The Politics of Food

Developed by Mary Kay Harrington
Revised by Jennifer McAdams, Lucinda Boswell, and John R. Edlund

Reading Selections for This Module


Web Sites and Media Supplements

The following websites are not required for teaching the module but are provided as background information on the topic. They may be useful to you or your students as supplements to the information in the articles.

Food Movement Sites:

Civil Eats (CivilEats.com): A “daily news source for critical thought about the American food system,” Civil Eats “[publishes] stories that focus the conversation on sustainable agriculture in an effort to build economically and socially just communities.” Naomi Starkman, the Founder and the Editor-in-Chief of Civil Eats, is a food policy consultant to Consumers Union and others as well as a founding board member and the Strategic Communications Advisor to the Food & Environment Reporting Network (thefern.org) and Fix Food. Michael Pollan, in his lecture Food Movement Rising (youtube.com/watch?v=E4w2Cqhz0VM), claims Starkman to be “one of the smartest people on food politics in the country.” He also asserts that Civil Eats is “the best food blog out there.”

Acknowledgments

The contents of this curriculum module were developed under a grant from the Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

Funding was provided for the initial development of this curriculum module by the Merced County P-16 Education and Community Council through an Advanced Placement Incentive Program grant.

Additional funding was provided by The California State University. Funding was also provided by the Fresno County Office of Education through an Investing in Innovation Development Grant, including these foundation partners: The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Walter S. Johnson Foundation, California Community Foundation, and James Irvine Foundation.
Fix Food (fixfood.org): “You are what you eat. Our food supply is convenient, abundant, and cheap. But there are hidden costs you don’t see at the checkout counter. We’re getting sick and our communities and environment are suffering.” FixFood.org is a nonprofit organization dedicated to changing the food system. They use videos and social media to raise awareness and partner with leading organizations to help Americans take direct action.

Fresh The Movie (freshthemovie.com): “The underground documentary that became a massive grassroots success, FRESH is the embodiment of the good food movement.” This site contains links to various current events and video links germane to this module.

King Corn (kingcorn.net): This Peabody-winning film is a feature documentary about Ian Cheney and Curt Ellis, two friends who, seeking to learn where their food comes from, move to the Midwest and lease an acre of land to plant corn, the subsidized crop that drives our fast-food nation.

The Meatrix (themeatrix.com): “Join Leo, the young pig who wonders if he is ‘the one’; Chickity, the feathered family farm defender; and Moopheus, the trench-coat-clad cow with a passion for green pastures, as they expose the problems with factory farming while making the world safe for sustainable family farms.”

Other Perspectives:


A nine-part report from the Economist that is clear and balanced on the issue of quality food versus sustainable, cost-effective food: http://www.economist.com/node/18200618


Module Description

This module was developed for the first semester of eleventh grade and should take about five weeks to complete. The students read and analyze four articles related to food and nutrition in terms of arguments, support, and rhetorical features. They write one of two essays: a personal view about developing a family food plan or a policy essay that argues for a policy change that would improve the health and eating habits of the population. The writing assignments emphasize synthesizing and responding to material from multiple sources.

If your students are unfamiliar with Aristotle’s concepts of ethos, logos, and pathos, you may want to download an article called “Three Ways to Persuade” from the ERWC website. Because students will use their notes, quickwrites, and annotations when they begin the writing assignments, you may want to ask them to keep a notebook. Another alternative is to give them a folder that they can keep in a file drawer or crate in the classroom.
Module Background

This module is primarily about what might be called the “food movement.” The first two articles discussed here were written more than ten years apart and have similar concerns: the health and well being of humans. However, these two authors have different ways of pointing out the same issues. Berry speaks directly to us as individuals, attempting to make us aware of food in general ways. He also presumes that his audience already agrees with his initial assumptions. Pollan speaks to a wide, general audience, barraging us with facts and details, attempting to make us see what is going on outside of us in the world of science, agriculture, and politics. Both of these articles are a bit demanding. The David Barboza article is about the marketing of food and the way advertising encourages us to make less than healthy choices. The article by Jay Rayner is in direct opposition to the position taken by Michael Pollan. Pollan wants better, more natural food while Rayner is arguing that we need cheap food, or the world will starve. This “good food versus cheap food” argument is a key component of the module.

Your students will explore the different ways that issues can be framed and defined by different authors. They will evaluate the arguments by looking at supporting details; they will question assumptions, evaluate rhetorical strategies, and formulate their positions about their own health and well being as well as that of their families.

Module Objectives

In addition to implementing many of the California Common Core State Standards, the module targets the skills areas listed below.

Students will be able to
• Identify the main ideas, including the author’s main argument/claim within a text
• Evaluate support for major claims
• Evaluate the rhetorical effectiveness of different articles
• Incorporate and synthesize material from various articles by quoting and paraphrasing appropriately
• Revise rhetorically to meet the needs of the audience for their proposal
• Edit with a focus on improving readability and effectiveness

Note: The activities for students provided in the Student Version for this module are copied here in the Teacher Version for your convenience. The shaded areas include the actual activities the students will see. The use of italics in the shaded areas generally indicates possible student responses and may be interspersed with notes to the teacher that are not shaded. If there are notes to the teacher within the shaded areas, they are indicated by italics and parentheses.
Getting Ready to Read

The following are some suggestions for optional homework activities that could deepen the students’ understanding of the topic of food and nutrition and their personal relationship to it. These activities develop background knowledge about issues that are related to the subjects of the module but are not directly addressed by the texts. These activities might be conducted during the entire time students are working through the module.

Activity 1: Homework Assignments

Your teacher may ask you to participate in one of the following extended activities as you work on this module:

1. Keep a food diary, and write down everything you eat and drink from breakfast to your last snack before bedtime.

2. Keep a TV diary. When you watch TV, write down the title of the program that you are watching, the kind of food advertisements (cereal, snacks, cookies, restaurants), and the number of food advertisements during the show. If you watch more than one program or sports game, compare the kind and number of food advertisements for each program. Do they change depending on the expected audience? Record your findings as a chart and a journal entry.

3. Research possibilities in your neighborhood for buying local or organic produce from local sources or farmer’s markets. Frequently state colleges have farm stores and sell produce grown on campus.

4. Go to your local market, and research the life of a vegetable in the produce section: Where was it grown? What nutrients was it fed? What pesticides, if any, were used in its production? How was it shipped? How long did it take to arrive at your local market? Write up your findings.

5. There have been some national scares because of food contamination. Research one such outbreak. What food was contaminated, how many people became ill, where was the food shipped, and what was the process for recalling the contaminated food?

6. Wendell Berry writes about how he “dislikes the thought that some animal has been made miserable in order to feed me.” Perhaps you might be interested in researching how animals are treated before becoming “food.” Look up the 5-Step Animal Welfare Rating (globalanimalpartnership.org). It is a method of rating how meat animals are raised. There are ratings for beef, chickens, and pigs. The rating pamphlet has a glossary of terms to help you understand what treatments are allowed and which ones are forbidden.
Compare the ratings to what Wendell Berry recommends in his essay. Can you tell from these descriptions why organic or naturally raised animals are more expensive?

7. Frequently there are articles about the “carbon footprint” humans create by living and using resources and the effect our carbon footprint has on the planet. Go online, type in “carbon footprint,” and find the many Web sites to choose from. Take a carbon footprint test, and see how you and your family score. There are even carbon footprints for pets. Complete a journal entry describing your findings.

8. Analyze the five snack foods that you consume regularly, and determine how many corn byproducts you eat (look at the ingredients, calories, fat content, etc.). Based on these five snacks, argue whether or not you have a healthy diet. Does your view change in any way as you read through each text?

Text—“The Pleasures of Eating” by Wendell Berry

Quickwrites

In “The Pleasures of Eating,” Wendell Berry asks readers to be “responsible eaters,” to see themselves as part of a “food economy,” and to think more deeply about what they eat, where it comes from, and how it is processed. Berry’s approach is philosophical, almost mystical. He advises his readers to grow some of their own food, even if in a window box, so that they can “become acquainted with the beautiful energy cycle that revolves from soil to seed to flower to fruit to food to offal to decay and around again.” Berry frames the issue as a matter of individual education and choice. In Berry’s view, if we choose local, natural, organic, humanely grown food, we will be better people and the world will be a more beautiful place.

The quickwrites below are designed to help students begin this process of reflecting on how they eat.

Activity 2: Getting Ready to Read

Before we discuss the Berry article, think about how much sugar, fried foods, meat, fish, fresh vegetables, fruit, and so forth that you eat daily. Then respond to one of the following quickwrites. (You have five minutes to write.)

**Quickwrite 1:** To what extent do advertisers influence your choices regarding the amount of water, flavored drinks, processed foods, meat, fish, fresh fruits, vegetables, fast food, sugar, and the like that you feed your body?

**Quickwrite 2:** Evaluate your own dietary habits, and discuss whether and in what ways you might change your diet.
Quickwrite 3: Consider what you know about the foods you eat, their origins and their quality. How much do you know about your food?

Quickwrite 4: Think about the amount of time and the quality of the time you spend eating. Do you drive and eat? Do you stand or walk while eating? Discuss how often you sit with your friends and family and enjoy the food that you eat.

Quickwrite 5: Certainly we all are responsible for what we put into our mouths, but at what point do we assume responsibility? At age five, ten, fourteen, eighteen, twenty-one? When (at what age) does a parent’s responsibility end and an individual’s begin?

Exploring Key Concepts

The quotations below introduce two important concepts in Berry’s article: processed food and the factory farm. Discussing these concepts beforehand will help students comprehend Berry’s arguments when they read the whole article.

Activity 3: Exploring Key Concepts

In your group, discuss the following quotations from the essay you are about to read. Be prepared to share your responses with the class.

1. Wendell Berry asks, “When the food product has been manufactured or ‘processed’ or ‘precooked,’ how has that affected its quality or price or nutritional value?” What do you think he means by “processed” food? What is the difference between processed food and natural food? What are some common examples of each kind?

2. Berry says, “The industrial farm is said to have been patterned on the factory production line. In practice, it looks more like a concentration camp.” We tend to think of farms as being very different from factories and concentration camps. What does the term “industrial farm” make you imagine? Why would anyone want to make a farm more like a factory?

Surveying the Text

Surveying the texts, or spot reading, gives students an opportunity to explore the reading, giving them an overview of what it is about and how it is put together. This assists them in making predictions and forming questions to guide their reading. As students look at the text, ask them to survey by looking at the questions below.
Activity 4: Surveying the Text

1. Read the title of the article and guess what it might discuss. Jot down your ideas.
   
   *I think Berry probably will talk about what the pleasures of eating are, like taste and color.*

2. Wendell Berry's essay “The Pleasures of Eating” comes from a collection of his essays titled What Are People For? What do you think the title of the collection might mean? Jot down your ideas.
   
   *I guess the title means that people have many reasons for living. One of the reasons people live is to enjoy food. Perhaps he'll talk about all the reasons people live.*

Making Predictions and Asking Questions

Fluent academic readers use cues from the text to make predictions about what the text will contain. The following questions will help students do this.

Activity 5: Making Predictions and Asking Questions

In this module, you will read four different articles. Keep the following questions in mind as you begin to read each one:

- What do you think the subject of the article will be?
- What do you think is the purpose of the article?
- Who do you think is the intended audience? What makes you think that?
- What do you think the writer wants us to do or believe?
- From the title and other features of the selection, what information or ideas might the article present?
- Will the article be negative or positive in relation to the topic? How did you come to these conclusions?
- What kinds of arguments do you expect? What makes you think that?

The following questions are specific to the Berry article. Write down your answers in your notes.

1. Read the first two paragraphs of Berry's “The Pleasures of Eating.” Jot down your predictions, based on the title and these early paragraphs, of what Berry might discuss.
   
   *Berry is straightforward. He'll probably explain what he means by "eat responsibly" which he feels there's more to talk about.*

2. Read the first four paragraphs of Berry's essay. Adjust your predictions about what Berry might try to do in his essay.
Now I see that he’s going to talk about the way we neglect our food and how we don’t even think about where it comes from, if it’s pure, or its quality or nutritional worth.

3. Turn the title of Berry’s essay into some questions that you might keep in mind as you read the essay.

What are the pleasures of eating?

Does everyone get pleasure all the time from eating?

How much of the time do we not get much pleasure from eating?

### Understanding Key Vocabulary

The following vocabulary words are important to the understanding of the Berry article. Students may be puzzled by the vocabulary words when they encounter them in the text. This activity allows them to create a word bank of vocabulary germane to the individual text. Students can then refer to the vocabulary template for the definition when necessary.

**Activity 6: Understanding Key Vocabulary**

The following vocabulary words are important to the understanding of the Berry essay. If you are puzzled by the vocabulary words when you encounter them in the text, you can return to your vocabulary template for the definitions.

If you know the word, check the sentence from the essay; then write the definition in your own words, and check the box “know it well.” If you don’t know it or are not sure of the meaning, look up the word, check the sentence to make sure you have the correct definition, and then write it down, and check the appropriate box.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word and Paragraph</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Know it well</th>
<th>Have heard of it</th>
<th>Don’t know it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rural (1)</td>
<td>country, rustic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proposition (3)</td>
<td>plan or suggestion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agricultural (3)</td>
<td>farm centered</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consumers (3)</td>
<td>customers; users</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>passive (3)</td>
<td>inactive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>persuaded (3)</td>
<td>influenced, convinced</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>processed food (3)</td>
<td>food that has been altered from its natural state by cooking, canning, freezing, grinding, drying, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word and Paragraph</td>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Know it well</td>
<td>Have heard of it</td>
<td>Don’t know it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>precooked (3)</td>
<td>food that has been cooked before being sold to the consumer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>urban shoppers (4)</td>
<td>city folks who buy things</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>obstacles (4)</td>
<td>things that get in the way of something else</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abstract (4)</td>
<td>intellectual concept; not real</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>specialization (5)</td>
<td>to focus attention on one thing; to be an expert on one small aspect of something</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consumption (5)</td>
<td>eating; the use or using up of something</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>patrons (5)</td>
<td>customers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>industrial food consumer (5)</td>
<td>those who eat unnatural foods that are produced by a specific industry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>industrial eater (6)</td>
<td>person who eats processed foods; opposite of home cooking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uncritical (6)</td>
<td>not evaluating or judging, accepting something as it is</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cultural amnesia (6)</td>
<td>to suffer a certain forgetfulness related to one’s group history</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>implies (6)</td>
<td>means</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a pig in a poke (6)*</td>
<td>something that is purchased without the buyer seeing it or knowing its value beforehand.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>food politics (8)</td>
<td>food activities associated with government</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>food esthetics (8)</td>
<td>a set of principles having to do with appreciating food, its taste, its beauty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>food ethics (8)</td>
<td>moral values associated with food or food production</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perfunctory (8)</td>
<td>superficially careless; unthinking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>obliviousness (9)</td>
<td>to be unaware, unconscious of something</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Word and Paragraph | Definition | Know it well | Have heard of it | Don't know it
--- | --- | --- | --- | ---
edibles (9) | foods | | | |
monocultures (10) | practice of growing just one crop, single crop | | | |
confinement (10) | imprisonment; enclosed in a small space | | | |
volume (11) | quantity, capacity | | | |
scale (11) | size, amount | | | |
relentlessly (11) | continuing without stopping; stubbornly pushing ahead | | | |
species (12) | a type of something, class | | | |
diverse (13) | different, varied, assorted | | | |
estranged (13) | separated from | | | |
horticulture (13) | gardening | | | |
comely arts (13) | pleasing, attractive practices | | | |
industrial farm (14) | a farm organized like a factory for efficiency | | | |
concentration camp (14) | a prison where torture or death might occur—often inhabited by people of a certain religious or ethnic identity | | | |
extensive (15) | all embracing, wide spread, in large amounts | | | |
intact (17) | whole, unbroken, in one piece | | | |

*This will probably not be in the dictionary. Do a Google search for this reference.

As you read the Berry article, you may want to highlight these words in the text.

**Reading**

**Reading for Understanding**

The first reading of an essay is intended to help students understand the text and confirm their predictions. This step is sometimes called reading “with the grain” or “playing the believing game.” Activity 7 provides students with a grid that divides the Berry essay into sections. Students will answer the Say,
Mean, Matter questions for each section, share their answers with a partner, and then revisit the predictions they made in Activity 5 to see if they are confirmed.

### Activity 7: Reading for Understanding

The grid below divides Berry’s essay into sections or chunks. For each section, answer the following questions in your own words:

- What does it say?
- What does it mean?
- Why does it matter?

When you finish, share your grid with a partner to see if you answered the questions in the same way. Discuss the areas where you disagree. See if you can reach an agreement on what the section says, what it means, and why it matters.

After this discussion, revisit the predictions you made in Activity 5. What predictions turned out to be true? Which ones did not?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paragraphs</th>
<th>What does it say? (Summary or gist)</th>
<th>What does it mean? (Interpretation)</th>
<th>What does it matter? (Implications or consequences)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>American farming and rural life is declining. City people can help by eating responsibly.</td>
<td>Some people eat irresponsibly.</td>
<td>Changing our eating habits will help farms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>It argues that “eating is an agricultural act,” that most people see themselves as passive consumers rather than participants in agriculture, that people buy food the way they buy entertainment, and that people are ignorant about where food comes from.</td>
<td>We should learn more about our food. Food companies are fooling us.</td>
<td>If we know more about our food, we will make better choices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>People who do not know where their food comes from are victims; they don’t associate food with the land.</td>
<td>Most of us are victims because we don’t understand our food. We are too passive and just accept what advertisers sell us.</td>
<td>We have to take action and stop being passive consumers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraphs</td>
<td>What does it say? (Summary or gist)</td>
<td>What does it mean? (Interpretation)</td>
<td>What does it matter? (Implications or consequences)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-9</td>
<td>It argues that there is a “politics” of food that takes our freedom away by controlling our knowledge and our choices. We hurry through work, recreation, and eating. Our food is processed so we don’t have to spend much time preparing or eating it.</td>
<td>Knowledge is freedom. If we know more, we have more power. Also, food is more than just fuel for keeping us going.</td>
<td>Controlling food controls the people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-11</td>
<td>It discusses how advertising hides the true nature of our food and its origins; it argues that the concerns of the food industry are not about quality and health but volume and price.</td>
<td>Food companies don’t want us to know that the animals we eat were raised in miserable conditions.</td>
<td>Maybe if we knew everything about our food, we would not want to eat it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-13</td>
<td>It offers a solution including some steps the reader can take to “eat responsibly” and builds on the idea that we should participate in the production and cooking of our food.</td>
<td>We should do these tasks to be responsible eaters.</td>
<td>We will have to spend a lot of time studying food and a lot of money buying the right food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-15</td>
<td>It draws the conclusion that knowing what happens in the industrial food economy leads to displeasure. Berry describes some of his own personal choices to avoid this displeasure.</td>
<td>We should be more like Wendell Berry.</td>
<td>If we act more like Berry, we will enjoy our food more.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It argues that eating with full knowledge is the fullest pleasure and a profound enactment of our connection with the world, and it quotes a poem by William Carlos Williams that connects eating to spiritual imagination.

Eating is spiritual, almost a religious act. We should take it more seriously.

It’s like saying grace at dinner.

Noticing Language

Among the delights and pitfalls of reading Berry is the fact that he uses hyperbole to create humor. The combination and the volume of words can be overwhelming to students unless they are given the opportunity to take a breath, relax, and enjoy the experience.

Activity 8: Noticing Language—Sentence Modeling

Among the delights and pitfalls of reading Berry is the fact that he uses hyperbole to create humor. The combination and the volume of words can be overwhelming. Here you have an opportunity to take a breath, relax, and enjoy the experience.

Locate the sentence below in “The Pleasures of Eating.” (Hint: It’s in paragraph 9.) Define any unknown words. Next, find a partner, and read the sentence aloud, striving to read it in the most expressive manner possible. (It is a Dickensian sentence!)

The passive American consumer, sitting down to a meal of pre-prepared or fast food, confronts a platter covered in inert, anonymous substances that have been processed, dyed, breaded, sauced, gravied, ground, pulped, strained, blended, prettified and sanitized beyond resemblance to any part of any creature that ever lived.

The model sentence relies heavily on interesting descriptive words, phrases, and verbs in a series, so using a thesaurus or dictionary may be helpful. Just be careful to choose words you know; words that are unfamiliar may be inappropriate to use in the context of your topic.

The key to sentence imitation is to first understand the grammatical structure of the sentence you are imitating.
Look for the subject first because the subject of a sentence is its focus.
• In Berry's sentence the subject is *consumer*.

Next, look for the main verb in the sentence. What is the subject doing?
• In Berry's sentence, the verb is *confronts*.

So what is the consumer confronting?
• The consumer confronts *substances* (presumably food).

Here is Berry's sentence again. Notice how Berry expands each element in his sentence to give it rhetorical punch.

**What is the consumer like?**
*passive and American, sitting down to a meal*

**What is the meal like?**
*of prepared or fast food*

**What does the consumer do?**
*confronts a platter*

**What is the platter like?**
*covered in substances*

**What are the substances like?**
*inert, anonymous, that have been processed, dyed, breaded, sauced, gravied, ground, pulped, strained, blended, prettified and sanitized beyond resemblance to any part of any creature that ever lived*

Berry takes these elements and combines them into one powerful sentence:

> The passive American consumer, sitting down to a meal of pre-prepared or fast food, confronts a platter covered in inert, anonymous substances that have been processed, dyed, breaded, sauced, gravied, ground, pulped, strained, blended, prettified and sanitized beyond resemblance to any part of any creature that ever lived.

To create your own sentence, you will first decide on a **topic** for the sentence (related to the politics of food), a **subject**, a **verb** that shows what the subject is doing, and descriptive words, phrases, and clauses that provide additional details and dramatic impact. Here is an example:

The diver stares at the pool below.

**Topic**: a diver on a high diving board

**Subject**: The diver

**Verb**: stares

Now comes the fun part where you give flavor and emotion to the sentence. Notice that Berry first describes the consumer. Here is an example using the diver. Our diver will be young and nervous.

**The diver**
*The terrified, adolescent diver, standing knock-kneed and trembling on the six meter board,*
What does the diver do?
stares at the tiny aquamarine rectangle of water,

What is the water doing?
shimmering, shifting, swelling, slopping, swirling, sloshing, splashing, splattering,

Where is the water?
miles below his toes

What do his toes do?
clench tightly to the wobbling, sandpapered board.

The finished sentence:
The terrified, adolescent diver, standing knock-kneed and trembling on the six meter board, stares at the tiny aquamarine rectangle of water, shimmering, shifting, swelling, slopping, swirling, sloshing, splashing, and splattering miles below his toes that clench tightly to the wobbling, sandpapered board.

Okay, so it is not as good as Wendell Berry, but the idea is to give it a try! You can change it as you go along.

It is important to remember, however, that while long, descriptive sentences are fun to create and may be very effective in certain situations, often it is the short, simple sentence that is most clear. Often skillful writers will conclude a series of long, complex sentence that are packed with information with one short punchy sentence that grabs the reader’s attention. At the end of a paragraph describing an Olympic diving competition, the writer might finish with the following sentence:
The young diver stood on the high board in complete terror.

Now try your own. Write a short sentence on the politics of food and identify the subject and verb. Then expand the elements in your sentence with descriptive words, phrases, and clauses. Ask yourself questions like the ones above.

Annotating and Questioning the Text

In Activity 7 students filled out a Say, Mean, Matter chart for different sections of the Berry article. Now they will return to that outline and respond to the arguments that Berry makes.

Activity 9: Annotating and Questioning the Text

In Activity 7, you filled out a Say, Mean, Matter chart for different sections of the Berry article. In that activity, you made objective notes about what Berry was talking about, what you thought he meant, and what the consequences might be. You were working to understand the article. Now you are going to work on questioning the article. As you read the article and your notes, make
further notes in the opposite margin or on another sheet of paper. Remember that Berry is writing for an audience that has already asked him what they can do to be more responsible eaters, so he is preaching to the choir to a certain extent and may not feel that he has to present evidence for every one of his claims. Think about the following questions:

- Berry asserts that “Most eaters . . . think of food as an agricultural product perhaps, but they do not think of themselves as participants in agriculture.” What does he mean by this? Is it true? How would you find out?
- Berry says that “food industrialists” think that “[t]he ideal industrial food consumer would be strapped to a table with a tube running from the food factory directly into his or her stomach.” Does he provide evidence for this idea? Do you think that this is true?
- In this passage, Berry defines the “industrial eater” as a “victim”: “The industrial eater is, in fact, one who does not know that eating is an agricultural act, who no longer knows or imagines the connections between eating and the land, and who is therefore necessarily passive and uncritical—in short, a victim.” Do these qualities actually characterize a “victim”? If consumers are victims, who is victimizing them? Do you feel like a victim?
- Berry says, “Our kitchens and other eating places more and more resemble filling stations, as our homes more and more resemble motels.” What does he mean by this? Is this true of your kitchen and home?
- Berry says that if one got all of one’s knowledge of food from advertisements, “one would not know that the various edibles were ever living creatures, or that they all come from the soil, or that they were produced by work.” Is this true in your experience? Why would food companies hide the origins of their products?
- Berry says that in the food industry, “the overriding concerns are not quality and health, but volume and price.” Does he have any evidence that food companies care only about price? Do you think this is true?
- Berry lists seven actions one can take to reclaim “responsibility for one’s own part in the food economy.” Are you convinced that people who change their behavior in these ways will lead better lives? Why or why not?
- In Berry’s conclusion, he argues that “[e]ating with the fullest pleasure—pleasure, that is, that does not depend on ignorance—is perhaps the profoundest enactment of our connection with the world.” Is this essay really about “pleasure”? Is it the sensory pleasure of taste and smell, or is it a self-satisfied pleasure from doing the “right” thing?
Analyzing Stylistic Choices

This particular line of questioning is offered to help your students see that the linguistic choices writers make create certain effects for their readers.

Activity 10: Analyzing Stylistic Choices

What are the denotative and connotative meanings of the key words noted below? Do you think the connotation or denotation you have for the word is the same as that intended in the text? Refer back to the text to see if your use and the author’s are in agreement. If not, in what way are they dissimilar?

Berry’s “The Pleasures of Eating” is about participating in the “agricultural act”—essentially being present for one’s food and understanding and appreciating the process from its beginning to our eating it. For the most part, Berry has a relaxed style, a personal voice. Although he does use sophisticated language at times, he speaks directly to the reader. Look at the following words and phrases, and discuss with your partner or your small group why Berry chose them to explain his concerns about our lack of knowledge concerning agricultural processes:

- mere consumers—passive, uncritical, and dependent (paragraph 5)
- victim (paragraph 6)
- one reason to eat responsibly is to live free (paragraph 7)
- remarkable obliviousness (paragraph 8)
- dependent on toxic chemicals (paragraph 10)
- ignorance and helplessness (paragraph 12)
- bechemicaled factory-fields (paragraph 14)
- factory production line… looks more like a concentration camp (paragraph 14)

1. How are you affected by this language?

The words and phrases outlined here seem to have a negative connotation. They make me feel a bit depressed and ignorant.

2. The word “bechemicaled” is a bit unusual. What does the prefix “be” mean? What are some other ways of saying this? Why did Berry choose this word?

Most of the hits a Google search finds for this word are references to this article, so I guess this is a pretty unusual word. The prefix “be” in this case probably means “covered with.” The oddness of the word makes it stick out, calling attention to the chemicals.

3. How do the connotations of these words contribute to what Berry is trying to do in the paragraph or overall argument?

The connotations are all pretty negative. It makes the reader want to avoid being like this.
Summarizing and Responding

Writing a short summary can solidify learning. This summary will also help students when they are comparing the arguments of all four essays and writing their papers.

Activity 11: Summarizing and Responding

Using the Say, Mean, Matter chart from Activity 7 and other notes, write a summary of Berry’s essay, “The Pleasures of Eating.” Limit it to 10 sentences or fewer.

In “The Pleasures of Eating,” Wendell Berry suggests that people have become more aware of the notion he calls an “agricultural act.” Eating awareness, for Berry, means acknowledging and honoring where our food comes from—whether plant or animal—and its connection to the land. The next step is to think about how “processed” foods separate us from the “agricultural act” since these foods have no resemblance to a natural food. He criticizes most of us who are “industrial food consumers” and calls us oblivious. Ultimately, he believes that without this knowledge, we can easily be manipulated by advertisers and thus not be free. Lastly, he lists seven ways we can become connected to the food we eat. He tries to argue against ignorance.

Thinking Critically

The following questions move your students through the traditional rhetorical appeals. Within this framework, the questions also help your students progress from a literal to an analytical understanding of the reading material.
Activity 12: Thinking Critically

Discuss the following questions with your classmates, and record your notes to use when you are writing about this article.

Questions about Logic (Logos)

1. What are Berry’s major claims and assertions? Do you agree with them?

   Berry’s major claim is that people are ignorant of the “agricultural act,” that they don’t understand or care where their food comes from. He doesn’t cite any studies but says that most urban shoppers don’t know very much about the food they buy. Then he defines an “industrial eater” and describes the processed food he/she consumes. Berry cites one work—Howard’s The Soil and Health, which is philosophic.

2. Are any of his claims weak or unsupported? Which ones and why?

   His claims are virtually all unsupported. No facts are given except for Berry’s own experience. He seems to want us to understand his philosophic point—to come to awareness by asking ourselves questions about our own eating habits. He is thinking aloud.

3. Can you think of counterarguments that Berry doesn’t consider?

   Part of the reason we eat so much processed snack food is that we’re all so busy. Who has time to cook? Who has the money to go out to eat at a quality place? Companies do us a favor to have food we can buy that is ready to microwave or ready to eat. His list of things for us to do is unrealistic.

4. Do you think the author has left something out on purpose? Why?

   Berry’s discussion about processed food doesn’t tell us, specifically, any studies about food quality or nutritional value. He asks us to find out. People seem to get what they ask for. I don’t think it’s his concern to prove something. I think he just wants readers to think about this subject.

Questions about the Writer (Ethos)

5. Does this author have the appropriate background to speak with authority on this subject?

   Wendell Berry is a novelist, poet, environmental activist, and farmer. He has published over 40 books of essays, poetry, and novels. He has worked on a farm in Kentucky since 1965. He was a professor of English at the University of Kentucky and a past fellow at the Guggenheim and Rockefeller Foundations. He has won numerous awards for his work: The Academy of Arts and Letters in 1971 and most recently, the T.S. Eliot Award. Here is a quotation by Berry: “My work has been motivated by a desire to make myself responsible at home, in this world, and in my native and chosen place.” It seems that he does have the authority to speak on this subject. He’s a writer and a farmer. One of his books of essays is called The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture. This sounds like a title that would combine his knowledge.
6. Berry makes a reference to Sir Albert Howard. Who is he? What is his book, Soil and Health, about?

Sir Albert Howard was a British agricultural expert (1873–1947) who spent 25 years working in India with agricultural programs. He became very interested in composting. His book, Soil and Health: A Study of Organic Agriculture, was very important to the early organic farmers. In fact, Howard is considered the father of organic farming. I can understand, then, why Berry made a reference to him. Howard was probably an important figure in Berry’s life.

7. What does Berry's style and language tell you about him?

Now that I have found out more about him, I understand the tone of his essay a bit better. He’s a thinker; he’s concerned about contemporary agriculture, and he loves the land. His language is definitely that of an English professor, but he doesn’t make the reader feel inferior. I did have to work to understand him.

Questions about Emotions (Pathos)

8. Do you think the author is trying to manipulate your emotions? How?

Berry's article calls consumers “passive, uncritical, dependent.” I don't like to think of myself that way. I'm uncomfortable. On the other hand, Berry ends on a positive note: pleasure.

9. Do your emotions conflict with your logical interpretation of the arguments?

When Berry, in paragraph 21, talks about how the Central Valley of California looks “more like a concentration camp,” I’m jolted a bit because I know what the fields look like there, and I’ve never thought of them as “huge, bechemicaled factory-fields.” I can see what Berry’s point is—how living things should live in good soil—but comparing them to concentration camps goes a little far.

FA Formative Assessment

The following quickwrites will allow you to assess how well your students understand the position Wendell Berry has taken.

Activity 13: Quickwrite

Choose one of the quickwrite topics below:

Quickwrite 1: Find Wendell Berry’s list of ways of eating responsibly, and determine which ones are possible or desirable for you and your family. Which ones could you do? Would it make you and your family healthier or happier? Do you agree with Wendell Berry that these are good actions to take?
Quickwrite 2: Have you ever worked in a fast food restaurant? Do you know someone who has? Describe what it is like to work in this kind of restaurant and whether your experiences there make you more or less likely to agree with Wendell Berry.

Prereading

Making Predictions and Asking Questions

“When a Crop Becomes King” adds another perspective to the discussion about food: the effects of government policy on the food supply. Michael Pollan frames his argument by personifying corn, or “zea mays” as he calls it, using the Latin name for the species. It is almost as if zea mays is taking advantage of us. Pollan spends the first part of the essay describing the expanding success of zea mays. He describes the way the U.S. government subsidizes the overproduction of corn and says, “this subsidy might look like a handout for farmers, but it’s a form of welfare for the plant itself—and for all those economic interests that profit from its overproduction: the processors, factory farms, and the soft drink and snack makers that rely on cheap corn.”

So what is the problem? Michael Pollan says, “The problem in corn’s case is that we’re sacrificing the health of both our bodies and the environment by growing and eating so much of it.” Pollan spends the second part of the essay describing the effects of U.S. corn policy on American society.

Activity 14: Making Predictions and Asking Questions

Consider the following questions, and make predictions about what the article will be about. Make notes about your predictions for later reference.

1. Read the title of the article, and guess what it might discuss. Jot down your ideas.

   It sounds like one crop became king of the land. I wonder how that happened?
   It doesn’t say what crop.
2. Read the first paragraph of Pollan’s “When a Crop Becomes King.” Based on the title and the first paragraph, jot down your predictions of what Pollan’s point of view might be.

*Pollan’s essay will be a bit more complicated than Berry’s, I think. He’ll probably discuss how much corn people eat. It might be that he’ll explain some problem about corn.*

3. Read the first four paragraphs of Pollan’s essay, and adjust your predictions about what Pollan might try to prove.

*I think Pollan’s essay might be more work to read. He has lots of facts and details to keep track of. I think he’s going to talk about how much government help corn farmers receive. It sounds like it costs a lot, but I think corn’s good for us to eat. It is, after all, a vegetable, isn’t it? [Actually, it is not. It’s a grain.]*

4. Turn the title of Pollan’s essay into some questions that you might keep in mind as you read the essay.

*What happens when a crop becomes king?*
*What’s wrong when a certain crop becomes king?*
*What’s wrong with corn becoming king?*

---

**Understanding Key Vocabulary**

The following words will help students develop a vocabulary for talking about food and nutritional issues.

**Activity 15: Understanding Key Vocabulary**

The following vocabulary words are important to your understanding of this essay. If you are puzzled by the vocabulary words when you encounter them in the text, you can return to your vocabulary template for the definition.

If you know the word, check the sentence from the essay, write the definition in your own words, and check the box “know it well.” If you don’t know it or are not sure of the meaning, look up the word, check the sentence to make sure you have the correct definition, write it down, and check the appropriate box.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word and Paragraph</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Know it well</th>
<th>Have heard of it</th>
<th>Don't know it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dubious (1)</td>
<td>doubtful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>domestication (2)</td>
<td>subduing, making tame</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>insinuated (3)</td>
<td>subtle hinting or manipulation; moving in on someone or into a certain situation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subsidized/ subsidies (4, 6)</td>
<td>money provided by the government or state</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evolved (6)</td>
<td>developed gradually over time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wreaks havoc (6)</td>
<td>causes a great deal of damage and chaos</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stave off (6)</td>
<td>keep away, delay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ethanol (6)</td>
<td>liquid for fuel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>biodegradable (6)</td>
<td>able to decompose (break down) naturally</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qua (7)</td>
<td>as</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>begrudge (8)</td>
<td>resent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>domestication/ domesticating (8,13)</td>
<td>animals or plants for human use</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>soared (9)</td>
<td>increased rapidly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>metabolized (10)</td>
<td>produced energy, digested</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fructose (10)</td>
<td>sugars in fruits and honey</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>glucose (10)</td>
<td>sugary energy source</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>triglyceride (10)</td>
<td>fat in tissues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sustainable (12)</td>
<td>able to be continued, maintaining ecological balance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>predators (13)</td>
<td>those that prey on something in order to attack it</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>douse (13)</td>
<td>cover with liquid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reading

Reading for Understanding

The Say, Mean, Matter activity will help students understand both the content and the argument of the piece.

Activity 16: Reading for Understanding

Read Pollan’s essay silently, and note in the margin where your predictions turn out to be true. Note also what surprises you: What didn’t you know? Does he persuade you to accept his point of view? What, specifically? To what extent?

In groups of three or four, read a paragraph at a time, and ask yourself the following questions for each paragraph:

• What does the paragraph say?

Paragraph 6 explains how pervasive corn is in our diet, how hidden from us it is. It also explains how the extra corn is used by companies.

• What does the paragraph mean?

The meat that we eat (chicken, pigs, cows, fish) is all fed corn, and since these animals haven’t evolved to eat corn, they get sick, so they are fed antibiotics.

• What does it matter?

Our health might be affected from eating the flesh of these animals.

Discuss your responses in your groups.

Annotating and Questioning the Text

Annotating a text enables readers to explore more deeply how a text works to inform or persuade its readers. During the initial reading, you read “with the grain” and “played the believing game.” In rereading, it is helpful to read “against the grain,” or “play the doubting game.”

Activity 17: Annotating and Questioning the Text

As you reread Pollan’s essay, “When a Crop Becomes King,” make marginal notations: ask questions, express surprise, disagree, elaborate, and note any moments of confusion. Here is one way to structure marginal notations.

1. In the left-hand margin, label the following:

• The introduction

One could argue that it ends at the first paragraph or even after the third since the thesis is more fully developed in the last sentence of the third paragraph.
• The issue or problem Pollan is writing about

   Pollan writes about the “cornification” of our entire food supply and taxpayers’ unknowing support of it.

• The author’s main arguments

   He cites the cost of growing corn, the abundance of corn because of farm subsidies, and the use of corn as pervasive and unhealthy to humans and to the environment.

• Examples the author gives

   He uses a lot of examples. The cost per bushel of growing corn ($3) as opposed to its selling price ($2). He then explains how cheap corn is and therefore it is used for soft drinks and snacks (corn syrup). Cheap and abundant corn is fed to animals (who should be raised on grass or grain). In the 1980s, when corn sweeteners became widely used, obesity and Type 2 diabetes became problems in the United States. In addition, corn demands a lot of nitrogen fertilizer and pesticides. The runoff is damaging to the water supply. Producing chemicals to grow corn uses a lot of oil and natural gas.

• The conclusion

   Corn has become king. Pollan summarizes the results of allowing this to happen.

2. In the right-hand margin, write your reactions to what the author is saying. Exchange your annotations and compare your labeling and responses in small groups or in pairs. Discuss why different people annotate a text differently.

Analyzing Stylistic Choices

This particular line of questioning can help students see that the linguistic choices writers make create certain effects for their readers. These questions are divided into two categories: words and sentences. You may want to ask your students what the denotative and connotative meanings of key words are and how the specific words the author chooses affect their responses.

Activity 18: Analyzing Stylistic Choices

“When a Crop Becomes King” is about a very specific crop—corn. The language is both sophisticated and informal. Look at the following words and phrases, and discuss with your partner or in your small groups why Pollan chose them to highlight the huge social and environmental issues that he sees surrounding the overproduction of corn in the U.S. and our romantic sense of the crop. Notice the soothing language of the first paragraph—its romantic treatment of corn as fanciful and idealistic.

• plants stretch toward the sun (paragraph 1)
effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
   a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.
   b. Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.

How are you affected by this language?

Now examine the words Pollan uses in the rest of his essay. They are the opposite of fanciful and idealistic.

- dominion (paragraph 4)
- welfare for the plant (paragraph 5)
- cornification (paragraph 6)
- corn we consume is invisible (paragraph 6)
- corn diet wreaks havoc (paragraph 6)
- illness and infection (paragraph 6)
- pushed sugar aside (paragraph 7)
- expanding race of corn eaters (paragraph 7)
- epidemic of obesity (paragraph 9)
- serious and lasting damage (paragraph 11)
- greediest of plants (paragraph 11)
- killed off marine life (paragraph 11)
- huge, inefficient, polluting machine (paragraph 12)
- guzzles fossil fuel (paragraph 12)
- douse it with chemicals (paragraph 13)
- poison our water (paragraph 13)
- cracked system (paragraph 13)

How are you affected by this language?

The first paragraph contains romantic words, emphasizing the idealistic notion of farming. After that, Pollan’s language becomes a series of words and phrases with negative connotations (i.e., guzzles, epidemic, killed off) that add weight to the argument that corn has become a dangerous king.
### Postreading

#### Summarizing and Responding

A One-Pager is a way of responding to an expository text using only a single sheet of paper. It represents the student's written and graphic interpretation of what was read. It may be very literal (just based on the facts or information in the piece) or it may be a symbolic representation of the text. It assists the reader in visualizing the primary argument, important rhetorical strategies and organizational structure of the text.

**Activity 19: Summarizing and Responding—One Pager**

- Collect important facts, words, phrases, sentences, and ideas from the reading. This collection should represent the primary arguments and/or rhetorical strategies of the text.
- On a standard sized, unlined piece of paper, create a graphic representation, or drawing, that relates to the reading and the quotes you chose. Your purpose in creating this One-Pager is to give the viewer an instant overview of the content of the article.
- In a section of your drawing, write your quotes. In another section of the drawing, write a personal response to what you have read: comment, interpretation, evaluation, etc.
- Include the title and author.
- The most effective presentation will fill the entire page, use color, and use ink for the written portion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading Rubric – One-Pager</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visually captures the argument, rhetorical strategy, and organization of the essay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes insightful personal reflection about the essay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses quotes that are important to the essay and relate to the visual image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requirements = effective presentation, spelling, grammar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total:**
- 35-32=A
- 31-28=B
- 27-24=C
- 23-21=D

**Comments:**

See the sample at the end of the teacher version.
Text—“If You Pitch It, They Will Eat” by David Barboza

Prereading

Making Predictions and Asking Questions

David Barboza’s “If You Pitch It, They Will Eat It” discusses the marketing of food products to children through television, video games, the Internet, media tie-ins, even marketing in schools. Barboza argues that “[t]he increase in food marketing to children has closely tracked their increase in weight” because the marketing sells junk foods, not fruits and vegetables. The marketers argue that they are not responsible because obesity is the result of lack of exercise, poor eating habits, and poor supervision. Barboza describes a number of different commercials aimed at children. The latter part of the essay is about efforts to control this advertising, with some comparing food marketers to big tobacco companies.

The following questions will help students use cues from the text to make predictions about what the text will contain.

Activity 20: Making Predictions and Asking Questions

Read the title and first four paragraphs of Barboza’s essay silently and consider the following questions.

1. Based on the title and these early paragraphs, what do you think Barboza is discussing?
2. Turn the title into some questions you might keep in mind as you read the essay.
3. Who do you think is the intended audience for this piece?
4. What type of argument do you think Barboza is going to make?

Understanding Key Vocabulary

The following words will help students develop a vocabulary for talking about nutritional issues and the marketing of food products.

Activity 21: Understanding Key Vocabulary

If you know the word, check the sentence from the essay; then write the definition in your own words, and check the box “know it well.” If you don’t know it or are not sure of the meaning, look up the word, check the sentence to make sure you have the correct definition, then write it down, and check the appropriate box.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word and Paragraph</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Know it well</th>
<th>Have heard of it</th>
<th>Don't know it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>blitzkrieg (3)</td>
<td>swift military action; saturation bombing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>obesity (3)</td>
<td>overweight</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nutritionists (3)</td>
<td>people who studies nutrition or the science of food</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proliferation (5)</td>
<td>great increase; rapid reproduction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sedentary (11)</td>
<td>characterized by lots of sitting, a “couch potato”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>epidemic (11)</td>
<td>fast spreading diseases; rapid development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kickback (24)</td>
<td>money given to get favor for oneself, a bribe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concur (26)</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>differentiate (30)</td>
<td>tell the difference between</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raffish (35)</td>
<td>showy, charmingly unconventional; confident but a bit disreputable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>revealed (35)</td>
<td>enjoyed immensely; took pleasure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>resonate (36)</td>
<td>have an effect</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scapegoat (41)</td>
<td>someone forced to take the blame for the actions of a group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abdication (42)</td>
<td>the forfeiting of one's position or rank; resignation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>regulate (43)</td>
<td>control something by rules or laws</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>litigation (54)</td>
<td>lawsuit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>analyst (54)</td>
<td>an expert who examines something</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bottom line (58)</td>
<td>profit or loss; lowest acceptable amount; unavoidable factor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conscience (58)</td>
<td>sense of right or wrong</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paradigm (58)</td>
<td>model; relationship of ideas to one another</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reading

Reading for Understanding

The Say, Mean, Matter activity will help students understand both the content and the argument of the piece.

Activity 22: Reading for Understanding

Read Barboza’s essay silently, and note in the margin where your predictions turn out to be true. Note also what surprises you: What didn’t you know? Does he persuade you to accept his point of view? What, specifically? To what extent?

In groups of three or four, read a paragraph at a time, and ask yourself the following questions for each paragraph. Some of the paragraphs are quite small, so combine them where it makes sense to do so.

• What does the paragraph say?
  Paragraph 7 explains that fast food companies see their advertising as harmless and not the cause of childhood obesity. Some lawyers and legislators disagree and want to limit or ban advertising directed toward children.

• What does the paragraph mean?
  That there is disagreement about the cause and blame for childhood obesity.

• Why does it matter?
  Obesity is a serious health issue and it appears that childhood obesity is increasing. If we can understand the cause, perhaps society can cure it.

Discuss your responses in your group.

Considering the Structure of the Text

Making a descriptive outline helps students understand how the organization of the topics and arguments influences the reader.

Activity 23: Considering the Structure of the Text

This activity will help you discover the main method of organization in the essay.

• Draw a line across the page where the introduction ends. Is it after the first paragraph, or are there several introductory paragraphs? Is it in the middle of a paragraph? How do you know that the text has moved on from the introduction?

• Draw a line across the page where the conclusion begins. Is it the last paragraph, or are there several concluding paragraphs? How do you know that the text has reached the conclusion?
Discuss in groups or as a class why the lines were drawn where they were.

In the left-hand margin of the text, label and summarize the information in sections of the essay by using the following outline.

- **The introduction (paragraphs 1-3)**
  
  The introduction opens with an example of how McDonald’s has connected its restaurant chain to toys children love and follows with the accusation by nutritionists that this advertising is causing childhood obesity.

- **The issue or problem Barboza is writing about**
  
  Barboza writes about the epidemic of childhood obesity and the way advertising and the media contribute to the problem by promoting snacks and unhealthy food to children through toys, games, and TV shows.

- **The author’s main arguments (paragraphs 4-52)**
  
  Companies are going after children because there is money to be made.

  Companies intentionally “hook” young children to get life-long customers.

  Advertisers blur the distinction between TV characters and product brands to sell unhealthy food.

  Schools contribute to the problem by accepting money to showcase fast food products.

  Advertisers claim they are not the problem, but parents are.

  The problem is so pervasive that some regulation must be put in place.

- **Examples the author gives**
  
  TV shows based on food characters/food based on TV shows

  Children in stores asking for food products by name and singing slogans

  Alliance between food companies and entertainment companies

  Amount of food advertising in children’s program

- **The conclusion (paragraphs 53-58)**
  
  The government is starting to take action because of the dangerous situation.

  Companies may take action only if their profits are in danger.

In the right-hand margin, write your reactions to what the author is saying using the same outline. This will provide you with a valuable resource when you begin your essay. You will have the examples the author uses and your own reactions to those examples ready to be used to support your claim.

- **The introduction (paragraphs 1-3)**
  
  The author does not seem to like McDonald’s and uses some pretty negative words to describe the restaurant and their advertising practices.
• The issue or problem Barboza is writing about

It seems as though children are fatter now than they were in the past, which
Barboza claims is because of fast food and television. I think that it is also
because kids sit around so much. Kids don’t play outdoors, join teams or just run
around.

• The author’s main arguments (paragraphs 4-52)

Companies are making a profit from kids because they are impressionable.

All the advertising does seem to create a habit and if parents buy the stuff in the
advertisements they are helping the companies.

I agree with this one. All the fast food is tied to a movie or a cartoon. My own
kid brother begs for fast food so he can get the toys.

My school used to invite a number of fast food restaurants onto campus for
students to enjoy as a reward for good test scores.

This would not be an issue if parents didn’t buy the food or “give in” to their kids
when they beg for McDonald’s.

Hard to know whether a law would work or not. My school no longer sells sodas
so the students bring their sodas from home. People try to get what they want
even if it is bad for them.

• Examples the author gives

The TV show example was very persuasive.

Barboza forgot to mention screaming kids in the market. That motivates parents.

It is hard to imagine a movie without food products sold along with it. Even
movie theaters have tons of advertising for candy and soda before a show.

I don’t know whether this is true or not, but I could do some “research” and check
it out.

• The conclusion (paragraphs 53-58)

Perhaps the government can make a difference, but often people rebel against
regulations.

The companies may try to make themselves look good, but they still want to sell
food and make a profit. In addition, people like salt and fat and sugar.
Noticing Language

In this activity, students will discover the effects of a preponderance of negatively loaded words.

Activity 24: Noticing Language

We all use words to influence an audience. Words can have a powerful effect on our emotions. Below is a set of words chosen from the Barboza article.

- In the middle column, note whether the word or phrase is positive, negative, or neutral in connotation.
- Then, in the right hand column, write a word or phrase that is either opposite in connotation or neutral.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word or Phrase</th>
<th>Connotation (+/- or neutral)</th>
<th>Opposite or Neutral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>blitzkrieg</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>peace talks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bottom line</td>
<td>possibly neutral</td>
<td>broad viewpoint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plastered</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>placed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sedentary</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>breach of duty</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>attention to duty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abdication</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>steadfast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fast-food joints</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>fine restaurant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perverts (VERB)</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>follows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assault</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>protect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>junk food</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>nutritious food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dominate</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>defer to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unhealthy</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>healthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>overeating</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>responsible eating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scapegoat</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>hero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>obesity</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>moderation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blur the line</td>
<td>possibly neutral</td>
<td>draw a line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kickback</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>user fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ban</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>promote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>backlash</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>increasing support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shoving it down their throat</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>dangling it in front of their noses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manipulation</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>persuasion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proliferation</td>
<td>usually negative</td>
<td>reduction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Your group is creating an advertising campaign for a food product or a food company (you choose).

- Create some advertising copy for your imaginary product or company, selecting words you have identified as positive. Write down some slogans and informational statements for your advertising campaign.
- Now imagine that you are a group totally opposed to this product or company and that you want to destroy its image. Write some negative slogans and statements using the words you identified as negative.

As you are working, think about the advertisements you have seen on television, in magazines, or on the Internet. Think about the words used in the articles you have read.

- Create a verbal image that is clear, that is easy to understand, and that makes a strong impression.
- When you finish your slogans and statements for your two campaigns, share them with the class or another group to see if they have the desired rhetorical effect.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word or Phrase</th>
<th>Connotation (+/- or neutral)</th>
<th>Opposite or Neutral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sugary snacks</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>whole grain bread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>epidemic of obesity</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>isolated cases of starvation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>animated pitchmen</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>expert spokespeople</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>captive audience</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>enthusiastic crowd</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Synthesis of the Texts—
“The Pleasures of Eating” by Wendell Berry
“When a Crop Becomes King” by Michael Pollan
“If You Pitch It, They Will Eat” by David Barboza

Postreading

Understanding Key Vocabulary

The following activity is designed to help students apply the vocabulary and concepts they have learned from the three articles to the marketing of a food product and the rhetoric of its ad.
Activity 25: Understanding Key Vocabulary—Selling and Unselling a Product

Take out the vocabulary charts you filled out for the Berry, Pollan, and Barboza articles. Which words and phrases have a positive connotation? Which have a negative connotation?

Bring a picture of a product label or an actual product package from home. Make sure that you also have the list of ingredients.

• First, write down all the words and phrases that appear on the front of the package. For example, here are the words from a box of breakfast cereal made by General Mills:
  
  With Whole Grain First Ingredient
  PER ¾ CUP SERVING: 120 CALORIES, 0g SAT FAT, 200mg SODIUM, 9g SUGARS
  CALCIUM 10% DV, IRON 25% DV
  Simply Nutritious NATURALLY FLAVORED Honey Nut Chex
  With a Touch of Honey
  GLUTEN FREE
  SAME GREAT TASTE
  No artificial flavors or colors!
  Sweetened corn cereal with real honey and natural almond flavor

• Second, analyze the language of the package. Next to each word or phrase, write down why it is there and what effect it is intended to have on the reader. How does it contribute to selling the product?

• Third, look at the ingredients. Ingredients are listed so that the biggest component comes first, the second biggest comes second, and so forth. In this example, the following is the ingredient list:
  
  1. Whole Grain Corn
  2. Corn Meal
  3. Sugar
  4. Honey
  5. Salt
  6. Brown Sugar Syrup
  7. Molasses
  8. Canola and/or Rice Bran Oil
  9. Natural Almond Flavor
  10. Natural Flavor
  11. BHT Added to Preserve Freshness
  12. Vitamins and Minerals (a long list)
Looking at the ingredient list and using what you learned from the Berry, Pollan, and Barboza articles, including the vocabulary for talking about food and nutrition, write some advertising copy for “unselling” this product. In other words, you will create an anti-advertisement that encourages people NOT to buy the product.

- Use at least five of the new vocabulary words in your anti-advertisement. Be sure you understand each word’s meaning and use in the text.
- Remember to include persuasive strategies to “unsell” your product.
- Share your anti-advertisement with a partner; then revise and edit it according to the feedback you get.
- Then prepare to present it to the class.

Analyzing Stylistic Choices

This particular line of questioning can help students see that the linguistic choices writers make create certain effects for their readers. These questions are divided into four categories: diction, figurative language, sentence structure, and punctuation.

Activity 26: Analyzing Stylistic Choices

What did the author intend or imply by making specific choices of diction, figurative language, sentence structure, or punctuation? Which ones are important to notice?

Let’s take a look at a few sentences by the three authors.

Diction (word choice, tone, level of formality)

- “McDonald’s calls this promotion and brand extension. But, a growing number of nutritionists call it blitzkrieg that perverts children’s eating habits and sets them on a path to obesity” (Barboza).
- “The ideal industrial food consumer would be strapped to a table with a tube running from the factory directly into his or her stomach” (Berry).
- “The ears of sweet corn are just starting to show up on local farm stands, inaugurating one of the ceremonies of an American summer” (Pollan).

What effect do the word choice, tone, and level of formality of these three writers have on their readers?

- Barboza’s words, as previously examined in an earlier activity, have extremely negative connotations, which makes his attitude clear. If the reader understands the term “blitzkrieg” and the way in which “perverts” is used, the sentence is clearly a negative comment about McDonalds.
- Berry, on the other hand, is more subtle in his criticism. He makes up his own phrase, “industrial food consumer,” and unless the reader has picked up the
negative connotation from previous sentences, the idea that this person is strapped
to a table and force fed food may be lost. It does convey the notion that this would
not be a pleasurable way to eat.

• Pollan’s sentence is almost elegiac. The growing corn is connected with
“inaugurations” and “ceremonies,” and the reader feels that this vegetable is quite
special.

Figurative Language (language not intended to be taken literally)

• “And two others (child actors) reveled in having so much sugar on their
Kellogg’s Cinnamon Krunchers cereal that even the tidal wave of milk that
washed over their treehouse couldn’t wipe off the sugary flavor” (Barboza).

• “It requires that the citizenry should give up their hereditary and sensible
aversion to buying a pig in a poke. It wishes to make the selling of pigs in
pokes an honorable and glamorous activity” (Berry).

• “And then in order to dispose of all the corn this cracked system has
produced, we eat it as fast as we can in as many ways as we can – turning the
fat of the land into, well, fat. One has to wonder whether corn hasn’t at last
succeeded in domesticating us” (Pollan).

What effect does the use of figurative language have on the tone of these
sentences? Why does the author use figurative language and what effect does it
have on the overall purpose of the essay?

• The first example sentence describes the advertisement as if it were played out
before the reader, but again it reinforces the negative aspect of huge amounts of
sugar by the enormous quantity of milk.

• The second example demonstrates the difficulty of Berry’s essay for students. The
sentence is intended to be a humorous take on the trend to separate ourselves
from food production and an understanding of how food is grown. However, if
the students do not know what a “pig in a poke” means this sentence becomes
quite confusing because it is used twice. Then it is combined with words such
as hereditary, aversion, honorable, and glamorous. This is a sentence that takes
time to understand; if students do not understand the vocabulary, they will not
recognize the irony.

• The third sentence uses the term “fat of the land.” If students have read Of Mice
and Men and remember Lennie’s “living off the fat of the land,” they would get
the joke implied in “well fat” as referring to the people eating corn. Corn is also
personified, perhaps as a way of blurring the issue of who is to blame.

Sentence Structure

• “Runoff from these chemicals finds its way into the groundwater and, in the
Midwestern corn belt, into the Mississippi River, which carries it to the Gulf
of Mexico, where it has already killed off marine life in a 12,000 square mile
area” (Pollan). 1 sentence/42 words

• “Most urban shoppers would tell you that food is produced on farms. But
most of them do not know what farms, or what kinds of farms, or where the
farms are, or what knowledge or skills are involved in farming” (Berry).
2 sentences/40 words
• “Product tie-ins are everywhere. There are SpongeBob SquarePants Popsicles, Oreo Cookie preschool counting books, and Keebler's Scooby Doo Cookies. There is even a Play-Doh Lunchables play set” (Barboza). 3 sentences/28 words

Notice the number of sentences in each example and the number of words in each excerpt. What do the differences tell you about the author’s style? What do they tell you about each author’s audience and purpose?

• Pollan’s example sentence contains 42 words. Berry uses 40 words in two sentences. Barboza has 28 words divided into three sentences. The length of the sentences makes Barboza’s the easier to comprehend, which makes his writing seem more casual in style. Pollan’s example, by contrast, builds the point with series of clauses and phrases that require the reader to pay attention and connect all the information to understand the serious point. Berry’s sentence is long and divided into two sentences, but within the sentences, the word farm is repeated so the connection is easier to make.

Punctuation

• “We know a lot more about what 80 million acres of corn is doing to the health of our environment: serious and lasting damage” (Pollan). (colon)

• “Eating with the fullest pleasure—pleasure, that is, that does not depend on ignorance—is perhaps the profoundest enactment of our connection with the world” (Berry). (dashes, commas, and word repetition)

• “On the commercial,” she says, “There’s a captain that goes on the submarine, and there’s an octopus, and three kids. And then the girl says, ‘Just taste this, pirate.’ And the pirate says, ‘Ayyy, yummy!’” (Barboza). (quotation marks)

In the first example, why does the author use a colon? In the second example, why the dashes and the commas? In the third sentence, what effect do the quotation marks have on the sentences? What do the differences tell you about the author’s style and intent?

• In the first example sentence, the use of the colon punctuates the point the author is making: that corn is a menace. It is also a contrast to Pollan’s usual style of longer sentences.

• The second sentence uses dashes and commas within the dashes. Perhaps the first thing students should know is that if they are puzzled by the longer sentence, removing the material within the dashes and reading just the outer portion of the sentence may help with comprehension. It also highlights the fact that the material within the dashes is an explanation of what the author means by the word “pleasure.” This is fairly typical of Berry’s use of repetition throughout the essay.

• The punctuation in the third sentence allows the author to showcase a younger speaker. The sentences have a sort of “breathless” quality of a child explaining something eagerly.
Thinking Critically

Activity 27 is designed to help students identify the rhetorical strategies used by the authors of these articles and analyze how the authors constructed their arguments and presented their evidence. At the end of this section, students should have a better idea of how the authors presented their evidence and how believable that evidence is. Ultimately, the goal is for students to learn to model these techniques in their own writing.

Activity 27: Thinking Critically—What is Evidence?

Authors use evidence to persuade their audience. What is evidence? We might call it “a reason to believe.” The list below contains various kinds of evidence with an example of each kind from one of the three articles. In your notebook, write down another example of each kind of evidence.

Statistics (logos): Evidence that cites specific numbers, percentages, or dates. This evidence may or may not be a part of expert testimony.

Since 1980 the number of obese children has more than doubled to 16 percent, according to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (Barboza)

Imagery (pathos): An appeal to the senses intended to draw the reader into the experience and “see” the situation with the mind’s eye.

People who know the garden in which their vegetables have grown and know that the garden is healthy will remember the beauty of the growing plants, perhaps in the dewy first light of morning when gardens are at their best. (Berry)

Expert Opinion/Testimony (ethos): Either a quotation or a summary from an individual person or professional agency with expertise, experience, or knowledge of the topic.

The problem of obesity is so staggering, so out of control, that we have to do something,” says Walter Willett, a professor of nutrition at the Harvard School of Public Health. (Barboza)

Facts/Factual Examples (logos): An example presented as a reliable “fact” to support the author’s main idea, although no source is offered to prove its truth.

The average bushel of corn (56 pounds) sells for about $2 today; it costs farmers more than $3 to grow it. (Pollan)

Personal/Anecdotal Experience (pathos/ethos): A story from the author’s personal history or observations used in support of the main idea.

But do these commercials really resonate with children? Nicky Greenberg, who is six, often spends her afternoons watching Nickelodeon. She can sing the theme song from “SpongeBob SquarePants,” and she says her parents buy her Kellogg’s Cinnamon Toast Crunch because she loves the commercials. (Barboza)
Commonly Held Assumptions/Belief (logos): A statement presented about human nature or human behavior as if all readers would be in agreement with the author.

It would not do for the consumer to know that the hamburger she is eating came from a steer who spent much of his life standing deep in his own excrement in a feedlot, helping to pollute the local streams, or that the calf that yielded the veal cutlet on her plate spent its life in a box in which it did not have room to turn around. (Berry)

Author’s Opinion (ethos): A statement regarding the author’s personal beliefs or conclusions based on experience.

The knowledge of the good health of the garden relieves and frees and comforts the eater. The same goes for eating meat. The thought of the good pasture and of the calf contentedly grazing flavors the steak. Some, I know, will think it blood thirsty or worse to eat a fellow creature you have known all its life. On the contrary, I think it means that you eat with understanding and with gratitude. (Berry)

FA Formative Assessment

The following quickwrites will allow you to assess how well your students understand the positions taken by the three authors they have read so far.

Activity 28: Quickwrites

Quickwrite: Analyze your own diet or your family's diet in light of the Pollan, Barboza, and Berry articles you have studied. Is it possible for you to eat a more healthy diet? Why or why not?

Quickwrite: Imagine that you will be having Berry, Barboza, or Pollan (or all three) to dinner. What would you serve them? Why would you make these choices? And where would you purchase the food?

Reflecting on Your Reading Process

As your students finish engaging with the first three articles of this module, ask them to reflect on the questions in Activity 29.

Activity 29: Reflecting on Your Reading Process

Answer the following questions:
1. What problems did you have reading these texts?
2. What strategies helped you overcome these problems?
3. Do you think these strategies will work with other readings?
4. If you had to sum up your attitude toward food in two or three sentences after reading these three articles, what would you say?

Text—“Big Agriculture Is the Only Option to Stop the World Going Hungry” by Jay Rayner

Prereading

Getting Ready to Read

Jay Rayner’s article, “Big Agriculture Is the Only Option to Stop the World Going Hungry,” takes a position that is contrary to both Berry and Pollan. He argues that food needs to be cheap because otherwise people will not be able to afford it. He raises the specter of food riots, an element of pathos that is hard for the reader to dismiss. Cheap food means efficient production, so for Rayner, the factory farm is a good thing.

Rayner is British, and his article was published in a British newspaper. To read it, students have to interpret elements of British English. Students will also have to decide which arguments apply to the U.S. and the rest of the world and which arguments are unique to Great Britain.

By this point, your students probably have a good idea of what they think about the politics of food and how the food economy works. The Rayner article may call this view into question. This is a common occurrence in researching any topic. Just as the writer starts to think he or she understands the topic and knows what to think, an opposing view with good arguments and evidence surfaces.

Activity 30: Getting Ready to Read

Read the title and the subtitle of the Rayner article. Answer the following questions:

• Do you think that Rayner will agree or disagree with Wendell Berry or Michael Pollan? Why or why not?
• Which article so far was the most difficult to read with an open mind?
• Do you think that you will agree with Rayner? If not, do you think you can read with an open mind? Why or why not?
Understanding Key Vocabulary

Your students may not know some of the words below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity 31: Understanding Key Vocabulary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Look over the following list of words before you read. Then go to the appropriate paragraphs, and highlight the selected words in the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• bout (¶ 1): a fight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• commodity (¶ 2): something bought and sold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• foodies (¶ 3): people who are very interested in high quality, delicious food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• gastroporn (¶ 4): high quality pictures or descriptions of food items or prepared dishes that emphasize the sensuousness of the food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• inherently evil (¶ 4): evil is inborn, natural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• hinder (¶ 4): hold back, prevent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• unblemished (¶ 5): without a blemish, perfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• harried (¶ 5): bothered, harassed, annoyed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• shedding (¶ 7): dropping off, like an animal sheds fur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sunday supplements (¶ 11): magazine-like publications that come with the Sunday newspapers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reading

Reading for Understanding

At this point in the module, students might find it difficult to read about food from a neutral perspective. This activity is designed to help students think about the various perspectives they have experienced while still keeping an open mind.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity 32: Reading for Understanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The previous articles argued against “Big Agriculture” in favor of local, organic, home-grown, and self-prepared food. Wendell Berry says he likes “to eat vegetables and fruits that [he knows] have lived happily and healthily in good soil, not the products of the huge, bechemicaled factory-field.” Michael Pollan laments the fact that government policies have made corn, especially high fructose corn syrup, a major part of our diet. However, Rayner, at least judging from the headline, is going to argue that we need factory farms, or the world will starve. As you read for the first time, you probably won’t be able to avoid thinking “What would Berry say to this? What would Pollan say? What would Barboza say?” However, you should also be asking, “What if Rayner is right?”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As you read the article, note in the margins what you think these other writers would say to each point. Do any of them have good arguments against the points that Rayner is making? Are there any sections where Rayner is responding to the types of arguments that the other authors have made?

---

**Considering the Structure of the Text**

Creating a descriptive outline will help students understand the structure of the whole article, the organization and rhetorical function of sections of the text, and the relationships between claims, arguments, and evidence.

**Activity 33: Considering the Structure of the Text—Descriptive Outlining**

This activity will help you discover the main method of organization in the essay.

- Draw a line across the page where the introduction ends. Is it after the first paragraph, or are there several introductory paragraphs? Is it in the middle of a paragraph? How do you know that the text has moved on from the introduction?
- Draw a line across the page where the conclusion begins. Is it the last paragraph, or are there several concluding paragraphs? How do you know that the text has reached the conclusion?
- Discuss in groups or as a class why the lines were drawn where they were.

Now draw lines between the major sections of the essay. For each section, consider the following questions, and make notes in the left margin:

- What is the section about?
- What does it say about that topic?
- What is the main argument in the section? How is it supported?
- What does the section do for the reader?

When you are finished with your descriptive outline, share it with a partner to see if you divided the article in the same way. If there are differences, what are they?

**Possible responses:**

**Paragraphs 1-2: Introduction.** The author introduces the theme of food riots, notes that they happened in the past and might happen again. He argues that based on his travels across Britain, cheap and plentiful food might quickly become expensive and scarce. He creates a sense of urgency that engages the reader.

**Paragraphs 3-4: The author argues that we need to evaluate how we produce food and eat it.** He introduces the concept of self-sufficiency and uses statistics to show that Britain imports almost half of its food. He also argues that “local, seasonal, and organic” food is for the affluent and that such “lifestyle choices” have nothing to
do with the real issues. He pits upper class versus other classes to argue that policies producing good food for the rich will cause the others to starve.

Paragraphs 5-6: Rayner uses apples as an example of how food production has gone wrong. Consumers are too concerned about the appearance of the fruit, so a lot is wasted.

Paragraphs 7-8: The author argues that “cost is key” and uses dairy farming as an example of why factory farms might be greener and more efficient than traditional farms.

Paragraphs 9-10: He argues that factory farms are the only way to “survive the coming food security storm” and that we need to abandon “mythologies” about farming. In addition, he says that Britain is a “small, overpopulated island” that needs factory farms to survive.

Paragraph 11: Conclusion. Rayner argues that we cannot ignore these issues. He returns to the threat of food riots.

Noticing Language

This activity is designed to help students explore some of the differences between British English and American English.

Activity 34: Noticing Language

Briticisms

This article was published in a British newspaper. British English is somewhat different from American English. The rules of punctuation are different. For example, you may notice that in this article, commas and periods go outside the quotation marks instead of inside (see paragraphs 1 and 8). Spelling is also slightly different. The British use “s” in words that Americans spell with “z” and spell words like “color” and “flavor” as “colour” and “flavour,” ending in “-our.” Some words also have different meanings or connotations in British English than in American. In this article, the word “bespoke” means “custom made” or “made to order.” This word usually refers to clothing, but here the writer is talking about custom or hand-made food as opposed to factory farm food.

Look at the following words and phrases. Then go to the appropriate paragraphs in the article, and read the sentence that contains the word in context. Work with a partner or in a small group to answer the following:

In your own words, what point is the writer trying to make in each of those sentences?

• “leave it to Tesco report” (¶ 1): Tesco is a large British chain of retail stores similar to Wal-Mart. The company tried to enter the U.S. market with the Fresh and Easy stores, but the plan didn’t go well because they didn’t understand American consumers very well.
A larger question about language: If British English and American English are different, which one is the “correct” version? Why is it correct?

This question can be answered in many different ways. One could argue that because English originated in the British Isles and because the English brought it to the American colonies, the British version should be considered “correct” on historical grounds. Certainly many British people feel that this is the case. However, both languages have changed quite a bit in the last 400 years. Languages are always evolving. One could also argue that each version is “correct” for its audience and context and that problems only arise when British and Americans try to communicate with each other. This argument implies that “correctness” is a local, rhetorical concept, not a universal one. In fact, “correctness” is a slippery concept because spelling, meaning, pronunciation, and even the rules of punctuation change over time and from place to place.

Annotating and Questioning the Text

This article is focused on food sustainability in Great Britain. One academic task is deciding how information about one situation is relevant to another. Activity 35 is designed to help students think about this question.

Activity 35: Annotating and Questioning the Text

Rayner is writing about British food policy in a British newspaper. Although he does talk about other countries, most of his examples are from England. Great Britain is an island nation with 88,745 square miles and a population of 60 million. For comparison, California is a state with more area (163,696 square miles), but a smaller population (38 million) and the entire U.S. is 3.794 million square miles with a population of about 314 million.

An important part of Rayner’s argument is based on what Aristotle called the topic of “past fact/future fact,” or, in other words, the idea that what happened in the past (food riots) is more likely to happen again in the future. One could extend this kind of argument to include location (i.e., what happened in one place is more likely to also happen in another place). For American readers, the important question is whether Rayner’s examples from England are relevant to our situation in our own country.

To help yourself think about this important point, read through the text of the article again. Write a “B” in the left margin where you think the argument applies only to Britain and a “U” where you think the argument is more...
“Universal,” applying to the whole world. In the right margin, note why you chose the letter you did.

One way of thinking about this is to note when Rayner uses the pronouns “we” or “our” and ask “Who do they refer to? Does it include Americans or people in other parts of the world?” And even if the immediate reference is to Britain, can the same argument be applied to other countries?

Possible responses:

Paragraph 1: “The question is whether the circumstances that led to that murderous bout of civil unrest have any implications for Britain.” Rayner clearly indicates that his focus is on Britain.

Paragraph 2: “Our food supply” clearly refers to Britain.

Paragraph 3: “We need to look” clearly refers to British people, but the argument could certainly be expanded to other countries. “Our self-sufficiency” and the statistics that follow it clearly refer to Britain.

Paragraph 4: The author writes, “Any consumer of gastroporn in print, online and on our TV screens would imagine we were already having this debate. Words such as local, seasonal and organic have become a holy trinity.” The phrase “any consumer” could apply to a population beyond Britain. The reader would have to decide whether “local, seasonal, and organic” are also common terms in this country.

Paragraph 6: Here we get more British statistics, this time about apples.

Paragraph 7: The author writes, “Cost is key. In the early 90s, we spent roughly 20% of our wages on our shopping bill.” The “we” here refers to Britain, but the same arguments could be made anywhere, perhaps with slightly different statistics.

Paragraph 9: The author writes, “We need to abandon the mythologies around agriculture, which take the wholesome marketing of high-end food brands at face value—farmer in smock, ear of corn, happy pig.” The “we” refers to Britain, but Americans have the same sorts of ideas.

Paragraph 10: The author writes, “we live on a small, overpopulated island with a growing head count and for many big is the only way to go.” This clearly refers to Britain, but we could argue that the whole planet might be considered, at least metaphorically, to be an island. On the other hand, the U.S. is a big country with a lot of land to work with, and maybe big isn’t the only “way to go” here.

Paragraph 11: The author writes, “Can we afford to ignore these issues?” This “we” refers first to Britain, but easily extends to the rest of the world.
Postreading

Thinking Critically

To think critically, students need to move beyond initial reactions toward deeper evaluations of texts by questioning and analyzing the rhetorical choices of the author. The following questions will help students examine Aristotelian rhetorical appeals.

Activity 36: Thinking Critically

The following questions are based on Aristotle’s three appeals: logos, ethos, and pathos. Using your notes and annotations about the Rayner article, answer each question.

Questions about Logic (Logos)

1. What are the major claims and assertions made in this reading?

   Food might become expensive and scarce.
   Food riots might be the result.
   Britain should be more self-sufficient in food production.
   Major supermarkets are not inherently evil.
   People need to give up myths about natural, idealized farms.
   The solution is more factory farms, not more expensive local, natural, organic food.

2. What evidence has the author supplied to support these claims? How relevant and valid do you think the evidence is? How sound is the reasoning? Is there any claim that appears to be weak or unsupported? Which one, and why do you think so?

   The arguments about past food riots are presented as historical fact. The arguments about Britain’s lack of self-sufficiency in food production are supported by statistics. The argument that supermarkets are not evil is not supported.

3. What counterarguments has the author addressed?

   The author thinks that people who disagree with him and believe we should have more natural organic food are wealthy and elitist.

4. Do you think the author has left something out on purpose? Why?

   The author doesn’t talk about the effects of factory farm food on health. He dismisses arguments about animal welfare. He says that sick cows don’t give milk, so a factory farm would keep the cows healthy, but he doesn’t investigate conditions on real factory farms. He also doesn’t talk about Genetically Modified Organisms.
5. How have the author’s ideas developed over the course of the text?

He begins with the idea of the possibility of food riots. He discusses Britain’s lack of self-sufficiency and makes a class distinction arguing that rich people want good food but ordinary people want cheap food. Then he argues that factory farms are the only way to feed the people. He ends with a return to the threat of food riots.

Questions about the Writer (Ethos)

6. What can you infer about the author from the text?

He seems to be a journalist, maybe mainly for TV.

7. Does this author have the appropriate background to speak with authority on this subject?

As a journalist, he is probably good at finding out information, but he is not an expert. He refers to one apple farmer as a knowledgeable source.

8. What does the author’s style and language tell the reader about him or her?

It is a fairly informal journalistic style. We can’t tell much.

9. Does the author seem trustworthy? Why or why not?

He seems sincere enough, but he is basing his view on conversations with people for a TV show.

Questions about Emotions (Pathos)

10. Do you think the author is trying to manipulate the reader’s emotions? In what ways? At what point?

The mention of food riots at the beginning and end of the piece seems to be designed to scare us.

11. Do your emotions conflict with your logical interpretation of the arguments?

When I imagine food shortages and starving people, I want to prevent them. His arguments seem logical, but maybe factory food isn’t the only solution.

12. Does the author use humor or irony? How does that affect your acceptance of his or her ideas?

No, this piece is pretty straightforward.
A Synthesis of the Texts—
“The Pleasures of Eating” by Wendell Berry
“When a Crop Becomes King” by Michael Pollan
“If You Pitch It, They Will Eat” by David Barboza
“Big Agriculture is the Only Option to Stop the World Going Hungry” by Jay Rayner

Summarizing and Responding
Activity 37 is designed to help your students summarize each article in preparation for staking out and defending their own positions.

Activity 37: Summarizing and Responding

In this module, you have read and analyzed four articles. Although they are all about food, they do not take the same positions or make the same arguments. Here are the articles:

1. “The Pleasures of Eating” by Wendell Berry
2. “When a Crop Becomes King” by Michael Pollan
3. “If You Pitch It, They Will Eat” by David Barboza
4. “Big Agriculture is the Only Option to Stop the World Going Hungry” by Jay Rayner

Using your annotations and notes for each article, write a short summary of each by writing one sentence in answer to the following questions:

- What is the article about?
- What is the main argument?
- What does the author want us to do?

After writing your summaries, think about the following questions:

- Do any of the authors share assumptions?
- How does each author frame his argument? Which frame do you feel is the most compelling or significant, and why?
- How does each author support or challenge the claims or concerns of the other authors?
- Where does each author stand on the question of good food vs. cheap food? How do you believe each author would define those terms?

Now write a statement explaining which author you agree with the most and why. It is rare that we agree “totally” with anyone, so make sure that you also note whatever reservations you have about the author’s position.
Connecting Reading to Writing
Discovering What You Think

Considering the Writing Task

The writing assignment offers two main options: a personal perspective and a policy perspective. Of course, within those two options, students can choose to write about many different aspects of food and nutrition. Whichever tasks students choose, they should be able to use material from one or more of the articles they have read. They may also incorporate material from homework, Internet searches, and other research.

Activity 38: Considering the Writing Task

Food is an essential part of the human experience. It is necessary for life and is a key ingredient of culture. A government that cannot feed its people is not a good government. People make individual choices about what to eat and how to prepare it, but governments also make policies that control and influence the type, abundance, and quality of food. A balanced diet can make us healthy while eating a limited diet of one or two types of food, even if the food is high quality, can make us sick. Food can appear to be healthy but contain pesticides, contaminants, or dangerous bacteria. We make personal choices about food, but our choices are influenced by advertising and government policies.

For example, Wendell Berry wants us to become more aware and involved in the food we eat. He wants us to ask questions and make personal choices. Michael Pollan discusses the unintended consequences of massive government subsidies on the price and availability of corn. His argument is a policy argument. David Barboza discusses the influence of advertising on the food we desire. He is interested in how advertising influences our personal choices. Although Jay Rayner does not mention Wendell Berry by name, he clearly thinks that if everyone made the personal choices that Berry recommends, it would lead to food that was too expensive for most people to buy, with dire social consequences.

Taking the statement you wrote in Activity 37 explaining which author you agree with the most as a starting point, and taking the arguments and evidence of all four authors into account, choose one of the following writing tasks:

1. **Personal View:** In response to the four articles you read in this module, write an essay in which you state your own personal preferences regarding food and nutrition. In this paper, describe the main criteria by which you will make decisions about food. Discuss what kinds of food you will buy for yourself and your family members, where you will buy it, and how you will prepare it. In addition to references to one or more of the four articles, support your food plan with logical arguments and evidence.
2. **Policy View:** In response to the four articles you read in this module, what should policy-makers (politicians, school boards, food safety experts, etc.) do to make the food supply healthy and affordable? You might discuss such issues as food labeling, agricultural subsidies, nutritional education, food inspections, and regulations. You might also discuss whether certain types of unhealthy foods should be banned from stores, restaurants, or schools. Write an essay in which you describe a policy or a plan that would improve our food supply or the health of the population. In addition to references to one or more of the four articles, support your plan with logical arguments and evidence.

One way to proceed with either one of these assignments is to describe what one or more of the authors you have read would say about this question and respond to his arguments and views.

---

**Writing**

5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning … focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

---

**Taking a Stance**

The following activity is designed to help students make a plan for their essay that includes a thesis statement, evidence, a strategy for dealing with opposing points of view, some ideas for potential common ground, some thinking about tone, and an organizational structure.

**Activity 39: Taking a Stance**

Read the following list of points and examples about writing a good argumentative essay. Then create your own plan for taking a stance on your chosen topic.

1. **State your opinion on your topic in your thesis statement.**

   To write a thesis statement for an argument essay, you need to take a stand for or against an action or an idea. In other words, your thesis statement should be debatable—a statement that can be argued or challenged and will not be met with agreement by everyone who reads it. Your thesis statement should introduce your subject and state your opinion about that subject.

   Note Michael Pollan’s thesis in his first paragraph: “These days the nation’s nearly 80 million-acre field of corn rolls across the countryside like a second great lawn, but this wholesome, all-American image obscures a decidedly more dubious reality.” This is a debatable thesis.

   - Not debatable: Most people like to eat corn in the summer.
   - Not debatable: Many adults buy corn in the supermarket during the summer.

   Pollan sets up his argument with some background about corn and about the domestication of plants and how important that is to the health and propagation of the plant itself. This background information is necessary for the reader to understand Pollan’s position.
2. **Find out as much as you can about your audience before you write.**

Knowing your readers’ background and feelings on your topic will help you choose the best supporting evidence and examples. Suppose that you want to convince people in two different age groups to quit eating so many snack foods. You might tell the group of teenagers that snack foods will make them gain weight and have cavities. But with a group of adults, you might discuss the statistics about health and longevity.

Pollan’s essay was first published in the New York Times, which has a highly educated readership, mostly in the northeast part of the U.S. His discussion has to take into consideration the varieties of people who read the New York Times throughout the U.S and in the world. His essay is filled with facts.

3. **Choose evidence that supports your thesis statement.**

Evidence is probably the most important factor in writing an argument essay. Without solid evidence, your essay is nothing more than opinion; with it, your essay can be powerful and persuasive. If you supply convincing evidence, your readers will not only understand your position but also perhaps agree with it.

Evidence can consist of facts, statistics, statements from authorities, examples, or personal stories. Examples and personal stories can be based on your own observations, experiences, and reading, but your opinions are not evidence. Other strategies, such as comparison/contrast, definition, and cause/effect, can be particularly useful in building an argument. Use any combination of evidence and writing strategies that will help you support your thesis statement.

Note the following use of evidence by Pollan:

- **Facts**
  - The average bushel of corn (56 pounds) sells for about $2 today. (paragraph 4)

- **Statistics**
  - Nearly 10 percent of the calories Americans consume now come from corn sweeteners; the figure is 20 percent for many children. (paragraph 7)

- **Statements from Authorities**
  - A recent study at the University of Minnesota found that a diet high in fructose (compared to glucose) elevates triglyceride levels in men shortly after eating, a phenomenon that has been linked to an increased risk of obesity and heart disease. (paragraph 10)

- **Examples and Personal Stories**
  - None
4. **Anticipate opposing points of view.**

   In addition to stating and supporting your position, anticipating and responding to opposing views is important. Presenting only your side of the argument leaves half the story untold—the opposition’s half. If you acknowledge that there are opposing arguments and answer them, you will move your readers more in your direction; you will impress them with your honesty.

   • Wendell Berry says, in paragraph 6, “Perhaps I exaggerate, but not by much.” That acknowledgment adds to his credibility. We all exaggerate at times.

5. **Find some common ground.**

   Pointing out common ground between you and your opponent is also an effective strategy. Common ground refers to points of agreement between two opposing positions. For example, one person might be a vegetarian and the other a meat eater. Acknowledging that vegetarians do, in fact, have to make sure they eat enough protein begins the conversation with meat eaters. Most people care about the health of their bodies. When you state in your essay that you agree with your opponent on certain points, your reader sees you as a fair person.

   • In paragraph 21, Berry says, “Though I am by no means a vegetarian, I dislike the thought that some animal has been made miserable in order to feed me.” He admits that although he eats meat, he’s also concerned with the animal itself. Few would argue that he ought not care about how an animal is raised.

6. **Maintain a reasonable tone.**

   Just as you probably would not win an argument by shouting or making mean or nasty comments, do not expect your readers to respond well to such tactics. Keep the “voice” of your essay calm and sensible. Your readers will be much more open to what you have to say if they think you are a reasonable person.

   • Note Pollan’s rhetorical questions in paragraph 8: “So why begrudge corn its phenomenal success? Isn’t this the way domestication should work?”

7. **Organize your essay so that it presents your position as effectively as possible.**

   By the end of your essay, you want your audience to agree with you. So you want to organize your essay in such a way that your readers can easily follow it. The number of paragraphs may vary depending on the nature of your assignment.

   Now create your own plan by responding to the same list of points:

   1. **State your opinion on your topic in your thesis statement.** (Hint: Make sure that your thesis is something that is debatable.)
2. **Find out as much as you can about your audience before you write.**
   (Hint: For the “Personal View” essay, your audience will probably be family members and friends who may not agree with your food plan. For the “Policy View” essay, your audience will be appropriate policy makers and others who might vote for them or influences them.)

3. **Choose evidence that supports your thesis statement.** (Hint: Go through your notes, quickwrites, and annotations to see what you can use. At this point, just go through your materials and make checkmarks or draw circles around relevant parts. We will develop this aspect in greater detail in the next activity.)

4. **Anticipate opposing points of view.** (Hint: Who is your opposition? What are they likely to argue?)

5. **Find some common ground.** (Hint: We all have to eat. We all like to save money. We all want good health.)

6. **Maintain a reasonable tone.** (Hint: What words sound reasonable? What words sound unreasonable?)

7. **Organize your essay so that it presents your position as effectively as possible.** (Hint: What might be a good lead in or hook? What arguments should come first? What arguments should come last?)

---

**Gathering Evidence to Support Your Claims**

Students can select evidence by returning to the readings, their notes, their summaries, their annotations, their descriptive outlining, and other responses in order to highlight information they may use to support their claims and refute the claims of those who disagree. The students determine the relevance, specificity, and appropriateness of their evidence in relation to the rhetorical situation.
Activity 40: Gathering Evidence to Support Your Claims

Fold a sheet of notebook paper into quarters and label it so that it looks like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facts</th>
<th>Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements from Authorities</th>
<th>Examples and Personal Stories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

List the evidence you want to use in the appropriate boxes. Don’t write down full statements because there won’t be enough room. Write down things like “Rayner on apples” or “Barboza on breakfast cereal.” Do the same thing with any personal anecdotes you want to use as examples. You might write, “My little brother in the supermarket,” “My obsession with cheese snacks,” or “The time mom cooked healthy stuff.”

Once you have filled out the squares, think about the relationships between the different items. Draw lines between related items in different squares, noting on the line what type of relationship it is. An idea from one author might be opposed to another. A statistic from one article might support an idea in another. A personal anecdote might illustrate a point that one of the authors made.

When you write an argumentative essay like this one, you are putting ideas and information together from different sources, combining it with your own experience, and producing a new text with a different contribution to the conversation.

Getting Ready to Write

At this point your students should be well primed to write their essays. Activity 41 asks students to “pitch” their ideas to a partner. They will give a short oral summary of their arguments and evidence in preparation for writing their first drafts.
Activity 41: Getting Ready to Write

At this point you will pitch your idea for your essay to a partner. Use the following prompts as a model for your pitch:

- In my essay, I am going to argue that…
- I am going to get my reader interested by talking about…
- I am going to support my thesis by talking about…
- My strongest point is…
- My strongest opposition is from…
- But I can rebut the opposition by saying…
- By the end, I hope my reader will be convinced that…

After you have made your pitch, your partner should ask questions about the paper and make suggestions. Then switch roles.

Writing Rhetorically
Entering the Conversation

Composing a Draft

For most writers, writing is a multi-draft process. As they create their first draft, writers take risks, explore ideas, and think on paper, knowing that they will have an opportunity later to revise and edit. When students plan to turn in their first drafts as their final drafts, they often pursue correctness and completion too early. If students understand from the beginning that revision is an important part of the writing process, they can experiment with tentative positions and arguments that can be evaluated, refined, and sharpened in a later draft. While students will want to keep their audience in mind throughout the writing process, the first draft is generally “writer-based” and discovery-oriented in that it serves to help the writer think through the issues and take a position. The first draft is often where students find out what they really think about a particular issue or topic.

Activity 42: Composing a Draft

With your copies of the articles, your notes, annotations, quickwrites, writing plans, and other materials close at hand, begin writing your first draft. You will revise this draft later, so at this point, don’t worry too much about grammar, spelling, or punctuation. Concentrate on getting your ideas down.
Considering Structure

No rigid formula will cover all of the writing that students may be asked to do, but almost all writing has a beginning, middle, and end—even lab reports and journal articles have well-established standard sections and subheads. Formulaic essay structures such as the five-paragraph essay may be appropriate for some tasks, but most writing in the real world, and even in the university, does not take this form.

Activity 43: Considering Structure

Look at the first draft of your essay. Answer the following questions:

• How many paragraphs do you have?
• Are any of the paragraphs much longer than the others? Could they be divided up? Where might they be divided?
• Does your beginning or introduction accomplish the following rhetorical tasks?
  – Direct readers’ attention to the topic or issue the writing addresses?
  – Establish the importance of the topic?
  – Provide background information that the audience may need?
  – Introduce the thesis, purpose, or main claim of the writing in order to suggest how the piece will be developed?
• Does the body of the essay do the following tasks for the reader?
  – Explain, illustrate, and develop the topic or issue?
  – Develop the ideas in sufficient detail to be clear and convincing?
  – Present examples or arguments supported by evidence?
  – Quote, paraphrase, or summarize other texts that support your purpose?
  – Present and analyze data?
  – Address counterarguments or alternative positions or explanations
  – Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to indicate transitions between the major sections of the text and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims?
well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

2a. Introduce a topic or thesis statement; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

CA 4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

• Does the conclusion do the following tasks?
  – Connect the writing to some larger claim or idea?
  – Point the reader to next steps or new questions raised by the essay?
  – Identify the conclusions the writer has reached and their significance?
  – Evaluate or analyze the conclusions drawn by the argument?
  – Explain the implications of the major point of the essay?

In the margins of your draft, indicate where you might improve your essay in your next draft.
Using the Words of Others (and Avoiding Plagiarism)

One of the most important features of academic writing is the use of words and ideas from written sources to support the writer’s own points. Students need practice choosing passages to quote, leading into quotations, and responding to them so that they are well integrated into their own text. Paraphrasing passages, which some students avoid because it requires an even greater understanding of the material to put it in their own words, is another important skill in academic writing. Students can practice these skills by choosing quotations, paraphrasing them, and then discussing whether they agree or disagree and why.

Activity 44: Using the Words of Others

There are three ways to introduce language and ideas from other writers into your own writing: quotes, paraphrases, and summaries.

**Direct quotation:** The first way is a direct quotation. For example, you could quote Wendell Berry in this way:

> In “The Pleasures of Eating,” Wendell Berry says, “Though I am by no means a vegetarian, I dislike the thought that some animal has been made miserable in order to feed me.”

The quotation marks indicate which words are Berry’s and which words are yours. It is also possible to include an extended section of an article in a block quote. For example, we might decide that the quote that we have been working with needs more context. However, when using a block quote, it is necessary to frame it by leading into it and commenting on it afterwards. It needs to be clear to the reader why the block quote is there. It will not speak for itself. Here is an example:

> In “The Pleasures of Eating,” Wendell Berry argues that both the animals and plants we eat should have happy healthy lives before we eat them.

> Though I am by no means a vegetarian, I dislike the thought that some animal has been made miserable in order to feed me. If I am going to eat meat, I want it to be from an animal that has lived a pleasant, uncrowded life outdoors, on bountiful pasture, with good water nearby and trees for shade. And I am getting almost as fussy about food plants. I like to eat vegetables and fruits that I know have lived happily and healthily in good soil, not the products of the huge, bechemicaled factory-fields that I have seen, for example, in the central valley of California. The industrial farm is said to have been patterned on the factory production line. In practice, it looks more like a concentration camp.

> Reading this, one might get the idea that animals and plants have the same rights as humans. Can we really afford this?

In the block quote, no quotation marks are necessary. The indentation indicates that the words belong to someone else.
Paraphrase: We can also paraphrase Berry’s ideas in our own words. We might write something like this:

In “The Pleasures of Eating,” Wendell Berry says that he does not like to eat animals that were made miserable in order to feed him.

Note that the pronouns have changed from first person “I” and “me” to third person “he” and “him.” The lack of quotation marks around Berry’s idea indicates that the words are yours, though the sentence indicates that the ideas are his. A paraphrase must still give credit to the author of the ideas.

Summary: You wrote short summaries of each of the four articles in Activity 38, using the following points:

• What is the article about?
• What is the main argument?
• What does the author want us to do?

Any one of these could be used in your essay if you wanted to give the reader a quick overview of what an article was about.

Now look over your rough draft. Are there places where it would be smoother if you changed a quotation into a paraphrase? Is there a block quotation that needs better framing? Is there a place where a nice quotation from one of the articles would help make your point better? Make annotations on your draft indicating where you should make these changes.

Negotiating Voices

The goal of negotiating voices is for students to be able to distinguish their ideas from those of their sources and to make clear their stance in relationship to those sources. In the section above, students practiced selecting useful and interesting material, punctuating direct quotations, and recasting the language for paraphrases and summaries. The following activity can help students put direct quotations, indirect quotations, concepts, facts, ideas, and opinions from other writers into their own texts while keeping all the voices distinct.

Activity 45: Negotiating Voices

When you integrate words and ideas from different sources, the reader sometimes becomes confused about who is saying what. If you quote someone you disagree with, is it clear that you disagree? If two of your sources disagree, is it clear who believes what and which one you agree with? The best way to keep the different voices separate is to use standard academic phrases that introduce, compare, and contrast different ideas.

Here are some examples.

This sentence introduces an author’s idea with “according to”:

According to Wendell Berry, when most people shop at a supermarket, they
“know nothing about the kind or quality of this food, or where it came from, or how it was produced and prepared, or what ingredients, additives, and residues it contains.”

The following sentence introduces an idea from one author using the common “says that” or “argues that” construction:

Wendell Berry argues that an “industrial eater” is someone “who no longer knows or imagines the connections between eating and the land, and who is therefore necessarily passive and uncritical—in short, a victim.”

Using “although,” this example introduces an idea the writer is going to disagree with:

Although Wendell Berry makes a good case that people should know more about their food, Rayner is correct in arguing that “cost is key.”

This passage introduces a topic and gives us several different perspectives. The phrase “in contrast” introduces an opposing point of view:

The issue of who is responsible for poor eating habits that lead to obesity and poor health is controversial. Wendell Berry argues that we should “eat responsibly,” by which he means that the individual is responsible. David Barboza notes that big food companies “deny that they are to blame for the epidemic of excess weight.” These companies say that “sedentary behavior, a lack of exercise and poor supervision” are to blame. In contrast, Michael Pollan blames government policies for the fact that “our entire food supply has undergone a process of ‘cornification,’” but he also pretends to blame the plant itself, which “has insinuated itself into our landscape, our food system—and our federal budget.” In my view, Berry is right: individual choices are the most powerful factor in health and nutrition.

This passage introduces two opposing points of view:

In “The Pleasures of Eating,” Wendell Berry argues, “When food, in the minds of eaters, is no longer associated with farming and with the land, then the eaters are suffering a kind of cultural amnesia that is misleading and dangerous.” On the other hand, in “Big Agriculture Is the Only Option to Stop the World Going Hungry,” Jay Rayner says, “We need to abandon the mythologies around agriculture, which take the wholesome marketing of high-end food brands at face value—farmer in smock, ear of corn, happy pig—and recognise that farming really is an industry.” Berry urges us to remember what farms used to be like, but Rayner urges us to forget the mythology and accept factory farms. Is it possible that they are both right?

The transitional phrase “on the other hand” indicates that what follows will be an opposing position. The last sentence implies that the writer is going to take a position that is between the two of them.

Read over your paper. Look at the phrases that you used to introduce the words and ideas of others. Is it clear who said what? Is it clear what the relationships between the ideas are? Make notes about what you might need to change in your revision.
Revising and Editing

Revising Rhetorically

A rhetorical approach to revision can help your students understand that revision is a strategic, selective process; what writers choose to revise depends on the ultimate purpose of their writing. The following activities take strategies that were applied to the articles in the module and apply them to the student’s own text. Activity 46 asks students to block out the structure and function of their essay using strategies they have already used in descriptive outlining. Activity 47 asks students to apply the traditional rhetorical concepts of ethos, and logos, and pathos to their own writing. You may choose to have your students do one or both of the following activities.

Activity 46: Revising Rhetorically

In this activity, you will take strategies that you applied earlier to the texts you read for this module and apply them to your own essay. You are going to think more about the effects of your essay on readers than about what you have to say.

• First, take a few sheets of blank paper. Draw a box on the paper for each paragraph of your essay. Make the boxes about the same size and shape as the actual paragraph.
• Second, divide each box in two with a dotted line so that you have a left side and a right side.
• On the left side, answer the “descriptive outline” questions for each paragraph:
  – What is the paragraph about?
  – What does it say about the topic
  – What does the paragraph do for the reader?
• Third, read your completed descriptive outline. Does it make you think of any gaps you need to fill or other changes you might make? Make notes in the appropriate left-hand box.
• Second, divide each box in two with a dotted line so that you have a left side and a right side.
• On the left side, answer the “descriptive outline” questions for each paragraph:
  – What is the paragraph about?
  – What does it say about the topic
  – What does the paragraph do for the reader?
• Third, read your completed descriptive outline. Does it make you think of any gaps you need to fill or other changes you might make? Make notes in the appropriate left-hand box.
• Now imagine that your best friend or a partner from your class is going to read your essay. As you reread your essay, make a “mental movie” of your reader responding to your essay. In the right hand side boxes, make notes about what you think this reader’s response will be. You might find yourself writing things like “Really?” “Wow!” or “I don’t think so!”
• Are there any changes in your essay that you might consider for this reader?

You may want to repeat this last exercise for other readers. You might make a “mental movie” of a parent or a teacher reading your essay. Or you might imagine that you are going to publish your essay in the school newspaper and imagine how newspaper readers would react. This activity builds your sense of audience.
The following activity asks students to apply the traditional rhetorical concepts of ethos, logos, and pathos.

**Activity 47: Ethos, Logos, Pathos**

If you did Activity 46, you re-read your essay at least twice thinking about different readers. If you did not do Activity 46, you may need to re-read your essay again. In either case, answer the following questions about the rhetoric of your essay:

- What kind of “ethos” or image do you project in this essay? Do you sound knowledgeable and serious? Do you sound sincere? Do you sound like a smart aleck? What aspects of your essay create this impression? Is this the impression you want to create? Is there anything you want to change?
- Are your logical arguments reasonable and well supported? Do you think your readers will be convinced? Is there anything you need to change?
- Do you rely on “pathos” or emotional appeals in this essay? How will your reader’s emotions be affected? Will this make your essay more persuasive, or less? Is there anything you want to change?

Make notes on your draft about any changes you want to make.

**Considering Stylistic Choices**

The last rhetorical feature for your students to check before the major rewrite is word choice.

**Activity 48: Considering Stylistic Choices**

Sometimes the right word, or the wrong word, can have a dramatic effect on the reader. Writers can make stylistic choices in order to enhance the clarity of their messages, make emotional connections with readers, and establish their ethos. These choices draw readers in or push them away. You can consider the effectiveness of your stylistic choices by responding to the following questions:

- How will the language you have used affect your reader’s response?
- Which words or synonyms have you repeated? Why?
- What figurative language have you used? Why did you use it?
- What effects will your choices of sentence structure and length have on your reader?
Editing the Draft

At this point, your students have read and re-read their first drafts from many different perspectives making notes and annotations about what they want to change. It is time for them to create a second draft of the essay that is ready for your feedback. You may choose to have them trade drafts and give peer feedback, but peer feedback is really no substitute for some informed comments from their teacher.

Activity 49: Rewriting Your Draft

After all of the work with quotations, paraphrases, introductory phrases, and rhetorical strategies, it is time to rewrite your first draft and make all the changes you decided on. This draft is for readers. Try to make it as readable and persuasive as possible.

One way to help your students at this point is to give them the ERWC “Editing Checklist,” which is the second part of Appendix K in the ERWC Assignment Template. The checklist is even more effective if you personalize it by noting on it which problems are especially important for each student.

Activity 50: Proofreading Your Draft

When we are focused on expressing our ideas; making logical arguments; supporting our arguments with facts, examples, statements from authorities; and thinking about our readers, it is easy to misspell words, make grammatical errors, and misuse punctuation. Before you hand in your new draft, proofread

- In what ways does your language help convey your identity and character as a writer?
- Is your language appropriate for your intended audience?
carefully. One useful technique is to read your essay backwards. Read the last sentence, then the next to last sentence, and so forth. This keeps you from getting caught up in the flow of the essay so that you can focus on grammar and mechanics.

Your teacher will give you an “Editing Checklist.” Use it to note your most important problems.

After students have finished rewriting their essays, collect them and read them with an eye toward the skills and abilities that have been developed in this module. These include the following:

• An introduction that contextualizes the topic and takes a position
• Body paragraphs that develop the topic and persuade the reader
• Arguments that engage the views of the assigned articles and develop points with appropriate quotations and paraphrases
• Effective use of ethos, logos, and pathos
• Effective word choice
• A conclusion that connects the ideas to larger issues and explains the implications of the arguments of the essay
• Effective proofreading that minimizes spelling, grammar errors, and mechanical problems

You don’t need to comment on every aspect of the essay. Look for problems that confuse or distract the reader, or reduce persuasiveness. Comment on those. Give the students the feedback that will help them improve their essays most efficiently. Don't grade this draft; just give feedback. The students will have one more chance to improve their essays before you grade them.

Also remember to praise what your students have done well. Positive feedback is very important!

Responding to Feedback

When you hand back the essays, ask your students to write the paragraph in Activity 51 in response to your feedback.

Activity 51: Creating a Revision Plan

Your teacher has given you feedback on your essay. You might also have some feedback from your classmates. Getting feedback is often an emotional experience. You might see some comments and think, “Oh, yeah I always have that problem.” Or you might think, “What! They didn’t get what I was trying to say!” Whatever your reaction, and this is true for all writers, the most important thing is to think about how to make it better.
On a blank sheet of paper, write a paragraph about what you need to do for your final draft. You might consider questions like these:

- What is my biggest problem? How can I fix it?
- What did the reader like about my essay? How can I do more of that?
- Are there any comments I don’t understand? Who can I ask about these?

Students are now ready to create their final drafts.

**Activity 52: Creating the Final Draft**

Taking your feedback and your revision plan into account, prepare the final draft for submission to your teacher. Make all the changes you think are necessary. Proofread your paper one last time.

Congratulations! You have finished! And you have contributed to the conversation about food and nutrition that is an ongoing concern in this country.

---

**Reflecting on Your Writing Process**

Reflection is an essential component in learning. Students benefit from discussing what they have learned about how to write and sharing that information with the rest of the class. This activity supports shared understanding of key terms, important moments and moves in developing writing, and generalizations that organize students’ approaches to writing. Reflection allows students to articulate their attitudes and assumptions about literacy and the role it plays in their developing academic identities.

You may want to direct reflection by asking the questions in Activity 53.

**Activity 53: Reflecting on Your Writing Process**

After turning in your final draft, think about the following questions:

- What have you learned about your writing process?
- What were some of the most important decisions you made as you wrote this essay?
- What did you learn about writing from reading Berry, Pollan, Barboza, and Rayner?
- What strategies did you learn in this module that you might use in future reading and writing assignments?
Michael Pollan, “When a Crop Becomes King”

Fat = diseases
Type 2 diabetes
Heart disease

People eat corn and get fat!
Bad for Animals, people, and the land!

80 million acres of our land
Corn needs lots of fertilizer and pesticides.
Fertilizers and pesticides contaminate land and water, flowing from the Mississippi River into the Gulf of Mexico.

Cornification
Food System
Farmers are paid to grow.
We have so much corn that we use it for everything.
Corn is fed to chickens, pigs, cows, and salmon.

BUT THERE IS MORE CORN!
We turn corn into Ethanol, vitamin C and plastics, but there is STILL MORE CORN LEFT!!
Snacks, chips, muffins, cereal
Corn sweeteners = high fructose corn syrup

We are spending money to destroy our health and our land for a crop that we supply in such abundance that we invent ways to use it all up.

Subsidize!
Costs $3 per bushel to grow but only worth $2

Federal Budget
4 Billion

4 Corn

Fat = diseases
Type 2 diabetes
Heart disease

People eat corn and get fat!
Bad for Animals, people, and the land!

80 million acres of our land
Corn needs lots of fertilizer and pesticides.
Fertilizers and pesticides contaminate land and water, flowing from the Mississippi River into the Gulf of Mexico.

Cornification
Food System
Farmers are paid to grow.
We have so much corn that we use it for everything.
Corn is fed to chickens, pigs, cows, and salmon.

BUT THERE IS MORE CORN!
We turn corn into Ethanol, vitamin C and plastics, but there is STILL MORE CORN LEFT!!
Snacks, chips, muffins, cereal
Corn sweeteners = high fructose corn syrup

We are spending money to destroy our health and our land for a crop that we supply in such abundance that we invent ways to use it all up.