

Adolescent Literacy Research Summaries

Writing Next: Effective Strategies to Improve Writing of Adolescents in Middle and High Schools

"This report identifies 11 elements of current writing instruction found to be effective for helping adolescent students learn to write well and to use writing as a tool for learning. It is important to note that all of the elements are supported by rigorous research, but that even when used together, they do not constitute a full writing curriculum" (p. 4).

Eleven Elements of Effective Adolescent Writing Instruction

Elements	Instructional Description
Writing Strategies	Teach students strategies for planning, revising, and editing their compositions.
Summarizing	Explicitly and systematically teach students how to summarize texts.
Collaborative Writing	Use instructional arrangements in which adolescents work together to plan, draft, revise, and edit their compositions.
Specific Product Goals	Assign students specific, reachable goals for the writing they are to complete.
Word Processing	Use computers and word processors as instructional supports for writing assignments.
Sentence Combining	Teach students to construct more complex, sophisticated sentences. <i>Note: Teaching students to focus on the function and practical application of grammar within the context of writing is more effective than teaching grammar as an independent, isolated activity.</i>
Prewriting	Engage students in activities designed to help them generate or organize ideas for their composition.
Inquiry Activities	Engage students in analyzing immediate, concrete data to help them develop ideas and content for a particular writing task.
Process Writing Approach	Interweave a number of writing instructional activities in a workshop environment that stresses extended writing opportunities, writing for authentic audiences, personalized instruction, and cycles of writing.
Study of Models	Provide students with opportunities to read, analyze, and emulate models of good writing.
Writing for Content Learning	Use writing as a tool for learning content material.

REFERENCE: Graham & Perin, 2007; http://www.all4ed.org/publication_material/reports/writing_next.

Writing to Read: Evidence for How Writing Can Improve Reading

“This report identifies a cluster of closely related instructional practices shown to be effective in improving students’ reading. . . . all of the *Writing to Read* instructional recommendations have shown clear results for improving students’ reading. Nonetheless, even when used together these practices do not constitute a full curriculum. The writing practices described in this report should be used by educators in a flexible and thoughtful way to support students’ learning (p. 6).

Writing Practices That Enhance Students’ Reading

Instructional Practices	Description
Have students write about the texts they read.	<p>Students’ comprehension of science, social studies, and language arts texts is improved when they write about what they read, specifically when they</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • respond to a text in writing (writing personal reactions, analyzing and interpreting the text); • write summaries of a text; • write notes about a text; and • answer questions about a text in writing, or create and answer written questions about a text.
Teach students the writing skills and processes that go into creating text.	<p>Students’ reading skills and comprehension are improved by learning the skills and processes that go into creating text, specifically when teachers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teach the process of writing, text structures for writing, and paragraph or sentence construction skills (improves reading comprehension); • teach spelling and sentence construction skills (improves reading fluency); and • teach spelling skills (improves word reading skills).
Increase how much students write.	Students’ reading comprehension is improved by having them increase how often they produce their own texts.

REFERENCE: Graham & Hebert, 2010; <http://carnegie.org/publications/search-publications/pub/315/>.

Key Ideas from the ELAR TEKS for Grades 6–8

WRITING STRAND

Writing Process	Literary Texts
Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genre • Intended meaning • Audience • Topic(s) • Thesis or controlling idea 	Imaginative stories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly defined focus, plot, and point of view • Reader interest • Well-paced action • Engaging story line • Specific and believable setting through sensory details • Dialogue • Interesting characters • Range of literary strategies/devices • Style and tone
Draft <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate organizational strategy • Building on ideas (focused, organized, coherent) 	
Revise to clarify and enhance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meaning • Style • Precise word choice and vivid images • Consistent point of view • Simple, compound, and complex sentences • Transitions • Internal and external coherence • Rethinking 	Poems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poetic techniques (alliteration; meter) • Figurative language (similes; idioms) • Graphic elements (line length; word position)
Edit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar • Mechanics • Spelling 	
Revise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer and teacher feedback 	
Publish <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate audiences 	

WRITING STRAND (cont.)

Personal (Own Experiences)	Persuasive Texts
Personal narrative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly defined focus Communicate reasons for actions and consequences Include reflections on decisions, actions, and consequences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written for the appropriate audience Clear position or thesis Sound reasoning Detailed and relevant evidence Consider/anticipate/respond to alternatives, other views, concerns, and counterarguments Logical, organized evidence to support viewpoint Differentiate between fact and opinion
Expository/Procedural Texts	
Letters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include important information Closure Date, salutation, closing 	
Literary response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate multiparagraph skills Evidence from text Use of quotations 	
Multimedia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Text and graphics Images and sound Using technology 	
Multiparagraph essay <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective introduction and conclusion Guide and inform readers' understanding Clear purpose/controlling idea Include specific facts, details, and examples Logically organized with facts and details No extraneous information or inconsistencies Variety of sentence structures, rhetorical devices, and transitions Synthesizes ideas from several sources 	

ORAL AND WRITTEN CONVENTIONS STRAND

Conventions	Handwriting/Capitalization/ Punctuation
Parts of speech in context <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verbs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Irregular Active and passive voice Perfect and progressive tense Participles Nouns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Singular and plural Common and proper Collective Noncount Adjectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Descriptive Predicate Comparative and superlative forms Adverbs: Conjunctive Prepositions and prepositional phrases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convey location, time, direction Provide details Influence subject–verb agreement Pronouns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indefinite Relative Conjunctions: Subordinating Transitional words and phrases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sentence to sentence Paragraph coherence 	Capitalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abbreviations Initials and acronyms Organizations
	Punctuation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In compound sentences After introductory words, phrases, and clauses After introductory structures and dependent adverbial clauses Complex sentences Quotations Parentheses, brackets, and ellipses Semicolons, colons, hyphens
	Proper mechanics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Italics Underlining for titles of books
	Spelling
	Correct spelling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commonly confused terms (its/it's) Use spelling patterns and rules; use print and electronic resources to determine and check correct spellings Know how to use spell-check function while understanding limitations
Active and passive voice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differentiate and know how to use 	
Complex sentences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differentiate between main and subordinate clauses 	
Variety of complete simple, compound, and complex sentences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correct subject–verb agreement Correct use of modifiers, antecedents, parallel structures, and consistent tenses 	

General Suggestions for Teaching Writing to Adolescent English Language Learners (ELLs)

The following suggestions are intended as guidelines for supporting English language learners in the classroom. It is important to remember to linguistically accommodate instruction according to the English proficiency levels of students. The suggestions below are not an exhaustive list—contact your Educational Service Center for additional information about strategies for working with English language learners.

Provide intensive teacher modeling of writing (in front of the class) with explicit examples of all of the thinking processes involved. Verbalize your own thinking and engage ELLs in the process.

- Demonstrate how writers read their own writing and get more ideas about what else to write.
- Model some of the questions that writers ask themselves to evaluate what they have written.
- Model exemplary writing practices and demonstrate how writers write about meaningful topics.
- Model how to write for a purpose and for an audience.
- Have ELLs participate during the demonstration so they have an opportunity to practice and better understand the thinking behind the writing.
- Use a variety of mentor texts as models of effective writing.

Study mentor texts to demonstrate the connection between writing and reading. This teaches ELLs to read like writers.

- Include culturally relevant texts and materials that mirror family backgrounds, experiences, characters, and interests to help ELLs make connections between their own lives and school.
- Consider how the text supports ELLs as they write, including what they can try in their own writing.
- Notice the structure of the language and if it matches the students' stage of language acquisition.
- Point out differences in authors' styles and the distinguishing characteristics of text types.

Establish attainable goals based on ELLs' level of English proficiency and writing knowledge and skills.

- Sequence and scaffold writing assignments and tasks into manageable steps/small

increments.

- Introduce and focus on one writing element/grammatical point at a time.
- Allow time for ELLs to incorporate an element/grammatical point into their own writing.
- Continuously reassess and set new goals based on student progress.
- Ensure that students are writing frequently as this will support end-of-the-year TELPAS Writing requirements.

Incorporate procedural supports (i.e., conferences, planning forms and charts, sentence frames, word lists, and rubrics/checklists for revision/editing), oral language, and many peer-assisted learning opportunities.

- Foster a sense of community that supports taking risks, uses language for real purposes in authentic writing situations, views students and teachers as writers, and encourages collaboration as the norm.
- Have ELLs work in small groups, in pairs, or in triads. Ensure that ELLs are grouped with students who can offer beneficial feedback that will help them improve their writing.
- Help ELLs develop their ideas for writing in English. When ELLs think in their native language first and then try to translate what they are thinking into English, their writing may reflect the nuances of their native language and be difficult to comprehend (i.e., inaccurate verb tenses or word choice). For example, have ELLs brainstorm with others and/or their peers and then read and talk about their writing with their peers or teacher.
- Model for students how to use all procedures and graphic organizers.
- Provide guided practice for students to work together using rubrics and checklists to clarify criteria and expectations for writers.
- Provide sentence stems for students to access for both oral and written discourse.

Demonstrate how writing and reading reflect thinking and learning. Even though ELLs may have mastered content knowledge, their writing ability may not reflect this knowledge.

“In order to communicate effectively, writers need to know many words and to know those words well. This means knowing the various meanings a word may have (e.g., *Mean*, *root*, *log*, and *citation* are all examples of words with multiple meanings.); knowing how to use the word grammatically (e.g., We use a mop to mop the floor, but we don’t broom the floor when we use a broom; we sweep it.); knowing the words it typically occurs with (e.g., *toxic waste*; *poisonous snake*); and knowing its level of politeness or formality (e.g., *kids* versus *children*, *fake* versus *fictitious*). Because this knowledge requires time and multiple exposures to each word in a variety of contexts, ELLs are likely to need a great deal of work in vocabulary in order to read and write like their English-proficient peers” (The Education Alliance: Brown University).

- Provide opportunities for ELLs to explain their writing and to obtain help in expressing

their knowledge effectively.

- Use visual cues, such as having students draw a picture before they write. Then, elicit more detail and provide language models by talking with students about their drawings (e.g., “Tell me more about...”).
- Provide rich listening, speaking, and reading experiences; multiple exposures to words; and explicit teaching of definitions and usage.
 - Develop a basic writer’s vocabulary (display in room and/or provide individual copies for writing notebooks). Include content-area and thematic words.
 - Incorporate lists of Spanish (or other native languages) cognates (i.e., words with common origins and meanings) as applicable.
 - Teach ELLs how to use dictionaries, thesauruses, and computer resources.

Demonstrate how writing is a recursive process.

- Have students write frequently, as this provides opportunity for practice and improvement.
- Model, model, model to help students understand all stages of the writing process, what you are asking them to do, how to do it, and why.
- Have ELLs revise and edit a paper in their writing folder/portfolio after they have learned more about a targeted grammatical point or text type/genre.
- Encourage ELLs to think and talk about what they have learned (e.g., “I learned to use a comma after an introductory clause”; “I use more dialogue now”; “I didn’t include enough supporting details”).
- Prompt for more information or clarification, when necessary.

Teach written conventions (grammar, mechanics, usage, and spelling) in the context of actual writing.

“Writing activities provide excellent context for providing the models, practice, explanations, and feedback that ELLs need” (The Education Alliance: Brown University).

- Provide models using sentences and examples from mentor texts and teacher writing.

“ELLs learn many structural patterns of English unconsciously through hearing them and then using them in their speech. . . . [ELLs] do not have an intuitive sense of what ‘sounds right’ in English. That sense develops with time and experience. ELLs’ grammar improves over time when they are provided with good language models, guided practice, clear explanations, and tactful but explicit feedback on grammatical correctness” (The Education Alliance: Brown University).
- Encourage ELLs to figure out the spellings of new and different words that express their

thoughts.

“Some ELLs ‘play it safe’ when they write, using only words they have memorized or can copy from the classroom print environment. This can result in writing that has no spelling errors but also little individuality” (The Education Alliance: Brown University).

Provide varied and increasingly challenging writing experiences for students. Scaffold as appropriate to a student’s proficiency level.

- Incorporate authentic writing assignments and provide opportunities for ELLs to write on culturally relevant topics.
- Be sure to revisit writing genres that ELLs may or may not have experienced or mastered previously (other grade-level expectations).

REFERENCES: The Education Alliance, 2006; Haynes, 2007; Kendall & Khoun, 2006.

Teacher Resources to Support English Language Learners

English Language Proficiency Standards Academies

These academies explore ways to increase achievement for English language learners (ELLs) through the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS). The ELPS focus on developing academic language in the content areas through the language domains of reading, writing, speaking, and listening in kindergarten through grade 12. Academy participants examine the ELPS and practice writing language objectives, using the four domains of the ELPS. The academies also include specific strategies for teachers to use to incorporate the ELPS into their classrooms.

Check your district or education service center professional-development catalog for information about ELPS academies offered both face-to-face and online through Project Share.

Implementing the ELPS: Project Share Online Modules

Implementing the ELPS in ELAR, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies will be available in the fall of 2012. These online modules will guide content area teachers through the use of the ELPS within sample content area lessons.

Texas English Language Learners Portal

This website provides information about assessment, compliance, accountability, the instructional environment, professional development, and other resources for teachers of ELLs.

Website: <http://elltx.org>

ELPS Presentations

Presentations are available through Education Service Center Region 20.

Website: http://portal.esc20.net/portal/page/portal/esc20public/ELPS_EnglishLanguageProficiencyStandards

A+RISE Instructional Strategies Linked to the ELPS

Resources are available through Project Share for teachers of students in grades 9–12. Check the Gadgets section of your Project Share My Portal page.

Grade 7 Expository Writing Rubric

SCORE POINTS: The essay represents a/an _____ writing performance.				
ORGANIZATION/PROGRESSION		1: Very limited	2: Basic	3: Satisfactory
Form and structure	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.	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.	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 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.
	Thesis statement, focus, and coherence Most ideas are generally related to the topic specified in the prompt, but the controlling idea 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.	Most ideas are generally related to the topic specified in the prompt, but the writer's controlling idea is weak or somewhat unclear . The lack of an effective controlling idea or the writer's inclusion of irrelevant information interferes with the focus and coherence of the essay.	The writer establishes a clear controlling idea . Most ideas are related to the controlling idea 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 establishes a clear controlling idea . All ideas are strongly related to the controlling idea 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 .
	Progression of ideas and transitions The writer's progression of ideas is weak . Repetition or wordiness sometimes causes serious disruptions in 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.	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.	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.	The writer's progression of ideas is coherent and well controlled . Meaningful transitions and strong sentence-to-sentence connections clearly show the relationships among ideas throughout the essay.
DEVELOPMENT OF IDEAS				
Details and examples	The development of ideas is weak. The essay is ineffective because the writer uses details and examples that are inappropriate, vague, or insufficient .	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 development of ideas is sufficient because the writer uses details and examples that are specific and appropriate , adding some substance to the essay.	The development of ideas is effective because the writer uses details and examples that are specific and well chosen , adding substance to the essay.
	Depth and understanding of task 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.	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.	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.	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.

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Grade 7 Expository Writing Rubric (cont.)

SCORE POINTS: The essay represents a/an _____ writing performance.				
USE OF LANGUAGE/CONVENTIONS				
	1: Very limited	2: Basic	3: Satisfactory	4: Accomplished
Word choice	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.	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.	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.	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	Sentences are simplistic, awkward, or uncontrolled , significantly limiting the effectiveness of the essay.	Sentences are awkward or only somewhat controlled , weakening the effectiveness of the essay.	Sentences are varied and adequately controlled , for the most part contributing to the effectiveness of the essay.	Sentences are purposeful, varied, and well controlled , enhancing the effectiveness of the essay.
Command of conventions; occurrence of errors	The writer has little or no command of sentence boundaries and age-appropriate spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Serious and persistent errors create disruptions in the fluency of the writing and sometimes interfere with meaning.	The writer demonstrates a partial command of sentence boundaries and age-appropriate 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.	The writer demonstrates an adequate command of sentence boundaries and age-appropriate 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.	The writer demonstrates a consistent command of sentence boundaries and age-appropriate 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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Grade 7 Personal Narrative Rubric

SCORE POINTS: The story represents a/an _____ writing performance.				
ORGANIZATION/PROGRESSION		1: Very limited	2: Basic	3: Satisfactory
		4: Accomplished		
Form and structure	The form or structure of the narrative is inappropriate to the purpose or the specific demands of the prompt. The writer uses organizational strategies or literary devices that are only marginally suited to the narrative task, or they are inappropriate or not evident at all. Because the narrative is presented in a random or illogical way, the writer is not able to convey a sense of the experience.	The form or structure of the narrative is evident but may not always be appropriate to the purpose or responsive to the specific demands of the prompt. The writer uses organizational strategies or literary devices that are only somewhat suited to the narrative task. The writer is able to convey some sense of the experience but may not be able to communicate its importance or meaning.	The form or structure of the narrative is, for the most part, appropriate to the purpose and responsive to the specific demands of the prompt. The writer uses organizational strategies or literary devices that are adequately suited to the narrative task. The writer is able to clearly convey the experience and adequately communicate its importance or meaning.	The form or structure of the narrative is appropriate to the purpose and responsive to the specific demands of the prompt. The writer uses organizational strategies or literary devices that are particularly well suited to the narrative task. The writer is able to skillfully convey the experience and communicate its importance or meaning.
Unity and coherence	Many of the details do not contribute to the narrative. The writer's lack of focus on a specific personal experience weakens the unity and coherence of the narrative.	Some details do not contribute to the narrative. The writer may focus on a specific personal experience but may not sustain that focus, limiting the unity and coherence of the narrative.	Most details contribute to the effectiveness of the narrative. The writer focuses on a specific personal experience and generally sustains that focus. The narrative is coherent, though it may not always be unified due to minor lapses in focus.	All details contribute to the effectiveness of the narrative. The writer focuses on a specific personal experience and sustains that focus, strengthening the unity and coherence of the narrative.
Progression of ideas and transitions	The writer's narrative presentation is weak . Repetition or wordiness sometimes causes serious disruptions in the story line. At other times the lack of transitions and sentence-to-sentence connections makes one or more parts of the narrative unclear or difficult to follow.	The writer's narrative presentation 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 narrative or establish a link between the experience and its meaning.	The writer's narrative presentation is adequately controlled . For the most part, transitions are meaningful, and sentence-to-sentence connections are sufficient to support the logical movement of the narrative and establish a link between the experience and its meaning.	The writer's narrative presentation is well controlled . Meaningful transitions and strong sentence-to-sentence connections enhance the logical movement of the narrative and reinforce the link between the experience and its meaning.
DEVELOPMENT OF IDEAS				
Development of the narrative	The development of the narrative is weak because the details are inappropriate, vague, or insufficient . They do not contribute to the writer's portrayal of the experience.	The development of the narrative 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 the writer's portrayal of the experience and provide the reader with little or no understanding of why this experience was meaningful.	Specific details add some substance to the narrative . For the most part, these details contribute to the writer's portrayal of the experience and provide the reader with some understanding of why this experience was meaningful.	Specific, well-chosen details add substance to the narrative. These details contribute significantly to the writer's portrayal of the experience and provide the reader with a clear understanding of why this experience was meaningful.

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Grade 7 Personal Narrative Rubric (cont.)

SCORE POINTS: The story represents a/an _____ writing performance.				
	1: Very limited	2: Basic	3: Satisfactory	4: Accomplished
Depth and understanding of task	The narrative is insubstantial because the writer's response to the prompt is vague or confused. In some cases, the narrative as a whole is only weakly linked to the prompt. In other cases, the writer fails to establish a realistic situation, present motivations for behavior or actions, or show any awareness of changes or insights that developed as a result of the experience.	The narrative reflects little or no thoughtfulness . In some cases, the writer's response to the prompt is formulaic and demonstrates only a limited understanding of the writing task. In other cases, the writer establishes some elements of a realistic situation but may provide few motivations for behavior or actions. In addition, the writer may not address changes or insights that developed as a result of the experience.	The narrative reflects some thoughtfulness . The writer demonstrates a good understanding of the writing task by establishing a realistic situation, providing reasonable motivations for behavior or actions, and addressing (at least to some degree) changes or insights that developed as a result of the experience.	The narrative is thoughtful and engaging . The writer demonstrates a thorough understanding of the writing task by establishing a realistic situation, providing plausible motivations for behavior or actions, and revealing changes or insights that developed as a result of the experience.
USE OF LANGUAGE/CONVENTIONS				
Word choice	The writer's word choice may be vague or limited . It reflects little or no awareness of the narrative purpose. The word choice impedes the writer's ability to relate the experience clearly or to convey a sense of its importance or meaning.	The writer's word choice may be general or imprecise . It reflects a basic awareness of the narrative purpose. The word choice limits the writer's ability to relate the experience clearly or to convey a sense of its importance or meaning.	The writer's word choice is for the most part, specific and concrete . It reflects an awareness of the narrative purpose. Generally effective word choice allows the writer to relate the experience clearly and to convey some sense of its importance or meaning.	The writer's word choice is vivid and expressive . It reflects a keen awareness of the narrative purpose. Effective word choice enables the writer to recreate the experience in a way that conveys its importance or meaning .
Sentences	Sentences are simplistic, awkward, or uncontrolled , weakening the effectiveness of the narrative.	Sentences are awkward or only somewhat controlled , limiting the effectiveness of the narrative.	Sentences are varied and adequately controlled , for the most part contributing to the effectiveness of the narrative.	Sentences are purposeful, varied, and well controlled , enhancing the effectiveness of the narrative.
Command of conventions; occurrence of errors	The writer has little or no command of sentence boundaries and age-appropriate spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Serious and persistent errors create disruptions in the fluency of the writing and sometimes interfere with meaning.	The writer demonstrates a partial command of sentence boundaries and age-appropriate 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.	The writer demonstrates an adequate command of sentence boundaries and age-appropriate 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 narrative.	The writer demonstrates a consistent command of sentence boundaries and age-appropriate spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Although minor errors may be evident , they do not detract from the fluency or clarity of the writing. The overall strength of the conventions contributes to the effectiveness of the narrative.

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