



Backwards Planning for Success with Writing with the new California Common Core Standards

Opinion/Argument Writing Packet Grades 3-6



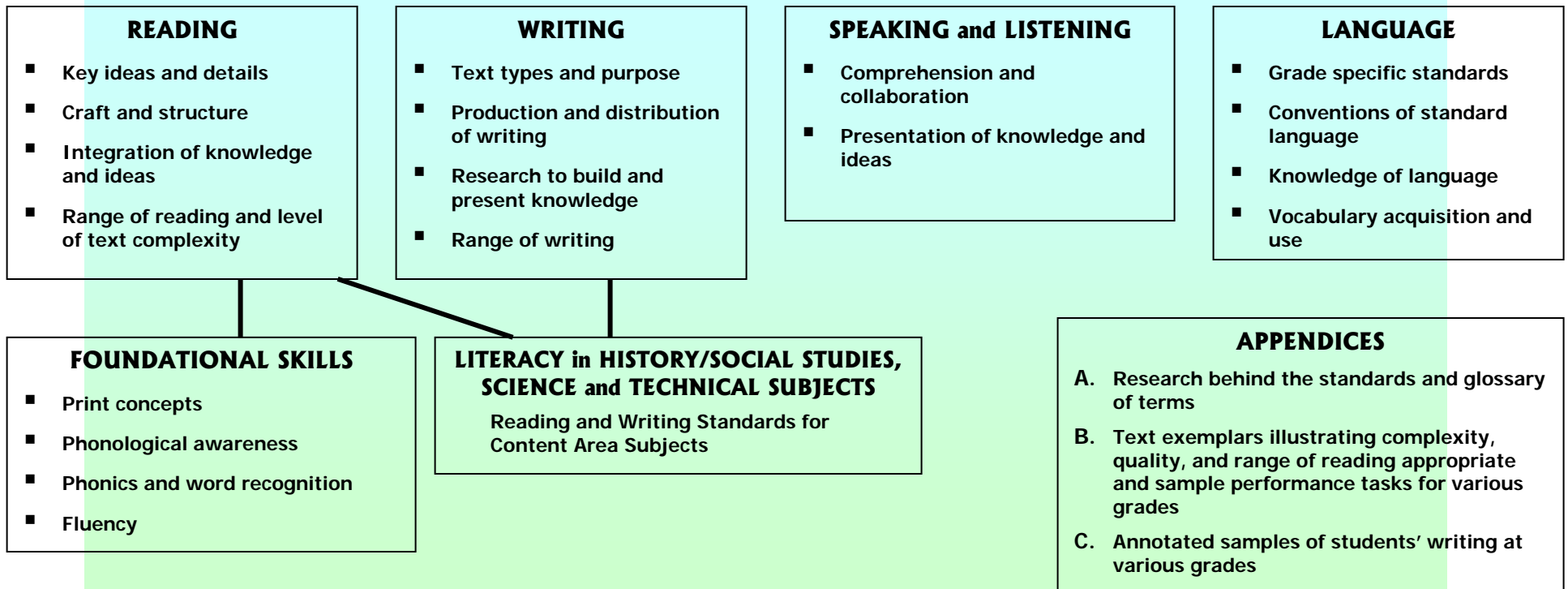
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Included are Sections from Backwards Planning for Success with Writing Handbook ©2011 Charlotte Knox ♦ knoxeducation.com

The New California Common Core Standards (CCCS)

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards Strands Grade Specific K-12



This version adapted from <http://gomaisa.com>

College and Career Readiness: Standards for Writing

Text Types and Purposes

| Text Type | Anchor Standards | In My Classroom |
|---------------------------------|---|-----------------|
| Opinion/ Argument | 1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence. | |
| Informative/ Explanatory | 2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content. | |
| Narratives | 3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences. | |

College and Career Readiness: Standards for Writing

Production and Distribution of Writing

| Anchor Standards | In My Classroom |
|---|-----------------|
| 4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. | |
| 5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach. | |
| 6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others. | |

College and Career Readiness: Standards for Writing

Research to Build Knowledge

| Anchor Standards | In My Classroom |
|--|-----------------|
| <p>7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.</p> | |
| <p>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.</p> | |
| <p>9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p> | |
| <h3>Range of Writing</h3> | |
| <p>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 audiences.</p> | |

What is an Argument?

An argument is a claim supported by evidence.

Arguments are used for many purposes— to change the reader's point of view, to bring about some action of the reader's part, or to ask the reader to accept the writer's explanation or evaluation of a concept, issue or problem.

What is an argument???

An argument is a reasoned, logical way of demonstrating that the writer's position, belief, or conclusion is valid.

In English/Language Arts, students make claims about the worth or meaning of a literary work or works. They defend their interpretations or judgments with evidence from the text(s) they are reading about.

Opinion/Argument Standards – K-12 Progression

Progression of Opinion to Argument Writing

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Kindergarten | Compose opinion pieces State an <i>opinion</i> or <i>preference</i> |
| Grades 1-2 | Write opinion pieces Introduce <i>topic, opinion, reason, closure</i> |
| Grades 3-5 | Write opinion pieces on topics Support <i>point of view with reasons and information</i> |
| Grades 6-8 | Write arguments to support claims <i>Clear reasons and relevant evidence</i> |
| Grades 9-12 | Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts <i>Valid reasoning, relevant and sufficient evidence</i> |

Persuasion vs. Argument

| Persuasion | Argument |
|---|---|
| Attempts to convince the reader to accept a thesis or truth . | Attempts to convince the reader to accept a claim as truth. |
| Appeals to the credibility, character, or authority of the writer (ethos). | Focuses on evidence (logos). |
| Is often grounded more in feelings (pathos) than facts. | Is grounded more in facts, data, and logic . |
| Is often associated with speeches and frequently requires listeners/readers to take some sort of action to remediate the issue. | Requires critical reading of the text(s); may include evidence from other sources. |
| | Addresses counterclaims fairly in order to present a complete argument. |

Opinion/Argument Writing and College and Career Readiness

Michelle Karns, Education Consultant

Writing logical arguments and opinions are an important form of college- and career-readiness. The Common Core Standards introduce today's educator to a unique definition for "opinion" and "argumentative" writing. This is a change from the typical use where the terms are used to describe the act of persuasion. Within the Common Core Standards the distinction is made that "logical arguments should convince the audience with the perceived merit and reasonableness of the claims and proofs offered" rather than to persuade using "either the emotions the writer evokes in the audience or the character or credentials of the writer." Opinion/argument writing includes speeches, editorials, reviews, proposals, letters, advertisements, and any sharing of a discrete opinion.

Writing an argument requires sharing an opinion "persuasively" and then documenting the argument with informational text validating and verifying the position taken. The importance of argument in college and careers is well articulated by Joseph M. Williams and Lawrence McEnerney (n.d.) of the University of Chicago Writing Program. When explaining to new college students the differences between high school and college writing, Williams and McEnerney define argument as "a serious and focused conversation among people who are intensely interested in getting to the bottom of things cooperatively." English and education professor Gerald Graff (2003) writes that "argument literacy" is fundamental to being educated. He maintains that college is an "argument culture," that students are not prepared for in their K-12 schools. He further states that K-12 educators should "teach conflicts" so that students are able to use, understand, and engage in argument (both oral and written) when they enter college. Graff claims that because argument is not standard in most school curricula, only 20 percent of those who enter college are prepared to write a persuasive argument and substantiate their argument.

Neil Postman (1997) calls argument the soul of an education because it forces a writer to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of multiple perspectives. When teachers ask students to consider two or more perspectives, students think critically and assess their own thinking while anticipating opposing positions. When writing to persuade, a common strategy is to appeal to the credibility or authority of the writer. When writers "credentialize", the reader is more likely to believe what they say. Another strategy is to appeal to the reader's self-interest, sense of identity, or emotions. A logical argument, however, convinces the audience because of the merit of proof offered rather than the emotions the writing evoked or the credentials of the writer. The Common Core Standards places high value on writing logical arguments as a vital aspect of college- and career-readiness.

Opinion/Argument Writing in the new Common Core Standards

(In the California Common Core Standards, it is "Opinion Writing Grades K-5, and then "Argument Writing" in grades 6 and up.)

Text Type and Purposes

| Grade | # | Standard |
|-------|-------|---|
| K | W 1. | Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose opinion pieces in which they tell a reader the topic or the name of the book they are writing about and state an opinion or preference about the topic or book (e.g., <i>My favorite book is...</i>). |
| 1 | W 1. | Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or name the book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply a reason for the opinion, and provide some sense of closure. |
| 2 | W 1. | Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply reasons that support the opinion, use linking words (e.g., because, and, also) to connect opinion and reasons, and provide a concluding statement or section. |
| 3 | W 1a. | Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons. Introduce the topic or text they are writing about, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure that lists reasons. |
| | W 1b. | Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons. Provide reasons that support the opinion. |
| | W 1c. | Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons. Use linking words and phrases (e.g., <i>because, therefore, since, for example</i>) to connect opinion and reasons. |
| | W 1d. | Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons. Provide a concluding statement or section. |
| 4 | W 1a. | Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information. Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which related ideas are grouped to support the writer's purpose. |
| | W 1b. | Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information. Provide reasons that are supported by facts and details. |
| | W 1c. | Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information. Link opinion and reasons using words and phrases (e.g., <i>for instance, in order to, in addition</i>). |
| | W 1d. | Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information. Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented. |
| 5 | W 1a. | Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information. Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which ideas are logically grouped to support the writer's purpose. |
| | W 1b. | Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information. Provide logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details. |
| | W 1c. | Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information. Link opinion and reasons using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., <i>consequently, specifically</i>). |
| | W 1d. | Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information. Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented. |

Opinion/Argument Writing in the new Common Core Standards

(In the California Common Core Standards, it is "Opinion Writing Grades K-5, and then "Argument Writing" in grades 6 and up.)

Text Type and Purposes

| Grade | # | Standard |
|-------|-------|---|
| 6 | W 1a. | Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly. |
| | W 1b. | Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. |
| | W 1c. | Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons. |
| | W 1d. | Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. Establish and maintain a formal style. |
| | W 1e. | Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented. |
| 7 | W 1a. | Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and address alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically. |
| | W 1b. | Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. Support claim(s) or counterarguments with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. |
| | W 1c. | Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence. |
| | W 1d. | Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. Establish and maintain a formal style. |
| | W 1e. | Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented. |
| 8 | W 1a. | Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically. |
| | W 1b. | Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. |
| | W 1c. | Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. |
| | W 1d. | Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. Establish and maintain a formal style. |
| | W 1e. | Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented. |

Grade 4 Anchor Paper CCCS Argument/Opinion

Student Sample: Grade 4, Argument (Opinion)

This argument was produced in class, and the writer likely received feedback from her teacher and peers.

Zoo Field Trip

Dear Mr. _____ and Mrs. _____,

We have a problem. The wildlife here in _____ is very limited. There is not a lot of opportunity to learn about conservation and wildlife preservation. If we took a field trip to _____ our problem would be solved. _____, _____, _____ and I would like to take our class for a great learning experience. In addition, we will provide a study guide to _____ to identify the animals and provide information about conservation of endangered wildlife.

If we went on a field trip, we will learn about the wildlife from around the world and how _____ provides a natural habitat for them to live and breed. This information would help us to understand the importance of science in our day to day life. We would use math to make a budget and figure out a way to earn money. These skills will be very useful again and again. We will learn how to make a schedule with target dates. This will provide us with a plan that covers the entire project from start to finish. The preparation of the study guide will require lots of research and organization of information.

The first thing to do is research, research, research! Next, we will choose a fund raiser (with your approval, of course). This will earn money for the field trip. The parents will hopefully chip in their time and money, if we don't get enough. We will prepare a plan schedule. This will provide the dates that team members will need to accomplish the steps toward our goal. My competent adult model is the Unofficial Guide to Walt Disney World. It shows us step by step how to plan a trip and what to see.

Now, you are asking why should I approve a trip to _____? How does this help _____ and the students? Besides the fact that the project planning, fund raising, budgeting and reporting will provide an excellent learning opportunity, it will provide education. It will also provide awareness of wildlife and the importance of conservation. This project will be evaluated by its successful planning and its ability to involve our class in wildlife conservation. The trip will be evaluated by the student participation on the trip and a plan of conservation that identifies what we can all do to protect and respect wildlife so they will still be around when we have children.

Sincerely,

Annotation

The writer of this piece

- introduces a topic clearly, states an opinion, and creates an organizational structure in which related ideas are grouped to support the writer's purpose.
 - *We have a problem. The wildlife here in _____ is very limited. There is not a lot of opportunity to learn about conservation and wildlife preservation. If we took a field trip to _____ our problem would be solved. _____, _____, _____ and I would like to take our class for a great learning experience.*
- provides reasons that are supported by facts and details.
 - *If we went on a field trip, we will learn about the wildlife from around the world and how _____ provides a natural habitat for them to live and breed. This information would help us to understand the importance of science in our day to day life. We would use math to make a budget and figure out a way to earn money . . . We will learn how to make a schedule with target dates . . . The preparation of the study guide will require lots of research and organization of information.*

Grade 4 Anchor Paper CCCS Argument/Opinion

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS for ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS & LITERACY IN HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES, SCIENCE, AND TECHNICAL SUBJECTS

- **links opinion and reasons using words and phrases.**
 - *The first thing to do . . . Next . . . Now, you are asking . . . Besides the fact . . .*
- **provides a concluding section related to the opinion presented.**
 - The final paragraph details possible objections to the field trip and argues against each one:
Now, you are asking why should I approve a trip to _____?. . . Besides the fact that the project planning, fund raising, budgeting and reporting will provide an excellent learning opportunity, it will provide education. It will also provide awareness of wildlife and the importance of conservation.
- **demonstrates exemplary command of the conventions of standard written English.**
 - This piece has been edited by student response groups as well as by adults, so it is nearly flawless in terms of observing the conventions of standard written English.

Grade 6 Anchor Paper CCCS Argument/Opinion

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS for ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS & LITERACY IN HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES, SCIENCE, AND TECHNICAL SUBJECTS

Student Sample: Grade 6, Argument

This argument (incorrectly labeled a story) is a process piece produced in class.

A Pet Story About My Cat . . . Gus

People get pets so that they will never be lonely, and they will always have a friend to be there for them. Ask your heart, what makes the best pet??? Some people think a best pet is picky, energetic, and sneaky, but I think my pet is the best pet because he is a cuddle bug, he's playful, and he loves me! Gus was about eight weeks old when we got him, now he is 4 1/2 months old, and he is about as big as a size eight sneaker. He is a little gray and white kitten. If you look closely he has a gray tail, but there are darker gray rings around it. He has a little white on his face, and some on his tummy and paws. He has a little stripe on his leg but it is his back left leg only. He's very cute, and he purrs a lot! He also has a cute little gray nose.

One of the reasons why my cat Gus is the best pet is because he is a cuddle bug. When Gus was a baby, he had to be kept in a cage because he wasn't allowed to interact with the other pets until he was older. He couldn't interact with the other pets because when Twister was a baby, the ferrets bit her ear and dragged her under the bed, and bit her in the back of the neck and we didn't want the same thing to happen to Gus. Also because Twister had to be kept in a cage when she was little, too. His cage was in my room so when he meowed, as if to say, "Get me out!" I would have to take him out and sleep with him. All he would do is thank me for doing that by snuggling against my chin! Another example to prove that Gus is a cuddle bug, is that when I'm feeding Gus, I put his and Twister's bowl up on the counter when I do so, and Twister sits there patiently while Gus is snuggling against my legs to show affection toward me. He snuggles my leg even when I'm walking around! Well, at least he tries to, because he follows me, and when I stop walking, he starts to cuddle. Eventually I pick him up and cuddle him back!!! Finally, when I have nothing to do and I'm just sitting on my bed reading, Gus jumps up with me and then he pushes away the covers to get under them, and he sleeps on my chest to keep my company when I'm board. After he slept on my tummy many times, he finally got the nickname _____ Cuddle Buddy. Now I always snuggle with my favorite cuddle buddy . . . Gus!!!

A second reason why Gus is the best pet is because he's playful. Most of the time when Gus is lying on the couch minding his own business, I'll reach out to pet him then he'll start biting my hand and attacking it!!! He does this to be playful, not to hurt anyone but he just wants to have fun. It kind of tickles when he does it, actually. Gus also has a little toy mouse that is attached to a string that I drag around the house so that Gus will follow it. The mouse has a leopard skin pattern on it with balls of fur as hands and feet. The mouse is about the size of the pencil sharpeners in Mrs. _____ classroom. He goes after that mouse so fast that it's hard to see him running by to catch it. When Gus was a baby, I would put him in my bed to sleep with, but before we went to sleep, I would move my feet around underneath the covers, while Gus was on top chasing them around. Eventually, he got tired and lied down near my feet, but before he was completely asleep, I would pick him up and put him near my pillow and we slept together. Gus loves doing that all the time. I love how Gus is so playful!!!

The last reason why Gus is the best pet is because he loves me! He always misses me whenever I'm not there. When I come home from school and I open the door, Gus comes flying around the corner, and starts to climb my pants! When he gets high enough, I grab him in my arms and we start cuddling each other while Gus is happily purring. He does this a lot. Most of the time I'm in my room watching TV, while Gus and Twister are fighting and killing each other, they come dashing around the corner and into my room. I, of course, have to break up the fight. After that, I put them on my bed and hold them down, but they keep squirming. Soon, they get tired and sleep with me, silently, watching TV. Gus is with me as much as possible. Sometimes he's busy playing with Twister, sleeping, or eating. Otherwise, he's playing or sleeping with me. We do so many things together and I'm glad I got him, but technically, he chose me. It was a homeless cat shelter. They were able to catch the kittens, but not there mommy. His brothers and sisters were all playing, but he was sleeping under the table. Soon, he walked out from under the table and slept with me while we cuddled on the couch. That's how I met Gus.

People have feelings for their pets that show that they love them very much. When I had to decide what makes the best pet, I would say that Gus is the best pet because he is a cuddle bug, he's playful, and he loves me. When you think about the examples that I gave you, like when I told you about how Gus snuggles against my chin, you saw that Gus is the best pet and if you don't believe me, you have a problem with deciding who the best pet is.

Grade 6 Anchor Paper CCCS Argument/Opinion

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS for ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS & LITERACY IN HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES, SCIENCE, AND TECHNICAL SUBJECTS

Annotation

The writer of this piece

- **introduces a claim and organizes the reasons and evidence clearly.**
 - *... I think my pet is the best pet because he is a cuddle bug, he's playful, and he loves me!*
- **supports the claim with clear reasons and relevant evidence, demonstrating an understanding of the topic.**
 - *One of the reasons why my cat Gus is the best pet is because he is a cuddle bug.* The writer elaborates this point by providing three examples of his cat's affectionate nature: freed from his cage, the cat snuggles against the narrator's chin; the cat rubs against the narrator's legs; and the cat sleeps on the narrator.
 - *A second reason why Gus is the best pet is because he's playful.* The writer elaborates this point with three examples of the cat's playful nature: Gus attacks the narrator's hand; Gus plays with a toy mouse; and Gus attacks the narrator's feet when they are under the covers.
 - *The last reason why Gus is the best pet is because he loves me!* The writer elaborates this point with three examples: Gus runs to greet the narrator when he returns home from school; Gus and the other cat, Twister, scuffle with one another until the narrator separates them, and then they sleep with the narrator as he watches television; and Gus spends as much time as possible in the narrator's company.
- **uses words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among the claim and reasons.**
 - *One of my reasons . . . A second reason . . . The last reason . . .*
- **establishes and maintains a formal style (except for the last sentence).**
 - The style throughout the document is appropriate for convincing readers about the writer's claim although the last sentence in the three-page-long paper (*... if you don't believe me, you have a problem with deciding who the best pet is*) seems inappropriate because it lapses into *ad hominem*.
- **provides a concluding statement that follows from the argument presented.**
 - *When I had to decide what makes the best pet, I would say that Gus is the best pet . . . When you think about the examples that I gave you, like when I told you about how Gus snuggles against my chin, you saw that Gus **IS** the best pet . . .*
- **demonstrates good command of the conventions of standard written English (with occasional errors that do not interfere materially with the underlying message).**

This is a sample only, please see separate packet for Rubrics-



Opinion



OPINION/ARGUMENT WRITING RUBRIC
California Common Core Standards Based – FIFTH GRADE

| Level | OPINION WRITING | ORGANIZATION and FOCUS | LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS | WITH GUIDANCE and SUPPORT FROM ADULTS |
|----------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| 4 Exceeds | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets all expectations set forth in (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details <input type="checkbox"/> Quotes from source to support opinion <input type="checkbox"/> Uses vivid and descriptive language that supports genre | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets all expectations set forth in (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Paper is well-developed with smooth transitions and indentations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets all expectations set forth in (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Combines, short related sentences with appositives, participial phrases, adjectives, adverbs, or preposition phrases <input type="checkbox"/> Uses verbs that are often misused (lie/lay, sit/set, rise/raise) correctly <input type="checkbox"/> Uses a colon to introduce a list, when applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Uses quotations marks around titles of poems, songs, and short stories <input type="checkbox"/> Correctly uses frequently confused words (e.g., to, too, two; there, their) (CCSS L 1h) | <p>Level of guidance and support from adults before writing:</p> <p>Check off what was done before the student wrote the piece being scored.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Read aloud or shared reading <input type="checkbox"/> Drawing <input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary word bank <input type="checkbox"/> Shared or interactive writing <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic organizer <input type="checkbox"/> Language frames |
| 3 Meets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Begins paper with a clear topic sentence that states an opinion about a topic and/or text (CCSS 1a) <input type="checkbox"/> Paper includes relevant and supporting sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational structure supports the writer's purpose (CCSS 1a) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides reasons that are supported by facts and details (CCSS 1b) <input type="checkbox"/> Links opinion and reasons using words and phrases such as, <i>for instance</i>, <i>in order to</i>, and <i>in addition</i> (CCSS 1c) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses multiple sources to gather information about the topic (internet, media, speakers, books, stories, newspapers, and magazines) if applicable (CCSS 9) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides a concluding statement or section that is related to the opinion (CCSS 1d) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Includes well-developed supporting facts and details <input type="checkbox"/> Uses transition words to move the reader from one detail to the next with indentation <input type="checkbox"/> Clearly planned writing with graphic organizer, rough draft or notes <input type="checkbox"/> Document is neat and legible | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Uses a variation of simple, compound, and complex sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Produces complete sentences, recognizing and correcting fragments and run-ons (CCSS L 1g) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses regular and irregular verbs, adverbs, prepositions or coordinating conjunctions correctly <input type="checkbox"/> Uses a comma before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence (CCSS L2c) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses commas and quotation marks to mark direct speech and quotations from a text (CCSS L 2b) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses correct capitalization (titles of literary works, holidays, product names, geographic names, dates, names and titles of people, and the first word in quotations) when appropriate (CCSS L 2a) <input type="checkbox"/> Spells grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed (CCSS L 2d) | |
| 2 Almost Meets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Lacks topic sentence <input type="checkbox"/> Opinion is not evident <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting sentences are weak and/or unclear | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Includes simple supporting details that follow a logical order <input type="checkbox"/> Rough draft, graphic organizer or notes are incomplete | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Uses mostly simple sentences or run-on sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Some errors in verb tense <input type="checkbox"/> Missing commas before coordinating conjunction a compound sentence <input type="checkbox"/> Quotations missing a comma or quotation marks <input type="checkbox"/> Some capitalization errors <input type="checkbox"/> First word of quotation not capitalized <input type="checkbox"/> Some spelling errors in one-syllable words with blends, contractions, compounds, doubling consonants, change <i>y</i> to <i>ies</i>), and common homophones or homographs | |
| 1 Does Not Meet | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Limited information on topic <input type="checkbox"/> Does not state opinion <input type="checkbox"/> Includes little to no facts for focus | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Disjointed ideas <input type="checkbox"/> No evidence of rough draft, graphic organizer, or notes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly run-on sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Word order in sentences are incorrect <input type="checkbox"/> No capitalization or punctuation <input type="checkbox"/> Many misspelled words | |

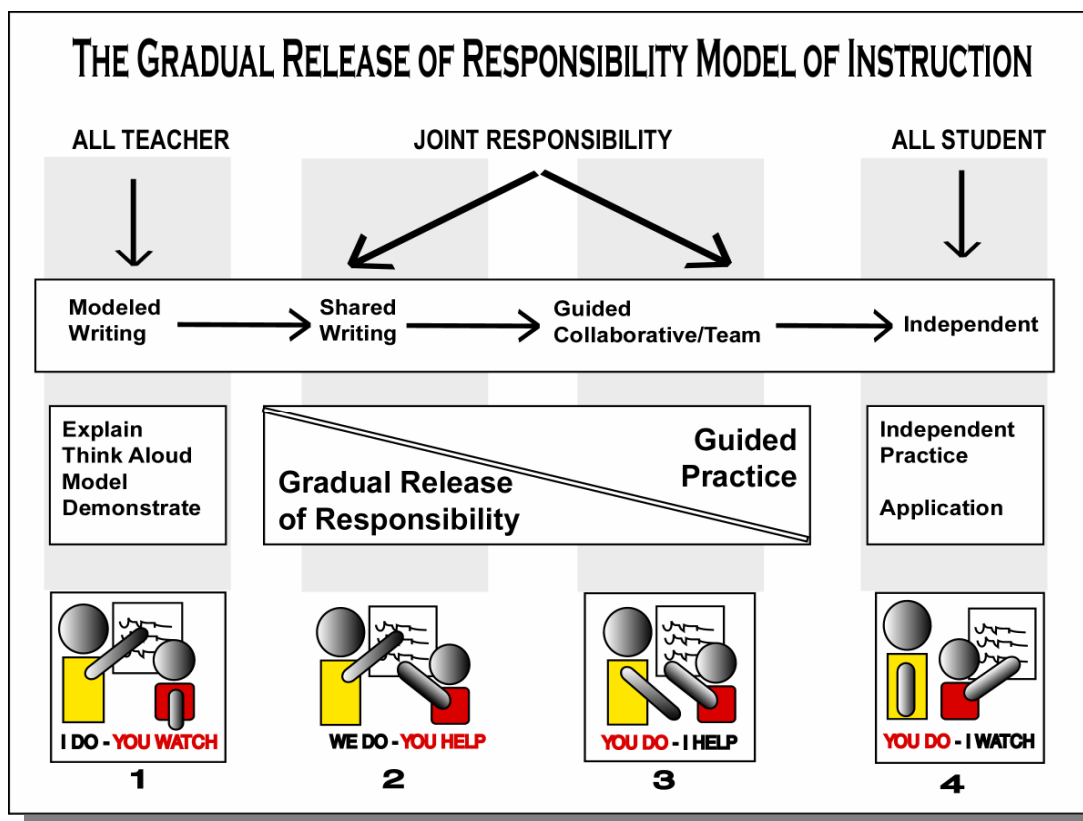
*The California Common Core Standards for Writing are available on our website, knoxeducation.com under the **Standards Tool Kits** and **Success with Writing**

Write a Sample Anchor Paper for Your Grade Level

1. Review the CCCS standards for your grade level.
2. Review the requirements for level 3 on the rubric for your grade level.
3. Read the anchor papers for your grade level as possible.
4. Write a "Level 3" anchor paper on a topic of interest to your students. Make sure to include the elements required for a "Level 3" paper.
5. Label the elements of your "anchor paper" with color coding or Post-its.
6. Display this in your classroom for all students to refer to as you teach this text type.

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The Gradual Release of Responsibility Model of Instruction*



* The Gradual Release of Responsibility model of instruction was developed by Pearson and Gallagher (1983). The model was then applied to key aspects of a comprehensive literacy program by Ritterskamp and Singleton (2001).

Teaching Writing - Scaffolding

"Scaffolding is not simply a case
of breaking learning segments into scope and sequence.

Instead, it is a complex interactive process
whereby the teacher regulates levels of support
according to how well the children understand the task at hand."

"By that we mean that the child's behavior
signals the teacher, *I don't need your help anymore.*
I can do this by myself."

Dorn et. Al (1998). *Apprenticeship in Literacy*. York, ME: Stenhouse.

One of the most important aspects of the scaffolding process in writing is the celebration of the independence being earned along the way. The students need to be praised and validated for the skills that are becoming automatic. Understanding that automaticity means mastery provides a springboard for the student to take further risks and go deeper into the writing process. Writers invent themselves from successful feedback and praise experiences.

Most of us unfortunately learned to write through trial and error. We were given a writing assignment, and told how it would be graded. Then we faced the blank page and tried to figure out how to do the assignment to get the grade. Our efforts focused on getting a grade, not on improving our writing. When we are writing, our thinking should be about writing. Once we turned the paper in, we waited with trepidation to see how we did. The marks on our papers either became our "teachers" as reminders of what NOT to do next time, OR they simply made us feel a surge of resistance to any future writing tasks. As a result, many of us do not enjoy writing. This is not the way to train writers. However, it does scare students into copying someone else's voice and style. Writing instruction is sabotaged when students only focus on completing assignments during the K-12 experience. Students learning to write in this way will never get to the depth necessary to be successful in college.

The most successful approach to teaching writing we have found with today's students is to honor the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model of Instruction. The model is shown in the graphic on the previous page. To make this paradigm work, 1) we first model the process through writing in front of the students OR through showing them examples of that writing type. Next, 2) we identify the steps or processes involved with producing that genre and list these in student friendly language. After that, 3) we write another sample piece with input from the class. This is often called "shared writing" or "language experience". Finally, 4) we provide guided writing experiences through mini-lessons preceding an independent writing period. During this phase of the model, 5) teachers can pull small groups of students to re-teach or extend the process based on individual progress with understanding writing skills. Differentiating for the language needs of English learners can also be offered during these small group sessions.

When this supportive flow is offered to student writers they become able to independently write a variety of complex forms of writing as indicated by the grade level standards for their age group. If students are still having difficulty, it's a signal to the teacher that perhaps a more gradual release of responsibility is called for. The teacher can ask him or herself, "Did I model enough? Did we look at enough examples? Did we walk through the process as a group in shared writing? Have I provided support for vocabulary for English learners? Did I leave up the examples and checklists for reference as students write?" If the answer is no to any of the above...more support may be needed.

Teaching Writing - Scaffolding

As an example, we are choosing to provide a detailed explanation for teaching *descriptive writing* as a model for this section. Remember that using description in writing is a skill that extends across all grade levels and needs to be taught and revisited throughout elementary and middle school. The following pages show how descriptive writing instruction may look over a 6-week period. The first few pages in this chapter provide a template for lesson planning with reminders about what might happen during each phase of the model. Detailed notes for each phase follow the template and provide examples of the kinds of teaching charts that may be generated over this 6-week course of instruction. This process is repeated for each of the other genres explored in this book. The amount of time and the individual lessons can be planned by each teacher or grade level team based on the needs of the student writers and the constraints on the instructional schedule.

If necessary, for example, something new in writing could be taught with a single session each for modeling, shared writing, and guided writing. However, writing is a complex task, and most teachers will find it necessary to take more time to teach specific aspects of the writing process at hand. Direct explicit instruction must always be followed by a writing project or inquiry based activity to ensure integration of the material presented. The formula we prefer is: explicit instruction: 10/15minutes – writing practice: 20/30minutes – edit, debrief the process, and get response: 10/15 minutes. This provides for some variation in the classroom time and emphasis but ultimately allows for one hour of writing instruction, practice, support, review, editing, and reinforcement. Stand and deliver writing instruction does not stand alone without practice in writing. Worksheets regarding language conventions and rules are not writing practice; practice worksheets involve the subskills that lead to writing. SO, when we say practice the gradual release model related to descriptive texts, we are asking you to allow the students to **write descriptions** of something on a daily basis.



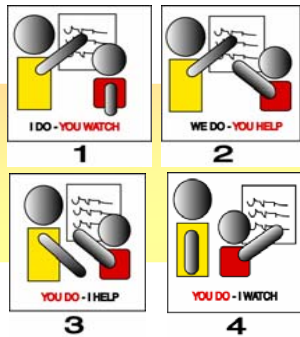
1. PLANNING

- Choose topic or analyze prompt
- Read, research and take notes
- Organize
- Draw
- Rehearse with talk



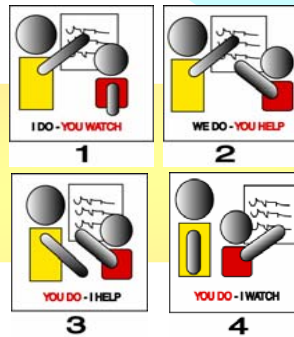
2. DRAFTING

- Write thoughts
- Use plan
- Re-read as you write
- Think about audience



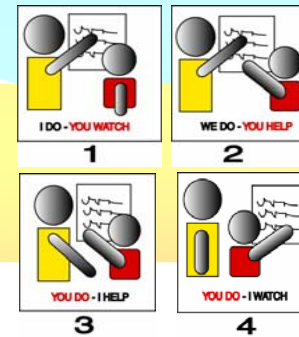
3. REVISING

- Reread and check:
- Make sense?
 - Interesting words?
 - Organized?
 - Enough detail?



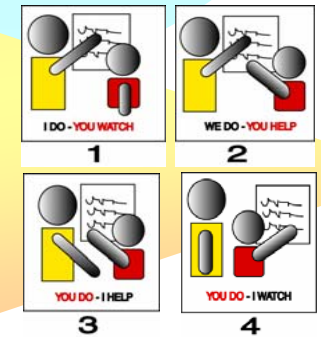
4. EDITING

- Reread and check:
- Capitals
 - Punctuation
 - Spelling
 - Format



5. PUBLISHING

- Make final copy: type or re-copy
- Share with an audience
 - Get feedback



Building Talk Time into the Writing Process: Writing Floats on a Sea of Talk

Before Writing:

1. Think pair share.
2. Note cards/note taking: Pairs share what notes they have taken on a topic and explain to each other what they are going to write.
3. Question/answer: Students/teacher ask a question about the topic, students answer to each other in pairs or triads.
4. Talk through your plan: after completing a graphic organizer, students tell a partner what they will write by reading aloud from their plan.
5. Favorite quote: Students find a favorite sentence or phrase from what they are researching to read to a partner or the class.
6. Leads: Before starting an assignment, students write their first sentence on white boards and read them aloud to the class, allow students to modify their own leads as they get ideas from each other.

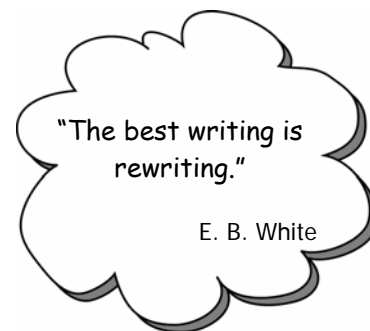


During Writing:

- Students begin a writing period by reading what they wrote yesterday to a partner or sharing a favorite sentence.
- Pause the writing period occasionally and have students read out loud a favorite sentence from the piece on which they are working.

Revising:

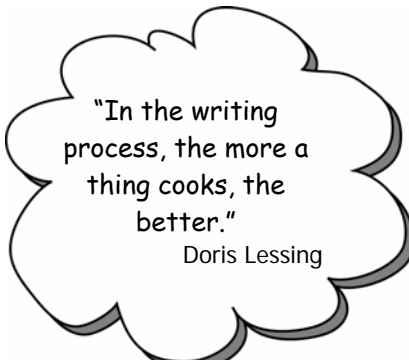
- Students read their pieces aloud to a small group or peer, others respond with a positive comment about the piece or a question.
- "I liked the part about....."
- "I wonder what you meant by....?"
- "I'd like to hear more about...."



Building Talk Time into the Writing Process: Writing Floats on a Sea of Talk

Editing:

- Provide mini lessons on grammar skills. After the lesson have students read aloud their pieces to each other and listen for the targeted skill. **For example:** listen for how pronouns are used.
- Make sure you have a chart or reference tool with the grammar skill illustrated so that students can refer to the correct grammar form as they listen to each other.

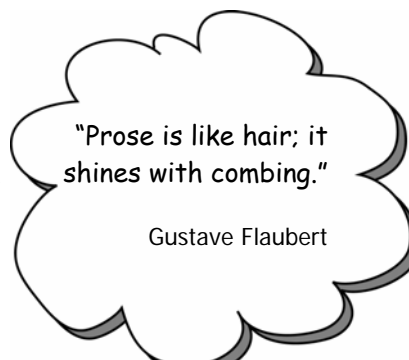


"In the writing process, the more a thing cooks, the better."

Doris Lessing

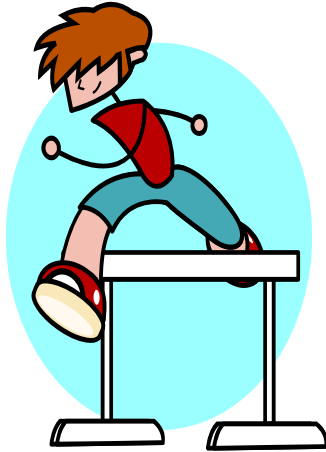
Publishing/sharing:

- Author's Tea
- Read aloud to lower grade class
- Author's Chair (see Feedback Section)



"Prose is like hair; it shines with combing."

Gustave Flaubert



Jumpstart

Week
1

Whole Class Lesson



Differentiated Support



1



2



3

1st

Jumpstart

- Oral rehearsal of what they will write.
- Help with first section.
- Have them share first.

2nd

Guided

- Check in and guide during writing.
- Have them share during writing to extend their thinking and get ideas from each other.

3rd

Independent

- Can work productively after whole group lesson.
- Check in as finish and extend quantity and quality.

- 1. Jumpstart Group:** Students who are not able to use a new writing skill after a whole group lesson. Students who without additional reminders and support after a whole group lessons, would have trouble getting started with a new process. These might include beginning English learners who may not have understood the lesson, students who struggle with remembering the steps of a complex task, or students who just lack confidence in their ability to write. Bring them to a small group instruction area right after the whole group lesson and help them get started with extra support such as:
 - Additional opportunities to talk as a rehearsal to writing
 - Interactive or shared writing of the first part of the writing task
 - Word bank of vocabulary and ideas to include in the piece
 - Re-teach of skill
 - Language frame
 - Re-teach of steps in process listed for them on a small chart
- 2. Guided Group:** Students who get started with some ease, but may need further reminders and support along the way. You can rove the room and check in with them, or if the whole class is bogged down with a step, you can do some re-teaching mid-stream.
- 3. Independent Group:** these students are eager to get started and work quickly. However, they may need reminders about quality over quantity in writing, or you may have time to teach that group an extension of that skill once the other students are all underway. For example, while most students in the class are writing a basic description with sensory detail, these students may be ready to use literary devices such as metaphor, simile, or idioms in their descriptions.

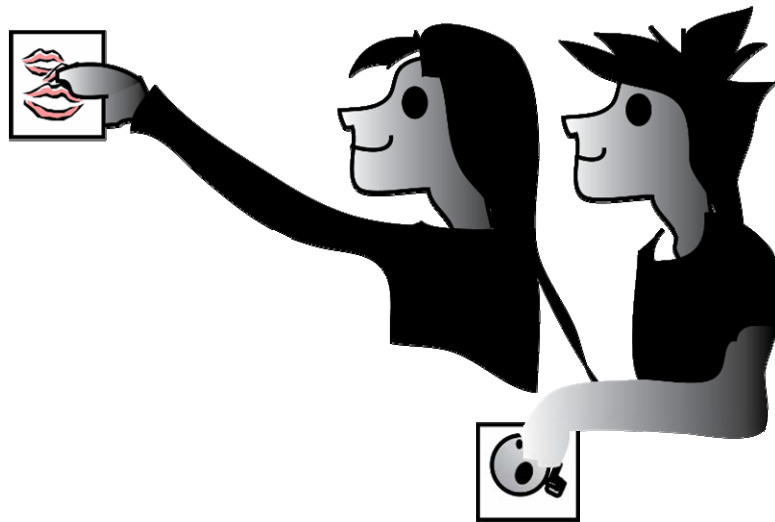
Talk Tickets

Any small object such as a paper clip, bingo marker or paper 'ticket' can be used as a ticket to talk!

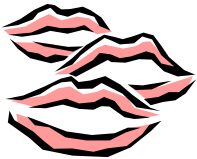
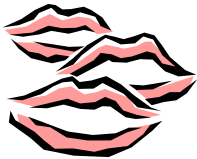
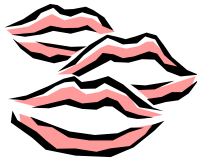
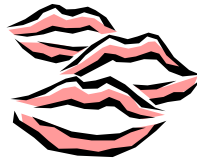




The ticket buys you a chance to talk during a small group discussion.

Each student receives the same number of Talk Tickets at the beginning of a small group discussion. As students enter into the discussion, they place one token in the middle of the table. When students run out of tokens, their talk time is up. They then can only make additional contributions *after* the others in the group have used up their tickets.

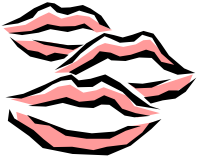
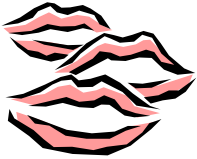
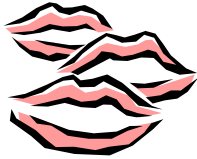
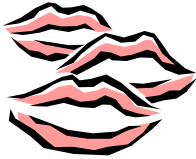
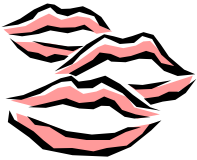
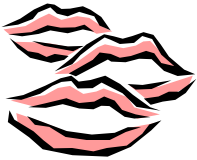
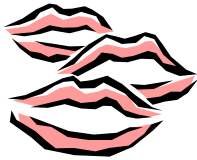
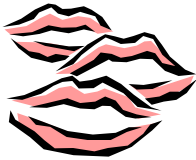
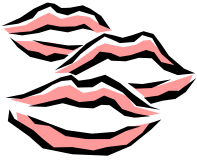
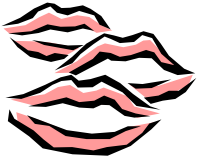
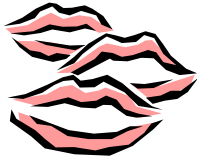
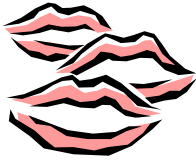









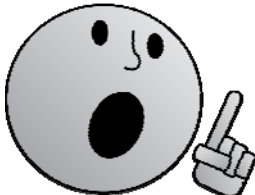


Talk Tickets encourage participation in two ways: They restrict dominant students from monopolizing the discussion, and they encourage reluctant students to share more of their ideas.



Talk Tickets

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Talk Tickets

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6 Weeks Backwards Planning for Success with Writing

Using the **Gradual Release of Responsibility Model of Instruction**, we have developed a basic 6-week sequence for successful teaching and learning of a new writing type (genre). This basic 6-week plan includes modeling, shared and guided writing, revision and editing, and finally sharing, publishing, and a dress rehearsal for on-demand assessment. The sequence is as follows:

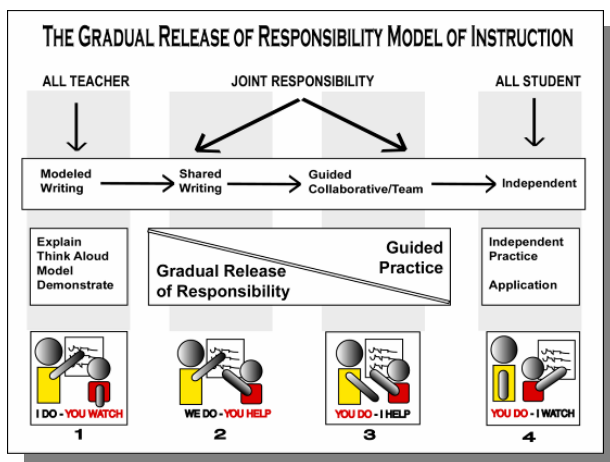
Week One: Introduce the writing standards. Model the whole process for the new text type using teacher modeling as well as examination of “mentor texts” or similar writing from published authors. Put a focus on identifying the elements of the new text type. Write or use anchor papers to introduce the rubric.

Weeks Two-Three*: Use shared writing to write a class piece using this text type. Then guide students through drafting 3 or more pieces. Supply varying levels of support depending on student need. Focus on choice of topics as possible. Provide mini-lessons on specific skills as needed.

Weeks Four-Five: Focus on revision and editing mini-lessons as needed using student writing as well as anchor papers. Provide time for peer conferencing as well as one on one teacher conferencing as possible.

Week Six: Help student choose and publish to final copy their favorite piece. Set aside time to share published pieces with an audience. Give feedback both from teacher and peers. Conduct a “dress rehearsal” for the on-demand prompt if time allows.

The **specific 6-week plan** for focusing on **Opinion/Argument Writing** follows this page.





This is the **Gradual Release Model of Instruction** incorporated in these lessons.

* **Please note** that teachers may find that their students need more than two weeks to learn to write a particular genre. The teacher will know that it is time to move on to teaching revision and editing when the students have completed **at least 3 complete drafts** of a writing type. Some forms of writing take longer than others to complete, so this section of the sequence may take longer.

6 Weeks Backwards Planning for Success with Writing

Opinion/Argument Writing: Writing Standards and WEEK 1



Week
1

| | |
|---|---|
| | <p>WRITING STANDARDS: List the standards you will be teaching for your grade level here. List the format you are choosing, as well as any other grade level writing standards to incorporate into this unit (for example written conventions, research skills, letter format, etc.)</p> |
| <p>Week 1 _____ Number of lesson periods: _____</p> | <p>MODELING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking for issues—walking “fieldtrip” around school or interviews • Oral language development: “take a stand” activity, book talks, interviews • Look at examples of this kind of writing and identify elements • I do, you watch: model writing an Opinion/Argument essay. • Write with the class a “how to” chart about the steps for writing a Opinion/Argument essay. • Introduce the rubric as you identify elements in sample work <p>My plan for this week:</p> <div style="text-align: right;">  <p>1</p>  <p>2</p> </div> |

6 Weeks Backwards Planning for Success with Writing

Opinion/Argument Writing - WEEK 2-3





| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Week 2 _____ Number of lesson periods: _____ | <p>SHARED and GUIDED WRITING:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write an opinion piece as a class. Follow the steps listed. Use white boards so that all students contribute. 2. Write a rubric or checklist as a class about the opinion piece you are going to be writing 3. Generate a list of possible topics for opinion pieces for students to choose from. 4. Students begin their own pieces <p>My plan for the week:</p> |  <p style="text-align: center;">1</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">2</p> |
| Week 3 _____ Number of lesson periods: _____ | <p>GUIDED WRITING + mini-lessons as needed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Guide the class through the writing of an Opinion/Argument essay on a topic. Review each step and then have them write that section into their essay. 2. Have students trade papers with a writing partner each day to review how they did on that step of the process. 3. Meet with small groups for more shared writing if some students need more support. 4. Continue this process for 2 or more weeks as needed until students have written 3 or more pieces either as a group, or individually <p>My plan for the week:</p> | |

6 Weeks Backwards Planning for Success with Writing

Opinion/Argument Writing - WEEKS 4-5





| | | |
|---|--|---|
| Week 4 Number of lesson periods: _____ | <p>FOCUS on REVISION:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use samples of student work to revise writing with the students' input. 2. Have students select 1-2 pieces to revise. Students revise their papers with some peer or teacher input. 3. "Power up" words as needed using a thesaurus. <p>My plan for the week:</p> |  <p style="text-align: center;">2</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">3</p> |
| Week 5 Number of lesson periods: _____ | <p>FOCUS on EDITING:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use samples of student work to edit writing with the students' input. 2. Have students select a piece of writing to publish—final edit, retype or write, illustrate, and post. 3. Teach students how to do the "editing machine" , or use color coded editing process <p>My plan for the week:</p> | |

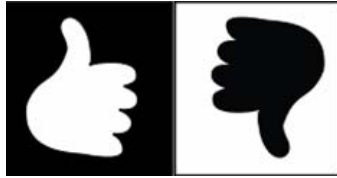
6 Weeks Backwards Planning for Success with Writing

Opinion/Argument Writing - WEEK 6

Week
6

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| Week 6 _____ Number of lesson periods: _____ | <p>FOCUS on SHARING and RESPONSE + ONE ON-DEMAND "DRESS REHEARSAL":</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Have students share their published pieces and hopefully get a response: mail the letters, invite the audience the piece was written for, call for action!2. Find ways for students to publish their writing in an authentic way which might reflect something they would see in the real world: letters to the editor, reviews in a magazine, posters or fliers, etc.3. Give one on-demand prompt for Opinion/Argument as a "dress rehearsal" for a formal on-demand assessment if time allows.4. Have students score each other's papers the next day. Review the steps for the writing process. <p>My plan for the week:</p> |  <p>3</p>  <p>4</p> |
|---|---|--|

Opinion

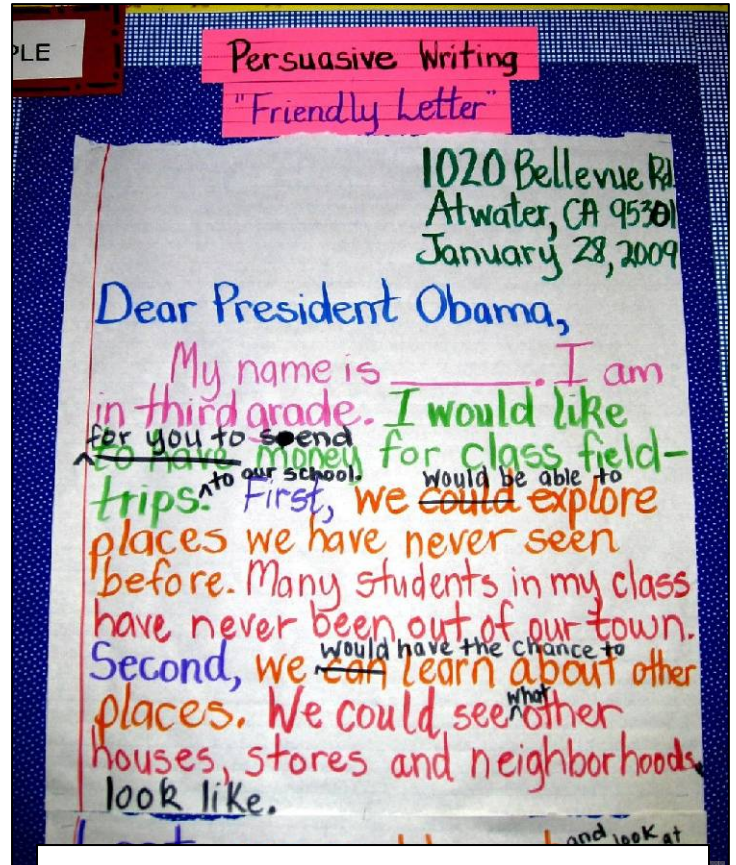
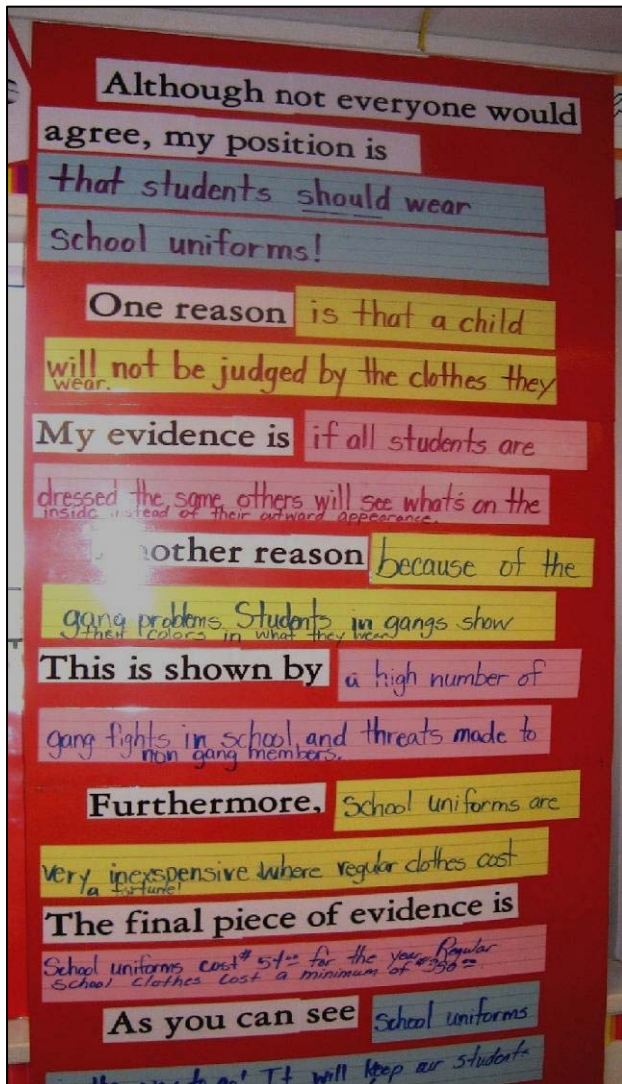


Opinion/Argument Writing Tool Kit



Examples of Opinion/Argument Writing

This teacher has created a laminated frame to use for shared writing of opinion pieces emphasizing transition words.



The Language Experience Approach can be used to create a model for a persuasive letter writing experience. This third grade teacher has worked with students to construct a formal letter to the President about their desire to go on a field trip.

Opinion/Argument Lesson Sequence for Older Students:



How to Take a Stand; Form an Opinion

1. Clear space in the classroom so that students may stand anywhere from one side to the other. Label one side of the classroom "strongly agree", label the other side "strongly disagree".
2. Hold up a sentence strip or card with a statement such as the ones listed below:
 - Children should not be able to eat sugary breakfast cereals.
 - Dogs should be kept on leashes
 - The school should offer more lunch choices
 - People should not be allowed to own guns.
 - If you get caught cheating on a test, you should fail the class.
 - If you misbehave in school, your parent should have to attend class with you.
 - Children should get paid for doing chores at home.
 - In order to reduce air pollution, people should ride buses rather than driving cars
 - People who own cats should keep them indoors.
3. After you read the statement, have students SILENTLY move their positions along a line in the classroom to show where they stand on the issue. Students may strongly agree/disagree and be at either side of the room, or may have more neutral or contradictory feelings about the statement.
4. Supply students with language frames to state their position such as:
 - *I strongly agree/disagree with the statement because I think....*
 - *I agree/disagree somewhat with the statement because I feel.... On the other hand I also know....*
 - *I want to convince you to agree/disagree with the statement because I think....*
 - *An important reason to consider my point of view is....*
5. Have students take turns orally explaining their position out loud to the class. After each student makes a statement, others may move to join or move away from that student based on their argument.
6. Continue this process until you think that as many of the arguments have been heard as possible. Chart these as the students share them on the white board for reference.
7. Use this activity as a pre-writing warm-up for any Opinion/Argument writing piece.

Adapted from *Write Time for Kids Nonfiction Reading and Writing Program Level 8*, Teacher Created Materials.

Warming up to Writing Opinion/Argument Writing with Older Students:

Week
1

Making Declarations and Backing them up:

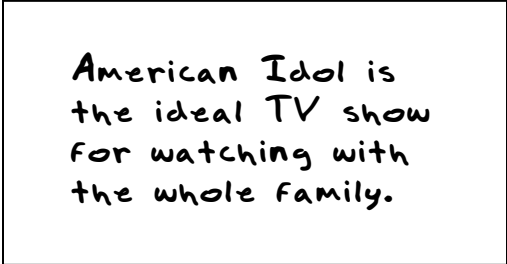
You can use **individual student white boards** to have students practice writing declarative statements and reasons for support on a variety of topics as a warm up to developing a Opinion/Argument essay. As students listen to their fellow students' ideas, they will begin to expand their own notions about how to develop an argument and back it up. Try running students through the following process:

Step 1: Provide students with a list of hot topics such as the one below:

- Cell phones at school
- Curfews
- Video games
- Pets
- Movie rating system
- Facebook
- Taking photos with cell phones
- Texting vs. talking
- Homework
- Bedtimes
- Chores
- Recess times
- Art in school
- Peanut butter and jelly sandwiches
- American Idol

Have them write a declaration statement providing a strong opinion about the topic:

For example:



American Idol is
the ideal TV show
for watching with
the whole family.

Have each student share their statement with the class and tell the students they can “steal” ideas from each other or modify their statement as they listen.

They may also choose a different topic and write a new declaration after they hear each others statements.

Step 2:

Next have them write at least three reasons supporting their declaration. They may want to transfer their statements to paper as they develop their reasons if there is not space on their white boards.

American Idol is the ideal TV show for watching with the whole family.

- *Learn about the latest talent*
- *Have fun watching Simon argue with the other judges*
- *See what Paula Abdul is wearing*
- *Talk about who is the best and why*
- *Get excited to see each week how each singer performs*

Step 3:

Have students finish by reading their declarations and reasons to a partner or the whole class. The "audience" for their sharing can give feedback about which arguments are the most convincing. The writer can put a check mark next to the best reasons according to their "audience."

Students can transfer their notes into a writing notebook if they want to stay with a topic from this exercise and develop it into an essay.

American Idol is the ideal TV show for watching with the whole family.

- *Learn about the latest talent*
- ✓ *Have fun watching Simon argue with the other judges*
- *See what Paula Abdul is wearing*
- ✓ *Talk about who is the best and why*
- ✓ *Get excited to see each week how each singer performs*

Defending the Ridiculous: more warm up practice

This activity is adapted from the book: Twisting Arms: Teaching Students How to Write to Persuade, by Dawn DiPrince, 2005 Cottonwood Press.

Write a number of ridiculous statements on the white board or provide students with them on a sheet of paper. You could also split the class in two and have one group write the statements for another and then trade.

Students in pairs or small groups choose a statement and write three plausible reasons in support of the statement:

Students should have unlimited access to candy at recess.

Texting should be the preferred method for giving teachers answers to questions.

Kindergarten should start when students are six years old.

All teachers should have the right to a day off from correcting homework each week.

Any student over the age of ten should be able to bring their pet to school.

The first 30 minutes of every school day should be time for socializing with friends.

All students should have at least 30 minutes a day to check their email and Facebook accounts.

Identifying Elements of Opinion/Argument Writing with Color Coding:

Provide students with a sample editorial piece of writing such as the one below. Establish a color coding system such as:

Green: Opinion Statement

Yellow: Reasons in support

Pink: Counter argument

Underline or **another color**—facts and research to support

Guide students to highlight the article using the coding system. They may also want to number the reasons and put a star by the strongest reason provided. They can keep these examples as “anchor texts” to help them understand the structure of this genre of writing.

Sample One:

Are School Uniforms Really That Bad?

Last week the Parent Teacher Association met to discuss whether or not the students at our school should begin wearing school uniforms. Most students who heard about the discussion were completely against the idea. Juanita Sanchez, a seventh grader, said, “Uniforms are so gross. Why would anyone want to look the same as everyone else?” This seemed to be the general feeling among most students.

But this writer thinks that the school uniform issue should be seriously considered. **In my opinion, school uniforms are NOT that bad, and have some benefits that students should consider before making up their minds against them.**

Miss Sanchez stated that she felt that uniforms **made everyone look the same.** Is that really so bad? Obviously, we don’t all want to look alike in every way. **But maybe if we all had to wear the same thing, we wouldn’t focus so much on having the coolest jeans, or the hottest sneakers.** According to an article in the **New York Times, students our age spend about \$50 a week on clothes and accessories.** **That is a lot of money! What if you don’t have that kind of money to spend on clothes?** Unfortunately, at our school, **if you are not wearing cool clothes, people make fun of you.** **Nobody likes to be made fun of,** so students take matters into their own hands. **Last year at Jefferson cool, over 60 students were robbed. Money, clothes, and jewelry were all taken from lockers and book bags.**

If everyone had to wear uniforms, students would not feel such pressure to keep up with the latest styles. Also, students could express their individuality in different ways, like hairdos and by must being more outgoing.

I urge parents, teachers and students at Jefferson School to really think about school uniforms—they are not as bad as you think!

Identifying Elements of Opinion/Argument Writing with Color Coding:

Week
1

Sample Two:

Hang Up and Drive

(6th grade student model from Write Source: <http://thewritesource.com/>)

You see it every day, especially in freeway traffic. A car is weaving back and forth, speeding up then slowing down, or suddenly stopping. No, it's not a drunk driver. It's a cell-phone driver. Cell phones are used everywhere, but on the road they are a dangerous distraction to drivers and should be prohibited.

The New England Journal of Medicine reported that "motorists using a cell phone were four times more likely to have an accident than those not using a phone." The major problem is that the driver is not focused on the road, but on his or her conversation. Cell-phone drivers are very unpredictable: they weave, tailgate, drive too fast or too slow, make improper turns, run red lights, and even stop at green ones. It's not only annoying; it's hazardous. Cell-phone-related accidents include rear-ending vehicles; running off a road and crashing into trees, fences, and buildings; flipping over; and having head-on collisions. Many of these accidents result in fatalities. In October at the California Traffic Safety Summit, experts testified that "cell phones used by drivers lead to at least 1,000 deaths per year in California." These are the same problems that occur with drunk driving, which is strictly outlawed and harshly enforced. For the same reasons, California needs laws that restrict the use of cell phones in cars.

Until we take action to pass new laws, drivers at least need to be more responsible when using cell phones. The American Automobile Association recommends that drivers pull off the road before using a cell phone, have a passenger use it for them, or use voice mail to answer calls. Another suggestion is to keep the phone off while moving or simply not use it in the car. Before using a cell phone, drivers should think to themselves, "Is this call really *that* important?"

Cell phones can be a vital link in emergencies, but drivers need to use them wisely. As professional NASCAR racer John Andretti says, "Driving safely is your first responsibility." The best road to safety is to just hang up and drive.

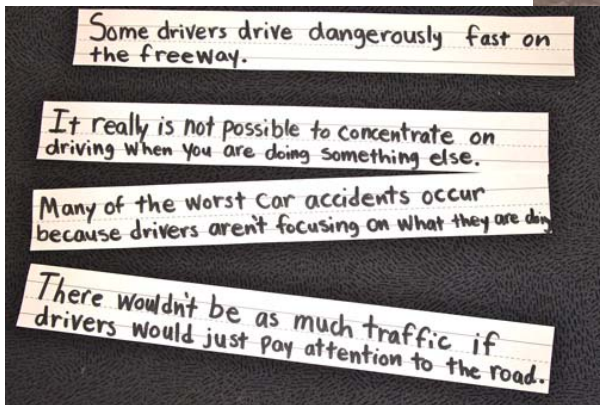
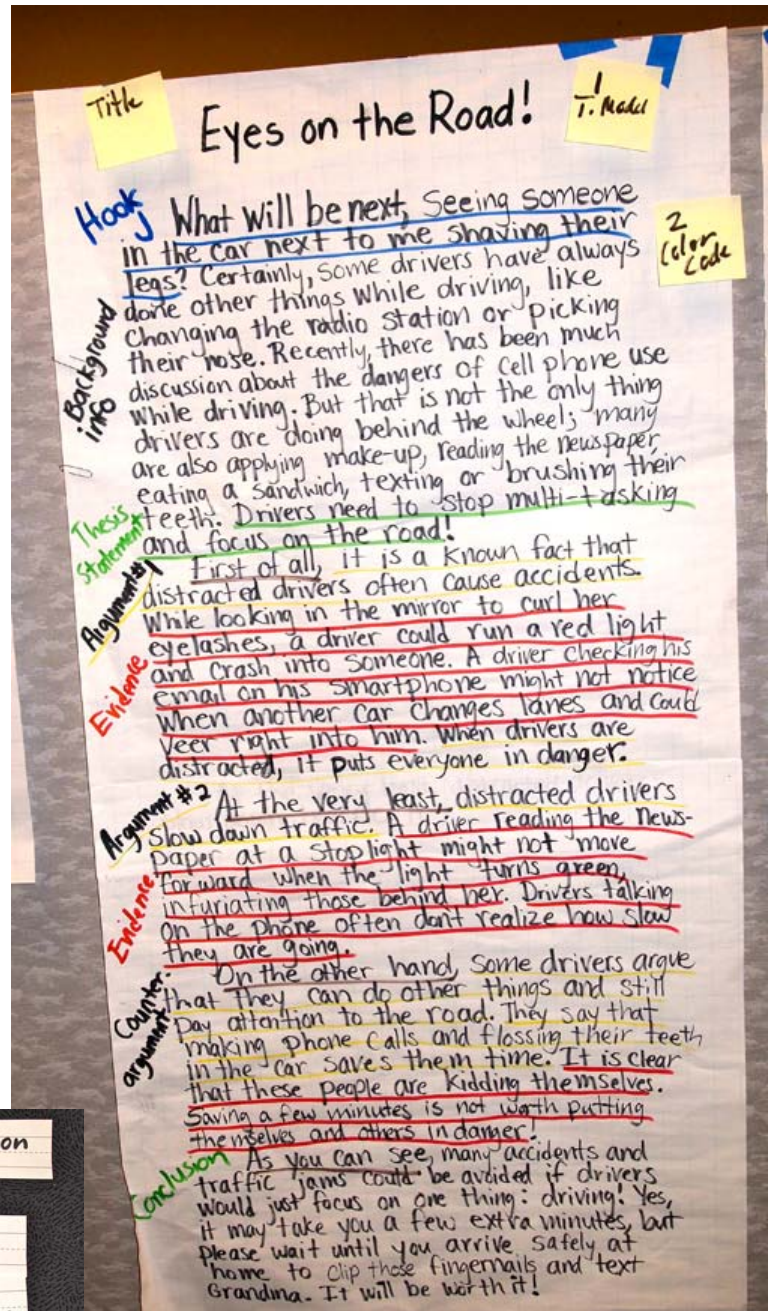
Teacher Modeling and Color Coding

Here is an example of a teacher's modeling of an argument essay which includes all of the required elements. This teacher wrote this in front of her students, talked out loud about each element, and then labeled those parts with color coding and labels when she was done. The elements include:

- Hook for opening
- Transition words
- Arguments and evidence
- Counter argument and response
- Conclusion

This chart is then left up for students to refer to throughout the argument writing unit.

Jo Ellen Anderson, Literacy Coach, Burbank Elementary School, Hayward, CA



Shared Writing of Opinion/Argument Essay

Charts for Topics to Choose from for Writing unit

FOR and AGAINST

Elements of a Letter

- Date
- Greeting
Dear _____,
To Whom it May Concern:
- Indent body
- Closing
Sincerely
Regards
Your Friend,
- Signature

Idea List

- homework
- environmental awareness
- favorite sport
- Burbank Lunch Menu
- Musical Artist
- School Sports Teams
- Videos Games at school
- Pets at school
- Own equipment at school
- Dessert at school

Topic: Recess in Elementary School

| For | Against |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise keeps kids healthy • It's fun • Taking a break and moving helps students focus in class • Teachers get a break • Learn more sports + games • a chance to use the restroom w/out interrupting class | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need more learning time • Kids get hurt or have conflicts at recess • It could be too hot or cold outside • Students get bullied |

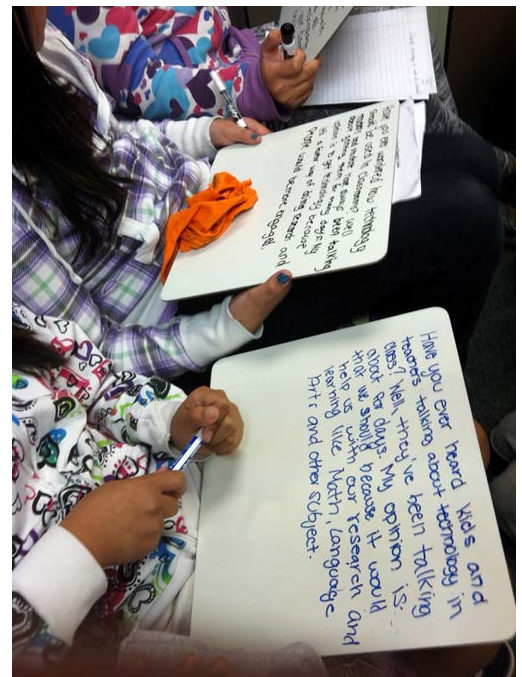
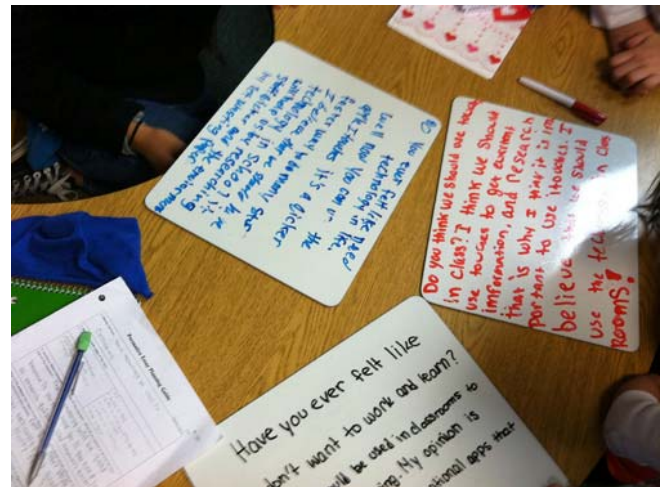
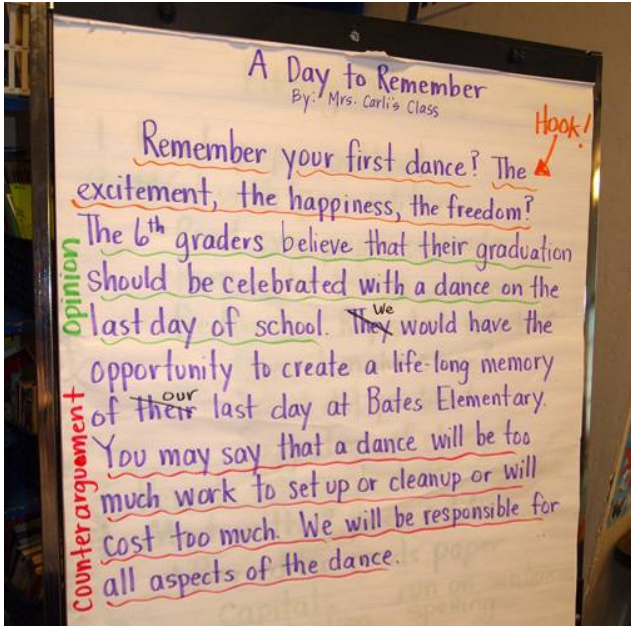
Chart with start of essay about recess

Healthy Kids, More Recess!

Do you want students to do poorly in school just because they never get a break? Some people think that schools should do away with recess. However, I think that we should have longer recesses. First of all, exercise keeps kids healthy.

Writing an Argument/Opinion Essay with Your Students

Here is an example of a shared writing of an argument essay written as a 6th grade class. The teacher has suggested a topic (a dance for graduation), and the students have written their arguments on white boards and shared them with each other before suggesting them to the whole class to be incorporated into the class essay. As the teacher constructs this essay with student input, she has labeled and color-coded the elements so that the students can refer to these as they begin writing their own essays.



How to Write a Opinion/Argument Letter

Week
2

(This is an example of a "how to" chart you would want to post as you guide students through the writing process, modify this to match the format and topic your students will be writing. Post the examples you model, label these, and leave them up throughout the unit on opinion/argument writing.)

Chart It!



1. Identify the topic for the letter.
2. Choose your position on the topic.
3. List all of the reasons supporting your position.
4. Choose the reasons from the list that will appeal to the person to whom you are writing the letter.
5. Consider the counterargument. With what will the person reading the letter disagree?

Examples:

Field Trip Ideas:

- Beach
- Aquarium
- Jelly bean factory
- Museum
- Marine World

Reasons my principal will like:

- Dolphin show
- Educational shark exhibit
- Safe— many security guards

What he will disagree with:

- Expensive
- Scary rides

My counter argument:

- Kids will fundraise

My choice: Marine World

My Reasons

- Fun
- Rides
- Many different activities
- Dolphin show
- Shark exhibit
- Cotton candy
- Expensive
- Gift shop

6. Write your letter in at least three paragraphs with the following elements:
 - Why you are writing and what your request is
 - Your reasons for your request
 - Their counter argument and your responseUse a polite closing ("Please consider....", "Sincerely yours", etc.)
7. Reread your letter to yourself and at least three others to see if they are convinced. Add/delete sentences as needed to make your most convincing argument.

Opinion/Argument Language Frames

State your position:

- In my opinion....
- I believe that....
- It seems obvious to me that....
- Although not everybody would agree, my position is....

Support your position:

- I have several reasons for arguing this point of view.
- My first reason is.... Another reason is....
- There are several points I want to make to support my point of view.
- Research shows.....
- It has been found that

Consider the counterargument:

- Some argue that....
- They say (claim, hold, maintain) that....
- On the other hand, there are many who disagree with the idea that....
- They also argue that....
- A further point they make is....
- Yet some argue vehemently that....

Restate your position:

- However, there are several reasons to oppose this point of view.
- After looking closely at both sides of the issue and the evidence, I believe it is best to.... because...
- Despite the fact that....it is also vital to consider....
- Well, that is only partly the case. The other side of the story is....
- The advantages of ... outweigh the disadvantages of....
- The issue is not so much a question of..., but a question of....
- What it seems to come down to is... versus....
- Even though the issue has two sides, I think I have shown that....
- Even though both sides have merits, the greater good will come from....
- If we look closely at..., we will see that it is better to....
- Based on the evidence so far, we should...because
- When you take a close look at this part, you see that....

Opinion/Argument Essay Planning Guide

| | |
|--|--|
| 1. Clarify the topic. | |
| 2. Brainstorm both sides of the topic. | |
| | |
| 3. Develop a thesis statement for your side of the argument - What do you believe to be true for your side of the argument? | |
| 4. What is the evidence that supports your thesis statement? This should include references to researched information when possible. | |
| 5. Identify counter-arguments What might the other side say about your arguments? | 6. Provide an organized reaction to counter-arguments. Why is your argument stronger? |
| 7. Summarize why the thesis statement is correct based on your arguments. What are the most important points you can make to convince others to support your arguments? How does your side "outweigh" the other side? | |

Adapted with permission from the author from:
Zwiers, J. (2004) *Developing Academic Thinking Skills in Grades 6-12*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

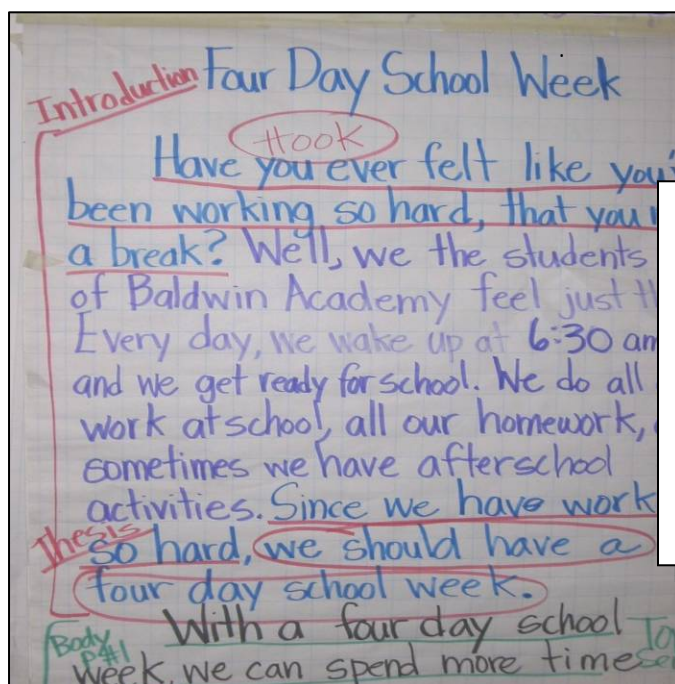
Paragraph Frames for Opinion/Argument Writing

Do you want a world with _____? This is what will happen if _____
_____. For years, _____.

Unfortunately, they/we have failed to realize that _____. Therefore, I propose that _____
_____. Furthermore, it will _____. Opponents, of course argue that this solution _____
_____. These limitations are real, but greatly exaggerated because _____
_____. Some also propose to _____. Yet this is not desirable because _____. Ultimately we
must decide what we value. I, and many others, believe that we should place a higher value on _____
than _____. For this reason, we should _____.

The time has arrived for us to _____. Why? Because _____. Some
say that _____. They are motivated by _____. They also
argue that _____. On the contrary, such solutions only serve to _____
_____. In the long term, our solution will be more effective because _____
_____.

Adapted with permission from the author from:
Zwiers, J. (2004) *Developing Academic Thinking Skills in Grades 6-12*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.



Teachers who model the writing of an essay in front of their students and then go back and label parts of the composition provide their young writers with a clear example of what is meant by the difficult concepts of writing. Here the teacher has labeled the "hook" introductory paragraph and the thesis statement. Color coding always helps as well.

Writing Reviews as Opinion Writing

Week
1

Students can be taught at the youngest ages to share their opinions about the books they are reading or being read to. This helps them make deeper meaning while they read and grow into discriminating readers who understand their preferences. It also builds the whole community of readers as students realize their classmates have opinions about the books in the room. A recently reviewed title will most undoubtedly become a classroom favorite.

Students can also have fun writing reviews about anything in their environment such as

- Books
- Favorite foods
- Restaurants
- Movies
- Video games
- Parks
- Sports Teams
- Musical Groups

Begin this unit with lots of opportunities to share opinions orally through class or group discussions. You can weave the following into any read aloud or anthology story assignment:

- Did you like/dislike this story? Why or why not?
- What did you think about how the author developed the character?
- What do you think about the way the story unfolded?
- Do you like ____ (kind of genre)? Why?

You may want to provide some language frames or linking words to support their statements:

I think _____ because _____

For example when _____

Another reason is _____

Since _____ then _____

Also _____

I liked _____, but the best part was _____

Next read reviews to students so that they can see how they are constructed. There are many wonderful websites with reviews written for students either by students or by adults for students.

Check out:

<http://www.spaghettibookclub.org/>

This website has hundreds of reviews written by students in schools all over the country which are searchable by title, reviewer, or school.

Review Writing: Basic Structures by Category

| | Book | Movie | Restaurant | Video Game | Places to visit | Food Product |
|---|---|---|---|--|--|--|
| Background Info | <p>Title</p> <p>Author</p> <p>Genre</p> <p>Brief summary</p> | <p>Title</p> <p>Type of movie</p> <p>Rating</p> <p>Actors/actresses</p> | <p>Name</p> <p>Location</p> <p>Type of food</p> | <p>Name</p> <p>Type</p> <p>Rating</p> <p>System to play on</p> <p>Object of the game</p> | <p>Name</p> <p>Location</p> <p>Type</p> | <p>Type</p> <p>Manufacturer</p> |
| Evidence to use to support your opinion | <p>Characters</p> <p>Setting</p> <p>Plot</p> <p>Illustrations</p> <p>Author's message or theme</p> <p>Best audience</p> | <p>Acting storyline</p> <p>Special effects</p> <p>Best audience for the movie</p> | <p>Taste and quality of food</p> <p>How the restaurant looks</p> <p>Service</p> <p>Price</p> <p>Best audience</p> | <p>Graphics</p> <p>Difficulty</p> <p>Levels</p> <p>Ease of directions</p> <p>Best audience</p> | <p>Appearance</p> <p>Activities</p> <p>Best for what kinds of visitors</p> | <p>Taste</p> <p>Nutrition</p> <p>Price</p> <p>Appearance</p> |

Review Writing Planning Form

Review of: _____

Reviewer: _____

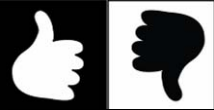
Date: _____

**Picture or
graphic to
highlight**

**Background
information
and opinion**

**Evidence to
support my
opinion**

**Audience I
recommend
for this**



Opinion Writing Organizer 3-6

Name: _____

| | | | | | |
|-------|--|----------|--|----------|--|
| Topic | | Question | | Audience | |
|-------|--|----------|--|----------|--|

My Opinion:

Word Bank

Reasons I will use in my writing:



From my research:

From my experience:

*** Put an asterisk (*) next to the reasons you think our audience will like.**

Building a “How To” Chart with Your Students:

Week
1

After you have

- Looked at examples of a text type with your students.
- Learned to identify the elements of the text type
- Modeled the process once in front of your students

It's time to write a piece together with input from the students through “shared writing” or the “language experience approach”. Gather the students on the carpet or in front of the classroom, have them bring a white board to offer suggestions for the piece, and walk them through the process of writing a new piece together. You can use chart paper or type and display the writing through a projector so that all the students can see the process unfold. Get input from the class as you compose each sentence. For example you may say, “Let’s think about how to start off our opinion piece, let’s put our opinion in the first sentence, what are some ways we could say that in a sentence?” Students then pair share and write their ideas onto white boards. Then we decide as a class how we want to compose that sentence. After each sentence is added, we re-read chorally to see if we like the way it sounds.

Once the piece is finished, label the parts of the writing with the elements you are highlighting for that text type.

Week
2

Next, create a “how to chart” listing the steps you just completed to create the class shared writing. Here is an example of what that may say:

How to write a food product review:


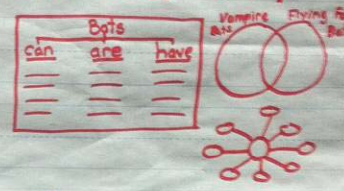
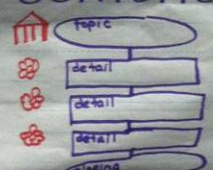

1. Taste several varieties of the kind of food you are reviewing.
2. Decide which one you want to write about (best? Worst?)
3. Use the planning form to gather information about the food. Hint: check out the package for information. Go on-line if possible to do more research about what others think of your food product.
4. Write a topic sentence that states the name of the food product and your opinion.
5. Write your reasons for your opinion. Make sure to include facts about the food product.
6. Conclude your review.
 - Who you think will like/dislike this product
 - Restate your opinion
7. Reread your review out loud to a partner to see if it makes sense.
8. Revise your writing. Think about word choice, sentence variety, and vivid details.
9. Edit your writing.
10. Share with your class.

Chart It!



Example of a How-To Chart

How to write an Informative Text

1. Learn about a topic through research.

2. Write what you learned on a graphic organizer.

3. Plan your topic sentence, facts, and closing sentence on a writing planner.
Use your planner to draft.

4. Edit and Revise your draft
• Capitals **A B C** • Spelling **cat**
• Punctuation **. ? !** • Neatness
5. Write your final draft!
Be proud of your hard work.


Guided Practice in Writing

Week
3

Week
4

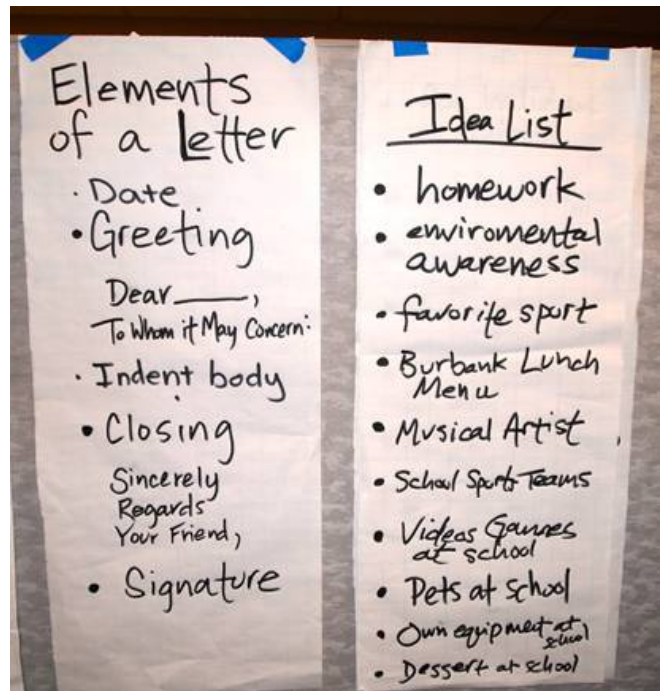
After you have:

1. Modeled a text type
2. Looked at examples of that text type and labeled the elements with the students
3. Created one piece together using shared writing and labeled that piece
4. Built a "how to" chart for that text type
5. Created or shared a rubric or checklist for that writing type

It's time to have the students write several pieces on their own for that text type.

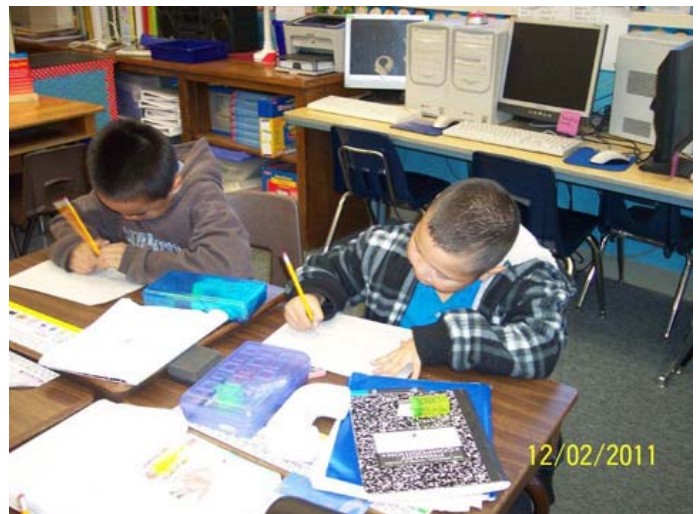
Topics to Choose From:

As you get started with this phase of your writing unit, you will want to generate several possible topics for students to draw from as they begin their own independent writing pieces. For example, if you are writing opinion pieces about books, you'll want to gather a basket of favorite books for the class. If you're writing opinion pieces about issues around the school, generate a list of possibilities with the students and staff members input.



Materials at the Ready:

If you have taught the students to use a particular graphic organizer or planning form for writing, make sure you have plenty of copies on hand for students to access as they start a new piece. Also make sure whatever word banks, pictorials, graphic organizers, and "how to" charts for that writing type are visible to all students. If possible, they should have a small copy of this in their own writing notebook or folder to refer to. If you have generated a student checklist or rubric for this writing type, students need access to that as well.



Guided Practice in Writing



Scaffolding Guided Practice:

If this is the first time students have written in this writing type, you may want to prompt for each step of the way. For example you may launch the whole class to do each step at the same time and share their writing after each step is completed. If necessary, you could literally do this sentence by sentence. *"Everyone write their topic sentence for their new piece. When you are done, read it aloud to your partner."* Try to move away from this whole group pacing as soon as you are able so the flow of ideas for the students is not squelched with all of the interruptions. You will probably have many writers who can plunge right into the process without reminders following the modeled and shared writing from weeks 1 and 2. Knowing how much scaffolding is needed is the highest form of responsive teaching. Watch what the students are writing to see who needs further support and prompting and who is ready to go it alone. Working with small groups during this period may be the most effective way to help all students be successful. The "jumpstart" procedure for a writing period may be helpful during guided practice. See page 25, (Jumpstart), for further details about managing differentiated groups after a whole group lesson.

Mini-lessons:


As you observe the students writing, you may notice whole group needs for writing with this text type. Consider providing a short (10-15 minute) lesson prior to the writing period for teaching whatever aspect of writing the students seem to need to learn about or be reminded of next. Here are some ideas for possible mini-lessons:

Word Choice:

You may notice that students are overusing certain words as they write their opinion pieces. If that is the case, gather the students with white boards for a mini lesson on synonyms for that "tired" word.

Instead of "Like" try these!

- ***prefer***
- ***enjoy***
- ***fond of***
- ***partial to***
- ***keen on***
- ***favorite***
- ***recommend***
- ***suggest***



You can use an on-line thesaurus to show students how to find other possibilities that are beyond their current active vocabulary.

Guided Practice in Writing

Week
3

Week
4

Transition Words and Phrases:

Use examples of the text type you are working on to help students identify transition words and phrases, and add those to a class list for students to use. There are all kinds of transition words. Some signal time order or sequence, others contrast things, some are used to provide additions to arguments, etc. Help students discover these in published text and then encourage them to use them in their writing by making them accessible. In addition, provide them with the transition words list in this handout on pages 63-64.

Sentence Variety:

Have students look at their writing from the previous day, reread it, and choose their favorite sentence in their piece. Have them recopy this onto a white board neatly. Next have them read their sentences out loud to either their group or the whole class. Notice with the students how their sentences are different. They may begin with different kinds of words, use interesting verbs, include a conjunction, or simply sound good to the reader. Point out explicitly for the students what makes their sentences different. List those things on the board so that all students can get those ideas from each other. Next suggest that the students revise their own sentence or perhaps another in their writing to apply ideas from the class to their work and give their sentences more variety.

Supersize your Sentence:

Write a short simple sentence on the board. Have all students rewrite the sentence to add detail on their white boards. Compare sentences with each other. Add more detail. Continue on until the students have “supersized” this sentence.

Next, encourage students to find one simple sentence in their writing and “supersize” it by adding more detail and information.

There are countless mini-lessons for writing to share with students as warm-ups before a guided writing period. The most frequent modes for these lessons include:

- Using student work under the document camera to make a teaching point
- Examining a similar feature in other writing
- Trying a technique out with white boards and comparing ideas with each other

Resource Tip!

The website: <http://writingfix.com/> contains literally hundreds of mini lessons for writing based on Six Traits Writing. Most of these lessons feature the use of children’s literature to make a point, and the site is searchable by type of mini-lesson and grade level.

Super Size the Sentence!

The dog ran across the road.

The black dog ran across the road to greet his owner.

The little black dog was so happy to see his owner, he ran across the dangerously busy street to greet him!

Opinion/Argument Rap: Rap Frame

Do you want a _____?
Well that's what will happen
if we let _____.
You'll see I'm right in the end.
Why? Well, first _____ no lie.
For example, _____
_____. That's why.
Furthermore, _____
_____ you see.
Because _____,
that's solid evidence, most would agree.
Granted, it's true that _____
and this could help out in the short run,
but this doesn't outweigh the _____
_____ in the long run.
I also concede that _____.
This is partly true, I must agree,
nevertheless, we must remember _____
_____ I believe.
Therefore, before _____,
think about these words of mine
and choose to _____.
In the long run it's what is right.

Adapted with permission from the author from:
Zwiers, J. (2004) *Developing Academic Thinking Skills in Grades 6-12*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association

Opinion/Argument Rap: The Greenhouse Effect

(Rap Example)

Do you want a world covered with water ?

Well that's what will happen

if we let the world keep getting warmer.

You'll see I'm right in the end.

Why? Well, first it's the glaciers

they are melting no lie.

For example, the ones in Alaska have dwindled

it's the Greenhouse Effect . That's why.

Furthermore, the oceans are already raised

several centimeters you see.

Because US Oceanography did a study

that's solid evidence, most would agree,

Granted, it's true that they say there are cycles of warmth and this

could help out in the short run, but this doesn't outweigh the

excessive flooding and the loss of land in the long run.

I also concede that we are starting to act .

This is partly true, I must agree,

nevertheless, we must remember all the heat

each day adds up I believe.

Therefore, before you start your car .

think about these words of mine

and choose to walk or ride a bike .

In the long run it's what is right.

Adapted with permission from the author from:
Zwiers, J. (2004) *Developing Academic Thinking Skills in Grades 6-12*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association

Explorers' Argument Advertisement and Essay

1. Choose one explorer to study. Read about the explorer and fill in the note sheet.
2. Imagine that you are the explorer. Your job is to persuade young people to go on your journey with you to the New World.

Part 1: You will be creating an advertising poster:

- Slogan
- Map showing where you are going
- Other visuals
- Benefits of going on the journey
- Address concerns of the reader
- Give a response to those concerns



Part 2: Turn your advertisement into an Essay

Paragraph 1

Turn your slogan into a lead. Options for leads that hook the reader;

- Question
- Amazing fact
- Appeal to something the reader wants

Explain where you are going and when.

Paragraph 2

Explain the benefits of going on the journey. Write a topic sentence and details to support that main idea.

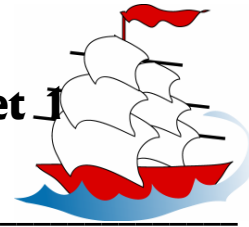
Paragraph 3

Address the reader's concerns about going on the journey. Respond to the concerns.

Paragraph 4

Write a concluding paragraph restating your main reasons why you are trying to convince them to go on the journey.

Explorers' Argument Note Sheet 1



Name of Explorer: _____

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Basic Facts: Where from? Where went? When?</p> | |
| <p>Why did they go?</p> | |
| <p>What impact did their exploration have on the local community?</p> | |

Explorers' Argument Note Sheet 2



Name of Explorer: _____

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>What impact did their journey have back home?</p> | |
| <p>What impact did the journey have on knowledge about the world?</p> | |
| <p>What is your opinion of this explorer?</p> | |



Explorers Report Matrix Worksheet

| Name of Explorer | Basic Facts: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Where from?▪ Where went?▪ When? | Why did they go? | What impact did their exploration have on the local community? | What impact did the journey have back home? | What impact did the journey have on knowledge about the world? | What is your opinion of this explorer? |
|------------------|--|------------------|--|---|--|--|
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

Cues, Sequences, and Transition Words

Size Sequence: When details are larger/smaller than each other.

| | | | |
|---------------|--------------|-------------------|------------------|
| the smallest | larger than | the largest | the small-sized |
| the larger of | equal to | the smallest | the medium-sized |
| the largest | smaller than | the next smallest | the large-sized |

Time Sequence: When some details occur before others in time.

| | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------------|
| first | now | at the beginning | before |
| then | soon | in the middle | during/meanwhile |
| next | then | at the end | after/afterwards |
| last | until | so far | later |
| by this time | first | in the morning | yesterday |
| at the same time | second | before noon | today |
| at that instant | third | in the afternoon | tomorrow |
| since | finally | in the evening | the day after tomorrow |
| | previously | | |
| the oldest | in the past | the next day | this year |
| the recent | in the present | two weeks later | next year |
| the most recent | in the future | six months later | in the next few years |
| to begin with | | | |
| the earliest | | | |
| the next earliest | | | |
| the most recent | | | |

Space Sequence: When details are arranged spatially in relationship to one another.

| | | | | | |
|----------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|----------|-----------|
| behind | on the edge | beside | in front of | west of | highest |
| over | toward | around | in back of | east of | against |
| under | throughout | side by side | facing | north of | alongside |
| below | to the right of | close to | in the center | south of | ahead of |
| beneath | to the left of | next to | inside | at the | here |
| low down | on top of | near | outside | in the | there |
| above | away | far | across | | |

(From Backwards Planning for Success with Writing ♦ www.knoxeducation.com Narrative Writing Section – Page 26)
You can also find these in the Standards Toolkits section of our website at knoxeducation.com

Cues, Sequences, and Transition Words

Important Sequence: When some details are more important than others.

| | | | |
|----------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| the best | the most important | the first interesting | the best |
| the next best | the next most important | more interesting | the next best |
| the least best | the least important | the most interesting | the worst |

Chain-Link Sequence: When details are not uniquely related; they can be chained together any way that you want them to be.

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------|------------|
| one example of | in addition | on the one hand | also | is |
| another example | in the same way | on the other hand | so | because |
| a further example | in fact | again | since | still |
| furthermore | a similarity | besides | yet | although |
| the latest example | still another | nevertheless | as well | while |
| moreover | in spite of | consequently | except | conversely |

Transitional Sequence: When ideas/details are being integrated; they can be linked using transitional words.

| | | | |
|----------|-----------|-------------|------------------|
| and | also | in addition | furthermore |
| plus | besides | otherwise | moreover |
| too | after | after that | not only |
| likewise | another | similarly | at the same time |
| another | however | for example | for instance |
| instead | therefore | thus | when |

Final Sequence: When ideas are being concluded.

| | | | |
|---------|-----------|-----------------|---------------|
| finally | therefore | consequently | in conclusion |
| then | by now | for this reason | |

Contrast Cues: When words are needed to indicate relations of degree.

| | | | | |
|--------|--------|-------|------|-------|
| only | many | most | more | least |
| little | some | worst | all | fewer |
| fewest | almost | best | | |

Cause/Effect Cues: When words are needed to signal cause and/or effect.

| | | | | |
|------|---------|-----------|-------------|--------------------|
| by | because | since | as a result | as a consequence |
| then | unless | therefore | so that | this is the reason |

(From Backwards Planning for Success with Writing ♦ www.knoxeducation.com Narrative Writing Section – Page 27)
You can also find these in the Standards Toolkits section of our website at knoxeducation.com

Ideas for Opinion/Argument Writing Sample Prompts that Appeal to Students

Uniforms in school
Skateboards on campus
Junk food on campus
Pay for chores at home
Homework
Cafeteria food quality
Where to go on a fieldtrip
Graffiti



Should animals perform at circuses?

Length of school day

Age for dating

Bullying

Cruelty to animals

Cloning

Violent video games

Smoking in movies or on TV

Dangerous sports

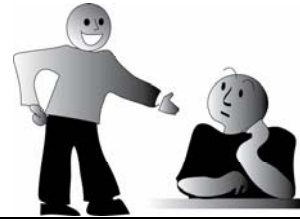
Best career choice for a student with research on the career

Analysis of Opinion/Argument techniques used in advertisements for toys



Students collaborate on a persuasive writing project.

Opinion/Argument Reading and Writing Vocabulary



| Word | Your Definition | Example/Illustration |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Argument | | |
| Counterargument | | |
| Editorial | | |
| Opinion | | |
| Unsupported | | |
| Supported | | |
| Fallacious | | |
| Fallacy | | |
| Reasoning | | |

Opinion/Argument Reading and Writing Vocabulary



| Word | Your Definition | Example/Illustration |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Quotes | | |
| Propaganda | | |
| Critique | | |
| Persuade | | |
| Explicit | | |
| Implicit | | |
| Weaker/ Stronger Statement | | |
| Subliminal Message | | |
| Fact | | |

Writing Checklist: Opinion/Argument Writing 3-6

Name: _____ Date: _____

| | Elements | Self | Peer | Teacher |
|--------------------|---|------|------|---------|
| Content | States a claim about the topic. | | | |
| | Describes reasons to support the claim. | | | |
| | Provides evidence from research to support the claim. | | | |
| | Counter argument: addresses readers' concerns or arguments against the claim. | | | |
| | | | | |
| Conventions | Capital letters (beginning of sentence, names, dates). | | | |
| | Spelling (Hint: reread backwards!). | | | |
| | Punctuation (.,!,?, " ', ') | | | |
| | Neatness (Skip lines, don't forget to indent, space between words.) | | | |

Writing Checklist: Opinion/Argument Writing 3-6

Name: _____ Date: _____

| | Elements | Self | Peer | Teacher |
|--------------------|---|------|------|---------|
| Content | States a claim about the topic. | | | |
| | Describes reasons to support the claim. | | | |
| | Provides evidence from research to support claim. | | | |
| | Counter argument: addresses readers' concerns or arguments against the claim. | | | |
| | | | | |
| Conventions | Capital letters (beginning of sentence, names, dates). | | | |
| | Spelling (Hint: reread backwards!). | | | |
| | Punctuation (.,!,?, " ', ') | | | |
| | Neatness (Skip lines, don't forget to indent, space between words.) | | | |

Writing Conference Strategies



| | WHOLE GROUP | ROVING | ONE-ON-ONE |
|------|--|---|---|
| WHY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaches the whole class and the conferee celebrates accomplishment. Integrates mini-lessons with student writing. Models importance of rereading. Shares teaching points with the whole class. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helps the whole class focus. Allows teacher to check in with each writer in a short time. Reminds writers of previous teaching points to incorporate. Reduces interruptions to the flow of writing. Helps others to sometimes eavesdrop and learn from the experience. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Puts the student in charge of what they need to learn. Provides specific in-depth teaching for that student. Gives enough time to assess and note what the student is working on. |
| WHEN | At the start of writing workshop 10-15 min. | During the writing period 1-5 minutes each student | During the writing period 5-10 minutes |
| HOW | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Have the student practice reading the piece aloud. Student or teacher reads the whole piece aloud (try not to look/make corrections). Read aloud again, listening for and celebrating strengths. Read sections or show sections to class to make specific teaching points. Write suggestions for the student on a post-it. Demonstrate for class how to make the changes to the piece. Be fair. Keep track publicly of who has shared. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Start with students having trouble getting started. Use "Jumpstart" techniques to have students say orally what they will write. Encourage students to reread, keep writing, check spelling. Teach on the spot. Remind students of resources in the room. Assess; as needed, take brief notes and add to checklist for individual students. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Have students read their pieces aloud to you. DO NOT make corrections to the piece while students are reading. Just listen. Begin by inviting the writer to ask for the help they need or want: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How's it going? What are you doing today as a writer? What do you need help with today? Use further questions and direct teaching to support the writer. The goal of the conference is to help the writer say what they want in writing so that the reader of the writing may understand what the writer intended. <p><i>NOTE: See next page for in depth information on one-on-one conferences.</i></p> |

Anderson, Carol (2000) *How's it Going? A practical guide to conferring with student writers*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
 Routman, Regie (2005) *Writing Essentials*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

One-On-One Conferences

Week
4

Week
5

Students sign up for a conference after they have completed the criteria for requesting a conference.

For example:

1. I have followed the steps for this writing assignment and completed everything I can do on my own.
2. I have reread my piece and checked to make sure it makes sense.
3. I have reread my piece and fixed any spelling or punctuation that I can.
4. I have practiced reading my piece aloud to myself.

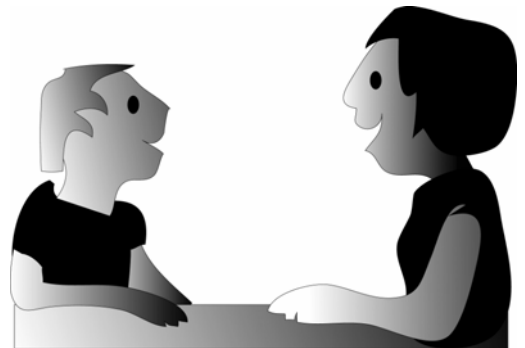
Bring to the Conference:

- Your writing folder
- The writing you are working on today
- A pencil
- Your personal spelling dictionary or spelling wall
- The checklist for this writing

Steps to a One-On-One Conference:

1. Have the student read their piece aloud to you. **DO NOT** make corrections to the piece while they are reading aloud. Just listen.
2. Begin by inviting the writer to ask for the help they want or need:
 - How's it going?
 - What are you doing today as a writer?
 - What do you need help with today?
3. Use further questions and direct teaching to support the writer. The goal of the conference is to help the writer say what they want to convey in writing so that the reader may understand what the writer intended.

See next page for additional questions...



Questions to Ask

Questions that nudge students to say more:

- "Could you say more about that?"
- "What do you mean by....?"
- "Could you explain what you mean by...?"

Questions to help with organization:

- "What do you want to say first, next, last?"
- "How would you like to begin/end?"
- "I am wondering if you could begin/end/continue with _____?" "What do you think about that?"

Questions to help with punctuation:

- "Listen to this..." (read the section aloud). "Where do you hear the end of that sentence?"
- Ask students to add punctuation as they listen to you read their piece.

Questions to help with spelling:

- Circle the words that don't look right. Ask, "Can you think of a way to help yourself with the spelling of that word?" (Word wall, word bank, dictionary, sound/spelling cards etc.)
- Write the words they need on a post-it or scratch paper and ask students to transfer those to their pieces after the conference. Ask them to add them to their personal word wall/dictionary too.

Questions to wrap up the conference:

- "What are you going to do next?"
- "How will you finish this piece?"
- "What are you going to work on next?"



Peer Conferencing

Week

4

Week

5

Tips for Teaching Students to Work with Peers on Editing, Revision, and Response

Teach the procedure using role play in a “fishbowl” setting. Have two students conduct a peer edit/revision or response session in the center of the room while the rest of the students form a circle around them. Make sure these two students know the precise steps you want them to use.

For example:

1. Student reads the piece aloud to the peer.
2. Peer asks student with what he/she wants help.
3. Peer uses polite language in offering suggestions.
4. Student writes down what he/she will change or makes the changes during the conference (not the peer!).
5. Student thanks peer for help.

When they are beginning, teach students to focus on one element at a time in conferences. Try mini-conferences with the whole class at the same time on a single focus such as punctuation, word choice, or spelling. Have the students use a simple student writing checklist for their work from which to choose a particular focus.

Designate a quiet corner or special location for peer conferencing so that others are not disturbed.

Use the Individual and Whole Class conferencing formats for a while before doing Peer Conferencing. Wait until you feel the students really understand what happens during a conference.

Consider assigning “writing buddies” for longer writing projects so that they won’t have to read through everything each time and can help each other through to the final product.



Learning about REVISION AND EDITING

Make it clear to students that there are two things we do with writing as we take it through the process towards a “publishable” piece. Make a chart like this with the students so that they can understand more easily the difference between the two.

REVISE—MAKE IT BETTER

- *Re-read to make sure it makes sense.*
- *Read aloud to a partner and see if they have any questions about what you were trying to mean.*
- *Think about sentence variety—do all of my sentences start the same way?*
- *Think about word choice—are there other words I can use to say the same thing in a more interesting way?*

EDIT—MAKE SURE IT'S CORRECT

GRAMMAR: Re-read to make sure that all of my sentences sound like correct English grammar.

FORMAT: Did I remember to indent, have straight margins, leave spaces between words?

SPELLING: Read your piece backwards and look at each word.

PUNCTUATION: Check for ending marks, commas, etc.

(Add to this throughout the year as you teach the students more and more about quality writing).

Chart It!





Implementing a Publishing Week in the Classroom

Towards the end of a cycle of teaching a particular form of writing, it is a wonderful thing to celebrate all the students have learned by taking time for a publishing week. The students will need to have saved several pieces of writing during the teaching cycle in order to participate. So, for example, you may have been teaching students descriptive writing for 4-6 weeks. Students have watched you model, participated in shared writing of a couple of pieces, and produced on their own 4-6 pieces following a similar process. Now, you're ready for a publishing week.

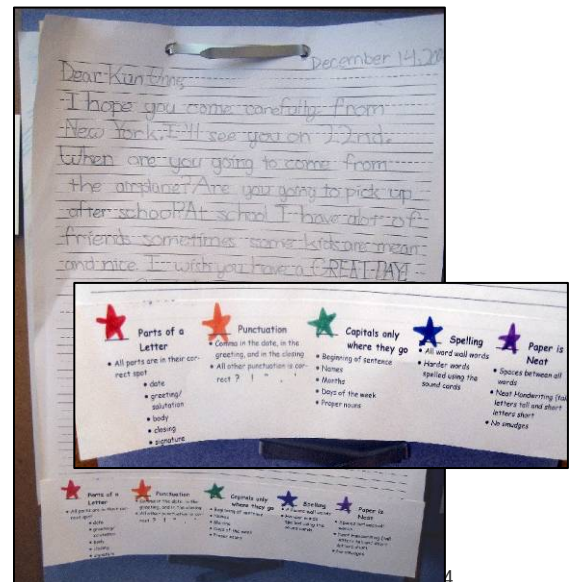
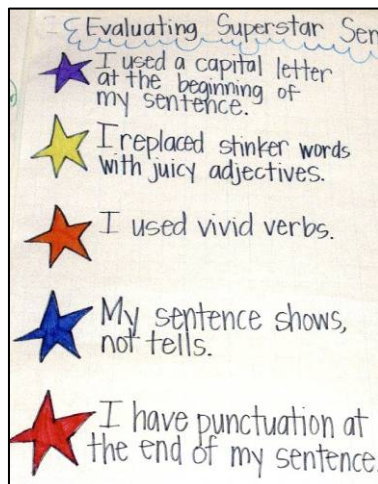
As you're scheduling for this week, also think about how you will want to have students share their writing when it is publishable. You may want to:

- Have students read their writing to another class
- Invite parents for an after school "authors' tea"
- Create a class anthology and put it in the library as well as give a copy to each of the other grade level classrooms
- Assemble a class magazine with each student contributing an article

Next is a list of mini-lessons you may want to consider to guide this process.

Choosing Which Piece to Publish:

Use student writing and your class rubrics or checklists to help students choose which piece they want to publish. Use actual examples from the students to help them identify the qualities of the writing you were working on. Have students re-read all of their pieces and then let students choose one piece for publishing from their collection.





REVISE: "make it better"

Use student writing to show students how to improve the content of the writing before taking it to publication. Students may use a thesaurus to improve word choice. They may need to improve sentence structure, add detail, or improve organization. Demonstrate with shared writing how to revise a piece of writing with input from the class.



Now have students re-read their writing to a partner. Next show them how to add detail to a piece of writing either by adding a sheet of paper to their piece to encourage writing more, or literally cutting and pasting with scissors and tape. Another way to get students to add more detail is to have students read to a partner and teach the partners to ask questions prompting more detail such as "what did the dog look like?" "How did that make you feel?" etc.

EDIT: "make it correct"

Editing is Fun!

Red Light

Green Light

Dogs make wonderful pets. They are always happy to see you.

You can play ball with them and teach them to do tricks. There is nothing more

cozy than snuggling on the couch with a soft and furry dog. Dogs have excellent

hearing and will warn you with a bark if someone is approaching your house. No

wonder we always say. "Dogs are a man's best friend!"

Green = Capitals

Red = Ending Punctuation

Yellow = Other punctuation: quotation marks, commas, apostrophes

Orange = beginning of paragraph for indent

Blue Dot = Read your writing backwards and
Fix the spelling if it doesn't look

Charlotte Knox www.knoxeducation.com

Guide this process slowly, one convention at a time. You may want to have them re-read just for capitals and periods first and use the color coding system (green for capitals and red for ending punctuation). For spelling have them read the whole piece backwards, putting a dot under each word as they say it out loud and look to see if it is spelled correctly. Any word that doesn't look right to the student can be circled and then fixed with the use of a word bank, dictionary, or even a peer. [This poster is on our website! See back page for how to get there.]

REVISE—MAKE IT BETTER

- Re-read to make sure it makes sense.
- Read aloud to a partner and see if they have any questions about what you were trying to mean.
- Think about sentence variety—do all of my sentences start the same way?
- Think about word choice—are there other words I can use to say the same thing in a more interesting way?

(Add to this throughout the year as you teach the students more and more about quality writing).

EDIT—MAKE SURE IT'S CORRECT

GRAMMAR: Re-read to make sure that all of my sentences sound like correct English grammar.

FORMAT: Did I remember to indent, have straight margins, leave spaces between words?

SPELLING: Read your piece backwards and look at each word.

PUNCTUATION: Check for ending marks, commas, etc.

TEACHER EDIT:

Before re-copying or typing, the teacher will need to give it a once over to fix up remaining errors. For spelling, you can list the still misspelled words on a post it and ask the students to “find and fix” them. For capitals and punctuation, use editing marks consistently and teach whichever system you want to use in advance to the students. For grammar, ideally, you would sit with the student and show them how to say the sentence so it “sounds right” in English. You could also do a mini-lesson on any particular common error such as irregular past tense words for the whole class and then see if the students can self correct. If possible, arrange for extra help from another teacher, teacher’s aide, or any other adult helper you can find during the publishing week to help with the final edit process.



PUBLISH! Have students re-copy or type their piece. If the typing is going to slowly, you can have the students work on typing for 30 minutes or so, and then just finish the typing yourself. Pairing young students with older buddies for typing is another option. If you are not able to have students type their final drafts, you may have them handwrite them neatly on lined paper and then trace over their writing with a thin black marker.

ILLUSTRATE

Have students illustrate their writing and bind it for a finished product. This is a great time to introduce another art media as a special treat such as colored pencils, watercolor, or collage. Student books can be assembled into blank hardbound books from Bare Books: <http://www.barebooks.com/books.htm> turning young students’ writing into something parents will treasure.

SHARE and CELEBRATE



Invite others to hear student writing and look at illustrations. This may take the form of an “author’s tea” with parents or invited guests from the staff, “author’s chair” with students reading aloud to their peers, or a writing fair that may be for a whole grade level or school to enjoy.

Have students practice reading aloud their piece several times before the sharing to promote fluency and dampen nerves. Encourage the audience to give feedback about the writing with compliments and questions. You may also want to have “wow” notes such as in the photos in the section on

“Author’s Chair” next, available for readers to leave feedback for writers.

The Author's Chair: Students Respond to Each Other's Writing



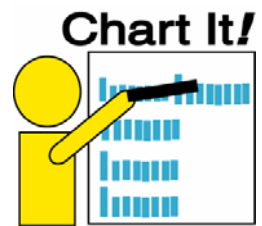
Students may periodically sign up to read their work aloud to the class and get feedback. For K-1 students this can be a daily practice since their writing is not lengthy. Other ways to organize this include:

- o Sign up to read a piece when students get to a certain stage in the process.
- o Designate days of the week for students to share.
- o Teacher chooses opportunity for sharing based on a teaching point the teacher wants to make.

Steps to Running an Author's Chair Session:

1. Students read their piece aloud to the class.
2. The writer calls on students to comment on the piece or ask questions.
3. Another student or the teacher takes notes on the comments and gives them to the writer when he/she is finished.

It is critical to teach students how to give appropriate comments and ask helpful questions. You may want to create a chart with the students with sentence stems and sample questions such as the example below:



Author's Chair

I liked the part where.....

I liked the way you described....

I'm wondering why you chose.....?

I'm wondering where you got the idea for....?

I really like..... Could you describe/explain it in more detail.....?

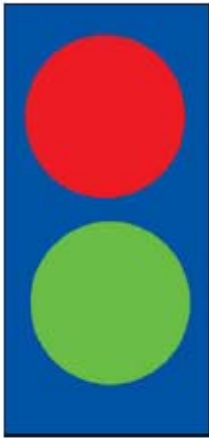
I noticed that you _____ Maybe you could try _____ instead?

That story made me feel.....

I could really picture.....

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The Editing is Fun Poster is located on our website:
Go to Teacher Resources → Backwards Planning for Success with Writing → Tools for Writing → Editing is Fun Poster



Editing is Fun!

Red Light

Green Light






 **D**ogs make wonderful pets. **T**hey are always happy to see you.

You can play ball with them and teach them to do tricks. **T**here is nothing more

cozy than snuggling on the couch with a soft and furry dog. **D**ogs have excellent

hearing and will warn you with a bark if someone is approaching your house. **N**o

wonder we always say. **"D**ogs are a man's best friend!**"**

-  **Green** = Capitals
-  **Red** = Ending Punctuation
-  **Yellow** = Other punctuation: quotation marks, commas, apostrophes
-  **Orange** = beginning of paragraph for indent
-  **Blue Dot** = Read your writing backwards and say each word.

Fix the spelling if it doesn't look right

The “Editing Machine”

This is a fun way to get students to help each other edit their pieces. You'll need to form groups of 3 or more ahead of time and have a timer handy. All students need to have a finished piece of writing—preferably the same assignment.

1. Form groups and assign roles:
 - Capitalization
 - Punctuation
 - Format—neatness (checks indents, margins, and layout)
 - Spelling
2. You may choose to assign a color to each role and have them make their corrections with their assigned color pen or pencil.
3. Explain the task and review norms. Students are to only make corrections for their assigned role and are not to give comments about the writing during the editing machine.
4. Set timer for an amount of time that will work with the length of the assignment (this will vary from 1-5 minutes or so).
5. Have students begin with a single paper in front of each “editor”.
6. Tell the students to start the machine. When the timer goes off, the students pass papers to their right and repeat the process until each paper in the group runs through every editor in the machine.
7. If students are going to publish these pieces, you may choose to collect them after the “machine” is complete and offer a final edit. For spelling errors, simply write the misspelled words on a Post-it and make students find them and fix them. For other kinds of errors, use the same editing marks and colors that were assigned to the editing machine.



Resources for Teaching Opinion/Argument Writing

A Quick Guide to Teaching Persuasive Writing, K-2 (Workshop Help Desk). Sarah Picard Taylor and Lucy Calkins (2008). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Why We Must Run With Scissors: Voice Lesson in Persuasive Writing
Barry Lane and Gretchen Bernabei (2001). Shoreham, VT: Discover Writing Press.

Twisting Arms: Teaching Students How to Write to Persuade
Dawn DiPrince (2005). Fort Collins, CO: Cottonwood Press.

Writing to Persuade: Minilessons to Help students Plan, Draft, and Revise in Grades 3-8. Caine, Karen (2008). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Crafting Opinion and Persuasive Papers (2007). Clifford, Tim Gainesville, FL: Maupin House.

Oh, Yeah?! Putting Argument to Work Both in School and Out. Smith, M. W., Wilhelm, J. D., Fredricksen, J. E. (2012). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Children's books as models for Argument/Opinion Writing

Should We Have Pets? A Persuasive Text by Pamela W. Jane, Sylvia Lollis and Joyce Hogan (Jan 2002). New York, NY: Mondo Publishing.

Click, Clack, Moo: Cows That Type, by Doreen Cronin (2011). New York, NY: Simon and Schuster.

I Wanna Iguana, by Karen Kaufman Orloff (2004). New York, NY: Putnam.

I Wanna New Room, by Karen Kaufman Orloff (2010). New York, NY: Putnam.

Earrings! by Judith Viorst (2010). New York, NY: Atheneum.

Hey, Little Ant, by Phillip and Hannah Noose(1998). New York, NY: Tricycle/Random.

Can I Keep Him? By Steven Kellogg (1992). New York, NY: Penguin.

Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus! By Mo Willems (2012). New York, NY: Hyperion.

Costco Magazine has a monthly editorial that often involves a topic of interest to students. There are two essays included, one on each side of an issue.

Websites:

Time for Kids Magazine's website includes an archive with many provocative and current articles that can be used to introduce a topic for discussion and writing.
<http://www.timeforkids.com/news>

The Writing Fix website is a god mine of resources for teaching writing based on the six traits model. Their Opinion/Argument section contains several great lesson ideas. Check out the RAFTS lesson on electing a vegetable which includes research on the nutritional qualities of the fruit or vegetable the student select to write about
<http://writingfix.com/genres/persuasive.htm>

Opinion/Argument Essay Prompts: This link takes you to a list of 53 Opinion/Argument essay prompts which are similar to those found on the NAEP test, lots of good ones here:
<http://www2.asd.wednet.edu/pioneer/barnard/wri/per.htm>