Big Idea/ Topic

The Power of Argument Writing: How to Build Confidence Using CCW Technique
Lesson Two: Scoring and Calibrating the Baseline

This is the second lesson of a 10-segment lesson series on the “Power of Argumentative Writing.” This lesson primarily works to introduce the topic, and it results in students writing a baseline argumentative essay which will be used to aid in growth comparisons with the final essay.

Essential Questions:
How can I empower myself through my writing?
How can I show growth in my argumentative writing proficiency this year?

NOTE: This learning plan uses specific texts (e.g., written, performed, illustrated) as concrete examples of standards-based learning activities. These texts are not endorsements. The selection of classroom texts is completely a local decision and subject to local approval processes.

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<th>Learning Targets</th>
<th>Lesson “Small Make(s)”</th>
<th>Unit “Big Make”</th>
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<td>I can <strong>connect</strong> to something I know to help me understand something new.</td>
<td>• Baseline argumentative essay: Which is more important: talent or hard work?</td>
<td>Argumentative Essay Rubric for Scoring</td>
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<td>I can <strong>self-assess</strong> my writing using a rubric.</td>
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<td>I can objectively <strong>assess</strong> the writing of others using a rubric.</td>
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*adapted from Cris Tovani’s Why Do I Have to Read This? Literacy Strategies to Engage our Most Reluctant Readers (2021)

Standard Alignment

- **ELAGSE11W1** (Introduce precise claims and organize claims, counterclaims, reason, and evidence; develop claims and counterclaims; create cohesion; establish and maintain formal tone; provide appropriate conclusion)
- **ELAGSE1W4** (Produce clear and coherent writing,)
- **ELAGSE11W5** (Develop and strengthen writing through planning revising, editing, etc.)
- **ELAGSE11SL1** (Initiate and participate in a range of collaborative discussions…building on others’ ideas.)
- **ELAGSE11SL3** (Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence/rhetoric.)
- **ELAGSE11L1** (Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing; use parallel structure.)
- **ELAGSE11L2** (Demonstrate the command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.)
- **ELAGSE11L3** (Make effective choices for meaning or style.)
Instructional Design

For more information regarding daily routine practices and/or additional information on the unit framework (including materials), please see the Power of Argument Writing Unit Overview.

Various evidence-based practices (EBPs) are identified throughout the lesson below; however, we believe good teaching can be eclectic, “...thoughtfully, intentionally taking some of the best of different teaching methodologies, while always holding onto some research-based, core beliefs, we can help our students flourish in ways that teaching only one way will not” (Roberts, 2018, p. 6). Always feel free to adapt the lesson to meet your professional needs with your specific student population. Ideas for student supports and enrichments can be found in the “Student Learning Supports” section.

This mini unit is written for synchronous distance learning or face-to-face learning that utilizes various technology resources. Everything listed as synchronous can be utilized with little to no change in a face-to-face (f2f) environment. However, guidance is provided for modifications, including ideas for supporting students who are learning asynchronously and those with little or no access to technology (unplugged / offline).

Materials
Teacher—virtual whiteboard (shared document), debatable prompts, resource like Padlet, Teacher Slide Deck
Students—resource like Padlet, digital or physical annotation tools, Power of Argument Writing: Lesson Two Handout (Unplugged)

Engage
Opening: [Increase student motivation and engagement in literacy learning [Moderate evidence] (Kamil, et al., 2008)].
Synchronous or Asynchronous

1. Depending on your environment/platform, you can divide your students into groups and create links for each group to use during collaboration. If unable to break students into “live” groups, you can use online tools such as Padlet to create a discussion board. (Padlet is a free online tool that is best described as an online discussion board where students and teachers can share ideas, links, videos, etc. [Tutorial Video]
**Explore**

**Synchronous or Asynchronous**

1. Assign each of the groups one sample essay from the Teacher Slide Deck (slide two) to review and share with the class. Feel free to utilize your own sample essays from years past. Have them utilize the rubric to assess their group’s assigned essay. If your course is asynchronous, you might have each student review an essay individually and add notes to a shared document about what they found.

2. After about 20 minutes, have students come back as a whole group and show each essay to the class allowing the experts to share what they found. This should be a discussion that reveals what students see as good writing; they can add their thoughts to a shared document. The sample essays should not be “perfect” but should have the requisite elements of the color-coded essay, which students will be introduced to in lesson 3.

[EBP: Increase student motivation and engagement in literacy learning [Moderate evidence] (Kamil, et al., 2008)].

**Unplugged/Offline**

1. Have students complete Part I of the Power of Argument Writing: Lesson Two Handout (Unplugged).

2. If possible, try to find a way to communicate with students about their thoughts and to provide feedback (even if it is via phone call or Google Voice).

**Apply**

**Synchronous or Asynchronous**

1. Release students’ baseline essays to them individually with your assessment. Ask students to use the rubric to assess their own essay and be prepared to discuss, using the group guidelines and their experience reviewing the other essay as a starting point:
   a. Do you agree with the score the teacher assigned?
   b. Why or why not?

[EBP: Integrate writing and reading to emphasize key writing features [Moderate evidence] (Graham, et al., 2016)].

**Unplugged/Offline**
1. Have students complete Part II of the **Power of Argument Writing: Lesson Two Handout (Unplugged)**.

2. If possible, try to find a way to communicate with students about their thoughts and to provide feedback (even if it is via phone call or Google Voice).

**Reflect**

**Synchronous or Asynchronous**

1. Students choose a small part the situation they are comfortable with sharing and describe how they felt writing via synchronous discussion, a breakout group, on a shared document, the chat function, or via Flipgrid.

2. What are your two greatest strengths in this essay?

3. What is the first thing you want to work on to improve this essay?

[EBP: Help students build explanations by asking and answering deep questions [Strong evidence] (Pashler et al., 2007)].

Using a Microsoft or Google form for students to complete (even as homework) is a way to have quick and easily accessible information for each class. You can see patterns quickly based on feedback and the chart functions.

Ask students why they think many people experience writing blocks? Explain that writing exposes a certain degree of vulnerability but reassure them that they are in a safe space and that you will grow together. Let them know you look forward to working with them throughout the unit so you will all grow together.

**Unplugged/Offline**

1. Have students complete Part III of the **Power of Argument Writing: Lesson Two Handout (Unplugged)**.

2. If possible, try to find a way to communicate with students about their thoughts and to provide feedback (even if it is via phone call or Google Voice).

**Evidence of Student Success**

As this is the first lesson in the **Power of Argument Writing** unit, the formative assessment of students’
discussions and writings will serve as evidence of student success in this lesson.

- Student Baseline Argumentative Essay
- **CCW Argumentative Writing Rubric**

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**Student Learning Supports**

At all levels, the English Language Arts standards encourage students to become critical thinkers and communicators. The following strategies are designed to support students who are either struggling to meet this lesson’s learning target and/or are exceeding and would benefit from enrichment.

**Supports/Scaffolding**

- **Conceptual Processing:** Allow additional processing time. Review this content prior to the lesson occurring so that the student will have additional time to formulate responses. Summarize each lesson segment and keep summary accessible for students. Implement scaffolds identified below for various circumstances.
- **Language:** Prior to beginning of the lesson, explicitly teach vocabulary required to engage with the content. [EBP: Explicit vocabulary instruction [strong] (Kamil, et al., 2008)].
- **Visual-spatial Processing:** Provide opportunities for students to engage with visual representations and/or manipulatives (virtual or concrete) as they explore concepts of power and communicate ideas.
- **Organization:** Maintain logical progression of big ideas/lesson segments in the course’s shared virtual space so that students can revisit lesson segments as necessary. Help students bookmark frequently utilized sites (such as Flipgrid) or how to group tabs in Chrome to assist with organization.
- **Memory:** Maintain logical progression of big ideas/lesson segments in the course’s shared virtual space so that students can revisit lesson segments, as necessary.

**Scaffolds for whole-group discussion**

Students may at first be hesitant to share their ideas or they may be uncomfortable with sharing their writing. Support their learning and collaboration by breaking the whole-group discussion into smaller parts.

**Scaffolds for work session**

- Pull a small group and demonstrate a think-aloud by sharing your screen and talking through a sample essay and the rubric, modeling your process of approach.

**Acceleration/Extension**
**ELA.GSE.11-12.W7:** 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.

- Students could engage in cursory research to support their argument, especially when they consider areas they could revise.

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### Engaging Families

Aligning with your district’s family engagement plan to facilitate the most meaningful way to work with your families. At the secondary level, much of the communication occurs with the student serving as a liaison.

- Encourage students to go home and discuss their baseline argumentative topic. Are their family members on their side? If not, what are the reasons they are on the other side? Can the students win their family members over to their side?

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**References**


