WRITING

The goal of English language arts (ELA) is for all students to read, understand, and express their understanding of complex, grade-level texts. Expressing understanding of texts can be done both orally and in writing. For additional information about how to support conversations, access the **Conversations Guide**.

Louisiana Student Standards for English Language Arts require all students to create different types of evidence-based, written responses for varied audiences/purposes, analyze information, and present knowledge gained through research.

Writing is used both as an informal learning tool and as a formal way to express understanding of texts in the guidebook units. Each unit focuses on two instructional goals for developing students' ability to write.

1. ***Students must have knowledge and understanding to write something meaningful.***
2. ***Students must have skills to express their understanding clearly and coherently.***

Goal One: Building Knowledge and Understanding

The first goal is met through the design of the units and the writing tasks. The guidebook units are organized so that the writing process begins with students developing their understanding to ensure they have something meaningful to write about. This shift to focus on writing about understanding levels the playing field for students. In the past, writing prompts asked students to write about their personal experiences and feelings. If students didn't have a wide variety of personal experiences and the prompt asked them to write about something about which they had no knowledge, students either had to make up an idea or write a response that was thin and superficial. Now writing tasks ask students to write about their understanding of complex texts. All students have the opportunity to build their understanding of complex texts through the guidebook lessons.

The guidebook units are divided into sections and sections are divided into lessons; the tasks in each (e.g., discussions, note taking, completing graphic organizers and smaller writing assignments) lesson and section build toward the end-of-unit assessments in which students express their understanding of complex texts. Visuals and graphic organizers included throughout the unit help students make sense of content; often the same graphic organizer is used across the unit. Many writing tasks start with a formal discussion (e.g., Socratic seminar) in which students develop and refine their ideas and supporting evidence orally in collaboration with others before creating a written product. These structures support students as they generate and organize their ideas for writing and research. All students who are engaged in the classroom work have the opportunity to express what they've learned along the way in the unit. This creates more opportunities for all students.

Goal Two: Developing Writing and Language Skills

The second goal is met through the lessons and supports included in the units. Writing and language skills are developed through scaffolded practice over the course of a guidebook unit. Students practice writing short responses about complex texts and unit ideas, typically during the "Let's Express Understanding" portion of each lesson. Use these practice opportunities to check how students' writing skills are building over the course of the unit. The guidebook lessons include directions to share the qualities of strong student work, including analyzing models of strong and weak oral and written responses. Students also work to develop word- and sentence-level language proficiency through the "Let's Work With Words" sections of the guidebook lessons. Students emulate the language and structure of complex texts to meet grade-level language standards.

The Louisiana Student Standards for English Language Arts are vertically aligned, which means that they progress from year to year. Use the **Writing Progressions** and the **Grammar Guide** to identify the skills students are expected to be proficient with in each grade. When using the writing rubrics for each grade, be sure that students' writing is meeting the specific grade-level expectations. **Review an example of how to use these documents together.**

Supporting All Students

While the guidebooks units are designed to accomplish both instructional goals, students will likely need additional support outside the guidebook lessons either individually or during small-group instruction. The process for providing supports is described in the **Diverse Learners Guide**.

The following resources and approaches should inform the types of support given to students to ensure they are clearly and coherently expressing their understanding of complex, grade-level texts. All support during writing tasks should be based on students' unique needs.

Resources for Building Knowledge and Understanding	Resources for Developing Skills
Additional Supports for Diverse Learners (under the Additional Materials for each lesson)	**Grammar Guide**
Reading Guide	**Mentor Sentences**
	Language Tasks
	Organizational Frames
	Supports Flow Chart
	Focus on one aspect of quality at a time; for example, if the focus of a lesson is on writing a thesis, give feedback on that aspect, not the students' lack of sentence variety or poor spelling

Resources

- Ginty, E., Hawkins, J., Kurzman, K., Leddy, D., Miller, J., & Wiggins, G. (2011). *Writing for Understanding: Using Backwards Design to Help All Students Write Effectively* (D. Wilbur, Ed.). VT: Vermont Writing Collaborative.
- Graham, S., & Perin, D. (2007). *Writing Next: Effective Strategies to Improve Writing of Adolescents in Middle and High Schools* (Rep.). Retrieved from Alliance for Excellent Education for the Carnegie Corporation of New York website: **https://www.carnegie.org/media/filer_public/3c/f5/3cf58727-34f4-4140-a014-723a00ac56f7/ccny_report_2007_writing.pdf**
- Hochman, J. (n.d.). The Hochman Method. Retrieved from **http://www.thewritingrevolution.org/hochman-method/**
- Killgallon, D., & Killgallon, J. (n.d.). Sentence Composing. Retrieved from **http://sentencecomposing.com/**
- Leddy, D. (2016, September 15). Painted Essay. Retrieved from **http://www.vermontwritingcollaborative.org/WPDEV/painted-essay/**
- Noden, H. R. (2011). *Image Grammar: Teaching Grammar as Part of the Writing Process*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

GUIDEBOOKS 2.0 ELA

HOW TO USE A WRITING RUBRIC

Review the descriptions under each score point. When the rubric references "full comprehension" or "full command," look at the Writing Progressions and the Grammar Guide to identify the skills students are expected to be proficient with in each grade. A student who receives the top score in each row should demonstrate evidence of meeting the grade-level expectations for the grade. Examples are provided below.

"Full comprehension" means students use the reader's circles for literary texts, reader's circles for informational texts, or reader's circles for literary nonfiction to fully demonstrate their understanding of the meaning of the text(s). Comprehension is demonstrated by their use of evidence and details from the text(s). (W.4.9a, W.4.9b, W.5.9a, W.5.9b)

- In grade 4, evidence is defined as facts, concrete details, quotations, or other information (W.4.1b, W.4.2b, RL.4.1, RL.4.2)
- In grade 5, evidence is defined as facts, concrete details, quotations, or other information (W.5.1b, W.5.2b); students are also expected to quote accurately when referencing text (RL.5.1, RI.5.1)

Grades 4–5 Literary Analysis Task (LAT) and Research Simulation Task (RST) Scoring Rubric

Construct Measured	Score Point 4	Score Point 3	Score Point 2	Score Point 1	Score Point 0
Reading Comprehension and Written Expression	The student response • demonstrates **full comprehension** of ideas stated explicitly and/or inferentially by providing an **accurate** analysis; • addresses the prompt and provides **effective** development of the topic that is **consistently appropriate** to the task, purpose, and audience; • uses **clear** reasoning supported by **relevant** text-based evidence in the development of the topic; • is **effectively** organized with **clear and coherent** writing; • uses language **effectively** to clarify ideas.	The student response • demonstrates **comprehension** of ideas stated explicitly and/or inferentially by providing a **mostly accurate** analysis; • addresses the prompt and provides **mostly effective** development of the topic that is **appropriate** to the task, purpose, and audience; • uses **mostly clear** reasoning supported by **relevant** text-based evidence in the development of the topic; • is organized with **mostly clear and coherent** writing; • uses language that is **mostly effective** to clarify ideas.	The student response • dem com stat infer gen • add prov of th app purp • uses text- deve • dem orga coh • uses idea	The student response	The student response • demonstrates no comprehension of ideas by providing an inaccurate or analysis; • is undeveloped and/or inappropriate to the task, and audience; • lacks organization and coherence; • does not use language to express ideas with clarity.
Knowledge of Language and Conventions		The student response demonstrates **full command** of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There **may** be a **few minor errors** in mechanics, grammar, and usage, but **meaning is clear**.	The stu demon of the c English of com errors i and us impede meaning		

In grade 4, this means students:

- Are proficient with grade 3 language skills
- Use relative pronouns, relative adverbs, and modal auxiliary verbs (L.4.1a, L.4.1c)
- Form and use prepositional phrases (L.4.1e)
- Use commonly confused words correctly (L.4.1g)
- Recognize and correct fragments and run-on sentences (L.4.1f)
- Use commas with quotation marks and before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence (L.4.2b, L.4.2c)

In grade 5, this means students:

- Are proficient with grade 4 language skills
- Use verb tense to convey various times, sequences, states, and conditions (L.5.1c)
- Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb tense (L.5.1d)
- Use correlative conjunctions (L.5.1e)
- Use commas in a series of phrases or clauses (L.5.2a)
- Use a comma to separate an introductory element from the rest of the sentence (L.5.2b)
- Use a comma to set off the words yes and no in direct address (L.5.2c)
- Punctuate titles of works (L.5.2d)

In grade 4, this means students:

- Are proficient with grade 3 writing skills
- Introduce a topic or text clearly and state the purpose for writing by including a main idea sentence/organizing idea statement/thesis statement (W.4.1a)
- Create an organizational structure which groups ideas based on the purpose (W.4.1a)
- Link opinions and reasons using words and phrases such as for instance, in order to, and in addition (W.4.1c)
- Provide a conclusion that relates to the purpose for writing (W.4.1d)