

Understanding by Design: Backwards Planning

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Date: 12 Oct 2015

Subject Area: English

Grade Level(s): 9

Unit Title/Focus: Persuasive Argument about a controversial topic

Estimated Amount of Instructional Time: 4 weeks: 19 days, approx. 40 min. per day

Stage 1 – Desired Results

State Content and Common Core Skill Standards:

- W.9-10.1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- W.9-10.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- W.9-10.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- W.9-10.5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
- W.9-10.7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- W.9-10.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- RI.9-10.1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the texts says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- RI.9-10.10. By the end of grade 9, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 9-10 complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.
- SL.9-10.1. Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- SL.9-10.3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, identifying any fallacious reasoning or exaggerated or distorted evidence.
- SL.9-10.4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.
- SL.9-10.6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.
- L.9-10.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- L.9-10.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
- L.9-10.3. Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.
- L.9-10.6. Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level

Enduring Understandings:

- Students will understand that...
- An argument can only be as strong as its evidence.
 - Tragedy doesn't come out of nowhere. There are cause and effect factors that lead up to it. If we understand the cause, we may be able to prevent it from happening again in the future.

Essential Questions:

- What makes an argument convincing?
 - What makes evidence credible?
 - Why do mass shootings/killing happen?
 - Why do they happen more in America than other countries?
- OR
- Why are they happening more now than [fifteen] years ago?
 - What can prevent them from happening again?

Big Idea(s)

There is a cause behind every action

An argument is only as strong as its evidence

What students will know:

- Mass shootings happen for a reason

What students will be able to do:

- Annotate assigned articles to demonstrate understanding

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not everybody agrees on what that reason is - Understanding the reason is essential to preventing it from happening again in the future - Must use evidence to make a persuasive argument - Close reading strategies to support understanding of a text - MLA citations 	<p>and synthesis of what they read</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produce Academic Summaries (rhetoric précis) to summarize the author's argument in their own words using academic language - Locate textual evidence that supports and/or contradicts their arguments - Analyze this evidence in their own words (<i>why/how</i> does this prove I'm right?) - Provide peer feedback on another student's writing - Revise their written arguments based on peer feedback
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Stage 2 - Assessment Evidence

<p><i>Performance Tasks:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Article 1 Annotation - Article 1 Rhetoric Précis - Article 1 Written Response - Article 2 Annotation - Article 2 Rhetoric Précis - Article 2 Written Response - Evidence list and analysis - Final persuasive paragraph 	<p><i>Other Evidence:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Written reflections/responses - Self assessment rubrics - Paragraph draft - Peer Editing worksheet (completed by a classmate)
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Stage 3 - Learning Plan

<p><i>Learning Activities:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “Real or Fake” Powerpoint Activity. <i>Anticipatory Set.</i> Students indicate whether they think the following are real or fake: Ghosts, Dinosaurs, Psychic abilities, La Ilorona, Global warming, and Aliens. Class discussion about how evidence and evidence credibility affects the persuasiveness of an argument. Writing response. 2. Persuasive Argument Pre-Assessment and Self Assessment. <i>Diagnostic Assessment.</i> Students will write a persuasive paragraph indicating whether they agree or disagree with one of three statements, and provide three reasons to support their position. Afterwards, they will use the Self Assessment Rubric to assess their paragraph and answer the follow up questions to deepen their thinking. 3. Article 1 – Close Reading/Annotation. As a class, students will apply specific reading strategies (previewing the text, rereading difficult sections, circling unfamiliar words and looking for context clues to define them, highlighting main ideas, restating main ideas in their own words, writing questions and responses in the margins) to close read and annotate an article re. school shootings. 4. Article 1 – Academic Summary. As a class, students will fill in the Rhetorical Précis Frame using academic language provided in a word bank. 5. Article 1 – Written Response. Students will respond to the article by indicating whether they agree or disagree with the author on the whole and why. 6. Article 2 – Close Reading/Annotation. Students will apply the same reading strategies on a new article independently or in pairs on a second article. 7. Article 2 – Academic Summary. Students will complete another Rhetorical Précis Frame independently or in pairs on the second article. 8. Article 2 – Written Response. Students will respond to the second article by indicating whether they agree or disagree with the author and why. (This will form the basis of their upcoming persuasive paragraph.) 9. Locating and Analyzing Evidence Worksheet. Students will learn to locate evidence in the article, restate it in their own words, determine whether it helps or hurts their arguments, and explain why/how. 10. Persuasive Paragraph 1st Draft: Students will use their “Article 2 Written Response” and “Evidence Worksheet” to compose a first draft of a persuasive paragraph. In this, they must state their position, provide at least three pieces of evidence from the article, and explain why/how it supports their position. 11. Peer Workshop. Students will pair up and exchange paragraphs. They will complete the Peer Editing Worksheet and discuss plans for revising their work. 12. Final Writing Task and Self-Assessment Rubric. Using the Peer Editing Worksheets, students will revise their paragraphs and complete a Self-Assessment Rubric.
