

ACTIVITY 3.11 continued

9 RETURNING TO THE TEXT: Guide students to return to the text to respond to the text-dependent questions. Invite them to work in small groups to reread the text and answer the questions. Remind them to use text evidence in their responses.

10 Move from group to group and listen in as students answer the text-dependent questions. If they have difficulty, scaffold the questions by rephrasing them or breaking them down into smaller parts. See the Scaffolding the Text-Dependent Questions boxes for suggestions.

3.11

Returning to the Text

- Return to the letters as you respond to the following questions. Use text evidence to support your responses.
- Write any additional questions you have about the text in your Reader/Writer Notebook.

1. Based on paragraph 1 of Patrick Zerr's letter to the editor, what is his purpose for writing?

Zerr's purpose for writing his letter is to address the "basic inaccuracies" that he feels undermines Wayner's entire argument.

2. Summarize the evidence that Zerr provides in paragraphs 3 and 4 to rebut Wayner's proposal.

Zerr uses well-established data of the capacity of free-flowing vehicular lanes and subway transit to make a comparison between how many travelers are serviced by the subway versus how many would be serviced by Wayner's proposed single lane of traffic.

3. How does Zerr conclude his letter? Is it convincing?

Zerr concludes his letter by summarizing his previous arguments and rebutting Wayner's argument.

4. In the second letter, Kreuter compares Wayner to Robert Moses. What is the effect of this comparison?

The effect of this comparison is to suggest that, like Moses, Wayner may not have considered all the consequences of his idea.

5. Summarize Wayner's claim that Kreuter rebuts in paragraph 2. What reasoning and evidence does Kreuter present in his rebuttal?

Wayner claims that modern technology can replace trains. However, Kreuter cites all of the technological advances that trains have already benefited from.

6. What is the rebuttal Isaac Brumer is making in this Facebook post?

Isaac Brumer rebuts Wayner's proposal by bringing up the people who will be without public transportation while the new system is being created and by noting the maintenance costs.

7. Describe the tone Peter Wayner uses to respond to the letters to the editor. Cite examples of diction and syntax in your response.

Wayner uses an instructional tone in his responses. He uses words like *mistake*, *we*, and *experiment* to guide the readers through his thinking as if they were coming to the conclusion together. He also uses mathematical syntax and rhetorical questions to do this.

8. What is Wayner's purpose for including paragraph 6?

Wayner includes a concession in paragraph 6.

Exploring Additional Letters to the Editor

9. Your teacher will provide an editorial and several letters written in response to the editorial. Fill in the chart for each of the letters to the editor. The last box is for your opinion on the editorial.

Letter Number	Agree or Disagree with Original Editorial?	Reasons/Evidence
1		
2		

ACTIVITY 3.11 continued

11 Focus students' attention on the Exploring Additional Letters to the Editor section. Provide them with copies of an editorial and four responses to it. Number each response and instruct them to reference those numbers as they complete the graphic organizer. Tell them to reserve row 5 for their own response to the editorial (as though they were preparing to write a letter themselves).

LEVELED DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION

In this activity, students may need support articulating the differences between the original editorial and the letters written in response to the editorial.

Beginning Have students work in small groups to use the **Idea and Argument Evaluator** to dissect the editorial and each letter to the editor in response. Have them use the organizer to fill out the chart.

Developing Have students work in pairs to use the **Idea and Argument Evaluator** to dissect the editorial and each letter to the editor in response. Have them use the organizer to fill out the chart.

Support Have students read the editorial and letters to the editor as a group. Guide them to summarize each letter and describe how it agrees or disagrees with the editorial.

Extend Have students write their own letter to the editor in response to the editorial. Have them make sure to provide a clear argument in support of or against it and provide evidence to support their claim.

ACTIVITY 3.11 continued

12 Give students time to respond to the Check Your Understanding task. Consider allowing them to work in pairs or small groups as they respond to the Quickwrite prompt, evaluating which letters are most effective and why.

13 Have students respond to the Writing Prompt. Direct them to use the steps outlined in the How to Write a Letter to the Editor section to guide their writing.

ASSESS

Student responses to the writing prompt should show an ability to logically sequence claims, reasons, and evidence and to address counterclaims.

ADAPT

If students need additional help in writing their letters to the editor, have them pair up with students who have completed the prompt and review the steps outlined in the How to Write a Letter to the Editor section at the beginning of the activity. If applicable, it might be helpful for students to compare what their partner has done with the guidance in the section and revise their own writing accordingly.

3.11

Letter Number	Agree or Disagree with Original Editorial?	Reasons/Evidence
3		
4		
Your Opinion		

Check Your Understanding

Quickwrite: Which of the letters to the editor makes the strongest argument? What makes that argument compelling?

Writing Prompt: Argumentative

Write a letter to the editor in response to one of the editorials you have read in this unit. Use the steps outlined in the How to Write a Letter to the Editor section to guide your writing. Be sure to:

- Utilize an organizational structure that follows the specifications of your local newspaper and logically sequences your claim, reasons, evidence, and response to counterclaims.
- Use a variety of rhetorical techniques, including anecdotes, case studies, or analogies.
- Provide a concluding statement that follows logically from your argument.



WRITING PROMPT: ARGUMENTATIVE

The following standards are addressed in the writing prompt:

- W.11-12.1a
- W.11-12.1b
- W.11-12.1e