

PART 4

WRITING EVIDENCE-BASED CLAIMS

“The unexamined life is not worth living.”

OBJECTIVE:

Students develop the ability to express evidence-based claims in writing through a close reading of the text.



ACTIVITIES

1- INDEPENDENT READING AND MAKING EBCs

Students independently review the text and use the Forming EBC Tool to develop an evidence-based claim.

2- MODEL WRITING EBCs

The teacher introduces and models writing evidence-based claims using a claim developed in Part 3.

3- WRITING EBCs IN PAIRS

In pairs, students write evidence-based claims using one of their claims from Part 3.

4- CLASS DISCUSSION OF WRITTEN EBCs

The class discusses the written evidence-based claims of volunteer student pairs.

5- READ ALOUD AND CLASS DISCUSSION

The class discusses their new evidence-based claims and students read aloud portions of the text.

6- INDEPENDENT WRITING OF EBCs

Students independently write their new evidence-based claims.

ESTIMATED TIME: 1-3 days

MATERIALS:

Writing EBC Handout
Forming EBC Tool
Organizing EBC Tool
EBC Criteria Checklist II
TCD Checklist



ALIGNMENT TO CCSS

TARGETED STANDARD(S): RI.9-10.1 W.9-10.9b

RI.9-10.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

W.9-10.9b: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

SUPPORTING STANDARD(S): RI.9-10.2 RI.9-10.3 SL.9-10.1 W.8.4

RI.9-10.2: Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

RI.9-10.3: Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.

SL.9-10.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

ACTIVITY 1: INDEPENDENT READING AND MAKING EBCs

Students independently read paragraphs 18-23 in the text and use the Forming EBC Tool to develop an evidence-based claim.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Depending on scheduling and student ability, students can be assigned to read and complete the tool for homework. Teachers should decide what works best for their students. It's essential that students have an opportunity to read the text independently. All students must develop the habit of perseverance in reading. Assigning

the reading as homework potentially gives them more time with the text. Either way, it might be a good idea to provide some time at the beginning of class for students to read the text quietly by themselves. This ensures that all students have had at least some independent reading time.

ACTIVITY 2: MODEL WRITING EBCs

The teacher introduces and models writing evidence-based claims using a claim developed in Part 3.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Parts 1-3 have built a solid foundation of critical thinking and reading skills for developing and organizing evidence-based claims. Parts 4 and 5 focus on expressing evidence-based claims in writing. Class discussions and pair work have given students significant practice expressing and defending their claims orally. The tools have given them practice selecting and organizing evidence. Expressing evidence-based claims in writing should now be a natural transition from this foundation.

Begin by explaining that expressing evidence-based claims in writing follows the same basic structure that they have been using with the tools; one states a claim and develops it with evidence. Discuss the additional considerations when writing evidence-based claims like establishing a clear context and using proper techniques for incorporating textual evidence. Introduce the EBC Criteria Checklist II with the additional writing-related criteria. The Writing EBC Handout gives one approach to explaining writing evidence-based claims. Model example

written evidence-based claims are provided with the materials.

Explain that the simplest structure for writing evidence-based claims is beginning with a paragraph stating the claim and its context and then using subsequent paragraphs logically linked together to develop the necessary points of the claim with appropriate evidence. (More advanced writers can organize the expression differently, like establishing a context, building points with evidence, and stating the claim at the end for a more dramatic effect. It's good to let students know that the simplest structure is not the only effective way).

Incorporating textual evidence into writing is difficult and takes practice. Expect all students to need a lot of guidance deciding on what precise evidence to use, how to order it, and deciding when to paraphrase or to quote. They will also need guidance structuring sentence syntax and grammar to smoothly and effectively incorporate textual details, while maintaining their own voice and style.



ACTIVITY 2: MODEL WRITING EBCs (CONT'D)

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Three things to consider when teaching this difficult skill:

- A “think-aloud” approach can be extremely effective here. When modeling the writing process, explain the choices you make. For example, “I’m paraphrasing this piece of evidence because it takes the author four sentences to express what I can do in one.” Or, “I’m quoting this piece directly because the author’s phrase is so powerful, I want to use the original words.”
- Making choices when writing evidence-based claims is easiest when the writer has “lived with the claims.” Thinking about a claim—personalizing the analysis—gives a writer an intuitive sense of how she wants to express it. Spending time with the tools selecting and organizing evidence will start students on this process.
- Students need to know that this is a process—that it can’t be done in one draft. Revision is fundamental to honing written evidence-based claims.



ACTIVITY 3: WRITING EBCs IN PAIRS

In pairs, students write evidence-based claims using their claims from Part 3.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Students return to the same pairs they had in Part 3 and use their Organizing EBC Tools as guidelines for their writing. Teachers should roam, supporting pairs by answering questions

and helping them get comfortable with the techniques for incorporating evidence. Use questions from pairs as opportunities to instruct the entire class.



ACTIVITY 4: CLASS DISCUSSION OF WRITTEN EBCs

The class discusses the written evidence-based claims of volunteer student pairs.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Have a pair volunteer to write their evidence-based claim on the board. The class together should evaluate the way the writing sets the context, expresses the claim, effectively organizes the evidence, and incorporates the evidence properly. Use the EBC Criteria Checklist II to guide evaluation. The Text-Centered Discussion Checklist (if being used) is helpful here to guide effective participation in discussion. Of course, it’s also a good opportunity to talk about grammatical structure

and word choice. Let other students lead the evaluation, reserving guidance when needed and appropriate. It is likely and ideal that other students will draw on their own versions in when evaluating the volunteer pair’s. Make sure that class discussion maintains a constructive collegial tone and all critiques are backed with evidence.

Model written evidence-based claims are provided in the materials.

≡ ACTIVITY 5: READ ALOUD AND ≡ CLASS DISCUSSION

The class discusses their new evidence-based claims from Activity 1 and students read aloud portions of the text.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

At this stage, this activity is reversed from earlier similar ones. Students should present their evidence-based claims and allow discussion to determine areas of the text to be read aloud. Students read aloud relevant portions to help

the class analyze claims and selected evidence. Have students transfer their claims from the Forming EBC Tool to the Organizing EBC Tool to help them organize and refine their evidence in preparation for writing.

≡ ACTIVITY 6: INDEPENDENT WRITING ≡ OF EBCs

Students independently write their evidence-based claims from their Organizing EBC Tools.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Students should have refined their claims and developed an Organizing EBC Tool based on class discussion. Now they independently write their claims based on their tools.

≡ INDEPENDENT READING ACTIVITY

Students review the entire text and use an Organizing EBC Tool to make a new claim of their choice and develop it with evidence. This activity overlaps with the first activity of Part 5 and can be given as homework or done at the beginning of the next class.

≡ ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

At this stage teachers can assess students' reading and writing skills. Students should be comfortable making claims and supporting them with organized evidence. Their tools should demonstrate evidence of mastery of the reading skill. Student writing should demonstrate the same qualities of organization. Make sure they have properly established the context; that the claim is clearly expressed; and that each paragraph develops a coherent point. Evaluate the writing for an understanding of the difference between paraphrase and quotation. All evidence should be properly referenced. Use the EBC Criteria Checklist II to structure the evaluation and feedback to students.