English II

English II, Week 1
Analyzing Argumentative Text

One person has the power to influence fellow human beings to take action or change their thinking. To persuade an audience, writers, speakers, and artists work to craft well-organized, well-supported, vivid, and engaging arguments with clear statements of opinion. In this unit, you will study the power of argument. You will begin by analyzing a variety of argumentative texts including an essay, an op-ed, a cartoon, and a spoken word poem

For this week's activity, you will view an informational text as well as a visual text. You will determine the claims being made by the texts as well as the evidence being used to support those claims. Complete the tasks in the following sequence.

Task 1: Page 4 (10-15 minutes) - Pre-writing
- Preview the three essential questions being asked on page 4. Take a few minutes to think about these questions prior to doing short answer statements.
- Complete a short answer for each of the questions to explore and communicate your thinking. This pre-writing activity will help you to connect the ideas being argued in the texts to your own experiences.

Task 2: Page 6 (5 minutes) - Visual Text
- View the illustration on page 6.
- Answer question 1 by making any notes about the details that you observe.

Task 3: Page 7 (10 minutes) - Visual Text
- Answer question 2. You may use a chart like the one on question 2, paying attention to analyzing each observation and the inferred meaning.
- Answer questions 3 and 4, considering that the evidence used by Twohy will be visual in nature.

Task 4: Pages 8 - 10 (20 minutes) - Argumentative Text #1
- Read the article on pages 8-10, paying attention to the notes at the bottom of page 7 (instructions repeated below). Essentially, you are annotating the document. Note that you may write these notes if you do not have a printed copy or the ability to digitally annotate.
    - *As You Read*
        - *Underline the central claim of this excerpt. Put stars next to McGonigal's supporting statements.*
        - *Circle unknown words and phrases. Try to determine the meaning of the words by using context clues, word parts, or a dictionary.*
- Answer the two "Making Observation" questions on page 10. **Remember to note the claim that you observe since you will be using it with many questions that follow.**

Task 5: Page 11 (15 minutes)
- Answer questions 6 - 9 based on the reading and annotations that you completed on exercise 4.
- If you have any additional questions, make a note of them. You may revisit them or be able to discuss later.

Task 6: Page 12 (15 minutes)
- Answer questions 10-12 and 14
- If you have any additional questions, make a note of them. You may revisit them or be able to discuss later.

Task 7: Page 13-14 (20 minutes)
- Answer questions 17 and 18 on page 13.
- Complete the "Writing Prompt" on page 14. Write one paragraph only to focus your writing!

Learning Strategies

Note-taking
Previewing
Skimming-Scanning

My Notes

Learning Targets
- Preview the essential questions for the unit.
- Create a plan for reading independently.

Preview

In this activity, you will explore the essential questions and tasks of the unit and make plans for your independent reading.

About the Unit

One person has the power to influence fellow human beings to take action or change their thinking. To persuade an audience, writers, speakers, and artists work to craft well-organized, well-supported, vivid, and engaging arguments with clear statements of opinion. In this unit, you will study the power of argument. You will begin by analyzing a variety of argumentative texts including an essay, an op-ed, a cartoon, and a spoken word poem.

Essential Questions

Based on your current thinking, how would you answer these questions?

1. How should we interact with the world around us?

2. To what extent are we responsible for our fellow humans?

3. How do we use evidence to create a persuasive argument?

📖 Planning Independent Reading

The focus of this unit is the power of argument, and you'll have the opportunity to read, watch, and listen to a wide variety of arguments in class. In your Independent Reading, you'll have a chance to investigate persuasive and informative writing on topics that interest you. You might select argumentative books, op-eds, biographies, or historical fiction to explore debatable topics related to defining reality and justice. Consider the following questions to help identify a text for Independent Reading.

- What have you enjoyed reading in the past? What is your favorite book or favorite type of book? Who is your favorite author?
- When you select a potential book, preview it. What do the front and back covers show you? What type of visual is shown? What types of fonts and colors are used? Are there awards or brags that tell you about the book?
- Read the first few pages. Are they interesting? How does the author try to hook you to keep reading? What can you tell about the characters and setting so far? Does this text seem too hard, too easy, or just right?

Learning Strategies

Close Reading
Graphic Organizer
Marking the Text

My Notes

Learning Targets

- Determine the claims of two texts, and analyze how the authors expand these claims and support them with evidence.
- Draw inferences about a multimedia text.

Preview

In this activity, you will read a cartoon and an argumentative text, and then determine the claims and evidence presented by the authors.

Observations and Inferences

1. Look at the following cartoon by Mike Twohy. What details do you notice?

©Mike Twohy.

M2E comics@aol.com

"Wanna toss the ol' virtual pigskin?"

2. Reading a text for meaning includes a close examination of all available clues, including **literal** meaning (what is stated directly) and **figurative** meaning (what can be **inferred**). Any text can be read in this way, including images. Use the following graphic organizer to record your observations about the cartoon. Then, use your observations to make inferences about the subject of the cartoon.

Observations	Inferences
The boy is looking at his computer while typing.	The boy is engaged in what he is doing on his computer.

My Notes

Claims and Evidence

All successful arguments contain a claim and evidence. The claim presents a position on an issue or topic. For a claim to be debatable, people should be able to hold differing opinions about it. If your claim is something that is generally agreed upon or accepted as fact, then there is no reason to try to convince people.

Evidence is information that supports the claim.

3. What is Twohy arguing?

4. What evidence does Twohy include to support his argument?

As You Read

- Underline the central claim of this excerpt. Put stars next to McGonigal's supporting statements.
- Circle unknown words and phrases. Try to determine the meaning of the words by using context clues, word parts, or a dictionary.

About the Author

Jane McGonigal, (b. 1977) is a game designer and author with a PhD in performance studies. She is the Director of Game Research and Development at the Institute for the Future. In 2009, while recovering from a concussion, McGonigal developed a game called *SuperBetter* that helps players tackle health challenges.

Argument

From Reality Is Broken: Why Games Make Us Better and How They Can Change the World (Part One)
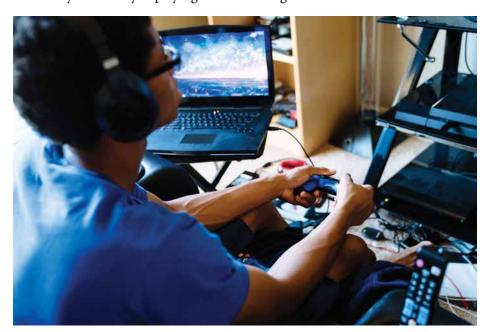
by **Jane McGonigal, PhD**

1   Gamers have had enough of reality.

2   They are abandoning it in droves—a few hours here, an entire weekend there, sometimes every spare minute of every day for stretches at a time—in favor of simulated environments and online games. Maybe you are one of these gamers. If not, then you definitely know some of them.

3   Who are they? They are the nine-to-fivers who come home and apply all of the smarts and talents that are underutilized at work to plan and coordinate complex raids and quests in massively multiplayer online games like *Final Fantasy XI* and the *Lineage* worlds. They're the music lovers who have invested hundreds of dollars on plastic *Rock Band* and *Guitar Hero* instruments and spent night after night rehearsing, in order to become virtuosos of video game performance.

4   They're the *World of Warcraft* fans who are so intent on mastering the challenges of their favorite game that, collectively, they've written a quarter of a million wiki articles about the fictional universe—creating a wiki1 resource nearly one-tenth the size of the entire Wikipedia. They're the *Brain Age* and *Mario Kart* players who take handheld game consoles everywhere they go, sneaking in short puzzles, races, and minigames as often as possible, and as a result nearly eliminating mental downtime from their lives.

5   They're the United States troops stationed overseas who dedicate so many hours a week to burnishing their *Halo 3* in-game service record that earning virtual combat medals is widely known as the most popular activity for off-duty soldiers. They're the young adults in China who have spent so much play money or "QQ coins," on magical swords and other powerful game objects that the People's Bank of China intervened to prevent the **devaluation** of the yuan, China's real-world currency.

devaluation: decline in value

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[1] A *wiki* is an online site that collects information that visitors can contribute to and edit.

My Notes

6   Most of all, they're kids and teenagers worldwide who would rather spend hours in front of any computer game or video game than do anything else.

7   These gamers aren't rejecting reality entirely. They have jobs, goals, schoolwork, families, commitments, and real lives that they care about. But as they devote more and more of their free time to game worlds, the *real* world increasingly feels like it's missing something.

8   Gamers want to know: Where, in the real world, is that gamer sense of being fully alive, focused, and engaged in every moment? Where is the gamer feeling of power, heroic purpose, and community? Where are the bursts of expanding thrill of success and team victory? While gamers may experience these pleasures occasionally in their real lives, they experience them almost constantly when they're playing their favorite games.

9   The real world just doesn't offer up as easily the carefully designed pleasures, the thrilling challenges, and the powerful social bonding afforded by virtual environments. Reality doesn't motivate us effectively. Reality isn't engineered to maximize our potential. Reality wasn't designed from the bottom up to make us happy.

10   And so, there is a growing perception in the gaming community:

11   Reality, compared to games, is broken.

12   In fact, it is more than a perception. It's a phenomenon. Economist Edward Castronova calls it a "mass **exodus**" to game spaces, and you can see it already happening in the numbers. Hundreds of millions of people worldwide are opting out of reality for larger and larger chunks of time. In the United States alone, there are 183 million *active gamers* (individuals, who in surveys, report that they play the computer or video games "regularly"—on average, thirteen hours a week). Globally, the online gamer community—including

exodus: group departure

My Notes

console, PC, and mobile home gaming—counts more than 4 million gamers in the Middle East, 10 million in Russia, 105 million in India, 10 million in Vietnam, 10 million in Mexico, 13 million in Central and South America, 15 million in Australia, 17 million in South Korea, 100 million in Europe, and 200 million in China.

13 Although a typical gamer plays for just an hour or two a day, there are now more than 6 million people in China who spend at least twenty-two hours a week gaming, the equivalent of a part-time job. More than 10 million "hard-core" gamers in the United Kingdom, France, and Germany spend at least twenty hours a week playing. And at the leading edge of this growth curve, more than 5 million "extreme" gamers in the United States play on the average of forty-five hours a week.

14 With all of this play, we have turned digital games—for our computers, for our mobile phones, and for our home entertainment systems—into what is expected to be a $68 billion industry annually by the year 2012. And we are creating a massive virtual silo of cognitive effort, emotional energy, and collective attention lavished on game worlds instead of the real world.

Making Observations
- Look back at the claim you underlined. Do you agree with this claim?
- Review the statements you starred. Which stand out to you and why?

Returning to the Text

- Reread the argument to answer these text-dependent questions.
- Write any additional questions you have about the text in your Reader/Writer Notebook.

5. In paragraphs 2 and 3, who does the word *they* refer to? What does the word *it* refer to? How do you know?

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6. What claim is presented in paragraphs 1–3?

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7. How is the word *abandoning* different in tone than its near synonym *leaving*? Why might McGonigal have chosen to use the term *abandoning* in paragraph 2?

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8. Based on its context, what do you think the phrase *in droves* means in paragraph 2? How does that term help convey the author's message and intended tone?

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9. Which part of the initial claim is best supported by paragraph 3?

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10. How does McGonigal use evidence and reasoning to support her claim in paragraph 3?

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11. McGonigal opens paragraph 3 by asking a question. What effect does this opening have on the reader?

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12. How is the rest of paragraph 3 structured? Do you see any similarities between the second and third sentences? What effect do you think that structure is intended to have on the reader?

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13. Do you notice anything about sound patterns in paragraph 3? What effect do you think these sound patterns are intended to have on the reader?

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14. Which part of the initial claim is best supported by paragraphs 4 and 5? (Refer to specific words and phrases in the opening claim as you answer this question.)

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15. How are evidence and reasoning used to effectively reinforce the claim in paragraphs 4 and 5?

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Working from the Text

16. Collaborative Conversation: How does McGonigal use claims, evidence, and reasoning together to produce an argument?

17. Both images and texts can present arguments, but they communicate their messages in different ways. How might McGonigal's claim be presented in a visual text? If Twohy were writing his argument instead of drawing it, what types of evidence might he include?

18. Both the cartoon and the excerpt from Reality Is Broken contrast life within virtual environments and life in reality. Would McGonigal most likely agree or disagree with the claim that Twohy makes in his cartoon? What evidence from McGonigal's excerpt supports your response?

19. How does McGonigal use diction to strengthen her argument? Revisit your answers to questions 6, 7, and 12.

> ## 📝 Writing Prompt: Informational
>
> Read paragraphs 12–14 individually, and write a paragraph explaining how McGonigal expands her initial claim in this section. What evidence has she provided so far to support this newly expanded version of the claim? Be sure to:
>
> - Organize your ideas using a logical structure.
> - Identify the author's claim.
> - Evaluate the author's various types of evidence.