



EXPEDITIONARY
LEARNING

Grade 7: Module 1: Unit 2: Lesson 12

Scaffolding for Essay: Examining a Model and Introducing the NYS Grade 6–8 Expository Writing Evaluation Rubric



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Long-Term Targets Addressed (Based on NYSP12 ELA CCLS)

I can write informative/explanatory texts that convey ideas and concepts using relevant information that is carefully selected and organized. (W.7.2)
 I can quote or paraphrase others’ work while avoiding plagiarism. I can use a standard format for citation. (W.7.8)
 I can accurately use seventh-grade academic vocabulary to express my ideas. (L.7.6)

Supporting Learning Targets

- I can use correct punctuation of quotes.
- I can analyze a model essay on *A Long Walk to Water* using a rubric.
- I can discuss new vocabulary from the NYS Grade 6–8 Expository Writing Evaluation rubric.

Ongoing Assessment

- Student homework on using quotes
- Exit ticket

Agenda

- 1. Opening**
 - A. Introducing Learning Targets (5 minutes)
 - B. Homework Check (10 minutes)
- 2. Work Time**
 - A. Introducing the NYS 6–8 Expository Writing Evaluation Rubric (10 minutes)
 - B. Analyzing the Model Essay Using the Rubric (10 minutes)
 - C. Comparing the Rubric to “What Makes a Literary Analysis Essay Effective?” Anchor Chart (5 minutes)
- 3. Closing and Assessment**
 - A. Exit Ticket (5 minutes)
- 4. Homework**
 - A. Continue independent reading.

Teaching Notes

- This lesson continues the scaffolding toward the End of Unit 2 Assessment essay. In the previous lesson, students began to analyze a model essay by finding the writer’s claim and discussing what in the essay helped to make that clear. In this lesson they will begin to look at the NYS Grade 6–8 Expository Writing Evaluation rubric, which will be used to assess the drafts and final copies of their essays.
- The rubric is a good assessment tool, but it is complex in both concepts and vocabulary. Seventh-graders need to be introduced to the writing elements being assessed and the terminology of the rubric. This lesson will involve close reading of the first criteria and level descriptors on the rubric.
- The academic vocabulary in the rubric is defined in a Writer’s Glossary, which students will use in this lesson and the next three lessons. The whole glossary is available at the end of the Unit 2 overview document. The specific page you will need for Lessons 12-15 also appear in the supporting documents at the end of each lesson.
- The words used in the rubric cannot easily be defined by their context, especially by novice writers. Therefore, the words are already defined in the glossary. You will need to discuss these definitions and give students examples so that they understand how the words are used in reference to their writing. Since the words from the rubric that are in the Writer’s Glossary show up in many places in relation to writing, this glossary can be used as a reference all year. Consider adding other academic vocabulary related to your students’ work as writers.



Agenda	Teaching Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In Lessons 13–15, students will continue to analyze the model essay and look at the other rows of the rubric so that by the time they complete their essays, they will have had the chance to discuss all of the criteria expected of middle school writers in New York State.• This first row of the rubric is about how clearly a writer states the claim and supports it, so it corresponds to the discussions students had about the model essay in Lesson 11.• As part of their examination of the rubric, they will add to the anchor chart <i>What Makes a Literary Analysis Essay Effective?</i> and compare the model essay, “Challenges Facing a Lost Boy of Sudan,” to the rubric criteria. By doing these activities, students will increase their academic vocabulary, begin to understand the complex descriptors in the rubric, and have a more concrete idea of what their own papers should include.• Prepare a place or system for students to keep their rubrics and model essays in the classroom (i.e., a folder, file, or binder). Students will reuse the rubric and the model essay, so both need to be kept in the classroom.• This lesson starts a four-lesson process where students will highlight or underline parts of the model essay that illustrate the NYS rubric. If possible, have students do this with colored pencils or highlighters. Each row of the rubric criteria in the essay could be marked with a different color so students could easily see the parts of the essay that illustrate the rubric criteria.• In advance: Determine which Discussion Appointment partners you want students to work with during this lesson. When you give the students instructions, name the African location on their Discussion Appointments map for the partner you wish them to meet.



Lesson Vocabulary	Materials
<p>rubric, column, row; content, extent, conveys, compelling, task, insightful, comprehension, logically/illogically</p> <p><i>NOTE: These words come from the first row of the NYS Grade 6–8 Expository Writing rubric. Vocabulary words from the other rows will be discussed in later lessons.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entry Task: Learning Targets (one per student) • Document camera • Tips on Using Quotes handout (from Lesson 11) • Using Quotes in Essays anchor chart (created in Lesson 11; should be posted in classroom) • Model Essay: “Challenges Facing a Lost Boy of Sudan” (from Lesson 11) • NYS Grade 6–8 Expository Writing Evaluation rubric (one per student) • Highlighters or colored pencils (one color per row of the rubric) • Writer’s Glossary page from Row 1 of the NYS Rubric (one per student) • What Makes a Literary Analysis Essay Effective? anchor chart (begun in Lesson 11; See example in Supporting Materials for additions) • Exit Ticket (one per student)

Opening	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p>A. Introducing Learning Targets (5 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As students enter the classroom, give each one an Entry Task: Learning Targets handout. For each target, tell students they should list one thing they have done in previous lessons to work on this target. Give students 2 to 3 minutes to get this done. • Once all are finished, ask a student to read the first learning target aloud and connect it to the mini-lesson on using quotes in Lesson 11. • Then ask another student to read learning target 2 and make connections to Lesson 11. • Students should give responses such as: “We worked with how to use quotes in our sentences,” “We talked about how to use punctuation with quotes,” or “We read a model essay yesterday, but we didn’t have a rubric.” • Do the same with another student and learning target 3. This learning target is a new one because they have not seen the NYS rubric yet. • Ask the class if they know what a <i>rubric</i> is and call on several to explain. If they do not know, give the following definition: “any established mode of conduct or procedure; protocol.” (Dictionary.com) 	



Opening (Continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain how this applies to an essay: a guide that lists the criteria for writing an effective essay and descriptions of how well students might write. We use this information to assess the writing and give feedback to the author. • If time permits, explain that the root word for <i>rubric</i> is Latin for red; in the Middle Ages the word named the fancy letters that monks used to start new chapters within their holy books. These letters were usually red. If you have a picture of one of these ornate manuscripts, you could show it on the document camera. • Tell students that even today, the red letters are in some church hymnals to tell the congregation what to do. These are rubrics because they give instructions of when to stand, sing, and pray. Then ask students to discuss with a seat partner: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “How do these uses of <i>rubric</i> relate to our use of a rubric to write and assess an essay?” 	
<p>Homework Check (10 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have two or three students share one of their homework sentences using quotes by putting them on the document reader and explaining what they did. (If no document reader is available, two students could write their sentences on the board for review.) • Invite the class to look at the student samples to see if they are correct and make suggestions to correct them if they are not. Their answers here should be based on the work they did in the previous lesson on the anchor chart Using Quotes in Essays and the Tips on Using Quotes handout. • Be sure to make any necessary corrections that the students do not find. Also, give the rationale for the corrections. This may take more time than allotted, but it is important that students see how to use the evidence they have gathered about the survival factors in the novel because supporting their claim well is the heart of the essay. If they miss this, the rest of the essay is very unlikely to work. • Thank the students who were willing to share their samples. Collect all homework papers for a quick assessment of how well students understand using, punctuating, and citing quotes. If they need more practice, you can assign more sentences using quotes for homework at the end of this lesson. 	



Work Time	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Introducing the NYS Grade 6–8 Expository Writing Evaluation Rubric (10 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to get out their copies of Model Essay: “Challenges Facing a Lost Boy of Sudan” (from Lesson 11). Say: “Yesterday we were looking at a model essay on <i>A Long Walk to Water</i> and you found the writer’s main claim about the challenges that Salva faced. For the next few lessons, we are going to continue to look at that model to see how a writer puts a good essay together. To help us discuss the model essay, we are going to look at a rubric from New York State that describes what middle school students can do to write well.” • Give students a moment to skim over the essay to refresh their memories and talk with a partner about what they remember. • Distribute the NYS Grade 6–8 Expository Writing Evaluation rubric. If possible, display a copy of the rubric on a document reader so that all students can see when you are circling vocabulary words and discussing the criteria. • Tell students: “This is the rubric that New York State uses to look at student writing for sixth through eighth grades. This rubric tells what the state expects students your age to do when they write an essay. In the next few lessons, you are going to learn what is in this rubric. Then we will use it as you write your essay on <i>A Long Walk to Water</i>. By doing this, you will have inside information to become a great writer!” • Ask students to meet with one of their Discussion Appointment partners. Tell them that they will be working with this partner during the whole class today. • Tell the pairs to read only the first row of the rubric and circle words they do not know or are unsure about. • Call on several pairs to share the words they identified. Circle these words on your copy on the document camera. Expect that they will not know the meanings of the following vocabulary words: <i>content, extent, conveys, compelling, task, insightful, comprehension, logically</i>, and the opposite <i>illogically</i>. Do not define the words until you have distributed the Writer’s Glossary page for Row 1 of the NYS Rubric. This will have the vocabulary words bolded and defined. • Once students have their glossary page, discuss and illustrate the definitions of the words already on the page and add any others that students contribute. (See Writer’s Glossary page for Lesson 12 for definitions.) Students may know some of these words used in other ways, so be sure that they understand them as they are used to refer to writing in the rubric. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having students look at the NYS rubric that will be used to evaluate their writing during seventh and eighth grades will give all of them initial understanding of the criteria for their writing. Discussing the vocabulary and criteria in the rubric one row at a time allows students to access the information in smaller pieces, something that aids in understanding complex information. • Many students will benefit from having the time available for this activity displayed via a visible timer or stopwatch.



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>B. Analyzing the Model Essay using the Rubric (10 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell students: “Now we are going to use the model essay to understand what the rubric is saying writers should do.” Explain that the first row across on the rubric describes how a writer introduces the topic of an essay. Say something like: “We need to look closely at how an essay would follow what the rubric describes so you know what you have to do as a writer to write an effective essay. We are going to be using the model essay to do that.” • Tell students that the numbered boxes on the rubric describe how well an essay follows the criteria in the left-hand column (be sure students are clear that <i>columns</i> are the lines from left to right, and rows are the lines from top to bottom). Box 4 describes the best essay, so we will look at the model essay to see what this description means. Read aloud Level 4 and say: “This means that the essay should start by telling the reader what the topic will be, but saying it in a way that is interesting so the reader wants to read the rest.” • Put a copy on the document reader if possible so that all can see as you discuss the essay. • Have students read the first paragraph of the model essay. Ask them to underline or highlight the last sentence in this introduction paragraph. As they do so, underline or highlight your copy as a model. (Since students will be highlighting various parts of this model essay as they discuss the rubric, it might be helpful for you to use a different color for each of the rows on the rubric. If students could use highlighters or colored pencils as well, that would help them see what the model does to meet each row of the rubric.) • Point out that this sentence uses a key word from the focus question and the title: <i>challenges</i>. Ask: • “What is this sentence saying about the challenges that Salva faces?” • Call on a student or two to get a response. Confirm that the sentence tells three challenges he is facing: war, losing his family, and the hostile environment of his country. Point out that this sentence does “clearly introduce the topic.” • Now ask: • “Does this sentence introduce the topic in an interesting, compelling way? If so, what words or phrases spark the reader’s interest?” • If a student volunteers, “thousands of Lost Boys of Sudan,” confirm that response. A student might also point to boys running from their villages during a war, which would make someone curious. • Invite students to reread the rest of the essay to see if they think the writer knows the book well and how they can tell that. With their partner they should find three things in the essay that show the writer knows the book. Ask them to number these three items in the margin of their copies of the model essay. If students are using colored pencils, these numbers should be in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students may have some difficulty recognizing the subtlety of the different levels of the rubric. You need to help them understand the differences between “lack of comprehension of the text” (Level 0), “literal comprehension of the text” (Level 2), and “insightful analysis of the text” (Level 4). At this point, students do not need sophisticated understanding of the rubric, but they do need to begin to understand what the rubric is demanding of them. If you wish and have time, you could also discuss how Levels 1 and 3 refer to their understanding of the text. • For students who struggle with following multistep directions, consider displaying these directions using a document camera or interactive white board. Another option is to type up these instructions for students to have in hand.



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>the same color as the underlined claim/thesis sentence in the first paragraph.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once they have finished, cold call several pairs to see what they have selected. Then say: “So the model essay does follow the best description of the rubric. It tells the topic early in an interesting way, and it shows that the writer understood the book well. These are two things you want to do in your own essays.” 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C. Comparing the Rubric to “What Makes a Literary Analysis Essay Effective?” Anchor Chart (5 minutes) Post the What Makes a Literary Analysis Essay Effective? anchor chart. Say: “Let’s look at our anchor chart What Makes a Literary Essay Effective? so we can be sure that we have put the ideas that are in this row of the rubric on our list.” Ask the pairs to look at their chart and what the rubric says makes a good essay. Tell them that the rubric’s ideas for a good essay are in the Criteria box and box 4. Cold call several pairs to see if they have things to add to the class anchor chart. At this point, you might get statements such as: “The beginning should be interesting,” “The essay must match and answer the focusing question,” or “The writer should really understand the book to write about it.” Have students thank their Discussion Appointment partners. 	
Closing and Assessment	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Exit Ticket: (5 minutes) Have the following questions on the board or document reader, and ask students to answer them. Give each student an Exit Ticket on which to respond. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Write one of the words you circled on the NYS rubric and explain what it means. Pick one detail or line from the model essay that you think shows that the essay meets the criteria in Row 1 of the rubric, and tell why your example meets the rubric criteria. Collect students’ exit tickets and preview the homework. 	



Homework	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Continue reading in your independent reading book for this unit at home.</p> <p>B. Alternative Homework Assignment: If students need more practice using quotes, ask them to repeat the homework assignment form Lesson 11, selecting three quotes from their Reader's Notes or Gathering Textual Evidence graphic organizers (either packets or separate notes from various lessons) and writing sentences including these quotes, being sure to punctuate them correctly.</p> <p><i>Note: Review students' exit tickets to be sure that students understand the material in the lesson. The exit ticket is not intended to be graded; rather, it is a useful formative assessment to give you a sense of what students understood in the lesson. If the definitions or examples they give to illustrate the rubric are off-base or unclear, write a note on the ticket to make a correction clear to the student or speak to that student during the next lesson to clarify his or her understanding. If all of the students miss the mark, especially on the example from the model essay, you will need to take a few minutes in the next lesson to clarify the information you wanted them to learn.</i></p> <p><i>Note that in Lesson 15, students begin the full draft of their essay. Ideally, they would do this on computers. Arrange necessary technology. (An alternate plan is included for classrooms where word processing is not feasible.)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Now that students are done reading <i>A Long Walk to Water</i>, it could be a good time to push them to move forward with their independent reading books. The unit overview includes a possible Reader's Response letter. If you are doing this, you might use this opportunity to check in with students about what the deadline for completing their book and the letter is.



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Supporting Materials



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- I can use correct punctuation of quotes.
- I can analyze a model essay on *A Long Walk to Water* using a rubric.
- I can discuss new vocabulary from the NYS Grade 6–8 Expository Writing Evaluation rubric..

DIRECTIONS: Read today's learning targets to yourself and write one thing for each target that you have already done to work toward that target. If there is a word or idea in the target that is new to you, circle it.



WORDS FROM NEW YORK STATE GRADE 6-8 EXPOSITORY WRITING EVALUATION RUBRIC		
Word/Phrase	Page	Definition
content	1	the ideas, facts, or opinions that are contained in a speech, piece of writing, film, program, etc.
extent	1, 2, 3, 4	used to say how true, large, important or serious something is Ex: <i>The extent of his injuries was not clear immediately.</i>
conveys	1	to communicate or express something Ex: <i>The TV ad conveys the message that thin is beautiful.</i>
compelling	1	very interesting or exciting, so that you have to pay attention Ex: <i>The movie's story was very compelling.</i>
task	1	a piece of work that must be done Ex: <i>I was given the task of building a fire.</i>
insightful	1	showing that you understand what a text, situation or person is really like Ex: <i>Steve's comments about the story were very insightful.</i>
comprehension	1	understanding Ex: <i>They don't have the least comprehension of what I'm trying to do.</i>
logically (opposite: illogically)	1, 3	seeming reasonable and sensible, ideas are in a clear order Ex: <i>He could logically present his argument for desert to his mom.</i> opposite: <i>Not reasonable, sensible or clearly put together</i>
Other new words you encountered:		



DIRECTIONS: Answer the following questions.

1. Write one of the words you circled on the NYS rubric and explain what it means.
2. Pick one detail or line from the model essay that you think shows that the essay meets the criteria in row 1 of the rubric, and tell why your example meets the rubric criteria.



What you might have listed on this chart so far:

- The author's message was listed in the first paragraph.
- The author's message was also in the last paragraph.
- The author gave examples of challenges.
- The topic should be introduced in the beginning in an interesting way.
- The essay should logically follow the focusing question and the connection should be really clear.
- The writer should show that he or she really understands the book.