

## Grades 6-8 Analyzing Two Author's Points of View Reading Lesson

### OBJECTIVE

The student will read two informational articles, synthesizing the information in those articles in order to explain how two authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations to reveal different points of view.

### MATERIALS

- Class set of or electronic access to two articles that cite the same scientific study like –
  - “[When Smartphones Go to School](#)” (K. Kowalski, *Science News for Students*, 3/3/16)
  - “[Take Note](#)” (C. Straumsheim, *Inside Higher Ed*, 6/8/15)(Both articles cite a study by *Jeffrey H. Kuznekoff*.)
- Sticky notes, blank piece of lined paper and pencil for each student

### PROCEDURES

<b>PHASE 1 MEET THE SOURCE</b>
<p><b>1. Introduce both sources and briefly preview.</b> You might start by saying, “Take a moment to read the title and deck (text under the title) for each article. What do you predict you’ll be learning about? Turn and share your thinking with a partner.”</p>
<p><b>2. Coach students as they read (and reread, if time) both sources.</b> Questions to pose as you confer with individual students include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “What did you just learn in this part of the source?” (<i>within the text</i> understanding)</li><li>• “What do you think is a central idea in this article so far? Why do you think so?” (<i>beyond the text</i> understanding)</li><li>• “Why do you think the author chose that detail (INSERT DETAIL FROM TEXT) to include in the article?” (<i>about the text</i> understanding)</li></ul>
<p><b>3. Discuss.</b> Pose a question like one of the following: “What did you learn about what research studies on smartphones have revealed? What else did you learn that you found interesting?” Notice which details the students seem to have understood easily and which details they perhaps did not understand as well. This will help you determine which portions of the article to reread closely during the next phase of the lesson.</p>

<b>PHASE 2 MEET THE STRATEGIES</b>
<p><b>1. Introduce the strategies and model.</b> Introduce the concept of synthesis (specifically, identifying an author’s point of view) by stating the <i>what</i>, <i>why</i>, and <i>how</i> of synthesis. You might say the following: <i>In this lesson, we are going to revisit the two articles we read for a particular purpose. Let me explain.</i></p> <p>(The WHAT) <i>Readers know that authors frequently have a point of view they are trying to convey in their writing. We also know that authors shape the information or facts in a way that helps them present their point of view.</i></p> <p>(The WHY) <i>Identifying the author’s point of view on a topic can help us remember what we read in each article and compare and contrast the information in those articles.</i></p>

(The HOW) *One way to identify an author's point of view is to think about how the author feels or what the author believes about the topic. We can do this by noticing and naming the types of details an author uses and how she uses these details. If we notice multiple details that lean towards a particular feeling or belief, we can probably assume the author's point of view.*

*Let's think about think about the first article, "When Smartphones Go to School." Let's reread the article and begin to think about what we think the author's point of view might be and then we'll go back and identify specific details that support our thinking.*

Provide time for students to reread the article and jot down a note about the author's point of view on a piece of paper or sticky note. Then engage them in sharing their thoughts. If the students hesitate or struggle unproductively, be prepared to step in and think aloud about your thoughts as a reader.

Next support the students in returning to the article and jotting down bulleted notes with details from the text that support their thinking. You might opt to do this together. As students identify details, confirm that the details support what the students thought the author's point of view was or support them in adjusting their notes on the author's point of view. **You may need to spend time teaching students to notice and name what the author is doing, providing them with language like the following: *introduces study, explains study, presents counterarguments, quotes an expert or researcher, shares negatives – benefits-disadvantages-positives-advantages, concludes with..., cites other studies, hypothesizes, draws conclusions.*** Students may benefit from an anchor chart that lists these types of details.

Note about these authors and their points of view:

- In "Smartphones go to school," while the author, Kowalski, presents both sides of the issue (regarding whether learning can happen via smartphones in the classroom), her presentation of the facts leans towards the argument that smartphones can be a distraction, dangerous and even addictive. Kowalski cites several studies and when she quotes Kuznekoff discussing his study, she tends to quote him describing the negative aspects of smartphones in the classroom.
- In "Take Note" the author, Straumsheim, explains Kuznekoff's study in more detail and seems to be leaning towards the idea that teachers need to learn to work with technology like students' smartphones and if they do, this can be beneficial.

**2. Guided and independent practice.** Ask the students to engage in the same process with the second text – rereading to identify the author's point of view and then identifying details that reveal that point of view.

**3. Discuss.** Pose a prompt like the following: "What are the similarities and differences in these two authors' points of views?" Nudge students to use their notes to support their responses.

### ***PHASE 3 MEET THE RESPONSE***

**1. Introduce the prompt and plan.** Pose the prompt, "How would you explain the difference between these two authors' points of view?" Provide a sticky note for each student to jot down a response and then bulleted details below.

**2. Coach students as they write a response.**  
See sample student response and analysis.

**3. Provide an opportunity for students to share their responses in small groups.**

\*For more support in implementing this lesson, see a [blog entry](#) I wrote.