

Unit 3: Research Based Argument

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s): **English Language Arts**
Time Period: **Generic Time Period**
Length: **January - February**
Status: **Published**

Unit Overview

In this unit, there are two parts. In the first bend, students will investigate a teacher led topic where they will explore the issues by reading articles and watching videos. They will be guided to make a solid argument with research-based support. In the second bend, writers will choose an argument that matters to them and take a stand. They will again research and make a valid, credible, convincing argument with research- based support. Students will draft both handwritten pieces as well as pieces using appropriate technology.

Standards

LA.5.CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.10	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.5.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.5.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.5.2.d	Use underlining, quotation marks, or italics to indicate titles of works.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.5.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.5.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal contrast, addition, and other logical relationships (e.g., however, although, nevertheless, similarly, moreover, in addition).
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.1	Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.6	With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of two pages in a single sitting.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.7	Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.8	Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.9.b	Apply grade 5 Reading standards to informational texts (e.g., "Explain how an author uses

reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text, identifying which reasons and evidence support which point[s]).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.1

Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.5.1

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 5 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.5.3

Summarize the points a speaker makes and explain how each claim is supported by reasons and evidence.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.5.4

Report on a topic or text or present an opinion, sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

Essential Questions

- How can I write research based argument essays in which I take a position and get readers to care about, and use examples, quotations, and/or information to develop reasons supporting the position?
- Why should we research both sides of an argument and have credible support?

Application of Knowledge: Students will know that...

- finding valid arguments will help them support their claim
- the writing process includes planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing
- there are a variety of strategies for researching a topic
- there are multiple sides to a topic
- there is a process to write a credible, convincing essay
- they can search their findings for an arguable claim and then build up their essay around that argument
- various of types on resources threw using books, articles, and multimedia

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

- acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal contrast, addition, and other logical relationships (e.g., however, although, nevertheless, similarly, moreover, in addition).
- cite textual evidence to support analysis of what text says as well as inference drawn from text
- demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling
- draw on everything they know about argument writing in order to find an issue, plan, and execute their own writing piece.
- engage in a range of collaborative discussions

- examine the many sides of a topic
- produce a clear coherent writing for an appropriate purpose and audience
- report on a topic or text or present an opinion, sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes
- use underlining, quotation marks, or italics to indicate titles of works
- write a volume of notes that capture important points of their topic but also generate thoughts and reactions to the topic.
- write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly
- write with independence

Teaching Points and Suggested Activities

The following teaching points are adapted from *Units of Study in Argument Writing Grade 5* by Lucy Calkins. Teachers will adjust based on students' needs.

- Today I want to teach you that when you are composing an argument, you will need to collect evidence not to support what you first think about the issue, but instead evidence that allows you to think through the various sides of the argument.
- Today I want to teach you that argument writers organize their opinion and reasons into boxes and bullets structure. Once they have a rough idea, they flash draft to get it all down quickly and roughly prior to revising.
- Today I want to teach you that argument writers don't just say what they personally think. They give compelling evidence to prove their point. To do this, they pore over research materials, analyzing which evidence will really support their claim, and they often start by putting that evidence into their own words.
- Today I want to teach you that argument writers search their texts for quotations that will bring their side of the argument to life.
- Today I want to teach you that argument writers reread their draft, decide what parts work and what parts don't, and then plan and write another draft.
- Today I want to teach you that a good argument is like a layer cake- just the right balance of dense, researched evidence layered between rich thinking. To achieve this balance, you add your own thinking and explanations.
- Today I want to teach you that persuasive writers think about the "other side" or counterclaims of an argument. They might use 'set-up' language saying 'Skeptics may think...' or 'Some will argue...' Then writers rebut the main counterargument.
- Today I want to teach you that some reasons and evidence are better than others. Some reasons and evidence are stronger and lead to more valid arguments, and some are weaker and can create invalid arguments. To be sure you provide the strongest possible reasons and evidence, it helps to keep asking the question, 'How do I know?'
- Today I want to teach you that argument writers consider their audience. Then they think about techniques that will help address and sway the readers by focusing on what the audience cares about.

- Today I want to teach you that once researchers have enough notes on a topic to compare and contrast its different faces and issues, we start to look at the bigger picture of this topic and ask, “What are some of the big issues and ideas that are important to write more about?” You will need to use all the skills you’ve learned up to today to argue for things that matter to you.
- Today I want to teach you that writers collect the information they need to clarify their writing and strengthen their arguments. As writers discover and collect information, they are thoughtful and deliberate as they decide what to include and how to include it.
- Today I want to teach you that whenever you are doing one type of writing, such as argument, you can still use everything you have learned from other types of writing to reach your audience. In particular, your storytelling craft can be a persuasive technique.
- Today I want to teach you that truly persuasive writers word and present their evidence in a way that is incontestable. One way they do this work is to make sure that they are not presenting specific evidence as being true for all times and occasions- unless it is.
- Today I want to teach you that argument writers revise to create feeling. We do this by paragraphing for a purpose, revising introductions to draw a reader in, and revising conclusions to sum up important information and leave readers pondering over big ideas.
- Today I want to teach you that writers edit in a variety of ways (on as needed basis) punctuation for effect, add domain-specific vocabulary, fragments and run-ons.

Suggested Activities

- create and reference anchor charts
- share pages from students' writing journal as a model
- present and study mentor texts
- list events across fingers
- use technology to publish writing
- plan a celebration of student writing
- make t-chart to recognize both sides
- use box and bullets to organize notes
- Write I think ... because... statements to start claims
- Watch videos and read articles on both sides of a claim
- Use quotes in writing
- balance argument writing like a cake with the right amount of thinking and explanation with research and evidence
- decide whether to underline, use quotations, or italicize titles

Assessments

Assessment in this unit takes three forms: diagnostic, formative, and summative. Assessment rubrics are available in Lucy Calkins' Reading and Writing Project resource kits, but teachers may also develop their own rubrics 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

Review of student's portfolio from the previous school year, particularly argument projects

On-demand piece:

"Think of a topic or issue that you know and care about, an issue around which you have strong feelings. You will have forty-five minutes to write an opinion or argument text in which you will write your opinion or claim and tell reasons why you feel that way. When you do this, draw on everything you know about essays, persuasive letters, and reviews. If you want to find and use information from a book or another outside source, you may bring them into school. Please keep in mind that you'll have forty-five minutes to complete this, so you will need to plan, draft, revise, and edit in one sitting.

In your writing, make sure you:

- Write an introduction
- State your opinion or claim
- Give reasons and evidence
- Organize your writing
- Acknowledge counterclaims
- Use transition words
- Write an ending for your story." - Taken from Writing Pathways: Performance Assessments and Learning Progressions, K-5 - page 86

Formative Assessments (Informal)

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

Students' questions, comments, suggestions to teacher

Journaling assignments which are intended to practice teacher-selected skills

Comments, corrections, and records from peer conferences between students

Formative Assessments (Formal)

Teacher-student conferences

Summative Assessment

Summative writing will take the form of both handwritten pieces and pieces generated using appropriate technology.

Published argument writing

On-demand argument (Same prompt as the diagnostic on-demand)

Activities to Differentiate Instruction

- This unit includes presentation of material through multiple modalities such as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic to address the unique learning styles of all students.
- Interactive mini-lessons provide instruction to the whole-class
- Small group work will provide small group instruction around specific skills.
- Individual conferences with each student will address specific needs of the writer. *The Argument Writing If...Then... charts in the *If...Then...Curriculum* by Lucy Calkins are a helpful resource on conferencing with individual students and providing exactly the guidance that child needs.
- Students have the ability to write using different modes: drawing, listing, creating time lines, drafting pen/paper, typing stories
- Student could watch various videos to address lower level readers - <http://video.pbs.org>, www.brainpop.com, or www.razkids.com or other videos that support their topic
- Teachers will follow any 504 plans and IEP's accordingly
- Provide modified and/or alternate grade level checklists and rubrics
- See the "Learning Progression for Opinion Writing" in *Writing Pathways* by Lucy Calkins for ideas on ways to differentiate for advanced learners. For example:
 - acknowledging different sides to the argument
 - writing more than one paragraph to develop a claim or reason
 - choosing how to present evidence and explaining why and how the evidence supported the claim
 - using shifts in tone to help readers follow the argument
 - using punctuation such as dashes, colons, parentheses, and semicolons to help include or connect extra information in some sentences

Integrated/Cross-Disciplinary Instruction

- Students can explore topics to write about related to any subject
- Students write school related topics to present to administrator or board members

Reading:

- Read articles and letter on level
- Shared Reading activity in Reader's Workshop on an argumentative writing piece

Technology:

- Use Chrome books to write final copy
- Post writings in a blog, forum, or create a class book on topic for future use.
- Video cast of argument will be shared with other peers or class
- Slide presentation on topic

Suggested Mentor Texts and Other Resources

Click, Clack, Moo: Cow That Type by Doreen Cronin

Somewhere Today by Bert Kitchen (persuasive leads)

In November by Cynthia Rylant (pros/cons)

Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus by Mo Williams

Should We have Pets? by Sylvia Lollis

- Alternate post- assessment from
 - *Writing Pathways, Grades K-8, Performance Assessments and Learning Progressions*; Lucy Calkins on page 238-242. This assessment provides three different articles to read and two videos to watch. The topic is on zoos and if they are endangering animals. The students have time to use a box and bullet organizer and then have 45 minutes to write their argument.

- (Websites)

www.timeforkids.com

www.history.com

www.smithsonianmag.com

www.nationalgeographic.com

www.crichetmag.com/MUS-MUSE-Magazine-for-Kids-ages-9-14

www.discoverymagazine.com

www.odysseymagazine.com

Units of Study in Argument Writing:

- *A Guide to the Common Core Writing Workshop*, Intermediate Grades; Lucy Calkins
- *Writing Pathways, Grades K-8, Performance Assessments and Learning Progressions*; Lucy Calkins
- *If...Then... Curriculum*, Grade 5 (Assessment-Based Instruction); Lucy Calkins; Julia Mooney; and Colleagues From the TCRWP
- *Resources for Teaching Writing* (DVD) Units of Study in Opinion, Information, and Narrative Writing; Lucy Calkins