

Unit Plan: Controversial Issue Argument Essay Essential Understanding(s): Students will know and be able to research an issue, develop an argument, and write a formal essay defending a claim. Essential Question(s): How can we write an argument essay? Final Product: An essay arguing for one side of a controversial issue		Approx dates: January-February 2014	Grade: 7
Rationale: This unit will teach students to argue effectively about an issue they care about. Their work will touch upon many necessary academic skills, including using evidence to support claims, writing a formal essay, writing an argument essay, and citing sources. It will also allow them an opportunity to research using articles, databases, and the Internet. All of these skills can transfer over to many other subjects and will prepare them for college and career readiness.			
Common Core Standards: <u>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.1</u> Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. <u>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.8</u> Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.		IFC Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses multiple sources to acquire background information and brainstorms ideas for further inquiry • Takes notes by paraphrasing or using quotation marks when using someone else’s words • Uses technology resources such as online encyclopedias, online databases, and Web subject directories to locate information on assigned topics in the curriculum • Forms opinions and judgments backed up by supporting evidence 	
Key Lessons: Plagiarism; Topic exploration; Databases/Grolier Online; Resource website introduction; Citations			
Vocabulary to model, embed in conversation, encourage and notice: Controversy Issues Databases Citations Plagiarism		Resources: Articles from Scholastic Scope and other sources on controversial issues (attached to website) Librarian-created Libguide with information on every topic students are studying: http://demo.libguides.com/issues http://easybib.com for citations	
Pre- and Post-Assessment/Final Product: Organizer/Note Taking Sheet – For students to record their evidence before writing the essay. This will be turned in before the essay is written. First Draft of Essay Final Essay			
Evaluation: The majority of students did very well with the time and the resources given. Evaluating the graphic organizers went much more effectively with two teachers in the room – next time, schedule this in advance to ensure the presence of both the ELA teacher and the librarian. Next time, allow more time for students to complete citations		Differentiation strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students will be working with a topic that has personal meaning – they will choose their own topics and will be encouraged to find something they are passionate about - Resources will be pre-selected for students who need assistance 	
Extensions/Follow-up: Higher level students can find their own resources through independent research. Related books are provided through the school library for students to explore if they would like to use them for research.			