

Lesson 8: Writing an Opinion Essay: Drafting the Introduction



CCS Standards

- **RI.3.1:** Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
- **W.3.1:** Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.
- **W.3.1a:** Introduce the topic or text they are writing about, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure that lists reasons.
- **L.3.1:** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- **L.3.1b:** Form and use regular and irregular plural nouns.



Daily Learning Targets

- I can form and use regular plural nouns. (L.3.1b)
- I can write an introductory paragraph for my opinion essay giving context on the issue and clearly stating my opinion. (RI.3.1, W.3.1a)

Ongoing Assessment

- Introduction to Opinion Essay: Water Pollution (RI.3.1, W.3.1a)

Agenda

1. Opening

- A. The Painted Essay®: Sorting and Color-Coding the Parts of an Introductory Paragraph (10 minutes)
- B. Reviewing Learning Targets (5 minutes)

2. Work Time

- A. Mini Lesson: Forming and Using Regular Plural Nouns (10 minutes)
- B. Independent Writing: Writing an Introduction (30 minutes)

3. Closing and Assessment

- A. Reflecting on Learning (5 minutes)

4. Homework

- A. Complete the Plural Nouns I practice in your Unit 2 homework.
- B. Accountable Research Reading. Select a prompt and respond in the front of your independent reading journal.

Teaching Notes

Purpose of lesson and alignment to standards:

- In this lesson, students write the introductory paragraph for their essays. They first analyze the introduction of the model essay and compare it to the introductions for the book reviews written in Module 3 (another opinion piece). They then use their planning from Lesson 7 to draft their own introductions (RI.3.1, W.3.1a).
- In this lesson, students focus on working to become effective learners by focusing on a characteristic of their choice as they draft their introductions.

How this lesson builds on previous work:

- In Lesson 5, students analyzed the structure of the Model Opinion Essay: Access to Water. In this lesson, the introductory paragraph is analyzed in detail to help students write their own.
- Throughout the year, students have been learning how to form and use different parts of speech. In this lesson, they learn how to form and use regular plural nouns.

Areas in which students may need additional support:

- Students may need additional support writing their introductory paragraphs. Consider providing a paragraph frame with the context portion of the paragraph completed, so that they have to add only the focus statement and reasons they will be writing about.
- Consider allowing students to work with a partner or grouping students who may need additional writing support together while you guide them through writing the introductory paragraph.

Assessment guidance:

- Review students' introductions to ensure that they have included all the necessary information. Use common issues as teaching points for the whole group.
- Refer to the characteristics related to W.3.1a on the Opinion Writing Checklist when assessing students' work in this lesson (see the Assessment Overview and Resources).
- Consider using the Writing Process Checklist for Writing and Language Skills during the independent writing in Work Time B (see Module 1 Appendix).

Down the road:

- In the next lesson, students will write the first proof paragraph of their essays.

In advance:

- Pre-determine pairs for work throughout the lesson.
- Post: Learning targets and applicable anchor charts (see materials list).

- Continue to use the technology tools recommended throughout Modules 1–3 to create anchor charts to share with families; to record students as they participate in discussions and protocols to review with students later and to share with families; and for students to listen to and annotate text, record ideas on note-catchers, and word-process writing.

Supporting English Language Learners

Supports guided in part by CA ELD Standards 3.I.C.10, 3.I.C.11, 3.I.C.12, 3.II.A.1, 3.II.A.2, 3.II.C.6, 3.II.C.7, 3.II.B.4

Important points in the lesson itself

- The basic design of this lesson supports ELLs with opportunities to work closely with essay structure, building on their understanding one paragraph at a time. In this lesson, students focus exclusively on the introductory paragraph for their opinion essay. They continue to benefit from the color-coding system established in previous lessons for visual support. Additionally, the explicit focus on forming and using regular plural nouns is particularly supportive of ELLs.
- ELLs may find it challenging to keep pace with the class as they work through each sentence of the introductory paragraph. Additionally, they may find it challenging to determine the most relevant context with which to open their paragraphs. Consider working with a small group after working with the class and help them create their introductions together. The group can begin writing as an interactive writing experience and finish independently.

Levels of support

For lighter support:

- Encourage students to use the sentence practice from the Language Dive in Lesson 5, “Millions of people do not have access to _____,” to provide context in their introductions during Work Time B. Challenge students to think of more than one way they could complete the sentence frame.

For heavier support:

- During Work Time B, consider providing an outline for students to organize their introductory paragraphs and make connections between the information on the note-catchers and information they need to include in their paragraphs. (Example: [Background information from Issue box] _____. [Background information from Issue box] _____. [Background information from Issue box] _____. [Focus statement stating my opinion] _____. [Point 1 from Impact box and Point 2 from Action box] _____.)

- Consider using the index cards with pictures of various nouns, created in Unit 1, Lesson 3 (see “For heavier support”), to provide additional practice for students to change singular nouns into regular plural nouns during Work Time A. Focus students on the underlined word sandcastle on the index card with the sentence: “The children are building a sandcastle on the seashore.” Students can talk in pairs, changing the underlined singular noun on the index card into a regular plural noun. (Example: Partner A: “The sentence is, ‘The children are building a sandcastle on the seashore.’ How do you make sandcastle plural?” Partner B: “You can make sandcastle plural by adding -s, to make it sandcastles.”) Allow students to practice with these familiar examples in Work Time B as they learn to form and use regular plural nouns.

Universal Design for Learning

- **Multiple Means of Representation (MMR):** In this lesson, students reflect on their learning successes and challenges. Some may need additional support to recall the work they did throughout the entire lesson. Scaffold memory and access of prior learning by listing the activities for each learning target on chart paper or a white board.
- **Multiple Means of Action and Expression (MMAE):** Continue to support students in setting appropriate goals for their effort and the level of difficulty expected.
- **Multiple Means of Engagement (MME):** Continue to support students in feeling successful with writing by allowing them to visualize and celebrate writing goals. Consider chunking the writing block into smaller blocks with breaks at specific intervals. Celebrate students who meet their writing goal, whether it be length of text or sustained writing time.

Vocabulary

Key:

(L): Lesson-Specific Vocabulary

(T): Text-Specific Vocabulary

(W): Vocabulary Used in Writing

- introductory paragraph, context, opinion, plural nouns, singular (L)
- garbage, runoff, sewers, poisons, groundwater, protect, water pollution, affects, solve (W)

Materials

- ✓ Organizing the Model: Introductory Paragraph strips (one strip per pair)
- ✓ The Painted Essay® template (from Module 1; one per student)
- ✓ Colored pencils (red, yellow, blue, green; one of each per student)
- ✓ Model Opinion Essay: Access to Water (from Lesson 5; one to display)
- ✓ Characteristics of Opinion Essays anchor chart (new; co-created with students during Opening A; see supporting materials)
- ✓ Characteristics of Opinion Essays anchor chart (example, for teacher reference)
- ✓ Close Readers Do These Things anchor chart (begun in Module 1)
- ✓ Vocabulary logs (begun in Module 1; one per student)

- ✓ Opinion Essay: Water Pollution Prompt (from Lesson 1; one per student and one to display)
- ✓ Working to Become Effective Learners anchor chart (begun in Module 1)
- ✓ Parts of Speech anchor chart (begun in Module 2)
- ✓ Regular Plural Nouns anchor chart (new; teacher-created; see supporting materials)
- ✓ Regular Plural Nouns anchor chart (example, for teacher reference)
- ✓ Opinion Writing Checklist (from Lesson 5; one per student and one to display; see Assessment Overview and Resources)
- ✓ Research Note-catcher: Water Pollution (from Unit 1, Lesson 11; one per student)
- ✓ Paper (lined; one piece per student)
- ✓ Domain-Specific Word Wall (begun in Unit 1, Lesson 1)

Opening

A. The Painted Essay®: Sorting and Color-Coding the Parts of an Introductory Paragraph (10 minutes)

- Move students into pre-determined pairs and invite them to label themselves A and B.
- Distribute **Organizing the Model: Introductory Paragraph strips**. Tell students that each pair has been given only one part of the introduction, and later on they will find the other parts to create a complete introduction.
- Invite students to refer to their **Painted Essay® template** to remember the parts of an introductory paragraph:
 - Introduction (background information to engage the reader)
 - Focus statement
 - Two points
- Invite pairs to use the Painted Essay® template and **colored pencils** to underline their part in the correct color: red for introduction, green for focus statement, yellow for Point 1, and blue for Point 2.
- Invite pairs to find pairs with the other parts of the introduction and put them together in the right order. Model an example as necessary.
- Tell students that when they have finished, they will check their work against the displayed **Model Opinion Essay: Access to Water**.
- Invite students to begin and circulate to support them in reading and sorting the strips of the introduction.
- After 7 minutes, refocus whole group.
- Invite students to help you record the parts of an introductory paragraph on the new **Characteristics of Opinion Essays anchor chart**. Refer to the **Characteristics of Opinion Essays anchor chart (example, for teacher reference)** as necessary.

■ Think-Pair-Share:

“Think back to the book reviews you wrote in Module 3. How will the introduction of our opinion essays be similar to the introduction of the book reviews? How will it be different?” (Similarities: It will include a focus statement that tells our opinion and our two points telling the reasons for our opinion. Differences: Our opinion essay will give background information about the issue related to water, and the book review gave a short recounting of the book we were writing about.)

Conversation Cue: “Can you figure out why the introduction of the opinion essay will be different from the book review, even though they are both opinion pieces? I’ll give you time to think and discuss with a partner.” (Responses will vary, but may include: An introduction gives background information to the reader, and for this opinion essay the reader needs background about the issue related to water.)

Meeting Students’ Needs

- For students who may need additional support: Provide differentiated mentors by purposefully pre-selecting student partnerships. Consider meeting with the mentors in advance to encourage them to share their thought processes with their partner. (MMAE)
- For ELLs: (Modeling and Thinking Aloud: Paragraph Organization) Model and think aloud the process for organizing introductory paragraph strips before students do so in pairs. Consider using the introductory paragraph from the Model Book Review from Module 3 (see Lesson 5, “For heavier support”) to do so. Color-code the text on the strips to represent each part of the introductory paragraph, providing students with a concrete model to work from.
- For ELLs: (Displaying Essays Side by Side) Consider displaying the model book review from Module 3 next to the enlarged model opinion essay (see Lesson 5, “For heavier support”) as students discuss similarities and differences between the introductory paragraphs. Explicitly note that the points in the book review focused on why students would or would not recommend the book they were reading, while the points in their opinion essay will focus on how a problem affects us and how we can solve it.

Opening

B. Reviewing Learning Targets (5 minutes)

- Direct students’ attention to the posted learning targets and read them aloud:
 - “I can form and use regular plural nouns.”*
 - “I can write an introductory paragraph for my opinion essay giving context on the issue and clearly stating my opinion.”*
- Underline the words *introductory paragraph* and review what an introductory paragraph is (the paragraph that opens a piece of writing and helps the reader understand what the writing will be about).

- Underline and use the vocabulary strategies on the **Close Readers Do These Things anchor chart** to review and/or determine the meaning of the following words. Add any new words to the Academic Word Wall and invite students to add them to their **vocabulary logs**.
 - *context* (background information about a situation or event)
 - *opinion* (what someone thinks about something)
- Invite students to retrieve their **Opinion Essay: Water Pollution Prompt** and follow along, reading silently in their heads as you read the prompt aloud.
- Remind students that the focus of their essay will be about how water conservation affects us all and why we must protect our water supply.
- Focus students on the **Working to Become Effective Learners anchor chart** and invite them to read the habits of character on the chart to themselves. Tell students to choose a habit to focus on as they begin drafting today.

Meeting Students' Needs

- For ELLs: (Word Families) When reviewing the word *introductory*, ask students about the root word (*introduce*). Explain that *introduce* is a verb meaning to present something for the first time. *Introduction* is a noun that refers to the action of introducing something. And *introductory* is an adjective that describes the introduction, or beginning, of something. Invite students to think of a time they *introduced*, or *were introduced to*, somebody, helping them determine the meaning of *introductory* while reinforcing the function of the various parts of speech and the strategy of using root words to find the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases.

Work Time

A. Mini Lesson: Forming and Using Regular Plural Nouns (10 minutes)

- Tell students that before they begin writing their essays, they will learn more about forming and using *plural nouns* in their writing.
- Focus students on the **Parts of Speech anchor chart**.
- Ask:
 - “What is a noun?” (*a person, place, thing, or idea*)
 - “What are some examples of nouns?” (*a student, a classroom, a book*)
- Direct students’ attention to the **Regular Plural Nouns anchor chart** and invite students to read the singular and plural noun headings on the first table on the anchor chart, clarifying the meaning of *singular* and *plural* as needed.
- Tell students that there are different types of plural nouns. Some are called regular plural nouns because they follow rules.
- Focus students’ attention on the first chart and use a total participation technique to invite responses from the group:
 - “What do you notice about how the noun changed from the singular to the plural in each of these examples?” (*-s was added*)

- Record this in the “What do you notice?” column. Refer to the **Regular Plural Nouns anchor chart (example, for teacher reference)**.
- Focus students’ attention on *farm* and *lake* on the first table.
- Turn and Talk:

“Form the plural of each of these nouns. How do you change farm to mean more than one farm? How do you change lake to mean more than one lake?” (farms, lakes)
- Record these in the appropriate spots on the anchor chart. Continue to refer to the Regular Plural Nouns anchor chart (example, for teacher reference) as necessary.
- Repeat with the remaining two tables on the chart:
 - For each example, discuss how the nouns changed from the singular to the plural and record students’ observations in the “What do you notice?” column on the anchor chart.
 - Invite students to turn and talk, discussing how to form the plural of the remaining examples in each table, and recording them on the anchor chart.
 - Refer to the Regular Plural Nouns anchor chart (example, for teacher reference) as needed.
- Use a checking for understanding technique (e.g., Red Light, Green Light or Thumb-O-Meter) for students to self-assess against the first learning target.

Meeting Students’ Needs

- For students who may need additional support with comprehension: Display pre-written index cards with nouns (e.g., farm, lake, chair) and separate cards pre-written with “s.” Invite students to physically add the “s” to the end of each noun to create the regular plural form. (MMR, MME)
- For ELLs: (Gestures for Reinforcement) Consider using gestures to reinforce the concept of a noun. Example: For a *person*, invite students to point to themselves; for a *place*, invite students to make a circular motion pointing to places around the room; for a *thing*, invite students to lightly pull at their clothing; and for an *idea*, invite students to point to their head to show thinking. Refer to concrete examples of nouns listed on the Parts of Speech anchor chart that correspond with each function, adding additional examples as needed.
- For ELLs: (Regular Plural Noun Practice) Invite students to play Make Me Plural! with the cards from “For heavier support.” Put all index cards in a bag and invite a volunteer to pull one out and ask how the underlined singular noun could be made plural. Invite that student to call on a classmate to explain. The student who explained how to change the singular noun into a regular plural noun then repeats this process. Record each example in the appropriate spot on the Regular Plural Nouns anchor chart.

Work Time

B. Independent Writing: Writing an Introduction (30 minutes)

- Display and invite students to retrieve their **Opinion Writing Checklist**. Remind them that they will use this checklist as they write and revise their essays.
- Read aloud the following criteria, pausing after each to invite students to turn and talk with an elbow partner to restate the criterion in their own words:
 - “W.3.1a: I state my opinion clearly, and my writing stays focused.”
 - “W.3.1a: I have an introduction that gives the reader the information needed to understand the topic or issue.”
 - “W.3.1a: I list reasons for my opinion.”
 - “L.3.1: My words and sentences follow the rules of writing.”
 - “L.3.3, L.3.6, W.3.4: The words and sentences I use are appropriate for this task and purpose.”
- Invite students to mark/highlight these criteria on their checklist.
- Tell students that, as with other writing pieces they’ve worked on this school year, they will focus on different criteria as they write each part of their essays.
- Focus students on the empty column of their checklist. Remind them that although every piece of opinion writing should include the criteria listed, each piece of opinion writing will have specific criteria according to the content.
- Focus students on the criterion:
 - “W.3.1a: I state my opinion clearly, and my writing stays focused.”
- Using a total participation technique, invite responses from the group:

“What is the opinion you are stating in your essay?” (how water pollution affects us all and why we must protect our water supply by keeping it clean)
- Model how to record this (by sketching or writing) on the displayed Opinion Writing Checklist and invite students to do the same.
- Repeat with the other criteria students have marked, referring to the Opinion Writing Checklist (for teacher reference) as necessary. When students focus on L.3.1, remind them of what they have just learned about forming and using regular plural nouns. Encourage them to consider the skills they have practiced in the previous modules: using coordinating and subordinating conjunctions and producing simple, compound, and complex sentences. Review these skills if students need a reminder.
- Invite students to retrieve their **Research Note-catcher: Water Pollution**. Remind them that they planned their essays in the previous lesson. Focus students on the parts of their note-catcher color-coded for the introduction: the focus statement and Issue box.
- Turn and Talk:

“Share the focus statement you have planned for your essay.”
- Distribute **paper** and invite students to use the displayed Model Opinion Essay: Access to Water, the criteria recorded on the Characteristics of Opinion Essays anchor chart, the Opinion Writing Checklist, and the **Domain-Specific Word Wall** to write their introduction. Remind students that they need to add their own opinion and reasons at the very end of their introduction paragraph.

- Remind students also to leave a line between each line of their writing.
- Invite students to begin writing.
- Circulate to support students, particularly in writing their own opinion and reasons at the end.
- Use a checking for understanding technique (e.g., Red Light, Green Light or Thumb-O-Meter) for students to self-assess against the second learning target.
- Invite students to take out their Opinion Writing Checklist and record “Y” for “Yes” and the date in the final column if they feel the criteria marked on their checklists in this lesson have been achieved in their writing in this lesson.

Meeting Students' Needs

- For students who may need additional support in building writing stamina: Consider offering built-in breaks, during which students can choose an activity such as getting water or stretching. (MME)
- For students who may need additional support in organizing ideas for written expression: Offer sentence starters or frames as scaffolding for student expression and communication. (MMAE)
- For ELLs: (Concrete, Corresponding Examples) Invite students to refer to the concrete, corresponding examples for each criterion on the Opinion Writing Checklist (see Lesson 5) to reinforce their understanding of each and to support them in restating the criterion in their own words.
- For ELLs: (Orally Reviewing Paragraph Structure) Invite students to orally review the structure of the introductory paragraph with a partner before they write and to explain where they will find the information for each sentence of the introduction. Provide sentence frames for support. (Example: The first part of the introductory paragraph includes ____ [background information], which I will find ____ [in the Issue box of my note-catcher]. The next part of the introductory paragraph includes ____ [my focus statement], which I will find ____ [written in green on my note-catcher]. The last part of my introductory paragraph includes ____ [the reasons for my opinion], which I will find ____ [in the Impact and Action boxes of my note-catcher].)

Closing and Assessment

A. Reflecting on Learning (5 minutes)

- Move students into groups of three or four and invite them to reread the Working to Become Effective Learners anchor chart.
- Invite students to reflect on the process of writing by discussing the following:

“What did you do to work toward becoming an effective learner as you worked today?” (Responses will vary.)

“What were your challenges as you worked today?” (Responses will vary.)

“What were your successes?” (Responses will vary.)

Conversation Cue: “Can you give an example?” (Responses will vary.)

Meeting Students' Needs

- For students who may need additional support with working memory: Display a list of the activities in this lesson for students to reference as they think about how they took initiative today. (MMAE)
- For ELLs: (Regular Plural Nouns: Noticing Syllables) Invite students to repeat the words *challenges* and *successes* before they reflect on each question, tapping out the syllables of each word as they say it. Then, invite students to say the singular form of each word, *challenge* and *success*, again tapping out each syllable. Explain that these are examples of nouns that take on an extra syllable when they become plural. Record *challenges* and *successes* in the appropriate spot on the Regular Plural Nouns anchor chart.

Homework

A. Complete the Plural Nouns I practice in your Unit 2 homework.

B. Accountable Research Reading. Select a prompt and respond in the front of your independent reading journal.

Meeting Students' Needs

- For ELLs: (Oral Response) Read aloud, discuss, and respond to your prompt orally, either with a partner, family member, or student from grades 2 or 4, or record an audio response.