



### Unit 1: Everything's an Argument

30 Days

Students will comprehend rhetoric as an interactive process of sending and receiving messages. Essentially, they will begin to understand how rhetoric can be influential in school and in life outside of school, as well as how that influence works. Using the rhetorical triangle, students will begin to analyze the rhetorical situation of a text and the interrelationship between the author and audience in context. Additionally, students will analyze readings using two-column, didactic reader-response journals that will serve as an evaluative tool when later developing an analytical essay. Through formulating their own samples, students will practice the five major canons of rhetoric--the process that a writer engages in as he or she works, including invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery.



### Unit 2: Rhetorical Analysis

40 Days

In this unit, the end goal is for students to write a well-developed analytical essay of a text. First, student-led class presentations throughout the semester will introduce roughly sixty commonly used rhetorical terms and logical fallacies to expand students' vocabulary base. Additionally, students will evaluate rhetorical appeals of logos, ethos, and pathos in a piece of given rhetoric. Critical readings and class discussions over Henry David Thoreau's, "Civil Disobedience," Patrick Henry's, "Speech in the Virginia Convention," and Martin Luther King's, "I Have a Dream" speech will prepare students to select one of the three texts and write a rhetorical analysis essay. Students will engage in the writing process through drafting, revising, and editing. Student-teacher writing conferences will further assist students with individual writing issues.



### Unit 3: Socratic Seminar: Understanding Through Inquiry 15-20 Days

Throughout the course of the year, students will engage in several Socratic Seminar discussions to achieve a deeper understanding of key ideas and values in a text. The Seminar participants systematically question and examine principles related to a particular content and articulate different points-of-view. The group conversation assists participants in constructing meaning through disciplined analysis, interpretation, listening, and participation. Good discussions occur when participants study the text closely in advance, listen actively, share their ideas and questions in response to the ideas and questions of others, and search for evidence in the text to support their ideas. The discussion is not about right answers; it is not a debate. Students are encouraged to think out loud and to exchange ideas openly while examining ideas in a rigorous, thoughtful manner.



### Unit 4: Successful Argumentation 25 Days

In this unit, students will define a genuine argument (as opposed to a shouting match) as an understanding that reasonable differences divide people, and negotiating between these opposing issues is at the heart of argumentation. Students will study varying styles of successful argumentation and how to implement these models in the appropriate context. For example, students will learn the difference between claims that can be substantiated, claims based on evaluation, and claims that propose or endorse policy. Additionally, students will comprehend the essential parts of an argument: claims, evidence, enabling assumptions, backing, differing views, and using qualifiers. Students will both analyze the parts of an argument in context as well as practice implementing the parts of an argument in their own writing. For example, students will complete weekly written assignments evaluating the argument of current, self-selected *New York Times* editorials.



## Unit 5: Debate

25-30 Days

During the classroom debate unit, students will apply their skills in the areas of organized argumentation, rhetorical influence, teambuilding, group problem solving, and oral presentation. First, students will prepare for debates by participating in substantial library research on a given issue and position (topics may vary year to year). Students will develop and organize an argument using rhetorical skill and credible information from sources. During debates, students will evaluate the opposing team's rhetorical strategy, logical fallacies, and appeals in order to invent successful counterarguments in support of their position. Along with the teacher, students in the audience will participate in assessing the debate and determining a winner.



## Unit 6: Research & Argument

25-30 Days

Students will define synthesis writing as writing about printed texts, drawing together particular themes or traits that can be observed in those texts, and organizing the material from each text according to those themes or traits. Using sample synthesis essays from retired AP exams, students will practice creating a thesis-driven essay that synthesizes information from various sources as support. More formally, students will create their own argumentative thesis about topics relating to modern family values – a response to Barbara Kingsolver's excerpt, "Stone Soup" and Barbara Whitehead's, "Women and the Future of Fatherhood" in *The Riverside Reader*. Students will research their chosen topic and synthesize key information from sources in support of specific claims. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the function of citations in a research paper, MLA formatting guidelines, and creating a Works Cited page that properly documents sources.



## Ongoing: Critical Reading and Test Preparation

Students will recall that the foundation for reading insightfully and writing effectively begins by focusing on the relationship between the reader and writer. In this unit, students will practice useful test-taking strategies to successfully tackle reading passages on the ACT & AP Language exam. By categorizing the style of different test questions, students will develop a further understanding of the purpose behind each type of question and how to best strategize when answering a specific style of question. Students will be able to follow sophisticated syntax, respond to diction, make inferences, identify a word in context, be sensitive to irony and tone, recognize components of organization and style, be familiar with modes of discourse and rhetorical strategies, and recognize how information contained in citations contributes to the author's purpose.