

Teacher Edition

Revised Edition

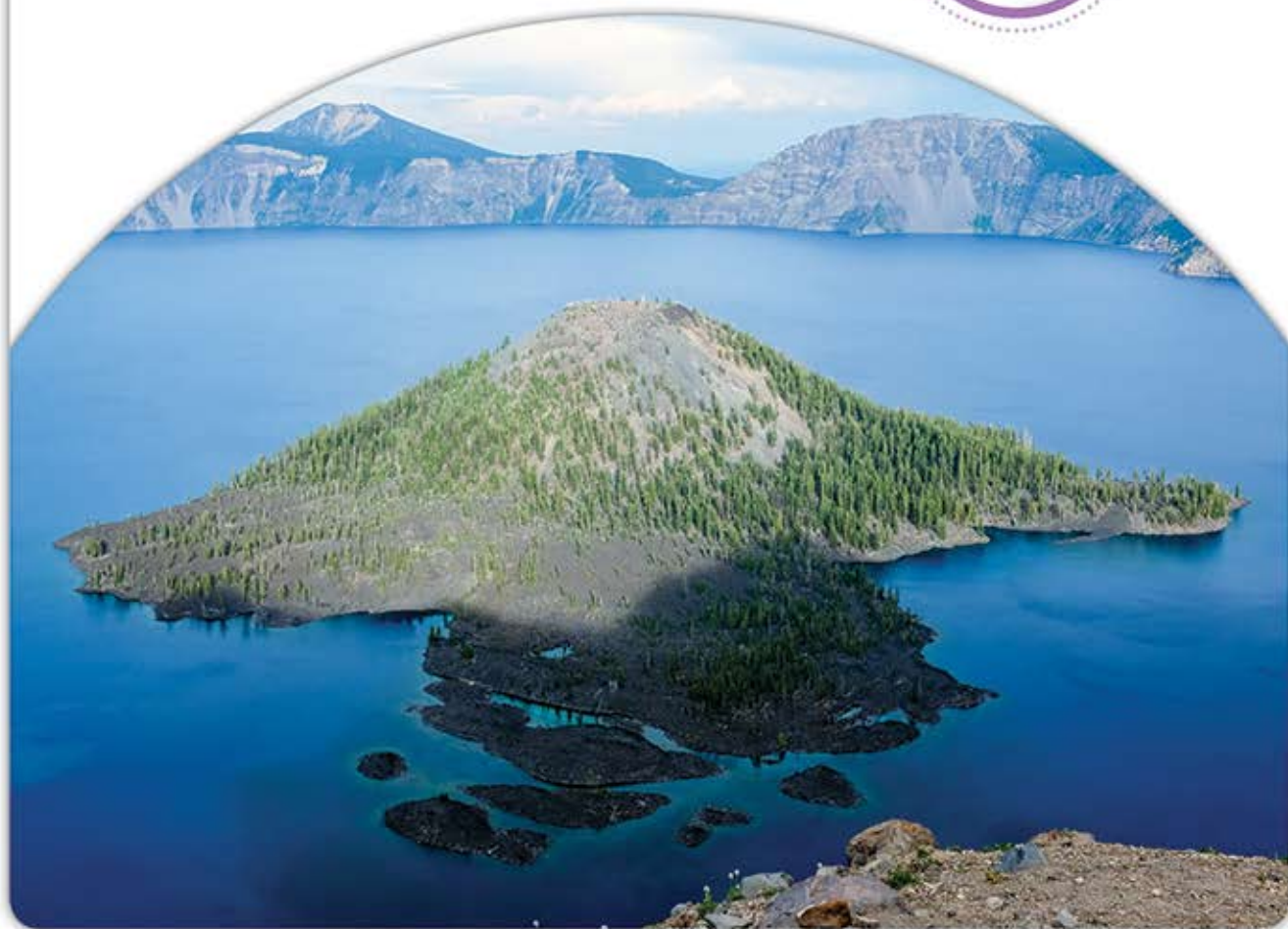
Performance

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English Language Arts

6



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Write an Argument

Student Edition pages 264–279

LESSON OVERVIEW

Objectives

Students will:

- write arguments with clearly stated claims.
- support a claim with organized reasons and relevant evidence.
- use transition words to show connections among claims and reasons.
- provide a strong conclusion.
- revise and edit writing to include varying sentence patterns.

Discussion Questions

- Why do authors write arguments?
- How can you tell if an author wrote an effective argument?
- How is writing an argument different from writing a story?

Differentiation

Lesson Support For students who struggle using relevant evidence to support claims, show how transition words can help. Point out how *Because* in the claim connects the first part of the sentence to the second part. Show how irrelevant evidence would not make sense by reading aloud the following sentence: “Because *my jersey number is 23*, I know I could make a great contribution to your team.” Have students explain why this new detail is not relevant. (It doesn’t tell why the speaker would be an asset to the basketball team.)

If students need practice writing conclusions, find a sample persuasive essay and remove its conclusion. Have them read the essay carefully and use the graphic organizer to map out the information. Prompt students to write a conclusion by asking “What does the claim say? What are the main points? How can we sum up the most important parts?”

Key Terms

argument
claim
fact
transition

Lesson Extension After students have written and supported an argument in item 6 of the Lesson Practice, challenge them to write an essay in support of the opposing argument. This task may require some outside research to locate supporting details for the opposing view.

Write an Argument

In this lesson, students are introduced to the process of writing clear and logical arguments to support a claim. They will learn how to structure their arguments with reasons, relevant evidence, and transitions.

Ask students to share an experience in which they tried to persuade an adult to let them go somewhere or do something. “What reasons did you use? Were they all related to what you wanted to do?” Point out that if students were to write down what they wanted and the reasons they should have it, they would have the outline of a written **argument**.

► Present a Claim

Have students recall the difference between a **fact** and an opinion. After reading about how to present a **claim**, ask: “Should your claim be a fact or an opinion? Why?” (It is an opinion because I am trying to persuade readers to think or act a certain way. If it were a fact, it could be proven, so I wouldn’t have to convince them.)

► Support the Claim

Explain what makes sources reliable. Note such examples as up-to-date scientific journals and encyclopedias, as well as Internet sites ending in .edu, .org, and .gov. Have a volunteer summarize why factual evidence makes an argument more believable using the sample paragraph as an example. (Facts can be proven. An opinion based on facts is more likely to be convincing; Lee uses statistics from her past performance to make her argument more persuasive.)

- **Organize Ideas** Prompt students to interpret the organizational structure laid out in the chart by asking: “Why does Lee include the reason about being a top scorer first?” (It is the most relevant and important.) “How might it have weakened her essay if she included Reason 3 first?” (It would not have been good to start with this reason because it is not the most convincing; it might have made the coach doubt her argument.) “How might Lee use this chart to write her essay?” (She can put each reason and set of supporting details into a new paragraph.)

- **Use Transitions** Explain that a **transition** can appear at the beginning of a sentence to connect it to the sentence before it. For example: “I can make a big contribution to the team. For instance, I already know how to play the game.” Other times, a transition can be used to connect one part of a sentence to another: “I do not belong to any other teams; therefore, I will have time to devote to practice.”

Pair students and have them add transitions to connect some of the sentences from the graphic organizer. (For example, three of the other team members live on my street. Therefore, we can share rides to games and practice.)

- **Style and Audience** Ask: “How can you make your writing formal?” After students share their ideas, explain that when writing formally, they should consider vocabulary, tone, and sentence formation. Formal writing includes more advanced vocabulary, a serious tone, and complete sentences. Contractions are usually avoided as well.

▲ **Common Errors** Students may include incomplete sentences in their arguments. Explain that a complete sentence has a subject and a predicate. Write: Everyone in the room with sneakers. Note that *this* is not a sentence because there is no predicate. Have students rewrite the fragment as a complete sentence. Repeat with a sentence missing a subject.

► Provide a Conclusion

Read the information about conclusions with students. Then have them look back at the claim and conclusion in the essay. Ask: “How do the claim and conclusion relate to each other? How does the conclusion relate to the points made in the essay?” (The conclusion restates the claim in different words. It also includes some of the information from the essay about how Lee would be an asset to the team.)

► Revise and Edit

Model how to use the first item on the checklist to evaluate the sample essay. Have volunteers follow your lead to answer the remaining checklist questions for other aspects of the sample essay outline.

▲ **ELL Support** To help English language learners understand the checklist, have them work with a proficient English speaker to highlight in different colors where each item in the checklist is located in the sample essay.

▲ **Journal Prompt** Think about a time when you tried to persuade a family member to do something. Explain how you could have used reasons and evidence to make your argument more effective.

Language Spotlight • Vary Sentence Patterns

Have students read about the different ways to vary their sentences. Ask a volunteer to change the sentences in the second row. (For example: The team played games on Saturday and Sunday. They won games on both days.) Encourage students to use varied sentence patterns in their own writing.

Standards Focus

Present and Evaluate Arguments Read the first paragraph of “Why Should Posting Calorie Information Be Required?” in order to model using appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation. Then have students use these speaking skills as they work in groups to read and evaluate the arguments they wrote either for or against the law. As students speak, have listeners take notes so they can later evaluate the speaker’s argument and the evidence and details that support the claim.

2 COACHED EXAMPLE

Using the Passage

Students will read a persuasive text designed to convince readers that no one in the food industry should be required to post calorie information. Encourage students to draw on what they learned in **Getting the Idea** to identify claims and supporting evidence.



Text Complexity Details

“Why Should Posting Calorie Information Be Required?”

Qualitative

LOW MIDDLE LOW **MIDDLE HIGH** HIGH

Implied purpose but can be inferred; some explicit connections between ideas; somewhat complex language that is occasionally unfamiliar and overly academic; some content knowledge of legal references; some references to outside ideas

Quantitative 1000L

Reader-Text-Task The text structure and use of transitions will help the reader follow the content and concepts. Although some of the text is complex, students will find sufficient information to analyze the author’s claim and locate text evidence to support their responses.

Answers

1. This question has two parts. Students will identify the author’s claim and then find text evidence to support it.

Part A D

Part B Possible responses: “I do not believe that anyone in the food industry should be required to post calorie information.” “Therefore, I believe requiring food businesses to post calorie information is an unnecessary and expensive law.”

Students’ answers should be drawn from the places where the claim chosen in Part A was stated.

2. Students will identify sentences that support the opinion that a labeling law is not a good idea.

A; C; E

Choices B and D are facts about the labeling law, not reasons why it is not a good idea. Choice F simply restates the opinion in the question.

3. Students will identify a source the author uses and explain how the source supports the argument.

Possible response: A study published in the *American Journal of Public Health* is reliable.

The study showed that there was no difference between the foods people chose to eat when the calorie information was and was not displayed. This showed that displaying calorie information does not affect people's eating habits, so there is no reason to pass the law.

The claim is that there should not be a labeling law. One reason is because it would not affect eating habits. The source supports this reason.

4. Students will choose the best sentence to add to the conclusion.

A

Choices B and C begin with transitions that add information or give examples, which are not used in a conclusion. Choice D is too informal.

3 LESSON PRACTICE

Using the Passage

Students will complete the **Lesson Practice** independently. The **Reading Guide** helps students monitor their comprehension while they read. Students can take notes in the margins, mark up the text, and think about key ideas.



Text Complexity Details

"Labeling Rules Still in the Works"

Qualitative

LOW MIDDLE LOW **MIDDLE HIGH** HIGH

Multiple purposes; complex organization and language that is somewhat unfamiliar and academic; requires moderate levels of content knowledge; some references to outside ideas

Quantitative 1070L

Reader-Text-Task Although the overall structure is complex, the paragraphs within the essay follow a consistent organization, which enables students to comprehend the information in smaller sections. Students will need to analyze the author's claim and reasons, and identify text evidence.

Answers

1. B (DOK 1)
2. C (DOK 2)
3. **Part A** A

Part B Possible response: The informative article gives both the pros and cons of labeling laws, so the author's claim is that neither has been proven so far. Sample text evidence: "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" and "As I have shown, many facts seem to support the implementation of such a law, but some do not." (DOK 3)

4. B; C; D (DOK 2)

5. **Part A** D

Part B C (DOK 3)

6. Responses will vary. Refer to the Informative and Argumentative Writing Rubric. Top-scoring student responses should:

- introduce a claim clearly in the introduction.
- include reasons and evidence from sources to support the claim.
- follow a logical pattern of organization.
- include a conclusion that is effective and memorable.
- formally express ideas using transitions.
- use correct spelling, grammar, capitalization, and punctuation. (DOK 4)