



Write Fix:

# **An Intervention for Struggling Writers**



## **Opinion Writing Unit: Recess Rocks!**

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## About the Unit

**Recess Rocks!** is a writing unit which focuses on crafting a persuasive letter expresses the writer's opinion and including support for opinion. It appeals to struggling and reluctant writers because the topic is something they are interested in—recess! This writing piece can be made even more appealing by offering extra recess to any students who receive a set number of points on the rubric.

In the Common Core State Standards, opinion and argument writing is particularly important. It includes a spiraling curriculum for developing opinion and argument writing. It emphasizes using sources to provide specific facts and evidence to support the opinion.

Struggling writers may have more difficulty with opinion writing because they do not attend to the audience or purpose for writing. They view writing as simply writing words on paper and don't put much thought into their message. They can have more success in crafting a message that they feel strongly about—such as recess. Students already have an opinion about recess, so the focus of the unit is on finding sources that will offer evidence to support their opinions.

*Reluctant or struggling writers need topics that they personally connect to or care about to express and develop their opinions. Try these high-interest topics to foster opinion writing:*

Junk food in school lunches

School Uniforms

Homework

Video Games

### Common Core State Standards

#### **Text Types and Purposes**

W1: Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

#### **Production and Distribution of Writing**

W4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

W5: Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

W6: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

#### **Research to Build and Present Knowledge**

W7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

#### **Range of Writing**

W10: Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

## Unit at a Glance: Recess Rocks

Read Aloud /Mentor/Research Texts:

[Yay for Recess!](#)

[Recess: Is It Necessary for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?](#)

[Who Killed Recess? The Movement to Resuscitate Recess](#)

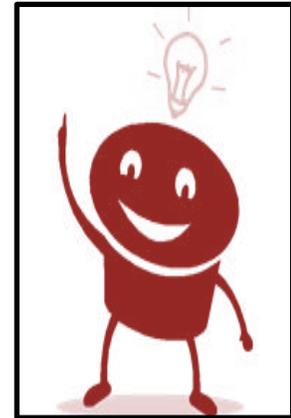
DAY 1					DAY 2					DAY 3					DAY 4					DAY 5				
<b>Editing ML:</b> Capitalization					<b>Revision ML:</b> Writing a Hook or Lead Sentence					<b>Revising ML:</b> Powerful, Convincing Reasons					<b>Revision ML:</b> Support and evidence for reasons					<b>Editing ML:</b> Punctuation				
<b>Modeling:</b> Introduce prompt and discuss. Close Reading of article(s) using note-taking sheet					<b>Modeled and Guided Writing:</b> Model and guide students to create a T-chart with “Pros” and “cons” for having recess.					<b>Modeled and Guided Writing:</b> Model prewriting using Thinking Map or organizer. Guide and monitor students as they create their own prewriting.					<b>Modeled and Guided Writing:</b> Model using prewriting graphic organizer to begin draft. Model hook and first paragraph. Guide students in creating first chunk or paragraph of letter.					<b>On Demand Prompt:</b> (10-15 minutes) Write a note to your friend about your favorite subject specific facts and evidence to. Make sure you include several valid and specific reasons to support your argument.				
<b>Sharing:</b> favorite thing to do at recess					<b>Sharing:</b> Hook					<b>Sharing:</b> Strongest reason in your writing					<b>Sharing:</b> strongest support					<b>Sharing:</b> Read On-Demand stories to partners				
DAY 6					DAY 7					DAY 8					DAY 9					DAY 10				
<b>Revising ML:</b> Just the Facts, Please! Staying on Topic					<b>Editing ML:</b> Spelling High Frequency Words					<b>Revising ML:</b> Concluding Sentence					<b>Editing ML:</b> Paragraph breaks					<b>Mini-Lesson Review</b> Review sentences				
<b>Modeled and Guided Writing:</b> Continue modeling and guiding students in draft					<b>Modeled and Guided Writing:</b> Continue modeling and guiding students in draft					<b>Modeled and Guided Writing:</b> Model and guide students in revising drafts—require 3 revisions					<b>Modeled and Guided Writing:</b> Model and guide students in revising drafts—require specific number of edits					<b>Final Copies:</b> Use an “assistant” to type final copies				
<b>Sharing:</b> two facts from their writing					<b>Sharing:</b> word choices					<b>Sharing:</b> The ending of their writing					<b>Sharing:</b> Read writing to partners for peer feedback					<b>Sharing:</b> Read Extended Writing to partners				

## What is **Opinion Writing**?

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**Opinion Writing** is stating your belief or conclusion and proving that it is valid.

When you create **Opinion Writing**, you should include:



- your clearly stated opinion
- several important facts and/or examples to prove your opinion
- explanations for each fact
- a clear connection between the opinion and support
- a conclusion that calls the reader to action

## Opinion Writing Rubric

<b>Name</b> _____ <b>Title</b> _____ <b>Date</b> _____		<b>Text Type:</b> Opinion	⑤-----Excellent ④-----Very good ③-----Satisfactory ②-----Needs Improvement ①-----Needs Much Improvement
<b>Production &amp; Distribution of Writing</b> W.4	<b>Ideas</b>		⑤ ④ ③ ② ①
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents a focused, clear opinion</li> <li>• Includes strong supporting reasons and details</li> </ul>		
	<b>Organization</b>		⑤ ④ ③ ② ①
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Logically organized</li> <li>• Beginning states opinion and catches the readers' attention</li> <li>• Appropriate transitions</li> <li>• Closing restates opinion and calls reader to act</li> </ul>		
<b>Language Choices</b> L.3	<b>Sentence Fluency</b>		⑤ ④ ③ ② ①
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sentences flow together smoothly</li> <li>• Sentences begin in different ways</li> <li>• Sentences vary in length and type</li> </ul>		
	<b>Voice</b>		⑤ ④ ③ ② ①
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engages readers with a strong opinion and a personal tone</li> <li>• Appropriate use of tone for the purpose and task</li> <li>• Reflects the writer's style</li> <li>• Writing style connects with the reader and keeps the reader's attention</li> </ul>		
<b>Language Conventions</b> L.2	<b>Word Choice</b>		⑤ ④ ③ ② ①
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well-chosen, persuasive words</li> <li>• Precise content vocabulary words</li> <li>• Detailed descriptions</li> </ul>		
	<b>Conventions</b>		⑤ ④ ③ ② ①
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is free or almost free from capitalization or punctuation errors</li> <li>• Spells common words correctly and less common words phonetically</li> <li>• Correct grammar and sentence structure</li> </ul>		
<b>Production &amp; Distribution of Writing</b> W.5; W.6	<b>Presentation</b>		⑤ ④ ③ ② ①
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visually appealing</li> <li>• Appropriate form</li> <li>• Neatly presented</li> <li>• Text features that enhance content</li> </ul>		
<b>TOTAL</b>			/35

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Opinion Writing Prompt**

You've just read several articles about recess in school. The principal is considering eliminating recess at our school. Write a letter to the principal to express your opinion about recess. In your letter, be sure to include:

ROLE	AUDIENCE	FORM	TOPIC

## Opinion Writing Organizer

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Topic \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Hook / Opinion Statement**

**Reason 1**

**Reason 2**

**Reason 3**

**Examples and Support**

**Examples and Support**

**Examples and Support**

**Concluding Sentence**





Editing Mini-Lesson Day 1

## Editing

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*Set a timer and have students edit in small groups or with partners.*

i really like dolphins i saw one when we went  
to north carolina last june

**Answer Key:**

I really like dolphins. I saw one when we went to North Carolina last June.

Revision Mini-Lesson Day 2

## **Hooking the Reader**

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Good writers “hook” the reader’s attention with a great beginning. A hook is usually the first sentence or few sentences. Try using a question to hook your reader.

**WEAK EXAMPLE:**

I am writing to persuade you that kids play too many video games.

**REVISED EXAMPLE:**

Did you know that kids today spend an average of 4  $\frac{1}{2}$  hours a day plugged into electronics? Say no to video games!

***Let’s do one together***

**WEAK EXAMPLE:**

I don’t like school uniforms.

**REVISED EXAMPLE:**

***Your Turn***

I really like recess.

Revision Mini-Lesson Day 3

## **Powerful, Convincing Reasons**

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Opinion writing includes powerful, convincing reasons that are rooted in facts from reliable sources.

### **WEAK EXAMPLE:**

- Video games are good.
- Kids enjoy playing video games.
- Kids get bored playing other games.

### **REVISED EXAMPLE:**

- Kids who play video games have increased problem solving skills
- Video gamers perform 10-20% higher in perceptual and cognitive abilities
- Surgeons who enjoy gaming were faster and more accurate at advanced procedures

Source: <http://www.voxxi.com/video-games-and-children-pros-cons/>

### ***Your Turn***

*With your partner, revised this list of reasons to convince the principal to continue to have recess at our school.*

### **WEAK REASONS:**

- Recess is fun.
- Kids get a break.
- We can play with our friends.

Revision Mini-Lesson Day 4

## **Evidence to Support a Reason**

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Add power to your writing! Reasons to support your opinion should be based on known facts or from a reliable source. Try these sentence starters!

- According to research, ....
- Experts agree that....
- A study showed that....
- In the article, " \_\_\_\_\_," it stated that....
- \_\_\_\_% of \_\_\_\_\_ think....

**WEAK EXAMPLE:**

*Video games make kids smart.*

**REVISED EXAMPLE:**

According to researchers, children who play video games have improved problem solving abilities and score higher on cognitive tests.

***Your turn.***

**WEAK EXAMPLE:**

*Video games are good for doctors.*

**REVISED EXAMPLE:**



Editing Mini-Lesson Day 5

## Editing

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*Set a timer and have students edit in small groups or with partners.*

according to national geographic hummingbirds  
are the smallest birds in the entire world they  
way only 2 oz

**Answer Key:**

According to National Geographic, hummingbirds are the smallest birds in the entire world. They weigh only 2 oz.

Revision Mini-Lesson Day 6

## Staying on Topic

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Good writers include only relevant details in their writing.

**WEAK EXAMPLE:**

Did you know that playing video games can make you smarter? According to researchers, children who play video games have improved problem solving abilities and score higher on cognitive tests. Video games have ratings systems so parents know if they are too violent. In order to be successful in video games, players need to demonstrate strategic thinking and analysis, which are high level thinking skills.

**REVISED WRITING EXAMPLE:**

Did you know that playing video games can make you smarter? According to researchers, children who play video games have improved problem solving abilities and score higher on cognitive tests. ~~Video games have ratings systems so parents know if they are too violent.~~ In order to be successful in video games, players need to demonstrate strategic thinking and analysis, which are high level thinking skills.

### **Your turn**

*Which sentence doesn't belong?*

**WEAK EXAMPLE:**

My opinion is that schools should not have uniforms. If schools have uniforms, students do not have the freedom of expression. My favorite outfit to wear is my jeans and red sweatshirt. It is a violation of students' rights to force them to wear the same thing!



Editing Mini-Lesson Day 7

## Editing

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*Set a timer and have students edit in small groups or with partners.*

when can you come to my house to fix my sink mrs hughes  
asked tommy its clogged and i cant wash dishes

**Answer Key:**

“When can you come to my house to fix my sink?” Mrs. Hughes asked Tommy. Its  
clogged and I can’t wash dishes.

Revision Mini-Lesson Day 8

## Conclusion

Good writers begin connect the conclusion of the writing piece to the hook.

*WEAK EXAMPLE:*

**HOOK:** I am writing to persuade you that kids play too many video games.

**CONCLUSION:** That is why I support video games. THE END

*REVISED EXAMPLE:*

**HOOK:** Did you know that kids today spend an average of 4  $\frac{1}{2}$  hours a day plugged into electronics? Say no to video games!

**CONCLUSION:** Turn off the TV, unplug the X-Box and go play outside!

### *Your turn*

*WEAK EXAMPLE:*

**HOOK:** Do you want to save time getting ready for school in the morning? You should support school uniforms.

**CONCLUSION:** That is all I know school uniforms. THE END

*REVISED EXAMPLE:*

Editing Mini-Lesson Day 9

## Paragraphs

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Writers indent to begin a new paragraph. This is a signal to the reader that there is a change. Transition words are good clues that you need a new paragraph. Mark the places where a new paragraph should begin and you should indent with a ¶ .

Did you know video games can be good for kids? Playing video games actually has many benefits. For example, playing video games can make you smarter. According to researchers, children who play video games have improved problem solving abilities and score higher on cognitive tests. In order to be successful in video games, players need to demonstrate strategic thinking and analysis, which are high level thinking skills. Video games can also help your fine motor skills. A study found that surgeons performed faster and more accurately when they played video games. Some evidence shows that it may help with other jobs, such as pilots, as well. While playing video games too much isn't good, they aren't all bad! Go buy an X-box for your kids today!

**Answer Key:**

Did you know video games can be good for kids? Playing video games actually has many benefits. For example, playing video games can make you smarter. According to researchers, children who play video games have improved problem solving abilities and score higher on cognitive tests. In order to be successful in video games, players need to demonstrate strategic thinking and analysis, which are high level thinking skills.

Video games can also help your fine motor skills. A study found that surgeons performed faster and more accurately when they played video games. Some evidence

shows that it may help with other jobs, such as pilots, as well. While playing video games too much isn't good, they aren't all bad! Go buy an X-box for your kids today!

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Editing Mini-Lesson Day 10

## **Editing Review**

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*Have students edit these sentences independently to see how they transfer skills.*

- 1) i really like owls i saw one when we went to northern pennsylvania last august
  
- 2) according to national geographic elephants are the largest mammals on earth they way up to 15,000 lbs

**Answer Key:**

- 1) I really like owls. I saw one when I went to northern Pennsylvania last August.
- 2) According to National Geographic, elephants are the largest mammals on Earth. They weigh up to 15,000 lbs.