

Writing to Share

Unit 2:

Opinion Writing and Informative/Explanatory Writing

Lucy Calkins has created new Writing Workshop bundles for nonfiction writing. Many schools have copies of these units. The Unit 4-Argument bundle takes students through the process of argument. Unlike her other bundles, students are given a topic to write about-whether or not chocolate milk should be served in their school. They will synthesize information from a variety of sources, researching both arguments, and drafting persuasive letters to the school principal. Later, they will craft position papers addressed to a panel of administrators, parents and lunch personnel. In the final unit bend students will transfer the skills they have learned to an argument piece of their own choosing. Alternative text sets for other topics can be found at www.readingandwritingproject.com



November is... Family Literacy Month!

Get ready for quality family time!

The National Council for Family Literacy (NCFL) provides fun, interactive activities for families to do together **at home** to promote literacy.

Reading engagement at home builds a love for reading!

Please visit

<http://www.familit.org/activities> to view these free online literacy activities.

Spotlight on the CCSS

More to know about *Close Reading*

Here are 6 Close Reading Practices:

1. **Short worthy passages:** (3-9 paragraphs) Teacher selects passages that are complex and above the students' independent reading level. They must also be deeply understood by the teacher.
2. **Student rereading:** Students read independently and with a peer. The teacher circulates throughout the room, looking for independent text analysis.
3. **Limited frontloading:** There is no pre-teaching or building background knowledge.
4. **Text dependent questions:** Students find the evidence in the text, not from their personal experience.
5. **Annotation:** Teachers first model how to annotate text. Students then use these note-taking skills to support understanding (i.e. circling, starring, underlining).
6. **After-reading Tasks:** Students may write an argumentative piece and debate with peers.

Working with Words

Many of our fifth graders are at the *Derivational Relations Stage* of Word Study. It is more important than ever to link spelling to meaning. In addition to weekly assessments, you should administer a cumulative review every few weeks. You may:

- Ask students to both spell and define words.
- Ask students to generate words given a prefix, suffix or root. For example, the root *mal* should generate words such as *malignant*, *dismal*, *malice* and *malfunction*.
- Ask students to generate a related word in which a consonant or vowel is heard (*moisten/ toil*).
- Ask students to match meaning to elements (*pre/before, post/after*).
- Provide a sentence and ask students to supply or select the target word (*He loved magic so he wanted to be a magician*).

Technology Time

Check it out...



Newsela is a great current events website, and it's free! Users can register for free and select leveled non-fiction articles for students to read independently. The same stories are written at various levels for students in grades 3-12. They also answer brief, CCCS referenced questions. Coming soon...highlighting and annotating tools!

Bonkers for Books

What it *really* means to "read closely."

The authors of *Rigorous Reading*, by Nancy Frey and Douglas Fisher, share a clear instructional plan, built on research to support teachers' implementation of close reading in their classrooms. Also called "deep reading" or "analytic reading", teaching close reading will give your students another opportunity to examine a text and probe into its deeper meaning.

