

Reading and Writing Arguments

Summary

In this lesson, students read informational pieces about whether or not schools should teach cursive writing. They will evaluate the arguments presented and then choose a side of the issue. Finally, they will write their own arguments expressing their points of view.

Main Core Tie

English Language Arts Grade 8

[Writing Standard 1](#)

Additional Core Ties

English Language Arts Grade 8

[Reading: Informational Text Standard 1](#)

English Language Arts Grade 8

[Reading: Informational Text Standard 2](#)

English Language Arts Grade 8

[Reading: Informational Text Standard 6](#)

English Language Arts Grade 8

[Reading: Informational Text Standard 8](#)

English Language Arts Grade 8

[Writing Standard 8](#)

Time Frame

4 class periods of 45 minutes each

Life Skills

Thinking & Reasoning, Communication

Student Prior Knowledge

Students should already have knowledge of how to write an argument.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will write an argument to support a specific point of view and will support their arguments with clear information.

Students will determine the central idea of a text, analyze that idea, find the supporting evidence for it within the text, and evaluate the quality of the evidence.

Students will determine an author's point of view in an informational text.

Instructional Procedures

As a class, read "[Should We Still Teach Students to Write in Cursive?](#)". Discuss cursive and manuscript writing with the students. Clear up any questions students have about the article. Then, ask them for their personal experiences with learning to write and for their opinions about this issue.

Explain that we will be reading some articles about this topic and analyzing the arguments presented. Students will then write their own arguments about this topic.

Hand out "[Cursive Slowly Scribbled out of N.J. Curriculums as Computer Skills Gain Value in](#)

[Schools"](#) Read the article as a class.

Hand out the [Information Collection Chart](#). Fill in the column for this article, discussing as you go.

Have students get in groups of 2-3. Hand out the rest of the articles listed below and have students work through them together and fill out the rest of the chart. Remind them that the final column should be done individually.

- [Should Schools Keep Teaching Both Cursive and Manuscript Handwriting?](#)
- [How Handwriting Boosts the Brain](#)
- [Cursive Writing--Is It Obsolete?](#)

Have a discussion with the students about the articles. Evaluate them, discussing the merits and faults of each one.

Students will now write their own essays about this issue. To start, fill out the Yes/No T-Chart.

This can be done as a class, in small groups, or individually, depending on the skill level of the students. Students should fill out both sides, giving at least four reasons on both sides.

Students should choose a side of the issue. Then, using their Yes/No T-Charts, students should fill in the Argument Essay Organizer for their chose point of view.

After completing the essay organizer, students will draft their argument essays. They should take them through the revision process using the Argument Scoring Guide. This can be done as a self-evaluation or a peer evaluation.

Students should make a final copy to turn in, as well as stapling together their process papers (completed throughout the lesson) to turn in.

Assessment Plan

The assessment for this lesson the written argument students create.

Authors

[Amy Geilman](#)