

Writing Standard Articulated by Grade Level

Grade 8

Strand 1: Writing Process

Research has established the major steps of the writing process. These steps are identified in the five concepts of this strand, each supported with specific performance objectives. While all steps are needed and used by effective writers as they compose text, different skills may be emphasized in individual assignments. These steps may be used recursively as a piece moves toward completion. Throughout the process, students should reflect on their own writing skills, set goals, and evaluate their own progress.

Concept 1: Prewriting

Prewriting includes using strategies to generate, plan, and organize ideas for specific purposes.

PO 1. Generate ideas through a variety of activities (e.g., prior knowledge, discussion with others, printed material or other sources).

PO 2. Determine the purpose (e.g., to entertain, to inform, to communicate, to persuade, to explain) of an intended writing piece.

PO 3. Determine the intended audience of a writing piece.

PO 4. Establish a central idea appropriate to the type of writing.

*PO 5. Use organizational strategies (e.g., outlines, charts, tables, graphs, **Venn Diagrams**, **webs**, **story map**, **plot pyramid**) to plan writing.*

PO 6. Maintain a record (e.g., lists, journals, folders, notebooks) of writing ideas.

*PO 7. Use **time management strategies**, when appropriate, to produce a writing product within a set time period.*

Concept 2: Drafting

Drafting incorporates prewriting activities to create a first draft containing necessary elements for a specific purpose.

*PO 1. Use a **prewriting plan** to develop a draft with **main idea(s)** and supporting details.*

PO 2. Organize writing into a logical sequence that is clear to the audience.

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Concept 3: Revising
Revising includes evaluating and refining the rough draft for clarity and effectiveness. (Ask: Does this draft say what you want it to say?)
<i>PO 1. Evaluate the draft for use of ideas and content, organization, voice, word choice, and sentence fluency. (See Strand 2)</i>
<i>PO 2. Add details to the draft to more effectively accomplish the purpose.</i>
<i>PO 3. Delete irrelevant and/or redundant information from the draft to more effectively accomplish the purpose.</i>
<i>PO 4. Rearrange words, sentences, and paragraphs to clarify the meaning or to enhance the writing style.</i>
<i>PO 5. Add transitional words, phrases and/or sentences to clarify meaning or enhance the writing style.</i>
<i>PO 6. Use a variety of sentence structures (i.e., simple, compound, complex) to improve sentence fluency in the draft.</i>
<i>PO 7. Apply appropriate tools or strategies (e.g., peer review, checklists, rubrics) to refine the draft.</i>
<i>PO 8. Use resources and reference materials to select more precise vocabulary.</i>

Concept 4: Editing
Editing includes proofreading and correcting the draft for conventions.
<i>PO 1. Identify punctuation, spelling, and grammar and usage errors in the draft. (See Strand 2)</i>
<i>PO 2. Use resources (e.g., dictionary, word lists, spelling/grammar checkers) to correct conventions.</i>
<i>PO 3. Apply proofreading marks to indicate errors in conventions.</i>
<i>PO 4. Apply appropriate tools or strategies (e.g., peer review, checklists, rubrics) to edit the draft.</i>

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Concept 5: Publishing Publishing includes formatting and presenting a final product for the intended audience.
<i>PO 1. Prepare writing in a format (e.g., oral presentation, manuscript, multimedia) appropriate to audience and purpose.</i>
<i>PO 2. Use margins and spacing to enhance the final product.</i>
<i>PO 3. Use graphics (e.g., drawings, charts, graphs), when applicable, to enhance the final product.</i>
<i>PO 4. Write legibly.</i>

Strand 2: Writing Components

This strand focuses on the elements of effective writing. Good writing instruction incorporates multiple performance objectives into an integrated experience of learning for the student. Throughout the process, students should reflect on their own writing skills, set goals, and evaluate their own progress. The order of the concepts and performance objectives is not intended to indicate a progression or hierarchy for writing instruction. Instructional activities may focus on just one concept or many.

Concept 1: Ideas and Content Writing is clear and focused, holding the reader's attention throughout. Main ideas stand out and are developed by strong support and rich details. Purpose is accomplished.
<i>PO 1. Use clear, focused ideas and details to support the topic.</i>
<i>PO 2. Provide content and selected details that are well-suited to audience and purpose.</i>
<i>PO 3. Develop a sufficient explanation or exploration of the topic.</i>
<i>PO 4. Include ideas and details that show original perspective.</i>

Concept 2: Organization Organization addresses the structure of the writing and integrates the central meaning and patterns that hold the piece together.
<i>PO 1. Use a structure that fits the type or writing (e.g., letter format, narrative, play, essay). (See Strand 3)</i>
<i>PO 2. Develop a strong beginning or introduction that draws in the reader.</i>

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<i>PO 3. Place details appropriately to support the main idea.</i>
<i>PO 4. Include effective transitions among all elements (sentences, paragraphs, ideas).</i>
<i>PO 5. Construct paragraphs by arranging sentences with an organizing principle (e.g., to develop a topic, to indicate a chronology).</i>
<i>PO 6. Create an ending that provides a sense of resolution or closure.</i>

Concept 3: Voice Voice will vary according to the type of writing, but should be appropriately formal or casual, distant or personal, depending on the audience and purpose.
<i>PO 1. Show awareness of the audience through word choice, style, and an appropriate connection with, or distance from, the audience.</i>
<i>PO 2. Convey a sense of identity through originality, sincerity, liveliness, or humor appropriate to the topic and application.</i>
<i>PO 3. Use language appropriate for the topic and purpose.</i>
<i>PO 4. Choose appropriate voice (e.g., formal, informal, academic discourse) for the application.</i>

Concept 4: Word Choice Word choice reflects the writer's use of specific words and phrases to convey the intended message and employs a variety of words that are functional and appropriate to the audience and purpose.
<i>PO 1. Use accurate, specific, powerful words that effectively convey the intended message.</i>
<i>PO 2. Use words that consistently support style and type of writing. (See R08-S2C1)</i>
<i>PO 3. Use vocabulary that is original, varied, and natural.</i>
<i>PO 4. Use literal and figurative language where appropriate to purpose. (See R08-S1C4-04)</i>

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Concept 5: Sentence Fluency

Fluency addresses the rhythm and flow of language. Sentences are strong and varied in structure and length.

PO 1. Write **simple**, **compound**, and **complex** sentences.

PO 2. Create sentences that flow together and sound natural when read aloud.

PO 3. Vary sentence beginnings, lengths, and patterns to enhance the flow of the writing.

PO 4. Use effective and natural **dialogue** when appropriate.

Concept 6: Conventions

Conventions addresses the mechanics of writing, including capitalization, punctuation, spelling, grammar and usage, and paragraph breaks.

PO 1. Use capital letters correctly for:

a. **proper nouns**

- *holidays*
- *product names*
- *languages*
- *historical events*
- *organizations*
- *academic courses (e.g., algebra/Algebra I)*
- *place*
- *regional names (e.g., West Coast)*

b. *words used as names (e.g., Grandpa, Aunt Lyn)*

c. *literary titles (book, story, poem, play, song)*

d. *titles*

e. *abbreviations*

f. **proper adjectives**

PO 2. Use commas to correctly punctuate:

a. *items in a series*

b. *greetings and closings of letters*

c. *introductory words and clauses*

d. *direct address*

e. **interrupters**

f. **compound sentences**

g. **appositives**

h. **dialogue**

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<p>PO 3. Use quotation marks to punctuate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. dialogueb. titles of short works (e.g., chapter, story, article, song, poem)c. exact words from sources
<p>PO 4. Use italics (in typed copy) and underlining (in handwriting) to indicate titles of longer works (e.g., books, plays, magazines, movies, TV series).</p>
<p>PO 5. Use colons to punctuate business letter salutations.</p>
<p>PO 6. Use apostrophes to punctuate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. contractionsb. singular possessivesc. plural possessives
<p>PO 7. Spell high frequency words correctly.</p>
<p>PO 8. Use common spelling patterns/generalizations to spell words correctly.</p>
<p>PO 9. Use homonyms correctly in context.</p>
<p>PO 10. Use resources to spell correctly.</p>
<p>PO 11. Use paragraph breaks to indicate an organizational structure.</p>
<p>PO. 12. Use the following parts of speech correctly in simple sentences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. nounsb. action/linking verbsc. personal pronounsd. adjectivese. adverbsf. conjunctionsg. prepositionsh. interjections
<p>PO 13. Use subject/verb agreement in simple, compound, and complex sentences.</p>

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Strand 3: Writing Applications

Writing skills particular to the applications listed here may be taught across the curriculum, although some applications may lend themselves more readily to specific content areas. It is imperative that students write in all content areas in order to increase their communication skills, and ultimately to improve their understanding of content area concepts. When appropriate, other content standards are referenced to show interdisciplinary connections.

Concept 1: Expressive

Expressive writing includes **personal narratives**, stories, poetry, songs, and dramatic pieces. Writing may be based on real or imagined events.

PO 1. Write a **narrative** that includes:

- a. an engaging **plot** based on imagined or real ideas, observations, or memories of an event or experience
- b. effectively developed characters
- c. a clearly described **setting**
- d. dialogue, as appropriate
- e. **figurative language**, or descriptive words and phrases to enhance style and **tone**

PO 2. Write in a variety of expressive forms (e.g., poetry, skit) that, according to mode, employ:

- a. **figurative language**
- b. **rhythm**
- c. **dialogue**
- d. **characterization**
- e. **plot**
- f. appropriate format

Concept 2: Expository

Expository writing includes nonfiction writing that describes, explains, informs, or summarizes ideas and content. The writing supports a **thesis** based on research, observation, and/or experience.

PO 1. Record information (e.g., observations, notes, lists, charts, map labels and legends) related to the topic.

PO 2. Write a summary based on the information gathered that include(s):

- a. a topic sentence
- b. supporting details
- c. relevant information

(See R08-S3C1-02)

PO 3. Write an **explanatory essay** that includes:

- a. a **thesis statement**
- b. supporting details
- c. introductory, body, and concluding paragraphs

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Concept 3: Functional

Functional writing provides specific directions or information related to real-world tasks. This includes letters, memos, schedules, directories, signs, manuals, forms, recipes, and technical pieces for specific content areas.

*PO 1. Write a variety of functional texts (e.g., directions, recipes, procedures, **rubrics**, labels, posters, graphs/tables).*

(See R08-S3C2; M08-S2C1)

*PO 3. Write a **friendly letter** that includes a:*

- a. *heading*
- b. *salutation*
- c. *body*
- d. *closing*
- e. *signature*

PO 4. Write a formal letter that follows a conventional business letter format.

PO 5. Address an envelope for correspondence that includes:

- a. *an appropriate return address*
- b. *an appropriate recipient address*

Concept 4: Persuasive

Persuasive writing is used for the purpose of influencing the reader. The author presents an issue and expresses an opinion in order to convince an audience to agree with the opinion or to take a particular action.

PO 1. Write persuasive text (e.g., essay, paragraph, written communications) that:

- a. *establishes and develops a **controlling idea***
- b. *supports arguments with detailed **evidence***
- c. *includes **persuasive techniques***
- d. *excludes irrelevant information*
- e. *attributes sources of information when appropriate*

(See R08-S3C3)

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Concept 5: Literary Response

Literary response is the writer's reaction to a literary selection. The response includes the writer's interpretation, analysis, opinion, and/or feelings about the piece of literature and selected elements within it.

PO 1. Write a response to literature that:

- a. *presents several clear ideas*
- b. *supports **inferences** and conclusions with examples from the text, personal experience, references to other works, or reference to non-print media*
- c. *relates own ideas to supporting details in a clear and logical manner*
- d. *provides support adequate to the literary selection (e.g. short poem vs. novel)*

(See R08-S2C1)

Concept 6: Research

Research writing is a process in which the writer identifies a topic or question to be answered. The writer locates and evaluates information about the topic or question, and then organizes, summarizes, and synthesizes the information into a finished product.

PO 1. Write a summary of information from sources (e.g. encyclopedias, websites, experts) that includes:

- a. *paraphrasing to convey ideas and details from the source*
- b. ***main idea(s)** and relevant details*

(See R08-S3C1-05, -06, -07, -08)

PO 2. Write an informational report that includes:

- a. *a focused topic*
- b. *appropriate facts and relevant details*
- c. *a logical sequence*
- d. *a concluding statement*
- e. *a list of sources used*

(See R08-S3C1-05, -06, -07, -08)

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