powerful words to convey image and meaning, with an historical account, this also includes eye witness accounts and descriptions

   *EXAMPLE*
   
   vague: The food was bad.  
   vivid: The pale turkey slices floated limply in a pool of murky fat.

   **Sensory Details** - using sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste to sketch an impression in writing.

   *EXAMPLE*
   
   Without sensory detail - I walked down the street.
   
   With sensory detail - The sidewalk scorched my feet and the sun beat down on my face and shoulders. I let out a shriek as sweat poured down my face.
Descriptive Writing

Without Sensory Description

My sister and I walked along the boardwalk each afternoon of our vacation. We watched the ocean and listened to the waves. Usually we stopped for a snack at one of the many stores that line the boardwalk. Afterwards, we walked along the beach and let our feet get wet.

With Sensory Description

My sister and I walked along the boardwalk one afternoon on our vacation. The hot boards warmed our bare feet. We watched the foam-covered waves topple over each other and then slide back into sea. The crashing water competed with the exuberant yells from the seagulls. We bought a perfectly oval fluff of pink cotton candy that dissolved sweetly in our mouths. Afterwards, we walked along the edge of the water, letting the warm salty air blow our hair away from our necks as the cool water lapped over our toes.

TO DO

• Put stars next to the sensory description.
• Circle language that is most vivid.
• How is the second passage organized?
• What is the difference in effect between the first and second paragraph?
• When do you use description in writing or in conversation?
Summary Writing

Think of the last time you had to provide a summary. It may have been when someone asked you, “What was the movie about?” or “How did the game go?” or “What did I miss in class today?” Your questioner didn’t want to know every line and action in the movie, every play in the game, or every word from class. S/he just wanted you to summarize the most important details. Let’s see if you can do the same for the passage below.

TO DO
After reading the passage below, write a 2-3 sentence summary that answers who, what, where, when and how.

Hurricane Katrina – from Wikipedia.org

As the center of Hurricane Katrina passed southeast of New Orleans on August 29, 2005, winds downtown were in the Category 3 range with frequent intense gusts and tidal surge. Hurricane-force winds were experienced throughout New Orleans, although the most severe portion of Katrina missed the city, hitting nearby St. Bernard and Plaquemines parishes. Hurricane Katrina made its final landfall in eastern St. Tammany Parish. The western eye wall passed directly over St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana as a Category 3 hurricane at about 9:45 am CST, August 29, 2005.

In the City of New Orleans, the storm surge caused more than 50 breaches in drainage canal levees and also in navigational canal levees and precipitated the worst engineering disaster in the history of the United States. By August 31, 2005, 80% of New Orleans was flooded, with some parts under 15 feet (4.6 m) of water. The famous French Quarter dodged the massive flooding experienced in other levee areas. Most of the city's levees designed and built by the United States Army Corps of Engineers broke somewhere, including the 17th Street Canal levee, the Industrial Canal levee, and the London Avenue Canal floodwall.

Between 80 and 90 percent of the residents of New Orleans were evacuated safely in time before the hurricane struck, testifying to some of the success of the evacuation measures. Despite this, many remained in the city, mainly those who did not have access to personal vehicles or who were isolated from the dissemination of news from the local governments. The Louisiana Superdome was used to house and support some of those who were unable to evacuate.

Your Turn to Write!

1. Select an event to write a paragraph about from the recent or distant past. In your writer’s notebooks, write a descriptive paragraph about this event that engages sensory detail and vivid language.
2. Now write a brief summary of that same event, sticking only to facts and important details.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Informational Text Models: Chronological Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point</strong></td>
<td>Writers examine pieces by other writers to learn about informational essay strategies. Writers use a chronological structure in informational essays to show how one moment followed and even led to another in creating what became a significant event. Summary and descriptive writing about key moments makes that chronological relationship clear.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Suggested Materials** | • **Historical Account Close Reading** handout, included after this session  
• Hurricane Katrina article from History.com or another historical account about an event of interest to your students. The article is included after this session. |
| **Preparation** | Read and annotate the article to anticipate any difficulties your students might have. |
| **Active Engagement** | • **Where Are We Headed?**  
• Briefly explain the writing assignment students are about to begin working on. Let students know that this kind of chronological text is sometimes called an **Historical Account**.  
• Emphasize the differences between argument writing and informational writing. Students are not writing arguments in which they attempt to change the reader’s mind but, instead, they are providing the reader with objective information so the reader can make up his or her mind about the historical event.  
• **Mentor Text Analysis**  
• Solo/Small Group  
  o Give students the historical account of Katrina from History.com.  
  o Have students annotate and paraphrase using the **Historical Account Close Reading** handout.  
• Full Class  
  o Debrief about the mentor text reading.  
  o Annotate on the Smartboard or document camera based on the students’ findings. |
Historical Account Close Reading

Directions:

READING #1

Read the historical account of Hurricane Katrina, then discuss with your group to decide:

1. What are the key moments about this event that are identified in the article?

2. What do you think the central idea of this article is? Summarize it below.

READING #2

Carefully read the historical account again. As you read, identify the historical event, key moments, and elements of summary and description by highlighting and annotating the text.

- Highlight summary
- Underline description

3. How do summary and description work together in this article? What patterns do you see? Explain.

4. Reconsider the central idea. Write any new thinking about the central idea below.
Hurricane Katrina – From History.com
Adapted from http://www.history.com/topics/hurricane-katrina

Early in the morning on August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast of the United States. When the storm made landfall, it had a Category 3 rating on the Hurricane Scale. It brought sustained winds of 100–140 miles per hour and stretched some 400 miles across. The storm itself did a great deal of damage, but its aftermath was catastrophic. Levee breaches led to massive flooding, and many people charged that the federal government was slow to meet the needs of the people affected by the storm. Hundreds of thousands of people in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama were displaced from their homes, and experts estimate that Katrina caused more than $100 billion in damage.

Hurricane Katrina: Before the Storm
The tropical depression that became Hurricane Katrina formed over the Bahamas on August 23, 2005, and meteorologists were soon able to warn people in the Gulf Coast states that a major storm was on its way. By August 28, evacuations were underway across the region. That day, the National Weather Service predicted that after the storm hit, “most of the [Gulf Coast] area will be uninhabitable for weeks...perhaps longer.” New Orleans was at particular risk. Though about half the city actually lies above sea level, its average elevation is about six feet below sea level—and it is completely surrounded by water.

Over the course of the 20th century, the Army Corps of Engineers had built a system of levees and seawalls to keep the city from flooding. The levees along the Mississippi River were strong and sturdy, but the ones built to hold back Lake Pontchartrain, Lake Borgne and the waterlogged swamps and marshes to the city’s east and west were much less reliable. Even before the storm, officials worried that those levees, jerry-built atop sandy, porous, erodible soil, might not withstand a massive storm surge. Neighborhoods that sat below sea level, many of which housed the city’s poorest and most vulnerable people, were at great risk of flooding.

The day before Katrina hit, New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin issued the city’s first-ever mandatory evacuation order. He also declared that the Superdome, a stadium located on relatively high ground near downtown, would serve as a “shelter of last resort” for people who could not leave the city. (For example, some 112,000 of New Orleans’ nearly 500,000 people did not have access to a car.) By nightfall, almost 80 percent of the city’s population had evacuated. Some 10,000 had sought shelter in the Superdome, while tens of thousands of others chose to wait out the storm at home.

Hurricane Katrina: Storm and Flooding
By the time Hurricane Katrina struck New Orleans early in the morning on Monday, August 29, it had already been raining heavily for hours. When the storm surge (as high as 9 meters in some places) arrived, it overwhelmed many of the city’s unstable levees and drainage canals. Water seeped through the soil underneath some levees and swept others away altogether. By 9 a.m., low-lying places like St. Bernard Parish and the Ninth Ward were under so much water that people had to scramble to attics and rooftops for safety. Eventually, nearly 80 percent of the city was under some quantity of water.

Hurricane Katrina: The Aftermath
Many people acted heroically in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. The Coast Guard, for instance, rescued some 34,000 people in New Orleans alone, and many ordinary citizens commandeered boats, offered food and shelter, and did whatever else they could to help their neighbors. Yet the government—particularly the federal government—seemed unprepared for the disaster. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) took days to establish operations in New Orleans, and even then did not seem to have a sound plan of action. Officials, even including President George W. Bush, seemed unaware of just how bad things were in New Orleans and elsewhere: how many people were stranded or missing; how many homes and businesses had been damaged; how much food, water and aid was needed.

Katrina had left in her wake what one reporter called a “total disaster zone” where people were “getting absolutely desperate.” For one thing, many had nowhere to go. At the Superdome in New Orleans, where supplies had been limited to begin with, officials accepted 15,000 more refugees from the storm on Monday before locking the doors. City leaders had no real plan for anyone else. Tens of thousands of people desperate for food, water and shelter broke into the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center complex, but they found nothing there but chaos. Meanwhile, it was nearly impossible to leave New Orleans: Poor people especially, without cars or anyplace else to go, were stuck. For instance, some people tried to walk over the Crescent City Connector bridge to the nearby suburb of Gretna.

Katrina pummeled huge parts of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, but the desperation was most concentrated in New Orleans. Before the storm, nearly 30 percent of its people lived in poverty. Katrina exacerbated these conditions, and left many of New
Orleans’s poorest citizens even more vulnerable than they had been before the storm. In all, Hurricane Katrina killed nearly 2,000 people and affected some 90,000 square miles of the United States. Hundreds of thousands of evacuees scattered far and wide. Today, after years of recovery and rebuilding efforts, people along the Gulf Coast have made great strides in returning to life as usual even as they continue to rebuild.
### Session 3

**Concept**

**Topic Brainstorming: Finding a Passion**

**Quotation**

“Motivation is at the heart of writing...Go where your interest lies or your affection or your passion.” — William Zinsser from *On Writing Well*

“Kids need time to explore topics before we ask them to formulate definitive research questions. Often they don’t know which questions to ask early in the research process, because they don’t know enough. They can investigate topics, build background knowledge, and learn as they research, becoming more knowledgeable and more curious, gathering important questions along the way. I have seen kids go to great lengths to find answers to questions that compel them.”

— Carol Newman, a school librarian in Boulder, Colorado

**Teaching Point**

Writers usually produce their best writing when focused on a topic they care about. They brainstorm and pre-write to identify and explore possible topics, then carefully select a topic based on their interests and the assignment.

**Suggested Materials**

- **Sample Topics Brainstorm List**, included after this session.
- **U.S. Historical Events Anchor Chart**, included after this session
- **Directed Exploration & Recording Prior Knowledge handout**, included after this session
- Copies, transparencies or scans to be projected of your (the teacher’s) Writer’s Notebook that you will share with your students that includes your two lists about historical events, as well as your directed exploration and prior knowledge about 3 topics of interest.
- Websites to research for possible topics
  - [http://www.history-timelines.org.uk/events-timelines/14-american-history-timeline.htm](http://www.history-timelines.org.uk/events-timelines/14-american-history-timeline.htm)

**Preparation**

- Complete the Writer’s Notebook activities as outlined in this lesson.
- Review the **Sample Topics Brainstorm List** and **U.S. Historical Events Anchor Chart**

**Active Engagement**

#### 1. Brainstorming Topics for the Informational Essay

- **Full Class: How to Brainstorm**
  - Share the definition of brainstorming to reinforce the idea that at this stage of the writing process, students should be open to all possibilities.
  - **Brainstorming: a first stage process where the writer produces a list of ideas, topics, or arguments without crossing any possibilities off the list. The goal is to create a “storm” of creative energy to open up thinking about the writing task and access ideas the writer might not have realized she had.**
  - **Explain that students are going to be generating two lists today that answer these questions:**
    - WHAT HISTORICAL EVENTS DO YOU KNOW ABOUT?
    - WHAT HISTORICAL EVENTS DO YOU WANT TO KNOW ABOUT?

Share your lists from your Writer’s Notebook that answer these questions. This will give students a sense of the variety they can include in their own lists.

**Independent Practice**

- **Solo: Generating Topics and Analyzing Lists**
  - Have students generate their two lists, each on a different page. Ask them to have at least **five items** on each list as a goal.
    - **Remind them that they can include topics they know about from outside of school and from their classes. All history-focused topics are possibilities.**
    - **Also, remind students that they can include events from the recent past—like the election of the first black president.**
  - **For help with the list WHAT HISTORICAL EVENTS DO YOU WANT TO KNOW ABOUT?**
    - **Share the Historical Events Categories Anchor Chart**
    - **Have students surf the websites below to expand their brainstorming.**
      - [http://www.history-timelines.org.uk/events-timelines/14-american-history-timeline.htm](http://www.history-timelines.org.uk/events-timelines/14-american-history-timeline.htm)
When they are finished, have your students read back through their lists. Students should:
   - Put a star next to any topic they feel especially interested in or passionate about.
   - Highlight topics that are repeated from one list to another.

### Active Engagement

- **Directed Exploration and Recording Prior Knowledge**
  - Review the Directed Exploration/Prior Knowledge Anchor Chart.
  - Share your topic choices and Directed Exploration/ Prior Knowledge Writer’s Notebook entries with your students so they have a sense of where they are headed in this topic exploration and selection process. Give students a chance to ask questions about your research process.
  - In their writers’ notebooks, have students record prior knowledge and/or research on their 3 selected topics to answer these questions from the Directed Exploration/Prior Knowledge Anchor Chart.

- **Pass Out of Class**
  Have students write their 3 historical event choices on a notecard. They should star the one they are most interested in and explain why this is their chosen topic.
Sample Topic Brainstorm List – Historical Events in U.S. History

**Civil Rights**
- Montgomery Bus Boycott
- Lunch counter sit-ins
- Detroit Race Riots of 1965
- Selma to Montgomery March for Voting Rights

**Triumphs**
- Man on the moon
- Invention of the television
- Invention of radio
- Invention of the electric light
- The production of the Model T

**War**
- Pearl Harbor
- Invasion of Baghdad during war with Iraq
- Dropping the atomic bomb

**Political Events**
- Watergate
- The Cuban Missile Crisis
- End of Slavery

**Assassinations**
- JFK
- Martin Luther King
- Malcolm X
- Robert Kennedy
- John Lennon

**Disasters**
- Sinking of the Titanic
- The Challenger Explosion
- The Trail of Tears
- Hurricane Katrina
- The bombing of the Twin Towers on 9/11
- Oklahoma City Bombing
- Stock Market Crash of 1929
- Chicago Fire
U.S. Historical Events Categories
Anchor Chart

Major Battles or Attacks During Wars

Political Events

Assassinations

Disasters

Triumphs

Civil Rights
Directed Exploration/Prior Knowledge Questions

- What happened? Give a brief summary of the event.
- When and where did it happen?
- Who were the players and parties involved in this event? (What are the unique perspectives?)
- What seem to be the key moments in this event?
- How much reliable information is there about this topic on the Web?
  - .gov, .edu, .net
  - Can you find eyewitness accounts or descriptions?
  - Is there a variety of info or is it the same on each site?
# Session 4

## Concept

### Developing Research Questions

### Quotation

“All students should learn how to formulate their own questions. All teachers can easily teach this skill as part of their regular practice...The skill of being able to generate a wide range of questions and strategies about how to use them effectively is rarely, if ever, deliberately taught. In fact, it has too often been limited to students who have access to an elite education. Our goal is to democratize the teaching of an essential thinking and learning skill that is also an essential democratic skill.”

-from *Make Just One Change* by Dan Rothstein and Luz Santana

### Teaching Point

Writers develop research questions to focus their investigation of a topic. These questions should be open-ended and require research and considerable thinking to answer.

### Suggested Materials

Copies of *Devising and Using Research Questions* handout, included after this session.

### Preparation

- Gather or devise sample research and information questions about an historical event that your students will find interesting. These could concern the topics that you shared from your Writer’s Notebook.

### Active Engagement

1. **Research Questions**
   - Full Class & Solo: Creating Questions
     - Share the teaching point.
     - Review the sample research questions on the *Devising and Using Research Questions* handout and share some of your own that you have generated.
     - Using the historical event they have chosen, students will generate research and information questions that will drive their research.

### Independent Practice – Formative Assessment Mini-Task

At this point in the research and writing process, have students turn in a notecard to you with the following information. Let them know this is a formative assessment.

#### Final Topic Selection and Reflection

The historical event I plan to write about is:

The research questions I devised are:

### Mini-Task Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept/Skill</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>On-target</th>
<th>Novice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>- Analytical and open ended.</td>
<td>- Analytical and open ended.</td>
<td>- Devised a factual question rather than a research question.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Devising and Using Research Questions

What is a research question?

Research questions help writers focus their investigation of a topic for an informational text. A research question is an overarching question that steers the research and writing of an essay. These questions should:

- Not be easily answered
  - There are no simple answers for these questions. It takes a lot of facts and explanation to answer an inquiry question.
- Be analytical in nature
  - Inquiry questions are “why” and “how” questions, which means a writer must gather information and analyze it in order for the reader to understand the answer to the inquiry question.
- Be open ended
  - Open-ended questions can’t be answered with simple facts because they are complex.
- Require research and thinking to craft an adequate response.

Sample research questions – Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans

1. What were the key moments before, during, and after this natural disaster? Why were they key?
2. Are these events linked? If so, how?
3. What kinds of eyewitness accounts would be helpful in bringing this disaster to life?

TO DO:
In your writer’s notebook, devise 2-3 research questions about your historical event.

What is an information question?
Information questions are fact-based questions at the lowest level of question asking. The answers to these questions help answer the research question.

Types of information questions about historical events:

- Where?
  - Where did this event occur? Is this place the same now as it was during this historical event?
- When?
  - When did this event happen?
- Who?
  - Who took part in or was affected by this historical event?
- What?
  - What happened during the event?
  - What happened as a result of this event?
• How?
  o How did the event occur? What were the circumstances that made it possible?

Sample information questions – Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans

Research Question: What were the key moments before, during, and after this natural disaster? Why were they key?

Information Questions:
- When did the storm hit?
- Did people know it was coming?
- When, where and why did the storm flood the city?
- When did people begin to evacuate?
- Where did they go?
- What happened to the people who stayed during the storm?
- Who had to be rescued?
- When did the water recede?
- What damage was done?
- When could people return to the city?

TO DO:
Read over all your prior knowledge and information gathered in your initial research. Next, write down all the information questions you think you need to answer in order to write a strong essay that fully responds to your research question(s). Information questions should be quite specific, like the questions above.

TO DO:
Share your research questions and information questions with a partner. Ask for their help in refining your research questions and generating further relevant information questions.

NEXT STEP:
Perform more research to get your questions answered!
Session 5

Teaching Point
Writers perform research to increase their knowledge of the chosen topic. They sort through their prior knowledge and research information, categorizing facts, details, quotations, and examples into categories and sub-categories.

Suggested Materials
- Putting Information into Categories handout, included after this session

Preparation
- Devise a strategy to introduce or review the selecting of credible sources.
- Select an article that you will use to model annotation to answer a research question.
- Review the lesson handout and the teacher versions of the category table. Consider where students might run into difficulty devising categories for the Hurricane information and in their formative assessment mini-task of devising categories and sub-categories for their own essay information.

Active Engagement
1. Finding, Reading and Annotating Sources
   - Review strategies for finding credible sources on the Internet as needed.
   - Once students have found their sources, model how to annotate a source to answer a research question using one of your sources and research questions.
   - Discuss ways of indicating through annotation whether information is summary or description.
   - Remind students to notice and highlight all needed citation information in their sources.

2. Organizing Information Using Categories and Sub-categories
   - Revisit the teaching point and pass out the Putting Information into Categories handout.
   - Explain the task and share the research question: What were key moments of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans?
   - Small Groups: Have students break into groups and cut up their information into strips (one strip per bullet). Working together, they will put the information into piles—first into categories, then into sub-categories (summary and description). Students then give names to the categories and sub-categories of information and record them in the handout’s table.
   - Whole Class: Reconvene the class to share results. Discuss different ways of organizing the key moments (there may be some debate about moments that happened simultaneously) and how to arrange summary and description of a moment. This discussion will continue when you reach the session on drafting body paragraphs.

Independent Practice

Formative Assessment
Mini-task
- Solo: Organizing Information for Your Essay
   - Students follow the steps from the Putting Information into Categories handout to create their own categories and sub-categories table for their own essay. It may be helpful for students working on the same topic to engage in this process together.
   - Students should also note where there are gaps in their information about key moments.
   - Review the students’ tables’ using the rubric below.

Mini-Task Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>On-Target</th>
<th>Novice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Reflect multiple key moments in the historical event; key moments are all well-chosen</td>
<td>- Reflect multiple key moments in the historical event</td>
<td>- Reflect few key moments in the historical event or confusion over what constitutes a key moment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Informational Essay 7: Session 5

Putting Information into Categories

Once you’ve read and annotated your sources, you can begin to put your information into categories and sub-categories. You can name these categories and sub-categories with headings and sub-headings, and you might even decide to use these headings and sub-headings in your essay to help your reader.

Let’s practice putting information into categories using information about Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans.

1. Read all the information about Hurricane Katrina on the next pages.

2. Cut the bullets into strips.

3. Group similar information together by putting the strips into piles.
   a. Begin with key moments.
   b. Break the key moments into smaller SUB-CATEGORIES by summary writing and description writing.
   c. When you’re happy with your piles, fill in the chart below to share with the class. Be sure the moments are in correct chronological order. Note that you may have fewer or more key moments than the table allows for.

What is the historical event? _____________________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>Key Moment #1 –</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUB-CATEGORIES</td>
<td>Summary explains...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Description concerns...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>Key Moment #2 –</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUB-CATEGORIES</td>
<td>Summary explains...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Description concerns...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>Key Moment #3 –</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUB-CATEGORIES</td>
<td>Summary explains...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Description concerns...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUB-CATEGORIES</td>
<td>Summary explains...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description concerns...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>Key Moment #4 –</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUB-CATEGORIES</td>
<td>Summary explains...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description concerns...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>Key Moment #5 –</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUB-CATEGORIES</td>
<td>Summary explains...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description concerns...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>Key Moment #6 –</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUB-CATEGORIES</td>
<td>Summary explains...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description concerns...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>Key Moment #7 –</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUB-CATEGORIES</td>
<td>Summary explains...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description concerns...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Information about Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans

Directions: Organize this information into categories and sub-categories.
-Your categories will be key moments of this natural disaster.
-Your sub-categories will be summary and description of each key moment.

- “The first evacuation buses arrived Wednesday evening near the Louisiana Superdome, where up to 30,000 people have sought shelter under deteriorating conditions. Under the direction of National Guard troops, weary evacuees waited in long lines to board buses that will relocate them to the Astrodome in Houston, Texas, where they will be temporarily housed” (“New Orleans”).

- “The hurricane’s storm surge — a 29-foot wall of water pushed ashore when the hurricane struck the Gulf Coast — was the highest ever measured in the United States” (“Hurricane Katrina”).

- “Katrina’s flooding struck hardest in such residential areas as Gentilly and the Lower Ninth Ward. While the waters largely spared the Central Business District and the French Quarter, more than 130,000 homes were damaged in the storm, some 70 percent of occupied units” (Blackburn).

- “At the Superdome, a 2-year-old girl slept in a pile of trash. Blood stains the walls next to vending machines smashed by teenagers” (Gold).

- “The trees were bent over and the wind blew so hard, you could hardly open the door. Rain was coming down in sheets. I couldn’t even see across the street, much less down the block. The wind just howled and howled” (Sellers).

- At approximately 8:14 AM CDT, the New Orleans office of the National Weather Service issued a Flash Flood Warning for Orleans Parish and St Bernard Parish, citing a levee breach at the Industrial Canal. The National Weather Service predicted three to eight feet of water and advised people in the warning area to "move to higher ground immediately."

- “The water wasn’t coming over the floodwall, it came through the levees. Those floodwalls were plenty tall. The levees gave way and then there was just water everywhere” (Doster).

- “By the evening of August 29, 2005, approximately 28 levee failures were reported throughout the city. Approximately 66% to 75% of the city was now under water” (“Civil Engineering”).

- “On August 29, over an estimated eighteen-hour period, approximately 80 percent of the city flooded with six to twenty feet of water, necessitating one of the largest search and rescue operations in our Nation’s history” (“Federal Response”).

- “They had been crammed into the Superdome’s shadowy ramps and corridors, spread across its vast artificial turf field and plopped into small family encampments in the plush orange, teal and purple seats that rise toward the top of the dome” (Treaster).

- “About 16,000 people eventually settled in. Within two days, it had degenerated into unspeakable horror. A few hundred were evacuated from the arena yesterday, and buses will take away the remaining people today” (Gold).

- “Broken levees are allowing floodwaters to pour into New Orleans, endangering thousands of residents in a city that was devastated by Hurricane Katrina Monday. The New Orleans Times-Picayune reported on its Web site Tuesday that floodwaters rushed into the streets when canal levees on opposite sides of the city ruptured” (Drye).

- “Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast with devastating force at daybreak on Aug. 29, 2005, pummeling a region that included the fabled city of New Orleans and heaping damage on neighboring Mississippi” (“Hurricane Katrina”).

- “The water had filled up the first floor. We ran to the attic, but it wasn’t safe there either. After an hour, it was up to our waist and rising. We knew we would die if we didn’t get up to the roof, so we bustsed through the ceiling and climbed onto the roof. Waited there until we was rescued two days later. It was blistering hot and we had no water. We were surrounded by water, but we had nothing to drink” (Cooper).

- “Many of the Corps of Engineers-built levee failures were reported on Monday, August 29, 2005, at various times throughout the day. There were 28 reported levee failures in the first 24 hours and over 50 were reported in the ensuing days. A breach in the Industrial Canal, near the St. Bernard/Orleans parish line, occurred at approximately 9:00 am CDT, the day Katrina hit. Another breach in the Industrial Canal was reported a few minutes later at Tennessee Street, as well as multiple failures in the levee system, and a pump failure in the Lower Ninth Ward, near Florida Avenue” (2005 Levee).

- “At the center of the dome, the field looked like a sprawling military aid station, littered with casualties from a major battle. Families huddled together on scraps of cardboard and torn sheets of vinyl ripped off the lower walls of the stadium. A few stretched out on cots. Piled beside them were plastic shopping bags and suitcases, holding a few clothes. Some people had arrived with nothing more than what they were wearing” (Treaster).
Information about Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans
(Teacher Version)

Directions: Organize this information into categories and sub-categories.
-Your categories will be key moments of this natural disaster.
-Your sub-categories will be summary and description of each key moment.

Storm Hits
- “Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast with devastating force at daybreak on Aug. 29, 2005, pummeling a region that included the fabled city of New Orleans and heaping damage on neighboring Mississippi” (“Hurricane Katrina”).
- “The hurricane’s storm surge — a 29-foot wall of water pushed ashore when the hurricane struck the Gulf Coast — was the highest ever measured in the United States” (“Hurricane Katrina”).
- “The trees were bent over and the wind blew so hard, you could hardly open the door. Rain was coming down in sheets. I couldn’t even see across the street, much less down the block. The wind just howled and howled” (Sellers).

Levees Fail
- At approximately 8:14 AM CDT, the New Orleans office of the National Weather Service issued a Flash Flood Warning for Orleans Parish and St Bernard Parish, citing a levee breach at the Industrial Canal. The National Weather Service predicted three to eight feet of water and advised people in the warning area to "move to higher ground immediately."
- “By the evening of August 29, 2005, approximately 28 levee failures were reported throughout the city. Approximately 66% to 75% of the city was now under water” (“Civil Engineering”).
- “Many of the Corps of Engineers-built levee failures were reported on Monday, August 29, 2005, at various times throughout the day. There were 28 reported levee failures in the first 24 hours and over 50 were reported in the ensuing days. A breach in the Industrial Canal, near the St. Bernard/Orleans parish line, occurred at approximately 9:00 am CDT, the day Katrina hit. Another breach in the Industrial Canal was reported a few minutes later at Tennessee Street, as well as multiple failures in the levee system, and a pump failure in the Lower Ninth Ward, near Florida Avenue” (2005 Levee).
- “The water wasn’t coming over the floodwall, it came through the levees. Those floodwalls were plenty tall. The levees gave way and then there was just water everywhere” (Doster).

Neighborhoods Flooded
- “On August 29, over an estimated eighteen-hour period, approximately 80 percent of the city flooded with six to twenty feet of water, necessitating one of the largest search and rescue operations in our Nation’s history” (“Federal Response”).
- “Broken levees are allowing floodwaters to pour into New Orleans, endangering thousands of residents in a city that was devastated by Hurricane Katrina Monday. The New Orleans Times-Picayune reported on its Web site Tuesday that floodwaters rushed into the streets when canal levees on opposite sides of the city ruptured” (Drye).
- “Katrina's flooding struck hardest in such residential areas as Gentilly and the Lower Ninth Ward. While the waters largely spared the Central Business District and the French Quarter, more then 130,000 homes were damaged in the storm, some 70 percent of occupied units” (Blackburn).
- “The water had filled up the first floor. We ran to the attic, but it wasn’t safe there either. After an hour, it was up to our waste and rising. We knew we would die if we didn’t get up to the roof, so we busted through the ceiling and climbed onto the roof. Waited there until we was rescued two days later. It was blistering hot and we had no water. We were surrounded by water, but we had nothing to drink” (Cooper).

Evacuation & the Superdome
- “At the center of the dome, the field looked like a sprawling military aid station, littered with casualties from a major battle. Families huddled together on scraps of cardboard and torn sheets of vinyl ripped off the lower
walls of the stadium. A few stretched out on cots. Piled beside them were plastic shopping bags and suitcases, holding a few clothes. Some people had arrived with nothing more than what they were wearing” (Treaster).
- “They had been crammed into the Superdome's shadowy ramps and corridors, spread across its vast artificial turf field and plopped into small family encampments in the plush orange, teal and purple seats that rise toward the top of the dome” (Treaster).
- “About 16,000 people eventually settled in. Within two days, it had degenerated into unspeakable horror. A few hundred were evacuated from the arena yesterday, and buses will take away the remaining people today” (Gold).
- “The first evacuation buses arrived Wednesday evening near the Louisiana Superdome, where up to 30,000 people have sought shelter under deteriorating conditions. Under the direction of National Guard troops, weary evacuees waited in long lines to board buses that will relocate them to the Astrodome in Houston, Texas, where they will be temporarily housed” (“New Orleans”).
- “At the Superdome, a 2-year-old girl slept in a pile of trash. Blood stains the walls next to vending machines smashed by teenagers” (Gold).
| Session 6 |
|------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| **Concept** | **Determining the Central Idea** |
| **Teaching Point** | Writers determine a central idea to focus the drafting of their essay. In an essay focused on chronology, the central idea will point to the key moments in an historical event and state why these moments were so important. |
| **Suggested Materials** | - Central Idea for an Historical Account handout, included after this session  
- Your own central idea developed for your historical event |
| **Preparation** | - Review the lesson and the Central Idea for a Critical Issue Overview handout  
- Craft a central idea for your critical issue that will act as a model for the students. |
| **Active Engagement** | 1. **Sample Central Idea**  
- Full Class  
  - Share your central idea as a model.  
  - Ask the students to make observations about the contents of your central idea.  
  - Use the Central Idea for a Critical Issue Overview handout to explain the teaching point and provide a model process for students to explore and draft their own central idea statement.  
  - Provide additional models as necessary.  
  - Discuss the gaps in information that can exist after drafting a central idea. Explain that writers then assess what additional research they must do—like finding more eyewitness accounts about a key moment.  
2. **Developing a Central Idea**  
- Solo: Review Your Research Information  
  - Ask students to review the following in their Writer’s Notebook:  
    - Prior knowledge on the topic  
    - Research questions  
    - Information questions  
    - All research notes  
3. Have students complete the free writing prompt on the handout with the goal of completing this notecard that is their pass out of class. |
| **Independent Practice** | **STUDENT NAME** |
| Mid-Unit Assessment Task | Historical Event:  
My research questions were:  
The key moments my essay will address are:  
My central idea is:  
The gaps in information that I need to fill are (phrase as questions): |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mini-Task Rubric</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>On-Target</th>
<th>Novice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key moments/Central idea</td>
<td>• Eloquently translated the chosen key moments and their importance and relation into a single statement</td>
<td>• Named the key moments and explained why they are important and related</td>
<td>• Named the key moments but did not explain their importance and/or relation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment of Remaining Research</td>
<td>•Outlined gaps in information that need to be filled</td>
<td>•Outlined gaps in information that need to be filled</td>
<td>•Did not outline gaps in information or did not accurately identify them</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Drafting a Central Idea for an Historical Account

Key Moments

Central Idea

Why They're Important

How They're Related

Answer the questions on this handout in your Writer’s Notebook, where you will have plenty of space to record your answers.

1. List all the key moments you identified in this historical event in chronological order.
   EXAMPLE: Hurricane Katrina Hits New Orleans 2005

   - Hurricane predicted
   - Hurricane hits
   - Levees break
   - New Orleans floods
   - People evacuated to the Superdome
   - People looting in downtown
   - Federal govt sends aid
   - President Bush visits New Orleans
   - New Orleans evacuees moved to Houston astrodome

2. Rank your moments in order from most important to least important.
3. Explain why did you ranked them in this way.

4. Consider which moments you have found the most information on—including eyewitness accounts. Put a star next to those moments.

5. Consider whether two events should be combined if they are closely related.

6. Examine your ranking and the items you starred. Now select 3-4 moments from your event to focus on in your essay. Circle those key moments.

7. Free write about the chronological order in which these moments occurred and how you think they might be linked.

8. Free write about why these particular moments are so important.

9. Draft a central idea: State the key moments you’ve chosen and explain why they’re important and how they’re related.

EXAMPLE CENTRAL IDEA: Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans

When Hurricane Katrina hit the city of New Orleans in August 2005, its waters broke the levees surrounding the city, resulting in massive flooding, and thousands of people being evacuated to the Louisiana Superdome. These events are all closely linked in a chain, one happening right after and because of the previous one. Because of these key moments during this natural disaster, New Orleans is a very different city today.

10. Gaps in information: What additional information will you need to draft your essay? Consider the balance of summary and descriptive information you currently have. List your information questions in your Writer’s Notebook.

EXAMPLE INFORMATION GAPS: Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans

- What did the breaking of the levees look like from the air?
- What did the flooding of different New Orleans neighborhoods look like?
- How were people evacuated to the Superdome?
- Who was at the Superdome to help take care of the people?
- What does the Superdome look like?
- How much of New Orleans flooded?
- How many people evacuated?

11. Consider what images, charts and graphs you might want to include in your essay. Add these to your information gap list if you need to.
### Session 7

#### Concept

**Teaching Point**

Informational essay writers select key facts, details, quotations, and examples to support the central idea in the topic sentence as they draft body paragraphs. They also analyze this information to help the audience make sense of the facts and link them to the central idea.

#### Suggested Materials

- Analyzing Information about an Historical Event handout, included after this session
- Body Paragraph Anchor Chart – Chronological (summary + description), included after this session
- Sample Body Paragraph handout, included after this session
- Citing Sources handout, included after this session

#### Preparation

- Review the lesson materials.
- Consider where your students will have the most difficulty with producing analysis. This is one of the most difficult steps in the writing process for students, and you may need to spend extra time on it, providing more models and more practice until students begin to generate analysis about the summary, description, and key events they have collected about their historical event.

#### Active Engagement

1. **Analyze This!**
   - Full Class/Small Groups
     - Review with the students: analysis is a form of explanation that often uses the word “because.” It tells the reader “why” and “how.”
       - Why a fact or detail is important.
       - How one piece of information connects to another piece of information.
       - Why a fact or detail is relevant to the subject of the essay.
       - What to think about those facts and details.
     - Share an example like this one:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facts</th>
<th>Facts with Analysis (highlighted)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have braces.</td>
<td>I have braces, and I hate them. <strong>Because my braces make me feel ugly</strong>, I don’t smile. Having braces restricts other things I can do. For example, I really like popcorn. But I only eat popcorn at the movies because it’s dark and no one will be able to see the kernels that get stuck in my teeth. Having braces is a difficult experience no teenager should be subjected to because we’re self-conscious enough as it is.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t smile.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I really like popcorn.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I only eat popcorn at the movies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   - Put the following facts on the board (or use others that your students will find interesting):
     - The basketball team has won five games.
     - They have lost three games.
     - They lost two players to injury during the season.
     - They have a new coach.
   - In small groups, have students write a brief paragraph on butcher paper that includes analysis connecting these facts and binds them together. They should underline their analysis.
   - Share all the paragraphs and have the class assess whether groups actually provided analysis of the facts.

2. **Analysis Hunting**
   - Explain that analysis in an informational text helps the reader understand how to interpret the facts and details they are given and make connections between different pieces of information.
   - Pairs/Solo
     - Have the students complete the annotation exercise on the **Analyzing**
### Information about an Historical Event handout.

- Full Class
  - Review the annotation as a class.
  - Review the central idea of the piece.
  - Discuss what the analysis explains, connects, and supports in the central idea and how the analysis links the key moments.

### Active Engagement

#### 3. Drafting Body Paragraphs
- Full Class
  - Review the Body Paragraph Anchor Chart.
  - Have students annotate the Sample Body Paragraphs either in small groups or as a full class.
  - Review the Citations handout as needed.

### Independent Practice

- Solo
  - Students draft a body paragraph about one of their key moments, using summary and description that they found in their research, weaving it together with analysis.
Analyzing Information about an Historical Event

Analysis tells the reader:
• How the summary and description support the central idea of the essay.
• Why this moment was so important.
• How this key moment is related to the previous or next moment.

READ and ANNOTATE
In the excerpt of the article below
• Highlight the central idea.
• Put check marks next to summary and description.
• Underline the analysis.
Body Paragraph Anchor Chart – Chronological
(Summary + Description)

Topic Sentence

The following 3 elements can come in any order
and may alternate several times within a paragraph.

Summary - Key Facts about a Key Moment
- Date/time
- Location
- What happened?
- Who was involved?

Description – Bringing a Key Moment to Life
- An eyewitness account that includes sensory details
- Supporting details of interest from a news article or interview
- Vivid images gathered from first-hand reporting

Analysis – Why & How?
- Why is this moment so important?
- How is it related to the moment before and after?
Sample Body Paragraphs – Chronological Account of an Historical Event

Directions: Using the Body Paragraph Anchor Chart, identify all the parts of these body paragraphs. Notice that the elements are organized differently each time—with the exception of the topic sentence.

- *Star the topic sentence.
- [Bracket the summary].
- Underline the description.
- Highlight the analysis.

From Time.com “Hurricane Katrina: An American Tragedy”
After Hurricane Katrina hit, the levee breach left 80% of the city immediately submerged and 100,000 people stranded. Canal Street lived up to its name. As the temperature rose, the whole city was poached in a vile stew of melted landfill, chemicals, corpses, gasoline, snakes, canal rats; many could not escape their flooded homes without help. Among those who could, only a final act of desperation would drive them into the streets, where the caramel waters stank of sewage and glittered with the gaudy swirls of oil spills. For the first time ever, a major U.S. city was simply taken offline, closed down. Food and water and power and phones were gone; authority was all but absent.

From Wikipedia.com “Effects of Hurricane Katrina”
In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, looting, violence and other criminal activity became serious problems. With most of the attention of the authorities focused on rescue efforts, public security in New Orleans degraded quickly. By August 30, looting had spread throughout the city, often in broad daylight and in the presence of police officers. "The looting is out of control. The French Quarter has been attacked," City Councilwoman Jackie Clarkson said. "We're using exhausted, scarce police to control looting when they should be used for search and rescue while we still have people on rooftops." Incapacitated by the breakdown of transportation and communication, as well as overwhelmed numerically, police officers could do little to stop crime, and shopkeepers who remained behind were left to defend their property alone. Looters included gangs of gunmen, and gunfire was heard in parts of the city. Along with violent, armed robbery of non-essential valuable goods, many incidents were of residents stealing food, water, and other commodities from privately owned grocery stores. There were also reports of some police officers looting.

YOU TRY! – DRAFTING BODY PARAGRAPHS
1. Pick the key moment that you believe goes first in the chronology.
2. Draft a paragraph that includes description, summary, and analysis. Experiment with the order in which these components occur.
3. Craft a topic sentence that supports the essay’s central idea. Use a signal word or phrase to help the reader understand where in the chronology this moment sits.
Citing Sources

What does it mean to cite a source?
- An in-text citation is a note in an essay that tells the reader where a piece of information or an idea came from.

- In-text citations always appear in (parentheses).
  
  Here’s an example:

  Year-round schools have lower drop-out rates (2%) than traditional schools (5%) (StatisticBrain.com).

- At the end of an essay, a writer includes a list of works cited that gives details about all the in-text citations.

Why do writers cite sources?
- To avoid plagiarism—the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as your own. Writers must give other writers credit for information and ideas that they borrow.

- To prove that the evidence is real and credible.

- To inform the reader about where to find more information on the topic.

What gets cited?
- Quoted information from a secondary source.

- Paraphrased information from a secondary source.

- Information obtained in an interview.

- Any idea that is not your own.
How do you cite a website?

When you find effective evidence on the Internet, record the following information in this exact order:

- Author and/or editor names (if available)
- Article name in quotation marks (if applicable)
- Title of the website
- Name of institution/organization publishing the site (use n.p if no publisher is listed)
- Date of resource creation (use n.d. if no date is listed)
- Type of resource
- Date you accessed the material.

**Works Cited entry** – create the entry by listing the information above in the exact same order.

**EXAMPLE:**


**In-Text Citation**

- Insert the in-text citation before the period at the end of the sentence in which the quotation or paraphrase appears.
- For any in-text citation, include the first item that appears in the works cited entry that corresponds to the citation (e.g. author name, article name, website name).

**EXAMPLE:**

As an article in Education Week points out, “Unlike their peers in schools with traditional schedules, students in year-round schools do not have a long summer vacation. To complicate matters, in some of those schools, not all students are on year-round schedules” (“Year-Round Schooling”).

**You Try!**

A. Insert an in-text citation into one of the sentences in your paragraph that has information from a secondary source.

B. Create a works cited entry at the end of your essay for the in-text citation.
### DEVELOPING & EXPANDING A TOPIC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Finding a Structure for Paragraphs and the Essay Using Transitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Teaching Point
Writers of informational essays select a logical structure for their piece as they draft. With the chronological pattern, the key moments are discussed in the order in which they happened. Within the paragraphs of a chronological account, writers organize summary, description, and analysis to have the greatest impact on the reader. Writers use transitions within and between paragraphs to help readers understand the logical order and flow of ideas.

#### Suggested Materials
**Signal Words and Phrases** handout, included after the session

#### Preparation
Review the handout and experiment with transitions within and between body paragraphs for your own informational essay to model for the students.

#### Active Engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Body Paragraph and Essay Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Full Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Discuss with students their options for organizing information within each body paragraph and how transitions/signal phrases can assist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Share and think aloud some of your body paragraphs and the use of signal words and phrases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Review the <strong>Signal Words and Phrases handout</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Have students experiment with inserting these words and phrases into an existing paragraph and share their experiments with the class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Solicit student input about the issues they are having in organizing their body paragraphs and troubleshoot as a class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Discuss potential issues when organizing a chronological text:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Events that happened simultaneously</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Multiple paragraphs about a single event/moment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Discuss the use of transitions/signal phrases between paragraphs—when to use them and when they are not necessary.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Solo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Students experiment with the organization of the body paragraph they drafted in the previous lesson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o They continue to draft paragraphs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Note: this drafting time is a good opportunity to conduct mini-conferences with individuals or small groups of students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Pairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Students share 2-3 drafted body paragraphs with another student for feedback, specifically on organization and transitions within and between paragraphs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Signal Words and Phrases

Chronology - Showing Time & Order

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>after</td>
<td>afterward</td>
<td>as soon as</td>
<td>before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>during</td>
<td>finally</td>
<td>first</td>
<td>following</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>immediately</td>
<td>initially</td>
<td>later</td>
<td>meanwhile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>next</td>
<td>not long after</td>
<td>now</td>
<td>on (date)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>preceding</td>
<td>second</td>
<td>soon</td>
<td>then</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sometimes</td>
<td>today</td>
<td>until</td>
<td>when</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eventually</td>
<td>finally</td>
<td>in the future</td>
<td>often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subsequently</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adding information: also, and, as well, besides, equally important, finally, furthermore, in addition, moreover, then, too

Providing an example: as an illustration, as can be seen by, for example, for instance, in other words, namely, specifically, to illustrate
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Using Visuals to Support Facts, Details, and Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point</strong></td>
<td>Informational essay writers select, or craft, and carefully place pictures, graphs, charts, and headings and sub-headings to help the reader visually understand their central and supporting ideas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Suggested Materials** | Informational websites to compare and contrast  
[link](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_Hurricane_Katrina)  
[link](http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/newsid_4210000/newsid_4215400/4215438.stm)  
or select two sites on the same or similar topic to have students analyze  
Comparing and Contrasting Visual Effectiveness handout, included after the session |
| **Preparation** | Review the websites and their use of the visual elements |
| **Active Engagement** | 1. **Compare/Contrast: How Visuals Support or Detract from an Informational Text**  
   - **Small Group**  
     - Ask students to compare and contrast the two informational websites’ use of visual elements. They are evaluating the effectiveness of the use of these visual elements.  
   - **Full Class**  
     - Debrief findings as a full class.  
     - Be sure to discuss how the visuals support or detract from the central ideas of the pieces.  
     - Ask students to consider how they will use headings, charts, graphs and images to help convey information. Provide them some time to search online and create a visual plan for their essay. |
Comparing and Contrasting Visual Effectiveness

Evaluate each site’s use of the following visual elements. How effective is each element in terms of its relevance to and support of the central idea/topic? How did the sites take similar and different approaches?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site #1</th>
<th>Visual Elements</th>
<th>Site #2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Headings &amp; Sub-Headings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Images (including captions)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Charts and Graphs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Page Layout/Format</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concept</strong></td>
<td><strong>Drafting Introductory and Concluding Paragraphs</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point</strong></td>
<td>Informational essay writers craft introductory and concluding paragraphs that make clear to the reader the importance of the topic. With the chronological structure, the concluding paragraph discusses how the historical event affected the culture or future events.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suggested Materials</strong></td>
<td><strong>Introductory Paragraphs</strong> handout, included after the session <strong>Concluding Paragraphs</strong> handout, included after the session</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Preparation** | • Review the teacher version of the handout, which contains annotations.  
• Write your own introductory and concluding paragraphs to share with students as models and mentor texts. |
| **Active Engagement** | **1. What’s in an Introduction & Conclusion?**  
• Full Class  
  o Ask your students why introductions and conclusions are important and what they think should be included in the introduction and conclusion of their historical account.  
  How can these two paragraphs compliment one another?  
  o Share and think aloud through the introductory paragraph for your essay.  
  o Pass out the **Introductory Paragraphs** handout.  
  o Review the names and purpose of each paragraph element.  
  o Ask your students what order they would put these elements in – discuss this order and what happens when the order is shifted around. There is no right answer here, but some orders are more logical than others.  
  • Pairs/Small Groups → Full Class  
  o Have students work together to annotate the mentor text.  
  o Review the annotations as a class. |
| **Independent Practice** | **2. Crafting the Introduction**  
• Solo  
  o Students draft their introductory paragraphs and share with a partner for initial feedback as time allows. |
| **Formative Assessment** | **Mini-task**  
**Mini-Task Rubric: Draft of the Introductory Paragraph** |
| **Content** | **Advanced** | **On-Target** | **Novice** |
| Hook | - Quote, anecdote or description is a unique choice and grips the reader’s attention. | - Quote, anecdote or description captures the reader’s attention. | - Missing hook or selected quote, anecdote or description does not suit the controlling idea or historical event. |
| Thumbnail Sketch | - Addresses the who, what, where, when of the historical moment in a riveting, well-worded fashion. | - Addresses the who, what, where, when of the historical moment. | - Addresses some but not all of the elements concerning who, what, where, when of the historical moment. |
| Central idea | - Addresses all key moments, their importance and relations to once another | - Addresses the key moments and their importance. | - Points to the key issues but not their importance or relation to one another. |
| Style & Flow | - Sentences and ideas flow seamlessly. | - Sentences and ideas flow seamlessly with one or two small exceptions. | - Sentences and ideas are disjointed. |
| **Active Engagement** | **3. Crafting the Conclusion**  
• Full Class  
  o Share and think aloud through the concluding paragraph for your essay.  
  o Discuss the elements of the **Concluding Paragraphs** handout, including directions to think through the long-term impact of this event.  
  o Share additional model concluding paragraphs as needed. |
| **Independent Practice** | **Solo**  
  o Students draft their paragraphs and share with a partner for initial feedback as time allows. |
**Introductory Paragraphs**

Goals of an Introductory Paragraph in an Historical Account:
- to grab the reader’s attention by raising their curiosity
- to make clear the event you will be writing about and the key moments you will discuss

To achieve the goals above, you must include:
- a hook
- a thumbnail sketch of the historical event
- the central idea (key moments, why they were important and how they’re related)

**Drafting Strategies**

**HOOK - Grabbing the Reader’s Attention**
- Very briefly provide a specific story (anecdote) from this historical event.
- OR begin with a relevant quotation from an eyewitness account or interview about this event.
- OR describe a scene from this historical event in vivid detail or provide a gripping image.

**THUMBNAIL SKETCH – Historical Event Summary**
- Provide 3-4 sentences that tell the reader the major points about this moment in history.
  - Who was involved?
  - What happened?
  - Where did this take place?
  - How did this story end?

**CENTRAL IDEA**
- State the key moments you will discuss.
- Explain why these are the crucial moments in this event and how they are related.
Concluding Paragraphs

Concluding paragraphs about history events should discuss:

- why the event was important to a society or culture.
- the impact the event has had on future events.

Example: Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans
From The Institute for New Orleans History and Culture at Gwynedd Mercy College
http://www.gmc.edu/library/neworleans/NOKatrina.htm

New Orleans will be forever changed by this storm. While the old city, the French Quarter and uptown section, survived because they were built on the high ground created by the Mississippi River, the outlying areas where most of its residents lived was destroyed. New Orleans is in a rebuilding phase that some predict will take at least ten years. Many areas of the city may be turned back into green space to absorb future flood waters. Most homes will have to be raised above newly established flood levels. Many wonder if New Orleans will ever recover from this tragedy. But if the spirit of its people prevails, the new New Orleans will be even better than the old.

*****

DIRECTIONS:
To generate strong material for your concluding paragraph, free write about the following questions. Write down everything you know about the answers to these questions. Don’t leave anything out! If you feel you can’t answer any of these questions, you may need to do some more research.

- Why was your chosen event so important?
- Why are we still talking and writing about this historical event today?
- What other things happened as a result of this moment in history? (These could be positive or negative developments.)
- What people or groups of people did this historical event affect long-term?
- How did this moment in history affect the economy, arts, jobs, technological advancements, politics, etc. of the area/people involved?
### Session 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Peer Review &amp; Revision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point</strong></td>
<td>When they have completed a draft of their essay, informational essay writers may engage in peer review to get feedback on their writing. They may also use a reverse outline to determine the effectiveness of their piece. Using all this information, they formulate a revision plan, then make changes accordingly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Suggested Materials** | Peer Review handout, included after this session  
Reverse Outline and Revision Plan handout, included after this session |
# Peer Review

**Reviewer's Name ______________________________________________________________**

**The Writer's Name ________________________ Essay Title __________________________**

Your job is to help the writer improve his/her paper. You must be honest in your feedback in a constructive way that will assist the writer. Be respectful and kind.

1. Read the essay through once without marking on it.
2. As you read the essay a second time, answer the questions below.
3. Discuss your feedback face to face with the writer.

### General Praise

What did you find most interesting about this essay? How come?

### Introduction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immediately defines the historical event?</th>
<th>yes</th>
<th>no</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adequate background on the event?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the context clear?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are key terms defined?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there any terms you need defined?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the central idea stated?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Provide **praise** for specific elements of the introduction that are working well in this draft. What did you like the most?

Provide **suggestions** for how the writer can improve any of the elements of the introduction that are missing or are confusing.

### Body Paragraphs

Provide **praise** for the body paragraphs. Which paragraph is the strongest? How come?

Do all the topic sentences make clear what the following paragraph is about? If not, underline topic sentences on the draft that need attention. Make a note in the margin about why they need attention.

Put check marks next to summary and supporting details that are especially interesting and best support the central idea.

Put *stars* next to analysis that is especially strong because it explains why this key moment is so important to this historical event.

Which body paragraph needs the most attention? How come? Explain below.

### Overall Organization
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How is the essay organized?</th>
<th>chronologically</th>
<th>not sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the essay flow logically from one paragraph to the next?</td>
<td>Are there transition phrases and sentences?</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain your answer below.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Concluding Paragraph**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does the paragraph briefly summarize the historical event?</th>
<th>yes</th>
<th>no</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the paragraph explain how the event is important to the culture and future events?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Provide **praise** for specific elements of the concluding paragraph that are working well.

Provide **suggestions** for how the writer can improve any of the elements of the concluding paragraph that are missing or are confusing. Questions can be helpful here—what else did you want to know?

**Title**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does it point to the central idea?</th>
<th>yes</th>
<th>no</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Give the writer 1-2 suggestions for a creative title.
Reverse Outline and Revision Plan

Reverse Outline

Why Revise?
Taking stock of the work and thinking you have done in a draft will help you revise more effectively. Whether you wrote the draft yesterday or a week ago, it’s always important to return to it and read through it thoroughly to figure out what is working, what should be cut, what needs development, and how to re-organize to make your controlling idea more clear.

How?
To figure out if the content and organization of your piece are working, you will first create a reverse outline of your essay. How do you do that?

1. Read each paragraph carefully and thoroughly.
2. As you read, make a note next to each paragraph that summarizes what it’s about (3 or 4 words).
3. Then, underline the topic sentence for that paragraph and decide if it reflects what you wrote in the margin. If your summary and the topic sentence don’t match up, put an arrow next to your topic sentence to note that it needs attention.
4. When you’ve finished reading and summarizing, go back and read through all your margin summaries. Ask yourself:
   a. Do the ideas and information flow here?
   b. What would happen if I put the paragraphs in a different order? Would my controlling idea be clearer?
   c. What seems to be missing?
   d. Is there anything I have spent too much time explaining?

Revision Plan

Take stock of what you’ll do next by:
1. Re-reading the peer review feedback.
2. Making a list below or in your Writer’s Notebook of all the changes you will make to your essay. What should you do first?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suggested Materials</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Resources** | Free Online Platforms  
http://www.wikispaces.com/  
http://issuu.com/  
http://www.livebinders.com/  

Publications  
http://www.teenink.com/submit |
Post-Revision Reflection Questions

In your Writer’s Notebook, reflect on these questions:

• What was the most exciting part of writing your informational essay? How come?
• What was the most difficult part of writing your informational essay? How come?
• If you still had more time to revise your piece, what would you work on/change?
• What did you learn about yourself as a writer?
• What will you do differently next time you write an essay?
What is Informational/Explanatory Writing?

Informational/explanatory writing conveys information accurately and is organized around a controlling idea with a coherent focus. When a reader engages with an informational text, s/he assumes the text is accurate and true. This assumption of truth is the foundation of the informational text teaching, clarifying or exploring for the reader.

### Purposes of Informational /Explanatory Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writer: TO TEACH</th>
<th>Writer: TO CLARIFY</th>
<th>Writer: TO EXPLORE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reader: Increase Knowledge</td>
<td>Reader: Increase understanding of a procedure or process</td>
<td>Reader: Enhance comprehension of a concept</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, the content of an informational or explanatory piece focuses on answering a question that addresses WHAT, HOW or WHY?

### What?, How?, Why?

- **What?**
  - types
  - components
  - size, function, behavior

- **How?**
  - size, function, behavior
  - how things work

- **Why?**
  - why things happen

As a result, students will employ a variety of techniques to convey information (see the graphic below) as they produce an informational text. These are the rhetorical approaches they will need in order to teach, clarify, and explore. The genres that engage informational writing and these techniques are also in the graphic.
How Does Informational Writing Differ from Argument Writing?

As Appendix A of the Common Core State Standards explains:

Although information is provided in both arguments and explanations, the two types of writing have different aims. Arguments seek to make people believe that something is true or to persuade people to change their beliefs or behavior. Explanations, on the other hand, start with the assumption of truthfulness and answer questions about why or how. Their aim is to make the reader understand rather than to persuade him or her to accept a certain point of view. In short, arguments are used for persuasion and explanations for clarification.

Like arguments, explanations provide information about causes, contexts, and consequences of processes, phenomena, states of affairs, objects, terminology, and so on. However, in an argument, the writer not only gives information but also presents a case with the “pros” (supporting ideas) and “cons” (opposing ideas) on a debatable issue.

Thus, writers of informational texts do not present a debatable claim, but rather select a lens through which to look at information.
The CCSS that Inform the Middle School Informational Writing Units

*Reading*

RI.1 - Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

RI.7 - Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

RI.9 - Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

RI.10 - Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

*Writing*

W.2 - Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

W.4 - Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

W.5 - Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

W.8 - Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

W.9 - Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

W.10 - Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audience.

How Do Students Approach the Informational Writing Process?

*Topics*

In her work on the Common Core and informational writing, Lucy Calkins emphasizes the importance of students’ writing about a topic they are passionate about. “An information writer’s purpose, then, is to help readers become informed on a topic that feels very important to the writer” (Calkins, Curriculum Plan, Grade 6, Writing Workshop). The depth of the writer’s engagement will likely determine the depth of the reader’s engagement with the topic. As we know as teachers, when we are excited about what we’re teaching, our students tend to be as well. So as writers and teachers, our students need to get their readers excited about their chosen topic. And thus, as Calkins explains, “the unit, then, assumes that students are writing about self-chosen topics of great individual interest.”
The point here is for students to draw on prior knowledge as they begin their exploration of a topic, then pull in information gleaned from primary and secondary sources. They must then determine the focus they wish to take when writing about this topic. As the Common Core, Appendix A, tells us, “With practice, students become better able to develop a controlling idea and a coherent focus on a topic and more skilled at selecting and incorporating relevant examples, facts, and details into their writing.”

Calkins also discusses the development of topic selection in terms of specificity. As a student progresses as a writer, her topics become more specific, as do her controlling ideas:

Students progress, with experience and instruction, from writing rather cursorily about very broad, generic topics toward being able to zoom in on more specific topics and therefore write with a greater density of relevant information. Eventually, experienced writers learn that they can focus not just on a smaller subject but on a particular angle or aspect of that subject. That is, for students writing a six- to seven-page book, usually those writing on the topic of tigers will work with less sophistication than those writing on the topic of the hunting patterns of the Bengal tiger. (53)

**Categories and Analysis**

In addition, informational writing requires that writers put information into categories. These categories should only be determined after significant generative pre-writing and/or research. The analysis of this information will be based on the technique they are engaging (definition, cause and effect, etc.). For example, the student writing about why she attends school might need to define key terms like “learning,” “extracurriculars,” and “floating schedule,” then explain their importance. As they progress as writers, students will become more sophisticated in their use of multiple techniques to convey information in a single piece.

**Organization**

The controlling idea of an informational essay does not simply determine the purpose of the piece, but also implies or indicates a possible organizational structure. If students are writing about why kids must attend school, they could organize their piece around the progression of a standard school day. While there is never one single, correct way to structure a writing piece, there are more and less logical structures. In this unit, students should be encouraged to explore a variety of organizational structures. This can begin with putting information into various categories and developing headings and sub-headings for those categories. To experiment with structure, students can move these headings around to determine how different methods of organization affect the logic and focus of their piece.
The graphic below highlights key steps in the informational writing process.

**Grades 6-8 Informational Writing Process**

1. Pre-write all prior knowledge on a topic and develop an inquiry question
2. Research using multiple sources to determine a controlling idea
3. Categorize information and select details, facts, examples
4. Analyze the information
5. Experiment with organization to reflect the controlling idea
6. Revise and edit the draft for clarity of content, strength of analysis, and organization
7. Share text with the reader
Resources

Teaching the Informational Text – Pedagogical and Theoretical Resources
Common Core State Standards Appendix A  http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards


Nonfiction Matters: Reading, Writing, and Research in Grades 3-8 by Stephanie Harvey
http://www.amazon.com/Nonfiction-Matters-Reading-Writing-Research/dp/1571100725/ref=lm_ni_t

“The Times and the Common Core Standards: Reading Strategies for ‘Informational Text’” from The Learning Network, NY Times

“Conferring in the Writing Workshop” by Salch and Marino, article published by NCTE
(Must be an NCTE member or previous customer to use this link - see PDF attached to this unit for the text of the article named above.)

Mentor Texts: Political Memoirs, Speeches, Newspaper and Magazine Articles On Hurricane Katrina
“The Evacuation of Older People: The Case of Hurricane Katrina” by Bill Bytheway
http://understandingkatrina.ssrc.org/Bytheway/index.html

Senator Barack Obama’s Speech to Congress about Relief Efforts

On Civil Rights
“Letters from a Birmingham Jail” by Martin Luther King, Jr.
http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html

JFK’s Civil Rights Address  http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/jfcivilrights.htm

excerpt from Ch. 1 of Warriors Don’t Cry by Melba Patillo Beals
http://books.simonandschuster.com/Warriors-Don’t-Cry/Melba-Pattillo-Beals/9781416948827/excerpt_with_id/12653

Integrating the University of Mississippi: three perspectives – James Meredith (student), Gov. Ross Barnett, Robert F. Kennedy, U.S. Attorney General
http://microsites.jfklibrary.org/olemiss/controversy/

On Space Travel
“Remembering Apollo 8, Man’s First Trip to the Moon” Time Magazine article looking back on this event from the perspective of the astronauts
http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1868461,00.html

JFK’s Speech on Space Travel at Rice University  http://www.jfklibrary.org/Research/Ready-Reference/JFK-Speeches/Address-at-Rice-University-on-the-Nations-Space-Effort-September-12-1962.aspx

On Pearl Harbor
Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Speech to Congress – Declaration of War (Includes text and video footage)
http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/fdrpearlharbor.htm

Resources for Finding Mentor Texts
Bibliography (with links) of non-fiction articles for middle school students from the Columbia Teacher’s College Reading and Writing Project

Copyright © 2010-2014 by the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators and Oakland Schools
Bibliography of non-fiction books, articles, and videos on high interest topics from the Columbia Teacher’s College Reading and Writing Project


Cobblestone – American History for kids (ages 9-14)  
http://www.cobblestonepub.com/resources_cob_tgs.html

Muse– past and present, history, science and the arts (ages 9-14)  

National Geographic- cultural, scientific, geographic, anthropological, and historical investigations of past and present events. 
http://www.nationalgeographic.com/

National Geographic Explorer for Kids (Pathfinder edition for grades 4-6)  
http://magma.nationalgeographic.com/ngexplorer/

Smithsonian Magazine
http://www.smithsonianmag.com/

Teen Ink - essays written by kids for kids  
http://www.teenink.com/nonfiction/academic/top/

Time for Kids
http://www.timeforkids.com/

PBS Video- Watch award-winning documentaries, including current episodes from Nova and Nature, as well as archived videos
http://video.pbs.org/

History.com- Video clips and full length shows on history topics from Ancient China to the Vikings to Watergate.  
http://www.history.com

Magnum Photos – a website with powerful photo/audio essays about a variety of world events  
http://www.magnumphotos.com/

Excellent Non-fiction Book Lists
The American Library Association’s List for Teens
http://www.ala.org/ala/rmgrps/divs/yalsa/teenreading/trw/trw2005/nonfiction.cfm

Young Adult Library Services Association – Best Books for Teens 2010 (scroll down for non-fiction)
http://www.ala.org/yalsa/booklistsawards/booklists/bestbooksyabhya2010

Young Adult Library Services Association – Best Books for Teens 2009 (scroll down for non-fiction)
http://www.ala.org/yalsa/booklistsawards/booklists/bestbooksyabhya2009
Writers Workshop Unit of Study
7th Grade – Writing the Argument

ELA Common Core Standards

Proposal Essay
Writers Workshop Unit of Study
7th Grade – Writing the Argument
Table of Contents

Preface
Learning Progression, Grades 6-8 ................................................................. 1
Learning Progression, Grades 9-12 ............................................................... 3

Background Section
Abstract .............................................................................................................. 7
Standards .......................................................................................................... 9
Overview of Sessions – Teaching Points and Unit Assessments .................. 11
Informational Essay Rubric ............................................................................ 13

Resource Materials Section
Resource Materials needed for each session follow the table of the Overview of that Session
Session 1 .......................................................................................................... 14
Session 2 & 3 ................................................................................................ 22
Session 4 & 5 ................................................................................................ 30
Session 6 & 7 ................................................................................................ 41
Session 8 ......................................................................................................... 49
Session 9 ......................................................................................................... 54
Session 10 ...................................................................................................... 59
Session 11 & 12 ............................................................................................ 64
Session 13 - 15 ............................................................................................ 65
Session 16 - 18 ............................................................................................. 66
Writers Workshop Unit of Study
7th Grade – Writing the Argument
Preface

The following unit supports and aligns to the Common Core State Standards. This research-based work is the outcome of a collective effort made by numerous secondary teachers from around the state of Michigan. Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA) initiated a statewide collaborative project, bringing together educators from around the state to create and refine a K-12 English Language Arts model curriculum. This one unit is situated within a yearlong sequence of units. Depending upon the unit’s placement in the yearlong scope and sequence, it will be important to recognize prior skills and content this unit expects learners to have. Each unit presents a string of teaching points that scaffold and spiral the content and skills. The unit is structured to be student centered rather than teacher driven. Sessions emphasize student engagement and strive to increase critical thinking and writing skills simultaneously. Writing and thinking processes are stressed and are equally important to the end writing product. Sessions are designed as a series of mini-lessons that allow time to write, practice, and conference. Through summative and formative assessments specific to each unit, students will progress toward becoming independent thinkers and writers.

Significant input and feedback was gathered both in the initial conceptualizing of the unit and later revisions. Teachers from around the state piloted and/or reviewed the unit, and their feedback and student artifacts helped in the revision process. Special thanks go to lead unit writer Delia DeCourcy, who closely studied the CCSS, translated the standards into curriculum and practice, and revised with a close eye to classroom teacher feedback. Throughout the yearlong collaborative project, teachers reviewing units are finding how students’ habits of mind have shifted from task-oriented to big-picture thinking, utilizing a critical literacy lens.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Make &amp; Support a Claim</th>
<th>Letter of Complaint</th>
<th>Prove Your Point</th>
<th>Proposal Essay</th>
<th>Develop Complex Commentary</th>
<th>Op-Ed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentors: paragraphs and essays by students about year-round school</td>
<td>Mentor texts: sample complaint letters from real life scenarios</td>
<td>Mentor texts: video clips, magazine &amp; newspaper articles, essays that outline a problem and suggest solutions</td>
<td>Mentor texts: paragraphs and essays by experts and journalists about school lunch and nutrition</td>
<td>Mentor texts: paragraphs and essays by students about school uniforms</td>
<td>Mentor texts: op-eds from newspapers, magazines, and other student-friendly publications</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Focus**

Differentiate between fact and opinion; support an opinion with evidence.

Craft a formal complaint letter about a real-life situation.

Research and identify effective evidence to support a claim.

Identify a problem and outline potential solutions.

Craft commentary to explain evidence that proves a claim.

Take a stand on an important social issue and call readers to action.

**Generating Ideas for Argument Writing**

- Distinguish between fact and opinion.
- Understand the concepts of claim and evidence.
- Understand the prompt and pre-write to discover and narrow a claim.
- Define key terms of argument and the complaint-letter genre.
- Analyze examples of complaint letters.
- Generate and select viable complaint-letter topics.
- Understand the relationship between claim and evidence.
- Define and identify the two main evidence types.
- Define key terms for the proposal-essay genre: problem, feasible solution, cause and effect.
- Analyze examples of proposals.
- Generate and select viable problems to propose solutions for.
- Understand the relationship between claim, evidence, and commentary.
- Define and identify the two main evidence types.
- Examine how commentary works.
- Define key terms for the op-ed genre: debatable claim, fact vs. opinion, problem, issue.
- Analyze examples of op-eds.
- Understand the parts of the op-ed: lede, debatable claim, counterargument, structures.
- Generate and select viable issues to write about.

**Creating/Planning**

- Find evidence from credible sources to support the claim.
- Find evidence through research and personal reflection to support the argument.
- Understand the prompt.
- Search for evidence.
- Examine evidence to generate a claim.
- Use search terms and driving questions to perform research on the problem.
- Select credible sources.
- Sort, select, and paraphrase evidence.
- Understand the prompt.
- Search for evidence.
- Examine evidence to generate a claim.
- Understand how to create a logical argument using ethos, logos, pathos, and kairos.
- Develop a counterargument.
- Identify evidence to support the argument and counterargument.

**Drafting**

- Revise the original claim.
- Support the claim with evidence.
- Cite sources.
- Draft a problem statement.
- Support the problem statement with relevant evidence.
- Determine the best structure for the letter.
- Revise the original claim.
- Select the most effective and credible evidence to support the claim.
- Cite sources.
- Generate commentary to explain how the
- Draft a problem statement.
- Explain the cause and effect of the problem.
- Draft the solution.
- Revise the original claim.
- Select the most effective and credible evidence to support the claim.
- Cite sources.
- Craft complex commentary to make new points about each
- Craft a debatable claim.
- Draft the argument and logically connect the evidence to each point.
- Develop a strong lede.
- Craft the counterargument.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revising and Editing</th>
<th>evidence supports the claim.</th>
<th>piece of evidence.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Examine the persuasiveness of the claim and evidence.</td>
<td>• Experiment with block and alternating paragraph structures.</td>
<td>• Create transitions between sentences to improve flow and logic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconsider the organization of the evidence.</td>
<td>• Develop a topic sentence that combines claim and a summary of the evidence.</td>
<td>• Develop a topic sentence that combines claim and a summary of the evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edit for grammar and spelling.</td>
<td>• Create transitions between sentences to improve flow and logic.</td>
<td>• Develop a topic sentence that combines claim and a summary of the evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflect on the process to learn from the experience.</td>
<td>• Develop a topic sentence that combines claim and a summary of the evidence.</td>
<td>• Develop a topic sentence that combines claim and a summary of the evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publish for an authentic audience.</td>
<td>• Develop a topic sentence that combines claim and a summary of the evidence.</td>
<td>• Develop a topic sentence that combines claim and a summary of the evidence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Learning Progressions for High School Argumentative Writing: Basics of Argumentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>9th Grade</th>
<th>10th Grade</th>
<th>11th Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Becoming a Critical Reader of Argument</td>
<td>Media and Marketing</td>
<td>Advertisements</td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>Social Issues in Film</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Connect prior knowledge about the persuasion in these ways:</td>
<td>• Review prior knowledge about the basics of argument.</td>
<td>• Engage in reading the world as a reflective observer, constructing facts and claims about the ways we acquire or use power in social settings.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Consumers are bombarded with arguments that may seem invisible.</td>
<td>o Argument is a basic of daily life.</td>
<td>• Read print and digital texts, and develop claims based on reflective observation and primary research of individuals in a public sphere.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Products are marketed for their real and perceived values.</td>
<td>o People encounter argumentative claims in daily living: news, reading, conversation, online blogs.</td>
<td>• Explore evidence after reflecting on information gathered from reading about power. Focus and clarify multiple angles or claims that might be taken from the evidence.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Define methods and sub-genres in the field of marketing and advertisement.</td>
<td>o Elements: claim, evidence, counterclaims, and explanation</td>
<td>• Engage in conversations with others who study power in social settings. Compare and propose issues that matter and actions that might be considered.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploring Ideas—Generating, Planning, and Drafting</td>
<td>• Inquire through search and reflection to identify the stances or positions advertisers use to persuade buyers. Consider persuasion for both impulse and planned consumerism.</td>
<td>• Research the social issue and claim of personal interest to identify the valid and invalid evidence used in the film.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collect and analyze evidence to develop and support claims about effective methods used by advertisers.</td>
<td>• Develop a claim about the effectiveness of the film’s portrayal and defense of a social issue.</td>
<td>• Identify a single claim that seems most interesting based on evidence gathered through primary and secondary research.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Compare and analyze methods used by various advertisements.</td>
<td>• Collect and evaluate evidence to support a claim.</td>
<td>• Organize the evidence to develop a line of reasoning, planning the structure and transitions in the essay.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop a claim based on evidence collected through exploration of marketing methods, purposes, and effectiveness of advertisements.</td>
<td>• Organize the key points, evidence, reasons and explanations to develop a line of reasoning that will convince a reader and support the claim.</td>
<td>• Write a first draft, utilizing the basic elements of an argumentative essay: claim, counterclaim, evidence and explanation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus an essay by developing multiple claims to anticipate alternate views or counterclaims.</td>
<td>Trace the diction to identify methods of appeal, and trace diction to reduce and control emotional appeal and develop logical appeal and tone.</td>
<td>Revise the order and structure of the essay to:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify relevant evidence, reasons and explanations.</td>
<td>Revisit the conclusion to clarify and extend the argument, utilizing research on the issue to extend the essay into new thinking.</td>
<td>1. make connections.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan an argumentative essay based on research.</td>
<td>Edit for sentence variety, considering punctuation present in more sophisticated sentence structures.</td>
<td>2. identify and repair diction.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write a first draft using a variety of evidence to convince a reader.</td>
<td>Revise by outlining and annotating a first draft to identify the elements of an argument: claim, counterclaim, evidence (a variety), and explanation.</td>
<td>3. identify and repair evidence, considering validity and bias.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Ideas—Revising and Editing</td>
<td>Evaluate explanation and insert or rethink the explanation to:</td>
<td>4. create a logical relationship between evidence, claims, counterclaims, and explanation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revise by rereading, and identify the academic/topical vocabulary used in the essay. Insert or thread “insider” language used by advertisers into the essay.</td>
<td>1. connect the explanation to the evidence.</td>
<td>5. increase clarity and reasoning.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edit using a checklist of common errors that might include: spelling, punctuation, control of syntax, sentence variety.</td>
<td>2. increase the clarity of the explanation.</td>
<td>6. trace diction to identify methods of appeal, and trace diction to reduce and control emotional appeal and develop logical appeal and tone.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trace the diction to identify methods of appeal, and trace diction to reduce and control emotional appeal and develop logical appeal and tone.</td>
<td>Increase the validity of the argument</td>
<td>Edit words, punctuation, sentences, correcting for common errors.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revise by outlining and annotating a first draft to identify the elements of an argument: claim, counterclaim, evidence (a variety), and explanation.</td>
<td>Revise by rereading, and identify the academic/topical vocabulary used in the essay. Insert or thread “insider” language used by advertisers into the essay.</td>
<td>Develop sentence variety to engage a reader.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Progressions for High School Argumentative Writing: Argumentative Genres</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Genre</strong></td>
<td><strong>Personal Essay</strong></td>
<td><strong>Op-Ed</strong></td>
<td><strong>Editorial</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9th Grade</strong></td>
<td>Connect prior knowledge about personal narratives to personal essays. 1. Writers of personal narratives create a plot line by organizing stories into a sequential story line, which enables readers to make connections and inferences to identify the central idea or theme. 2. Writers of personal essays create a line of reasoning by organizing stories of personal experience with other types of evidence to support a claim.</td>
<td>Engage in reading about the world to become a critical citizen, studying and voicing opinions about problems that create concerns for society.</td>
<td>Engage in reading about the world to become a critical citizen, studying and voicing opinions about problems that create concerns for society.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10th Grade</strong></td>
<td>Trace a line of reasoning in a personal essay to connect the claim, evidence (personal stories), comments (explanation), and counterclaims.</td>
<td>Identify the audience of the article and author bias to evaluate the validity of an author’s argument.</td>
<td>Identify the audience of the article and author bias to evaluate the validity of an author’s argument.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11th Grade</strong></td>
<td>Annotate personal essays to notice and name the elements of argumentative essays.</td>
<td>Engage in conversations with peers about world issues and propose actions that can improve these issues.</td>
<td>Engage in conversations with peers about world issues and propose actions that can improve these issues.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exploring Ideas—Generating, Planning, and Drafting</strong></td>
<td>Explore an idea or topic in various ways:  o positive and negative emotions connected to an idea or topic  o personal dialogue to explore various beliefs on an idea or topic  o collection of stories that illustrates a belief  o multiple angles to discover new thinking</td>
<td>Develop a habit of reading and responding to the world to identify conflicts and their impact on individuals. Use this habit to create an inquiry on a topic/problem/issue of personal interest.</td>
<td>Develop a habit of reading and responding to the world to identify conflicts and their impact on individuals. Use this habit to create an inquiry on a topic/problem/issue of personal interest.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Read mentor texts to study how essays connect.</td>
<td>Explore a topic of interest to see it from multiple angles and perspectives.</td>
<td>Explore a topic of interest to see it from multiple angles and perspectives.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identify evidence to support a belief.</td>
<td>Engage in primary and secondary research to gather information about the topic of interest.</td>
<td>Engage in primary and secondary research to gather information about the topic of interest.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Experiment with a variety of structures</td>
<td>Experiment with a variety of elements to structure and develop a line of reasoning.</td>
<td>Experiment with a variety of elements to structure and develop a line of reasoning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Write a first draft using a repertoire of writing decisions (craft and structure).</td>
<td>Write a first draft using a repertoire of writing decisions (craft and structure).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Developing Ideas—Revising and Editing

- Revise the order and structure of the essay to create a line of reasoning that creates a logical relationship between evidence, claims, counterclaims, and explanation.
- Reflect on the decisions that develop a focus, controlling idea, and logical development of the argument.
- Revise by studying and creating concise stories that serve as evidence and make clear points to support the claim.
- Edit words, sentences, and punctuation.

Developing Ideas—Revising and Editing

- Revise the order and structure of the essay to create a line of reasoning that creates a logical relationship between evidence, claims, counterclaims, and explanation.
- Reflect on the decisions you have made that develop a focus, controlling idea, and logical development of the argument.
- Trace the diction to identify methods of appeal and, and trace diction to reduce and control emotional appeal and develop logical appeal and tone.
- Edit words, sentences, and punctuation.
- Develop sentence variety to engage a reader.

Developing Ideas—Revising and Editing

- Revise the order and structure of the essay to create a line of reasoning that creates a logical relationship between evidence, claims, counterclaims, and explanation.
- Reflect on the decisions you have made that develop a focus, controlling idea, and logical development of the argument.
- Trace the diction to identify methods of appeal and, and trace diction to reduce and control emotional appeal and develop logical appeal.
- Edit on the word, sentence and punctuation level, identifying and correcting common errors.
- Develop sentence variety to engage a reader.
Writers Workshop Unit of Study  
7th Grade – Writing the Argument  

Abstract

Unit Description (overview):

Students identify a range of local problems that they believe are solvable. They practice defining these problems and analyzing their effects in order to develop workable solutions. Once they identify a local problem for which they would like to propose a solution, students conduct research from multiple sources to gain a deeper understanding of their chosen problem and how it can be solved. As they draft their proposal essay, students will seek the best structure for this piece and focus on using appropriate tone and diction for their target audience. Students’ proposals will address the feasibility and credibility of the solution.

To assist with the specificity of lessons, teachers may want to narrow the topic field from which students choose. This can help focus the research lessons and sources students choose from.

- Example #1/Neighborhood Focus – Have students brainstorm issues they experience in their neighborhoods. Issues might include: graffiti, not enough green space for playing, speeding cars in residential areas, safety.
- Example #2/ School Focus – Have your students brainstorm problems they experience at school. These might include bullying, dislike of the cafeteria options, not enough recess, a lack of resources for particular classes, etc. To narrow further, you might have them focus on buildings and grounds, daily schedule, or student-to-student interaction etc.

Interdisciplinary Options

- Collaborate with science to work on proposals for environmental problems like climate change, oil spills, disaster response, and lake-related issues.
- Collaborate with social studies to work on policy proposals—proposed changes to current laws that have resulted in problems either locally or statewide.

Terms

Argument
- In life- conflicts engaged in using language.
- In writing - opinions that can be backed up with evidence.

Problem- any question or matter involving doubt, uncertainty, or difficulty; a question proposed for solution or discussion.

Problem Statement – a clear and concise statement of a problem that defines the causes and effects.

Proposal- an argument that presents a solution for how to solve an existing problem. The audience for a proposal is the person or people who have the power to carry out the solution or change the law.

Evidence- details, facts, and reasons that support a debatable claim.

- Anecdotal Evidence - evidence based on personal observation and experience, often in the form of a brief story. Can come from the writer, friends, family, and acquaintances.
- Factual Evidence - data, confirmed facts, and research performed by experts. Found by the writer performing research.

Cause – the situation or event that generates a problem.

Effect - the difficulties or outcomes that result from the problem.

Feasible- able to be done or put into effect; possible.

Feasible Solution
- Practical- actually solves the problem, the time and effort is worthwhile given the nature of the problem.
- Affordable- not too expensive and the money exists to pay for the solution.
• Preferable- better than other potential solutions.

**Annotate**- to make notes on a text that summarize its meaning and extend its ideas; annotation also includes posing questions from the reader to the writer.

**Reverse Outline** – an outline of the structure of an existing text that notes the focus or key claim of each paragraph and each paragraph’s purpose in the essay.

**Viable**- practical, feasible, usable, adaptable; able to live and grow.

**Viable Writing Topic**- one that the writer:
- can make an argument for
- has enough to say to engage the reader
- thinks the reader will care about
- can find enough evidence to support a claim regarding
- knows will fulfill the expectations of the rubric

**Proposal Essay Topic Viability**
1.) the problem is clearly defined and there is evidence of it
2.) the proposal has the potential to help the community
3.) potential solutions to the problem exist

**Idea Generation (brainstorming)** – a first stage process where the writer produces a list of ideas, topics, or arguments without crossing any possibilities off the list. The goal is to create a “storm” of creative energy to open up thinking about the writing task and access ideas the writer might not have realized she had. For resources on brainstorming techniques visit [http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/brainstorming.html](http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/brainstorming.html)

**Relevant** (in reference to research sources) – appropriate, significant, and important to the matter at hand.

**Credible Source** (in reference to research sources) – a reliable and accurate text created by experts in the field.

**Process**
Writing a proposal essay to define a problem and its effects (cause and effect), then suggest a detailed solution, arguing for the feasibility of this solution.

**By generating**: a solution for a school or neighborhood problem.

**By reading**: model proposal essays, as well as articles, video, and websites about the selected problem and potential solution(s).

**By drafting**: body paragraphs that define the problem, its effects, a proposed solution and explaining why this solution will be effective.

**By researching**: multimedia sources to find evidence that supports the effects of the problem and the feasibility of the proposed solution.

**By revising and editing**: for clear statement of the problem and its effects, detailed solution, thorough explanation of how the solution will resolve the problem, effective use of evidence supporting the effects of the problem and feasibility of the solution, and proper spelling and syntax.
## Standards

*Common Core Standards: Argument Writing:* The following standards apply to reading and writing in narrative template tasks. Refer to the 6-12 standards for grade-appropriate specifics that fit each task and module being developed. The standards numbers and general content remain the same across all grades, but details vary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>CCR Anchor Standards for Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RI.7.1.</td>
<td>Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI.7.2.</td>
<td>Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI.7.4.</td>
<td>Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI.7.5.</td>
<td>Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI.7.8.</td>
<td>Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI.7.10.</td>
<td>By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>CCR Anchor Standards for Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W.7.1.</td>
<td>Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.7.4.</td>
<td>Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.7.5.</td>
<td>With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.7.6.</td>
<td>Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.7.7.</td>
<td>Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.7.8.</td>
<td>Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.7.9.</td>
<td>Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.7.10</td>
<td>Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>CCR Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SL.7.1</td>
<td>Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL.7.2</td>
<td>Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL.7.3</td>
<td>Delineate a speaker’s argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| SL.7.6 | Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CCR Anchor Standards for Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L.7.1.</td>
<td>Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.7.2.</td>
<td>Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.7.3</td>
<td>Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.7.4</td>
<td>Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on grade 7 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.7.6.</td>
<td>Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overview of Sessions: Teaching Points and Unit Assessments

Pre-Unit Assessment Task

TEACHING POINTS

Generating Ideas for Argument Writing
1. When people identify problems in their neighborhoods, cities, states, nation and even the world that they can’t solve by themselves, they write proposals that present solutions. These solutions can be enacted by citizen groups, lawmakers, officials, and government employees. Proposals can also suggest a change in an existing rule or law that is ineffective. Writing a proposal to solve a problem involves defining the problem, including its causes and effects, as well as explaining the potential solution and why this solution is feasible. But before you can write a proposal, you have to prove there is truly a problem by gathering evidence of it.

2. Writing a proposal to solve a problem involves defining the problem, including its causes and effects, as well as explaining the potential solution and why this solution is best. But before you can write a proposal, you have to prove there is truly a problem by gathering evidence of it. Developing a feasible solution to an identified problem means coming up with a plan that will appeal to those who will implement it by being practical, affordable and preferable.

3. Writing a proposal to solve a problem involves defining the problem, including its causes and effects, as well as explaining the potential solution and why this solution is best. But before you can write a proposal, you have to prove there is truly a problem by gathering evidence of it. Developing a feasible solution to an identified problem means coming up with a plan that will appeal to those who will implement it by being practical, affordable and preferable.

4. Before writing a proposal, or any kind of text, it is helpful to examine how other writers have done the same job you are about to do. Studying mentor texts (models) helps a writer determine what will strengthen their argument and what mistakes to avoid. Annotating—or marking up—a text, will provide you a map of the important ideas in the piece. And creating a reverse outline will help you understand how a writer has organized their argument. When writers outline, they determine the order of the points of their argument. So when we create a reverse outline, we note the order of topics in a text that already exists. The purpose of a reverse outline is to consider possible structures for your own work. Rubrics provide student writers with a clear understanding of how they can meet the expectations of a particular mode and assignment.

5. Before writing a proposal, or any kind of text, it is helpful to examine how other writers have done the same job you are about to do. Studying mentor texts (models) helps a writer determine what will strengthen their argument and what mistakes to avoid. Annotating—or marking up—a text, will provide you a map of the important ideas in the piece. And creating a reverse outline will help you understand how a writer has organized their argument. When writers outline, they determine the order of the points of their argument. So when we create a reverse outline, we note the order of topics in a text that already exists. The purpose of a reverse outline is to consider possible structures for your own work. Rubrics provide student writers with a clear understanding of how they can meet the expectations of a particular mode and assignment.

6. To write a proposal, you must first determine what problem you will propose to solve. Brainstorming to generate topic ideas is an important step in the writing process. Next, writers must select a topic from their brainstormed list that is viable for the writing situation. A proposal is viable when 1.) the problem is clearly defined and there is evidence of it, 2.) the proposal has the potential to help the community, and 3.) potential solutions to the problem exist.

7. To write a proposal, you must first determine what problem you will propose to solve. Brainstorming to generate topic ideas is an important step in the writing process. Next, writers must select a topic from their brainstormed list that is viable for the writing situation. A proposal is viable when 1.) the problem is clearly defined and there is evidence of it, 2.) the proposal has the potential to help the community, and 3.) potential solutions to the problem exist.

Creating/Planning
8. Proposal writing requires thorough research to define evidence of the problem, the problem’s causes and effects, as well as its solutions. To perform research efficiently and accurately, writers must know how to ask good questions and identify key search terms.
9. Writers must take a trial and error approach with research as they find sources, determine their credibility, gain new knowledge about their topic, and further define the information and evidence they must gather. The credibility of sources can be determined by type of source, author, sponsoring institution, and cross-referencing facts.

**Drafting**

10. Once a writer has collected multiple credible sources, s/he must decide what information from each source is relevant and how it will be used in the proposal. This requires the writer to categorize source information based on the parts of a proposal and how the information will act as evidence for a particular component of the piece. Paraphrasing is one way to present key information from a credible source.

11. Proposals must have clear statements of the problem that outline the cause(s) and effect(s). The language a writer uses will vary depending on who his/her audience is.

12. The first half of a proposal must define the problem and explore cause and effect to provide evidence of the problem. This persuades the audience of the seriousness and implications of the problem. Incorporating research into a proposal involves paraphrasing and/or quoting sources. This evidence from outside sources strengthens the argument of the proposal.

13. The solution portion of a proposal essay can be multi-part or offer multiple solutions to address all the effects of the problem. Giving evidence of how other people/communities have employed similar solutions gives a writer’s argument more credibility.

**Revising and Editing**

14. After writers complete a draft, they revisit what they have written to see if it makes sense, needs to be re-organized and addresses the target audience. Revision is essential to good writing.

15. Writers ask for constructive criticism from other writers in order to determine how to best revise their pieces. This feedback can come from peers who carefully and respectfully critique another student’s writing. This feedback is then used to revise the piece to improve on content, organization, and argumentation.

16. After writers complete a draft, they revisit what they have written to see if it makes sense, needs to be re-organized and addresses the target audience. Revision is essential to good writing. Conferencing with another writer or the teacher can be helpful in devising and carrying out a revision plan.

17. After writers complete a draft, they revisit what they have written to see if it makes sense, needs to be re-organized and addresses the target audience. Revision is essential to good writing. Conferencing with another writer or the teacher can be helpful in devising and carrying out a revision plan.

18. The last step that writers take before sending off a piece of writing is to edit it to catch all the small grammatical errors. Small grammatical and punctuation errors can trip a reader up, making your argument less clear. Reflecting on the writing process helps writers refine their process for future writing projects.

**Mid-Unit Assessment Task**

**Post-Unit Summative Assessment Task**

Consider a school or neighborhood problem that you have a solution for. For this proposal essay, summarize the problem by defining it, explaining whom it affects, and describing possible long-term outcomes it could have. Then lay out a detailed proposal for a solution. Explain what it would take to implement your solution and why it's feasible. Briefly discuss why your solution is better than alternate solutions.
## Proposal Essay Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>On-Target</th>
<th>Novice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td>The writer:</td>
<td>The writer:</td>
<td>The writer:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provides a compelling introduction that introduces the problem and makes a claim about how to solve it.</td>
<td>• Introduces the problem and makes a claim about how to solve it.</td>
<td>• Introduces the problem and makes a claim about how to solve it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Presents the cause(s) and effect(s) of the problem, explaining the interrelations of multiple causes and effects.</td>
<td>• Presents the cause(s) and effect(s) of the problem.</td>
<td>• Presents the problem and either its causes or effects but not both; or presents both cause and effect but does not make clear the link between them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Outlines a feasible solution and explains why this solution is better than other options.</td>
<td>• Outlines a feasible solution.</td>
<td>• Outlines a solution without clearly illustrating its feasibility; or does not outline a complete solution; or solution doesn’t address all aspects of the problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Uses credible evidence to o Show the existence of the problem. o Support the feasibility of the solution.</td>
<td>• Uses credible evidence to o Show the existence of the problem.</td>
<td>• Evidence of the problem is either insufficient or not from credible sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Employs a variety of evidence types: factual, anecdotal, statistical, authorities in the field.</td>
<td>• Employs a variety of evidence types: factual, anecdotal, statistical, authorities in the field.</td>
<td>• Does not consistently or accurately cite sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Cites sources correctly and accurately.</td>
<td>• Cites sources correctly and accurately.</td>
<td>• Readers are not provided with suggestions for how to act on the proposed solution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provides readers with suggestions for how to act on the proposed solution and explains what will happen if the problem is not solved.</td>
<td>• Provides readers with suggestions for how to act on the proposed solution.</td>
<td>• Provides readers with suggestions for how to act on the proposed solution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>• The chosen structure consistently reveals the writer’s line of reasoning both in the presentation of the problem and its solution.</td>
<td>• The chosen structure usually reveals the line of reasoning to illustrate o the cause and effect of the problem o how the proposed solution will solve the problem, with only occasionally misplaced paragraphs or sentences.</td>
<td>• The chosen structure does not make clear the line of reasoning to illustrate o the cause and effect of the problem o how the proposed solution will solve the problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Transitions also make clear the line of reasoning and create a logical flow between sentences and paragraphs.</td>
<td>• Transitions also make clear the line of reasoning and create a logical flow between sentences and paragraphs.</td>
<td>• The arrangement of paragraphs and sentences lacks logic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Style &amp; Mechanics</strong></td>
<td>• Voice is persuasive, authoritative and consistently appropriate for the intended audience.</td>
<td>• Voice is appropriately persuasive and formal for the intended audience.</td>
<td>• Voice is not appropriate for the intended audience; or shifts from informal to formal throughout the essay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The word choice is interesting, reflects the intended audience, and is specific to the chosen topic.</td>
<td>• The word choice usually reflects the intended audience and is specific to the chosen topic.</td>
<td>• The word choice is simplistic and/or general and is not specific to the topic or intended audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sentence structures are varied and complex.</td>
<td>• Sentence structure is varied.</td>
<td>• Essay employs subject/verb sentence structure with little variety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The essay contains no errors in punctuation.</td>
<td>• Sentences are properly punctuated in most cases.</td>
<td>• Contains numerous punctuation errors that affect meaning and fluidity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Process Checklist</strong></td>
<td>The writer:</td>
<td>The writer:</td>
<td>The writer:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Brainstormed to discover multiple topics and selected the most viable.</td>
<td>o Brainstormed to discover multiple topics and selected the most viable.</td>
<td>o Brainstormed to discover multiple topics and selected the most viable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Drafted to explore and revise his/her topic choice.</td>
<td>o Drafted to explore and revise his/her topic choice.</td>
<td>o Drafted to explore and revise his/her topic choice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Revised his/her research questions to find effective evidence.</td>
<td>o Revised his/her research questions to find effective evidence.</td>
<td>o Revised his/her research questions to find effective evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Evaluated the credibility of his/her sources.</td>
<td>o Evaluated the credibility of his/her sources.</td>
<td>o Evaluated the credibility of his/her sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Revised his/her draft to achieve greater coherency and clarity.</td>
<td>o Revised his/her draft to achieve greater coherency and clarity.</td>
<td>o Revised his/her draft to achieve greater coherency and clarity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Edited for clarity and an error-free essay.</td>
<td>o Edited for clarity and an error-free essay.</td>
<td>o Edited for clarity and an error-free essay.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Session 1

Essential Questions

- What is a proposal?
- What is a problem?
- How do you know something is a problem?
- What is evidence?
- What is cause and effect?
- What is a good solution?

Preparation

For section #1 of the session, review the Proposal Essay Anchor Chart in conjunction with the Teaching Points.

Consider generating alternate examples of proposals that will appeal to your particular population of students.

Review and make copies of the What’s Your Problem handout. This process will help you anticipate students’ difficulties with this handout as you think about evidence of a particular problem, its cause and effects, as well as how you landed on your particular solution. This initial thinking about how we identify and solve problems is foundational to students’ later work in this unit when they will identify problems and propose feasible solutions. Review the Do We Have a Problem Here? handout that can act as a model for your students during this thinking/writing activity. Both handouts are included after the session.

Teaching Point

When people identify problems in their neighborhoods, cities, states, nation and even the world that they can’t solve by themselves, they write proposals that present solutions. These solutions can be enacted by citizen groups, lawmakers, officials, and government employees. Proposals can also suggest a change in an existing rule or law that is ineffective. Writing a proposal to solve a problem involves defining the problem, including its causes and effects, as well as explaining the potential solution and why this solution is feasible. But before you can write a proposal, you have to prove there is truly a problem by gathering evidence of it.

Skills:
- Define a problem by gathering evidence.
- Define a problem by articulating the cause and effect relationship evident in the scenario.
- Articulate why a particular solution was chosen.

Strategies:
- Introduce students to key terms and concepts in a mini-lecture.
- Have students explore concepts and terms by identifying problems they have recently solved.

Presentation of Concepts

Introduce the Teaching Point using the Proposal Essay Anchor Chart: When people identify problems in their neighborhoods, cities, states, nation and even the world that they can’t solve by themselves, they write proposals that present solutions. These solutions can be enacted by citizen groups, lawmakers, officials, and government officials. Proposals can also suggest a change in an existing rule or law that is ineffective. Writing a proposal to solve a problem involves defining the problem, including its causes and effects, as well as explaining the potential solution and why this solution is feasible. But before you can write a proposal, you have to prove there is truly a problem by gathering evidence of it.

Put key terms on the board: problem, cause, effect, evidence, solution. Let the students know that they will be defining these words by the end of the class period.

Examples of Proposals:
- Persuade the principal to change a school rule.
- Convince your parents to buy you a new cell phone.
- Proposing that your city build a skate park for teens.
- Proposing a plan to the State Board of Education to decrease the high school dropout rate statewide.
What’s Your Problem?: Students as Solution Seekers

- To help them define the key terms and before tackling local problems, students should practice identifying problems and solutions in their own lives.
- Use the What’s Your Problem: Students as Solution Seekers handout to walk your students through the following thinking and writing exercise.
- To model possible responses to each section, project/share the Do We Have a Problem Here? handout.

Have students generate a list of problems that they have recently solved. If students struggle to come up with problems solved, have them also include problems in their daily life that they wish to solve. After a few minutes, have students share their lists and record them on the board. The list might look something like this:

- Friends fighting over which movie to see
- Dealing with forgotten homework
- No milk for cereal at breakfast
- Little sister coming in room all the time
- Dog barking during dinner
- Waiting for the bus in the cold

At this point, define the term evidence with the class: facts, details, and reasons that prove a situation or event is a problem.

Have students select one of their solved problems and note, list, or explain how they knew it was a problem. What made them feel this was a problem? What evidence can they give of this problem? Share the example from Do We Have a Problem Here?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why My Little Sister Coming Into My Room is a Problem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>She comes into my room every night and won’t leave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel annoyed when she’s in my room.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She takes my stuff and doesn’t give it back—usually my favorite clothes which I then can’t find when I want to wear them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She distracts me from doing my homework and talking on the phone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She listens in on my conversations and tells my mom things she shouldn’t.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Have a few students share their problem and evidence.

Point out that these are examples of evidence that the problem exists. In fact, this evidence actually points to the effects of the problem. Lasting effects given the evidence above would be:

- Missing clothes
- Poor homework completion
- Getting in trouble with mom

Ask students to explain the reason WHY their problem occurs in the first place. What is the cause of the problem? Using the example above, the answer to the question might be:

- My little sister looks up to me.
- She wants to be around me all the time.
- She gets bored when she’s alone.

Identify this reason or reasons as the cause of the problem.

Before completing this section, students need to define what a good solution looks like. Solicit their input. Ideas might include:

- The time, money, and/or effort are worthwhile given the nature of the problem.
- Will actually fix the problem.
- Better than other solutions.

Have students brainstorm a solution to the sister in the room problem. Next, have them generate a solution for their own problem and analyze if it will address most or all of the effects of a problem. They will need to revisit the evidence list for the problem to determine this.
### Review
To reinforce the content of the lesson and determine how much students have retained, ask them to define the terms:
- Problem
- Cause and effect
- Evidence
- Good Solution

### Assessment
Collect students’ *What’s Your Problem* handouts. Assess how well they identified problems, broke down the evidence, causes, long term effects and solutions and showed a clear understanding of each concept.
Proposals try to persuade the audience to **make a change to** or **take action on** practices, behaviors, laws, rules, funding, habits, policies, etc.
What’s Your Problem?
Students as Solution Seekers

A. DAILY PROBLEMS
Make a list of all the problems in your daily life you have recently solved. These should concern you, your friends, and your family. (Can’t think of anything? Also list problems you would like to solve.)

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 

B. EVIDENCE of the PROBLEM
Select one problem from the list above and give evidence (facts, details, reasons) for why it was clearly a problem.

The Problem:

Evidence:
1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
C. LONG-TERM EFFECTS

If this problem was not/is not solved, what are the lasting effects it could have?

1.

2.

3.

4.

D. CAUSES of the PROBLEM

Why did this problem exist in the first place? How/why did it come about?

1.

2.

3.

4.
E. GOOD SOLUTION

Explain how you solved or could solve this problem.

Is this a long-term solution? To answer this question, examine which effects of the problem this solution addresses. (Look at your evidence list.) Are all of them taken care of by the solution?
Do We Have a Problem Here?

A. Problem: any question or matter involving doubt, uncertainty, or difficulty; a question proposed for solution or discussion.
   - Friends fighting over which movie to see
   - Dealing with forgotten homework
   - No milk for cereal at breakfast
   - Little sister coming into room all the time
   - Dog barking during dinner
   - Waiting for the bus in the cold

B. Evidence: facts, details, and reasons that prove a situation is a problem.

Why My Little Sister Coming Into My Room Is a Problem
   - She comes into my room every night and won’t leave.
   - I feel annoyed when she’s in my room.
   - She takes my stuff and doesn’t give it back—usually my favorite clothes which I then can’t find when I want to wear them.
   - She distracts me from doing my homework and talking on the phone.
   - She listens in on my conversations and tells my mom things she shouldn’t.

C. Evidence points to the effects of the problem. Lasting effects given the evidence would be:
   - Missing clothes
   - Poor homework completion
   - Getting in trouble with Mom

D. Cause: the reason why the problem occurs in the first place.
   - My little sister looks up to me
   - She wants to be around me all the time
   - She’s bored when she’s alone

E. Good Solution:
   - Will actually fix the problem.
   - The time, money, and/or effort is worthwhile given the nature of the problem.
   - Better than other solutions.
## Sessions 2 and 3

### Essential Questions
- How do you know something is a problem?
- What is evidence?
- What is cause and effect?
- How do you show a solution is feasible?

### Preparation
**Gathering Evidence to Define a Problem**
Make copies of the *Gathering Evidence to Define a Problem* handout. Your students will be working on this thinking exercise during the session. Decide which problem and associated videos you want them to watch. There are suggested videos about environmental problems and their solutions below. You can also find a video about a problem salient to your student population/community and curriculum using or YouTube. For this lesson, it’s most useful to select one issue to focus on.

Use the *Gathering Evidence to Define a Problem* handout to take notes about the nature of the problem, evidence, causes and solutions and to determine when you might want to pause the video to have students record their observations and pair/share.

**Suggested Videos:**
- Global Water Shortage by BBC America: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gg-ac0EaYDQ&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gg-ac0EaYDQ&feature=related)
- BP Oil Spill Effects on Wildlife by Skywatch Media: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GARHmc7WRqs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GARHmc7WRqs)
- Global Warming 101 by National Geographic: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oJAbATJCugs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oJAbATJCugs)

**Determining the Feasibility of a Solution**
Review the *Feasible Solution Anchor Chart*. Watch a corresponding solution video for the problem you have decided to focus on (or find one of your own). Use the *Is the Solution Feasible* handout to record your ideas and to determine when you might want to pause the video to have students record their observations and pair/share.

**Suggested Videos:**
- Water Crisis - a Solution: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B7jCGk6jvME](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B7jCGk6jvME)
- Kevin Costner’s Solution for the BP Oil Spill: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u4eSqSu2hWk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u4eSqSu2hWk)

### Teaching Point
Writing a proposal to solve a problem involves defining the **problem**, including its **causes and effects**, as well as explaining the potential **solution** and why this solution is best. But before you can write a proposal, you have to prove there is truly a problem by gathering **evidence** of it. Developing a feasible solution to an identified problem means coming up with a plan that will appeal to those who will implement it by being **practical, affordable and preferable**.

**Skills:**
- Define a problem by gathering evidence.
- Define a problem by articulating the cause and effect relationship evident in the scenario.
- Examine the feasibility of a solution.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies:</th>
<th>Gathering Evidence to Define a Problem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Watch news pieces that illustrate a problem by providing evidence and showing causes and effects.</td>
<td>a.) Reintroduce the teaching points: Writing a proposal to solve a problem involves defining the problem, including its causes and effects, as well as explaining the potential solution and why this solution is best. But before you can write a proposal, you have to prove there is truly a problem by gathering evidence of it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch a solution proposal video that points to feasibility.</td>
<td>b.) Students will undertake a thinking process similar to the one from yesterday, but this time they will analyze a global problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• While watching the selected video on the problem, have students work on the Gathering Evidence to Define a Problem handout.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Pause the video at key points and have students pair and share.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c.) Review the responses to the handout as a class. Ask students:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What evidence from the segment proved this is a problem?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What else would you like to know about this problem from an evidence standpoint? (This extension question will get students thinking about the evidence needed to convince an audience that a problem is, in fact, a serious problem.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What Does “Feasible” Mean?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a.) Introduce the teaching point: Developing a feasible solution to an identified problem means coming up with a plan that will appeal to those who will implement it by being practical, affordable and preferable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b.) Ask the students: Given the teaching point, what do you think the definition of the word “feasible” is? Help them develop a definition that looks something like: able to be done or put into effect; possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c.) Show the Feasible Solution Anchor Chart.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d.) Return to one or two of the problem/solution scenarios you discussed yesterday as a class. Discuss their feasibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Determining if a Solution is Feasible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a.) Explain to students that at least half of their proposal will be an explanation of their solution and evidence that proves its feasibility. So how do you determine if a solution is feasible? Have students watch a video on a solution to the corresponding problem you just discussed, pausing the video as needed so students can digest and record what they are watching on the Is the Solution Feasible handout, as well as pair and share.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b.) As a class, discuss the feasibility of the proposed solution. Ask students:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What seems good about this proposal?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Does it address all the effects of the problem?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What about it would be hard to carry out?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Who might be difficult to convince about the effectiveness of this solution?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Take a final vote about whether it’s feasible or not.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>Collect students’ Gathering Evidence to Define a Problem and Is the Solution Feasible handouts. Assess the quality of evidence, paraphrasing, identification of the problem’s causes, and discussion of the solution’s feasibility.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gathering Evidence to Define a Problem

**Problem**- any question or matter involving doubt, uncertainty, or difficulty; a question proposed for solution or discussion.

**Evidence**- reasons, facts, details that support a debatable claim

Often evidence of a problem = the effects of a problem because the clear effects of a problem prove that it exists.

**Cause** – the situation or event that generates a problem.

**Effect** - the difficulties or outcomes that result from the problem.

*****

**Video Title:**

Name of Problem_______________________________________

List the facts (evidence) the video gives to illustrate the problem.

1.  
2.  
3.  
4.  

Where is the problem the worst? Give evidence that supports this.

Define the problem in your own words:
What are some of the causes of this problem?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

What are solutions proposed to solve the problem?
Gathering Evidence to Define a Problem  
(Teacher copy--Global Water Shortage Video by the BBC)

**Problem**- any question or matter involving doubt, uncertainty, or difficulty; a question proposed for solution or discussion.

**Evidence**- reasons, facts, details that support a debatable claim

> Often evidence of a problem = the effects of a problem because the clear effects of a problem prove that it exists.

**Cause** – the situation or event that generates a problem.

**Effect** - the difficulties or outcomes that result from the problem.

Video Title: Global Water Shortage, part 1, BBC America  
Name of Problem: water shortage  

List the facts (evidence) the video gives to illustrate the problem.

1. 1.1 billion people don’t have access to sufficient drinking water.

2. Water use is growing at twice the rate of the population.

3. In 25 years, half of the continent of Africa will be living under water stress.

4. Violence (wars) is erupting over drinking water, which is in short supply.

**Where is the problem the worst? Give evidence that supports this.**

Africa – violence erupts over water shortages.  
Mexico City- the city has sunk by 9m and 40% of the water supply is lost due to leaky pipes.  
Sydney- lower lakes face an ecological disaster due to lack of rain.  
West Bank- Palestinians have little access to drinkable water because it is controlled by Israelis.

**Define the problem in your own words:**

There is less drinking water available on the planet than what is needed.

**What are some of the causes of this problem?**

6. Fast growing global population.
7. Climate change leading to decline of rainfall.
8. Ground water depletion.
9. Greater demand for water.
10. No alternative for water.

**What solutions are proposed to solve the problem?**

a. Desalination  
b. Rain water harvesting  
c. Better management of the landscapes
Feasible Solution Anchor Chart

Practical - actually solves the problem; the time and effort is worthwhile given the nature of the problem

Affordable - not too expensive and the money exists to pay for the solution

Preferable - better than other potential solutions
Is the Solution Feasible?
Feasible: able to be done or put into effect; possible.
Practical - Affordable - Preferable

What problem does the solution address? (Summarize in your own words.)

What is the plan? What steps must be taken for the solution to be carried out?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

PRACTICAL

1. **How** does the solution address the problem? Which effects of the problem does the solution address?

2. Do you think this solution is effective enough? What parts of the problem are not addressed by it?
AFFORDABLE

1. **Who** will have to be convinced about the effectiveness/affordability of the solution?

2. Does the **money exist** to pay for this solution? How will the solution be funded?

PREFERABLE

1. What are other solutions to the problem?

2. Why is this one the best?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Questions</th>
<th>Sessions 4 and 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>• What are the parts of a proposal?</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>• How do you organize a proposal?</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>• What does a strong proposal look like?</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>• How do writers use rubrics?</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation</th>
<th>Review the Proposal Essay Rubric. Mark any terms you might need to review with students. This includes writing terminology (e.g., evidence, conclusion) and high-frequency words (verbs that direct students in their thinking and writing (e.g., analyze, convince, persuade, compare).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Read &quot;Water Waste at the University of Michigan&quot; by Elyssa Weigand (attached after this session) or select another sample proposal essay to share with students. Use the Understanding the Proposal handout (attached after this session) to mark key components of the mentor text and make margin notes, as well as a reverse outline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reverse Outline</td>
<td>an outline of the structure of an existing text that notes the focus or key claim of each paragraph and each paragraph’s purpose in the essay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Review the Rubric Study handout (attached after this session). Use the Proposal Essay Rubric to grade the mentor text students will evaluate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Teaching Point    | Before writing a proposal, or any kind of text, it is helpful to examine how other writers have done the same job you are about to do. Studying mentor texts (models) helps a writer determine what will strengthen their argument and what mistakes to avoid. Annotating—or marking up—a text, will provide you a map of the important ideas in the piece. And creating a reverse outline will help you understand how a writer has organized their argument. When writers outline, they determine the order of the points of their argument. So when we create a reverse outline, we note the order of topics in a text that already exists. The purpose of a reverse outline is to consider possible structures for your own work. Rubrics provide student writers with a clear understanding of how they can meet the expectations of a particular mode and assignment. |
|                   | **Skills:** |
|                   | o Identify “problem” and “solution” in mentor texts. |
|                   | o Identify “cause and effect” in models. |
|                   | o Identify evidence in a mentor text. |
|                   | o Analyze the organization of a text. |
|                   | o Understand the expectations set forth in a rubric. |
|                   | **Strategies:** |
|                   | o Annotate mentor texts. |
|                   | o Create a reverse outline of the mentor texts to determine possible structures for a proposal. |
|                   | o Examine and paraphrase rubric elements. |
|                   | o Evaluate a proposal essay mentor text using the rubric. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Engagement</th>
<th>Mentor Text Reading and Annotating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>• Introduce the teaching point:</strong> Before writing a proposal, or any kind of text, it is helpful to examine how other writers have done the same job you are about to do. Studying mentor texts (models) helps a writer determine what will strengthen their argument and what mistakes to avoid. Annotating—or marking up—a text, will provide you a map of the important ideas in the piece.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>• We mark up a text to help us better understand it, making a map of our reading, and so it’s easy to find particular points when we return to the text as we discuss it.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>• Stress to your students that annotation includes not just marking up a text with underlining, stars and highlights, but also making margin notes. Share this definition:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Annotate</strong>- to make notes on a text that summarize its meaning and extend its ideas; annotation also includes posing questions from the reader to the writer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>• Have students read and annotate the chosen mentor text using the Understanding the</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Proposal handout.

- Prior to doing so discuss what a margin is.
- Review the handout directions for the first and second reading.

Consider showing the students a model paragraph you have marked up so they know what you expect.

Consider reading and annotating the first few paragraphs together as a class using a projector/overhead, then sending the students off in pairs or trios to finish their annotations. Alternately, after the full class annotation, consider making certain pairs/groups responsible for particular paragraphs.

Bring the class back together to report back on annotations and margin notes made that you mark on the projected version of the text. If pairs/groups have been assigned particular paragraphs, they can report/show/model their annotations to the group.

Mentor Text Reverse Outline

- Introduce the teaching point: Creating a reverse outline will help you understand how a writer has organized their argument. When writers outline, they determine the order of the points of their argument. So when we create a reverse outline, we note the order of topics in a text that already exists. The purpose of a reverse outline is to consider possible structures for your own work.
- On chart paper, have students create a reverse outline of the mentor text using the Understanding a Proposal handout. This activity can be completed in pairs or small groups.
- Check in with each pair/group as they reverse outline to determine if they understand the concept of annotation and that they are marking components correctly.
- Hang the reverse outlines up next to one another in the classroom and compare them. Ask students to observe: What are the similarities and differences between the outlines?
- Then ask students:
  - Why do you think the writer ordered her argument in this way?
  - Is this order effective? Why or why not?
  - Could particular paragraphs be rearranged?
  - What would the effect of this be?

Rubric Study

- Using the Rubric Study handout, review the meaning of “rubric” and why we use them.
- Have students carefully underline high-frequency words (verbs) they don’t understand and circle writing terminology they are unsure of.
- Discuss all words that need explanation.
- Explain that writers can score differently on each item on the rubric and that teachers look at how a writer scores overall to give a final grade.
  - Big picture = final grade
  - Small picture = each item
  - The big picture is composed of many small pictures.
- Review the directions for assessing the mentor text using the rubric on the Rubric Study handout and divide students into groups to assess the mentor text.
- When students have finished grading, bring the class back together and compare results of the completed rubric. Ask:
  - What was your overall assessment: advanced, on-target, novice
  - How did you score each section?
  - How come? Provide evidence for the assessment of each section in the rubric. This final step is crucial in helping students bring together and clarify their understanding of proposal essay expectations.

Independent Practice (Optional)

If you feel your students would benefit from further practice and looking at an additional mentor text, spend an additional session practicing with another proposal model or send the students home with a model and have them annotate for homework.
| Assessment | **Understanding the Proposal**- assess students’ understanding of annotating and reverse outlining, as well as what the components of a proposal essay are based on, given their completed annotations and shared reverse outlines.  
**Rubric Study**- assess students’ understanding of the purpose and elements of the rubric based on their use of the rubric to grade the sample proposal essay. |
## Proposal Essay Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>On-Target</th>
<th>Novice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td>The writer:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provides a compelling introduction that introduces the problem and makes</td>
<td>• Introduces the problem and makes a claim about how to solve it.</td>
<td>The writer:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a claim about how to solve it.</td>
<td>• Presents the cause(s) and effect(s) of the problem.</td>
<td>• Introduces the problem and makes a claim about how to solve it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Presents the cause(s) and effect(s) of the problem, explaining the</td>
<td>• Outlines a feasible solution.</td>
<td>• Presents the problem and either its causes or effects but not both;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>interrelations of multiple causes and effects.</td>
<td>• Uses credible evidence to</td>
<td>or presents both cause and effect but does not make clear the link</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Outlines a feasible solution and explains why this solution is</td>
<td>o Show the existence of the problem.</td>
<td>between them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>better than other options.</td>
<td>o Support the feasibility of the solution.</td>
<td>• Outlines a solution without clearly illustrating its feasibility; or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Uses credible evidence to</td>
<td>• Cites sources correctly and accurately.</td>
<td>does not outline a complete solution; or solution doesn’t address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Show the existence of the problem.</td>
<td>• Provides readers with suggestions for how to act on the proposed</td>
<td>all aspects of the problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Support the feasibility of the solution.</td>
<td>solution.</td>
<td>• Evidence of the problem is either insufficient or not from credible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Employs a variety of evidence types: factual, anecdotal, statistical,</td>
<td></td>
<td>sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>authorities in the field.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Does not consistently or accurately cite sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Cites sources correctly and accurately.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Readers are not provided with suggestions for how to act on the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provides readers with suggestions for how to act on the proposed</td>
<td></td>
<td>proposed solution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>solution and explains what will happen if the problem is not solved.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>• The chosen structure consistently reveals the writer’s line of</td>
<td>• The chosen structure usually reveals the line of reasoning to illustrate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>reasoning both in the presentation of the problem and its solution.</td>
<td>o the cause and effect of the problem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Transitions also make clear the line of reasoning and create a</td>
<td>o how the proposed solution will solve the problem, with only</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>logical flow between sentences and paragraphs.</td>
<td>occasionally misplaced paragraphs or sentences.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Style &amp;</td>
<td>• Voice is persuasive, authoritative and consistently appropriate for</td>
<td>• Voice is appropriately persuasive and formal for the intended</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanics**</td>
<td>the intended audience.</td>
<td>audience.</td>
<td>• Voice is not appropriate for the intended audience; or shifts from</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The word choice is interesting, reflects the intended audience, and</td>
<td>• The word choice usually reflects the intended audience and is specific</td>
<td>informal to formal throughout the essay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>is specific to the chosen topic.</td>
<td>to the chosen topic.</td>
<td>• The word choice is simplistic and/or general and is not specific to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sentence structures are varied and complex.</td>
<td>• Sentence structure is varied.</td>
<td>the topic or intended audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The essay contains no errors in punctuation.</td>
<td>• Sentences are properly punctuated in most cases.</td>
<td>• Essay employs subject/verb sentence structure with little variety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Process</td>
<td>The writer:</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Contains numerous punctuation errors that affect meaning and fluidity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checklist**</td>
<td>o Brainstormed to discover multiple topics and selected the most viable.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Drafted to explore and revise his/her topic choice.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Revised his/her research questions to find effective evidence.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Evaluated the credibility of his/her sources.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Revised his/her draft to achieve greater coherency and clarity.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Edited for clarity and an error-free essay.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Understanding the Proposal

First Reading: Annotation
During your first reading of the proposal, mark the following items. Use these annotation marks:

- Underline the sentences where the problem is first introduced.
- **Put a star next to any effects of the problem. Remember, this is also evidence that the problem exists.**
- Put [brackets] around the cause(s) of the problem.
- Put a happy face 😊 where the proposed solution begins.
- Put a number sign # next to any sentences that explain the feasibility of the solution.

Second Reading: Margin Notes
During your second reading, make notes about the following questions in the margin:

- **At the top of the first page:** Who do you believe the audience is? Who could actually make this solution happen?
- **In the left-hand margins:** Note any places where you would like more evidence, either of the problem or the feasibility of the solution. What else do you want to know? Write it in the margin.
- **In the right-hand margins:** Pose at least 2 questions to the writer. You might disagree with him/her about a claim, want to know more about a point, or want the writer to consider another point of view.

Third Reading: Reverse Outline
When writers outline, they determine the order of the points of their argument. So when we create a reverse outline, we note the order of topics in a text that already exists. The purpose of this exercise is to consider possible structures for our own work.

- Create a reverse outline of the proposal essay you have just read by listing the following components in the order that they occur.
- You may repeat components.
- Note that some paragraphs may contain more than one of these components.
- Each paragraph of the proposal should have a corresponding item in the reverse outline.

Proposal Components

- **Introduction** – including a statement of the problem.
- **Defining the problem and its stakes** – how serious it is
- **Causes** of the problem
- **Effects** of the problem
- **Solution**
  - What it is
  - How we know it will work
  - What it will cost in money or effort
- **Conclusion** – should indicate what will happen if the problem isn’t solved.
**Water Waste at the University of Michigan**  
**By Elyssa Wiegand**

Approximately 1,180 students live at Mary Markley Residential Hall at the University of Michigan, so this dorm uses large amounts of resources—especially water. Whether brushing their teeth, taking a shower, or flushing the toilet, all 1,180 students use water at some point during the day. Across the university’s campus, improvements have been made to reduce the use of this resource, including low-flow faucet fixtures and toilet flushers. These implementations, which have been proven to reduce water use by 31%, have been installed in buildings such as Shapiro Library and Dana Science Building. But these additions should also be put into operation in campus dorms, where more water is used daily (Greening of Dana).

High water use is a broad issue that pertains to many commercial and living buildings or complexes. On a college campus though, there is a much higher density of people; therefore, a large amount of water is wasted daily. Water use directly affects all of life on earth, as it is required by all organisms (U.S. Water). Overconsumption of water can have detrimental effects on the environment, as water is what makes land habitable for animals. Conserving water is also a simple way to save money, which could, in effect, lower tuition to some extent (Why Conserve?).

Figure 1 shows that only a small portion of water in the world is usable for humans. The Great Lakes contain 21% of the world's freshwater, an amount only surpassed by the polar ice caps (Great Lakes). Living in a state surrounded by much of this usable water makes many individuals take this resource for granted.
Figure 1. Worldwide Water Availability (Source: University of Waikato)

Figure 2 below shows an estimation of the amount of water used in Mary Markley Hall. These numbers can change dramatically, depending on the frequency of any individual's use, but the raw numbers show that a large amount of water can be saved each day—up to 10,000 gallons—without even taking drinking water, shower water, or food production water into account.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Water use at Mary Markley Hall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brushing Teeth (2 gpm-eapa.gov)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washing Hands (2 gpm-eapa.gov)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flushing Toilet (1.6 gpf-Sloan Valve)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Water Saved: 10,325 gallons / day**

Figure 2. Estimated water use/water saved per day at Mary Markley Hall. (Theoretical values may go up or down, depending on the individual and faucet/toilet used. Using estimation of 1,180 students.)
The two main engineering utilities that should be installed in Markley Residential Hall are dual-flush toilet valves and faucet aerators. According to Sloan Valve Company, a regular commercial toilet uses about 1.6 gallon per flush (gpf). As you can see in Figure 3, the Sloan Uppercut dual-flush handle can be pushed in two directions for two different purposes—up for liquid waste or down for solid waste. Flushing up will only use 1.1 gpf, while flushing down will still use 1.6 gpf. In addition to this toilet valve, faucet aerators would also reduce the amount of water wasted.

While toilet water is measured in gallons per flush, sink water is measured in gallons per minute. There are many different types of faucet aerators that reduce amount of gallons used per minute. The ones currently built into the faucets on campus reduce gpm by 1.5 (Energy and Water Conservation). Another less frequently seen utility on campus is a sensor faucet. These are currently only being used at buildings such as the Undergraduate Science Building. In addition to saving water, these faucets help stop the spread of germs and infectious diseases. Similarly, low-flow showerheads should also be considered, as much more water is wasted in showers. These low-flow showerheads reduce the gallons used per minute to 2.5 gallons or less.

These simple building solutions are already implemented in campus buildings such as the Dana Science Building, the Chemistry Building, and the Shapiro Undergraduate Library. The bathrooms in these buildings do not see as many people per day as most dorms. Specifically, these bathrooms are not used by 1,180 students multiple times per day, as the bathrooms in Mark Markley Hall are. In addition to using toilets and washing hands, students in dorms also take showers and brush their teeth. So installing faucet aerators and dual-flush toilet valves would significantly reduce water usage, save the university money, and lessen the effect of water waste on the environment.

This issue is especially pressing because when the University of Michigan remodeled Mosher-Jordan Residence Hall, it had a great opportunity to add these new faucets and toilet flush valves. But these cost and environment-saving measures were not taken. Figures 4, 5, and 6 (below) show the faucets and toilet flushes that were installed during the renovation—standard faucets and toilet flushers—which makes it safe to assume that the university will not install faucet aerators and dual-flush toilet valves in future Residence Hall.
renovations. The University of Michigan published an Energy and Water Conservation document that included the projects that would be incorporated in new buildings across campus. The water conservation projects include the following: dual flush water closets, ½ gpm aerators for lavatory faucets, and 2 gpm showerheads (Energy and Water Conservation). Despite these regulations, the aerators were only installed in Mosher-Jordan in bathrooms next to the Hill Dining Center; they are not installed in residential bathrooms, which are much more frequently used.

**Figures 4, 5, & 6.** Figure 4 shows a regular flowing faucet, which are the faucets implemented in Mosher-Jordan’s Residential bathrooms. Figure 5 shows a low-flow faucet, that is also a sensor faucet, which are implemented in the non-residential bathrooms at Mosher-Jordan. Figure 6 shows the standard toilet flush/valve that has been implemented in residential bathrooms. (Source: Elyssa Wiegand)

Not adding these features leaves water conservation up to the individual, and many individuals do not make good and careful choices about water usage. The problem is not always that people don’t care or are irresponsible. Instead, water conservation isn’t necessarily the top issue on the minds of college students. According to freshman Brittany Gordon, who lives in Markley, “If the sink automatically turned itself off, I would not need to leave the faucet on/running. I’m always in a hurry, and focusing on turning the sink on and off when I have to get to class isn’t my priority.” A low-flow faucet that also turns off each time your hands or toothbrush leave it would be ideal in any dorm situation.

Without these water conservation add-ons, water will continue to be used in wasteful, excessive amounts in University of Michigan residence halls. The water is simply being used up, and its continuous flow is not benefiting anyone at any point in the water cycle. The best way to solve the problem of excessive water use at the University of Michigan, without leaving the decision up to individuals, is to integrate new toilet, faucet, and shower fixtures into dormitory bathrooms. These implementations are simple and effective methods of saving water. As they have already been introduced into buildings on campus, they should be installed in the buildings that see more users each day. Introducing such simple utilities is non-invasive to the individuals that have to use them. No one will have to change the way they wash their hands or flush the toilet. No one will have to take the extra time or make a decision to save water. If these simple implementations are not integrated at the University of Michigan, 9,500 students living in 18 dorms across campus will continue to waste huge amounts of water each day. The University of Michigan should take further steps to protect the environment by installing these water conservation fixtures in all dorms by 2015.
Sources


Rubric Study

Rubric: a guide listing specific criteria for grading or scoring academic papers, projects, or tests

Study: to make a careful examination of

What is a rubric?

As the definition above explains, a rubric is a set of rules that shows how a paper, project or test is scored. These expectations are based on the conventions of the mode you’re writing in. For this assignment, you have to explain the problem and its solution. But if you were creating a website, you might be graded on your use of images and how you organized the pages.

How can a rubric help you?

Before writing an essay or creating a project, it’s important to see the rubric so you can meet the expectations of the person grading it. How can you do a good job if you don’t know what a good job looks like?

Rubric Study

Examine the Proposal Essay Rubric by doing the following things:

- Underline any verbs that you don’t understand.
  - The verbs are usually come right after the bullet and tell you what to do (analyze, include, define, employ)
- Circle any writing terms you’re not sure you understand. (conclusion, style, mechanics etc.)

Using the Rubric - Directions

With your neighbor or a small group of students, grade the sample proposal essay you read yesterday.

1. Review your annotations from yesterday on the sample proposal essay.
2. Discuss each bulleted item on the rubric as a group and come to some agreement about how the writer scored—advanced, on-target, or novice.
3. Highlight the description under each item that applies to the sample proposal (advanced, on-target, novice).
4. When you’ve finished reviewing each item, look at the highlights on your rubric. How did the writer do overall? Is the proposal essay as a whole advanced, on-target or novice?
5. Share your decision with the rest of the class.
### Sessions 6 and 7

| Essential Questions | • How do you generate solution possibilities for a proposal?  
• How do you decide if a writing topic is viable? |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|

#### Preparation

Gather copies of local newspapers and magazines and make a list of the local problems evident from newspaper headlines. In addition or alternately, you can prepare to use a projector and computer to show students the front pages of local (or national) online publications and newscasts. Some sites to consider include:

- [http://www.freep.com/localnews](http://www.freep.com/localnews)
- [http://spinalcolumnonline.com/](http://spinalcolumnonline.com/)

Make copies of the **What is Viability? Handout** and **Viability Anchor Charts**. Both are included after this session.

#### Teaching Point

To write a proposal, you must first determine what problem you will propose to solve. Brainstorming to **generate** topic ideas is an important step in the writing process. Next, writers must **select** a topic from their brainstormed list that is **viable** for the writing situation. A proposal is viable when 1.) the problem is clearly defined and there is evidence of it, 2.) the proposal has the potential to help the community, and 3.) potential solutions to the problem exist.

**Skills:**
- Brainstorming possible topics
- Selecting a viable topic given the writing situation

**Strategies:**
- Brainstorm individually and as a group
- Consult newspaper headlines for community problem ideas
- Define and perform the viability test on an identified problem

#### Active Engagement/Writer's Notebook

**Brainstorming – A Long List of Problems**

**a.) Introduce the teaching point:** To write a proposal, you must first determine what problem you will propose to solve. Brainstorming to **generate** topic ideas is an important step in the writing process.

**Initial problem list:** Have students think about the community problems they witness, experience, or hear about on a daily basis in their neighborhoods and cities. Ask them to record a list of all these problems in their writer’s notebook. They may need some help getting started, so give a few examples:
- Potholes in roads not fixed after the winter is over
- Graffiti on buildings downtown that goes unaddressed
- Pack of stray dogs roaming a particular neighborhood
- Bullying in school

**b.) Master List:** Have students share their list items and create a class master list of problems on the board. Stress that because you’re in the brainstorming phase, you’re not evaluating whether or not these problems are solvable. You’re just generating ideas.

**Newspaper Problems:** This activity can be done as a full class or in small groups. Using the copies/projections of the local newspapers, have students identify additional community problems. Model for the students how to pull community problems from a headline. They may pull community problems directly from headlines or a headline might spark a topic idea based on **inference**. For example,
- The headline “Troy holds off on library closing” points directly to the problem of multiple public libraries being closed in and around Detroit due to a massive decrease in tax revenue.
- Whereas the headline “1 arrested, 1 sought in elderly woman’s attack in Detroit” might prompt students to list neighborhood violence or burglary as a problem they are aware of.

**c.) Revise the Class Master List:** Add the problems generated from the newspaper to the master list.
What is Viability? And Viability Testing

a.) Introduce the teaching point: Writers must **select** a topic that is **viable** for the writing situation.

b.) Now that students have all these problems that are potential topics for the proposal essay, what do they do with them? Take them through the **What is Viability?** handout to answer this question.

c.) You will also use the **Viability Anchor Charts** during this part of the lesson.

### Viability Examples

- After discussing examples, have the students come up with examples of their own to assess their initial understanding of this word.

### You Try

- This part of the handout is probably best accomplished in pairs or small groups so students can bounce ideas off each other. Alternately, and as a time saver, you can generate dance themes as a class and identify the most viable ones.

### Viability with Writing Topics

- Discuss with your students what their criteria tend to be for selecting writing topics.
- Next, review the **Writing Topic Viability Anchor Chart**.
- Discuss how the students’ initial answers compare to the anchor chart.
- Review the **Proposal Essay Topic Viability Anchor Chart**.

### Viability Testing

- If you feel your students are grasping the concept of topic viability well, you can have them take the graffiti problem and put it to the test themselves as a class using the 3 criteria rather than reviewing the viability test on the handout.

### Let’s Practice

- This activity gives students a preview of the activity to come in which they narrow down topic possibilities.
- Working in pairs and trios will help students talk through the criteria and apply them to each topic.

### Revising the Master Problem List

- This is probably a long list to go through together, so consider dividing the students into groups and giving each group a portion of the list to evaluate.
- When the class comes back together, groups can report back on the problems they crossed off the list and explain why. As a class, agree on problems on the master list that are not viable because they don’t meet all the viability criteria.

### Independent Practice

### Students Perform the Viability Test

- Have students select the two problems that interest them most from the master list.
- Provide students with a notecard where they record their viability test one proposed problem on each side of the notecard.

#### Problem Viability Notecard

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evidence/effects of problem:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Causes of the problem:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible Solution(s):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How will solving this problem help the community?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Assessment

- Collect students’ viability test notecards. Assess whether for each problem they have:
  - selected a community problem that affects many people
- have clearly stated the problem
- have presented 1-3 pieces of evidence/effects of the problem
- can point to at least one cause of the problem
- the solution is plausible
What is Viability?

Viable - practical, feasible, usable, adaptable; able to live and grow.

Viability is a noun. The adjective form is viable.

Viability (noun): the ability to live and grow
Viable (adj.): practical, usable, adaptable.

What does viability have to do with writing?
Finding a viable topic for a writing task is one of the most important steps in the writing process. When you spend plenty of time brainstorming and pre-writing to figure out how well your topic fits the writing task, you’re more likely to produce a successful draft and finished product!

Let’s Look at Viability Examples:

Hit Songs - When signing recording artists to a record label, record executives have to decide if a singer’s music is viable in the market. Will teenagers buy the songs on iTunes? Will they watch their videos on Youtube? Songs by Taylor Swift, Justin Bieber, 50 Cent, Beyonce, the Black Eyed Peas, and Katie Perry were labeled as viable hits by record executives. The executives thought the music would be viable (popular, able to live and grow in the music industry) and make a lot of money. And they were right!

Movie Stars - When a film company decides to make a blockbuster Hollywood action movie like Iron Man, X-Men, or Transformers, they cast the major roles based on which actors will make the movie a success. Who will draw the most people to buy tickets? Who is the most viable star? They want to hire an action hero actor like Ben Affleck or Angelina Jolie.

T.V. Show Plots - Think of your favorite television show. When the television scriptwriters put together an episode of that show, they must come up with an interesting plot that holds your attention. Interesting things have to happen! The writers must create a viable plot that will make the episode a success. If the plot is unrealistic, boring because not enough happens, or uninteresting to the audience, you’ll change the channel. Each plot they write must for viable to be turned into an episode that is produced, filmed, and broadcast on TV.

You Try
There’s a school dance coming up, and you have to help devise a theme that most of the students will enjoy. With a partner or in a small group, come up with a viable theme idea for the dance. Your viability criteria is that most students will like the theme.

Theme:

Possible decorations:

D.J. Playlist for this theme:

Viability with Writing Topics
How do you decide whether a writing topic is viable when you have to write an essay? List your criteria below:

1.
2.
3.
Examine the **Writing Topic Viability Anchor Chart**. How are these criteria similar to and different from yours?

**Viable Writing Topics are** ones that the writer:
- can make an argument for
- has enough to say to engage the reader
- thinks the reader will care about
- can find enough evidence to support a claim regarding
- knows will fulfill the expectations of the rubric

In this lesson, we are asking the question

*Is a particular problem you select a viable topic for a proposal essay?*

To answer this question, you have to figure out if your topic (which for this writing task is a problem with a proposed solution) can **live and grow** in the form of a proposal essay.

Now check out the **Proposal Essay Topic Viability Anchor Chart**.

1.) The problem is clearly defined and there is evidence of it.
2.) Potential solutions to the problem exist.
3.) The proposal has the potential to help the community.

So the goal is to pick a problem that can fulfill the 3 criteria above.

**Performing the Viability Test**

What does it look like when we apply these criteria to a possible proposal essay topic (problem)?

**Example Topic:** **Graffiti and tagging in the downtown area**

1. The problem is clearly defined and there is evidence of it.
   a. What is the specific problem?
      - Graffiti (cause) is leading to a decline in the appearance of and business in the downtown area (effects).
   b. What evidence do we have that this problem exists?
      - Graffiti and tags on most city blocks
      - Doesn’t get cleaned up, which encourages more graffiti and the decline of a neighborhood.
      - Several downtown shops have closed in the last year.

2. Potential solutions to the problem exist.
   - Create a volunteer graffiti clean up crew
   - Commit funds to creating a city graffiti clean up crew
   - Increase police efforts to prevent and arrest graffiti artists
   - Give graffiti artists another creative outlet—create a mural on a downtown building, get apprenticeships with local artists
   - Educate students in schools about how graffiti harms the community

3. The proposal has the potential to help the community. *(Look at the current effects of the problem.)*
   - Decrease crime
   - Improve the look of the downtown area
   - Less graffiti could attract new businesses
   - Citizens will feel safer about going downtown

*Is this a viable topic? YES!*
Let’s Practice

In the chart below, circle the more viable topic for a proposal essay in each pair. You may not know what the possible solutions for a problem are, but you can probably guess if you’d be able to research these solutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1. a. The middle school students want to change their school mascot.</th>
<th>b. The dropout rate at the local high school increased by 10% last year.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. a. A large percentage of children in Somalia (a country in Africa) are suffering from malnutrition.</td>
<td>b. It’s extremely hot in Africa during the summer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. a. The last album by Miley Cyrus didn’t sell very well and her popularity decreased.</td>
<td>b. 33% of children ages 3-17 do not have Internet access at home.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Viability Anchor Charts

**Viable**- practical, feasible, usable, adaptable; able to live and grow.

Writing Topic Viability

A viable writing topic is one that the writer...

- can make an argument for.
- can find enough evidence to support a claim regarding.
- has enough to say about to engage the reader.
- thinks the reader will care about.
- knows will fulfill the expectations of the rubric.
Proposal Essay Topic Viability: 3 Criteria

The **problem** is clearly defined and there is evidence of it.

Potential **solutions** to the problem exist.

The **proposal** has the potential to help the community.
# Session 8

## Essential Questions
- How do you use questions to drive research?
- How do you find information relevant to your topic on the web?

## Preparation
During this session, students will reflect on the process they undertook to land on a topic with the goal of understanding what about the brainstorming process really worked for them. Presumably, this reflection will help them with future writing tasks. The rest of the session will be spent getting ready to research. If you’ve already spent considerable time on research skills this year, you can probably skip parts of this session. Items to review and copy in preparation for this session include:

- Topic Selection Reflection Handout
- Driving Questions and Search Terms List Handout
- Google Search Tips and Tricks Anchor Chart
- [http://www.google.com/support/websearch/](http://www.google.com/support/websearch/)

The handouts are included after this session.

## Teaching Point
Proposal writing requires thorough research to define evidence of the problem, the problem’s causes and effects, as well as its solutions. To perform research efficiently and accurately, writers must know how to ask good questions and identify key search terms.

**Skills:**
- Asking effective research questions to deepen inquiry into a problem.
- Translating research questions into search terms.
- Revising search terms based on initial search results.

**Strategies:**
- Practice developing research questions.
- Identify key search terms that address driving questions.
- Produce multiple search terms.
- Revise search term list based on initial searches.

**Resources:**
- *Internet Literacy grade 6-8* by Heather Wolpert-Gawron

## Independent Practice
**Select a Topic**
- Return the Problem Viability Notecards to your students. Ask them to select a topic based on their preferences and your feedback.
- Consider allowing students to have a mini-conference with their neighbor if they need to talk through this decision. In the 6-minute mini-conference, students would explain to their parent the pros and cons of selecting either topic.

**Topic Selection Reflection**
- Give students time to then reflect on the process of selecting a proposal topic using the *Topic Selection Reflection handout*.
- Encourage them to write in complete sentences and use the terminology they’ve used in the unit thus far.

## Active Engagement
**Good Writing Comes from Good Questions**

**Introduce the Teaching Point:** Proposal writing requires thorough research to define evidence of the problem, the problem’s causes and effects, as well as its solutions. To perform research efficiently and accurately, writers must know how to ask good questions and identify key search terms.

Explain the following to your students:
- Good pieces of writing explore a pressing and relevant question:
  - Why is the polar ice cap melting?
  - What should be done about unemployment in America?
  - Why is Harry Potter such a popular series?
- By exploring an interesting question (implied or explicit), you further engage your reader because they want the find out answers to your question.
- So it’s important to understand what question you think you’re trying to answer as you
research and draft any piece of writing you undertake. For your proposal essay, this question will determine what you search for as you seek information on the Internet.

**Defining Driving Questions and Search Terms**

Use the [Driving Questions and Search Terms List Handout](#) to walk students through developing questions for their proposal and how to pull search terms from these questions.

**Finding Answers on the Web: Effective Searching**

- If you’ve already worked with your students this year on conducting effective searches, you can skip to the next session.
- Consider modeling searches about a topic using a computer and projector to show how to search using various Google tools and how to refine your search terms based on the results you get and information you pick up from initial reading.

**Refining Your Search**

- Give students time to search on the Internet using their search terms.
- Make clear that they’re not concerned with finding the most credible sources at this point. They’re doing some more reading on their topic to discover more and better terms that will help them research their problem’s cause, effect, and solutions.
- Site Skimming tip: pay attention to headings, subheadings and terms repeated from site to site.
- Wikipedia is a good place to begin.
- End the session with students recording their revised list of search terms on the [Driving Questions and Search Terms Handout](#).

**Assessment**

Collect students’ [Topic Selection Reflection](#) pieces as well as their [Driving Questions & Search Term List Handout](#). Use the rubric below to perform a formative assessment of students’ current understanding of developing key questions and devising search terms.

**Formative Assessment Rubric – Driving Questions & Search Terms List Handout**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>On-Target</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Novice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Questions</strong></td>
<td>- Overarching question is narrow and detailed</td>
<td>- Overarching question is narrow and detailed</td>
<td>- Overarching question adequately defines topic</td>
<td>- Overarching question is quite broad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Sub-questions outline multiple causes, effects, and solutions.</td>
<td>- Sub-questions begin to define causes, effects, and solutions.</td>
<td>- No sub-questions.</td>
<td>- No sub-questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Search Terms</strong></td>
<td>Revised search terms display significant new understanding of the topic.</td>
<td>Revised search terms show new learning about the topic.</td>
<td>Revised search terms include a few new words or phrases relevant to the topic.</td>
<td>Original and revised search terms are the same.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Picking a great topic for a writing task is tough and important. Reflect on the work you’ve done generating ideas and selecting a problem to better understand what you learned during the pre-writing process.

1. When did you feel most confused during the idea generation (brainstorming) process? How come?

2. Which part of the idea generation process most helped you come up with a possible problem to write about in your proposal? Explain how/why.

3. If your topic selection process were a kind of weather, what would it be? (For example- sun showers, tornado, hurricane, tsunami, a hot cloudless day, snow.) Why?

4. Explain why you’re interested in the problem you’ve selected to write a proposal on.

5. What about this writing task still confuses you?
Driving Questions & Search Terms List

These questions will help you figure out what direction to go in as you research your topic on the Internet. They “drive” your research.

**Overarching Question:**
This question will most likely involve seeking a solution to your problem. Make it as specific as possible.

Example: How do we eliminate the graffiti problem in downtown Detroit?

Yours:

**Questions that Define the Problem:**

*Cause(s)*

Examples

- Who is putting up the graffiti?
- Are only certain sections of the city affected? Why?
- What happens to graffiti artists who get caught?
- How is the amount of graffiti in a city related to poverty or unemployment?

Yours:

*Effect(s)*

Examples

- What is the relationship between graffiti and crime/violence/drug activity?
- How does graffiti affect business in a city?
- How much time and money does it take to clean up the graffiti?

Yours:

**Questions that Seek Solutions:**

Examples

- How is graffiti cleaned up in Detroit?
- How is it prevented in other cities?
- Have these solutions been effective?
Your Search Terms and Phrases

1. Examine the questions you developed above. Underline all the keywords and phrases that appear in them.
2. Use these words/phrases to start your list below.
3. Next, add any other words to your search terms and phrases that you believe could be relevant to your topic.
4. Finally, while performing some initial research, revise your list to reflect the new words and phrases you’ve discovered that are important to your topic, and cross off any items that you have decided won’t uncover important information.

Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Detroit graffiti</th>
<th>Effects of graffiti (in Detroit)</th>
<th>Solutions to graffiti in cities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tagging</td>
<td>Relationship between graffiti and crime/drug activity</td>
<td>How to clean up graffiti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graffiti artists</td>
<td>Punishment for graffiti in Michigan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graffiti and poverty/unemployment</td>
<td>Cost of cleaning up graffiti</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yours:
# Finding Answers From Credible Sources

**Session 9**

## Essential Question
How do you know if a source is credible?

## Preparation
Review the Credible Sources Anchor Chart. Select web sources that will help you illustrate each of the items on the chart. Here are some possibilities:

**Type of Source**
- Website: [http://www.unwater.org/](http://www.unwater.org/)

**Sponsoring Institution**

**Author**
- No author but credible sponsoring institution: [http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1890623,00.html](http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1890623,00.html)

Make copies of the Web Source Credibility Chart. Using the same topic you used to model research skills during yesterday’s session, select 3-5 sources that vary in their levels of credibility. Have them ready to share with students for evaluation by putting the links on your website or emailing them to your students. Examples using graffiti as the topic/problem:

- **High credibility:** [http://www.toronto.ca/graffiti/abatement_program.htm](http://www.toronto.ca/graffiti/abatement_program.htm)
- **Moderate credibility:** [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Graffiti](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Graffiti)

## Teaching Point
Writers must take a trial and error approach with research as they find sources, determine their credibility, gain new knowledge about their topic, and further define the information and evidence they must gather. The credibility of sources can be determined by type of source, author, sponsoring institution, and cross-referencing facts.

**Skills:**
- Determining the credibility of web sources based on URLs, authors, and cross-referencing facts.
- Using an Internet search engine to perform research.

**Strategies:**
- Provide students with 3-5 sources on the same topic and have them evaluate their credibility based on a specified list of components.
- Practice searching and refining terms based on search engine results.
- Have students search and select one credible and one non-credible source about their problem.

**Resource:** *Internet Literacy grade 6-8* by Heather Wolpert-Gawron

## Active Engagement
Optional: Using Evernote.com

As your students embark on collecting research for their proposals, Evernote.com is a fantastic place for them to keep and organize their findings. If your students don’t already use this web-based platform and would like to, provide a 10 minute intro to Evernote, explaining:
- the purpose and benefits of Evernote
- how to save text and image from the web
- how to organize it into notebooks

**What Makes a Source Credible?**

**Introduce the Teaching Point:** Writers must take a trial and error approach with research as they find sources, determine their credibility, gain new knowledge about their topic, and further define
the information and evidence they must gather. The credibility of sources can be determined by type of source, author, sponsoring institution, and cross-referencing facts.

Review the Credible Sources Anchor Chart with students using sample sites, blogs, and wikis to illustrate the aspects of a web source they should examine to determine their credibility.

**Rating Sources Based on Credibility**

**Set Up**

This activity is ideally done in a computer lab or with students at classroom computer stations or on their laptops. They will be performing research on their own later in the class period, so having computer access all period long is ideal. If you don’t have access to that many computers, another option is to use a single computer with a projector and to do this as a full class activity.

**Activity**

Put your students in groups of 4-5 students. Present the class with 3-5 sources about the same topic. (You could throw in a source that is credible but not relevant and see what they do with it—just for a little challenge.)

Have students evaluate the credibility of the web sources using the Web Source Credibility Chart.

**Full Class Share and Discussion**

Have the class share their results. Any easy way to do this is to have groups record their rankings on a chart on the board (see below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
<th>Group 3</th>
<th>Group 4</th>
<th>Group 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Have the class assess which sources were consistently considered most and least credible. Discuss why groups gave sources the ratings they did.

**Independent Practice**

**Students Search for and Save Sources**

Give students time to search for sources about their chosen topic and decide whether these sources are credible. All possible sources can be saved in Evernote.com or their bookmarks.

**Assessment**

Circulate throughout the class period and ask students to share the credible sources they’ve found. Also ask them to share/describe a source they discovered that they deemed not credible and explain why.

As a form of reflection, in the last 5 minutes of class, consider having your students explain to their neighbor why they selected particular sources and discarded others. Having to articulate these decisions to someone else clarifies thinking and can raise questions that need to be addressed as a class. Allow time for such questions that all students would benefit from hearing the answers to.
Credible Sources Anchor Chart
How do you know if a Web source is credible? Look at these 5 components:

Type of Source – web site, blog or wiki?
- **Website** - more static so the information doesn’t change over time. Look at who the sponsoring institution is.
- **Blog** - can provide good information, but you must know who the author is and whether s/he is an expert/reliable source.
- **Wiki** - authored and edited by multiple people. Determine who they are and what their purpose and expertise is.

Sponsoring Institution – the company, organization, or university/college who sponsors this site
- Different institutions have different reasons for providing information. Consider their purpose before using a site’s information.
- Examine the URL (web address) to determine the purpose of the site
  - .com – commercial> to sell services
  - .gov – government institution> to inform the public
  - .edu – educational institution> to share research
  - .org – non-profit organization
  - .net - network

Author – the writer of the page or article
- What are this person’s credentials?
- Is s/he an expert on this subject?

Cross-Referencing Facts
- Compare the facts from this source to a credible source. Do they match up?
# Web Source Credibility Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credibility Rank</th>
<th>Source A Name</th>
<th>Type of Source</th>
<th>Sponsoring Institution &amp; URL</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Cross-Referencing Facts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credibility Rank</th>
<th>Source B Name</th>
<th>Type of Source</th>
<th>Sponsoring Institution &amp; URL</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Cross-Referencing Facts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credibility Rank</th>
<th>Source C Name</th>
<th>Type of Source</th>
<th>Sponsoring Institution &amp; URL</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Cross-Referencing Facts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credibility Rank</th>
<th>Source D Name</th>
<th>Type of Source</th>
<th>Sponsoring Institution &amp; URL</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Cross-Referencing Facts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credibility Rank</td>
<td>Source E Name</td>
<td>Type of Source</td>
<td>Sponsoring Institution &amp; URL</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Cross-Referencing Facts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Session 10

**Essential Questions**
- Once you have a credible source, what do you do with it?
- How do you paraphrase evidence for use in a text?

**Preparation**
Select a short article or part of an article about a community problem that requires a solution. You will use the article to show students how to sift and sort information when researching.

**Prepare copies of:**
- *Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Summarizing* handout
- *7 Steps to Effective Paraphrasing* Anchor Chart
  Both are included after this session.

**Teaching Point**
Once a writer has collected multiple credible sources, s/he must decide what information from each source is relevant and how it will be used in the proposal. This requires the writer to categorize source information based on the parts of a proposal and how the information will act as evidence for a particular component of the piece. Paraphrasing is one way to present key information from a credible source.

**Skills:**
- Reading sources for information relevant to research questions.
- Categorizing information based on the components of a proposal.
- Paraphrasing relevant passages from credible sources.

**Strategies:**
- Categorize the information into problem definition, cause, effect, or solution.
- Practice reading a source and pulling out relevant information for a specified community problem and its accompanying research questions.
- Have students practice this process using a source for their chosen community problem.
- Practice paraphrasing a key passage from a source.

**Active Engagement**
**Sifting and Sorting**

**Introduce the Teaching Point:** Once a writer has collected multiple credible sources, s/he must decide what information from each source is relevant and how it will be used in the proposal. This requires the writer to categorize source information based on the parts of a proposal and how the information will act as evidence for a particular component of the piece.

- Introduce an article or part of an article that you will read together as a class to sift and sort the information.
- Provide the students with the driving questions for the research on this topic.
- Read through the article paragraph-by-paragraph using a projector (or have the students do this in groups and revisit as a full class) and highlight relevant information into the following categories.

**Categories of information**
- Cause - green
- Effect - red
- Evidence of the Problem - yellow
- Solutions - blue

- Have students put a star next to the passages that they determine to be the most relevant and important based on the research questions you’ve provided them.
- Show students how they can then paste the best passages of a particular color into a note in Evernote or into a section of a Word document to group like information together.
- Note the importance of keeping track of source information so sources can be cited.
- Discuss to Learn
  - Were there many types/colors of information in this article/section? Why or why not?
  - How did you decide what was most important from the article that you would want to use in a proposal?
  - What would a next step be once you had read and categorized information from all your sources? (Discuss re-ordering the info in each category/color.)

**What Is Paraphrasing and How Do You Do It?**

**Introduce the Teaching Point:** Paraphrasing is one way to present key information from a credible source.
- First, take your students through the **Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Summarizing** handout, which discusses the difference between the three and shows a paraphrased exampled.
- Next, explain the **7 Steps for Paraphrasing Anchor Chart**.
- Return to the **Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Summarizing Handout** and paraphrase the selected passage either in small groups or as a full class. Alternately, use a passage from the article the class just read. Have the students discuss their word choice, organization, and cutting of phrases and sentences in their final paraphrase.

**Independent Practice**

**Practice Paraphrasing**
- Have your students select a passage from one of their sources that they would like to paraphrase.
- On one side of a large notecard or half a sheet of paper, have students record the following:
  - Their chosen problem for the proposal
  - A verbatim quote from a credible source that they deem important for their proposal
  - Source information
- On the other side of the notecard/paper, have students
  - Paraphrase the quotation
  - Explain why/how this quotation is important to their proposal.
    - What section does it belong in? (general purpose)
    - What driving question does it address? (more specific purpose)

**Assessment**

Review the students’ practice with paraphrasing using the rubric below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paraphrasing</th>
<th><strong>Advanced</strong></th>
<th><strong>On-target</strong></th>
<th><strong>Developing</strong></th>
<th><strong>Novice</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Selects key points, uses new word choice, organization of ideas, and sentence structure.</td>
<td>Selects key points, uses new word choice, organization of ideas, or sentence structure.</td>
<td>Selects some key points but struggles to generate new word choice, sentence structure or organization.</td>
<td>Struggles to identify key points and/or alter word choice, sentence structure and organization.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explanation</td>
<td>Identifies purpose of quote. Discusses in detail the relevance of the quote to a driving question.</td>
<td>Identifies purpose of quote. Connects quote to driving question.</td>
<td>Identifies either the purpose of the quote or the driving question it connects to.</td>
<td>Unsure of quote’s purpose and related driving question.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quoting and Paraphrasing Handout

How Is Paraphrasing Different from Summarizing?

Quotations must be identical to the original and use only a small passage from the source. They must match the source document word for word and must be attributed to the original author.

Paraphrasing involves putting a passage from a source into your own words. A paraphrase must also be attributed to the original source. Paraphrased material is usually shorter than the original passage because it condenses the original passage.

Summarizing involves putting the main idea(s) into your own words, including only the main point(s). Once again, it is necessary to give credit for the summarized ideas to the original source. Summaries are significantly shorter than the original because they take a broad overview of the source.

Sample Paraphrase

From the “water crisis” page of http://www.worldwatercouncil.org/

Original Passage

“When the world’s population tripled in the 20th century, the use of renewable water resources has grown six-fold. Within the next fifty years, the world population will increase by another 40 to 50%. This population growth - coupled with industrialization and urbanization - will result in an increasing demand for water and will have serious consequences on the environment.”

Weak Paraphrase of Passage – What makes it weak?

The number of people in the world tripled in the 20th century, but the use of renewable water resources has grown six-fold. In fifty years, the world population will grow by another 40 to 50%. This growth will result in an increasing demand for water and will have serious consequences on the environment.

Good Paraphrase of Passage – What makes it good?

Subject, purpose, importance: evidence of the problem, causes (population growth and increased water use)

The world water crisis is a result of population growth and using more “renewable water resources.” There are three times more people living on the planet than there were a century ago, using six times more water. This massive water usage spells trouble for the environment, especially because the global population is expected to grow by 40-50% in the next fifty years. (www.watercouncil.org)

You Try!

Paraphrase the passage below from http://www.un.org. Don’t forget to use the 7 Steps for Paraphrasing.

“According to the United Nations, every day 4,400 children under the age of 5 die around the world, having fallen sick because of unclean water and sanitation. In fact, five times as many children die each year of diarrhea as of HIV/AIDS. A third of the world’s population is enduring some form of water scarcity. One in every six human beings has no access to clean water within a kilometer of their homes. Half of all people in
developing countries have no access to proper sanitation. Water is critical for life and for livelihoods. Yet billions of people suffer from disease, poverty and a lack of dignity and opportunity because they have no access to this basic resource.”

Subject, purpose, importance:

Your paraphrase:
7 Steps for Paraphrasing

1. **Reread** the original passage multiple times to determine what it means.

2. **Put away** the original passage.

3. **Write** your paraphrase on a note card, in a Word document or in another online research tool.
   - change the order of ideas
   - change the structure of sentences
   - use synonyms for key words

4. **Title** your paraphrase with key words or phrases to indicate the subject, purpose, and importance of your paraphrase.

5. **Check** your paraphrase against the original passage to make sure that your version accurately expresses all the important information.

6. **Put quotation marks** around any terms or phrases you lifted exactly from the source.

7. **Record the citation information** below the paraphrase so you can create a parenthetic citation or endnote if you use this information in your piece.
### Session 11

#### Essential Questions
- How do you write a problem statement for a proposal?
- How do you determine your audience for a proposal?
- How does audience affect tone and diction?

#### Teaching Point
Proposals must have clear statements of the problem that outline the cause(s) and effect(s). The language a writer uses will vary depending on who his/her audience is.

**Skills:**
- Devise a problem statement.
- Determine the primary and secondary audiences for a proposal.

**Strategies:**
- Model problem statements for community-based problems.
- Define proposal audience: the person/people who can solve or assist in solving the problem.
- Model differences in language depending on audience using one of the model problem statements.
- Based on their initial research, students define who the primary and secondary audiences are that can solve the problem or assist with the solution.
- Students draft problem statements for their intended audience defining their problem’s cause(s) and effect(s).

### Session 12

#### Essential Questions
- How do you draft to define cause and effect?
- How do you incorporate your research into a draft?

#### Teaching Point
The first half of a proposal must define the problem and explore cause and effect to provide evidence of the problem. This persuades the audience of the seriousness and implications of the problem. Incorporating research into a proposal involves paraphrasing and/or quoting sources. This evidence from outside sources strengthens the argument of the proposal.

**Skills:**
- Articulating cause and effect.
- Paraphrasing, quoting, and using proper citation format.
- Connecting information found in research to a specific point in a proposal.

**Strategies:**
- Review the parts of a proposal.
- Explain how to incorporate a quotation – lead-in sentence, quotation format, analysis/explanation.
- Encourage students to begin drafting to define cause and effect by using the question: How do we know this problem exists?
- Provide a strategy for how to incorporate evidence found during the research phase. Students should have the research they put in the cause and effect categories close at hand.
### Session 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Questions</th>
<th>How do you draft a solution?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point</strong></td>
<td>The solution portion of a proposal essay can be multi-part or offer multiple solutions to address all the effects of the problem. Giving evidence of how other people/communities have employed similar solutions gives a writer’s argument more credibility.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Skills:**         | • Articulating a multi-part solution.  
                      • Explaining why a proposed solution is feasible.  
                      • Paraphrasing, quoting, and using proper citation format.  
                      • Connecting information found in research to a specific point in a proposal. |
| **Strategies:**     | • Revisit what makes a solution feasible.  
                      • Reinforce the benefits of providing multi-part or multiple solutions that address all the effects of the problem by revisiting a model.  
                      • Revisit paraphrasing and quoting from sources as needed. |

### Session 14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Questions</th>
<th>How do you revise a rough draft?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point</strong></td>
<td>After writers complete a draft, they revisit what they have written to see if it makes sense, needs to be re-organized and addresses the target audience. Revision is essential to good writing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Skills:**         | • Analyze two versions of the same text (preferably a sample proposal) and identify differences.  
                      • Determine how changes to a draft improve an argument. |
| **Strategies:**     | • Compare an early and a finalized draft of the same proposal. Have students identify/highlight the differences in the draft. Look at:  
                      o Content  
                      o Structure  
                      o Diction and style  
                      • Discuss how the changes improve the final draft. |

### Session 15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Questions</th>
<th>How do you provide effective feedback to a peer about a proposal?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Point</strong></td>
<td>Writers ask for constructive criticism from other writers in order to determine how to best revise their pieces. This feedback can come from peers who carefully and respectfully critique another student’s writing. This feedback is then used to revise the piece to improve on content, organization, and argumentation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Skills:**         | • Praise effective aspects of another writer’s proposal.  
                      • Identify issues with the argument, content and structure in another student’s work. |
| **Strategies:**     | • Define helpful and respectful feedback.  
                      • Perform a role-play or play a video to illustrate constructive and unconstructive feedback.  
                      • Students pair up and read each other’s proposals and give feedback using a critiquing handout as a guideline.  
                      • Have students devise a revision plan based on the feedback received. |
### Session 16 and 17

**Essential Questions**  
How do you revise a rough draft?

**Teaching Point**  
After writers complete a draft, they revisit what they have written to see if it makes sense, needs to be re-organized and addresses the target audience. Revision is essential to good writing. Conferencing with another writer or the teacher can be helpful in devising and carrying out a revision plan.

**Skills:**  
- Explain the concept of a revision plan.  
- Articulate questions or struggles with the assignment that the teacher can address in conference.

**Strategies:**  
- Conference with students in small groups or individually depending on what time and class size allows.  
- Students use independent work time to revise and perform additional research as needed.

### Session 18

**Essential Questions**  
- What is the difference between drafting, revision, and editing?  
- What steps were effective and ineffective for you during this writing process?

**Teaching Point**  
The last step that writers take before sending off a piece of writing is to edit it to catch all the small grammatical errors. Small grammatical and punctuation errors can trip a reader up, making your argument less clear. Reflecting on the writing process helps writers refine their process for future writing projects.

**Skills:**  
- Distinguish between revision and editing.  
- Identify particular grammatical and formatting issues in one’s own and other students’ writing.  
- Reflect on the writing process.

**Strategies:**  
- Review key editing points.  
- Have students edit and peer edit (as time allows).  
- Read a sample reflection piece and discuss what students are expected to include in their own reflection pieces.

**Post-Unit Assessment**  
Students turn in their final proposals as the post-unit assessment.