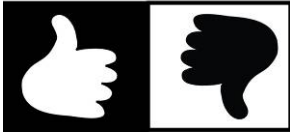




Grades 3-5 Opinion Reading & Writing Handbook

Opinion/Argument



Together is Better

Teaching Literacy in Integrated Units



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Opinion/Argument Writing - Section Contents 3-5


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What is Opinion/Argument Writing?

Common Core State Standards indicate for the first time that students as young as kindergarteners should learn about how authors use reasoning and evidence to support their thoughts, and that in order to be prepared for college and career in the 21st century, students should also be able to write clearly developed arguments of their own. Although the anchor standard below sounds complex, in day-to-day living we are surrounded by these kinds of texts:

- product reviews
- news stories explaining possible reasons for events
- reports on contemporary issues in areas of interest such as health, environmental concerns, financial issues, etc.
- popular media reviews
- editorials of all kinds
- emails and letters to communicate a particular point the author wants to make
- advertising of all kinds

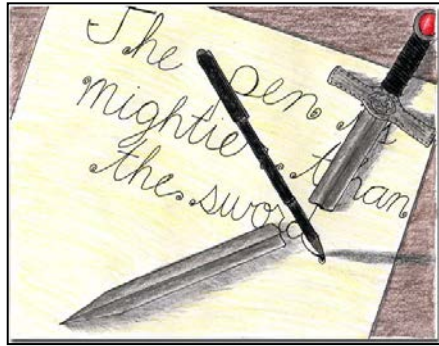
Writing Standard 1 Indicates what each grade level needs to know and be able to do with this text type:

W	Writing Standards – W1 Opinion/Argument	K-6
TEXT TYPES and PURPOSES*:		
	ANCHOR STANDARD 1: Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.	

Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
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>).	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.	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., <i>because, and, also</i>) to connect opinion and reasons, and provide a concluding statement or section.	Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce the topic or text they are writing about, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure that lists reasons. Provide reasons that support the opinion. Use linking words and phrases (e.g., <i>because, therefore, since, for example</i>) to connect opinion and reasons. Provide a concluding statement or section.
Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	
Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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. Provide reasons that are supported by facts and details. Link opinion and reasons using words and phrases (e.g., <i>for instance, in order to, in addition</i>). Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented. 	Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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. Provide logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details. Link opinion and reasons using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., <i>consequently, specifically</i>). Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented. 	Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly. Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons. Establish and maintain a formal style. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented. 	

*These broad types of writing include many subgenres. See Appendix A for definitions of key writing types.

(Teaching tip: display one or more of these quotes and have students discuss them, then do a quick write sharing their opinions of these statements)



"The pen is mightier than the sword.."

This picture was drawn by Erika Aoyama on February 17, 2003

"There is no conversation more boring than the one where everyone agrees."

Michel de Montaigne

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead

"A man never tells you anything until you contradict him."


George Bernard Shaw

Informational Text

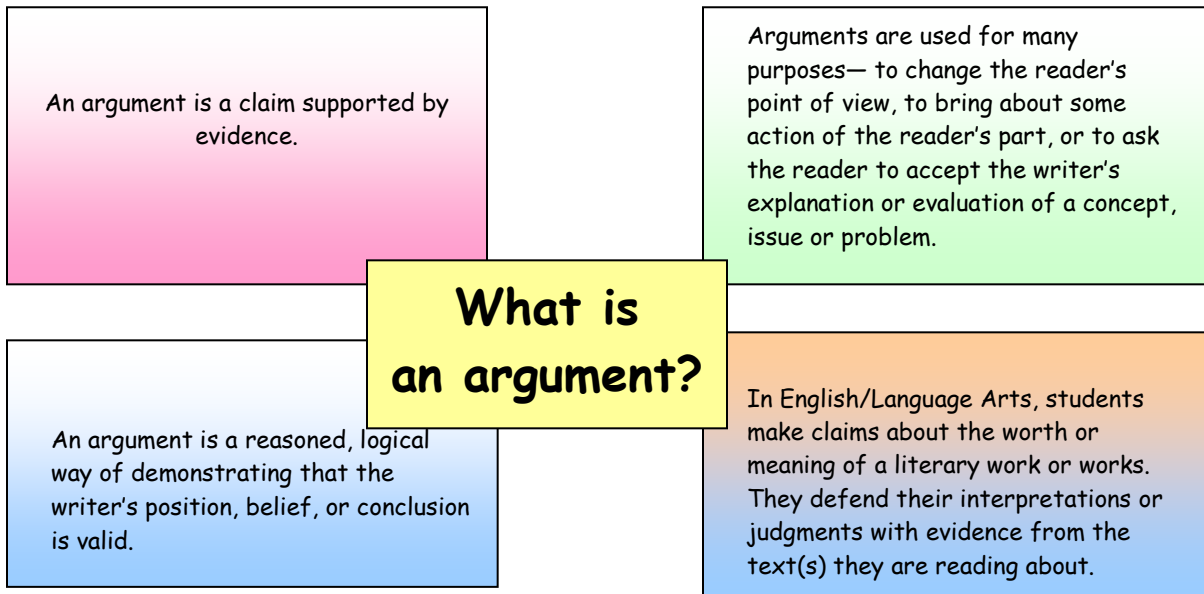


Reading Informational Text

Reading Informational Text Standard 8 relates this skill with writing to how students should be able to analyze the same in texts they read:

RI		Reading Standard RL8 for Informational Text		K-6
INTEGRATION of KNOWLEDGE and IDEAS				
 ANCHOR STANDARD 8: Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.				
Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	
With prompting and support, identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text.	Identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text.	Describe how reasons support specific points the author makes in a text.	Describe the logical connection between particular sentences and paragraphs in a text (e.g., comparison, cause/effect, first/second/third in a sequence).	
Grade 4		Grade 5	Grade 6	
Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.		Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text, identifying which reasons and evidence support which point(s).	Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.	

What is an Argument?



Persuasion vs. Argument

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

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.

Anchor Paper from CCCS Argument/Opinion Grade 4

This is a sample only. For additional anchor papers K-8, please see our website, www.knoxeducation.com, and the separate packet entitled CCCS Opinion-Argument Anchor Papers Packet 2013.

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,


This is a sample only, please see our website
www.knoxeducation.com for all rubrics



OPINION WRITING RUBRIC

California Common Core Standards Based – **GRADE 4**



Level	OPINION WRITING/PROCESS	LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS	WITH GUIDANCE and SUPPORT FROM ADULTS
4 Exceeds	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets all expectations set forth in 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Document is well organized and connected <input type="checkbox"/> Both opinion and conclusion are clear and well stated <input type="checkbox"/> Reasons are well organized with appropriate details	Mostly correct use of language conventions, and some above grade level skills used, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets all expectations set forth in 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Uses underlining, quotation marks, or italics to indicate titles of works <input type="checkbox"/> Recognizes and corrects inappropriate shifts in verb tense. 	Guidance & Support:  Level of guidance and support from adults before writing:
3 Meets	OPINION WRITING (W1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Introduces topic clearly and states an opinion <input type="checkbox"/> Creates organizational structure that groups related ideas to support writer's purpose (W1a) <input type="checkbox"/> Supplies reasons that support opinion with facts and details (W1b) <input type="checkbox"/> Links opinion and reasons with words/phrases such as <i>for instance, in order to, in addition</i> (W1c) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides a concluding statement or section related to the opinion (W1d) <hr/> WRITING PROCESS (W4-W8) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Uses clear and coherent writing in multi-paragraph texts that is appropriate to task, purpose, and audience (W4) <input type="checkbox"/> WGASFA* Develops and strengthens writing by planning, revising, and editing (W5) <input type="checkbox"/> WGASFA* Uses a variety of digital tools to write and publish writing (W6) <input type="checkbox"/> WGASFA* Can keyboard/ type a minimum of one page in a single sitting (W6) <input type="checkbox"/> Takes notes, paraphrases, and categorizes information, and provides a list of sources (W8) <input type="checkbox"/> Draws evidence from text (W9) 	Adequate use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling for grade level, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Produces complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons (L1f) <input type="checkbox"/> Correctly uses frequently confused words (e.g., <i>to, too, two; there, their</i>) (L1g) <input type="checkbox"/> Writes fluidly and legibly in cursive or joined italics. (L1h) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses correct capitalization (L2a) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses commas and quotation marks to mark direct speech and quotations from a text (L2b) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses a comma before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence. (L2c) <input type="checkbox"/> Spells grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed. (L2d) <input type="checkbox"/> Chooses words and phrases to convey ideas precisely (L3) <input type="checkbox"/> Chooses punctuation for effect (L3) 	Check off what was done before the student wrote the piece being scored. <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
2 Almost Meets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Opinion is clear but some reasons are unrelated <input type="checkbox"/> May not write multi-paragraphs <input type="checkbox"/> Planning for writing is limited <input type="checkbox"/> Provides few facts and details <input type="checkbox"/> Draws little evidence from text <input type="checkbox"/> Uses some linking words/phrases but ideas are scattered 	Limited use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling for grade level, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Uses some punctuation correctly <input type="checkbox"/> Uses some sentence variety correctly <input type="checkbox"/> Spells most words correctly 	
1 Does Not Meet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provides few or no details or facts <input type="checkbox"/> Provides no concluding statement or is unrelated to opinion <input type="checkbox"/> Document is disorganized or incomplete 	Infrequent use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling for grade level, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Many words spelled incorrectly <input type="checkbox"/> Has many errors in capitalization <input type="checkbox"/> Writes few complete sentences or only simple sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Punctuation includes many errors or is missing 	

* **WGASFA:** "with guidance and support from adults"

This rubric was adapted from rubrics at sbusd.org and information from Smarter Balanced Assessments (www.smarterbalanced.org) using the California Common Core Standards at www.cde.ca.gov.



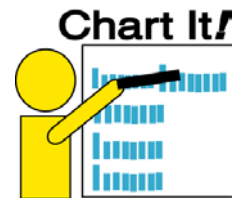
Writing Anchor Papers with Students Learning About a Rubric from the Inside Out

A powerful way to help students understand what the elements of a rubric really mean is to write anchor papers reflecting each level on a rubric WITH the students. Here's how:

1. Either write yourself, or locate a piece of writing that represents a "2" on the rubric you are hoping to help the students understand. (On a four point scale this is a paper that is just below proficient.) Project this piece of writing on the screen or chart paper so that all of the students can see it.
2. Provide each student with a copy of the rubric you will be illustrating with the anchor papers you will be writing together.
3. Read the "2" to the students aloud and ask them to find evidence from the rubric for why it's a "2". For example, students may say, *"I think it's a "2" because it uses a lot of everyday words instead of more interesting word choices."*
4. Using a piece of chart paper take suggestions from the class and collaboratively rewrite the "2" paper to make it a "3" or proficient paper.

PLEASE NOTE: you will need to have taught the students about each of the elements on the rubric before attempting this lesson.

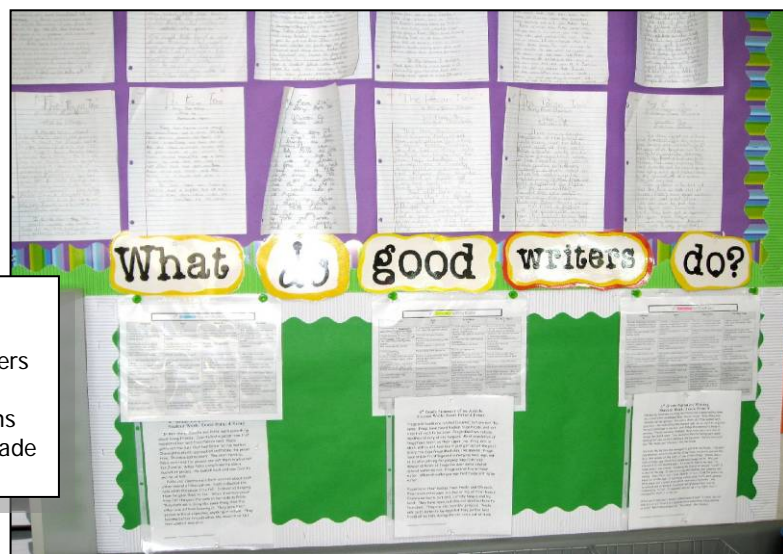
5. Next, take the "3" paper and re-write it collaboratively with student input to make it a "4". There may be times during this process that you make suggestions yourself if the students are stuck for ideas about how to write an advanced paper. Early in the school year, you may even model and think aloud as you go to compose this yourself in front of the students.
6. Finally, revisit the "2" paper and collaboratively re-write it to make it a "1". Display this paper as well.
7. Use these exemplars as anchor papers for students to refer to as they learn to evaluate their own writing throughout the year.



2



3



Portfolio Wall with Anchor Papers

When teachers display anchor papers and rubrics alongside the portfolio wall of student writing, expectations for writing at grade level can be made very explicit for everyone.

GRADE 3 SAMPLE LEVEL 2 Anchor Paper

Saving Water

Water is rely important. Everyone needs water to live. I learn that peple use about 100 gallons a day of water. Peple use water to drink and wash and water ther gardens. When I was little I like to play in the water. I'm going to ask my mom to save water.

- Weak topic sentences
- Few facts
- Simple details
- Simple sentences
- Some verb errors
- Some spelling errors

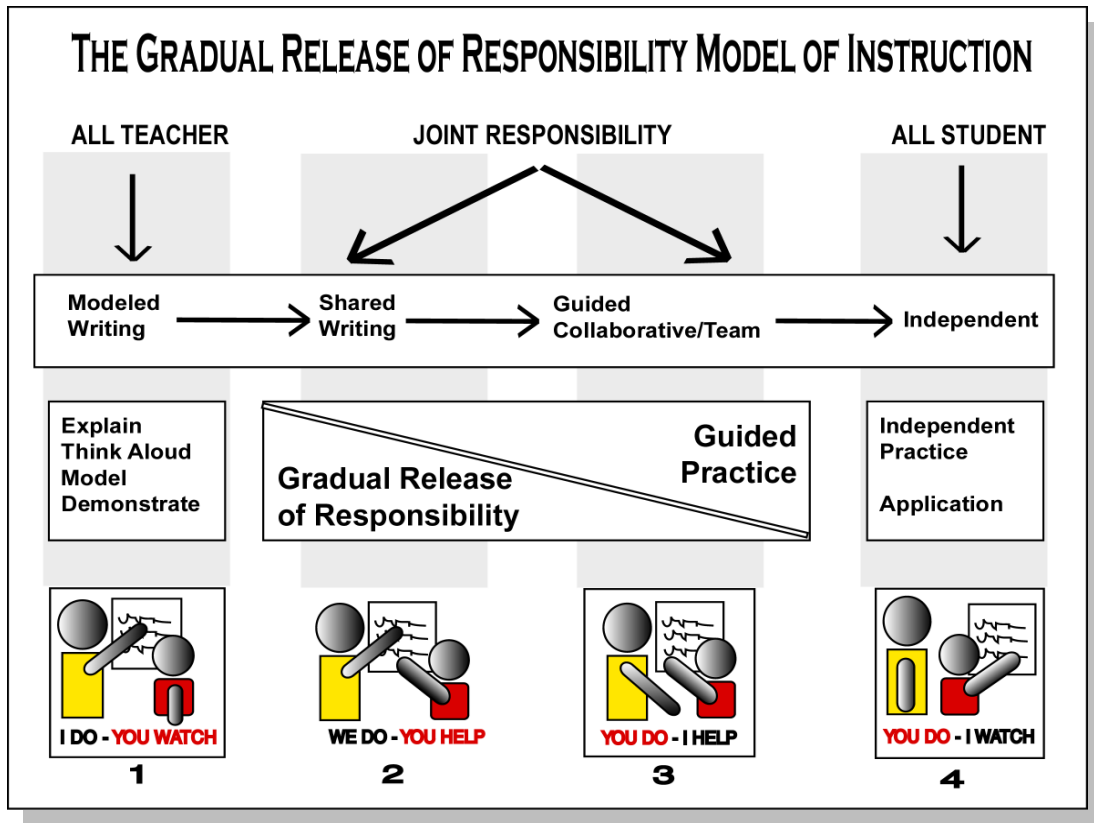
GRADE 3 SAMPLE LEVEL 3 Anchor Paper

Life's most precious resource is water. People can't survive without water to drink, wash, and irrigate the plants that become our food. People use about 100 gallons a day just in their homes. We need even more than that to grow crops! However, many people don't have enough water to live. They live in parts of the world with droughts, or not enough rain. They also sometimes live where the water has been polluted and it makes them sick if they drink it. We all need to work together to save water so that everyone on earth can have the water they depend on to survive!

- Topic sentence is clear
- Facts and definitions
- Transition words
- Ideas are grouped into two paragraphs
- Concluding statement
- Sentence variety: simple and compound

The Gradual Release of Responsibility Model of Instruction*

See also page 17 for specific application of this model in the 6 week Planning for writing sequence.



* 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.

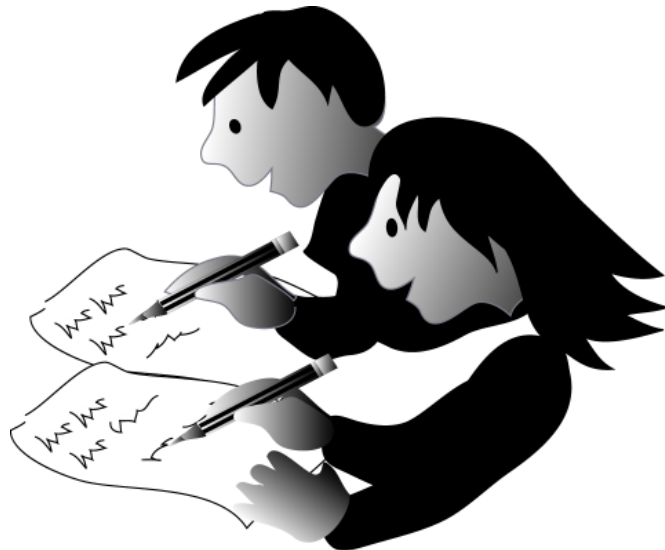
The most successful approach to teaching writing we have found with today's students is to honor the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model of Instruction. The model is shown in the graphic on the previous page. To make this paradigm work, 1) we first model the process through writing in front of the 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.

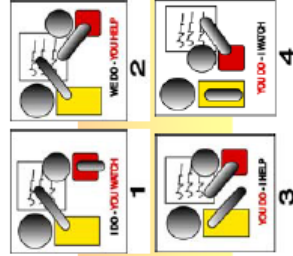




The Writing Process

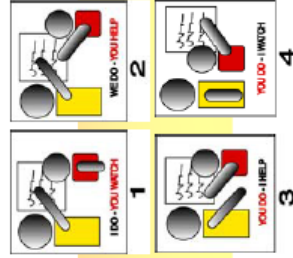
1. PLANNING

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



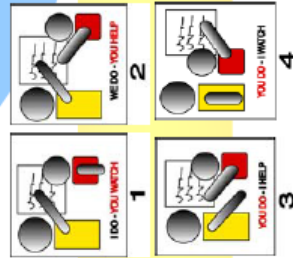
2. DRAFTING

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



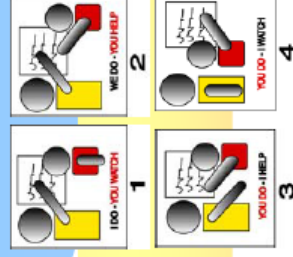
3. REVISING

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



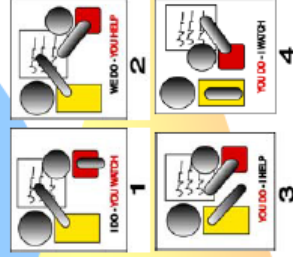
4. EDITING

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



5. PUBLISHING

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



Sea of Talk

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. Favorite quote: Students find a favorite sentence or phrase from what they are researching to read to a partner or the class.
5. 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.

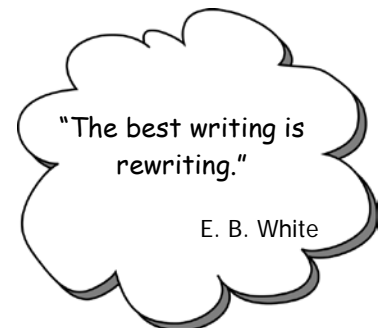


During Writing:

- 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:

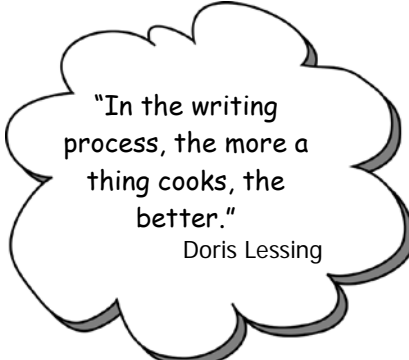
- Students read their pieces aloud to a small group or peer, others respond with a positive comment about the piece or a question.
- "I liked the part about...."
- "I wonder what you meant by....?"
- "I'd like to hear more about...."



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.

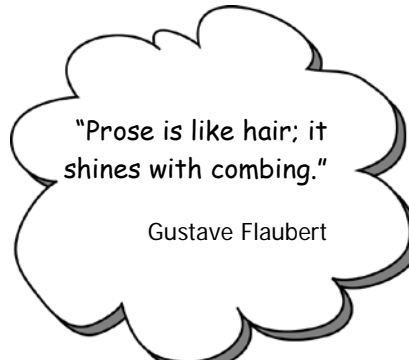


"In the writing process, the more a thing cooks, the better."

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

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:

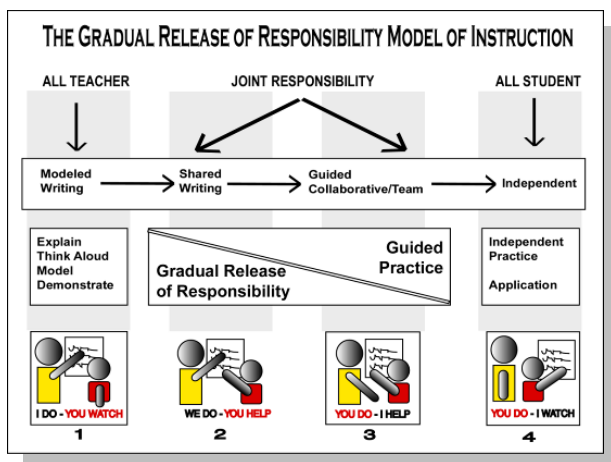
Week One: Introduce the writing standards. Model the whole process for the new text type using teacher modeling as well as examination of “mentor texts” or exemplars from published authors. Focus on identifying the elements of the new text type with color coding or labeling. Write or use anchor papers 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 students 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.







CCSS Unit Planner for Opinion/Argument Writing

"Begin with the end in mind."



Grade		Topic:	
PLANNING	CCSS Grade Level Standards:		
	Writing Standard 1	Reading Informational Text Standard 8	
	Authentic Mode for Publishing/Sharing:		
	Format (something you would see in the real world—magazine, brochure, webpage, poster, etc.) <i>Style is covered under Writing: W 4 and publishing is in W6; Speaking and Listening: SL 1-5.</i>		
	Authentic Audience (Who are the students trying to influence with their opinion/argument writing?)		
	<i>Audience is covered in Writing: W 4 and W10; and Speaking and Listening: SL4.</i>		
	Assessment: (Rubric, student friendly checklist, commentary from audience, etc.)		
<i>Revision is covered under Writing: W5, and peer assessment under Speaking and Listening: SL 1 and 4.</i>			

READING and RESEARCH SOURCES	Possible Sources: INTERNET
	<i>Internet resources are covered under Reading: RI7 and Writing: W6.</i>
	Possible Sources: TEXTBOOKS/BOOKS
	<i>Other resources are covered under Reading: RI 9 and Writing: W6-8.</i>
Possible Sources: OTHER	
(Guest speakers, community organizations, hands-on experiences, etc.)	
<i>Interaction with people & resources is covered under Writing: W6; Speaking and Listening: SL 1,2,3.</i>	
Evaluating Sources and Resources	
Include a lesson on how to evaluate websites and conduct effective website searches. http://www.schrockguide.net/critical-evaluation.html Excellent source of website evaluation lessons	
<i>Evaluation of resources is covered under Reading: R 7,8,9.</i>	


LESSON SEQUENCE Weeks 1 and 2

<p>WEEK 1</p>	<p>MODELING: Read exemplars, label/color code, introduce rubric, write “quick tries.”</p> <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 20px;">   </div>
<p>WEEK 2</p>	<p>Researching topics of interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate an “Issues We Care About” list. • Invite a guest speaker, or go on a fieldtrip to learn about a local issue. • Model with a whole class topic. • Teach CCSS Reading Standard 8 for Informative Text: “Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.” (anchor standard) • Students choose topic and start their research take notes on graphic organizer. <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 20px;">   </div>

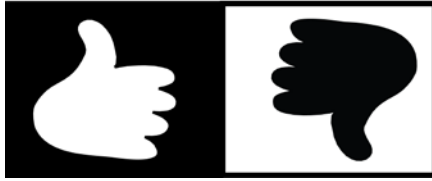
LESSON SEQUENCE Weeks 3, 4 and 5

WEEK 3	<p>Take a Stand: Use academic language frames, white boards, etc. activities to rehearse arguments and reasons orally and draft statements. Use shared writing to write a class piece and label the parts <i>Speaking and Listening standards L 1-4; Writing Standard W1a (6-12) organization.</i></p>  
WEEKS 4-5	<p>Guided writing: for opinion/argument pieces: students write 1-3 pieces. Use student checklist, writing project board, small group instruction, sharing and responding.</p>  

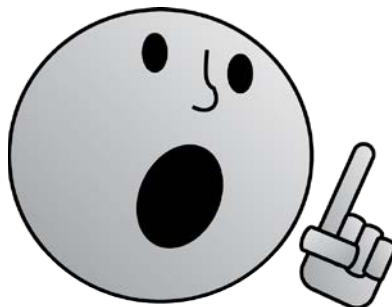
LESSON SEQUENCE Week6

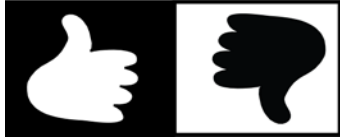
WEEK 6	Editing/Publishing <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Revise, edit and publish on piece• administer on-demand prompt
	 4
	Planning for Differentiation: <i>(Jumpstart, Group or partner project, language frames as needed)</i>

Opinion/Argument

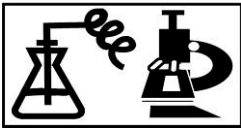


Opinion/Argument Writing Tool Kit





This text type can be integrated across the curriculum in multiple ways. Here are some ideas for integration:

Science & Technical**Science:**

- Write to show your opinion about topics we have studied and their impact on our world: ecology, weather, energy use, etc.
- Write to convince your reader to take action on an issue such as health, recycling, etc.

History/Social Studies**Social Studies:**

- Write to show your opinion about a topic we have studied such as equal rights, taxation, voting for a current issue.
- Write to use point of view to show the position of a historical person or movement such as trying to convince someone to join your exploration, or your colony.

Literature**Literature:**

- Write to share your opinion about a piece of literature citing evidence from the text.
- Write a review of a piece of literature to share your opinion and who you think would enjoy it.
- Write to argue for a particular theme or character trait in a piece of literature, and how one can learn from it (heroic, kind, brave, etc.).

MATHEMATICS**Math:**

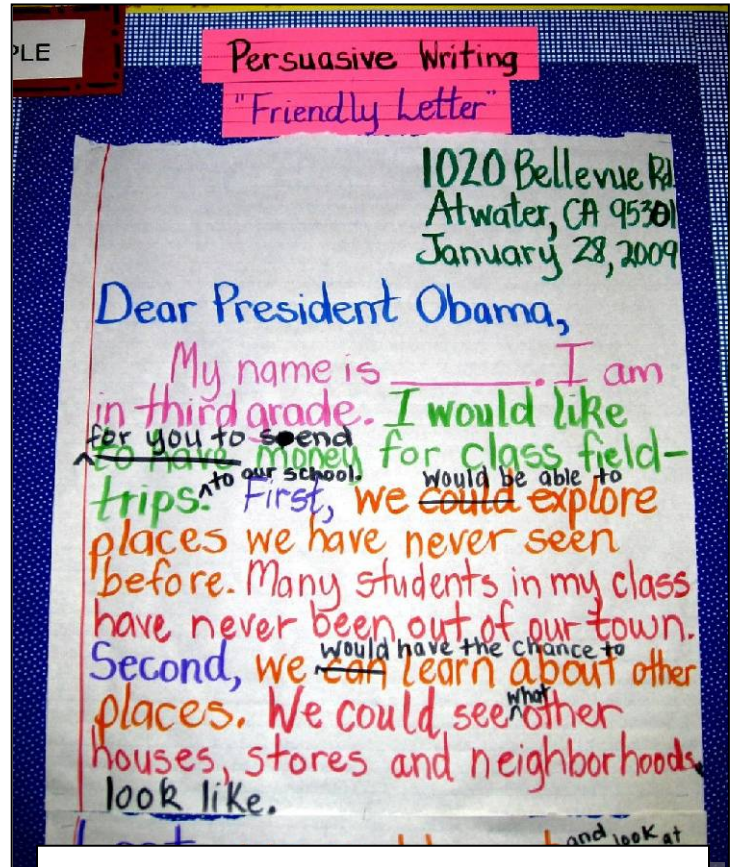
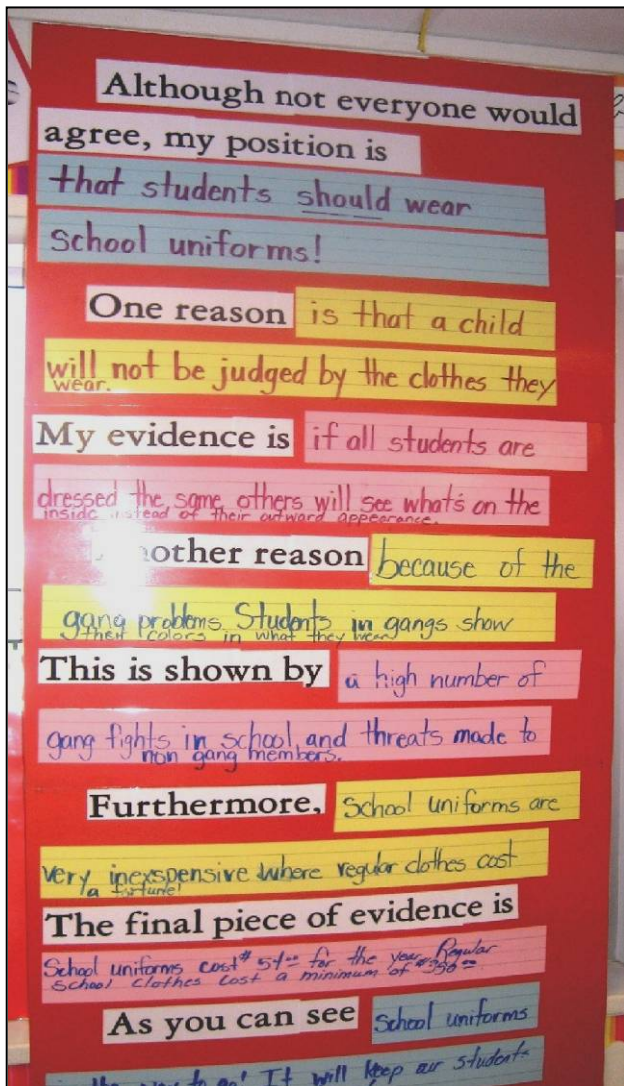
- Write to share your opinion about the best way to solve math problems.
- Write to share your opinion about real-life applications for mathematical concepts.

What's Happening NOW?**Contemporary World:**

- Write reviews of products, places or entertainment you enjoy. Include research and information about what you are reviewing.
- Write to share your opinion about something you care about.
- Write to show how to make your world a better place, for example, issues around school, neighborhood, family life, etc.

Examples of Opinion/Argument Writing

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

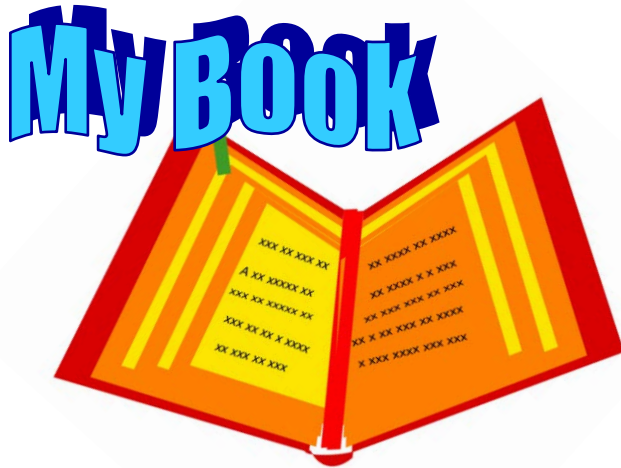


The Language Experience Approach can be used to create a model for a persuasive letter writing experience. This third grade teacher has worked with students to construct a formal letter to the President about their desire to go on a field trip.

Book Talks: Sharing our Opinions about Literature

Students may also hold weekly book talks to share their opinions about books they are reading for pleasure. The students simply take turns telling each other about a book they are reading and why they like or dislike it. Modeling will help student elaborate, as will language frames for them to use:

This is available as separate document on our website and in the workshop.



The title of the book I am reading is: _____

It is about _____

I like/dislike it because _____

An example of this is _____

It reminds me of another book I like/dislike

You will like/dislike it because _____

This book makes
me laugh! The
characters are
so funny!



Students can share their opinions orally in front of the class or in small groups. They can also write tiny “post-it” reviews about the books they read and leave those in the books in your library. Students will always be interested in reading a book another classmate has recommended.

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:

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.

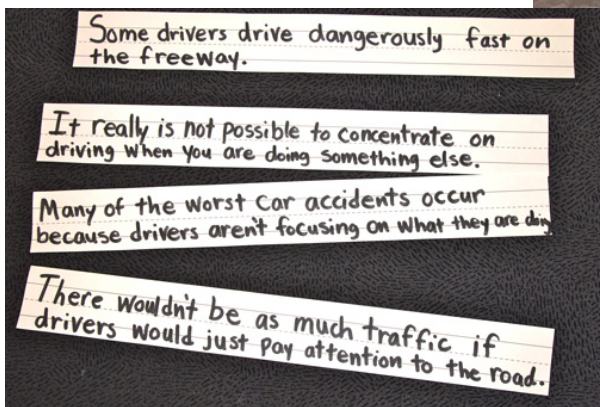
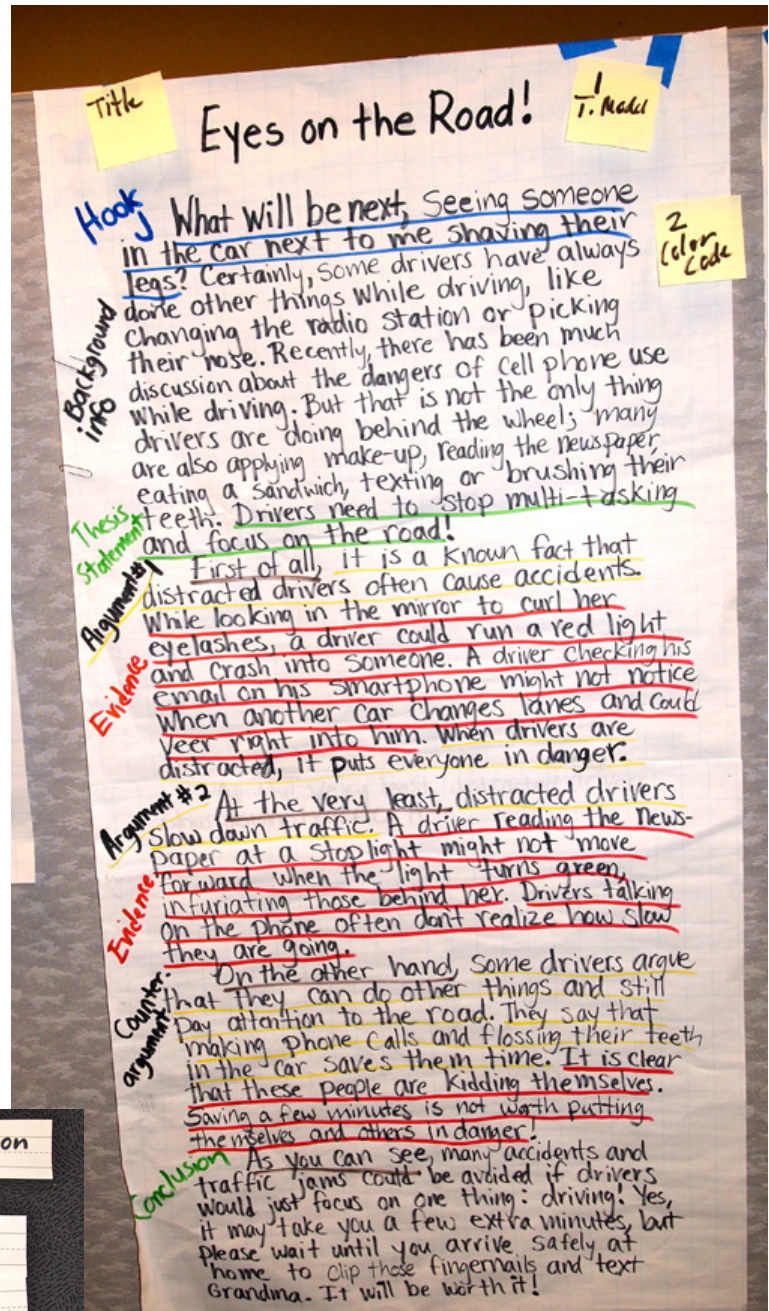
Teacher Modeling and Color Coding

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:

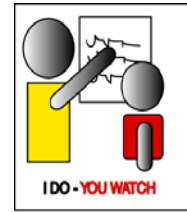
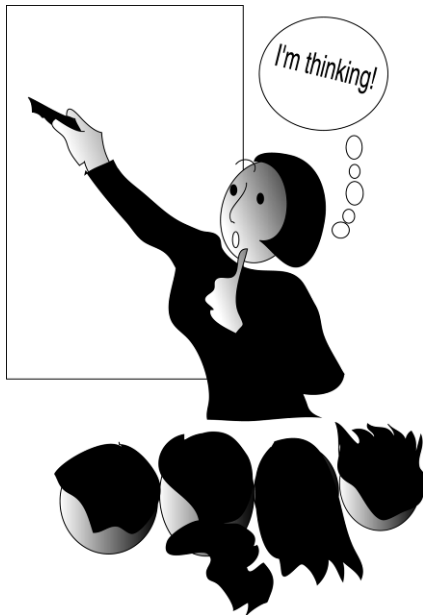
- Hook for opening
- Transition words
- Arguments and evidence
- Counter argument and response
- Conclusion

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



Modeled Writing for Opinion Writing



1

"Students can go a lifetime and never see another person write, much less show them how to write. ... Writing is a craft. It needs to be demonstrated to your students in your classroom...from choosing a topic to finishing a final draft. They need to see you struggle to match your intentions with the words that reach the page."

Graves, D. (1994) *A Fresh Look at Writing* p. 109-10.

"...when I stand in front of the classroom, take off the top of my head, turn on the overhead projector, and invite them to hear my thinking and see what I do as an adult writer, they learn about purpose, patience, and love. They begin to understand the hundreds of choices I make every time I write. They see that almost nothing is accidental, that whenever I write I try deliberately to write well, to create literature about something that matters to me, not merely do another piece for the folder. I show them how I plan, confront problems, weigh options, change my mind, read and reread my own writing as I'm writing it, use conventions to make my writing sound and look the way I want it to or my readers will need it to, and consider questions of audience, intention, craft, and coherence every step of the way."

Atwell, Nancie (1987/2013)

In the Middle: New Understandings About Writing, Reading, and Learning, p. 332

"The Top 5 Things I do to ensure students become excellent writers: Demonstrate that I am a writer who always writes with a reader in mind (sometimes that the reader is myself) and make my writing and thinking processes visible."

Routman, R. (2004) *Writing Essentials*.

MODELED WRITING PROCEDURES:

- 1. PLANNING:** Prepare for what you are going to write in front of the students ahead of time. You'll want to review the standards for the text type you're modeling, check out anchor papers and other mentor texts from literature to think about any techniques you may want to include. Most importantly, make it REAL for you as a writer. Students are fascinated to hear about their teacher's life or things he/she cares about. I typically write fairly simple opinion pieces about an current events issue I am personally tracking. Take care not to choose topics for your writing that are beyond the imagination or background experiences of your students. Help your students see through your modeling that their every day lives may provide sources for issues to write about. Once you've decided the direction of your modeling, take some notes on a post-it to keep handy during the lesson, it can be challenging to be thinking out loud as a writer while also managing a classroom full of students.

2. **DRAFTING:** Gather the students to the rug or draw their attention to your chart or writing projected on-screen. Tell them that you are going to show them what you do while you are writing and that their job is to simply observe what you do to see if they can pick up some tips for writing. Older students may even take notes about what you do as you write. Remind them that this is **your** writing, not a **shared** writing. To make this literal start by writing your title and listing yourself as the author.

Begin writing and keep a running dialogue going about every step of your thinking process. Your monologue might sound like this:

So I was looking at my notes and thinking I might want to start this opinion piece off with a question to get the reader thinking about this issue right away. Let's see, I could write..... "Do you really believe dogs should be kept on leashes at ALL times? Well, some people in our community think that's best." Ok, that's a start, it tells the reader what our topic is going to be.....now I need to give my statement of opinion..... I have to disagree. "Dogs and their owners are happiest when they get to spend some of their day running free." Let's see, let me re-read to see how that sounds.....Ohh.....I think I want to change running free.....some readers may think the dogs will get crazy and run all over when they are off-leash.....I'll change that to "freely exploring." Now I need to give my reasons, let me think about which I want to share first..... I think I'll start with exercise. "When dogs are walked without a leash they go twice as far and get much better exercise."

3. **REREADING:** Modeled writing gives teachers an authentic excuse for teaching students to reread as they write. After you add each sentence or two, tell the students you need to reread what you have so far to see about what you will write next. Continue to reread and add more writing until you are done with the whole piece or the section you are working on for that day.
4. **REVISION:** Modeling allows you to show students in a natural way how some revision happens as you are writing a piece. Feel free to modify words or sentences as you go during modeled writing. For example in the piece above, I may, after rereading the first part, add a descriptor to community: "**small community**" might give more information. You can show the students how to insert more language with a caret. ^
5. **CONVENTIONS:** Modeled writing is **not** the time to focus on conventions. Making errors on purpose so that your students can "catch" you, takes the focus away from the purpose of modeled writing which is to demonstrate for students what good writers do in their heads as they write. Belaboring the modeled writing process with talk of the conventions will distract.
6. **DEBRIEFING:** When you are finished, ask students to share with you what they saw you doing as a writer. You may want to start a chart labeled "**What Ms. _____ does when she writes**" and list there what the students notice that you do so they can remember literally what you did when they are working on their own pieces.



Reading Informational Text Standard 8

The CCSS Anchor Standard for Reading Informational Text states, "Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence." Here is this standard specific to each grade level.

Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
With prompting and support, identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text.	Identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text.	Describe how reasons support specific points the author makes in a text.	Describe the logical connection between particular sentences and paragraphs in a text (e.g., comparison, cause/effect, first/second/third in a sequence).	Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.	Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text, identifying which reasons and evidence support which point(s).

Teaching students to identify the reasons and evidence an author chooses to support key points he or she is making in a text goes hand in hand with the teaching of opinion/ argument writing. If students can see how other authors select reasons and evidence to provide as a means of supporting their point of view, they will understand how to do the same in their writing.

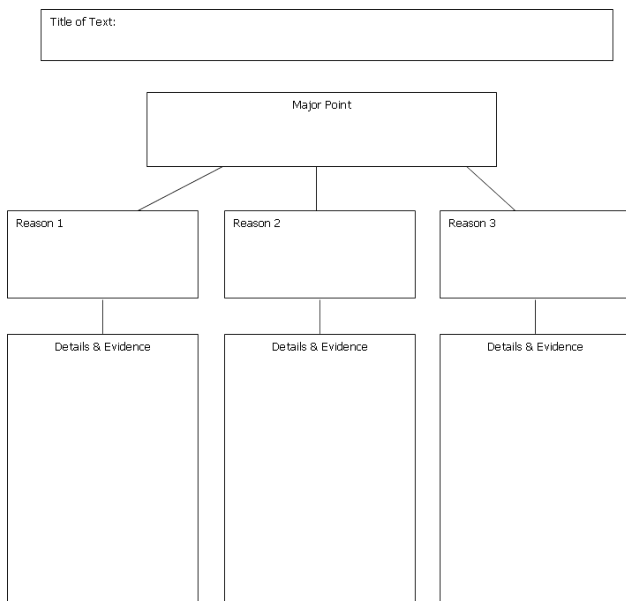
Here's how:

- 1. Select a text:** Use material which has an obvious major point and lays out an argument with evidence and reasons. There are multiple children's literature books listed on last page of this handbook or you can use the text exemplars for this unit in the separate packet on exemplars/anchor papers or on our website at www.knoxeducation.com. Science and social studies textbooks will also contain sections with this structure.
- 2. Identify the major point the text is making:** Students can either skim the text to "discover" this on their own, or you can introduce the major point yourself. For example, the author wants us to "understand the importance of recycling." Or we can see from the title, Freedom on the Menu, the Greensboro Sit-ins, that the author wants us to know how the "sit-ins" brought freedom to African American people.
- 3. Show students how to identify and evaluate the argument and reasons used to make the point:** Use shared reading of the projected text to read text together with the students and annotate the elements of reasoning the author includes. Students can list these into a graphic organizer such as the one included here, or annotate directly onto the text with notes such as "reason #1, reason #2," etc. If there is sequence to the text, students may note that with 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.

Here are some prompts you may use as you are helping students analyze text in this way:

- The author pointed out that _____. What reasons does the author give?
- What details does the author use to make their point?
- How does the author lay out his/her argument about the importance of _____?
- What do you think is the most important reason or evidence the author gives to help us understand the importance of _____?
- How does the author emphasize the point that _____? Use details from the text to support your answer.*
- Highlight the parts of the text that provide evidence to support the idea that _____.*

** These questions stems come directly from the Smarter Balanced sample test items.*



Graphic Organizer for Reading Anchor Standard 8:

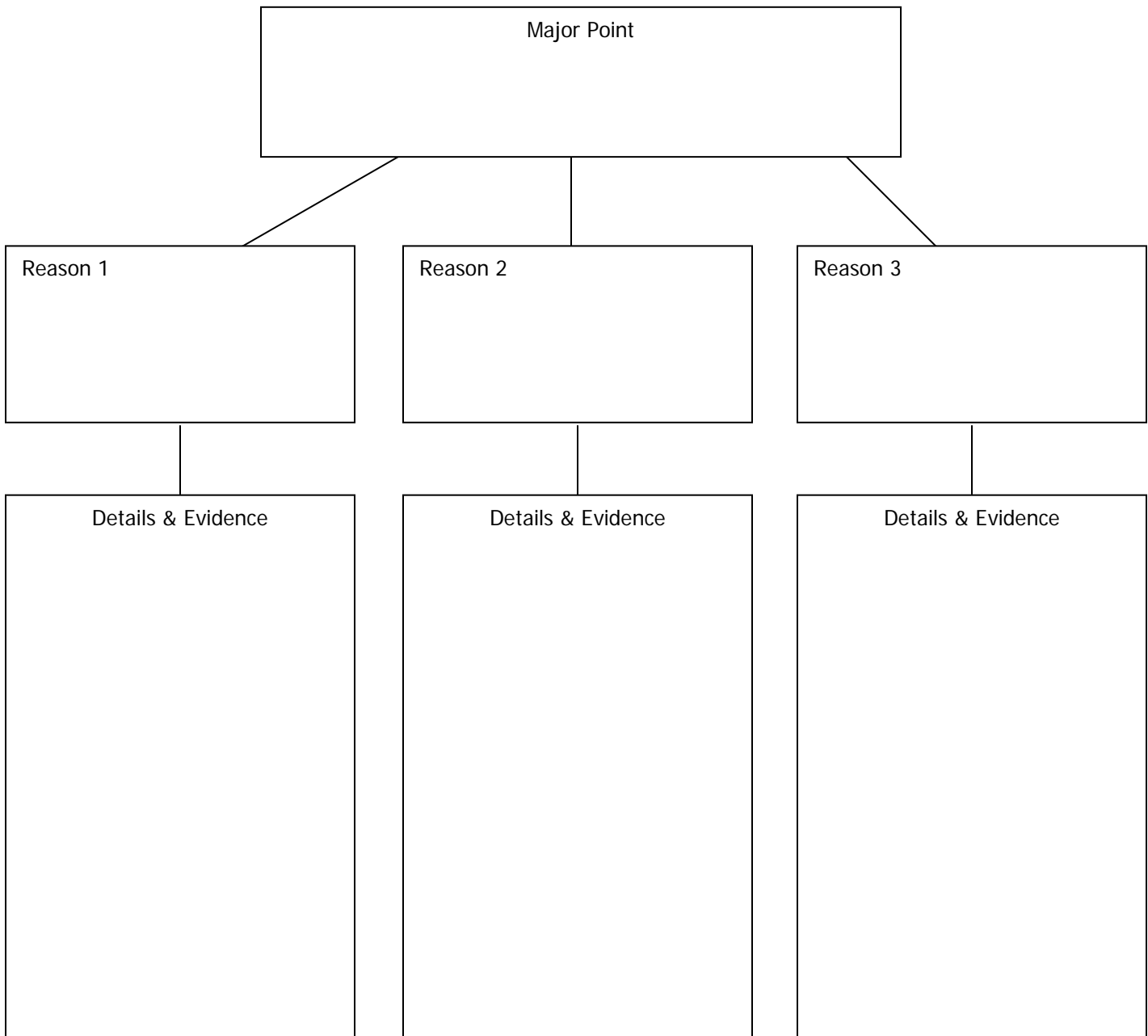
Tree Map (www.thinkingmaps.com)

Make a box to write the major point of the text inside, and then once you've identified what the reasons and evidence the author includes, make branches for each and label them with the main idea of each reason. Sample is on next page. Add more "branches" to the tree map to go with the organization of the text you're analyzing with students. There may be more than 3 reasons provided.

Graphic Organizer for Reading Standard 8 Analyzing Reasons & Support

Student Name: _____

Title of Text: _____



“Quick Tries” for Writing

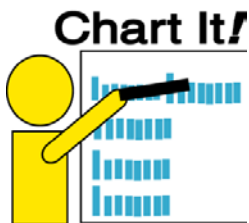
Letting students “have a go” with a writing idea

An effective way to get students to put a mini lesson or shared writing demonstration to use right away is to encourage **Quick Tries**. Following any lesson, have students try out the demonstrated strategy. For example, if you’ve just produced an opinion piece during shared or modeled writing with lots of reasons supporting the opinion, ask students to think of one more reason that wasn’t included and write out a sentence describing that reason as quickly as they can without worrying about spelling or even neatness! This is very similar to a “free write” but strategically focuses on the writing element the students just learned about. This also removes any pressure for correctness that students may feel when they are adding writing to a larger project.

Other examples of “quick tries” while teaching opinion writing might include:

- Write a list of issues you care about personally
- Try out various ways to state an opinion using a list of possible academic language frames
- Write to ask your reader to take an action as a result of the opinion shared in a piece

You’ll need to model this for your students to help them see how to really go for it during “quick tries”. Go ahead and show students how you try an idea, cross out and start over, or even stop mid-sentence if it isn’t going well. You may want to create a chart like this to free students up:



Quick Try Tips:

- Keep your pencil moving
- Don't worry about spelling
- Don't get too picky
- Try several ideas and don't worry about which is best

Talk Tickets

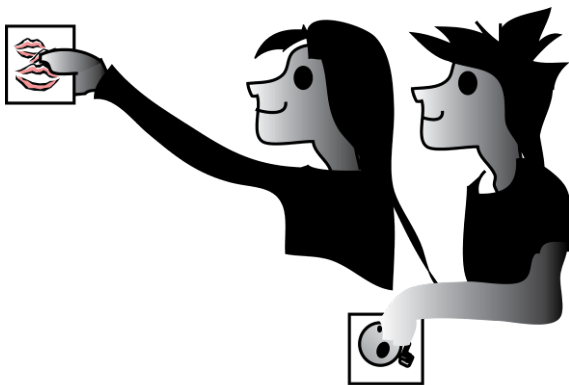
Any small object such as a paper clip, bingo marker or paper 'ticket' can be used as a ticket to talk!

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.

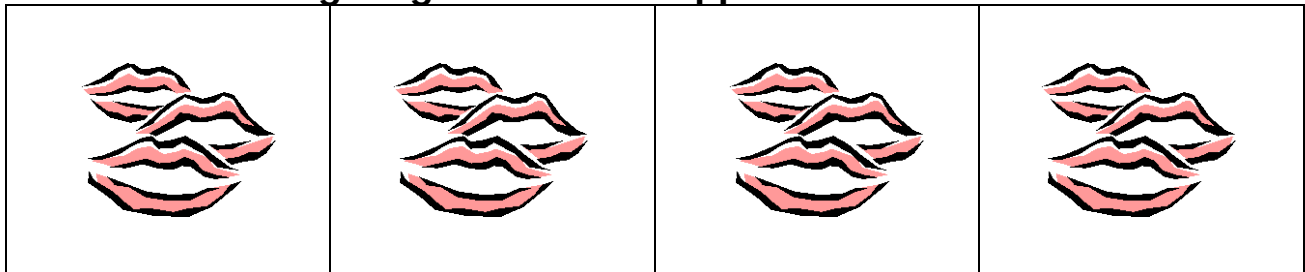
Talk Tickets encourage participation in two ways:

They restrict dominant students from monopolizing the discussion, and they encourage reluctant students to share more of their ideas.

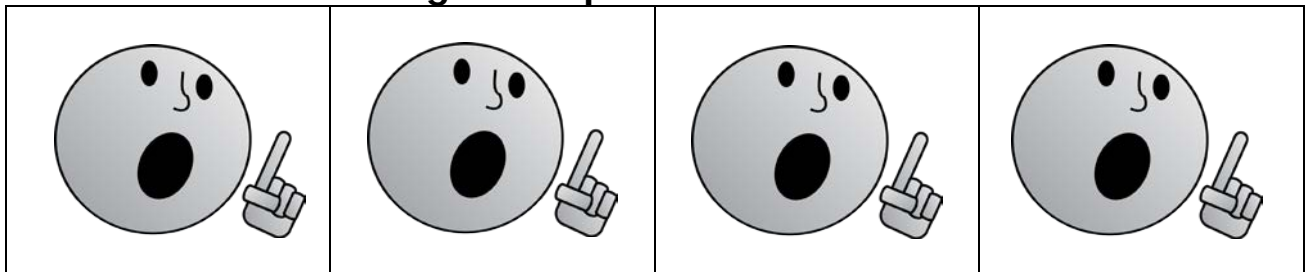


We've included two icons for talk tickets here in case you want to have the students differentiate their contributions between stating their opinion and offering reasons or support.





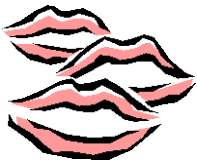
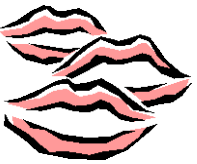
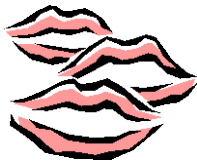








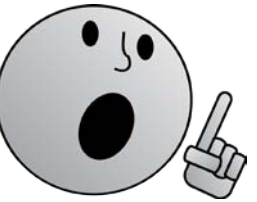
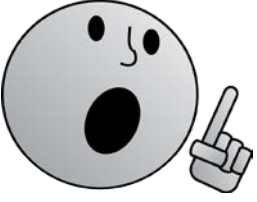

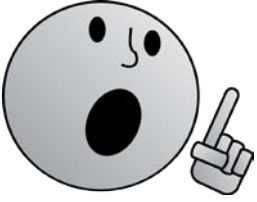
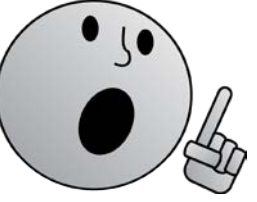
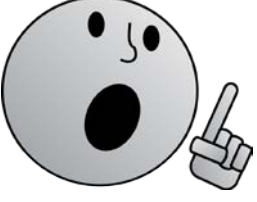
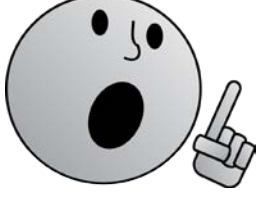
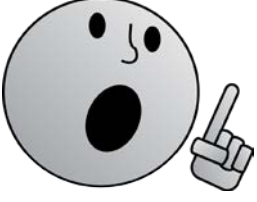
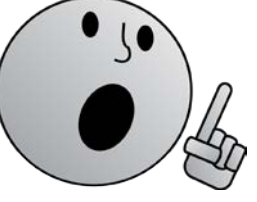
Talk Tickets for giving reasons or support



Talk Tickets for stating their opinion



Talk Tickets

Shared Writing of Opinion/Argument Essay

Charts for Topics to Choose from for Writing unit

FOR and AGAINST

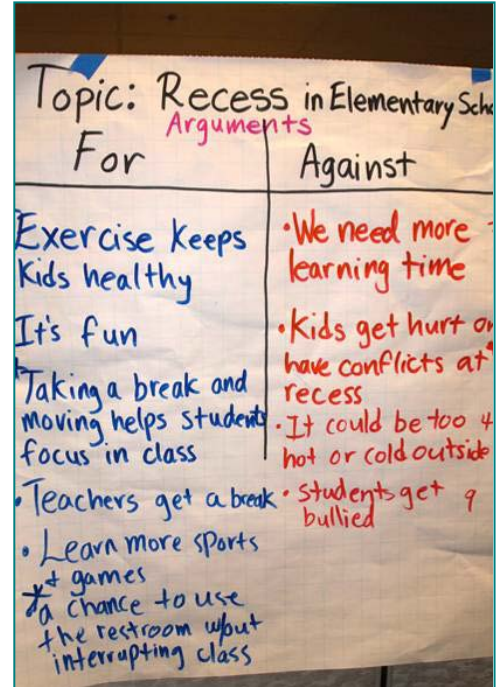
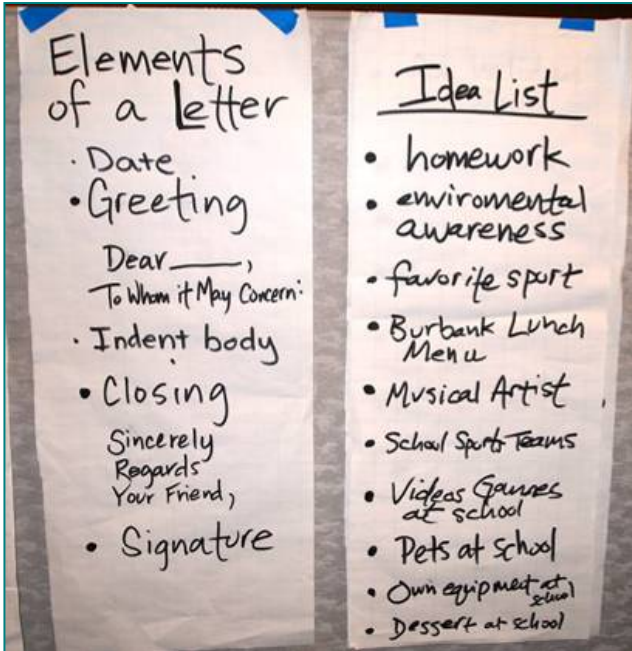
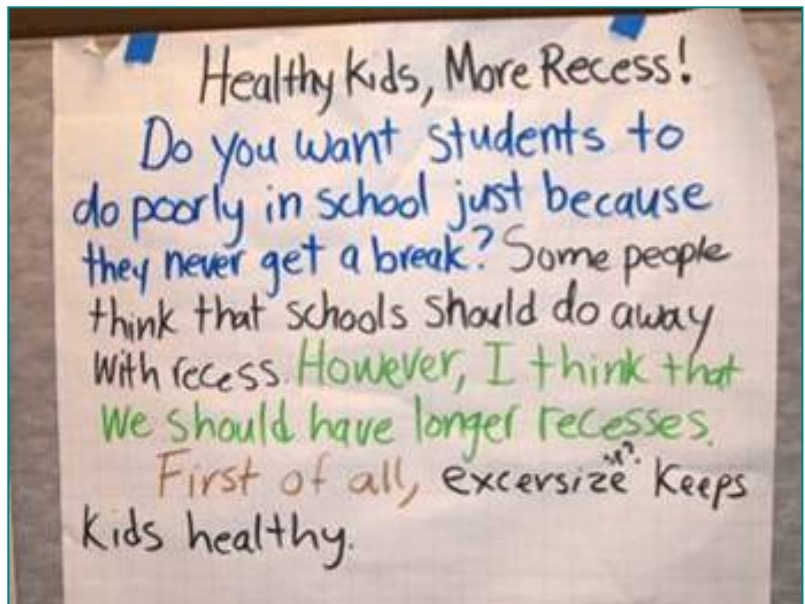
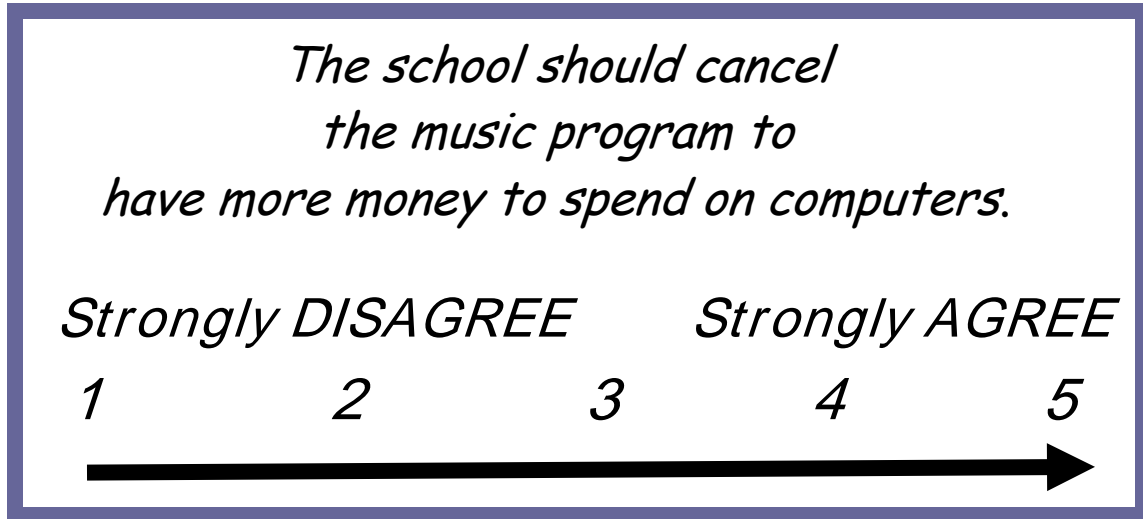


Chart with start of essay about recess



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. Post 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. You may also have them list on a white board what number their position represents and bring that with them. They can jot their reasons why they hold that opinion on their white board before they move to their spot.

How to Take a Stand—Form an Opinion continued

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:

Making Declarations and Backing them up:

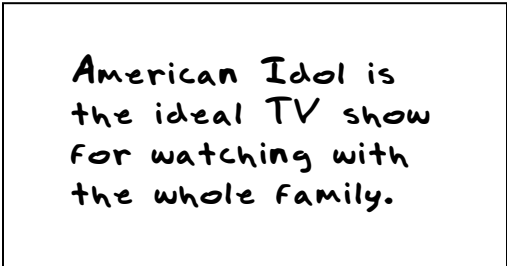
You can use **individual student white boards** to have students practice writing declarative statements and reasons for support on a variety of topics as a warm up to developing a Opinion/Argument essay. As students listen to their fellow students' ideas, they will begin to expand their own notions 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.

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

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*

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

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.

How to Write an Opinion/Argument Letter

(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 response

Use 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.

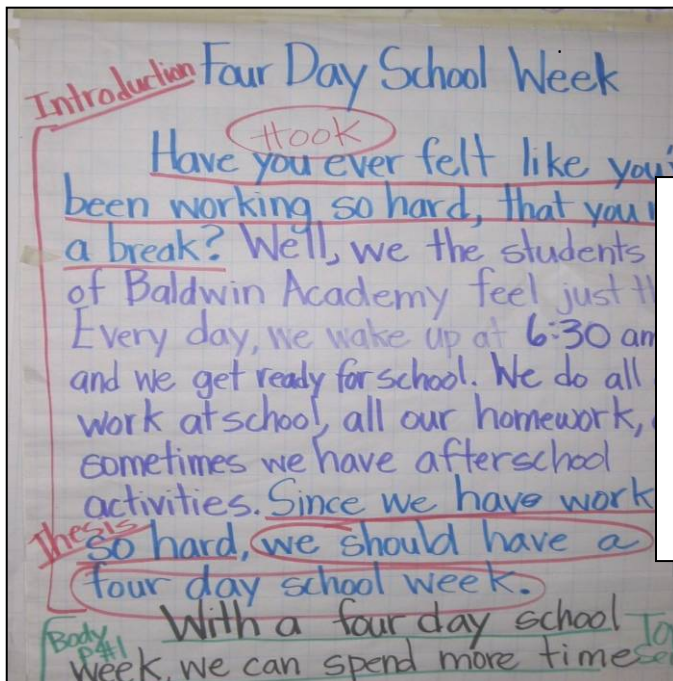
Paragraph Frames for Opinion/Argument Writing

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

Very young students can be taught 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. An example from a kindergartener below shows the writing as well as her picture follows.

Example of Book Reviews 3-5

Hunger Games

Written by Suzanne Collins
Reviewed by Kenny P. (age 14)



Can you think how you would feel if your little sister was chosen and forced to participate in a game that losing meant death? Well, you would probably feel the same way as Katniss Everdeen did when her little sister was chosen for the annual Hunger Games. Then Katniss, as any other sibling in that situation would do, stepped up and took her sister's place as the girl "tribute" in the Hunger Games. The tributes from each district were pitted against each other in games where the task was to kill the other tribute. What will become of Katniss?

I love this book because I love science fiction books. This book is part of a series and is being made into a movie, scheduled for release sometime in spring 2012. This is like no other book I've read because the author is daring enough to make one of the main themes about government control in people's lives. I don't have a favorite part of the book because I liked it all.

I would definitely recommend this book because it is an awesome Sci-Fi book. I would suggest that readers be at least in the middle school range. I think the plot, the characters, and the setting would interest readers and lovers of Science Fiction!

[Kenny P.](#) is a student in [Ms. James' 8th Grade Class 2010-2011](#)

Spaghetti® Book Club

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http://www.spaghettibookclub.org/review.php?review_id=11929

Other resources for writing reviews

Common Sense Media: <http://www.common sense media.org/>

This website has reviews and a rating system for books, video games, movies, TV shows and more. Most are written by adults, but some short pieces are written by students.

Cyber Kids : <http://www.cyberkids.com>

This website houses reviews for movies, books, software, toys and video games, some written by students.

Kids First: <http://www.kidsfirst.org>

This website houses movie reviews written by students that are viewable via UTube. Really adorable footage. If you able to show them at school they would be very engaging for students.

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	
Reasons	
Audience I recommend for this	

Opinion/Argument



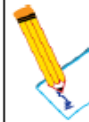
Opinion Writing Organizer 3-5

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:

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.

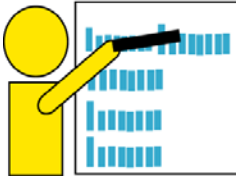
Once the piece is finished, label the parts of the writing with the elements you are highlighting for that text type.

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:

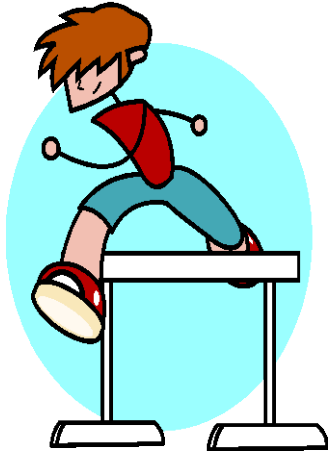
How to write a food product review:

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!



Jumpstart



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.

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>	

WEEK 3-4

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>	

WEEK 3-4



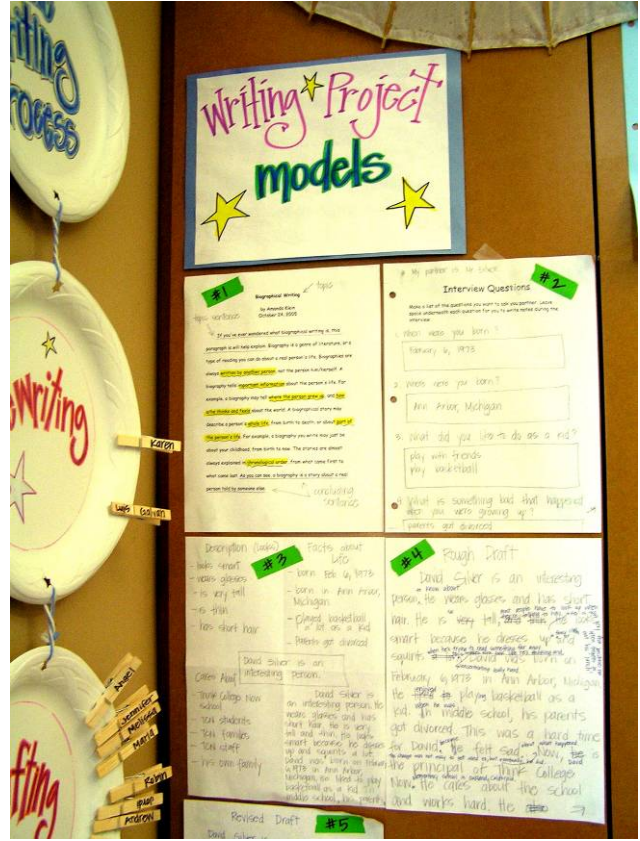
Explorers Report Matrix Worksheet

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?

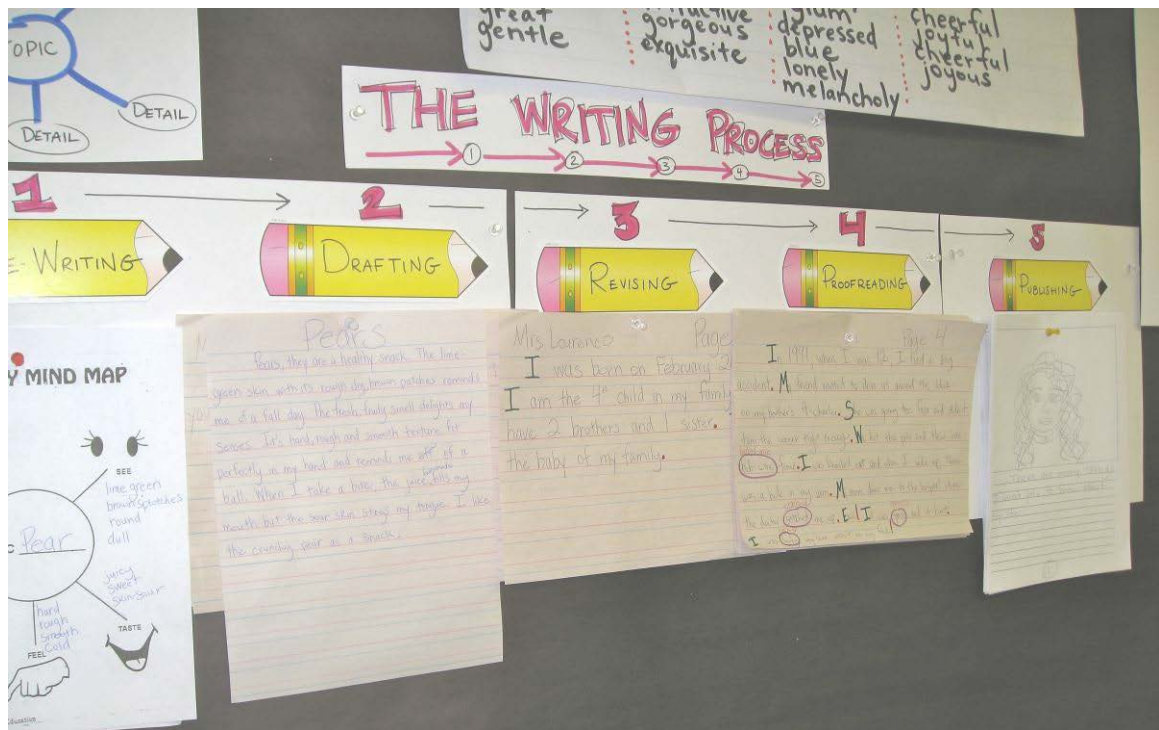
Writing Project Boards

During any unit of instruction, it's really helpful to have a "project board" on display showing each step of the process as students work on their projects. Simply set aside a space on a bulletin board for this, and after you model each step in a process with the students using shared or modeled writing, simply post that exemplar, list the steps you used, and label the parts of the text as needed.

This is an excellent way to help all students stay on track, or get back on track after missing school. You can also use the project board as a classroom management tool by having students put a post-it or clothespin with their name on it next to the stage of the project they are currently working on. This "status of the class" visual will help you see at a glance how students are keeping up, or needing further assistance. Place the project board next to the rubric you are using for the unit and the anchor papers or exemplars for further explanation. You could even add due dates to each step as a reminder. Here are some photos of writing project boards:



WEEK 1-6



Guided Practice in Writing

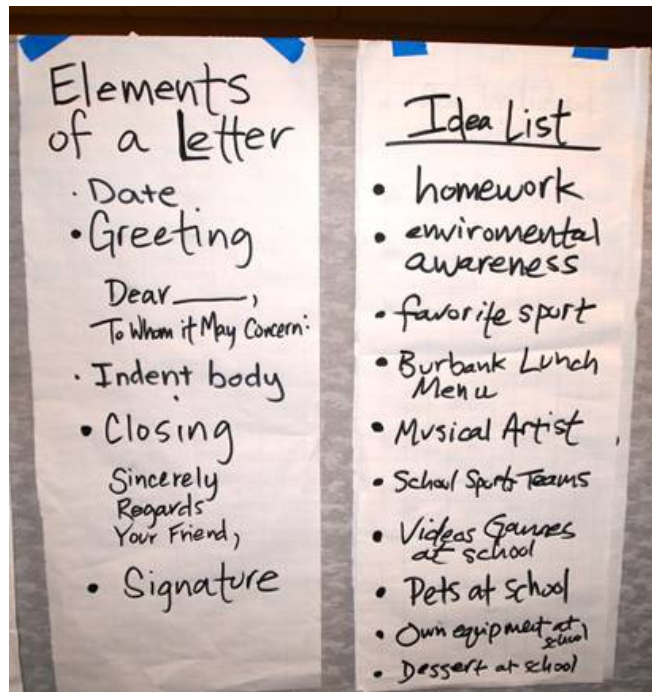
After you have:

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.

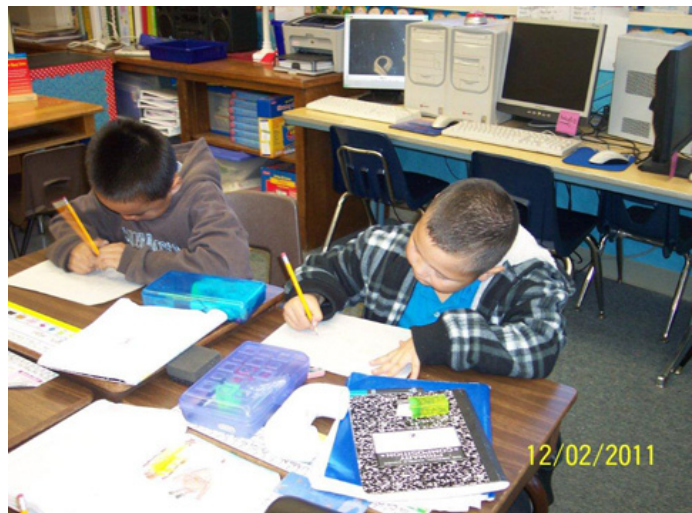
Topics to Choose From:

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 55, (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

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 83-84.

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.



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 an opinion/argument writing project.



Writing Checklist: Opinion Writing Grade 3

These checklists are all on our website www.knoxeducation.com and as separate documents.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Elements		Self	Peer	Teacher
Content	I wrote my opinion and ideas, and I wrote to help readers understand my reasons. I provided some facts, definitions and details.			
	I wrote several reasons about why people should agree with my opinion. I wrote several sentences about each reason, giving details and information.			
	To start, I set my readers up to expect that my writing will be about my opinion. I also tried to "hook" my readers into caring about my opinion.			
	I connected my ideas/reasons using words such as <i>also, another, for example, and because</i> .			
	I organized my information so that each part is mostly about one thing.			
	The ending I wrote includes a thought or comment about my opinion.			
Conventions	I used capital letters correctly and leave spaces between my words.			
	To spell a word I don't know, I used what I know about word families and spelling rules to help me spell and edit my work.			
	I used a dictionary when I needed one - either a print or digital dictionary.			
	I used commas, quotation marks, and end points correctly.			
	I used punctuation in my piece to help my readers read with pauses and expression.			
	I wrote quotations correctly, using commas and quotation marks.			
	I corrected any fragments or run-on sentences in my writing.			
	My writing is readable and I allowed for margins and used correct spacing.			

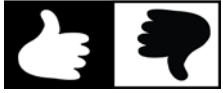
WEEK 1-4



Writing Checklist: Opinion Writing Grade 4

Name: _____ Date: _____

	Elements	Self	Peer	Teacher
Content	I clearly stated a claim about my topic and tried to support my reasons.			
	I wrote a few sentences to "hook" my reader. For example: I asked a question and explained why the topic matters, or I told a surprising fact, or gave relevant background information.			
	I made deliberate word choices to convince my reader (emphasizing or repeating words to evoke my reader's emotional response).			
	I separated sections of information using paragraphs.			
	I used prepositional phrases in my writing.			
	I gave reasons to support my opinion and I chose them to convince my reader. I gave examples and information to support my reasons (from my life, what I know, or from text I read).			
	If it was appropriate, I chose precise details and facts to help make my points.			
	If it was appropriate, I used figurative language (similes, metaphors, idioms, or adages) to draw my reader into my line of thought.			
	I made choices about which evidence was relevant and best to include to support my points.			
	I used linking words and phrases to group ideas or sections together. For example, for shifting from stating reasons to giving evidence, I used these kinds of words: <i>another example, one time, for instance</i> . When I wanted to make a new point, I used phrases such as: <i>in addition to, also, and another...</i>			
The ending I wrote includes a thought or comment about my opinion, which restates and reflects on my claim.				
Conventions	I used commas, quotation marks, and end points correctly.			
	To spell a word I don't know, I used what I know about word families and spelling rules to help me spell and edit my work.			
	I used the word wall and a dictionary or thesaurus to help me pick the right word and spell it correctly when needed.			
	I used commas in long sentences to help make them clear and correct.			
	I used capitals and commas correctly and used an apostrophe for contractions and possessives.			
	I made sure my subjects and verbs agree.			
	I checked for "run-on" or fragment sentences and fixed them by breaking up the sentence into separate thoughts and using periods.			
	My handwriting is neat and readable and I used correct spacing and margins.			



Writing Checklist: Opinion Writing Grade 5

Name: _____ Date: _____

	Elements	Self	Peer	Teacher
Content	I wrote a claim about a topic and supported it with reasons and a variety of evidence for each reason.			
	I worked to get my reader to care about my opinion not by just including a cool fact or a jazzy question, but by giving the reader relevant information about what is <i>significant</i> about the topic.			
	I made deliberate and precise word choices to state my claim and I let the reader know the reasons I develop later in my piece.			
	I used transition words and phrases to connect my evidence to my reasons with phrase such as <i>this shows that...</i>			
	I helped my reader follow my thinking using phrases such as <i>another reason</i> , <i>the most important reason</i> , and used temporal words to indicate <i>timing or sequence</i> .			
	To show what happened, I used phrases such as <i>consequently</i> and <i>because of</i> . To be more precise, I used words such as <i>specifically</i> , and <i>in particular</i> .			
	I grouped information and related ideas into paragraphs and used headings to help separate sections.			
	I organized my writing in the order that most suits my purpose and helps me prove my reasons and claim.			
	I gave relevant reasons to support my opinion which are parallel and do not overlap. I put these reasons in an order I thought would be the most convincing.			
	I made choices about which evidence was best to include to support my points.			
	I included relevant evidence to support my claim, such as facts, examples, quotations, micro stories, and information.			
	I discuss/explain logically the way my evidence goes with my claim.			
	I made deliberate word choices to have an effect on my reader. I reached for the right phrase, metaphor, simile, or image that would best convey my ideas.			
	When it was appropriate, I tried to use a scholarly voice and varied my sentences to create the pace and tone of the different sections of my writing.			
Conventions	The conclusion I wrote connects back to and highlights what my piece is mainly about, not just the preceding paragraph.			
	I used commas to set off introductory parts of sentences, such as <i>"At this time in history, it was common to..."</i>			
	I used a variety of punctuation to fix any run-on sentences and I used a variety of sentence types.			
	I checked to make sure my subjects and verbs were correct and that I was using the correct verb tense.			
	I used what I know about spelling rules and a dictionary to help me spell and edit my work.. I made sure to correctly spell words that are important to my topic.			
	I used correct punctuation in my writing and to cite my resources.			
	I tried to maintain a formal style.			
My writing is legible and I used correct margins and spacing.				

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.

<i>REVISE—MAKE IT BETTER</i>	<i>EDIT—MAKE SURE IT'S CORRECT</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Re-read to make sure it makes sense.</i>• <i>Read aloud to a partner and see if they have any questions about what you were trying to mean.</i>• <i>Think about sentence variety—do all of my sentences start the same way?</i>• <i>Think about word choice—are there other words I can use to say the same thing in a more interesting way?</i>	<p><i>GRAMMAR: Re-read to make sure that all of my sentences sound like correct English grammar.</i></p> <p><i>FORMAT: Did I remember to indent, have straight margins, leave spaces between words?</i></p> <p><i>SPELLING: Read your piece backwards and look at each word.</i></p> <p><i>PUNCTUATION: Check for ending marks, commas, etc.</i></p>
<p>OPINION WRITING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have I used my best reasons?• Did I give details or evidence to go with my reasons?• Have I used linking words?• Did I remember a closure?	

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

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 pages 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.

Whole Group Conferences as Mini-Lessons for Writing:

Strengthening Writing



Common Core anchor standard 5 says: students will “develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.” As early as second grade, it also suggests that students do this with “guidance and support from peers and adults.” One-on-one conferencing allows for entirely customized support of each writer’s revision process, but it is not easy for teachers to find time for this in a classroom of 30+ students. Peer conferencing can be a valuable way to learn. Students automatically “kidify” their explanations for each other, however it can be problematic and also hard to manage. Either students don’t have the skill to offer suggestions to strengthen writing, or they take over and do the work for the student.

Whole group conferences using projected text of student writing provide the ideal instructional vehicle for teaching students what it looks like to *strengthen* writing, as well as

how to offer suggestions in a way that is helpful, not hurtful. Here’s how:

STEP 1:

Select 2-3 students’ writing to focus on per session. Start with stronger, more confident writers so that shy or reluctant writers can see that it will be a supportive, rather than embarrassing experience. Also select writing of these students that contains a teaching point for revision that you want to make during this lesson. For example, typical revision lessons may include:

- Improving word choice
- Varying sentence structure
- Adding detail or missing information
- Selecting details or evidence that supports the thesis or main idea of the paper
- Finding more precise transition words
- Dividing run-on sentences into distinct, complete sentences
- Showing what is meant with using vivid detail instead of “telling”
- Writing an interesting conclusion

Step 2:

Ask the students permission to share their writing with the class and suggest they practice reading it aloud. They may also want to fix editorial errors so as to save embarrassment. The focus of these lessons is on *revision*, NOT editing. Project the writing on the screen and have the student read his or her piece aloud to the whole class.

Step 3: "I noticed"



Ask students to celebrate the strengths they notice in the writing with "I noticed..." statements. For example they may say, "I noticed that you really told about your topic in the first sentence," or "I noticed that there is a lot of detail in your picture," or "I noticed that you used a lot of adjectives to describe things in your writing," etc. Feel free to model these statements yourself during the initial lessons.

Step 4: "I wonder?"

Tell students they can ask questions about the writing to help the writer think about what may be missing in the writing or made more interesting. Students use questions, not suggestions, to keep the writer in control of his or her own writing. Initially, students will need a lot of modeling of this by the teacher in order to get the difference between a comment or judgment, and a question. For example, "I wonder what the room looked like when you stepped inside?" or "I wonder what else you learned about ____ that you might want to include to explain more." As the writer answers these questions from the students, you take notes for the student writer on a post-it so that the writer can remember what they said they wanted to add or change. After 3-5 questions are answered, project the post-it with your notes on the screen so that the class can see what you wrote for the writer. The post-it may look something like this with bullet points, not entire sentences:

I wonder?

- dog: rusty brown, long fur
- park: windy, leaves, ground
- feeling: confused

Step 5: Closure:

End the session with reminding students what we learned about revising writing today while helping our fellow students. Suggest to the others that they use what they learned to strengthen their own writing during writing time. The spillover effect of these whole group conferences on all the students' writing is notable. Make sure to be equitable and work your way through the entire class list before you invite the first writers up to share again. You may choose to do this at the beginning of a writing session to make a specific teaching point to apply, or at the end as a way to celebrate as well as extend quality into the writing for the next day.

One-On-One Conferences

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

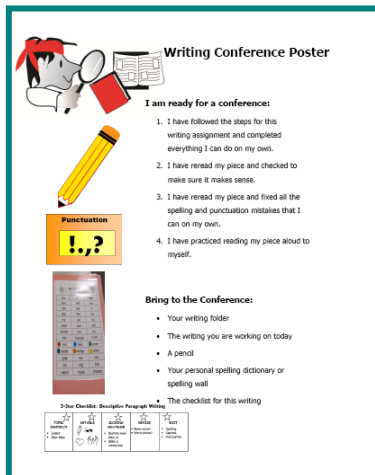
My Writing Conference

I am ready for a conference:

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

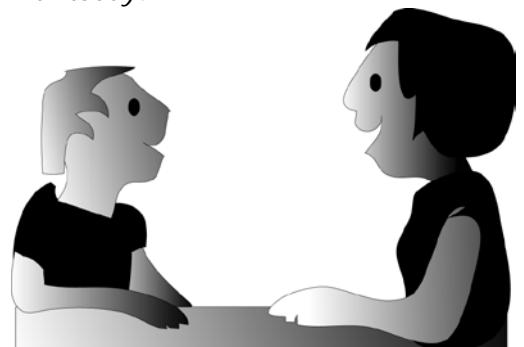


This “Writing Conference Poster” is available as a separate document on our website at knoxeducation.com.

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...



One-On-One Conferences

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:

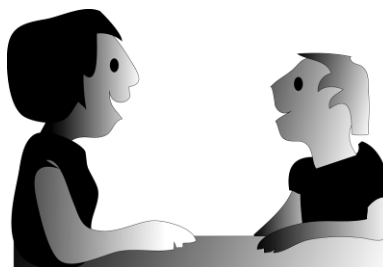
- “Listen to this...,” (read the section aloud). “Where do you hear the end of that sentence?”
- Ask students to add punctuation as they listen to you read their piece.

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

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

Teach the procedure using roleplay 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.



Round Robin Revision

(My Name) _____ Writing 

			
Reader		Reader	



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 opinion writing for 4-6 weeks. Students have watched you model, participated in shared writing of a couple of pieces, and produced at least three pieces of their own following a similar process. Now, you're ready for a publishing week.

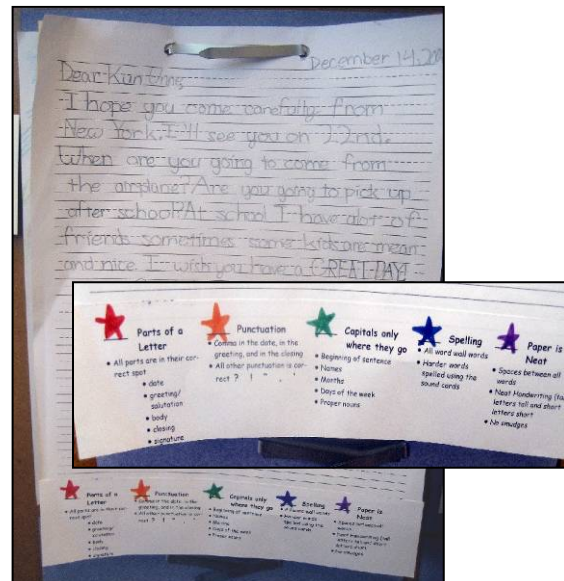
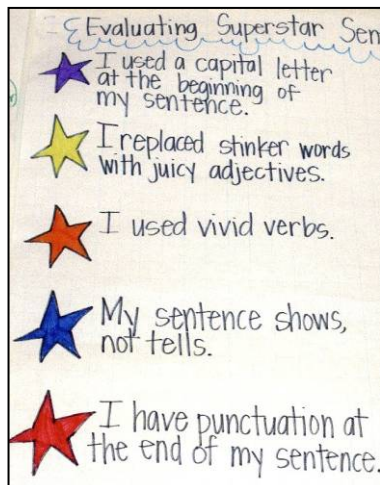
As you're scheduling for this week, also think about how you will want to have students share their writing when it is publishable. You may want to:

- 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
- Post the student writing on the school website, or start a blog

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. For young students this is most often adding detail, or choosing more interesting words. Demonstrate with shared or interactive writing how to add detail to 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. For word choice, you can help students find a word to change and then either think of a synonym or use a simple thesaurus. 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”

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, www.knoxeducation.com.]

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, apostrophes, etc.

Orange = beginning of paragraph for indentation

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

Charlotte Knox www.knoxeducation.com

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.

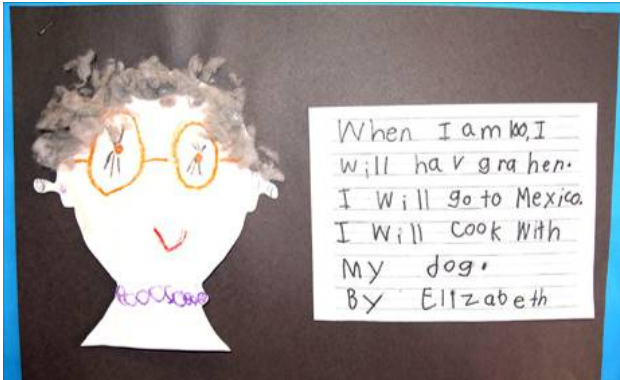
FORMAT: Did I remember to indent, have straight margins, leave spaces between words?

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

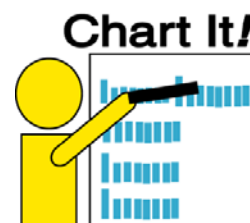
Students may periodically sign up to read their work aloud to the class and get feedback. For K-1 students this can be a daily practice since their writing is not lengthy. Other ways to organize this include:

- 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:

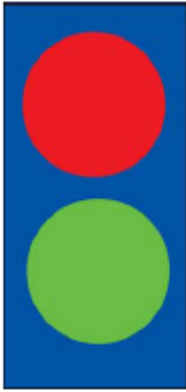
Go to Teacher Resources → Backwards Planning for Success with Writing → Tools for Writing → Editing is Fun Poster

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.





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, "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 say each word.

Fix the spelling if it doesn't look right

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		

(You can also find these in the Common Core Writing section of our website at knoxeducation.com)



Cues and Transition words are covered in SL4 Speaking and Language and W 1 and W3 in Writing Standards in the Common Core Standards

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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)



C Capitalization

- I
- Names, places
- Months, days of the week
- First word in a sentence

U Usage

- Match nouns/verbs correctly

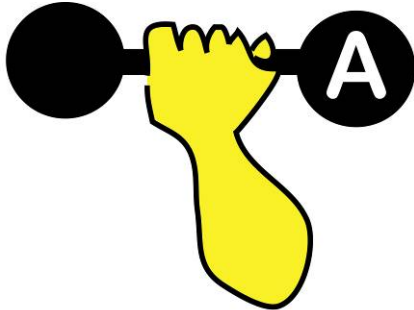
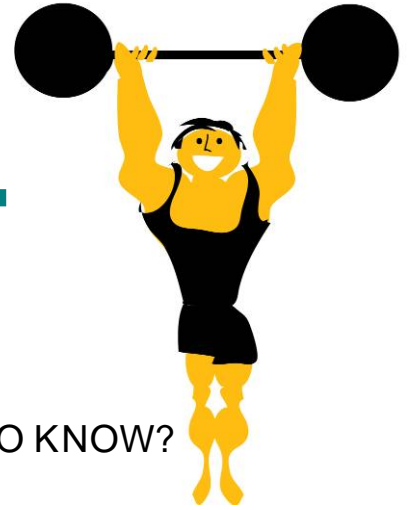
P Punctuation

- Quotes “...”
- Commas,,,
- Periods... question marks???
exclamation points !!!

S Spelling

- Check all words
- Use dictionary if necessary

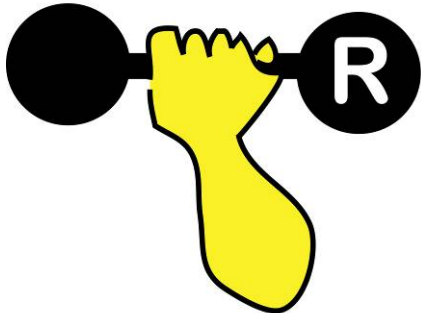
A.R.M.S.



Add

What does my reader **NEED TO KNOW**?

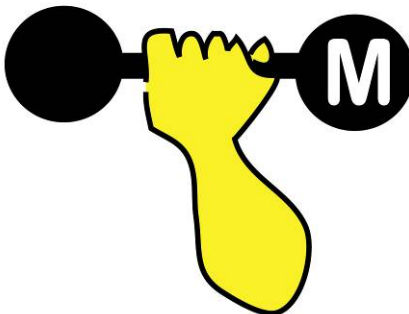
- More details
- Sensory words
- Descriptive words



Remove

Is there any information that **DOES NOT** need to be in my writing?

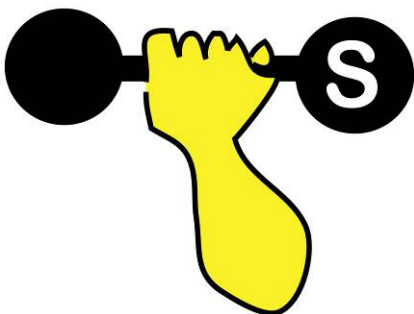
- Words that do not make sense
- Sentences that do not make sense
- Details that confuse my reader



Move

Is the information in the **RIGHT ORDER**?

- Words that could go in another spot
- Sentences that could go in another spot



Substitute

What can I replace and make more **EXPRESSIVE** or more **CLEAR** in my writing?

- Dead words
- Boring words
- Repetitive words

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., Fredrickson, 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 gold 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>