Inspired Instruction

NJSLA Research Simulation Task
Grade 7 Writing
Lesson 4: Selecting Textual Evidence to Support Reasons

Rationale

- NJSLA emphasizes the use of textual evidence when writing argumentative and informational/explanatory essays. On the Research Simulation Task (RST), students are expected to draw evidence exclusively from the texts. This lesson instructs students on how to use textual evidence to support their reasons.

Goal

- To use evidence to accurately support reasons in an argumentative or informational/explanatory PCR prompt

Task Foci

- **CCSS W.7.1**: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
- **CCSS W.7.2**: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
- **CCSS W.7.8**: Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
- **CCSS W.7.9**: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Objectives

- Students will identify textual evidence to support their reasons.
- Students will explain how the chosen textual evidence supports their reasons.

Materials

- Sample Texts from Lesson 3
- Thesis Worksheet from Lesson 3
- Reasons and Textual Evidence Worksheet

Procedures

- Return students' worksheets from Lesson 3. Explain that today students will come up with three reasons to support the thesis statements they wrote for Lesson 3. They will determine what these reasons are by using textual evidence.
- Ask the question: **"What is 'textual evidence'?"** Allow students time to try defining this term. If someone gets it…great! Next, you'll use the students' prior work in Lesson 3 to illustrate what textual evidence means.
- Have students look at their annotated texts again. Say: **"Let's look at the articles you read last time. The information that you underlined and took notes on is your textual evidence. This is information you use to prove that your reasons are valid."**
- Pass out the Reasons and Textual Evidence worksheet.
- Reiterate the prompt from Lesson 3. Remind students that this is ultimately the question they'll want to answer. Their thesis statement is the direct answer to the prompt. Their reasons and textual evidence are the substance of their argument used to back up their thesis.
- Tell students that now they are going to use their notes to come up with reasons and find support for those reasons in the texts. Remind students: **"While you're working, you may find that your evidence doesn't quite support the reasons you came up with. That's OK. This is just what happens when we look for evidence to support our reasons. Sometimes we have to adjust our reasons to better fit the evidence we have, or there may be different evidence that better supports our reasons."**
- Give students 15-20 minutes to fill out the worksheet (or as much time as is needed).
- While students are working, circulate around the room and help any students who seem to be struggling.
- Collect students' worksheets. They'll need them for Lesson 5.

Assessment

- Students' worksheets should show evidence of understanding. A student's reasons should accurately validate his or her thesis. Their textual evidence should clearly relate to the reasons they give.

Extension Activities

- Have students work in pairs and repeat the activity using a different set of texts.
- This lesson can be modified by providing the class with a thesis statement, the three reasons, or another facet of the lesson that students need more help understanding, and could benefit from seeing modelled for them first.

Selecting Reasons and Textual Evidence Name:_____

My Thesis Statement:

Reason 1:

Evidence from text:

Explanation of evidence:

How does this evidence support my thesis?

Reason 2:

Evidence from text:

Explanation of evidence:

How does this evidence support my thesis?

Reason 3:

Evidence from Text:

Explanation of Evidence:

How does this evidence support my thesis?