

# VIDEO RESOURCE PACKAGE: OBSERVING ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS/LITERACY CLASSROOMS

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Standards-in-Action 2.0

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## ELA/LITERACY CLASSROOM OBSERVATION FOR SARAH SIMPSON

What follows is an observation of a lesson taught by Sarah Simpson. She served as an instructor from the Martin County Adult Education Program in Kentucky. This observation provides concrete examples of what challenging state academic standards in ELA/literacy look like in daily planning and practice. The observation tool is designed as a professional development tool for instructors, those who support instructors, and others working to implement standards. It is not designed for use in evaluation.

**Core Action 1.** Lesson content is rigorous and relevant for the level defined by the state-adopted standards.

**Core Action 2.** Question and tasks are text-specific and cognitively demanding.

**Core Action 3.** Lesson content and activities productively engage students.

**Core Action 4.** Lesson content is intentionally sequenced to develop students' skills and knowledge.

**Core Action 5.** Students' levels of understanding are checked throughout the lesson, and instruction is adjusted accordingly.



<b>Core Action 1. Lesson content is rigorous and relevant for the level defined by the state-adopted standards.</b>	<b>Y, N, or N/A</b>
A. Instructor establishes well-defined standards-based lesson goals.	Y
B. Students are working with texts at or above the expected complexity for the level(s) as defined by the standards.	Y
C. Students spend most class time engaged with some combination of reading, writing, or speaking directly about knowledge-building text(s).	Y

**Evidence observed:**

**Indicator A:**

Sarah defines the lesson's goals and identifies "I can ..." statements for students [at 00:06:31:00]. Throughout the lesson, Sarah refers to lesson objectives. The activities of the lessons tie closely to the established goals of the lesson. Sarah presents various statements for students to label as claims or evidence. Sarah also urges students to find evidence to support the claim in each of the three texts students read and discuss.

Sarah lists all of the CCR standards reflected in her lesson:

- Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text (Reading Standard 1 – High Intermediate Level, Informational Text).
- Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments (Reading Standard 2 – High Intermediate Level, Informational Text).
- Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text, identifying which reasons and evidence support which point(s) (Reading Standard 8 – Low Intermediate Level, Informational Text).
- Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently. (Reading Standard 10 – High Intermediate/Low Adult Secondary Level, Informational Text).
- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly (Speaking and Listening Standard 1 – High Intermediate Level, Informational Text).

**Indicator B:**

The texts were evaluated for complexity. The lesson plan offers the following information:



- “Don’t You Dare Eliminate the Penny” – Forbes: High Intermediate/Low Secondary Level
- “Should We Get Rid of the Penny? 8 Reasons to Keep It vs. Eliminate It” – MoneyCrashers.com: High Intermediate/Low Secondary Level
- “Can We All Just Agree That Pennies Are Stupid and Need to Be Retired?” – The Huffington Post: High Intermediate/Low Secondary Level

The three texts are conceptually related to eliminating the U.S. penny and are designed to build knowledge about the topic.

**Indicator C:**

The entire lesson time relates to what students are reading, including the initial practice to identify claims and evidence. Sarah reads the first of three texts out loud as students follow along and annotate their copies. She then models how to find the claim in the text. She spends very little time providing instructions or making transitions, including as students move from whole-group to small-group to individual work.

Students engage in a blend of reading, writing, speaking, and listening tasks. In a whole or small group, students read and discuss the texts about eliminating the U.S. penny. To answer the questions about the third text and to complete the exit slip, students also write.



<b>Core Action 2. Questions and tasks are text-specific and cognitively demanding.</b>	<b>Y, N, or N/A</b>
A. Instructor consistently sequences questions to support students delving deeper into text(s) to build their understanding of key information.	N
B. Instructor consistently includes systematic work with high-value words, phrases, and syntactically complex sentences from the text(s).	Y
C. Instructor asks students to elaborate and justify their thoughts and responses with precision by drawing evidence from text(s).	Y

**Evidence observed:**

**Indicator A:**

Questions are not sequenced to support students delving deeper into the texts. Additional text-based questions could have been developed to further support students' understanding of The Huffington Post text. There is, however, a mix of questions and tasks that reinforce comprehension of each text and build knowledge about eliminating the penny.

**Indicator B:**

During the evidence-sorting task, students interact with the words, phrases, and sentences of the MoneyCrashers.com article. When students work independently or in pairs on The Huffington Post questions, they must address specific words, phrases, and sentences from the text.

**Indicator C:**

Rarely can students answer questions with just a "yes" or "no" —elaboration or justification is required. During the final activity on The Huffington Post article, the questions are open-ended. They also call for reflection (rather than recall) and evidence about the words, sentences, and ideas in the text. The instructor also invites students to follow up on one another's comments. For example, during the practice session on claims versus evidence and the discussion on fast food, Sarah asks, "Does anyone have a different opinion?" After students discuss, Sarah summarizes their points [at 00:11:34:00]. As Sarah works with students, she often asks questions rather than providing answers. For example, as she moves from group to group, she asks students questions to help them clarify their thinking and progress through the activity.

Students cannot answer the questions Sarah poses without referring to the text. Sarah also encourages precision from student responses. For example, during the group activity, Sarah works with several groups to review the evidence statements to decide which ones support the claim. This prompts students to reflect more deeply on their responses [at 00:23:45:00]. As another example, near the



end of the group activity, Sarah checks a group's chart and asks, "Why did you keep this one? Does that relate?" Students rethink their response and remove the evidence from the chart [at 00:35:20:00].





<b>Core Action 3. Lesson content and activities productively engage students.</b>	<b>Y, N, or N/A</b>
A. Students participate actively in sustained class discussions where they use evidence from their readings to build on each other's insights.	Y
B. Students have varied opportunities to apply what they are learning in authentic adult-oriented contexts.	Y
C. Most students display persistence with tasks about demanding text(s).	Y

**Evidence observed:**

**Indicator A:**

The combination of whole-class, small-group, and independent or partner work ensures that all students could actively participate in the lesson. Students are interested and are sometimes animated. They are engaged from the start about the topic. This is evidenced as they decide whether to throw away the pennies the teacher has strategically placed on the floor around the room. The buzz at each table is evident when students work together to find the claim and supporting evidence. The lesson is dominated by student talk and discussion; there is no lecture. Even the initial activity to help students distinguish between claims and evidence is conducted through a participatory activity. In the lesson as a whole, Sarah talks about 35% of the time while students talk about 65% of the time.

Students consistently refer to the text during discussions and collaborative activities. During the small-group activity, students make decisions about which evidence does and does not support the claim [at 00:21:18:00].

**Indicator B:**

Sarah explicitly ties the lesson objectives to students' goals and interests. She calls out the difference between reading and understanding, asking students to think about their own experiences doing so. Students immediately relate to this question, which adds relevance to the lesson [at 00:01:12:00]. Also, at the beginning, Sarah relates the importance of finding claims and evidence to practical, everyday activities like comparison shopping or buying a car [at 00:02:29:00]. Sarah further engages students in the topic by strategically placing pennies around the room and by starting a discussion about their value [at 00:06:45:00]. The small-group evidence-sorting activity also provides students with a creative opportunity to engage with evidence from the text.

Given the lesson's topic—the debate over the elimination of the penny from U.S. currency—these



articles provide useful information to students. All three texts were previously published in established outlets such as Forbes and The Huffington Post.

**Indicator C:**

Students remain engaged and on-task throughout the lesson. There were no instances of students being off-task. Even when a student offers a story about a man paying car taxes in all pennies, the story relates to the topic.



<b>Core Action 4. Lesson content is intentionally sequenced to develop students' skills and knowledge.</b>	<b>Y, N, or N/A</b>
A. Instructor explicitly links lesson content to previous lessons or students' prior knowledge.	Y
B. Instructor offers a range of brief and engaging resources to build students' knowledge about the topics of the central texts.	N/A
C. Instructor ends the class by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reviewing lesson objectives;</li><li>• Summarizing student learning with references to student work and discussion; and</li><li>• Previewing the next class session and explaining how it will build upon today's activities.</li></ul>	Y

**Evidence observed:**

**Indicator A:**

At the beginning of the lesson, Sarah reminds students of a past lesson on claims and evidence.

**Indicator B:**

There are no extension texts or research projects connected with this lesson, although there are three texts on the same topic. This enables students to build knowledge and vocabulary, which seems appropriate for the nature of this lesson.

**Indicator C:**

Sarah asks students to complete an exit slip to identify the author's claim and two pieces of supporting evidence, which fulfills the lesson objectives. Sarah says that future lessons will evaluate evidence and determine if a source is valid or reliable.



<b>Core Action 5. Students' levels of understanding are checked throughout the lesson, and instruction is adjusted accordingly.</b>	<b>Y, N, or N/A</b>
A. Instructor consistently uses informal yet deliberate methods to provide students with prompt, specific feedback to correct misunderstandings and reinforce learning.	Y
B. Instructor consistently provides strategic supports and scaffolds to help learners focus on what is essential to make sense of what they are reading.	Y
C. Instructor provides opportunities for students to evaluate and reflect on their own learning.	Y

**Evidence observed:**

**Indicator A:**

When students are working individually or in groups, Sarah circulates. Sarah checks student understanding in several ways:

- During whole-class discussions, by asking, “Is everyone following me?” [at 00:03:18:00].
- During group work, by walking the room and noticing what’s written on the chart paper, and by interacting with small groups.
- At the end of the class, by giving students an exit slip. It asks for the author’s claim and two pieces of supporting evidence from the final text [at 00:50:27:00].

As Sarah moves from group to group, she often asks students questions to guide their thinking rather than providing them with the “right” answers. For example, she asks, “How do you know that?” [at 00:24:56:00], and there are several other examples throughout this activity. Sarah provides prompt and specific feedback during the small-group evidence-sorting activity. She corrects the group’s misunderstanding, telling students that there is only one claim in the set. She then prompts them to read all the sentence strips to figure out which one states an opinion.

**Indicator B:**

Sarah provides support when it is needed. As Sarah moves from group to group, students ask her questions or call her to their table to explain or clarify the task. When a student says he sometimes forgets text he just read, Sarah summarizes it with him, letting the student finish his thought [at 00:34:07:00].

**Indicator C:**

The exit slip includes reflection questions [at 00:50:27:00]: “After reading these texts, do you want to eliminate the penny from our currency or not? What evidence convinced you? Name one thing you learned today about claims and evidence. Name something you still need help with.”



# LESSON PLAN FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS/LITERACY

*Created by Sarah Simpson • Martin County Adult Education Program • Kentucky*

**Title of this lesson:**

Claim and Evidence: The Penny Debate

**Brief description of how the lesson is to be used:**

This lesson is focused on how to find the claim of and supporting evidence in a text. Later lessons will focus on evaluating evidence and claims to figure out reliability, validity, and bias in a text.

**Intended level of the lesson:**

High Intermediate/Low  
Adult Secondary Level

**Suggested time to spend on the  
lesson:**

One 60-minute session

**Learning goals of the lesson (i.e., big ideas/key understandings):**

- Identify the “gist” of the text.
- Find the author’s main point.
- Find the reasons the author gives to back up his or her point.



**Level-specific college and career readiness English Language Arts/literacy standards (4–8 standards) that are targets of the lesson:**

Reading Standard 1 – High Intermediate Level, Informational Text

Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Reading Standard 2 – High Intermediate Level, Informational Text

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

Reading Standard 8 – Low Intermediate Level, Informational Text

Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text, identifying which reasons and evidence support which point(s).

Reading Standard 10 – High Intermediate/Low Adult Secondary Level, Informational Text

Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

Speaking & Listening Standard 1 – High Intermediate Level, Informational Text

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

**Complexity of the texts that are the focus of the lesson:**

A. Quantitative Measure: ATOS

**Article A:** “Don’t You Dare Eliminate the Penny” – Forbes: **9.6, High Intermediate/Low Adult Secondary Level** (This text will be read by the teacher and used for modeling.)

**Article B:** “Should We Get Rid of the Penny? - 8 Reasons to Keep It vs Eliminate It” – MoneyCrashers.com: **9.6, High Intermediate/Low Adult Secondary Level** (Excerpts from this text will be used during the group activity.)

**Article C:** “Can We All Just Agree That Pennies Are Stupid and Need to Be Retired?” – The Huffington Post: **9.5, High Intermediate Level/Low Adult Secondary Level** (This text will be read by students and is the focus of the independent/partner task.)

B. Qualitative Features: For each dimension, note specific examples (from the text that will be read independently by students) that make it more or less complex.



Article C: “Can We All Just Agree That Pennies Are Stupid and Need to Be Retired?”

<i>Moderately Complex:</i> The purpose is to make the case for eliminating the penny. The meaning is implicit but fairly easy to infer; the evidence is theoretical as well as concrete.	<i>Slightly Complex:</i> The connections between ideas are explicit and clear, and section headings enhance the reader’s understanding of the content.
<b>MEANING/PURPOSE</b>	<b>STRUCTURE</b>
<b>LANGUAGE</b>	<b>KNOWLEDGE</b>
<i>Slightly Complex:</i> The language is explicit, literal, straightforward, and easy to understand. The vocabulary is familiar and conversational. The text is primarily made up of simple and compound sentences, with some complex constructions.	<i>Moderately Complex:</i> The text relies on everyday, practical knowledge and includes simple, concrete ideas.

**Academic vocabulary words that demand attention and are related to the big ideas:**

Article C: “Can We All Just Agree That Pennies Are Stupid and Need to Be Retired?”

These words merit <b>less</b> time and attention.	These words merit <b>more</b> time and attention.
<i>(They are concrete and easy to explain, or they describe events, ideas, processes, concepts, or experiences that are familiar to your students.)</i>	<i>(They are abstract, have multiple meanings, and/or are a part of a large family of words with related meanings. These words are likely to describe events, ideas, processes, concepts, or experiences that most of your students are unfamiliar with.)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nostalgia</li><li>• Inflation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Obsolete</li><li>• Defunct</li></ul>



**Focus of text-dependent questions (check those that apply):**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus on determining central ideas or themes and analyzing their development (CCR Reading Standard 2)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus on summarizing the key supporting details and ideas (CCR Reading Standard 2)	<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on analyzing how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact (CCR Reading Standard 3)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus on why the author chose a particular word/phrase (CCR Reading Standard 4)	<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on defining the most powerful academic words (CCR Reading Standard 4)	<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on how specific word choices shape meaning and tone (CCR Reading Standard 4)
<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on examining the impact of sentence or paragraph structures or patterns (CCR Reading Standard 5)	<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on looking for pivot points in the paragraph or sections of the text (CCR Reading Standard 5)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus on how an author's ideas are developed and refined by particular sentences, paragraphs, etc. (CCR Reading Standard 5)
<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on how point of view or purpose shapes the content or style (CCR Reading Standard 6)	<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on integrating and evaluating content presented in diverse media and formats (CCR Reading Standard 7)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus on specific claims and overarching arguments (CCR Reading Standard 8)
<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence authors present (CCR Reading Standard 8)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus on how two or more texts address similar themes or topics (CCR Reading Standard 9)	<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on how authors writing about the same topic shape their presentation of key information (CCR Reading Standard 9)





**List level-specific text-dependent questions based on the areas of focus identified in the chart above.**

1. Is the author's claim in paragraph 1 or 2? What is the author claiming?
2. What is the relation between a penny costing 2 cents to make and the fear that people will melt pennies down for the raw material?
3. The author says in paragraph 5, "It probably says something that you see pennies lying abandoned on the street in the first place." What does this mean?
4. Give two pieces of evidence proving that eliminating the penny in Canada has been successful.
5. What does the word "defunct" mean in paragraph 11?
6. Is the author hopeful that the penny will be eliminated, or not? What evidence supports your answer?

**Text-based writing assignment(s), including a culminating writing assignment:**

Fill in the blanks below—write down the author's claim and three pieces of evidence that support it.

Author's claim:

Evidence 1:

Evidence 2:

Evidence 3:

**Extension text(s) or research project(s) connected to this text:**

There are no extension texts or research projects connected with this lesson.



**The suggested lesson sequence is as follows:**

Warm-up and objectives [Timestamp: 00:06:45:00]

I will plant a couple of pennies on the floor around the room and open the lesson by pointing them out to students. I will tell the students that if they picked one up and gave it to me, I'd just go ahead and throw it away. Hopefully this will elicit some mixed responses from students, starting a conversation about whether the penny is worth anything. I will have students vote on whether I should throw the penny away or not. Then introduce this as the issue we will be reading about today.

Model finding claim and evidence during teacher-led discussion of Forbes article [Timestamp: 00:15:17:00]

I will tell students that as we read and learn about this issue, we will focus on identifying the claim and evidence. (I will have eliminated the titles from the texts so as to not give away the claims.) I will then discuss and define “claim” and “evidence,” showing examples of each. I will read the article aloud for students, modeling the identification of the claim and evidence projected. While I do this, students read along, circle the claim, and underline the evidence on their own printouts.

Group activity sorting claim and evidence from MoneyCrashers.com article [Timestamp: 00:19:23:00]

I will give each group of students a set of index cards that has one claim about the penny and several pieces of evidence. Some pieces of evidence will support the claim, and some will not. Students will identify the claim and supporting evidence from the set and make a poster to display them. Then someone from each group will briefly tell the class about that group's claim and evidence, and the class will discuss whether the evidence given lines up with the claim.

Independent/partner reading of The Huffington Post article; students answer text-dependent questions [Timestamp: 00:40:00:00]

Either independently or with a partner, students will read the article and then answer text-dependent questions about its claim and evidence.



Discussion of responses to independent/partner activity [Timestamp: 00:46:06:00]

Exit ticket and closing [Timestamp: 00:50:24:00]

Students will write a brief reflection about whether their opinion on eliminating the penny has changed. I will ask students to write their claim and the evidence from today's readings that convinced them. I will then inform students that they will use these same readings to write their own argumentative essays. In these future essays, students also must address and counter the opposing side's claim. We will examine how these texts present and address counterclaims in the next lesson.



## ELA/LITERACY CLASSROOM OBSERVATION FOR DONNIE OSBORN

What follows is an observation of a lesson taught by Donnie Osborn. He served as an instructor from the Martin County Adult Education Program in Kentucky. This observation provides concrete examples of what challenging state academic standards in ELA/literacy look like in daily planning and practice. The observation tool is designed as a professional development tool for instructors, those who support instructors, and others working to implement standards. It is not designed for use in evaluation.

**Core Action 1.** Lesson content is rigorous and relevant for the level defined by the state-adopted standards.

**Core Action 2.** Questions and tasks are text-specific and cognitively demanding.

**Core Action 3.** Lesson content and activities productively engage students.

**Core Action 4.** Lesson content is intentionally sequenced to develop students' skills and knowledge.

**Core Action 5.** Students' levels of understanding are checked throughout the lesson, and instruction is adjusted accordingly.



<b>Core Action 1. Lesson content is rigorous and relevant for the level defined by the state-adopted standards.</b>	<b>Y, N, or N/A</b>
A. Instructor establishes well-defined standards-based lesson goals.	Y
B. Students are working with texts at or above the expected complexity for the level(s) as defined by the standards.	Y
C. Students spend most class time engaged with some combination of reading, writing, or speaking directly about knowledge-building text(s).	Y

**Evidence observed:**

**Indicator A:**

Since this video is an excerpt of a longer lesson, it does not capture the instructor's sharing goals and objectives with students. However, Donnie discusses the lesson objectives during interview clips and explains why working with claims and evidence is an important skill for students to learn [at 00:02:12:00]. Donnie also refers to relying on evidence to identify claims for and against tween cell phone use during the whole-class discussion. For example, he reminds students to consider evidence not just against but also for tween cell phone use: "I'm hearing an awful lot of cons. I know for every con, there is a pro. Is there a pro that is not up here that someone wants to share?" [at 00:14:05:00]. This underscores for students the importance of considering all the evidence to make sound decisions.

Students engage in a blend of reading, writing, speaking, and listening tasks during the lesson. They read and discuss a text about tweens owning cell phones, and they write down evidence for and against that use.

The following CCR standards are listed in the lesson plan and targeted in the lesson:

- Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text (Reading Standard 1 – High Intermediate Level, Informational Text).
- Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments (Reading Standard 2 – High Intermediate Level, Informational Text).
- Analyze a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation (Reading Standard 9 – High Intermediate Level, Informational Text).
- Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently (Reading Standard 10 – High Intermediate/Low Adult Secondary Level, Informational Text).



- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly (Speaking and Listening Standard 1 – High Intermediate Level, Informational Text).

**Indicator B:**

The lesson plan does offer contextual and complexity-level information about the text that students read and discuss: “Do kids need their own cell phones?” – Time for Kids: 1000L; High Intermediate Level.

**Indicator C:**

The entire activity is dedicated to the text that students read. Appropriate time is spent providing directions for the various parts of this activity, such as organizing for partner reading and preparing “snowballs” for sharing evidence. This text relates conceptually to the two other texts included in the lesson plan. All three relate to the advantages and risks associated with using new technologies.



<b>Core Action 2. Questions and tasks are text-specific and cognitively demanding.</b>	<b>Y, N, or N/A</b>
A. Instructor consistently sequences questions to support students delving deeper into text(s) to build their understanding of key information.	N
B. Instructor consistently includes systematic work with high-value words, phrases, and syntactically complex sentences from the text(s).	Y
C. Instructor asks students to elaborate and justify their thoughts and responses with precision by drawing evidence from text(s).	Y

**Evidence observed:**

**Indicator A:**

Although the task is text-based, the video segment does not include students answering a series of text-based comprehension questions.

Rarely can students answer Donnie's questions with just a "yes" or "no." They are required to discuss evidence for and against tweens owning cell phones. As Donnie facilitates the whole-group discussion, he encourages students to build on one another's comments. At one point, he asks students to share an evidence statement from their text annotations to further the discussion [at 00:14:18:00].

**Indicator B:**

When reading the article with a partner, students are expected to pay attention to the words, phrases, and sentences as they annotate the text. They underline specific evidence in favor of tweens owning cell phones; they circle evidence against it. Students then select statements from the article to write on their half-sheets of paper during the "snowball" activity to share during the whole-group discussion.

**Indicator C:**

Regularly throughout the lesson, Donnie reminds students to refer to the text to complete the task. Donnie redirects a student who wants to share a personal comment, the student then successfully shares evidence from the text during the whole-group discussion [at 00:12:25:00].

Donnie also encourages precision from students. When he mentions they mostly seem to be providing evidence against tweens owning cell phones, he asks students to provide evidence in favor of it [at 00:14:05:02].

At the start of the "snowball" activity, two students discuss which evidence to record and share with their peers [at 00:06:33:00]. When students rely on their own opinions during discussions and



collaborative activities, Donnie reminds them to refer to the text. He also tells them to build on one another's observations from what they have read [at 00:02:59:00]. He also redirects a student during the whole-group discussion, suggesting that she "put a pin" in her opinion and cite evidence from the text [at 00:11:46:00].





<b>Core Action 3. Lesson content and activities productively engage students.</b>	<b>Y, N, or N/A</b>
A. Students participate actively in sustained class discussions where they use evidence from their readings to build on each other's insights.	Y
B. Students have varied opportunities to apply what they are learning in authentic adult-oriented contexts.	Y
C. Most students display persistence with tasks about demanding text(s).	Y

**Evidence observed:**

**Indicator A:**

The small-group discussion, independent task of writing evidence, and whole-class discussion of the evidence ensured that all students had the opportunity to participate actively. Students are animated — they are interested in the topic and engaged in the small-group and whole-class discussions. They underline, circle, and share evidence from the text they are reading with one another.

The annotation activity, “snowball” activity, and group sharing provide students with multiple ways to build on one another’s evidence and insights. There are laughter and smiles from students during the “snowball fight” [at 00:07:50:00]. The activity is dominated by student talk and discussion. There is no lecture. Donnie walks around the room and provides prompting and guidance when needed. During the whole-class discussion, Donnie gathers pro and con evidence from students and places it in a graphic organizer [at 00:09:15:00].

**Indicator B:**

Donnie selects a practical, real-world topic for discussion that is interesting and connected to many students’ daily lives: whether to provide tweens with cell phones. Donnie begins by asking whether he should buy his 8-year-old daughter a cell phone, which is immediately relevant to many students in the class. Several yell “no” and hold up red cards [at 00:00:58:00]. The “snowball” activity and evidence charting let students consider evidence from both sides of the argument. However, some students continued to have strong feelings about the topic. The text-based discussion allows students to practice using evidence that is so essential to sound decision-making.

The topic of the lesson examines the role of convenient technology in our daily lives. The video segment showcases a text about tween cell phones that was previously published. It appears in an established publication, Time for Kids.



**Indicator C:**

All students appear to be engaged in the discussion, involved in the reading activities, and attentive throughout the lesson. There are no instances of students being off-task. Moreover, Donnie circulates the room during student work time. This provides opportunities for students to ask for help when needed or for Donnie to help them stay on-task. For example, a student asks, “What should we underline again?” and Donnie repeats the instructions [at 00:03:11:00].



Core Action 4. Lesson content is intentionally sequenced to develop students' skills and knowledge.	Y, N, or N/A
A. Instructor explicitly links lesson content to previous lessons or students' prior knowledge.	N/A
B. Instructor offers a range of brief and engaging resources to build students' knowledge about the topics of the central texts.	N/A
C. Instructor ends the class by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reviewing lesson objectives;</li><li>• Summarizing student learning with references to student work and discussion; and</li><li>• Previewing the next class session and explaining how it will build upon today's activities.</li></ul>	N/A

**Evidence observed:**

This is only a video segment of Donnie's lesson (and is not full length). No evidence has been gathered to exemplify the indicators that make up this Core Action.



<b>Core Action 5. Students' levels of understanding are checked throughout the lesson, and instruction is adjusted accordingly.</b>	<b>Y, N, or N/A</b>
A. Instructor consistently uses informal yet deliberate methods to provide students with prompt, specific feedback to correct misunderstandings and reinforce learning.	N/A
B. Instructor consistently provides strategic supports and scaffolds to help learners focus on what is essential to make sense of what they are reading.	N/A
C. Instructor provides opportunities for students to evaluate and reflect on their own learning.	N/A

**Evidence observed:**

This is only a video segment of Donnie's lesson (and is not full length). No evidence has been gathered to exemplify the indicators that make up this Core Action.



# LESSON PLAN FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS/LITERACY

*Created by Donnie Osborn • Martin County Adult Education Program • Kentucky*

**Title of this lesson:**

Claim and Evidence: The Penny Debate

**Brief description of how the lesson is to be used:**

The texts selected for the lesson focus on building students' knowledge of current advances in technology. This lesson is focused on the pro/con format. It also focuses on how to use the claim of and supporting evidence in a text to determine the author's position on a topic. By determining the evidence for and against these innovations, students can weigh the potential impact of technology on their own lives

**Intended level of the lesson:**

High Intermediate/Low  
Adult Secondary Level

**Suggested time to spend on the lesson:**

One 60-minute session

**Learning goals of the lesson (i.e., big ideas/key understandings):**

- Locate pro/con evidence that supports the authors' claims about different types of innovative technologies.
- Analyze two texts that provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where they disagree.



**Level-specific college and career readiness English Language Arts/Literacy standards (4-8) that are targets of the lesson:**

Reading Standard 1 – High Intermediate Level, Informational Text

Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Reading Standard 2 – High Intermediate Level, Informational Text

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

Reading Standard 9 – High Intermediate Level, Informational Text

Analyze a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.

Reading Standard 10 – High Intermediate/Low Adult Secondary Level, Informational Text

Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

Speaking and Listening Standard 1 – High Intermediate Level, Informational Text

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

**Complexity of the texts that are the focus of the lesson:**

A. Quantitative Measure: Lexile

**Article A:** “How closely is Amazon’s Echo listening?” – The Washington Post: **1320L** – **Low Adult Secondary Level** (This text will be read by the teacher and used for modeling.)

**Article B:** “Do kids need their own cell phones?” – Time for Kids: **1000L** – **High Intermediate Level** (This text will be read by students. It is the focus of the group activity and the focus of the video segment.)

**Article C:** “Is the idea of driverless cars gaining popularity?” – Newsela: **1060L** – **Low Adult Secondary Level** (This text includes Articles A and B that will be read by students and is the focus of the independent/partner task.)

B. Qualitative Features: For each dimension, note specific examples (from the text that will be read independently by students) that make it more or less complex.



## Article B: "Do kids need their own cell phones?"

*Moderately Complex:* The purpose is to provide arguments for and against tweens having their own cell phones. The purpose is implicit but fairly easy to infer; the evidence is theoretical as well as concrete.

### MEANING/PURPOSE

*Slightly Complex:* The organization is evident. The topic is introduced, then a paragraph or two describes each side of the debate. Connections between ideas are explicit and clear.

### STRUCTURE

### LANGUAGE

*Slightly Complex:* The vocabulary is familiar and the text is primarily made up of simple and compound sentences. There are some with complex constructions, "They believe that plugged in kids... bad for concentration."

### KNOWLEDGE

*Moderately Complex:* The text relies on everyday practical knowledge and includes a mix of simple, concrete ideas about cell phone technology and the lives of children.

## Academic vocabulary words that demand attention and are related to the big ideas:

### Article B: "Do kids need their own cell phones?"

These words merit **less** time and attention.

*(They are concrete and easy to explain, or they describe events, ideas, processes, concepts, or experiences that are familiar to your students.)*

- Assumed
- Fielding

These words merit **more** time and attention.

*They are abstract, have multiple meanings, and/or are a part of a large family of words with related meanings. These words are likely to describe events, ideas, processes, concepts, or experiences that most of your students are unfamiliar with.)*

- Concentration
- Concerned
- Evolved



Focus of text-dependent questions (check those that apply):		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus on determining central ideas or themes and analyzing their development (CCR Reading Standard 2)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus on summarizing the key supporting details and ideas (CCR Reading Standard 2)	<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on analyzing how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact (CCR Reading Standard 3)
<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on why the author chose a particular word/phrase (CCR Reading Standard 4)	<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on defining the most powerful academic words (CCR Reading Standard 4)	<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on how specific word choices shape meaning and tone (CCR Reading Standard 4)
<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on examining the impact of sentence or paragraph structures or patterns (CCR Reading Standard 5)	<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on looking for pivot points in the paragraph or sections of the text (CCR Reading Standard 5)	<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on how an author's ideas are developed and refined by particular sentences, paragraphs, etc. (CCR Reading Standard 5)
<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on how point of view or purpose shapes the content or style (CCR Reading Standard 6)	<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on integrating and evaluating content presented in diverse media and formats (CCR Reading Standard 7)	<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on specific claims and overarching arguments (CCR Reading Standard 8)
<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence authors present (CCR Reading Standard 8)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus on how two or more texts address similar themes or topics (CCR Reading Standard 9)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus on how authors writing about the same topic shape their presentation of key information (CCR Reading Standard 9)





**List level-specific text-dependent questions based on the areas of focus identified in the chart above.**

**A. Which section of Article C introduces the idea that the availability of driverless cars will lead to fewer people owning cars?**

1. “Car Companies and State Governments Are Gearing Up”
2. “Suburban Life Is Preferred”
3. “Cities Hold the Best Jobs”
4. “Commuting Will Become Easy”

**B. Which of the following sentences from Article C best supports the author’s concerns about the safety of driverless cars?**

1. Huge improvements must be made before they can safely handle streets.
2. Driverless cars rely primarily on pre-programmed information about routes.
3. No one was hurt, but Google’s car was hit from behind by another car.
4. Car companies would need to maintain and update information on millions of miles of roads.

**C. Which of the following is the most central consideration for the author of Article C?**

1. Cost
2. Safety
3. Enjoyment
4. Convenience

**D. How does the author of Article C introduce the argument?**

1. By explaining why some are in favor of self-driving cars and then describing problems with the new technology
2. By telling a story to illustrate the danger of self-driving cars and then listing several problems with the new technology
3. By providing a brief history of self-driving cars and then explaining why the new technology needs more development
4. By describing how self-driving technology works and then presenting some issues with the new technology



**Text-based writing assignment(s), including a culminating writing assignment:**

The lesson will build up to a writing unit that will ask students to synthesize the information they have learned about new technologies.

**Extension text(s) or research project(s) connected to this text:**

There are no extension texts or research projects connected to this lesson.



**The suggested lesson sequence is as follows:**

Warm-up and objectives

I will tell students that today's lesson will focus on the use of technology in our lives. It is also about the arguments for and against major innovations that are on the rise. I will begin the lesson with this video from USA Today—from start to 1:26—that explains a personal digital assistant.

Model finding claim and evidence during teacher led discussion of The Washington Post article

I will tell students that we will focus on identifying the claim and evidence to determine whether the author is for or against technology being discussed. I will discuss and define “claim” and “evidence” and the pro/con format. I will then read the article aloud while students follow along. I will model underlining evidence in favor of personal digital assistants and circling evidence that is against the technology.

Group activity snowball fight with evidence from Time for Kids article (featured in video segment)

Students will read the article and then underline evidence supporting cell phones for tweens and circle evidence against the idea. Students will write one pro and one con on half-sheets of white paper. Then students will ball up the paper into “snowballs” and toss the snowballs to each other across the room. Students will share the evidence found on their peers' snowballs. I will record the evidence in a T-chart in the PowerPoint (or on the board or chart paper.)

Independent/partner reading of Newsela article; students answer text-dependent questions

Either independently or with a partner, students will read the article and answer text-dependent questions as well as gather evidence for and against driverless cars. If students need more information about driverless cars, I will show them this TED Talk by Sebastian Thrun.

Discussion of responses to independent/partner activity

Exit ticket and closing

Students will vote on whether their opinion has changed on the subject of driverless cars and complete the exit ticket.