



EXPEDITIONARY
LEARNING

Grade 8: Module 2A: Unit 2: Lesson 13

End of Unit 2 Assessment, Part 1: Drafting The Argument Essay



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End of Unit 2 Assessment, Part 1:
Drafting the Argument Essay

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

- I can write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. (W.8.1)
- I can produce clear and coherent writing that is appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (W.8.4)
- I can select evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. (W.8.9)
- I can cite text-based evidence that provides the strongest support for my analysis of literary text. (RL.8.1)
- I can analyze the development of a theme or central idea throughout the text (including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot). (RL.8.2)
- I can analyze how specific dialogue or incidents in a plot propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision. (RL.8.3)

Supporting Learning Targets

- I can write an organized argument essay about *To Kill a Mockingbird*.
- In my essay, I can support my claim with reasons, details, and quotes from the novel.
- In my essay, I can explain how the details develop the reasons that support my claim.
- In my essay, I can acknowledge and respond to a counterclaim.

Ongoing Assessment

- Essay draft



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Agenda	Teaching Notes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Opening <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Reviewing Learning Targets (3 minutes) 2. Work Time <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Drafting the Essay (40 minutes) 3. Closing and Assessment <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Collect Essay Drafts (2 minutes) 4. Homework <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Choose two scenes from Chapter 27 onwards in the novel that communicate each of the four key quotes. Record two scenes for each key quote. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In this lesson, students write the draft of their essay about Atticus’s decision to defend Tom Robinson. In the previous four lessons, students have shaped their arguments, planned their essays, and critiqued one another’s work. At this point, students need time to craft their essay. • Consider posting a list of the resources to help students write their essays. The list includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Atticus Note-catchers * Essay planners * Supporting Evidence-Based Claims graphic organizers * Structured notes • This lesson is written assuming students will use computers to draft the essays in order to make later revisions easier. • Consider the setup of your classroom if you are using laptops; since students can distract themselves on computers, think about positioning the desks so that it is easy to scan the screens throughout the lesson. • If your students are not familiar with expectations about computer use in the classroom, explain them at the beginning of work time. • Be sure to think about how students will submit their drafts at the end of class: printing, saving to a server, emailing, etc. • If using computers is not possible in your classroom, consider giving students more time to handwrite their essays. • Since students will produce this essay draft independently, it is used as an assessment for “Claim and Reasons” and “Command of Evidence” on the argument rubric. Return the essay drafts with feedback in Lesson 16. Be sure to give feedback on the “Coherence, Style, and Organization” row and the “Command of Conventions” row of the rubric so that students can make those revisions in Lesson 16. • A sample student argument essay is included for Teacher Reference in the supporting materials of this lesson. While it is not needed during the lesson itself, it may be useful to have a sample student response for assessment purposes. • See teaching note at the end of this lesson regarding the possibility of launching independent reading at this point in Module 2, in order to have more time to read and give feedback on students’ draft essays.



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Agenda	Teaching Notes (continued)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Post: Learning targets.

Lesson Vocabulary	Materials
argument	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Computers• <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> (book; one per student)• <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> Argument rubric (from Lesson 11; for Teacher Reference; use this to assess students' draft essays)• End of Unit 2 Assessment Prompt: <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> Argument Essay (from Lesson 8; included again in this lesson for Teacher Reference; one per student and one to display)• Sample student argument essay (for Teacher Reference)• Optional: Launching Independent Reading in Grades 6–8: Sample Plan (stand-alone document on EngageNY.org)



End of Unit 2 Assessment, Part 1:
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Opening	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Engaging the Writer and Reviewing Learning Targets (5 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assign computers and invite students to get out their essay planners and their novel, <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i>.• Read the learning targets:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* “I can write an organized argument essay about <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i>.”* “In my essay, I can support my claim with reasons, details, and quotes from the novel.”* “In my essay, I can explain how the details develop the reasons that support my claim.”* “In my essay, I can acknowledge and respond to a counterclaim.”• Remind students that these learning targets build on the work they have been doing in the past four lessons, as well as work they did in Module 1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Based on the exit ticket from Lesson 9, if any students did not understand how to write an argument essay, consider pulling a small group during this time.



End of Unit 2 Assessment, Part 1:
Drafting the Argument Essay

Work Time	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Drafting the Essay (40 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be sure students have their novels <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i>. Display the End of Unit 2 Assessment Prompt: <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> Argument Essay (originally distributed in Lesson 8).• Remind students of the following:<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Use the ideas and evidence in your planners to write your essay drafts.2. You will turn in your drafts at the end of the class.3. You will have a chance to revise for conventions after you get your first draft back.• Emphasize the importance of saving their work often as they are typing. Let them know in what form (email, printed, saved to server, etc.) they will turn in their draft at the end of the class.• As students are working, circulate around the room. Since this is an assessment, students should work independently.• Continue to circulate around the room, supporting students when needed or when their hands are raised.• When a few minutes remain, remind students to save their work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One of the goals of the scaffolding in the previous lessons is to support all students in writing their essays, including SPED and ELL students. As much as possible, this draft should be done independently. However, if it is appropriate for some students to receive more support, there is space during Work Time.• In order to give more support, consider:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Prompting them to look at their essay planner to remind them of their claim and/or the evidence they gathered.* Asking questions like: “How does that evidence support your claim?” or “How are those ideas connected?”* Reminding them of the resources they have available to help them.



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Closing and Assessment	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Collect Essay Drafts (3 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give students specific positive praise for behaviors or thinking you noticed during class. Emphasize ways in which they are showing stamina as writers, and specific examples of students who are having strong insights about the theme of the novel.• Tell students you look forward to reading their drafts. Collect student drafts and their associated planning work: Supporting Evidence-Based Claims sheets and essay planner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider allowing SPED and ELL students more time to complete their draft.
Homework	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Choose two scenes from Chapter 27 onwards in the novel that communicate each of the four key quotes. Record two scenes for each key quote.</p> <p><i>Note: Assess students' essay drafts for "Claim and Reasons" and "Command of Evidence" on the argument rubric. Be prepared by Lesson 16 to return the essay drafts with feedback and the rubric. For assessment purposes, focus on just the top two rows of the rubric.</i></p> <p><i>But also give feedback on the "Coherence, Organization, and Style" and "Control of Conventions" for students to revise in Lesson 16. Specifically, keep an eye out for common organization or convention mistakes in the essays. In Lesson 16, you can address one of these common errors in a mini lesson in Lesson 16 when students revise.</i></p> <p><i>Lessons 14 and 15 begin the work of Unit 3 and build toward the Readers Theater performance task (This also allows time for you to review essays and give feedback by Lesson 16.) If you need additional time to review student work before the revision lesson, consider using a day or two between Lesson 13 and Lesson 16 to launch the independent reading routine. This routine is explained more fully in a supporting document Launching Independent Reading in Grades 6–8: Sample Plan (stand-alone document on EngageNY.org). However, make sure students return to their essays relatively soon; a gap of more than a few days will make it harder for them to revise successfully.</i></p>	



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Supporting Materials



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This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Sample Student Argument Essay:
(for Teacher Reference)

Essay Prompt: Atticus says, “Simply because we were licked a hundred years before we started is no reason for us not to try to win,” (Chapter 9, page 76). Now that you have read the whole text, what do you think? Does it make sense for Atticus’s character to take a stand to defend Tom Robinson? Give evidence from the text to support your thinking, and be sure to take into account what people who disagree might say.

In *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee, the main character, Atticus Finch, defends Tom Robinson, a black man accused of attacking a white woman. Set in Jim Crow Alabama, Atticus is making a decision that many of the people of Maycomb don’t understand—taking a stand for a black man. When asked by his daughter, Scout, why he was fighting for Tom Robinson, Atticus responds, “Simply because we were licked a hundred years before we started is no reason for us not to try to win,” (76). Even though Atticus knows he does not have a chance at winning Tom’s case, because of his character, it makes sense for Atticus to defend him anyway.

Defending Tom Robinson makes sense for Atticus because of his worldview. Atticus believes that all people are worth respecting and he lives by the Golden Rule. For instance, he says, “You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view—until you climb into his skin and walk around in it,” (30). Here it is clear that Atticus values other people’s perspectives and that must also include Tom Robinson’s. Atticus also believes in racial equality. When talking to his brother, Jack, about the trial, Atticus says, “Why reasonable people go stark raving mad when anything involving a Negro comes up, is something I don’t pretend to understand,” (88). Atticus believes it’s crazy to treat Tom differently just because he’s black. That means that, for Atticus, defending Tom means he is living by the Golden Rule, just as Atticus expects Jem and Scout to.



Sample Student Argument Essay:
(for Teacher Reference)

Another reason why it makes sense for Atticus to defend Tom Robinson is to set an example for his children. When Scout asks him why he takes Tom Robinson's case, Atticus responds by saying, "The main one is, if I didn't I couldn't hold up my head in town, I couldn't represent this county in the legislature, I couldn't even tell you or Jem not to do something again," (75). Atticus defends Tom because he believes in setting an example for Scout, Jem, and others. He builds on this idea later in the same conversation by saying, "Scout, simply by the nature of the work, every lawyer gets at least one case in his lifetime that affects him personally. This one's mine, I guess. You might hear some ugly talk about it at school, but do one thing for me if you will: you just hold your head high and keep those fists down. No matter what anybody says to you, don't you let 'em get your goat. Try fighting with your head for a change ..." (76). Here, Atticus shows that he wants Scout to follow the example he sets. Atticus is fighting with his head against the racism of Maycomb. He wants Scout to do that as well, even if people say bad things about Atticus for defending Tom. Atticus thinks it is very important to live in a way that shows Scout how to live by the Golden Rule. Therefore, it makes sense for Atticus to defend Tom Robinson.

Some people may argue that Atticus did not make a good decision by defending Tom. Atticus risked his safety by taking the case. For example, when Tom Robinson was in jail awaiting trial, Atticus guarded it so that he wouldn't get killed. When a bunch of men showed up in the middle of the night to hurt Tom, Scout described Atticus "... moving slowly, like an old man. He put the newspaper down very carefully, adjusting its creases with lingering fingers. They were trembling a little," (152). Atticus's trembling fingers show that he was afraid of the mob and what they might do. He was in danger. However, because Atticus set such a strong positive example for Scout and Jem, they stood by his side until the lynch mob went away. If he didn't always set that kind of example for them, they may not have stood up for what they knew was right. Atticus also put Jem and Scout in danger by taking the case. At the end of the book, Bob Ewell attacks them, breaking Jem's arm and drawing a knife on Scout. Atticus had no way to know that Ewell would take his anger out on Jem and Scout. However, Boo Radley saved the children from Ewell. He did that because they had developed a sort of friendship. Jem and Scout wouldn't have been able to overcome their fear of Boo if Atticus hadn't taught them over and over to walk in another person's skin. Therefore, Atticus's decision to defend Tom makes sense—the example he sets for his children ends up saving them from danger.



Sample Student Argument Essay:
(for Teacher Reference)

In conclusion, Atticus's decision to defend Tom Robinson makes sense. For him, the decision made sense because of his belief that all people are equal and because Atticus lived in a way to set a good example for Scout and Jem. Even though some may argue that Atticus's decision was not in his best interest because it was dangerous, based on his example, his children are able to make good decisions that lead them out of danger. Atticus teaches that what he said is true: "Simply because we were licked a hundred years before we started is no reason for us not to try to win," (76).