

ELA MINI-UNIT

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GRADE LEVEL: 4th

2021 AL ELA COURSE OF STUDY

- *Writing genre standard (argument/opinion, informative/explanatory, narrative)*

37. *Write an argument to persuade the reader to take an action or adopt a position, using an introduction, logical reasoning supported by evidence from relevant sources, and linking words to connect their argument to the evidence.*

- *Revising and editing standard if applicable*

38. Compose complete sentences with correct subject-verb agreement, punctuation, and usage.

c. Recognize and correct sentence fragments and run-on sentences.

- *Language standard if applicable (grammar, capitalization, punctuation, spelling,)*

39. *Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage.*

a. *Use relative pronouns who, whose, which, and that, relative adverbs where, when, and how, and irregular possessive nouns.*

If the unit is integrated, a content standard must also be included (math, science, social studies).

CENTRAL FOCUS

A description of the important understandings and core concepts that you want students to develop over the course of the unit. The central focus should support students in developing an essential literacy strategy for composing text.

The central focus of the unit is for students to research, plan, write, revise, and publish an argumentative letter that clearly states a position, provides logical reasoning with evidence, and uses linking words to connect ideas. Students will explore how different perspectives shape a story by analyzing the story of the 3 little pigs! And will use this understanding to craft their own argument.

DIFFERENTIATION

How will you address the needs of students who struggle with writing or reading? What different instruction will you provide for English learners (ELs)?

To support students who struggle with reading and writing, this unit incorporates scaffolding strategies such as guided discussion, visual aids (anchor charts), sentence stems, and persuasive graphic organizers. Targeted small groups will be provided throughout the planning and drafting processes according to student's needs.

- ***Striving student's needs:*** *will receive sentence starters for introductions ("I believe.... Because..." and transition word banks. Teacher conferences will provide immediate, specific feedback on evidence and reasoning.*

- **ELL's:** *vocabulary will be explicitly taught and reinforced with visuals and gestures. Students may orally rehearse arguments with a partner before writing. Audio support of the mentor text and bilingual glossaries will be available.*

ACADEMIC LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS

(verbs from the standards and/or objectives)

Functions (verbs): argue, persuade, introduce, support, revise, edit, publish, explain

LESSON SPECIFIC ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

(vocabulary related to the unit)

Argument, claim, evidence, reason, perspective, counterargument, linking words (because, therefore, for example, in conclusion) relative pronouns/adverbs)

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

How will you monitor and give feedback during the lesson?

To monitor and provide feedback the teacher will:

- Observe and record participation during discussions and debates on the mentor text's point of view.
- Check completion of persuasive graphic organizers and prewriting notes.
- Collect "exit slips" where students write one reason for supporting their stance.
- Conduct quick conferences during drafting to guide reasoning and sentence level corrections.

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

What evidence will you collect? An original rubric that is aligned to the objectives must be attached to assess the students' writing.

Evidence collected: Final persuasive letter graded with rubric:

Students will also submit their peer editing checklist and a brief reflection on how perspective affects opinion writing.

MATERIALS

List the materials needed for the lesson. Graphic organizers, checklists, and the rubric must be attached.

- **Mentor text:** *The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs! By Jon Scieszka*
- *Anchor charts (Argument Writing, Hamburger Organizer)*
- *Perspective Chart (Day 1)*
- *Hamburger Graphic organizer (Day 2)*
- *Revision Checklist (Day 3)*
- *Sentence Surgery Highlighters (Day 3)*
- *Chart paper, markers, pencils, laptops/tablets for final draft*
- *Rubric*

MENTOR TEXT

A mentor text must be used to teach the lesson. List the mentor text.

*The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs!
By Jon Scieszka*

DAY ONE

OBJECTIVES

The students will be able to define argument writing and identify its key elements (claim, evidence, reasoning). Students will explore the concept of perspective using the true story of the 3 little pigs! Students will begin to form an opinion on whether the wolf is guilty or innocent.

MINI-LESSON

How will you engage students in the lesson? How will you introduce the writing genre?

How will you provide instruction in the writing strategy, skill, concept, and/or technique you want the students to learn?

Set the Stage

Teacher gathers students on the carpet or in a meeting area.

Prompting questions to activate prior knowledge:

- “When you hear the word argument, what comes to mind?”
- “How is an argument different from a fight?”
- “Have you ever tried to convince someone to agree with you?”

The teacher records responses on a chart labeled “**What We Know About Arguments.**”

Teacher explains:

“Argument writing isn’t about yelling it’s about using facts and reasons to convince someone to agree with your opinion.”

Display a simple **anchor chart** with the three big parts of argument writing:

- **Claim-** your opinion or position
- **Evidence-** facts to support your claim
- **Reasoning-** why the evidence proves your claim

Key questions to guide discussion

- “What might be a claim about a story or a character?”
- “What could count as evidence? Where do we find it?”
- “Why is reasoning important?”

Mentor Text Read Aloud & Perspective Analysis

Before Reading

Show the book *The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs!*

Ask:

- “Whose side do we usually hear in the three little pigs’ story?”
- “How might this book be different?”

During Reading

Stop at key points to ask:

- “What is the wolf’s claim about what happened?”
- “What evidence does he use to support his story?”
- “Do you believe him? Why or why not?”

After Reading

Turn and talk:

- “Do you think the wolf is guilty or innocent? Why?”

Teacher charts student responses into two columns: **Guilty** vs **Innocent**.

Practice/Guided Discussion

- Teacher introduces **fact vs opinion** with examples from the book.
- Class identifies at least 3 **facts** the wolf gives, and 3 **opinions** people might have.

Student Task

Students complete a **perspective chart**:

- **Claim** “I think the wolf is [guilty/innocent].”
- **Evidence**: 3 facts from the story.
- **Reasoning**: Why these facts support their claim.

PERSPECTIVE
CHART

Claim	Evidence
3 facts from the story.	I think the wolf is [guilty/innocent].
Reasoning	
Why these facts support their claim.	

Formative assessment

Teacher circulates and checks that students can identify **claim, evidence, and reasoning** in their chart.

DAY TWO

OBJECTIVES

The students will be able to organize their opinion using a graphic organizer (claim, evidence, reasoning).
Students will draft an argumentative paragraph supporting their chose side (guilty or innocent).
Students will use **linking words** to connect evidence to their reasoning.

Mini lesson: Organizing an Argument

Teacher reviews the anchor chart from day 1.

Questions to guide thinking:

- “What should come first in our writing? The claim or the evidence?”
- “How many pieces of evidence will make your argument stronger?”

Introduce a **Hamburger Graphic Organizer**:

- **Top bun** = introduction/claim
- **Meat and toppings** = evidence and reasoning
- **Bottom bun** = conclusion

Model filling it out with one example:

“Claim: the wolf is innocent because he was just trying to borrow sugar.”

“Evidence 1: he says he had a cold and sneezed accidentally.”

“Reasoning: sneezing is not a crime.”

Highlight **linking words**: because, therefore, for example, in addition.

Argument Burger

Example

NAME: _____
DATE: _____

The diagram is a hamburger-shaped organizer with four sections:

- Introduction/Claim:** An orange rounded-top section containing the text: "The wolf is innocent because he was just trying to borrow sugar."
- Evidence:** A white rectangular section with a green border containing the text: "The wolf says he had a cold and sneezed accidentally."
- Reasoning:** A white rectangular section with a green border containing the text: "sneezing is not a crime"
- Conclusion:** An orange rounded-bottom section containing the text: "Highlight linking words: because, therefore, for example, in addition."

GUIDED WRITING/INDEPENDENT WRITING/DRAFTING

How will you use the mentor text? How will you model the writing task? How will students practice the writing strategy, skill, concept, and/or technique? How will the students use prewriting? How will students draft?

Guided Practice

Students work with a partner to plan their argument using the hamburger organizer:

- **Introduction:** state their claim (guilty or innocent).
- **Evidence:** list 3 supports from the text.
- **Reasoning:** explain how each fact supports their claim.
- **Conclusion:** restate their opinion.

Teacher circulates, asking:

- “What evidence will convince your reader the most?”
- “How can you connect your evidence to your claim?”

Independent Drafting

Using their organizer, students will write a first draft of their argument (one full paragraph or more).
Sentence starters for support:

- “I believe the wolf is _____ because _____.”
- “One reason is _____”
- “For example, _____”
- “Therefore, _____”

Formative Assessment

Teacher checks drafts for:

- A clear **claim** in the introduction.
- At least **three pieces of evidence**.
- Use of **linking words**.

DAY THREE

OBJECTIVES

The students will be able to revise their draft for clarity, evidence, and persuasive language.
Students will edit for grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure.
Students will publish and share their final argument with peers.

Mini lesson: Revising for Strength

Teacher models revising a sample paragraph on the board.
Think aloud:

- “I need a stronger opening sentence to grab the reader.”
- “Can I add more evidence?”
- “Do I have linking words to connect ideas?”

Introduce a **Revision Checklist**:

- Did I clearly state my **claim**?
- Do I have **at least three pieces of evidence**?
- Did I explain how each piece of evidence supports my claim (**reasoning**)?
- Did I use **linking words**?

Revision

Name: _____

Checklist

Date: _____



Did I clearly state my claim?



Do I have at least three pieces of evidence?



Did I explain how each piece of evidence supports my claim/reasoning?



Did I use linking words?

REVISING/EDITING/PUBLISHING

How will the students revise and edit their drafts? How will the students publish their writing?

Editing Mini Lesson

Quick review of:

- Sentence fragments vs. complete sentences
- Run-ons
- Subject verb agreement
- Correct punctuation

Sentence surgery activity:

“Writers, today you are becoming sentence surgeons! Just like doctors fix patients, we will fix our sentences, so they are healthy, strong, and ready to convince our readers.”

Examine the Patient:

- Students will read their drafts with a highlighter and **identify 2-3 sick sentences** (examples: fragments, run-ons, boring details, or unclear ideas).

Remind students to look for:

- Missing capitals or punctuations
- Sentences that don't make sense
- Places that need stronger details or evidence

Plan the Surgery:

Students will decide **what each sentence needs**:

Add details (who, what, when, where, why, how)

Cut or Move words to fix fragments/run-ons

Repair grammar, spelling, or punctuation

Perform the Surgery:

- Students will underline parts to move, then rewrite each “before” sentence into the “after” box on the sentence surgery sheet or directly in their drafts.
- Encourage the use of **linking words** (because, therefore, for example) and strong evidence.

Check the Vital Signs

- Partners read the “after” sentences to each other.
- Partners give a thumbs up if the new sentence is complete, correct, and more convincing than the original.

The worksheet is titled "SENTENCE SURGERY" in large, outlined letters. Below the title is a short paragraph: "Writers, today you are becoming sentence surgeons! Just like doctors fix patients, we will fix our sentences, so they are healthy, strong, and ready to convince our readers." The main part of the worksheet consists of three rows, each labeled "Sick Sentence #1", "Sick Sentence #2", and "Sick Sentence #3". Each row has two columns: "Before:" and "After:". Each column contains four horizontal lines for writing.

Independent Work

Students revise and edit their drafts, then write a **final copy** on neat paper or type it.

SHARING

How will the students share their writing? How will you lead the students to summarize what they learned from the unit?

- Students read their final arguments aloud in small groups.
- Listeners give feedback using sentence frames:
- “I like how you used _____ as evidence.”
- “One thing you did really well was _____.”

Teacher leads a closing discussion

“What makes an argument convincing?”

“What did you learn about perspectives from this unit?”

Summative assessment

Collect final essays and evaluate using a 4-point rubric:

References

Appendix

Argument Burger

NAME: _____
DATE: _____

The Argument Burger graphic organizer is shaped like a burger. It consists of four horizontal sections:

- Introduction/Claim:** The top section, which is a semi-circle.
- Evidence:** A rectangular section with a red border.
- Reasoning:** A rectangular section with a green border.
- Conclusion:** The bottom section, which is a semi-circle.

Revision Checklist

Name: _____

Date: _____

-  Did I clearly state my claim?
-  Do I have at least three pieces of evidence?
-  Did I explain how each piece of evidence supports my claim/reasoning?
-  Did I use linking words?

SENTENCE SURGERY

Writers, today you are becoming sentence surgeons! Just like doctors fix patients, we will fix our sentences, so they are healthy, strong, and ready to convince our readers.

Before:	After:
Sick Sentence #1	
Sick Sentence #2	
Sick Sentence #3	

RUBRIC

Creative Writing

Student: _____ Total: _____

20

	4	3	2	1
CLAIM & INTRODUCTION	Clear, engaging introduction with a strong, well-stated claim that takes a clear position.	Introduction states a clear claim and position.	Claim is present but unclear, weak, or confusing.	No clear claim or introduction.
EVIDENCE & REASONING	Uses 3+ strong, relevant pieces of evidence with clear, logical reasoning that fully supports the claim.	Uses at least 3 pieces of evidence with reasoning that supports the claim.	Uses 1-2 pieces of evidence, but reasoning is limited or unclear.	Little or no evidence; reasoning missing or unrelated.

RUBRIC

Argumentative writing

Student: _____ Total: _____

20

	4	3	2	1
ORGANIZATION & LINKING WORDS	Well-organized with smooth flow. Linking words and phrases are varied and enhance clarity.	Organized with introduction, body, and conclusion. Linking words are used correctly.	Some organization; ideas may be out of order. Few linking words used or used incorrectly.	Disorganized; no linking words or structure.
CONVENTIONS (GRAMMAR, PUNCTUATION, SENTENCES)	Free of errors in grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Strong, complete sentences with variety.	Few minor errors that do not affect readability. Sentences are complete with some variety.	Frequent errors that sometimes affect clarity. Some sentence fragments or run-ons.	Many errors that make writing hard to understand. Multiple fragments and run-ons.

PERSPECTIVE
CHART

Claim

3 facts from the story.

Evidence

I think the wolf is [guilty/innocent].

Reasoning

Why these facts support their claim.