Teacher Version			
Grade	**8**	**Title/Subject**	**Do violent video games contribute to violent behavior?**

The following sections are included in this Teacher Version:
- **Process: Day 1, 2 and 3**
- **Teacher Directions for Scoring Rubric**
- **Student Prompt & Articles**

Overview

On Day 1 students will engage in a shared reading and note-taking activity using opinion texts to learn about the argument about whether or not violent video games contribute to violent behavior. On Day 2, after the group activity, they will be directed to plan, and begin to draft an argument writing piece about whether or not violent video games contribute to violent behavior utilizing the information they read in the texts as well as notes they took during the shared lesson. On Day 3 students will finish their drafts, revise and edit their writing, and if they choose, produce a final copy.

Process

DAY 1: Shared Reading and Note-taking: Up to 60 minutes

Step 1: Connect to Background Knowledge

Provide an introduction to the classroom activity by indicating that after this activity, students will be writing an argument writing piece indicating whether or not they think violent video games contribute to violent behavior. Ask students to discuss this orally. Possible questions could include:

"Do you think violent video games contribute to violent behavior? Why or why not do you believe they do? What do you categorize as violent behavior? What do you consider is a violent video game?"

For active engagement encourage pair or group sharing, before sharing out with whole group. You may also want to use the *"take a stand"* activity from our training handbook to generate discussion.

Step 2: Accessing the Information

1. Explain: *"Now we will read the pros and cons of violent video games and how they may affect behavior in real life. You will be writing an argument paper to your teacher about whether you agree or disagree with the opinion that violent video games produce violent behavior and you will include information from the articles provided in your reasons."* Use the information from the texts to supply your reasons. Read the articles with the students and point out facts and features (pictures, captions, etc.) Use ONLY the sources provided in this prompt packet.

2. Lead a whole class discussion about the sources.

3. Think-Pair-Share: *"Tell your partner what you learned about the pros and cons violent video games and how they may or may not affect behavior."* Make sure both partners have time to share with each other.

DAY 2: Planning and Writing a Draft: Up to 60 minutes

Step 3: Clarify Expectations for the Writing Task:

Explain: *"In a few minutes you will have a chance to look at the sources, plan, and write a draft to explain to me why you agree or disagree with the opinion that violent video games may be a cause of violent behavior. Tomorrow you will have a chance to change and edit your work from today or add more detail."*

Review the student directions and checklist for the writing assignment and give each student a sheet of blank paper for planning and lined paper for writing.

Step 4: Clarify Expectations for the Writing Task:

Tell students to begin planning their writing on the blank sheet of paper. You can remind them of planning strategies you have taught in your classroom such as outlining, lists, or webs. Don't provide a plan yourself just remind them of the strategies for planning.

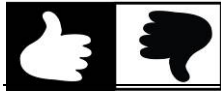After 10 minutes suggest to students that they begin writing their drafts.

Collect all materials from Day 2.

DAY 3: Up to 60 minutes

1. Allow students to access the sources, their notes, the classroom activity charts/key word lists, and their draft.

2. Direct students to re-read their draft from Day 2. Review the task using the student checklist poster.

3. When students are done writing, remind them to reread and edit.

4. Students may create a final draft or use word processing to publish their writing if time allows.

5. Collect all student writing materials.

Teacher Directions for Scoring Rubric:

Use the argument writing rubric to score the writing and enter a score for each student into Data Director.

Grade	8	Argument Writing Rubric	
Level	**ARGUMENT WRITING/PROCESS**	**LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS**	**WITH GUIDANCE and SUPPORT FROM ADULTS**

Level 4 – Exceeds

ARGUMENT WRITING/PROCESS
- ☐ Meets all expectations in level 3
- ☐ Introduces precise claim(s) and distinguishes the claim for alternate/opposing claims
- ☐ Maintains a formal style and objective tone in argument
- ☐ Document is very well presented and documented with excellent organization

LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS

Mostly correct use of language conventions, and some above grade level skills used, for example:
- ☐ Meets all expectations in level 3
- ☐ Uses parallel structure
- ☐ Uses a semicolon to link related dependent clauses
- ☐ Uses a colon to introduce a list or quotation

WITH GUIDANCE and SUPPORT FROM ADULTS

Guidance & Support

Level of guidance and support from adults before writing:

Check off what was done before the student wrote the piece being scored.
- ☐ Discussion
- ☐ Read aloud or shared reading
- ☐ Drawing
- ☐ Vocabulary word bank
- ☐ Shared or interactive writing
- ☐ Graphic organizer
- ☐ Language frames

Level 3 – Meets

ARGUMENT WRITING/PROCESS

ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING (W1)
- ☐ Introduces claim(s) and acknowledges and distinguishes the claim from alternate or opposing claims (W1a)
- ☐ Organizes reasons and evidence logically (W1a)
- ☐ Supports claims with logical reasoning and relevant evidence demonstrating understanding of topic/text (W1b)
- ☐ Uses words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify relationships among claims, reasons and evidence (W1c)
- ☐ Establishes and maintains a formal style (W1d)
- ☐ Provides a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented (W1e)

WRITING PROCESS (W4-W8)
- ☐ Writes clearly and coherently and organization and style are appropriate to task, purpose and audience (W4)
- ☐ **WGASFA*** Develops and strengthens writing as needed, by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed (W5)
- ☐ Uses technology to produce writing and link to and cite sources (W6)
- ☐ Assesses credibility of each source and quotes/paraphrases the data/conclusions of each source (W8)
- ☐ Avoids plagiarism and follows a standard format for citation (W8)

LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS

Adequate use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling for grade level, for example:
- ☐ Uses verbs in indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood (L1c)
- ☐ Recognizes and corrects inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood (L1d)
- ☐ Uses punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break (L2a)
- ☐ Uses an ellipsis to indicate an omission (L2b)
- ☐ Spells correctly (L2c)
- ☐ Uses verbs in active/passive voice and in conditional/subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (3a)

Level 2 – Almost Meets

ARGUMENT WRITING/PROCESS
- ☐ Claim is well stated but does not address opposing/alternate claims
- ☐ Has some reasons and evidence but may not be logical or relevant
- ☐ Does not establish or maintain a formal style
- ☐ Concluding statement may be unclear or not well supported
- ☐ Writing may not fully address audience, task, or purpose

LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS

Limited use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling for grade level, for example:
- ☐ Contains some run-on sentences or fragments
- ☐ Uses mostly simple or compound sentences
- ☐ Does not use active/passive voice but otherwise consistent in expression
- ☐ Contains some punctuation errors
- ☐ Contains some capitalization or spelling errors

Level 1 – Does Not Meet

ARGUMENT WRITING/PROCESS
- ☐ Limited information on topic
- ☐ Does not state an argument or claim
- ☐ Includes little to no facts or focus
- ☐ Information is disorganized or missing

LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS

Infrequent use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling for grade level, for example:
- ☐ Contains many run-on sentences
- ☐ Contains many punctuation errors
- ☐ Contains many capitalization or spelling errors

- **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.
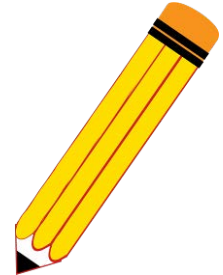
Grade	**8**	**Title/Subject**	**Do violent video games contribute to violent behavior?**

Student Prompt:

Choose a position on the argument about whether or not violent video games contribute to violent behavior. Write a multi-paragraph essay to your teacher explaining your **argument**. Include information from the following articles as you write.

Writing Tips:

- ☐ Be sure to introduce your claim and group related facts together.
- ☐ Use evidence from the two sources to develop your argument.
- ☐ Include linking words and phrases to connect your ideas, create cohesion, and clarify relationships among claims, reasons, and evidence.
- ☐ Maintain a formal style throughout.
- ☐ End with a conclusion.

Reminders:

- ☐ You can look at the two sources and your key word list to help you with your writing.
- ☐ You might begin by making a plan or drawing a graphic organizer to help you with your thinking.
- ☐ Do not plagiarize; do not copy sentences from the sources.

Step 1: Plan

Plan: review the texts and your notes

- ☐ Make a plan on the blank paper for your writing.

Step 2: Draft

- ☐ Introduce your claim or argument.
- ☐ Address opposing claims or arguments.
- ☐ Include relevant evidence to support your claim.
- ☐ Support your claims with logical reasoning.
- ☐ Group information together as you write into paragraphs.
- ☐ Write a concluding paragraph or section.
- ☐ Write a bibliography of sources for your paper using a standard format for citation.

Grade	**8**	**Title/Subject**	**Do violent video games contribute to violent behavior?**

Step 3: Reread and Revise

- ☐ Does it make sense?

- ☐ Have you used evidence from the texts to support your claim?

- ☐ Have you used linking words to organize your writing?

- ☐ Have you used a variety of simple, compound, and complex sentences to signal relationships between ideas?

- ☐ Have you maintained a formal style?

- ☐ Checked for wordiness and redundancy?

- ☐ Is it right for your task, purpose and audience?

Step 4: Edit

Reread your writing and revise:

- ☐ Capitals

- ☐ Punctuation: (end points) **. ! ?**

- ☐ Commas **,** quotation marks **" "** underlining and *italics*

- ☐ Spelling

- ☐ Complete sentences; avoid run-ons and fragments.

- ☐ Precise and concise language to express your ideas

Step 5: Final Draft

- ☐ Recopy and fix your mistakes.

Good work!

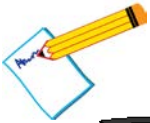Opinion/Argument

Writing an Argument Poster

1. Research a topic.

2. State your claim: choose an argument which is well supported with evidence.

3. List evidence you will use. Focus on the most credible sources.

4. Choose your best evidence.

5. Write a topic sentence that states your claim.

6. Write paragraphs outlining your argument with evidence.

7. Use linking words to connect your ideas.

8. Write a conclusion to remind the reader of your claim and/or call for action.

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

10. Reread and edit: Check

- capitals
- spelling
- punctuation

☆ Punctuation	☆ Capitals *only* where they go	☆ Spelling	☆ Spaces between all words	☆ Paper is Neat
. ? ! " ,	• Beginning of sentence • Names • Months • Days of the week	• All word wall words • Harder words spelled using the sound cards and/or attempted spelling		• Handwriting • No smudges

11. Type or write a final draft!

12. Celebrate your hard work!

			Student Reading Text
Grade	**8**	**Title/Subject**	Do violent video games contribute to violent behavior?

http://videogames.procon.org/view.answers.php?questionID=1608

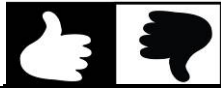# Do Violent Video Games Contribute to Youth Violence?

The "pro arguments" are on the left and continue vertically down the left; the "con arguments" are on the right and continue vertically down the right side for the next three pages.

Pro	Con
ProCon.orgThe American Academy of Pediatrics's Council on Communications and Media wrote in a Nov. 1, 2009 policy statement titled "Media Violence" that was published in the journal *Pediatrics*: "Exposure to violence in media, including television, movies, music, and video games, represents a significant risk to the health of children and adolescents. Extensive research evidence indicates that media violence can contribute to aggressive behavior, desensitization to violence, nightmares, and fear of being harmed... Correlational and experimental studies have revealed that violent video games lead to increases in aggressive behavior and aggressive thinking and decreases in prosocial behavior. Recent longitudinal studies designed to isolate long-term violent video-game effects on American and Japanese school-aged children and adolescents have revealed that in as little as 3 months, high exposure to violent video games increased physical aggression. Other recent longitudinal studies in Germany and Finland have revealed similar effects across 2 years." Nov. 1, 2009 - American Academy of Pediatrics ☆ Craig Anderson, PhD, Director of the Center for the Study of Violence, wrote in a 2009 article "FAQs on Violent Video Games and Other Media Violence," available on psychology.iastate.edu: "The results, overall, have been fairly consistent across types of studies (experimental, cross-sectional, and longitudinal) and across visual media type (television, films, video games). There is a significant relation between exposure to media violence and aggressive behavior. Exposing children and adolescents (or 'youth') to violent visual media increases the likelihood that they will engage in physical aggression against another person. By	Lawrence Kutner, PhD, and Cheryl K. Olson, ScD, co-founders of the Harvard Medical School Center for Mental Health and Media, wrote in their 2008 book *Grand Theft Childhood: The Surprising Truth about Violent Video Games*: "It's clear that the 'big fears' bandied about in the press - that violent video games make children significantly more violent in the real world; that children engage in the illegal, immoral, sexist and violent acts they see in some of these games - are not supported by the current research, at least in such a simplistic form. That should make sense to anyone who thinks about it. After all, millions of children and adults play these games, yet the world has not been reduced to chaos and anarchy." 2008 - Lawrence Kutner, PhD ☆☆☆ Cheryl K. Olson, ScD ☆☆☆ Henry Jenkins, PhD, Provost's Professor of Communication, Journalism, and Cinematic Arts at University of Southern California, wrote in an article titled "Reality Bytes: Eight Myths about Video Games Debunked" on www.pbs.org (accessed Jan. 13, 2010): "According to federal crime statistics, the rate of juvenile violent crime in the United States is at a 30-year low. Researchers find that people serving time for violent crimes typically consume less media before committing their crimes than the average person in the general population. It's true that young offenders who have committed school shootings in America have also been game players. But young people in general are more likely to be gamers - 90 percent of boys and 40 percent of girls play. The overwhelming majority of kids who play do NOT commit antisocial acts. According to a 2001 U.S. Surgeon General's report (1.3 MB) 📄, the strongest risk factors for school shootings centered on mental stability and the quality of home life, not media exposure. The moral panic over violent video games is doubly harmful. It has led adult authorities to be more suspicious and hostile to many kids who already feel cut off from the system. It also misdirects energy away from eliminating the actual causes of youth violence and allows problems to continue to fester." Jan. 13, 2010 - Henry Jenkins, PhD ☆☆☆ In *Video Software Dealers Association v. Schwarzenegger*, the US Court of

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'physical aggression' we mean behavior that is intended to harm another person physically, such as hitting with a fist or some object. A single brief exposure to violent media can increase aggression in the immediate situation. Repeated exposure leads to general increases in aggressiveness over time. This relation between media violence and aggressive behavior is causal." 2009 - Craig Anderson, PhD ⭐⭐⭐ Leland Yee, PhD, State Senator (D-CA) wrote in a June 22, 2009 amicus brief filed with the US Supreme Court for *Video Software Dealers Association v. Schwarzenegger*: "The interactive nature of video games is vastly different than passively listening to music, watching a movie, or reading a book. With interactive video games, the child becomes a part of the action which serves as a potent agent to facilitate violence and over time learns the destructive behavior. This immersion results in a more powerful experience and potentially dangerous learned behavior in children and youth... Just as the technology of video games improves at astonishing rates, so too does the body of research consistently demonstrate the harmful effects these violent interactive games have on minors. Over three thousand peer-reviewed studies, produced over a period of 30 years documenting the effects of screen violence (including violent video games), have now been published... These data suggest very strongly that participating in the playing of violent video games by children and youth increase aggressive thought and behavior; increase antisocial behavior and delinquency; engender poor school performance; desensitize the game player to violence." June 22, 2009 - Leland Yee, PhD ⭐⭐⭐ The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry wrote in an Aug. 2006 article "Children and Video Games: Playing with Violence" published in their *Facts for Families* information sheet series: "There is growing research on the effects of videogames on children... Studies of children exposed to violence have shown that they can become: 'immune' or numb to the horror of violence, imitate the violence they see, and show more aggressive behavior with greater exposure to violence. Some children accept violence as a way to handle problems. Studies have also shown that the more realistic and repeated the exposure to violence, the greater the impact on children. In addition, children with emotional, behavioral and learning problems	Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in a 3-0 majority opinion written by Consuelo Callahan, JD, ruled on Feb. 20, 2009: "In sum, the evidence presented by the State does not support the Legislature's purported interest in preventing psychological or neurological harm. Nearly all of the research is based on correlation, not evidence of causation, and most of the studies suffer from significant, admitted flaws in methodology as they relate to the State's claimed interest. None of the research establishes or suggests a causal link between minors playing violent video games and actual psychological or neurological harm, and inferences to that effect would not be reasonable. In fact, some of the studies caution against inferring causation." Feb. 20, 2009 - Video Software Dealers Association v Schwarzenegger (136 KB) 📄 Christopher Ferguson, PhD, Professor of Behavioral, Applied Sciences and Criminal Justice at Texas A&M University, was quoted in a Sep. 14, 2009 article titled "New Study Links Youth Violence to Depression & Peers, Not Video Games" on www.gamepolitics.com: "We found that depressed mood and association with delinquent peers were the strongest and most consistent risk factors for youth violence across outcome measures. Parents' use of verbal cruelty in domestic relationships and the child's antisocial personality traits were also reasonably strong predictors of violent behavior. By contrast video game violence exposure and television violence exposure were not found to be predictors of youth violence." Sept. 14, 2009 - Christopher Ferguson, PhD ⭐⭐⭐ *The Economist*, in its Apr. 4, 2005 editorial "Chasing the Dream," stated: "The opposition to gaming springs largely from the neophobia that has pitted the old against the entertainments of the young for centuries. Most gamers are under 40, and most critics are non-games-playing over-40s. But what of the specific complaints - that games foster addiction and encourage violence? There's no good evidence for either... Most of the research on whether video games encourage violence is unsatisfactory, focusing primarily on short-term effects. In the best study so far, frequent playing of a violent game sustained over a month had no effect on participants' level of aggression. And, during the period in which gaming has become widespread in America, violent crime has fallen by half. If games really did make people violent, this tendency might be expected to show up in the figures, given that half of Americans play computer and video games. Perhaps, as some observers have suggested, gaming actually makes people less violent, by acting as a safety valve." Apr. 4, 2005 - The Economist ⭐⭐ Guy Cumberbatch, PhD, Director of the Communications Research Group and chartered psychologist, wrote in the 2004 report "Video Violence: Villain or Victim?" available at www.videostandards.org.uk (accessed Jan. 14, 2010): "The evident weakness in the individual studies and the general pattern of inconsistent findings would not normally lead us to expect researchers to make any strong claims about video games. However, this is far from the case. As with other research on media violence, some of the strongest claims are made on the most flimsy of evidence...

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may be more influenced by violent images. Children and adolescents can become overly involved and even obsessed with videogames. Spending large amounts of time playing these games can create problems and lead to... aggressive thoughts and behaviors." Aug. 2006 - American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry ⭐ ──────────────── The American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, American Psychological Association, American Medical Association, American Academy of Family Physicians, and American Psychiatric Association, wrote in a July 26, 2000 "Joint Statement on the Impact of Entertainment Violence on Children" available at www.aap.org: "Children who see a lot of violence are more likely to view violence as an effective way of settling conflicts. Children exposed to violence are more likely to assume that acts of violence are acceptable behavior. Viewing violence can lead to emotional desensitization towards violence in real life. It can decrease the likelihood that one will take action on behalf of a victim when violence occurs. Entertainment violence feeds a perception that the world is a violent and mean place. Viewing violence increases fear of becoming a victim of violence, with a resultant increase in self-protective behaviors and a mistrust of others. Viewing violence may lead to real life violence. Children exposed to violent programming at a young age have a higher tendency for violent and aggressive behavior later in life than children who are not so exposed. Although less research has been done on the impact of violent interactive entertainment (video games and other interactive media) on young people, preliminary studies indicate that the negative impact may be significantly more severe than that wrought by television, movies, or music." July 26, 2000 - American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry ⭐ ────────────────	The real puzzle is that anyone looking at the research evidence in this field could draw any conclusions about the pattern, let alone argue with such confidence and even passion that it demonstrates the harm of violence on television, in film and in video games. While tests of statistical significance are a vital tool of the social sciences, they seem to have been used more often in this field as instruments of torture on the data until it confesses something to justify a publication in a scientific journal. If one conclusion is possible, it is that the jury is not still out. It's never been in. Media violence has been subjected to lynch mob mentality with almost any evidence used to prove guilt." Jan. 14, 2010 - Guy Cumberbatch, PhD ⭐⭐⭐ ──────────────── Guillaume de Fondaumiere, MA, former President of the French National Video Game Association, stated in an Nov. 16, 2009 interview with Digital Games on digitalgames.fr: "Playing a violent game won't turn you into a psycho, a murderer or a serial killer. Most studies show that very clearly on the contrary violent games allow players to express themselves. It's like an outlet for them in a way. All these violent actions that are said to have been inspired by playing violent video games are nothing but the expressions of issues unrelated to video games." Nov. 16, 2009 - Guillaume de Fondaumiere, MA ⭐ ──────────────── The Office of the Surgeon General, through Director of Communications Damon Thompson, was quoted in the Jan. 22, 2001 article "Video Games: Bad, But Not All Bad," in *USA Today*: "Media violence - specifically video games - are not a major risk factor for violence. We did find rising links between media violence, television violence, and short-term aggressive behavior. But that is significantly different from violent behavior allegedly caused by playing video games... In children, there is a difference between aggressive behavior like pushing or shoving, and real violence - like hitting - which causes bodily harm. But the key factor regarding video gaming is that we simply don't have enough research at this point to form conclusions." Jan. 22, 2001 - Office of the Surgeon General ⭐ ──────────────── Frank Gaskill, PhD, and Dave Verhaagen, PhD, Founding and Managing Partners of Southeast Psych, in an Oct. 11, 2009 article titled "Do Violent Video Games Cause Violence and Aggression?" at www.southeastpsych.blogspot.com, wrote: "...Correlations are just relationships between two variables; you can never say one causes the other. We could say that during the season when ice cream sales increase, shark attacks also increase. But we could not say the more ice cream you sell, the more you cause shark attacks. Why would a couple of child psychologists come to the defense of violent video games? Because some legislative initiatives and public opinions across the country are based on fallacious assumptions, personal biases, political posturing and weak science. One recent systematic analysis of the research literature found 'insufficient, contradictory and methodologically flawed evidence on the association between television viewing and video game playing and aggression in children and young people with behavioral and emotional difficulties. If public health advice is to be evidence-based, good quality research is needed,' (Mitrofan, Paul, Spencer, 2009). Another extensive study found 'no support for the hypothesis that violent video game playing is associated with higher

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	aggression,' (Ferguson, 2007). In fact, that same study found some positive benefits of playing violent video games, particularly improvements in visual-spatial thinking. While there are studies that find people who play violent video games may have a brief increase in violent thoughts and feelings, newer research finds that these thoughts and feelings typically last less than four minutes (Barlett, Branch, Rodeheffer, & Harris, 2009). And remember, having a violent thought is a whole lot different than actually committing violence." Oct. 11, 2009 - Frank Gaskill, PhD ⭐⭐⭐ David Verhaagen, PhD ⭐⭐⭐