The Common Core State Standards

Writing

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for
Writing 9–12

The grades 6–12 standards on the following pages define what students should understand and be able to do by the end of each grade. They correspond to the CCR anchor standards by number. The CCR and grade-specific standards are necessary complements—the former providing broad standards, the latter providing additional specificity—that together define the skills and understandings that all students must demonstrate.

Text Types and Purposes*

1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the elective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using elective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

Production and Distribution of Writing

4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.
9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Range of Writing

10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Note on Range and Content of Student Writing

For students, writing is a key means of asserting and defending claims, showing what they know about a subject, and conveying what they have experienced, imagined, thought, and felt. To be CCR writers, students must take task, purpose, and audience into careful consideration, choosing words, information, structures, and formats deliberately. They need to know how to combine elements of different kinds of writing—for example, to use narrative strategies within argument and explanation within narrative—to produce complex and nuanced writing. They need to be able to use technology strategically when creating, refining, and collaborating on writing. They have to become adept at gathering information, evaluating sources, and citing material accurately and reporting findings from their research and analysis of sources in a clear and cogent manner. They must have the flexibility, concentration, and fluency to produce high-quality, first-draft text under a tight deadline as well as the capacity to revisit and make improvements to a piece of writing over multiple drafts when circumstances encourage or require it.

* These broad types of writing include many subgenres. See Appendix A for definitions of key writing types.

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for

Writing

The College and Career Readiness (CCR) anchor standards are the same for all middle and high school students, regardless of subject area or grade level. What varies is the sophistication of the writing of the three types—argument, informative/explanatory, and narrative—stressed at each subsequent grade level in each disciplinary domain. The core writing skills should not change as students advance; rather, the level at which they learn and can perform those skills should increase in complexity as students move from one grade to the next.

Text Types and Purposes*

Argument appears first as it is essential to success in college and develops the critical faculties needed in the adult world. Crafting arguments requires students to analyze texts or topics, and determine which evidence best supports their arguments. Informational/explanatory writing conveys ideas, events, and findings by choosing and explaining the behavior, meaning, or importance of key details.

Students draw from a range of sources, including primary and secondary sources. Narrative writing includes not just stories but accounts of historical events and lab procedures. Students write to change minds, hearts, and actions (argument); to extend readers' knowledge or acceptance of ideas and procedures (informational/explanatory); and to inform, inspire, persuade, or entertain (narrative).

Production and Distribution of Writing

This set of anchor standards involves the stages of the writing process. These standards also highlight the importance of knowing who the audience is and the style and format the writer should use to achieve a purpose. Students also learn the skills needed throughout the writing process: generating ideas, trying other styles, structures, perspectives, or processes as they bring their ideas into focus and some final form. Finally, these standards call for writers to use technology not only to publish but to collaborate throughout the writing process with others.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

These standards focus on inquiry processes of varying lengths, all of which should develop students' knowledge of the subject they are investigating and the skills needed to conduct that investigation. Students acquire and refine the ability to find, evaluate, and use a range of sources during these research projects, which can take as long as a period to as much as a month. Such inquiries demand students correctly cite the source of all information to ensure they learn what plagiarism is and how to avoid it.

Range of Writing

This standard emphasizes not only what students write but how often and for what purposes they write over the course of the school year. Writing, as this standard makes clear, is something students should be doing constantly and for substantial lengths of time. Also, they should write for an array of reasons and audiences and in response to a mix of topics and tasks.

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* These broad types of writing include many subgenres. See Appendix A for definitions of key writing types.

Writing 1: Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

9–10 English Language Arts	**11–12** English Language Arts
Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.	Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

9–10 English Language Arts

Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

a. Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

b. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns.

c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

d. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

11–12 English Language Arts

Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

a. Introduce precise, **knowledgeable** claim(s), **establish the significance of the claim(s)**, distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization **that logically sequences** claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

b. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly **and thoroughly**, supplying **the most relevant** evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, **values, and possible biases**.

c. Use words, phrases, and clauses **as well as varied syntax** to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

d. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

* These broad types of writing include many subgenres. See Appendix A for definitions of key writing types.

What the **Student** Does

9–10 English Language Arts

Gist: Craft arguments to support claims, analyzing complex texts or topics, all of which students support with sound reasoning and evidence that is both appropriate and adequate. Students begin by introducing a specific claim(s), which should be precise and distinct from other competing claim(s), establishing an organizing structure that clarifies the relationship between various claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. Students then examine the claim(s) and counterclaims without bias, pointing out the strengths and flaws of both sides in response to readers' forthcoming objections. Students choose words, phrases, and clauses that connect ideas, improve cohesion, and explain the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, reasons and evidence, and claim(s) and counterclaims. Students accomplish all the preceding through writing that is formal and objective in style and tone, and follows those rules established for different types of writing in each discipline. Finally, students create for the reader a conclusion that states their key ideas and supports their argument in a way that logically follows from all they said prior to the conclusion.

- What argument are you making about this topic or text?
- What alternate or counter claims do you include? And do you treat these fairly and develop them fully?
- What evidence do you provide to support your claim(s)?
- How would you describe the tone and style of your writing in this piece? Objective? Formal?
- How do the ideas in your concluding statement or section logically follow from all that you said prior to the conclusion?

11–12 English Language Arts

Gist: Craft arguments to support claims, analyzing complex texts or topics, all of which students support with sound reasoning and evidence that is both appropriate and adequate. Students begin by introducing a specific, insightful claim(s), which should be precise and distinct from other competing claim(s), establishing their importance and an organizing structure that imposes a logical sequence on and clarifies the relationship between various claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. Students then examine the claim(s) and counterclaims in depth, providing only the most pertinent evidence for both sides while pointing out the strengths and flaws of each in anticipation of readers' knowledge, objections, opinions, and biases. Students vary their syntax and choose words, phrases, and clauses that connect ideas, improve cohesion, and reveal the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, reasons and evidence, and claim(s) and counterclaims. Students accomplish all the preceding through writing that is formal and objective in style and tone, following those rules established for different types of writing in each discipline. Finally, students create for the reader a conclusion that states their key ideas and supports their argument in a way that logically follows from all they said prior to the conclusion.

- What argument are you making about this topic or text?
- What alternate or counter claims do you include? And are your claims knowledgeable, precise, and substantive?
- What evidence do you provide to support your claim(s)—and is it the most relevant?
- How would you describe the tone and style of your writing in this piece? Objective? Formal?
- How do the ideas in your concluding statement or section logically follow from all that you said prior to the conclusion?

Writing 1: Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

9–10 | Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Write arguments focused on *discipline-specific content.*

a. Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among the claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

b. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying data and evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both claim(s) and counterclaims in a discipline-appropriate form and in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns.

c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

d. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from or supports the argument presented.

11–12 | Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Write arguments focused on *discipline-specific content.*

a. Introduce precise, **knowledgeable** claim(s), **establish the significance of the claim(s),** distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that **logically sequences** the claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

b. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly **and thoroughly**, supplying **the most relevant** data and evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both claim(s) and counterclaims in a discipline-appropriate form that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, **values, and possible biases**.

c. Use words, phrases, and clauses **as well as varied syntax** to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

d. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from or supports the argument presented.

* These broad types of writing include many subgenres. See Appendix A for definitions of key writing types.

What the **Student** Does

9–10 Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Gist: Craft arguments about discipline-specific content, which students support with sound reasoning and evidence that is both appropriate and adequate. Students begin by introducing a specific claim(s), which should be precise and distinct from other competing claim(s), establishing an organizing structure that clarifies the relationship between various claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. Students then examine the claim(s) and counterclaims without bias, pointing out the strengths and flaws of both sides in response to readers' forthcoming objections. Students choose words, phrases, and clauses that connect ideas, improve cohesion, and explain the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, reasons and evidence, and claim(s) and counterclaims. Students accomplish all the preceding through writing that is formal and objective in style and tone, and follows those rules established for different types of writing in each discipline. Finally, students create for the reader a conclusion that states their key ideas and supports their argument in a way that logically follows from all they said prior to the conclusion.

- What argument are you making about this topic or text?
- What alternate or counter claims do you include? And do you treat these fairly and develop them fully?
- What evidence do you provide to support your claim(s)?
- How would you describe the tone and style of your writing in this piece? Objective? Formal?
- How do the ideas in your concluding statement or section logically follow from all that you said prior to the conclusion?

11–12 Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Gist: Craft arguments about discipline-specific content, which students support with sound reasoning and evidence that is both appropriate and adequate. Students begin by introducing a specific, insightful claim(s), which should be precise and distinct from other competing claim(s), establishing their importance and an organizing structure that imposes a logical sequence on and clarifies the relationship between various claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. Students then examine the claim(s) and counterclaims in depth, providing only the most pertinent evidence for both sides while pointing out the strengths and flaws of each in anticipation of readers' knowledge, objections, opinions, and biases. Students vary their syntax and choose words, phrases, and clauses that connect ideas, improve cohesion, and reveal the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, reasons and evidence, and claim(s) and counterclaims. Students accomplish all the preceding through writing that is formal and objective in style and tone, following those rules established for different types of writing in each discipline. Finally, students create for the reader a conclusion that states their key ideas and supports their argument in a way that logically follows from all they said prior to the conclusion.

- What argument are you making about this topic or text?
- What alternate or counter claims do you include? And are your claims knowledgeable, precise, and substantive?
- What evidence do you provide to support your claim(s)—and is it the most relevant?
- How would you describe the tone and style of your writing in this piece? Objective? Formal?
- How do the ideas in your concluding statement or section logically follow from all that you said prior to the conclusion?

What the **Teacher** Does

To develop students' ability to write arguments in their discipline, do the following:

• Provide students with a range of sample arguments so they learn to distinguish between effective and ineffective arguments.
• Have students read whole papers to see how writers use claims and evidence over the course of the whole text.
• Use structured note-taking formats (e.g., columns with headers such as claim, reason, evidence) in the early stages to help students understand the elements and see how they work together to support the argument.
• Give students sets of claims with varying degrees of specificity and insight; ask them to evaluate each by some criteria or arrange them all on a continuum of quality.
• Require students to label the elements of their argument (e.g., claim, evidence, reason), and evaluate the quality of each in light of whatever criteria are most appropriate on that occasion.
• Ask students to provide a list of possible counterclaims, alternative positions, values, or biases to consider when writing their claims or evaluating/responding to those of others.
• Generate questions to help students analyze texts and topics, evidence and reasoning, and claims and counterclaims when developing their claims or supporting them.
• Examine sentences for a variety of style and syntax, especially as these help clarify and emphasize the relationships and general cohesion between the different elements.
• Help students establish and apply criteria for determining the quality of topics and texts, claims and counterclaims, and evidence and reasons.
• Generate words that are appropriate to the tone, topic, and type of argument, as well as the audience, occasion, and purpose; this can be done as a class, in groups, or independently.
• Invite students to use such techniques as backward outlining to assess the logic of their arguments within a paragraph or the whole text.
• Have students investigate how they might use data—statistics, surveys, or other quantitative information—to support their claims; include in this discussion why they should or should not do so.
• Keep and use both professional and student models for subsequent study of what to do—and what *not* to do.
• Develop a guide or scoring rubric based on the Common Core writing standard description for argument.
• Instruct students in how to gather and evaluate evidence when preparing to write (e.g., during the research or prewriting phase).
• Discuss with students the formats and styles used by different disciplines or on special occasions.
• Think aloud about an effective and ineffective model or some portion (e.g., introducing the claims) of the paper; you might display it on a big screen as you walk through it and point out what is and is not effective and why that is.
• Distribute highlighters or crayons, and then ask students to indicate those words that create cohesion by linking or serving as transitions between claims and reasons, reasons and evidence, and claims and counterclaims.

To help your English Language Learners, try this:

• Discuss the *idea* of argument, as it may be a foreign and even troubling concept for many students, given their culture's emphasis on respect for authorities and elders.

Notes

Academic Vocabulary: Key Words and Phrases

Analysis: Dividing ideas, content, or processes into separate elements to examine what it is, how it works, and what it is made from.

Anticipate the audience: Writers must consider how readers will respond and what they will find offensive, confusing, or important.

Argument: Arguments have three objectives: to explain, to persuade, and to mediate conflicts between positions, readers, or ideas. Writers make logical claims—supported with reasons, evidence, and different appeals—to advance their argument(s).

Biases: Writers or readers favor one position over another; such prejudices and values are important for writers to consider or readers to be aware of (in themselves or writers).

Claim: This is a word with many apparent, sometimes confusing iterations: *proposition*, *assertion*, *thesis*; sometimes mistaken for same as *argument*. It is not the same as the subject or topic: A claim must be able to be argued and must require defense through evidence. Alternate or opposing claims suggest other, sometimes contradictory, claims one should consider. Effective claims are precise, clear, properly qualified, and affirmative. A thesis statement is the writer's main claim.

Clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons: Writers should have a reason for the claim(s) they make. They think X *(the claim) is true because of* Y *(a reason)*. This relationship between claims and reasons should be based on evidence, not opinions or preferences.

Cohesion: One idea or sentence connects to another to create a sense of flow; reasons, claims, evidence, and ideas all work together.

Concluding statement or section: Writers provide some statement or section that connects all the claims and evidence, and then shows how they support the argument presented in the paper or speech.

Distinguish: This means to perceive something as, to explain how something is, or to argue that it is different or distinct from others that seem, on the surface, similar.

Establish the significance of the claim: *Significance* is also sometimes replaced with *substantive*; however, both mean the claim should be important, based on real and thorough knowledge about the subject.

Evidence: Each discipline has its own standards for evidence, but most lists would include quotations, observations, interviews, examples, facts, data, results from surveys and experiments, and, when appropriate, personal experience.

Formal style: Writers use words and tone appropriate for occasion and audience; this includes a more objective tone to suggest some critical distance from the subject or claim.

Norms and conventions of the discipline: Disciplines have their own conventions for style, format, and presentation; this applies to which words and information writers use, to how the writer uses them, and to what tone is used when discussing them.

Organization: This applies to how information and ideas are arranged within the document in general and the paragraphs and sentences in particular. All should be organized to best support the claims made.

Reasons/reasoning: Writers must base their claims and ideas on more than personal preferences or opinions when constructing arguments; reasons demand evidence, information, and logic.

Substantive topics or texts: Writers are expected to be writing about compelling, important ideas or texts that examine big questions meant to challenge the reader.

Syntax: Varied syntax refers to how a writer arranges words, phrases, clauses, and sentences in length, patterns, and word order; such arrangements have both stylistic and rhetorical effects.

Writing 2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

9–10   English Language Arts

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

a. Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

b. Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.

c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.

d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.

e. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).

11–12   English Language Arts

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

a. Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information **so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole**; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

b. Develop the topic **thoroughly by selecting the most significant and** relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.

c. Use appropriate and varied transitions **and syntax** to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.

d. Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, **and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy** to manage the complexity of the topic.

e. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).

* These broad types of writing include many subgenres. See Appendix A for definitions of key writing types.

What the **Student** Does

9–10 English Language Arts

Gist: Inform readers about or explain complex ideas, processes, or events in language that is clear, precise, and formal, incorporating and organizing only the essential details, facts, examples, and quotations needed to provide a thorough analysis of the content. Students begin by introducing the topic, organizing any major ideas and information in ways that connect and distinguish between different ideas, using formatting (e.g., headings, sidebars), graphics (e.g., figures and tables), and multimedia to enhance clarity and comprehension. Students then build and refine their topic by selecting those facts that are salient and well suited to the their purpose, while making use, as needed, of other techniques such as extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, and other information or data that may be relevant. Next, students insert a variety of transitions where appropriate to connect ideas and details and improve cohesion and clarity. In addition, students write in the language specific to that discipline, using words with precision to resolve any confusion or make clear what to some is complex. Students accomplish all the preceding through writing that is formal and objective in style and tone, and follows those rules established for different types of writing in each discipline. Finally, students end their paper with a conclusion that logically follows from all that precedes it, discussing the meaning or importance of the topic and their ideas about it.

- What is your subject—and what are you saying about it?
- What ideas, details, or sources are most important to include?
- What are the purpose, audience, and situation for this writing?
- What organizational techniques and supporting transitions do you use to clarify and emphasize your ideas?
- How would you describe the tone and style of your writing? Objective? Formal?
- What are the main ideas you discuss or emphasize in the conclusion—and how do those relate with all that preceded them?

11–12 English Language Arts

Gist: Inform readers about or explain complex ideas, processes, or events in language that is clear, precise, and formal, incorporating and organizing only the essential details, facts, examples, and quotations needed to provide a thorough analysis of the content. Students begin by introducing the topic, organizing any major ideas and information in ways that allow new elements to complement what precedes them and achieve a cohesive whole; they also connect and distinguish between different ideas, using formatting (e.g., headings, sidebars), graphics (e.g., figures and tables), and multimedia to enhance clarity and comprehension. Students then build and refine their topic in depth by choosing only those facts that are most salient and well suited to the their purpose, while making use, as needed, of other techniques such as extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, and other information or data that may be relevant. Next, students insert a variety of transitions and syntax where appropriate to join important sections of the text and improve cohesion and clarity among significant ideas. In addition, students write in the language specific to that discipline, using such devices as metaphor, simile, and analogy to resolve any confusion or make clear what to some is complex. Students accomplish all the preceding through writing that is formal and objective in style and tone, and follows those rules established for different types of writing in each discipline. Finally, students end their paper with a conclusion that logically follows from all that precedes it, discussing the meaning or importance of the topic and their ideas about it.

- What is your subject—and what are you saying about it?
- What ideas, details, or sources are most important to include—and how do those you include build on each other to create a unified whole?
- What criteria should you apply when choosing which facts, details, or other information to include?
- How do you vary the syntax and use transitions to clarify and emphasize your ideas?
- What domain-specific language or figurative speech do you use to manage the complexity of this topic?
- How would you describe the tone and style of your writing? Objective? Formal?
- What are the main ideas you discuss or emphasize in the conclusion—and how do those relate with all that preceded them?

Writing 2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

9–10 Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects	**11–12** Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects
Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes. a. Introduce a topic and organize ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. b. Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic. c. Use varied transitions and sentence structures to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts. d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic and convey a style appropriate to the discipline and context as well as to the expertise of likely readers. e. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).	Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes. a. Introduce a topic and organize complex ideas, concepts, and information **so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole**; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. b. Develop the topic **thoroughly by selecting the most significant and** relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic. c. Use varied transitions and sentence structures to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among **complex** ideas and concepts. d. Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary **and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy** to manage the complexity of the topic; convey a knowledgeable stance in a style that responds to the discipline and context as well as to the expertise of likely readers. e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation provided (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).

* These broad types of writing include many subgenres. See Appendix A for definitions of key writing types.

What the **Student** Does

9–10	Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Gist: Inform readers about, explain, or narrate complex ideas, historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes. Students begin by introducing the topic, organizing any major ideas and information in ways that connect and distinguish between different ideas, using formatting (e.g., headings, sidebars), graphics (e.g., figures and tables), and multimedia to enhance clarity and comprehension. Students then build and refine their topic by selecting those facts that are most salient and well suited to the their purpose, while making use, as needed, of other techniques such as extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, and other information or data that may be relevant. Next, students insert a variety of transitions where appropriate to connect ideas and details and improve cohesion and clarity. In addition, students write in the language specific to that discipline, using words with precision to resolve any confusion or make clear what to some is complex. Students accomplish all the preceding through writing that is formal and objective in style and tone, and follows those rules established for different types of writing in each discipline. Finally, students end their paper with a conclusion that logically follows from all that precedes it, discussing the meaning or importance of the topic and their ideas about it.

• What is your subject—and what are you saying about it?
• What ideas, details, or sources are most important to include?
• What are the purpose, audience, and situation for this writing?
• What organizational techniques and supporting transitions do you use to clarify and emphasize your ideas?
• How would you describe the tone and style of your writing? Objective? Formal?
• What are the main ideas you discuss or emphasize in the conclusion—and how do those relate with all that preceded them?

11–12	Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Gist: Inform readers about, explain, or narrate complex ideas, historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes. Students begin by introducing the topic, organizing any major ideas and information in ways that allow new elements to complement what precedes them and achieve a cohesive whole; they also connect and distinguish between different ideas, using formatting (e.g., headings, sidebars), graphics (e.g., figures and tables), and multimedia to enhance clarity and comprehension. Students then build and refine their topic in depth by choosing only those facts that are most salient and well suited to the their purpose, while making use, as needed, of other techniques such as extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, and other information or data that may be relevant. Next, students insert a variety of transitions and syntax where appropriate to join important sections of the text and improve cohesion and clarity among complex ideas. In addition, students write in the language specific to that discipline, using such devices as metaphor, simile, and analogy to resolve any confusion or make clear what to some is complex. Students accomplish all the preceding through writing that is formal and objective in style and tone, and follows those rules established for different types of writing in each discipline. Finally, students end their paper with a conclusion that logically follows from all that precedes it, discussing the meaning or importance of the topic and their ideas about it.

• What is your subject—and what are you saying about it?
• What ideas, details, or sources are most important to include—and how do those you include build on each other to create a unified whole?
• What criteria should you apply when choosing which facts, details, or other information to include?
• How do you vary the syntax and use transitions to clarify and emphasize your ideas?
• What domain-specific language or figurative speech do you use to manage the complexity of this topic?
• How would you describe the tone and style of your writing? Objective? Formal?
• What are the main ideas you discuss or emphasize in the conclusion—and how do those relate with all that preceded them?

What the **Teacher** Does

To introduce students to informative/explanatory texts, do the following:

- Show them a range of examples—from students, professional writers, or even yourself—so they see what it is that you want them to do and get a sense of what they should include.
- Discuss the contents, conventions, and other elements of the type of informational/explanatory text you want them to write.
- Give students a copy of a sample text and, if possible, display it on a screen so you can annotate portions of it while discussing the writer's decisions and the text's relevant features.

To format and integrate graphics and multimedia into the text, have students do the following:

- Offer direct instruction to the whole class or a smaller group of students who need to learn how to use those features of the word processor or other software applications.
- Give students step-by-step directions or create a link to a web tutorial they can watch if they do not know how.
- Give them samples that show them different types of graphs, tables, and other options they might consider when incorporating information or data into their papers.

To develop their topic with details, examples, and information, have students do the following:

- Work directly with them to generate ideas and gather evidence, data, examples, or other content; then develop with them criteria for how to evaluate and choose the best of the bunch to work into their writing.
- Use sentence stems or templates from a book like *They Say/I Say* (by Graff and Birkenstein) to teach students how to introduce or frame the quotation and then comment on the meaning or importance of that quotation.

To have students use varied transitions to link ideas and create cohesion, do the following:

- Generate with students or provide them a list of transition words and phrases specific to the type of writing they are doing (e.g., cause–effect, compare–contrast).
- Have students go through their papers once they have a complete draft and highlight the first six words of each sentence; then they can evaluate existing transitions and add others where they would improve clarity and cohesion.

To help students use precise language and academic vocabulary, do the following:

- Direct them to go circle any words in their papers that are abstract, too general, or otherwise ineffective; then have them generate words that could replace weaker words or phrases.
- Generate with the class words they might or should use when writing about a specific subject, procedure, event, or person; this might include specific verbs, nouns, and adjectives for use when, for example, explaining a process or procedure.
- Provide examples of or demonstrate for them how to use other techniques such as metaphors, similes, and analogies.

To establish and maintain the conventions for a discipline, have students do the following:

- Establish for the class the proper tone, format, and other genre conventions for the type of discipline-specific writing assigned.
- Give students a checklist or annotated sample that illustrates all the discipline-specific conventions they must include.

To prepare them to write about historical events, procedures, processes, or complex ideas, have students do the following:

- Discuss the ideas, details, or other contents that they should include to help them generate new ideas about what to say and how to organize it when they begin to write.

To help your English Language Learners, try this one thing:

- Break the process down into stages, providing students with examples and instruction at each stage before moving on to the next to ensure they understand and are doing the work correctly.

Academic Vocabulary: Key Words and Phrases

Analogy: Writers show how two things are similar to explain a foreign or complex idea to a reader. Analogies are a form of argument: The writer attempts to convince others the connection is true.

Audience's knowledge of the topic: This phrase emphasizes clarity in writing; thus, if a writer ignores the audience's lack or excess of knowledge about a topic, he or she risks confusing or insulting them.

Cohesion: This refers to how well things stick together to create a clear flow from one idea to the next. Generally, the beginning of a sentence should clearly connect to the words at the end of the previous sentence as the writing unfolds.

Complex ideas: Since students will be writing about an idea from multiple perspectives or drawing evidence from multiple sources to support their claims about a text or subject, writing about such complex ideas, which are often abstract, poses unique challenges.

Concrete details: This refers to specific details that refer to actual objects or places; it is the difference between Thomas Jefferson declaring the British guilty of "repeated injuries and usurpations" and listing the crimes committed by the British under its "absolute Tyranny" against the American colonies in the Declaration of Independence.

Distinctions: Writers distinguish between different ideas, characters, plot developments, or any other details to reveal those that contribute most to the work's meaning.

Domain-specific vocabulary: When writing about any topic or text in a specific subject, writers must explain or describe it using the language of that discipline if they are to be accurate and precise.

Explanatory texts: Such texts are defined by their objective: to explain to or to inform the audience about a topic using facts and an objective tone; the writer's role here is to report what he or she sees.

Extended definitions: Transcend basic definitions by discussing the qualities, history, value, and purpose of whatever they are defining; also, often assign synonyms for the subject being defined.

Formatting: Today's technology allows writers to emphasize ideas, connections, or other details through headers, fonts (style, size, and typeface), color, graphics, and spatial arrangement on the page.

Graphics: This includes tables and graphs, charts and images, and infographics, which incorporate many graphic elements to represent the complexity of a process, an idea, or an event.

Metaphor: This is one thing used to mean or represent another by comparing them in ways that are imaginative.

Norms and conventions of the discipline: Each discipline supplies requirements about how to write about and format documents in that particular subject. Literary analysis papers are written in the present tense; scientific papers have prescribed sections that must all be included and indicated with proper subheadings.

Objective tone: The purpose of informational writing is to inform or explain but not persuade. An objective tone maintains a distance from its subject, interjecting no emotions about the subject.

Selection, organization, and analysis of content: Writers choose the most important facts and details about the subject, organizing them to achieve a clear objective, then analyzing how those elements relate to one another and the larger idea of the paper in general, while also analyzing what each detail contributes to the meaning of that text.

Simile: The writer creates a new meaning by comparing one thing explicitly to another using *like*, *as*, or *as though*. Similes are less emphatic as a consequence of using *like* or *as*, which are indirect.

Transitions: They connect one sentence or idea to another, allowing writers to express the nature or importance of the relationship between those two ideas.

Writing 3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

9–10 English Language Arts

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

a. Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.

b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

c. Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole.

d. Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.

e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.

11–12 English Language Arts

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

a. Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation **and its significance**, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.

b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

c. Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another **to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone and outcome (e.g., a sense of mystery, suspense, growth, or resolution).**

d. Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.

e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.

9–10 Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

(Not applicable)

11–12 Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

(Not applicable)

* These broad types of writing include many subgenres. See Appendix A for definitions of key writing types.

What the **Student** Does

9–10 English Language Arts

Gist: Construct narratives—fictional, biographical, and autobiographical—that describe real or imagined experiences or events from the student's own or others' lives. Students first report a problem, situation, or observation, establishing the different perspectives the story will examine through the narrator(s) and/or character(s), in a logical progression from one event or experience to the next. Students then develop these experiences, events, or characters through techniques such as dialogue, setting, plots (sometimes multiple plot lines), sensory details, flashbacks, and characterization. Students also arrange details and events into a logical sequence that allows ideas and events to complement each other as the story unfolds to create a coherent whole. Students choose words and phrases carefully, selecting words that evoke the experience or the sense of place and people involved. Students end the narrative in a satisfying logical way that connects all its elements, while allowing the writer to reflect on the events, experiences, or observations described in the narrative.

• What problem, situation, or observation do you report—and from what point of view?
• How do you arrange the elements of the story—and to what end?
• What language is most appropriate for this story, occasion, audience, and purpose?
• What precise details or other aspects of this experience are important to include in the story?
• How should you end this story so you provide readers with insight and a satisfying conclusion?

11–12 English Language Arts

Gist: Construct narratives—fictional, biographical, and autobiographical—that describe real or imagined experiences or events from the student's own or others' lives. Students first report a problem, situation, or observation, establishing its importance and the different perspectives the story will examine through the narrator(s) and/or character(s), in a logical progression from one event or experience to the next. Students then develop these experiences, events, or characters through techniques such as dialogue, setting, plots (sometimes multiple plot lines), sensory details, flashbacks, and characterization, all of which combine to create a distinct tone and effect, such as mystery or surprise. Students also arrange details and events into a logical sequence that allows ideas and events to complement each other as the story unfolds to create a coherent whole. Students choose words and phrases carefully, selecting words that evoke the experience or the sense of place and people involved. Students end the narrative in a satisfying logical way that connects all its elements, while allowing the writer to reflect on the events, experiences, or observations described in the narrative.

• What problem, situation, or observation do you report—and from what point of view?
• How do you arrange the elements of the story—and to what end?
• What language is most appropriate for this story, occasion, audience, and purpose?
• How do the elements of this story combine to create a tone or outcome such as surprise, growth, or resolution?
• How should you end this story so you provide readers with insight and a satisfying conclusion?

9–10 Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

The Common Core State Standards states that "writ[ing] narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events" is "not applicable."

11–12 Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

The Common Core State Standards states that "writ[ing] narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events" is "not applicable."

What the **Teacher** Does

To have students write narratives about real or imagined experiences, do the following:

- Have students read a diverse sampling of narratives similar to and slightly different from the sort you want them to write.
- Guide students through the process of creating a story map, storyboard, or other graphic form that allows them to identify, discuss, and arrange the different events or scenes in the story.
- Generate with students or provide a list of the elements of an effective narrative of the story you are assigning.
- Consider allowing students to incorporate images in their narrative if they are appropriate and complement the narrative.

To have students set out a problem or create a situation in a narrative, do the following:

- Have students establish a problem up front that the story will examine and the protagonist will solve after a series of scenarios richly imagined.
- Ask students to imagine a situation in rich detail (perhaps one inspired by another book they have read or a subject or era they studied), and then describe how characters (or they, if it is a personal narrative) responded and changed over the course of the story.
- Lead students through the creation of a detailed observation about an event, process, or experience, guiding them by examples and questions that prompt them to add sensory details; then generate with them questions they should ask and apply to their narrative as they write the second part, which comments on the meaning or importance of what they observed.
- Have students describe the same event or experience from multiple perspectives to explore how point of view affects one's perception of an idea, event, or era or the people involved.

To have students introduce or develop a narrator or characters in a narrative, do the following:

- Help students develop questions that not only portray the character's physical persona but also reveal the character's personality and motivations within the context of the story.
- Provide students with a list of archetypal characters as a starting place to help them imagine their own.
- Ask students, when writing personal narratives that involve people they know, to fill in a graphic organizer with boxes like what the person says, does, thinks, and feels prior to writing.

To have students use a range of narrative techniques to engage the reader, do the following:

- Introduce students to different plot lines and story structures, including the traditional linear format (exposition, rising action, conflict, falling action, and resolution) as well as more episodic or lyric narrative formats that string a series of impressions together as a way of telling story about a person, an event, or an experience.
- Have students analyze the dialogue and other techniques used in the stories they study for ideas they can use in their own.

To have students sequence events in a coherent way throughout a narrative, do the following:

- Have students write on sticky notes or index cards key events or scenes in the narrative they are creating; then ask them to arrange them in different ways, stopping to explain to others what they are thinking, until they find the sequence that best works with the story they are trying to tell.
- Have students use a presentation software program to create the story as a series of slides, with notes and images on the slides so they can manipulate and better understand the elements of their story.

To help your English Language Learners, try this one thing:

- Give students the opportunity to draw the story first as a cartoon strip with notes and captions and dialogue, in their own language if they prefer, before asking them to write the story; if possible, give them the chance to tell their story before writing it.

Academic Vocabulary: Key Words and Phrases

Coherent whole: This refers to the degree to which all the parts of the story hold together to create a complete picture of the events reported.

Conclusion: One always looks for some *point* or ideas one can draw from a story; otherwise, why tell it? Conclusions in narrative tales are often more subtle than other forms, which have more specific structure about where and how to conclude the story.

Description: Stories rely on precise, detailed descriptions of people, places, and events to bring them alive in vivid ways that convey the emotions and capture the reader's imagination.

Develop (experiences, events, or characters): When one develops, for example, characters in a story, one describes them in detail, adding specific details that bring the character alive; such development must also reflect the person, place, or events moving through time and, as a result, changing if they are to seem real.

Event sequences: How the writer arranges the events in a story directly affects how the story affects readers; some events create tension, mystery, and surprise; others create humor, nostalgia, and wonder.

Growth: Characters evolve over the course of a story in response to events; dynamic or round characters are fully developed and grow in response to the people and events in the story.

Mystery: Narratives about people reveal aspects of our human nature—the good and bad elements of it—that often cause readers to feel a sense of wonder or dismay about the mysterious nature of humans.

Narrative: This is a story one tells, whether in prose or verse, a novel or a play, or even an epic poem. A narrative can be fictional or grounded in facts, such as an autobiographical or historical narrative.

Pacing: This is the speed at which the action unfolds or the story is told; pacing affects the tone, mood, and atmosphere of the story, instilling in readers a feeling of anxiety, nostalgia, despair, or excitement.

Plot line: This is the sequence of events that makeup the story; complex narratives often have several plot lines, some intersecting to create tension in or otherwise help to develop the main plot line.

Points of view: From whose perspective do we experience the story? Do we get the first-person point of view (I, me, my), second-person point of view (you, your), or third-person (he, his, them) point of view? How does the point of view affect our response to or the meaning of the story?

Real or imagined experience: Narratives that are imagined are fictional (novels, plays, poems, and fairy tales); those that are real are based on personal or historical records (memoirs or autobiographies).

Resolution: Also known as the falling action or dénouement, the resolution falls near the end of the story and involves all the conflicts and problems explored throughout the story. Complex literary narratives involve multiple conflicts or plot lines that culminate in often surprising, unpredictable resolutions.

Sensory language: This evokes a place, person, or situation through its use of smells, sounds, textures, and other such rich details.

Setting out a problem, situation, or observation: This appears near the front where it can establish a problem or situation that the story then traces to show how the characters solve or respond to over the course of the story. Some narrative genres, such as fairy tales, state the problem as one of the conventions of that genre.

Technique: This reminds us that literary narratives are carefully crafted to create certain emotional impacts on the reader; to study the writer's technique is to study how his or her work affects the reader.

Tone: This is tone of voice; another word for this is *attitude*, as in one's tone of voice reveals his or her personality or feelings about certain events, details, or characters in the story.

Production and Distribution of Writing

Writing 4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

9–10 English Language Arts

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in writing standards 1–3.)

11–12 English Language Arts

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in writing standards 1–3 above.)

9–10 Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

11–12 Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

What the **Student** Does

9–10 English Language Arts

Gist: Write with clarity and coherence in a style that is appropriate to the assignment, objective, and audience, arranging and developing their ideas with that end in mind. Grade 9–10 students strive to achieve these qualities with all the different types of writing—argument, information/explanatory, and narrative—discussed in writing standards 1–3.

- What are the topic and the task of this writing assignment?
- What is your purpose: to inform, explain, argue, or entertain?
- How best to organize details to achieve clarity and coherence so as to fully address the task, purpose, and audience?
- Which words, transitions, and sentence styles offer the greatest clarity and coherence as related to your purpose?
- Which examples, details, quotations, or evidence are most appropriate to your task, topic, and purpose?

11–12 English Language Arts

Gist: Write with clarity and coherence in a style that is appropriate to the assignment, objective, and audience, arranging and developing their ideas with that end in mind. Grade 11–12 students strive to achieve these qualities with all the different types of writing—argument, information/explanatory, and narrative—discussed in writing standards 1–3.

- What are the topic and the task of this writing assignment?
- What is your purpose: to inform, explain, argue, or entertain?
- How best to organize details to achieve clarity and coherence so as to fully address the task, purpose, and audience?
- Which words, transitions, and sentence styles offer the greatest clarity and coherence as related to your purpose?
- Which examples, details, quotations, or evidence are most appropriate to your task, topic, and purpose?

9–10 Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Gist: Write with clarity and coherence in a style that is appropriate to the assignment, objective, and audience, arranging and developing their ideas with that end in mind.

- What are the topic and the task of this writing assignment?
- What is your purpose: to inform, explain, argue, or entertain?
- How best to organize details to achieve clarity and coherence so as to fully address the task, purpose, and audience?
- Which words, transitions, and sentence styles offer the greatest clarity and coherence as related to your purpose?
- Which examples, details, quotations, or evidence are most appropriate to your task, topic, and purpose?

11–12 Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Gist: Write with clarity and coherence in a style that is appropriate to the assignment, objective, and audience, arranging and developing their ideas with that end in mind.

- What are the topic and the task of this writing assignment?
- What is your purpose: to inform, explain, argue, or entertain?
- How best to organize details to achieve clarity and coherence so as to fully address the task, purpose, and audience?
- Which words, transitions, and sentence styles offer the greatest clarity and coherence as related to your purpose?
- Which examples, details, quotations, or evidence are most appropriate to your task, topic, and purpose?

What the **Teacher** Does

To have students produce writing that is clear and coherent, do the following:

- Establish for students first what these terms mean and why they are important to good writing by showing them models from different writers.
- Direct students to highlight or underline the subject of each sentence in their narrative; once they have done this, ask them to find all abstract subjects or long compound subjects and replace these with concrete subjects that fit the actions of the sentence.
- Determine the extent to which all the sentences in a paragraph and the larger piece itself work together to make one coherent whole; think of each sentence as a piece in a larger puzzle that should, when assembled, make sense.

To have students ensure that their writing is effectively organized, do the following:

- Make clear—or ask students to do the same—the task, purpose, and occasion for this writing; then have students assess these to determine the best way to organize, present, and develop the topic in the paper.
- Provide students with a variety of organizational structures to choose from, helping them to evaluate each in light of their purpose, the task, the audience, and the occasion.
- Have students create some sort of map, outline, or plan before writing to improve the organization of the writing; if students already have a draft, ask them to create a reverse outline that is based on the draft of the text they already wrote.

To develop students' ideas to the fullest effect, have students do the following:

- Gather and incorporate into the writing examples, details, data, information, or quotations that illustrate or support their ideas.
- Explain what the examples, details, data, information, or quotations mean and why they are important in relation to the main idea or claim they are developing.

- Consider integrating graphs, tables, charts, images, or infographics of some other sort to illustrate and reinforce some point students are trying to make.

To have students produce clear and coherent writing, have students do the following:

- Determine who the audience for the piece of writing will be, including their biases, current knowledge, expectations, and assumptions so they can anticipate and respond appropriately to the audience's concerns and questions about your topic.
- Have students evaluate the task and all related directions to be sure students know what they must do, include, or avoid in this piece of writing.
- Establish purpose—to convey ideas, events, and findings by choosing and explaining the behavior, meaning, or importance of key details. Draw from a range of sources, including primary and secondary sources; write to extend readers' knowledge or acceptance of ideas and procedures.

To have students determine what style is most appropriate to the occasion, do the following:

- Show students samples from different authors or agencies so they see what real language and formats look like in this discipline for this type of text, purpose, and audience.
- Talk with students about beginning with the end in mind—the impression you hope to make or end you hope to achieve—and ask what choices they need to make about style and organization in light of their purpose.

To help your English Language Learners, try this one thing:

- Meet individually with your ELL students to ensure they have time and opportunity to talk about the assignment and their needs as they try to write it.

Academic Vocabulary: Key Words and Phrases

Audience: This is considered an essential part of the rhetorical situation when writing. Key considerations include who the audience is, what they already know or need to learn to understand the writer's message, and how the audience is likely to respond to what you write. What biases do they have that you must anticipate and address if you are to effectively advance your argument?

Clear: Clarity is a fundamental quality of good writing. Writers achieve such clarity by choosing precise words and joining them in logical ways through grammar that further enhances the clarity of the ideas expressed. They achieve this clarity by using concrete or specific nouns or subjects instead of abstractions; also, they include verbs that express actions and avoid unnecessary use of passive voice, which often undermines clarity in writing.

Coherent: Think of your words and sentences as building blocks in a larger structure, such as a wall or fort; all work together to form a strong, stable structure that serves a purpose; coherent writing, where each word and sentence adds to the larger whole of the text, creates a sense of clarity.

Development: Includes everything from examples and quotations, to details and other forms of evidence used to support and illustrate whatever the writer is saying about the subject. All such forms of development should extend, clarify, or otherwise enhance the writer's claims. Development can also come in the form of figures, tables, or images that add more information or further illustration.

Organization: No one approach or strategy is appropriate for organizing ideas in academic writing; what matters is that there is a clear, appropriate, logical, and effective structure to the ideas. One can arrange information from new to old, least to most important, areas of agreement to areas of disagreement, or more traditional forms such as spatial, sequential, and solution among others. Also important are the transitional phrases or words used to signal organizational shifts.

Purpose: This generally means that a writer simply has *something* she is trying to accomplish through this piece; the writer's purpose also intersects with and is shaped by the rhetorical situation (occasion, topic, and audience). The most common purposes are to persuade, to inform/explain, to entertain, or to inspire.

Style: To speak of style is to discuss how the writing sounds, how it moves, and how it feels when one reads or hears it read; it involves the words and how those words are joined to others to form patterns of sound and meaning in the service of some larger idea or purpose, so that the style complements and helps the writer to achieve their purpose.

Task: Whatever the directions tell the writer to do is the "task." Directions might ask the student to read one or more texts, drawing from them the details and examples necessary to support their argument about a subject, or the task might ask students to write a letter to the editor in which they take a position for or against a certain controversial subject, such as banning sodas in school or changing the age at which one can apply for a driver's license.

Notes

Writing 5: Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

9–10 English Language Arts

Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language Standards 1–3 up to and including grades 9–10 on page 54 of the full CCSS document.)

11–12 English Language Arts

Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language Standards 1–3 up to and including grades 11–12 on page 54 of the full CCSS document.)

9–10 Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

11–12 Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

What the **Student** Does

9–10 English Language Arts

Gist: Plan, revise, edit (for clarity, concision, correctness), rewrite portions or all of a paper as needed, or try a new method, technique, or strategy, addressing those aspects of a given piece which matter most to your purpose and audience in the context of this writing task. Students know their command of Language Standards 1–3 up through grades 9–10 as spelled out on page 54 of the original CCSS document.

- What are your subject, purpose, audience, and task for this piece of writing?
- Which planning methods will help you most for this paper: outlining, chunking, brainstorming, using index cards or sticky notes (so you can play with arrangement of ideas?
- What are the most pressing editing needs for this paper: content, clarity, concision, cohesion, coherence, or correctness?
- What other approaches will satisfy the needs of your audience and achieve your purpose?

11–12 English Language Arts

Gist: Plan, revise, edit (for clarity, concision, correctness), rewrite portions or all of a paper as needed, or try a new method, technique, or strategy, addressing those aspects of a given piece which matter most to your purpose and audience in the context of this writing task. Students know their command of Language Standards 1–3 up through grades 11–12 as spelled out on page 54 of the original CCSS document.

- What are your subject, purpose, audience, and task for this piece of writing?
- Which planning methods will help you most for this paper: outlining, chunking, brainstorming, using index cards or sticky notes (so you can play with arrangement of ideas?
- What are the most pressing editing needs for this paper: content, clarity, concision, cohesion, coherence, or correctness?
- What other approaches will satisfy the needs of your audience and achieve your purpose?

9–10 Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Gist: Plan, revise, edit (for clarity, concision, correctness), rewrite portions or all of a paper as needed, or try a new method, technique, or strategy, addressing those aspects of a given piece that matter most to your purpose and audience in the context of this writing task.

- What are your subject, purpose, audience, and task for this piece of writing?
- Which planning methods will help you most for this paper: outlining, chunking, brainstorming, using index cards or sticky notes (so you can play with arrangement of ideas?
- What are the most pressing editing needs for this paper: content, clarity, concision, cohesion, coherence, or correctness?
- What other approaches will satisfy the needs of your audience and achieve your purpose?

11–12 Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Gist: Plan, revise, edit (for clarity, concision, correctness), rewrite portions or all of a paper as needed, or try a new method, technique, or strategy, addressing those aspects of a given piece that matter most to your purpose and audience in the context of this writing task.

- What are your subject, purpose, audience, and task for this piece of writing?
- Which planning methods will help you most for this paper: outlining, chunking, brainstorming, using index cards or sticky notes (so you can play with arrangement of ideas?
- What are the most pressing editing needs for this paper: content, clarity, concision, cohesion, coherence, or correctness?
- What other approaches will satisfy the needs of your audience and achieve your purpose?

What the **Teacher** Does

To improve students' ability to plan prior to beginning to write, do the following:

• Provide opportunities for generative conversations about the text, topic, or task *before* they begin to write about it; if possible, have them capture all ideas on posters, whiteboards, sticky notes, or other means, and then post them to an online site they can access later for further reference or even addition.
• Show students how you or professional writers prepare to write by either demonstrating live in front of them or providing examples of such notes and plans by major writers, many of which are available through the *Paris Review*.
• Expose them to a range of planning strategies—mapping, outlining, sticky notes or index cards, apps or features of Microsoft Word you use—and then let them choose the one or ones that suit their ways of working best.

To improve students' capacity to revise, edit, or rewrite, do the following:

• Require them to focus on one specific aspect of the writing that would lead to improved clarity and comprehension by the audience; for example, students could revise the structure of the paper to improve the reader's ability to navigate and understand your complex ideas that are now brought into greater focus through the use of subheadings.
• Teach students specific aspect of editing—concision, for example—and then, after modeling for students (perhaps by using a portion of a student's paper); ask them to apply the techniques by cutting 50, 100, or more words (depending on the length).
• Ask them to go through their paper and, after reading each sentence, ask of that sentence (and their ideas), "So what?" If the next sentence does not answer that question, look for ways to rewrite the sentence or paragraph so that it does explain why any idea, quotation, or claim matters or what it means.
• After first modeling for the class, have students read one another's papers, stopping at any point to jot a question in the margin about some aspect of the writing that they do not understand (e.g., "How does this relate to the previous sentence?").

To help students develop and try new approaches to a writing task, do the following:

• Show them what it means to rewrite the same story, event, or process by either modeling it for them live, bringing in several different versions of a paper about the same topic, or sharing samples from writers who tried the same method.
• Provide students with, for example, a list of different approaches to writing an introduction; then direct them to choose two or three of these techniques and write as many different introductions, each one in a style or voice very different from the others; these they should share with peers for feedback on which is most effective.

To develop students' ability to focus on what is most significant, do the following:

• Give them a graphic organizer of some sort (e.g., one shaped like a target) that is designed to establish a focus to which all parts of the essay should connect in some substantial way.
• Have students write a reverse outline based on the essay's current content and organization.
• Ask students to determine what question their essay seeks to answer; then go through their draft and ask what question each paragraph attempts to answer and how that question relates to the overarching question they are trying to answer in the paper.

To help your English Language Learners, try this one thing:

• Have them turn their entire paper into a sentence outline in the word processing program to examine the relationship between each sentence or paragraph and those that precede them, revising as necessary to improve the focus and flow of the paper.

Notes

Academic Vocabulary: Key Words and Phrases

Audience: Whether the audience is known (the teacher, the class, the school, or the local community) or unknown (a prospective employer, anyone who visits the class blog, or a wiki), students must consider who that audience is and what they do and do not know before writing.

Conventions: These are rules that apply to and govern the genre, format, grammar, and other aspects of writing this paper, including spelling.

Develop: Refers to the process one follows to improve a piece of writing before one even sets words down on paper, that is, such steps as gathering and generating ideas for the writing, taking time to outline, brainstorm, or map one's ideas. Once those ideas are down in a rough draft, development means seeking for better words, editing out unnecessary words, or improving clarity and cohesion by tightening the sentences.

Editing: When students rewrite the paper to make it more concise, coherent, or cohesive, they are editing; when one looks for and fixes spelling and mechanics, they are proofreading. Editing can and, with more fluent writers, does take place throughout the composing process, not just at the end, as with proofreading.

New approach: At some point, the writer may feel the current approach—the voice, the style, the perspective, or the stance—is not effective, at which point it makes sense to write the whole piece over in some new style, different format, or alternate perspective to better convey one's ideas to the audience on this occasion.

Planning: Students can do many things to plan: outline ideas, gather and generate ideas, and block off the main ideas before refining them into an outline or making concept maps, mind maps, brainstorms to generate and make connections between ideas. Some make lists of what they need to do, read, or include; all should review the assignment requirements repeatedly throughout the planning process to make sure they include all they should.

Purpose: We always have some purpose when we write, whether it is to persuade, inform, entertain, or inspire. It is essential that they know what it is they are trying to achieve (and for whom and under what circumstances) before they even begin to write as their purpose influences everything from the words and structures they choose to the media and formats they use. Even when the writing task is assigned or outlined on a timed writing exam, it is crucial that students learn to identify the purpose and approach the writing with that in mind as they plan, draft, edit, and revise their papers.

Revising: This does not mean, as some think, merely correcting or proofreading a paper. To *revise* is to re*see*, to consider the paper or idea from a whole new angle or hear a different way to express an idea or emotion. Revising the paper should improve not just the clarity and cohesion but also the content as the writer strives to strengthen the arguments, the logic, and the style.

Rewriting: Student writers sometimes need to take a whole paper or some portion of it and rewrite it in light of what they learn after getting that first draft down. Sometimes used interchangeably with *revising*, this phase of the writing process involves not tweaking or polishing up what is there but replacing it with new ideas or language better suited to the audience, the purpose, or the occasion.

Strengthen: This is what revising for concision, clarity, and coherence does to the writing: It strengthens it by tightening the wording, refining the argument, removing what is unnecessary so you can emphasize key ideas, reasoning, or evidence.

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