

Making Moves with Evidence

Overview of Instructional Resource:

The ideas in this instructional resource come from Joseph Harris's book [*Rewriting: How To Do Things with Texts*](#), especially chapters 2 and 3. Be sure to carefully re-read chapters 2 and 3 of Harris's book before teaching this resource. His ideas about working with the words of other people expand students' ideas about how and why to cite other people's texts. His overall argument is that citation is an action, that it's about the *writer's* action. Most students see quoting as finding the right quotation to support their claim. Harris divides quoting into two large categories: forwarding and countering. Harris defines these as actions or "moves" that the writer makes: "in forwarding a text, you extend its *uses*; in countering a text, you note its *limits*" (38).

Harris further divides "forwarding" into different purposes:

- *Illustrating*: When you look to other texts for examples of a point you want to make
- *Authorizing*: When you invoke the expertise or status of another writers to support your thinking
- *Extending*: When you put your own spin on the terms or concepts that you take from other texts. (39)

Harris defines "countering" as developing "a new line of thinking in response to the limits of other texts" (57). This definition, as well as his careful unpacking of the idea, highlights the best use of disagreement, and opposes a point/counterpoint understanding of countering. Instead, when writers counter other texts, they do so in order to advance their own point of view. Note that in all these moves, Harris stresses the constructive nature of countering.

As with *forwarding*, Harris subdivides *countering* into different moves:

- *Arguing the other side*: Showing the usefulness of a term or idea that a writer has criticized or noting problems with one that she or he has argued for.
- *Uncovering values*: Surfacing a word or concept for analysis that a text has left undefined or unexamined.
- *Dissenting*: Identifying a shared line of thought on an issue in order to note its limits. (57)

This resource is designed to be an early entry point into the Harris moves and can be taught as an extension to another instructional resource or as part of routine argument writing. In teaching the Harris moves as part of C3WP instruction, teachers have noticed that students pretty quickly learn to identify the Harris moves in mentor texts, but they often find it challenging to make the moves in their own writing. This resource was designed specifically to support students in making deliberate choices in using the words of others in their writing.

Skill Emphasis

- Analyze key language that indicates a move
- Understand the concept of using information from sources to make moves
- Use information from sources to practice Harris Moves

Duration: two to three 45 minute class periods

Sample Text Set: This resource uses excerpts from the text set on homework, which is the sample text set for the C3WP instructional resource, [Ranking Evidence](#). However, the teacher can pull examples from any text set if teaching this as an extension to another instructional resource, or can pull examples from current local or national topics of conversation to teach it as part of routine argument writing. The idea is to gather some quotes for students to use - they can come from an article they have been reading, a brand new article, a famous quote, a poster on the wall, excerpts from texts in a C3WP instructional resources, or other texts that fit into the teacher’s current instructional goals.

Classroom Resources:

- Notebook/Journal
- Highlighters
- Chart paper
- Markers
- Tape

Digital Resources:

Organizers, Tools, and Resources

- [Making Moves with Sources](#)
- [Excerpts from Sources](#) (for hands-on sorting)
- [Images of Sorting Activity](#)
- [Digital Excerpts from Sources](#) (for digital sorting)
- [Let’s Try it Out](#)

Overview of Lesson Sequence

1. Introduction to Harris Moves
2. What Move Might I Make? Sorting excerpts from sources
3. Making Moves with Sources: Let’s Try it Out

Lesson Sequence:

Introduction or Review of Harris Moves (20-40 minutes)

In this activity, the teacher models highlighting and discussion of examples of each Harris move in [provided examples](#). As mentioned above, the excerpts in this resource all come from the homework text set from the Ranking Evidence instructional resource. These excerpts could be used as-is as part of routine argument writing, as pre-teaching for Ranking Evidence or as an extension during or after Ranking Evidence. The teacher could also use examples of the Harris moves from any C3WP text set or from other texts and substitute those for the excerpts from the homework text set.

- To begin, the teacher introduces the way that Harris describes writing “as a kind of conversation” (35). For some students, it might be helpful to share Kenneth Burke’s parlor metaphor, which Harris includes on pages

Teaching Tip

If the idea of argument as conversation is new to students, consider teaching the [Argument as Conversation Instructional Resource](#) before beginning the lesson sequence.

35-36 in *Rewriting*. Other students might relate more to the “Atwoodian Table” as described in the C3WP resource, [Argument as Conversation](#).

- Then, the teacher introduces or re-introduces the definitions of the Harris moves, included in the overview above. The teacher can use any preferred strategy to provide the definitions and lead a full class discussion to collect student responses and answer questions.
- The teacher then passes out a copy of [“Making Moves with Sources”](#), and a highlighter to each student. As students follow along, the teacher models highlighting and discussion of 1-2 examples. The students then work together in small groups or partners to highlight and discuss the other examples. The key point in analyzing the examples is to look carefully at the signal phrase (the sentence or sentences that introduce the quotation) and the sentence(s) that follow the quotation. The goal is to help students see quoting as an action that is indicated by surrounding words and phrases. Provide students with the following directions for analyzing the examples:
 - Highlight the quote in each example
 - Look carefully at the signal phrase and the sentences surrounding the quote
 - Circle the key words the writer uses to indicate the “move” he or she is making
 - Discuss: Do any of the examples show more than one move?
- To close the activity, have students write a reflection or complete an exit ticket in response to the following prompts:
 - *How would you describe the Harris moves to someone completely new to the concept?*
 - *What questions are you grappling with when it comes to the concept of argument as a conversation and/or the Harris moves?*

Teaching Tip

Be sure to closely re-read chapters 2 and 3 of *Rewriting* in preparation for this lesson.

What Move Might I Make? (30-45 minutes)

Sorting Excerpts from Sources

Technology Adaptation

Use Google Docs to have students do a [digital sorting](#) in partners or small groups.

The key next step in this instructional sequence is to shift students from thinking in terms of identifying examples of the moves in other texts, to thinking about how they might make the moves in their own writing. It will be important to emphasize this point multiple times throughout the next sequence of activities in order to set them up for the final writing where they will try out a couple of moves independently using one of the provided excerpts.

- In preparation for this lesson, the teacher will need to print out and cut out the excerpts from texts. Depending on teacher preference, the excerpts can be printed in all the same color or each excerpt can be printed in a different color. This activity also requires a piece of butcher paper, a roll of tape, and a marker for each group of students (groups of 3-4), so have the necessary amount of supplies prepared beforehand. [These images](#) provide an example of teachers completing this sorting activity in professional development and illustrate how a teacher might set up the room for this activity.

Teaching Tip

Depending on preparation and class time, cutting out the excerpts and creating the posters could be done entirely by the teacher, entirely by students, or shared.

- To begin the activity, the teacher reminds students that they are focusing on the idea of argument as conversation and the ways in which writers make moves with the words of others in their own writing. Then, the teacher groups students in groups of 3-4, making sure each group has the necessary supplies. The teacher might have butcher paper prepared and on the wall already, or students might move it there and prepare it themselves, creating four quadrants on the butcher paper and labeling each of the quadrants with a Harris move: Illustrating, Authorizing, Extending, Countering.
- The teacher then passes out a packet of excerpts from the texts to each group and provides the following instructions:
 - As a group, consider the excerpts from sources.
 - Sort them on the chart paper based on what move(s) a writer might make with each excerpt.
 - IMPORTANT NOTE: You are sorting them based on how they might be *used*, not by what they are an example of.
 - Use the following sentence stem to guide this discussion:
 - *If my claim were _____, I might use this excerpt to _____*

Teaching Tip:

Make sure the sentence stem is displayed in a way that is easy for students to see and reference as they do the sorting.

Formative Assessment

Circulate the room as students are sorting to check to see if they are sorting based on how the excerpts might be used. If there is evidence of misunderstanding, redirect them to the important note and sentence stem.

Possible Adaptation for Students who Need Additional Scaffolding

Some students might find it challenging to sort the excerpts without having a pre-determined claim. To scaffold this, the teacher could create possible claims for the topic and write one at the top of each poster paper. Or, students could write a claim as a group after reading through all of the excerpts and then use their group created claim to do the sorting.

Making Moves with Sources: Let's Try it Out (25-50 minutes)

For the final steps in this instructional resource, students will practice the Harris moves using the excerpts from sources. They will also get feedback from a peer to see if their intended move comes across to an outside reader.

- To begin, the teacher passes out a copy of the [Try it Out](#) handout to each student. The teacher then directs each student to select one of the excerpts from sources that they sorted during the sorting activity. Students take their selected excerpt off the wall and return to their seats.
- In the left-hand column of the handout, each student identifies 1-2 possible claims about the topic and identifies 2 purposes for using the evidence excerpt he or she collected.
- In the right-hand column, students try out two different moves. They might try two forwarding moves, one forwarding and one countering, two countering, or whatever combination of moves they want to try. The goal is to try out two completely different moves with the same evidence excerpt in order to see that writers use different moves for different purposes. The teacher might remind students that they can try two moves for the

same claim, or they can use different claims for each move. The idea is to try out a couple of moves in order to see how even the same excerpt can be used in different ways.

- After students have tried the moves, the teacher directs students to fold their papers in half so only the right-hand column is visible. They then trade their paper with a partner and have a brief conference to discuss if their intended moves came through and any thoughts they have for how they might have been more successful.

Assessing Formative Growth and Next Steps

Collect the Try it Out writing to assess both the writer's use of the moves and the peer responder's understanding of the moves. Adjust instruction to provide further practice if needed. If students seem to grasp the concept of the Harris moves, move to what you identify as next steps in instructions as far as C3WP resources. Be sure to return to the type of practice provided in this resource as students move to more complex resources and texts, and/or as part of routine argument across the year.