

December 14, 2017

Dear Family,

**Welcome to SpringBoard English Language Arts** ***Grade 8, Unit 2***

**Overview**

In this unit,students will explore argumentation and persuasive appeals. The **essential question** focuses their attention on the skills and knowledge presented and assessed in the unit:

* *What makes an argument effective?*

Students answer this question through the activities and assessments in the unit.

**Assessments**

Theperformance-based task, called **Embedded Assessments**, give students an opportunity to demonstrate their new learning in the skills of argumentation. Specifically,

* **Embedded Assessment 2** asks students to argue a debatable idea using a variety of appeals and research to support claims.

In this case, students demonstrate their ability to organize ideas, support claims, and incorporate embedded quotations as evidence.

**Developing Skills and Knowledge for the Assessments**

Throughout the unit, students engage in activities in which they use **strategies** such as *debate* and *predicting* to practice the important **skills** of formulating questions to improve understanding, speaking and listening, and supporting opinions with textual evidence.

Moreover, students analyze and discuss a variety of texts such as and KUTV-Austin’s article “The Science Behind Distracted Driving.” Throughout the unit, discussion is promoted as a way to deepen students’ understanding of texts and concepts.

Students’ **vocabulary study** concentrates on **academic vocabulary** of argumentation, such as *controversy, rebuttal,* and *reasoning.*

**Helping Your Child**

Students should be practicing every day in class for their upcoming performance on the Embedded Assessment. Help your child reflect on and focus his or her learning by asking the following questions:

* What did you learn today? What **texts** did you read, discuss, and respond to in writing or speaking? What **strategies** did you use during your reading, discussing, and writing?
* What did you learn today that will help you succeed on the upcoming Embedded Assessment? What do you still need to practice?

You may also find it helpful to read through the **Embedded Assessments** (particularly the **Scoring Guides**) and to note the **Learning Targets** that are located at the beginning of each unit activity.

Sincerely,

Ms. Kernan