



# Teaching Argument Writing, Grades 6-12: Supporting Claims with Relevant Evidence and Clear Reasoning

By George Hillocks Jr

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"In this book, George Hillocks teaches us not only what an argument is, but how to teach it and why we should. Essential reading for those preparing ALL students to think critically, write well, and succeed academically in both high school and college."

*Jim Burke, Author of The English Teacher's Companion and What's the Big Idea?*

Argument writing can be difficult to teach, but it may be the most important set of skills we teach in English. According to the National Common Core Standards, by the end of high school, students should be able to write arguments to support claims with clear reason and relevant evidence-and they should be able to do so well.

Designed for middle and high school students, the activities in this book will enable students to *write* strong arguments and *evaluate* the arguments of others. When they are through, students will be able, as the Common Core Standards ask, to "Delineate and evaluate [an] argument and specific claims...including the validity of the reasoning [and] the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence." Developed by **George Hillocks, Jr.** and others in diverse inner city classrooms in Chicago, students are easily engaged in the lively problem-solving approach detailed in this book.

*Teaching Argument Writing* begins with how to teach simple arguments and moves onto those that are more complex, showing step-by-step how to teach students to write and evaluate:

- arguments of fact
- arguments of judgment
- arguments of policy

Student handouts, activities, and models of classroom discussions are provided to help you bring these methods to your classroom. Among other things, Hillocks

guides you through teaching your students:

- how judgments are made in the real world
- how to make literary judgments based on criteria
- how to develop and support criteria for arguments.

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### **Editorial Review**

#### **About the Author**

George Hillocks, Jr. is Professor Emeritus, departments of Education and English Language and Literature, The University of Chicago. He and his MAT students have taught writing in Chicago schools for over twenty-five years. In 1997 he won the NCTE David H. Russell award for Distinguished Research in the Teaching of English for the book *Teaching Writing as Reflective Practice*. In 2004 he received NCTE's Distinguished Service Award. George Hillocks was named the recipient of the 2010 Distinguished Lifetime Researcher Award given by the National Conference on Research in Language and Literacy. George's book *Narrative Writing* has also just been named the winner of the Richard Meade Award, given by the National Council of Teacher's of English. In 2011, he won NCTE's James R. Squire Award: a special honor given to an NCTE member who has had a transforming influence and has made a lasting intellectual contribution to the profession.

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