

Writing Standard 1 – Argumentative Writing

8th grade: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

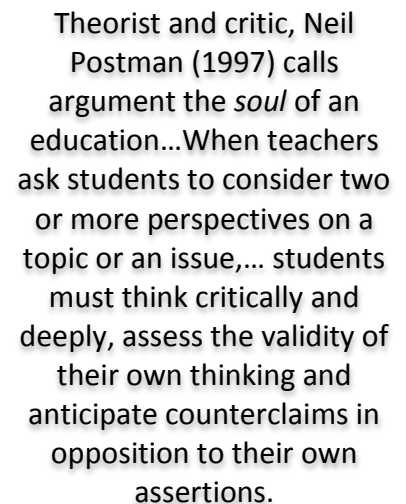
- Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
- Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- Establish and maintain a formal style.
- Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

What is a claim? Counterclaim?

What is reasoning?

What is evidence?

How do claims, reasoning, and evidence play a joint role in writing arguments for Standard 1?



Theorist and critic, Neil Postman (1997) calls argument the *soul* of an education...When teachers ask students to consider two or more perspectives on a topic or an issue,... students must think critically and deeply, assess the validity of their own thinking and anticipate counterclaims in opposition to their own assertions.

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When students meet the expectations, what does the standard *look* like? What observable behaviors could you note? For instance, think about what students would be able to do in a particular lesson.

Williams and McEnerney define argument not as “wrangling” but as “serious and focused conversation among people who are intensely interested in getting to the bottom of things cooperatively.”
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What types of teaching would be necessary to scaffold this skill?

What types of assignments would be necessary to scaffold to this standard?

What problems do you think our students will have meeting these expectations?

How will you teach your colleagues about Standard 1? How will you help them understand that Standard 1 requires a large shift in instructional practice? What avenues will you take to get the word out to your department?

As Richard Fulkerson (1996) put it in *Teaching the Argument in Writing*, the proper context for thinking about argument is one “in which the goal is not victory but a good decision, on in which all arguers are at risk of needing to alter their views, one in which a participant takes seriously and fairly the views different from his or her own” (pp. 16-17).

CCSS Appendix A