



# Grades 6-8 Argument Reading & Writing Handbook

Argumentative



## *Together is Better*

Teaching Literacy in Integrated Units



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# What is 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

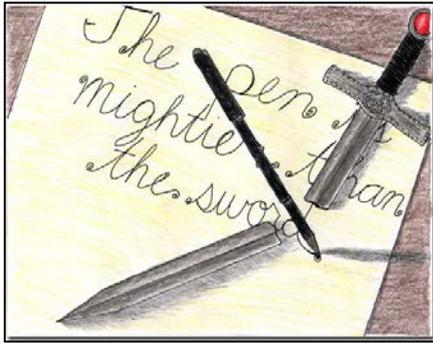
Writing Standard 1 Indicates what each grade level needs to know and be able to do with this text type:

<b>W</b>	<b>Writing Standards – W1 Argument</b>	<b>6-8</b>
<b>TEXT TYPES and PURPOSES*:</b>		
 <b>ANCHOR STANDARD 1:</b> Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.		

Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly.</li> <li>Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.</li> <li>Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons.</li> <li>Establish and maintain a formal style.</li> <li>Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.</li> </ol>	1. Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce claim(s), acknowledge <b>and address</b> alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically. <b>CA</b></li> <li>Support claim(s) <b>or counterarguments</b> with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. <b>CA</b></li> <li>Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence.</li> <li>Establish and maintain a formal style.</li> <li>Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.</li> </ol>	1. Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.</li> <li>Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.</li> <li>Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.</li> <li>Establish and maintain a formal style.</li> <li>Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.</li> </ol>

\*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 arguments 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

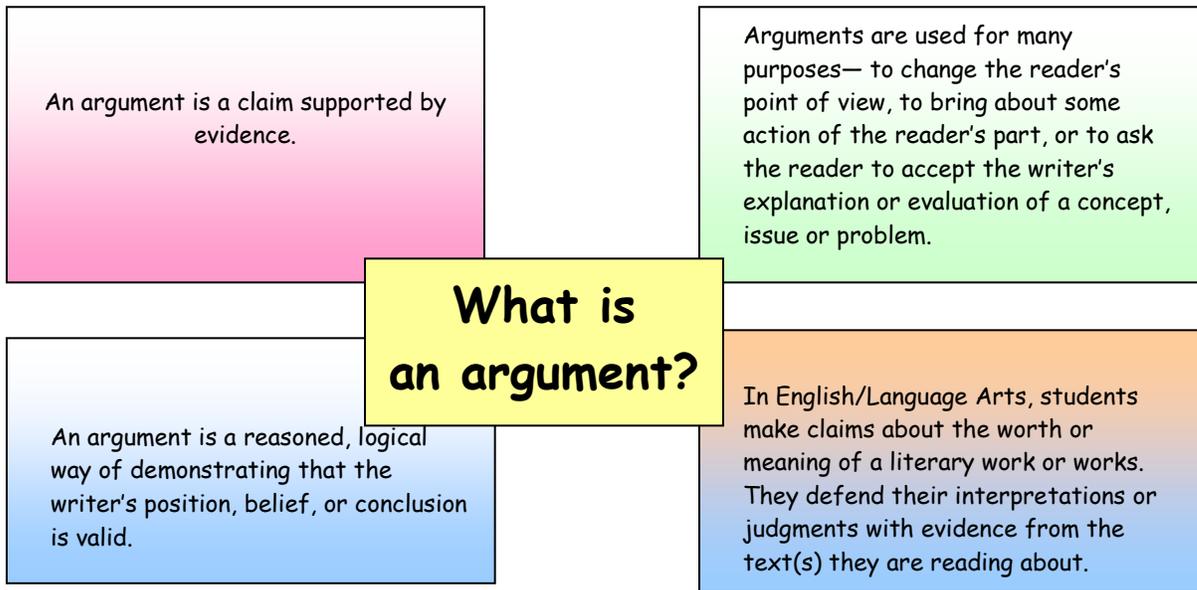


## Reading Informational Text

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	6-8
<b>INTEGRATION of KNOWLEDGE and IDEAS</b>		
<b>ANCHOR STANDARD 8:</b> 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.		
<b>Grade 6</b>	<b>Grade 7</b>	<b>Grade 8</b>
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.	Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims.	Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

## 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>

# 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." 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 CCSS Argument Grade 6

*This is a sample only. For additional anchor papers K-8, please see our website, [www.knoxeducation.com](http://www.knoxeducation.com), and the separate packet entitled CCSS Opinion-Argument Anchor Papers Packet 2013.*

### Student Sample: Grade 6, Argument

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

#### A Pet Story About My Cat . . . Gus

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

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

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

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

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

**This is a sample only, please see our website  
[www.knoxeducation.com](http://www.knoxeducation.com) for all rubrics.**



**ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING RUBRIC**

California Common Core Standards Based - **SIXTH GRADE**



Level	ARGUMENT WRITING/PROCESS	LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS	WITH GUIDANCE and SUPPORT FROM ADULTS
<b>4</b> Exceeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Meets all expectations in level 3</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Introduces claim, acknowledges alternate or opposing claims and organizes the reasons and evidence logically</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Effective use of sources to support argument</li> </ul>	<p><b>Mostly correct</b> use of language conventions, and some above grade level skills used, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Meets all expectations in level 3</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses phrases and clauses within a sentence, avoiding dangling modifiers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Refers to reference material to determine best word choices in writing</li> </ul>	<p>Guidance &amp; Support</p> <p>Level of guidance and support from adults before writing:</p> <p>Check off what was done before the student wrote the piece being scored.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Discussion</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Read aloud or shared reading</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Drawing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary word bank</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Shared or interactive writing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Graphic organizer</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Language frames</li> </ul>
<b>3</b> Meets	<p><b>ARGUMENT WRITING (W1)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Introduces claim and organizes reasons and evidence clearly (W1a)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates an understanding of the topic or text by supporting claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence (W1b)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses words, phrases/clauses to clarify the relationships among claims and reasons (W1c)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Establishes and maintains a formal style (W1d)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provides a concluding statement/section that follows from argument presented (W1e)</li> </ul> <p><b>WRITING PROCESS (W4-W8)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses clear/coherent writing where development, organization and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience (W4)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>WGASFA*</b> Develops and strengthens writing by planning, revising, and editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach (W5)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses technology to produce writing (W6)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses keyboarding skills to minimum of 3 pages in a single sitting (W6)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Conducts research drawing on several resources (W7)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Assesses credibility of sources; quotes or paraphrases the data and conclusions (W8)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Avoids plagiarism and provides basic bibliographic information (W8)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Adequate</b> use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling for grade level, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses a variety of pronouns effectively (L1a-d)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses a variation of simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences for meaning and interest (L3a)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ensures that verbs agree with compound subjects</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses commas when linking two clauses with a conjunction in compound sentences</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses correct capitalization</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Spells correctly (L2b)</li> </ul>	
<b>2</b> Almost Meets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Claim may be somewhat unclear</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Introduction may be clear but conclusion is weak</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses some evidence from source, but may be repetitive or vague</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses few words/phrases to clarify relationships between claim and reasons</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Has formal style but may not be maintained throughout document</li> </ul>	<p><b>Limited</b> use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling for grade level, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Contains some run-on sentences</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses mostly simple or compound sentences</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses propositional phrases, appositives, dependent and independent clauses, transitions or conjunctions incorrectly</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Contains some punctuation errors</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Contains some capitalization errors</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Contains some spelling errors</li> </ul>	
<b>1</b> Does Not Meet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Claim may be confusing or ambiguous</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Intro/conclusion may be missing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses few or little evidence from sources</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uses style not appropriate to audience, purpose or task</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Has no formal style</li> </ul>	<p><b>Infrequent</b> use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling for grade level, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Contains many run-on sentences</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Contains many punctuation errors</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Contains many capitalization errors</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Contains many spelling errors</li> </ul>	

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

This rubric was adapted from rubrics at [bsud.org](http://bsud.org) and information from Smarter Balanced Assessments ([www.smarterbalanced.org](http://www.smarterbalanced.org)) using the California Common Core Standards at [www.cde.ca.gov](http://www.cde.ca.gov).



# Writing Anchor Papers with Students

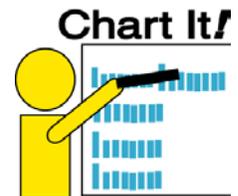
## Learning About a Rubric from the Inside Out

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.



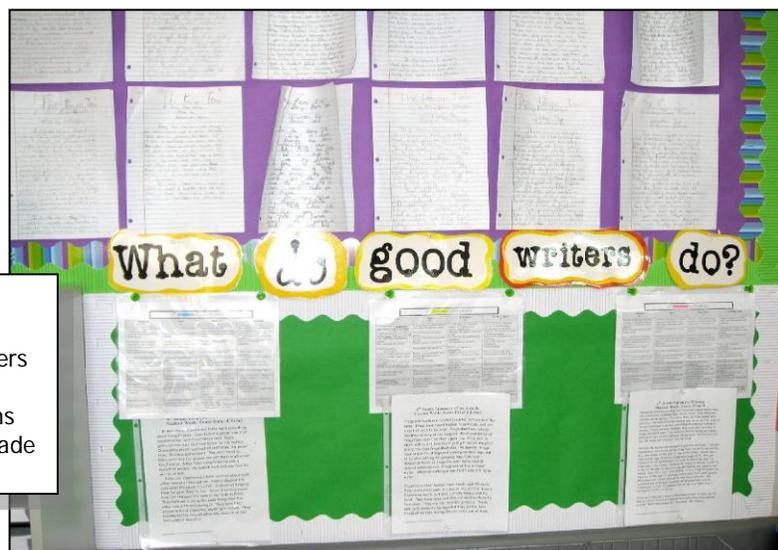
2



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

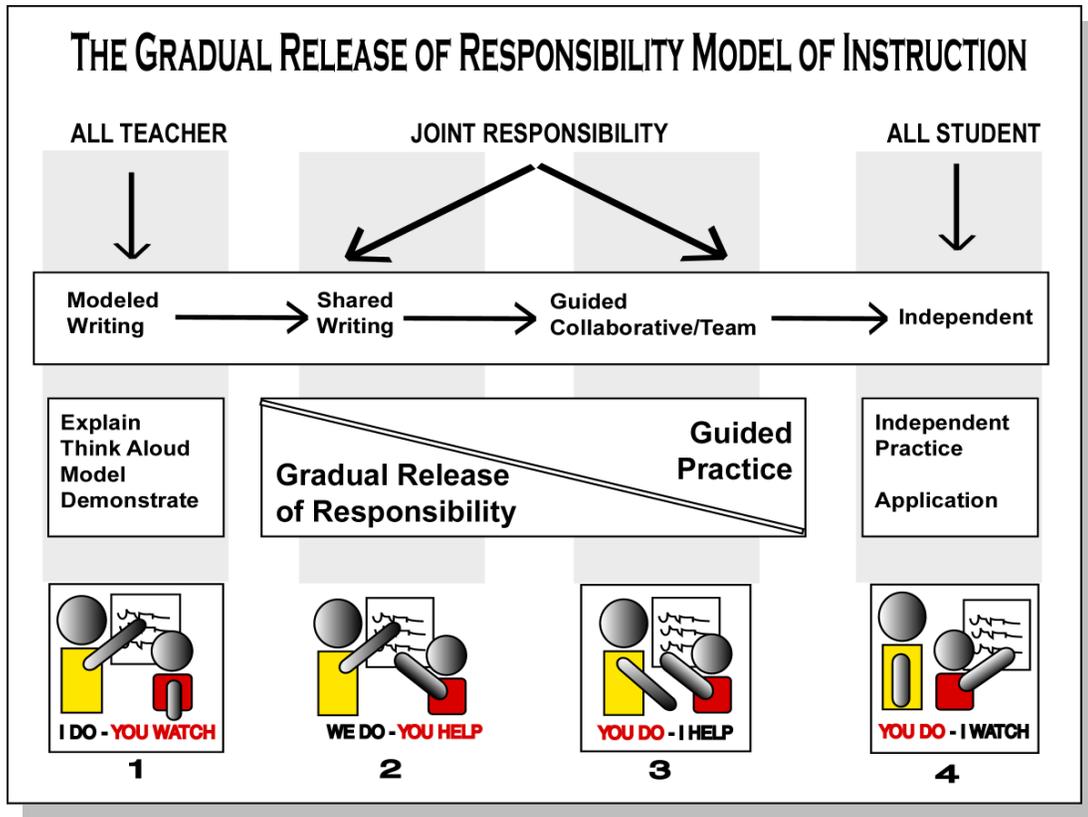
GRADE 3 SAMPLE LEVEL 3 Anchor Paper

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.

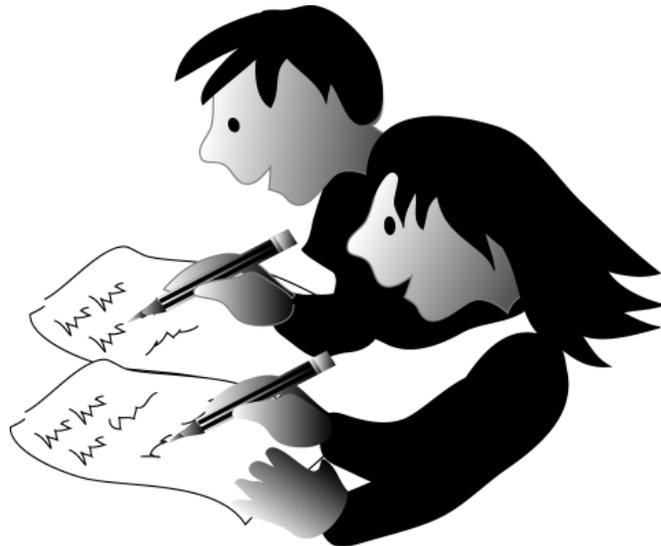
The most successful approach to teaching writing we have found with today's students is to honor the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model of Instruction. The model is shown in the graphic on the previous page. To make this paradigm work, 1) we first model the process through writing in front of the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



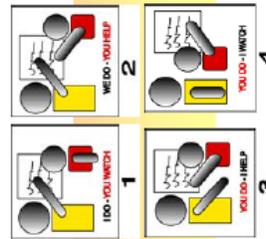


# The Writing Process

## Sea of Talk

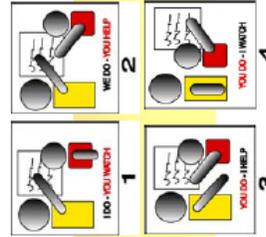
### 1. PLANNING

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



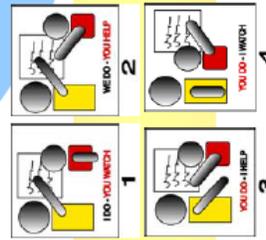
### 2. DRAFTING

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



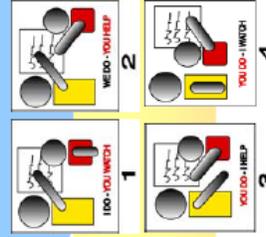
### 3. REVISING

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



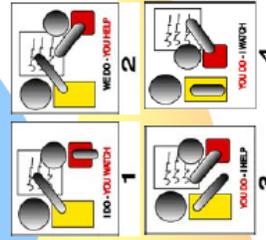
### 4. EDITING

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



### 5. PUBLISHING

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



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

## Before Writing:

1. Think pair share.
2. Note cards/note taking: Pairs share what notes they have taken on a topic and explain to each other what they are going to write.
3. Question/answer: Students/teacher ask a question about the topic, students answer to each other in pairs or triads.
4. 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.

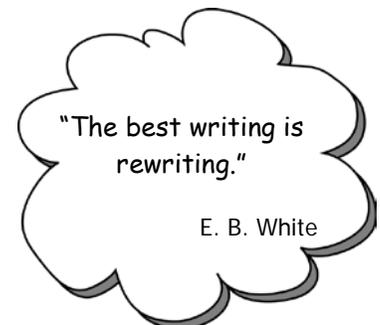


## During Writing:

- 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:

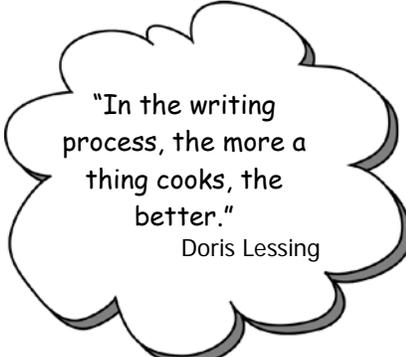
- Students read their pieces aloud to a small group or peer, others respond with a positive comment about the piece or a question.
- "I liked the part about...."
- "I wonder what you meant by....?"
- "I'd like to hear more about...."



# 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.

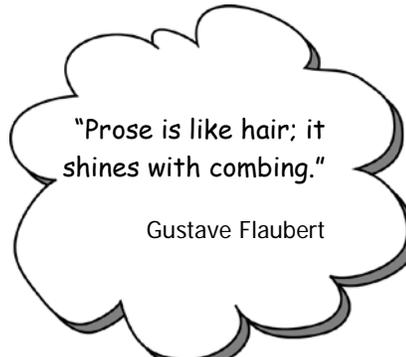


"In the writing process, the more a thing cooks, the better."

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:

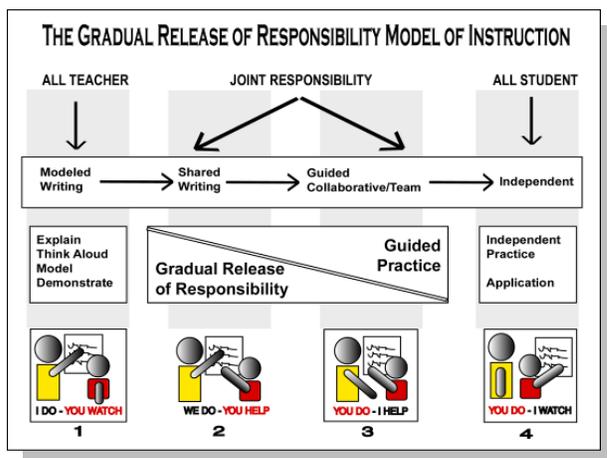
**Week One:** Introduce the writing standards. Model the whole process for the new text type using teacher modeling as well as examination of “mentor texts” or exemplars from published authors. Focus on identifying the elements of the new text type with color coding or labeling. Write or use anchor papers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

*"Begin with the end in mind."*

Grade		Topic:	
PLANNING	<b><u>CCSS Grade Level Standards:</u></b>		
	Writing Standard 1	Reading Informational Text Standard 8	
	<p><b><u>Authentic Mode for Publishing/Sharing:</u></b></p> <p><b>Format</b> (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></p>		
	<p><b><u>Authentic Audience</u></b> (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></p>		
	<p><b><u>Assessment:</u></b> (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></p>		

<b>READING and RESEARCH SOURCES</b>	<b>Possible Sources: INTERNET</b>
	<i>Internet resources are covered under Reading: RI7 and Writing: W6.</i>
	<b>Possible Sources: TEXTBOOKS/BOOKS</b>
	<i>Other resources are covered under Reading: RI 9 and Writing: W6-8.</i>
	<b>Possible Sources: OTHER</b>
	(Guest speakers, community organizations, hands-on experiences, etc.)
	<i>Interaction with people &amp; resources is covered under Writing: W6; Speaking and Listening: SL 1,2,3.</i>
	<b>Evaluating Sources and Resources</b>
	Include a lesson on how to evaluate websites and conduct effective website searches. <a href="http://www.schrockguide.net/critical-evaluation.html">http://www.schrockguide.net/critical-evaluation.html</a> 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><b>MODELING:</b> Read exemplars, label/color code, introduce rubric, write “quick tries.”</p>  
<p>WEEK 2</p>	<p><b>Researching</b> topics of interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Generate an “Issues We Care About” list.</li><li>• Invite a guest speaker, or go on a fieldtrip to learn about a local issue.</li><li>• Model with a whole class topic.</li><li>• 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)</li><li>• Students choose topic and start their research take notes on graphic organizer.</li></ul>  

LESSON SEQUENCE Weeks 3, 4 and 5

WEEK 3	<p><b>Take a Stand:</b> 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><b>Guided writing:</b> for argument pieces: students write 1-3 pieces. Use student checklist, writing project board, small group instruction, sharing and responding.</p>  

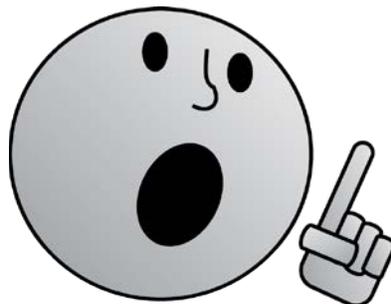
LESSON SEQUENCE Week6

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

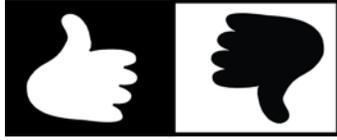
# Argumentative



## Argument Writing Tool Kit



## Opinion/Argument

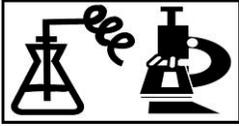


# Argument Writing *Possibili*



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 argument 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 argument about a piece of literature citing evidence from the text.
- Write a review of a piece of literature to make your argument 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 argument about the best way to solve math problems.
- Write to share your argument about real-life applications for mathematical concepts.

#### Contemporary World:

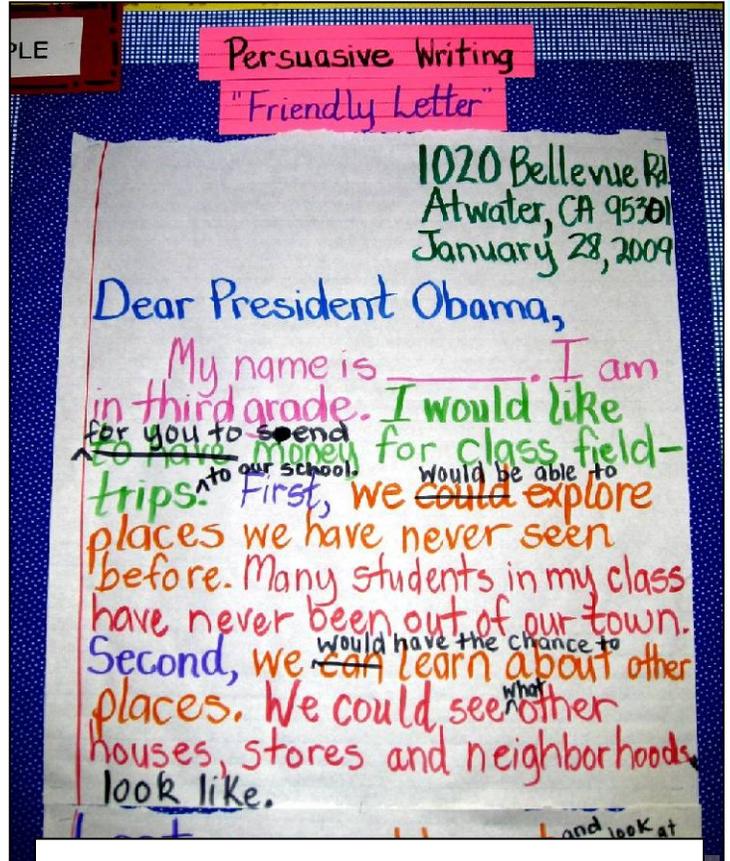
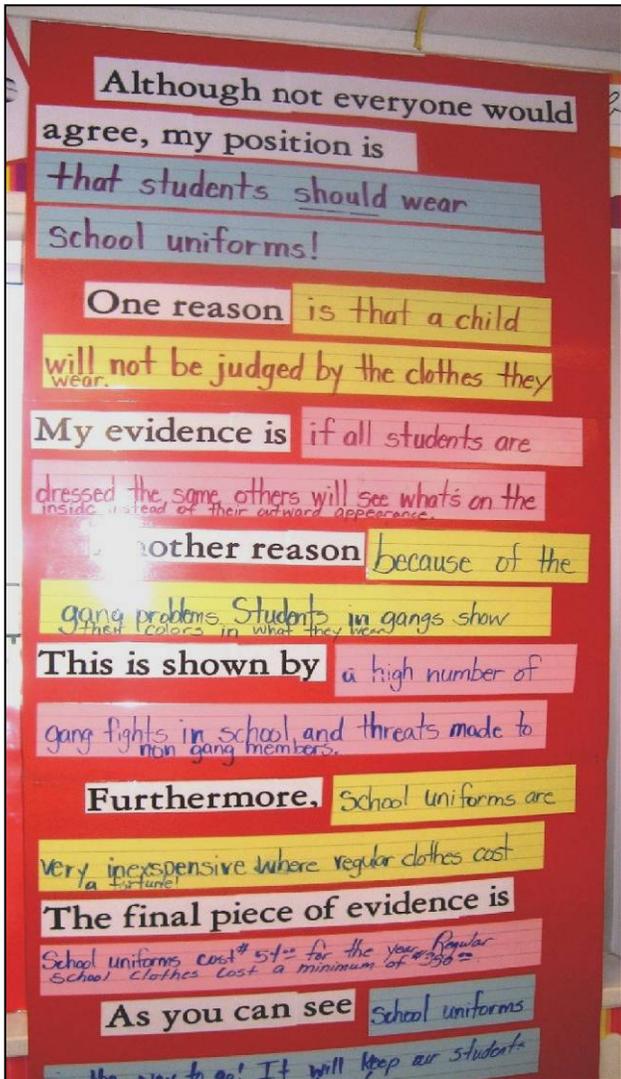
- Write reviews of products, places or entertainment you enjoy. Include research and information about what you are reviewing.
- Write to share your argument about something you care about.
- Write to show how to make your world a better place, for example, issues around school, neighborhood, family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

### What's Happening NOW?



# Examples of Argument Writing

This teacher has created a laminated frame to use for shared writing of opinion/argument 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.

## Identifying Elements of 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:** Argument/thesis statement

**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 Argument Writing with Color Coding:

### Sample Two:

### Hang Up and Drive

(6<sup>th</sup> 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

**Title** Eyes on the Road! **1. Model**

**Hook** What will be next, Seeing someone in the car next to me shaving their legs? Certainly, some drivers have always done other things while driving, like changing the radio station or picking their nose. Recently, there has been much discussion about the dangers of cell phone use while driving. But that is not the only thing drivers are doing behind the wheels; many are also applying make-up, reading the newspaper, eating a sandwich, texting or brushing their teeth. Drivers need to stop multi-tasking and focus on the road!

**Background info**

**Thesis Statement** First of all, it is a known fact that distracted drivers often cause accidents.

**Argument #1** While looking in the mirror to curl her eyelashes, a driver could run a red light and crash into someone. A driver checking his email on his smartphone might not notice when another car changes lanes and could veer right into him. When drivers are distracted, it puts everyone in danger.

**Evidence**

**Argument #2** At the very least, distracted drivers slow down traffic. A driver reading the newspaper at a stoplight might not move forward when the light turns green, infuriating those behind her. Drivers talking on the phone often don't realize how slow they are going.

**Evidence**

**Counter-argument** On the other hand, some drivers argue that they can do other things and still pay attention to the road. They say that making phone calls and flossing their teeth in the car saves them time. It is clear that these people are kidding themselves. Saving a few minutes is not worth putting themselves and others in danger!

**Conclusion** As you can see, many accidents and traffic jams could be avoided if drivers would just focus on one thing: driving! Yes, it may take you a few extra minutes, but please wait until you arrive safely at home to clip those fingernails and text Grandma. It will be worth it!

**2. Color Code**

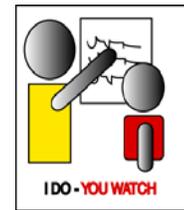
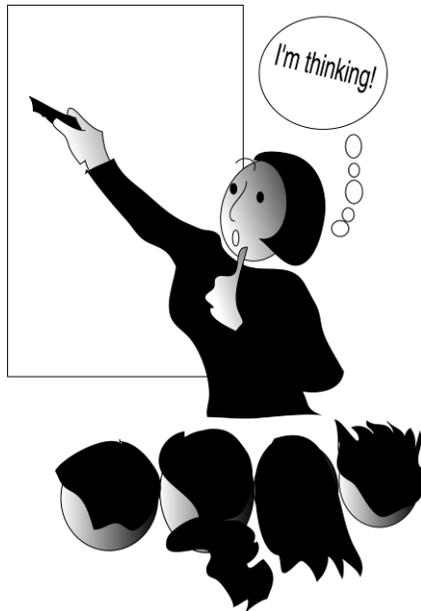
Some drivers drive dangerously fast on the freeway.

It really is not possible to concentrate on driving when you are doing something else.

Many of the worst car accidents occur because drivers aren't focusing on what they are doing.

There wouldn't be as much traffic if drivers would just pay attention to the road.

# Modeled Writing for Argument 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 argument pieces about a 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/argument ..... 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 carat. ^
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.

# Photos of Modeled Writing

**Title** Eyes on the Road! **1** T. Madel

**Hook** What will be next, seeing someone in the car next to me shaving their legs? Certainly, some drivers have always done other things while driving, like changing the radio station or picking their nose. Recently, there has been much discussion about the dangers of cell phone use while driving. But that is not the only thing drivers are doing behind the wheels; many are also applying make-up, reading the newspaper, eating a sandwich, texting or brushing their teeth. Drivers need to stop multi-tasking and focus on the road!

**Background info**

**Thesis Statement**

**Argument 1** First of all, it is a known fact that distracted drivers often cause accidents. While looking in the mirror to curl her eyelashes, a driver could run a red light and crash into someone. A driver checking his email on his smartphone might not notice when another car changes lanes and could veer right into him. When drivers are distracted, it puts everyone in danger.

**Evidence**

At the very least, distracted drivers slow down traffic. A driver reading the news at a stoplight might not move forward when the light turns green, irritating those behind her. Drivers talking on the phone often don't realize how slow they are going.

On the other hand, some drivers argue they can do other things and still pay attention to the road. They say that making phone calls and flossing their teeth while driving saves them time. It is clear that these people are kidding themselves. Saving a few minutes is not worth putting themselves and others in danger!

**Conclusion** As you can see, many accidents and traffic jams could be avoided if drivers would just focus on one thing: driving! Yes, it may take you a few extra minutes, but please wait until you arrive safely at home to clip those fingernails and text Grandma. It will be worth it!

**2** Color Code

Some drivers drive dangerously fast on the freeway.

It really is not possible to concentrate on driving when you are doing something else.

Many of the worst car accidents occur because drivers aren't focusing on what they are doing.

There wouldn't be as much traffic if drivers would just pay attention to the road.



## 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.

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	6-8
<b>INTEGRATION of KNOWLEDGE and IDEAS</b>		
<b>ANCHOR STANDARD 8:</b> 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.		
<b>Grade 6</b>	<b>Grade 7</b>	<b>Grade 8</b>
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.	Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims.	Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

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 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.

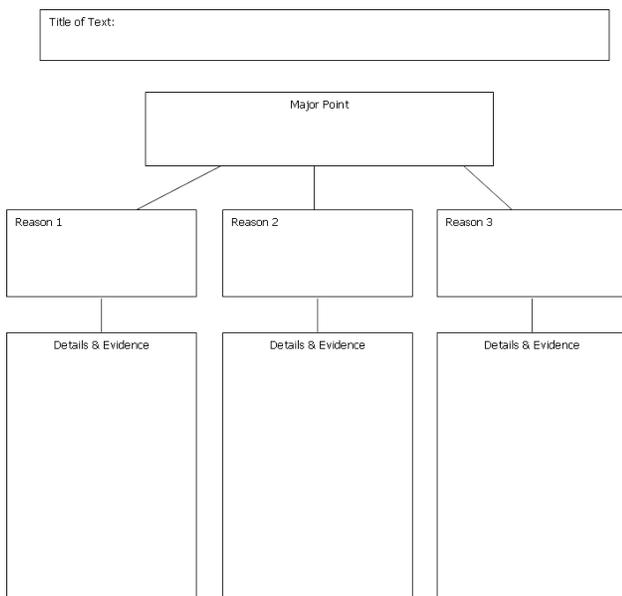
Here’s how:

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](http://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 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 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:

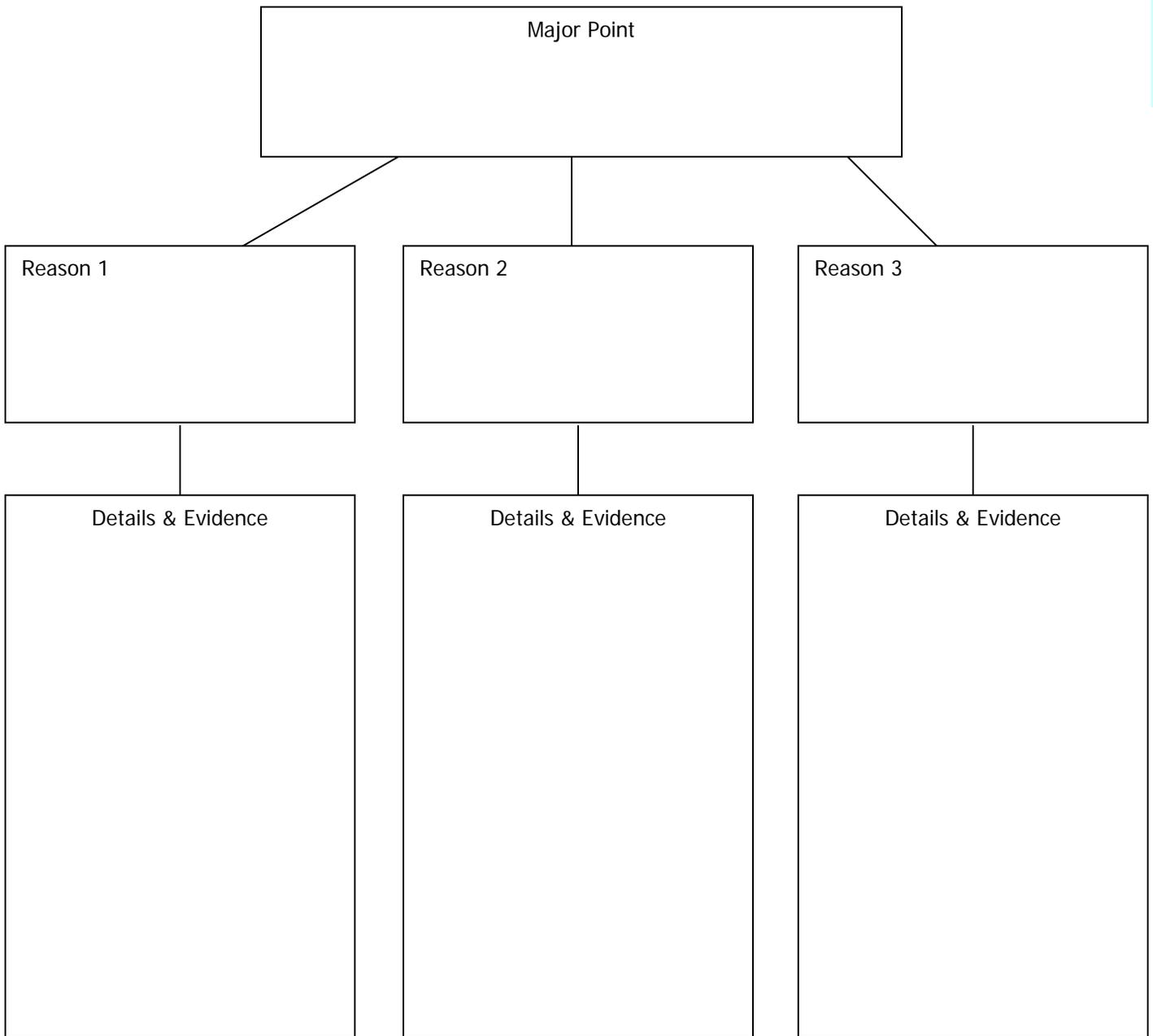
### Tree Map ([www.thinkingmaps.com](http://www.thinkingmaps.com))

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: \_\_\_\_\_



# Talk Tickets

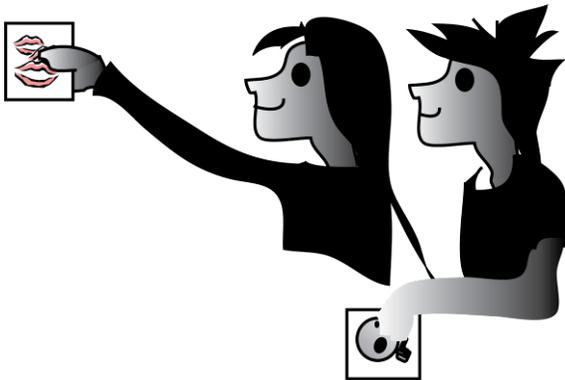
Any small object such as a paper clip, bingo marker or paper 'ticket' can be used as a ticket to talk!

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.

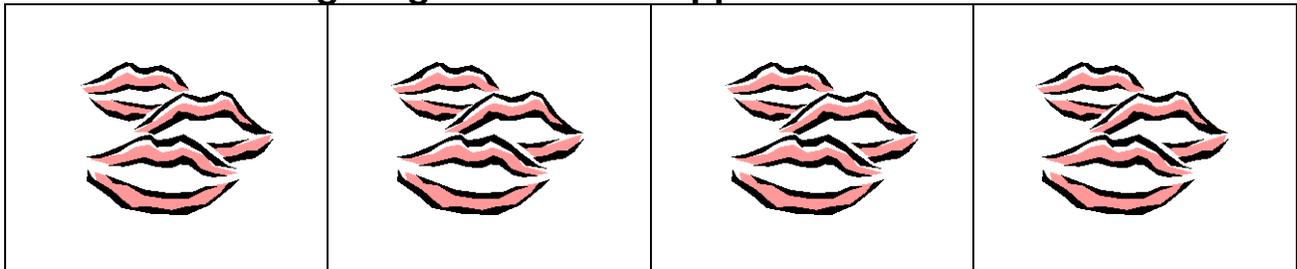
Talk Tickets encourage participation in two ways:

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

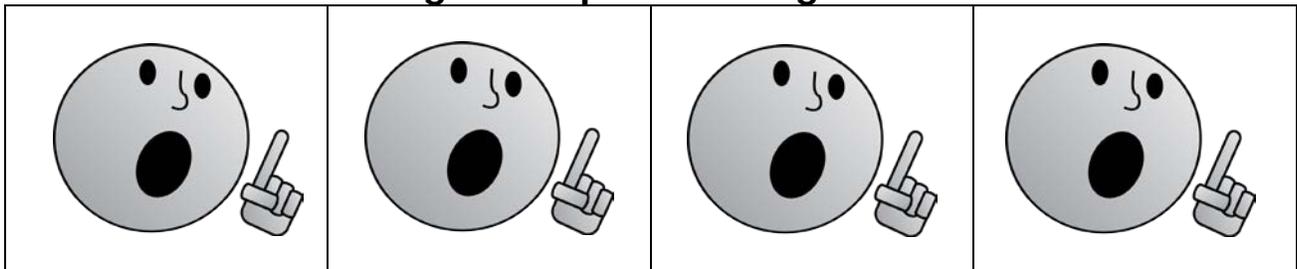


We've included two icons for talk tickets here in case you want to have the students differentiate their contributions between stating their opinion or argument and offering reasons or support.

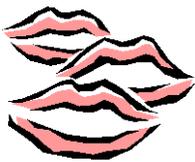
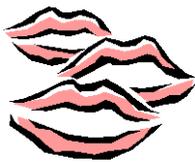
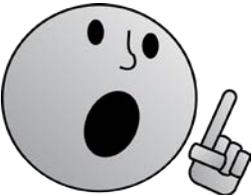
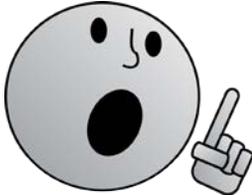
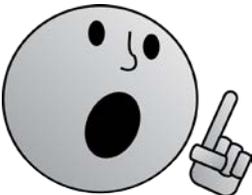
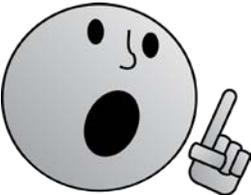
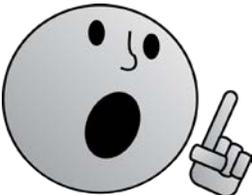
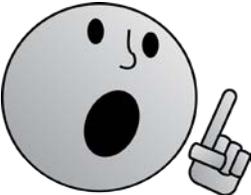
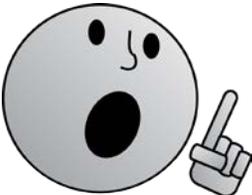
## Talk Tickets for giving reasons or support



## Talk Tickets for stating their opinion or argument



# Talk Tickets

# Shared Writing of Argument Essay

Charts for Topics to Choose from for Writing unit

FOR and AGAINST

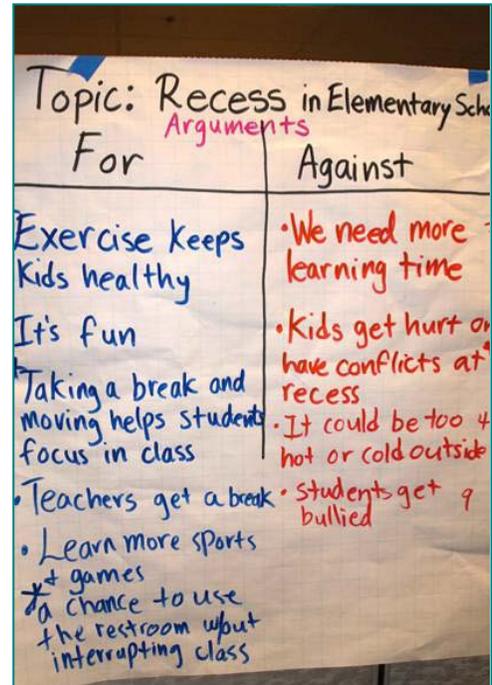
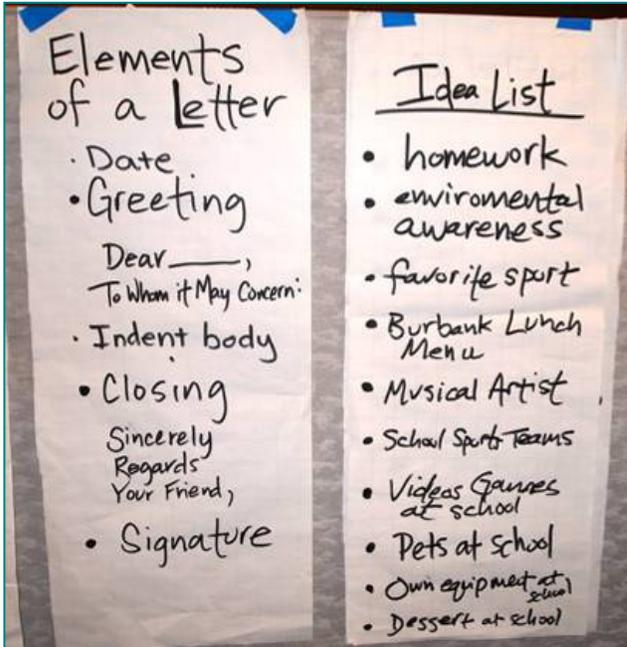
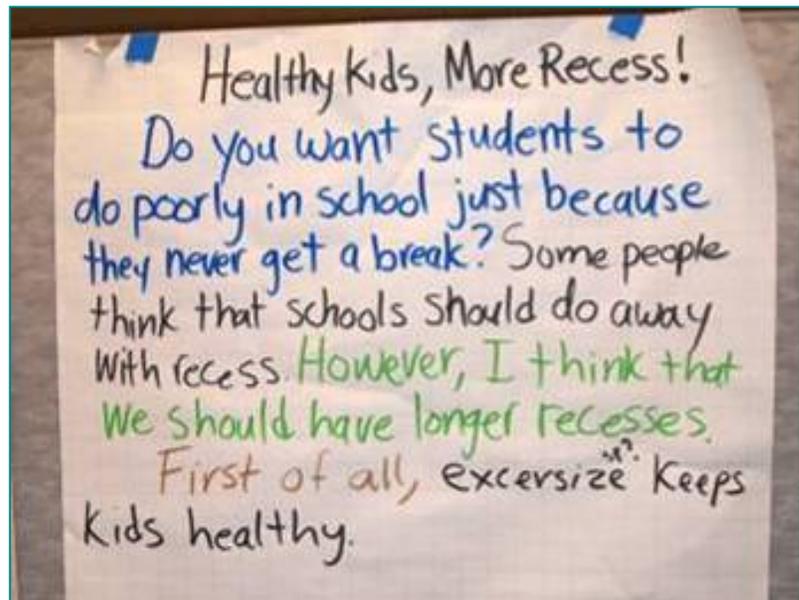
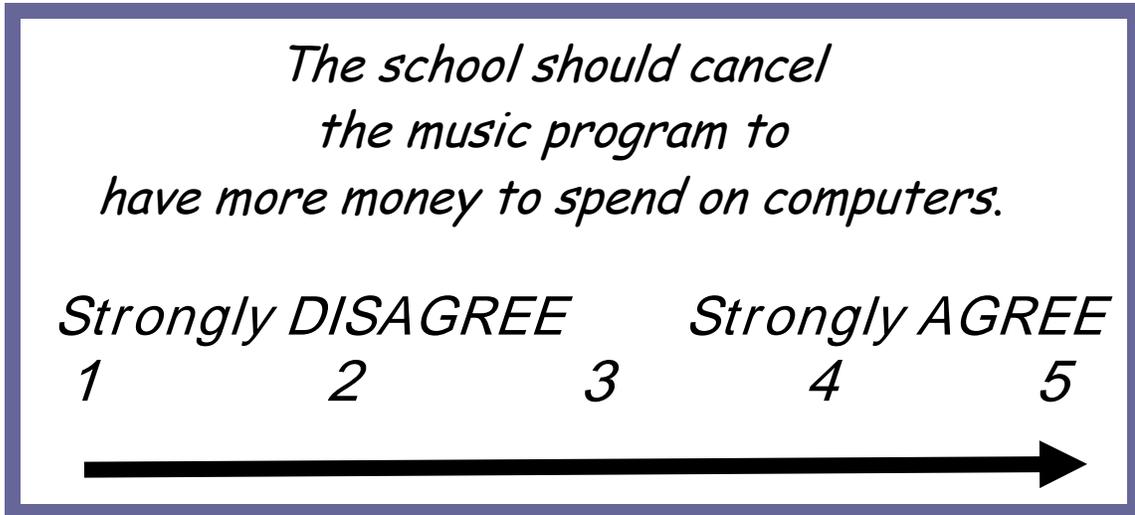


Chart with start of essay about recess



# How to Take a Stand—Form an Argument

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 or make their argument on their white board before they move to their spot.

## How to Take a Stand—Form an Argument 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 argument writing piece.

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

# Warming up to Writing 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 an 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 or presenting their argument 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 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 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.*

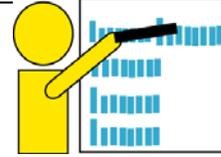
*The first 30 minutes of every school day should be time for socializing with friends.*

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

# How to Write an 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 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.

## 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....

## Argument Essay Planning Guide

1. <b>Clarify</b> the topic.	
2. <b>Brainstorm both sides</b> of the topic.	
3. Develop a <b>thesis statement</b> for your side of the argument - What do you believe to be true for your side of the argument?	
4. What is the <b>evidence</b> that supports your thesis statement? This should include references to researched information when possible.	
5. Identify <b>counter-arguments</b> What might the other side say about your arguments?	6. Provide an <b>organized reaction</b> to counter-arguments. Why is your argument stronger?
7. <b>Summarize</b> 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.

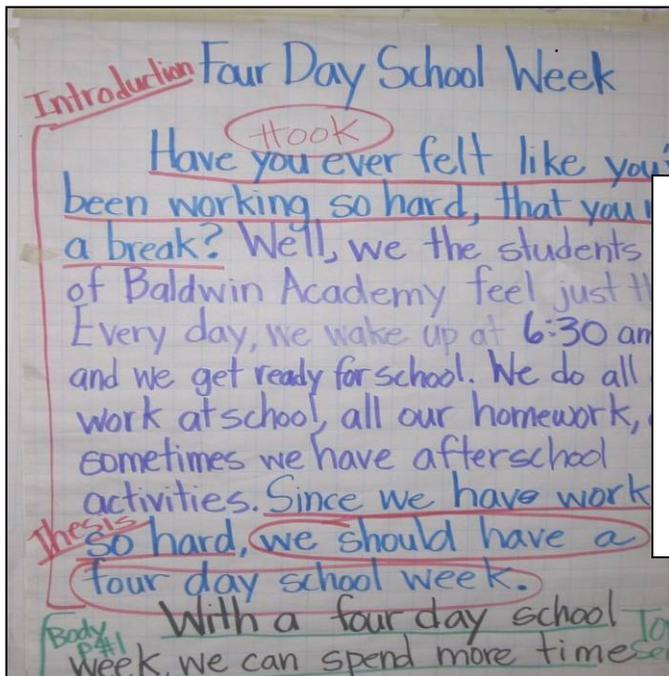
## Paragraph Frames for Argument Writing

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 Argument Writing

Very young students can be taught to share their opinions/arguments 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/arguments 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 6-8

# 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**  
©1999-2014 Happy Medium Productions, Inc.  
[http://www.spaghettibookclub.org/review.php?review\\_id=11929](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	Title Author Genre Brief summary	Title Type of movie Rating Actors/actresses	Name Location Type of food	Name Type Rating System to play on Object of the game	Name Location Type	Type Manufacturer
Evidence to use to support your argument	Characters Setting Plot Illustrations Author's message or theme Best audience	Acting storyline Special effects Best audience for the movie	Taste and quality of food How the restaurant looks Service Price Best audience	Graphics Difficulty Levels Ease of directions Best audience	Appearance Activities Best for what kinds of visitors	Taste Nutrition Price Appearance

<b>Review Writing Planning Form</b>	
Review of: _____	
Reviewer: _____	
Date: _____	
<b>Picture or graphic to highlight</b>	
<b>Background information and argument</b>	
<b>Reasons</b>	
<b>Audience I recommend for this</b>	

# Argument Writing Organizer 6-8

(Sample: also available on our website in full size)

Opinion/Argument			
Argument Writing Organizer 6-8			
Name: _____			
Topic	Question	Audience	
<b>My Opinion:</b>			
<b>Word Bank</b>			
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

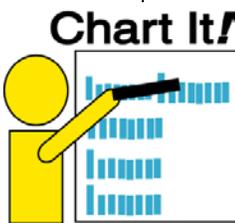
It's time to write a piece together with input from the students through “shared writing” or the “language experience approach”. Gather the students on the carpet or in front of the classroom, have them bring a white board to offer suggestions for the piece, and walk them through the process of writing 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/argument piece, let’s put our opinion/argument 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/argument.
5. Write your reasons for your opinion/argument. Make sure to include facts about the food product.
6. Conclude your review.
  - Who you think will like/dislike this product
  - Restate your opinion/argument
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.



# Language Frames and How-To Chart

These are available on our website [www.knoxeducation.com](http://www.knoxeducation.com) and as separate documents.

## Writing an Argument



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

☆	☆	☆	☆	☆
<b>Punctuation</b>	<b>Capitals only</b>	<b>Spelling</b>	<b>Spoken</b>	<b>Paper &amp; Hand</b>
. ? ! ,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always use the 31</li> <li>• Beginning of sentences</li> <li>• Names</li> <li>• Months</li> <li>• Days of the week</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always use words</li> <li>• Use the words carefully</li> <li>• Be clear</li> <li>• Check and correct spelling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use voice all words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• handwriting</li> <li>• no eraser</li> </ul>



11. *Type or write a final draft!*

12. *Celebrate your hard work!*

## Language for Writing about our Opinions



Writing your opinion about a topic:

- *In my opinion.....*
- *I believe.....*
- *I think.....*
- *\_\_\_\_\_ are the best because \_\_\_\_\_*
- *\_\_\_\_\_ make the best \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_*
- *(In my opinion) (I think that) \_\_\_\_\_*  
*(need to/have to/should) \_\_\_\_\_*  
*because \_\_\_\_\_*

Writing reasons for your opinion:

- *one reason for this is \_\_\_\_\_*
- *There are several/three/many reasons I think \_\_\_\_\_.*  
*First.....Secondly.....Finally.....*
- *Evidence for this is \_\_\_\_\_*
- *This can be shown by \_\_\_\_\_*
- *Research from \_\_\_\_\_ shows \_\_\_\_\_*

Linking words to connect ideas:

- *because*
- *also*
- *furthermore*
- *on the one hand/on the other hand*
- *another*
- *for example*
- *for instance*
- *therefore*
- *however*

Concluding statements:

- *That is why I think \_\_\_\_\_*
- *As you can see \_\_\_\_\_*
- *Clearly \_\_\_\_\_*
- *Obviously \_\_\_\_\_*  
*Although \_\_\_\_\_, I think/believe \_\_\_\_\_.*

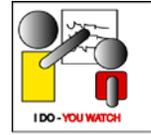
# Jumpstart



Whole Class Lesson



Differentiated Support



1<sup>st</sup>

## Jumpstart

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

2<sup>nd</sup>

## Guided

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

3<sup>rd</sup>

## 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.

## 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

# 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.

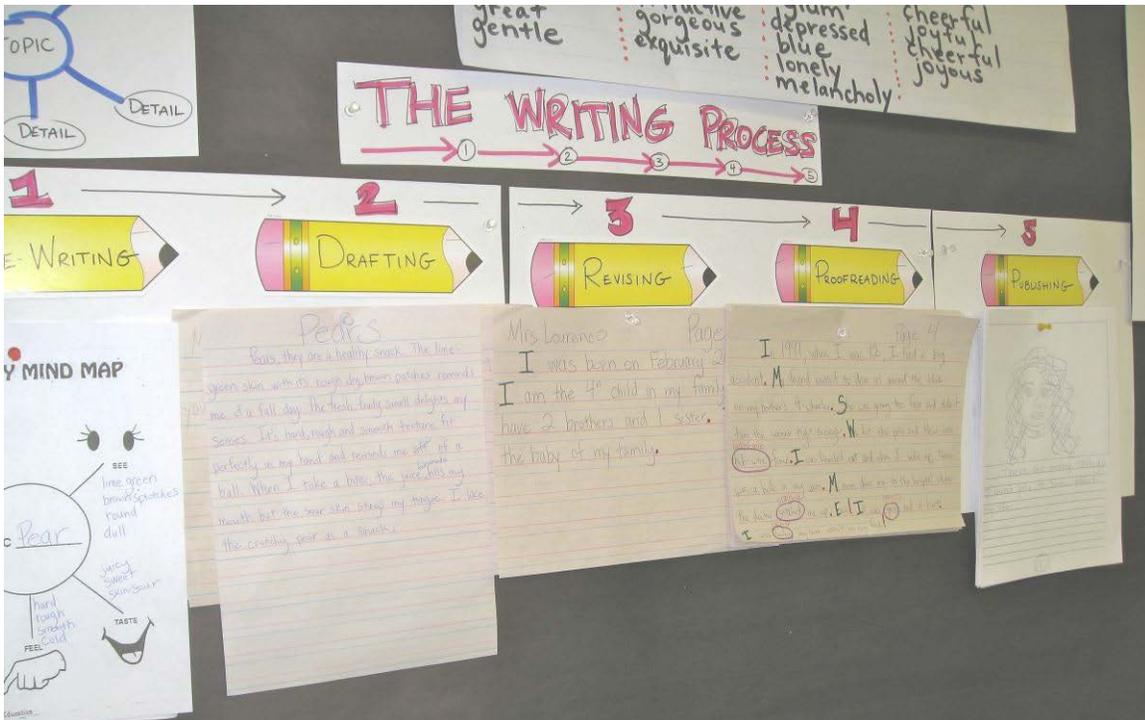
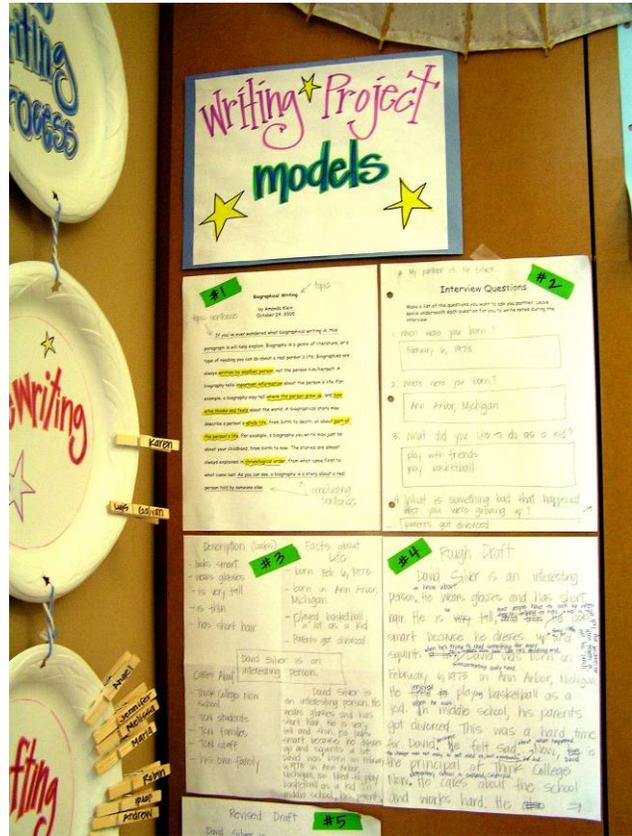
In the long run it's what is right.

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

# 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:



# Guided Practice in Writing

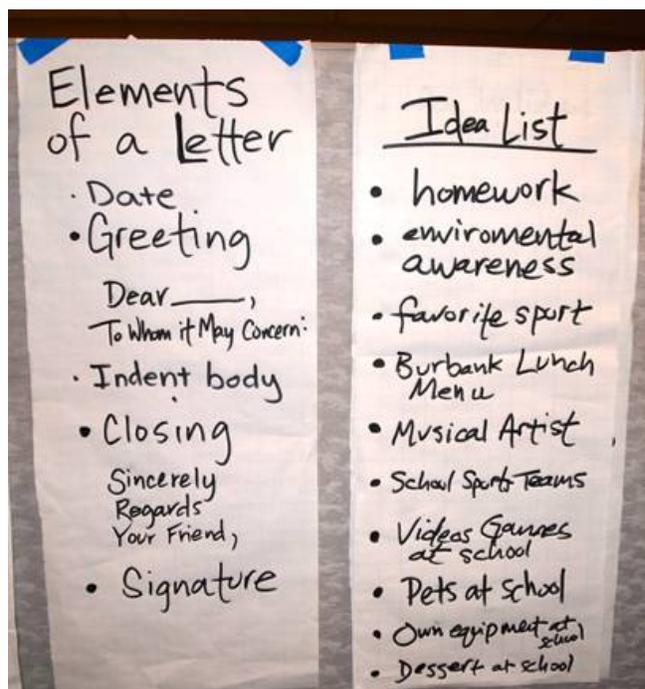
## After you have:

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:

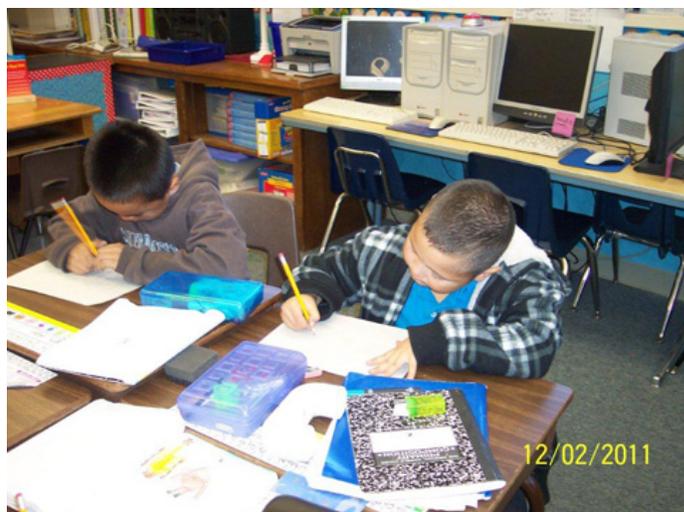
As you get started with this phase of your writing unit, you will want to generate several possible topics for students to draw from as they begin their own independent writing pieces. For example, if you are writing opinion/argument pieces about books, you'll want to gather a basket of favorite books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



WEEK 3-4

## 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/argument 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 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

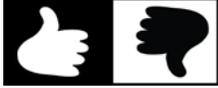
Dangerous sports

Best career choice for a student with research on the career

Analysis of argument techniques used in advertisements for toys



Students collaborate on an opinion/argument writing project.



# Writing Checklist: Argument Writing Grade 6

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	Elements	Self	Peer	Teacher
Content	I stake a position and make a thesis statement that can be supported by a variety of trustworthy, credible sources. Each part of my text builds my argument and leads to a conclusion.			
	My introduction engages and helps the reader to understand and care about the topic. I thought backwards from my piece to the introduction to make sure it fits with the whole.			
	<b>Argument:</b> I acknowledged different sides, or counter arguments, to my own claim.			
	<b>Words:</b> I made deliberate and precise word choices to state my claim.			
	<b>Words:</b> I used transition words and linking words and phrases to help the reader to understand how all the different parts of my piece fit together to support my argument.			
	<b>Research:</b> I used technology and both print and digital resources to research my claim.			
	<b>Evidence:</b> I included and arranged a variety of credible and relevant evidence to support my reasons.			
	<b>Evidence:</b> I used trusted, credible sources and information from authorities on the topic.			
	<b>Evidence:</b> I explained how my evidence strengthens my argument. I explain exactly which evidence supports which point.			
	<b>Evidence:</b> I chose how to present evidence and explained why and how the evidence supports my claim.			
	<b>Paragraphs:</b> I wrote more than one paragraph to develop a claim or reason.			
	<b>Paragraphs:</b> I arranged paragraphs, reasons and evidence purposefully, leading the reader from one claim or reason to another.			
	<b>Words:</b> I chose words deliberately to be clear and have an effect on the reader.			
	<b>Words:</b> I reached for precise phrases, metaphors, analogies, or images that would help convey my ideas and strengthen my argument.			
<b>Tone/Mood:</b> I used shifts in my tone to help the reader follow my argument or clarify meaning.				
My <b>conclusion</b> restates the main points of my essay and strengthens and supports my overall argument.				
Conventions	I used resources to be sure the words in my writing are spelled correctly, including returning to my sources and checking spelling.			
	I used all punctuation carefully and correctly.			
	I used punctuation such as dashes, colons, parentheses, and semicolons to help me include or connect extra information in some of my sentences.			
	I used the correct verb tense and checked my writing for run-on or fragment sentences and corrected them.			
	I correctly cited my resources in a <b>bibliography</b> , using quotation marks, italics, or underlining for titles of works.			
	I have used headings to separate sections, and I have tried to maintain a formal style.			
	My writing is readable, I have used correct margins and spacing,			

WEEK 3-4



# Writing Checklist: Argument Writing Grade 7

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	Elements	Self	Peer	Teacher
Content	I stake a clear position and make a thesis statement that can be supported by a variety of credible sources. Each part of my text builds my argument and leads to a conclusion.			
	My introduction engages and helps the reader to understand and care about the topic.			
	<b>Argument:</b> I acknowledged and addressed different sides, or counter arguments, to my own claim.			
	<b>Words:</b> I made deliberate and precise word choices to state my claim.			
	<b>Words:</b> I used transition words and linking words and phrases to help the reader to understand how all the different parts of my piece fit together to support my argument.			
	<b>Research:</b> I used technology and both print and digital resources to research my claim and have included links or cited my sources.			
	<b>Research:</b> I offer additional focused or related questions for further research and investigation.			
	<b>Evidence:</b> I included and arranged a variety of credible and relevant evidence to support my reasons.			
	<b>Evidence:</b> I used trusted, credible sources and information from authorities on the topic.			
	<b>Evidence:</b> I explained how my evidence strengthens my argument. I explain exactly which evidence supports which point.			
	<b>Evidence:</b> I chose how to present evidence and used it well to logically support my claim.			
	<b>Paragraphs:</b> I wrote more than one paragraph to develop a claim or reason.			
	<b>Paragraphs:</b> I arranged paragraphs, reasons and evidence purposefully, leading the reader from one claim or reason to another.			
	<b>Words:</b> I chose words deliberately to be clear and have an effect on the reader.			
<b>Words:</b> I reached for precise phrases, figurative language, or words that would help convey my ideas and strengthen my argument.				
<b>Tone/Mood:</b> I used shifts in my tone to help the reader follow my argument or clarify meaning.				
My <b>conclusion</b> restates the main points of my essay and strengthens and supports my overall argument.				
Conventions	I used all my resources to be sure the words in my writing are spelled correctly,			
	I used all punctuation carefully and correctly.			
	I used punctuation such as dashes, colons, parentheses, and semicolons to help me include or connect extra information in some of my sentences.			
	I used the correct verb tense and checked my writing for run-on or fragment sentences and corrected them.			
	I correctly cited my resources in a <b>bibliography</b> , using the correct format.			
	I have used headings to separate sections, and I have tried to maintain a formal style.			
	My writing is readable, I have used correct margins and spacing,			

WEEK 3-4



# Writing Checklist: Argument Writing Grade 8

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	Elements	Self	Peer	Teacher
Content	I stake a clear position and make a thesis statement that can be supported by a variety of credible sources. Each part of my text builds my argument and leads to a conclusion.			
	My introduction engages and helps the reader to understand and care about the topic.			
	<b>Argument:</b> I acknowledged and addressed different sides, or counter arguments, to my own claim.			
	<b>Words:</b> I made deliberate and precise word choices to state my claim.			
	<b>Words:</b> I used transition words and linking words and phrases to help the reader to understand how all the different parts of my piece fit together to support my argument.			
	<b>Research:</b> I used technology and both print and digital resources to research my claim and have included links or cited my sources.			
	<b>Research:</b> I offer additional focused or related questions for further research and investigation.			
	<b>Evidence:</b> I included and arranged a variety of credible and relevant evidence to support my reasons.			
	<b>Evidence:</b> I used trusted, credible sources and information from authorities on the topic.			
	<b>Evidence:</b> I explained how my evidence strengthens my argument. I explain exactly which evidence supports which point.			
	<b>Evidence:</b> I chose how to present evidence and used it well to logically support my claim.			
	<b>Paragraphs:</b> I wrote more than one paragraph to develop a claim or reason.			
	<b>Paragraphs:</b> I arranged paragraphs, reasons and evidence purposefully, leading the reader from one claim or reason to another.			
	<b>Words:</b> I chose words deliberately to be clear and have an effect on the reader, including using the active and passive voice.			
<b>Words:</b> I reached for precise phrases, figurative language or words that would help convey my ideas and strengthen my argument.				
<b>Tone/Mood:</b> I used shifts in my tone or mood to help the reader follow my argument or clarify meaning, and checked them to make sure they are correct.				
My <b>conclusion</b> restates the main points of my essay and strengthens and supports my overall argument.				
Conventions	I used all my resources to be sure the words in my writing are spelled correctly,			
	I used all punctuation carefully and correctly.			
	I used punctuation such as dashes, colons, parentheses, semicolons, and ellipses to help me include or connect extra information in some of my sentences.			
	I used the correct verb tense and checked my writing for run-on or fragment sentences and corrected them.			
	I correctly cited my resources in a <b>bibliography</b> , using the correct format.			
	I have used headings to separate sections, and I have tried to maintain a formal style.			
	My writing is readable, I have used correct margins and spacing,			

WEEK 3-4

# Learning about REVISION AND EDITING

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

## **REVISE—MAKE IT BETTER**

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

### **OPINION/ARGUMENT WRITING:**

- 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?

## **EDIT—MAKE SURE IT'S CORRECT**

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

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

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

*PUNCTUATION: Check for ending marks, commas, etc.*

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

## Writing Conference Strategies

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



### 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.

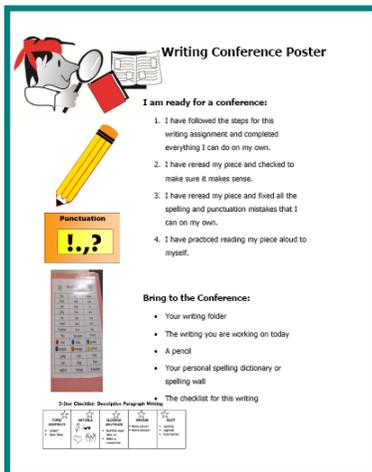
## My Writing Conference

### 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

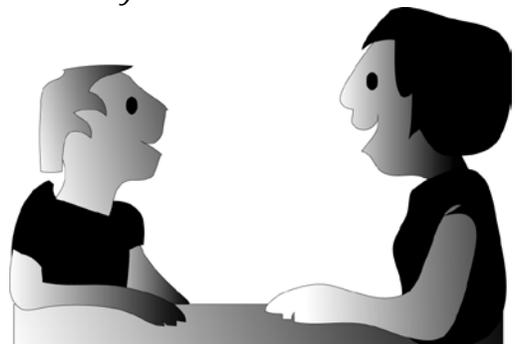


This "Writing Conference Poster" is available as a separate document on our website at [knoxeducation.com](http://knoxeducation.com).

### 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:

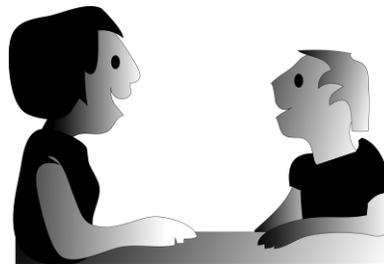
- “Listen to this...,” (read the section aloud). “Where do you hear the end of that sentence?”
- Ask students to add punctuation as they listen to you read their piece.

### 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

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/argument 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.

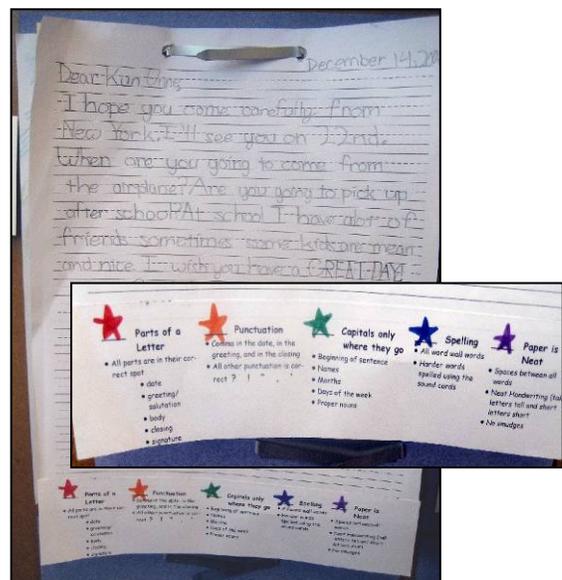
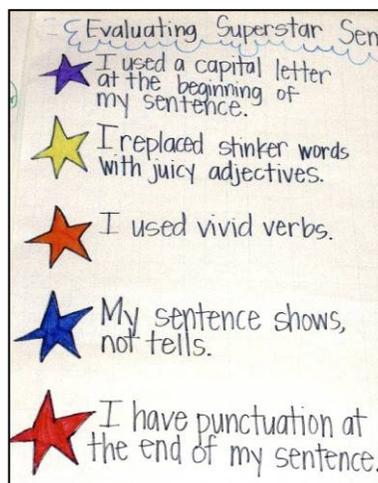
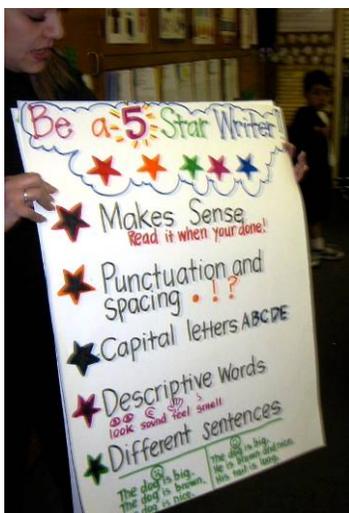
As you're scheduling for this week, also think about how you will want to have students share their writing when it is publishable. You may want to:

- 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](http://www.knoxeducation.com).]

**Editing is Fun!**

**Red Light**  
**Green Light**

**Legend:**

- Green = Capitals
- Red = Ending Punctuation
- Yellow = Other punctuation: quotation marks, commas, etc.
- Orange = beginning of paragraph for indentation
- Blue Dot = Read your writing backwards and fix the spelling if it doesn't look right.

**Sample Paragraph:**

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!"

### 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.

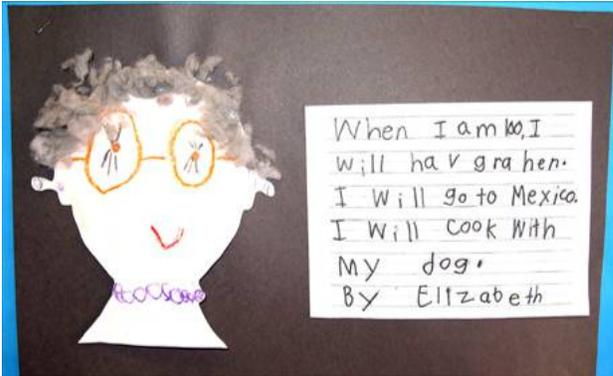
**FORMAT:** Did I remember to indent, have straight margins, leave spaces between words?

**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

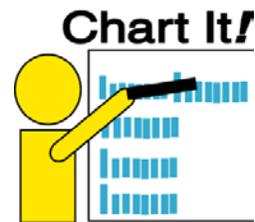
Students may periodically sign up to read their work aloud to the class and get feedback. For K-1 students this can be a daily practice since their writing is not lengthy. Other ways to organize this include:

- 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:

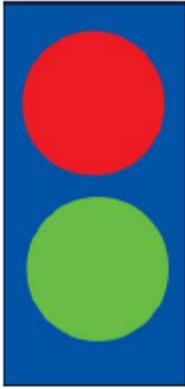
Go to Teacher Resources → Backwards Planning for Success with Writing → Tools for Writing → Editing is Fun Poster

# 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.

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

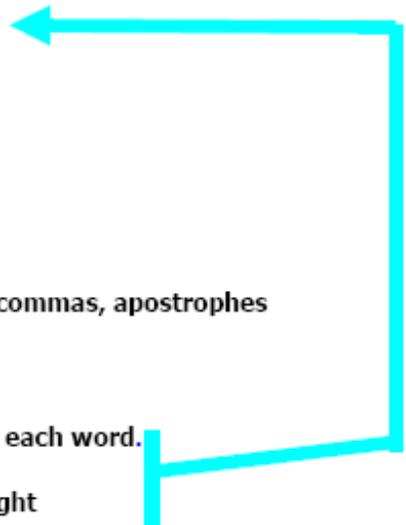
cozy than snuggling on the couch with a soft and furry dog. **D**ogs have excellent

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](http://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](http://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

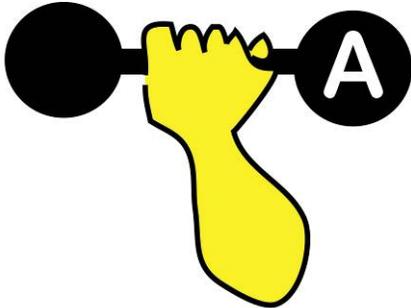
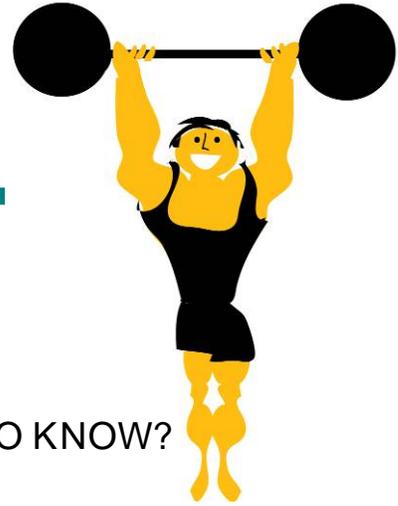
## P Punctuation

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

## S Spelling

- Check all words
- Use dictionary if necessary

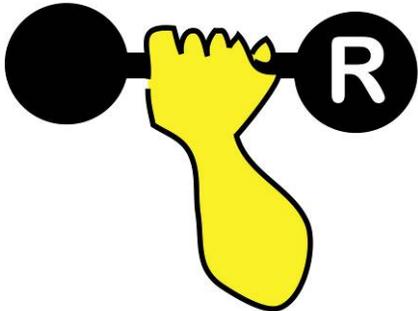
# A.R.M.S.



## Add

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

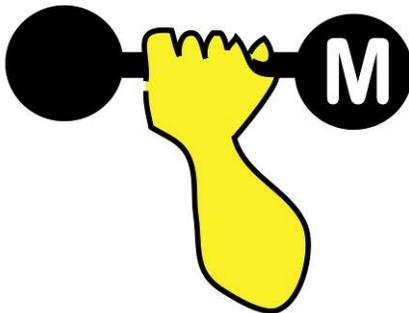
- More details
- Sensory words
- Descriptive words



## Remove

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

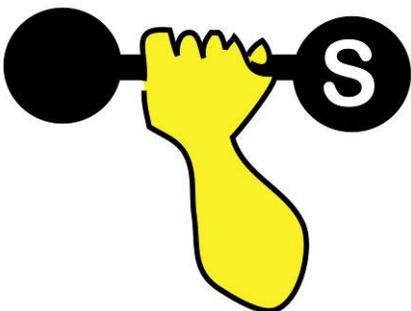
- Words that do not make sense
- Sentences that do not make sense
- Details that confuse my reader



## 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 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., Fredericksen, J. E. (2012). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

### Children's books as models for Argument 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 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>

**Argument Essay Prompts:** This link takes you to a list of 53 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>