

## Grade 8, Prompt for Argument Writing

### Common Core Standard W.CCR.1

Some people are actively involved in promoting and supporting a cause, such as feeding the homeless or protecting the environment. A survey was recently done among school children in England about knowledge of such organizations and it was discovered that the students seemed to know the most about two current international organizations that began in England many years ago. Below are two articles to acquaint you with the work of these organizations. Decide which of these two organizations should receive financial support by Americans. Write an essay supporting your choice.

Begin by reading the articles and making a list of the positives for each organization. Your list may have additional ideas that are not in the articles. Then make your choice. Reread the articles and highlight the important points. Group your ideas to prepare to write your essay.

For the essay, your Focusing Question is:

Some people are actively involved in promoting and supporting a cause to help their fellowman and make the world a better place. Which of the two international organizations chosen by English schoolchildren deserves our support?

Remember, a strong and effective piece of argument writing:

- *Takes the audience into account*
- *Has a clear introduction*
- *States a focus/position statement clearly, precisely, and thoughtfully*
- *Uses specific evidence from the text(s) to support and develop the position, and explains that evidence logically*
- *Takes into account what people who disagree with you might think and tries to respond to that*
- *Concludes effectively*
- *Uses precise language*
- *Shows control over conventions*

You will have three class periods to complete this reading/thinking/writing task. The essay will have a single draft, and you may want to take some time to plan your writing before you begin work. When you have finished, be sure to proofread.

# Argument Writing

## Common Core Standard W.CCR.1

### *Teacher Directions*

- The student has been give directions to make lists before reading the texts. The teacher may need to brainstorm a couple of ideas for each list to help the student get started. However, the lists should be created mostly by the student.
- The texts provide the information needed to address the prompt, and students should independently read the texts carefully before writing. Encourage students to refer back to the text while writing and to take notes, and to mark up the text as much as is helpful to them. **IMPORTANT:** When a student does this kind of writing for the first time, it should be a joint project between student and parent teacher, with the parent teacher modeling how to take notes and how to determine which information is important enough to deserve highlighting.
- Students should be given three sessions for the prompt. Allow approximately 45 minutes for each, but the prompt should not be strictly timed. Students should be given as much time as needed to plan, write, and proofread.
- The writing should be done with limited help, but students may have access to personal dictionaries, or any other resources to support spelling and mechanics that they are accustomed to using while writing.
  - Be sure students have paper to take notes or do whatever pre-planning they might choose to do.
  - If students are writing by hand, provide lined paper for writing. If they are using a digital device, make sure they save their work so it can be accessed the next day.
- This will be first draft writing, but encourage students to proofread and correct any errors they find.



## **Together we can achieve a fairer world without poverty**

**Founded:** 1942

**Mission:** Working with thousands of local partner organizations, we work with people living in poverty striving to exercise their human rights, assert their dignity as full citizens and take control of their lives.

Oxfam is an international confederation of 17 organizations working together with partners and local communities in more than 90 countries. One person in three in the world lives in poverty. Oxfam is determined to change that world by mobilizing the power of people against poverty. Around the globe, Oxfam works to find practical, innovative ways for people to lift themselves out of poverty and thrive. We save lives and help rebuild livelihoods when crisis strikes. And we campaign so that the voices of the poor influence the local and global decisions that affect them. In all we do, Oxfam works with partner organizations and alongside vulnerable women and men to end the injustices that cause poverty.

Oxfam believes that poverty and powerlessness are avoidable and can be eliminated by human action and political will. The right to a sustainable livelihood, and the right and capacity to participate in societies and make positive changes to people's lives are basic human needs and rights which can be met.

Though Oxfam's initial concern was the provision of food to relieve famine, over the years the organization has developed strategies to combat the causes of famine. In addition to food and medicine, Oxfam also provides tools to enable people to become self-supporting and opens markets of international trade where crafts and produce from poorer regions of the world can be sold at a fair price to benefit the producer.

Oxfam's program has three main points of focus:

1. development work, which tries to lift communities out of poverty with long-term, sustainable solutions based on their needs;
2. humanitarian work, assisting those immediately affected by conflict and natural disasters (which often leads in to longer-term development work), especially in the field of water and sanitation;
3. lobbyist, advocacy and popular campaigning, trying to affect policy decisions on the causes of conflict at local, national, and international levels.



# Save the Children

**We save children's lives. We fight for their rights. We help them fulfill their potential.**

**Founded:** 1919

**Mission:** To inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children and to achieve immediate and lasting change in their lives.

The Save the Children Fund, commonly known as Save the Children, is an international non-governmental organization that promotes children's rights, provides relief and helps support children in developing countries. It was established in the United Kingdom in 1919 in order to improve the lives of children through better education, health care, and economic opportunities, as well as providing emergency aid in natural disasters, war, and other conflicts.

In addition to the UK organization, there are 30 other national Save the Children organizations who are members of Save the Children International, a global network of nonprofit organizations supporting local partners in over 120 countries around the world.

Save the Children promotes policy changes in order to gain more rights for young people especially by enforcing the United Nations' *Declaration of the Rights of the Child*. Alliance members coordinate emergency-relief efforts, helping to protect children from the effects of war and violence. Specifically, we work to support children in the following six areas:

1. **EMERGENCIES:** We do whatever it takes to save children's lives when disaster strikes
2. **EDUCATION:** We help children who are missing out on school get an education
3. **CHILD POVERTY:** We help tackle the poverty which harms a child's chances for a full life
4. **HEALTH:** We provide access to better healthcare to children worldwide
5. **HUNGER:** We feed children and campaign against the causes of global hunger
6. **CHILD PROTECTION:** We protect children who are in danger, exploited or neglected

Save the Children runs world-class programs to save children's lives and challenges the world leaders to keep to their promises to give children a brighter future.

All information taken from: <http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/>



# Writing Scoring Guide (Rubric)

(for Opinion/Argument writing)	<i>Great!</i>	<i>O.K.</i>	<i>Needs Help</i>
<b>Critical Components</b>			
Demonstrates clear understanding of purpose			
Provides specific textual examples and factual information			
Links opinion and reasons using words, phrases, and clauses			
<b>Style</b> (lively, engaging and appropriate use of language)			
Precise words			
Strong, active verbs			
Includes a variety of sentence types and structures			
Maintains a consistent point of view and focus			
<b>Organization</b>			
Contains clearly presented central idea with supporting evidence			
Logical and orderly sequence of ideas			
Flows well-easy to understand-including use of transitional words			
Begins with strong introductory paragraph clearly stating thesis			
Has a defined conclusion			
<b>Conventions</b> (accepted practice established by usage)			
<i>Usage:</i>			
Correct use of pronouns			
Clear pronoun reference			
Subject/Verb agreement			
Correct word choice			
<i>Mechanics:</i>			
Ending punctuation			
Proper capitalization			
Correct use of commas			
Complete sentence formation (no fragments or run-ons)			
Quotation marks used appropriately			
<i>Spelling:</i>			
Words spelled correctly			