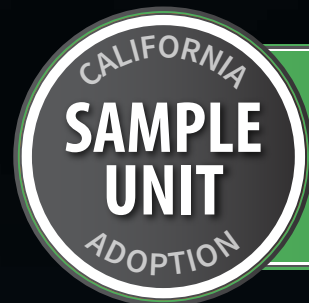


Level 1

TEACHER
EDITION



LANGUAGE![®] *Live*

WRITING PROJECT: Argument

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LANGUAGE! Live Level 1 Writing Projects

The eight major writing projects can be printed from the Teacher Resources online. The projects were developed to lead students through the process of becoming proficient writers while writing in a multitude of genres and styles.

Project 1: Basic Paragraph

Project 2: Shared Scientific Research

Project 3: Problem and Solution

Project 4: Firsthand and Secondhand Accounts

Project 5: Compare and Contrast Fairy Tales

Project 6: ° ematic Literature

Project 7: Argument

Project 8: Career Documents

Writing projects can be assigned periodically throughout the course of the program or as the teacher deems beneficial based on state assessment calendars. Projects 1 and 8 are intended to take four to five 45-minute class periods, whereas the remaining projects are intended to take eight to ten 45-minute class periods. Each project should be given ample time for students' thoughts and writing to develop. Students will work to master objectives, not only in writing within the specific genres, but also in grammar, analysis of text, peer collaboration, speaking and listening, research, use of technology, and presentation. Facilitation of the writing projects, in conjunction with Text Training and Word Training, will meet the necessary requirements for a full ELA curriculum.



Table of Contents



Argument: Teacher

Project Plan	v
Lesson 1: Evaluating Argumentative Writing.....	1
Lesson 2: Developing Arguments	13
Lesson 3: Identifying Argumentative Writing Structure.....	17
Lesson 4: Analyzing Arguments	20
Lesson 5: Writing Arguments: Research and Plan.....	22
Lesson 6: Writing Arguments: Draft	25
Lesson 7: Writing Arguments: Sequence and Use Transitions.....	27
Lesson 8: Writing Arguments: Revise and Edit	31
Lesson 9: Writing Arguments: Publish	33
Lesson 10: Creating a Multimedia Presentation	35
Argument Writing Scoring Rubric.....	38

Argument: Student

Lesson 1	S1
Lesson 2	S8
Lesson 3	S9
Lesson 4	S13
Lesson 5	S14
Lesson 6	S17
Lesson 7	S18
Lesson 8	S19
Lesson 10	S21

Project Plan

Materials List:

Class Discussion Rules poster (found in online Resources)

Collegial Discussion poster (found in online Resources)

Driving Argument video (found in online Resources)

Driving Argument audio (found in online Resources)

Computers

Internet access

Research materials

Printing capabilities

Poster paper

Masterpiece Sentences poster

Elements of Formal Writing poster (found in online Resources)

Notebook paper or composition notebooks

Red pens (or color of choice to be used for editing)

Blogging platform

Audio/Video recording equipment

Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4	Lesson 5
<p>Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine the central claim of an argumentative text. Trace and evaluate claims and counterclaims within an argument. Determine which claims are supported with evidence. Assess reasoning and evidence used by an author to determine if it is sound and relevant. Identify similarities and differences in two texts on the same topic. Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums to present a topic. Engage effectively in classroom discussions. 	<p>Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and support an opinion on a topic. Come to discussion prepared. Engage in collaborative discussion. Follow rules for discussion. 	<p>Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write arguments to support claims. Use claims and objections supported with evidence and rebuttals in writing. Develop a strong thesis statement and a conclusion for an argument. Develop writing appropriate to the task and audience. 	<p>Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present an argument that is supported with reasons and evidence. Analyze how a speaker presents and supports a claim. Delineate an argument. Determine whether an argument is sound and supported with sufficient evidence. 	<p>Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct short research projects to develop a strong argument. Gather relevant information from multiple sources. Assess the credibility of sources. Draw evidence from print and digital sources to support a claim. Cite credible sources to strengthen an argument. Use quotation marks when using words directly from a source.

Lesson 6	Lesson 7	Lesson 8	Lesson 9	Lesson 10
<p>Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write arguments—including reasons, evidence, and rebuttals—to support claims. Develop writing appropriate to the task and audience. Establish and maintain a style in writing. 	<p>Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and strengthen writing through sequencing ideas. Connect ideas with appropriate transitions. Use language to create cohesion and clarify relationships in writing. 	<p>Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use shades of meaning that clearly express your emotion in writing. Develop and strengthen writing through revising and editing. Use a rubric to guide and evaluate writing. 	<p>Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use technology to publish writing and link to cited sources. Use technology to collaborate with others about writing. Use technology to present claims and findings. Follow rules of discussion to respond positively and negatively to a published argument. 	<p>Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use multimedia and visual displays to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.

Developing Arguments

Writing

Objectives

- Develop and support an opinion on a topic.
- Come to discussion prepared.
- Engage in collaborative discussion.
- Follow rules for discussion.

Write the following quote on the board.

“Where there is much desire to learn, there of necessity will be much arguing, much writing, many opinions . . .”

—John Milton

Ask students what they think the quote means. Explain that when poet John Milton wrote these words in 1644, he was making an argument against censorship. He believed that the only way to get closer and closer to the truth was through sharing and listening closely to different ideas.

To cling to an opinion without being able to support it with sound evidence doesn’t get us anywhere. To really communicate our ideas to those who disagree, we must know *why* we think the way we do. Instead of just shouting our opinions at one another, we must explain them and back them up. And we must listen to each other too. We must be willing to change our minds as we gain knowledge about a topic.

Share Information on Topics

You’ve already started to gain knowledge about topics that people disagree on. Let’s share what we found out. Have students consult their research notes on Blackline Master page S7. Then, move through the list of topics one by one. Have all students who chose and researched that topic present and discuss their facts.

Ask whether students’ opinions on the topic changed as they conducted research or as they listened to other students’ findings. If so, have them tell which fact(s) they found most persuasive.

Level 1		Lesson 1 Writing	
Prepare for Discussion			
Read this list of discussion topics. Circle two that interest you.			
• the length of the school day	• soda machines in gyms	• homework load	• off campus lunch
• the dress code	• getting paid to attend school	• athletic culture	
• “meatless” Mondays in schools			
• class size			
• cell phone use			
Write the topics below. Then, research each topic. Write five facts about each topic on the lines.			
Topic 1: _____	Topic 2: _____		
• Fact 1: _____	• Fact 1: _____		
_____	_____		
Source: _____	Source: _____		
_____	_____		
• Fact 2: _____	• Fact 2: _____		
_____	_____		
Source: _____	Source: _____		
_____	_____		
• Fact 3: _____	• Fact 3: _____		
_____	_____		
Source: _____	Source: _____		
_____	_____		
• Fact 4: _____	• Fact 4: _____		
_____	_____		
Source: _____	Source: _____		
_____	_____		
• Fact 5: _____	• Fact 5: _____		
_____	_____		
Source: _____	Source: _____		
_____	_____		

© 2016 Voyager Sopris Learning, Inc. All rights reserved. Student Writing Project: Argument S7

As students share, encourage other members of the class to contribute knowledge they possess about a topic. If students express opinions, ask them to support their opinions with facts.

Later on, you will each write your own argumentative essay about one of the topics you began to research. You will be required to do further research and cite at least two sources. So, it's a good thing you noted the source of each fact. This will give you a head start later on, during the research phase of writing an argument.

Defend a Position

Write the following outline on the board.

- *I believe that _____.*
- *I believe this because _____.*
- *The evidence for what I believe is _____.*
- *However, _____.*

Every sound, persuasive argument contains all of these components.

- It contains a clearly expressed opinion, or position. This opinion is the central claim.
- It contains reasons why the opinion is held.
- It contains evidence—facts, testimony, statistics—that show why the reasons are true.
- It also acknowledges opposing points of view. Sometimes, it concedes or accepts parts of the opposing argument, and other times it argues against them. It is important to be familiar with the arguments against you in order to guide your research. Even if it isn't something you write about in your text, you need to be familiar in case audience members ask questions.

Have partners use the sentence frames to tell about one of their chosen topics.

We will discuss these elements in greater depth in future lessons. For now, let's have a sneak preview of what the argument-building process looks like. One place where people build arguments every day is a court of law. During a trial, an attorney, or lawyer, argues a case. He or she makes claims and presents facts to support those claims. His or her goal is to persuade the jury and judge to agree with the central claim—that a person did or did not commit a crime.

Let's play with some of the topics we discussed to learn how to build arguments. You will argue your case, just as a lawyer does.

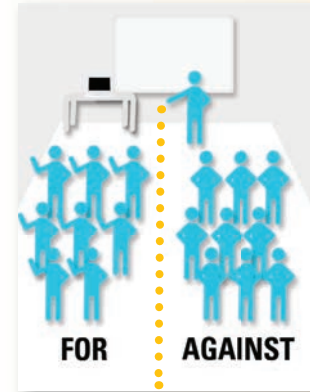
Choose one of the activities below. Explain it to the class and then facilitate it.

Note: The following activities create varying degrees of “commotion” in the classroom, so choose an activity that best fits your teaching style and classroom environment. All the activities should generate equal interest among students.

Activity 1: Stand and Deliver

This is a kinesthetic activity designed to help students consider both sides of an issue.

- Draw a line down the middle of the classroom. Designate one side as “For” and one side as “Against.”
- Choose one of the topics students reported on, and turn it into a claim. For example, the topic *off-campus lunch* might yield the claim *Only seniors should be allowed to leave campus for lunch*. Have students number off, then tell the even numbers to stand on the “For” side of the line and the odd numbers to stand on the “Against” side.
- Partner a “For” with an “Against.” Give each side one minute to offer one to three reasons for their position. Opposing students give thumbs up for a valid/strong point. Allow students to point out why a point may be weak. Switch.
- Change topics and repeat the process.



Activity 2: Jigsaw

This is a mildly kinesthetic activity designed to generate “experts” on a debatable topic.

- Choose one of the topics students reported on.
- Have groups brainstorm various positions or opinions related to the topic. Each student should write a unique position, or claim, on a note card. (Alternatively, give each student a unique position written on a card ahead of time.)
- Have students meet with a member of another group with a similar position. Together, they should brainstorm reasons for their position. They should write their reasons (and any evidence they might be aware of) on the back side of their position card.
- Students then return to their original groups and take turns stating their position and presenting their arguments (reasons and evidence). Other group members should evaluate the strength or weakness of the argument and support their own ideas with valid reasoning.

Activity 3: The Legal Team

This sedentary activity is designed to help students work collaboratively to develop an argument.

- Divide the class into an even number of groups, and assign one topic to every two groups. (If the class only has two groups, assign one topic. For four groups, assign two topics.)
- Assign each group a position related to the topic to defend. One group should receive a “for” position, and the other “against.”

- Have group members brainstorm strong arguments to support their position. After choosing the strongest arguments, they should write them on note cards and pass them to the “Lead Defense.”
- The Lead Defense students take turns presenting the group’s argument.

Suggest that students who are interested in writing on a particular topic take notes during these discussions.

Explore Topics

Direct students to Blackline Master page S8.

Earlier, you chose two topics and began to research them. From the activity we just completed, you learned that it is best to be open to all sides of an issue at the beginning of the process. We’re going to apply that idea to the topics you chose, so that as you do further research, you’ll be able to keep an open mind and try to get closer to the truth of the matter.

Eventually, you’ll choose just one topic to write about. But keep working with both topics for now. You might not be able to find much reliable information about one of the topics, so it’s good to have a backup.

Write your topics in the top row of the chart. Then, complete the chart.

- First, fill in what you want to say about the topic—your current opinion or position.
- Next, list what you already know about it. These can be facts you researched, or facts you learned during class discussion.
- Finally, list what questions you still have about the topic. For example, I’m going to write about soda machines in gyms. I already know that soda is bad for you because it contains a lot of sugar, but I will need to know exactly how much sugar is in a can of soda, and what that amount of sugar does to a person’s body. I will make note of these questions in the last section.

If necessary, model filling out the graphic organizer. Have students complete the chart independently or, if students are working on the same topic(s), in pairs.

Lesson 2 Writing		Level 1	
Argument Topic			
Choose two topics and write them in the chart. Then, complete the chart.			
Topic 1	Topic 2		
		What I want to say about this topic	What I want to say about this topic
		What I know about this topic	What I know about this topic
		What I need to research about this topic	What I need to research about this topic
S8 Student Writing Project: Argument		© 2015 Younger Steps Learning, Inc. All rights reserved.	



Creating a Multimedia Presentation

Writing

Objective

- Use multimedia and visual displays to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.

Review Multimedia Arguments

Replay for students the Driving Argument audio and video they viewed in Lesson 1. Now that you know so much about the elements of an argument, what did you notice this time that you did not notice before? (Responses will vary.)

Earlier, we discussed how important it is for an argument presented in various media to be logically sound. Sometimes, we see videos on the Internet that are not grounded in facts at all. Instead, they are designed to deceive viewers. They use emotional ploys and half-truths to persuade viewers to buy a product or adopt a particular point of view.

Today, you will have a chance to turn your written argument into a multimedia argument. As you do so, you must stay faithful to the facts that you have discovered. But you may present those facts in interesting ways—ways that appeal not only to your audience members' rational minds, but also to their senses. A word of caution about multimedia presentations: only the most important points you are trying to drive home should be included in print form on a screen. Too many words will only make the presentation hard to follow.

Have students name the five senses, and list them on the board. Then, discuss how a multimedia presentation about a given topic might appeal to a few of them. For example, a multimedia presentation about soda machines in school gyms might take the form of a slide show. It might appeal to audience members' senses in the following ways:

- Sight: Viewers will see images of athletes drinking soda or diagrams showing the amount of sugar in a can of soda.
- Sound: The slide show might use sound files of a person dropping coins in a soda machine and the soda dropping into the chute; or amplified, slow-speed sound files of a person gulping a drink.
- Touch: While the slideshow is being presented, a small sack containing the amount of sugar in a soda may be passed around for audience members to weigh in their hands.

Plan a Multimedia Argument

Discuss with students the media available for their use. If possible, create and provide a menu of media options. If your classroom is not technology enabled, include on the list possibilities such as the following:

- musical instruments or recordings of music or sounds
- objects to hold and pass around
- samplings of food to taste
- substances to smell
- photos, posters, charts, graphs, or other images to display

Next, have students gather in small groups and summarize their arguments for one another. Ask each group to choose the argument they think will lend itself best to multimedia presentation. Then, direct students to Blackline Master page S21. Have students use this page to plan a multimedia presentation of their argument. Remind them to create realistic plans. Provide these questions to guide their thinking:

- What multimedia components will help the audience understand the ideas, thoughts, and feelings we are trying to convey?
- Are the components we want to use readily available?
- If not, how much time will it take to create them?
- Who will be in charge of what?
- What kinds of equipment will we need? Where will we get it?
- How much rehearsal time will we need? When and where will we rehearse?

Encourage students to take discussion and planning notes.

Even though you are using different media to present the argument, your presentation must still flow logically. You must present your central claim early on. Then, you should present your reasons and your evidence, and at least one objection and rebuttal. Each of these components can be presented in a creative way, but your ideas must be clear. Audience members who know the elements of an argument should be able to identify those elements with ease as they view your presentation.

When students have finished planning their presentation, give them time to create and rehearse it, or assign presentation preparation as homework.

Level 1 Lesson 10 | Writing

Plan a Multimedia Presentation

Our topic is _____

Our central claim is _____

We will communicate the claim in these ways:

Visuals	Sounds	Other

Reason #2 is _____

We will communicate this reason and supporting evidence in these ways:

Visuals	Sounds	Other

One objection to our claim is _____

We will communicate this objection and our rebuttal in these ways:

Visuals	Sounds	Other

Ideas for a closing:

Visuals	Sounds	Other

Notes: _____

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Present

Allow students time in class to present their multimedia arguments. After each presentation, ask audience members to name one thing that made the argument persuasive.

Congratulate students on transforming honest, logical, well-grounded arguments into a feast for their audience members' senses. Encourage them to continue approaching projects in similarly creative ways throughout their lives.

Wrap-Up

You have worked very hard to complete all phases of this writing project. You have read and analyzed written arguments and multimedia arguments. You have written arguments and produced multimedia arguments of your own.

You've also learned to consider opinions that differ from yours. You've learned that it's okay to change your mind as you learn more about a topic. And if you don't change your mind, you've learned that it's okay to "agree to disagree."

Ask students how their approach to texts they encounter in daily life has changed. Do you think more critically about texts you read or advertisements you hear? Have students give examples. Encourage them to continue searching for the facts behind claims they hear. And when they are promoting their own ideas, remind them that having an opinion isn't enough. Always be prepared to support your opinions with factual information. And when you're expressing your views, use a respectful, open-minded tone. We're all in this together. We all want to learn what's true and live accordingly.

Extension

Provide students with a persuasive text about a current event. Have them read and discuss the text and decide whether it is a sound argument, and why.

Six Traits of Writing: Argument

	Ideas and Development	Organization	Voice and Audience Awareness	Word Choice	Sentence Fluency	Language Conventions
4	Clearly states a position on the issue. Fully develops reasons with evidence, examples, and explanations that are compelling. No irrelevant information.	Introduction clearly states position. Ideas logically sequenced. Transition sentences link ideas. Conclusion ties essay together and gives reader something to think about. Follows required format.	Strong sense of person and purpose behind the words. Brings issue to life.	Words are specific, accurate, and vivid. Word choice enhances meaning and reader's enjoyment.	Writes complete sentences with varied sentence patterns and beginnings.	<i>Capitalization & Punctuation</i> No errors. Indents paragraphs. <i>Grammar/Usage</i> 0–1 error <i>Spelling</i> 0–1 error
3	States a position on the issue. Develops reasons adequately with some evidence, examples, and explanations. Limited irrelevant information.	Introduction states position. Ideas mostly logically sequenced. Some linkage among ideas. Conclusion ties essay together. Follows required format.	Some sense of person and purpose behind the words. Sense of commitment to the issue. Text may be too casual for the purpose.	Words are correctly used but may be somewhat general and unspecific.	Writes complete sentences with some expansion. Limited variety.	<i>Capitalization & Punctuation</i> 1 error. Indents paragraphs. <i>Grammar/Usage</i> 2 errors <i>Spelling</i> 2 errors
2	Does not state a clear position on the issue and/or does not support reasons with sufficient evidence, examples, and explanations. May be too repetitious or too much irrelevant information.	Introduction may not state a position. Ideas not logically sequenced. Transition sentences missing. Conclusion may be missing. Does not follow required format.	Little sense of person and purpose behind the words. Very little engagement with reader. Text may be too casual for the purpose.	Word choice limited. Words may be used inaccurately or repetitively.	Writes mostly simple and/or awkwardly constructed sentences. May include some run-ons and fragments.	<i>Capitalization & Punctuation</i> 2 errors. May not indent paragraphs. <i>Grammar/Usage</i> 3 errors <i>Spelling</i> 3 errors
1	Does not address the prompt OR does not develop a position. Elaboration lacking or unrelated to the issue.	Text has no evident structure. Lack of organization seriously interferes with meaning.	No sense of person or purpose behind the words. No sense of audience.	Extremely limited range of words. Restricted vocabulary impedes message.	Numerous run-ons and/or sentence fragments interfere with meaning.	<i>Capitalization & Punctuation</i> 3+ errors. May not indent paragraphs. <i>Grammar/Usage</i> 4+ errors interfere with meaning <i>Spelling</i> 4+ errors
Value						

Comments _____

Anchor Text

Homework: A Stifling Problem

Homework. This may be the most dreaded compound word uttered to kids across the country. Homework is given by many teachers and hated by a large majority of students. The important question we need to ask is, “why?” Why is the homework so widely given, and does it actually improve the learning and performance of students? The answer is *no*. Excessive homework is causing undue stress to both students and families and is not significantly contributing to educational growth and improvement.

Homework has had unnoticeable effects on a student’s performance, but profound effects on a student’s mental health. Excessive assignments lead to anxiety. Some high school students have 17.5 hours (more than three hours per night) of homework per week. Trying to fit this into an already busy schedule causes stress and anxiety. A Stanford researcher found that students in high-achieving communities who spend too much time on homework experience more stress, physical health problems, a lack of balance, and even alienation from society. More than two hours of homework a night may be counterproductive, according to the study. Students lose out on extracurricular activities and leisure time in order to complete busy work, further exacerbating the problem because what little time they do have left to enjoy life is tense and anxiety-filled because they were denied the time needed to blow off steam.

Homework volume has become so great that it occupies all of a student’s waking hours at home. Children are weighed down by pointless assignments, keeping them isolated from family. Being denied time with family, time for leisure, and the ability to engage in stress-relieving activities causes damage to the students, and in turn to the families to whom they belong. Excessive homework—prescribed by educators across the nation to close the achievement gap—is actually doing more to destroy families than to help students achieve. Teenagers are often a needed source of assistance to their family, either monetarily or physically. When a student cannot find the time to help around the house or earn money, parents must carry the burden alone. This creates feelings of resentment that destroy the fibers of family. According to one research study, it was reported that overly time-consuming homework led to children “not meeting their developmental needs or cultivating other critical life skills.” Both of which are necessary to be a productive member of a family.

Anchor Text (*cont.*)

In the same way the family unit is suffering, learning is stifled when large amounts of time are spent doing homework. The joy is sucked out of learning. The quality of the work given and the quantity of time the assignments take make intellectual growth and improvement impossible. While moderate and high-interest homework may be beneficial to one's educational experience, the arbitrary and tedious assignments given by many teachers are merely extinguishing a desire for learning. In 2006, Alfie Kohn wrote "The Homework Myth: Why Our Kids Get Too Much of a Bad Thing." He supports the idea that homework may have benefits, but time-consuming and poorly planned assignments do not contribute positively to learning. Hours of homework has not been proven to lead to improved test scores or classroom performance. What's more is the type of homework often given requires very little complex, creative, or critical thinking. In fact, the only thing required to complete the tasks is an excessive amount of time. Creativity is actually being squashed by homework.

Educational experts justify the need for homework by citing information about American schools and their "poor performance in math and science." They contend that, by increasing the paperwork load, the United States will improve their performance in the global marketplace against countries like China. There is data that the United States is ranked 25th in science and 21st in math compared to other countries. This leads to concern among educational leaders. However, it should be noted that, in recent comparative studies, other countries are beginning to realize that increasing the volume of homework does not ultimately increase the skills of students. The French president Francois Hollande proposed a no-homework policy last year in his plans for educational reform.

The old adage "practice makes perfect" is the driving force behind many advocates for homework. They believe that, when students develop automaticity of certain skills through repetition, they will be more successful. The theory is that the more students rehearse an academic skill—such as vocabulary, spelling, or mathematics—the more rote it becomes, thus building a foundation for future learning. While there may be truth to these assertions, there is no proof that countless hours of this practice are any more beneficial than shorter, more focused periods. "This kind of busy work, by its very nature, discourages learning and instead promotes doing homework simply to get points," Stanford researcher Pope stated.

Anchor Text (cont.)

It is also argued by teachers and parents that the expectation of homework helps teach students discipline and focus. Some adults say, "We all have things in life we don't want to do but are required to do anyway." Homework is the earliest exemplar of this idea. If students learn early to complete undesirable tasks, they may be more likely to develop tenacity as they age. There are parents who also agree and believe that homework helps their children learn time management, planning skills, and problem solving strategies. Many feel that, by following through on homework assignments, children develop life strategies that lead to business and personal success as they mature. However, the level of stress that homework causes should be considered, as well. In the aforementioned Stanford study, "Less than one percent of the students said homework was not a stressor."

Homework is an integral part of the educational system. It begins in Kindergarten and continues through the high school years. While there are many arguments for the continuation of homework, there are cautions that need to be addressed. To assign work to be done at home, there should be "a purpose and benefit, and it should be designed to cultivate learning and development," according to one researcher. The arbitrary assignments that take numerous hours and cause stress and strife in households need to be eliminated.

While some homework may be beneficial in teaching skills and expanding knowledge, it should not lead to health problems, social isolation, and family turmoil. Students should have the opportunity to delve into self-driven learning experiences and have enough free time that they can identify and pursue their own areas of interest as well as maintain their mental health and contribute productively to the fabric of family.