



5TH GRADE

VOLUME 5.4

Argumentative Writing Unit for *Kids at Work*

Sarah Collinge
with Bethany Robinson



Read Side by Side
9514 180th St. SE
Snohomish, WA 98296
425-412-3724
www.readsidebyside.com

Table of Contents

Welcome	3
Day 1: Brainstorm Ideas & Plan: Introduction & Body 1	5
Day 2: Brainstorm Ideas & Plan: Body 1.....	9
Day 3: Brainstorm Ideas & Plan: Body 2.....	11
Day 4-5: Plan: Elaborate with facts and details.....	13
Day 6: Plan: Conclusion	14
Day 7: Plan: Title & Illustration.....	15
Day 8-9: Draft, Introduction, Body Paragraphs, and Conclusion	16
Day 10: Revise	18
Day 11: Edit & Revise	20
Day 12-15: Publish & Share.....	22
Checklist for Assessing an Argumentative Essay.....	23

Welcome to the 5.4 Argumentative Writing Unit for *Kids at Work!*

If this is your first time using this guide, you will want to read through this introduction carefully, as it provides information that you will find critical to your establishment of a successful language arts block!

This argumentative writing unit is meant to be taught in conjunction with the *Read Side by Side Reading Program*, Unit 5.4, *Kids at Work*. The book *Kids at Work* will be used as a mentor text to build students' background knowledge and expose students to the craft of writing.

This unit takes approximately 15 days to complete, from brainstorming and planning to sharing the published piece! Lessons in this unit give students explicit instruction in the steps of the writing process and the structure of argumentative writing. Some craft and grammar lessons will be incorporated as students revise and edit their writing. You may want to supplement with additional craft, grammar, and spelling lessons between writing units.

Prior to starting the unit, you will want to consider how students will share their writing. Students might read their writing aloud to their own classmates, visit another classroom, or make their writing available for others to read in the classroom, library or other public location.

After students have had the opportunity to publish their writing, assess their work using the checklist for grading an argumentative essay provided at the end of the unit.

Schedule

To complete this unit, you will need to set aside 30-minutes for writing, 2-4 times a week.

Instructional days begin with a whole-class lesson. Lessons will be 10-15 minutes in length, allowing a short time after the lesson for students to work on the assignment. While working, students will access the help of a writing partner as needed. It may be helpful to seat partners next to each other during the work time. The teacher then confers with partnerships as needed.

Working days allow students to get started right away on writing projects. During the work time, students will continue to access a partner or the teacher for help as needed. If it is challenging to find time every day for writing, teachers might assign these work-projects as homework.

Argumentative schedule:

1. Brainstorm & Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review research on the topic.• Select a position.• Complete the <i>Argument Planning Sheet</i>.• Elaborate with facts & details.• Design an illustration, cover, or banner.	Day 1-7
2. Draft	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write a draft using the 4-quadrant method.	Days 8-9
3. Revise & Edit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use transition words.• Use strong words.	Day 10
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Edit and revise using a checklist.	Day 11
4. Publish & Share	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete a final product that is handwritten, typed, or other.• Share with a real audience.	Days 12-15

Day 1: Brainstorm Ideas & Plan: Introduction & Body 1

Lesson Goals: Brainstorm ideas for writing in response to the prompt. Begin to plan a piece of writing using the *Argument Planning Sheet*.

Materials:

Argument Planning Sheet

Notes from 5.4 Read-Aloud:

Day 24 – *Child Labor Laws Charts*

Day 25 – Video Outline for the Documentary, *Children in the Fields*

Day 26 – *Solution Chart* and article, *Timeline of an Attempt to Change Agriculture Child-Labor Regulations*

Instructional Procedures:

1. *Introduction:* Introduce the argumentative writing prompt:

We have been learning about child labor in the United States. We studied what child labor was like during the early 1900s and read about the Fair Labor Standards Act that was signed by Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1938. We also learned that child labor continues to be a concern in the 21st century.

It was brought to our attention that child-labor laws are less restrictive when applied to agricultural work—the second most dangerous occupation in the United States. We know that the Department of Labor proposed changes to the rights of agricultural employees but that the Obama Administration decided in April of 2012 to reject those changes.

Based on the facts and details you learned about child labor laws do you believe the legal protections already in place for nonfarm workers should be extended to farm workers? What evidence supports your argument?

Today, you will begin a writing project in which you will write to the acting Secretary of Labor (<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/osec>).

2. *Plan:* Introduce the *Argument Planning Sheet*
 - Box 1 – Introduction – Thesis that answers the prompt.
 - Box 2 – Argument 1
 - Box 3 – Argument 2
 - Box 4 – Conclusion
3. *Draft:* Draft the first part of the introduction, which provides a salutation and a thesis statement that answers the prompt.

Example: Box 1

Dear _____,

Thank you for your service as Acting Secretary of Labor! My name is _____ and I am a fifth-grade student at _____ school in _____ state. We have been learning about child labor in the United States. As I am sure you are aware, the laws are not as restrictive for children who work on farms as for children who work in other industries. I am writing today to encourage you to _____. I believe this is important because _____ and _____.

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to fill out the *Argument Planning Sheet* (Box 1) for their own argumentative essay. Then, give time for partners to share their writing plan and receive feedback.

- What do you like about my writing plan?
- What might I do to improve it?

ARGUMENT PLANNING SHEET

1	<i>Introduction (to include a thesis statement that answers the prompt).</i> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>								
2	<i>Argument #1</i> <hr/> <hr/> <table border="1" data-bbox="261 1060 1432 1850"><tr><td data-bbox="261 1060 836 1260"><i>Reason 1:</i></td><td data-bbox="836 1060 1432 1260"><i>Fact / Detail 1:</i></td></tr><tr><td data-bbox="261 1260 836 1459"><i>Reason 2:</i></td><td data-bbox="836 1260 1432 1459"><i>Fact / Detail 2:</i></td></tr><tr><td colspan="2" data-bbox="261 1459 1432 1659"><i>Counterargument:</i></td></tr><tr><td data-bbox="261 1659 836 1850"><i>Reason 3:</i></td><td data-bbox="836 1659 1432 1850"><i>Fact / Detail 3:</i></td></tr></table>	<i>Reason 1:</i>	<i>Fact / Detail 1:</i>	<i>Reason 2:</i>	<i>Fact / Detail 2:</i>	<i>Counterargument:</i>		<i>Reason 3:</i>	<i>Fact / Detail 3:</i>
<i>Reason 1:</i>	<i>Fact / Detail 1:</i>								
<i>Reason 2:</i>	<i>Fact / Detail 2:</i>								
<i>Counterargument:</i>									
<i>Reason 3:</i>	<i>Fact / Detail 3:</i>								

ARGUMENT PLANNING SHEET *Cont.*

3	<i>Argument #2</i> <hr/> <hr/>	
	<i>Reason 1:</i>	<i>Fact / Detail 1:</i>
	<i>Reason 2:</i>	<i>Fact / Detail 2:</i>
	<i>Counterargument:</i>	
	<i>Reason 3:</i>	<i>Fact / Detail 3:</i>
4	<i>Conclusion</i> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	

Day 2: Brainstorm Ideas & Plan: Body 1

Lesson Goals: Brainstorm ideas for writing in response to the prompt. Continue to plan a piece of writing using the *Argument Planning Sheet*.

Materials:

Argument Planning Sheet

Notes from 5.4 Read-Aloud:

Day 24 – *Child Labor Laws Charts*

Day 25 – Video Outline for the Documentary, *Children in the Fields*

Day 26 – *Solution Chart* and article, *Timeline of an Attempt to Change Agriculture Child-Labor Regulations*

Instructional Procedures:

1. *Introduction:* Review the argumentative writing prompt:

Based on the facts and details you learned about child labor laws do you believe the legal protections already in place for nonfarm workers should be extended to farm workers? What evidence supports your argument?

2. *Plan:* Plan body paragraph 1, which provides an argument supported by reasons and evidence.

Model writing your argument in box 2 of the *Argument Planning Sheet* and including 2 strong reasons to support your argument. (Do not fill out the *evidence* section. This will be completed on days 4-5.)

Example: Box 2

Argument 1: Children should not have to work in hazardous farming conditions.

Reason 1: Children under 16 should not be allowed to operate power equipment such as tractors.

Reason 2: Children under 18 should not be allowed to work in grain elevators and silos.

Model writing a counterargument based on your research of child labor laws. (A *counterargument* provides a reason someone might be opposed to your argument.) Respond to that counterargument with another reason to support your position.

Counterargument: Some people argue that these restrictions would hurt family farming.

Reason 3: If you protect children from operating heavy equipment in factories, shouldn't the same protections be in place for children working in agriculture?

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to fill out the *Argument Planning Sheet* (Box 2) for their own argumentative essay. Then, give time for partners to share their writing plan and receive feedback.

- What do you like about my writing plan?
- What might I do to improve it?

Day 3: Brainstorm Ideas & Plan: Body 2

Lesson Goals: Brainstorm ideas for writing in response to the prompt. Continue to plan a piece of writing using the *Argument Planning Sheet*.

Materials:

Argument Planning Sheet

Notes from 5.4 Read-Aloud:

Day 24 – *Child Labor Laws Charts*

Day 25 – Video Outline for the Documentary, *Children in the Fields*

Day 26 – *Solution Chart* and article, *Timeline of an Attempt to Change Agriculture Child-Labor Regulations*

Instructional Procedures:

1. **Introduction:** Review the argumentative writing prompt:
Based on the facts and details you learned about child labor laws do you believe the legal protections already in place for nonfarm workers should be extended to farm workers? What evidence supports your argument?
2. **Plan:** Plan body paragraph 2, which provides an argument supported by reasons and evidence.

Model writing your argument in box 3 of the *Argument Planning Sheet* and including 2 strong reasons to support your argument. (Do not fill out the *evidence* section. This will be completed on days 4-5.)

Example: Box 3

Argument 2: Labor laws should protect children from working long hours of agricultural work.

Reason 1: Children under 15 should be protected from working more than 8 hours a day in the summer months.

Reason 2: Children under 15 should be protected from working more than 3 hours a day during the school year.

3. **Model** writing a counterargument based on your research of child labor laws. (A *counterargument* provides a reason someone might be opposed to your position). Respond to that counterargument with another reason to support your position.

Counterargument: Some argue that working long hours on the farm teaches children the value of hard work.

Reason 3: Children who work long hours on farms are at risk for dropping out of school.

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to fill out the *Argument Planning Sheet* (Box 3) for their own argumentative essay. Then, give time for partners to share their writing plan and receive feedback.

- What do you like about my writing plan?
- What might I do to improve it?

Day 4-5: Plan: Elaborate with facts and details.

Lesson Goals: Use facts and details to create a strong argument.

Materials:

Argument Planning Sheet

Notes from 5.4 Read-Aloud:

Day 24 – *Child Labor Laws Charts*

Day 25 – Video Outline for the Documentary, *Children in the Fields*

Day 26 – *Solution Chart* and article, *Timeline of an Attempt to Change Agriculture Child-Labor Regulations*

Instructional Procedures:

1. *Introduction:* Tell students that argumentative writing uses elaboration (facts and details) to create a strong argument. In the book *Kids at Work*, the author uses facts and details to tell about Lewis Hine’s life and the impact he made on child labor laws. At the back of the book, you will find a list of sources for these facts and details.
2. Today, you will be rereading your research on child labor, looking for facts and details to further support your arguments.
3. Model planning a piece of writing to include elaboration (facts and details) to create a strong argument. Go back into the texts looking for facts and details.

Model adding these facts and details to the *Argument Planning Sheet* (column 2).

Examples:

- Agriculture is the 2nd most dangerous occupation in the United States.
- Children as young as 12 can work in agriculture.
- The hours a child works on farms is currently not restricted.
- A child must be 16 years old to work in hazardous farming conditions; 18 years old in other labor industries.
- Tractors are the leading cause of farm deaths.
- 300 children die each year in farm deaths.
- Half of the deaths on farms are caused by tractors.

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to revise their writing to include facts and details. Then, give time for partners to share their writing and receive feedback.

- What do you like about my writing?
- What might I do to improve my writing?

Day 6: Plan: Conclusion

Lesson Goals: Continue to plan a piece of writing using the *Argument Planning Sheet*.

Materials:

Argument Planning Sheet

Instructional Procedures:

1. *Introduction:* Tell students that they will now be planning the conclusion of their argumentative writing. When writing an argumentative piece, the conclusion will restate the position and summarize the key points.
2. *Plan:* Model summarizing the key points in the first part of the conclusion paragraph. Use box 4 of the *Argument Planning Sheet* to record your notes.

Example:

In summary, I believe you should give your full support to update the agricultural restrictions to protect children from the injustices of child labor! I think children deserve to be protected from hazardous conditions and long hours of work. It is important for children to have the opportunity to pursue an education. In conclusion, it is time to take a stand against the injustices of child labor in the United States!

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to finish filling out the *Quadrant Chart* (box 4) for their own persuasive essay. Then, give time for partners to share their writing plan and receive feedback.

- What do you like about my writing plan?
- What might I do to improve it?

Day 7: Plan: Title & Illustration

Lesson Goals: Continue to plan a piece of writing by choosing a title, then making an illustration, cover, or banner.

Materials:

Art materials or illustration software.

Instructional Procedures:

1. *Introduction:* Tell students they will be writing a title for their argumentative essay and creating an illustration, cover, or banner for their writing. Share tips for writing a good title:
 - It should provide the main idea.
 - It should be relatively short.
 - It should get the reader interested.
 - It should put a picture in the reader's mind.

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to create a title and illustration, cover, or banner for their essay. Then, give time for partners to share their illustrations and receive feedback.

- What do you like about my illustration?
- What might I do to improve my illustration?

Day 8-9: Draft, Introduction, Body Paragraphs, and Conclusion

Lesson Goals: Draft the introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion.

Materials:

Transition Word List

Instructional Procedures:

1. *Introduction:* Tell students that they will now be drafting the introduction, the body paragraphs, and the conclusion of their argumentative writing piece.
 - Argumentative writing uses transition words between paragraphs (see list).
2. *Model* drafting an argumentative essay that incorporates transition words.

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to draft the introduction, the body paragraphs, and the conclusion. Then, give time for partners to share their writing and receive feedback.

- What do you like about my writing?
- What might I do to improve my writing?

TRANSITION WORD LIST

First,	Second,	Third,	In Conclusion,
<p>First of all, To begin with, Initially,</p>	<p>Additionally, Also, Furthermore, Another, Equally Important, In addition, Next,</p>	<p>Last, Lastly, Finally,</p>	<p>In summary, In the end, As you can see, It is clear,</p>

Day 10: Revise

Lesson Goals: Revise a piece of writing to include strong words.

Materials:

Strong Word List

Instructional Procedures:

1. *Introduction:* Tell students that they will now be revising their argumentative essays to make them interesting to the reader. They will be adding strong words to their essays.
2. *Revise:* Model rereading your writing and adding strong language. (*See list*)

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to revise their writing to include strong language. Then, give time for partners to share their writing and receive feedback.

- What do you like about my writing?
- What might I do to improve my writing?

STRONG WORD LIST

Some examples of strong words from the book *Children of the Gold Rush*:

- Unhealthy,
- Hazardous,
- Dangerous,
- Demanding,
- Deprived,
- Miserable,
- Robbed,
- Unprotected,
- Haunting,
- Illiteracy,
- Poverty,
- Exhaustion,
- Hardships,
- Suffering,
- Degradation,
- Accident rate,
- Victims,
- Violate,
- Common,
- Work force,
- Powerful,
- Reformer,
- Investigate,
- Examine,
- Emphasize,
- Demand,
- Outlaw,
- Regulate,
- Enforce,
- Enact,
- Testify,
- Question,
- Rightful,
- Hopeful,
- Justice,
- Protect,
- Compassion,
- Crusade

Day 11: Edit and Revise

Lesson Goals: Reread a piece of writing and make edits and revisions.

Materials:

Editing and Revision Checklist

Instructional Procedures:

3. *Introduction:* Tell students that they will now be editing and revising their persuasive writing pieces to make them easy to read as well as convincing.

4. *Edit:* Model rereading your writing and marking edits as you go:
 - Capitals
 - Punctuation
 - Spelling
 - Paragraphing

As you make editing marks, discuss the changes you will make and how they will help the reader understand the piece of writing better. Give students time to reread their writing and record editing marks.

5. *Revise:* Model rereading your writing and marking revisions as you go:
 - Complete sentences
 - Transition words
 - Elaboration (facts and details)
 - Key Vocabulary

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to their edit and revise their writing. Then, give time for partners to share their writing and receive feedback.

- What do you like about my writing?
- What might I do to improve my writing?

Editing Checklist:

- _____ Sentences start with a capital letter.
- _____ I used capital letters for proper nouns.
- _____ I have punctuation at the end of each sentence.
- _____ I checked my words for spelling.
- _____ I indented paragraphs.

Revision Checklist:

- _____ I started with an introduction that is clear.
- _____ I ended with a conclusion that is clear.
- _____ I used transition words at the beginning of paragraphs.
- _____ I used language to show how one event may have caused another event.
- _____ Sentences make sense.
- _____ Sentences stay focused on the topic.
- _____ I added details and elaboration that are important to the topic.
- _____ I used key vocabulary.

Day 12-15: Publish & Share

Lesson Goals: Publish a piece of writing.

Instructional Procedures:

1. *Introduction:* Tell students they will now be preparing their piece of writing for others to read. This is called publishing.
2. *Discuss:* how stories will be published—handwritten, typed, or other. Let them know when and how their letters will be shared with the class.

Work Time & Collaboration: Give students time to publish their writing and share their writing with an audience.

Ideas for sharing:

- read letters aloud to classmates,
- read letters aloud to another class,
- make letters available for others to read (in the classroom, library, hallway bulletin board or other); and
- send the letter by mail to the federal representative.

An **author's chair** is a fun classroom tradition. It is a decorated chair in which an author sits to share his/her writing. Teachers can paint a wooden chair or have each new class decorate a pillowcase to go over the back of a chair. This quickly transform a standard classroom chair into something special for young authors.

Checklist for Assessing an Argumentative Essay

Cover/Illustration/Banner _____/4	_____ Has a title that is short. _____ The title puts a picture in the reader's mind. _____ Cover/illustration/banner introduces the main idea. _____ Cover/illustration/banner gets the reader interested.
Introduction Paragraph _____/3	_____ The introduction includes a thesis statement that answers the prompt. _____ The introduction presents the argument. _____ The introduction is written clearly to grab the reader.
Body Paragraphs _____/6	Body Paragraph 1 _____ Introduces an argument. _____ Provides important reasons, facts, and details. _____ Provides a counterargument. Body Paragraph 2 _____ Introduces an argument. _____ Provides important reasons, facts, and details. _____ Provides a counterargument.
Conclusion _____/2	_____ The conclusion restates the argument. _____ The conclusion provides a counterargument.
Craft and Structure _____/4	_____ Paragraphs are well organized. _____ Paragraphs include transition words. _____ Elaboration is used to present facts and details. _____ Key vocabulary is used.
Revision and Editing _____/5	_____ Writing is edited for spelling. _____ Writing is edited for grammar. _____ Writing is edited for punctuation. _____ Writing shows evidence of revision. _____ Published writing is polished.
Collaboration & Effort _____/4	_____ Worked well with a partner. _____ Respectfully gave feedback to a partner. _____ Respectfully received feedback from a partner. _____ Showed good effort and persistence.
Total: _____/28	Comments:



ACT NOW!

Protect Kids in
Agriculture!

Dear _____,

Thank you for your service as Acting Secretary of Labor! My name is _____ and I am a fifth-grade student at _____ school in _____ state. We have been learning about child labor in the United States. As I am sure you are aware, the laws are not as restrictive for children who work on farms as for children who work in other industries. I am writing today to encourage you to approve the changes proposed by the Department of Labor in 2011 and make farm work safer for kids. I believe this is important because children should be protected from hazardous conditions and be encouraged to stay in school.

I believe the first problem with the current farm labor laws is that they do not protect children from the dangers of farming. If the new child-labor laws were approved, children under 16 would not be able to operate power equipment. Did you know tractors are the leading cause of farm deaths? Of the 300 farm deaths each year, half of those deaths are caused by tractors! With the new restrictions, children under 18 would not be able to work in grain elevators and silos. This would protect children from life-threatening farm accidents. Some people argue that such restrictions would hurt family farming. Regardless of the impact on family farming, I believe children's lives deserve to be protected. Franklin D. Roosevelt understood that children need to be protected from operating heavy equipment in factories. What about the children who work on farms? Shouldn't they be protected too? It is your responsibility to help make sure there are laws to protect children from the dangers of farm work.

I believe the second problem with the current farm labor laws is that they do not protect children from toiling in the fields for long hours in the hot sun. Many children today suffer from long hours of hard work in the fields. They can work as many as 12 hours a day in the hot summer sun. During the school year, there are no restrictions on how many hours a child can work in the fields. Long hours of farm work infringe on the time for schoolwork. Some argue that working on the farm is important for teaching children the value of hard work. As it turns out, children who work long hours on farms are at a higher risk for dropping out of school.

In summary, I believe you should give your full support to update the agricultural restrictions to protect children from the injustices of child labor! I think children deserve to be protected from hazardous conditions and long hours of work. It is important for children to have the opportunity to pursue an education. In conclusion, it is time to take a stand against the injustices of child labor in the United States!

Sincerely,