



Common Core State Standards Professional Learning Module Series

English Language Arts: Writing to Inform, Argue, and Analyze Unit 2

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Tom Torlakson, State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Welcome to Unit 2

Planning Lessons for Informational and Argument Writing

2 | California Department of Education

Unit 2 Learning Objectives

During and upon completion of Unit 2, you will:

- Interact with a process for planning writing lessons that address the CCSS writing standards
- Apply your knowledge of writing text types, genres, and situations to lesson planning
- Examine strategies for selecting standards, text resources, and instructional priorities for informational, argument, and analytical writing lessons
- Examine and adapt lesson plans for your grade level span and diverse students

3 | California Department of Education

Planning CCSS-Informed Writing Lessons

What guidance do the CCSS provide to teachers?

The CCSS are a clear set of shared goals and expectations for the knowledge and skills students need in English language arts and mathematics at each grade level to ultimately be prepared to graduate college and career ready.

The standards establish what students need to learn, but they do not dictate how teachers should teach. Teachers will continue to devise lesson plans and tailor instruction to the individual needs of the students in their classrooms.

CCSS Initiative, 2010

4 | California Department of Education

A Framework for Planning Writing Lessons

Two documents for planning a CCSS-informed writing lesson:

- *Framework for Planning Writing Lessons* (Handout 2.1.1a)
- *Lesson Planning Template* — Mapped (Handout 2.1.1b)

Consider:

- *How does the framework address and support Common Core writing standards 1–10?*
- *How does the planning template address and support Common Core writing standards 1–10?*

5 | California Department of Education

Using a Shared Scenario to Plan a Writing Lesson

Prompt: *What does it mean to be an upstander?*

In a genre of your choosing, share an example of an upstander. The upstander you choose to write about can be historic, public, or personal. Illustrate how and why this person is an upstander by using current or past events. Explain how the events and the person have served as a call to action to you, the writer.

Definition of upstander: An individual, group, or institution that chooses to take a positive stand and act on behalf of themselves and others (Facing History and Ourselves, 2012).

Definition of bystander: An individual, a group, or institution that observes or knows about a problem such as bullying or discrimination and chooses not to help or act on behalf of those who are affected by the problem.

6 | California Department of Education

Planning a Writing Lesson

Consider the theme and its connection to your students and the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy by:

- Writing Topic
- Content and Context
- Writing Types and Genre
- Audience

Note: Answers to the questions on the following slides will vary widely across grade levels and teaching contexts.

7 | California Department of Education

Planning the Writing Topic

Writing Topic

- *If you were to teach your students to respond in writing to topic of Upstanders, Not Bystanders, how could you adapt it for your grade level and your student population?*

8 | California Department of Education

Planning – Content and Context

Content and Context

- *What kinds of upstanders could your students write about? Have they read texts about historical upstanders? Are there additional texts in your anthology or in your school or classroom library that would focus them on the topic?*
- *Do they have prior knowledge that they could build on? What more do they need to read and research to expand their knowledge of the topic?*
- *Does your school have a character education or anti-bullying program? If yes, can the topic be adapted for the content and texts that are a part of those programs?*

9 | California Department of Education

Planning – Text Types and Genre

Writing Text Types and Genre

- *What "response" will you ask students to write?*
- *What writing text type or mix of text types could you teach?*
- *Which specific writing genres could you teach?*
- *Would the genres be mostly informative/explanatory or opinion/argument? Or are they a blend of the two?*

10 | California Department of Education

Planning – Audience

Audience

- *Will the audience for the students' written response be you as their teacher and also their classmates?*
- *Or will the response be directed to a more public audience?*

11 | California Department of Education

Planning a Writing Lesson

Important Takeaway: You have just applied much of what you learned in Unit 1. Through your thinking, you are beginning to develop the writing situation — **task, purpose, audience, text type, genre** — for your own lesson.

- Remember, the CCSS does not name writing applications or genres by grade level.
- Developing the writing situation and targeting a writing genre are the first steps of planning lessons that address the Common Core writing standards.

12 | California Department of Education

Examining Lesson Plans

Eight California teachers used the same thinking process for adapting the *Upstanders, Not Bystanders* writing topic.

- Refer to the Lesson Abstracts and Planning Templates (Handouts 2.1.3a–i)
- Focus on lesson plans at or near your grade level or on any that interest you by topic or genre
- Read and discuss what these teachers planned for teaching the writing genre or sequence of writing genres to address the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy and the instructional needs of their students
- Revisit your own lesson idea and, with a partner, use the blank *Lesson Planning Template* (Handout 2.1.1c) to note possibilities for fleshing out your own lesson plan

13 | California Department of Education

Lesson Plans: Elementary

For elementary, select grade level(s) and refer to Handouts 2.1.3a–e for summaries and lesson plans:

Kindergarten: Kim Holsberry (Winters Joint Unified School District)

Grade 2: Angie Balias (Garden Grove Unified School District)

Grade 3: Lorena Sanchez (Tracy Unified School District)

Grade 5: Teresa Pitta (Merced City School District)

14 | California Department of Education

Lesson Plan: Middle School

For middle school, refer to Handout 2.1.3a and 2.1.3f for a summary and lesson plan:

Grade 7: Liz Harrington (English teacher, San Gabriel Unified School District)

15 | California Department of Education

Lesson Plans: High School

For multi-grade high school, refer to lesson summaries (Handout 2.1.3a) and lesson plans (Handouts 2.1.3g–i):

Multi-Grade: Marlene Carter (English teacher, Los Angeles Unified School District)

Multi-Grade Special Education: Amanda von Kleist (Hamilton Unified School District)

Multi-Grade English Learner: Norma Mota Altman (ELD teacher, Alhambra Unified School District)

16 | California Department of Education

Extension Activity (Optional)

To listen in on the teachers as they planned their lessons, link to any or all of the three videos through the link below:

<http://www.myboe.org/portal/default/Content/Viewer/Content?action=2&scld=504695&scld=12814>

- In the first video, the teachers share overviews of their lessons and the ways they are planning to adapt the *Upstanders, Not Bystanders* writing prompt for their students.
- In the other two videos, the teachers discuss instructional plans, strategize possibilities for texts and resources, and problem-solve about teaching questions they have about their lessons.

17 | California Department of Education

Selecting and Using Texts Purposefully

Recommendation in the *Lesson Planning Framework* :

“Choose print and digital texts for students to read and research: essays, podcasts, videos, articles, reports, infographics, speeches, etc.”

18 | California Department of Education

Selecting and Using Texts Purposefully

Refer to the *Lesson Planning Template* (Handout 2.1.1b) that mapped three purposes for using texts to the following CCSS writing standards:

- **Using texts to increase content knowledge:** Supports the *Research to Build and Present Knowledge* standards.
- **Using texts to increase genre knowledge:** Supports *Production and Distribution of Writing* Standard 4 (development and organization of the genre appropriate to task, audience, and purpose).
- **Using texts to increase language knowledge:** Important component of teaching students to write for correctness, with a style appropriate to task, purpose and audience, and with precise and domain-specific language.

19 | California Department of Education

Analyzing Teachers' Uses of Texts

Watch 6th grade students (video on the next slide) getting ready to read a blog post titled, "Child Labor Used to Make Soccer Balls" (Handout 2.2.1a).

- One of several readings in an extended lesson where students will write an article in response to the following writing prompt:

"After researching nonfiction books, photojournals, and articles on contemporary child labor, write an article for a children's magazine that defines and explains child labor practices and how children around the world are impacted. Support your explanation with evidence from your research. What implications for the American consumer can you draw?"

20 | California Department of Education

Analyzing Teachers' Uses of Texts

"Getting Ready to Write: Citing Textual Evidence"

<https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/teaching-about-textual-evidence>

For what purposes is the teacher is using this text with her students?

- To increase content knowledge?
- To increase genre knowledge?
- To increase language knowledge?



21 | California Department of Education

Building a Knowledge Base

Compare what you saw in the video to the *Research to Build and Present Knowledge* writing standards for Grades 6–8.

- Discuss:

Which phrases in these standards describe how the students are addressing them?

- Refer to Handout 2.2.1b "Savage Harvest" for the complete lesson

22 | California Department of Education

Increasing Genre Knowledge

CCR Anchor Standards for Writing "*Text Types and Purposes*" indicate that the broad types of writing include many subgenres.

- Read Anchor Standard 4 and consider the importance of genre knowledge in meeting this standard:

"Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience."

Recall that students are preparing to write an article. In the lesson, there is no specific mention of teaching students to analyze articles written for children for the features of that genre (although they may have had practice already).

- *What if they haven't had such practice?*
- *Why is it important to use texts to increase the genre knowledge of students in ways that will scaffold and support them to write an article?*

23 | California Department of Education

Increasing Genre Knowledge

Teachers must help their students discover what varied genres look like and "the structures and features that competent writers use when writing for specific purposes."

- Many teachers were not taught to write a wide range of genres for varied audiences and purposes, or have little recent practice in such writing.
- "Our own limited knowledge of writing genres and how they work has made us" tentative writing models and guides for student writers.

Stead, 2002

- *Is that true for you? Why is increasing genre knowledge so important?*

24 | California Department of Education

Using Genre Features to Support a Claim

Watch a video of a middle school teacher helping students organize information writing, using genre and text features with deliberation and purpose:

- Note examples of how the teacher is helping students increase their genre knowledge of the nonfiction book they are writing.

“Teaching Students to Organize Information Texts to Support a Claim”
<http://vimeo.com/55951303>

25 | California Department of Education

Depth of Knowledge (DOK)

The DOK model provides a frame of reference to the complexity of mental processing that must occur to answer a question, perform a task, or generate a product. The four DOK levels are:

- **Level 1: Recall** — includes identifying (who, what, when, where, why), memorizing, recalling, listing, quoting
- **Level 2: Skill/Concept** — includes identifying main idea, organizing, categorizing, determining cause and effect, comparing, predicting, summarizing
- **Level 3: Strategic Thinking** — includes developing a logical argument, analyzing, using concepts to solve problems, citing evidence, drawing conclusions
- **Level 4: Extended Thinking** — includes designing, connecting, synthesizing, critiquing, applying concepts, conducting in-depth analysis, justifying, proving

In the video, the teacher pushed her students to higher levels of DOK through their connections to the text features of the genres they were preparing to write.

26 | California Department of Education

Reflect, Write, Discuss

- **What text features did the teacher help students identify as the most purposeful in integrating the central idea onto the page for the given assignment?**
- **Why does the teacher share her own writing as a genre model?**
- **How did the teacher push her students to higher levels of DOK?**

27 | California Department of Education

Genre Models, Text Features, and Claims

How could the teacher in the child labor video use texts to increase students' genre knowledge of an article?

Prompt begins with: “After researching nonfiction books, photo journals, and articles on contemporary child labor, write an article for a children’s magazine ...”

- What genre models could the teacher use for an article?
- What text features could she focus on?
- What claim can she use to help her students use to select both relevant evidence and text features that are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience of a children’s magazine?

28 | California Department of Education

Genre Models, Text Features, and Claims

What genre models could the teacher use?

Time for Kids: <http://www.timeforkids.com/news/>

- “Following Their Dreams” explains how Beads for Kids helps girls go to school in Kenya
- “Saving Nemo?” describes how scientists are protecting clown fish
- “Keeping Food Safe” explains federal requirements to keep food safe

Teacher may also write an example of an article and follow up by having students draft an article as a class or in small groups.

29 | California Department of Education

Genre Models, Text Features, and Claims

What text features could the teacher focus on?

- Title that grabs reader
- Images and pictures
- Subtitles that separate the problem and the problem-solving
- Short paragraphs
- Examples that help readers see the problem
- Explanation of how people are trying to solve the problem

30 | California Department of Education

Genre Models, Text Features, and Claims

What claim can the teacher use to help students select both relevant evidence and text features appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience for a children's magazine?

Teacher has asked students to gather examples of implications for the American consumer.

- Students should think about which examples are most relevant to children or fellow students and which text features enhance the point of the article.

31 | California Department of Education

Using Texts to Connect the Standards across Disciplines

The CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy for reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language are interconnected and interrelated. In writing across a wide range of disciplines, students participate in activities that emphasize different areas of the CCSS.

- Observe a video of a teacher helping young students increase language knowledge by incorporating domain-specific words into their informational writing:

"Whole Class Instruction to Teach Students to Use Domain-Specific Vocabulary Within Information Writing (K–2)"

<http://vimeo.com/55966098>

32 | California Department of Education

Reflect, Write, Discuss

- *What have the students learned prior to this lesson?*
- *How is the teacher drawing on that prior knowledge to help students understand how to use scientific or domain-specific language?*
- *What domain-specific language is important for your students to learn how to use in their writing?*

33 | California Department of Education

Developing Language and Comprehension through Discourse

CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy Speaking and Listening Standard 1 requires that students *"engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions..."*

- Focused classroom discussion around text is essential
- Providing scaffolds through academic discourse is especially important for English learners and students with disabilities

34 | California Department of Education

Developing Language and Comprehension through Discourse

Watch how a 5th-grade teacher scaffolds reading and writing in three stages: clarifying understanding, finding specific examples about the author's viewpoint, and paraphrasing and citing to support students' written interpretations of the author's viewpoint.

- Observe how the teacher uses small and large group discussion strategies prior to writing to increase students' understanding of the text.
- Note how she points students back to the text to find and cite the author's language that supports their interpretation and prepares them for the culminating writing activity.

35 | California Department of Education

Developing Language and Comprehension through Discourse

Upper Elementary Examples:

"Analyzing Texts: Brainstorm Before Writing"

<https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/analyzing-text-brainstorming>

"Analyzing Texts: Text Talk Time"

<https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/analyzing-text-as-a-group>

"Analyzing Texts: Putting Thoughts on Paper"

<https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/analyzing-text-writing>

36 | California Department of Education

Reflect, Write, Discuss

- *How does the teacher support students' use of language from the text, while still encouraging the use of their own language and ideas?*
- *How do strategic and focused discussion activities increase understanding of text and foster language development in preparation for writing?*
- *How does the teacher scaffold the lesson to meet the needs of her English learner students? How might these or similar strategies support struggling readers or students with disabilities?*

37 | California Department of Education

Precise Use of Language When Researching a Topic or Issue Online

The Common Core Writing and Language standards make frequent mention of using language with precision.

- Watch how a teacher helps her 6th-grade students increase language precision and online research knowledge simultaneously.

Middle School Example:

"Improving Research Skills With Effective Keywords"

<https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/teaching-strategies-internet-research>

- Refer to Handout 2.2.3 *"The Key to Key Words"* to see lesson process and scaffolding



38 | California Department of Education

Reflect, Write, Discuss

- *How do the lesson activities increase student understanding of the importance of precise and specific language choices?*
- *How did the teacher ensure student interest and engagement?*
- *How can students apply the strategies of this lesson to researching print resources?*

39 | California Department of Education

Writing for Varied Audiences and Purposes

Grade 9 CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy Writing Standard 2:

- d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.*
- e. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.*

Every genre of writing occurs in a situation that has an audience, a purpose, a context or setting, a set of expected and appropriate responses, and a reason for the writer to write (Fox, 2004).

- Students need to research a variety of sources to determine language, vocabulary, levels of formality, and tone appropriate to the task.

40 | California Department of Education

Writing for Varied Audiences and Purposes

Watch how a teacher guides her 9th- and 10th- grade students to understand and identify for what audiences and purposes informal and formal language are appropriate and effective.

- As students write for increasingly networked audiences in both digital and print texts, the goals of this lesson become increasingly important.

High School Example: ***"Reading Formal and Informal Texts"***

<https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/formal-and-informal-texts>



41 | California Department of Education

Reflect, Write, Discuss

- *How does the teacher take the students from the broad topic of formal versus informal text to a narrow focus of language at the sentence and word level?*
- *How does the teacher help students understand the contexts in which to use formal or informal language? How does she incorporate technology into the lesson?*
- *How does the teacher scaffold the lesson?*

42 | California Department of Education

Assessing the Credibility of Texts and Sources

Grade 6 CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy Writing Standard 8:

"Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources."

Engage students in learning to assess and analyze credibility by asking them to assess digital texts before they assess print texts:

- When students explore the idea that anyone can publish on the Internet, they begin to understand that not all sites are equally trustworthy. Students need to carefully evaluate the sites they use for research, and then decide which ones they can trust.

43 | California Department of Education

Assessing the Credibility of Texts and Sources

Watch a middle school teacher employ this strategy in a lesson from Common Sense Media:

Middle School Example:

"Using Critical Thinking to Find Trustworthy Websites"

<https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/analyzing-websites-with-students>



44 | California Department of Education

Assessing the Credibility of Texts and Sources

With a partner, examine the lesson for which the video activity is a part:

"Identifying High Quality Sites" (Handout 2.2.4)

- Note the emphasis on critical thinking and academic vocabulary
- Note also that the CCSS addressed in this research lesson are in Reading and Speaking and Listening, not in Writing.

45 | California Department of Education

Reflect, Write, Discuss

- How can you apply what students learned in this lesson about assessing the credibility of online texts to students assessing the credibility of print texts?

Or

- If your school has limited access to the technology needed to teach this lesson, how could you adapt the lesson to help students assess print or other multimedia texts?

46 | California Department of Education

Teaching Digital Literacy: Sample Lessons

On the following slides, watch examples of teaching digital literacy. After viewing the video at your grade level span:

- Select, link to, read, and review a Digital Literacy lesson from Common Sense Media at your grade level span.

After reviewing the lesson:

- Refer to your grade level standards for CA CCSS Writing Standard 8

Consider how the lesson you reviewed helped you address this standard.

47 | California Department of Education

Teaching Digital Literacy: Sample Lessons

Early Elementary Example: *"Sites I Like"*

<http://www.common sense media.org/educators/lesson/sites-i-k-1>



What makes a Web site the right site for me?

Students explore and evaluate an informational Web site for children.

48 | California Department of Education

Teaching Digital Literacy: Sample Lessons

Upper Elementary Example: “How to Cite a Site”

<http://www.common sense media.org/educators/lesson/how-cite-site-6-8>



How do I cite different types of online sources?
Students reflect on the importance of citing all sources when they do research.

49 | California Department of Education

Teaching Digital Literacy: Sample Lessons

Middle School Example: “Digital Literacy and Citizenship”

<http://www.common sense media.org/educators/curriculum/grades-6-8>



How do individuals interact with and impact others in the digital world?
Students learn to reflect critically on their use of media, understanding of the broader landscape, and participation in the always-on community.

50 | California Department of Education

Teaching Digital Literacy: Sample Lessons

High School Example: “Rights, Remixes, and Respect”

<http://www.common sense media.org/educators/lesson/rights-remixes-and-respect-9-12>



What should you consider when you use other people’s creative work?
Students reflect on the differences between taking inspiration from the creative work of others and appropriating that work without permission.

51 | California Department of Education

Reflect, Write, Discuss

Refer again to your grade level standards for CA CCSS Writing Standard 8.

➤ *How would the lesson that you just reviewed at your grade level span help you address this standard?*

52 | California Department of Education

Writing with Digital Tools

CCR Writing Anchor Standard 6 urges teachers and students to “use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.”

“Research shows that digital technology enhances writing in several ways. K-12 students who write with computers produce compositions of greater length and higher quality and are more engaged with and motivated toward writing than their peers.”

Source: Goldberg et. al, 2003

Digital tools are changing writing by creating new genres such as podcasts, digital essays, Glogster posters, Web sites, blog forums, Animotos, etc.

53 | California Department of Education

Writing with Digital Tools

Refer to the *Lesson Planning Templates* examined earlier in this unit.

- This time, reread them and look for how the teachers draw on digital texts for research and reading, or how they use digital tools to create a digital genre.

What do you notice?

54 | California Department of Education

Navigating the Digital World: Extension Activity (Optional)

Digital communication opens exciting new possibilities for multimedia, multimodal literacies. However, it can also open up to cyber- bullying.

- Impacts school culture and classroom climate
- Needs to be addressed as students become more comfortable with digital technology

Common Sense Media provides a series of lessons aligned with the CCSS and the National Educational Technology Standards for Students (NETS-S):

- Provides print and digital texts for students to read, discuss, and analyze
- Culminates with print and digital writing prompts that include informational/explanatory and opinion/argument writing

55 | California Department of Education

The Digital World and Cyberbullying (Optional)

Sample lessons—Elementary

Grades K–2: “Screen Out the Mean”

<http://www.common SenseMedia.org/educators/lesson/screen-out-mean-2-3>



“What can you do when someone is mean to you online?”

Grades 3–5: “What’s Cyberbullying?”

<http://www.common SenseMedia.org/educators/Lesson/whats-cyberbullying-3-5>

“What is cyberbullying, and how do you deal with it?”



56 | California Department of Education

The Digital World and Cyberbullying (Optional)

Sample lessons—Secondary

Grades 6–8: “Cyberbullying: Be Upstanding”

<http://www.common SenseMedia.org/educators/lesson/cyberbullying-be-upstanding-6-8>



How do you judge the intentions and impact of people’s words and actions online?

Grades 9–10: “Turn Down the Dial on Cyberbullying and Online Cruelty”

<http://www.common SenseMedia.org/educators/lesson/turn-down-dial-cyberbullying-and-online-cruelty-9-10>

What factors intensify cyberbullying and online cruelty, and what can you do to lessen them?



57 | California Department of Education

Examining Lessons for Informational, Argument, and Analytical Writing

Examine complete lessons that show how teachers adapted and taught the *Upstanders, Not Bystanders* writing topic:

- Refer to Handout 2.4a: “Abstracts and Links for Complete Upstanders, Not Bystanders Lessons.” Focus on those of interest to you:

Grades 4,5 and ELD: “Californianos Today: Writing Firsthand Biographies to Inform and Reflective Essays to Argue and Analyze”

http://www.californiawritingproject.org/uploads/1/3/6/0/13607033/californianos_today.pdf

Grades 9,10: “Upstanders, Not Bystanders: Writing Reports of Information”

http://www.californiawritingproject.org/uploads/1/3/6/0/13607033/writing_reports_lesson_plan.pdf

Grades 8–10: “Why People Don’t Help in a Crisis: Writing Arguments About Bystanders”

http://www.californiawritingproject.org/uploads/1/3/6/0/13607033/crisis_bystanders.pdf

58 | California Department of Education

Examining Lessons for Informational, Argument, and Analytical Writing

To learn more about digital writing genres and digital tools to support writing lessons, refer to Handout 2.4b: “Upstanders, Not Bystanders: A Digital Call to Write and Call to Action”

- Developed by the California Writing Project (CWP) and Common Sense Media
- Participate in statewide effort to showcase students’ digital writing: follow the embedded links in the document or contact the CWP at cwp@berkeley.edu.

59 | California Department of Education

Looking Forward

Before moving to Unit 3, reflect on the following:

- *What CCSS-informed lessons are you thinking about or planning to develop that will help your students strategically use writing to inform, or argue, or analyze?*
- *What professional learning needs and questions are surfacing for you as you prepare to teach informational, argument, and analytical writing more effectively?*

60 | California Department of Education