

## **Unit 3 – Opinion Writing**

The Common Core authors have devoted time and space to explaining “The Special Place of Argument in the Standards,” citing research showing that the ability to write arguments is essential to success in college and the workforce (CCSS, Appendix A, p. 24). Strange as it may seem to consider this when you are working with six- and seven year-olds, opinion writing lays the foundation for learning to write arguments, so this unit puts our students on a pathway toward academic and professional success. In second grade, the Common Core places new demands on our writers. No longer is there mention of dictating or drawing. Though illustrations will continue to be important to young writers, by the time they leave second grade, they will be moving toward composing the bulk of their pieces through writing. In addition, students are now expected to “introduce the topic they are writing about (or name the book), supply a reason for their opinion, and provide some sense of closure” (W 1.1). Writers must provide a bit of information about the topic before they name their opinion. In addition, students now need to supply a reason, recognizing that a reason supports an opinion.

In addition, writers need to offer a sense to readers that their piece has a purposeful ending. The Common Core calls this “some sense of closure,” leaving what counts as an ending open to the interpretation of the reader.

Students will continue to get guidance and support from peers, focus on a topic, respond to questions and suggestions from peers, and add details to strengthen writing as needed” (CCSS W 1.5).

Students will also be expected to “use a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including collaboration with peers. (CCSS W 1.6). Students are expected to “capitalize dates and names of people” (L 1.2a), “use end punctuation for sentences” (L 1.2b), “use commas in dates and to separate single words in a series” (L 1.2c), “use conventional spelling for words with common spelling patterns and for frequently occurring irregular words” (L 1.2d), and “spell untaught words phonetically, drawing on phonemic awareness and spelling conventions” (L1.2e). Also, students are expected to do all of the work they learned in kindergarten around demonstrating command of conventions of language. Students will supply multiple reasons, use linking words, and provide a more formal concluding statement or section.