

# Introduction to Argument and Lenses

Content Area: **Generic Content Area**  
Course(s):  
Time Period: **2 weeks**  
Length: **2 weeks**  
Status: **Published**

## Unit Overview

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This unit is strictly designed build up the expectations and methods that will be used through the class. Mainly, this unit builds up concepts of developing questions, close-reading texts, and building up the muscle for evaluating the relevance of texts. The specific texts here do not matter as much as the skills used to read them and bring them together; however, the texts in the particular unit is centered around the intentionally vague "What Is Beauty?" The concept of "What is Beauty?" seems, on the surface, like a good question in that it is provocative; however, it actually does not get to a deep discussion of anything too specific or focused; the students will be forced to push back against the instructor to develop the question further, which is an essential impulse to develop for the class: constant developing and refinement of questions. The important part of the texts is that they all represent a different type of lens, thus the students can be exposed on a basic level to the lenses/perspectives that will be constantly revisited throughout the class. This unit also exposes students the teamwork aspect of the course, which is central to gaining deeper understanding on the lenses, biases, perspectives, and techniques to reading each type of text.

## Transfer

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Students will be able to independently use their learning to...

- Students will refine strategies to comprehending and analyzing a text.
- Students will begin to be able to evaluate biases beyond the basics of left/right political persuasions.
- Students will be able to identify the main idea and supportive claims in an argument.
- Students will be able to identify trends from a variety of texts which are written about a singular or similar topic.
- Students will be able to refine and develop a question to make it more helpful for the purpose of research.
- Stuednts will be able to develop their role in a team to be valuable without being overly dominant.

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For more information, read the following article by Grant Wiggins.

[http://www.authenticeducation.org/ae\\_bigideas/article.lasso?artid=60](http://www.authenticeducation.org/ae_bigideas/article.lasso?artid=60)

## Meaning

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## **Understandings**

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Students will understand that...

- Questions for research inquiry are constantly evolving based on new information and perspectives.
- All texts are biased and that bias should be considered but is not necessarily reason to discard a source.
- They (the students) also have biases and that they must be aware of them when creating arguments.
- Gaining a full understanding of a topic can only be achieved through collecting and considering information from a variety of lenses and perspectives on that issue.
- Different lenses or genres of texts can be about the same overall topic but merely emphasize a particular aspect of the topic.
- Working in groups requires constant reflection to allow a variety of voices and perspectives, as those perspectives will yield more complex, well-considered results.

## **Essential Questions**

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Students will keep considering...

- What do I want to know, learn, or understand?
- How does the context of a problem or issue affect how it is interpreted or presented?
- What strategies help me comprehend a text?
- What is the argument's main idea and what reasoning does the author use to develop it?
- Why does the author view the issue that way?
- What patterns or trends can be identified among the arguments about this issue?
- What biases may the author have that influence his or her perspective?
- How might others see the problem or issue differently?

## **Application of Knowledge and Skill**

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**Students will know...**

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Students will know...

- Lenses (Cultural and Social; Environmental; Scientific; Economic; Political and Historical; and Artistic and Philosophical)
- Perspectives
- Biases
- Argument
- Solution
- Plagiarism
- Synthesis
- Credibility
- Relevance
- Suitability

### **Students will be skilled at...**

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Students will be skilled at...

- Questioning and Exploring topics and ideas surrounding topics
- Understanding and Analyzing arguments
- Evaluating Multiple Perspectives on a topic, issue, or set of facts, including biases
- Synthesizing Ideas from a variety of sources to create a new, more integrated perspective
- Team, Transform, and Transmit to communicate research and synthesis work

### **Academic Vocabulary**

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Students will know...

- Lenses (Cultural and Social; Environmental; Scientific; Economic; Political and Historical; and Artistic and Philosophical)
- Perspectives
- Biases
- Argument
- Solution
- Plagiarism
- Synthesis
- Credibility
- Relevance
- Suitability

### **Learning Goal 1**

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Identify and describe the claims and evidence of an argument.

## **Target 1**

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Identify and explain claims and evidence within an argument.

LA.RI.9-10.2 Determine a central idea of a text and analyze how it is developed and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

LA.RI.9-10.3 Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.

## **Target 2**

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Identify and describe the overarching thesis of an argument, and any indication it provides of the argument's structure.

LA.RI.9-10.3 Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.

LA.RI.9-10.5 Analyze in detail how an author's ideas or claims are developed and refined by particular sentences, paragraphs, or larger portions of a text (e.g., a section or chapter).

## **Target 3**

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Explain ways claims are qualified through modifiers, counterarguments, and alternative perspectives.

LA.RI.9-10.5 Analyze in detail how an author's ideas or claims are developed and refined by particular sentences, paragraphs, or larger portions of a text (e.g., a section or chapter).

LA.RI.9-10.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetorical devices to advance that point of view or purpose.

LA.RI.9-10.8 Describe and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and reasoning.

## **Learning Goal 2**

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Explore complexities of one or more themes by making connections within, between, and/or among multiple cross-curricular areas and by exploring, evaluating, and synthesizing multiple perspectives and lenses (e.g., cultural and social; artistic and philosophical; political and historical; environmental; economic; scientific; futuristic; ethical) related to those themes.

## Target 1

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Students will read widely about a topic across many disciplines to gain a fuller understanding of the topic.

- LA.RI.9-10.7 Analyze various perspectives as presented in different mediums (e.g., a person's life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account.
- LA.RI.9-10.9 Analyze and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) documents of historical and literary significance, (e.g., Washington's Farewell Address the Gettysburg Address, Roosevelt's Four Freedoms speech, King's "Letter from Birmingham Jail", Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen, U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, etc.), including how they relate in terms of themes and significant concepts.

## Target 2

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Students will synthesize ideas from many disciplines, perspectives, and lenses.

- LA.RI.9-10.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetorical devices to advance that point of view or purpose.
- LA.RI.9-10.8 Describe and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and reasoning.
- LA.W.9-10.8 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).
- LA.SL.9-10.1.A Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.

## Target 3

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In keeping focused on a single topic or theme, evaluate the relative credibility and relevance to a theme of the various perspectives and lenses being explored.

- LA.RI.9-10.8 Describe and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and reasoning.
- LA.W.9-10.8 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).
- LA.W.9-10.9.B Apply grades 9–10 Reading standards to nonfiction informational (e.g., "Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious

reasoning”).

### **Learning Goal 3**

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Work collaboratively with a team to identify, investigate, analyze, and evaluate a real-world or academic problem or issue; consider and evaluate alternatives or options; propose one or more solutions or resolutions.

### **Target 1**

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Work with a team to identify, analyze, and evaluate a real-world or academic problem or issue.

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| LA.SL.9-10.1   | Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with peers on grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.     |
| LA.SL.9-10.1.A | Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas. |
| LA.SL.9-10.1.D | Respond thoughtfully to various perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and justify own views. Make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.   |

### **Target 2**

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Consider and evaluate alternatives or options (in relation to the problem/issue under study).

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| LA.W.9-10.7    | 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.   |
| LA.W.9-10.8    | 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). |
| LA.SL.9-10.1.C | Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions.   |
| LA.SL.9-10.1.D | Respond thoughtfully to various perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and justify own views. Make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.  |

### **Target 3**

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Propose one or more solutions or resolutions to the problem/issue in question.

LA.SL.9-10.2	Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, qualitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.
LA.SL.9-10.4	Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically. The content, organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
LA.SL.9-10.5	Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

## **Formative Assessment and Performance Opportunities**

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- Argument graphic organizers
- Part-A-style prompts for analyzing arguments
- Journaling
- Role-Playing
- Development of team plan of analyzing texts
- Defining lenses
- Defining and identifying features of texts from various lenses

## **Summative Assessment**

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- Team-led class discussion
- Type-A-style analysis
- Text lens test

## **Accommodations/Modifications**

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- Reducing amount of readings
- Reducint word-count required
- Extra time given on individually-complete assignments (not team)
- Extra time given on individually-complete assessments (not team)

## Unit Resources

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- "Beauty lies in the eyes of the beholder." (2012, Nov. 30). YSHAH. <http://msalbasclass.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Beauty-lies-in-the-eyes-of-the-beholder-beauty-article-8.pdf>
- Dawson, Alene. *What is Beauty and Who Has It?* CNN. <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/LIVING/06/29/global.beauty.culture/index.html>
- Emerson, R.W. *Beauty*. Nature: Addresses/Lectures.
- Herrick, Lexi. (2016, Sept. 10). *What is the Real Definition of Beauty*. Huffington Post. [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/what-is-the-real-definition-of-beauty\\_b\\_8117790](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/what-is-the-real-definition-of-beauty_b_8117790)
- Kahn, Razib. (2012, Oct. 5). *Beauty is objective & subjective*. Discover Magazine. <https://www.discovermagazine.com/the-sciences/beauty-is-objective-and-subjective>
- Katekat12. (2013). *Is Beauty In the Eye of the Beholder*. Study Mode Research. <https://www.studymode.com/essays/Is-Beauty-In-The-Eye-Of-1385161.html>
- Sartwell, Crispin. *Beauty*. The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2014/entries/beauty/&gt;>.

## 21st Century Life and Careers

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Select all applicable standards from the applicable standards

CRP.K-12.CRP1.1	Career-ready individuals understand the obligations and responsibilities of being a member of a community, and they demonstrate this understanding every day through their interactions with others. They are conscientious of the impacts of their decisions on others and the environment around them. They think about the near-term and long-term consequences of their actions and seek to act in ways that contribute to the betterment of their teams, families, community and workplace. They are reliable and consistent in going beyond the minimum expectation and in participating in activities that serve the greater good.
CRP.K-12.CRP4.1	Career-ready individuals communicate thoughts, ideas, and action plans with clarity, whether using written, verbal, and/or visual methods. They communicate in the workplace with clarity and purpose to make maximum use of their own and others' time. They are excellent writers; they master conventions, word choice, and organization, and use effective tone and presentation skills to articulate ideas. They are skilled at interacting with others; they are active listeners and speak clearly and with purpose. Career-ready individuals think about the audience for their communication and prepare accordingly to ensure the desired outcome.
CRP.K-12.CRP5.1	Career-ready individuals understand the interrelated nature of their actions and regularly make decisions that positively impact and/or mitigate negative impact on other people, organization, and the environment. They are aware of and utilize new technologies, understandings, procedures, materials, and regulations affecting the nature of their work as it relates to the impact on the social condition, the environment and the profitability of the organization.
CRP.K-12.CRP6.1	Career-ready individuals regularly think of ideas that solve problems in new and different ways, and they contribute those ideas in a useful and productive manner to improve their organization. They can consider unconventional ideas and suggestions as solutions to issues, tasks or problems, and they discern which ideas and suggestions will add greatest



value. They seek new methods, practices, and ideas from a variety of sources and seek to apply those ideas to their own workplace. They take action on their ideas and understand how to bring innovation to an organization.

## **Interdisciplinary Connections**

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As per College Board guidelines texts/resources used must cover the following lenses:

- cultural and social;
- artistic and philosophical;
- political and historical;
- environmental;
- economic;
- scientific;
- futuristic;
- ethical.