

Lesson 3: Writing an Opinion Essay: Planning an Essay and Drafting an Introduction



CCS Standards

- **W.5.1:** Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
- **W.5.1a:** Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which ideas are logically grouped to support the writer's purpose.
- **W.5.1b:** Provide logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details.
- **W.5.4:** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- **W.5.5:** With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
- **W.5.6:** With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of two pages in a single sitting.
- **W.5.9:** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- **W.5.9b:** Apply *grade 5 Reading standards* to literature (e.g., "Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text, identifying which reasons and evidence support which point[s]").



Daily Learning Targets

- I can plan an essay that states an opinion and has reasons that are supported by facts and details. (W.5.1, W.5.4, W.5.9b)
- I can give kind, helpful, and specific feedback. (W.5.5)
- I can write an introductory paragraph for my essay, giving context on the issue and clearly stating my opinion. (W.5.1, W.5.4, W.5.6)

Ongoing Assessment

- Student-designed Essay Planner graphic organizer (W.5.1, W.5.4, W.5.5, W.5.9b)
- Introductory paragraph of opinion essay (W.5.1, W.5.4, W.5.9b)

Agenda

1. Opening

A. Reviewing Learning Targets (5 minutes)

2. Work Time

A. Planning an Opinion Essay (25 minutes)

B. Peer Critique: Essay Planner Graphic Organizer (10 minutes)

3. Closing and Assessment

A. Independent Writing: Drafting an Introduction (20 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 Work Time A, students plan an essay responding to the following prompt: “Which two items do you think are most important to include in your emergency preparedness kit? Why?” They briefly review the criteria on the Opinion Writing Checklist before choosing their two items, drafting their opinion statements, and planning their opinion essays (W.5.1, W.5.4, W.5.5, W.5.9b). This is done with minimal teacher guidance and without a topic-specific model to gradually release students to write opinion essays independently in preparation for responding to an essay prompt for the end of unit assessment. Instead, students are directed to look back at the Opinion Writing Planning graphic organizer and the Model Essay: Branch Rickey (from Module 3, Unit 2, Lesson 9) as a model for an organizer and an opinion essay and to transfer what they learned in Module 3 to this content.
- In Work Time B, students give and receive peer feedback focused on stating an opinion and the organization of their essays (W.5.1a, W.5.1b, W.5.5, W.5.9b). If time permits, consider allowing more time for peer review focused on common issues students may need additional support with.
- In the Closing, students draft the introductory paragraphs of their opinion essays (W.5.1a, W.5.4). To address W.5.6, students word-process their introductory paragraphs. If technology is not available for this, students can handwrite their essays, leaving a line between each line of writing for editing.
- In this lesson, students continue to focus on working to contribute to a better world as they apply their learning to help their school and community by educating them about preparing for natural disasters. They also consider the Working to Become Ethical People anchor chart, specifically respect, as they provide kind, specific, and helpful peer feedback.

How this lesson builds on previous work:

- In Lessons 1–2, students researched the food and supplies needed in an emergency preparedness kit. In this lesson, they consider—from the list of supplies they have chosen—which are the two most important supplies and why.

Areas in which students may need additional support:

- Students may need additional support creating a graphic organizer to organize their opinion statement and reasons. For those students, consider providing them with a six-square graphic organizer from a previous module (e.g., the Opinion Writing Planning graphic organizer from Module 3, Unit 2, Lesson 10).

Assessment guidance:

- Review students' essay plans and introductory paragraphs to identify common issues to use as whole group teaching points in the next lesson.

Down the road:

- In the next lesson, students will write the two proof paragraphs for their opinion essay.

In advance:

- Prepare:
 - Copies of students' Mid-Unit 3 assessments for them to work from to make their choices in this lesson.
 - Opinion Writing Planning graphic organizer from Module 3, Unit 2, Lesson 10 (optional; for students who need additional support)
 - Model Essay: Branch Rickey from Module 3, Unit 2, Lesson 9 (one per student)
 - Technology for students to word-process their introductions (see Technology and Multimedia)
- Pair students strategically, with at least one native speaker per pair if possible.
- Consider working with a technology teacher to support students in word-processing their essays.
- Post: Learning targets and applicable anchor charts (see materials list).

Technology & Multimedia

- 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.
- Closing and Assessment A: Prepare technology and tools necessary for students to word-process their essays, one device per student.

Supporting English Language Learners

Supports guided in part by CA ELD Standards 5.I.A.2, 5.I.A.4, 5.I.C.10, 5.I.C.11, 5.I.C.12, 5.II.A.1, 5.II.A.2, 5.II.B.4, 5.II.B.5, 5.II.C.6, 5.II.C.7

Important points in the lesson itself

- The basic design of this lesson supports ELLs by using the familiar Painted Essay® structure for their opinion essay. Although they do not explicitly analyze a model or color-code their essay, the familiarity of this writing structure, used in each of the previous modules, allows students to focus intently on language and content rather than on a new writing structure. The opportunity for students to discuss ways to use the focus statement from the Model Essay: Branch Rickey to write a focus statement for this unit’s opinion essay is also particularly supportive of ELLs, as is the opportunity for students to work in pairs as they plan their essay during Work Time A.
- ELLs may find it challenging to keep pace with the class as they plan their opinion essay, participate in a peer critique, and draft an introduction all in one lesson. Additionally, they may find it challenging to complete each of these tasks without having a model essay to reference that is specific to this writing prompt, as they have had in previous modules. If necessary, consider extending the amount of time students have to plan their essay during Work Time A, as well as to draft their introduction during Closing and Assessment A, and condensing time spent on the peer critique. Additionally, consider working with a small group of students throughout the lesson to provide further scaffolding as needed (see levels of support and the Meeting Students’ Needs column).

Levels of support

For lighter support:

- Challenge students to think of more than one way they can complete the sentence frame for their emergency preparedness opinion focus statement suggested in the Meeting Students’ Needs column of Work Time A. Additionally, invite them to create another sentence frame to use to write their focus statement and to share it with classmates who need heavier support.
- During Closing and Assessment A, invite students to create sentence starters to begin the introduction paragraph, providing context for their opinion essay. Invite students who need heavier support to use these sentence starters as they draft their introduction paragraphs.

For heavier support:

- Prepare the Enlarged Model Essay: Branch Rickey from Module 3, Unit 2, Lesson 9 (see *For heavier support*) to display during Work Time A. If it has not already been color-coded according to the Painted Essay® colors that correspond to each component of the essay, consider doing so to support students with the structure of an opinion essay. Additionally, consider recording the purpose of each paragraph in the margins of the model essay as students share out during Work Time A (see the Meeting Students’ Needs column). Continue to display the Enlarged Model Essay: Branch Rickey over the next several lessons for students to reference as they plan and write their opinion essays for this unit.
- Consider including a word or phrase bank to support students with completing the sentence frame for their emergency preparedness opinion focus statement suggested in the Meeting Students’ Needs column of Work Time A. (Examples of words or phrases to include: “are important to have during a natural disaster,” “can help in the case of a natural disaster,” “a flashlight,” “a first aid kit,” “an emergency blanket”)

Universal Design for Learning

- **Multiple Means of Representation (MMR):** Similar to Unit 2, this lesson offers a variety of visual anchors to cue students' thinking. Continue to support students by creating additional or individual anchor charts for reference and by charting student responses during whole class discussions to aid with comprehension.
- **Multiple Means of Action and Expression (MMAE):** This lesson offers several opportunities for students to engage in discussion with partners. Continue to support those who may struggle with expressive language by providing sentence frames to help them organize their thoughts.
- **Multiple Means of Engagement (MME):** In this lesson, students review one another's work and provide feedback through a peer critique. Peer review can be threatening to some students, so continue to highlight the benefits of peer review and feedback for all students by emphasizing effort and growth over relative performance.

Vocabulary

Key:

(L): Lesson-Specific Vocabulary

(T): Text-Specific Vocabulary

(W): Vocabulary Used in Writing

- emergency preparedness kit (L)

Materials

- ✓ Performance Task anchor chart (begun in Unit 1, Lesson 1)
- ✓ Working to Contribute to a Better World anchor chart (begun in Module 1)
- ✓ Mid-Unit 3 Assessment: Research: Supplies to Include in an Emergency Preparedness Kit (from Lesson 2; copy; one per student)
- ✓ Paper (blank and lined; one piece of each per student)
- ✓ The Painted Essay® template (from Module 1; one per student)
- ✓ Opinion Writing Checklist (one per student and one to display; see Assessment Overview and Resources)
- ✓ Model Essay: Branch Rickey (from Module 3; one per student)
- ✓ Two Items Essay and Graphic Organizer (example, for teacher reference)
- ✓ Working to Become Ethical People anchor chart (begun in Module 1)
- ✓ Sticky notes (two different colors; one of each per student)
- ✓ Peer Critique anchor chart (begun in Module 1)
- ✓ Directions for peer critique (one to display)
- ✓ Devices (one per student; see Technology and Multimedia)
- ✓ Opinion Writing Checklist (example, for teacher reference)

Opening

A. Reviewing Learning Targets (5 minutes)

- Move students into pre-determined pairs.
- Direct students' attention to the posted learning targets and select volunteers to read them aloud:

“I can plan an essay that states an opinion and has reasons that are supported by facts and details.”

“I can give kind, helpful, and specific feedback.”

“I can write an introductory paragraph for my essay, giving context on the issue and clearly stating my opinion.”

- Remind students that they saw all of these learning targets in Module 3 when writing opinion essays about Jackie Robinson.
- Direct students' attention to the **Performance Task anchor chart** and select volunteers to read the anchor chart aloud.
- Review what an **emergency preparedness kit** is.
- Tell students that in preparation for unpacking an emergency preparedness kit for an audience, they are going to consider two supplies they think are the most important to include in an emergency preparedness kit and write an opinion essay explaining their two supplies and the reasons they chose them.
- Remind students of the **Working to Contribute to a Better World anchor chart**, specifically applying their learning to help their school and community by educating them about preparing for natural disasters.

Meeting Students' Needs

- For ELLs and students who may need additional support with motivation: (Sharing Strategies) Invite students to recall and share one strategy they used when writing an opinion essay in Module 3. (MMR, MME)
- For ELLs: (Stopping between Learning Targets) Consider stopping after each learning target has been read to ask students what they think they will be doing in this lesson. Invite students to rephrase each learning target in their own words to ensure comprehension and to discuss how they worked toward each target in Module 3.

Work Time

A. Planning an Opinion Essay (25 minutes)

- Post the prompt and invite a volunteer to read it aloud:
- Think-Pair-Share:

“How will the research you did in the mid-unit assessment help you to respond to this prompt?” (In the mid-unit assessment, we researched supplies for an emergency preparedness kit, so we need to look at the notes we took, with the reasons why each item is necessary, to choose the two most important.)
- Distribute copies of students’ **Mid-Unit 3 Assessment: Research: Supplies to Include in an Emergency Preparedness Kit**.
- Give students a couple of minutes in pairs to share and review the items they recorded and the reasons those supplies are necessary.
- Invite students in pairs to select two of the items they think are the most important. Think-Pair-Share:

“Which two of the items you listed do you think are the most important? Why are these items more important than the others? Which two items do you think it would be difficult to survive without?” (Responses will vary, but may include: a flashlight in case there is no light and a first aid kit to help anyone who is injured; the flashlight may be necessary to use any or all of the other supplies.)
- Help students understand as they share out that some items depend on the others. (Example: It will not be possible to use a first aid kit if you can’t see what you are doing, making the flashlight more important than the first aid kit.)
- If, as you hear students share out, students have selected personal items that will boost morale rather than provide a specific function, encourage them to think about necessary supplies that are not personal items and explain that they will focus on personal items later in the unit.
- Tell students that in this module they are going to decide how to organize their thinking and plan for their essay. They can create their own graphic organizers, such as the six-square organizer they have used in previous modules, or they can do it another way that will be most effective for them. Show students how to fold a piece of paper to make six boxes should they wish to make the six-square organizer themselves.
- Distribute **paper**. Tell students to use the blank sheet to create an Essay Planner graphic organizer. Remind them to ensure that the different parts of an essay on the **Painted Essay® template** are represented. Emphasize that they are not to take too long doing this—this should take no more than 2 or 3 minutes.
 - Distribute and display the **Opinion Writing Checklist** and briefly review the criteria.
- Focus students on the criterion:
 - W.5.1a: I state my opinion clearly, and my writing stays focused.
- Think-Pair-Share:

“How can we state our opinions clearly?” (in an opinion statement)
- Remind students that opinion essays always have opinion statements, which state the writer’s opinion.

- Invite students to retrieve or distribute new copies of the **Model Essay: Branch Rickey** and remind them that this is the model they used to write an opinion essay about Jackie Robinson and their expert group athlete in Module 3.
- Think-Pair-Share:
 - “Where do we usually find the focus statement or opinion statement in an essay? Why?” (introduction; because that is where the author introduces the topic he or she will be talking about in the rest of the essay)*
 - “Which sentence in the introductory paragraph most clearly states the author’s opinion? What is the opinion statement in this essay?” (“There were many factors that led to Rickety’s success, but it was support from others in baseball that was most important.”)*
 - “How do you know this statement is an opinion?” (It says what the author thinks was the most important factor in Rickey’s success; someone could disagree or have a different point of view.)*
 - “How can you use this opinion statement to help you write your opinion focus statement for your essay to answer the prompt about the two most important supplies for your emergency preparedness kits?” (Responses will vary, but may include: “There are many supplies that are necessary in an emergency preparedness kit, but a flashlight and first aid kit are two of the most important.”)*
 - Conversation Cue: “Who can explain why your classmate came up with that response?” (Responses will vary.)*
- Invite pairs to record their focus statement in the appropriate place on their Essay Planner graphic organizer.
- Think-Pair-Share:
 - “What are your reasons for choosing each of the supplies you have chosen? What did you record on your research graphic organizer in the previous lesson?” (Responses will vary.)*
- Tell students that they may have to infer some of the reasons these supplies are necessary based on what they have learned about what happens in natural disasters. They can also refer to their texts and research from Unit 1 about the effects of natural disasters to help them understand why the items identified in their research will be useful, based on the effects described. (Example: They may have learned that during the high winds of a hurricane, power can go out. In this situation, a flashlight could be important to find a way out of a building or to see to be able to use other items in a kit.)
- Invite students to record their reasons in the appropriate place on their Essay Planner graphic organizer. Remind them that as this is just a planning organizer rather than the actual essay, they only need to make quick notes to help them organize their thoughts.
- Tell students that now that they have the focus for their essay, you are going to give them time to work in pairs and use their planning graphic organizers to put more time and thought into planning.
- Post the following questions under the prompt:
 - “How are you going to introduce the topic before you give your opinion statement? What do people need to know before they read your opinion statement? Why?”
 - “How can you elaborate on your reasons for choosing each item? What do your research sources say?”
 - “How can you conclude your essay? At the end of an essay, we usually restate the focus

and then reflect on it. What are you going to leave your reader thinking about?”

- Remind students to discuss their ideas with their partner before recording notes on their organizers.
- Invite students to begin. Circulate and ask the posted questions. Refer to the **Two Items Essay and Graphic Organizer (example, for teacher reference)** as necessary.
- When 2 minutes remain, 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 ELLs and students who may need additional support with strategy development: (Including Labels on Graphic Organizer) Reduce anxiety and scaffold written expression by offering a graphic organizer template with pre-written labels for each part of the essay. (Example: Introduction, Proof Paragraph 1, Proof Paragraph 2, Conclusion, Sources, Vocabulary) (MMAE)
- For ELLs: (Recalling Language Dive: Comparing Sentence Structures) As students focus on the opinion statement from the Model Essay: Branch Rickey, invite them to recall the whole class Language Dive in Module 3, Unit 2, Lesson 9:
 - Remind students that the focus of that Language Dive was on using the coordinating conjunction *but* to link and show contrast between the independent clause, which stated the existence of many factors (*There were many factors that led to Rickey's success*), and the dependent clause, which provided an opinion on factors that were most important (*but it was support from others in baseball that was most important*).
 - Remind students of the sentence frame from that Language Dive: *There were many factors that _____, but it was _____ that was/were most important.*
 - Invite students to modify this frame to help them write their emergency preparedness opinion focus statement. To provide heavier support, consider providing students with this modified sentence frame: *There are many supplies that _____, but it is _____ and _____ that are two of the most important.*
 - Students can orally complete the new sentence frame for their emergency preparedness opinion focus statement before writing it.
 - Then, invite students to compare the two sentences. (Responses will vary, but could include: The structure of both the independent and dependent clauses are the same, and the coordinating conjunction *but* links and shows contrast between the independent and dependent clauses. However, the verb tenses change from past to present; and the noun *factors* is replaced with *supplies*.)
 - Ask:

“We just used familiar language from a previous writing task to help us with a new writing task. How did this add to your understanding of English and writing?”
- For ELLs: (Enlarged Model Essay: Referencing) Display the Enlarged Model Essay: Branch Rickey (see *For heavier support*) to activate prior knowledge about the different parts of an opinion essay. Invite students to explain the purpose of each paragraph, and then to explain how understanding the purpose of each paragraph supports them in determining the most relevant information to include in the

corresponding section of their planning graphic organizer. Model and think aloud as necessary. (Example: "The purpose of the introductory paragraph is to provide background information, as well as an opinion focus statement that answers the writing prompt. I now understand that, in my introduction paragraph, I need to provide background information about the reason it is important to have an emergency preparedness kit; I also need to include a focus statement that states my opinion about the two most important supplies to include in this kit. I will write this information in the first box of my planning graphic organizer. In the second box of my planning graphic organizer, I will write information about the first proof paragraph. What is the purpose of the first proof paragraph?")

Work Time

B. Peer Critique: Essay Planner Graphic Organizer (10 minutes)

- Invite students to find a new partner and label themselves A and B.
- Tell students they will now participate in a peer critique. Focus them on the **Working to Become Ethical People anchor chart** and remind them specifically of the respect criteria. Remind students that when providing peer feedback, they need to be respectful.
- Focus students on the following criteria on their Opinion Writing Checklist and invite them to highlight or star these criteria:
 - "W.5.1a: I state my opinion clearly, and my writing stays focused."
 - "W.5.1a: I have an introduction that gives the reader the information needed to understand the topic or issue."
 - "W.5.1b: I provide logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details from sources."
 - "W.5.1d: I have a conclusion that is clearly related to my opinion."
- Tell students that even though they are not looking at a finished essay, only a plan, they should still be able to see from the plan whether these criteria are present.
- Distribute **sticky notes** and use the **Peer Critique anchor chart** and the **directions for peer critique** to guide students through a peer critique.
- When 2 minutes remain, use a checking for understanding protocol (e.g., Red Light, Green Light or Thumb-O-Meter) for students to self-assess against the second learning target and how well they demonstrated respect during the peer critique.

Meeting Students' Needs

- For students who may need additional support with auditory processing: Invite students to brainstorm different words and phrases they could use to provide kind, specific, and helpful feedback to their partner. Write the words and phrases on chart paper and encourage students to refer to it as they work with their partners. (MMR, MMAE)
- For ELLs: (Fishbowl: Peer Critique) Invite a confident pair to fishbowl the process of providing feedback during a peer critique. Consider further supporting students by modeling and thinking aloud specific examples of feedback as necessary.

(Example: "You have provided a very clear opinion focus statement, allowing me to easily understand what your essay will be about. However, I think that one of the supplies you listed is more of a personal item. Is there another supply you can think of that is more necessary for survival of a natural disaster?")

- For ELLs: (Home Languages) Invite students to share kind, helpful, or specific comments in their home languages. (Example: "How would you say 'excellent point' in Spanish?" [excelente punto])

Closing and Assessment

A. Independent Writing: Drafting an Introduction (20 minutes)

- Invite students to return to their original partners.
- Organize students on **devices**.
- Invite students to mark/highlight the following criteria on their Opinion Writing Checklist and to read each one chorally with you:
 - "W.5.1a: I state my topic clearly, and my writing stays focused."
 - "W.5.1a: I have an introduction that gives the reader the information needed to understand the topic or issue."
 - "W.5.1a: Information is well organized to make my argument clear and convincing."
- Focus students on the third column:
 - "Characteristics of my opinion essay"
- Think-Pair-Share:

"What is specific to this essay for each of those criteria you have highlighted? What is the opinion? What information does the reader need in the introduction to understand the piece?"
- As students share out, refer to the **Opinion Writing Checklist (example, for teacher reference)** to confirm their responses.
- Invite students to update the third column of their checklists accordingly.
- Tell students they are going to use the information they have recorded on their Essay Planner graphic organizers to say their introductory paragraph aloud.
 - Invite students to label themselves A and B in their pairs.
 - Invite students to think about and plan what they are going to say in their heads.
 - After 2 minutes, invite partner B to say his or her introduction aloud to partner A. Then, direct pairs to switch roles and repeat.
- Direct students to use the information they have recorded on their planners and what they just said orally to draft their introductions. Although students have planned in pairs, they are each working on a device and are writing their own essay. They can continue to discuss ideas in pairs but should not both be writing exactly the same thing.
- Circulate to support students. Refer to the Two Items Essay and Graphic Organizer (example, for teacher reference) as necessary.

- When 2 minutes remain, invite students to record “Y” for “Yes” on their Informative Writing Checklist 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.
- Use a checking for understanding technique (e.g., Red Light, Green Light or Thumb-O-Meter) for students to self-assess against the third learning target.

Meeting Students' Needs

- For ELLs and students who may need additional support in sustained effort: (Positive Feedback) Provide feedback that encourages perseverance as students draft their introductions. (Example: “I see that you are working hard to record the ideas I heard you share with your partner. I saw that you paused to think back to that discussion when you were stuck on an idea. Way to stick with it to keep working hard on your draft!”). (MME)
- For ELLs: (Providing Concrete Examples) Display the Enlarged Model Essay: Branch Rickey (see *For heavier support*) next to the Opinion Writing Checklist. While going over each criterion, model and think aloud identifying an example of the criterion in the introduction of the model essay. This will provide students with concrete examples of how the criterion applies to their own introduction. As necessary, consider providing non-examples to clarify criteria. (Example: “Criterion W.5.1a says: I state my opinion clearly, and my writing stays focused. What if the introduction to the Model Essay: Branch Rickey was about Branch Rickey’s favorite subject in school? Would that be focused writing? Why or why not? What is the focus of the introduction for our opinion essays today?”)

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 written expression: (Oral Response) Read aloud, discuss, and respond to your prompt orally, either with a partner, family member, or student from Grades 4 or 6, or record an audio response. (MMAE)