

In Common: Effective Writing for All Students Collection of All Student Work Samples, K-12

By The Vermont Writing Collaborative, with Student Achievement Partners and CCSSO

Tenth Grade Range of Writing Argument Writing Samples

File Name: A9-10R Keep On Reading

Opinion/Argument

Grade 10

Range of Writing

Keep On Reading

On the first day of school, the students walk into the classroom and see a book on every desk. The teachers happily greets them and tells everyone to sit at a desk with a book that seems interesting to them. The pupils tentatively sit down in their seats and look up at their young teacher for instructions, but she sits down and is soon deeply absorbed in her story, eyes shimmering in the light. The pupils gaze in wonder at her and slowly crack open their books. We've grown up reading, but not very often do we see a teacher who exemplifies reading. Reading is recurrently a forced activity. Therefore, people both young and old feel like they HAVE to read, and so it's only something they have to do for school or work. They don't see it as an amazing skill that will not only help with their futures but also a great hobby to enjoy in life. Continuing to silent read for at least the first ten minutes of every class is a very good idea.

The first reason why reading is class is a good idea is because it helps get some of our required silent reading done. Envision Anne, an active, sweet young lady who participates in sports and also plays a big part in the school play. The little time she spends at home every day is reserved for homework assignments and memorizing her lines. Time reading in class at school cuts down on the time Anne has to make in order to read. Reading is important to Anne but she knows she can't possibly read and make good reflections if she doesn't have the time to do so. Some people just don't have the time, so making them read more outside of school is like telling the workers of IBM to go play a football game every day- there's just not enough time outside of work and school.

There are people who say that silent reading doesn't help low level readers, but in reality, it actually helps a lot. James McNair has many

Uses narrative lead to set context and engage reader

Introduces precise claim: The introduction states a claim about the value of ten minutes of silent reading; **distinguishes it from alternate claims** that many students do not see the value of silent reading. **Topic is substantive.**

States focus / **precise claim**

Supports claim with logical and valid reasoning, accurate and credible evidence. Points out strengths of reason by anticipating the knowledge level and concerns of the audience (teachers, other students, parents).

Names **counterclaim**

techniques to help children better comprehend what they are reading. He says that children can get bored with reading if it has no meaning to them (i.e. when reading as a class, not everyone is on the same level, and therefore, the lower level readers are not as interested). Once a child discovers the wonders of reading, they are sure to come across words they don't know (2). When this happens, silent reading will surely help because they can go over words they do know, and learn as they go. This really helps since classwork reading may be harder for lower level readers and they have many words they don't understand as opposed to learning a couple new words a day. They need practice in order to read better so if students are not surrounded by reading then they will not get better. In a research evaluation by Chow & Chou, 9th grade students were allowed 10 minutes each day to silent read and improved their reading skills by the end of the year (4). This is solid proof that having time to read in class is a benefit to everyone.

Creates an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence

Develops claims and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each

Reminds reader of claim.

Silent reading is not only fun, it paves way for tests – no one is allowed to read out loud or have questions read to them during a test. All tests require you to read at least questions. This doesn't include the rereading you need to do when you write essays for a test, an example being the NECAPs. Based on the National Center for Educational Statistics of 2008, reading is one of the few factors that can be the big change in test scores. The more you practice reading, the more enhanced your vocabulary gets. This helps not only the reading part, but also the writing parts, most importantly on standardized tests. Getting students to read in school ensures at least some practice for the testing that the United States schools have for students.

Uses clauses to link major sections of text, creating cohesion and clarifying relationships between reasons and claims

Supports claim with logical and valid reasoning, accurate and credible evidence. Points out strengths of reason by anticipating the knowledge level and concerns of the audience (teachers, other students, parents).

Not only is silent reading useful, it allows students to choose what they want to read, which in turn can help their future. Too frequently, class discussions are based on books that the teacher selects for their students to read. Students may get bored of always having their choices made for them and some even take it for granted and can soon forget how to deal with life on their own. KC, an avid reader, agrees: "Picking your own books allows you to be more prepared for real

Establishes and maintains formal style, objective tone

life, not just a classroom where decisions are typically made for you". By having the choice to find

their own books, students become more independent in the process. School prepares them for life, but their choices prepare them for their future.

Silent reading during school hours has been a widely argued situation in many school districts of the world. We should continue to have silent reading for at least ten minutes every day, especially because of Winooski High School's Tier 1 situation. Our school officials say that our NECAP scores are getting lower and require more structure to help fix it. If that's the case, then silent reading could only help raise the scores reading well is a big part of the NECAPs, not only when we read the essays but also to read the questions that accompany them. Having a good knowledge of reading and reading strategies will help our school and a good start to getting there is through silent reading.

Distinguishes claim about value of silent reading from counterclaim.

Provides a conclusion which follows from and supports arguments presented

Sources

McNair, James. "Helping Children to Comprehend Faster For Better School Achievements". May 22 2009. *Ezine Articles*. March 10 2011 <http://ezinearticles.com/?Helping-Children-to-Comprehend-Faster-For-Better-School-Achievements&id=2381196>.

In this assignment from a language arts class, the student was asked to take a position on whether or not the school should continue its program of ten minutes of daily silent reading. He gives an introduction of some background / context on the issue, and makes a claim that in his view the ten minutes of silent reading should continue.

The writer develops his claim with several reasons, which he develops with relevant, accurate, credible evidence. The writer organizes his ideas clearly and supports his claim with logical reasoning, on which he relies to develop his claim and persuade his audience of the correctness of his position. He also uses credible evidence to support and develop his claim. In addition, he acknowledges the counterclaim that there are reasons to not support the ten minutes of silent reading, then refutes that counterclaim with an argument that anticipates the concerns of his intended audience.

The writer maintains a formal style and objective tone throughout the piece. The conclusion follows from and supports the argument presented.

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