

Argumentative Writing/WWI & WWII Unit

Summary

In this 28 day unit, students will gain background information on historic wars, compare different genres' presentations of events, recognize different points of view, research an essential question, compile evidence, create warrants that lead to a claim which answers the essential question, and write an argumentative essay.

Cheryl Dominguez helped to crystallize the Essential Question #2 Graphic Organizer idea.

Main Core Tie

English Language Arts Grade 6

[Writing Standard 1](#)

Additional Core Ties

English Language Arts Grade 6

[Reading: Literature Standard 1](#)

English Language Arts Grade 6

[Reading: Literature Standard 6](#)

English Language Arts Grade 6

[Reading: Literature Standard 9](#)

English Language Arts Grade 6

[Reading: Literature Standard 10](#)

English Language Arts Grade 6

[Reading: Informational Text Standard 1](#)

English Language Arts Grade 6

[Reading: Informational Text Standard 6](#)

English Language Arts Grade 6

[Reading: Informational Text Standard 9](#)

English Language Arts Grade 6

[Reading: Informational Text Standard 10](#)

English Language Arts Grade 6

[Writing Standard 4](#)

English Language Arts Grade 6

[Writing Standard 5](#)

English Language Arts Grade 6

[Writing Standard 6](#)

English Language Arts Grade 6

[Writing Standard 7](#)

English Language Arts Grade 6

[Writing Standard 8](#)

English Language Arts Grade 6

[Writing Standard 9](#)

English Language Arts Grade 6

[Writing Standard 10](#)

English Language Arts Grade 6

[Speaking and Listening Standard 1](#)

English Language Arts Grade 6

[Language Standard 2 a.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 6

[Language Standard 2 b.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 6

[Language Standard 3 b.](#)

Group Size

Small Groups

Life Skills

Thinking & Reasoning, Communication, Character, Social & Civic Responsibility

Materials

Copy a class set for each attached graphic organizer.

Background for Teachers

Many books are provided for teachers to select texts from. It is the teacher's responsibility to preread the texts that will be used in class to decide which are appropriate for the current school population. Teachers can change out any texts listed in the Bibliography Section for texts containing similar information that are already in the class or school library.

Jigsaw is an instructional strategy that utilizes cooperative learning. This website explains the strategy: www.jigsaw.org/overview.htm

Intended Learning Outcomes

English Language Arts Objectives: By the end of the unit:

Each student will compare different genres' presentations of events.

Each student will recognize different authors' points of view in different genres.

Each student will be able to research an essential question and compile evidence to make conclusions for a claim.

Each student will write an argumentative essay including basic bibliographic information.

Social Studies Objectives: By the end of the unit:

Each student will understand causes and effects from World War I and World War II.

Each student will understand different perspectives and events of WWI and WWII.

Instructional Procedures

Hook:

1. Start reading Number the Stars by Lois Lowry as a class read-aloud

Lesson Plans-

Day One:

Gallery Picture Walk (set up pictures of WWI and WWII around the classroom, use books #1, #2, #3, and #4 from the Bibliography Section)-Give the following prompt: As you go on a silent walk around the room look at the pictures and write a short description of what you see.

Small Groups-Students share their descriptions of the pictures with their small group and the group chooses the most descriptive one to share with the class.

Group Share-Small groups share with class the description they chose.

Open Class Question-What common words do we hear in these descriptions?

Individual Work-What questions do these pictures make you have? Write two questions to share.

Small Groups-Each person shares the two questions and the small group decides on three

questions to share with the class.

Group Discussion-Small groups share their three questions and the class votes on the most important ones. Write these questions on a poster to hang in the room for the remainder of the unit.

Day Two:

Shared Reading-

Quote: The first half of the 20th century was dominated by world wide conflict. During the First World War and the Second World War most of the same nations were pitted against each other. To some, this made it seem like one long war, with a 20-year lull between fighting. At stake was the mastery of the world. But the final outcome was not what many of the leading players on either side would have hoped for-or expected. In seeking to defend or increase their power, Britain, France and Germany lost their dominant position to the United States and Soviet Russia. (The World Wars: an Introduction to the First & Second World Wars, p. 6, Bibliography Section book #5)

The First World War was fought on such a massive scale that people called it the Great War. Never before had any war been fought on so many battlefields, with such a vast array of powerful and destructive weapons, and resulted in so many deaths. The War was a human tragedy on a global scale. It began in Europe, but countries from around the world were soon dragged into the fighting. The war lasted for four dark years and a staggering 65 million men were mobilized to fight. Over 21 million people died, including 13 million civilians. The terrible impact of the war sparked revolutions, toppled once-great empires and changed the political map of Europe forever. (The World Wars: an Introduction to the First & Second World Wars, p. 9, Bibliography Section book #5)

World War II was the most catastrophic conflict in history. Almost every continent on Earth was drawn into its fiery cauldron. Fought between two opposing alliances, known as the Allies and the Axis, the war began on September 1, 1939, when Germany invaded Poland. It ended six years and a day later with the official surrender of Germany's ally Japan on September 2, 1945. In that time, as many as 50 million men and women may have been killed. (The World Wars: an Introduction to the First & Second World Wars, p. 124, Bibliography Section book #5)

Essential Question #1-Write the following question on the front board: What were the contributing factors (causes) to the beginning of WWI and WWII?

Teacher Think-Aloud-Read p. 6-9 of book #6 in the Bibliography Section and list the contributing factors (causes)of war that you see in those pages.

Small Groups-Students read book #5 in the Bibliography Section p. 12-17 for WWI and p. 126-131 for WWII or books #5a/b p. 2-3 as small groups and compile a list of "causes" for WWI and WWII.

Group Discussion-Share small group "causes" of WWI and WWII on the front board. Look for similarities and differences in the "causes" of both wars? What are the common causes of war that the class sees?

Graphic Organizer-Hand out the cause/effect graphic organizer. As a class right the Essential Question at the top of the organizer and fill out the common causes. (see attachment #1 in the Materials Section) Save graphic organizer to use later in the unit.

Building Justification Criteria:

Day Three:

See Chapter 2 p. 41-49 of Book #7 in the Bibliography Section. Follow Hillocks suggestions for "What Makes a Good Mascot" and complete the activity with your class. I would use a new school close to your area as the school and choose mascots that students will know their characteristics. Hillocks uses lemurs and manatees. Most Utah students are unaware of what the characteristics of these mascots would be.

Days Four/Five:

See Chapter 2 p. 49-66 of Book #6 in the Bibliography Section. Follow Hillocks suggestions for "A Picture Is Worth a Thousand Words" and complete the activity with your class.

Before War-Common Causes:

Day Six:

Essential Question #2: Write-"Is war ever justified?" on the front board. Discuss that our class will be learning about WWI and WWII in more depth. As we go through the unit I want you to look for evidence to answer this question for YOU. Each person may feel differently. You are going to explore how you feel and make a decision for the essential question.

Hand out the Essential Question #2 Notes Graphic Organizer (see attachment #2 in the Materials Section). Using your notes on common causes of war from Day Two, fill out the first section Before(Causes) of your graphic organizer deciding if you want to put the common causes under the No or the Yes column.

During War-Building Knowledge:

Days Seven-Fourteen:

(Could use Jigsaw as an instructional strategy during this section especially in the Biography and Historical Fiction Sections to save time and to differentiate instruction-see Background Knowledge Section and Strategies for Diverse Learners Section for an explanation of this strategy)

Small Groups-Read in small groups from the following texts and add justifications with reference citation for each in the No or Yes columns of your Essential Question #2 Graphic Organizer in the During(Conflict) section.

Informational Text

Books #5a/b from Bibliography Section p. 4-15

Biography

Selections from Book #8-Bibliography Section

Selections from Book #9-Bibliography Section

Selections from Book #10(More Complex)- Bibliography Section

Book #11 (More Complex)-Bibliography Section

Book #12(Less Complex)-Bibliography Section:Margaret Davidson p. 192-195, Calvin Graham p. 202-204, Terry Grimmersey p. 205-208

Historical Fiction

Book #13-Bibliography Section

Book #14-Bibliography Section

Book #15(More Complex)-Bibliography Section

Book #16(Less Complex)-Bibliography Section

Poetry

Book #17-Bibliography Section: Read Foreword as an introduction together as a class p. xi-xxi, then choose select poems from the rest of the book.

Point of View:

Day Fifteen:

Group Discussion-Hand out the Genre-Point of View Graphic Organizer (see attachment #7 in the Materials Section). Project teacher's copy using a document camera or an overhead on the front board. Explain the different columns of the graphic organizer.

Small Group Work-Allow small groups time to write what books they read under the Genre column and complete the graphic organizer together.

Group Discussion-Bring the class back together and have a whole class discussion using the information the students wrote in small groups.

After War-Building Knowledge:

Day Sixteen:

Small Groups-Read in small groups from Book #5-Bibliography Section, WWI p. 107-115, WWII p. 232-238 or Books #5a p. 16-17 and #5b p. 15-17, add justifications for each effect of war in the No or Yes column of your Essential Question #2 Graphic Organizer in the After(Results/Effects)section.

Group Discussion-Discuss how to transfer your After(Results/Effects) section ideas to the cause/effect graphic organizer. Discuss the causes of war and the effects of war.

Argumentative Essay:

Days Seventeen/Eighteen:

Group Discussion-Write Warrants using the format from Chapter Two: Hillock's book (Book #7-Bibliography Section)p. 60-65 for the essential question: Is war ever justified?

Group Discussion-We are going to write an argumentative essay for our essential question.

Write-What does the word argument mean?

Pair Share-Discuss the question with a partner.

Group Discussion-Pairs share with the whole class their answers for the question.

Show students the following quote from the Common Core(See Bibliography Section), "Arguments are used for many purposes-to change the reader's point of view, to bring about some action on the reader's part, or to ask the reader to accept the writer's explanation or evaluation of a concept, issue, or problem. An argument is a reasoned, logical way of demonstrating that the writer's position, belief, or conclusion is valid...In history/social studies, students analyze evidence from multiple [sources] to advance a claim that is best supported by the evidence, and they argue for a historically...situated interpretation."

Group Discussion-What is this quote telling you an argument is/is not? As a whole class make a T-Chart on the board for what argument is/is not. Students are going to write an argumentative (argument) essay using this meaning for the word argument.

Group Discussion-Look at your graphic organizer and decide what conclusion you can draw for Essential Question #2 from the information you have in your graphic organizer. Then, highlight the information from your graphic organizer that you will use to justify your position for a yes or no answer to Essential Question #2. This will be your claim. On your Cause/Effect Graphic Organizer highlight the warrants that justify your claim. Lastly, highlight the evidence/justifications you wrote under the No or Yes sections from the Essential Questions #2 graphic organizer that go with your claim. These will be your supporting details.

Group Discussion-Show students the Essay Map (attachment #3 in the Materials Section). Have students fill out the three main warrants they will be addressing from their Cause/Effect Graphic Organizer in the Main Reasons Section of the Essay Map.

Group Discussion-Have students copy evidence/justification from their Essential Question #2 Graphic Organizer to support their Warrants in the Supporting Details Section of the Essay Map. Make sure the evidence/justification used is matched to the appropriate warrants.

Group Discussion-Write this question on the front board-What is a claim?

Partner work/Group Discussion-partners look in the dictionary for meanings of the word "claim" and then the class shares out ideas. Crystallize the definition down to one like: A claim is your conclusion to the essential Question based on the evidence you have to support the warrants.

Group Discussion-Show students the Essay Map graphic organizer again and discuss how to fill out the Claim Section by giving them the following scaffolding: War is or is not ever justified (depending on what the student decides) because of Warrant #1, Warrant #2, and Warrant #3.

You may want to model one using an Essay Map from one of your students.

Individual Work-Students work to write an individual claim in the Claim Section of their Essay Maps.

Days Nineteen-Twenty-seven:

Writing the Body Paragraphs

Group Discussion-Review writing a paragraph with a topic sentence, three specific supporting details, and a concluding sentence. Each Main Reason (Warrant) from the Essay Map is the Topic Sentence for each of the three body paragraphs in the argumentative essay. The three Supporting details from the Essay Map are the supporting details that follow the topic sentence in each body paragraph. Students need to write a concluding sentence for each of the three body paragraphs. So, again, each of the three body paragraphs in their essay contains a Topic Sentence (Main Reason Section), three supporting details (Supporting Details Section), and a concluding sentence to tie the paragraph together.

Individual Work-students work to write the "body" of the argumentative essay by writing three paragraphs, one for each Main Reason.

Writing the Introduction Paragraph

Group Discussion-How to write an introduction paragraph which contains a hook and the claim. See Craft Lessons by Ralph Fletcher p. 66-67, Nonfiction Craft Lessons by Ralph Fletcher p. 57, and 6+1 Traits of Writing by Ruth Culham p. 87-90 for teaching ideas.

Individual Work-Students work to write the "introduction" paragraph for their essay.

Group Discussion-Hand out the Writing Organization Sheet (see attachment #4 Writing Organization Sheet in the Materials Section) and review the Opening Section ideas for good hooks in an introduction paragraph.

Individual work-Students revise their introduction paragraphs to create better "hooks" for their readers.

Writing the Conclusion Paragraph

Group Discussion-How to write a concluding paragraph for an argumentative essay which includes: A. Student's individual thoughts about if war is ever justified; B. A restatement of the Claim; and C. A concluding wrap-up sentence. See Craft Lessons by Ralph Fletcher p. 68-71, Nonfiction Craft Lessons by Ralph Fletcher p. 106, and 6+1 Traits of Writing by Ruth Culham p. 87-90 for teaching ideas.

Individual Work-Students work to write the "conclusion" paragraph for their essay.

Group Discussion-Look at the Writing Organization Sheet (see attachment#4 in the Materials Section) and review the Conclusions section ideas for good wrap-ups in a conclusion paragraph.

Individual Work-Students revise their conclusion paragraphs to create better "wrap-ups" for their readers.

Adding Transitions

Group Discussion-Model how to tie essay paragraphs together using transition words so that the essay has an introduction paragraph, followed by a transition at the beginning of each of the three body paragraphs, followed by a transition at the beginning of the conclusion paragraph. See 6+1 Traits of Writing by Ruth Culham p. 91-92 and the Transitions section of the Writing Organization Sheet for ideas. Have students look over the Writing Organization Sheet for ideas to use in their essays.

Individual Work-Students write their whole essay in one piece with an introduction paragraph, three body paragraphs (transitions at the beginning of each of the three body paragraphs), and a conclusion paragraph (transition at the beginning).

Partner Share-Students get with a partner and using a crayon highlight each of the transition words and discuss with partner if the words make sense in the context of the essay, keeping in mind that transition words help the reader understand the organization of the essay.

Revising and Editing Essay

Group Discussion-How do I revise my essay: A. Read essay out loud to see if it reads smoothly and makes sense-make any changes; and B. Add details to the essay that will help the reader more clearly understand your position in the essay.

Individual Work-Students revise their essays.

Individual Work-Students reflect and revise their essays again using the Self-Teacher Assessment Rubric (attachment #5 in the Materials Section). Students fill out just their section of the rubric. The teacher can then use this same rubric for grading purposes when the essay is submitted for grading.

Individual Work-Student use the Editing Checklist to edit their essays(see attachment #6- Materials Section)

Creating a Works Cited Page

Group Discussion-How to write a Works Cited page. Hand out a copy of the Works Cited Page-How To Create (see attachment #9 in the Materials Section) to each student. Discuss the first page together as a class and demonstrate how to appropriately cite a source on the second page (Works Cited Information Collection Page)by using book #6 in the Bibliography Section.

Individual Work-Lay out all the texts utilized during this unit on a table. Students can work in groups of two or three to fill out the Works Cited Information Collection Page for all books in the unit.

Individual Work-Students create a beginning Works Cited page for their essay.

Publishing Essay

Individual Work-Student publish their essays by writing a final copy (or word processing it on a computer).

Celebration of Writing!-Partner Share-Students trade essays with two other students and fill out the Peer Assessment Rubric (see attachment #7 in the Materials Section)

Strategies for Diverse Learners

Students that are slower readers could be mixed within the different small groups so that they can focus on writing notes as a faster reader reads the text to the group.

Longer/more complex texts and shorter/less complex texts are labeled in the Historical Fiction and Biography sections of Days Eight-Fifteen. Teachers could utilize the Jigsaw instructional strategy explained in the Background for Teachers Section to help differentiate for diverse classroom learners.

Assessment Plan

Assessment rubrics are built into unit instructional procedures.

Bibliography

Number the Stars by Lois Lowry

Quote from Appendix A: Common Core State Standards for ELA and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects, p. 23

Craft Lessons by Ralph Fletcher

Nonfiction Craft Lessons by Ralph Fletcher

6+1 Traits of Writing by Ruth Culham Elementary CORE Academy 2004, Academy Handbook for Fifth Grade, p. 3:6

Books #1-#4 are used for their pictures of WWI and WWII. Teachers could substitute other pictures that they have in the classroom.

Book #1-World War One: Life in the Trenches by Robert Hamilton

Book #2-World War One: The Great Battles by Robert Hamilton

Book #3-World War Two: D-Day to Berlin by Robert Hamilton

Book #4-World War Two: War in the Pacific by Robert Hamilton

Many books are provided for teachers to select texts from. It is the teacher's responsibility to preread the texts that will be used in class to decide which are appropriate for the current school population.

Teachers can change out any texts listed in the Bibliography Section for texts containing similar

information that are already in the class or school library.

Book #5-The World Wars: An Introduction to the First & Second World Wars by Usborne books (Buy enough for each small group to have a copy-After using, I would buy one book as a teacher reference and use Books #5a/b for students. They are less expensive and easier for students to gather information)

Book #5a-World War I: Putting up a Front; Kids Discover magazine (Buy enough for each small group to have a copy)-EASIER READ than Book #5, could be used instead of Book #5

Book #5b-World War II; Kids Discover magazine (Buy enough for each small group to have a copy)-EASIER READ than Book #5, could be used instead of Book #5

Book #6-The First World War by Usborne books

Book #7-Teaching Argument Writing by Gearge Hillocks, Jr.

Book #8-Heroes of the Holocaust: True Stories of Rescues by Teens by Allan Zullo and Mara Bovsun (Valuable background information in the Introduction)

Book #9-Survivors: True Stories of children in the Holocaust by Allan zullo and Mara Bovsun (Valuable background information in the Introduction)

Book #10-We Are Witnesses: Five Diaries of Teenagers Who Died in the Holocaust by Jacob Boas (More graphic with mature themes, possibly 8th grade)

Book #11-Surviving Hitler: A Boy in the Nazi Death Camps by Andrea Warren (Excellent Biography)

Book #12-We Were There, Too!: Young People in U.S. History by Phillip Hoose

Book #13-Rose Blanche by Roberto Innocenti

Book #14-The Butterfly by Patricia Polacco

Book #15-Journey to Topaz by Yoshiko Uchida

Book #16-Passage to Freedom: The Sugihara Story by Ken Mochizuki

Book #17-...I never saw another butterfly...Children's Drawings and Poems from Terezin Concentration Camp, 1942-1944 (Expanded Second Edition), (Valuable background information in the Introduction)

Authors

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