Unit 1: Different Types of Essays: Reflective and Argumentative

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Marking Period 1**
Length: **9-10 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Brief Summary of Unit

Focus: "The overarching goal of College Writing is for students to develop habits of reading and writing that will allow them to respond successfully to the varied rhetorical challenges they will encounter in their future studies."

Summary:

College Writing introduces students to the strategies and practices necessary to become a successful writer at the university level and beyond. As the required writing course for undergraduate students at Rutgers University–New Brunswick, College Writing challenges students to reflect upon and cultivate their strengths as readers and writers at this new stage of their educational careers. Students develop their critical reading abilities and written communication skills through meaningful writing projects of diverse genres, including multimodal composition. The class is designed to prepare students for the writing they will do at the university level and during their professional lives. Students will come to recognize the value of creativity and intellectual risk-taking in an interdisciplinary context while learning to appreciate writing as an instrument of critical thought as well as a means of communication.

This course at Cranford High School offers concurrent enrollment with Rutgers whereby students have the opportunity to earn both required Cranford High School Language Arts credit and three credits in College Writing from Rutgers University.

Students who successfully complete College Writing will be able to identify different types of texts in relation to their purpose and audience. Students have the opportunity to reflect on their own experiences as a reader and adapt writing strategies to create effective writing through different styles. Additionally, students will practice evaluating and responding to sources critically and will learn to use evidence thoughtfully and in service of developing their own areas of inquiry. Multimodal resources will be included to enrich the reader's experience and convey ideas to a general audience. Lastly, students will engage in different techniques and strategies of successful writers, including drafting, revising, and responding to feedback to develop perseverance and resilience in the face of challenging writing tasks and approach those challenges as a member of a community of writers.

Throughout the course, students will complete short idea-generating and reflective assignments as they work toward formal projects and develop their habits as a writer. Consistent attention to reading, analysis, drafting, and revision is needed to create a thoughtful and complex piece of writing. Developing regular practices for reading and writing will form the basis of habits that will lead to success in this course and others. This will include the formal peer review process. The primary goal of peer review is to serve as a collaborative practice whereby students learn to claim their own authority in the writing process. Students learn to reflect on their own writing by reading and responding to writing produced by their peers. This feedback will allow for four

formal projects to be completed throughout the course. Each will incorporate the objectives of identifying purpose and audience of a text, reflecting on personal experiences, writing with evidence and complexity, and using multimodal sources to enhance their understanding.

From:

College Writing Syllabus, Rutgers University New Brunswick, 2024

Interdisciplinary Connections and Career Readiness: This unit is designed to be part of a developmental progression across grade levels and make interdisciplinary connections across content areas including physical and social sciences, technology, career readiness, cultural awareness, and global citizenship. During this course, students are provided with opportunities to develop skills that pertain to a variety of careers. When completing this course, students can make informed choices and pursue electives that further their study and contribute toward the formation of career interest.

Revision: June 2024

Standards

The identified standards reflect a developmental progression across grades/ levels and make interdisciplinary connections across content areas including social sciences, technology, career readiness, cultural awareness and global citizenship. The standards that follow are relevant to this course in addition to the associated content-based standards listed below.

L.VL.11–12.3	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 11–12 reading and content, including technical meanings, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
L.VL.11–12.3.C	Analyze how an author or speaker uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text or discussion.
L.VI.11–12.4	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings, including connotative meanings.
RI.IT.11–12.3	Analyze the impact of an author's choices as they develop ideas throughout the text regarding a complex set of ideas or sequence of events, and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop.
RL.PP.11–12.5	Evaluate perspectives/lenses from two or more texts on related topics and justify the more cogent viewpoint (e.g., different accounts of the same event or issue, use of different media or formats).
RL.CT.11–12.8	Demonstrate knowledge of, analyze, and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) documents of historical and literary significance for their themes, purposes, and rhetorical features, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.
W.AW.11–12.1	Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
W.AW.11–12.1.D	Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
W.NW.11–12.3.D	Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.
W.WP.11–12.4	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, trying a new approach; sustaining effort to complete complex writing tasks; tracking and reflecting on personal writing progress (e.g., using portfolios, journals, conferencing); or consulting a style manual (such as MLA or APA Style), focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
SL.PE.11–12.1	Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with peers on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
SL.PE.11–12.1.B	Collaborate with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and assessments (e.g., student developed rubrics), and establish individual roles as needed.
SL.PE.11–12.1.D	Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.
SL.ES.11–12.3	Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

Essential Questions

- How does knowing text structure help a reader to understand non-fiction text?
- How does a reader identify the author's purpose of a text?
- How can previewing text features help the reader gather information about a text?

- What is the relationship between reading and writing?
- In what ways does the reader bring the "self" to a text?
- How do authors develop and convey theme/meaning throughout a text?
- How does the study of an author's craft inform our understanding of a text?
- How does reading shape our understanding of the world?
- How does the study of an author's craft inform our writing?
- How can we use rubrics as a way to improve our writing?
- How do students come to know their process as writers?

Students Will Know/Students Will Be Skilled At

- Students will know how to annotate complex texts.
- Students will be able to provide summaries of small and large chunks of reading.
- Students will come to understand their own note-taking style.
- Students will be able to forge connections within and across texts, synthesizing their own ideas.
- Students will be able to analyze literary and rhetorical devices and how those devices convey meaning.
- Students will be able to develop claims and ideas about texts, keeping in mind the broader stakes.
- Students will be able to select quotes and evidence relevant to prompts and discussion.
- Students will be able to determine the main idea of the text.
- Students will be able to identify an author's craft moves and purpose in a text.
- Students will be able to understand writers' biases, interrogate claims, analyze arguments, and think critically about the texts they encounter.

Evidence/Performance Tasks

Developmental progression across years in both reading and writing is evidenced by multiple benchmark assessment screeners, administered two times per year. Follow up diagnostic assessments are used to target skill remediation. Student proficiency allows for additional or alternative assessment based on demonstration

or absence of skill.

Students demonstrate differentiated proficiency through both formative and summative assessments in the classroom. Based on individual student readiness and performance, assessments can be implemented as formative and/or summative.

The performance tasks listed below are examples of the types of assessments teachers may use in the classroom and the data collected by the district to track student progress.

Formative:

- Teacher Observations
- Accountable Talk, Socratic Seminars/Fish Bowls
- Analysis of multimodal text sets
- Analysis of critical commentary, literary criticism
- Writers Notebook (quick writes/drafts/prewrites), emphasizing author's craft
- Close reading analysis of text using evidence as substantiation
- Conferences: Individual and small group, accompanying conference notes
- Reflective exercises and assessments
- Oral Reading and Interpretation
- Peer and self-evaluations of learning
- Entrance and Exit Tickets
- Open-Ended Responses in Journal
- Textual Analysis Reading Responses
- Dialectical Journal
- Rhetorical Precis
- SOAPSTone Analysis

Summative, including Alternative Assessments:

- On-demand Writing Assessments, timed and untimed

- Write across genres to show understanding of multi genre writing
- Researched Presentations
- Performance Assessments
- Project-based Learning
- Inquiry-based Learning
- Personalized Learning
- Visual Literacy Prompts
- Digital Portfolios
- Online Discussion Forums
- Analytical and Expository Essay
- Peer Editing and Revision

Benchmark:

- Benchmark reading and writing assessments, scored using rubrics, district-created and standards-aligned; based on NJSLA, reported twice per year
- Engage in text set analysis using visual literacy and close reading analysis strategies to compose a claim and use evidence as support
- Grade-level Standards-based Rubrics
- SAT (grades 11-12)
- Final Presentation

Learning Plan

The intent is for student-readers to have clear modeling through whole-class instruction. Explicit reading strategies are practiced in a group setting of peers and through independent practice monitored through teacher conferencing with students. An emphasis will be based on the transfer of skills instruction, teaching the reader, not merely the content of the text. The text complexity and rigor of reading will be appropriate for grade 12; materials selection will be approved by the Board of Education and Rutgers University.

The reading throughout the course targets not only comprehension, but also analysis. Students will read both long-and short-form, excerpted and full-length, print and electronic, as well as multimodal sources. Study will include the analysis of visual texts including film clips, art, infographic, maps, charts, graphs, cartoons, and podcasts. Technique and terminology specific to a genre of reading is examined. Research tasks are

embedded throughout the course, and vocabulary instruction will be chosen from the reading material.

A variety of writing forms, including digital writing, are emphasized. Grammar lessons are embedded in writing instruction, holding students accountable for skills taught and practiced; modeling is done through published and student-crafted mentor texts. While students are immersed in multiple published and non-published mentors, they will also engage in interactive writing as a means to write with their entire class as driven by the instructor in addition to writing collaboratively with peers. Teachers focus equally on process and product with an emphasis on intellectual risk-taking in an interdisciplinary context to appreciate critical thought and effective means of communication; teacher-created multi-modal text sets will be used as materials. High-and low-stakes writing and timed and untimed assignments will be used throughout the unit.

Teachers may personalize instruction during this unit and address the distinct learning needs, interests, aspirations, or cultural backgrounds of individual students.

Within this unit students will focus on issues impacting the self, community, and world. Students will be encouraged to think critically about issues like climate change, capitalism, elitism, sexuality, race, technology, and relationships, citizenship, etc. These issues will be the topics with which students create their own independent ideas. The text is a starting point for conversation and thinking and writing.

For this particular unit, teachers should . . .

- Select common readings and supplemental texts.
- Prepare for conferences with students.
- Generate a list of skills students will master throughout the unit (focusing specifically on a few in each area).
- Create a summative assessment (backwards design).
- Create scaffolds for student reading and writing.
- Create formative assessments, but not limited to, reading checks, exit slips.
- Collaborate with colleagues to design small units within the larger unit.
- Reflect on previous teaching practices and pedagogy to inform planning.
- Review student modifications and accommodations.

Reflective Essay

For the first writing project, students will write a reflective essay in response to an assigned reading. Students will demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of the form and rhetorical strategies of the assigned text as they practice writing strategies appropriate for the intended text genre, audience, and purpose.

This writing project will be modeled on Lahiri's essay: a nonfiction reflective essay, which engages and takes inspiration from reading that you have done to address a recurring question you or others have about a specific activity or interest.

The essay should be motivated by curiosity about a particular question the student is posing and, ideally, the process of writing will help students discover new thoughts and ideas about this question and its implications. Students can be creative in the structure, or use Lahiri as a model for the writing organization to incorporate the required elements of repetition, metaphor and diction. Other required elements include 500 Word Rough Draft and 700 Word Final Draft for successful completion.

Suggested Strategies and Activities:

1. "Reading as a Writer" Reflection: Students will engage in an introduction activity using a selected speech to begin to work with the objectives and skills of the course. Students will identify the purpose, audience, genre, and expression of a provided text and explain how they arrive at their responses.
2. Class Inquiry of Text: After students read independently, a class discussion with the teacher as the facilitator will ask students to focus on the textual elements of theme, structure, diction, repetition, and point of view. By the end of the activity, students should be able to answer, according to Lahiri, "Why Italian" with evidence and reasoning.
3. Metaphor as Lens: Write a discussion board post analyzing a selected metaphor and using it as a lens to consider some aspect of a student's own life and experience.
4. Global Feedback for Class/Peer Editing: students will engage in peer review sessions and teacher conferences to elicit meaningful feedback on their reflective essay. Students will then revise their rough draft reflective essay, incorporating constructive feedback.
5. Self Assessment/Reflection: Students will reflect on the final grade of their first project to determine their planning, preparation, revision, and writing processes to assist them in goal setting for the next assignment and course.

Argumentative Essay

The second writing project will respond to multiple assigned texts on a contemporary topic of interest. By synthesizing understanding of these texts with a personal student experience, students will contribute to an

ongoing conversation about a specific problem related to the broader topic. Students will demonstrate an understanding of using sources and will practice, in particular, analysis, synthesis, summary, paraphrase, and the incorporation of quotations.

This process will allow students to consider the ideas of others who have a vested interest in the motivating question "what is education for?" as they develop their own understanding of the complexities and stakes of this issue. For successful completion, students must submit a first Rough Draft of at least 800 words, second Rough Draft of at least 1,000 words, and a final draft of at least 1,200 words.

Suggested Strategies and Activities:

1. Socratic Seminar : Students will pose higher-level thinking questions with responses supported by the text as students engage in student-led discussion to gain a deeper understanding of the issues and ideas presented in the text.

2. SOAPSTone Analysis: Students will complete a SOAPSTone Analysis analyzing speaker, occasion, audience, purpose, subject, and tone. The graphic organizer response will include specific textual evidence to support analytical findings.

3. Dialectical Journal: Focusing on key terminology, evidence-based reasoning, and personal connections, students will complete a dialectical journal with entries for quote selection, context, and analysis.

4. Joining the Intellectual Conversation: A collaborative activity where students will read and evaluate a respondent to Allen's article. Students will revisit identifying claim/purpose, point of view, and textual evidence to support or refute an argument to begin to engage with intellectual conversation and synthesis of two different texts.

5. "And, Or, But" Textual Connection Activity: After the introduction of a third text (optional) the key point in this exercise is to see what is the relationship between the essays written by Davidson & Allen. If they are making a common point, the link is AND. If they disagree, the connecting link is BUT. If the writer is offering an alternative, the key operator is OR. This can also serve as reinforcement of intellectual conversation and synthesis of texts.

6. Conferences/Peer Editing: students will engage in peer review sessions and teacher conferences to elicit meaningful feedback on their reflective essay. Students will then revise their rough draft reflective essay, incorporating constructive feedback.

7. Self Assessment/Reflection: Students will reflect on the final grade of their second project to determine their planning, preparation, revision, and writing processes to assist them in goal setting for the next assignment and course.

Materials

The materials used in this course integrate a variety of leveled instructional, enrichment, and intervention materials that support student learners at all levels in the school and home environments. Associated web

content and media sources are infused into the unit as applicable and available.

It is expected that materials endorsed by Rutgers University as part of their writing program will be used in this course as part of the concurrent enrollment agreement. In that way, both the academic rigor and topical content of these pieces will be appropriate for a freshman undergraduate student. Students can anticipate that reading material is relevant, timely, thought-provoking, mature, and rigorous. (Statements such as these will be included on the course syllabus).

In addition, teachers will refer to the district-approved Core Book List while selecting whole-class or small-group leveled resources that are not driven by the Rutgers University course.

Instructional Materials

Summer Reading Text:

How to Read Nonfiction Like a Professor by Thomas C. Foster

Included Texts:

Jhumpa Lahiri, "Why Italian?" (2022)

Allen, Danielle. "What Is Education For?" Boston Review, 26 April 2016, www.bostonreview.net/forum/danielle-allen-what-is-education-forLinks to an external site..

Snyder, Jeffrey Aaron. "What Is Education For?" Forum Response. Boston Review, 26 April 2016, www.bostonreview.net/forum_response/jeffrey-aaron-snyder-jeffrey-aaron-snyder-responds-danielle-allenLinks to an external site.

Meier, Deborah. "What Is Education For?" Forum Response. Boston Review, 26 April 2016, www.bostonreview.net/forum_response/deborah-meier-deborah-meier-responds-danielle-allenLinks to an external site.

Satz, Debra. "What Is Education For?" Forum Response. Boston Review, 26 April 2016, www.bostonreview.net/forum_response/debra-satz-debra-satz-responds-danielle-allenLinks to an external site.

DeGraff, Michel. "What Is Education For?" Forum Response. Boston Review, 26 April 2016, www.bostonreview.net/forum_response/michel-degraff-michel-degraff-responds-danielle-allenLinks to an external site.

Reich, Rob. "What Is Education For?" Forum Response. Boston Review, 26 April 2016, www.bostonreview.net/forum_response/rob-reich-rob-reich-responds-danielle-allenLinks to an external site.

Stanczyk, Lucas. "What Is Education For?" Forum Response. Boston Review, 26 April 2016, www.bostonreview.net/forum_response/lucas-stanczyk-lucas-stanczyk-responds-danielle-allenLinks to an

external site.

Supplemental/Optional Texts:

Cathy Davidson, "Introduction" from The New Education (2022)

Bell Hooks, "Teaching with Love" (2003)

Anu Partanen, "What Americans Keep Ignoring About Finland's School Success" (2011) [Hyperlink to article on The AtlanticLinks to an external site.]

Ken Robinson, "Do Schools Kill Creativity?" (2006)Links to an external site.

Helen Thomas, "Indigenous Knowledge Is Often Overlooked in Education. But It Has a Lot to Teach Us." (2022)Links to an external site.

Jessica Winter, "The Rise and Fall of Vibes-Based Literacy" (2022)

*Additional texts will be added based on the Rutgers University College Writing curriculum.

* Art, photography, infographics, films, videos, podcasts, poems, short stories, and other texts will be added to compliment these course readings.

Research:

Cranford High School Media Center Databases:

- JStor and varied databases
- MLA Format online: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/08/
- Purdue Owl:https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/

Cranford Public Library Online Resources: http://cranford.com/library/

Additional Student Resources:

- Chromebooks/laptops
- Writing Portfolios
- Writer's Notebook/Journal
- Google Suite including Classroom

Teacher Resources

- *Everything's An Argument*, Lunsford et. al.
- *They Say/I Say*, G. Graff and C. Birkenstein
- *Readicide*, Kelly Gallagher
- *A Novel Approach*, Kate Roberts
- *When Kids Can't Read*, Kylene Beers
- *Beyond Literary Analysis,* Allison Marchetti & Rebekah O'Dell
- *Writing with Mentors*, Allison Marchetti & Rebekah O'Dell
- *Argument in the Real World*, Kristen Hawley Turner and Troy Hicks
- *Writing Instruction that Works: Proven Methods for Middle and High School Classrooms*, Arthur Applebee and Judith Langer
- *Teaching Adolescent Writers*, Kelly Gallagher
- *Write Like This,* Kelly Gallagher
- *Book Love*, Penny Kittle
- *The Journey is Everything*, Katherine Bomer
- *The Digital Writing Workshop*, Troy Hicks
- *Crafting Original Writing*, Troy Hicks
- *Fearless Writing: Multigenre to Motivate and Inspire*, Tom Romano
- *The Art of Styling Sentences*, Ann Longknife and K.D. Sullivan
- *The Well-Crafted Sentence*, Nora Bacon

Suggested Strategies for Accommodation and Modification

Content specific accomodations and modifications as well as Career Ready Practices are listed here for all students, including: Special Education, English Language Learners, At Risk of School Failure, Gifted and Talented, Students with 504.

Additional modifications and accommodations particular to the content of this course include:

- Access speech-to-text function on computer.
- Use visual presentations of all materials to include organizers, charts.
- Allow students to set individual goals for writing/reading.
- Offer graphic organizers, note-taking models, strategies for summarizing, and questioning techniques.
- Offer oral assessments.
- Supply study guide questions and access to class notes.
- Work in partnerships.
- Give responses in a form (verbal or written) that is easier for the student.
- Take additional time to compete a task or project.
- Scaffold by chunking material and texts.
- Individualize reading choices based on ability and level.
- Take frequent breaks.

- Use an alarm to help with time management.
- Small group and one on one assessment.
- Mark text with a highlighter or other manipulative such as a post-it.
- Receive help coordinating assignments.
- Answering fewer questions or completing shorter tasks.
- Modify the length and quantity of assignments to fit individual.
- Differentiate roles in discussion groups.
- Use digital technology, eBooks, audio version of printed text.
- Create alternate assignments or homework.
- Provide distinct steps in a process; eliminate unnecessary steps, as needed.
- Use art, music, and film to convey alternate interpretation of literature and assessment.
- Manage executive function by scaffolding process and amending deadline.
- Adhere to all modifications and accommodations as prescribed in all IEP and 504 plans.