

Writing Is Elementary, My Dear Watson

Writing Paragraphs With Evidence and Reasoning

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Grade Level	9th Grade	**Time Frame**	1-2 class period(s)
Subject	English/Language Arts	**Duration**	65 minutes
Course	American Literature, British Literature, Composition, World Literature		

Essential Question

Why is it important to be able to construct a strong, logical argument that is supported by evidence?

Summary

To support students' ability to write persuasive essays, this lesson will scaffold aspects of argumentation through paragraph development. Students will first review the use of evidence and reasoning to support a claim by performing a CER analysis of a comic strip. Next, students will work both collaboratively and individually to identify evidence, discuss the evidence, and write a well-developed paragraph. Students will then peer review their classmates' paragraph and compose a gist statement to reflect on what they have learned.

Snapshot

Engage

Students look at a comic and do a two-minute Quick Write based upon a prompt that asks students to develop a claim or stance.

Explore

Students work collaboratively to support their claim with evidence from the comic and create reasoning from the evidence.

Explain

Students use Lines of Agreement to defend their claim based upon evidence and reasoning.

Extend

Students write a well-developed argumentative paragraph based on CER statements that they have developed.

Evaluate

Students peer review each other's paragraphs and compose gist statements to reflect on the writing process.

Standards

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - English (6-12)

ORG 401: Determine the need for transition words or phrases to establish straightforward logical relationships (e.g., first, afterward, in response)
ORG 402: Determine the most logical place for a sentence in a straightforward essay

Oklahoma Academic Standards: English Language Arts (Grade 9)

9.3.R.5: Evaluate the validity of a speaker's argument:
- distinguish the kinds of evidence (e.g., logical, empirical, anecdotal)
- distinguish substantiated from unsubstantiated claims
- analyze rhetorical appeals (i.e., ethos, logos, pathos)
- identify bias
- identify logical fallacies

9.3.W.3: Compose argumentative essays, reviews, or op-eds that:
- introduce precise, informed claims
- include a defensible thesis
- acknowledge counterclaims or alternate perspectives
- organize claims, counterclaims, and evidence in a logical sequence
- provide the most relevant evidence to develop balanced arguments, using credible sources
- use sentence variety and word choice to create clarity and concision
- use style and tone that suits the audience and purpose

Attachments

- CER-Outline-Writing-Is-Elementary - Spanish.docx
- CER-Outline-Writing-Is-Elementary - Spanish.pdf
- CER-Outline-Writing-Is-Elementary.docx
- CER-Outline-Writing-Is-Elementary.pdf
- CER-Paragraph-Guide-Writing-Is-Elementary - Spanish.docx
- CER-Paragraph-Guide-Writing-Is-Elementary - Spanish.pdf
- CER-Paragraph-Guide-Writing-Is-Elementary.docx
- CER-Paragraph-Guide-Writing-Is-Elementary.pdf
- CER-Peer-Review-Rubric-Writing-Is-Elementary - Spanish.docx
- CER-Peer-Review-Rubric-Writing-Is-Elementary - Spanish.pdf
- CER-Peer-Review-Rubric-Writing-Is-Elementary.docx
- CER-Peer-Review-Rubric-Writing-Is-Elementary.pdf
- Gist-Writing-Is-Elementary.docx.docx
- Gist-Writing-Is-Elementary.pdf
- Lesson-Slides-Writing-Is-Elementary.pptx
- Slylock-Fox-Brain-Boggler-Writing-Is-Elementary - Spanish.docx
- Slylock-Fox-Brain-Boggler-Writing-Is-Elementary - Spanish.pdf
- Slylock-Fox-Brain-Boggler-Writing-Is-Elementary.docx
- Slylock-Fox-Brain-Boggler-Writing-Is-Elementary.pdf

Materials

- Projector
- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Slylock Fox Brain Boggler comic (attached, one per student)
- CER Outline (attached, one per student)
- CER Paragraph Guide (attached, one per student)
- CER Peer Review Rubric (attached, one per student)
- Gist Template (attached, one per student)

Engage

In the **Lesson Slides**, introduce students to the essential question on **slide 3** and the lesson objective on **slide 4**.

Go to **slide 5** to show the Slylock Fox comic, or pass out copies of **Slylock Fox Brain Boggler** to each student. Ask students to study the comic and the prompt closely and complete a two-minute Quick Write about what they observe.

Teacher's Note: Keep on Writing!

During a two-minute Quick Write, students should not stop writing. If any students get stuck and can't think of anything else to write, they should write the last word they have over and over until a new idea comes.

Explore

Go to **slide 6**. Pass out copies of the **CER Outline,** and discuss the CER strategy as a class. The "C" stands for claim, the "E" stands for evidence, and the "R" stands for reasoning. The CER instructional strategy assists students in identifying a claim along with evidence to support the claim and reasoning for the evidence.

Once students have an idea of how CER statements work, they can begin brainstorming and organizing their ideas using the graphic organizer in the CER Outline. Students do not need to fill out all five items, but they should find as much evidence as they can. If students need extra guidance, you can show them the example on **slide 7**. Students should follow the following basic process to fill in their graphic organizers:

- Decide on the claim. Is Smitty telling the truth?
- Find evidence (facts) from the comic to back up the claim. For example, "Smitty is covered in eggs."
- Write comments to provide reasoning about the evidence. For example, "Obviously, someone threw eggs all over Smitty. No one would do that to themselves."

Explain

Go to **slide 8**. Use the Lines of Agreement strategy to give students the opportunity to defend their claims. Have students who believe Smitty is telling the truth form one line and students who believe he is lying form another line facing the first line.

Have students who are facing each other take turns sharing out one piece of evidence with their reasoning to defend their claim.

Give students an opportunity to switch sides if they are convinced by the other side's argument.

Teacher's Note: Defending Both Sides

Make sure you have strong evidence for both sides before you begin the Lines of Agreement activity. If you notice that everyone is coming to the same general conclusion during the **Explore** activity, you might want to encourage some students to find evidence for the other side or challenge the whole class to argue their point against you. Another option if your class is heavily weighted to one side is to break into clusters. For example, you could have two students who think Smitty is lying group with one student who thinks he's telling the truth.

Extend

Go to **slide 9,** and pass out copies of the **CER Paragraph Guide** handout. Have students use this handout as a guide to write a paragraph that includes a claim, evidence, and reasoning. Their paragraph should explain why Smitty is either lying or telling the truth.

Teacher's Note: Topic Sentences

If students are not comfortable writing paragraphs, you might need to write a topic sentence together as a class. If this is a review, most students should be able to do this on their own.

Evaluate

Go to **slide 10**. Pass out the **CER Peer Review Rubric,** and have each student find a partner. Ask pairs to peer review each other's paragraphs and discuss the use of evidence and reasoning.

When they feel confident with their writing, have the partners discuss the following questions:

- *How did using evidence and reasoning help you argue your claim during Lines of Agreement?*
- *How did using evidence and reasoning help or hinder your writing process?*

Go to **slide 11**. Using the Gist strategy, have students compose a statement to answer the following question: *How can you use evidence and reasoning outside of writing?*

Have students answer the question with a gist statement. A gist statement must be 28 words or less. This keeps your students' answers concise.

When students are finished, ask them to share their gist statements with the class.

Resources

- K20 Center. (n.d.). Claim, Evidence, Reasoning (CER). Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/156
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Gist. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/3289
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Lines of Agreement. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/165
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Quick Write. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/816ff8a793dedf6ff5046224f80a1d35
- Niabot. (2011, May 20). Magnifying glass with focus on paper. Wikimedia Commons. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Magnifying_glass_with_focus_on_paper.png
- Weber, B., Jr. (2016). Kid cartoonists. Kid Cartoonists, by Bob Weber Jr. http://www.kidcartoonists.com/
- Weber, B., Jr. (1997). Slylock Fox & comics for kids. King Features Syndicate. http://comicskingdom.com/slylock-fox-and-comics-for-kids