

Unit 4: Academic Research, Writing Arguments, & Presenting Our Work (Weeks 24-29)

Content Area: **Template**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Full Year**
Length: **9 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Unit 4: Academic Research, Writing Arguments, & Presenting Our Work

In this unit, students will choose a topic to research and gain knowledge about with the goal of being able to write an argumentative research paper based on the evidence gained from their research, then present their findings to the class via a persuasive, research-backed presentation. This unit serves multiple purposes and is one of the most important of the course. In it, students will be assessed on their ability to conduct academic research, which will require them to master the Reading Informational Text standards. The findings of their research will be used to craft a 5-8 paragraph argumentative research paper, which requires mastery of the Writing Arguments standards as well as the Research standards. Finally, after completing the research process and writing the paper, students must then master the Speaking and Listening standards, as they will then persuade their audience of their findings via a captivating oral presentation.

Essential Questions

1. How has the definition of “hero” evolved over time? How do we currently define one?
2. How has academic research evolved with the advancement of technology?
3. What are the essential elements of an argumentative research paper?
4. What are the essential elements of an engaging and informative presentation?

Pre-Assessments

Pre-assessment: Students will work together in groups. Each group will be asked to decide if they believe Odysseus should be considered a hero. To do this, they will have to review their knowledge of the story and his actions in particular, then work together to develop an argumentative thesis, three reasons, and supporting evidence. This exercise will serve as practice before they are expected to go through this process on their own with their own research subject, and at the same time, it will allow teachers to decide how to proceed with instruction.

Instructional Plan

Pre-Assessment

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

WALT we cannot accurately support a thesis without using relevant textual evidence as support.

Student Success Criteria ... "I can statements"

I can write a thesis

I can choose relevant textual evidence to support my thesis

Instructional Strategies and Activities

Students will work together in groups. Each group will be asked to decide if they believe Odysseus should be considered a hero. To do this, they will have to review their knowledge of the story and his actions in particular, then work together to develop an argumentative thesis, three reasons, and supporting evidence. This exercise will serve as practice before they are expected to go through this process on their own with their own research subject, and at the same time, it will allow teachers to decide how to proceed with instruction.

Formative Assessments

Quick Writes

Instructional Materials and Resources

Library Databases

Reflections and Suggested Modifications

Presearch: Brainstorming

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

WALT central ideas are essentially just thesis statements, i.e., if you can understand the overarching message(s) of a nonfiction text, you can both understand and develop a thesis.

Student Success Criteria ... "I can statements"

I can identify the "thesis" of nonfiction texts

Instructional Strategies and Activities

Brainstorm Session: Students will be given a list of “heroes” in various fields; they will have ample time to decide whom they’d like to research.

Formative Assessments

Check ins

Frewrites

Instructional Materials and Resources

Graphic organizer

Reflections and Suggested Modifications

Source Analysis

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

WALT write objective summaries of the source articles we read to help us organize our research.

WALT the structure of nonfiction pieces is often much more linear and straightforward than fiction.

WALT read carefully to determine the literal and figurative meaning of words chosen by writers.

Student Success Criteria ... “I can statements”

I can find sources that relate to my topic

I can research ethically

Instructional Strategies and Activities

Source Reliability & Citation Direct Instruction: Review how to test a source for reliability and how to cite properly.

Preliminary Research Activity: Students will find two sources about their subject to watch and take notes

on/read and annotate to ensure they've chosen the right subject.

Formative Assessments

Annotated Sources

Instructional Materials and Resources

Library Database

Reflections and Suggested Modifications

Writing Conferences

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

WALT participate in a recursive writing process

Student Success Criteria ... "I can statements"

I can revise my writing based on feedback

Instructional Strategies and Activities

First Round of Individual Conferences:

Students will meet with the teacher to review their subject choice and discuss what they've learned about him/her/them so far. Students can only begin formal research once subject is discussed and approved by the teacher.

Second Round of Individual Conferences: After completing Step 1 of their Individual Research Process, all students will be required to meet individually with me to review their work and ensure they're on the right track.

Third Round of Individual Conferences: Once students have completed all of task #10, they will meet with their teacher to discuss all of their sources and their current tentative thesis and evidence. Once the teacher approves their work, they will be ready to move onto their essay outlines.

Fourth Round of Individual Conferences: After students submit their outlines, the teacher will spend ample time providing valuable feedback on their work. Then, the teacher will meet with each student individually to ensure students understand the feedback and are ready to move onto their essay.

Formative Assessments

Conferences

Instructional Materials and Resources

Library Databases

Reflections and Suggested Modifications

Research and Database Mini Lesson

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

WALT look up unknown words when we can't determine them via context clues and copy down their definitions.

WALT read carefully to determine the literal and figurative meaning of words chosen by writers.

Student Success Criteria ... "I can statements"

I can navigate the library databases

Instructional Strategies and Activities

Research & Database Direct Instruction:

Students will visit the LMC for the librarian's presentation on the research process and how to navigate CHS's databases.

Formative Assessments

Check-ins

Freewrites

Instructional Materials and Resources

Library Databases

Reflections and Suggested Modifications

Research Process

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

WALT structure our paragraphs in a meaningful and organized manner, using clear topic sentences and transitions throughout and between.

WALT provide relevant and adequate evidence to support our thesis in the form of paraphrases and direct quotations.

WALT write in a formal, academic tone and avoid first person language and slang.

WALT write conclusions that reiterate our argument and reinforces the significance of the argument and topic as a whole.

WALT write clearly so as to be taken seriously as writers and convince our audience of our ideas.

Student Success Criteria ... “I can statements”

I can create an arguable thesis statement

I can organize my thoughts around a central idea

I can incorporate supporting details

Instructional Strategies and Activities

1. Students will start by searching for two reliable sources on their subject (they may use the two they've previously found if they are reputable). These sources must provide biographical information on their subject as well as career/achievement information. Once found, students will print both articles, copy down their citation information, annotate them, and complete this worksheet, which asks them to develop a tentative thesis and three reasons to support their argument, choose three pieces of evidence from the two articles to use as support, and brainstorm more research questions/ relevant topic to explore next in their research process.

2. Once students' work has been approved by me during the previous conference, they may continue gathering

reliable articles on their topic. All articles must be printed, annotated, summarized, and fully cited. They will have about a week (4+ full class periods) to complete this task; they must find and be able to use at least five sources in their essay.

3. Students should now be ready to outline their essay.

4. Students should now be ready to write their essay.

5. Students should now be ready to revise and edit their work according to the teachers' feedback for their final draft.

6. Presentation

Formative Assessments

Essay

Instructional Materials and Resources

Library Databases

Reflections and Suggested Modifications

Hero Essay

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

WALT determine the purpose of a text, as writers always have a purpose for writing (to entertain, to inform, to persuade, to call to action, etc.)

WALT speak clearly, professionally, and confidently during our presentations.

Student Success Criteria ... “I can statements”

I can determine the purpose of a text

I can present my ideas clearly

Instructional Strategies and Activities

Direct Instruction: Review elements of a compelling presentation, sample presentation, and grading rubric.

Formative Assessments

Hero Essay Presentation

Instructional Materials and Resources

Library Databases

Reflections and Suggested Modifications

Modifications and/or Accommodations

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.

New Jersey Student Learning Standards: Content Area

or speaking.

ELA.RI.CR.9–10.1	Cite a range and thorough textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections, to strongly support an analysis of multiple aspects of what an informational text says explicitly and inferentially, as well as interpretations of the text.
ELA.RI.CI.9–10.2	Determine one or more central ideas of an informational text and analyze how it is developed and refined over the course of a text, including how it emerges and is shaped by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
ELA.RI.PP.9–10.5	Determine an author’s purpose in a text (including cultural experience and knowledge reflected in text originating outside the United States) and analyze how an author uses rhetorical devices to advance that purpose.
ELA.W.AW.9–10.1	Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient textual and non-textual evidence.
ELA.W.AW.9–10.1.A	Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
ELA.W.AW.9–10.1.B	Develop claim(s) and counterclaims using sound reasoning, supplying data and evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both claim(s) and counterclaims in a discipline-appropriate manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level and concerns.
ELA.W.AW.9–10.1.C	Use transitions (e.g., words, phrases, clauses) to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.
ELA.W.AW.9–10.1.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.
ELA.W.AW.9–10.1.E	Provide a concluding paragraph or section that supports the argument presented.
ELA.W.WP.9–10.4	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, trying a new approach; sustaining effort to complete complex writing tasks; seeking out feedback and reflecting on personal writing progress; consulting a style manual (such as MLA or APA Style), focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
ELA.W.WR.9–10.5	Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
ELA.W.SE.9–10.6	Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation (MLA or APA Style Manuals).
ELA.W.RW.9–10.7	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.

Integration of Career Readiness, Life Literacies and Key Skills

TECH.9.4.12.CI.1	Demonstrate the ability to reflect, analyze, and use creative skills and ideas (e.g., 1.1.12prof.CR3a).
TECH.9.4.12.CI.3	Investigate new challenges and opportunities for personal growth, advancement, and transition (e.g., 2.1.12.PGD.1).

TECH.9.4.12.CT.2	Explain the potential benefits of collaborating to enhance critical thinking and problem solving (e.g., 1.3E.12profCR3.a).
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Integration of Computer Science and Design Thinking

TECH.9.4.12.CT.4	Participate in online strategy and planning sessions for course-based, school-based, or other project and determine the strategies that contribute to effective outcomes.
TECH.9.4.12.TL.3	Analyze the effectiveness of the process and quality of collaborative environments.
TECH.9.4.12.IML.8	Evaluate media sources for point of view, bias, and motivations (e.g., NJSLSA.R6, 7.1.AL.IPRET.6).

Interdisciplinary Connections: NJSLS for ELA, Social Studies, Science and/or Math

SOC.6.1.12.HistoryCA.2.a	Research multiple perspectives to explain the struggle to create an American identity.
SOC.6.2.12.GeoPP.5.a	Use a variety of sources to explain the impact of migration on the way of life in the country of origin and the new country (e.g., social, economic, political structures).

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

See Crosswalks

21st Century Life and Career

CAEP.9.2.12.C.1	Review career goals and determine steps necessary for attainment.
CAEP.9.2.12.C.3	Identify transferable career skills and design alternate career plans.
TECH.8.1.12.C.CS1	Interact, collaborate, and publish with peers, experts, or others by employing a variety of digital environments and media.
TECH.8.2.12.A.2	Analyze a current technology and the resources used, to identify the trade-offs in terms of availability, cost, desirability and waste.
TECH.8.2.12.A.CS2	The core concepts of technology.

SEL Competencies

SEL.PK-12.1.4	Recognize the importance of self-confidence in handling daily tasks and challenges
SEL.PK-12.2.3	Identify and apply ways to persevere or overcome barriers through alternative methods to achieve one's goals
SEL.PK-12.3.3	Demonstrate an understanding of the need for mutual respect when viewpoints differ

