



EXPEDITIONARY
LEARNING

Grade 8: Module 4: Unit 1: Lesson 11

Evaluating an Argument: The Joy of Hunting



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License.
Exempt third-party content is indicated by the footer: © (name of copyright holder). Used by permission and not subject to Creative Commons license.



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

- I can determine a speaker’s argument and specific claims. (SL.8.3)
- I can evaluate the reasoning and evidence presented for soundness and relevance. (SL.8.3)
- I can identify when irrelevant evidence is introduced. (SL.8.3)
- I can identify the argument and specific claims in a text. (RI.8.8)
- I can evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text (assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims). (RI.8.8)
- I can identify when irrelevant evidence is used. (RI.8.8)

Supporting Learning Targets

- I can evaluate a spoken argument for sound reasoning, and sufficient relevant evidence to support the claim.
- I can evaluate Michael Pollan’s argument on pages 240–245 of *The Omnivore’s Dilemma* for sound reasoning and sufficient relevant evidence to support the claim.
- I can identify irrelevant evidence in a text.

Ongoing Assessment

- Food Chain graphic organizer
- Evaluating an Argument graphic organizer for pages 240–245



Agenda	Teaching Notes
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Opening<ol style="list-style-type: none">A. Unpacking Learning Targets (2 minutes)2. Work Time<ol style="list-style-type: none">A. Evaluating an Argument in an Interview (13 minutes)B. Evaluating an Argument: Pages 240–245 of <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i> (15 minutes)C. Identifying Irrelevant Evidence (10 minutes)3. Closing and Assessment<ol style="list-style-type: none">A. Synthesizing Learning (5 minutes)4. Homework<ol style="list-style-type: none">A. None for this lesson.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This lesson is very similar in structure to Lesson 9. In this lesson, students build on the learning from Lesson 9 about evaluating an argument; however, to address SL.8.3, students begin by evaluating the claims in a spoken argument.• In advance: Read the Interview with an Organic Farmer, as you will be reading this aloud to the students.• Read pages 240–245 of <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i> and review the answer key for the Evaluating an Argument graphic organizer to familiarize yourself with what students will be doing and the answers you will be guiding them toward (see supporting materials).• Post: Learning targets; What Makes a Strong Argument? anchor chart.



Lesson Vocabulary	Materials
evaluate, argument, claim, relevant, irrelevant, sound, sufficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interview with an Organic Farmer (for teacher reference)• Lined paper (one piece per student)• Evaluating an Argument graphic organizer for pages 240–245 (one per student)• Evaluating an Argument task card (one per student)• <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i>, Young Readers Edition (book; one per student)• Evaluating an Argument graphic organizer for pages 240–245 (answers, for teacher reference)• Example of Irrelevant Evidence: Page 245 of <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i> Rewritten (one per student and one for display)



Opening	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Unpacking Learning Targets (2 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the posted learning targets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “I can evaluate a spoken argument for sound reasoning, and sufficient relevant evidence to support the claim.” * “I can evaluate Michael Pollan’s argument on pages 240–245 of <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i> for sound reasoning, and sufficient relevant evidence to support the claim.” * “I can identify irrelevant evidence in a text.” • Remind students that these are similar targets to those in Lesson 9; they just deal with a different excerpt of text. Explain that today they will practice the skill of evaluating an author’s argument. • Remind students of what relevant, irrelevant, and sufficient evidence means. • Ask students to Think-Pair-Share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “Why is evaluating an argument an important skill?” • Cold call two to three students to share their thinking with the class. • Listen for students to say something along the lines of: “It is a way to think deeply about the text” and “it will prepare them to make their own argument.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning targets are a research-based strategy that helps all students, especially challenged learners. • Posting learning targets allows students to reference them throughout the lesson to check their understanding. The learning targets also provide a reminder to students and teachers about the intended learning behind a given lesson or activity. • Reviewing academic vocabulary words benefits all students developing academic language.



Work Time	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Evaluating an Argument in an Interview (13 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell students they will hear you read aloud an interview by an organic farmer about why organic food is important.• Read aloud the Interview with an Organic Farmer to the students, but don't show them the text, as they can practice evaluating what they hear.• Ask students to discuss in triads:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* "What claim is the farmer making?"• Select volunteers to share their answers. Listen for students to explain the claim is that organic food is important because it is healthy and good for you.• Distribute lined paper. Invite students to fold their paper into four (in half and in half again—this may need modeling). Tell students you will read the interview again and they should take notes about the following (record list on the board). Invite students to record each of these as a heading in a section of their folded paper:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Relevant evidence– Sufficient evidence– Irrelevant evidence– Sound reasoning• Read the interview two more times.• Cold call students to share their thinking whole group. Go through each section at a time. Listen for students to explain that there isn't any relevant evidence, and as a result, there isn't sufficient evidence. The irrelevant evidence is the information about fruits and vegetables. This is irrelevant because not all fruits and vegetables are organic. The reasoning is not sound because the evidence isn't relevant – the evidence needs to be relevant for the reasoning to be sound	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use of protocols (like Teammates Consult) allows for total participation of students. It encourages critical thinking, collaboration, and social construction of knowledge. It also helps students to practice their speaking and listening skills.



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>B. Evaluating an Argument: Pages 240–245 of <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i> (15 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Distribute the Evaluating an Argument graphic organizer for pages 240–245.• Remind students that for homework they reread pages 240–245 of <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i>, identified a claim that Michael Pollan makes, and flagged supporting evidence. Select volunteers to share their claim and evidence. Listen for claims and evidence to be similar to the Evaluating an Argument graphic organizer for pages 240–245 (answers, for teacher reference) and guide students in that direction.• Distribute the Evaluating an Argument task card. Read the directions with students. Explain to students they will work in triads following the Teammates Consult protocol, using <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i> to complete the graphic organizer.• Circulate to assist students. Ask:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* “How is this evidence relevant?”* “How is the evidence connected to the claim? Has the author explained this?”• Use the Evaluating an Argument graphic organizer for pages 240–245 (answers, for teacher reference). (In the supporting materials, provide an idea of how to answer each question.)• Invite students to follow the task card’s final directions to share their graphic organizer with someone from another triad and then to return to their triad to revise their graphic organizer.	



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>C. Identifying Irrelevant Evidence (10 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invite students to look at the second part of their graphic organizers: “Part 2: Irrelevant Evidence.” Remind students that irrelevant evidence is that which doesn’t support the claim or make sense in support of the claim. It may also be evidence that has been deliberately added to mislead the reader or listener. Remind students that one piece of irrelevant evidence from the interview with the organic farmer was: “Seventy-five percent of overweight children who ate five servings of fruits and vegetables per day lost weight to be in a safer weight zone,” and that it is irrelevant because it isn’t about organic food at all—not all fruit and vegetables are organic.• Tell students that, as in Lesson 9, the excerpt they will analyze for irrelevant evidence is a rewritten piece of the Michael Pollan excerpt they have been reading and analyzing in the previous two lessons. Remind students that this will help because they have already identified a claim in this excerpt; it will also help them see why Michael Pollan’s actual writing is a good example of a strong argument.• Ask students to close their <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i> books. Display and distribute Example of Irrelevant Evidence: Page 245 of <i>The Omnivore’s Dilemma</i> Rewritten and read it aloud as students follow along silently in their heads.• Remind students that they have already figured out a claim that they think Michael Pollan is making in this excerpt (something similar to: “Hunters should be aware of the seriousness of killing a living creature and not take it lightly”); now they will work in triads to identify any irrelevant evidence in this excerpt of text and record it on Part 2 of their organizers.• Give students no more than 5 minutes to identify the irrelevant evidence and record it.• Cold call students to share the irrelevant evidence whole group. Refer to the answers for teacher reference to guide students toward appropriate answers and invite them to revise their graphic organizers accordingly.• Invite students to review the original paragraph on page 245 of their books. Ask them to discuss in triads:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* “How is the rewritten excerpt different to the original? How is Michael Pollan’s better?”• Select volunteers to share their responses whole group. Listen for them to explain that Michael Pollan doesn’t provide irrelevant details about pigs.	



Closing and Assessment	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Synthesizing Learning (5 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to Think-Pair-Share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “Did Pollan make a strong argument in this excerpt? Why or why not?” • Cold call students to answer. Listen for them to say something along the lines of: “The argument was strong because his evidence gave examples of both the joy and the pain he felt after hunting, his evidence was sufficient, and his reasoning was sound.” • Review the day’s learning targets with students. • Use the Fist to Five protocol to have them assess themselves on evaluating an argument. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking in with learning targets helps students self-assess their learning. This research-based strategy supports struggling learners most.
Homework	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None for this lesson. 	



EXPEDITIONARY
LEARNING

Grade 8: Module 4: Unit 1: Lesson 11

Supporting Materials



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License.
Exempt third-party content is indicated by the footer: © (name of copyright holder). Used by permission and not subject to Creative Commons license.



Interview with an Organic Farmer (for Teacher Reference)

Why is organic food important?

Organic food is important because it means that people who eat organic food aren't eating a lot of harmful chemicals like pesticides and fertilizers on their foods. Pesticides and fertilizers sprayed on crops when they are growing kill pests and make the crops grow faster, but they can cause illnesses like cancer. I don't spray any chemicals on my crops and, as a result, I might not produce such a big harvest or make as much money as farmers who do spray their crops with pesticides and fertilizers, but the food I produce is much safer to eat. Obesity is still a problem in the U.S. and eating a lot of fruit and vegetables can prevent obesity, particularly in children. Seventy-five percent of overweight children who ate five servings of fruits and vegetables per day lost weight to be in a safer weight zone. Children need to learn at school that eating too much fast food can lead to health problems and that fruit and vegetables are much healthier. Everyone should eat organic food for these reasons.

Evaluating an Argument Graphic Organizer for Pages 275-276

Name: _____

Date: _____

I can identify the argument and specific claims in a text. (RI.8.8)

I can evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text (assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims). (RI.8.8)

I can identify when irrelevant evidence is used. (RI.8.8)

Part 1: Evaluating an Argument Graphic Organizer

Author/Speaker's Claim:

Relevant Evidence 1

Relevant Evidence 2

Relevant Evidence 3

Explain how this piece of evidence is relevant to the claim:

Explain how this piece of evidence is relevant to the claim:

Explain how this piece of evidence is relevant to the claim:



Evaluating an Argument Graphic Organizer for Pages 275-276

Part 1: Evaluating an Argument Graphic Organizer		
Relevant Evidence 4	Relevant Evidence 5	Relevant Evidence 6
Explain how this piece of evidence is relevant to the claim:	Explain how this piece of evidence is relevant to the claim:	Explain how this piece of evidence is relevant to the claim:
Did the author provide sufficient evidence? Explain why or why not.		
Was the reasoning sound? Explain why or why not.		



Evaluating an Argument Graphic Organizer for Pages 275-276

Part 2: Irrelevant Evidence

What irrelevant evidence did the author/speaker provide? Explain what makes this evidence irrelevant.



Evaluating an Argument Task Card

1. Discuss your claim and the relevant evidence you flagged with your partner.
2. Add the claim to the graphic organizer.
3. Add the relevant evidence you flagged to the graphic organizer.
4. Explain how each piece of relevant evidence you have recorded supports the author's claim.
5. Answer the questions about sufficient evidence and sound reasoning.
6. Meet with a new partner to share work.
7. Report back to original partner and make revisions.



Evaluating an Argument Graphic Organizer for Pages 275-276
(Answers, for Teacher Reference)

Part 1: Evaluating an Argument Graphic Organizer		
<p>Author/Speaker’s Claim: <i>Hunters should be aware of the seriousness of killing a living creature and not take it lightly.</i></p>		
Relevant Evidence 1	Relevant Evidence 2	Relevant Evidence 3
<p><i>“I wasn’t ready to see it as meat, though. What I saw was a dead wild animal, its head lying on the dirt in a widening circle of blood. I kneeled down and pressed the palm of my hand against the pig’s belly above the nipples. Beneath the dusty, bristly skin I felt her warmth, but no heartbeat” (241).</i></p>	<p><i>“A scale attached to the rig gave the weight of the animal: 190 pounds. The pig weighed exactly as much as I did” (242).</i></p>	<p><i>“I’d handled plenty of chicken guts on Joel’s farm, but this was different and more disturbing. That was probably because the pig’s internal organs looked exactly like human organs” (243).</i></p>
<p>Explain how this piece of evidence is relevant to the claim: This emphasizes the seriousness of hunting because it emphasizes that the pig he killed was a living creature with a heartbeat rather than just meat to eat.</p>	<p>Explain how this piece of evidence is relevant to the claim: Again this emphasizes the seriousness of killing an animal because by comparing the weight of the pig to the author’s own weight, it makes us realize that the pig is a living creature rather than just meat to eat.</p>	<p>Explain how this piece of evidence is relevant to the claim: Comparing the pig’s internal organs to human internal organs makes the killing of the pig seem more serious because it emphasizes that a pig is a living thing rather than just meat to eat.</p>



Evaluating an Argument Graphic Organizer for Pages 275-276
(Answers, for Teacher Reference)

Part 1: Evaluating an Argument Graphic Organizer		
Relevant Evidence 4	Relevant Evidence 5	Relevant Evidence 6
<i>“When we kill an animal, especially a big mammal like a pig, it can’t help reminding us of our own death. The line between their bodies and ours, between their deaths and ours, is not very sharp” (244).</i>	<i>“No matter how I looked at it, I felt regret about killing that pig. The animal is at once different from me and yet as a living creature it is in some ways the same.”</i>	
<i>Explain how this piece of evidence is relevant to the claim: Comparing the killing of a pig to our own death makes the action seem very serious. Again it emphasizes that a pig is a living thing rather than just meat to eat.</i>	<i>Explain how this piece of evidence is relevant to the claim: Again he is comparing pigs to humans, emphasizing that they are living creatures rather than just meat.</i>	
Did the author provide sufficient evidence? Explain why or why not. <i>Yes, he did provide sufficient evidence because he gave multiple detailed examples emphasizing how pigs are living creatures, like us, which makes hunting seem more serious.</i>		
Was the reasoning sound? Explain why or why not. <i>Yes, the reasoning is sound, although it is all based on personal beliefs and interpretations of the hunting experience. He certainly provides multiple examples of how a pig is a living creature comparable to a human being; however, someone else may not feel those same emotions when hunting and killing an animal, so they may not agree with the claim.</i>		



Evaluating an Argument Graphic Organizer for Pages 275-276
(Answers, for Teacher Reference)

Part 1: Evaluating an Argument Graphic Organizer

Explain how this piece of evidence is relevant to the claim: *Comparing the killing of a pig to our own death makes the action seem very serious. Again it emphasizes that a pig is a living thing rather than just meat to eat.*

Explain how this piece of evidence is relevant to the claim: *Again he is comparing pigs to humans, emphasizing that they are living creatures rather than just meat.*

Did the author provide sufficient evidence? Explain why or why not.

Yes, he did provide sufficient evidence because he gave multiple detailed examples emphasizing how pigs are living creatures, like us, which makes hunting seem more serious.

Was the reasoning sound? Explain why or why not.

Yes, the reasoning is sound, although it is all based on personal beliefs and interpretations of the hunting experience. He certainly provides multiple examples of how a pig is a living creature comparable to a human being; however, someone else may not feel those same emotions when hunting and killing an animal, so they may not agree with the claim.

Part 2: Irrelevant Evidence

What irrelevant evidence did the author/speaker provide? Explain what makes this evidence irrelevant.

The evidence the author provides about pigs is not linked to the claim—it gives us facts about pigs, but it doesn't emphasize the seriousness of killing a living creature. He says, "Pigs can run up to 11 miles per hour, and they like to bathe in water or mud to keep cool, although they actually prefer water to mud."



Example of Irrelevant Evidence:

Page 245 of *The Omnivore's Dilemma* Rewritten

I was confronted with yet another dilemma. What exactly is the joy of hunting? I know what made me feel good when I was out in the woods. I enjoyed feeling totally alive and a part of nature. I enjoyed discovering new abilities that I didn't know I had. I enjoyed succeeding in my difficult task.

However, I also knew what made me feel bad about hunting. No matter how I looked at it, I felt regret about killing that pig. The animal is at once different from me and yet as a living creature it is in some ways the same. Pigs can run up to 11 miles per hour, and they like to bathe in water or mud to keep cool, although they actually prefer water to mud. So when a hunter kills a pig, they ought to be aware of the seriousness of what they are doing and never treat it lightly