

Should We Switch to the Metric System?

Students read arguments on both sides of the debate and take a stand.

About the Story

Lexile® Measure 900L

For qualitative complexity factors, go to Scope Online.

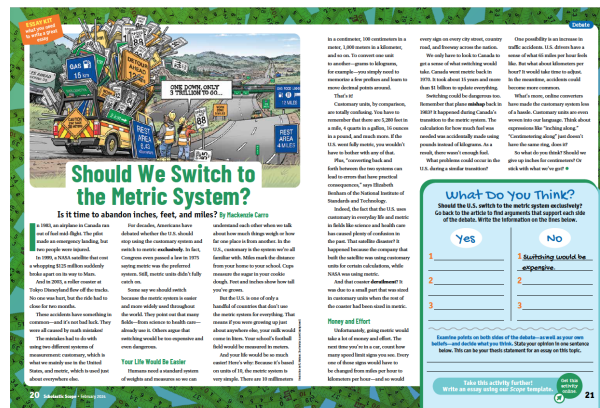
Learning Objective: to read and analyze a text that presents arguments on both sides of a debate, then take a stand

Featured Skill: argument writing

Standards:

The article and its suite of support materials support these Common Core anchor standards: R.1, R.2, R.3, R.4, R.5, R.6, R.8, W.1, SL.1, SL.4

For more standards information—including TEKS—go to [Scope Online](#).



Your Teaching Package

Find your full suite of support materials at scope.scholastic.com.

Audio:

- Article read-aloud
- Text-to-speech
- Vocabulary

**Connected readings
from the *Scope* archives:**

- “Should We Get Rid of Paper Money?”
- “Should We Get Rid of the Penny?”
- “Should We Get Rid of Daylight Saving Time?”
- “Should You Learn Cursive?”

Activities to print, project, or share digitally:

- Measurement in Everyday Language
- Vocabulary: Definitions and Practice
- Argument Terms Glossary
- Featured Skill Activity: Essay Kit
- Anchor Chart: Great Transitions
- Anchor Chart: Argument Essay Checklist
- Persuasive Appeals: Ethos, Pathos, Logos
- Lesson Plan Slide Deck

**Available on two levels*

Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

1. Prepare to Read (25 minutes)

Do Now: Interpret Measurement Expressions and Sayings (15 minutes)

- Project the following task on your whiteboard, or distribute our **Measurement in Everyday Language** handout, found in your Resources tab.

Customary measurement units are part of our everyday language, found in many common expressions and sayings. Consider the phrases below. For as many as you can, explain what the phrase means and/or use it in a sentence.

the whole nine yards
a mile a minute
walk a mile in someone's shoes
a ton of bricks
a country mile
missed it by a mile
an ounce of sense
Give someone an inch and they'll take a mile.
inching along
all wool and a yard wide
within an inch of one's life
won't budge an inch
wouldn't touch it with a 10-foot pole
A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.
pound for pound
An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

- Invite students to share their answers. Sample answers can be found in the Answer Key.

Preview Vocabulary (10 minutes)

- Project the Google Slides version of **Vocabulary: Definitions and Practice** on your whiteboard. Review the definitions and complete the activity as a class. Highlighted words: *derailment*, *exclusively*, *mishap*. Audio pronunciations of the words and a read-aloud of the definitions are embedded on the slides. Optionally, print the PDF version or share the slideshow link directly to your LMS and have students preview the words and complete the activity independently before class.

2. Read and Discuss (45 minutes)

- Read the article once as a class. Optionally, for students' first read, have them follow along as they listen to the **audio read-aloud**, located in the Resources tab in Teacher View and at the top of the story page in Student View. Then have students silently reread the article to themselves.
- Project the article. Complete the following steps as a class, modeling text marking on your whiteboard while students mark their magazines:
 1. **Using a colored pencil, pen, or marker, write a sentence that expresses the central claim on one side of the debate.** (e.g., *The U.S. should stop using the customary system and switch to metric exclusively.*)
 2. **In that same color, circle the paragraphs that contain reasons that support the central claim.** (all of the section "Your Life Would Be Easier," the first five paragraphs of the introduction)
 3. **Have students repeat steps 1 and 2 independently, but for the other side of the debate, this time using a DIFFERENT color.** (central claim: *The U.S. should not abandon the customary system. Circle all but the final paragraph of the section "Money and Effort."*)
- Have students fill in the "Yes/No" chart in their magazines based on the details they identified in the text. Sample responses:

YES:

- People need a standard system of measurement and almost everyone outside the U.S. uses metric.
- The metric system is much easier to use than the customary system.
- Converting back and forth between systems leads to errors.
- Many fields in the U.S. already use metric.

NO:

- Switching would be expensive.
 - Switching would take lots of time and effort.
 - Switching could lead to accidents.
 - Online converters make it easy to use both systems.
 - Customary units of measurement are woven into our everyday language.
- Discuss: Which supporting detail do you think is the strongest? The weakest? Do you think the writer shows bias—that is, a preference for one side of the debate or the other? Explain and support your answer with text evidence.

3. Write About It: What Do You Think?

(45 minutes)

- Have students work individually to complete the **Essay Kit**, a guided writing activity and outline that will help them write their own argument essay in response to this question:

Should the U.S. switch to the metric system exclusively?

- Students can use the **Great Transitions** and **Argument Essay Checklist** anchor charts to help them edit and evaluate their essays.

Connected readings from the Scope archives—other debates about changing long-held systems:

- ["Should We Get Rid of Paper Money?"](#)
- ["Should We Get Rid of the Penny?"](#)
- ["Should We Get Rid of Daylight Saving Time?"](#)
- ["Should You Learn Cursive?"](#)