



GRADE 8 LITERACY: TCRWP NONFICTION

READING AND ARGUMENT WRITING

UNIT OVERVIEW

This packet contains two units designed to support students' journeys towards proficiency in reading and analyzing nonfiction texts, analyzing information across multiple texts, and writing argument essays based on their research. The task included asks each student to read and watch several nonfiction texts that give information about an issue, to take a stance on that issue, and defend that stance in an argument essay, drawing on the provided texts for support.

TASK DETAILS

Task Name: TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing Performance Assessment

Grade: 8

Subject: Literacy

Task Description: Students will write an objective summary of a text, analyzing a central idea of that text and its supporting ideas and information. Students will also write argument pieces, taking a stance on the topic of sports programming in high school, supporting their claims with clear reasons and information derived from the video and print informational texts provided.

Standards:

RI.8.1 Cite the evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inference drawn from the text.

RI.8.2: Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationships to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.

RI.8.10: Read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grade 6-8 complexity band independently and proficiently.

W.8.1: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

Materials Needed: See Task Administration Details for a complete list of materials.

Video clips: "Do Athletes Face Unnecessary Parent Pressure?" "Notebook: Kids and Sports," "Report: Pressure on Teen Athletes Soars," and "Sports: How Much Is Too Much?"

Video projection equipment

Text sets provided with assessment

Student instruction sheets and paper for responses



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The task and instructional supports in the following pages are designed to help educators understand and implement tasks that are embedded in Common Core-aligned curricula. While the focus for the 2011-2012 Instructional Expectations is on engaging students in Common Core-aligned culminating tasks, it is imperative that the tasks are embedded in units of study that are also aligned to the new standards. Rather than asking teachers introduce a task into the semester without context, this work is intended to encourage analysis of student and teacher work to understand what alignment looks like. We have learned through the 2010-2011 Common Core pilots that beginning with rigorous assessments drives significant shifts in curriculum and pedagogy. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) support is included to ensure multiple entry points for all learners, including students with disabilities and English language learners.

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The Teachers College Reading and Writing Project donated their time and expertise towards the development of these performance assessments and the accompanying units of study. Lucy Calkins, Mary Ehrenworth and Anna Gratz led the curriculum work. The units attached to the performance assessments are part of a larger curriculum that is available to any school (visit www.readingandwritingproject.com for more information). Lucy Calkins, Audra Robb, Janet Steinberg and Kara Fischer led the performance assessment work. Their effort relied on pilot work from teachers from IS289, the Hudson River Middle School, and MS260, the Clinton School for Writers and Artists. A special thanks goes to Emily Strang-Campbell for trying out the final version of the assessment.



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READING AND ARGUMENT WRITING
PERFORMANCE TASK

Task Administration Details: Materials Needed and Guidelines for Administration

Materials needed:

- Video clip “Do Athletes Face Unnecessary Parent Pressure?” Video from KCRA.com (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dqypa_oNQVI)
- Video clip "Notebook: Kids and Sports" Video from CBS news (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CV-WqlorsBM>)
- Video clip "Report: Pressure on Teen Athletes Soars" Video from WCPO, Cincinnati, Ohio (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_p_9jUEz7AE)
- Video clip "Sports: How Much Is Too Much?" Video from KCRA.com (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vrP68OD355w>) and video projection
- “High School, College Football Comes With Risk” by Jeffrey Perkel (<http://abcnews.go.com/Health/Healthday/story?id=4508074&page=1>)
- “What in the Name of High School Football” by Hank Hill (see text section on page 77)
- “Are High School Sports Good For Kids?” by Daniel Gould (see text section on page 79)

Guidelines for Task Administration – Teacher Directions

Administration guidelines: This assessment will take approximately three periods – spanning two or three days depending on how much time you can allocate each day and on your students’ stamina.

Day 1

Initial Setup: Approximately 1 hour

Suggestion for what the teacher might say to students:

“Students, we are about to start a quick research project together. This project will give us the chance to do a lot of different things. You’ll have the opportunity to learn about some new ideas, and most importantly you will have the opportunity to create and share some ideas of your own. In fact, I’m guessing that by the end of the project you’ll want to mail the letters you write, or present them as speeches. I think you’ll be surprised by how rapidly, efficiently, and wisely you can research and argue a position.”

“A lot of this work will feel like some of the work that we have been doing all unit long with our research-based argument essays. For this mini-research project, you will be investigating some of the research on youth sports. Some of these ideas you’ll encounter are in support of sports programs and others argue that sports programs can be harmful for students. It’s a complicated subject.”

“This assessment will feel like a mini-research project, where you will have to understand, weigh, and communicate the value of youth sports based on the information presented in the digital sources, articles, and charts that you will experience. You’ll call on all you know about not just reading sources, but reading them critically, really analyzing their validity.”

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“Once you’ve researched some of the issues related to youth sports, you are going to use the information that you discover to choose a side. You will eventually use all the facts and statistics that you learn to present a written argument in the form of a letter to a school board, your mayor, or the editor of a newspaper. Because you’ll be writing these letters based on your research, you’re going to want to be able to quote experts, and reference important facts and details that will convince your audience. So during the research period, use what you know about taking notes to get all the detailed information and specific references that you may want to use in your letter. Again, it is important that you use facts, ideas, quotes, and statistics from the texts AND NOT JUST YOUR OWN OPINION to help you construct your letter. It’s also important that you analyze your sources, not just refer to them.”

“We’ll be working on this over the next two days, and I want you to know some things about what we are about to do before we start. First, this mini-project might feel like a test just because you’ll be working independently, but it’s not the kind of test that just gives you a grade or a score. This experience will allow us to see all the magnificent things that you do as a reader, as a writer, and as a thinker. I think you’re going to really see how strong you’ve become. It will also allow me to learn more about what I can do to help you become an even more powerful writer and student.”

Task 1

Text (digital source): “Do Athletes Face Unnecessary Parent Pressure?”
(http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dqypa_oNQVI)

Suggested Teacher Prompt:

“You’ll have the opportunity to watch this two-minute video three times. It’s a news report from California that engages with some of the issues related to kids and sports. As you watch it, you will need to organize some notes in which you list the main ideas and any supporting details that connect to those ideas. You might want to just watch the video the first time, think about it, and take notes during your second and third viewing.”

“After we watch the videos, you can look over your notes, reflect, and then summarize your knowledge. The task is to organize your notes so that you summarize the central idea of the video, and indicate how that idea is developed through supporting evidence. You’ll remember that in our prior research, we’ve taken notes this way – thinking about what we’ve read or seen, so that our notes are a way to analyze our sources, not just move facts and information from one text to our notes. Don’t forget, if you hear an important quote, you’ll want to record that somehow, so you’ll know later that it was a direct quote. And if you are adding in your own opinion, you’ll want to make special note of it too, so you remember later what the author’s research was, and what your opinion is.”

Written Prompt:

Text (digital source): “Do Athletes Face Unnecessary Parent Pressure?”

Your goal is to name the central idea of this text, and indicate how it is developed with supporting ideas and evidence. To do this, you’ll want to determine the central idea, identify supporting

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ideas, and analyze their relationships and development in the video. When citing specific evidence, quote accurately and/or paraphrase specifically.

Task 2

Texts:

“High School, College Football Comes With Risk” by Jeffrey Perkel
(<http://abcnews.go.com/Health/Healthday/story?id=4508074&page=1>)

“What in the Name of High School Football” by Hank Hill (see text packet)

Suggested Teacher Prompt:

“You have the opportunity now to add to your research by reading two articles about sports in schools. As you read them, take whatever notes you think will help you with your research. You may write on the articles, as well as take notes.”

Written Prompt:

Texts: “High School, College Football Comes With Risk” by Jeffrey Perkel and
“What in the Name of High School Football” by Hank Hill

You have a chance to add to your research. For the following articles, take whatever notes you think will help you with your research. You may write on the articles, as well as take notes on a separate sheet of paper.

Task 3

Suggested Teacher Prompt:

“Students, imagine that the mayor or the school board is having a meeting to decide whether or not to keep funding school sports. You have an opportunity to present an essay, in the form of a letter, to the decision makers. What would you say? What claim would you make about school sports being good or bad for kids? What research will you call on to back up your claim?”

You can address your letter to the mayor, the editor of the newspaper, or the head of the PTA or school board. Letters are, after all, really essays. So remember everything you’ve learned about writing essays for this task. Your letter should state a claim, or thesis, by taking a clear side, back up this claim with research, and refute the other side. Be sure to cite important references.”

Written Prompt:

“You have done some research on this issue now, and you know much more about the pros and cons of youth sports. Now, imagine that your school district is going to make a decision about continuing to fund sports programs in the schools. You have a chance to write a letter that will be read to the mayor, printed in the paper, or presented to the head of the school board or PTA. Your letter should state a claim or thesis by taking a clear side, back it up with research, and refute the other side. Your job is to argue whether, overall, sports are good or bad for kids. Letters are really just a form of essay, so use what you know about essay writing to structure your letter. Be sure to back up your claim with reasons and evidence, supported by facts and details, and analysis of sources from your research. Be sure to cite important references.”

“This letter is a quick fast draft – you’ll have a chance to extend, revise, and polish it tomorrow.”

Day 2

Initial Setup: Approximately 2 periods

“Ok, researchers! I looked over your drafts with great interest. It’s fascinating to see how complicated this topic is – there’s no simple right or wrong I guess. Today you have an opportunity to add to your research. You will read another great article and watch a few more short videos on the subject of high school sports. After you’ve had a chance to read and take notes, you’ll be able to draft your final letter – and after this new research, you might have more information for your claim, or you may change your claim. That happens with researchers all the time – as we become more expert, we realize that some issues are more complicated than we thought. You can keep all your texts, notes, and prior draft around you as you write this.”

Task 4

Text: “Are High School Sports Good For Kids?” by Daniel Gould (see text packet)

Suggested Teacher Prompt:

“You’ll start with an article about sports and health issues. You might want to underline the important ideas and supporting details directly in the text, and note any important quotes. Then, your job will be to construct a summary of the central idea and how that idea is developed, by generating some thoughtful notes.”

“After you read and annotate the article, you can look over, reflect, and then summarize your knowledge. The task is to organize your notes so that you summarize the central idea of the article, and indicate how that idea is developed through supporting evidence. You’ll remember that in our prior research, we’ve taken notes this way – thinking about what we’ve read, so that our notes are a way to analyze our sources, not just move facts and information from one text to our notes. Don’t forget, if you notice an important quote, you’ll want to record it somehow in your notes, so you’ll know later that it was a direct quote. And if you are adding in your own opinion, you’ll want to make special note of that too, so you remember later what the author’s research was, and what your opinion is.”

Written Prompt:

Text: “Are High School Sports Good For Kids?”

Read the article, “Are High School Sports Good For Kids?” Your goal is to name the central idea of this text, and indicate how it is developed with supporting ideas and evidence. To do this, you’ll want to determine the central idea, identify supporting ideas, and analyze their relationships and development in the article. When citing specific evidence, quote accurately and/or paraphrase specifically.

Task 5

Digital text collection – 3 videos

Suggested Teacher Prompt:

“We are going to watch three one-minute videos. We will watch each video three times. All three of these videos are news clips that talk about youth sports. As you watch them, you will need to take notes that will help you with your research. Don’t forget, if you hear an important quote, you’ll want to record it somehow in your notes, so you’ll know later that it was a direct quote.”

Written Prompt

Digital text collection – 3 videos

- Video clip "Notebook: Kids and Sports" Video from CBS news (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CV-WqlorsBM>)
- Video clip "Report: Pressure on Teen Athletes Soars" Video from WCPO, Cincinnati, Ohio (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_p_9jUEz7AE)
- Video clip "Sports: How Much Is Too Much?" Video from KCRA.com (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vrP68OD355w>) and video projection

You have a chance to watch three digital texts. Take whatever notes will help you with your research. You may watch the videos two or three times each.

Task 6

Suggested Teacher Prompt:

“Listen, your task is clear. You know a lot more about sports in schools – the pros and cons, than you did yesterday. And, I know you’d write a different letter now – more informed, more expert, more compelling, more critical, than you did even twenty-four hours ago. Go to it.”

Written Prompt:

You have done more research on this issue now, and you know even more about the pros and cons of youth sports. Now, imagine that your school district is going to make a final decision about continuing to fund sports programs in the schools. You have a chance to write a letter that will be read to the mayor, printed in the paper, or presented to the head of the school board or PTA. Your letter should state a claim or thesis by taking a clear side, back it up with research, and refute the other side. Your job is to argue whether, overall, sports are good or bad for kids. Letters are really just a form of essay, so use what you know about essay writing to structure your letter. Be sure to back up your claim with reasons and evidence, supported by facts and details from multiple sources you studied and analysis of those sources. Be sure to cite important references.

Be sure to:

- Introduce your topic
- State a claim: make clear what you are arguing for or against in this letter
- Organize your reasons and supporting details in paragraphs
- Use relevant information from the sources you studied to support your claim
- Acknowledge and refute the counterclaim
- Include direct quotes from sources when appropriate
- Maintain an essayist’s tone

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- Use transitional words and phrases
- Write a conclusion

Guidelines for Administering the Task

This assessment will be an on-demand – that is, it aims to assess kids’ ability to independently read informational texts and construct a written argument that incorporates multiple sources of information. The assessment will probably take about two days, across three 50-minute class periods.

For your students, this assessment will feel like a mini research project where they will have to understand, weigh, and communicate the value of youth sports, based on the information presented in the digital and print sources.

Some Logistics:

- Day one for your class will probably be a period-long research session, with ten minutes for a fast-draft of a letter. It will start with a two-minute introductory digital text that presents the issue and frames the debate. Then, they will read two informational texts. In the last ten minutes of the period, students will write a flash essay/letter based on the information shared across the two texts.
- Your students’ day two experience will be two periods long – a research period followed by a writing period. Day two will start with a challenging grade-level text, and they will watch a series of digital video shorts on the issue. They will take any notes that feel important, and write a final essay/letter that demonstrates the critical reading, thinking, and writing skills that they have learned and practiced across the unit.
- In all, they would have read three articles, encountered several digital sources, examined some charts, and synthesized information across all of these sources to compose an initial essay/letter, and then a final, more informed, polished essay/letter. All of these artifacts together will give us a nuanced view of each student’s ability to read, understand, analyze, and incorporate informational texts as well as their ability to construct a coherent, compelling, and convincing essay.
- Teachers, it is important to note that the students will have a sheet of paper with all of the tasks described there for them. Even with these tasks outlined in writing, it is still essential for you to say some words about each task. In this document, we have some language that you might want to use when talking to students about this task. Please read through the tasks for yourself, consider our language, and think about how your students will need to hear the tasks so that they may understand them best. This step is critical to your students’ success with this assessment.
- Students will need paper, copies of the actual texts, and a sheet of tasks, or prompts. They will need all of these documents on BOTH days!

Guidelines for Task Administration- Student Directions

Day 1

Task 1

“Do Athletes Face Unnecessary Parent Pressure?” – video

Your goal is to name the central idea of this text, and indicate how it is developed with supporting ideas and evidence. To do this, you’ll want to determine the central idea, identify supporting ideas, and analyze their relationships and development in the video. When citing specific evidence, quote accurately and/or paraphrase specifically.

Task 2

“High School, College Football Comes With Risk” by Jeffrey Perkel and
“What in the Name of High School Football” by Hank Hill

You have a chance to add to your research. For the following articles, take whatever notes you think will help you with your research. You may write on the articles, as well as take notes.

Task 3

You have done some research on this issue now, and you know much more about the pros and cons of youth sports. Now, imagine that your school district is going to make a decision about continuing to fund sports programs in the schools. You have a chance to write a letter that will be read to the mayor, printed in the paper, or presented to the head of the school board or PTA. Your letter should state a claim or thesis by taking a clear side, backing it up with research, and refuting the other side. Your job is to argue whether, overall, sports are good or bad for kids. Letters are really just a form of essay, so use what you know about essay writing to structure your letter. Be sure to back up your claim with reasons and evidence, supported by facts and details, and analysis of sources from your research. Be sure to cite important references.

This letter is a quick fast draft – you’ll have a chance to extend, revise, and polish it tomorrow.

Day 2

Task 4

Text: “Are High School Sports Good For Kids?”

Read the article, “Are High School Sports Good For Kids?” Your goal is to name the central idea of this text, and indicate how it is developed with supporting ideas and evidence. To do this, you’ll want to determine the central idea, identify supporting ideas, and analyze their relationships and development in the article. When citing specific evidence, quote accurately and/or paraphrase specifically.

Task 5

Digital text collection – 3 videos:

- Video clip "Notebook: Kids and Sports" Video from CBS news
- Video clip "Report: Pressure on Teen Athletes Soars" Video from WCPO, Cincinnati,
- Video clip "Sports: How Much Is Too Much?" Video from KCRA.com

You have a chance to watch three digital texts. Take whatever notes will help you with your research. You may watch the videos two or three times each.

Task 6

You have done more research on this issue now, and you know even more about the pros and cons of youth sports. Now, imagine that your school district is going to make a final decision about continuing to fund sports programs in the schools. You have a chance to write a letter that will be read to the mayor, printed in the paper, or presented to the head of the school board or PTA. Your letter should state a claim or thesis by taking a clear side, backing it up with research, and refuting the other side. Your job is to argue whether, overall, sports are good or bad for kids. Letters are really just a form of essay, so use what you know about essay writing to structure your letter. Be sure to back up your claim with reasons and evidence, supported by facts and details from multiple sources you studied and analysis of those sources. Be sure to cite important references.

Be sure to:

- Introduce your topic
- State a claim: make clear what you are arguing for or against in this letter
- Organize your reasons and supporting details in paragraphs
- Use relevant information from the sources you studied to support your claim
- Acknowledge and refute the counterclaim
- Include direct quotes from sources when appropriate
- Maintain an essayist’s tone
- Use transitional words and phrases
- Write a conclusion



GRADE 8 LITERACY: TCRWP NONFICTION
READING AND ARGUMENT WRITING
UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING (UDL)
PRINCIPLES

**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing ELA/ Grade 8
Common Core Learning Standards/
Universal Design for Learning**

The goal of using Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) is to provide the highest academic standards to all of our students. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a set of principles that provides teachers with a structure to develop their instruction to meet the needs of a diversity of learners. UDL is a research-based framework that suggests each student learns in a unique manner. A one-size-fits-all approach is not effective to meet the diverse range of learners in our schools. By creating options for how instruction is presented, how students express their ideas, and how teachers can engage students in their learning, instruction can be customized and adjusted to meet individual student needs. In this manner, we can support our students to succeed in the CCLS.

Below are some ideas of how this Common Core Task is aligned with the three principles of UDL; providing options in representation, action/expression, and engagement. As UDL calls for multiple options, the possible list is endless. Please use this as a starting point. Think about your own group of students and assess whether these are options you can use.

REPRESENTATION: *The “what” of learning.* How does the task present information and content in different ways? How students gather facts and categorize what they see, hear, and read. How are they identifying letters, words, or an author's style?

In this task, teachers can...

- ✓ **Provide graphic organizers and templates for data collection and organizing information** that highlight main idea and key details, support note taking for videos, summarizing, supporting evidence, and the development of an argumentative essay,

ACTION/EXPRESSION: *The “how” of learning.* How does the task differentiate the ways that students can express what they know? How do they plan and perform tasks? How do students organize and express their ideas?

In this task, teachers can...

- ✓ **Facilitate managing information and resources** by providing graphic organizers, templates, and checklists that focus on self-monitoring for organizing and editing the writing of argumentative essays focusing on the advantages and disadvantages of youth sports.

ENGAGEMENT: *The “why” of learning.* How does the task stimulate interest and motivation for learning? How do students get engaged? How are they challenged, excited, or interested?

In this task, teachers can...

- ✓ **Engage learners in assessment discussions of what constitutes excellence and generate relevant examples** through the use of peer sharing and positive feedback of models of excellence based on preset guidelines to foster authentic communication between teacher and students.

Visit <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/CommonCoreLibrary/default.htm> to learn more information about UDL.



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TCRWP Informational Reading and Writing Rubric-8th Grade

8 th Grade Writing Rubric Assessment for Task 6	Level 1- Novice	Level 2- Intermediate	Level 3- Proficient	Level 4- Above Proficient
<p>Makes a Claim</p> <p><i>W. Standard 1.a:</i> Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximates the statement of a claim(s), where the claim(s) may be incorrect, incoherent, or missing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The claim(s) may be jumbled, meandering, or may not stake a position on the topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> States a crystallized claim(s) that takes a position on the topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly states a nuanced claim(s) that takes a position on the topic.
<p>Addresses an Alternate View</p> <p><i>W. Standard 1.a:</i> Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May state a claim but does not seem to acknowledge other possible views. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seems to recognize that there is an alternate view, but grants it almost no attention or respect. May mention the alternate view but then immediately reject it without explaining why. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledges that there's an alternate view and may provide some backing for that view, but doesn't look at it analytically. Raises it only to discount it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows some attempt to give respectful attention to, or wrestle with, an opposing view. May acknowledge the other view's validity, while still arguing that the writer's own view is stronger.
<p>Focuses on the Claim</p> <p><i>W. Standard 1.a:</i> Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attempts a focus that supports the claim(s), but drifts away from the primary focus multiple times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mostly maintains a focus that supports the claim(s), but may become unfocused in a couple parts of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintains a focus that supports the claim(s). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintains a focus that both supports the claims(s) and skillfully balances between claim(s), counterclaims,

TCRWP Informational Reading and Writing Rubric-8th Grade

opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.	throughout the piece.	piece.		reasons and evidence.
<p>Structure— Organizes Information</p> <p><i>W. Standard 1.a:</i> Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizes the essay roughly into reasons/evidence, few of which are supported by facts and details, and are presented in an order that may not be logical or cohesive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizes the essay into reasons/evidence, some of which are supported by facts and details. Reasons are presented in an order that supports the claim. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizes the essay into reasons/evidence, each of which is supported by facts and details. Reasons are presented in a logical order that supports the claim. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizes the essay into reasons/evidence, each of which is supported by significant facts and details. Reasons are presented in a logical order that supports the claim.
<p>Structure— Introduction</p> <p><i>W. Standard 1.a:</i> Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jumps directly into the supports of the claim(s), bypassing the establishment of a clear introduction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gestures at constructing an introduction that both orients the reader with the topic and makes a claim(s). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orients the reader with an introduction to the topic and makes a claim(s). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orients the reader with a compelling introduction to the topic and establishes the claim(s).
<p>Structure— Conclusion</p> <p><i>W. Standard 1.e:</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a concluding statement or section that does 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a concluding statement or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a concluding statement or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a concluding statement or section

TCRWP Informational Reading and Writing Rubric-8th Grade

<p>Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.</p>	<p>not clearly connect to the original claim, or conclusion is not present.</p>	<p>section that attempts to circle back to, extend, or reflect on the original claim.</p>	<p>section that circles back to, extends, or reflects on the original claim.</p>	<p>that circles back to and extends or reflects on the original claim, and may also relate or connect it to a larger audience.</p>
<p>Elaboration— Provides Evidence</p> <p><i>W. Standard 1.b:</i> Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes information that may provide support of the claim(s), but is not always drawn from relevant sources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes accurate information from relevant sources to support some claim(s). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes accurate information from relevant sources to support most or all claim(s). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes accurate and significant information from relevant sources to support most or all claim(s). Most likely analyzes these sources for validity and bias.
<p>Elaboration—Use of Quotations</p> <p><i>W. Standard 1.b:</i> Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes no direct quotations or quotations seem unconnected to author’s claim(s). May instead make general references to the texts as a whole. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes at least one direct quotation. Quotation may not clearly enhance or support the author’s claim(s). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes direct quotations that support the author’s claim(s). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes direct quotations that enhance and support the author’s claim(s).

TCRWP Informational Reading and Writing Rubric-8th Grade

<p>Craft—Tone/Style</p> <p><i>W. Standard 1.d:</i> Establish and maintain a formal style.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creates an informal tone and style inappropriate to the genre of essays and formal letters, and may cross over into the style of other genres. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attempts to establish and maintain an essayist’s tone and style appropriate to the genre of essays and formal letters, and may be inconsistent between informal and formal style. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes and maintains an essayist’s tone and style appropriate to the genre of essays and formal letters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes and maintains an essayist’s tone and style appropriate to the genre of essays and formal letters, while adhering to a tone that is calibrated to the intended audience.
<p>Craft—Transitions</p> <p><i>W. Standard 1.c:</i> Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lacks transitional phrases or includes only lowest-level transitional phrases, such as for example or also. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes some transitional phrases, such as moreover and nevertheless. May use these mostly to connect between sections or paragraphs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently and effectively uses transitional phrases, such as moreover and nevertheless, to clarify claims, counterclaims and their supporting reasons/evidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses transitional phrases, such as moreover and nevertheless, to clarify claims, counterclaims and their supporting reasons/evidence and uses transitional phrases (going back to, returning to, further support for) to link non-adjacent parts of the essay.

Scoring Guide:

In each row, circle the descriptor in the column that matches the student work. Total the number of points according to the guidelines below. Use the provided table to score each student on scale from 0 – 4.

For each response in column one, students receive one point.

TCRWP Informational Reading and Writing Rubric-8th Grade

For each response in column two, students receive two points.
 For each response in column three, students receive three points.
 For each response in column four, students receive four points.

Scoring Table:

Number of Points	Scaled Score
No response	0
1-14 points	1
15-24 points	2
25-34 points	3
35-40 points	4

8 th Grade Reading Rubric Assessment for Tasks 4&6	Level 1- Novice	Level 2- Intermediate	Level 3- Proficient	Level 4- Above Proficient
<p>Citation</p> <p><i>R.I. Standard 1:</i> Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <p><i>Should be assessed in the research-based essay (task 6 in this assessment)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May refer to the text but not to any specific section; may discuss the topic with no reference to the text. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May cite evidence that is somewhat connected to an analysis or may paraphrase from the text to support a theory about the text. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cites textual evidence that is clearly supportive of an analysis of the text. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accurately cites several pieces of textual evidence that clearly support an analysis of the text.
<p>Central Idea</p> <p><i>R.I. Standard 2:</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When asked to summarize a text by determining the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When asked to summarize a text by determining the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When asked to summarize a text by determining the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When asked to summarize a text by determining the

TCRWP Informational Reading and Writing Rubric-8th Grade

<p>Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.</p> <p><i>Should be assessed in the reading response summary (task 4 in this assessment)</i></p>	<p>central idea, identifying supporting details, and analyzing their relationships and development, the reader identifies a minor point or detail from the text.</p>	<p>central idea, identifying supporting details, and analyzing their relationships and development, the reader states an idea that is less central, overly broad, or not accountable to the whole of the text.</p>	<p>central idea, identifying supporting details, and analyzing their relationships and development, the reader states a central idea of the text.</p>	<p>central idea, identifying supporting details, and analyzing their relationships and development, the reader chooses to focus on a less obvious but still central idea of the text, showing how an implicit message can have a strong impact.</p>
<p>Understanding/Analysis</p> <p><i>R.I. Standard 1:</i> Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <p><i>Should be assessed in the reading response summary (task 4 in this assessment)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May refer only to one or two parts of the text without an attempt to synthesize them; may rely solely on explicit facts and details. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarizes key points in the text that are explicitly stated; may rely mostly on explicit information and may not analyze the development of these points, or may analyze them incorrectly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyzes the development of central ideas in the text based on explicit and implicit messages and information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops a sophisticated analysis of the text’s explicit and implicit messages and how those messages are communicated through key ideas and details.

TCRWP Informational Reading and Writing Rubric-8th Grade

<p>Support</p> <p><i>R.I. Standard 2:</i> Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.</p> <p><i>Should be assessed in the reading response summary task 4 in this assessment)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When doing the above, the reader may restate information from the text without explaining its connection to a central idea. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When doing the above, the reader explains how one or two key details support a central idea; may show a partial or inaccurate analysis of how those details are supportive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When doing the above, the reader analyzes how a central idea is developed across the text through the use of supporting details. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When doing the above, the reader analyzes how a central idea, perhaps a less obvious one, is developed. He or she may also critique the text, noting where the idea is less developed.
<p>Summarizing</p> <p><i>R.I. Standard 2:</i> Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.</p> <p><i>Should be assessed in the reading response summary (task 4 in this assessment)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That is, the reader may recount parts of the text but fails to synthesize them into a summary. Alternately, the reader states an idea from the article but does not use the text to support this idea. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That is, the reader summarizes the text, but leaves out key elements or includes inaccuracies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That is, the reader summarizes the text accurately but sparsely. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That is, the reader provides an accurate and complete summary of the whole of the text.

Scoring Guide:

TCRWP Informational Reading and Writing Rubric-8th Grade

In each row, circle the descriptor in the column that matches the student work. Total the number of points according to the guidelines below. Use the provided table to score each student on scale from 0 – 4.

For each response in column one, students receive one point.

For each response in column two, students receive two points.

For each response in column three, students receive three points.

For each response in column four, students receive four points.

Scoring Table:

Number of Points	Scaled Score
No response	0
1-7 points	1
8-12 points	2
13-17 points	3
18-20 points	4



GRADE 8 LITERACY: TCRWP NONFICTION

READING AND ARGUMENT WRITING

ANNOTATED STUDENT WORK

This section contains annotated student work, a summary of student performance, and instructional implications for students in both reading and writing. Task 6 is annotated and scored based on the 8th grade TCRWP Writing Rubric to demonstrate students' writing performance. Task 2 is annotated and scored based on 8th grade TCRWP Reading Rubric to demonstrate students' reading comprehension.

Note: To align with the CCSS (R.I. Standard 10) TCRWP annotated and scored the student work from Task 4, which has students read and summarize a grade-level complex text. However, TCRWP recommends that teachers also look at their students' work from Task 2, in which they read and summarize an easier text. This will give richer information about each student and help to separate their decoding and vocabulary skills from their comprehension and summarizing skills.

**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student A**

Scaled Score—Level 4 (Above Proficient) Writing, Level 4 (Above Proficient) Reading

8th Grade Writing Sample

Dear Mayor Bloomberg,

For many young people in America, sports are their dreams and hopes. And this is not without reason. Research has shown that children who participate in athletics are happier and more goal-driven than their non-athletic peers. High school athletics are still a highly beneficial activity for young people everywhere, and this is why it is important for sports programs across the country to stay right where they are. Sports programs should be kept in high schools because they have a positive effect on academics, they improve determination, and they bring people together.

According to the article Are High School Sports Good for Kids?, over 5 million young people in America play high school sports each year. In Michigan alone almost 300,000 play every year. And the potential education benefits skyrocket with more adolescents participating. In Jesuit High School, a coach states that when kids play sports, it has a positive effect on grades. In fact, when the season ends, grades actually tend to drop as kids are less excited and motivated for their life in and out of school. Not to mention the many sports scholarships colleges offer. Usually, altogether, doing sports has a positive effect on teenagers across the nation.

While many claim that sports are negative for young people, with many injuries and wrong lessons, I find that sports are actually very rewarding for young people. Jeffrey Perkel in his article, "High, School, College Football Comes With Risk," describes how football can be particularly dangerous. But he doesn't describe the many sports that are much less dangerous, or the dangers of obesity, inactivity, and loneliness. Some say that children are being taught that winning is the only thing that matters, and it is true that in recent society there has been an emphasis on winning. It is also said kids who are enveloped in pressure stemming from sports are more likely to "burn out sooner," but a study in Michigan reveals that kids who play sports actually have more aspirations and are more likely to set and achieve goals. This highlights how though impressionable kids may be being taught questionable lessons, the journey they take to winning is much more rewarding.

The National Federation of State High School Activity Associations promotes "participation and sportsmanship" which helps to "develop good citizens through interscholastic activities which provide equitable opportunities, positive recognition, and learning experiences to students while maximizing the achievement of educational goals." This quote illustrates how sports and teamwork in young people are a national effort, a successful one too.

As can be seen, I have revealed the positive benefits of athletics to young people across the country. Confidence, hard work, and close friendships are only a

Comment [KF1]: Structure—Introduction, Level 4: Orients the reader with a compelling introduction to the topic and establishes the claim (W.8.1a).

Makes a Claim, Level 4: Clearly states a nuanced claim that takes a position on the topic (W.8.1a).

Comment [KF2]: Structure—Organizes Information, Level 4: Organizes the essay into reasons/evidence, each of which is supported by significant facts and details. Reasons are presented in a logical order that supports the claim (W.8.1a).

Informational Reading—Citation, Level 4: The reader accurately cites textual evidence to clearly support his/her analysis of the text (RL.8.1).

Comment [KF3]: Addresses an Alternate View, Level 4: Shows some attempt to give respectful attention to, or wrestle with, an opposing view, acknowledging the other view's validity while still arguing that the writer's own view is stronger (W.8.1a).

Focuses on the Claim, Level 4: Maintains a focus that both supports the claims and establishes a clear relational focus between the claim, counterclaims, reasons and evidence (W.8.1a).

Elaboration—Provides Evidence, Level 4: Includes accurate and significant information from relevant sources to support all claims. Analyzes some of these sources for validity and bias (W.8.1b).

Craft—Transitions, Level 4: Consistently and effectively uses transitional phrases to clarify claims, counterclaims and their supporting reasons/evidence. In this part, uses "While many claim... I find..." "Some say... It is also said that... but..." and "This highlights..." (W.8.1c).

Comment [KF4]: Elaboration—Use of Quotations, Level 4: Includes direct quotations that enhance and support the author's claim (W.8.1b).

**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student A**

few lessons sports teaches to young people. So keep the sports programs, and keep the wonderful cycle going.

Thank you.
Sincerely,
Olivia

Comment [KF5]:
Craft—Tone/Style, Level 4: Establishes and maintains a style appropriate to the genre of essays and letters, while adhering to a tone that is calibrated to the intended audience (W.8.1d).

Structure—Conclusion, Level 3: Provides a concluding statement or section that circles back to, extends, or reflects on the original claim (W.8.1e).

Summary:

This student is a level 4 (Above Proficient) writer, who is able to write a clearly organized letter in support of a nuanced claim. He/she orients the reader with a compelling introduction and establishes his/her claim, and then supports the claim with clear reasons, each of which is supported by clearly cited quotes and facts pulled from his/her research. The writer raises and addresses counterclaims, and uses transitional phrases to navigate smoothly between claims, counterclaims, and supporting evidence. The tone is consistent and formal throughout the letter, and he/she concludes with a paragraph that circles back to her original claim, though it does not extend it.

Criterion and Score Point	Evidence	Instructional Next Steps: To meet CCLS the student needs to:
Makes a Claim 4 Above Proficient	The writer clearly states a nuanced claim that takes a position on the topic.	The student has met and exceeded CCLS.
Addresses an Alternate View 4 Above Proficient	The writer shows some attempt to give respectful attention to, or wrestle with, an opposing view, acknowledging the other view's validity while still arguing that the writer's own view is stronger.	The student has met and exceeded the CCLS. A next step might be to teach the student how to give even more weight to the opposing side before arguing against it, to make his/her own argument seem even stronger.
Focuses on the Claim 4 Above Proficient	The writer maintains a focus that both supports the claims and establishes a clear relational focus between the claim,	The student has met and exceeded the CCLS.

**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student A**

	counterclaims, reasons and evidence.	
Structure—Organizes Information 4 Above Proficient	The writer organizes the essay into reasons/evidence, each of which is supported by significant facts and details. Reasons are presented in a logical order that supports the claim.	The student has met and exceeded the CCLS.
Structure—Introduction 4 Above Proficient	The writer orients the reader with a compelling introduction to the topic and establishes the claim.	The student has met and exceeded CCLS.
Structure—Conclusion 3 Proficient	The writer provides a concluding statement that circles back to the original claim.	The student has met the CCLS. The next step might be to teach the student to reflect on or extend her original claim in her conclusion, and to possibly relate or connect it to a larger audience.
Elaboration—Provides Evidence 4 Above Proficient	The writer includes accurate and significant information from relevant sources to support all claims and analyzes some of these sources for validity and bias.	The student has met and exceeded the CCLS.
Elaboration—Use of Quotations 4 Above Proficient	The writer includes direct quotations that enhance and support his/her claim.	The student has met the CCLS.

**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student A**

<p>Craft—Tone/Style 4 Above Proficient</p>	<p>The writer establishes and maintains a style appropriate to the genre of essays and letters, while adhering to a tone that is calibrated to the intended audience.</p>	<p>The student has met the CCLS.</p>
<p>Craft—Transitions 3 Proficient</p>	<p>The writer consistently and effectively uses transitional phrases to clarify claims, counterclaims and their supporting reasons/evidence.</p>	<p>The student has met the CCLS.</p> <p>The next step might be to teach the student to use transitional phrases such as going back to, returning to, and further support for, to link non-adjacent parts of the essay.</p>

**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student A**

8th Grade Reading Summary Sample

In Daniel Gould’s “Are High School Sports Good For Kids?” Daniel’s central ideas is, though highschool sports increase educational aspirations, education is more important then sports anyday. I believe this because in the text, Daniel states, (after reffering to why high school sports are desired) “their (highschoolers) education objectives always come first.”

The text also describes how highschool sports increase player’s educational objectives. Gould states “high school sports are an intergral part of the fabric of Americans society,” and “maximizes the achievement of educational goals.” High school sports help students get “closer ties to school” and therefore become better students. Studies have also shown that children who participate in sports “increase educational aspirations.” Overall playing sports helps kids educationally.

Though sports benefits players educationally, some players are over-achievers and emphasize winning a lot. Those students present problems educationally. Sometimes they are so focused on winning “the educational objectives for involvement are forgotten.” This is very important because it is a downside to the privledge of highschool sports, when players are too focused on winning and not focused enough on education.

Daniel Gould believes education always comes first. Though winning is very important, the real thing you gain is education. Sports help kids in highschool achedemically, and should be there so everyone can participate. Daniel believes that the educational benefit of sports is important, yet education with or without should always come first.

Summary:

The reader is a solid level 4 (Above Proficient) reader, according to the reading rubric. He/she not only provides an accurate and complete summary of the whole of the text, but he/she also develops a sophisticated analysis of the text’s explicit and implicit messages using key ideas and details to support his/her idea.

Comment [LM6]:
Central Idea, Level 4: The reader chooses to focus on a less obvious but still central idea of the text, showing how an implicit message can have a strong impact (R.I.8.2).

Comment [LM7]:
Understanding/Analysis, Level 4: The reader develops a sophisticated analysis of the text’s explicit and implicit messages and how those messages are communicated through key ideas and details (R.I.8.1).

Comment [LM8]:
Support, Level 4: The reader analyzes how a central idea, perhaps a less obvious one, is developed (R.I.8.2).

Criterion and Score Point	Evidence	Instructional Next Steps: To meet CCLS the student needs to:
Citation 4 Above Proficient	The reader accurately cites several pieces of textual evidence to clearly support his/her analysis of the text.	The student has met and exceeded CCLS.

**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student A**

<p>Central Idea 4 Above Proficient</p>	<p>The reader chooses to focus on a less obvious but still central idea of the text, showing how an implicit message can have a strong impact.</p>	<p>The student has met and exceeded CCLS.</p>
<p>Understanding/Analyses 4 Above Proficient</p>	<p>Develops a sophisticated analysis of the text's explicit and implicit messages and how those messages are communicated through key ideas and details.</p>	<p>The student has met and exceeded CCLS.</p>
<p>Support 4 Above Proficient</p>	<p>The reader analyzes how a central idea, perhaps a less obvious one, is developed.</p>	<p>The student has met and exceeded CCLS. You might teach the student to also critique the text if applicable, noting where the idea is less developed.</p>
<p>Summarizing 4 Above Proficient</p>	<p>The reader provides an accurate and complete summary of the whole of the text.</p>	<p>The student has met and exceeded CCLS.</p>

**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student B**

Scaled Score—Level 3 (Proficient) Writing, Level 3 (Proficient) Reading

8th Grade Writing Sample

Dear Mayor Bloomberg,

Every Spring, kids line up around my school gym, anxious, excited looks across their faces. Everyone knows from their expressions what this day is—Track and Field tryouts. As Spring turns into summer, the magic and excitement of the kids and team never dies. The mood at Clinton is always brighter during sports seasons.

Although school sports can cause injuries and anxiety, they are extremely desirable for young people across America. I strongly believe in keeping school sports at my school, because it benefits moods, grades, and health in every way.

Reporter Katie Couric states that school sports help children gain confidence, and make new friends. Studies have shown that by simply hitting a golfball, tossing a ball in a hoop, and running bases can help you connect more with people. Couric says, “Get in the game’ Which is, after all, an important lesson for people at all ages.”

Playing school sports also has a positive effect on grades. While many people wonder ‘how much is too much?’ balancing sports and grades helps kids focus. A high school basketball coach says, “When the season ends, grades drop.” He feels like kids have no motivation when they are not playing sports.

So Mayor Bloomberg, please understand that without school sports, many children would feel lost, because they are not just losing and activity they love, but also the many benefits that come with it.

Comment [LM1]:
Structure—Introduction, Level 4: The writer orients the reader with a compelling introduction to the topic (W.8.1a).

Comment [LM2]:
Craft—Transitions, Level 3: The writer uses transitional phrases, such as moreover and nevertheless, to clarify claims, counterclaims and their supporting reasons/evidence (W.8.1c).

Comment [LM3]:
Makes a Claim, Level 4: The writer clearly states a nuanced claim that takes a position on her topic (W.8.1a).

Comment [LM4]:
Structure—Organizes Information, Level 3: The writer organizes the essay into reasons/evidence, each of which is supported by facts and details (W.8.1a).

Comment [LM5]:
Elaboration, Level 3: The writer includes direct quotations that support his/her claim (W.8.1b).

Comment [LM6]:
Addresses an Alternate View, Level 3: The writer acknowledges that there’s an alternate view and provides some backing for that view, but doesn’t look at it analytically (W.8.1a).

Craft—Tone/Style, Level 3: The writer establishes and maintains an essayist’s tone and style appropriate to the genre of essays and formal letters (W.8.1d).

Focuses on the Claim, Level 4: Maintains a focus that both supports the claims(s) and skillfully balances between claim(s), counterclaims, reasons and evidence. (W.8.1a).

Comment [LM7]:
Elaboration—Provides Evidence, Level 3: The writer includes accurate information from relevant sources to support most or all claim(s) (W.8.1b).

Comment [LM8]:
Informational Reading—Citation, Level 4: The reader accurately cites textual evidence to clearly support his/her analysis of the text (RI.8.1).

Comment [LM9]:
Structure—Conclusion, Level 3: Provides a concluding statement or section that circles back to the original claim (W.8.1e).

**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student B**

Summary:

This student is a level 3 (Proficient) writer, who is able to write a clearly organized letter in support of a nuanced claim. He/she orients the reader with a compelling introduction and establishes his/her claim, and then supports the claim with clear reasons, each of which is supported by clearly cited quotes and facts pulled from his/her research. The tone is consistent throughout the letter, and he/she concludes with a paragraph that circles back to her original claim, though it does not extend it.

Criterion and Score Point	Evidence	Instructional Next Steps: To meet CCLS the student needs to:
Makes a Claim 4 Above Proficient	The writer clearly states a nuanced claim that takes a position on the topic.	The student has met and exceeded CCLS.
Addresses an Alternate View 3 Proficient	The writer acknowledges that there's an alternate view and provides some backing for that view, but doesn't look at it analytically.	The student has met the CCLS. The next step might be to teach the student to analyze the alternate view, giving it respectful attention or wrestling with it.
Focuses on the Claim 4 Above Proficient	Throughout the piece, the writer maintains a focus that both supports the claims(s) and skillfully balances between claim(s), counterclaims, reasons and evidence.	The student has met and exceeded the CCLS.

**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student B**

<p>Structure—Organizes Information</p> <p>3 Proficient</p>	<p>The writer organizes the essay into reasons/evidence, each of which is supported by facts and details. Reasons are presented in a logical order that supports the claim.</p>	<p>The student has met the CCLS.</p> <p>The next step might be to teach the reader to select the most significant facts and details to support each reason, rather than simply stating facts and details that fit.</p>
<p>Structure—Introduction</p> <p>4 Above Proficient</p>	<p>The writer orients the reader with a compelling introduction to the topic in order to establish the claim.</p>	<p>The student has met and exceeded CCLS.</p>
<p>Structure—Conclusion</p> <p>3 Proficient</p>	<p>The writer provides a concluding statement that circles back to the original claim.</p>	<p>The student has met the CCLS.</p> <p>The next step might be to teach the writer to extend and/or reflect on the original claim, and also possibly to relate or connect it to a larger audience.</p>
<p>Elaboration—Provides Evidence</p> <p>3 Proficient</p>	<p>The writer includes accurate information from relevant sources to support most or all claim(s).</p>	<p>The student has met the CCLS.</p> <p>The next step might be to teach the student to analyze sources for validity and bias.</p>
<p>Elaboration—Use of Quotations</p> <p>3 Proficient</p>	<p>The writer includes direct quotations that support his/her claim.</p>	<p>The student has met the CCLS.</p> <p>The next step might be to teach the student to choose quotes that enhance in a deliberate attempt to enhance his/her piece.</p>

**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student B**

<p>Craft—Tone/Style 3 Proficient</p>	<p>The writer establishes and maintains an essayist’s tone and style appropriate to the genre of essays and formal letters.</p>	<p>The student has met the CCLS. The next step might be to teach the student to adhere to a tone that is calibrated to the intended audience. In this case, since the audience is the mayor, the tone should be calibrated to be slightly more formal and professional.</p>
<p>Craft—Transitions 3 Proficient</p>	<p>The writer consistently and effectively uses transitional phrases, such as moreover and nevertheless, to clarify claims, counterclaims and their supporting reasons/evidence.</p>	<p>The student has met the CCLS. The next step might be to teach the student to use transitional phrases (such as going back to, returning to, or further support for) to link non-adjacent parts of the essay.</p>

**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student B**

8th Grade Reading Summary Sample

Daniel Gould's article "Are High School Sports Good For Kids?" teaches the reader the importance of high school sports. This important topic is dissected in his passage.

Comment [LM10]:
Central Idea, Level 3: The reader states a central idea of the text (R.I.8.2).

"A multiyear study conducted in Michigan has shown that children who participate in sports have increased educational aspirations, closer ties to school and increased occupational aspirations in youth," this quote from Gould's passage reflects one positive students gain when involved with sports. The positive means sports encourage kids to do better in school, and set goals for their future.

Comment [LM11]:
Support, Level 3: The reader provides details to support the main idea (R.I.8.2)

In the article "Are High School Sports Good For Kids?" Gould mentions "High School sports are an integral part of the fabric of Americans society with over 5 million youth participating in any school year." As you can see, a lot of students participate in school sports; when taken away, who knows what effect that could have on the student?

Although Daniel Gould is defending high school sports, he does mention a couple important cons that should be taken into consideration when debating this issue. One very important one is winning. "The overemphasis on winning issue is especially significant as when this occurs the educational objectives for involvement are often forgotten." Competitiveness can get out of hand sometimes, the solution is to make sure the coaches/parents/teachers remind the students not to get too caught up in it.

Comment [LM12]:
Understanding/Analysis, Level 3: Analyzes the development of central ideas in the text based on explicit and implicit messages and information (R.I.8.1).

The importance of high school sports is dealt with in the article "Are High School Sports Good for Kids?" by Daniel Gould. He brings up excellent points/ideas on why they are good, and a couple of important points on why they aren't always the best.

**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student B**

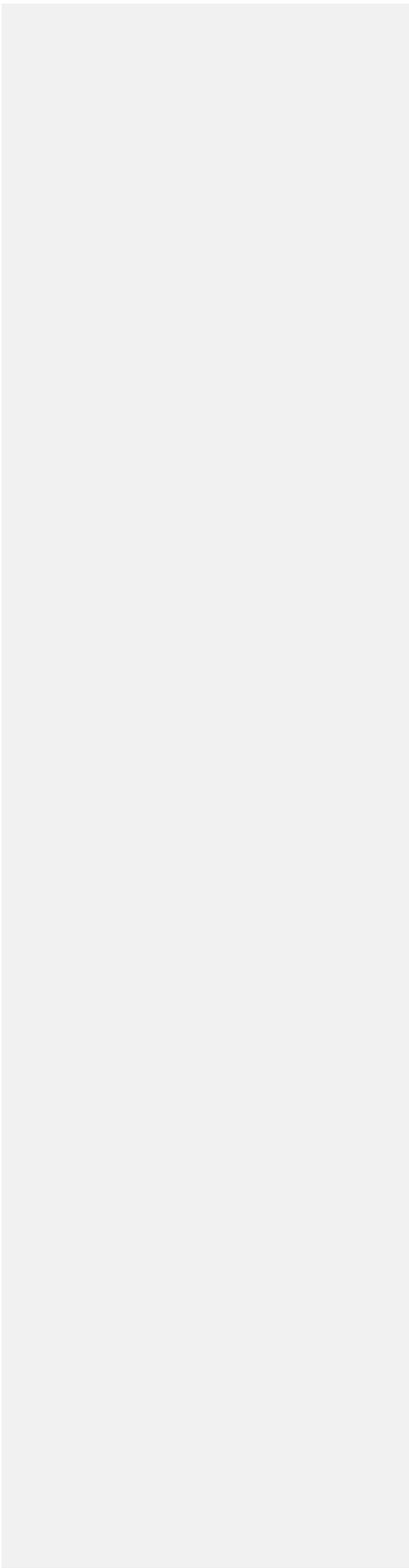
Summary:

The reader is a solid level 3 (Proficient) reader, according to the reading rubric. He/she provides an accurate and complete summary of the whole of the text while providing details to support the main idea.

Criterion and Score Point	Evidence	Instructional Next Steps: To meet CCLS the student needs to:
Citation 4 Above Proficient	The reader accurately cites several pieces of textual evidence to clearly support his/her analysis of the text.	The student has met and exceeded the CCLS.
Central Idea 3 Proficient	The reader states a central idea of the text.	The student has met the CCLS. You might teach the student to focus on a less obvious, but still central idea of the text.
Understanding/Analysis 3 Proficient	Analyzes the development of central ideas in the text based on explicit and implicit messages and information.	The student has met the CCLS. You might teach the student to develop a more sophisticated analysis of the text by noting the implicit messages that are communicated through key ideas and details in a given text.
Support 3 Proficient	The reader analyzes how a central idea is developed across the text through the use of supporting details.	The student has met and exceeded the CCLS. You might teach the student to also critique the text if applicable, noting where the idea is

**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student B**

		less developed.
Summarizing 4 Above Proficient	The reader provides an accurate and complete summary of the whole of the text.	The student has met and exceeded the CCLS.



**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student C**

Scaled Score—Level 2 (Intermediate) Writing, Level 2 (Intermediate) Reading

8th Grade Writing Sample

Dear Mayor Bloomberg,

I belive sports are sports, you will get stressed and possibly injured. Young adults have the power to say their so stressed that they can't play. Young adults have the power to persuew their dreams, if its sports; then they should know the harms that come with it.

We have stressed the idea of doing sports will get an amazing schollership. Stressing the fact of our economy today, a lot of parents will stress their teens of doing what-ever it takes to get that schollership.

Why not make other good schollerships for other extra curricular activities? So we don't stress sports so much, till another injury?

For example it says in the text "3% of basketball players get scollerships." While in another text says "basketball is one of the most injuries." Why are they so determined to a point of hurting themselves?

Parents, popularity, even how it makes them feel. As it says in a video that "10% of young adults are embaresd how their parents act at games." That has a huge effect. Furthermore it also is stated it makes young adults to get out and just play.

Including the new study stated from one video in particular states, "New study shows students gain confidence and friendships, and the young adults that don't partisipate normally aren't as social and constantly alone."

Taking away sports is to drasic, some students use it to unwind. While some say its stressfull, I get the feeling those young adults who say that are oviously being pressured.

Sports arn't to be blamed for stress, its the parent that forced them to do it, the self esteem of the young adult, and not enough hours to balance school, sports, and just time to relax.

As Hank Hill stated, "Good teachers benefit all students. Varsity sports only benefit some."

To me that says, having good coaches and teachers to support and care for the team will let their students thrive. While others who were forced to do sports activities are not benefited as much.

Comment [LM1]:
Makes a Claim, Level 2: The writer's claim appears to be jumbled and meandering. (W.8.1a).

Comment [LM2]:
Structure—Introduction, Level 2: The writer gestures toward constructing an introduction that both orients the reader with the topic and makes a claim(s) (W.8.1a).

Comment [KF3]: **Craft—Transitions:** The writer lacks transitional phrases or includes only lowest-level transitional phrases, such as for example or also (W.8.1c).

Comment [LM4]:
Addresses an Alternate View, Level 2: The writer mentions an alternate view but then immediately reject it without explaining why (W.8.1a).

Comment [LM5]:
Elaboration—Use of Quotations, Level 2: The writer included at least one direct quotation, although the quotations included did not clearly enhance or support the author's claim(s) (W.8.1b).

Informational Reading—Citation, Level 2: The reader cites evidence that is somewhat connected to his/her analysis and paraphrases from the text to support a theory about the text (RI.8.1).

Comment [LM6]:
Structure—Organizes Information, Level 2: The writer organizes the essay into reasons/evidence, some of which are supported by facts and details (W.8.1a).

Comment [KF7]: **Craft—Tone/Style, Level 2:** The writer attempts to establish and maintain an essayist's tone and style appropriate to the genre of essays and formal letters, but is inconsistent between informal and formal style (W.8.1d).

Comment [LM8]:
Elaboration—Provides Evidence, Level 2: The writer includes accurate information from relevant sources to support some claims (W.8.1b).

Comment [LM9]:
Focuses on the Claim, Level 2: The writer becomes unfocused in a couple parts of the piece (W.8.1a).

**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student C**

Why not just make more scollerships and make it less stressful than forcing their children to do some thing they do not want to do? Like arts programs, they are disapering day by day. While some love the arts, they are getting shoved into sports. I belive there are people called born athleats, they will eat up sports because it is fun. There are such things as born artists, writers, mathematishions, even explorers! Why make young adullts be put into a categorie that they oviously don't want to be in?

All in all, if you don't stress scollerships on only sports and make schollerships for other acedemic and extra curricular activities, we would have... less stressed young adults, less injuries, less stress in homes, and more thriving students in schools.

I believe if we just do this one thing, it would make a huge difference in grades and emotional stress decline in schools across the U.S.

Comment [LM10]:
Structure—Conclusion, Level 2: The writer provides a concluding statement or section that attempts to circle back to, extend, or reflect on the original claim (W.8.1e).

Summary:

This student is a level 2 (Intermediate) writer. He or she is unable to write a clearly organized piece in order to prove a claim. Instead the writer attempts to draw from resources to raise many points about a particular topic. The piece is not focused, but there is an attempt to organize it in an essay fashion with reasons/evidence to support various claims.

Criterion and Score Point	Evidence	Instructional Next Steps: To meet CCLS the student needs to:
Makes a Claim 2 Intermediate	The writer's claim appears to be jumbled, meandering, and does not stake a clear position on the topic.	The next step might be to teach the student to identify and state a crystallized claim(s) that takes a position on the topic. This probably takes coaching the writer to write successive drafts of a claim, or to rehearse orally. Also boxing out claims in other people's work, reading them aloud. Getting the 'sound' in ones bones

**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student C**

		could help.
<p>Addresses an Alternate View</p> <p>2 Intermediate</p>	<p>The writer mentions an alternate view but then immediately reject it without explaining why.</p>	<p>The next step might be to teach the student to provide some backing for the alternate view as well the the writer's own stance. This probably involves explicitly telling the writer that this matters, and teaching actually towards the level 4 work of not only mentioning but also respecting the opposition. Some work with debate could help.</p>
<p>Focuses on the Claim</p> <p>2 Intermediate</p>	<p>The writer mostly maintains a focus that supports the claim(s), but does become unfocused in a couple parts of the piece.</p>	<p>The next step is to teach the student to reread his/her work and note places where he/she does support the claim, and places where she/he provides information that 'lies flat' instead of being angled. More sentences that 'unpack' information and link it to the claim can help, perhaps starting with, 'This shows...'</p>
<p>Structure— Organizes Information</p> <p>2 Intermediate</p>	<p>The writer organizes the essay into reasons/evidence, some of which are supported by facts and details.</p>	<p>The next step might be to teach the student to support all of his/her reasons/evidence with facts and details. Just as a prosecutor in a court case needs to provide evidence, a writer in an</p>

**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student C**

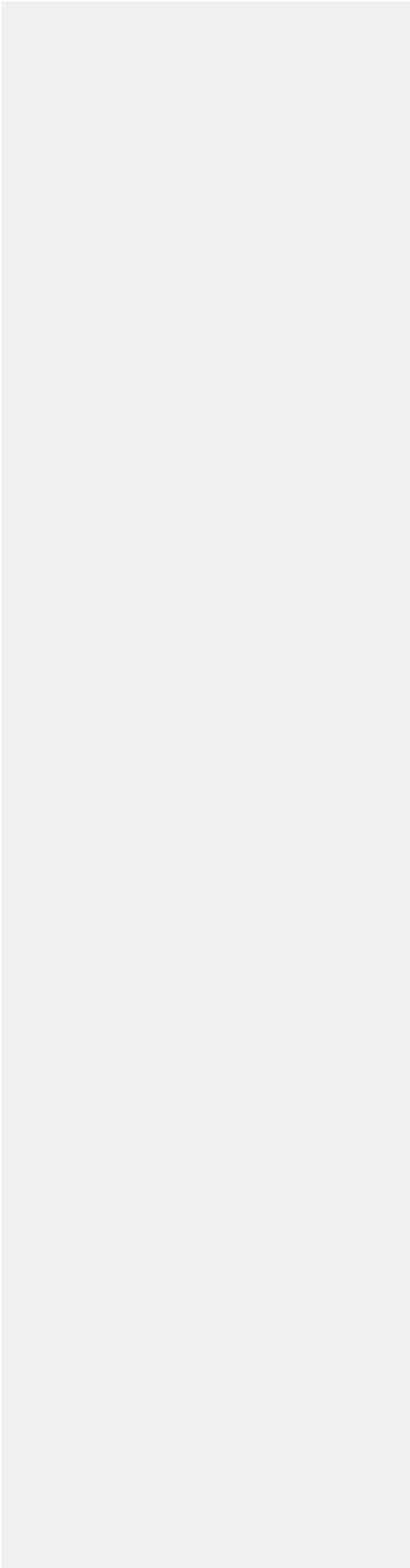
		argument is expected to substantiate claims. Partners can play jury, helping the writer see unsubstantiated claims. It is also important (and challenging) to help writers present reasons in a logical order, which is usually easiest when all the reasons are planned from the start and go together (by time, by nature, by ranking from big to small, least to most important etc.)
Structure— Introduction 2 Intermediate	The writer gestures toward constructing an introduction that both orients the reader with the topic and makes a claim(s).	The next step might be to teach the student to write an introduction that makes a claim and clearly orients the reader to the topic. Mentor texts can help, even for something as small as an introduction. A writer in the class who is strong at this can coach others.
Structure—Conclusion 2 Intermediate	The writer provides a concluding statement or section that attempts to circle back to, extend, or reflect on the original claim.	The next step is to teach the student to include a concluding statement that effectively circles back to, extends, or reflect on the original claim. Again, mentor texts or a class expert can help.

**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student C**

<p>Elaboration—Provides Evidence</p> <p>2 Intermediate</p>	<p>The writer includes accurate information from relevant sources to support some claims.</p>	<p>The next step is to teach the writer to include accurate information from relevant sources to support most or all claims. Writers may need more help taking notes prior to writing. Sources can often include classmates, and that gives a real world feel to this expectation.</p>
<p>Elaboration—Use of Quotations</p> <p>2 Intermediate</p>	<p>The writer includes at least one direct quotation, although the quotations included did not clearly enhance or support the author's claim(s).</p>	<p>The next step may be to teach the student to include direct quotations that support his or her claim(s). There is actually a lot to learn about how to do this, and writers can engage in a whole little inquiry, collecting ways to do this, categorizing them.</p>
<p>Craft—Tone/Style</p> <p>2 Intermediate</p>	<p>The writer attempts to establish and maintain an essayist's tone and style appropriate to the genre of essays and formal letters, but is inconsistent between informal and formal style.</p>	<p>The next step is to teach the student to clearly establish and maintain an essayist's tone and appropriate style throughout his or her piece. Writers can learn about register, and be coached to alter their register for different audiences. Many but not all essays are formal register.</p>

**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student C**

Craft—Transitions 1 Novice	The writer lacks transitional phrases or includes only lowest-level transitional phrases, such as for example or also.	The next step is to teach the student to include transitional phrases, such as moreover and nevertheless, to clarify claims, counterclaims and their supporting reasons/evidence. The transitional phrases will follow work on logical order, and should be extensions of that work, or this can seem silly.
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**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student C**

8th Grade Reading Summary Sample

Are High School Sports good or bad for kids, what does Daniel Gould have to say about that. In Daniel Gould's essay "Are Highschool sports Good for Kids?" he supports his idea that they are good, mainly. This demonstrates how he supports it.

No doubt about it that Daniel Gould thinks that High School sports are good for kids. For example he states in the this article "High school sports are an integral part of the fabric of Americans society." This quote shows that Daniel thinks that High school sports are good for the American society, in addition.

I would be lying if I said that Daniel thinks that sports are a bunch of hard work for High School kids. For example he backs up that the coaches stressed winning but they never put it before personal and educational purposes. This shows that Daniel does stress that coaches put emphasis on winning but not as much as everybody thinks they do.

All in all Daniel does realize that there are put backs to highschool sports for kids but they are overall good for kids. In "Are Highschool sports good for kids? By Daniel Gould he mainly supports his idea that they are good for kids. Just like I asked in the beginning what did Daniel have to say about it?

Summary:

The reader is a solid level 2 (Intermediate) reader, according to the reading rubric. He/she summarizes the text, but leaves out key elements or includes inaccuracies. While the reader does include some evidence from the text to support his ideas, there is unevenness and the summary is missing important information from the text.

Criterion and Score Point	Evidence	Instructional Next Steps:
		To meet CCLS the student needs to:

Comment [LM11]:
Understanding/Analysis, Level 2: The reader analyzes some of the information incorrectly (RI.8.1).

Support, Level 2: The reader explains how one or two key details support a central idea; although this analysis is somewhat inaccurate (RI.8.2).

Comment [LM12]:
Central Idea, Level 3: The reader states a central idea of the text (RI.8.2).

**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student C**

<p>Citation</p> <p>2 Intermediate</p>	<p>The reader cites evidence that is somewhat connected to his/her analysis and paraphrases from the text to support a theory about the text.</p>	<p>The next step is to teach the reader to accurately cite several pieces of textual evidence to clearly support his/her analysis of the text.</p>
<p>Central Idea</p> <p>3 Proficient</p>	<p>The reader states a central idea of the text.</p>	<p>The student has met the CCLS.</p> <p>You might next teach the student to focus on a less obvious, but still central idea of the text.</p>
<p>Understanding/Analysis</p> <p>2 Intermediate</p>	<p>The reader is able to summarize key points in the text that are explicitly stated. However, he/she relies mostly on explicit information and analyzes some of the information incorrectly.</p>	<p>The next step is to teach the student to analyze the development of central ideas in the text based on explicit and implicit messages and information.</p>
<p>Support</p> <p>2 Intermediate</p>	<p>The reader explains how one or two key details support a central idea, although this analysis is somewhat inaccurate.</p>	<p>The next step is to teach the student to analyze how a central idea is developed across the text through the use of supporting details.</p>
<p>Summarizing</p> <p>2 Intermediate</p>	<p>The reader summarizes the text but leaves out key elements or includes inaccuracies.</p>	<p>The next step is to teach the student to provide an accurate and complete summary of the whole of the text.</p>

**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student D**

Scaled Score—Level 1 (Novice) Writing, Level 1 (Novice) Reading

8th Grade Writing Sample

Dear Mayor Bloomberg,

Imagine a boy waking up from a dream he just had about being a PRO basketball player and he follows it with the help of scholarships and his dream later comes true. my cousin named Juan Dominguez who is currently 18 years old is working towards making that dream come true. Of course, along with that keeping his grades up, which is great because his mind is always entertained and according to the news report, the more you play the better you hit the books!

Have you ever heard that saying “You look great, you feel great”? Well, it’s true, and can equal to a happy child! Games and sports help build up confidence, however as do other activities such as acting so where are the scholarships for that and other art programs? Yes, one of the pros to sports is that you get rewarding friendships, but same with any other art program because really, it’s all about teamwork.

As can be seen, there are a few legit and solid reasons to why following your dream is so important, and we sometimes need your help with the use of scholarships including athletics and artist.

Comment [LM1]:

Structure—Introduction, Level 1: Although an anecdote can be an effective way to start an essay, this introductory statement lacks a claim and therefore does not orient the reader to the piece (W.8.1a).

Craft—Tone/Style, Level 1: The writer creates an informal tone and style inappropriate to the genre of essays and formal letters (W.8.1d).

Comment [LM2]:

Elaboration—Provides Evidence, Level 1: The writer includes information that may provide support of the claim(s), but is not drawn from relevant sources (W.8.1b).

Comment [LM3]:

Addresses an Alternate View, Level 2: The writer seems to mention the alternate view but then immediately rejects it without explaining why (W.8.1a).

Elaboration—Use of Quotations, Level 1: The writer includes general references to the texts as a whole, with no specific quotations (W.8.1b).

Informational Reading-Citation, Level 1: The reader refers to the text but not to any specific section; may discuss the topic with no reference to the text (RI.8.1).

Comment [LM4]:

Focuses on the Claim, Level 1: The writer attempts a focus that supports the claim(s), but drifts away from the primary focus multiple times throughout the piece (W.8.1a).

Structure—Organizes Information, Level 1: The writer organizes the essay roughly into reasons/evidence, few of which are supported by facts and details, and are presented in an order that does not feel particularly logical or cohesive (W.8.1a).

Comment [LM5]:

Makes a Claim, Level 2: The writer attempts to make a claim related to the topic, although it is jumbled and unclear (W.8.1a).

Structure—Conclusion, Level 2: The writer provides a concluding statement or section that attempts to circle back to, extend, or reflect on the original claim (W.8.1e).

Craft—Transitions, Level 2: includes the transitional phrases “As can be seen.” This phrase is used to connect between paragraphs (W.8.1c).

**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student D**

Summary:

This student is a level 1 (Novice) writer. He/she is unable to write a clearly organized piece in order to prove a claim. Instead the writer attempts to draw from personal resources as well as general statements from outside sources to raise key points about a particular topic. The piece is not focused, but there is an attempt to organize it in an essay fashion with reasons/evidence to support various claims.

Criterion and Score Point	Evidence	Instructional Next Steps: To meet CCLS the student needs to:
Makes a Claim 2 Intermediate	The writer’s claim appears to be jumbled, meandering, and does not stake a clear position on the topic.	The next step might be to teach the student to identify and state a crystallized claim(s) that takes a position on the topic. Writers can be coached to try drafting a claim, reaching for the more precise and clear words possible. Don’t worry about creativity—go for clarity.
Addresses an Alternate View 2 Intermediate	The writer mentions an alternate view but then immediately rejects it without explaining why.	The next step might be to teach the student to provide some backing for the alternate view and then explain why he/she agrees or disagrees with it. Often writers simply don’t know they are expected to do this. Give the student phrases such as, ‘Some argue...’ or ‘Others say...’ Coach the writer to support the opposition in more than a sentence before

**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student D**

		rebutting, and encourage a considered rebuttal, one that shows the writer has given thought to the view. "This idea has some merit because...but in the end, I think..."
Focuses on the Claim 1 Novice	The writer attempts a focus that supports the claim(s), but drifts away from the primary focus multiple times throughout the piece	The next step might be to teach the student to maintain a focus that supports his/her claim(s) throughout the piece. The student can reread his/her work to note instances when he/she lost focus, and can try to revise to address this. The student can also support classmates working with similar challenges.
Structure— Organizes Information 1 Novice	The writer organizes the essay roughly into reasons/evidence, few of which are supported by facts and details, and are presented in an order that does not feel particularly logical or cohesive.	The next step is to teach the student to support his/her reasons/evidence with facts and details. The hardest part will be teaching the student to logically order his or her reasons in support of the claim. You could help by suggesting alternate ways the writer could do this in his/her essay, or show the writer alternate ways you could do this in your essay, naming the kinds of 'logical orders' that writers tend to rely on (sequence, ranking, kinds.)

**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student D**

<p>Structure—Introduction</p> <p>1 Novice</p>	<p>The writer jumps right into the piece.</p>	<p>The next step is to teach the student to make a claim and to find a way to orient the reader to the topic. The writer can collect instances when others orient, name what the writer has done that is transferable to another piece, and tried to write an introduction that does the same thing. For example, one option is to directly address the reader with a question. Another is to chronicle the story of how you become interested in this topic.</p>
<p>Structure—Conclusion</p> <p>2 Intermediate</p>	<p>The writer provides a concluding statement or section that attempts to circle back to, extend, or reflect on the original claim.</p>	<p>The next step might be to teach the student to include a concluding statement that effectively circles back to, extend, or reflect on the original claim. Writers can work in small groups, helping each other do this, generating several possible conclusions and then choosing the best.</p>
<p>Elaboration—Provides Evidence</p> <p>1 Novice</p>	<p>The writer includes information that may provide support of the claim(s), but is not drawn from relevant sources.</p>	<p>The next step is to teach the writer to include accurate information from relevant sources to support most or all claim(s). This will be supported by stronger note-taking work.</p>
<p>Elaboration—Use of</p>	<p>The writer includes general references to the</p>	<p>The next step is to teach the student to include</p>

**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student D**

<p>Quotations 1 Novice</p>	<p>texts as a whole, with no specific quotations.</p>	<p>direct quotations that support his or her claim(s). Partly writers need to respect the challenges in this. It is more complex than many writers realize and a small group study of quotations is helpful.</p>
<p>Craft—Tone/Style 1 Novice</p>	<p>The writer attempts to establish and maintain an essayist’s tone and style appropriate to the genre of essays and formal letters, but is inconsistent between informal and formal style.</p>	<p>The next step is to teach the student to clearly establish and maintain an essayist’s tone and style appropriate throughout his or her piece. Of course, there is no one tone that all essayists use, so the challenge is to match one’s tone to one’s purpose and audience. In a testing situation, the tone is usually formal.</p>
<p>Craft—Transitions 1 Novice</p>	<p>The pieces includes the transitional phrases “As can be seen.” This phrase is used to connect between paragraphs.</p>	<p>The next step is to teach the student to include transitional phrases, such as moreover and nevertheless, to clarify claims, counterclaims and their supporting reasons/evidence. Transition words work when they are part and parcel of a logical structure.</p>

**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student D**

8th Grade Reading Summary Sample

This article is about how school sports is good for a kid and good for a kids education. I think that school sports can help a kid do better in school. In this article "Are High School Sports good for Kids?" the author Daniel Gould believes that sport will help kids do better in school. I Do too.

Comment [LM6]:
Central Idea, Level 3: The reader states a central idea of the text (RI.8.2).

Comment [LM7]:
Support, Level 1: The reader states an idea from the article but does not use the text to support this idea (RI.8.2).

Comment [LM8]:
Understanding/Analysis, Level 1: The reader restates information from the text without explaining its connection to a central idea. (RI.8.2).

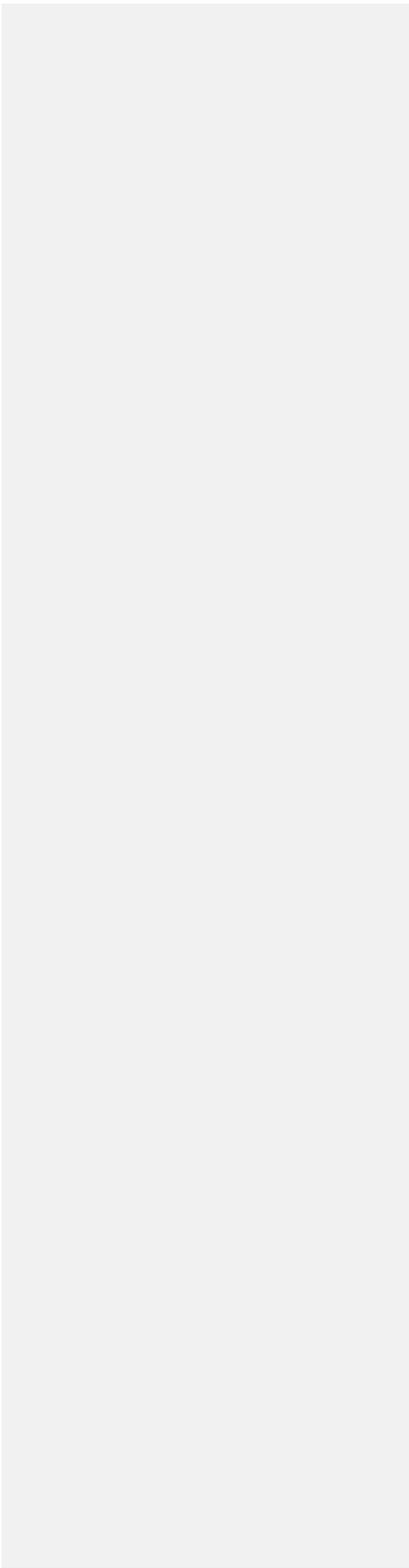
Summary:

The reader is a level 1 (Novice) reader, according to the reading rubric. He/she briefly summarizes the text, but leaves out details and key elements. While the reader does correctly name the text that he/she is summarizing, he/she does not include evidence from the text to support the main idea that he/she acknowledges from the text.

Criterion and Score Point	Evidence	Instructional Next Steps: To meet CCLS the student needs to:
Citation 1 Novice	The reader refers to the text but not to any specific section; may discuss the topic with no reference to the text.	The next step is to teach the reader to accurately cite several pieces of textual evidence that support his/her analysis of the text.
Central Idea 3 Proficient	The reader states a central idea of the text.	The student has met the CCLS. You might next teach the student to focus on a less obvious, but still central idea of the text.

**TCRWP Nonfiction Reading and Argument Writing
Annotated Student Work
Student D**

<p>Understanding/Analysis 1 Novice</p>	<p>The reader refers to only to one or two parts of the text without an attempt to synthesize them.</p>	<p>The next step is to teach the student to analyze the development of central ideas in the text based on explicit and implicit messages and information.</p>
<p>Support 1 Novice</p>	<p>The reader restates information from the text without explaining its connection to a central idea.</p>	<p>The next step is to teach the student to analyze how a central idea is developed across the text through the use of supporting details.</p>
<p>Summarizing 1 Novice</p>	<p>The reader states an idea from the article but does not use the text to support this idea.</p>	<p>The next step is to teach the student to provide an accurate and complete summary of the whole of the text.</p>





GRADE 8 LITERACY: TCRWP NONFICTION

READING AND ARGUMENT WRITING

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORTS

The instructional supports on the following pages include a unit outline with formative assessments and suggested learning activities. Please see the TCRWP Curricular calendars for full details on how this unit could be integrated into the TCRWP curriculum.

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project

Unit Outline – Grade 8 Reading-Research Clubs

INTRODUCTION:

As we have found in fiction book clubs, our middle school students often outgrow themselves very quickly when reading and talking in the company of their peers. Book clubs support both the social aspects of “getting things” done as well as analytical muscles that lead students to read in more thoughtful ways, pushing them to see and think things about their books that they have not before. This year we are suggesting that you draw on some of that enthusiasm and steer it towards the nonfiction reading work your students will be doing. If you follow the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP) curricular calendar, you will find support in facilitating this work with your students. In this unit, you’ll build on all the essential nonfiction comprehension reading skills taught in the prior TCRWP unit, and add new work that teaches students to compare and contrast texts, to analyze their claims and arguments, to investigate authors’ points of view, to critique, and to design their own independent analysis of urgent nonfiction research topics that they’ll pursue in small research groups.

The Common Core State Standards emphasize students’ abilities to not only restate the information a text teaches, but to analyze the author’s claims, and the validity of the argument presented, as does Norman Webb’s Depth of Knowledge levels. To do that kind of high level, critical analytical work, students need to read more than one text on a subject. In effect, they must become expert at gathering information *and* at analyzing how that information is conveyed, so that they can, indeed, evaluate texts rather than simply summarize them. It’s exciting intellectual work that you’ll embark on with your students—and they’ll surprise you with how critical they can be as readers and thinkers, given the opportunity, the expert instruction, and the resources to develop their own stances on important subjects.

It’s also important, for their academic and professional success, that students learn to do rapid, on-the-run research and synthesizing, rather than poring for days over the illustrations in a book, or the few paragraphs of texts in a short article. The days when students or adults spent weeks or months finding resources, and more weeks or months sifting through the parts of those resources that would most help their research, have shifted to a time now when students and adults need to be able to do research quickly and efficiently. All it takes now to look up the latest genome project or to find the number of polar animals displaced by the melting of ice caps, is the click of a button; the world is coming to think of the Internet as an eight billion page encyclopedia. Yet even the most cursory research requires certain literacy muscles: the ability to pick the key words to search, the ability to pick one source of information to trust over multiple others, the ability to make up our own mind about aspects of a topic once we’ve read enough about it. Moreover, these muscles need to be deployed with automaticity. Information now changes almost in the blink of an eye. If a student takes six weeks to research the political system of Egypt, for instance, the information gleaned at the start of the six weeks may no longer be valid by the end of the six weeks! Most of our students, of course, will be researching more stable topics, where they can find lots of information in a few well-chosen books and articles, as well as a couple of websites, but you’ll be teaching them, in this unit, to read rapidly, to evaluate and compare resources, and to construct in-depth, critical understandings of research topics that feel urgent in their fascination and their application.

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project Unit Outline – Grade 8 Reading-Research Clubs

It is also of note that this unit, like the one that came before it in the TCRWP Curricular Calendar, feeds the work your students will do not only in English Language Arts but in their content area classes. You might decide, then, that you will share one or both of these units with your Science and Social Studies colleagues and then consider how you will pace out this work across the year. Will you tackle this research clubs work first and then the following month your Science colleague will pick it up and then later Social Studies? Or perhaps while you launch the year and move into a narrative study in October, your content area counterparts could be doing some initial nonfiction reading work so it is not like a “from scratch” exercise when you begin these units of study in November and December. If you are interested in supporting this work throughout the year, the TCRWP has created separate year-long curricular plans that support a CCSS-aligned year-long reading curriculum and a year-long writing curriculum. Whatever you decide, the Common Core State Standards expect that reading and writing instruction are infused across the entire school day, so this may be a great time to pull your team together and support one another.

8th Grade Reading: Nonfiction Research Clubs

UNIT TOPIC AND LENGTH:

- Ø The length of the unit includes suggested time spent on the classroom instruction of lessons and administration of assessments. Please note that this framework does not include individual lessons.

COMMON CORE CONTENT STANDARDS:

Primary Standards:

- Ø RI.8.2 Students will determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationships to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.
- Ø RI.8.10 Students will read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grade 6-8 complexity band independently and proficiently.
- Ø W.8.1 Students will write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

Secondary Standards:

- Ø RI.8.1 Students will cite the evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- Ø RI.8.9 Students will integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.
- Ø W.8.8 Students will gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources,

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project

Unit Outline – Grade 8 Reading-Research Clubs

<p>assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and the conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.</p>	
<p>ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:</p> <p>∅ How can I read across a set of related texts on a topic of interest to me, noting and analyzing multiple perspectives and their supporting reasons, and integrating and analyzing information learned so that I can develop and effectively support my own informed opinion on my research topic?</p>	<p>GUIDING QUESTIONS:</p> <p>∅ How can I help students draw on their repertoire of nonfiction comprehension strategies in order to select and pursue a focused research topic that has multiple sides, developing expertise so that they can eventually teach others the nuances of the topic?</p> <p>∅ How can I help students look across different texts to build on their knowledge, see how the texts advance different perspectives, and do the critical reading work necessary to examine how and why each author angles a piece of writing to evoke a particular reaction from readers?</p> <p>∅ How can I help readers to develop their own informed opinion on a topic and to talk (and perhaps write) about that opinion in ways that are accountable to the evidence and persuasive to others?</p>
<p>CONTENT/SKILLS :</p> <p>This unit addresses several reading skills, including accurately summarizing nonfiction texts, integrating and analyzing information from multiple texts, investigating authors' points of view, critiquing text bias and validity, and investigating nonfiction research topics. Below, we include a breakdown of the novice, intermediate, proficient (meets standards), and above proficient levels for two of these skills, but teachers will of course want to keep all of this unit's skills in mind when planning instruction and examining student work.</p> <p>SKILL: SUMMARIZING A NONFICTION TEXT TO DETERMINE MAIN IDEAS AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION</p> <p>WHEN ASKED TO SUMMARIZE THE TEXT’S MAIN IDEAS AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION...</p> <p>Novice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reader recounts parts or copies information from the text without synthesizing it into 	

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a summary. That is, the reader produces “information in the raw” without connecting it to a central idea.

- Alternatively, the reader may refer to the text but not to any specific section of it or may discuss the topic without reference to the text, seeming to instead base the summary on prior knowledge of the topic. Or the reader may zero in on a minor point or detail from the text and treat it as the central idea, building off of it with prior knowledge to create a summary that does not align to the majority of the text.
- Alternatively, the reader correctly names an idea from the text, but does not support it with specific details, facts, quotes or examples.
- In instances when the reader does offer both a generalization and supporting specifics, the supporting specifics may be interpreted incorrectly or may not actually be illustrative of the generalization.

Intermediate:

- The reader identifies one or more ideas that are important in the text. The ideas named may be less central, overly broad, or not accountable to the whole of the text, but do gesture towards creating a theory about the text.
- The reader is likely summarizing in a way that incorporates large chunks of the text, but may still neglect or appear not to have considered some of the text. These dropped sections are likely to be less significant than at the prior level.
- The reader offers one or two specific supporting details from the text and shows how they support a central idea. These are connected to the central idea mostly accurately.
- The reader’s summary includes most of the concrete and straightforward parts of the text, though subtle details and implications may still escape him/her. It is these more subtle parts that are most likely to be included without accurate connection to the stated central idea.

Proficient:

- The reader identifies a central idea or ideas that together cover most of the information in the text. That is, the reader’s main ideas are like a tent, and most of the text fits under that tent. No significant parts of the text are left out.
- The reader may indicate the value of some pieces of information used as support, noting what makes some more reliable or compelling than others.
- The reader uses multiple pieces of information, accurately quoted or paraphrased, as examples to show that the main ideas given are in fact the primary focus of the text. The reader not only cites the information, but also analyzes it to explain how it contributes to the development of the central idea in the text.
- The reader’s summary may feel sparse or may contain some extraneous details, but there is a sense that the student has grasped most or all of the explicit ideas important to the text, and also some of the implicit ideas.

Above Proficient:

- The reader identifies a central idea that accounts for all of the important information in

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the text. The central idea given is a less obvious one than at the previous level, and speaks to the implicit, not just explicit, messages of the text.

- The reader indicates the value of specific pieces of information used as support, noting what makes some more reliable or compelling than others and showing an understanding of the differing biases, motivations, and knowledge bases of authors.
- The reader accurately cites and quotes multiple pieces of information and explains subtle as well as obvious connections between these details and the central idea.
- The reader's summary is artfully composed, covers multiple explicit and implicit ideas important to the text, and is embellished with well-chosen details.

SKILL: ANALYZING INFORMATION FROM MULTIPLE TEXTS

Novice:

- When the student is presented with several texts on the same topic, he or she notes subtopics that are addressed in both texts (especially those that are flagged with subtitles, and topic sentences). When nudged to do so, he or she can find at least one similarity and one difference in the information presented in the two write-ups on those subtopics.
- The student can also, when nudged to do so, talk about observed similarities/differences in the presentation of the content (e.g. focus, use of text features, tone, point of view), though these observations may be vague and/or not address aspects of the texts that are particularly important.
- When talking or writing about a topic, the student can take information from at least two texts that are quite different and begin to fit that information together, building almost a new text, made from selected bits of the original texts.
- When doing the above, the student is apt to mostly clump the information synthesized from the texts into logical categories.

Intermediate:

- When the student is presented with several texts on the same topic, he or she can find similarities and differences in the content and, with nudging, in the presentation of the content.
- When encouraged to do so, and especially when texts that are clearly slanted to advance a particular stance in an argument, the student talks or writes about how authors' choices about the text's content and/or presentation channel readers to think and feel in particular ways about the topic.
- When two texts about a topic contradict each other, the reader can, with nudging, build theories to explain some of the inconsistencies.
- When talking or writing about a topic, the student can take information from two or more texts (including those that are quite different) and fit that information together, using information from both texts to add to an integrated sense of the topic.
- When doing the above, the student groups the information logically. Whereas at earlier levels, these categories may have been organized around topics, only, now the categories

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may reflect some attentiveness also to idea-based groupings of information, not just to subtopics.

Proficient

- When the student is presented with several texts on the same topic, he or she finds similarities and differences in the content and presentation of the content.
- When two texts advocate very different positions on a topic, the reader seems to weigh the persuasiveness and/or trustworthiness of the different texts and of their authors, and then the reader takes a position relative to the claims advanced by the contradictory texts.
- When talking or writing about an idea or topic, the student can take information from multiple texts (including those that are quite different) and fit that information together, using information from each text to add nuance to an understanding of the topic.
- Without needing to be prompted, the reader recognizes places where sources contradict and the reader builds theories to explain most or all the places where information seems inconsistent.
- When doing the above, the student groups the information logically, around ideas and concepts where appropriate. The order in which the information is presented makes it apparent that the student has ranked the value and importance of the different groups of information.

Above Proficient

- When the student is presented with several texts on the same topic, he or she finds similarities and differences in content of the text, including noting not only differences in explicit information, but also in implicit information, and in overarching themes and concepts.
- Readers also notice differences in presentation. As in the previous level, when the text advances a particular stance, the reader can see and discuss or write about some ways in which authorial decisions help to sway readers.
- When texts make contradictory claims about a topic, the reader does not rush to take a position, siding right away with one text, one position, over the other. Instead, the student gives considered respect to both viewpoints and looks for nuanced ways to reconcile the differences between the viewpoints or to understand the source of those differences. When writing an argument essay about the two texts, then, the reader is apt to value arguments for both sides and to create a more nuanced view that attempts to bring the information from both sides together.
- When talking or writing about an idea or topic, the student can take information from multiple texts (including those that are quite different, and when appropriate including some primary source historical documents) and fit that information together in nuanced ways, as at the previous level.
- When doing the above, the student organizes the information logically, around ideas, concepts, and themes where appropriate (including some that are quite abstract). The order in which the information is presented makes it apparent that the student has ranked the

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value/importance and power of different groups of information and presented the information in a way designed to have maximum effect on readers/listeners.

VOCABULARY:

Analyze, Evaluate, Critical understanding, Collaborative small groups, Technical vocabulary, Primary documents, Flow charts, Implications, Investigate, Critique, Validity

ASSESSMENT EVIDENCE AND ACTIVITIES:

In a unit of study, you will likely teach toward more standards than those that are the main focus of your culminating performance assessment. In this unit, for example, you are supporting R.I. standards #6, #8, #9, and #10, as well as Standard #1 (Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text) and #2 (Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text). In this map, we provide you with an assessment tool that can reveal students' progress at least in relation to CCSS #1/#2 and CCSS #10. You will see that under the skill section of this map, we included rubrics that can help you track student progress in both these dimensions. Here, we have provided support to help you analyze the student work with an eye towards measuring students' progress only towards CCSS #1 & #2 and CCSS#10. We focused on these standards (and not CCSS# 9) given NYC's focus standards for the 2011-12 school year. We did not equally work with related standards that you may choose to more explicitly address in this unit. We do, however, encourage you to keep CCSS#9 in mind throughout this unit, or to select your own priorities.

We also want to emphasize that the purpose of a rubric is not only to weigh and measure each of your learners and to calibrate their relative gains. The rubrics are important above all because they allow you to see what a student has done well, noting especially new progress, and to give that student crystal clear feedback. The rubrics also allow you to explicitly name what a student might do next (or what your class of students might aim to do next) in order to make tangible progress. The rubrics, then, inform your mini-lessons, mid-workshop teaching points, teaching shares, small group work, one-to-one conferences and your record keeping systems. All of this is true whether or not you score a student's work and to add up your numbers. Assessment should feel like breathing – it is what the thinking teacher does all the time. And you will be informally assessing a whole handful of skill trajectories, even while more formally tracking progress along one or two selected measures.

INITIAL ASSESSMENT : (ON-DEMAND WRITING OR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT- WRITING / RUNNING RECORDS OR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT – READING)

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Running Records with Nonfiction Texts

The preceding units' two summative assessments can double as pre-assessments for this unit, allowing you to tailor the upcoming unit to meet your students' needs.

First, you will want to conduct running records sometime during the final week of the previous unit or the first week of this unit, to see whether you can move readers towards more complex nonfiction texts. You can assess readers' work with fiction texts and use those levels also in nonfiction texts (although you may find a fair proportion of your class needs to be moved down a notch when reading nonfiction) or you can conduct nonfiction reading assessments relying upon the Fountas and Pinnell tool, the DRA or QRI tool, or you can simply assess readers while they work with any leveled nonfiction text. Be sure to give a short text introduction, and to observe whether the reader not only reads with 96% accuracy but also can retell the text and answer simple inferential questions about the passage. If you are unsure of whether you can move readers towards a slightly harder text, you can always try putting the reader in transitional baggies that include texts from two levels and watch to see if the reader can handle both levels. During the upcoming unit, when the reader is just starting to read about a topic, the reader will profit from reading easier books but once the reader has some background knowledge, he or she can progress to the slightly harder texts. When moving readers to slightly harder texts, remember that it supports a reader to read in same book partnerships.

To be at standard level at this time in the year, students should be reading Level X/Y/Z texts. Of course, the important thing is for every reader to be accurately matched to accessible texts.

Prompts, Embedded into a Text That Can be Read Aloud or Read Silently, to Assess Nonfiction Reading

You will also want to conduct a formative assessment that is an adaptation of the assessment you conducted earlier, during the character unit. To devise this assessment, select an expository nonfiction text that you will read aloud to your students. (The running record assessment has already gauged the level of text-difficulty that your students can handle; this assessment instead ascertains students' abilities to glean the main ideas and supportive details from a text, using the text structure to help them organize this.)

Read the text yourself and note natural stopping places, where you as a reader are apt to pause and cumulate all you have read. At those places, insert prompts which you can say aloud that will channel all your students to do a bit of written work. For example, at the end of the first natural division in the text, pause and say, "What I do after I've read a bunch is I pause and think, 'what has this text said so far?' Right now, record what the text has said so far, capturing the main ideas and the key supporting details." You can ask a similar question later in the text and can also at one point ask, "How does this part fit with earlier sections of this text?"

Once students have done these stop-and-jots, ask them to write their names on all they've

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written, then collect these and use the second skill box on the rubric that you'll be using at the end of this unit in order to gauge where your students are in this work. This should give you an initial sense of students who will need extra attention during the weeks ahead.

Many teachers also decide to administer the final performance task twice, once as a pre-assessment and once as a post-assessment. This allows you to gauge student progress, although of course the fact that students will see the assessment twice could worry you. Be sure you and your grade-level colleagues all agree upon a shared plan, and if the assessment bookends your unit, do not discuss it with students until the end of the unit. Also, don't be discouraged if many of them don't do well—this pre-assessment spotlights the need for the unit!

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT: (CONFERENCE NOTES AND SMALL GROUP, POST-ITS, WRITER'S NOTEBOOKS, ETC.)

During reading workshop, be sure to watch your children, studying their levels of engagement. When you see a child who is struggling with a text, help him/her to find an easier one, or provide a book introduction to help him/her navigate the harder text. Remember, during this unit, children will be working in groups to quickly research a topic. The group can work together to support each other in comprehending text, providing book introductions for each other, or providing information when necessary. You could look at these groups as if they were a guided reading group, working with them over a series of days to move them as readers. If you see readers talking animatedly, using their hands to gesture, pointing to significant pages in the books, flipping to notes to remind themselves of details, then all is probably well.

If you see your groups finishing their conversations in just a minute or two, or coming to conversations without a stack of books, notes, and post-it flags, you may want to listen very closely and see if students need coaching in how to synthesize main ideas, how to convey the details that support those ideas, and how to monitor whether they're in a book that is a good match for them. Remember that often young readers read nonfiction at a lower level than they read fiction, so you and your students will have to constantly pay attention to monitoring comprehension and choosing books wisely.

FINAL PERFORMANCE TASK:

At the end of the unit, you will administer a performance assessment that assesses for both the Nonfiction Reading Unit and the Research-Based Argument Essay Writing Unit in eighth grade. This assessment will take three class periods, across two days. Students will have the opportunity to read three articles, encounter several digital sources, examine some charts, and synthesize information across all of these sources to compose an initial essay/letter, and then a final, more informed, polished essay/letter. All of these artifacts together will give us a nuanced view of each student's ability to read, understand, analyze, and incorporate informational texts as well as their ability to construct a coherent, compelling, and convincing essay.

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Please see task instructions for full details.

TEACHING POINTS

During this unit, students will read widely across a topic, learning from a collection of related texts, synthesizing information, exploring multiple perspectives and arguments and eventually taking their own stance on the topic. They will read to become experts, drawing both on a growing repertoire of nonfiction reading skills, on domain-specific language, and on their understanding of how writers structure arguments to advance a claim. Below is a series of teaching points that could be used during whole class mini-lessons, mid-workshop teaching points, teaching shares, and could also support some small group instruction. Teachers will alter this list, especially by adding to it in order to respond to students' needs, making sure to avoid extending the unit beyond the month. Attached to this map is a full write-up of the unit.

Guiding Question/Bend One: How can I help students draw on their repertoire of nonfiction comprehension strategies in order to select and pursue a focused research topic that has multiple sides, developing expertise so that they can eventually teach others the nuances of the topic?

- Readers, right now, you can choose topics that will become your areas of expertise. To embark on a learning project, you gather and preview a collection of texts, mapping out the lay of the land between those texts, much as we mapped out the lay of the land within a text. This then can help you plan your learning journey.
- Readers, today I want to teach you that when you are reading—whether it is about penguins or hurricanes, insects or castles, or anything else—you can dig because you've been forced to do so, or you can dig because you're digging for treasure! Someone watching nearby might not be able to decipher the difference, but there's a world of difference between the two. So, readers, dig for treasure, read for treasure.
- Readers, today I want to give you a tip to help you go from good to great in your reading and research. When you become an expert on a topic, it is important to begin using the technical vocabulary of that subject. Even if you're really just beginning to learn about a subject, you can accelerate your learning curve by "talking the talk."
- We don't do research just to become fact-combers, collecting facts like a beach-comber might collect pretty shells. We cup our hands around one bit of the world—and for our class as a whole and for one of your groups, that bit has been penguins—because we want to become wiser about the world. Specifically, today I want to teach you that researchers need not only to collect, but researchers also need to think.
- Today I want to teach you that really juicy topics usually have two (or three, or four) sides to them. As you read, you can be on the lookout for what the different sides are and what the best arguments are for each side. Usually you'll find that both sides have compelling points when you start looking for them and that finding those compelling points will lead you to deeper and stronger thinking about your topic.

Guiding Question/Bend Two: How can I help students look across different texts to build on their knowledge, see how the texts advance different perspectives, and do the critical reading work necessary to examine how and why each author angles a piece of writing to evoke a

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particular reaction from readers?

- Today I want to teach you that as we research, we don't think only about the book we are reading at the moment. Instead, we build on our knowledge of the topic with each new book we read, holding the information from old books in our minds, and noticing where the old and new information connects. One thing this means is that we don't need to start a new page of notes for each book—instead, we can take the charts and diagrams we have already started and build on them with information from the books we are reading now.
- Readers, today I want to teach you that researchers don't just take in knowledge. We also construct mental models that represent our ideas about a topic. And the mental models that we construct influence what information we notice, what we decide to record, and what we think as we read our nonfiction texts. Since we are building mental models, things become significant to us that we wouldn't ordinarily even notice.
- Today I want to teach you that every writer's version of the truth is colored by his or her own understanding, experience, access to information, or motivation. Just like every artist in a still-life class can't possibly be sitting in exactly the same spot, seeing the same angles, the same shadows, so too, every author writing about our topic won't report from the same stance.
- Today I want to teach you that one way researchers notice the angle an author takes on a subject is by thinking as we read, "What is this author hoping I will feel about this subject?" and then listing the evidence in the text that supports our thinking.
- Today I want to teach you that as we identify what authors make us *feel* about a subject, we also investigate *how* the author caused those feelings to get stirred up. Readers pay close attention, for example, to the images, the stories, and the information authors choose to include, and how those stir up emotional responses in us as readers.
- Readers, today I want to teach you that as we are deciding which sources to trust, it is important to consider what we know about each author's expertise and personal motivation. As we examine sources, we ask ourselves, "What makes this author an expert?" and "Does this author have a personal motivation to support this side?"
- Today I want to teach you that we don't just pay attention to the perspectives that are given to us. We also pay attention to which perspectives are missing, and we actively seek out those other viewpoints, to fill in holes in our understanding of our topic and to help us understand why those voices have been marginalized.

Guiding Question/Bend Three: How can I help readers to develop their own informed opinion on a topic and to talk (and perhaps write) about that opinion in ways that are accountable to the evidence and persuasive to others?

- Readers, today I want to teach you that noticing different authors' perspectives on a topic often leads us to develop or change our own stance on this topic. When that happens, we pause from investigating other people's claims to ask, "After everything I've read and thought, what position do I want to take on this topic?" and then trying to name it.
- Readers, today I want to teach you that once we take a position on a topic, we can structure our research in such a way that we look for more information to support our thinking. Meanwhile, we'll also look for counterarguments to dispute.

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- Today I want to teach you that eventually, research leads to a burning urge to teach others. We decide what we want to say and organize what we know, and we decide how to share information and ideas with our communities, through presentations, artwork, and multi-media.
- Readers, today, on the day before our celebration, on the day when we say goodbye to this unit on nonfiction reading, let's remember that when we finish reading a nonfiction text, that text lives with us. It walks down the street with us. We carry our nonfiction reading with us, using it to find direction in our world.

RESOURCES:

- Ø Website: pbs.org
- Ø Website: scholastic.com
- Ø Multimedia: Artifacts (such as model cars or planes) that students may bring from home
- Ø Multimedia: Photographs, videos, interviews

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Unit Outline – Grade 8 Writing-Research-Based

Argument Essays

INTRODUCTION: This unit focuses on teaching students how to be thoughtful consumers of information, as well as to develop and support a claim and to write a coherent and persuasive argument essay with cited research. The unit assumes that students have been instructed in argument/opinion writing during previous years, and have had experience writing persuasive letters, reviews and/or essays (see Reading and Writing Project’s Curricular Plans, available online through Heinemann.)

UNIT RATIONALE: Most of the eighth graders will approach this unit having already studied and practiced writing flash-draft essays within ‘boxes and bullets’ thesis-driven argument structure, and doing this writing in ways that cite passages from across multiple texts. As part of their preparation for the 8th grade ELA exam, students will likely have learned to read two texts that advance different positions, angling themselves towards the expectation that they will need to take a stance, and they will have done some intensive, short-term, pressured drill writing essays in which they open the essay with an introductory sentence stating the writer’s position on a topic, and then proceed to provide a citation from a text that supports this opinion. They will have been taught to acknowledge the counter argument, starting a later paragraph with a transition such as, “You might argue instead....” The writer will have disputed that counter argument.

Although eighth graders will have experienced some instruction around writing these very simple argument essays, the stance and structure of argument writing will still feel alien to most of the class members, and their thinking and writing within such a structure will feel very much like a paint-by-numbers activity. A review of their on-demand argument writing might suggest that many of these students are roughly accustomed to writing in an essay structure, but often the writers will approach the essays as if the challenge is to convey information about a topic, not to advance a stance, and the writer will either have only loosely drawn on texts or will have done so without acknowledging the differing perspectives and claims of the texts, instead merging information from the texts as if they are all adding to one homogenized body of knowledge on the topic. Those who do write within essays structures will seem ill at ease in the structure, writing pieces which are more about structure than content, with the transitional phrases and topic sentences (rather than the specific content) dominating the pieces.

This unit aims to give eighth graders additional practice working with multiple texts that are written as arguments. Students will spend some of the month reading texts that are arguments, and during the reading workshop they’ll come to see that different authors advance different opinions, selecting and highlighting evidence that supports their argument. Writers will have read texts, noting ways in which authors choose words, sequence information, elaborate or skim, so as to make readers think or feel certain things. Although this work will not be specifically aimed to support writing, the reading-writing connections will be important.

Within the unit, writers will learn that writing argument essays involves not only writing an essay in which they make a clear claim and then shift towards including evidence. Writers will learn that the challenge is to reach and influence readers. There will be evidence that writers

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Unit Outline – Grade 8 Writing-Research-Based Argument Essays

write with readers in mind—sometimes directly addressing readers, sometimes writing in ways that show the writer is trying to evoke a response in readers, sometimes using the writer’s voice to try to win friends and influence people. Writers will not only cite evidence but they will also interpret the evidence for readers. The form of the writing will begin to feel more like it is a natural extension of the writer’s purpose—that of arguing, of influencing.

8th Grade Writing: Research-Based Argument Essays

UNIT TOPIC AND LENGTH:

- This Research-Based Argument Essay unit lasts five weeks and is taught alongside a unit on Nonfiction Research.

COMMON CORE CONTENT STANDARDS:

Primary Standards:

- W.8.1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
- W.8.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Secondary Standards:

- W.8.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
- W.8.8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
- L.8.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- L.8.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on *grade 8 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

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Unit Outline – Grade 8 Writing-Research-Based

Argument Essays

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

- How can I study and weigh the sometimes conflicting perspectives on an issue in order to develop an informed stance and to write a well-structured argument essay that convinces readers of my stance, cites the research sources I use, and states and refutes the counter-arguments?

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

- How can I help students use everything they know about note-taking to develop the research skills needed to gather and respond to information related to their claims and counterclaims?
- How can I support writers in analyzing and evaluating different authors' perspectives, examining ideologies across a variety of sources to develop a personal stance on an issue?
- How can I support writers in drafting several versions of well-structured argument essays with clearly developed and supported thesis statements, distinct voice and intention, and information that states and refutes counterclaims?
- How can I support writers in revising their essays to make them more compelling and convincing and to stimulate readers to consider new perspectives by using a distinct voice, inserting anecdotes, citing text support, using technical vocabulary, and enhancing their introductions and conclusions?
- How can I support writers in publishing their work and sharing it with a wider audience?

CONTENT/SKILLS:

At the start of the unit, students are assumed to have an understanding of:

- Basic note-taking strategies
- Basic drafting structures
- Essay structure and format

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Unit Outline – Grade 8 Writing-Research-Based

Argument Essays

- Essay-writing techniques: thesis, claim, and counterclaim
- The writing process: collecting many seed ideas, rehearsing different ideas, drafting ideas in various ways, and revising drafts
- Basic nonfiction reading strategies
- Peer collaboration
- Finding details to prove what they are trying to say

At the end of the unit, students will have an understanding of:

- Gathering facts and statistics to help support a claim
- Looking for different perspectives and lenses on a topic
- Revising, confirming, or adding to what they are thinking
- Making a claim and then acknowledging the other side (the counterclaim) to make the claim stronger

SKILLS:

This unit addresses several writing skills, including writing an argument text that supports a claim, backing up analysis with textual evidence and interpretation, writing sections of text that inform/explain, and using craft moves to sway readers. Below, we include a breakdown of the novice, intermediate, proficient (meets standards), and above proficient levels for writing an argument text that supports a claim, but teachers will of course want to keep all of this unit's skills in mind when planning instruction and examining student work.

Novice

- Approximates the statement of a claim(s), where the claim(s) may be incorrect, incoherent, or missing.
- May state a claim but does not seem to acknowledge other possible views.
- Attempts a focus that supports the claim(s), but drifts away from the primary focus multiple times throughout the piece.
- Organizes the essay roughly into reasons/evidence, few of which is supported by facts and details, and is presented in an order that may not be logical or cohesive.
- Jumps directly into the supports of the claim(s), bypassing the establishment of a clear introduction.
- Provides a concluding statement or section that does not clearly connect to the original claim, or conclusion is not present.
- Includes information that may provide support of the claim(s), but is not always drawn from relevant sources.
- Includes no direct quotations or quotations seem unconnected to author's claim(s). May instead make general references to the texts as a whole.
- Creates an informal tone and style inappropriate to the genre of essays and formal letters, and may cross over into the style of other genres.
- Lacks transitional phrases or includes only lowest-level transitional phrases, such as for example or also.

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Unit Outline – Grade 8 Writing-Research-Based

Argument Essays

Intermediate

- The claim(s) may be jumbled, meandering, or may not stake a position on the topic.
- Seems to recognize that there is an alternate view, but grants it almost no attention or respect. May mention the alternate view but then immediately reject it without explaining why.
- Mostly maintains a focus that supports the claim(s), but may become unfocused in a couple parts of the piece.
- Organizes the essay into reasons/evidence, some of which are supported by facts and details. Reasons are presented in an order that supports the claim.
- Gestures at constructing an introduction that both orients the reader with the topic and makes a claim(s).
- Provides a concluding statement or section that attempts to circle back to, extend, or reflect on the original claim.
- Includes accurate information from relevant sources to support some claim(s).
- Includes at least one direct quotation. Quotation may not clearly enhance or support the author's claim(s).

Proficient

- States a crystallized claim(s) that takes a position on the topic.
- Acknowledges that there's an alternate view and may provide some backing for that view, but doesn't look at it analytically. Raises it only to discount it.
- Maintains a focus that supports the claim(s).
- Organizes the essay into reasons/evidence, each of which is supported by facts and details. Reasons are presented in a logical order that supports the claim.
- Orients the reader with an introduction to the topic and makes a claim(s).
- Provides a concluding statement or section that circles back to, extends, or reflects on the original claim.
- Includes accurate information from relevant sources to support most or all claim(s).
- Includes direct quotations that support the author's claim(s).
- Establishes and maintains an essayist's tone and style appropriate to the genre of essays and formal letters.
- Consistently and effectively uses transitional phrases, such as moreover and nevertheless, to clarify claims, counterclaims and their supporting reasons/evidence.

Above Proficient

- Clearly states a nuanced claim(s) that takes a position on the topic.
- Shows some attempt to give respectful attention to, or wrestle with, an opposing view. May acknowledge the other view's validity, while still arguing that the writer's own view is stronger.
- Maintains a focus that both supports the claims(s) and skillfully balances between claim(s), counterclaims, reasons and evidence.

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- Organizes the essay into reasons/ evidence, each of which is supported by significant facts and details. Reasons are presented in a logical order that supports the claim.
- Orients the reader with a compelling introduction to the topic and establishes the claim(s).
- Provides a concluding statement or section that circles back to and extends or reflects on the original claim, and may also relate or connect it to a larger audience.
- Includes accurate and significant information from relevant sources to support most or all claim(s). Most likely analyzes these sources for validity and bias.
- Includes direct quotations that enhance and support the author’s claim(s).
- Establishes and maintains an essayist’s tone and style appropriate to the genre of essays and formal letters, while adhering to a tone that is calibrated to the intended audience.
- Uses transitional phrases, such as moreover and nevertheless, to clarify claims, counterclaims and their supporting reasons/evidence and uses transitional phrases (going back to, returning to, further support for) to link non-adjacent parts of the essay.

VOCABULARY:

Claim, slant, perspective, argument, support, vignette, bias, persuasive, evaluate, analyze, compelling, paraphrase, counterargument, statistics

Possible transition words: Nevertheless, contrasting, however, despite this, furthermore, consequently

ASSESSMENT EVIDENCE AND ACTIVITIES:

In a unit of study, you will likely teach toward more standards than those that are the main focus of your culminating performance assessment. In this unit, for example, you are supporting Writing standards #2, #8 and #9, as well as Standard 1: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. In this map, we provide you with an assessment tool that can reveal students' progress at least in relation to CCSS #1. You will see that under the skill section of this map, we included a rubric that can help you track student progress in this dimension, and here we have provided support to help you analyze the student work with an eye towards measuring students' progress towards CCSS #1. We focused on this standard given NYC's focus standards for the 2011-12 school year. We did not equally work with related standards (CCSS #2, #8, and #9) that you may choose to more explicitly address in this unit. We do, however, encourage you to keep multiple standards in mind throughout this unit, or to select your own priorities.

We also want to emphasize that the purpose of a rubric is not only to weigh and measure each of your learners and to calibrate their relative gains. The rubrics are important above all because they allow you to see what a student has done well, noting especially new progress, and to give that student crystal clear feedback. The rubrics also allow you to explicitly name what a student might do next (or what your class of students might aim to do next) in order to make tangible

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progress. The rubrics, then, inform your mini-lessons, mid-workshop teaching points, teaching shares, small group work, one-to-one conferences and your record keeping systems. All of this is true whether or not you bother to exactly score a student's work and to add up your numbers. Assessment should feel like breathing – it is what the thinking teacher does all the time. And you will be informally assessing a whole handful of skill trajectories, even while more formally tracking progress along one or two selected measures.

INITIAL ASSESSMENT : (ON-DEMAND WRITING OR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT- WRITING / RUNNING RECORDS OR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT – READING)

You will want to give your students a performance assessment before the unit, so that you can hone your instruction to what they already know how to do, and what they'll need not only instruction but extra practice with. You may decide to use the final performance task as a pre-assessment as well as a post-assessment, allowing you to gauge progress in concrete ways. If you decide to do this, make sure that others across your grade level agree to do likewise, and do not discuss the pre-assessment until students have engaged in it as a final performance task. This task provides students with a few texts on the same subject, and asks them to gather and evaluate information and to draft a persuasive essay staking a claim and supporting it with evidence from the texts. Please see task instructions for full details. Alternatively, the TCRWP has a CCSS-aligned performance assessment for opinion/argument writing (similar to the Narrative Continuum Tool that has been widely used across NYC schools), and this tool is available to all on the ReadingandWritingProject.com website. When assessing these, look for knowledge of essay structure, ability to stake claims and provide supporting evidence, ability to paraphrase, and the level of nonfiction texts that students are using.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT: (CONFERENCE NOTES AND SMALL GROUP, POST-ITS, WRITER'S NOTEBOOKS, ETC.)

As you continue through the unit, you will confer with students one-on-one and monitor their progress in writing. You will note whether they develop a stance, counterclaim, and evidence. If necessary, you can create a small group for students who need extra support in developing one clear stance. You will also note their progress with revision, looking at structure and organization as well as elaboration. A group (or perhaps the whole class) may be ready for you to push them to revise for the most compelling order of evidence. You will look at how students elaborate and use quotes, and then divide them into groups to assist with quotes, paraphrasing, anecdote, and statistics. You will also probably find some students that need support with counterarguments, and you can make a group for that as well.

FINAL PERFORMANCE TASK:

At the end of the unit, you will administer the performance assessment a second time. This

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assessment will take four periods. It will be an on-demand – that is, it aims to assess kids’ ability to independently read informational texts and construct a written argument that incorporates multiple sources of information. The assessment will probably take about two days, across three 50-minute class periods.

For your students, this assessment will feel like a mini research project where they will have to understand, weigh, and communicate the value of youth sports, based on the information presented in the digital and print sources.

Please see task instructions for full details.

LEARNING PLAN & ACTIVITIES: (TEACHING POINTS)

During this unit, students will research about a topic, taking thoughtful notes, noticing a variety of slants and perspectives, and staking their own claim about an issue related to the topic. They will then write a research-based argument essay where they defend their claim, raise and reject the counterclaim, and support their thinking with well-cited evidence. Below is a series of teaching points that could be used during whole class and small group instruction. Attached to this map is a full write-up of the unit. Mini-lessons, mid-workshop teaching points, and teaching shares could also support some small group instruction. Teachers will alter this list, especially by adding to it in order to respond to students’ needs, making sure to avoid extending the unit beyond the month. If you are interested in supporting this type of work throughout the year, the TCRWP has created separate year-long curricular plans that support a CCSS-aligned year-long reading curriculum and a year-long writing curriculum.

Guiding Question/Bend I: How can I help students use everything they know about note-taking to develop the research skills needed to gather and respond to information related to their claims and counterclaims?

- Researchers don’t just scribble random facts; we make sure our notes are careful and precise, because they will be an important reference for later writing.
- Researchers draw on their whole repertoire of note-taking strategies, choosing which strategy makes the most sense to use for a particular text and kind of information.
- Researchers make sense of what they read. One way to do this is to (mentally or physically) mark up a text, selecting various topic sentences to “box” and then underlining and numbering the sentences (or clauses) that serve as bullets for each box.
- Researchers paraphrase during the note-taking process. Notes are short, quick, and efficient. Wherever we lift a thought from a text, we write it out in our own words and keep it short.
- Researchers do not merely record information from books. A researcher’s note-making process incorporates *actively responding* to all this information that we’re recording.
- Researchers don't just stick with note-taking strategies that we've been taught. We experiment with new ways of recording ideas

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Guiding Question/Bend II: How can I support writers in analyzing and evaluating different authors' perspectives, examining ideologies across a variety of sources to develop a personal stance on an issue?

- Just as we read fiction for fine nuances, researchers read nonfiction with that same attention to detail, tone, and perspective.
- When researchers know a topic well enough (when we've read enough about it), we can see all its sides. We can ask, "Are there two ways to look at this topic?"
- When researchers take notes, we don't just record what one book says. We take our pens and record what one books says versus what another book says. We can jot the name of the text, author, date of publication and then we record the angle that one book presents on a topic versus another.
- Researchers consider the two faces of a topic to ask ourselves, "What is MY stance, MY position on this?" We don't just pick any old stance to call our own, we look over our notes and all we've read about the topic to find a stance with the most compelling reasons or evidences to believe in.
- Research-writers return to our prior jottings, or data, and begin to systematize these, looking for when authors don't even agree on facts – or agree on which facts are important.
- Researchers ask themselves: *what do these authors want me to feel about this topic and how do they get me to feel this way by what images and stories they include? What might that imply about the author's potential bias?*
- As researchers gather lots of notes and jottings, we also go back into them, and develop systems that help us to analyze this data for patterns. We might, for instance, reorganize our notes to show which authors present which facts. Then we might jot some thinking about how these facts support one side of a claim.
- We also notice anomalies, or breaks in patterns. We may notice that authors include contradictory facts or statistics. We can then begin to research authors' potential biases.

Guiding Question/Bend III: How can I support writers in drafting several versions of well-structured argument essays with clearly developed and supported thesis statements, distinct voice and intention, and information that states and refutes counterclaims?

- Once researchers have enough notes on a topic to compare and contrast its different faces and issues, we start to ask, "What are some of the big issues and ideas that are important to write more about?"
- One way to find a strong arguable claim for our topic is to look across our notes to study the many faces of our topic that we've recorded, or the different feelings that writers have tried to inspire for this topic, or the perspective of different people on this topic. We pick the most compelling of these and try to jot more arguments in its favor.
- When possible arguments about a topic begin to occur to us, essayists capture these in a claim or thesis statement. One way to write the thesis statement (claim) of an argument essay is to start by stating something that an opposite side might say, but then add what we would like to argue instead.
- Essayists try out several possible claims and rehearse those with a partner, "writing the

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essay in the air,” sort of giving a speech about it. Then we try a second idea or claim.

- Once we know the argument that we want to forward, essayists look back at all our notes to come up with a list of reasons or examples that may serve as evidence of our argument. We jot each of these down and elaborate them further to form different possible paragraphs for the essay.
- Essayists look at the possible evidence to support the opposite side’s argument. We jot all possible evidence that may support the counterclaim, but add a transition (Nevertheless, But, However, Despite this...) to refute each argument, showing that it is inaccurate/ incomplete/ not representative of all situations/ deficient in some other way.
- Essayists write at least one fast draft, and sometimes a few drafts of possible essays. As we do so, we use what we know about the structure and form of essays, to have a first paragraph that stakes our claim and perhaps says what research we’ll be citing. Then we may acknowledge and discredit the counterclaim, and then strongly prove our claim, in the following paragraphs.

Guiding Question/Bend IV: How can I support writers in revising their essays to make them more compelling and convincing and to stimulate readers to consider new perspectives by using a distinct voice, inserting anecdotes, citing text support, using technical vocabulary, and enhancing their introductions and conclusions?

- Essayists know that there are many ways to revise essays to make them more compelling and convincing. We call to mind prior craft lessons, and apply those to our writing. We may share ideas with a partner, and show each other how we incorporate meaningful elaboration and revision. If we are stuck for ideas, we might study mentor texts, thinking about how authors have made their arguments compelling and convincing.
- One way to make our essays more persuasive is to reconsider and revise the order in which we present the reader with information. We wonder what to put first, what to present next and what to reveal at the end.
- Essayists sometimes insert an anecdote (narrative writing) into our essays to create a powerful impact on the reader by providing an example of something compelling about our topic. As we craft this anecdote, we call on our narrative craft. We also angle the story so that it is concise, and usually simply one moment – often what would be the greatest moment of tension or trouble.
- Another form of anecdote that essayists sometimes employ is the “invented anecdote,” which often begins: picture this... or imagine this...and then offers a vivid image that stirs up the reader’s sympathies for our implicit point of view.
- Sometimes essayists paraphrase and cite portions from texts. When we do this, we use our own words to summarize a point in the book. Then we provide some analysis and explanation as to why this research is significant. We cite a reference, even when we paraphrase.
- Essayists write like an “insider” to a topic by using technical vocabulary. This establishes our authority and expertise. We stay on the lookout for places where we might need to define vocabulary words that are connected to the topic that might be hard for readers to understand.

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- Writers consider the connotations of words as well. We make sure that our connotations support the tone and claim we are making.
- Essayists revise the introduction of our information books, thinking about how we can set readers up to be experts in the topic and how we can draw readers in right from the start.
- Essayists work on our conclusions. Often we look over our essay and pause to really think – what new thinking has this led me to? Or we consider making a plea for change in the world. Or we share what seem like the most significant personal applications of our claim. Or we try to say the biggest potential implications, now and in the future, of our claim.

Guiding Question/Bend V: How can I support writers in publishing their work and sharing it with a wider audience?

- Writers share their writing by posting it on blogs, collecting it in anthologies, posting it on websites, and hosting symposia.

End of Unit (summative)-*At the end of this unit, students will understand that...*

Nonfiction texts are simply someone's perspective on the truth. We need to be adept at paying attention to the ways writers make and support claims.

RESOURCES:

- Books: *Just right* Leveled books
- Books: Social studies resource books, atlas, and textbooks
- Text: *Sharks* by Seymour Simon
- Text: *Shark Attack* by Cathy Dubowski
- Text: *Surprising Sharks* by Nicola Davies
- Website: <https://www.rodneyfox.com.au>
- Website: <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/nature/episodes/sharkland/interactive-anatomy-the-great-whites-weapons/4093>
- Field trip: Gotham Center for New York History



GRADE 8 LITERACY: TCRWP NONFICTION TEXT

Text 2 – Task 2

What in the Name of High School Football? By Hank Hill

My high school is an *athletocracy*. Sports are well-celebrated. The arts and academics are simply tolerated. Football players are princes; artists are stepchildren. The hockey team walks on water. Musicians just walk. My yardstick is a glance at the amount of community recognition and resources dedicated to each.

Don't get me wrong. Our high school has one of the strongest academic and arts programs. Our artists and musicians consistently win awards when matched against their greater statewide peers. Our scholars are many and perform admirably on a wide array of Advanced Placement courses and national tests. But you would hardly know it.

With Martha's Vineyard Regional High (MVRHS) sports, win or lose, you cannot escape the news. The deaf can almost hear the cheers. The blind would tire at the week-after-week, above-the-fold, page-one photos of ball-catching/throwing/whacking. The local cable television channel repeats both the JV and Varsity football games a half dozen times a week. Ditto for field hockey and soccer. The advertising banners on that same channel flash accolades for sports teams from local businesses 24 hours a day.

Each Friday before football games, the school is decorated with banners and streamers and mug shots of football players. And on autumn Mondays, the heroes (as defined by catching a TD pass or two) are again up on the walls as icons. Winter and spring have a new cast of poster boys.

Yet only a few weeks ago, 16 MVRHS vocalists and instrumentalists auditioned for the competitive All Cape & Islands music festival. And the judges selected a remarkable 16 of 16. Unheard of success. And yet not a mention in the local papers. Not a word on the radio. Not a sentence in the principal's address. Not a squeak on the morning announcements. Not a face on the wall.

The gift of music came wrapped in silence.

The only recognition was a list of names taped to the music-room door and a story I jammed in as editor of the school newspaper. Imagine the hoopla if the entire starting offense plus defensive backfield of the football team (that's 16 give or take the particular defense) were selected as All-Cape League All-Stars. A parade down Main Street with fire engine sirens blaring would only begin the excess.

Again do not misunderstand me. I am not against athletics. The single greatest factor in preventing the nation's number one killer – heart disease – is regular and vigorous exercise, and that gets my vote. In junior high school I played baseball and lacrosse and loved it. Fenway Park, the Boston Red Sox's baseball stadium, is among my favorite places on earth. I am against the unfair and lopsided allocation of community resources to varsity sports that benefit one select group of students over another. I believe colleges are even-handed when slicing the pie. Not MVRHS.

Our school will shell out \$26,000 this winter alone to pay for ice time for the hockey teams. That's before even a dollar is spent on coaches, insurance, transportation, and equipment. At the end of the season, that \$26,000 will literally be water vapor. The drama department limps along without even a decent set of body microphones for productions which include 50 students at a time. Two Advanced Placement English seminars were compressed into one unwieldy class this year as a cost-cutting measure. And the hockey players skate on \$26,000 that by March will evaporate into thin air.

The athletic program at MVRHS has become almost a religion. The administration openly concedes that our mostly sleep-deprived student body – many of whom catch a 6:20 a.m. school bus – is the result of a forced homage to sports. The school day must start that early so athletes who travel off the Vineyard for away games limit their missed classes. The result of this catering to sports is bleary-eyed students and an overall depression of academic performance for everyone. This is an accepted cost of athletics. Absurd.

Without even addressing the actual “value” of competitive athletics or the arts, consider just the numbers: Band, orchestra and jazz have a total of about 120 kids times *three full seasons* of participation in my school. Freshman chorus, mixed-chorus, and Minnesingers (vocal performing group) have at least an equal number times *three seasons*. Yet the music students have to fight for a group lesson while the sports training programs rival that of an NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) Division I team.

Meanwhile, an educational crisis is looming. As more and more master teachers retire, MVRHS cannot find veteran replacements – the cost of buying a home here is unaffordable for most teachers. Last year, an advertised math position drew only a single applicant.

Yet instead of taking the lead from our sister island, Nantucket, which has followed the example of the best private schools by building teacher housing on school property, MVRHS is poised to bulldoze the last, prized acres of undeveloped school land and expand the athletic fields even further at huge expense.

Good teachers benefit all students. Varsity sports only benefit some.

I am not suggesting eliminating or even cutting down any MVRHS sports programs. Not at all. I am simply stating that to *expand* an already large athletic department is, by definition, at the *expense* of the arts and academics. It's time the Martha's Vineyard *athletocracy* take the perennial advice of all wrestling coaches: Time to go on a little diet.

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Text 1 – Task 4

Are High School Sports Good For Kids?

By Daniel Gould, Ph.D.

Director, Institute for the Study of Youth Sports

High school sports are an integral part of the fabric of Americans society with over 5 million youth participating in any school year. Here in Michigan almost 300,000 young people take part in high school sports every year. Moreover, school sports are justified because of their potential educational benefits. For example, the mission statement of the National Federation of State High School Activity Associations indicates that it promotes “participation and sportsmanship” in an effort to “develop good citizens through interscholastic activities which provide equitable opportunities, positive recognition and learning experiences to students while maximizing the achievement of educational goals.”

Not only are school sports justified on educational grounds, but researchers have shown that participation in them and other extracurricular activities have positive effects on adolescents. For example, a multiyear study conducted in Michigan has shown that children who participate in sports have increased educational aspirations, closer ties to school and increased occupational aspirations in youth. It has been demonstrated, then, that school sports participation has a number of desirable benefits.

This does not mean, however, that school sports are not without problems. An overemphasis on winning, year-round single sport participation, and difficulties finding qualified coaches are but a few of concerns facing leaders in the area. The over-emphasis on winning issue is especially significant as when this occurs the educational objectives for involvement are often forgotten.

And while principals, athletic directors, and coaches have the ultimate responsibility for keeping winning in the proper perspective and must be held accountable for their actions, let’s not place all the blame on them. The general public, parents and society is placing more emphasis on winning than ever before which, at times, pressures athletic personnel to deviate from the athlete-centered educational and personal development mission. We cannot let this happen. The educational objectives of high school sports must be recognized and placed in the forefront.

This does not imply that winning is unimportant and should not be emphasized at all. Leading youth development experts contend that one of the potential benefits of sports participation is the development of initiative or the ability to set and go after goals, which is part of the competitive process. Moreover, in a recent Institute for the Study of Youth Sports investigation of outstanding high school coaches who were recognized for the character and citizenship building contributions to players we found that these individuals were highly successful (winning over 70% of their games). They stressed winning, but never put winning before the personal and educational development of their players. Instead, they maintained a strong educational philosophy and did not just talk about building character in their players, but took daily actions to do so while at the same time pursuing excellence.

The bottom line is that high school sports are still a highly desirable activity for students to participate in and should be supported for their educational benefits. However, we as taxpayers and proponents of positive youth development must insist that their educational objectives always come first. We cannot knowingly or unknowingly let winning become the only goal and must support school district, athletic director and coach efforts to always put the education and development of the student-athlete first.

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GRADE 8 LITERACY: TCRWP NONFICTION
READING AND ARGUMENT WRITING
SUPPORTS FOR STUDENTS
WITH DISABILITIES

Instructional Supports for Students with Disabilities using UDL Guidelines

Provide Multiple Means of Representation

Activities to guide information processing, visualization, and manipulation:

“Successful transformation of information into useable knowledge often requires the application of mental strategies and skills for “processing” information. These cognitive, or meta-cognitive, strategies involve the selection and manipulation of information so that it can be better summarized, categorized, prioritized, contextualized and remembered.”

- Provide multiple means of representation (to address hearing impairments, vision impairments, receptive and expressive language delays, auditory processing, language acquisition)
- Provide text-to-speech capabilities <http://www.naturalreaders.com/index.htm>
- Provide an online visual dictionary <http://visual.merriam-webster.com/>

Implementation Examples:

- Give explicit prompts for each step in a sequential process
- Provide options for organizational methods and approaches

Sample Graphic Organizers that Support Task 1

Learners differ in the ways that they perceive and comprehend information that is presented to them. For example, those with sensory disabilities (e.g., blindness or deafness); learning disabilities (e.g., dyslexia); language or cultural differences, and so forth may all require different ways of approaching content. Others may simply grasp information quicker or more efficiently through visual or auditory means rather than printed text. Also learning, and transfer of learning, occurs when multiple representations are used, because it allows students to make connections within, as well as between, concepts. In short, there is not one means of representation that will be optimal for all learners; providing options for representation is essential.

Provide graphic organizers and templates for data collection and organizing information that highlight main idea and key details, support note taking for videos, Summarizing, supporting evidence, and the development of an argumentative essay



Video Viewing Guide for
“Do Athletes Face Unnecessary Parent Pressure?”

My Ideas Before Viewing	Video Details	Central or Main Idea	Details that Support the Central Idea	“Quotes”	My Ideas After Viewing

Provide Multiple Means of Action and Expression

Learners differ in the ways that they can navigate a learning environment and express what they know. For example, individuals with significant movement impairments (e.g., cerebral palsy), those who struggle with strategic and organizational abilities (executive function disorders), those who have language barriers, and so forth approach learning tasks very differently. Some may be able to express themselves well in written text but not speech, and vice versa. It should also be recognized that action and expression require a great deal of strategy, practice, and organization, and this is another area in which learners can differ. In reality, there is not one means of action and expression that will be optimal for all learners; providing options for action and expression is essential.

Sample Graphic Organizers that Supports Task 2

Action/Expression - **Facilitate managing information and resources by providing graphic organizers, templates, and checklists that focus on self-monitoring for organizing and editing** the writing of argumentative essays focusing on the advantages and disadvantages of youth sports.

The following are options for students to actively engage with the two provided texts (*High School, College Football Comes With Risk* by Jeff Perkel and *What In the Name of High School Football?* By Hank Hill):

OPTION 1: Identify and record questions you have about the text on the article on the provided separate sheet of paper

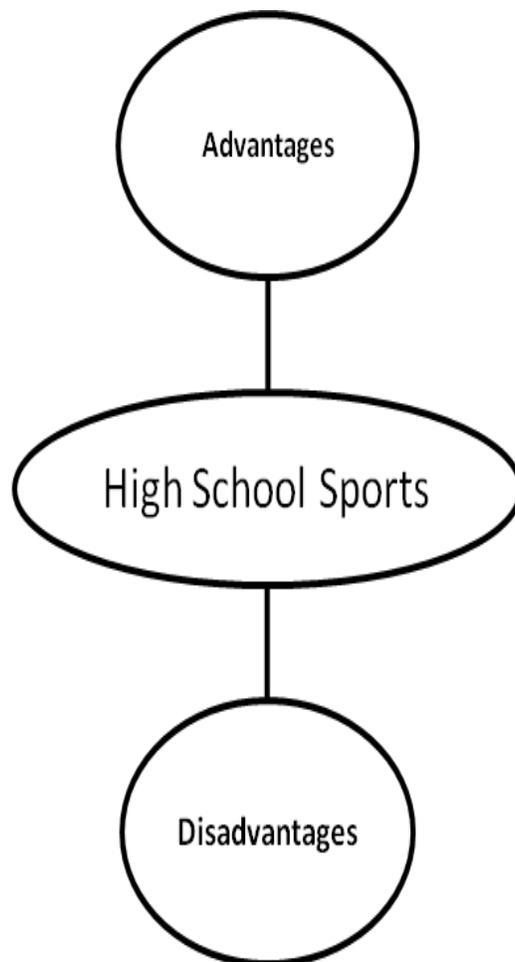
OPTION 2:

Sample QUESTIONS	NOTES
What are some specific risks associated with playing football?	
What were the most common injuries experienced?	

OPTION 3:



Use a **Semantic Map** such as the one below that has been started for you:

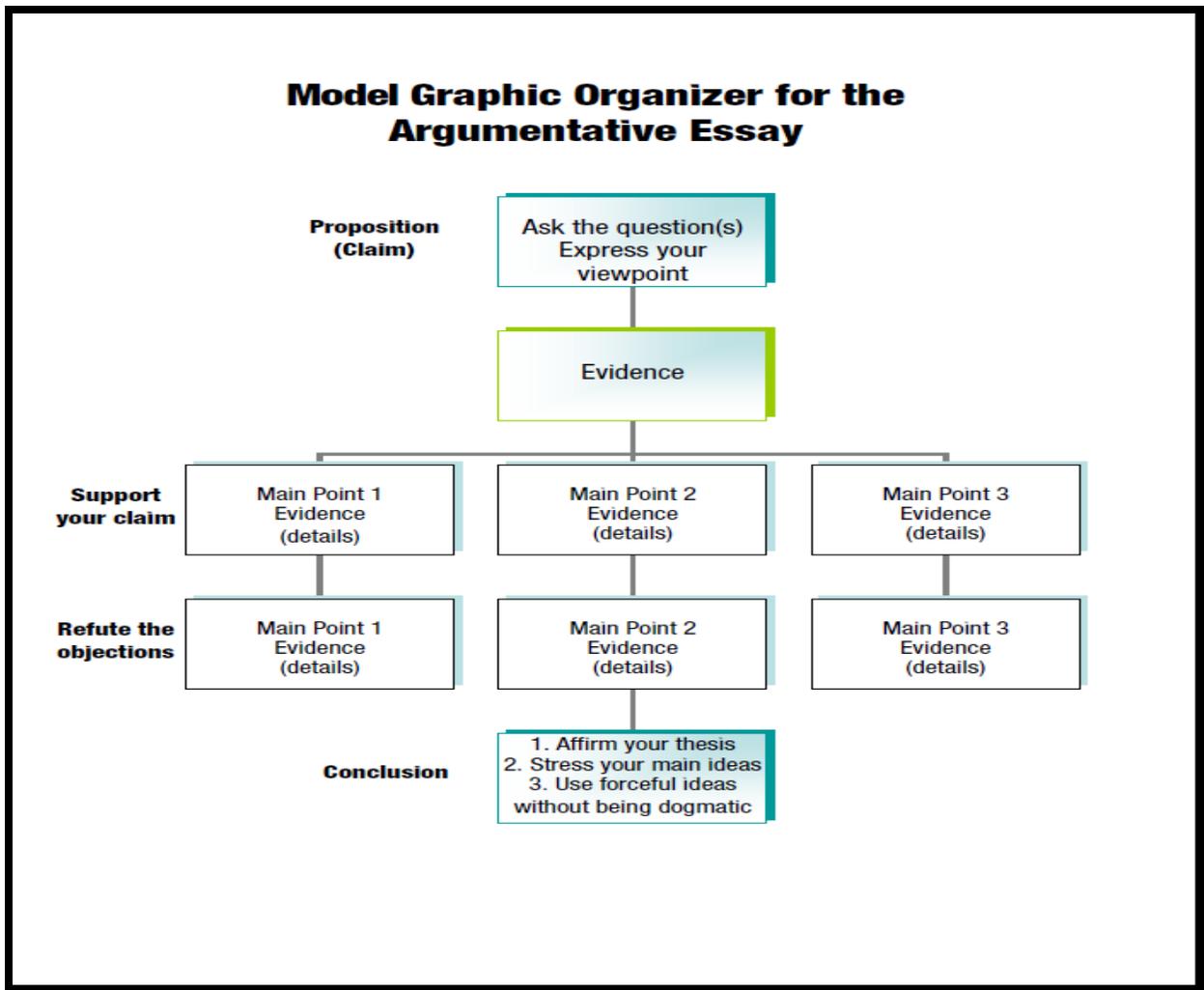


Sample Graphic Organizers that Support Task 3

ACTION /Expression - **Facilitate managing information and resources by providing graphic organizers, templates, and checklists that focus on self-monitoring for organizing and editing** the writing of argumentative essays focusing on the advantages and disadvantages of youth sports.

Teachers may provide the following Graphic Organizer to support organization of ideas in students' first draft of letter.

Sample Graphic Organizers that Supports Task 3



Sample Graphic Organizers that Supports Task 4

Provide graphic organizers and templates for data collection and organizing information that highlight main idea and key details, support note taking for videos, summarizing, supporting evidence, and the development of an argumentative essay.

Text: “Are High School Sports Good For Kids?”

Teachers may use the following table to support student comprehension of text

	What do the experts say about high school students’ participation in sports?		
Positive Effects on Youth		Problems that May Occur	

Support for Video Viewing in Task 5

Students may watch a video, draw relevant pictures and record notes



Video 1



Video 2



Video 3

Provide Multiple Means of Engagement

Affect represents a crucial element to learning, and learners differ markedly in the ways in which they can be engaged or motivated to learn. There are a variety of sources that can influence individual variation in affect including neurology, culture, personal relevance, subjectivity, and background knowledge, along with a variety of other factors. Some learners are highly engaged by spontaneity and novelty while other are disengaged, even frightened, by those aspects, preferring strict routine. Some learners might like to work alone, while others prefer to work with their peers. In reality, there is not one means of engagement that will be optimal for all learners in all contexts; providing multiple options for engagement is essential.

ENGAGEMENT: *Engage learners in assessment discussions of what constitutes excellence and generate relevant examples* through the use of peer sharing and positive feedback of models of excellence based on preset guidelines to foster authentic communication between teacher and students.

Teacher may utilize the following to support student scaffolding of steps required for essay development and writing of final letter.

Sample Graphic Organizers that Support Task 6

“Are Overall Sports Good or Bad for Kids?”

	Checklist for Writing Essay
	Introduction
	Stated claim(s) clearly
	Provided supporting details from sources
	Stated counterclaim(s)
	Refuted counterclaim(s)
	Identified direct quotes
	Used transitional words
	Conclusion