Big Idea/ Topic

The Power of Argument Writing: How to Build Confidence Using CCW Technique
Lesson Four: Collaborative Writing: Selecting a Topic and Ideation

This is the fourth lesson of a 10-segment lesson series on the “Power of Argument Writing.” This lesson primarily works to utilize the color-coded writing technique after reviewing the building blocks/essential elements of argument writing.

**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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*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, Teacher Slide Deck

Students—reader & writer’s notebooks, digital or physical annotation tools, Reading Power: Lesson Four Handout (Unplugged)

Engage

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

Synchronous or Asynchronous

Starting as a whole class and using a slide deck with Pear Deck extension, start with asking students what sorts of debatable topics they would be interested in as a class. There are several ways to do this. Using Pear Deck, you can have students generate ideas in real time

Unplugged/Offline

- Have students complete Part I of the Power of Argument Writing: Lesson Four 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**

As students generate ideas for debatable topics, the teacher can compile a list to condense as needed.

• A quick Microsoft or Google form can also be used. While students are generating ideas, the teacher can create the Form with a top five voting option.
• The teacher can also use the thumbs up/down in Pear Deck once some topics have been narrowed.
• The teacher could also use a tool such as Sli.do for a voting option in real time.

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

**Unplugged/Offline**

• Have students complete Part II of the [Power of Argument Writing: Lesson Four 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**

• Once the topic is selected, the class will work on ideation for the debate thinking about both sides of the argument. This can be accomplished several ways. For differentiation, you can offer students 10 minutes of independent time to brainstorm, you could keep a group live in the meet to discuss their ideas, or you could use an online discussion board like Padlet or the add-on in Pear Deck.
• Time-permitting, you can have students engage in cursory research [which could include a brief lesson on identifying solid sources online] to flesh out the Pro and Con list.
• Below is an image of how ideation could happen using Pear Deck:
Students generate ideas, which the teacher can present in real time.

Another way to differentiate for students is to take their digital ideations and create anchor charts if you are/as if you were in a face-to-face environment. This is especially helpful when working with students individually. Having anchor charts that document writing collaboration helps memorialize the process for students that may need to revisit part of the collaborative process. [EBP: Integrate writing and reading to emphasize key writing features [Moderate evidence] (Graham, et al., 2016)].

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**Unplugged/Offline**

- Have students complete Part III of the **Power of Argument Writing: Lesson Four 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**

Ask students if they had any ideas for the Pro/Con list that they did not mention during the discussion. Students could share via synchronous discussion, a breakout group, on a shared document, the chat function, or via Flipgrid.

- Start lesson as a whole-group and present the anchor chart or slide from the previous lesson where students came to a consensus on the argument, three top reasons, and the one dissenting reason. These components will help you collaborate on a working thesis
statement.  
[EBP: Help students build explanations by asking and answering deep questions [Strong evidence] (Pashler et al., 2007)].

### Evidence of Student Success

As this is the fourth 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’ participation in the lesson (identified pro/con list) will inform instruction regarding readiness to proceed through process.

**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**

- If students experience difficulty in brainstorming debatable topics, you can share this list of “debatable topics” with them to prompt/extend discussion.

**Scaffolds for work session**

**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.

- You can encourage students who require enrichment to either:
  - Research additional Pros/Cons for the class-identified topic
  - Pursue a side project of Pros/Cons for an individually-identified topic

**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.

- Ask students to design a Pro/Con list with their families about a debatable topic they decide on together (e.g., Should students be required to do household chores?)

**References**


