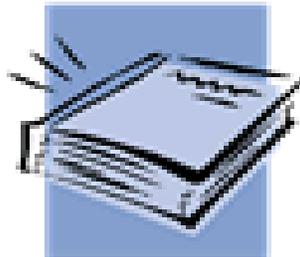


**GOESSEL  
JR/SR HIGH  
SCHOOL**



**LANGUAGE ARTS  
AND WRITING  
HANDBOOK**

Created and Compiled by:  
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Crysta Guhr

February 2006

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	READING	
	A. The Reading Process	Page 5
	B. Reading Genres	Page 6
	C. Elements of Literature	Page 7-9
	D. Reading Organizers	Page 10-11
	E. Improving Vocabulary	Page 12
	F. Parts of Speech	Page 13
	G. Library Usage	Page 14
II.	WRITING	
	A. The Writing Process	Page 16
	B. Writing Genres	Page 17
	C. Title Page	Page 18
	D. Thesis	Page 19
	E. Outlines and Organizers	Page 20-21
	F. Punctuation	
	1. Commas	Page 22-23
	2. Semi-colons	Page 23-24
	3. Colons	Page 24
	4. Hyphen	Page 25
	5. Quotation Marks	Page 25-26
	6. Italics/Underlining	Page 26
	7. Apostrophes	Page 26-27
	8. Plurals	Page 27
	G. Editing Marks	Page 28
	H. Giving Proper Credit	Page 29
	1. Plagiarism	Page 29
	2. Paraphrases	Page 29-30
	3. Quotations	Page 30-31
	4. Citation	Page 31-32
	5. Works Cited	Page 33-35
	I. Kansas State Assessment Guidelines	Page 36-37
	J. 6-Trait Writing Rubrics	
	1. Narrative	Page 38-43
	2. Expository	Page 44-49
	3. Persuasive	Page 50-55
	4. Technical	Page 56-61

# READING

## **THE READING PROCESS**

Reading is a personal process through which you make meaning using your own experiences, knowledge, and abilities. The following is *one* example of a reading process. This is not *the only* process, but simply *one* tool.

### ***Before Reading***

- A. Set a Purpose for reading
- B. Preview the material
- C. Plan how you will read (strategies needed)

### ***During Reading***

- A. Read with a Purpose
- B. Connect the material with your life and/or with prior knowledge

### ***After Reading***

- A. Pause and Reflect about what you read
- B. Reread to clarify information
- C. Remember the information by making a summary, writing a review, or starting a conversation

Burke, Jim. Reader's Handbook: A Student Guide for Reading and Learning.  
Wilmington, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2002.

## ***READING GENRES***

### ***Nonfiction***

Nonfiction is a record of real people, places, events, thoughts, and times. There are two basic types of nonfiction.

1. *Expository Nonfiction* is factual and informative writing
  - a. articles
  - b. news stories
  - c. persuasive essays
  - d. editorials
2. *Narrative Nonfiction* tells a true story
  - a. biographies
  - b. autobiographies
  - c. memoirs
  - d. some personal essays

### ***Fiction***

Fiction is written work that is made up or imagined. The two main types of fiction include short stories and novels.

There are many *subgenres* of fiction as well. These include realistic fiction, mysteries, westerns, science fiction, thrillers, and fantasy. Even within the subgenre of thrillers, you will find multiple forms, including political, techno, and detective thrillers.

### ***Poetry***

Poetry is as varied as people's reactions to it. It is arranged in relatively short line length, and it says a lot in a few words. There are several different forms and styles of poetry. *Poetry does not have to rhyme.*

### ***Drama***

Drama has evolved from the tradition of telling and acting out stories. Plays are the primary example of a drama. Shakespeare's dramas are some of the most commonly read plays in high school classrooms.

Burke, Jim. Reader's Handbook: A Student Guide for Reading and Learning.  
Wilmington, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2002.

## **ELEMENTS OF LITERATURE**

### **Literary Terms**

**Allegory**-is a story in which people, things, and actions represent an idea or a generalization about life; allegories often have a strong moral or lesson.

**Analogy**-is a comparison of two or more similar objects, suggesting that if they are alike in certain respects, they will probably be alike in other ways as well.

**Anecdote**-is a short account of an interesting event used to make a point.

**Antagonist**-is the person or force working against the protagonist, or hero, of the work.

**Caricature**-is a picture or an imitation of a person's features or mannerisms exaggerated in a comic or absurd way.

**Characterization**-is the method an author uses to create believable people.

**Climax**-is usually the most intense point in a story. A series of struggles or conflicts build a story or play toward the climax.

**Conflict**-is the problem or struggle in a story that triggers the action.

**Context**-is the set of facts or circumstances surrounding an event or a situation in a piece of literature.

**Dialogue**- is the final resolution or outcome of a play or story.

**Diction**- word choice based on correctness, clearness, or effectiveness.

**Empathy**- is putting yourself in someone else's place and imagining how that person must feel. The phrase "What would you do if you were in my shoes?" is a request for one person to empathize with another.

**Epic**-is a long narrative poem that tells of the deeds and adventures of a hero.

**Epiphany**- is sudden perception (moment of understanding) that causes a character to change or act in a certain way.

**Exaggeration**- is overstating or sketching the truth for special effect: "My shoes are killing me."

**Falling Action**- is the part of a play or story that leads from the climax or turning point to the resolution.

**Figurative Language**-is language used to create a special effect or feeling.

**Hyperbole**-is an exaggeration or overstatement: "I have seen this river so wide it had only one bank."

**Metaphor**-is a direct comparison of two things **not** using *like* or *as*.

**Personification**-is a literary device in which the author speaks of or describes an animal, object, or idea as if it were a person: "The rock stubbornly refused to move."

**Simile**-is a comparison of two things **using** the words *like* or *as*: "She stood in front of the altar, shaking like a freshly caught trout."

**Flashback**-is returning to an earlier time for the purpose of making something in the present more clear.

**Foreshadowing**- giving hints or clues of what is to come later in a story.

**Genre**-refers to a category or type of literature based on its style, form, and content. The mystery novel is a literary genre.

**Imagery**-is the use of words to create a certain picture in the reader's mind. It is usually based on the sensory details: "The sky was dark and gloomy, the air was damp and raw, the streets were wet and sloppy."

**Irony**-using a word or phrase to mean the exact opposite of its literal or normal meaning.

**Mood**-is the feeling a text arouses in the reader: happiness, peacefulness, sadness, and so on.

**Narrator**-is the person who is telling the story.

**Oxymoron**-is a combination of contradictory terms as in *jumbo shrimp*, *tough love*, or *cruel kindness*.

**Parable**- is a short descriptive story that illustrates a particular belief or moral.

**Plot**-is the action or sequence of events in a story. It is usually a series of related incidents that build upon one another as the story develops including *exposition*, *rising action*, *climax*, *falling action*, and *resolution*.

**Point of view**-is the vantage point from which the story is told.

1<sup>st</sup> person: the story is told by one of the characters using “I”.

2<sup>nd</sup> person: a rare form where pronouns are replaced with “you”

3<sup>rd</sup> person: the story is told by someone outside the story and uses “he” , “she”

**Omniscient**-3<sup>rd</sup> person point of view allowing the narrator to share the thoughts and feelings of all the character.

**Limited**-3<sup>rd</sup> person point of view that allows the narrator to share the thoughts and feelings of one central character.

**Protagonist**- the main character or hero of the story.

**Resolution** – the portion of the play or story in which the problem is solved. It comes after the climax and falling action and is intended to bring the story to a satisfactory end.

**Rising Action** – the series of struggles that builds a story or play toward a climax

**Sarcasm** – the use of praise to mock someone or something

**Satire** – a literary tone used to make fun of human vice or weakness, often with the intent of correcting or changing the subject of the attack

**Setting** – the time and place in which the action of a literary work occurs

**Soliloquy** – a speech delivered by a character when he or she is alone on stage. It is as though the character is thinking out loud

**Symbol** – a person, place, thing, or event used to represent something else

**Theme** – the statement about life that a writer is trying to get across in a piece of writing. In most cases, the theme will be implied rather than directly spelled out

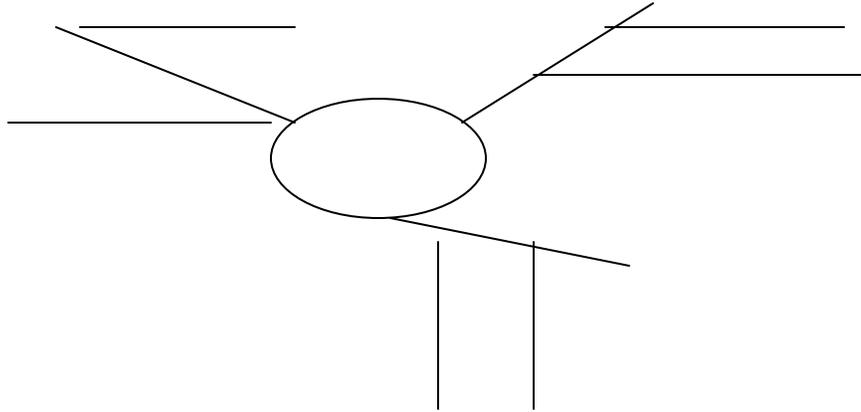
**Tone** – the overall feeling, or effect, created by a writer’s use of words. This feeling may be serious, humorous, or satiric

Sebranek, Patrick, et al. Writers Inc.: A Student Handbook for Writing and Learning. Wilmington, MA: Write Source, 2001.

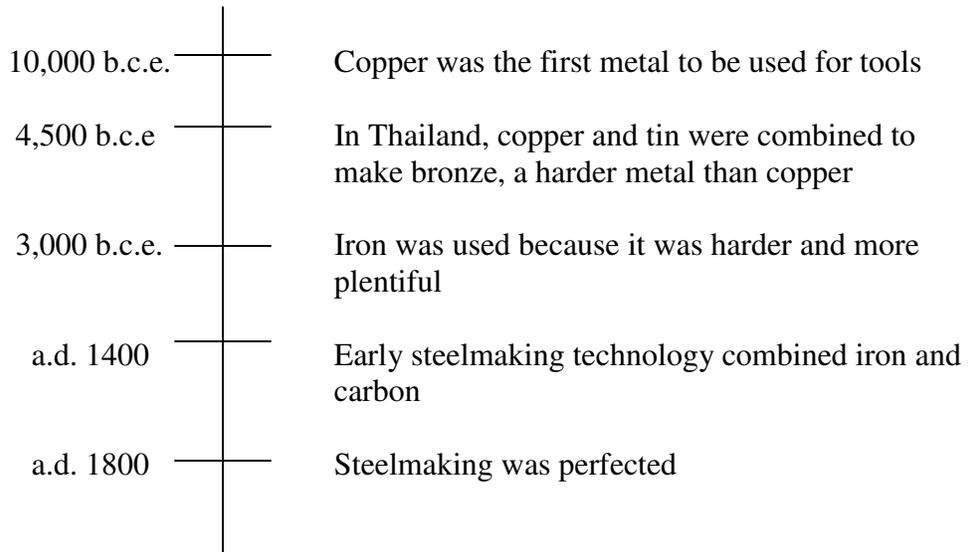
## READING ORGANIZERS

Organizers can help you organize and understand the assigned reading. The following are several options to consider:

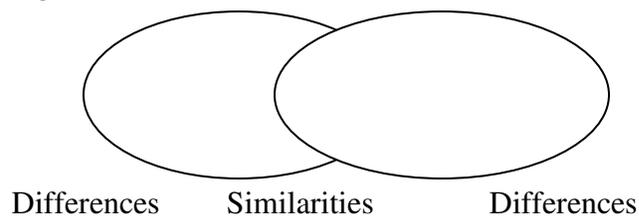
### 1. Mapping



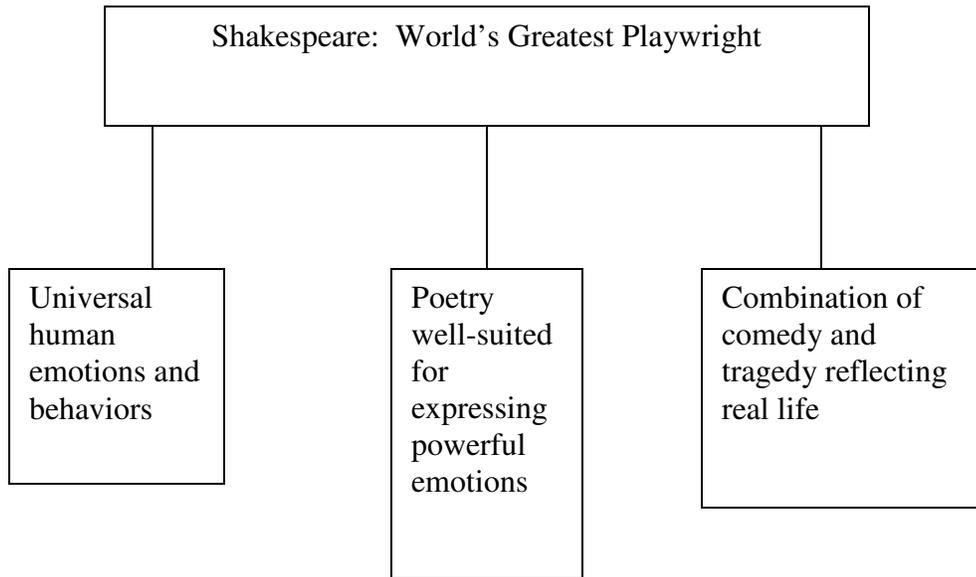
### 2. Time Line



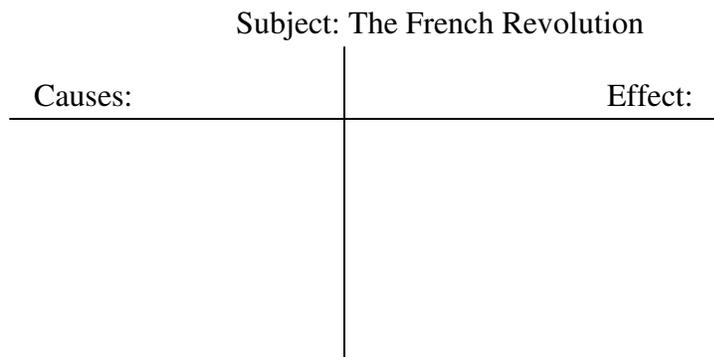
### 3. Venn Diagram



4. *Table Organizer*



5. *Cause-and-Effect Organizer*



Sebranek, Patrick, et al. Writers Inc.: A Student Handbook for Writing and Learning. Wilmington, MA: Write Source, 2001.

## IMPROVING VOCABULARY

### *Building Your Vocabulary*

Many experts agree that the most important thing you can do to improve your grades is to increase your vocabulary. Here are some ways to do that:

1. *Use Context* – Context clues are made up of synonyms, definitions, descriptions, and several other kinds of specific information helpful to understanding the meaning of a passage or a particular word. Below are six kinds of context clues to look for.
  - a. Synonyms and Antonyms
  - b. Comparisons and Contrasts
  - c. Definitions and Descriptions
  - d. Words in a Series
  - e. Cause and Effect
  - f. Tone and Setting
2. *Learn Common Word Roots, Prefixes, and Suffixes* – Many English words are a combination of word parts (prefixes, suffixes, and roots). If you know the meaning of the parts, you can figure out the meanings of words that contain these parts.
  - a. You can find a list of these roots, prefixes, and suffixes in the book *Writers, Inc.*
3. *Refer to your Dictionary*
4. *Study the Origin of Words* – Pay attention to the etymologies (history of words) in the dictionary.
5. *Use a Thesaurus* – Check a thesaurus to find all the synonyms for a common word or phrase.
6. *Keep a Vocabulary Notebook* – Include the definition, pronunciation, and part of speech for each word.

Sebranek, Patrick, et al. Writers Inc.: A Student Handbook for Writing and Learning. Wilmington, MA: Write Source, 2001.

## PARTS OF SPEECH

According to the kind of work that words perform in a sentence, all words are divided into eight classes called parts of speech. The eight parts of speech are: noun, pronoun, adjective, verb, adverb, preposition, conjunction and interjection.

1. **Noun:** a word used to name a person, place thing, or idea. (e.g. boy, desk, teacher, beauty, car, field.)  
**Then the man entered the room quietly.**
2. **Pronoun:** a word used in place of a noun. (e.g. I, we, you, they , he, she, it, who)  
**You should have told her that it was broken.**
3. **Adjective:** a word used to describe or modify a noun or pronoun. (e.g. red, tall, beautiful, sad, five)  
**Faint heart never won fair lady.**
4. **Verb:** a word used to show action or to express a state of being. (e.g. study, play, rest, is, are, work.)  
**She sang while the orchestra played.**
5. **Adverb:** a word used to modify a verb, adjective, or another adverb. (e.g. quickly, slowly, skillfully, too, quite.)  
**He suddenly threw the ball too fast.**
6. **Preposition:** a word used to show the relationship between a noun or pronoun and some other words in the sentence. Prepositional phrases always begin with a preposition and end in a noun or pronoun. (e.g. to, in, by, at, under, over, near, before)  
**Mother went into the store for some bread.**
7. **Conjunction:** a word used to connect words, phrases, and clauses within a sentence.(e.g. and, or, but, while, since, however)  
**Jill and Mary stayed home because they needed to study.**
8. **Interjection:** a word used to express sudden emotion or feeling; it has no grammatical connection with the sentence. ( e.g. Oh!, Ah!, Wow!)  
**Bah! That sounds ridiculous to me.**

## **LIBRARY USAGE**

The Goessel Jr/Sr High School Library collection consists of many items including books, magazines (periodicals), and other audiovisual materials.

There are five databases that can be searched:

1. On-line catalog
2. Ebsco
3. Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia
4. World Book On-line
5. Lands and People On-line

### **On-line Catalog**

The on-line catalog replaces the traditional paper card catalog. Any of the catalog search terminals in the library may be used to find materials in the on-line catalog. Most searches of the catalog will be done using one of four different methods: SUBJECT, TITLE, AUTHOR, KEYWORD.

# WRITING

## THE WRITING PROCESS

<u>PREWRITING</u> Also called:	<u>May include:</u>	
a. finding a topic	-interpretive note-taking	-talking ideas onto a tape
b. generating ideas	-class discussion	-journals
c. getting started	-logs	-small-group talk about topic
d. thinking of topic	-reaction papers	-lists/notes/jottings
	-outlines	-short responses to questions
	-debates	-generating questions
	-timed or free writing	-brainstorming
<u>DRAFTING</u> Also called:	<u>May include:</u>	
a. first draft	-journals	
b. sloppy copy	-logs	
	-reaction papers	
<u>REVISING</u> Also called:	<u>May include:</u>	
a. seeing the piece anew	-peer editing	-attention to mechanics
b. looking for content improvements	-attention to word choice	-tutoring
	-adult editing	-attention to organization
<u>POST WRITING</u> Also called:	<u>May include:</u>	
a. finished draft	-attention to mechanics, organization, and word choice	
b. proof reading	-formal feedback to writer	
c. evaluation	-publishing	
d. sharing		

\*The steps of the writing process apply to all forms of writing.

Adopted from MHS Writing Style Book

## WRITING GENRES

### *Descriptive Writing*

In its more creative forms, descriptive writing paints a word picture in the reader's mind, often making use of sensory details—what the writer sees, hears, smells, feels. In a technical manual, descriptive writing might be used to help a reader understand and visualize a process or see how key components fit together in a piece of equipment.

### *Expository*

Informational writing answers key questions, such as: What is the state of pollution in a local stream? Is nicotine addictive? Informational pieces are based on research and/ or personal observation. It is well supported by facts, comparisons, or relevant anecdotes. Successful expository writing can be compelling and *may* have strong voice –indicating the writer's commitment to the topic.

### *Persuasive*

Persuasive writing is writing with attitude. It is intended to convince the reader that a certain point of view is the right one, or that action needs to be taken. Successful persuasive writing is based on a topic that is highly focused—and about which there are clear opposing sides. The issue is clearly explained, with *both* sides presented. The writer takes a stand, using compelling evidence why the reader should agree.

### *Technical*

Technical writing is a form of informational writing, with the topic highly focused to a targeted audience. The technical writer must know the topic well enough to explain it to an audience of technical specialists and non-specialists. The writer does this by simplifying word choice, shortening sentences, and making ideas clear even to novices. Thus, the writer must have a strong and diverse vocabulary, as well as knowledge of the topic and the audience.

### *Narrative*

Narrative writing is best described as a story. They are usually told in chronological order; each event is unfolded in exactly the order it happened. Narratives encourage readers to participate in the story. Strong narratives let the readers feel so involved that they feel for the characters and the conflicts they face. All narratives share the same components: beginning, middle, climax, and end in a proper sequence; believable, non-stereotyped characters; vivid settings; accurate point of view; authentic voice; lively, original descriptions; and a message or theme.

Adopted from Lynda Rice's 6 Trait Writing Resource Book

## TITLE PAGE

If you are instructed to include a title page with your research paper, use the sample below as your guide. Some important notes to consider include:

1. Center the title one-third of the way down the page; center author information two-thirds of the way down.
2. Titles should be in 22-point font. Author's name should be in 16-point font. All other information should be in regular, 14-point font.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Preserving the Great American Desert</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Allison De Jong</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mrs. Runge</p> <p style="text-align: center;">English III</p> <p style="text-align: center;">20 November 2000</p>
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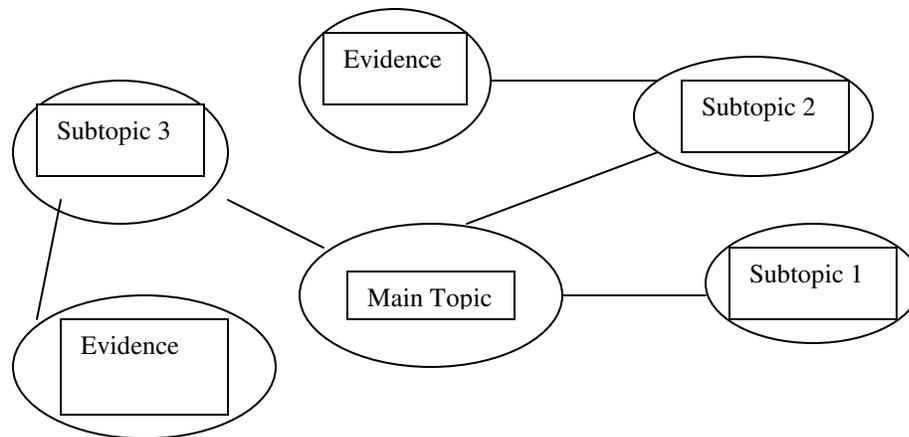
Sebranek, Patrick, et al. Writers Inc.: A Student Handbook  
for Writing and Learning. Wilmington, MA: Write Source, 2001.



## OUTLINES AND ORGANIZERS

Outlines and Organizers can help you gather and organize your details for writing. The following are several options to consider:

1. Clustering (Web-chart) – Begin a cluster with a nucleus word related to your writing topic or assignment. Then cluster ideas around the nucleus word. Circle each idea you write and draw a line connecting it to the closest related idea.



2. Outline – Begin with your thesis statement written at the top. Points I, II, and III are the main points of emphasis.

Introduction – The Ogallala Aquifer transformed the Great American Desert, but its future is in jeopardy.

- I. Background of the Problem
  - a. Formation of the Ogallala Aquifer
  - b. Explanation of aquifers
  - c. Size and location of the Ogallala Aquifer
- II. The Nature and Extent of the Problem
  - a. Irrigation depleting the aquifer
  - b. Advances in center-pivot irrigation a huge factor
    1. Lowering water table
    2. Causing unnecessary waste.

(continue through the conclusion)

3. Cause-Effect Organizer – use to collect and organize details for cause/effect essays

Subject:

Causes  
(because of)

1.

2.

3.

Effects

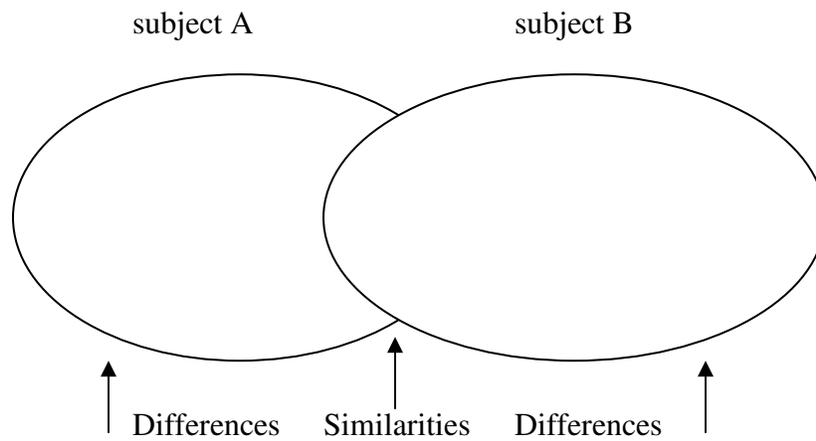
(...these conditions resulted)

1.

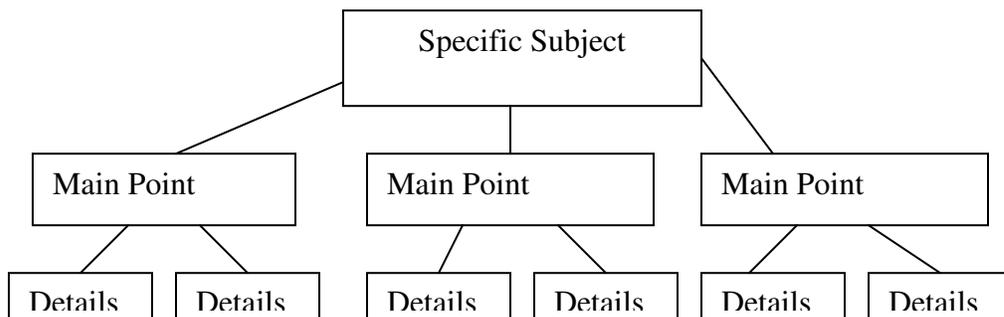
2.

3.

4. Venn Diagram – use to collect details to compare and contrast two subjects



5. Line Diagram – use to collect and organize details for expository essays



# PUNCTUATION

## *Commas*

1. *Between two independent clauses* – use a comma between two independent clauses that are joined by a coordinating conjunction such as *and, but, or, nor, for, yet, so*  
Example: I wanted to knock on the glass to attract attention, but I couldn't move.
2. *To Separate Adjectives* – use commas to separate coordinate adjectives that equally modify the same noun  
Example: John's eyes met the hard, bright lights hanging directly above him.
3. *To Separate Parenthetical or Contrasted Elements* – use commas to separate parenthetical elements within a sentence  
Example: Allison stepped into class, late as usual, and sat down.
4. *To Close Explanatory Words* – use commas to enclose an explanatory word or phrase  
Example: They stood together, away from the pile of stones in the corner, and their jokes were quiet and they smiled rather than laughed.
5. *To Set Off Appositives* – a specific kind of explanatory word or phrase called an appositive identifies or renames a preceding noun or pronoun  
Example: Benson, our uninhibited and enthusiastic Yorkshire terrier, joined our family on my sister's fifteenth birthday.
6. *Between Items in a Series* – use commas to separate individual words, phrases, or clauses in a series  
Example: I'd never known anything about having meat, potatoes, and a salad all at the same meal.
7. *After Introductory Phrases or Clauses* - use a comma after an introductory participial phrase and after an introductory adverb clause  
Example: Determined to finish the sweater by Thanksgiving, my grandmother knits night and day.  
  
Example: After the practice was over, Tina walked home.
8. *To Set Off Nonrestrictive Phrases and Clauses* – use commas to set off nonrestrictive (unnecessary) clauses and participial phrases  
Example: The Altana Fitness Center and Visker Gymnasium, which were built last year, are busy every day.

9. *To Set Off Dates* – use commas to set off items in a date  
Example: He began working out on December 1, 1999, but quit by May 1, 2000.
10. *To Set Off Items in Addresses* – use commas to set off items in an address  
Example: Mail the box to Friends of Wildlife, Box 402, Spokane, Washington 20077.
11. *To Set Off Dialogue* – use commas to set off the speaker’s exact words from the rest of the sentence  
Example: “It’s like we have our own government,” adds Tanya, a 17-year-old squatter.
12. *In Direct Address* – use commas to separate a noun of direct address from the rest of the sentence  
Example: “But, Mother Gibbs, one can go back; one can go back there again....”  
-Thornton Wilder, *Our Town*
13. *To Set Off Interjections* – use a comma to separate an interjection or a weak exclamation from the rest of the sentence  
Example: Hey, how am I to know that a minute’s passed?
14. *To Set Off Interruptions* – use commas to set off a word, a phrase, or a clause that interrupts the movement of a sentence  
Example: For me, well, it’s just a good job gone!  
-Langston Hughes
15. *For Clarity or Emphasis* – use a comma to prevent confusion or to emphasize an important idea  
Example: It may that those who do most, dream most.  
  
Example: What the crew does, does affect our voyage.

### ***Semi-Colons***

1. *To Join Two Independent Clauses* – use a semicolon to join two independent clauses *at are not connected with a coordinating conjunction*  
Example: Silence coated the room like a layer of tar; not even the breathing of the 11 Gehad made any sound.  
-Gann Bierner, “The Leap”

2. *With Conjunctive Adverbs* – a semicolon is used before a conjunctive adverb (and a comma after it) when the word connects two independent clauses in a compound sentence (common conjunctive adverbs are: *also, besides, however, instead, meanwhile, then, therefore*)

Example: “I am faced with my imminent demise; therefore, life becomes a very precious thing.”

-Amy Taylor

3. *To Separate Groups That Contain Commas* – a semicolon is used to separate groups of words that already contain commas

Example: Every Saturday night my brother gathers up his things – goggles, shower cap, and snorkel; bubble bath, soap, and shampoo; tapes, stereo, and rubber duck – and heads for the tub.

## ***Colon***

1. *After a Salutation* – use a colon after the salutation of a business letter  
Example: Dear Judge Parker:
2. *Between Numerals Indicating Time* – use a colon between the hours, minutes, and seconds of a number indicating time  
Example: 8:30 a.m.
3. *For Emphasis* – use a colon to emphasize a word, a phrase, a clause, or a sentence that explains or adds impact to the main clause  
Example: His guest lecturers are local chefs who learn a lesson themselves: Homeless people are worth employing.
4. *To Introduce a List* – a colon is used to introduce a list  
Example: I took all the proper equipment: scissors, a bucket of water to keep things clean, some cotton for the stuffing, and needle and thread to sew it up.
5. *Between a Title and a Subtitle* – use a colon to distinguish between a title and a subtitle, volume and page, and chapter and verse in literature  
Example: Writers INC: A Student’s Handbook for Writing and Learning

Example: Encyclopedia Americana IV: 211

Example: Psalm 23:1-6

## ***Hyphen***

1. *In Compound Words* – use the hyphen to make compound words  
Example: great-great-grandfather
2. *To Join Letters and Words* – use a hyphen to join a capital letter or lowercase letter to a noun or participle  
Example: t-shirt
3. *Between Numbers and Fractions* – use a hyphen to join the words in compound numbers from *twenty-one* to *ninety-nine* when it is necessary to write them out  
Example: twenty-five            five-sixteenths
4. *To Create New Words* – use a hyphen to form new words beginning with the prefixes self, ex, all, and half  
Example: self-contained            ex-governor
5. *To Prevent Confusion* – use a hyphen with prefixes and suffixes to avoid confusion or awkward spelling  
Example: re-cover (not recover) the sofa
6. *To Join Numbers* – use a hyphen to join numbers indicating the life span of a person and the score in a contest or a vote  
Example: 1822-1895            17-9
7. *To Form an Adjective* – use the hyphen to join two or more words that serve as a single adjective before a noun  
Example: In real life I am a large, big-boned woman with rough, man-working hands.

## ***Quotation Marks***

1. *To Punctuate Titles* – use quotation marks to punctuate titles of songs, poems, short stories, one-act plays, lectures, episodes of radio or television programs, chapters of books, unpublished works, electronic files, and articles found in magazines, newspapers, encyclopedias, or on-line sources  
Examples:    “Saint Lucia” (song)  
                  “The Chameleon” (short story)  
                  “Affordable Adventures” (magazine article)  
                  “Dire Prophecy of the Howling Dog” (chapter in a book)  
                  “Dancing with Debra” (television episode)  
                  “Miss Julie” (one-act play)

2. *Quotations or Dialogue* – always place periods and commas inside quotation marks

Example: “Dr. Slaughter wants you to have liquids, Will,” Mama said anxiously. “He said not to give you any solid food tonight.”

-Cold Sassy Tree

### ***Italics (Underlining)***

Italics is a printer’s term for a style of type that is slightly slanted. In this sentence, the word *happiness* is printed in italics. In material that is handwritten or typed on a machine that cannot print in italics, underline each word or letter that should be in italics.

1. *In Titles* – use italics or underlining to indicate the titles of magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, books, full-length plays, films, videos, radio and television programs, book-length poems, ballets, operas, lengthy musical compositions, cassettes, CD’s, legal cases, and the names of ships and aircraft

Examples: Newsweek (magazine)  
Shakespeare in Love (film)  
Caring for your Kitten (pamphlet)  
Chicago Tribune (newspaper)  
Cold Sassy Tree (book)  
Friends (television program)

### ***Apostrophes***

1. *In Contractions* – use apostrophes to show that one or more letters have been left out

Example: hadn’t      they’d      it’s

2. *To Form Plurals* – use an apostrophe and s to form the plural of a letter, a number, a sign, or a word discussed as a word

Example: B’s      8’s      and’s

3. *To Form Singular Possessives* – add an apostrophe and s to form the possessive of most singular nouns (when a singular noun ends with an s or a z sound, you may form the possessive by adding just an apostrophe)

Example: Spock’s ears      the ship’s escape plan

4. *To Form Plural Possessives* – the possessive form of plural nouns ending in s is usually made by adding just an apostrophe

Example: bosses’ orders

5. *In Compound Nouns* – form the possessive of a compound noun by placing the possessive ending after the last word  
Example: the secretary of the interior's agenda
6. *To Show Shared Possession* – when possession is shared by more than one noun, use the possessive form for the last noun in the series  
Examples:  
Sarah, Linda, and Nakiva's water skis (All three own the same skis)  
Sarah's, Linda's, and Nakiva's water skis (Each owns her own skis)

### ***Plurals***

1. *Nouns Ending in a Consonant* – form the plurals of most nouns by adding s to the singular  
Example: cheerleader – cheerleaders  
-form the plurals of nouns ending in sh, ch, x, s, and z by adding es to the singular  
Example: lunch – lunches                      fox – foxes
2. *Nouns Ending in Y* – the plurals of common nouns that end in y – preceded by a consonant – are formed by changing the y to i and adding es  
Example: fly – flies  
-form the plurals of nouns that end in y – preceded by a vowel – by adding only an s  
Example: donkey – donkeys
3. *Nouns Ending in O* – the plurals of nouns ending in o – preceded by a vowel – are formed by adding an s  
Example: radio – radios  
-plurals ending in O – preceded by a consonant – are formed by adding es  
Example: echo – echoes  
-exceptions: musical terms always form plurals by adding s  
Example: banjo – banjos
4. *Nouns Ending in f or fe* – if the final f sound is still heard in the plural form of the word, simply add s; if the final f sound becomes a v sound, change the f to ve and add s  
Examples: roof – roofs                      wife – wives
5. *Nouns Ending in ful* – form the plurals of nouns ending in ful by adding s at the end of the word  
Example: mouthful – mouthfuls

Sebranek, Patrick, et al. Writers Inc.: A Student Handbook for Writing and Learning. Wilmington, MA: Write Source, 2001.

## **EDITING MARKS** (Correction symbols)

**Add letters or words**

**Add a period**

**Capitalize a letter**

**Make a capital letter lowercase**

**Close up**

**Begin a new paragraph**

**Add a comma**

**Trade the position of letters or words**

**Take out letters or words**

**Sentence Fragment**

**Misspelling**

**Awkward sentence**

**Run-on sentence**

Adopted from MHS Writing Style Book

## **GIVING PROPER CREDIT**

The Goessel High School Handbook states, “Academic dishonesty is not acceptable. Cheating is defined as copying another student’s work and/or plagiarism. Plagiarism is the use of another person’s original ideas or writing without giving credit to the true author. Materials taken from electronic sources are covered by this policy.”

In addition, information written in papers and/or speeches should not be fabricated. All documentation cited within a paper should be able to be verified according to the information used.

“A student who engages in any form of academic dishonesty will be subject to the loss of credit for work in question, as well as other disciplinary measures up to and including suspension or expulsion” (GHS HANDBOOK).

### ***Avoiding Plagiarism***

“You owe it to your sources and your readers to give credit for anyone else’s ideas or words that you use in your research paper. If you don’t, you may be guilty of *plagiarism* – the act of presenting someone else’s ideas as your own.” The guidelines that follow will help you avoid plagiarism:

- When using a writer’s idea, credit the author by name and also cite the work in which you found the idea.
- Give a new citation even when using additional information from a previously cited source.
- When summarizing or paraphrasing, remember to use quotation marks around key words or phrases taken directly from the source.
- Cite everything you borrow unless you’re sure that the information is common knowledge” (Sebranek).

### ***Writing Paraphrases***

“There are two ways to share information from another source: 1) quote the source directly, or 2) paraphrase the source. When you quote directly, you include the exact words of the author and put quotation marks around them. When you paraphrase, you use your own words to restate someone else’s ideas. In either case, you must cite your source.” To paraphrase, follow the steps below:

1. Skim the selection first to get the overall meaning.
2. Read the selection carefully; pay attention to key words and phrases.
3. List the main ideas on a piece of paper, without looking at the selection.
4. Review the selection again.
5. Write your paraphrase; restate the author’s ideas in your own words.
6. Check your paraphrase for accuracy” (Sebranek).

## ***Sample Paraphrases***

Following the original passage below from a book by Travis Taylor, you'll find two sample paraphrases, both properly cited.

### **ORIGINAL PASSAGE**

Kyudo, which means “the way of the bow” in Japanese, is the Zen martial art of archery. It was adapted into traditional Buddhist practice from medieval Japanese archers who used seven-foot asymmetrical bows called *yumi*. Although kyudo lacks the widespread popularity of karate or judo, it is often regarded as one of the most intensive martial arts in existence, taking an estimated 30 years to master.

The standard execution of kyudo involves a series of specific actions, including assuming the proper posture, approaching the intended target, nocking the arrow, drawing it, releasing it, and then repeating the process. After the second arrow has been released, the archer approaches the target, withdraws the arrows, and thus completes the exercise.

There is far more to kyudo, however, than simply shooting arrows. For every movement, the archer must maintain a specific posture, inhaling and exhaling at predetermined points throughout the exercise. The focus point for breathing and positioning is the region of the lower stomach called the *hara*. Careful attention to the *hara* is supposed to help an archer maintain a solid center of balance.

With continued practice, the archer gains greater abilities of concentration and action. In addition, the repetitive action and deep breathing greatly relaxes the archer – heightening his alertness and lowering his stress.

### **Basic Paraphrase**

Kyudo is the Zen martial art of archery. It was adapted from medieval Japanese archery into a spiritual and physical exercise. Through a series of specific actions, the archer prepares and shoots an arrow into a target and then repeats the action one more time. The archer's sense of balance comes from focusing on the lower stomach region. The focused breathing and balanced posture lessen stress and increase the archer's ability to concentrate (Taylor 26).

### **Basic Paraphrase with Quotation**

Kyudo is the Zen martial art of archery. It was adapted from medieval traditional Japanese archery into a spiritual and physical exercise. “The standard execution of kyudo involves a series of specific actions, including assuming the proper posture, approaching the intended target, nocking the arrow, drawing it, [and] releasing it...” (Taylor 26). An archer's sense of balance comes from focusing on the lower stomach region. The breathing and balanced posture lessen stress and increase the archer's ability to concentrate (Taylor 26).

## ***Using Quoted Material***

A quotation can be a single word or an entire paragraph. Choose quotations carefully, keep them as brief as possible, and use them only when they are necessary.

### **Short Quotations**

If a quotation is four typed lines or fewer, work it into the body of your paper and put quotation marks around it.

### **Long Quotations**

Quotations of more than four typed lines should be set off from the rest of the writing by indenting each line 10 spaces and double-spacing the material. When quoting two or more paragraphs, indent the first line of each paragraph three additional spaces. Do not use quotation marks.

### **Quoting Poetry**

When quoting up to three lines of poetry, use quotation marks and work the lines into your writing. Use a diagonal (/) to show where each line of the poem ends. For quotations of four lines or more, indent each line 10 spaces (and double-space the same as the rest of the text). Do not use quotation marks.

### **Partial Quotations**

If you want to leave out part of the quotation, use an ellipsis to signify the omission. An ellipsis (. . .) is three periods with a space before and after each one.

Goessel High School Handbook.

Sebranek, Patrick, et al. Writers Inc.: A Student Handbook  
for Writing and Learning. Wilmington, MA: Write Source, 2001.

## CITATION AND WORKS-CITED LIST: Overview

Citation is both giving credit within the text to who or what you borrowed the information from AND on a works cited page.

For citation, there are several options for summarizing.

1. With author and title in text  
Example: In Confederates in the Attic, Tony Horwitz explains how the Civil War remains alive in the South.
2. Without author in text  
Example: Confederates in the Attic explains how the Civil War remains alive in the South (Horwitz).
3. Paraphrase with author in text  
Example: According to Winchester, no English dictionary existed at the time Shakespeare wrote his plays (80).
4. Paraphrase without author in text  
Example: No English dictionary existed at the time Shakespeare wrote his plays (Winchester, 80).
5. Directly borrowed quote  
Example: In Cry, the Beloved Country, the author presents Steven Kumalo as “a man who lives in a world not made for him, whose own world is slipping away, dying, being destroyed, beyond recall” (Paton, 165).

The works-cited section lists all of the sources you have cited in your paper. It does not include sources you may have read but did not cite in your paper. The Language Arts Department uses MLA format for all papers. Follow the format below:

1. Begin your works cited on a new page (the next page after the text)
2. Center the title *Works Cited* one inch from the top
3. Begin each entry flush with the left margin. If the entry runs more than one line, indent additional lines five spaces.
4. Single space all entries
5. Double space between all entries.
6. List each entry alphabetically by the author’s last name. If there is no author, use the first word of the title.
7. In Web entries, if certain items are not available, go on to the next item.

## BOOKS

### *One Author*

Zubrin, Robert J. Entering Space: Creating a Spacefaring Civilization. New York: Putnam Publishing, 1999.

### *Two or Three Authors*

Diehl, Daniel and Mark Donnelly. Medieval Furniture: Plans and Instructions for Historical Reproductions. Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole, 1999.

### *More Than Three Authors*

Roberts, Simon, et al. The Complete Java 2 Certification Study Guide. Alameda, CA: Sybex, 1999.

### *A Corporate Group Author*

Wisconsin Taxpayers' Alliance. School Facts '99. Madison, WI: Wisconsin Taxpayers' Alliance, 1999.

### *A Single Work from an Anthology*

Paley, Grace. "A Warning." Telling and Remembering: A Century of American Jewish Poetry. Ed. Steven J. Rubin. Boston: Beacon, 1997.

### *A Multivolume Work*

Bianco, David P., ed. Parents Aren't Supposed to Like It: Rock and Other Pop Musicians of the 1990s. Vol. 3. Detroit: UXL – Gale, 1998.

### *An Article in a Reference Book*

Pettigrew, Thomas F. "Racism." The World Book Encyclopedia. 1998 ed.

"Pyrrho." The Encyclopedia Americana. International ed. 1995.

## PERIODICALS

### *Signed Article in a Magazine*

Anderson, Kelli. "Going to the Dawgs." Sports Illustrated 15 Nov. 1999: 116-19.

### *Unsigned Article in a Magazine*

"Seven Tips About Portable Generators." Consumer Reports Nov. 1999: 10.

### *Signed Newspaper Article*

Mullen, William. "Dinosaur Bones in Sahara Prove a Monster Find." Chicago Tribune 12 Nov. 1999, late ed., sec. 1:1+.

### *Unsigned Newspaper Article*

"Toyota to Team Up with Dealer Network to Sell Cars on Web." Wall Street Journal 12 Nov. 1999: B5.

## OTHER SOURCES

### *Television or Radio Program*

“An Interview with Elton John.” Barbara Walters Special. ABC. WISN, Milwaukee. 21 Mar. 1994.

### *CD Recording*

Shocked, Michelle. Arkansas Traveler. Polygram Records, 1992.

### *Filmstrip, Slide Program, Videocassette, DVD*

Going Back: A Return to Vietnam. Videocassette. Virginia Productions, 1982.

### *Interview*

O’Connell, Amanda. Telephone Interview. 7 Jan. 2000.

### *Survey*

Goessel High School Student Body. Survey. 7 Jan. 2000.

## ELECTRONIC SOURCES

### *Article Within a Web Site*

Devitt, Terry. “Flying High.” The Why Files. 9 Dec. 1999. University of Wisconsin, Board of Regents. 4 Jan. 2000.  
[www.whyfiles.news.wisc.edu/shorties/kite.html](http://www.whyfiles.news.wisc.edu/shorties/kite.html).

### *Article Within a Web Site (Anonymous)*

“Becoming a Meteorologist.” Weather.com. 12 Nov. 1999. The Weather Channel. 24 Nov. 1999.  
[www.weather.com/learn\\_more/resources/metro.html](http://www.weather.com/learn_more/resources/metro.html).

### *Article from On-Line Computer Service*

“Senate Approves New Alternative Fuel.” National Petroleum News. Sept. 1998: 36. MasterFILE Premier. EBSCOhost. Lynchburg Public Library. 12 Nov. 1999. [www.ebscohost.com](http://www.ebscohost.com).

\*\*the following page shows you an example of a works cited page

Sebranek, Patrick, et al. Writers Inc.: A Student Handbook for Writing and Learning. Wilmington, MA: Write Source, 2001.

## WORKS CITED

Barrett, Susan. Personal Interview. 3 May 2000.

Lewis, Jack. "The Ogallala Aquifer: An Underground Sea." EPA Journal. Nov./Dec. 1990: 42. MasterFILE Premier. EBSCOhost. Goessel High School Library. 5 Nov. 2000. [www.ebscohost.com](http://www.ebscohost.com).

Nebel, Bernard J. and Richard T. Wright. Environmental Science. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1998.

Opie, John. Ogallala: Water for a Dry Land. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1993.

Zwingle, Erla. "Wellspring of the High Plains." National Geographic Mar. 1993: 80-109.

Sebranek, Patrick, et al. Writers Inc.: A Student Handbook for Writing and Learning. Wilmington, MA: Write Source, 2001.

# KANSAS STATE ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

## *Ideas and Content*

Ideas and Content are what you have to say—the message. If you can choose your own topic, pick something that is important to you, and that you know a lot about. Keep it small. If your topic is too big, you'll end up trying to tell too much and not having the time or space to tell anything very interesting. Put in the kind or details to show you pay attention to the world and notice things. Don't tell the reader what he already knows. Avoid general statements and be specific.

## *Organization*

The Organization of your paper is in the inside structure—like a frame of a home. Without it, ideas collapse or crash into each other. Organization gives your writing direction and purpose. You need to begin with a strong lead—one that hooks the reader immediately. Then you need to build to your most important point by giving your reader interesting details that work like stepping stones—each one taking the reader a little closer to the main idea of your paper. Everything should fit, with a strong connecting line back to the main idea. Do not get bogged down in trivial details. When you have said it all, stop—but make your last sentence count.

## *Voice*

The Voice is you coming through your writing. It's what gives your writing personality, flavor—a sound that is all its own. To give your Voice power, you must be very honest. You must say what you truly feel and think—not what you think someone else might want to hear. This means you need to know yourself, listen to yourself, and trust those thoughts and feelings. Write with confidence—as if you know what you're talking about and as if you find it fascinating.

## *Word Choice*

As you read and listen to other people speak, you can gain a rich vocabulary of precise and colorful words that will let you say exactly what you want. This is the essence of good word choice. Every new word increases your power. Keep your vocabulary natural; **never** write to impress or you will sound like a thesaurus. Be specific and help the reader create a mental picture.

### *Sentence Fluency*

Read the paper aloud and listen to the rhythm of the language. Do you like what you hear? Is the rhythm varied and pleasing to the ear? Your sentences should be clear; they should make sense. Make every word work hard. Look at how your sentences begin. Vary beginnings and combine very short sentences. Don't let sentences get too long either. If a sentence feels too long or out of control, make two sentences.

### *Conventions*

Conventions include spelling, punctuation, grammar, paragraphing, and capitalization—all the little details that determine how correct your text is. When everything else is done, you must review spotting your own mistakes. You can skip right over them if you're not careful. Mistakes come between your reader and the meaning of your work. They get in the way and keep the reader from understanding your message. Good editing polishes your work, sets it off, and showcases it so that the ideas and voice can be appreciated. Use plenty of resources to help you—a dictionary is a must, and a good handbook is helpful too.

## 6-TRAIT WRITING RUBRICS

### *Narrative Rubric*

#### **Ideas/Content (Development)**

##### **Rating of 5 (Strong):**

**The paper is clear, focused, and interesting. It holds the reader's attention. Relevant details enrich the text. Ideas are fresh and original.**

- The writer seems to be writing from experiences and shows insight.
- Supporting, relevant, and focused details give the reader important information that he or she could not personally bring to the text.
- The main idea(s) stand out.
- The text is controlled and well developed.
- The writer works with and shapes ideas, making connections and sharing insights.

##### **Rating of 3 (Developing):**

**The paper is clear and focused. The topic shows promise, even though development is still limited, sketchy or general.**

- The writer is beginning to define the topic, but is not “there” yet. The reader needs more information to “fill in the blanks.”
- The writer seems to be writing from experience, but has some trouble going from general observations to specific details.
- Ideas are reasonably clear and purposeful, even though they may not be explicit, detailed, personalized, or developed.
- Main idea(s) seems a blend of the original and the predictable.
- Support is attempted, but doesn't go far enough in developing, clarifying, or adding new insights.

##### **Rating of 1 (Beginning):**

**As yet, the paper has no clear sense of purpose. The reader must make inferences based on sketchy details.**

- Information is very limited or unclear.
- All details seem equally important.
- The text is very repetitious, or reads like a collection of random thoughts from which no main idea emerges.
- The writer may still be in search of a real topic or sense of direction to guide development.
- The topic is not defined in a meaningful way.

## *Narrative Rubric*

### **Organization**

**Rating of 5 (Strong): The organization emphasizes the main idea and moves the reader through the text.**

- Details fit where they are placed; sequencing is logical and effective.
- An introduction engages the reader with the text.
- A satisfying conclusion leaves the reader with a sense of resolution.
- Pacing is very well controlled; the writer delivers needed information at just the right moment and then moves on.
- Transitions allow ideas to flow smoothly within the text.

#### **Rating of 3 (Developing):**

**The organizational structure is strong enough to move the reader from point to point without confusion.**

- Sequencing is usually logical. It may sometimes be too obvious or otherwise ineffective.
- The paper has a recognizable introduction but it may not create a strong sense of anticipation.
- The conclusion may not leave the reader with a satisfying sense of resolution.
- Pacing is fairly well controlled, though the writer sometimes moves too quickly or spends too much time on the obvious.
- Transitions often work well though connections between ideas are sometimes unclear.

#### **Rating of 1 (Beginning):**

**The writing lacks a clear sense of direction. Ideas, details, or events are random. There is no identifiable internal structure.**

- Sequencing needs work.
- The text lacks a real introduction.
- There is no conclusion.
- Pacing is awkward.
- Transitions are not clearly defined. Connections between ideas seem confusing or incomplete.

## *Narrative Rubric*

### **Voice**

#### **Rating of 5 (Strong):**

**The writer speaks directly to the reader in a way that is individualized, expressive, and engaging. Clearly, the writer is involved in the text.**

- The language communicates in a compelling manner. Moments here and there amuse, surprise, delight, or move the reader.
- The text leaves the reader feeling a strong sense of interaction with the writer.
- The tone is appropriate for the purpose and the audience.

#### **Rating of 3 (Developing):**

**The writing seems sincere, but not genuinely engaged, committed, or involved. The text is pleasant and sometimes personable, but short of compelling.**

- The language is natural, sometimes thought-provoking, and it brings the topic to life.
- The text uses language that is strong on occasion, but at other times it is vague and tentative.
- The writer seems aware of an audience but often fails to weigh words carefully.

#### **Rating of 1 (Beginning):**

**The writing is flat, lifeless, or mechanical.**

- The language does not connect with the reader.
- The text speaks in a monotone that flattens all potential highs and lows of the message.
- The text does not address a particular audience.

## *Narrative Rubric*

### **Word Choice**

#### **Rating of 5 (Strong):**

**Words convey the intended message in an interesting, precise, and natural way.**

- Words are specific and accurate; they seem just right.
- Imagery is strong.
- Powerful verbs give the writing energy.
- Striking words and phrases often catch the reader's eye, but the language is natural and never overdone.
- Expression is fresh and appealing; slang is used sparingly.

#### **Rating of 3 (Developing):**

**The language is functional, but sometimes lacks punch. It gets the message across.**

- Words are sometimes correct and adequate; it is easy to understand what the writer means.
- Familiar words and phrases communicate but rarely capture the reader's imagination.
- A few energetic verbs liven things up now and then; the reader yearns for more.
- Attempts at colorful language often come close to the mark but may seem overdone or out of place.
- The text may be redundant or rely on clichés.

#### **Rating of 1 (Beginning):**

**The writer struggles with a limited vocabulary.**

- Words are so vague and abstract that only the most general message comes through (e.g., *It was a fun time.*; *It was nice and stuff.*)
- Redundancy clouds the message and distracts the reader.
- Verbs are general and vague.
- Words are frequently used incorrectly.
- Clichés or jargon serve as a crutch.

## *Narrative Rubric*

### **Sentence Fluency**

#### **Rating of 5 (Strong):**

**The text flows easily with a variety of sentence structures and lengths. Oral reading is easy and enjoyable.**

- Sentence structure reflects logic and sense and helps to show how ideas relate.
- Purposeful sentence beginnings guide the reader from one sentence to another.
- Sentences are skillfully crafted, grammatical, and solid.
- Variation in sentence structure and length adds interest to the text.
- Fragments, if used, work well.
- Dialogue, if used, sounds natural.
- The writing sounds natural and one sentence flows effortlessly into the next.

#### **Rating of 3 (Developing):**

**The text flows efficiently but lacks variety of sentence structure.**

- Some sentence structure reflects logic and sense showing how ideas relate.
- Some sentence beginnings guide the reader from one sentence to another.
- Sentences may not seem skillfully crafted, but they are grammatical and solid.
- The text favors a particular sentence pattern, but there is some variation in sentence length.
- Fragments, if used, distract from the flow of the text.
- Dialogue, if used, sounds contrived.

#### **Rating of 1 (Beginning):**

**The text uses sentences that tend to be choppy, incomplete, rambling, or awkward. The text is difficult to follow.**

- Sentence structure tends to obscure meaning.
- Sentence beginnings are missing or do not guide the reader from one sentence to another.
- Sentence patterns are monotonous. There is little or no variety in sentence length or structure.
- Sentences may be choppy, run-on, or fragmented.
- Dialogue, if used, is incorrect.

## *Narrative Rubric*

### Conventions

#### **Rating of 5 (Strong):**

**The writer demonstrates control of standard writing conventions and uses them effectively to enhance readability. Errors tend to be so few and minor the reader can easily skim right over them.**

- Paragraph divisions reinforce the organizational structure.
- Grammar and usage are correct and contribute to clarity and style.
- Punctuation is correct and guides the reader through the text.
- Spelling is generally correct even on more difficult words.
- The writing is sufficiently long and complex to allow the writer to show skill in using a range of conventions. (This criterion applies to grade 7 and up only.)
- Only light editing would be required to polish the text.
- The writer may manipulate conventions (particularly grammar) for stylistic effect.

#### **Rating of 3 (Developing):**

**The writer shows control over a limited range of standard writing conventions. Errors are numerous or serious enough to be somewhat distracting, but the writer handles some conventions well.**

- Paragraph divisions are attempted, but paragraphs sometimes run together or begin in the wrong places.
- Problems with grammar and usage are not serious enough to distort meaning.
- Terminal (end-of-sentence) punctuation is almost always correct; internal punctuation (commas, apostrophes, semicolons) may be incorrect or missing.
- Spelling is usually correct (or reasonably phonetic) on common words.
- The writing is sufficiently long and complex to allow the writer to show some skill in using a range of conventions. (This criterion applies to grade 7 and up only.)
- Moderate editing would be required to polish the text for publication.

#### **Rating of 1 (Beginning):**

**Errors in spelling, punctuation, usage and grammar, capitalization and/or paragraphing repeatedly distract the reader and make the text difficult to read. The reader must read once to decode, then again for meaning.**

- Paragraph divisions are missing, irregular, or so frequent (e.g., every sentence) that they do not relate to the organization of the text.
- Errors in grammar and usage are very noticeable and affect meaning.
- Punctuation (including terminal punctuation) is often missing or incorrect.
- Spelling errors are frequent even on common words.
- The writing is not sufficiently long and complex to allow the writer to show skill in using a range of conventions. (This criterion applies to grade 7 and up only.)
- Extensive editing would be required to polish the text for publication.

## *Expository Rubric*

### **Ideas and Content (Development)**

#### **Rating of 5 (Strong):**

**The paper is clear, focused, and purposeful. It thoroughly explains the selected topic in understandable terms. Relevant details provide enrichment.**

- The main idea or thesis statement is clearly defined.
- The writer seems knowledgeable and uses appropriate information and details from a variety of sources. (e.g. personal experiences, observations, and prior knowledge)
- The writer responds to the reader's informational needs.
- The writer uses relevant logical details to clarify the main idea.
- Sources, if used, are acknowledged.

#### **Rating of 3 (Developing):**

**The paper addresses an identifiable topic by offering the reader general basic information. Although the paper is clear and focused, the development is limited, sketchy, and/or general.**

- The main idea can be identified.
- The writer shares some knowledgeable information, facts, and experience but has some difficulty going from general observations to specifics.
- The writer sometimes responds to the reader's informational needs, but important issues or questions are somewhat vague.
- The writer sometimes uses relevant logical details to clarify the main idea and to meet the reader's informational needs.
- Sources, if used, are sometimes acknowledged.

#### **Rating of 1 (Beginning):**

**The writer has not clarified the selected topic. The paper has no clear sense of purpose.**

- The main idea is not identifiable.
- The writer shares some information, but it is limited or unclear.
- The writer does not seem to have the reader's informational needs in mind.
- Details are missing or repetitious.
- Sources, if used, are not acknowledged.

## *Expository Rubric*

### **Organization**

**Rating of 5 (Strong): The organization enhances and showcases the central idea or theme. The sequence, structure, and presentation are compelling and move the reader through the text.**

- Information is arranged within each paragraph in a logical and effective sequence that meets the reader's needs.
- The writing is a cohesive piece that includes an engaging introduction, a body that provides relevant information, and a conclusion that reinforces the thesis statement and leaves the reader with a sense of completion.
- Transitions are appropriate and connect the ideas within and between paragraphs.

**Rating of 3 (Developing): The organizational structure is strong enough to move the reader from point to point without undue confusion.**

- Information is sometimes arranged within each paragraph in a logical and effective sequence, which does not always meet the reader's needs.
- The writing is beginning to develop as a cohesive piece that includes a functional introduction, body, and conclusion.
- Transitions are usually appropriate within and between paragraphs.

**Rating of 1 (Beginning): The writing lacks a clear sense of direction. Ideas, details, or events seem strung together in a random fashion.**

- The sequential arrangement of information is not logical and effective.
- The writing does not include a clear introduction, body, and conclusion.
- Transitions are not used.

## *Expository Rubric*

### **Voice**

**Rating of 5 (Strong): The writer speaks directly to the reader in a way that is individualized, expressive, and engaging. Clearly, the writer is involved in the text and is writing for an audience.**

- The tone is appropriate to the topic, purpose, and audience.
- Vocabulary and figurative language convey the writer's personality. (e.g. humor, surprise, and discovery)
- Text is original and compelling and is designed to hold the reader's attention by anticipating the reader's interest and needs.

**Rating of 3 (Developing): The writing seems sincere, but not genuinely engaged, committed, or involved. The result is pleasant and sometime even personable, but short of compelling.**

- The tone could be altered slightly to better fit the topic, purpose, and audience.
- Vocabulary and figurative language are interesting but inconsistently convey the writer's personality. (e.g. language may be general, vague, or abstract)
- The text occasionally holds the reader's attention by anticipating the reader's interests and needs.

**Rating of 1 (Beginning): The writer seems indifferent, uninvolved, or distanced from the topic and/or audience. As a result, the writing is flat, lifeless, or mechanical.**

- The tone is inappropriate for the topic, purpose, and audience.
- Vocabulary and figurative language do not convey the writer's personality. (e.g. language may be overly technical)
- The text does not hold the reader's attention or anticipate the reader's interest and needs.

## *Expository Rubric*

### **Word Choice**

**Rating of 5 (Strong): Words convey the intended message in an interesting, precise, and natural way. The writing is rich, concise, and increases the reader's understanding.**

- Words are specific and accurate.
- Words and phrases (e.g. vivid verbs, explicit nouns, and effective modifiers) are used to catch the reader's attention. Slang, if present is used sparingly.
- The vocabulary suits the writer, subject, and audience. The meaning of specialized vocabulary is defined or can be determined by context.

**Rating of 3 (Developing): The language is functional but sometimes lacks interest. It gets the message across.**

- Words sometimes are correct and adequate though not necessarily suitable and precise.
- Words and phrases sometimes capture the reader's imagination.
- Specialized vocabulary is sometimes used without sufficient explanation.

**Rating of 1 (Beginning): The writer struggles with a limited vocabulary and searches for words to convey meaning. The words do not get the message across.**

- Words are vague or used incorrectly. (e.g. "It was a fun time."; "It was nice and stuff.")
- Words and phrases do not capture the reader's imagination.
- Specialized vocabulary may be overused or is missing where it would be helpful in clarifying information.

## *Expository Rubric*

### **Sentence Fluency**

**Rating of 5 (Strong): The text flows easily with a variety of sentence structures and lengths.**

- Sentence structure reflects logic and sense and helps to show how ideas relate.
- Purposeful sentence beginnings guide the reader from one sentence to another.
- Variation in sentence structure and length adds interest to the text.
- Fragments, if used, work well.
- Dialogue, if used, is natural and convincing.

**Rating of 3 (Developing): The text flows efficiently but lacks variety in sentence structure.**

- Some sentence structure reflects logic and sense showing how ideas relate.
- Some sentence beginnings guide the reader from one sentence to another.
- The writer shows good control over simple sentence structure, but inconsistent control of complex sentence structure.
- Fragments, if used, distract from the flow of the text.
- Dialogue, if used, is contrived yet convincing.

**Rating of 1 (Beginning): The text uses sentences that tend to be choppy, incomplete, rambling, or awkward. The text is difficult to follow.**

- Sentence structure tends to obscure meaning, rather than showing the reader how ideas relate.
- Sentence beginnings are missing or do not guide the reader from one sentence to another.
- The writer relies on simple or repetitive sentence patterns.
- Fragments, if used, are ineffective.
- Dialogue, if used, is not convincing.

## *Expository Rubric*

### **Conventions**

**Rating of 5 (Strong): The writer demonstrates control of standard writing conventions and uses them effectively to enhance readability. Errors tend to be so few and minor the reader can easily skim right over them.**

- Paragraph division is sound and reinforces the organizational structure.
- Grammar and usage are correct and contribute to clarity and style.
- Punctuation is smooth and guides the reader through the text.
- Spelling is generally correct even on more difficult words.
- The writing is sufficiently long and complex to allow the writer to show skill in using a range of conventions. (This criterion applies to grade 7 and up only.)
- Only light editing would be required to polish the text for publication.
- The writer may manipulate conventions, particularly grammar, for stylistic effect.

**Rating of 3 (Developing): The writer shows control over a limited range of standard writing conventions. Errors are numerous or serious enough to be somewhat distracting, but the writer handles some conventions well.**

- Paragraph divisions are attempted but paragraphs sometimes run together or begin in the wrong places.
- Problems with grammar and usage are not serious enough to distort meaning.
- Terminal (end-of-sentence) punctuation is almost always correct; internal punctuation (commas, apostrophes, semicolons) may be incorrect or missing.
- Spelling is usually correct on common words.
- The writing is sufficiently long and complex to allow the writer to show some skill in using a range of conventions. (This criterion applies to grade 7 and up only.)
- Moderate editing would be required to polish the text for publication.

**Rating of 1 (Beginning): Errors in spelling, punctuation, usage and grammar, capitalization, and/or paragraphing repeatedly distract the reader and make the text difficult to read. The reader must read once to decode, and then again for meaning.**

- Paragraph divisions are missing, irregular, or so frequent (e.g. every sentence) that they do not relate to the organization of the text.
- Errors in grammar and usage are very noticeable and may affect meaning.
- Punctuation is often missing or incorrect.
- Spelling errors are frequent, even on common words.
- The writing is not sufficiently long and complex to allow the writer to show skill in using a range of conventions. (This criterion applies to grade 7 and up only.)
- Extensive editing would be required to polish the text for publication.

## Persuasive Rubric

### Ideas/Content (Development)

#### **Rating of 5 (Strong):**

**The writer's position is clear, developed, and supported by evidence.**

- The arguable position is clearly asserted and suggests the need for a change of beliefs or a specific course of action.
- The persuasive technique enhances the writer's position through 1) effective use of appeals (e.g., authority, reason, and emotion) and 2) makes use of pertinent evidence.
- The alternate positions are identified and addressed.

#### **Rating of 3 (Developing):**

**The writer has begun to define and develop a position. Some supporting details and evidence are present.**

- The arguable position is evident but suggests neither a change in belief nor a new course of action.
- The persuasive technique relies on appeals though some may be weak or undeveloped.
- The persuasive technique makes use of evidence, though not all of it is relevant.
- The alternate positions are acknowledged but not addressed.

#### **Rating of 1 (Beginning):**

**The writer takes no identifiable position. As a result, the reader can only infer the writer's message.**

- The arguable position is not asserted and suggests neither a change in belief nor a course of action.
- There is no recognizable persuasive technique.
- The writer uses unsupported opinions in place of a persuasive technique.
- The alternate positions are not acknowledged.

## *Persuasive Rubric*

### **Organization**

#### **Rating of 5 (Strong):**

**The structure of the paper is logical and allows the reader to make transitions from point to point.**

- The introduction engages the reader with the topic.
- The argument structure presents main points and evidence in a logical and effective sequence to reinforce the writer's position.
- Appropriate transitions connect ideas between and within paragraphs.
- The conclusion reinforces the writer's original position.

#### **Rating of 3 (Developing):**

**The paper has a functional introduction, body, and conclusion that allow the reader to move from point to point.**

- The introduction is recognizable and functional.
- The argument structure and evidence move in a direction that is somewhat mechanical.
- The transitions are usually present and between and within paragraphs but may be forced.
- The conclusion is recognizable and functional.

#### **Rating of 1 (Beginning):**

**The paper has no recognizable beginning, middle, and end.**

- The introduction is unrecognizable.
- The argument structure is unrecognizable and contains ideas and information strung together randomly.
- The transitions are missing.
- The conclusion is unrecognizable.

## *Persuasive Rubric*

### **Voice**

#### **Rating of 5 (Strong):**

**The writer's energy and passion for the position drive the writing, making the text lively, expressive, and engaging.**

- The tone is appropriate to the topic, purpose, and audience.
- Vocabulary and figurative language convey the writer's personality.
- The text is provocative, lively, and designed to hold a reader's attention by anticipating the reader's interests and needs.

#### **Rating of 3 (Developing):**

**The writer is sincere and willing to communicate the position on a functional, if somewhat distant level.**

- The tone could be altered slightly to better fit the topic, purpose, and audience.
- Vocabulary and figurative language are interesting but inconsistently convey the writer's personality.
- The text occasionally speaks to the audience and sometimes holds the reader's attention by anticipating the reader's interests and needs.

#### **Rating of 1 (Beginning):**

**The writer seems distanced from the position; as a result, the text may lack life, spirit, or energy.**

- The tone is inappropriate for the topic, purpose, and audience; it may deliver a one sided emotional burst or is monotone.
- Vocabulary and figurative language do not convey the writer's personality.
- The text does not speak to the audience or anticipate the reader's interests and needs.

## *Persuasive Rubric*

### **Word Choice**

#### **Rating of 5 (Strong):**

**Words convey the position in an interesting, precise, and natural way.**

- Words are specific and accurate; they seem just right.
- Imagery is strong.
- Powerful verbs give the writing energy.
- Striking words and phrases often catch the reader's interest, but the language is natural and never overdone. Slang, if present, is used sparingly.

#### **Rating of 3 (Developing):**

**The language is functional, but sometimes lacks punch. It gets the message across.**

- Words are sometimes correct and adequate though not necessarily stirring.
- Attempts at imagery or colorful language sometimes capture the reader's imagination.
- There are few energetic verbs.
- The text is sometimes redundant or contains clichés.

#### **Rating of 1 (Beginning):**

**The writer struggles with a limited vocabulary and searches for words to convey meaning.**

**The words do not get the message across.**

- Words are vague or used incorrectly (e.g., "*It was a fun time.*"; "*It was nice and stuff.*").
- The writer does not select words that create imagery.
- Verbs are general and vague.
- Redundancy, clichés, or jargon are common.

## *Persuasive Rubric*

### **Sentence Fluency**

#### **Rating of 5 (Strong):**

**The text flows easily with a variety of sentence structures and lengths.**

- Sentence structure reflects logic and sense and helps to show how ideas relate.
- Purposeful sentence beginnings guide the reader from one sentence to another.
- Variation in sentence structure and length add interest to the text.
- Fragments, if used, work well.
- Dialogue, if used, is natural and convincing.

#### **Rating of 3 (Developing):**

**The text flows efficiently but lacks variety of sentence structure.**

- Sentence structure sometimes reflects logic and sense showing how ideas relate. Some sentence beginnings guide the reader from one idea to another.
- The writer shows good control over simple sentence structure, but inconsistent control of complex sentence structure.
- Fragments, if used, distract from the flow of the text.
- Dialogue, if used, is contrived yet convincing.

#### **Rating of 1 (Beginning):**

**The text uses sentences that tend to be choppy, incomplete, rambling, or awkward. The text is difficult to follow.**

- Sentence structure tends to obscure meaning.
- The writer relies on simple or repetitive sentence patterns.
- Fragments, if used, are ineffective.
- Dialogue, if used, is not convincing.

## *Persuasive Rubric*

### **Conventions**

#### **Rating of 5 (Strong):**

**The writer demonstrates control of standard writing conventions and uses them effectively to enhance readability. Errors tend to be so few and minor the reader can easily skim right over them.**

- Paragraph divisions reinforce the organizational structure.
- Grammar and usage are correct and contribute to clarity and style.
- Punctuation is smooth and guides the reader through the text.
- Spelling is generally correct, even on more difficult words.
- The writing is sufficiently long and complex to allow the writer to show skill in using a range of conventions. (This criterion applies to grade 7 and up only.)
- Only light editing would be required to polish the text for publication.
- The writer may manipulate conventions (particularly grammar) for stylistic effect.

#### **Rating of 3 (Developing):**

**The writer shows control over a limited range of standard writing conventions. Errors are numerous or serious enough to be somewhat distracting, but the writer handles some conventions well.**

- Paragraph divisions are attempted, but paragraphs sometimes run together or begin in the wrong places.
- Problems with grammar and usage are not serious enough to distort meaning.
- Terminal (end-of-sentence) punctuation is almost always correct; internal punctuation (commas, apostrophes, semicolons) may be incorrect or missing.
- Spelling is usually correct on common words.
- The writing is sufficiently long and complex to allow the writer to show some skill in using a range of conventions. (This criterion applies to grade 7 and up only.)
- Moderate editing would be required to polish the text for publication.

#### **Rating of 1 (Beginning):**

**Errors in spelling, punctuation, usage and grammar, capitalization and/or paragraphing repeatedly distract the reader and make the text difficult to read.**

- Paragraph divisions are missing, irregular, or so frequent (e.g., every sentence) that they do not relate to organization of the text.
- Errors in grammar and usage are very noticeable and may affect meaning.
- Punctuation is often missing or incorrect.
- Spelling errors are frequent even on common words.
- The writing is not sufficiently long and complex to allow the writer to show skill in using a range of conventions. (This criterion applies to grade 7 and up only.)
- Extensive editing would be required to polish the text for publication.

## *Technical Rubric*

### **Ideas/Content (Development)**

#### **Rating of 5 (Strong):**

**The writing is clearly focused which leads to achieving a well-defined goal.**

- The purpose is clearly defined.
- The writing supports the purpose with concise, logical details that meet the reader's informational needs.
- Sources, if used, are acknowledged.

#### **Rating of 3 (Developing):**

**The writing addresses an identifiable goal by offering the reader general basic information. The development is limited, sketchy, and/or general.**

- The purpose can be identified.
- The writing sometimes supports the purpose with concise, logical details that meet the reader's informational needs.
- Sources, if used, are sometimes acknowledged.

#### **Rating of 1 (Beginning):**

**The writing has not clarified the selected goal. The text has no clear sense of purpose.**

- The purpose is not identifiable.
- The writer does not support the purpose with concise, logical details that meet the reader's information needs.
- Sources, if used, are not acknowledged.

## *Technical Rubric*

### **Organization**

#### **Rating of 5 (Strong):**

**The organization enhances and showcases the purpose. The sequence, structure, and presentation are compelling and move the reader through the text.**

- Information is arranged in a format that is logical and effective and meets the reader's needs.
- The writing is a comprehensive piece with a constructive introduction, a body that provides relevant information, and a suitable conclusion that reinforces the purpose and leaves the reader with a sense of completion.
- Transitions are appropriate and connect the ideas.
- Information is organized within each section, paragraph, list, or graphic in a logical and effective sequence to meet the reader's needs.

#### **Rating of 3 (Developing):**

**The organizational structure is strong enough to move the reader from point to point without undue confusion.**

- Information is sometimes arranged in a format that is logical and effective, which does not always meet the reader's needs.
- The writing is beginning to develop as a comprehensive piece that includes a functional introduction, body, and conclusion.
- Transitions are usually appropriate.
- Information is sometimes organized within each section, paragraph, list, or graphic in a logical and effective sequence to meet the reader's needs.

#### **Rating of 1 (Beginning):**

**The text lacks a clear sense of direction. Ideas and details seem strung together in a random fashion.**

- Information is not arranged in a format that is logical and effective.
- The writing is not comprehensive and does not include a clear introduction, body, and conclusion.
- Transitions are not used.
- Information in each section, paragraph, list, or graphic is not organized in a logical or effective sequence.

## *Technical Rubric*

### **Voice**

#### **Rating of 5 (Strong):**

**The writer speaks directly to the reader in a way that is individualized, expressive, and engaging. Clearly, the writer is involved in the text and is writing for an audience.**

- The text and/or graphics are appropriate for the audience and purpose. (e.g. letter, complex reports, directions, brochures, electronic presentations, newsletters, memos, e-mails, fliers, web pages, charts, maps, tables, pictorials, and resumes)
- Writes with authority so the voice is not distracting.

#### **Rating of 3 (Developing):**

**The writing seems sincere, but not genuinely engaged, committed, or involved. The result is pleasant and sometime even personable, but short of compelling.**

- The text and/or graphics sometimes are appropriate for the audience and purpose. (e.g. letter, complex reports, directions, brochures, electronic presentations, newsletters, memos, e-mails, fliers, web pages, charts, maps, tables, pictorials, and resumes)
- Writes with authority but sometimes voice is distracting.
- Rating of 1 (Beginning): The writer seems indifferent, uninvolved, or distanced from the topic and/or audience.

#### **Rating of 1 (Beginning):**

**The writer seems indifferent, uninvolved, or distanced from the topic and/or audience.**

- The text and/or graphics are not appropriate for the audience and purpose. (e.g. letter, complex reports, directions, brochures, PowerPoint®, newsletters, memos, e-mails, fliers, web pages, charts, maps, tables, pictorials, and resumes)
- Writes without authority and the voice is distracting.

## *Technical Rubric*

### **Word Choice**

#### **Rating of 5 (Strong):**

**Words convey the intended message in an accurate and concise manner that increases the reader's understanding.**

- Words are clear, precise, and professional.
- The meaning of technical terms or professional jargon is defined or can be determined by the context.
- The vocabulary suits the purpose, subject, and audience.

#### **Rating of 3 (Developing):**

**The language is functional but sometimes lacks interest. The words do not get the message across.**

- Sometimes words are clear, precise, and professional.
- The meaning of technical terms or professional jargon is sometimes defined or can be determined by the context.
- The vocabulary sometimes suits the purpose, subject, and audience.

#### **Rating of 1 (Beginning):**

**The writer struggles with a limited vocabulary and searches for words to convey meaning. The words do not get the message across.**

- Words are not clear, precise, and professional.
- The meaning of technical terms or professional jargon is not defined or can not be determined by the context.
- The vocabulary does not suit the purpose, subject, and audience.

## *Technical Rubric*

### **Sentence Fluency**

#### **Rating of 5 (Strong):**

**The text flows easily with a variety of sentence structures and lengths.**

- Compact sentences or phrases make the point clear.
- The text reflects logic and sense and helps show how ideas relate.
- Fragments, if used, work well.
- Dialogue, if used, is natural and convincing.

#### **Rating of 3 (Developing):**

**The text flows efficiently but lacks variety in sentence structure.**

- Sometimes compact sentences or phrases make the point clear but some sentences are wordy.
- The text reflects logic and sense and helps show how some ideas relate.
- Fragments, if used, distract from the flow of the text.
- Dialogue, if used, is contrived yet convincing.

#### **Rating of 1 (Beginning):**

**The text uses sentences that tend to be choppy, incomplete, rambling, or awkward. The text is difficult to follow.**

- Wordy sentences detract from the purpose.
- The text tends to obscure meaning, rather than showing the reader how ideas relate.
- Fragments, if used, are ineffective.
- Dialogue, if used is not convincing.

## *Technical Rubric*

### **Conventions**

#### **Rating of 5 (Strong):**

**The writer demonstrates control of standard writing conventions and uses them effectively to enhance readability. Errors tend to be so few and minor the reader can easily skim right over them.**

- Paragraph division is sound and reinforces the organizational structure.
- Grammar and usage are correct and contribute to clarity and style.
- Punctuation is smooth and guides the reader through the text.
- Spelling is generally correct even on more difficult words.
- Only light editing would be required to polish the text for publication.
- Graphic devices, when used, are clear, helpful, visually appealing and supportive of the text.
- The writer may manipulate conventions, particularly grammar, for stylistic effect.

#### **Rating of 3 (Developing):**

**The writer shows reasonable control over a limited range of standard writing conventions. Errors are numerous or serious enough to be somewhat distracting, but the writer handles some conventions well.**

- Paragraph divisions are attempted but paragraphs sometimes run together or begin in the wrong places.
- Problems with grammar and usage are not serious enough to distort meaning.
- Terminal (end-of-sentence) punctuation is almost always correct; internal punctuation (commas, apostrophes, semicolons) may be incorrect or missing.
- Spelling is usually correct on common words.
- Moderate editing would be required to polish the text for publication.
- Graphic devices, when used, are sometimes clear, helpful, visually appealing and supportive of the text.

#### **Rating of 1 (Beginning):**

**Errors in spelling, punctuation, usage and grammar, capitalization, and/or paragraphing repeatedly distract the reader and make the text difficult to read. The reader must read once to decode, then again for meaning.**

- Paragraph divisions are missing, irregular, or so frequent (e.g. every sentence) that it does not relate to the organization of the text.
- Errors in grammar and usage are very noticeable and may affect meaning.
- Punctuation is often missing or incorrect.
- Spelling errors are frequent even on common words.
- Extensive editing would be required to polish the text for publication.
- Graphic devices, when used, are not clear, helpful, visually appealing or supportive of the text.

