

Writing to Sources

Introduction

This guide shows you how Reading Street Common Core Writing to Sources provides comprehensive writing instruction for students in Kindergarten through sixth grade.

It explains the features of Writing to Sources and how to use it to help your students meet the Common Core State Standards for Writing.

As you review this guide, follow along with Writing to Sources!

Overview

Writing to Sources offers you flexible resources for writing instruction and makes fact-finding fun for students! It provides practice with the three modes of writing: argument or opinion, explanatory or informative, and narrative. Additionally, it connects students to the Common Core State Standards for Writing.

Features

Each of the six units of instruction focuses on a specific mode of writing and is comprised of three types of writing tasks.

Write Like a Reporter has students respond to one source—the main selection anchor text—by citing evidence from the text.

Connect the Texts has students write to two sources: the main selection anchor text and the paired selection.

Prove It! gives students opportunities to demonstrate their understanding while collaborating with their peers. They complete performance tasks by writing in response to what they read using multiple sources from the unit.

The screenshot shows a worksheet for a writing task. At the top right, it says 'Argument Unit 2'. Below that, the title is 'The Role of Teamwork Writing Task - Short Response'. Underneath is a box for 'Student Directions' which includes 'Your Assignment' and 'Sources'. The sources listed are: 1. Coyote School News, pp. 202–219; 2. Scene Two, pp. 234–247; 3. Horse Heroes, pp. 262–273. At the bottom, there are instructions for 'Evidence-Based Short Response Questions'.

More Connect the Texts provides you with additional lessons for students to practice the different genres within each mode of writing.

<p>More Connect the Texts Persuasive Essay</p> <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the characteristics of a persuasive essay. Write a persuasive essay using facts and supporting details. Evaluate your writing. Revise and publish your writing. <p>Common Core State Standards</p> <p>Writing 4. Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information. Writing 1.a. Produce a topic or text, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which ideas are logically presented to support the writer's purpose. Writing 1.b. Provide reasons that are supported by facts and details. Writing 1.c. Organize ideas and reasons using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., for instance, in order to, in addition). Writing 1.d. Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented. Writing 4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing range as defined in standards 1-3 above.) Writing 5. With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, Writing 6. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p> <p>STEP 1 Read Like a Writer</p> <p>Review the key features of a persuasive essay listed below. Respond to any questions students might have.</p> <p>Key Features of a Persuasive Essay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses a topic sentence to state the writer's opinion, or claim. Supports the claim with reasons that include facts, details, and examples. Uses persuasive words to make reasons more convincing. Provides a conclusion that restates the opinion. Tries to convince readers to think or act in a certain way. <p>Choose a persuasive text that students have already read to model key features. Display the model for students to see and point out each of the key features you have discussed.</p> <p>STEP 2 Organize Your Ideas</p> <p>Writing Prompt: Look back at <i>Because of Winn-Dixie</i> and <i>Letters Home from Yosemite</i>. Think about the personality descriptions of Miss Franny and John Muir that are given or implied in the text. Then make a case as to whether or not Miss Franny and John Muir might have been friends had they met. Support your opinion with details from the texts.</p> <p>Think Aloud: You learned a lot about Miss Franny in <i>Because of Winn-Dixie</i>, but you'll need to decide what John Muir has to say from information in <i>Letters from Yosemite</i>. Decide on the opinion, or claim, you will state in your essay. Then decide which facts, details, and examples you will draw from each selection to support your opinion.</p> <p>Guided Writing: Display an outline as an example. Help students organize reasons that support their opinion, or claim, into the outline. Tell students to write their main idea as a topic sentence and then write a paragraph for each reason. Each paragraph will include facts, details, and examples that support the topic sentence.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Argument Use with Unit 1</p> <p>STEP 3 Draft Your Writing</p> <p>Have students use their outlines to write a persuasive essay. Remind them of the key features of a persuasive essay.</p> <p>Think Aloud: An effective way to persuade readers is to support your opinion with details and examples of the character's traits. Gather details and examples from <i>Because of Winn-Dixie</i> and <i>Letters Home from Yosemite</i> and also infer John Muir's character traits. You can find additional facts and details about John Muir in books and on Web sites.</p> <p>Getting Started: Tell students to begin writing their persuasive essay using their outline as a guide. Help them understand where to place facts and supporting details. Emphasize the importance of using correct grammar and clear and coherent writing. Remind them to restate their opinion in their conclusion.</p> <p>STEP 4 Evaluate Your Writing</p> <p>Display the checklist below and have students use it to evaluate their persuasive essays. Circulate around the room and confer with individual students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Did I clearly state my position in the topic sentence? ✓ Did I include convincing facts, details, and examples that help persuade my readers? ✓ Did I organize my reasons in a clear and logical order? ✓ Did I use words that appeal to the reader's emotions? ✓ Did I conclude by restating my opinion or position? <p>Help students set goals and a plan for improving in areas where their writing needs to be better.</p> <p>STEP 5 Revise and Publish</p> <p>Help students follow through with their plans for revision. If time permits, have students trade essays and offer up suggestions for how to improve their writing.</p> <p>Publishing: Students can print and compile their persuasive essays in a book for classmates to read and comment.</p>
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Writing to Sources Lessons

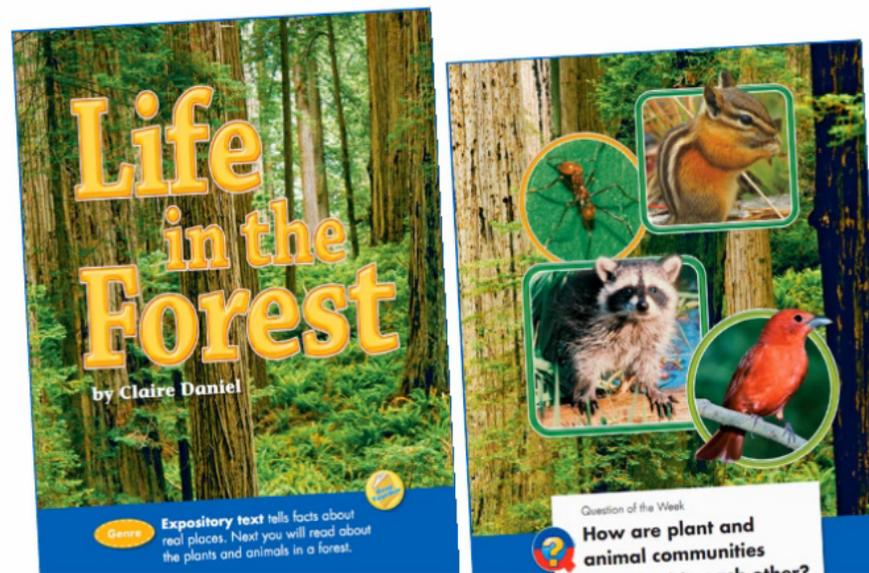
Every lesson in Writing to Sources has a Student Prompt reproducible. The prompts ask students to reread passages from the Reading Street student edition and complete writing tasks. The engaging tasks provide students with opportunities to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate texts and create their own written responses. Students then share their responses in collaborative discussions with their peers.

For example, in Grade 1, Unit Two: Communities, students reread the Reading Street passage, "Life in the Forest." In Writing to Sources, Write Like a Reporter, students write an informational report about one animal that lives in the forest. They use evidence from the selection to support their response.

<p>Name _____</p> <p>Write Like a Reporter</p> <p>Explanatory Paragraph</p> <p>Student Prompt Review the information about the animals in <i>Life in the Forest</i>. Write an informational report about one animal that lives in the forest. Use evidence from the selection to support your answer in your short paragraph.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Informative/Explanatory</p> <p><i>Life in the Forest</i></p>
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In Grade 4, Unit Three: Patterns in Nature, students reread the Reading Street passage, “Eye of the Storm.” In Writing to Sources, Write Like a Reporter, students find facts to summarize the tasks, risks, and rewards that storm chasers experience when they record dangerous weather. Writing a one-paragraph summary that includes facts, definitions, and concrete details of the events from the text, students use vocabulary from the selection to help explain the topic.

In Connect the Texts, Grade 1, students reread “Life in the Forest” and “A Mangrove Forest.” They write sentences about how each forest is similar and different using evidence from the texts.



Grade 4 students reread “Eye of the Storm” and “Severe Weather Safety.” Students write a one-paragraph summary about the ways in which Web sites might be helpful in learning more about storm chasing and dangerous weather. The summary includes facts, definitions, and concrete details from both texts and vocabulary from the selections to help summarize their points clearly.

In Prove It!, Grade 1, students reread “Life in the Forest,” draw a picture, and write about an animal community using evidence from the text.

Grade 4 students reread several selections from the unit and take notes on the sources. They respond to three evidence-based short response questions, using details from the texts. They discuss their ideas in small, collaborative groups and then write a compare-contrast essay on their own about how different features of weather affect the lives of people and animals. They use facts, details, and examples from the texts to support their ideas.

Lesson Plans

The lesson plan includes a Student Prompt along with a detailed Writing Task Overview and Teacher Directions. It also provides a description of what should be included in student responses, and writing rubrics to assess and score their work.

Informative/Explanatory
Eye of the Storm

Connect the Texts
Informative/Explanatory Summary

Student Prompt, p. 84 Look back at *Eye of the Storm* and "Severe Weather Safety." Write a one-paragraph summary of *Eye of the Storm* and the ways in which Web sites might be helpful in learning more about storm chasing and dangerous weather. Be sure to introduce the topic clearly. Include facts, definitions, and concrete details from both readings. Use and define vocabulary in your summary so your points are clear.

Writing to Sources: Discuss *Eye of the Storm* and the "Severe Weather Safety" Internet search with students. Ask students to compare and contrast the information in the passage with the information on the Web sites they find. Students should use concrete details, definitions, and facts found in both sources. Remind students to use and define domain-specific language in their explanations.

Informative/Explanatory Writing Rubric					
Score	Focus	Organization	Development of Evidence	Language and Vocabulary	Conventions
4	Main idea is clearly conveyed and well supported; response is focused.	Organization is clear and effective, creating a sense of cohesion.	Evidence is relevant and thorough; includes facts and details.	Ideas are clearly and effectively conveyed, using precise language and/or domain-specific vocabulary.	Command of conventions is strongly demonstrated.
3	Main idea is clear; adequately supported; response is generally focused.	Organization is clear though minor flaws may be present and some ideas may be disconnected.	Evidence is adequate and includes facts and details.	Ideas are adequately conveyed, using both precise and more general language; may include domain-specific vocabulary.	Command of conventions is sufficiently demonstrated.
2	Main idea is somewhat supported; lacks focus or includes unnecessary material.	Organization is inconsistent, and flaws are apparent.	Evidence is uneven or incomplete; insufficient use of facts and details.	Ideas are unevenly conveyed, using overly-simplified language and/or domain-specific vocabulary.	Command of conventions is uneven.
1	Response may be confusing; unfocused; main idea insufficiently supported.	Organization is non-existent.	Evidence is poor or non-existent.	Ideas are conveyed in a vague, unclear, or confusing manner.	There is very little command of conventions.
0	The response shows no evidence of the ability to construct a coherent explanatory essay using information from sources.				

Additional lesson plans can be found in More Connect the Texts. For example, there are optional lesson plans that include a book review, persuasive speech, and business proposal.

Suggestions for publishing and tips for presenting student work are highlighted.

For example, in Grade 4, Unit Two: Teamwork, students are invited to publish their work in a wiki or blog post. They are also encouraged to present their argumentative essays to the class.

Additional suggestions for publishing can be found in More Connect the Texts.

Look for the Common Core State Standards at the end of every lesson plan.

Review

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