

Unit 4: Research & Developing An Argument That Passes The “Duh Test” (Weeks 24-29)

Content Area: **Template**

Course(s):

Time Period: **Full Year**

Length: **9 Weeks**

Status: **Published**

Unit 4: Research & Developing An Argument That Passes The “Duh Test”

When it comes to writing a research paper, a common trap that students fall into is creating an argument that fails the “Duh Test”: an argument which is so obvious that it makes a reader think “Duh, I already knew that.” (Examples include “The Holocaust was bad,” “Depression is a serious problem,” “Bulimia is an eating disorder.”) This unit will focus on how to create a research-based argument that **PASSES** the Duh Test: a non-obvious argument that one side of the room might agree with while the other side might disagree (e.g.- “Depression shouldn’t be treated with medication.”) A research paper with an argument that passes the Duh Test is more likely to persuade and/or get the audience to see the topic in a different way.

Essential Questions

Why is it important to choose a research-topic that you’re personally passionate about?

Why is the Thesis Statement the engine of a research paper?

Why is it important for the Thesis Statement/argument to pass the “Duh Test”?

Why is it necessary to use more than one source when doing research?

Pre-Assessments

As a pre-assessment, the personal essays written during Unit 1 will be examined.

Instructional Plan

Research Topic

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

WALT Choose a Research Topic which... 1. they’re personally passionate about so that they’re more motivated to find information & sources, and 2. can be open to defense or falsification.

Student Success Criteria ... “I can statements”

I can research from a place of inquiry

I can use the library databases to conduct preliminary research on a topic

Instructional Strategies and Activities

Each student will be given a list of 40 research topics and tasked with choosing the topic that most interests them. (If student is interested in a topic not on the list, they simply need to get it approved by teacher.)

Formative Assessments

Choice of research topic

Instructional Materials and Resources

Library Databases

Reflections and Suggested Modifications

Noodletools

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

Set up a NoodleTools account to keep research organized via technology (a skill which will be increasingly valuable in college whenever there's a research paper).

Student Success Criteria ... “I can statements”

I can set up a noodletools account

I can create a research question for my chosen topic

Instructional Strategies and Activities

Each student will be given a hard-copy of instructions that show them how to set up a NoodleTools account.

Students will each search the school's research database for articles related to their topic. Students will also be shown how to customize their search so that they can work in a more efficient, timely manner.

Formative Assessments

Setting up NoodleTools account

Instructional Materials and Resources

Collingswood High School's research database; Noodletools.com

Reflections and Suggested Modifications

Source Analysis

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

WALT Search gathered articles for quotes that could support argument so that students can sharpen their ability to identify strong evidence.

Student Success Criteria ... "I can statements"

I can gather relevant research on my topic

I can analyze my topic from multiple perspectives

Instructional Strategies and Activities

Students will gather at least two strong quotes from each of their gathered articles and store them for later use

Formative Assessments

Collection of 12 total quotes

Instructional Materials and Resources

Reflections and Suggested Modifications

Argument Development

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

WALT Form an argument which passes the “Duh Test” (see Unit Rationale above) so that the resultant research paper runs on a strong engine.

Student Success Criteria ... “I can statements”

I can create a thesis statement

Instructional Strategies and Activities

Teacher will model an argument that passes the “Duh Test” (e.g.- “Racism will never go away...”)
Students will each be tasked with developing an argument based on the quotes they’ve gathered from the various articles.

Written thesis statement

Instructional Materials and Resources

Google Classroom

Reflections and Suggested Modifications

4 Paragraph Essay

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

WALT Write a 4-paragraph research essay to further develop the skill of producing organized, structured written work.

Student Success Criteria ... “I can statements”

I can compose an introduction

I can use transitions between ideas

I can use supporting details to expand on my claims

I can use proper citation styles

I can support my claims with appropriate textual evidence

Instructional Strategies and Activities

Teacher will break down the components of a 4-paragraph research essay.

Teacher will continue breaking down the structure of a 4-paragraph research essay, this time focusing on the 1st Body Paragraph.

Teacher will continue breaking down the structure of a 4-paragraph research essay, this time focusing on the 2nd Body Paragraph.

Teacher will continue breaking down the structure of a 4-paragraph research essay, this time focusing on the Concluding Paragraph (with special focus on how to wrap it up: always end with a warning or piece of advice to the reader.)

Formative Assessments

Written Intro paragraph

Instructional Materials and Resources

Graphic Organizer

Google Classroom

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

ELA.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.
ELA.W.AW.11–12.1.A	Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
ELA.W.AW.11–12.1.B	Develop claim(s) and counterclaims avoiding common logical fallacies and using sound reasoning and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.
ELA.W.AW.11–12.1.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.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.
ELA.W.AW.11–12.1.E	Provide a concluding paragraph or section that supports the argument presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).
ELA.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.
ELA.W.WR.11–12.5	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.11–12.6	Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation (MLA or APA Style Manuals).
ELA.W.RW.11–12.7	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.

ELA.SL.II.11–12.2	Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.
ELA.SL.PI.11–12.4	Present information, findings and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically. The content, organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Integration of Career Readiness, Life Literacies and Key Skills

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).
TECH.9.4.12.IML.9	Analyze the decisions creators make to reveal explicit and implicit messages within information and media (e.g., 1.5.12acc.C2a, 7.1.IL.IPRET.4).

Integration of Computer Science and Design Thinking

CS.K-12.2.a	Cultivate working relationships with individuals possessing diverse perspectives, skills, and personalities.
CS.K-12.2.c	Solicit and incorporate feedback from, and provide constructive feedback to, team members and other stakeholders.

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

SOC.9-12.1.3.1	Distinguish valid arguments from false arguments when interpreting current and historical events.
SOC.9-12.1.3.3	Gather relevant information from multiple sources representing a wide range of views (including historians and experts) while using the date, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.
SOC.9-12.1.4.2	Demonstrate effective presentation skills by presenting information in a clear, concise, and well-organized manner taking into consider appropriate use of language for task and audience.

21st Century Life and Career

CRP.K-12.CRP1	Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee.
CRP.K-12.CRP2	Apply appropriate academic and technical skills.
CRP.K-12.CRP4	Communicate clearly and effectively and with reason.
CRP.K-12.CRP6	Demonstrate creativity and innovation.
CRP.K-12.CRP7	Employ valid and reliable research strategies.
CRP.K-12.CRP8	Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
CRP.K-12.CRP11	Use technology to enhance productivity.
CRP.K-12.CRP12	Work productively in teams while using cultural global competence.

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

See Crosswalks

SEL Competencies

SEL.PK-12.3.3	Demonstrate an understanding of the need for mutual respect when viewpoints differ
SEL.PK-12.4.1	Develop, implement and model effective problem-solving, and critical thinking skills
SEL.PK-12.5.2	Utilize positive communication and social skills to interact effectively with others