

# COMMON CORE BASICS

Building Essential Test Readiness Skills for High School Equivalency Exams



WRITING

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# To the Student

Common Core Basics: Building Essential Test Readiness Skills, Writing will help you learn or strengthen the skills you need when you take any Common Core State Standards-aligned writing test. To answer some questions, you will need to focus on sentence structure, grammar, and mechanics. To answer other questions, you will need to concentrate on the organization of sentences within a paragraph. These skills are also important when you are asked to write short or extended response essays.

Before beginning the lessons in this book, take the **Pretest**. This test will help you identify which skill areas you need to concentrate on most. Use the chart at the end of the Pretest to pinpoint the types of questions you have answered incorrectly and to determine which skills you need to work on. You may decide to concentrate on specific areas of study or to work through the entire book. It is highly recommended that you do work through the whole book to build a strong foundation in the core areas in which you will be tested.

Common Core Basics: Building Essential Test Readiness Skills, Writing is divided into eight chapters:

- Chapter 1: Sentence Basics instructs you in the fundamentals of a sentence, including the parts of a simple sentence, types of sentences, and noun and pronoun usage in sentences.
- **Chapter 2: Verbs** teaches you types of verbs, different verb tenses, and subject-verb agreement.
- Chapter 3: Modifiers teaches you how to distinguish between adjectives and adverbs, how to use these modifiers, and how to work with phrases as modifiers.
- Chapter 4: Mechanics teaches you the rules of capitalization and punctuation. You will learn how to spell possessives, contractions, homophones, and affixes. You will also learn basic spelling patterns and generalizations.
- Chapter 5: Sentence Structure shows you how to combine ideas in sentences. You will also learn about writing effective sentences and choosing appropriate style and diction.
- Chapter 6: Text Structure teaches you the basics of paragraph structure, including how to write effective topic sentences. You will learn about tone and diction and order of importance, time order, cause-and-effect order, and comparison-and-contrast order.
- Chapter 7: The Writing Process introduces you to prewriting, writing, and revising and editing.
- Chapter 8: Text Types and Purposes describe the three main types of writing. You will learn to write an effective argument, an informative/explanatory text, and a narrative.

In addition, *Common Core Basics: Building Essential Test Readiness Skills, Writing* has a number of features designed to familiarize you with and begin to prepare you for writing tests.

- The Chapter Opener provides an overview of the chapter content and a goal-setting activity.
- **Lesson Objectives** state what you will be able to accomplish after completing the lesson.
- Skills list the Core Skills and Reading Skills that are taught and applied to the lesson content.
- Vocabulary critical for understanding lesson content is listed at the start of every lesson. All bold words in the text can be found in the Glossary.
- The **Key Concept** summarizes the content that is the focus of the lesson.
- In the lessons, **Core Skills** and **Reading Skills** are emphasized with direct instruction and practice in the context of the lesson. The Core Skills align to the Common Core State Standards.
- In the lessons, special features presenting 21st Century Skills,
   Technology Connections, Workplace Connections, and Research It activities will help you activate higher-level thinking skills using realworld application of these skills.
- Think about Writing questions check your understanding of the content throughout the lesson as you read.
- Write to Learn activities provide you with a chance to practice the writing skills you have learned in the lesson.
- End-of-lesson Vocabulary Review checks your understanding of important lesson vocabulary, while the Skill Review checks your understanding of the content and skills presented in the lesson.
- Skill Practice and Writing Practice exercises appear at the end of every lesson to help you apply your learning of content and skill fundamentals.
- The Chapter Review and end-of-chapter Writing Practice tests your understanding of the chapter content and provides an opportunity to strengthen your writing skills.
- Check Your Understanding charts allow you to check your knowledge of the skills you have practiced.
- The **Answer Key** explains the answers for questions in the book.
- The Glossary and Index contain lists of key terms found throughout the book and make it easy to review important skills and concepts.

After you have worked through the book, take the **Posttest** to see how well you have learned the skills presented in this book.

Good luck with your studies! Keep in mind that knowing how to use grammar correctly and how to write well will help you succeed on any writing test and in other future writing tasks, whether at school, at home, or in the workplace.

# LESSON 2.1

# **Verbs and Verb Tenses**

#### **Lesson Objectives**

#### You will be able to

- Identify two types of verbs: action and linking
- Demonstrate an understanding of the various verb tenses
- Understand the difference between active and passive voice

#### Skills

- Reading Skill: Use Context Clues
- Core Skill: Form and Use Verbs

## Vocabulary

common context clue link majority regular verb **KEY CONCEPT:** Verbs tell what the subject of a sentence is or does, and the tense of a verb tells when the action occurs.

**1.** Select the correct pronoun in this sentence:

Even though Victor and Dave are twin brothers, (he, they) have different interests.

**2.** Underline the subject once and the predicate twice:

Rihanna and I bake something new every weekend.

# Types of Verbs

Every sentence has a subject and a predicate. The key word in the predicate is the verb. A **verb** tells what the subject *is* or *does*. Verbs are divided into two types: action verbs and linking verbs.

#### **Action Verbs**

**Action verbs** are verbs that tell what the subject *does*.

Paul searches for his car in the huge parking lot.

Searches is an action verb that tells what Paul, the subject, does. Here, the action is physical. Other action verbs tell what mental action the subject does. These can be more difficult to identify. Know, wish, realize, and hope are **common** [regularly used] verbs that tell about mental action.

Helena knows where her car is parked.

# **Linking Verbs**

**Linking verbs** tell what the subject *is*. They **link**, or connect, the subject with a word or words that describe it.

Last night, Toshi became a father.

Note that some sentences contain more than one verb.

When Toshi became a father, he felt proud.

Verbs also may be made up of more than one word. *Has been* and *did run* are examples of verb phrases.

# **Modal Auxiliary Verbs**

**Modal auxiliary verbs** express several meanings. *Can* expresses ability or possibility.

Raj can dance very well.

May is used to ask for permission or to make a prediction.

May I sit with you at the meeting?

There may be some overtime work next week.

*Must* indicates the speaker's opinion.

You must balance your checkbook regularly!

Sometimes the words in a verb phrase may be separated by other words. These other words are not part of the verb. In the example below, the verb is *has watched*. *Always* is not part of the verb phrase.

Harrison <u>has</u> always <u>watched</u> boxing on television.



#### THINK ABOUT WRITING

**Directions:** On a separate sheet of paper, write a sentence that uses the type of verb in parentheses.

**Example:** (action) Julian stayed home from work.

- 1. (modal auxiliary)
- 2. (verb phrase)
- 3. (action)
- 4. (linking)
- 5. (action)

# **Verb Tenses**

In addition to telling what something *is* or *does*, verbs also tell the time of the action. The time shown by a verb is called its **tense**.

# **Simple Tenses**

There are three basic or simple tenses.

Present tense: Traci plays soccer on Wednesday.

Past tense: Traci played soccer on Wednesday.

Future tense: Traci will play soccer on Wednesday.

#### Infinitive and Base Form

Read the following sentence. Pay special attention to the underlined words.

Jim wants to borrow our barbecue grill.

The underlined words, *to borrow*, make up a verb form called an **infinitive**. The infinitive is the basic form of a verb and almost always begins with the word *to*. The verb form following *to* is the base form. The **base form** is what you begin with when you form all verb tenses.

#### Simple Present Tense

Verbs in the **simple present tense** are used in three situations. First, present-tense verbs tell what is happening or is true at the present time.

Andrea pours a second cup of coffee.

Second, present-tense verbs show actions that are performed regularly.

We walk for an hour every day.

Third, present-tense verbs tell about an action or state of being that is always true.

The Sonoran Desert is hot and dry.

The simple present tense is formed in three ways: base form (sometimes plus *s*), a form of the verb *to be* and the base form plus *ing*, and base form with *do* or *does*.

#### Base Form or Base Form plus s

Almost all verbs form their simple present tense from the base form of the verb or from the base form plus *s*. Study the following chart showing the simple present tense of the verb *walk*.

Simple Present Tense		
Singular Plural		
I walk you walk he, she, it walks	we walk you walk they walk	

The only time a regular verb changes its form in the present tense is when the subject is he, she, it, or a singular noun. When the subject is one of these, an s is added (or es if the verb ends in s, x, ch, or sh).

Pedro plays basketball every evening.

Kathy pushes the pedal to the floor.

### Base Form plus ing

Present Tense with <i>ing</i>		
l he, she, it we, you, they	am is are	walking

When the present tenses of verbs are formed in this way, they are used to tell about actions that are true now and are ongoing.

I am working too hard.

Evelyn and John are planning the company picnic.

#### Base Form with do or does

The present tense can also be formed by combining *do* or *does* with the base form of the verb. *Do* or *does* gives added emphasis to the verb.

My dog does eat at the table with everyone else.

Do you know what time it is?

## Simple Past Tense

The **simple past tense** shows actions that occurred at a specific time in the past.

Ms. Chavez asked me for a ride home from work.

The simple past tense is formed by adding ed or d to the base form of the verb.

I hoped for a promotion.

Simple Past Tense			
Singular	Plural		
I walked you walked he, she, it walked	we walked you walked they walked		

## **Reading Skill**

Use Context Clues

**Context clues** are words that provide hints about a sentence's meaning.

Verbs can provide some information about whether an event is in the past, present, or future, but sometimes that is not enough. In those cases, other words, such as before, yesterday, and next week, can help make your writing clear and provide clues for readers.

In the following sentence, the word tomorrow and the verb will are clues that the party will take place in the future.

Tomorrow she will purchase the cake for the party.

Write three sentences to tell about something that happened in the past, is happening in the present, and will happen in the future. Include context clues, such as the words yesterday, every morning, and next year.

# Simple Future Tense

The **simple future tense** shows an action that will occur in the future. The simple future tense is formed by combining *will* with the base form of the verb.

I will call you tomorrow.

Simple Future Tense		
Singular	Plural	
I will walk you will walk he, she, it will walk	we will walk you will walk they will walk	



# THINK ABOUT WRITING

**Directions:** Write the correct tense of the base form of the verb in parentheses. Then underline any words that gave you a clue to the correct verb tense.

<b>Example:</b> (open) I <u>will open</u> my birthday gifts tomorrow.		
1.	(call)	We your daughter yesterday.
2.	(wait)	Stan for his children every afternoon after school.
3.	(move)	The Rosellos to Columbus two years ago.
4.	(enjoy)	l always a good mystery book.
5.	(work)	Mrs. Haynes on your furnace next week.
6.	(happen)	What to you last night?
7.	(demand)	Today's consumers higher-quality products than in the past.
8.	(end)	You your study of the Constitution next Tuesday.
9.	(own)	Simon now a car and a pickup truck.
10.	(talk)	We about you for hours yesterday.

# **Principal Parts of Verbs**

As you have learned, there are three simple verb tenses: past, present, and future tenses. In addition to these simple tenses, there are perfect verb tenses. To understand the perfect tenses, you must understand the principal parts of verbs. These parts are used to form the perfect tenses.

The three principal parts of verbs are the base, past, and past participle. The past participle shows an action that was already complete before the sentence began.

The following chart shows the three principal parts, or forms, of the verb *help*.

Principal Parts of Verbs			
Base Past Past Participle			
help	helped	helped	

The base form is used to form the simple present and simple future tenses. The past form is used to form the simple past tense. The past participle form is used to form the perfect tenses, which you will learn about later in the lesson.

# **Regular Verbs**

**Regular verbs** are verbs that form their past and past participle forms in a **regular**, or predictable, way. The **majority** [more than half] of verbs are regular verbs.

Most regular verbs form the past and past participle by adding ed to the base. If the verb ends with an e, only a d is added. In some cases, the final consonant is doubled. If the regular verb ends in a consonant plus y, the y is changed to i before ed is added. Here are examples:

Examples of Regular Verbs			
Base	Past	Past Participle	
walk praise stop reply	walked praised stopped replied	walked praised stopped replied	



# Technology-Specific Verbs

New verbs have been created to describe actions related to technology. You e-mail your paper to your teacher. Texting while driving is unsafe. Did you Google "chocolate cake recipes" before you began baking?

Other verbs have added new, technology-specific meanings. Think of how you use each of these verbs:

calculate, click, command, control, copy, delete, filter, input, install, input, key, manipulate, paste, program, run, save, search, send, tweet

# **Irregular Verbs**

Verbs that do not form their past and past participle forms by simply adding *ed* are called **irregular verbs**. There are no simple rules for forming the irregular forms of verbs. You will, however, notice patterns. You have to memorize the spellings of the principal parts of these verbs. Another tip is to look up the base form of the verb in a dictionary. You will find the past and past participle forms there.

Three irregular verbs are so common and so important they need special attention.

Have, Do, and Be			
Base	Present	Past	Past Participle
have do be	has, have do, does am, is, are	had did was, were	had done been

The following list gives the principal parts of common irregular verbs. Some verbs have more than one correct form for some parts.

Common Irregular Verbs			
Base Past		Past Participle	
	awoke,		
awake	awaked	awaked, awoken	
become	became	become	
bend	bent	bent	
bet	bet	bet	
bid	bid	bid	
bind	bound	bound	
bite	bit	bitten	
blow	blew	blown	
build	built	built	
burst	burst	burst	
buy	bought	bought	
cast	cast	cast	
catch	caught	caught	
cost	cost	cost	
creep	crept	crept	
cut	cut	cut	
deal	dealt	dealt	
dig	dug	dug	

Common Irregular Verbs			
Base	Past	Past Participle	
draw	drew	drawn	
dream	dreamed, dreamt	dreamed, dreamt	
drive	drove	driven	
fall	fell	fallen	
feed	fed	fed	
feel	felt	felt	
fight	fought	fought	
find	found	found	
fly	flew	flown	
forget	forgot	forgotten	
keep	kept	kept	
lay	laid	laid	
lead	led	led	
leave	left	left	
lend	lent	lent	
lie	lay	lain	
lose	lost	lost	
make	made	made	
mean	meant	meant	
meet	met	met	
pay	paid	paid	
prove	proved	proved, proven	
put	put	put	
read	read	read	
rid	rid	rid	
ride	rode	ridden	
rise	rose	risen	
say	said	said	
sell	sold	sold	
send	sent	sent	
set	set	set	
shake	shook	shaken	
shine	shone, shined	shone, shined	
shoot	shot	shot	
sit	sat	sat	
sleep	slept	slept	
spend	spent	spent	
spin	spun	spun	
stand	stood	stood	
strike	struck	struck	
swear	swore	sworn	
teach	taught	taught	
tell	told	told	
think	thought	thought	
throw	threw	thrown	
understand	understood	understood	
	1	1	



# THINK ABOUT WRITING

**Directions:** Write the correct form of the missing verb. The base form is given in parentheses.

	<b>ample:</b> (sh ek's earth	nake) Our house <u>shook</u> violently during last quake.
1.	(throw)	Brian out the runner trying to steal second.
2.	(freeze)	The rain as soon as it hits the pavement.
3.	(give)	Please this package to the delivery person.
4.	(mean)	I didn't know what she when she said she was skating home.
5.	(cling)	Jill's children tightly to her when she left home.
6.	(deal)	Dilip is the most helpful real estate agent I have ever with.
7.	(swear)	Ms. Tso to the judge that she was telling the truth.

#### **Perfect Tenses**

The simple tenses divide time into the three natural periods: the past, present, and future. Verbs also have three perfect tenses. **Perfect tenses** tell that an action has been completed before a certain time or will be continuing to a certain time. Two of the perfect tenses, the present perfect and the past perfect, are actually special forms of the past tense. The other perfect tense, the future perfect, is a special form of the future tense.

Although you may think of the past as one time, there are actually three levels of past tenses. You already know about the simple past tense. The other two types of past tense are the present perfect and the past perfect.

#### Present Perfect Tense

The **present perfect tense** tells that an action was started in the past and is continuing in the present or has just been completed.

Pat has waited for the bus since six o'clock.

I have walked the entire way home.

Form the present perfect tense of regular verbs by adding either *has* or *have* to the past participle of the main verb.

Present Per	fect Tense
he, she, it	has waited
I, you, we, they	have waited

#### Past Perfect Tense

The **past perfect tense** tells that an action was completed in the past before another event or before a certain time in the past. Form the past perfect tense of regular verbs by adding *had* to the past participle of the main verb.

Pat had waited for the bus for 10 minutes before we arrived.

Past Perfect Ten	se
I, you, he, she, it, we, they	had waited

#### **Future Perfect Tense**

There are two types of verbs in the future tense. You already know about the simple future. It tells what will happen in the future. The other future tense is the future perfect tense.

The **future perfect tense** shows an action that will be completed by a specific time in the future.

Pat will have waited 10 minutes by the time we get there.

Form the future perfect tense of regular verbs by adding *will have* to the past participle of the main verb.

Future Perfect 1	Tense
I, you, he, she, it, we, they	will have waited

# **Using Verbs in a Cover Letter**

When you write a cover letter to accompany a job application, you will include different types of verbs and you may use more than one tense.

Dear Mr. Smith:

I <u>am interested</u> in the position of automotive service manager <u>advertised</u> on your website. My resume <u>is</u> attached. I <u>believe</u> I <u>have</u> the qualifications you <u>require</u>. In June I <u>graduated</u> from Silver <u>Lake</u> Community College with an associate degree in business. Prior to that, I <u>worked</u> for three years as an assistant service manager at Mega-Cars. I <u>will be</u> available for an interview any day next week. I look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards,

Max Grafton

#### Core Skill

Form and Use Verbs

There are three perfect tenses: the present perfect, past perfect, and future perfect. Read the following sentence:

Max walks to work.

Now read the sentence rewritten in each of the three perfect tenses.

Max has walked to work every morning.

Max had walked to work before I even woke up.

Max will have walked to work by 8:00 a.m.

Rewrite the following sentence in a notebook using each of the three perfect tenses.

They watch the movie.



# THINK ABOUT WRITING

**Directions:** Write the correct form of the verb in parentheses on the blank lines. These sentences review all six of the verb tenses: present, past, future, present perfect, past perfect, and future perfect.

<b>Example:</b> Ms. Luna <u>will explain</u> the new procedure next week. (explain)		
1.	(begin)	In two more weeks, I my class.
2.	(taste)	A cup of tea with lunch always good to me.
3.	(take)	Frank a lot of pictures before he discovered that his lens cap was still on.
4.	(swim)	Jose and Molly more than 20 miles by the time they finish the race.
5.	(say)	As I before, I'm not going to be talked into taking the first offer I get.

# **Subjunctive Mood**

The **subjunctive mood** is a verb form used in three situations: in commands, to express urgency, and to express wishes or a condition that is contrary to fact.

When used for commands or to express urgency, the subjunctive is formed in two ways.

**1.** Use the base form of the verb. Do not add an *s* to the end of the verb.

Be careful. (command)

It is important that Lee complete this questionnaire. (urgency)

**2.** Use the verb *be* plus the past participle of the main verb.

Mr. Chino insists that this project be finished today. (urgency)

To express wishes or something that is contrary to fact, the subjunctive is formed using *were*. *Were* may be used by itself or with the infinitive, past participle, or the *ing* form of the main verb.

If I were taller, I could dunk the basketball.

If we were to leave, we would never know what happened.

If you were elected president, would you name me to the Supreme Court?

If he were lying, do you think it would show on his face?



# THINK ABOUT WRITING

**Directions:** Choose the correct verb in the parentheses in each of the following sentences.

**Example:** If I (was, were) a fast runner, I would enter that 10K race.

- It is necessary that the runner (complete, completes) the entire form.
- 2. If I (was, were) stronger, I would run a marathon.
- 3. It is important that lots of water (is drunk, be drunk).
- **4.** If Naoshi (was, were) to see me in this race, he would be surprised.
- **5.** The rules require that every runner (pay, pays) a small registration fee.

#### **Active and Passive Voice**

When a sentence is written in the **active voice**, the subject performs the action. When a sentence is written in the **passive voice**, the subject is acted upon.

**Active:** LeRoi poured the pancake batter onto the grill.

Passive: The pancake batter was poured onto the grill.

The first sentence is in the active voice. The subject, *LeRoi*, performs the action of pouring. The second sentence is in the passive voice. The subject, *pancake batter*, is acted upon by being poured.

Sentences in the passive voice can be written in any tense. To write regular verbs in the passive voice, use a form of the verb *be* and the past participle.

Passive Voice		
Present	I <i>am</i> he, she, it <i>is</i> we, you, they <i>are</i>	
Past	I, he, she, it <i>was</i> we, you, they <i>were</i>	shocked
Future	I, you, he, she, it, we, they <i>will be</i>	



# THINK ABOUT WRITING

**Directions:** Rewrite each of the following passive voice sentences in the active voice.

**Example:** That wedding dress was worn by my grandmother 60 years ago.

My grandmother wore that wedding dress 60 years ago.

- 1. The old house was deserted by my grandparents.
- 2. The doorway is hidden by large shrubs.
- 3. The cellar door was jammed shut by that fallen tree.
- 4. The old house will be torn down by the wrecking crew.

#### **Consistent Verb Tenses**

Remember that verb tenses are used to show when an action takes place. As you write, use the correct tenses so your readers are not confused. Do not change tenses within a sentence or between sentences unless it is necessary to show a change in the time of the actions.

**Incorrect:** Amy picked up the keys and walks to the door.

**Correct:** Amy picks up the keys and walks to the door.

**Correct:** Amy picked up the keys and walked to the door.

In the first sentence above, *picked* is in the past tense and *walks* is in the present tense. This change in verb tenses is confusing. Both verbs should be in the present tense, as shown in the second sentence, or in the past tense, as shown in the last sentence.

The following sentence contains two verbs in different tenses. How would you correct the sentence?

Boris <u>stands</u> at the end of the diving board for five minutes before he jumped.

To correct the sentence, you could change both verbs to the present tense:

Boris <u>stands</u> at the end of the diving board for five minutes before he jumps.

To correct the sentence, you could also change both verbs to the past tense:

Boris <u>stood</u> at the end of the diving board for five minutes before he jumped.

Sometimes a change in tense is necessary to show that two actions occur at different times. In the following example, both events happened in the past. By using the past perfect and simple past tenses, the writer tells the reader that while both events took place in the past, one event (Abraham Lincoln had been a senator) preceded the other (he became president).

Abraham Lincoln <u>had been</u> (past perfect) a senator before he <u>became</u> (simple past) president.

When you write about two actions, you can give context clues to help your readers know if the actions occur at the same or different times. To do this use words such as *before*, *now*, *yesterday*, *after*, *while*, *next*, *then*, and *when*.



# THINK ABOUT WRITING

**Directions:** Write the correct form of the verb in parentheses on the blank line.

	<b>mple:</b> Before Yolanda (come) <u>came</u> to see me, she (go) had gone to the bakery.
1.	Last year Lauren always (ride) the bus to work, but now she always (ride) her bike.
2.	After we (buy) a gas stove, we (discover) we did not have a gas hookup.
3.	Our company (begin) a new hiring policy last month while I (be) on vacation.
4.	Jason (finish) the book by the time class (begin) next week.
5.	Audrey (sweat) when she (return) from carrying the box of books up two flights of stairs.
6.	I (hope) that when you testified you (give) the correct information.
7.	Since last Tuesday, Sachi (memorize) her lines for the play that (open) next weekend.
8.	Curtis didn't (reach) his landlady until he (try) six times.
9.	Bill (run) six miles by the time we (wake) up in the morning.
10.	The neighbor's dog (bite) $\_$ the mail carrier before it (run) $\_$ out of the yard.

# **Vocabulary Review**

**Directions:** Complete each sentence with a vocabulary word. Then use the words to complete the puzzle.

common link majority regular verb Across 2. There are only two girls in his class. The \_\_\_\_\_ of students are boys. 2. 4. Serena used the chain to \_\_\_\_\_ her bike to the bike rack. 5. A word that tells what someone is or does is a Down 1. Tornadoes are a \_\_\_\_\_\_ occurrence in some parts of the country. 3. The seasons come and go in a \_\_\_\_\_ pattern.

# **Skill Review**

**Directions:** Tell which words in the sentence are context clues that help you determine when the action happened. Then describe when it took place..

Before he left for work, Robert ate breakfast and walked his dog.
 When Jordan finishes reading the book, he will read the next one in the series.
 On her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, my grandmother celebrated with all her children and grandchildren.
 Yesterday, Sandy was feeling under the weather, so she did not have the energy to go for her usual run that day.

#### Skill Practice

**Directions:** Choose the one best answer to each question.

1. Javier crossed the finish line after John arrives at the track.

Which correction should be made to the sentence?

- A. change crossed to will have crossed
- **B.** change crossed to had crossed
- C. change arrives to had arrived
- D. change arrives to has arrived
- **2.** Scientists will study Jupiter when the satellite reachs the planet.

Which correction should be made to the sentence?

- **A.** change will study to study
- B. change will study to studied
- **C.** change reachs to reaches
- **D.** change <u>reachs</u> to <u>will reach</u>
- **3.** Before the lawyer asked any questions, the witness had swore she would tell the truth.

Which correction should be made to the sentence?

- A. change asked to asks
- B. change had swore to had sworn
- C. change had swore to swears
- D. change would tell to tells

**4.** It is important that <u>Sid connects the wires</u> properly or the battery will go dead.

Which is the best way to write the underlined portion of the sentence? If the original is the best way, choose option (A).

- **A.** Sid connects the wires properly
- **B.** Sid connect the wires properly
- C. Sid connected the wired properly
- **D.** Sid had connected the wired properly
- 5. Marta exchange the purple skirt for a white one so that she could wear more blouses with it.

Which is the best way to write the underlined portion of the sentence? If the original is the best way, choose option (A).

- A. Marta exchange
- **B.** Marta will exchange
- C. Marta exchanged
- D. Marta had exchanged
- **6.** After Ted gets his tax return, he bought a computer.

Which is the best way to write the underlined portion of the sentence? If the original is the best way, choose option (A).

- A. he bought a computer
- B. he is buying a computer
- **C.** he will buy a computer
- D. he buy a computer

# **Writing Practice**

**Directions:** On another piece of paper, write a paragraph about a place you like to go. Include examples of times that you have been there in the past. Use context clues to tell the reader more about when you went to this place. Use appropriate verb forms and tenses, punctuation, and proper language conventions.

# LESSON 8.1

# **Arguments**

#### **Lesson Objectives**

#### You will be able to

- Write arguments to support claims
- Use cohesive language

#### Skills

- Reading Skill: Assess Accuracy of Source
- Core Skill: Provide a Conclusion

# **Vocabulary**

argument
citation
claim
cohesive
counterclaims
credible
databases

**KEY CONCEPT:** An argument is an essay in which the writer takes a position on an issue and presents reasons and evidence to convince readers to change their thoughts or actions regarding the issue.

Have you ever argued about an issue such as immigration or the death penalty? If so, you are not alone. Such issues may affect your actions and voting choices. However, to win an argument, you must provide more than your **opinion**, or belief. You need reasons and facts to support your point of view.

Suppose your city council proposes raising parking fees in order to fund local parks and recreation. Would you be in favor of this increase? Make a list of sources you could use for facts to support an argument for or against the proposed parking fee increase.

# **Arguments**

Persuasive arguments must be logical. To create a convincing argument, focus on the parts of your essay, from start to finish.

#### Introduce a Claim

A **claim** is a statement of the writer's opinion. To develop a claim, begin with issues in local or national news. Consider these topics:

- Outsourcing of jobs
- · School uniforms

Which of these issues do you feel more strongly about? About which issue are you more knowledgeable? Try phrasing an issue in the form of a question to capture the different opinions:

- Is job outsourcing hurting or helping the American economy?
- Should public schools require students to wear uniforms?

Then answer the question you formed:

- Job outsourcing is hurting/helping the American economy.
- Public schools should (not) require students to wear uniforms.

This answer is your claim, and it should appear in the first paragraph of your essay. You can begin your argument by using one of the following strategies:

**Action:** Is there an event—a protest, or public meeting—you can describe?

**Quotation:** What does a relevant person have to say?

**Reaction:** Using verbs such as *think* or *wonder*, what are your thoughts on the issue?

**Rhetorical Question:** What question should you ask readers? Remember, a **rhetorical question** is a statement phrased in the form of a question. When you ask a rhetorical question, you do not expect an answer.

# Write an Argument to Support Your Claim

Although a claim is an opinion, you can support it with facts from reliable sources. First, list three to five reasons you think others should agree with your claim.

**Claim:** Public schools should require students to wear uniforms.

- **Reason 1:** Uniforms lower the cost of clothing for students.
- Reason 2: Uniforms help protect low-income students from being bullied.
- **Reason 3:** Uniforms keep distractions from learning to a minimum.

These reasons will be **topic sentences**, or introductions to the main idea, for each paragraph. Next, provide **evidence**, or grounds for belief, for each reason. Evidence comes in various forms:

- Anecdotes: short stories about real people or events
- **Descriptions:** observations of items, people, or events
- Facts: information that can be proven; statistics are number-based facts
- · Graphics: charts, graphs, diagrams, or photographs
- **Quotations:** exact words from an expert or affected person

Complete each paragraph by stating and explaining one or more pieces of evidence. Consider the following anecdote regarding Reason 2:

Uniforms help protect low-income students from being bullied. Appearance is a common reason that students bully others. Student harassment may focus on weight, eyeglasses, hair styles—and clothes. If uniforms are required for everyone, low-income students may no longer be bullied because their parents cannot afford to dress them in expensive clothes. Ana, a student bullied for her clothing, says, "Kids used to tease me for wearing the same outfit two or three days a week. Now that we all wear uniforms, I don't stand out so much, and that's a good thing."



### THINK ABOUT WRITING

**Directions:** Create an outline for an argument. Complete the outline below. You will use the outline to write an argument at the end of this lesson. Note the type of evidence you believe will support your reasons. Add specific evidence later.

#### **Argument Outline**

#### I. Introduction

Circle One: Action, Dialogue or Quotation, Reaction, Rhetorical Question

#### II. Claim:

#### III. Reasons and Evidence

- A. Reason 1 and Evidence:
- B. Reason 2 and Evidence:
- C. Reason 3 and Evidence:



Select a print or digital source that relates to the claim you developed in your argument outline. You may choose a book, a magazine or newspaper article, or a journal article, for example. Using this source, respond in writing to the bulleted evaluation questions listed on this page.

When your responses are complete, finish this sentence starter: This source is credible/not credible because . . . .

# **Assess Accuracy of Source**

When it comes to research, not all sources are equal. Some sources are written and reviewed by experts in related fields. These sources are accurate and **credible**, or deserving of belief or trust. However, other sources may not be accurate. How can you tell the difference? Use key questions to assess, or evaluate, each source:

- Who is the author, publisher, or reviewer of the source? What degrees, credentials, or experience does this person or organization have? Is the person or organization regarded by others as an expert or authority in the field?
- What is the purpose of the source: to inform, to persuade, to entertain, or to explain? Remember that an author's purpose affects choices about what information to include in a source and how to present the information.
- When was the source published or revised? Is it current or is it out-of-date?
- Where is the source located: on the public, easily accessible World Wide Web, or in an academically reviewed library database?
- Why do you want to use this source? Which reason does it support?

# **Respond to Counterclaims**

Because you are expressing an opinion in an argument, there are other possible opinions or claims that go against your point of view. These opposing views are called **counterclaims** because they run counter to, or against, your claim.

When writing an argument, it is important to acknowledge counterclaims:

- Uniforms limit student self-expression.
- · Uniforms are cheaply made.
- Uniforms do not fit everyone well.

After you acknowledge each counterclaim, you can respond to it.

Some may argue that uniforms limit student self-expression. However, what uniforms do, in fact, is take emphasis away from superficial expression. Without this outlet, students must focus on more meaningful forms of expression, such as speaking and writing. Mr. Jones, a teacher at a school that recently adopted a uniform policy, says, "Students are being forced to find new ways of expressing themselves that are not dictated by external fashion trends."

When determining how you will respond to a particular counterclaim, consider these issues:

- Is there any part of a counterclaim with which you agree? If so, it is acceptable to acknowledge this.
- For what reasons do you disagree with all or parts of a counterclaim?
- What evidence are you able to offer that shows that a counterclaim is not as strong as your claim?



# THINK ABOUT WRITING

**Directions:** In your notebook, continue creating the outline for the argument you will write at the end of this lesson. There is no required number of counterclaims to which you must respond, but you should acknowledge the most common ones.

Outline (continued)

#### IV. Counterclaims

- **A.** Counterclaim 1:
  - **a.** Response + Evidence:
- B. Counterclaim 2:
  - **b.** Response + Evidence:
- **C.** Counterclaim 3:
  - **c.** Response + Evidence:

#### **Reading Skill**

Assess Accuracy of Source

To find accurate sources for your evidence, your public library is a good place to start. Many libraries have sizable databases, or online listings of reliable, published reference materials. Using the library's database is one way to locate and assess accurate sources. You may also rely on material from government or educational websites whose Internet addresses, or URLs, end in .gov, or .edu. You can search for information using keywords, a subject, an author's name, and other search options. You can also find the publication information to create a citation, or reference to your source document.

Locate the topic you focused on in your claim and find at least one example of each of the following types of supporting evidence:

 Fact
 Graphic
Quotation
Statistic

Add the evidence you collect to your argument outline. Include the citation data with each entry.

If you need help using a database or obtaining source citations, ask a librarian to help you.

#### Core Skill

Provide a Conclusion

Read the sample conclusion on this page. Mark the text as follows:

- Underline the claim restatement.
- Draw a box around the summary of important reasons and/or evidence.
- Label the type of final insight the writer provides as Connection to Reader, Quotation, Fact/Statistic, or Anecdote.

With a partner, discuss the effectiveness of this conclusion. Use these discussion questions:

- What does the writer leave you thinking about?
- Is this a satisfying ending for this essay? Why or why not?
- Are you persuaded to consider the writer's argument? Why or why not?
- · What does the writer do well in the conclusion?
- What suggestions do you have to improve the conclusion?

#### **Provide a Conclusion**

Now that you have stated your claim, supported it with reasons and evidence, and acknowledged and responded to counterclaims, it is time to write the **conclusion**, or the end of your essay.

Generally, a conclusion has two purposes. First, it must reinforce your argument. Secondly, it must leave the readers with something to think about.

To reinforce your argument, use these strategies:

- Restate your claim.
- Summarize the most important reasons or evidence.

To provide a final insight that will leave readers thinking, use one or more of these strategies:

- Explain why readers should care about your argument. How does it affect them personally?
- Provide a provocative or thoughtful quotation.
- Deliver a stunning fact or statistic.
- Offer a particularly moving anecdote or short story.

Combine both purposes as you write your conclusion.

American public schools should move to adopt uniform policies for students because school hallways should lead students to classrooms where they can develop their minds; school halls should not serve as fashion runways. In short, the public school is the last great center of democracy in American society—a place where all students are created equal and should have equal opportunities to think and grow. Ana, a student once bullied for her clothing, has a final thought on the subject: "Since our school adopted uniforms, I find it easier to study. It's great to be able to concentrate on my classes instead of worrying about being teased."



# THINK ABOUT WRITING

**Directions:** In your notebook, complete the outline for the argument you will write at the end of this lesson.

Outline (continued)

#### V. Conclusion

- A. Restatement of claim:
- **B.** Summary of most important reasons and evidence:
- C. Final Insight: Circle One: Connection to Reader, Quotation, Fact/Statistic, Anecdote

**Description:** 

# **Use Cohesive Language**

Arguments are written using **formal** and **cohesive** language. Formal language refers to the use of words and phrases that are appropriate for school and business settings. The following words or expressions—which are appropriate for spoken language or writing among friends—are generally not used in formal writing. It is, however, acceptable for informal words or expressions to appear within quoted material a writer is using as evidence.

#### Avoid Use Instead

- **Abbreviations:** Use *for example* in place of *e.g.*, or use *and so on* in place of *etc*.
- **Contractions:** For instance, write out *could not* instead of using *couldn't*.
- **Vague Language:** For instance, use *evidence* or *reasons* in place of *things*.
- **Personal Pronouns:** Generally, avoid using first- and second-person pronouns (*I*, *we*, *you*) in favor of third-person pronouns (*he*, *she*, *they*).
- **Slang or Idioms:** For instance, use *popular* instead of *cool*, or use *laughing* instead of *rolling in the aisles*.

**Cohesive** language refers to transition words and phrases that make the relationships among claims, reasons, evidence, and counterclaims clear for readers.

Relationship	Transition Words or Phrases
acknowledgment	granted, agreed, of course  Granted, some believe that uniforms limit students' self-expression.
example	for example, for instance, in fact, specifically What uniforms do, in fact, is to take emphasis away from superficial expression.
summary	finally, in conclusion, in other words, in short In other words, without the distraction of external fashion trends, students express themselves through speaking and writing.
supplement	also, in addition, besides, too, moreover With superficial distractions out of the way, students <u>also</u> have more time to devote to their studies.

#### 21st Century Skill

Communication and Collaboration

Using the concluding paragraph about school uniforms that appears on the previous page, mark the text as follows:

- Circle examples of informal language.
- Highlight any transitions that are unclear.

Rewrite the paragraph to replace informal language with formal language and to add transition words or phrases to clarify the relationships among ideas.

With a partner, compare and contrast the original paragraph with your revision. What is similar? What is different? Which version is better? Why?

# **Vocabulary Review**

**Directions:** Match each vocabulary word with its definition.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ argument A. able to be trusted or believed

2. \_\_\_\_\_ citation B. statement of opinion

3. \_\_\_\_\_ claim C. publication information

4. \_\_\_\_\_ counterclaims D. written opinion supported by reasons and evidence

**5.** \_\_\_\_\_ credible **E.** collection of searchable information

6. \_\_\_\_\_ database F. statements in opposition to an opinion

## **Skill Review**

**Directions:** Read the argument below. Then answer the questions that follow.

#### · Introduction of Claim:

Public school students should be required to wear school uniforms.

• **Reason 1:** Uniforms lower the cost of clothing for students.

Although families must buy uniforms at the beginning of the school year, most of the cost of outfitting students is then finished. When students no longer face peer pressure to wear the latest fashionable outfits to class, it makes a difference in the family budget. Buying new clothing throughout the year is far more costly than purchasing a few uniforms.

• **Reason 2:** Uniforms help protect low-income students from bullying.

Uniforms help protect low-income students from being bullied. Appearance is a common reason that students bully others. Student harassment may focus on weight, eyeglasses, hair styles—and clothes. If uniforms are required for everyone, low-income students may no longer be bullied because their parents cannot afford to dress them in expensive clothes. Ana, a student bullied for her clothing, says, "Kids used to tease me for wearing the same outfit two or three days a week. Now that we all wear uniforms, I don't stand out so much, and that's a good thing."

• Reason 3: Uniforms keep distractions from learning to a minimum.

Some may argue that uniforms limit student self-expression. However, what uniforms do, in fact, is take emphasis away from superficial expression. Without this outlet, students must focus on more meaningful forms of expression, such as speaking and writing. Mr. Jones, a teacher at a school that recently adopted a uniform policy, says, "Students are being forced to find new ways of expressing themselves that are not dictated by external fashion trends."

In conclusion, American public schools should move to adopt uniform policies for students because school hallways should lead students to classrooms where they can develop their minds; school halls should not serve as fashion runways. In short, the public school is the last great center of democracy in American society—a place where all students are created equal and should have equal opportunities to think and grow. Americans should not sacrifice this grand ideal to support a culture of superficial judgment and materialism.

## Skill Review (continued)

- 1. Which passage below best begins an introduction for the argument?
  - A. The dictionary defines a uniform as "a suit of clothing worn by a particular group." Many people wear uniforms, including nurses, firefighters, and waiters.
  - B. For many years, students in private schools have worn uniforms. Today, many public schools are considering the benefits of uniforms.
  - C. Should public school students wear uniforms if uniforms reduce social friction, help focus students' attention on their studies, and relieve a financial burden for parents?
  - D. A typical school uniform consists of a cotton shirt and khaki or navy colored pants, skirt, or shorts. The cost is about \$30.00.
- 2. Which evidence below best supports Reason 1?
  - A. description of a busy mall setting in early August
  - B. statistics contrasting the cost of regular clothing with uniforms
  - C. photographs from back-to-school clothing advertisements
  - **D.** quotations from a school dress code policy
- 3. From which credible source might the writer find evidence to support Reason 2?
  - A. government website
  - B. teen magazine
  - C. letter to the editor
  - **D.** parenting blog
- 4. Which evidence below best supports Reason 3?
  - A. anecdote about a parent and student shopping for clothes
  - B. facts from research about school learning objectives
  - **C.** statistic about the number of schools with uniform policies
  - **D.** quotation from a teacher about causes of conduct problems
- 5. From which credible source might the writer find evidence to support Reason 3?
  - A. .com uniform website
  - B. YouTube video about classroom management
  - **C.** Web forum about school uniforms
  - D. interview with a school principal

# **Skill Practice**

**Directions:** Using the completed outline in your notebook, write an argument in the space below.

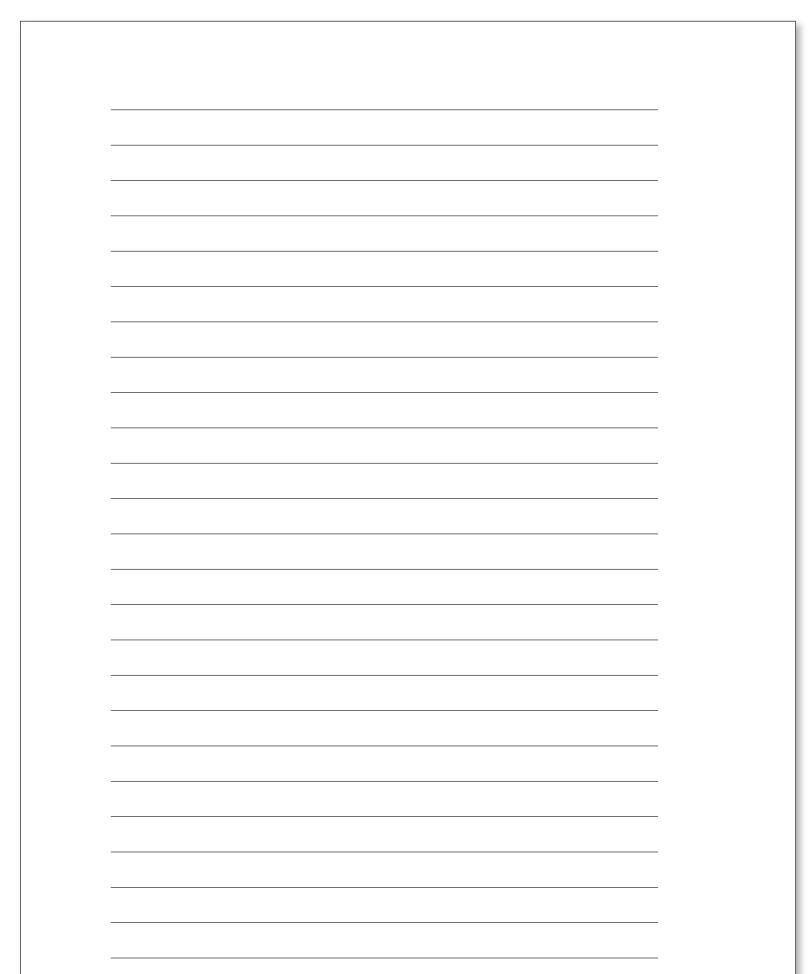
Make sure to use one of the strategies discussed in the lesson for introducing a claim. Then state your claim.

For each paragraph, state a reason the reader should agree with your claim. Then state and explain supporting evidence. Make sure to vary the types of evidence you cite. If you use outside sources to supply evidence, make sure your sources are credible. Provide source citations at the end of your essay.

Next, research some counterclaims to your argument. Acknowledge and respond to common counterclaims. You may include further evidence in this section.

Finally, conclude by restating your claim, summarizing important reasons and evidence, and leaving readers with a final insight. Use one of the final insight strategies discussed in the lesson.

Reread your argument and make necessary corrections to ensure that you have used formal and cohesive language throughout the essay.	



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