

4th-5th GRADE UPPER ELEMENTARY OPINION WRITING UNIT

FIFTH-GRADE OPINION WRITING STANDARDS

WRITING STANDARDS

W.5.1

Write of vie

FOURTH-GRADE OPINION WRITING STANDARDS

WRITING STANDARDS

W.4.1

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OPINION WRITING ROUGH DRAFT

CREATING A THESIS STATEMENT

WHAT IS A THESIS STATEMENT?



- A one-sentence claim you are making about a topic or text. Usually the last sentence of your introduction.
- It tells the reader what your essay will be about and directs them to your main reasons.
- It tells your opinion on the topic and what you're going to prove in the essay.
- It describes ways in which you will support and develop your claim.

GOOD EXAMPLES

- The four-day school week is beneficial for students, families, and schools because it saves schools money, students and teachers get to spend more time with their families, and it highlights the fact that the purpose of school isn't just about student achievement.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER TO DEVELOP A THESIS STATEMENT:

1. What is your topic or text?
2. What is your stance or claim?
3. What is your rationale for this stance?
4. What countercult or opposing view will you acknowledge to justify your stance?

THESIS FORMULA:

Topic + claim + because, <reason 1> + <reason 2> + <reason 3>.

EXAMPLE: College students should be encouraged to pursue a degree in science because it's a growing field, there are many job options, and the salaries are high.

THESIS FORMULA WITH COUNTERCLAIM:

edge counterclaim + topic + claim + because, <reason 1> + <reason 2> + <reason 3>.

Some people think that any bachelor's degree is beneficial to college students should be encouraged to pursue a degree in science it's a growing field, there are many job options, and the salaries are high.

REASONS AND INFORMATION

COLLECTING, RANKING, AND SORTING INFORMATION

HOW TO DEBATE EFFECTIVELY

BEFORE THE DEBATE: PREPARING YOUR IDEAS

KNOW YOUR OPINION	CHOOSE YOUR STRONGEST REASONS	MATCH YOUR REASONS WITH INFORMATION	REVIEW YOUR NOTES
Be clear about what you believe. You should be able to say your opinion in one sentence.	Pick the reasons that best support your opinion. You do not need to use every reason you wrote down.	Facts Details from the article Examples or explanations	Highlight or star your best evidence. Be ready to explain why it supports your opinion.

DURING THE DEBATE: SPEAKING EFFECTIVELY

START CLEARLY.	GIVE A REASON	SUPPORT YOUR REASON WITH INFORMATION	SUPPORT YOUR REASON WITH INFORMATION
• Begin with your opinion. • Example: "I believe _____ because _____."	• Explain one reason at a time. • Don't rush — clarity matters more than speed.	• Use facts, details, or examples from the text. • Explain how the information proves your point.	• Listen carefully to what they say. • You may agree, disagree, or add a different idea. • Stay respectful and focused on the topic.

DURING THE DEBATE: LISTENING EFFECTIVELY AND RESPONDING

LISTENING EFFECTIVELY	PREPARING A RESPONSE	WRAPPING UP YOUR THINKING
• Look at the speaker. • Do not interrupt. • Take notes on strong ideas you hear. • Think about how you might respond.	Look back at your notes or the article. Find: ✓ Stronger evidence ✓ A clearer explanation ✓ A response to your partner's idea ✓ Decide what you want to say next.	• A strong closing should: ✓ Restate your opinion. ✓ Summarize your main reasons. ✓ Leave your listener with a final thought.

DEBATE EXPECTATIONS

WHAT GOOD DEBATERS DO

- ✓ Listen respectfully
- ✓ Use evidence, not just opinions
- ✓ Speak clearly and stay on topic
- ✓ Respond to ideas, not people
- ✓ Stay calm and respectful
- ✓ Be open to hearing different viewpoints

REMEMBER

Debating is not about winning. It's about:

- ✓ Thinking clearly
- ✓ Explaining your ideas
- ✓ Using reasons and information
- ✓ Preparing to become a stronger writer

OPINIONS AND REASONS

WHAT IS AN OPINION?

WHAT IS A REASON?

explains why someone has an opinion.
on answers the question:
it directly to the
not have

SESSION ONE: INTRODUCTION TO OPINION WRITING

SESSION THREE: COLLECTING, SORTING, AND RANKING REASONS AND INFORMATION

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SESSION THREE:

AN UPPER ELEMENTARY DEBATE AND OPINION WRITING UNIT

This flexible unit gives students the tools they need to craft clear, well-supported opinion essays—moving beyond simple “I think” responses into arguments with structure, reasoning, and evidence. With step-by-step modeling, scaffolded writing lessons, and mentor text examples, students learn how to form strong opinions, develop logical reasons, and support their thinking with relevant information. Whether you’re introducing opinion writing, revisiting it mid-year, or preparing students for polished final drafts, this unit meets them where they are and pushes their thinking and writing further.

- 16 step-by-step teacher lesson plans**
- 16 teacher PDF and Google Slides presentations** (opinions vs. facts, writing thesis statements, collecting and ranking evidence, debate and discussion, body paragraphs, linking words, counterarguments, conclusions, revising, and more)
- Fully scaffolded writing practice** with modeled examples
- Mentor text studies, graphic organizers, and interactive notebook pages**
- Built-in opinion reference booklet** for student use
- Rubrics, checklists, and writing conference tools** for self-, peer-, and teacher feedback
- Teacher answer keys, sample passages, and flexible pacing guides**
- 100% digital and print** student notebooks and teaching slides



ELEMENTARY OPINION WRITING UNIT

This **Opinion Writing Unit** gives students the scaffolds, models, and strategies they need to move beyond simple “I think” responses into clear, well-supported opinion essays. Through engaging lessons, mentor text studies, and structured writing practice, students learn how to form strong opinions, develop logical reasons, and support their thinking with relevant evidence. With step-by-step guidance, they’ll gain confidence as writers who can explain their ideas clearly, respond to opposing viewpoints, and write with purpose.

💡 Here's what they'll learn:

- **Opinion Structure:** Understand the purpose and structure of an opinion essay
- **Stating a Clear Opinion (Thesis):** Write focused opinion statements that introduce a topic and position
- **Developing Strong Reasons:** Generate logical reasons that support a central claim
- **Using Evidence:** Support opinions with facts, examples, and details from texts
- **Linking Words & Transitions:** Connect opinions and reasons clearly for coherence
- **Counterarguments:** Acknowledge opposing viewpoints and clarify thinking
- **Body Paragraphs:** Organize writing so each paragraph supports one main reason
- **Strong Conclusions:** Restate opinions and synthesize key reasons
- **Revising & Editing:** Strengthen ideas through revision and polish conventions
- **Publishing:** Prepare polished final drafts for authentic sharing

📚 Why this works:

This unit transforms opinion writing into a clear, approachable thinking process. Students don't just answer a question—they learn how to take a position, organize their ideas, and support their thinking with evidence. Reluctant writers gain the confidence to explain what they believe and why, while advanced writers strengthen their reasoning through structured revision, debate, and reflection.

💡 Perfect for:

- Teachers who want a step-by-step opinion writing sequence that's ready to use.
- Students who need structured guidance for turning thoughts into organized arguments.
- Any upper elementary ELA class working on opinion, argument, or persuasive writing..

TEACHERS LIKE YOU HAVE SAID...



"I absolutely love every resource I buy from Martina. The layout is easy to follow, it correlates with her other resources, and **has everything you need in it. The standards are aligned with every lesson, suggested responses are included, clear procedures, learning objectives, and so much more.**" – Julie N.



"This is an amazing resource and is well worth the price. It is so robust. I started with the text structures and objective summaries lessons, and students were very engaged." – Jill P.



"SUCH a valuable resource! There's so much here, and it's all appropriate for my state's learning targets. Many of my students wrote really impressive narratives, thanks to the help of this resource!" –Amy G.



"I love these units! They are so easy to use in the classroom and making planning and teaching an absolute breeze."
— Carley L.



"This resource has made teaching narrative writing to my middle schoolers a breeze! I love how each day is laid out and set up so students learn a little bit about narrative writing and build their own narratives step-by-step. I made a couple of changes to some of the mentor text examples, as I am using this in conjunction with literature circle novels, and I wanted it to match what my students are currently reading. Overall, I have felt so organized using this, and most importantly, my students have been engaged! " -Samantha S.



"This was one of the first products of yours that I have purchased, and I'm SO beyond glad that I did. I love everything about it-- ESPECIALLY how you've included the lesson plans, and examples of completed work. I've never been more pleased with a TPT purchase in my life. Thank you!"

- Insightfully Designed Academics

4th-5th GRADE **UPPER ELEMENTARY**
OPINION WRITING UNIT
EXPLORING STRONG OPINION ARGUMENTS

FIFTH GRADE OPINION WRITING STANDARDS
WRITING STANDARDS
OPINION WRITING ROUGH DRAFT
OPINION WRITING REVISED FINAL DRAFT

REASONS AND INFORMATION
COLLECTING, RANKING, AND SORTING
OPINIONS AND REASONS

HOW TO CRAFT AN OPINION ESSAY
CREATING A THESIS STATEMENT
WHAT IS A THESIS STATEMENT?
HOW TO DEBATE EFFECTIVELY
BEFORE THE DEBATE: PREPPING YOUR DEBATE

PRINT AND DIGITAL

NARRATIVE WRITING UNIT

Includes lesson plans, interactive notebook lessons, lesson materials, full size reference materials, and graphic organizers.

4th-5th GRADE **INTERACTIVE NOTEBOOK EXAMPLES**

HOW TO CRAFT AN OPINION **OPINION WRITING REVISED FINAL DRAFT**

OPINION WRITING REVISED FINAL DRAFT

PRACTICE ARTICLE **DEBATE ONE** **TEACHER EXAMPLE** **Cons of School Uniforms**

Answer Key One: Identifying the Six Elements of an Opinion Essay

Yellow = Author's Opinion
Green = Evidence or Central Claim
Blue = Logical Reasons
Pink = Supporting Information (facts or details)
Purple = Conclusion

Recess Should Be Longer

Recess should be longer at school because it helps students focus better, stay healthy, and enjoy learning more.

One reason recess should be longer is that students need time to move their bodies. During the school day, students sit for long periods of time. Because of this, having more time to run, play, and stretch helps students release energy and return to class ready to learn.

Another reason recess should be longer is that it helps students concentrate. When students get a mid-break, they are able to pay attention longer during lessons. For instance, after recess, many students feel calmer and are more prepared to listen and participate.

Finally, recess helps students build friendships. Playing games and talking with classmates allows students to practice teamwork and solve problems together. These social skills are important both in and out of the classroom.

In conclusion, recess should be longer because it helps students focus, stay active, and build strong friendships. Schools should consider giving students more recess time so everyone can have a better learning day.

TEACHER KEYS, EXAMPLES, AND GUIDES

The teacher examples have all notes, outlines, drafts, examples, and essays. All of these are in the lesson plans and in the slides to display to students as well.

LESSON PRESENTATIONS

PDF + Google Slides lesson presentations for every lesson to display for students while taking notes or learning opinion writing skills.

REVISING **DEBATE TWO** **OPINION TOPICS**
DEBATE ONE **STATING OPINION** **INTRODUCTION TO OPINION WRITING**

WRITING **CHOOSE TOPIC** **IDENTIFYING OPINIONS AND REASONS**

INTEGRATING **PLUS** **REASONS AND INFORMATION**
EVIDENCE **GATHERING SUPPORTING EVIDENCE** **COLLECTING, RANKING, AND SORTING**

FINAL REVISIONS **LINKING WORDS** **DEBATE ONE**
LOGY **LESSON TEN** **WRITING AN OPINION FLASH DRAFT**

PUBLISHING AND CELEBRATION **LESSON FIVE**

PACING GUIDES

Breaks down the daily lesson plans, prep you'll need to do, materials or articles you will need, and reading and writing standards.

STUDENT REFERENCE PAGES

HOW TO CRAFT AN OPINION ESSAY

SELECT A TOPIC

WHAT IS AN OPINION? An opinion is what you think or believe about a topic. It is your answer to the question: "What do you think?"

- Different people can have different opinions about the same topic.
- Opinions are not proven by themselves - they need support.
- Examples: Students should not have homework on weekends because they need time to play.

WHAT IS A REASON? A reason is why someone has an opinion.

• Examples: The question: "Why do you think that?"

- Reasons are supported by clear logical reasoning.
- Each reason should connect directly to the opinion.

• Examples: Students should not have homework on weekends because they need time to play.

OPINIONS AND REASONS

REASONS AND INFORMATION

COLLECTING, RANKING, AND SORTING

COLLECTING INFORMATION

1. When you collect information, begin by reading the text in full, underlining or highlighting information that is important.

WRITING A CONCLUSION

AN OPINION ESSAY CONCLUSION

A conclusion paragraph is like the final farewell. It must be effective. It should leave your reader pondering.

The conclusion needs to act as a reminder, stating why you matter and is correct! This is your **last chance to convince** your reader about your opinion. That said, don't just summarize it.

It's a good idea to discuss possible implications in the conclusion paragraph of an opinion essay. For example, you could bring up possible situations that could arise if the reader goes point of view, or you could end with a call to action, like the concluding part of the opening of your essay.

Remember: The last part of the concluding paragraph must be a reminder of why your opinion is correct!

LINKING WORDS

CREATING A THESIS STATEMENT

WRITING AN INTRODUCTION

AN OPINION ESSAY INTRODUCTION SHOULD:

1. **Hook the Reader:** Explain why your topic or opinion is significant or provide compelling facts, statistics, or anecdotes.
2. **Provide Specific Context:** Include a backstory or a bit of general information.

HOW TO DEBATE EFFECTIVELY

RE THE DEBATE: PREPARING YOUR IDEAS

OUR	CHOOSE YOUR STRONGEST ARGUMENTS	PUT YOUR IDEAS WITH INJECTION	DEFEND YOUR NOTES
IDEAS	Identify the best support that best support your opinion. Be sure to use every reason.	Details from the article or book you are explaining.	Highlight your best evidence to be ready to explain why it supports your opinion.
STRONG	Use facts, details, and examples from the text. Make sure the information proves your point.	Support your ideas with annotations.	Underline key terms. You may agree with your opponent's ideas, but you must focus on your own.

THE DEBATE: SPEAKING EFFECTIVELY

WHS	GIVE A REASON	SUPPORT YOUR IDEAS WITH INJECTION	SUPPORT YOUR IDEAS WITH ANNOTATIONS
you	• Explain one point.	• Don't just repeat what others have said.	• Use facts, details, and examples from the text. Make sure the information proves your point.

THE DEBATE: LISTENING EFFECTIVELY AND RESPONDING

WRITING STRONG BODY PARAGRAPHS

- ✓ Body paragraphs are the meat of your essay.
- ✓ They are where you prove a point or reason at time and support it.
- ✓ Each body paragraph should focus on your thesis statement.

WHAT A BODY PARAGRAPH IS

STRONG BODY PARAGRAPHS

- Focus on your opinion.
- Give background or context.
- Reader understands the topic.

BODY PARAGRAPH FORM

BODY PARAGRAPH BREAKDOWN

EDITING VS. REVISING

CAPITALIZATION

- Proper nouns
- Paper headings, if used
- Section beginnings: *Introduction*

USAGE/GRAMMAR

- Subject-verb agreement
- fragments and run-on sentences
- run-on sentences

ADD OR REMOVE

- Add sentences or words to make your essay flow better
- remove sentences or words to make your essay flow better

MOVE OR SUBSTITUTE

- Change a word and/or sentence placement to make your writing better

EDITING YOUR ESSAY IN GOOGLE DOCS

1. SIGN IN WITH GOOGLE ACCOUNT

2. OPEN DOCUMENT

3. CLICK ON THE BLOKND DOCUMENT

4. CLICK ON "UNTITLED DOCUMENT" IN THE TOP-LEFT CORNER.

5. TYPE CLEAR WITH THE NAME OF THE BEGINNING (E.G., "WORK'S OPINION ESSAY ON SCHOOL CHURCH").

6. CLICK THE "YOUR ESSAY IN GOOGLE DOCS"

7. CLICK PAGE AND PARAGRAPH SPACES.

BODY PARAGRAPHS

Body part of your essay.

Your opinion by exploring one thing with relevant information.

And focus on ONE clear reason



U DOCS

Use evidence from a source to support the main idea.

- Explains why the evidence matters
- Ends with a sentence that wraps up the idea.

our thesis, writing words, add a pic, drop (or a link).

and grammar check to underline for errors.

icon, and add new word!

LA DOWN

Reasoning = Background/Context + Evidence + Elaboration + Concluding Sentence



they need to understand
use evidence.

examples, or quotations from a
text.

ence supports your opinion. This is
what matters most.

raph by reinforcing the reason and
text idea.

OPINION DIGITAL NB 4-5 | Google Slides

File Edit View Insert Format Side Arrange Tools Extras Help

Background Layout Theme Transition

LESSON ONE

CRAFTING AN OPINION ES

QUICK

ELEMENT	EXPLANATION
SELECT A TOPIC	
TAKE A POSITION	
CREATE A THESIS STATEMENT OR CENTRAL CLAIM	
USE LOGICAL REASONS AND LINKING WORDS	
USE CLEAR AND CONVINCING INFORMATION	
FINISH WITH A STRONG CONCLUSION	

LESSON TWO

CREATE AN OPINION

LESSON ONE

I. SELECT A TOPIC

Make sure your topic is neither too broad, nor too limited.

when taking a position with an

ast always possible

ESSAY EXAMPLE

Yellow – Author’s Opinion
Green – Thesis Statement / Central Claim
Blue – Logical Reasons
Pink – Supporting Information (facts or details)
Purple – Conclusion

Rules Should Be Longer

INTRODUCTION TO OPINION WRITING

LESSON ONE

DIGITAL RESOURCES

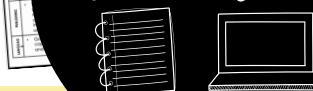
INDIVIDUAL WRITING		NARRATIVE CHECKLIST		INDIVIDUAL WRITING		NARRATIVE CHECKLIST		INDIVIDUAL WRITING	
WRITING STANDARDS AND CONCEPTS		ESSAY COMPOUND		INDIVIDUAL STUDENT CHECKLIST		WRITING STANDARDS AND CONCEPTS		NARRATIVE RUBRIC	
DATE ASSESSMENT		PERIOD SCORING		1. Overall narrative		DATE ASSESSMENT		PERIOD SCORING	
Writing techniques, sequences, and structures naturally		Overall		Writing standards to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective techniques, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.		Writing techniques to develop or imagine experiences or events using effective techniques, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.		Name: _____	
Orient in introductory text to establish naturally		FIFTY GRADE		Write narratives to develop a situation and introduce a character or characters; and introducing a sequence of events that unfolds naturally.		Write narratives to develop or imagine experiences or events using effective techniques, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.		Name: _____	
Use details to clarify the meaning or tone of characters		SCORE		Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a character or characters; and introducing a sequence of events that unfolds naturally.		Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and introducing a character or characters and event sequence that unfold naturally.		Name: _____	
Use details to clarify the meaning or tone of characters		LITERACY		Use narrative techniques such as dialogue, description, narration, or point of view to develop experiences or events or show the responses of characters to situations.		Use narrative techniques such as dialogue, description, narration, or point of view to develop experiences or events or show the responses of characters to situations.		Period: _____ Date: _____	
Provide guidance		LITERACY		Use a variety of transitions and sentence structures to signal shifts from one scene to another.		Use a variety of transitions and sentence structures to signal shifts from one scene to another.		GRADE: _____ PAGE 1 OF _____	
Productive writing approach		LITERACY		Use precise words and descriptive details to create sensory images.		Use precise words and descriptive details to create sensory images.		GRADE: _____ FOURTH GRADE	
With guidance as needed		LITERACY		Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.		Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.		4 3 2 1/0	
With your use teach reference		LITERACY		Provide clear and coherent development, style, and tone.		Provide clear and coherent development, style, and tone.		4 3 2 1/0	
demonstrate on page in		LITERACY		Use words and phrases, words, and clauses to move the story along.		Use words and phrases, words, and clauses to move the story along.		4 3 2 1/0	
Strength		LITERACY		Provide details and descriptive words and phrases to convey experiences and events precisely.		Provide details and descriptive words and phrases to convey experiences and events precisely.		4 3 2 1/0	
Goal		LITERACY		Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.		Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.		4 3 2 1/0	
Grade		LITERACY		Use technology, including digital tools, to produce and publish writing and demonstrate speaking and writing skills in multiple genres and in a range of situations.		Use technology, including digital tools, to produce and publish writing and demonstrate speaking and writing skills in multiple genres and in a range of situations.		4 3 2 1/0	

EDITABLE RESPONSE RUBRICS

Editable and differentiated
opinion writing rubrics.

Editable and differentiated
opinion writing rubrics.

PRINT AND DIGITAL



16 LESSON PLANS

FOURTH GRADE OPINION WRITING STANDARDS

WRITING

W.4.1

Write a point

FIFTH GRADE OPINION WRITING STANDARDS

WRITING STANDARDS AND CONCEPTS

PRINTFRIENDLY CHROME EXTENSION:

This argumentative unit links to a variety of articles online. If students are not accessing the articles online, you will likely want to print them.

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OPINION WRITING TIPS

While I never want to reduce writing instruction to "teaching the test," I do believe it's important to give students authentic practice with opinion writing tasks that reflect what they may encounter on standardized assessments. When students understand the structure and expectations of opinion prompts, they not only feel more confident on test day but also become clearer, more intentional writers in everyday classroom writing.

NOTE TO TEACHER

This unit is designed to help upper elementary ELA students (grades 4-5) learn how to write clear, organized, and well-supported opinion essays. While Common Core state standards require students to write opinion pieces, my goal was not to turn students into rote memorizers of writing formulas. Instead, I wanted students to develop a deep understanding of the writing process and how to use it to express their ideas clearly and effectively.

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PAGE	DAY	LESSONS AND CONCEPTS
3		Note to Teachers + Helpful Implementation Information
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SESSION ONE: INTRODUCTION TO OPINION WRITING

FOURTH GRADE	FIFTH GRADE
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SESSION TWO: OPINIONS AND REASONS

FOURTH GRADE	FIFTH GRADE
--------------	-------------

SESSION THREE: COLLECTING, SORTING, AND RANKING REASONS AND INFORMATION

FOURTH GRADE	FIFTH GRADE
--------------	-------------

SESSION FOUR: DEBATE - PRESENTING OPINIONS

FOURTH GRADE	FIFTH GRADE
--------------	-------------

SESSION FIVE: FLASH DRAFT ONE

FOURTH GRADE	FIFTH GRADE
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SESSION SIX: CREDIBLE SOURCES + CHOOSING AND RESEARCHING TOPICS

FOURTH GRADE	FIFTH GRADE
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SESSION SEVEN: STATING OPINIONS, WRITING THESIS STATEMENTS, AND DRAFTING INTRODUCTIONS

FOURTH GRADE	FIFTH GRADE
--------------	-------------

SESSION EIGHT: GATHERING SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

FOURTH GRADE	FIFTH GRADE
--------------	-------------

SESSION NINE: DRAFTING OPINION PARAGRAPHS

FOURTH GRADE	FIFTH GRADE
--------------	-------------

SESSION TEN: USING LINKING WORDS

FOURTH GRADE	FIFTH GRADE
--------------	-------------

SESSION ELEVEN: REVISING FIRST DRAFTS

FOURTH GRADE	FIFTH GRADE
--------------	-------------

SESSION TWELVE: SECOND DEBATE - SWITCHING SIDES

FOURTH GRADE	FIFTH GRADE
--------------	-------------

SESSION THIRTEEN: WRITING CONCLUSIONS

FOURTH GRADE	FIFTH GRADE
--------------	-------------

SESSION FOURTEEN: INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY

FOURTH GRADE	FIFTH GRADE
--------------	-------------

SESSION FIFTEEN: FINAL REVISIONS

FOURTH GRADE	FIFTH GRADE
--------------	-------------

SESSION SIXTEEN: PUBLISHING AND CELEBRATION

FOURTH GRADE	FIFTH GRADE
--------------	-------------



EXAMPLE OF A LESSON PLAN AND RESOURCES

HOW TO DEBATE EFFECTIVELY

BEFORE THE DEBATE: PREPARING YOUR IDEAS

KNOW YOUR OPINION	CHOOSE YOUR STRONGEST REASONS	MATCH YOUR REASONS WITH INFORMATION	REVIEW YOUR NOTES
Be clear about what you believe. You should be able to say your opinion in one sentence.	Pick the reasons that best support your opinion. You do not need to use every reason.	Facts Details from the article Examples or explanations	Highlight or star your best evidence. Be ready to explain why it supports your opinion.

DURING THE DEBATE: SPEAKING EFFECTIVELY

START CLEARLY	GIVE A REASON	SUPPORT YOUR REASON WITH INFORMATION	SUPPORT YOUR POSITION WITH EVIDENCE
DURING - Begin with opinion. - Examples - I believe because	DURING - Listen - Look at the audience - Do not interrupt	DURING - Start clearly - Give a reason - Support your reason with information	DURING - Highlight or star your best evidence. - Be ready to explain why it supports your opinion.

HOW TO DEBATE EFFECTIVELY

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KNOW YOUR OPINION	CHOOSE YOUR STRONGEST REASONS	MATCH YOUR REASONS WITH INFORMATION	REVIEW YOUR NOTES
Be clear about what you believe. You should be able to say your opinion in one sentence.	Pick the reasons that best support your opinion. You do not need to use every reason you wrote down.	Facts Details from the article Examples or explanations	Highlight or star your best evidence. Be ready to explain why it supports your opinion.

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START CLEARLY	GIVE A REASON	SUPPORT YOUR REASON WITH INFORMATION	SUPPORT YOUR POSITION WITH EVIDENCE
DURING - Start clearly - Give a reason - Support your reason with information	DURING - Listen - Look at the audience - Do not interrupt	DURING - Highlight or star your best evidence. - Be ready to explain why it supports your opinion.	DURING - Start clearly - Give a reason - Support your position with evidence

DEBATE FORMATION

- 1. **How We Sit**
 - ✓ Students will sit across from someone who is defending the opposite position.
 - ✓ One side of the room is **Position One**.
 - ✓ The other side of the room is **Position Two**.
- 2. **How We Listen**
 - ✓ Students will sit across from someone who is defending the opposite position.
 - ✓ One side of the room is **Position One**.
 - ✓ The other side of the room is **Position Two**.
- 3. **Speaking Order**
 - ✓ Round 1
 - ✓ Student 1 (**Position One**) speaks for **30-60 seconds**.
 - ✓ Student 13 (**Position Two**) responds for **30-60 seconds**.
 - ✓ Round 2
 - ✓ Student 2 speaks.
 - ✓ Student 14 responds.
 - ✓ This continues until all pairs have had a turn:
 - ✓ 3 and 15
 - ✓ 4 and 16
 - ✓ 5 and 17
- 4. **Expectations While Listening**
 - ✓ All students should have their notes in front of them.
 - ✓ While others are debating, students should:
 - ✓ Write down strong reasons they hear
 - ✓ Add new evidence to their notes
 - ✓ Prepare ideas for when it's their turn to speak
- 5. **Midway Point (Break)**
 - ✓ Halfway through the debate, pause for a short break.
 - ✓ Students may:
 - ✓ Whisper with someone on their side
 - ✓ Share strong arguments they've heard
 - ✓ Add or revise their notes
- 6. **Teacher Tip**
 - ✓ Encourage students to **respond to what they hear**, not just repeat their prepared notes.
 - ✓ Remind them that listening is part of the debate skill.

TEACHER GUIDE: CONDUCTING DEBATES

Debate Format: Taking Turns

1. **How We Sit**
 - ✓ Students will sit across from someone who is defending the opposite position.
 - ✓ One side of the room is **Position One**.
 - ✓ The other side of the room is **Position Two**.
2. **How We Listen**
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 - ✓ Remind them that listening is part of the debate skill.

Each lesson plan includes a section for the standards, objective, preparation, learning period, and closing. It also includes any student materials, reference sheets, teacher examples, and answer keys.

The lesson's teaching slides have everything you need to teach the lesson: teaching slides, examples, and concept breakdowns.

EXAMPLE OF LESSON SEVEN'S SLIDES

TEACHING SLIDES INCLUDED FOR ALL 16 LESSONS

INTRODUCTION TO OPINION WRITING

IDENTIFYING OPINIONS AND REASONS

REASONS AND INFORMATION
COLLECTING, RANKING, AND CRAFTING

DEBATE ONE

PRESENTING OPINION

WRITING AN OPINION FLASH DRAFT

REVISING FIRST DRAFTS

DEBATE TWO

PRESENTING OPINIONS

WRITING A CONCLUSION



INTEGRATING

TOPIC OPINION TOPICS

CHOOSING AND RESEARCHING

STATING OPINIONS

THESIS STATEMENTS AND DRAFTING INTRODUCTIONS

GATHERING SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

GATHERING SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

LINKING WORDS

FINAL REVISIONS

PUBLISHING AND CELEBRATION



ESSAY EXAMPLE

Yellow – Author's Opinion

Recess Should Be Longer

Recess should be longer at school because it helps students focus better, stay healthy, and enjoy

Green – Thesis Statement / Central Claim

Recess should be longer at school because it helps students focus better, stay healthy, and enjoy

Red Key

Recess should be longer at school because it helps students focus better, stay healthy, and enjoy

PRACTICE

6. FINISH WITH A STRONG CONCLUSION

- You must provide a concluding statement or paragraph reflecting your opinion in your essay.

Practice identifying the parts of your essay.

Yellow

Green

Blue

Pink

Indigo

Purple

Yellow

Green

Blue

EXAMPLES AND POSSIBLE ANSWERS INCLUDED

OPINION WRITING REVISED FINAL

OPINION WRITING REVISED

Bay
Mrs.
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bey...

Baylor Duke
Mrs. Cahill
English 5
12 January 2026

BODY PARAGRAPH 2:

- Topic Sentence:** Another reason school uniforms should not be required is that they not really improve academic performance.
- Background / Context:** Some people believe that uniforms are a good idea. However, research has shown that uniforms are very small. One study found that uniforms have a negative effect on academic performance.
- Evidence:** Studies have found that uniforms are not effective. They are expensive to buy and maintain.
- Elaboration:** If uniforms truly helped, they would be more popular. Since the change in uniforms did not lead to better academic performance, it is clear that uniforms are not effective.

ARTICLE ONE

ARTICLE TWO

ARTICLE THREE

ARTICLE FOUR

ARTICLE FIVE

ARTICLE SIX

ARTICLE SEVEN

ARTICLE EIGHT

ARTICLE NINE

ARTICLE TEN

ARTICLE ELEVEN

ARTICLE TWELVE

ARTICLE THIRTEEN

ARTICLE FOURTEEN

ARTICLE FIFTEEN

ARTICLE SIXTEEN

ARTICLE SEVENTEEN

ARTICLE EIGHTEEN

ARTICLE NINETEEN

ARTICLE TWENTY

ARTICLE TWENTY-ONE

ARTICLE TWENTY-TWO

OPINION WRITING FIRST FINAL DR

OPINION WRITING REVISED

Baylor Duke
Mrs. Cahill
English 5
12 January 2026

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ARTICLE THREE

ARTICLE FOUR

ARTICLE FIVE

ARTICLE SIX

ARTICLE SEVEN

ARTICLE EIGHT

ARTICLE NINE

ARTICLE TEN

ARTICLE ELEVEN

ARTICLE TWELVE

ARTICLE THIRTEEN

ARTICLE FOURTEEN

ARTICLE FIFTEEN

ARTICLE SIXTEEN

ARTICLE SEVENTEEN

ARTICLE EIGHTEEN

ARTICLE NINETEEN

ARTICLE TWENTY

ARTICLE TWENTY-ONE

ARTICLE TWENTY-TWO

DEBATE TWO

TEACHER EXAMPLE

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Use the conclusion formula to help you craft and refine your concluding paragraph.

REPHRASED TO

1ST DRAFT OF YOUR RE
School uniforms should not be required for prices and their lack of academic impact

Now get peer feedback from your neighbor
FINAL DRAFT OF YOUR RE

TEACHER EXAMPLE

Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

Directions: Use the thesis formula to help you craft and refine your thesis statement.

THESIS FOR

RESEARCH GUIDE

Topic + opinion + because + r
1ST DRAFT OF YO

Name: _____

Directions: Fill out your one you want to defend

TOPIC:

School uniforms

PRACTICE ARTICLE

Name: _____

Directions: _____

PRACTICE ARTICLE

Name: _____

Directions: _____

ANSWER KEY ONE: IDENTIFYING THE

1. Select a Topic
• Topic: Length of recess at school
• The topic is specific and appropriate

2. Take a Position
• Opinion: Recess should be longer
• The author clearly states what the opinion is

3. Create a Thesis Statement or Central Claim
• Thesis Sentence:
"Recess should be longer at school to stay healthy, and enjoy learning more."

4. Use Logical Reasons and Linking Words
• Reasons:
✓ Students need time to move
✓ Recess helps students concentrate
✓ Recess helps students build social skills

5. Use Clear and Convincing Information
• Examples of supporting information:
✓ Students sit for long periods
✓ Moving helps students return to recess
✓ Recess helps students practice teamwork

6. Finish with a Strong Conclusion
• Conclusion Sentence: "In conclusion, recess should be longer at school to stay healthy, and enjoy learning more."

7. Reflect on the Conclusion
• The conclusion restates the opinion and provides a strong ending to the essay.

ANSWER KEY TWO: IDENTIFYING THE

1. Select a Topic
• Topic: Length of recess at school
• The topic is specific and appropriate

2. Take a Position
• Opinion: Recess should be longer
• The author clearly states what the opinion is

3. Create a Thesis Statement or Central Claim
• Thesis Sentence:
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• Conclusion Sentence: "In conclusion, recess should be longer at school to stay healthy, and enjoy learning more."

7. Reflect on the Conclusion
• The conclusion restates the opinion and provides a strong ending to the essay.

TEACHER EXAMPLE

Name: _____

Date: _____

Period: _____

Author's Name: TEACHER EXAMPLE

Directions: Complete the sentences.

POSITION:

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REASONS:

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19. P

20. Q

21. R

22. S

23. T

24. U

25. V

26. W

27. X

28. Y

29. Z

30. A

31. B

32. C

33. D

34. E

35. F

36. G

37. H

38. I

39. J

40. K

41. L

42. M

43. N

44. O

45. P

46. Q

47. R

48. S

49. T

50. U

51. V

52. W

53. X

54. Y

55. Z

56. A

57. B

58. C

59. D

60. E

61. F

62. G

63. H

64. I

65. J

66. K

67. L

68. M

69. N

70. O

71. P

72. Q

73. R

74. S

75. T

76. U

77. V

78. W

79. X

80. Y

81. Z

82. A

83. B

84. C

85. D

86. E

87. F

88. G

89. H

90. I

91. J

92. K

93. L

94. M

95. N

96. O

97. P

98. Q

99. R

100. S

101. T

102. U

103. V

104. W

105. X

106. Y

107. Z

108. A

109. B

110. C

111. D

112. E

113. F

114. G

115. H

116. I

117. J

118. K

119. L

120. M

121. N

122. O

123. P

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128. U

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151. R

152. S

153. T

154. U

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157. X

158. Y

159. Z

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162. C

163. D

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166. G

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168. I

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170. K

171. L

172. M

173. N

174. O

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STUDENT REFERENCE PAGES AND BOOKLET

EDITING VS. REVISING

CAPITALIZATION

- ❑ Proper nouns
- ❑ Paper headings, if used
- ❑ Sentence beginnings

ADD OR REMOVE

- ❑ Add sentences or words to make your essay flow better
- ❑ Remove sentences or words to

LINKING WORDS

LINKING WORDS:

- Linking words are used to connect ideas in a sentence.
- They help the reader to progress from one idea (expressed by the author) to the next idea.

WRITING STRONG BODY PARAGRAPHS

WRITING STRONG BODY PARAGRAPHS

- Body paragraphs are the middle part of your essay.
- They are where you **prove your opinion** by explaining one reason.

CREATING A THESIS STATEMENT

WHAT IS A THESIS STATEMENT?

- A one-sentence claim you are making about a topic or text. Usually the last sentence of your introduction.
- It tells the reader what your essay will be about and directs them to

HOW TO DEBATE EFFECTIVELY

BEFORE THE DEBATE: PREPARING YOUR IDEAS

KNOW YOUR OPINION	CHOOSE YOUR STRONGEST REASONS	MATCH YOUR PERSONS WITH INFORMATION	REVIEW YOUR NOTES
Be clear about what you believe. You should be able to say your opinion in one sentence.	Pick the reasons that best support your opinion. You do not need to use every reason you wrote down.	Details from the article Examples or explanations	Highlight your best evidence. Be ready to explain why it supports your opinion.

OPINIONS AND REASONS

WHAT IS AN OPINION?

An opinion is what someone thinks or believes about a topic. An opinion answers the question: **“WHAT DO YOU THINK?”**

- Different people can have different opinions about the same topic.
- Opinions are not proven by themselves — they need support.
- Example: Students should not have homework on weekends.

WHAT IS A REASON?

A reason explains why someone has an opinion.

- A reason answers the question: **“WHY DO YOU THINK THAT?”**
- Strong opinions are supported by **clear, logical reasons**.
- Each reason should connect directly to the opinion.
- Example: Students should not have homework on weekends **because** they need time to rest and spend time with family.

REASONS AND INFORMATION YOU CAN USE

FACTS	EXAMPLES	PERSONAL EXPERIENCE	LOGICAL REASONS	EXPERT OR AUTHORITY INFORMATION
Facts are things that can be proven to be true. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Numbers ✓ Statistics ✓ Research findings ✓ Information from reliable sources 	Examples help show what your reason looks like in real life. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Real situations ✓ Things that commonly happen ✓ Clear, specific illustrations 	Personal experiences explain how the issue affects real people. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Things you've experienced ✓ Things you've observed ✓ Stories that connect to the topic 	Logical reasons explain how one thing leads to another. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Cause and effect ✓ Common sense explanations ✓ If this happens, then that happens thinking 	Experts show what they know. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Teachers ✓ Doctors ✓ Researchers ✓ Trusted organizations

COMES IN SIX DIFFERENT VERSIONS:

1. Tabbed mini-page in full-color
2. Tabbed mini-page in black and white
3. Non-tabbed mini-page in full-color
4. Non-tabbed mini-page in black and white
5. Full-page in full-color
6. Full-page black and white

DIGITAL STUDENT NOTEBOOK AND GOOGLE TEACHING SLIDES INCLUDED

OPINION DIGITAL NB 4-5

File Edit View Insert Format Slide Arrange Tools Extensions Help

Slideshow Share Upgrade

Background Layout Theme Transition

LESSON ONE

CRAFTING AN OPINION eSSAY

QUICK NOTES

ELEMENT	EXPLANATION
SELECT A TOPIC	
TAKE A POSITION	
CREATE A THESIS STATEMENT OR CENTRAL CLAIM	
USE LOGICAL REASONS AND LINKING WORDS	
USE CLEAR AND CONVINCING INFORMATION	
FINISH WITH A STRONG CONCLUSION	

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LESSON 1 SLIDES

File Edit View Insert Format Slide Arrange Tools Extensions Help

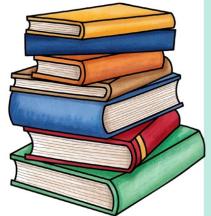
Slideshow Share Upgrade

Background Layout Theme Transition

I. SELECT A TOPIC

Make sure your topic is neither too broad, nor too limited.

When taking a position with an opinion, while not always possible or necessary, being passionate about the topic will help.



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LESSON 1 SLIDES

File Edit View Insert Format Slide Arrange Tools Extensions Help

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ESSAY EXAMPLE

Yellow – Author's Opinion
Recess should be longer at school because it helps students focus better, stay healthy, and enjoy learning more.

Green – Thesis Statement / Central Claim
One reason recess should be longer is that students need time to move their bodies. During the school day, students sit for long periods of time. Because of this, having more time to run, play, and stretch helps students release energy and return to class ready to learn.

Blue – Logical Reasons
Another reason recess should be longer is that it helps students concentrate. When students get a real break, they are able to pay attention longer during lessons. For instance, after recess, many students feel calmer and are more prepared to listen and participate.

Pink – Supporting Information (facts or details)
Finally, recess helps students build friendships. Playing games and talking with classmates allows students to practice teamwork and solve problems together. These social skills are important both in and out of the classroom.

Purple – Conclusion
In conclusion, recess should be longer because it helps students focus, stay active, and build strong friendships. Schools should consider giving students more recess time so everyone can have a better learning day.

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THANK YOU SO MUCH!



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