

Opinion Writing

Teaching Students to Voice their Opinions Effectively with the Common Core Standards



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Fifth Grade Common Core Writing Standards – Opinion Writing

Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

- Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which ideas are logically grouped to support the writer’s purpose.
- Provide logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details.
- Link opinion and reasons using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., *consequently, specifically*)
- Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented.

Content Elaboration

*In recognizing the multiple **Text Types and Purposes** of written text, authors use a repertoire of writing strategies and include content that supports the composition of specific types of writing. Student writers select structures (narrative, informative or persuasive), use precise language, and choose appropriate tone and style to communicate a point of view and/or purpose to their audience. They use writing as a tool for thinking through issues, solving problems, investigating questions, conveying and critiquing information, and expressing real or imagined experiences.*

Mentor Text Lists

Picture Books

Hey, Little Ant by Phillip M. Hoose

Should There Be Zoos? A Persuasive Text by Tony Stead and Judy Ballester

Should We Have Pets? A Persuasive Text by Sylvia Lollis and Joyce W. Hogan

Earrings by Judith Viorst

I Wanna Iguana by Karen Kaufman Orloff

I Wanna New Room by Karen Kaufman Orloff

Can I Keep Him? By Steven Kellogg

The Perfect Pet by Margie Palatini

Click Clack Moos: Cows That Type by Doreen Cronin

Thank You, Sarah: The Woman Who Saves Thanksgiving by Laurie Halse Anderson

Magazines

Time for Kids – Look for issues with Debate Sections (Pros and Cons)

American Girl – Section called “Heart to Heart” which gives various short opinions by readers on questions and issues. Very short but a good place to get the ball rolling

Boys’ Life – Reviews on products for boys called “Guy Gear”. Example: “Less Shoe, More Fun” from March 2010 features reviews on sandals and water shoes for boys.

Real Simple – this is an adult magazine, but they have a section called “Road Test” with reviews every month on products. A great real-life example of reviews!

Poetry

“What I Love about Summer/What I Hate about Summer” by Douglas Florian

“If I were in Charge of the World” by Judith Viorst

“I Can’t...” by Sara Holbrook

Websites for Book Reviews

- www.spaghettibookclub.org Book Reviews by kids – I think these are more like recommendations
- www.amazon.com - **favorable** reviews and **critical** reviews, not all written by kids
- www.readerviewkids.com written by kids, can search by age ranges
- www.studentsreviewbooks.com Great site! Has audio files of students reading book reviews! Can search by ages or book titles.

Also check NY Times and Kirkus Review – these are not written by students, but are worth checking out

Professional Book List

Nonfiction Mentor Texts: Teaching Informational Writing Through Children's Literature K-8 Lynne R. Dorfman and Rose Cappelli, Stenhouse

Chapter 5 "Writing to Persuade" is a great place to start with a persuasive unit. Lots of great ideas to organize a unit.

Explorations in Nonfiction Writing Tony Stead and Linda Hoyt, Heinemann

This is available in grade level kits, which includes writing units, mentor texts and a CD rom with rubrics, checklists and more mentor texts. Our district bought each teacher one and the ideas are great.

Pathways to the Common Core Lucy Calkins, Mary Ehrenworth, Christopher Lehman, Heinemann

Outlines the Common Core and how to really make sense of them and use them in the classroom.

Sample Ideas for Opinion Writing

- Should we have more recess time?
- Should we have more/less homework?
- Should we get paid for school?
- Should we have a shorter school day?
- Should I have a Facebook page?
- Should I have a cell phone?
- Should people eat healthier?
- Should our school have its own football field?
- Should people stop abusing animals?
- Should our school have more recess equipment for older kids?
- Should gas stations stop selling energy drinks to kids?
- Should all fifth grade classes have the same lunch and recess?
- Should hunters be allowed in national parks?
- Should we be allowed to play Dodgeball at school?
- Should kids have jobs?
- Should every student at Legend have an iPad?
- Should girls be allowed to play baseball professionally?
- Should elementaries have sports teams?
- Should we have school uniforms?
- Should people stop hunting animals for skin, fur and meat?
- Should people recycle more?
- Should we do more experiments/activities in school?
- Should Ohio create more jobs?

Possible Ways to Publish Opinion Writing

- ✓ Essay
- ✓ Op-Ed (Opinion Editorial)
- ✓ Reviews
- ✓ Commercials
- ✓ PSAs (Public Service Announcements)
- ✓ Posters
- ✓ Power Point presentations
- ✓ iMovie

Possible Mini-Lessons for Opinion Writing

- Choosing Topics
- Seeing both sides of an argument
(Pro/Con Lists)
- Taking a stand – crafting an argument
- Writing for an audience
- Language (opinion words, transitions)
- Organization (paragraphs and transitions, letter, essay)
- Introductions – how to hook your audience
- Evidence (Fact vs. Opinion, where to find facts, personal experiences), using evidence language, researching to find facts (NOT Wikipedia)
- Conclusions



Rylie + Janey + Madison

10-10-12

Purpose: We need less HW

Audience: Miss Fielhauer

Visual: Teacher grading papers, looks exhausted and stressed. Pulls hair and moves on to different paper. Piles and Piles of paper everywhere

Voice Over: Teachers everywhere > hair are you stressed about all the ¹⁵ messy papers you have to grade?

Visual: Teacher nods exsaturatedly (white background) If this looks like you

Voice Over: This is why we should have less homework

Visual: Student brings in big box of more paper to grade. Sets down on teachers desk with loud thud!

Visual: Teacher puts face in hands with a loud sigh

~~Voice Over: less homework = less stress for you teachers out there!~~

~~Visual: hold up 3 pappers with less homework and = and less stress~~

Voice Over: here are 3 reasons why we should have less homework

Rylie & Madison & Janey

Visual: Waves hand to continue

Voice Over: One reason is that all you teachers have to grade all the homework we do. And you will be exhausted after you grade all the homework. You may even spend 2-3 hours grading!

Visual: Teacher jumps in excitement.

Voice Over: secondly you would not get as stressed as you usually do while grading all that homework! So if we have less homework you would get less stressed. because you would have less to grade

Visual: teacher smiles and nods expressing that she understands

~~Voice Over: plus, the students would come to school tired and not ready to learn, because of all that homework they have to do and you teachers will have to deal with it.~~

Voice Over: And this is why we should have less homework.

Visual: teacher shoves homework box off

Preps

Rylie & Janey / Madison

- Giant box
- Giant coffee cup
- table / desk
- Chair
- paper

parts.

Rylie / Teacher

Janey / Voice Over

Madison / Student

table and smiles happily
and puts thumbs up

The end

Organizer for Opinion Essay

Name _____

Your opinion statement:

Pros	Cons

Examine your Pro/Con list and circle your three most persuasive reasons.

Your opinion statement:

Audience: _____

Reason #1 _____

Facts/my experiences to answer "so what?"

Reason #2 _____

Facts/my experiences to answer "so what?"

Reason #3 _____

Facts/my experiences to answer "so what?"

October 22, 2012

Dear the Board of Education,

I know most kids think that school is boring, but I know how to fix it! We should have more experiments and activities in school, such as making obleck in first grade, and the shadow experiment in fifth grade. In fourth grade we had a science day, and one of the things we did was launch water bottles.

First, experiments and activities are better than pencil and paper. You get to see it happen right in front of you instead of writing it down on paper. Kids get tired of just writing everything down.

In addition, they are hands on. For instance you will have to set it up, do it, and clean it up. For example, if you are mixing chemicals they won't just float up in the air, and pour itself will it?? NO!!! You have to pick it up yourself.

Another thing is that kids will pay more attention in discussions. So, they will know what to do. Kids will learn more because experiments are more fun and interesting.

Lastly, we should have more experiments and activities in school, because kids will pay more attention and participate more. So that's why I think we should have more experiments and activities in school.

Sincerely,
Ashton

Dear General Public,

I have been noticing in my own experiences, kids haven't been making enough money to buy stuff. Therefore, I am trying to find a solution to all those problems; kids should be able to get a job.

Initially, kids can't make enough money on chores or smaller jobs to buy those cool new cloths, that fun game, that cool toy, or that brand new phone. I, for example, only make 10\$ a week. And sometimes I don't make a thing. If kids could get jobs, those problems won't be around anymore.

Furthermore, if kids can get jobs at a young age, then if they get a better job when they grow up, they'll know what's expected. For example, you have to get there on time, work hard all day, do the right, not the wrong, and make sure nothing happens to the machines if the job requires them. Although the kids might not understand the job or how to work the machines. But that's why you teach them, if their responsible enough, they'll do it right.

Thirdly, if littler kids have jobs at the fast food places, then teens could get better paying jobs, then parents could get even better paying jobs. If that all happens, we might not have to worry about not having enough money to pay for bills or taxes. There will be no such thing as homeless people. Everyone would be happier. The world would be a better place.

To sum it up, if kids could get jobs, it could end money problems. So, please consider letting kids at least apply for jobs.

Sincerely,
Draven

October 24, 2012

Dear PTA Members,

I've noticed that when I am outside at recess injuries happen because of the balance beams. I think they are too dangerous. I have seen 1st, 4th, and 5th grade on them and they seem to enjoy them. But some of those students have gotten hurt. I think we should get rid of the balance beams.

The first reason is that students push each other off. I know this because I have seen it before. The students didn't get injured when they got pushed off but there is a chance they could've gotten badly injured.

Secondly, I know someone who got hurt. She told me that she was walking on one then slipped. She had a bruise on her leg and jaw. She did not break any bones but she could've.

My last reason is that students try to run on them. It is very dangerous because then the balance beam or your shoes could be slippery. I also in my experience have seen kids trying to run on them.

In conclusion, I think we should get rid of the balance beams at Legend Elementary. They are too dangerous, students run on them, and students get pushed off. I think we should get rid of the balance beams at Legend. If we get rid of the balance beams fewer students would get injured. So, please think about this letter.

Sincerely,
Janey



October 24, 2012

Dear Baseball Leagues of America,

I am a 10 year old girl who lives 5 minutes away from a baseball field. I play baseball and I'm on my first year varsity. I only have one year left of baseball because where I live they don't let girls play 7th grade ball, 8th grade ball and so on. Baseball is my life. I think girls should be allowed to play baseball above the varsity level.

First of all, some girls like baseball more than softball. In 2008, 1,012 girls played on high school baseball teams, says the national federation of state high school associations. But in many states, the high school teams are not available for girls.

Secondly, if girls don't know how to play softball and they switch from baseball to softball it will be very hard because they won't know how to play. Because a softball diamond is a lot smaller than a baseball diamond, softball bats cannot be bigger than 2 ¼ inches or longer than 34in and a baseball bats cannot be bigger than 42in or thicker than 2 ¾, and the pitchers mounds are different. The baseball mound is 60 feet from home plate and a softball mound is 50 feet away from home plate.

Thirdly, people say girls aren't built like boys and can't take pain. Well if you know the rules of baseball then you wouldn't get hurt as easily as you would if you did know how to play. Let's say you're 12 years old and you decide you want to play baseball so on your first game you're up to bat and you get hit well you probably wouldn't of got hit if you know the rules of baseball.

In conclusion, I think girls should be able to play baseball above the varsity level. You baseball leagues should let girls play baseball instead of softball. Last year a boy named Noah on my team said, "If you have to go to softball Rylie, than I will too." Now that shows respect.

Sincerely,
Rylie

Opinion Writing Rubric

Writing Quality	4	3	2	1
Clear topic and point of view	My piece has a clear topic and opinion statement. "I	My piece has a topic and opinion	My piece has an opinion, but it is a	My piece does not have a clear opinion

	think we should/shouldn't..."	statement, but it could be clearer.	little unclear what my topic is.	at all. I can't tell what I am trying to write about.
Supporting facts and details to back up arguments	My piece has three strong arguments with facts and details to support them. I use words like "For example..." and "According to..." to show my evidence	My piece has three arguments with many facts/details to support. I could use more facts. I use some evidence words, but could add more.	My piece has arguments, but not three. I have a few facts/details, but not many. I have used few evidence words in my piece.	My piece has few arguments. I don't have many facts. I haven't used any evidence words from the chart.
Persuasive Language	My piece has many words to persuade (should, shouldn't) and tries talking directly to the reader. This piece would change the reader's mind!	My piece has some words to persuade, but is mostly facts. This piece may change the reader's mind.	My piece has few words or phrases that are persuasive. I haven't talked directly to my reader. This piece may not change the reader's mind.	My piece has no words or phrases that would change the reader's mind.
Transition Words	My piece has transition words at the beginning of each paragraph, and within paragraphs, followed by a comma.	Most of my paragraphs have transition words. Some are followed by commas. I have a few transition words in paragraphs as well.	My paragraphs are missing transition words. They are not all followed by a comma. I haven't used any transition words in my paragraphs.	My piece has no transition words. I may not even have paragraphs in my writing. It is tough to find the arguments.
Introduction	My introduction has a clear problem, and is followed by a solution to solve the problem. My introduction is interesting makes someone want to read on.	My intro has a problem and solution. I could use some more details to make my problem stronger.	My intro doesn't have a clear problem and solution. I am not sure what the purpose of this piece is.	My intro is not clear or is missing. It may be only one sentence. I am missing details to make the reader want to find out more.
Conclusion	My conclusion restates my opinion, and gives the reader a call to action. It ties up the end of my piece.	My conclusion restates the opinion, but doesn't have a clear call to action.	My conclusion doesn't retell my opinion. My ending needs more details to tie it up.	My conclusion is missing or not clear. When I read it, I don't think my letter is done.
Letter form	My letter has date, greeting, body, closing and signature in the correct places	My letter is missing 1 or more parts of a letter.	My letter is missing 2 or more parts of a letter.	My piece does not look like a letter.

Book Review by Luke

The Last Olympian by Rick Riordan is a fantasy book based on Greek myths. Percy Jackson, the main character, is a son of

Poseidon and can control water. The book takes place in two places: Camp Half Blood and Manhattan. Most of the demigods are defending Manhattan from the evil Titan Lord Kronos who is trying to destroy Mount Olympus. This book is the fifth in the series.

There is so much action in The Last Olympian that is completely soaked the book! For example in the beginning Percy and Charles Beckendorf blow up the Princess Andromeda, which is a ship. There is action until the end of the war. After that, there is like 20 pages of action at the end. I think the book is awesome because there is so much action!

You'll never want to put The Last Olympian down because it is so serious. For example Annabeth gets stabbed by a poison knife and almost died. I was so sad. Another example is when a character kills himself to kill Kronos. I was almost in tears.

The Last Olympian has terrific vivid mental images. For example, at one part of the book it says "Annabeth winces in pain when she moves her bad shoulder." I could just see her quickly blink because her shoulder hurt. Another thing that happened was when the Williamsburg Bridge collapses. I saw something in my mind that was so cool I can't even describe it!

This book is the best in the series because it is action packed and fast paced. For me, I finished the book in two or three days, and it was the longest one in the series. This is why The Last Olympian by Rick Riordan is one of my favorite books.

Book Review by Brittany

Walk Two Moons by Sharon Creech is a realistic fiction book about a girl named Sal and her grandparents and a girl named Phoebe. They eventually mash up into one story. Sometimes Sal is with her grandparents driving to Idaho and sometimes she is with Phoebe trying to find out who the lunatic is. This is a sad but happy book.

It's a Thrill Ride

Walk Two Moons is a Thrill Ride and you will not want to put it down. I would have to finish the page I was on and complain about having to stop. Like when I was reading about Phoebe and Sal catching Phoebe's mom and right when I read that I had to stop!

It Builds Suspense

Walk Two Moons definitely builds suspense. And I love and hate it at the same time! For example, on page 250 Phoebe and Sal open up the door and you figure out who was leaving notes. And it's not at all who you think it's going to be. Sharon Creech does that all the time.

You Think and Think

Walk Two Moons is one of those books that you cannot stop thinking about. I kept telling all my friends and Miss Fielhauer about parts of the book, and I wanted to share it with others. The stories of Phoebe and Sal keep you wanting to read on for more and more!

In conclusion, I think anyone would enjoy this book. It does have some sad parts, but if you are like me, you won't be able to put it down. It will make you want to read and will keep you guessing. Plus it won a Newberry Medal, so that means it is good. I hope you will enjoy it as much as I did!

Nory Ryan's Song by Patricia Reilly Giff

This story is based in 1845, and this was kind of like the Great Depression only a little bit different. It is in Ireland and Nory (the main character) and her family live in a little rented house. If you don't pay rent, your house will be destroyed. So, everyone is trying to leave by ship to America. Maggie (Nory's oldest sister) has already left and their mother has died. Her father is out at sea trying to earn money.

When you first open the book, you really can't put it down. I read the first half in two days, it was that good. The book does have some emotional parts, like the family being separated. Some parts really make your heart beat really fast and others make you want to cry.

The one thing I don't like is how some parts are depressing. If you are really emotional, you may want to carry a box of tissues around with you. But it is about people suffering and that happens all over the place, not just in books.

If you like a good, emotional book, then Nory Ryan's Song is for you. I would give it 5 stars, because if you can get through the crying, it is worth the read.

Book Review by Erica

Book Review Rubric

Writing Quality	4	3	2	1
Clear topic and point of view	My piece has a clear opinion on the book and why they liked/didn't like it.	My piece has an opinion about the book.	My piece has an opinion, but it is a little unclear what this writer thought of the book.	My piece does not have a clear opinion at all. I can't tell how this writer feels about the book.
Supporting facts and details to back up arguments	My piece has strong arguments with facts and details to support them. I use words like "For example..." and "In the book..." to show my evidence	My piece has arguments with many facts/details to support. I could use more facts. I use some evidence words, but could add more.	My piece has some arguments, but not enough. I have a few facts/details, but not many. I have used few evidence words in my piece.	My piece has few arguments. I don't have much evidence from the book. I haven't used any evidence words from the chart.
Persuasive Language	My piece has many words to persuade (should, shouldn't) and tries talking directly to the reader. This piece would change the reader's mind!	My piece has some words to persuade, but is mostly facts. This piece may change the reader's mind.	My piece has few words or phrases that are persuasive. I haven't talked directly to my reader. This piece may not change the reader's mind.	My piece has no words or phrases that would change the reader's mind.
Transition Words	My piece has transition words at the beginning of each paragraph, and within paragraphs, followed by a comma.	Most of my paragraphs have transition words. Some are followed by commas. I have a few transition words in paragraphs as well.	My paragraphs are missing transition words. They are not all followed by a comma. I haven't used any transition words in my paragraphs.	My piece has no transition words. I may not even have paragraphs in my writing. It is tough to find the arguments.
Introduction	My introduction has a clear intro to the book, and is followed by clear points. My introduction is interesting makes someone want to read on.	My intro has an intro to the book and points. I could use some more details to make my points stronger.	My intro isn't clear about my book. I am not sure what the opinion of this book is.	My intro is not clear or is missing. It may be only one sentence. I am missing details to make the reader want to find out more.
Conclusion	My conclusion restates my opinion, and gives the reader a recommendation. It ties up the end of my piece.	My conclusion restates the opinion, but doesn't have a clear recommendation.	My conclusion doesn't retell my opinion. My ending needs more details to tie it up.	My conclusion is missing or not clear. When I read it, I don't think my review is done.

Review of the I Pod Touch by Drew

The I Pod touch is awesome. All it is an I Pad but smaller. It fits in your pocket and its portable.

In the first place, the I Pod touch is good for all people and all types of ages. It has over 1 million apps and are still being made, so there is something for everyone. It's extremely easy to use because its all touch screen.

You can use the I Pod touch for everything. It has a camera; in addition you can also read books. It has a map device and it connects to the internet just like a computer. You can also text and take notes, too.

Not to mention it is great for the price! There are different models to buy so you don't have to buy the one that costs the most money. You download your favorites: movies, games, music and more. And you download what you want.

Above all, I say buy the I Pod touch. It is a blast to play and inexpensive given what you can do. It's a great device...I guarantee it! I give it 5 out of 5 stars!



Review of **The Nook** by Leah
Out of 5 stars? 2 stars!

The Nook is a boring device that does not act like a computer. It is slow and you need to pay for everything.

One reason I do not recommend a Nook to you is it is not entertaining. For example there are not many fun, free, and working apps that you would like. The next thing is that to read any book you have to pay for it. Furthermore, another reason is that there is NO INTERNET.

A second reason I would not recommend a Nook to you is that it's not worth the money. The Nook is about \$80-\$130. Additionally, it takes 4-5 hours to fully charge. The last thing is that the Nook is only 6 inches across and 1 foot tall.

The final thing is that the Nook was made for kids not adults. For instance, it was made for a car or house so you do not want to use it outdoors. In conclusion, one page in the book is equal to three pages in the Nook. So it takes longer to read.

Lastly, I don't recommend purchasing a Nook because, it was not made for adults, it's not worth the money, and it's a very boring device. I guarantee it will ruin your life.



Review of The Xbox 360 Elite by Riley

The Xbox 360 Elite is developed by a very successful company named Microsoft. The Xbox 360 Elite is one of the BEST game systems Microsoft has ever developed.

First, the Xbox 360 Elite has better technology than older versions of the Xbox. Next, the Xbox 360 Elite has the biggest internal hard drive of all the Xbox's; it can hold 225 gigs of memory. The Xbox 360 Elite has better technology than all the other Xbox's combined.

Second, the Xbox 360 Elite is the only Xbox with Xbox live. You can play games with friends and talk with friends if they have a microphone. When you get the Xbox 360 Elite you can sign up for a 30 day free trial. The Xbox 360 Elite is extremely easy to set up, all you need are 3 cables and you are good to go.

Third, Microsoft make's many different types of controller's. They make wired and wireless controllers. Over all, I recommend the Xbox 360 Elite because it has great

graphics and runs faster and you can play games with people all over the world and the best part is that you can customize your controller to your preferences. If you like video games then this is the system for you.

5 out of 5 stars!



Conventions Rubric for Writing

Writing Quality	4	3	2	1
Spell grade level appropriate words correctly	I've checked my piece for spelling mistakes and have made changes. I looked up words in the dictionary and other sources.	I've checked my piece for spelling mistakes. I tried to look up words and fixed almost all of them in the writing.	I've checked my piece for spelling mistakes. I made some changes, but need to do a better job of fixing my errors.	I have not checked my piece of writing enough for spelling mistakes. The spelling errors make it hard to understand my writing.
Capitalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginning of sentences • Proper Nouns (people, places, websites, etc.) 	My piece has all beginning of sentences capitalized. It also has proper nouns capitalized in all places it needs to be.	My piece has most sentences capitalized. I may have forgotten one or two. I don't always capitalize proper nouns	My piece has some sentences capitalized. I don't always use proper capitalization, so my writing is not always clear.	My piece has little capitalization. I really need to go back and fix the capitalization to make my writing clearer.
Punctuation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periods • Question marks • Exclamation points • Quotation marks 	My piece periods at the ends of sentences, question marks at the ends of questions, and even some exclamation points. It also has	My piece has periods at the ends of sentences, but some periods need to be question marks and exclamation points.	My piece has some periods, but some are out of place and do not make sense in the piece.	My piece has few periods to break up sentences. I have a hard time following my piece of writing.

	quotation marks if someone is speaking.			
Grammar <i>Does the piece sound right?</i>	I have reread my piece of writing. It sounds correct, and any places that don't make sense have been fixed. All my sentences are strong sentences.	I have reread my piece of writing. Most of it sounds correct, but some sentences need to be rewritten so they make sense.	I have reread some of my writing. But there are sentences that don't make sense in my writing. I need to rewrite parts.	I have not reread my piece of writing. Much of it does not make sense, and would not make sense to the reader.
Uses commas - in a series, when using transitions	I have used commas correctly in a series in a sentence. I also put a comma in all my transition words throughout my piece.	I have used commas in my piece, and have tried them in series and most transitions.	I have used some commas in my piece but I need to add more to my piece.	I have no commas in my writing. My writing needs commas to make it more readable.