

Argumentative Writing

Learning Targets

- Analyze the characteristics and structural elements of argumentative texts including valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence. [E3.7\(E\)\(i\)](#), [E3.7\(E\)\(ii\)](#)
- Produce focused, structured, and coherent writing using development, organization, tone, and style appropriate to the topic, purpose, and audience. [E3.7\(E\)\(iii\)](#), [E3.8\(F\)](#), [E3.9\(B\)\(i\)](#), [E3.9\(C\)](#)
- Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing to address specific purposes and audiences. [E3.9\(A\)](#), [E3.9\(D\)](#), [E3.11\(C\)](#)
- Conduct research projects to answer questions or solve problems, demonstrating a clear understanding of the subject under investigation, critiquing the research process, and synthesizing information from a variety of sources. [E3.11\(B\)](#), [E3.11\(D\)](#), [E3.11\(F\)](#)
- Evaluate details and generate questions and evidence from informational texts while monitoring comprehension, supporting analytic responses, and defending or challenging an author's claims. [E3.4\(B\)](#), [E3.4\(G\)](#), [E3.4\(I\)](#), [E3.5\(C\)](#), [E3.5\(J\)](#)
- Initiate and participate collaboratively in discussions, working towards goals by asking questions, accepting differences of ideas, and evaluating group work. [E3.1\(D\)](#)
- Demonstrate command of standard conventions and use proper diction and syntax to create an appropriate tone. [E3.8\(F\)](#), [E3.9\(D\)](#)

Preview

In this workshop, you will work with your teacher and classmates to construct two arguments that respond to a specific perspective. You will then use these as models as you present your own claim and support it.

Writing an Argumentative Essay

Writers and speakers compose argumentative texts to influence people's attitudes about an issue and to spur them to action. An effective argument presents claims and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, offering relevant evidence while pointing out its strengths and limitations based on the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.

ACTIVITY 1

Discovering the Elements of an Argumentative Response Essay

Addressing Opposing Points

- Honing skills in civil debate and diplomatic argumentation is important in many careers and fields. When trying to convince others of your point of view and calling on them to take action, it is especially important to understand the logic of the opposition. Think of the last time you engaged in a debate or disagreement about a worthy topic. Was your understanding of the other point of view strong enough to respond with a **rebuttal** based on logic and reason? How did you address the opposing point of view effectively?

LEARNING STRATEGIES

Activating Prior Knowledge, Brainstorming, Close Reading, Discussion Groups, Drafting, Marking the Text, Peer Editing, RAFT, Sharing and Responding, Think-Pair-Share

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

A **rebuttal** is evidence that attacks the criticisms against a thesis or claim, also called a refutation.

ACTIVITY 1

Discovering the Elements of an Argumentative Response Essay

PLAN

This sequence of activities is designed to provide direct writing instruction in argumentative writing, specifically writing to respond. Students will create three separate texts throughout this process: one that is co-constructed as a class with direct guidance from the teacher, one that is peer-constructed, and one that is written individually.

Materials: pens and highlighters for marking the text

Pacing: 1 50-minute class period

TEACH

1 Go over with students the Learning Targets, Preview, and introduction to writing an argumentative response.

2 **Addressing Opposing Points** is intended to **activate prior knowledge** about engaging in debate and response. This workshop requires students to respond to or rebut a particular point of view.



TEACHER TO TEACHER

This sample text was chosen to model the elements of argumentative writing to respond. You may opt to select a different text for classroom use.



Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills

Activity 1 Focus Standards:

E3.4(B) Generate questions about text before, during, and after reading to deepen understanding and gain information.

E3.4(G) Evaluate details read to understand key ideas.

E3.4(I) Monitor comprehension and

make adjustments such as re-reading, using background knowledge, asking questions, annotating, and using outside sources when understanding breaks down.

Additional Standards Addressed:

E3.5(C), **E3.5(H)**, **E3.9(D)**

Working from the Text

2. **RAFT** is an acronym for a strategy used to respond to and analyze texts. Using this strategy can help the reader understand the relationship among the following elements: **Role of the author**, **Audience**, **Format**, and **Topic**. If only one element is changed or adjusted, the text can take on an entirely different complexity. Begin by identifying the following elements from the sample text:

a. Role of the author

Sample response: The writer is the Governor of Illinois whose job it is to veto a legislative bill that he considers unenforceable, unfair, and downright silly. His task is to show why he cannot support the bill without offending its proponents.

b. Audience

Sample response: The audience is the Illinois Senate, including both proponents and opponents of this legislation that saw fit to pass the bill, probably knowing that the Governor would veto the bill. A veto is a public document so the audience also includes the wider public.

c. Format

Sample response: The format, or genre, is a formal letter of veto.

d. Topic

Sample response: The topic is a veto of legislation enacted to restrict the movements of cats in favor of protecting the lives of birds.

Check Your Understanding

Examine the specific phrases and clauses you highlighted. How would you categorize the tone of this letter? Why does Stevenson choose to approach this topic with this tone? What is the intended effect of this approach?

Sample response: The tone of this veto is wryly humorous. Stevenson uses wit and humor to amuse the opponents and convince the proponents of this legislation that it would be impossible to enforce and unfair to cats and cat owners. Governor Stevenson uses hyperbole for comic effect and to underscore his reasoning, saying, “I doubt if we want to make their every brief foray an opportunity for a small game hunt by zealous citizens—with traps or otherwise.” He crowns his argument with this *reductio ad absurdum*: “The problem of cat versus bird is as old as time. If we attempt to resolve it by legislation who knows but what we may be called upon to take sides as well in the age-old problems of dog versus cat, bird versus bird, or even bird versus worm.” He also offers cogent reasoning to assure he is being reasonable and not insensitive to the value of bird life: “I cannot believe there is a widespread public demand for this law or that it could, as a practical matter, be enforced.” “That cats destroy some birds, I well know, but I believe this legislation would further but little the worthy cause to which its proponents give such unselfish effort.”

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4 Working from the Text **RAFT** is a strategy that helps initiate reader response, facilitate analysis of a text, and promote understanding of the relationship between the author, the audience, the format (or genre), and the topic. Begin by creating a class definition of each component of **RAFT** (*Role, Audience, Format, and Topic*). Pair students (or place them in small groups) to discuss and respond to the elements from the sample text. Ask students to share their responses with the class.

5 Check Your Understanding

After students answer the questions independently or in small groups, lead them in a discussion of the phrases and clauses they highlighted and their understanding of the intended effect of each element. Clarify the terms and concepts, if necessary.

ASSESS

Check that students sufficiently filled in each element from the **RAFT** strategy. Review student Check Your Understanding responses to assess whether they have correctly identified Stevenson’s tone and its intended effect. Students should cite specific text evidence to support their claims.

ADAPT

Help students who need additional support by reading through the essay and answering the **RAFT** questions together. To prompt correct responses to the Check Your Understanding questions, provide students with specific examples from the text and a list of possible tones to choose from. As necessary, model making a connection between a phrase or clause and the tone it conveys.

client. According to Mian, Lloyd had to undergo reconstructive surgery and currently suffers from headaches.

- 7 The International Little League tells NBC10 that all local chapters carry accident insurance that covers players, coaches and concessions but not spectators.
- 8 Bob also tells Asbury Park the entire ordeal has made the family step back from the league. He's taken a break from coaching while his wife Sue has stepped down as manager of the league's snack stand. Matthew continues to play however.
- 9 "He accidentally threw a ball," said Bob. "He didn't do anything wrong and I don't want him to carry that around thinking he did something wrong. It's just not right."
- 10 No court date has been set for the lawsuit.

Planning and Prewriting

1. Using the left column of the following graphic organizer, list the claims (explicit or implicit) that support Lloyd's position that the Migliaccio family is liable in this case. Then, in the right column, brainstorm possible responses and evidence that could be used as counterarguments against her position. Prepare to share your ideas.

Lloyd's claims (explicit or implicit)	Potential rebuttals and evidence that could be employed to respond to this claim
At little league games, spectators should not be held responsible for paying attention to their environment or watching out for stray/fly balls. It is not reasonable to expect spectators to be vigilant or to protect themselves.	Sample response: All spectators take risks when they attend a sporting event. It is the same as walking in a park when a sporting event takes place. An element of danger is present in all activities.
Sample response: Those who hit baseballs should be liable for any injuries or damage incurred as a result of their hits or misses or mishits.	Sample response: Accidents happen; no athlete intends to hit a spectator. Responsibility implies intent to harm. In this case there was no intent to harm.
Sample response: The Migliaccio family has insurance and the purpose of insurance is to cover any unexpected or unplanned damages that occur; therefore, Lloyd can collect damages.	Sample response: Just because a person has insurance does not mean he can be sued for damages for an accident in a public place in a court of law.
Sample Response: Damage or injury incurred can develop over time rather than at the moment of the incident.	

3 Planning and Prewriting: Lead students in an activity that completes the graphic organizer, modeling the process for them with a whiteboard or projector. Synthesize the class ideas to present the most compelling responses and the most effective evidence for each explicit or implicit claim.



Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills

E3.7(E)(ii) Analyze characteristics and structural elements of argumentative texts such as various types of evidence and treatment of counterarguments, including concessions and rebuttals.

E3.7(E)(iii) Analyze characteristics and structural elements of argumentative texts such as identifiable audience or reader.

E3.8(F) Evaluate how the author's diction and syntax contribute to the mood, voice, and tone of a text.

E3.9(B)(i) Develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing in timed and open-ended situations by using strategic organizational structures appropriate to purpose, audience, topic, and context.

4 If necessary, lead students in conducting light research to augment their bank of evidence or provide students with preselected sources that might illustrate rebuttal points to the lawsuit. Be sure students understand the importance of relevant, reliable, and valid evidence.

5 Evaluate which responses are the most logical and effective based on the information collected in the graphic organizer. As a group, select an approach to argue, and **draft** a thesis, or position and reasoning, for the class-constructed response.

6 Lead the class in creating a topic outline, paying special attention to the organization of ideas. As you do this, ask students to articulate why they choose the order they do.

7 **Drafting:** Begin drafting the response to the Lloyd's case against the Migliaccios. To emphasize the importance of outlining, remind students that they should be making conscious references to the outline in both content and organization.

8 Point out the elements of an introduction or opening paragraph and where these elements appear in the sample text. **Think aloud** from the perspective of a writer as you draft this first paragraph.

Writing Workshop 2 (continued)

2. After all class members have shared their ideas, you will have a solid representation of a range of responses and evidence for rebuttal of counterarguments. As a class, synthesize this information, and select the most relevant and persuasive responses and evidence for inclusion in the rebuttal to the case against the Migliaccio family.
3. To augment your evidence, spend time researching credible online sources as well as conducting informal interviews. Search for both primary and secondary sources. Your goal here is to search out information that represents the entire range of relevant perspectives on this lawsuit—not just your own.

4. Once you have found additional sources, consider their relevance, validity, and reliability. If you deem your new information relevant, valid, and reliable, add the information to your brainstorm list so you can accurately represent these viewpoints in your class-constructed text.

To consider your sources' relevance, validity, and reliability, think about the following questions:

- **Relevance and Validity:** Does the information appear to be legitimate? Is it timely and closely connected to the rebuttal? In what ways could this evidence be used to support the ideas generated for response?
 - **Reliability:** Are the author's name and qualifications clearly identified? Is the information from a respected source of publication? If it is an online resource, is the site listed as .gov, .edu, or .org rather than .com?
5. Once you have compiled a list of relevant, valid, and reliable evidence, choose two to three of the most compelling and precise pieces of evidence and place them on the board.
 6. After everyone has submitted their best evidence, you will have a solid representation of a range of views and information on the topic. As a class, use the synthesized information to construct an outline that will frame the response.

Drafting

Your class should now have a clear and thoughtful line of reasoning in response to Lloyd's lawsuit, a list of specific and relevant evidence, and a proposed outline. The next step is to plan an approach that will suit the public audience (not just Lloyd) and the purpose.

7. Remember that part of your task is to maintain formal style while exposing the absurdity of this case. This is crafted not only into what you write but also how you write it. The tone you strike will have a great deal of impact on the effectiveness and *ethos* of your response. Before you begin drafting, come to an agreement as a group about how to promote this style in your response. This selection will influence your choices regarding diction, syntax, and rhetorical appeals/devices.
8. As a class, work together to draft the introduction, or opening paragraph, of the response. Remember that while this will take the form of a letter of response, the forum is public and the appeals should be directed at a broader audience than just Lloyd as an individual.



Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills

E3.9(C) Revise drafts to improve clarity, development, organization, style, diction, and sentence fluency, both within and between sentences.

E3.9(D) Edit drafts to demonstrate a command of standard English conventions using a style guide as appropriate.

E3.11(B) Critique the research process at each step to implement changes as needs occur and are identified.

E3.11(D) Modify the major research question as necessary to refocus the research plan.

Additional Standards Addressed:
E3.9(A), E3.11(C), E3.11(F)

9. Your teacher will assign your group a portion of the outline to draft. Work together as a group to draft your portion of the response, and prepare to share your draft with the class for revision before including it in the class-constructed response. Be sure to use words and phrases that clarify the relationship between your claims and reasons, and your reasons and evidence.
10. When you combine your piece with the rest of the class's, use varied syntax (such as clauses) to link the different sections coherently.
11. After your class has assembled these portions to create a complete body, your teacher will lead your class as you work together to draft a conclusion, or closing, that supports your argument.

Check Your Understanding

After you have completed this process, read over the drafted response that your class has created. Use these questions as a checklist.

- Does the introduction clearly establish your group's position and the topic of contention?
- Are the strongest points of argument in the lawsuit adequately addressed?
- Does the diction and syntax maintain decorum while promoting the specified tone desired?
- Does the writing expose the absurdity of holding small children liable for stray throws?
- Is the tone effective for the purpose and audience?
- Do transitions help the reader clearly make connections among the ideas of the response?
- Is the response organized in the most effective way to convince the audience?

Revising for Language and Writer's Craft

Using Figurative Language and Hyperbole

Sometimes, in order to expose the absurdity of a situation, it is effective to employ figurative language or *hyperbole* (deliberate exaggeration) as an appeal. Figurative expression and exaggeration are not meant to be taken literally but rather to expose the irrational reasoning of the opposing viewpoint by gently (or sometimes not so gently) mocking ideas the other side proposes as logical or reasonable.

11. Reread the examples of hyperbole employed in the sample text. Then, in the space provided, explain what impression Stevenson hopes to make by employing hyperbolic diction and imagery in each instance.

Language/hyperbole from the passage	Explanation of the intended effect
It would permit any person to capture, or call upon the police to pick up and imprison , cats at large.	Sample response: Using the language of human capture and incarceration makes the idea of restraining cats ridiculous.
I doubt if we want to make their every brief foray an opportunity for a small game hunt by zealous citizens—with traps or otherwise.	Sample response: "Small game hunt" uses the language of hunting and thus contextualizes the restraint of cats as absurd.
To escort a cat abroad on a leash is against the nature of the cat, . . .	Sample response: Inflated diction "escort" coupled with "on a leash" creates a ridiculous image.

(continued)

9 Instruct groups to craft a paragraph that will describe a point of rebuttal to the lawsuit, referencing the class-constructed outline. Assign one talking point to each group.

10 When all groups are finished, ask the presenter from each group to share their work. Read through each group's contribution and ask for peer feedback from other groups. Allow students to make revisions to their paragraphs.

11 Display the selected paragraphs on an overhead or whiteboard and allow students time to copy them down individually. Make revisions as necessary, keeping tone at the forefront of your revisions.

12 Lead the class in construction of a convincing closing paragraph/conclusion. Model this process using an overhead projector or whiteboard.

13 **Check Your Understanding** In discussion groups, ask students to read over the drafted response and use the questions as a checklist. Emphasize that *logos* should dominate their responses. As groups finish, students should present their revisions to the class in the order those paragraphs will be included in the response.

14 **Revising for Language and Writers Craft** This language activity explicitly addresses using figurative language and hyperbole. Guide students through the activity, checking for understanding by having selected students share their responses.

15 As a class, revise the draft to include hyperbole where appropriate to create a witty, ironic tone.

16 Editing: When producing the final draft of the essay, be sure to model editing skills to eliminate mistakes in spelling, punctuation, grammar, etc. Model using transitional words and clauses to link sections of text.

ASSESS

Student responses should include a clear thesis; an accurate representation of opposing points of view; an appropriate structure; demonstrable consideration of the relevance, validity, and reliability of sources; and formal language that exposes the absurdity of the topic, with instances of hyperbole.

ADAPT

Have students share their essays with another peer group that can assess whether the hyperbole is effective.

ACTIVITY 3

Writing an Argumentative Response Essay with Peers

PLAN

Materials: materials generated in Activity 1 and Activity 2 to serve as models for partner work

Pacing: 2 50-minute class periods

TEACH

- 1 Divide the class into pairs or groups of three.
- 2 Monitor groups to be sure they research and find an appropriate lawsuit or legislative bill for their response.

Writing Workshop 2 (continued)

Language/hyperbole from the passage	Explanation of the intended effect
Moreover, cats perform useful service... in combating rodents—work they necessarily perform alone and without regard for property lines .	Sample response: Applying the legal language of “property lines” makes light of thinking of restraining cats from their valuable service.
... we may be called upon to take sides as well in the age-old problems of dog versus cat, bird versus bird, or even bird versus worm.	Sample response: “ <i>Argumentum ad absurdum</i> ” or “ <i>reductio ad absurdum</i> ”
In my opinion, the State of Illinois and its local governing bodies already have enough to do without trying to control feline delinquency.	Sample response: Inflated diction of “feline delinquency” puts the idea of restraining the activities of cats in the context of the functions of governing bodies to make it silly.

12. Look back at the response you drafted as a class. Have you already employed examples of language that intends to exaggerate the claims or ideas behind the lawsuit? In what places could ideas be revised or words or phrases be added or replaced to exploit this subtle but powerful technique? Consider specific diction as well as hyperbole. Prepare to share your thoughts with the class to be considered for inclusion in the class constructed response.

Editing

13. After presenting your revisions to the class and hearing the revisions of others, it’s time to polish the final draft of the argumentative essay by editing for mistakes and to ensure you’re following standard English conventions. Consider all of the elements listed in the Language category of the Scoring Guide.

ACTIVITY 3

Writing an Argumentative Response Essay with Peers

WRITING PROMPT: Collaborating with a partner (or partners), locate a published, publicly filed lawsuit or proposed bill that inspires you to respond with a rebuttal. Then, work together to respond to the stated or implied ideas expressed in the piece in a well-crafted argumentative letter or essay. Refer to the Scoring Guide for this writing task—it will help you understand where to focus your attention and efforts. Your peer-constructed response should include the elements listed in Activity 2 under the writing prompt.



Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills

Activity 3 Focus Standards:

E3.5(C) Use text evidence and original commentary to support an analytic response.

E3.5(J) Defend or challenge the authors’ claims using relevant text evidence.

E3.10(C) Compose argumentative texts using genre characteristics and craft.

E3.9(C) Revise drafts to improve clarity, development, organization, style, diction, and sentence fluency, both within and between sentences.

Additional Standards Addressed:

E3.1(D), E3.7(E)(i–iii), E3.8(F), E3.9(A), E3.9(B)(i), E3.9(D), E3.11(B), E3.11(C), E3.11(D), E3.11(F)

Planning/Prewriting/Drafting

1. In pairs or small groups, review the writing steps from the class-constructed response and apply them to your peer-constructed response.
 - a. Create an outline of the points made in the text that inspired your response.
 - b. Brainstorm possible responses and evidence that could be used as a counterargument against this position.
 - c. Conduct research to augment your bank of evidence. Be mindful of selecting relevant, valid, and reliable sources.
 - d. Generate an outline for your response.
 - e. Determine a tone to promote in the response.
 - f. Draft an introduction, body paragraphs, and convincing conclusion or closing.

Peer Review

2. Upon completing your letter or essay, reread the required elements for this activity. You will evaluate and provide feedback for another group's response based on the criteria listed as well as a specific focus on hyperbole as an element of rhetoric.
3. Exchange response drafts *and* unmarked copies of the original lawsuit or bill that inspired the response. When you receive materials from your peers, begin by reading the response *first*. Judge its effectiveness and clarity, and note any points for which clarity is necessary. It should not be necessary to read the original article to understand the peer-generated response.
4. After you have read your peers' work the first time, read the text that inspired this response. Then, read the work of your peers again, making connections between the two texts. Are there any significant points in the original opinion that are not addressed in the response? Note these observations.
5. As you read your peers' work a second time, record your feedback—specifically whether the tone is effective, as well as whether the argument is convincing and whether the evidence is compelling. Pay particular attention to the balance between humor and diplomacy. In addition, make marks regarding editing mistakes that need to be corrected (spelling, punctuation, etc.) and suggestions for revisions in effective diction and standard English conventions.

Revising/Editing

6. Return your peers' work. After you have the peer review notes for your essay or letter, revise it based on feedback from your peers. Edit for language conventions and make it ready for publication.

ACTIVITY 4

Independent Writing

WRITING PROMPT: Locate a published, publicly filed lawsuit or proposed bill that inspires you to respond with a rebuttal. Then, respond to the ideas expressed in the piece in a well-crafted argumentative letter or essay. Review the writing steps from the class-constructed response and apply them to your response.

Refer to the Scoring Guide for this writing task—it will help you understand where to focus your attention and efforts.

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3 Remind students of the elements they should incorporate in the argumentative response. Refer to the Scoring Guide to inform areas of emphasis.

4 **Planning/Prewriting/Drafting:** Students should review and emulate the process they followed in Activity 2.

5 Monitor and assist students as necessary through this process.

6 **Peer Review:** Guide students through the peer-review process. Encourage students to provide written feedback. Ask teams to trade papers and review one another's work.

7 Combine groups to create larger groups for sharing and responding. Each writing group should take careful notes.

8 After both responses have been reviewed in the writing group, writers should revise their work to produce a final draft. Collect drafts and review student work before proceeding to Activity 4.

ASSESS

Collect and review students' outlines and essays/letters. Argumentative responses should demonstrate that students have conducted research. Responses should have a strong opening, powerful body paragraphs, and a convincing conclusion, while using an appropriate tone and standard English conventions.

ADAPT

Students may find it especially difficult to think of counterarguments; walk them through this challenge by suggesting they put themselves in the shoes of someone on the other side of the argument. By removing themselves from their own side of the argument, students might be able to think about things from a different point of view.

ACTIVITY 4

Independent Writing

PLAN

Materials: materials generated in Activities 1, 2, and 3; research materials or opportunities for student research

Pacing: 1 50-minute class period or homework



Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills

Activity 4 Focus Standards:

E3.5(C) Use text evidence and original commentary to support an analytic response.

E3.5(J) Defend or challenge the authors' claims using relevant text evidence.

E3.7(E)(i) Analyze characteristics and structural elements of argumentative texts such as clear arguable thesis,

appeals, structure of the argument, convincing conclusion, and call to action.

E3.7(E)(ii) Analyze characteristics and structural elements of argumentative texts such as various types of evidence and treatment of counterarguments, including concessions and rebuttals.

E3.7(E)(iii) Analyze characteristics and structural elements of argumentative texts such as identifiable audience or reader.

TEACH

1 Students should plan and draft this essay individually.

2 Assign the independent writing prompt. Respond to students' needs during the writing process. Remind them of the steps they've practiced in class.

ASSESS

Use the criteria in the Scoring Guide to assess each student's independent essay.

ADAPT

Instruct struggling students to focus more on ideas than on structure and language in their initial drafts, then follow up on those two elements in their final drafts. Assign specific topics or positions, and expand/limit options based on their level of challenge. You may choose to assign some students the task of researching and critiquing a published rebuttal of a lawsuit or bill as an enrichment exercise.

SCORING GUIDE

Use the Scoring Guide throughout this workshop to remind students of the elements expected to be included in their writing.

Writing Workshop 2 (continued)

SCORING GUIDE

Scoring Criteria	Exemplary	Proficient	Emerging	Incomplete
Ideas	<p>The essay or letter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> asserts an insightful thesis or position statement; effectively anticipates counterarguments supports reasons with precise, convincing evidence, and authoritative commentary demonstrates thoughtful consideration of relevance, validity, and reliability of evidence consistently presents counterarguments accurately, honestly, and diplomatically 	<p>The essay or letter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> presents a clear thesis or position statement that anticipates and distinguishes counterarguments supports reasons with specific and relevant evidence and commentary demonstrates consideration of relevance, validity, and reliability of evidence usually presents an accurate, honest, and diplomatic representation of counterarguments 	<p>The essay or letter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> presents a limited or unfocused thesis that does not distinguish counterarguments uses insufficient evidence and vague commentary demonstrates little or no consideration of relevance, validity, and reliability of evidence and insufficient research often struggles to represent counterarguments accurately or diplomatically 	<p>The essay or letter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> presents neither a clear claim nor counterarguments contains insufficient and/or irrelevant evidence with little or no commentary pays little attention to research and consideration of relevance, reliability, and validity of evidence shows little attempt to present counterarguments fairly
Structure	<p>The essay or letter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> skillfully uses an appropriate organizing structure presents a sustained focus that displays a progression of ideas with depth and complexity appropriate for the audience effectively sequences ideas and uses graceful transitions 	<p>The essay or letter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> includes an appropriate organizing structure includes a sustained focus that presents ideas with clarity and coherence appropriate for the audience sequences ideas logically and uses transitions appropriately 	<p>The essay or letter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> may lack an organizing structure or contain one that is inappropriate presents unfocused or underdeveloped ideas inappropriate for the audience presents disconnected ideas and limited use of transitions 	<p>The essay or letter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> lacks a clear or appropriate organizing structure presents unfocused and underdeveloped ideas inappropriate for the audience presents ideas that are unconnected with little or no use of transitional elements
Use of Language	<p>The essay or letter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses syntax effectively to contribute to the clarity of ideas and persuasive effect uses diction and tone that are deliberately crafted for the topic employs hyperbole in a way that enhances the argument uses conventions skillfully to contribute to the rhetorical effectiveness 	<p>The essay or letter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses syntax deliberately for persuasive effect uses diction and tone appropriately for the topic and audience uses hyperbole uses conventions correctly; minor errors do not affect meaning 	<p>The essay or letter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows little or no deliberate use of sentence structure for effect uses inappropriate diction and tone for the topic, and audience does not use hyperbole uses conventions incorrectly; errors may interfere with meaning 	<p>The essay or letter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows no deliberate use of syntax for a certain effect shows no evidence of careful and deliberate use of diction and tone shows little or inappropriate use of hyperbole contains multiple errors in conventions that interfere with meaning

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Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills

E3.8(F) Evaluate how the author's diction and syntax contribute to the mood, voice, and tone of a text.

E3.9(B)(i) Develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing in timed and open-ended situations by using strategic organizational structures appropriate to purpose, audience, topic, and context.

E3.9(C) Revise drafts to improve clarity, development, organization, style, diction, and sentence fluency, both within and between sentences.

E3.9(D) Edit drafts to demonstrate a command of standard English conventions using a style guide as appropriate.

E3.10(C) Compose argumentative texts using genre characteristics and craft.

E3.11(B) Critique the research process at each step to implement changes as needs occur and are identified.

E3.11(D) Modify the major research question as necessary to refocus the research plan.

Additional Standards Addressed:

E3.9(A), E3.11(C), E3.11(F)