Teaching Students Editorial Writing and Persuasive Reading

A Sample Unit of Lessons for Middle School Teachers

Jefferson County Public Schools
Version 2.0
WRITING AN EDITORIAL/PERSUASIVE READING

This unit combines a group of lessons designed to teach students the skills and strategies involved in reading persuasive texts and writing editorials. The unit was designed for middle school students, but lessons can easily be adapted for use with older or younger students.

Lessons vary in length: some will take fifteen minutes or less; others will take several periods to complete. The length of the session will depend on what your students already know how to do and the depth at which you want to take the lesson. These lessons address Kentucky Core Content for Assessment in the areas of Persuasive Reading and Transactive Writing.

In planning your unit, you will want to read through all of the lessons first to get an overall picture of the unit. Then, you may choose to eliminate some lessons and/or add lessons of your own to address the supporting skills most needed by your students. This unit is just one sample. There are many combinations of lessons that will make a successful unit.

The lessons do not depend on a particular textbook. Materials needed for each lesson are listed and include materials typically found in a middle school language arts classroom. The following lessons are included in the unit:

Lesson 1 Three Types of Editorials
Lesson 2 Distinguishing Between Informative and Persuasive Texts
Lesson 3 Embedded Question Reading Strategy
Lesson 4 Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion
Lesson 5 Contextual Redefinition
Lesson 6 Making Informed Judgments about Persuasive Texts
Lesson 7 Persuasive Techniques
Lesson 8 Using Persuasive Techniques
Lesson 9 Possible Sentences
Lesson 10 Getting Ideas for Topics
Lesson 11 Doing the Research
Lesson 12 Detecting Bias and Misinformation in Persuasive Text
Lesson 13 Detecting Bias and Misinformation in Persuasive Text
Lesson 14 Detecting Bias and Misinformation in Persuasive Text
Lesson 15: Anticipating Reader’s Needs
Lesson 16 Anticipating Reader’s Reactions
Lesson 17 Anticipating Reader’s Reactions
Lesson 18 Organizing Your Editorial
Lesson 19 Transitional Words and Phrases in Editorial Writing
Open Response Question
Lesson 20 Making Your Point Stronger
Lesson 21 Conclusions
Lesson 22 Editorial Headlines

Appendix Extensions and Accommodations for ECE and Other Diverse Learners
UNIT: Writing an Editorial/ Persuasive Reading

TOPIC: Three Types of Editorials, Lesson 1

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will learn about the variety of ways editorials are typically used in newspapers.

CORE CONTENT:
RD-M-3.0.11 Distinguish between informative and persuasive passages.
RD-M-3.0.1 Identify an author's purpose in persuasive materials.
RD-M-3.0.15 Identify the argument and supporting evidence.
RD-M-3.0.10 Connect information from a passage to students' lives and/or real world issues.

VOCABULARY: editorial, op-ed page, forum, syndicated column

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS: Samples of op-ed/editorial sections from The Courier-Journal or other American newspapers; copies of "Three Types of Editorials" graphic organizer.

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:
A good deal of confusion exists when it comes to defining what exactly constitutes an editorial. Editorials usually come in three varieties:

• Articles written by a newspaper's editorial board members expressing the paper's position on a local, national, or international issue currently in the news. Since these pieces are written by a group, a by-line indicating author is not included.

• Syndicated or locally written columns written by individuals, again expressing a position on a local, national, or international issue in the news. The author's name, and in some cases, a picture, are included in the column. In the case of The Courier-Journal, another example is the local issue-oriented "Your View" column, which appears in Wednesday's "Neighborhoods" section. The articles are written by readers and are typically of an editorial nature.

• Letters written by readers of the newspaper. In the case of Louisville's The Courier-Journal, this section is titled "Readers' Forum." The newspaper is providing a forum through which readers may comment on an issue or the way the paper has covered an issue.

Using the form at the end of this lesson as a graphic organizer, have students look for one example of each of the three types of editorials. Attempt to find a newspaper the class may be unfamiliar with, in terms of its layout. Local booksellers, such as Hawley-Cooke and Barnes and Noble, have a large section of major newspapers from around the country and world. It might be valuable to have a variety of papers on hand for students to
explore. Students should be able to determine *who* wrote each piece (members of the editorial board, individual, or reader) as well as the author's purpose.

**• TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:**
- [www.ncew.org](http://www.ncew.org) National Conference of Editorial Writers editorials from many different newspapers.
- To use examples of editorials other than the Courier-Journal
- [www.thepaperboy.com](http://www.thepaperboy.com) has on-line versions of newspapers from other U. S. cities and states
- The Internet Public Library [www.ipl.org/reading/news](http://www.ipl.org/reading/news) has English translations of newspapers from around the world.

**ASSESSING THE LEARNING:**
Review graphic organizers to see whether students understand the differences between the three types and whether they have comprehended the editorials they have chosen to read.
Three Types of Editorials

**Editorial Board**
Title of article:

What is the issue the members are addressing?

What is the position/opinion of the board on the issue?

What is your personal opinion on this issue?

**Editorial Columnist**
Title of article:

What is the issue the author is addressing?

What is the position/opinion of the author on the issue?

What is your personal opinion on this issue?

**Letter to the Editor (Written by a reader of the newspaper)**

What is the issue the author is addressing?

Is the letter about an issue in the news or the way a story was covered in the newspaper?

What is your personal opinion on the issue?
UNIT: Writing an Editorial/ Persuasive Reading

TOPIC: Distinguishing Between Informative and Persuasive Text, Lesson 2

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will learn about the differences between informative and persuasive text. Students will be able to identify informative and persuasive text.

CORE CONTENT:
RD-M-3.0.11 Distinguish between informative and persuasive passages.
RD-M-3.0.1 Identify an author’s purpose in persuasive materials.
RD-M-2.0.1 Identify an author’s purpose in informational materials.

VOCABULARY: editorial, feature article, persuade, inform

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS: Samples of editorials and feature articles (enough for partners or individuals); SOURCES--local newspaper, Kentucky Marker Papers, magazines, web sites (Vocal Point, Children’s Express)

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

• Explain to students that the difference between an editorial and a feature article is in the purpose of the piece.

• Share examples with whole class and guide them to see the purpose in each piece.

   Examples:
   Persuasive: Students should be allowed to wear shorts as part of their uniform.
   Informative: School uniform requirements in Colonial America.

   Persuasive: Pet owners should be required to spay or neuter their pets.
   Informative: Problems caused by pet overpopulation. (information in this article may persuade you to spay or neuter your pet, but it is not the main purpose of the piece.)

   Persuasive: Parents should be help accountable for truant children.
   Informative: Truancy rates have risen this year.

• Distribute copies of editorials and feature articles to class. Students can have their own, or partners can share. Have students read text and decide if it is an Editorial (primary purpose is to persuade) or Feature Article (primary purpose is to inform).

• Students should report to whole class as to the topic of their text and whether its main purpose is to persuade or inform. Teacher may want to keep track on board/overhead/chart paper.
• EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS (See Appendix for additional extensions/accommodations.)
For further explanation to ensure student understanding, relate feature articles and editorials to fact and opinion. Access student’s prior knowledge of these concepts.

• ENRICHMENT
  • Teacher may direct students to make a Venn Diagram comparing persuasive and informative text.
  • Teacher may have students bring in examples and create a bulletin board display.

• TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS
  • Students may use Inspiration to create Venn diagram
  • See list of Editorial web sites in Lesson 21 of this Unit.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING:
Students should be able to examine text and determine if it is persuasive or informative. Students may be required to bring in examples from newspapers, magazines, or web sites.
UNIT: Writing an Editorial/ Persuasive Reading

TOPIC: Embedded Question Reading Strategy, Lesson 3

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will activate metacognition strategies to achieve higher levels of comprehension (before, during, and after reading)

CORE CONTENT:
RD-M-3.0.8 Make predictions, draw conclusions, and make generalizations about what is read.
RD-M-3.0.9 Reflect on and evaluate what is read.
RD-M-3.0.15 Identify the argument and supporting evidence.
RD-M-3.0.5 Formulate questions to guide reading.
RD-M-3.0.12 Identify an author's opinion on a subject.
RD-M-3.0.14 Distinguish between fact and opinion.

VOCABULARY:
metacognition, prediction, self-monitoring, visualization

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS: Copies of “The Anguish of Exotic Birds” or another persuasive text with embedded questions related to key persuasive elements (See "Guidelines for Writing Embedded Questions for Persuasive Text.") Both of these handouts are included at the end of this lesson.

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:
• Begin the lesson by explaining that good readers use metacognition strategies before, during, and after reading. Metacognition, in essence, is the act of thinking about your own thinking practices. Good readers generally carry out an internal dialogue with themselves as they move through new material.

• The following fundamental inquiry questions might be posted somewhere in the room:

  How can we know if we understand what we read?
  What can we do to make sure we understand what we read?

• In addition, the following list of strategies may be posted to emphasize that skillful, effective readers use a variety of strategies to make sure they understand what they read:

  * self-monitoring for understanding
  * making, confirming, or disproving predictions
  * formulating and answering questions
  * rereading, retelling, or mentally replaying a scene
  * employing sensory imagery
  * noticing organizational patterns of text
  * making connections between text and personal experience
• Explain that students are about to read an editorial (or other persuasive text) that has had a variety of questions embedded throughout. These questions offer opportunities for students to summarize, self-question, and predict.

• EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS: (See Appendix for additional extensions/accommodations)
For those students needing intervention to bypass memory and comprehension difficulties, teach how to memorize small chunks of information by reading the passage, covering up the information and stating it verbally, checking self, writing down key words and connections to personal experiences.

• ENRICHMENT:
• In pairs or groups, students could find an editorial, embedding their own questions within. They could then answer their own questions or swap embedded question editorials with another group.

• TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:
Students will make the text a word processing document on their computers.
Students will change the color of unfamiliar words to blue and emotionally loaded words to red.
Students will answer questions in an indented block (1/2 inch in from the original margins).
Student answers should be in italicized style in a different font and one size larger than the body of the text.
Students could use clipart and/or downloaded images for visualizations.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING:
Analyze student work for comprehension of text.
Guidelines for Writing Embedded Questions for Persuasive Text

When to embed a question

Draw attention to (especially at the beginning of a text):
- the lead
- descriptions of the problem and the writer's reaction
- text features, such as italics, line breaks, or bulleted statements
- statistical information
- conclusions that are implied, not stated directly

Include several prediction points:
- when the author’s position begins to develop
- just before the suggested solution
- just the conclusion

Ask students to pose questions about and identify:
- historical or cultural references that may be unfamiliar (e.g., Jim Crow laws, manga, Louis Armstrong)
- specialized language
- the more confusing sections of the text and how they coped with the confusion
- the use of quotes

Have students highlight:
- unfamiliar vocabulary
- words that establish tone or mood
- persuasive techniques
- evidence supporting author's opinion

Ask students to paraphrase long, difficult sentences or retell incidents

Typical embedded questions

What kind of evidence do you think the author will use next? Make a prediction.
Stop and visualize X. Draw a sketch of your visualization.
What are you wondering at this point? Write a question.
Highlight emotionally loaded words as you read this editorial.
What does the author mean when she says, "We must resist corporate use of public space"?
The Anguish of Exotic Birds
By: A middle school student

When his wing is bruised and his bosom sore---
When he beats his bars and he would be free;
It's not a carol of joy or glee,
But a prayer from his heart's deep core,
But a plea,
That upward he flings---
I know why the caged bird sings!

Paul Lawrence Dunbar
(son of two runaway slaves)

While reading, highlight any unfamiliar vocabulary and circle emotionally loaded words.

It is a very depressing fact, but the average exotic bird spends only two years with the same person. Because jungle birds may bite, chew, and are really loud, they are continuously passed on from house to house. Often, they are warehoused in a small closet of a room or have their cages covered all the time. Can you imagine staring at nothing but a sheet all day?

Why do you think the author uses the word "warehoused?"

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Large birds, like Macaws, can live for around 100 years. A medium bird, like a Lovebird, can live for about 50 years and small birds, like Parakeets, can live around 15 years. If one of these birds ends up in an unfavorable environment, they may be for a long lifetime of agony! The abuse many of these magnificent, brilliant, and sociable birds experience is greater than that reserved for prisoners. Being a bird owner myself, I find this very sad!
Write one question you have at this point.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

The manner in which these breathtakingly exotic birds are captured is horrendous! Hunters will stop at nothing to catch exotic birds. These cruel, ruthless hunters will catch a bird, hack off bits and pieces of their wings, and tether them to the ground so the poor victim can cry out to their mate. Since birds are so social and loyal, this, many times, sends other nearby birds into waiting nets. It's hard to believe that these kind of things happen!

If you find that appalling, then you don't want to hear this! The way these so-called hunters smuggle the birds from their jungle home is pure evil! Sometimes they tape their beaks shut, tie their wings and feet together, and stuff them in unbelievable places like floorboards, wheel wells, and trunks.

The other times they are stuffed in claustrophobic crates and cages with other birds they don't even know, with little if any food and water. The most heinous part about this is only one out of five birds make it to their unwanted destination. The people who pay these dreadful hunters and smugglers for their own pleasure are just as much at fault. And to think people sometimes wonder why birds peck at their feet and feathers, and are sometimes "neurotic!" Wouldn't you if you were put through that? It is sheer evil.

This is probably the most barbarous thing you've ever heard, but the way common, domesticated birds are kept is just as awful. Birds are forced to mate and sometimes one of the mates usually winds up killing one or the other. On a par with that, the way they are kept in "storage" until someone buys them is pretty awful; it resembles a puppy mill!

A few "mistakes in logic" are made in these last couple of paragraphs. Find one and write it in as an example.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

These "parrot mill" conditions are very stressful for the birds. They are stuffed in a room with hundreds of
other birds. It sort of makes me afraid, thinking about how these birds are treated, and where my Parakeet came from. I don't know if he was yanked out his jungle or if he was raised in one of those gruesome parrot mills.

In the wild, these magnificent creatures mate for life. They groom each other and share nesting and feeding duties. When they are captured, they are separated forever. To them, that is worst than death. These birds should not be bought, but rescued. They belong in the wild, not in a cage.

What do you think the author should recommend to his readers?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

The next time you go to the pet store, take a look around. Ask the managers where the birds came from. Call the Better Business Bureau and ask if there have been any complaints about the store. Don't shop in a place that contributes to this severely sinister problem...Bird abuse.

What was the purpose of the quote at the beginning of this piece?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Below, sketch one scene you were able to visualize during your reading.

Adapted from:
UNIT: Writing an Editorial/ Persuasive Reading

TOPIC: Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion, Lesson 4

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will learn to read persuasive sentences carefully to distinguish between fact and opinion.

CORE CONTENT:
RD-M 3.0.14 Distinguish between fact and opinion.
RD-M 3.0.17 Identify bias and/or misinformation.
RD-M 3.0.9 Reflect on and evaluate what is read.

VOCABULARY: bias, fact, opinion

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS: Samples of sentences or any other type of persuasive text available.

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

• Explain that the author’s purpose of persuasive text is attempting to get the reader to share the author’s view on the topic. Readers need to discern between fact and opinion to make an informed decision about the topic.

• Provide students with the sentences on that handout at the end of this lesson or another selection of sentences that support the author’s opinion as well as provide facts about the specific topic.

• Have students read and label sentences as fact or opinion.

• Allow time for students to discuss how they discerned between fact and opinion.

• EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS: (See Appendix for additional extensions/accommodations)
To increase retention of concept, make statements aloud and have students identify orally each statement as a fact or opinion.

ASSESSING THE LEARNER:
Students will write a journal entry explaining the difference between fact and opinion.
Fact  Opinion

____  ____  In the Louisville area, gasoline prices averaged a $1.82 a gallon during the Memorial Day weekend.

____  ____  Louisville residents are paying too much for gasoline.

____  ____  Gasoline prices will never be as low as $1.29 a gallon again.

____  ____  Most gasoline stations provide unleaded, unleaded plus, and super unleaded gasoline.

____  ____  Louisville residents pay a higher price for gasoline than Oldham County residents because of reformulated gasoline.
UNIT: Writing an Editorial/ Persuasive Reading

TOPIC: Contextual Redefinition, Lesson 5

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will become acquainted with new vocabulary in persuasive reading text (before, during, and after reading).

CORE CONTENT:
RD-M-3.0.4 Know the meanings of common prefixes and suffixes to comprehend unfamiliar words.
RD-M-3.0.8 Make predictions, draw conclusions, and make generalizations about what is read.
RD-M-3.0.10 Connect information from a passage to students' lives and/or real world issues.

VOCABULARY:
Will vary according to the text material used.

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS: Chart paper, overhead projector, or chalkboard; persuasive text.

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

Contextual Redefinition is a strategy that allows readers to make informed guesses about the meaning of words and to monitor those guesses by checking for accuracy as reading continues. In essence, the context in which the word is presented enables readers to predict a word's meaning by making connections between their prior knowledge and the text. Writers often use clues such as the use of synonyms, familiar expressions, or comparison and contrast with other concepts may provide readers with additional guidance.

- **Select unfamiliar words.** Identify words students will encounter in text that are central to comprehending important concepts and that may present trouble for students as they read.

  *Example:* Imagine students are about to read an editorial on the portrayal of violence in television and film. Words such as *desensitized, mimic, gratuitous, depiction,* and *jolts* might appear in such a text. These are words that may very well be unfamiliar to most middle grades students.

- **Write a sentence.** Provide a context for each word with appropriate clues to the word's meaning. If such a context already exists, use it.
Example:

After watching several movies in which monsters jumped out at characters, Jack became desensitized and no longer jumped in his seat. *(The prefix "de" usually means what? What's the opposite or synonym of desensitize?)*

Tyron attempted to mimic the actions of his older brother.

My uncle says there's too much gratuitous violence on most prime-time TV shows.

The movie gave an inaccurate depiction of a normal American high school.

I counted 15 different jolts in the opening scene of the movie, Exit Wounds.

- *Present the words in isolation.* Using a transparency or chalkboard, ask students to provide a meaning for each word. Students defend their guesses and, as a group, come to a consensus as to the best definition. An accurate meaning may be offered, but many times the guesses might be humorous or "off the wall"; this is part of the process of realizing the importance of context in vocabulary learning.

- *Present the words in a short paragraph.* Be sure to present the word in its appropriate context. Again, students should be asked to offer guesses as to the meaning of each word and to defend their definitions. In this way, less able readers will be able to experience the thinking processes involved in deriving a definition from context. In essence, students act as models of appropriate reading behavior for one another.

Example:

Studies have consistently proven that frequent exposure to violence in film and television causes viewers to become desensitized. After watching twelve murders occur every evening on network drama series, the sounds of gunfire may simply fade into background noise.

- *Dictionary verification.* Students then consult a dictionary to verify the meaning.

**EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS:** *(See Appendix for additional extensions/accommodations)*

For the student preferring material presented visually, create a word wall of the new vocabulary words and their definitions.

**ASSESSING THE LEARNING:**

Observation of student reasoning skills.

*Adapted from:*

Readance, John E. *Prereading Activities for Content Area Reading and Learning.* International Reading Association, 2000
UNIT: Writing an Editorial/ Persuasive Reading

TOPIC: Making informed judgments about persuasive text, Lesson 6

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will learn to read persuasive material carefully to make an informed judgment (during and after reading).

CORE CONTENT:
RD-M-3.0.15 Identify the argument and supporting evidence.
RD-M-3.0.8 Make predictions, draw conclusions, and make generalizations about what is read.
RD-M-3.0.10 Connect information from a passage to students' lives and/or real world issues.

VOCABULARY: evidence, opinion, judgment, perspective

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS: Any type of persuasive text available, such as “Guns in Hands of the Blind is a Shot in the Dark.”

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

• Explain that persuasive reading materials are created with the intent of promoting a certain perspective and convincing readers to embrace that view. Readers need to carefully weigh the evidence to make an informed decision about their own opinion on the matter.

• Have students create, or provide them with, a three-column notetaking form headed EVIDENCE FOR/EVIDENCE AGAINST/PERSONAL OPINION. A sample of this form appears at the end of this lesson.

• Provide students with the editorial, "Guns in Hands of the Blind is a Shot in the Dark," or another piece of persuasive text which clearly provides evidence supporting the author's opinion.

• Have students record their thinking about the topic as they read the piece.

• Provide time for a class discussion to allow students to sort out their thinking and develop a more informed opinion.

•EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS:
(See Appendix for additional extensions/accommodations)
To bypass written language difficulties, model use of and provide template for the three-column notetaking form. Allow students to use brief statements and/or single words to fill in their forms.
• **ENRICHMENT:** Ask students to think of some additional evidence that would add weight to the argument presented in their text.

• **TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:**
  Students may use Word processing software to create a three-column note form.

**ASSESSING THE LEARNING:**
Review student forms for accuracy in determining evidence for and against.

*Adapted from:* Harvey, Stephanie and Anne Goudvis. 2000. *Strategies That Work: Teaching Comprehension To Enhance Understanding.* York, ME: Stenhouse
Guns in hands of the blind is a shot in the dark

By: A middle school student
Originally published in a local school newspaper

Guns! Guns! Guns! That's all anyone ever hears about these days. Some teenager shot and killed 15 of his classmates. A little boy picks up a gun and accidentally shoots his older brother. When does it stop? Maybe never.

Recently people have suggested that disabled citizens should be allowed to own and carry guns. Now I am not saying this is a good or bad idea without considering both sides of the issue. But there is the obvious danger of innocent people getting hurt. Still, disabled people should have the same rights as any other man or woman.

If someone breaks into their home, they will need as much or more protection than anyone else. But guns are dangerous, even when held by your typical American. You hear of children getting shot because they didn't know how to properly handle a gun; imagine if you were blind or deaf. A police officer might yell, "Stop! Don't shoot," and a deaf person wouldn't hear him. What would you do if you were deaf and thought your life was in danger? Well, you would shoot the intruder. Who wouldn't? You wouldn't know it was wrong until too late.

What if someone tried to rob a blind person on the street and this blind person whips out his gun and starts shooting. But if they can't see who robbed them they would just be shooting aimlessly around and could kill anyone nearby.

What then? You won't get many police officers or judges that will charge a blind man with murder since he couldn't see. It's not his fault.

Wrong!

Tell that to the victim's family. If disabled people are allowed the dispensation of carrying guns, then they should also pay the consequences for their actions, no exceptions made.

Last month a blind woman was robbed on the street and she started shooting at a tree. Well, that tree could have been a person.

I think it's a great idea that disabled people have special rights, but not at the risk of innocent people. I'm not sure being armed is an entirely good idea unless they go through special training and are closely supervised. An organization should be appointed to set up special training facilities where they would have to spend
a certain amount of hours learning about safety precautions and how to shoot the weapon correctly.

We should not forget that the Second Amendment to the Constitution states that "a well regulated militia being necessary to the security of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed."

Disabled people should be allowed to own guns and have them in their house for protection but they should not be allowed to carry them in public unless they have had the special training. This way the safety of everyone is assured.
Example of a completed three-column form including responses to “Guns in hands of the blind is a shot in the dark”:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVIDENCE FOR</th>
<th>EVIDENCE AGAINST</th>
<th>PERSONAL OPINION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Second Amendment to the Constitution defines the right for American people to bear arms.</td>
<td>The deaf may not hear a police officer yelling, “Don’t shoot!”</td>
<td>This seems an unlikely situation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The disabled may have even greater reason to own weapons because criminals may target them.</td>
<td>The blind may be able to see the criminal and may shoot an innocent bystander instead.</td>
<td>The case of the woman shooting at the tree makes me thing the legally blind should not have access to guns.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
UNIT: Writing an Editorial/ Persuasive Reading

TOPIC: Persuasive Techniques, Lesson 7

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will learn about common persuasive techniques.
(before reading)

CORE CONTENT:
RD-M-3.0.16 Identify commonly used persuasive techniques.

VOCABULARY: propaganda, expert authority, emotional appeal, statistics, bandwagon, testimonial, call to action, rhetorical question, repetition, prediction, cause and effect

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS: Various advertisements representing the persuasive techniques; various editorials; handout “Persuasive Techniques”

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:
• Teacher will present two or more persuasive techniques a day as mini-lessons. Students will keep notes in their notebook/journal/folder.
• Students will be required to find examples that relate to the vocabulary.

• EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE

 billboard magazine, etc. Tape several commercials to show in class and discuss. Include advertisements from material materials.

• ENRICHMENT:
• Hang index cards from ceiling with persuasive technique on one side, and example on the other.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bandwagon</th>
<th>Most Americans believe education is a top priority for out tax dollars.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

• Play a memory/concentration game. Place cards on board. One side of card is a number; on the other is the term of a persuasive technique or an example. Student teams take turns choosing two cards to flip over. If the term and the example match, the cards remain exposed and the team gets a point. Play continues until all cards are matched.

• Create a bulletin board display with the samples students bring in.
• TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:
  • Students may create concentration game using HyperStudio
  • Students may use AppleWorks to make a database of persuasive techniques and ads. Scan ads and insert in database as multimedia field.
  • The Center for Media Literacy [http://www.medialit.org/otersites.html#teachers] has links to many examples of print and TV ads, past and present.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING:
Examination of student notebooks, samples that students bring in, teacher observation
Persuasive Techniques

These are the common techniques used to persuade the reader. The first four are listed in the Core Content and are likely to appear on the test.

**BANDWAGON**
“Using the argument that because everyone is doing it, you should, too” *(Reading Teacher’s Book of List)*.

Every kid loves pizza, so our cafeteria should serve it every day.

**TESTIMONIAL**
“Using the testimony or statement of someone to persuade you to think or act as he or she does.” *(Reading Teacher’s Book of List)*

Bob has been in three different middle schools, and he claims our cafeteria has the best pizza.

**EXPERT OPINION**
Using quotes and statements from a person considered to be an expert on the topic.

Sally Jones, the Health Inspector, said after her visit to our cafeteria, “You have wonderfully clean facilities.”

**STATISTICS**
Using research to support the writer’s view.

According to a Middle School Health survey, only 85% of adolescents consume lunch.

**CALL TO ACTION**
Encouraging the reader to do something about the issue being addressed.

All of us need to eat lunch in our cafeteria each day.

**EMOTIONAL APPEAL**
Using details to create an emotional response from the reader (pity, disgust, fear, anger, etc.).

When you skip a meal, your body begins converting energy into fat in an effort to keep from starving.

**RHETORICAL QUESTION**
Using a question to get the reader’s attention and focus the purpose.

Do you enjoy the sound of your stomach growling?

**REPETITION**
Repeating a word or phrase throughout the writing.

Hunger. It affects all of us at some point in the day. Hunger. Our growing bodies need fuel to help us function. Hunger. It is keeping many of us from achieving our best in school.
PREDICTION
Predicting the outcome of the situation.
   If we do not take our eating habits seriously, our grades will drop and our future will be doomed.

CAUSE AND EFFECT
Stating the effect that something may have.
   Because not enough students are eating in the cafeteria, our choices of food items have been limited.

Sources
UNIT: Writing an Editorial/ Persuasive Reading

TOPIC: Using Persuasive Techniques, Lesson 8

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will demonstrate their understanding of persuasive techniques.

CORE CONTENT:
WR-M-1.4 Transactive Writing
RD-M-3.0.16 Identify commonly used persuasive techniques (e.g., expert opinion, statistics, testimonial, bandwagon).

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS: “Techniques and Issues” sheet, cut apart so that there are enough for each student in your class to be able to pull out one issue and one technique out of a hat. (Feel free to adapt the issues to meet the needs of your students.)

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:
• Once students have learned the basic persuasive techniques, tell them that they will be applying this knowledge to a writing activity.

• Have two envelopes/boxes/hats. One will contain the persuasive techniques, the other the issues.

• Students will draw out one technique and one issue. They will then role play then write a few sentences in their notebooks using the technique for the issue. They may choose to be for or against the issue.

• Students will then share to class.

EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS: (See Appendix for additional extensions/accommodations.) For those students with articulation challenges, allow them to work with a peer who can perform the speaking parts.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING:
Writing to learn; notebook entry; teacher observations
TECHNIQUES
BANDWAGON
TESTIMONIAL
RHETORICAL QUESTION
REPETITION
EMOTIONAL APPEAL
PREDICTION
CALL TO ACTION
STATISTICS
EXPERT TESTIMONY
CAUSE AND EFFECT

ISSUES
SCHOOL DANCES
VIDEO GAMES
SCHOOL UNIFORMS
MOVIE RATINGS
CURFEWS
DETENTION
HOMEWORK
PARENTS
GRADES
LOCKERS
UNIT: Writing an Editorial/ Persuasive Reading

TOPIC: Possible Sentences, Lesson 9

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will become acquainted with new vocabulary in persuasive reading text (before, during, and after reading).

CORE CONTENT:
RD-M-3.0.4 Know the meanings of common prefixes and suffixes to comprehend unfamiliar words.
RD-M-3.0.8 Make predictions, draw conclusions, and make generalizations about what is read.

VOCABULARY:
Will vary according to the text material used.

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS: Chart paper, overhead projector, or chalkboard; persuasive text.

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:
Possible Sentences is a combination vocabulary/prediction activity designed to acquaint students with new vocabulary in their reading, guide them in verifying the accuracy of the statements they generate, and arouse curiosity concerning the passage to be read. Possible Sentences is best used when unfamiliar vocabulary is mixed with familiar vocabulary.

- **Determine the key vocabulary in the persuasive text that students are about to read.** For example, in an editorial about society and the elderly, the following concepts might be selected as most important:

  - The American population is aging. Lower mortality rates due to advanced medical care and lower birth rates are among the many factors contributing to this phenomenon.
  - The need for workers in geriatric services and the health care industry will inevitably increase in coming years.
  - It is questionable whether the current Social Security system will be able to sustain such growth. The system needs to be revamped so that our aging citizens may approach their later years without financial fear.

- **List key vocabulary.** In order to lead students to the above concepts, you might list the following vocabulary on the chalkboard, pronouncing each word as you write it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Aging of America</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mortality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phenomenon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>geriatric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inevitably</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>questionable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sustain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>revamped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>financial</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• **Elicit sentences.** Ask students to select at least two words from the list and formulate a sentence using the words. The resulting sentences must be ones they think might be in the text. It is useful to model a possible sentence and the thinking required in formulating one. Remind students that they might start by looking for familiar prefixes and suffixes in the new vocabulary. These may offer clues to word meaning. Record student sentences verbatim, even if the information is not correct, and underline the words used from the list. Students may use words already in sentences, provided that a new context is created. Cease recording the sentences after all words have been used, or when the students can produce no more. Following are some sentences that might be elicited during Possible Sentence using the above example:

A) You won't always be able to sustain that kind of energy.  
B) Senior citizens often have financial difficulties.  
C) My grandmother sees a geriatric doctor.  
D) Sometimes older people think teenagers have bad mortality.  
E) It's questionable whether Social Security will be around ten years from now.

• **Read to verify sentences.** Have students read the text selection for the explicit purpose of verifying the accuracy of their possible sentences.

• **Evaluate sentences.** After the reading, have students evaluate each sentence. The text selection may be used as a reference. Evaluate sentences according to their accuracy, and refine or omit those that are incorrect. Such discussion calls for careful reading, and judgments of the accuracy of the generated sentences must be defended. Thus, students model their thinking for one another. Examining the possible sentences listed earlier, sentences (A), (B), (C), and (E) may be accepted as they stand. Sentence (D) will have to be modified because, even though they may sound similar, *mortality* and *morality* have different meanings. The sentence could be modified as follows: Sometimes older people worry about the morality of teenagers. However, students should then be challenged to use mortality correctly in a sentence.

• **Generate new sentences.** After evaluation and modification of the original sentences are accomplished, ask students for new sentences. New sentences are generated with the intent of extending student understanding of the text concepts. As these sentences are dictated, have students check them for accuracy, using the text selection for confirmation. Students should record all final acceptable sentences in their notebooks or journals.

• **EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS:** (See Appendix for additional extensions/accommodations)  
To eliminate written output difficulties, permit students to dictate their responses, and have someone else transcribe for them. To help increase level of success, provide students with dictionaries in order to look up the differing definitions, selecting which they think is appropriate for the text.
• TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:
  • Students could create AppleWorks slide shows that have the unfamiliar word on one slide and the word used in a sentence on the next slide.
  • Sound may also be added so that, as the word is presented on the slide, it is also pronounced.
  • Students could use AppleWorks spreadsheet to create a crossword puzzle based on the new vocabulary (writing a sentence with the vocabulary word missing as the clues).

ASSESSING THE LEARNING:
Observation of student reasoning skills; review of journal/notebook.

Adapted from:
Readance, John E.  *Prereading Activities for Content Area Reading and Learning.*
International Reading Association, 2000.
UNIT: Writing an Editorial/ Persuasive Reading

TOPIC: Getting Ideas for Topics, Lesson 10

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will learn ways to generate possible topics for editorial writing.

CORE CONTENT: WR-M-1.4 Transactive Writing

VOCABULARY: perceive, difficulty, solutions, implement, evaluate, explore, analyze, recognize

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS: Newspapers and/or news-oriented magazines, such as Time for Kids, or issue-oriented trade books, such as the Opposing Viewpoints series, transparency of steps in Getting an Idea for Addressing a Problem.

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

- Explain to students that the first step in writing an editorial is to recognize that a problem exists either in the local community, state, nation, or world. Allow students to peruse current informational texts to find a problem that intrigues them.
- Next, the students must analyze the problem, breaking it down into its smaller components. They must be able to define the problem in a way that readers will understand.
- After the problem is clearly defined, a writer should explore possible solutions to the problem and evaluate each solution as to how effective it might be.
- It is the responsibility of the writer to select the best solution and focus on that. However, the other possibilities should also be described within the piece so that the reader will see that the writer has explored every possible avenue.
- Finally, the writer should discover how to actually implement the selected course of action.

EXAMPLE OF HOW A WRITER MIGHT ADDRESS A PROBLEM: MINIMUM WAGE

PROBLEM I PERCEIVE: A lot of adults I know are working two jobs to make enough money for their families. Some of them are working 60-70 hours a week. This is causing them to feel tired all the time, and they are not able to spend quality time with their children.

DEFINING THE PROBLEM: Minimum wage, set by the U.S. Department of Labor, should be increased to a level that will allow American workers, working one full-time job, to live comfortably and support their families.
POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS: Minimum wage increased to at least $10.00 an hour and raised yearly to reflect cost of living increase; more vacation days for workers; increased wages for overtime work; corporations taxed at higher rates with revenue placed into a worker's fund.

SELECT THE BEST SOLUTION: It seems to me that the best solution would be for the current minimum wage rate to be increased immediately. This would have to be legislated by the government because it's not likely that businesses would do this on their own.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT: A congressional act would need to be passed. In order for this to happen, voters would need to demand a change. I will encourage readers to speak out in favor of a higher minimum wage.

- Have students read a persuasive text that explores a problem, offers a solution, and suggests ways to implement change. Students then should point out how the writer addressed each step. The handout on page 35 could be used as a graphic organizer.

- Then, each student should complete the handout on page 36 for an editorial that he/she will write.

**EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS:** *(See Appendix for additional extensions/accommodations)*

To increase student involvement with the reading and discussing, pair the diverse learner with a student reading on grade level with a history of high academic achievement.

**TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:**

- Using Inspiration, students could fill out a teacher-created template of the included web.
- More technology-advanced students could create the web from scratch using appropriate graphics to illustrate their selections.
- Students could use HyperStudio to create a hub and spoke stack that links the web topics [I perceive, define terms, analyze, and explore solutions] to cards containing student responses.
GETTING AN IDEA FOR ADDRESSING A PROBLEM

PERCEIVE a felt difficulty or recognize a problem exists

ANALYZE the problem, including attempts at a definition

EXPLORE possible solutions and EVALUATE them

SELECT the best solution

DISCOVER how to implement the selected course of action
Title of my persuasive text: ____________________________________________

Author: ____________________________________________________________

The problem the writer addresses:

How the writer defines the problem:

The solution(s) the writer suggests:

How the writer suggests the solution should be implemented:

My own opinion of the issue:

NAME___________________________________________________________

TOPIC OF MY EDITORIAL _________________________________________
The problem that I am addressing:

My analysis of the problem:

My solution(s) to the problem and my evaluation of each solution:

Describe how your solution should be implemented:
UNIT: Writing an Editorial/Persuasive Reading

TOPIC: Doing the Research, Lesson 11

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will learn how to use expository text.

CORE CONTENT:
RD-M-4.0.11 Locate and apply information for a specific purpose.
WR-M-1.4 Transactive Writing

VOCABULARY: expository, narrative

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS: Selection of expository and narrative texts.

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

• Explain to students the difference between expository text and narrative text.

• Allow students time to examine the samples of expository and narrative text provided.

• Have students list the differences between expository and narrative texts.

• Provide time for a class discussion of their findings. The discussion should emphasize how the expository text allows researchers to read only necessary information for their research topic by using the format of the expository text including the introduction, table of contents, glossary, and the index.

• Give students a specific question to answer using the format of the expository text to find the answer.

• Students will locate information related to their individual editorial topics.

EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS: (See Appendix for additional extensions/accommodations)
For organizational skills support, have students use webs to organize their research data and information on expository and narrative text.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING: Students will be assessed after finding the answer to the question using the expository text.

Adapted from:
Portalupi, Joann. Fletcher, Ralph. Nonfiction Craft Lessons: Teaching Information Writing K-8
UNIT: Writing an Editorial/ Persuasive Reading

TOPIC: Detecting Bias and Misinformation in Persuasive Text, Lesson 12

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will learn how to use the Internet as a credible source for persuasive text.

CORE CONTENT: RD-M-3.0.17 Identify bias and/or misinformation.

VOCABULARY: reliability, credibility, affiliation

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

• Explain to students that materials on the Internet do not need approval for content before going out to the public. Allow class time for students to discuss, in small groups, how this impacts the materials used for research on a persuasive piece of writing.

• Share the discussion in whole group.

• Allow class time for students to discuss, in small groups, why they would visit a particular Internet site for a persuasive piece of writing.

• Share the discussion in whole group. Record a list of reasons from the discussion. The list should include but not be limited to facts, opinions, arguments, information, statistics, descriptions, and support.

• Explain to students that choosing a credible Internet source is possible. Ask students to consider how they choose a text for research.

EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS: (See Appendix for additional extensions/accommodations)
For those diverse learners with limited access to the internet, schedule time in the computer lab where students are given the opportunity to access information on the worldwide web. This will aid in their understanding of using cyberspace as a resource.

ENRICHMENT/TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS: Students will find an Internet site that discusses credibility and turn in a written piece about what they discovered.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING: Writing to learn: Students will write a journal entry about how they choose a text for research and how this may relate to choosing a credible Internet source.
UNIT: Writing an Editorial/ Persuasive Reading

TOPIC: Detecting Bias and Misinformation in Persuasive Text, Lesson 13

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will learn how to check credibility of an Internet site.

CORE CONTENT:
RD-M-3.0.14 Distinguish between fact and opinion.
RD-M-3.0.17 Identify bias and/or misinformation.

VOCABULARY: misinformation, distinguish, evaluate

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS: Sample of evaluation form included with this lesson or any other type of evaluation appropriate to task, a CD/VCR Projection recorder, and/or access to a computer lab which is wired for Internet use.

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

- Allow students as a whole group to decide on a topic of interest to research on the Internet. (Topics may include a favorite singer, amusement park, etc.)

- Have students work in pairs to locate one site related to this topic.

- Ask students to find one fact and one opinion from the Internet site. This can be done as a whole group, individually or with a partner depending on computer accessibility.

- Allow class time for students to discuss what they found.

- Ask each student to find an Internet site that relates to the topic of the editorial that he/she is writing. The student should evaluate the site using the evaluation form included in this lesson.

EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS: (See Appendix for additional extensions/accommodations)
For students with poor information processing skills, accept a reduced number of responses to the Web Page Evaluation Form. The form itself should be in one font throughout to minimize confusion.

TECHNOLOGY CONNECTION: Students will visit other Internet sites to evaluate each site for credibility.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING: Students will complete the evaluation form.
WEB PAGE EVALUATION FORM

NAME: ______________________________

CLASS: ______________________________

DATE: _______________________________

GENERAL:
1) What is the name of the page?
__________________________________________________________________________

2) What is the URL (address) of the page?
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

AUTHORITY
1) Is a page creator listed? YES___ NO___ Who is this person?
2) Does this person give his/her qualifications? YES___ NO___
   Is he/she qualified in the page's content area? Explain.
3) Which of the following does the creator/organization provide?
   EMAIL ADDRESS___ POSTAL ADDRESS___
   PHONE NUMBER___ OTHER___
4) Is the page affiliated with an organization? YES___ NO___
   Which organization?
5) What type of domain is the site?
   .EDU (COLLEGE)___ .GOV (GOVERNMENT)___
   .COM (COMMERCIAL)___ .ORG (NON-PROFIT)___
6) Does the page include a bibliography? YES___ NO___
7) What does the bibliography include?
   PRINT SOURCES___ WEB SOURCES___
   HOT LINKS___ OTHER___
8) Does the site credit pictures, information, and media clips?
   YES___ NO___
9) Has the site won any awards? YES___ NO___
10) List the awards.
11) Is a fee required to access the page or the information?
   YES___ NO___
12) DOES THIS SITE HAVE GOOD AUTHORITY? YES___ NO___
13) WHAT MAKES THE SITE CREDIBLE? OR WHY IS THE SITE NOT CREDIBLE?
ACCURACY
1) Does the page have any spelling errors? YES___ NO___ How many?
2) Does the page have any punctuation errors? YES___ NO___ How many?
3) Does the page have any grammatical errors? YES___ NO___ How many?
4) Does the page have any content errors? YES___ NO___ Explain.
5) DOES THIS SITE HAVE GOOD ACCURACY? YES___ NO___

OBJECTIVITY
1) Does the page have an obvious bias? YES___ NO___ Explain.
2) Is information on opposing points of view given (or links provided)?
   YES___ NO___
3) Does the page mislead or deceive the user? YES___ NO___ Explain.
4) Does the page contain ads? YES___ NO___
5) Do the ads represents a conflict of interest? YES___ NO___ Explain.
6) IS THIS SITE OBJECTIVE? YES___ NO___
7) WHAT MAKES THE SITE OBJECTIVE? OR WHY IS THE SITE NOT
   OBJECTIVE?

TECHNICAL AND VISUAL APPEAL
1) Does the page load quickly? YES___ NO___
2) Was the page easy to find? YES___ NO___
3) Is the text clear and easy to read? YES___ NO___
4) Is the page attractive / grab your attention? YES___ NO___
5) Do the images add to the attractiveness and completeness of the page?
   YES___ NO___ Explain.
6) Is the page easy to navigate (get from one place / page to another)?
   YES___ NO___ Explain.
7) Does the page require special plug-ins or downloads? YES___ NO___
8) Are the required plug-ins or downloads readily available? YES___ NO___
9) DOES THIS SITE HAVE GOOD TECHNICAL AND VISUAL APPEAL? YES___
    NO___
10) WHY DOES THIS SITE HAVE GOOD TECHNICAL AND VISUAL APPEAL?
    OR WHY DOES THIS SITE HAVE BAD TECHNICAL AND VISUAL APPEAL?

CURRENCY
1) Does the page give a creation date? YES___ NO___
   When was the page created?
2) Does the page list the dates on which it was updated? YES___ NO___
   What is the date of the last update?
3) Does this page need to be updated:
   DAILY___ OFTEN___ RARELY___ NEVER___ Explain.
4) DOES THIS SITE HAVE GOOD CURRENCY? YES___ NO___
5) WHY DOES THIS SITE HAVE GOOD CURRENCY? OR WHY DOES THIS
   SITE HAVE BAD CURRENCY?
APPROPRIATENESS
1) For what users would this site be appropriate?
2) For what users would this site be inappropriate?
3) Is there any material that would be offensive to any users?
   YES___ NO___ Explain.
4) Who would find this site offensive?
5) Are statements provided to warn users of potentially offensive material?
   YES___ NO___
6) If inappropriate, is the page protected by some other security feature?
   YES___ NO___ Explain.
7) DOES THIS SITE HAVE GOOD APPROPRIATENESS? YES___ NO___
8) WHY DOES THIS SITE HAVE GOOD APPROPRIATENESS? OR WHY DOES THIS SITE HAVE BAD APPROPRIATENESS?

COMPLETENESS
1) Is the page currently under construction? YES___ NO___
2) Does the page cover its specific subject completely? YES___ NO___
3) Does the page provide links to similar pages? YES___ NO___
4) Does the page provide related links? YES___ NO___
5) DOES THIS SITE HAVE GOOD COMPLETENESS? YES___ NO___
6) WHY DOES THIS SITE HAVE GOOD COMPLETENESS? OR WHY DOES THIS SITE HAVE BAD COMPLETENESS?

FINAL EVALUATION
1) Is this a good site? YES___ NO___ Explain.

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UNIT: Writing an Editorial/ Persuasive Reading

TOPIC: Detecting Bias and Misinformation in Persuasive Text, Lesson 14

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will learn to check credibility in persuasive text.

CORE CONTENT:
RD-M-3.0.17 Identify bias and/or misinformation.
RD-M-3.0.9 Reflect on and evaluate what is read.
RD-M-3.0.15 Identify the argument and supporting evidence.
RD-M-3.0.8 Make predictions, draw conclusions, and make generalizations about what is read.

VOCABULARY: prediction, reflect, spectacle

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS: Copy of “NASCAR Spectacle” included with this lesson or a letter to the editor from another source. Access to the library and/or Internet.

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

• Explain to students that checking credibility of a persuasive piece can eliminate bias and/or misinformation.

• Before handing out copies of “NASCAR Spectacle,” read the title to students and ask them to predict what the piece is about. Allow time for several responses.

• Distribute copies of “NASCAR Spectacle” to students. Ask students to read the first sentence only.

• Allow class time for students to discuss how they believe the author of the piece feels about the topic. Ask them if it is possible to know from reading just the first sentence.

• Students will finish reading the piece.

• Ask students to read the piece a second time. Students will highlight the parts of the piece that are biased or give information that has no support.

• Students will research the highlighted areas for credibility using available resources.

• Students will then find at least one resource that is related to their individual editorial topic. Each student will highlight any parts of the piece that are biased or give information that has no support.
EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS: (See Appendix for additional extensions/accommodations)
For students with limited vocabulary, define bias and provide numerous examples. To bypass reading difficulties, read “Nascar Spectacle” aloud to class.

TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:
Students may use the Internet as a tool for checking credibility of the information in “NASCAR Spectacle.”

ASSESSING THE LEARNING: Students will write about their research findings.
NASCAR ‘Spectacle’

With engines revving and gasoline burning once a, the INDY 500 once again captured the attention of racing fans, drawing record crowd. And once again local and national media outlets swooped in to report the story. The front page of the Courier-Journal displayed the winner, trophy in hand, endorsements for the usual variety of multinational brands emblazoned on his car and apparel: Exxon, Tide, Sprint and Burger King.

In smaller print deep inside section A, another report of soaring gas prices and economic uncertainty appeared.

Our energy resources are dwindling fast. In another five years, it’s doubtful that we’ll have any oil left! Companies like the top oil producer, Exxon, will be out of business if this crisis continues! Everybody remembers the Exxon-Valdez disaster. Think about the amount of oil that was lost in that wreck! We’re in this energy mess because of irresponsible companies like Exxon.

In these times, people have no business attending spectacles like NASCAR racing that glorify the wasting of gasoline and elevate corporations who have worked to destroy our environment. The time has come for viewers to turn their backs to NASCAR racing and all it represents. That’s if it’s not already too late.
UNIT: Writing an Editorial/ Persuasive Reading

TOPIC: Anticipating Reader’s Needs, Lesson 15

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will analyze techniques used to meet the needs of the reader of persuasive text.

CORE CONTENT:
RD-M-3.0.16 Identify commonly used persuasive techniques.

VOCABULARY: identify, technique, reader needs

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS: Any type of persuasive text.

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

• Explain to students that authors of persuasive text use several different techniques to anticipate the reader’s needs.

• Allow time for small groups to discuss how they get their parents to agree to let them do something that the parents might object to initially.

• Allow whole group discussion of some of the techniques the students shared in small groups.

• Give students a copy of any type of persuasive text to read and analyze.

• Ask students to list some of the techniques the author used to anticipate the reader’s needs.

• Allow time for class discussion of the techniques students discovered.

EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS: (See Appendix for additional extensions/accommodations)
To increase student understanding, monitor the student’s comprehension of language used during instruction.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING: Writing to learn: Students will write a journal entry demonstrating their understanding of persuasive techniques discussed in class.
UNIT: Writing an Editorial/Persuasive Reading

TOPIC: Anticipating Reader’s Reactions, Lesson 16

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will learn a strategy for finding opposing viewpoints. Students will recognize the need to anticipate the opposition’s viewpoint before writing an editorial.

CORE CONTENT: WR-M-1.4 Transactive Writing
RD-M-3.0.14 Distinguish between fact and opinion

VOCABULARY: opposition

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS: four signs, each saying one of the following: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree; chart paper for each corner; post-it notes

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:
• Teacher informs class that a statement will be made and that the students will need to go to the corner of the room that has the sign where they believe they belong.
• Teacher makes/displays statement. (e.g. School lunches are good; I like my locker; Homework helps students learn)
• Students move to corners labeled Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Agree.
• Groups decide on a statement that represents their position on that particular statement and writes it on their chart paper. Chart paper is then divided into fact and opinion.
• On a post-it note, each student writes an example that gives evidence that supports his/her opinion.
• Each student shares evidence in small group.
• Post-it notes are placed on paper in fact or opinion column.
• Small groups then share with whole group.

EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS: (See Appendix for additional extensions/accommodations.)
To help alleviate frustration and embarrassment, assign the chart writing to one student in each group who does not have writing difficulties.
TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:

• Students could compile database of statements using a radio button field to label statements fact or opinion.
• In a lab setting, students would make a 5 or 10 record database with just statements.
• Students could switch computers and fill in fact or opinion field and state reasons for their choice in a text field.
• In a one computer classroom, students could come to the computer one at a time, label statement as fact or opinion, state reason, and create a new record with a statement in the statement field.
• Continue cycle until all students have contributed to database.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING: Chart paper; reflective response in notebook; teacher observations
UNIT: Writing an Editorial/ Persuasive Reading

TOPIC: Anticipating Reader’s Reaction, Lesson 17

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will learn to analyze both sides of an issue.

CORE CONTENT: 
RD-M-3.0.15 Identify the argument and supporting evidence.

VOCABULARY: anticipation, opposition

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS: The attached list of student relevant issues or other issues having opposing views; chart paper

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

• Explain to students that persuasive reading and writing anticipates the reader’s reaction.

• Allow students to have a choice of a topic that interests them from the attached list or other issues having opposing views.

• Ask students to decide whether they are for or against the issue and list some of the reasons why.

• Place four students, in chairs, in the center of the room. Have the chairs facing in so that the four students can see one another.

• Ask the rest of your students to form a circle surrounding the students in the center of the room with their chairs facing in towards the center.

• Students in the inner circle will discuss the issue giving their viewpoint. Students on the outer circle may not speak but will listen to discussion.

• When a student in the inner circle has given his/her viewpoint, he/she may point to someone in the outer circle to take his/her place in the inner circle.

• A student cannot leave the inner circle until he/she gives an opinion on the issue.

• Students in the inner circle may not interrupt the speaker until that person has finished speaking.

• Allow enough class time to give each student a chance to speak.

• Teacher can record comments on the board, overhead, or easel. The teacher will write the comments under one of these two columns: for and against.
• When all students have been given a chance to speak, the class will analyze the chart to see which argument had more comments. Explain to students that using a chart may be helpful in deciding which side to take on an issue. Point out that developing a chart is a good way to anticipate a reader’s reaction to an issue.

• Students will now make a chart for the topic of their individual editorials. On one side of the chart, they will list as many “for” arguments as they can think of. On the other side, they will list “against” arguments.

EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS: (See Appendix for additional extensions/accommodations)
For those students with poor information processing skills, provide them an index card containing information about the topic. Before the student goes to the center of the room, read the information aloud to him/her as he/she follows along helping to develop vocabulary.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING: Teacher will collect and review the “for and against” chart from each student.
**Issues for Discussion**

Should our school continue to have a dress code?

Should parents give money for good grades?

Do you agree or disagree with rating movies?

Should we have a curfew?

Should parents be held liable for their child’s truancy?

Should students be allowed to carry beepers and/or cell phones?

If a student brings any type of weapon to school, should he or she be expelled?

Should we have year around school?

Do you agree or disagree that principals should be allowed to paddle a student for receiving more than three referrals?
UNIT: Writing an Editorial/Persuasive Reading

TOPIC: Organizing Your Editorial, Lesson 18

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will learn how to structure an editorial.

CORE CONTENT: Transactive Writing

VOCABULARY: lead, main idea, opposition, body, argument, conclusion

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS: overhead projector/chalkboard/chart paper; graphic organizer “Structure of an Editorial”

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:
• Explain to students that they will learn a basic form to structure or build their editorial. Display graphic organizer “Structure of an Editorial.”

• Model how to use the graphic organizer with a topic by filling in the boxes with ideas taken from an editorial that everyone has read.

• Provide students with individual copies of the graphic organizer, or display a blank copy so the students can transfer it to their notebooks as needed.

• Students should use the notes and research that they have been doing throughout the unit to complete the graphic organizer on page 53 for their individual editorials.

• After the teacher has responded to the completed graphic organizer, students will use the information in the boxes to write the first draft of their editorial.

•EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS (See Appendix for additional extensions/accommodations.)
To provide extra support for the apprehensive student during discussion, acknowledge and validate the student’s response to questioning.

•ENRICHMENT: Students can work in pairs/small groups using a previously written editorial and fill in graphic organizer for that editorial.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING: Teacher observations, completed graphic organizers, student work
# Structure of an Editorial

This is a very traditional way of organizing your editorial. Fill in the blocks before drafting your editorial.

(Adapted from Only a Matter Opinion? http://library.thinkquest.org/50084)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEAD</th>
<th>MAIN IDEA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catch the reader’s attention. Be creative!</td>
<td>Give your main idea, the purpose of your editorial. Let it flow from your lead.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACKNOWLEDGE THE OPPOSITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recognize the opposition’s strongest argument against your opinion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRONG ARGUMENT(S)</th>
<th>CONVINCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Give a strong argument in favor of your opinion. (Repeat the Strong Argument and Convince boxes for each argument.)</td>
<td>Build on your argument. Use evidence and examples from credible sources, facts and opinions, appropriate persuasive techniques.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRONGEST ARGUMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This leaves the reader with something convincing to think about.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONCLUSION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Restate your main idea using new words. Leave the reader with something extra--a call to action, a prediction, something to think about.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
UNIT: Writing an Editorial/ Persuasive Reading

TOPIC: Transitional Words and Phrases in Editorial Writing Lesson 19

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will learn importance of using transitions to link ideas.

CORE CONTENT:
WR-M-1.4 Transactive Writing
RD-M-3.0.9 Reflect on and evaluate what is read.

VOCABULARY: transition, link

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS: Copies of transitional words and copy of “For the Health of Us All” at the end of this lesson or from another source.

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

• Explain to students the importance of using transitional words and phrases to connect ideas.

• Allow class time for students to examine list of transitions.

• Allow class time for students to work in pairs or small groups to read and add transitions to the piece, “For the Health of Us All.”

• Allow class time for students to share the transitions they added.

• Students will add transitions to the draft of their editorials. Have them trade drafts with a partner. The partner should highlight all of the transitions.

• EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS: (See Appendix for additional extensions/accommodations) To bypass reading deficiencies, read aloud to the students, explaining vocabulary that proves to be problematic.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING: Students will write transitions for the piece of writing included or writing from another source.
Connecting Transitions:

First(ly)
Second(ly)
Third(ly)
Finally
Furthermore
Moreover
In addition
Finally
Later
Instead of
Beyond
Before
After
At last
Although
For example
During
Also
Rather than
Since
Unless
In conclusion
In summary
Thus
FOR THE HEALTH OF US ALL

Core Content Assessed:
RD-M-3.0.12 Identify an author’s opinion on a subject
RD-M-3.0.15 Identify the argument and supporting evidence.

Context/Background for the question:
The following is an editorial written by a middle school student about a school issue. Read it and answer the questions that follow.

For the Health of Us All

Vandalism. Most of us think about graffiti on the walls or broken furniture. Most of the time it does not affect the entire population at our school, but a new type of vandal is responsible for all of us being punished, and putting our health at risk.

The bathrooms at our school are being vandalized, and our school has decided the best way to punish the vandals is to take away the very basics of hygiene--soap and paper towels--from the bathrooms. We need to get these supplies back in our bathrooms.

When immature students first began to throw wet paper towels on the ceiling of the girl’s bathroom, the school took the towels away. This stopped the mess that the custodians have to clean up, but it left handwashers with the option of using the cold air hand dryers or wiping their wet hands on their clothing. Disgusting, not to mention unsanitary.

Then, some kids got the bright idea to pour the soap from the dispenser all over the floor. The punishment for this mess? No more soap in the bathroom! What an outrage. Most of us remember the lessons and songs from elementary school about the dangers of germs and how washing our hands with soap was the best deterrent to harmful diseases. Signs above the sinks in our school’s bathrooms give directions on proper handwashing techniques to prevent the spread of germs. Using soap on both sides of your hands and turning off the water with a paper towel are included in the directions. The Health Department issues statements each year on the importance of handwashing at schools, yet our school is ignoring these directives.

Doesn’t the school encourage us to come to school? Don’t they know that by providing soap in the bathroom they can help raise attendance rates? Students suffering from diseases cannot attend school.

Shigellosis, pink eye, and the common cold all can be prevented through good handwashing practices. There were 125 cases of shigellosis reported in our state last year. Students must be able to have access to soap in order to wash their hands properly. Water alone will not stop the spread of germs and disease.

Just imagine how many things are touched and shared at this school! Even if you have soap in your bathroom and wash your hands, you will most likely come into contact with something that has been contaminated by a non-soap using handwasher. Mary
Howard had trouble with her contacts one day, and went to the bathroom to clean them. The bathroom did not have soap or paper towels, so Mary had only water to use to try to clean her hands. She developed an eye infection and had to see her doctor. He said germs on her hands could have contributed to the infection.

I don't know why some students vandalize the bathrooms, but I know we all need to take a stand and get the soap back in all our bathrooms. We need to take responsibility for our bathrooms. No one likes dirty bathrooms, so we need to work together to keep them clean. We can have bathroom monitors who check to see who is causing the trouble. They can have special passes to come to class after the bell rings.

Students who care about being clean need to take a stand and stop those vandals from encouraging the spread of disease throughout our school. It is only a matter of time until we all are affected by some disease caused by the unsanitary conditions of our hands.

Instructions:

The author of this editorial is raising awareness about the bathroom problems in her school.

A. Identify TWO changes that the author wishes to see take place in her school.

B. Select ONE of the author’s arguments. Explain how the author uses supporting evidence to argue for a specific change.

UNIT: Writing an Editorial/ Persuasive Reading

TOPIC: Making Your Point Stronger, Lesson 20

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will learn how to revise persuasive statements to make them more powerful.

CORE CONTENT: WR-M-1.4 Transactive Writing

VOCABULARY: authority, conviction, hesitant, stance

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS: A set of sentences taken from student drafts that demonstrate the use of "hesitant" language

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

- Explain that one frequent problem in persuasive writing is the use of "hesitant" language. These are statements that lead the reader to believe that the author is unsure about his/her authority on the issue. Statements beginning with "I think, I feel, or I believe" weaken a writer's stance.

- Look for examples of hesitant statements in student writing to illustrate in a mini-lesson. The following statements might also serve as examples:

  Hesitant: *I think that record stores charge too much for CDs.*

  Stronger: Because of steady price increases established by major recording companies, record stores have been forced to pass along higher prices to consumers. Teenagers on limited budgets can't afford to buy CDs at prices of $16.99 and upwards.

  Hesitant: *It's my belief that Grammy awards are never given to the best musicians.*

  Stronger: In the last several years, Grammys have been given to all the wrong people. Many of the so-called "musicians" who received Grammys last month didn't write any of the songs on their albums. On top of that, many of the recipients can't even play a musical instrument.

  Hesitant: *I feel like twenty minutes isn't enough time for lunch.*

  Stronger: In twenty minutes, a student is lucky to get through the lunch line, pay the cashier, find a seat. If he or she is able to choke down their food in that time frame, it's a particularly good day! The time has come for our schools to reconsider the amount of time allotted for lunch.
• Ask students to examine their persuasive writing to find statements that could be strengthened by the deletion of hesitant statements. Have them begin by circling the words "feel," "think," or "believe." Students could work with a partner on designing more powerful statements using specific, concise language.

Additional statements for practice:

_I believe everyone should have first-aid training._

_I think schools should stop making kids come so early in the morning._

_I think it would be cool if the Olympics were held in Louisville._

_It's my feeling that people should be nicer to each other._

_I feel like companies should stop testing cosmetics on animals._

• EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS: (See Appendix for additional extensions/accommodations)
  To eliminate confusion and increase understanding of assignment, explain to students how conversation differs from a written piece. Have students orally state “what they feel,” then work from their statements to develop a written stance.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING:
Include a "strength of word choice" category within any scoring rubrics used during with editorial writing.
UNIT: Writing an Editorial/ Persuasive Reading

TOPIC: Conclusions, Lesson 21

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will learn ways to effectively end once ideas are presented.

CORE CONTENT: WR-M-1.4 Transactive Writing

VOCABULARY:

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS: Nonfiction Craft Lessons "End with a Bang!" page 142, Appendix V, or a book such as Writing Workshop Survival Kit; Kentucky Marker Papers

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:
- Read and discuss writing conclusions using suggestions from Nonfiction Craft Lessons.
- Read editorials from magazines and newspapers and some of the editorials found in the Kentucky Marker Papers to determine if the writers' conclusions are effective based on what you've learned from step 1.
- Practice by rewriting as a group the conclusion of “NASCAR Spectacle” on page 45.
- Students will write an effective conclusion for their individual editorials.

- EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS: (See Appendix for additional extensions/accommodations.) For those students lacking motivation at this point, give them the opportunity to restate their opening statement as their conclusion, explaining how it supports the body of the text.

- TECHNOLOGY CONNECTIONS:
  Resources for editorials: www.thepaperboy.com and www.ipl.org/reading/news

UNIT: Writing an Editorial/ Persuasive Reading

TOPIC: Editorial Headlines, Lesson 22

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Students will become acquainted with a variety of methods used to create titles for editorials

CORE CONTENT:
WR-M-1.4 Transactive Writing
RD-M-3.0.3 Identify words that have multiple meanings and select the appropriate meaning for the context.
RD-M-3.0.8 Make predictions, draw conclusions, and make generalizations about what is read.
RD-M-3.0.10 Connect information from a passage to students' lives and/or real world issues.

VOCABULARY: deck, contradictory, alliteration, schema, ambiguous, plausible, improbable

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS: Chart paper, overhead projector, or chalkboard; examples of editorial headlines.

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES:

- In most cases, decisions for the writing of editorial headlines go to an editor; however, columnists often suggest their own headline.

- Headlines lead readers to a story; they shouldn't try to tell it. Writers should avoid being overly wordy in their headlines.

- In newspaper terminology, each part of a headline in a single font (whether one of more lines) is called a deck. In the case of Louisville's The Courier-Journal, editorial headlines generally consist of one deck

  EXAMPLE OF A 2-DECK HEADLINE:
  Headlines attract
  Second deck adds to the message,
  Draws reader further into piece

  EXAMPLE OF A 1-DECK HEADLINE:
  Treating immigrants right
• A "play on words" can often be found in editorial headlines. Take the following headlines for example:

**EXAMPLES:**

**Overdue for overhaul**
(uses alliteration---the main words in the line begin with the same sound)

**BUSH NEEDS A FULL COURT PRESS**
(pulls together two images that seem contradictory---the president and a basketball term)

**Is 'zero tolerance' making zero sense?**
(makes fun of the very concept of "zero tolerance" in a school's disciplinary code)

**Crouching tiger, hidden donors**
(refers to a current popular film, *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*--the content of the editorial is actually about questionable campaign funds)

• Collect examples of headlines that can be interpreted in more than one way. In other words, headlines that, when standing alone, do not make the content of the editorial entirely clear.

**EXAMPLES OF AMBIGUOUS HEADLINES:**

**The time has come for school bus passengers to be belted**

**Senators could use milk, cookies, and afternoon nap**

Have students copy down an ambiguous headline. Ask them to write what they believe to be an improbable but plausible explanation based on a literal reading of the words. Ask them to write what they believe to be the correct explanation of what it means. Ask them to think about the schema or prior knowledge associations with the words that would be necessary to understand the correct meaning.

**EXAMPLES:**

**Squad helps dog bite victim**

**Wrong Meaning:** Bad people help a dog bite people.

**Correct Meaning:** A group of people rescue the people who got bitten by dogs.

**Schema:** You have to know that groups of rescuers are sometimes called squads.
After students have written an editorial, ask them to go through the piece, circling or highlighting their ten favorite words. Once the ten have been singled out, they should look to see if any of the words could be used in the title. Are there any opportunities for wordplay?

Although the subject matter of an editorial may be quite serious, it is entirely acceptable to employ clever wordplay to appeal to readers.

**EXTENSIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ECE/OTHER DIVERSE LEARNERS:** (See Appendix for additional extensions/accommodations)

For the diverse learner overwhelmed by the vocabulary in this lesson, relate the words headline and deck to “title.”

**ASSESSING THE LEARNING:** Make "Effectiveness of Headline" a criteria on the scoring rubric used with editorial assignments. Collect the editorials and use the Kentucky Holistic Scoring Guide for Writing to score the success of the students’ writing.

Adapted from:

Extensions/Accommodations for ECE and other Diverse Learners

Students with disabilities may require additional accommodations. Refer to IEP (Individual Education Plan)

Organize and Structure

- **Establish routines to insure that students have consistent opportunities to process information and to maintain an effective learning climate.**
  - Activate prior knowledge with a written or verbal review of key concepts at the beginning of class.
  - Present the agenda for the lesson and task expectations verbally and in written form.
  - Establish well-defined classroom rules. Have students model and rehearse behavioral expectations.
  - Set clear time limits. Use a timer to complete tasks.
  - Utilize student’s peak learning times to teach important lessons.
  - Use verbal/nonverbal cues and frequent breaks to keep students focused.

- **Plan and organize classroom arrangement to minimize disruptions and enhance efficiency.**
  - Allow adequate space for effective traffic patterns, furniture, and equipment.
  - Arrange classroom to limit visual and auditory distractions.
  - Provide preferential seating (near teacher, good view of board, special chair or desk) to increase attention and reduce distractions.
  - Keep student’s work area free of unnecessary materials.

- **Display and use visuals, posters, objects, models, and manipulatives to increase memory, comprehension and establish connections to core content. Examples include….**
  - Mnemonic devices such as COPS (Capitalization, Organization, Punctuation, Spelling).
  - A model of the final product before beginning an experiment, project, lab, etc.
  - Posters of steps for specific learning strategies (open response, writing process, formulas).

- **Use varied student groupings to maximize opportunities for direct instruction and participation.**
  - Use of one-on-one and small group instruction for students who require additional support.
  - Carefully consider student abilities, learning styles, role models, type of assignment, etc., when grouping students for cooperative learning and with peer partners.
  - Collaborate, co-teach, or consult with ECE, Comprehensive Teachers, etc.

- **Prior to instruction, design and organize content to strengthen storage and retrieval of information.**
  - Design instruction that incorporates a multi-sensory approach (visual, auditory, tactile/kinesthetic) to insure that all learning styles are accommodated. Include
demonstrations, simulations, hands-on activities, learning strategies, and mnemonic devices.

- Identify and focus on information critical for mastery. Determine the content students need to know (vs. what is nice to know). Organize instruction around the *big ideas*.
- Design an agenda showing exactly what the students will learn.
- Sequence presentation of content from easier to more difficult.
- Prepare study guides, a copy of class notes, or graphic organizers ahead of time. Allow some students to use partially completed copies during the lesson.
- Provide simplified versions of books and materials with similar content.
- Design specific management procedures to insure acquisition of content and task completion using…
  - Planners, agendas, assignment sheets, homework/personal checklists, folders, notebooks, and/or parent notes.
  - Written as well as verbal cues/prompts, color-coding, symbols, picture clues.

**Instruct Explicitly**

- **Present and pace explicit instruction to reinforce clear understanding of new concepts and make connections to prior learning.**
  - Teach, model and rehearse learning strategies pertaining to the content of the lesson including organizational guides, cooperative learning skills, and memory/mnemonic devices. (KWL, Venn Diagrams, SQRW = **S**urvey **Q**uestion, **R**ead, **W**rite, etc.).
  - Introduce new concepts by clearly connecting them to prior knowledge using key vocabulary, chapter review questions, agenda, syllabus, etc. Present in both written and verbal form.
  - Present assignments/directions in small steps/segments.
  - Use short phrases, cue words, and signals to direct attention (my turn, your turn, eyes on me).
  - Adjust the volume, tone, and speed of oral instruction.

- **Frequently monitor students to enhance memory, comprehension, and attention to content.**
  - Use frequent and varied questioning strategies. Target higher order thinking skills.
  - Call on students by name. Restate student responses. Provide positive and corrective feedback.
  - Use and model ‘think aloud,’ self-questioning, problem solving, and goal setting techniques.

**Reduce**

- **Condense main ideas and key concepts to avoid overload and allow for developmental mastery.**
  - Modify requirements of assignments based on information critical for mastery.
  - Provide clear, visually uncluttered handouts/worksheets.
• Adapt assignment and test formats. Use alternate modes such as short answer, matching, drawing, true/false, and word banks.
• Break tasks into manageable segments. Adjust duration of instruction and independent work.
• Reduce redundancy and unnecessary practice.
• Use activities that require minimal writing. Avoid asking students to recopy work.
• Adjust amount/type of homework and coordinate assignments with other teachers.
• Provide credit for incremental learning.

**Emphasize and Repeat**

• Use repeated practice/targeted cues to increase retention of essential concepts and to develop ability to monitor own learning.
  • Provide frequent, but short, extra practice activities in small groups.
  • Have student read/drill aloud to self or peer partner.
  • Highlight text or use coding methods for key concepts.
  • Use bound notebooks and/or learning logs to store vocabulary, facts, references, and formulas.
  • Allow students guided practice and test taking strategies before assessments.
  • Frequently restate concepts/directions using short phrases.
  • Use computer activities, games, and precision teaching drills for practice activities instead of worksheets.

**Motivate and Enable**

• Enhance opportunities for academic success to remediate faulty learning/thinking cycles and to reduce failure.
  • Create unique learning activities including skills, posters, clay models, panoramas, dramatizations, etc. (see textbook manuals for alternative activities).
  • Offer students choices of topics/projects and alternative methods to demonstrate knowledge (oral tests/presentations, illustrations, cooperative groups, etc.).
  • Allow flexible timelines for assignment completion, homework, and testing with retakes.
  • Consider the students learning styles when designing extent of involvement in a learning activity.
  • Extend time for students to process ideas/concepts, which are presented in lectures/discussions.
  • Use technology such as taped text, word processors, scanners, and audio feedback software.
  • Provide spare material and supplies.
  • Provide personal word lists/spelling aids for written assignments.
  • Adjust grading procedures to reflect individual goals, only correct answers, and percent of completed work. Allow extra credit projects to bring up grades.
• **Enhance opportunities for behavioral success to reduce frustration and confusion.**
  • Increase positive comments and student interactions (make 3 positive statements for every one negative statement).
  • Use positive and specific verbal/nonverbal praise. Provide immediate feedback.
  • Review rules regularly. Provide varied rewards and consequences.
  • Maintain close physical proximity to students especially during independent work sessions.
  • Alert students several minutes before transitions occur.
  • Use personal contracts and goal setting which match the student’s needs, interests, and abilities.
  • Teach self-monitoring skills using progress charts/reports. Gradually wean students from artificial incentives.
  • Maintain regular communication with parents.

**References**

Adapted from *Student/Staff Support Teams*, Phillips, McCullough 1993 and *Collaborative Strategies*, Mall (2001)