ARGUMENT

Examining Argument in Print and Visual Texts

“Any authentic work of art must start an argument between the artist and his audience.”
—Rebecca West
Unit 11.1: Argument

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Enduring Understandings

- Literate individuals are discerning writers, speakers, readers, viewers, and listeners.
- Literate citizens incorporate new knowledge to adjust their world view.
- Literate individuals employ a variety of effective strategies to communicate with others.
- The success of a democracy depends on the literacy of its people.

Essential Questions

- How do readers and viewers engage meaningfully with text?
- How does a literate individual become part of the conversation?
- How is a writer both empowered and limited by writing from personal voice and experience?
- How does a writer know when to change strategies to communicate more effectively?

Common Tasks

Students should engage in a variety of tasks that demonstrate and deepen their learning. Teachers should provide specific instruction on strategies during each stage of the writing process for at least one of the common tasks. For other common tasks, teachers may focus instruction on one stage or may implement the tasks as homework, timed writings, presentations, or structured discussions.

- Set up a portfolio with at least two surface revision goals and two deep revision goals to improve writing.
- Analyze the techniques an artist, photographer, or cartoonist uses to present an argument in a visual text.
- Synthesize information from at least two different sources to create an argument on a topic related to the core text. Credit your sources using MLA format.
- After reading a selection of essays, write a multi-paragraph essay analyzing the effectiveness of a writer’s argument. In your analysis, you may want to consider rhetorical devices, use of logic, and selection of supporting detail.
- Participate in a Socratic Seminar on a question of genuine doubt raised by the texts in this unit. Use the texts to support and extend insights during the discussion.
- Write an argumentative essay in response to a quotation from a text, choosing appropriate methods of paragraph development.

Common tasks focus on analyzing arguments in print and visual texts and on creating arguments of one’s own. Students examine how argument can be present in all types of texts.
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Recommended Tasks

- Have students set up a writer’s notebook for reflecting on texts, themes, arguments, and seeds for their own ideas.
- Work in groups to examine how arguments are present in all types of text, including poetry, narratives, photographs, and cartoons as well as essays.
- Choose a controversial issue at random and deliver a one-minute impromptu speech arguing a viewpoint on the topic. Write a journal entry reflecting on the challenges of expressing an opinion without preparation.
- Work in groups to analyze the logic and rhetorical devices used in a selection of advertisements or a series of political commercials.
- Rewrite the third common task, arguing from a different point of view.
- When appropriate as part of the text study, examine the narrative devices an author uses to create theme.
- Target two individual errors in each essay to avoid in future essays. Record the errors in the portfolio and use a style book to learn how to correct each error. Set up conferences for students who repeat errors.

Paragraph Development

Unit 1 focuses on argumentative writing, and students apply their knowledge of six types of paragraph development. Students have studied cause and effect, comparison and contrast, definition, division and classification, exemplification, and problem and solution in previous grades; now they choose an appropriate format for the particular task.

Grammar, Usage, and Sentence Composing

Teachers should ensure that students revise during the writing process rather than after their papers have been graded. Students work on individual skills listed in their portfolios throughout the year. In addition, certain skills will be explicitly taught and integrated into writing instruction during Unit 1. Students will

- correct sentence fragments in order to communicate clear and coherent ideas.
- correct run-on sentences by using appropriate punctuation to separate ideas and add clarity.
- revise their writing for more clarity by correcting dangling modifiers.
- use sentence combining to create more complex sentences and to add variety to sentence structure.
- break the rules selectively to achieve a particular purpose or effect.
English 11.1 Focus Indicators

Standard 1: The student will comprehend and interpret a variety of print, non-print and electronic texts, and other media.

1.1.2—Monitor understanding while reading, viewing, and/or listening to a text.
1.1.3—Confirm understanding after reading, viewing, and/or listening to a text.
1.1.4—Apply knowledge of a word meaning, context, structure, and origin to define unfamiliar words.
1.2.1—Determine the contributions of literary elements in classical and contemporary texts.
1.2.2—Determine the critical or central idea(s) of a text.
1.2.3—Determine the relationship among format, structure, and meaning of informational texts.

Standard 2: The student will analyze and evaluate a variety of print, non-print and electronic texts, and other media.

2.1.1—Analyze organization, structure, and syntax that reveal an author’s purpose.
2.1.2—Analyze stylistic elements in a text or across texts that communicate an author’s purpose.
2.1.3—Analyze connections between and among themes, ideas, and/or styles of two or more texts.
2.1.4—Analyze and evaluate the purpose and effect of non-print texts, including visual, aural, and electronic media.
2.1.5—Analyze and evaluate evidence and determine the credibility of information in a text.

Standard 3: The student will compose in a variety of modes by developing content, employing specific forms, and selecting language appropriate for a particular audience and purpose.

3.1.2—Compose effective persuasive essays and arguments that advance, modify, or refute a position; use a logical structure; provide relevant and complete support; and employ effective rhetorical strategies.

3.2.1—Prepare for writing by generating and developing ideas.
3.2.2—Select and organize ideas for specific audiences and purposes.
3.2.3—Revise and edit texts for clarity, completeness, and effectiveness.
3.2.4—Use general and specialized resources to correct or confirm revisions and/or editorial choices.
3.3.3—Evaluate the appropriateness of information to accomplish a purpose.
3.3.4—Use a systematic process for recording and documenting information.

Standard 4: The student will control language by applying Standard English in writing and speaking and making effective language choices.

4.1.2—Apply Standard English grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling in speaking and/or writing.
4.1.3—Apply knowledge of the history and development of the English language in order to analyze and explain its dynamic structure.

Standard 5: The student will communicate orally in a variety of situations, for different audiences and purposes, and in different formats.

5.1.2—Participate in and contribute to large- and small-group collaboration for a variety of assigned and self-selected purposes.
5.1.3—Determine the effectiveness of large- and small-group collaboration and its associated product(s).

Standard 6: The student will listen effectively in a variety of situations and for a variety of purposes.

6.1.1—Apply skills and strategies to gather and interpret verbal messages.
6.1.2—Demonstrate understanding of information and ideas communicated orally.
**English 11.1 Course Terms**

Annotation
Argument
Assertion
Audience
Citation
Civil discourse
Claim
Close reading
Concede/concession
Connotation
Cornell notes
Deduction
Denotation
Entering the conversation
Fiction
Graphic organizer
Induction
Logical fallacy
Nonfiction
Moving image
Patterns of development
  o Cause and effect
  o Comparison and contrast
  o Definition
  o Division and classification
  o Exemplification
  o Problem and solution
Personal voice
Persona
Persuasion
Persuasive appeals
  o Ethos
  o Logos
  o Pathos
Point of view
Portfolio
Propaganda
Refutation/counter argument
Rhetoric
Rhetorical devices
  o Alliteration
  o Experience
  o Expert testimony
  o Historical allusion
  o Juxtaposition
  o Parallelism
  o Repetition
  o Rhetorical question
Research
Six Traits of Writing
  o Ideas
  o Organization
  o Voice
  o Syntax or Sentence
    Fluency
  o Diction or Word Choice
  o Conventions
Socratic Seminar
Speaker
Style
Synthesis of sources
Tone
Visual rhetoric
Visual text
Writing process
  o Inquiry
  o Pre-writing
  o Drafting
  o Revision or deep revision
  o Editing or surface revision
  o Presentation or publishing
Unit 11.1: Texts
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Students read a combination of nonfiction and fiction texts in Units 1 and 2. While certain titles are recommended for each unit, teachers may use the Unit 1 and 2 texts interchangeably as appropriate. Throughout the year, teachers should combine classic literature with contemporary works and choose a diverse group of writers who represent the richness of America’s cultures and traditions.

**Fiction**

- *A Lesson Before Dying* by Ernest J. Gaines
- *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest* by Ken Kesey
- *Ordinary People* by Judith Guest
- *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy
- *The Sirens of Titan* by Kurt Vonnegut

**Nonfiction**

- *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* by Alex Haley
- *The Color of Water* by James McBride
- *A Hope in the Unseen* by Ron Suskind
- *Hunger of Memory* by Richard Rodriguez
- *The Pine Barrens* by John A. McPhee
- *Roots* by Alex Haley

**Essay Collections**

- *Current Issues and Enduring Questions* edited by Sylvan Barnet
- *40 Model Essays* edited by Jane E. Aaron
- *The Language of Composition* edited by Renee Shea
- *Little Brown Reader* edited by Marcia Stubbs
- *Patterns for College Writing* edited by Gary Colombo
- *Rereading America* edited by Rise B. Axelrod
- *Reading Critically and Writing Well* edited by David Bartholomae
- *Ways of Reading* edited by David Bartholomae

**Thematically Related Essays**

**Education (Reading Critically, Rereading America)**

- “The Achievement of Desire”* by Richard Rodriguez
- “Against School” by John Gatto
- “The Human Cost of an Illiterate Society” by Jonathan Kozol
- “Idiot Nation” by Michael Moore
- “Learning to Read” by Malcolm X
- “Serving in Florida” by Barbara Ehrenreich
- “Still Separate, Still Unequal”* by Jonathan Kozol

*Asterisked titles and many other essays are available through the subscription services available on all MCPS computers.*
Unit 11.1: Texts

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MoreThematicallyRelatedEssays

**Gender** (*LittleBrownReader,ReadingCritically,RereadingAmerica*)

- “Claiming an Education” Adrienne Rich
- “The Glass Half Empty”* Anna Quindlen
- “Michelle Obama’s Sacrifice” Debra Dickerson
- “What We Really Miss about the 1950s” Stephanie Coontz
- “Why I Want a Wife” Judy Brady

**Race** (*ReadingCritically,RereadingAmerica*)

- “Black Men and Public Space” Brent Staples
- “C.P. Ellis” Studs Terkel
- “The Crossing” Ruben Martinez
- “I’m Black, You’re White, Who’s Innocent?”* Shelby Steele
- “The Pressure to Cover” Kenji Yoshino

**WorldConflict** (*CurrentIssues,RereadingAmerica*)

- “The Just War” G.E.M. Anscombe
- “Iraq and Just-War Thinking”* George A. Lopez
- “The Oblivious Empire” Mark Hertsgaard
- “Yes, a War Would Be Moral”* Andrew Sullivan

**Vocabulary and Language Skills**

Vocabulary study enhances students’ understanding of the writer’s craft—how word choice creates character, defines mood, and sets tone. Separated, or explicit instruction, focuses on both meaning and word structure, and students will:

- know the 30-15-10 list of Latin and Greek roots.
- use Latin and Greek roots to comprehend unfamiliar words.
- identify unfamiliar words in texts and employ strategies to understand meanings in context.
- know and use course terms for Unit 1.

Students become independent, strategic readers of challenging text by identifying and defining unfamiliar words in context and studying the etymology and morphemic structure of words. As students learn about the variety and richness of language, they write with diction that is both precise and expressive.