

Writing Lesson Plan – Thesis-Proof Organizer

Standard

CC.3.6.6-8.A. Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content.

- Introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue, acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant, accurate data and evidence that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources.

Objective

Organize information for an argumentative paper by identifying support and opposition

Strategy

Thesis-Proof Organizer--A graphic organizer to help students identify evidence that supports and opposes a thesis statement

Phase of Writing

Before

Skill Review

Students should be able to develop a thesis statement from a claim.

Definitions

Thesis Statement--a sentence in an essay, report, research paper or speech that identifies the main idea and/or central purpose of the text

Claim--an unproved assertion or claim. It provides the basis for a formal thesis statement in an argumentative paper.

Argumentative writing--a composition that establishes a position on a topic in a concise manner, based on researched evidence

Opposition--Arguments in contrast to the paper's thesis

Summary--a brief statement or account of the main points

Lesson Preparation

Copy the template, if desired. Prepare a copy of the organizer to use with a document camera or electronically.

Lesson

Whole Group Instruction

Lead students through a simulation of establishing a proposition/thesis statement and determining arguments for and against the proposition. Use a topic about which students will have strong opinions.

Present a proposition such as: Same-sex schools are preferable to co-educational classes.

Have students share as much evidence as they can to support the proposition. Record the brainstorming on chart paper, the board or electronically. This is brainstorming, so complete accuracy is not required as long as evidence is plausible.

Next have students share as much evidence as they can generate that opposes the proposition.

At this point, students determine their thesis statement, which will clearly state whether they support or oppose the proposition.

Share the template with the students. You can provide the template or simply show it for them to copy.

Make the point that the best argumentative writing addresses and refutes the other side. This often requires additional research.

Guided Practice

Provide pairs of students with pro and con articles on a single topic. One good source for this is newsela.com. Have them develop a proposition on the topic of the articles and identify support and opposition from the articles. Once they have completed the organizer, have them write a thesis statement.

Application

After presenting a scenario or task for students, have students develop a preliminary proposition related to the task. Use the thesis-proof organizer to record the proposition.

Based on their research or experience, students then identify evidence that supports and refutes the proposition. These notes and their sources go into the organizer.

Once students have enough information to determine their position, have them write their thesis statement for the assigned writing.

Extensions/Notes:

- Although this strategy has a graphic organizer, a simpler form can work effectively.
- Students will often struggle to identify evidence to support the opposite side. One possibility is to pair students with opposite positions to help develop the chart.
- Make sure that students are identifying the sources for their evidence as they complete the chart. They will need to cite these sources in their final products so they need to collect information to complete citations in the chosen style.
- Two similar templates can be downloaded from [Reading Quest Thesis](#) and [Reading Quest Thesis b](#).

- The thesis-proof organizer can be used in peer review. If the organizer is available, a peer reviewer can use it to check whether the evidence is included. The peer reviewer could also chart information from the paper.

For More Information on Strategy

Retrieved from [University of Virginia, Reading Quest.](#)

Thesis-Proof Organizer	
Proposition/Thesis Statement:	
Support	Opposition
Summary	

Make sure you document sources.