



Writing at High Levels in the Intermediate Grades

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Video Notes



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Video Notes Directions


- This guide supports the video presentation and provides you a copy of the PowerPoint slides used in the program. There are multiple segment breaks in the video that are included to allow time for you to process the information you have seen and heard.
- The slides that are associated with the segment breaks have reflection questions to consider during the interim period.
- It is advisable to print out all of the supplemental files for this program as resources to utilize during and after viewing.
- The follow-up activities should be completed and submitted to your professional development director for possible credit



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Enduring Understanding

Focused, direct writing instruction is necessary for all learners



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Essential Question

- How can focused writing instruction help high-achieving readers improve their ability to write at high levels?



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Outcomes: By the end of the session, participants will have:

- Examined reading performance data of high-achieving students
- Reviewed research related to writing instruction
- Deconstructed national and state writing standards
- Participated in a modeled writing lesson
- Reflected on new learning



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Engage: Five Words/Three Words

- On your own, list five words that come to mind when you hear the words "advanced reader"
- Share your individual list with your table group
- Agree on three words your team believes best describe "advanced readers"
- Record each of the three words on three index cards found on your table
- Be prepared to share your three words with the group



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Three Words

- Connectors
- Independent
- Creative



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Three Words

- Connectors
- Independent
- Motivated
- Fluent
- Creative
- Reads for Understanding



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Three Words

- Connectors
- Independent
- Motivated
- Fluent
- Enjoys Reading
- Creative
- Reads for Understanding
- Strategy Utilization
- Extensive Vocabulary

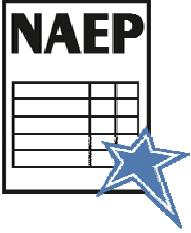



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National Data

The Nation's Report Card

NAEP





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National Data

- 2002 National Assessment of Educational Progress data show that 32% of fourth graders performed at proficient level in reading, and only 28% of fourth graders performed at proficient level in writing

The Nation's Report Card
Writing Highlights (2002)
Reading Highlights (2002)
<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard>




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The Writing Report Card:
(1996 study by NAEP)

- Directly links writing effectiveness to the development of critical thinking skills
- Found that only 20% of students write adequately
- Shows that many students have difficulty organizing their thoughts coherently.

Applebee, Langer, & Mullis, 1996



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Consider This...

A 2004 survey of 120 American corporations found that:

- Corporations are dissatisfied with the writing skills of recent college graduates
- 51% of respondents take writing skills into consideration when hiring
- Employers spend billions of dollars annually trying to correct writing deficiencies

The National Commission on Writing,
College Board, 2004



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Segment 1 is now finished— Need For Instruction

Please proceed with the activity.

Reflect on your own strengths and needs as a teacher of writing. Try to list three of each.

Continue to the next segment at the conclusion of the activity.



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The National Commission on Writing (2004)


...many employees don't understand the need for an appropriate level of detail, reasoning, structure, and the like.



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The National Commission on Writing (2004)


**Writing helps students
"connect the dots" in
their learning.**



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The National Commission on Writing (2004)

**It is estimated that the
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costs for providing writing
training could be as high
as \$3.1 billion.**



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The National Commission on Writing (2004)


**American education will
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My Story

Reading performance data from Bradley Hills Elementary School, Montgomery County, Maryland

- Maryland State Assessment (MSA)—Grade 3 reading 95.8% of students at proficient or advanced levels
- Measure of Academic Progress—Reading (MAP-R) current fourth-grade students' mean RIT score of 215 in fall—similar to sixth-grade-level mean scores
- We have met AYP every year in every category



MSA Data www.msa.12.org
MAP-R Data www.mva.org

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That's terrific, except...

The greatest academic concern in our building is the quality of student writing



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Other questions:

- Do we expect “advanced readers” to naturally become good writers without a lot of direct instruction?
- Do we spend enough time teaching writing?
- Is our instruction aligned with state and national standards?
- Do we continue to teach vocabulary at high levels and hold students accountable for using rich vocabulary?



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Segment 2 is now finished— Four Corners Activity

Please proceed with the activity.

Generate a list of verbs for each level of Bloom's Taxonomy that might be used to provide instruction to students. Then, create a list of student products that align with the cognitive demand of each level of the taxonomy.

Continue to the next segment at the conclusion of the activity.



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Deconstruct the Standards

Persuasive Writing

3.5.7 Write to persuade an intended audience by selecting an appropriate form that establishes a clear position in support of a proposition or proposal and supports the position with organized and relevant evidence

3.8.7 Includes all of the above plus differentiating between evidence and opinion and refuting counter-arguments

Montgomery County, Maryland Curriculum Framework



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Deconstruct the Standards

Persuasive Writing (NAEP requirements)

- Take a clear position and develop it consistently with well-chosen reasons or examples
- Organize the piece with strong transitions
- Sustain variety in sentence structure and word choice
- Keep errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation to a minimum



Persuasive Writing Scoring Guide
The Nation's Report Card

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Deconstruct the Standard

Informational Writing

- 3.5.6 Write information reports for an intended audience and purpose that frame a key question, present a literal understanding of a topic, and include facts and details that illuminate the main idea
- 3.8.6 Write information reports for an intended audience and purpose that convey clear and accurate perspectives on a subject and pose relevant and tightly drawn questions about the topic



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Bloom's Taxonomy

Think about the skills required for:

- Knowledge
- Comprehension
- Application
- Analysis
- Synthesis
- Evaluation



Bloom, B.S., 1956

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Bloom's Taxonomy

Level	Skills Demonstrated
Knowledge	Define, tell, identify, collect, name, who, where, when
Comprehension	Summarize, describe, contrast, compare
Application	Complete, illustrate, show, solve, modify, relate, classify, discover, order
Analysis	Analyze, separate, explain, connect, compare
Synthesis	Combine, integrate, modify, rearrange, substitute, plan, create, design, what if, compose, rewrite
Evaluation	Assess, decide, rank, recommend, convince, judge, explain, support, conclude



Bloom, B.S. (1956)

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What Reading Skills Do the Standards Demand?

- High level of vocabulary
 - Word parts, derivatives, word relationships
 - Content-specific vocabulary
 - Applies context clues to solve for unknown words
- Knowledge of organizational structures of text
 - Chronological sequence, cause/effect, description, compare/contrast, point of view, problem/solution



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Consider...

- 60% of the NAEP writing assessment requires informational and persuasive writing
- Writing requires knowledge and focuses thought
- Writing is an "integrative process" that combines the total intellectual capacities of the writer

Risinger, 1987
<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard>



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Segment 3 is now finished— Results

Please proceed with the activity.

Review a recent writing lesson. In what ways can the lesson be changed to make it more explicit for students? Compare the student work samples from each lesson. Which produced better results in students' work?

Continue to the next segment at the conclusion of the activity.



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Looking at Student Work

Compare student writing samples from two different grade levels related to Standards 3.5.7/3.8.7

- Which samples meet standard?
- Why?



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What Do We Know About Good Writers?

- They communicate well in a variety of situations
- They can perform a variety of writing tasks
- They need expert instruction, frequent practice, and constructive feedback



<http://www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard>

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Blanger, 1987
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Websites

- <http://www.mdreportcard.org/>
- <http://www7.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/archives.html>
- <http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/curriculum.cfm>



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Modeled Lesson

1. Deconstruct or “unpack” the standard
2. Share a model
3. Match a graphic organizer to the writing intent
4. Identify key vocabulary and text structures
5. Provide practice and feedback
6. Provide opportunities to improve



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Debrief the Lesson

- What did you notice?
- What questions do you have?
- What can you try?



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Summarize

- Use the “Two-Word” Summary Sheet from your handouts to help focus your summary of today’s session
- Share with a partner the two words you selected



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Reflection

1. What did you learn today?
2. How will you share the new information back at your school?



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Segment 4 is now finished— Student Samples

Please proceed with the activity.

Carefully review the student samples provided. Articulate the strengths of each sample. Articulate the needs of each sample. What specific steps or immediate lessons will you create and teach to move students forward?



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