

Week Six: Evidence-Based Response and Independence

Weekly Focus: Components of the Evidence-Based Response
Weekly Skill: Writing an Outline

Lesson Summary: Today students will be introduced to the new essential question, “What does it mean to be independent?” They will also define the words “claim,” “evidence,” and “warrant,” and practice using them to outline an evidence-based response.

Materials Needed: Dictionaries (1 per group, can be online or book), Essay #2 Prompt, Introduction to Claim, Evidence, Warrant, Planning an Evidence-Based Response, “Are You Your Own Person?” Reading, Spider-web Discussion Rules, Whiteboard and markers

Objectives: Students will be able to...

- Define claim, evidence, and warrant
- Write a claim
- Write an outline that includes textual evidence and warrants
- Use a dictionary to define “independent”

Common Core Standards Addressed: W.11-12.2., W.11-12.4, W.11-12.5., W.11-12.10.

Notes:

This lesson introduces the concepts of “claim,” “evidence,” “warrant,” as well as “counter argument.” Students are not supposed to have these concepts mastered by the end of this lesson. The teacher-led activities are designed to give students practice using these words and to understand how to identify them to construct an evidence-based response.

Activities:

New Student Orientation/Returning Student Testing:

Time: 70 minutes

- Returning students should TABE test
- New students should go through New Student Orientation

Break: 10 minutes

- ALL students will reconvene for class after break.

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Introduction to Claim, Evidence, Warrant

Time: 40 minutes

- 1) Hand out the graphic organizer—Introduction to Claim, Evidence, and Warrant—to each student. As the graphic organizer indicates, have students complete the sections in order (i.e. first have students fill out the “my thoughts,” then the “context” section, THEN look it up in the dictionary, etc.)
- 2) After 15 minutes, go over the graphic organizer as a class. Before moving on, make sure that everyone has essentially the same definition for the word as it pertains to writing GED 2014:
 - a. Claim: Another word for thesis; the main idea of an essay; (usually) a one-sentence argumentative response to a question.
 - b. Evidence: Supporting details; textual references that support (or back up) the claim
 - c. Warrant: Justification; the explanation as to WHY each piece of evidence is used to support the claim (“This evidence shows...”)
- 3) **Hand out Essay #2 Prompt. Have someone read it aloud. Inform students that this is the question we will be looking at in the RLA and Social Studies classes this unit.**
- 4) Hand out the graphic organizer—Planning an Evidence-Based Response—to each student. Have students complete an example with you to illustrate these concepts of claim, evidence, and warrant. **Note:** Point out to students that on the GED 2014 test, evidence will be based on text. However, for the purpose of illustrating the concepts, we will be using an example without text.
 - a. Ask the question: Does getting a GED make you more independent?
 - b. As a class, write a claim at the top of the graphic organizer: “Yes, getting a GED makes you more independent,” or “No, getting a GED does not make your more independent.” (Go with the opinion of the majority of the class).
 - c. Next, ask students, “What evidence can we give to support this claim?” (Notice that there are three sections for evidence on the graphic organizer. For the new test, three are not necessary...students may use two or four, depending on what is needed to make their point. There is more flexibility with this test.) Write down a few pieces of evidence that students supply to support the claim about getting a GED and independence.
 - d. Then, go to what you wrote for Evidence #1. Ask, “How does this piece of evidence help us make our point?” You may want to start with the words, “This shows...” Write this in the “Warrant” section. Repeat this step for all pieces of evidence.
 - e. Lastly, **FOR DISCUSSION ONLY**, ask the class, “Could someone think differently than us? What might the other side of the argument say?” There may not be a counter argument for each piece of evidence, but the GED 2014 essay will require at least one acknowledgment of a counter argument. For this lesson, do not require them to write a counter-argument. Simply make them aware of the concept.

Practicing with a Text

Time: 50 minutes

- 1) Hand out the blog post text, “Are You Your Own Person?”
- 2) Have a student volunteer to read the question at the bottom aloud; then, proceed to read the text as students follow along.
- 3) Hand out another Planning and EB Response graphic organizer.

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- 4) Just like you worked through the previous example about the connection between a GED and independence, complete this graphic organizer as a class by starting with the claim. **Answer:** The claim should be similar to the following: "The author believes to be truly independent, one must strike a balance between relying too much and too little on others." The evidence used to support the claim should be pulled DIRECTLY from the text—SHORT quotes or paraphrases.
- 5) Complete the warrant sections.

Extension Activity or Homework: Have students use this outline to write an evidence-based response.

Wrap-Up: Group Discussion	Time: 25 minutes
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(If you don't have time for this activity, take five minutes to have students generate ideas as a large group to the question below. As they leave, tell students to keep thinking about independence—what makes someone independent? What might prevent one from being independent?)

- Divide Students into groups of three or four
- Tell students that if we are going to discuss Independence during this unit, we must also consider the factors that prevent people from achieving it.
- In their groups, give students five minutes to answer these two questions:
 - 1) What is the opposite of independence?
 - 2) What things keep people from being independent? List as many as possible.
 Encourage students to take notes in their groups
- Come back together as a class and hold a Spiderweb discussion to share answers as a class. Students may bring notes from their small group discussions to the larger circle.

Extra Work/Homework:	
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Have students finish the essay that you began as a class.

Differentiated Instruction/ELL Accommodation Suggestions	Activity
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Online Resources:

Suggested Teacher Readings:

ESSAY #2

What does it mean to be independent? Identify at least one criteria that you believe a person needs to meet in order to be considered independent. **Use evidence from the texts we read this unit** and experiences from your own life as examples.

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PLANNING MY EVIDENCE-BASED RESPONSE

Claim—My Argument in One Sentence

Evidence #1—Something from the text that supports or backs up my claim

Warrant for using Evidence #1

Counter Argument—Not addressed in this lesson

Evidence #2

Warrant for using Evidence #2

Counter Argument—Not addressed in this lesson

Evidence #3 (if necessary)

Warrant for using Evidence #3

Counter Argument—Not addressed in this lesson

Are You Your Own Person?

Published on February 27, 2012 by Elliot D. Cohen, Ph.D. in *What Would Aristotle Do?*

"Where, not the person's own character, but the traditions or customs of other people are the rule of conduct," said John Stuart Mill. "There is wanting one of the principal ingredients of human happiness, and quite the chief ingredient of individual and social progress." In other words, to be happy you need to be your own person. But what exactly does it mean to be your own person? And how do you personally measure up? ...

Indeed, we all can use some work. If there is any settled philosophical consensus about humankind, it is that none of us are perfect.

In what ways and to what extent do you depend on others?

To be your own person clearly requires independence of thought, feeling, and action. This means that you can and do think, feel, and act without excessively relying on others to give you direction. However, as John Donne famously proclaimed, "no man is an island," and human happiness cannot be attained in a social vacuum. So, being independent does not mean that you live outside cultural, social, and legal boundaries; or that your character is not shaped by a process of socialization; or that all social conformity is unhealthy. Still, there exists a personal sphere of personal independent existence characterized by autonomous thinking and acting, which cannot be subtracted from a person without taking away the capacity for happiness.

Indeed, some people may be so dependent on others that they feel (understandably) that their lives are out of their control. They may feel lost, confused, manipulated, degraded, and needy. They may feel as though an important ingredient is missing from their lives but really not even know what's missing—let alone how to attain it or get it back.

Some people may be easily intimidated by others. They cave in to social pressures to think, feel, or act in certain ways, even if they know or should know better.

Some people live vicariously through others (for example, their children, partner, friends, or people they admire) instead of plotting an independent life plan. So, the accomplishments of someone else are substituted as though they were their own. Indeed, admiring, being proud of, or being happy for someone else are healthy responses to the good fortune of another—much more so than envy, jealousy, and disdain. But living through others is no substitute for living through oneself. The latter tends to promote and sustain happiness; while the former does not.

Others may isolate themselves from social interaction. As the words of Simon and Garfunkel's classic song go, "Hiding in my room, safe within my womb, I touch no one and no one touches me. I am a rock, I am an island. And a rock feels no pain; and an island never cries." But this is more properly a form of depressed thinking than it is a healthy coping mechanism.

Still others may tend to deliberately do the opposite of what is expected of them primarily for the sake of being oppositional. This is also counterproductive because it is not based on any rational determination of what conduces to one's own best interest or the best interest of others.

While too much conformity or reliance on others can leave you without your own sense of purpose or direction, too little thwarts your chances of attaining any goals you may have set. However, between relying too much or too little there is also a "golden mean." While no person in the course of living attains perfect balance between these opposite poles, being your own person requires attainment of a significant measure of balance.

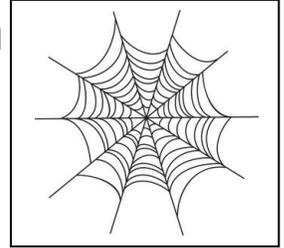
Such a balanced life is one where there is interdependence between you and others. There is reciprocity between the support you receive from others and that which you give, consistent with your own freedom and that of others to forge respective life plans and make reasonable strides toward them. In this balanced state, you may be actively involved in helping others thrive but not to the exclusion of helping yourself to live contentedly. You know where to draw the line between healthy helping and becoming a slave to others. In this healthy state of interdependence, there is mutuality in friendship, business ventures, intimate relationships, kinship, and other social encounters.

**Question: According to the author,
what does it mean to be “your own person,” i.e. independent?**

SPIDER WEB DISCUSSION RULES

About: The Spider-web discussion model is a great way to allow your class control of its learning process and to show whose voices are and aren't being heard.

Guidelines: The instructor should come to the table as a facilitator. He or she should be prepared with a list of guiding questions but otherwise, as much as possible, should remain as an observer and not a participant in the conversation



Rules for Discussion:

1. Have students brainstorm 1 to 2 questions about the reading or topic that you want them to discuss. Students should write these questions on a note-card.
2. Organize students into a large circle. Each student should bring her note-card to the circle with her.
3. Explain to students that they will be in charge of the conversation, and that your role will be only that as an observer and to help prod them along if they get stuck.
4. On a large piece of paper, draw a circle to represent the group (with plenty of room left to write in the margins). Along the circle, according to where they are sitting, write the names of each of the class-members. Include yourself.
5. Remind students that, as much as possible, everyone should speak. Encourages students to ask each other for input and, if the discussion lags, to bring their own questions to the group. Begin by having one person read his or her question aloud.
6. As each person speaks, draw a line to his or her name. For example, if participant A asks the question and participant B answers, draw a line from A's line on the circle to B's. Continue in this way, creating a "spider-web" pattern.
7. Whenever anyone asks a new question, make a star by the student's name and write the question above her name on the page. If someone makes an insightful comment, one, perhaps, that changes the direction of the conversation, star this and note the comment on the sheet near that student's name.
8. If the discussion lags, you may ask a question that you already have prepared.

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9. When the discussion time is over, show the class the “spider-web” you’ve created and ask students what they notice. What did they do well? What would they like to see more of next time?