

PART 1

UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF AN ISSUE

“The use of enhancement ‘substances’ for sporting events dates back to the ancient Greeks and ancient Maya.”

OBJECTIVE:

Students apply their close reading skills to understand a societal issue as a context for various perspectives, positions, and arguments.



ACTIVITIES

1- INTRODUCING THE UNIT

The teacher presents an overview of the unit and its societal issue.

2- EXPLORING THE ISSUE

Students read and analyze a background text to develop an initial understanding of the issue.

3- DEEPENING UNDERSTANDING OF THE ISSUE

Students read and analyze a second background text to expand and deepen their understanding of the issue.

4- QUESTIONING TO REFINE UNDERSTANDING

Students develop text-dependent questions and use them to refine their analysis.

5- WRITING AN EVIDENCE-BASED CLAIM ABOUT THE NATURE OF THE ISSUE

Students develop and write an evidence-based claim about the nature of the issue.

MATERIALS:

Text Sets 1 and 2
Guiding Questions Handout
Forming EBC Tool
TCD Checklist
EBA Terms



ALIGNMENT TO CCSS

TARGETED STANDARDS:

RI.7.1: Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RI.7.2: Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

RI.7.3: Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).

W.7.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

SUPPORTING STANDARDS:

SL.7.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

RI.7.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.



ACTIVITY 1: INTRODUCING THE UNIT

The teacher presents an overview of the unit and its societal issue.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

INTRODUCE ARGUMENTATION

Introduce the central purpose of the unit: to develop, practice, and apply the skills of argumentation in the context of a societal issue by:

- 1) Understanding the nature of a challenging *issue* for which there are various *perspectives* and *positions*.
- 2) Understanding and comparing *perspectives* and *arguments* on the issue.
- 3) Developing an evidence-based *position* on the issue.
- 4) Developing, sequencing and linking *claims* as *premises* in an evidence-based *argument* for one's position.
- 5) Supporting one's premises with logical *reasoning* and relevant *evidence*.
- 6) Developing an argumentative *essay* through a series of guided editorial processes.

Emphasize that in this unit, students will learn and think about a complex societal issue for which there are many explanations, perspectives, and opinions, not simply two sides of an argument to be debated. Let them know that they will read and research to better understand the issue and various perspectives on it *before* they form a position of their own and develop an argument in support of that position. Explain that the unit will culminate in a collaborative process for developing and strengthening an argumentative essay that each student will write on the unit's societal issue.

- Establish a clear definition of the term *issue* in general. An issue can be defined as *an important aspect of human society for which there are many differing opinions on an appropriate course of action*. Brainstorming a list of societal issues might be helpful.
- Using examples from various fields and topical areas, discuss the general question: *"How do strategic thinkers discuss and understand challenging issues or problems?"* Brainstorm a list of approaches and skills used by experts who regularly have to propose and support responses to issues or problems.

PERFORMANCE ENHANCING DRUGS

The topic area and texts focus on the issues and controversies surrounding PEDs (Performance Enhancing Drugs) in both professional and non-professional sports. Doping, and policy related to both the legal and illegal use of drugs to increase performance in sports, is a complex topic with many perspectives and positions – not a simple “pro and con” arena for debate – which allows the teacher and students to approach and study the issue from many possible angles.

FORMULATE A PROBLEM-BASED QUESTION

Formulate a problem-based question from which students can begin their discussions, reading, and development of an argumentative position. Choose or develop a general, though still focused, question that causes students to think about the problem with many directions for argumentation, and that connects to students' backgrounds and interests. An example/option for a problem-based question is:

How should the world of sports approach performance-enhancing drugs?

TEXT-BASED QUESTION

If this question is selected, or a similar one developed, provide a little background to get students thinking; in this case, showing them the video on Mark McGwire's transformation from a skinny baseball player from the Oakland Athletics to the muscular player who years later broke Roger Maris' single-season homerun record. While this video is specific to baseball, it demonstrates the impact of performance-enhancing drugs on the body, which would be similar for athletes young and old in other sports. The video can be accessed by searching for “Mark McGwire's Changing Muscles” on YouTube.



ACTIVITY 1: INTRODUCING THE UNIT (CONT'D)

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES (CONT'D)

The video on Mark McGwire also provides a first opportunity for close analysis, using a text-based question set such as:

What do the changes in McGwire's body suggest about the influence and effects of performance-enhancing drugs in sports?

Let students know that they will be returning to these questions often as they read texts related to performance-enhancing drugs. Emphasize that their task in this argumentation unit is not simply to answer them, but rather to use them as a stimulus for reading and discussion. Thinking about these question as they read, analyze, and discuss will eventually lead them to a perspective on the use of PEDs, and finally to a position about the use of PEDs from which they can build an evidence-based argument.

KWL

Teachers might choose to use an activity to help students access their prior knowledge of the subject while also making sure to be careful of erroneous prior conceptions of the topic (KWL, class brainstorm, image brainstorm, free write, etc.).



ACTIVITY 2: EXPLORING THE ISSUE

Students read and analyze a background text to develop an initial understanding of an issue.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

READING

- Students read the text independently, annotating and making notes on how it relates to the unit's problem-based question.
- The teacher introduces one or more text-based questions to drive a closer reading of the text. Students then follow along as the text is presented to them.
- In reading teams, students discuss the text-based questions and search for relevant details, highlighting and annotating them in their text (and might use a *Forming EBC* tool to record their thinking).

WRITING CLAIMS

- The teacher models the development and writing of an explanatory claim that addresses something the text has presented about the unit's issue. The claim is explanatory not argumentative at this point.

- Students individually develop explanatory claims about the text's presentation of the issue (a *Forming EBC* tool can be used).
- In reading teams, students compare claims and the evidence they have found to derive and support them.

Students write a short claim-based synopsis of the text and the information it presents about the nature of the issue or problem, citing specific details and evidence to support their explanatory claim. [NOTE: Emphasize that at this point in the process, student claims should focus on interpreting what the text says about the nature of the issue, not on the validity of the text's perspective or position and *not* on articulating the student's own, still-developing position. Those sorts of claims will come later.]



ACTIVITY 2: EXPLORING THE ISSUE (CONT'D)

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES (CONT'D)

NOTE ON TEXT SETS

Instruction in this unit links to a sequence of *text sets*. Each text set provides multiple entry points into the issue, giving teachers and students flexibility with respect to the time and depth with which they wish to explore the topic.

Teachers may choose to use the text sets in a variety of ways:

- Select one of the three texts for all students to read, analyze, and discuss. Provide links to the other two so that students can do additional reading if desired.
- Have all students read, analyze, and discuss all three texts (or two of the three) in a more extended instructional time sequence.
- Place students in “expert groups” and have them read and analyze one of the three texts. Then have students “jigsaw” into cross-text discussion groups to share and compare what they have learned from the text each has read. [Note: students might be grouped by reading level and assigned texts based on their complexity/difficulty.]

TEXT SET #1: TEXTUAL NOTES

Text Set I includes three texts that can be used to provide initial background information about PEDs in sports, the history of PEDs in sports, and information about the most used PEDs in sports.

TEXT 1.1: “WHAT ARE PERFORMANCE-ENHANCING DRUGS?”

Author: Luke Bauer; **Source/Publisher:** Odell Education; **Date:** December 5, 2013

Complexity Level: Measures at 910L.

Text Notes: This short background article defines a performance-enhancing drug, explains that they are not allowed in many sports, and asks a couple of questions surrounding the topic itself. It provides a glimpse into the history of this issue, which will prime readers for Text #2, a historical timeline. It concludes by describing the culture of sports and why some athletes turn to performance-enhancing drugs.

Sample Text-Dependent Questions (to drive closer reading and discussion):

1. How does the author describe performance-enhancing drugs?
2. What comparison is made between modern athletes and ancient Greek and Mayan athletes?
3. What “competitive environment” is being described that is responsible for increases in performance enhancing drug usage amongst athletes?



ACTIVITY 2: EXPLORING THE ISSUE (CONT'D)

TEXT SET #1: TEXTUAL NOTES

TEXT 1.2: "HISTORICAL TIMELINE: HISTORY OF PERFORMANCE ENHANCING DRUGS IN SPORTS"

Author/Source/Publisher: ProCon.org; **Date:** Last Updated August 8, 2013

Complexity Level: Complexity levels for the timeline entries vary. While the chunking and text features make them more accessible, some vocabulary will have to be defined.

Text Notes: This timeline is lengthy and, therefore, students do not need to read it in its entirety. By simply scrolling through it, students should gain knowledge that athletes have been using substances to enhance their athletic abilities for thousands of years and so this issue is not a new one, despite the media circus surrounding superstar athletes like Alex Rodriguez of the New York Yankees, Marion Jones of Olympic fame, and Lance Armstrong from cycling. Teachers might choose specific entries to have students focus on.

Sample Text-Dependent Questions (to drive closer reading and discussion):

1. In any year or era, what does the timeline's text say happened regarding performance-enhancing drugs? What might the impact of these events have been on people who lived during this time?
2. What evidence does this text provide that influences your understanding of the issue/problem of performance-enhancing drugs in the US?
3. What is the earliest documented usage of performance-enhancing substances in athletics? Where did the word "doping" come from?
4. In what sports have performance-enhancing drugs been used?
5. Which entries on the timeline indicate attempts to restrict the usage of performance enhancing drugs in sports?
6. What evidence does this text provide that influences your understanding of the issue/problem of performance-enhancing drugs in the US?

TEXT 1.3: "STEROIDS"

Author/Source/Publisher: Kids Health; **Date:** 2013

Complexity Level: This text measures 1200L, however, it is chunked into three sub-sections, which make it relatively easy for students to access. As in other texts in this unit, most of the difficult vocabulary pertains to the names of different performance-enhancing drugs. However, students do not need to know all the differences between them, just recognize that they are referencing PEDs. The important terminology like "performance-enhancing" can be taught directly when first encountered to support comprehension in subsequent texts.

Text Notes: This Kids Health article goes more in-depth on what steroids are and what they do to your body when taken. It also lists out many of the dangers of using steroids and concludes by starting a conversation about why using them might not be fair to other athletes. The Kids Health site also has an option for students to listen to the text if necessary.

Sample Text-Dependent Questions (to drive closer reading and discussion):

1. What are steroids?
2. In what forms can you put steroids into your body?
3. What reasons does the author provide for why "using steroids isn't playing fair?"
4. What evidence does this text provide that influences your understanding of the issue/problem of performance-enhancing drugs in the US?

ACTIVITY 3: DEEPENING UNDERSTANDING OF THE ISSUE

Students read and analyze a second background text to expand and deepen their understanding of the issue.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

READING

- Students read the text independently, annotating and making notes on how it relates to the unit's problem-based question.
- The teacher introduces one or more text-based questions to drive a closer reading of the text. Students then follow along as the text is presented to them.
- In reading teams, students discuss the text-based questions and search for relevant details, highlighting and annotating them in their text (and might use a *Forming EBC* tool to record their thinking).

WRITING CLAIMS

- The teacher models the development and writing of an explanatory claim that addresses something the

text has presented about the unit's issue. The claim is explanatory not argumentative at this point.

- Students individually develop explanatory claims about the text's presentation of the issue (a *Forming EBC* tool can be used).
- In reading teams, students compare claims and the evidence they have found to derive and support them.

Students write a short claim-based synopsis of the text and the information it presents about the nature of the issue or problem, citing specific details and evidence to support their explanatory claim. [NOTE: Emphasize that at this point in the process, student claims should focus on interpreting what the text says about the nature of the issue, not on the validity of the text's perspective or position and *not* on articulating the student's own, still-developing position. Those sorts of claims will come later.]

TEXT SET #2: TEXTUAL NOTES

Text Set #2 includes three texts that can be used to provide additional background information about performance-enhancing drugs in sports and why athletes and non-athletes choose to use them.

TEXT 2.1: "HOW TO GET DOPING OUT OF SPORTS"

Author: Jonathan Vaughters; **Source/Publisher:** The New York Times; **Date:** August 11, 2012

Complexity Level: This article, from The New York Times, measures 1010L and is very accessible for students in middle school.

Text Notes: This article is written by a former professional cyclist who chose to use performance-enhancing drugs. He describes the pressure he felt to "keep up" and how doping would allow him to become an elite cyclist. His remorse is now fueled by his desire to help keep sports clean and prevent a culture that legitimizes drugs.

Sample Text-Dependent Questions (to drive closer reading and discussion):

1. What textual details support Vaughters claim that, "Achieving childhood dreams is a hard road."?
2. What is the "2%" that Vaughters describes?
3. What does Vaughters mean by, "The answer is not to teach young athletes that giving up lifelong dreams is better than giving in to cheating. The answer is to never give them the option."?
4. What evidence does this text provide that influences your understanding of the issue/problem of performance-enhancing drugs in the US?

ACTIVITY 3: DEEPENING UNDERSTANDING OF THE ISSUE (CONT'D)

TEXT SET #2: TEXTUAL NOTES

TEXT 2.2: "PERFORMANCE-ENHANCING DRUGS OUTSIDE OF PRO SPORTS"

Author: Kyung Lah; **Source/Publisher:** Anderson Cooper 360: CNN; **Date:** August 5, 2013

Complexity Level: NA.

Text Notes: This is a video blog from Anderson Cooper 360. It details how other athletes, besides those in professional sports, are using performance-enhancing drugs. Specifically, some older adults are using them to keep themselves in top form, despite aging.

Sample Text-Dependent Questions (to drive closer reading and discussion):

1. What evidence from the video helps explain Jeffrey Life's statement, "I'm not against aging. I'm against getting old."?
2. What are the long terms costs to using Human Growth Hormone described by Dr. Tom Perls from Boston University?

TEXT 2.3: "PERFORMANCE-ENHANCING DRUGS: A CHEAT SHEET"

Author: Katie Moisse; **Source/Publisher:** ABC News; **Date:** August 5, 2013

Complexity Level: This text measures 1380L, however, it is chunked into twelve small sections, which make it relatively easy for students to access.

Text Notes: This ABC News report provides background information on the names and descriptions of many banned substances/drugs that are used by athletes. This basic information will help students become familiar with their names, how they work, and how often they are used. One goal of the background readings is for students to recognize the names of drugs when they encounter them in further reading so they can identify quickly and continue reading.

Sample Text-Dependent Questions (to drive closer reading and discussion):

1. For any of the drugs detailed in the sections of this article, how do they work, what are the health risks, and how often are they used by athletes?
2. What evidence is presented in this article that deepens your understanding of the issue surrounding performance-enhancing drugs in sports?
3. What evidence does this text provide that influences your understanding of the issue/problem of performance-enhancing drugs in the US?

ACTIVITY 4: QUESTIONING TO REFINE UNDERSTANDING

Students develop text-dependent questions and use them to find additional evidence and further refine their claims.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

QUESTIONING TEXTS

Students now apply skills they have developed in a *Reading Closely for Textual Details* unit to frame their own, more focused questions about the issue and texts. They use these questions to drive a deeper reading of the previous texts, or of additional texts providing background and perspectives on the topic.

- Starting from the unit’s problem-based question, students work in reading teams to develop a set of more focused, text-based questions to drive further inquiry into the issue. (Students can use the *Reading Closely for Details: Guiding Questions* handout to help them develop their questions.)
- Individually, students use these new questions to re-read one of the two background texts, find additional details, and further refine their explanatory claim.
- *If additional background information is necessary or desired*, students then use their question sets to drive close reading and analysis of one or more additional texts. (Note: Suggested texts are listed in the Instructional Notes or may be identified by the teacher or found by the students. Students might work in teams to become “experts” and develop explanatory claims about one or more of these additional texts, then “jigsaw” into new groups and share what they have learned. In this way, all students can become familiar with a wider range of background texts.)
- Students write or revise one or more explanatory claim(s) based on additional evidence they have found through further or deeper reading.

TEXTUAL NOTES

ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND TEXTS

To expand their understanding of the topic, students might be assigned any of the texts from Text Sets #1 and #2 that have not been read by the class. They might also access other sources found by the teacher (or by students themselves) or the additional source texts listed in the unit plan.

The three listed source texts provide additional, and different, information about performance-enhancing drugs in sports, and can be used to expand students’ understanding and/or as independent reading/research assignments. “The Future of Cheating in Sports” is an article how genetically changing your body so it naturally produces performance-enhancing substance. “Athlete Guide to the 2013 Prohibited List” is basically organized like a rulebook and explains all of the banned substances that athletes are not legally allowed to take. Finally, “The Beam in your Eye” compares surgery like Lasik vision correction and Tommy John Elbow to performance-enhancing drugs and asks why one is legal and the other is not.

ACTIVITY 5: WRITING AN EBC ABOUT THE NATURE OF THE ISSUE

Students develop and write an evidence-based claim about the nature of the issue.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

In the culminating activity for Part 1, students now develop a synthesis claim about the nature of the issue that they will expand and revise when drafting their final argument. Before they can take a position and make their case for a response, they must be able to use evidence to explain their understanding of the issue or problem.

- The teacher models the development of an evidence-based claim that synthesizes information from multiple sources and presents the writer's understanding the unit's issue.
- In reading teams, students go back to the background texts to find additional evidence/details that support this synthesis claim. (An *Organizing EBC* tool can be used).
- In reading teams, students review the explanatory claims they wrote about each text.
- In reading teams, students brainstorm alternative ways of viewing or understanding the problem, based on evidence from the background texts.
- Individually, students develop a multi-part claim that synthesizes how they have come (so far) to view and understand the nature of the issue and its components. (An *Organizing EBC* tool can be used).
- In reading teams, students compare their synthesis claims and the evidence that supports them.
- If teachers and students are familiar with the *Evidence-Based Claims Criteria Checklist* and the *Text-Centered Discussion Checklist* from work in previous units, students can use them as criteria for evaluating their claims and reflecting on their discussions and participation in their reading teams.
- As a class, return to the unit's problem-based question to consider revising it based on the emerging understanding of the issue.

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

As a formative assessment, and a building block for their final argument, in Activity 5, students draft a written, multi-part claim that:

1. Synthesizes what they have learned about the nature of the unit's issue.
2. Presents their current way of understanding the issue and its components.
3. Cites evidence from multiple sources that explains and substantiates their perspective.
4. Represents their best thinking and clearest writing.

Teachers can use an *EBC Criteria Checklist* to evaluate student writing as well as each student's initial comprehension of the background texts and understanding of the issue.