

Revised Edition

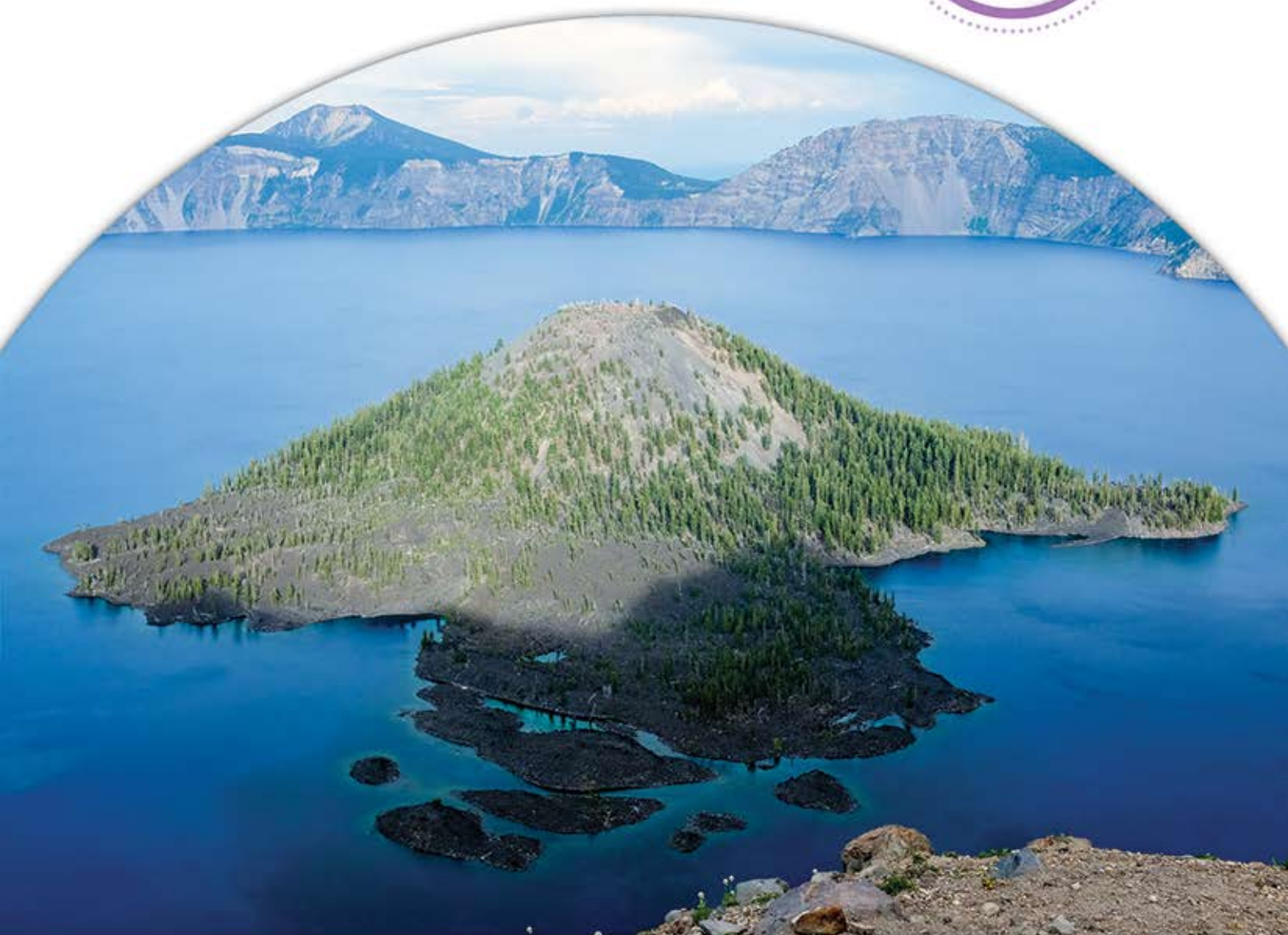
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English Language Arts

6



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Write an Argument

1 GETTING THE IDEA

When you write an **argument**, you try to persuade the reader to think or do something in a certain way . . . your way! To do this, you need to include reasons and evidence that support your argument.

Let's look at an example. Lee is new in school. She wants to write a letter to the basketball coach to persuade her to accept Lee on the basketball team. What should Lee's persuasive letter include to win her argument?

Present a Claim

Begin with writing a clear statement of your position, or **claim**. This claim is the controlling idea that is woven throughout your argument. Lee could write this claim in her letter.

Allowing me to become a member of the basketball team is the right decision.

Support the Claim

Use clear reasons and relevant evidence to support your claim. Evidence should include **facts**, or statements that can be proved. Check that sources you use for facts are reliable and accurate.

All of your evidence should relate to your argument. For example, Lee was the top scorer on her basketball team in her old school. She can prove this fact with her old school records. She also was in the band. Being in the band is not related to her argument, so she will not include that fact. She can use the relevant fact to support her claim:

Because I was the top scorer on the basketball team in my old school, I know I can make a great contribution to your team as well.

Organize Ideas Your reasons and evidence must be enough to persuade readers to agree with you. List reasons, and think about what you have to say about each one. Order your reasons from strongest to weakest. Use credible sources to find additional evidence to make your argument stronger.

Using a graphic organizer is a good way to plan and organize your ideas.

Claim	Allowing me to become a member of the basketball team is the right decision.
Reason 1	I was the top scorer on my basketball team last year.
Supporting facts and details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I already know how to play the game. • I can make a big contribution to your team.
Reason 2	I do not belong to any other clubs or teams.
Supporting facts and details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will have time to devote to practice. • I will still be able to complete my schoolwork.
Reason 3	Three of the other team members live on my street.
Supporting facts and details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We can share rides to games and practice. • We can have extra practices together.
Reason 4	I am new to the school.
Supporting facts and details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I did not have the opportunity to try out in the beginning of the year as other students did. • I could become a member on a trial basis.
Conclusion	Therefore, I ask that you would consider allowing me to join the team, as I truly believe I would be a great asset.

Use Transitions Include transitions to connect claims and reasons. **Transitions** are words, phrases, and clauses that show how the content sentences and paragraphs are related. The following chart shows the purpose of some transitions.

Transitions	Purpose
<i>for instance, for example, in addition</i>	to give additional support and reasons
<i>nevertheless, but, on the other hand</i>	to show contrast
<i>some may think, another side is</i>	to address reader concerns
<i>in fact, especially</i>	to give emphasis
<i>therefore, as a result, in conclusion</i>	to summarize or conclude

Style and Audience In an argument, you should consider your audience when deciding how formal your writing style should be. Usually, you should use a formal style and avoid slang to give your ideas credibility. When you write in a formal style, your readers are more likely to view you as an authority on the subject.

Provide a Conclusion

Conclude by restating your position and summarizing important ideas. This is the last thing your reader will see. Summarize your main points in a fresh way, and write a strong ending sentence.

Revise and Edit

Reread your writing to check that your argument is clear and your reasons are logically organized. Return to your sources as much as needed when writing and rereading. Also, proofread for grammar and spelling mistakes.

Use the following checklist to guide your revision.

- Does my argument introduce a clear and focused claim?
- Do I support the claim with strong reasons and supporting evidence?
- Do I use linking words and phrases to connect ideas?
- Do I use appropriate style and vocabulary for my audience?
- Does my argument have a strong conclusion?
- Do I use correct grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling?

Language Spotlight • Vary Sentence Patterns

Good writers vary their sentences to make the writing more interesting. Use the following tips to vary your sentences.

- Start sentences in different ways.
- Do not use the same word too many times.
- Use different kinds of sentences, such as simple, complex, and compound.
- Use a mixture of short and long sentences.

The first row of the chart shows how to vary sentences. How would you vary the sentences in the second row?

Similar Sentence Patterns		Varied Sentence Patterns
Hanna looked for her wallet in her desk drawer. Hanna looked for her wallet in her coat pockets.	⇒	Hanna went to look for her wallet in her desk drawer. Then, she checked her coat pockets.
The team played a game on Saturday. The team played a game on Sunday. The team won the games on Saturday and Sunday.	⇒	

Read the passage.

Why Should Posting Calorie Information Be Required?

People in the food industry cannot agree. Should restaurants be required to post calorie information on their menus? Some government officials suggest that chain restaurants with twenty or more locations should be required to post the number of calories for each menu item. They would extend this requirement to bakeries, grocery stores, convenience stores, and coffee chains. However, I disagree. I do not believe that anyone in the food industry should be required to post calorie information. There are too many problems and unfair burdens involved in such a law.

First of all, the cost for businesses would be very high. Imagine the work and money involved in posting the calorie count for every unlabeled food item in a grocery store! As a member of the Food Marketing Institute points out, many supermarkets have thousands of items, such as prepared foods and bakery items, that change day by day. Even the Food and Drug Administration admits that the cost for businesses could be over \$300 million.

Because of the high cost, the effectiveness of such a law needs to be considered. What is the purpose of labeling a food item with its calories? Some experts believe this practice would help to curb the obesity problem in our country. It would allow customers to consider the calories before choosing what to eat. However, there are many studies that show that this is not the result. For example, a study published in the *American Journal of Public Health* shows that even though items on a menu were labeled with calorie content, the labeling did not affect customer choices. People still ordered what they originally wanted. The study was done in New York City, where there was a labeling law. The study showed that consumers did not make healthier choices either before or after the law went into effect. Other studies from New York University and Duke-National University had similar results: Adding calorie information to menus did not affect the food choices consumers made.

Finally, this is just one more example of the government controlling our lives. There is already too much government involvement in what we do. We have tax laws, traffic laws, education laws, and thousands of other laws that we need to have a civilized society. I do not think we need the government involved in our food choices as well. If people want to know how many calories are in a particular food, they can find out for themselves. They don't need the government to require businesses to post it.

Therefore, I believe requiring food businesses to post calorie information is an unnecessary and expensive law. It does not help either the consumer or the business. This rule definitely should not be added to our health care law.

Answer the following questions.

1 This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A

Which sentence represents the author's claim about calorie information?

- A. It is not important for people to find out how many calories foods have.
- B. Only restaurants should post calorie information on menus.
- C. Posting calorie information does not help people choose foods with fewer calories.
- D. The government should not require the food industry to display calorie information.

Part B

Underline textual evidence that supports your answer to Part A.

Hint Think about the purpose of the argument. What does the author want readers to believe?

2 According to the passage, which sentence gives a reason why a menu labeling law is not a good idea? Circle **all** that apply.

- A. It costs too much money to implement.
- B. It applies to restaurants with twenty or more locations.
- C. It doesn't help people make better choices.
- D. It allows customers to know how many calories there are before they choose what to eat.
- E. The government should not regulate this part of the food industry.
- F. The law should not be passed.

Hint A reason answers the question "Why?" Be sure your choices relate to the topic. Which sentences above tell why the law is not a good idea?

- 3 Identify a reliable source the author uses to support a reason. Explain how the information from the source supports the argument.

Hint Look for sources mentioned in the argument that contain provable facts. Then, reread both the argument and the source information to find the connection between them.

- 4 The author wants to add a sentence to the conclusion and send the argument to a lawmaker. Which sentence is **best** to add?

- A. Therefore, I respectfully request that you consider voting against this law.
- B. In addition, it's just not a good idea to pass a law as useless as this.
- C. For example, providing calorie information on menus can benefit both adults and children.
- D. Nevertheless, it sure would be a waste of time and money to even think about passing this law.

Hint There are three things to think about with this question: How are different transitions used? What kind of style should be used to write to a lawmaker? What information belongs in the conclusion?

Use the Reading Guide to help you understand the passage.

Labeling Rules Still in the Works

Reading Guide

Read the first paragraph to find the central idea of the passage. Underline the sentence that states the central idea.

What is the purpose of this passage?

How does the author structure the second paragraph?

The 2010 U.S. health care law includes about 2,400 pages of rules and regulations. Contained in the law is the requirement that restaurant chains with twenty or more restaurants show calorie information on menus and menu boards. They must also display the recommended number of daily calories—2,000. Vending machines are also included in the requirement. The new law instructs the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to develop a national standard for labeling menus. This standard will be higher than the laws some states already have. Is this a necessary law? Is it a good law or is it bad for consumers and business? Considering both sides of the issue shows how difficult these questions are to answer.

First of all, a law similar to the federal law was passed in New York City, and it has shown no significant effect. Calorie information has been required on menus in restaurant and coffee chains in New York City since 2008. In 2009, a survey was conducted to study how this law affected consumer food choices. It compared the average calorie intake at these restaurants two weeks before and four weeks after the labeling. The findings showed there was no significant change in calorie intake after the law was passed. A broader study compared the average calorie intake of 15,000 restaurant customers a year before labeling to nine months after. This, too, showed no significant overall change. These studies seem to show that the law is not effective. However, people who reported using the calorie information consumed an average of 96 fewer calories per meal. This shows that the labeling could be effective if more people used the information.

Reading Guide

Underline the transitions used to connect ideas in the passage. How do these transitions help the reader understand the content?

Summarize the opposing views on the cost of implementing the labeling law. Which view do you think is stronger or more reasonable?

Does the National Restaurant Association support or oppose the law? How do you know?

Of course, as with most legislation, there are differing opinions about the new law. For example, one spokesperson for the National Restaurant Association was happy about the law. She said, “The association and industry were supportive because consumers will see the same types of information in more than 200,000 restaurant locations.” On the other hand, the general counsel of the Competitive Enterprise Institute believes the government should not be involved in such actions. He states that if people want to know the information, they can look it up on the Internet. As he says, “This is simply not a federal issue.”

In addition, there are the concerns of business owners themselves. The cost of implementing such a law can be enormous. Many small business owners believe they will be more disadvantaged than larger businesses. For example, figuring out the nutritional facts for each menu item can be very expensive. Some of the smaller chain restaurants will find it difficult to pay for this. They will also need to buy new menus and signs that display the information. However, one of the directors at the National Restaurant Association points out that a single rule for posting calorie information will be less expensive, in the long run, than individual cities and states making up their own laws. Also, as for the cost of new menus and boards, he points out that restaurants often change these items to show new prices and foods anyway.

Reading Guide

List the main points in favor of labeling and the main points against labeling.

How does the author support the idea that labeling helps people who want to lose weight?

What conclusion is stated at the end of the passage?

While menu labels have not been solidly proven to help consumers make healthy choices, they do have their benefits. One director at the Center for Science in the Public Interest pointed out that many consumers want to lose weight. The labeling helps these consumers. For example, many people might think that a tuna fish sandwich has fewer calories than a roast beef sandwich. They would choose to eat tuna to help lose weight. However, knowing that the tuna has 50 percent more calories than the roast beef might change the person's decision. Labeling helps people who want the information to find it when they need it.

As far as the studies showing there was no difference before and after calorie labeling, there are other studies that show different results. In 2013, a study published in the *American Journal of Preventative Medicine* reported on diners who were observed eighteen months after a menu labeling law began. It showed that customers at some restaurants consumed fewer overall calories. The study suggests that, over time, people will change their eating habits because of the labeling.

As of today, only a few cities and states have labeling laws. The national labeling law that is part of the Affordable Care Act passed in 2010 has still not been implemented. Even though labeling seems to offer many benefits to the consumer, the information to date is insufficient. More studies and arguments for and against such a law will have to be considered. The information to date is just not conclusive. As I have shown, many facts seem to support the implementation of such a law, but some do not.

Answer the following questions.

- 1 Lana wrote the following sentences about the menu labeling law.

The law has not been put into effect. Some people want the law. Some people do not want the law.

Which choice below **best** shows how to rewrite these sentences to show a variety of sentence patterns?

- A. The law has not been put into effect because some people want the law and some people do not want the law.
- B. The law has not been put into effect. The issue is that some people want the law while others do not.
- C. The law is what some people want. The law is what other people do not want. The law has not been put into effect.
- D. Correct as is.

- 2 The writer wants to add a sentence to the end of the conclusion.

Which sentence **best** fits the content and style of the conclusion?

- A. Maybe someone will come up with the answer pretty soon.
- B. It is obvious that the law will need to be implemented immediately.
- C. The final decision should be made in the near future.
- D. It is up to the restaurant industry to decide if this law is fair or not.

3 The following question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A

Which of the following **best** describes the claim made by the author of this passage?

- A. There is no definite proof that the labeling law is or is not beneficial to all.
- B. Studies prove that the labeling law will benefit both consumers and businesses.
- C. As of 2013, the national labeling law, which is part of the Affordable Care Act, has not been put into effect.
- D. Smaller businesses will not be able to afford implementing the law.

Part B

Underline textual evidence that supports your answer to Part A.

4 According to the passage, which sentences give reasons why labeling menus is beneficial? Circle **all** that apply.

- A. It compared the average calorie intake at these restaurants two weeks before and four weeks after the labeling.
- B. . . . a single rule for posting calorie information will be less expensive, in the long run, than individual cities and states making up their own laws.
- C. Labeling helps people who want the information to find it when they need it.
- D. It showed that customers at some restaurants consumed fewer overall calories.
- E. Contained in the law is the requirement that restaurant chains with twenty or more restaurants show calorie information on menus and menu boards.
- F. As of today, only a few cities and states have labeling laws.

5 The following question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A

How are the reasons in this passage organized?

- A. chronologically
- B. main idea and details
- C. cause and effect
- D. compare and contrast

Part B

Which evidence supports the answer to Part A?

- A. First of all, a law similar to the federal law was passed in New York City, and it has shown no significant effect.
- B. In 2009, a survey was conducted to study how this law affected consumer food choices.
- C. On the other hand, the general counsel of the Competitive Enterprise Institute believes the government should not be involved in such actions.
- D. For example, figuring out the nutritional facts for each menu item can be very expensive.

- 6 The passage “Why Should Posting Calorie Information Be Required?” presents an argument about the menu labeling law that is part of the Affordable Care Act, and the passage “Labeling Rules Still in the Works” presents information about this same law. Think about the arguments, reasons, and supporting facts presented in both passages.

Then, write your own argument either for or against the labeling law. Be sure to include specific reasons and supporting facts from the sources to support your argument. Remember to use transitions and write in a formal style.

You may plan your argument in the space below. Write your argument on the following pages.

Plan

A series of 25 horizontal lines for writing.
