



EXPEDITIONARY
LEARNING

Grade 7: Module 4A: Unit 3: Lesson 1

Analyzing a Model Position Paper: “Facebook: Not for Kids”



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Long-Term Targets Addressed (Based on NYSP12 ELA CCLS)

I can identify the argument and specific claims in a text. (RI.7.8)

I can evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text for sound reasoning and relevant, sufficient evidence. (RI.7.8)

I can accurately use seventh-grade academic vocabulary to express my ideas. (L.7.6)

Supporting Learning Targets

- I can determine the central ideas in the model position paper “Facebook: Not for Kids.”
- I can identify the argument and specific claims in the model position paper “Facebook: Not for Kids.”
- I can identify the academic vocabulary in the model position paper “Facebook: Not for Kids.”

Ongoing Assessment

- Getting the gist of the model position paper “Facebook: Not for Kids”
- Position Paper Planner for model position paper “Facebook: Not for Kids”



Agenda	Teaching Notes
<p>1. Opening</p> <p>A. Entry Task: Writing Improvement Tracker, Module 4A Reflections (7 minutes)</p> <p>B. Reviewing Learning Targets (3 minutes)</p> <p>2. Work Time</p> <p>A. Examining a Model Position Paper: First Read and Partner Discussion (20 minutes)</p> <p>B. Analyze the Model Paper Using the Argument Rubric (11 minutes)</p> <p>3. Closing and Assessment</p> <p>A. Exit Ticket: What Will Be the Most Difficult Aspect of Writing This Paper? (2 minutes)</p> <p>B. Review Homework (2 minutes)</p> <p>4. Homework</p> <p>A. Look through your research and identify three reasons you will address in your position paper.</p> <p>B. Reread the model and underline where the author explained the brain science specifically.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This lesson begins the scaffolding toward writing a draft of the position paper, a type of argument essay that will be the Mid-Unit 3 Assessment in Lesson 5. Students must be able to write a clear and coherent position paper (W.7.1). Being able to share their understanding of the arguments they read about in Unit 2 and creating an argument that supports claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence are important skills. Writing about what they have read is enjoyable for students, since they will now want to share their well-reasoned arguments with an audience. • In the design of this lesson and the lessons that follow, the following criteria were used to define argument writing, as first introduced in Module 2A/2B: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The goal of argument writing is for the reader to acknowledge the validity of the claim (not necessarily be persuaded by it). – Appropriate evidence is used and analyzed logically to support the claim. This evidence is usually organized to support specific reasons, which in turn support the claim. – The author considers the reasons and evidence before articulating the claim. – The author acknowledges a counterargument in his or her writing. • Since students have written a literary analysis essay in Module 1, an argument essay in Module 2A/2B, and a text analysis in Module 3, they have already been introduced to how to plan and write an essay. Therefore, less scaffolding is provided in Unit 3. • In Unit 2, students were introduced to the prompt and made the claim they will write about in their position paper. • The model position paper is based on the prompt: “You are part of the Children and Media Expert Advisory Committee. Your job is to help the American Academy of Pediatrics revisit the recommendation that children over the age of two should spend no more than two hours a day on entertainment screen time. After examining both the potential benefits and risks of entertainment screen time, particularly to the development of the adolescent brain, make a recommendation. Should the AAP raise the recommended daily entertainment screen time from two hours to four hours?”—but addresses increasing the age of legal use of Facebook, as opposed to making a recommendation to the AAP. The model was intentionally written about a similar content; however, the model position paper does not use options in the prompt so as not to provide similar evidence, examples, and information that the student position paper will use. There will be some crossover with the brain science.



Agenda	Teaching Notes (continued)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The writing process for the position paper is similar to that of Module 2A/2B. The rubric for this assignment is based closely on the New York State Grades 6–8 Expository Writing Evaluation Rubric. Because the students are already familiar with this rubric, the analysis will not be as in-depth as in previous modules.• To provide support, and to remind students that producing thoughtful writing includes revisions (W.7.5), students return to their Writing Improvement Tracker, used in Module 2A/2B, and 3A. They will return to it multiple times in this unit. The purpose of this is to develop students’ awareness of their strengths and challenges, as well as ask students to strategize to address their challenges. Self-assessment and goal-setting helps students take ownership of their learning. The purpose of this tracker is for students to reflect on their growth as writers across modules.• Be sure students have their Writing Improvement Trackers, and/or go to EngageNY.org or commoncoresuccess.elschools.org to locate copies of this tracker and print it out for students again. To begin, students review the reflections they completed during Modules 1–3, start the Reflection on Module 4A in this lesson, and then complete it in Lesson 10. Since this is the last formal writing of the year, consider what students will do with the completed Writing Improvement Tracker when they finish in order to encourage continued reflection.• Students need to know the content well and understand the structure of the paper they are writing. This lesson focuses on understanding the structure of the paper they will write through the lens of the model position paper. Students have already become content “experts” in Units 1 and 2.• Students first read the model paper “Facebook: Not for Kids” as a reader, much the same way they have read other informational texts throughout this module, using an Argument note-catcher. Examining the model position paper first as a reader provides students with a working example of how to structure their content before they begin writing. As part of analyzing the model position paper, students will deconstruct the model essay using the same Position Paper Planner that they will begin to use to plan their own writing in Lesson 2. Note that they receive a separate “Model Position Paper Planner” since it has a different focus question than they will have for their own writing. Note that there are two questions at the end of the planner about feedback. Students can ignore those questions for this lesson (however, they will be important on students’ own planners later on).• Consider posting the Building an Argument Essay poster from Module 2A/2B. This may be helpful for your more visual learners.



Agenda	Teaching Notes (continued)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In advance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – If you collected the researcher’s notebook in Unit 2, Lesson 18 for assessment, have it ready to return to students today. – Make sure students can access their reflections (Writing Improvement Tracker) from Module 3. – Read the model position paper “Facebook: Not for Kids.” – Post: Learning targets; Building an Argument Essay poster from Module 2A/2B: Unit 1, Lesson 13 (optional).

Lesson Vocabulary	Materials
<p>sustainable, advocates, low-flow shower heads, appliances, textile, wet-processing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Improvement Tracker (begun in Module 1; students’ own copies) • Model position paper “Facebook: Not for Kids” (one per student) • Getting the Gist of the Model Position Paper (one per student) • Getting the Gist of the Model Position Paper (for teacher reference) • Domain-Specific Vocabulary anchor chart (begun in Unit 1, Lesson 1) • Model Position Paper Planner (one per student and one to display; see Teaching Notes) • Model Position Paper Planner (for teacher reference) • NYS Grades 6–8 Expository Writing Evaluation Rubric (position paper argument version) (one per student and one to display) • Document camera • Exit Ticket: What Will Be the Most Difficult Aspect of Writing This Paper? (one per student) • Researcher’s notebook (from Unit 2, Lesson 4; returned with teacher feedback)



Opening	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p>A. Entry Task: Writing Improvement Tracker, Module 4A Reflections (7 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As students enter the room, distribute the Writing Improvement Tracker. • Remind students that this tracker has helped them identify what strengths and challenges they have had in writing throughout the year. • Give students several minutes to reflect on and record their strengths and challenges. • Ask students to turn to a partner and share their strengths and challenges from the Module 3 essay. Ask them to also talk about how knowing their strengths and challenges will help them write their position paper on recommended screen time. • Call on several students to share both strengths and challenges. • Help the class notice that all writers have strengths and challenges, and one key to improving is having a strategy for tackling the challenges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing self-assessment and reflection supports all students, helping them learn to be metacognitive about their learning. Metacognition, or the ability to understand one’s own thought processes, includes the ability to monitor one’s own learning. Learning how to learn helps all students, but it is often a missing ability in those who struggle.
<p>B. Reviewing Learning Targets (3 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have students turn to a partner and quietly read the learning targets aloud to each other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “I can determine the central ideas in the model position paper ‘Facebook: Not for Kids.’” – “I can identify the argument and specific claims in the model position paper ‘Facebook: Not for Kids.’” – “I can identify the academic vocabulary in the model position paper ‘Facebook: Not for Kids.’” • Have each pair briefly discuss which concepts in the targets they think they may experience difficulties with, and which ones they may experience success with. Cold call two or three students to discuss their answers as a whole class. 	



Work Time	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p>A. Examining a Model Position Paper: First Read and Partner Discussion (20 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remind students that they were introduced to the prompt for their position paper and made their claim during Unit 2. Today they will read a model paper that responds to a similar prompt. Remind students that reading a model is an important part of learning process because it helps them know what is expected and it is an example of a good paper. Distribute the model position paper “Facebook: Not for Kids” and the Getting the Gist of the Model Position Paper handout. Read the model position paper aloud to students and ask them to read along silently. Prepare students to read the model position paper a second time aloud. As students follow along, they should add details to the Getting the Gist handout. Remind them that “getting the gist” is about getting the main ideas, not about getting every detail. Assure students that they will examine the paper in further detail using the position paper planner and the Argument rubric. In addition, ask students to circle any words of which they are unsure. Read the paper aloud for the second time. Invite students to raise their hands to share details they found and wrote down. Next, invite students to share any words they circled. List these words on the Domain-Specific Vocabulary anchor chart. Likely words include those identified above as vocabulary. If students do not mention these words, all of which are strong academic vocabulary, check to see that students understand the meaning. Distribute and project the Position Paper Planner. Orient students to the six sections of the planner: the introduction, the three body paragraphs, the conclusion, and the counterclaim. Read the introduction aloud one more time. Before you do so, ask students to go on a “treasure hunt” for the author’s claim and reasoning, marking up the introduction as you read. Cold call four students for their answers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Claim: “The American Academy of Pediatrics should recommend that Facebook raise its minimum age to 18 so teens are on steadier ‘neurological footing’ before they begin to navigate the social world of Facebook.” (Note to students that the claim is also introduced by the phrase “for these reasons,” which gives a huge signal to the reader as to where the reasons for the claim are—in the sentences just before the claim.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider redistributing the Writer’s Glossary of the writing rubric used in other modules for students who still struggle with understanding the vocabulary words in the rubric. Consider selecting students ahead of time to take on the role of responder to the cold call. Students who need practice in oral response or extended processing time can be told the prompt before class begins and prepare for their participation. This also allows for a public experience of academic success for students who may struggle with on-demand questioning, or for struggling students in general.



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Reasoning: “Because an adolescent brain has a developing prefrontal cortex, a highly sensitive risk and reward center, and is entering a period of dynamic growth, Facebook can be a particularly toxic when paired with the developing teen brain.” • State that students should think about the reasons and evidence the author uses to support her claim. Model the analysis of the first paragraph for the students, saying something like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “The author’s first paragraph is all about how the undeveloped prefrontal cortex of a teen makes Facebook a dangerous place to be. On the planner, I’m going to note ‘undeveloped prefrontal cortex makes foolish decisions likely on Facebook’ as one of the reasons. I’m also going to fill in the topic sentence at this point.” * “Now, as I look down the first column to see what else the planner wants me to notice, I see three places for ‘Evidence’ and three places for ‘Analysis of Evidence.’ I’m going to model the first one for you now. The paragraph first gives evidence about what happens when the prefrontal cortex is not fully developed yet—I’ll note that as ‘Evidence 1.’ It’s important, as you can see, to use an explanation of the brain science in your first piece of evidence so the rest of the paragraph makes sense. The paragraph then goes on to analyze, or explain, this evidence by using an “if/then” statement to show that this may result in a poor decision on Facebook. I’ll note this in the ‘Analysis of Evidence 1.’” * “Take a look here, too, at the cautious tone this paragraph uses. It doesn’t say, ‘Teens <i>will</i> make poor decisions online’; that prediction wouldn’t be accurate, since we’re only just learning about both brain science and how time online affects us. Instead, it says ‘teens are <i>more likely</i> to make a foolish decision.’ That’s a big difference. You’ll want to take this tone in your essays as well. We’ll talk more about this as we go on in the unit.” • Ask students to think about other reasons the author uses to support her claim. Have students turn and talk to a partner and write down reasons they found at the top of each of the Body Paragraphs sections of the planner. Call on students to share these reasons. • Invite students to work with a partner and fill in the rest of the planner from the model position paper. • Note two important points: Most, but not all, of the boxes on the planner need to be filled in, especially the “Analysis of Evidence” boxes (sometimes the evidence is clear enough on its own); and occasionally the same sentence can serve two functions and fill two boxes (for example, a piece of evidence that also concludes the paragraph). Ask pairs of students to join another pair in the class and share their planner. Have them circle any parts on which they disagree. • Refocus whole group and ask a representative from each of these four-student groups to report on any disagreements and help students clarify. 	



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>B. Analyze the Model Paper Using the Argument Rubric (11 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Distribute the NYS Grades 6–8 Expository Writing Evaluation Rubric (position paper argument version). Inform students that this is just Column 3 of the rubric.• Display the rubric using a document camera so that all students can see when you are circling or discussing a certain section. Remind them that they have used this rubric on all their major writing assignments so far this year.• Tell students that you are looking only at the first two rows today. The first row is about how clearly a writer states the claim and supports it, so it corresponds to the discussion they have just had related to the planner. Ask them to read the first bullet in Row 1 silently while you read it aloud:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* “Clearly introduce the topic and the claim in a manner that is compelling and follows logically from the task and purpose.”• Remind students that the topic of the model paper (not their own position papers) is if we should increase the age of Facebook use. Refer them back to the introduction, where the claim was introduced.• Point out that this is a clear position statement, or claim, and it “follows logically from the task and purpose.” If something follows logically, it is clearly connected to the ideas before and after it. In this case, it takes two sentences to make the claim, so students should consider how they might use sentences to establish their claim in their paper. Note also that the claim clearly addresses the purpose for writing the paper, or the prompt.• Ask students to read the second bullet silently while you read it aloud: “Claim and reasons demonstrate insightful analysis of the text(s).”• Ask students to turn and talk to a partner about what they think “insightful analysis” means. Cold call a few students to share out. Listen for: “Claims and reasons should be the most interesting, related, and compelling ideas that help prove the argument,” or “The reasons and evidence support and develop the claim, and the writer explains his thinking so that it makes sense to the reader.” Ask students to discuss why the claims and reasons they chose on their planner are or are not evidence of an “insightful analysis.”• Ask students to read the third bullet silently as you read it aloud: “Acknowledges counterclaim(s) skillfully and smoothly.”• Ask them to read through the model until they find a counterclaim acknowledged and to think if it is done “skillfully and smoothly.”• Have students discuss this with a partner and share out. Students should be able to find this sentence in the conclusion: “Facebook is an extremely popular Web site. Nearly one in eight people on the planet have a Facebook account (Giedd). It is a lively and evolving part of modern society.”	



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Point out that a counterclaim is <u>not</u> a place where the author contradicts herself. Rather where the author acknowledges the complexity of the subject and the validity of differing opinions.• Invite students to work with a partner to find examples of the bullets in the second row of the rubric. Review questions they might ask each other. For example:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* “What evidence can you find in the text (the model position paper) that shows how the author developed the claim with relevant, well-chosen facts?”* “What evidence can you find in the text that shows how the author developed the claim with definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples from the research text(s)?”* “What evidence can you find in the text that shows how the author consistently used varied, relevant evidence?”* “What evidence can you find in the text that shows how the author logically explains how evidence supports ideas?”• Call on students to share out their information to the whole class. Consider projecting these on a document camera or creating a display for their answers.	



Closing and Assessment	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Exit Ticket: What Will Be the Most Difficult Aspect of Writing This Paper? (2 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute and ask students to complete the Exit Ticket: What Will Be the Most Difficult Aspect of Writing This Paper? • Collect students' exit tickets. You will have time to address these concerns in the Lesson 2, Work Time A. 	
<p>B. Review Homework (2 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute the researcher's notebook (if you collected it in Unit 2, Lesson 18) and tell students that their homework is to identify three reasons they will address in their position paper. They may use their researcher's notebook, anchor charts, neurologist notebooks, or thinking logs to help them. 	
Homework	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look through your research and identify three reasons you will address in your position paper. • Reread the model position paper and underline where the author explained the brain background specifically. 	



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Supporting Materials



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Model Position Paper:
“Facebook: Not for Kids”

Name:

Date:

Prompt:

You are part of the Children and Media Expert Advisory Committee. Your job is to help the American Academy of Pediatrics decide whether or not to make an official endorsement of Facebook’s current policy that children must be 13 in order to get a Facebook account. After examining both the potential benefits and risks of a Facebook account, particularly to the development of the adolescent brain, make a recommendation. Should the American Academy of Pediatrics officially recommend that Facebook raise its minimum age to 18 or endorse the policy as it stands at the age of 13?

In many ways Allison is a normal teenager, except for one. She’s an exceptional texter. In fact, she quite routinely sends over 900 texts a day. Even though Allison’s texting habit may be extreme, her impulse to connect to her peers is not. Teenagers are social. Whether it is due to the evolutionary imperative to find a mate or because they are naturally starting to separate from their parents, teenagers seek out other teens. With the advent of Facebook, this social impulse can be followed any time of the day. However, because an adolescent brain has a developing prefrontal cortex, a highly sensitive risk and reward center, and is entering a period of dynamic growth, Facebook can be a particularly toxic when paired with the developing teen brain. For these reasons, the American Academy of Pediatrics should recommend that Facebook raise its minimum age to 18 so teens are on steadier “neurological footing” before they begin to navigate the social world of Facebook.

Facebook is not a Web site for someone with limited access to his or her prefrontal cortex. The prefrontal cortex develops throughout adolescence and is the part of the brain that helps someone control impulses and make sound judgments (Bernstein). Because a teenager’s prefrontal cortex is less developed, he or she is more likely to be impulsive (“Teens and Decision Making”). If teenagers are spending a lot of time on Facebook, then they are more likely to make an impulsive or foolish decision online. This is a problem. In real life the consequences for an impulsive, foolish decision may evaporate quickly, but if a person impulsively does something foolish online then that decision can quickly become permanent. It is very easy to make unwise decisions on Facebook. Things like bullying someone, sharing private information, or posting inappropriate pictures can be done, almost without thinking, especially if one’s prefrontal cortex is still developing. Raising the age threshold on Facebook will limit the time teenagers spend on Facebook and will lower their risk of making a foolish decision online.

Model Position Paper:
“Facebook: Not for Kids”

Perhaps due to the fact that the prefrontal cortex isn't fully available, teenagers rely more on their limbic system, which is more developed, to make decisions (“Teens and Decision Making”). The limbic system is the emotional center of the brain and is also called the “risk and reward” system (Bernstein). This means that it is the part of the brain that is activated when one does something risky or pleasurable. When a part of the brain, like the limbic system, is “activated,” it is awash with neurotransmitters, like dopamine. Dopamine is the main neurotransmitter of the reward system and all addictive substances and addictive behavior increase dopamine in the brain (Giedd). This is important because, compared to adults teens are highly sensitive to dopamine in their limbic system (Galván). This extra sensitivity and excitability makes them more prone to addiction (Knox). Therefore it seems logical that they may be more prone to becoming addicted to substances or activities that stimulate dopamine. Logging on to Facebook increases the dopamine levels in a person's brain (Ritvo). If teenagers are more prone to addiction and more sensitive to the dopamine released by logging into Facebook, then they may be more vulnerable to becoming “addicted” to Facebook. While this may seem like a harmless pastime, for a teenager, it can be very distracting and debilitating. If the age limit is raised, then teens are less likely to fall prey to this addiction.

The third reason that the AAP should recommend that Facebook raise its minimum age has to do with synaptic pruning. The adolescent brain is in a dynamic stage of development. It is pruning unnecessary synapses and cementing other neurological pathways (“Teens and Decision Making”). A large part of our brain is dedicated to reading social cues because this skill is very important to leading a successful life (Giedd). However, this skill is not automatic. A teenage brain needs time and practice to build these pathways. There are many social skills that cannot be learned online because they are very subtle and require physical proximity (Giedd). These are such things as reading body language, facial expressions, or tone of voice. If someone is spending many hours a day interacting with others on Facebook, then he or she is missing out on an opportunity to build in-person skills. As Facebook becomes more and more popular, teens may use it as a substitute for in-person socializing and spend less time together. If they do that, then they will be pruning very important synapses that are necessary for human interacting. If the age limit for Facebook is raised, then teenagers will be more likely to find a social outlet that nourishes that part of the brain.

Model Position Paper:
“Facebook: Not for Kids”

Facebook is an extremely popular Web site. Nearly one in eight people on the planet have a Facebook account (Giedd). It is lively and evolving part of modern society. However, there are many potential pitfalls on Facebook to the developing teen brain, including addiction, impulsive decision-making, and the missed opportunity to build strong social skills. By recommending that teenagers wait until they are 18 to have an account, the AAP will mitigate these hazards by giving the adolescent brain time to develop further. The pro-social benefits of Facebook will be there when the teen can more wisely and effectively access them.

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Getting the Gist of the Model Position Paper

Name:

Date:

Use this Main Idea/Claim note-catcher to get the gist when you read the model position paper. Remember that the main idea and the details are often not just a single sentence of the text; rather, they may involve multiple sentences.

Main Idea/Claim:	
Reason:	Evidence/Reasoning:
	
Reason:	Evidence/Reasoning:
	
Reason:	Evidence/Reasoning:
	
Reason:	Evidence/Reasoning:
	



Getting the Gist of the Model Position Paper
(For Teacher Reference)

Use this Main Idea/Claim note-catcher to get the gist when you read the model position paper. Remember that the main idea and the details are often not just a single sentence of the text; rather, they may involve multiple sentences.

<p>Main Idea/Claim: Teen brain science indicates that the risk of using Facebook under the age of 18 is significant. The age should be raised.</p>	
<p>Reason: The prefrontal cortex is not mature.</p>	<p>Evidence/Reasoning: → This will lead to poor decisions being made on Facebook.</p>
<p>Reason: The limbic system and dopamine are highly active.</p>	<p>Evidence/Reasoning: → Facebook raises dopamine levels, and therefore can become addictive.</p>
<p>Reason: Synaptic pruning will make excessive time spent on Facebook decrease the social skills teens need.</p>	<p>Evidence/Reasoning: → Teen brains need practice in face-to-face interacting, which will decrease when using Facebook too often.</p>

Model Position Paper Planner

Name:

Date:

Focus question: Should the American Academy of Pediatrics officially recommend that Facebook raise its minimum age to 18 or endorse the policy as it stands at the age of 13?

Purpose of position paper: To craft a logical, well-supported argument in favor of increasing or decreasing the minimum age recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

I. Introduction	
A. Hook to capture the reader's interest and attention	
B. Define the issue of screen time in terms of brain science	
C. Claim	



Model Position Paper Planner

II. Body Paragraph 1	
First reason to support your claim	
Topic sentence	
Evidence/Reasoning 1 (with background on brain science)	
Analysis of Evidence/Reasoning 1	
Evidence/Reasoning 2	
Analysis of Evidence/Reasoning 2	
Evidence/Reasoning 3	
Analysis of Evidence/Reasoning 3	
Concluding sentence	



Model Position Paper Planner

III. Body Paragraph 2	
Second reason to support your claim	
Topic sentence	
Evidence/Reasoning 1 (with background on brain science)	
Analysis of Evidence/Reasoning 1	
Evidence/Reasoning 2	
Analysis of Evidence/Reasoning 2	
Evidence/Reasoning 3	
Analysis of Evidence/Reasoning 3	
Concluding sentence	



Model Position Paper Planner

IV. Body Paragraph 3	
Third reason to support your claim	
Topic sentence	
Evidence/Reasoning 1 (with background on brain science)	
Analysis of Evidence/Reasoning 1	
Evidence/Reasoning 2	
Analysis of Evidence/Reasoning 2	
Evidence/Reasoning 3	
Analysis of Evidence/Reasoning 3	
Concluding sentence	



Model Position Paper Planner

V. Conclusion	
Restate claim and its connection to brain science	
Summarize reasons	
Explain why your view is worth consideration by the reader	



Model Position Paper Planner

VI. Counterclaim	
What counterclaim(s) will you use in your essay?	
Where in your essay will you acknowledge the counterclaim(s)?	

Where would I like peer feedback on this planner?

1)

2)

Model Position Paper Planner
(For Teacher Reference)

Name: _____

Date: _____

Focus question: Should the American Academy of Pediatrics officially recommend that Facebook raise its minimum age to 18 or endorse the policy as it stands at the age of 13?

Purpose of position paper: To craft a logical, well-supported argument in favor of increasing or decreasing the minimum age recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

I. Introduction	
A. Hook to capture the reader's interest and attention	In many ways Allison is a normal teenager, except for one. She's an exceptional texter. In fact, she quite routinely sends over 900 texts a day. Even though Allison's texting habit may be extreme, her impulse to connect to her peers is not. Teenagers are social. Whether it is due to the evolutionary imperative to find a mate or because they are naturally seeking to separate from their parents, teenagers seek out other teens. With the advent of Facebook, this social impulse can be followed any time of the day.
B. Define the issue of screen time in terms of brain science	However, because an adolescent brain has a developing prefrontal cortex, a highly sensitive risk and reward center, and is entering a period of dynamic growth, Facebook can be particularly toxic when paired with the developing teen brain.
C. Claim	For these reasons, the American Academy of Pediatrics should recommend that Facebook raise its minimum age to 18 so teens are on steadier "neurological footing" before they begin to navigate the social world of Facebook.

Model Position Paper Planner
(For Teacher Reference)

II. Body Paragraph 1	
First reason to support your claim	Prefrontal cortex is underdeveloped and spending time online increases likelihood of making impulsive decision online
Topic sentence	Facebook is not a Web site for someone with limited access to his or her prefrontal cortex.
Evidence/Reasoning 1 (with background on brain science)	The prefrontal cortex develops throughout adolescence and is the part of the brain that helps someone control impulses and make sound judgments (Bernstein). Because a teenager’s prefrontal cortex is less developed, he or she is more likely to be impulsive (“Teens and Decision Making”). If teenagers are spending a lot of time on Facebook, then they are more likely to make an impulsive or foolish decision online.
Analysis of Evidence/Reasoning 1	This is a problem. In real life the consequences for an impulsive, foolish decision may evaporate quickly, but if a person impulsively does something foolish online, then that decision can quickly become permanent.
Evidence/Reasoning 2	It is very easy to make unwise decisions on Facebook. Raising the age threshold on Facebook will limit the time teenagers spend on Facebook and will lower their risk of making a foolish decision online.
Analysis of Evidence/Reasoning 2	Things like bullying someone, sharing private information, or posting inappropriate pictures can be done, almost without thinking, especially if one’s prefrontal cortex is still developing.



Model Position Paper Planner
(For Teacher Reference)

Evidence/Reasoning 3	
Analysis of Evidence/Reasoning 3	
Concluding sentence	Raising the age threshold on Facebook will limit the time teenagers spend on Facebook and will lower their risk of making a foolish decision online.



III. Body Paragraph 2	
Second reason to support your claim	Teenagers rely more on the limbic system, which is extra sensitive. This makes them more prone to addiction.
Topic sentence	Perhaps due to the fact that the prefrontal cortex isn't fully available, teenagers rely more on their limbic system, which is more developed, to make decisions ("Teens and Decision Making").
Evidence/Reasoning 1 (with background on brain science)	The limbic system is the emotional center of the brain and is also called the "risk and reward" system (Bernstein). This means that it is the part of the brain that is activated when one does something risky or pleasurable. When a part of the brain, like the limbic system, is "activated," it is awash with neurotransmitters, like dopamine. Dopamine is the main neurotransmitter of the reward system and all addictive substances and addictive behavior increase dopamine in the brain (Giedd). This is important because, compared to adults, teens are highly sensitive to dopamine in their limbic system (Galván). This extra sensitivity and excitability makes them more prone to addiction (Knox). Therefore it seems logical that they may be more prone to becoming addicted to substances or activities that stimulate dopamine. Logging on to Facebook increases the dopamine levels in a person's brain (Ritvo).
Analysis of Evidence/Reasoning 1	If teenagers are more prone to addiction and more sensitive to the dopamine released by logging on to Facebook, then they may be more vulnerable to becoming "addicted" to Facebook. While this may seem like a harmless pastime, for a teenager, it can be very distracting and debilitating.
Evidence/Reasoning 2	
Analysis of Evidence/Reasoning 2	



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Evidence/Reasoning 3	
Analysis of Evidence/Reasoning 3	
Concluding sentence	If the age limit is raised, then teens are less likely to fall prey to this addiction.

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IV. Body Paragraph 3	
Third reason to support your claim	Synaptic pruning may cause teens who spend a lot of time on Facebook to be stunted in their social growth.
Topic sentence	The third reason that the AAP should recommend that Facebook raise its minimum age has to do with synaptic pruning.
Evidence/Reasoning 1 (with background on brain science)	The adolescent brain is in a dynamic stage of development. It is pruning unnecessary synapses and cementing other neurological pathways (“Teens and Decision Making”). A large part of our brain is dedicated to reading social cues because this skill is very important to leading a successful life (Giedd). However, this skill is not automatic. A teenage brain needs time and practice to build these pathways. There are many social skills that cannot be learned online because they are very subtle and require physical proximity (Giedd). These are such things as reading body language, facial expressions, or tone of voice. If someone is spending many hours a day interacting with others on Facebook, then he or she is missing out on an opportunity to build in-person skills.
Analysis of Evidence/Reasoning 1	As Facebook becomes more and more popular, teens may use it as a substitute for in-person socializing and spend less time together. If they do that, than they will be pruning very important synapses that are necessary for human interacting.
Evidence/Reasoning 2	
Analysis of Evidence/Reasoning 2	



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Evidence/Reasoning 3	
Analysis of Evidence/Reasoning 3	
Concluding sentence	



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V. Conclusion	
Restate claim and its connection to brain science	By recommending that teenagers wait until they are 18 to have an account, the AAP will mitigate these hazards by giving the adolescent brain time to develop further.
Summarize reasons	However, there are many potential pitfalls on Facebook to the developing teen brain, including addiction, impulsive decision-making, and the missed opportunity to build strong social skills.
Explain why your view is worth consideration by the reader	The pro-social benefits of Facebook will be there when the teen can more wisely and effectively access them.



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VI. Counterclaim	
What counterclaim(s) will you use in your essay?	Facebook is an extremely popular Web site. Nearly one in eight people on the planet have a Facebook account (Giedd). It is a lively and evolving part of modern society.
Where in your essay will you acknowledge the counterclaim(s)?	Conclusion



NYS Grades 6–8 Expository Writing Evaluation Rubric
(Position Paper Argument Version)

Criteria	CCLS	4	3	2	1	0
CLAIM AND REASONS: the extent to which the essay conveys complex ideas and information clearly and accurately in order to logically support the author’s argument	W.2 R.1–9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> —clearly introduces the topic and the claim in a manner that is compelling and follows logically from the task and purpose —claim and reasons demonstrate insightful analysis of the topic —acknowledges counterclaim(s) skillfully and smoothly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — clearly introduces the topic and the claim in a manner that follows from the task and purpose — claim and reasons demonstrate grade-appropriate analysis of the topic —acknowledges counterclaim(s) appropriately and clearly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — introduces the topic and the claim in a manner that follows generally from the task and purpose — claim and reasons demonstrate a literal comprehension of the topic —acknowledges counterclaim(s) awkwardly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — introduces the topic and the claim in a manner that does not logically follow from the task and purpose — claim and reasons demonstrate little understanding of the topic —does not acknowledge counterclaim(s) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — claim and reasons demonstrate a lack of comprehension of the topic or task



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Criteria	CCLS	4	3	2	1	0
<p>COMMAND OF EVIDENCE: the extent to which the essay presents evidence from the provided texts to support argument</p>	<p>W.9 R.1–9</p>	<p>—develops the argument with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples from the research text(s)</p> <p>—sustains the use of varied, relevant evidence</p> <p>—skillfully and logically explains how evidence supports ideas</p>	<p>—develops the argument with relevant facts, definitions, details, quotations, or other information and examples from the research text(s)</p> <p>—sustains the use of relevant evidence, with some lack of variety</p> <p>—logically explains how evidence supports ideas</p>	<p>—partially develops the argument of the essay with the use of some textual evidence, some of which may be irrelevant</p> <p>—uses relevant evidence inconsistently</p> <p>—sometimes logically explains how evidence supports ideas</p>	<p>—demonstrates an attempt to use evidence, but only develops ideas with minimal, occasional evidence which is generally invalid or irrelevant</p> <p>—attempts to explain how evidence supports ideas</p>	<p>—provides no evidence or provides evidence that is completely irrelevant</p> <p>—does not explain how evidence supports ideas</p>



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Criteria	CCLS	4	3	2	1	0
<p>COHERENCE, ORGANIZATION, AND STYLE: the extent to which the essay logically organizes complex ideas, concepts, and information using formal style and precise language</p>	<p>W.2 L.3. L.6</p>	<p>—exhibits clear organization, with the skillful use of appropriate and varied transitions to create a unified whole and enhance meaning</p> <p>—establishes and maintains a formal style, using grade-appropriate, stylistically sophisticated language and domain-specific vocabulary with a notable sense of voice</p> <p>—provides a concluding statement or section that is compelling and follows clearly from the claim and reasons presented</p>	<p>—exhibits clear organization, with the use of appropriate transitions to create a unified whole</p> <p>—establishes and maintains a formal style using precise language and domain-specific vocabulary</p> <p>—provides a concluding statement or section that follows from the claim and reasons presented</p>	<p>—exhibits some attempt at organization, with inconsistent use of transitions</p> <p>—establishes but fails to maintain a formal style, with inconsistent use of language and domain-specific vocabulary</p> <p>—provides a concluding statement or section that follows generally the claim and reasons presented</p>	<p>—exhibits little attempt at organization, or attempts to organize are irrelevant to the task</p> <p>—lacks a formal style, using language that is imprecise or inappropriate for the topic and task</p> <p>—provides a concluding statement or section that is illogical or unrelated to the claim and reasons presented</p>	<p>—exhibits no evidence of organization</p> <p>—uses language that is predominantly incoherent or copied directly from the research text(s)</p> <p>—does not provide a concluding statement or section</p>



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(Position Paper Argument Version)

Criteria	CCLS	4	3	2	1	0
CONTROL OF CONVENTION S: the extent to which the essay demonstrates command of the conventions of standard English grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling	W.2 L.1 L.2	—demonstrates grade-appropriate command of conventions, with few errors	—demonstrates grade-appropriate command of conventions, with occasional errors that do not hinder comprehension	—demonstrates emerging command of conventions, with some errors that may hinder comprehension	—demonstrates a lack of command of conventions, with frequent errors that hinder comprehension	—is minimal, making assessment of conventions unreliable

