

Grade 7 Playlists for Reading: Informational Text

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

This resource bundle aligns with the Integration of Knowledge and Ideas standards of the Common Core State Standards for Grade 7 Reading: Informational Text. We have included three of our playlists—content-rich tools that use trusted textual, audio, visual, and multimedia resources to supplement high-quality instruction in specific elements of the Common Core—to guide students through each of the relevant standards for the informational text reading strands of English Language Arts.

Each playlist is designed for 30–45 minutes of instructional time and is followed by a rigorous self-check for students. Alternatively you could assign individual student playlists as homework or remedial/extension activities.

The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts are not intended to be taught in sequential order, and neither are these playlists. Instead, you should feel free to dip in and out of these resources as your instructional needs dictate.

The accompanying Student Editions include additional passages on which students can practice their reading skills, including the ability to analyze craft and structure. Stepped-out examples and hyperlinks to videos, graphic organizers, and other activities further support instruction.

Thank you for trusting Wisewire to help your students become better readers and lifelong learners! Visit us online for even more resources and to access our free to use computer-based assessment platform.



Grade 7 Playlist: Tracing and Evaluating an Argument

Aligns with *CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.8*:

- Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims.

Welcome

When authors make arguments, they must be able to back up what they write. They will give an opinion on the subject; make claims that explain why they have that opinion; and present evidence that shows those claims to be true. If arguments make little sense and are not backed up properly, authors are not going to convince many people to accept their opinion. This is why authors must be careful to use sound reasoning and evidence that is both relevant and sufficient in an argument.

Objectives

In this playlist, students will learn how to:

- trace and evaluate an argument and specific claims in a text.
- assess whether the reasoning an author uses is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims.

Review

Key Terms

- In an **argument**, an author states a position on a subject and explains why the reader should share that position. The author makes **claims**, or statements, that he or she wishes the reader to believe.
- Authors use **evidence** to support their claims so that people are more likely to believe them. Evidence can take many forms: statistics, the opinions of experts in the field, and text from documents and studies, among many other things. It is very important that evidence be:
 - **relevant**, or connected to the claim that is being made (not a random statement that has little to do with the subject); and
 - **sufficient**, or adequately supporting its purpose in the argument.
- In addition to using relevant and sufficient evidence, an author's **reasoning**, or the way he or she thinks about something and makes judgments on it, must be **sound**, or sensible, and logical.
- When reading an author's argument, readers first **traces** the argument to determine the claims the author makes and the evidence that supports those claims. Then, after the claims and evidence are determined, readers **evaluate** the argument, determining whether or not it is strong enough to convince them to agree with the author's position.



Teaching Notes: Tracing and Evaluating an Argument

The goal of RI.7.8 is for students to understand and be able to explain how to **trace** and **evaluate** an argument. To do so requires determining the author's position, identifying the claims made by the author to support that position, and assessing the evidence and reasoning used by the author to support those claims. The following information contains ideas that teachers can incorporate into their classrooms as well as additional resources to peruse and integrate into instruction as appropriate.

Activities

1. Have the students locate two editorials or opinion pieces from magazines or newspapers. The arguments made should represent opposing viewpoints. Ask the students to trace and evaluate both arguments and determine which is the stronger of the two, based on the evidence and reasoning used by the author.
2. Choose a speech or letter written by a well-known person from history, such as an American president or civil rights leader. Lead a discussion with the class on the speech or letter to determine the main claim, supporting claim, and the evidence used. Is the evidence and reasoning sound enough to convince the reader to accept the author's position? Why or why not?

Writing Prompts

1. Instruct students to choose an issue that affects them directly, such as the school dress code or local laws concerning riding skateboards in public, and articulate a position on that issue. Then, have them create an outline showing what the structure of a good argument for that position would resemble. The outline should include claims and specific types of evidence to support the claims.
2. After the students have written their outlines, have them develop their position and claims into a full essay. Remind the students to include relevant and sufficient evidence and sound reasoning.

Additional Resources

Consider these additional resources when teaching RI.7.8:

“Read, Discuss, Debate: Evaluating Arguments”: This resource discusses how to teach students to evaluate and debate arguments.

- <https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/evaluating-both-sides-of-argument>

“Establishing Arguments”: This resource gives instructions on crafting a thesis, organizing an argument, and other strategies for writing arguments.

- <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/588/01/>



Grade 7 Playlist: Analyze How Various Authors Present the Same Topic Differently

Aligns with *CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.9*:

- Analyze how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts.

Welcome

When different authors write about the same topic, it is not uncommon for them to have different perspectives on that topic. Writers convey their perspective on a topic by emphasizing certain ideas and evidence while de-emphasizing or ignoring other ideas and evidence. Paying close attention to what ideas and evidence an author includes in a text will help the reader better understand his or her perspective on the topic.

Objectives

In this playlist, students will learn how to:

- analyze how two authors write about the same topic from different perspectives.
- think critically about how these authors convey their perspectives through their choices about how to interpret and present evidence.

Review

Key Terms

- The **perspective**, or point of view, of the author is the way in which he or she sees an issue. It is the idea or opinion that he or she will attempt to convey to the reader.

Exploring the Standard

Each author brings his or her own perspective to their writing. This is especially the case when an author is writing about a controversial topic. Two texts about the same topic may be written from very different perspectives. When a reader encounters two different perspectives on the same topic, it is important that he or she understands the different perspectives and analyzes how each author has made choices in order to convey his or her perspective. Being able to understand and analyze texts with differing perspectives will help the reader gain a more informed and complete understanding of the topic.

A Closer Look: Understanding Different Perspectives on the Same Topic

When reading two texts about the same topic, it is important to identify the perspective of each author. How does he or she present the topic? To do this, first identify information that is similar in each text. What topic do these texts share? What points are similar in each text? Next, identify the differences in each text. What do the similarities and differences tell the reader about the viewpoint or perspective of each author? How does each author communicate their perspective? What ideas and evidence do they highlight? What do they leave out? Read the two passages below and identify the topic they share. Be prepared to answer questions about the similarities and differences between each passage.

