

## Argumentative Writing

### Learning Targets

- Analyze the characteristics of argumentative writing, and evaluate a writer's use of reasoning and evidence to support a claim.
- Use knowledge of the writing process to plan, write, revise, and edit an argumentative essay that supports claims with valid reasoning and relevant evidence.
- Introduce and develop claims and counterclaims effectively, anticipating the knowledge, concerns, values, and possible biases of the audience.
- Use an organizational structure and transitional words, phrases, and clauses that make the relationships between claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence clear.
- Craft writing that effectively employs figurative language or hyperbole.
- Edit drafts to conform to standard English conventions.
- Participate collaboratively during discussions by contributing relevant ideas and information, building on others' ideas, and moving the discussion forward with thoughtful questions and responses.

### 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 write an argumentative essay independently.

### 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

1. 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 that 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, Drafting, Marking the Text, Self-Editing/Peer Editing, Sharing and Responding, Think Aloud

#### 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.

### College and Career Readiness Standards

#### Focus Standards:

**W.11–12.1** Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

**W.11–12.4** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)



## 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.

**3 As You Read:** Engage students in a **shared reading** of the sample responsive text. Ask students to **mark the text** as you read, paying attention to the tone. You may choose to have students first read the essay silently, following the directions about marking the text. Explain any vocabulary that may be unfamiliar to your students, or engage them in a vocabulary activity using context clues and dictionaries when necessary.

## Writing Workshop 2 (continued)

### My Notes

Lined area for student notes.

### As You Read

- Underline key ideas, and reread any sections that you do not understand at first.
- Highlight phrases and clauses that contribute to the author's tone.
- Jot down notes and any questions that you may have in the margins.

**Background Information:** The following letter of veto (a form of rebuttal) is an example of formal argumentation, responding to legislation passed by the Illinois State Senate. The author, Adlai Stevenson (Illinois governor, 1949–1953), maintains a professional persona while expressing his opinion that Bill No. 93 is ridiculous.

### Sample Text: Argumentative Response To the Illinois State Senate

by Adlai E. Stevenson

- 1 To the Honorable, the Members of the Senate of the Sixty-sixth General Assembly:
- 2 I herewith return, without my approval, Senate Bill No. 93 entitled "An Act to Provide Protection to Insectivorous Birds by Restricting Cats." This is the so-called "Cat Bill." I veto and withhold my approval from this bill for the following reasons:
- 3 It would impose fines on owners or keepers who permitted their cats to run at large off their premises. It would permit any person to capture, or call upon the police to pick up and imprison, cats at large. It would permit the use of traps. The bill would have statewide application—on farms, in villages, and in metropolitan centers.
- 4 This legislation has been introduced in the past several sessions of the Legislature, and it has, over the years, been the source of much comment—not all of which has been in serious vein. It may be that the general assembly has now seen fit to refer it to one who can view it with a fresh outlook. Whatever the reasons for passage at this session, I cannot believe there is a widespread public demand for this law or that it could, as a practical matter, be enforced.
- 5 Furthermore, I cannot agree that it should be the declared public policy of Illinois that a cat visiting a neighbor's yard or crossing the highway is a public nuisance. It is in the nature of cats to do a certain amount of unescorted roaming. Many live with their owners in apartments or other restricted premises, and 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. I am afraid this Bill could only create discord, recrimination and enmity. Also consider the owner's dilemma: To escort a cat abroad on a leash is against the nature of the cat, and to permit it to venture forth for exercise unattended into a night of new dangers is against the nature of the owner. Moreover, cats perform useful service, particularly in rural areas, in combating rodents—work they necessarily perform alone and without regard for property lines.
- 6 We are all interested in protecting certain varieties of birds. 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. 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. In my opinion, the State of Illinois and its local governing bodies already have enough to do without trying to control feline delinquency.
- 7 For these reasons, and not because I love birds the less or cats the more, I veto and withhold my approval from Senate Bill No. 93.

Respectfully,  
Adlai E. Stevenson, Governor

## College and Career Readiness Standards

**W.11–12.5** Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grades 11–12.)

**W.11–12.7** 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.

## 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:

### R—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.

### A—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.

### F—Format

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

### T—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 that 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 that 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.”

Writing Workshop 2 • Argumentative Writing 17

**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 that 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 from which to choose. As necessary, model making a connection between a phrase or clause and the tone that it conveys.

## College and Career Readiness Standards

**W.11–12.9** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

**L.11–12.2** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

**L.11–12.3** Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

**Additional Standards Addressed:**  
W.11–12.10, SL.11–12.1, L.11–12.1

Writing Workshop 2 • Argumentative Writing 17

ACTIVITY 2

Writing a Class Argumentative Response

PLAN

Materials: projector or whiteboard to display group-generated work; research materials, if necessary; Materials generated in Activity 1 to serve as models

Pacing: 2 50-minute class periods



TEACHER TO TEACHER

This activity is intended to be a guided writing activity involving the entire class. However, you may want to use small groups for specific parts of the activity. If so, writing groups should be organized so that specific roles are assigned to each member of the groups of no more than four (e.g., two recorders, a manager, and a presenter).

TEACH

1 Review the prompt. Be sure to remind students of the elements that they should incorporate in the class-generated argumentative response essay. Refer to the Scoring Guide to inform your areas of emphasis.

2 Engage students in a shared reading of the article. Do a close reading of the text, paying attention to the case being promoted by Lloyd and her lawsuit. Remember that some parts of the article make explicit claims, but other claims are implied rather than stated explicitly.

Writing Workshop 2 (continued)

ACTIVITY 2

Writing a Class Argumentative Response

WRITING PROMPT: An excerpt of a news article is provided below. Read the excerpt, and mark the text for ideas or comments that inspire you to respond to Lloyd’s lawsuit. Then work with your class and your teacher to respond to the ideas expressed in the excerpt in a focused, structured, and coherent argumentative letter. Refer to the Scoring Guide for this writing task—it will help you understand where to focus your attention and efforts. Be sure to:

- Include a clear position based on logical reasons with varied support.
• Include accurate and honest representation of opposing points of view.
• Develop an organizational structure appropriate to the purpose, audience, topic, and context.
• Develop the strengths and limitations of both the claims and counterarguments.
• Demonstrate consideration of the relevance, validity, and reliability of sources used.
• Use language attentively crafted to maintain a formal tone while exposing the absurdity or ridiculousness of the topic.

My Notes

Handwriting lines for notes

Sample Text: Argumentative Response

NJ Woman Hit by Ball Sues Little League Player

by David Chang, June 22, 2012

- 1 There’s no crying in baseball, but as one local teen is learning, there are lawsuits.
2 Back in May of 2010, Matthew Migliaccio, a catcher in the Manchester Little League, was helping a pitcher warm up during a bullpen session. Matt’s father, Bob Migliaccio, says one of his son’s warm-up throws got away from him and struck Elizabeth Lloyd, the mother of a teammate, in the face.
3 “Mrs. Lloyd was sitting on the top of the bench and the ball came over the fence and hit her,” said Bob. Bob says his son, who was 11 at the time, ran over to check on Lloyd who he says claimed to be okay.
4 “A few weeks later she came to a game and the team gave her flowers,” said Bob. “Matt went up to her and formally apologized and she said again, ‘I’m fine Matt, I know you didn’t do anything wrong.’”
5 Lloyd, 45, of Manchester, was not okay however. The Asbury Park Press reports she suffered multiple fractures. Yet while Lloyd suffered the injury, it’s Matthew and his family who felt the insult. Six months after his son apologized to Lloyd, Bob says he received a letter from the woman’s attorney demanding home owner’s insurance information. On April 24 of this year, Lloyd’s attorney filed a lawsuit against Matt, who is now 13. The Press reports that Lloyd is seeking \$500,000 in damages to cover medical costs stemming from the incident. The attorney, Riaz A. Mian, tells the Press the damages his client is seeking is the maximum that the family’s home insurance covers.
6 The suit claims Matthew intentionally struck her, causing permanent injuries, according to the Press. Mian tells Asbury Park the suit was filed after several failed attempts to reach a settlement with insurance companies and that “life is now different” for his

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.	Sample response: If further damage or injury occurs over time, you cannot necessarily be sure that the incident was the cause; the damage would possibly have happened with or without 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.

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 that 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 that they do.

7 **Drafting:** Begin drafting the response to 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 share them with the class.
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.

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 those of the rest of the class, 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 that the other side proposes as logical or reasonable.

12. 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 <b>imprison</b> , 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 <b>escort</b> 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 that those paragraphs will be included in the response.

**14 Revising for Language and Writer’s 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 Activities 1 and 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 that they research and find an appropriate lawsuit or legislative bill for their response.

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

## 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 <b>without regard for property lines</b> .	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: This is an example of <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.

**13.** Look back at the response that 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

**14.** 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 ensuring that 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.



### 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 a 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 the feedback from your peers. Edit for language conventions, and finalize your response 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.

Writing Workshop 2 • Argumentative Writing 23

#### 4 Planning/Prewriting/Drafting:

Students should review and emulate the process that 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 that 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

Writing Workshop 2 • Argumentative Writing 23

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

24 SpringBoard® Writing Workshop • English III

© 2021 College Board. All rights reserved.

© 2021 College Board. All rights reserved.