



EXPEDITIONARY
LEARNING

Grade 6: Module 4: Unit 3: Overview



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Unit 3: Writing: Position Paper about the Use of DDT

Building on the research and decision-making process that students completed in Unit 2, Unit 3 is an extended writing process during which students draft, revise, edit, and publish their research-based position papers. In the first half of the unit, students analyze a model position paper and plan their own, with several opportunities to talk through their ideas as well as get feedback to improve their plans. The mid-unit assessment is students' best draft of their position paper.

In the second half of the unit, students revise their position papers based on teacher feedback. They also receive lessons on the use of grade-level-appropriate vocabulary and formal English in writing. The end of unit assessment is students' published position paper as well as a student reflection on the process of writing the paper, using evidence from the students' own work. Finally, students engage in the performance task: creating a scientific poster based on their position paper. They share this poster with their classmates in a hosted Gallery Walk.

Guiding Questions And Big Ideas

- **How do we balance the needs of people and the condition of the natural world?**
- **Do the benefits of DDT outweigh its harmful consequences?**
- **How do I integrate evidence from multiple sources to help support a claim in a position paper?**
- *Research includes the close reading of multiple sources, evaluation of those sources, and collecting of relevant information.*
- *Thorough research of multiple perspectives of an issue builds toward an informed decision and claim.*
- *Position papers are well supported by carefully chosen evidence from credible sources.*



Mid-Unit 3 Assessment	<p>Draft of Position Paper: Do the Benefits of DDT Outweigh Its Harmful Consequences?</p> <p>This assessment centers on NYSP12 ELA CCLS RI.6.1, W.6.1, and W.6.9.</p> <p>For this mid-unit assessment, students submit their best draft of their position paper. Students focus their writing on the drafting of an introduction in which they make their claim and foreshadow the organization of their paper. They support this claim with relevant evidence from their reading and research done in Units 1 and 2. Students draft a conclusion that follows logically from the claim and evidence presented in their paper.</p>
End of Unit 3 Assessment	<p>Reflection on the Writing Process: Moving from Draft to Published Position Paper</p> <p>This assessment centers on NYSP12 ELA CCLS W.6.5, W.6.6, L.6.1e, and L.6.6.</p> <p>For this end of unit assessment, students revise their position paper based on teacher and peer feedback. They also revise based on focused revision mini lessons on the use of sixth-grade domain-specific and academic vocabulary as well as the use of standard English in writing. Students complete a reflection on the writing process, focusing specifically on how the steps of the process improve their writing.</p>
Final Performance Task	<p>Scientific Poster and Hosted Gallery Walk</p> <p>This performance task gives students a chance to demonstrate the ideas and evidence from their position papers, in which they answered the question: “Do the benefits of DDT outweigh its harmful consequences?” Students will craft and share a scientific poster that serves as a visual representation of their position papers, including their claim, reasons, and evidence based on their research and the decision-making process in Unit 2. Students then participate in a hosted Gallery Walk in which they present the scientific poster they have created. (Speaking and listening standards are not formally assessed in the performance task, as they were taught and assessed in Unit 2 of this module.) This hosted Gallery Walk is written with students’ peers as their intended audience; however, other interested members of the community could be invited as an extension. This task addresses NYSP12 ELA Standards RI.6.1, W.6.1, W.6.4, W.6.5, and L.6.6.</p>



Content Connections

This module is designed to address English Language Arts standards as students read literature and informational text about the use of DDT. However, the module intentionally incorporates Social Studies Practices and Themes to support potential interdisciplinary connections to this compelling content. These intentional connections are described below.

Big ideas and guiding questions are informed by the New York State Common Core K–8 Social Studies Framework:

<http://engageny.org/sites/default/files/resource/attachments/ss-framework-k-8.pdf>

Unifying Themes (pages 6–7)

- Theme 4: Geography, Humans, and the Environment: The relationship between human populations and the physical world (people, places, and environments); impact of human activities on the environment; interactions between regions, locations, places, people, and environments.
- Theme 9: Science, Technology, and Innovation: Applications of science and innovations in transportation, communication, military agriculture, and industrialization. techno lo

Social Studies Practices, Geographic Reasoning, Grades 5–8:

- Descriptor 2: Describe the relationships between people and environments and the connections between people and places (page 58).
- Descriptor 3: Identify, analyze, and evaluate the relationship between the environment and human activities, how the physical environment is modified by human activities, and how human activities are also influenced by Earth's physical features and processes.

Social Studies Practices, Gathering, Using, and Interpreting Evidence, Grades 5-8:

- Descriptor 1: Define and frame questions about events and the world in which we live and use evidence to answer these questions.
- Descriptor 2: Identify, describe, and evaluate evidence about events from diverse sources (including written documents, works of art, photographs, charts and graphs, artifacts, oral traditions, and other primary and secondary sources).
- Descriptor 4: Describe and analyze arguments of others.
- Descriptor 6: Recognize an argument and identify evidence that supports the argument; examine arguments related to a specific social studies topic from multiple perspectives; deconstruct arguments, recognizing the perspective of the argument and identifying evidence used to support that perspective.



This unit is approximately 2 weeks or 10 sessions of instruction.

Lesson	Lesson Title	Long-Term Targets	Supporting Targets	Ongoing Assessment	Anchor Charts & Protocols
Lesson 1	Analyze Model Position Paper with Rubric	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. (W.6.1) With support from peers and adults, I can use a writing process to produce clear and coherent writing. (W.6.5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can analyze a model position paper for topic and argument. I can analyze the argument rubric to understand expectations of a position paper. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Author's Presentation of Events graphic organizer Assessing model position paper with rubric 	
Lesson 2	Planning the Argument: Writing the Claim and Reasons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. (W.6.1) I can support my claims(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence. (W.6.1b) I can use credible sources to support my claims(s). (W.6.1b) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can identify the steps to writing a position paper. I can plan my claim and evidence for my position paper. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning My Argument graphic organizer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Types of Claims and Evidence
Lesson 3	Claim, Reasons, and Evidence: Planning the Body Paragraphs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. (W.6.1) With support from peers and adults, I can use a writing process to produce clear and coherent writing. (W.6.5) I can accurately use sixth-grade academic vocabulary to express my ideas. (L.6.6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can give and receive feedback with my peers on claims, reasons, and evidence. I can analyze a body paragraph of the model position paper. I can plan the body paragraphs of my position paper. I can use appropriate vocabulary to express my ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning My Body Paragraphs graphic organizer 	



Lesson	Lesson Title	Long-Term Targets	Supporting Targets	Ongoing Assessment	Anchor Charts & Protocols
Lesson 4	Actions for a Position Paper: Identify, Discuss, Write	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. (W.6.1) I can identify the relationship between my claim(s) and reasons by using linking words, phrases, and clauses. (W.6.1c) With support from peers and adults, I can use a writing process to produce clear and coherent writing. (W.6.5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can identify the parts of a strong position paper. I can discuss my ideas for my position paper with a peer. I can write drafts of my body paragraphs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning My Body Paragraphs graphic organizer (from homework) Written drafts of body paragraphs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parts of a Position Paper Transitions
Lesson 5	Mid-Unit Assessment: Completing My Draft Position Paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. (W.6.1) I can create an introduction that states my main argument and foreshadows the organization of my piece. (W.6.1a) I can construct a concluding statement or section that reinforces my main argument. (W.6.1e) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can identify the qualities of a strong introduction and conclusion for a position paper. I can draft the introduction of my position paper. I can draft the conclusion of my position paper. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mid-Unit 3 Assessment: Draft of Position Paper: "Do the Benefits of DDT Outweigh Its Harmful Consequences?" Reflecting on My Writing So Far 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parts of a Position Paper
Lesson 6	Peer Critique and Revising: Formal English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. (W.6.1) I can maintain a formal style in my writing. (W.6.1d) I can identify when standard English is and isn't used. (L.6.1e) I can convert language into standard English. (L.6.1e) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can recognize the differences between formal and informal English. I can give and receive feedback on formal and informal English in a position paper. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying and revising formal English and transitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transitions



Lesson	Lesson Title	Long-Term Targets	Supporting Targets	Ongoing Assessment	Anchor Charts & Protocols
Lesson 7	End of Unit Assessment: Revising and Publishing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With support from peers and adults, I can use a writing process to produce clear and coherent writing. (W.6.5) • I can accurately use sixth-grade academic vocabulary to express my ideas. (L.6.6) • I can use resources to build my vocabulary. (L.6.6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can revise my position paper to include appropriate vocabulary. • I can publish my position paper. • I can self-assess my position paper against the Position Paper Argument Rubric. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of Unit 3 Assessment: Final draft of the position paper 	
Lesson 8	Completing Reflection: Preparing a Poster for Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can produce clear and coherent writing that is appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (W.6.4) • With support from peers and adults, I can use a writing process to produce clear and coherent writing. (W.6.5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can reflect on the writing process to show how it helps me grow as a writer. • I can choose evidence and visuals to use in my scientific poster. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Process Reflection • Scientific poster 	
Lesson 9	Finishing Poster and Preparing for Gallery Walk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can produce clear and coherent writing that is appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (W.6.4) • With support from peers and adults, I can use a writing process to produce clear and coherent writing (W.6.5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can complete a scientific poster for the hosted Gallery Walk. • I can practice using formal English to present my research. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientific poster 	
Lesson 10	Performance Task: Hosted Gallery Walk of Scientific Posters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can produce clear and coherent writing that is appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (W.6.4) • I can accurately use sixth-grade academic vocabulary to express my ideas. (L.6.6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can use a scientific poster to share my research with my peers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientific posters 	



Optional: Experts, Fieldwork, and Service

Experts:

- Invite writers of editorials or opinion pieces to speak to students about their process for writing and the most important aspects of writing position papers.

Fieldwork:

- N/A

Service:

- Consider having students submit their position papers to a local newspaper as a way to contribute to their community's dialogue about the use of pesticides.

Optional: Extensions

- A presentation of students' scientific posters to stakeholders in the community: scientists, farmers, policy makers, etc.

Preparation and Materials

This unit follows a routine familiar to students from Modules 1–3.

In the first half of the unit, students study a model position paper about the use of hydraulic fracturing. They collect the necessary evidence to support the claim they formed in Unit 2. Students use familiar graphic organizers to plan the body paragraphs of their writing, and then study the model for writing their introduction and conclusion. Students turn in their best drafts of their position papers in Lesson 5, and will need teacher feedback to complete Lesson 7.

1. Independent Reading

- Students should be reading their independent reading book throughout this unit.
- Be sure students have an independent reading book, or one carried over from Unit 2, as multiple lessons ask students to share their reading and reflect on their experience with the book.