
MAKING EVIDENCE-BASED CLAIMS

DEVELOPING CORE PROFICIENCIES
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS / LITERACY UNIT

GRADE 12

MAKING EBCs ABOUT LITERARY TECHNIQUE

“What We Talk About When We Talk About Love”

Raymond Carver



DEVELOPING CORE PROFICIENCIES SERIES

This unit is part of the Odell Education Literacy Instruction: Developing Core Proficiencies program, an integrated set of ELA units spanning grades 6-12. Funded by USNY Regents Research Fund, the program (under development) is comprised of a series of four 3-week units at each grade level that provide direct instruction on a set of literacy proficiencies at the heart of the CCSS.

Unit 1: Reading Closely for Textual Details
Unit 2: Making Evidence-Based Claims
Unit 3: Researching to Deepen Understanding
Unit 4: Building Evidence-Based Arguments

The Core Proficiencies units have been designed to be used in a variety of ways. They can be taught as short stand-alone units to introduce or develop key student proficiencies. Teachers can also integrate them into larger modules that build up to and around these proficiencies. Teachers can also apply the activity sequences and unit materials to different texts and topics. The materials have been intentionally designed for easy adaptation to new texts.

Unit materials available at www.odelleducation.com



MAKING EVIDENCE-BASED CLAIMS

Making evidence-based claims about texts is a core literacy and critical thinking proficiency that lies at the heart of the CCSS. The skill consists of two parts. The first part is the ability to extract detailed information from texts and grasp how it is conveyed. Education and personal growth require real exposure to new information from a variety of media. Instruction should push students beyond general thematic understanding of texts into deep engagement with textual content and authorial craft.

The second half of the skill is the ability to make valid claims about the new information thus gleaned. This involves developing the capacity to analyze texts, connecting information in literal, inferential, and sometimes novel ways. Instruction should lead students to do more than simply restate the information they take in through close reading. Students should come to see themselves as creators of meaning as they engage with texts.

It is essential that students understand the importance and purpose of making evidence-based claims, which are at the center of many fields of study and productive civic life. We must help students become invested in developing their ability to explore the meaning of texts. Part of instruction should focus on teaching students how to understand and talk about their skills.

It is also important that students view claims as their own. They should see their interaction with texts as a personal investment in their learning. They are not simply reading texts to report information expected by their teachers, but should approach texts with their own authority and confidence to support their analysis

This unit is designed to cultivate in students the ability to make evidence-based claims in the realm of literary analysis.

HOW THIS UNIT IS STRUCTURED

The unit activities are organized into five parts, each associated with sequential portions of text. The parts build on each other and can each span a range of instructional time depending on scheduling and student ability.

The unit intentionally separates the development of critical reading skills from their full expression in writing. A sequence of tools isolates and supports the progressive development of the critical reading skills. Parts 1-2 focus on making evidence-based claims as readers. Part 3 focuses on preparing to express evidence-based claims by organizing evidence and thinking. Parts 4 and 5 focus on expressing evidence-based claims in writing.

This organization is designed to strengthen the precision of instruction and assessment, as well as to give teachers flexibility in their use of the unit.

The first activities of Parts 2-5 – which involve independently reading sections of the text – are designed as independent reading assignments. If scheduling and student ability do not support independent reading outside of class, these activities can be done in class at the beginning of each Part. Accordingly, they are listed both as an independent reading activity at the end of each part and as an activity beginning the sequence of the next part.

Alternate configurations of Part 5 are given in the detailed unit plan to provide multiple ways of structuring a summative assessment.

HOW THIS UNIT ALIGNS WITH CCSS FOR ELA/LITERACY

The primary CCSS alignment of the unit instruction is with **RL.1** and **W.9b** (*cite evidence to support analysis of explicit and inferential textual meaning*).

The evidence-based analysis of the text, including the text-dependent questions and the focus of the claims, involve **RL.3**, **RL.5** and **RL.6** (*analyze an author's choices concerning the development of characters, structure and point of view over the course of a text*).

The numerous paired activities and structured class discussions develop **SL.1** (*engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly*).

The evidence-based writing pieces involve **W.2** and **W.4** (*produce clear and coherent informative/explanatory texts in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience*).

≡ HOW THIS UNIT ASSESSES ≡ STUDENT LEARNING

The unit's primary instructional focus is on making evidence-based claims as readers and writers. Parts 1-3 develop the reading skill. Activities are sequenced to build the skill from the ground up. A series of tools supports students in their progressive development of the skill. These tools structure and capture students' critical thinking at each developmental stage and are the primary method of formative assessment. They are specifically designed to give teachers the ability to assess student development of the reading skill without the influence of their writing abilities.

From the first activity on, students are introduced to and then use a set of criteria that describes the characteristics of an evidence-based claim. In pair work and class discussions, students use the first five of these criteria to discuss and evaluate evidence-based claims made by the teacher and their peers. Teachers use these same criteria to assess student claims presented on the tools from Parts 1-3.

As the instructional focus shifts to writing in Parts 4 and 5, so does the nature of the assessment. In these parts, teachers assess the student writing pieces. Students continue using tools as well, giving teachers clear and distinct evidence of both their reading and writing skills for evaluation. In Parts 4-5, students learn about and use six additional criteria for writing claims. Teachers apply these criteria in the formative assessment of students' written work, as well as the evaluation of their final evidence-based writing pieces.

In addition to reading and writing, the unit incorporates many structured collaborative activities to develop key speaking and listening proficiencies. Students and teachers use the Text-Centered Discussion Checklist to structure and evaluate participation in those discussions. Opportunities are also given for teachers to directly observe and evaluate student speaking and listening skills using the checklist.

Part 5 can be configured in multiple ways giving teachers the flexibility to structure a summative assessment suitable for their students.

≡ HOW THIS UNIT TEACHES ≡ VOCABULARY

This unit draws on several strategies for teaching academic and disciplinary vocabulary. The primary strategy is the way critical disciplinary vocabulary and concepts are built into the instruction. Students are taught words like “genre,” “tone,” “mood,” “claim,” “evidence,” “reasoning,” and “inference” through their explicit use in the activities. Students come to understand and use these words as they think about and evaluate their textual analysis and that of their peers.

The EBC Checklist plays a key role in this process. By the end of the unit, students will have developed deep conceptual knowledge of key vocabulary that they can transfer to a variety of academic and public contexts.

The text and activities also provide many opportunities for text-based academic vocabulary instruction. Many activities focus directly on analyzing the way authors use language and key words to develop ideas and achieve specific purposes. The process of developing and evaluating claims supports the acquisition of these words and content knowledge.

≡ HOW THIS UNIT MIGHT BE EMBEDDED IN ≡ CONTENT-BASED CURRICULUM

The unit is explicitly and intentionally framed as *skills-based instruction*. It is critical for students to understand that they are developing core literacy proficiencies that will enrich their academic and civic lives. The unit and activities should be framed for them as such. Nonetheless, the texts have been chosen, in part, for their rich content and cultural significance. They contain many important historical and contemporary ideas and themes. Teachers are encouraged to sequence the unit strategically within their curriculum and instructional plans, and to establish content connections that will be meaningful for students. This might involve

connecting the unit to the study of topics or eras in social studies, related genres or voices in literature, or themes and guiding questions.

Teachers can also adapt the unit activities and materials to other fiction and non-fiction texts. The materials have been intentionally designed for easy adaptation to a variety of texts.

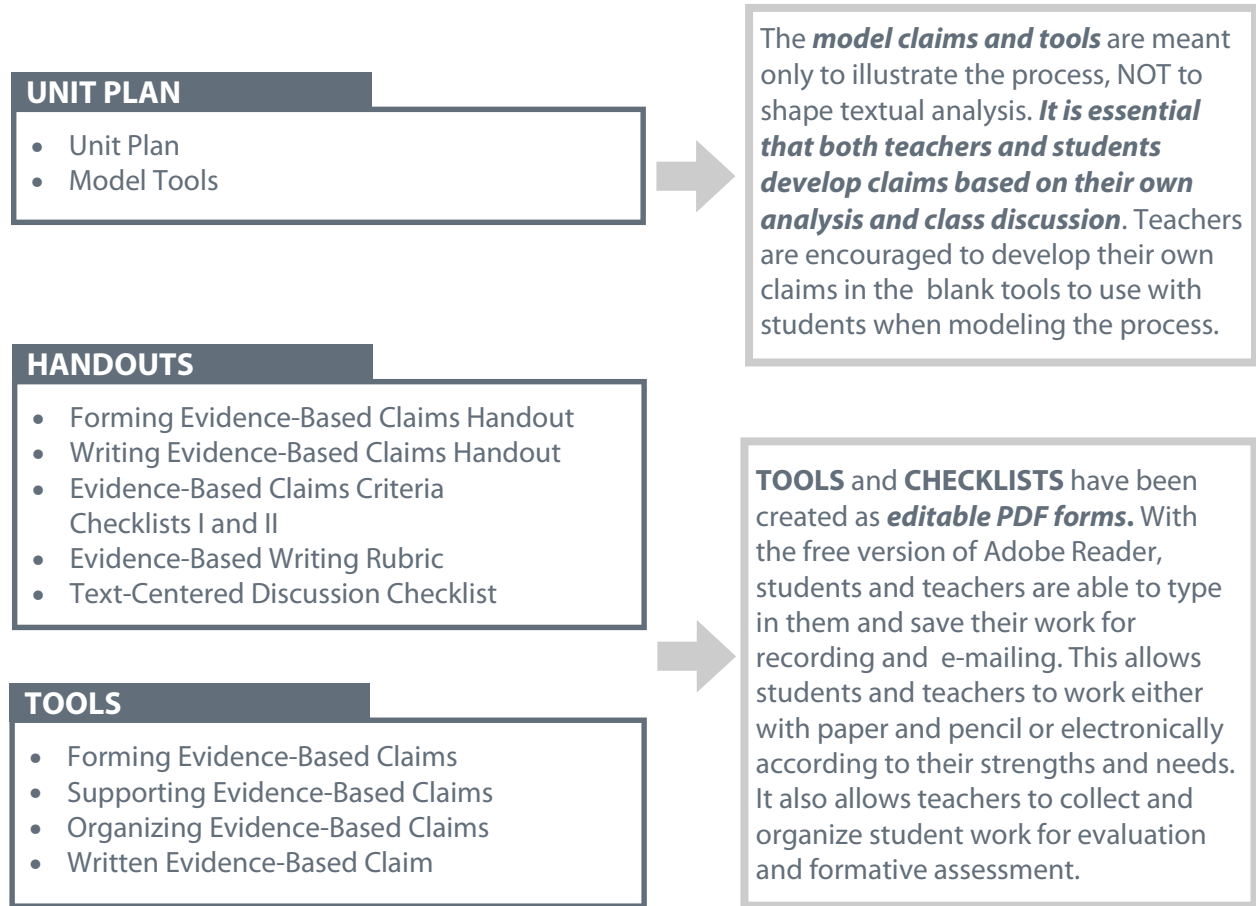
Whatever the curricular context established by the teacher, the central emphasis of the unit should, however, be on evidence-based, text-focused instruction.



HOW TO USE THESE MATERIALS

This unit is in the format of a **Compressed File**. Files are organized so you can easily browse through the materials and find everything you need to print or e-mail for each day.

The materials are organized into three folders:



If you decide to **PRINT** materials, please note that you can print them at **actual size**, without enabling the auto-fit function. All materials can be printed either in color or in black and white.



UNIT OUTLINE

PART 1: UNDERSTANDING EVIDENCE-BASED CLAIMS

- The teacher presents the purpose of the unit and explains the skill of making EBCs.
- Students independently read part of the text with a text-dependent question to guide them.
- Students follow along as they listen to the text being read aloud and discuss a series of text-dependent questions.
- The teacher models a critical reading and thinking process for forming EBCs about texts.

PART 2: MAKING EVIDENCE-BASED CLAIMS

- Students independently read part of the text and look for evidence to support a claim made by the teacher.
- Students follow along as they listen to the text being read aloud and discuss a series of text-dependent questions.
- In pairs, students look for evidence to support claims made by the teacher.
- The class discusses evidence in support of claims found by student pairs.
- In pairs, students make an EBC of their own and present it to the class.

PART 3: ORGANIZING EVIDENCE-BASED CLAIMS

- Students independently read part of the text and make an EBC.
- Students follow along as they listen to the text being read aloud and discuss a series of text-dependent questions.
- The teacher models organizing evidence to develop and explain claims using student EBCs.
- In pairs, students develop a claim with multiple points and organize supporting evidence.
- The class discusses the EBCs developed by student pairs.

PART 4: WRITING EVIDENCE-BASED CLAIMS

- Students independently review the text and develop an EBC.
- The teacher introduces and models writing EBCs using a claim from Part 3.
- In pairs, students write EBCs using one of their claims from Part 3.
- The class discusses the written EBCs of volunteer student pairs.
- The class discusses their new EBCs and students read aloud portions of the text.
- Students independently write EBCs.

PART 5: DEVELOPING EVIDENCE-BASED WRITING

- Students review the text and make a new EBC.
- The teacher analyzes volunteer student evidence-based writing from Part 4 and discusses developing global EBCs.
- Students discuss their new claims in pairs and then with the class.
- Students independently write a final evidence-based writing piece.
- The class discusses final evidence-based writing pieces of student volunteers.

PART 1

UNDERSTANDING EVIDENCE-BASED CLAIMS

“Does that sound like love to you?”

OBJECTIVE:

Students learn the importance and elements of making evidence-based claims through a close reading of part of the text.



ACTIVITIES

1- INTRODUCTION TO UNIT

The teacher presents the purpose of the unit and explains the proficiency of making EBCs.

2- INDEPENDENT READING

Students independently read part of the text with a text-dependent question to guide them.

3- READ ALOUD AND CLASS DISCUSSION

Students follow along as they listen to the text being read aloud, and the teacher leads a discussion guided by a series of text-dependent questions.

4- MODEL FORMING EBCs

The teacher models a critical reading and thinking process for forming EBCs about texts.

ESTIMATED TIME: 2-3 days

MATERIALS:

Forming EBC Lit Handout
Forming EBC Tool
EBC Criteria Checklist I
Supporting EBC Tool



ALIGNMENT TO CCSS

TARGETED STANDARD(S): RL.11-12.1

RL.11-12.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

SUPPORTING STANDARD(S): RL.11-12.2 RL.11-12.3 RL.11-12.4 SL.11-12.1

RL.11-12.2: Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.11-12.3: Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

RL.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)

SL.11-12.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.



ACTIVITY 1: INTRODUCTION TO UNIT

The teacher presents the purpose of the unit and explains the proficiency of making evidence-based claims, making reference to the first five criteria from the EBC Checklist I.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Introduce the central purpose of the unit and the idea of a “claim” someone might make.

The following is a possible approach:

Introduce the first characteristic of an evidence-based claim: “States a conclusion you have come to... and that you want others to think about.” Pick a subject that is familiar to students, such as “school lunches” and ask them to brainstorm some claim statements they might make about the subject. Introduce the fourth characteristic: “All parts of the claim are supported by specific evidence you can point to” and distinguish claims that can be supported by evidence from those that are unsupported opinions, using the students’ brainstorm list as a reference.

Move from experience-based claims to claims in a field like science. Start with more familiar, fact-based claims (For example, the claim “It is cold outside” is supported by evidence like “The outside thermometer reads 13 degrees F” but is not supported with statements like “It feels that way to me”). Then discuss a claim such as “Smoking has been shown to be hazardous to your health” and talk about how this claim was once considered to be an opinion, until a weight of scientific evidence over time led us to accept this claim as fact. Introduce the third characteristic/criterion: “Demonstrates knowledge of and sound thinking about a topic” and with it the idea that a claim becomes stronger as we expand our knowledge about a subject and find more and better evidence to support the claim.

Discuss other fields and areas in which making claims supported by evidence is central to what

practitioners do (e.g., lawyers, historians, movie critics, etc.). Then transition and focus discussion into the realm of claims made about literary works and the close reading skills of literary analysis - the domain of scholars and critics, but also that of active and skillful readers who intuitively sense and appreciate the multi-dimensional aspects of writing craft when they read a poem, short story, novel, play, or essay. Let students know that in this unit they will be focusing and applying their skills of reading closely for textual details and making evidence-based claims in the realm of literary analysis. Use an example text read recently by most students to suggest what it means to read a literary work for meaning while also attending to its craft.

When reading and analyzing a literary work (as with any text), a reader attends to details that are related to comprehending the text, finding meaning, and understanding the author’s perspective. But a skillful reader of a literary work also pays attention to what authors *do* – the language, elements, devices, and techniques they use, and the choices they make that influence a reader’s experience with and understanding of the literary work - the craft of writing. Explain that literary scholars classify, name and discuss the elements, devices, and techniques characteristic of a literary genre to help us analyze and think about texts. Students should already be familiar with some of these techniques (i.e. plot, characterization, imagery, rhyme). Throughout this unit, they will discuss specific techniques, develop their ability to identify and analyze the use of those techniques, and make evidence-based claims about the effects of those techniques on textual meaning.



ACTIVITY 1: INTRODUCTION TO UNIT (CONT'D)

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

It is important for students to come to understand that in a great literary work, the many aspects of its craft are interdependent, creating what Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren have described as the “organic unity” of a work, where all aspects “are significant and have some bearing on the total significance” of the work. [See Brooks’ and Warren’s anthology *The Scope of Fiction*, Prentice Hall, 1960.] However, students will also need to practice and develop the skills of examining specific aspects of a work, and the relationship of those aspects to other aspects – and to the overall meaning of the work. Thus, this unit will focus on specific elements, devices, or techniques that seem particularly relevant and students will initially make claims related to those targeted aspects of craft. The text notes and text-dependent questions are designed to emphasize these targeted techniques, but teachers and students are also encouraged to extend beyond or outside of the unit’s models, into the study of other literary techniques, themes, and meanings that transcend what is suggested here. No matter what approach is emphasized during reading, discussion, and analysis, the close reading process should be guided by these broad questions:

1. What specific aspect(s) of the author’s craft am I attending to? (Through what lense(s) will I focus my reading?)
2. What choices do I notice the author making, and what techniques do I see the author using? What textual details do I find as evidence of those choices and techniques?
3. How do the author’s choices and techniques influence my reading of the work and the meaning that emerges for me? How can I ground my claims about meaning in specific textual evidence?

In this unit, reading, discussion, and literary analysis will focus on the short story genre, using Raymond Carver’s “What We Talk About When We Talk About Love.” Students will read this text closely, search for evidence of techniques used by Carver, and develop claims about specific passages, eventually forming and writing more global claims about how the techniques and choices they have identified contribute to the story’s overall meaning and unity. Broad guiding questions, specific textual notes, and text-dependent questions will guide teachers and students as they examine how Carver has evidenced the following targeted elements and devices of the short story:

Language Use (word choice/diction, conversational, vernacular, repetition, poetic prose)

How could Carver’s style be described in this short story? What is the range of word choice? What language features stand out? What is the significance and/or effect of words being repeated in the story?

Narration (narrative point of view, authorial construction of narrator, characters, setting)

Who moves the story forward? How many storytellers are there? Who provides perspective on the story? How are characters described? What background information is given? What information about setting is provided?

Tone (author/character attitude towards theme and reader, perception of tone by reader, effect of tone on theme)

How can the tone be described? What choices by the author or character contributed to the creation of tone? What is the emerging relationship between tone and theme? How does tone inform theme, at this point?



ACTIVITY 2: INDEPENDENT READING

Students independently read pages 170-174 ("She's easy to be with.") of the text with a text-dependent question to guide them.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES



Briefly introduce students to "What We Talk About When We Talk About Love" by Raymond Carver. The introduction should be kept to naming the author, the title, and the year it was published. While any unabridged version of the story can be used, the pagination referenced in these notes correspond to *Where I'm Calling From, New and Selected Stories*. Vintage Contemporary, 1989.

Students independently read the first part of the story guided by the question:
Who are the characters of this story?

ACTIVITY 3: READ ALOUD AND CLASS DISCUSSION

Students follow along as they listen to pages 170-174 of the text being read aloud, and the teacher leads a discussion guided by a series of text-dependent questions.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

The close reading of the first section of text serves three primary purposes: to ensure comprehension of an important part of the text, to orient students to the practice of close reading, and to guide students in using questions to search for textual evidence.


Use the discussions about both the guiding and text-specific questions to help students learn the essential skills of selecting interesting and

significant textual details and connecting them inferentially. Also encourage students to develop and use their own text-specific questions related to the guiding and modeled questions. This process links directly to the close reading skills they may have practiced in the Reading Closely for Textual Details unit or a previous EBC unit, and to the forming of evidence-based claims they will do in Activity 4.

ACTIVITY 3: READ ALOUD AND CLASS DISCUSSION (CONT'D)

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

1. *Who are the characters of this story? What significance do you think there may be in Carver choosing these particular characters? How might his choice of characters relate to the developing meaning or theme of the text?*




Two pairs of couples are introduced—Mel and Terri, Nick and Laura, and, by way of the stories that Mel and Terri tell, two secondary characters—Ed, a former lover of Terri’s, and at the end of the story, Marjorie, Mel’s ex-wife. Suggest to students that they write down the names and relationships of the five (eventually, by the end, six) characters as they read to help with tracking and remembering with whom they are paired. The act of making these notes should also indirectly call attention to the fact that every character is paired with at least one other character. Why would Carver choose to construct his story with only characters who are relationally grouped together? Help students infer a relationship between this choice of craft and, from the title and other pieces of evidence (e.g., the topic of the couple’s discussion), the furthering of the seeming subject of the text—i.e., the nature of love. Highlight the significance of all characters being paired or grouped with other characters as it relates to the seeming subject of the story. Point out that even the secondary characters are relationally connected, forming, as it were, a trio with the other characters—e.g., Mel, Terri, Ed, and Mel, Terri, Marjorie. Discuss how Carver’s decision not to invent a character for the story who was not relationally connected and paired with another character focuses the story on its subject. Discuss how, in this way, even seeming basic choices of character selection are complimentary to and help provide coherence to the emerging theme of the text.

Additionally, discuss with students why Carver (through the observational lens of Nick) chose to keep character description to a minimum, how this might help focus attention on what is said between them as they discuss the subject of love. Perhaps compare again to other short stories to demonstrate how description of character in this story is minimal, how its largely been stripped away. We learn just enough about the characters to appreciate how they contribute (or not) to the conversation. There are no distractions. Their dialogue is on center stage. No description is really even given of Terri. Nick mentions only his age—thirty-eight. Laura receives a bit more description—she is a thirty-three year old legal secretary who, Nick tells us, is compatible with him—“We like each other and enjoy each other’s company. She’s easy to be with” (173-174). Mel is a heart surgeon who spent five years in seminary—how might this relate to the theme of the text?

ACTIVITY 3: READ ALOUD AND CLASS DISCUSSION (CONT'D)

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

2. What is striking about the setting? How might Carver's selection of setting contribute to the development of meaning or theme in the story?




The entire story takes place in the kitchen of Mel's apartment—it is the story's only setting (though a nearby restaurant is mentioned repeatedly, it is never visited). The scene never changes, except for the passage of time being marked by the sun and the consumption of gin. Ask students to recall other short stories they may have read and consider the different settings they had—were events in those stories contained to only one setting? Discuss why Carver may have chosen a minimalistic, static “set” and how that might contribute to the development of the story's meaning. Why might Carver have chosen to situate his story entirely in a kitchen, to confine the scene to four people sitting in a kitchen talking and drinking? What effect does the domesticity evoked have on the story's construction and development of meaning? Ask students to describe what is remarkable about Carver's choice of setting, and suggest that what is remarkable is the lack of setting and changing scenery (save the sun and gin bottle). There is only one milieu, the accoutrements are minimal, the set is bare, and its description is spare. Building off the discussion between Carver's choice of characters, encourage students to think along the same lines and consider the significance of this selection of setting in the story, how Carver's choice of characters and setting help inform the development of the story's main activity and subject—an informal discussion about the nature of love.

3. From this beginning section of the story, what can be said about the tone of the text? What descriptors come to mind to describe the tone? What decisions has Carver made in the construction of the text to create tone?

A quick overview with examples about what tone is may be desirable to help students consider these guiding questions as they read/listen to the first part of the story. Perhaps, by way of refamiliarizing and reassuring students that tone is not a mysterious concept, circulate a legal contract and/or a text message, asking students what the tone of those texts are, and how do they know—e.g., what is the evidence for the claim that the legal contract is “serious” or “formal” and the text message is “light-hearted” or “funny”? Specifically identify word choice (or diction) and sentence structure as textual elements that the author makes choices about when fashioning the text and how those decisions convey tone.

≡ ACTIVITY 3: READ ALOUD AND ≡ CLASS DISCUSSION (CONT'D)

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES



Discuss with students how text is imbued with tone via an author's and/or narrator's decisions regarding word choice, sentence structure, description of setting, or other literary elements, and how this evinces an author's/narrator's perspective or stance to the text or the reader—thus creating tone. Talk about how perspective or stance can be identified through decisions made regarding the use of literary elements. In the case of this story, the title's construction itself does much to influence tone. The word choice and syntax is colloquial, perhaps poetic through the repetition of words, a bit playful, possibly elusive or indirect—lightheartedly announcing, as it seems to, that the story will be about a peripheral discussion on the subject of love instead of being on the subject of love itself. All of these elements combine to create a literary/artistic, casual, inviting, good-natured, accessible, inclusive tone—a tone of welcoming readers in with a wink and a smile. Nick's pun on Mel being a cardiologist "sometimes giv[ing] him the right [to discourse on love]" furthers the playful dimension of the tone through wordplay (170). And yet, very soon, the tone is pushed and enlarged to contain other dimensions through the harsh, jarring contribution Nick makes by way of his concise summary of Terri's story: "Terri said the man she lived with before she lived with Mel loved her so much he tried to kill her" (170). The tone continues to broaden in this way when Terri begins talking, relating a horrible scene of domestic abuse, and is further complicated by her quote that oppositionally integrates "I love you" with the vulgar and abusive "you bitch" (170). Terri's implication that this was a scene of love—"What do you do with love like that?"—is the culminating contribution to the complication of tone in this early part of the story. The point here is that the choices Carver makes regarding the imagery and language his characters use to tell and report stories, creates rich and complex tone towards the text's subject matter; and the development of this complexity is well underway by paragraph four. Have students cite other instances of tone being evinced through word choice or description. Discuss how a tone that requires various oppositional descriptors may be a hallmark of a literary text—that the tone being many things at once is part of what enables a text to effect an aesthetic experience.



ACTIVITY 4: MODEL FORMING EBCs

The teacher models a critical reading and thinking process for forming EBCs about texts.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Based on the class discussion of the text, the teacher models a critical reading and thinking process for forming EBCs: from comprehension of textual details that stand out, to an inference that arises from examining the details, to a basic EBC that is supported by specific references back to the text.

Once the class has reached an understanding of the text, use the Forming EBC Lit Handout to introduce a three-step process for making a claim that arises from the text.

Exemplify the process by making a claim with the Forming EBC Tool. The tool is organized so that students first take note of “interesting” details that they also see as “related” to each other. The second section asks them to think about and explain a connection they have made among those details. Such “text-to-text” connections should be distinguished from “text-to-self” connections readers make between what they have read and their own experiences. These “text-to-text” connections can then lead them to a “claim” they can make and record in the third section of the tool – a conclusion they have drawn about the text that

can be referenced back to textual details and text-to-text connections. Have students follow along as you talk through the process with your claim.

To provide structured practice for the first two steps, you might give students a textual detail on a blank tool. In pairs, have students use the tool to find other details/quotations that could be related to the one you have provided, and then make/explain connections among those details. Use the EBC Checklist 1 to discuss the claim, asking students to explain how it meets (or doesn't yet meet) the criteria.

[Note: Here and throughout the entire unit, you are encouraged to develop claims based on your own analysis and class discussion. The provided models are possibilities meant more to illustrate the process than to shape textual analysis. Instruction will be most effective if the claims used in modeling flow naturally from the textual ideas and details you and the students find significant and interesting. Also, while the tools have three or four places for supporting evidence, students should know that not all claims require three pieces of evidence. Places on the tools can be left blank.]



INDEPENDENT READING ACTIVITY

Students independently read pages 174-183 (“Do you see what I’m saying?”) of the text and use the Supporting EBC Tool to look for evidence to support a claim made by the teacher. This activity overlaps with the first activity of Part 2 and can be given as homework or done at the beginning of the next class.



ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Forming EBC Tool should be evaluated to get an initial assessment of students’ grasp of the relationship between claims and textual evidence. Even though the work was done together with the class, filling in the tool helps them get a sense of the critical reading and thinking process and the relationships among the ideas. Also make sure that students are developing the habit of using quotation marks and recording the reference.

PART 2

MAKING EVIDENCE-BASED CLAIMS

“What do any of us really know about love?”

OBJECTIVE:

Students develop the ability to make evidence-based claims through a close reading of the text.



ACTIVITIES

1- INDEPENDENT READING AND FINDING SUPPORTING

EVIDENCE Students independently read part of the text and use the Supporting EBC Tool to look for evidence to support a claim made by the teacher.

2- READ ALOUD AND CLASS DISCUSSION

Students follow along as they listen to the same part of the text being read aloud and discuss a series of text-dependent questions.

3- FIND SUPPORTING EVIDENCE IN PAIRS

In pairs, students use the Supporting EBC Tool to look for evidence to support additional claims about the text made by the teacher.

4- CLASS DISCUSSION OF EBCs

The class discusses evidence in support of claims found by student pairs.

5- FORMING EBCs IN PAIRS

In pairs, students use the Forming EBC Tool to make an evidence-based claim of their own and present it to the class.

ESTIMATED TIME: 1-3 days

MATERIALS:

Supporting EBC Tool
Forming EBC Lit Handout
Forming EBC Tool
EBC Criteria Checklist I
TCD Checklist



ALIGNMENT TO CCSS

TARGETED STANDARD(S): RL.11-12.1

RL.11-12.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

SUPPORTING STANDARD(S): RL.11-12.2 RL.11-12.3 RL.11-12.4 SL.11-12.1

RL.11-12.2: Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.11-12.3: Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

RL.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)

SL.11-12.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

ACTIVITY 1: INDEPENDENT READING AND FINDING SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

Students independently read part of the text and use the Supporting EBC Tool to look for evidence to support a claim made by the teacher.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Students independently read pages 174-183 (“Do you see what I’m saying?”) of the text and use the Supporting EBC Tool to look for evidence to support a claim made by the teacher.

Depending on scheduling and student ability, students can be assigned to read and complete the tool for homework. Teachers should decide what works best for their students. It’s essential that students have opportunity to read the text independently. All students must develop the habit of perseverance in reading. Assigning the reading as homework potentially gives them more time with the text. Either way, it might be a

good idea to provide some time at the beginning of class for students to read the section quietly by themselves. This ensures that all students have had at least some independent reading time.

Also depending on scheduling and student ability, some students might choose (or be encouraged) to read ahead. Instructional focus should follow the pacing outlined in the activities, but students will only benefit from reading and re-reading the text throughout the duration of the unit.

ACTIVITY 2: READ ALOUD AND CLASS DISCUSSION

Students follow along as they listen to the same part of the text being read aloud and discuss a series of text-dependent questions.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Students follow along as they listen to the teacher (or a volunteer student) read pages 174-183, (“Do you see what I’m saying?”) of the text aloud. Following the reading, the teacher leads a discussion guided by text-dependent questions that focus on specific passages and narrative techniques.

1. *What feeling(s) does the text create within you, the reader? How does the text create these feeling(s)? What decisions has Carver made in the construction of the story that contribute to the mood? How does language use, setting, and imagery contribute to mood?*

It might be helpful to link this discussion with the previous discussion on tone as it’s a good opportunity to revisit with students the difference between the two. Tone is one of the many literary elements that contributes to the mood (or the atmosphere) of a text. Discuss with students the difference between how a text may reveal an author’s or character’s attitude to the reader or to the theme of the text, and how this differs with how that tone (or any literary element) might affect a reader’s mood. For

ACTIVITY 2: READ ALOUD AND CLASS DISCUSSION (CONT'D)

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

instance, going back to the example of the text message, the tone—through word choice, punctuation, use of emoticons—might be light-hearted, which is different than its effect upon the reader, which may be to generate happiness or a positive rapport with the writer.

Discuss what mood is established by Carver in this section of the story. What emotions do students say they feel as they read or listen to this part of the text? As with the discussion on tone, show how Carver does not merely create one mood in his story, but uses different literary elements to create a multidimensional atmosphere; e.g., reported action, “[Ed] shot himself in the mouth in his room” and imagery, “His head swelled up to twice the size of a normal head” effect a grim and foreboding mood, while “She poured the rest of the gin in her glass and waggled the bottle” and “I made a big production out of kissing her hand. Everyone was amused” contribute a comforting sense of domesticity and humor to the mood. As with tone, encourage students to begin thinking about how mood might interact with and further theme.

2. By this point in the story, certain recurring symbols and actions should begin to become apparent. Identify one symbol and one motif. What significance do you think they may have to the subject of the story and its developing theme?



Point out some instances of the description of sunlight in the story—how it’s described in the beginning and now through the middle of the story. How has its description changed? Along with simply marking the passage of time during the couples time together in Mel’s kitchen, the sun also symbolizes the contour of the discussion and the mood of the inquiry into the subject of love—e.g., the optimistic beginning of an illuminating conversation when “sunlight filled the room from the big window behind the sink” (170) to the acme of that optimism and cheerful inquiry when “the afternoon sun was like a presence in this room, the spacious light of ease and generosity. We could have been anywhere, somewhere enchanted” (176) to the spiraling attempt to define love and increased drunkenness of the group, “The sunshine inside the room was different now, changing, getting thinner” (182).

Carver also uses the repeated action of drinking related activities as a motif that serves to help bind the text, giving it artistic cohesion, and also, symbolically supporting and furthering the development of the story’s theme. Drinking is a repetition of an action that runs through the story. Discuss some instances of drinking or drinking related activities, and how they help bind the story together for the reader. Encourage students to think about how the instances of drinking might contribute to the emerging theme of the text. For example, drinking might be fuel for the conversation, the inquiry into the nature of love: “Mel got up from the table and went to the cupboard. He took down another bottle” and “Mel opened the gin and went around the table with the bottle” (175). Drinking and its ceremonies helps bind the couples, the participants in the inquiry, together; it celebrates the quest, in a manner of speaking: “Let’s have a toast. I want to propose a toast. A toast to love. To true love,”

ACTIVITY 2: READ ALOUD AND CLASS DISCUSSION (CONT'D)

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Mel said. We touched glasses. 'To love,' we said" (176). When Mel begins exploring more complicated recesses of the nature of love, positing that if he or Terri died, the other partner would "go out and love again, have someone else soon enough," Terri questions his sobriety: "Are you getting drunk? Honey? Are you drunk?" (177). Discuss other ways that recurring actions of drinking relate to the theme and help bind the text together.

3. What can be said about the theme at this point? Does the text seem to have a primary subject, a central concern? How would you describe the emerging meaning of the story? How does Mel contribute through his storytelling and ruminations to the discussion about love? How does this contrast with how Nick and Laura contribute to the conversation?

The theme and main concern of the story have obviously something to do with love. Love is the subject of the couple's conversation. It is in the title of the story. But what is being said about love? How are Mel's attempts to define it going? "I'll tell you what real love is," he says, and then, "I mean, I'll give you a good example" (176). Discuss explicit remarks made by Mel—e.g., "If that's love, you can have it," in reference to Ed killing himself possibly out of love for Terri—and more implicit points he makes—e.g., love is confusing: "There was a time when I thought I loved my first wife more than life itself. But now I hate her guts. I do. How do you explain that?"; and love is complex: "... but then the surviving party would go out and love again [...] all of this love we're talking about, it would just be a memory. Maybe not even a memory" (177). Contrast this with how Nick and Laura contribute to the conversation about love. Laura, when she says that she and Nick know what love is, bumps her knee against Nick's, and says to him, "You're supposed to say something now," to which Nick responds by bringing Laura's hand to his lips and "mak[ing] a big production out of kissing her hand" (175). Discuss the significance of their mostly nonverbal contribution to the conversation and the craft by which Carver underscores it by having Nick respond to Laura's request to "say something" with kissing her hand.

The story is rife with comments made explicitly and implicitly about love. Help students cite and extrapolate larger points from a selection of the many comments made about love. How is love characterized? Are contributions made by each character consistent with other character's contributions? With the character's own contributions? Do the comments add up to something illuminating about the nature of love? What is Mel finally saying about love through his many stories, remarks, and asides? And, more importantly, how may Carver be constructing a larger theme through these many remarks?

It may be helpful when developing discussion on the story's theme to recur to the selection of title and include it in the conversation. Why might Carver have entitled the story as he did? Ask for other, alternate love-themed titles to be considered, such as "What is Love" or even simply "Love," and hypothesize why Carver didn't entitle his story as such. Would they relate adequately to the theme?



ACTIVITY 3: FIND SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

In pairs, students use the Supporting EBC Tool to look for evidence to support additional claims about the text made by the teacher.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Once the class has reached a solid understanding of the text, connect it to the skill of making claims and supporting them with evidence by presenting a few main claims. Pass out the tools and have students work in pairs to find evidence to support the claims.

Collect each student’s Supporting EBC Tool with the evidence they found for the first claim. These should be evaluated to get an assessment of where each student is in the skill development. Students should use their tools for their work in pairs—repeating the first claim and refining their evidence based on the read aloud and class discussion. Even though students are not finding the evidence independently, they should each fill in the tools to reinforce their acquisition of the logical structure among the ideas. Students should get into the habit of using quotation marks when recording direct quotes and including the line

numbers of

the evidence.

The instructional focus here is developing familiarity with claims about texts and the use of textual evidence to support them. Students should still not be expected to develop complete sentences to express supporting evidence. The pieces of evidence should be as focused as possible. The idea is for students to identify the precise points in the text that support the claim. This focus is lost if the pieces of evidence become too large. The tools are constructed to elicit a type of “pointing” at the evidence.

One approach for ensuring a close examination of claims and evidence is to provide erroneous claims that contradict textual evidence and ask students to find the places that disprove the claim. Students could then be asked to modify it to account for the evidence.



ACTIVITY 4: CLASS DISCUSSION OF EBCs

The class discusses evidence in support of claims found by student pairs.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

After students have finished their work in pairs, regroup for a class discussion. Have pairs volunteer to present their evidence to the rest of the class. Discuss the evidence, evaluating how each piece supports the claims. Begin by modeling the evaluation, referring to the checklist, and then call on students to evaluate the evidence shared by the other pairs. They can offer their own evidence to expand the discussion. Carefully guide the exchanges, explicitly asking students to support their evaluations with reference to the text.

These constructive discussions are essential for the skill development. Listening to and evaluating the evidence of others and providing text-based criticism expands students’ capacity to reason

through the relationship between claims and evidence. Paying close attention to and providing instructional guidance on the student comments is as important to the process as evaluating the tools, and creates a class culture of supporting all claims (including oral critiques) with evidence.

Using the Text-Centered Discussion Checklist is one way of talking about and supporting student participation in class and pair discussions, especially if students are already familiar with the TCD checklist from previous units. If not, time can be taken (if desired) to introduce them to some or all of the criteria of effective text-centered discussions.

ACTIVITY 5: FORMING EBCs IN PAIRS

In pairs, students use the Forming EBC Tool to make an evidence-based claim of their own and present it to the class.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Once the claims and evidence have been discussed, students return to the pairs and use the tool to make an evidence-based claim of their own. Pairs should make a single claim, but each student should fill in his or her own tool. Regroup and discuss the claims and evidence as a class. Pairs can use their tool to present their claims and evidence orally.

Talk through the process modeled in the tool, including the nature of the details that stood out to students, the reasoning they used to group and relate them, and the claim they developed from the textual evidence.

Draw upon the Forming EBC Lit Handout and EBC Criteria Checklist I to help guide discussion.

INDEPENDENT READING ACTIVITY

Students independently read the rest of the story (pages 183-185) and use the Forming EBC Tool to make a claim and support it with evidence. This activity overlaps with the first activity of Part 3 and can be given as homework or done at the beginning of the next class.

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Making EBC Tools should be evaluated to assess the development of the student's grasp of the relationship between claims and textual evidence. They should show progress in the relevance and focus of the evidence. The Forming EBC Tools are students' first attempts at making their own claims with the help of a peer. Basic claims are fine at this point. Use the EBC Criteria Checklist to structure the evaluation and feedback to students. Evaluation should focus on the validity and clarity of the claim and the relevance of the evidence. Recording the "thinking" part of the tool is important in order to strengthen the student's reasoning skills as well as provide them with the academic vocabulary to talk about them.

Evidence should be in quotation marks and the reference recorded. Using quotation marks helps students make the distinction between quotes and paraphrases. It also helps them to eventually incorporate quotes properly into their writing. Recording references is critical not only for proper incorporation in writing, but also because it helps students return to text for re-evaluating evidence and making appropriate selections.

The Text-Centered Discussion Checklist can be used to evaluate student participation in discussions for formative and diagnostic information. Teachers and students can get a sense of areas where development in speaking and listening skills is needed.

PART 3

ORGANIZING EVIDENCE-BASED CLAIMS

“I think I want to call my kids ”

OBJECTIVE:

Students expand their ability into organizing evidence to develop and explain claims through a close reading of the text.



ACTIVITIES

1- INDEPENDENT READING AND FORMING EBCs

Students independently read the rest of the story and use the Forming EBC Tool to make an evidence-based claim.

2- READ ALOUD

Students follow along as they listen to part of the text being read aloud.

3- MODEL ORGANIZING EBCs

The teacher models organizing evidence to develop and explain claims using student evidence-based claims and the Organizing EBC Tool.

4- ORGANIZING EBCs IN PAIRS

In pairs, students develop a claim with multiple points using the Organizing EBC Tool.

5- CLASS DISCUSSION OF STUDENT EBCs

The class discusses the evidence-based claims developed by student pairs.

ESTIMATED TIME: 1-3 days

MATERIALS:

Organizing EBC Tool
Forming EBC Tool
Forming EBC Lit Handout
EBC Criteria Checklist I



ALIGNMENT TO CCSS

TARGETED STANDARD(S): RL.11-12.1

RL.11-12.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

SUPPORTING STANDARD(S): RL.11-12.2 RL.11-12.3 RL.11-12.4 SL.11-12.1

RL.11-12.2: Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.11-12.3: Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

RL.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)

SL.11-12.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

ACTIVITY 1: INDEPENDENT READING AND FORMING EBCs

Students independently read the rest of the story and use the Forming EBC Tool to make an evidence-based claim.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Depending on scheduling and student ability, students can be assigned to read and complete the tool for homework. Teachers should decide what works best for their students. It's essential that students have an opportunity to read the text independently. All students must develop the habit of perseverance in reading. Assigning

the reading as homework potentially gives them more time with the text. Either way, it might be a good idea to provide some time at the beginning of class for students to read quietly by themselves. This ensures that all students have had at least some independent reading time.

ACTIVITY 2: READ ALOUD

Students follow along as they listen to the rest of the story being read aloud.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Read the rest of the story aloud as the students follow along. Alternatively students can be asked to read aloud to the class,

ACTIVITY 3: MODEL ORGANIZING EBCs

The teacher models organizing evidence to develop and explain claims using student evidence-based claims and the Organizing EBC Tool.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

The central focus of Part 3 is learning the thinking processes associated with developing an evidence-based claim: reflecting on how one has arrived at the claim; breaking the claim into parts; organizing supporting evidence in a logical sequence; anticipating what an audience will need to know in order to understand the claim; and, eventually, planning a line of reasoning that will substantiate the claim. This is a complex set of cognitive skills, challenging for most students, but essential so that students

can move from the close reading process of arriving at a claim (Parts 1-2 of the unit) to the purposeful writing process of explaining and substantiating that claim (Parts 4-5).

How a reader develops and organizes a claim is dependent upon the nature of the claim itself – and the nature of the text (or texts) from which it arises. In some cases – simple claims involving literal interpretation of the text – indicating where the claim comes from in the text and explaining how the reader arrived at it is

ACTIVITY 3: MODEL ORGANIZING EBCs (CONT'D)

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

sufficient. This suggests a more straightforward, explanatory organization. More complex claims, however, often involve multiple parts, points, or premises, each of which needs to be explained and developed, then linked in a logical order into a coherent development.

Students only learn how to develop and organize a claim through practice, ideally moving over time from simpler claims and more familiar organizational patterns to more complex claims and organizations.

Students can be helped in learning how to develop a claim by using a set of developmental guiding questions such as the following:
[Note: the first few questions might be used with younger or less experienced readers, the latter questions with students who are developing more sophisticated claims.]

- What do I mean when I state this claim? What am I trying to communicate?
- How did I arrive at this claim? Can I “tell the story” of how I moved as a reader from the literal details of the text to a supported claim about the text?
- Can I point to the specific words and sentences in the text from which the claim arises?
- What do I need to explain so that an audience can understand what I mean and where my claim comes from?
- What evidence (quotations) might I use to illustrate my claim? In what order?

- If my claim contains several parts (or premises), how can I break it down, organize the parts, and organize the evidence that goes with them?
- If my claim involves a comparison or a relationship, how might I present, clarify, and organize my discussion of the relationship between parts or texts?

Students who are learning how to develop a claim, at any level, can benefit from graphic organizers or instructional scaffolding that helps them work out, organize, and record their thinking. While such models or templates should not be presented formulaically as a “how to” for developing a claim, they can be used to support the learning process. The Organizing EBC Tool can be used to provide some structure for student planning – or you can substitute another model or graphic organizer that fits well with the text, the types of claims being developed, and the needs of the students.

Begin by orienting students to the new tool and the idea of breaking down a claim into parts and organizing the evidence accordingly.

Ask for a volunteer to present his or her claim and supporting evidence. Use the example as a basis for a discussion. Based on the flow of discussion, bring in other volunteers to present their claims and evidence to build and help clarify the points. Work with students to hone and develop a claim. As a class, express the organized claim in the Organizing EBC Tool. The provided teacher version is one possible way a claim could be expressed and organized.



ACTIVITY 4: ORGANIZING EBCs IN PAIRS

In pairs, students develop and organize a claim using the Organizing EBC Tool.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

When the class has reached a solid expression of an organized evidence-based claim, have students work in pairs, using the tool to develop and organize another claim.

You might want to give students some general guidance by directing their focus to a specific section of the text.



ACTIVITY 5: CLASS DISCUSSION OF STUDENT EBCs

After students have finished their work in pairs, regroup for a class discussion about their EBCs.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Have pairs volunteer to present their claims and evidence to the rest of the class. Discuss the evidence and organization, evaluating how each piece supports and develops the claims. Repeat the process from activity two, using

student work to explain how evidence is organized to develop aspects of claims. The teacher version of the Organizing EBC Tool is one possible way a claim could be expressed and organized.



INDEPENDENT READING ACTIVITY

Students read Tim O'Brien's "On the Rainy River," and use the Forming EBC Tool to make any claim and support it with evidence. This activity overlaps with the first activity of Part 4 and can be given as homework or done at the beginning of the next class.



ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Students are now beginning to develop more complex claims about challenging portions of the text. Their Forming EBC Tool should demonstrate a solid grasp of the claim-evidence relationship, but do not expect precision in the wording of their claims. Using the Organizing EBC Tool will help them clarify their claims as they break them into parts and organize their evidence. How they have transferred their information will demonstrate their grasp of the concept of organizing. Their second Organizing EBC Tool should show progress in all dimensions including the clarity of the claim and the selection and organization of evidence. Use the EBC Criteria Checklist I to structure the evaluation and feedback to students.

PART 4

WRITING EVIDENCE-BASED CLAIMS

“I could head right on out into the sunset.”

OBJECTIVE:

Students develop the ability to express evidence-based claims in writing through a close reading of the text.

ACTIVITIES

1- INDEPENDENT READING AND MAKING EBCs

Students independently review text and use the Forming EBC Tool to develop an evidence-based claim.

2- MODEL WRITING EBCs

The teacher introduces and models writing evidence-based claims using a claim developed in Part 3.

3- WRITING EBCs IN PAIRS

In pairs, students write evidence-based claims using one of their claims from Part 3.

4- CLASS DISCUSSION OF WRITTEN EBCs

The class discusses the written evidence-based claims of volunteer student pairs.

5- READ ALOUD AND CLASS DISCUSSION

The class discusses their new evidence-based claims and students read aloud portions of the text.

6- INDEPENDENT WRITING OF EBCs

Students independently write their new evidence-based claims.

ESTIMATED TIME: 1-3 days

MATERIALS:

Writing EBC Handout
Forming EBC Tool
Organizing EBC Tool
EBC Criteria Checklist II
TCD Checklist

ALIGNMENT TO CCSS

TARGETED STANDARD(S): RL.11-12.1 W.11-12.9a W.11-12.4

RL.11-12.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

W.11-12.9a: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

W.11-12.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

SUPPORTING STANDARD(S): RL.11-12.2 RL.11-12.3 RL.11-12.4 W.11-12.2

RL.11-12.2: Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.11-12.3: Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

RL.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)

W.11-12-2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

ACTIVITY 1: INDEPENDENT READING AND MAKING EBCs

Students independently read the text and use the Forming EBC Tool to develop an evidence-based claim.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Depending on scheduling and student ability, students can be assigned to read and complete the tool for homework. Teachers should decide what works best for their students. It's essential that students have an opportunity to read the text independently. All students must develop the habit of perseverance in reading. Assigning

the reading as homework potentially gives them more time with the text. Either way, it might be a good idea to provide some time at the beginning of class for students to read the text quietly by themselves. This ensures that all students have had at least some independent reading time.

ACTIVITY 2: MODEL WRITING EBCs

The teacher introduces and models writing evidence-based claims using a claim developed in Part 3.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Parts 1-3 have built a solid foundation of critical thinking and reading skills for developing and organizing evidence-based claims. Parts 4 and 5 focus on expressing evidence-based claims in writing. Class discussions and pair work have given students significant practice expressing and defending their claims orally. The tools have given them practice selecting and organizing evidence. Expressing evidence-based claims in writing should now be a natural transition from this foundation.

Begin by explaining that expressing evidence-based claims in writing follows the same basic structure that they have been using with the tools; one states a claim and develops it with evidence. Discuss the additional considerations when writing evidence-based claims like establishing a clear context and using proper techniques for incorporating textual evidence. Introduce the EBC Criteria Checklist II with the additional writing-related criteria. The Writing EBC Handout gives one approach to explaining writing evidence-based claims. Model example

written evidence-based claims are provided with the materials.

Explain that the simplest structure for writing evidence-based claims is beginning with a paragraph stating the claim and its context and then using subsequent paragraphs logically linked together to develop the necessary points of the claim with appropriate evidence. (More advanced writers can organize the expression differently, like establishing a context, building points with evidence, and stating the claim at the end for a more dramatic effect. It's good to let students know that the simplest structure is not the only effective way).

Incorporating textual evidence into writing is difficult and takes practice. Expect all students to need a lot of guidance deciding on what precise evidence to use, how to order it, and deciding when to paraphrase or to quote. They will also need guidance structuring sentence syntax and grammar to smoothly and effectively incorporate textual details, while maintaining their own voice and style.



ACTIVITY 2: MODEL WRITING EBCs (CONT'D)

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Three things to consider when teaching this difficult skill:

- A “think-aloud” approach can be extremely effective here. When modeling the writing process, explain the choices you make. For example, “I’m paraphrasing this piece of evidence because it takes the author four sentences to express what I can do in one.” Or, “I’m quoting this piece directly because the author’s phrase is so powerful, I want to use the original words.”
- Making choices when writing evidence-based claims is easiest when the writer has “lived with the claims.” Thinking about a claim—personalizing the analysis—gives a writer an intuitive sense of how she wants to express it. Spending time with the tools selecting and organizing evidence will start students on this process.
- Students need to know that this is a process—that it can’t be done in one draft. Revision is fundamental to honing written evidence-based claims.



ACTIVITY 3: WRITING EBCs IN PAIRS

In pairs, students write evidence-based claims using their claims from Part 3.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Students return to the same pairs they had in Part 3 and use their Organizing EBC Tools as guidelines for their writing. Teachers should roam, supporting pairs by answering questions and helping them get comfortable with the techniques for incorporating evidence. Use questions from pairs as opportunities to instruct the entire class.

ACTIVITY 4: CLASS DISCUSSION OF WRITTEN EBCs

The class discusses the written evidence-based claims of volunteer student pairs.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Have a pair volunteer to write their evidence-based claim on the board. The class together should evaluate the way the writing sets the context, expresses the claim, effectively organizes the evidence, and incorporates the evidence properly. Use the EBC Criteria Checklist II to guide evaluation. The Text-Centered Discussion Checklist (if being used) is helpful here to guide effective participation in discussion. Of course, it’s also a good opportunity to talk about grammatical structure and word choice. Let other students lead the evaluation, reserving guidance when needed and appropriate. It is likely and ideal that other students will draw on their own versions when evaluating the volunteer pair’s. Make sure that class discussion maintains a constructive collegial tone and all critiques are backed with evidence.

Model written evidence-based claims are provided in the materials.

≡ ACTIVITY 5: READ ALOUD AND ≡ CLASS DISCUSSION

The class discusses their new evidence-based claims from Activity 1 and students read aloud portions of the text.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

At this stage, this activity is reversed from earlier similar ones. Students should present their evidence-based claims and allow discussion to determine areas of the text to be read aloud. Students read aloud relevant portions to help

the class analyze claims and selected evidence. Have students transfer their claims from the Forming EBC Tool to the Organizing EBC Tool to help them organize and refine their evidence in preparation for writing.

The following questions can be used throughout Parts 4 and 5 to stimulate discussion if needed.

1. Aside from episodes within stories told by Mel and Terri, identify instances of marital tension between the couple. What impact do these moments have on the immediate events of the story? How might they relate to the overall theme?
2. How does Terri characterize her relationship with her former lover, Ed? How is this different from how Mel characterizes his relationship to his ex-wife, Marjorie? How might these different characterizations inform the theme of the story?
3. Compare the two couples—their ages, interpersonal relationship, and ways of contributing to the conversation. Why might Carver have chosen to pair these couples together in his story?
4. Carver provides minimal background information on the characters through Nick's narration, so what might be the significance of Nick reporting, in the first paragraph, that the people gathered in Mel's kitchen "were all from somewhere else"?
5. Using evidence from the text, hypothesize why everyone sits motionless and silent in the dark at the end. Why might Carver have chosen to end the story with this image?
6. Looking again at the title, and presuming the couples in the story are representative of "us," what do we talk about when we talk about love?

ACTIVITY 6: INDEPENDENT WRITING OF EBCs

Students independently write their evidence-based claims from their Organizing EBC Tools.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Students should have refined their claims and developed an Organizing EBC Tool based on class discussion. Now they independently write their claims based on their tools.

INDEPENDENT READING ACTIVITY

Students review the entire story and use the Forming EBC Tool to make a new claim of their choice and develop it with evidence. This activity overlaps with the first activity of Part 5 and can be given as homework or done at the beginning of the next class.

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

At this stage teachers can assess students' reading and writing skills. Students should be comfortable making claims and supporting them with organized evidence. Their tools should demonstrate evidence of mastery of the reading skill. Student writing should demonstrate the same qualities of organization. Make sure they have properly established the context; that the claim is clearly expressed; and that each paragraph develops a coherent point. Evaluate the writing for an understanding of the difference between paraphrase and quotation. All evidence should be properly referenced. Use the EBC Criteria Checklist II to structure the evaluation and feedback to students.

PART 5

DEVELOPING EVIDENCE-BASED WRITING

“not one of us moving, not even when the room went dark”

OBJECTIVE:

Students develop the ability to express global evidence-based claims in writing through a close reading of the text.



ACTIVITIES

1- INDEPENDENT READING AND MAKING EBCs

Students independently review the text and use the Forming EBC Tool to make a new evidence-based claim.

2- CLASS DISCUSSION OF GLOBAL EBCs

The teacher analyzes volunteer students' written evidence-based claims from Part 4 and discusses developing global EBCs.

3- PAIRS DISCUSS THEIR EBCs

Students discuss their new claims in pairs and then with the class.

4- INDEPENDENT WRITING OF FINAL PIECE

Students independently write a final evidence-based writing piece using their new claims.

5- CLASS DISCUSSION OF FINAL WRITING PIECES

The class discusses final evidence-based writing pieces of student volunteers.

ESTIMATED TIME: 1-2 days

MATERIALS:

Forming EBC Tool
Organizing EBC Tool
Writing EBC Handout
EBC Criteria Checklist II
Evidence-Based Writing Rubric



ALIGNMENT TO CCSS

TARGETED STANDARD(S): RL.11-12.1 W.11-12.9a W.11-12.4

RL.11-12.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

W.11-12.9a: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

W.11-12.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

SUPPORTING STANDARD(S): RL.11-12.2 RL.11-12.3 RL.11-12.4 W.11-12.2

RL.11-12.2: Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.11-12.3: Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

RL.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)

W.11-12-2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

ACTIVITY 1: INDEPENDENT READING AND MAKING EBCs

Students independently review the entire story and use the Forming EBC Tool to make a new evidence-based claim.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Depending on scheduling and student ability, students can be assigned to read and complete the tool for homework. Teachers should decide what works best for their students. It's essential that students have an opportunity to read the text independently. All students must develop the habit of perseverance in reading. Assigning

the reading as homework potentially gives them more time with the text. Either way, it might be a good idea to provide some time at the beginning of class for students to read the text quietly by themselves. This ensures that all students have had at least some independent reading time.

ACTIVITY 2: CLASS DISCUSSION OF GLOBAL EBCs

The teacher analyzes volunteer students' written evidence-based claims from Part 4 and discusses developing global EBCs that relate the meaning of a work to its literary craft.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

In the final activity sequence of the unit, students are writing and developing evidence-based claims that look more globally at the story, the authorial choices and techniques they have analyzed, and the meanings they have derived. Students should be encouraged to emphasize analysis of craft in their final claims and expected to reference specific textual evidence. However,

they should also be allowed to make claims about what they have come to understand from the text and the various meanings they have found – which may take some students into claims that are more thematic in nature. For their final claim, students might pursue the following option, or follow a path of the teacher's or their own choosing:



Write and explain a global, multi-part claim about some aspect of author's craft in "What We Talk About When We Talk About Love," and how that craft contributes to a "general and pervasive" meaning of the story (Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren) as it has emerged for them through close reading and analysis.



ACTIVITY 3: PAIRS DISCUSS THEIR EBCs

Students discuss their new claims from Activity 1 in pairs and then with the class.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Once the class has a general understanding of the nature of more global claims, break them into pairs to work on the claims they have begun to develop in Activity 1. Have the pairs discuss if their claims contain sub-claims and how best they would be organized. It may be helpful to provide students with both the two-point and

three-point organizational tools to best fit their claims.

Volunteer pairs should be asked to discuss the work they did on their claims. At this point they should be able to talk about the nature of their claims and why they have chosen to organize evidence in particular ways.



ACTIVITY 4: INDEPENDENT WRITING OF FINAL PIECE

Students independently write a final evidence-based writing piece using their new claims.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

This evidence-based writing piece should be used as a summative assessment to evaluate acquisition of the reading and writing skills. Evaluating the claims and discussing ways of

improving their organization breaks the summative assessment into two parts: making an evidence-based claim, and writing an evidence-based claim.



ACTIVITY 5: CLASS DISCUSSION OF FINAL WRITING PIECES

The class discusses the final evidence-based writing piece of student volunteers. If the Text-Centered Discussion Checklist has been used throughout the unit, this activity can be used for formative assessment on student discussion skills. In this case, the activity can be structured more formally, as small group discussions where each student reads, receives constructive evidence-based feedback from other group members, and then responds orally with possible modifications.

ASSESSMENT

At this stage teachers can assess students' reading and writing skills. Students should be comfortable making claims and supporting them with organized evidence. Their tools should demonstrate mastery of the reading skill. Their final evidence-based writing piece can be seen as a summative assessment of both the reading and writing skills. Use the Evidence-Based Writing Rubric to evaluate their pieces.

If activity 5 is used for assessment of discussion skills, use the Text-Centered Discussion Checklist to structure evaluation and feedback.

ALTERNATIVE ORGANIZATION OF PART 5

The activities of Part 5 can be re-ordered to provide a slightly different summative assessment. Teachers could choose not to give Activity 1 as an initial homework assignment or begin the part with it. Instead they can begin with the analysis of student writing from Part 4 and the discussion of global claims. Then students can be assigned to review the entire speech, use a tool to make a global evidence-based claim, and move directly to developing the final evidence-based writing piece. This configuration of the activities provides a complete integrated reading and writing assessment. Depending on scheduling, this activity could be done in class or given partially or entirely as a homework assignment. Even with this configuration, ELL students or those reading below grade level can be supported by having their claims evaluated before they begin writing their pieces.

ACTIVITY 1- CLASS DISCUSSION OF GLOBAL EBCs

The teacher analyzes volunteer students' written evidence-based claims from Part 4 and discusses developing global claims.

ACTIVITY 2- INDEPENDENT READING AND MAKING EBCs

Students review the entire text and use the Forming EBC Tool to make a global EBC.

ACTIVITY 3- INDEPENDENT WRITING OF FINAL PIECE

Students independently write a final evidence-based writing piece using their global claims.

ACTIVITY 4- CLASS DISCUSSION OF FINAL WRITING PIECES

The class discusses final evidence-based writing pieces of student volunteers.