



EXPEDITIONARY  
LEARNING

# **Grade 6: Module 4: Unit 3: Lesson 5**

## **Mid-Unit Assessment: Completing My Draft Position Paper**



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

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)

**Supporting Learning Targets**

- 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.

**Ongoing Assessment**

- Mid-Unit 3 Assessment: Draft of Position Paper: “Do the Benefits of DDT Outweigh Its Harmful Consequences?”
- Reflecting on My Writing So Far



Agenda	Teaching Notes
<p>1. Opening</p> <p>A. Unpacking Learning Targets (2 minutes)</p> <p>2. Work Time</p> <p>A. Drafting an Introductory Paragraph (20 minutes)</p> <p>B. Drafting a Concluding Paragraph (18 minutes)</p> <p>3. Closing and Assessment</p> <p>A. Reflecting on My Writing So Far (5 minutes)</p> <p>4. Homework</p> <p>A. Read your independent reading book for 30 minutes. Complete the Reading Tracker and Reviewer's Notes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• At this point, students have taken several sequential steps toward writing position papers. At the end of Unit 2, students used their research to determine their position. Through self-review and teacher feedback, students decided if their position still fit for them or if they needed to revise their position.</li><li>• In preparing for their draft writing, students read and assessed a model essay; reviewed the Position Paper Argument Rubric; planned their claim, reasons, and evidence; partnered to share feedback; and developed and wrote their body paragraph drafts.</li><li>• In this lesson, students are introduced to the criteria for writing introductory and concluding paragraphs. To build their understanding, students look at the similarities and differences of an introduction and conclusion.</li><li>• Make clear to students that in an introductory paragraph you are foreshadowing the structure of an argument. By doing this, you are helping the readers prepare their mind for where you, as the writer, are going, which makes your argument easier to follow.</li><li>• Students use the model essay and the Parts of a Position Paper anchor chart as references to plan their introductory and concluding paragraphs. Before writing, students verbally rehearse their paragraphs with partners to strengthen their plans.</li><li>• Students then draft their introductory and concluding paragraphs and complete their draft position paper, which is the mid-unit assessment. Consider asking students to write on every other line to allow space for revisions in future lessons or to use technology, if available.</li><li>• By the end of this lesson, students should have finished their draft position papers for their mid-unit assessment. Those students who have not finished by the end of the lesson would benefit from arranging school time to complete their draft.</li><li>• At the close of the lesson, students reflect on their writing at this mid-unit point by reading their completed draft to consider what they have done well, what challenges they had during the writing process, and what help they may need to improve their writing.</li><li>• Be prepared to provide students with feedback in Lessons 6 and 7 using Rows 2, 3, and 4 of the Position Paper Argument Rubric, included in the supporting materials of Lesson 1. Provide specific, positive feedback for at least one thing each student did well (star) and at least one specific area of focus for each student to revise (step)</li></ul>



Agenda	Teaching Notes (continued)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In advance:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Have students’ body paragraphs available for them to read with their introductory and concluding paragraphs.</li><li>– Consider starting to prepare teacher feedback on the completed body paragraphs. Students will use that feedback in Lesson 7.</li><li>– Consider and determine partners for verbally sharing their introductory paragraphs.</li></ul></li><li>• Post: Learning targets.</li></ul>

Lesson Vocabulary	Materials
introduction, conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Document camera</li><li>• Model position paper: “Hydraulic Fracturing” (from Lesson 1)</li><li>• Equity sticks</li><li>• Parts of a Position Paper anchor chart (from Lesson 4)</li><li>• Mid-Unit 3 Assessment: Position Paper Prompt (one per student)</li><li>• Lined paper</li><li>• Writing Reflections graphic organizer (one per student)</li><li>• Position Paper Argument rubric (from Lesson 1; for teacher use to score students’ draft position papers)</li></ul>



Opening	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>A. Unpacking Learning Targets (2 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read aloud as students read the learning targets silently in their heads.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* “I can identify the qualities of a strong introduction and conclusion for a position paper.”</li><li>* “I can draft the introduction of my position paper.”</li><li>* “I can draft the conclusion of my position paper.”</li></ul></li><li>• Invite students to Think-Pair-Share:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* “How are introductions and conclusions similar types of writing?”</li></ul></li><li>• Listen for responses, or guide students toward responses, such as: “They are both writing about the whole essay in some way,” or “They are both ‘big idea’ writing and are not about details.”</li><li>• Again invite students to Think-Pair-Share:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* “How are introductions and conclusions different?”</li></ul></li><li>• Listen for responses such as: “The introduction should introduce the topic and get the reader interested, while the conclusion should reinforce the main argument and wrap up the author’s point of view on the topic.”</li></ul>	



Work Time	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>A. Drafting an Introductory Paragraph (20 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using a <b>document camera</b>, display the <b>model position paper: “Hydraulic Fracturing.”</b> Tell students that now that they have written a first draft of the body paragraphs of the argument essay, they are going to finish their mid-unit assessments by completing the first draft of their introductory and concluding paragraphs.</li> <li>• Invite students to read along silently as you read the introduction of the model position paper.</li> <li>• Ask students to Think-Pair-Share:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “What is the topic?”</li> <li>* “What is the claim?”</li> <li>* “What reasons will be talked about?”</li> <li>* “How does the author capture the reader’s interest?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Use <b>equity sticks</b> to select students to share their responses. Record student responses in the margin by the introductory paragraph. Listen for and ensure the following are included:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The topic is: Should hydraulic fracturing be used to collect natural gas?</li> <li>– The claim is: Hydraulic fracturing is a process that should be used to collect natural gas.</li> <li>– The three reasons include: Hydraulic fracturing is better for the environment; it benefits the people; and if done safely and with regulations, it would prove beneficial.</li> <li>– To capture the reader’s interest, the author explains what hydraulic fracturing is and explains how it could be an important process used to collect natural gas, which is a cleaner source of energy than coal and oil.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Point out the <b>Parts of a Position Paper anchor chart</b>. Read the criteria listed on the chart. Explain to students that the author introduces the topic in a strong opening statement. Next, a connector statement is used, transitioning the reader from the opening statement to the author’s claim. After that, the author gives his/her point of view, or the claim, and the three supporting reasons foreshadowing the essay.</li> <li>• Display the <b>Mid-Unit 3 Assessment: Position Paper Prompt</b>. Point out to students that they have been working on this task for a few days now; today is their opportunity to actually complete their draft.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider providing models of expected work to support all students, especially select learners.</li> <li>• Allowing students to verbally share their introductory and concluding paragraphs before writing helps students recognize what strong introductions and conclusions should include and what revisions they should make before writing their draft.</li> <li>• Consider placing students in homogeneous pairs.</li> <li>• Provide direct support to students who need it the most.</li> </ul>



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite students to take a few minutes to think about what should be included in their introductory paragraph. Explain that they will be verbally rehearsing their introductory paragraphs with their partners. Remind students to refer to the Parts of a Position Paper anchor chart to guide their thinking.</li> <li>• Invite partners to begin sharing.</li> <li>• Circulate to assist students in verbally rehearsing their introductory paragraphs.</li> <li>• Refocus the class. Ask students to draft the introductory paragraph using their verbal rehearsal and the criteria listed on the Parts of a Position Paper anchor chart. Ask students to write the draft on <b>lined paper</b> skipping every other line to allow space for revisions.</li> <li>• Again circulate to assist students in drafting their introductory paragraphs.</li> </ul> <p>Commend students for their writing focus and effort to use the anchor chart criteria to write a quality introductory paragraph.</p>	
<p><b>B. Drafting a Concluding Paragraph (18 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using the document camera, again display the model position paper: “Hydraulic Fracturing.”</li> <li>• Read aloud the introductory and concluding paragraphs and ask students to Think-Pair-Share:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “What are the similarities between the introduction and conclusion?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Cold call partners. Listen for responses such as: “Both give the claim,” “Both refer to the three reasons,” and “Both engage the reader.” Remind students that the introduction engages the reader by introducing and defining the topic, and the conclusion engages the reader by bringing closure to the topic and/or possibly ending the paragraph with a clincher.</li> <li>• Invite students to read along silently as you read the concluding paragraph of the position paper.</li> <li>• Ask students:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “What does the author tell us in the concluding paragraph?”</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use equity sticks to select students to share their responses. Record student responses in the margin on the model essay. Ensure that the following are included:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– The conclusion restates the claim in a different way.</li><li>– The three reasons are combined.</li><li>– The conclusion points out the relationship of the topic to the position, or points to a logical conclusion.</li><li>– The ending statement is a clincher, or final remark giving a decisive fact.</li></ul></li><li>• Invite students to take time to think about their concluding paragraph. Explain that they will verbally rehearse their concluding paragraph with their partners. Remind students to refer to the notes on the anchor chart and in the margin of the model position paper to guide their thinking.</li><li>• Ask partners to begin sharing. Circulate to assist as they verbally rehearse their concluding paragraphs. Ask:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* “How can you restate your claim?”</li><li>* “How did the author conclude the model essay?”</li></ul></li><li>• Invite students to draft their concluding paragraph using their verbal rehearsal and the notes on the Parts of a Position Paper anchor chart. Remind students to skip every other line to allow space for revisions.</li><li>• Again circulate to assist students in drafting their concluding paragraphs. Ask:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* “How can you restate your claim?”</li><li>* “How did the author conclude the model essay?”</li><li>* “What are you going to give the reader to think about at the end?”</li></ul></li><li>• Congratulate students for their focused thinking and writing and the completion of the Mid-Unit 3 Assessment. Explain that all their effort and hard work has enabled them to create a draft of their position paper.</li></ul>	



Closing and Assessment	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>A. Reflecting on My Writing So Far (5 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commend students for the steps they have taken so far to write a draft of their position about the benefits or harmful consequences of the use of DDT.</li> <li>• Tell students as they complete this part of the writing process and begin the next, it is helpful to look at what they have just completed and give some thought to how they are doing so far. Ask students to listen closely as you read the following reflection questions:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “What did I do well?”</li> <li>* “What challenges did I have?”</li> <li>* “What help do I need to make it better?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Distribute the <b>Writing Reflections graphic organizer</b> and their body paragraph drafts.</li> <li>• Ask students to put the introductory, body, and concluding paragraphs together and read their complete position paper draft with the reflection questions in mind.</li> <li>• Tell students to write their thoughts or reflections on the Writing Reflections graphic organizer. Explain that this marks the first half of their reflections on this writing journey.</li> <li>• Collect students' position paper drafts and Writing Reflections graphic organizer.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider allowing students who need additional time to continue writing their introductory and concluding paragraphs.</li> </ul>
Homework	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read your independent reading book for 30 minutes. Complete the Reading Tracker and Reviewer's Notes.</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: Be prepared to provide students with feedback in Lessons 6 and 7 using Rows 2, 3, and 4 of the Position Paper Argument Rubric, included in the supporting materials of Lesson 1. Students will need access to their drafts during the following lesson, however, so be aware that some students may get drafts with feedback in the next lesson and others in Lesson 7. Students will not need to revise based on teacher feedback in Lesson 6.</i></p>	



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## Supporting Materials



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**Mid-Unit 3 Assessment:**  
Position Paper Prompt

**Learning Targets:**

- 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)

**Directions:**

- Write a position paper in which you respond to the question below.
- Support your claim with relevant evidence from your research.
- Conclude your paper in a way that follows logically from you claim and evidence.

**Prompt:**

- Do you believe DDT should be used despite its potentially harmful consequences in the natural world?
- Do the benefits of DDT outweigh its harmful consequences?



Writing Reflections Graphic Organizer

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**Name:**

.....  
**Date:**

Read your position paper with these reflection questions in mind.

What did I do well?

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What challenges did I have?

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What help do I need to make it better?

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