Online Workshop Overview
It’s not by accident that the first type of writing listed in the standards is persuasive/argumentative. More than just restating information, students must know how to articulate their feelings, opinions, and viewpoints based on logical reasons and relevant evidence. However, for many teachers, this standard is an area of anxiety and weakness. Through this online workshop, K-12 teachers will obtain dozens of lesson ideas that they can easily incorporate into their yearlong writing curriculum.

Workshop Topics
• Dissect the argumentative writing standard for what it looks like in primary, intermediate, and secondary classrooms.

• Receive dozens of mini-lesson ideas that target the essential skills in strong opinion, persuasive, and argumentative writing.

• Learn which conventions are most relevant in opinion-based writing units.

• Incorporate media-based texts, including commercials, infomercials, documentaries, online resources, wordless picture books, video clips, and more.

When you complete this workshop, you’ll be able to:
▶ Recognize the subtle but significant differences between persuasive and argumentative writing.
▶ Weave frequent argumentative writing experiences into subject-area learning and literary reading.
▶ Support students in identifying things they want to change, suggestions they want to make, and problems they want to solve.
▶ Execute a customized calendar of lessons to teach opinion, persuasive, and/or argumentative writing.

“Love your handouts, your energy, & the wonderful ideas. Our kids are better prepared thanks to you!”
Christopher Alber • Principal at Riley Elementary School, LaPorte, IN

WORKSHOP OUTLINE
Yearlong Vision
• Redefine argument in the writing curriculum
• Dissect the college & career-ready standards
• Identify common genres and formats

Unit Considerations
• Scaffold frequent experiences
• Focus on the “trump” traits

Unit Foundations
• Read the world
• Consider multiple perspectives
• Take a position

Logical Reasoning
• Introduce the opinion or claim
• Provide supporting reasons with evidence
• Organize key points

Message Polishing
• Convey a logical flow of ideas
• Present an appropriate tone
• End memorably and expressively

Total time to complete: 5-6 hours; (allotted time to complete the online workshop: 30 days)

Instructor:
Kristina Smekens
President & Lead Consultant for Smekens Education Solutions, Inc.
Top reasons to watch & learn from this online workshop

1. Just assigning students to do more writing won’t improve their writing.
The secret to writing success is pairing frequent writing opportunities with explicit writing instruction. Students need their teachers to break down the abstract qualities of good writing. More than telling students what to do, our writing curriculum must include a heavy dose of how to do it.

2. Argumentative and informative writing are essential skills for today’s students.
Conveying information clearly and articulating a strong argument are among the more challenging writing skills reflected in today’s standards. Kristina will provide dozens of lesson ideas to help teachers address these modes of writing with confidence.

3. Students need to recognize different writing purposes.
Writing to inform is very different than writing to persuade or share feelings. Students must learn the unique characteristics of the different modes of writing in order to fully accomplish writing tasks.

Top questions teachers ask about teaching writing units
► How many different types of writing should I plan to teach in a year?
► There are so many writing skills I could teach; which ones are most important?
► How do the 6 Traits fit into the different writing units?
► Is argumentative writing really all that different from persuasive writing?
► What is a “short research project” as stated in the writing standards?
► How do you teach students to stop plagiarizing in informative writing and omit the words I and you in argumentative writing?
► How can my writing instruction prepare students for the skills they need when writing about their reading on standardized assessments?
► How can I incorporate informative and argumentative writing into my subject-area learning?
► How do you wean students off dependence on the teacher to hand-hold them through the writing process/unit?

Interested in Smekens on-site training?
Smekens Education specializes in providing customized, on-site professional development in the areas of reading and writing. Our training team is best known for showing teachers how to apply research-based literacy strategies in ways that are practical and effective. For details on how this online workshop, or others, can be customized to fit your exact needs and presented at your school or district, call toll free (888) 376-0448 today!

“I leave inspired every time. Everyone should be Smekenized!”
Erica Shadley • Teacher at Ada Elementary School, Ada, OH
ABOUT THE PRESENTER
Kristina Smekens

Kristina Smekens is a full-time literacy consultant who has built a reputation for using enthusiasm, humor, and common sense to equip K-12 educators with practical, demystifying strategies for teaching reading and writing.

As president and lead consultant for Smekens Education, Kristina is constantly developing new strategies for helping teachers to meet the demands of today’s College and Career-Ready Standards. She and her two full-time associates share those strategies with teachers across the United States and beyond through on-site school trainings, regional seminars, and an always-growing pool of print, digital, and video resources.

A PRESENTER
Kristina has a gift for making the complex seem simple—for showing teachers how to meet the needs of readers and writers by bridging the gap between education research and practical, classroom-tested strategies that work. When she presents at state and national conferences, teachers flock to her sessions because they know Kristina will share strategies they can use in their own classrooms the very next day.

But beyond providing teachers with practical classroom techniques, Kristina is also a master at giving educators an injection of motivation and encouragement to help them return to their classrooms with the confidence and excitement they need to execute change. In fact, more than 17,000 educators rely on a monthly “shot in the arm” from Kristina as subscribers to her monthly email newsletter, “Big Ideas.”

AN AUTHOR
Well known for offering innovative ideas, Kristina has created more than 50 “Smekens Originals,” a compilation of books, guides, and classroom tools designed to help teachers implement best-practice literacy strategies. Among the most popular of these resources are her best-selling books, Launching the Writer’s Workshop: Grades K-2 and Grades 3-12. Other popular publications include The Trait Mate: 6-Traits Starter Lessons, Connecting Comprehension & Composition, Sing & Comprehend, Close Reading Questions for Literature, Close Reading Questions for Informational Text, Trait Trackers, and Serving Up Synthesis. Additionally, Kristina is the author of Trait-Based Writing: Lessons and Activities (Scholastic, 2009).

A CRAFTER
Beyond books and physical teacher tools, Kristina has also created a library of more than 50 on-demand professional learning videos that are utilized by teachers around the world. With topics ranging from “Building Kid-Friendly Writing Rubrics” to “Achieving a Close Reading,” each of Kristina’s “webPD” videos uses a seminar-style format to capture her energy and enthusiasm while conveying her teacher-friendly ideas.

BACKGROUND
Kristina earned her BA in English and education at Michigan State University. Prior to her full-time consulting career, she was an accomplished high school English and journalism teacher in Michigan and Indiana. A leader in state and national scholastic journalism endeavors, Kristina authored a journalism textbook and teachers’ guide for Walsworth Publishing in 2002.

Over the past 12 years, she has been blessed to work and learn with hundreds of schools and thousands of teachers throughout the Midwest. She was awarded the Excellence in Reading Award by the Indiana State Reading Association in 2013 for her contributions to literacy in Indiana.

Kristina lives in Warren, Indiana with her husband and business partner Brady, their three teenage children, and a rambunctious family dog named Buddy.

“Kristina just takes the guess work out of everything to make it ALL make sense!”
Nicki King • Teacher, Union Furnace Elementary, Logan, OH

“I love how you made it abundantly clear the why and how to hone in with intentionality on the issues my kids are having rather than giving skimpy instruction on a plethora of topics just to say ‘we covered that.’ Now, I feel like I can create a road map that will make sense because it will be specifically tailored to their needs.”
Priscilla Peterson • Teacher, Westfield Middle School Westfield, IN

“I love the way Kristina presents the information with so much enthusiasm. I love how she builds on what she’s taught before.”
Kristen Smith • Teacher, Gilmer County High School, Glenville, WV

“After 33 years of teaching, I still am drawn back into Kristina’s workshops because they are research-based, standards-focused, and very interactive.”
Katie Cadle • Teacher, Paoli Community Schools, Paoli, IN
Group Registration Process

To register a group of teachers, complete the form on this page and fax it with a purchase order to webAcademy at 888-376-0489. After a purchase order is received, a professional development specialist will email each registrant with instructions for accessing the online workshop.