

Lesson 9: Writing Informative Texts: Developing Proof Paragraphs



CCS Standards

- **RI.4.9:** Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.
- **W.4.2:** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- **W.4.2b:** Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.
- **W.4.2e:** Provide a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.
- **W.4.4:** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- **W.4.5:** With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.
- **W.4.7:** Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.
- **W.4.9:** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- **W.4.9b:** Apply *grade 4 Reading standards* to informational texts (e.g., "Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text").
- **L.4.1:** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- **L.4.1c:** Use modal auxiliaries (e.g., *can*, *may*, *must*) to convey various conditions.



Daily Learning Targets

- I can write proof paragraphs for my informative piece that describe the defense mechanisms of my expert group animal. (RI.4.9, W.4.2, W.4.4, W.4.5, W.4.9b)
- I can write a concluding statement for my informative piece that summarizes the defense mechanisms of my expert group animal. (RI.4.9, W.4.2, W.4.4, W.4.5, W.4.9b)
- I can use modal auxiliaries to express the condition of verbs. (L.4.1c)

Ongoing Assessment

- Draft of proof paragraphs (RI.4.9, W.4.2, W.4.4, W.4.5, W.4.7, W.4.9b)

Agenda

1. Opening

- A. Reviewing Learning Targets (5 minutes)

2. Work Time

- A. Analyzing Model Proof Paragraphs (15 minutes)
- B. Drafting Proof Paragraphs (25 minutes)
- C. Guided Practice: Writing a Concluding Statement (10 minutes)

3. Closing and Assessment

- A. Fourth Draft of Sketch (5 minutes)

4. Homework

- A. 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 continue drafting the informative page for their performance task, with a focus on the proof paragraphs and conclusion (RI.4.9, W.4.2b, W.4.2e, W.4.4, W.4.5, W.4.7, W.4.9b, L.4.1c).
- Similar to Lesson 8, students analyze the model informational essay before crafting their own.
- Also similar to Lesson 8, students have the opportunity to share their writing with a partner outside of their expert group in order to receive feedback.
- The research reading that students complete for homework will help build both their vocabulary and knowledge pertaining to animals and specifically animal defense mechanisms. By participating in this volume of reading over a span of time, students will develop a wide base of knowledge about the world and the words that help describe and make sense of it.
- Students have the opportunity to practice their fluency in this lesson by following along and reading silently as the teacher reads “Fight to Survive!” aloud, by chorally reading the finished proof paragraph about the millipede, and by reading their writing aloud to a partner.
- Students who finish quickly can use the Informational Writing Planning graphic organizer, an additional research question they may have developed in the first half of this unit as an extension, and their research notes to draft an additional paragraph of their informative piece.
- Students who finish quickly can begin to consider other ways to present the information they have been researching. Invite them to brainstorm ways to present (e.g., PowerPoint presentation, create a poster, etc.), choose one, and begin planning this presentation.

How it builds on previous work:

- In Lesson 8, students used their research from the first half of Unit 2 and their Informational Writing Planning graphic organizers to draft their introductory paragraphs. In this lesson, they do the same to develop proof paragraphs and conclusion.
- Continue to use Goals 1-3 Conversation Cues to promote productive and equitable conversation.

Areas where students may need additional support:

- Students may need additional support with using their planning organizers to draft sentences and with elaborating on their ideas. Check in and conference with these students when they are drafting in Work Time D.
- Students may need additional time drafting their proof paragraphs.
- Note that sentence frames are not provided for all students to use when writing in this module. Refer back to the writing lessons in Module 1 if students need this additional support.

Assessment guidance:

- Refer to the characteristic related to W.4.2b and W.4.2e of the Informative Writing when assessing students' work in this lesson.
- Consider using the Writing Informal Assessment: Writing and Language Skills Checklist (Grade 4) during students' writing in Work Time D. See Module 1 Appendix.
- Collect in Informative QuickWrite homework (Lesson 7).
- For ELLs: Collect the Language Dive Practice Part II (Lesson 8).

Down the road:

- Students will continue working on their informative pieces by revising for supporting details and word choice in Lesson 10, editing for conventions in Lesson 11, and publishing their pieces in Unit 3.

In advance:

- Post: Informational Texts anchor chart; learning targets.

Technology & Multimedia

- See the Module Overview document for suggestions of technology and multimedia that could be incorporated to enhance student learning in this lesson.
- Work Time D: Students complete their drafts in a word processing document, for example a Google Doc using Speech to Text facilities activated on devices, or using an app or software like Dictation.io (<https://dictation.io/speech>).

Supporting English Language Learners

Supports guided in part by CA ELD Standards 4.I.A.1, 4.I.A.3, 4.I.B.5, 4.I.B.6, 4.I.B.8, 4.I.C.10, 4.I.C.11, 4.I.C.12, 4.II.A.1, 4.II.B.3

Important points in the lesson itself

- The basic design of this lesson supports ELLs with explicit instruction around the language of proof paragraphs.
- ELLs may find the proof paragraphs challenging, as writing proof paragraphs using U.S. conventions may be unfamiliar. Call special attention to the name and purpose of each piece

of the introduction. See Levels of support and the Meeting Students' Needs column for suggestions.

- Mini Language Dives. Highlight and discuss language structures that are critical to understanding the characteristic of focus in this lesson. Example: "I have a conclusion / that is clearly related to the focus and the information presented."

Levels of support

For lighter support:

- Invite students to highlight and label the "information that develops the focus statement" and underline and label the "concluding statement." Ask students to find samples of information that develops a focus statement and write down the best concluding statement they find. They can discuss these samples in home language groups or heterogeneous English-speaking groups.

For heavier support:

- Remind students about the steps in the writing process: plan, draft, revise, edit, publish.
- For Work Time C, provide students with a cloze proof paragraph about their animal. Write the paragraph for them, but leave out key words and phrases for small groups to fill in together. Make the task simpler by writing a list of the key words next to the cloze paragraph so that students can select from the list.
- Help students take the lead in pair work by giving them turn-taking sentence frames. Examples:
 - "I can share what I think ..."
 - "That's a great idea. I also think that ..."
 - (Nod head.) "Uh-huh. And the paragraph should also ..."
- With the small group, create an outline of what the entire informative piece should look like using a color-coded example: Focus statement and concluding statement are both green, introduction is red, proof paragraph 1 is blue, proof paragraph 2 is yellow. Draw an arrow from both proof paragraphs to the focus statement. This will help students see that the focus and concluding statements should be similar and directly tied to the information about animal defenses—blue and yellow make green. The extra information in the introduction is important, but it's not necessarily linked directly to the focus question.

Universal Design for Learning

- **Multiple Means of Representation (MMR):** This lesson offers a variety of visual anchors to cue students' thinking. For those who may need additional support, consider creating additional or individual anchor charts for reference. Additionally, chart student responses during whole class discussions to aid with comprehension. Some students may require additional scaffolding in visual representation, such as the use of graphic organizers, charts, highlights, or different colors. This will prompt them to visually categorize information into more manageable chunks and reinforce relationships among multiple pieces of information.
- **Multiple Means of Action & Expression (MMAE):** Support developing writers in this lesson by discussing the idea of a concluding statement being "clearly related" to a focus statement. Brainstorm many different concluding statements and have students choose

one that is related to, but not exactly the same as, their focus statement to add to their informative piece.

- **Multiple Means of Engagement (MME):** Continue to encourage self-regulatory skills by helping students anticipate and manage frustration by modeling what to do if they need help from their partners. For example, “I can remember when I’m sharing that if I forget my idea or need help, I can ask my partner to help me. My partner could help me by giving me prompts that will help me share my thinking.” Consider offering sentence frames to strategically selected peer models. Recall that offering these supports for engagement promotes a safe learning space for all students.

Vocabulary

Key:

(L): Lesson-Specific Vocabulary

(T): Text-Specific Vocabulary

(W): Vocabulary used in writing

- proof paragraphs, concluding statement, scientifically accurate, restating (L)

Materials

- ✓ Model informational essay (from Lesson 7; one per student and one to display)
- ✓ Painted Essay® template (from Module 1; one per student and one to display)
- ✓ Millipede Informational Writing Planning graphic organizer (from Lesson 7; one to display)
- ✓ Equity sticks
- ✓ Informational Texts anchor chart (begun in Lesson 7; added to with students in Work Times A and C)
- ✓ Informational Texts anchor chart (example, for teacher reference)
- ✓ Informative Writing Checklist (from Lesson 7; one per student and one to display)
- ✓ Lined paper (several pieces per student)
- ✓ Informational Writing Planning graphic organizer (from Lesson 7; one per student and one to display)
- ✓ Informative piece drafts (from Lesson 8; one per student)
- ✓ Expert Group Animal research notebook (distributed in Lesson 1; one per student)
 - Sketch page (page 20)

Opening

A. Reviewing Learning Targets (5 minutes)

- Direct students’ attention to the learning targets and ask for volunteers to read them aloud:

“I can write proof paragraphs for my informative piece that describe the defense mechanisms of my expert group animal.”

“I can write a concluding statement for my informative piece that summarizes the defense mechanisms of my expert group animal.”

“I can group together scientifically accurate facts with related evidence in my informative piece.”

“I can use modal auxiliaries to express the condition of verbs.”

- Ask students if they are unfamiliar with any terms in the learning targets. They might identify: *proof paragraphs*, *concluding statement*, and *scientifically accurate*. Write a synonym above these terms in the learning targets and ask for new volunteers to read the targets again.
- For the third target, ask students to turn and talk:

“What does it mean to group accurate facts with related evidence?” (It means our evidence has to match our facts.)

- Ask students to show you a thumbs-up if they understand what they will be learning today, a thumbs-sideways if they need clarification, and a thumbs-down if they still don’t know. Clarify as necessary.

Meeting Students’ Needs

- For students who may need additional support with comprehension: Discuss and clarify the language of learning targets to help build academic vocabulary.(MMR)
- For ELLs: Mini Language Dive. Highlight language structures that are critical to understanding the learning targets. Examples: “I can group together scientifically accurate facts / with related evidence / in my informative piece.” Work on comprehension of these structures—for example, by asking ELLs: “What kind of facts?” (accurate, correct) “In what way are they accurate? (scientifically, related to science)

Work Time

A. Analyzing Model Proof Paragraphs (15 minutes)

- Ask students to get out their copy of **the model informational essay**.
- Tell students they are going to analyze the proof paragraphs of the model essay. Invite students to silently review their Painted Essay® template to see where Proof Paragraphs 1 and 2 fit into the structure of the essay.
- Explain that in informational writing, we call the middle paragraphs the proof paragraphs. In these paragraphs, the author develops the topic with facts, definitions, details, and quotations from research.
- Display the **Millipede Informational Writing Planning graphic organizer** from Lesson 7. Ask students to turn and talk, then use **equity sticks** to cold call students:

“Based on your planning and what you know about the performance task criteria, what should each proof paragraph contain?” (Each proof paragraph should describe one defense mechanism that the expert group animal uses, how or when the animal uses that defense mechanism, how a predator responds, and details about the defense mechanism.)

- Ask:
“What are the features of a strong paragraph?” (A strong paragraph has a topic sentence, details, and concluding sentence.)
- If productive, cue students with a challenge. Ask students to turn and talk, then use equity sticks to cold call students:
“Can you figure out how the author designed the proof paragraph to develop the topic? I’ll give you time to think and discuss with a partner.” (Responses will vary.)
- Invite students to chorally read the proof paragraphs of the model informational essay with you.
- Invite students to help you record the parts of the proof paragraphs on the Informational Texts anchor chart. Refer to the Informational Texts anchor chart (example, for teacher reference) as necessary.
- Point out that within each proof paragraph the author has elaborated on the focus of the writing, or explained how the evidence he or she has chosen supports the focus statement.

Meeting Students' Needs

- Modify the Informational Writing Planning graphic organizer by color-coding the paragraph boxes (making them clearly different from the sources and research boxes) so it is easier for students who have difficulty organizing to see that there are three paragraphs in this informative piece. Also highlight “defense mechanism” in each of the proof paragraph boxes to emphasize the focus of these paragraphs. (MMR, MMAE)
- For ELLs: Repeat the question: “Based on your planning and what you know about the performance task criteria, what should each proof paragraph contain?” Rephrase the question: “What are the performance task criteria? Think about your research and the performance task criteria. What should you include in each proof paragraph?”
- For ELLs: Repeat the question: “What are the features of a strong paragraph?” Rephrase the question: “What does a good paragraph have?”
- For ELLs: Display and read aloud the features of a strong paragraph in a brief, bulleted format.
- For ELLs: Repeat the question: “How did the author design the proof paragraph to develop the topic?” Rephrase the question: “The writer developed the topic in the proof paragraph. How did the writer do that?”
- For ELLs: Bolster participation by giving students additional think time. Provide sentence frames and collocations: “The author started by describing the ____” or “Each paragraph has ____.” (scientific vocabulary/a lot of details/facts from research/details about X)
- For ELLs: Mini Language Dive. Highlight language structures that are critical to understanding the student observations on the Developing Proof Paragraphs anchor chart. Work on comprehension of these structures—for example, by eliciting paraphrases of these structures.

Work Time

B. Drafting Proof Paragraphs (25 minutes)

- Display a copy of the **Informative Writing Checklist** and ask students to take out their own copy. Remind them that this checklist will be used to assess their writing.
- Invite students to read the following characteristics of an effective informative piece to themselves:
 - “W.4.2a: **I group related information in paragraphs and sections. Each paragraph or section explains a main idea.**”
 - “W.4.2b: **I use accurate and relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information to explain my thinking.**”
- Underline “group related information” and ask students to turn and talk; then use equity sticks for students to share out:

“Why should we group related information into paragraphs?” (It helps the reader understand how each point supports the focus.)
- Remind students they should use evidence from their research in their proof paragraphs.
- Explain to students that they should keep these criteria in mind as they begin drafting their informative pieces.
- Distribute **lined paper** and tell students they are going to complete a first draft of their proof paragraphs. Invite them to take out their **Informational Writing Planning graphic organizer** from Lesson 7 and their **informative piece drafts** from Lesson 8.
- Remind them that when they write a draft, they should skip lines so they have room to make revisions and edits later in the writing process. Also remind them to use their research notes and planning page to ensure their writing is scientifically accurate.
- Encourage students to refer to the following while they are working: model informational essay, Informative Writing Checklist, Informational Texts anchor chart, their planning graphic organizer, the Academic Word Wall, and the Domain-Specific Word Wall.
- Remind students to use modal auxiliaries correctly to make their work precise as they express the condition of verbs.
- Give students 25 minutes to write. Circulate and support them as needed. Be sure to confer with those whom you observed needing additional support with planning their writing in Lesson 7 and drafting in Lesson 8. Help them focus on getting their ideas down on paper, as opposed to worrying about spelling or grammar. Remind them that they will edit their writing toward the end of the writing process.
- Remind students that as they draft their proof paragraphs, they should elaborate on the focus of their essay, or explain how the evidence they have chosen shows how their animal’s defense mechanisms help it to survive.
- If productive, cue students to think about their thinking:

“What habits helped you succeed in drafting your proof paragraphs? I’ll give you time to think and discuss with a partner.” (Responses will vary.)

Meeting Students' Needs

- For ELLs: Provide support as needed. Keep in mind, however, that successful completion after considerable effort builds both stamina and confidence.
- For students who may need additional support in building writing stamina: Consider offering built-in breaks, where students can choose an activity such as getting water or stretching. (MME)
- For ELLs: Display key terms and sequences. Example:
 - Introduction Paragraph
 - focus statement
 - Proof Paragraph #1
 - information developing the focus statement
 - Proof Paragraph #2
 - information developing the focus statement
 - Concluding Statement

Work Time

C. Guided Practice: Writing a Concluding Statement (10 minutes)

- Tell students they are going to analyze the conclusion of the model essay. Invite students to silently review their Painted Essay® template to see where the conclusion fits into the structure of an essay.
- Invite students to chorally read the conclusion of the model informational essay with you.
- Invite students to help you record the parts of the conclusion on the Informational Texts anchor chart. Refer to the Informational Texts anchor chart (example, for teacher reference) as necessary.
- Refocus students on the **Informative Writing checklist**.
- Invite students to read the following characteristic of an effective informative piece to themselves:
 - **W.4.2e**
- Circle *clearly related* and ask, and then select volunteers to share:

“What do we mean by the phrase clearly related?” (It means the conclusion ties back to the focus statement, or The conclusion is connected to the focus statement.)
- Tell students that they will need to include a concluding statement in their writing. Ask, and then select volunteers to share:

“How does a concluding statement help a reader understand a text?” (It sums up or wraps up the writing for the reader, or It reminds the reader what the main topic of the writing was.)
- Ask, and then select volunteers to share:

“Where would it make sense to include the concluding statement? In the beginning, middle, or end of the piece? (the end)
- If productive, cue students to provide reasoning:

“Why do you think that?” (because it restates and wraps the writing up.)

- Explain that, like the focus statement, the concluding statement answers the focus question and reminds the reader what the piece is about. Tell students that it should answer the focus question in a different way than the focus statement, and that this is called *restating*.
- Refocus students on their **Informational Writing Planning graphic organizer**.
- Point out the focus question at the top of the graphic organizer and cold call a student to read it aloud:

“How does my expert group animal use its body and behaviors to help it survive?”

- Remind students that a concluding statement is like a focus statement in that it is brief, to the point, and answers the focus question.
- Rephrase the focus question so it is specific to the millipede and invite students to turn to an elbow partner. Ask:

“How can we answer this question in a different way than we answered it as the focus statement? ‘How does the millipede use its body and behaviors to help it survive?’” (The millipede has many ways of protecting itself;” or “The millipede protects itself by rolling into a ball and using poison.)

- If productive, cue students to listen carefully and seek to understand:
“Who can tell us what your classmate said in your own words?” (Responses will vary.)
- When students share out, write examples that are different from the examples used for the focus statement in Lesson 8.
- Choose one concluding statement from the student-generated list and write on the Millipede Informational Writing Planning graphic organizer in the Concluding Statement box. Be sure to display this for students to see.
- Invite students to Ink-Pair-Share a concluding statement for their own piece, writing the concluding statement on their informative piece draft. Give them 5 minutes to do so, circulating and supporting as needed. Look for those who need additional support to develop a concluding statement.
- Invite students to record ‘Y’ for ‘Yes’ and the date in the final column of their Informative Writing Checklist if they feel the criteria marked on their checklists have been achieved in their writing in this lesson.
- Focus students on the learning targets. Read each one aloud, pausing after each to use a checking for understanding protocol for students to reflect on their comfort level with or show how close they are to meeting each target. Make note of students who may need additional support with each of the learning targets moving forward.

Meeting Students' Needs

- For students who may need additional support with auditory processing: Write key words that students use on the board during discussion about concluding statements. (MMR)
- For ELLs: Repeat the question: “How can we answer this question in a different way from how we answered it as the focus statement?” Rephrase the question: “We already answered this question for the focus statement. Now we need to answer it a little differently for the concluding statement. How can we answer it a little differently?”

- For ELLs: Provide students with the parts of possible concluding statements on separate strips of paper. Example: "The millipede / protects itself / by rolling into a ball / and using poison." In pairs, have them rearrange the strips into the correct sequence.

Closing and Assessment

A. Fourth Draft of Sketch (5 minutes)

- Invite students to work on the fourth draft of their expert group animal sketch on the **sketch page** in their **Expert Group Animal research notebook**.

Homework

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

Meeting Students' Needs

- For ELLs and students who may need additional support with reading and writing: Refer to the suggested homework support in Lesson 1. (MMAE, MMR)