

Turning Evidence Into a Paragraph

© Gay Miller @ Book Units Teacher

✍ Teacher Instructions: Christmas Truce Informational Writing Activity

Overview

This activity helps students practice writing an **informational paragraph** using evidence from the Christmas Truce of 1914. Students will learn how to identify factual details, connect evidence to a claim, and write a clear explanation and conclusion.

Materials

Informational Paragraph Organizer (three versions)

- Use the **open-ended** version for advanced learners or writing practice.
- Use the **cloze** version for guided practice or review.
- Keep the **completed** version as your answer key or for modeling.

Christmas Truce Evidence Organizer (two versions)

- *Open-Ended:* Students record evidence from the video and text.
- *Completed (Answer Key):* Teacher reference.

Lesson Steps

Introduce the Topic

Briefly discuss the Christmas Truce and show the video. **YouTube** https://youtu.be/aSWtrfxnKtg

- Explain that students will write an informational paragraph using evidence from the event.

Student Practice

- Students use the **open-ended** or **cloze** organizer to complete their own paragraph.
- Encourage them to refer to the video and any provided notes.

Review and Reflect

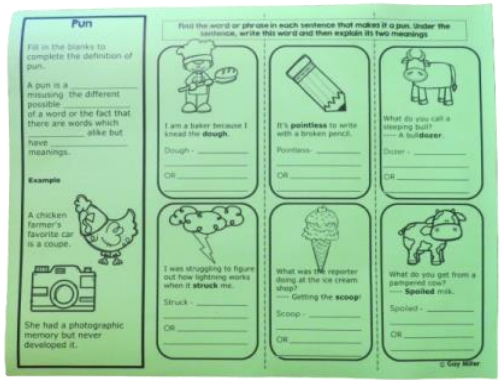
- Compare student responses to the **completed answer key**.
- Discuss how strong explanations connect evidence to the claim.
- Optional: Have students color the blackline illustration as a finishing touch.



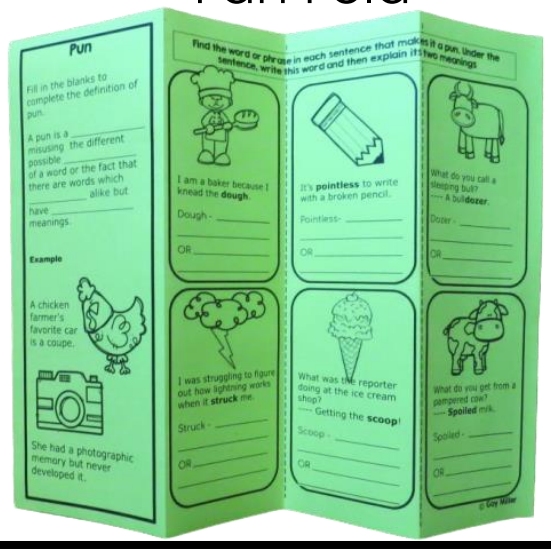
© Gay Miller @ Book Units Teacher

Three Easy Steps

Print

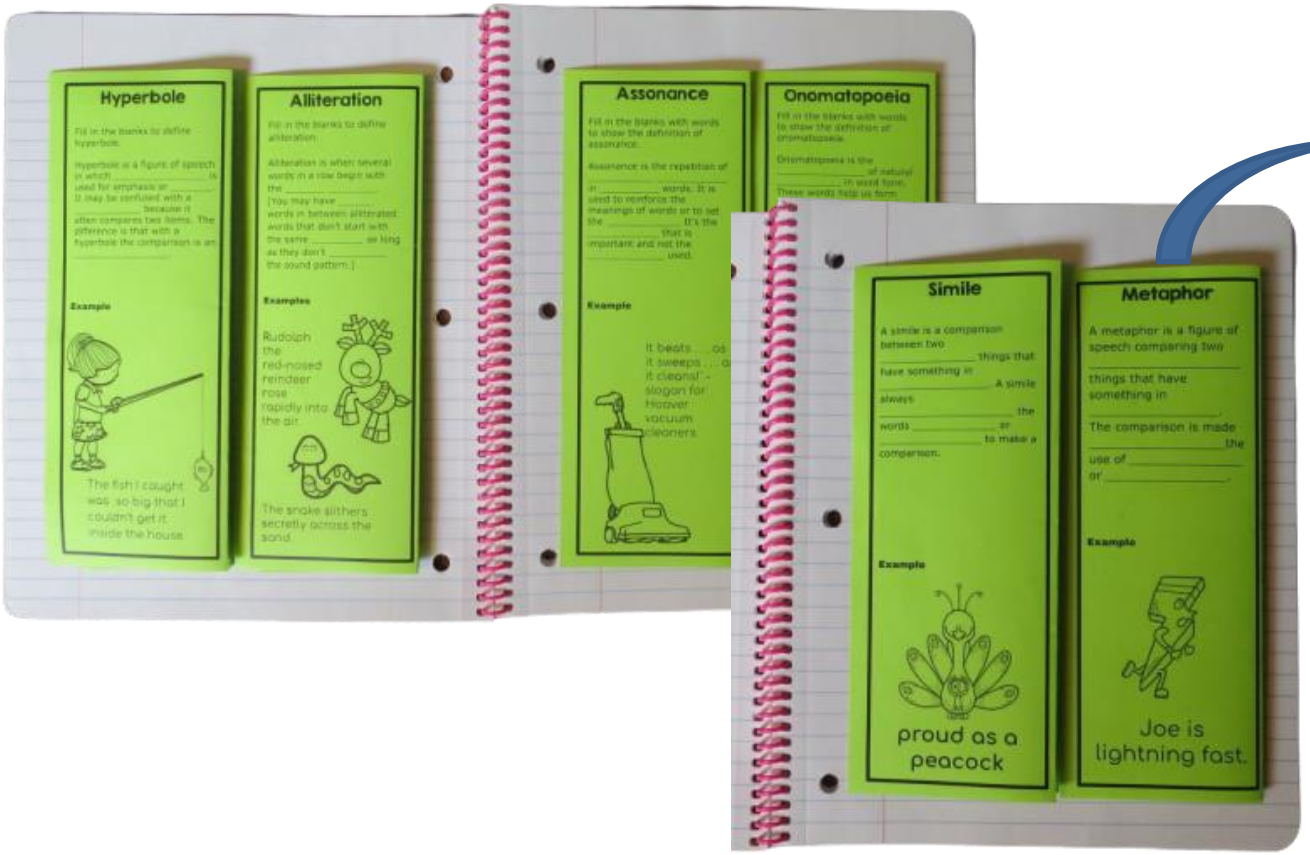


Fan Fold



Glue







Informational Paragraph

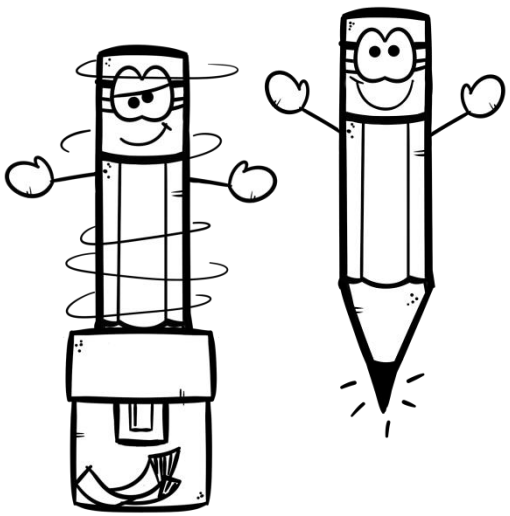
1. Claim

A **claim** is _____

How to write a strong claim:

1. State the topic.
2. Tell what you will explain.
3. Keep it specific.
4. Avoid emotional or persuasive language.

Examples of claim starters:



2. Evidence

Evidence is _____

It can come from many sources:

Good evidence is:

Evidence should NOT be:

3. Explanation

The **explanation** _____

A strong explanation:

- Shows the meaning behind the evidence
- Answers "Why does this detail matter?"
- Makes the connection clear
- Avoids repeating the evidence

Explanation starters:

This shows that…

4. Conclusion

A **conclusion** _____

A strong conclusion:

- Restates the claim in new words
- Summarizes the key idea
- Leaves the reader with a final thought
- Does NOT add new evidence

Conclusion starters:

5. Primary vs. Secondary Sources

Understanding your sources helps you choose strong evidence.

Primary Sources

Examples:

Secondary Sources

Examples:

Why this matters:

- Primary sources give firsthand details
- Secondary sources help explain and interpret events
- Using both creates stronger informational writing

Informational Paragraph

1. Claim

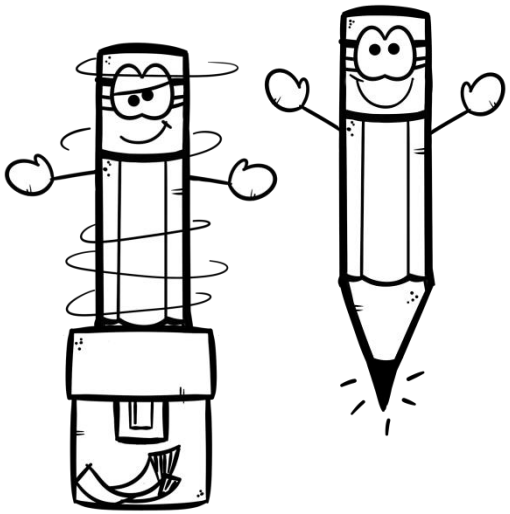
A **claim** is the _____ point you want to explain or _____ in your _____ writing. It should be clear, focused, and based on facts — not _____.

How to write a strong claim:

1. State the _____.
2. Tell what you will explain.
3. Keep it _____.
4. Avoid _____ or persuasive language.

Examples of claim starters:

The main idea is…
This text shows that…
One important fact about this topic is…



2. Evidence

Evidence is the factual information that supports your claim.
It can come from many sources:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Good evidence is:

Accurate
Relevant
Specific
Taken from a reliable source

Evidence should NOT be:

_____
_____
_____
_____

3. Explanation

The **explanation** tells *why* your evidence matters.
It connects the evidence back to your claim.

A strong explanation:

- Shows the meaning behind the _____
  Answers "Why does this detail matter?"
- Makes the connection _____
- Avoids _____ the evidence

Explanation starters:

This shows that…
This detail is important because…
This helps explain…
This means that…

4. Conclusion

A **conclusion** wraps up your paragraph or essay by restating the main idea in a clear, meaningful way.

A strong conclusion:

- Restates the claim in new _____
- Summarizes the key idea
- Leaves the reader with a _____ thought
- Does NOT add new evidence

Conclusion starters:

In conclusion…
Overall…
This explains why…
As a result…

5. Primary vs. Secondary Sources

Understanding your sources helps you choose strong evidence.

Primary Sources

Created by someone who was *there* during the event.
Examples:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Secondary Sources

Created *after* the event by someone who did not witness it.
Examples:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Why this matters:

- Primary sources give firsthand details
- Secondary sources help explain and interpret events
- Using both creates stronger informational writing

Informational Paragraph

1. Claim

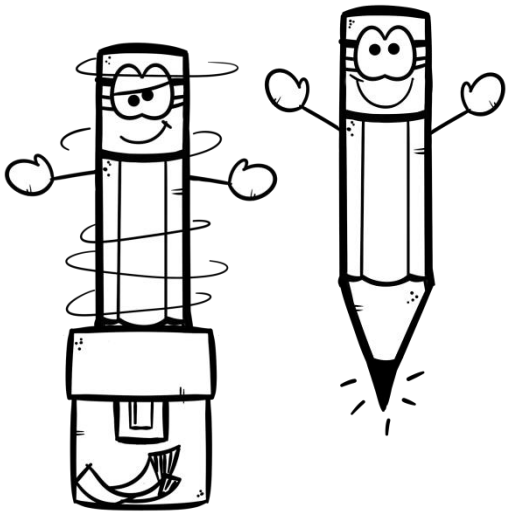
A **claim** is the main point you want to explain or prove in your informative writing.
It should be clear, focused, and based on facts — not opinions.

How to write a strong claim:

1. State the topic.
2. Tell what you will explain.
3. Keep it specific.
4. Avoid emotional or persuasive language.

Examples of claim starters:

The main idea is…
This text shows that…
One important fact about this topic is…



2. Evidence

Evidence is the factual information that supports your claim.
It can come from many sources:

- Facts
- Details
- Statistics
- Examples
- Quotes
- Photographs
- Diagrams
- Maps
- Charts
- Eyewitness accounts

Good evidence is:

- Accurate
- Relevant
- Specific
- Taken from a reliable source

Evidence should NOT be:

- Opinions
- Feelings
- Assumptions
- Emotional reactions

3. Explanation

The **explanation** tells *why* your evidence matters.
It connects the evidence back to your claim.

A strong explanation:

- Shows the meaning behind the evidence
- Answers "Why does this detail matter?"
- Makes the connection clear
- Avoids repeating the evidence

Explanation starters:

This shows that…
This detail is important because…
This helps explain…
This means that…

4. Conclusion

A **conclusion** wraps up your paragraph or essay by restating the main idea in a clear, meaningful way.

A strong conclusion:

- Restates the claim in new words
- Summarizes the key idea
- Leaves the reader with a final thought
- Does NOT add new evidence

Conclusion starters:

In conclusion…
Overall…
This explains why…
As a result…

5. Primary vs. Secondary Sources

Understanding your sources helps you choose strong evidence.

Primary Sources

Created by someone who was *there* during the event.
Examples:

- Letters
- Diaries
- Photographs
- Interviews
- Original documents
- Artifacts

Secondary Sources

Created *after* the event by someone who did not witness it.
Examples:

- Textbooks
- Documentaries
- Websites
- Articles written later
- Videos explaining the event

Why this matters:

- Primary sources give firsthand details
- Secondary sources help explain and interpret events
- Using both creates stronger informational writing

Christmas Truce Evidence Organizer



Claim _____

_____

_____

Evidence #1 _____

_____

_____

Evidence #2 _____

_____

Evidence #3 _____

_____

Explanation _____

_____

_____

_____

Conclusion _____

_____

_____

_____

Paragraph _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Christmas Truce Evidence Organizer Answer Key



Claim

The Christmas Truce shows that soldiers on bo
even though they were fighting a war.

Evidence #1

Soldiers left their trenches and met peacefully in No Man's Land.

Evidence #2

They exchanged small gifts such as chocolate, tobacco, and souvenirs.

Evidence #3

They played soccer together during the truce.

Explanation

These actions show that the soldiers viewed each other as human beings rather than enemies. Their willingness to stop fighting, share food, and play games demonstrates a desire for connection and peace, even in the middle of a dangerous conflict.

Conclusion

The Christmas Truce reveals the human side of World War I and shows that many soldiers longed for peace despite the war around them.

Paragraph (Example)

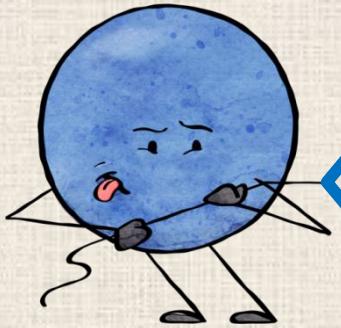
During World War I, the Christmas Truce showed that soldiers on both sides wanted peace. One piece of evidence is that soldiers left their trenches and met peacefully in No Man's Land. They also exchanged small gifts like chocolate and tobacco. Another detail is that they played soccer together during the truce. These actions show that the soldiers saw each other as human beings instead of enemies. Their behavior reveals a desire for connection and kindness, even in the middle of a terrible war


BOOK
UNITS
TEACHER
store

Credits


EDUCLIPS
CLIP ART
Chirp Graphics
Illumismart
ARTS
SARAH PECORINO
Teachers Resource Force
CREATIVE Clips
graphics from the pond
Creating 4 the CLASSROOM Clipart
Antifex Graphics
Katrina Keegan
SCHOOL CLIPART
pigknit
CLIPART
PALACE Pics
Charlotte's Clips
CLIP GUY
Graphics
Kate Hadfield
DESIGNS
D'Art
RON LEISHMAN
DIGITAL TOONAGE
Caboose Designs
Commercial and Personal use
~Clip Art~
WHIMSY
CLIPS
DOODLE DAD
Designs
CLEVER CAT
CREATIONS
SCRAPPIN DOODLES
ZIP-A-DEE DOO-DAH
ashley hughes
DESIGN
kimberly geswein

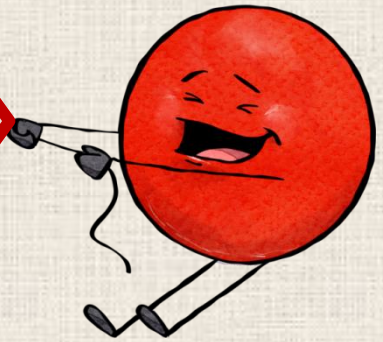




Book Units Teacher Website

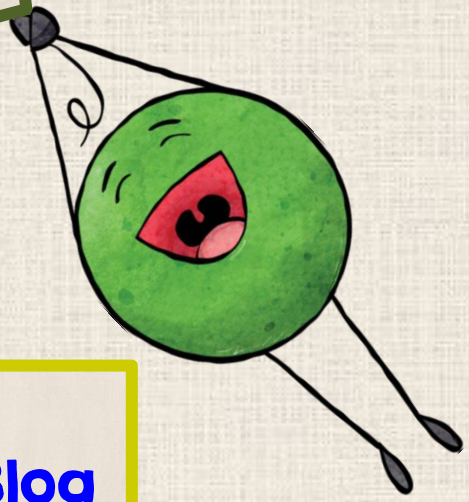
Gay Miller's
Teachers Pay Teachers Store

Pinterest





YouTube





Book Units Teacher Blog