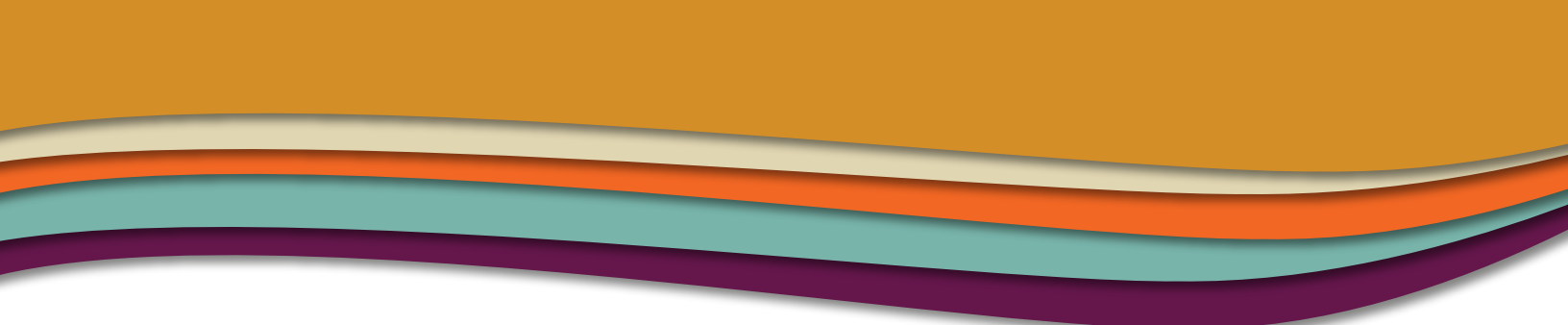# WRITE FOR TEXAS

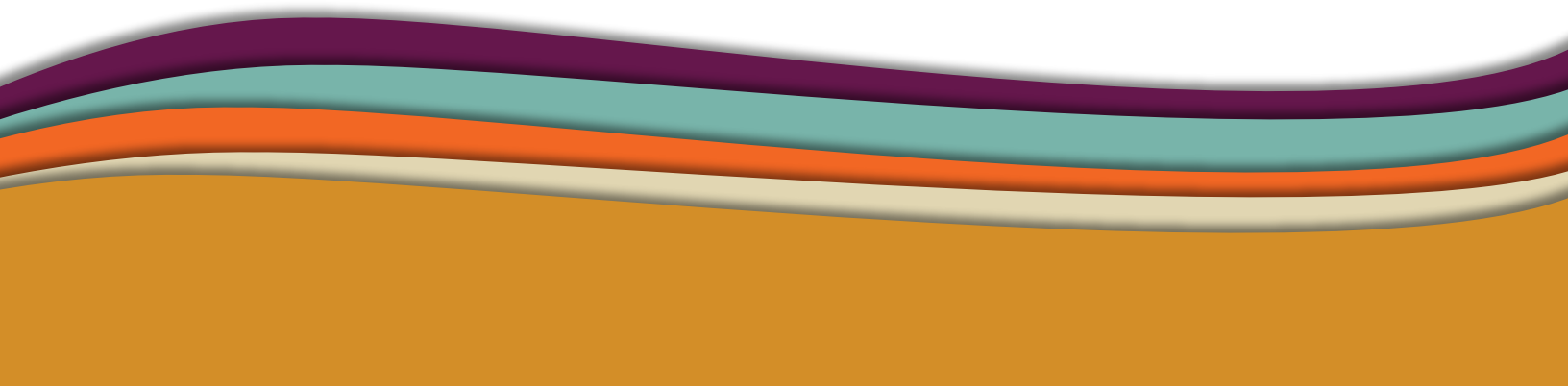## Teaching Revising and Editing Skills

Online Companion Workbook

This Write for Texas Online Companion Workbook serves as an optional guide that participants can use as they work through each online resource.

This Companion Workbook includes the following:

1. Copies of the handouts for each resource—these handouts, which are also available electronically and can be downloaded, read, and/or printed within each resource, include the following:

   - **Classroom teacher handouts:** Instructional practices for teachers to use as they plan and implement reading and writing instruction in their content area classrooms

   - **Classroom templates:** Masters for students to use—these handouts can be kept in students' writing folders or notebooks

   - **Professional connection handouts:** Informative materials for teachers that provide background and research-based information related to effective content area reading and writing instruction

   - **Online activity handouts:** Materials for teachers to use as they complete online practice activities and view related videos

2. A brief explanation of how teachers use the handouts as they work through each online resource

3. Tips for how to use some of the materials and strategies in the classroom

4. Related online resource participant activities, including the following:

   - **Online practice activities and videos:** Opportunities for teachers to practice (sometimes in the role of a student or teacher) the reading and writing strategies (Some resources include videos.)

   - **Classroom teaching activities:** Opportunities for teachers to try the strategies in the classroom and think about how to incorporate the instructional practices into their content area curriculum

   - **Teaching journal questions:** Opportunities for teachers to think about and record (on paper or electronically) their responses to reflection questions, ideas, and other thoughts that relate to the online resources

Contents

Handouts

Teaching Revising and Editing Skills
Gateway Resource TRES0001

Teaching Revising and Editing Skills
GATEWAY RESOURCE ID: TRES0001
Making Revising and Editing a Priority

Making Revising and Editing a Priority is the first online resource in the Teaching Revising and Editing Skills series.

To locate this resource, go to the Write for Texas website: http://writefortexas.org. Click on the **Online Materials** tab at the top of the page. Next, click on the **Teaching Revising and Editing Skills** tab in the column on the left side of the page. Then, after reading the information, click on **Making Revising and Editing a Priority** (in the middle of the page) to begin working in the Project Share Gateway.

Making Revising and Editing a Priority has three sections. The suggested time to complete all three sections is 50 minutes. You may complete this resource at your own pace. All sections may be completed in a single session, or you may log in multiple times as you work through the information and activities.

Materials and Activities by Section

Section 1. Introduction

Read and consider the research excerpt.

Section 2. Revising and Editing Guidelines

Read the guidelines.

> **Tip:** Use the guidelines to teach your students how to revise and edit their writing. Write, reread, and think aloud in front of the class. Focus on one area or element to revise at a time. Provide guidance and support as students practice revising and editing their writing individually, with a partner, or in a small group.

- **Teaching journal questions:** How would you explain the differences between revising and editing? Which writing conventions are the most problematic for your students? How do you address these areas?

  Think about the questions. Record your responses, ideas, and other thoughts in your teaching journal.

Section 3. Peer Conferencing

- **Classroom teacher handout:** General Guidelines for Teaching Peer Conferencing

  Read the guidelines before watching the video.

  > **Tip:** Model and explicitly teach peer conferencing procedures, reviewer etiquette, and appropriate ways to respond and give constructive, helpful feedback. Include multiple opportunities for students to practice in pairs and small groups. Provide copies of page 2 of the handout for students' writing folders or notebooks.

- **Online activity handout and classroom template:** Peer Conferencing Tool for Expository Essays (Handout 29)

- **Online activity handout:** The Whole Family Under One Roof? (Handout 17)

- **Online practice activity:**
  - Select and carefully read one of the expository essays on Handout 17. Then, complete the peer conferencing tool on Handout 29 for that essay.
  - Review the sample basic response or feedback protocol—praise, question, and polish—on page 2 of the General Guidelines for Teaching Peer Conferencing handout.
  - Use your peer conferencing tool to locate one part of the essay to address for each of the three steps in the strategy. Label each part: Praise, Question, and Polish. Write in the margin a sentence stem to model for students how to give each type of feedback.

- **Classroom teacher handouts and classroom templates:** Peer Conferencing Tool for Personal Narratives (Handout 41) and Peer Conferencing Tool for Persuasive Writing

  Review the handouts.

  > **Tip:** Model and teach students how to use each peer conferencing tool as they read and review expository essays, personal narratives, or persuasive essays. Use sample pieces of writing and teach only one genre at a time. Explicitly demonstrate how to incorporate the tool during a writing conference. Include opportunities (in pairs or small groups) for students to (1) complete the tool, (2) use the tool as they discuss and review a sample piece of writing, and (3) incorporate the tool in a peer conference.

General Guidelines for Revising and Editing Essays

These general guidelines apply to writing a variety of genres or text types in the content areas. The guidelines are designed to help students become thoughtful and process-oriented, rather than product-oriented, readers and writers. The guidelines are not meant as a strict sequence for revising or editing essays and other forms of writing (e.g., reports, research papers, summaries).

Make Revision a Priority and a Routine Part of Content Area Writing

Teach students the importance of revision:

- Emphasize that all writers revise their writing to improve the content (i.e., the development of ideas, organizational structure, and connections between ideas).

- Clarify that revision does not mean recopying in neater handwriting, running a spell-check, or changing a few words.

Identify and focus on one area or element to revise at a time, rather than trying to fix everything that is wrong:

- Too much information at one time can be overwhelming.

- Make sure that students improve in the focus area before moving on.

- Shorter, more focused revisions help students build a complete set of revision skills over time.

Read and talk about mentor texts to emphasize strong writing and to show how writers do what you are asking your students to learn to do:

- Show how a specific element is effectively used in different types of text.

- Discuss what makes a text strong.

- Create and/or share a list of elements specific to that genre that can guide students' thinking.

- Establish expectations that students use the proper terminology and academic diction appropriate to your discipline.

Teach students how to use specific revision strategies by modeling the process:

- Modeling revision makes students less resistant to change what they have written.

- Show how revision affects the reader and helps the writer grow.

- Use teacher and student samples when modeling.

- Model by thinking aloud; clearly explain what you are thinking as you wrestle with how to revise and improve a specific part.

- Think through your revision options and how to determine the best way to "fix" an identified element.

- Show how to go through multiple rounds of revision for a single piece of writing—but with a different focus (identified element) each time.

Teach Editing Skills

Teach and assess writing conventions—it is the responsibility of all teachers in every content area:

- Establish expectations that students proofread and edit spelling, grammar, usage, punctuation, sentence structure, and capitalization when they write in your content area class.

- Teach specific conventions, one at a time, that your students struggle with in their writing.

- Focus on conventions frequently used in your discipline. Use model sentences from mentor texts.

- Have students think about how they can use specific conventions in their own writing.

- Clarify the differences between writing conventions for informal electronic communication (e.g., blogs, e-mail, text messages) and the more traditional writing styles and conventions (e.g., grammar, spelling, punctuation) of professional and academic contexts.

- Communicate and share with your colleagues any pervasive convention errors and collaborate to address them. Share rubrics and strategies for correct use of written conventions.

Create a Positive Environment of Respect, Trust, Support, and Encouragement

Make time for students to revise and edit their writing during class, so you can monitor and support their thinking about content and their writing skills:

- Circulate around the room. Stop and hold brief (1- to 2-minute) conferences with individual students or groups. Ask key questions: "What are you working on?" "What help do you need?"

- Focus on only one or two aspects of the content or a specific writing skill that could be improved. Use sticky notes to quickly record student focus areas and interactions.

- When providing written feedback on student writing, use a conversational tone. Comment on strong aspects and target one or two areas that need revision or editing. Address both content knowledge (focus, organization, purpose) and writing conventions (grammar, punctuation, spelling).

- For formal writing assignments, incorporate rubrics and revision guides for the writing genres and assignments in your discipline. Teach students how to use the tools before, during, and after writing. Use the criteria to evaluate and provide written and verbal feedback about student writing.

- Set aside class time for students to collaborate as they revise and edit with a partner or small group (peer conferences). Explicitly teach students the procedures and appropriate ways to respond by modeling how to read others' writing, discuss the writing, and provide constructive feedback.

- Have students attach their revisions and edits to the original draft. It is unnecessary to rewrite an entire piece until a final copy is turned in.

- To motivate students to write well (and focus on revision and editing), provide opportunities for students to share (publish and present) their work in a variety of forms and venues.

Sources:

Daniels, H., Zemelman, S., & Steineke, N. (2007). *Content-area writing: Every teacher's guide*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Peterson, S. S. (2008). *Writing across the curriculum: All teachers teach writing*. Winnipeg, MB: Portage & Main Press.

Teach for America. (2011). *Secondary literacy*. Retrieved from http://teachingasleadership.org/sites/default/files/Related-Readings/SL_2011.pdf

General Guidelines for Teaching Peer Conferencing

These general guidelines apply to writing a variety of genres or text types in the content areas. The guidelines are designed to help students become thoughtful and process-oriented, rather than product-oriented, readers and writers. The guidelines are not meant as a strict sequence for peer conferences.

Peer Conferences

A peer conference is the process of students working collaboratively to improve their writing. Peer conferences can be used at any stage of writing, but they are most commonly associated with revising and editing.

Revising involves working with the organization and development of ideas to clarify, strengthen, and improve the overall clarity and coherence of writing. Editing typically occurs after the content has been revised and focuses on improving capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and academic language conventions.

Peer Conferencing Procedures and Appropriate Feedback

For this process to be effective, provide **explicit instruction** in peer conferencing procedures and reviewer etiquette and make peer conferencing an established part of the routine for content area writing assignments. Do not just put students in groups and tell them to read and respond to one another's writing.

Peer conferences can be organized in different ways—as responses between partners, in small groups (three to four students), or with the whole group.

Model the peer conferencing process and how to appropriately respond by giving constructive, helpful feedback. Display a sample teacher- or student-written essay or other form of writing for the class.

Teach students what to focus on as they carefully read (not skim) and review their peer's writing. Review their purpose for writing and the elements of the specific writing genre.

Provide a set of critiquing guidelines, such as questions, elements, or steps, to follow to help students focus on particular aspects of the writing as they read and review one another's writing. For example, the questions on the **peer conferencing tools** provided with this resource help students focus on particular elements and aspects in a personal narrative, expository essay, or persuasive essay.

One or two focus questions related to the specific topic or assignment can also be given. For example, if students are defending whom they would vote for in an upcoming election, a question could be: "Has the writer included three convincing reasons for his or her choice?"

In addition, establish a **basic response or feedback protocol** for students to use when they respond to one another's writing, no matter the genre. A protocol provides a structure for peer conferences and builds confidence as well as skills and knowledge to improve writing. A protocol helps students learn how to respond in a respectful and supportive way.

For example, the peer reviewer could read the writing and note the following:

1. Something positive (strength)

2. One or two things to improve (problem areas)

3. Suggestions the writer might try (action statements)

Then, when the peers confer, the reviewer could provide feedback on each point to help the writer improve the organization or development of ideas.

Praise, question, and polish is an example of this type of protocol. The adapted version below helps students when they work together to revise content. It involves the three types of feedback.

1. Praise: Point out a positive quality of the writing or something you like. Be sure to explain why you like it. Be honest—do not say something works if it does not.

Sample sentence stems to scaffold student responses include the following:

• "_____ is very effective because _____."

• "I really liked the way you _____ because _____."

• "In this part, I think you used a lot of good _____."

• "My favorite part was _____ because _____."

• "This was really fun to read because _____."

2. Question: Identify a specific problem (something that is confusing or needs more explanation) and give a reason why a change is needed. Then, ask a question to help the writer revise (clarify or elaborate). Be specific and sensitive.

Sample sentence stems to scaffold student responses include the following:

• "I am not sure I understand this part that I underlined because _____. What else could you tell me?"

• "In this paragraph, I need more information about _____." What could you add?

• "I do not see how this idea relates to your thesis because _____." Why did you include it? "

• "This part was not clear because _____. Would you tell me more about _____?"

• "Why did you say _____? What does it have to do with _____?"

3. Polish: Offer one or two suggestions (a plan that gives the writer a specific direction for revision).

Sample sentence stems to scaffold student responses include the following:

• "If you add more details after this sentence, it would help to clarify _____."

• "Instead of using the word _____, maybe you can use another word like _____ to better [describe explain, define, illustrate, express, or persuade] _____."

• "One suggestion I can offer for improvement is _____."

• "You might want to expand on _____."

• "You might consider changing the order of _____."

Monitoring Peer Conferences

Hold students accountable for their performance as both a writer and peer reviewer of essays. As peer reviewers, they should be respectful and provide concrete and specific feedback. As writers, they should concentrate, listen, and be open and receptive—not defensive—to advice.

Circulate, ask questions, offer suggestions, and listen as students confer about their writing. Coach students through the process and help them use feedback to improve their writing.

Monitor students' progress by jotting down your thoughts and observations (e.g., their effectiveness as a peer reviewer, participation and involvement). For example, record your observations by using a clipboard, a chart listing students' names, and sticky notes.

Additional Peer Conferencing Strategies

Reverse outlining is a strategy that writers can use before they meet with peers to confer about their writing. Reverse outlining helps the writer focus on the development and progression of ideas. Students reread their own writing and focus on whether their ideas are clearly related to the topic.

Reverse outlining includes the following steps:

- Read the writing one paragraph at a time.
- Write a sentence in the margin that summarizes the point you have made in each paragraph.
- Look through each summary sentence and ask yourself whether it is relevant to your thesis and strengthens the development of your ideas. Determine whether there are any unnecessary tangents (development is off topic).

In the end, you should have a good idea about what you say in your essay and where you say it.

Students can use an **editing mini-chart** to edit their own essay and/or confer with their peers to improve their written conventions. Editing mini-charts list areas for students to review and edit.

Self-editing encourages students to evaluate specific features of their own writing, increasing their self-awareness of writing conventions. Peer editing heightens the awareness of various print and grammatical conventions for the peer editor and the writer.

An example of an editing mini-chart that involves both self-editing and peer editing can be found at www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/printouts/editing-checklist-self-peer-30232.html.

The **fishbowl technique** can be used in a variety of ways in content area classrooms. The technique involves inner and outer circles of students. The students in the inner circle (fishbowl) discuss a topic or complete a task. The rest of the class is seated in an outer circle (or concentric circles) outside of the fishbowl. Their role is to watch, listen, and follow along. These students do not participate until the inner circle is finished. Then the class discusses the process. Key points are noted and summarized.

The fishbowl technique is an excellent way to introduce and teach peer conferencing procedures, activities, and protocols. The inner circle, which may include the teacher, demonstrates or role plays the process while the rest of the class watches. The process is then discussed, questions are answered, and clarifications are made to help students understand how to work together to improve their writing.

For example, one way to teach students how to use the sample editing mini-chart discussed on the previous page is to use the fishbowl technique, allowing the class to see both a self-editing and peer-editing session.

- Give each student a copy of a sample (teacher-written) essay or other form of writing. Then, display the editing mini-chart on a document reader or overhead projector. Model the self-editing phase by working through the items on the mini-chart as students observe. Or select a student who has a good understanding of the conventions on the mini-chart to model this phase.

- After the self-editing demonstration phase is complete, discuss the process with students.

- Choose another student to serve as the peer editor for the piece of writing that was just self-edited. Have the person who conducted the self-editing phase and the reader (peer editor) sit in the middle of the class, so that all students can see and hear them as they work through this collaborative phase of the editing process.

- Discuss the process and how this type of editing can help both the writer and reader (peer editor) improve their writing.

Sources:

Annenberg Foundation. (n.d.). *Write in the middle workshop 7. Responding to writing: Peer to peer*. Retrieved from http://www.learner.org

Daniels, H., Zemelman, S., & Steineke, N. (2007). *Content-area writing: Every teacher's guide*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Neubert, G. A., & McNelis, S. J. (1990). Peer response: Teaching specific revision suggestions. *English Journal*, *79*(5), 52–56.

ReadWriteThink. (2013). *Editing checklist for self- and peer editing*. Retrieved from http://www.readwritethink.org

Virgil Undergraduate Writing Center. (2001–2005). [Website no longer active.]

Peer Conferencing Tool for Expository Essays

Name of Writer: Date:

Name of Reviewer: Date:

Directions to the Reviewer

Read the draft. Make suggestions for improvement. Be specific. Consider the questions listed below. Jot down notes for your conference with the writer. Be prepared to share your responses.

What is the writer's purpose? Is it clear?

Is the topic too large to cover in this essay? If so, how can the writer narrow the topic and clearly define and sustain the thesis?

Does the introduction make me want to read the rest of the essay? If not, why?

Are the ideas presented logically and easy to follow? Is the organizational pattern clear? If so, what is it?

Could the writer strengthen sentences to connect ideas at the sentence and paragraph levels? Does the writer effectively use transitions or need to add more?

Do you wish the writer had included more information in some places? If so, where?

Does the writer use interesting, specific supporting details that add substance to the essay? What types of details (e.g., facts, reasons, examples, comparisons) provide evidential support?

Does the writer show, rather than tell, to explain the topic? If so, where?

Could parts be left out (extraneous information)? If so, where?

Could the writer have used more purposeful and precise language? If so, what words do you suggest?

Do you find any parts confusing? If so, what parts?

Does the conclusion bring closure to the essay? Does the writer give you a lasting impression?

Does the essay include a variety of sentence types?

What do you like best about the expository essay? Why?

What could the writer do to most improve this essay?

Are there spelling and grammatical errors?

The Whole Family Under One Roof?

Introduction

A Victorian family circa 1860 (Hulton Archive/Getty Images)

If you're like many Americans, you have just spent a few days in close quarters with your parents, grandchildren, siblings, etc. You're ready to go home, or ready for them to go home. But for a growing number of families in which adult children can't afford to live on their own, this is the new normal.

These "boomerang" children have been the butt of jokes on late-night television and even in commercials, but what's so bad about moving back in with your parents? Could extended families under one roof — a common arrangement in years past — be the way of the future?

The Only Faithful Human Institution

John L. Graham *is a professor of business at the University of California, Irvine. He is the co-author with Sharon Graham Niederhaus of "Together Again: A Creative Guide to Successful Multigenerational Living."*

December 27, 2011

I live on a cul-de-sac in Irvine, Calif., that includes eight 2,500-plus-square-foot homes. When we moved into the neighborhood 27 years ago, six of those homes included two baby-boom parents with children and two couples with empty nests. Now there are no longer children on our street, although adult kids are still living in two of the homes. In my house we now have three spare bedrooms — we keep the doors and the heating vent shut to conserve energy.

Houses like mine are a root of the current world financial crisis. In 2006, housing prices in the United States began to crash. That's about when our last daughter left for college. Our house, along with millions of others across the country, literally became worth less when the last kid moved out. The demand for big houses declined even while the new home builders were madly adding more square feet. Circa 2012 housing in the U.S. has lost about a third of its value, down from $25 trillion to $16 trillion by some estimates. This sharp decline in value of the American housing stock has catalyzed a worldwide restructuring of our economic systems. And just wait until 2020 when the full burden of baby-boomer retirement and decrepitude is recognized.

The cure for this demographic disaster is the pooling of resources across generations that we are already seeing in America. The idea of the nuclear family is now obviously obsolete. We are all reverting to the old reliance on the extended family that anthropologist Margaret Mead correctly described as the only faithful human institution. The government won't be there to help on this one. Boomerang kids are actually a blessing in disguise. They're allowing us to relearn how to live in multigenerational arrangements as humans almost always have. Yes, the lessons for balancing proximity and privacy are tough, but such learning is essential for all of us in the 21st century.

I'm Not Seeing a Boomerang

Michael J. Rosenfeld, *an associate professor of sociology at Stanford University, is the author of "The Age of Independence: Interracial Unions, Same-Sex Unions and the Changing American Family."*

December 26, 2011

One of the stories parents like to tell ourselves is that our young adult children want to move back in with us. Our 20-somethings are referred to as the Boomerang Generation, noted for their failure to launch. There is just one problem with the story of the Boomerang Generation: It is not true.

Census data show that what is really new about young adulthood is the percentage of young adults who live on their own. From 1880 to 1970 the percentage of U.S. born women in their twenties who lived on their own (not with parents and not with a husband) was always less than 15 percent. By 1980, the percentage of young adult women who lived on their own had risen to 27 percent, and to 33 percent in 1990, to 39 percent in 2000, and to 42 percent today. The delay of marriage and the extension of singleness can make it appear as if young people are more likely to return to the parental nest. If one examines single people in their twenties, who are the people who have the option of living with their parents, the percentage who live with their parents is now about 45 percent. That may seem high but it isn't: in the past single people in their 20s nearly always lived with their parents.

The Great Recession has actually had no effect whatsoever on the percentage of young adults living with their parents in the United States. This is not so surprising; the (even greater) Great Depression did not affect family structure much, and neither did the Industrial Revolution. Family structure changes slowly over time. Economic ups and downs have little effect on who lives with whom.

A Sensible Use of Spare Rooms

Sharon Graham Niederhaus *is a co-author with John L. Graham of "Together Again: A Creative Guide to Successful Multigenerational Living."*

December 27, 2011

The direct consequence of the turn of the century residential building boom is that now, in 2012, there are a lot of spare rooms in all those houses. Indeed, the chances are the greatest in the last 50 years that an adult family member is now living in your spare bedroom.

Multigenerational living is ahead for all of us. Baby boomers will be living with their kids as they begin to experience the infirmities of old age. By 2020 they'll need help with their disabilities, and the most sensible helpers will be members of the extended family living close by. The practice now of living together as adults across generations will be a big help.

Boomerang kids and baby boomers are learning about the balancing act between proximity and privacy that will be required in the modern families of the remainder of this century. Both physical structures and financial arrangements are being developed to accommodate such changes. For example, approximately one-third of American homes can be remodeled to include an accessory apartment with a separate kitchen and entrance. The major home builders have finally begun to experiment with such designs as well. Cross-generational financial agreements are burgeoning including shared real estate investments and adult children moving back home while saving money to repay college loans (which are exempt from bankruptcy proceedings).

Extended family members are already creatively designing a new future in these tough times. Indeed, now is the time to get ready for the coming changes in the American family.

Source: Multiple authors. (2011, December 26). The whole family under one roof? *The New York Times.* Reprinted with permission.

Peer Conferencing Tool for Personal Narratives

Name of Writer: Date:

Name of Reviewer: Date:

Directions to the Reviewer

Read the draft. Make suggestions for improvement. Be specific. Consider the questions listed below. Jot down notes for your conference with the writer. Be prepared to share your responses.

What is the writer's purpose? Is the writer able to communicate the significance or importance of the experience?

Is the topic too large to cover in this essay? If so, how can the writer narrow the topic and clearly define and sustain the central idea?

Does the introduction make me want to read the rest of the essay? If not, why?

Are the ideas presented logically and easy to follow? Could the writer strengthen sentences to connect ideas? Could the writer add transitions?

Are the characters interesting? Does the writer use an appropriate amount of dialogue? Where does the writer need to improve character descriptions?

Does the writer use sensory details to describe the setting? How can the writer strengthen the setting description?

Does the writer use interesting, specific details that add substance and contribute to the portrayal of the experience? Does the writer show, rather than tell about, this experience? If so, where?

Could parts be left out? If so, where?

Could the writer have used more purposeful and precise language? If so, what words do you suggest?

Did you find any parts to be confusing? If so, what parts?

Does the conclusion bring closure to the essay? Does the writer give you a lasting impression of the personal experience and/or insight?

Does the essay include a variety of sentence types?

What do you like best about the personal narrative? Why?

What could the writer do to most improve this essay?

Are there spelling and grammatical errors?

Peer Conferencing Tool for Persuasive Writing

Name of Writer: Date:

Name of Reviewer: Date:

Directions to the Reviewer

Read the draft. Make suggestions for improvement. Be specific. Consider the questions listed below. Jot down notes for your conference with the writer. Be prepared to share your responses.

What is the writer's purpose? Is it clear?

Is the topic too large to cover in this essay? If so, how can the writer narrow the topic and clearly define and sustain the thesis?

Does the introduction make me want to read the rest of the essay? If not, why?

Are the ideas presented logically and easy to follow? If not, what would improve the organization?

Could the writer strengthen sentences to connect ideas at the sentence and paragraph levels? Does the writer effectively use transitions or need to add more?

Do you wish the writer had included more information in some places? If so, where?

Does the writer use specific reasons and supporting evidence to defend the position or claim? What evidential support (e.g., facts, expert opinions, statistics, examples, counterarguments) does the author use?

Could parts be left out? If so, where?

Could the writer have used more purposeful and precise language? If so, what words do you suggest?

Did you find any parts to be confusing? If so, what parts?

Does the conclusion bring closure to the essay? Does the writer give you a lasting impression that reflects the importance of the argument or persuade you to take some course of action?

Does the essay include a variety of sentence types?

What do you like best about this persuasive writing piece? Why?

What could the writer do to most improve this piece?

Are there spelling and grammatical errors?

Handouts

Teaching Revising and Editing Skills
Gateway Resource TRES0002

Teaching Revising and Editing Skills
GATEWAY RESOURCE ID: TRES0002
Understanding Rubrics

Understanding Rubrics is the second online resource in the Teaching Revising and Editing Skills series.

To locate this resource, go to the Write for Texas website: http://writefortexas.org. Click on the **Online Materials** tab at the top of the page. Next, click on the **Teaching Revising and Editing Skills** tab in the column on the left side of the page. Then, after reading the information, click on **Understanding Rubrics** (in the middle of the page) to begin working in the Project Share Gateway.

Understanding Rubrics has two sections. The suggested time to complete both sections is 1 hour. You may complete this resource at your own pace. All sections may be completed in a single session, or you may log in multiple times as you work through the information and activities.

Materials and Activities by Section

Section 1. Using Rubrics

- **Classroom teacher handout:** Using Rubrics in Content Area Instruction

  Review the handout. Notice how the elements for writing mathematical responses (page 3) were incorporated into the teacher-made rubric (page 4).

  > **Tip:** Introduce and explicitly teach students how to use rubrics as a working guide before, during, and after an assigned task. Include multiple opportunities for students to practice using rubrics with a partner, in small groups, and individually.

- **Teaching journal question:** How do you use rubrics and checklists to support student learning in your classroom?

  Think about the question. Record your responses, ideas, and other thoughts in your teaching journal.

Section 2. Teacher Talk: A Look at Two Rubric-Scored Essays

- **Online activity handout:** Video Guide for Teacher Talk: Understanding Rubrics

  As you watch each video, record (in the right column) specific details the teachers share or any questions that come to mind for the main ideas and key concepts (listed in the left column).

- **Online activity handout:** Literary Scoring Guide

  Review the literary essay scoring rubric criteria for each level of performance on pages 3, 6, 9, and 12. Then, read the sample student literary essay "Heart Race" and the assessment summary on page 5.

- **Online practice activity and video:** As you watch the video, think about how feedback can be used to help the student improve his or her writing. Write notes in the left column of the Video Guide for Teacher Talk: Understanding Rubrics handout.

- **Online activity handout:** Expository Scoring Guide

  Review the expository essay scoring rubric criteria for each level of performance on pages 3, 6, 9, and 12. Then, read the sample student expository essay that begins with "Technology is what turns the world—almost literally" and the assessment summary.

- **Online practice activities and video:**
  - As you watch the video, write notes in the left column of the Video Guide for Teacher Talk: Understanding Rubrics handout.
  - After the video, review your notes on the Video Guide for Teacher Talk: Understanding Rubrics handout. Complete the chart by summarizing the most important ideas from the discussion.
  - Read the other literary and expository sample student essays and assessment summaries. After reading each one, decide which fundamental part of the essay (refer to the scoring rubric criteria) you would suggest the student work on and revise. Write your ideas at the top of the essay.

- **Teaching journal question:** How did your suggestions (feedback) differ according to the essay score?

  Think about the question. Record your responses, ideas, and other thoughts in your teaching journal.

Using Rubrics in Content Area Instruction

Rubrics are performance-based assessment tools that content area teachers can use to evaluate and support student learning.

Types of Rubrics

There are two major types of rubrics: analytical and holistic.

Analytical rubrics focus on specific criteria related to a task or assignment. Analytical rubrics include a predetermined set of essential criteria or descriptors for what is required in the task and descriptions of the varying levels or qualities of performance for each criterion. Analytical rubrics usually include a value or score for each level of performance.

Analytical rubrics are most often used in classrooms because they give both teachers and students clear descriptions of what good performance looks like. This type of rubric also provides detailed, formative feedback about students' learning and what they need to do to improve.

Holistic rubrics focus on a global picture of the task as a whole. Holistic rubrics do not list separate levels of performance for each criterion. Instead, these rubrics assign a level of performance across multiple criteria. Holistic rubrics usually include a value or score for each level of performance.

Note About Checklists

Checklists are assessment tools, but they are not rubrics. Checklists list the criteria for a task or assignment, like rubrics, but do not include the levels or quality of performance.

Purpose of Rubrics

Although rubrics are commonly associated with evaluation (the assessment or scoring of student work), rubrics can also be used for instruction to scaffold and support student learning.

Evaluation rubrics allow teachers to make valid and reliable criterion-referenced judgments about the degree to which a student's performance meets the criteria for a particular task. In other words, rubrics take the mystery out of grading. Teachers can evaluate and even assign grades in a more consistent and objective manner. For example, the scores can be tallied and then averaged to come up with a final score that can then be converted into a grade (e.g., a score ranging from 4 to 3.50 is converted to an A, 3.49 to 3.0 to an A–, 2.99 to 2.50 to a B).

Well-designed rubrics also clarify for students a teacher's expectations for specific assignments. When rubrics are shared before an assignment, students know the criteria on which they will be graded and then can work toward meeting the highest performance criteria.

Rubrics are not just for evaluation. More importantly, they are also instructional tools that help students view assessment as more than just a grade or score. Rubrics are working guides that provide specific informative feedback as students work through a task, process, or procedure such as a content area writing assignment. Learning how to use rubrics helps students identify their strengths and areas in need of improvement.

Note About Instruction

Rubrics are not a substitute for good instruction. They should not merely be given to students at the beginning of an assignment. Rubrics are **not** self-explanatory. Teachers should introduce and explicitly teach students how to use a rubric as a working guide before, during, and after an assigned task.

Rubrics and Writing Instruction

Writing rubrics are generally used in the content areas with formal writing assignments such as essays, reports, or research papers. These types of rubric describe the varying levels of quality for the essential criteria related to a specific writing genre or assignment.

Ideally, when students use rubrics, they begin to internalize the criteria as they write and ultimately can generalize and transfer what they have learned to future writing tasks.

To incorporate rubrics in content area instruction, use the following procedure:

- **Introduce the rubric before students begin to write.**
  Distribute a copy of the rubric to each student after the mentor text (model essay or other writing sample) has been read and the elements of the genre have been identified.

- **Model for students how to read the rubric.**
  Make sure the rubric's language is comprehensible to all students so they have a clear understanding of the criteria (what is expected of them).

- **Use the rubric with students to evaluate the mentor text.**
  Consider evaluating other writing samples that represent a range of performance to help students understand the differences in quality.

- **Model and explain for students how to use the rubric at each stage of the writing process—before, during, and after they write.**
  For example, rubrics provide important information for students to use when revising and editing their own writing or conferring with peers. The criteria and performance-level descriptors show students what the next steps should be to improve their writing.

Rubric Design

Rubrics should be concise and easy to use.

Teachers can use premade rubrics, design their own, or work with students to create rubrics. Online tools and templates are available for teachers to create their own curriculum-based rubrics (e.g., the free RubiStar tool: http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php).

A sample teacher-made analytical rubric that incorporates the elements of a mathematical written response is included on the remaining pages of this handout.

Source: Andrade, H. G. (2000). Using rubrics to promote thinking and learning. *Educational Leadership*, *57*(5), 13–18.

Elements of a Mathematical Written Response

- Writing includes responses to all parts of the question.

- Connections are shown between each step.

- Each part of the question is labeled.

- Organization matches the sequential nature of answering the question.

- Sequence of steps to solve the problem and the strategy used are included.

- Writing explains to the reader each step of the process needed to solve the problem.

- Mathematical vocabulary is used throughout the response.

- Graphs, charts, number lines, and diagrams are used as needed.

- Vocabulary words are defined to demonstrate understanding.

- There is evidence of computation with correct results.

- Writing demonstrates an understanding of spelling, grammar, and mechanics (editing is important).

Note: Please see Teaching Expository and Persuasive Texts (TEPT0001) for a mathematical written response sample.

Source: Scallin, S. M. (2006). Written response to mathematical questions: Computation and composition. In S. L. Pasquarelli (Ed.), *Teaching writing genres across the curriculum: Strategies for middle school teachers* (pp. 77–90). Greenwich, CT: Information Age.

Sample Rubric for Writing Mathematical Responses

	4 Proficient	3 Developing	2 Beginning to Develop	1 Not Yet
Is the question answered completely?	• All parts answered completely • All parts of question labeled	• All parts answered but some not complete • Most parts of question labeled	• Not all parts answered • Parts that are answered are complete • Few parts of question labeled	• Not all parts answered • Parts that are answered are incomplete • No parts of question labeled
Is my work organized and focused?	• Work proceeds logically from one step to next • Work is easy to read and understand • Separate parts of the work labeled	• Most of the work has logical connections • Work is understandable but difficult to read • Some parts of the work labeled	• Few logical connections in the work • Work is readable but difficult to understand • Only one part of the work is labeled	• No logical connection between ideas • Difficult to read and understand • Difficult to tell difference between parts of question
Does my work contain appropriate details (diagrams, equations, examples, charts, graphs, definitions, formulas tables, supporting details in words)?	Many appropriate details in both words and arithmetic add depth to the work	Some details both in arithmetic and words	Very few details, but they fit the problem	Details do not fit the problem or details not included
Do I use math vocabulary correctly?	Math vocabulary appropriate and accurate throughout the work	Some math vocabulary used, and it is used correctly	Very little math vocabulary used, but it is used correctly	Math vocabulary not accurate or math vocabulary not used at all

	4 Proficient	3 Developing	2 Beginning to Develop	1 Not Yet
Are my computations correct?	All computation correct	Small math errors, but process is correct	Computing errors interfere with solution	So many errors that main idea of problem is lost
Does my writing show that I understand the main ideas?	Explanations show that main ideas are fully understood by analyzing and computing them in real-life problems	Explanations show that general ideas are understood by analyzing and computing them in real-life problems	Explanations show that basic ideas are understood by analyzing and computing them in real-life problems	Explanations show that ideas are minimally understood by analyzing and computing them in real-life problems
Is my use of grammar and mechanics appropriate?	Excellent mechanics and grammar	Adequate mechanics and grammar	Piece needs proofreading for mechanics and grammar	Misuse of mechanics and grammar interfere with reader's understanding
Did I follow the process as instructed?	• All stages of process evident with growth shown from draft to draft • Careful computational corrections shown	• Most stages of process evident and growth from draft to draft shown • Computational corrections shown	• Some stages of process evident and some growth from draft to draft shown • Evidence of some computational corrections	• No stages of process included or process unclear • Computational errors not corrected

Source: Pasquarelli, S. L. (Ed.). (2006). *Teaching writing genres across the curriculum: Strategies for middle school teachers.* Greenwich, CT: Information Age.

Video Guide for Teacher Talk: Understanding Rubrics

In the video, a group of teachers use student writing samples scored with an assessment rubric to discuss how to help students revise and improve their writing. As you watch each segment, use the Cornell Notes chart below to record specific details the teachers share or any questions that come to mind for the main ideas and key concepts listed in the left column. After the video, complete the chart by summarizing the most important ideas from the discussion.

Main Ideas and Key Concepts	Details and Questions
• Helping students who do not address the prompt or topic or do not use the correct writing form or genre • Understanding how to use an assessment rubric to provide meaningful feedback • Teaching students what a good essay looks like • Teaching writing within the constraints of everything you must cover and the diverse abilities of students • Understanding what reading and writing instruction looks like in the lower versus the upper grades • Preparing students to write well across different situations, including high-stakes tests • Narrowing down which revisions to focus on	
Summary	

Literary Scoring Guide

These examples were selected specifically for use in this online course from the English I Writing State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) rubrics and sample student essays made available by the Texas Education Agency.

English I Writing
Literary Prompt

Look at the photograph.

© Ben Blankenburg/iStockphoto.com

Write a story about a challenging adventure. The adventure can be real or imagined. Be sure that your story is focused and complete and that it has an interesting plot and engaging characters.

The names of individuals mentioned in the compositions have been changed to protect the confidentiality of the students whose responses appear in this guide.

STAAR English I Literary Writing

Score Point 1

The story represents a very limited writing performance.

Organization/Progression

❑ The form or structure of the story is inappropriate to the purpose or the specific demands of the prompt. The writer uses narrative strategies or literary devices that are only marginally suited to the literary task, or they are inappropriate or not evident at all. The writer presents the story in a random or illogical way, causing it to lack clarity and direction.

❑ Many of the details do not contribute to the story. The writer's lack of focus on a specific character, event, or idea weakens the unity and coherence of the story.

❑ The writer's presentation of the story is weak. Repetition or wordiness sometimes causes serious disruptions in the story line. At other times the lack of meaningful transitions and sentence-to-sentence connections makes one or more parts of the story unclear or difficult to follow.

Development of Ideas

❑ The development of the story is weak because the details are inappropriate, vague, or insufficient. They do not contribute to key literary elements such as character development, conflict, and point of view.

❑ The story is insubstantial because the writer's response to the prompt may be vague or confused. In some cases, the story as a whole is only weakly linked to the prompt. In other cases, the writer develops the story in a manner that demonstrates a lack of understanding of the literary writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

❑ The writer's word choice may be vague or limited. It reflects little or no awareness of the literary purpose. The word choice may impede the quality and clarity of the story.

❑ Sentences may be simplistic, awkward, or uncontrolled, weakening the effectiveness of the story.

❑ The writer has little or no command of sentence boundaries and spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Serious and persistent errors create disruptions in the fluency of the writing and sometimes interfere with meaning.

Texas Education Agency
Student Assessment Division

STAAR English I
Spring 2012

Literary – 3

COMPOSITION #3

I am about tall a challinging adventure I went on in the summer. The riding to Dinsey world was a long drive. I was tired when we got to holte in Disey World, I was tired. In the morning I went to the addimison studios. I ride the Tower of Tearror, I was scard on that ride. On the trail on the back our house, My mom, sisters, and I were walking on the trail one day. My mom saw a copperhead snak in the walk way, My mom said "To jump over the copper head snak." We went one a time over the copperhead snak. On my trip caming with my pawpaw, memaw, sisters, and I. I was scared about geting in the water at the lake in camp site. Because there were alligators in the water. Then one day I finely got in the water and stand in the water. The water smell bad that why because the alligators use to be that side before, their is a pool mark thing in water to block the alligators away from us. On that camping trip we went on the trail they have their. On the trail we pick close to the end of the trail we saw spider webs and spiders on there. We had duck under the spiders and the spider web.

Score Point 1
The writer of this very limited response begins with a trip to Disney World, including a scary ride on the Tower of Terror. An abrupt shift of focus occurs when the writer begins telling a story about his family's encounter with a snake. The writer then shifts to a camping trip taken with his grandparents and siblings. The lack of focus on one event weakens the unity and coherence of the story. In addition, numerous errors in conventions create disruptions in the fluency of the writing.

STAAR English I
Spring 2012

Literary – 4

COMPOSITION #3

<u>Heart Race.</u>

My three year old cousin Cody was born with half a heart that works, and they told us when he was first born he wouldn't probly make it passed two years old, but he proved them wrong an him being born with half a heart means he can't run around alot like a normal kid cause their's the chance he could have a heart attack because it can't pump enough blood threw out his tiny body but he plays on a little soccer team as the goalie. He has to have an open heart operation every year till he's ten. he has a huge scar to his neck down to his belly button he's our hero, he changed everyone in our families life to apreciate him an each an everyone of us. But everyday is a challenge for Cody.

Score Point 1
In this response the writer describes the life of a cousin who is restricted by a congenital heart defect. Basic character development is achieved through the use of a few details (he wouldn't probably make it past two years old, has to have an open heart operation every year till he's ten, has a huge scar to his neck down to his belly button). However, the response is primarily an explanation, and the writer demonstrates a very weak command of sentence boundaries and punctuation. These problems are indicative of a very limited writing performance.

STAAR English I Literary Writing

Score Point 2

The story represents a basic writing performance.

Organization/Progression

- ❑ The form or structure of the story is evident but may not always be appropriate to the purpose or responsive to the specific demands of the prompt. The writer uses narrative strategies or literary devices that are only somewhat suited to the literary task. The writer is able to convey some sense of the story.

- ❑ Some of the details do not contribute to the story. The writer may focus on a specific character, event, or idea but may not sustain that focus, limiting the unity and coherence of the story.

- ❑ The writer's presentation of the story is inconsistent. Sometimes repetition or wordiness causes minor disruptions in the story line. At other times transitions and sentence-to-sentence connections are too perfunctory or weak to support the logical movement of the story.

Development of Ideas

- ❑ The development of the story is minimal and remains at a surface level because there are few details, they are not always appropriate, or they are too general. For the most part, the details contribute only marginally to key literary elements such as character development, conflict, and point of view.

- ❑ The story reflects little or no thoughtfulness. The writer's response to the prompt is sometimes formulaic. The writer develops the story in a manner that demonstrates only a limited understanding of the literary writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer's word choice may be general or imprecise. It reflects a basic awareness of the literary purpose. The word choice may limit the quality and clarity of the story.

- ❑ Sentences may be awkward or only somewhat controlled, limiting the effectiveness of the story.

- ❑ The writer demonstrates a partial command of sentence boundaries and spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Some distracting errors may be evident, at times creating minor disruptions in the fluency or meaning of the writing.

Texas Education Agency
Student Assessment Division

STAAR English I
Spring 2012

Literary – 5

COMPOSITION #3

I think for me, life itself is a challenging adventure that is still in progress. It can be one of the greatest, most enjoyable adventures... but can also be the worst and most challenging. Life is a bunch of little treks that make up one huge adventure. Sometimes, we go through a part of life that is very satisfying and you feel like nothing can go wrong. This could be as if you're sailing across the ocean in a big boat with all of your friends and family. You have smooth waters, calm waves, and the sun is shining perfectly. Then there's that part of life where it seems like you've lost it all and you feel as though nothing worse could possibly go wrong. This is the time where the clouds roll in and block the sunshine. The waters become rough, with the waves crashing up against the boat, rocking you back and forth, or knocking you onto the ground. But yet you still have your friends right there with you, acting as your tour guides along the way. This adventure through life is almost like a never-ending process with many challenging obstacles that you feel like you can never overcome. But then, when you do, it's like you are fine again and stronger than before, ready to accept the next trek that life brings upon you to carry on that crazy, overwhelming adventure.

Score Point 2
In this basic writing performance, the writer focuses on a single theme: Life is a bunch of little treks that make up one huge adventure. Although the response is more explanation than story, the writer embeds some literary elements, specifically in the form of figurative language, that serve to minimally develop the theme. Because the response is a blend of expository and literary writing, the writer demonstrates only a limited understanding of the literary task.

STAAR English I
Spring 2012

Literary – 8

COMPOSITION #3

a journey around the ocean isnt easy this how evrything began I was reading the book Finding nemo and than the fish nemo was saying "hey you with the clothes can you here me" and me thinking it was my sister I faded inside the book I was swimming in the ocean with a giant tail covering my feet. I thought to myself whats happening I was worried I wanted to cry but I couldnt under Ocean. so I swam and swam and some body was calling my name whispering " Abby, Abby " and I turned around and I see nemo from the story. I was like what's happening I asked your in the middle of getting ran over by huge whales so than nemo grabs me and pulls me back and I said "why am I here" nemo says " you were the choosen one to lead the ocean now I was the quen of oceans now" I said "no this cant be im just a simple girl not a queen" nemo said "you were the choosen one because were going to be in a war with the other side of the ocean because they want to take are land." I said "ok" what do I do. nemo tells me you must guide us a right way for we can beat the other ocean. OK. So everybody put on your sheds, and weapons were going to snick up on them in a ballon fish, and in the night We attack and just hope everything goes well, so we attacked and we were able to obtain are ocean. After they tell me thanks and now we shall crown you quen of this ocean they scream there lungs out cheering!

Score Point 2

The writer of this basic writing performance presents a fictional story based upon *Finding Nemo* by cleverly inserting herself into the cast of characters while reading the book. The presentation of the story is adequately controlled and supports the story's logical movement. The writer supplies some specific details (a giant tail covering my feet, in the middle of getting run over by huge whales) and uses dialogue not only to advance the story line but also to develop character. However, only a partial command of conventions is evident; the writer creates minor disruptions in the fluency of the writing by making errors in sentence boundaries, grammar, and usage throughout the story.

STAAR English I Literary Writing

Score Point 3

The story represents a satisfactory writing performance.

Organization/Progression

❑ The form or structure of the story is, for the most part, appropriate to the purpose and responsive to the specific demands of the prompt. The writer uses narrative strategies or literary devices that are adequately suited to the literary task. The writer is able to clearly convey the story.

❑ Most details contribute to the effectiveness of the story. The writer focuses on a specific character, event, or idea and generally sustains that focus. The story is coherent, though it may not always be unified due to minor lapses in focus.

❑ The writer's presentation of the story is adequately controlled. For the most part, transitions are meaningful, and sentence-to-sentence connections are sufficient to support the logical movement of the story.

Development of Ideas

❑ Specific details add some substance to the story. For the most part, these details contribute to key literary elements such as character development, conflict, and point of view.

❑ The story reflects some thoughtfulness. The writer's response to the prompt is original rather than formulaic. The writer develops the story in a manner that demonstrates a good understanding of the literary writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

❑ The writer's word choice is, for the most part, specific and concrete. It reflects an awareness of the literary purpose. The word choice usually contributes to the quality and clarity of the story.

❑ Sentences are varied and adequately controlled, for the most part contributing to the effectiveness of the story.

❑ The writer demonstrates an adequate command of sentence boundaries and spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar and usage conventions. Although some errors may be evident, they create few (if any) disruptions in the fluency of the writing, and they do not affect the clarity of the story.

Texas Education Agency
Student Assessment Division

STAAR English I
Spring 2012

Literary – 9

COMPOSITION #3

I love running. I normally run long distances of 5 miles or more, or sprint short distances of 200 meters or less. However, I had never expected myself to be running the 800 meter event at a track meet. The 800 is exactly 2 laps around the track, sprinting. Yes, I may enjoy long distance, but only at a steady, planned pace. This wasn't a short sprint either; I wasn't going to be running my hardest for 30 short seconds. Instead, I would be sprinting my hardest for a few minutes. Also to make it worse, I hadn't trained in over a month.

I felt nauseus at the starting line. I don't think I had ever felt this nervous before. My goal was to do my best, and NOT get last place. My heart skipped a beat as the gun fired, and we began to sprint. The majority of the girls were a few years older than me, and obviously practiced a lot. Before I knew it, I was on my last lap. I had no idea how many girls were behind me, but I could see at least 5 ahead. I could hear my friends cheering for me, and despite my burning legs and exhaustion, I began to speed up. Suddenly, a girl was right beside me, panting. "Want to run together?" she asked. I smiled and nodded, slowing down a bit. It was then that she decided to sprint, attempting to catch me off-guard! I sprinted my hardest, and beat the decieving girl, finishing in 5th place of 15!

Score Point 3

In this satisfactory writing performance, the writer focuses on the challenge of running an 800-meter race at a track meet. The writer clearly conveys her particular story by sustaining focus on the event and controlling the logical movement of the story. The writer develops the character of the narrator and establishes both internal and external conflicts. Some substance is added to the story through an effective use of specific language and details (My heart skipped a beat as the gun fired; despite my burning legs and exhaustion, I began to speed up). Overall, the writer demonstrates a good understanding of the literary writing task.

STAAR English I
Spring 2012

Literary – 10

COMPOSITION #3

It was 2:00 pm in Austin, Texas. I was competing against   David Davis   for 5ᵗʰ rank in Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) in state out of 50,000. He was undefeated but so was I. I had a 1ˢᵗ degree black belt in Brazilian Juijitsu and he was a boxer. The fight started and he went straight to offense. He came at me with blinding speed. He had quick hands but so did I. I was waiting for one mistake, for him to slip then it would change. The moment came. His right hook was a little to high and he went to for in. I used a left wrist block and had a right jab to the ribs. It hurt him. BAD! He bent over clutching his side and I got him straight in the nose with my left knee. The fight was over in 2 minutes. He left with two cracked ribs and a broken nose. I left with a belt, trophy, and victory.

Score Point 3

The writer of this concise, satisfactory response tells the story of a Mixed Martial Arts fight. The story centers on the two minutes in which the fight occurs. Specific, pertinent details and concrete word choice (blinding speed, quick hands, clutching his side) add some substance to the story. In addition, the writer uses short, clipped sentences to compare/contrast the two fighters; these sentences mimic the quick nature of the fight and contribute to the effectiveness of this satisfactory writing performance. The logical ordering of the play-by-play and the tight focus add to the coherence of this story.

STAAR English I Literary Writing

Score Point 4

The story represents an accomplished writing performance.

Organization/Progression

- ❑ The form or structure of the story is appropriate to the purpose and responsive to the specific demands of the prompt. The writer uses narrative strategies or literary devices that are particularly well suited to the literary task. The writer is able to skillfully convey the story.

- ❑ All details contribute to the effectiveness of the story. The writer focuses on a specific character, event, or idea and sustains that focus, strengthening the unity and coherence of the story.

- ❑ The writer's presentation of the story is well controlled. Meaningful transitions and strong sentence-to-sentence connections enhance the logical movement of the story.

Development of Ideas

- ❑ Specific, well-chosen details add substance to the story. These details contribute significantly to key literary elements such as character development, conflict, and point of view.

- ❑ The story is thoughtful and engaging. The writer may respond to the prompt from an unusual perspective, may use his/her unique experiences or view of the world as a basis for writing, or may connect ideas in interesting ways. The writer develops the story in a manner that demonstrates a thorough understanding of the literary writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer's word choice is vivid and expressive. It reflects a keen awareness of the literary purpose. The word choice strongly contributes to the quality and clarity of the story.

- ❑ Sentences are purposeful, varied, and well controlled, enhancing the effectiveness of the story.

- ❑ The writer demonstrates a consistent command of sentence boundaries and spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Although minor errors may be evident, they do not detract from the fluency of the writing or the clarity of the story. The overall strength of the conventions contributes to the effectiveness of the story.

Texas Education Agency
Student Assessment Division

STAAR English I
Spring 2012

Literary – 14

COMPOSITION #3

'Twas a lovely day, it happened so to be Jordan's first in Wal-mart. He being the age of six and three quarters was the oldest in his class.

Jordan was fascinated by the toys and bikes in the childrens section. He never wanted to leave, not ever, although his mother was calling for him. With Batman in his tiny hands, he thought of a way he could stay.

"I'll have food, there's plenty here," he said to Batman, "And there's a water fountain, and a bathroom, and a TV. All we have to do is hide until Mommy leaves." So he hid in the giant bin with all the bouncy balls and waited. His mother didn't leave though, infact, she was getting louder, and closer.

"Alright, we'll have to make a run for it," said Jordan with the utmost seriousness. He jumped out of the bin and made a dash for the bike helmets, grab one for him and Batman, and then shot over to the clothes section. "She can never find us here," Jordan said while putting the helmet on, "and if she does, she won't recognize us with these helmets and she'll leave." He looked down to place the helmet on his Batman doll and realized he had left him in the bouncy ball bin. He devised a plan to retrieve Batman back from the bin. Like a bullet, he ran as fast as speed Racer can drive, dodged a cart, jumped a baby, slid under a wheelchair and dove back into the bin. Tossing balls here and there he couldn't find Batman.

" Jordan ,"his mother said, standing there with Batman in her grasp, "You can have plenty of adventures at home, now put back the helmets. "

Score Point 4
In this accomplished writing performance centered on imaginative play, a young boy conspires with his Batman doll to outwit his mother and spend the night in the toy section of a Wal-Mart store. The writer sustains focus on this single event, strengthening the unity and coherence of the piece. Literary devices, such as dialogue, are used to enhance character development and reinforce the story line. Expressive word choice and details are carefully chosen to reveal the boy's innocent, childlike perspective, which remains consistent throughout the story. In addition, the overall strength of the conventions contributes to the effectiveness of the writing.

STAAR English I
Spring 2012

Literary – 16

COMPOSITION #3

The deafening roar of the upcoming rapids drowned out anything that Shane seemed to be yelling. Macy anxiously watched his lips, gripping onto the hope that maybe she could read them. She could only pick out two words: "dangerous" and "attention." Cold panic seeped into her stomach where it fluttered around and then rose to her throat. Clinging to the rope on the sides of the neon orange raft, she made her way to Shane, inch by inch.

"Did you hear me?" he yelled above the noise. "This part is going to be a bit tricky, so pay attention." Macy nodded once to acknowledge this. Sensing the fear in her eyes, Shane gave her hand a quick squeeze and signalled a thumbs up with his other hand. Macy flashed him a grateful smile before picking up her paddle again and pushing it into the frothy water. Cleaving the water in time to her swiftly beating heart, she pushed herself. Already, the faint but sure ache of fatigue plagued her arms and torso, but she refused to listen to it. After all, if she gave up now, she would never get a break from Shane whom she saw practically every day.

In an almost surreal moment, the water was crystal clear, shiny pebbles eerily glinting at her from the bottom of the river. However, within seconds, the river turned into a perilous, turbulent belt of rocky danger. Swallowing all inhibition, Macy and the rest of the people in the raft turned into one seamless human machine of pure power, expertly gliding through the most difficult areas. In sync, they rowed and paused, occasionally yelling instructions. After the most challenging thirty seconds of her life, Macy exhaled as the raft lazily floated into tranquility, the water winking at her as Shane would.

Score Point 4
The writer of this accomplished writing performance tells a story about an experience while white-water rafting. The story takes place over a brief 30 seconds of time, and this strong focus creates a unified and coherent response. Meaningful transitions and strong sentence-to-sentence connections allow the writer to skillfully convey what is happening to the characters. The writer uses well-chosen details and expressive word choice to vividly unveil the splendid beauty and awe-inspiring forces that are at the heart of the perilous river journey. Skillfully inserted dialogue punctuates the characters' predicament, drawing the reader into the story. A strong command of conventions adds to the effectiveness of this story.

Expository Scoring Guide

These examples were selected specifically for use in this online course from the English I Writing State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) rubrics and sample student essays made available by the Texas Education Agency.

English I Writing
Expository Prompt

Read the information in the box below.

> The digital audio player, also known as the MP3 player, first became available to the general public in 1996. Unlike the compact disc player, this technology did not require that music be stored on separate discs. MP3 players have now become the dominant medium for listening to music.

Think about the new technologies that people use in everyday life.

Write an essay explaining the effect of one new technology on people's lives.

Be sure to —

- clearly state your thesis
- organize and develop your ideas effectively
- choose your words carefully
- edit your writing for grammar, mechanics, and spelling

STAAR English I Expository Writing

Score Point 1

The essay represents a very limited writing performance.

Organization/Progression

- ❑ The organizing structure of the essay is inappropriate to the purpose or the specific demands of the prompt. The writer uses organizational strategies that are only marginally suited to the explanatory task, or they are inappropriate or not evident at all. The absence of a functional organizational structure causes the essay to lack clarity and direction.

- ❑ Most ideas are generally related to the topic specified in the prompt, but the thesis statement is missing, unclear, or illogical. The writer may fail to maintain focus on the topic, may include extraneous information, or may shift abruptly from idea to idea, weakening the coherence of the essay.

- ❑ The writer's progression of ideas is weak. Repetition or wordiness sometimes causes serious disruptions in the flow of the essay. At other times the lack of transitions and sentence-to-sentence connections causes the writer to present ideas in a random or illogical way, making one or more parts of the essay unclear or difficult to follow.

Development of Ideas

- ❑ The development of ideas is weak. The essay is ineffective because the writer uses details and examples that are inappropriate, vague, or insufficient.

- ❑ The essay is insubstantial because the writer's response to the prompt is vague or confused. In some cases, the essay as a whole is only weakly linked to the prompt. In other cases, the writer develops the essay in a manner that demonstrates a lack of understanding of the expository writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer's word choice may be vague or limited. It reflects little or no awareness of the expository purpose and does not establish a tone appropriate to the task. The word choice may impede the quality and clarity of the essay.

- ❑ Sentences are simplistic, awkward, or uncontrolled, significantly limiting the effectiveness of the essay.

- ❑ The writer has little or no command of sentence boundaries and spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Serious and persistent errors create disruptions in the fluency of the writing and sometimes interfere with meaning.

Texas Education Agency
Student Assessment Division

Expository – 1

COMPOSITION #3

"Thats bad". "Mom come look at this on T.V." Why do people have to text and drive it only hurts themselves. But what if your friend is talking and you want to respond back or they think your mad or ignoring them. "Well I think they should wait because if you don't you will in up like a pancake in the car." I wish the tecnoligy could make a divice where your don't have to look at your phone to read the message it could read it for you. Then you wouldn't have to worry about crashing or driving off the road. The world would be so much safer if it did, I think it should."

Score Point 1

In this very limited performance, the writer provides no thesis statement and uses a narrative strategy—a dialogue between a mother and child—to present ideas. The result is an essay with an organizing structure that is inappropriate to the explanatory task. Although most ideas are generally related to the topic of technology, the absence of a functional organizational structure causes the writer to include ideas that are extraneous to the specified task: to explain the effect of one new technology. These problems cause the essay to lack direction and coherence.

STAAR English I
Spring 2012

Expository – 2

COMPOSITION #3

There is new technology that came out last year in 2olo and it was the new Ipad. The Ipad is kinda of the sam as a Ipod or a cellphone, but it was big and better. It can go anywere with people. It's also can go on the internet and you can plan sutt. The technology that effectivel people life help's them with anything they need to Know about or if they arc lost or something like that. Technology also tell you were to go and you can do anything just almost like a cellphone. I said that technology help's in some way's. But it can be bad for people they are getting lazy and not doing anything that much. But I can said that technology is great, but it can be bad to.

Score Point 1

In this example of a very limited writing performance, the writer attempts to support a weak thesis (technology is great, but it can be bad to) by providing a few examples of the advantages and disadvantages of the new iPad and technology in general (can go on the internet and you can plan stuff; it can be bad for people they are getting lazy and not doing anything that much). The development of these examples, however, is weak because most of the information is vague and lacks explanation or clarification. The result is an essay that is insubstantial and ineffective.

STAAR English I Expository Writing

Score Point 2

The essay represents a basic writing performance.

Organization/Progression

- ❑ The organizing structure of the essay is evident but may not always be appropriate to the purpose or the specific demands of the prompt. The essay is not always clear because the writer uses organizational strategies that are only somewhat suited to the expository task.

- ❑ Most ideas are generally related to the topic specified in the prompt, but the writer's thesis statement is weak or somewhat unclear. The lack of an effective thesis or the writer's inclusion of irrelevant information interferes with the focus and coherence of the essay.

- ❑ The writer's progression of ideas is not always logical and controlled. Sometimes repetition or wordiness causes minor disruptions in the flow of the essay. At other times transitions and sentence-to-sentence connections are too perfunctory or weak to support the flow of the essay or show the relationships among ideas.

Development of Ideas

- ❑ The development of ideas is minimal. The essay is superficial because the writer uses details and examples that are not always appropriate or are too briefly or partially presented.

- ❑ The essay reflects little or no thoughtfulness. The writer's response to the prompt is sometimes formulaic. The writer develops the essay in a manner that demonstrates only a limited understanding of the expository writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer's word choice may be general or imprecise. It reflects a basic awareness of the expository purpose but does little to establish a tone appropriate to the task. The word choice may not contribute to the quality and clarity of the essay.

- ❑ Sentences are awkward or only somewhat controlled, weakening the effectiveness of the essay.

- ❑ The writer demonstrates a partial command of sentence boundaries and spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Some distracting errors may be evident, at times creating minor disruptions in the fluency or meaning of the writing.

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Student Assessment Division

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Expository – 5

COMPOSITION #3

Technology is what turns the world-almost literally. With technology, we can find out what turns the world, how it turns, and maybe one day affect the way it turns. Technology is our learning process that improves our lives day to day. For example, the discovery and control of fire improved the human race so much and so drastically over so many centuries, that we went from caveman to today in a few millenia. Fire cooked food, reducing chances of sickness; fire created light and warmth during the night; and fire allowed us to shape metals and materials to help us construct new things. Without the simplest technology of a flaming glorified stick, we'd still be chimpanzees. The simplest technology can make a difference on us, even today.

Score Point 2

In this basic writing performance, the writer presents the thesis that "Technology is our learning process that improves our lives day to day." This thesis is general, while the focus of the essay—fire—is specific. For this reason, the links between the thesis and the development are not always clear. For example, "our learning process" is not clearly connected to the fact that "fire created light and warmth during the night." In addition, the writer's ideas about how fire has improved our lives are only briefly presented in the form of a list.

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Expository – 7

COMPOSITION #3

Technology

The mp3 player I think is one of the greatest inventions of all time. You can take it anywhere, They mostly have good battery life, and You can put Lots of songs on it. If we didn't have mp3 players we wouldn't be able to Listen to our favorite music when we wanted.

I think that we would still be Listening to CD's, Tapes, or recorded music.

The Television is also a great invention. You can hook up your computer to it, put internet on it, and pictures on it. If we didn't have Televisions we wouldn't probably get news and watch our favorite shows. We would probably miss all of the football games, basketball, baseball, and soccer games. So I think they are both great things added to our technology.

Score Point 2
The writer discusses two technological devices: the mp3 player and the television. The writer provides minimal development by giving examples of what can be done with each device as well as what the consequences would be if the devices did not exist. The ideas included in the essay are clearly related to the topic specified in the prompt, but the thesis statement is very weak. The lack of an effective thesis interferes with the focus and coherence of the essay, preventing the writer from showing a strong relationship between the two examples. Overall, however, even with the weak thesis, the essay is developed and controlled well enough for this essay to be considered a basic writing performance.

STAAR English I Expository Writing

Score Point 3

The essay represents a satisfactory writing performance.

<u>Organization/Progression</u>

❑ The organizing structure of the essay is, for the most part, appropriate to the purpose and responsive to the specific demands of the prompt. The essay is clear because the writer uses organizational strategies that are adequately suited to the expository task.

❑ The writer establishes a clear thesis statement. Most ideas are related to the thesis and are focused on the topic specified in the prompt. The essay is coherent, though it may not always be unified due to minor lapses in focus.

❑ The writer's progression of ideas is generally logical and controlled. For the most part, transitions are meaningful, and sentence-to-sentence connections are sufficient to support the flow of the essay and show the relationships among ideas.

<u>Development of Ideas</u>

❑ The development of ideas is sufficient because the writer uses details and examples that are specific and appropriate, adding some substance to the essay.

❑ The essay reflects some thoughtfulness. The writer's response to the prompt is original rather than formulaic. The writer develops the essay in a manner that demonstrates a good understanding of the expository writing task.

<u>Use of Language/Conventions</u>

❑ The writer's word choice is, for the most part, clear and specific. It reflects an awareness of the expository purpose and establishes a tone appropriate to the task. The word choice usually contributes to the quality and clarity of the essay.

❑ Sentences are varied and adequately controlled, for the most part contributing to the effectiveness of the essay.

❑ The writer demonstrates an adequate command of sentence boundaries and spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Although some errors may be evident, they create few (if any) disruptions in the fluency of the writing, and they do not affect the clarity of the essay.

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Student Assessment Division

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Expository – 9

COMPOSITION #3

One new technology that has had a great effect on people's lives is the Cell Phone. The cell Phone Started out just being a phone that you can take anywhere and call people. Now, the phone has evolved into a device that has the ability not only to call people, but to text, play games, use apps, and access the internet, as well as doing many other amazing and helpful jobs. Personally, I have a Flip phone, and all it does is talk and text. However, I still see the impacts of the "smart" cell phones everyday. For example, in my Health class my teacher will tell us to take out our phones and search certain things on the internet. I can't, but the ones that can benefit immensly from it. The cell phone has helped out life in many more ways, Such as using it as a GPS, or calling your parents when they forget to pick you up from school, or even just playing games on it while in the waiting room in the doctor's office. This new technology is extremely beneficial to us in our lives everyday, and is an amazing innovation.

Score Point 3

In this satisfactory writing performance, the writer uses the first and last sentence of the essay to establish a clear thesis statement focused on the beneficial features of the cell phone. The writer establishes the evolution of the cell phone from portable telephone to multimedia tool. The writer then provides a meaningful transition to a thoughtful personal example of the value of "smart" phones, which adds some substance to the essay. In the last part of the essay, the writer lists additional specific benefits of modern day cell phones. Overall, the essay is focused and coherent, and the writer demonstrates a good control of sentences and conventions.

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Expository – 10

COMPOSITION #3

Technology advancements certainly change the mindsets and the lifestyle of many people of the twenty-first century. One great example of technology advancement that changes the lives of many avid book readers is the digital online book such as the Nook or the Kindle. This modern technology reduces the amount of paper needed to produce a book by being available via kilobytes. It further reduces the fuel consumption that a trip to the bookstore or the library may require.

These digital books also make reading easier and more enjoyable to readers of all ages. It also lets the user have access to the Internet. Among many of its advantages these digital books are lightweight and can be read under the glaring sunlight. This enables the user to use this device anywhere they like.

In conclusion, the Nook or the kindle give many readers a great time enjoying their favorite book and simultaneously reducing the world's landfill. That certainly puts us in a "win-win" situation.

Score Point 3

The writer establishes a clear thesis statement (One great example of technology advancement that changes the lives of many avid book readers is the digital online book such as the Nook or the Kindle). The writer sufficiently supports this thesis by developing the ideas that the reading devices are environmentally friendly and that they are much more convenient than traditional books. The inclusion of details and examples that are specific and appropriate adds some substance to the essay and demonstrates that the writer has a good understanding of the expository writing task. The progression of ideas is generally logical and controlled, and the writer's word choice is, for the most part, clear and specific. This essay represents a satisfactory writing performance.

STAAR English I Expository Writing

Score Point 4

The essay represents an accomplished writing performance.

Organization/Progression

❑ The organizing structure of the essay is clearly appropriate to the purpose and responsive to the specific demands of the prompt. The essay is skillfully crafted because the writer uses organizational strategies that are particularly well suited to the expository task.

❑ The writer establishes a clear thesis statement. All ideas are strongly related to the thesis and are focused on the topic specified in the prompt. By sustaining this focus, the writer is able to create an essay that is unified and coherent.

❑ The writer's progression of ideas is logical and well controlled. Meaningful transitions and strong sentence-to-sentence connections enhance the flow of the essay by clearly showing the relationships among ideas, making the writer's train of thought easy to follow.

Development of Ideas

❑ The development of ideas is effective because the writer uses details and examples that are specific and well chosen, adding substance to the essay.

❑ The essay is thoughtful and engaging. The writer may choose to use his/her unique experiences or view of the world as a basis for writing or to connect ideas in interesting ways. The writer develops the essay in a manner that demonstrates a thorough understanding of the expository writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

❑ The writer's word choice is purposeful and precise. It reflects a keen awareness of the expository purpose and maintains a tone appropriate to the task. The word choice strongly contributes to the quality and clarity of the essay.

❑ Sentences are purposeful, varied, and well controlled, enhancing the effectiveness of the essay.

❑ The writer demonstrates a consistent command of sentence boundaries and spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Although minor errors may be evident, they do not detract from the fluency of the writing or the clarity of the essay. The overall strength of the conventions contributes to the effectiveness of the essay.

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STAAR English I
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Expository – 14

COMPOSITION #3

New gaming technologies effect many people's every-day lives. Gaming systems such as the Playstation 3 and the Xbox 360 cause many people to waste hours of time each week sitting in front of a TV.

These 21st century gaming technologies focus on allowing normal-life people to control a character on a TV. The character on the TV does wild things that the player only wishes he/she could do. Different types of games also allow the player to experience and control everyday life from a different perspective. These systems can give the player a sense of power that is fun to experience. Because of this, these machines may become addicting to many, causing people to blow off their normal everyday work in order to make more time for gaming. This may cause bad grades for adolescents, low salaries for those in the work force, and sometimes damaged relationships with friends and family that designated time should be spent with. Modern gaming systems can be just an enjoyable hobby if they are used wisely and not placed above priorities in importance.

21st century technologies such as modern gaming systems can effect people in many negative ways; but, if they are just used as a fun activity in a person's free time then they will not negatively effect anyone's everyday life.

Score Point 4
The writer of this accomplished performance uses a cause/effect organizational strategy to develop the thesis that 21st century gaming technologies can be addictive and lead to possible negative consequences. The essay is skillfully crafted; the organizational structure allows the writer not only to establish that gaming addictions affect "normal-life people" in their "normal everyday work," but also to address the specific ways in which these addictions manifest themselves. Meaningful transitions and strong sentence-to-sentence connections enhance the development by clearly showing the relationships among ideas. Precise word choice, purposeful and well-controlled sentences, and strong conventions contribute to the overall clarity and effectiveness of the essay.

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Expository – 15

COMPOSITION #3

Many people have gotten lost before while driving. Sure, one can use a map, but it is irritating trying to fold a map. Also, one can not find food places, lodging, gas stations, etc. using a map. One new technology has been created that will help you find and direct you to your destination. This is called a Global Positioning System, or GPS for short. Having a GPS can keep you from getting lost and make your life much easier.

A GPS has a function to just show a map. This map has most roads accessible to the area that that person is driving in. Most GPS's have an option to select a point of interest such as food, lodging, or even airports or hospitals. Imagine that two brothers are on vacation and driving through Houston at the end of the day. They decide to spend the night because they are tired, but they need to find a hotel. Brother #1 types in hotel in the POI function. The GPS shows them the closest one and they are there within minutes. Now imagine these brothers in a different situation. Brother #1 is driving when all of a sudden Brother #2 starts to have chest pains. Brother #1 does not know what to do so he types in hospital in the POI function of the GPS. It displays that there is a hospital three blocks away. There, Brother #2 is successfully treated for a heart attack. If not for the GPS, he might have died.

Global Positioning Systems are indeed important, and not only to these brothers. People can find virtually anything if they needed to. That's why GPS Systems can make everyone's life be better. They help us find our way.

Score Point 4

In this accomplished performance, the writer uses an anecdote to support a clear thesis statement: "One new technology has been created that will help you find and direct you to your destination. This is called a Global Positioning System, or GPS for short." This anecdote is an appropriate organizational strategy because the writer uses it to **explain** rather than to tell a story. In this particular case, the writer focuses on the high points of two specific instances in which a GPS was not only helpful to two brothers (finding a hotel) but also necessary (finding a hospital). In the last paragraph of the essay, the writer broadens the explanation by generalizing the experiences of the two brothers to ways in which Global Positioning Systems can "make everyone's life be better." The writer develops the essay in a manner that demonstrates a thorough understanding of the expository writing task. In addition, the writer demonstrates a consistent control of sentences and command of conventions.

Handouts

Teaching Revising and Editing Skills

Gateway Resource TRES0003

Teaching Revising and Editing Skills
GATEWAY RESOURCE ID: TRES0003
Teaching Revision

Teaching Revision is the third online resource in the Teaching Revising and Editing Skills series.

To locate this resource, go to the Write for Texas website: http://writefortexas.org. Click on the **Online Materials** tab at the top of the page. Next, click on the **Teaching Revising and Editing Skills** tab in the column on the left side of the page. Then, after reading the information, click on **Teaching Revision** (in the middle of the page) to begin working in the Project Share Gateway.

Teaching Revision has three sections. The suggested time to complete all three sections is 1 hour. You may complete this resource at your own pace. All sections may be completed in a single session, or you may log in multiple times as you work through the information and activities.

Materials and Activities by Section

Section 1. Revision Guides

• **Classroom teacher handouts and classroom templates:** Writing Revision Guides

  Review the handouts.

> **Tip:** Model and teach students how to use the appropriate guide to revise and improve their writing. Focus on only one or two elements at a time and provide several rounds of revision per essay over several class periods. Provide copies for students' writing folders or notebooks.

Section 2. Literary Essay Revision

• **Online activity handout:** Sample Student Essay: Literary

• **Online practice activities and videos:** Locate the Literary Writing Revision Guide (page 1 of the Writing Revision Guides handout from Section 1 of this resource). As you watch each video of the Revising a Literary Essay demonstration lesson, follow along on your copy of the sample student essay. Make the suggested revisions and record any ideas, comments, or questions:

  - After the first video, think about how the teacher reinforced the importance of "showing," rather than "telling." Review the literary writing revision guide and place a checkmark beside what you think needs to be revised next.

  - After the second video, review the revisions made so far on your copy of the essay. Refer to the revision guide and think about what might be added to strengthen the beginning.

- After the third video, write what might have happened after the Harpers fell in the river.

- After the fourth video, review the elements of a strong ending on the revision guide. Think about what suggestions you would give to improve this part of the student's essay.

- As you watch the Teacher Talk video, listen carefully to the demonstration lesson discussion and think about how you would participate in the conversation.

- **Teaching journal question:** Look at your revised draft and the revision guide. What other elements would you encourage this student to address in later revisions?

  Think about the question. Record your responses, ideas, and other thoughts in your teaching journal.

Section 3. Expository Essay Revision

- **Online activity handout:** Sample Student Essay: Expository

- **Online practice activities and videos:** Locate the Expository Writing Revision Guide (page 2 of the Writing Revision Guides handout from Section 1 of this resource). As you watch each video of the Revising an Expository Essay demonstration lesson, follow along on your copy of the sample student essay. Make the suggested revisions, and record any ideas, comments, or questions:

  - After the first video, review the expository writing revision guide. What element would you focus on to improve this part of the essay?

  - After the second video, review the revisions that have been made so far on your copy of the essay. Did you notice how the teacher focused on developing the author's ideas in a way that clearly and logically supports the thesis?

  - After the third video, revise the following on your copy of the essay: "And people will rob banks and steal supplies. The police will do nothing to stop this. Prisons will not exist with no laws. Technogly programs will be free. Money will be non use. Government with no power. And driving where ever you want."

  - After the fourth video, use the revision guide to write a conclusion on your copy of the essay. As you write, think about why you make certain choices, so you can better explain to your students the thinking behind the revision process.

  - As you watch the Teacher Talk video, listen carefully to the demonstration lesson discussion and think about how you would participate in the conversation.

- **Teaching journal questions:** How will the demonstration videos change the way you teach and incorporate revision in your content area classroom? What are your thoughts about the way the teacher combined editing with the revision process in both demonstrations?

  Think about the questions. Record your responses, ideas, and other thoughts in your teaching journal.

Writing Revision Guides

Literary Writing Revision Guide

1. Reread and think about your story.
2. What do you notice? Use the elements in the table below to guide your thinking and revising.
3. Make one or more of the following revisions to improve your story: Replace or substitute all or parts of it, add to it, delete (take things out) from it, or reorder (rearrange) it.

Elements of Literary Writing for Prose Fiction and Literary Nonfiction
Literary texts express ideas and feelings about real or imagined people, events, and ideas. Basic forms include prose fiction, drama, poetry, and literary nonfiction.

Narrow focus	• Conveys a story that focuses on a specific (real or imagined) character, event, or idea, based on the topic or prompt • Includes the central conflict or problem (internal or external) that drives the plot • Is sustained throughout the story (does not change) • Is told from a clear and consistent point of view (first or third person)
Logical sequence	• Presents the events in a logical sequence (usually in chronological order) • Includes a beginning, middle, and end • Uses meaningful transitions to connect ideas between paragraphs and sentences and to move the reader through the story
Strong beginning	• Grabs the reader's attention and makes the reader want to read the rest of the story • Uses sensory details to describe the setting and create the mood (the overall feeling that the story conveys) • Uses vivid language and interesting details to introduce the characters and the central conflict they face • Establishes the point of view (first or third person) • Usually includes the triggering event that starts the story in motion
Strong middle	• "Shows," rather than "tells," by using a balance of narration, description with sensory and specific details, dialogue, and action to advance the plot and develop the characters and setting • Presents only events directly related to the central conflict • Builds each event on the next, adding suspense until the action reaches a climax (high point)
Strong ending	• Brings the story to a close • Continues to clearly show, rather than tell, as it resolves the central conflict and/or presents a logical and believable outcome • Leaves the reader with a memorable impression • May reveal or imply the theme (the underlying main idea, message, or lesson about life)
Purposeful and precise word choice	• Makes the story clear and easy to understand • Creates the mood and tone (how the author expresses his or her attitude and feelings about the story) • Includes specific, powerful words • Is careful and thoughtful
Varied sentence structure	• Essay includes sentences of various types, length, and structure • Sentences are clearly written and make sense • Language and phrasing help the story flow (make it easy to read and follow)

Expository Writing Revision Guide

1. Reread and think about your essay.
2. What do you notice? Use the elements in the table below to guide your thinking and revising.
3. Make one or more of the following revisions to improve your essay: Replace or substitute all or parts of it, add to it, delete (take things out) from it, or reorder (rearrange) it.

Elements of Expository Essays
An expository essay is a type of informational text that clarifies or explains something.

Element	
Clear, concise, and defined thesis (or controlling idea) statement	• Clearly focuses on the topic or prompt • Tells why the topic is important • Has a narrow focus (is not too general or broad) • Is sustained throughout the essay (does not change)
Specific supporting details	• Logically connect to the thesis or controlling idea (connection is clear and makes sense) • Are interesting and thoughtfully chosen • Are well developed (add substance to the essay) • "Show," rather than "tell," by using examples, facts, reasons, incidents, comparisons, etc.
Clearly organized structure	• Presents the ideas in a logical way • Is easy to follow • Shows how all the ideas relate to the thesis or controlling idea • Uses meaningful transitions to connect ideas between paragraphs and sentences
Strong introduction	• Grabs the reader's attention and makes the reader want to read the rest of the essay • Shows why the author's ideas are important (worth reading) • Provides a brief overview of the topic and background information for the reader • Includes the thesis or controlling idea
Strong conclusion	• Brings closure to the essay • Accurately synthesizes or resolves information already presented (does not introduce new ideas) • Readdresses the thesis or controlling idea, based on what has been presented (does not restate thesis verbatim) • Uses vivid images and interesting language that leave a memorable impression on the reader
Purposeful and precise word choice	• Makes the essay clear and easy to understand • Creates an appropriate tone for expository writing (the attitude an author takes toward the subject and its effect on the reader) • Includes specific, powerful words • Is careful and thoughtful
Varied sentence structure	• Essay includes sentences of various types, length, and structure • Sentences are clearly written and make sense • Language and phrasing help the essay flow (make it easy to read and follow)

Analytical Writing Revision Guide

1. Reread and think about your essay.
2. What do you notice? Use the elements in the table below to guide your thinking and revising.
3. Make one or more of the following revisions to improve your essay: Replace or substitute all or parts of it, add to it, delete (take things out) from it, or reorder (rearrange) it.

Elements of Analytical Essays

An analytical essay analyzes and interprets a work of literature by using specific examples from the text to build a logical argument beyond a summary or description of the work.

Clear and convincing thesis (or controlling idea)	• Clearly focuses on the topic or prompt • Presents a defensible interpretation or claim (argument) about the topic • Has a narrow focus (is not too general or broad) • Is sustained throughout the essay (does not change)
Explicit supporting details	• Logically connect to the thesis or controlling idea (connection is clear and makes sense) • Are interesting, thoughtfully chosen, and focused on the specific aspect of the text the writer is analyzing • Present a credible and compelling analytical interpretation of the text (add substance to the essay) • "Show," rather than "tell," by supporting the interpretation with relevant textual evidence (examples, facts, reasons, incidents, quotations)
Clearly organized structure	• Builds a logical argument that supports the author's conclusions and is easy to follow • Shows how all the ideas relate to the thesis or controlling idea • Uses meaningful transitions to connect the ideas between paragraphs and sentences • Smoothly integrates textual evidence into the essay
Strong introduction	• Grabs the reader's attention and makes the reader want to read the rest of the essay • Shows why the author's ideas are worth reading and considering • Provides context (background information) about the topic or text • Includes the thesis or controlling idea • Briefly describes how the author will make his or her argument and present evidence to support it
Strong conclusion	• Brings closure to the essay • Accurately synthesizes what has been proven and clarifies its meaning (does not introduce new ideas) • Readdresses the thesis or controlling idea based on what has been presented (does not restate the thesis verbatim) • Uses vivid images and interesting language that leave a memorable impression on the reader
Purposeful and precise word choice	• Makes the essay clear and easy to understand • Creates an appropriate tone for analysis (the attitude an author takes toward the subject and its effect on the reader) • Includes specific, powerful words • Is careful and thoughtful
Varied sentence structure	• Essay includes sentences of various types, length, and structure • Sentences are clearly written and make sense • Language and phrasing help the essay flow (make it easy to read and follow)

Personal Narrative Writing Revision Guide

1. Reread and think about your essay.
2. What do you notice? Use the elements in the table below to guide your thinking and revising.
3. Make one or more of the following revisions to improve your essay: Replace or substitute all or parts of it, add to it, delete (take things out) from it, or reorder (rearrange) it.

Elements of Personal Narratives	A personal narrative is an expressive literary piece written in first person that centers on a particular event in the author's life and may contain vivid description as well as personal commentary and observations.
Narrow, clearly defined focus	• Focuses on a central idea (theme or message) • Is based on a singular, significant event or experience • Communicates the gist of the experience and its significance to the author's life (meaning, insight, or lesson learned) • Is sustained throughout the essay (does not change)

Interesting details	• Make the situation realistic and believable (clearly show why the experience was meaningful)
	• Are specific and thoughtfully chosen
	• Are well developed (add substance to the essay)
	• "Show," rather than "tell," by appealing to the senses
	• Include the following:
	  – Descriptions of the characters (their appearance, actions, and words)
	  – Dialogue that moves the narrative along (should sound natural and not be overused)
	  – A vivid description of the setting (where and when)

Logical sequence	• Presents the events in a meaningful order (often chronologically) • Shows how all the events support the clearly defined focus or central idea • Is similar to the plot line of a story (story elements build to a climax that reveals the lessons learned) • Uses meaningful transitions to connect ideas between paragraphs and sentences, move the reader along through the story, and reinforce the link between the experience and its meaning
Strong introduction	• Grabs the reader's attention and makes the reader want to read the rest of the essay • Shows why the author's ideas are important (worth reading) • Includes the focus or central idea
Strong conclusion	• Brings closure to the essay • Includes a strong action, feeling, or image that shows the author's personal growth and/or emphasizes the importance of the event • Leaves the reader with a memorable impression of the personal experience and the author's insight (a new or deeper understanding of the experience)
Purposeful and precise word choice	• Makes the essay clear and easy to understand • Creates the tone (how the author uses words to express his or her attitude and feelings about the experience) • Includes specific, powerful words • Is careful and thoughtful
Varied sentence structure	• Essay includes sentences of various types, length, and structure • Sentences are clearly written and make sense • Language and phrasing help the essay flow (make it easy to read and follow)

Persuasive Writing Revision Guide

1. Reread and think about your essay.
2. What do you notice? Use the elements in the table below to guide your thinking and revising.
3. Make one or more of the following revisions to improve your essay: Replace or substitute all or parts of it, add to it, delete (take things out) from it, or reorder (rearrange) it.

Elements of Persuasive Essays A persuasive essay is written with the intent to persuade or convince the reader of something.	
Clear, concise, and defined thesis statement	• Clearly presents the writer's position on the topic or prompt • States a supportable position that is open for debate • Has a narrow focus (is not too general or broad) • Is sustained throughout the essay (does not change)
Well developed argument with strong evidential support	• Logically connects to the thesis (connection is clear and makes sense) • Uses specific supporting evidence to support or defend the thesis (evidence includes examples, facts, expert opinions or quotes, incidents, emotional appeals, or a call to action) • Explains differing points of view (counterarguments) to convince the reader why the author's position is better
Clearly organized structure	• Presents the ideas in a logical way • Is easy to follow • Shows how all the ideas relate to the thesis • Uses meaningful transitions to connect ideas between paragraphs and sentences
Strong introduction	• Grabs the reader's attention and makes the reader want to read the rest of the essay • Shows why the topic or issue is important (worth reading and considering) • Provides background information for the reader • Includes the thesis
Strong conclusion	• Brings closure to the essay • Accurately synthesizes or resolves already presented information (does not introduce new ideas) • Readdresses the thesis based on what has been presented (does not restate the thesis verbatim) • Uses vivid images and interesting language that leave a memorable impression on the reader or persuade the reader to take action
Purposeful and precise word choice	• Makes the essay clear and easy to understand • Creates the appropriate tone for persuasive writing (the attitude an author takes toward the subject and its effect on the reader) • Includes specific, powerful words (avoids words that show bias or emotion) • Is careful and thoughtful
Varied sentence structure	• Essay includes sentences of various types, length, and structure • Sentences are clearly written and make sense • Language and phrasing help the essay flow (make it easy to read and follow)

Expository Summary Writing Revision Guide

1. Reread and think about your essay.

2. What do you notice? Use the elements in the table below to guide your thinking and revising.

3. Make one or more of the following revisions to improve your essay: Replace or substitute all or parts of it, add to it, delete (take things out) from it, or reorder (rearrange) it.

Elements of an Expository Summary

An expository summary is an accurate, concise restatement, in the writer's own words, of a text's main ideas and important details.

Clear and concise topic sentence	• Explains the topic in the writer's own words • Is not copied word for word from the original text • Suggests the content of the summary • Reflects the overall meaning of the original text • Does not include a traditional introduction
All main ideas and important supporting details in body	• Is written in complete sentences that make sense • Uses own words—not copied word for word from the original text • Uses various types of sentences (i.e., simple, compound, complex) • Varies sentence beginnings • Includes transitional words and phrases
No trivial or unimportant information	• Focuses on the identified main ideas and important supporting details • Contains only significant facts and details about the topic • Does not elaborate details
No repeated information	• Sticks to the point • Does not include redundant information • Does not reiterate key ideas • Does not include a conclusion
Purposeful and precise word choice	• Is clear and easy to understand • Includes specific, powerful words • Suggests a category instead of listing all examples or details in the original text

Sample Student Essay: Literary

River Rafting is many things. A hobbie, a sport, a memory. But, it is mustly an adventure! If you have ever river rafted with a group of people, you know it is difficult. But, it also makes relationships with those people.

When the Harper family went river rafting in the smokies, they were very inexperienced. They thought it would be a fun family activity that would make their relationship grow. But they never realized how hard it was until they actually got into the raft. They figured out they always needed to be on their guard, they always needed to communicate and most importantly, they always had a job to perform.

During their adventure, they hit many rocks, got stuck many times and had fallen off the raft many times. But they never thought it would be that fun to work together as a family.

Sample Student Essay: Expository

I don't think it is ever okay to break the rules. If rules were ever to be broken, we would live in a chaotic world. The laws, the order, the sports, and schools would be unfair. In cities, driving will not have a speed limit. And people will rob banks and steal supplies. The police will do nothing to stop this. Prisons will not exist with no laws. Technogly programs will be free. Money will be non use. Government with no power. And driving where ever you want. And another way rules shouldn't be broken in, is sports. In a football game, the game would not seem as fair without the rules. With no rules in this sport, there will be no consequences, no penaltys. If there were none, players would do what ever they want. And in schools children would do what ever they want also. Bullying will be fair, everyone will want ever they want and referals would not exist.