



HxA High School Classroom Activity Series

Introduction to the Series

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The “HxA High School Classroom Activity Series” provides educators with recommendations for how to use some of Heterodox Academy’s tools and resources, alongside other materials, to establish a classroom environment conducive to open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement and to teach these values.

The five-part series can be used in its entirety, from Mini-Unit One through Mini-Unit Five, or educators can choose whichever mini-unit(s) fits best within their existing curriculum. The series is best suited for English and social studies classes offered in grades 11 – 12 but can easily be adapted for grades 9 – 10.

The series begins with a pre-cursor for educators to prepare for implementing classroom activities that encourage open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement.

Why Teach Open Inquiry, Viewpoint Diversity, and Constructive Disagreement?

The U.S. is a pluralistic society of people who hold a range of viewpoints on a variety of issues. An educational environment that values open inquiry allows students to explore these issues to understand why certain views are held and fosters an environment where students can learn how to disagree with any view constructively. [Research shows](#) to engage with diverse viewpoints in a classroom, students must have intellectual humility: the ability to acknowledge that they might be wrong. And they must embrace active, open-minded thinking: the ability to actively look for and understand reasons other people’s views may differ from their own. The mini-units in this series will help students cultivate these habits of mind.

By instilling the values of open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement in students, they can perform well-reasoned thinking and be better prepared to engage with new ideas in high school classrooms, on university campuses, in the workforce, and in their communities.

By teaching the mini-units of this series, students will be able to:

- Perform analytic reading and dialogue
- Investigate what has shaped their worldview
- Differentiate between facts and beliefs
- Identify logical fallacies
- Engage in dialectical thinking

Standards

The series addresses Common Core State Standards for English language arts, including reading informational texts, speaking and listening, literacy in history/social studies, and writing. The standards for the entire series are listed in the table below, and the standards relevant to each mini-unit are outlined in the respective mini-unit.

	Grades 9 – 10	Grades 11 – 12
English Language Arts — Reading: Informational Texts		
<i>Key Ideas and Details</i>	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.1	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.1
	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.2	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.2
	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.3	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.3
<i>Craft and Structure</i>	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.4	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.4
	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.5	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.5
	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.6	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.6
English Language Arts — Speaking & Listening		
<i>Comprehension and Collaboration</i>	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1
	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.3	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.3
<i>Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas</i>	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.4	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.4
English Language Arts — Literacy in History/Social Studies		
<i>Key Ideas and Details</i>	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2
<i>Craft and Structure</i>	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.4	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.4
	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.5	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.5
<i>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</i>	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.8	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.8
English Language Arts — Writing		
<i>Text Types and Purposes</i>	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.2	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2

Time

The entire series spans 29 to 42 days (not including the pre-cursor activities). The maximum is 9 weeks, depending on students' academic level and whether some activities are assigned for in-class work or homework. Constructing the series assumes that a teacher would implement Mini-Unit One at the start of the school year or semester.

Below is a calendar view of the entire "HxA High School Activity Series" The calendar assumes that one day equals a 50-minute class. The calendar also assumes the shortest timeframe needed to complete each mini-unit.

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Begin Mini-Unit One Warm-Up Activity: Pose series of questions Students read How to Read a Book Discussion questions from "Fundamentals of Analytic Reading: A Guide for Teachers"	Warm-Up Activity: Ask students: How can you be a demanding reader? Re-read chapter 8 of How to Read a Book Activity 1 from "Classroom Activities: How to Read a Book: The Classic Guide to Intelligent Reading"	Warm-Up Activity: Ask students: What does it mean to come to terms with an author? Re-read chapter 9 of How to Read a Book Activity 2 from "Classroom Activities: How to Read a Book: The Classic Guide to Intelligent Reading"	Warm-Up Activity: Ask students: How do you identify the important sentences in a book? Re-read chapter 9 of How to Read a Book Activity 3 from "Classroom Activities: How to Read a Book: The Classic Guide to Intelligent Reading"	Begin Mini-Unit Two Warm-Up Activity: "On Being Wrong" Read All Minus One Activity: "Coming to Terms with John Stuart Mill" Activity: "Understanding All Minus One through Illustrations"
Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10
Warm-Up Activity: Recap the previous day's activities Read All Minus One Activity: "Coming to Terms with John Stuart Mill" Activity: "Understanding All Minus One through Illustrations"	Warm-Up Activity: Recap the previous day's activities Read All Minus One Activity: "Coming to Terms with John Stuart Mill" Activity: "Understanding All Minus One through Illustrations"	Warm-Up Activity: Recap the previous day's activities Read All Minus One Activity: "Coming to Terms with John Stuart Mill" Activity: "Understanding All Minus One through Illustrations"	Warm-Up Activity: Recap the previous day's activities Read All Minus One Activity: "Coming to Terms with John Stuart Mill" Activity: "Understanding All Minus One through Illustrations"	Warm-Up Activity: Recap the previous day's activities Read All Minus One Activity: "Coming to Terms with John Stuart Mill" Activity: "Understanding All Minus One through Illustrations"

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Day 11	Day 12	Day 13	Day 14	Day 15
<p>Warm-Up Activity: Recap the previous day's activities</p> <p>Read All Minus One</p> <p>Activity: "Coming to Terms with John Stuart Mill"</p> <p>Activity: "Understanding All Minus One through Illustrations"</p>	<p>Warm-Up Activity: Ask students: What illustration or argument presented in <i>All Minus One</i> resonated with you most?</p> <p>Activity: "Discussion Guide: "All Minus One"</p>	<p>Warm-Up Activity: Ask students: How would you illustrate <i>All Minus One</i>?</p> <p>Activity: "Understanding All Minus One through Illustrations"</p>	<p>Begin Mini-Unit Three</p> <p>Warm-Up Activity: "Why I, as a black man, attend KKK rallies"</p> <p>Activity: "Have Students Interview Someone They Disagree With"</p> <p>(Optional) Video: "Beyond Bigots and Snowflakes: Before We Begin"</p>	<p>Warm-Up Activity: Have students reflect on interviewing someone they disagree with</p> <p>Video: "Beyond Bigots and Snowflakes: Building Community Through Viewpoint Diversity"</p> <p>Activity: "Discussion Questions"</p> <p>Activity: "What is Your Worldview?"</p>
Day 16	Day 17	Day 18	Day 19	Day 20
<p>Warm-Up Activity: Have students reflect on the activity, "What is your worldview?"</p> <p>Video: "Beyond Bigots and Snowflakes: The Problem of Unintentionally Treating Beliefs as Facts"</p> <p>Activity: "Discussion Questions"</p> <p>Activity: "Facts versus Beliefs"</p>	<p>Warm-Up Activity: Have students reflect on the difference between facts and beliefs</p> <p>Video: "Beyond Bigots and Snowflakes: The Problem of Excess Social Penalties"</p> <p>Activity: "Discussion Questions"</p>	<p>Warm-Up Activity: Have students reflect on the downsides to excessive social penalties</p> <p>Video: "Beyond Bigots and Snowflakes: The Problem of Telling People to Stay in their Lane"</p> <p>Activity: "Discussion Questions"</p> <p>Activity: "Don't Stay in Your Lane"</p>	<p>Warm-Up Activity: Have students reflect on the activity, "Don't Stay in Your Lane"</p> <p>Video: "Beyond Bigots and Snowflakes: The Problem of Relying on Science to Bridge Our Divides"</p> <p>Activity: "Discussion Questions"</p> <p>Video: "Beyond Bigots and Snowflakes: Putting the Lessons into Practice"</p> <p>Activity: "Discussion Questions"</p>	<p>Warm-Up Activity: Have students recount the lesson of "Beyond Bigots and Snowflakes"</p> <p>Activity: "Develop a Value Statement for our School"</p> <p>Video: Beyond Bigots and Snowflakes: "Summary"</p>

Day 21	Day 22	Day 23	Day 24	Day 25
<p>Begin Mini-Unit Four</p> <p>Warm-Up Activity: “Elephant and Rider”</p> <p>Activity: “Thinking Logically: Learning to Recognize Logical Fallacies”</p>	<p>Warm-Up Activity: Ask students: Did you think about logical fallacies after class? Did you notice them used in shows, on social media, etc.?</p> <p>Activity: “Thinking Logically: Learning to Recognize Logical Fallacies”</p> <p>Activity: “Seeking Disconfirmation”</p>	<p>Warm-Up Activity: Ask students: On your “Seeking Disconfirmation” worksheet, what did you write as a next step for understanding an opposing view?</p> <p>Activity: “Challenging Our Political Biases”</p>	<p>Warm-Up Activity: Ask students: In your “Challenging Our Political Biases” assignment, how did it feel writing a supporting argument for a view you disagree with?</p> <p>Activity: “Dialectical Thinking”</p>	<p>Warm-Up Activity: Ask students: Reflect on the “Dialectical Thinking” activity, what was difficult about that activity, and what was easy about it?</p> <p>Discussion questions: “Dialectical Thinking”</p>
Day 26	Day 27	Day 28	Day 29	
<p>Begin Mini-Unit Five</p> <p>Warm-Up Activity: “Meeting the Enemy”</p> <p>Teach the stages of analytic reading</p> <p>Activity 1 from “Classroom Activities: Applying the Rules of Analytic Reading to Dialogue”</p>	<p>Warm-Up Activity: Ask students: Why is it important to come to terms when engaging in dialogue?</p> <p>Activity 2 from “Classroom Activities: Applying the Rules of Analytic Reading to Dialogue”</p>	<p>Warm-Up Activity: Ask students: Was it uncomfortable to listen to feedback from your peers about your argument?</p> <p>Activity 3 from “Classroom Activities: Applying the Rules of Analytic Reading to Dialogue”</p>	<p>Warm-Up Activity: What was easy about agreeing or disagreeing with your conversation partners argument, what was difficult?</p> <p>Activity: “All Minus One: Play the Devil’s Advocate”</p>	

Mini-Units of the Series

The first and second mini-units of the series introduce students to concepts and practices that encourage the values of open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement. In the third mini-unit, students engage with one another to apply the concepts and practice these values. The fourth and fifth mini-units have students engage with and present opposing views to show they grasp the concepts and values.

Mini-Unit One: Understanding Terms and Critiquing an Argument

This mini-unit builds a foundation for student engagement in discussion with others by practicing how to come to terms with an author of a book and understand their arguments.

Time: Approximately 4 to 8 days.

Materials: *How to Read a Book*; discussion questions and activities freely accessible on the HxA website.

Mini-Unit Two: Why Does Free Speech Matter

This mini-unit builds a foundation for student engagement in discussion with others by presenting the importance of free speech and viewpoint diversity.

Time: Approximately 9 to 15 days.

Materials: *All Minus One* (freely accessible online); discussion questions and activities freely accessible on the HxA website.

Mini-Unit Three: Understanding Your Worldview and the Worldview of Others

This mini-unit introduces students to the concepts of open inquiry and viewpoint diversity and has them seek to understand their own worldview and that of others.

Time: Approximately 7 to 8 days.

Materials: “Beyond Bigots and Snowflakes” (found on YouTube); discussion questions and activities freely accessible on HxA website.

Mini-Unit Four: Seek to Understand Opposing Points of View

This mini-unit introduces students to the concepts of “steel man” and “dialectical thinking” to help them understand and appreciate both sides of an argument.

Time: Approximately 5 to 6 days.

Materials: Activities freely accessible on HxA website.

Mini-Unit Five: Present Your Own Argument and an Opposing Argument

This mini-unit has students actively engage in dialogue with one another to develop arguments and present opposing views.

Time: Approximately 4 to 5 days.

Materials: Activities freely accessible on HxA website.