

# Unit 5: Source Evaluation & Research (Weeks 29-36)

Content Area: **English Language Arts**  
Course(s):  
Time Period: **Full Year**  
Length: **8 Weeks**  
Status: **Published**

## **Unit 5: Source Evaluation & Research**

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### **Unit Rationale**

This culminating unit ties all skills developed through the year while adding in examining credibility of sources. Determining which sources to trust and how to critically examine and evaluate texts are skills everyone must master in the evolving world where anyone can create an Internet site. Even more traditional news agencies are inherently biased today. Of all the skills developed through the year, this is the most important for future years in school and beyond. They will learn to use both academic search databases as well as Internet sources via search engines. Furthermore, students will develop annotated bibliographies which will require students to demonstrate mastery of summary skills as well as evaluate sources for credibility and bias. Additionally, students will work to determine the best genre for their final essay based on purpose and audience. They will choose between a traditional persuasive argument essay, cause and effect essay, problem/solution essay, or compare/contrast essay. Throughout the year, students have learned about rhetorical situations and how task, purpose and audience can impact how one writes. Now, they will make a choice on the genre based on that knowledge and the information they locate on a topic of their choice.

### **Essential Questions**

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- How do writers choose a genre for writing to express their ideas?
- How do writers research using both academic and internet sources?
- How do researchers use critical thinking skills to evaluate sources to determine trustworthiness and credibility?
- How do writers develop their own ideas based on research? (How do they determine what “I Say” based on what “They Say?”)
- How can bias impact the way an author crafts a text including, but not limited to, selection of evidence and word choice?

### **Pre-Assessments**

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Students will complete a Google Form to determine their knowledge of credible vs. non credible sources, research databases vs. internet searches, how to determine keyword search phrases, media bias, and the differences between different types of argument writing and why writers select a certain genre. They also will read an opinion piece and write a response detailing whether or not they spot bias and explaining where they

see it and how that bias can impact a reader's views on an issue.

## **Instructional Plan**

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Students will engage in several activities to learn how to evaluate sources for credibility and bias - both explicit and implied. They will then develop a research question on a topic in which they are interested. Through lessons on search phrases and keywords, students will conduct research using both academic databases and internet search engines. They will create annotated bibliographies using summary skills as well as their source evaluation skills. Students will then determine what they want to say on the topic using the research as a springboard to develop their own ideas. At that point, they will determine the type of essay to write based on purpose and audience. Students will receive organizers specific to the type of essay they will write. Peer discussion and feedback will be crucial throughout the unit.

ALL LESSONS COULD TAKE SEVERAL DAYS

## **Lesson 1: Plagiarism & Citations**

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### **Student Learning Intentions or We are learning to ... (WALT)**

WALT provide an objective summary of the text.

WALT avoid plagiarism and follow a standard format for citation.

### **Student Success Criteria ... "I can statements"**

I can...annotate a text for key details.

I can...apply those annotations to write a summary.

I can...rephrase key details to avoid plagiarism.

I can...properly cite evidence without plagiarizing.

### **Instructional Strategies and Activities**

- Summary writing and annotated bibliographies.
- Annotate texts and write an annotated bibliography entry include MLA-formatted Works Cited listing.

### **Formative Assessments**

- Analysis/ annotation of sample annotated bibliography.

- Annotated bibliography entries

## Instructional Materials and Resources

- Analyze and annotate a sample “annotated bibliography: Note characteristics of an annotated bibliography.
- Develop a checklist for an annotated bibliography, which includes an objective summary.
- Video focused on showing students how to use EasyBib to create the MLA-formatted Works Cited reference entry.

## Reflections and Suggested Modifications

ELA.RI.CR.7.1	Cite several pieces of textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what an informational text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
ELA.RI.CI.7.2	Determine a central idea in an informational text and explain how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

## Lesson 2: Word Choice

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### Student Learning Intentions or We are learning to ... (WALT)

WALT analyze impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone.

WALT quote and paraphrase the data and conclusion of others.

### Student Success Criteria ... “I can statements”

I can...analyze the impact of word choice.

I can...embed appropriate word choice for different styles of writing.

## Instructional Strategies and Activities

- Review denotation vs. connotation.
- Students will write blog posts that strive for a certain tone and use word choice to achieve that tone.
- Share with partners to ensure the desired tone is achieved.

## Formative Assessments

- Annotations
- Blog posts

## Instructional Materials and Resources

- Annotate a sample paragraph, or view a biased video, and students will circle or list words that create the tone. Think, pair and share to discuss findings.
- Annotate a self-selected, credible source and [complete “They Say/I Say” organizer](#).

- Plan what you want to say as a reaction and the desired tone. List words to help achieve that tone.
- Write a blog post keeping the audience, purpose and context in mind to achieve the desired tone.

## Reflections and Suggested Modifications

ELA.L.KL.7.2.A	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.
ELA.L.KL.7.2.C	Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy.
ELA.L.VL.7.3.A	Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
ELA.L.VL.7.3.C	Analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.
ELA.L.VI.7.4.D	Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., refined, respectful, polite, diplomatic, condescending).

## Lesson 3: Argumentative Essays

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### Student Learning Intentions or We are learning to ... (WALT)

WALT demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text in argumentative writing

### Student Success Criteria ... “I can statements”

I can...identify the structure of argumentative writing.

### Instructional Strategies and Activities

- Analyze sample argumentative essay for writer credibility.
- How do writers establish they know about that which they are writing.
- Develop a checklist for items or writing moves that demonstrates the writer “did his/her/their” homework.

### Formative Assessments

- Annotations
- Checklist development
- Essay drafts

### Instructional Materials and Resources

- Annotate sample argument text or video. Note how writer developed/established their credibility to write about the topic.
- In pairs or groups, develop a checklist writers could use to demonstrate they know and understand the topic (AKA, they did their homework).
- Continue drafting essay.

## Reflections and Suggested Modifications

ELA.W.AW.7.1

Write arguments on discipline-specific content (e.g., social studies, science, technical subjects, English/Language Arts) to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

## Lesson 4: Credibility & Bias

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### Student Learning Intentions or We are learning to ... (WALT)

WALT use accurate, credible sources in argumentative writing

WALT assess the credibility and accuracy of each source

WALT gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources

WALT avoid plagiarism and follow a standard format for citation

### Student Success Criteria ... “I can statements”

I can...find credible resources that support claims.

I can...gather relevant information from credible sources.

I can...properly cite evidence from credible sources.

### Instructional Strategies and Activities

- CRAPP Method and media bias.

### Formative Assessments

- EdPuzzle/ screencast results
- Exit ticket on CRAPP method and media bias
- Credibility organizers
- Annotated bibliography entry with source evaluation.

### Instructional Materials and Resources

- [Resource for media literacy](#)
- [Checkology](#)
- Lesson 1
  - Have students go to [Bad News game](#). Students are guided through how fake news and noncredible information can create chaos in society.
  - Screencast video on [CRAPP method](#) to determine source credibility.
  - Gallery walk: Media bias. [First have students scan the media bias chart](#)
- Lesson 2:
  - Evaluating source credibility. Annotate a sample annotated bibliography entry and look for a

source evaluation.

- Complete a CRAPP and media bias organizer.
- Draft a source evaluation paragraph for an annotated bibliography entry.

## Reflections and Suggested Modifications

ELA.RI.MF.7.6	Compare and contrast texts to analyze the unique qualities of different mediums, including the integration of information from multiple formats and sources to develop deeper understanding of the concept, topic or subject and resolve conflicting information.
ELA.W.AW.7.1.B	Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant, accurate data and evidence that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources.
ELA.W.SE.7.6	Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

## Lesson 5: Stamina

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### Student Learning Intentions or We are learning to ... (WALT)

WALT write routinely over extended time frames to allow for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction, and revision, for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences

### Student Success Criteria ... “I can statements”

I can...write for extended periods of time.

I can...write for a variety of purposes.

### Instructional Strategies and Activities

- Write blog entries recording reaction to research.
- Write drafts and revise throughout the process.

### Formative Assessments

- Blog posts
- Essay drafts

### Instructional Materials and Resources

- Blog posts (shorter writing)
- Essay drafts (longer writing)
- Revising based on peer and student feedback.
- Revise using a checklist, rubrics and self- assessment activity such as a Google form and/or comparing writing to model essays across a range of scores.

## Reflections and Suggested Modifications

ELA.W.RW.7.7

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

## Lesson 6: Organization

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### Student Learning Intentions or We are learning to/that ... (WALT)

WALT develop writing that is appropriate to task, purpose and audience.

WALT development, organization, voice and style produce clear and coherent writing.

WALT organize writing that is appropriate to task, purpose and audience.

### Student Success Criteria ... “I can statements”

I can...develop my writing.

I can...write to an appropriate audience.

I can...organize my writing for purpose and audience.

### Instructional Strategies and Activities

- Students will choose the appropriate genre (or type of essay) they will write depending on the purpose, audience and task.
- Depending on the rhetorical situation and the essay type/genre they select to write to reach the intended audience and achieve its desired purpose, students will complete a graphic organizer.

### Formative Assessments

- Entrance slip data
- Organizer and blog entry
- Essay Drafts

### Instructional Materials and Resources

- Blog posts (shorter writing)
- Essay drafts (longer writing)
- Revising based on peer and student feedback.
- Revise using a checklist, rubrics and self- assessment activity such as a Google form and/or comparing writing to model essays across a range of scores.
- Entrance Ticket: Rhetorical situation. What is it? How does a writer determine it.
- Quick review of the rhetorical situation (this has been stressed during unit 1 and 3).
- Complete organizer and blog entry detailing what the student wants to say/add to the larger conversation on the topic.

- That will help students determine the rhetorical situation and the type of essay they write that is appropriate to purpose, audience and task/context.
- Complete a graphic organizer for the selected essay type/genre.
  - [Cause/ Effect essay organizer](#)
  - [Problem- Solution Essay Outline](#)
  - [Argument essay organizer](#)
  - Draft Essays

## Reflections and Suggested Modifications

ELA.W.AW.7.1.D

Establish and maintain a formal style/academic style, approach, and form.

## Lesson 7: Revisions

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### Student Learning Intentions or We are learning to ... (WALT)

WALT with some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing by focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed

WALT use technology to interact and collaborate with others to produce and publish writing

### Student Success Criteria ... “I can statements”

I can...accept constructive feedback.

I can...apply feedback to revise my writing.

I can...use technology to support my writing.

### Instructional Strategies and Activities

- Peer review
- Teacher feedback
- With parent/guardian permission, students may reach out to experts and/or submit their finished essay for publication online.
- Students will collaborate with each other and publish on their own blogs. They may leave comments for each other, too.

### Formative Assessments

- Two stars and a Wish
- Peer feedback provided
- Revisions
- Emails
- Published essays
- Comments

## Instructional Materials and Resources

- Entrance slip: What makes peer feedback helpful? What are the characteristics of quality feedback?
- Using either [Eduflow](#), or just sharing via Google docs, students will peer review. Complete a [Two Stars and a Wish](#).
- Submit draft for teacher feedback.
- Revise based on teacher and peer feedback
- Compare/contrast text messages vs. formal emails. Identify and discuss characteristics.
- Develop a checklist for formal emails.
- Identify an expert in the field and draft an email to ask them about the topic students are researching. (Emails may only be sent with parent permission.)
- Comment on classmates blogs to share ideas.

## Reflections and Suggested Modifications

ELA.L.SS.7.1	Demonstrate command of the system and structure of the English language when writing or speaking.
ELA.W.WP.7.4	With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning; flexibly making editing and revision choices and sustaining effort to complete complex writing tasks; and focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
ELA.SL.ES.7.3	Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

## Modifications and/or Accommodations

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### Suggested Modifications (ELL, Sp. Ed, Gifted, At-risk of Failure)

#### English Language Learners

Native language support: The teacher provides auditory or written content to students in their native language.

Adjusted Speech: The teacher changes speech patterns to increase student comprehension. This could include facing the students, paraphrasing, clearly indicating the most important ideas, and speaking more slowly.

Visuals: The teacher uses graphics, pictures, visuals, and manipulatives. This helps ELL students better understand and comprehend the subjects at hand.

Front-Loading Vocabulary: The teacher front loads vocabulary. This means providing students with a list of important vocabulary words they will need to know for a book, lesson, etc. prior to the lesson being taught. Including pictures to go with the vocabulary words is also very beneficial for the students.

#### Special Education Students

Chunking: The teacher presents information in a way that makes it easy for students to understand

and remember. Chunking is based on the presumption that our working memory is easily overloaded by excessive detail. The best way to deliver information is to organize it into meaningful units. Because students with special needs get overloaded easily, chunking is an effective strategy to use with them.

**Checking for Understanding:** It is important to constantly check for understanding, especially for students who have accommodations. Teachers want to make sure students understand the concepts being covered in a way that makes sense to them.

**Extra time:** The teacher provides students with special needs extra time to complete work or answer questions. It is important to give students enough time to process their thoughts.

**Oral Reading:** The teacher will read work orally to students. Class work such as tests and literature circles may need to be read aloud to the student.

**Timers:** The teacher will use timers as an instructional tool. The use of timers is beneficial for students who have trouble completing tasks. Timers can be helpful so the student is aware of how much time they have to complete an assignment.

## **Students with 504 Plans**

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## **Gifted & Talented Strategies**

**Extensions/Enrichments:** Teachers will provide gifted and talented students with extension/enrichment projects. Students will be challenged to further their understanding, to apply acquired knowledge, and/or to produce something in reference to acquired knowledge.

**Modify/Change Activities:** Teachers will monitor and modify activities to accommodate those students who need to be challenged further. Additional reading, problem-solving, writing, or project work is necessary for those students who are ready to move on at a rate more accelerated than their peers. In this way, G & T students are provided the same opportunity for support as special needs students.

## Students at Risk of School Failure

**Directions or Instructions:** Make sure directions and/or instructions are given in limited numbers. Give directions/instructions verbally and in simple written format. Ask students to repeat the instructions or directions to ensure understanding occurs. Check back with the student to ensure he/she hasn't forgotten.

**Peer Support:** Peers can help build confidence in other students by assisting in peer learning. Many teachers use the 'ask 3 before me' approach. This is fine, however, a student at risk may have to have a specific student or two to ask. Set this up for the student so he/she knows who to ask for clarification before going to you.

**Alternate or Modified Assignments:** Always ask yourself, "How can I modify this assignment to ensure the students at risk are able to complete it?" Sometimes you'll simplify the task, reduce the length of the assignment or allow for a different mode of delivery. For instance, many students may hand something in, the at-risk student may jot notes and give you the information verbally. Or, it just may be that you will need to assign an alternate assignment.

**Increase One to One Time:** When other students are working, always touch base with your students at risk and find out if they're on track or needing some additional support. A few minutes here and there will go a long way to intervene as the need presents itself.

**Contracts:** It helps to have a working contract between you and your students at risk. This helps prioritize the tasks that need to be done and ensure completion happens. Each day write down what needs to be completed, as the tasks are done, provide a checkmark or happy face. The goal of using contracts is to eventually have the student come to you for completion sign-offs.

**Hands On:** As much as possible, think in concrete terms and provide hands-on tasks. This means a child doing math may require a calculator or counters. The child may need to tape record comprehension activities instead of writing them. A child may have to listen to a story being read instead of reading it him/herself.

**Tests/Assessments:** Tests can be done orally if need be. Break tests down in smaller increments by having a portion of the test in the morning, another portion after lunch and the final part the next day.

**Seating:** Seat students near a helping peer or with quick access to the teacher. Those with hearing or sight issues need to be close to the instruction which often means near the front.

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## **Integration of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Climate Change, Informational and Media Literacy**

See crosswalks.

Students will have the ability to share their own personal experiences with DEI while brainstorming story

ideas.

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1uf0fWDvpqWFOAb51rOq7mN5xq-xu-M5Yp2FbEVZ9Kt8/edit?gid=0#gid=0>

## **New Jersey Student Learning Standards: Content Area**

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ELA.L.SS.7.1	Demonstrate command of the system and structure of the English language when writing or speaking.
ELA.L.KL.7.2.A	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.
ELA.L.KL.7.2.C	Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy.
ELA.L.VL.7.3.A	Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
ELA.L.VL.7.3.C	Analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.
ELA.L.VI.7.4.D	Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., refined, respectful, polite, diplomatic, condescending).
ELA.RI.CR.7.1	Cite several pieces of textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what an informational text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
ELA.RI.CI.7.2	Determine a central idea in an informational text and explain how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
ELA.RL.CT.7.8	Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of an event, time, place, or character and a historical or scientific account of the same period or event as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history and/or events.
ELA.RI.CT.7.8	Analyze and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) how two or more authors writing informational texts about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts.
ELA.W.AW.7.1	Write arguments on discipline-specific content (e.g., social studies, science, technical subjects, English/Language Arts) to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
ELA.W.AW.7.1.B	Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant, accurate data and evidence that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources.
ELA.W.AW.7.1.D	Establish and maintain a formal style/academic style, approach, and form.
ELA.W.IW.7.2.D	Use precise language and domain/grade-level-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
ELA.W.WP.7.4	With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning; flexibly making editing and revision choices and sustaining effort to complete complex writing tasks; and focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
ELA.W.WR.7.5	Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.
ELA.W.SE.7.6	Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms

effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

ELA.W.RW.7.7

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

ELA.SL.ES.7.3

Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

## **Integration of Career Readiness, Life Literacies and Key Skills**

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WRK.9.2.8.CAP.12

Assess personal strengths, talents, values, and interests to appropriate jobs and careers to maximize career potential.

## **Integration of Computer Science and Design Thinking**

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CS.6-8.8.1.8.AP.6

Refine a solution that meets users' needs by incorporating feedback from team members and users.

## **Interdisciplinary Connections: NJSLs for ELA, Social Studies, Science and/or Math**

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The reading and writing skills taught throughout this unit will provide knowledge, practice, and support in all content areas where reading and writing are required.

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1bNUBwwW9BLgTLqjfVVAJiet6rbmQ3THg-sXDz2rEnXk/edit?gid=0#gid=0>

SOC.6.1.8.CivicsDP.3.a

Use primary and secondary sources to assess whether or not the ideals found in the Declaration of Independence were fulfilled for women, African Americans, and Native Americans during this time period.

SOC.6.1.8.CivicsHR.3.a

Explain how and why constitutional civil liberties were impacted by acts of government during the Early Republic (i.e., Alien and Sedition Acts).

ELA.RI.CR.7.1

Cite several pieces of textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what an informational text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

ELA.RI.CI.7.2

Determine a central idea in an informational text and explain how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

## **21st Century Life and Career**

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CRP.K-12.CRP4

Communicate clearly and effectively and with reason.

TECH.8.1.8.A.3

Use and/or develop a simulation that provides an environment to solve a real world problem or theory.

TECH.8.1.8.A.4

Graph and calculate data within a spreadsheet and present a summary of the results.

TECH.8.1.8.B.CS2

Create original works as a means of personal or group expression.

## **SEL Competencies and Standards**

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SEL.PK-12.5.2

Utilize positive communication and social skills to interact effectively with others