



EXPEDITIONARY  
LEARNING

# **Grade 8: Module 4: Unit 2: Lesson 15**

## **Writing a Position Speech: Which Food Chain Would Be Best?**



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| Long-Term Target Addressed (Based on NYSP12 ELA CCLS)   |  |
|---|--|
| I can present claims and findings in a focused, coherent manner (use relevant evidence, sound reasoning, and well-chosen details). (SL.8.4) |  |
| Supporting Learning Target  | Ongoing Assessment   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>I can make a claim supported by reasons and evidence from research.</li></ul>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Position Speech Rubric (content section only for Birke Baehr speech)</li><li>Completed Position Speech graphic organizer</li></ul> |



| Agenda  | Teaching Notes  |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Opening               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Unpacking Learning Target (2 minutes)</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Work Time               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Analyzing a Position Speech (12 minutes)</li> <li>B. Completing Position Speech Graphic Organizer (28 minutes)</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Closing and Assessment               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Partner Share (3 minutes)</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Homework               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Finish your Position Speech graphic organizer.</li> <li>B. Use your Position Speech graphic organizer to write your position speech. Remember to use relevant evidence, sound reasoning, and well-chosen details.</li> </ol> </li> </ol> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is the first of three lessons dedicated fully to the End of Unit 2 Assessment. In this lesson, students watch the Birke Baehr speech once more. In Lesson 10, their focus when watching the speech was on effective speaking skills. In this lesson, their focus is on content, as it was in Unit 1.</li> <li>• Note that, as the Birke Baehr speech has been used in this lesson, students are already familiar with it and will not have to learn a lot of new content. However, it is not an example of a perfect position speech, as he uses personal experiences as evidence rather than researched facts and data. Ensure students are aware of this.</li> <li>• To fully understand how to organize their own speeches, students outline Birke Baehr's argument on the same graphic organizer they will use. Then, in Work Time B, they complete the Position Speech graphic organizer for their own speeches.</li> <li>• The Position Speech graphic organizer lays the foundation for the position paper students will write in Unit 3. It is essentially a first draft of their outline for their paper.</li> <li>• Completing the graphic organizer may be challenging for some students who may require more modeling or small group instruction.</li> <li>• In advance:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Ensure the class Industrial Food Chain Cascading Consequences chart from Lessons 1–4 has the “Food is cheap” consequence. Cascading from that consequence should be “Foods processed to be sweet, fat, and cheap so we’ll eat more.” Cascading from that consequence should be “Obesity increases.” This will be necessary for the counterclaim model you show to the class.</li> <li>– Make sure you are familiar with the Steps for Completing Assessment.</li> <li>– Review the rubric for the Birke Baehr speech in supporting documents. Think about what you want to emphasize when students use the rubric to assess the content of his speech.</li> <li>– Review the Birke Baehr Speech excerpt and the Birke Baehr Speech graphic organizer in supporting documents. Text code the speech yourself in preparation.</li> <li>– Consider photocopying the Birke Baehr Speech excerpt on one side and the Birke Baehr Speech graphic organizer on the opposite side of the same paper.</li> <li>– Review: Checking for Understanding Techniques (see Appendix). You may choose to use one of these</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |



| strategies during the “catch” in Work Time B. |   |
|---|---|
| Lesson Vocabulary                             | Materials   |
| counterclaim                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End of Unit 2 Assessment: Position Speech Prompt and Steps (one per student)</li> <li>• Position Speech Rubric (one per student)</li> <li>• Video: Birke Baehr—“What’s Wrong with Our Food System<br/><a href="http://www.ted.com/talks/birke_baehr_what_s_wrong_with_our_food_system.html">http://www.ted.com/talks/birke_baehr_what_s_wrong_with_our_food_system.html</a>”</li> <li>• Position Speech graphic organizer (one per student)</li> <li>• Class Industrial Food Chain Cascading Consequences chart (from Lessons 1–4)</li> <li>• Sticky notes (10 per student)</li> </ul> |

| Opening  | Meeting Students’ Needs |
|--|-------------------------|
| <p><b>A. Unpacking Learning Target (2 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read the learning target aloud:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “I can make a claim supported by reasons and evidence from research.”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Invite students to turn and talk with an elbow partner to answer the questions:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “What did we learn in Unit 1 about relevant evidence, sound reasoning, and well-chosen details?”</li> <li>* “How do they help make a strong argument?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Cold call several students to share their answers.</li> <li>• Explain that over the next few lessons students are going to take a position about which food chain is best for feeding all the people in the United States. This position speech is the End of Unit 2 Assessment. This will help them write their position paper in Unit 3.</li> </ul> |                         |



| Work Time   | Meeting Students' Needs  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>A. Analyzing a Position Speech (12 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Distribute the <b>End of Unit 2 Assessment: Position Speech Prompt and Steps</b>. Invite students to read it for the gist, circling words that are most important to understanding what they are going to be asked to do.</li><li>• Invite students to turn and talk to a partner, answering the following questions:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– “What do you need to do for the end of unit assessment?”</li><li>– “What questions do you need answered to fully understand what you are being asked to do?”</li></ul></li><li>• Invite students to share out. Use no more than a minute to answer any questions that you think would help students to understand the assessment.</li><li>• Distribute the <b>Position Speech Rubric</b>.</li><li>• Explain to students that the focus of today’s lesson is only on the content of the speech, so they will only be discussing that section of the rubric. Remind them that in Lesson 10 they thought about how speeches should be presented. Their Effective Speaking Skills anchor chart contains the same criteria as the presentation section of the rubric. Tell them that, in the next lesson, they will discuss the remaining section of the rubric (for the visual component).</li><li>• Invite students to read along silently as you read the content section of the rubric aloud.</li><li>• Explain to students that they will now watch Birke Baehr’s speech about local organic food again. As they watch, they should assess the content of his speech using the content section of the rubric. Point out that as they assess this speech, they only need to focus on the criteria in the Content section.</li><li>• Tell students that in the Comments column they should list the claim, the reasons, the evidence, and the counterclaim that they hear to justify how he met the criteria.</li><li>• Play the <b>Video: Birke Baehr—“What’s Wrong with Our Food System”</b> twice. Give students time between each play of the speech to record their ideas before playing it again.</li><li>• Invite students to turn and talk to a partner to share what the checked off and why, and what they recorded.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consider a partially completed rubric for some students who may find it challenging.</li></ul> |



| Work Time (continued)   | Meeting Students' Needs  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cold call several students to share out. Ask students:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– “What did you check off? Why?”</li> <li>– “Do you agree with what the previous student said? Why or why not?”</li> <li>– “What comments or questions did you write down?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Emphasize here that as students have done a lot of research in this unit, they should be able to write a much stronger speech than Birke Baehr. Explain that much of Birke Baehr’s evidence is personal experiences, but their evidence will be well-researched information including facts and data.</li> </ul>  |  |
| <p><b>B. Completing Position Speech Graphic Organizer (28 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribute the <b>Position Speech graphic organizer</b>. Invite students to read the steps for completing the graphic organizer.</li> <li>• Focus students on Step D (the counterclaim). Ask students:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “So what is a <i>counterclaim</i>? Why is it a good idea to include a counterclaim when you are taking a position on something?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Select volunteers to share their responses. Listen for students to explain that a counterclaim goes against the position they are taking and that it is a good idea to include it to show that you have considered why the other options are not so good. Explain to students that they should be able to find counterclaims on their Cascading Consequences charts (they will be negative consequences).</li> <li>• Show the <b>class Industrial Food Chain Cascading Consequences chart</b>. Say and point to the appropriate parts of the chart as you speak:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “I would choose the industrial food chain because food is cheaper, and one reason I think this is important because my research shows that a lot of people in the United States go hungry because they can’t afford food. Research suggests that cheaper food from the industrial food chain can increase obesity because it contains more fat and sugar, as my Cascading Consequences chart shows, but my response to this is that it is more important for people to not be starving because food is too expensive for them to buy.”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Distribute <b>10 sticky notes</b> to each student. Explain that the sticky notes are so they can change their minds as they are working without messing up their graphic organizers.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remind students that they have worked with writing claims, citing evidence, and acknowledging counterclaims in previous modules for writing assignments. This time they are using these same thinking skills to write a speech. Provide examples from these modules, if necessary.</li> <li>• Additional modeling may be required. Modeling provides a clear vision of the expectation for students.</li> </ul> |



| Work Time (continued)  | Meeting Students' Needs |
|--|-------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure students understand what to write in the two right-hand columns of the graphic organizer:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The name of the note-catcher it came from (Cascading Consequence chart, Stakeholders chart, or researcher's notebook)</li> <li>– What source the evidence came from (page number of <i>The Omnivore's Dilemma</i> or article name)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Tell students that they can work at their own pace, but that you will pull the class together every 7 or so minutes to make sure everyone understands the steps and is making progress.</li> <li>• As students work, circulate to observe and assist them.</li> <li>• Depending on where they are in the process, ask students:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* "Why did you choose this piece of evidence?"</li> <li>* "How does this piece of evidence prove your claim?"</li> <li>* "Do you think this evidence is specific enough? If not, what can you do?"</li> <li>* "Why did you choose this counterclaim?"</li> <li>* "How did you organize your evidence?"</li> <li>* "What two big reasons are you thinking about? Do you have sufficient evidence to support these reasons?"</li> </ul> </li> <li>• After about 7 minutes of work time, pause students and refocus them as a group. Depending on the observations you made while circulating, use this time to:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Address common problems.</li> <li>– Clarify directions.</li> <li>– Model if necessary.</li> <li>– Invite students to share their progress with a partner.</li> <li>– Invite students to self-assess using Fist to Five or a similar quick check strategy; this will help you see who to focus on during the next 7 minutes of Work Time.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• This "catch" should take only 1 or 2 minutes. It should serve to help students see where they need to go next. Then "release" students back to work individually.</li> <li>• Explain that once students are happy with their sticky notes, they can write the information straight onto their graphic organizers.</li> </ul> |                         |



| Closing and Assessment  | Meeting Students' Needs  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>A. Partner Share (3 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review the learning target.</li><li>• Invite students to share with a partner and give each other feedback:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Share your claim and one piece of evidence with a partner.</li><li>– Ask your partner: “Is my piece of evidence relevant and detailed enough to prove my claim?”</li><li>– Repeat for the other partner.</li></ul></li><li>• Tell students that for homework they are going to be finishing their Position Speech graphic organizers and using them to write speeches that should take no more than 2 minutes to read aloud.</li><li>• Be sure that students take home everything they need to finish their graphic organizers and write their speeches: their sticky notes, their own Stakeholders charts, and their researcher’s notebooks.</li></ul> |  |
| Homework  | Meeting Students' Needs  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Finish your Position Speech graphic organizer.</li><li>• Use your Position Speech graphic organizer to write your position speech. Remember to use relevant evidence, sound reasoning, and well-chosen details.</li></ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Some students may require additional time writing their speeches. Adapt lessons as needed based on the outcome of the homework assignment.</li></ul> |





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## Supporting Materials



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**End of Unit 2 Assessment:**  
Position Speech Prompt and Steps

**Name:**

**Date:**

I can present claims and findings in a focused, coherent manner (use relevant evidence, sound reasoning, and well-chosen details). (SL.8.4)

I can use effective speaking techniques (appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation). (SL.8.4)

I can integrate multimedia components and visual displays in a presentation to clarify information, strengthen claims, and add emphasis. (SL.8.5)

I can adapt my speech for a variety of contexts and tasks, using formal English when indicated or appropriate. (SL.8.6)

**Prompt:**

Use your research findings about the consequences of each food chain to write and present a position speech to answer the focus question: “Which of Michael Pollan’s four food chains would best feed all the people in the United States?”

**Steps for completing assessment:**

1. Complete graphic organizer
2. Use graphic organizer to write speech
3. Choose visual component for speech
4. Practice delivering speech
5. Deliver speech to peers
6. Adapt speech for an audience of adults



Position Speech  
Rubric

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

| The speaker         |  | Check if Yes | Comments? Questions? |
|---------------------|--|--------------|----------------------|
| Content             | Starts with a claim that clearly answers the guiding question                                      |              |                      |
|                     | Provides at least two reasons for making that claim  |              |                      |
|                     | Provides relevant evidence for each reason from the Cascading Consequences and Stakeholders charts |              |                      |
|                     | Provides a counterclaim and responds to it with evidence to support own claim                      |              |                      |
| Presentation        | Makes eye contact with multiple points in the audience   |              |                      |
|                     | Speaks clearly and slowly enough for everyone to hear and understand                               |              |                      |
|                     | Uses appropriate volume  |              |                      |
|                     | Pronounces words correctly   |              |                      |
| Visual Component    | Chooses a visual component that clarifies information, supports the claim, and adds emphasis       |              |                      |
|                     | Integrates the visual component into the presentation at a logical point                           |              |                      |
| Different Audiences | Present to Adults  |              |                      |

Position Speech  
Graphic Organizer

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**Name:**

---

**Date:**

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- A. Write down, in the opening statement box of the graphic organizer, the name of the food chain you are choosing. Don't write your complete opening statement yet. This will come after you have identified and organized your evidence.
- B. Look for evidence in your Cascading Consequences charts, Stakeholders charts, and researcher's notebook to prove that the food chain you chose is best for feeding all the people in the United States.
- C. When you find evidence you might want to use, write it on one sticky note. Each sticky note should have one piece of evidence, the name of the note-catcher it came from (Cascading Consequence chart, Stakeholders chart, or researcher's notebook), and what source the evidence came from (page number of *The Omnivore's Dilemma* or article name).
- D. Identify a counterclaim that you can disprove with evidence. Remember that a counterclaim is a claim that goes against the position you are taking. You can often find them in the negative consequences on the Cascading Consequences chart for the food chain you have chosen.
- E. Organize evidence sticky notes into big ideas about why the food chain is best. For example, several of the sticky notes may be about the environment and could therefore go together. Other sticky notes may be evidence that disproves the counterclaim; these sticky notes would be grouped together.
- F. Look for additional evidence if necessary.
- G. Fill in the counterclaim and evidence boxes of the graphic organizer using your sticky notes or other evidence from the note-catchers.
- H. Draft the opening statement so that it includes your answer to the question with two reasons. For example: "The industrial food chain has the potential to be both affordable and healthy for all of the people in the United States."
- I. Draft a closing statement that really pushes the audience to agree with you.



Position Speech  
Graphic Organizer

|   |   |                                       |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| Guiding Question: Which of Michael Pollan's four food chains would best feed all the people in the United States? |   |                                       |
|   |   |                                       |
| Claim: What is your answer to the guiding question and why? (one sentence)  |   |                                       |
|   |   |                                       |
| Counterclaim and Response   | What note-catcher/organizer is this information from? | What source is this information from? |
|   |   |                                       |
| Supporting Evidence and Details for Reason 1  |   |                                       |
|   |   |                                       |



**Position Speech**  
Graphic Organizer

| Supporting Evidence and Details for Reason 2 |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |
| Closing Statement (one sentence)             |  |  |
|  |  |  |