PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

- Close Reading of Complex Texts
- Writing from Sources:
  Argument, Literary Analysis, Research Simulation
- Performance Assessment Practice
PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT
In order to get good at anything, you need to practice. Whether the goal is to improve your jump shot, level up in a video game, or make the cut in band tryouts, success requires repeated practice on the court, computer, and field. The same is true of reading and writing. The only way to get good at them is by reading and writing.

Malcolm Gladwell estimates in his book *Outliers* that mastering a skill requires about 10,000 hours of dedicated practice. He argues that individuals who are outstanding in their field have one thing in common—many, many hours of working at it. Gladwell claims that success is less dependent on innate talent than it is on practice. Now I’m pretty sure that I could put in 10,000 hours at a ballet studio and still be a terrible dancer, but I agree with Gladwell that, “Practice isn’t the thing you do once you’re good. It’s the thing you do that makes you good.”

Not just any kind of practice will help you master a skill, though. Effective practice needs to focus on improvement. That is why this series of reading and writing tasks begins with a model of the kind of reading and writing you are working towards, then takes you through practice exercises, and finally invites you to perform the skills you have practiced.

Once through the cycle is only the beginning. You will want to repeat the process many times over until close reading, supporting claims with evidence, and crafting a compelling essay is something you approach with confidence. Notice that I didn’t say “with ease.” I wish it were otherwise, but in my experience as a teacher and as an author, writing well is never easy.

The work is worth the effort. Like a star walking out on the stage, you put your trust in the hours you’ve invested in practice to result in thundering applause. To our work together!
Unit 1 Argumentative Essay
Animal and Human Interactions

STEP 1 ANALYZE THE MODEL
Should animals be kept in zoos?

Read Source Materials

INFORMATIONAL ARTICLE
Zoos and Aquariums Have a Positive Impact on Visitors
Oliver Dunhill 4

INFORMATIONAL ARTICLE
Do Zoos Shorten Elephant Life Spans?
Virgina Morell 5

STUDENT MODEL
Have You Ever Seen an Elephant?
Justin Rivers 6

STEP 2 PRACTICE THE TASK
Should people be allowed to keep pit bulls as pets?

Read Source Materials

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE
Ohio Overturns Pit Bull Bill
Diane Bird 10

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE
Miami-Dade County Votes to Keep Pit Bulls Out
Roberto Gómez 11

BLOG
Pit Bulls Haven't Always Had a Bad Rep
pitbull_lover 12

NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL
The Media and the Pit Bull
James Cross 13

Write an Argumentative Essay
Should people be allowed to keep pit bulls as pets?
16
STEP 3 PERFORM THE TASK

Can animals learn or use language?

Read Source Materials

MAGAZINE ARTICLE
Speaking Bonobo
Paul Raffaele 22

MAGAZINE ARTICLE
When Animals Communicate, They Are Not Using “Language”
Mia Lewis 26

GRAPHIC FEATURE
What Is Language?
28

Write an Argumentative Essay
Can animals learn or use language?
31

Unit 2 Informative Essay

Disaster!

STEP 1 ANALYZE THE MODEL

What causes home fires and how can we prevent them?

Read Source Materials

INSTRUCTIONAL ARTICLE
Organizing Your Writing
Russ Weisman 36

STUDENT MODEL
Hunting for Hazards
Robert Colleran 38

STUDENT MODEL
One Thing Led to Another
Karen Dayton 40
STEP 2 PRACTICE THE TASK

How are hurricanes and tornadoes alike and different?

Read Source Materials

INSTRUCTIONAL ESSAY
What Is . . . Comparison-and-Contrast Organization Moira McCarthy 44

MAP
Hurricanes and Tornadoes in the U.S. 45

INFORMATIONAL TEXT
What You Should Know About Tornadoes Sheldon Hammond 46

INFORMATIONAL TEXT
Basic Facts About Hurricanes Eve Perry 48

Write an Informative Essay
How are hurricanes and tornadoes alike and different? 52

STEP 3 PERFORM THE TASK

How are rogue waves and tsunamis alike and different?

Read Source Materials

INFORMATIONAL TEXT
What Are Rogue Waves? Neveah Simmons 58

INFORMATIONAL TEXT
What Causes Tsunamis? Jane Sanborn 61

Write an Informative Essay
How are rogue waves and tsunamis alike and different? 65
## Unit 3 Literary Analysis
### Viewpoints

**STEP 1 ANALYZE THE MODEL**

*How do others view us?*

**Read Source Materials**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POEM</th>
<th>Earth</th>
<th>John Hall Wheelock</th>
<th>70</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POEM</td>
<td>Earth</td>
<td>Oliver Herford</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUDENT MODEL</td>
<td>As Earth and Our Ideas Explode</td>
<td>David Yuan</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STEP 2 PRACTICE THE TASK**

*How does the information we have affect our viewpoint?*

**Read Source Materials**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFORMATIONAL TEXT</th>
<th>What Is a . . . Folk Tale</th>
<th>Sandra Merrick</th>
<th>76</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FOLK TALE</td>
<td>Six Men and an Elephant</td>
<td>retold by John Godfrey Saxe</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOLK TALE</td>
<td>The Red and Blue Coat</td>
<td></td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Write a Literary Analysis**

*How are the lessons taught by the folk tales alike, and how are they different?*

84

**STEP 3 PERFORM THE TASK**

*How can the theme of a story convey a viewpoint about life?*

**Read Source Materials**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFORMATIONAL TEXT</th>
<th>How Authors Convey the Theme</th>
<th>Martin Rashad</th>
<th>90</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SHORT STORY</td>
<td>The White Umbrella</td>
<td>Gish Jen</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Write a Literary Analysis**

*How does the author of “The White Umbrella” convey the theme of the story?*

105
# Unit 4 Mixed Practice

## On Your Own

### TASK 1 ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY

**Research Simulation**

**Read Source Materials**

**Anchor Text**
- NEWSPAPER ARTICLE
  - White House Conference Tackles Bullying  
    Mimi Hall 113

**MAGAZINE ARTICLE**
- Parenting a Bully: What Are the Responsibilities?  
  Damien Steiner 116

**Write an Argumentative Essay** 119

### TASK 2 INFORMATIVE ESSAY

**Research Simulation**

**Read Source Materials**

**Anchor Text**
- ONLINE ARTICLE
  - Best American Bike Trails  
    Jeff Wallach 125

**ONLINE ARTICLE**
- Top Five Places to Mountain Bike  
  Beth Puliti 128

**MAGAZINE FEATURE**
- Not Your Typical Mountain Biking Trail  
  Aaron Dunphy 131

**Write an Informative Essay** 135

### TASK 3 LITERARY ANALYSIS

**Read Source Materials**

**POEM**
- That Day  
  David Kherdian 140

**ESSAY**
- About “That Day”  
  David Kherdian 141

**Write a Literary Analysis** 143
UNIT 1: Argumentative Essay

Animal and Human Interactions
Think about the last time you tried to convince someone about something. To make your point, you used reasons or examples to support your position. Although a formal argument is different from a conversational argument, they share some basic qualities.

The ability to sway, convince, or change someone’s opinion is a powerful communication tool. By presenting your argument in a way that is persuasive, you are expressing your point of view using facts, logic, and reason.

In this unit, you will learn how to write an argumentative essay that is based on your close reading and analysis of several relevant sources. You will learn a step-by-step approach to stating a claim—and then organizing your essay to support your claim in a clear and logical way.
Should animals be kept in zoos?

You will read:

▶ TWO INFORMATIONAL ARTICLES
  - Zoos and Aquariums Have a Positive Impact on Visitors
  - Do Zoos Shorten Elephant Life Spans?

You will analyze:

▶ A STUDENT MODEL
  - Have You Ever Seen an Elephant?
Zoos and Aquariums Have a Positive Impact on Visitors

BY OLIVER DUNHILL, zoo and aquarium manager

Organizations such as the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) recently conducted a study to find out if zoos and aquariums make a lasting impact on visitors. The study showed that people are positively affected by their experiences at zoos and aquariums. Knowing what visitors take away from the experience can show that visiting these establishments encourages people to be more aware of their attitudes toward conservation. Visitors also improve their understanding of exotic animals and the environments these animals live in.

Zoos and aquariums that are recognized by the AZA, including the two I manage, work to actively educate their visitors. We offer lectures and show videos that feature some of the animals in the zoo and the aquarium. The topics can cover an animal’s natural environment, what its diet is, or what dangers it faces from human presence.

These programs might be the only time that adult visitors learn about why plastic bags are dangerous to sea turtles and birds, for example. The information they learn in these programs could inspire them to research more about the animal or the dangers its species faces in the wild.

People who visit zoos think more positively about conservation. Many visitors will feel a stronger connection to nature after their visit and are more likely to reflect on their role in protecting the environment.
Do Zoos Shorten Elephant Life Spans?

by Virginia Morell

Elephants are one of the top draws for zoos, which are the only places most of us get a chance to see the behemoths. But a new and controversial study in *Science* suggests that captivity is so bad for female elephants’ health and overall well-being that their life spans are less than that of half of those of protected populations in Africa and Asia. The data also indicate that captive-born Asian elephant calves are particularly likely to die young. The team has called for an end to zoos’ acquisition of wild elephants and for limits on transfers of animals among zoos.

Already concerned about their elephants, many zoos in the United States and Europe are expanding or building new enclosures, or even deciding against exhibiting the great beasts altogether. Studies in the wild have documented the importance of roaming and family ties for these animals, which zoos with limited space often cannot provide.

Some of the zoo elephants’ problems stem from the practices of removing young calves from their mothers and transferring females from one zoo to another, usually for breeding. Both practices break the animals’ family ties and presumably cause mental stress. “In the wild, females always stay with their mothers; they never leave the herd where they’re born,” says Mason. Zoo elephants are often overweight as well, due to a lack of space in which to roam.

1 **behemoth** an enormous creature or animal

Discuss and Decide

You have read two sources about the relationships between people, animals, and zoos. Without going any further, discuss the question: Should animals be kept in zoos?
Have You Ever Seen an Elephant?

Have you ever heard the roar of a lion? Have you ever seen elephants so close that you could practically touch them? If you have, most likely you saw these great creatures in a zoo.

Watch out! If some people get their way, most zoos everywhere will be abolished. Try to imagine a world where lions and tigers and elephants can be seen only in old films and photo books.

Come to think of it, maybe it’s better not to imagine such a thing. A world without zoos is scary. Zoos have been around for at least 3500 years. Today more than 600 million people visit the zoos of the world each year. What if all zoos closed down?

Animal Research and Zoos

If all zoos shut their gates, the excitement and knowledge they bring to all of us would be gone! However, unhappy children would not be the only problem.

Many large zoos have animal research programs. That makes sense because paying scientists to travel great distances to study animals in the wild is very expensive. It can also be very difficult to get close enough to wild animals to conduct this kind of on-site research. In fact, zoos raise a significant amount of the money that is spent on the research to save animals.
Breeding and Zoos
Very rare animals in the wild are often rare for a reason. Sometimes their environment is being destroyed, or they are losing the competition with the needs of people.

Some large zoos have breeding programs to keep rare animals from going extinct. Some of these zoos even have programs to return animals they have bred to the wild.

Fairness
Zoos give my friends and me a chance to learn about animals. Without zoos, only very wealthy families would be able to visit animals in the wild! My family can’t travel to Africa or the Galapagos Islands, but we can go to the zoo.

Closing zoos would not be fair to endangered animals either. Because of zoos, more people know how to help animals that can’t help themselves. After all, many animal species need us to care because they can’t solve their own problems. What can wild animals do about curing their own diseases, finding water during a drought, or finding food when their territories are shrinking?

Many zoos have education programs that put a spotlight on animals that need help and environments that are at risk. When people know what they can do to help out, they often do it.

Facing the Argument
Those who are against zoos point out that of the 10,000 zoos around the world, many keep the animals in bad conditions. Some zoos do not provide the animals with the things they need to live naturally, such as plenty of space to roam and the chance to hunt. However, the main objections to zoos could be solved by forcing government agencies to check regularly on animals in zoos. Animals deserve this help. And we deserve the chance to see them up close.

Discuss and Decide
Did Justin convince you that zoos are worthwhile? If so, cite the compelling evidence in his essay.
Terminology of Argumentative Texts

Read each term and explanation. Then look back at Justin Rivers’ argumentative essay and find an example to complete the chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Example from Justin’s Essay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>audience</td>
<td>The <strong>audience</strong> for your argument is a group of people that you want to convince. As you develop your argument, consider your audience’s knowledge level and concerns.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>purpose</td>
<td>The <strong>purpose</strong> for writing an argument is to sway the audience. Your purpose should be clear, whether it is to persuade your audience to agree with your claim, or to motivate your audience to take some action.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>precise claim</td>
<td>A <strong>precise claim</strong> confidently states your viewpoint. Remember that you must be able to find reasons and evidence to support your claim, and that you must distinguish your claim from opposing claims.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reason</td>
<td>A <strong>reason</strong> is a statement that supports your claim. (You should have more than one reason.) Note that you will need to supply evidence for each reason you state.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opposing claim</td>
<td>An <strong>opposing claim</strong>, or <strong>counterclaim</strong>, shares the point of view of people who do not agree with your claim. Opposing claims must be fairly presented with evidence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Should people be allowed to keep pit bulls as pets?

You will read:
- TWO NEWSPAPER ARTICLES
  - Ohio Overturns Pit Bull Bill
  - Miami-Dade County Votes to Keep Pit Bulls Out
- A BLOG
  - Pit Bulls Haven’t Always Had a Bad Rep
- A NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL
  - The Media and the Pit Bull

You will write:
- AN ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY
  - Should people be allowed to keep pit bulls as pets?
Source Materials for Step 2

AS YOU READ  Analyze the newspaper articles, the blog, and the editorial. Annotate the sources with notes that help you decide where you stand on the issue: Should people be allowed to keep pit bulls as pets?

Source 1: Newspaper Article

OHIO OVERTURNS PIT BULL BILL

February 21, 2012

COLUMBUS—The Ohio State Legislature voted today on a bill to eliminate a 25-year-old law automatically declaring pit bulls as vicious. The original bill, enacted in 1987, was the only state law in the country to discriminate against a specific breed—the pit bull.

Under the old law, owners of all pit bulls were required to register their dogs as dangerous. Other dogs were labeled as vicious if they had ever injured a person seriously, or killed another dog. However, all pit bulls were automatically included in either the dangerous or vicious category.

The new bill, House Bill 14, redefines the designations of vicious and dangerous and creates a lesser category of a nuisance dog. In addition to removing any mention of a specific breed, this bill creates a process for dog owners to change labels applied by law enforcement. Now, the legal responsibility for proving that a dog deserves its label is on the dog warden, and this proof must be clear and convincing.

Representative Bruce Goodwin voted against the bill, in part because, as he states, “I am not convinced that a ‘pit bull’ is a safe animal to have around. The ‘pit bull’ has the distinction or characteristic that, when they grab on, they don’t let go,” Mr. Goodwin said. “You can say all you want about all these other breeds, but ‘pit bulls’ are the choice for drug dealers and other bad folks for a reason.”

Close Read

What evidence does Bruce Goodwin cite to support his view that pit bulls are unsafe?
Miami-Dade County is the only county in Florida that has any breed-specific law. In 1989, the county instituted a ban on pit bulls. Last month, they voted to keep the ban in place.

The ban was enacted after a pit bull attacked a young girl. A neighbor's pit bull had escaped from the house, and was sitting in the Moreira’s driveway when 8-year-old Melissa and her mother returned to the house. The dog viciously attacked Melissa, requiring her to have multiple major reconstructive surgeries in the years following the incident.

The Morerias worked to pass a law that would prevent anyone else from being injured by pit bulls.

At the time, the county supported the ban. However, as the years have gone by, many are reconsidering their stance. One famous advocate for pit bulls, Mark Buehrle of the Marlins, relocated to Broward County in order to keep his family’s pit bull.

The protestations of people such as Buehrle have caused county commissioners to rethink the ban, and consider the fairness and necessity of such a law. However, not enough support was mustered to overturn it.
Discuss and Decide

Review the reasons the blog gives for the enduring popularity of pit bulls. Which reasons suggest that a pit bull may make a good pet?
The Media and The Pit Bull

by James Cross May 28, 2012

When I walk my two-year-old pit bull mix, people cross the street to avoid us. When I told my friends about my plan to adopt Maisy from a shelter, many of them said, “They’re dangerous! That’s like bringing a cat to a chicken coop! You are asking for trouble.” Some of my relatives even stopped coming to my house; I’m not so sure that is a bad thing. But it does make me wonder: why do so many people hate pit bulls?

I place the blame squarely in the lap of the media. According to the ASPCA (American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals), news outlets consistently tell animal control officers that they will not cover a dog attack unless the situation involves a pit bull. Despite the fact that other breeds of dogs can and do attack people, these incidents go unmentioned in the news, even at the local level.

The media intentionally over-reports incidents involving pit bulls, while keeping silent on attacks committed by dogs with better reputations, such as Labradors. News outlets also erroneously report dog attacks. If a dog’s breed is unknown, news media will often call it a pit bull. Any short-haired, stocky dog could be mistakenly called a pit bull in the news. People expect to hear about attacks by pit bulls, so the distinction is lost on those hearing the news report. Even if it is later revealed that the dog was not in fact a pit bull, the damage is done, and the idea of the pit bull as a dangerous breed is reinforced in the public eye.

The mistrust of the pit bull, built by media bias, is a cultivated reaction. But we should consider the fact that some of our fear derives from what we have been told—and not by facts.

Close Read

1. What evidence does the author use to support the claim that pit bulls are unfairly targeted in the media? Which expert source does he cite to support his claim?

2. What does over-report mean? In what way do the media over-report incidents involving pit bulls? Cite evidence from the text.
Respond to Questions on Step 2 Sources

These questions will help you analyze the sources you’ve read. Use your notes and refer to the sources in order to answer the questions. Your answers to these questions will help you write your essay.

Evaluate the sources. Is the evidence from one source more credible than the evidence from another source? When you evaluate the credibility of a source, consider the expertise of the author and/or the organization responsible for the information. Record your reasons in the chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Credible?</th>
<th>Reasons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio Overturns Pit Bull Bill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami-Dade County Votes to Keep Pit Bulls Out</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blog</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pit Bulls Haven’t Always Had a Bad Rep</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper Editorial</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Media and the Pit Bull</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prose Constructed-Response  If you were in favor of banning pit bull ownership, which sources would you use to support your view? Cite text evidence in your response.

Prose Constructed-Response  Many different breeds of dogs can bite and hurt people. Should other dog breeds be banned? Cite text evidence in your response.
## Types of Evidence

Every reason you offer to support the central claim of your argument must be backed up by evidence. It is useful to think ahead about evidence when you are preparing to write an argument. If you can’t find the evidence to support your claim, you will need to revise your claim. The evidence you provide must be relevant, or directly related to your claim. It must also be sufficient. Sufficient evidence is both clear and varied.

Use this chart to help you choose different types of evidence to support your reasons.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Evidence</th>
<th>What Does It Look Like?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anecdotes:</strong> personal examples or stories that illustrate a point</td>
<td><strong>Blog</strong> “He once saved his entire platoon by warning them of a poison gas attack.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Commonly accepted beliefs:</strong> ideas that most people share</td>
<td><strong>Newspaper Editorial</strong> “The mistrust of the pit bull…”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Examples:</strong> specific instances or illustrations of a general idea</td>
<td><strong>Newspaper Article</strong> A neighbor’s pit escaped from the house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expert opinion:</strong> statement made by an authority on the subject</td>
<td><strong>Newspaper Editorial</strong> “According to the ASPCA… news outlets consistently tell animal control officers…”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Facts:</strong> statements that can be proven true, such as statistics or other numerical information</td>
<td><strong>Newspaper Article</strong> “In 1989, the county instituted a ban on pit bulls.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ASSIGNMENT

Write an argumentative essay to answer the question: Should people be allowed to keep pit bulls as pets?

Planning and Prewriting

Before you draft your essay, complete some important planning steps.

Claim → Reasons → Evidence

You may prefer to do your planning on a computer.

Make a Precise Claim

1. Should people be allowed to keep pit bulls as pets?  yes  no

2. Review the evidence on pages 10–13. Do the sources support your position?  yes  no

3. If you answered no to Question 2, you can either change your position or do additional research to find supporting evidence.

4. State your claim. It should be precise. It should contain the issue and your position on the issue.

   Issue: A ban on ownership of pit bulls as pets

   Your position on the issue:

   Your precise claim:

State Reasons

Next, gather support for your claim. Identify several valid reasons that justify your position.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason 1</th>
<th>Reason 2</th>
<th>Reason 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Find Evidence

You have identified reasons that support your claim. Summarize your reasons in the chart below. Then complete the chart by identifying evidence that supports your reasons.

**Relevant Evidence:** The evidence you plan to use must be *relevant* to your argument. That is, it should directly and factually support your position.

**Sufficient Evidence:** Additionally, your evidence must be *sufficient* to make your case. That is, you need to provide enough evidence to convince others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short Summary of Reasons</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reason 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant?</td>
<td>______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient?</td>
<td>______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant?</td>
<td>______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient?</td>
<td>______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant?</td>
<td>______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient?</td>
<td>______</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Finalize Your Plan

Whether you are writing your essay at home or working in a timed situation at school, it is important to have a plan. You will save time and create a more organized, logical essay by planning the structure before you start writing.

Use your responses on pages 16–17, as well as your close reading notes, to complete the graphic organizer.

- Think about how you will grab your reader’s attention with an interesting fact or anecdote.

- Identify the issue and your position.

- State your precise claim.

- List the likely opposing claim and how you will counter it.

- Restate your claim.
Draft Your Essay

As you write, think about:

▶ Audience: Your teacher
▶ Purpose: Demonstrate your understanding of the specific requirements of an argumentative essay
▶ Style: Use a formal and objective tone that isn’t defensive
▶ Transitions: Use words, such as furthermore or another reason, to create cohesion or flow

Revise

Revision Checklist: Self Evaluation

Use the checklist below to guide your analysis.

If you drafted your essay on the computer, you may wish to print it out so that you can more easily evaluate it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ask Yourself</th>
<th>Tips</th>
<th>Revision Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Does the introduction grab the audience’s attention and include a precise claim?</td>
<td>Draw a wavy line under the attention-grabbing text. Bracket the claim.</td>
<td>Add an attention-grabber. Add a claim or rework the existing one to make it more precise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Do at least two valid reasons support the claim? Is each reason supported by relevant and sufficient evidence?</td>
<td>Underline each reason. Circle each piece of evidence, and draw an arrow to the reason it supports.</td>
<td>Add reasons or revise existing ones to make them more valid. Add relevant evidence to ensure that your support is sufficient.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do transitions create cohesion and link related parts of the argument?</td>
<td>Put a star next to each transition.</td>
<td>Add words, phrases, or clauses to connect related ideas that lack transitions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Are the reasons in the order that is most persuasive?</td>
<td>Number the reasons in the margin, ranking them by their strength and effectiveness.</td>
<td>Rearrange the reasons into a more logical order, such as order of importance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Are opposing claims fairly acknowledged and refuted?</td>
<td>Put a plus sign by any sentence that addresses an opposing claim.</td>
<td>Add sentences that identify and address those opposing claims.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Does the concluding section restate the claim?</td>
<td>Put a box around the restatement of your claim.</td>
<td>Add a sentence that restates your claim.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Revision Checklist: Peer Review

Exchange your essay with a classmate, or read it aloud to your partner. As you read and comment on your classmate’s essay, focus on logic, organization, and evidence—not on whether you agree with the author’s claim. Help each other identify parts of the draft that need strengthening, reworking, or a new approach.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What To Look For</th>
<th>Notes for My Partner</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Does the introduction grab the audience’s attention and include a precise claim?</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Do at least two valid reasons support the claim? Is each reason supported by relevant and sufficient evidence?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Do transitions create cohesion and link related parts of the argument?</td>
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<td>4. Are the reasons in the order that is most persuasive?</td>
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<td>5. Are opposing claims fairly acknowledged and refuted?</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Does the concluding section restate the claim?</td>
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Edit

Edit your essay to correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors.
Can animals learn or use language?

You will read:

▶ TWO MAGAZINE ARTICLES

- Speaking Bonobo
- When Animals Communicate, They Are Not Using “Language”

You will analyze:

▶ A GRAPHIC FEATURE

- What Is Language?

You will write:

▶ AN ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY

- Can animals learn or use language?
To better understand bonobo intelligence, I traveled to Des Moines, Iowa, to meet Kanzi, a 26-year-old male bonobo reputedly able to converse with humans. When Kanzi was an infant, American psychologist Sue Savage-Rumbaugh tried to teach his mother, Matata, to communicate using a keyboard labeled with geometric symbols. Matata never really got the hang of it, but Kanzi—who usually played in the background, seemingly oblivious, during his mother’s teaching sessions—picked up the language.

Savage-Rumbaugh and her colleagues kept adding symbols to Kanzi’s keyboard and laminated sheets of paper. First Kanzi used 6 symbols, then 18, finally 348. The symbols refer to familiar objects (yogurt, key, tummy, bowl), favored activities (chase, tickle), and even some concepts considered fairly abstract (now, bad).

Kanzi learned to combine these symbols in regular ways, or in what linguists call “proto-grammar.” Once, Savage-Rumbaugh says, on an outing in a forest by the Georgia State University laboratory where he was raised, Kanzi touched the symbols for “marshmallow” and “fire.” Given matches and marshmallows, Kanzi snapped twigs for a fire, lit them with the matches and toasted the marshmallows on a stick.
Savage-Rumbaugh claims that in addition to the symbols Kanzi uses, he knows the meaning of up to 3,000 spoken English words. She tests his comprehension in part by having someone in another room pronounce words that Kanzi hears through a set of headphones. Kanzi then points to the appropriate symbol on his keyboard. But Savage-Rumbaugh says Kanzi also understands words that aren’t a part of his keyboard vocabulary; she says he can respond appropriately to commands such as “put the soap in the water” or “carry the TV outdoors.”

About a year ago, Kanzi and his sister, mother, nephew and four other bonobos moved into a $10 million, 18-room house and laboratory complex at the Great Ape Trust, North America’s largest great ape sanctuary, five miles from downtown Des Moines. The bonobo compound boasts a 13,000-square-foot lab, drinking fountains, outdoor playgrounds, rooms linked by hydraulic doors that the animals operate themselves by pushing buttons, and a kitchen where they can use a microwave oven and get snacks from a vending machine (pressing the symbols for desired foods).

Kanzi and the other bonobos spend evenings sprawled on the floor, snacking on M & M’s, blueberries, onions and celery, as they watch DVDs they select by pressing buttons on a computer screen. Their favorites star apes and other creatures friendly with humans such as Quest for Fire, Every Which Way But Loose, Greystoke: The Legend of Tarzan and Babe.

Through a glass panel, Savage-Rumbaugh asks Kanzi if it’s OK for me to enter his enclosure. “The bonobos control who comes into their quarters,” she explains. Kanzi, still the alpha male of this group in his middle age, has the mien1 of an aging

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1 *mien* bearing or manner, especially as it reveals an inner state of mind

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**Close Read**

Which details suggest that Kanzi knows 3,000 spoken English words? Cite text evidence in your response.
patriarch—he’s balding and paunchy with serious, deep-set eyes. Squealing apparent agreement, he pushes a button, and I walk inside. A wire barrier still separates us. “Kanzi can cause you serious damage if he wants,” Savage-Rumbaugh adds.

Kanzi shows me his electronic lexigram touch pad, which is connected to a computer that displays—which a male voice speaks—the words he selects. But Kanzi’s finger slips off the keys. “We’re trying to solve this problem,” says Savage-Rumbaugh.

She and her colleagues have been testing the bonobos’ ability to express their thoughts vocally, rather than by pushing buttons. In one experiment she described to me, she placed Kanzi and Panbanisha, his sister, in separate rooms where they could hear but not see each other. Through lexigrams, Savage-Rumbaugh explained to Kanzi that he would be given yogurt. He was then asked to communicate this information to Panbanisha. “Kanzi vocalized, then Panbanisha vocalized in return and selected ‘yogurt’ on the keyboard in front of her,” Savage-Rumbaugh tells me.

With these and other ape-language experiments, says Savage-Rumbaugh, “the mythology of human uniqueness is coming under challenge. If apes can learn language, which we once thought unique to humans, then it suggests that ability is not innate in just us.”

But many linguists argue that these bonobos are simply very skilled at getting what they want, and that their abilities do not constitute language. “I do not believe that there has ever been an example anywhere of a nonhuman expressing an opinion, or asking a question. Not ever,” says Geoffrey Pullum, a linguist at the University of California at Santa Cruz. “It would be wonderful if animals could say things about the world, as opposed to just signaling a direct emotional state or need. But they just don’t.”

2 linguist an expert who studies the nature and structure of many languages, and the variations among them
Whatever the dimension of Kanzi’s abilities, he and I did manage to communicate. I’d told Savage-Rumbaugh about some of my adventures, and she invited me to perform a Maori war dance. I beat my chest, slapped my thighs and hollered. The bonobos sat quiet and motionless for a few seconds, then all but Kanzi snapped into a frenzy, the noise deafening as they screamed, bared their teeth and pounded on the walls and floor of their enclosure. Still calm, Kanzi waved an arm at Savage-Rumbaugh, as if asking her to come closer, then let loose with a stream of squeaks and squeals. “Kanzi says he knows you’re not threatening them,” Savage-Rumbaugh said to me, “and he’d like you to do it again just for him, in a room out back, so the others won’t get upset.”

I’m skeptical, but I follow the researcher through the complex, out of Kanzi’s sight. I find him, all alone, standing behind protective bars. Seeing me, he slapped his chest and thighs, mimicking my war dance, as if inviting me to perform an encore. I obliged, of course, and Kanzi joined in with gusto.

Discuss and Decide
Which details about the author’s interactions with Kanzi suggest that Kanzi communicates beyond “signaling a direct emotional state or need”?
Over the years, a number of research studies have shown that it is possible to teach an animal to communicate using sign language or specially designed computer keyboards. Bonobos or other primates raised in captivity and trained from birth may over the course of many years learn signs or symbols representing hundreds of words. They may even be able to string a couple of them together to make basic phrases. Dogs, and even birds, can be trained to recognize and respond to many words and signals.

But does any of this constitute the ability to use language? Many linguists, zoologists, and other scientists say no. They believe that the ability to use language is unique to humans. We have something in our brains that enables us to learn and use language in a way that animals never can.

Skeptical scientists insist that when chimpanzees or other animals are taught to use words or signs, more often than not they are simply performing a kind of trick in order to receive a reward—usually food. That is why the animals do not then go on to create more words of their own, or string them together into complex sentences. A human baby, on the other hand, rapidly progresses from saying single words to being able to form complex sentences.

One famous linguist compares the animals that participate in human language studies to Olympic athletes. “Humans can...
fly about 30 feet—that’s what they do in the Olympics,” Noam Chomsky said in an interview. In other words, just because you can train a gymnast to fly through the air, that does not mean humans can fly. Likewise, the chimps in these studies aren’t really using language, and the studies don’t tell us anything about actual animal communication. “If higher apes were incapable of anything beyond the trivialities that have been shown in these experiments, they would have been extinct millions of years ago,” Dr. Chomsky said.

Of course animals communicate with each other using various means—sounds, signals, even smells and vibrations. And as research technologies improve, scientists discover more and more about the complexity and sophistication of these communications. But all the same, those communication methods are not the same as language. They lack one or more of the many attributes that make up human language, such as the following:

— Displacement: the ability to communicate ideas about things not present in time or space;

— Discreteness: discrete units of sound being combined to make up meaning;

— Productivity: the ability to combine the words in a language to produce an infinite number of meanings.

Even if it isn’t “language,” the natural communication in animal species is more interesting and important to study than the tricks they can be taught. After all, what chimpanzees communicate to each other in the wild—without language—must go far beyond the 200-300 words they can be taught in a laboratory setting.

**Close Read**

What makes animals’ natural communication—“sounds, signals, even smells and vibrations”—less complex than human language?
Discuss and Decide

How is language different from communication? Cite evidence in your discussion.
Respond to Questions on Step 3 Sources

These questions will help you think about the sources you’ve read. Use your notes and refer to the sources to answer the questions. Your answers to these questions will help you write your essay.

1. Why did Kanzi become a candidate for learning language?
   a. Sue Savage-Rumbaugh took him from the wild to teach him.
   b. Sue Savage-Rumbaugh had taught all members of Kanzi’s family.
   c. He was present when his mother, Matata, was being taught how to communicate.
   d. He was the psychologists’ favorite bonobo.

2. According to Source 2, what do the methods animals use to communicate with one another reveal about them?
   a. They show that animals have a language similar to humans.
   b. They show that animals can communicate in many ways that are superior to human language.
   c. They show that animals communicate in ways that are as sophisticated as human language.
   d. They show that humans are not communicating effectively.

3. Which words best support your answer to Question 2?
   a. “. . .when chimpanzees or other animals are taught to use words or signs, more often than not they are simply performing a kind of trick. . .”
   b. “But all the same, those communication methods are not the same as language.”
   c. “. . .what chimpanzees communicate to each other in the wild—without language—must go far beyond the 200-300 words they can be taught in a laboratory. . .”
   d. “They lack one or more of the many attributes that make up human language. . .”

4. Which best supports the idea that co-creation is the most advanced stage of language?
   a. “It is how we create common ground.”
   b. “The speaker and the listener share an activity.”
   c. “Language is more than talking and hearing.”
   d. “A message that goes two ways.”
Is the evidence from one source more credible than the evidence from another source? When you evaluate the credibility of a source, consider the expertise of the author and/or the organization responsible for the information. Record your reasons.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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Prose Constructed-Response You have read three texts about animals’ ability to learn and use language. Analyze the strengths of the arguments made in at least two of the texts. Cite textual evidence to support your ideas.
Part 2: Write

ASSIGNMENT

You have read about the animals and whether or not they are capable of learning or using language. Now write an argumentative essay explaining why you agree or disagree with the idea that animals can learn and use language. Support your claim with details from what you have read.

Plan

Use the graphic organizer to help you outline the structure of your argumentative essay.

Introduction

Reason/Evidence

Reason/Evidence

Reason/Evidence

Opposing Claim

Concluding Section
Draft

Use your notes and completed graphic organizer to write a first draft of your argumentative essay.

Revise and Edit

Look back over your essay and compare it to the Evaluation Criteria. Revise your essay and edit it to correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors.

Evaluation Criteria

Your teacher will be looking for:

1. **Statement of purpose**
   - Is your claim specific?
   - Did you support it with valid reasons?
   - Did you anticipate and address opposing claims fairly?

2. **Organization**
   - Are the sections of your essay organized in a logical way?
   - Is there a smooth flow from beginning to end?
   - Is there a clear conclusion that supports the argument?
   - Did you stay on topic?

3. **Elaboration of evidence**
   - Is the evidence relative to the topic?
   - Is there enough evidence to be convincing?

4. **Language and vocabulary**
   - Did you use a formal, noncombative tone?
   - Did you use vocabulary familiar to your audience?

5. **Conventions**
   - Did you follow the rules of grammar usage as well as punctuation, capitalization, and spelling?