

If you are teaching *The Research-Based Argument Essay* Writing unit and/or the *Argument and Advocacy: Researching Debatable Issues* Reading unit simultaneously, this chart can help offer a vision of the work taking place in those units in writing workshop, reading workshop, and read-aloud, as well as show some key connections.

Writing Workshop <i>(The Research-Based Argument Essay)</i>	Reading Workshop <i>(Argument and Advocacy: Researching Debatable Issues)</i>	Read Aloud
Launch Simultaneously		
<p>Bend I: Establishing and Supporting Positions Students develop an argument essay on the issue of chocolate milk in schools.</p>	<p>Bend I: Investigating Issues Students work in research clubs. Each club studies a first issue—suggestions for texts sets are in the Digital Resources.</p> <p>We suggest that research clubs do not study the issue of chocolate milk. Students will already be writing about this issue in writing workshop and we are suggesting that the class might also study it during read-aloud and that you can use that issue during your minilessons in reading workshop. If this is the case, then students will likely not also want to study that same issue in their clubs. There may be some cases, however, where you have a few students who you do think would benefit from the support of studying chocolate milk in schools during reading workshop.</p> <p>*In Session 3, during the minilesson, students will flash-debate about the issue the class has been studying (chocolate milk in schools or another demonstration issue). This means that prior to this session, in either read-aloud or writing workshop, you’ll want students to have had some time to learn about the issue.</p>	<p>Days 1–3: Read articles about the issue of chocolate milk in schools (or another demonstration issue) to get a grasp of the sides of the question. One of these should be “A School Fight Over Chocolate Milk” by Kim Severson. <i>Specific suggestions/links for other texts are in the Digital Resources and on page xvi of Argument and Advocacy (Reading Unit 3).</i></p> <p>Days 4–8: Read longer texts about background context regarding nutrition, vitamins, minerals, sugar, etc. <i>(This will support students in writing about this issue). Specific suggestions/links for texts are in the Digital Resources and on page xvi of Argument and Advocacy.</i></p>
<p>Bend II: Building Powerful Arguments Students develop a second argument essay about chocolate milk in schools.</p>	<p>Bend II: Raising the Level of Research Each club continues to study the issue studied in Bend I. Teachers can add a few additional articles to the text sets (as suggested in the Digital Resources.) There are two sessions in the reading unit that refer to a writing session. Session 12, which is about teaching students to study the perspectives of authors, refers to critical reading work students have done in writing workshop (Session 9). Session 14, which is about teaching students to evaluate arguments, refers to prior work students have done in writing workshop to evaluate arguments (Session 12).</p>	<p>Days 9–11: Continue reading both short and lengthier texts about the issue of chocolate milk in schools.</p> <p>Days 12–15: Read-aloud (and watch videos of) texts that specifically help students analyze perspective, craft moves, and evaluate arguments. These do not all have to be on the topic of chocolate milk in schools. <i>Specific suggestions/links for texts are in the Digital Resources and on page xvi of Argument and Advocacy.</i></p>
<p>Bend III: Writing for Real-Life Purposes and Audiences Students develop a third argument essay about a new issue.</p> <p>*If you are teaching the reading unit alongside the writing unit, students could write their third research-based argument essay on the issue they have been studying during Bends I and II of the Reading unit.</p>	<p>Bend III: Researching a New Issue with More Agency</p> <p>Each club studies a new issue.</p>	<p>Days 16–21: Read-aloud texts on another issue, such as killer whale shows. Use the texts from Bend I and Bend II text sets to study that issue as a class.</p>

Answers to a few frequently asked questions regarding these units:

***How do I teach these reading and writing units simultaneously?**

It's important to know that the units do not have to be taught together. Each one functions as a stand-alone unit. However, if you do wish to pair these units, you will find there are several ways that the units work to support each other. In addition, the work happening in Read Aloud will support the work happening in Reading Workshop and Writing Workshop. (Please see the chart for more explanation of alignment).

You should not feel overly concerned about lining up the teaching of these units and making sure that every day is matched between the units. It's not necessary to think about the alignment in such detail. In general, Reading Workshop, Writing Workshop, and Read Aloud can be launched simultaneously and will support each other as the units progress.

One important connection is that in Bend III of the writing unit, students could write their third argument essay on the issue they have studied in Bends I and II of the reading unit. This would be a way for them to take what they are learning in reading workshop and turn that learning into advocacy work. This would also help their third argument essay to feel grounded in the content knowledge they have gained during Bends I and II of the reading unit. In this case, you could skip Session 20 of the reading unit (or use some of the work shown as mentor texts in your writing workshop).

There are two places where work that takes place in writing workshop is especially mentioned in a reading lesson. Session 12, which is about getting students to study the perspectives of authors, refers to critical reading work students have done in writing (Session 9). Session 14, which is about getting students to evaluate arguments, refers to prior work students have done in writing workshop to evaluate arguments (Session 12).

If some of the work feels similar between the reading unit and writing unit (for example, getting kids to take notes in a way that pushes them to understand both sides or getting them to read texts more critically), that is purposeful. It's meant to give students repeated practice in different areas of the curriculum. You'll want to make those connections explicit for your students ("The same way you set up your notes in writing workshop to help you understand both sides of the issue of chocolate milk in schools, you can set up your notes to help you understand both sides of the issue your club is studying . . .")

***What if I am teaching the reading unit alone--do I need to bring any of the work from the writing unit into it?**

If you are not teaching the writing unit alongside the reading unit, know that both of the writing sessions referenced in the reading unit are in the Reading Digital Resources for your background knowledge and so you can decide if you want to teach them as part of the reading unit. Each of the writing sessions can be dislodged from the writing unit and (with a small bit of tweaking) can be taught as part of the reading unit. (For example, before you teach Session 12 in reading, you could teach Session 9 from the writing unit.) Teaching the additional sessions will give students repeated practice in work that is tricky and important. However, it's not necessary for you to teach these additional sessions—you could also delete

mentioning the prior work and teach the reading unit as it is (and perhaps bring some of the work from the writing sessions into small-group work during reading).

If you do teach the additional sessions, you'll need to cut two sessions from the reading unit so the unit doesn't go too long. In that case, you might choose not to teach Session 11, which is about reaching to tackle more difficult texts, and Session 17, which is about letting conversations spark new ideas as minilessons; and instead use them for small-group work.

In addition, if you are teaching the reading unit as a stand-alone unit, you will see that Session 20 is especially written for you. It is about giving students some time to create advocacy projects, which could be written arguments. It is important that students see the link between deeply researching an issue and doing something with that knowledge—living differently in some way because of what they now know. You'll want to give students a day or two to work on a project (eg, a letter to a local business asking that business not to use plastic bags, or a presentation to a second-grade class teaching them why they should not be so afraid of sharks) so they feel there was power and purpose in their research and learning.

***Are there any special considerations for teaching the writing unit?**

The Research-Based Argument Essay writing unit is a favorite unit of students and teachers. You could teach it just as it is and see your students make enormous growth in their abilities to write arguments.

There are a few things that you might consider to help make the unit go as well as possible:

You want to keep the text set students are using to research very manageable so the unit stays, first and foremost, a writing unit. A small starter set of texts is provided on the topic of chocolate milk in schools, so students do not need to spend a tremendous amount of time reading and researching but can instead devote the bulk of their time to working on their writing. You can introduce a few more texts on the topic during the second part of the unit but you want to be sure to keep an eye on the volume of writing students are doing.

You might also consider if there are any parts of your day outside of writing workshop that you might be able to give to support the writing work. Perhaps you have a little bit of time to do some read-alouds of a few texts on the topic of chocolate milk in schools—ones that offer some background information on nutrition, vitamins, minerals. Or you might talk to your librarian and media specialist to see if there is any time the students might come to the library to do some extra research. For the last bend of the unit, you might consider getting students into little research clubs so they can support each other as they each study and write about the issue, and ask your librarian and media specialist to help you build manageable text sets for each club. There are also text sets on our website that you can use to support your clubs (<http://readingandwritingproject.org/resources/text-sets>). You might also push some students to read additional texts outside of class time, letting them know it will make a huge difference to their work to know more about the issue.

One other thing to consider is that the *Personal and Persuasive Essay* unit for 4th graders really supports students' foundational understanding of essay structure. If your students come into your room not having been taught this unit, you may want to take a day or so to do some of the "I love ice cream" boot camp work at the start (Session 1), so students can see how to frame essays (especially the importance

of creating parallel supports—“One reason I love ice cream is because.... Another reason I love ice cream is because....”). When writers use these kinds of key transitional stems to move between major sections in their piece, it feels more organized and the reader can better follow the writer’s reasoning. It is also important for writers to learn to help orient their readers to what the piece will argue by laying out those supports for the thesis at the start of the essay. If you notice you have writers having trouble organizing their writing, you can also do a version of essay boot camp as small-group work with those writers.

Another key tip for the writing unit is that audience really matters. The writing unit asks students to write a letter to the principal during the first bend of the unit and to prepare a position paper and presentation to a panel at the end of the second bend. Preparing to present their work publicly really raises students’ investment and energy in the work. For the third bend, it will be important to help students find an audience and a place in the world where their writing can go.