



EXPEDITIONARY  
LEARNING

# **Grade 4: Module 3B: Unit 3: Lesson 2**

## **Reading Opinion Pieces, Part II: How Authors Support Their Opinions with Reasons and Evidence**



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**Long-Term Targets Addressed (Based on NYSP12 ELA CCLS)**

I can explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text. (RI.4.8)

I can write an opinion piece that supports a point of view with reasons and information. (W.4.1)

**Supporting Learning Targets**

- I can write a gist statement about an opinion piece.
- I can determine an author's opinion in an opinion piece.
- I can explain how authors support their opinions with reasons and evidence.

**Ongoing Assessment**

- Exploring Opinions as Readers and Writers anchor chart
- Reading and Analyzing an Opinion Piece graphic organizer
- Exit ticket



Agenda	Teaching Notes
<p>1. Opening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Sharing Homework: Mix and Mingle (5 minutes)</li><li>B. Reviewing Learning Targets (5 minutes)</li></ul> <p>2. Work Time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Reviewing William Barton’s Opinion Letter: Recording the Gist and Opinion (5 minutes)</li><li>B. Rereading the Text to Determine Reasons and Evidence (35 minutes)</li></ul> <p>3. Closing and Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Preparing for Homework: Reading Another Opinion Piece for the Gist (10 minutes)</li></ul> <p>4. Homework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Reread Robert Barton’s opinion letter and answer Questions 1 and 2 in your graphic organizer.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In this lesson students continue to learn how authors articulate and support their opinions in writing by analyzing the opinion letter they read in Lesson 1, which is written from the perspective of the main character, William Barton, from the play <i>Divided Loyalties</i> (read in Unit 2). In this lesson they will focus on how the character supports his opinion with reasons and evidence.</li><li>• Then for homework and to prepare for the next lesson, students read another opinion letter, this time written from the perspective of Robert Barton, William’s father in <i>Divided Loyalties</i>. They will continue to define the characteristics of opinion writing through both of these letters and add to the Exploring Opinions as Readers and Writers anchor chart (begun in Lesson 1) through over the next several lessons.</li><li>• In advance:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Determine partnerships for Work Times A and B.</li><li>– Review students’ exit tickets from Lesson 1 to determine whether or not to spend more instructional time during Work Time A. Based on the needs of your students, consider doing a “think-aloud” about determining the author’s opinion in the introductory paragraph of the text.</li><li>– Post: Learning targets.</li></ul></li></ul>



Lesson Vocabulary	Materials
opinions, reasons, evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exploring Opinions as Readers and Writers anchor chart (begun in Lesson 1)</li><li>• Exploring Opinions as Readers and Writers anchor chart (added to in this lesson; for teacher reference; see supporting materials)</li><li>• William Barton's opinion letter (from Lesson 1)</li><li>• Exit ticket (from Lesson 1; one to display)</li><li>• Document camera</li><li>• Reading and Analyzing an Opinion Piece graphic organizer (two per student; one to use in class and a second blank copy for homework)</li><li>• Writing folder (one per student to organize texts, graphic organizers, and writing materials)</li><li>• Robert Barton's opinion letter (one per student, for homework)</li></ul>



Opening	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>A. Sharing Homework: Mix and Mingle (5 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Post the <b>Exploring Opinions as Readers and Writers anchor chart</b>. Have students take out <b>William Barton's opinion letter</b> from their homework from the night before.</li><li>• Explain to students that in this mix and mingle they will share the reasons they found in the letter to support William's opinion.</li><li>• Give students a few minutes to mingle and share with one or two peers. Gather students back to sit whole group. Ask:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* "Were the reasons you recorded the same as or different from those of your classmates'?"</li><li>* "How did you identify the statement you underlined as reason?"</li></ul></li><li>• Cold call a few students to share what they underlined. Discuss with the class and clarify misunderstandings as necessary.</li><li>• Have students hold onto their texts; they will need them for the rest of this lesson.</li><li>• On a <b>document camera</b> or written on the board, display the quotes from the <b>exit ticket</b> for Lesson 1.</li><li>• Cold call a few students to point out the author's opinion of the American Revolution. Listen for students to say something like: "The author supports the Revolution," or "The author is a Patriot."</li><li>• Clarify any confusion about the author's opinion and/or point out words in the excerpts that help the reader understand the author's opinion about the American Revolution.</li><li>• Redistribute students' exit tickets and ask them to keep them in their writing folder as a resource for later research.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For students who need further support reading grade-level text or are in need of a visual, consider using a document camera when students are called to share their work with the whole group.</li><li>• For students limited in their English language or oral skills, consider allowing them to do a quick sketch of what the learning target means to them before the Think-Pair-Share.</li></ul>



Opening (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>B. Reviewing Learning Targets (5 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Remind students that yesterday they focused on defining and identifying opinions. Tell students that today they will examine examples of opinion writing more closely.</li><li>• Post and read aloud the following learning targets:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* “I can write a gist statement about an opinion piece.”</li><li>* “I can determine an author’s opinion in an opinion piece.”</li></ul></li><li>• Students should notice that these targets are the same targets as they worked with in Lesson 1. They give you a quick thumbs-up, thumbs-sideways, or thumbs-down to indicate their understanding of these targets. Clarify if necessary.</li><li>• Post and read the third learning target:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* “I can explain how authors support their opinions with reasons and evidence.”</li></ul></li><li>• Ask students to Think-Pair-Share on important words they notice in the target and what the target means to them.</li><li>• Ask a few pairs to share their thinking. Be sure to point out the following words: <i>opinions</i>, <i>reasons</i>, and <i>evidence</i>.</li><li>• Remind students that yesterday they defined what an <i>opinion</i> is and how to determine one when they are reading. Explain that today they will focus on the reasons authors give for their opinions, or why they believe what they believe.</li><li>• Explain that they will also examine how authors use evidence (facts, observations, or details) to support their reasoning. Let students know that they will be rereading William Barton’s opinion letter to analyze how authors do this.</li></ul>	



Work Time	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>A. Reviewing William Barton's Opinion Letter: Recording the Gist and Opinion (5 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Place students with a partner for review, rereading, and discussion of this text. They will remain working with this partner for most of the lesson.</li><li>• Next, distribute the <b>Reading and Analyzing an Opinion Piece graphic organizer</b>. Make sure students still have their William Barton opinion letters. On the graphic organizer, have students record their names and title of the opinion piece. Display the graphic organizer using a document camera. Point out Question 1 on the graphic organizer:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* "What is the topic? What is the gist of this opinion piece?"</li></ul></li><li>• Ask a few volunteers to share the gist statement they wrote on the bottom of their text in Lesson 1. If necessary, clarify the gist with the class. Tell students that in a moment they will record their gist again on the graphic organizer.</li><li>• Point out Question 2 on the graphic organizer:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* "What is the author's opinion on this topic (WHAT the author believes)?"</li></ul></li><li>• Remind students that yesterday they identified the author's opinion in the introductory paragraph and underlined it. Display the text and zoom in on the first paragraph.</li><li>• Ask students to turn to their partner and share which sentence in the first paragraph of the letter states William's opinion on the American Revolution. Remind them to refer to the Characteristics of Opinions listed on the anchor chart as they share.</li><li>• Cold call a pair to share their response. Students should identify the last sentence in the first paragraph as William's stated opinion: "Father, I know my words will be hard for you to hear, but I feel I have no choice but to join the fight for independence from Great Britain."</li><li>• Help students notice that there could be a different/opposing point of view on the issue of the American Revolution.</li><li>• Once students are clear on the gist and William's opinion, ask them to record their responses for both Questions 1 and 2 of the graphic organizer. Model this as necessary using a document camera and a copy of the graphic organizer.</li></ul>	



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>B. Rereading the Text to Determine Reasons and Evidence (35 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Refer to the Exploring Opinions as Readers and Writers anchor chart. Remind students that in informational writing, authors use reasons and evidence to support a point about a topic. Point out to students that this is true for opinion writing as well; authors often use reasons and evidence to support a point they want to make, which is their opinion on a topic.</li><li>• Explain that a <i>reason</i> is an explanation for why an author thinks something is true. It is why someone believes what he or she believes. Add the following to the Exploring Opinions as Readers and Writers anchor chart:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– “Authors support their <i>opinions</i> (WHAT they believe) with <i>reasons</i> (WHY they believe).”</li></ul></li><li>• Point out Question 3 in the graphic organizer:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* “What are the reasons and evidence the author uses to support this opinion?”</li></ul></li><li>• Put a box around the word <i>reasons</i>.</li><li>• Ask students to take about 5 minutes to complete the following with their partners:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Reread the second paragraph of the letter.</li><li>2. Find a sentence that you think is the author’s reason.</li><li>3. Be prepared to share your sentence and why you think it is the reason. (Use details in the text to support your thinking.)</li></ol></li><li>• After about 5 minutes, cold call pairs to share the sentence they identified and why they identified it as the reason. Listen for students to identify the first sentence of the paragraph: “You say that we are British subjects, but we are not treated like we are part of Great Britain.” Ask students to write the sentence as the first reason on their graphic organizer.</li><li>• Next, reread Question 3 on the graphic organizer. Ask students to focus on the word <i>evidence</i>. Remind them that this word means facts or details listed in the text that support the reason stated. Tell students that <i>evidence</i> is HOW authors support their reasons with facts and details.</li><li>• Model with a think-aloud something like the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– “So, if the reason stated is that the colonists were not treated like they were part of Great Britain, then I should find some details or facts that support this reason in the paragraph.”</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• During guided practice, determine which, if any, students should be pulled into a small group supported by the teacher during the partner work.</li></ul>



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Read the second paragraph aloud to students and point out the sentences: “We are forced to pay high taxes on everything. We have to buy stamps for newspapers, paper, even playing cards! Yet, despite this, we have no say in government decisions.”</li><li>– Explain that these sentences are facts that support the author’s reason. Let them know that it is likely that some facts have been researched by the author, but others will be common knowledge.</li><li>– On your graphic organizer, model writing this evidence under the recorded reason. Ask students to record the evidence on their own graphic organizers.</li><li>• Ask students to work with their partners to reread this paragraph and find another sentence that contains evidence that supports the author’s reason. After a minute or so, have pairs share their sentences.</li><li>• Once students are ready to identify reasons and evidence with their partner, have them continue analyzing the second paragraph in the letter, recording their evidence in the bulleted section of the graphic organizer.</li><li>• Give them 10 minutes to do this. Circulate and support partners as necessary or pull a small group to continue with another round of guided practice.</li><li>• Have pairs group with another pair and share their reasons and evidence. Ask groups to discuss the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* “What information should we add about reasons and evidence to the Exploring Opinions as Readers and Writers anchor chart?”</li></ul></li><li>• Give groups 5 minutes to share and discuss. Circulate and note any groups that could be selected to share with the whole group about the discussion question. Also note any misconceptions that should be cleared up during the whole group debrief.</li></ul>	



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask one or two groups to share their evidence from the second paragraph. Listen for students to share the following evidence:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– The King sends his own governors to rule us and we have no representatives in the British Parliament.</li><li>– British soldiers watch our every move, and have even killed innocent people.</li><li>– The British soldiers sent here threaten, not protect, us.</li></ul></li><li>• Add the following to the anchor chart:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Opinions are supported by:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– <u>Reasons</u>: WHY an author has a particular opinion.</li><li>– WITH</li><li>– <u>Evidence</u>: HOW authors support their reasons with facts or details (based on research and/or observations).</li></ul></li></ul></li><li>• Point out that the facts or details used by authors can be from research or observation. Add this note after the explanation of evidence.</li></ul>	



Closing and Assessment	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>A. Preparing for Homework: Reading Another Opinion Piece for the Gist (10 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk with students about how people share their opinion with others today. Examples editorials, blogs, Twitter, Facebook, etc. Tell students that during the American Revolution, people shared their opinions as well, but used other means to do so, such as broadsides. They will have a chance to learn more about broadsides in the next lesson.</li> <li>• Collect their Reading and Analyzing an Opinion Piece graphic organizers (about William Barton's letter) to help determine any instructional adjustments to the next lesson. Have students put the William Barton opinion letter into their <b>writing folder</b>.</li> <li>• Distribute the <b>Robert Barton's opinion letter</b>. Explain that the class will analyze this next opinion letter to help them explain how authors use reasons and evidence to support their opinions. Today you will read the text aloud to help them get the gist; tonight they will reread the letter and answer the questions on the graphic organizer.</li> <li>• Reassure them that it is okay if they do not fully understand the letter after you have read it aloud; they will be able to confirm their answers to the questions on the graphic organizer in class tomorrow.</li> <li>• Read the text aloud as students follow along in their own copies. Afterward, have them turn to a partner and discuss what they think the letter is mostly about.</li> <li>• Finally, distribute a second clean copy of the Reading and Analyzing an Opinion Piece graphic organizer to students for use in their homework.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For students who struggle to read grade-level texts, consider allowing them to have an adult at home read the text aloud to them. You can also provide support by adding text-dependent questions or excerpts from the text to their graphic organizer. For example, an additional scaffold for Question 2 on the graphic organizer could be the following: In the first paragraph, the author shares his opinion about the American Revolution. Based on the following sentences from the text, what is the author's opinion? "We are loyal citizens of Great Britain, and will remain so."</li> </ul>
Homework	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reread Robert Barton's opinion letter and answer Questions 1 and 2 on your graphic organizer.</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: Use students' first Reading and Analyzing an Opinion Piece graphic organizers (used with William Barton's opinion letter) to determine student progress toward the following learning target: "I can explain how authors support their opinions with reasons and evidence." Use this information to inform differentiation for Lesson 3</i></p>	



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## Supporting Materials



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Exploring Opinions as Readers and Writers Anchor Chart  
(For Teacher Reference)

**Teacher Directions:** This anchor chart was begun in Lesson 1. During Lesson 2, add the following:

**opinion**—what a person thinks about something or someone; this thinking can be based on facts, feelings, experience or a combination of all three

**Characteristics of Opinions:**

- A way of thinking about something
- A belief
- A judgment; can be debated or argued
- A differing point of view could be stated

Reading and Analyzing an Opinion Piece Graphic Organizer

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Title of the Opinion Piece:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is the topic? What is the gist of this opinion piece?

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2. What is the author's opinion on this topic (WHAT the author believes)?

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3. What are the reasons and evidence the author uses to support this opinion?

(List the reasons and their supporting evidence from the text: you may not need to use all the spaces below.)

**Reason ("WHY" the author believes an opinion):**

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Reading and Analyzing an Opinion Piece Graphic Organizer

**Evidence (facts, details, information):**

**Evidence:**



Robert Barton's Opinion Letter

February 1777

Dear William,

I am glad to hear you arrived safely and are well. Please do keep me informed of your well-being. You will always be my son, so I care very much about how you are doing. Your mother, sister, brother, and I arrived safely in New York and are settling in as best we can. Leaving our home and the store was difficult, as you know, but we had to go to a place where our beliefs are respected. We are loyal citizens of Great Britain, and will remain so.

It does greatly disappoint me to hear you continue on with your rebel ideas. You forget that paying those taxes is our duty as subjects of the British crown. Great Britain protected us against France in the last war, and British soldiers continue to keep us safe. The Royal governors are good men, and serve us wisely. All of this costs money, and we must pay our fair share.

You cannot win this war, William. I know you are now part of their army, so it hurts me to say this, but the rebel Patriots will not be able to defeat the British army without a navy. Remember, speeches and pamphlets are fine, but soldiers win a war. Your group is a ragtag bunch. I do hope you are able to stay safe among them, William.

Please continue to write to let us know how you are. We worry every day that something has happened to you in battle. Despite our differing views about this war, we are still family and will never be enemies. We miss you and care about you.

Fondly,

Father