

## Critical Concepts 8.8A Non-Fiction Writing Lesson Plans

### Turning Graphic Organizers into Writing Responses

Each of the sample responses models turning our graphic organizers into complete paragraph responses

#### Prompt:

*After reading a nonfiction text, identify the author's overall argument and at least three specific claims. For each claim, provide the reasoning or evidence the author uses, and evaluate whether the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claim. Write a well-developed paragraph that clearly traces the argument, explains the claims, and assesses the strength of the support..*

**Author's Argument**

**Specific Claim**

**Relevant Reasoning/Evidence**

**Irrelevant Evidence**

**Evaluation (soundness, relevance, sufficiency)**

#### I Do – Teacher Model

**Text:** *Why Kids Need Recess and Exercise* – Denene Millner

The author's argument is that daily recess is essential for children's health and learning. Claim 1: Recess improves academic focus; studies cited show short activity breaks raise on-task behavior and attention, which is relevant and largely sufficient because it directly links movement to learning. The author also notes "kids like to run around with friends," which is irrelevant to academic impact and slightly weakens the claim. Claim 2: Recess supports physical health; evidence references reduced obesity risk with regular activity, which is sound and sufficient given it draws on research findings. Claim 3: Recess builds social skills; examples describe teamwork and conflict resolution during games, yet support is only moderately sufficient and would be stronger with formal studies. Overall, the reasoning is sound, mostly relevant, and adequate to support the argument, with one minor irrelevant point noted.

#### We Do – Guided Practice

**Text:** *Advantages and Disadvantages of Advanced Technology* – Jin Sun-K Wellesley

Wellesley's argument is that advanced technology brings meaningful benefits alongside significant risks. Claim 1: Technology increases productivity; examples of automation and faster communication show measurable efficiency gains, which are relevant and sufficient. Claim 2: Excessive use can reduce face-to-face interaction; studies link heavy screen time to

fewer in-person conversations, which is relevant though sufficiency would improve with broader, recent data. Claim 3: Technology heightens cybersecurity risk; reports of frequent data breaches illustrate real-world harm, which is strong, relevant, and sufficient. A side remark that “everyone is glued to their phones” is an overgeneralization and not evidentiary, but the balanced set of studies and concrete examples sustains a credible, well-supported overall argument.

### You Do with Partner – Collaborative Practice

**Text:** *Pizza is a Vegetable? Congress Says Yes* — Mary Clark Jelinek

Jelinek’s argument is that Congress’s pizza-as-vegetable classification weakens school nutrition standards. Claim 1: The policy lowers the bar for vegetables; citing the tomato-paste rule shows pizza can count as a vegetable serving, which is directly relevant and sufficient. Claim 2: Lobbying influenced the decision; references to industry pressure and policy language changes support the point, while “kids prefer pizza over broccoli” is irrelevant to policymaking and slightly distracts from the claim. Claim 3: The rule harms student health; evidence notes high sodium/fat in typical school pizza, which is relevant and fairly strong. Overall, despite one irrelevant appeal, the reasoning and evidence are largely sufficient to support the author’s argument.

### You Do Independently – Independent Practice

**Text:** *My Objection to Homeschooling and Five Arguments Against It* — Barbara Hammond

Hammond’s argument is that homeschooling can negatively affect children’s academic and social development. Claim 1: Limited exposure to diversity; reasoning explains fewer daily interactions with peers of varied backgrounds, which is relevant but would be more sufficient with comparative data. Claim 2: Inconsistent academic structure; examples describe variability in parent-led curricula and pacing, a relevant point that needs broader statistics for full sufficiency. Claim 3: Risk of social isolation; accounts of missed group learning and extracurriculars support the claim, while an aside that “homeschoolers never socialize” is an absolute and irrelevant overreach. Taken together, the claims are reasonable and mostly relevant, but the argument would be stronger with systematic research to establish sufficiency and avoid anecdotal or absolute statements.