



EXPEDITIONARY
LEARNING

Grade 4: Module 4: Unit 2: Lesson 9

Examining the Structure of Short Essays and Gathering Evidence for an Essay about Myrtle



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Long-Term Targets Addressed (Based on NYSP12 ELA CCLS)

I can describe a story's characters, setting, or events using specific details from the text. (RL.4.3)
I can choose evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. (W.4.9)
I can write informative/explanatory texts that convey ideas and information clearly. (W.4.2).

Supporting Learning Targets

- I can gather evidence for a short essay that describes how Myrtle was affected by her experience riding in the “colored car” in *The Hope Chest*.
- I can describe the basic structure of a short essay.

Ongoing Assessment

- Reader's Guide for *The Hope Chest*, Chapter 8: “In the Jim Crow Car” (from homework)
- Essay Prompt/Planner

Agenda

1. Opening
 - A. Reviewing Learning Targets (5 minutes)
 - B. Sharing Homework and Engaging the Reader (10 minutes)
2. Work Time
 - A. Gathering Evidence for a Short Essay about Myrtle (15 minutes)
 - B. Learning about the Structure of a Short Essay (25 minutes)
3. Closing and Assessment
 - A. Debrief (5 minutes)
4. Homework
 - A. Read Chapter 9 (pages 98–112), then record summary notes and a summary at the bottom of the Reader's Guide for *The Hope Chest*, Chapter 9: “Mr. Martin's Escape.”

Teaching Notes

- In Lesson 8, students began to prepare for writing a short essay about Myrtle by examining this prompt: “How did riding in the Jim Crow car affect Myrtle?”
- In this lesson, students continue to prepare for this essay by gathering evidence from the text. They also learn about the basic structure of a short essay. This portion of the lesson, Work Time B, is adapted with permission from “The Painted Essay®” developed by Diana Leddy of Vermont Writing Collaborative. More resources can be found at : www.vermontwritingcollaborative.org.
- In Lesson 10, students will plan and write their short essays with support. Then on the mid-unit assessment, students will demonstrate their ability to meet W.4.2a and b and W.4.9 independently.
- In advance: Be prepared to place students with a new partner at the beginning of this lesson (not anyone from their reading triad) for sharing their homework.
- Prepare the Structure of a Short Essay anchor chart (see supporting materials).
- Post directions on the board for the Back-to-Back and Face-to-Face protocol (see supporting materials); review the Back-to-Back and Face-to-Face protocol (Appendix).
- Post: Learning targets.



Lesson Vocabulary	Materials
structure, introduction, focus statement, body, conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directions for the Back-to-Back and Face-to-Face protocol (to post) • Myrtle’s Character anchor chart (begun in Lesson 5) • <i>The Hope Chest</i> (book; one per student) • Essay Prompt/Planner (from Lesson 8; one per student) • Evidence flags (small stack per triad) • Equity sticks • Structure of a Short Essay anchor chart (new; co-created with students during Work Time B) • Model Essay about Violet (one to display) • Document camera • Red, green, yellow, and blue markers (one set for teacher) • Red, green, yellow, and blue colored pencils, markers, or crayons (one set for each triad) • Reader’s Guide for <i>The Hope Chest</i>, Chapter 9: “Mr. Martin’s Escape” (one per student)

Opening	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p>A. Reviewing Learning Targets (5 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to read along silently as you read the learning targets aloud: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “I can gather evidence for a short essay that describes how Myrtle was affected by her experience riding in the ‘colored car’ in <i>The Hope Chest</i>.” * “I can describe the basic structure of a short essay.” • Tell students that to write their short essay about Myrtle using evidence from Chapter 8, they will have to understand the <i>structure</i>, or parts, of an essay. Tell them that today they will look at a model essay and examine how it is organized so they can better plan for their own essays. • Ask students to give a thumbs-up, thumbs-sideways, or thumbs-down to check for understanding of the targets, with a thumbs-down for no understanding, thumbs-sideways for some understanding, and thumbs-up for complete understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of protocols (like Back-to-Back and Face-to-Face) allows for total participation of students. It encourages critical thinking, collaboration, and social construction of knowledge. It also helps students practice their speaking and listening skills.



Opening (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>B. Sharing Homework and Engaging the Reader (10 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask students to get out their Reader's Guide for <i>The Hope Chest</i>, Chapter 8: "In the Jim Crow Car" (from homework).• Tell them that today they will share their homework using a protocol called Back-to-Back and Face-to-Face. Point out the posted Directions for the Back-to-Back and Face-to-Face protocol.<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Stand back-to-back with a partner. Think about what you will share.2. When the teacher says, "Face-to-Face," turn to face your partner.3. Pick someone to go first, then take turns sharing.• Tell students that you would like them to share the summary statements on their Reader's Guide for Chapter 8 using this protocol.• Once students have shared, ask for a few students who liked their partner's summary statement to volunteer their partner to read it. Listen for students to identify each portion of the Somebody In Wanted But So Then strategy in their summaries for this chapter.• Post the Myrtle's Character anchor chart. Ask students for suggested additions to the chart. Be sure the following is added:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Action: "She says she will vote when she grows up" (page 97).* What this says about this character: "She is determined and stubborn."	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use of protocols (like Back-to-Back and Face-to-Face) allows for total participation of students. It encourages critical thinking, collaboration, and social construction of knowledge. It also helps students practice their speaking and listening skills.



Work Time	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Gathering Evidence for a Short Essay about Myrtle (15 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask students to take their texts, <i>The Hope Chest</i>, join their reading triads, and get out their Essay Prompt/Planner (from Lesson 8). Point out Steps 3 and 4 in their planners.• Ask students to review the steps in the planning process with their triads to identify what they have done and what they will do today. Call on a triad to paraphrase the process for the rest of the class. Clarify as needed.• Tell students that for Step 3, they will have 5 minutes to share with their triads. Encourage them to mark the text with more evidence flags if they find additional details related to how Myrtle was affected.• As students share the details they have marked in the text, circulate and listen for them to identify any details related to how she was affected by the experience. For example: “On page 92, she got shoved by the conductor” or “She had to sit on a seat with no springs.”• Use equity sticks to cold call several triads to share one detail they marked with evidence flags. Ask students to list the page number and read directly from the text. List evidence collected on the board.• Some possible evidence students may cite:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– “Myrtle had to ride without her friend Violet” (page 90).– “Myrtle got cold stares, was laughed at, grabbed, and ignored on her way back to the ‘colored car’” (pages 91 and 92).– “Myrtle had ‘tears of frustration’ when she was trying to get to the ‘colored car’” (page 92).– “Myrtle had to sit on a hard seat in a crowded train car” (page 93).– “Myrtle talked with an old woman about getting the right to vote. They disagreed about whether colored women would be allowed” (pages 96 and 97).• Ask students to complete Step 4 on their planners individually: “Review your evidence flags in Chapter 8 and record four details from the text that describe how Myrtle was affected by riding in the Jim Crow car.”• Give students 5 minutes to select and record their evidence .	



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>B. Learning about the Structure of a Short Essay (25 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell students that before they continue with Step 5 in their planners, it is important for them to understand the basic structure of an essay. • Tell the class that being given an essay prompt is similar to receiving an art assignment. For example, in art class they may be given a medium, like watercolors, and they are also given a subject, like a bowl of fruit. As an artist, though, they can make their painting unique. However, if they don't follow some basic guidelines for using watercolors, everything could turn out brown and muddled. • The same could be said for writing an essay from a prompt. They will be asked to use a particular type of writing or genre, such as historical fiction narrative, and will also be given a specific topic, like Colonial America (in Module 2A. If students have completed Module 2B, use the example of "Choose Your Own Adventure" narratives and animal defenses). Likewise, as a writer, they can make their essay unique, but it may be muddled and confusing to the reader unless they follow some guidelines. • Explain that today students will look at a model essay about Violet and examine the essay's <i>structure</i>, or parts. • Post the Structure of a Short Essay anchor chart (blank version prepared in advance). • Point out the terms <i>introduction</i>, <i>focus statement</i>, <i>body</i>, and <i>conclusion</i> on the anchor chart. Review the terms <i>introduction</i>, <i>body</i>, and <i>conclusion</i> with students. They should be familiar with these terms from writing in previous modules. Point out the term <i>focus statement</i> and explain that this sentence is the focus of the essay, what it is about, and should be the writer's answer to the prompt. • Next, display the Model Essay about Violet using a document camera. Tell students that they will have a chance to examine the structure of this essay, but first you would like them to listen for the gist as you read it aloud to them. • Ask for a few volunteers to tell the class what the essay is about. Listen for: "The essay is about how running away helped Violet to become more confident." • Tell students that you will read the essay for them once more, and you would like them to notice how it is organized—specifically what is in the introduction, the body, and the conclusion. • When you read the essay again, stop after the introduction (first paragraph) and ask students to turn to their triad and discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * "What does the introduction paragraph do for the reader?" * "Where do you see the answer to the prompt?" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For students who need support in finding evidence in the text, consider providing page numbers or marking sections of the text as areas to look for evidence. • To further support students, provide copies of the model essay about Myrtle and allow them to annotate the model to identify the introduction, focus statement, body, and conclusion.



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cold call students to share out and add this to the anchor chart in the Introduction box:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– “Catches the reader’s attention and introduces the topic”– “Gives background information or describes the topic”• Outline the Introduction box with a red marker and explain to students that red is an eye-catching color, so it will help them remember the purpose of the introduction.• Next, explain that the answer to the prompt is contained in the <i>focus statement</i>. Point out this box on the anchor chart and explain that the focus statement is what gives the main idea of the essay. Record this explanation on the anchor chart in the Focus Statement box and outline the box with a green marker. Tell students that you will explain the significance of the green color in a moment.• Next, tell students that you now will reread the body paragraph of the essay and you would like them to listen for what this paragraph contains and think about the purpose of this part of the essay.• Reread the body of the essay (2nd paragraph). Then ask students to turn to their triads and discuss:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– “What is the purpose of the body of an essay?”– “What do the body paragraphs contain?”• Cold call students to share their thinking. Add this to the anchor chart in the Body box:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Supports the focus of the essay with examples and evidence– Explains how each example relates to the focus– Takes the form example, evidence, and explanation• Outline one of the inside boxes (containing the phrase “Example, Evidence, and Explanation”) with a yellow marker and the other inside box with a blue marker.• Point out the green Focus Statement box and explain that just like yellow and blue make green, the examples and evidence in the body of the essay help support the essay’s focus.• Finally, tell students that you will now reread the conclusion paragraph of the essay and you would like them to listen for what this paragraph contains and think about its purpose in the essay.• Reread the conclusion of the essay (third paragraph), then ask triads to discuss:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– “What does the first sentence of the conclusion do?”	



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">– “What is the purpose of the final sentence?”• Cold call students to share their thinking. Add this to the anchor chart in the Conclusion box:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Brings readers back to the focus and gives them something to think about• Ask students if they have any guesses about which color this box should be. Give them a hint: It is a color that is already on the chart. Students should predict this box be outlined in green, because the conclusion restates the focus of the essay.	
Closing and Assessment	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Debrief (5 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask students to look at Step 5 in their Essay Prompt/Planner. Tell them that you would like them to work with their triad to color-code the graphic organizer so that it matches the class's new Structure of a Short Essay anchor chart.• Ask them to give you a quick thumbs-up, thumbs-sideways, or thumbs-down for the learning target:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* “I can describe the basic structure of a short essay.”• Distribute a set of red, green, yellow, and blue colored pencils (or markers or crayons) to each triad.• Circulate and help students notice where the basic structure for an essay is contained within their graphic organizers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Note students who have a thumb to the side or down and confer with these students before they color-code their graphic organizers.
Homework	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read Chapter 9 (pages 98–112), then record summary notes and a summary at the bottom of the Reader's Guide for <i>The Hope Chest</i>, Chapter 9: “Mr. Martin's Escape.” Reread as you take notes. <p><i>Note: Use students' Essay Prompt/Planning sheets for formative assessment. Determine if they will need further support in gathering evidence for their essays.</i></p>	



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Supporting Materials



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Directions for Back-to-Back and Face-to-Face protocol

1. Stand back-to-back with a partner. Think about what you will share.
2. When the teacher says, “Face-to-Face,” turn to face your partner.
3. Pick someone to go first, then take turns sharing.



Reader's Guide for *The Hope Chest*, Chapter 8: "In the Jim Crow Car"
(Answers, For Teacher Reference)

Historical Background Information

- * **Jim Crow laws:** laws passed in many Southern states after the Civil War and the end of slavery that kept blacks separate from whites in public places; prevented blacks from voting or holding office in the government; and required blacks to live, do business, and go to school separately from whites. The public services provided to blacks were most often inferior, or of poor quality.
- * **Panama Canal:** a canal for boats that was dug in in Central America where the land between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans is its most narrow. The canal was built in the country of Panama starting in 1881 and ending in 1914. Many men died of a disease called malaria during the building of the canal.

Glossary

bartered (96): traded property or services without use of money	passive (91): not taking part in an activity
contradicted (96): said the opposite of	rattan (92): plants used to make woven furniture and baskets
derailed (95): went in an unexpected direction	sarcasm (95): to say something in a mocking tone
derisively (97): making fun of in an unkind way	talisman (90): an object that is believed to give protection or good luck
indifference (91): the state of not caring	vacant (92): showing no thought or emotion
mohair (92): soft cloth made of wooly yarn	vestibule (91): an enclosed entrance to a train car



Reader's Guide for *The Hope Chest*, Chapter 8: "In the Jim Crow Car"
(Answers, For Teacher Reference)

Summary Notes:	Summary:
Somebody: Myrtle	<p>In Chapter 8 of <i>The Hope Chest</i>, Myrtle is on a train heading to Tennessee. She was forced to leave Violet and the suffragists and ride in the "colored car." She goes to the back of the train and is treated badly along the way. When she gets to the colored car, she sits and talks with an old lady about voting. Myrtle thinks that she will be able to vote some when she grows up, but the old lady tells her colored people won't get to vote.</p>
In: the train heading to Tennessee	
Wanted: to sit with Violet and the other suffragists	
But: The conductor wouldn't let her.	
So: She goes to the colored car and sits with an old black lady named Mrs. Merganser.	
Then: They talk, and the lady tells her that because white people don't like colored people, there was no way they will ever let them vote.	



Myrtle's Character Anchor Chart
(For Teacher Reference)

Bolded type indicates additions made in this lesson.

Character	Actions that affect others	What does this say about this character?
Myrtle	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. She kept Violet from getting run over and helped clean her up after her fall (page 36).2. She helped Violet find the settlement house (page 42).3. She convinced Violet to hop a train to Washington, D.C., with Hobie (page 52).4. She leaves the car with her head up (page 88).5. She says she will vote when she grows up (page 97).	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. She is a caring and compassionate person.2. She is independent and knows her way around the city.3. She is brave and determined to help her friends.4. She has self-respect and doesn't want people to feel sorry for her.5. She is determined and stubborn.



Structure of a Short Essay Anchor Chart
(For Teacher Reference)

Teacher Directions: Copy the graphic below onto chart paper in advance of this lesson.

Structure of a Short Essay
Introduction:
Focus statement:
Body: * *
Conclusion:



Structure of a Short Essay Anchor Chart
(Answers, For Teacher Reference)

Teacher Directions: This anchor chart will be co-constructed with students, so the descriptions of each part of the essay may vary slightly from those contained below. Be sure to leave space between example boxes in the Body section and in the Conclusion box, as this anchor chart will be added to in the next half of this unit.

Structure of a Short Essay
Introduction: <ul style="list-style-type: none">* Catches the reader’s attention and introduces the topic* Gives background information or describes the topic
Focus statement: <p>States the focus or main idea of the essay.</p>
Body: <p>Supports the focus of the essay with examples and evidence and explains how each example relates to the focus.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">* Example, Evidence, and Explanation
Conclusion: <p>Brings readers back to the focus and gives them something to think about.</p>

Adapted with permission from “The Painted Essay®” developed by Diana Leddy of Vermont Writing Collaborative. More resources can be found at www.vermontwritingcollaborative.org.



Model Essay about Violet

Prompt: How has Violet’s experience running away changed her character?

In the beginning of the novel *The Hope Chest* by Karen Schwabach, Violet runs away from her parents to find her sister Chloe. This experience changes her quite a bit. She started off uncertain of herself, but she becomes more self-confident.

For example, in the beginning of the novel, Violet followed Myrtle and looked to her to make decisions. She followed Myrtle into the Henry Street Settlement House to talk to Mr. Martin. Myrtle was also the one who convinced Violet to travel with Hobie to Washington, D.C.

Later, Violet begins to become more confident. She stops the evil Brakeman from throwing Myrtle off the train by giving him all of her money. Then she refuses to go back to her parents when Mr. Martin told her to send them a telegram.

I think that Violet will continue to become a more confident character in this novel. I think that her confidence will prepare her for challenges later in the book.



Reader's Guide for *The Hope Chest*, Chapter 9: "Mr. Martin's Escape"

.....
Name:

.....
Date:

Historical Background Information

- **Palmer Agents:** government agents who later became the Federal Bureau of Investigation, or FBI. These agents investigated and arrested people who were considered traitors for speaking against World War I and the U.S. government.
- **Florence Kelly:** worked to stop child labor, get women the right to vote, and protect the civil rights of African Americans. She was a founder of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, or NAACP.
- **NAACP:** The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was formed in 1909 to help protect the rights of all people and end racial discrimination (treating others unfairly).



Reader's Guide for *The Hope Chest*, Chapter 9: "Mr. Martin's Escape"

Glossary	Figurative and Complex Language: Idioms and Adages
conceal (108): synonym: hide antonym: show	"send someone to the rightabout" (100): to turn someone away
disadvantages (99): isn't helpful	"get fresh" (100): to be rude
inequality (99): not equal; not the same as	"gentleman friend" (101): boyfriend
racialist (98): someone who is a racist or believes that one race is better than others	"beyond the pale (103): unacceptable or improper
radicals (110): people in favor of extreme changes in government or society	"send someone to the rightabout" (100): to turn someone away
smitten (100): struck by strong feelings of love	"get fresh" (100): to be rude
socialist (109): a person who believes that most resources and property should be shared by the community to increase economic equality	
traitor (107): a person who is disloyal to or betrays his own country	
vacated (102): left empty	



Reader's Guide for *The Hope Chest*, Chapter 9: "Mr. Martin's Escape"

Summary Notes:	Summary:
Somebody:	
In:	
Wanted:	
But:	
So:	
Then:	