

PROHUMAN CURRICULUM - GRADE 7

OVERVIEW OF UNITS:

Unit 1	September	Optimism
Unit 2	October	Grit
Unit 3	November	Gratitude
Unit 4	December	Curiosity
Unit 5	January	Courage
Unit 6	February	Compassion
Unit 7	March	Fairness
Unit 8	April	Understanding
Unit 9	May	Humanity

UNIT 6: COMPASSION

LESSON 3: WRITING AN ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY ABOUT U.S. IMMIGRATION POLICY DURING WWII

SUMMARY:

The Prohuman Grade 7 curriculum is aligned to two sets of standards: [Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts](#) and [Character and Social Emotional Development \(CSED\) National Guidelines](#). The full collection of units introduces all nine of the prohuman character strengths: optimism, grit, gratitude, curiosity, courage, compassion, fairness, understanding, and humanity.

In Unit 6, Lesson 3, “Writing an Argumentative Essay About U.S. Immigration Policy During WWII,” students will write an argumentative essay in which they take a position on how the U.S. government should have responded to the plight of Jewish refugees during WWII. Students will support their argument with evidence from the article read in the previous unit: “[Voyage of the St. Louis](#).”

SUGGESTED TIME: 50 minutes

RELATED SUBJECT: English Language Arts

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Write an argumentative essay
- Provide textual evidence to support claims from the article "[Voyage of the St. Louis.](#)"

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

- [Prohuman Grade 7 Unit 6 Worksheet 3: Writing an Argumentative Essay About U.S. Immigration Policy During WWII](#)

ELA COMMON CORE STANDARDS MET

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.1	Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.	✓
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.1.A	Introduce claim(s), acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.	✓
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.1.B	Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.	✓
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.1.C	Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence.	✓
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.1.D	Establish and maintain a formal style.	✓
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.1.E	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.	✓

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.	✓
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.	✓

CHARACTER AND SOCIAL EMOTIONAL (CSED) NATIONAL STANDARDS MET

Intellectual Character B4	Compare and contrast perspectives and defend a position (e.g., intellectual autonomy)	✓
Responsible and Ethical Decision-Making A3	Write about and share a principle you want to live by that you learned from a family member, book, movie, or personal experience	✓

LESSON PROCEDURE

- Explain that students will write an argumentative essay of 2-3 pages, either in class or as part of a homework assignment, in response to the following prompt on the worksheet.
- Explain that students will share their essays with three classmates for peer review. It is recommended that the teacher assign the groups.
- Explain that students' essays will be evaluated on the criteria listed on the worksheet.

GRADE 7 UNIT 6 WORKSHEET 3: WRITING AN ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY ABOUT U.S. IMMIGRATION POLICY DURING WWII

Essay Prompt:

Write an argumentative essay of 2-3 pages in response to the following prompt, adapted from [Teach Democracy](#):

- In our unit on compassion, we read an article about the U.S. response to the plight of Jewish refugees aboard the SS St. Louis: "[Voyage of the St. Louis](#)."
- Imagine that you are President Roosevelt in 1939 and have been presented with three proposals by your cabinet in response to the plight of Jewish refugees:
 - 1.) The U.S. should increase immigration quotas (limits) and ease visa rules to permit more Jewish refugees to enter the country.
 - 2.) The U.S. should take in large numbers of Jewish refugee children outside of the immigration quota system.
 - 3.) The U.S. should establish a camp system throughout America to give temporary safe haven to Jewish refugees, with those in the camps to return to their countries when it is safe for them.
- Write an argument favoring one of these proposals, explaining why it is better than the other two options. Provide at least three reasons for your argument, with evidence from the text: "[Voyage of the St. Louis](#)."

Essay Evaluation Criteria:

Your essay will be evaluated on the extent to which it does the following:

- 1.) Meets the 2-3 page length requirement.
- 2.) Introduces claims, acknowledges and distinguishes claims from alternate or opposing claims, and organizes the reasons and evidence logically.
- 3.) Supports claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and showing an understanding of the topic.
- 4.) Uses words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- 5.) Establishes and maintains a formal style.
- 6.) Provides a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
- 7.) Demonstrates command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage.