Unit 4- Argument and Advocacy: Researching Debatable Issues

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s): **English Language Arts**
Time Period: **Marking Period 3**
Length: **7-8 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Unit Overview

This unit helps children tackle more difficult informational texts with greater agency and independence. The unit begins with a one-day intensive "boot camp" on analyzing arguments. Students work in research groups to study a debatable issue, first learning about both sides of the issue, then choosing a position to research in greater depth, and finally debating the issue and reflecting on their learning to develop new questions and insights. Next, you'll help your students raise the level of their research to develop deeper questions and ideas and engage in more complicated conversations. Students will read more difficult texts with a critical eye, considering perspective and craft while evaluating arguments. A debate highlights students' growth and knowledge, and builds momentum for the final part of the unit. Later, students select a new issue to study. They'll think about patterns and connections across issues they have studied and consider larger issues of power. By the end of this unit, students will have learned how to compare the ideas and perspectives of many authors and how to formulate their own evidence-based, ethical positions on issues.

Standards

LA.RL.5.1	Quote accurately from a text, and make relevant connections when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
LA.RL.5.2	Determine the key details in a story, drama or poem to identify the theme and to summarize the text.
LA.RL.5.3	Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., how characters interact).
LA.RL.5.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes.
LA.RL.5.5	Explain how a series of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fits together to provide the overall structure of a particular story, drama, or poem.
LA.RL.5.6	Describe how a narrator's or speaker's point of view influences how events are described.
LA.RL.5.7	Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text (e.g., graphic novel, multimedia presentation of fiction, folktale, myth, poem).
LA.RL.5.9	Compare, contrast and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) the treatment of similar themes and topics (e.g., opposition of good and evil) and patterns of events (e.g., the quest) in stories, myths, and traditional literature from different cultures.
LA.RL.5.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.
LA.RI.5.1	Quote accurately from a text and make relevant connections when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

LA.RI.5.2	Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.
LA.RI.5.3	Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.
LA.RI.5.4	Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 5 topic or subject area.
LA.RI.5.5	Compare and contrast the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in two or more texts.
LA.RI.5.6	Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.
LA.RI.5.7	Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.
LA.RI.5.8	Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text, identifying which reasons and evidence support which point(s).
LA.RI.5.9	Integrate and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.
LA.RI.5.10	By the end of year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.
LA.RF.5.3	Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding and encoding words.
LA.RF.5.3.A	Use combined knowledge of all letter-sound correspondences, syllabication patterns, and morphology (e.g., roots and affixes) to read accurately unfamiliar multisyllabic words in context and out of context.
LA.RF.5.4	Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.
LA.RF.5.4.A	Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding.
LA.RF.5.4.B	Read grade-level prose and poetry orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression.
LA.RF.5.4.C	Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.
LA.W.5.7	Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different perspectives of a topic.

Essential Questions

- How can readers recognize a good argument?
- How do readers research an argument?
- How can book club members strengthen their conversation skills?
- What does it mean to summarize an argument?
- How do readers find new ways to analyze a text?

Application of Knowledge: Students will know that...

- A good argument is supported with evidence
- nonfiction readers clarify their thinking by letting their research spur quick flash-debates
- readers annotate a text in a purposeful and deliberate way as they read to help them remember the author's big ideas
- readers reflect on information to grow new ideas about a topic
- readers summarize arguments using their own words
- readers use research and debating skills in the real world
- researchers can take a stand for their beliefs and become powerful advocates for change in the world
- researchers gather an abundance of information on a topic and develop background which makes them authorities on that issue

Application of Skills: Students will be able to...

- compare and contrast the choices authors make in different texts
- debate on a specific topic from a text
- determine an author's perspective in order to understand how their ideas fit into the issue
- discuss choices authors make to shape the content of their stories
- discuss ideas about their reading during book clubs
- read a text and ask, "How might this information apply to my argument?"
- summarize an argument by putting the author's idea in their own words without changing the author's message
- use reasons and evidence to back up an argument
- use their annotations to facilitate evidence-based conversations about a text

Teaching Points and Suggested Activities

The following teaching points are adapted from the Argument and Advocacy*; Researching Debatable Issues* unit; *Grade 5;* part of the *Units of Study for Teaching Reading* by Lucy Calkins and Colleagues from the Reading and Writing Project. These serve as a loose framework for teachers, who will add and or emphasize based on their students' needs.

Teaching Points

- teach children that readers recognize that a good argument is supported by reasons backed up by evidence, so when readers analyze an argument, they ask themselves questions about the claim being made, the reasons supporting that claim, and the evidence backing up those reasons
- teach children that when readers research an argument, they learn to grasp both sides of that argument by focusing initially on texts that lay out the argument clearly, and then reading for both sides
- teach children that nonfiction readers can let their research spur quick flash-debates, which can help them clarify their thinking and know what further research they need to do
- teach children that researchers read deeply about an issue, developing background information that allows them to become authorities on that issue. Whenever they read, they ask, "How might this information apply to the argument?"

- teach children that a conversation should be a journey of thought, and club members can make specific moves to strengthen their conversations
- teach children that readers shift from taking in information to reflecting on that information to grow new ideas
- teach children that readers summarize arguments by using their own words to express the most essential parts of the writer's argument, while being careful to not distort or change what the writer meant
- teach children that readers can prepare for and have a debate on an issue they are researching, and this can help them find new ways of thinking about their ideas and give them new insights into their issue
- teach children that researchers push themselves to ask new questions and develop new ideas about their issue, then narrow their focus before conducting further research
- teach children that readers annotate a text in a purposeful and deliberate way as they read- to help them remember the author's big ideas, as well as their own thoughts and ideas- and that readers can use their annotations to facilitate evidence-based conversation about the text
- teach children that readers recognize difficult texts and draw on their portfolio of strategies to help them manage the difficulty, approaching this work with a strong sense of agency
- teach children that readers figure out an author's perspective to understand how his or her ideas fit into the issue. They do this by seeing how that perspective fits into a progression of perspectives and by studying connections and contradictions across sources
- teach children that readers think about texts in more than one way, considering not only the content, but also the choices authors make that shape that content
- teach children that readers approach an author's arguments skeptically, carefully evaluating evidence to determine whether it supports or weakens a claim
- teach children that researchers can hold debates as a means of celebrating the work they have done, as well as an inspiration for further learning
- teach children that when researchers embark on a new research project, they start by making a plan for that study, drawing on all that they have learned from previous research studies
- teach children that readers let their future reading can be shaped not only by past reading and thinking, but also by conversations with other readers
- teach children that one way readers can analyze texts is by reading across more than one text, paying careful attention to craft, and comparing and contrasting the choices made by the authors of each text
- teach children that experienced nonfiction readers bring all their critical lenses to reading nonfiction, noting when the text stirs them to a strong emotional response, and analyzing how the text positions the reader
- teach children that researchers can take a stand for their beliefs and become powerful advocates for change in the world
- teach children that the work of looking for evidence, weighing and evaluating arguments, and forming thoughtful, considered judgments on important issues is not just work for school, but work they will do for a lifetime

Activities to Support Teaching Points

- create and refer to anchor charts
- study pages from exemplar reader's notebooks
- provide and present mentor texts as models
- teach the *Work of Readers* Charts
- teach children strategies for holding onto text, for example by using Post-its and graphic organizers

- model (Talk Aloud) the strategies good readers use
- model, provide, and use a reader's notebook
- tap, sketch, or jot across a story as a way of retaining information and details
- study book introductions and endings
- practice creating mental movies as you read
- investigate figurative language and descriptive vocabulary and how authors use them
- Turn and Talk the dialogue in a story to bring the characters' feelings alive
- set mini-reading goals for engagement, print work, fluency, comprehension, and/or conversation
- provide checklists and reading progressions to assess and develop on-going reading goals
- scaffold skills with strategies, for example using Post-its to identify key elements of a chapter
- write long about reading
- practice alternating the speed a text is read to reflect tone and mood
- plan to celebrate the conclusion of classroom reading projects
- use technology in the reading classroom; for example digital journals

Assessments

Assessment in this unit takes three forms: diagnostic, formative, and summative. The resource *Reading Pathways, Grades 3-5*, provides reading progressions, performance assessments, rubrics, tools for collecting data, a system for conducting running records, There are also downloadable, digital versions of the assessment tools available through the online resources at; www.readingandwritingproject.org/resources. Teachers may also develop their own rubrics and assessments in order to include more specific elements of knowledge and skills listed in this unit summary.

Student self-assessment and peer assessment should take place whenever possible--again, in all three forms: diagnostic, formative, and summative. Removing the traditional emphasis on teacher assessment enables students to take more initiative and become self-directed.

On-going teacher assessment will take place in the context of a conference. Conferences, both small group and one-to-one conferring, are used to reinforce expectations, provide advice and/or assistance, and ultimately, to support growth.

Diagnostic Assessments

Running Records

www.readingandwritingproject.org/resources/assessments/running-records

Spelling Inventory

www.readingandwritingproject.org/resources/assessments/spelling-assessments

Individual beginning of the year "How's It Going?" conferences

Formative Assessments

Teacher-student conferences including: individual, small group, strategy group, and guided reading

Daily observation of students' participation during the active engagement segment of each mini-lesson.

Students' conversation with partners during Turn and Talk segment of mini-lessons.

Reading logs, Reader's Notebooks, Writing About Reading evidence (Post-its, journal entries, writing long about reading, for example)

Summative Assessment

Teacher-student conferences

Running Records

Spelling Assessments

Reading logs, Reader's Notebooks, and other evidence of students improving skills

Activities to Differentiate Instruction

The design of reading workshop allows for individualized instruction and independent growth for every child. At the heart of differentiation in Reader's Workshop is data and the analysis of data. Through the usage of monitoring student progress during independent reading, analysis of formal and informal running records, and other assessments such as high-frequency word lists and spelling inventories, teachers should be able to delineate which students are in need of additional supports, in what areas those supports should be targeted at, and which students are ready to be pushed further in their reading work.

Some methods to use to support struggling readers as well as advanced readers:

- Provide leveled books appropriate for all reading levels
- Provide support as needed through conferencing
- Provide support as needed through strategy groups
- Provide support as needed through guided reading groups
- Provide modified and/or alternate grade level checklists and rubrics to scaffold or stretch learning
- Scaffold or stretch learning through the use of various strategies
- Provide appropriate reading partners
- Utilize charts to provide a visual reminder for students throughout the mini-lesson.
    - Add drawings and visuals to charts
    - Provide individualized copies of teaching charts
    - Depending on the concept, the chart may be most effective to visually break the concept into parts and touch each part during a demonstration
- For students needing more support at the end of the mini-lesson, keep them at the rug for an extra minute after dispersing the rest of the class and clarify the main topic of the mini-lesson or work one-on-one with them to start their reading
- Set reading goals for students and follow-up with the reading goals after an appropriate amount of time.
- Create group and one-on-one conferencing calendars to ensure that students are being met with on a regular basis and working toward individualized goals
- As the unit progresses, the teacher, in coordination with the students, will develop a word wall that will highlight vocabulary specific to the topic chosen

- Assign roles to partners (Partner 1/Partner 2) to help scaffold which student should speak first and avoid one partner dominating the conversation and the other partner becoming a passive listener
    - For ELL students, creating a triad instead of partnership may be beneficial
- Provide students access to RAZ Kids which will provide students more reading options for leveled texts, access to technology, and the ability to have books read to them while they follow along or for students to record their reading

Supports for ELL students:

- Provide consistent teaching structures
- Use consistent teaching language
- Offer plentiful opportunities for reading practice
- Provide access to a broad variety of texts
- Use assessment to provide extra support
- Support students in the preproduction and early production stages of learning English
- Use visual examples in your teaching
- Modify our mini-lessons to be as concise as possible
- Provide extra ?active engagement? time in mini-lessons for extra practice
- Provide readers with topic-based text sets
- Provide opportunities for listening and learning the social language of the reading workshop
- Provide opportunities to read in both their home language and in English
- Plan instruction with the ELL teacher
- Extend the language ELLs are producing through questioning
- Provide explicit instruction in tenses, pronoun references, and connectives
- Support students in building vocabulary using their own reading as the context
- As the unit progresses, the teacher, in coordination with the students, will develop a word wall that will highlight vocabulary specific to the topic chosen

In order to support this differentiation work, teachers may want to consult the following materials:

- Units of Study books at lower or higher levels for teaching strategies that are appropriate to the support needed.
- The Reading Strategies Book by Jennifer Serravallo
- If. . . Then. .. Curriculum book for alternate units or teaching points to support the individual reading levels.
- A Guide to the Reading Workshop (Primary Grades) chapter 14 for more in-depth information on differentiation

Challenge gifted students to:

- preview the book, paying attention to information from the cover and the first chapter/prologue to orient the reader to the story's characters, conflicts, and possible themes
- use what the reader knows about the genre and author to build expectations for the characters, setting, plot, and theme
- anticipate that a story might have more than one plotline, timeline, and point of view and track shifts in time or perspective
- notice when the narrator is connected to one or more characters' inner thoughts (3rd person narrative)
- notice when the author has made the narrator unreliable or limited in his or her point of view (1st person narrative)
- continue to develop theories about main and minor characters, thinking about how they are affected by elements such as the plot, setting, issues, and conflicts
- question stories and think about social issues and stereotypes

Integrated/Cross-Disciplinary Instruction

Writing Workshop

- apply language and ideas from read alouds and independent reading
- utilize read alouds and independent reading as mentor texts
- apply spelling strategies
- identify areas of spelling needs
- apply grammar skills
- identify areas in need of addressing (spelling, grammar, mechanics)
- expand written vocabulary from read alouds and independent reading
- model sentence and paragraph structure after mentor texts

Content Areas: Science, Social Studies, Health

- read just right books in the content areas
- use mentor texts to deliver Social Studies content
- compare content area ideas and issues to what our characters deal with in our read alouds and mentor texts
- apply reading skills and strategies to the reading we do in the content areas

Study Skills

- use graphic organizers to support reading
- use checklists and rubrics to monitor progress
- use Venn diagrams and t-charts to gather, compare, and contrast events
- use highlighters, note cards, post-its, and other tools to keep track of story events, details, and ideas
- keep a log and notebook

The Arts

- analyze illustrations in books for details
- compare illustrations to other forms of art
- illustrate a passage that was just read to show details, ideas, and lessons
- act out a scene from a book to better visualize how a character feels

Suggested Mentor Texts and Other Resources

Resources

Units of Study for Teaching Reading:

- *Building a Reading Life* by Lucy Calkins and Kathleen Tolan
- *A Guide to the Reading Workshop, Intermediate Grades*; Lucy Calkins
- *Reading Pathways, Grades 3-5, Performance Assessments and Learning Progressions*; Lucy Calkins
- *If...Then... Curriculum: Assessment-Based Instruction, Grades 3-5*; Lucy Calkins; Julia Mooney; and Colleagues From the TCRWP
- *Online Resources for Teaching Writing*; Lucy Calkins
- website: www.readingandwritingproject.org/resources

The Art of Teaching Reading; Lucy Calkins

The Reading Strategies Book: Your Everything Guide to Developing Skilled Readers; Jennifer Serravallo

Leveled Books, K-8: Matching Texts to Readers for Effective Teaching; Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell

Reading Miscue Inventory: From Evaluation to Instruction; Yetta M. Goodman

Miscue Analysis Made Easy: Building on Student Strengths; Sandra Wilde

Around the Reading Workshop in 180 Days; Frank Serafini

The Book Whisperer: Awakening the Inner Reader in Every Child; Donalyn Miller

Mindsets and Moves: Strategies That Help Readers Take Charge; Gravity Goldberg

Guiding Readers and Writers, Grades 3-6; Irene C Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell

Smarter Charts; Marjorie Martinelli

21st Century Skills

CRP.K-12.CRP2.1	Career-ready individuals readily access and use the knowledge and skills acquired through experience and education to be more productive. They make connections between abstract concepts with real-world applications, and they make correct insights about when it is appropriate to apply the use of an academic skill in a workplace situation.
CRP.K-12.CRP4.1	Career-ready individuals communicate thoughts, ideas, and action plans with clarity, whether using written, verbal, and/or visual methods. They communicate in the workplace with clarity and purpose to make maximum use of their own and others' time. They are excellent writers; they master conventions, word choice, and organization, and use effective tone and presentation skills to articulate ideas. They are skilled at interacting with others; they are active listeners and speak clearly and with purpose. Career-ready individuals think about the audience for their communication and prepare accordingly to ensure the desired outcome.
CRP.K-12.CRP7.1	Career-ready individuals are discerning in accepting and using new information to make decisions, change practices or inform strategies. They use reliable research process to search for new information. They evaluate the validity of sources when considering the use and adoption of external information or practices in their workplace situation.
CRP.K-12.CRP12.1	Career-ready individuals positively contribute to every team, whether formal or informal. They apply an awareness of cultural difference to avoid barriers to productive and positive interaction. They find ways to increase the engagement and contribution of all team members. They plan and facilitate effective team meetings.