

Claims in "The Crisis, No. 1"

Summary

This set of lessons extends over several days and focuses on "The Crisis, No. 1" by Thomas Paine. Students closely read and annotate the text. Students identify and evaluate claims and evidence in the text. Students present their findings to the class. Finally, students collaboratively write short arguments identifying claims and evidence in "The Crisis, No. 1." Students present their arguments to the class, and the class discusses and assesses the arguments.

Main Core Tie

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Reading: Informational Text Standard 1](#)

Additional Core Ties

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Reading: Informational Text Standard 8](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Writing Standard 1 a.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Writing Standard 1 b.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Writing Standard 1 c.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Writing Standard 1 d.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Writing Standard 1 e.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Writing Standard 4](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Writing Standard 5](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Writing Standard 9 b.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Speaking and Listening Standard 1 a.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Speaking and Listening Standard 1 b.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Speaking and Listening Standard 1 c.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Speaking and Listening Standard 1 d.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Speaking and Listening Standard 3](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Speaking and Listening Standard 4](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Language Standard 1](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Language Standard 2 b.](#)

Group Size

Small Groups

Materials

"The Crisis, No. 1" appears in many English 11 anthologies. It is also available online. I provide students with copies of the text to annotate. If you wish to use the textbook, students may record their annotations on sticky notes or on regular notepaper.

Handouts

Projector or overhead machine.

Background for Teachers

Spend some time developing student background about "The Crisis, No. 1"

Students need to know how to integrate or embed quotations into their own sentences. I have attached the website I use to teach how to integrate or embed quotations in the materials section of this lesson.

Students need to know how to cite quotations (I use and teach MLA).

Student Prior Knowledge

Students need to know historical background for "The Crisis, No. 1."

Students need to know how to integrate quotations into text and how to cite quotations.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will closely read and annotate the text. Students will delineate and evaluate the claims and evidence in the text. In the culminating activity, students will collaboratively write short arguments to support claims in an analysis of "The Crisis, No. 1," using relevant and sufficient evidence.

Instructional Procedures

PART ONE

Pass out copies of ["The Crisis, No. 1"](#) (Although this text is often found in English 11 anthologies, I make copies of the text so that students may annotate. If you want to use the textbook, students may record their annotations on sticky notes or on standard notebook paper.)
Pass out and preview copies of Claims in "The Crisis, No. 1" handout.

Put students into groups of four.

Model how to complete the assignment by doing the first paragraph with the whole class.

Read the first paragraph of the passage. Annotate as you read, capturing your thinking about the text. Instruct students to annotate their own copies of the text.

After reading and annotating the first paragraph, as a class, brainstorm a list of possible claims made in the text. Reassure students that there may be more than one "correct" claim and that the same claim may be worded in many different ways. Students record the brainstormed list of claims on the handout.

As a class, choose one claim on which to focus. Record this claim.

As a class, search the first paragraph for evidence for that claim. Your goal should be 2-3 pieces of evidence. I require my students to use quotations from the text as evidence (for this assignment, I do not allow paraphrase). Record the page number(s) where you found the quotations. Emphasize that the evidence must actually support the claim. Push students to explain their rationale for choosing evidence and to explain how and why a particular piece of evidence supports the claim. It is very hard for some students to see the connection between claims and evidence. Make sure they understand this idea before you turn them loose to work in

their groups.

Students get with their groups. I let my groups read aloud, stopping to show their thinking with annotations. Emphasize that all students must annotate the passage and encourage discussion, clarification and a close reading of the text. Groups should stop reading at the end of the second paragraph. Groups then brainstorm a list of possible claims. Groups choose one claim and find and record textual evidence (2-3 quotations) that support the claim.

Groups complete the process with the remaining paragraphs.

PART TWO

Put students into new groups of four.

Explain that students will meet with their new groups and share the findings of their original groups.

One student will read his or her chosen claim for the second paragraph. That student will then share his or her evidence. One-by-one the remaining group members share their claim and textual evidence for the second paragraph. Encourage all students to listen quietly while their group members share. They may add information to their own handout if they wish.

As a group, students then choose the best claim and the best evidence for the second paragraph. Students may wish to mark the best claim and evidence for each paragraph (they will need this for later).

Repeat this process for all remaining paragraphs.

PART THREE

Pass out one copy of "The Crisis, No. 1" Collaborative Argument handout to each group. Groups should record their best claim and best 2-3 pieces of textual evidence for each paragraph.

Model this for students by writing the class-generated claim and evidence for the first paragraph on the handout. (Each group only has to complete one copy of this handout; each group will need to choose a scribe.)

When all groups have completed the task, I pull the class back together.

As a class, we write a collaborative argument which synthesizes the claim and evidence we generated from the first paragraph of the text. Read the rubric (on the handout) with the students so that they know what is required. Be sure to explain, in writing, how each piece of evidence actually supports the claim. Work to smoothly integrate all the textual evidence (quotations) into sentences. Properly cite all quotations. Let the students see how messy collaborative writing can be. Get them started with the writing, but give them plenty of think time (don't write the whole thing yourself - you are modeling collaborative writing). Be sure to proofread, edit and revise the rough draft, and then create a final draft. As a class, use the rubric to evaluate the argument.

Groups write a collaborative argument, synthesizing the claim and the evidence in the second paragraph. They follow the procedure that was modeled for them. They should refer to the rubric and include all required elements. They must include a precise and arguable claim and 2-3 pieces of textual evidence (quotations) which should be smoothly integrated and correctly cited. Students should proofread, edit and revise their rough draft and then create a neat final draft. It is very important that teachers monitor the collaborative writing process. Move around the room and encourage all group members to participate. I grab my clipboard and take anecdotal records during this part of the lesson. Students know that they will earn (or lose) participation points for this activity.

Groups repeat the process for the remaining paragraphs.

PART FOUR

Assign each group a different paragraph to present (do not assign the first paragraph, which was completed as a class). Depending on the number of students in your class, you may have to repeat some paragraphs - choose the longer/more complex paragraphs to repeat.

Pass out the Class Presentation and Argument Rubric handout and review the required

elements. You may find it helpful to revisit the class-generated argument from the first paragraph.

Beginning with the group(s) assigned the second paragraph, students project the final copies of their assigned collaborative argument.

During the presentations, individual students use the rubric to score each group's argument.

After each group presents its argument and the students have completed their rubric assessment, give that group feedback. As a class, point out one area of strength and one area that needs improvement.

Assessment Plan

Information on how to assess the assignment and rubrics are in the instructional procedures and the materials section of this lesson.

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