



Teaching Argument Writing

Using Short & Effective Lessons

In a Nutshell

- Graduated from CSULB in 2008 with a BA in English Education
- Graduated from CUI in 2016 with a MAED: Curriculum & Instruction
- About to start my 7th year teaching; currently teaching at El Camino High School in Oceanside, CA.



OUSD Instructional Framework

OCEANSIDE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT INSTRUCTIONAL FRAMEWORK – ENGLISH 10 COMMON CORE A/B

GRADE 10 PRE-AP: QUARTER III

UNIVERSAL CONCEPT:		POWER		
CONCEPT QUESTION:		To what extent does the end justify the means? In other words, is the method one uses to achieve a goal at least as important as the goal itself?		
PRIMARY TEXT(S):		<u>The Prince</u> – Machiavelli <u>Black Boy</u> – Richard Wright <u>Julius Caesar</u> - Shakespeare		
Anchor Texts		<u>Julius Caesar</u>	<u>The Prince</u>	<u>Black Boy</u>
KEY UNDERSTANDINGS/ QUESTIONS		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sometimes noble intentions can lead to tragedy Language is a powerful weapon and can be used to manipulate others Is it more powerful to feared or loved as a leader? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The greater the pressure, the more you're willing to compromise morally. What price do you pay when you compromise your value system in order to achieve the end? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education provides access to power There is a need to belong to a self-determined group Individuals have the power to expand their sphere of choice when all local choices are unacceptable What is the difference between individualism or selfishness?
SUPPORTING TEXTS		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Hollow Man" – T.S. Eliot ... from <u>Profiles and Courage</u> – John F. Kennedy <u>Parallel Lives</u> - Plutarch "On the Death of Martin Luther King Jr." – Robert F. Kennedy "Geraldo No Last Name" – Sandra Cisneros Crash course: The Roman Republic – John Green "Three Ways to Persuade" – John Edlund 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>The Art of War</u> – Sun Tzu Nixon's Watergate scandal – historical document Too Big to Fail? – NYT room for debate Op.ed articles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "The Ethics of Living Jim Crow" – Richard Wright "Just Walk on By" – Brent Staples

OUSD Instructional Framework

LITERARY/RHETORICAL FOCUS			KEY CONCEPTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argument • Pathos • Ethos • Logos • Irony • Logical Fallacies • Qualify • Credibility • Digression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paralipsis • Tragic hero • Counterargument • Propaganda • Tone • Motif • Concession • Reliability of the narrator • Structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assertion • Evidence • Warrant • Citation • Defend • Challenge • Refutation • Repetition • Syntax 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argument as a writing genre • The use of power in various government structures • The risks to society in civil unrest • American Dream • Psychological construct: fight or flight • Ironies of equality in America
COMMON TARGET OBJECTIVES			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [DOK 3] Using a graphic organizer, students will chart evidence from a variety of argumentative speeches in order to determine the validity of arguments. (RL. 10.1, 4, 6, 9, 10/ W. 10.1, 7, 9, 10/ SL. 2, 3/ L. 3, 4, 5, 6) • [DOK 4] Students will work together to demonstrate an understanding of how images and language shape meaning and influence audiences by working in groups to create a propaganda video on the topic of power in government. The propaganda must use appropriate forms of persuasion and rhetoric. (RI. 10.1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7/ W. 10.7, 8, 9/ SL. 10.1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6/ L. 10.1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6) • [DOK 3] Students will demonstrate their understanding of <u>Julius Caesar</u> by responding to multiple-choice questions similar to those that will appear on the Advanced Placement in English Literature and Composition Exam (RL. 10.1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10/ L. 10.3, 4, 5) • [DOK 3] Students will participate in a Socratic seminar in order to surface and address counterarguments to the claim “the end justifies the means.” Students will build on others’ ideas and express their own clearly and persuasively. (RL. 10.1, 6, 10/ W. 10.1, 9/ SL. 10.1, 3, 4, 6) • [DOK 4] Students will read and synthesize a variety of literary and informational texts in order to write a multi-paragraph argumentative process paper in response to the essential question. (RL. 10.1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 10/ RI. 10. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10/ W. 1, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10/ L. 10.1, 2, 3, 5, 6) 			

Understanding CCSS

- Take a couple minutes and talk with an elbow partner about the following question:
 - After evaluating the OUSD Instructional Framework, does it align with your understanding of the Common Core State Standards(CCSS)?

Why Argument is Important to CCSS

- “When teachers ask students to consider two or more perspectives on a topic or issue, something far beyond surface knowledge is required: students must think critically and deeply, assess the validity of their own thinking, and anticipate counterclaims in opposition to their own assertions.” ELA CCSS

How I Taught Argument in the Past

ARGUMENT WRITING

Traditional Structure

4 Parts...

I. INTRODUCTION

a. Context of the argument: consider referencing SOAP

b. Precise claim: Position on the topic & general reason you are taking this position

Transition sentence or phrase

II. COUNTERARGUMENT(S)

a. Statement/ Explanation of counterargument

b. Evidence/ rationale refuting counterargument

c. Respectful tone: no loaded language, logical appeals only

...as many paragraphs as there are counterarguments

Transition sentence or phrase

III. REASONS SUPPORTING PRECISE CLAIM

a. Statement/ Explanation of reason

b. Evidence/ rationale supporting reason

c. Respectful tone: logical *and* emotional appeals

...as many paragraphs as there are reasons

- If the audience is likely to disagree with the writer, counterargument goes first.
- If the audience is likely to agree, counterargument goes second.

IV. CONCLUSION

a. Precise claim emphasized as a reminder to the audience

b. Answer to the question: *So What?* Why should the audience care about this topic?

Student Sample: Grade 10, Argument

This argument was produced by a student who was asked to write a persuasive essay that required research. The student generated the topic and had an opportunity to revise.

_____ School Bond Levy

The _____ School Board has recently proposed a bond levy to add new facilities as well as conduct some major repairs to the school. The bond includes building a new gymnasium, a new science room and lab, a new Media Center/Library, new Chapter 1 and Special Education classrooms, and other facilities such as more parking space, an increase in storage area, and new locker rooms. Along with new construction, the board is proposing to remodel facilities such as the drama/music areas, the entire roof, the heating system, the school kitchen, and present gym as well. This bond allowing _____ School to add more facilities should be passed in order for young students to be provided with a better education.

Several arguments have been brought up concerning the levy since it failed in the March election. Some say that the school doesn't need to have brand new facilities and better classrooms, but it does. Just this year the school had to shut down for days at a time as a result of a malfunction of the heating system. The roof of the library also had a leaking problem all winter long. The leaking has actually caused the ceiling tiles to rot to the point where they are having to be removed. It isn't safe to sit underneath them because, in fact, they have fallen to tables where students had been working only minutes before.

Another issue that people may be concerned with is the money that taxpayers have to put up for the building. The cost of the project in its entirety will be 2.9 million dollars, meaning that for the next 25 years, taxpayers would pay 40 cents more per thousand dollars in property tax than they do this year. The project does cost a significant amount of money, but the school needs it. If something isn't done now, then the facilities such as the library, the science room and others will continue to grow steadily worse. The construction and remodeling needs to be done eventually, so why not now, when interest rates are low and expenses are also low. Superintendent _____ commented that it would cost the taxpayers much less money now than ten years from now. Another reason that this is a good time to pass this bond is that the results of Ballot Measure 5 are going into effect at the same time as the levy. As it stands now, property tax rates will go down another \$2.50 by next year; however, if taxpayers don't mind paying what they do now and can handle a 40 cent increase, then the school can be that much better.



Many other good reasons we exist for funding this construction now. For one, better facilities will be made available to everyone: staff members, students, and community members. The new gym will allow student athletes to have earlier practices and more time for homework. With only one gym in a K-12 school system, the junior high has to practice in the morning before school, starting at 6:30 A.M., meaning that both the girls and boys teams had to practice at the same time, with half of the court for the girls half for the boys. After school, the high school girls would practice from 3:30 to 5:30 P.M. The varsity boys would then start at 5:30 or 6:00 and go until 7:30. After that, the junior varsity boys would come in for an hour and a half. It's absurd to think that student athletes can make good use of their time with a schedule like that. If the bond were to pass, both the new gym and the present gym would be used for practices and athletes wouldn't have to wait so long to practice every day.

Another reason that the gym should be built is that it is no longer adequate. The bleachers are too close to the court and so there is no room to walk by without getting in the way during a game. The gym also poses a problem for the cheerleaders. As it is now, there is no room for them to cheer. They have to stand on one of the ends which, of course, is right in the way of people walking by. If a new gym were built, enough room would be provided surrounding the court that there wouldn't be any of the problems there are now.

Another advantage to the bond proposed is that it would provide more space in the school. The school has always been small, which is in some ways nice, but it needs to expand. The lack of space is a problem because everyone is crammed into one little hallway trying to make it around from class to class. As it is, there isn't enough room for the library to just be a library or the kitchen to just be a kitchen. Students can't even go to the library when they need to because Health, Media, and other classes are held there. The Satellite Learning classroom, which shares a space with the kitchen, usually has a difficult learning atmosphere each day people prepare food for the hot lunch program. Another problem area is the current science room and lab. Lab facilities are outdated and cannot be replaced for a variety of reasons related to the plumbing and electrical systems. Both science teachers have said publicly that the chemical storage room is inadequate and unsafe. The science curriculum is a core part of students' education and they deserve good facilities.

It is clear then, that _____ School needs significant improvements in which case the bond must be passed. As a community, education is an essential part of the future. In the past, _____ has relied in the timber industry for employment, but times are changing and the younger generations need to be better prepared to meet the challenges that arise. For example, they need to be able to take part in a variety of activities and be able to achieve in many different areas. If the school is inadequate, how can the younger generations be provided with the education and training they need to be successful in the future?



How I Want to Teach Argument Now

- Mini-lessons that can be taught throughout the week
- Lessons that make sense and meaning to ALL students
- Lessons that have students think critically and explore the task at hand.
- Lessons that have students working collaboratively.

Exploring Through Writing

“If we to develop our students’ sense of curiosity, we must be mindful to carve out time to allow our students to inquire and explore.” Kelly Gallagher

Spot the Urban Myth

- **A. Disneyland used to deny admittance to long-haired guests.**
- **B. No one is ever declared dead while on the Disney property.**
- A. A man whose vanity license plate reads “no plate” has received hundreds of parking tickets.
- B. Sucking on a penny will help someone who has been drinking to beat a Breathalyzer test.
- **A. A medical school student discovered that the cadaver assigned to him was actually one of his relatives.**
- **B. A University of Texas student lost both kidneys to organ thieves.**

The Elements of Argument

- A **Claim**
- Based on **Evidence** of some sort
- A **Warrant** that explains **how the evidence supports the claim**
- **Backing** supporting the warrants
- **Qualifications** and **Rebuttals** or counterarguments that refute competing claims.

Teach Simple Arguments of Fact

- Analyzing evidence critically in light of existing knowledge
- Interpreting the evidence to explain what it shows
- Developing warrants that show why the evidence is relevant
- Using the evidence and explanations to solve the problem.

Teach Simple Arguments of Fact

Slip or Trip? Accident or Crime?



At five-feet-six and a hundred and ten pounds, Queenie Volupides was a sight to behold and to clasp. When she tore out of the house after a tiff with her husband, Arthur, she went to the country club where there was a party going on.

She left the club shortly before one in the morning and invited a few friends to follow her home and have one more drink. They got to the Volupides house about ten minutes after Queenie, who met them at the door and said, "Something terrible happened. Arthur slipped and fell on the stairs. He was coming down for another drink—he still had the glass in his hand--- and I think he's dead. Oh, my God---what shall I do?"

The autopsy conducted later concluded that Arthur died from a wound on the head and confirmed that he'd been drunk.

Teach Simple Arguments of Fact

DIRECTIONS: Your group is an investigative team that must determine what may have happened. You can either agree or disagree with Queenie's version.

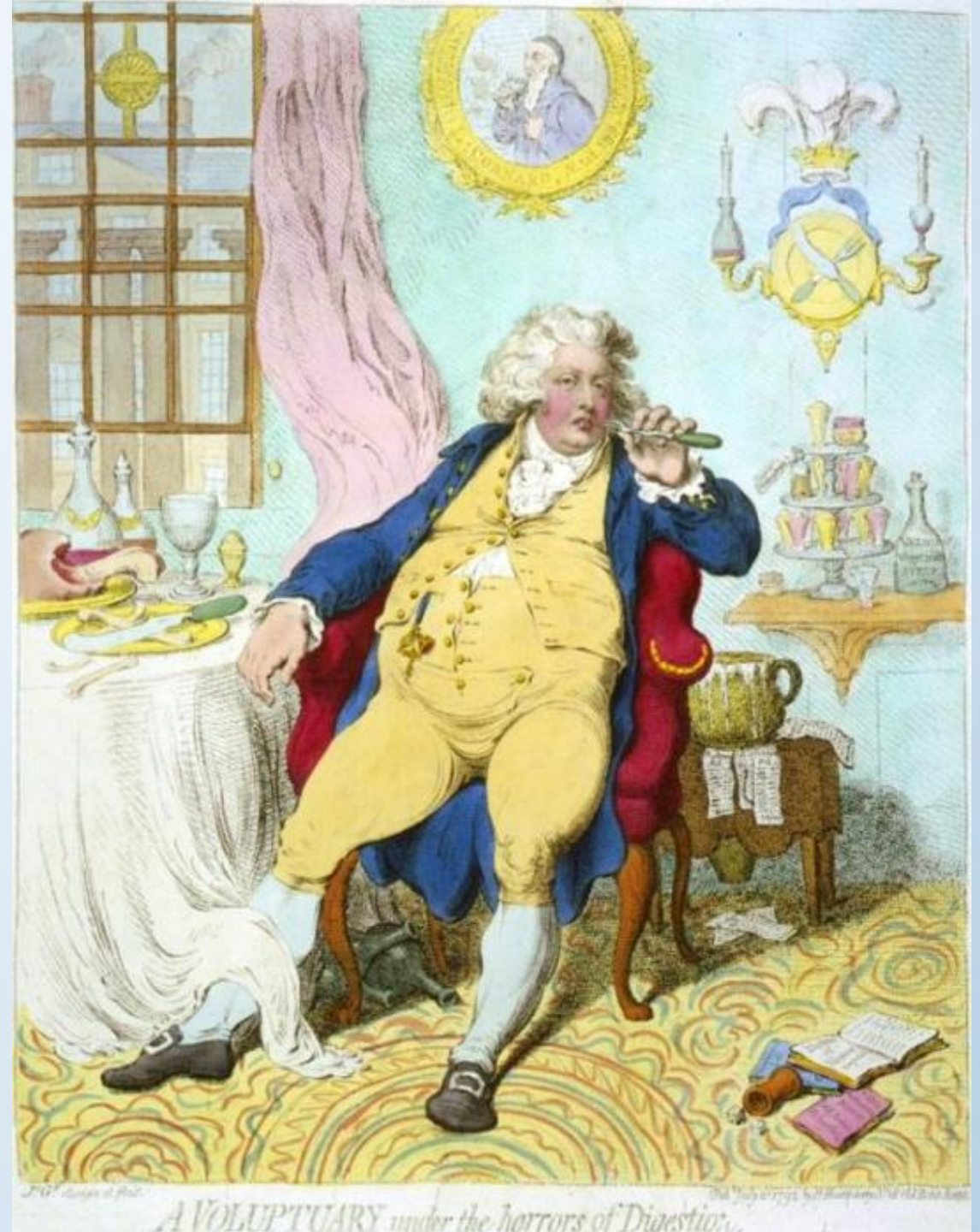
1. Do you think Queenie is telling the truth? Make a *Claim*.
2. Find *all* the evidence you can that indicates whether or not Queenie is telling the truth. Make a list of *all* the evidence (even if you think the evidence contradicts your claim). Evidence includes concrete, observable information; personal testimony; written documents; and material objects and their condition or appearance.
3. Next explain how each piece of evidence supports your claim that Queenie is (or is not) telling the truth. Each explanation will be a generally accepted rule, which may begin with a phrase such as, "As a rule..." If other members of your team disagree with you, find evidence that will convince them.
4. Be prepared to explain why your evidence supports your case.
5. Write a report to convince the others in the class that your analysis makes the most sense.

Teach Simple Arguments of Fact

Evidence (concrete, observable information)	Rule or Warrant	Conclusion
CLAIM:		

Teaching Simple Arguments of Judgment

What do you think of this man?



Teaching Simple Arguments of Judgment

- Define voluptuary. Why might this man be labeled one?

Teaching Simple Arguments of Judgment

- What makes a good king? Justify your responses.

Teaching Simple Arguments of Judgment

- ***What makes a good king?*** Let us apply a characteristic from the previous slide to the prince in “The Voluptuary.”

Claim	Evidence	Warrant

Closing Activity

- A. (“Slip or Trip?”) Based on the evidence and “rules” you identified, make a determination about whether or not Queenie is lying.
- B. (The “Voluptuary”) Write an argument of judgement about whether or not the prince would be a good king.