



Writing an Opinion Piece Grades 3-5

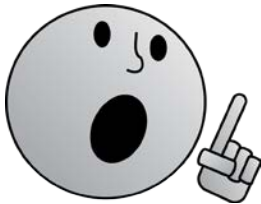
When completing a shared writing of a new text type for students, it is helpful to walk the students through the same process you will ask them to use on their own. Here, I've listed each step on the "how to" chart the students will have, then described what the teaching might sound and look like as you collaboratively work through the process for the first time. Since there will be so much guidance and support during the shared writing phase, you can choose to take on a more complex topic such as one from your science or social studies curriculum.



1. *Research a topic that you care about.*

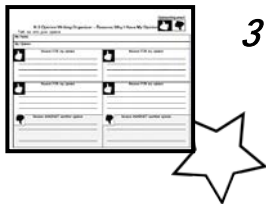
Generate a list of topics to explore for opinion writing with your students. You will choose one for the group piece, and later the students may choose others from the same list for their own essays. See [page 15](#) for many possibilities.

Once the topic is chosen, read and research as a whole class on the topic. This is a good time to teach students how to choose good search terms, evaluate the credibility of websites, and keep track of the information they glean in on-line or paper notes. You'll also want to teach them keep track of their sources.



2. *Choose your opinion.*

Use "Take a Stand" or "Talk Tickets" to guide the students to developing an opinion about the topic. Since this will be a group piece, you'll have to choose a side to support in the class writing. You may want to vote to choose a side.



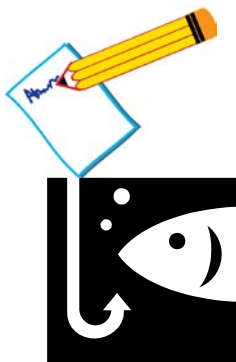
3. *List reasons you will use for your opinion.*

Introduce whichever graphic organizer for planning you want them to use. Have the students write their opinion and gather evidence for their writing into the organizer. You may want to do this on a large chart with students offering their evidence via white boards, for example.



4. *Choose your best reasons.*

With your guidance, choose the best evidence and arguments for your opinion and put a check mark, or star next to them. You can also use numbers to order these to show the sequence you will use in your essay.



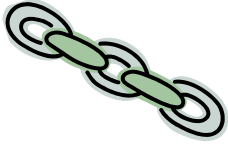
5. *Write your introductory paragraph. Begin with a hook then write a topic sentence that states your opinion.*

As you and the students begin writing, have them refer to the language frames guide to create sentences to suggest. Refer to the chart for hooks to generate possible first sentences as well. Students can write possibilities as pairs, then display their suggestions and the class can vote.



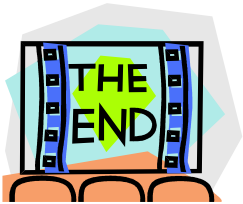
6. Write paragraphs* to elaborate on your reasons and give evidence from research. Include facts and details.

Continue writing the rest of the piece with input from the class. Feel free to guide the class to the best sounding language and the clearest structure. You'll want the resulting effort to reflect at least grade level standards for opinion writing: clearly stated opinion, organized writing in multiple paragraphs, good use of transitions and linking words, include facts and details from research, and an effective conclusion.



7. Use linking words to connect your ideas.

Refer to the transitions/cues words chart as you go to select the best ways to link ideas throughout the piece.



8. Write a conclusion to remind the reader of your opinion.

Try a few ideas for the conclusion before choosing one. You may want to refer back to the mentor texts from week one to give them ideas.



9. Reread and revise: Does it make sense? Sound convincing? Any missing information?

If you have time, you could refer here to the A.R.M.S. poster and look at the essay again for each element (Add, Remove, Move, Substitute)



10. Reread and edit: Check

- capitals
- spelling
- punctuation
- cite or list sources

★	★	★	★	★
Punctuation	Capitals only where they go	Spelling	Spaces between all words	Paper is Neat
. ? ! " ,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginning of sentence • Names • Months • Days of the week 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All word wall words • Harder words spelled using the sound cards and/or attempted spelling 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handwriting • No smudges



11. Type or write a final draft!

12. Celebrate your hard work!

Since you as teacher will have typed this up with the class as it is composed, you won't need to edit, but do celebrate! You could print it out and give it to a staff member or the parents for feedback, for example. Do print a copy of this as well for each student as a reminder of the elements of an argument essay.



- Grade 3 requires only one paragraph