



iCivics' new classroom tool *Drafting Board* can help simplify the complexity of creating a Common Core-aligned learning environment. This free resource is integrated with the content of the iCivics curriculum and aligned to the Common Core standards.

Drafting Board offers interactive, scaffolded learning with immediate feedback. It is a collection of three-day interventions that teach students to write with evidence to support an argument.

Through *Drafting Board* students will:

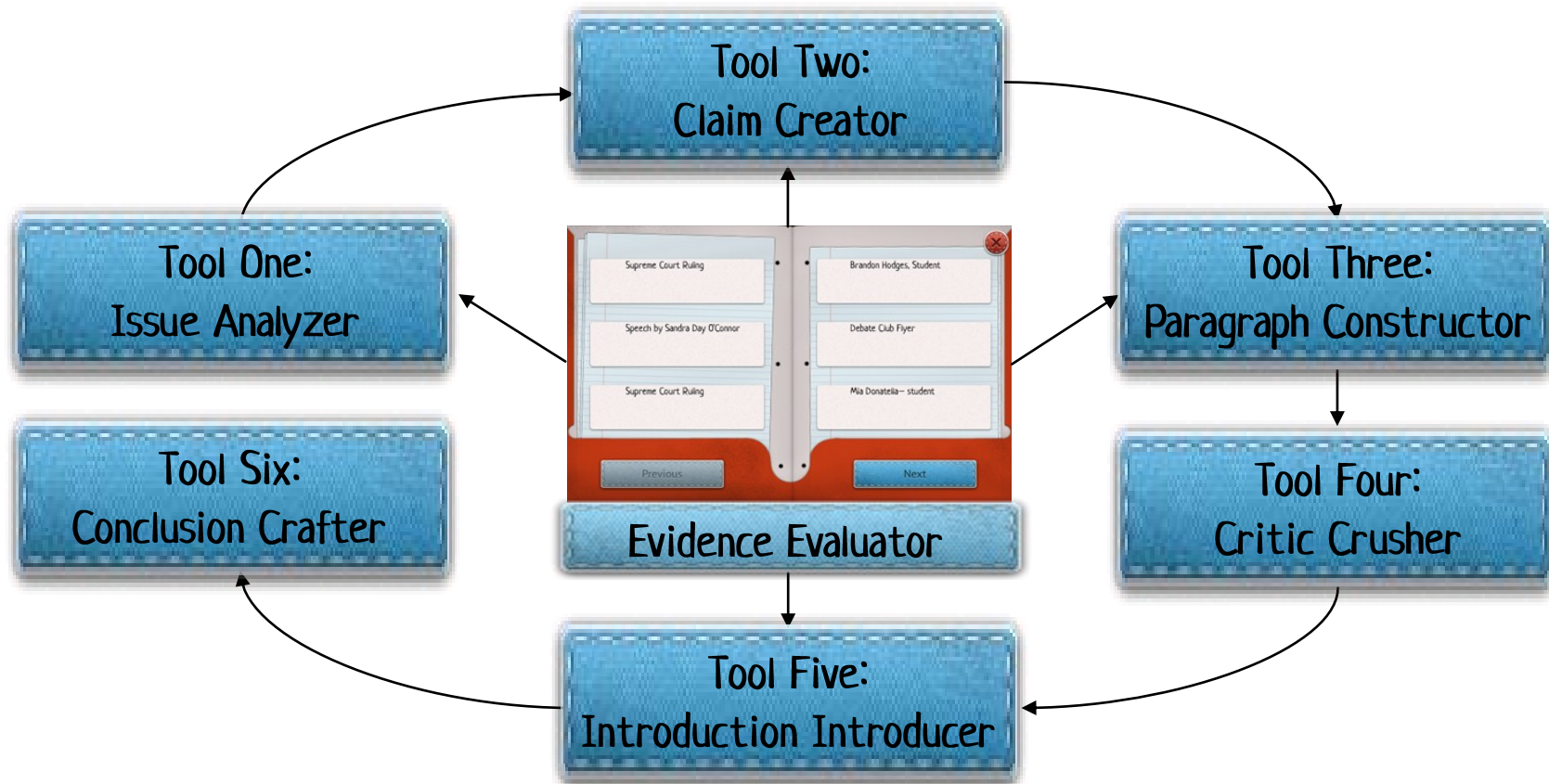
- ☑ Analyze and synthesize primary and secondary sources;
- ☑ Compare and analyze text;
- ☑ Understand and incorporate elements of structure, tone, vocabulary, and audience;
- ☑ Ultimately understand and write an effective argument
- ☑ Improve their writing (Study by CIRCLE at Tufts University, forthcoming)

The Tools

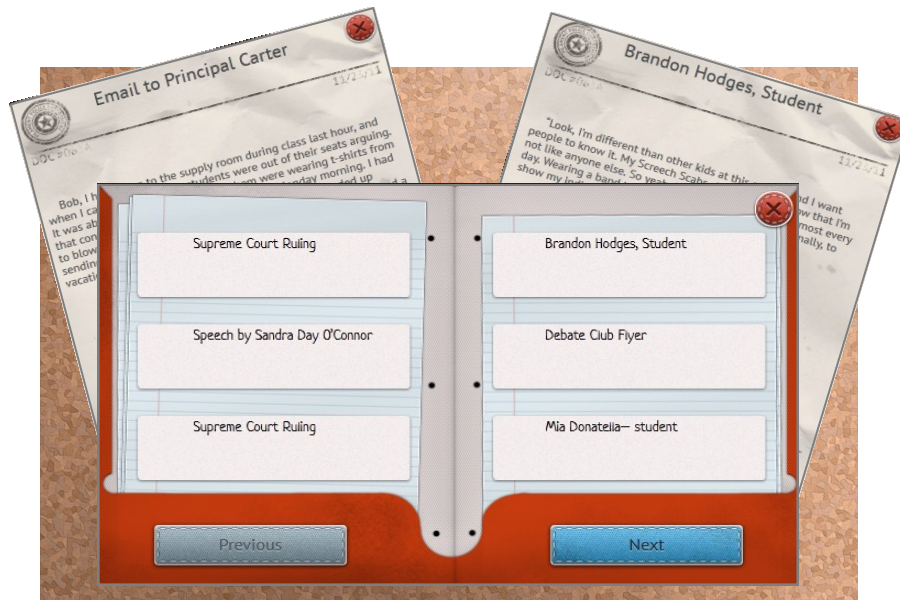
Drafting Board takes students through the steps of creating a persuasive essay. It includes six tools that scaffold the process of evaluating evidence, making a claim, and defending that claim in a thoughtful way. At the end, students have a persuasive essay with an introduction, body, and conclusion.

The tools themselves do not progress in the same order as the essay. After analyzing the evidence and making a claim, students work on the body paragraphs first. This way, students understand the claim and the evidence before they craft a counterclaim, introduction or conclusion.

Students work through the tools sequentially. In each tool, they access a core evidence folder that they use to complete most of the activities. *Drafting Board* controls the sequence of activities, and students cannot access the tools any time they want. However, *Drafting Board* tracks the student's progress on a wheel that is visible on every screen. When a tool is complete, the student sees a recap of the work from that tool and may edit the content or even restart the tool.



Evidence Evaluator



The Evidence Evaluator shows the evidence that is used throughout *Drafting Board*. Students work with this evidence in various activities within each tool.

Within a tool or activity, students may be asked to evaluate the evidence for different purposes. Evidence buttons appear in the activity, taking students to the Evidence Evaluator. Depending on the activity, students work with specific highlighted parts of the evidence and must select relevant parts of the text.

At any time, students may access the Evidence Evaluator directly by clicking the green Evidence button that appears on every screen.

Navigation Tools



Throughout the tool, students can access the Evidence Evaluator, a list of transitions to assist with free writing, and a help page.



Inside each tool, students can check their overall progress on the wheel at the bottom left of their screen. Clicking the wheel takes the student to a progress page that shows the work that has been done and the objectives that still must be met.

Progress Page

The Progress Page appears between each tool and can also be accessed by clicking the progress wheel.

Overview

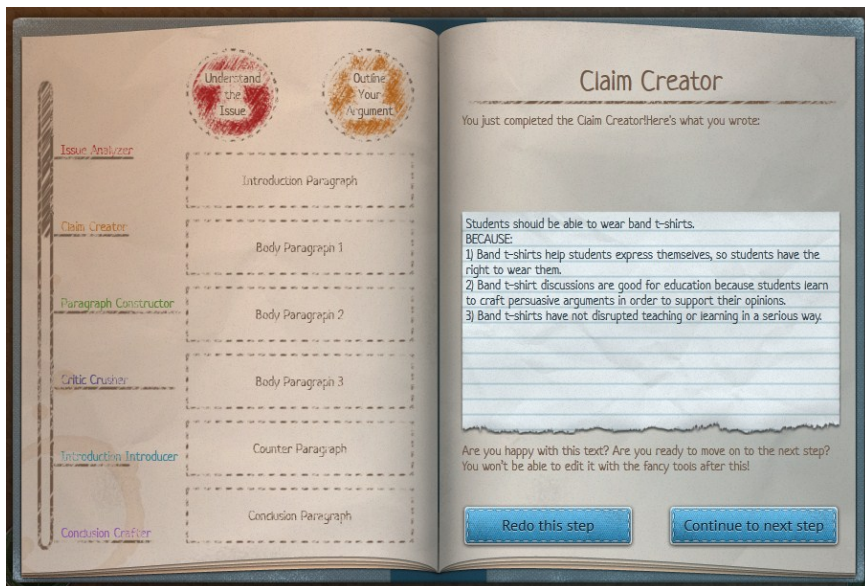
The left side of the Progress Page shows students where they are in the *Drafting Board* process. It colors in each tool after the tool has been successfully completed.

Preview

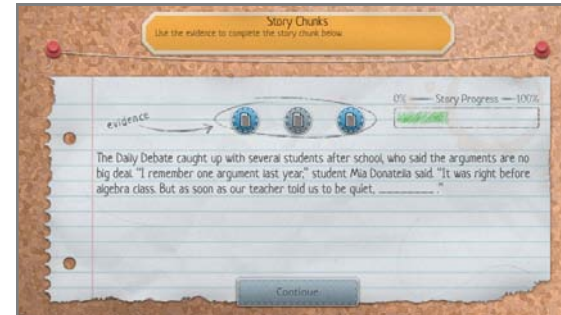
At the start of a new tool, the right side of the Progress Page shows the objectives for the tool the student is about to begin.

Review

At the end of a tool, the right side of the Progress Page shows the work the student just did in the tool. Here, the student has the opportunity to edit, redo the step if needed, or move on to the next tool.



Tool One: Issue Analyzer



The first tool introduces students to a controversy. The controversies in *Drafting Board* cover a wide range of topics. Current topics include debates over freedom of expression, the Electoral College, military intervention in humanitarian crises, whether kids should have credit cards, and whether community service should be required for high school graduation.

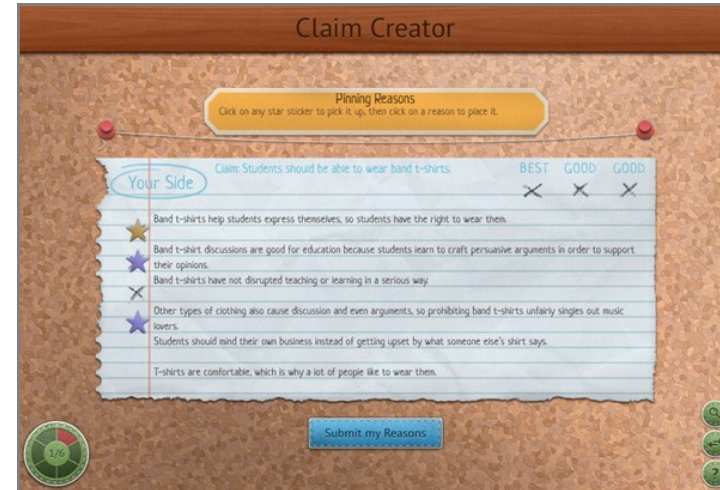
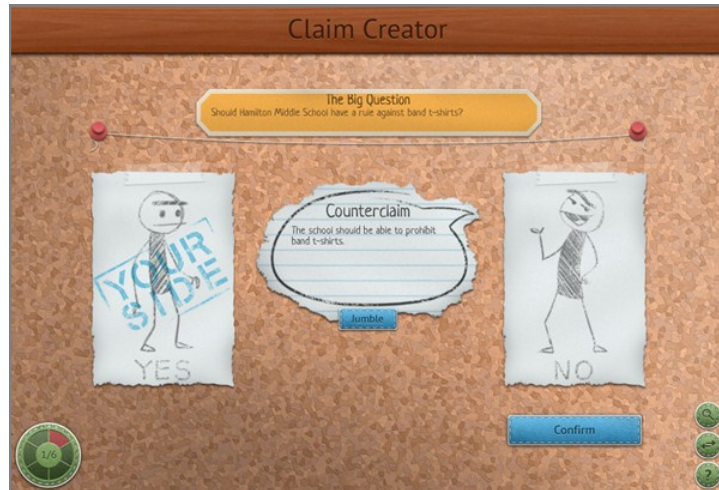
The first tool is designed as a newspaper article and begins with an attention-grabbing introductory paragraph. Students use the evidence to fill in missing pieces of the story, which paints a complete picture of the controversy. This gives students background knowledge of the topic and familiarizes them with most of the evidence in the Evidence Evaluator. A progress bar on the right shows students how far they have progressed through the story.

Teacher Feedback

Teachers can access the following information about each student's performance in the Issue Analyzer:

- Number or percent of story blanks correctly matched to the evidence;
- Time used to complete the tool.

Tool Two: Claim Creator



The second tool asks students to make a claim by choosing a side of the argument. Once sides have been chosen, students select three reasons they think best support the claim. These reasons act as the three-part base for the body of the essay.

Students then find two pieces of evidence to support each reason. In each version of Drafting Board, the evidence takes a variety of forms, including things like emails and letters, legal precedent, news articles, statistics, and interviews.

Claim Creator Objectives:

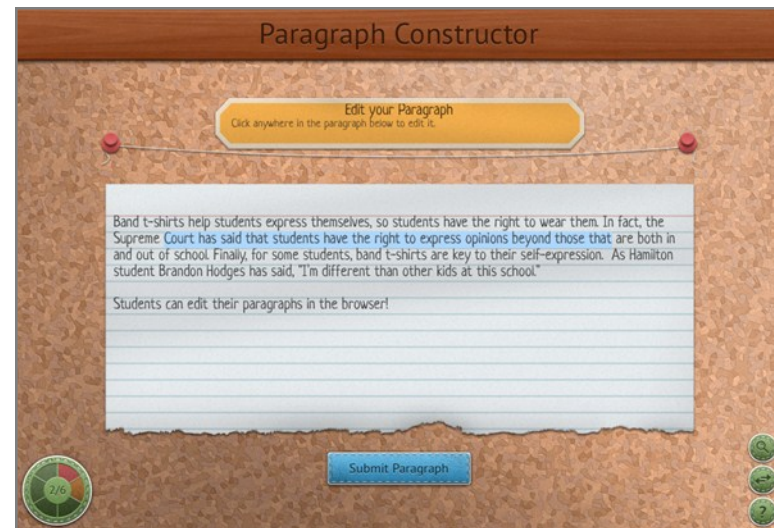
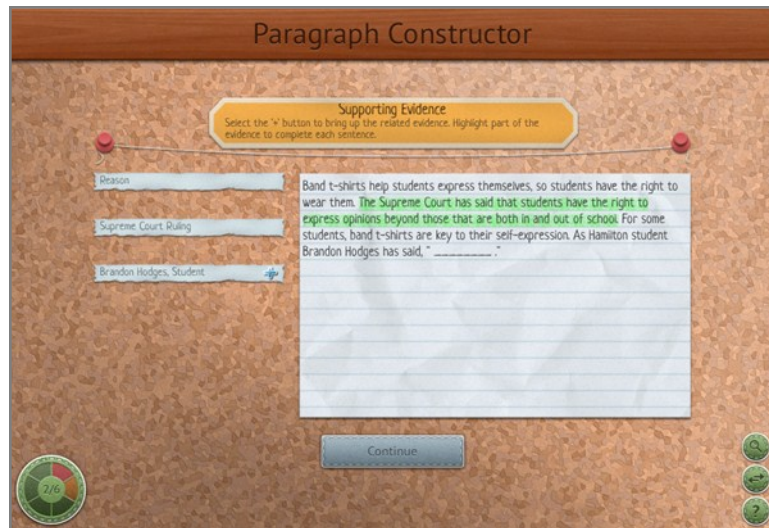
- Pick Sides (this directs the path for the rest of the essay)
- See Vote Results (see which side other students selected)
- Pin Your Reasons (select three reasons to use as the base of the essay)
- Justify Your Choice (match two pieces of evidence that support each reason)
- Support Your Side (open response)
- Pin the Other Side (select reasons that support the counterclaim's position)

Teacher Feedback

The teacher can access the following information about each student's performance in the Claim Creator:

- Number or percent of reasons and evidence correctly matched;
- Time used to complete the tool;
- Open responses added by the student.

Tool Three: Paragraph Constructor



The Paragraph Constructor scaffolds the process of writing each body paragraph. For the first paragraph, *Drafting Board* models proper sentence and paragraph construction. Students identify relevant portions of evidence to complete missing pieces of the paragraph. They can reorder the sentences, add transitions, and custom-edit the paragraph.

For the second body paragraph, some of the scaffolding is removed. Students must re-write the sentences in their own words before they can advance.

In the third paragraph, the scaffolding is largely gone. Students must use the evidence they selected to compose their own sentences. They can access a list of transitions, and there is a checklist to help them proofread their work.

Paragraph Constructor Objectives:

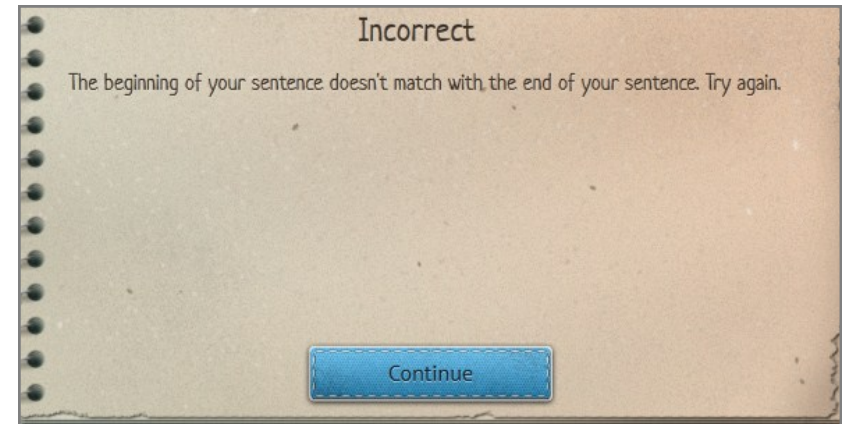
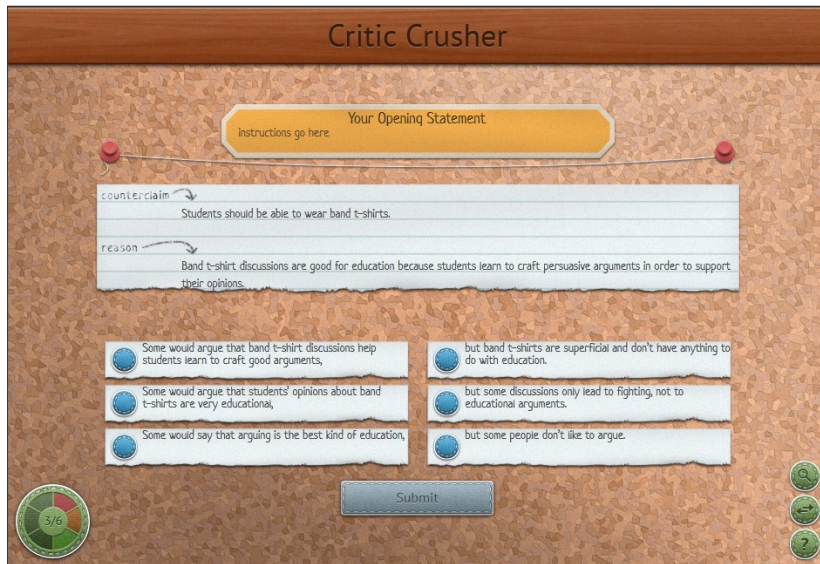
- Arrange sentences
- Complete sentences with evidence
- Place transitions
- Edit your paragraph

Teacher Feedback

The teacher can access the following pieces of information about each student's performance in the Paragraph Constructor:

- Number or percent of missing paragraph pieces correctly completed;
- Time used to complete the tool;
- Open responses added by the student;
- Completed paragraphs, distinguishing between *Drafting Board*-created content and student-created content.

Tool Four: Critic Crusher



Drafting Board pushes students one step beyond defending their own claim. The Critic Crusher calls on the students to look at the other side of the argument, understand the opposing reasons, and find inconsistencies to weaken them. Students complete matching and multiple choice activities to piece together the paragraph. As with all of the tools, students receive immediate feedback when they incorrectly match or select items.

Critic Crusher Objectives:

- Acknowledge the other side's argument
- Use your evidence weaken their argument
- Support your side with more evidence
- Restate your claim to make your point
- Choose your best paragraph
- Place transitions
- Edit and check

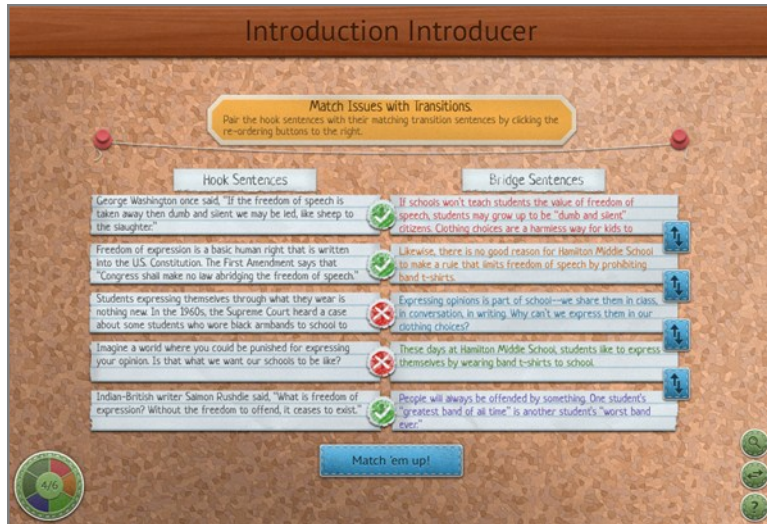
Students do this twice, then choose which paragraph to include in the essay.

Teacher Feedback

The teacher can access the following pieces of information about each student's performance in the Critic Crusher:

- Number or percent of paragraph pieces correctly matched or selected;
- Time used to complete the tool;
- Open responses added by the student;
- Paragraph selected for the essay.

Tools Five & Six: Introduction Introducer & Conclusion Crafter



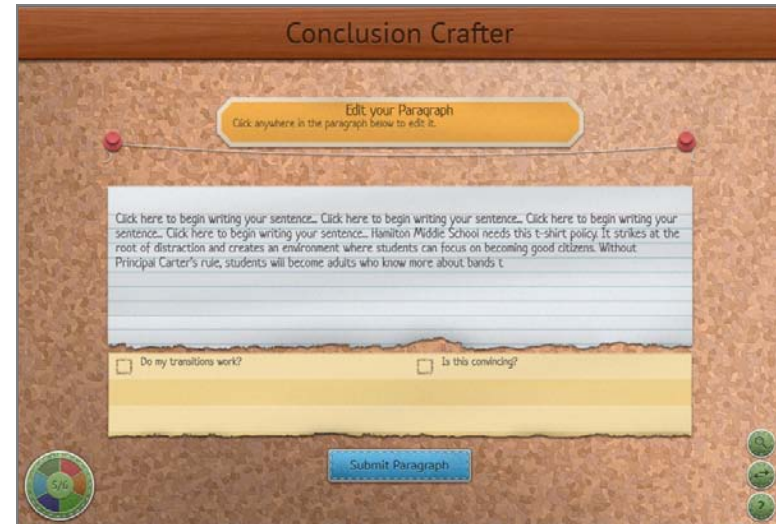
Introduction Introducer

At this point, students have defended their claim, acknowledged the other side, and created the main body of the essay. The Introduction Introducer now shows students how to construct an introductory paragraph that pulls the reader into the controversy.

A quick drill shows students a variety of attention-grabbing ways to begin the paragraph. Students choose the opening they like best, then construct the rest of the paragraph. They add transitions, give the paragraph a read through, make any final edits, and move to the next step.

Teacher Feedback

Once the final tool is complete, you can access the student essays from the Reports tab on your class page at iCivics.org.



Conclusion Crafter

The Conclusion Crafter shows students how to write a concluding statement that supports the argument presented. This step does double duty by asking the students to review their argument up to this point as well as craft the concluding paragraph in the essay. Students learn several ways to write a closing sentence that brings the argument home.

Wrapping it Up

After completing all the tools, students have a structured written argument. They have a final opportunity to edit the essay before submitting it electronically or printing it out to hand in.

Teacher Reporting

STUDENT NAME	PROGRESS	READ ESSAY
StudentUsername123	ISSUE ANALYZER (green) CLAIM CREATOR (yellow) PARAGRAPH CONSTRUCTOR (gray) CRITIC CRUSHER (gray) INTRODUCTION INTRODUCER (gray) CONCLUSION CRAFTER (gray)	Read
StudentUsername123	ISSUE ANALYZER (green) CLAIM CREATOR (yellow) PARAGRAPH CONSTRUCTOR (gray) CRITIC CRUSHER (gray) INTRODUCTION INTRODUCER (gray) CONCLUSION CRAFTER (gray)	Read
StudentUsername123	ISSUE ANALYZER (green) CLAIM CREATOR (yellow) PARAGRAPH CONSTRUCTOR (gray) CRITIC CRUSHER (gray) INTRODUCTION INTRODUCER (gray) CONCLUSION CRAFTER (gray)	Read
StudentUsername123	ISSUE ANALYZER (green) CLAIM CREATOR (yellow) PARAGRAPH CONSTRUCTOR (gray) CRITIC CRUSHER (gray) INTRODUCTION INTRODUCER (gray) CONCLUSION CRAFTER (gray)	Read

StudentUsername123 Essay

Sed ut perspiciatis unde omnis iste natus error sit voluptatem accusantium doloremque laudantium, totam rem aperiam, eaque ipsa quae ab illo inventore veritatis et quasi architecto beatae vitae dicta sunt explicabo. **Nemo enim ipsam voluptatem quia voluptas sit aspernatur aut odit aut fugit, sed quia consequuntur magni dolores eos qui ratione voluptatem sequi nesciunt.**

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STUDENT NAME	PROGRESS	READ ESSAY
StudentUsername123	ISSUE ANALYZER (green) CLAIM CREATOR (yellow) INTRO INDUCER (gray) PARAGRAPH CONSTRUCTOR (gray) CRITIC CRUSHER (gray) CONCLUSION CRAFTER (gray)	Read
StudentUsername123	ISSUE ANALYZER (green) CLAIM CREATOR (yellow) INTRO INDUCER (gray) PARAGRAPH CONSTRUCTOR (gray) CRITIC CRUSHER (gray) CONCLUSION CRAFTER (gray)	Read

ISSUE ANALYZER
Issue Name: The name of the issue
Total Story Chunks: 20 Number of Attempts: 5
Completed: 2/2/2012 9:15 AM
Started: 2/2/2012 8:35 AM
VIEW REWARD RECAP

CLAIM CREATOR
Started: 2/2/2012 8:35 AM

INTRO INDUCER
PARAGRAPH CONSTRUCTOR
CRITIC CRUSHER
CONCLUSION CRAFTER

The *Reports* tab on your My iCivics page provides you with a few ways to access student progress within the *Drafting Board* assignment.

You can see a class roster of where your students are in the *Drafting Board* process. This color coded chart shows completed tools in green, the open tool in yellow, and all other tools grayed out.

You'll also be able to see your students' writing progress in each tool. Bold text was written by the student; regular text was provided by iCivics.

You also have the ability to dig deeper into each student's individual progress by clicking on their names. It will show you how they did on evidence matching, how much time they took on each tool, and the text that they entered along the way. The specific data points are different from tool to tool, but give you a quick idea of how the students are doing.

Print and export features for student data are also be available.