

Learning Target Guide

Learning Target #1: Having an argument vs. Making an argument.

- Students will be able to articulate the difference between making an argument and having an argument in order to prepare for writing an argumentative essay.

Activity 1: Think - Pair - Share

Think - Ask students to recall a recent argument and to respond to the following questions about that argument:

- What was the argument about?
- How did you behave during the argument? What did you say and/or do (i.e., yell, interrupt, say mean things, etc.)?
- What did you hope to accomplish as a result of the argument?

Now consider the following sentence: “The judge listened carefully as each lawyer argued her position on the matter.”

How is this different than the argument you described? Explain.

Pair - Have students partner with another student to discuss responses.

Share - Have the students share their responses with the class while the teacher records ideas on chart paper.

Point out how *having an argument* is different than making an argument. Explain that we are going to learn how to *make an argument* the way a lawyer might.

Based on the discussion, have students brainstorm and list on chart paper the components of “making an argument.” Highlight aspects that demonstrate a reasoned, evidence-based response vs an emotional one.

Activity 2: Argumentative vs. Persuasive

Ask students to pair up or work in small groups to complete a KWL about persuasive writing.

- K: what they know
- W: what they wonder
- L: what they learned

Have students complete the K and W portion of the chart and post the results on the board.

Distribute the handout entitled “What is the Difference Between Persuasive and Argumentative Writing?”

http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson-docs/Difference_Between_Persuasive_Argumentative.pdf

Explain that making an argument in writing is called argumentative writing, and how it is different than persuasive writing.

Students then complete the L column on the KWL chart as a class.

Note - Because persuasive and argumentative writing are so similar, students may need several examples before they understand the difference. Here are sites with a variety of texts that may be used as exemplars for either persuasive or argumentative writing.

[Newsela](https://newsela.com) (newsela.com)

[KQED Do Now](http://ww2.kqed.org/learning) (ww2.kqed.org/learning)

[Scholastic News](https://magazines.scholastic.com) (magazines.scholastic.com)

[The Week](http://theweek.com) (theweek.com)

[Tween Tribune](http://tweentribune.com) (tweentribune.com)

[Kelly Gallagher Article of the Week](http://kellygallagher.org/article-of-the-week) (kellygallagher.org/article-of-the-week)

Activity 3: Reading samples of persuasive and argumentative texts

Have students read a few samples of argumentative and persuasive texts, and ask students to identify the purpose of each text.

Have students find features in the text that support their conclusion about the purpose. Encourage students to use the “What is the Difference Between Persuasive and Argumentative Writing” chart.

Note - Teachers may want to model how to mark the text (i.e., underline, highlight, use organizer, post-it notes, etc.), as well as model the thinking associated with distinguishing between argumentative and persuasive writing.

Learning Target #2: Reasons and Support.

- Students will identify areas of improvement in their own school in order to make an argument for change.

Activity 1

Ask the class to consider the following questions:

- WHO makes the rules at school?
- WHO decides if the rules are fair or not?
- WHAT gives the rule-maker the right to make the rules?
- HOW does one get them changed?
- WHAT does it mean to be independent from the rules?
- HOW does a group of people declare that they will no longer follow the rules?

Ask students to make a list of improvements or changes to their school that would make their school a better place for the students to work and learn.

Have students share their lists and record commonalities in small groups. Have the groups identify reasons for the common changes they propose.

Activity 2: Parts of an Argument

Give students the “Parts of an Argument” handout that looks like this:

<i>Term:</i>	<i>Definition:</i>
Claim	What you’re arguing, what side of the issue you’re on; must be debatable and defensible.
Reason	Why you’re choosing your position; why someone else should agree with you.
Support	The facts and research that back up your reasons; how you know you’re right.
Big Idea (Underlying Assumption)	An idea you’re assuming is true; something so obvious, universal, or indisputable that even the other side can’t disagree. Your reasons will often be based on underlying assumptions.
Counterclaim	What the other side thinks, what argument will be used against you. Must be addressed but also disproved.

Watch YouTube clip that explains the parts of an argument

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=04UA2YwDpc4>

Walk through the language of arguments with students while giving particular emphasis to the importance of claims.

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/588/03/>

Ask students to write a claim arguing for the improvements their group identified, and to provide reasons and evidence for those improvements. (Students can do this individually or in a group.)

Use the techniques listed below to instruct students about evidence.

1. Statistics
2. Facts (historical facts, scientific facts, etc)
3. Anecdotes
4. Quotations from an authority in the field

Learning Target #3: The Declaration of Independence as an argument

- Students will be able match quotes from the Declaration of Independence to the parts of an argument in order to prove that the document is an argument for independence.

Activity 1

Watch satirical music video about Thomas Jefferson and King George III.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uZfRaWAtBVg>

Focus Questions:

1. What is the historical significance of the video?
2. What is being communicated?
3. How is it being communicated?
4. Is it ever too late to apologize? Explain your thinking.

Ask students to partner with another student to discuss focus questions about the video (transcript of video is available on the site to help students). Have students discuss their responses with the class.

Activity 2: Match quotes from the declaration to components of an argument

Ask students to work with a partner to complete the third column of the “Parts of the Declaration’s Argument” chart. Have students explain their answers when sharing with the class.

Note - that there is more than one example of support and counterclaims.

Answer key: “Parts of the Declaration’s Argument”

Quote	In other words...	Part of an argument
“That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.”	The colonies have a right to be independent from Great Britain.	Claim
“The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States.”	Because the king is a tyrant.	Reason
“Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes...”	Changing a government shouldn’t be done for unimportant reasons.	Counterclaim

<p>“But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.”</p>	<p>But the colonies have been treated unfairly and have a right to make a new government that will protect their freedoms.</p>	<p>Rebuttal to counterclaim</p>
<p>“He has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained; and, when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.”</p>	<p>The king has taken away the colonists’ right to make their own laws.</p>	<p>Evidence*</p>
<p>“For depriving us in many cases, of the benefit of Trial by Jury...”</p>	<p>In some cases, the king has taken away the right to trial by jury.</p>	<p>Evidence*</p>
<p>“He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures.”</p>	<p>The king has forced the colonists to house British troops.</p>	<p>Evidence*</p>
<p>“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”</p>	<p>Everyone is created equal.</p>	<p>Big idea (Underlying assumption)</p>

* *Note* - Because the norms and structure of argumentative writing in the 18th century were different than they are in the 21st century, students might be confused about why the Declaration does not use the kind of evidence they are required to present in an essay (statistics, citations, etc). After all, the list of grievances that serves as the Declaration’s evidence seems largely anecdotal by today’s standards. To minimize confusion, we recommend focusing on the Declaration’s claim and underlying assumption (big idea), which are especially applicable to the writing standards of 21st-century classrooms.

Activity 3

Ask students why they think constructing an argument is important.

Potential answers:

- To learn more about a topic (through research, thinking about topic)
- To learn more about the other side of a claim
- To refine thinking about a topic
- To possibly change your own mind
- To change other peoples' minds
- To create change
- To learn more “moves” to make effective arguments in the future
- Arguments happen everywhere! (school, home, work, etc)
- To be prepared for next level of school - writing assignments may eventually all be argumentative pieces (become increasingly more argumentative)

Learning Target #4: Claim and Reasons

- Students will be able to develop claims in order to draft an argumentative essay.

Activity 1

Review claims from the Declaration of Independence

Activity 2

Students watch the video to see other students construct a claim

Watch Youtube video about “The Power of Argument”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x6-nInfdyqY>

Note - Teacher may want to review and teach this short lesson on claims developed by a NWP teacher in the College Ready Writers Program (CRWP).

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1IrdDo3SQc3nQctmcomUMg6ZFTIqbbKPxrMEIAuMKjXs/edit#slide=id.p11>

Activity 3

Have each student construct three claims. One of these will eventually form the basis of their argumentative essay. Teachers may choose to assign a topic for this portion, have students continue to work on their claims about school improvement, or let students work on a topic of their choosing. Students looking for ideas may want to refer back to the news sites under Lesson target #1. Teachers may want to teach a lesson on claims before

Activity 4

Ask students to share their three claims with a partner, then choose which one they want to use for an argumentative essay.

Activity 5

Students should then come up with three reasons to support their claim.

Learning Target #5: Evidence

- Students will be able to explore a variety of sources to identify evidence for their claim in order to prepare for writing an argumentative essay.

Activity 1

Using their three reasons from Learning Target #4, students will need to find at least two pieces of evidence to support each of their reasons. This means they need to have at least six pieces of evidence in their essay. Have students list the source and paraphrase the evidence on the chart. See 5.1

Allow students time to research evidence for their reasons. This may involve the use of computers and the school library.

Note - A prior lesson on sources may be needed if the students are unfamiliar with how to search and cite sources. Teachers may want to review the Connecting Evidence to Claim mini unit powerpoint. See slides # 44-59

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1rPSy7mEHTzVv7wGeHFUsrLbe30yL0C_jO8gcbQbPnKk/edit#slide=id.p84

Activity 2

Review how to incorporate evidence into your essay. See slide # 43 taken from the Connect Evidence to Claim Mini Unit mini powerpoint taken from the NWP CRWP

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1rPSy7mEHTzVv7wGeHFUsrLbe30yL0C_jO8gcbQbPnKk/edit#slide=id.p84

Learning Target #6: Counterclaims

- Students will be able to locate counterclaims for their argument in order to prepare to draft their argumentative essay.

Note - Teachers may want to review the slides 64-71 on “Countering” in the Connect Evidence to Claim Mini Unit referenced above to deepen their knowledge and use as a possible resource in teaching students how to make counterclaims.

Activity 1

Review the claim, counterclaim, rebuttal and the evidence from the Declaration of Independence in Learning Target #3.

Activity 2

Have students read each other’s drafts and identify the claim and select one piece of evidence to refute. While reading their partner’s argument, students can place a post-it or highlight where they disagree with the claim and counter it. Students can then respond to these objections in their essays as a way to make a counterclaim.

Activity 3

Students will counter the opposition in their essay by refuting the evidence and making a counterclaim using evidence that demonstrates the flaws in their opponent’s argument.

Provide an opportunity for students to share their counterclaims.

Learning Target #7: Outline

- Students will be able to draft an argumentative essay that includes all the parts of an argument in order to demonstrate their understanding of argumentative writing.

Activity 1

Students construct their essay using previous work on claims, evidence, and counterclaims. Teachers may choose to use the sample argumentative essay format or another one.

Note - The timeline will vary for students from this point forward, as some students need more revisions than others. Teachers should use their own discretion when assigning deadlines.

Before turning in their essay, students should review their essay using the appropriate state rubric for assessing argumentative writing. See the links below to the Pa Argumentative Writing guidelines.

PSSA 6-8 Argumentative Scoring Guidelines

<http://www.education.pa.gov/Documents/K-12/Assessment%20and%20Accountability/PSSA/Scoring%20Guidelines%20and%20Formula%20Sheets/English%20Language%20Arts/Writing%20Argumentative%20Scoring%20Guidelines%206-8.pdf>

Keystone Argumentative Scoring Guidelines 9-12

<http://www.education.pa.gov/Documents/K-12/Assessment%20and%20Accountability/Keystone%20Exams/Keystone%20Exams%20Scoring%20Guidelines/Keystone%20English%20Composition%20Argumentative%20Combined.pdf>

Students may also use the NWP's Using Sources Tool to review their essay on the use of source material.

Student Version

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zmSt6kBPe0kSKaiMoWSletbSEG2wx8GWCMaIAySTYFo/edit>

Teacher's Version of the Using Sources Tool

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B7w4F4fnYbTMdzVqNWIDaEJyM2c/view>