Big Idea/ Topic

The Power of Argument Writing: How to Build Confidence Using CCW Technique
Lesson Three: Introducing the Color-Coded Writing (CCW) Technique

This is the third lesson of a 10-segment lesson series on the “Power of Argument Writing.” This lesson primarily works to introduce the color-coded writing technique after reviewing the building blocks/essential elements of argument writing. The lesson culminates in students color-coding a sample essay based on the guidance to demonstrate their understanding of the basic principles of organization and content in argument writing.

Essential Questions:

- How can I empower myself through my writing?
- How can I show growth in my argumentative writing proficiency this year?
- What is the “Color Coded Writing Technique” and how does it work? How can I make it work for me?

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>
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<td>• I can connect to something I know to help me understand something new.</td>
<td>• Color-code a sample essay</td>
<td>Argumentative Essay Rubric for Scoring</td>
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<td>• I can use the color-coding technique for better understanding the structure of writing.</td>
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<td>• I can objectively assess 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)
- **ELAGSE11W4** (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, [Teacher Slide Deck](#)

**Students**—reader & writer’s notebooks, digital or physical annotation tools, [Power of Argument: Lesson Three Handout (Unplugged)](#), [Graphic Organizer](#)

### Engage

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

*Synchronous or Asynchronous*

- Start as a whole group and discuss the last assignment asking students to reflect on their own writing (probably through a Microsoft or Google Form). Having a chart of the aggregated data ready to share with students can be a powerful tool in highlighting the collaborative empowerment and/or struggle.
- You could use a slide deck with Peardeck to make this portion of the lesson interactive.
Basically, students need to see that across the board, there are common elements most students need to work on (hooks, clear thesis statement, topic sentences, and warrants). When students see that several are missing an entire introduction and/or conclusion, it is time to show them how to build these elements into their essay.

Unplugged/Offline

- Have students read Part I of the Power of Argument: Lesson Three Handout (Unplugged).
- 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).

Explore

Synchronous or Asynchronous

- Using a slide deck and a resource like Pear Deck, students as a whole group interact with the lesson that teaches about the basic elements of an argument essay.
- As students participate in the lesson, they may select to type notes on a provided graphic organizer. Alternatively, they may click on the link embedded and make a copy of the color-coded writing graphic organizer and keep/print for reference.
- This chart will remain a reference point throughout the collaborative writing process.

Unplugged/Offline

- Have students read Part I of the Power of Argument: Lesson Three Handout (Unplugged).
- 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

- The apply portion of the assignment is for students to color-code sample essay three that we previously discussed during the rubric calibration lesson. Students should have a digital copy and can share their practice with students in the original groups. The teacher can choose to upload a key so students can self-assess their understanding, or this can be an opener for the next lesson.

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

- Sample Slides:
Unplugged/Offline

- Have students complete Part III of the **Power of Argument: Lesson Three Handout (Unplugged)**.
- 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**

Either through live discussion or via a pre-recorded video, encourage students to discuss their perceptions of the color-coding technique. Did anything about it surprise them? If they are comfortable, have them identify the pieces (or review the key). Students can show their screen, or students can post their insights via *synchronous* discussion, a breakout group, on a shared document, the chat function, or via Flipgrid. What questions do you have? [EBP: Help students build explanations by asking and answering deep questions [Strong evidence] (Pashler et al., 2007)].

**Unplugged/Offline**

- Have students complete Part IV of *Power of Argument: Lesson Three Handout (Unplugged).*
- 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).

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**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.

Students' comprehension of the organization/content structure is easily assessed viewing how they color-code the sample. You can quickly check their understanding of the various parts.

**Formative Assessment**

**“More of What’s Meaningful”: Formative Assessments** (Serravallo, 2013)

Formative assessment can occur in two ways:

- Conferring [Guidance: Tips for Conferring to Maximize Student Engage]  
  **“Supercharge your Conferring: Focus on Goals, Strategies, and Feedback”** (Serravallo, 2018)
- Sharing ["How to Create an Inclusive Virtual Classroom” (Kern, 2020)]  
  **“8 Strategies to Improve Participation in Your Virtual Classroom”** (Minero, 2020)
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 color-coded graphic organizer, 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 can research sample argumentative essays online, and they can apply the CCW technique to one of those essays. Since those essays are not vetted, they may not have all the parts, but that might make it even more of a challenge for those students.
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 color-coding. What is already color-coded in their life? How does that make things easier to understand?

References


