Reading Selections for This Module


Additional Reading Selection:


Module Description

Juvenile Justice was developed for use in the twelfth grade early in the year and will require about two to three weeks of class time. The module was designed to explore a legal issue and the way in which scientific evidence and personal observations and experience contribute to different strongly held points of view on the topic. An optional additional reading is a magazine article profiling a 30-year-old man who killed his parents as a 14-year-old and is serving a life sentence in prison. It adds one more very compelling voice to the debate about mandatory life in prison for juveniles and can be used with more accelerated students. Students practice analyzing different genres of text from a rhetorical perspective. The final on-demand assignment asks students to respond to a recent Supreme Court decision on the topic and to construct their own arguments on one or the other side. Subsequent instruction focuses on revising to improve essay focus.

Module Background

Legal issues surrounding the mandatory sentencing of juveniles to life in prison for serious crimes is an engaging topic for students who are juveniles themselves. The scientific evidence about the
changes that teenaged brains undergo is surprising for most teens while the question of whether young people who have committed crimes can be rehabilitated raises fundamental questions about human nature.

The first two articles pair an opinion piece opposed to sentencing juveniles as adults along with an article by a doctor at UCLA vividly describing his research into the brain development of teens. The second pair of articles presents the perspectives of the sister of a victim of juvenile murder asking that the feelings of the relatives of victims be taken into consideration in contrast to a former juvenile judge who argues that most juvenile criminals can turn their lives around. The additional reading profiles a juvenile murderer adding complexity to the issue. The readings also provide rich opportunities to analyze how writers use rhetorical appeals to sway their readers while the writing assignment asks students to use the evidence from the texts to form an argument supporting one or the other sides of the Supreme Court decision. The writing assignment cites a recent Supreme Court decision barring mandatory life sentences which sharply divided the Court.

Module Objectives

In addition to the focus on Common Core State Standards, the module targets the skill areas listed below.

Students will be able to
  • Identify the main ideas, including the author’s main argument/claim within a text
  • Summarize and respond to a text
  • Analyze the impact of the author’s ethos on the credibility of an argument
  • Compare different arguments and the rhetorical strategies of their writers
  • Construct an argument using sources
  • Revise rhetorically to establish a clear focus for their essay
  • Edit with a focus on sentence structure

Note: The activities for students provided in the Student Version for this module are copied here in the Teacher Version for your convenience. The shaded areas include the actual activities the students will see. The use of italics in the shaded areas generally indicates possible student responses and may be interspersed with notes to the teacher that are not shaded. If there are notes to the teacher within the shaded areas, they are indicated by italics and parentheses.
Reading Rhetorically

Prereading

Getting Ready to Read

As the students approach the readings, you can help them make a connection between their own personal world and that of the texts with the following prewrite. If you share a few of these quickwrites with the class, you can get a sense of what students know and think about the topic of sentencing juveniles.

**Activity 1: Getting Ready to Read**

Quickwrite (5 minutes). If you committed a serious crime, do you think it would be fair for you to be punished the same way an adult who committed the same crime would be?

Collect the quickwrites. After you share some of them with the class, save them. You will be passing them back to students after they have read the four texts in this module so they can see how their ideas have evolved as they prepare to join the ongoing conversation about the best way to deal with juveniles who commit serious crimes.

The strategies in this section of the ERWC are designed to prepare students in advance of reading increasingly complex and sophisticated texts. These brief, introductory activities will prepare students to learn the content of California’s Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts (ELA) and Literacy in the sections of the module that follow.

Exploring Key Concepts

This module focuses on whether or not sentencing juveniles to life in prison as though they were adults is appropriate and fair. A key concept is the distinction between adults and juveniles. This activity should lead to a discussion about whether age alone makes a person a juvenile or if other qualities give a person that designation.

**FA Formative Assessment**

The next two activities (Activities 2 and 3) provide an opportunity for you to explore how much students already know about the American juvenile justice system and brain science. Based on what emerges, you can adjust the time you spend preparing students for the concepts they will encounter in the Juvenile Justice module.
Activity 2: Exploring Key Concepts

1. Who is a juvenile? What are some synonyms for “juvenile”?
2. What are the differences between an adult and a juvenile? Brainstorm a list of qualities that characterize a juvenile but not an adult.

These articles also require students to understand some key legal terminology. In this assignment, you can review certain terms that students need to know to better understand the articles: “first-degree murder” and “manslaughter,” for example. Ensuring that students understand the long-term consequences of being convicted of a crime is also critical. Do convicted criminals have rights? Can they have another trial? Providing the students with this background information will increase their comprehension as they read the articles. If your class is composed of students from different cultures, you can use them as a resource to illustrate that different cultures define juveniles and view crimes they commit in different ways.

One approach to this task is to provide students with definitions of the legal categories that describe killing someone. Ask students to read the definitions and explain them to a partner. Then have them read the scenarios and select the legal term that applies to the situation. Once the pairs have come to a consensus, ask the class as a whole for a show of hands to determine the majority response. Then give them the actual answers based on California law, using the key provided here for you.

Activity 3: Exploring Key Definitions

Definitions of some legal terms for killing someone are provided below. Study them, and explain the differences in your own words.

Definitions of Legal Terms

Homicide is the killing of one person by another, either intentionally or unintentionally. Homicide includes accidents and murder.

Murder is killing someone with malice of forethought. It could be done while committing another crime. Murder is always illegal.

First-degree murder is killing a person with malice of forethought; the killing was planned. It was done deliberately.

Second-degree murder is a killing done during a crime deemed dangerous to a human life. The crime was most likely not committed with the intention of killing.

Voluntary manslaughter is killing someone intentionally but without malice of forethought. For example, if the killing was a crime of passion (killing a spouse or lover because of jealousy), the intention was to kill. However, there was no malice of forethought because it was not planned.
Involuntary manslaughter is killing someone unlawfully but without malice of forethought. It was committed without intent to kill and without a conscious disregard for human life.

**Matching Activity**

Now read the following scenarios and fill in the boxes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actual situation</th>
<th>Crime or conviction</th>
<th>Punishment or sentencing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A troubled 17-year-old girl has slowly poisoned her parents each night at dinner. After three months, she came home to find them dead on the kitchen floor. The coroner's report indicated that cyanide poisoning caused their deaths.</td>
<td>First-degree murder</td>
<td>Sentenced to life in prison without parole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three 16-year-olds were hanging out at the park drinking whiskey. One boy started shoving his friend. Soon the shoving escalated into punching. One boy tripped, and his head hit a sharp-edged rock. The boy died before help arrived.</td>
<td>Second-degree murder</td>
<td>Sentence to three years in prison after being tried as an adult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspicious that his girlfriend was cheating, a 16-year-old boy went to her house and found her in bed with his brother. Impulsively, he grabbed the nearest lamp and hit his brother on the head. His brother died two days later.</td>
<td>Voluntary manslaughter</td>
<td>Sentenced to six years in prison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A 13-year-old boy broke into an auto parts business to steal hubcaps. The 17-year-old security guard picked up his boss's gun and fired two warning shots at the thief. The second shot hit the 13-year-old and killed him on the spot.</td>
<td>Involuntary manslaughter</td>
<td>Sentenced to 15 years to life</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Finally, before asking students to read the selections, show a graphic of the brain with its parts and their functions labeled:

![The Human Brain](http://www.biomedresearches.com/root/pages/researches/epilepsy/brain.html)

**The Brain’s Vital Statistics:**

- **Adult Weight:** About 3 pounds
- **Adult Size:** A medium cauliflower
- **Number of Neurons:** 100 billion
- **Number of Synapses:** (The gaps between neurons) about 100 trillion
- **Number of Capillaries:** (Tiny blood vessels) about 400 billion

**Surveying the Text**

Surveying the texts gives you an overview of what the articles are about and how they are put together. This activity will help you create a framework so that you can make predictions and form questions to guide your reading. In the course of the discussion, supply brief definitions for “justices,” “bar,” and “mandatory” if it seems like your students need them.

**Texts—**

- “Kids are Kids—Until They Commit Crimes”
- “Startling Finds on Teenage Brains”
Activity 4: Surveying the Text

Discuss the following questions as a class:

- What do the titles “Kids Are Kids—Until They Commit Crimes” and “Startling Finds on Teenage Brains” tell you about the topics of these articles?

  I think both these articles will be about punishing kids who commit crimes such as murder. The first one sounds like it will discuss the author’s opinion about how kids are punished. It sounds like the author thinks kids stop deserving to be treated like kids when they commit crimes. The second article sounds like it will talk about how the teenage mind is different from the adult mind.

- “Kids Are Kids” was published in the Sacramento Bee in 2001. “Startling Finds on Teenage Brain” was published in the same paper also in 2001. What can you predict about the articles? How do you think the articles will be the same? How do you think they will be different?

  They are both respected papers so I think they both will probably be accurate and well written. “Kids Are Kids” sounds like it will be about the author’s opinions. “Startling Finds” sounds like it’s going to be about the science of the brain, so it will probably be more factual and maybe less fun to read, but I’m intrigued by the word “startling.”

Making Predictions and Asking Questions

Predicting and asking questions help students engage their knowledge and experience prior to reading, set purposes for reading, and anchor their thinking in the text. In helping students make predictions, draw their attention to features of the text relevant to the particular genre and rhetorical situation, and ask students to think about the character and identity of the writer, the nature of the audience, and the purpose of the writing. Students can become more aware of how they form predictions by providing evidence from the text they have surveyed. Read the first three paragraphs of “Startling Finds” aloud.

Activity 5: Making Predictions and Asking Questions

Listen as your teacher reads the first three paragraphs of “Startling Finds on Teenage Brains,” and then discuss the following questions:

- Now that you’ve listened to the first three paragraphs of “Startling Finds,” what do you think it is going to be about?

  It’s going to be about whether juveniles like Brazill should be sentenced to life for murder because they are immature.
• What do you think is the purpose of this text?
  
  I think the purpose will be to discuss brain science and the way it relates to teenage crime.

• Who do you think is the intended audience for this piece? How do you know this?
  
  I think the audience is going to be a general audience of newspaper readers. I don't think the article is going to be aimed at scientists and other experts.

• Turn the title into a question to answer as you read the essay.
  
  What are the finds about teenage brains, and why are they startling?

Now read the first six paragraphs of “Kids Are Kids” silently.

• What is Lundstrom’s opinion on the topic of juvenile crime?
  
  I think Lundstrom believes that “kids are kids” and that they shouldn’t be treated like adults, even if they commit serious crimes.

• Turn the title into a question to answer as you read the essay.
  
  Should kids be treated as kids when they commit adult crimes?

Understanding Key Vocabulary

Ask students to generate as many words and phrases related to “juvenile crime” as they can. Model for students how to group these words and phrases into concept categories. Then have them classify the remaining words and phrases using a map like the one below. Students will need to classify their words and phrases according to whether they are general concepts, subcategories of concepts, or specific examples of concepts and show how the concepts relate to each other by linking visually the ones that are connected. Students should collaborate in groups for this activity in order to share their prior knowledge and build new knowledge, and then all the students should share their maps with the class.

FA Formative Assessment

Activities 6 and 7 can provide a quick way to determine how challenging students will find the general academic vocabulary as well as the more technical language in the articles in this module.
Activity 6: Understanding Key Vocabulary

Create semantic maps for the words “juvenile crime” and “justice system.” Begin by brainstorming a list of words that relate to “juvenile crime”; sort these words into categories, and label each one using the graphic below. Do the same for “legal system.”

A map for the phrase “Juvenile Crime” is included below.

When you assign the articles by Thompson and Lundstrom, instead of creating semantic maps, you may ask your students to fill out the vocabulary self-assessment chart.

Vocabulary acquisition occurs on a continuum. With repeated exposure to vocabulary work, students gradually refine their understanding of what words mean and when they can be used. The vocabulary self-assessment chart helps students think about whether a word is familiar and to what degree. It also helps draw students’ attention to particular words that are important to their understanding of the article. After your students have filled out the chart, have them (as a class) share their knowledge of the words. Introduce them to word families, such as “impulse” and “impulsive.” Point out that suffixes such as -ive show that a word is an adjective and indicate how it can be used in a sentence. After discussing the words and their meanings, ask your students to predict what the articles might be about, using their new words in their written predictions.

Activity 7: Vocabulary Self-Assessment Chart

The words in the self-assessment chart are from the texts you will read. Indicate how well you know the word, and define it if you can. Fill in missing definitions when you discuss the words with your class.
### Vocabulary Self-Assessment Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Know It Well</th>
<th>Have Heard of It</th>
<th>Don't Know It</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocabulary from Thompson, “Startling Finds on Teenage Brains”</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>verdicts (2)</td>
<td>decisions in a trial</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cognitive development(3)</td>
<td>the development of thinking and judgment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>impulsive (4)</td>
<td>without thinking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>erratic (4)</td>
<td>unpredictable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>purged (7)</td>
<td>gotten rid of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inhibit (7)</td>
<td>block or restrain</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diminished (9)</td>
<td>reduced</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accountability (11)</td>
<td>responsibility for something</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>homicidal (11)</td>
<td>murderous</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocabulary from Lundstrom’s “Kids Are Kids”</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inconsistency (6)</td>
<td>changeable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quandary (7)</td>
<td>uncertainty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heinous (14)</td>
<td>particularly horrible</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coddling (14)</td>
<td>babying, pampering</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perpetuated (20)</td>
<td>continued</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Quickwrite** (5 minutes): Now that you have discussed these words, what do you predict the articles you are going to read will be about? Use some of the words on your chart in your prediction.

**RG**  
Rhetorical Grammar for Expository Reading and Writing

At this point, have your students complete grammar Activities 2-6, as appropriate for their needs, over the course of the Rhetorical Reading and Connecting Reading to Writing portions of this module. Participating in these activities (located at the end of the module) will complement your students’ work in this module and help them get ready to write their own assignments.
Reading

Reading for Understanding

During their first reading of “Startling Changes” and “Kids Are Kids,” have students fill out the graphic organizer below, which is similar to the one they did as a prereading activity. Then ask your students to highlight the text showing where the arguments for and against punishing juveniles like adults appear.

Activity 8: Reading for Understanding

The first reading of an essay is intended to help you understand the text and confirm your predictions. This step is sometimes called reading “with the grain” or “playing the believing game.” As you read, think about the following questions:

• Which of your predictions turned out to be true?
• What surprised you?
• If your predictions turned out to be wrong, what in the text misled you?
• Can you answer the question you created from the title?
• What, if anything, is still confusing to you?

As you read “Startling Findings on Teenage Brains” and “Kids Are Kids,” you will find that the two articles discuss four recent cases in which teenagers were tried for murder. Fill out the following graphic organizer based on those cases:

Recent Cases of Juvenile Crime

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Defendant</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Crime</th>
<th>Sentence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nathaniel Brazil</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Killed his middle school teacher</td>
<td>??</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lionel Tate</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Beat a six-year-old girl to death, imitating television wrestling heroes</td>
<td>Possible life in prison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas A. Preciado</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Stabbed a minimarket clerk</td>
<td>26 years to life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two “good kids”</td>
<td>16 &amp; 17</td>
<td>Killed two Dartmouth College professors</td>
<td>Undetermined</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Considering the Structure of the Text

The activities in this section will help your students learn how to summarize what a writer is saying and analyze the rhetorical purpose of each part of the text as well as the text as a whole. In your feedback, emphasize the importance of precision with respect to what the text actually is saying and doing.
Mapping the Organizational Structure

Ask your students to map the organization of “Startling Finds on Teenage Brains” by taking the following steps:

- Draw a line across the page where the introduction ends. Is it after the first paragraph, or are there several introductory paragraphs? Is it in the middle of a paragraph? How do you know that the text has moved on from the introduction?
- Draw a line across the page where the conclusion begins. Is it the last paragraph, or are there several concluding paragraphs? How do you know that the text has reached the conclusion?
- Discuss in groups or as a class why the lines were drawn where they were.

In this activity, thinking and reasoning about organizational structure are more important than agreeing on where the lines should be drawn.

Descriptive Outlining

The next step in mapping the organizational structure is to produce a descriptive outline by asking students to make a distinction between the content and rhetorical purpose of each section. When introducing this activity, it is helpful to prepare a text by dividing it into sections determined by the textual organization and modeling for students what the text says versus what it does (highlighting the difference between content and rhetorical purpose). After modeling this process, ask students to take the following steps:

- At the end of each section, specify what the section says (content) and then what it does (why the writer put it there).
- At the end of the text, describe the overall content and purpose of the text.

**Activity 9: Considering the Structure of the Text**

Create a descriptive outline of “Startling Finds on Teenage Brains” by describing the content and purpose of each section. The first section has been done as an example. *Answers will vary.*

**Startling Finds on Teenage Brains**

_by Paul Thompson_

_The Sacramento Bee, Friday, May 25, 2001_

1 Emotions ran high at the trial of Nathaniel Brazill in West Palm Beach, Fla., two weeks ago. Friends of slain teacher Barry Grunow called for the death penalty, while a growing crowd of demonstrators outside the courthouse wielded hastily written placards reading, “A child is not a man.” Jurors returned with their verdict May 16: Fourteen-year-old Brazill, charged in last May’s shooting of middle-school teacher Grunow, was found guilty of second-degree murder.

2 A Florida grand jury had previously ruled that Brazill, who frequently looked dazed during the trial, would be tried as an adult, and if he had been convicted of first-degree murder he would have faced life in prison.
but parole. But Brazill’s immaturity was evident throughout this incident—from the act itself of Brazill’s shooting a teacher he considered one of his favorites, to his subsequent inability to give a reason for doing so, to the various quizzical looks that came across his face as the verdicts were read.

3 In terms of cognitive development, as research on the human brain has shown, Brazill—and any other young teen—is far from adulthood.

### Content and Purpose

Nathaniel Brazill, a fourteen-year-old, was tried as an adult and found guilty of second-degree murder in the killing of his teacher. But research on the brain has shown that young teens are not adults in terms of development. The purpose is to raise the question of whether teenagers should be tried as adults.

4 Over the last several years, as school shootings have seemed to occur with disturbing frequency, startling discoveries have emerged about the teenage brain. The White House held a televised conference on adolescent development in May of last year, and a flurry of papers on the teen brain has appeared in top science journals. Reporters and teen advocates ask: Do the studies help explain the impulsive, erratic behavior of teens? The biggest surprise in recent teen-brain research is the finding that a massive loss of brain tissue occurs in the teenage years.

### Content and Purpose

The discovery that the teenage brain loses massive amounts of brain tissue may help explain why teens commit violent crimes. The purpose is to suggest a possible connection between what happens to the teenage brain and teenage criminal behavior.

5 Specifically, my own research group at the University of California, Los Angeles, and our colleagues at the National Institutes of Health have developed technology to map the patterns of brain growth in individual children and teenagers. With repeated brain scans of kids from three to twenty [years old], we pieced together “movies” showing how brains grow and change.

6 Some changes make perfect sense: Language systems grow furiously until age twelve and then stop, coinciding with the time when children learn foreign languages fastest. Mathematical brain systems grow little until puberty, corresponding with the observation that kids have difficulty with abstract concepts before then. Basically, the brain is like a puzzle, and growth is fastest in the exact parts the kids need to learn skills at different times. So far, all well and good.

7 But what really caught our eye was a massive loss of brain tissue that occurs in the teenage years. The loss was like a wildfire, and you could see it in every teenager. Gray matter, which brain researchers believe supports all our thinking and emotions, is purged at a rate of 1 percent to 2 percent a year during this period. Stranger still, brain cells and connections are only being lost in the areas controlling impulses, risk-taking, and self-control. These frontal lobes, which inhibit our violent passions, rash actions, and regulate our emotions, are vastly immature throughout the teenage years.
Content and Purpose: Areas of the brain develop in children when children need the skills. However, teenagers lose brain tissue in the areas controlling impulsive behavior. The purpose is to suggest that the immaturity of the brain may make it harder for teenagers to control their impulses and emotions than for adults.

8 The implications are tantalizing. Brazill was only thirteen when he committed his crime. He said he made a “stupid mistake,” but prosecutors argued that by bringing a gun to school he planned the crime.

9 Does “planning” mean the same thing for a thirteen-year-old, with his diminished capacity for controlling erratic behavior, as it means for an adult? The verdict, in this case, seems to line up with the research. The jurors, by returning a verdict of second-degree murder instead of first, indicated that they believe Brazill’s actions, while not accidental, were not fully thought-out, either.

Content and Purpose: The implication of brain research is that teenagers have less ability to think through and control their actions. This may explain why the jurors in Brazill’s case didn’t convict him of first-degree murder. The purpose is to suggest that jurors should not penalize teenagers who commit violent crimes in the same way as adults because of the immaturity of the adolescent brain.

10 Linking this maelstrom of normal brain change with legal or moral accountability is tough: Even though normal teens are experiencing a wildfire of tissue loss in their brains, that does not remove their accountability. What is clear from the research is that the parts of the frontal lobes that inhibit reckless actions restructure themselves with startling speed in the teen years. Given this delicate—and drastic—reshaping of the brain, teens need all the help they can get to steer their development onto the right path.

11 While research on brain-tissue loss can help us to understand teens better, it cannot be used to excuse their violent or homicidal behavior. But it can be used as evidence that teenagers are not yet adults, and the legal system shouldn’t treat them as such.

Content and Purpose: Although brain studies show that the areas of the brain that control decision-making are not fully developed in juveniles, they still should be accountable for their actions. The legal system, however, needs to treat them differently from adults since they are not yet fully mature. The purpose is to conclude the article by confirming that teens who commit crimes should be held accountable but should not be treated in the same way as adults by the justice system.

Paul Thompson is an assistant professor of neurology at the University of California, Los Angeles, School of Medicine.

Now that you have completed the descriptive outline, discuss the following questions with your class:
• What does each section say? What is its content?
• How does each section affect the reader? What is the writer trying to accomplish?
• Which section is the most developed?
After students have analyzed the structure of a text, they can prepare to write a summary or rhetorical précis by considering the following questions.

Now consider the following questions about the structure of this text:

- How are the authors’ arguments ordered? (Which arguments come first, in the middle, last?) What is the effect of this on the reader?

  Thompson begins by discussing the case of Nathaniel Brazill as an example of the way in which immaturity may have contributed to his heinous crime and resulted in some leniency on the part of the jury. He then presents research into the teenage brain that suggests that immature actions may be related to changes in the area of the brain controlling impulses. He concludes that the juvenile justice system should hold teens accountable but not in the same way as adults who commit similar crimes. The introductory example makes the argument that follows more understandable, and the brain research provides compelling evidence for the conclusion.

- How has the structure of the text helped make the argument clear, convincing, and engaging?

  The structure of the text uses the example of Brazill to make the reader interested in the issue of sentencing teens who commit heinous crimes. This prepares us to be interested in the brain research that suggests a convincing reason that teens may be less responsible than adults. We are then prepared to agree with the conclusion that teens should be punished for crimes differently than adults.

Noticing Language: Focused Questions

Your students have been challenged with unfamiliar vocabulary in the “Juvenile Justice” assignment. Now is a good time to assess their understanding of those words. Focused questions go beyond simple memorization or matching and require that students demonstrate a deeper understanding of new vocabulary. The following activity gives students a chance to pronounce and use the academic language in the articles they have been reading while they are focusing on the meaning in the context of the issues surrounding juvenile justice. If your students are asked to write answers to the questions, they need to share the answers orally afterwards so they can practice saying the new words. The following questions are based on the articles by Thompson, “Startling Finds on Teenage Brains,” and Lundstrom, “Kids Are Kids.”
Activity 10: Noticing Language—Focused Questions

The following questions are based on the articles by Thompson, “Startling Finds,” and Lundstrom, “Kids Are Kids.” Answer them in writing and then share your answers with your class:

1. Do you think a jury should take the age of a criminal defendant into consideration? Use “jurors” and “juveniles” in your answer.
   
   I think jurors should think about the age of juveniles and the background they come from before they sentence them to life in prison.

2. Should juveniles be treated the same way as adults if they commit the same crimes? Use “tried as adults” in your answer.
   
   I think juveniles should be tried as adults because they should know right from wrong by the time they are teenagers.

3. Do you agree that teenagers often act on impulse? Use the word “impulsive.”
   
   I know some pretty impulsive adults, but teenagers are probably more impulsive.

4. How is technology helping us understand the teenage brain?
   
   With technology, scientists can create “movies” that show how the brain changes as kids get older.

5. What factors do you think juries should take into account when they sentence juveniles?
   
   I think they should consider the age of the juveniles and whether they understood what they were doing.

6. Do you agree with Lundstrom that it is inconsistent to deny privileges like voting and drinking to teenagers but then to sentence them as adults? Why?
   
   I think it’s inconsistent because we deny privileges since we think teenagers won’t make sensible decisions, but when they make a really bad decision, like kill someone, we suddenly believe they knew what they were doing.

7. Do you think juveniles should be sentenced to life in prison if they commit especially bad crimes? Use the word “heinous” in your answer.
   
   I don’t think juveniles should be tried as adults even if they commit a heinous crime such as murder.

8. Do you agree with Lundstrom that the media perpetuates the stereotype of violent youths? Use “perpetuate” in your answer.
I think newspapers and TV seldom show good teens who work hard in school and do community service in their spare time; what shows up on the news is the teen who takes a gun to school and kills his teachers and classmates, which perpetuates this stereotype.

Surveying the Text; Making Predictions and Asking Questions; and Understanding Key Vocabulary

Because students have been introduced to the key concepts involved in Juvenile Justice and have read intensively two articles on the topic, you can now begin to release the responsibility for reading to them by asking them to apply the reading strategies they have learned to a new pair of texts. Begin by telling your students that they will be writing an essay about whether teens should be sentenced to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole. Then ask them to read Jenkins, “On Punishment and Teen Killers,” and Garinger, “Juveniles Don’t Deserve Life Sentences,” paying particular attention to how they add more information or new perspectives to the arguments made by Thompson and Lundstrom.

Review the prereading strategies that students used to read “Startling Finds” and “Kids Are Kids,” and remind them to independently survey the texts and make predictions before they begin reading.

FA Formative Assessment

Activities 11, 12, and 13 will enable you to assess how well students can independently apply the reading strategies you have taught to new texts.

Ask students, as they read independently, to identify and mark five key words in each article that they think are essential to their understanding of the article. Using either a print or an online dictionary, have them look up the meanings of the words and gloss them with synonyms or brief definitions.

Activity 11: Preparing to Read

Using strategies you have employed with previous reading selections, quickly survey these two new texts, making predictions about the content of the texts. Then read the texts independently, and identify five key words or phrases in each text. If you are unsure what they mean, try to guess their meanings from the context or look them up.
d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

6. Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Reading – Informational Text

1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

Reading for Understanding

Once students have read the texts, ask them to answer the following questions for themselves:

Activity 12: Reading for Understanding

After reading the two texts independently, answer the following questions:

- Which of your predictions turned out to be true?
- What surprised you?
- If your prediction was inaccurate, what in the text misled you?
- Can you answer the question you created from the title?
- What, if anything, is confusing to you?

After students have made and confirmed or revised predictions and clarified the meanings of key vocabulary independently, debrief the class as a whole. Ask students to report what they still find confusing and to share some of the words they identified as essential along with their synonyms or definitions.
Annotating and Questioning the Text

In the initial reading, the students read “with the grain,” playing the “believing game.” In the second reading, students should read “against the grain,” playing the “doubting game.” Asking students to reread a text develops fluency and builds vocabulary, both of which are integral to successful comprehension.

Ask the students to reread “On Punishment and Teen Killers” by Jenkins. As the students reread the texts, ask them to make marginal notations (e.g., ask questions, express surprise, disagree, elaborate, or note any moments of confusion). One way to structure marginal notations is demonstrated in the activity that follows.

Project students’ shared annotations “On Punishment and Teen Killers.” Talk about alternative possibilities, and explain why people annotate and respond to a text differently. Now ask students to reread and annotate “Juveniles Don’t Deserve Life Sentences” by Garinger. When they have finished, have them share their annotations with a partner. As a class, discuss what these two articles add to the arguments in “Startling Finds on Juvenile Brains” and “Kids Are Kids.”

Activity 13: Annotating and Questioning the Text

Annotating a text enables readers to explore more deeply how a text works to inform or persuade its readers. During the initial reading, you read “with the grain” and “played the believing game.” In rereading, it is helpful to read “against the grain,” or “play the doubting game.” This is where the conversation shifts and you begin to question the text and the author.

In the initial reading, you read “with the grain,” playing the “believing game.” In the second reading, you should read “against the grain,” playing the “doubling game.” This is where the conversation about juvenile justice shifts, and you should begin to question the texts and their authors. As you reread “On Punishment and Teen Killers” and “Juveniles Don’t Deserve Life Sentences,” make marginal notations.

1. In the left margin, label what the author is saying as follows:
   - The introduction
   - The issue or problem the author is writing about
   - The author’s main arguments
   - The author’s examples
   - The author’s conclusion

2. In the right margin, write your reactions to what the author is saying. You can ask questions, express surprise, disagree, elaborate, and note any moments of confusion.

3. As a class, discuss the annotations you and your classmates made on the first article. Now repeat this process for the second article. When you finish, exchange your copy with a partner. Read your partner’s annotations,
and then talk about what you chose to mark and how you reacted to the text. Did you agree on what the main idea was? Did you mark the same arguments and examples? Did you agree on the conclusion?

Analyzing Stylistic Choices

This particular line of questioning is offered to help the students see that the linguistic choices writers make create certain effects for their readers. This activity will enable you to determine how well students can make distinctions between positive and negative connotations in preparation for analyzing the rhetorical strategies used by the writers of the texts in this module.

Activity 14: Analyzing Stylistic Choices

The choices writers make when they choose words create certain effects for their readers. Think about these words from Jenkins’s “On Punishment and Teen Killers.” Put a plus (+) next to the words and phrases that have a positive connotation and a minus (–) next to the words and phrases that have a negative connotation. If you aren’t certain of the meaning of a word, look it up and write a brief definition or synonym next to the word in the list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Connotation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>culpability</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deserving blame, guilt</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lovingly</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>violence-loving culture</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alarming</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intelligent</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bragging</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>traumatic</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>justice</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enlightened</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>victim</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>repeat violent offenders</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>propaganda</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nobility</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>misleading</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now discuss with your class the effect that the writer’s choice of language has on you as a reader. Is she completely fair and objective, or is she trying to appeal to your emotions?

Jenkins seems to use a lot of emotional language. She uses negative language like “culpability,” “violence-loving culture,” and “repeat violent offenders” to describe teenage criminals. She uses words like “enlightened” to describe our current system in comparison to the systems of other countries and “traumatic” to describe what victims’ families have experienced. She clearly feels very strongly about her argument, but she may not be completely unbiased.
Postreading

Summarizing and Responding

The ability to accurately and objectively summarize a text is essential to academic writing. Once students have identified the main idea, supporting ideas, and key evidence through annotation (Activity 13), they can construct a summary that reflects both the argument and the organization of the text. While the summary should not contain any of their reactions to the text, the response gives them the opportunity to articulate how they feel about the text in the light of their personal experiences and what they have read and observed. If students have not written summaries before, you can turn the model summary below into sentence starters (see the underlining in the sample summary below) to provide additional scaffolding, but then you may want to ask them to summarize and respond to a different text on the topic of social networking to make sure they can summarize and respond independently.

Activity 15: Summarizing and Responding

Use Garinger's article with your annotations to help you write the summary and response.

1. Write a summary of the article (one paragraph). A summary is a shorter version of the text that contains all of the essential information—and nothing extra. Identify the title, the author, the source, and the date of publication in your summary, and write the entire summary in your own words; do not use quotations from the original source.

Gail Garinger, in “Juveniles Don’t Deserve Life Sentences,” published in the New York Times on March 14, 2012, argues that juveniles should not be sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole. She notes that some states passed laws allowing sentences of life in prison without parole in response to fears about a violent juvenile crime wave, but says that juvenile crime has instead gone down. Now the Supreme Court is going to consider life without parole in the case of juveniles who commit murder. She argues that juveniles are immature, powerless to escape their environment, and still developing, so they cannot be held to the same standards as adults. She adds that as a juvenile court judge, she has personally observed the ways in which children can change and be rehabilitated. Because it’s impossible to know which juvenile offenders will become good citizens as adults, it is important to be able to modify the sentences of those who reform. She urges the Supreme Court justices to leave open this possibility for juveniles who commit murder.

2. Write a response to the article (one paragraph). A response is your personal reaction to the text. For example, what personal experiences have you had that cause you to agree and/or disagree? Why? Does the author make a particularly strong or weak argument? Explain.

I agree with Garinger. Since we read “Startling Finds on Teenage Brains,” I’m convinced that teen brains are actually physically changing and that we’ll...
become better able to make decisions and think through our actions as we get older. I’ve certainly seen that with my big sister. Not that she committed murder, but she was pretty wild when she was in high school. Now she’s a senior in college, and she is completely in control. She studies really hard because she wants to go to medical school, and she knows she has to have good grades. She also volunteers at a free clinic because she’s realized that life isn’t just about having fun; what really matters is being able to help other people. So I think Garinger has made a strong argument, and we should never give up on teens, even those who commit heinous crimes. If there’s a chance they can reform, we should leave the door of the prison open, not slam it shut forever.

**Formative Assessment**

Activity 15 gives you clear insight into students’ reading processes. The Annotation/Summary/Response Rubric printed here allows you to give useful feedback as well as see where additional instruction would be helpful. If you use it at several points during the course, you and your students can chart their progress over time. What you learn can help you make instructional decisions when students write and revise the essay at the end of the module.

**Annotation/Summary/Response Rubric**

Once students have completed their Summary and Response papers, you can collect the annotation and summary/response and grade them using the following rubric.

1 = inadequate 2 = limited 3 = proficient 4 = strong

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 2 3 4</th>
<th><strong>Annotation:</strong> The writer has systematically annotated the reading, identifying the main idea, major points, and important examples. The writer has also included some personal reactions.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td><strong>Content of the Summary:</strong> The writer clearly states the title and the author and demonstrates concise understanding of the focus of the passage. The writer includes all the important supporting points and examples but excludes unnecessary detail and personal opinion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(X2) = ____</td>
<td><strong>Organization of the Summary:</strong> The paragraph begins with a sentence(s) accurately explaining the main idea of the passage, and the organization is logical, generally coinciding with the original organizational pattern. The writer effectively uses transitions and concludes appropriately.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td><strong>Content of the Response:</strong> The writer clearly describes a personal connection to one or more ideas in the passage, using thoughtful detail and appropriate level of formality.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Language: The writer communicates in his/her own words showing consistent control of language conventions and effective use of vocabulary.

Circle the number in each category that best describes the student’s proficiency. Multiply the “Content of Summary” by 2. Add the numbers and then divide by 6 to get an average score.

Total __________
Average __________

Note: This rubric is also included as Appendix F in the Assignment Template.

In Activity 16, students offer formative assessment from their peers as they evaluate each other’s Summary/Response papers. Explain the purpose of Peer Response, and model for the class how to use the rubric below on a sample student paper before asking them to do the activity themselves. Then have students reread the article and revise their Summary/Response taking into account the Peer Response. You may choose to grade the Peer Response as well as the final draft of the Summary/Response. Before doing peer response, let students know in advance so they don’t put anything that could embarrass them or their classmates in their response.

Activity 16: Summarizing and Responding—Peer Response Rubric

Exchange your Summary/Response with a classmate. Carefully read it and respond to the following questions.

1. Does the writer include the author’s name in the first sentence of the summary?
   Yes ____
   Writer: Include the author’s name.
   No ____

2. Does the writer include the title of the essay in the first sentence of the summary?
   Yes ____
   Writer: Include the title of the essay.
   No ____

3. Is the title in quotation marks?
   Yes ____
   Writer: Punctuate the title using quotation marks.
   No ____

4. Does the first sentence clearly state the main idea of the article?
   Yes ____
   Writer: State the main idea in the first sentence.
   No ____

   You can improve your first sentence by ____________________________

   Writer: Make sure it is clear and accurate.
Thinking Critically

The following questions will move your students through the traditional rhetorical appeals. Using this framework helps students progress from a literal to an analytical understanding of the reading material.

For students who are ready for a further challenge, ask them to read the supplemental text, “Greg Ousley Is Sorry for Killing His Parents. Is That Enough?” Remind them to use the strategies for reading rhetorically, especially annotating the text and looking up the meaning of key words that are unfamiliar. “Greg Ousley Is Sorry” is a long text about a 30-year-old man who killed his parents when he was 14 and is currently serving a life sentence. The article adds a new voice to the conversation, that of a man who appears to have turned his life around after committing a heinous crime as a juvenile. If some or all of the students in your class read the article, assign one or more groups to respond to the Logos, Ethos, Pathos questions for that article.

Divide your class into groups of four or five. If time permits, have each group discuss the Logos, Ethos, and Pathos questions for one article, with a notetaker writing down notes on the discussion. Then call on different groups to respond to the questions, comparing responses to the two (or three) articles. If time is short, assign each group to Logos, Ethos, or Pathos questions, but be sure to debrief after the discussion so students can hear from all the groups.
5. Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.

6. Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text.

**Speaking and Listening**

1. Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

   a. Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.

   b. Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.

---

**Formative Assessment**

If you wish to use Activity 17 as a formal assessment, use the rubric for Academic Language Use in Group Discussion (below). Circulate among the groups taking notes as they carry on their discussions, and provide feedback to each group, based on the rubric, following the debriefing.

**Rubric for Academic Language Use in Group Discussion**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Strong</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collaborative Discussion</strong></td>
<td>Does not participate in discussions or participates only occasionally; seldom includes others in discussion.</td>
<td>Participates in discussions; sometimes includes others in discussion.</td>
<td>Initiates and participates in discussions in groups; reaches out to include others in discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Listening</strong></td>
<td>Does not listen carefully to what others say; may not understand what others have said.</td>
<td>Listens to what is said and occasionally refers to the ideas of others.</td>
<td>Listens carefully to what is said and regularly refers to the ideas of others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evidence</strong></td>
<td>Offers little evidence from either own experience or texts.</td>
<td>Draws on own experience; occasionally refers to texts for evidence.</td>
<td>Draws appropriately on own experience; regularly refers to texts for evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Questioning</strong></td>
<td>Seldom asks or responds to questions.</td>
<td>Asks questions to clarify understanding; responds briefly to questions.</td>
<td>Asks questions about the evidence and reasoning of others; responds fully to questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocabulary and Syntax</strong></td>
<td>Does not try to use academic sentence starters, new vocabulary, or even simple sentence structures.</td>
<td>Attempts to use a limited number of academic sentence starters, new vocabulary, and sentence structures.</td>
<td>Attempts to use a range of academic sentence starters, new vocabulary, and more complex sentence structures.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from the CCSS for ELA/Literacy, Speaking and Listening Standards, Grades 11-12, 1 a-d.
Activity 17: Thinking Critically

In your group, answer the following questions about the traditional rhetorical appeals that Garinger makes in “Juveniles Don’t Deserve Life Sentences.” Write down your group’s answers so you can share them with your classmates.

Group 1

Questions about Logic (Logos)

1. What are Garinger’s major claims and assertions? Do you agree with her claims?

   Garinger’s major claim is that juveniles don’t deserve life sentences. Teens are still developing, and as a judge, she has seen children outgrow crime. I am convinced by her claims because I have seen teenagers change when they get older.

2. What evidence does she use to support her claims? How relevant and valid do you think the evidence is? How sound is the reasoning? Is there any claim that appears to be weak or unsupported? Which one, and why do you think so?

   Garinger refers to the brain imaging studies that we read about, to her experience as a juvenile judge, and to the fact that the criminologists who were worried about teenagers becoming “superpredators” have acknowledged that they were wrong. She refers to evidence, but she doesn’t provide any data to support what she says. I’d like to see the evidence that “an overwhelming majority of young offenders grow out of crime.” How does she know? Garinger is writing an opinion piece, not a scholarly article, so it’s probably OK not to include a lot of detail about her evidence.

3. Can you think of counterarguments that Garinger does not consider?

   Garinger downplays the danger of repeat crimes being committed by adult criminals who committed their first crimes as juveniles. She also doesn’t talk about the deterrent effect of harsh penalties. If there’s no life without parole, maybe kids will be more likely to commit violent crimes.

4. Do you think Garinger has left something out on purpose? Why?

   She doesn’t talk about the victims of violent crime and what’s fair for them. If she did, it would be harder for readers to agree that no juvenile deserves a life sentence.

Questions about the Writer (Ethos)

5. What can you infer about Garinger from the text? Does she have the appropriate background to speak with authority on the subject? Is she knowledgeable?

   Garinger was a juvenile court judge. That means that she understands how laws work when applied to kids in actual courts. She also is well informed since she knows about the studies about juvenile brains and the fact that the criminologists who predicted a crime wave have changed their position.

6. What does Garinger’s style and language tell you about her? Can you trust her?
Garinger seems to be an expert on juvenile crime and serious about her subject. Her style is clear, but she isn’t colloquial or informal the way Lundstrom was. She talks about juveniles and children, not “kids,” and she writes long sentences, although they aren’t too difficult to understand. She seems objective and doesn’t use a lot of loaded language the way Jenkins does. I think she’s trustworthy.

Questions about Emotions (Pathos)

7. Does “Juveniles Don’t Deserve Life Sentences” affect you emotionally? What parts?

“Juveniles Don’t Deserve Life Sentences” appeals more to reason than emotion. It doesn’t give any of the personal examples Lindstrom used in “Kids Are Kids” or the loaded language that Jenkins used in “On Punishment and Teen Killers.” It uses unemotional language and relies mainly on scientific studies and legal opinions to make its case.

8. Do you think Garinger is trying to manipulate your emotions? In what ways? At what point?

I think when she tells us she was a juvenile judge, she’s appealing to our emotions since she then doesn’t provide any evidence for her assertion that most teenagers outgrow crime. She wants us to believe her, but she’s only giving us her personal observation. Even Thompson makes clear that just because juvenile brains are still developing, it doesn’t mean we shouldn’t hold them responsible when they commit serious crimes, and maybe that means for some crimes they should be in prison for their whole lives.

Group 2

In your group, answer the following questions about the traditional rhetorical appeals that Jenkins makes in “On Punishment and Teen Killers.”

Questions about Logic (Logos)

1. What are the writer’s major claims and assertions? Do you agree with her claims?

Jenkins’s major claim is that proposals to change the law so that juveniles cannot be sentenced to life in prison for murder have been made without taking into account the rights and needs of victims. She implies that in some cases teens should continue to be sentenced to life.

2. What evidence does she use to support her claims? How relevant and valid do you think the evidence is? How sound is the reasoning? Is there any claim that appears to be weak or unsupported? Which one, and why do you think so?

She says that more teens are committing murder in the U.S. than elsewhere and blames TV and the availability of weapons. She says this disproves the scientific findings on brain development. She also points out that many juvenile murderers are repeat offenders. Finally, she says that other countries treat teens much worse than just sentencing them to life in prison. She does not provide any data for any of her assertions, but she raises some interesting questions.
3. Can you think of counterarguments that Jenkins does not consider?

She implies that sentences should continue to be mandatory without considering the differences among teen killers. She talks about 16- or 17-year-olds, but she doesn’t consider whether a 13-year-old is as able to make good decisions as a 17-year-old and is therefore equally culpable. She also talks about how her sister’s killer came from a privileged background, but she doesn’t address the question of the teens who come from dysfunctional families and violent neighborhoods. Finally, she doesn’t address the argument of whether it’s possible to tell if a 14-year-old will become a repeat offender. If we can’t predict which kids will commit more crimes, then we need to leave open the possibility of rehabilitation in some cases.

4. Do you think Jenkins has left something out on purpose? Why?

She doesn’t make clear that the issue before the court is whether sentences to life in prison should be mandatory. She argues persuasively that many teen killers should not be released, but what about the minority who are rehabilitated? Shouldn’t they have a chance to leave prison if they show that they have genuinely become useful members of society?

Questions about the Writer (Ethos)

5. What can you infer about the Jenkins from the text? Does she have the appropriate background to speak with authority on the subject? Is she knowledgeable?

Jenkins is a high school teacher, so she knows about teenagers. More importantly, her sister, her brother-in-law, and their unborn baby were murdered by a teenager, so she understands what it’s like to be the victim of a crime committed by a juvenile. However, she isn’t an expert on the law or on brain science.

6. What does the writer’s style and language tell you about her? Can you trust her?

I like her because she talks about working lovingly with teens. I also feel sorry for her loss, but I’m not sure I can trust her because she can’t be objective. All she can think about is the one teen who killed her family. He sounds like he truly deserves life in prison, but that doesn’t mean that every teen sentenced to life really deserves that sentence.

Questions about Emotions (Pathos)

7. Does “On Punishment and Teen Killers” affect you emotionally? If so, what parts?

When she talks about being a loving teacher and about the murders of her family, I feel strong emotions because she seems nice, and I feel sorry for her. But she is trying to affect me emotionally throughout the article with her choice of language and the way she dismisses all the arguments on the other side.

8. Do you think Jenkins is trying to manipulate your emotions? In what ways? At what points?
Definitely. For example, when she talks about the teen who murdered her relatives, she calls him “a serial killer in the making.” Maybe, but we’ll never know because he’s in prison. She said he came from a life of privilege, but privileged kids can be abused, so maybe there were extenuating circumstances that we don’t know about. She also characterizes her opponents’ arguments as “propaganda.” They disagree with Garinger and oppose her position, but I don’t think they are writing propaganda.

**Activity 18: Thinking Critically—Student-led Discussion**

Using your annotated copy of “Greg Ousley is Sorry for Killing His Parents,” write three questions that you would like to discuss with other students in your class. These questions should be about significant issues that the article raises and should not have a right or wrong answer. An example is the question below:

**Example:** Can our knowledge about the development of the teenage brain help us understand why Greg Ousley killed his parents and why he behaved the way he did afterwards?

In your group, select two discussion leaders. Their responsibility is to call on people to talk and to make sure that everyone in your group participates in the discussion. They are not responsible for knowing the right answer. Your teacher will give your group questions from the ones that the students in your class have developed.

After the discussion, your teacher will give you feedback on how well your group used academic language and collaborated on answering the questions.

**Reflecting on Your Reading Process**

Ask students to write the answers to the questions below. Once they have finished, debrief with the class as whole.

**Formative Assessment**

You may wish to ask students to keep their responses to Activity 19 as part of a portfolio that will enable them to provide evidence of what they have learned during their work on the module about monitoring their own writing process.

**Activity 19: Reflecting on Your Reading Process**

You have now read four texts that are part of the conversation that has taken place over the last decade about how juveniles who commit serious crimes, including murder, should be treated in the justice system.
• What have you learned from joining this conversation?
• What do you want to learn next?
• What reading strategies did you use to read the four texts? Which strategies will you use in reading other texts? How will these strategies apply in other classes?
• In what ways has your ability to read and discuss texts like this one improved?

Connecting Reading to Writing
Discovering What You Think

Considering the Writing Task

Ask students to respond to the questions in Activity 20 below which are designed to help them articulate the different positions of the various authors whose texts they have read. If students are not yet able to paraphrase independently, you may wish to allow them to quote or to supply sentence starters, but paraphrase is an important college-ready skill that students need to practice. When they are finished, return the quickwrites that they produced at the beginning of the module, and ask them to reflect on how their position has evolved as a consequence of reading and thinking about the arguments of the four authors as well as listening to their classmates ideas.

FA Formative Assessment

Assessing students’ ability to accurately paraphrase the words of one author in responding to another in Activity 20 will give you a clear measure of their understanding of the arguments made in each text and students’ ability to recast those arguments into their own words.

Taking a Stance

Activity 20: Taking a Stance—Trying on Words, Perspectives, and Ideas

Imagine that the four authors of the texts you have read are in a room together. Pretend you are one author, and respond to the following statements made by another author. As you compose the response, refer to the readings, and make sure you can support your answer from the author’s text, but paraphrase the author’s position in your own words. Do not quote the author’s exact words.
1. “The actual science (about teenage brain development) does not ... in any way negate criminal culpability.” Jennifer Bishop Jenkins
What would Thompson say to Jenkins?
I agree that teens still are accountable for their behavior even though we know that their brains are different from the brains of adults. I know you doubt that teens can ever change, but my use of brain scans has shown that teens can change as their brains mature and therefore they can potentially be rehabilitated.

2. “Young people ... cannot be held to the same standards when they commit terrible wrongs.” Gail Garinger
What would Lundstrom say to Garinger?
I completely agree with you. Like you, I accept that the teen brain is not fully developed and that sentencing young people as juveniles is the best way to ensure that fact is taken into consideration. Sentencing them as adults to life in prison implies they are like adults, when in fact they are not yet fully capable of making good decisions.

3. “Do the studies [on brain development] help explain the impulsive, erratic behavior of teens?” Paul Thompson
How would Jenkins answer Thompson's question?
No, the studies don't explain the impulsive, erratic behavior of teens, and they don't excuse it. The research on the developing teen brain by scientists like you has been misunderstood. Criminal violence is caused by culture, especially television, rather than by the development of teenagers' brains. Take the example of the Canadian Innuit who experienced no teen crime until television was introduced in the 1980s. Most teen murderers have committed other violent crimes. If they were released as adults, they would continue to murder people. My sister's killer was on track to become a serial killer.

4. “Teens are being tried and sentenced to prison for murder at alarming rates in the United States.” Jennifer Bishop Jenkins
How would Garinger respond to Jenkins's assertion?
I'm sorry, but I must disagree with you. The predictions that there would be a crime wave of killings carried out by “superpredators” never happened. In fact, the criminologists who predicted it admit they made a huge mistake because teen crime has actually gone down, but now there are laws in many states putting kids in prison for life. They have now apologized and asked the court to change the law.

5. “But the zeal to corral wildly troubled, ever-younger kids and ram them through the adult system belies everything that the juvenile justice system is all about: that kids are different.” Marjie Lundstrom
What would Jenkins say to Lundstrom?
I know you mean well, but you aren't thinking about the feelings of the families of victims of teenage crime when you advocate for treating juveniles who commit murder differently from adults. Our juvenile justice system is already
vastly more humane than it is in many other countries. You need to consider that criminals like the one who murdered my sister and her unborn baby and husband can still enjoy life, even in prison, unlike their victims.

Now look at the quickwrite you wrote at the beginning of this module.

Quickwrite (5 minutes). If you committed a serious crime, do you think it would be fair for you to be punished the same way an adult who committed the same crime would be?

On the same page, respond to the following questions:

How have your views changed or developed? What is your position now?

When students have finished writing, tell them that the United States Supreme Court has now decided the issue. On June 25, 2012, it ruled that juveniles could not be sentenced to life in prison because it violated the Eighth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution’s ban on cruel and unusual punishment: “Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.”

Justice Elena Kagan wrote the majority decision. She was joined by four other justices. Chief Justice John G. Roberts wrote the dissenting argument on behalf of the four remaining justices, but Justice Samuel Alito also wrote a separate dissent, expressing his strong disagreement. The decision can be found at http://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/11pdf/10-9646.pdf.

The topic of juvenile justice has been widely assigned in high school and college classes for almost a decade. Many essays on the topic are readily available online, so it is a good idea to ask students to write the first draft of the essay in class so you can monitor your students’ writing. However, since it is a complex issue, you may want to allow them to write over two days. If so, collect their essays at the end of the first day so they don’t simply bring in a new essay on the second day. Once students have written their first drafts and you have given them feedback, they can revise and edit out of class.
Gathering Evidence to Support your Claims

The day before students do the writing assignment, ask them to reread the four texts they have annotated and the other writing they have done in response to the texts. Have them think about and mark which passages from the texts may best help them support their position on sentencing juveniles to life in prison and which may help them respond to the positions of others who disagree.
Getting Ready to Write

Review strategies for writing a source-based on-demand essay:

- Plan how you will use your time for reading, planning, writing, and revising.
- Read the directions carefully.
- Annotate the reading passage, labeling the main ideas and conclusion and noting your responses.
- Write a working thesis that states your position on the topic. Then make a map or list of ideas that will help you support your position.
- Write legibly on one side of the page only. Do not recopy.
- After writing the essay, leave a few minutes to revise. Check to make sure your thesis still reflects the main idea of your essay. Then edit for one or two of your main patterns of error.

Remind students of the criteria that will be used to grade their essay, and let them know if it will be graded by you or collaboratively with other teachers.

Activity 21: On-Demand Writing Assignment

On June 25, 2012, the Supreme Court ruled that juveniles who committed murder could not be sentenced to life in prison because it violated the Eighth Amendment’s ban on cruel and unusual punishment. Justice Elena Kagan, writing for the majority, stated that “Mandatory life without parole for a juvenile precludes consideration of his chronological age and its hallmark features—among them, immaturity, impetuosity, and failure to appreciate risks and consequences. It prevents taking into account the family and home environment that surrounds him—and from which he cannot usually extricate himself—no matter how brutal or dysfunctional.”
However, four justices strongly disagreed, arguing that mandatory sentences reflected the will of American society that heinous crimes committed by juveniles should always be punished with a sentence to life in prison. Justice Alito noted that otherwise, “Even a 17½-year-old who sets off a bomb in a crowded mall or guns down a dozen students and teachers is a ‘child’ and must be given a chance to persuade a judge to permit his release into society…”

Write an essay analyzing the issues raised by these arguments. Be sure to indicate which side you most strongly agree with. Support your position, providing reasons and examples from your own experience and observations, discussions you have participated in, and texts you have read for this module. Your essay should be as clearly focused, well organized, and carefully written as you can make it.

Questions such as the ones below will help you plan what you want say before you begin to draft your essay.

- Do you agree with the majority of Supreme Court justices who argued to abolish mandatory life in prison for juveniles who commit murder or with the minority who argued to retain it?
- Which author or authors that we have read support your position? What evidence do they provide?
- Which author or authors support those who disagree with you? What evidence do they provide?
- Sketch out a plan for the arguments and evidence you will use in your essay.
- Write a working thesis. After you have finished your essay, reread your thesis statement, and revise it if necessary.

Writing Rhetorically
Entering the Conversation

Composing a Draft

On the day students write their on-demand essay, pass out the topic. Although prewriting must be done in a compressed time frame for on-demand assignments, it is nevertheless an essential part of the planning process.
Considering Structure

When you respond to your students’ essays, you may want to focus your feedback for revision on the techniques students used to give focus to their essays. If you use a rubric, you can modify it to reflect your emphasis on focus.

Before you return the papers, ask students to look at the descriptive outline they created for “Startling Finds.” Have students identify the parts of Thompson’s article that correspond to the Introduction, Body Paragraphs, and Conclusion, reviewing the discussion that students had when they mapped the organizational structure of the text. Note that newspaper articles do not necessarily follow this pattern, but in this case, the first section of Thompson’s article follows the general outline of an academic essay. Here is a skeleton outline of this part of his article:

through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task purpose, and audience.

9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Writing

1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
   a. Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
Introduction
- He offers an example of a teenager who committed murder.
- He describes Brazill’s immature behavior during the trial.

Thesis
- In terms of cognitive development, as research on the human brain has shown, Brazill—and any other young teen—is far from adulthood.

Body Paragraphs
- Recent brain research may explain criminal behavior in teens.
- Thompson’s research at UCLA shows that the adolescent brain loses tissue in areas that control impulses.
- Brazill’s jury may have taken into account his “diminished capacity” as a teen to plan a crime. (Note: “Diminished capacity” is a psychological and legal term meaning reduced mental ability to understand and plan a crime. It often applies to people who are mentally ill or developmentally delayed, but Thompson uses it here to suggest that teens also may not be able to fully control their behavior because of changes occurring to their brains.)

Conclusion
- While teens who commit crimes should be held accountable, they should not be treated like adults in the criminal justice system.

Point out how the thesis moves from the specifics of the introductory example to the general topic of the article and Thompson’s position on the topic. The rest of the essay follows directly from the thesis, and the conclusion makes the connection between the brain research and criminal accountability clear.

Now give students the following guidelines to help them understand how to construct an effective thesis statement, using Thompson’s thesis as an example.

**FA Formative Assessment**

The informal assessment of the quality of students’ revised thesis statements in Activity 22 will help you decide if students as a group need further guidance in writing effective thesis statements or if individual feedback will be sufficient going forward.

**Activity 22: Considering the Structure—Evaluating Thesis Statements**

Using the guidelines for developing effective thesis statements, evaluate Thompson’s thesis statement. Then evaluate the thesis statements taken from student essays below. Label them “very effective,” “OK,” or “not effective,” and briefly explain each of your decisions.
Guidelines for Developing Thesis Statements

- A thesis reflects the writer’s position on a question that has more than one side. After reading the thesis, the reader should be able to explain what the issue is and what side of the argument the writer is on.
- Develop a thesis statement that makes the topic and your opinion or position on the topic clear to your reader.
- Choose one side of the issue if your topic requires it, but you may qualify your position.
- If the topic asks “to what extent” you agree or disagree with a statement, be sure to explain how strongly you agree or disagree. You may include a “because” statement, but you do not need to list all the reasons for your position.
- Neither a factual statement nor a question make an effective thesis because they do not reflect the writer’s position on the issue.

Thompson’s Thesis

In terms of cognitive development, as research on the human brain has shown, Brazill—and any other young teen—is far from adulthood.

Effective. The topic is clear: the issue of whether teens are the same as adults in terms of cognitive development, their ability to think and reason. He also makes his position clear: research on the human brain shows they are not.

Student Thesis Statements

1. Juvenile offenders are young people under the age of 18 who commit crimes.

   Not effective—a statement of fact. It isn’t a question with more than one side, and it doesn’t tell us what side the author is on.

2. Sentencing juveniles to mandatory life in prison is necessary because it keeps them from committing more crimes. Also, it’s what the families of victims want, and it holds the teen murderers accountable for what they did.

   Not effective—there isn’t an overall focus for the essay; instead the thesis is divided into three parts.

3. Juveniles must be held accountable for their crimes, but they must be treated differently than adults.

   OK—it gives an overall focus for the essay, but it would be better if it gave the general reasons for the writer’s opinion.

4. Sentencing juveniles to life in prison is both good and bad.

   Not effective—the writer doesn’t take a position. You can’t tell what side of the issue the writer is on.

5. Children’s crimes should not be brushed off, but it is not right to throw children who don’t even understand the enormity of the crime that they have committed into the slammer for life.

   Very effective—it gives an overall focus to the essay and the author’s opinion.
6. With a growing number of young adults being tried and sentenced as adults for violent crimes, the question arises, “Why did they commit these crimes?”

Not effective—it’s a question. It doesn’t give us the author’s position.

Now copy the thesis from the first draft of your essay. How would you judge its effectiveness based on the criteria above. If you do not think it is a very effective thesis, revise it so it is improved.

My thesis:

My revised thesis:

Using the Words of Others

If students are able to focus their essay and write effective thesis statements, you may wish to focus your instruction and feedback instead on the use of sources to provide support in their essays. This activity will focus students on the language that they can use when they refer to evidence from the four texts they have read in this module and prepare them to incorporate the words of others in their own writing.

This activity enables you to assess informally how well students can use the texts of others to support their arguments and strengthen their own writing. This form of synthesis is an important but complex writing skill. During this process, students will also naturally use their content words from the module as they synthesize.

Activity 23: Using the Words of Others

One of the most important features of academic writing is the use of the words and ideas from written sources to support the writer’s own points. Presented here are five ways to incorporate words and ideas from sources:

1. **Direct quotation.** According to Paul Thompson, brain researchers have discovered to their surprise that “a massive loss of brain tissue occurs in the teen years.”

2. **Paraphrase.** In “Startling Finds on Teenage Brains,” Thompson notes that young people actually lose a large amount of brain tissue during their teen years.

3. **Summary.** In “Startling Finds on Teenage Brains,” Thompson summarizes recent research that shows teenagers actually lose a large amount of brain tissue, a finding that may explain their impulsive and violent behavior. Such changes in the brain do not mean that teens are not responsible for their violent behavior, but Thompson believes they should not be treated as adults in the criminal justice system.
4. Source within another text. Garinger cites the Supreme Court ruling in 2005 which asserted that juvenile offenders “are less mature, more vulnerable to peer pressure, cannot escape from dangerous environments, and their characters are still in formation.”

5. Explaining the significance. Concurring with Thompson, Garinger observes that brain research shows that “the regions of the adolescent brain responsible for controlling thoughts, action and emotions are not fully developed.” It is clear that they should have a chance as adults to make the case that they have matured and become law-abiding citizens who deserve to be released from prison.

An important strategy for developing your ideas is to incorporate material from the articles you have read into your essay and explain to your readers how it contributes to your argument. Read the first draft of your essay, and think about the following questions.

1. Where can I strengthen my argument by referring to one of the texts? Should I quote directly from the text, paraphrase a short piece of the text, or summarize the entire text?

2. Where can I improve my writing by taking a passage I quoted and paraphrasing it or shortening the length of the quotation to a few key words?

3. In each case where I have referred to a text, have I explained how it contributes to my argument?

4. Have I accurately identified the source of the material that I have quoted, paraphrased, or summarized? Be careful where an author has quoted another source (a source within a source) to identify the original source.

Mark the places in your essay where you can improve your use of sources.

An alternative activity to help students learn to incorporate material from other sources is “Quote, Paraphrase, Respond.” For this exercise, students choose passages that they might be able to use in an essay. First, they practice writing each passage as a correctly punctuated and cited direct quotation. Second, they practice paraphrasing the material in their own words, citing the material correctly. Last, they respond to the idea expressed in the passage by agreeing or disagreeing with it and explaining why, again with the correct citation. It is easy to see whether your students understand the material by looking at their paraphrases. Later, they can use the material in an essay.

**RG** Rhetorical Grammar for Expository Reading and Writing

At this point, have your students complete grammar Activities 7-9 while they revise and edit their assignments.
Revising and Editing

Revising Rhetorically

The following activity asks students to apply to their own writing the same kinds of rhetorical questions they asked about the texts they have read in order to decide how best to revise their essays.

FA Formative Assessment

Students’ responses to the questions in Activity 24 will enable you to determine how well students are able to distance themselves from what they have written in order to see it from the perspective of their readers. What you learn will help you decide if students need more modeling and/or instruction in revising rhetorically.

Activity 24: Revising Rhetorically

Write answers to the following questions to help you think about your audience, your purpose, your image as a writer, and your arguments, including the evidence that supports them.

1. Who will read your essay? What do your readers probably think or believe about sentencing juveniles as adults? How much background information will they need?
2. What is your purpose in writing? What questions are you trying to answer? What are you trying to accomplish?
3. What sort of image, or ethos, as Aristotle would say, do you want to project to your readers? How will you achieve it? What words or type of language might you want to use to help construct your ethos?
4. Are there any emotional appeals (pathos) you want to use?
5. If readers disagree with your thesis or the validity of your support, what would they say? How would you answer them?

Use what you have discovered in analyzing how effectively you used the words of others and how well you addressed your audience, purpose, and image. Revise your essay to clarify and strengthen each area.
Editing the Draft

The following activity assumes that students have received feedback previously about their patterns of error. If they have not, this would be a good time to label the common patterns of error in their essays and direct them to edit for those patterns; however, if they already know their patterns, you can make them responsible for editing independently after reviewing the Editing Guidelines below.

Activity 25: Editing the Draft

You now need to work with the grammar and mechanics of your draft to make sure your use of language is effective and conforms to the guidelines of standard written English.
Individual Work

Edit your draft based on the information you have received from your instructor or a tutor. Use the editing checklist provided by your teacher. The suggestions below will also help you edit your own work.

Editing Guidelines for Individual Work

• If possible, set your essay aside for 24 hours before rereading to find errors.
• If possible, read your essay aloud so you can hear your errors.
• Focus on individual words and sentences rather than overall meaning. Take a sheet of paper, and cover everything except the line you are reading. Then touch your pencil to each word as you read.
• With the help of your teacher, figure out your own pattern of errors—the most serious and frequent errors you make. For example, you might decide that subject-verb agreement, punctuation of quotations, and sentence fragments are patterns that you need to check in your writing.
• Only look for one type of error at a time. Then go back and look for a second type, and if necessary, a third.
• Use the dictionary to check spelling and confirm that you’ve chosen the right word for the context.

Editing Focus

Select three patterns of error that you tend to make when you write. List them, and then one at a time, look for them in your essay and make corrections.

1. 
2. 
3. 

Reflecting on Your Writing Process

Ask students to write the answers to the questions below. Once they have finished, debrief with the class as whole.

Activity 26: Reflecting on your Writing Process

When you have completed your own essay, answer these questions.

1. What was most difficult about this assignment?
2. What was easiest?
3. What did you learn about arguing by completing this assignment?
4. What do you think are the strengths of your argument? Place a wavy line by the parts of your essay that you feel are very good.
5. What are the weaknesses, if any, of your paper? Place an X by the parts of your essay you would like help with. Write any questions you have in the margin.
6. What did you learn from this assignment about your own writing process—about preparing to write, writing the first draft, revising, and editing?