



**Raising Your ELA Scores Through Writing:
Simple and
Easy**



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- State testing information
 - Rubrics
 - Sample papers
 - Information
- Progress Monitoring
 - Checklists
 - Tracking forms
 - Anecdotal notes
- Setting the foundation
- Text-based expository writing
- Text-based argumentative writing
- Additional activities and strategies

AGENDA



STATE WRITING ASSESSMENT



(FAST) FLORIDA ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT THINKING

<https://www.fldoe.org/accountability/assessments/k-12-student-assessment/best/>

- Three tests per year (2022-2023 field test)
 - PM1 and PM2 will be used for informational purposes.
 - PM3 will be a summative assessment and used for accountability.
- Testing Windows
 - PM1: August 15-September 30
 - PM2: December 5-January 27
 - PM3: May 1-June 2
- Tests will be computer-adaptive through Cambium.

FAST STATE ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

12 POINTS TOTAL

- Purpose/Structure: 1-4 points
- Development: 1-4 point
- Language: 1-4 points

4 = Above grade level

3 = Within range of grade level

2 = Approaching the range of grade level

1 = Below grade level

FAST GRADE 4-6 RUBRIC: EXPOSITORY

Teaching Tip: The writing skills expected at each score point are often the same; it is the quality of these skills that differs from score to score.



Grades 4-6 Expository Rubric			
Responses are scored holistically by domain and earn scores by demonstrating <i>most</i> of the descriptors in a given score point.*			
Score Point	Purpose/Structure	Development	Language
<p>4 Above grade-level accomplishment demonstrated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central idea is focused on the task and consistently maintained throughout. Organizational structure strengthens the response and allows for advancement of the central idea. Varied transitional strategies connect ideas within and among paragraphs, enhancing the progression of the response. Effective introduction and conclusion enhance the essay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skillful development demonstrates thorough understanding of the topic. Effective elaboration may include original student writing combined with (but may not be limited to) paraphrasing, text evidence, examples, definitions, narrative, and/or rhetorical techniques as appropriate to support the central idea. Smoothly integrated, relevant evidence from multiple sources lends credibility to the essay. Evidence is appropriately cited. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of academic vocabulary strengthens and furthers ideas. Skillful use of varied sentence structure contributes to fluidity of ideas. Use of standard English grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling demonstrates consistent command of the communication of ideas. Tone and/or voice strengthens the overall response.
<p>3 Within the range of grade-level performance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central idea is focused on the task and generally maintained throughout. Organizational structure is logical and allows for advancement of the central idea. Varied transitional strategies connect ideas within and among paragraphs. Sufficient introduction and conclusion contribute to a sense of completeness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Logical development demonstrates understanding of the topic. Adequate elaboration may include (but may not be limited to) a combination of original student writing with paraphrasing, text evidence, examples, definitions, narrative, and/or rhetorical** techniques as appropriate to support the central idea. Relevant, integrated evidence from multiple sources lends credibility to the exposition. Evidence is appropriately cited. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of academic vocabulary demonstrates clear expression of ideas. Sentence structure is varied and demonstrates grade-appropriate language facility. Use of grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling demonstrates grade-appropriate command of standard English conventions. Tone and/or voice is appropriate for the overall response.

FAST GRADE 4-6 RUBRIC: EXPOSITORY



<p>2 Approaching the range of grade-level performance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central idea may be unclear, loosely related, or insufficiently sustained within the task. • Organizational structure may be repetitive or inconsistent, disrupting the advancement of ideas. • Transitions attempt to connect ideas but may lack variety. • Introduction and conclusion may be present but repetitive, simplistic, or otherwise ineffective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development may demonstrate partial or incomplete understanding of the topic. • Elaboration may attempt to develop the central idea but may rely heavily on the sources, provide loosely related information, be repetitive or otherwise ineffective. • Evidence may be partially integrated and/or related to the topic but unsupportive of or disconnected from the exposition. • Lacks appropriate citations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary and word choice may be imprecise or basic, demonstrating partial command of expression of ideas. • Sentence structure may be partially controlled, somewhat simplistic, or lacking grade-appropriate language facility. • Inconsistent use of correct grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and/or spelling may contain multiple distracting errors, demonstrating partial command of standard English conventions. • Tone and/or voice may be inconsistent. • May be grammatically accurate but too brief to demonstrate grade-appropriate command of language skills.
<p>1 Below grade-level performance demonstrated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central idea may be absent, ambiguous, or confusing, demonstrating lack of awareness of task. • Demonstrates little or no discernible organizational structure. • Transitions may be absent or confusing. • Introduction and conclusion may be unrelated to the response and/or create confusion. • Too brief to demonstrate knowledge of purpose, structure, or task. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response may demonstrate lack of understanding of the topic and/or lack of development. • Elaboration may consist of confusing ideas or demonstrate lack of knowledge of elaborative techniques. • Evidence from sources may be absent, vague, and/or confusing. • Lacks appropriate citations. • Too brief to demonstrate knowledge of elaboration, topic, or sources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary and word choice may be vague, unclear, or confusing. • Sentence structure may be simplistic or confusing. • Use of grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and/or spelling may contain a density and variety of severe errors, demonstrating lack of command of standard English conventions, often obscuring meaning. • Tone and/or voice may be inappropriate. • Brevity with errors demonstrates lack of command of language skills.

*Citation is not a holistic consideration. Without citation, the highest score possible in *Development* is a 2.

**Grade 6

EXAMPLE EXPOSITORY TEST

The screenshot shows a web-based writing test interface. On the left, a source text titled "The Arts" by Jason Torres is displayed. It contains three paragraphs of text. On the right, a writing prompt is shown, including a numbered question (1), a text box for the user's name, and a set of instructions for writing an expository essay. Below the instructions is a rich text editor with a toolbar containing icons for bold, italic, underline, strikethrough, bulleted list, numbered list, indent, outdent, link, unlink, and undo.

Items Grade 4 Writing Sample Item GUEST, GUEST (Username: GUEST) GUEST SESSION

Back Next Save Pause End Test

Notes Line Reader Zoom Out Zoom In

The Arts

Source 1: The Power of Painting

by Jason Torres

1 Painting has a lot of power. People everywhere use it to tell their stories. They communicate their feelings through pictures. Painting can bring together people who don't have the same experiences. It can help them understand what makes them different. It can also show them what they have in common.

2 Famous painters usually don't create art to become famous. They paint because it is meaningful to them. They become famous because other people relate to their art. People won't like everything artists make. Most artists think that's okay. Art is a way to express their ideas. Artists share their work hoping others will see those ideas too, or see another idea in the same art. They know it won't always happen. An artist's work may make one person sad and another person happy. As long as it makes someone feel something, it is art.

3 Frida Kahlo was a famous Mexican painter. She went through many struggles in her life. Her art helped her understand her difficult feelings. Frida said, "The only thing I know is that I paint because I need to, and I paint whatever passes through my head without any other consideration." She painted many portraits of herself. Self-portraits can help artists understand and show how different life events make them feel. Art students, **historians**, and many other people spend a lot of time looking at Frida's art. Sometimes they

1

GUEST, GUEST

The arts are different types of creative activity, such as painting, music, drama, literature, and dance.

Write an expository essay about how people use the arts to express themselves.

Your expository essay must be based on this prompt and topic, and it must incorporate ideas and information found in the sources provided.

Use your best writing to complete an essay that

- is focused on your central idea;
- combines evidence from multiple sources with your own elaboration to develop your ideas;
- is organized and includes transitions within and among ideas;
- provides citations for quoted material and source ideas; and
- demonstrates correct use of grammar and language appropriate to the task.

Write your multiparagraph essay to an academic audience in the space provided.

B I U Ix

JavaScriptvoid(Insert/Remove Numbered List)

Grades 4-6 Argumentation Rubric Responses are scored holistically by domain and earn scores by demonstrating <i>most</i> of the descriptors in a given score point.*			
Score Point	Purpose/Structure	Development	Language
4 Above grade-level accomplishment demonstrated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Claim is focused on the task and consistently maintained throughout. Organizational structure strengthens the response and allows for advancement of the argument. Varied transitional strategies connect ideas within and among paragraphs, enhancing the progression of the argument. Effective introduction and conclusion enhance the essay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skillful development demonstrates thorough understanding of the topic. Effective elaboration may include original student writing combined with (but may not be limited to) paraphrasing, text evidence, examples, definitions, narrative, and/or rhetorical** techniques as appropriate to support the argument. Smoothly integrated, relevant evidence from multiple sources lends credibility to the argument. Counterclaim(s) may be present. Evidence is appropriately cited. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of academic vocabulary strengthens and furthers ideas. Skillful use of varied sentence structure contributes to fluidity of ideas. Use of standard English grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling demonstrates consistent command of the communication of ideas. Tone and/or voice strengthens the overall argument.
3 Within the range of grade-level performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Claim is focused on the task and generally maintained throughout. Organizational structure is logical and allows for advancement of the argument. Varied transitional strategies connect ideas within and among paragraphs. Sufficient introduction and conclusion contribute to a sense of completeness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Logical development of ideas demonstrates understanding of the topic. Adequate elaboration may include (but may not be limited to) a combination of original student writing with paraphrasing, text evidence, examples, definitions, narrative, and/or rhetorical** techniques as appropriate to support the argument. Relevant, integrated evidence from multiple sources lends credibility to the argument. Evidence is appropriately cited. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of academic vocabulary demonstrates clear expression of ideas. Sentence structure is varied and demonstrates grade-appropriate language facility. Use of grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling demonstrates grade-appropriate command of standard English conventions. Tone and/or voice is appropriate for the overall argument.

FAST
GRADE 4-6
RUBRIC:
ARGUMENTATIVE
E

<p>2 Approaching the range of grade-level performance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Claim may be unclear, loosely related, or insufficiently sustained within the task. Organizational structure may be repetitive or inconsistent, disrupting the advancement of ideas. Transitions attempt to connect ideas but may lack variety. Introduction and conclusion may be present but repetitive, simplistic, or otherwise ineffective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development may demonstrate partial or incomplete understanding of the topic. Elaboration may attempt to develop the argument but may rely heavily on the sources, provide loosely related information, be repetitive or otherwise ineffective. Evidence may be partially integrated and/or related to the topic but unsupportive of or disconnected from the argument. Lacks appropriate citations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocabulary and word choice may be imprecise or basic, demonstrating partial command of expression of ideas. Sentence structure may be partially controlled, somewhat simplistic, or lacking grade-appropriate language facility. Inconsistent use of correct grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and/or spelling; may contain multiple distracting errors, demonstrating partial command of standard English conventions. Tone and/or voice may be inconsistent. May be grammatically accurate but too brief to demonstrate grade-appropriate command of language skills.
<p>1 Below grade-level performance demonstrated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Claim may be absent, ambiguous, or confusing, demonstrating lack of awareness of task. Demonstrates little or no discernible organizational structure. Transitions may be absent or confusing. Introduction and conclusion may be unrelated to the response and/or create confusion. Too brief to demonstrate knowledge of purpose, structure, or task. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Response may demonstrate lack of understanding of the topic and/or lack of development. Elaboration may consist of confusing ideas or demonstrate lack of knowledge of elaborative techniques. Evidence from the sources may be absent, vague, and/or confusing. Lacks appropriate citations. Too brief to demonstrate knowledge of elaboration, topic, or sources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocabulary and word choice may be vague, unclear, or confusing. Sentence structure may be simplistic or confusing. Use of grammar, punctuation, capitalization and/or spelling may contain a density and variety of severe errors, demonstrating lack of command of standard English conventions, often obscuring meaning. Tone and/or voice may be inappropriate. Brevity with errors demonstrates lack of command of language skills.

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 **Grade 6

FAST
GRADE 4-6
RUBRIC:
ARGUMENTATIVE
E



FAST STATE RUBRIC - MAIN POINTS

Purpose/Structure

- Central idea focused on task (prompt)
- Central idea maintained throughout the essay
- Clear, logical organizational structure
- Little or no loosely related info
- Varied transitional strategies that connect ideas within and among paragraphs
- Effective introduction and conclusion

Development

- Demonstrates understanding of the topic
- Relevant evidence from multiple sources
- References to sources
- Definitions, quotations, and examples
- Elaboration based on evidence

Language

- Academic vocabulary
- Varied sentence structure
- Punctuation, capitalization, and spelling grade-level appropriate
- Tone/voice appropriate

RUBRICS vs. SCORING SAMPLERS

- Print out the **sample papers** and **rubrics** from your state website.
- Use the scoring samplers to **understand** the nuances of the rubric.
- Scoring writing can be **subjective - score how the state does.**
- Use the sample papers **while** scoring.
- **Score with your peers** in order to develop a consistent grading system within your school.

****FAST Scoring Samplers have not been released yet.**



Teaching Tip: Use the sample papers while teaching; print out poster size.

F.A.S.T. STATE ASSESSMENT SAMPLE PAPERS



THE B.E.S.T. STANDARDS

Benchmarks for Excellent Student Thinking

GRADE 4

2022 B.E.S.T. Writing

SCORING SAMPLER



THE B.E.S.T. STANDARDS

Benchmarks for Excellent Student Thinking

GRADE 5

2022 B.E.S.T. Writing

SCORING SAMPLER

FAST STATE ASSESSMENT SAMPLE PAPERS

Essays that scored a 12:

- Three out of the four essays that earned a perfect score were five paragraphs and at least one full page typed.
- All essays had a very consistent structure and way of organizing ideas/topics.
- All used a great deal of both external and internal transition words.
- Each essay included evidence from multiple sources and cited specifically where the evidence was from.
- Every essay had a great deal of “original writing” that elaborated on the evidence.
- Argumentative essays can be written in either 1st or 3rd person and should at least mention both sides of the issue/topic.

FAST STATE ASSESSMENT SAMPLE PAPERS

Essays that scored a 7-9:

- Overall essays, are shorter; six of the eight that scored within this range are only half a page.
- All included four or five organized and structured paragraphs.
- Essays consistently used external transitions, but internal transitions were less frequent and less sophisticated.
- In all essays, evidence was included from multiple sources; however, there was less evidence used to support each topic/reason and citations were at times unspecific or missing.
- Essays included less original writing and less analysis of the text.
- Some essays included writing that lacked clarity or did not vary in sentence structure. Overall, the essays used a moderate amount of general/imprecise words and made more frequent grammatical errors.

FAST STATE ASSESSMENT SAMPLE PAPERS

Essays that scored a 6 or below:

- Essays were all very brief; all were less than half a page.
- Essays either did not fully address prompt, misinterpreted prompt, or the central idea/claim was confusing.
- All essays lacked structure and/or organization of ideas.
- Evidence frequently came from only one source and often did not include a citation.
- Elaboration either repeated evidence, was confusing, or was too brief.
- Essays utilized basic, vague word choice. There were consistent, distracting grammatical errors throughout.

FAST STATE ASSESSMENT SAMPLE PAPERS

Grade 4 2022 B.E.S.T. Writing

Writing Prompt

Write an argumentative essay about whether kids learn better through digital play or hands-on play.

Your argumentative essay must be based on this prompt and topic, and it must incorporate ideas and evidence found in the sources provided.

Use your best writing to complete an essay that

- is focused on your claim;
- combines evidence from multiple sources with your own elaboration to develop your ideas;
- is organized and includes transitions within and among ideas;
- provides citations for quoted material and source ideas; and
- demonstrates correct use of grammar and language appropriate to the task.

Write your multiparagraph essay to an academic audience in the space provided.

Saws, hammers, axes, and nails. These all come from hands-on-play. I believe that kids learn better through hands-on-play than on digital play. Kids are their own designers, kids transport digital games into real life, and kids can construct objects of their own.

In hands-on-play, kids can be their own designers. They use their imagination to bring their ideas to life. Citing evidence from *The Many Worlds of Play*, "It's harder to have an unlimited imagination in digital play, where the games world and tools have already been decided from it's designers. With hands-on-play, kids are always their own designers." This means that kids can use their ideas to design their own world. I love to design myself, so I love hands-on-play. Last summer, my family and I went to Virginia to see our friends, Katherine and Jacob. While we were there, we got a tour of their house. They also own 30 acres of land outside of their house, so we checked that out too. We saw a deer hunting stand and had an idea. We would build a tree-house! We worked on it for a week and had a lot of fun. Building, and designing. You can see that kids can design anything they think of in hands-on-play.

Not only that, but kids transport digital games into real life. So there is no need to go out and buy a digital game, you can use the supplies you have in your house or backyard! Information from *The Many Worlds of Play*, "Those exciting fantasy worlds in digital games can easily be transported into real life. When kids are at play, an empty box becomes a rocket ship. Or, Maybe, a fallen tree branch becomes the key to a pretend universe." These children all use their imagination to bring these ideas to life. My five-year-old brother has a big imagination. One time, my brother collected an egg box and a diaper box. He taped them on top of each other and my sister helped him put paper inside. My bother made a ladder out of pipe cleaners while I made a palm tree, flower pot, snake, and a sign. My sister took a pair of scissors and cut out a door. My brother and I taped the sign on the door, the snake to the roof, the palm tree to the bottom, the flower pot on the building, and secured the piece of paper. Now, my siblings and I have just created a hot wheels castle for my brother. Children are able to transform digital play into hands-on-play.

Last but not least, kids can construct objects of their own. They use creativity, imagination, and some hard work. According to *The Thrill of Getting Grubby*, "Visitors find saws, hammers, scissors, pliers, axes, and screw drivers. Add to that lots of wood and old items of all types. Kids construct objects and spaces like go carts and hide-outs. They can play in ways they'd never be able to at home or in a regular playground." When these kids play, it is different because there is no wall that parents want kids to break down for adventure playing. When I was in Virginia, We created the idea on our own and we couldn't build it at home, or at a regular playground. We also didn't get much help. When kids get ideas, they can

Grade 4 2022 B.E.S.T. Writing

S-1

Score Point 4/4/4

(page 2 of 3)

actually happen when they put their mind to it.

As you can see, kids learn better through hands-on play than on digital play. Kids are their own designers, they transport digital games into real life, and kids can construct objects of their own. I hope you start hands-on-play.

FAST STATE ASSESSMENT SAMPLE PAPERS

Grade 5 2022 B.E.S.T. Writing

Writing Prompt

Write an expository essay about why grasslands are important.

Your expository essay must be based on this prompt and topic, and it must incorporate ideas and information found in the sources provided.

Use your best writing to complete an essay that

- is focused on your central idea;
- combines evidence from multiple sources with your own elaboration to develop your ideas;
- is organized and includes transitions within and among ideas;
- provides citations for quoted material and source ideas; and
- demonstrates correct use of grammar and language appropriate to the task.

Write your multiparagraph essay to an academic audience in the space provided.

Our world has many natural wonders such as swamps, praries, mountains, and oceans. One that a lot of time gets overlooked is grass lands. However, even though sometimes grasslands are underrated, they are a neccessity to our world for many reasons. One of which being the hiding it provides to all the occupants in it.

To begin, grasslands house a vast food source. Grasslands contain a variety of consumables. "The Great Plains" states, "...grasses include plants that we eat, such as corn, wheat, and oats." Farms can make the best of this oppurtunity and sell goods to improve the economy. Additionally, grasslands are very sustainable. "Oceans of Grass" clearly displays, "They bend and sway easily in the wind, and are well adapted to survive in droughts, fierce storms, and extreme heat and cold." In winters when food is scarce and animals are literally dying of starvation, grasslands can be their savior.

Moreover, minerals are yet another facet of why grasslands are important. The abundance of minerals grasslands are home to is significantly huge. "A Hunger for Grass" implies that, different types of grass have different types of minerals like protein, sodium, calcium, fiber, and silica. With all these minerals in place, animals should receive minimal to no illnesses. Furthermore, the minerals grasslands give can be specific to suit any need. The author of "A Hunger for Grass" indicates that wildebeasts need one mineral in particular, phosphorus, which is is a major base for building strong and healthy bones. With these solid bones intact, wildebeasts can defend young from predators.

Just as important, hiding is another thing grasslands grant to creatures. Animals can reach safety or stalk prey whenever is neccessary. Alice Mills, author of "The Great Plains" says, "Tall grasses allowed animals to hide from prey or predators. For instance, if animals are not gifted the ability to acquire camoflauge or mimicry, there is now another option by hiding in grass. Therefore, hiding helps balance out population. According to the text, "A whole ecosystem thrived, including plants, prey, and predators. Due to this population balance it affects the food chain greatly in a positive way.

To conclude, grasslands are important to our enviroment for a large amount of reasons. Some of which including being a reliable food source, giving valuable minerals, and being a useful hiding spot. So the next time you see a grassland, do not overlook it. Stop and think of all the things it has done for the enviroment and take in the beauty of this exaggeratingly remarkable natural wonder.

STATE WRITING ASSESSMENT PREP & REVIEW

6-8 Weeks Prior to the Test:

- Revisit lessons
- Individualize lessons based on assessment results
- Prompt practice
- Timed practice (work on pacing & stamina)
- Simulation tests (teachers, rooms, time, etc.)
- Small groups
- Peer teaching



TESTING TIME: PACING AND TIME MANAGEMENT

Know the time limit for your state's assessment. Create anchor charts that divide the writing process into clear steps and assign an appropriate amount of time to each.

Reading	20-30 min
Planning	10-15 min
Writing	60-75 min
Editing	Any extra time

Writing Breakdown: 60-75 Minutes

1 st paragraph	5-10 min
2 nd paragraph	15-20 min
3 rd paragraph	15-20 min
4 th paragraph	15-20 min
5 th paragraph	5-10 min

Teaching Tip:

Example pacing charts for a two-hour test.



TESTING PLAN

Who is testing your students?

Where is everyone testing?

Have you practiced the testing plan so that students can see who they are testing with and where?

Plan on conducting at least two mock assessments before test day so students will be familiar with the person and environment.

Make sure the person in front of them knows the “language” and is a “nice” person.

Always practice with the state writing materials/testing format.



MOCK ASSESSMENTS

For students who will be administered **paper-based writing assessments**, create a testing template that mimics the format they will be presented with.

Include the exact number of planning and response pages that will be provided.

Within the *Test and Answer Book*, place the text sets that students will read and the prompt to which students will respond in the same order they will appear during the state writing assessment.

For students who will be administered **computer-based writing assessments**, create a testing scenario that mimics the state writing test. Provide students with passages in the same way the state will.

Have students type their essays during mock assessments.

*Students should practice typing skills throughout the year. A variety of free and low-cost programs are available online for students to use at school and home.

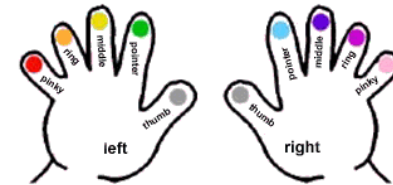
DEVELOPING KEYBOARDING SKILLS

- Free programs:
 - Typing.com
 - Typing Club
 - Type 2 Learn
 - Fast Fingers
 - Monkey Type
- Low-cost programs:
 - Mavis Beacon-multiple programs/levels \$20-25 each
 - Typing Master-\$20 for lifetime access

Practice opportunities:

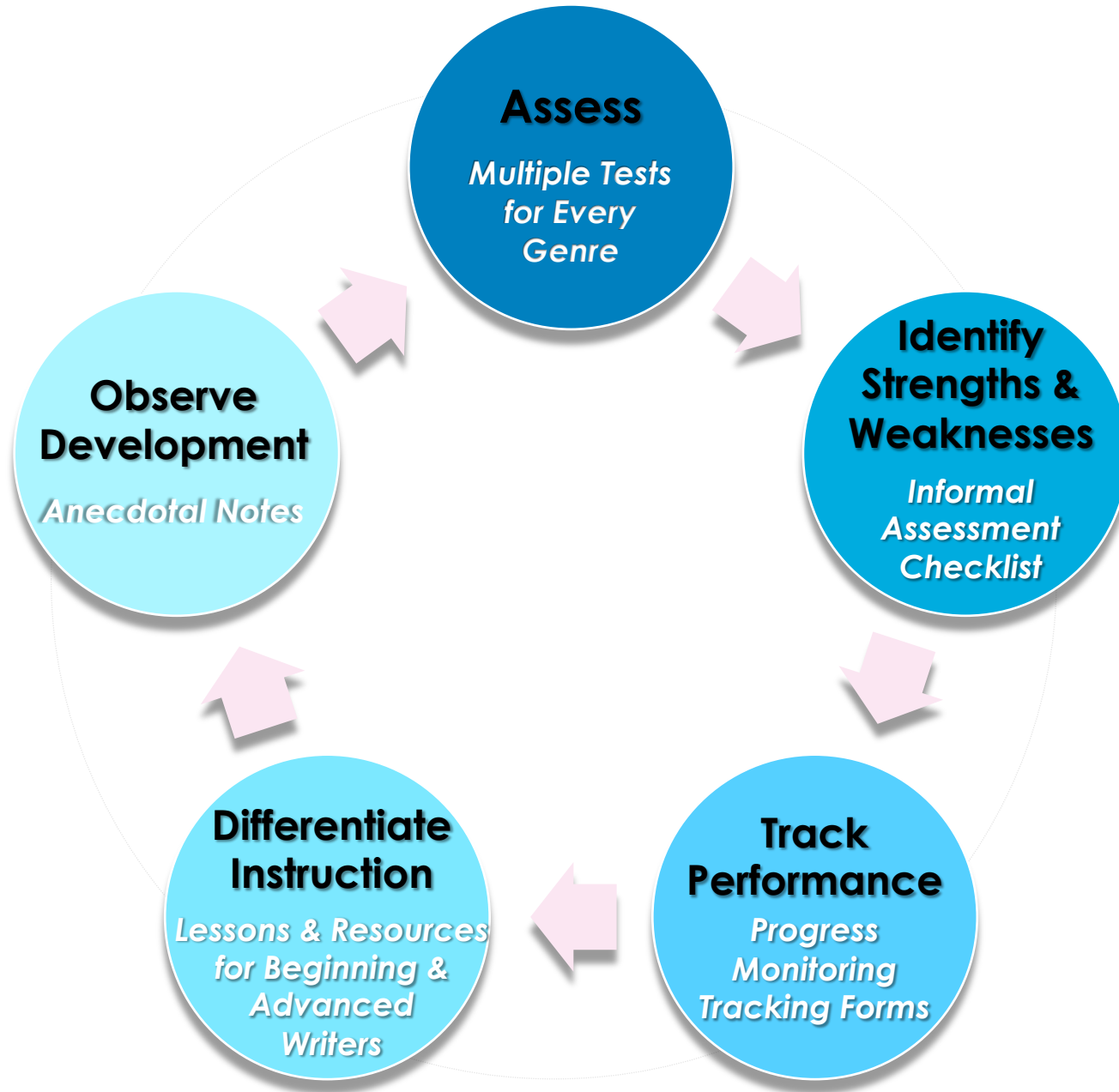
- Morning work
- Center assignment,
- Homework,
- Type final versions of essays using Google Docs or MS Word
- Mock assessments

Keyboard Practice



PROGRESS MONITORING





WE HAVE THE
TOOLS TO
MAKE
PROGRESS
MONITORING
EASY



DATE: _____ GENRE: _____

PASSAGE SET: _____

Anecdotal Notes

STUDENT: _____	STUDENT: _____
STUDENT: _____	STUDENT: _____

(c) Top Score Writing 2022

ANECDOTAL NOTES



**DIFFERENTIATE
INSTRUCTION AND
RECORD
OBSERVATIONS**

WHERE KIDS STRUGGLE: ORGANIZATION AND PLANNING

FROM IDEAS...



TO PAPER

SETTING THE FOUNDATION

NON-TEXT-BASED EXPOSITORY WRITING



PLANNING

I	_____	
R1	_____	a. _____ b. _____
R2	_____	a. _____ b. _____
R3	_____	a. _____ b. _____
C	_____	



Teaching Tip:

To help students generate ideas for subtopics, ask them to TEACH their reader about each R.

PLANNING EXAMPLE

Prompt: Everyone has a favorite activity. Think about your favorite activity. Now explain why this activity is your favorite.

I basketball

R1 shoot

a. 3-pointer

b. dunk

R2 dribble

a. court

b. legs

R3 win

a. championship

b. trophy

C basketball

INTRODUCTION

“I” PARAGRAPH

Structure: 3-4 Sentences

- Hook
- State 3 reasons
- Closing statement

What is your favorite activity? My favorite activity is basketball because you can shoot the ball, dribble down the court, and win. Basketball is the best sport in the world!

MIDDLE PARAGRAPH STRUCTURE

3A, 3B

For R1, R2, and R3:

- Topic Sentence (T)
- 3 sentences about A (3-4A)
- 3 sentences about B (3-4B)

R1 ***First, I like basketball because you can shoot the ball. One way to shoot is by making a three-pointer. You have to make sure you stand behind the white three-point line. Then, shoot it with a lot of force so it will make it into the basket. You can also make a shot by dunking. First, you have to run fast across the court. Then jump as high as you can and push it through the net.***

MIDDLE PARAGRAPHS

- R1 **First, I like basketball because you can shoot the ball.** One way to shoot is by making a 3-pointer. You have to make sure you stand behind the white three-point line. Then, shoot it with a lot of force so it will make it into the basket. You can also make a shot by dunking. First, you have to run fast across the court. Then jump as high as you can and push it through the net.
- R2 **Second, I like basketball because you can dribble the ball.** You can steal the ball from the other team and dribble down the court. Once you start dribbling, make sure you don't stop and then move. If you do this, the referee will call traveling. Another way to dribble is between your legs. You have to make sure you use both hands and pass the ball back and forth under your legs. This confuses the other players and then you can get around them.
- R3 **Third, I like basketball because you can win.** If your team makes the most points, you will win the game. After winning most of the games, your team will make the playoffs and go for the championship. Winning the championship is every team's dream. In addition, your team will win a trophy. The first-place team usually gets the tallest trophy. The trophy comes with a small plaque on the front that has your team's name and the year.

Key

Topic Sentence

A

B

COMPLETE MIDDLE PARAGRAPHS

R1, R2, R3

Structure: 9-10 sentences

- Topic sentence
- 3-4 sentences about A
- 3-4 sentences about B
- Wrap-up



EXAMPLE R1

First, I like basketball because you can shoot the ball. One way to shoot is by making a 3-pointer. You have to make sure you stand behind the white three-point line. Then, shoot it with a lot of force so it will make it into the basket. You can also make a shot by dunking. First, you have to run fast across the court. Then, jump as high as you can and push it through the net. Shooting is the best part about basketball!

Topic (T) – red

3-4 A – green

3-4 B – blue

Wrap-up (W) - purple

CONCLUSION

“C” PARAGRAPH

Shooting the ball, dribbling down the court, and winning are the reasons I enjoy playing basketball so much. I think that basketball is the best sport on earth! I hope that everyone gets to play basketball at least once in their lifetime.

Structure: 3-4 Sentences

- Restate 3 reasons
- Thought and/or feeling
- Ending sentence

TEXT-BASED EXPOSITORY WRITING



EXPOSITORY PLANNING: ITC OUTLINE

3 big topics from the text

I	_____	
T1	_____	a. _____ b. _____
T2	_____	a. _____ b. _____
T3	_____	a. _____ b. _____
C	_____	

a/b = details or examples

When writing text-based informative/expository essays, the 3 topics must come from the passage set.

PLANNING → ORGANIZATION

Prompt: Write an informative essay to present to your class about alligators. Use information from the passages in your essay.

I alligators

T1 species

a. American

b. Chinese

T2 type of reptile

a. cold-blooded

b. eggs

T3 habitats

a. freshwater

b. holes

C alligators

Did you know that the largest ever recorded alligator measured 19.2 feet? Alligators are interesting because there are two different species, they are a type of reptile, and they live in various habitats. Alligators aren't as scary once you learn more about them.

First, there are two different species of alligators in the world. According to the text Alligators at Risk, the most well-known type of alligator is the American alligator. The American alligator lives in the wetlands of the Southern United States. It was listed under the Endangered Species Act, and it was illegal to hunt them. Another type of alligator species is the Chinese alligator. The author states in Alligators at Risk that the Chinese alligator looks very similar to the American alligator. However, these reptiles are much smaller. There are also far fewer Chinese alligators than American alligators because they are listed as critically endangered. Alligators are fascinating animals, and it is important to know the similarities and differences between the two species.

Second, alligators are animals classified as reptiles. Based on the information in Alligators at Risk, alligators fall into the category of reptiles because they are cold-blooded. Cold-blooded means their environment controls their body temperature, and they have scales for protection. When their body temperature is too low, they warm up by laying in the sun. Similarly, alligators are classified as reptiles because they lay eggs in nests. Baby alligators are either male or female based on the temperature of the nest that the eggs are in. In the article Alligators at Risk, it states that if the nest is above 93 degrees the eggs will be male, and if it is cooler than that the eggs will end up being female. After learning about the characteristics of reptiles, I can understand why alligators are classified this way.

Third, alligators are adapted to live in various habitats. In paragraph one of Habitats, it says that you can find alligators in freshwater habitats like rivers, as well as brackish habitats such as swamps. Brackish means the water is saltier than fresh water, but not as salty as seawater. Freshwater and brackish water habitats are the perfect places for alligators to live and lay eggs. Another habitat alligators live in are holes that they create in swamps. According to the text Habitats, the author says they dig these holes by using their body parts such as their feet and tail. Alligator holes are very useful because they help alligators keep cool in the hot weather and also camouflage them from their prey so that they can capture meals easily. It is important to know where alligators like to live so that we can make sure we protect those areas from destruction.

In conclusion, alligators are remarkable because there are two different species, they are a type of reptile, and they live in various habitats. I think everyone should learn more about alligators so they can understand this mysterious creature. Alligators are an important part of their ecosystem.

EXPOSITORY PROMPTS

Passage Set:

- Alligators at Risk
- Alligator Habitats

Prompt: Write an informative essay to present to your class about alligators. Use information from the passages in your essay.

Teaching Tip:


Use different prompts based on the same text set to easily differentiate task complexity.



940L Top Score Writing - Grade 4

Top Score Writing

Alligators at Risk



1 There are two species of known alligators in the world, the American alligator and the Chinese alligator. The American alligator can be found in the wetlands of the southern United States. These reptiles have been hunted for many years and, at one point, were close to extinction. In order to protect this species, they were listed under the Endangered Species Act, making hunting alligators illegal. Due to the efforts of the Endangered Species Act, the species has made a huge recovery and was taken off the endangered species list in 1987. Since the American alligator population has repopulated so well, hunting and egg collecting is once again allowed.

2 On the other hand, the Chinese alligator is a class one endangered species. The Chinese alligator can be found in the subtropical regions of China in low-lying areas such as rivers, streams, and marshes. This species of alligator is classified as critically endangered because it has a decline in population greater than 80% in specific areas of population. The destruction of their habitats comes largely from the conversion of the lands they inhabit being used for agricultural purposes. The Chinese alligator is very similar to the American alligator in appearance, but they are much smaller.

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amphibians lay their eggs in the nearby dry areas. When the eggs hatch, the young crawl into the water.

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Alligator Habitats written for educational purposes.

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EXPOSITORY PROMPTS

ANALYZING PROMPTS

As easy as 1...2...3...

1. What are the keywords?

Circle them.

2. What is this prompt asking us to write about?

Restate the prompt in your own words.

3. Is this prompt asking us to write about anything specific or just a topic in general?

Decide if this is an open-ended, general information prompt or if it is requiring a response based on a specific topic.

Teaching Tip:

There are multiple lessons at the beginning of each section focused just on analyzing prompts.



EXPOSITORY PLANNING EXAMPLE

Prompt: Write an informative essay to present to your class about alligators. Use information from the passages in your essay.

Teaching Tip:

Remind students to write their plans in the same way they would write a shopping list.



- | | | |
|----|-----------------|----------------------------|
| I | alligators | |
| T1 | species | a. American
b. Chinese |
| T2 | type of reptile | a. cold-blooded
b. eggs |
| T3 | habitats | a. freshwater
b. holes |
| C | alligators | |

EXPOSITORY PLANNING BOXING AND LABELING

I alligators

T1 species

a. American

b. Chinese

T2 type of reptile

a. cold-blooded

b. eggs

T3 habitats

a. freshwater

b. holes

C alligators

T1 – Species



1 There are two species of known alligators in the world, the American alligator and the Chinese alligator. The American alligator can be found in the wetlands of the southern United States. These reptiles have been hunted for many years and, at one point, were close to extinction. In order to protect this species, they were listed under the Endangered Species Act, making hunting alligators illegal. Due to the efforts of the Endangered Species Act, the species has made a huge recovery and was taken off the endangered species list in 1987. Since the American alligator population has repopulated so well, hunting and egg collecting is once again allowed.

A

2 On the other hand, the Chinese alligator is a class one endangered species. The Chinese alligator can be found in the subtropical regions of China in low-lying areas such as rivers, streams, and marshes. This species of alligator is classified as critically endangered because it has a decline in population greater than 80% in specific areas of population. The destruction of their habitats comes largely from the conversion of the lands they inhabit being used for agricultural purposes. The Chinese alligator is very similar to the American alligator in appearance, but they are much smaller.

B

EXPOSITORY PLANNING BOXING AND LABELING

I alligators

T1 species

- a. American
- b. Chinese

T2 type of reptile

- a. cold-blooded
- b. eggs

T3 habitats

- a. freshwater
- b. holes

C alligators

T2 – Type of Reptile

What Are Reptiles?

3 Snakes, turtles, and lizards are reptiles. These animals are cold-blooded; this means their body temperature depends on their environment and their skin is covered with hard scales that serve as protection for the animal. They have to keep warm by laying in the sun. Since they do not burn too much energy to keep warm, they do not have to eat as much food as mammals or other warm-blooded animals.

4 Most reptiles lay eggs. Alligators tend to create nests from nearby vegetation to keep their eggs safe. The decomposing vegetation creates the heat needed to keep the eggs incubated. The sex of the baby alligators is determined by the temperature of the nest. If the nest is cooler, it will produce a clutch of female hatchlings, and if the temperature is above 93 degrees Fahrenheit, the eggs will produce male hatchlings.

A

B



Teaching Tip:
Text-based check: students should be able to box and label every topic on their plans in the passages.

EXPOSITORY PLANNING


BOXING AND LABELING

I	alligators	
T1	species	a. American b. Chinese
T2	type of reptile	a. cold-blooded b. eggs
T3	habitats	a. freshwater b. holes
C	alligators	


T3 – Habitats

Alligator Habitats

5 American alligators can be found in freshwater environments like rivers, lakes, ponds, swamps, and marshes. They also like to live in areas that are brackish, which means the water is slightly higher in salt content than fresh water, but not salty like sea water. Alligators tend to stay in marshy areas during the breeding season. The wetlands make nest building much easier for the alligators and keep the temperatures of the nests ideal for incubating their eggs.



6 Adult American alligators create holes in their swamp habitats. They construct these alligator holes by using their feet, tail, and snout. These holes create areas that help the alligator stay cool during hot weather. Alligator holes also provide habitats for other animals during droughts.



7 Other animals found in these types of habitats are amphibians, shellfish, bears, and panthers. The types of animals found in these habitats depends on whether the swamp is a freshwater swamp or a saltwater swamp. These animals make this their home since they are able to live in low-oxygenated, slow-moving waters.

8 Many species of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fish live and do well in swamp ecosystems. These swamp areas are important because many fish and amphibians lay their eggs in the nearby dry areas. When the eggs hatch, the young crawl into the water.

A

B

EXPOSITORY INTRODUCTION “I” PARAGRAPH

Key

Hook

3 topics

Closing
statement

There are many ways students can structure an introduction paragraph.

Key

Hook

3 topics
(split into 2-3 sentences)

Teaching Tip:

Create anchor charts with each structure and an example paragraph.



SCAFFOLD STUDENTS UNDERSTANDING

Start by teaching structure...

T1, T2, T3

- Topic sentence
- 3-4A
- 3-4B
- Wrap-up sentence

...then teach elaborative techniques.

T1, T2, T3

- Topic sentence
- 3-4A (quotes, paraphrases, own thoughts and ideas)
- 3-4B (quotes, paraphrases, own thoughts and ideas)
- Wrap-up sentence

MIDDLE PARAGRAPHS

T1, T2, T3

I	alligators	
T1	species	a. American b. Chinese
T2	type of reptile	a. cold-blooded b. eggs
T3	habitats	a. freshwater b. holes
C	alligators	

First, there are two different species of alligators in the world. According to the text Alligators at Risk, the most well-known type of alligator is the American alligator. American alligators live in the wetlands of the southern United States. They were listed under the Endangered Species Act, and it was illegal to hunt them. Another type of alligator species is the Chinese alligator. The author states in Alligators at Risk that the Chinese alligator looks very similar to the American alligator. However, these reptiles are much smaller. There are also far fewer Chinese alligators than American alligators because they are listed as critically endangered. **Alligators are fascinating animals, and it is important to know the similarities and differences between the two species.**

Key

Topic sentence

3-4A

3-4B

Wrap-up

STRUCTURE

Prompt: Write an informative essay to present to your class about alligators. Use information from the passages in your essay.

- I alligators
- T1 species
 - a. American
 - b. Chinese
- T2 type of reptile
 - a. cold-blooded
 - b. eggs
- T3 habitats
 - a. freshwater
 - b. holes
- C alligators

Did you know that the largest ever recorded alligator measured 19.2 feet? Alligators are interesting because there are two different species, they are a type of reptile, and they live in various habitats. Alligators aren't as scary once you learn more about them.

First, there are two different species of alligators in the world. According to the text *Alligators at Risk*, the most well-known type of alligator is the American alligator. The American alligator lives in the wetlands of the Southern United States. It was listed under the Endangered Species Act, and it was illegal to hunt them. Another type of alligator species is the Chinese alligator. The author states in *Alligators at Risk* that the Chinese alligator looks very similar to the American alligator. However, these reptiles are much smaller. There are also far fewer Chinese alligators than American alligators because they are listed as critically endangered. Alligators are fascinating animals, and it is important to know the similarities and differences between the two species.

Second, alligators are animals classified as reptiles. Based on the information in *Alligators at Risk*, alligators fall into the category of reptiles because they are cold-blooded. Cold-blooded means their environment controls their body temperature, and they have scales for protection. When their body temperature is too low, they warm up by laying in the sun. Similarly, alligators are classified as reptiles because they lay eggs in nests. Baby alligators are either male or female based on the temperature of the nest that the eggs are in. In the article *Alligators at Risk*, it states that if the nest is above 93 degrees the eggs will be male, and if it is cooler than that the eggs will end up being female. After learning about the characteristics of reptiles, I can understand why alligators are classified this way.

Third, alligators are adapted to live in various habitats. In paragraph one of *Habitats*, it says that you can find alligators in freshwater habitats like rivers, as well as brackish habitats such as swamps. Brackish means the water is saltier than fresh water, but not as salty as seawater. Freshwater and brackish water habitats are the perfect places for alligators to live and lay eggs. Another habitat alligators live in are holes that they create in swamps. According to the text *Habitats*, the author says they dig these holes by using their body parts such as their feet and tail. Alligator holes are very useful because they help alligators keep cool in the hot weather and also camouflage them from their prey so that they can capture meals easily. It is important to know where alligators like to live so that we can make sure we protect those areas from destruction.

In conclusion, alligators are remarkable because there are two different species, they are a type of reptile, and they live in various habitats. I think everyone should learn more about alligators so they can understand this mysterious creature. Alligators are an important part of their ecosystem.

TEACHING THE MIDDLE PARAGRAPHS ONE PIECE AT A TIME



1. Paraphrasing
2. Referencing
3. Overview of elaborative techniques
4. Quotes
5. Own thoughts and ideas

OVERVIEW OF ELABORATIVE TECHNIQUES

There are three ways to write the support in the A and B sentences.

Students should try to use a variety of these in each middle paragraph (T1, T2, and T3).

1. Take exact words from the text (direct quote)
2. Restate information from the text in their own words (paraphrasing)
3. Include their own thoughts and ideas about topics in the text

OVERVIEW OF ELABORATIVE TECHNIQUES

Teaching Tip:
Focus on the balanced use of elaborative techniques. There is no formula!



Lesson 34 Top Score Writing – Grade 4

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Advanced Essay about Alligators

Did you know that the largest ever recorded alligator measured 19.2 feet? Alligators are interesting because there are two different species, they are a type of reptile, and they live in various habitats. Alligators aren't as scary once you learn more about them.

First and foremost, there are two different species of alligators in the world. The most well-known type of alligator is the American alligator, and that is because there are many that live right in Florida, Georgia, Alabama, and Louisiana. According to the article *Alligators at Risk*, "The American alligator can be found in the wetlands of the Southern United States." It is hard to believe that these animals were once close to extinction because I have seen so many around where I live. It is very common to see alligators. In the first passage, I learned that the American alligator was listed under the Endangered Species Act and it was illegal to hunt them. As a result of the Act, the alligators have a high enough population to be taken off of the endangered species list in 1987. Another type of alligator species is the Chinese alligator. "The Chinese alligator is very similar to the American alligator in appearance. However, these reptiles are much smaller," says the author of the article *Alligators at Risk*. There are also far fewer Chinese alligators than American alligators because they are listed as critically endangered, based on what I read in the article *Alligators at Risk*. The Chinese alligator is not as familiar to me as the American alligator because it is only located in China and I have never seen one in real life. I can imagine they look the same, but are a little smaller than the American alligator. Alligators are fascinating animals, and it is important to know the similarities and differences between the two species.

Additionally, alligators are animals classified as reptiles. Alligators fall into the category of reptiles because they are cold-blooded unlike humans, birds, and bears. The author states in the passage *Alligators at Risk*, that cold-blooded "means their body temperature depends on their environment. They have to keep warm by laying in the sun." I have seen alligators spending most of the day sunbathing along the banks of the wetlands. I think the strong sun and warmer weather is why they prefer to live in the Southeast. Similarly, alligators are classified as reptiles because they lay eggs in nests. According to the passage *Alligators at Risk*, baby alligators are either male or female based on the temperature of the nest that the eggs are in. If the nest is at over 93 degrees, the eggs will be male, and if it is cooler than that, the eggs will end up being female. After learning about the characteristics of reptiles, I can understand why alligators are classified this way.

Last but not least, alligators are adapted to live in various habitats. You can find alligators in freshwater habitats like rivers, lakes, and marshes, as well as brackish habitats such as swamps. Brackish means "the water is slightly higher in salt content than fresh water, but not salty like seawater," states the author of the second source titled *Habitats*. Of all of the places alligators prefer to live, none of them are purely salt water. It would be extremely rare to find an alligator at the beach. They are definitely more common in lakes and ponds. Another habitat alligators live in are holes that they create in swamp habitats. I read in the article *Habitats* that "they construct these alligator holes by using their feet, tail, and snout." I can imagine alligators burrowing themselves down in the cool, wet sand. Alligator holes are very useful because they help alligators keep cool in the hot weather and also camouflage them from their prey so that they can capture meals easily, states the text titled *Habitats*. These holes are a great survival technique. They allow the alligators to regulate their body temperature and hunt. It is important to know where alligators like to live so that we can make sure we protect those areas from destruction.

In conclusion, alligators are remarkable type of reptile, and they live in various habitats. I think everyone should learn more about alligators so they can understand this mysterious creature. Alligators are an important part of their ecosystem.

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Key
Quotes
Paraphrases
Own thoughts
and ideas

MIDDLE PARAGRAPHS

T1, T2, T3

- Topic sentence
- 3-4 A (quote, paraphrasing, own ideas)
- 3-4 B (quote, paraphrasing, own ideas)
- Wrap-up sentence

*Balance of quotes,
paraphrasing,
and own
thoughts/ideas*

Teaching Tip:

Create an anchor chart with a color-coded paragraph.



CONCLUSION

“C” PARAGRAPH

I	alligators	
T1	species	a. American b. Chinese
T2	type of reptile	a. cold-blooded b. eggs
T3	habitats	a. freshwater b. holes
C	alligators	

KEY

Overview/summary

Restate 3 topics

Thought or feeling

In conclusion, alligators are interesting to learn about. Alligators are remarkable because there are two different species, they are a type of reptile, and they live in various habitats. I think everyone should learn more about alligators so they can understand this mysterious creature.

REVIEW AND REVISE

SELF-ASSESS, SELF-CORRECT & INDIVIDUALIZE

- Conferencing
- Skill groups
- Revisions
- Self-assessing with highlighters
- Checklists
- Partner checklists



TEXT-BASED ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING



OPINION/ARGUMENTATIVE PLANNING: IRC OUTLINE

3 big reasons from the text

NNN

I	_____	
R1	_____	a. _____ b. _____
R2	_____	a. _____ b. _____
R3	_____	a. _____ b. _____
C	_____	

a/b = details or examples

When writing text-based opinion/argumentative essays, the 3 reasons must come from the passage set.

OPINION/ARGUMENTATIVE PRACTICE

Prompt: You have read several sources about recess in schools. Write an opinion essay about whether or not schools should be required to provide students with recess time. Use information from the texts to support your opinion.

I yes – recess

R1 health benefits

a. body
b. energy

R2 social

a. happy
b. friends

R3 laws

a. 20 minutes
b. free play

C yes – recess

Teaching Tip:

Use questioning strategies to guide students to generate a/b subtopics.



OPINION/ARGUMENTATIVE INTRODUCTION “I” PARAGRAPH

Clearly states
opinion

Do you think schools should be required to give students recess time? In my opinion, schools must provide recess for students because there are many health benefits, kids improve social skills, and laws protect recess time. You can't expect kids to concentrate all day without a break!

Teaching Tip:

Have students underline their opinion when self-assessing.



Key

Hook

3 reasons

Closing statement

OPINION/ARGUMENTATIVE MIDDLE PARAGRAPHS

R1, R2 & R3

Topic sentence – clearly states opinion

a

First, in my opinion, schools must provide a recess for students because there are many health benefits. When kids have a chance to go outside and have physical activity, they get a little break, and it's great for their bodies too! The recess can improve things like mental alertness, student attention span, memory, and behavior. Even though people who disagree with recess say that it is a waste of instructional time, all of these rewards for having recess can improve students' learning in the classroom. Recess time also allows students to get rid of their extra energy and relax. Children who are not given sufficient breaks experience consequences like fidgeting, restlessness, lack of concentration, and off-task behavior. Students need the opportunity to release all of their built-up energy to continue to learn. When I get a break like recess in the middle of the day, I always return to class feeling relaxed and ready to learn. With all of this evidence about the health benefits of recess, how could schools possibly want to keep students from participating?

I	yes – recess	
R1	health benefits	a. body b. energy
R2	social	a. happy b. friends
R3	laws	a. 20 minutes b. free play
C	yes – recess	

OPINION/ARGUMENTATIVE MIDDLE PARAGRAPH TOPIC SENTENCES

First, schools must provide a recess for students because there are many health benefits.



transition
word



opinion



reason

Teaching Tip:

For opinion writing, students have to strongly maintain their opinion throughout the entire essay. A great strategy for this is showing what “side” they are on in their topic sentences. Students should be able to highlight where they showed what “side” they are on in each middle paragraph.



USING EVIDENCE FROM THE TEXT

First, in my opinion, schools must provide recess for students because there are many health benefits. **According to the text Recess to Success**, when kids have a chance to go outside and have physical activity, they get a little break and it's great for their bodies, too! Recess can improve things like mental alertness, student attention span, memory, and behavior. Even though people who disagree with recess say that it is a waste of instructional time, all of these rewards for having recess can actually improve students' learning in the classroom. Recess time also allows students to get rid of their extra energy and relax. **Based on what I read in the article Kids Need Recess**, children who are not given sufficient breaks experience consequences like fidgeting, restlessness, lack of concentration, and off-task behavior. Students need the opportunity to release all of their built-up energy in order to continue to learn. When I get a break like recess in the middle of the day, I always return to class feeling relaxed and ready to learn.

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Name: _____

Advanced Essay about Recess

Do you think schools should be required to give students recess time? In my opinion, schools must provide a recess for students because there are many health benefits, kids improve social skills, and laws protect recess time. You can't expect kids to concentrate all day without a break!

First and foremost, in my opinion, schools must provide a recess for students because there are many health benefits. When kids have a chance to go outside and have physical activity, they get a little break, and it's great for their bodies too! According to the article *Recess to Success*, recess can help students with memory and behavior. People who disagree with recess say that it is a waste of instructional time. However, the rewards for having recess can improve students' learning in the classroom. Recess time also allows students to get rid of their extra energy and relax. "When children sit for long periods of time they build up energy and may experience fidgeting, restlessness, lack of concentration, and off-task behavior. Students need the opportunity to release all of their built-up energy to continue learning," states the author of the text *Kids Need Recess*. When I get a break like recess in the middle of the day, I always return to class feeling relaxed and ready to learn. It helps me stay on task the rest of the day. With all of this evidence about the health benefits of recess, how could schools possibly want to keep students from participating?

Secondly, I strongly believe that recess should be required in schools because of the social benefits. Kids who have recess are happier than kids who do not get the opportunity to play every day. The article *Kids Need Recess* states, "In order for students to be happy in school they should have physical and emotional safety, positive relationships with peers and adults, support for learning, and a learning environment that encourages school connectedness and engagement. A component that ties in all four of these conditions for happiness is recess." This is true because I feel happier when I have a chance to go outside and play with my friends. It is my opportunity to talk and play with friends. Another social benefit for kids is that they get to interact with their friends. The source *Kids Need Recess* explains that during recess time kids have time to build their social relationships and friendships as they play together. This opportunity isn't allowed during class time. This is our chance to make friends and be social. There are more benefits of having recess during the school day than not having recess and having more instructional time.

Last but not least, it is important that schools keep recess because there are laws that protect it. One of the laws requires a certain amount of time for recess each day. According to the article *Kids Need Recess*, there are state laws that require recess for at least 20 minutes each day. I think 20 minutes is a good amount of time to play but not too much time missing out on class. Schools should not have trouble adding in just 20 minutes of recess. Also, laws make sure that recess has its own time and not included with P.E. class. "The problem with this decision is that physical education class is a structured environment and children need recess because it provides an opportunity for free play," based on what I read in the source titled *Kids Need Recess*. Recess shouldn't be considered a P.E. class because that is still a class in school and not a chance for kids to play. Kids need time for free play. Every state should have laws that protect students from schools trying to take recess away.

To summarize, I think schools must provide a recess for students because there are many health benefits, kids improve social skills, and laws protect recess time. I feel bad for kids who do not get the chance to play outside for a small amount of time each day. Recess should be required by law for every school!

OVERVIEW OF ELABORATIVE TECHNIQUES

Key
Quotes
Paraphrasing
Own thought/idea

OPINION/ARGUMENTATIVE CONCLUSION EXAMPLE

Key

Overview(summary)-opinion

Restate 3 reasons

Thought or feeling

To summarize, recess should be required by law for every school. Schools must provide recess for students because there are many health benefits, kids improve social skills, and laws protect recess time. I think all kids should get the chance to play outside each day.

Teaching Tip:

Model writing multiple conclusions for the same plan.



ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES AND STRATEGIES



SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOLS



Lesson 47 Top Score Writing – Grade 4

Informative Checklist Name: _____

Checking Your Paper

I _____

Opinion Checklist Name: _____

Checking Your Paper

_____ 5 paragraphs
_____ Indent 5 times

T1 _____

I _____ 2-4 sentences
_____ Hook
_____ 3 reasons
_____ Closing
_____ State Opinion

R1 _____ Transition Word _____ Quote
_____ T sentence _____ Paraphrase
_____ 2-4 sentences about A _____ Own thoughts/ideas
_____ 2-4 sentences about B
_____ W sentence
_____ State Opinion
_____ 8-10 sentences
_____ 1-2 Reference Sources

T2 _____

T3 _____

R2 _____ Transition Word _____ Quote
_____ T sentence _____ Paraphrase
_____ 2-4 sentences about A _____ Own thoughts/ideas
_____ 2-4 sentences about B
_____ W sentence
_____ State Opinion
_____ 8-10 sentences
_____ 1-2 Reference Sources

C _____

R3 _____ Transition Word _____ Quote
_____ T sentence _____ Paraphrase
_____ 2-4 sentences about A _____ Own thoughts/ideas
_____ 2-4 sentences about B
_____ W sentence
_____ State Opinion
_____ 8-10 sentences
_____ 1-2 Reference Sources

C _____

_____ Give an overview (summary) of the topic – state opinion
_____ Restate 3 reasons
_____ Thought or feeling about the topic

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HIGHLIGHTER ACTIVITY

IDENTIFY EACH PART OF A PARAGRAPH

Directions:

- Provide students with the key
- Model highlighting the class essay
- Students self-assess their own paragraphs by color-coding

Playing video games can be a fun challenge, but violence is not necessary. In my opinion, violent video games make people violent in real life because they are very realistic, playing them can result in negative consequences, and kids are playing them because they are the most popular. I think only adults should be allowed to play these video games. Let's all play friendly, peaceful games instead.

"C" Paragraph Key

Summary

Restate 3 topics

Thought or feeling

HIGHLIGHTER ACTIVITY

ANALYZE USE OF ELABORATIVE TECHNIQUES

Directions:

- Provide students with the key
- Model highlighting the class essay
- Students self-assess their own paragraphs by color-coding

T1, T2, T3

Quoted evidence

Paraphrased evidence

Own thoughts and ideas

Last but not least, alligators are adapted to live in various habitats. You can find alligators in freshwater habitats like rivers, lakes, and marshes, as well as brackish habitats such as swamps. Brackish means “the water is slightly higher in salt content than fresh water, but not salty like seawater,” states the author of the second source titled Habitats. Of all of the places alligators prefer to live, none of them are purely salt water. It would be extremely rare to find an alligator at the beach. They are definitely more common in lakes and ponds. Another habitat alligators live in are holes that they create in swamp habitats. I read in the article Habitats that “they construct these alligator holes by using their feet, tail, and snout.” I can imagine alligators burrowing themselves down in the cool, wet sand. Alligator holes are very useful because they help alligators keep cool in the hot weather and also camouflage them from their prey so that they can capture meals easily, states the text titled Habitats. These holes are a great survival technique. They allow the alligators to regulate their body temperature and hunt. It is important to know where alligators like to live so that we can make sure we protect those areas from destruction.

HIGHLIGHTER ACTIVITY CONVENTIONS

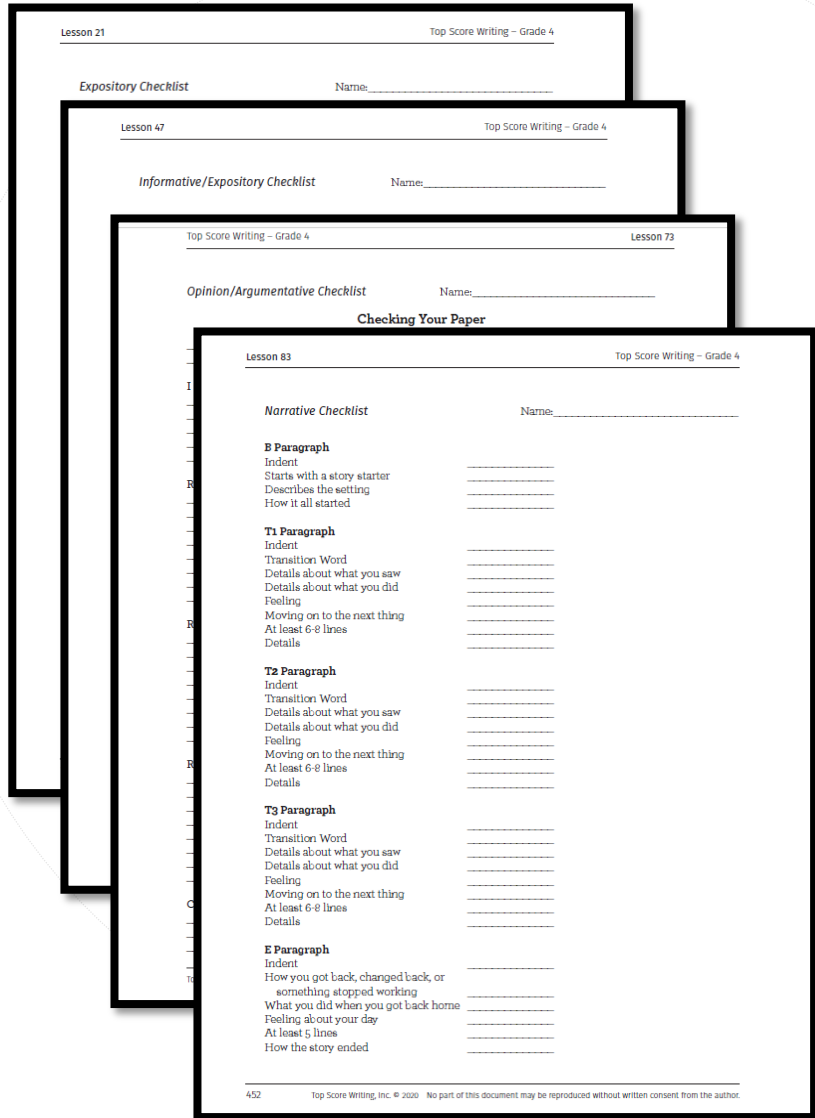
Directions:

1. Have students write a paragraph.
2. Write color-code key on board:
 - Indent space – yellow
 - Capitalization – purple
 - Punctuation – blue
3. Have them highlight, then discuss.
4. Repeat as they write each paragraph.

Page 3

Who is a special person is your life? My
Special person is my mom because she takes
care of me, cleans my room, and buys me
things. My mom is such a great person.

CHECKLISTS



So Many Ways To Use:

- Self-assess part of an essay
Example: if students only wrote their introductions today, they would only use the introduction portion of the checklist.
- Self-assess an entire essay
Example: use during a revision day after an assessment.
- Use as a guide **while** students are writing.

YOU WRITE, THEY WRITE

MODELING AND PACING PRACTICE

Directions:

- Read a text set and write a prompt on the board.
- Plan for the prompt under the document camera – think out loud.
- Students plan for the same prompt (they can't use your ideas) - set a timer.
- Write your introduction paragraph – think out loud.
- Students write their introduction paragraph- set a timer.
- Write your T1/R1 paragraph under the document camera – think out loud.
- Continue this process for the remainder of the essay.

Teaching Tip: Provide extended time for students with accommodations.



RACE AGAINST THE CLOCK

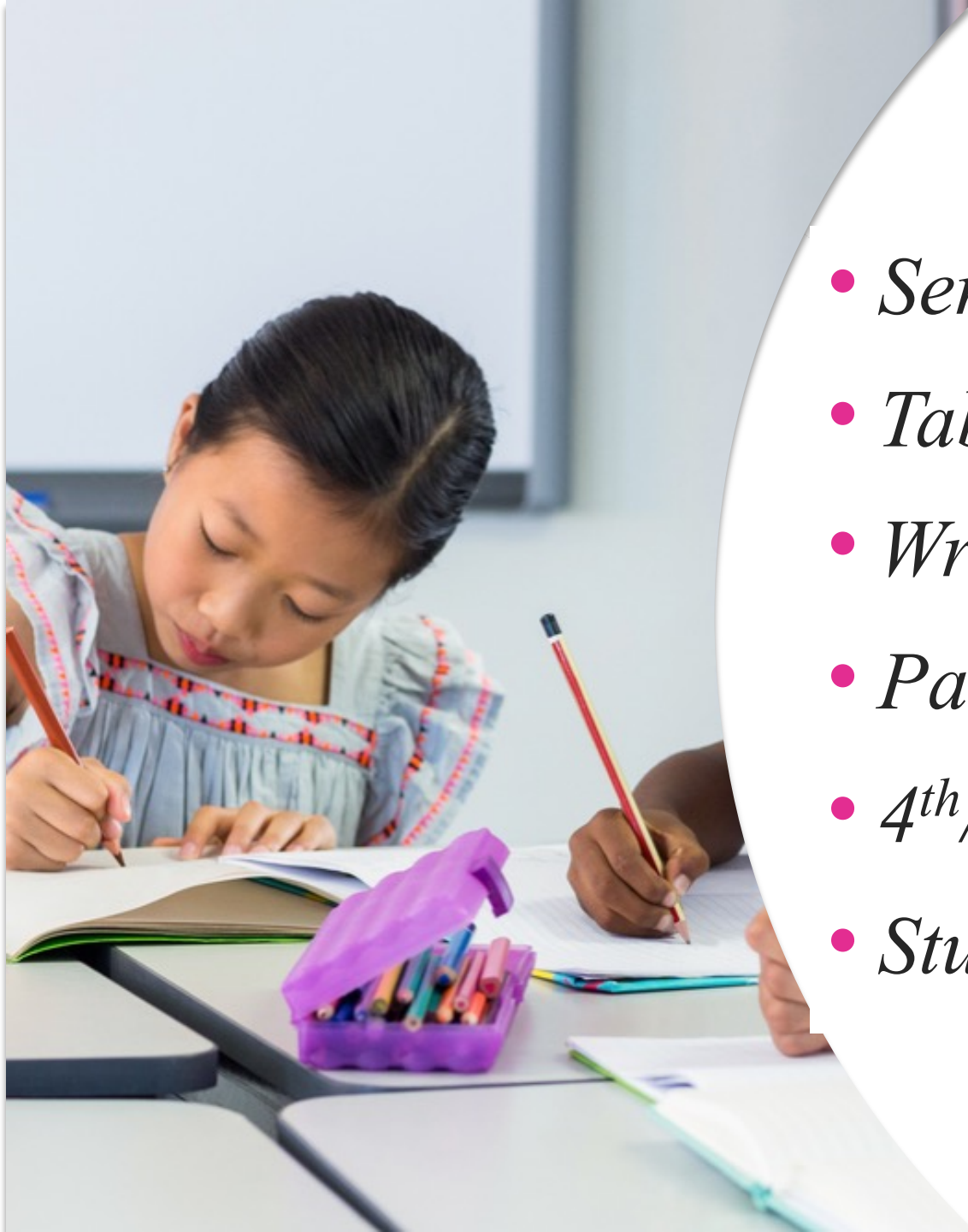
PACING AND ENDURANCE PRACTICE

Directions:

- Have students read a text set. Write a prompt on the board.
- Get the timer ready and tell students they will have 10 minutes to plan. Go!
- After 10 minutes, have students put their pencils down. Anyone who planned correctly in 10 minutes gets a raffle ticket.
- Tell students they will have 10 minutes to write their introduction paragraph. Go! *As students are writing, walk around the room and check on their essays.
- After 10 minutes, pencils down. Anyone who wrote their introduction paragraph correctly with all three parts gets a raffle ticket.
- Tell students they will have 15 minutes to write their R1 paragraph.
- Continue this process for the remainder of the essay.



Teaching Tip: Pull a small group or hold conferences during writing.



MAKE WRITING FUN!

- *Seminars*
- *Table writing*
- *Writing Around The Room*
- *Partner writing on big Post-its*
- *4th/5th-grade pair-up*
- *Student exchange*

TEACHER VIP GROUP



<https://bit.ly/2C0kVAc>

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