

PART 4

EXPLAINING UNDERSTANDING

“The instruments of peace”

OBJECTIVE:

Students learn how to summarize and explain what they have learned from their reading, questioning, and analysis of texts. Students read and analyze three related texts.



ACTIVITIES

1- INTRODUCTION TO CULMINATING ACTIVITY

The teacher introduces the final culminating text-centered writing and comparative discussion.

2- READING AND DISCUSSING RELATED TEXTS

Students listen to three related texts and discuss them as a class.

3- QUESTIONING AND ANALYZING TEXTS INDEPENDENTLY

Students select (or are assigned) one of the texts to discuss with a small group and then analyze independently.

4- INDEPENDENT WRITING ACTIVITY

Students use their analysis to independently write a detail-based explanation of one of the texts.

ESTIMATED TIME: 3 days

MATERIALS:

Texts #1-9
Questioning Texts Tool
Analyzing Details Tool
Guiding Questions Handout



ALIGNMENT TO CCSS

TARGETED STANDARD(S): RI.11-12.1 RI.11-12.2 RI.11-12.6

RI.11-12.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

RI.11-12.2: Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.

RI.11-12.6: Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text.

SUPPORTING STANDARD(S): RI.11-12.10 RI.11-12.4 W.11-12.2 W.11-12.9

RI.11-12.10: By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 11–CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 11–CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.

RI.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text.

W.11-12.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

W.11-12.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

≡ ACTIVITY 1: INTRODUCTION TO ≡ CULMINATING ACTIVITY

The teacher introduces the final culminating text-centered writing and comparative discussion.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

The final two parts (4 and 5) of the unit are a two-stage culminating activity in which students first analyze and write about one of three related texts, then lead a comparative discussion about the three texts. In the first stage, students are introduced to the texts and choose one to read closely with a small, “expert” group. Building on their collaborative close reading, students independently analyze and write about their text. In the second stage of the culminating activity, students return to their small groups to discuss their writing and draft a question that compares their text to the other texts in the unit. Students then “jigsaw” to a new group and use their analysis, writing, and comparative question to facilitate and participate in a structured text-centered discussion with students who have analyzed the other two texts.

The culminating text-centered discussions could be given in an “academic panel” format. In this format, student groups have their discussions in front of the class (and invited community members) to simulate real-world and college panel discussions. See the description at the end of Part 5 for more details.

≡ ACTIVITY 2: READING AND DISCUSSING ≡ RELATED TEXTS

Students listen to three related texts and discuss them as a class.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

- Read aloud the texts #7, #8, and #9. Alternatively, strong readers can be asked to read aloud.
- Lead a discussion of the students’ first impressions of the texts, using the Guiding Questions to help facilitate discussion.

TEXTUAL NOTES

The three texts are all public speeches given by individuals who were important figures in the Civil Rights movements of the 1960s. Each speech offers a fresh perspective on the role of faith in society. If possible students should watch the videos or listen to the audio files of the Kennedy and King speeches (links are included in the text set).

≡ ACTIVITY 2: READING AND DISCUSSING ≡ RELATED TEXTS (CONT'D)

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

TEXTUAL NOTES

"The Separation of Church and State is Absolute"

This memorable speech was given by President John F. Kennedy on September 12, 1960. Kennedy ran for office in a context where a largely Protestant voting population began to fear the imagined ramifications of a Catholic president. For example, many were concerned that once Kennedy was elected he would take orders from the Pope in Rome. Others feared that Catholicism would become the established and hence compulsory American civil religion. Kennedy quells these fears by articulating his vision of America and the relationship of the presidential office to that vision. Kennedy also notes how this issue sometimes obscures other, more important ones. Because of its imaginative rhetoric, Kennedy's speech is easily accessible to students. It will also be helpful to view the video recording.

"Instruments of Peace"

Dorothy Day, best known for her leadership in the Catholic Worker Movement, was the first figure in American public life to openly advocate for 'Catholic pacifism,' which included among other things the complete renunciation of war, the advocacy for human dignity, and nonviolent civil disobedience to protect human rights. This speech marks the beginning of Dorothy Day's involvement in the antiwar movement during Vietnam. Day urges activists to adopt nonviolent methods for conflict resolution. Day also highlights the limits and shortcomings of the law and the responsibility of people of faith with respect to these limits. Day's speech uses language that is accessible to all.

"I Have Been to the Mountaintop"

This was the last speech delivered by the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. the night before his assassination. In the speech King expresses his excitement about the passion of peoples across the globe for freedom and peace, and he urges the audience to greater determination in their quest to make America "what it ought to be." King's imaginative language and voice are accessible to most readers. It will also be helpful to view the video and listen to the audio recording.

ACTIVITY 3: QUESTIONING AND ANALYZING TEXTS INDEPENDENTLY

Students select (or are assigned) one of the texts to discuss with a small group and then analyze independently.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Students may be assigned a text based on their reading comprehension levels, interests, or developing skills (as demonstrated earlier in the unit), or they may be allowed to choose a text following their initial reading and small group discussion of the three. Either way, each student will be responsible for doing a close reading, questioning, analysis, and summary of one of the three related texts.

SMALL GROUP CLOSE READING USING THE QUESTIONING TEXTS TOOL

- Small “expert” groups read one of the texts collaboratively using the Questioning Texts Tool.
- Each group member fills in his/her own Questioning Texts Tool for their assigned text, and each develops a separate text-specific question through their discussion.

INDEPENDENT ANALYSIS USING THE ANALYZING DETAILS TOOL

- Students independently complete an Analyzing Texts Tool using a text-specific question (his/her own or one from another group member).
- Students might optionally return to their expert groups to discuss their analysis.

MODEL TEXT QUESTIONING SEQUENCE

These speeches are a good opportunity to model the use of the Guiding Question:

1- What ideas are presented at the beginning of the text?

Text-specific Questions:

“The Separation of Church and State is Absolute”

1- What do the specific words and details in Kennedy’s opening paragraph of his speech suggest about his attitude toward his topic?

“Instruments of Peace”

1- What do specific words and details in Days’ opening two paragraphs of her speech suggest about her attitude toward her topic?

“I Have Been to the Mountaintop”

1- What does King’s opening image across the first eight paragraphs of his speech show about his attitude toward his topic?

or perhaps simply,

2- What do King’s opening two lines of his speech show about his attitude toward his topic?



ACTIVITY 4: INDEPENDENT WRITING

Students use their analysis to independently write a detail-based explanation of one of the texts.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

This final activity of Part 4 serves both as a more formal assessment of each student's demonstration of the skills focused on in the unit, and as a foundation for their planning in Part 5, where they will lead a discussion comparing their text to others read in the unit. Students will submit this writing exercise as part of their assessment in Part 5.

Students write a multi-paragraph explanation, using textual evidence that explains:

- ⇒ A central idea of the text and how it is developed across it
- ⇒ What the central idea demonstrates about the author's perspective on the topic
- ⇒ What they have come to understand about the topic from the text.



ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The multi-paragraph explanations students draft in Part 4 should be reviewed closely as evidence of their close reading skills (and, to a lesser extent, as a formative assessment of their explanatory writing skills). At this point, students should be able to:

- Describe accurately central ideas of a text
- Explain observations about the author's perspective
- Identify something they have learned from their reading that is clearly text-related
- Reference details related to each of these writing purposes.

Students who can do so are ready to lead discussions in Part 5. Students who have not yet been able to read and explain their understanding of their text successfully may need additional support before moving on to Part 5.