

ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING

Packet:

- one complete model essay with annotation
- four example paragraphs with annotation
- writing a "claim" lesson
- writing a "counter-argument" and "refutation" lesson
- Grammar for writing: introducing counter-arguments and refutations
- 5 practice writing prompts

What is an argumentative essay?

- An essay that includes arguments for both sides of topic.
- It includes a claim which shows your position, or belief, on the topic.

The first two sentences are the "hook". Why are these sentences important?

Unnecessary Physical Education

There is a thrill in kicking a ball to the outfield and running around the bases while teammates cheer. There's also an embarrassment that comes with missing the ball or not running quite fast enough. Physical education has been required in schools for many years. It is believed to promote social skills and health. However, physical education could also promote negative social experiences as well as being a distraction from more important academic studies. Physical education is not necessary for social or academic growth.

High-light the "claim" in the essay. Is the author FOR physical education or AGAINST physical education?

One serious issue with physical education as a requirement is the risk of embarrassment and bullying. Students have different abilities and often feel segregated and ashamed in physical education classes because of their lack of skill. Many games include physical contact, which can lead to injuries. These situations can cause students to avoid physical education.

Underline the topic-sentences that show supporting arguments.

Physical education is often required for other academic courses, which takes away from time spent on other subjects. Physical education and other activities should be given more time than academic courses. Skills learned in academic courses will be required for students' future careers. It is very unlikely that basketball or volleyball skills will be necessary for students in their careers.

In paragraph #4: How is this paragraph different from paragraphs #2 and #3?

Others may believe that physical education is necessary for teaching students about physical health. Although health and physical exercises is important for students, it is not necessary as a daily requirement or graded course. Elementary students have schedule recess time for play and exercise already. In secondary school, students can participate in after school sports. If parents are interested in their children playing sports, there are many opportunities in the community. It is not necessary for teachers and schools to focus time outside of academic studies for exercise.

Put a star* next to the topic sentence, which is the "counter-argument".

All in all, physical education should not be a requirement for schools because of negative social and emotional issues. The class time allotted for physical education takes away from important academic skills necessary for future courses and careers. Schools should make physical education an optional activity, and parents can choose to put their children in physical activities outside of school hours.

Is the last sentence a question, prediction, or suggestion?

Draw a squiggly line under the sentence/sentences that summarize the essay.

Looking at independent paragraphs:

Body Paragraph #1:

High-light the topic sentence of this paragraph.

In your own words, what is the author's main argument in this paragraph?

One serious issue with physical education as a requirement in school is the possibility of social embarrassment and bullying. Students have different skills and talents. Those who are not talented in sports often feel segregated and ashamed in physical education class. From early childhood, students are teased for their lack of skill. Many games include teams in which students are left out or not chosen by their peers. These situations can cause long-term emotional issues for students.

This paragraph is a supporting paragraph. How many examples does the author give to support the topic sentence?

Do you believe the paragraph supports the topic sentence? Yes or no?

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Quickly, if the counter-argument, there is a refutation. High-light the refutation.

What does the refutation do in this paragraph?

... essay must show both sides of the argument. The first sentence of this paragraph is the counter-argument. Underline the counter-argument.

Does the counter-argument support the claim of the essay?

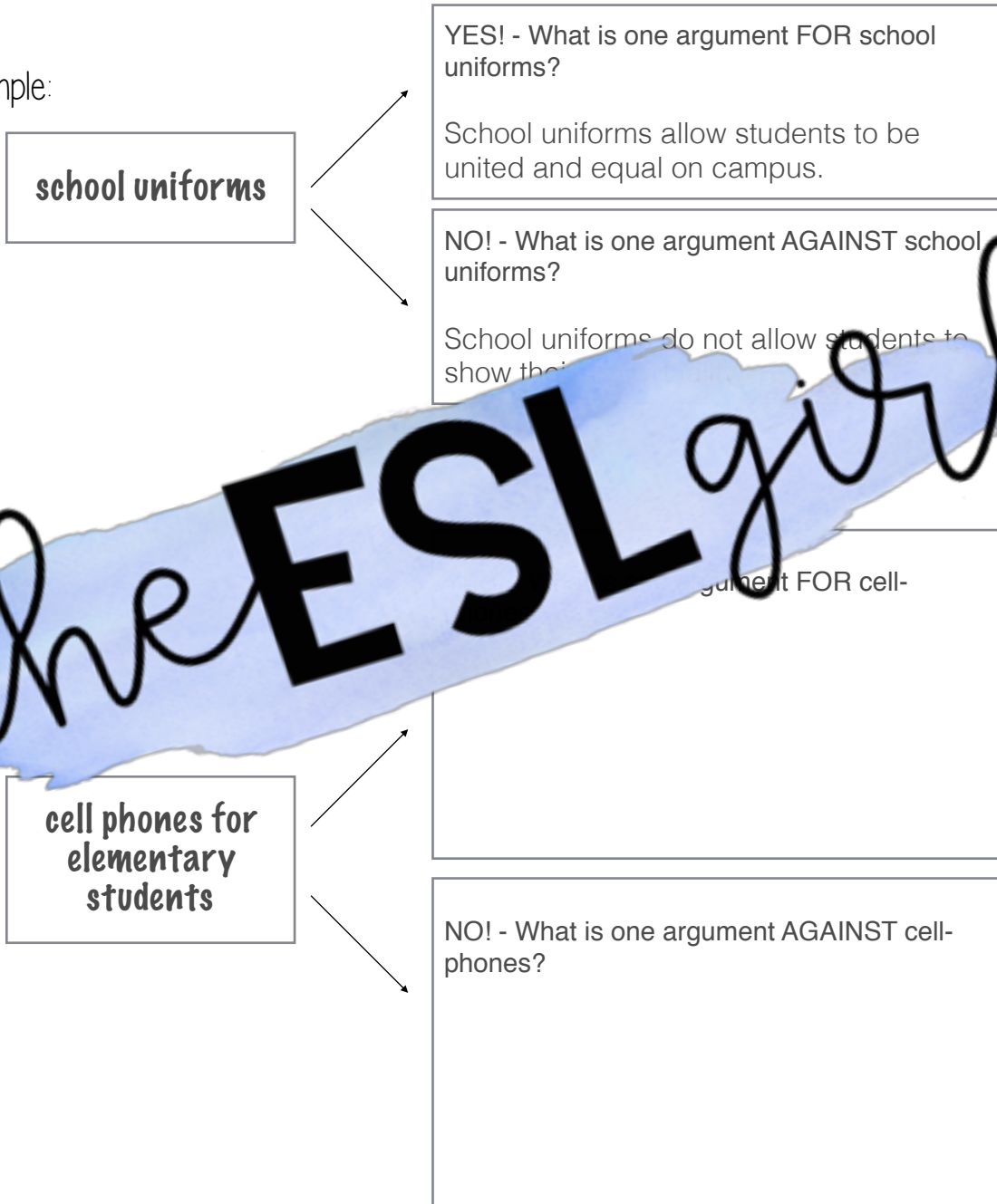
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Claim: A statement that can be argued. Evidence can be used to prove (or disprove) the argument. The claim in an argumentative essay is the thesis of the essay.

Discussion and Practice:

What do you think? Look at the topic and think of a "pro" claim and a "con" argument.

Example:



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A claim is your thesis. It is a strong statement that shows your belief and it is what you will argue in your essay.

Examples about school uniforms:

Pro: School uniforms improve the overall academic life at schools.

Con: School uniforms limit the growth and independence of students in schools.

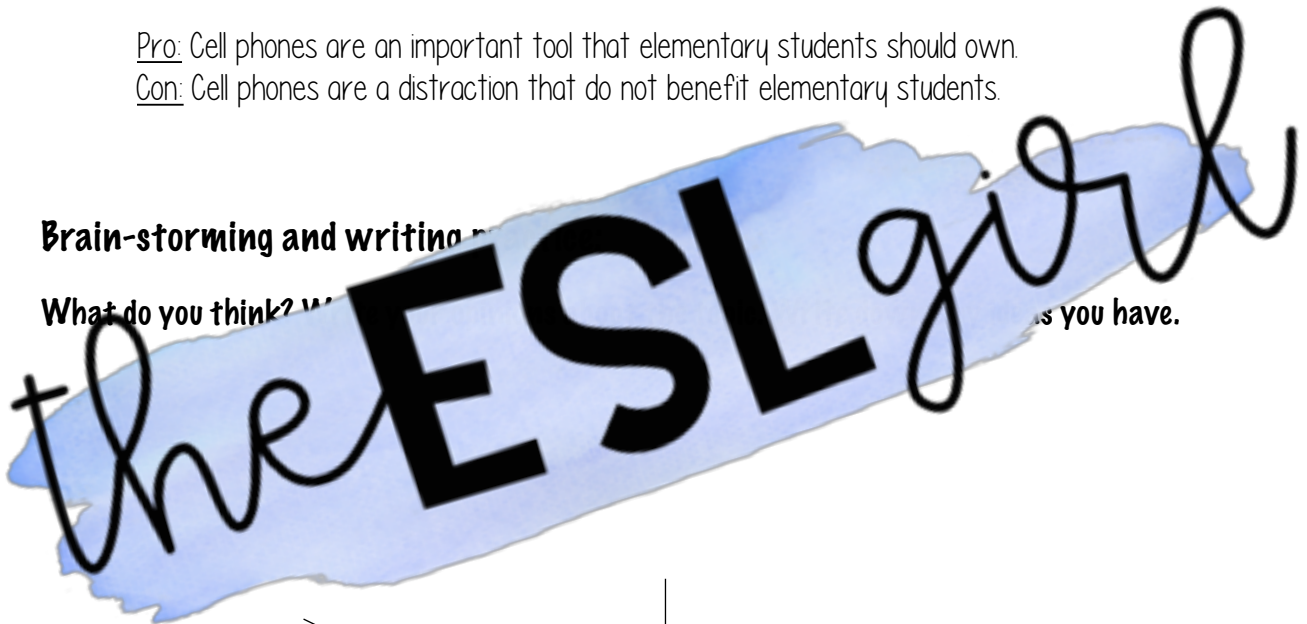
Examples about cell phones for elementary students:

Pro: Cell phones are an important tool that elementary students should own.

Con: Cell phones are a distraction that do not benefit elementary students.

Brain-storming and writing

What do you think? What are your arguments? What do you have.

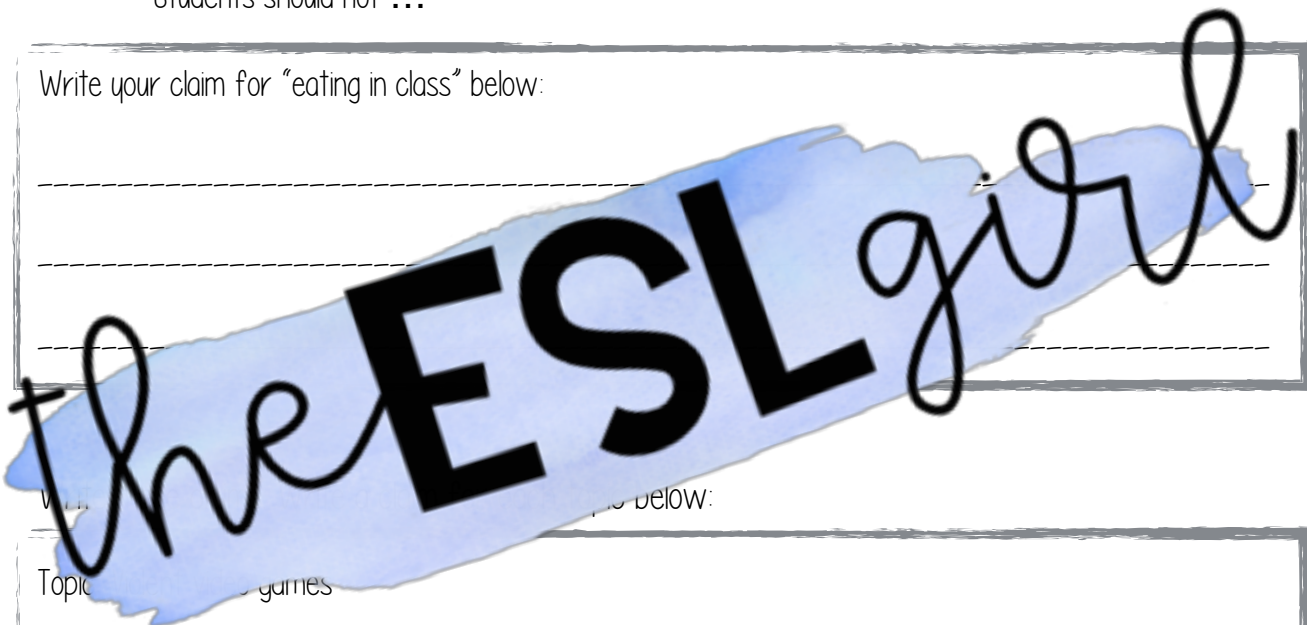


Write a claim: Usually, we do not use “I think” or “In my opinion” in argumentative writing. Write your claim as a strong statement.

Some ways to start your claim could be:

- Eating in class...
- It's important ...
- It's not important...
- It's necessary ...
- Students should ...
- Students should not ...

Write your claim for “eating in class” below:



Write your claim for “video games” below:

Topic: video games

Topic: Physical Education as a school requirement

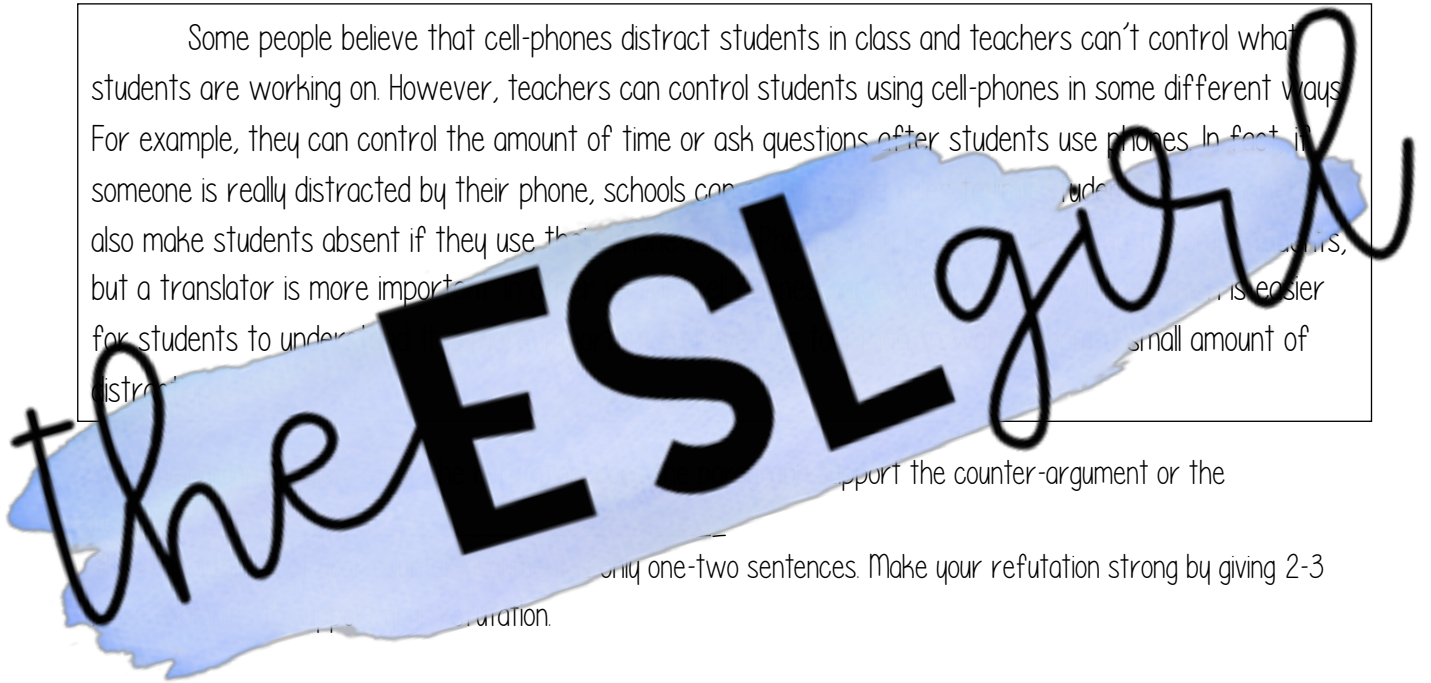
Writing a counter-argument and refutation:

The paragraph below was written by a student about cell-phones in class. This body paragraph includes a counter-argument and refutation.

The claim: Cell-phones are an important tool that students should use in class.

1. High-light the counterargument in the paragraph below.
2. Underline the refutation.

Some people believe that cell-phones distract students in class and teachers can't control what students are working on. However, teachers can control students using cell-phones in some different ways. For example, they can control the amount of time or ask questions after students use phones. In fact, if someone is really distracted by their phone, schools can take away their phone. Schools can also make students absent if they use their phone in class. Translators are helpful for students, but a translator is more important for students to understand a small amount of English. It is easier for students to understand a small amount of English.



Example #2:

The claim: Parents should have control of their children's technology for their overall safety.

1. High-light the counterargument in the paragraph below.
2. Underline the refutation.

Others may say that students are individuals who deserve privacy. However, children are their parent's responsibility until they are at least eighteen years old. A parent's responsibility is to care for and protect their children until they are a legal adult and can legally make their own decisions. A parent's motivation in having access to their children's technology is not to misuse trust. A parent's motivation is to protect children from issues such as bullying, unsafe websites, or dangerous scams and individuals. A child's safety is the most important issue to focus on, not privacy.

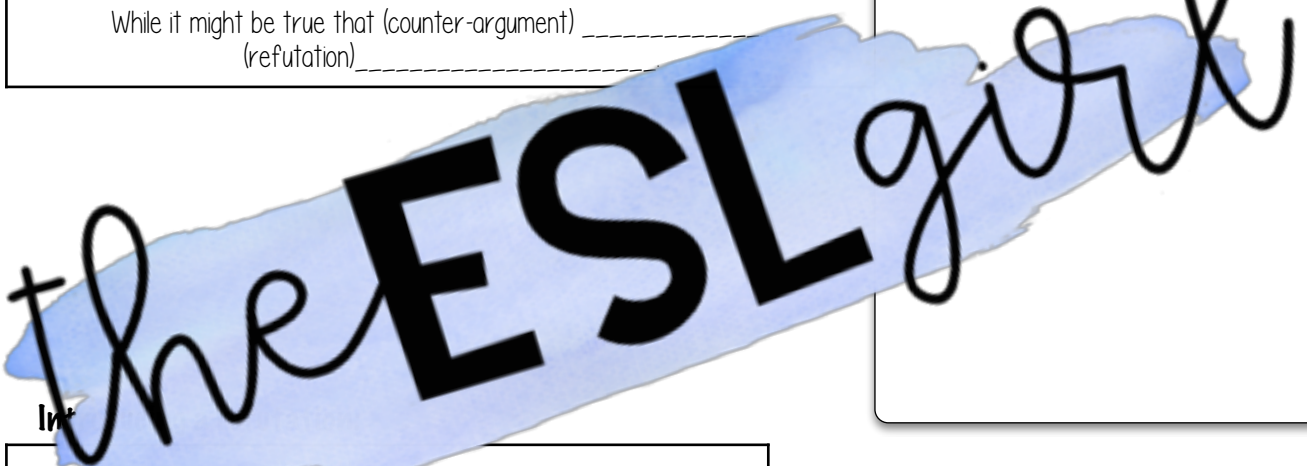
Grammar for Writing: introducing counter-arguments and refutations

Introducing a counter-argument:

Some people may think ...
Others may believe ...
Others may say ...
One common argument for _____ is ...
Those that oppose _____ may believe ...
Although (counter-argument) _____, (refutation) _____.
While it might be true that (counter-argument) _____, (refutation) _____.

Write a counter-argument for this claim: Students should be required to go to bed by 8:00 p.m. on weekdays.

Use one of these phrases to start your counter-argument:



however,
Yet,
While there may be some truth in that, ...
Even though some people believe that, ...
Despite that belief, ...
Although some may think _____, ...

Claim: Art and music are not necessary classes for students to complete for high school graduation.

Counter-argument: Some people may think that art and music are necessary for students to show their individuality and creativity.

Refutation:

Let's practice!

Many students ride bicycles and skateboards to school. Some states require individuals to wear helmets while riding bicycles and skateboards. Write a claim that tells your argument for or against helmets being a requirement by law.

Since university is expensive and students often change their career choice, many students are choosing to have a "gap-year" between high-school and college. Is a gap-year a good idea for students? Write a claim:

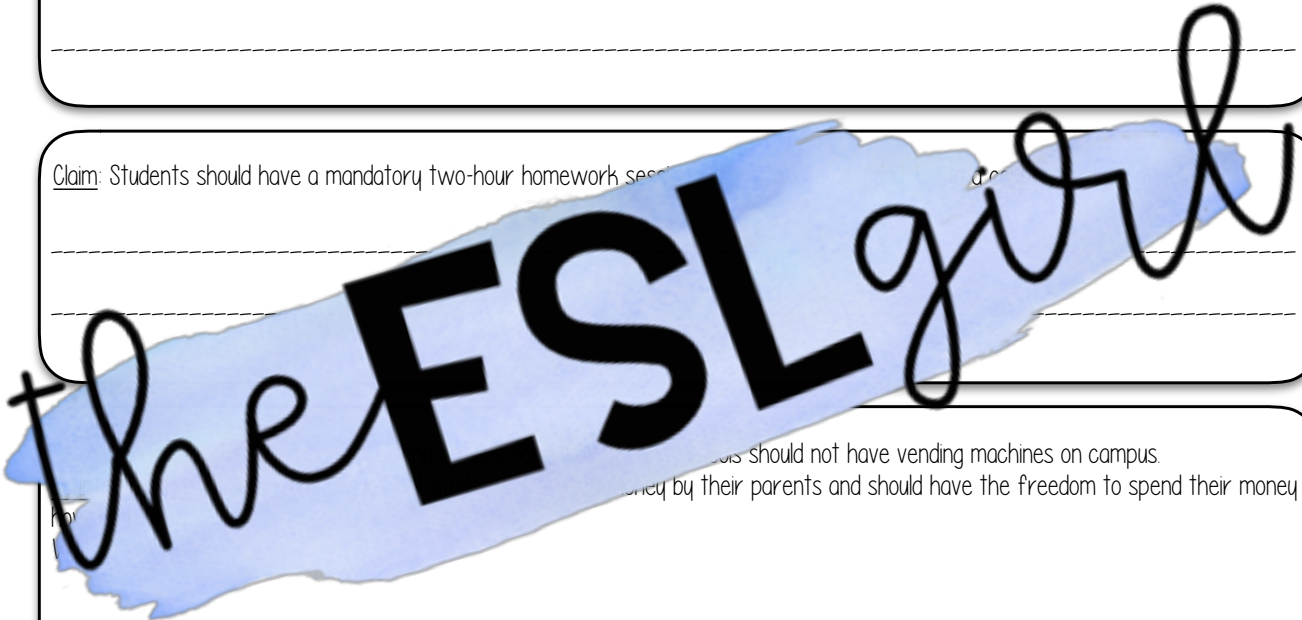
Claim: Students should have a mandatory two-hour homework session every day.

Claim: Universities should not have vending machines on campus. Students are often given money by their parents and should have the freedom to spend their money on other things.

Claim: Studying-abroad is an essential part of student-life and all students should study abroad once in their high-school or college education.

Write a counter-argument:

Write a refutation:



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ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE



Hello!
Hi!
Hey!
Welcome!
What's up?
How's it going?

THANKS FOR SUPPORTING A FELLOW TEACHER! I'M KIM & I LOVE TEACHING ALL THINGS ESL / ELL RELATED. MY GOAL IS TO HELP SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNERS FEEL **COMFORTABLE, SAFE, AND CONFIDENT**. IF THEY LEAVE THE CLASSROOM FEELING LIKE SOMEONE BELIEVES IN THEM, THEN I'VE DONE ALL THAT MATTERS.

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO USE THIS RESOURCE FOR ALL OF YOUR CLASSES & EDUCATION NEEDS. HOWEVER, PLEASE DO NOT SHARE WITH OTHER TEACHERS OR POST IN SHARED-FOLDERS. IT'S GREATLY APPRECIATED!

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