



# BIG GREEN LESSONS

WINTER WRITING, OPINION: GRADES K-2

## KEY

In this lesson, students will...

## UNDERSTANDINGS

- write opinion pieces based on the Learning Garden.

## STANDARDS

Common Core - English Language Arts

## ALIGNMENT

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.K.1.** Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose opinion pieces in which they tell a reader the topic or name of the book they are writing about and state an opinion or preference about the topic or book (e.g., *My favorite book is...*).
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.1.1.** Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or name the book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply a reason for the opinion, and provide some sense of closure.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.2.1.** Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply reasons that support the opinion, use linking words (e.g., *because, and, also*) to connect opinion and reasons, and provide a concluding statement or section.

## MATERIALS & PREPARATION

- Chart paper/whiteboard and markers
- Writing materials for students (pencils/paper, computers, tablets, etc.)
- Graphic organizer, optional
- Opinion writing rubric

## TEACHER BACKGROUND

The winter may seem like a slow season for your school Learning Garden without active planting, observing, and harvesting activities happening during a prime growing season. This can be the optimum time, however, for students to engage further with the Learning Garden by identifying a topic connected to the Learning Garden that they can “take a side on” and tell others why.

If the weather allows, consider touring the Learning Garden to introduce this writing – give students time to explore the differences between a fall and winter Learning Garden. You may also consider introducing the activity in the Learning Garden space, doing the student discussion and brainstorming, even writing the first drafts in the Learning Garden.

Opinion writing for early elementary grades should focus on distinguishing fact from opinion and supporting that opinion with reasons. As students get older, the focus should turn to selecting reasons



## **INTRODUCTION**

that clearly connect to the opinion the student holds.

Spend time discussing the following introductory questions:

- What is the best thing about our Learning Garden?
- What do you like the least about our Learning Garden?
- Is spending time in the Learning Garden good for us?

## **LESSON**

1. Review as necessary the components of opinion writing.
2. Have students “Think, Pair, Share” their perspectives from the introduction questions. Emphasize the need to share their “why” with their partner.
3. Allow pairs to share the results of their discussion and record all ideas on a chart paper or whiteboard.
4. Share your own opinion topic from the Learning Garden in order to model the writing process. (We recommend using a topic different from the questions posed in the introduction to allow students to present their own opinion and not be tempted to follow yours.)  
If using a graphic organizer, model how to use the graphic organizer with your own idea. \*Use this opportunity to highlight a classroom focus for writing.
5. Model drafting your own opinion piece for students.
6. Give students time to solidify their own perspective with reasons and begin drafting their piece.
7. Circulate as needed, reinforcing desired writing techniques with students.
8. As time allows (possibly over the remainder of the week), move through the writing process with the Learning Garden opinion pieces. After drafting, revise and edit your model and then have students revise and edit their own; repeat as necessary.
9. Create a final draft of your model and publish, and have students create a final draft and publish. Consider creating a class book with all students’ pieces. Lastly, if possible, allow students to share or present their opinion pieces.
10. Use your school’s opinion rubric to score student writing and provide feedback.

## **CONCLUSION**

Have students share key parts of the lesson and review the Key Understandings.

## **ADDITIONAL WRITING PROMPTS TO CONSIDER**

- If you were to change something about our Learning Garden, what would you change? Why?
- Do you think growing your own food is easy or difficult? Why?

More writing prompts available in our BG Writing Prompts document!



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

### Learning Garden Opinion Piece

Topic:

Opinion:

Reason(s):