

**State Museum Instructional Guide – English Language Arts Model Lesson**  
**Author: Jessica George, West Virginia Department of Education**

**Title:** A State by Any Other Name

**Big Idea:** Analyzing argumentation

**Essential Question:** What were the arguments for/against the possible names for the new state at the Constitutional Convention in Wheeling on November 26, 1861? Whose argument is most convincing?

**West Virginia College and Career Readiness Standards**

**English Language Arts:**

ELA.10.R.C.6 Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of complex ideas or events in informational texts, including the order in which the points are made, how they are developed, and how they interact.

ELA.10.R.C.12 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in an informational text and evaluate how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose.

ELA.10.R.C3.4 Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims and counterclaims in an informational text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning.

**Social Studies:**

SS.9.10-L.10 Read and comprehend history/social studies texts at or above grade level complexity band independently and proficiently.

**Learning Plan:** During social studies/history time or in cooperation with the social studies/history teacher, students must have developed the content background knowledge related to the Constitutional Convention that occurred in Wheeling on November 26, 1861. They need to understand who participated and the reason(s) the convention took place. Particularly, basic awareness of the following individuals would be helpful: James Henry Brown, Granville Parker, Daniel Lamb, Harmon Sinsel, Elbert H. Caldwell, Waitman T. Willey, Peter G. Van Winkle, Gordon Battelle, and Chapman J. Stuart.

This activity involves students rotating to five different stations – each station representing the five respective options for the name of the new state formed from the land that once made up the western portion of Virginia. The five options were West Virginia, Kanawha, Western Virginia, Allegheny, and Augusta. A transcript related to each option will be placed at each station. It is important to note that the transcript has been condensed to highlight the most pertinent quotes from the delegates at the Constitutional Convention. Students will read the transcript and extract the arguments for and against the state name option represented at that station.

At each station, students will read transcripts (or listen to audio recordings if the teacher makes audio recordings of the transcripts) of comments made by the delegates regarding the five options for the new state's name. Students will need their own copy of the transcript at each station. (The entire transcript can be found in a link below.) Students will take a graphic organizer entitled "The Naming of West Virginia" from station to station. On this sheet, they will record information (in their own words) related to reasons delegates give for and against each of the name options. The language utilized in the transcript is highly complex; teacher-made audio recordings could help provide clues to the tone of the speaker.

After rotating to all five stations, students will develop a paragraph response to the question: Who had the most convincing argument in the discussion about naming the new state? Why? (For enrichment, the teacher could opt to

address the persuasive techniques used by the speakers [e.g., bandwagon, plain folks, appeal to authority, etc.] and evaluate the effectiveness of those respective techniques.)

After students have composed their written responses, an in-class vote could be held to determine how students would have voted if they had attended the Constitutional Convention.

**Notes to Instructor:** This station activity will take approximately 45-60 minutes, depending upon the time allocated at each station. It is strongly suggested that the teacher model how to fill out the handout, "The Naming of West Virginia." The teacher should circulate the stations at all times to provide assistance and clarification. Student groups should be created based upon teacher discretion. Creating audio recordings of the station transcripts will help struggling readers hear the inflection of the speakers to determine positive/negative connotation. This lesson could serve as an introduction to argumentation or reinforce previous instruction related to argumentative writing/speaking.

### **Links and Other Resources:**

<http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/delegatescc.html> - Contains information on the delegates to the Constitutional Convention

<http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/statehood11.html> - Contains information about the West Virginia Constitutional Convention 1861-1863

<http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/statename.html> - Contains a transcript from the *Debates and Proceedings of the First Constitutional Convention*, pictures of select delegates involved, and a primary document source (picture) showing how the delegates voted

Station Transcripts (\*Note: Transcripts have been shortened to eliminate exceedingly complex language/content.)

The Naming of West Virginia (graphic organizer)

**Student Materials:** Station Transcripts, writing utensils, audio recordings of transcripts (if available), The Naming of West Virginia (graphic organizer)

### **Related Websites:**

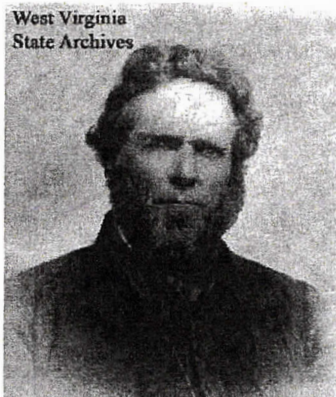
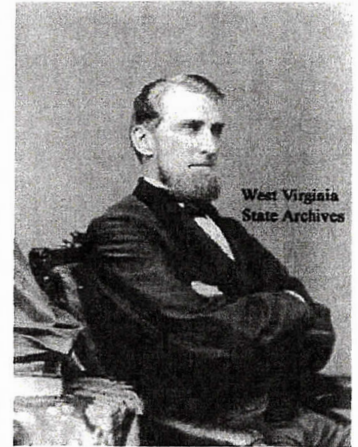
<http://www.wvculture.org/history/statehood/primarydocuments.html> - Statehood Primary Documents located on the West Virginia Archives & History website

**Station 1**  
**State Name Option: West Virginia**

**Directions:** Read the transcript of the conversation between delegates at the Constitutional Convention. Locate statements that are for (Pro) and against (Con) the State Name Option listed above. Write these statements in your own words on your graphic organizer.

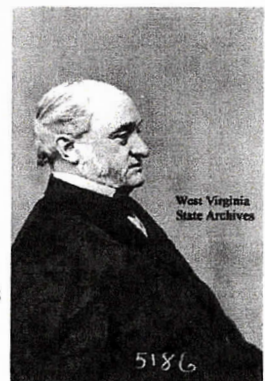
Mr. Willey: Sir, there are cherished memories connected with that old state in old times that will never be obliterated while memory holds her seat. Whatever may have been the course of Virginia towards us in recent times, still I cling to the memories of the past, and I shall cherish that until memory is no more.

Moreover, sir, we have fought this fight under the name of West Virginia. We are known and recognized as West Virginia - on the continent, over the sea, in Europe, and everywhere, we are spoken of as West Virginia, and as men rising up in the majesty of our love of right and of liberty and periling our lives and our fortunes and taking a stand in defense of our rights. If I were to make a selection of all the names it seems to me that of West Virginia would be the most proper. We are not adopting the principles of old or east Virginia with the name. We are standing by the principles upon which we have been fighting hitherto under the name of western Virginia; and we can stand as steadfastly and loyal hereafter when we are utterly cut off from political connection with east Virginia while the name is Western Virginia as under any other name.



Mr. Battelle: I shall be opposed to substituting either New Virginia or West Virginia. We are now forming a new State. I for one would want a new name - a fresh name - a name which if it were not symbolical of especially new ideas would at least be somewhat indicative of our deliverance from very old ones.

Mr. Van Winkle: I have a positive objection to adopting anything which compels us to attach a Virginia to it. If we could have Virginia by itself I would take it and be thankful for it; but if we must have West Virginia or New Virginia, or, as the world will think, Little Virginia, I shall most certainly feel if it is persisted in after the discussion that has taken place, and under the circumstances - that it comes before us as a compromise.





**Station 2**  
**State Name Option: Kanawha**

**Directions:** Read the transcript of the conversation between delegates at the Constitutional Convention. Locate statements that are for (Pro) and against (Con) the State Name Option listed above. Write these statements in your own words on your graphic organizer.

West Virginia  
State Archives



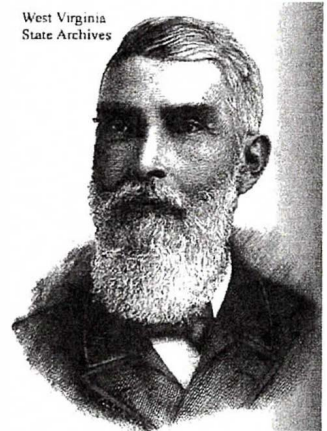
Mr. Parker: There is within the boundary of the new State a large county of the same name as the one proposed for the State - the county of Kanawha, which has been one of the most prominent points within the boundaries of the new State. In looking over the United States, I believe we can find no instance where any subdivision of a state bears the name of the state itself. Well, I suppose the reason is that it shall not create confusion, in postal and other connections with other parts of the country, and the outside world.

Mr. Sinsel: I was born and raised in Virginia, and I have ever been proud of the name. I admit that Virginians have done wrong - that many of them in this rebellion have disgraced themselves; but that has not weaned me from the name. When we look back to history and see the origin of the name - Virginia, from the Queen. It is a name that I almost revere; and I am utterly opposed to leaving it out and substituting the name "Kanawha" in its stead.

Mr. Brown: It has been remarked that there was no instance, I believe, of a state being called after a small part or subdivision of it. The State of Kentucky has been alluded to. If I recollect right Kentucky was but one of the counties of Virginia. The time was when Kentucky was a part of Virginia territory and the district of Kentucky covered all that portion of the state which now bears its name.

It has been said by gentlemen that they cherish the name of Virginia, from the source, the Virgin Queen after whom it was named, but, sir, when this was mentioned, I confess my mind reverted to the fact that that [queen] was not above suspicion. With these views, and this obvious propriety, and this precedent, I feel constrained to vote against the motion which the gentleman has made to strike out after the people have ratified the name of Kanawha.

West Virginia  
State Archives

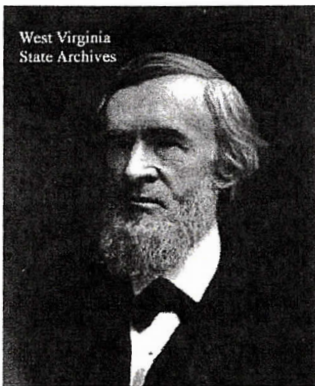


**Station 3**  
**State Name Option: Western Virginia**

**Directions:** Read the transcript of the conversation between delegates at the Constitutional Convention. Locate statements that are for (Pro) and against (Con) the State Name Option listed above. Write these statements in your own words on your graphic organizer.

Mr. Caldwell: Now, sir, I am not in favor of the renovating or changing of names or even constitutions. We, sir, in western Virginia have been struggling for western Virginia rights ever since the oldest member of this Convention can recollect. Western Virginia has been made dear to all of us; and I think, sir, that for that reason, if no other could be assigned, Western Virginia is the most proper name for this new State.

Mr. Willey: And there is another remark I desire to make. My friend from Marshall (Mr. Caldwell) has said we have been contending for our rights as western Virginians, under the banner of western Virginia. In the short period of my life, I have been contending to the best of my abilities to vindicate those rights. That flag has never struck; it still floats; it is about to be victorious; and on our proud mountains I want it to wave still with New Virginia or Western Virginia inscribed on it. We have fought under that flag heretofore. We are about to triumph under it. Let us retain the name.



Mr. Lamb: But what have we here in western Virginia to attach us to the name of Virginia. Sir, I have been an inhabitant of western Virginia for thirty odd years. During that time what have we received here but oppression, and outrage I may say, from the State of Virginia. During that time our people having been constantly complaining of the course of policy that has been forced upon them. We have been denied by the State of Virginia, for many long years, our proper share in the representation and government of the State. Look at the policy of Virginia in regard to improvements. Loaded down with a debt from which she never can recover, the proceeds of that debt invested in public improvements and public buildings. Where is the one foot of these improvements - where is the one public building - within the borders of western Virginia?

A resident of the state as I have been more than thirty years, I have no hesitation in proclaiming to this Convention and my constituents that there is nothing in the conduct of the State of Virginia to the people of western Virginia that entitles her or the name to our attachment.

**Station 4**  
**State Name Option: Allegheny**

**Directions:** Read the transcript of the conversation between delegates at the Constitutional Convention. Locate statements that are for (Pro) and against (Con) the State Name Option listed above. Write these statements in your own words on your graphic organizer.



Mr. Van Winkle: Again, sir, in naming the states, new states have almost always taken their names from the territories christened by Congress. A system has obtained and has been very regularly carried out to name them from the principal river or some other great natural feature. The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. Lamb) has named several of those names, and they have been alluded to by others. There are several others that have not been named by gentlemen here. There is Michigan, named from its lake, and Iowa and Minnesota, and Nevada and Utah, territories, from their principal rivers. Here is a system then that has been established, and one that has been admired, which gives you a name that is simply a name. It is not essential that a name should have any particular meaning attached to it. It is a name simply to be for use in referring to and so on. We merely ask that the State may be named in accordance with this system which has prevailed since the formation of the government after its principal river. It is true, sir, we have a part of the Monongahela in our borders, but that runs into Pennsylvania. There may be other rivers having their rise within our bounds but I do not remember any considerable one. There are no other rivers of any magnitude that are entirely within the territory of the proposed State. In the late convention, in a substitute that was offered was the name Allegheny. The name of the mountain range was adopted. The substitute, however, as a whole was defeated, and when we came into committee the question was between Allegheny and Kanawha; and, sir, (I suppose I may state without violating any propriety) on account of the limits we were then giving to the boundary, in many places not touching the mountains at all, it was thought that name would be inappropriate and by general consent Kanawha, derived out of the general system that had obtained in the United States, was adopted.

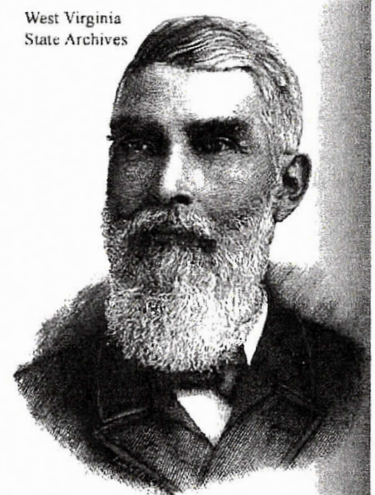


**Station 5**  
**State Name Option: Augusta**

**Directions:** Read the transcript of the conversation between delegates at the Constitutional Convention. Locate statements that are for (Pro) and against (Con) the State Name Option listed above. Write these statements in your own words on your graphic organizer.

Mr. Brown: That there is a very obvious propriety in that name seems to me very clear; because when we see the states of the Union that have been formed throughout the length and breadth of the land, following an almost unbroken line of precedents in naming the states after particular rivers within their territories, and generally selecting the most prominent, it must be considered a strong argument why we should do the same. We see that in the name of the state right across the way here; in our sister State of Kentucky, which was the daughter of Virginia; in the State of Tennessee named after the river of that name - even changed in the case of Tennessee, for the original name of the territory was Franklin, and they began in the early stages of that territory to form a state of that name, but they afterwards changed it and adopted the name of Tennessee, after one of the principal rivers in the territory. You go into Nebraska - you find a territory there named after the chief river of that territory. We have the same thing in the State of Kansas. Pursue the cases around you, within these Western States, and you find that the chief rivers have been the chosen example for the naming of the states. There is an obvious propriety in it. It shows that the people look at home for names. It has been remarked that there was no instance, I believe, of a state being called after a small part or subdivision of it. The State of Kentucky has been alluded to. If I recollect aright Kentucky was but one of the counties of Virginia. The time was when Kentucky was a part of Virginia territory and when West Augusta covered all this portion of the State of Virginia, and the district of Kentucky covered all that portion of the state which now bears its name, and which through a subdivision of the State of Virginia has been erected into a commonwealth, and now wears the proud name of that subdivision - a name no less proud than that of Virginia whence she sprang.

West Virginia  
State Archives



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

### The Naming of West Virginia

**Directions:** Locate statements that are for (Pro) and against (Con) each State Name Option. Write these statements in your own words in the chart below. On the back, write a paragraph explaining who had the most convincing argument and why. Use proof from the chart below.

State Name Option	Pro Statements	Con Statements
Station 1 – West Virginia		
Station 2 – Kanawha		
Station 3 – Western Virginia		
Station 4 – Allegheny		
Station 5 – Augusta		