

Lesson/Unit Name: Building Evidence Based Arguments: Doping

Content Area: English language arts

Grade Level: 7

Reviewer 1

Overall Rating:

E

Exemplar

Dimension I – Alignment to the Depth of the CCSS

<p><i>The lesson/unit aligns with the letter and spirit of the CCSS:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Targets a set of grade-level CCSS ELA/Literacy standards. ✓ Includes a clear and explicit purpose for instruction. ✓ Selects text(s) that measure within the grade-level text complexity band and are of sufficient quality and scope for the stated purpose (e.g., presents vocabulary, syntax, text structures, levels of meaning/purpose, and other qualitative characteristics similar to CCSS grade-level exemplars in Appendices A & B). <p><u><i>A unit or longer lesson should:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Integrate reading, writing, speaking and listening so that students apply and synthesize advancing literacy skills. <input type="checkbox"/> (Grades 3-5) Build students' content knowledge and their understanding of reading and writing in social studies, the arts, science or technical subjects through the coherent selection of texts. 	<p>Targeted Standards: Over the course of this unit, numerous reading, writing, and speaking & listening standards are targeted, all appropriate for a seventh-grade cohort. These standards are listed on page 4 of the unit introduction. At the beginning of each of the five parts, there is a table with both the targeted and supporting standards, which are then clearly linked throughout the activities in that part.</p> <p>Clear and Explicit Purpose for Instruction: The unit introduction provides a very clear purpose for the instruction that will happen in the unit on page 2 of the unit introduction, in part that "learning the skills and habits of mind associated with argumentation...is therefore central to students' civic and academic lives." Two very helpful features are the "How This Unit is Structured" section on page 3 and the chart on page 5, the unit outline. Both of these clearly lay out how the instructional purpose will be developed over the five parts of the unit.</p> <p>Selected Texts: There are a large number of grade-level texts in this unit, both non-fiction writings and visuals, mostly in the form of political cartoons. They are listed in a chart on page 7 of the unit introduction. All are clearly integrated into the lessons in order to build students' skill with using evidence to support a claim.</p>
<p>Rating: 3 – Meets most to all of the criteria in the dimension</p>	

Dimension II – Key Shifts the CCSS

<p><i>The lesson/unit addresses key shifts in the CCSS:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Reading Text Closely: Makes reading text(s) closely, examining textual evidence, and discerning deep meaning a central focus of instruction. ✓ Text-Based Evidence: Facilitates rich and rigorous evidence-based discussions and writing about common texts through a sequence of specific, thought-provoking, and text-dependent questions (including, when applicable, questions about illustrations, charts, diagrams, audio/video, and media). ✓ Writing from Sources: Routinely expects that students draw evidence from texts to produce clear and coherent writing that informs, explains, or makes an argument in various written forms (e.g., notes, summaries, short 	<p>Reading Text Closely/Text-based Evidence/Writing From Sources: Throughout the unit, students are reading a variety of texts closely and examining and selecting textual evidence not only in order to deeply understand what they are reading but also to use later to support their claims in their writing.</p> <p>Throughout the unit are also text-dependent questions that a teacher could use with each reading to help students get deeper into each text. Students must absolutely closely read and return to the text to find the answers. One strength of this unit is that students are creating their own text-dependent questions about what they are reading. In Activity 4 of Part 1, students work together to create text-dependent questions of their own, with a guiding questions document for support if needed.</p> <p>Academic Vocabulary: There was clearly a concerted effort made by the authors of this unit to support students' learning of the academic vocabulary specific to argumentation. On page 4 of the introduction, there is a section</p>
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<p>responses, or formal essays).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Academic Vocabulary: Focuses on building students' academic vocabulary in context throughout instruction. <p><i>A unit or longer lesson should:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Increasing Text Complexity: Focus students on reading a progression of complex texts drawn from the grade-level band. Provide text-centered learning that is sequenced, scaffolded and supported to advance students toward independent reading of complex texts at the CCR level. ✓ Building Disciplinary Knowledge: Provide opportunities for students to build knowledge about a topic or subject through analysis of a coherent selection of strategically sequenced, discipline-specific texts. ✓ Balance of Texts: Within a collection of grade-level units a balance of informational and literary texts is included according to guidelines in the CCSS (p. 5). ✓ Balance of Writing: Include a balance of on-demand and process writing (e.g., multiple drafts and revisions over time) and short, focused research projects, incorporating digital texts where appropriate. 	<p>dedicated to how that academic vocabulary is addressed in the unit, both through explicit instruction and also through contextual learning. It is a strength of the unit that it does not shy away from the challenging vocabulary; rather, it explicitly and coherently guides students in their learning of these terms with scaffolding along the way as needed.</p> <p>The academic vocabulary load in this unit is quite high, and one suggestion would be to have students develop a glossary of terms of their own for them to refer to over time.</p> <p>Increasing Text Complexity/Building Disciplinary Knowledge: The texts in this unit do get more challenging over time, as do the tasks that students are asked to complete using them. The materials specifically call out when the complexity is ramped up and often notes that the text is already broken into smaller chunks. As with the academic vocabulary, the instruction in the unit supports rather than shies away from these complex texts in order to increase students' development of the disciplinary skills of gleaning evidence from a text and using that evidence to support an argumentative claim.</p> <p>Balance of Texts: The texts in this unit are all informational, but represent a wide range of types within the genre. There are expository pieces, opinion pieces, speeches, and news stories. There are other types of media as well, including political cartoons. In Activity 2 of Part 1, on page 12, students are looking at a timeline in order to learn more about the history of performance-enhancing drugs.</p> <p>Balance of Writing: Throughout the unit, the students are writing, including both short and long pieces. The final assessment is an argumentative piece that has been carefully planned and revised over time. While evidence for this writing is gathered and students learning about argumentative writing as a skill throughout the unit, parts 4 and 5 are the places where the most specific instruction is targeted.</p>
<p>Rating: 3 – Meets most to all of the criteria in the dimension</p>	

Dimension III – Instructional Supports

<p><i>The lesson/unit is responsive to varied student learning needs:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Cultivates student interest and engagement in reading, writing and speaking about texts. ✓ Addresses instructional expectations and is easy to understand and use. ✓ Provides <i>all</i> students with multiple opportunities to engage with text of appropriate complexity for the grade level; includes appropriate scaffolding so that students directly experience the complexity of the text. ✓ Focuses on challenging sections of text(s) and engages students in a productive struggle through discussion questions and other supports that build toward independence. ✓ Integrates appropriate supports in reading, writing, listening and speaking for students who are ELL, have disabilities, or read well below the 	<p>Cultivates Student Interest and Engagement: In this unit students are engaged in rigorous learning about writing evidence-based argumentation, all based around an interesting topic: the use of performance-enhancing drugs in sports. This is a very current, relevant topic that would be engaging to students and the range of types of readings would keep them interested throughout.</p> <p>Instructional Expectations: The unit introduction clearly lays out the purpose and expectations for instruction and those are clearly articulated throughout the five parts of the unit. Both the teacher and the students would be very clear about what purpose is for the learning and what the desired outcomes are for reading, writing, and speaking & listening development.</p> <p>This unit is written and formatted in a way that would make it very easy to use. The introduction provides a great deal of information, including the text set table and suggestions for different ways this unit may be used, whether as a stand-alone or as part of the full articulated curriculum. Each part is organized in the same clear way, with notes for instruction and deeper explanations of the texts or the skills being taught.</p>
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<p>grade level text band.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provides extensions and/or more advanced text for students who read well above the grade level text band. <p><u><i>A unit or longer lesson should:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Include a progression of learning where concepts and skills advance and deepen over time (<i>may be more applicable across the year or several units</i>). ✓ Gradually remove supports, requiring students to demonstrate their independent capacities (<i>may be more applicable across the year or several units</i>). ✓ Provide for authentic learning, application of literacy skills, student-directed inquiry, analysis, evaluation and/or reflection. ✓ Integrate targeted instruction in such areas as grammar and conventions, writing strategies, discussion rules and all aspects of foundational reading for grades 3-5. ✓ Indicate how students are accountable for independent reading based on student choice and interest to build stamina, confidence and motivation (<i>may be more applicable across the year or several units</i>). ✓ Use technology and media to deepen learning and draw attention to evidence and texts as appropriate. 	<p>One suggestion is that the formatting is very dense, to the point that it is at times difficult to read. It may be helpful to put each activity within the part on its own page, as they tend to flow into one another. It would also be helpful to list the unit part number on each page in addition to the activity numbers. With activity numbers duplicating in each part, it gets confusing as you're working through the materials.</p> <p>In addition to the suggestion above of having students create a glossary of all the academic terms they learn along the way, a glossary for teachers of all terms as a stand-alone tool would be very helpful.</p> <p>Engagement with Complex Text/Focus on Challenging Sections of Text: As mentioned above, a particular strength of the unit is the way in which it engages all students in the close reading of complex text in order to elicit evidence. The use of text-dependent questions, whether provided in the lesson or created by the students, would support them in getting deep into these rich texts. A great deal of scaffolding is provided along the way in the form of teacher-led brainstorming, graphic organizers, conversation in pairs, and checklists.</p> <p>Supports for Diverse Learners: This unit pays careful attention to supporting every student's success with the complex texts. There are graphic organizers and checklists that could help students organize and synthesize their thinking and monitor their progression in the skills being taught. There are several places where the teacher is directed to do an additional activity as needed by the students. The use of a timeline, video, and images would also support diverse learners.</p> <p>One suggestion is that while the graphic organizers and checklists are very supportive of student needs, the academic vocabulary load in them is quite high. It would be helpful to have a modified version provided that reduces the level of vocabulary needed to understand them. They cannot be a useful tool for students if they're not able to access what is being said.</p> <p>The same is true for some of the text-dependent questions in the unit; they absolutely reflect the standard and as such are at a high level. Perhaps a note to teachers suggesting that they may need to modify the language of the question while maintaining the focus on the specific evidence being elicited would be in order.</p> <p>Extension Opportunities: There are extension opportunities listed throughout the unit. In the chart on page 7, several texts are marked as "AT," additional texts for that part. These could be used for students who are interested in the topic and want to learn more or perhaps for those who need additional challenge. For example, on page 11, the teacher is directed to select one of the three potential texts for students to read and then to provide the links to the others to the students so they may do additional reading.</p> <p>There are other extension opportunities mentioned as well. For example, on page 25, there is a note that students may wish to engage in further research.</p> <p>Progression of Learning/Gradual Removal of Supports/Targeted Instruction: This unit is clearly planned around a coherent progression of learning where</p>
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	<p>students engage in activities that strengthen their reading, writing, and speaking & listening skills. They are supported throughout all of their learning in various ways, with the final demonstration of their understanding in an independent writing piece. Over the course of the unit, the learning is more and more in the hands of the students, supported by partners as needed. This process is quite authentic, as is the task in which they're engaged: making a claim about the use of performance-enhancing drugs and supporting that claim with evidence.</p> <p>Independent Reading: There are many opportunities throughout the unit where students might engage in independent reading in order to learn more about performance-enhancing drugs and also how the authors of those texts have structured their arguments. For example, on page 15, the text box describes some of the additional readings available to students and how those readings might provide students with more learning on performance-enhancing drugs.</p> <p>Technology and Media: There is not a great deal of technology used in this unit, other than the suggestion of a video about Mark McGwire and the use of writeable PDFs. Students could easily share their thinking and collaborate on their writing process using technology.</p> <p>There are, however, a couple different types of media present in the unit. In addition to a variety of written texts, there are political cartoons used to engage students. Photographs or audio files, perhaps of athlete interviews, could also be included to spark student interest and build their skills in accessing different types of media for the purpose of deepening their understanding and building evidence.</p>
<p>Rating: 3 – Meets most to all of the criteria in the dimension</p>	

Dimension IV – Assessment

<p><i>The lesson/unit regularly assesses whether students are mastering standards-based content and skills:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Elicits direct, observable evidence of the degree to which a student can independently demonstrate the major targeted grade-level CCSS standards with appropriately complex text(s). ✓ Assesses student proficiency using methods that are unbiased and accessible to all students. ✓ Includes aligned rubrics or assessment guidelines that provide sufficient guidance for interpreting student performance. <p><u><i>A unit or longer lesson should:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use varied modes of assessment, including a range of pre-, formative, summative and self-assessment measures. 	<p>Direct, Observable Evidence/Assesses Student Proficiency/Use Varied Modes of Assessment: This unit supports teachers in gathering a great deal of evidence of student learning. Students are engaged in gathering evidence in written form, synthesizing that evidence, and organizing it to support a claim they have developed. They also engage in discussions with partners, which would allow the teacher to gather evidence of their learning. The summative assessment for the unit is a written piece that brings together all the standards learned in the course of the unit. All students would be able to engage in the various formative and summative assessments in the unit, as scaffolding documents and written explanations are present in the materials to help them do so.</p> <p>Aligned Rubrics or Assessment Guidelines: There is an excellent rubric the teacher may use to assess the students' writing on the final assignment. There are also checklists teachers may use to monitor students' acquisition of the skills targeted in the unit, as well as a checklists students may use to assess their own learning.</p> <p>One strength of this unit is that it includes sample arguments so that the teacher might see effective examples. Teachers can then also use these examples with the students in their instruction so that students can clearly see the criteria for success in making an evidence-based argument.</p>
<p>Rating: 3 – Meets most to all of the criteria in the dimension</p>	

Summary Comments

This unit is a well-thought-out, well-scaffolded plan for advancing students' skills in reading information text and other media and using evidence gleaned from their reading to support their claims. The instructional expectations are clearly laid out from the beginning and are carried out throughout all of the activities in the unit. Students are guided and supported in their learning of the various targeted reading, writing, speaking & listening skills and would likely be very successful on the summative assessment. Enough guidance in formative assessment is provided so that any teacher using the unit would be able to see areas of need for the students and hopefully adjust instruction to support those needs.

The only area of concern is that the materials, while quite comprehensive, are very dense and teachers may therefore find them difficult to use. The pieces are laid out uniformly and clearly, and teachers would certainly know where to go in the materials to find something they need, but the richness of the explanations in the introduction and throughout the activities might be lost if teachers skim the materials. Adding some spacing in the materials and making some other formatting tweaks, such as moving some of the pieces to appendices, would help resolve that.

Reviewer 2

Dimension I – Alignment to the Depth of the CCSS

The lesson/unit aligns with the letter and spirit of the CCSS:

- ✓ Targets a set of grade-level CCSS ELA/Literacy standards.
- ✓ Includes a clear and explicit purpose for instruction.
- ✓ Selects text(s) that measure within the grade-level text complexity band and are of sufficient quality and scope for the stated purpose (e.g., presents vocabulary, syntax, text structures, levels of meaning/purpose, and other qualitative characteristics similar to CCSS grade-level exemplars in Appendices A & B).

A unit or longer lesson should:

- ✓ Integrate reading, writing, speaking and listening so that students apply and synthesize advancing literacy skills.
- ☐ (Grades 3-5) Build students' content knowledge and their understanding of reading and writing in social studies, the arts, science or technical subjects through the coherent selection of texts.

- Grade Level CCSS Lit standards targeted: The introduction provides a clear listing of standards which are also evident throughout the unit. There are standards at the beginning of the entire unit, and then there are standards at the beginning of each lesson focusing on those activities.

- Clear purpose: The purpose is present, but as with everything else in this unit, it would be beneficial if the purpose was labeled for better access. With a unit that is so in-depth, for a teacher, it would be helpful to be able to glance at the headings. Other sections are labeled; it would be helpful if the purpose would have been also.

- Appropriate grade level text (complexity, quality, purpose): With the amount of reading, the types of readings and illustrations, and other sources, such as news reports, makes the text very complex. Seems to be scaffolded to help the student with guided questions, especially the use of the text-based questions. Some of the sets tend to have a large amount of reading. Looking at this as a teacher, seeing the number of texts listed, and taking the time to preview this may be an issue. It is stated in the directions about not providing the links and to use search engines to find these texts, which could also be an issue. Being able to use links would be helpful to teachers. A teacher may feel overwhelmed and not even take the time. This needs to be inviting.

- Integrate reading, writing, speaking and listening: There is a large amount of reading and writing as well as listening to the teacher through discussion, but a concern would be listening to each other and speaking more than just discussions. Being able to have time for Think-Pair-Share would allow the students to express their opinions and/or findings. When looking at this lesson, there are areas that speaking could be included, but all that was accomplished was writing. In Part 3, Number 5 – Responding to Opposing Arguments – could call for student-lead conversations that could lead to writing. Responding to opposing arguments gave the impression for speaking.

Dimension II – Key Shifts the CCSS

The lesson/unit addresses key shifts in the CCSS:

- ✓ **Reading Text Closely:** Makes reading text(s) closely, examining textual evidence, and discerning deep meaning a central focus of instruction.
- ✓ **Text-Based Evidence:** Facilitates rich and rigorous evidence-based discussions and writing about common texts through a sequence of specific, thought-provoking, and text-dependent questions (including, when applicable, questions about illustrations, charts, diagrams, audio/video, and media).
- ✓ **Writing from Sources:** Routinely expects that students draw evidence from texts to produce clear and coherent writing that informs, explains, or makes an argument in various written forms (e.g., notes, summaries, short responses, or formal essays).
- ✓ **Academic Vocabulary:** Focuses on building students' academic vocabulary in context throughout instruction.

A unit or longer lesson should:

- ✓ **Increasing Text Complexity:** Focus students on reading a progression of complex texts drawn from the grade-level band. Provide text-centered learning that is sequenced, scaffolded and supported to advance students toward independent reading of complex texts at the CCR level.
- ✓ **Building Disciplinary Knowledge:** Provide opportunities for students to build knowledge about a topic or subject through analysis of a coherent selection of strategically sequenced, discipline-specific texts.
- ✓ **Balance of Texts:** Within a collection of grade-level units a balance of informational and literary texts is included according to guidelines in the CCSS (p. 5).
- ☐ **Balance of Writing:** Include a balance of on-demand and process writing (e.g., multiple drafts and revisions over time) and short, focused research projects, incorporating digital texts where appropriate.

- Close Reading of Text: There are definite activities for close reading, but taking into consideration the complexity of some of these texts, more teacher-directed activities for close reading may be considered. Modeling is present in Part 3 where the teacher is to model how to use the checklist to review and evaluate an argument.

- Text-based evidence: A list of texts to be used is present. The title, author, source/publisher, and date are displayed on a chart for easy access. Also, the number of texts for each lesson is listed as "sets" for the teacher. Another support to the unit is the use of brainstorming activities and the text-based questions to guide the students to determine proof.

- Writing from sources: This is also present where the teacher models the development of an explanatory claim that is expressed within a text. Writing is also completed in a group through collaboration with feedback provided by peers, teachers, and audience members. The Writing Process allows a student to become independent and write as an individual. Using sources/text provides information for the student to evaluate and use.

- Academic vocabulary: The use of vocabulary is subtle. There is not a specific "list of words" given, but there is the idea of providing strategies for the meaning of words, phrases, and sentences within context. Since there is a large amount of texts, the recognition of unknown ideas will arise. There may be a word determined by context, a phrase influenced by the rest of the sentence, and a cartoon, which may be figurative. The explanation of how to present academic vocabulary is within the introduction.

- Increasing text complexity: Complexity is high throughout. Formative assessing may be needed to be sure that students are understanding the texts and gaining the concepts that are needed to be successful. It can be assumed without checking all of the texts listed that the complexity increases because of the set topics.

- Building disciplinary knowledge: A large amount of knowledge is present. The teacher would need to be aware of the student being disciplined enough to gain the information/knowledge needed. Students will need to be able to filter out unnecessary information.

- Balance of texts: There is definitely a balance and variety of texts- articles, background articles, cartoons, press releases, videos and written texts allowing the student to experience a diversity of exposure.

- Balance of writing: There is definitely a variety of writing, but process writing may be weak. There are multiple drafts but not until later in the unit. It was difficult to follow and understand the purpose of some of the writings and how these writings will be used. Formative writing assessments are evident once, maybe twice. The balance of writing should be a progression to the final product.

Dimension III – Instructional Supports

The lesson/unit is responsive to varied student learning needs:

- ✓ Cultivates student interest and engagement in reading, writing and speaking about texts.
- ☐ Addresses instructional expectations and is easy to understand and use.
- ☐ Provides *all* students with multiple opportunities to engage with text of appropriate complexity for the grade level; includes appropriate scaffolding so that students directly experience the complexity of the text.
- ✓ Focuses on challenging sections of text(s) and engages students in a productive struggle through discussion questions and other supports that build toward independence.
- ☐ Integrates appropriate supports in reading, writing, listening and speaking for students who are ELL, have disabilities, or read well below the grade level text band.
- ☐ Provides extensions and/or more advanced text for students who read well above the grade level text band.

A unit or longer lesson should:

- ☐ Include a progression of learning where concepts and skills advance and deepen over time (*may be more applicable across the year or several units*).
- ☐ Gradually remove supports, requiring students to demonstrate their independent capacities (*may be more applicable across the year or several units*).
- ✓ Provide for authentic learning, application of literacy skills, student-directed inquiry, analysis, evaluation and/or reflection.
- ✓ Integrate targeted instruction in such areas as grammar and conventions, writing strategies, discussion rules and all aspects of foundational reading for grades 3-5.
- ☐ Indicate how students are accountable for independent reading based on student choice and interest to build stamina, confidence and motivation (*may be more applicable across the year or several units*).
- ✓ Use technology and media to deepen learning and draw attention to evidence and texts as appropriate.

- Cultivates interest and engagement in reading, writing, speaking: Students will definitely be engaged with these topics. A concern would be that students may need more speaking other than discussions. Allowing for more verbal input also affects the listening and evaluating. A student would be engaged if he/she would know that his/her ideas are valued.

- Addresses instructional expectations and easy to understand: Directions are explicit and detailed and aligned to the standards. Some areas are difficult to understand (e.g. some of the writing tasks do not necessarily give explicit purposes/expectations) and additional information would be beneficial to the teacher on how to use these writings early in the unit.

- Provides all students opportunity to engage in text: There is a modeling, scaffolding, and guided questioning, reading, and writing, but this may not be sufficient for ELLs or those with specific disabilities. Some of the lessons may need to be chunked as a large amount of information is given in each lesson.

- Focuses on difficult portions of text and allows for productive struggle: With the amount of text given each lesson and the complexity of the text, struggle is present. A concern would be moving towards independence. Reading is supported, discussions are supported, creating ideas are within a group, but independence does not become evident (strongly) until the final writing.

- Integrates appropriate supports: Appropriate supports are not strongly evident. Supports are for everyone throughout the lesson, but not all students may respond to this type of support. An ELL or student with disabilities may need additional help or clarification of expectations. Another concern would be if the student does not understand a text.

- Provides extensions: There are no extensions observed, at least not easily found.

- Includes progression of learning: Part 5 has evidence of progression of learning. It uses activities from other lessons and progresses from strengthening writing to a final product. It goes from collaboration to using clear criteria by gathering information from their reading to creating drafts for final production.

- Gradually removes supports: It is not observed that supports are removed. Guided writings, modelings, guiding questions are present throughout the unit without any changes. These should slowly be eliminated as the units progress. Another suggestion may be working towards independent reading.

- Provides for authentic learning: These are consistent throughout the lessons. The lessons progress from gathering information to thinking to organizing/sequencing to integration of evidence to producing a product. The learning is progressive.

- Integrates targeted instruction: Activity 7 stresses areas such as grammar and conventions. There has been research about teaching conventions separate from the other lessons. This research shows that students maintain conventions if it is taught throughout the entire unit when writing is

	<p>required, not just at the end preparing them for the final product.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indicates how students are accountable for independent reading: Even though reading is required throughout the unit and students are held accountable for their involvement within the class, independent choice is not observed. - Uses technology and media: Observed within the type of texts provided as well as research.
<p>Rating: 2 – Meets many of the criteria in the dimension</p>	

Dimension IV – Assessment

<p><i>The lesson/unit regularly assesses whether students are mastering standards-based content and skills:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Elicits direct, observable evidence of the degree to which a student can independently demonstrate the major targeted grade-level CCSS standards with appropriately complex text(s). ✓ Assesses student proficiency using methods that are unbiased and accessible to all students. ☐ Includes aligned rubrics or assessment guidelines that provide sufficient guidance for interpreting student performance. <p><u><i>A unit or longer lesson should:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Use varied modes of assessment, including a range of pre-, formative, summative and self-assessment measures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elicits observable evidence of students' independent demonstration of standards: Independence will be demonstrated with the summative assessment. The use of formal and informal formative assessments would be beneficial to observe students understanding. - Assesses using unbiased/accessible methods: Assessments are obtainable as long as evidence is provided. - Includes aligned rubrics: Evidence-based Arguments Criteria Checklist and the Evidence-Based Writing Rubric are available. These can be used for formative assessments and as summative for the final product. - Varied modes of assessment measures: With the use of the checklist, teachers are able to assess formative and the use of the rubric for summative with the final product.
<p>Rating: 3 – Meets most to all criteria in the dimension</p>	

Summary Comments

<p>A score of 11 places this as an exemplar lesson.</p> <p>This unit covers the standards listed very well. The use of the texts for reading and viewing allow students to interpret and evaluate from different lenses. The structure of the lesson helps the students through difficult texts while they gather information for later evaluation. The structure of these lessons do not lend toward those who may need extra help or time. The overall unit progresses quite well to the final product.</p> <p>A major concern is how the unit looks. It is very sterile, no graphics or illustrations. If a teacher is asked to look at this unit, the teacher would probably set it aside. It is extremely text heavy. Instructions and directions need to be thorough, but this may be a little overwhelming to a busy teacher. A suggestion might be to condense some of the information where possible.</p>
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Reviewer 3

Dimension I – Alignment to the Depth of the CCSS

The lesson/unit aligns with the letter and spirit of the CCSS:

- ✓ Targets a set of grade-level CCSS ELA/Literacy standards.
- ✓ Includes a clear and explicit purpose for instruction.
- ✓ Selects text(s) that measure within the grade-level text complexity band and are of sufficient quality and scope for the stated purpose (e.g., presents vocabulary, syntax, text structures, levels of meaning/purpose, and other qualitative characteristics similar to CCSS grade-level exemplars in Appendices A & B).

A unit or longer lesson should:

- ✓ Integrate reading, writing, speaking and listening so that students apply and synthesize advancing literacy skills.
- ☐ (Grades 3-5) Build students' content knowledge and their understanding of reading and writing in social studies, the arts, science or technical subjects through the coherent selection of texts.

- Grade Level CCSS Lit standards targeted:

There are very specific CCSS Lit standards stated at the onset of this unit on page 4. The developers explicitly state that RI.1, RI.8, W.1, W.2, and W.9 were used in the primary alignment of the unit. In addition, it is further explained and demonstrated that RI.6, RI.9, W.4, W.5, and SL.1 are included as focus standards in individual lessons in order to guide students toward the desired outcome. Each individual part of this unit includes a set of targeted standards, along with a listing of practiced standards (such as RI.4, .RI.2, RI.3, R.5, R.7).

The intentional 'road-mapping' to the planning of this unit to assure coherence and alignment of these standards and the instruction is evident throughout. When reviewing the activities in each lesson, the focus is on the identified standards. There is no doubt that the activities are clearly teaching and allowing practice of the targeted standards. Just one example of this is noted on page 17, the opening to Part 2, where the developers specifically outline the activities and targeted/practiced standards. The correlation between the two sections offers a perfect match of standard and instruction.

- Clear purpose:

One of the strengths of this unit is that the purposes outlined are not 'school-bound'. On page 2 of this unit, the developers state the primary purpose of the detailed instruction as "Literacy - the integrated abilities to read texts closely, to investigate ideas and deepen understanding through research, to make and evaluate evidence-based claims, and to communicate one's perspective in a reasoned way - is fundamental to participation in civic life."

The students are made aware of the central purpose of the unit when introduced in Part 1: "...to develop, practice, and apply the skills of argumentation in the context of a societal issue..." Six specific portions to this purpose are then explained.

Each part of the unit offers very clearly stated objectives. For example, Part 1's objective is articulated as, "Students apply their close reading skills to understand a societal issue as a context for various perspectives, positions and arguments." The alignment between the targeted standards (RI.7.1, RI.7.2, RI.7.3 and W.7.2) is evident in the accompanying activities.

- Appropriate grade-level text (complexity, quality, purpose):

All provided texts have been analyzed for appropriateness for this grade band. Quantitative measures, qualitative features, and consideration of the readers and tasks are clearly explained in detail for each text in each text set. A sample of this detailed information is available on page 20 in Part 2, Activity 3, Text 4.1: "This press release measures at 1330L, due mostly to some longer sentences. However, the text is short and is chunked into 1-2 paragraphs, which makes for an easier read than the measure might suggest. In addition, this argument is clearly structured to communicate and substantiate a position through a set of linked and supported premises, which should make it an accessible argument to begin with for most students."

- Integrate reading, writing, speaking and listening:

All aspects of literacy are intertwined in the instructional strategies utilized in this unit of study. The authors articulate to students the intention of integrating reading, writing, speaking and listening on page 10, when they explain that the guiding text-based questions are not being offered only for the students to answer, but also as "...a stimulus for reading and discussion.

Thinking about these questions as they read, analyze, and discuss will eventually lead them to a perspective on the use of PEDs [Performance Enhancing Drugs], and finally to a position about the use of PEDs from which they can build an evidence-based argument."

These components of literacy are integrated so well that it is almost seamless. For example, the final part of the unit has students doing close reading of their close writing.

Rating: 3 – Meets most to all of the criteria in the dimension

Dimension II – Key Shifts the CCSS

The lesson/unit addresses key shifts in the CCSS:

- ✓ **Reading Text Closely:** Makes reading text(s) closely, examining textual evidence, and discerning deep meaning a central focus of instruction.
- ✓ **Text-Based Evidence:** Facilitates rich and rigorous evidence-based discussions and writing about common texts through a sequence of specific, thought-provoking, and text-dependent questions (including, when applicable, questions about illustrations, charts, diagrams, audio/video, and media).
- ✓ **Writing from Sources:** Routinely expects that students draw evidence from texts to produce clear and coherent writing that informs, explains, or makes an argument in various written forms (e.g., notes, summaries, short responses, or formal essays).
- ✓ **Academic Vocabulary:** Focuses on building students' academic vocabulary in context throughout instruction.

A unit or longer lesson should:

- ✓ **Increasing Text Complexity:** Focus students on reading a progression of complex texts drawn from the grade-level band. Provide text-centered learning that is sequenced, scaffolded and supported to advance students toward independent reading of complex texts at the CCR level.
- ✓ **Building Disciplinary Knowledge:** Provide opportunities for students to build knowledge about a topic or subject through analysis of a coherent selection of strategically sequenced, discipline-specific texts.
- ✓ **Balance of Texts:** Within a collection of grade-level units a balance of informational and literary texts is included according to guidelines in the CCSS (p. 5).
- ✓ **Balance of Writing:** Include a balance of on-demand and process writing (e.g., multiple drafts and revisions over time) and short, focused research projects, incorporating digital texts where appropriate.

- Close Reading of Text:

Close reading is the foundation for all learning within this unit. As one of the key instructional shifts of the Common Core demands, students are asked to really analyze texts prior to formulating a claim, making reading closely the central focus of instruction.

Multiple reads for multiple purposes are emphasized in this unit. Text 4.4 is used initially to provide background information, but reread more closely when comparing perspectives.

- Text-based evidence:

High level questioning and thinking pushes students to engage in evidence-based, thought-provoking discourse (both oral and written). The developers provide many carefully worded text-dependent questions to promote this discourse. These sample sequence of questions guide students into a deeper understanding of the texts. Questions force students to go past the literal textual evidence and grapple with the main purpose of this unit. An example of this type of question is "What evidence does this text provide that influences your understanding of the issue/problem of performance-enhancing drugs in the US?"

Another strength of this unit is the bridging of the gap between teacher-generated text-dependent questions and ones created by the students themselves. With supports such as, "Reading Closely for Details: Guiding Questions," students work individually or in teams to dive more deeply into the texts - and work toward the goals of this unit.

- Writing from sources:

There is a consistent requirement in this unit that writing be evidence-based. An example of this is on page 29, when students are "...writing a multi-part evidence-based claim."

- Academic vocabulary:

With the description provided in the overview of this unit, it is obvious that academic vocabulary was not only considered, but made a priority. On page 4, an entire section is devoted to explaining "How This Unit Teaches Vocabulary." Both academic and domain-specific vocabulary are intentionally taught, practiced and applied in oral and written discourse. The authors describe how vocabulary was used as a determinate in sequencing texts, instruction and activities.

One suggestion, however, might be for a more complete glossary of utilized Tier 2 and Tier 3 terms to be offered for both teachers and students. The EBA Terms handout does provide some of these, but the inclusion of additional specific vocabulary and phrases would be beneficial. This is particularly needed when discussing argumentative writing. It would be beneficial if terms, such as explanatory claim and synthesis claim, were

defined with corresponding examples.

- Increasing text complexity:

The developers make it clear that there was great thought put into the sequencing of texts. Evidence is located on page 20-21 ("...this argument is clearly structured... which should make it an accessible argument to begin with for most students") and again on page 23 ("At this point in the text sequence, students will be supported by vocabulary and ideas they have learned from earlier texts...").

- Building disciplinary knowledge:

As exemplified in the Unit Outline on page 5, there is a definite coherence in the sequence of instruction and learning in this unit. Step-by-step, the concept of building evidence-based arguments is intentionally taught.

- Balance of texts:

The Grade 7 Argumentation Unit Text Sets on page 7 shows that there is a balance of types of texts. Primary and secondary sources are utilized, along with political cartoons.

There seems to be an effort to keep complex texts as the mainstay for ALL students, offering various supports to access the reading.

Since this unit is about an issue with differing points of view, care was taken to offer a balance of perspectives. An example of this is on page 23, where the developers discuss texts 4.2 and 4.3, noting that these offer "... two very different arguments about the issue."

- Balance of writing:

Throughout the unit, writing is integrated not only as a means to demonstrate learning, but as a way to process information. Note-taking, short responses and other on-demand writing occurs throughout the unit, culminating in a piece which undergoes a very thorough writing process.

The Core Proficiencies collaborative, question-based approach detailed in Part 5 is an excellent example of why this unit of study is an exemplar! The process offers students the opportunity to learn how to truly refine their writing. Teaching students that writing is an on-going process and not a one-time product is a valuable lesson for all writers.

Rating: **3 – Meets most to all of the criteria in the dimension**

Dimension III – Instructional Supports

The lesson/unit is responsive to varied student learning needs:

- ✓ Cultivates student interest and engagement in reading, writing and speaking about texts.
- ✓ Addresses instructional expectations and is easy to understand and use.
- ✓ Provides *all* students with multiple opportunities to engage with text of appropriate complexity for the grade level; includes appropriate scaffolding so that students directly experience the complexity of the text.
- ✓ Focuses on challenging sections of text(s) and engages students in a productive struggle through discussion questions and other

Cultivates interest and engagement in reading, writing, speaking:

The chosen topic in and of itself is one that the typical middle school student will find inviting, thereby encouraging the reading, writing, speaking and listening about it. Specific guiding questions further this interest in engaging in the reading, writing and communication about the topic. An example of this type of question can be located on page 12: "What evidence does this text provide that influences your understanding of the issue/problem of performance-enhancing drugs in the US?"

- Addresses instructional expectations and easy to understand:

The explanation of the structure on page 3 and the outline on page 5 are two samples of how this unit addresses instructional expectations and of the unit's ease of use. The explanations and details make this unit manageable as a classroom teacher.

There is an abundance of supporting resources for this unit of study. A

<p>supports that build toward independence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Integrates appropriate supports in reading, writing, listening and speaking for students who are ELL, have disabilities, or read well below the grade level text band. ☐ Provides extensions and/or more advanced text for students who read well above the grade level text band. <p><u>A unit or longer lesson should:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Include a progression of learning where concepts and skills advance and deepen over time (<i>may be more applicable across the year or several units</i>). ✓ Gradually remove supports, requiring students to demonstrate their independent capacities (<i>may be more applicable across the year or several units</i>). ✓ Provide for authentic learning, application of literacy skills, student-directed inquiry, analysis, evaluation and/or reflection. ✓ Integrate targeted instruction in such areas as grammar and conventions, writing strategies, discussion rules and all aspects of foundational reading for grades 3-5. ✓ Indicate how students are accountable for independent reading based on student choice and interest to build stamina, confidence and motivation (<i>may be more applicable across the year or several units</i>). ✓ Use technology and media to deepen learning and draw attention to evidence and texts as appropriate. 	<p>couple comments/suggestions about making this unit even more user-friendly:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On the electronic version of the Unit Plan, it would be a great improvement if the suggested tools, charts, texts, etc. were available as hyper-links, providing immediate access with the click of the mouse. 2. At times, the acronyms used became confusing. Possibly providing a full title after the use of the acronym would be helpful. 3. This unit is so thorough! Unfortunately, the same detail that makes the unit exemplar may be seen as intimidating to a teacher with minimal time. This is always a fine line - how much detail is needed and how much is too much. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides all students opportunity to engage in text: Engaging ALL students in complex text seems to be a priority in this unit of study. Careful consideration about providing appropriate scaffolds is also apparent. For example, when a text with a quantitative measure of 1380L is recommended, there is a description about how the text is divided into easily digestible chunks, making it more readily accessible to all students. The careful sequencing of texts also allows ALL students to successfully engage with the texts. - Focuses on difficult portions of text and allows for productive struggle: Since students are engaged in creating text-dependent questions, self-identified difficult portions of the text are highlighted for re-visitation. - Integrates appropriate supports: As stated previously, it seems as though the intent is to have all students engage in the complex texts. The modeling, teams, and intentional sequencing of activities provide ALL students the supports needed to be successful. In addition, the developers offer a couple of additional lessons, such as Activity 6 in Part 2, to be used if needed, to support success. - Provides extensions: Although students are self-differentiating throughout the unit, specifics on extensions and advanced texts for advanced learners would be one area of possible improvement. - Includes progression of learning: Careful planning to assure coherence within this unit is apparent when reviewing this module. Evidence of this thoughtful attention to the alignment of the standards, purposes, and instruction is detailed at the beginning of Part 3, Activity 1, on page 28, where the authors state, "Having analyzed and compared the perspectives, positions, premises, and evidence for various arguments related to the unit's issue, students are ready to evaluate the logic and quality of various positions and arguments..." - Gradually removes supports: The entire unit speaks to the Gradual Release of Responsibility, with skills being modeled, practiced with teacher guidance, practiced in small groups and practiced independently prior to formal assessment. - Provides for authentic learning: Again, referring back to the overall purpose of this unit, there is a very authentic goal in this unit - providing students with the application of literacy skills that will benefit them in their civic and academic lives.
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	<p>Students are provided many opportunities for "student-directed inquiry, analysis, evaluation and reflection."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Integrates targeted instruction: Instruction is clearly provided throughout this unit. For example, very specific mini-lessons target writing strategies such as counterclaims (page 30) and the "four essentials" of writing (page 38). - Indicates how students are accountable for independent reading: Students are offered choice in some independent reading (i.e. page 11). The developers suggest early in the overview that a portfolio system be utilized to hold students responsible and accountable for their learning. - Uses technology and media: Technology and media is appropriately integrated into this unit. A video (page 9), an option for auditory version of text (page 12) and the use of a video blog (page 14) are some examples of how they are utilized. The use of technology in writing might be one suggestion for additional recommendations for this criterion.
<p>Rating: 3 – Meets most to all of the criteria in the dimension</p>	

Dimension IV – Assessment

<p><i>The lesson/unit regularly assesses whether students are mastering standards-based content and skills:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Elicits direct, observable evidence of the degree to which a student can independently demonstrate the major targeted grade-level CCSS standards with appropriately complex text(s). ✓ Assesses student proficiency using methods that are unbiased and accessible to all students. ✓ Includes aligned rubrics or assessment guidelines that provide sufficient guidance for interpreting student performance. <p><u><i>A unit or longer lesson should:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use varied modes of assessment, including a range of pre-, formative, summative and self-assessment measures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elicits observable evidence of students' independent demonstration of standards: The strength of the organization and structure of this unit flows right into many opportunities for teachers to gain observable evidence of students' progress with the targeted standards. The final paper mirrors the standards and purposes targeted. There is a perfect match here. Throughout the unit, the staircase toward this final product provides observable evidence step-by-step. For example, on page 16, students are to draft a multi-part claim. - Assesses using unbiased/accessible methods: None of the assessments are biased or inaccessible. - Includes aligned rubrics: Specific scoring criteria are offered, such as those on page 16. In addition, an Evidence-Based Criteria Checklist is available for use. - Varied modes of assessment measures: Many opportunities for formative assessment are available, for example in Part 2. In addition, students are asked to rate their team's work and do some self-reflection (i.e. page 34). A summative assessment is completed in Part 5.
<p>Rating: 3 – Meets most to all of the criteria in the dimension</p>	

Summary Comments

<p>This unit received the rating of 12, placing it solidly in the exemplar category!</p> <p>The strength of this unit is the intentionality in the planning. Every component is well thought-out and articulated. If there were some formatting additions to the electronic version, making some of the tools available at the teachers' fingertips, the detail of the unit would not feel limiting.</p>
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This unit is a fine example of instruction aligned to the rigor of the Common Core!

Rating Scales

Rating Scale for Dimensions I, II, III, IV:

- 3: Meets most to all of the criteria in the dimension
2: Meets many of the criteria in the dimension
1: Meets some of the criteria in the dimension
0: Does not meet the criteria in the dimension

Overall Rating for the Lesson/Unit:

- E: Exemplar – Aligned and meets most to all of the criteria in dimensions II, III, IV (**total 11 – 12**)
E/I: Exemplar *if* Improved – Aligned and needs some improvement in one or more dimensions (**total 8 – 10**)
R: Revision Needed – Aligned partially and needs significant revision in one or more dimensions (**total 3 – 7**)
N: Not Ready to Review – Not aligned and does not meet criteria (**total 0 – 2**)

Rating Descriptors

Descriptors for Dimensions I, II, III, IV:

- 3: **Exemplifies CCSS Quality** - meets the standard described by criteria in the dimension, as explained in criterion-based observations.
2: **Approaching CCSS Quality** - meets many criteria but will benefit from revision in others, as suggested in criterion-based observations.
1: **Developing toward CCSS Quality** - needs significant revision, as suggested in criterion-based observations.
0: **Not representing CCSS Quality** - does not address the criteria in the dimension.

Descriptor for Overall Ratings:

- E: **Exemplifies CCSS Quality** – Aligned and exemplifies the quality standard and exemplifies most of the criteria across Dimensions II, III, IV of the rubric.
E/I: **Approaching CCSS Quality** – Aligned and exemplifies the quality standard in some dimensions but will benefit from some revision in others.
R: **Developing toward CCSS Quality** – Aligned partially and approaches the quality standard in some dimensions and needs significant revision in others.
N: **Not representing CCSS Quality** – Not aligned and does not address criteria.